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AMCAP
ASSOCIATION OF
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AND PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

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ISSUE

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

The theme of this second theme-centered issue of the Journal is "Vulnerable Populations within the Church." We hope you will find it helpful. While we have articles on a number of the vulnerable populations, such as older singles, children, adopted children, and those under significant stress, we obviously do not have represented other vulnerable populations, such as the handicapped, aged, infirm, and unemployed—groups that could have been included but we did not receive articles dealing with them. We are sorry about that. If you have ideas to share on some of the other vulnerable populations, or have a colleague who does, we would still like to consider those for another issue. For an excellent preview to the theme-related articles of this issue, please see "LDS Church Members in the United States and Canada" by Kristen Goodman and Tim Heaton in the last Journal (vol. 12, no. 1).

As will probably be typical of future issues, we have again included articles not directly related to our theme. We trust that you will also enjoy these.

We would also be pleased to receive your comments and inquiries about, or rejoinders to, any of the articles in the Journal.

We express special appreciation to the authors, who have given much talent, time, thought, and energy in preparing their articles for this issue.

"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU"

Elder Dean L. Larsen
Of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy
Keynote Address AMCAP Convention
2 October 1986

It is good to be with you today. I appreciate the invitation. Before I go further, I must make a comment regarding something that happened yesterday. Apparently, some little notification appeared in the local newspapers yesterday about the program today, and, I presume, as a result of that, the Church Public Communications Department called and asked if I would share with them the text of my talk. I had to confess I didn't have a text. And I confess it to you. That is not to imply that I have not given considerable thought to what I would like to share with you today, but I felt that I would like to have a little more freedom than a prepared text would give me. I hope this will not be a disappointment to you, and if it is I give my apologies in advance. If it is necessary that some kind of report be made of what I say today, and if anything occurs of sufficient value to warrant such a report, perhaps someone could make notes and afterwards compile some kind of recapitulation of the proceedings. I hope to be rather informal and perhaps even involve some of you in a discussion of shared areas of concern. And I hope that will not be inappropriate. I sincerely hope that what we do will be useful to you. The chalkboard here suggests something of a classroom atmosphere, but it isn't that I intended to be the teacher today. I was hoping to be able to use this to construct a simple representation of some ideas that we might discuss.

On the opposite ends of this chalkboard I am going to construct two simple rectangles that will represent the spectrum between the conditions that we call "health" and "sickness." I will connect these two rectangles with three lines that are to represent three basic areas of our lives in which we experience degrees of health or sickness. These

representations will be oversimplifications, but I hope they will be useful in our discussion. I will let these three connecting lines represent the spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects of our lives. All of us have an interest in these three areas. Some of us might be considered as professional practitioners who have an interest in helping others to enjoy a healthy condition in these areas.

As Latter-day Saints we should have no difficulty in recognizing the interrelationships among the spiritual, emotional, and physical elements in our lives. We really can't isolate one from the others. I don't think there is any question, for example, that there is a direct relationship between one's physical condition and his emotional stability, and often the reverse might also be true. Certainly both of these have bearing upon the spiritual condition, and one's spiritual condition may well have an effect upon his physical and emotional health. I mention this to lay a foundation for some of the observations I would like to share with you today.

In my role as a spiritual adviser, I sometimes encounter those who are suffering from emotional problems and, not infrequently, those who have physical difficulties. At times those of us who have ecclesiastical responsibilities are asked to administer to those who have emotional and physical problems. All of us have had experiences of this kind in which we have observed the results of prayer and faith. Sometimes these results are almost miraculous. The Lord, in some instances, responds to prayers and to the exercising of faith to intervene in all three of these areas of our lives. But frequently he does not.

I have to recognize as a spiritual adviser, or as a spiritual leader, that conditions may exist in an individual's life that I may not be able to deal with effectively without the kind of help that you can give, or without the help that those who practice medicine can give. By the same token, I would sincerely hope and trust you will recognize that people have profound spiritual needs that may not be fulfilled by the professional expertise you may bring to bear. Does anyone want to comment on or disagree with this premise?

One other idea, then, might be represented by this very simple graph. I will draw a vertical line that intersects the three parallel horizontal lines which we have said represent the spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects of our lives. It will be somewhere between the two poles that we have identified as sickness and health. This vertical line will represent the arbitrary point at which certain symptoms appear in the life of an individual which cause us to speak of that individual as being "sick." To illustrate further, at some point along this range that represents the emotional part of our lives there can emerge some

kind of behavior that we consider to be abnormal and that requires treatment in a particular way. The same thing can be true in a spiritual sense. That is, we may find people living in such a way that their lives appear to be out of harmony with spiritual principles, and we express the same kind of concern and anticipate something of the same kind of special need on their behalf. Certainly this can be true in the physical part of our lives as well.

Most of you, I suspect, devote the major part of your time professionally dealing with people in this area, along the "emotional" line beyond the point where it verges toward "sickness." Is that correct? One of the things I would like to suggest to you today is that in the area along this range of emotional and spiritual health where we generally think of people as being well, or adjusted, or healthy, there are many who are experiencing difficulties and needs that often go unobserved. In this environment of complexity and diversity and stress we need to become more aware of these needs that are not always overtly observable in people's lives and that may be pushing them toward the "sickness" pole. *We* need to be increasingly alert to the needs, not only here where abnormality begins to surface, but increasingly here in this area where people may appear to be dealing successfully with the challenges and problems they are faced with. There are needs that are peculiar to our own time, and they probably will not diminish in our lifetime.

I have attempted to discover some scriptural terms that might represent these two points that I have described as "health" and "sickness." The best term that I have been able to discover relating to "health" is the term *peace*. The Savior said:

> Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.
> (John 14:27)

The Savior himself is a source of peace, of reassurance. He is an anchor, a refuge; and one who accepts him as the Son of God and recognizes in him all the possibilities and opportunities in an eternal sense that he extends to us finds a principal source of peace. That idea is repeated in another way, interestingly, in section 39 of the Doctrine and Covenants in which the Savior says:

> And this is my gospel—repentance and baptism by water, and then cometh the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, which showeth all things, and teacheth the peaceable things of the kingdom.
> (D&C 39:6)

I would have to interpret from this statement that there is, in the proper understanding of the gospel and in our living in compliance with its principles, a source of peace, of emotional and spiritual strength. We need to recognize this in our attempts to help others.

The opposite of peace is a little harder to come by in specific scriptural terms. *Contention* comes close, but it's not altogether satisfactory. Yet, if it's considered broadly as representing conflict and stress, then it serves better. The scriptures make it clear that noncompliance with gospel principles is destructive of peace. "Wickedness never was happiness." This is difficult for some people to believe as they observe the apparent pleasure with which so many live dissolute lives. This apparent paradox is sometimes disconcerting.

A week or two ago I was seated next to a young woman on a flight from the East. She was going to Denver, she said, to conduct a training seminar for people of the company she represented. I asked her how she enjoyed her work. She was very fulfilled. She was enjoying the alcoholic beverages that the flight attendants brought to her as we conversed. Then she told me, "Really, I have everything. I have more than I ever dreamed of having." She talked of her work and then said she had found the man of her dreams. They were just completing decorating and furnishing a beach-front condominium. She said it was just what they wanted. There was no intention of marriage. She told about their traveling together in Europe and what an enjoyable time they had had, and how thrilled her mother and father were with him and with their relationship. All of this seems in direct contradiction to what I have just represented regarding the relationship between peace and compliance with gospel principles. Yet it is not difficult for us to predict from all we have observed in our lives that inevitably this young woman is headed for some disillusionment and unhappiness.

Now, let me come back to the often-concealed needs of so many who appear to be, by surface observation, spiritually and emotionally healthy. The observations that follow will not surprise most of you, because you encounter people in your daily professional work who reflect the kinds of difficulties that I am going to point to now. I believe we must become more wise and more sensitive in dealing with these problems than we have ever been before, both ecclesiastically and professionally. I seem to be encountering more and more frequently in my circulation among the membership of the Church, people who are honestly trying to avoid sin, who are really doing their best, as they understand, to live in accordance with the principles of

the gospel but who are unhappy, frustrated, and disillusioned to a considerable degree. Let me use extractions from several letters that have come to me from such people to illustrate the nature of the problem to which I refer:

> Please understand, we are trying. We know that these are the last days, and so much needs to be done. We do not want to be numbered among the inactives, but for the first time it is beginning to look better and better.

Have you ever run into people like that? Here is another:

> Is it really a matter of piling it on to see how much one can take? A survival of the fittest? I can't imagine Heavenly Father wanting it to be this way.

There is some anguish in that serious question. These are not all from the same individual. Here is another:

> Life has ceased to have any meaning for me. I cannot see any way out except to quit. I just wish I could walk away from all of it—sometimes from everything.

There is some desperation expressed here—in the life of one who is obviously a member trying to do what's right. How do you account for that? Is this something you need to be prepared to come to grips with in your profession? What might be done to help these people? What are some of the things that may be happening in the lives of these people, things that would not be readily apparent, but might be contributing to their frustrations?

Comment: There are so many expectations that are generated for people today.

Elder Larsen: Is there anyone who wants to comment on that and expand on it, to become a little more specific?

Comment: There is a guilt complex reflected in these letters—"God does not love me, . . ." "I'm not measuring up. . . ."

Elder Larsen: Does it relate to the magnitude and diversification of the expectations these people feel are imposed on them or that they generate for themselves?

Comment: It relates to perfection.

Elder Larsen: And achieving perfection is a correct principle, isn't it? But it is apparently a source of great frustration to many who don't feel they are achieving it as quickly as they feel they should, or as somebody else feels they should.

Comment: When the gospel is misunderstood, it seems to be a source of contention.

Elder Larsen: We need to be particularly careful in our ecclesiastical and professional roles that we don't raise expectations so broad and so numerous that people can't cope with them. Let me share with you one other comment that came in another letter—this one in response to the *New Era*'s printing (Feb. 1986, pp. 4–9) of a talk I had given at a BYU fireside. I spoke on the subject "The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom." I believe I received more response to and reaction from what I tried to say on that occasion than I have on any other thing I have said or done since I came into this position ten years ago—more letters, more telephone calls, more personal visits, sometimes from people whose names you would readily recognize. Here is one I have chosen because the woman is very articulate and has said well what others with less ability to put their feelings into words have tried to say:

> How grateful I am to you for bringing these things out in the open.

Elder Larsen: That in itself is interesting.

> I fit so closely with the emotionally and spiritually burned-out person you describe.
>
> For the first time I can see the reason why I have never felt peace, even though I try so hard to do what's right. Your message has done more for me than all the anti-depressants and psychiatrists' visits I have made. It's like you have given me permission to enjoy the road back to Heavenly Father, instead of beating myself frantically toward Him.

There is some real pathos in this. Now, this is not an isolated reaction. I don't think that is an isolated feeling or condition among our own people today, and I believe sincerely it is one of the significant challenges that you and I and those with whom we are associated are going to have to deal with in this stressful, challenging time. How do we do it successfully so that people don't become disillusioned about the gospel, or lose faith in the Savior and the refuge and source of peace that he represents?

Let me quote a few lines from the talk I gave (3 Feb. 1985) to which this last correspondent reacted:

> Some of us create such a complexity of expectations for ourselves that it is difficult to cope with the magnitude of them. Sometimes we establish so many particulars by which to evaluate and rate ourselves that it becomes difficult to feel successful and worthy to any degree at any time. We can drive ourselves unmercifully toward perfection on such a broad plane. When this compulsion is intensified by sources outside

ourselves, the problem is compounded. Confronting these demands can bring mental and emotional despair.

Everyone needs to feel successful and worthy in some ways at least part of the time. The recognition of our frailities need not propel us to try to achieve perfection in one dramatic commitment of effort. (p. 6)

That to me seems to be particularly important.

The best progress sometimes comes when we are not under intense duress. Overzealousness is at least as much to be feared as apathy. Trying to measure up to too many particular expectations without some sense of self-tolerance can cause spiritual and emotional "burn-out."

In order to avoid the effects of too many external and internal pressures, it is not necessary nor wise to withdraw from all of life's challenges. This would only compound our difficulties. To enjoy the "peaceable things of the kingdom," we must find warm acceptance, love, and understanding from those who have the most direct influence on our lives. (p. 6)

Here is another quotation from the same talk:

Another factor that has a bearing upon whether or not we experience peace in our lives has to do with our being able to realistically respond to expectations that others have for us and the demands they sometimes make of us. In responding to these expectations, we must successfully evaluate between fundamentally important values and the sometimes superficial or outward performances that others may expect from us. This requires that we recognize real truth and demonstrate integrity to it. Peace of mind comes when we know we are doing the right thing for the right reasons.

For some reason one of the most common methods many of us use to motivate is to develop feelings of guilt within ourselves or in others for whom we have a responsibility. (pp. 7–8)

Have you been to a church meeting lately where you were made to feel that way? If we play upon the guilt of people who are earnestly striving to become perfect with an almost unending diversification of expectations which seem to come simultaneously, we can overwhelm them and cause them to feel as if their eternal prospects are hopeless. One additional quotation:

Guilt feelings are a natural product of an injured conscience. When we willfully violate a valid code of conduct, we suffer the consequences of our infraction in the internal conflict that occurs within our souls. Such

> feelings, painful and remorseful though they may be, can generate the desire to repent and improve. They can be useful, constructive emotions that propel us forward to greater perfection.
>
> But purposefully generating feelings of guilt over some shortcoming as a means of motivating action or promoting more compliant behavior is rarely productive. (p. 8)

I suggest to you today, brothers and sisters, that this is one of our great challenges—how we motivate and encourage without intensifying so greatly the pressures and the stresses that our efforts become counterproductive. Is it possible to do that? I would earnestly hope and pray so and suggest to you that that's one of the areas we will have to deal with increasingly on both of these levels—the spiritual and the emotional. There are some today who feel the Church is a great insatiable, demanding institution—cold, impersonal, and unyielding. And to the degree we have made it appear that way to others, shame on us. We have a responsibility to represent the Lord and his work in a way that will not bring those results.

Have I said that in an acceptable way? I hope so.

In the past several years, studies have been made and are being made among some segments of the Church population primarily to determine what things seem to have the greatest impact or influence in people's lives to help them become spiritually mature and at peace. I have not had an opportunity to go through some of those studies carefully, but I have reviewed virtually all of them to some degree, and some of them I have reviewed very closely. It is interesting to me that in all of these studies three things seem to emerge regularly as having tremendous importance in the acquiring and maintaining of spiritual health and well-being. These may not be surprising to you, and yet may be because they are so standard and foundational to the gospel we don't give them as much attention as we need to. One is *prayer*. People who will pray regularly and out of the genuine recognition of the source of peace, comfort, and security that Deity represents have a tremendously powerful and stabilizing influence in life. The second thing is the *study of the scriptures*—regular study. There is something about scripture study that is tremendously significant, more so, it seems, than we have ever realized before, even though attention has been given to this in the past. Its effect upon stability and spiritual and emotional health is very potent. The third thing is something we don't talk about quite so much. The third thing is *a disposition to do something good for someone else*, an inclination to forget self in a concern for someone else. Now, I'm not just talking about church

service. Assigned church service is important, but I refer more to an attitude or a disposition to be alert to the needs of others and then the determination to make an effort in some way to respond to those needs. There is apparently something so very Christ-like about that attribute that it represents a tremendously strong underpinning of emotional and spiritual strength. I share that with you simply to suggest that maybe this disposition is something we all need to consider as we counsel with people. The more we can help to turn them outside themselves and to become conscious of and anxious to help others, the more we may be able to help them overcome their own problems. Those three things are of tremendous importance.

I hope that I have not understated or given too little attention to the importance of the real source of spiritual strength in our lives, which is, of course, a belief in and reliance upon our Heavenly Father and the Savior, Jesus Christ. They are the most secure refuge that we have. I know that, and I know from my own experience and my experience with others.

Generally, when we are invited to stake conferences we spend Saturday evening in the home of the stake president with whom we visit. That's not always the case, but generally it is. And those are always rich experienes, as we have the opportunity to meet with some truly great people of the world. Sometimes these are interesting experiences. I was recently in a stake in the Midwest and stayed with a stake president who had rather modest means and a large family. They lived in a home that was an older home—not spacious, with only one bathroom and one bedroom downstairs, and that was the one used by the parents. There were eight children. When we got to their home Saturday night we had a little refreshment, and I had an opportunity to meet with the children; then the children all hurried upstairs to bed. The stake president and his wife insisted that I use their bedroom. I protested. I said that I could sleep on the couch or anywhere. I protested until I could tell I was beginning to offend them and hurt their feelings, so I proceeded to their bedroom downstairs, and they went upstairs somewhere with the children. About midnight the door to the bedroom opened and I heard a little boy's voice call, "Daddy." In an instant, before I was fully awake, their little two-year-old son was in bed with me and had his arms wrapped around my neck. He said simply, "I had a dream about a monster." And I didn't want to add to his trauma, so I didn't say anything. I put my arm over him and patted him and in an instant he was asleep. I drifted off again, but sometime later I was awakened. In the darkness of the room the youngster was sitting up in bed, running his fingers

over my face. He sensed something was wrong. I said, "Would you like to go where your mommy and daddy are?" He said, "Uh, huh." I led him over to the door, and by that time his father had heard our voices and was standing at the head of the stairs waiting for his son. There was something almost symbolic in that experience. As I lay awake for awhile and thought about the experience, I realized that in that bedroom, in that home, that little boy knew he had sanctuary. There was security there. There was safety and acceptance and love. I thought how tremendously important that is. He instinctively knew where to go for that support and reassurance. It seems to me that each one of us has to have that kind of place to go. Prayer and a relationship with our Heavenly Father and the feeling we have for the Savior, those things are tremendously important to us. The principles of the gospel and our understanding of them can help. But we need to help one another as well.

The Lord says in the Doctrine and Covenants:

> If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal.
> (D&C 42:61)

There is more to learn as we seek to help one another, and we must learn more, particularly in today's stressful environment. Life will probably become more complicated, more difficult. The challenges will increase. But as we earnestly and honestly pray to understand and do our tasks better, we have the promise that inspiration will be available to us.

May I share one more thing with you before I conclude. I came home this past Monday night, after traveling from a stake conference outside the country. I was concerned about the preparation for this meeting with you as well as the events of a general conference week. In an effort to relax a little before retiring, I pulled from a bookshelf a book of poetry by Edgar A. Guest. I found these verses:

> The happiest nights
> I ever know
> Are those when I've
> No place to go,
> And the missus says
> When the day is through:
> "To-night we haven't
> A thing to do."

Oh, the joy of it,
And the peace untold
Of sitting 'round
In my slippers old,
With my pipe and book
In my easy chair,
Knowing I needn't
Go anywhere.

Needn't hurry
My evening meal
Nor force the smiles
That I do not feel,
But can grab a book
From a near-by shelf
And drop all sham
And be myself.

Oh, the charm of it
And the comfort rare;
Nothing on earth
With it can compare;
And I'm sorry for him
Who doesn't know
The joy of having
No place to go.

("No Place to Go," *A Heap O' Livin'*, pp. 110–11)

I think we all need that sometimes, too, and we shouldn't feel guilty.

May the Lord bless us and help us in our attempts to be serviceable to others. I express to you my personal, deep appreciation for the great good that you do in your own ecclesiastical service in the Church and in the professional service that you give as well.

May the Lord bless you in all you do, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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AFFIRMING CHURCH ACTIVITY, OR WHY THE CHURCH IS AS TRUE AS THE GOSPEL

Eugene England

I was convinced when I was a boy that the most boring meeting in the Church, perhaps in the world, was a "quarterly stake conference." In those days stake conference was indeed held every three months. It included at least two two-hour sessions on Sunday—for everyone. And the most interesting highlights to us children were the quavery songs literally "rendered" by the "Singing Mothers" and the sober sustaining of the "Stake No Liquor-Tobacco Committee."

But one conference, when I was twelve, was memorable for a better reason. I was sitting near the front because my father was being sustained as a high councilor in a newly formed stake, and I had turned around in my seat to tease my sister, who was sitting behind me. Suddenly I felt something, vaguely familiar, burning to the center of my heart and bones and then, it seemed, physically turning me forward to look at the transfigured face of Elder Harold B. Lee, the "Visiting Authority." He had interrupted his prepared sermon and was giving the new stake an apostolic blessing. And I became aware, for a second and confirming time in my life, of the presence of the Holy Ghost and the special witness of Jesus Christ.

How many boring stake conferences would I attend to be even once in the presence of such grace? Thousands—all there are. That pearl is without price. And because I have since learned better what to look for and find there—not doctrinal revelation so much as understanding of and experience with the members of the Church—the conferences are no longer boring. Thus, one of the earliest and most important pillars of my faith came not through some great insight into the gospel but through an experience I could only have had because I was doing my duty in the Church, however immaturely.

Yet one of the clichés often repeated by Mormons is that the *gospel* is true, even perfect, but the *Church* is, after all, a human

instrument, history-bound, and therefore understandably imperfect—something to be endured for the sake of the gospel. I am persuaded, by experiences like that one at a stake conference and by my best thinking, that, in fact, the Church is as "true," as effective, as sure an instrument of salvation, as the system of doctrines we call the gospel—and that it is so in good part because of the very flaws, human exasperations, historical problems, etc., that occasionally give us all some anguish about the Church.

But sometimes that anguish becomes so intense it is emotionally destructive. It may lead Mormons to seek professional help or at least it may be a significant part of the pain and troubled behavior that counseling is designed to heal. In the following essay I wish to provide counselors of all kinds some ideas, based on my own experiences as a branch president, bishop, teacher and advisor to students, etc., that may help us understand and respond in more helpful ways to the conflicts and pain that church activity seems to bring many people. My fundamental conviction is that it is unhelpful, indeed rationally impossible, to deny or simply palliate those inner and outer conflicts: They are, I believe, intrinsic to the nature of the Church. Instead, I believe it is possible to help people see and experience the conflicts in more positive ways, to affirm them as essential to the Church's saving role—the way it teaches us unconditional love. The key seems to be to change our basic orientation from consumers ("What has the Church or sacrament meeting or the bishop or my Sunday School class done for *me* lately?") to contributors ("How am I using my membership in the Church, with its many opportunities for association and service, to give to others in that community of my time, means, love, talents, insight, patience?"). Then we need to realize that conflicts will inevitably arise when we try to work with, serve, be taught by people we might not have anything to do with given our own choice. The conflicts need not be a cause for alienation and guilt but, using the basic principles of honest confrontation based in both courage and charity that are outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 121:36–46, can be the basis of increased understanding and acceptance, despite real and painful differences.

I know that those who use the cliché about the gospel being more "true" than the Church want to mean by the gospel a perfect system of revealed commandments based on principles which infallibly express the natural laws of the universe. But, in fact, even revelation is merely the best understanding the Lord can give us of those things. And that human understanding, as God himself has clearly insisted, is not perfect. As he reminds us in the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

> Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding.
>
> And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known.
>
> (vv. 24–25)

This is a remarkably complete and sobering inventory of the problems involved in getting God's knowledge of how the universe works into human language and then of having it understood. It should make us careful about claiming too much for our understanding of "the gospel," which as we have seen is not the same as the perfect principles or natural laws themselves—or God's perfect knowledge of those things—but is merely the best human language version that inspired but limited mortals can express.

And even after a revelation is received and expressed by a prophet, it has to be understood, taught, translated into other languages, worked out in programs and manuals, sermons and essays—in a word, interpreted. And that means that at least one more set of limitations of human language and worldview enters in. Even simply reading the scriptures to others involves interpretation—in choosing *what* is read in a particular circumstance and *how* it is read, its tone and emphasis. Then *anything* we do beyond that becomes less and less "authoritative" as we move into explication and application of the scriptures—that is, as we teach "the gospel."

Certainly the Holy Ghost can give strokes of pure intelligence to the speaker and bear witness of truth to the hearer. I have experienced both of those lovely, reassuring gifts. But I also know that those gifts, which guarantee the *overall* guidance of the Church in the way the Lord intends and provide occasional remarkably clear guidance to individuals, still do not override individuality and agency. They are not exempt from those limitations of human language and mortal perception which the Lord describes in the passage I quoted above, and thus they cannot impose *universal* acceptance or understanding of the gospel.

This problem is compounded by the fundamentally paradoxical nature of the universe itself and thus the dilemmas posed even by the true laws and principles that the gospel uses to describe the universe. Lehi's law, "It must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things" (2 Ne. 2:11), is perhaps the most provocative and profound statement of abstract theology in the scriptures, because it describes what is most ultimate in the universe—even beyond God. In context it clearly suggests that not only is contradiction and opposition a natural part of human experience, something God uses for his redemptive purposes,

but that opposition is at the very heart of things: It is *intrinsic* to the two most fundamental realities, intelligence and matter—what Lehi calls things "to act" and things "to be acted upon." According to Lehi, opposition provides the universe with energy and meaning, even makes possible the *existence* of God and everything else: Without it "all things must have vanished away" (2 Ne. 2:13).

We all know in our experience the consequences for mortal life of this fundamental, eternal reality. Throughout history the most important and productive ideas have been paradoxical, that is, in useful opposition to each other: The energizing force in all art has been conflict and opposition; the basis for success in all economic, political, and other social development has been competition and dialogue. Think of our government based on checks and balances and our two-party political system (which together make pluralistic democracy possible). Think of Romanticism versus Classicism (a conflict at the heart of much literature—and most literary movements), reason versus emotion, freedom versus order, individual integrity versus community responsibility, men versus women (whose differences make eternal increase possible), justice versus mercy (an opposition whose transcendence through the Atonement of Christ makes our redemption possible).

Life in this universe is full of polarities and is made full by them. We struggle with them, complain about them, even try sometimes to destroy them with dogmatism or self-righteousness or a retreat into the innocence that is only ignorance, a return to the Garden of Eden where there is deceptive ease and clarity but no salvation. William Blake, the great eighteenth-century poet, taught that "without contraries is no progression" and warned that "whoever tries to reconcile [the contraries] seeks to destroy existence" (quoted in *The Norton anthology of English literature: Major authors edition,* 1323). Whatever it means that we will eventually see "face to face," *now* we can see only "through a glass, darkly" (1 Cor. 13:12), and we had better make the best of it.

Certainly, if we mean by "the gospel" only the good news of Christ's redemption (as it is used often in the New Testament), or if we mean only the basic principles of salvation implied when we say, "I know the restored gospel is true," we are talking about something fairly definite and clear. But, as we know it in human terms, the full gospel is not—and perhaps, given that paradoxical nature of the universe itself, cannot ever be—a simple and clear set of unequivocal propositions. However clear and unified our ultimate knowledge of doctrine will be, our present understanding of the gospel, which is what we actually have to deal with, is various and limited.

And that is precisely where the Church comes in. I believe the Church is the best medium, apart from marriage (which it much resembles in this respect), for helping us to gain salvation by grappling constructively with the oppositions of existence. And it can do this despite our limited and various understandings of "the gospel." I believe that the better any church or organization is at such help, the "truer" it is. And when I call the Mormon church "the true church" I mean that it is the best organized means for providing such help because it is divinely organized and directed—and that it is made and kept effective by revelations that have come and continue to come from God, however "darkly" they, of necessity, come to our own limited and various understandings.

Martin Luther, with inspired perception, wrote, "Marriage is the school of love"—that is, marriage is not the home or the result of love so much as the *school.* I believe that any good church is a school of love and that the Mormon church is the best one, the "only true and living church" (D&C 1:30)—not just because its doctrines teach and embody the great and central saving principles and paradoxes but, more importantly, because the Church provides the best *context* for struggling with, working through, enduring, being redeemed by, those paradoxes and oppositions that give energy and meaning to the universe. Joseph Smith, also with inspired perception, wrote in a letter just before his death, "By proving contraries, truth is made manifest" (in *History of the Church,* 6:428). By *prove* he meant not only to demonstrate logically but to *test,* to struggle with, and to work out in practical experience. The Church is as true—as effective—as the gospel because it involves us directly in proving contraries, working constructively with the oppositions within ourselves and especially between people, struggling with paradoxes and polarities at an experiential level that can redeem us. The Church is true because it is concrete, not theoretical. And despite, even because of, all its contradictions and problems, it is as productive of good as is the gospel.

