

should ask counsel also. They are under the direction of the Twelve Apostles, who are their file leaders, under the First Presidency of the Church. And one man should not give counsel without consulting his fellow servants. I have no right, as one of the First Presidency of the Church, to counsel in matters concerning the Church without knowing the mind and will of my fellow servants, especially of President Woodruff. I do not want to give counsel to anyone, on any important matter, without Presidents Woodruff and Smith hearing it and getting their views concerning it. Otherwise I might be giving one kind of counsel; Brother Joseph F. Smith might be giving another kind of counsel; and when President Woodruff heard our counsel, he might not agree with either of us. Therefore, there should be union in this respect on the part of every officer in the Church. A counselor to a President of a Stake has no business to give counsel without he knows it is in accord with the mind of his fellow servants. The Twelve have no business to do it. They have no right to go here and there while they have access to their fellow servants and are operating in conjunction with them, and counsel on their own responsibility in the management of the affairs of the Church. You can see if care were not taken in this direction we should be divided and confusion would ensue. It is just as necessary that we should be united in giving counsel in regulating the affairs of the Church and of the Stakes of Zion as it is that we should be sound in teaching doctrine. I have no right to go into a Stake of Zion and give counsel and arrange affairs unless I know that that which I am doing is in strict accord with the feelings and the counsel of my fellow servants, nor has any man; and even then I must respect the authority that presides in that Stake. The business requiring counsel may be important, but it is not so important but that it can generally be deferred until the united counsel can be obtained. So it is in all the branches of the Church and in all the work of the ministry. There must be union. You remember the story of the Scythian king. Before he died he called his boys together. He handed them a bunch of arrows, and asked the oldest to break the bunch. He put it across his knees, and he tried and tried, but could not do it. He requested each of his boys to try, and they each failed to break the bunch. Then he commanded them to break the band that united the arrows. They did so. "Now try and break them," he said. Why, they broke them with the greatest ease separately. So it is with us. When we are not united we are easily broken; but when we are united we cannot be broken. When I am giving counsel that I know I am sustained in giving I feel strong. I would feel very weak if I were not in that condition, because I would be ashamed perhaps by having that counsel changed. Therefore, when men come for counsel, and have the idea that they can get better suited by coming to me, or to Brother Joseph F. Smith, I do not want them to think, if they come to me, that I am going to give them some counsel that may not be in accord with the counsel of the other brethren. None of us should do this, and no man should seek for counsel in that spirit. We should be united in giving counsel. Then the

affairs of the Church will roll on, and everything will move harmoniously; there will be peace and union in the councils of the authorities, and the Church will feel the influence of it. That spirit of union will run through the Church, and all will be benefited by the spirit that will be thus received and enjoyed.

My brethren and sisters, above all things, therefore, we should seek for this spirit of union and love. It should be sought for in our councils, and we should not contend. Now, suppose that I should take it into my head to say that a certain doctrine is true, and I contend for it, determined to have it so; does my contention make it true? Suppose that I should contend from now until the Savior came that it is true, would my contention make it true? Certainly not. I cannot change a principle of truth. Then why contend or dispute, or argue about it? A man contends about something that happened in the past, and he is determined to have it so. Another contends that it is not so; Well, what does this contention amount to? Does it change the truth? The thing has happened; can it be altered by contention? Not in the least. And so concerning events to come. Contention concerning them does not change them. There can be no change wrought in doctrine and in truth by our contention. But I will tell you where there is room for differences of opinion—in regard to the policy to be pursued. There ought to be no contention, however. God speaks against it. We have no right to be a disputing, contentious people. And whenever I dispute with my brother I am likely to grieve the spirit of the Lord and darken my own mind. Therefore, let us avoid contention, in our councils and in all our intercourse one with another. Of course, as I say, there is a chance for differences of views respecting policy. It often amuses me to hear some of our brethren say, "Well, he is a policy man"—as though there was something very bad about a man being a policy man. I think, however, I know what is meant by that term. Now, there is good policy and there is bad policy. I believe in good policy. I believe we ought to be a politic people—and when I say a politic people I mean a wise people, taking advantage of every circumstance that we can to obtain our rights and our liberties, and to get recognition in the earth, that our true worth may be known. The difficulty with us is, we are not known. If we were better known, we would be better thought of. It is a good thing to pursue a wise policy; not crouching, bending and yielding, but firm as a rock where the principles of truth are involved; ready to take hold of every proper advantage to be gained for the Zion of God, and make use of it for the promotion of righteousness and liberty and true freedom in the earth.

My brethren and sisters, let us stop our contentions, and not be stiff and set in urging our views. Of course, where there is wrong being done, we should be firm as a rock. Where men are teaching false doctrine we should not keep still and allow it to be taught in our hearing without protesting against it. But we need not fall into the spirit of contention and quarreling over that. We can use our influence, and tell what we think, and then if it is not received, let it go; we have done our duty; and not all the time be looking around to

see where we can find fault. Some men are continually prying into doctrine and trying to reveal mysteries, as President Woodruff referred to this morning about the Godhead and other things. They want to know a great many mysteries. Now, if we will do that which lies before us we will grow in knowledge, and God will give us revelation upon revelation, and nothing will be concealed from us.

I have felt to make these remarks this afternoon on this important topic. It is of the utmost importance that we should be united. Whenever you see men attacking the work of God and the servants of God, you may know that the adversary is at work. He has reasons for being at work. And his weapons have always been lies and misrepresentations. It is in this way that he has brought about his wicked designs from time to time. If he could make this people believe that the First Presidency were deceivers and were ready to take advantage of them, it would please him very much. If he could make the people believe that the Twelve were dishonest and could not be relied upon, and were looking for self interest, it would greatly please him. It is on this account that he fills the whole world, so to speak, with lies concerning us. He will go on doing it until he is bound. He will be bound, and then he will not have power to deceive the nations as he has had up to the present time.

Speaking about men like the Prophet having views superior to other men, the same thing may be said about this people. Our ways are ahead of those of the world. They cannot comprehend our views. We take views of things which seem utterly strange to them. On the question of virtue alone, the majority of people cannot agree with us in insisting that men should be strictly virtuous, and they do not understand why we should think that such severe penalties should be attached to the punishment of adultery, fornication and kindred sins. They cannot understand this. And so it is in many things. We are trying to live up to a higher law, and to lift the world to our plane, and we are being lifted higher all the time ourselves, through the Spirit of God and the revelations of God. It is a great work, however, to uplift a people like we are from our old traditions and habits and our old ways of thinking, especially when we are surrounded by such elements as we are. The influence of their example combined with our inherited traditions are powerful to contend against. Many of our young fail because of this. It is a great trial for this people to be exposed to such things. I am thankful they are doing as well as they are. Yet I mourn when I hear of transgression and sin; especially among the rising generation. I would like to see our sons and daughters grow up very pure, very perfect, and be an example to the world. I am happy to think that there are a great many in this condition—pure in heart, and striving to the extent of their ability to uplift themselves and to help lift their brethren and sisters on to a higher plane. We shall lift the world up by degrees. The influence of our teachings has already done this to a great extent. I have been away a good deal lately, mingling with other people and I am surprised, although I have been expecting it, at the effect our influence is having upon the people. I am surprised at the manner in which they look to us, and quote us.