

consequences which its practice involves! Surely God, who would reveal such a principle to his people and call upon them to obey it, would defend those who had the courage to sacrifice themselves if it were necessary to carry out what they believed to be God's behest! He would stretch forth his arm, exert his power and fulfill his promises to deliver those who would thus go forth in humility and meekness and carry out a principle that he had revealed unto them!

This is the view which I take of this matter. Instead of our being left to the power of our persecutors to a greater extent since its revelation and practice, we have had greater freedom and security, and have been blessed as we never were before. It was not on account of our belief in this that we have been hated. Joseph and Hyrum Smith were slain in Carthage jail, and hundreds of persons were persecuted to the death previous to the Church having any knowledge of this doctrine. What then was the cause of the persecutions of the people, and why should they have been singled out and made so remarkable above other people, many of whom believe in several of the principles that they believed in. There is not a religious denomination in Christendom which does not believe in Jesus Christ; I do not know of one that does not believe in repenting of sin and also in some form of baptism. They may differ in opinion as to the mode, efficacy and necessity of the ordinance; some may and do call it essential, while others regard it as nonessential, but it is generally believed in; and there are also denominations which believe in the laying on of hands. I do not know of one that believes in the gathering of the people together, still there are people or communities who do gather together, besides the Latter-day

Saints. What is it then that makes us so marked? I will explain it in a few words, as I understand it. It is because the Latter-day Saints believe that God has restored from the heavens the everlasting Priesthood—that eternal authority by which man acts upon the earth as the ambassador of God. It is because we have testified that God has restored this once more to earth and we have received it, and that by virtue of it we act as Apostles, members of the seventies, high priests, elders, bishops, priests, teachers and deacons, and in the several offices God has placed in his Church. This is the secret, my brethren and sisters and friends, of the opposition that is and has been waged against the Church of God. We might go forth and preach belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance of sin, and baptism for the remission of sins, as Alexander Campbell did; we might say, as some of the sects do, that it is necessary to lay on hands; we might gather the people together, and do any or all of these things, but if we did not have the right to exercise heaven-bestowed authority there would be no particular opposition to us. Of course, the nearer a man draws to God, and the more he lives according to the plan which God has prescribed, the more opposition he meets with. Satan will stir up strife, animosity and hatred against him. On this account Luther, Calvin, John Wesley and other reformers have been persecuted. The nearer they came to the truth, and the more zealous they were in proclaiming it, the more opposition they met with. Men, in reasoning upon this subject, say that every sect, at the commencement of its career, is persecuted because men are not familiar with its doctrines; but, when they become known, opposition and persecution cease. They predict this about the Latter-day Saints; but the