Let us consider why this is so: In the life of the true church, as in a good marriage, there are constant opportunities for all to serve, especially to learn to serve people we would not normally choose to serve—or possibly even associate with—and thus there are opportunities to learn to love unconditionally (which after all is the most important thing to learn in the gospel, the very key to our ability to accept the Atonement). There is constant encouragement, even pressure, to be "active": to have a "calling" and thus to have to grapple with relationships and management, with other people's ideas and wishes, their feelings and failures; to attend classes and meetings and to have to listen

to other people's sometimes misinformed or prejudiced notions and to have to make some constructive response; to be subject to leaders and occasionally to be hurt by their weakness and blindness, even unrighteous dominion—and then to be made a leader and find that we, too, with all the best intentions, can be weak and blind and unrighteous.

Church involvement teaches us compassion and patience as well as courage and discipline. It makes us responsible for the personal and marital, the physical and spiritual welfare of people we may not already love (may even heartily dislike), and thus we learn to love them. It stretches and challenges us, even when we are disappointed and exasperated, in ways we would not otherwise choose to be. Thus it gives us a chance to be made better than we might choose—but need and ultimately want—to be.

Michael Novak, the lay Catholic theologian, has made this same point concerning *marriage.* In a remarkable essay, published in the April 1976 *Harper's*, he reviewed the increasing inclination of modern intellectuals to resist, desert, and even to attack marriage. He argues that the main reason the family, which has traditionally been the bulwark of economic and emotional security, is currently "out of favor" is that many modern opinion makers are unwilling to take the risks and subject themselves to the disciplines that the school of marriage requires. But he then points out how such fears, though justified, keep them from meeting their own greatest needs. Similarly, I believe that those who resist, desert, and attack the Church fail, from a simple lack of perspective, to see their own best interest. To better understand what I mean, as you read this passage from Novak, mentally substitute "the Church" for "marriage":

> Marriage [the Church] *is* an assault upon the lonely, atomic ego. Marriage *is* a threat to the solitary individual. Marriage does impose grueling, humbling, baffling, and frustrating responsibilities. Yet if one supposed that precisely such things are the preconditions for all true liberation, marriage is not the enemy of moral development in adults. Quite the opposite. . . .
>
> Being married and having children [being active in the Church] has impressed on my mind certain lessons, for whose learning I cannot help being grateful. Most are lessons of difficulty and duress. Most of what I am forced to learn about myself is not pleasant. . . .
>
> My dignity as a human being depends perhaps more on what sort of husband and parent [Church member] I am, than on any professional work I am called upon to do. My bonds to [my family] hold me back (and my wife's even more) from many sorts of opportunities. And yet these do not feel like bonds. They are, I know, my liberation. They force me to be a different sort of human being, in a way in which I want and need to be forced. (Novak, 1976, 39, 42)

I bear witness that the Church can do those same frustrating, humbling, but ultimately liberating and redeeming things for us. But it can do that only if we can learn to see it as Novak does marriage, if we can see that its assaults on our lonely egos, its bonds and responsibilities which we accept willingly, can push us toward new kinds of being in a way we most deeply want and *need* to be pushed.

Two keys to this paradoxical power in the Mormon church are first that it is, by revelation, a *lay* church—radically so, more than any other—and second that it organizes its congregations geographically, rather than by choice. I know that there are exceptions, but the basic church experience of almost all Mormons brings them directly and constantly into very demanding and intimate relationships with a range of people and problems in their assigned congregations that are not primarily of their own choosing; but those relationships are profoundly redemptive in potential, in part *because* they are not consciously chosen. Yes, the ordinances performed through the Church are important, as are its scriptural texts and moral exhortations and spiritual conduits. But even these, in my experience, are powerful and redemptive mainly because they embody profound, life-giving oppositions and work harmoniously with those oppositions through the Church structure to give truth and meaning to the religious life of Mormons.

Let me illustrate: In one of his very last messages, during the Saturday evening priesthood session, 5 October 1968, President David O. McKay gave a kind of final testament that was a bit shocking to many of us who are conditioned to expect that prophets have no trouble getting divine manifestations. He told how he struggled in vain all through his teenage years to get God "to declare to me the truth of his revelation to Joseph Smith." He prayed, "fervently and sincerely," in the hills and at home, but had to admit to himself constantly, "No spiritual manifestation has come to me." But he continued to seek truth and to serve others in the context of Mormonism, including going on a mission to Britain; he did these things mainly because of trust in his parents and the goodness of his own experience. Finally, as President McKay put it:

> The spiritual manifestation for which I had prayed as a boy in my teens came as a natural sequence to the performance of duty. For, as the apostle John declared, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).
>
> Following a series of meetings at the conference held in Glasgow, Scotland, was a most remarkable priesthood meeting. I remember, as if

> it were yesterday, the intensity of the inspiration of that occasion. Everybody felt the rich outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord. All present were truly of one heart and one mind. Never before had I experienced such an emotion. It was a manifestation for which as a doubting youth I had secretly prayed most earnestly on hillside and in meadow. . . .
>
> During the progress of the meeting, an elder on his own initiative arose and said, "Brethren, there are angels in this room."
>
> Strange as it may seem, the announcement was not startling; indeed, it seemed wholly proper, though it had not occurred to me there were divine beings present. I only knew that I was overflowing with gratitude for the presence of the Holy Spirit. (McKay, 1968, 85)

I have had many confirmations of President McKay's prophetic witness in that sermon. Most of my profound spiritual manifestations, those that have provided the rock-bottom convictions I have about the reality of God and Christ and their divine work—as well as my most troubling, soul-stretching moral challenges, my most maturing struggles with the great human issues of personal integrity versus public responsibility, loyalty to self versus loyalty to community, redemptive freedom versus redemptive structure and order—all these have come, as President McKay affirms, "as a natural sequence to the performance of duty" in the Church.

I know God has been found by unusual people in unusual places—in a sudden vision in a grove or orchard or grotto, or on a mountain or in a closet, or through saintly service to African lepers or Calcutta untouchables. But for most of us, and most of the time, I am convinced he can be found most surely in the "natural sequence to the performance of the duty." And I mean especially the duties God has given us that *all* of us (not just the unusual) can perform in our own homes and neighborhoods—and that the Church, in its unique community, imposed as well as chosen, can best teach and empower us to perform.

I have come to an overwhelming witness of the divinity of the Book of Mormon, such that the Spirit moves me, even to tears, whenever I read any part of it, and I came there by teaching it at church. One Sunday when I was a bishop, as I tried to help a young woman who had attempted suicide a number of times, once just recently, and who was feeling the deepest worthlessness and self-rejection, I was moved to merely read to her some passages from the Book of Mormon about Christ's atonement. I am convinced that book provides the most comprehensive "Christology"—or doctrine of how Christ saves us from sin—that is available to us on earth and that the internal evidences for the divinity of the book entirely overwhelm the

evidences and arguments against it, however troubling. But more important to me than all of those things is that as I read those passages to that desperate young woman and bore witness of their truth and power for me in my own times of despair and sin her lips began to tremble with new feelings, and tears of hope formed in place of those of anguish.

In moments such as these, I was able, through my calling as bishop, to apply the atoning blood of Christ, not in theory but in the truth of experience. In addition, I have come to know the ministering of angels because I have done my duty in temple attendance and have gone whenever possible to temple dedications. And I have found that we mortals do indeed have the power to bless our oxen and cars as well as people because I was a branch president and was pushed to the limits of my faith by my sense of responsibility to my brothers and sisters in that little branch.

Before I was a branch president, I served in the bishopric of the Stanford Ward in the mid-sixties and taught religion at the Palo Alto Institute to bright young students. At the same time, I was doing graduate work in English literature and trying to come to terms with modern skepticism and relativism and the moral dilemmas of the Civil Rights and anti-war movements and the educational revolutions of the time. I tended to see religion very much in terms of large moral and philosophical issues that the gospel did or did not seem to speak to.

In 1970, I accepted a position as dean of academic affairs at St. Olaf, a Lutheran liberal arts college in the small town of Northfield, Minnesota, and within a week of arriving was called as president of the little Mormon branch in that area. I suddenly entered an entirely different world, one that tested me severely and taught me much about what "religion" is. At Stanford much of my religious life had been involved with understanding and defending the gospel—and had been idealistic, abstract, and critical. In Northfield, as branch president for twenty families scattered over seventy-five miles, ranging from Utah-born, hard-core inactives with devastating marital problems to bright-eyed converts with no jobs or with drunken fathers who beat them, I soon became involved in a religious life that was practical, specific, sacrificial, exasperating—and more satisfying and redemptive. And I saw, more clearly than before, how true the Church is as an instrument for confronting all kinds of people with the processes of salvation despite—even because of—its management by imperfect instruments like myself.

I think of a young man in that branch who had been deeply injured socially by some combination of mental and family problems.

It was difficult for him even to speak a word in a group or to organize his life productively. He joined the Church before I arrived, and I was able to see him grow, as we gave him increasing responsibilities in our branch and supported him with much love and patience while he struggled to work with others and express himself, into a fine leader and confident husband and father. I think of a woman whose nonmember husband made her life a hell of drunken abuse, but who patiently took care of him, worked all week to support her family, and came to church each Sunday in drab but jaunty finery and with uncomplaining determination. She found there, with our help, a little hope, some beauty and idealism, and strength not only to endure but to go on loving what was unlovable. The Church blessed us all by bringing us together.

During the five years I served them, there were, among those seventy to one hundred members, perhaps four or five whom I would have normally chosen for friends when I was at Stanford—and with whom I could have easily shared my most impassioned and "important" political and religious concerns and views, the ones that had so exercized me before. But with inspiration far beyond my usual less than good sense, I did not begin my tenure as branch president by preaching about my ideas or promoting my crusades. I tried very hard to see what the immediate problems and concerns of my flock were and to be a good pastor, one who fed and protected them. And a remarkable thing happened. I traveled hundreds of miles and spent many hours—helping a couple who had hurt each other into absolute silence learn to talk to each other again; seeing a student through drug withdrawal; teaching a somewhat domineering man to work cooperatively with his counselors in the Sunday School presidency; blessing a terribly sick baby, aided by its father, who was weak in faith and frightened; comforting, at a hospital at four in the morning, parents whose son had just been killed by his brother driving drunk—and then helping the brother forgive himself. And I found, after six months, that my branch members, initially properly suspicious of an intellectual from California, had come to feel in their bones, from their direct experience, that indeed my faith and devotion to them and to what mattered to them, was "stronger than the cords of death." And the result promised in Doctrine and Covenants 121:44–46 followed: There flowed to me "without compulsory means" the power to talk about *any* of my concerns and passions and to be understood and trusted, even if not agreed with.

Now this may all sound a bit selfish, even obsessive about the Church's contribution to my own spiritual maturity. But what was

happening to me was happening to others. A young couple who had lived abroad, where there was no organized Church, for a year right after the wife had been converted and they had married, came to the branch. Their church experience, especially hers, had been essentially gospel-oriented, deeply felt and idealistic but abstract, involving very little service to others. She was a dignified and emotionally reserved woman, bright, creative, and judgmental—and thus afraid of uncontrolled situations or emotional exposure. He was meticulous, intimidating, somewhat aloof. I called them—despite some resistance—into positions of increasing responsibility and direct involvement with people in the branch and saw them, with some pain and tears, develop into powerfully open, empathetic, vulnerable people, able to understand, serve, learn from, and be trusted by people very different from themselves. And I saw them learn that the very exposures, exasperations, troubles, sacrifices, disappointments, etc., that characterize involvement in a lay church like Mormonism—and that are especially difficult for idealistic liberals to endure—are a main source of the Church's power to teach us to love. They are now teaching others what they have learned.

This lesson—that the Church's characteristic "problems" are among its strengths—has been continually confirmed as I have served as bishop of a ward of young married students at BYU. The two most direct, miraculous—and ultimately redemptive—blessings the Lord gave us when the ward was organized were what looked only like problems: a spastic quadriplegic child in one family and seriously handicapped parents in another. I had known the crippled child's mother for nearly a year: As a visiting high councilman I had spoken on the Atonement at her sacrament meeting, and she had approached me after for counsel and help. She was feeling deep anger and guilt as she tried to understand this failure of hospital care that had made one of two twins into a desperate physical and emotional and financial burden, one which had ended her husband's education in his intended profession, severely tested their marriage and their faith as priesthood blessings seemed to fail, and left her close to breakdown and apostasy.

Now, a year later, as I prayed for guidance in organizing a new ward, I felt as clearly as ever I have felt those "strokes of intelligence" Joseph Smith described, telling me that I should, against all common sense, call her as my Relief Society president. I did, and despite being on the verge of moving away, she accepted. She became the main source of the unique spirit of honest communication and sense of genuine community our ward developed. She visited all the families and shared without reserve her feelings, struggles, successes, and needs. Together with her husband, she spoke openly in our meetings about

her son, his problems and theirs, asked for help and accepted it, and all the while did her duty and endured. We have all learned from them how to be more open, vulnerable, gracious, persistent, how to turn to each other for all kinds of help and not to judge.

I first met the handicapped couple wandering through the halls of our chapel on our first Sunday. They were not looking for our ward; in fact, they lived just outside our boundaries, but I am certain the Lord sent them. They required major expenditure of our ward resources—time, welfare aid, patience, tolerance—as we worked to get them employed, into decent housing, out of debt, capable of caring for their bright, energetic child, and as we tried to help them become less obtrusive in meetings and less offensive socially. And I have learned two lessons: First, the Church structure and resources (which are designed for voluntary, cooperative but disciplined effort with long-range, essentially spiritual goals) are ideally suited as a means in which to build the necessary support system for them, one which may yet succeed in keeping the family together and may even bless them with more progress. Second, the blessings have come to the ward as much as to that family as we have learned to expand greatly our ideas about "acceptable" behavior and especially about our own capacities to love and serve and learn from people we would otherwise never know. One sister called me to report on her efforts to teach the woman some housekeeping and mothering skills, confessed her earlier resentments and exasperations, and told me in tears how much her heart had softened and her proud neck bent as she had learned how to learn from this sister so different from herself.

These are examples, I believe, of what Paul was talking about in 1 Corinthians 12, the great chapter on gifts, where he teaches that all the parts of the body of Christ—the Church—are needed for their separate gifts. He taught, in fact, that those with "less honorable" and "uncomely" gifts are *more* needed and more in need of attention and honor because the *world* will automatically honor and use the others.

It is in the Church especially that those with qualities ("gifts") of vulnerability, pain, handicap, need, ignorance, intellectual arrogance, social pride, even prejudice and sin—those Paul calls the members which "seem to be more feeble"—can be accepted, learned from, helped, and made part of the body so that together it can all be blessed. It is there that those with the more comely and world-honored gifts of riches and intelligence can learn what they most need to serve and love and patiently learn from those with other gifts and thus be more meek about their own.

But that is very hard for the "rich" and "wise" to do. And that is why those who have one of those dangerous gifts tend to misunderstand and sometimes disparage the Church, which, after all, is made up of the common and unclean, the middle class, middlebrow, politically unsophisticated, even prejudiced, *average* members like most of us. And we all know how exasperating *they* can be! I am convinced that in that exasperation lies our salvation, *if* we can let the context which most brings it out—the Church—also be our school for unconditional love. But that requires a change of perspective, one that I will now summarize.

The Church is as "true" as—that is, as effective for salvation as—the gospel: The Church is where there is potentially fruitful conflict, the place where its own revealed nature and inspired direction maintains an opposition between liberal and conservative values, between faith and doubt, secure authority and frightening freedom, individual integrity and public responsibility—and thus where there will be misery as well as holiness, bad as well as good. And if we cannot stand the misery and the struggle, if we would prefer that the Church be "a compound in one" such as Lehi described (smooth and perfect and unchallenging, without internal opposition and thus "vanished away") rather than as it is, full of nagging human diversity and constant insistence that we perform ordinances and obey instructions and take seriously teachings that embody logically irresolvable paradoxes—if we refuse to lose ourselves wholeheartedly in such a school, then we will never know the redeeming truth of the Church. If we constantly ask, "What has the Church done for me?" we will not think to ask the much more important question, "What am I doing with the opportunities for service and self-challenge the Church provides me?" If we constantly approach the Church as consumers, we will never partake of its sweet and filling fruit. Only if we can lose our lives in church and other service will we find ourselves.

It is precisely in the struggle to be obedient while maintaining integrity, to have faith while being true to reason and evidence, to serve and love in the face of imperfections, even offenses, that we can gain the humility we need to allow divine power to enter our lives in transforming ways. Perhaps the most amazing paradox about the Church is that it literally brings together the divine and the human—through priesthood service, the ordinances, the gifts of the Spirit—in concrete ways that no abstract systems of ideas ever could.

My purpose here has not been to ignore the very real problems of the Church or the power of the gospel truths. As I have tried to indicate all along, the Church's paradoxical strength derives from the

truthful paradoxes of the gospel it embodies, contraries we need to struggle with more profoundly in the Church. And we must all engage in not merely accepting the struggles and exasperations of the Church as redemptive but in genuinely trying to reach solutions where possible and reduce unnecessary exasperations. (Indeed, it is only when we grapple with the problems, not merely as intellectual exercises but as problems in need of solution, that they prove redemptive. A good part of successful counseling, it seems to me, must come in helping people to grapple redemptively with real problems.)

But, along with our sensitivity to problems, we must also, I believe, have more respect for the truth of action, of experience, that the Church uniquely exposes us to and we must respond with courage and creativity. We must be active, critical, faithful, believing, doubting, struggling, unified members of the body of Christ. To do so we must accept the Church as true in *two* very important senses: First, it is a repository of crucial redemptive truths and of the authority to perform essential saving ordinances. Though, as I have shown, those truths are difficult to pin down to simple propositons, taken together they motivate and make efficacious the willingness to serve that creates the redemptive schooling I have described. The Mormon concept of a nonabsolute, progressing God, for instance, though not reducible to a creed or even to systematic theology, is the most reasonable, emotionally challenging but satisfying concept, ever revealed or devised—and the most powerful imaginable basis for motivating education and progression. And even though that concept is not understood by all Mormons in the same way, it remains true, as a thoughtful friend once remarked to me, that "the idea of eternal progression is so engrained in our church experience that no statement or even series of statements can root it out," which of course supports my main point about the primary truth of the Church.

In addition, the power of ordinances, however true in form and divinely authorized, is limited by the quality of our preparation and participation. Like baptism of infants, being ordained, partaking of the sacrament, and receiving our endowments can be merely what Moroni called "dead works" (Moro. 8:23), an offense to God and valueless, if they are not genuine expressions of our solidarity with others, living and dead, and sincere responses to the communion of the Saints which is the Church.

But one essay cannot cover everything, and here I have been emphasizing how the Church is true a second way that is too much neglected: Besides being the *repository* of true principles and authority, it is the *instrument* provided by a loving God to help us become like

him, that is, to give us essential schooling—experiences with each other that *can* bind us together in an honest but loving community. And such a community is the essential nurturing place for salvation. If we cannot accept the Church and the challenges it offers with the openness and courage and humility they require, then I believe our historical studies and our theological enterprises are mainly a waste of time—and possibly destructive, merely contributors to serious mental and emotional problems. We cannot appreciate the history of Mormonism or know the truth of Christ's restored gospel unless we understand—and act on—the truth of his church. But if we can affirm church activity, with all its redemptive conflict and pain (and through example and counseling help others do the same), we can all see more clearly the soul-stirring beauty of our history and the unique intellectual and moral power of the gospel.

Eugene England, a professor of English at Brigham Young University, presented this paper, based on the first chapter of his book of essays Why the Church Is As True As the Gospel *(Bookcraft, 1986) at the AMCAP Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, 3 October 1986. It is an expanded version of an essay first printed in* Sunstone.

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LOVE UNCONDITIONAL OR LOVE UNFEIGNED: JUSTICE AND MERCY IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Trevor R. McKee, Ph.D.

> When I want to know how to be a good father, I go to church, consult the scriptures, and listen to the authorities. (Boyd K. Packer, 1985)

One morning last spring I began leading a discussion in our high priest's group by asking questions based on a popular concept. My questions were, simply, "When we hear someone encourage us to love our children unconditionally, what does *unconditionally* mean to you? How would you express love unconditionally to your children?"

As I wrote on the chalkboard the responses I heard, various shades of meaning began to emerge. I was not surprised to see a familiar perception of love being discussed. But what this group of high priests described as unconditional love clearly did not carry the same meaning the people who coined the term *unconditional love* had in mind.

What was it, then, the high priests in this group were describing? Or perhaps more appropriately, what parental behavior is it the humanists are calling for with the terminology of this concept?

The purpose of this exposition is to show that the love many are calling "unconditional" (for example, those who are coming from a gospel perspective) is, upon reflection, radically different from the contemporary (humanist) psychological notion of unconditional love. It is, therefore, much more than just a matter of semantics.

One outcome of this paper should be to help us see why thoughtful parents anguish in confusion when they hear from so many quarters that they are to "love their children unconditionally"; to "love their children no matter what those children do." I hope in this paper to offer some relief to those who want to understand the relationship between misbehavior and the love the children may or may not receive from their parents. Sometimes it is necessary to chastise or reprimand children—something which is far from *conditional love.*

How did this problem get started? A review of two popular perspectives on child-rearing strategies will show how the clash emerged. This may help us understand why there is so much confusion that still lingers over when we should or should not give love to children. The first perspective we will review is high powered in its orientation; the second is permissive.

High-Powered Parenting

The advice we get on parenting, based on empirical studies, strongly suggests that high social and academic achievement in children is associated with parents who are powerful, whose control attempts are inductive, and who are characterized by the child as supportive (Rollins, 1979). Consider one way that a parent fitting this typology might handle a common discipline problem.

In the Jackson home, the job of keeping the garage clean falls to the oldest son. Recently, the garage got so dirty that it was hard for anyone to find his or her way around. Dad Jackson wrote his son a note. It merely said: "Tim, please clean the garage, soon!" That evening at the table Dad got an empathetic reply: "I know it is really bad. I'll get to it this weekend." But when Saturday rolled around, Tim and his friends found the day was too nice to pass up, so they went sailing. During the next week no attempts were made to make up for Saturday. For three weeks Dad patiently listened to Tim's logical excuses and his renewed resolves to get right at the job: but that was all they were. The garage was still dirty, and Dad felt it was due time for him to intervene.

What should Mr. Jackson do? Or perhaps more appropriate questions that Jackson may have contemplated are, "What do I want to accomplish?" Or, "What do I want my child to experience?" At the task or behavioral level it is obvious that the garage needs to be cleaned. If Jackson approaches it on the basis of getting the job done (a behavioral objective), he probably takes the position that "if I want it done, then it is up to me to set something up." If it doesn't get done, then we have an example of a weak parent. If it does get done, then we see an example of a strong, effective parent, typical of the prototype described. This mentality suggests that what the parent does to move the child will make all the difference. It is up to the parents to find appropriate incentives and motivate their children, to help them internalize the rules through good habits and many successes.

Jackson's attempt to control by inducing Tim with good reasoning might sound like this: (Warmly) "Son, I've asked you several times

to clean the garage, but you keep procrastinating. What do you think I ought to do? It's not like you to ignore me. It seems that cleaning the garage is on the bottom of your list of priorities. It seems like anything that comes along . . . I know you said again you would get to it this Saturday, but I'm not sure you will. I think maybe we had better go over the consequences that we all agreed to when we made the assignments in the family. I think it just isn't fair to the rest of us if one person keeps getting out of doing his job. Let me remind you of our agreement. You earn your allowance and the use of the car, which I think you feel is fair, by keeping the garage clean; in the winter you shovel the snow; in the summer you cut the lawn. Is that right? Do you still think that is fair? Now the garage has got to be cleaned before this Sunday. I guess you can do it, or I can hire our neighbor Steve to do it and pay him with your allowance. I'm not going to hassle you over this. You know that. If it isn't done by Saturday at noon, I'll simply get someone else to do it."

With a reminder of those consequences Tim makes sure the garage is cleaned, one way or another, since the use of the car and the allowance are very important to him, and since he does not want to let his dad down.

What did this inductive parenting style take as an objective? That is, what did Jackson as a parent want to accomplish? He wanted to control behavior, to get the task done, to get compliance. Getting compliance, and having a child feel good about it, is always the objective of parents who see motivation as their job. The basic assumption of this model is that some force external to the child pushes or pulls a response. That external force is always the antecedent to a child's behavior. The perspective of parents' persuading in this manner is that because of their technique the behavior changes. The child yields to the parents' superior power, forceful reason, or undeniable control of the resources. He does yield and he does conform. And the child may even grant or legitimize the parents' right to exercise persuasive control.

What makes this process work? It works, according to this empirically supported perspective, because early in infancy the dynamics were already being shaped into the child's mode of interaction with his or her caregivers. It starts when the infant begins to develop a bond of attachment to the principal caregivers. Here is what happens:

From the first day of life instrumental needs are met by principal caregivers. The infant comes to anticipate that those needs will be met by specific persons. As the needs are met, bonds of attachment are developed between the caregivers and the infant. The infant develops a dependency on the caregivers to meet those needs. Parents who are

warm and loving and who respond promptly and appropriately to their infant's cries develop a secure attachment between themselves and their infant. A securely attached infant develops a sense of trust that needs will be met by loving caregivers.

In an atmosphere that is characterized by warmth, love, acceptance, and approval (or support) over time, the infant feels free to explore and experience the environment. However, not everything the infant does may be acceptable. The infant may discover the mother's negative responses for the first time when he or she bites the nipple. The mother scowls, says something harsh, stops the feeding, and leaves the baby alone for a minute. The baby cries. This is repeated a second and a third time when the infant tries the same trick. About the fourth time, the infant hesitates and resists. This change of intent suggests the emergence of a developing conscience. Momentarily the infant remembers what happens after he or she bites. The memory of that experience produces within the baby what is called a fear of nurturance withdrawal. The negative state or fear of nurturance withdrawal that the infant experiences teaches the baby that not biting (complying with mother's wishes) removes the fear or negative state, and the infant returns to equilibrium.

Through the toddler months and into early childhood, the child learns which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. The child learns to anticipate what behaviors are likely to bring on some form of nurturance withdrawal on the part of the adult world. Children who learn how to avoid nurturance withdrawal before it happens are those who have learned to live within the constraints of the social norm. They learn that by compliance they can eliminate any fear of nurturance withdrawal that might be associated with an anticipated behavior. This process is called anticipatory socialization and is a skill children learn early and exhibit throughout life. It is through this process that society is capable of controlling its members and preserving the social order.

The Humanistic Challenge: Permissive Parenting

After World War II, a reaction to this concept became the target among certain psychologists and therapists as a form of resistance or as an alternative to the technological advances in behavior modification. These proponents were the humanists. They got inspiration in large part from the writings of the existential philosophies coming from Europe (Crain, 1985, pp. 261–62).

The notion of unconditional love emerged and rolled across not only this country but the world as a humanistic reaction to the mechanistic

practice of socializing children through a growing technology of nurturance withdrawal paradigms (Rogers, 1958, pp. 15–16). It appeared to offer a fresh and appealing alternative to socializing children.

The bandwagon response unconditional love received has even found its way to the pulpit and Sunday School classes. This acceptance has added to its popular appeal a kind of religious zeal and consequently an informal theological sanction.

How shall we take the admonition that children are entitled to unconditional love from their parents? On the surface, one way to take this advice might be, "No matter what you do I'll still love you." And another might be, "We should never say to a child, if you act like that I won't love you." These are fairly accurate adages, but the concept goes deeper than them.

The unconditional love perspective holds that the reasons youngsters have problems in behavior and adjustment stem from hang-ups they acquire because of the way conditions are placed on the love they get. If it weren't for the acceptance/rejection threat bound up in the expectations parents make on behavior as a precondition for certain expressions of acceptance and love, children wouldn't turn out the way they do.

