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READERS' FORUM



SCREWY DECIMAL SYSTEM

THE OTHER DAY I dropped in at the Deseret Book Store at Salt Lake's ZCMICenter. When I saw the LDS book section, I thought of Elbert Peck's editorial, "God the Librarian" (SUNSTONE 16:1). Peck may think that God's judgment will be as democratic as the alphabet, but that isn't how His bookstore operates. For years Deseret Book has segregated general authority books from other Mormon books, on what I am sure are separate but equal shelves. Now, however, not even all general authorities are equal: Their books are arranged to reproduce the pull-out G.A. photosheet in each conference *Ensign*. The top shelf has books by the current First Presidency ordered in seniority. The next shelf has books by current members of the Quorum of the Twelve, again arranged by seniority. Books by the Seventy fill the remaining shelves, but are arranged alphabetically with no regard for the first or second quorum or for the seven presidents. Emeritus general authorities are placed at the end of the bottom shelf—Elders Paul Dunn and Marion Hanks, side by side.

As I stood there pondering the meaning of this hierarchical arrangement, and almost resigning myself to it, I said, "Where are the dead G.A.s?"—Were there no shelves for past prophets, counselors, and apostles, in seniority? The late President Spencer W. Kimball and Apostle Bruce R. McConkie were filed alphabetically with the Seventy.

What screwy results hierarchy brings. I hope that God's judgment doesn't reflect the confusion that status brings in this world.

GEOFFREY ARTHUR JONES
 Salt Lake City

GIFTS FOR THE SEASON

IN LATE SEPTEMBER, I requested my name be removed from the rolls of the Church (see "Six Intellectuals Disciplined for Apostasy," SUNSTONE 16:6). I had come to the conclusion that I could not retain both my integrity and my membership. I do not believe the Brethren are prophets. I find the system of Church "justice" abusive. The emphasis on obedience squelches the Spirit of God. And the traditional formulation of basic Church doctrines reflects neither my experience nor my hopes.

I couldn't have asked for more considerate hearings from my bishop, stake president, and home teacher. Naturally, they disagreed with my decision. They bore their testimonies to the truthfulness of the gospel and the divine mission of the Church. They did not argue, patronize, or demean. They agreed to honor my request and invited me back sincerely. I continue to participate at my previous level of activity. Last week I played the viola for the Relief Society; this Saturday I'll play for the ward Christmas party. I continue to enjoy good social relations with ward members.

My bishop, stake president, and home teacher are good men. They perform their stewardship about as well as anyone could in the orthodox environment. In appreciation, I am sending each a SUNSTONE subscription for Christmas.

Not all subscribers are so fortunate. If you can't send subscriptions as thanks, I suggest you give subscriptions as a witness, a protest—or as bread upon the waters. There are many good, honest leaders who are only kept from the "true" Mormon process "because they know not where to find it."

You don't need to agree with everything you read in SUNSTONE to advocate the forum it provides. Stand up for honest inquiry and open discussion. Send two gift subscriptions to persons in authority over you. Call 800/326-5926 to place your order, and have your credit card number ready.

This year make your giving commensurate with the value you receive.

SCOTT KENNY
Alpine, UT

POOH ON WRITING

ONE KINDNESS OF good editors is that they protect writers from themselves. For example, a recent letter flaunted words like "aphotic," "jejune," and "trendy nostrums" ("What Is Man?" SUNSTONE 16:5). As we stroll further through that issue, we find phrases like "seduction of the summa" (40) and "grant the *donnée* of faith" (56). Seeing writing like this is like seeing people with too much makeup—some of us want to laugh; more of us are embarrassed for them.

Please encourage writers to converse with clear, concise language. We like the advice of William Strunk and E. B. White: "Avoid fancy words. Avoid the elaborate, the pretentious, the coy, and the cute. Do not be tempted by a twenty-dollar word when there is a ten-center handy, ready and able. Since

writing is communication, clarity can only be a virtue." (*The Elements of Style*, 76, 79.)

