

all propensities to evil. Do you understand, what I have often taught you as plainly as my language will permit me, the warfare pertaining to the spirits of the children of men while in the flesh? The spirit is pure and holy upon its entrance into the tabernacle, and God, by the power of his Spirit, operates upon it; but the flesh, and no more, is unholy; and here are the holy and the unholy united. Which shall be the master? Let the spirit that comes from the eternal world, which at the outset is pure and holy, with the influence God gives to it, master all the passions of the body, and bring it under subjection to the will of Christ. That course makes us Saints.

I have flattered myself, if I am as faithful as I know how to be to my God, and my brethren, and to all my covenants, and faithful in the discharge of my duty, when I have lived to be as old as was Moses when the Lord appeared to him, that perhaps I then may hold communion with the Lord, as did Moses. I am not now in that position, though I know much more than I did twenty, ten, or five years ago. But have I yet lived to the state of perfection that I can commune in person with the Father and the Son at my will and pleasure? No—though I hold myself in readiness that he can wield me at his will and pleasure. If I am faithful until I am eighty years of age, perhaps the Lord will appear to me and personally dictate me in the management of his Church and people. A little over twenty years, and if I am faithful, perhaps I will obtain that favor with my Father and God.

I am not to obtain this privilege at once or in a moment. True, Joseph Smith in his youth had revelations from God. He saw and understood for himself. Are you acquainted with his life? You can read the history of it. I was acquainted with

him during many years. He had heavenly visions; angels administered to him. The vision of his mind was opened to see and understand heavenly things. He revealed the will of the Lord to the people, and yet but few were really acquainted with brother Joseph. He had all the weaknesses a man could have when the vision was not upon him, when he was left to himself. He was constituted like other men, and would have required years and years longer in the flesh to become a Moses in all things. For the length of time he lived, he was as good a man as ever lived in the flesh, Jesus excepted. It was so ordered that a man has to live and gain by his experience that knowledge and wisdom, and that degree of stability in his character that will present him favorably to the heavenly hosts at all times and under all circumstances. Let us, then, resolve and act upon the principle of constant improvement.

As to doing any better than I have done, I have to know more, and so have you. You have done as well as you knew how. This is a matter of rejoicing to me. And though we are still far from being perfect, the Latter-day Saints are not far from a deep desire to be perfect. They are far from being what they should be; but they are not far from an abiding desire to be what they should be. But have you so trained yourselves as to be able to say, for instance, that if the potatoes you have planted yield, abundantly well; and if they do not, that is just as well? Can you feel to say that in all sincerity? Can you say, after you have prepared the ground, cast in the wheat, watered it, and taken good care of it, and then found the crop destroyed by blight or smut, Well, all right? Can you honestly say so? If you cannot, you have not schooled your hearts to what you should have done—to learn that