So, for the humanists, the claim is that compliance is just what they do not want from their children. Well then, what kind of child behavior is it that the humanists value, and how do they propose we should go about getting it? What we want, the humanists reason, is for our children to be self-fulfilling, congruent, responsive, aware of their feelings and the feelings of others, and to behave appropriately where "appropriate" means that behavior is determined by one's feelings of the moment plus the contexts, not by some rules imposed by external forces (Coombs, 1962). All these are humanistic values. And the way you get this to happen is to let children know that no matter what they do you will still love them. That is, the humanists want parents to shift to the other end of the continuum, away from using conditional love as a contingency for manipulating behavior.

A. S. Neill (1960) developed Summerhill, a private school in England, around this notion. The atmosphere in the school seemed to offer a fresh new approach to child education. In his chapter on love and approval, Neill criticizes religious education and condemns the imposition of moral values on children. He believes "parents are spoiling their children's lives by forcing on them outdated beliefs, outdated manners, outdated morals. They are sacrificing the child to the past. This is particularly true of those parents who impose authoritative religion on their children just as it was once imposed on them"

(1960, p. 118). As a reaction to giving moral instruction he declares with strong conviction that "the boy is never in the wrong" (1960, p. 298). He thinks that in the case of children it is psychologically wrong to give moral instruction.

> The adults cling to old values—old *emotional* values. There is no logical basis for a father's prohibiting his twenty-year-old daughter from smoking. The prohibition springs from emotional sources, from conservative sources. At the back of prohibition is the fear, *What may she do next?* The crowd is the guardian of morality. The adult fears to give freedom to the young because he fears that the young may do indeed all the things that he, the adult, has wanted to do. The eternal imposition on children of adult conceptions and values is a great sin against childhood. (1960, pp. 112–13)

Instead he holds that "children do not need teaching as much as they need love and understanding. They need approval and freedom to be naturally good" (1960, p. 118). The way parents can produce children whose lives are characterized by humanistic values is to "be on the side of their children, demanding nothing in return, and therefore getting a lot" (1960, p. 117). He wants a home and a school system in which "the children and the adults have equal rights" (1960, p. 107). If children are given love and approval, if they are trusted and understood, if they are not forced to obey rules imposed by adults, and if parents will not disapprove of their children's misbehavior, because to children "disapproval means hate," they will become self-regulated and on their own come to protect the rights of others, "soon accept[ing] social laws" (1960, p. 120).

Challenging the Humanists

If this is a fair representation of the tone of the humanistic reaction to childrearing, then there appears to be at least three fundamental flaws in humanist thinking.

First, humanists have made a serious conceptual error by not keeping parental love or nurturance conceptually separate from child behavior. What they created instead was a false dichotomy between conditional love and unconditional love, presenting both as functions of children's behavior. It would appear, on the surface, that in telling caregivers that children are entitled to parental love no matter what the children do, they have separated love and behavior. But this is an illusion, as we shall see.

Remember, the idea of unconditional love became popular in the U.S. mostly through the writings and lectures of the father of

client-centered humanistic therapy, Carl Rogers. In his writings as far back as the 1950s he admonishes all who are in a caring relationship to treat children with "unconditional positive regard" (Rogers, 1959). (The cumbersome term *positive regard* was eventually replaced and popularized with the more simple and commonly understood term *love*. The meanings of *unconditional love* and *unconditioned positive regard* are essentially the same.) He taught that parents who "prize" their children treat them with unconditional positive regard (1959, p. 208). This term became the reactionary apothegm against the practice of parental control attempts in general and the notions of nurturance withdrawal in particular for getting compliance from children. But as often is the case when an idea pops up as a reaction, it usually remains tied to the theoretical or psychological traditions from which it stems.

Both Rogers and Neill felt caught and stifled by the demands of their religious traditions. In fact, it was from the outset a reaction to their religious traditions that led them to look for a different set of values and a different methodology and to fight against any parenting procedure that imposed moral standards upon developing children (Neill, 1960, p. 242; Rogers, 1961, p. 5). But their look was more of a glance at some appealing existential ideas than a careful reading of the philosophical underpinnings that sprouted those ideas. When they borrowed some existential concepts they failed to bring with those concepts the underlying theoretical or philosophical principles which are the roots from which existential thinking grew. As a consequence of this serious blunder, their perception of human behavior remains essentially the same as the behaviorists'—causal and mechanistic. Consequently, any talk about freedom of the "self" (which concept the humanist threw in as a thought on what caregivers should do to keep the self independent from interference) is quite hollow. But in insisting on the notion of a self they become indefensible to the behaviorists. For the behaviorists, *self* is a vague term and therefore meaningless and inoperable. Only observable behavior can be controlled by manipulations from the environment. Such conceptual inconsistencies make it difficult for rational people to embrace humanism.

What was it Neill said? It really is quite behavioristic. The difference is not in method but in what variables are being manipulated. "I believe that it is moral instruction that makes the child bad. I find that when I smash the moral instruction a bad boy has received, he becomes a good boy" (Neill, 1960, p. 250). So children are taken to be passive to the socialization attempts of the caregivers. If it weren't for what caregivers were doing, children wouldn't be like they are.

Hence children are victimized by the methods of their caregivers. This voice of accusation blames conditional love as the cause of misbehavior. Children's reactions in the form of rebellion and misbehavior are brought on and explained by restrictive parenting. So supportive data pile up as every bad kid is observed through this psychologistic, i.e., causal, perspective.

So what is the humanist solution? To give love unconditionally. True, the idea of unconditional love calls for a rethinking of what we are doing with love. But love expressed even unconditionally is actually conceived as an antecedent to the kind of behavior that the humanists are calling for. It is not a fresh approach at all, but only a modification of the same old causal theme. Instead of reinforcing the compliance to the traditional moral or ethical values, the humanists only reinforce a different set of values with a different set of contingencies. They want children to comply to such behaviors as being independent, creative, freed from a nagging conscience, open to and having a sense of awareness of their own feelings, independent from institutions, free from binding rules and preconditions that stifle growth, etc. So if both conditional and unconditional love are only extremes on how we manipulate the environment, then perhaps this dichotomization of love will turn out to be no love at all. Perhaps to take children's behavior to be the result of either extreme of the dichotomy is only a variation of feigned love.

But this is not all; and this is the second problem. Think about applying the logic of unconditional love to the other end of the continuum: unconditional punishment, unconditional rejection, or unconditional hatred. The notion of "whatever you do I will love you" is really quite problematic. Consider for a moment, by way of some sinister hyperbole, what the outcome might be if I were to proceed with my child on the basis of unconditional rejection. No matter what he does I will reject him. If my child comes home with bad grades, I reject him; if he comes home with good grades, I reject him. But, in the unconditional love causal model, if he comes home with good grades, I love him; if he comes home with bad grades, I love him equally.

There is a problem of children's knowing what is punishment and what is reward. To some children some things are rewarding, but to others different things are rewards. The same with punishment. Similarly, how do you operationalize love? How does the child know when he is loved? If the child thinks he is loved when you ignore bad grades or when you give him what he wants, then what he does may not be what you expected. If our reason tells us that unconditional rejection is clearly wrong as a strategy for childrearing, why should we,

at the other end of the same continuum, think that unconditional love is right? If in a causal model a child is rewarded for wrong and right behaviors, how will the child ever know which behavior is appropriate? So the best things we can say are that unconditional love is selective and that humanists are using it to increase the likelihood the child will perform the behaviors valued by the humanists. If it is selective, it may not be unconditional at all. It is quite likely the child will read in your indifference to the child's behavior that you don't love him or her at all; you want only to posture yourself as a kind parent.

It appears that this whole conceptualization of love and behavior is misguided, and we are being led astray. It certainly is confusing. Clearly the relationship between behavior and love needs some more work in conceptualization. I shall return to this when I discuss justice and mercy.

Finally, while there has been a widespread popular appeal to the notion of unconditional love in our preaching, there nonetheless can be found no scriptural support for the concept or language whatsoever. While there are references and parables and stories of unfeigned love, there is not one single mention of the word or idea of *unconditional* love in holy writ. Nonetheless, many are citing (misrepresenting) the scriptural stories as evidence which they offer as a demonstration of the notion of unconditional love (for example, the Prodigal Son).

And how would those advocating unconditional love handle the scripture D&C 95:12? Would they take Christ's language to be conditional or unconditional love when he chastised the Saints at Kirtland for failing to build the House of the Lord? "If you keep not my commandments, the love of the Father shall not continue with you, therefore you shall walk in darkness." Does this mean that if we don't keep the commandments he won't love us? Or does it mean something else?

Some might argue that conditions are placed on his love when he says that those who don't keep the commandments will not have his love, and thereby justify the use of conditional love. It seems to me, however, that to take this perspective is to see a God who is manipulative. It is to embrace a God who we believe can get us to be obedient by making what he can give to us conditional upon keeping his commandments. Such a belief of God does not reconcile with a concept of agency, but rather with one of causality. How could someone be deprived of God's love and not take God to be making that love conditional upon keeping the commandments? Perhaps we get into trouble when we see love as being on and off, as either conditional or unconditional. Perhaps that is how some may use it, but maybe that isn't the way unfeigned love is expressed at all.

Perhaps the reason this happens is that behavior and love have been fused together conceptually by both the behaviorists and the humanists. And they are kept together because both behaviorists and humanists see a *causal* relationship between love and behavior. "Make love (the reinforcer) a condition of behavior (child compliance)" vs. "Give love unconditionally, for then the child will behave appropriately and congruently." Both perceptions see a causal, psychologistic relationship between what the parent does and how the child behaves. "What I do affects how my child will behave." Or accusingly by both perspectives, "If it weren't for what you are doing, Mom, your kid wouldn't be acting that way." It is only when we separate the causal relationship between love and behavior through the perception of the concepts of justice and mercy that this dilemma ceases to be a dilemma at all. How justice and mercy become critical parenting behaviors is the topic of the next section of this paper.

But let's look at love from a nonpsychologistic perspective. Perhaps feeling the pure love of the Father is an act of ours. Perhaps *receiving* the love of the Father comes not, as some may believe, from the fact that he is either always watching and will accept us if we do good and will reject us if we do evil, or, in the conceptualization of the humanists, he is eternally reaching out to bless our lives with pure love by giving us his divine goodness and light no matter what our behavior. Where and how accessible his love is, perhaps, is a function of our heart.

I take it that the Father's love is never feigned but is the same as the pure love of Christ. It always exists. It does not shift about in order to achieve compliance to his commandments by his children. It is neither conditional nor unconditional. It just is. It has no ulterior purpose: "charity seeketh not her own."

If this is so, then how must we see the relationships between love and behavior? Before we talk about justice and mercy, we must take a close look at what *feigned* and *unfeigned love* are and how they are expressed and felt. Then we will be able to see where behavior fits in.

Unfeigned love has been referred to as the pure love of Christ, as charity.

> And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.
>
> (Moro. 7:45)

Those possessed of unfeigned love look for and find the needs of others and use their resources to bless them. When they see the life of someone they love being blessed, they rejoice as if it were their own life being blessed. Remember what the Savior's response was to the righteous who did not recognize that they had clothed him or come unto him or fed him or given him drink? "In as much as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

So, following that model, when we see someone get something that we would want for ourselves (a gift, a trip, a blessing) and do not covet it but truly feel that person's joy as if it were our own, the same as if we had actually received the gift, then we can count that person as one for whom we have unfeigned love. I recommend that we try that as a criterion to measure our performance towards others on the scale of love. This feeling permeates families possessed of unfeigned love.

If I feel a desire, for example, to prepare breakfast for my daughter who is hurrying to get to school earlier than usual, and respond to those feelings solely to be true to the inclinations of my heart, I express charity and unfeigned love to her. If, on the other hand, before preparing her breakfast (or during preparation, or even after she has eaten and left, it doesn't matter) I begin to get motivated because of some consequence that this opportunity might have for me, I don't express unfeigned love. I may be thinking only, "Hey, cooking her breakfast (something I seldom do) will surprise her and can't help but make points for me in her mind. She's bound to think I'm a great dad. The way things have been going lately between us, I could use some strokes like that." Then, in thinking this, fixing breakfast ceases to be an act of *pure love*, an act of charity. It becomes, to the contrary, an act of feigned love. I am posturing. At best, cooking breakfast becomes an investment in self-love. My payoff is to make myself a great dad, in her mind.

Parents who express unfeigned love both show and feel love all the time. There are no antecedents to their giving it. There are no ulterior purposes in expressing it. Their love is charity. Their love is not an investment for self-love. It is available and ready to all who can see it and receive it. And that leads us to the perceptual difference, to a real alternative in expressing love in a family relationship. It is the child who must act on the unfeigned expressions of love to understand, recognize, and transform them from the parent into his or her heart and mind. If a child can't see the love, isn't near it, or doesn't look for it (accessibility) even though walking with it or doesn't recognize it, then the child won't experience it.

How could children not see it? When children rebel and cut themselves off emotionally or physically, they lose accessibility to that love. They look at their parents and see them as rigid, mean, and unsympathetic to their wants. Seeing the parents that way, they block availability to the parents' love. Some children move out. Others just stay home and raise hell while they are there, criticizing, complaining, and blaming the parents for not meeting demands.

But when and if those children come to see that their behavior is a sham and repent so that it brings a complete change of heart and a transformation of thought and action, all of a sudden they see things as they really are: that their parents are filled with unfeigned love, that it is free and available for the children to feel and act on. (Of course, if the parents are feigning their love, then all that is going on is a power struggle, getting one's way being dependent on who has control of the resources. But this paper is for *loving* parents; powerful vs. inept parenting is the topic of another paper.) Children will then come back to the parents, standing on holy ground in their presence and filled with compassion and mercy.

But this feeling can come about only through a godly repentance. There is no vision of pure love without godly repentance and a desire to live righteously on the part of the receiver. So there it is: *Sin and disobedience on the part of children move them away from love, while the honest parents remain unchanged in their expression.* The parents may have never manipulated their children. They may have never set any preconditions for getting the love. They probably taught that children who act in such a way lose it all due solely to such behavior.

Let's take a closer look at what leads to an absence of love between members in a family. There are at least two ways of conceptualizing the absence of pure love in a relationship. One is that the *giver* will not or does not give it. The other is that the *receiver* cannot or will not feel it. The giver holds back for at least two reasons: either what he or she is doing is not love at all but a feigned expression of it, or the giver outrightly withholds it. When love is not felt because of the behavior of the receiver, then at least two explanations stand out: first, propinquity or accessibility, and second, perception or recognition.

No love given

First, absence of love due to the giver's feigned expressions seems to be one of the most common culprits. If you wanted to feign your love, what would you have to do? Obviously you would take out the charity but try to make it appear present. When a father wants respect from his daughter and feels that if he denies her the use of the car

until she gets her grades up (something they had agreed upon as a consequence of low grades), she may accuse her father of being unfair, mean, and not as reasonable as other dads. In this case, he may let his daughter have the car anyway. "After all," he reasons (but confusedly), justifying his actions, "I can show her I love her." But from that point forward, everything the dad says will be an attempt to fix in his daughter's mind that he is a fair dad, worthy of her respect. But the truth is that he hasn't expressed love at all. The best we can say of this parental behavior is that it was an investment. It was made in order to get something in return, for which he was willing to pay the cost. This is feigned love because it is given to get compliance.

These exchanges take place everywhere under the guise of love. But when the mask is removed we see only a naked sham—a person trying to get gain, even though willing to give his "client" a little something in return. A young dating girl who wants the status of being seen with a first stringer on the ball team often enters into an arrangement in which she allows the young man to treat her as he wants, if she can be his steady girl. The cover-up of this sham is calling it love. It is not. It is just another exchange, an investment made using the barter system.

Whether the investment is big or little, it is still an investment and not love. Certainly there is nothing wrong in making an exchange with someone: "I'll cook the dinner, keep the house, and tend the kids if you will earn the money." "I'll give you kisses, Daddy, if you will give me a piece of your gum." These exchanges, while they may be lovely, are not love. Love is holy; it is charity, consecrated and given for someone's benefit without consideration of renumeration or paybacks. It is possible that the willingness to enter into an exchange relationship with someone could be an act of unfeigned love. But the exchange that follows needs to be seen as it is, namely an exchange. And love given with any strings attached is not love at all but an investment with an expected payoff.

So what did we do? Did we come full circle to Roger's theory? Wouldn't he contend, "That's what I said. Love must be unconditional"? Not exactly, for conceptually he misses the point; when one loves, when one cares deeply about someone, that love flows into another. So Rogerian, humanistic love at best is evidence of posturing as being kind. It is really a refusal to love.

Second, withholding love deliberately may be due to insensitivity or selfishness. It may be due to inability also. Sometimes we run out of time and resources to bless everyone's lives. But that is a different issue. People who deny love because of neglect or not caring, or

because they are too caught up in their own world of work or play, are frequently too hurried to give love to others unless the two courses happen to meet. This kind of a problem is easier to overcome. They must learn to make time for those over whom they have stewardship.

No Love Received

First, one way to miss out on love that is being given is to not be around where it is given. This is the issue of propinquity. One cannot be loved by a friend one has never met. Or if a child chooses to run away from home, he or she cannot participate in the daily expressions of love that flow in the home.

A second way to miss out on the love of others is to be blind to it, even if the receiver is in the presence of and interacting with the giver. If the way a child is seeing things is such that the child's perceptions are incongruent with those of the giver, then the love expressed will bounce off and never be felt.

I would like to examine these last two conditions of no love received from the framework of the scriptures, because I think that in taking a look at love from the perspective of the receiver and the ability to perceive it, we will be able to see the real relationship between behavior and love, putting to rest the controversy between conditonal and unconditional love. That is, if we can see that there is a relationship between love and behavior and if we can come to know just what the true relationship between them ought to be, then I think we will see that the controversy between conditional and unconditional love is a pseudo-issue.

Justice and Mercy

Now we are ready to talk about *justice* and *mercy* in parenting. But let's resist thinking of the demands of justice as some kind of prior condition or antecedent which the parent sets up that must be satisfied before the parent can give love or mercy to a wayward child. That is, we will not take love and mercy to be something that the parent withholds until the child complies to the rules and justice is obtained. Nor will we think of it as something to inflict punishment so as to create the illusion of a choice either to repent or face this awful punishment. Nor will we think of justice and mercy as old hat with rules that are relative.

But I will nevertheless hold tenaciously that what children do (their behavior) is going to make all the difference in the world as to whether they feel the love of their parents. The reception of unfeigned love can be and is what they obtain only *after* acting and expressing the intentions of their hearts. And let's not think of children who are

motivated to act with the expectation of love as an antecedent controlling their desire to behave in a certain way to get love.

In a system to which we attribute the characteristics of intentionality, that is, the law of action (as opposed to inanimate systems—those that are acted upon by the laws of motion), the consequence of an action can never be the antecedent (Taylor, 1964, p. 16). The intention is always first. It is the action itself that gives evidence of intentions, not the other way around. Actions give evidence of intentions, and what is obtained as a consequence of actions is the result of first the intention and then the action which produced the desired outcome.

Let's look at human behavior in the light of Alma's teachings. While Alma talks about these principles on a grand scale, encompassing all of humanity, the principle does not change one whit when applied to individual family relationships.

> And thus we see that all mankind were fallen, and they were in the grasp of justice; yea, the justice of God, which consigned them forever to be cut off from his presence.
>
> And now, the plan of mercy could not be brought about except an atonement should be made; therefore God himself atoneth for the sins of the world, to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also.
>
> Now, repentance could not come unto men except there were a punishment, which also was eternal as the life of the soul should be, affixed opposite to the plan of happiness, which was as eternal also as the life of the soul.
>
> Now, how could a man repent except he should sin? How could he sin if there was no law? How could there be a law save there was a punishment?
>
> Now, there was a punishment affixed, and a just law given, which brought remorse of conscience unto man.
>
> Now, if there was no law given—if a man murdered he should die—would he be afraid he would die if he should murder?
>
> And also, if there was no law given against sin men would not be afraid to sin.
>
> And if there was no law given, if men sinned what could justice do, or mercy either, for they would have no claim upon the creature?
>
> But there is a law given, and a punishment affixed, and a repentance granted; which repentance, mercy claimeth; otherwise, justice claimeth the creature and executeth the law, and the law inflicteth the punishment; if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God.

> But God ceaseth not to be God, and mercy claimeth the penitent, and mercy cometh because of the atonement; and the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead; and the resurrection of the dead bringeth back men into the presence of God; and thus they are restored into his presence, to be judged according to their works, according to the law and justice.
>
> For behold, justice exerciseth all his demands, and also mercy claimeth all which is her own; and thus, none but the truly penitent are saved.
>
> What, do ye suppose that mercy can rob justice? I say unto you, Nay; not one whit. If so, God would cease to be God.
>
> (Alma 42:14–25)

What is the real parenting problem of our time? From my perspective, the problem is that with the popularization of the concept of unconditional love, people have become confused. Love and behavior have been fused together. Alma helps us see clearly why the two, because of the child's disobedience, are separable and have to be treated independently. Clearly the demands of justice cannot be ignored. But that does not mean that the parents who require justice love their child any less. To the contrary, requiring obedience is a godly expression of love (D&C 95:1–2; Lewis, 1960, p. 154). But, as discussed earlier, a child's rebellion keeps the child from receiving that love.

Parents today are confused as to whether they should teach obedience and require justice on the one hand or merely give love, ignoring the problem or behavior, on the other. But it is not an either/or condition. If God the Father ceased to require justice, he would cease to be God. So it is in parenting; those who cease to require justice will cease to have "dominion" (influence) as parents. We cannot offer up love at the expense of justice in our homes. That is indulgence. Well then, how do we make justice and love compatible? Obviously, the scriptures teach us it is through repentance and mercy. Let's see how it works in the home.

First, we see in the light of Alma's teachings that feeling parental love is a result obtained by the child's act of softening his or her heart through real repentance. That is to say, feeling the parent's unfeigned love gives evidence of a child's softened heart. So there it is! *The most fruitful business of working with disobedient children is to help them soften their hearts.* And then we have a bridge between obedience and justice on the one side and unfeigned love and mercy on the other.

Unless they live a certain kind of life, unless the children's hearts are right, they won't have access to that love that is most important.

They may "find life" in misbehavior, toys, and playthings, or in acquiescence and conformity, but in actuality they will "lose it."

Second, parents need to focus their attempts to persuade not on behaviors but on children's perceptions. Parents need to be strong, loving, powerful people who know the law, teach good rules, and understand the concepts of justice, repentance, and mercy as taught by Alma.

This means that the parents see children not as something that is molded by their hands like a piece of potter's clay, but as something that is unfolding based on light and life that came in the very creation of life. This is a child who acts willingly on the correct teachings of parents. A parent who has this vision believes it is the child who must, if you will, "act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence . . . here is the agency of man . . ." (D&C 93:31). (And to not do it, we are told, is condemnation.)

The purpose of reaching out and of the desire to communicate is to touch a heart. The outcome centers on helping children see what happens when *their actions*, and their actions alone, bring about a softening of the heart, an abandonment of stiff-necked, rigid (or even mellow and passive) resistance to righteousness and an insistence on accomplishing impure intent or practice. (See 1 Ne. 2:16, in which Nephi desires to see and the Lord softens and purifies his heart.) The outcome centers on helping children see the light and a vision of truth. Then when their hearts are soft, truth is seen and repentance brings them unto the arms of the caregiver, seeking forgiveness, "submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit in all things." To some this may sound like hard-core manipulation. Seeing such behavior psychologistically is a problem of perception. It always is. Righteous parents are not "making" their children behave in a particular way. There are no antecendent consequences to repentance and soft hearts. If there were, the behavior could never be repentance or softening of the heart (Nibley, 1985, p. 26). The children, at some point, choose to yield to their softening hearts, recognizing their wrongdoing and desiring to repent and make amends. Once children yield to their hearts, bringing about righteousness becomes their purpose; and their actions, "without compulsory means" as antecedents, will give evidence of their foremost desires to be true to what they, themselves, believe to be right.

Finally, is there a formula? A prescribed string of words? No, the words don't count. Any righteous thing can be said when the eye of the parent is set on leading the child to trust in the Lord "and his matchless power, and his wisdom, and his patience, and his long-suffering towards the children of men; and also, the atonement" (Mosiah 4:6).

Listen to Alma's testimony of how his father handled Alma's resistance to yielding his heart:

> And again, the angel said: Behold, the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, and also the prayers of his servant, Alma, who is thy father; for he has prayed with such faith concerning thee that thou mightest be brought to the knowledge of the truth; therefore, for this purpose have I come to convince thee of the power and authority of God, that the prayers of his servants might be answered according to their faith.
> (Mosiah 27:14)
>
> And it came to pass that as I was thus racked with torment, while I was harrowed up by the memory of my many sins, behold, I remembered also to have heard my father prophesy unto the people concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world.
>
> Now, as my mind caught upon this thought, I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death.
>
> And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more.
>
> And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!
>
> Yea, I say unto you, my son, that there could be nothing so exquisite and so bitter as were my pains. Yea, and again I say unto you, my son, that on the other hand, there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy.
>
> Yea, methought I saw, even as our father Lehi saw, God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels, in the attitude of singing and praising their God; yea, and my soul did long to be there.
>
> But behold, my limbs did receive their strength again, and I stood upon my feet, and did manifest unto the people that I had been born of God.
> (Alma 36:17–23)

The purpose of Alma's experience was to soften his heart and to bring him to repentance. It was not to control or punish or compel him to do a task. It was to help him see himself as he really was—a child of God, and in a much broader perspective than the restricted vision he had of things when walking in his sins and persecuting the Church. And then, and only then, did his heart turn to righteousness, and a great and glorious good was manifested in all his works.

But bear in mind, your child's heart may not soften. So what then? Do you go to plan B and set up the strong reinforcers and heavy induction? I guess some do, but they change their perspective: they

change their goal; they change what it is that they want their child to experience and learn. And the child learns that the parent is taking responsibility for the child's behavior. The parent becomes "Satan" the manipulator, rather than "Jehovah" who appeals to integrity. Maybe there will be times when high power may be necessary and proper, in righteousness, but I suspect the spirit, most of the time, will move you to be long-suffering: to agonize over the child's weakness, to bear this burden, praying with much faith as Alma and Mosiah did for their sons.

To summarize: when the heart softens and the light penetrates, the child gets a glimpse of something. His or her acts of repentance make it possible for the child to feel burning inside the unfeigned love that the parent has, to taste the love and the mercy and the remission of sins. This love grows into an exceedingly great joy. What a moment before was darkness and could not be seen is now transformed and experienced in its fulness. It wasn't the parent who moved—it was the child who moved. The child moved to holy ground through repentance and felt the sacredness of unfeigned love that always flows from a tender and righteous parent. And the child gave love and the two embraced. The two came together and are one in keeping the most important commandment of all. Don't you see? The business of parenting shouldn't be on shaping and engineering a child to conform and comply to each little behavior that comes along. The most cogent business of parenting is to teach faith, justice, repentance, mercy, and obedience to the law. A child who understands these principles and lives by them softens his or her heart. And the desire to do right guides that child's life—even in the parent's absence.

What parents should be about is trying to help their children have a desire to fully stop their resistance, to follow the dictates of their hearts. And in abandoning the resistance, children want to do what they know in their hearts to be right. Chastisement does not focus on any specifics. What a child, an adolescent, a mate knows about an intention, in knowing the intent of his or her heart, already senses the rightness or wrongness in it as part of the knowing. A specific misbehavior is seldom targeted. People will do what they know to be right if their hearts are right and if they have abandoned their resistance.

How does a parent err? A parent errs first in targeting a specific behavior—in today's language, in pinpointing an undesirable behavior and making it an objective that needs to be changed. Then the parent errs in setting up antecedent contingencies (reinforcers) which have the power to control the outcome of the child's behavior. This has the

effect of focusing the child's actions on mechanistic performance of behaviors and away from the issue of repentance and a soft heart which, when the heart is right, frees the child to do any and all behavior, and do it right. It also has the effect of shifting the responsibility to the parent for the child's actions. These erroneous procedures seldom lead the child to repentance and they seldom lead the child to the feelings and expression of unfeigned love.

