

Developing a Personal Relationship with the Savior

GEORGE W. PACE

Brother and sisters, this is a delightful experience for me today. I don't know when I've been more terrified and frightened. I feel a little like the cowboy who rode into town and shot up the place and jumped on his horse and rode off in all directions. But I hope with all my heart that I might have that presence of mind and that presence of Spirit which will allow me to share with you some of the feelings and the ideas I have relative to developing a personal relationship with the Lord.

I appreciated the introduction this morning. There happen to be on the stand two men who have been the two most effective teachers in my life. I wouldn't want to embarrass them by calling them by name, and so I won't mention President Robert K. Thomas and Dean Chauncey C. Riddle. As a young freshman at BYU, I took my English class from Brother Thomas. He touched my heart, set my spirit on fire, and I determined in my heart I was going to do everything I could to measure up to the kinds of things he suggested we could measure up to. As the years have slipped by, I have had the opportunity of being continually fed by Brother Riddle and stimulated by his insight into the gospel.

I'm also grateful that I can have my wife here today. I appreciate her so much. Brother

Thomas indicated that we anticipate the coming forth of our tenth child, which will make our third son. (Should he be a girl, it's because you laughed.) On the basis of the number of children we have, I have concluded that to offset the power of women in our household I'd have to have another 113 sons.

Not long ago I was with my wife in Carson's Market, we were getting some groceries, and I was negotiating with a local banker so we could swing the deal. Truman Madsen came up behind us, we got to chatting, and I said, "Have you ever met my wife?"

He said, "No, I don't believe I have, but I would like to," so I introduced them. Then he said, "How many children do you two have?"

I said, "We have nine."

The next thing I heard, and I think everyone in the store heard it, was Truman saying, "Eighty-one months of pregnancy!" My wife and I have never viewed it in quite that perspective; consequently we collapsed. But we are delighted with the beautiful experience of having a family.

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Testimonies of the Savior

Having this opportunity today brings back a lot of fond memories. My heart has really been touched over the years as I've had the opportunity of hearing men speak at BYU devotionals. I'll never forget, as a young man, listening to the great prophet David O. McKay as he gave a stirring sermon on the bread of life. How it touched my heart. How stimulated I was by what he had to say about the Savior. How I hoped with all of my heart that somehow the Savior might become my bread of life, that somehow I might be able to partake of his divine nature, that somehow I might be able to take advantage of my membership in the Church and ultimately put on the nature of Christ and become like him. In fact, over the years, of all the ideas and all the concepts I have been exposed to, none has touched my heart, none has stirred me with such great determination to try to do the things that I felt the Lord would have me do as much as those ideas that pertain directly to the living reality of the Savior.

I remember one occasion at Salt Lake City in old Barrett Hall. I was going on a mission. There were about 250 of us listening to different Brethren speak. Finally, at a particular hour, one stood and spoke. I had a testimony at that time. I knew that Jesus was the Christ. I knew that the Church was true, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that this Church was headed by prophets. But on that occasion, without fanfare, without visual aids, quietly and powerfully, he shared with us his feelings about the Lord. I vowed in my heart that someday I too would know the Lord even as he. As a result of that one talk I set out on a quest to know the Lord and to know him well—a quest which has changed my life more than any other effort.

I think of a beautiful experience of Elder Melvin J. Ballard which occurred while he was serving as a mission president in the northwestern states. He had gone over to the Fort

Peck Indian Reservation to take care of mission business. He and his counselors had fasted that they might solve some problems that had come into existence on the reservation. After much fasting and prayer, and after making the best decisions they could, Brother Ballard then got on the train to go back to Portland, Oregon. In the dreams of the night, he found himself in what I would assume to be the Salt Lake Temple. He was in conversation with a group of men. After a period of time an individual came over to him and said that it had been requested of him to go to an adjoining room to meet another individual. Brother Ballard said he opened the door to this adjoining room, and as he looked into the room, he saw seated upon a raised platform the most glorious person he had ever seen. As he entered the room this individual arose and smiled and softly spoke his name. Brother Ballard said that this individual came right up to him and put his arms around him and embraced him and kissed him. Brother Ballard at that moment felt a love so intense that he thought the very marrow of his bones would melt. He said he then fell at the feet of this individual, and, seeing the wounds, he knew he was in the presence of Jesus Christ. Throughout the rest of his life he bore powerful witness to the effect that he would be pleased to give all he had and all he could ever hope to have if he could have the privilege of dwelling in the presence of Christ forever. Brothers and sisters, how that touched my heart.

