

this Church, who comes from the nations of the earth, a living witness for himself and for herself, not depending upon the Elders, for the Elders could not do this, they could not offer the inducements, but every man and every woman becomes an interested person, a witness himself and herself to the truth of these things, and especially to the doctrine of gathering. Why the desire is so strong and has been in the hearts of the people that if it were necessary they would walk on foot any distance to join the gathered Saints. If they could walk on the water they would do it. They would push handcarts across the plains if they could not come across in any other way, carrying their packs on their backs. Why? Because the Spirit of God was poured out upon them, and it filled their hearts with this desire that I said is irrepressible. They could not be content to stay away.

In this way God has built up this Church. It did not, as we have often heard, depend upon one man. Men thought if they killed Joseph Smith they would destroy the keystone; that his existence was the means of upholding the work and giving it solidity. But he was killed, and still the work prospered, and it will prosper if every man that is now in position in the Church should be killed or should die. The testimony of Jesus is in the hearts of the people. You travel throughout the Territory, and call the people together and ask them: "What influence brought you here?" Everyone who is an adult, and has retained the faith, will tell you that it was the Spirit and power of God. No other influence nor power could have done this but that. Well, now, men will fight it, men are fighting it. It is strange today

to see people who call themselves religious, advocating all manner of means to be brought against this people to destroy them. To shed their blood is thought to be justifiable; the killing of people in order to destroy an organization that they think is so full of menace; and yet we are told in the Bible—and we have been taught it from childhood, that the righteous never persecute the wicked, but it has always been the case that the wicked persecute the righteous; and we are told by the Savior himself that his followers should be hated of all men, and that men in seeking to kill them would think they were doing God's service. It was not the Apostles of Jesus who persecuted the wicked, it was not the righteous who hated them and who sought their destruction. There were no petitions went out from the humble followers of Christ against the Pharisees and against the religious sects of that day to have them destroyed, to have governmental aid to assist them in extirpating their heresies; nothing of this kind has ever been witnessed, but here we find today the professedly righteous, the ministers, advocating the most dreadful measures. Why I heard here a few days ago from one of our returned missionaries that the sermon of a notorious preacher in the East, delivered some time since, in which he advocated the wiping out of the Latter-day Saints by the use of arms and cannon and weapons of war—I was told that the sermon when it reached England was reprinted and distributed gratuitously at the doors of the churches. People rejoiced over it, thought it an excellent scheme, and yet you tell those people they are not Christians and they would be shocked, feel insulted and think themselves terribly abused