I would like to end by telling you of my experience of a child's heart being softened. The child is my daughter, Kristin. (We call her Tina.) Very few words were said but there was a lot of atmosphere in an unlikely setting. For a few days, a few summers ago, Tina had been acting like a holy terror around our house, demanding whatever came to her mind. At this time she was only four. We knew something had to be done. She simply had to see what she was doing. She was like a sticky fly annoying everyone for whatever she got out of it.

I thought I knew exactly what to do. She needed to experience opposites. She needed to see the difference between the bitter and the sweet so she could have a point of reference. I swept her up into my arms and on that midsummer, late afternoon day I carried her into the garage. The doors were closed, and we sat on the steps going down from the house, and I explained: "Tina, I can't let you act like this to your family. I need you to know that it is a privilege to live in our house, to be close to our family, and to have all the things we have. And you just need to understand that along with that privilege comes a need for you to cooperate with others." (The problem of cooperation and the idea of privilege, while specific behaviors, were only excuses to get to the real issue—her perceptions.)

"You are about to experience what I mean," I went on. "For the rest of this day and until tomorrow you are going to live in the garage. The garage isn't a bad place: You can play with my tools—here is some wood and here are some nails and glue; you can bring out these old toys we have in storage that you used to play with; you can play with the cat. I will bring you a sleeping bag and you can sleep here on this carpet or in the back seat of the car."

Then I left. Before the door had closed she was screaming her head off. I monitored her crying through the door. Occasionally she would stop crying long enough to holler out some kind of promise that she thought would be appealing to me. After each promise she would wait a second, and then, as if she knew it would not help her cause, she would bang on the door and again begin crying. In about ten minutes her crying stopped. With her sleeping bag under my arm I opened the door. When she saw me standing there with the sleeping

bag, she become totally sober, her eyes wide open. There was no doubt left in her mind that I meant what I had said.

I sat again with her on the sleeping bag that I had rolled out on top of the carpet remnant we kept in the corner of the garage. I picked up where I had left off. "Tina, we have just got to cooperate with each other in our home. I don't think you realize just how nice it is in our house. Do you like watching the TV? Well, tonight you won't get to watch it. Do you like eating with us at the table? Well, tonight I will bring you a plate of food out here. Do you like your nice soft bed and the company of your sister in your room when you go to bed? Well, tonight you will be out here alone. Do you like to wrestle and play Billy Goat Gruff with me on the carpet? Well, tonight we won't do that before you go to bed. All these things you like are things we do with each other because we like to cooperate. I think you need to think about whether it is better to cooperate with each other or bother each other. In the morning I would like you to tell me what you think. Just know this, Tina. I am your dad, and I wouldn't ever turn you out into the street or let anything bad happen to you. But all of us in the house cooperate, and because we all cooperate, we enjoy each other. Tina, I want you to think about something while you are out here. I want you think about what it would be like if all of us acted toward each other the way you have been acting. What would it be like if Mom bugged me, and Paul bugged Shawna, and Sabrina bugged you, and we could do that all we wanted. Would it be privilege to live in our house? You think about it."

In a few minutes her dinner was ready. I handed it to her without saying a word. As I turned to leave I heard this little voice that had mellowed out. It had changed already. It sounded so submissive. "Dad," she said, "could I have just one thing?"

"Yes, Tina, you surely can. What would you like?"

"Could I have my pillow, Dad?"

"You surely can, sweetheart."

I turned to leave and once again this tender voice called out "Dad?"

"Yes?"

"Could I have just one more thing?"

"You surely can, sweetheart. What do you want me to bring you?"

"I'd like to have my pajamas, please," came her reply.

"Oh, yes, Dad should have remembered that," I said.

When I returned with the pillow and pajamas, she had finished her supper. I picked up the plate and left. There was no resistance. There was no crying or forlorn face. She was ready to face the night.

It was about 6:30 P.M. I really don't know what was going on inside her. But she looked peaceful and free from any fear. By 7 o'clock I could hear no movement outside, so I opened the door for a peak. She was in the sleeping bag sound asleep. I checked on her periodically. She hadn't moved a twitch by 10 o'clock, when I went down to watch the news.

As soon as the news was over, I made one last check before going to bed. As I was coming up the stairs from the familyroom, I experienced one of those special visions fathers are privileged to have occasionally about a child, giving unambiguous direction in what they should do. I saw that little tike all alone in that enormous dark garage wake up at 2 in the morning. I felt her feelings as if they were my very own. I knew that there was no way that she would be able to handle the strangeness of that place alone. I knew that there was only one thing that I could do. I went back to the closet, got my sleeping bag, and rolled it out on the floor beside her and crawled in. And just as I had seen, at 2 A.M. Tina woke up. For a moment, she was lost, but almost instantly she sensed my presence, recognized my breathing, and whispered, "Dad?" I was awake. (Dads don't do as well as four-year-olds on the concrete floor.)

"Yes, sweetheart, it's your dad," I gently reassured.

"Oh, Daddy," came her expression of relief, "can I get in your sleeping bag with you."

"You surely can."

I have never been snuggled so closely in my life. She was a new child. She had come to me and had felt my presence and the love that I have for her. Her heart was soft; she was repentant. She was at peace. It was all over. She had transcended. And she fell to sleep. She slept in total trust.

At dawn we sat up in the sleeping bag and looked at each other. Her countenance was pure love. Her first words were "Dad, I think I know what it means to co-a-pooh-wate." But that isn't all she knew. She knew the sweetness of repentance and felt the gratitude of mercy. She felt a full measure of her daddy's love for her. She had experienced giving up the awful pains of loneliness and replacing them with the exquisite joy of a soft heart.

She was transformed. Her soft heart filled her with unfeigned love. For days her love blessed our lives. She made her bed. She played with her baby sister. She picked things up. She sang and danced. She offered to help her mother. She was charity. (We had experienced the feigned love—the kind that seeks recognition and praise: "Look at how nice I ate my dinner; see how I picked up everything in my room. I'm

special, aren't I, Daddy?'') But this was different. Everything she did was done with an eye single to the glory of God, of others, of her parents, of her siblings. There was a reverence, a holiness about it. All her behavior was right. Her every thought was to do right.

As I reflect on this, I have come to understand how untrained parents, guided by the Spirit, can rear righteous children. They teach them the first principles of the gospel: faith, repentance, baptism, justice, mercy. They pray, they keep the commandments, and they read the scriptures. They are available. Their love is unfeigned. And the children are free. And when our children realize that all that we have is theirs, what joy will fill our bosoms knowing that it will be for their good.

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THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE

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Foster care has been recognized for decades as a valid therapeutic intervention to aid families in distress and to protect children. It is a child welfare service that has as its distinctive component the provision of a substitute family during a planned period of time for a child to be separated from his or her natural or legal parents (Child Welfare League of America [CWLA], 1975, p. 1).

Unfortunately, there are far too many cases in which foster care has neither been therapeutic nor implemented in a carefully considered manner. Yet many helping professionals and lay people continue to recommend it without knowledge of the results foster care engenders. On the other hand, some psychotherapists, because of their orientation, inappropriately keep a child in therapy when the preferable treatment would have been foster care.

This article is undergirded by the principle of iatrogenesis, that is, for every action there is a reaction. Social iatrogenesis is an unexplored topic deserving systematic analysis. Each alternative therapy (including the alternative of doing nothing) can produce deleterious as well as beneficial effects. Therapists are encouraged to take calculated risks only when the likely benefits outweigh the likely risks (Kane, 1982, p. 317).

This is basically the same type of argument that Milton and Rose Friedman (1979) bring up in their book *Free to Choose*, in which they argue for less government action. "As is so often the case, one good objective conflicts with other good objectives[.] Safety and caution in one direction can mean death in another" (p. 195).

This paper, therefore, is an attempt to review some of the indicators that would determine foster care to be the treatment of choice, so that helping professionals who are not intimately involved with foster care might be better able to examine the recommendations they will be giving to present and future clients for or against foster care.

Problems of Foster Care

Despite the increase of government monies for families at risk and a further proliferation of preventative type services, the number of children in foster care has increased dramatically. For instance, the number and proportion of children requiring placement away from home in the United States increased during the decade of the 1960s from 3.7 to 4.7 per 1,000 children in the population. In March 1970, 258,400 children were in foster family homes. By March 1971, the number had increased by 2,030 (CWLA, 1975, p. 2). What is disturbing is that while these children became involved with agencies so that some permanency could be provided amidst their chaotic lives, less permanency frequently occurred.

First, it is well established that most children who enter foster care do so because of problems involving their behavior. A consequence is that sometimes the practical problems are ignored and therapeutic interventions are prescribed that are beyond the children's needs. Rather than dealing with the issues of parenting or relationships, many counselors will automatically recommend out-of-home placement only because the family is exhibiting pain with the present condition. Second, essentially normal but dependent children can be labeled "most disturbed."

Unspoken and frequently unseen is the children's internal interpretation of removal as a statement of their own badness. They can only experience being taken from home as punishment, rejection, or abandonment. In addition, we know that placing children in foster homes or institutions may in fact be as detrimental to them as their staying at home. All of these factors make it more difficult in determining whether a short-term or permanent separation is the best solution at a given time. It places a burden on helping professionals to carefully evaluate, consider, and discriminate unique needs of the particular child and family.

Removal of the child is legally the simplest alternative, requiring only a court order in the juvenile court at an emergency or preliminary hearing. However, removal may in many cases be quite traumatic for the child; it may be perceived as punishment, the child may miss his or her family or may have difficulty adjusting to foster placement. Further, the family may close ranks against the victim in his or her absence.

A high number of children have been forgotten for long periods in child welfare systems, and others have been brutalized in some child welfare institutions. The common reaction to these events is usually

a call for tightening up the administration of child welfare departments, increasing the number of inspections of files and child care facilities, and introducing computer tracking systems for caseloads. Although these responses are reasonable, they miss the main point. These events would not be so prevalent if ready, easy, open, and frequent communications between children and professionals in the child welfare systems were the norm. They are not. Thirty percent of the children who were questioned in one particular study did not even know who their caseworker was (Bush and Gordon, 1982, p. 3).

There is strong evidence that some welfare agencies, rather than providing a more permanent or stable environment than the legal or natural parents, provide less of one. As an example, a group of children in public welfare agencies participating in a survey spent long periods of time in foster care: over 52% were in care for more than two years, over 33% from four to six years. Yet, of the children for whom custody information was available, 77% were in temporary custody of the child welfare agency or court, and 23% were in permanent custody. Also, the children were moved frequently. While only 43% had no moves; 38% moved once or twice; and 18% moved more than twice. Of the children reviewed in this study and known to be discharged, 63% returned home; 7% were adopted or placed in adoptive homes; 11% left foster care upon reaching the age of legality. The status of the remaining 19% of the children discharged is not known (Children's Defense Fund, 1978, p. 187).

One must acknowledge that some parents, whether biological, adoptive, or longtime foster, may threaten the well-being of their children, but one should not suggest that state legislatures, courts, or administrative agencies can always offer such children something better and compensate them for what they have missed in their own homes. By its intrusion the state may make a bad situation worse.

The following case study is an example:

> In May 1970, after the Alsager children had been out of their home for almost a year, Judge Tidrick terminated the parental rights of Charles and Darleene Alsager of five of six children. By 1974 these five children had experienced, between them, more than "15 separate foster home placements and eight juvenile home placements." (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1979, p. 13)

In spite of all the evidence which points out neglect in the care of children by various agencies (both private and public), psychotherapists continue to recommend the placement of children in foster care facilities (foster homes, juvenile detention centers, group homes) without realistically assessing the long-term results of such an action.

There seems to be an effort to act in the temporary best interest of the parents rather than for the long-term benefits of the child.

The way the foster care system is set up rewards the agencies for the number of children that are in foster care, not for the preventative work that is done. Almost all agencies decide on provision of manpower by the caseload or the number of children in foster care, not the number of children that have been kept out through appropriate services. This encourages inappropriately ambitious administrators and caseworkers to maintain certain levels of children in foster care to justify their own or their agencies' existence and budgets.

Further problems have developed because the system, rather than encouraging responsibility on the part of the parents and the child, has provided them with the means of not having to deal with their primary conflict, that is, of not being able to get along with each other.

When one defines the terms *effective* as "the degree to which operative and operational goals are rendered" and *efficient* as the "achievement of the same level of output with fewer inputs" and applies these defined terms to how foster care has been administered, it is obvious that in these cases foster care was neither effective nor efficient (Steers, 1977, p. 51).

Objectives of Foster Care

Foster care has been used for decades as a therapeutic intervention to aid families in distress and to protect children. The child welfare service has as its distinctive component the provision of a substitute family during a planned period of time for a child who has to be separated from natural or legal parents. This planned period of time was originally meant to be short-term and was usually brought about by the following situations: (1) temporary emergency care of the child, (2) time for a parent to solve problems, (3) a different home experience for a child, (4) care until institutional treatment is available, (5) care until an adoption is approved (Rutter, 1978, p. 2).

Assessment

While trying to determine and evaluate the need for foster care, a therapist can encounter several pitfalls. In assessing these difficult clinical situations, any therapist is presented with unresolvable dilemmas. Faller has described these as follows: (1) the need for promptness and quick resolution versus the need for careful and detailed consideration of the family and individuals, (2) the need for permanence for the child versus the need for continuing contact with an absent

parent, (3) the child's need for an adequate home with consistent, predictable care versus the child's psychological attachment to abusive or neglectful parents (Faller, 1981).

In assessing a child's needs for foster care, a therapist must also include an evaluation of the child's psychological vulnerability to separation. This will depend upon the quality of the child's attachment to current nurturing adults and his or her developmental level.

In infancy, from birth to approximately 18 months, any change in routine leads to food refusals, digestive upsets, sleeping difficulties, and crying. Such reactions occur even if the infant's care is divided merely between mother and baby-sitter (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 32).

Change of the caretaking persons for infants and toddlers affects the course of their emotional development. Their attachments, at these ages, can be as upset by separations as they are promoted by the constant, uninterrupted presence and attention of a familiar adult. When infants and young children find themselves abandoned by a parent, they suffer not only separation distress and anxiety but also setbacks in the quality of their next attachments, which will be less trustful. When continuity of such relationships is interrupted more than once, as happens due to multiple placements in the early years, the children's emotional attachments become increasingly shallow and indiscriminate. These individuals tend to grow up as persons who lack warmth in their contacts with other people (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 33).

Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit have made some observations about school-age children:

> The breaks in their [the children's] relationships with their psychological parents affect above all, those achievements which are based on identification with the parents' demands, prohibitions, and social ideals. Such identifications develop only where attachments are stable and tend to be abandoned by the child if he feels abandoned by the adults in question. Thus, where children are made to wander from one environment to another, they may cease to identify with any set of substitute parents. Resentment toward the adults who have disappointed them in the past makes them adopt the attitude of not caring for anybody; or of making a new parent the scapegoat for the shortcomings of the former one. In any case, multiple placement at these ages puts many children beyond the reach of educational influence, and becomes the direct cause of behavior which the schools experience as disrupting and the courts label as dissocial, delinquent, or even criminal.

They further state:

> With adolescents, the superficial observation of their behavior may convey the idea that what they desire is discontinuation of parental relationships

> rather than their preservation and stability. Nevertheless, this impression is misleading in this simple form. It is true that their revolt against any parental authority is normal developmentally since it is the adolescent's way toward establishing his own independent adult identity. But for a successful outcome, it is important that the breaks and disruptions of attachment should come exclusively from his side and not be imposed on him by any form of abandonment or rejection on the psychological parents' part. (1973, p. 34)

Adults measure the passing of time and are able to deal with the uncertainties of life with intellect and reason; they are usually able to maintain positive emotional ties with a number of individuals, even those who are unrelated or even hostile to each other (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 12).

Children have their own built-in time sense based on the urgency of their instinctual and emotional needs, resulting in their intolerance for postponement of gratifications and intense sensitivity to the length of separations. In addition, they can respond to any threat to their emotional security with fantastic anxieties, denial, or distortion of reality, all of which do not help them cope but place them at the mercy of events (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 12). They appear to love more than one adult only if the individuals in question feel positively about one another; otherwise, the children become susceptible to various loyalty conflicts.

Finally, they do not have a psychological conception of blood-tie relationships until later in their development. The considerations of birth are not apparent to children; what they do notice are the day-to-day interchanges with adults who take care of them. They become attached to parent figures based upon the strength of these interchanges (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 12). Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit (1973) further state:

> This attachment results from day-to-day attention to his needs for physical care, nourishment, comfort, affection, and stimulation. Only a parent who provides for these needs will build a psychological relationship to the child on the basis of the biological one and will become his "psychological parent" in whose care the child can feel valued and "wanted." An absent biological parent will remain, or tend to become a stranger. (p. 19)

From their first attachments, children begin to develop other relationships. As they get older, they will form internal images of parents, images which will be available to them even if the parents are absent. Once children have made parental attitudes their own, they will have more internal stability (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 13).

Parents must learn to walk in the middle of the road with their parenting. When they show lack of affection and continuity of care, their children are insecure, have low self-esteem, and lack abilities to form other human attachments. When these parents do not set limits to behavior and feel their children can do no wrong, their children are self-centered and egotistical (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 27).

If children are placed out of the home, how quickly depression and the interruption of development which separation causes are resolved will depend not only on the child's age but also on the quality of pre- and post-placement nurturing. As the children's needs for a nurturing person build in the new placement, they will reattach if the capacity to love and trust has been developed previously, and if a consistent nurturing person is available. If children should attach to the new caretaker, the trauma of breaking this attachment will be repeated when the children return home (Faller, 1981, p. 86).

In addition to assessing the impact of separation on the child, Faller (1981) feels the following areas should be studied:

1. *The Child.* What is the quality of attachment to nurturing people? What is the developmental stage of the child? What has been the effect of abuse or neglect on the child? (Health, social, affective or mood, intellectual, motor, and adaptive areas need evaluation.)
2. *The Parents.* What strengths and weaknesses do they have as parents and as individuals? What is their capacity to change so as to meet the child's needs?
3. *Environmental Stresses.* What are the external stresses to the family which may have precipitated the breakdown of nurturing functions?
4. *Available Helping Systems.* What forms of assistance are there in the community for helping with the specific problems found in (1), (2), and (3)?

Finally, the need to keep the children with their family must be balanced against the fact that children are most vulnerable to abuse and neglect at very young ages (pp. 85–86).

To provide help in only one level and ignore parenting difficulties based on psychological conflict is to provide pseudohelp.

Intervention

Children's lack of regard for the safety of their bodies becomes the concern of parents, who normally value and protect their children's bodies as they would their own. It takes years before this state of affairs

changes, before children identify with parents' attitudes and begin to "look after themselves."

When parents do not act according to this expectation, when they inflict or attempt to inflict serious bodily injury, or when they repeatedly fail to protect their children from such bodily harm, the state should not only intervene, but it should also provide substitute parents or, in the event of repeated unintended injuries, the supportive assistance essential to the children's future safety (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 73).

Even though neglect is the most obvious reason for intervention, it also is the most easily dealt with and changed. By far the most damaging types of child abuse are physical and sexual, especially when coupled with mental abuse. For example, when the seducing adult is actually the child's parent, the damage done to the child's emotional life is likely to be most severe.

Sexual relations between parent and child tend to remain well-guarded family secrets. And some authors feel that in many cases inquiry in sexual abuse cases can be more detrimental than not intruding and that termination of parental rights should occur only when the evidence of sexual abuse has been tested by the criminal court system (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973, p. 8). It is my contention that sexual abuse can only happen in secret and the only appropriate way to deal with it is to explode the secrecy of the act. From my own counseling experiences, most clients responded positively to treatment if they were protected from further abuse and if the perpetrator had to suffer the full legal consequences of the abusive behavior. Those, however, who continued to hide the "secret," especially when significant others, including mother, father, legal and church officers and/or helping professionals, protected the perpetrator, harbored a large amount of unresolved anger and guilt which were exhibited through various dysfunctional behaviors (depression, promiscuity, lack of warm relationships, etc.).

The Mother

The issue of collusion of the mother in sexual abuse is one which must be assessed, but it is also one which is commonly misunderstood. As a rule, mothers do not actively connive in the seduction of their daughters. What must be examined is their response to clear indications of the incest. The more collusive they are at this point, the less good the prognosis is for treating the family intact. This list of some possible maternal responses to discovery begins with the most collusive and ends with the least collusive:

1. Mother observes the sexual behavior and actively encourages it.
2. Mother observes the behavior and acts as though she has not, perhaps walks out of the room.
3. Victim reports the abuse; mother accuses her of being a liar, having a dirty mind, etc.
4. Victim reports; mother tells her to avoid perpetrator but not to tell anyone.
5. Victim reports; mother confronts perpetrator, he denies; and mother believes perpetrator.
6. After confrontation, mother initially sides with daughter, believing her and supporting her, but subsequently sides with the father.
7. Upon discovery (seeing or report) mother supports daughter; mother calls protective services or police and throws father out, insists that he get treatment or get a divorce; she sticks to her decision once it is made. (Faller, 1981, p. 152)

The final area of maternal functioning to be assessed is the extent to which she loves her children. If a mother is cold and rejecting of the victim, views the victim as responsible and culpable, and/or is jealous of and in competition with the victim, then chances are not good that the mother will be protective (Faller, 1981, p. 152).

The Father

The two dimensions in assessing the father's coping which must be examined to determine safety for the child are the father's functioning in other areas than sexual and the extent to which he feels guilty about the sexual behavior. Questions to be asked are as follows: Is he employed or unemployed? Does he support his family or spend his income without regard for their needs? Does he appear to genuinely care about his family, or is he a wife abuser and a child abuser as well as a molester? Is he regarded by the community as an upstanding citizen, or does he get into difficulties outside the home, and has he been in trouble with the law? Does he have a substance abuse problem? The better his general functioning, the more likely intervention is to be successful (Faller, 1981, p. 152).

Intervention Strategies

There is very little hope that a father who experiences no guilt will respond to intervention. Therefore, he should be removed from the home. If the mother appears to have a good relationship with the children, to have responded appropriately to discovery of the behavior, and if she has the capability to function independently, then the mother–children grouping should be offered treatment (Faller, 1981, p. 152). However, if there is a psychopathic father and a cold, collusive,

dependent mother, the victim (and probably other children) should be removed permanently.

Mother	Father	Intervention
Dependent, cold, collusive	Psychopath	Remove children, terminate parental contact
Dependent, cold, collusive	Not a psychopath	Work with mother, treatment for parents
Independent, loves kids, reacts appropriately	Psychopath	Remove father, treatment for mother and children
Independent, loves kids reacts appropriately	Not a psychopath	Provide treatment for family, children in the home

(Faller, 1981, p. 153)

In these mixed and uncertain cases, the worker should first be sure the child is protected and then try treatment and carefully assess its impact. Time limitations should be placed on how long therapy should be tried, and court intervention should be used as necessary to facilitate treatment goals (Faller, 1981, p. 153).

A third strategy for protecting the child is to have someone else move into the household. This is especially feasible when the incest developed because the mother was incapacitated or there was no mother present. This person might be a relative or a homemaker (Faller, 1981, p. 153).

Fourth, a strategy which holds a promise is improving the mother–daughter relationship so that the mother accepts the responsibility of protecting the child. Although this may be difficult to do because of the hostility and ambivalence in the relationship, it is the only strategy which is likely to have long-term effects (Faller, 1981, p. 155).

Faller (1981) suggests the following model:

Intervention with Child and Family to Include Separation	Intervention with Child and Family with Intact Family
I. Nature of abuse or neglect	
Sadistic injury	Single injury
Multiple injuries over a period of time	
Head injury	
Severe neglect	
II. Child factors	
Child fearful or unmanageable with poor attachment	Child under 3 years of age (however, a young child

Child requires exceptional caretaking	more vulnerable to serious physical harm)
Child's survival in question	Child has good attachment
Serious development delay	

III. Parents

As Individuals

Alcohol or drug addiction	Areas and times of good coping with life problems
No areas of successful coping	Sexual and/or angry feelings not converted into action
Sexual and/or angry feelings expressed in action	Capable of remorse; not only motivated by fear
No guilt	Extended family available to help
Not capable of trusting relationships	Response to trial of thearapy
Family of origin unable to use help	
No response to trial of therapy	

As Parents

Cannot perceive child's needs and/or cannot respond to them at age appropriate level	Short-term crisis
	Some helping network, formal or informal
Child perceived as bad, as cause	Community has infant mental health services or family therapists (p. 88)

Summary

Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit (1973) formulated a new standard to replace the oft-quoted one of "in the best interest of the child." Theirs is the standard of "least detrimental available alternative" for safeguarding the child's growth and development. "Based upon the fact that any change in the primary caregiver is detrimental to the child, it would be best for any child to stay with the biological parents, if they also provided properly for the child's psychological needs" (1973, p. 8). For these authors, the least detrimental alternative, then,

> is that specific placement and procedure for placement which maximizes, in accord with the child's sense of time and on the basis of short-term predictions given the limitations of knowledge, his or her opportunity for being wanted and for maintaining on a continuous basis a relationship with at least one adult who is or will become his "psychological parent" (1973, p. 8).

To summarize this section, so long as the child is part of a viable family, the child's own interests are merged with those of the other members. Only after the family fails in meeting the child's interests

should these interests become a matter for state or agency intrusion. When the placement decision has been reached, it should occur with the following objectives in mind:

1. Placement decision should safeguard the child's need for continuity of relationships.
2. Placement decisions should reflect the child's, not the adult's, sense of time.
3. Placement decisions must take into account the law's incapacity to supervise interpersonal relationships and the limits of knowledge to make long-range predictions.
4. Quality of placement services should be evaluated according to the following criteria:

A. Input: Are services being delivered by qualified staff members working in acceptable organizational program structuring?

B. Process: Are services delivered in accordance with accepted beliefs about what constitutes good practice?

C. Outcome: Are services having the desired effect on clients?

D. Output: Are services being delivered in sufficient quantity?

E. Access: Are clients who need services actually receiving them? (Coulton, 1982, p. 397)

Conclusion

In this paper, I have discussed how many professionals recommend foster care without understanding the consequences of that treatment decision. I have discussed statistics and case examples of situations in which governmental and agency intrusion were detrimental to the child. I then presented information and questions that could help any helping professional to decide if foster care is the treatment of choice. Finally, I provided criteria with which that professional could evaluate the quality of foster care that is being provided.

To summarize, it is my opinion that for every action, there is a reaction, and one good objective can conflict with others (Friedman, 1979, p. 195). In cases in which foster care might be considered, the worker should not look for what would be best for the child, but what would be least detrimental. Parents will value their children more if they invest more of themselves in their children. As parents make a greater investment in their children, the parents' own self-esteem is enhanced. As they value themselves more, the bond between parents and their children becomes stronger and is more likely to endure.

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RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND MENTAL HEALTH

Daniel K. Judd, M.S.

In recent years, a renewed interest in the relationship between religiosity and mental health has developed. Bergin (1983) states that there is a "renascence of psychological interest occurring" (p. 170). Beit-Hallahmi (1972) states that as well as a renewal of interest there exists an improvement in the quality of research.

