

BLESSINGS OF ASSOCIATION—ORIGINAL PURITY OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT—TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS, ETC.

INSTRUCTIONS BY PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, OCTOBER 6, 1859

Reported by G. D. Watt

We have assembled this morning in the capacity of a Conference; and as it is also our fast day, we will conduct the forenoon services as we generally do in our fast day meetings, when the Saints meet to express their feelings and to strengthen each other in their faith of the holy Gospel. We will, so far as the time will permit, give all the Saints who may wish the privilege to freely express their views and reflections to this congregation; and I hope we shall be enabled to appreciate the privilege we enjoy. I am aware that the Saints like to speak often one to another, if the candle of the Lord is lit up within them; and it is their delight to walk in the light thereof, and diffuse that delight to others, that they also may enjoy its blessings.

You are well aware, by your own experience, that mankind in their feelings and spirits are more or less subject to be operated upon by surrounding influences. You, no doubt, discover that you are very much inclined to mingle with and participate in the feelings and exercises of the society in which you are. Mankind are naturally inclined to associate one with another. Deprive an individual of the society of his fellow beings, and life becomes wearisome and a burden to him; his hours and days become monotonous and tedious.

This people, as a religious people, are more blessed with the spirit of

association than are the generality of those called Christians. A gathering and social spirit seems to be the order of heaven—of the spirit that is in the Gospel we have embraced. Though it may be esteemed as a fault—as an unwarrantable act to separate ourselves from those who do not believe as we believe, yet such is the nature of a portion of our religion pertaining to the performance of outward duties. If the Latter-day Saints can associate together, free from the contaminating influences that are in the world, it is a blessing and a great privilege. What would induce a child to grow up in the wickedness of the wicked world, if it never saw or heard any of it? Would you see the fruit you now see produced? You would not. If children never heard language unbecoming intelligent beings, in their most heated passions, they would not know what to say; they would have no words to express their wicked feelings, until reflection would take the place of anger, and they would refrain from it.

It is very true that, through the fall, we are all prone to evil. It is also true that the spirit in man is also pure and holy upon its entrance into a tabernacle, and perfectly prepared to be influenced and receive instruction. Being united with the body, which was brought under condemnation through the fall, they are inseparably connected in a probation.