I was standing in a beet field on another occasion in Idaho, doing some irrigating. I pulled out of my pocket a crumpled piece of paper and read the account of Lorenzo Snow having the opportunity of being visited by the Master in the Salt Lake Temple. As I read that account, there came to me an assurance that that indeed did occur, that Lorenzo Snow did see the living Christ, that he did converse with him, that he obtained knowledge and power and understanding from him. Again, how

my heart was touched with that particular experience.

As I have attempted to understand what the role of the Church is, my feeling is that the fundamental message of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to declare that Jesus Christ lives, that he is indeed the Son of God, that he has appeared in our day, that men and women today can know him, that they can know him better than they know anyone else on the face of the earth, that he can have a greater impact on their lives than the combined influence of anybody else. I believe with all of my heart that this is the fundamental message: that in the Master strength can come, that in him men and women can become all that they were potentially created to become—that is, very gods. But it's through a personal relationship with the Savior that that's accomplished.

I love Joseph Smith. I'm grateful for his mission. I revere his name. Oh, I would some day that I might be sufficiently faithful to be able to walk up to him and shake his hand and express appreciation for what he has done. That appreciation would be housed in the framework, "Joseph, through you, through the Restoration, through the grace of our Heavenly Father and his Christ in raising you up, you placed me in a position where I might know who the Master is. Oh, I rejoice for your mission, for your calling, for the role that you performed so marvelously as a prophet." I feel the spirit of Joseph Smith moving to and fro in our day, in effect tapping men and women on the shoulder and saying, "Would you, too, discover who he is? Would you, too, learn how to communicate with him as I did and do? Would you feel his power? Would you become filled with his love as I have? Would you know that in all I did, the reason I did it is so that I might be a living witness that he lives?" In fact, Joseph summed it up so beautifully: "This is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!" (D&C 76:26). The purpose of the programs of the Church, the purpose of the

ordinances and the principles, and everything that is done in the church and kingdom of God, will only find its creative fulfillment if members somehow will accept the challenges that they can know who the Lord is and that they can have a marvelous relationship with him.

The Savior's Example

Many people have had a great influence in my life, for which I am grateful. I can't help but think of President Joseph Fielding Smith. On one occasion he was asked, "Who, President Smith, has had the greatest influence in your life of anyone?" Very quickly President Smith came back with, "Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has had the greatest influence in my life." Oh, again, brothers and sisters, what a delight to belong to a church and a kingdom that testify so vividly and so powerfully of the possibility of a personal relationship with the Creator of this earth, a relationship that will give us the power and the ability to accomplish everything that the Lord would have us accomplish. I don't know that we could ever adequately express the gratitude that ought to be in our hearts for that restored knowledge, for that available power, for that available relationship with the Lord.

Brigham Young once said:

The greatest and most important of all requirements of our Father in heaven and of his Son Jesus Christ, is . . . to believe in Jesus Christ, confess him, seek to him, cling to him, make friends with him. Take a course to open and to keep open communication with your Elder Brother or file-leader—our Savior. [Journal of Discourses, 8:339]

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I'm sure I echo your feelings when I share with you the feelings that came to me as I read with real intent for the first time the Book of Mormon. Oh, how Nephi came alive! It was as though Nephi were telling me in person, "George, I want you to know that I've seen the

Lord. I want you to know that I've talked with him, that my spirit has been carried away on high mountains, that I have been filled with his power, that it was through him I've been able to accomplish the things I've been able to accomplish." Along with that witness I felt so strongly coming from him, I also felt I could hear him say, "George, I want you to know that you, too, can know him as I do. I want you to know that the reason I have written and testified of these things is so that you might determine to your heart that ultimately your relationship with the Master will be even as mine. That is the purpose of my intent, to testify of the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Brothers and sisters, how touched I have been by Nephi's testimony.

In the Book of Mormon, Moroni, after speaking about the mansions that are prepared on high and the great love of the Lord, wants to emphasize to us that he knows whereof he speaks, and he attempts to do that by speaking of judgment day and his personal relationship with the Lord:

Then shall ye know that I have seen Jesus, and that he hath talked with me face to face, and that he told me in plain humility, even as a man telleth another . . . concerning these things . . .

