

from the beginning, as the Lord does. They have their faith tested as you have your faith tested. So with the Twelve Apostles. All that we can do is to seek the mind and will of God, and when that comes to us, though it may come in contact with every feeling that we have previously entertained, we have no option but to take the step that God points out, and to trust to Him, as we were often told by President Young, for the results. That is the way this Church is led. There is no being, save the Lord himself, who knows the end from the beginning. Who of us would be tested if we were in that condition? It is just as necessary that the Presidency and the Apostles should be tried as it is that you should be tried. It is as necessary that our faith should be called into exercise as that your faith should be called into exercise. We can see a certain distance in the light of the Spirit of God as it reveals to us His mind and His will, and we can take these steps with perfect security, knowing that they are the right steps to be taken. But as to what the result will be, that is for the God of Israel to control. That is the way in which the Church of God has always been led, and it will always be led in that way until He comes who is our King, our Lawgiver and our President, even Jesus Christ.

It is your privilege, my brethren and sisters, in all these matters, to know also whether the steps that you take are acceptable unto God; and when you receive this testimony you will know for yourselves; you will know it all over. Though your mortal eyes and your mortal ears may neither have seen nor heard, you will know it by the testimony that comes from God. The convincing power of the Spirit of God is greater than the evidence of the outer senses.

God is with His people, and He will continue to be with them; and if we will do that which He tells us, He will never desert us, nor turn His face from us; He will never close His ears to our cries, but He will be quick to hear our supplications and to respond to them in blessings upon us.

If there are any who have joined this Church with the expectation of having ease, worldly profit and advantage from their espousal of the Gospel, probably they will learn, if they have not already, that this is a wrong motive, and that they have been mistaken in their ideas. Yet I want to say to the Latter-day Saints that I do not believe there is another people upon the face of the earth who are blessed as we are, notwithstanding our trials. I believe—and I do not say this with any disposition to exaggerate—that a happier or a more prosperous people does not live upon the earth than the Latter-day Saints. For God has blessed us in the midst of our trials and has given us prosperity. You look at those who have been faithful and compare the results of their lives with the results of the lives of those who have left the Church, and I am sure that in making the com-

parison you will be perfectly satisfied that the course of the former class has been the most profitable in every sense of the word. So it will be to the end, notwithstanding our afflictions, our imprisonments, and everything of this character. I said on one occasion, and probably more than once, to the brethren who were in the penitentiary, that I was willing to prophesy that they would be more blessed and prospered in that which they put their hands to do than if they had not gone there; and I am sure it will be so. God does not forget the sacrifices of His people, and I am thankful this day for the integrity of the Latter-day Saints. When I think of the hundreds who have gone to prison willingly, so that the world might know that they were conscientious and not cowards or covenant-breakers, I thank God that I live among a people who can do such things as these without shaking of the knees or of the arms, and without being afraid to face all the consequences of that which they have done. I am thankful for it, not only because we are Latter-day Saints, but because we belong to humanity. It is a glorious thing, however mistaken men may be in the estimation of others, to see them valorous and courageous and not afraid to meet all the consequences of their conduct. When my children do wrong, I say to them, "Tell me of it; show me that you have courage, and that you are not afraid to meet the consequences of what you have done." When they do this and are ready to receive whatever the punishment may be, should I be disposed to inflict any, I feel like embracing them. There is that in us which makes us admire courage, even if it be in a mistaken cause. So it is with the Latter-day Saints. However much the world may think we have been mistaken in our views, the time will come when the conduct of the Latter-day Saints during the last five years will stand out as the brightest page in the history of humanity,—in modern times, at least,—and men will dwell upon it and say that such exhibitions of courage and integrity are a credit to our race. I am looking for that—I believe most firmly it will come.—We have given the best evidence of our sincerity that it is possible for men and women to give, and whether the world accepts these testimonies and evidences or not, we are sure that God and angels will accept them, and that they will be recorded in our favor.

