

How should we as a Church respond to critics, whether “pessimists” or “devotees”?
 With persuasion, with long-suffering, with gentleness and meekness;
 with love unfeigned, with kindness, with pure knowledge.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

J. Frederic Voros Jr.

I GREW UP IN A HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. I WAS reared by my mother, who was a professor of speech, a college debate coach, and a biblical literalist. We argued often: about politics, about religion, and about social issues. But in our home, argument was never viewed as a means of merely triumphing over your opponent or of causing division, and certainly not of belittling or harming another person. So that while my mother and I argued often, we never quarreled.

Later each of us joined the Church because we were convinced that Joseph Smith was a true prophet and that the gospel and the Church were restored through him. It never occurred to us that the presence of revelation, either through him or through later prophets, should entail the absence of open discussion.

And yet many Mormons seem to believe that. And they claim authoritative support. In the April 1989 general conference, Elders Russell M. Nelson and Dallin H. Oaks delivered addresses¹ which many Mormons read as hostile to open discussion of Mormonism within the Church. I do not read them so broadly, especially in view of Elder Oaks's statement, “Members of the Church are free to participate [in] or to listen to any alternate voices they choose. . . .”² I believe those talks can best be understood as offering guidelines for exercising our freedom to speak, not as prohibitions against speaking. I cannot believe that God would have his saints check their right to speak at the door of the household of faith. And although several doctrines of the restored gospel are frequently cited in support of that view, I believe that none offers much support, and most actually militate against it.

CONTENTION

SOME maintain that disputation, especially doctrinal disputation, is inherently evil. This view is sometimes supported

with reference to scriptural passages such as 3 Nephi 11:28-29, which both Elder Oaks and Elder Nelson cited in their talks. It reads:

And there shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been. For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

At first blush, this scripture seems inconsistent with the many instances in the ancient and modern church of apostles, prophets, and saints reasoning, disputing, even debating.

For example, disputation was the Apostle Paul's stock in trade. In Thessalonica, “Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures” (Acts 7:2). In Athens, he “disputed . . . in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him” (Acts 17:17). In Corinth, “he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks” (Acts 18:4). In Ephesus, “he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8). And this, we are told, is how “all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10).

There are also notable examples in this dispensation. For instance, in 1870 a Methodist minister named the Reverend Dr. J. P. Newman traveled to Salt Lake City and challenged President Brigham Young to debate the topic, “Does the Bible Sanction Polygamy?” President Young responded,

If you think you are capable of proving the doctrine of “plurality of wives” unscriptural, tarry here as a missionary; we will furnish you the suitable place, the congregations, and plenty of our elders, any of whom will discuss with you on that or any other scriptural doctrine.³

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After considerable preliminary maneuvering, a debate was finally held between Newman and Orson Pratt. It lasted two hours a day for three consecutive days. Attendance on the final day was estimated at 11,000 people.⁴

But the most interesting example is Jesus himself. By his own statement, he sat daily teaching in the temple (Matthew 26:55). And as he sat there, he fielded subtle, difficult, even insincere questions. And while the hypocrisy of his critics angered him, he never intimidated that they should not question or even argue with him. He answered all, and sometimes thunderously. Consider this diatribe from the Prince of Peace:

Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? . . . But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God:

these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them. (Luke 11:39-44.)

The passion of this passage becomes even clearer when we turn it upon ourselves. Consider this paraphrase, which I offer solely for purposes of illustrating tone:

You self-righteous Mormons have a clean public image, but your hearts are greedy and dark. You fools, don't you see that you have to be clean clear through? Woe unto you, for although you scrupulously pay a full tithe, you act unjustly and do not love God. You should act justly, love God, and pay your tithing, too. Woe unto you, who love to sit on the stand at church and be recognized in the business community. What hypocrites! You are like underground toxic waste dumps, invisibly contaminating unsuspecting passersby.

Now, I do not believe God wants us to talk to one another in

this tone. God may know another's heart, and he may call an occasional wild man, such as an Isaiah or a Samuel the Lamanite, to rebuke Israel, but most of us should converse in the spirit of the parable of the mote and the beam. Still, the passage is instructive as an illustration of acceptably "contentious" speech.

