

# *Be Ye Men and Women of Valour*

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**H**ow grateful we are for you great young men and women. We have a firm confidence not only in your talents and abilities, but also in your testimonies and in your conviction of the truth of this wondrous latter-day work.

You have been blessed to live in interesting and challenging times. Ours is a day foreseen by ancient prophets, a time when men call evil good and good evil, when darkness is called light and bitterness called sweet (see Isaiah 5:20).

It is not for nothing that the Church is called The Church of Jesus Christ of *Latter-day Saints*. We live in the latter days, the preparatory era before the second coming of Christ, who will return to reign on earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. This period of world history is marked by prophetic signs. The scriptures tell us that

*it shall come to pass that he that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man.*

*And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath. . . .*

*And then they shall look for me, and, behold, I will come; and they shall see me in the clouds of*

*heaven, clothed with power and great glory; with all the holy angels; and he that watches not for me shall be cut off. [D&C 45:39–40, 44]*

Christ's return will be marked by the end of evil and the triumph of righteousness.

The signs of the times—those events that mark the last days and are signs of the preparation of Christ's return—are well summarized in the following excerpt from the *Millennial Star*, a newspaper then published by the Church in Britain. The article, written by Charles W. Penrose, dated September 10, 1859, and entitled "The Second Advent," reads in part as follows:

*On the other hand, through the rejection of this Gospel, which "shall be preached to all the world as a witness" of the coming of Christ, the world will increase in confusion, doubt, and horrible strife. As the upright in heart, the meek of the earth, withdraw from their midst, so will the Spirit of God also*

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*be withdrawn from them. The darkness upon their minds in relation to eternal things will become blacker, nations will engage in frightful and bloody warfare, the crimes which are now becoming so frequent will be of continual occurrence, the ties that bind together families and kindred will be disregarded and violated, the passions of human nature will be put to the vilest uses, the very elements around will seem to be affected by the national and social convulsions that will agitate the world, and storms, earthquakes, and appalling disasters by sea and land will cause terror and dismay among the people; new diseases will silently eat their ghastly way through the ranks of the wicked; the earth, soaked with gore and defiled with the filthiness of her inhabitants, will begin to withhold her fruits in their season; the waves of the sea will heave themselves beyond their bounds, and all things will be in commotion; and in the midst of all these calamities, the master-minds among nations will be taken away, and fear will take hold of the hearts of all men. [“The Second Advent,” *Millennial Star* 21, no. 37 (10 September 1859), p. 582]*

As the earth ripens in iniquity, becoming increasingly full of violence and immorality, the righteous will watch the signs of the times, call upon the Lord for protection and help, and seek to be worthy to abide the day of his coming. Though faithful disciples of the Lord will not totally escape the difficulties associated with the last days, President John Taylor pointed out they will experience “very little compared with the terrible destruction, the misery and suffering that will overtake the world who are doomed to suffer the wrath of God” (*JD* 21:100).

Incidentally, the name of the Church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—unites three themes: the theme of *restoration*, the theme of *preparation*, and the theme of *revelation*. The Church is a *restoration* of “the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church” (see the sixth article of faith) as established by Jesus in the meridian of time. The

theme of *preparation* is underlined by the fact that the Saints anticipate and prepare for the coming of Christ. Finally, the Restoration was accomplished through *revelation* received by Joseph Smith and his successors as presidents of the Church. Even the name of the Church was given by revelation, as recorded in D&C 115:4.

Like Helaman’s stripling warriors of old (see Alma 57), you must be young men and women of “exceeding faith” and great valour (see verse 26). I choose that word, *valour*, advisedly, knowing that it connotes courage, particularly courage on the battlefield. We are engaged in a great war. The adversary rages in the world today; his forces are arrayed against us, in all their malignant might, as never before.