It may be necessary for us to do other things that come in contact with our feelings. But I believe that this people are capable of any sacrifice that they shall be called upon to make; and they can bow in submission, when it is necessary and right, as easily as they can stand erect and resist that which they esteem to be wrong. We will show mankind—we have shown them, and we will show them more abundantly—that the Latter-day Saints are a people of truth, a people of integrity, a people who are loyal to God, loyal to the country of which

they are citizens or of which they ought to be citizens, loyal to the institutions which God has permitted, in His providence, to be established, and loyal in all the relations of life; a people strong in fidelity, and, above all things, pure and virtuous. I tell you I would lose all hope myself for humanity if it were not for our people. It has been my lot to travel and mingle with men, and, without prying into affairs, things have come to my knowledge that have filled me with—well, I cannot describe the feelings that I have had. When I see the course that men and women are taking outside of this Church, and witness the fate that is coming upon the people, I feel thankful to God that He has established this Church, and that the standard of purity is raised among the Latter-day Saints, and that all impurity is denounced and dealt with; that there is a people upon the face of the earth who say that the virtue of men and the virtue of women ought to be equal to the angels'. If you were to see the faces of men as I have seen them when they have been told that we look upon the sin of adultery as the greatest crime next to the shedding of blood, it would be a picture to you; for I tell you that virtue among men is almost unknown outside of this Church; and, of course, when men's virtue has fallen so low, you can depend upon it the virtue of the other sex is not beyond question. The testimony that we bear is that the Latter-day Saint who indulges in sexual sin will be damned, if he do not repent. There has been no greater cause of apostacy in this Church than the want of virtue. You can predict the future of a man who is guilty of sins of this kind, unless he repents, as sure as you can predict that darkness will follow the setting of the sun. God will have a virtuous people, and those of you who are not virtuous will go the way that others have gone, unless you repent; you will lose the faith; for the Spirit of God will not dwell in an unholy tabernacle. The man or the woman that is unvirtuous cannot retain the Spirit of God. They may be members of the Church today, in full fellowship, unsuspected by their fellows; but if they do not repent, their wickedness will produce its fruits and the result which God has said would attend it. Think of what the word of God is. In two revelations that He has given to the Church, He has said that "he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall deny the faith. . . . unless he repents." He that "looketh" upon a woman, remember—not lay his hands upon her—but "he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall deny the faith." Therefore, we must not only be pure in deed, but be pure in thought, in order to retain the Spirit of God and to have it dwell in our tabernacles. It will not dwell in those who are lustful.

This is the standard that God has raised for His people. He wants us to come up to this standard—to be pure as angels are pure. And why should not we be? If we are going

to dwell with God and Christ and with the holy angels, why should not we emulate on the earth the purity that they possess; which makes heaven the best abode that it is? I am thankful that this standard has been raised among us. It gives hope for the future of humanity. Otherwise, the fate of this generation is sure. They are going the downward road, and nothing can save them except thorough repentance. The Elders wonder why it is that they do not gather out more from the nations of the earth than they did formerly. The reason is obvious. The people are corrupt. They are full of lust and abominable evils. Abortion and feticide and kindred sins are practiced almost universally. An intelligent man with whom I was traveling a few weeks ago told me that when he re-visited his home in Massachusetts about twelve years ago, to see his mother, he went to the school houses where he had gone to school in his boyhood. In the first school that he visited, out of all the scholars that were there he found only four who were of native American families, and two of them were colored boys. The rest of the children were all of foreign extraction. In the other school that he visited there were ten out of the entire school that were of native American families. He went back to his mother's house, and there was a lot of old maids there. He said to them: "The Yankees are dying out. You women are not having children; you are old maids; and those who are married do not have children. What is to become of us?" That was his comment. And you can mingle among the better class of this nation—I mean those who are in good circumstances, and of old American families—and you will find that very few of the young men marry. Luxury prevails to such an extent that they think they cannot marry. They do not want to marry and take their wives into a lower condition than they have occupied in their parents' houses; and as young men they have the entree to society, and they go wherever they please and are welcome; therefore, they do not marry. The result is, the best blood in America is not being perpetuated. The old families are not being kept up, and their places are being filled with foreigners. When they do marry, they do not have children; or, if they do, they have only one or two. What will God do with a people of this kind? He will let them be blotted out, if they do not repent. They will bring upon themselves, by their sins, the very condemnation that God has said would follow, because they destroy the life that God gives to them, and they do not perpetuate their race. The result is, an inferior class of people is growing up, because the foreigners, when they come here, are not contaminated with that dreadful sin—the murder of the innocents, the murder of unborn children, as well as those that are born—and they are not likely to be for one generation, at least. These are sad truths, but they are true nevertheless.

