

said to them, "You that have seen me have seen Joseph Smith, for the same spirit and the same sentiments that are in him are in me, and I bear testimony to you that these things are verily true."

It is generally the case, and I think I may say it is invariably the case, that when an individual is ordained and appointed to lead the people, he has passed through tribulations and trials, and has proven himself before God, and before His people, that he is worthy of the situation which he holds. And let this be the motto and safeguard in all future time, that when a person that has not been tried, that has not proved himself before God, and before His people, and before the councils of the Most High, to be worthy, he is not going to step in to lead the Church and people of God. It never has been so, but from the beginning someone that understands the Spirit and counsel of the Almighty, that knows the Church, and is known of her, is the character that will lead the Church.

How does he become thus acquainted? How does he gain this influence, this confidence in the estimation of the people? He earns it by his upright course and conduct, by the justness of his counsels, and the correctness of his prophecies, and the straightforward spirit he manifests to the people. And he has to do this step by step; he gains influence, and his spirit, like an anchor, is fastened in the hearts of the people; and he is sustained and supported by the love, confidence, and goodwill of the Saints, and of Him that dwelt in the bush. This is the kind of character that ought to lead God's people, after he has obtained this goodwill and this confidence.

What then is he to do? Is he to go abroad to the nations of the earth and preach the Gospel; to leave his home and the people of his charge?

May we not count him as first and foremost in the ranks of them that overcome? I think so! Well then, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." All those who approach the nearest to that standard, we expect will remain in the temple of God at home, and not go abroad to the nations of the earth.

Says one, "If an angel from heaven would descend and bear testimony that this work was of God, I would believe it. Why may I not receive the testimony of angels, as well as Joseph Smith or any other person? For God is no respecter of persons! If I could receive it, I would be satisfied then that the work is true." But let me here remark again—suppose the Omnipotent Jehovah, that sits upon His throne of glory and power, was to descend and bear testimony, what further credence would you then want? You would want someone to tell you that it was really God Himself that had visited you, that you might be satisfied it was not an angel of darkness in the similitude of a heavenly personage.

Remember that God, our heavenly Father, was perhaps once a child, and mortal like we ourselves, and rose step by step in the scale of progress, in the school of advancement; has moved forward and overcome, until He has arrived at the point where He now is. "Is this really possible?" Why, my dear friends, how would you like to be governed by a ruler who had not been through all the vicissitudes of life that are common to mortals? If he had not suffered, how could he sympathize with the distress of others? If he himself had not endured the same, how could he sympathize and be touched with the feelings of our infirmities? He could not, unless he himself had passed through the same ordeal, and overcome step by step. If this is the case, it accounts for the