These examples, typical of hundreds more, do not violate Third Nephi. That passage speaks of "the spirit of contention," which is the desire to stir up people's hearts in anger against one another. It is, as Elder Oaks teaches, the spirit of wrath, strife, and reviling.⁵ Conversation in that spirit, even if polite, is evil; in contrast, disputation whose purpose is to get at the truth, and which is couched in a spirit of love, is not condemned, however contentious it may sound.

Joseph Smith drew the following distinction after observing "an interesting debate of three hours or more" on the topic, Was it Christ's design to establish his gospel by miracles? Joseph recorded:

I discovered in this debate, much warmth displayed, to much zeal for mastery, to much of that enthusiasm that characterizes a lawyer at the bar, who is determined to defend his cause right or wrong. I therefore availed myself of this favorable opportunity, to drop a few words upon this subject, by way of advise, that they might improve their minds and cultivate their powers of intellect in a proper manner, that they might not incur the displeasure of heaven, that they should handle sacred things verily sacredly, and with due deference to the opinions of others, and with an eye single to the glory of God.⁶

Notice that he did not forbid debating, or even suggest that to do so was inconsistent with the gospel or his own prophetic calling. He decried the perverse and egocentric attitude that would place a higher value on victory than on truth. To avoid this "spirit of contention," he offered some "advice" for improving the debates: handle sacred things sacredly, respect others' opinions, and act with an eye single to the glory of God.

Elder Nelson offered similar advice in April 1989. He counseled to "bridle the passion to speak or write contentiously for personal gain or glory" and to esteem others better than ourselves, which, he suggested, "would then let us respectfully



Unfortunately, in Mormonism there seems to have emerged a false dichotomy: there are loyal members, who avoid difficult issues and express only praise of the Church, and there are its enemies.

disagree without being disagreeable."⁷ This statement echoes Joseph's declaration that "equal rights & privileges are my motto, and one man is as good as another, if he behaves as well, and that all men should be esteemed alike, without regard to distinctions of an official nature."⁸ This should indeed be our goal. What a glorious day it would be if each Latter-day Saint, whether apostle or prospective elder, single or married, male or female, wealthy or on welfare, east side or west side, esteemed others better than himself. Surely this is the best foundation for loving, truth-seeking disputation.

REVELATION

CONTINUING revelation is probably the most commonly cited ground for condemning open discussion within Mormonism. Some would say that the heart of Mormonism is continuing revelation; that it is the specific role of the apostles and prophets to bring forth and promulgate that revelation to the general Church; that the concomitant role of ordinary members (those not sustained as apostles and prophets) is to obey this revelation and those through whom it comes; and therefore, that open discussion of a Church doctrine or policy is unnecessary at best and, at worst, tantamount to denying the faith.⁹

One danger in this position is that it subtly invites the saints to equate revelation and infallibility, an equation which finds no basis in Mormon doctrine. In fact, Brigham Young denounced the concept of the infallible leader as a false secular notion and warned against importing it into the Church. In contrasting the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of God, he stated:

No matter what the king does, we as his subjects must say that the king does right and cannot do wrong. That you know very well to be the feelings and teachings of the nations of the earth. The king cannot do wrong, and of course he is not to be rebuked. And when he sends his princes, his ministers, his messengers, to perform duties for him, they say to the people to whom they go—"The king can do no wrong; his agents can do no wrong." . . . These are the feelings and these the teachings and belief, and not only the belief, but the practice. *It is not so in this kingdom; it must not be so; it cannot be so; it has not been so; . . .*¹⁰

Recent statements by general authorities reiterate Brigham Young's position. "We who have been called to lead the Church are ordinary men and women with ordinary capacities," declared Elder Boyd K. Packer,¹¹ while Elder James E. Faust asserted, "We make no claim of infallibility or perfection in the prophets, seers, and revelators."¹²

Revelation and discussion play different roles in the household of faith. The president of the Church is less like the king who can do no wrong than he is like the speaker of the English House of Commons. The speaker was not called the speaker because only he spoke while everyone else remained silent, but because he traditionally acted as the "common mouth" of the

House in speaking to the king. And, of course, he would convey messages from the king to the House.¹³ His presence did not end debate; as often as not, it instigated it.