I have been told, though it seems incredible to me, that among those who call themselves Latter-day Saints the same evils are growing up. I tell you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that any woman who commits this horrible sin will be damned, just as sure as God lives; and any husband who will suffer his wife to take means to prevent the natural increase of the race as God has designed it, that man will be cursed of God. I want to lift my voice against these dreadful evils that exist in the world; and if they are coming into our midst, I say to you, Woe unto those who practice them; for they will stand before the bar of God as murderers, and they will be damned. Hear it, all ye people! This is the curse that is coming upon our race today upon this continent, especially through the Northern States. It is not so in the South. It will creep in there, however, after awhile, if care be not taken. But the Southern people have not yielded to this crime to the extent that those have in the North.

God has chosen us to institute a new condition of things on the earth, to arrest the tide of evil. He has selected men and women from the world who have the courage to carry out whatever He tells them. And we have tried to do it. But the nation has interposed and said, "Stop," and we shall bow in submission, leaving the consequences with God. We shall do the best we can; but when it comes in contact with constituted authorities, and the highest tribunals in the land say "Stop," there is no other course for Latter-day Saints, in accordance with the revelations that God has given to us telling us to respect constituted authority, than to bow in submission thereto and leave the consequences with the Lord. Nevertheless, we can stand as a living protest against the evils of the age, and cry out against them, and by our lives proclaim that we are determined, with the help of God, to do all in our power to redeem the race, if it be possible to do so. God has chosen us expressly for this mission. It required people of courage, of integrity and of virtue, and I believe the great bulk of the Latter-day Saints are a people of this character. Because of this virtue they were prepared to receive the truth when it was proclaimed to them. They were not corrupted, and the Spirit of God had an abiding place in them. It is a remarkable fact that those who are unvirtuous very rarely join the Church. They seem to have become corrupted so that the Spirit of God has left them, and they have lost the strength necessary to enable them to endure.

Brethren and sisters, let us remember the mission that God has given unto us, and let us put our trust in Him. He has been our savior and our deliverer out of the many trials that we have had to pass through. Notwithstanding we have gone through considerable during the past six years, when I look at the condition of the people as I travel through the settlements,

I feel to thank God for the prosperity that he has given to us. I go into the houses of the brethren in our settlements, and I see great comfort. I contrast it with the times of old, when we had scarcely any food, no habitations and very little clothing, and I thank God that the trials we now have to contend with have assumed a new form, and that God, in his providence, has permitted us to dwell in the land to which He has led us. I trust he will continue to do so. I hope He will give us patience to bear all things uncomplainingly, and to go to with our faith undisturbed, knowing that He comprehends all things, and that after the trials there cometh the blessing. We have never yet passed through severe afflictions without their being compensation in the shape of great blessings bestowed upon us. And so it will be. Trial will follow trial; but blessing will follow trial also. Blessing will follow blessing; and the cause of truth will spread, the honest in heart will be gathered out, and the great work of God will go forth, notwithstanding every effort to oppose it and to thwart it. And you may notice this: Those who fight against this cause may be prominent for awhile. Sometimes prominence is given them because of their opposition to this work, and their names being linked with ours is all that gives them prominence frequently. But after a while, when they have ceased to fill the positions occupied by them, and which gave their voices some weight, they will drop out of sight and be forgotten, as hundreds have been who have figured more or less conspicuously in their opposition against us. We need not be disturbed, therefore, at the utterance of this man or the other who occupies official position, and who for a while inflates himself with the idea that he is an important personage and that he is going to do some great thing against the Latter-day Saints. I have seen so many of these men pass away and sink into oblivion. They step on the stage and figure for a while, but soon they pass away. Therefore, do not let us be worried over them; but let us pursue the course that God has pointed out, and putting our trust in Him, know that all things will be overruled for our good.

Before I sit down there is one subject that I have felt I wanted to speak about. I think it of some importance to us as Latter-day Saints. It was referred to yesterday by two or three of the brethren. It is in relation to the events of 1891, and connected with the coming of the Lord. It was intimated by Brother Roberts that some people thought that such an event might perhaps happen, and he was anxious that the Saints should not be disappointed if nothing did occur during that year that would fulfil expectation, because a great many anticipations have been indulged in connected with that year, and I believe there has been altogether too much agitation upon this subject. I have seen a great many times in our history when sanguine men have attached a great deal of importance to certain