As Winnie the Pooh might say, "I like good writing. It makes for good reading."

MIKE DANG
KITTY IRVINE
Santa Ana, CA

PURITANICAL TOLERANCE

WHEN THE PURITANS got to the New World (seeking religious freedom) they set up a system to suppress everybody else's religious freedom. Maybe the scale isn't as grand today, but acts of bigotry are often still tolerated, even welcomed, by people who seem contemporary and enlightened.

Consider the guidelines offered by the Mormon Alliance ("Dealing with Spiritual Abuse: The Role of the Mormon Alliance," SUNSTONE 16:5). Under "proposed definitional language" to be used in determining who has committed excommunicable apostasy, Paul James Toscano and Fred Voros suggest "the knowing and unauthorized performance or procurement . . . of an ordination, endowment, or marriage sealing. . ." (36). This clause is aimed directly at those odd-dressing, anachronistic, holy goofs we know as Mormon Fundamentalists. In effect, the stated guidelines would allow the Church, as it has for decades, to neatly dis-

pose of people with whom it feels uncomfortable—dissenters who pay tithes, attend sacrament meetings, and believe wholeheartedly in the Book of Mormon, including latter-day revelations contained therein that govern plural marriage, revelations that some modern-day Mormons feel are archaic and embarrassing.

Face it, we're a peculiar people, no matter how well we masquerade as Protestants. We have believers who follow the Old Ways. We can either tolerate them or help those in authority sweep them out of the way. The question is whether the liberal dissenters are ready to accept the fellowship of very conservative dissenters.

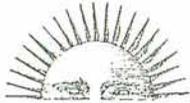
JOE FASBINDER
Santa Monica, CA

TOSCANO STEREOTYPES

LET ME APOLOGIZE for the editorial error in my review of Phyllis Barber's non-fiction book *How I Got Cultured* (SUNSTONE 16:5) that I neglected to de-correct. Phyllis's work is decidedly *not* a novel, but her own wonderfully resonant and honest voice, telling her own experience as a Mormon. It is a voice that bids us feel as well as see. She sets the example I wish more SUNSTONE writers would use—specifically Paul Toscano.

I know Toscano has some terribly impor-





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tant, deeply felt—even earth-shattering—things to tell us, but, though his voice is refreshingly personal and honest at the beginning of his essay, it quickly degenerates into lawyer talk. He's doing a brief on the whole Church disciplinary system, and ironically (I hope inadvertently) urging his readers to do to Church leaders exactly what he begs Church leaders *not* to do to so-called dissidents: reduce and stereotype. As Toscano portrays them, bishops, stake presidents, and especially general authorities are uniformly insensitive, unresponsive, and not to be trusted. He not only describes "The Brethren" thus, but provides them motives: fear and faithlessness, and pontificates at length on how—in their tail-chasing antics—these leaders show the all-too-human trait of objectifying others, "treating them as categories of evil rather than as individuals with hopes and fears . . . then deal[ing] with them as enemies, or apostates, or anti-Mormons, or liberals, or right-wingers, fundamentalists, or intellectuals." Yet in this particular article (and even more so in his essay in a recent *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*), he treats the amorphous "objectifiers" as "categories of evil rather than as individuals with hopes and fears" and deals with them as enemies, blind iron-rodgers, bigots, or misogynists, etc.

My own experience brings up the specific faces and voices of my ecclesiastical leaders and says that Toscano's view is dangerously generalized. He moves so easily from what he does know to what he doesn't, from his own soul to his leaders' souls, that he probably doesn't realize he's doing it. And not all readers will catch him. Sadly, his fictions will precipitate a greater swell of our current, terrible wave of campism, and urge more members to remove Church leaders' individual faces and excommunicate them from their own sacred circles—which is every bit as sad as other kinds of excommunication.

