

revelation, the things of God just as naturally as we understand natural things that are around us.

We inquire, is this the character of the people called Latter-day Saints? We can say it is the character of many of them, but when we reflect, it is not the case with the whole of them. There are many who never fail to improve upon every means of grace given them, upon every particle of light imparted to them. They perform every duty that is made known to them, they cease to do evil wherever an evil is presented to them, they refrain, so far as is in their power, from every act and from every thought and disposition which is contrary to the holy Gospel.

Again, when we look around we see many, very many, men and women who profess to know the things of God, to belong to His family, to the Church of the Firstborn—the Church of Jesus Christ, who are oftentimes wrought upon by the Holy Spirit of the Gospel which has caused them to rejoice therein, who give thanks to their God, rejoice with joy unspeakable, and you would think they were very near the kingdom of heaven—near the threshold of the gate which opens into the presence of the Father and the Son, and yet, if anything crosses them, will give way to an evil temper; and if anything is presented to them which they do not understand, they condemn it at once; they are ready to pass judgment upon that which they do not understand. If they are crossed by their friends and families they are ready to speak by the spirit of evil, by the spirit of contention; they are ready to receive a little malice in their hearts. They do all this, they turn round and repent of it, they are sorry for it, and they say they will try to do better, will try to overcome their passions, or the temptations of the evil one in their natures. You see them again, have

they kept themselves pure? No, they have not, but they have given way to evil, to a little dishonesty, falsifying, shading of sentiment, speeches, sayings, and doings of their neighbors. They have given way to anger, and will remark, “It is true I got angry, I was overcome, true I acted the fool, but I mean to refrain from so doing in the future.” And thus they live for a spell, but how long will it be before they are again overtaken in fault? Then if a delusive spirit, professedly a righteous one, is cast into a neighborhood, how easy such people are decoyed by it, led away by it.

At one time you see them as enthusiastic as mortals can be, in what they call righteous principles, and hear them saying, “I have more light now than I ever had before in my life, I am better now than I ever was, I am filled with the Holy Spirit.”

This is the way we often find them, they are rejoiced exceedingly and are upon Pisgah’s top—flaming Latter-day Saints, and, perhaps, when the next day or the next week has passed over they are angry, filled with malice and wrath. After a while they will say, “That was a delusive spirit, it is true I felt joyful and happy, I thought it was the best spirit and the most light I ever enjoyed in all the days of my life, but I now find I was deceived, I find that if I had continued in that spirit there was a trap laid to catch me, to decoy me away, and destroy my faith in the holy Gospel.” Is this the case with the Latter-day Saints? Yes, with many of them.

Our religion is a practical and progressive one. It will not prepare a thief, a liar, a sorcerer, a whoremonger, an adulterer, a murderer, or a false swearer, in one day, so that he can enter into the celestial kingdom of God. We ought to understand that when our lives have been filled with all manner of wickedness, to turn and repent of our sins, to be baptized for