If we are to win the battle, we must

*put on the whole armour of God, that [we] may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against . . . the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*  
[Ephesians 6:11–12]

You young men and women of valour must, then, stand

*having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

*And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

*. . . taking the shield of faith, . . .*

*. . . the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.* [Ephesians 6:14–17]

In ancient times, those who sought the honors of knighthood were required to qualify themselves, proving thereby their worthiness and the content of their character. If you, in this day, are to be considered worthy to put on the whole armour of God, to wear it in honour, you too must look to your character, to the

kind of person you are. Permit me to rehearse with you some of those attributes of character essential in men and women of valour.

### 1. Be Men and Women of Integrity

Those who have integrity are whole and complete. They know who they are and who God is. Sincerity, humility, and meekness are integral parts of their character, inherent in their being. They are less concerned about being recognized than in being right, more desirous of consecration than kudos. They are driven by conscience, not by a desire for credit.

In 1968, then Elder Marion G. Romney said:

*When the issues are determined, whether we stand with the winners or the losers, of this we may be sure: To make the proper choice on any issue is of far more importance to us personally than is the immediate outcome of the issue upon which we make a decision. The choices we make will affect the scope of our agency in the future. As of now, we have the right of decision. What we will have tomorrow depends upon how we decide today.* [Marion G. Romney, *CR*, October 1968, p. 68]

President N. Eldon Tanner was known throughout much of his adult life as “Mister Integrity.” As minister in the government of Alberta, private businessman, and Church leader, he exemplified the highest ideals of honesty, honor, and superior character—“a man to match our mountains; tall, rugged, unyielding, immeasurable,” as President Kimball said of his beloved associate (“Civic, Business Leaders Honor President Tanner,” *Church News*, 1 April 1978, p. 6). On one occasion, while in government service in Canada, Brother Tanner stood to vote against his own party on a proposal he could not accept. Warned by colleagues that his vote could cost him his government post, Brother Tanner replied that he “would rather be *out* honorably than to be *in* voting against my principles” (G. Homer Durham, *N. Eldon Tanner, His Life*

*and Service* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1982], p. 106; emphasis in original).

When Brother Tanner retired from government service, a Calgary newspaper article of the time commented:

*For the general good sense of the government’s oil policies, most of the credit must go to Hon. Nathan Tanner, whose impending resignation from the Cabinet will be received everywhere with genuine regret. . . . We have not always agreed with him, but we respect him; and now, on his departure, we sincerely wish him well.* [Durham, *Tanner*, p. 107]

At a retirement banquet in his honor, in response to the tributes paid him, Brother Tanner spoke with characteristic modesty and simplicity of the philosophy that guided his life: “The service we give is the price we pay for the privilege of living in this world. The type of service we give will determine the kind of world we will live in” (Durham, *Tanner*, p. 108). President Tanner would no doubt have agreed with these words of the great American military commander, General Robert E. Lee: “There is a true glory and a true honor: the glory of duty done, the honor of the integrity of principle” (Clifford Dowdey, *Lee’s Last Campaign* [New York: Barnes and Noble, 1994], p. 375).

An important component of integrity is honesty. An outstanding example of honesty was set by an American who served his country as an artilleryman in World War I. After the war, he and a partner established a men’s clothing store in Kansas City. At first the store prospered, but in the postwar depression of 1921, the two partners fell on hard times. The business failed in 1922, approximately \$35,000 in the red. One of the partners filed for bankruptcy, but the other stubbornly would not. He resolved to payoff his creditors as best he could, little by little. Fifteen years after the store went under, he was still paying business debts and was generally strapped for money

for twenty years. But he knew where his duty lay. In later years he did rather well for himself. His name, of course, was Harry S. Truman, the thirty-third president of the United States (see David G. McCullough, *Truman* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992], pp. 145–51). Significantly, on President Truman’s desk was a sign, “The Buck Stops Here.”

How glorious and pure are those who have integrity! They can sleep at night, secure in the knowledge that they have done their best; their conscience is clear of offense to anyone, their honor unsullied by the sordid compromises and shady dealings of the world. Their values and convictions are clearly defined and well known to their associates. They seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and are little interested in power or wealth. They understand that “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15). They love people and are deeply interested in them. Others see them as people who can be trusted.

