

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED IN THE BEGINNING, AND HOW THEY DRIFTED INTO ERROR.

In June 1829, the translation of the Book of Mormon was finished. God gave it to us as his Holy Word, and left us as men to work out our own salvation and set in order the Church of Christ according to the written word. He left us as men to receive of His Spirit as we walked worthy to receive it; and His Spirit guides men into all truth; but the spirit of man guides man into error. When God had given us the Book of Mormon, and a few revelations in 1829 by the same means that the Book was translated, commanding us to rely upon the written word in establishing the church, He did His part; and left us to do our part and to be guided by the Holy Ghost as we walked worthy to receive. God works with men according to His divine wisdom and justice. He works with men only according to their faith and obedience. He has unchangeable spiritual laws which He cannot break; and He could not be so merciful as to give more of His Spirit to any man, than that man was worthy to receive by his faith and obedience.

In the beginning we walked humble and worthy to receive a great portion of the Spirit of God, and we were guided rightly at first in establishing the Church, but we soon began to drift into errors, because we heeded our own desires too much, instead of relying solely upon God and being led entirely by His Holy Spirit. How easy it is for a man to drift into errors, and think at the time that he is doing God's will. Brethren, few of us know how wily and cunning Satan works, and how easy a man can be deceived and led into errors. Satan works in many ways to lead the spiritual man into error step by step. I will state a few facts concerning some of Brother Joseph's errors in the beginning, also the errors of us all, in order to show you these most important truths, viz: How humble and contrite in heart a man must be to receive revelations from God: and how very weak man is, and how liable to be led into error, thinking at the time that he is doing God's will.

At times when Brother Joseph would attempt to translate, he would look into the hat in which the stone was placed, he found he was spiritually blind and could not translate. He told us that his mind dwelt too much on earthly things, and various causes would make him incapable of proceeding with the translation. When in this condition he would go out and pray, and when he became sufficiently humble before God, he could then proceed with the translation. Now we see how very strict the Lord is; and how he requires the heart of man to be just right in His sight, before he can receive revelation from him.

When the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, more money was needed to finish the printing of it. We were waiting on Martin Harris who was doing his best to sell a part of his farm, in order to raise the necessary funds. After a time Hyrum Smith and others began to get impatient, thinking that Martin Harris was too slow and under transgression for not selling his land at once, even if at a great sacrifice. Brother Hyrum thought they should not wait any longer on Martin Harris, and that the money should be raised in some other way. Brother