

the first resurrection? If it is a narrow and bigoted religion, supposed to consign those who do not accept its teachings now to endless misery and woe, what is the meaning of these temples erected to the name of the Most High God? What means this work in those sacred structures, not alone for the living, but for the dead? What means the binding together of all the generations of men in the family associations? Why, it means that there is a deeper understanding with the Saints of the term "the everlasting Gospel," than that entertained by the world. It means that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is as eternal as He himself is; that the everlasting Gospel walks beside the race of God's children, that its precepts and ordinances by the wisdom of God will forever be made available unto His children, and that the actions of men in this finite state will not meet with infinite, never ending misery and woe; but when the sons and daughters of God, with humble spirit and repentant heart, shall stretch out their hand towards God the Father they shall find that His hand has always been outstretched to them, and that it was only waiting until the heart could be broken, until the spirit could become penitent, until obedience could be yielded to the everlasting Gospel, to grasp theirs and lead them from darkness to light. This is what Mormonism teaches; is there anything narrow and contracted in such a religion?

I observe in one of the declarations of the Presbytery held at Spanish Fork, that they set it forth—and I speak of it because they undertake to justify their assertion by reference to a publication of mine—that those who do not accept the person and the mission of Joseph Smith are heretics and are to become sons of perdition.

It is scarcely necessary in this congregation for me to say that Mormonism does not teach any such doctrine as that. I am sure that I have never taught it. Indeed, I am rather of the opinion that men cannot be sons of perdition until they do receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ, until they themselves hold part of God's authority in the Holy Priesthood, and that having come to the light and to the possession of this power they then do violence to it by becoming traitors to God, and by denying the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by altogether turning away from the Gospel. I am of the opinion that no man can become subject to the same condemnation that rests upon Lucifer until they commit the same sin that Lucifer committed; then, and then only, can like condemnation fall upon them, and that cannot be until they have tasted the good word of God and partaken of His power. Therefore, our friends are mistaken when they say that we teach that those who do not accept the testimony of Joseph Smith and the work that he was the instrument of establishing, become sons of perdition.

But I am not here to say smooth things, even to please our friends, and would tell them all frankly that by rejecting this message, by closing their hearts against it, they come under great condemnation, because as in the days of the Savior, light has come into the world, and because men turn away from the light, therefore condemnation rests upon them. But our religion teaches us that in the great future men shall be raised from the dead, and judgment

shall be passed upon them; that they shall be judged in that justice and mercy that is resident in the breast of God the Father; that to every son, and to every daughter there shall be awarded that degree of glory and of exaltation to which their faith, and devotion and worthiness entitle them, and which their intelligence can comprehend and enjoy; and that as the stars in Heaven differ one from another in degree of brightness, so in the world to come shall differ in degree of exaltation, and greatness, and development and progress, the reward and blessing that shall be afforded to the children of men.

If there is any taint or stain of bigotry, injustice or narrowness connected with these doctrines, for the life of me I cannot comprehend where it comes in. But let me scan the theology, the teachings of Protestant and Catholic alike, and enquire of them, what becomes of those whom you have not converted to the Christian religion? After nineteen centuries of favorable opportunity to spread abroad in the world a knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, you have not yet reached, even up to this year of grace 1896, more than about one-fourth of the inhabitants of the earth. What of those millions outside the pale of your churches? And what of those who have perished without the Gospel through all the centuries of the Christian era? What of all the untold millions of the inhabitants of America, who, like the leaves upon the trees in the forests, have fallen silently, unknown by you, unreached by your missionaries? Is there anything in your teaching, is there anything in your conception of the plan of salvation that reaches out to these untold millions of God's children the hand that has power to save? What is your answer? Come! on this question of narrowness and of being bigoted, where is your breadth? Nay, we may ask you, what is your teaching and your doctrine in respect to innocent infancy that passes away by the million without the sacrament of your baptism? Are you in any position to talk of bigotry and of narrowness when you speak of other religions?

I do not dwell upon these themes with any degree of anger or unpleasantness. But I would wish that our friends not of our faith could understand the glory, could understand the height, the depth and the profoundness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. I wish they could be led to comprehend what the future of man is as that Gospel teaches it. It seems to me that then the finger would be placed upon the lip that characterize the doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ as believed in by the Latter-day Saints as a narrow, contracted religion.

But, my brethren and sisters, let me say this: If our friends come to the conclusion that they cannot fellowship us as Christians; if we cannot say to them that they have the fullness of the Gospel and divine authority to proclaim it and administer its ordinances; if we must mutually "unchurch" each other in this way, let us do so at least in Christian charity on our part, and with no malice towards anyone; and if we cannot meet, as perhaps in strict logic we cannot—though perchance we would go farther than they would in making concessions, in this, that we acknowledge that they hold many precious truths within their creeds and their doctrines. When the Gospel was taken

from the earth and divine authority removed from among men, God was gracious enough to leave behind in the world the written word which, though fragmentary, yet contains precious gems of truth; and that so far as Christian sects embraced those truths—nay, and for that matter, so far as so called heathen religions embraced the same truths—so much is good that they have. You know after the sun sets there is still a twilight left in the heavens; and after the twilight passes away in a sea of glory, and the sable mantle of night overspreads the sky, God has permitted the stars to shine through, to break away absolute darkness, that in this light men may walk with some degree of safety. And so when the Gospel of Jesus Christ was taken from the earth, fragments of it were left to reflect some of its glow, some of its truth, and our Father, in His kindness and goodness, did not leave the inhabitants of the earth to total darkness. Some mighty spirits He has raised up also, in His providence, to seize these great fragments of Christian truth and hold them up as beacon lights unto the people, to keep them partly in the way until the sun in the fullness of the everlasting Gospel should again shed its golden light over all the earth. He did this for the children of men; and our Christian friends that have taken these truths and treasured them up in their hearts are to be congratulated, and for their fidelity to these fragments of truth how great is our admiration! But, as I was going to remark, if we cannot in strict logic, recognize our Christian friends as possessing the fullness of truth, let us never forget that there is something we can do: we can recognize in each other fellow citizens of the same commonwealth, children of the self-same God, all heirs to salvation, all entitled to the same political rights and liberties. We can be kind neighbors; we can all be good citizens. And it on doctrinal points we cannot altogether come to see eye to eye, we can become united in upholding a high standard of morality in the community, and can protect each other in the enjoyment of all our rights and liberties as citizens of the same commonwealth. Now that our Utah is clothed fully in the robes of her sovereignty, I hope, for one, to see her become a model commonwealth in the great American Union; acknowledging and preserving to all the people, irrespective of religious creeds and differences of opinion, the liberties and immunities that belong to American citizens. Here in this land I hope to see realized the dream of one of our early poets, who, in one of our hymns, has said:

Come, ye Christian sects, and pagan,  
Pope and Protestant and priest;  
Worshippers of God or Dagon,  
Come ye to fair freedom's feast.

Come, ye sons of doubt and wonder,  
Indian, Moslem, Greek or Jew;  
All your shackles burst asunder;  
Freedom's banner waves for you.

I do hope, I say, to see that spirit pervade the hearts of the people of this commonwealth. I do hope to see all fear dismissed from the hearts of the Latter-day Saints first of all, that there will be any interference with their rights and their liberties as American citizens. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, beginning with bringing us liberty, is never intended to end in bondage; and the Latter-day Saints may now take it for