

promises which have been made unto us, we are as liable to go astray as any other people. If we treat these things as matters of no importance, and are careless and negligent in relation to that which we believe, and to those whom we follow, we are sure to err.

There are some principles which have become firmly rooted in the minds of the Latter-day Saints. It is a difficult thing to cause them to doubt in relation to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance of sin, baptism for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. These principles seem to be clearly understood, and in them the people are apparently fully indoctrinated; and though men may deny the faith, in one sense, and turn away from the path of righteousness, and dissolve their connection with the Church, yet they will cling, in most instances, to what we term the first principles of the Gospel of Christ; and it is a very rare thing to see those who have been members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints turning away and joining what we call sectarian churches. If they leave this Church, it is an exceedingly difficult thing for them to connect themselves with other denominations, because the Scriptures are so familiar to them, the principles contained therein are so plain to their understanding that, unless there is some speculation, some mercenary or other end to be gained by their alliance with people of other creeds, they are very apt to stand aloof; that is, where they have a thorough understanding of the principles of the Gospel.

But there are other principles more advanced with which the people are not so familiar, and of this the adversary seeks to take advantage; and when men deny the faith, they are apt to deny these principles; and

when they get into the dark, there is probably no point upon which they differ more frequently than that which relates to the authority that is exercised in presiding. This is a point that the adversary always aims at. I suppose it was so in ancient days. We read of false prophets then, and also of men turning away; and there is no doubt but what the rock upon which they split was the question of the right and authority of those presiding over them.

It seems as though the adversary, in the day in which we live, seeks, by every means in his power, to undermine the influence and the authority of the man whom God has called to preside over His people. If you will observe, you may perceive in what direction the shafts of the adversary are aimed. In the days of Joseph, he was the man against whom all the enemies of truth hurled their malicious shots; his life was sought, his character assailed, and his influence was decried. He was the target at which every arrow of calumny and hatred was aimed, and the man to whom all eyes were directed. He was held up before men as an object worthy only of their hatred and derision, to be scoffed at, despised and killed.

Did anybody hear then of others who are now prominent? Yes. President Young's name was talked about, but not as at present; but Joseph's name occupied every tongue. His deeds, or rather his misdeeds, as his enemies were pleased to call them, occupied every one's attention. His actions were scrutinized and misrepresented, and everything pertaining to him was made the subject of comment and reproach. It was the case from the hour that he received the plates of the Book of Mormon, until the day of his death. All those who were members of the Church