

The BYU Way

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It is wonderful to be with you at the beginning of a new school year. This is my third opportunity to visit with you on the occasion of a university conference, and I approach this assignment and responsibility with gratitude to you, to many others, and particularly to our board of trustees for this privilege. I have spoken before about our vision, our antecedents, and also our future and will again do so today, albeit somewhat differently. My basic premise has been, and continues to be, that we are all engaged in the daunting and exhilarating adventure of helping BYU become the best it can be.

I believe that an essential component for this great university to become the best it can be is for each of us in our various roles to strive to be the best that we can be individually. There are a number of appropriate ways to consider such matters. Today, as we think about how best to improve, I would like to contribute by trying to strengthen our understanding of the context in which BYU finds itself.

As an example, rather early in the BYU presidency of Dallin H. Oaks, he spoke to the faculty about the need to be “bilingual” in their skills and attributes. Let me share what he said:

In order to be effective at teaching secular subjects and at integrating gospel concepts, we must be

*“bilingual.” . . . We ha[ve] to be fluent in the language of scholarship in order to command the respect of the secular world and . . . we also ha[ve] to speak in the special language of our faith to communicate our adherence to the gospel values that illuminate our learning efforts and justify our existence as a university. [“A House of Faith,” BYU Annual University Conference address, 31 August 1977, 12; see also *Educating Zion*, eds. John W. Welch and Don E. Norton (Provo: BYU Studies, 1996), 124]*

I believe that almost all of us understand the unique philosophical basis and religious purposes for Brigham Young University. Candidly, I am less sure that all of us fully understand some of the practical applications and, when compared with most universities, the almost countercultural approaches we take in a number of areas. I hope to address some of them today.

In the coming months our bilingual capacities will take on special significance. During this next year we face our once-each-decade examination for institutional accreditation.

Cecil O. Samuelson was president of BYU when this address was given at the BYU Annual University Conference on 23 August 2005.

Our BYU Accreditation Executive Committee chairs, committee members, and others have worked long, hard, and smart under the leadership of Gerrit Gong to draft the BYU Accreditation Self-Study you see referenced on the inside cover of your Annual University Conference program. I invite you to read and comment on our BYU Accreditation Self-Study—both so we will receive your input and so you will be knowledgeable about its contents if a visiting site team should ask you about it!

In addition, we will also be testing, validating, and refining our self-study institutional and unit strengths, challenges, opportunities, and recommendations in upcoming president's leadership retreats, college visits, Deans' Council and Faculty Advisory Committee meetings, and other campus visits. You recognize, of course, that this is all a natural part of our continuing focus on how and where we work together "to make BYU the best we can be." In many ways, especially coming now, this BYU accreditation process provides a road map for where we have been, where we are, and where we plan to be, inasmuch as we are asked to evaluate ourselves in such important areas as institutional mission, planning and effectiveness, educational program, students, faculty, library and information services, governance and administration, finance, physical resources, and institutional integrity.

Also, as part of accreditation preparation, this past February a majority of faculty and staff responded to the campus e-mail survey regarding BYU's mission, aims, and objectives. Your thoughtful responses are both heartening and instructive.

You say you understand the BYU mission, aims, and objectives and integrate aspects of spirituality, service, and character-building into courses and into building character in your students.

At the same time, some respondents perceive a gap between what we say is

important as an institution and what we sometimes reward or emphasize. Several responses ask, "Are we a research institution or an undergraduate teaching institution?" While the answer is "both," I want us to continue discussing how we best define each.

Some responses feel a tension between student evaluations and the need to teach skills and disciplines. A representative response notes, "I worry that working my students beyond their comfort zone will adversely affect my course evaluations," though to be well prepared, students "need to be pushed, and pushed hard."

University-wide accreditation is important and essential for a number of reasons. Of course our reputation and standing in the academic universe generally depend on it. There are a number of practical reasons as well. About half of our students receive various government loans and grants that would not be possible if BYU were not a fully accredited institution. As many of our students look to go on for graduate work at other institutions or to enter the workforce, they are judged in a significant way by the reputation and credentials of Brigham Young University.

Again, many have been working hard and effectively on this project for some time. I express our gratitude to them and to our entire university community for what has been done and for what must and will be done in the few months before next April.

