

ly? Have they grown stronger? I believe they have. I believe that they have had many testimonies from the Lord to strengthen their faith; I believe that the brethren who have suffered persecution and have been incarcerated for the Gospel's sake, for the keeping of the commandments of the Lord, are stronger in the faith today than they were before. It is the natural consequence of persecution that the people are drawn together and become stronger in their faith than they are in times of peace; and this I believe to have been the case with the Saints.

We have heard of no serious apostasy. The greatest apostasies we have ever had have been when the people were in peace and when let alone; not in times of great trouble and serious difficulty. Trials seem to draw the people together, to make them seek after the Lord, and become better acquainted with Him and the workings of His Holy Spirit, than is the case in times of peace. I have heard a great many express themselves as though they thought the Latter-day Saints were in rather a perilous condition—that is, at home in the Wards and in the Stakes; that they were growing cold, neglecting their duties, etc. Now, there may be an appearance of this, and there may be some truth in it for a foundation; but let me testify to you that the Latter-day Saints are not going to apostatize, they are not going to desert the Kingdom; for the Lord has made no mistake, and He has chosen the very spirits that He wanted. He has sent them at the time He wanted them on the earth, and He sent the Gospel at the time He wanted it on the earth, for them to receive. He is with our brethren whom He has chosen, in their missionary labors; He has set His hand to establish His Kingdom and to accomplish His purposes; and He will make no failure. God's Kingdom—the work of the Lord—is established in the earth, and it will endure. Men may fail, but there will be plenty remain; plenty that will endure faithfully to the end, just as our brother did who was buried today. Brother Morris died in the prime of life; he died in the faith. So will we generally die.

The Lord has given this people a very remarkable schooling, and their trials have been effectual and brought out great good to the souls of men; and the people are established so that they will endure. The Lord has planted a little spark in each heart, and established an

anchor in each individual soul among the Latter-day Saints, and they are not to be shaken nor to be turned away from that anchor, for it reaches within the soul. God will preserve His people. We need not be disturbed at all, for the work is the Lord's, and not of man. It does not belong to the Prophet Joseph. It was not his; he did not originate it. Not his thoughts or counsels, or revelations, but God's, formed the foundation for the establishment of this work. The Lord will take care of it and preserve it through all the vicissitudes and changes and difficulties that we have to meet in this life. The Lord will sustain His work and bring it off victorious, and you will be mortified and ashamed to turn away from it.

Everyone who grows careless and neglects a known duty, will be mortified and made ashamed and sorrowful when the Lord comes to make up His jewels. Do not act thus. Let me exhort and plead with you not to neglect your duties. Renew your energies; forget not your prayers and obligations to the Lord and to each other, and be united. Be true to God, to each other, and to the world; be honest in all your ways. Be upright, and seek to know the will of God concerning your individual selves, and the flocks over which you have the care, so that your duties shall not be neglected, and that the Lord shall be with you.

I sometimes look over the history of the Church at different periods, and particularly have I noticed it during the last six years. It is thought that the Latter-day Saints have been passing through a very serious ordeal. And so they have—rather a serious ordeal; but how many of them have been disturbed? Not one in twenty. Have their trials been very serious? Not one in twenty. There have been a very few deaths; how many I cannot say; possibly a few have occurred that would not have happened under other circumstances. The homes of the Latter-day Saints have not been very seriously disturbed. Their homes have not been burnt; they have not been mobbed and driven out into the frosts of winter; they have not been driven from their homes; but the Lord has established His people here. The families of the brethren who have been required to suffer have been generally at home, surrounded by their friends.

Yet the trials have been quite severe upon some; but how much

more serious they might or could have been. The Lord has not allowed the persecutions of the Saints to be so serious but that they have been able to endure them; and He will not in the future. But the people will be maintained and sustained in the valleys of these mountains and in the districts of country where they have been settled. The Kingdom of God is spreading abroad very rapidly, reaching outside the United States into other countries—it is spreading over the land of Zion, north and south, and the servants of the Lord go out before the people and bless the lands and prepare them for their habitation, that there may be room for the children of Zion; for they will need abundance of room. They are increasing rapidly.

In the last four years has the Church decreased in numbers? Not that I have heard of. I have not noticed particularly the reports of excommunications from the Church; I do not know that the withdrawals have been very plentiful. Very few men of note have fallen, among the Latter-day Saints—very few indeed—during the last five or six years. Very few prominent men—very few families—have drawn off from the Church and arrayed themselves on the side of the enemy at all. But generally the Latter-day Saints have endured faithfully.

Some may have thought because of the efforts of the government to confiscate the property, that they would not give any more of their tithings to be taken away. Some men may have shirked the law of tithing because of this effort being made by the government, and some may have felt it was a good excuse for them; but those who have taken this stand are weak in the faith. No man, solid and sound in the faith, has taken that stand; and there is no need for it.

All the government has required is what the Church was possessed of at the time of the passage of the law; nothing that has belonged to the Church since, or been received into or by the Church. They have no law for it, and make no pretense to it; but have only taken hold of that property of which the Church was possessed at the time the law was passed. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof;" and the property that has been taken and that may be confiscated to the United States, is a little property that belonged to the Lord. Will it hurt the Church? Oh, no. Will it