I know Paul has been through some devastating things recently. I want to understand them, and to understand him. I want to see Paul's face, and sense his soul in the same way I sense Phyllis Barber's face and soul in

How I Got Cultured.

So enough of his circular arguments. Enough campism. Enough reductionism. These are the byproducts of pride. What we need is genuine peacemaking—and I'm not at all persuaded that the only alternative to "covering up" conflict is facing it head on. That kind of attitude gives us tabloid television, not eternal life. We are capable of seeing beyond our differences and finding a way to speak the truth in love. To fuel fires or use combative language in the name of peace is simply hypocrisy. The gospel teaches us that the greatest gift is charity, which takes us beyond our instincts, beyond debate, beyond accusation, beyond vindication, to a place where we can converse in love. We—all of us, not just Church leaders—are commanded to love even those who have offended us. Christ's answer to the "Yeah buts" was "As I have loved you, love ye also one another." To do that, we sinners need to see every person as a "you," not a category of evil. (Sadly, I am remembering some who have actually used the word "evil" to describe particular Church leaders.)

I urge Paul Toscano to read Phyllis Barber, and then write from his own heart, rather than presuming to explain his bishop's. As C. S. Lewis might put it, "Tell your own story, not someone else's." I want to see the "you" who is Paul Toscano.

MARGARET YOUNG
Laie, HI

HORNS O' PLENTY

I ENJOYED Elbert Peck's "Cornucopia of Things" (SUNSTONE 16:4) and I hope that he can make SUNSTONE be more overflowing in goodness in future issues than he has in the past. His statement that the items held by hands at the top of the Nauvoo temple sun stones were horns of plenty was new to me. I had always heard that they were trumpets announcing the Restoration.

KATE CANFIELD
Sparks, NV

Elbert Peck's reply:

In an early issue of SUNSTONE, Peggy

Pontius' Puddle



and time.

3. Is a story about an unbelieving, confused, or "humanistic" Mormon any less a Mormon story? A tale about an apostate living under a rock and stockpiling weapons is no less Mormon than one about the Relief Society president who sees an angel in her dying daughter's hospital room.

Mormons are immersed in the culture around them and cannot help but be affected by it. "Outside" influences are not always positive, but must all outside cultural viewpoints be considered a "negative" to guard against? After all, the latest visiting teaching message I gave was about treating the earth with gentleness, an idea surely found in scriptures but not in the hearts of most Mormons until the "outside" influence of the ecological movement

4. Should critics judge a work of art based on its "orthodoxy"? During the Inquisition, works of art (and artists) were judged on their theological correctness. Mormon writers, like any others, are exploring *life*, not necessarily religious doctrine. The scriptures do the later. Mormon writers, like any other writers, cannot, without maiming their art, consider who will or won't be moved, offended, gratified, or angered by what they

write. It is not the critic's job to judge the "Mormonness" of a Mormon's writing, but to judge its literary merit.

LISA MADSEN DE RUBILAR
Atlanta, GA

THE BASIC UNIFORM

IT'S A SMALL corps of LDS scholars who harbor the illusion that academic freedom thrives only at institutions other than BYU. Without exception, other academic communities have their own commandments, sacraments, and holy ground.

The doctrines and practices that currently hold sway at most institutions of higher learning stem primarily from the worldly creeds of humanism, intellectualism, individualism, or even hedonism. These find expression in the sects of social-liberalism, environmentalism, feminism, multiculturalism, etc., and open opposition to them places a scholar's academic freedom at risk. This is understandable. Ultimately, no belief system encourages the kind of scrutiny and harsh criticism that will erode its power and influence no matter how democratic, rational, or scientifically based it claims to be.

Scholars who advocate "politically incor-

rect" views on issues from abortion to environmentalism to South Africa find their intellectual freedom challenged at the so-called "liberal" institutions of higher learning. Pressure usually arises from unofficial, decentralized sources. Intellectual "unorthodoxy" brings reactions ranging from subtle shunning to effective academic "excommunication" as "unrepentant" scholars discover their assignments, theses, dissertations, scholarly papers, petitions for tenure, etc., unfairly evaluated or even rejected.