If Mormonism has a message for the rest of Christianity, it is that human thought is no substitute for revelation. But in proclaiming that truth we must not lose sight of its converse: revelation is no substitute for thought. Those who think this, in my opinion, betray their own relative disinterest in revelation. For those with a hunger for the word of God, a new or newly discovered revelation doesn't end the discussion, it starts it. Like youthful kisses, revelations stimulate more than they satisfy. A person with a passing interest in the First Vision may be satisfied with a single account, but a true disciple wants to read all the accounts, compare them, and contemplate them. Joseph Smith himself was such a person. "If I have sinned, I have sinned outwardly," he declared, "but surely I have contemplated the things of God."¹⁴

It is of course a settled tenet of Mormonism that only revelations received through the earthly head of the Church are binding upon the general Church, subject to the consent of the membership. But to a seeker after truth, the statement that it is the prophet's role to bring forth revelation for the Church is less a reprimand than a promise. Such a person subscribes to the word of the Lord through Jeremiah: "If a prophet has a dream, let him tell his dream; if he has my word, let him speak my word faithfully" (Jeremiah 25:28, Revised English Bible).

Furthermore, that true principle does not exclude the possibility of some rather inspired braying from a Balaam's Ass or two in the midst of the flock. In fact, that is precisely what the gospel program contemplates. In the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord announced:

The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh—But that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world. . . . (D&C 1:19-20.)

In other words, God's plan for the household of faith is not to have one prophet and many followers, but to have many prophets, each speaking in the name of the Lord. In this spirit, when Moses was told by an agitated young man that two men were prophesying in the camp, Moses ignored Joshua's counsel to forbid them and responded, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" (Numbers 11:27-29).

Can it possibly be the Lord's plan to make all his people prophets but prevent them from speaking? Your sons and your daughters may prophesy, your old men may dream dreams, and your young men see visions (Joel 2:28), but who will know? And who will be edified? Are we of the household of faith to shut ourselves up in different rooms, without sharing whatever insights may come to us, including those from the Lord?

Of course, we cannot know in advance who will speak in the name of the Lord and who will merely speak. This is why

Joseph insisted that “every man has the right to be a false as well as a true prophet.”¹⁵ But we do know that if none speak, none will speak in the name of the Lord.

CRITICISM

ANOTHER reason given for limiting free speech within the Church is the idea that discussion implies criticism, which implies disloyalty, so that people who discuss a doctrine, policy, or historical event may be dismissed as enemies or critics. We who are of the household of faith must be loyal to the Church. But loyalty can take many forms. Unfortunately, in Mormonism there seems to have emerged a false dichotomy: there are loyal members, who avoid difficult issues and express only praise of the Church, and there are its enemies. As a friend of mine once remarked, “the Church recognizes only two modes of address: attack and panegyric.”

If this is true, we have not thought carefully enough about criticism. The audacious Christian G. K. Chesterton divided critics into three types: the pessimist, the optimist, and the devotee. “The evil of the pessimist,” wrote Chesterton, is “not that he chastises gods and men, but that he does not love what he chastises—he has not this primary and supernatural loyalty to things.”¹⁶ We might call this pessimist the enemy of the Church: he desires not to heal, but to hurt.

In contrast, the optimist can love only by denying all faults: “wishing to defend the honour of this world, will defend the indefensible. He is the jingo of the universe; he will say, ‘My cosmos, right or wrong.’” Consequently, the optimist “will be less inclined to the reform of things; more inclined to a sort of front-bench official answer to all attacks, soothing every one with assurances. He will not wash the world, but whitewash the world.”¹⁷ This is the Mormon who denies all doctrinal ambiguity, all inconvenient historical events, all institutional problems, all social concerns.

