

And shall they so far forget themselves, as to spend their time in licentiousness, gambling, and seducing the innocent and unsuspecting, and in a variety of ways sow the seeds of sin and immorality, with impunity, and no man dare utter his protest? I tell you nay. With me, with this people you will have war, if needs be, upon this principle. It is incumbent upon us to use our influence for the preservation of ourselves, our wives, our children, our brethren, our sisters, and all of our society from the contaminating influence of vice, sin, immorality, and iniquity, let it emanate from where it will. If it exists in high places, so much the more need of rebuking it, for from thence it will do the most harm.

I claim this as a right, as a Constitutional right; I believe it is legal to exercise all the power and influence which God has given me for the preservation of virtue, truth, and holiness; and because we feel sensitive upon points such as these, should it be construed that we are enemies to the Federal Government? Our history proves that for such things we have been persecuted even unto death, but this deters me not. I would rather have God my friend, and all the world enemies, than be a friend with the world, and have God my enemy; and in this view of the case the Government should also be our friends, for assuredly in the preservation of virtue, morality, and intelligence she may look for the perpetuity of her free institutions, and the preservation of her liberty. And in the moment of her disregard of these principles, when wickedness and sin can run riot with impunity, and not moral influence and force enough be found in the people to check it, and walk it under foot, then may she reckon on a speedy downfall. When moral obligations cease to exert an influence, and virtue hides its face, and the un-

blushing effrontery of sin and foul corruption takes its place, then may the nation consider there is danger. "When the wicked rule, the people mourn."

This then is our position towards the Government of the United States, and towards the world, to put down iniquity, and exalt virtue; to declare the word of God which He revealed unto us, and build up His Kingdom upon the earth. And, *Know all men*, Governments, Nations, Kindreds, Tongues, and People, that this is our calling, intention, and design. We aim to live our religion, and have communion with our God. We aim to clear our skirts of the blood of this generation, by our faithfulness in preaching the truth of heaven in all plainness and simplicity; and I have often said, and repeat it now, that all other considerations of whatever name or nature, sink into insignificance in comparison with this. To serve God and keep His commandments, are first and foremost with me. If this is higher law, so be it. As it is with me, so should it be with every department of the Government; for this doctrine is based upon the principles of virtue and integrity; with it the Government, her Constitution, and free institutions are safe; without it no power can avert their speedy destruction. It is the lifegiving power to the government; it is the vital element on which she exists and prospers; in its absence she sinks to rise no more.

We now proceed to discuss the question, does our faith and practice—our holy religion, as we hold and believe it—come within the purview of the Constitution; or, in other words, is it a religious question over which the Constitution throws its protecting shield? It reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Ours is pecu-