It's no mystery that BYU has unique limitations that promote the values and beliefs of its sponsoring church. In a nation that theoretically supports religious and philosophical pluralism, it even has the right to do so. While some may disagree with BYU's beliefs, it isn't difficult to understand the reasons behind its limits to academic freedom.

BYU forbids no one from examining the latest trendy fashion show of intellectual thought. They're just regularly reminded that the basic uniform is a "suit of armor," not the academician's "new clothes."

JIM CATANO
Provo, UT

FAITH OVER REASON

SCOTT ABBOTT'S lament about anti-intellectualism has stirred my thoughts ("One Lord, One Faith, Two Universities: Tensions between 'Religion' and 'Thought' at BYU," SUNSTONE 16:3).

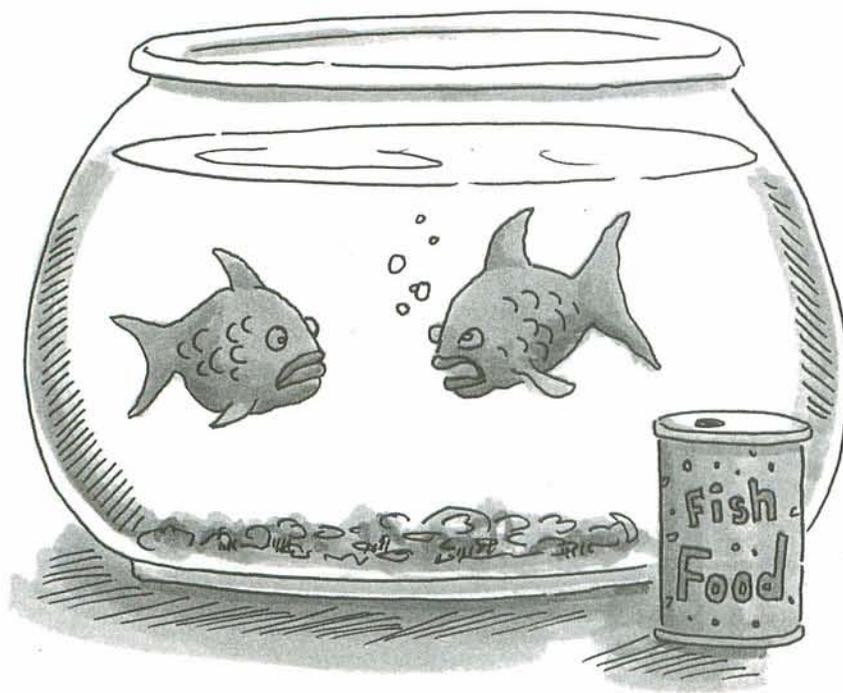
It is clear to me what problems BYU's trustees are trying to solve, and, in general, they are going about it in the best way possible. Abbott's vision of the all-inclusiveness of the gospel is well founded, but he targets the wrong community.

The trustees encourage an all-inclusive gospel and academic atmosphere at BYU, but discourage disdain of things spiritual that pervades the scholarly world. Perhaps we cannot have it both ways. The Brethren have learned the lessons of history; by far the greatest damage done to the primitive Church was done by insiders and "defenders" of the faith pursuing intellectual acceptance.

The three main things Abbott found most relevant in James Burchael's article ("The Decline and Fall of the Christian College") were telling. However, I interpret them differently than Abbott does:

(1) *Intellectual ferment is not a problem, until it "raise[s] . . . challenges to theology."* Churches are essentially theological institutions. But the Church cannot be expected to support attacks against its defining beliefs.

