BELIEF AND KNOWLEDGE, ETC. 21

the ministry, and have received instruc-
tion through having the counsels and
teachings of the servants of God, as you
all have; but some, perhaps, have not en-
joyed this privilege to so great an extent
as others who have been less abroad. In
my childhood I learned to believe the
Gospel, and in the divine mission and
calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith, in
the visitation of the angel Moroni, in the
establishment of the kingdom of God on
the earth, and also in the gathering to-
gether of the people of the Lord, and
many important things connected with
this great latter-day work.

On my first mission I began to learn
something for myself; I had hitherto be-
lieved the testimonies of the servants
of God whom I had heard converse and
preach, as well as the instructions I re-
ceived from a most kind and affection-
ate mother, as also what I could compre-
hend through reading the Book of Mor-
mon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and
the Bible. But in the ministry, where I
labored earnestly, I began to comprehend
more fully, through the inspiration of the
Holy Spirit, what I had read and been
taught, and so they became in my mind
established facts, of which I was as ab-
solutely certain as I was of my own exis-
tence; and from the beginning of my ex-
perience as an Elder in the Church until
the present, if there has been a moment
in my life when I have doubted the
divinity and truthfulness of these things,
it has escaped my notice, and it is today
as much a matter of fact with me, as it is
that I live.

I long ago learned to prize the
principles of the Gospel, as of far
greater importance than all earthly
things; they are of more value than
this present life, for without the
Gospel it is valueless, the grand ob-
ject and purpose of life being attainable
only through being obedient unto the
Gospel.

A saying of the Savior is here forced
upon my mind, "For what shall it profit a
man, if he shall gain the whole world and
lose his own soul? or what shall a man
give in exchange for his soul?" Again, "I
am the door: by me if any man enter
in, he shall be saved," but only upon this
plan can he be saved.

By the principles of the Gospel, as
revealed through the Prophet Joseph
Smith, we are privileged to secure unto
ourselves the gift of eternal life, which is
the greatest gift of God. Without these
principles we are as the dumb animal,
so far as relates to the knowledge of
God, for our fathers were unable to teach
us, they knew no more of the ways of
God, or the plans of salvation, than the
children, notwithstanding their boasted
enlightenment and their possession of
the holy Scriptures. They were not ac-
quainted with the principles of life, they
knew not the law of the Lord, and nei-
ther did we until we received and obeyed
the Gospel, thereby obtaining heavenly
light through the channel of the Priest-
hood. Before this we were as they were,
clinging to dead forms, puzzled to divine
the meaning of many things which un-
der the light of inspiration have become
plain and easy to be understood. "And
this is life eternal, that they might know
thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ,
whom thou hast sent."

It behooves the Latter-day Saints,
and all men, to make themselves ac-
quainted with "the only true God, and
Jesus, whom he hath sent." But can
we through our own wisdom find out
God? Can we by our unaided in-
genuity and learning fathom his pur-
poses and comprehend his will? We
have, I think, witnessed examples