

circumstances that would have made his influence irresistible on the earth and among the people. He could have given him such power that men would have been compelled to have received him, but that was not the way in which the Lord did his work. He never did it in that manner. He never consulted men's views and their ideas respecting his work. He chose his instruments and he sent them as he desired under the circumstances which he deemed best adapted to accomplish his purposes. Therefore His Son Jesus was born—though as I have said deriving his descent from the kingly house of David—under circumstances that did not carry with them great influence. There was nothing about his birth or his surroundings to convince the inhabitants of the earth that he was the Son of God. They were left entirely to know this by the Spirit of God; they were left to derive this knowledge by seeking for it unto him who could bestow it upon them, and were not to be actuated by that which is called the popular voice; and in this way man's agency is tested to the very utmost. To illustrate the idea that I have on my mind, suppose that Jesus had been born under circumstances that mankind would have had to accept him as the Son of God; suppose his disciples had been under such circumstances and surrounded by such influences that mankind would have naturally followed them and accepted their doctrines without hesitation, because it would have been to their worldly interest to do so, would man's agency have been tested as it was in the days of the Savior? No, his agency would not have been tested. He had presented before him truth and error. Truth was not popular.

The espousal of truth was not of worldly advantage to men at that time. If he therefore espoused it, it would be because of his love for it, and for the blessings which would flow from it, and not because there would be any profit of a worldly character attending its espousal. There is a reason therefore for God sending many of his messengers as he has done. It was rarely that they were men who by their position could control the people and cause them to follow them naturally aside from the truth. We know how it was with many of the Prophets. They were unpopular. The truths that they declared did not add to their popularity, and it was a test of men and women's love for the truth when these men came among them, for when they espoused the truth they did it because of the love of the truth. God has evidently determined that when men and women embrace the truth, they shall embrace it for the love of it; that they shall not be converted by man's influence; that they shall not follow in the train of men because of some advantage that will accrue to them. Evidently, then, it is the will of God concerning us, that if we embrace the truth we must embrace it because we love it, not because of the instrument who brings it to us. We must be willing to receive it through whatever channel he may choose. If it be John the Baptist, if it be any of the disciples of the Savior, if it be Joseph Smith, if it be Brigham Young, if it be John Taylor, or any other man, no matter who the man may be, God chooses his own instruments, and he sends his truth to the earth in a way that he sees fit.

The most of those who are of adult years in this audience this day know how it was before they heard the sound of the Gospel as