(2) *"There was a transfer of primary loyalty*



"I don't know what we did wrong, but once again God is punishing us with no food for three days straight."

from the church to the academic guild." Why? Because the "angry General Conference had narrowed its view of what it meant to be Methodist." How about just sticking to a definition? Is that the same thing as narrowing? Being a Latter-day Saint does not mean being fearful of scholarship and inquiry. But Mormonism is a system of beliefs; membership is defined as sharing and adhering to those tenets. And who are the keepers of dogma? A fundamental principle of Mormonism is that the apostles and prophets are the primary defenders and definers of the faith.

(3) "There was a progressive devolution of church identifiers." Why? Because "an effective bond to the Methodist Church instinctively evoked references to bigotry, exclusion, narrowness, sectarianism and selfishness." Abbott finds BYU at risk because of its bond to the LDS church. He is right, and it is here that I despair of a solution that will make all parties happy. By the world's definition, Mormonism is bigoted and exclusive. We clearly believe that some forms of behavior and thought are evil and unacceptable. We have plainly announced that some sectarian doctrines are not true. To become acceptable (and therefore less bigoted and exclusive) to the world would mean to give up essential parts of our identity. We cannot be all things to all people.

Nowhere is the problem that the Brethren are trying to solve made plainer than in the article by David Wright, who was fired from BYU for his beliefs ("Historical Criticism: A Necessary Element in the Search for Religious Truth," *SUNSTONE* 16:3). Wright explains how historical and critical approaches to the scriptures have led him to the conclusion that, among other things, the Book of Mormon is the product of Joseph Smith's nineteenth-century mind.

Nothing that Joseph Smith or his contemporaries ever said allows this conclusion. To believe this, in the face of unequivocal and repeated claims to the contrary, is to believe that Joseph Smith was the monstrous liar and the fraud his critics have always charged.

Historical criticism, or any other scholarly academic and intellectual pursuit, is not a problem. People create problems when some endeavors cause the neglect of others, such as engendering attitudes that put one's soul (or those of others) in danger. The Brethren caution against scholarship that neglects or denigrates faith. Academics would have us believe that there can be no soul-danger in scholarly pursuits. Does anyone who reads this magazine not know someone who believes that they have found an intellectual reason to overrule faith, leave the Church, neglect the ordinances of the priesthood, and

change their behaviors in ways that are critical to the eternal soul?

MICHAEL A. THOMPSON
Felixstowe, England

WHAT OF THE CHILDREN?

DAVID P. WRIGHT fails to answer the hardest question we face as members of the LDS church: what do we tell our children about the authorship of the Book of Mormon? There are all kinds of ways that we as adults justify participation in the preservation of this imaginative tale of golden plates and visiting angels, but do we have the right to allow our children to struggle with these same faith-endangering stories when they reach the age of discernment and begin to question their truthfulness?

If we have wrestled with these questions and reached conclusions not in agreement with Church dogma, don't we parents have the obligation to tell our children the truth? Admittedly, it's only the truth as we know it, but to do less is to forsake our duties.