Finally, there is the devotee, who loves in spite of faults:

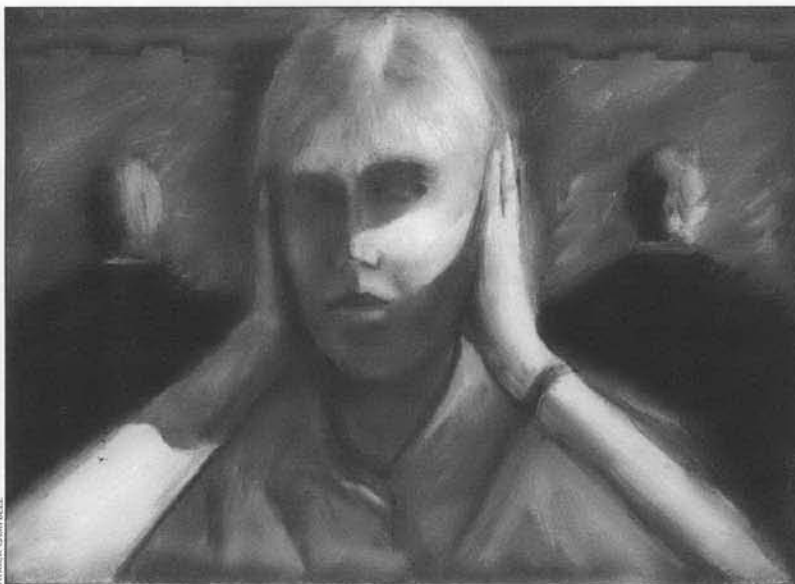
The devotee is entirely free to criticize; the fanatic can safely be a sceptic. Love is not blind; that is the last thing that it is. Love is bound; and the more it is

bound the less it is blind.¹⁸ Mormonism has its devotees, Saints who discuss Mormonism out of loyalty to it. Anyone who does not see the Church’s problems cannot love it very much.

I attended a Mormon Women’s Forum presentation on women and the priesthood, and I heard quite a few comments and questions from audience members, women and men alike.

Some were very angry at the Church, and one or two had even left it. I heard comments which, coming from enemies of the Church, would have made me angry. Coming from its children, they made me sad. I heard many people who loved the Church but felt that the Church did not reciprocate their love.

The temptation is to lose patience with people like this. They are not really at odds with the Church, but always seem to be at cross purposes with it. I’m sure we who gather at the Sunstone Symposium to talk and talk and talk must appear to some Church leaders as unruly children who can’t keep focused on the task of



I’m sure we who gather at the Sunstone Symposium to talk and talk and talk must appear to some Church leaders as unruly children who can’t keep focused on the task of living the gospel.

living the gospel. But amazingly, some of our talking may be of practical benefit to the Church. The bedeviling fact is that sometimes the critic actually has a solution.

We learned this in our family. Every Sunday night we hold a family council.¹⁹ After the opening prayer, each person gives a sincere compliment to some other family member. After we have a devotional presentation and plan the coming week’s events, we come to the guts of the meeting: the agenda. Anyone who has a grievance about how something is being handled in the family, or the way they are being treated, writes it on the agenda during the week. In our meeting we discuss each agenda item until we reach a consensus.

One week an agenda item was “milk.” My oldest son, who rises early, was leaving the milk out on the kitchen counter, so that everyone else had to eat their cereal with warm milk. I suppose I could have said, “Look, I am the father of this family. It is my right to get revelation for the family. You must obey. When I speak, the discussion ends. And I say: whoever gets the milk out puts it back.” But instead, in keeping with our rules, we respectfully disputed.

I began. “Look,” I said, “there are only two options: either the person who got the milk out puts it back, or the person

who used it last puts it back.” This was the voice of one who does not actually eat cereal in the morning. No, they said, neither rule works: if the person who gets the milk out has to put it back, he will put it back even if his brother or sister is standing beside him, and then that person will have to get the milk out again and so on down through all of us: not an efficient result. On the other hand, if the burden is on the last person to use it, it will never get put away, since everyone will claim they thought someone else hadn’t eaten breakfast.

Then my ten-year-old son Christopher said, “Here’s what I think we should do: the person who gets the milk out has to put it away, unless someone else is there and asks to use it. Before giving the milk to that person, the first person asks, ‘will you put it away?’ If the other person says he will, then it becomes his responsibility.” This is now the rule, and the milk is (almost) always put away.

My wife and I haven’t abdicated authority over our children; they know the ultimate authority is ours. What we have done is give them a voice in its exercise. And we have noticed improvements in the family. One is that the family runs more smoothly. Another is that the children feel better about the family because they know, at least once a week, their views and feelings, regardless how critical, will be respectfully considered. The desire to be heard is inherent in the human spirit, and it is not evil.

