

doctrine, but would hire teachers to preach for the commandments of God the precepts of men; when the world would be turned upside down and be emptied of its inhabitants, because they had transgressed the law, changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant. This was to be the condition of the world when these gifts and blessings would be said to be no longer needed. They could no longer lay claim to them because they would persecute, oppress and put to death those who preached sound doctrine; and having destroyed the temporal Church from the face of the earth, its spiritual counterpart would necessarily depart, just as naturally as the spirit of man will depart when the body ceases to live. The body is but a lump of clay without the enlivening agency of the spirit within it. When the body returns to dust, the spirit is free to soar away. When the body of Christ was dead, the spirit returned to God, passed into the spirit world. So it is with the Church, which is called the body of Christ. Kill the temporal Church, and the spirit Church will take its departure; it will be received into the heavens.

This is our belief; that the Christian Church, established in the days of Christ and His Apostles, apostatized and turned from the truth, it became paganized, mixed up with the religion and traditions of pagan Rome, and that that is the cause of this wide diversity of beliefs and conjectures, these many forms of godliness, denying the power thereof; which are said to be the Church of Christ, yet bear little or no semblance to the Church which He established; all claiming to be one, yet divided innumera- bly; to have the same Gospel, yet not able to stand the test of comparison with

the Gospel preached in former days; claiming the same power, yet repudiating and denying that power and trampling upon those who still maintain that it ought to exist. This is the consistency of the position of the opponents of "Mormonism," which claims to be the old Gospel brought back again, the old Church resurrected, no new religion, no new plan, but simply the everlasting Gospel revealed anew.

I might occupy your time citing evidences almost innumerable to show how the Christian world have departed from the teachings of this sacred Book. I might appeal to it, also, to confirm the teachings of the Latter-day Saints. It is an old story, many times told, and perhaps I had better not dilate upon it this afternoon. Suffice it that we claim that God has spoken from heaven; that He has reopened the long-closed portals of eternity, and has raised up a people to usher in the dispensation of Gospel grace as He has headed every dispensation which has preceded it; raising up inspired men to do His bidding; to preach to the world the principles of everlasting life; to establish upon the earth a system which will foreshadow and usher in the millennial reign of universal peace and righteousness. We believe that we are living in the last days; that these are the days when God said He would perform a marvelous work and a wonder; that He would set His hand the second time to recover the remnant of his people; that He would gather them from the north and from the south, from the east and from the west, and would bring them to Zion, and give them pastors after His own heart, to teach them the law of the Lord, and that the law should go forth from Zion to the inhabitants of the