Where would we be today if not for the

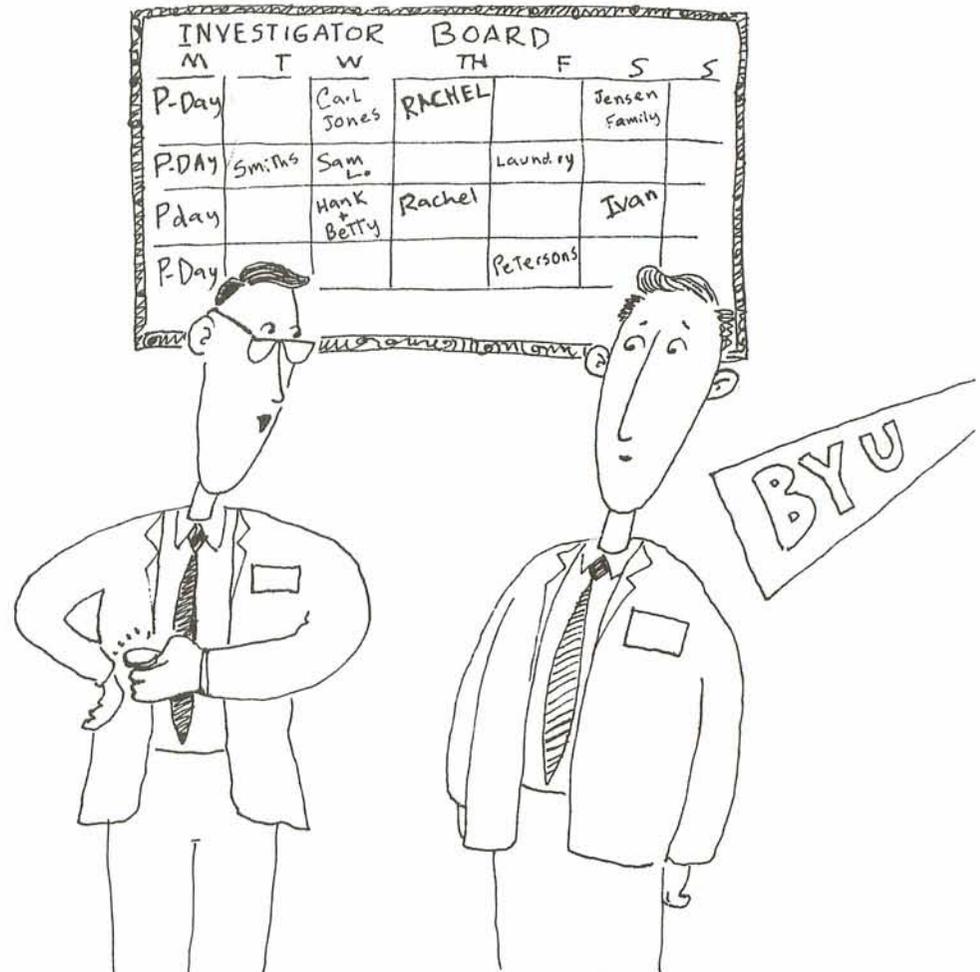
likes of Galileo, Darwin, Luther? Each followed his conscience and spoke against established dogma—and sometimes paid dearly for it. Is this not exactly what Jesus himself did?

JIM PHILLIPS
New Castle, WY

AND THE CHOIR SANG ON

I HAVE BEEN a regular reader of *SUNSTONE* since its first issue. I believe strongly that the community of Saints needs periodicals like *SUNSTONE* and *Dialogue* for the exploration and expression of ideas and issues that official Church publications will not approach. I have often been mystified, annoyed, perturbed, or troubled by the hostility expressed by some general authorities toward *SUNSTONE* and *Dialogue*.

Until now, I have never considered these two publications "alternate" voices, just "other" voices singing a different part in the choir of the LDS community. The official Church may be likened to the melody of a hymn; *SUNSTONE* is part of the harmony



"Heads, you have to teach Rachel the Law of Chastity."

that makes hymns richer and more complete.

The LDS community hymn must be one of faith—faith in a living God who sent his Son to redeem the world, and faith that this same God called an ignorant, obscure farm boy to be his prophet in these latter days so we could be fully blessed by the redemption of his Son. Ed Firmage Jr.'s article ("Historical Criticism and the Book of Mormon: A Personal Encounter," *SUNSTONE* 16:5) was interesting, but he certainly does not sing the LDS hymn of faith. While Firmage may believe that his "life is richer," even as his belief "grows more uncertain," and that he can continue as a Mormon in a state of such nonfaith, most people, including myself, are much more practical. If I reached the same conclusions as he did about the work of Joseph Smith and the origin of the Book of Mormon, I would put my money and energy into membership at the country club instead of the LDS church. The country club membership would seem to have as much power to bring me and my family eternal life as membership in this church.

Firmage's article probably would not have

bothered me had it not followed so closely the similar article by David P. Wright. Wright's article is also interesting, but he does not sing the LDS hymn of faith either. *SUNSTONE* has previously published articles by "aging" intellectuals who describe their loss of faith. None of these articles have ever offended me; each has always challenged me.

