

Did the Devil believe that Joseph Smith was an impostor? He knew that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet. Did the first priest who persecuted Joseph Smith, when Joseph was about nineteen years of age, believe that Joseph was an impostor? No. The Devil and his emissaries are not afraid of an impostor; for the world is full of imposition. Men who lecture against God, Jesus Christ, and the Bible, are not persecuted, but figure in what is called the best society. This proves one saying of the Savior, that the world loves its own; and those that the Lord has chosen out of the world, they hate and persecute. Infidelity, under some popular name, makes its way to the altars of Christian sanctuaries, and its supporters receive the honor of this world. But when Joseph Smith came before the world bearing testimony that Jesus lived, that he had seen him, declaring that he was his witness, and that Jesus was the Savior of the world, that he had spoken from the heavens and had revealed in these days the fulness of the Gospel for the salvation of men, that the Old and New Testament were true and contained the plan of human redemption, he was cast out, and the cry—"False Prophet, false Prophet, away with him," was almost universal.

Who can justly say aught against Joseph Smith? I was as well acquainted with him, as any man. I do not believe that his father and mother knew him any better than I did. I do not think that a man lives on the earth that knew him any better than I did; and I am bold to say that, Jesus Christ excepted, no better man ever lived or does live upon this earth. I am his witness. He was persecuted for the same reason that any other righteous person has been or is persecuted at the present day.

The world have the Gospel preached to them, but they do not receive it,

and they wish to drive the Priesthood and its supporters from the earth. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Had Jesus Christ been an impostor and of the world; the world would have loved its own. Had Joseph Smith been an impostor and of the world, the world would not have hated him, but would have loved its own. Had Joseph Smith made political capital of his religion and calling, and raised up a political party, he doubtless would have become celebrated and renowned in the world as a great man and as a great leader.

The world fears a concentration of feeling and union of action. We say that we live in a Republican Government, and we hold that we have the best national constitution in the world; but a wicked people will corrupt themselves and do wickedly under any government, and, in so doing, will sooner or later be destroyed. The most excellent human or divine laws are of no use to earthly or heavenly beings, unless they are faithfully observed. Law is for the protection of the law-abider; and the penalty of the law is for the lawbreaker. God cannot acknowledge a divided government as his, wherein some are of Paul, some of Apollos, etc.

The Church of Jesus Christ could not exist, and be divided up into parties. Where such disunion exists in any government, it ultimately becomes the means of the utter overthrow of that government or people, unless a timely remedy is applied. Party spirit once made its appearance in heaven, but was promptly checked.