And now, I would commend you to seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written.[Ether 12:39, 41]

Christ the Center of the Church

Now, brothers and sisters, recognizing that the Savior is the center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that everything points to him, I should like to share with you a scripture that has triggered many insights in my life. Nephi says, "Behold, my soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ; for, for this end hath the law of Moses been given; and all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying

of him" (2 Nephi 11:4). In other words, brother and sisters, as we take a look at the scriptures, every major experience that God has had transpire between him and us is to typify or point to Jesus Christ.

Let me refer first to the law of sacrifice that was given to Adam. Everything in the law of sacrifice was to point the minds of the children of God to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to help them appreciate and realize that somehow (and we don't totally understand how) there is no remission of sins, there is no breaking of the bands of death, there is no possible way men and women can overcome the effects of the Fall and become clean and filled with his Spirit save it be through the shedding of blood. The sacrificing of all of those animals from the time of Adam to the time of Christ was to help men and women realize that ultimately in a person, in a man, in a divine being, would come the source of redemption as he, even Christ, shed his blood.

I think of the experience of Abraham, commanded to offer up his son, Isaac. On many occasions I have gathered one at a time my young sons on my lap. As I held them, in my mind I recounted the experience of Abraham offering up his son. I have felt deeply the personal implications of Abraham having been commanded to do that. I have felt, by the quiet witnessings of the Holy Ghost, the overwhelming impact of what it meant for the Father to send his Son. Much of that impact has come as I have studied and reflected and prayed on that great experience of Abraham offering up his son Isaac.

I think, brothers and sisters, of Moses standing on a mountain (actually an elevated piece of land) high enough that everyone could see him. Poisonous serpents had gone among the children of Israel; many were losing their lives because of the bite of those poisonous serpents. Moses, standing on this piece of elevated land somewhat parallel to the piece of elevated land where the Master would hang on

the cross, spoke for and in behalf of Jehovah. He invited everybody to look at him, to listen to his words spoken under the inspiration of the Lord. He asked them to look at the rod and the brazen serpent that was on the rod, and he promised that if they would look they would be saved. Again, the lesson that incident teaches is that only in the Master, only in looking to him, only in being respectful of his anointed, only in recognizing that his prophets speak in his behalf and being respectful of what they have to say and doing it, can we through Christ be saved.

I think of the manna coming down from heaven, typifying the ultimate bread of life which would come in the form of Christ. Our manna today can be seen in the form of the sacrament. Oh, the power that will flow from the Master, the divine nature that will come from him into our lives, the changes that will come through that simple ordinance, the sacrament, if we can catch the significance of the life and the mission of the sacrifice of one Jesus Christ.

Church Ordinances to Lead to Christ

Now, brothers and sisters, in the Doctrine and Covenants is a particularly significant scriptures relative to the goal of the Church which I would like to share with you. I, like you, am appreciative of the good lives of men and women across the width and breadth of the earth. I'm grateful for their feelings for the Lord, grateful for their willingness to live and abide by the light that they have. But, brothers and sisters, our witness to the world concerning an understanding and comprehension of the life and the mission of Christ, compared to the understanding that the world has, is the difference between the brightness of the sun and the moon. This is why the Church was restored. Again, with all due respect and feeling for what the Christian world has, I know how much more comprehension and power could be theirs if people would accept the

message of the Restoration. I think this message is beautifully portrayed in the following verses:

And this greater priesthood [speaking of the Melchizedek Priesthood] administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. [D&C 84:19–20]

The Church today says that through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the restoration of the priesthood the very key to the knowledge of God has been brought back to the earth. Once again men and women can know who the Lord is and can relate with him in a total and complete kind of way, but they can't relate with him save they obtain through the ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ the power of godliness. It's for this reason, brothers and sisters, that we go forth teaching the world that no one—be he ever so good—will ever know fully the hands of one who has divine authority, save he enters the waters of baptism through the hands of one who has divine authority, save he searches the scriptures and humbles himself and seeks mightily for a revealed knowledge and understanding of the Lord so that he might exercise faith in him.

