

God are to a very great extent incomprehensible, because the evidence which they look for they do not often receive; or if they do, it comes in such a form that it is not entirely reliable to them. The man or the woman who is convinced of the truth of the gospel by seeing the ears of the deaf unstopped, or the tongue of the dumb unloosed, or by dreams or visions, as a general thing, requires a continuation of these manifestations from that time forward to keep them in the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This our experience confirms. There is another class who obey the truth because it is the truth, and receive the testimony of the Spirit without any particular manifestations, but in whose hearts the Spirit of God continues to burn and increase, imparting to them all its gifts and filling them with joy and peace unspeakable. They retain their faith in the work of God, and as days, weeks, months, and years pass over their heads, their faith and confidence increase.

No doubt there are many saints present this afternoon who have seen illustrations of this kind. They probably can allow their minds to refer to their early experience in the Church, in the branches to which they belonged when they embraced the gospel. Probably there were many of their companions who embraced the gospel at about the same time they did, who received great manifestations, and whose minds never seemed to be content with what they would term the small things of the gospel; but they were constantly reaching after visions and dreams, and extraordinary manifestations of the power of God; and, in nine cases out of ten, with the desire of consuming those manifestations on their own lusts, to have some wonderful testimony to bear, to be a little ahead

of, and to excel their brethren and sisters in the things of God. Probably many present can recollect instances of this kind, and have watched the course of such individuals until they have lost the faith and have gone out of the Church. On the other hand there are men and women who were not favored in these respects, and, in consequence, probably felt that they had committed some sin almost unpardonable in the sight of Heaven; yet through their humility and the constant exercise of faith they have continued to increase in wisdom and strength, and in all the gifts of the Spirit necessary for the perfecting of the Saints; and today they can look back through their whole career in the Church, and can see that God has given them the best possible kind of evidence to enable them to retain their standing in the Church. There are probably thousands of people, at the present time, among the nations of the earth, who would say, that if they could see the sick healed, or the blind restored to sight, see a person who was on the verge of the grave snatched from the grasp of death and restored to perfect health, or hear a man speak in tongues or interpret a language of which he was entirely ignorant, they would be perfectly willing to embrace the gospel and become Latter-day Saints for the rest of their lives. I have no doubt there are men in our midst who would say that if they could have evidence of this kind they would be Latter-day Saints; and in making such a statement they would imagine they were perfectly safe, and that it would be consistent with God's plan for them to expect such evidence. Experience in this work has proved that this is not the best kind of evidence, but that there is a kind which is of a higher order, and which is calculated to preserve those who