

Saints indeed, and feel that affinity one to another that becomes the Saints of the living God.

I have no desire, at this time, to address you upon any particular point of doctrine, or to select a text upon which to expound or explain. I merely wish to inquire whether the Latter-day Saints understand the eventful day in which they live—whether they appreciate and understand the peculiar providences of God that are cast around them—whether they partially comprehend the nature of their own being, and the great object of their existence and place upon the earth. If they understand and rightly practice upon all this, every soul of them will keep the faith. After the existence of the Deity, his supremacy, his right to rule, his knowledge, his power, and his great plan of salvation for the children of men have been proved beyond the power of truthful contradiction; and after tens of thousands have bowed to the truths of the Gospel, been baptized for the remission of sins, and received the ordinances of the holy Priesthood, and run well for a season, it is lamentable to see so many turn away, forsake their covenants, and lose sight of all holiness and purity of life, becoming like a ship upon the great waste of waters without a compass, sail, rudder, or any means for guiding their course, and being wafted hither and thither with every wind that blows, not seeming to have the least idea of directing their own course. This is a matter of deep regret.

I ask intelligent men—those in whose bosoms the spirit of revelation continually abides, whether their souls do not mourn to see the neglect, the weakness, the blindness, and stupidity of those who have received the words of eternal life—who have received the promises and covenants of God,

and have had the rights and privileges of receiving the revelations of Jesus Christ to guide and direct them in the path of truth and holiness, so that they could make sure to themselves salvation and eternal lives in the celestial kingdom of our Father and God. Is it not painful? Are you not astonished to see people who have received the Holy Spirit of promise, the Holy Ghost—who have received visions—who have been endowed with faith and with the knowledge of God—who have had power to lay hands upon the sick, and diseases have departed at their command, and foul spirits at their word, turn away and forsake their covenants and their God?

If there should not be another meeting of the Latter-day Saints until the winding-up scene, it would be astonishing that any man or woman of good sound sense and judgment should ever forsake their faith. I do not know that a comparison strong enough can possibly be framed to exhibit the folly of such a proceeding. Were I to say to a son, The whole earth is in my hands to dispose of as I will: I can make you the sovereign of the universe—the possessor of the gold, the silver, the mountains, the valleys, the rivers, the lakes, the seas, and all that float upon them and that live upon the face of the whole earth; for it is mine to give to you, my son, if you will serve me one month faithfully. I require nothing of you that will give you the least pain: all I require is strict obedience to my law. My son faithfully serves me during twenty-nine days, and on the thirtieth day, for the value of a straw, or for a mess of pottage, he sells his right and title to all I had promised him. This comparison falls very far short of showing the loss a Saint sustains when he turns away from his God and his religion.

There is one virtue, attribute, or principle, which, if cherished and