Every ordinance in the gospel is a channel of power to us if, as we function in those ordinances, we develop in an ever-increasing way a personal relationship with the Lord. But those ordinances won't change our lives unless we know who he is. They can't touch us in the manner they ought to do unless somewhere along the line he really comes alive. The power of redemption isn't in the ordinances per se; the power of redemption isn't in the Church per se. The ordinances and the Church are a means to an end, channeling the power that can flow from the Master. The degree to which you and I know him and relate with him and give our lives to him is the degree to which

that power will flow through the ordinances and principles. Oh, brothers and sisters, I know that's true. I know we're finally saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, but we must have the ordinances.

We have a divine organization, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If we'll see the Church as a means to an end and simultaneously look to the Lord with all of our hearts, then every ordinance that we participate in will be a blessing, will lift us, will change us, will qualify us to become more and more like the Lord. However, some of the time we find ourselves getting caught up in the machinery of the Church. Some of the time we get caught up in the theology of the Church, in the programs. Some of the time, because we get caught up in those things, we fail to realize that, unless somewhere along the line the image of the Savior becomes emblazoned on everything we see and everything we do, then the great purpose for that divine organization and its divine principles will be nullified.

Let me liken membership in the Church to the possession of a beautiful, powerful car. In fact, it's the finest car money can buy. We love to get in it and drive around; there is a great deal of satisfaction in just owning it. We obtain so much satisfaction in possessing the car that we fail to realize the car was given to us as a means to an end, not an end in itself. It was given to us to make the most important journey in our lives. SO it is with the Church. It's a beautiful, successful organization capable of bringing many blessings into our lives, but the *main* reason we were given the Church is so that we might make the journey from where we are to where the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is, that we might learn who he is and exercise a mighty faith in him!

What a challenge to make sure we realize the Church must be a divine launching pad to Christ, that the Church is a means to an end, that it may be possible to be converted to the Church without being converted to the Lord,

but it's never possible to be converted to the Lord without being converted to the Church. If you go all the way to the Lord, you'll see the Church is the only means whereby ultimate redemption will come to the world—the only means.

Spiritual Rebirth

The fundamental process by which the Lord and his divine church can accomplish their destined purpose is through the scriptural doctrine of being born again. If an individual will enter the waters of baptism and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and then with all his heart search the scriptures and serve in building the kingdom—recognizing his dependency on the Lord even to the point of having a broken heart and contrite spirit—then the heavenly element of the Holy Ghost will cleanse him of his sins and free him from ignorance. His body will be clean and a veritable temple for the Spirit to dwell in constantly. As the full experience of being “born again” transpires, one becomes a son or daughter of Christ, having been spiritually begotten of him. In fact, brothers and sisters, that's the time when the Lord really becomes personal, because marvelously enough, amazingly enough, through the ordinances and the principles and this experience of being born again, you and I can partake of the divine nature of Christ. We can have his image engraved upon our countenances. Through that process we then stand in a position to solve our problems, to free ourselves from our personality idiosyncrasies, to discover who we really are. We can pick up a sense of destiny. Through that experience, brothers and sisters, there will be no question in our minds that in Christ we can find the solutions to *every* problem that comes into our lives and that in him we can do everything he asks us to do. In that experience we will see the Lord as the fountain of *all righteousness*.

The gospel, in a sense, is composed of two different kinds of truth. There is what we refer

to as the doctrine of Christ, that is, those principles and ordinances we need to know and participate in to become clean from sin and to partake of the special powers of the Atonement. It is the doctrine of Christ that is distinctive to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The second dimension of truth in the gospel is the moral and ethical truths, which truths are found essentially in every great and good system of thought on earth. When the prophets speak of the “power of godliness” that’s available in the gospel, they are referring to the doctrine of Christ. If we, having obtained testimonies of the gospel, will immerse ourselves in the doctrine of Christ—that is, resolve to comprehend by revelation the meaning of the first principles and their relationship to Christ—then we will acquire, as an endowment from the Spirit, a celestial dimension of moral and ethical character. However, if after acquiring our testimonies we then spend endless hours in a humanistic, secular approach to living the good life we can never—worlds without end—go above or beyond the development of a terrestrial character.

