

dience is the first law of heaven. Without it the elements could not be controlled. Without it neither the earth nor those who dwell upon it could be controlled. The angels in heaven would not be controlled without it, and in fact without obedience there could be no union or order, and chaos and confusion would prevail. When we are obedient we may be guided to the accomplishment of all that is required of us by our heavenly Father, for it is on this principle that the designs and purposes of God are accomplished. The elements are obedient to his word. He said, "Let there be light and there was light." He commanded the land and the waters to be divided, and it was so. When Christ commanded the storm to be still, and the sea to be calm, the elements were obedient to him. The earth, and all the worlds which God has made are obedient to the laws of their creation, for this reason there are peace, harmony, union, increase, power, glory and dominion, which could not exist without obedience. For the lack of obedience the whole world today lies in sin, for except the little existing among this people, obedience cannot be found on the face of the earth. Go to the religions of the day, do you find obedience manifested by the people? No, but you find man everywhere self-willed and untractable, therefore confusion and anarchy reign. It is said in the Scriptures that all things are possible with God; but he only works in accordance with the principles by which he himself is governed; and hence he cannot convince nations of the truth against their will. As the poet says—

Know this, that every soul is free,  
To choose his life and what he'll be;  
For this eternal truth is given, That  
God will force no man to heaven.

He'll call, persuade, direct aright— Bless him with wisdom, love and light— In nameless ways be good and kind, But never force the human mind.

That is the way that God deals with man, therefore I say, he cannot work with this generation. They have set him aside and made themselves supreme. They have fulfilled the words of the prophet Paul when he said, "That in the last days perilous times should come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affections, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," &c.

No one could better describe the condition of this generation, and yet light has come into the world, but it is rejected, and for this reason the world lies in sin, and under condemnation. The people of God lie under condemnation too, so far as they are disobedient to the counsels of God's servants. We talk of obedience, but do we require any man or woman to ignorantly obey the counsels that are given? Do the first Presidency require it? No, never. What do they desire? That we may have our minds opened and our understandings enlarged, that we may comprehend all true principles for ourselves; then we will be easily governed thereby, we shall yield obedience with our eyes open, and it will be a pleasure for us to do so.

The Lord does not accept obedience from men except that which they render cheerfully and gladly in their hearts, and that is all that is desired by his servants. That is the obedience we ought to render, and if we do not we are under condemnation.