

larly suited to the nature of the work we are called to perform, that it might be hastened to its consummation. It is a righteous principle, not an unrighteous one. It is a pure and holy principle; and, therefore, persons, either male or female, who have not the desire in their hearts to become pure and righteous, have no business to practice it, for it cannot be practiced acceptably before God on any other principle than that of purity and righteousness, therefore no wicked, unjust or impure person can enter into the law of celestial or plural marriage without incurring the displeasure of the Almighty and his own condemnation before the Lord, unless he speedily repent of all his impure motives and designs. A man that is not honest in his heart, who does not desire to be just and impartial, even as God is just and impartial, has no business in plural marriage; and before he enters into the practice of that principle he needs to repent, to learn wisdom, to get the Spirit of God, to get understanding in relation to the purpose God has in view in regard to this principle; that he may go into the practice of it understandingly, that his heart and mind may be set upon practicing it in righteousness. It is a difficult matter, I am aware, to distinguish between the actions of a man and the principles in which he professes to believe. A corrupt, ungodly hypocrite can do more injury in the midst of a people, in a given length of time, correspondingly, than a host of upright men can do good. Send an Elder to preach the Gospel among the nations, and let him degrade himself, dishonor his priesthood and calling, and he will bring more reproach upon the cause misrepresented by him, than twenty good men could remove. Because people generally look at the man. To judge him by his acts would be right-

eous judgment: but to condemn the Gospel or the Saints, because of his acts, would be unjust; yet the cause he misrepresents suffers wrong because of his connection with it. A man's acts may justly be considered as resulting from his principles. We judge a tree by its fruits. The fruits of the Gospel are good; he that has actually embraced the Gospel will do good, only so far as he may err, or depart therefrom. Hence, it is difficult to separate a man's actions from his principles.

There is no difficulty, however, in this matter to those who always bear in mind, that evil and corrupt practices are not the results of obedience to the Gospel, but of disobedience, and of the perversion of the truth. If we would keep this in our minds we would not cast blame upon the principles themselves when we see or hear of men, who should represent them, do wrong; but we would rather say, the man has departed from his principles and gone into error. It is he that is defective, through not practicing what he professes; the principles are good and holy, and he himself would become so too, if he would but practice them.

It is precisely so in relation to our domestic relations. We see trouble in families occasionally, not any more so in plural than in single families. There is no reason why there should be any difference between the husband and wife, or husband and wives, in the midst of this people, if all are disposed to obey the principles and doctrines of the Gospel. It is only by the practice of these principles that we can avoid the disturbances that occur in families, or among mankind. We must learn and obey correct principle, or we will ever be in turmoil and confusion, and in antagonism one towards another. Where differences exist in families