Several years ago, a friend of mine who was serving at the time as a stake president was out of work. He struggled hard to find employment, without success. Part of the problem was that he was nearly fifty years old, and many potential employers turned him down as qualified but too old. After several fruitless months, job interviews fell away to zero. After nearly a year out of work, the family’s savings were exhausted and their supply of food and other essentials was nearly all used up. My friend’s self-confidence had eroded to the vanishing point. Finally, he got another job interview. It went well, but the interviewer was undecided, influenced as others had been by my friend’s age. Finally, a senior partner in the firm intervened. “Hire him,” he declared. “He’s a Mormon stake president; he won’t steal from us.” Integrity is the jewel in the crown of character!

## 2. Be Men and Women of Testimony

Be “not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” (see Romans 1:16), but bear witness of what you know to be true concerning his divinity, the restoration of his gospel, and the blessings that come from living its principles.

Your testimony will have immeasurable impact on the lives of those who hear your voice. The impact of a single testimony is illustrated by Brigham Young’s account of his own conversion to the gospel when Eleazer Miller, a humble missionary, bore testimony to him:

*If all the talent, tact, wisdom, and refinement of the world had been sent to me with the Book of Mormon, and had declared, in the most exalted of earthly eloquence, the truth of it, undertaking to prove it by learning and worldly wisdom, they would have been to me like the smoke which arises only to vanish away. But when I saw a man without eloquence, or talents for public speaking, who could only say, “I know, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of the Lord,” the Holy Ghost proceeding from that individual illuminated my understanding, and light, glory, and immortality were before me. I was encircled by them, filled with them, and I knew for myself that the testimony of the man was true. [JD 1:90]*

## 3. Be Men and Women of Moral Rectitude

As President Hinckley has said of bishops, so too must your goodness be as an ensign to those with whom you associate. Your morals must be beyond reproach. No hint of scandal or of impropriety must ever darken your life. You must stand on higher ground so you can lift others. You must be wise with inspired wisdom in all of your relationships, both private and public, lest anyone—but most particularly those who are your associates and friends—read in to your actions *any* taint of moral wrongdoing. You must shun as a terrible plague the filthy torrent of pornography that engulfs and destroys so many. Yours must be

the strength that comes from a pure heart and a clear conscience.

Many years ago, in another time and place, I had the professional responsibility to enact and enforce regulations pertaining to the liquor industry in another country. It is perhaps not too farfetched to think that the Prophet Joseph Smith may have had the products of that industry in mind when he inquired of the Lord regarding matters we now include in the Word of Wisdom. It was not long before I learned the industry trade association had a file on me and on others who were in a position to regulate their affairs. I smiled when I found that there was only one entry in my dossier—that I was a Mormon bishop! I've been called worse!

#### 4. Be Men and Women of Courage

There are, of course, several aspects of courage. I speak not of the physical courage of the warrior but of the moral courage exemplified by the great apostle Peter, who raised his voice in mighty testimony to the rulers, elders, and scribes. Luke tells the story in Acts 4:6–12:

*And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.*

*And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?*

*Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,*

*If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;*

*Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.*

*This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.*

*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

I think also of Father Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Catholic priest imprisoned in the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz during World War II. Upon his arrival at the camp in May 1941, Father Kolbe was informed by an SS officer that the life expectancy of priests there was about a month. He was assigned to the timber detail, required to carry felled tree trunks from one place to another. When he collapsed from overwork and starvation, he was kicked, beaten, given fifty lashes with a whip, then shoved into a ditch, covered with branches, and left for dead. Miraculously, Father Kolbe survived. But a greater horror awaited him. A prisoner from Barracks 14, where Father Kolbe was housed, managed to escape. The prisoners from that barracks were paraded before the commandant. After a day standing in the sun, during which many fainted and were shot, the commandant, a monster named Fritsch, levied sentence. "Ten of you will die in the starvation bunker." The starvation bunker was the horror of horrors: both food and water were denied; many prisoners spent their dying days howling, attacking each other, clawing the walls in a frenzy of fear. After a couple of days in the bunker, the inhabitants frightened even the guards.