I appreciate and endorse our theme for this year's conference: "Seek learning, even by study and also by faith" (D&C 88:118). Many have spoken on the phenomenon of our special dual track to wisdom and knowledge, but nothing has been clearer than the word of the Lord Himself. Of all places, BYU needs to keep its activities and efforts well grounded in the revelations and the pronouncements of living prophets. Our scriptures, especially those revealed to our dispensation, are rich in counsel, clarification, and direction with respect to

our education, learning, and thinking. This is true for passages that address these issues directly but also true for many other verses and chapters that seemingly are focused on other themes as well.

Some years ago a respected and loved senior mentor suggested that I reread the scriptures regularly through the eyes of my current calling—whatever that happened to be at the time. I endorse the same notion for each of you and suggest that insights will come to you, as they have to me, in ways not before obvious. This is so, I believe, because of the importance of the context of our lives and responsibilities and also because of the maturation in understanding that should occur with broadening experiences. Likewise, the counsel of Nephi that we “liken all scriptures” (1 Nephi 19:23) to ourselves and not just rely on a few old favorites is both sound and broadening. Let me use an example that I think will help add some clarity to the BYU context of how and why we do certain things the way we do.

I, like most of you, have long been familiar with section 104 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Given in 1834, it addresses the reorganization of the United Order and the necessary consideration of meeting the temporal needs of the people. Those who have had responsible Relief Society and priesthood callings may recall that one verse in this section is often quoted in welfare meetings and in associated printed materials. I have used this verse myself in such settings. Let me share the specific scriptural phrase I have in mind: “But it must needs be done in mine own way” (D&C 104:16).

My point to you is that as significant as this scriptural phrase is in the welfare context, it has broader general significance and further narrow specific applications to us even though our primary efforts at BYU have to do with education rather than temporal welfare.

Let me now read several verses from this section. As you listen and reread these

passages later, try to do so with the ears and eyes of one with great responsibility and opportunity to further the mission of Brigham Young University—because I believe this is who you and we really are.

It is wisdom in me; therefore, a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall organize yourselves and appoint every man his stewardship;

That every man may give an account unto me of the stewardship which is appointed unto him.

For it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures. . . .

And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine.

But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low.

For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves. [D&C 104:11–13, 15–17; emphasis added]

This is good doctrine for bishops and Relief Society presidents as they administer to the welfare needs of their flocks. I believe it is also good doctrine for us in our BYU stewardships.

Let me suggest several principles that I believe apply to us in the context of the doctrines outlined in these scriptural statements. These are broad concepts, but I am convinced they also have narrow and specific applications in the ways that BYU should operate. Think of our special circumstances as I list a few.

1. Everyone has a stewardship, or obligation. This is true of every one of us—students, staff, faculty, and administration—although the particulars of our stewardship may be quite different for each of us.

2. Everyone must be held responsible for her or his stewardship. Note that the Lord assigns

both the specific stewardship and a corresponding accountability for it.

3. It is the Lord's purpose to provide for His Saints (including our students and all of us who are here to support, teach, and assist them), but:

4. It must be done in His way.

5. We are also agents unto ourselves (see D&C 29:35).

By now you might well be asking yourself, "What does this really have to do with us at BYU?" That is a fair question and deserves a clear answer. I will do my best to provide a proper response.

I believe each of these five premises or assertions just mentioned are general principles and not just unique applications to temporal needs or welfare concerns. While the scriptural reference I used seems to focus on pressing temporal issues that were vexing the Saints and the Church in 1834, the principles themselves largely make the case that Nephi was teaching and instructing us that "all scriptures" should be likened to our current and specific circumstances (see 1 Nephi 19:23). If we understand this basic construct, then some things—including and especially some at BYU—that might not be so clear in isolation can be appreciated with new and improved understanding.

Let me give some examples. This list is not comprehensive by any means but includes some things about which I have wondered, puzzled, thought, and prayed about since my arrival here. I have done so because in our quest to help BYU be the best that it can be, several of these matters, standing alone, may seem counterintuitive to our goals and aspirations. I do not believe they are and want to share my current understanding of why this is so.

