

the Anglo-Saxon race possesses more confidence in themselves and more worldly wisdom than any other nation upon the earth; yet take the people on the Sandwich and Society Islands, and the natives of these mountains and of North and South America, or of any country where there are natives in their idolatry—those whom we call ignorant, dark, benighted, lost, possessed of little or no knowledge, and let a person understanding the Priesthood visit them, and I will venture to say that he would find more and better traits of the Priesthood of God among them than can be found among the Christians. And though it may appear surprising and a matter hardly credible, yet even we are more or less under the power of traditions similar to those of the heathen.

There is a cause for their traditions, customs, and present practices. They have grown into their present idolatry through a neglect of the truth, through a proneness to wander and forget their God and true religion. Let this people backslide—lose their present faith and knowledge, and in after generations, perhaps, a few would cling to the Priesthood with all the vigor that we do, and would understand that the people were going into darkness, and would urge them to have some custom, some form, some representation or figure of their former faith and religion. What is commonly termed idolatry has arisen from a few sincere men, full of faith and having a little knowledge, urging upon a backsliding people to preserve some customs—to cling to some fashions or figures, to put them in mind of that God with whom their fathers were acquainted, without designing or wishing the people to worship an idol—to worship stocks, stones, beasts, and birds. Idols have been introduced, which are now worshipped, and have been for centuries and thousands of years; but they were

not introduced at once. They were introduced to preserve among the people the idea of the true God.

I have frequently said, and say again, that there are and always have been a great many in this Church that are not Saints. There are more "Mormons" than Saints; and there are different degrees and grades of "Mormons" and of Saints. There are many that are "Mormons" that are not Saints; and so it will be until Jesus comes to separate the sheep from the goats; or, in other language, until the Husbandman shall bid his servants gather the wheat into the barn, and the tares into bundles to be burned. This must be; this we all believe and can understand.

If we are not all Saints, the most of this people are trying to be. If we are not as perfect in our sphere as are the angels, we are trying to prepare ourselves to become so. We have not yet received our inheritances; but we are trying to prepare ourselves to be worthy to receive them. Yet it can readily be understood that if this people should backslide, they would, as others have, introduce an idolatrous worship. All Protestants accuse the Roman Catholic Church of worshipping idols. It is the practice of its members to carry a cross with them to worship the Virgin Mary. They have paintings and images in their chapels and other places of worship; and they are accused of worshipping these paintings and images, and that they are idolatrous worshippers. But those representations were introduced in the same way that a father would show his children that Jesus Christ is actually a man like their father, by showing them a figure representing Jesus as extended upon the cross, and saying, "This gives you, my children, an idea that he was a man." Now, let those children, when saying their prayers, have that representation before them, and