

the character of this work, the nature of the opposition that it would have to meet with in the earth, the murderous character of Satan's efforts as they have been manifested in past ages, and as I believed they would be in this age, I made up my mind that if I got through safely, if I secured the crown and the glory which God has promised unto those who will be faithful to His cause and to His Son Jesus Christ—that if I got through and attained to this great glory at the cost of everything on earth that I held dear to me, even to life itself, I ought to be satisfied and I ought to make up my mind that such might be the result.

It has been much better with me thus far in the progress of this work and my connection with it than I ever expected it would be. I have had more happiness, that is of a worldly character, I have had more means, I have had more substance, I have had more quietude, I have had more rest, and less affliction, less trouble and less evil to contend with, and less persecution—that is, as far as I am personally concerned—than I expected might be the case in my life.

This great work which God our Eternal Father has founded is destined—hear it, all ye Latter-day Saints, hear it, all ye ends of the earth—to fill the whole world. It is the power that the prophets spoke about; it is the power that they described in the most glorious language. The predictions of the holy prophets upon this subject are the most glorious to be found within the volume of Scripture. We refer to the work of the last days. Small as it is in its beginnings, insignificant, destitute of influence, destitute of worldly advantages, it is a power, nevertheless, that will continue to grow; it will continue to increase, it will continue to spread until from pole to pole, from the centre to the circumference of our globe, in every land, the power and the influence of this great work which our Father in heaven has laid the foundation of, will be felt.

Will it be accomplished by us as mortal men, by the human agencies that we have at our disposal? No; no. We have proved by experience that we of ourselves can do but very little. Why, there are events occurring every little while that put our human wisdom to shame, that cause us to fall back and wonder what next shall be done, what move shall next be made, what step we shall take to counteract this affliction or this evil; how shall we escape this threatening danger; how shall we penetrate this seemingly impenetrable wall that is before us and impedes our progress? Is not this the feeling experienced very frequently? I confess to having it. I confess that time and time again I have been at a loss, looking at it as a man, to tell how we shall escape the evils that menace us, by which we have been surrounded, and from which it seemed there was no possible outlet or means of escape. It is at such times that men who look upon this work and who do not

understand it, who do not recognize in it the work of God, raise the cry that "Mormonism" has received its death-blow and will most assuredly perish.

It is easy enough to understand why this is the case. This work, to be understood, must be viewed with the eye of faith. The man who looks at it to comprehend it must have some knowledge of the power that founded it—the power that accompanies it, the power that sustains it. In the absence of this knowledge of course men judge of it as they would of any other system, looking at it as they would at something else that has its origin in man's device. But there has never been a moment since the Lord laid the foundation of this Church until this present time that God has left His servants in the hour of extremity, in the hour of trial, in the hour of peril, without knowledge from Him, without the voice of His Spirit directing the path to take, to show them the next step forward, when seemingly confronted by obstacles that could not be overcome—but that would arrest the progress of the work. As these obstacles have been approached they have vanished. They have been removed out of the way, and the path has been made as clear as this aisle before me for the progress of the work and for the action of the people of God.

Praise be to God for this; to Him be the glory. It is not the effort of man, it is not the wisdom of man, it is not the ingenuity of man, it is not the power of man that has carried this work forward to its present condition. If it had been, our position would be a most woeful one; we would have been in the most deplorable circumstances. What could we have done, what could we do today, if this were the case? If this were our position, if God were not with us and did not sustain us, and He did not guide us in every step of this work, what would become of us? Why, there are thousands and thousands in this land who would be ready to lie down and die—hopeless, lost to all feelings of cheerfulness as to the future, and expecting nothing else than overwhelming ruin.

Now my brethren and sisters—for you are the ones to whom I address myself today—I desire that my testimony shall be encouraging so far as I have the Spirit to encourage, to inspire hope, to lift up those who are cast down, those who mourn, those who feel despondent, those who ask themselves, "Has God forsaken or forgotten us?" I wish to address myself to all those, and to say and bear testimony to them that God reigns today in the heavens; that He is as near to us today, that His revelations are poured out upon us today, that He gives us knowledge today, that He fills us with His Holy Spirit today as much as ever He did in the history of our Church.

This work did not depend upon the Prophet Joseph. I well remember, although in my boyhood, when he was taken. It seemed as though hope had fled. We imagined that

he would have lived to have led this people forward until Jesus should come. What was to become of the people then, was the inquiry; to whom should we look for the word or the Lord? The Prophet, the Seer, the Revelator, the man of God, he who had beheld the Lord, the Father, and the Son, who had been ministered unto by holy angels, to whom had been restored the everlasting Gospel in its original purity and power, and the glorious priesthood by the authority of which men could officiate in God's name—this man so blessed, so gifted, so honored of God, had been taken away by the cruel hand of assassins, and to whom should we look for guidance? Who was there among all the Elders of Israel who could step forward and lead the people of God? I remember in the printing office where I was then a boy discussions among the Elders, who labored there, concerning this. There was no man, apparently, amongst the Saints, amongst the Elders, so pre-eminent that all minds could settle upon him.

But when the time came that the congregation met, when the Twelve Apostles returned and met with the people, then it was plainly manifest in the face of all Israel that there was a man whom God had chosen; there was a man who was fully empowered with the authority of the Priesthood to lead the people. The voice of God was heard spoken by human lips, and the Spirit of God bore powerful testimony to every one present that he was the man. It was necessary in that hour of trial, in that hour for which the people had been so unprepared, in that hour when there was such a diversity of views as to the Priesthood and as to the rights of the Priesthood, that there should be a signal manifestation of God's providence and power to designate the man, so that there could be no cavil nor dispute in the minds of the Saints.

He led Israel with the same power, with the same authority, with the same gifts, and with the same wisdom that had characterized the Prophet Joseph. He led the people through hours of trial and difficulty, scenes that were perplexing—led them across the plains and brought them to this land, pointed out the spot, and prophesied concerning the future of this country to encourage them. So it has been from that day to this.

When President Young passed away in the full measure of his days, having led the people of God with such signal advantage and accompanied by such marks of Divine favor, God raised up another. And when he died He raised up another. President Woodruff is here now; he lives today—a man of ripened experience, having been familiar with this work from the commencement till the present time, understanding it thoroughly; that is as much as man can do, and he has in the providence of our God been spared to us to give unto us the benefit of his counsels, to point out unto us the mind and the will of God, to teach us as a people, to labor