

work of God does and will depend greatly upon the righteousness of the people, the faithfulness of the Priesthood in keeping His commandments, honoring His laws, and laboring for the accomplishment of the purposes of God upon the earth, instead of self-aggrandizement. I will venture, as my opinion, that the Latter-day Saints through their follies, their neglect of proper example, their carelessness respecting their duties, not to mention greater sins, and the evil resulting therefrom, have prevented the conversion of as many people as have been converted unto God. There are today perhaps nearly as many that have apostatized as are now in good standing in the Church; many of whom were honest but have been deceived and led away from the truth, many others, I admit, have turned away because of their own sins. Others again have left the Church because they were unable to distinguish between the actions of their foolish brethren and the principles of eternal truth, and in that way have allowed themselves to go into darkness and turn away from the Kingdom. In almost every place you go, where the Gospel is being preached, you may find scores and scores of people that once belonged to the Church, how are they today? Are they members of this Church? No; they are apostates, in darkness, knowing not the truth, for the light they had is gone out and darkness has taken the place thereof, and they are now under the power of darkness or Satan and cannot help themselves.

And again, there are many people who have come among us, who, if they had found that perfection in the conduct and character of Latter-day Saints which they expected to find among those professing to be

Saints, if they had found more of the fruits of righteousness in the midst of this people and less of their follies and weaknesses, they would no doubt have been constrained to yield obedience to the Gospel; whereas they only became hardened in seeing the weakness and imperfection of many so-called Latter-day Saints, concluding that they, judging them by their acts, are not much better than other professing Christians. And in this way many that might have been brought to a knowledge of the truth, have been discouraged, disappointed and deceived, because they failed to discover or feel as they might and should have done, if all the fruits of the Gospel had abounded as they should, that power of the Priesthood and efficacy of the Gospel which should be exhibited in the midst of the people of God.

Now, am I finding fault with the Latter-day Saints? If I should find fault with you of course I would be finding fault with myself. I acknowledge that I have not lived up to the standard as I should have done. I have not possessed that power, that inspiration, that knowledge of truth, that close communion with God and with the Holy Ghost, that I might or ought to have done. Therefore if there is blame attached to the Church I am willing to acknowledge and share my proportion of that blame. Nevertheless, what I say in regard to this matter I believe to be the truth. I will give you, if you wish, and I think I had better do so, one or two simple and undeniable proofs of my assertion. Excuse me if I refer to things which may be considered quite common; I am not here to teach you new doctrine, I am endeavoring to teach you truths, which we have been taught for the last fifty years.