Fritsch walked down the lines of prisoners, selecting his victims. One poor wretch, whose number—5659—was on the list, groaned and cried out: "My poor wife, my poor children, what will they do?"

Suddenly, there was a commotion in the ranks. A prisoner had broken out of line, calling for the commandant. That alone was enough to ensure his death. Though Fritsch had his hand on his revolver, he did not shoot.

"Halt!" he called. "What does this Polish pig want of me?"

The prisoners gasped. It was Father Kolbe who had spoken. He was much loved; he shared his last crust and comforted the dying. Surely, he would not have to die.

The frail priest spoke softly to the Nazi butcher. “I would like to die in place of one of the men you condemned.”

“Why?” shouted the commandant.

Father Kolbe sensed that he must not seem to be asking Fritsch to reverse his order. The priest bowed his head: “I am an old man, sir, and good for nothing.”

“In whose place do you want to die?”

“For that one,” Kolbe responded, pointing to the weeping prisoner—number 5659—who had cried for his wife and children.

“Who are you?” asked Fritsch, as though he saw Kolbe for the first time. The prisoner looked back at him, a strange fire in his dark eyes. “I am a priest.”

“Ein Pfaffe!” the commandant snorted. He nodded to his assistant. Number 5659 was crossed out, and number 16670—Kolbe’s number—replaced it.

Father Kolbe died as he had lived, serving and loving others. From the death cell came not the sounds of frenzied despair but the faint sounds of singing. This time, the prisoners had a shepherd to lead them through the shadows of the valley of death. (Story adapted from Chuck Colson, “The Volunteer at Auschwitz,” in *The Book of Virtues*, William J. Bennett, ed. [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993], pp. 803–8.)

### 5. Be Men and Women of Faith

Your journey of faith will lead you to the throne of God. Courage will be your companion on the journey: it takes rare courage to affirm principles and truths that others deny, defame, and deride. Some will decry your faith as credulous superstition. Others will display what they claim to be scholarly analysis to disparage that which you hold dear. Neither the flickering lamps and pale gleams of history

or scholarship, so called, can illuminate the face of God and reveal him to you. In the Book of Job we read:

*Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?*

*It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?*

*The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. [Job 11:7–9]*

God will not be found through logic, history, or scholarship, though each can be of value in buttressing faith.

Those who, under the guise of scholarship, sneer at, question, and tear down the faith of others need not feel proud of themselves. They are as those spoken of by the Nephite prophet Jacob, who lamented the vainness, frailties, and 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. [2 Nephi 9:28–29]*

### 6. Be Men and Women of Perseverance

The year A.D. 1306 was one of the darkest in Scotland’s long and often gloomy history. Edward I of England, aptly named “The Hammer of the Scots,” invaded Scotland at the head of a powerful army. Soon the streets of Scotland’s cities echoed to the clash and clatter of mailed English soldiery. Noble and prominent families were imprisoned and tortured. Many were killed. The king of the Scots, Robert the Bruce, Lord of Kerrick, fled to his seigniory in the rough hills north of the English border. There he sought refuge in a cave, alone save for a solitary watcher in the heather charged with raising a warning should English troops appear.

Bruce was disconsolate, his spirit broken, his mood black and bitter. Many members of his family were imprisoned. Others had been hanged or drawn and quartered. The land and its people groaned under Edward's iron heel.

As he lay on his bed of heather in the gloomy recesses of the cave, Bruce's courage nearly failed him. What could he do, in the face of such terrible odds, to free his country from tyranny? Perhaps he should just give up, accept the inevitable, and fulfill his ambition to go as a humble pilgrim to the Holy Land.

