

trust that you desire counsel, from time to time, and that you will cheerfully conform to it, whenever you receive it from a proper source" (*History of the Church*, 4:45).

These inspired statements from Hyrum and Joseph to Church members in their day are certainly appropriate for Church members today. While standing in Nauvoo at the foot of the headstone of these noble men, I had the impression that they would have me counsel all members of the Church to remain anchored to the basic and simple principles of the gospel. Study the scriptures; look to the leaders of the Church for guidance in these troubled times. Brothers and sisters, be careful of the schisms, divisions, and contentions that are among us today. Keep the commandments so the Holy Ghost will be with you in your search for truth and knowledge.

I bear humble witness that Joseph Smith is one of the great, noble ones to come to the earth. He and his brother Hyrum deserve our honor, respect, and gratitude as do other members of their family who assisted with the restora-

tion of the fulness of the gospel. I testify that President Ezra Taft Benson is the prophet of God at this time, and the Apostles and other General Authorities, who are seated on this stand, are ordained of God to preside over the Church. Jesus, our Lord and Savior, stands at the head of the Church. Our Heavenly Father lives and watches over each of His children. To this I humbly testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The chorus sang "The Lord Is My Shepherd" without announcement.

President Hinckley

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Twelve Apostles has spoken to us, followed by the chorus singing "The Lord Is My Shepherd."

Elder Robert L. Backman of the Presidency of the Seventy will now address us, and he will be followed by Elder Ted E. Brewerton of the Seventy.

Elder Robert L. Backman

While abridging the records of the Nephites, Mormon wrote: "Behold, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I have been called of him to declare his word among his people, that they might have everlasting life" (3 Nephi 5:13). This humble yet straightforward declaration ought to express the feelings of all Latter-day Saints—disciples of Christ called to minister in his cause.

Christ—more than a king

Who is this Jesus whom we worship? Above all people on earth, we Latter-day Saints should appreciate the vital significance of Jesus of Nazareth—his role in the plan of salvation,

his virgin birth, his immaculate life, his powerful teachings, his selfless death, his glorious resurrection, his guidance of his Church.

In Lloyd Douglas's book *The Robe* is an imaginative account of the entry of Christ into Jerusalem, riding a donkey. Amid the hysteria of the excited multitude, ignorant of the significance of the event and of its chief Actor, occurs a conversation between two Greek slaves:

"See him—close up?" [asked the uncouth Athenian].

"Demetrius nodded; . . . turning away. . . .

"Crazy?" persisted the Athenian. . . .

"No."

"King?"

"No," muttered Demetrius, . . .
"not a king."

"What is he, then?" . . .

"I don't know," mumbled Demetrius, . . . "but—he is something more important than a king" (*The Robe* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1947], p. 74).

Jesus Christ is indeed more than a king; he is the Son of God, our Savior, our Redeemer, the Author and Finisher of our faith, King of kings, Lord of lords, Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (see Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 12:2, Revelation 17:14).

That is what the gospel is all about. Without him, without his intervention in our behalf, we would be helpless in the face of Adam's transgression. We are indeed saved by grace "through faith" (Ephesians 2:8), or as Nephi wrote, "It is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do" (2 Nephi 25:23).

"All other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages" to the testimony of Jesus—his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven (Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938], p. 121).

A little girl, misquoting the twenty-third Psalm, put everything in perspective. She said: "The Lord is my shepherd. That's all I want!" What more could anyone want? What could be more desirable than to "look unto [Jesus] in every thought"? (D&C 6:36).

As we ponder our relationship to our Savior, may I paint some sketches of him that have helped me become acquainted with him and serve as standards by which I have tried to measure my life.

A pattern for our lives

He was born of Mary; he had the power to die. He was the firstborn of the Father, the Son of God; he had the power to live and the capacity to live perfectly. We know that Jesus "received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness" (D&C 93:13).

As a youth the Lord "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). During this growth process, he suffered "temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer" (Mosiah 3:7). He experienced all of these things "that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities" (Alma 7:12). There is nothing we experience—no heartache or joy—that he has not experienced more intensely; and his response to such experiences was perfect. He thus established a pattern for our own lives.

During his mortal life, Jesus gave us his gospel and organized his Church. Jesus taught his disciples how to live more abundantly and showed us the way to happiness here and eternal life hereafter.

Miracles

He performed many miracles. They were "an important element in the work of Jesus Christ, being not only divine acts, but forming also a part of the divine teaching. . . . They were intended to be a proof to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. . . . The miracles of healing also show how the law of love is to deal with the actual facts of life. Miracles were and are a response to faith, and its best encouragement" (Bible Dictionary, "Miracles").

Recall the pathos in one of Christ's greatest miracles, the raising

of his friend Lazarus from the dead. The compassionate Savior responded to the pleas of his friends but also delayed his coming in order to use the occasion to teach. "I am glad for your sakes," he said, "that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe" (John 11:15).

The mourning Martha said with childlike faith:

"Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

"But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

"Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

"Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:21-25).

