

an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” We must bear this in mind when we investigate the nature of the Apostles’ teachings and the ordinances and doctrines which they administered and taught. If they who profess to be preachers of the Gospel diverge in the least from the doctrines and principles taught by the Apostles they place themselves in a position to receive the condemnation which Paul invoked.

I have endeavored in these remarks to bring your minds to the faith the Saints once enjoyed, and to the teachings which the Apostles, in their day, laid before the people, and called upon them in all earnestness to obey. I have done this in order that you may be prepared for that which we teach, for we teach precisely the same principles that they did. Men wonder and say, “How is it that you Latter-day Saints can live together as you do? How is it that you are so united?” The secret lies in the fact that we have the same principles to teach to the people that were taught by the ancient Apostles, and the same results follow in our case as in theirs.

It has been frequently remarked to the Elders, when abroad, “What necessity was there for an angel to come from heaven to earth to bring, as you say he did, the everlasting Gospel when we have the Bible and Christian organizations and Christian churches all through the land?” This is a very important question, and one to which I will try and give a satisfactory answer. There would have been no necessity of any such thing if the churches, at the time Joseph Smith sought for knowledge, had taught the same principles the Apostles declared, and if believers in these days had enjoyed the same gifts and blessings that they did in theirs.

But if there was such a church at that time history has failed to record the fact. There was no man on the face of the earth, of whom we have heard, who declared to the people that if they would believe in Jesus and repent of their sins and be baptized for the remission of them, they should receive the Holy Ghost. On the contrary, the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, as anciently, with its gifts and powers, was denied by the whole Christian world. They declared that these gifts were not for this generation, but were bestowed upon the primitive church for the whole and sole purpose of establishing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that when that was accomplished there was no longer any need for them. That was the belief in Christendom then, and that is the belief there now; you may hear it expressed on every hand when conversing on these subjects. They will declare that there is no necessity for these gifts in this age, as if the Holy Ghost could be enjoyed by man and these gifts not manifested! Such a thing is impossible! There would have been no necessity for the restoration of the Gospel to the earth by an angel if the keys and priesthood by which the ancient Apostles officiated had not been taken from the earth. It is true that the Catholic Church claims direct succession from the Apostles; other churches claim the same; and all, claiming any authority whatever, endeavor to trace it back to them. They all base their claims to authority on the fact that the Apostles received it. The Catholic Church, especially, claim uninterrupted descent from Peter and the last of the Apostles. But, while so doing, they ignore the fact that as long as there was a man on the earth who laid claim to authority direct from God the inhabitants warred against him, until