

minent reformers, we find that a great many sects and parties have since then taken the same liberty with their creeds and formulas, which they took with their mother church; and they have generally used the same kind of argument, namely, if it was right and proper for the first reformers to protest against the doings, acts, ordinances, and proceedings of the church which had by them been considered heretofore as the only Christian Church, and to protest against the acts of its Priesthood, and the doings of the people, it was proper also for other reformers to arise and correct those first reformers on many doctrines, views and principles that they may have entertained. This kind of spirit having been inaugurated and adopted, like leaven, it has worked, increased and spread, until great numbers of sects and parties have appeared through Christendom, all claiming the same rights that the first reformers exercised, in correcting what they believed to be wrong and unscriptural.

With us, Latter-day Saints, it is very different. We have never claimed any affinity or connection with, or professed to derive any power or authority from, any of the parties, no matter what name they may bear, nor to any of the Dissenters who have separated themselves from them. We have never professed an adherence to any of those principles that have been promulgated by others. The origin of our faith is that God has spoken, that, in the midst of conflicting opinions which prevailed with regard to him, he has thought proper to settle that question once and for all by the revelation of his will to the human family. Hence, we as Latter-day Saints have based our faith upon these revelations, given originally to

Joseph Smith, and taught by those who have been ordained and set apart by him, and who have gone forth as messengers to the nations of the earth to proclaim *not* what somebody else said in former times only, not to make known what other men have done in other dispensations alone; but to reveal to the human family what the will of God is concerning them. This is the position we occupy as Latter-day Saints. If we have any ideas of a God, we have obtained them through these revelations, if we have a worship which is accepted of God, it is because the Lord has dictated as to its form and manner; if we have a Priesthood, it is because some of the ancient Priesthood who existed heretofore on the earth and now administer in the heavens, have come and conferred, upon man on the earth, this authority; if we have ordinances of any kind, it is not because other people have received these ordinances through whom we have obtained them, but because God has revealed them to us direct; and if we have various officers in the Church, it is not because we have copied after any other church or people, but, because God has told us what his order is, what his law is in relation to these matters, and the proper manner of government to conduct and direct the affairs of God upon the earth. It is in short the revelation of the will of God to man in these the last days.

Now without any kind of circumlocution, these are some leading prominent features of our faith. Predicated upon these the quorums of Priesthood associated with our Church have been established, which are the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles, High Priests, Seventies, Elders, Bishops, Priests, Teachers, Deacons and Patriarchs, with all