Bruce's eyes fastened on a spider clinging precariously to a stone high in the mouth of the cave. He watched, first with idle curiosity and then with increasing interest, as the tiny beast attempted to swing on its gossamer strand to another perch several feet away. Six times the spider tried and failed. Finally, on the seventh attempt, it succeeded. Bruce vowed that if a lowly spider could persevere, the king of the Scots could do no less. He fought on, with increasing power, finally ridding Scotland of her enemies at the Battle of Bannockburn in A.D. 1314 (see Ronald McNair Scott, *Robert the Bruce, King of Scots* [Edinburgh: Canongate Publishing Ltd., 1982], p. 95).

Like Bruce the Scottish king, faithful servants of truth and justice throughout the ages have understood that perseverance is a large part of their job. They have learned, by a combination of Spirit whisperings and experience, that dismal, even disastrous, failure can turn into scintillating success if only they can exert a little more effort and show a little more patience. They have learned never to give up, to let no temptation, frustration, discouragement, or disappointment deter them from the achievement of their goals. Victory has been the sweeter to them because and not in spite of the fact that they faced opposition and hardship. Life, they have found, is meant for struggle (see Moses 4:22–25).

Winston Churchill learned those lessons well. His magnificent wartime speeches, in

which he "mobilized the English language, and sent it into battle," echo again and again the theme of perseverance in the midst of "an ordeal of the most grievous kind." He said to the House of Commons on May 13, 1940:

*We have before us many, many long months of struggle and of suffering. . . . You ask, What is our aim? I can answer in one word: Victory victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be.* [David Cannadine, ed., *Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat: The Speeches of Winston Churchill* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), pp. 11, 149]

In his Periclean tribute to the fighter pilots of the Royal Air Force (House of Commons, 20 August 1940), Churchill sounded this note of defiance and determination:

*The road to victory may not be so long as we expect. But we have no right to count upon this. Be it long or short, rough or smooth, we mean to reach our journey's end.* [Cannadine, *Blood*, p. 182]

And in one of his most famous speeches, broadcast over the BBC on February 9, 1941, and addressed largely to American ears, the old lion growled again:

*We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle, nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools, and we will finish the job.* [Cannadine, *Blood*, p. 213]

Churchill understood that discouragement is a major foe of perseverance. Despondency, born of uncertainty and fear, saps courage and destroys resolution. It is so easy to lose a sense of proportion, to grow weary as we struggle through the "long, stern, scowling valley" (Cannadine, *Blood*, p. 216) of life, to lose heart as we contemplate what still remains undone.

The scriptures are replete with references to perseverance and endurance and contain many examples from the lives of great souls illustrating this powerful principle. I mention only one: Job had everything, it seemed, that a person could ever ask for—land, wealth, possessions, and, above all else, a loving family. Then the next day all was gone, and Job was left with nothing but tears and sorrow. “He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. He hath destroyed me on every side,”

Job lamented (Job 19:9–10). His faith in God, though sorely tried, remained strong:

*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. . . .  
He also shall be my salvation. . . .*

*For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*

*. . . yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

[Job 13:15–16, 19:25–26]

Perseverance has many faces, many aspects, all of which men and women of valour must learn. There is, of course, suffering, to which we have already alluded. But there is also the need to persevere in the face of opposition.

“Mormon-bashing” has long been a favorite pastime of some who for one reason or another disapprove of our doctrines and teachings. Since our earliest days, opposition, persecution, and misunderstanding have been our common companions. Perhaps we should not be too surprised. After all, since we truly are the church of Jesus Christ, restored in its fullness at a pivotal point in world history, the dark, satanic forces that oppose *him* can be expected to hurl themselves in fury also against *us*. And so they have, for more than a century and a half.

