

Contention

There is a difference between contending for the truth and having the “spirit” or attitude of contention (3 Ne 11:29).

I. Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 32–33.

We learn by Elder Phelps, that the brethren have surrendered their arms to the Missourians, and are fleeing across the river. If that is the case, it is not meet that they should recommence hostilities with them; but, if not, you should maintain the ground as long as there is a man left, as the spot of ground upon which you were located, is the place appointed of the Lord for your inheritance, and it is right in the sight of God that you **contend** for it to the last.

History of the Church, Vol. 3, Ch. 6, p. 59.

From the best information, about one hundred and fifty Missourians warred against from six to twelve of our brethren, who fought like lions. Several Missourians had their skulls cracked. Blessed be the memory of those few brethren who **contended so strenuously** for their constitutional rights and religious freedom, against such an overwhelming force of desperadoes!

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 129.

We say unto you, brethren, be not afraid of your adversaries; **contend earnestly against** mobs, and the unlawful works of dissenters and of darkness.

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 179.

The work in which we are unitedly engaged is one of no ordinary kind. The enemies we have to **contend against** are subtle and well skilled in maneuvering;

it behooves us to be on the alert to concentrate our energies, and that the best feelings should exist in our midst; ...

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 197.

Upon the same principle do I **contend** that baptism is a sign ordained of God, for the believer in Christ to take upon himself in order to enter into the kingdom of God.

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 203.

“Try the spirits,” but what by? Are we to try them by the creeds of men? What preposterous folly — what sheer ignorance — what madness! Try the motions and actions of an eternal being (for I **contend** that all spirits are such) by a thing that was conceived in ignorance, and brought forth in folly — a cobweb of yesterday! Angels would hide their faces, and devils would be ashamed and insulted, and would say, “Paul we know, and Jesus we know, but who are ye?” Let each man of society make a creed and try evil spirits by it, and the devil would shake his sides; it is all that he would ask — all that he would desire.... for I **contend** that if one man cannot understand these things but by the Spirit of God, ten thousand men cannot ...

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 305.

Contend earnestly for the like precious faith with the Apostle Peter ...

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 306.

In answer to yours of May 4th,

concerning the Latter-day Saints forming a temperance society, we would say, as Paul said — “Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers, but **contend** for the faith once delivered to the Saints”; ...

Lectures on Faith, Lecture 6, 11.

... through the knowledge thus obtained their faith became sufficiently strong to lay hold upon the promise of eternal life, and to endure as seeing Him who is invisible; and were enabled, through faith, to combat the powers of darkness, **contend against** the wiles of the adversary, overcome the world, and obtain the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls.

Lectures on Faith, Lecture 6, 12.

... and where faith is weak their persons will not be able to **contend against** all the opposition, tribulations, and afflictions which they will have to encounter in order to be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ Jesus; and they will grow weary in their minds, and the adversary will have power over them and destroy them.

II. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*

2:214. I regret to say that the idea has prevailed very largely in some quarters that a person who is good, but perhaps has never done anything very much, is suitable to act as a worker in genealogical work, either in the stake or in the ward. That idea, of course, is being overcome. But we have had to **contend** with that, more or less, in some stakes and some wards, because the presiding officers, perhaps the bishop, has felt that this was an honorary position only, and therefore he could call into this organization someone merely to give him a little honor, where there would be no labor attached to it.

3:56. This is a day when we are in grave danger — danger because of the

teachings of men, danger because of the lack of faith in the hearts of men, because the philosophies of the world have a tendency to undermine the fundamental things of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These are things we must **contend against**.

3:301–302. Many things are tolerated today that would not have been tolerated for a moment 20 years ago. New problems have arisen with which we must now **contend** that we never dreamed of even in the days of my youth. We have evils in the world now to **combat** that have been brought into existence through modern invention and discovery ...

III. Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places*, 367.

The Master did not directly answer that question, “Are there few that be saved?” But He answered, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate.” Strive means to struggle in opposition or **contention, to contend**, to battle for or against a person or thing opposed, to strive against temptation, and to strive for truth.