Some of the time I am deeply troubled in my heart when I see members of the Church approach the gospel as though it were simply a moral and ethical system. True, it is a moral and ethical system, but it’s also much more than that. As President J. Reuben Clark put it powerfully in 1938 in Aspen Grove:

We use the tithes of the Church to carry on the Church school system, and these are impressed with a holy trust. . . . The tithing represents too much toil, too much self-denial, too much sacrifice, too much faith, to be used for colorless instruction of the youth of the Church in elementary ethics. . . . Students fully sense the hollowness of teachings which would make the gospel plan a mere system of ethics, they know that Christ’s teachings are in the highest degree ethical, but they also know they are

more than this. [*The Charted Course of the Church Education*, 8 August 1938]

Years ago President McKay, as a young member of the Sunday School general board, was going over to the islands. The evening before arriving he stood on the deck of the ship and marveled at the beauty of God’s handiwork. The clouds overhead were tinged in pink, and the islands in the distance were like velvety diamonds. He said, “Is there anything more beautiful than this?” As he thought about it, he said, “Yes, there is something more beautiful than this. The character of men and women who know who Christ is is more beautiful than this. The innocence that you see in children’s eyes is more beautiful than this.” That night, after he retired, he saw in the dreams of the night what he referred to as the eternal city. He said he saw people dressed in long, white, flowing robes, moving along through a gate into that heavenly city. Off to one side he saw the Master, even Christ. He was some distance away, but he couldn’t see the Savior’s features clearly and wondered who these people were who were moving in through the gate. As though his mind were being read by the Lord, the Lord raised his hand and drew his attention to the writing of the gate: “These are they who have overcome the world—who have truly been born again.”

President McKay in general conference in 1960—speaking to members of the Church, those who had gone down into the waters of baptism and had had hands laid on their heads but who perhaps for one reason or another hadn’t persisted in paying the price to grow and develop in the endowments of the Spirit so that it could be said of them that they were truly born again—said:

May God grant that . . . members of the Church everywhere resist temptations that weaken the body, that destroy the soul, that we may be born again; that our souls might bask in the light of the Holy

Spirit, and go on as true members of the Church of Jesus Christ until our mission on earth is completed. [Conference Report, April 1960, p. 29]

What a challenge! From my perspective, brothers and sisters, just from what I see, I think the greatest need in the Church is for the members of the Church to be truly born again, to be quickened by that heavenly element of the Holy Ghost, to grow in the stature of Christ, to acquire his qualities and his characteristics—as Peter put it, to partake of his divine nature.

In that setting, then, could I share with you a quote of Brigham Young’s about what would happen if we tried with all of our hearts to live under the influence and power of the Holy Ghost? (I remember hearing President McConkie say it ought to be the goal of all members of the Church to so live as to have the Spirit with us at all times.) President Young made a statement that I would like to read because of the simplicity of the message. (Jacob 4 says that the Jews tended to look beyond the mark and therefore had the simplicity of the gospel taken away from them, and they stumbled.) Brigham recorded a dream in which he went to visit Joseph Smith, who said:

Tell the people to be humble and faithful, and be sure to keep the spirit of the Lord and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the small still voice; it will teach them what to do and where to go; it will yield the fruits of the Kingdom. Tell the brethren to keep their hearts open to conviction, so that when the Holy Ghost comes to them their hearts will be ready to receive it. They can tell the spirit of the Lord from all spirits; it will whisper peace and joy to their souls; it will take malice, hatred, strife and all evil from their hearts; and their whole desire will be to do good, bring forth righteousness and build up the kingdom of God. Tell the brethren if they will follow the spirit of the Lord, they will go right. Be sure to tell the people to keep the spirit of the Lord; and if they will, they will find themselves just as they were organized by our

Father in Heaven before they came into the world. Our Father in Heaven organized the human family, but they are all disorganized and in great confusion. [“Journal History,” 23 February 1847]

What a beautiful experience, brothers and sisters, testifying again that the fundamental process by which human nature is changed is really quite simple. This process consists of having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, forsaking our sins, keeping the commandments, being filled with the Spirit, partaking of the divine nature of Christ, really becoming like him—the greatest personality of all. If we want to change our personalities, if we want to come alive, if we want to get excited about who we are, why not touch home base with the greatest personality of all, even the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Finally, it’s only he who can change human nature. Oh, it’s true we can change human behavior, but changing human behavior is a lot different from changing human nature. Only the blood of Christ can place us in a position to have our nature changed.

Personal Knowledge of the Savior

Brothers and sisters, for several years I have read this particular verse: “Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am” (D&C 93:1). I’ve heard the Brethren bear witness to the truths of that particular statement. I’ve pondered in my mind what it meant. I know how careful one needs to be in seeking for certain experiences, but as I read that scripture, and as I look at my involvement in the Church and the involvement of those that I have great respect for, I see men and women who in their minds and in their hearts are convinced that ultimately they can know the Lord fully and totally. Ultimately they can see him. They know that he lives by the whisperings of the Spirit.