When I read Firmage's article, the cumulative effect finally struck me. I asked myself: Is *SUNSTONE* really part of the choir of the LDS community? Can I sense from its pages a commitment to our faith in God, his Son, and his Church, or has it finally become an "alternative" voice, singing a different hymn? I was not sure.

What I perceive missing in *SUNSTONE* is a "context" of faith. Elbert Peck writes flowery, spiritual sounding articles, but most of them could be published in any liberal Protestant magazine with just a few changes. William Hamblin wrote an excellent refutation to Wright's ("The Final Step," *SUNSTONE* 16:5), but that is not enough to create a context of faith. That context of faith is created from the cumulative effect of the

content and tone of the articles published issue after issue. It is this sense of a missing context of faith that concerns some general authorities. Perhaps *SUNSTONE* has become so interested in pursuing the "truth" that "faith" has been sacrificed. They are not mutually exclusive.

I hope *SUNSTONE* will continue to publish articles such as those by Wright and Firmage. However, I hope it will be in a context of faith, created by the magazine as a whole, so that all the readers will know that *SUNSTONE* is committed to the faith of the LDS community. In the meantime, I am going to withhold my annual contribution. I will continue reading *SUNSTONE*, and I hope in a year I will want to contribute.

ANTHONIE H. WOLLER
Beaverton, OR

REFORM VS. RESTORE

EDWIN FIRMAGE JR. discusses, among other things, how the chronological order of translation of the books of the Book of Mormon can provide clues as to when Joseph Smith decided to form a new church.

Firmage correctly points out that "nowhere in the Book of Mormon's many detailed prophecies of the last days is anything ever said about the establishment of a new church in the latter days." To take this idea further, nothing in the revelations received by Joseph Smith before the completion of the translation says anything about it either.

A few examples from the 1833 Book of Commandments, the first publication for most of the revelations of Joseph Smith, show that a new church was nowhere in the agenda. Here's what the revelations say was to be done: Joseph's only calling is to translate (2:4, 4:2); the purpose of the Book of Mormon is to bring the Lamanites to a knowledge of the gospel (2:6, 9:11); Joseph is to preach the gospel (5:4, 5:13, 9:16, 10:4). Nothing is said about creating a new church, although a few verses could be interpreted to support either a reformation or a restoration (5:16, 9:14, 9:16, sec. 15). Admittedly, this is negative evidence, but, as Firmage points out, Joseph's first calling to translate appears so often that certainly something as important as creating or restoring a church should be discussed.

Firmage suggests that Oliver Cowdery's work on what is now Doctrine and Covenants 20, starting in June 1829, may point toward Joseph Smith's thinking about creating a new church. A revelation received in March of that year, first published in the 1833 Book of Commandments as section 4,



then later with extensive editing in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants as section 5, shows that, at least in March, Joseph was still thinking along the lines of a reformation of existing churches: "And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a *reformation* among them, and I will bring down all lyings, and deceivings, and priestcrafts, and envyings, and strifes, and idolatries, and sorceries, and all manner of iniquities, and I will establish my church, like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old" (Book of Commandments 4:5; italics added). (This important clue didn't survive the editing of the revelation before it was republished in 1835.) Then, as now, the dictionary definition of the word "establish" could support either the creation of a new church or the building up and strengthening of an existing church. So the question still remains: When did Joseph Smith first encounter the idea of establishing a new church? If Firmage is correct that Cowdery's work on section 20 demonstrates a calling to create a new church, then the time the idea was born could be narrowed to between March and June of 1829 because of the ideas expressed in section 4 of the Book of Commandments.

Firmage hints that the existence of the "handbook" (Moroni 1-6, 8) shows that Joseph Smith was planning a restoration rather than a reformation. Firmage's discussion of the matter sounds to me more like a reformation than a restoration, except for the name of the Church. But if the "handbook" *does* point to a restoration, then dating the translation of this section of the Book of Mormon could provide some insight into the dating of the idea.

