

follow the Lamb of God whithersoever He goeth, can we not advocate and practice the principles that He preached and that He died for? If we cannot, what right have we to call ourselves His disciples? Follow me, he said. He that would be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me; "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." This was one reason why He could practice the principle; He recognized that it was ignorance, to a great extent, that prevented men from doing right. They did not know fully the results of a wicked course. Even the men who murdered him did not know to the full extent what they were doing. He could pity their ignorance; and he lifted himself so high above them by a righteous life that He could say, and not only say but feel, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He came to suffer for their sakes, and He was willing to suffer. And He has said to us in these latter times, "I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required that you forgive all men." Why? Because God wants us to grow and expand and become godlike. We cannot do this with hatred in our hearts. We can only do it to the best advantage with love in our hearts, with feelings of kindness, generosity, mercy, forbearance and forgiveness. That is why we are required to practice these virtues.

Joseph Smith, the third great teacher, as I have already reminded you, taught these same principles. He brought anew into the world the knowledge of the true and living God. Men had again forgotten the true God and how to worship him. Yes, in the midst of this full blaze, so-called, of Gospel light, men had actually forgotten what had been taught thousands of years before regarding the personality of the Creator. They were worshipping Him again as a being "without body, parts, or passions," who was in the sun, and the moon, and the stars, who was in the flowers and the trees, and in all the manifestations of nature. And so He is in one sense. By His Spirit He is in all these things—that Spirit which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The light of the sun? Yes. The light of the moon? Yes. The light of the stars? Yes; the light of all things; for light, like truth, has but one source—God. But we must not confound the Spirit of God with the personality of God, our Father in heaven. He who created man in His own image, as Moses taught the children of Israel; He who was in the express likeness of His Son Jesus Christ, who was in the form of man, and who with others taught this truth to the world. This was the God that men were to worship. But they were not worshipping Him when Joseph Smith came forth to re-reveal and re-declare Him. His mind was confused over the many conflicting claims of the various Christian sects, one saying, "this is the right way," another saying, "that is the right way;" "lo, here is Christ," "lo, there is Christ;" inasmuch that he did not join any of them, but went to the Bible, which had come down through the ages containing the word of God. He read in the Epistle of James, "If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." He did not find there that he was to go to this man, or that man, to this church, or that church; for the Priesthood and the Church of God were not upon the earth; but to go to God, go directly to his Father in heaven, and ask Him for wisdom. In the simple faith of his heart he carried out this behest; and while praying in the woods near his father's house, a glorious

vision burst upon his view. First, however, he was attacked by an evil influence which tied his tongue and made every effort to destroy him, but he kept on praying in his heart until he saw a light above his head brighter than the noonday sun, and a pillar of glory descended until it rested upon the tops of the trees. In the midst of it he saw two persons in the form of men; and one of them, calling Joseph by name and pointing to the other, said, "This is my beloved Son: hear Him." Could Joseph Smith doubt that moment, if he had ever doubted before, that his Father in heaven was in the form of a man, just as the Lord Jesus Christ was in the form of a man? No; it was as plain as daylight; for there was the vision glowing in glory before his eyes. He was told not to join any of the churches, for God was about to found His Church upon the earth, and he—this boy—had been chosen to do a great work for God in this last dispensation.

This was the calling of Joseph Smith. He taught anew that God was in the form of man; that man was made in the image of God; and he taught the principles of justice, mercy, charity, and forgiveness. Therefore, I say, as one who believes in him as a Prophet of God, judge the tree by its fruits. Do men not inspired of God teach men to love each other; to believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Moses, the God of Jesus Christ; to be charitable, to be honest, to be virtuous, to be upright, to be kind, loving and forgiving, and to return good for evil? No, they do not. You may know the tree by its fruits. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. And if men draw near to God in their lives, and teach and practice the teachings of His servants, they follow in the footsteps of their Savior—they do not follow after evil; and Joseph Smith did not. He taught the truths that the Prophets before him had taught; and he went beyond them. Yes, for this great movement nicknamed "Mormonism" is like a mighty tidal wave rolling up the beach of history, destined to make a higher ripple mark than any wave that has preceded it. Joseph Smith taught men to look up to heaven and conceive of a God in the form of man. He taught them that they could become like their Father and God, who was "an exalted Man." And what is more simple and reasonable? Don't you parents expect your children to become like you? Or do you expect your children to be something else than men and women? No. You men will see your sons become men; you women will see your daughters become women. Then God our Father—yes, and our Mother—in heaven, looking down upon this world—this school house in which their children are being educated—expect, and Joseph Smith taught it as a truth, that their children will be exalted. If they pursue the proper course, until they shall become divine beings themselves, worthy to stand upon that plane where stand their Father and their Mother in heaven. Like begets like; and the principle of eternal progress will make of man a God.