Nor can we expect that as we grow in size and become better known around the world, the opposition will become muted. Indeed, as the great winding-up scenes of human history

progress, under an increasingly dark and somber sky, to their inevitable apocalyptic conclusion, Christ and his teachings will continue to be rejected by many, if not most. Sadly, even in many so-called Christian nations the preaching of the Word now struggles to be heard by societies whose members consider it not so much untrue or unbelievable as simply irrelevant. Of our time and place in history the Lord has declared:

*They have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;*

*They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.*

[D&C 1:15–16]

In our time much of the opposition to the Church is verbal rather than physical. It was not always so and may not be again. Many of those who oppose us claim to be Christians, yet they use the most unchristian tactics in their attacks, unfettered by even reasonable concerns for fairness, accuracy, or balance in what they say and do. Some clearly feel threatened by our success, perhaps fearing that as we wax they will wane. In like manner the religious establishment during the decades following the death of Christ resented the message of Paul and its potential impact on their preeminence and economic well-being. Recall, for example, the instructive account of Paul’s encounter with those who worshiped Diana, the goddess regarded as the source of the fruitful and nurturing powers of nature. Luke records:

*For a certain man named Demetrius, a silver-smith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;*

*Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.*

*Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:*

*So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.*

*And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*

*And the whole city was filled with confusion.*  
[Acts 19:24–29]

Is it any real wonder that Paul’s detractors labeled him “a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes” (Acts 24:5)?

Perhaps those who call themselves Christian and harp on what they claim are inconsistencies in our history and doctrine need to be reminded that Christianity itself rests upon very meager historic evidence. The miracles of Christ, including his resurrection and atonement, the details of his life and preachings, simply are not recorded in the secular histories available to Christian and non-Christian alike. Similarly, all Christians must wrestle with the fact that the teachings and records found in the New Testament (which, by the way, display their own internal minor inconsistencies) were written by friends and followers of Jesus, not by objective historians. None of this should be of inordinate concern to any of us, Saint or sinner alike. The validity of the Christian message rests on spiritual, rather than secular, foundations.

Yet we must not dwell too long on those who are our professional detractors, who make

a living (often a very good living!) by criticizing the “Mormons.” They will always be with us and will be dealt with in the Lord’s good time and in his way. They will not have any appreciable impact on the work, “for the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled” (Mormon 8:22). Elder Marvin J. Ashton has wisely reminded us that “no religion, group, or individual can prosper over an extended period of time with fault-finding as their foundation” (“Pure Religion,” *Ensign*, November 1982, p. 63).

We must be ever mindful of the need to be “swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” (James 1:19–20). We must avoid like the plague the common tendency to strike back in anger at those who unjustly attack us. We must never revile the revilers (see D&C 19:30) but rather “declare glad tidings” in “all humility,” preaching “repentance and faith on the Savior, and remission of sins by baptism, and by fire, yea, even the Holy Ghost” (D&C 19:29–31).

There are many—the good, honest, fair-minded people of the world—who sincerely want to hear more about us:

*For there are many yet on the earth among all sects, parties, and denominations, who are blinded by the subtle craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it. [D&C 123:12]*

Brethren and sisters, be men and women of valour. Be men and women of courage, of faith, of perseverance, and of integrity. “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12). May these words of a well-known hymn resound in your hearts and sustain your actions as men and women of Christ, valiant soldiers in his cause:

*Behold! A royal army,  
With banner, sword, and shield,  
Is marching forth to conquer  
On life's great battlefield.  
Its ranks are filled with soldiers,  
United, bold, and strong,  
Who follow their Commander  
And sing their joyful song:*

*And now the foe advancing,  
That valiant host assails,  
And yet they never falter;  
Their courage never fails.  
Their Leader calls, "Be faithful!"  
They pass the word along;  
They see his signal flashing  
And shout their joyful song:*

*Oh, when the war is ended,  
When strife and conflicts cease,*

*When all are safely gathered  
Within the vale of peace,  
Before the King eternal,  
That vast and mighty throng  
Shall praise his name forever,  
And this shall be their song:*

*Victory, victory, Thru him that redeemed us!  
Victory, victory, Thru Jesus Christ, our Lord!  
Victory, victory, victory,  
Thru Jesus Christ, our Lord!  
["Behold! A Royal Army," *Hymns*, 1985,  
no. 251]*

I leave you my testimony that this is his work. As one of his servants I bear that testimony to the world with gratitude to be amongst you who are young men and women of exceeding valour. I leave this message with you in Jesus' name. Amen.