Mary expressed similar feelings: "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:32). And Jesus, seeing her and others weeping, "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled," and he himself wept (see John 11:33, 35). The depth of caring and compassion is remarkable and warmly inviting. Jesus, with the word of faith and power, said simply, "Lazarus, come forth" (John 11:43). And Lazarus did—a life restored and irrefutable evidence of Christ's divinity, forever established as a basis of faith.

Disciples of the living Christ

I exult with Paul: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55). Christ has won the victory. Death is conquered; life—eternal life—reigns triumphant. We are disciples of the living Christ. Though his body was laid in a borrowed sepulcher, he was resurrected on the third day, appearing to many.

Imagine yourself in the company of the disciples and other believers on

the day of the Resurrection. Mere hours have passed since you witnessed the horrifying crucifixion of the gentle Nazarene. You have shared hopeless moments of profound sorrow. Confused, knowing not where to turn, how to act, your minds are clouded with mists of despair. Then two disciples join you with word that they have conversed with the Lord on the road to Emmaus. Dare you believe those who report, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon"? (Luke 24:34).

Luke recorded this remarkable event:

"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

"And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet" (Luke 24:36-40).

That scene lives in my heart, for it heralds immortality for all of us. It assures us of continued life after death free from mortal pain and sorrow.

His atonement

Jesus took upon himself the sins of all of us in Gethsemane and on the cross. He died that we might live. Who among us has not experienced the pain of sin? Who does not desperately need the balm of divine forgiveness to heal a wounded soul? Lehi taught his son Jacob:

"Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth.

“Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered” (2 Nephi 2:6–7).

His was a “great and last sacrifice,” an “infinite and eternal sacrifice,” which none but the sinless Son of God could effect (Alma 34:10).

The way to eternal life has been cleared by the “way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Why should we not accept the invitation to salvation as phrased by Peter, “casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

His commission

“Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth” (2 Nephi 2:8). Jesus displayed a missionary zeal, a fervent desire that all the children of God enjoy the blessings of his gospel. Isn’t it interesting that the last chapter of each of the Gospels contains an appeal from the risen Lord to spread the gospel.

On the wall of the main floor of the Church Office Building in Salt Lake City is a magnificent mural depicting Jesus Christ as a resurrected being standing among his eleven Apostles as he gives them a stirring charge to be missionaries to all the world:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:19–20).

The Apostles who there stood with the Son of God responded to this call with faith, boldness, and power.

We read that they were “all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31). They had seen a resurrected being, had eaten with him, had felt his hands and feet. They knew, and knowing, they testified, “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

Does that commission extend to us as his disciples? Perhaps we have not seen in person the risen Lord. But the testimony of his chosen witnesses is etched into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We know, and knowing, we too must testify. Is there any question in the mind of any of us that this is one of the chief responsibilities we enjoy by reason of our membership in his Church? I began with Mormon’s declaration: “I have been called of him to declare his word among his people, that they might have everlasting life” (3 Nephi 5:13). Such is the calling of each of us.

Give yourself to Christ

What Christ desires from each of us is surrender, complete and total—a voluntary gift of trust, faith, and love. C. S. Lewis captured the spirit of this surrender:

“Christ says ‘Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good. I don’t want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. . . . Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked—the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours’” (*Mere Christianity* [New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1943], p. 167).

I know that my Redeemer lives

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, I express my willingness to so submit myself to my Savior because I trust him, I believe him, and I love him. I say with Job:

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

"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25-26).

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Ted E. Brewerton

My brethren and sisters, on this bright and beautiful day, I should like to address the subject of light. The dictionary defines light as something that makes vision possible or something that enlightens or informs.

Two types of light are physical light and spiritual light.

Physical light

Physical light, especially natural light, affects the moods of people. When summer's light begins to fade, days grow shorter, and the winter season looms darkly ahead, natural light becomes a more precious commodity, especially to people who live in extreme northern climates. There, where darkness reigns for up to three months a year and then summer blooms into three months of constant daylight, moods swing with the seasons.

Light does have a profound effect on human mood and behavior. Mounting evidence indicates that people who are feeling a little down and need a lift can get it by going outside in daylight. Walking in the light is a natural mood booster. Many who simply walk for half an hour or more during the daylight hours receive a distinct benefit. (See *The Walking Magazine*, Jan.-Feb. 1989, pp. 28-30.)

Scientists are not entirely certain which wavelengths cause light's mood-boosting effects. Researchers believe that these effects are traceable to light taken in *through the eyes* and not through the skin.

A second medical use of light is light therapy for treating some cancers. Certain chemicals combined with light can destroy cancer cells. Research is under way to identify the best source of light and to determine how to direct it to body areas. (See *Time*, Canadian ed., Nov. 1989.)

Spiritual light

Shifting from these brief remarks about physical light, I should like to consider a kind of light that has infinitely greater power and effect. I speak of *spiritual light*. It comes from God and his gospel. In the scriptures, we find reference to a relationship between the physical light of the sun and spiritual light. We read in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 88, of "the light of truth;

"Which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made. . . .

"And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings;

"Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—

"The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed" (D&C 88:6-7, 11-13).