

this knowledge today is more precious than any knowledge there is upon the face of the earth; for in the darkness, in the unbelief, in the denial of God, which is so common at the present time, the man who knows that God lives, that God hears and answers prayer, the woman who knows this occupies a very superior position and has great cause for thanksgiving and praise that such knowledge has been placed in his or her possession. Now Paul, who wrote this epistle from which I have read, understood this perfectly. His life, in many respects, resembles the lives of those who preceded him in the same career. In many of its features it resembles the lives of the prophets who lived before the days of the Savior; and the lives of the servants of God in this day in which we live have a strong resemblance to that of Paul and his fellow Apostles. Brother Woodruff has published a little work, called, "Leaves from my Journal," and in reading that book I have been very forcibly reminded of the lives of the ancient Apostles, it resembles them so much. You have doubtless thought, all of you, about the character of the men whom Jesus chose to be His Apostles. They were men who were stumblingblocks to their generation, for they did not belong to the popular classes. They were not learned men, they were not rich men—that is in the worldly sense of the word—they were not dignified men; and Jesus Himself, the Lord of life and of glory, was a constant stumblingblock to His generation. His origin was humble—although he came of a kingly line: his surroundings were mean and low; his reputed father a carpenter, and doubtless he himself worked at the business, and the men whom he chose were fishermen,

men of low degree, men of lowly origin; not scholars, not men of fine presence so far as worldly advantages were concerned. But he filled them with the power of God; he gave them the revelations of heaven; he taught them the plan of salvation; he sent them forth endowed with power from on high; and they effected a great revolution in the earth. They laid the foundation of a system that has accomplished marvelous results, and through their work the name of Christ has been spread throughout all the earth.

Have you not been frequently struck, my brethren and sisters, with the peculiar manner in which God called his people and his servants. It is not many wise, it is not many learned, it is not many noble who have been called as his servants. He called his Prophets wherever he could find them, and they were suited to his purpose. He called his Apostles and his disciples in the same manner. It seemed to be a necessity that the faith of the generations of men should be tried, that their confidence in God should be tested, to see whether they would be willing to receive his truth from any source however humble. It would not be any trial of a man's faith if some man possessing supreme power, who wielded wonderful influence, were to declare that what he said was the word of God unto the people—a man of popular honors, a man who could control all the people, who could make the system which he advocated popular and desirable among mankind, what trial would there be of a people's faith to embrace truth under such circumstances? But that has not been the course which God has taken with his people. He could have sent his Son Jesus Christ among men at a time and under