Because they know that he lives, they're pleased to forsake their sins, to come to him, to obey his voice, to do all of the things that he would have them do, but there's a lively hope in their hearts and ultimately they will see him. Brothers and sisters, I believe in the ideal with all of my heart. I believe that there's something lifting, something tremendously soul-transforming that occurs to us when we determine in our hearts that someday we're going to know the Lord, that we're going to see him, that sometime we're going to have a total and complete relationship with him, and that someday we'll be able to stand up and say we have a perfect knowledge that he lives. By the time that we can bear that testimony, we can rest assured that he has worked a mighty work in us, that he has changed us, that we will have been transformed into his image.

In conclusion, I'm convinced in my own mind that the great key by which we can obtain the power and develop the relationship with the Lord that he would have us have is prayer. Some years ago I read this inspiring statement of Joseph Smith's: "It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we may converse with Him as one man converses with another" (*Documentary History of the Church*, 6:305). One that occasion there came a witness to my soul that it is possible to converse with the Lord as one man converses with another. We can call upon the Father through Christ and have a marvelous relationship with the Lord. Knowing Joseph couldn't lie, I determined in my heart that I would try to develop that kind of communication.

Could I, brothers and sisters, bear witness to you that I know that if every day with great fervor and great determination we will go to the Lord in mighty prayer, lifting up our voice, pleading with him that we might be filled with his Spirit and that we might be instruments in his hands to bless and to strengthen and to build his kingdom, if we will go to him with

the kind of intensity that will suggest that we want that more than anything in life—then gradually, beautifully, quietly, the Holy Ghost will distill upon our hearts that strength, that peace, those qualities and characteristics that will enable us to do his work. Oh, I know that is true! I know it with all of my heart. I know even as I know that God lives, that Heavenly Father hears and answers prayer, that personal revelation is real, that the veil can become thin so that you and I can see mighty things, that he's pleased to bare his arm, even Jehovah, so that we might know he is a god of power and that in him we can accomplish all of the things he would have us do. Oh, I know that with all of my heart.

Joseph Smith, on one occasion while he was away from home and away from his wife, wrote in a letter to Emma:

My situation is a very unpleasant one although I will endeavor to be contented the Lord assisting me. I have visited a grove which is just back of the town almost every day where I can be secluded from the eyes of any mortal and there give vent to all the feelings of my heart in meditation and prayer. I have called to mind all the past moments of my life and am left to mourn and shed tears of sorrow for my folly in suffering the adversary of my soul to have so much power over me as he has had in times past, but God is merciful and has forgiven my sins and I rejoice that he sendeth forth the Comforter unto as many as believe and humble themselves before him. I was grieved to hear that Hiram had lost his little child. I think we can in some degree sympathize with him but we all must be reconciled to our lots and say the will of the Lord be done. Sister Whitney wrote a letter to her husband which was very cheery and being unwell at the time and filled with much anxiety it would have been very consoling to me to have received a few lines from you. But as you did not take the trouble I will try to be contented with my lot knowing that God is my friend. In him I shall find comfort. I have given my life into his hands. I am prepared to go at his call. I desire to be

with Christ. I count not my life dear to me only to do his will. [6 June 1832, Chicago Historical Society]

In a sense, brothers and sisters, there's really only one principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that's faith in Jesus Christ. In a sense there's only one law, and that's obedience to Jesus Christ. And in a sense, there's really only one endowment, and that's charity, the pure love of Christ. I know with all my heart that—if we will take advantage of our membership in the Church and will search the doctrine of Christ, serving the Lord with all of our hearts, carrying a heavy load of responsibility as we try to climb the mountain of spirituality—as time goes on the living reality of the Savior will

be the greatest reality in our lives, and we will see him as the center of all things. He will be the home of our heart, and in him we will have the ability to help Zion put on her lovely garments. As the Savior said, "Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine to the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up" (3 Nephi 18:24). May we do that in his power. May the Lord bless you that you might grow and increase in the knowledge and stature of him after whom this Church is named and through whom we can have the power ultimately to become sanctified and perfected. I say this humbly and express appreciation for being with you today in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.