Some things are dangerous to ignore. Pain is the body’s feedback system. It tells you which member needs help. You ignore your own pain at your peril. Criticism is institutional pain. Any institution, whether family, church, or nation, that suppresses feedback from its own members is unhealthy, and likely to stay that way.

An excellent recent illustration of this phenomenon is the pre-1989 Soviet Union. Eugene Methvin, in a 1987 article entitled “Soviet Dystopia,” wrote:

Gorbachev is trying to cope with the ultimate source of the crisis of any totalitarian system: Soviet feedback channels are clogged. One cannot have the benefits of independent critics without conceding some immunity to those critics, and accepting some limits on the government’s power to silence them. The utility of free speech is evident, it seems, to Gorbachev. But “the fleas come with the dog.” One cannot enjoy the fruits of freedom without freedom, or its efficiencies without its discomforts. . . . This is Gorbachev’s dilemma, and it is insoluble: he cannot be both infallible and informed.²⁰

The Soviet Union has traditionally punished public criticism under a pernicious law condemning “anti-Soviet behavior.” This law ignores the fact that most Soviet dissidents are not anti-Soviet at all, but patriots trying to improve their country and, with it, their own lives.

Obviously, the fact that loyal critics exist does not mean that disloyal ones do not. There are people, and some may even be Church members, who seek to undermine its doctrines and leaders and subvert its mission. And in our not-too-distant past, the attacks launched by such people were literally

murderous. It is understandable that we Mormons would be sensitive to anything that even slightly resembles persecution.

So, how should we as a Church respond to critics, whether “pessimists” or “devotees”? The Lord has already told us: with persuasion, with long-suffering, with gentleness and meekness; with love unfeigned, with kindness, with pure knowledge; by reproof with sharpness only when moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and by showing thereafter an increase of love toward that person. Our spiritual authority depends on it.

UNITY

ANOTHER reason frequently given for restricting free speech is that it destroys unity.²¹ The Lord has said, “if ye are not one, ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27). However, if people disagree in their hearts, and are only silent by command, they are not truly united. They may have the image of unity, but the mere image of unity can hardly be what the Lord desires for us.

The Christian psychiatrist Scott Peck has made a study of community, within both Christian and religiously diverse groups. He describes a group seeking the image of community as a “pseudocommunity.” He writes:

Pseudocommunity is conflict-avoiding; true community is conflict-resolving. . . . In pseudocommunity it is as if every individual member is operating according to the same book of etiquette. The rules of this book are: Don’t do or say anything that might offend someone else; if someone does or says something that offends, annoys, or irritates you, act as if nothing has happened and pretend you are not bothered in the least; and if some form of disagreement should show signs of appearing, change the subject as quickly as possible—rules that any good hostess knows. It is easy to see how these rules make for a smoothly functioning group. But they also crush individuality, intimacy, and honesty, and the longer it lasts the duller it gets.²²

I’m sure you have known Sunday School teachers who ran their classes according to Peck’s book of etiquette, and with the result he predicts.

Needless to say, true community is impossible so long as we are satisfied with pseudocommunity. And a group intent on avoiding disagreement at all costs condemns itself to remain a pseudocommunity. Similarly, true unity will continue to elude us so long as we insist upon the appearance of unity. True community, true unity, must be based upon mutual respect and a willingness to accord to each group member an equal right to speak his or her heart and mind, even though the responsibility for a final decision reposes in the priesthood authority.

PERSONAL PROGRESS

THE most deceptive misconception about free discussion is that it inevitably sidetracks spiritual progress. Admittedly, free discussion has its perils. Intellectual inquiry may be

dangerous to your faith. Scholarship requires a detachment that is at odds with the passion of the disciple. Imagine a careful historian assiduously recording each detail of the crucifixion—the construction of the cross, the location, size, and nature of Jesus' wounds, the name and rank of each Roman soldier—while John and the Marys weep in anguish. Such a scholar would, as T. S. Eliot wrote, have “had the experience, but missed the meaning.”²³ Even God can be reduced to an artifact, and his saints to specimens.

