

and in time we shall have so far overcome as to really astonish ourselves at the progress we have made in self-government and improvement.

We have received a Gospel that is marvelous in its operations: through obedience to its requirements we may receive the choicest blessings that have ever been promised to or bestowed upon mankind in any age of the world. But, like the child with the toy or the plaything, we too often satisfy ourselves with the perishable things of time, forgetting the opportunities we have of developing within us the great, the eternal principles of life and truth. The Lord wishes to establish a closer and more intimate relationship between himself and us; He wishes to elevate us in the scale of being and intelligence, and this can only be done through the medium of the everlasting Gospel which is specially prepared for this purpose. Says the Apostle John: "Every man that has this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he (Christ) is pure." Are the Latter-day Saints applying the principles of the Gospel to their lives, and thus accomplishing the design of God?

We sometimes, though perhaps not to a great extent, trouble ourselves about some probable or possible persecution that our enemies may bring upon us. We look upon the past history of the Church and see that the Lord has suffered our enemies on certain occasions, to destroy our houses, despoil us of our property and drive us from one place to another. We say such things have been allowed; and we query in our minds, whether they will still be permitted to bring trouble upon us, and if so, to what extent. We acknowledge that God has blessed us—that he has given us houses and

lands, flocks and herds, and has put us in the way to obtain the conveniences and comforts of life. We, no doubt, appreciate our temporal condition, and would dislike very much to be deprived of these blessings we enjoy. And some wonder as to how far the hand of oppression will be allowed to disturb the quiet of our mountain homes, and whether we as individuals, will ever pass through what this people endured in early days. This is a matter that should not trouble the Saints of God particularly; but what to my mind is far more important is, what can we do under the circumstances to elevate ourselves still higher in the righteousness of our God. What advantages, blessings and privileges does this system of salvation, which we have obeyed, afford, and what means shall be employed to realize them? If there should be a sacrifice demanded it will be very opportune for all those who wish to make their religion a study, and who are endeavoring to conform to its requirements, by living it in their everyday life, to show their willingness to bow to the will of Jehovah, acknowledging his hand in adversity as in prosperity.

I remember very well the cloudy and stormy days of Kirtland, and how foolishly some people acted. There were men who occupied high standing in the Church, who disgraced themselves, having behaved in a manner which afterwards brought the blush of shame to their cheeks. There was a reason for that. Had they lived so that they could have offered up in their hearts David's prayer, they would not have been numbered among those who apostatized and fell in the hour of trial. It would be well to examine ourselves, hold communion with ourselves in the secret closet, to