

declaration, "Thus saith the Lord."

Now, I say to the people, will you gather the poor? To the Elders I say, will you carry the Gospel to all the world? Blessed are they who obey when the Lord gives a direct commandment, but more blessed are they who obey without a direct commandment. For it is written: "It is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward. Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness; For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in no wise lose their reward. But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with a doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned." I say this that you may understand that I feel just as patient, and just as kind towards the Latter-day Saints as a man's heart can feel, and am careful to take every precaution in directing their steps to the possession of eternal life in the presence of God that none may be lost. My course is not to scold, but to persuade and entreat the people to do their duty, holding before them the reward of faithfulness. It requires all the care and faithfulness which we can exercise in order to keep the faith of the Lord Jesus; for there are invisible agencies around us in sufficient numbers to encourage the slightest disposition they may discover in us to forsake the true way, and fan into a flame the slightest spark of discontent and unbelief. The spirits of the ancient Gadiantons are around us. You may see battlefield after battlefield, scattered over

this American continent, where the wicked have slain the wicked. Their spirits are watching us continually for an opportunity to influence us to do evil, or to make us decline in the performance of our duties. And I will defy any man on earth to be more gentlemanly and bland in his manners than the master spirit of all evil. We call him the devil; a gentleman so smooth and so oily, that he can almost deceive the very elect. We have been baptized by men having the authority of the holy Priesthood of the Son of God, and consequently we have power over him which the rest of the world do not possess, and all who possess the power of the Priesthood have the power and right to rebuke those evil spirits. When we rebuke those evil powers, and they obey not, it is because we do not live so as to have the power with God, which it is our privilege to have. If we do not live for this privilege and right we are under condemnation.

I know that the Bishops in this Church are improving, and are better men, and they should lead and dictate their Wards still better than they do.

It may be asked, should not brother Brigham lead the people better? No doubt he should. Will you hearken to one little saying? I can say, follow me as I follow Christ, and everyone of us is sure to go into the celestial kingdom of our God, God being our helper. Can all the Bishops say this? I think not in every case. But are they improving? They are and that is not all, they will continue to improve, and they will become wise leaders of the people. They should be fathers to their Wards. They are looked upon as such by the people; and their example has its effect for better or for worse, and they should be foremost in every good word and work, to be