

to the most oppressive measures. The religious wars have been more terrible in their effects, caused more bloodshed and sorrow, than all the others put together. A gradual but sure relief from religious rule and dictation has been brought about, until the nations of the earth are made free. No wonder, then, that the people look with ill favor upon any one religious element gaining ascendancy over the other. As the old saying goes, "A burnt child dreads the fire."

In this country there is no religious power predominating, but now that the kingdom of God is established this opposition is brought about and is felt even to a greater extent than before. The world is jealous of its growing power and, hence, its bitter and unrelenting opposition. So opposed have men been to the increase and spread of religion as a political power that in many places no person holding a religious office has been permitted to hold a position of trust or profit under the government. It was for this same reason that the name of God is not mentioned in the Constitution of the United States. The Puritan Fathers suffered from religious oppression, and rather than be made to bow the head or the knee when mentioning the name of Jesus Christ, or being compelled to place the cross on their churches, as was and is still customary with the Roman Catholic church, they sought elsewhere that toleration they could not obtain in their native land; but singular to say, after the lapse of time, when the colonies were founded, they were unwilling to accord unto others of different faiths to their own, that religious freedom for which they themselves had forsaken fatherland, and expelled from the colonies all who differed with them in a religious point of view.

Besides this intolerance there is another reason why religion has become so distasteful to many people, and why the nations have eschewed religion from their councils. Because these teachers and professors of religion are without the knowledge of God, and their ideas and doctrines have been so far different to the written word, that reasonable people say, "Humbug!" and fly to the other extreme and become infidels. After witnessing the strife and variety of forms, and being unable to gain assurance from such sources respecting the realities of the future, they say, "We don't know anything about it; we'll live good moral lives and all will be well."

The greatest difficulty the elders have to contend with in the world is this wide-spreading infidelity, brought about by the assumptions of so called religious teachers. Now, the Lord has restored his Holy Priesthood, his mind and will—the glorious Gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation," and fearful of losing what power they hold over the minds of men, these self-elected teachers and priests have combined to oppose it. Now, in order to understand the principles of the true and everlasting Gospel, we must look at them by the spirit of God, for "the things of God knoweth no man except by the spirit of God." A man cannot understand the things of man with the spirit of a horse or an ox; then how can a man understand the things of God except by the spirit of God—a higher grade of intelligence. By that Spirit, the Bible, with all its apparent inconsistencies, is made plain to the human mind. People have misconstrued, have turned the truth into lies and perverted the Gospel of Christ. When a Latter-day Saint has conformed to the ordinances of the Gospel and received the Holy Ghost, the Bible has