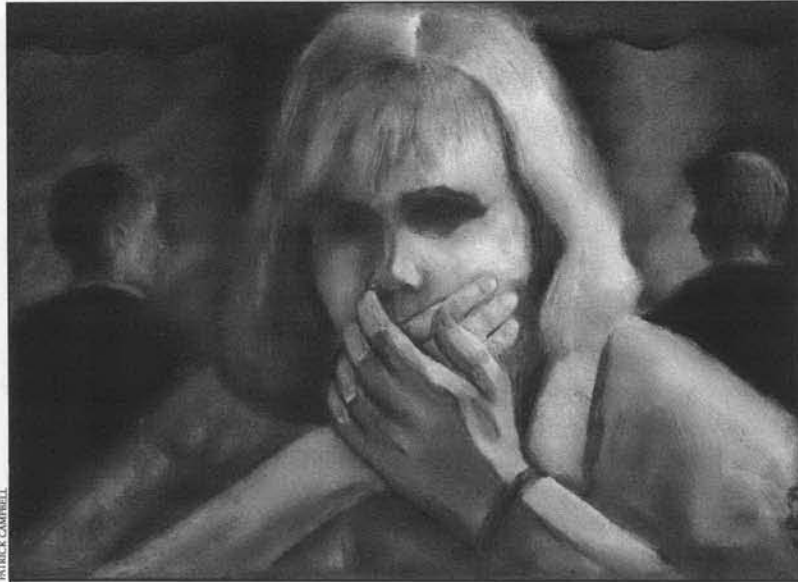
Although we may idealize the scholar's dispassionate search for truth, scholars are as arrogant as any group, probably more so, and as prone to abuse their special status and power as anyone else. I recall a tale about Hans Küng, the Catholic theologian who achieved notoriety by debunking the notion of papal infallibility. Finally, Pope John Paul, fed up with Küng's constant carping, called him in and offered to abdicate and make Küng the pope. “Thank you, your holiness,” replied the scholar, “but I prefer to remain infallible.”

On the other hand, each of us is counseled to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12). It is not the purpose of the Church to ensure our salvation. All the household of faith can provide is a loving and supportive community within which we each struggle with that issue.

The term “household of faith” comes from chapter four of Paul's letter to the Ephesians:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-15.)

Paul's metaphor is significant. We are born as children into an earthly household with adult parents who take care of us. As infants, we are dependent upon them for our survival. Later, though we may be able to feed and dress ourselves, we are still not fully capable of making mature judgments and decisions. Finally, we reach adulthood, which is the proper end of our childhood and youth.



True community, true unity, must be based upon mutual respect and a willingness to accord to each group member an equal right to speak his or her heart and mind, even though the responsibility for a final decision reposes in the priesthood authority.

Of course, many adults are also not fully capable of making mature judgments and decisions. Their participation in the maturing process was arrested at some point. But no healthy parent desires this for his or her child. My child, though I hope she will always value my counsel, cannot be a slave to it except at the price of remaining forever a child.

This process of maturation is the basis of Paul's analogy. Each Saint is to be perfected, which is to say, made complete and whole. That process begins when one is born into the household of faith, or spiritually reborn. According to the Book of Mormon, the Saint then becomes a new creature (Mosiah

27:26), a child of Jesus Christ (Mosiah 5:7; 27:25), and, conversely, Jesus becomes that person's spiritual father (Mosiah 16:15). Rebirth is, spiritually speaking, the starting point in the process of becoming like God.

Paul stresses that the end of this growth process is to be as spiritually mature as Jesus: to attain “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” We are to “grow up in him in all things.” We are, he says, not to remain children, so spiritually unsophisticated that cunning men may deceive us.

But we cannot complete this maturing process if we delegate to someone else the function of thinking and speaking for us. We cannot grow up “in Christ” simply by following the tail of the sheep ahead of us. We cannot delegate to another the right to make our decisions on spiritual issues without stunting our spiritual growth. It is not the gospel plan for us to become spiritually dependent upon our leaders. Doing so will keep the Saints forever suspended, like so many Peter Pans, in the Never-Neverland of spiritual childhood, never to grow up in Christ.

