

Jesus has laid down the doctrine that we are not to return wrong for wrong, nor do evil for evil; and furthermore, we are not merely to do good for good. Even the publican and the sinners do that. Of course, this is good as far as it goes, and it is the prevalent idea in the world. If a man does good to me I will do good to him; if he befriend me, I will befriend him. Still, though he does good to me, yet I am very careful to watch his motives, and to see that not only does he not get the advantage of me, but it is possible that I might get advantage of him. What is there in the prevailing principles of the world to prevent a man from doing this? Why, not only do the publican and sinner so, but the Saints do so—at least some who profess to be Saints. Though we have had faith, though we have repented of our sins, (at least, in name) though we have been baptized for the remission of our sins, and have had hands laid upon us for the gift of the Holy Ghost, I am sorry to say that many of us do not appear to have progressed but little farther than that. We have not grown a great deal above the fathers. We have not even advanced very much from the condition they were in before they knew anything about this Gospel and Priesthood. Even now, with the gift of the Holy Ghost in our possession, with the right and privilege of revelation from God, with all the increased light within our reach, with all the plainness of instruction and counsel that has been and is continually being given to us, we still are traveling in the ruts of the fathers to a very great extent, and we are not making the progress that men and women ought to make who profess to have received a remission of their sins by the interposition of the power of God, and the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Why, bless your soul, I have been listening to things within the last twenty-four hours that have fairly made my hair stand on ends—and it was told in the utmost sincerity and candor. We hear talk about some men once professing to be Latter-day Saints, engaging in stealing their neighbor's cattle, stealing their neighbor's wagons, stealing their neighbor's harness, and, for aught I know, stealing their neighbor's chickens. Chicken thieves, cattle thieves, harness thieves, thieves of every description, so to speak, dwelling in the community, shielded and protected by kindred and friends! And yet they live, and move, and have their being as free and as independent as their honest neighbor. Is it possible that such a condition as this can exist in a community like this? A community of Elders, Priests and Teachers, High Priests and Seventies? Can such a thing be and the people sit down and fold their arms, saying "a little more sleep and a little more slumber?" If I lived in a community where I had any influence or power, and was convinced that thieves and robbers and bandits existed there, I would not sleep good until I had put on foot an organization of honorable and honest men who would ferret out the thieves and prosecute them to the bitter end, and put a stop to such a condition of things if it exists. The good men and women in a community that will quietly settle down by their residences, knowing that the people were being plundered by thieves, and do nothing to uproot the evil from the land, are in part guilty with the thieves. They should not cease a moment until every thief was hunted out and his true

character brought into the light of day, to be seen of all men, or until he should be punished according to the law of his offense, that sin and iniquity shall be put a stop to in this region. The man who shields the guilty one, because he is his neighbor or his brother, from just punishment under the law is carrying the doctrine of love for his neighbor too far. Did you ever hear of Jesus asking men to shield the wicked in their wickedness, to shield even their brother and nurture him in the continuance of sin? Did Christ ever promulgate such a doctrine as this? No, He did not. The doctrine that was taught by Christ was that the evil-doer must repent of his evil doings, he must turn away from his wickedness. The man that shields the wrong-doer, or that sympathizes with his wrong-doing, is guilty of wrong himself. God does not look upon sin with any degree of allowance. He does not tolerate sin in him that knows to do better. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Where light is and men prefer darkness rather than light, they are under condemnation. Christ said, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." No man should protect his brother in sin. No man should protect his son in sin. No man should justify the evils that are committed by men because the men happen to be their neighbors or near of kin. It is an evidence of weakness to do this, and it is wrong. The man that condones evil, and protects him who is doing evil, is as guilty in the eyes of God as the man who commits the evil. I have heard that there exists here an organization of lawless men, who are committing depredations and robbing the honest. I give it to you one and all, and especially to those who hold prominent positions here, and if you have just grounds for the suspicion that such a condition of things does exist in this community, it becomes your duty to bring to bear every influence that you can and to combine every power that you can to put an end to that condition and stop such iniquity. Let the guilty be brought to judgment and suffer the consequences of their own conduct. Teach all the people that men cannot rob with impunity, that men can not steal their neighbor's goods and escape justice; that the eye of vigilance is upon them, and they will be hunted out and punished according to law. Let this be understood here, and you will stop this evil, if it really exists, and you will start men's thoughts in a better direction; for even a thief has a soul to save. He has started out in the wrong direction, and if he can be convinced that he is in error and that he is doing wrong, perhaps he will amend and start out in the right road.

I feel very earnestly about this. My reputation is at stake. I stand as one of the watchmen upon the towers of Zion. Men look to me, to my associates, to my nie leaders in the Church of God, and we are in reproach if sin flourishes in the midst of the people and we raise not our voice against it. Therefore, I say that my reputation is at stake, because I am identified with this people. My interest is theirs, and their interest is mine; and there is not in which will be good for you that it is not my duty to enhance and develop as far as I can. I am not in a position to be indifferent in relation to these things. I must be active and

energetic; I must put my talents to use; I must not wrap them in a napkin and bury them in the earth, but I must do the utmost within my power to help the people to grow and develop in righteousness, purity, virtue, honor and integrity to God, that we may be indeed aud of a truth the saints of the Most High.

Now, have any of you ought against me? Have I done or said anything to hurt you? If I have, I want to say it has been unintentional. I never in my life intentionally hurt the feelings of any individual. I never intended in my heart to injure any man or any community. On the contrary, I have felt deep and earnest solicitude for the welfare of the people; and I have sought, according to the wisdom and counsel manifest to me through my file leaders and the understanding that I possessed, to do the very best for the good of all the people. This is my desire still. The ambition of my life is to do something that will benefit this people, that will strengthen them in the midst of weakness and help them to grow stronger and better. Therefore, if I have said anything in times past that has hurt anybody's feelings, I ask their forgiveness. If I knew there were any who had feelings against me, I would go to them most gladly, and not rest until I visited them and learned wherein I had wronged them. If it can be made to appear that I have actually done something to injure my brother, I will not ask him to come and meet me half way to settle the difficulty. —I will go the whole distance myself and do everything in my power to make it right with him. My mission is not to injure, not to do wrong; it is to do good. And although I fail, and fail largely, to come up to the standard of my Savior and of following in his footsteps, yet I have advanced far enough to humble myself and confess my wrong when I am guilty of wrong. I can do that if I keep the right spirit; and I will do it. I will confess my sins, I will acknowledge my weaknesses and my imperfections, and I will humbly ask my brethren and sisters to forgive me and bear with my imperfections. If you can see wherein I err or lack wisdom and judgment, come to me as a brother; take pains to come, because I think I am worth saving. Then all ye that have been injured by me, all ye whom I have wronged, if there are any such, let me know wherein I have wronged you, and I will do all in my power to make it right with you. I have no malice in my heart toward my brethren; I have only love, charity and an earnest desire to do good. I am called to do good. Therefore, I hope that you will help me to fulfill my calling, and I will help you to fulfill yours.

Now, if there is anybody here who knows of the existence in this community of a thief, I say to you as a community of intelligent men and women and as a true Christian society, put your eye upon that man, and save him from his sins if you can; but if he will not be reclaimed, if he will not repent, then I ask of you, in the name of good government, in the name of the Lord, to put that man to the test of evidence in the courts and let the law deal with him. But stop this stealing; do not suffer it to continue, or your own sons and daughters will be led into it and your families be ruined by it. Your daughters will marry thieves, and your sons will become thieves. Therefore, I call upon you now to combine your energy and wisdom and stop all this if you can—and I know you can. A