

better surroundings than others, doubtless dwelt in finer houses, better furnished, and they were better clad, and had probably finer and nicer food. Distinctions of this kind grew up not out of the Gospel, but out of the violation of the principles of the Gospel. Wherever the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is taught, it produces, as I have said, this sense of equality, it makes the man who may know and understand the things of God feel that he is no better than his fellow man, and the woman who understands the things of God feel that she is no better than her sister. If this sentiment were practiced among us, it would produce the results we find that Alma sought to produce among the people, and which he did produce by the preaching of the word, as recorded in the subsequent verses to those which I read. He went forth preaching the word as he found it the most effectual means, as described by the historian, of checking the evils that were growing among the people. It would be so among us in a while if it were not for the preaching of the word of God, and with the preaching of the word, with all the faith, all the zeal, and all the power which our leaders are capable of exercising, it needs it all to repress these inclinations and these tendencies. There is something in the human heart of that character that when human beings are prospering they are apt to be lifted up in pride and to forget the cause or the source of their prosperity; they are apt to forget God, who is the fountain of all their blessings, and to give glory to themselves. It requires a constant preaching of the word of God, a constant pleading with the people, a constant outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the people to bring them to a true

sense of their real condition. With all the experience the Latter-day Saints have had, who is there among us that cannot perceive this tendency? Why, it is constantly bringing itself into notice. It becomes in some instances quite offensive, because those who are humble feel the effects of it. Those who are poor, needy and destitute, not gifted with ability to accumulate the things of this world, feel it, and very frequently their hearts are grieved because of it. There is this tendency we have to contend with as a people and as individuals, and it is something we should constantly bear in mind, that God has sent us here and given unto us a mission on the earth, not to accumulate riches, not to become worldly-minded, not to pile up the things of this world which are perishable, to the injury of ourselves or to our detriment in our progress in the things of the kingdom of God. Is it right that we should take care of ourselves as a people and as individuals? Certainly. Is it right that we should be prudent, that we should take care of those gifts and blessings which God has given unto us, that we should husband our resources, that we should be economical, and not extravagant? Certainly; this is right, this is proper, we should be culpable if we were not so. But with this there is also something else required, and that is, to keep constantly in view that the management and care of these things is not the object that God had in sending us here, that is not the object of our probation. God has shown unto this people repeatedly—and there is scarcely an individual member of the Church who has not had experience in it—that he can give and he can take away. I have in my mind now many instances where men of wealth