

the truth in the hearts of this people, and it was this which constituted the great strength of their work. But for this they would be a very weak people, and could be easily broken up; for it was not the President of the Church or his Counselors, the first Presidency; it was not the Twelve Apostles, Presidents of Stakes, nor any other body in the Church upon whom the people depended or unto whom they looked solely for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. The Saints could go to God themselves, if they had doubts upon any question or point—pray to Him in their secret places and ask Him to reveal to them whether or not what was taught unto them was in accordance with His mind and will.

Many things in this Church had come in contact with the traditions and preconceived ideas of men. There were many things today which perhaps conflicted with the previous views of the Latter-day Saints. There was scarcely a thinking man or woman in the Church of Christ who had not indulged in reflections concerning the future of this work, and some of those views had been rudely upset by subsequent events. God was the author of this work and He would conduct it to suit His purposes, and not those of man.

Let them think of how many doctrines had been taught that were new to the world which God had revealed in our day. How would they understand these unless the Spirit of God bore testimony to them? Who on the earth believed them? They were not sanctioned by tradition, they were not upheld by the common belief of men. They were new to this generation, and yet, though they shook the prejudices of mankind and perhaps startled the Latter-day Saints, when they sought of God for a testimony concerning them, He never failed to give unto them His Holy Spirit which gave the assurance that they were of God and not of man. And so it will be to the end. The Presidency of this Church have to walk just as the Saints walk; they have to depend upon the revelations of God as they come to them. They had their faith tested as the Saints have and so with the Twelve Apostles. All that they could do was to seek the mind and will of God.

If there were any who had joined the Church with the expectation of enjoying ease and worldly profit, they were laboring under a wrong impression; yet he did not believe that there was another people on the face of the earth so blessed as the Latter-day Saints, notwithstanding their trials and persecutions. He believed—and he did not say this with any disposition to exaggerate—that a happier and more prosperous people did not exist. Look at the results of the lives of those who have been faithful as compared with those who have left the Church and been unable to endure. He was sure that those who did so would be perfectly satisfied with the course they had followed. God did not forget the sacrifices of this people. When he

thought of the hundreds who had gone to prison willingly to show to the world that they were conscientious, true and faithful men and not cowards, covenant-breakers and recreants, he felt thankful to God that he lived among such a people. However much the world might think the Latter-day Saints had been mistaken in their views, the time would come when their conduct during the last five years would stand out as the brightest page in the history of humanity, in modern times at least. He believed that this people were capable of undergoing any sacrifices that they may be called upon to make. They could bow with submission when it was necessary and right as easily as they could stand erect and resist that which they esteemed to be wrong. They would yet show mankind more abundantly that the Latter-day Saints were a people of truth and uprightness, who were loyal to God, to the country of which they were citizens or ought to be citizens, to the institutions which He had permitted in His providence to be established; loyal in all the relations of life; strong in their fidelity, and, above all things, pure and virtuous.

He would lose all hope for humanity but for the Latter-day Saints. It filled him with horror when he saw the course which men and women were taking outside of this Church, and witnessed the fate which was coming upon the people of this and other nations, and felt thankful to our Heavenly Father that He had established a Church whose standard of purity was unequalled, and in which all impurity was denounced and dealt with. Virtue among the people was of a low standard outside of this Church. The Latter-day Saint who indulged in sexual sin would be damned if he did not repent. There was no greater cause of apostasy and there never had been in this Church than the want of virtue. God would have a virtuous people, for His Spirit would not dwell in unholy tabernacles. They must be pure not only in deed but in thought, in order to retain the Spirit of God.

The Elders, when they went abroad, wondered why the people did not gather as numerously as was the case formerly from the various nations of the earth. It was due to the abominable wickedness which prevailed. Luxury was indulged in to such an extent that young men found themselves unable to marry, and, consequently, some of the oldest blood in America was disappearing. Those who practiced unblushingly one of the besetting sins of the age, fornication, would stand before the bar of God as murderers and murderesses and would be damned. Hear it, all ye Latter-day Saints! This was the curse which was coming upon our race today in portions of this country. In the Southern States it did not prevail to so great an extent as in the north, but it would creep in there after a time if care be not taken. The speaker regretted to learn that that sin had made its appearance, somewhat among the Latter-day Saints.

The curse of God would rest upon those guilty of such abominations.

God had chosen the Saints to institute a new condition of things on earth, to arrest the tide of evil. He had selected men and women who had the courage to carry out what he told them and they tried to do it. But the nation interposed and said stop, and they would bow in submission, leaving the consequences with God. They would do the best they could; but when their actions came in conflict with the constituted authorities, and the highest tribunal in the land cried "stop," there was no other course for the Latter-day Saints to pursue, than to be in accordance with the revelations which God had given to them, telling them to respect constituted authority and yield submissively thereto. Nevertheless they could stand as a living protest against the evils of the age, cry out against them and by their lives proclaim that they were determined with the help of God to effect a change in affairs and redeem the world from its wickedness as far as possible.

Brother Cannon rejoiced that God in His providence had permitted the Saints to remain in the land to which He had led them, and trusted that He would give them courage and patience to bear all trials uncomplainingly. Those who fought against this cause might be prominent for a time, but when they ceased to occupy the positions which they filled and which gave their voices some importance, they would drop out of sight as hundreds before them have done in this land. Let not the Saints disturb themselves about the utterances of those men who inflated themselves with the idea for a time that they are important personages and were going to do some great things against them. We have seen many of those creatures pass away and sink into oblivion.

President Cannon then took up another theme, on which he spoke as follows:

Before I sit down there is one subject that I have felt I wanted to speak about. I think it of some importance to us as Latter-day Saints. It was referred to yesterday by two or three of the brethren. It is in relation to the events of 1891, and connected with the coming of the Lord. It was intimated by Brother Roberts that some people thought that such an event might perhaps happen, and he was anxious that the Saints should not be disappointed if nothing did occur during that year that would fulfill expectation, because a great many anticipations have been indulged in connected with that year, and I believe there has been altogether too much agitation upon this subject. I have seen a great many times in our history when sanguine men have attached a great deal of importance to certain dates. I remember when 1888 was coming in, I heard on all sides that there was something remarkable connected with that year. I fully endorse what Elder Thatcher said yesterday upon this point—that 1890 has been as important a year as we have ever witnessed. And I believe it will be so with every year. I do