

They are hated by those who are under his influence. They would have destroyed this Church long ago if it had not been for the promises of God concerning it. I do not believe that the men bearing the Priesthood could have escaped the snares and plots of the evil one if it had not been for the promise that God has made concerning this dispensation, that it should not be given into the hands of another people, and that Satan should not prevail over it. Had it not been for this, I say, the bearers of the Priesthood in this day would have been destroyed as their predecessors were in ancient days. But God has made this promise; and notwithstanding the hatred, notwithstanding the blood that has been and may yet be shed, the work will roll forth and will accomplish the end that the Father has in view. At the same time you can see why Satan should be angry. He has had undisputed sway, it may be said, in the earth until of late years. Now when he sees his work being undone; when he sees the spread of truth, the increase of righteousness, is it any wonder that he hates it and all people who are seeking to practice righteousness? Is it any wonder that he seeks to decoy and lead astray our children? No, it is not. That is part of his plan. If he can be successful in this, then he will triumph.

But the duty and the mission is entrusted to us to seek to make a better condition. And it will have to be done by the influence of the Priesthood. We cannot get away from that. Now, I do not mean by this that the Church will interfere with the State. That is the constant cry, you know, that is being raised to frighten us and to make us afraid to do things, lest we shall be open to the charge of interfering with the State. It is a stale cry. There is nothing in it, and it should not intimidate a people like the Latter-day Saints. We have not interfered with the State. We have built the State. The influence of the Priesthood in the Church of Christ has made this country what it is. It has transformed it from a desert into its present fruitfulness. Do you think that if the men who bear the Priesthood could have their way they would oppress anybody in this country? They would not. It is a truth that we may as well recognize, that because a man bears the Priesthood it does not necessarily follow that he must abstain from all participation in state affairs. This would be a terrible condition for this people, because every reputable man in our Church is a bearer of the Priesthood; and if this rule were to operate, it would exclude the entire Mormon male population from all participation in the affairs of the State. But, we have endeavored to concede everything that we could to meet these attacks; we have done everything in our power, without sacrificing our rights and liberties. At the same time there is no reason why a man that bears the Priesthood should not act in any capacity in the State. His bearing the Priesthood should not preclude him in the least degree from that. He can be as true to the State and to all its obligations as if he were a private citizen. One does not interfere with the other.

We have been taught from the beginning this important principle, that the Church of God is distinct from the kingdom of God. Joseph gave us the pattern before he died. He gave his brethren an example that has not been for-

gotten up to this day. He impressed it upon them, that men, not members of the Church, could be members of the kingdom that the Lord will set up when He reigns. He picked out the youngest among them, and told them to be sure and remember this. In the minds of all of us who understand this matter there is a clear distinction between the Church in its ecclesiastical capacity and that which may be termed the government of God in its political capacity. No people are less open to the charge of mingling the two and seeking to destroy the distinctions between church and state than the Latter-day Saints, and especially the leading men of this Church; and any attempt on the part of anyone to say that we have any such designs, is the attack of an enemy and is untrue. But no matter how scrupulously we walk, or how many declarations we may make of our intentions, or how many pledges we give, there is a class of men, and probably will be for years, who are always ready to misinterpret and to make false charges against us concerning these things. And many of our own people have been as much to blame for this as those not of us; they have drunk into the same spirit, and they have yielded to the influence of it, thus strengthening the hands of those who have attacked us from this standpoint. Many of our people have helped them, and yet they have called themselves Latter-day Saints! They have been untrue to the people, untrue to their fellowship, and to the covenants which we make with one another. We have never made a covenant that will not bear exposure, that we would not be willing that the whole world should know. We have made no secret covenants and oaths to prevent us from loving mankind and treating them as our brothers and sisters. But we do covenant to love one another and to love the Lord; we do covenant to build up righteousness in the earth, to be the children of God, the servants of Jesus Christ. We make covenants of that kind when we go into the waters of baptism. But men have broken those covenants, and unwittingly, perhaps, in many instances, they have injured the work of God. Therefore, I say that they must repent, no matter who they are, and turn away from these things, or the Lord will withdraw His Spirit from them, as well as His gifts and blessings. We may as well understand this first as last. I cannot lift my hand against this people and be prospered in it, nor can any other man. No man can join with the enemies of this people and hope to succeed; for God will desert him, no matter how high his standing may be, and all who follow in his footsteps will find themselves dreadfully deceived. We may as well warn you of this, and tell you the truth, whatever may be said about it. We do not want any of your blood clinging to our garments. We do not want to stand in the positions we do and hold our peace and see the people misled and going astray. God has placed us as shepherds over His flock, and if we do not look out for the flock He will smite us and remove us. We are placed as watchmen upon the walls of Zion, and if we do not give warning when we see danger, then we are culpable and will be condemned of God. Now, if you want to know why we talk this way, understand that this is the reason: We are responsible to the Lord for you, and we cannot shirk that responsibility. Our opponents may be

offended at these remarks, and misquote them; but that does not make a particle of difference. Must we stand and let the people go astray, and not lift up our voices in warning? Why, we might as well die today and be done with it, and let somebody else come and take our places and do the work. What is the use of our being in this position unless we are men and have the willingness to declare the whole counsel of God as it comes to us?

I have been delighted at seeing the gathering of the people at this conference and the spirit of union that prevails. My brethren and sisters, let us seek more and more for this spirit. If you are in doubt concerning anything, go to the Lord. Oh! if the people would only go to the Lord, how easy it would be to govern them. Go to the Lord, humble yourselves before Him, and ask Him, in the name of Jesus, to give His Holy Spirit to you. We pray constantly that it may be poured out upon you; that your hearts may be softened, and that the scales of darkness may fall from all our eyes—priest and people; for we are all blind to a certain extent; but we want to see and understand the purposes of God and that which He is striving to accomplish in the earth. He is building a place of refuge in these mountains. He wants us to be a united people, and to make this a place of refuge, so that the eyes of mankind will turn to these mountains, that they may say: "Why, there I see a people living at peace and in harmony, undivided, loving one another, and seeking the welfare of their fellow men." This is the object for which we gathered. When you divide and split up, and join factions, and seek to destroy the influence of the Priesthood of God, you defeat, so far as your action is concerned, the design of God. God wants us to be a united people. I do not mean by this that we must all vote one ticket. But we can vote without quarreling and getting into a bad spirit. We should love the Lord, and be willing to be guided by Him, and we should listen to the voice of the Lord. What a power then the people would be! The Lord would come in a very little while; for the earth would be prepared for His coming. This is what we want; not for Latter-day Saints alone, but for this whole nation, which God loves, and which He established and made a free nation—the best, the strongest, and the most liberty-loving nation upon the face of the earth. And we love it because God has founded it. He raised up men to found it, and He gave it those forms of liberty which permitted this Church to be organized. This Church could not have been organized in any other land, or under any other form of government. Therefore, we love this land, we love this government, and we love the Constitution and the institutions of the land. We believe in the Constitution more than any other people, because we know it has been inspired of the Lord. Let not our people, therefore, divide, or go hither and thither after every will-o'-the-wisp there is in the land. The Lord wants us to be united, and wants the influence of this Church to be increased by the union of the people. He wants the influence of the Priesthood of the Son of God elevated and strengthened in these mountains and among the nations. I tell it in great plainness, for it is the truth of heaven. And the possibilities that will