

Bishops, or any other quorum or class of officers, if you will appoint meetings and have only those present whom we wish to be there, I will then tell you how to commence a reformation. I will there be particular and personal in my remarks, if necessary, and I will talk to you as severely as I already have to some of the quorums. Now then, morally reform. "In what?" In everything. Reform your moral character, and be at least as moral as you would if you belonged to a Methodist, Presbyterian, or Baptist church, or to the Roman Catholics: be as moral as those classes of people, for heaven's sake. Then there will be a chance for you to reform in spirit, and to get the light of eternity to shine upon your efforts.

There are a great many things to be taught and practiced. I have frequently thought that I would rather preach to and baptize new converts than to fashion over the old ones, for you can seldom get a good pattern out of them. Some will be full of seams and checks, and you never can make a sound piece out of them. If I had the material to work with I would rather make new ones, than patch up the old ones: but as we have not the new materials to work upon, we must patch up the old ones. Patch up yourselves—make your characters comely to each other. I am not so anxious about the Spirit; let a man walk as pure and holy as the Gods and angels, and then see if there will not be the light of eternity in him. Let a man or woman walk without spot or blemish and the Spirit and power of God Almighty will be with them all the time, and the angels of God will be round about them all the time, they will be preserved to do the will of God preparatory to an eternal exaltation.

Do not talk to me and tell me that you are so backslidden and dark, but reform and get the light of God within you. Some get up here and say, "I will live my religion, I will brethren; O pray for me, I will live my religion, if it costs me my life." Yes, some of the great men of Israel talk in that style. Some of the Presidents come here and say, "I will live my religion, God being my helper, if it takes away my life." When a man talks about his religion costing him his life, I want to ask that man if he has any common sense about him. Have you any true philosophy, argument, light, or intelligence in the least degree? "O yes, we are philosophers." Then ask yourselves from whence you derive your lives, your means, your property, everything you can enjoy in time and eternity. Do you receive them outside of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? No you do not. And still a man will get up here and say, "I will serve the Lord, if it costs me my life." I will say what I said yesterday, such a man is a fool. Such a man is condemned, and the wrath of God is upon him. His eyes are closed, and he is no more fit for a President of the Seventies, or any other quorum, than a red hot limekiln is for a powder house. Cut such a man off from the Church, for he has backslidden to that degree that nothing but death stares him in the face, when he looks to God and Christ with a view of keeping their law. We wish those rotten branches cut off from the Church, severed from the trunk of the tree; slash them off, and put a little wax on where you cut the limb off, that the wound may heal over, and the tree grow more thrifty. May the Lord bless us. Amen.