

that the Latter-day Saints are not easily converted. You cannot convert a Latter-day Saint. You cannot change a Latter-day Saint into a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or a Roman Catholic, or cause him to join any other denomination upon the face of the earth. There is not wisdom nor power enough in the world to turn one Latter-day Saint from the truth; for every man, woman and child that is a Latter-day Saint has established in his or her heart a knowledge of the truth. They have a testimony of the truth from God. The father does not have this testimony for the son, or the mother for the daughter, or the priest for the people; but every individual member of the Church has a knowledge of the truth for himself. An honest man cannot turn from that which he knows to be true. An honest, virtuous, good man is willing to lay down his life for the truth. Indeed, men devoted to error are found willing to lay down their lives (and have so done in many instances), for it. How much more, then, will men be willing to lay down their lives for that which they know to be truth—for the Gospel of Christ. Have we a knowledge of the principles of truth? Yes. Do the Apostles depend upon President Taylor, who was so closely associated with the Prophet Joseph in his lifetime and at the time of his death, for a testimony of the truth? No. Is there any man dependent upon President Taylor for a knowledge of the truth? No. There is not a member of the Church dependent upon any man for a knowledge of the truth of this work. The early members of the Church never depended upon Joseph Smith for their testimony in regard to these things. It was not in the power of the Prophet to give that knowledge.

Jesus Himself—if I read the Scriptures correctly—had not the power to establish in the hearts of His own Apostles a knowledge of the truth, or even a knowledge of his own character. For when He enquired of Peter and the disciples as to who the world said He was, they answered Him that some said that He was Elias, some that He was John the Baptist arisen from the dead, etc. “But,” said He, “whom say ye that I am?” Peter answered and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Whereupon the Savior informed him that flesh and blood had not revealed that unto him, but His Father which is in heaven. Now, if there was a man at that time who could possibly obtain, in any other way, a knowledge as to who Jesus was and as to the truth of the work He established, that man was Peter. Such men as President Taylor, and the first Apostles of the Church, would have, if it were possible, obtained that knowledge from the Prophet Joseph. But none of these men obtained their knowledge in regard to these things in that way. And you may ask the Saints by the tens of thousands in the land of Zion today, as to how they learned Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God—although a great many of them never saw him, and yet there are many of them who knew him personally—and they will tell you that their knowledge of his character, mission and power, was given to them of the Lord. We have had this knowledge established in our hearts and we cannot fly it. We cannot close our eyes upon it. When we know what the truth is, we cannot fail to tell it; and there are people in the world today, that look upon us, perhaps, with no degree of allowance and consider us a very wicked people, that, if