

of every good thing; and the heavens and the earth are created for us: therefore be prudent and not covetous; do not cling to property because it is in your possession. Do I own a house? No. I am in possession of houses. I left a good many houses that were in my possession in Nauvoo. I left a number in like manner in Kirtland. I did not leave many houses in Missouri, but I left a number of pieces of land, and there they remain. I received nothing for them, neither do I want anything. Why? Because the Lord has blest me with ability to bring forth the elements and organize them for my own convenience; and if I was stripped and kicked out now, I would be richer in ten years than I ever was. When the gold or silver dollar goes into my pocket, it is not mine: the Lord in his providence places it there, and it is for Him to say what I shall do with it. Do you practice this course? If you do, you do not complain. If our legislators understood this, they would never complain for the people. You ask why I take up this subject. That you may be instructed—that a legislator may not be so unwise as to introduce a bill that taxes be paid in anything that cannot be sold for money.

The people are not as they used to be in regard to tithing. In the days of Joseph, when a horse was brought in for tithing, he was pretty sure to be hipped, or ringboned, or have the poll evil, or perhaps had passed the routine of horse diseases until he had become used up. The question would be, "What do you want for him?" "Thirty dollars in tithing and thirty in cash." What was he really worth? Five dollars, perhaps. They would perhaps bring in a cow after the wolves had eaten off three of her teats, and she had not had a calf for six years past; and if she had a calf, and you ventured to milk her, she

would kick a quid of tobacco out of your mouth. These are specimens of the kind of tithing we used to get. If you give anything for the building up of the kingdom of God, give the best you have. What is the best thing you have to devote to the kingdom of God? It is the talents God has given you. How many? Every one of them. What beautiful talents! What a beautiful gift! It is more precious than fine gold that I can stand here and give you my ideas, and you can rise up and tell me what you think and feel, and thus exchange our ideas. It is one of the precious gifts bestowed upon human beings. Let us devote every qualification we are in possession of to the building up of God's kingdom, and you will accomplish the whole of it.

A few Sabbaths ago, brother Wells was strenuously talking to you in regard to temperance. No man has a right on the earth, and certainly not in this kingdom, to spend his means and time in drunkenness. Every moment of time belongs to the Lord, and the people demand it. Here are young men stepping on to the stage of action, of whom you have never heard an evil. And every little while one begins to come into note, and it seems as though he had dropped from unfathomable space. "Who is he?" "Such a brother's son." "I never heard of him." What are my calculations? That he is a good man—that he is not a rowdy in the streets. A host are growing up in this way: they spring up like lovely plants, trees, or flowers. Now, young brothers and sisters, is there anything against your characters? Not anything. If you were in possession of all the wealth in the world, it is not worth so much to you as your good characters. Preserve them. If you have a happy influence with your brethren and sisters, preserve it, for it is more choice than fine gold. How