> After a golden age of theory and research on religion around the turn of the century, interest in this area had almost vanished from the social-science scene. The past decade has seen a renewal of interest and research on religion as a variable in social and private behavior. The increase has been not only in volume but also in quality. (p. v)

Great diversity in the operational and constitutive definitions of both religiosity and mental health exists. Strommen (1971) states:

> For some it [religiosity] means being affiliated with a religious institution and attending it regularly; for others religion is synonymous with expressed beliefs. . . . Some find their criteria of religiosity in religious acts; and others opt for mystical experiences. Some fail to recognize the multi-dimensionality of religion and assume they have tapped the essence when they have data on one dimension or on a subcategory within a dimension. (p. xvii)

Jahoda (1958) describes the ambiguity that exists in defining *mental health*:

> There is hardly a term in current psychological thought as vague, evasive, and ambiguous as the term "mental health." That many people use it without even attempting to specify the idiosyncratic meaning the term has for them makes the situation worse, both for those who wish to promote mental health and for those who wish to introduce concern with mental health into systematic psychological theory and research. (p. 3)

While recognizing the difficulty of defining both variables, several theorists have attempted to do so. Hoult (1958) defines *religion* as

> the belief in, and the attempt to relate favorably to (a) values thought to have some transcendental importance, and/or (b) ultimate powers thought responsible for all, or some significant aspect of the fundamental order of the universe. (p. 9)

Glock and Stark (1965) have also proposed a definition for *religion*: "Religion, or what societies hold to be sacred, comprises an institutionalized system of symbols, beliefs, values, and practices focused on questions of ultimate meaning" (p. 4).

Jahoda (1958), commenting on the diverse definitions of *mental health*, has said, "Mental health as the opposite of mental disease is perhaps the most widespread and apparently simplest attempt at definition" (p. 10). While the defining of *mental health* as "the opposite of mental illness" is the definition most commonly used, Jahoda (1958) calls it an "unsuitable conceptualization" and outlines the following six aspects of a positive definition of *mental health*:

> 1. Accurate perception of reality which includes seeing what is really there in spite of pressures from the environment to distort;
> 2. Mastery of the situation which includes a sense of control and success in love, work, and play;
> 3. Autonomy which includes a sense of independence, self-determination, acceptance or rejection of influence, and the ability to surrender or commit oneself if one so desires;
> 4. Having a positive attitude towards oneself which includes acceptance, awareness, identity, and lack of self-consciousness;
> 5. Personal integration which includes an adequate balance of inner forces and a philosophy of life;
> 6. Self-actualization which includes a sense that one is growing and developing toward self-realization and long-range goals which one has set for himself. (Jahoda, cited in Maloney, 1983, p. 18)

Szaz (1961) has argued that neither a positive nor a negative definition of *mental health* is appropriate, as both are merely reflections of cultural values; what is defined as healthy in one culture may be defined as illness in another. As Szasz states, definition "entails . . . a covert comparison or matching of the patient's ideas, concepts, or beliefs with those of the observer and the society in which they live" (Szasz as cited in Lowe, 1976, p. 56).

Review of Literature

Bergin (1983) and Lea (1982) each published literature reviews concerning religiosity and mental health through 1979 and 1977, respectively. Bergin's review focused specifically on a meta-analysis of studies that dealt with at least one measure of religiosity correlated

with at least one measure of mental pathology, such as, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory or the Manifest Anxiety Scale.

The impetus for Bergin (1983) was the widely held view among mental health professionals that religion is antithetical to mental health and rationality. Ellis is representative of this view:

> Religiosity is in many respects equivalent to irrational thinking and emotional disturbance. . . . The elegant therapeutic solution to emotional problems is to be quite unreligious. . . . The less religious they are, the more emotionally healthy they will be. (Ellis, cited in Bergin, 1983, p. 170)

Bergin's review of 24 studies (30 outcomes) reports that the religiosity is facilitative of mental health in 4 of 9 MMPI measures, 1 of 3 neuroticism measures, 2 of 3 self-esteem measures, 1 of 4 for both hostility and inadequacy measures, 2 of 2 adjustment measures, and 1 of 1 measures of repression sensitization. Religiosity is negatively related to mental health in 5 of 10 anxiety measures, 1 of 3 self-esteem measures, and 1 of 1 measures of both ego strength and hostility.

No relationship between religiosity and mental health was reported in 5 of 10 measures of anxiety, 2 of 3 neuroticism measures, or 2 of 2 measures of irrational belief. There were 5 measures that showed significant positive statistical relationships, and 2 that showed a significant negative relationship. (The term *positive* in this study represents religiosity being facilititative of mental health. The term *negative* represents religiosity as being facilitative of mental pathology.)

Hence, these findings do not support the assertion by Ellis that religiosity is "antithetical to emotional well being" (Ellis, cited in Bergin, 1983, p. 170); neither do the data provide more than "marginal support for the positive effect of religion," for much of the data is contradictory (Bergin, 1983, p. 176).

Lea (1982) produced a literature review covering 1939–77. The reviewed studies investigated the relationship between religiosity and the variables of mental health as represented by social behavior.

Lea's review of 27 studies (30 outcomes) suggests that religiosity has little or no effect upon the social health of the community and has a facilitative relationship with prejudice, excepting those individuals who score extremely high on measures of religiosity. Religiosity is conducive to feelings of personal inadequacy in students, but not in the adult population. Students scoring high on religiosity measures were found to be more anxious and scored lower on measures of self-esteem than their less-religious counterparts. Religiosity is not significantly related to moral behavior or social deviancy. Adjusting the outcomes

to reflect the positive (facilitative), negative (antithetical), or neutral relationship of religiosity and mental health, of the 28 outcomes reviewed, 44% suggest a negative relationship, 41% a positive relationship, and 15% a neutral relationship. While Lea (1982) reports "the data describe a potential positive relationship between religion and psychological health" (p. 340), he also writes of the importance of caution in interpreting the data:

> Methodological problems relating to defining "religion" and "mental health" and to correlational data require caution in interpretation . . . . Limitations exist in the number and type of studies conducted, their methodology, and the difficulty in interpretation.

Affiliation As a Measure of Religiosity

While Bergin (1983) and Lea (1982) have published recent literature reviews covering a period of time from 1939 through 1979, their reviews, by their own design, have not been comprehensive. Lea (1982) totally omitted the operational definitions of religiosity while Bergin (1983) included such definitions in 14 of 24 studies. This author, in a forthcoming article, has expanded both the Bergin (1983) and Lea (1982) studies to include the specific measures of religiosity and mental health. Furthermore, this forthcoming article will review the research that has been published since the reviews of Bergin and Lea. (See Appendix A for a summary of this article.) Inasmuch as my other article will address the general concerns of religiosity and mental health, it is intended the remainder of this paper focus on the affiliation dimension of religiosity and its relationship to mental health. Lea (1982) suggests that "little research exists on the relationship between specific denominations and mental health" (p. 336). Consequently, the sampling of specific religious denominations is suggested as an area for further research.

By examining the empirical evidence derived from religious affiliation, the author intends to identify what influence this variable may have upon the relationship of religiosity and mental health.

Table 1 contains studies concerning the relationship of religious affiliation and mental health from 1939 through March 1985.

Of the 22 studies reported in Table 1, seven indicated a comparison between Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religions while eight made a comparison between religious affiliates (no specific denominations mentioned) and nonaffiliates. Two studies compared Catholicism and specific Protestant religions such as the Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, and Episcopalian. Two studies focused on the Unification church, and

TABLE 1
Religious Affiliation and Mental Health
1939–1984 Including Bergin * (1983) and Lea ** (1982)

	Study[1]	Year	Religiosity Scale	Health Scale	Findings[2]
1.	Thorndike **	1939	Religious Membership (Affiliated vs. Nonaffiliated)	Community Goodness	A◄NA
2.	Angell **	1951	Religious Membership (Affiliated vs. Nonaffiliated)	Community Social Health	A◄NA
3.	Blumm **	1960	Religious Membership (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, No Religious Preference)	Anti-Semitism Prejudice Scale	C = P = J►NR
4.	Maddox **	1964	Religious Membership (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, No Religious Preference)	Alcohol Use	P◄NR◄J = C
5.	Mobert **	1965	Religious Membership (Affiliated vs. Nonaffiliated)	Social Adjustment	A►NA
6.	Bohrnstedt *	1968	Religious Membership (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, No Religious Preference)	MMPI	P◄C◄J◄NR

[1]Only the primary author is listed in the table. See reference list for other authors.
[2]The level of significance for each of the studies reported was either .05 or .01.

	Study[1]	Year	Religiosity Scale	Health Scale	Findings[2]
7.	Lindenthal **	1970	Religious Membership (Affiliated vs. Nonaffiliated)	Index of Mental Status	A►NA
8.	Burgess **	1971	Religious Membership (Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian)	Mental Hospital Admission	C = B►M = L
9.	Spencer	1975	Religious Membership (Jehovah's Witness)	Schizophrenia	+ Schizophrenia
10.	Groesch	1977	Religious Membership (Catholic vs. Protestant)	MMPI	C►P (var. scales) P►C (var. scales)
11.	Paragament	1979	Religious Membership (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish)	Psychological Competence	C = P = J
12.	Schlegel	1979	Religious Membership (Affiliated vs. Nonaffiliated)	Alcohol Use	A►NA
13.	Panton	1979	Religious Membership (Affiliated vs. Nonaffiliated)	Adjustment	A◄NA
14.	Galanter	1980	Religious Membership (Unification Church vs. Nonmembers)	General Well-Being Schedule	UC◄NM
15.	Galanter	1980	Religious Membership (Unification Church & Divine Light Mission vs. Nonmembers)	Alcohol Abuse	R◄NM

	Study[1]	Year	Religiosity Scale	Health Scale	Findings[2]
16.	Shrum	1980	Religious Membership (Catholic vs. Protestant)	Marital Stability	C = P
17.	Glenn	1982	Religious Membership (Homogamy vs. Heterogamy)	Marital Happiness	HOM►HET
18.	Chalfant	1983	Religious Membership (Affiliated vs. Nonaffiliated)	Prejudice	A = NA
19.	McDonald	1983	Religious Membership 1. Non-mainline Protestant 2. Mainline Protestant 3. Catholic 4. Christian Science, LDS, Seventh-day Adventist, Jehovah Witness	Psychiatric Evaluation	+ Anxiety & Depression + Personality Disorders + Repression + Psychoticism
20.	Ross	1983	Religious Membership (Hare Krishna)	MMPI & General Health Questionnaire	HK = General Population
21.	Ebaugh	1984	Religious Membership (Christian Science, Catholic, Baha'i)	Life Crises Scale	CS = C = B
22.	Perkins	1985	Religious Membership (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, No Religious Preference)	Humanitarianism, Egalitarianism, Racism	C = P = J = NP

one study respectively on the Jehovah's Witnesses, Hare Krishna, Christian Science, and Baha'i.

The data indicate little support for the assertion that religiosity is facilitative of psychopathology. Of the 11 studies reporting a comparison of nonreligious and religious samples, three report the religious sample being less "mentally healthy," four report the religious sample having greater "mental health," and four report equal "mental health."

Concerning denominational comparisons, the data indicate that Catholics, Protestants, and Jews are equal with regard to prejudice, MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory) scores, psychological competence, marital stability, and humanitarianism/egalitarianism.

Protestants abuse alcohol less frequently than Catholics and Jews. Jehovah's Witnesses are treated more frequently for schizophrenia than are people from other religions. Catholics and Baptists are hospitalized in mental institutions more frequently than Methodists or Lutherans.

The data indicate a preponderance of research concerning affiliated vs. nonaffiliated and Catholic vs. Protestant comparisons. Capps (1984) (journal editor for *The Scientific Study of Religion*) states his perception of the present situation:

> Since I began receiving manuscripts in June 1982, there have been some 53 submissions . . . on a specific religious denomination or aspect thereof. . . . There were twelve denominations represented, with the following breakdown: Catholic, 17; Judaism, 11; Mormon, 9; Mennonite, 4; Seventh-day Adventists, 4; Episcopal, 2; and one each for Assembly of God, Baptist, Jehovah's Witness, Lutheran, Pentecostal, and Quaker. (p. 108)

While Capps (1984) continues and calls for studies concerning "various churches within mainline protestantism" (p. 108), it is this author's perception that much can be done with the existing studies in making meaningful comparisons.

Method

Studies were selected from the review of literature which reported the following: (a) specific religious affiliation and (b) scores from the MMPI. The studies fitting these criteria were Ross (1983), Bohrnstedt, Borgatta, and Evans (1968), Groesch (1977), and Panton (1979). The latter two studies were excluded, for they dealt with extreme populations—psychiatric patients and prison inmates, respectively.

The sample consisted of 816 Catholic, 1953 Protestant, 695 Jewish, 203 nonreligious college students, and 42 Hare Krishna devotees. Also, previously unreported MMPI data were obtained from 2,751 members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (student sample data obtained from Burton Kelly). In addition to the extracting of data from previous studies, the author contacted and administered the MMPI to local groups of Hare Krishna, Baha'i, and Seventh-day Adventists. Due to the small sample sizes available, these data are not included in this analysis. These data will be utilized in a forthcoming paper reporting a comparison of traditional religions, nontraditional religions, and mental health.

MMPI mean scores for the three validity scales and each of the 10 clinical scales were extracted and compared for each of the three data bases. The authors of the various studies consulted did not include standard deviation data for their respective samples. Inasmuch as this report is the first to include LDS data, however, standard deviation scores for this sample were reviewed and found to be consistent with a normal population. Visual summaries and descriptive statistics representing the MMPI mean scores and T-scores are created for comparative clarity.

Results

Tables 2 (male) and 3 (female) contain the mean scores for each of the specific denominations surveyed. Since the MMPI is normalized separately for males and females, respective summaries are reported.

MMPI Interpretations

Duckworth (1979) has developed the *MMPI Interpretation Manual for Counselors and Clinicians* in which she has made an exhaustive review of research concerning the MMPI. This research has been utilized by the author in offering interpretations of the MMPI profiles created for each of the groups being studied. For a definition of the MMPI scales, see Appendix B.

TABLE 2
Mean MMPI Scores for Respective Religious Affiliations (MALE)
(Scores corrected for K)

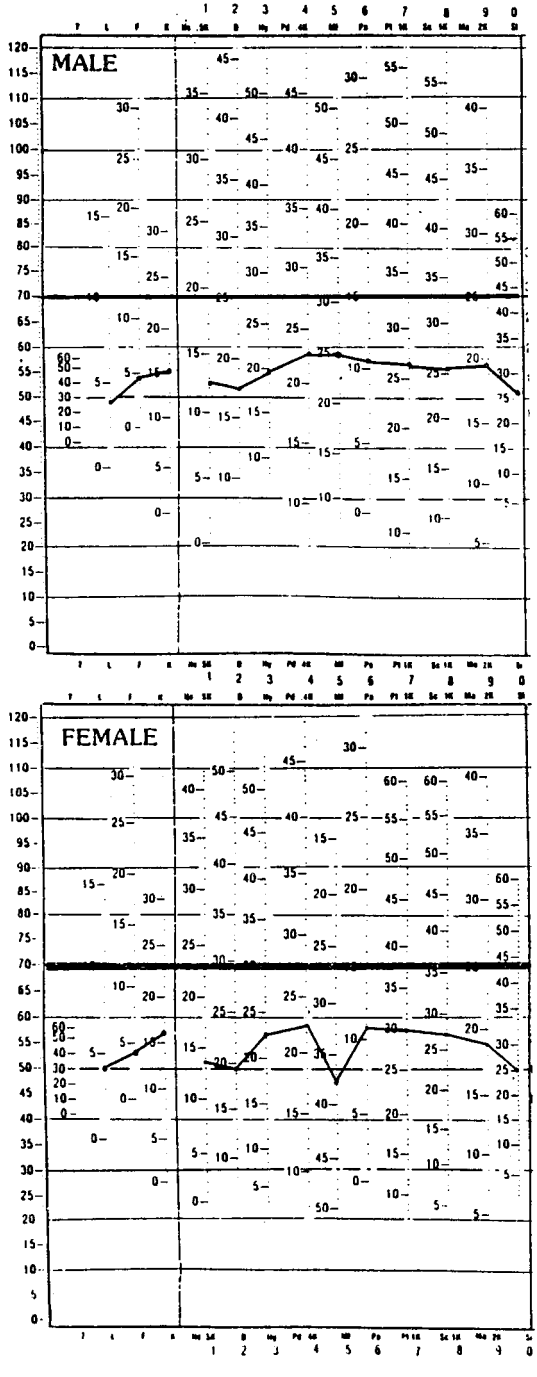
	LDS	Catholic	Protestant	Jewish	No Religion	Hare Krishna
Scale	N = 1280	N = 469	N = 994	N = 283	N = 105	N = 29
1. Hs	12.5	12.6	12.5	12.6	12.9	12.2
2. D	17.4	18.9	19.1	20.9	20.6	18.3
3. Hy	19.7	19.9	19.7	20.7	21.0	21.2
4. Pd	22.9	22.8	21.9	22.8	23.1	24.5
5. Mf	25.0	24.9	25.6	27.9	28.6	28.2
6. Pa	10.5	10.0	10.0	9.8	10.2	9.1
7. Pt	26.6	27.8	27.4	27.4	27.4	24.5
8. Sc	25.7	27.7	27.3	27.5	28.7	25.1
9. Ma	19.8	20.5	20.5	21.0	20.8	21.4
0. Si	26.5	27.4	27.8	25.5	28.7	21.0
F	4.7	5.2	5.0	5.6	6.7	3.5
L	3.9	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.8	6.8
K	15.2	14.2	13.9	14.3	14.7	19.6

TABLE 3
Mean MMPI Scores for Respective Religious Affiliations (FEMALE)
(Scores corrected for K)

	LDS	Catholic	Protestant	Jewish	No Religion	Hare Krishna
Scale	N = 1280	N = 469	N = 994	N = 283	N = 105	N = 29
1. Hs	13.8	13.5	13.3	13.4	13.6	16.1
2. D	19.6	20.5	20.2	22.6	23.1	20.5
3. Hy	22.3	21.3	21.9	22.1	22.7	21.8
4. Pd	22.4	21.5	21.2	21.7	22.6	23.1
5. Mf	37.7	36.5	37.3	38.4	39.0	36.5
6. Pa	10.8	9.9	10.0	9.7	10.9	17.0
7. Pt	29.6	28.8	28.7	29.0	29.1	25.0
8. Sc	27.0	27.1	27.0	27.2	30.0	24.5
9. Ma	19.2	20.3	20.2	20.5	20.7	18.5
0. Si	24.9	27.7	26.3	26.8	29.1	24.5
F	4.3	4.0	3.9	4.7	6.3	4.2
L	4.3	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.7	7.2
K	15.8	14.5	14.8	14.1	13.9	19.7

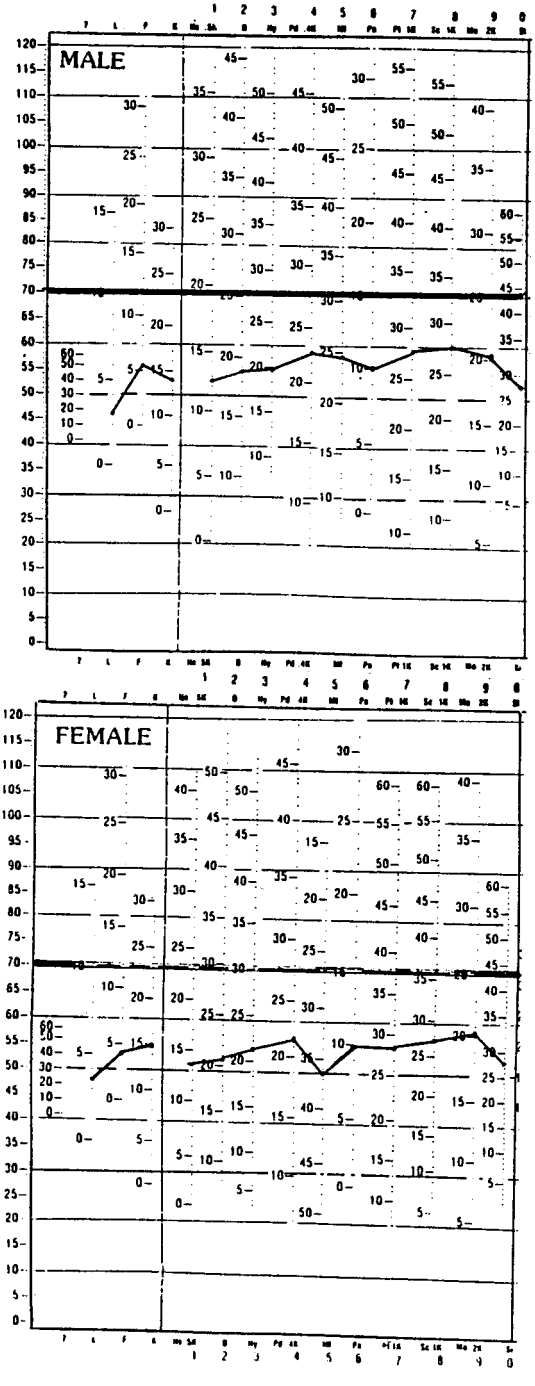
LDS MMPI Profiles

The scores obtained from the LDS sample were generally typical of the majority of "normal" people taking the MMPI. Both male and female LDS subjects were willing to admit to general human faults—their scores did not indicate any evidence of attempting to "fake good." Individuals with scores similar to the LDS sample seldom show evidence of mental pathology.



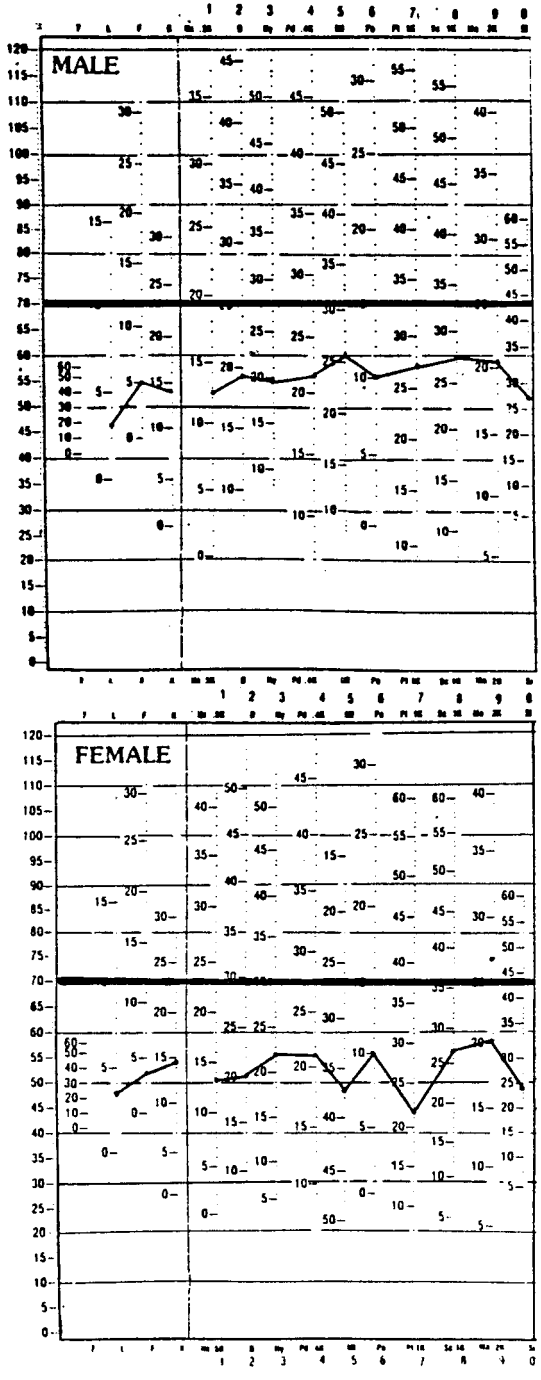
Catholic MMPI Profiles

The scores obtained from the Catholic sample were within normal limits. Male and female profiles indicated that they are willing to admit to general human faults. No indication of mental pathology was observed.



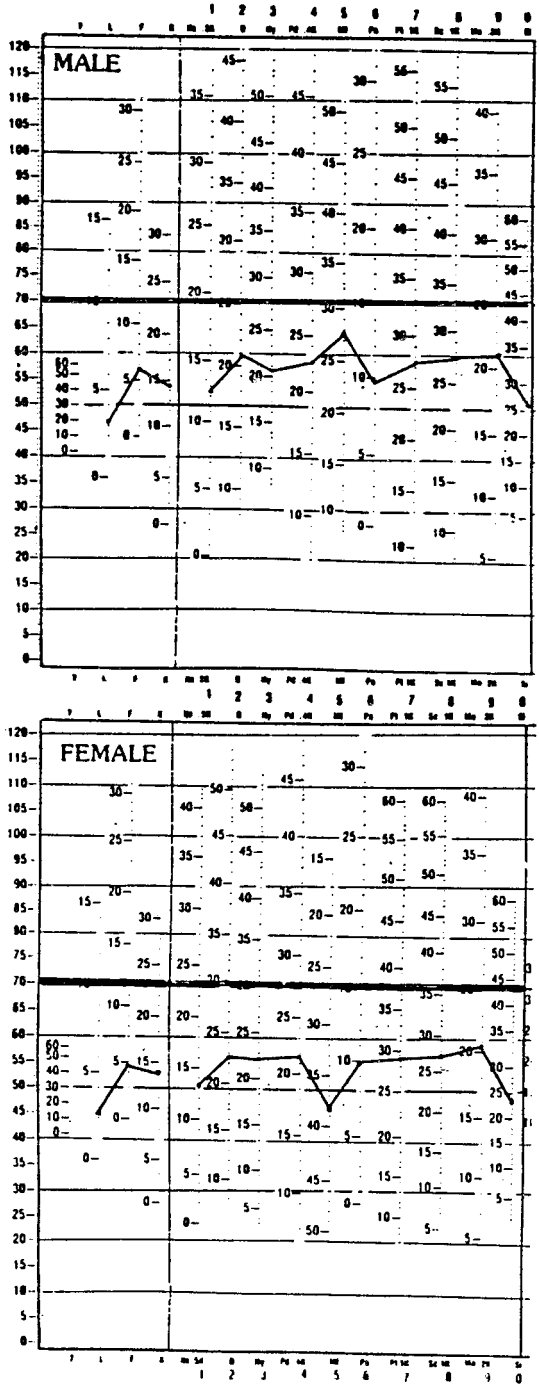
Protestant MMPI Profiles

Scores from the Protestant sample were within normal limits. Protestant females appeared to be "nonworriers," secure with themselves. They may appear to some as being "somewhat lazy and nontask oriented" (Duckworth, p. 149).



Jewish MMPI Profiles

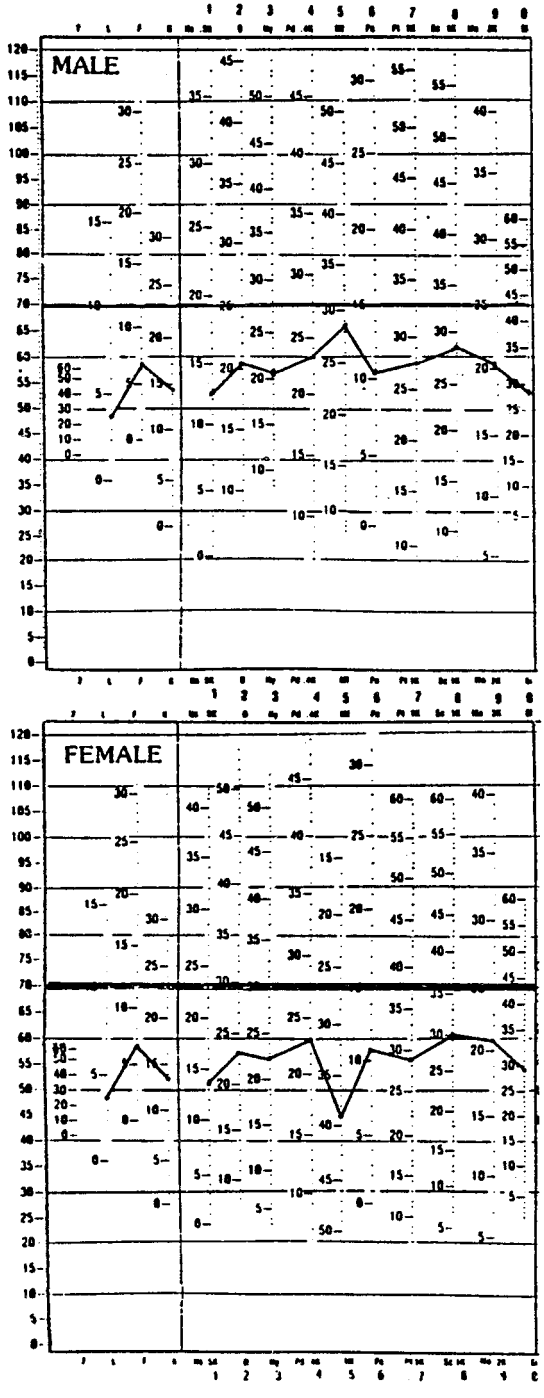
The scores obtained from the Jewish sample were within normal limits on all scales. Jewish males appear to be interested in aesthetics and to be somewhat passive. Jewish female profiles indicated the desire for traditional female roles.



