

had made to them. Where there were no manifestations of this power, Jesus attributed it to the want of faith. It is said that He did no mighty works in certain places because of the unbelief of the people. But at no time during His ministry did He say to the people or convey the idea that there was a limit to the bestowal of power or the communication of God's will to the children of men. On the contrary, He said that whosoever would do the works that He commanded he should know for himself concerning the doctrine; continually impressing upon them that there would be communication from the Father to those who sought to know concerning the doctrines that were taught. Everyone who reads the New Testament can perceive this. If it were not for tradition and for the fact that these blessings are not enjoyed to any extent at the present time, the reader of the New Testament would inevitably come to the conclusion, from the words of the Savior and His disciples, that those blessings, gifts, powers and communications were not intended for that time alone, but were to be bestowed upon the people of God in all ages, if they would live so as to receive them. Jesus never said that these gifts and blessings were intended for the people of that day, and for then alone.

In our day there is that same spirit of unbelief that there was formerly. Jesus reproached the Jews with garnishing the sepulchres of the Prophets whom their fathers had killed. They held the memory of the dead Prophets in great esteem; at least, they professed to do so. They said, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets." Yet Jesus Himself, the Son of God, walking in their midst and performing the mighty works which He did, was rejected by them, and finally crucified. In this manner they testified that they were the children of those who killed the Prophets, and that they were possessed with the same spirit. When one reads of the mighty works which were performed by the Lord, the wonder arises how it was possible for such a being to be rejected by them. The Book of Mormon gives an explanation of this. It says that no nation on the face of the earth but the Jews would have done to the Son of God that which was done to Him. They were so wicked, so hardened in their hearts, and so determined to reject God and His servants, that they were ready to crucify the Son of God Himself, and did crucify Him. Well, as I have said, there is a good deal of the same spirit in our day. Magnificent structures are reared to the memory of the men who once talked with God. There is not a city in Christendom where there are no temples reared bearing the names of the men who suffered martyrdom because they were the servants of God—St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. Andrew; and all those sainted personages were once despised, derided, persecuted, cast out, and finally killed. What was their crime? They professed to have received revelation from God, to be His servants, and to have received authority to act in His name; and because they did this, men sought to kill them. Not many generations had

passed away, however, when they became the honored among men. They were extolled and held up as examples. Sanctity was attributed them. Miraculous power was attributed to anything that had been in their possession. The places of their martyrdom were considered sacred. And anything that could be done has been done by different generations to show that if they had lived cotemporary with them they would not have persecuted them or slain them. It is so in this land of America. And yet one of the greatest crimes almost that a man can commit today, and one that will arouse the fiercest hatred, and stir up the most violent persecution, is to go into the cities of this land and say that God has called him to be His servant, and that he has authority from God to preach His Gospel and to administer the ordinances thereof, according to the ancient pattern. It would be incredible, if experience had not proved it to us, that such a testimony in these days would produce such results. A man who had received authority from God would naturally think that if he were to go into a church called after one of the martyred Apostles the people would be glad to hear him; that all he would have to do would be to say that he had received the same authority from God that St. Peter, or St. Paul, or St. John had, and the congregation and the pastor would invite him to tell them what he had to say. One would think that they would want to hear his message, because knowing well that men of God have been martyred, they would hesitate about rejecting a communication from such a source. But how different is the experience that Latter-day Saints have gained in this respect! Joseph Smith, a boy, untrained in the schools of divinity—such a one in some respects as were the ancient servants of God—came forward at a time when there was no voice heard from heaven and nobody knew anything about the mind and will of God; when confusion concerning doctrine prevailed, and professed ministers of Jesus Christ quarreled over important and essential points of doctrine, there being no man on the earth who had the authority to decide which was correct. In the midst of this confusion Joseph Smith appeared and said: "God has spoken to me from the heavens. He has revealed His mind and will. He has told me that all the churches have gone astray; that the Priesthood which was once on the earth had been withdrawn, and that He will restore it again to man, with the ancient gifts and blessings." Now, one would imagine that, there being such confusion in religious matters, and with the experience of the past, humble, unlettered men having been chosen by God so frequently as His messengers, men would say, "let us listen to this young man's words and see whether he is indeed what he professes to be." But how different was the procedure! No sooner did he make this announcement than he was hated and persecuted. He knew, he said, that God had spoken to him, and that angels had ministered to him. He knew it just as well as Paul knew that on his way to Damascus he had heard a voice from heaven. Until it was disproved, his testimony was as good Paul's, and

he was entitled to be listened to, at least. But the lessons of the past were lost upon them, and the ministers of religion did exactly what their predecessors had done among the Jews; for we all know that it was the religious element among the Jews—the men who observed most strictly the law of Moses, who were the teachers of the people, and who set themselves up as patterns of propriety—that persecuted the Son of God. Joseph Smith's sole crime consisted in saying that God had again spoken from the heavens, and that He had revealed His mind and will to man once more. He was an inoffensive person. He was not influential. He was not in a position to do any harm to anybody. But it is extraordinary now to look back and see the storm that was aroused by his declarations. He afterwards testified that he and Oliver Cowdery had received angelic ministrations, and had had the Priesthood conferred upon them—the authority by which God empowers His servants to administer holy ordinances.

Now, there are large numbers of people who call themselves ministers of Jesus Christ; but to be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ a man must have power and authority from Him to act in His name. When Peter said to the assembled multitude on the day of Pentecost, "repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of your sins," he made a promise unto them as to what the effect would be if they would obey his words. When they were baptized, there is not a doubt that their sins were remitted, because the man who made the promise spoke in the name of heaven, and heaven confirmed his words by remitting the sins of those who obeyed his words. The Holy Ghost was also bestowed upon them. It is a remarkable thing that notwithstanding the thousands of professed ministers throughout the land, there were none at the time of which I speak who could make this promise. The Lord told Joseph Smith that that authority had been withdrawn from the earth. The evidences of this were to be seen in the absence of power, of heavenly blessings and gifts, of union, and of all those great characteristics which accompanied the work of God in the days of Jesus and His Apostles. He testified that this authority had been restored and that he had received the administration of holy angels. Why should this testimony startle anybody? I know that at the time he made the declaration it was a most startling thing; for people were not familiar then, as they are somewhat now, with spiritual manifestations. Spiritualism had not been heard of. It required the true church to come before an imitation or a bogus was necessary to deceive the people. But it should not startle anybody that angels should come to restore that which was lost. How else could it be obtained, if there was no man on the earth who had the authority? There was consistency in the statement that Joseph Smith made. He said that John the Baptist came and ordained him and his companion. They both testified to this. Why was it necessary that John the Baptist should come? Because he had authority from God to baptize people in water for the remission of their sins. He held