

How often have we witnessed a faithful animal conveying his master home so drunk that he could not see his way or sit up; yet his faithful animal will plod through mud, shun stumps, trees, and bad places, and land him safely at home.

Are we even obedient to our better judgments and to truth that is self-evident? Many of us have been taught the doctrine of total depravity—that man is not naturally inclined to do good. I am satisfied that he is more inclined to do right than to do wrong. There is a greater power within him to shun evil and perform good, than to do the opposite. We have the powers of darkness, or the influences opposite to good, to contend with, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." There are two classes of influences, one tends to good and the other to evil; one to truth and life, the other to falsehood and death. Evil is sown in our nature, but there is not a person who is not prompted to do good and forsake evil, though there are but few who, from their own volition, will subject themselves to be perfectly obedient to the law of Christ, yet there are dispositions that will be subject to the truth through cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonment. Truth is for us, right is for us, life is ours.

Our enemies accuse the leaders of this Church of having too much influence over the people. How much influence have I, or any other man that ever lived in this kingdom, over an apostate? It is now as it was in the days of Joseph. While people retained the spirit of their religion, they looked upon him as one of the best men on the earth; but when they gave way to the spirit of apostasy, then he was the worst of men. This

has been so in all ages with every Prophet, Apostle, and righteous man and woman; they have had the warmest friends, and the bitterest enemies. No man has friends like those who are righteous; their friendship is even unto death, and then it reaches throughout all eternity. The friendship of the wicked must fade away, sooner or later; while the friendship of the righteous will last forever and ever. When we understand the truth let us abide by it, and boast not in our own strength, but glory in the strength of the Almighty.

The Elders often tell how many they have converted, and how many churches they have built up in different parts of the world. When persons apostatize from the path of right, I think some of them are man-made converts; as a Methodist preacher remarked to a drunken man lying by the wayside, who hailed him with delight saying, "You are my father in Christ, you converted me." "I should think so," said the preacher, "for it is very clear that you are not one of the Lord's converts." We cannot make Latter-day Saints of anybody on this earth but ourselves; we have not even power to make a Saint of a wife, or a child, a brother, or sister, in the least degree, unless they will hearken to counsel and obey the principles of righteousness, which I contend they are naturally inclined to do, were it not for the awful apostasy there is in the world. All persons must possess their intelligence free and independent before God.

I preach the Gospel to the Latter-day Saints; and if a person comes into our community and wishes to know further with regard to life and salvation, I will tell him as freely as ever I breathed the mountain air; but you cannot find one person that I ever crowded my religion upon either in or out of the Church. I have my