Nonreligious MMPI Profiles

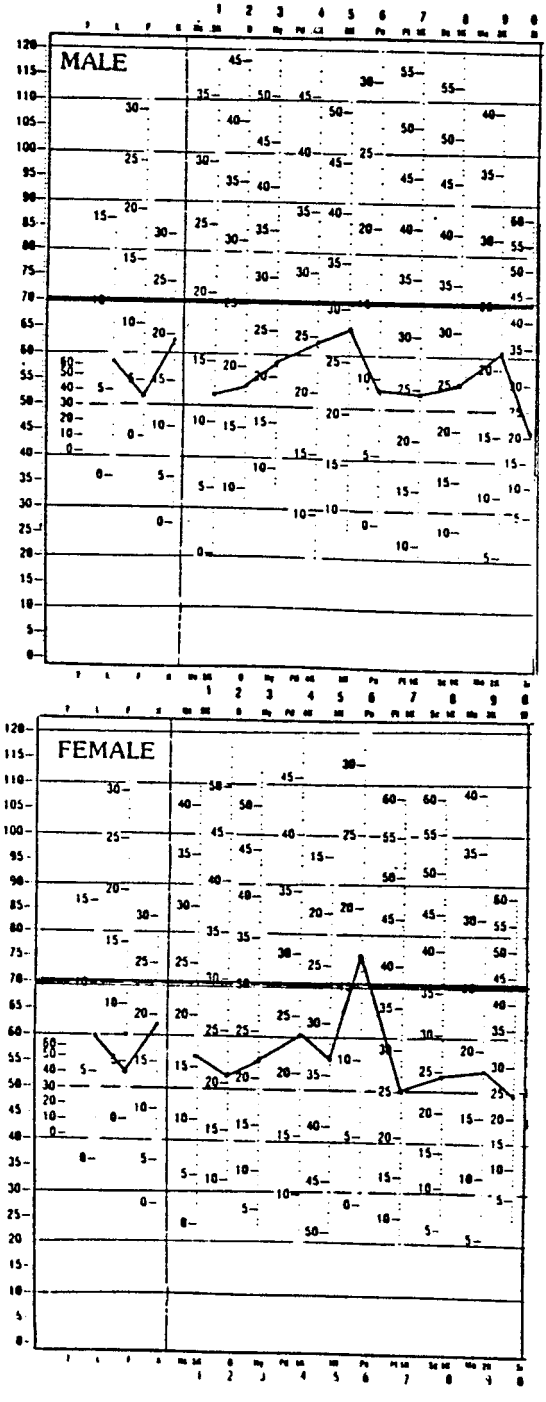
Scores obtained from those who did not indicate a preference for religious affiliation were within the normal limits for all scales measured.

Males and females in this category may think differently than other people. Duckworth (1984) states that people scoring similar to this profile may be "avant-garde [different] or highly creative people" (p. 164). People with profiles similar to this often indicate a concern with social problems. Duckworth (1984) further states: "With college educated persons, this level usually indicates concern about the social problems of the world. . . . Other people with this elevation may have a situational crisis such as marital discord. In this latter instance, the elevation tends to go down after the problem is resolved" (p. 177).



Hare Krishna MMPI Profiles

The scores obtained from the Hare Krishna were within normal limits on all of the scales excepting scale 6 (paranoia). Hare Krishna females' scores indicated that they were interpersonally sensitive to what others thought of them. Duckworth (1979) states: "In addition to sensitivity . . . suspiciousness is usually present. . . . The client may assume that other people are after him or her. Righteous indignation also is usually present" (p. 139). Hare Krishna female profiles indicated they may not be interested in being considered feminine, although this may be an indication of cultural differences. Hare Krishna males and females presented themselves as being virtuous, conforming, and self-controlled. The scores of Hare Krishna men indicated they were generally poised and confident in social and group situations, but typically not satisfied with the social condition of the world and would like change.



Discussion

This study represents an analysis of 6,270 subjects affiliated among five different religions. From the 13 different measures of mental health for each of these five religions studied (65 measures), only one scale on one sample was outside the normal limits on the MMPI. These data contradict the notion set forth by Albert Ellis that religiosity is facilitative of mental illness (Ellis as cited in Bergin, 1983).

While there are differences in the interpretations of the MMPI profiles for the five religions studied, they were all quite similar and indicated no extreme difference as to the presence or absence of mental pathology.

Inasmuch as this study has operationally defined religion in terms of religious affiliation, I hope that future research will examine the relationship of the MMPI and other dimensions of religiosity. Also, because 13 research scales have been added to the traditional MMPI, I feel that these scales should be reported in future studies.

Appendix A

Judd (1985) reviewed 167 studies concerning the relationship of religiosity and mental health. These studies covered from 1928 to 1985. The findings revealed little support for the assertion that religiosity is antithetical to mental health. High levels of specific religiosity measure were reported as being facilitative of marital and family stability, personal adjustment, and well-being. Religiosity was reported to have a curvilinear relationship with prejudice, ethnocentrism, and authoritarianism.

The following table lists the year, type of sample, measures, and outcome for each of the studies reviewed.

TABLE 4
A Comprehensive & Contemporary Review of Literature Concerning Religiosity and Mental Health 1928–1985 Including Lea ** (1982) and Bergin * (1983) Reviews

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
1. Hartshorne	1928	Children	Religious Belief± & Normal Behavior	–[3]
2. Thorndike **[4]	1939	Census	Religious Affiliation† & Community Goodness 1. Health 2. Education 3. Social Programs 4. Creature Comforts	–
3. Merton	1940	643 students	Religious Affiliation & MacCrones Negro Prejudice Scale	–
4. Weir	1941	N/A	Religious Affiliation & Social Pathology	0
5. Middleton	1941	185 adolescent girls	Religious Attitude‡ & Delinquency	–
6. Levinson	1944	77 male students	Religious Affiliation & Anti-Semitism	–
7. Frenkel-Brunswik	1945	76 female students	Religious Attitude & Anti-Semitism	0
8. Allport	1946	437 students	Religious Attitude & Attitude toward Minorities	+/–
9. Porterfield	1946	100,000 adults	Religious Affiliation & Well-Being	0

[1]Only the primary author is listed in the table. See reference list for other authors.

[2]The level of significance for each of the studies reported was either .05 or .01.

[3]Signs +, –, and 0 have been adjusted so positive relations (+) indicates association of higher religiosity with better mental health. Belief± indicates the religiosity measure contained questions regarding the sample's religious beliefs; for example, "Do you believe in God?" Affiliation† indicates religious membership was used as the religiosity measure. Attitude‡ indicates the religiosity measure contained questions regarding the sample's religious attitudes; for example, "Do you feel that God is just?" Activity– indicates the religiosity measure contained questions regarding the sample's religious activity, for example, questions concerning frequency of church attendance, prayer, scripture reading.

[4]The references for the studies noted with ** or * may be found in Lea (1982) ** or Bergin (1983) *.

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
10. Turbeville	1946	212 students	Religious Affiliation & Prejudice	–
11. Sanford	1948	1282 adults	Religious Affiliation & Cal. Ethnocentrism Scale	–
12. Smith	1949	1100 prison inmates	Religious Activity§ & Crime	0
13. Kirkpatrick	1949	215 adults	Religious Belief & Humanitarianism	–
14. Lantz	1949	1000 students	Religious Activity & Satisfaction	0
15. Rosenblith	1949	861 students	Religious Attitude & Attitude toward Indians	+/–
16. Parry	1949	736 adults	Religious Activity & Prejudice	+
17. Sanford	1950	268 adults	Religious Activity (Low, Med., High) & Anti-Semitism, Prejudice	L◄H◄M*[5]
18. Bettleheim	1950	World War 2 veterans	Religious Attitude & Anti-Semitism	+
19. Protho	1950	652 students	Religious Attitude & Remmer's Prejudice Scale	0
20. Sanford	1950	123 female students	Religious Belief & Anti-Semitism, Ethnocentrism	–
21. Ross	1950	1935 YMCA	Religious Belief & Adolescents & Prejudice	–
22. Gough	1951	262 H.S. students	Religious Affiliation & Cal. Ethnocentrism Scale	–
23. Brown *	1951	102 students	Inventory of Religious Belief± & MMPI	0
24. Angell **	1951	Census	Religious Membership & Community Social Health	–
25. Evans	1952	169 students	Religious Attitude & Anti-Semitism Scale	0
26. Sanai	1952	250 students	Religious Attitude & Prejudice	0

[5]Signs L, M, and H denote low, medium, and high levels of religiosity. The sign ◄ denotes less; the sign ► denotes greater correlations with measure of mental health/illness.

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
27. Hardin	1954	Housewives	Religious Activity & Prejudice Catholics Protestants	 + 0
28. O'Neil	1954	200 students	Religious Belief & Ethnocentrism	0
29. Allport	1954	77 adults	Religious Affiliation & Authoritarianism	–
30. Funk	1955	255 students	Religious Activity & Manifest Anxiety	+
31. Brown *	1955	140 students	Thurstone Religious Attitude Scale & MMPI, Welsh Anxiety Scale	0
32. Ranck	1955	880 male seminary students	Religious Belief & Authoritarianism Submissiveness Psychopathology	 – – +
33. Smith	1956	50 male inmates	Religious Activity & Crime	–
34. Funk *	1956	255 students	Religious Orthodoxy Scale [Belief] & Manifest Anxiety (MAS)	0
35. Moberg *	1956	219 adults ► 65 years	Religious Activity & Personal Adjustment	+
36. Rosenblith	1957	256 students	Religious Belief & Prejudice	0
37. Gregory	1957	596 students	Religious Belief & Ethnocentrism	–
38. Walters **	1957	50 alcohol rehabilitation patients	Religious Activity of Parents & Affiliation with Alcohol Treatment Center	–
39. Keedy	1958	138 students	Religious Belief & Cal. Ethnocentrism Scale	–
40. Rosenblum	1958	173 adults	Religious Activity & Prejudice	H◄L&M
41. Shinert	1958	327 students	Religious Activity & Ethnocentrism	+
42. Jones	1958	197 navy cadets	Religious Attitude & Authoritarianism	–

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
43. Kelly	1958	606 students	Religious Attitude & Prejudice	–
44. Bateman	1958	51 students	Religious Belief & Ability to Control Anger	+
45. Spilka	1958	students	Religious Attitude & Ethnocentrism	–
46. O'Reilly	1958	210 Catholic adults ►	Religious Activity & Happiness	+
47. Pettigrew	1959	adults	Religious Activity & Anti-Black	–
48. Wright	1959	310 adults	Religious Belief & Sociability, Personal Relations	+ –
49. Rosenbloom	1959	173 adults	Religious Activity & Prejudice	0
50. Strunk	1959	60 divinity students vs. 50 business students	Comparison regarding Aggressiveness in Social Situations	DS►BS
51. Schofield	1959	328 psych. patients	Religious Activity & Schizophrenia	0
52. Friedrichs **	1959	112 adults	Religious Activity & Attitude toward Segregation	+/–
53. Alexander	1960	31 students Religious/ Nonreligious	Religious Attitude & Attitude towards Death	+
54. Rokeach *	1960	202 students (Catholics & Protestants vs. Nonbelievers)	Religious Membership & Anxiety	–
		207 students (Catholics, Jews & Protestants vs. Nonbelievers)	Religious Membership & Anxiety	–
55. Wilson	1960	207 adults	Extrinsic Religious Values & Prejudice	–
56. Gurin	1960	adults	Religious Activity & Happiness	0

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
57. Blumm **	1960	125 students	Religious Club Membership [Activity] & Anti-Semitism Scale [Prejudice]	–
58. Rokeach **	1960	278 students	Religious Belief & Anti-Semitic/Gentile, Black/White	–
59. McGrath	1961	students	Religious Activity & Personal Adjustment	+
60. Pyron	1961	124 adults	Religious Attitude & Openness to Change	–
61. Putney	1961	1126 students	Religious Belief & Authoritarianism	–
62. Armstrong	1962	psych. patients	Religious Affiliation (Cath./Prot./Unitarian) & Personal Adjustment	C = P = U
63. Whitman	1962	300 adults	Religious Belief & Ethnocentrism	–
64. Martin	1962	163 students	Religious Activity, Attitude & Prejudice	0
65. Siegman	1962	43 U.S. youth, 41 Israel youth; 43 U.S. youth, 41 Israel youth	Religious Belief & Prejudice; Religious Belief & Authoritarianism	– 0 0 –
66. Brown *	1962	203 students	Brown's Revision of Thouless Test of Religious Orthodoxy [Belief] & Eysenck Neuroticism Scale	0
67. Martin *	1962	163 students	Religious Belief & MMPI, Cal. F Test [Authoritarianism]	0
68. Salisbury **	1962	1000 students (South)	Religious Attitude, Activity, Belief & Attitude toward	0
		1094 students (Northeast)	Interracial Marriage, Trial Marriage, Segregation/Integration	0
69. O'Reilly **	1962	212 students	Religious Beliefs & Prejudice	–

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
70. Middleton **	1962	554 students	Religious Belief, Activity, Attitude & Anti-Social Behavior & Anti-Ascetic Behavior	0 +
71. Strole **	1962	Census	Religious Conversion [Activity, Belief] & Psychiatric Evaluation	+
72. Obenhaus	1962	1200 rural adults	Religious Activity, Attitude & Social Issues	–
73. Ragan	1963	206 adults	Religious Activity & Attitude toward Blacks	+/–
74. Struening	1963	889 adults	Religious Activity & Prejudice	H◄L◄M
75. Eisenman	1964	11 students	Religious Affiliation & Prejudice	–
76. Feagin	1964	286 Southern Fundamentalists	Religious Affiliation & Prejudice	–
77. Scholl **	1964	80 delinquent boys	Religious Attitude & Prejudice	0
78. Williams	1964	901 non-Jewish adults	Religious Activity & Attitude toward Jews, Blacks, and Mexican Americans	H◄L◄M
79. Scholl **	1964	80 male delinquents	Religious Belief, Attitude & Social Deviance	0
80. Maddox **	1964	1296 H.S. students	Religious Membership & Use of Alcohol	–
81. Allen	1965	335 students	Religious Attitude & Intolerance	+
82. Cline **	1965	154 adults	Religious Belief, Attitude, & Humanitarianism	0
83. Weima **	1965	244 adults	Religious Conservatism [Belief, Attitude] & Authoritarianism (Cal. F Test)	+
84. Moberg **	1965	5000 adults ► 60 years	Religious Membership & Adjustment (Social Adjustment Scale)	+

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
85. Glock	1966	2958 adults	Religious Attitude & Anti-Semitism	–
86. Strommen	1967	2609 Lutheran youth	Religious Belief & Prejudice	+
87. Allen	1967	497 students	Religious Attitude, Belief & Prejudice	+
88. Babchuck	1967	144 wives	Religious Activity & Family Stability	+
89. Keene *	1967	250 urban adults	Religious Attitude & Neuroticism	0
90. Wilson *	1967	164 students	Religious Belief & Eysenck Neuroticism	0 0
91. Allport **	1967	309 adults	Religious Orientation Scale (Extrins./Intrins.) [Belief, Activity, Attitude] & Prejudice	+/–
92. Maranell **	1967	359 students	Religious Attitude & Anti-Semitic/Black Scale [Prejudice]	+
93. Globetti **	1967	132 H.S. students	Religious Attitude & Alcohol Abuse	–
94. Acuff **	1967	50 retired professors	Religious Belief, Adjustment & Demoralization	+ –
95. Tennison *	1968	299 students	Kirkpatrick Religiosity Scale [Belief] & Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS)	–
96. Parker	1968	adults	Religious Activity & Prejudice	0
97. Young	1968	578 adults	Religious Activity & Desegregation Attitude	L◄H◄M
98. Williams *	1968	161 students	Religious Activity & MMPI [Anxiety], Security–Insecurity Inventory (S–I)	+
99. Wilson *	1968	100 students	Religious Belief, Activity & Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS)	0

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
100. Bohrnstedt *	1968	366 students	Religious Membership & MMPI	0
101. Sanua	1969	students	Religious Activity & Authoritarianism	+
102. Rokeach	1969	1704 adults & students	Religious Activity & Social Compassion	L◄M◄H
103. Mayo *	1969	166 students	Religious Attitude & MMPI	+
104. Weltha *	1969	565 students	Religious Attitude & Index of Adjustment & Values	+
105. Bagley	1970	400 adults	Religious Belief & Prejudice	0
106. Kersten	1970	886 Lutheran adults	Religious Attitude & Prejudice	–
107. Brannon	1970	81 adults	Religious Attitude (Extrins./Intrins.) & Segregation	+/–
108. Swindell *	1970	135 students	Religious Attitudes Questionnaire (RAQ), Fundamentalist Attitudes Inventory (FAI) & Dogmatism Scale, Repression Sensitization Scale (R–S)	0
109. Lindenthal **	1970	938 adults	Religious Activity & Index of Mental Status	–
110. Tate	1971	175 adults	Religious Attitude (Extrins./Intrins.) & Equality	+/–
111. Campbell	1971	5759 adults	Religious Activity & Prejudice	L,H◄M
112. Spellman *	1971	60 rural adults	Ministerial Judgment 1. Sudden Converts 2. Gradual Converts 3. Not Religious [Attitude & Activity] & Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS)	0

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
113. Graff **	1971	152 students	Dimensions of Religious Commitment [Attitude, Activity] & Self-Actualization	–
114. Stark **	1971	200 psych. patients	Religious Membership & Psychiatric Evaluation	+
115. Burgess **	1971	529 psych. patients	Religious Membership & Mental Hospital Admission	0
116. Strickland	1972	47 Baptists, 46 Unitarians	Religious Belief & Prejudice	U◄B
117. Gorsuch	1972	84 students	Religious Belief & Prejudice	0
118. King	1972	1346 adults	Religious Belief, Attitude, & Prejudice	0
119. Nias	1972	441 children	Religious Belief & Ethnocentrism	+
120. Strommen	1972	4745 Lutheran adults	Religious Attitude & Prejudice	0
121. Hoge	1973	858 adults (Methodists/ Presbyterians)	Religious Attitude & Anti-Black/ Anti-Semitism	+/–
122. Middleton	1973	1704 adults	Religious Attitude & Prejudice	–
123. Jessor **	1973	adolescents	Religious Belief & Abstinence from Alcohol	+
124. Gray	1974	123 students	Religious Attitude (Extrins./Intrins.) & Prejudice	+/–
125. Feifel	1974	187 adults	Religious Belief & Fear of Death	0
126. Maranell *	1974	96 students (Midwest)	Religious Orientation, Ritualism, Altruism, Fundamentalism, Theism, Idealism, Superstition, Mysticism, & Anxiety	0
		109 students	[Attitude & Belief] & Manifest Anxiety (MAS)	0

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
127. Hood *	1974	82 students	Religious Experience Episodes Measure (REEM) [Activity] & Barron's Measure of Ego Strength	0
			REEM [Activity] & Stark's Index of Psychic Inadequacy	–
128. Spencer	1975	50 psych. patients (Jehovah's Witnesses)	Religious Affiliation & Incidence of Schizophrenia	–
129. Hjelle **	1975	63 males	Religious Activity & Self-Actualization	–
130. Heintzelman *	1976	114 students	Brown Modification of Thouless Test of Religious Orthodoxy [Belief]	
			Manifest Anxiety (MAS)	0
			Manifest Hostility (MHS)	+
			Self-Esteem	0
131. Groesch	1977	72 psych. patients (Cath. vs. Prot.)	Religious Affiliation & MMPI	0
132. Kunz	1977	2222 LDS couples	Religious Affiliation & Marital Satisfaction	+
133. Fehr *	1977	82 students	Brown Modification of Thouless Test of Religious Orthodoxy & Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values [Belief] &	
			Manifest Anxiety (MAS)	0
			& Cal. F Test [Authoritarianism]	0
			& Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory	0
134. Albrecht **	1977	409 adolescents	Religious Attitude, Activity, & Deviant Behavior	0
135. Hadaway	1978	adults	Religious Attitude, Activity, & Quality of Life Scale	+

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
136. Glenn	1978	NORC Survey	Religious Activity & Marital Happiness	+
137. Hunt	1978	66 couples	Religious Belief, Activity, & Marital Adjustment	+
138. Jolish *	1978	66 Jewish Temple members	Religious Belief, Activity, & Adult Ideas Inventory (Ellis Irrational Beliefs), Personal Orientation Inventory (POI): Self-Actualization Measure	0
139. Joubert *	1978	137 students	Religious Activity & Ellis Irrational Beliefs	0
140. Pargament	1979	133 adults	Religious Attitude, Belief, & Competence	0
141. Galanter	1979	237 Unification Church adults	Religious Attitude, Affiliation, & Well-Being, Neurotic Distress Schedule	+
142. Panton *	1979	234 male prisoners	Religious Affiliation & Adjustment	+
143. Smith *	1979	1995 Catholic adolescents	Religious Belief, Practice Experience, Knowledge, Consequences, & Self-Esteem	0
144. Ness	1980	51 adults	Religious Activity & Cornell Medical Ind.	+
145. Shaver	1980	2500 women	Religious Belief, Affiliation, Activity, Attitude, & Well-Being	+
146. Pattison	1980	11 men (Pentecostal)	Religious Activity & Sexual Orientation Scale (Change from Gay to Straight)	+
147. Wilkinson	1980	223 LDS adolescents	Religious Activity & Familial Affection	+
148. Shrum	1980	9120 adults	Religious Membership & Marital Instability	0
149. Schumm	1982	181 couples	Religious Attitudes & Marital Satisfaction (Abbreviated Marriage Conventionalism Scale)	+

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
150. Glenn	1982	1500 adults	Religious Affiliation & Marital Happiness	+
151. Conway	1982	262 adult members (Unification, Hare Krishna, Scientology, Divine Light, & The Way)	Religious Affiliation & Psychological Disturbances	–
152. Kilbourne	1983	262 adults members (Unification, Hare Krishna, Scientology, Divine Light, & The Way)	Religious Affiliation & Psychological Disturbances	–
153. McDonald	1983	7050 psych. patients	Religious Affiliation & Psychiatric Evaluation	0
154. Ross	1983	42 adults (Hare Krishna Temple Members)	Religious Affiliation & MMPI/General Health Questionnaire	0
155. Chalfant	1983	NORC Survey 3722 adults	Religious Affiliation, Activity & Prejudice	0
156. Stack	1983	Census	Religious Activity & Suicide	+
157. Spendlove	1984	184 women (LDS/non-LDS)	Religious Affiliation & Depression	0
158. Fislinger	1984	208 couples	Religious Belief, Activity, Attitude & Marital Adjustment	+
159. Ebaugh	1984	150 adults	Religious Affiliation & Life Crises	0
160. Hadaway	1984	600 H.S. students	Religious Attitude, Activity, Belief & Drug Use	+
161. St. George	1984	1500 adults	Religious Activity & Well-Being	+
162. Watson	1984	317 students	Religious Attitude (Extrins./Intrins.) & Narcissism	+/–

Study[1]	Year	Sample	Measures	Relation[2]
163. Wulf	1984	365 adults	Religious Attitude (Extrins./Intrins.) & Sexual Liberalism	+/−
164. Heaton	1984	NORC Survey	Religious Affiliation & Marital Satisfaction	+
165. Bergin	1985	119 students	Religious Attitude & Anxiety (MAS), CPI, Self-Control	+
166. Perkins	1985	1197 adults	Religious Affiliation, Attitude & Racism, Humanitarianism, Egalitarianism	+

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Appendix B
The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory is a true/false questionnaire developed in the early 1940s by McKinley and Hathaway at the University of Minnesota (Hathaway & McKinley, 1940). Its stated purpose is to aid clinicians in the objective classification or diagnosis of psychiatric patients.

Since its initial publication, several attempts have been made to modify the 566 question format. While various short forms have been proposed, few revisions have proved as satisfactory as the original format.

Validity Scale

L Scale. 15 items all scored in the false direction and often associated with an attempt to make a good impression.

F Scale. 64 items involving a broad spectrum of psychopathology and often associated with an attempt to fake mental symptoms.

K Scale. 30 items generally reflecting defensiveness or guardedness.

Clinical Scales

1. *Hypochondriasis* (Hs). 33 items expressing concern regarding bodily functions.
2. *Depression* (D). 60 items expressing moodiness, dysphoria, or hopelessness.
3. *Hysteria* (Hy). 60 items revealing those who may respond to stress by use of conversion symptomology.
4. *Psychopathic Deviate* (Pd). 50 items generally identifying antisocial behavior tendencies.
5. *Masculinity/feminity* (Mf). 60 items distinguishing male vs. female sex role preoccupation.
6. *Paranoia* (Pa). 40 items generally illiciting delusional material reflecting feelings of grandeur or persecution.
7. *Psychasthenia* (Pt). 48 items identifying excessive sensitivity, doubt, or indecision.
8. *Schizophrenia* (Sc). 78 items reflecting unusual thought processes or personal perception.
9. *Hypomania* (Ma). 46 items identifying impulses toward increased inability, nonproductive activity, and mood difficulties.
0. *Social Introversion* (Si). 70 items reflecting self-concept difficulties and a tendency to withdraw.

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A SUMMER EXCURSION TO THE LDS TWILIGHT ZONE

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Across the table, a vocally animated woman in perhaps her early sixties claimed that she and her husband were each better off now that "he can read his newspaper and watch TV as much as he wants. That's all he really wanted to do anyway—just watch TV and read the paper. He doesn't have to be bothered by my wanting his attention, and I don't have to be unhappy and resentful over his lack of attention."

As over a thousand people flowed out of the Wilkinson Center Ballroom to the adjoining lounge and terrace areas so that the banquet dishes and tables could be cleared away, the social professionals arrived. In a scene reminiscent of an LDS version of *Saturday Night Fever*, hundreds of faces, not seen at events since the previous night's dance, came into view, often in the same small groups of two and three with whom they had arrived the night before.

With aisles packed and some attendees seated on stairs and peering in doorways, a moderate but clearly inadequate-sized classroom struggled to digest its anxious contents. This presentation about relationships was sure to be a big draw. Down the hall to the left, a rather feminist-oriented lawyer prepared to give her advice to a smaller group of listeners regarding legal dilemmas and discrimination facing single adults.

The three short vignettes above, culled from scores of those experienced personally, I hope will provide some feel for the diversity of feelings, impressions, and thoughts connected with a three-and-one-half-day event held annually each July at sites in and around Provo, Utah. Called the LDS Singles Conference by some, the Utah Single Adult Conference by others, and considered as RELIEF, HOPE, a breath of fresh air, or the year's best chance to meet "the right one" by still others, it appears to be the granddaddy of Church-related single events. Participants, arriving it seemed from all over the USA and Canada,

are sometimes given the appellation of the largest (and some would argue the most misunderstood and ignored) minority among LDS membership.

Sunday morning testimonies meshed verbal flavors of Florida, Kentucky, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Texas with those dozens of rather auditorially indistinguishable towns from the Intermountain and Pacific Coast regions. A diversity not likely to be experienced at any local sacrament meeting, a veritable cornucopia of shapes, sizes, minds, colors, hearts, and backgrounds assembled. Their common denominator—being single and LDS. Near the close of the program one speaker noted that more than five thousand individuals had been involved in at least one of the events connected with the conference.

