

in the right way, and being humble enough to carry into effect the commandments which the Lord gives when he does manifest himself unto them, can obtain communication from on high by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, by dreams and visions, and by the visible manifestation of God's power in the midst of his people.

This is our testimony to the world, and it is for this that we are opposed; this is the ground work of the opposition applied to us in what is called the Christian world. For if the fact be admitted that the Latter-day Saints are the people of God and those who preside over them are the servants of God, that they receive communications from him, and that this is His Church, that would be to admit also that all other churches are the churches of men and not of Christ; that those who minister in them are not delegated of heaven and that the doctrines they teach are merely the doctrines and commandments of men. Thus our faith comes in contact with the established systems of Christendom.

Now, the Lord has made known to us a few simple truths in regard to our being—who we are, where we came from, what we are here for, where we are going to, and what is to be our final destiny. These things in our minds are not mere articles of faith, they are not myths, they are not mere opinions or sentiments, but they are to us, to use the language of Brother Bywater, "absolute truths;" they have been revealed from the Almighty, and are his word to us and not the say-so of men. God has borne testimony of the truth of them in our own hearts; and to us they have become absolute truths. We are not left in doubt about them; they are to us facts as

palpable as the fact of our existence.

I have not time to dwell upon this subject, but I will mention two or three facts that God has made known to us, and will leave them for the reflection of the congregation. God has made known to us, in the first place, that we—the real beings, the intelligent spirits which are entabernacled in these mortal frames—are the offspring of Deity, the children of God, as much so as our bodies are the offspring of the children of men; that just as men and women are the sons and daughters of men, so far as their earthly bodies are concerned, so the spirits which inhabit these bodies are beings born of the Almighty God in the eternal worlds. This spark of intelligence that exists in the human form is stricken off from the eternal flame of Deity; the children of men are the offspring of God. And when Jesus told his disciples, in addressing the throne of grace, to say, "Our Father who art in heaven," he said that which was absolutely true, not in a spiritual or Methodistical sense, but as an absolute fact. God is our Father, and we are his sons and daughters. Our earthly bodies are framed in the image of God; they are framed to fit our spirits which are the offspring of God, which are therefore in his image, according to the law that every seed brings forth its own kind. A comprehension of the offspring of God will therefore lead to an understanding of God Himself.

These spiritual beings now sojourning upon the earth in mortal tabernacles, dwelt in the bosom of eternity and were with the Eternal Father "when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy" on beholding the organization of this earth. We were there and we joined in the heavenly chorus. Said the Apostle