

brethren. My reply has invariably been, "We stayed with you just as long as you would let us, and when you would let us stay no longer we had to hunt up some other place, and we came to the valleys not out of choice but out of necessity." It is true that we have had some little things to contend with here, but it amounts to no more than a war of words. Our religion will bear investigation, and we invite the Christian world to investigate and to exchange ideas concerning faith and principles.

Brother Wells has been telling you about some of the influences that we had to contend with in Illinois. This gentleman was not a "Mormon" when we went from Missouri to Illinois, neither was he when we left that State, and he was in a position to know what the feelings of the people were; his neighbors composed the band that slew Joseph and Hyrum in the jail at Carthage. He is acquainted with the circumstances. He says he has put them from his mind as much as possible, and does not think of them. I am happy to hear it. I wish we may never be under the necessity of again referring to what we have passed through; but we shall be, there is no question; and if we have to meet with influences of another character now, all that we have to do is to be prepared for them; and if the Lord brings us into circumstances in which we shall be as willing to live our religion and pray as some are to fight, it will be much better for us. We have many Elders in Israel who would much rather fight for their religion than pray. As for a person being saved in the celestial kingdom of God without being prepared to dwell in a pure and holy place, it is all nonsense and ridiculous; and if there be any who think they can gain the presence of the Father

and the Son by fighting for instead of living their religion, they will be mistaken, consequently the quicker we make up our minds to live our religion the better it will be for us. If we live so as to enjoy the spirit of the faith that we have embraced there is no danger of our being deceived.

To those of our Christian brethren who have come here, not to join a mob to kill or persecute the Saints, but to see how many of those who have obeyed the Gospel they can induce to forsake the holy commandments of the Lord Jesus and to follow after phantoms, I say the quicker this war of words commences and the fiercer it is carried on the better it will be for the Saints. So we say come, brethren, come with your big tents, your meetinghouses, your arguments and all the philosophy you are in possession of, for we have a religion that we would like the inhabitants of the earth to understand. We have nothing in the dark, nothing but what is good for man; and we would say to all try our religion. We have tried and we understand the religions of the world; and in some remarks I made yesterday I ventured to say that our youth know more of heavenly things than old men do in the Christian world. If any doubt this, just take our children and question them, and if they have the courage and boldness, see how quickly they will lead members of the sectarian world into waters so deep that they cannot see the shore. But if a war of argument is desired or intended, I do not mean contention, but an exchange of ideas, we are willing to give to all who want them the principles of the Gospel of life and salvation, and they can give to us all they know of the Gospel as they have embraced it, which is no more nor less than a system of morals or ethics, and is excellent as far as it goes.