For some two or three years, I had given at least some thought to attending this event, but each July something seemed to come up to prevent it. One year it was the timing of our family vacation; another year a professional seminar produced a schedule clash. But perhaps underneath all these "reasonable explanations" were recurrent fears about what actually attending would mean. To do so would be to openly acknowledge (to a significant LDS population at least) my singleness. It might be perceived as a sign advertising my loneliness and desire for a companion, and it certainly would rip away my facade as the busy psychologist who was rather aloof and above all that—who had such issues resolved. But finally, when sufficient time had passed, and I had provided myself revolving mental rationales ranging from "a valid professional learning experience" to "God helps those who help themselves," mixed with a generous sprinkling of old-fashioned curiosity, I ruthlessly scheduled and executed the long-contemplated trip.

As a bon voyage gift, I was summoned only days before leaving by my newly called bishop to receive the call of Single Adult Representative for the ward. Letting him know that he had just removed my last shred of dignity by issuing such a call, I interposed with all sincerity the alternative solution of holding a church court instead. Surely, I thought, such an event could be no less devastating. For seven-and-one-half years since becoming single, I had scrupulously tiptoed around and dodged such callings. I had served as a Gospel Doctrine teacher for several years and as an executive secretary to the stake president—legitimate jobs associated in everyone's mind with regular people. But with this call there was no way of redefining, relabeling, or otherwise distancing it from the realm of the Church "Twilight Zone." I would, to be sure, finally be one of "those" people. While I had helped many clients who were single, both in and

out of the Church, and had sincere empathy and caring for their circumstances, this was different. Sensing my state of mind, the bishop kindly offered whatever time I needed to consider the calling before giving a scorable response. But sensing that he honestly was doing as he was moved to do made my task no easier.

The brief trip which followed brought profound experiences I hope never to forget, some of which other therapists might find of value. Not to be confused with a somewhat similar event sponsored by the Brigham Young University Summer Conferences and Programs Department, the Utah Valley Single Adult Conference increasingly stands alone as a remnant of a dozen or more Church-sponsored multiregional gatherings for Church singles. Name tags at the opening Thursday night events (informal outdoor picnic and talent show) provided a geographic montage of most areas of North America and testified to both the word-of-mouth publicity for the event as well as to the anticipation of it among single members. This sense of isolated people experiencing nonisolation and the rejuvenating effect of that in their lives was perhaps the most consistent and vivid impression connected with the event. Without their saying a word, it was evident that most were relieved, built up, and comforted, to know that there were so many others with similar feelings, disappointments, and struggles, even though their specific circumstances and background variables differed considerably.

A man in his early forties who had apparently lost a small fortune as well as a wife; a native American girl, looking at least a dozen years younger than her admitted mid-thirties who told of raising five young children alone; an executive-looking woman who had recently returned to church activity; a woman of stately carriage whose husband had died only months before; youthful-appearing women who had, after fifteen to twenty-five years of marriage, learned suddenly there was someone else in their husbands' lives; and hundreds of others with stories. But they were together now, not alone—and sharing. At times, many were forgetting by simply playing volleyball in the midafternoon sunshine or enjoying a dance with someone they had never before encountered.

Most of these conference-goers, perhaps more than their married counterparts, need heroes. To have one of the Osmonds (Jay) enthusiastically greet the overflow crowd at Thursday night's talent show and openly identify himself as one of them and to have another member of the same family (Marie) speak to them at the program's closing Sunday evening fireside meant self-affirmation, a sense of validity and worth in spite of personal tragedies. That a significant percentage of the LDS population exudes overdone approval and acceptance toward

anything that affirms their standards and values irrespective of its quality level is true, but the vast majority clearly benefitted, at least temporarily, at a feeling level even from the most mediocre of the talent and classes presented. With such an eager audience, it seems a particular shame that in at least two cases presenters simply failed to appear for classes without notice to anyone.

Conscious conversations and the unintended overhearing of miscellaneous verbal bits and pieces during several activities brought personally and professionally enlightening insights. Many of my fellow attendees are in rather complicated binds caused by the expectations of local Church members and leaders. On one hand, they are often expected to surmount their nonmainstream circumstances and serve, perform, feel, and act like their married associates in the ward or branch. In most of these situations not enough effort is put into understanding the day-to-day effects of these singles' circumstances, physical and otherwise. On the other hand, in contexts where special attention or allowances are made, it is likly that the resultant treatment is carried out in either a condescending manner or in one which implies that "special" means "weak" and a bit "less capable." Regardless of the intelligence, talent, and spirituality possessed by the single person, he or she is one, not two, and has mathematically fewer resources to devote to whatever problem is at hand. Thus, it seems singles feel in a no-win position, which can reinforce feelings of inadequacy and decreased motivation.

Perhaps the most disquieting and saddening impression gained from that long Utah weekend was the not very rare opinion that too many priesthood leaders feel uncomfortable with or simply ignore singles. At the level of individual ward singles representatives, that conclusion seemed based on their having put in monumental efforts to get bishops and stake presidents to overtly support singles activities and lend their influence to correct functioning of the outlined organizational structure by calling people to positions and following up to see that stake level councils and personnel function regularly. The process of educating a constantly changing pool of leaders and attempting to modify the negative personal views of others toward the program had exhausted these singles.

More than once, speakers representing the organizational structure of the conference expressed gratitude that the weekend's events were possible because of the love that a number of brethren at the general Church level had for particular regional and stake ecclesiastical leaders. It is truly gratifying that there are leaders with the compassion, foresight, and commitment to LDS singles, leaders who are willing to

work, lobby, and persuade in order to obtain what is needed; but simultaneously, how sad it is that such extraordinary dedication is required to make possible what is so sorely needed. Some disappointment was expressed among a few attendees that changes in the Church's singles program, rumored for at least two years and announced early this year, were so cosmetic and peripheral in contrast to what had been hoped for.

The focus of their hope evidently centered on new and more creative ways to meet worthy LDS singles on a wider geographic scale. Since singles wards are clearly being deemphasized by changes in Church policy, many of the older or more socially mature singles are quietly living their lives within scattered individual wards and branches. With few attending the stereotyped singles dances, greater and greater numbers of "Church" singles are going outside the Church for their social contacts and, in some regions with greater numbers of single members, arranging their own social parties and groups in a less formal system outside the Church-sponsored organization and programs.

That time-honored institution, the church dance, clearly is perceived as the most popular, yet most maligned, form of social activity and meeting medium. The nightly, sometimes multivenued and musically bifurcated, dances at the conference provided all the ingredients for observing the best and worst of this species of happening. By the third, if not the second, evening, the familiar faces could be noted, perhaps a quarter of the total in attendance, who were virtually never seen at other types of activities. While it could be inferred that significant numbers of these professional socializers might be less actively affiliated with regular LDS organizational events such as Sunday meetings, the value of these dances for them could be easily underestimated. For a significant number, these dances may be their major or only concrete contact with large numbers of LDS people and with a Church atmosphere. I, for one, would hate to see that contact severed. Many I talked with said that at one time in recent memory that step was contemplated by the suggestion that printed dance cards, which would be required for entrance into such events, be issued by bishops.

A felt marker sign at the Saturday night "conventional" (a euphemism for "older") dance underscored one type of potential complication of being liberal in dance admission policies. "Divorces Must Be Final" announced the hand-scrawled sign. Subsequent conversation with the matronly ticket-takers informed me that "you never know what might happen; people might get back together!" A little imagination easily yielded up a scenario of some of the local dramas that had most likely unfolded in the past, as well as a couple of

intriguing notions for movie plots based on what could occur. Other rumors about the controversy over dance admission implied that two since-convicted felons, full-fledged Church members at the time of their dance participation, had prompted the review of admissions.

Of more conventional concern, of course, are those who find dances a lonely, rejecting environment. With the ratio of women to men conservatively estimated at such activities to be from between five and seven to one, unless the males present are both extroverted and fearless, and in some cases kind, there are bound to be many women left consistently on the sidelines. At the several dances I attended personally, however, it was not only women who stayed on the circumference of the crowd. A considerable number of men, including one known most intimately to me, were simply either too afraid of rejection, or perhaps too picky, to venture forth. For them, attending a dance is serious business indeed, and implementing a choice of dance partner beyond the realm of mental fantasy is tantamount to an eternal commitment combined with going over Niagara Falls in a barrel. One speaker, on Saturday morning, strongly chastised his male listeners for such behavior and urged the priesthood brethren to give to all the ladies what he viewed as nearly a constitutional right to a good time socially, which involved having a dance partner from time to time and not social isolation. And there were a few gentlemen who seemed to perceive their role in just that manner. They were a delight to view and admirable indeed. The more socially self-conscious would have cautioned them to avoid the risk of making a spectacle of themselves or given advice about the proper age-range limits for selecting a partner. Fortunately, they did not receive all that good and wise counsel, and they were able to both have a good time themselves and provide some of the same for their female counterparts.

Sunday morning's testimony meeting, divided into at least four locations following the sacrament portion, evoked both emotions of empathy and humility. What seemed a cross section of those present told of their circumstances and their spiritual reactions to varied experiences connected with the conference. The meeting proved to be remarkably free from self-aggrandizing and ego-flexing testimonies, except in one instance. The thanksgiving for the weekend was heartfelt indeed. A number of men, exceeding my expectation level, were involved in testimony bearing. Perhaps it is the predominance of female voices or the usually quiet circumstances of singles meetings, but there is virtually always a unique spirit that affects me as I listen to such congregations sing. Never mind that many different levels of spiritual maturation were represented in the words spoken; each speaker

underwent a change—temporary or permanent, shallow or deep, but invariably for the better.

Many thousands who were not there will of course also benefit. Mothers will return with renewed energy to deal with the daily demands of single parenthood. The faith of many whom the attendees date in the coming weeks might be uplifted, just a notch. The conference's events and effects will be shared with friends, some of whom will commit themselves to attend next year, or resolve to continue an attempt to live a particular gospel principle. And local priesthood leaders may notice some change in an individual or two, a change which could result in that leader's becoming a more active and understanding supporter of official organizational efforts to serve the LDS singles population.

How are the results of that short hiatus to Provo to be summarized? Certainly it brought knowledge! The fact that more than half of those entering the temples during 1986 for their own endowments will come from other than traditional nuclear families (only 20% of the entire worldwide LDS membership lives in such a traditional context) is stark testimony to change—a new reality with staggering implications. The trip brought spiritual experiences, including a visit to a singles session at the Provo Temple, albeit pitifully underattended, and the sharing of so many sweet testimonies. Socially, it provided a breath of fresh air, some new friendships, and the reality of a male fantasy: to view en masse thousands of eligible LDS women. From an emotional perspective, it resulted in more empathy and understanding toward single clients and their situations, as well as a therapeautic idea or two. But the most concrete and perhaps most fundamental effects were more personal and idiosyncratic than all of the above. There are more people whom I love and respect than when I left to attend. And my ward has a new Single Adult Representative.

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TELESTIAL, TERRESTRIAL, AND CELESTIAL THERAPY: A MORMON THERAPEUTIC MODEL

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For a number of years now, the *AMCAP Journal* and the AMCAP conferences have served as an arena within which many Mormon counselors and psychotherapists try to work out their sense of dissonance as they try to integrate their professional and religious lives. Having felt a similar sense of dissonance through much of my life, I share the concerns of my fellow professionals.

The primary purpose of this paper is to share my own personal resolution. Before doing this, however, I will provide a framework within which my sharing will have meaning. Therefore, in this paper I will first present the results of a brief, informal survey of the *AMCAP Journal*, in order to identify the various ways in which Mormon counselors and psychotherapists appear to integrate their professional and religious roles. Second, I will discuss my own struggles to resolve my sense of dissonance and will also present and analyze a model which has eventually helped me to reconcile my profession to my religion.

Patterns in Sacred/Secular Dissonance Resolution Among AMCAP Writers

An earlier and more thorough analysis of the *AMCAP Journal* (De Hoyos and De Hoyos, July 1982) identified, among other trends, that many Mormon counselors and psychotherapists are using the Journal and the conferences to reconcile their secular knowledge with their sacred knowledge.

To gain a greater understanding of precisely how Mormon counselors and psychotherapists resolve their sense of dissonance, in this updated survey I will review briefly *all* the AMCAP articles that deal primarily with therapeutic issues. I will tentatively divide the authors

of such articles into three major groups: (1) the rather small group of AMCAP writers who take a secular approach when discussing therapeutic issues; (2) the larger group of AMCAP writers made up of those who attempt, in diverse and unique ways, to integrate their sacred and secular thinking; and (3) the group who have opted to give primacy to the gospel. Let us now look at these three groups.

The purpose of the first part of the paper is simply to provide a framework for the second part; the categories do not have intrinsic value. They were devised only to identify some basic patterns that are later used as a tentative frame of reference for the second part of the paper which constitutes the main thesis. Therefore, placement in a given category must not be seen as a definitive position of the authors involved, but rather as a suggestion of a pattern.

AMCAP Writers Who Use the Secular Approach

Articles are included in this group when they are concerned with some aspect of therapy and when the approach is primarily secular. Only four articles are found in this category.

One of these (Pearson, 1980, April) suggests the use of clinical humor as a therapeutic technique. Another (Scoresby, 1979, February) discusses family systems therapy. Still another (Lambert, 1981, April) evaluates the effects of cognitive therapy on certain types of depression. The last one (Hoopes and Barlow, 1980, April) presents an eight-week structured group treatment for divorce and death adjustment. Each of these articles is written in a primarily rational, nonreligious style, using the *AMCAP Journal* as any other professional journal.

Of course, that these writers make no mention of religion obviously cannot be interpreted as a lack of interest in reconciling their sacred with their secular thoughts. It simply means that, in this particular presentation, they did not choose to discuss their sense of dissonance. This is made clear by the fact that several of these writers are equally adept in the secular, in the sacred, and in their ability to blend the two.

AMCAP Writers Who Want to Integrate the Sacred and the Secular

The AMCAP writers included here have chosen neither totally the secular over the sacred, nor the sacred over the secular. Rather, their papers are attempting to establish some degree of integration between the two.

Within this group, four different types of integration can be identified:

1. Using Secular Therapies to Achieve Church-Approved Goals

Here I include a few AMCAP writers who share their concern that, occasionally, clients seek help to achieve goals which are inimical to Mormon beliefs.

Obviously, it is mostly while working with non-LDS clients that value conflicts emerge. Card admits that he has simply opted to respect his clients' goals, whatever these are (1975, October). Others have opted for exactly the opposite. Hurst (1981, April) feels that therapists need to make clear their personal values to their clients, because doing so enhances the quality of the therapeutic relationship and intervention. Others go even further. Brown (1975, October) states that homosexuality demands what he calls "therapeutic guilt," the guilt which brings change. Similarly, because Madsen and Millet (1981, April) believe that sin brings pain and that all people have access to the Spirit of Christ, they make a point of teaching righteous principles to any client who comes to them with unacceptable goals.

Broderick (1975, October) is in between these two positions. He estimates that only about two percent of his clientele come with goals that he cannot quite espouse. He draws the line at abortion, but he tries to work with everything else. However, he considers issues very carefully as he tries to make the very best decisions he can.

Thus some AMCAP writers are concerned that, occasionally at least, clients bring to therapy goals which are not consonant with LDS beliefs. They all admit feeling dissonance when this occurs, but the ways they choose to resolve this dissonance appear to be quite different.

2. "Mormonizing" Secular Models

In this subgroup, we find a few AMCAP writers who follow a very common practice in order to avoid feelings of dissonance. They have studied a particular model and have found it attractive. By ignoring inimical assumptions, or emphasizing a few specific aspects of the gospel, they integrate this secular model into their religious thinking. Now they are at peace, feeling secure that their work reflects both good secular therapy and gospel thinking.

For example, Tanner (1979, June) and Berrett (1979, October) advocate the use of *cognitive therapies*. Russell (1979, October) advocates *Gestalt therapy*. And Morris (1980, July) advocates an *eclectic approach* which includes Existentialism, Frankl, Jourard, and

Glasser. They all express their feeling that the model of their choice fits comfortably within gospel thought.

Others (like Brown and Cowley, 1977, Spring) make their secular models more comfortable by introducing into them some gospel-oriented content. This is what Propst (1981, January) does when she demonstrates that *religious imagery* reduces mild depression. It is also what Chamberlain (1979, June) does when he uses a "mormonized" version of *implosive therapy* and takes his clients "to hell and back" in the process of helping them abandon self-destructive behavior. I find the book reviews of Raynes the most fascinating. In her reviews she analyzes recent books to gain new models (1985, March) and new ideas on how to integrate the sacred and the secular (1985, November).

So, quite a few AMCAP writers "mormonize" their secular thinking, a practice that many of us participate in, to justify their favorite theoretical and therapeutic models.

3. Blending Secular Therapies with the Gospel

Many AMCAP writers do their best to blend the sacred and the secular. Just to name a few, Hull (1981, July) informs us that, in the military, chaplains are men of faith who are equally prepared in religious and secular training. Rowley (1979, February) uses an eclectic approach, seeking not only to restore families but to develop Christlike attributes within family members. When Broderick (1980, January) shares some real cases out of his marital counseling practice, when Allred and Smith (1975, October) discuss their techniques to make a good marriage better, or when Ashton (1979, June) tells us about his work with unwed mothers, we all can feel that their gospel orientation transcends and directs their professional lives.

Thus we can tentatively conclude that a large number of Mormon counselors and psychotherapists attempt to integrate the sacred and the secular without necessarily giving up their secular therapeutic goals and skills.

4. Placing the Gospel at the "Hub of the Wheel"

This last subgroup is made up of two writers who, after deciding to place the gospel at the center of their work, appear to have some problems feeling good about secular models. They stand in between those who seek to integrate the sacred with the secular and those who give full priority to the gospel.

Madsen and Millet (1981, April) take up President Jeffrey Holland's challenge to place the gospel at the hub of the wheel, arranging secular disciplines around it, as spokes. When they do this, however, they find

that the traditional theoretical and therapeutic models of the world do not fit with the gospel model, because they are either too deterministic or too humanistic. Yet, not wanting to openly advocate dropping all secular models, they simply suggest that therapists add to their therapeutic intervention the *teaching* of God and of eternalism (1981).

Apparently, then, most AMCAP writers want to integrate the sacred and the secular. And they do so through helping clients achieve Church-approved goals, through "mormonizing" their own secular models, through blending their secular therapies with the gospel, and/or through adding the teaching of gospel principles to their therapeutic skills.

In so doing, some AMCAP writers are seeking a *theoretical resolution* while others want a *therapeutic resolution* as well. That is, some are primarily concerned with being sure that their secular theoretical approaches do indeed reflect their religious convictions. But some actually introduce gospel content in their practice. Of course, those who do are typically working with the LDS population. Yet it is interesting to note that they introduce at least a few aspects of the gospel into their therapy even with non-LDS.

AMCAP Writers Who Give Priority to the Gospel

No longer committed to secular models, some AMCAP writers have turned to the gospel as the source of all wisdom. While all within this category share this position, these writers do not yet present a united front, and, so far, they can be divided into two subgroups: (1) those who are using specific gospel material to help clients resolve problems and (2) those who have become interested in creating new rational models primarily based on gospel-thinking.

1. Using Gospel Material in Therapy

A number of AMCAP writers seem to have resolved their dissonance simply by giving priority to the gospel in their professional thinking and practice. This thinking leads them to believe that the best therapies are those that are based on the gospel (Bennion, 1983, April) and that the best therapists are those who live by the gospel (Berrett, 1981, January; Wagstaff, 1981, October; Voros, 1979, October). It leads Cox (1981, July) and Brower (1981, October) to develop models through which clients can understand how to receive personal revelation. And it leads Kelly to suggest that, because scriptural insights facilitate behavior change (1980, July), clients can best solve their problems through "feasting upon the words of Christ" (1981, June).

This view is often supported by visiting General Authorities as they suggest that the gospel can help build strong families (Hanks, 1985, March), can help maintain good mental health (Pinegar, 1983, October), can make therapists better therapists (Kikuchi, 1982, April; Featherstone, 1975, October; Faust, 1981, January), and can make good therapy even better (Fyans, 1985, March; Rector, 1976, Fall; Featherstone, 1980, July), because good therapy must bring clients to obedience and repentance (Rector, 1976, Fall), as well as to the gospel (Maxwell, 1979, February).

2. Creating New Gospel-Based Theoretical and Therapeutic Models

In the past few years, through the *AMCAP Journal*, two Mormon models have been publicized. One is primarily a therapeutic model, based on a specific gospel principle. The other was originally developed as a theory.

The first model was published as a book (*Getting to Know the Real You*, written by Sterling G. and Richard G. Ellsworth, Deseret Book, 1981, and reviewed by James D. MacArthur, 1981, July). This model suggests that clients can gain some self-confidence simply by remembering the very special position they enjoyed in the first estate. With renewed awareness of their previous status as children of God in the premortal existence, they can be helped to see that their poor self-image is only a temporary result of their suffering from love deprivation here on earth.

The second model, the *theory of self-betrayal*, was developed by C. Terry Warner (1982, April; 1983, April) who, along with others, is currently implementing it (Warner and Olson, 1984, January; Chidester, 1981, April) and testing it (Brower, 1982, April). This theory of self-betrayal is very obviously based on a central theme in the gospel, as it suggests the need to repent, the need for a change of heart. But is presented in such a rational and sophisticated way that apparently it has been well received by both Mormons and non-Mormons. This theory certainly adds an interesting dimension to our therapeutic thinking, a dimension which can be quite useful, particularly with clients who desire to change.

As increasingly better Mormon theories and psychotherapies are being developed, the gospel will truly be where it should be: at the center of our secular and sacred thinking.

In summary, this brief review of the *AMCAP Journal* tells us that while a few AMCAP writers can (at least occasionally) feel comfortable with their secular theoretical and therapeutic models, most Mormon counselors and psychotherapists feel at least some degree of dissonance

between their religious and secular understandings. They try to resolve this dissonance through:

1. using their secular therapies to achieve Church-approved goals;
2. "mormonizing" their secular models;
3. blending their secular therapies with the spirit of the gospel;
4. placing the gospel at the "hub of the wheel" and secular therapies as the spokes;
5. adding the teaching of true gospel principles to secular psychotherapy; and/or
6. creating new gospel-based theoretical and therapeutic models.

These six resolutions obviously are not mutually exclusive. In fact, some of the AMCAP writers are mentioned in more than one category. Rather, these resolutions can be seen as a sequence through which our sacred–secular dissonance can eventually be totally resolved.

The second part of this paper will, I hope, provide some insight into this resolution.

My Personal Sacred / Secular Dissonance Resolution

As I review the six previously mentioned resolutions, they all look extremely familiar to me. And this is very obviously because they were stages in the process of reaching a final resolution of my own dissonance.

Going through the Stages of Dissonance Resolution

I remember going through at least five of the six stages in my process of dissonance resolution. The only stage I skipped was the first one. This is because when I first started in social work the moral values of non-Mormons were not as different from Mormon values as they are today; and later, when I returned to social work practice, after teaching college for a number of years, I worked with only LDS clients.

On the other hand, early in graduate school, and throughout my early teaching career, I became an expert at "mormonizing" secular models. Only years later, after a serious religious recommitment, did I start blending my secular therapy with the spirit of the gospel. After that, things proceeded quite fast. Soon, I placed the gospel at the hub of my psychotherapy, forcing me to add teaching gospel principles to my therapeutic skills. And suddenly I found that, somehow, my psychotherapy was being guided by an emerging model.

"Mormonizing" Secular Models

When in the late fifties I attended Michigan State University, I felt proud of completing my MSW degree and proud of my new understanding of human personality and behavior through totally secular models. But occasional twinges of dissonance forced me to reexamine some secular models and make them fit my Mormon ethos. At that time, most social workers were trained within the neo-Freudian tradition. It was easy for me to dismiss Freud and his emphasis on sexual adjustment while accepting his central explanation of neuroticisms by transforming his concept of the Id into the LDS concept of the natural man. The rest I could accept as providing me with very special insights into the effects of the "sins of the fathers" on new spirits coming to earth. Many times I wondered about the nature of mental illness and its connection with evil spirits. But this type of thinking was not rational and professional enough, and for many years, it became compartmentalized out. The medical model fitted my belief in the need for repentance and change. And so I was satisfied for a number of years.

It was shortly after getting a Ph.D. in sociology from Indiana University that I started doubting the real value of "mormonizing" secular models. Personally influenced by Albert K. Cohen (the author of *Delinquent Boys*) and by the writings of Talcott Parsons, I chose structural-functionalism as a major theoretical model. Of course, I "mormonized" it. I felt internally consistent, even though, at that time, the conflict school and the open systems approach had been adopted by the rebellious youth of the sixties. I might have been out of step with society, but I was not, I felt, out of step with the Church or the gospel.

However, when I started teaching sociological theories at BYU, I found that my colleagues also had "mormonized" their preferred theory. One of them was explaining conflict theory as the reality of life according to Satan's promise to make this earth his complete dominion. Another explained his choice of the open systems theory in terms of Lorenzo Snow's idea about the process of becoming gods.

Eventually I returned to social work and found that many Mormon psychotherapists had also chosen one therapy in preference to all others. And they all justified their choice through careful "mormonizing" of their favorite model. Thus I have heard advocates of such diverse theories as behaviorism, humanism, cognitive theory, the Gestalt approach, and a few others all claiming that their favorite model provides the "best" explanation of our gospel reality.

Because of this diversity of claimed Mormon-fitting theories, for a few years now, this approach to bringing together secular and religious thinking has lost its attractiveness to me. Yet in teaching, it is still not beyond me to rationalize my favorite models and explain them in terms of the gospel. I am fair enough to admit that in doing so, I am "mormonizing" the models, that is, distorting them enough that they do fit the gospel.

Blending Secular Therapies with the Spirit of the Gospel

One day, in Salt Lake, in a committee meeting, I heard Margaret Hoopes share that when she first came to BYU to teach she wanted to help students. Therefore, she prayed that students would come to her with their problems. And they came. I was very impressed. In fact, I was ready for such a message. So I also prayed, and they also came! Of course, this also led me to pray for my clients and for me to be inspired in my intervention with them. And I felt I was! This, little by little, led me to placing the gospel at the hub of the wheel, and to teaching true gospel principles. Eventually, I realized that I had developed my own gospel-oriented therapeutic model.

Developing a Mormon Therapeutic Model: Telestial, Terrestrial, and Celestial Therapy

For years now, I have been working with a small number of students (students from our own department, their roommates or friends) and an occasional ward member. I invite some, and others come by themselves, are referred, or are somehow brought to my door. I do not charge them, and I tend to meet with them around two hours, simply because after an hour I feel that we are in the middle of something that will take another hour to resolve properly.

My clients come with all types of problems: scholastic problems, a bad roommate situation, loneliness, relationship problems, marital problems, unresolved feelings about a difficult childhood, etc., etc.

I typically see my clients for a semester or two, although some students have kept in touch with me for years, often until they move or get married. And I am very grateful to them, because it is through them I have developed my personal gospel-oriented therapeutic model.

My Terrestrial Therapy

Having been trained in the neo-Freudian tradition, I generally listen to ongoing problems, react to these problems with warmth and

acceptance, and look for patterns as I try to identify the locus of the problem. Because I have been trained to see present issues as related to past problematic relationships, I often probe into my clients' pasts to help them develop insight. This insight then can help them develop some power over their typical, set, "blind" reactions to the faulty perceptions they may have acquired in their painful past. But I tend to be quite present-oriented; I do not dwell on the past. I would rather concentrate on problem solving, serve as a reality check, and help clients identify their alternatives so they can make rational decisions.