KARL F. BEST
Sandy, UT

FOOLISHNESS OF MEN

EDWIN FIRMAGE JR. discounts that Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon by nitpicking about (1) the translation order of the books; (2) whether Joseph Smith contemplated organizing a new church; and (3) why infant baptism wasn't talked about sooner. A number of other things were mentioned, but who cares? It makes no difference. All of Firmage's education doesn't mean anything when he uses it to question the Book of Mormon. It puts me in mind of 2 Nephi 9:28-29: "O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for

they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God."

The Book of Mormon teaches us to live by the commandments of our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ. These precepts lead to high moral values and a happy, full life. I have no doubt that the Book of Mormon was translated by Joseph Smith and was given to us for our benefit. We have no business making light of it and disregarding it. If by some remote chance it was made up by Joseph, it is still a book that if a person lives by its teachings, she will have all that she could possibly want and need in this life, and will be ready for the life to come.

Everyone has one main purpose in life: to bring to all we can a knowledge of Christ and his teachings and commandments, and to know that he died for us. The Book of Mormon helps us to do this better than any other book that I have read.

DORIS BEACH
Salt Lake City

JESUS FRAMED

I WAS FASCINATED with Martha Bradley's "Mormon Steeple" article (SUNSTONE 16:3), and smiled at her appeal to the building committee to add a little beauty to our chapels. Don't hold your breath, Martha! As bad as the outside is, the insides are also sterile and uninspiring. I hope the experience my husband and I had is not typical.

In the fall of 1953 we put a "gift on the altar" at a tiny new Mormon chapel, which my labors as a new convert had helped build, in Piney Green, North Carolina. Our "gift" was a beautifully framed print of Christ. The branch president put it in a place of honor on the wall behind the speaker's platform on the tiny stage. On our visits during the next two years it provided a sense of spirituality to the otherwise uninspiring cultural hall.

In the late 1970s we visited Piney Green again after many years, and I noticed our Christ no longer hung on the wall behind the stage. Twelve years later I discovered from my sister Lois McCullen what had happened to our "gift."

"I noticed the picture was down one Sunday about 1980," she said. "I'm not sure just when it had been taken down as we had moved away. I asked the new branch president what had happened, and he told me they had a directive from Salt Lake to remove all 'distracting' material from the chapels, so they had moved the picture somewhere else.

I told him the action 'really bothered me' and that I had gotten a lot of inspiration from contemplating it as I partook of the sacrament, and that I didn't find it distracting."

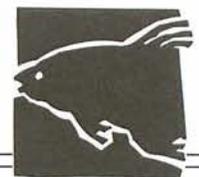
"Sister McCullen, President Kimball would be very disappointed if he knew you had questioned that decision," the branch president said with his stern, authoritarian voice.

"About 1989," Lois continued, "I was cleaning up the kitchen at church and started to wipe off the top of the refrigerator. There was your picture of the Savior, face side up with an accumulation of about ten years of dust and grime. I brought it home, cleaned it up, and put it away. When our congregation moved to a new building in a larger town, I gave the picture of Christ to the new leaders, a missionary couple from Utah. The wife placed the print in the foyer and it was there for one year, along with the general authorities. Then I noticed Christ had disappeared again, replaced with a picture of the Salt Lake Temple in the same frame. I asked her what had happened to the picture of Christ. 'The picture was faded, so I replaced it with a picture of the temple,' she said."

I mourn this disturbing incident. I notice few pieces of art on the inside of our chapels. However, I do notice the ever increasing number of pictures of the general authorities and temples which have replaced Christ.

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SUSURRO DEL SAUSAL

Life
is like
a splendid
whisper.
It comes
but before
we truly hear
its softly shaded sounds
it leaves.

—DAVID CLARK KNOWLTON