

a hatred against the principles, hoping they were not true, fearing and trembling lest they were, I rejoiced with great joy, believing that the ancient principles of the Gospel were restored to the earth—that the authority to preach it was also restored. I rejoiced that my ears were saluted with these good tidings while I was yet a youth, and, in the day, too, of the early rising of the kingdom of God. I went forward and was baptized. I was the only individual baptized in that country for many years afterward. I immediately arranged my business and started off on a journey of two hundred and thirty miles to see the Prophet. I found him in the house of old father Whitmer, in Fayette, Seneca County, State of New York—the house where this Church was first organized, consisting of only six members. I also found David Whitmer, then one of the three witnesses who saw the angel and the plates.

I soon became acquainted with all the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, with the exception of Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, who had started westward, and whose acquaintance I formed a few months afterward. I heard their teachings, saw their course of conduct, saw their earnestness, their humility, and diligence in prayer, and their faithfulness in warning one another and in warning their neighbors.

I called upon the Lord with more faith than before, for I had then received the first principles of the Gospel. The gift of the Holy Ghost was given to me; and when it was shed forth upon me, it gave me a testimony concerning the truth of this work that no man can ever take from me. It is impossible for me, so long as I have my reasoning faculties and powers of mind, to doubt the testimony I then received as among the first evidences that were given,

and that, too, by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost. And while I am speaking upon the subject, let me say that the gift and power of the Holy Ghost given to an individual is the greatest evidence that he can receive concerning God, godliness, and the kingdom of heaven set up upon the earth. There is no evidence equal to it. A natural man may see all the signs that Jesus has promised should follow the believer; he may see them in exercise by the faithful Saints of God. He may see them speak in different tongues and languages, and then he may have his doubts in regard to it, if he has not received the testimony of the Holy Ghost himself. He may hear the sounds of these tongues; but how is he to judge or know whether they do speak in another tongue or not? It is true he hears sounds put together which resemble languages he has heard foreigners speak; but it is not a testimony that imparts a knowledge to his mind: he wants something greater than this. Again, he hears others, who are ignorant and unlearned, by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost interpret these tongues, and unfold the things spoken by the power of the Spirit of God in another language: but how does he know that they give the true interpretation? His own understanding will not testify that they have. He must, therefore, have a testimony independent of this—a higher, a greater testimony—even that of the Holy Spirit. Again, he might see individuals, professing to be followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, go forth and lay their hands upon the sick, and pray to the Father, in the name of Jesus, that they may be healed. He may see them raised up and apparently restored to health and soundness; but then, how does he know that these persons were really as sick and as much afflicted as they pretended to be? Seeing these