However, I feel that through the years my style has changed. First, like most social workers, I have become more concerned with my clients' systemic adjustment. Second, after discovering that many people have never learned rational decision-making, I have adopted some of the techniques of cognitive therapy. Also, because a large percentage of people I see have taken at least one of my classes, and because I am more rational than emotional, I feel less reluctance occasionally to *teach* basic behavior principles through models that I have learned in social-psychology or sociology, as well as in social work. And because I am visual, I have developed the habit of using pen and paper to describe, graphically and very pragmatically, the patterns I identify in my clients' behavior. It helps me to figure out my clients' issues, and it helps them visualize their repetitive patterns of dysfunctional behavior. I have decided that for me the best therapy is one that blends the emotional and the rational. I see myself as eclectic, primarily using a blend of three therapeutic approaches (the neo-Freudian, the cognitive, and the ecological) with an occasional teaching of models.

Toward My Celestial Therapy

I was not alarmed by these "rational" changes because my dual role of teacher and social worker to many of my clients justified them. But the renewed commitment that I have made in my private life, to God and to the gospel led me to want to serve my fellow-beings, pray for them and for myself, so as to be more able to help in the way He wanted me to help. I gradually became more sensitive, more aware of my clients' pain. When in a session they tried to reconcile their view of God with what was going on in their lives, I used scriptures. And since the great majority of my clients were women, I learned to reach out to them, touch their arms, and when appropriate, hug them.

This becoming more emotional at first worried me. I had always prided myself for my professionalism, my rationality, and I had seen

this as a major asset in my work with clients. But soon I convinced myself that I still was therapeutically rational when helping my clients resolve some of their religious hang-ups. The fact was that they needed to discuss these religious problems in the same way they discussed their problems of adjustment in other areas. For example, some of them had a rather poor relationship with God, and we discussed this openly and rationally, using the scriptures as we explored rational religious answers.

But I also found myself sharing some of the gospel understandings I was acquiring . . . and becoming a *gospel teacher*. For instance, when some clients lamented their problematic early background, I often would read to them from Ether 12:27 to show that the Lord is willing to take some responsibility for our being weak. Or if they wanted to change their feelings, their behavior, their personality, I warned them that they had better harness the power of God. I read to them from the same verse: "If they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them."

Occasionally students brought their patriarchal blessings, and as we analyzed them, they found rather specific instructions regarding their challenges in life, and, above all, the love of God and hope. A number of them needed to forgive, and we talked about the mechanics through which God can take away our feelings of resentment and anger. Or we discussed the difficulty most of us have getting direct answers from God and practiced the first part of "Oliver Cowdery's method"—the studying the problem out in our mind (D&C 9:8). And in the process they learned to communicate more effectively with our Father in Heaven.

Because my students know from my classes that the gospel is important to me, they themselves bring up the subject matter. If they do not, and I feel that they do need the Lord's help in what they are trying to do, I may introduce the subject by asking: "How is your relationship to God these days?"

Yet, all in all, the sessions are still primarily rational, traditional, that is, *terrestrial*. And even when the session goes *celestial*, everything is done very pragmatically and rationally, with the purpose of learning celestial skills, to understand our Father in Heaven better, to ascertain his will, to sharpen our ability to communicate with him, to tap one additional and major support system in our ecological adjustment. But even if our emotions are restrained, together we learn to understand better God's plan for us, we learn to depend more on the Lord, and we feel love: his love for us and our love for one another. And we feel joy.

Eventually, I realized not only that I had fallen into the habit of blending secular and religious concerns but that I was able to identify the duality of my therapeutic style. And I could label it as *terrestrial* and *celestial therapy*.

Now let me try to define what might be included under three basic types of psychotherapy.

Defining Telestial Therapy

Telestial therapy is allowing or even encouraging our clients to maintain a telestial style of life. A *telestial style of life* consists of ignoring the reality of God, his power, his expectations, his laws, his commandments, more specifically, his Ten Commandments. This in turn may lead to violating the rights of those around us through failing to keep a relationship of fairness and honesty with our neighbors or to honor and respect members of our family. It may even lead to acts of abuse and violence against ourselves and others.

Telestial clients are those who are participating in telestial sins such as rebelling against God and his basic commandments, being involved in sexual behavior of some sort outside of marriage, using substances which leave them powerless to control their own behavior, wielding power over others through violence or some other unrighteous means, wallowing in negative feelings toward life and others around them, being unfair to those dependent on them. These types of sins are those which bring pain, first to the victim, eventually to the perpetrator.

Telestial therapists, instead of helping telestial clients to change, are primarily interested in helping them escape the consequences of their sins, in helping them gain what our Lord has told us could not be maintained: happiness in wickedness.

Defining Terrestrial Therapy

Terrestrial therapy is helping clients to gain and/or maintain a terrestrial style of life.

A *terrestrial style of life* involves living by the law of Moses. In religious terms, it means that obedience to the Ten Commandments and to basic religious and social rules results in many basic temporal blessings (Ex. 23:20–31). In more secular terms, the terrestrial style of life demands the recognition of a higher power of some sort (be it of God, nature, immutable laws, or whatever), and a recognition that careful obedience to fair societal and interpersonal laws and fairness in our relationship to others result in peace and prosperity. Thus the terrestrial life-style is based on reason and pragmatism, and it reflects, among other things, the Protestant ethic.

Terrestrial clients are individuals who understand this connection between fairness in relationships, and peace and prosperity. They may have strayed away from this, or they may be the victims of others who do not operate on the basis of this ethic. They usually come to therapy to reestablish a terrestrial life-style, but occasionally their pain forces them to move on to more celestial goals.

Terrestrial therapists, on this basis, can help both telestial and terrestrial clients. They can help telestial clients become aware of the consequences of sin and thus help them adopt a more fair, rational, terrestrial style of life. And they can help terrestrial clients develop insights into inner and external problems which get in the way of a happy terrestrial life. They may help both types of clients, widening the clients' frame of reference to include the hereafter, increasing their awareness of the consequences of their actions, providing them with better, more rational decision-making skills, and developing a more appropriate network of social support. And as they make use of these additional terrestrial skills, both of these types of clients can finally make a happy adjustment to the terrestrial life.

Defining Celestial Therapy

First of all, it must be emphatically pointed out that celestial therapy does *not* refer to the degree to which the therapist has become celestialized. Otherwise, none of us could practice it. *Celestial therapy* is facilitating clients' understanding and resolving of their religious hang-ups, as well as helping them develop (through teaching) a few of the basic skills found in the celestial life-style.

The *celestial style of life* involves building upon the Mosaic code of ethics and going beyond covenants and rituals. It demands that we

1. strive to obey the Lord in all things;
2. lovingly serve and help our fellow-beings gain eternal life; and in the process,
3. gain remission of our sins through faith, full repentance, and the acceptance of Christ as our personal Savior;
4. achieve sanctification as we gain the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost; and
5. gain the right to have all ordinances and covenants sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise.

The term *celestial clients*, as such, may be contradictory. Celestial individuals certainly could have problems with noncelestial people, but instead of coming to secularly trained therapists, they would

probably go to their bishops, or go directly to God, and resolve their problem through personal revelation and inspiration.

Celestial therapists would help both terrestrial and telestial clients sharpen their terrestrial skills while helping them resolve their major problems. Simultaneously, to the extent that their clients are ready for this, celestial therapists are expected to help with religious maladjustment and teach basic gospel principles that can help their clients develop celestial insights, skills, and practices so as to reach their common goal of celestial glory.

Conclusion

In the process of integrating the gospel into my professional life, I obviously have done nothing more than follow the lead of many before me. I know that a number of my colleauges do what I do, which is to use my professional skills to do good, secular, rational psychotherapy, while occasionally, when appropriate, doing some religious psychotherapy and teaching a few useful gospel principles, skills, and insights.

If I have made a contribution at all, it is that I have labelled what I do. By labelling, I have provided for myself a framework from which I practice. And this framework helps me be aware of not only my clients' physical, psychological, and social needs but of their religious needs as well. So I respond to their religious needs as I do to any other needs, letting their readiness set my pace.

On the other hand, I admit to having been bothered for quite a while upon finding that responding to clients' religious needs invariably led me to teaching the gospel. This smacked too much of giving advice, and it made me very uncomfortable for a long time. Finally I realized that *whenever we work from any framework which suggests a right way (as opposed to a wrong way) of doing things, we have no alternative but to teach.* One of the best examples I know, at the secular level, is that of Virginia Satir who, having discovered and labelled one good way (as opposed to four faulty ways) of communicating, became primarily a teacher to her clients.

If this is indeed a basic principle, and if an increasing number of secular therapists are using such a method to teach what they believe is true, should we not justify the teaching of religious principles that we *know* are true?

On this basis, I suggest that we, LDS professionals, in our concern with being good (secular) psychotherapists, have been quibbling too long about whether or not we should integrate the gospel and our

secular skills. The chances are that most of us already practice some version of celestial therapy. So let us come out of our closets, let us admit that we are already involved, let us give each other support, and let us start exchanging our experience, our thoughts and feelings, our new insights and understandings.

Even the earlier superficial survey of the *AMCAP Journal* indicated overwhelmingly that Mormon psychotherapists and counselors are interested in integrating secular psychotherapy and the gospel. So if most of us agree that we need to integrate, let us not waste time arguing about to what degree. Instead, let us move on and start working on a solid body of knowledge concerning religious psychotherapy by sharing the insights we all have gained.

For myself, in the process of trying to practice "celestial therapy," I have learned a number of things. I have learned that most active LDS clients need and want to develop *two basic "celestial" skills*:

to do away with negative feelings toward others, and
to get personal revelation.

And so far I have identified what we could call *religious "hang-ups"*:

Some have never developed trust in God because a poor relationship to their own father prevents them from trusting any man, and any father, including their Father in Heaven.

Some very complex and interesting clients, in the course of a traumatic childhood, have made the decision to be totally righteous through using sheer self-control. Failing to avail themselves of divine help, they start feeling unrewarded and become dissatisfied in their relationship to God.

Some who have been converted from a telestial background are not aware of the skills of rationality, self-control, and obedience needed to live the terrestrial life-style while learning little by little the celestial skills. As a result, without the anchor of obedience, they go back and forth from a telestial life-style to a celestial life-style. That is, they go from impulsive, emotional, telestial behavior to an amazing celestial, Christlike love of others, and often, back to sin again.

Because these few insights have whetted my appetite for more, much more, *I*, for one, *invite all AMCAP participants to share the insights they are gaining through using celestial psychotherapy*. In so doing, we will build a body of knowledge that will facilitate our fulfilling *all* our clients' needs and thereby create some of the very best therapists in the world.

Summary

In the first part of this paper, I present a brief survey of the *AMCAP Journal*, indicating that a majority of AMCAP writers appear to feel dissonance between the sacred and the secular. It appears also that AMCAP writers are concerned with resolving this sense of dissonance through integrating the sacred and the secular in their therapy. They show this concern (1) through worrying about clients' goals being unacceptable by LDS standards, (2) by "mormonizing" secular models, (3) by blending their secular therapies with the gospel, and (4) by placing the gospel at the "hub of the wheel." In addition, (5) a few AMCAP writers appear to give total priority to the gospel in their therapy, while (6) others have developed gospel-based models.

In the second part, I suggest that these six outcomes can be perceived as progressive stages in the process of reaching dissonance resolution. I recall that (as with other Mormon therapists) it was upon reaching the fourth stage that I felt the need to add teaching the gospel to my therapeutic skills. Then I was ready to develop a model explaining the dual practice of what I call *terrestrial and celestial therapy*.

Finally, now that so many LDS therapists are actually practicing celestial therapy, I suggest that this is the time for AMCAP to encourage the development of a body of knowledge concerning human religious behavior and the proper therapeutic skills to teach gospel knowhow and help clients with their religious maladjustments, that is, to practice knowledgeable, intelligent, enlightened celestial therapy.

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TRUTH AND INTEGRITY: A CANDID INTERFACE

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As a student in the 1960s and as a university professor since 1971, I have been intrigued with the intellectual struggle of many Church members (including myself) as they honestly deal with doubt in the pursuit of truth. The following comments from a faithful Church member, whom I will call Brother Jones, summarize the feelings of many who view themselves as "faithful believers," but not "orthodox knowers":

> I am an active Latter-day Saint who was raised in the Church and loves the fellowship of Mormonism. However, as I have gone through the academic rigors of questioning and have experienced many different belief systems, I have doubts about some aspects of what the Church teaches. I like to think all of what is taught is true, but when I am honest with myself, I have some questions which seem impossible to answer. I get frustrated at times because I know the Church is good for me and my family because of its many positive features. Without the guidance of the Church and its teachings, I would have become a lesser person. However, at times, I am uncomfortable at church because I do not always feel or think the way the "orthodox Mormon" should. I sometimes get angry because the Church makes people like me feel like they cannot share honest feelings without being labeled a "liberal," "intellectual apostate," or "closet doubter." I am a good person and try to live according to the gospel, but the quick Mormon answer of "studying and praying about it" has not always answered my many questions which generate many new questions. Is there room for someone like me in the Church even though I don't know "without a shadow of a doubt" that all of the Church teachings are true?

His comments cause me to reflect upon how I deal with doubt in my personal pursuit of truth. Sometimes, members are accused of compartmentalizing their "secular knowledge" separately from their

"spiritual knowledge." Perhaps some coping strategies I have developed over the years may provide insights to help questioning members find happiness within the institutional church.

We Are Responsible for Our Feelings

It is important to mention early that "the Church" really cannot make others feel a certain way. The Church is an abstract organization which is manifest through its individual leaders and members, who have diverse personalities and gospel perceptions. But even individuals don't make others feel a certain way. We feel bad or uncomfortable only when we allow ourselves to feel that way. In other words, it is our response, or what we tell ourselves about what is happening to us, that causes us to feel a certain way. Each of us is ultimately responsible for how he or she feels.

However, the Church's social culture does set a mood which can ostracize or provide an environment of nonacceptance of diversity which can influence people to feel uncomfortable at church or to decide to become inactive. Of course, under more serious circumstances, Church excommunication proceedings could cause a person to lose his or her membership.

For the majority of Church members to be insensitive to those holding minority views is not Christlike, as long as the behavior of that minority is not antithetical to the Church. It is too easy to ignore or deny that many are struggling with their testimonies or have some beliefs different from "mainstream Mormonism." Self-righteously saying "You shouldn't feel or think that way about the gospel or the Church" does not change the reality of Brother Jones's feeling and thinking the way he does. It is hoped that the general Church membership will lovingly accept and be more tolerant of reasonable diversity while those who sometimes feel alienated will accept responsibility for their own feelings and apply their talents in a positive way to strengthen others.

Diversity of Thought and Questioning Are Important

Honesty in the pursuit of truth is a basic tenet of our church, and questioning is a natural consequence of this process—not grounds for leaving the Church. The LDS thirteenth article of faith reflects open-ended seeking after all that is good:

> We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition

> of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

President Hugh B. Brown's remarks in his speech to the BYU student body on 13 May 1969 should give Brother Jones a sense of acceptance and encouragement:

> One of the most important things in the world is freedom of the mind; from this all other freedoms spring. . . .
>
> Preserve, then, the freedom of your mind in education and in religion, and be unafraid to express your thoughts and to insist upon your right to examine every proposition. We are not so much concerned with whether your thoughts are orthodox or heterodox as we are that you shall have thoughts. (*Speeches of the Year 1968-1969*, 9–10)

The free spirit of inquiry was taught by Paul: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thes. 5:21). It is interesting to note that *prove* in Greek means to "examine" or "put to the test." A scientist before becoming an Apostle, Elder John A. Widtsoe in an article "Is It Wrong to Doubt?" provides helpful insight:

> Doubt of the right kind—that is, honest questioning—leads to faith. Such doubt impels men to inquiry which always opens the door to truth. . . .
>
> No! Doubt is not wrong unless it becomes an end of life. It rises to high dignity when it becomes an active search for, and practice of, truth. (*Evidences and Reconciliation*, 29–30)

In conjunction with the standard works, the mantle of authority for Church doctrine rests upon the shoulders of the prophet. Nevertheless, each of us in turn has a personal responsibility to be true to our consciences as we pray and try to understand what the Lord is telling us relative to revealed doctrine.

Brother Jones's frustration associated with the pursuit of truth while maintaining integrity is more prevalent than he thinks. Knowing that other committed Latter-day Saints likewise struggle in their pursuit of truth should provide Brother Jones with some consolation. Articles such as these provide a healthful forum which reflects the emcompassing scope and love of the Church for all of its members—theological conservatives, moderates, liberals, and others—who are trying to live according to the gospel.

Brother Jones should feel somewhat relieved knowing that there are many members who share his doubts yet find fellowship within the Church. But how do the Brother and Sister Joneses find satisfaction within the Church while maintaining their integrity about having less than orthodox religious views? That is what this article is all about.

Questions Increase As Knowledge Increases

Elder Theodore Burton, who was a professor prior to his calling as a General Authority, gave some valuable insight to a group of BYU students many years ago. He drew on the chalkboard a rectangle, representing the knowledge of all truth. He then indicated that at birth all are without knowledge of any truth; so our rectangles are blanked out. He then drew within the rectangle a very small circle which represented our gaining knowledge. As children, we experience limited knowledge so our circle of awareness of truth is small.

He pointed out how, in the beginning, the circumference of the small circle touches only a little of the blackness of the rectangle's area of darkness (lack of knowledge about truth). But as we mature and gain knowledge of truth, our circle becomes larger and its circumference touches more areas of the unknown. Consequently, as we gain knowledge, we tend to have more questions because we are exposed to more of the unknown. Only when our circle of knowledge about truth completely fills the area of the rectangle of all truth will we stop having questions.

Elder Burton's analogy helps us to accept more easily the geometric progression of questions which occur in all areas of study, including the gospel. While it helps to symbolize our experience as we obtain knowledge, it does not eliminate the reality that the educational process of learning usually generates more questions than answers. Thus, having faith in the gospel does not require ultimate closure on all issues.

During our temporal stay on earth, our circle of knowledge about truth will never come close to filling the rectangle of darkness; therefore, we will always have questions until we become one with God and are all-knowing. Paul summarized it in his epistle to the Corinthians: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12).

"I Don't Know" May Be What We Should Most Know

Sometimes we become so obsessed with having to know all of the answers that we forget that the answer to so many of our questions is "I don't know." God revealed in the Old Testament: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Isa. 55:8). We must learn to deal with our finite limitations while we enjoy the pursuit of truth.

Often we become irritated with "the Church" about "teachings" which are sometimes promulgated even though they are not really doctrinal or binding upon the membership. Classic examples of open issues include evolution, age of the earth, how God created the earth and living things, effects of the premortal existence upon mortality, to what extent God intervenes in our lives, to what extent scriptures are to be understood literally, how the different human races developed, to what extent the Church should use its resources beyond traditional applications, economic policy, women and the priesthood, and politics.

Our finite minds are limited, and we need to be more patient because we believe that God "will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Ninth article of faith). Until all has been revealed, there are many open-ended questions that we may enjoy discussing but that will not be totally resolved during mortality. Perhaps part of the plan of mortal maturation is spending a lifetime dealing with dilemmas and ambiguities.

My way of coping with unresolved questions is to store them on the "question shelf" within my mind. Periodically, I review these questions and issues as I gain more experience and knowledge. Sometimes I enjoy the exhilaration of getting some insight about an item on my "question shelf." At other times I just generate more questions about my questions. The pursuit of truth is never ending and requires a great deal of patience. In the meantime, we need to learn to say more often "I don't know," which is a legitimate response when we really don't know!

Spiritual Insight Requires a Different Sense

When I get too carried away with analyzing the gospel, I am reminded of Paul's admonition:

> Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2:13–14).

It is difficult for me to understand completely what Paul means as I wrestle with "spiritual" knowledge and the "rational" process of pursuing truth. Nevertheless, during those introspective times when I am tuned into God's "spiritual frequency" which speaks to my spirit, I feel the warmth of his Spirit, which touches my soul, giving me the assurance that the gospel is true.

Even though Oliver Cowdery was visited by an angel, was shown the Book of Mormon plates, and heard the voice of the Lord, he still struggled with his testimony. To give Oliver Cowdery assurance, a revelation was given to him and Joseph Smith in April 1829:

> Verily, verily, I say unto you, if you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things. Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God? (D&C 6:22–23)

It helps me to review my own personal spiritual experiences that remind me of God's influence in my life and how he has at times spoken peace to my mind concerning those things that matter most.

Religious Dissection Can Destroy

Sometimes we can become so carried away with analyzing and dissecting our religious feelings and perceptions that the probing process becomes a tool of destruction. Illustrating this point, I am reminded of how eager I was to understand totally the nature of frogs. Unfortunately, however, in the process of dissection, cutting, and probing the frog, I took the life of the animal I wanted to understand.

While all analogies have their shortcomings, including this one, we should not lose sight of the potential damaging effects of religious dissection. The core of our religion is based upon subjective feelings and spiritual experiences that are not totally measurable by mortal means. A religious faith is by definition not finite knowledge.

Trying to critically analyze and dissect every aspect of our religiosity may destroy the beauty and simplicity of that which we love. However, in this case, the life is more important than that of our friendly frog. It has to do with the spiritual lives of ourself, our loved ones, and others who mean so much to us.

A Testimony Is a Gift and Some Must Believe Others

Why some receive stronger witnesses and revelations while others do not is still an unknown for me. I continue to exercise faith that someday I will understand God's sense of equality. The reality that different people receive different witnesses of the truth was evident soon after the Church was restored. On 8 March 1831 Joseph Smith received a revelation on this subject as recorded in the 46th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Of particular relevance are the verses outlining those gifts "that are given unto the church" (v. 10):

> For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God. To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby. To some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world. To others it is given to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful. (D&C 46:11–14)

Life seems to provide tests in different ways to different people. Perhaps one of the challenges for some intellectuals in the Church is to remain righteous as committed "believers," with the ongoing quest of becoming "knowers." Nevertheless, "believers" can strengthen the Church with their gift of "the word of knowledge, that all may be taught to be wise and to have knowledge" (D&C 46:18).

The "believers" might appear to possess the lesser gift of verse 14: "To others it is given to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful." However, whether a member has the gift "to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (v. 13) or the gift "to believe" others (v. 14), the result is the same—namely, eternal life (God's greatest gift) "if they continue faithful."

Knowing the Gospel Is True Is a Progressive Process

In the process of studying the German and English languages, I have gained some insight into my perception of what "knowing the gospel" means. When testimonies are shared in German using the present tense, we are limited to one way of expressing *wissen*, "to know," in that we would say *Ich weiss, dass das Evangelium wahr ist* (I know that the gospel is true). However, in English we have three ways of sharing the present tense of "to know." In the simple English present tense of expression we say "I know." In the emphatic present tense we say "I do know." In the present progressive tense we say "I am knowing."

I like the added dimension of the progressive tense in English. Rather than being limited to saying 'I know the gospel is true," we can more meaningfully say "I am knowing that the gospel is true." In other words, knowing is a changing progressive process—rather than a static event. We are each on different rungs of the progressive ladder of "knowing."

The awareness of the present progressive tense "am knowing" helps us become tolerant of little children who say "I know," while accepting our own level of knowledge. It should also motivate us to attain higher levels of knowing which others have already achieved.

Truth Is a Personal Experience

Words mean different things to different people. What one member means when he says "I know something is true" may be somewhat different from another, but both can be honest and sincere about their own experience of "knowing." Marvin Rytting, a psychology professor and active Latter-day Saint, shared his insightful views about testimony:

> When I say that I know that the Gospel is true, I am saying that I experience it as being true. I am comfortable making that statement—it is honest. I could not honestly say the formulaic testimony, however, if I had to mean that I am certain that my religious views are completely accurate and that everyone who disagrees with me is wrong. And I could not sit through testimony meetings if I had to interpret other people's testimonies as meaning that their ideas are correct. With my translation, I can say (in my mind, of course), "yes, you experience the Gospel as being true and so do I, and the fact that my truth and your truth are different is irrelevant." We can even experience the world in exactly opposite ways and both of us can know that our experience is true—we each experience what we experience. My definition allows me to translate these absolutistic statements into personal ones. . . . "Bearing my testimony" for me becomes sharing the truth that I experience—the meaning that I find in life. I realize that it will not be the same as the meaning that each of you experience, but I am willing to grant the validity of your truth for you and hope that you will grant me the validity of mine for me. It is all I have to share because "all I know are my experiences." (*Sunstone*, July–August 1982, 60)

Each of us must honestly come to grips with our personal perception of reality. Even though good members may disagree on a given issue, we can at least allow each other enough room to experience what we experience. Expecting every member to experience everything exactly the same way is not only unrealistic but also contrary to the gospel teachings of free agency and tolerance.

Integrity Is Essential to One's Peace of Mind

A friend of mine was stricken with cancer. Shortly before he died, I asked him what was the most important message he could leave with his children. His response was "To maintain their integrity." The wholeness implied by integrity encompasses honesty with oneself. Not acknowledging our testimony when we have one is as dishonest as pretending to have a testimony when we do not.

Wherever a person is in his "experience" within the Church, he needs to honestly accept himself. Since all of us are at different stages

of the "knowing process," we mean different things even when we use the same words—like "I know." If a member feels more comfortable with other words, that's all right too. Some like to use words like "believe," "hope," "faith in," "would like to believe," etc. We need not feel that there is only one "true" way to share our feelings about the gospel. Nevertheless, no matter where we are in our knowledge curve, we need to climb toward higher ground.

Whatever we say or do should be consistent with our own experience. Only then will we find the peace that comes with personal congruence between what we know, what we believe, how we live, and what we experience—that is integrity. Unfortunately, most of us know more than we do, do not introspect enough upon our deeply felt beliefs, and do not honestly evaluate the implications of our experiences.

Knowing That the Church Is Good Can Help Us

Philosophers, theologians, and thinkers have wrestled for centuries with the notion of "What is truth?" For some, the idea of arriving at "truth" appears to be an impossibility. If getting hung up on the issue of "truth" is causing problems because of not trusting our feelings, which we typically associate with a testimony of the Restoration, what can the Brother Joneses of the Church do?

Perhaps we need to resolve an earlier question while continuing to seek our spiritual knowledge of religious truth. While pursuing the question "Is this or that LDS church doctrine or historical event true?" perhaps we should also ask, "Is the LDS church good for me and my family?"

The word *good* is an extension of the word *God*. Many intellectuals feel very comfortable within the fellowship of the Church because they experience personal growth within the Church and feel that it is "good." If it is good, then it is godlike. If it is godlike, that seems to be reason enough for activity so each family member can enjoy the personal growth that comes from living the gospel and participating in the many fine Church programs. Feeling good about the Church's goodness will help while we are continuing to struggle with knowing that it is the only true church (see D&C 1:30).

Love Is the Core of the Gospel, Not the "Perfect Testimony"

Paul's teaching to the Corinthians is as applicable today as it was then, as he focused upon the core of the gospel of Jesus Christ: "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and

all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity [love], I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13:2).

It is interesting to note that we cannot truly know God unless we learn to love. To teach this point and to emphasize how God's core personality trait is love, from which all other characteristics flow, John wrote: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John 4:8).

The hypocritical behavior of the biblical Pharisees who wanted everyone to act and believe as they interpreted the law provides us with an important caution today. Trying to catch Jesus in heresy, a Pharisee lawyer asked: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:36–40).

Since love is the weightier matter of the gospel, it would seem that there is plenty of room for a wide range of Church members. The Church was not restored for the perfected saints; it was created "for the perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:12). All of us are working continually on some aspect of our imperfection. Some may be struggling with "truth" while others must overcome an unloving or judgmental attitude. The multitude of imperfections among us are too numerous to list, but each of us knows where he or she needs to spend time working. The fellowship of the Saints is a great place to help each other grow, not a place selectively to decide who should be tolerated.

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IN FUTURE ISSUES

The upcoming issue will be centered on the theme "Principles of Therapeutic Change."

The Fall issue will deal with "Homosexuality and the AIDS Crisis," the theme of the October 1987 AMCAP Convention. Those of you who have contributions on this topic but will not be presenting at the Convention, please submit your articles for that issue by 1 November. Although we prefer articles on the theme, those on other subjects will also be considered.

Thank you.

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