Joseph Smith also taught the great principle of universal salvation. The Gospel of Jesus Christ saves all men; but saves them according to their merits, in different degrees of glory. True, there are some exceptions. There are some who cannot be saved, who remain filthy still, because they will not receive the truth, or, rather, having received it, throw it away and trample upon it wittingly. Men who, knowing that a thing is true, will not receive it, will not live it, cannot be sanctified by that truth. Men who are so perverse that they will utterly reject light and knowledge, knowing it to be light and knowledge, cannot be redeemed by it, for they place themselves

outside the pale of redemption. But are there many who would do this? I have this much confidence in the human race; I believe that the most of men would, if the truth were brought to them, obey it, either fully or in part; that they would not fly in the face of God, knowing him to be God, nor reject His truth, knowing it to be His truth. Hence the Savior said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." But those who do know, their situation is far more serious. God is merciful to ignorance. He cannot look upon sin with allowance, but he can allow for human weakness. He cannot compromise with sin. He saves us from our sins, not in our sins; and He has instituted means whereby we may get rid of our sins. He tells us to believe, to have faith, to repent of our sins, and have them washed away by baptism, by being immersed—buried—in the water, and brought forth out of the water, in the likeness of His birth and resurrection. And not only this, but we are required to practice all that God reveals. This is the celestial law—to live by every word that proceeds from His mouth; not to select this principle or that principle, and say, "This is my Gospel," but listen to Him and to His servants who bear the holy Priesthood, and follow them, and obey them; for they are the mouthpieces and oracles of God. This is the celestial law. You need not try to tie it down to any one thing; it means everything that we are commanded to do. We are here that it may be seen whether we will observe to do all that the Lord our God requires at our hands.

And what awaits those who obey this celestial law? These are they who are of the glory of the sun, of the celestial kingdom, whose glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical. They who receive the Gospel in the flesh when it is presented to them; who live its holy principles, and are faithful unto the end; they are saved, redeemed, sanctified and exalted by it. They go into the celestial kingdom, to enjoy the full presence of God the Father. They are beings celestial, and their glory is the glory of the sun. All things are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's. But they who reject the Gospel here, and put off the day of their salvation, and have to be preached to in the spirit world, where their spirits will go, as did the spirits of the antediluvians, those who were swept off by the flood, and to whom Christ in the spirit went and preached, even to "the spirits in prison"—they who put off the day of their salvation, and think "we will have a good time here and will obey the Gospel hereafter," they must answer for this neglect, and after they have answered for it and realized what they have lost, they will be saved—not in the celestial kingdom, but in a lesser kingdom called the terrestrial, the difference between which and the celestial world is as the difference between the moon that rules the night and the sun that is king of day. The heathen nations that were never given the Gospel, and consequently never sinned against it, are also heirs of the terrestrial kingdom. But those who reject the Gospel altogether and are besotted and crime-stained—what of them? It is written that they will be thrust down to hell; even the murderer, the liar, the sorcerer, and the whoremonger. They will, in short, be damned. But they will only be damned to the extent justified by their sins. Even for them there is hope, after they have "paid the uttermost farthing." They will be punished, as all men must be, for neglect of duty, for transgression of the laws of God; but after they have been punished sufficiently, they will be brought forth and saved in a glory of which the stars in heaven are typical.