

from the beginning, as the Lord does. They have their faith tested as you have your faith tested. So with the Twelve Apostles. All that we can do is to seek the mind and will of God, and when that comes to us, though it may come in contact with every feeling that we have previously entertained, we have no option but to take the step that God points out, and to trust to Him, as we were often told by President Young, for the results. That is the way this Church is led. There is no being, save the Lord himself, who knows the end from the beginning. Who of us would be tested if we were in that condition? It is just as necessary that the Presidency and the Apostles should be tried as it is that you should be tried. It is as necessary that our faith should be called into exercise as that your faith should be called into exercise. We can see a certain distance in the light of the Spirit of God as it reveals to us His mind and His will, and we can take these steps with perfect security, knowing that they are the right steps to be taken. But as to what the result will be, that is for the God of Israel to control. That is the way in which the Church of God has always been led, and it will always be led in that way until He comes who is our King, our Lawgiver and our President, even Jesus Christ.

It is your privilege, my brethren and sisters, in all these matters, to know also whether the steps that you take are acceptable unto God; and when you receive this testimony you will know for yourselves; you will know it all over. Though your mortal eyes and your mortal ears may neither have seen nor heard, you will know it by the testimony that comes from God. The convincing power of the Spirit of God is greater than the evidence of the outer senses.

God is with His people, and He will continue to be with them; and if we will do that which He tells us, He will never desert us, nor turn His face from us; He will never close His ears to our cries, but He will be quick to hear our supplications and to respond to them in blessings upon us.

If there are any who have joined this Church with the expectation of having ease, worldly profit and advantage from their espousal of the Gospel, probably they will learn, if they have not already, that this is a wrong motive, and that they have been mistaken in their ideas. Yet I want to say to the Latter-day Saints that I do not believe there is another people upon the face of the earth who are blessed as we are, notwithstanding our trials. I believe—and I do not say this with any disposition to exaggerate—that a happier or more prosperous people does not live upon the earth than the Latter-day Saints. For God has blessed us in the midst of our trials and has given us prosperity. You look at those who have been faithful and compare the results of their lives with the results of the lives of those who have left the Church, and I am sure that in making the com-

parison you will be perfectly satisfied that the course of the former class has been the most profitable in every sense of the word. So it will be to the end, notwithstanding our afflictions, our imprisonments, and everything of this character. I said on one occasion, and probably more than once, to the brethren who were in the penitentiary, that I was willing to prophesy that they would be more blessed and prospered in that which they put their hands to do than if they had not gone there; and I am sure it will be so. God does not forget the sacrifices of His people, and I am thankful this day for the integrity of the Latter-day Saints. When I think of the hundreds who have gone to prison willingly, so that the world might know that they were conscientious and not cowards or covenant-breakers, I thank God that I live among a people who can do such things as these without shaking of the knees or of the arms, and without being afraid to face all the consequences of that which they have done. I am thankful for it, not only because we are Latter-day Saints, but because we belong to humanity. It is a glorious thing, however mistaken men may be in the estimation of others, to see them valorous and courageous and not afraid to meet all the consequences of their conduct. When my children do wrong, I say to them, "Tell me of it; show me that you have courage, and that you are not afraid to meet the consequences of what you have done." When they do this and are ready to receive whatever the punishment may be, should I be disposed to inflict any, I feel like embracing them. There is that in us which makes us admire courage, even if it be in a mistaken cause. So it is with the Latter-day Saints. However much the world may think we have been mistaken in our views, the time will come when the conduct of the Latter-day Saints during the last five years will stand out as the brightest page in the history of humanity,—in modern times, at least,—and men will dwell upon it and say that such exhibitions of courage and integrity are a credit to our race. I am looking for that—I believe most firmly it will come. We have given the best evidence of our sincerity that it is possible for men and women to give, and whether the world accepts these testimonies and evidences or not, we are sure that God and angels will accept them, and that they will be recorded in our favor.

It may be necessary for us to do other things that come in contact with our feelings. But I believe that this people are capable of any sacrifice that they shall be called upon to make; and they can bow in submission, when it is necessary and right, as easily as they can stand erect and resist that which they esteem to be wrong. We will show mankind—we have shown them, and we will show them more abundantly—that the Latter-day Saints are a people of truth, a people of integrity, a people who are loyal to God, loyal to the country of which

they are citizens or of which they ought to be citizens, loyal to the institutions which God has permitted, in His providence, to be established, and loyal in all the relations of life; a people strong in fidelity, and, above all things, pure and virtuous. I tell you I would lose all hope myself for humanity if it were not for our people. It has been my lot to travel and mingle with men, and, without prying into affairs, things have come to my knowledge that have filled me with—well, I cannot describe the feelings that I have had. When I see the course that men and women are taking outside of this Church, and witness the fate that is coming upon the people, I feel thankful to God that He has established this Church, and that the standard of purity is raised among the Latter-day Saints, and that all impurity is denounced and dealt with; that there is a people upon the face of the earth who say that the virtue of men and the virtue of women ought to be equal to the angels. If you were to see the faces of men as I have seen them when they have been told that we look upon the sin of adultery as the greatest crime next to the shedding of blood, it would be a picture to you; for I tell you that virtue among men is almost unknown outside of this Church; and, of course, when men's virtue has fallen so low, you can depend upon it the virtue of the other sex is not beyond question. The testimony that we bear is that the Latter-day Saint who indulges in sexual sin will be damned, if he do not repent. There has been no greater cause of apostasy in this Church than the want of virtue. You can predict the future of a man who is guilty of sins of this kind, unless he repents, as sure as you can predict that darkness will follow the setting of the sun. God will have a virtuous people, and those of you who are not virtuous will go the way that others have gone, unless you repent; you will lose the faith; for the Spirit of God will not dwell in an unholy tabernacle. The man or the woman that is unvirtuous cannot retain the Spirit of God. They may be members of the Church today, in full fellowship, unsuspected by their fellows; but if they do not repent, their wickedness will produce its fruits and the result which God has said would attend it. Think of what the word of God is. In two revelations that He has given to the Church, He has said that "he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall deny the faith. . . . unless he repents." He that "looketh" upon a woman, remember—not lay his hands upon her—but "he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall deny the faith." Therefore, we must not only be pure in deed, but be pure in thought, in order to retain the Spirit of God and to have it dwell in our tabernacles. It will not dwell in those who are lustful.

This is the standard that God has raised for His people. He wants us to come up to this standard—to be pure as angels are pure. And why should not we be? If we are going