

our devotion to the advice would have produced far different results. There would not have been, as there is today, a feeling to expostulate with the people on the necessity of laying up and securing to themselves bread against a time of want. There would not be the empty granaries and the comparative lack of that which should exist in abundance among the people.

I do not know what name men may give to the causes that have induced this condition of things. In my mind there exists but one general reason—our lack of comprehending the truth in relation to the nature of the work in which we are engaged; and that with all our opportunities of acquiring knowledge and getting understanding we are, as has been truthfully told us in the fatherly admonitions imparted to us during this Conference, only just beginning to be Saints—only just entering on that work, the consummation of which will make of us that kind of a people for whom the Lord says it is his business to provide.

Now, perhaps, we may have been to some extent presuming too much upon the kindness, charity, and goodness of our heavenly Father. We may have fancied, perchance, that he is pledged to preserve us irrespective of the course that we pursue, simply because we have supposed that we are Saints, because we have been baptized into the Church. But this truth cannot be too forcibly impressed on our minds—that if it is the business of the Lord to provide for his Saints, it is our business exclusively so to live that the Lord may have Saints for whom to care and provide, whom He may protect, and who may securely rest beneath the shadow of His wings, enjoying the blessings of His protection against evil.

But what is it that will constitute us Saints? A knowledge of the work

we have to perform, and then a faithful, humble, undivided, and unreserved devotion to its accomplishment. That will constitute us Saints; that will constitute us teachers in the midst of the people; that will constitute us a people to whom the ministrations of the Priesthood will extend as a fountain of blessings.

The attainment of this knowledge, the possession of this rich understanding, is that to which you and I must reach ere we are established in the truth beyond a chance of becoming unsettled. This is the way it appears to me. My paths may be crooked, and my efforts to attain to this position and condition may be feeble, and not only feeble, but they may be characterized by a corresponding amount of improprieties and inconsistencies; but this is what appears to me to be the great object that is before me, that invites my exertions, induces me to labor and struggle—not till I am worn out, but until I find the realization of my brightest hopes in the possession of that which I seek.

As the Gospel presents itself to me, as the work of God is spread out before my mind, so I judge of it, so I appreciate it, so I talk about it, so I recommend it to you, my brethren and sisters.

“Well,” says one, “when will we learn?” That depends altogether upon ourselves. “Why,” says one, “will not the Lord have something to do with it?” The Lord has to do with it; and if we would be more careful about what we should do, instead of troubling ourselves about what the Lord should do, it might perhaps result in bringing us to the enjoyment of greater and richer blessings. Why, the Lord knows what to do, and He has no need of our instruction. The Lord is supposed, by me at any rate, to be fully up to all that devolves upon Him in relation to ourselves. The Lord is waiting