Admittedly, some will use their freedom, as Peter Pan did,

to remain children, and vicious children at that. Freedom offers no guarantees. But surely the solution is to help them exercise this gift, not to urge them to relinquish it.

Someone once tried to deprive us of our freedom, to make us a race of automatons, doing only good, speaking only praise, never contentious, always obeying and therefore perfectly united, ever dependent upon himself. His proposal was rejected in part because he coveted God's glory, but I believe in the main because it is a metaphysical impossibility to compel humans to godhood. Goodness not freely chosen is spiritually irrelevant.

Of course, I do not mean to suggest that anyone now can rob us of our God-given agency, even with chains and prisons. We may always choose among the options available to us. Nor do I mean to suggest that choosing to obey authority, whether heavenly or earthly, is to renounce freedom. It is not; it is an exercise of freedom. He gave us agency with the intention that we would choose him, our Father (Moses 7:32-33). My point is that obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ should not and does not entail silence on religious issues.

So, in the spirit of Paul, Joseph, and Jesus himself, let us keep talking, and arguing even, without regard to distinctions of an official nature, not for personal gain but in the search for truth, in the spirit of love, with due deference to the opinions of others, and always with an eye single to the glory of God. ☪

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, "The Canker of Contention," *Ensign* (May 1989), 68-71; Dallin H. Oaks, "Alternate Voices," *Ensign* (May 1989): 27-30.
2. Oaks, 28. He stressed that we should exercise that choice in a sophisticated and prayerful way.
3. B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:290.
4. Roberts, 287-93.
5. Oaks, 29.
6. Dean C. Jessee, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1984), 90.
7. Nelson, 71.
8. Jesse, 166.
9. See, e.g., Orson Scott Card, "Walking the Tightrope," *SUNSTONE* (April 1989): 41.
10. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 8:364-65, emphasis added.
11. Boyd K. Packer, "Revelation in a Changing World," *Ensign* (November 1989): 16.
12. James E. Faust, "Continuous Revelation," *Ensign* (November 1989): 11.
13. See R. W. Chambers, *Thomas More* (London: 1938), 200-03.
14. Joseph Fielding Smith, ed., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1972), 322.
15. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 349.
16. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1959), 69.
17. Chesterton, 69-70.
18. Chesterton, 71.
19. See Jane Nelsen, *Positive Discipline* (New York: Ballantine, 1987), 144-59, for information on this type of family meeting.
20. Eugene H. Methvin, "Soviet Dystopia," *National Review* (4 December 1987): 45.
21. See, e.g., Nelson, 70.
22. M. Scott Peck, *The Different Drum* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 88-89.
23. T. S. Eliot, "The Dry Salvages," *The Four Quartets* (New York, NY: Harvest, 1971), 39.

ON THE GROUNDS OF THE MANTI TEMPLE

Lovers' hearts incised in snow—
Ephemeral—should blur with heat
And melt and fade to gritty scabs
Of ragged snow across
Dead winter's wounds.

But here they melt by day and freeze
Again by night—and snow-heart ridges
(Ice beneath a froth of snow)
Outlast cold drifts beneath
Blue-shadowed pines.

—MICHAEL R. COLLINGS

THERAPY

The hour was almost up. She said
it was not my job to watch
the clock. All those past due
notices, the threat of losing
what little Dave and I had left.
Walking back, I fought the weight
of loneliness as the elevator
descended into the underground
parking lot, painted arrows
and dim fluorescent lights leading
me out with just enough change
in the ashtray to pay the attendant
who flashed her smile of gold.
Love is not less because of loss.
Reaching out, she took my coin
and waved me into the light.

—TIMOTHY LIU

LADY OF LIGHT

Lady of Light at the top of the stair,
You stand and beckon me up.
Your hair is as white as the white-hot flame.
In your hand is the victor's cup.
But the stair that leads up is of molten fire
And I'm not sure you're aware
The pain it will cause me to bring myself up
For, Lady, my feet are bare.
And the way that leads up is a pillar of pain
Amid the rude furnace blast.
While the way that leads down is pleasantly cool
Though dark and awful at last.

Oh! Lady of Light at the top of the stair,
You stand and beckon me up.
Give me the courage to face the flame
And reach for the victor's cup.

—INGRID T. FUHRIMAN