Salary Structure

The basic salary structure at BYU is quite unlike that of most other universities with

which most of us are familiar. It is not just a matter of money—although I've never met a faculty member or administration official at any institution who thought that they truly had enough money. We keep careful comparative compensation data about BYU salaries in the context of a fairly broad series of roughly comparable institutions. For most disciplines, but not all, our beginning faculty salaries at the assistant professor level are close to most index institutions. The most dramatic differences occur in the upper ranks and for the faculty who have been at BYU for a long time. In brief, they tend to be further behind their colleagues at other places salarywise.

Is this true because of ignorance or neglect on the part of the administration or the board of trustees? In spite of some opinions I have heard expressed on this campus, I am convinced that this is not the case. Rather, fundamental decisions have been consciously and carefully made that take into account at least the following factors:

1. BYU does not have a "star system" for faculty compensation. Make no mistake, we have more than a few real stars as members of the faculty in their respective disciplines, but their rewards are not likely to be financial. While many universities pay tremendous salary premiums to recruit or retain academic "stars," we do not.

2. The approach taken at BYU has been to address salary levels at the time that is typically most important for faculty: when their children are young, when they are trying to buy a home, when they are retiring student loans from graduate school, and the like. Thus a conscious effort has been to do as much as possible for the faculty early in their careers. Similar principles are used to ensure that salaries for our administrative and staff personnel are at appropriate levels.

3. It is a well-considered decision by the board that an element of sacrifice be offered by

all who are privileged to have a BYU appointment. Stated another way, it is the intent of our trustees that none of us, including faculty and staff, chooses to come to BYU primarily on the basis of a financial decision. It is the job of the administration and the trustees to see that the gap does not become too large, but it is not the preference of the board to participate in bidding wars with other institutions for faculty, staff, or students. Having said this, it must be noted that in terms of our benefits, we do rather well. Travel funds, start-up expenses, and the like are very generous at BYU when compared with most other places. Likewise, our leave policies and faculty enrichment efforts are really quite liberal and remarkable.

4. In addition to these considerations, we do look carefully at—and also try to reward—merit and performance in our annual evaluations.

Church Support of BYU

Many of you will be aware that the high level and stability of the Church's support for this university is quite atypical, even for nominally church-supported institutions. A general trend in American higher education is for the churches to decrease their support gradually—both in total and in percentages—to their universities. Gratefully, this has not been our lot. In fact, a conscious decision was reached many years ago and regularly reaffirmed by our board of trustees that the primary source of support for BYU and other Church institutions would come from the appropriated funds of the Church. This is so not only because we have a very generous Church and leaders but also because the Brethren have always wanted it to be abundantly clear to whom we would look for our leadership and guidance.

It is the stated policy of the board of trustees that the fundamental support needed to prosecute the university's agenda would come from the tithing funds of the Church. While we receive substantial amounts of donated funds,

these monies are viewed as enhancements to rather than as replacements for the basic programs of the university. The salary support of our faculty, for example, needs to come from Church-appropriated sources so that no one will ever be in doubt as to where we look for our guidance and to whom we owe our loyalty.

This unique approach is surprising and even confusing to some; but when its foundational reasons are clear, then we have a better appreciation for our remarkable support system and the tremendous protection and security it brings to us. In effect, we have an “endowment” that ranks with those of the most prominent universities in our nation.

Research Support

For many years prior to my current assignment, I believed that BYU's well-known reticence about seeking large amounts of extramural research funding was based on an effort to keep the government out of the affairs of the university. As desirable as this might be in the abstract, I have come to learn that there are at least two other considerations that bear on the matter.

The first is that BYU is subject to careful scrutiny and detailed governmental regulations because we are part of an increasingly regulated world and also because we are the ultimate recipient of millions of dollars of federal financial assistance in the form of Pell Grants, student loans, and the like. Thus, like it or not, we have considerable scrutiny from and obligations to the government. In partial response to this reality, I have established the Executive Risk Management and Compliance Committee composed of senior university personnel and tasked them with establishing processes and procedures to ensure that we are in compliance with this complex labyrinth of laws and regulations.

The second—and far more important factor, in my judgment—is the clear intent of our board of trustees that none of us, individually

or collectively, gets distracted from BYU's fundamental mission of undergraduate education excellence in an environment of sustaining and enriching faith. The pursuit of available and generous external funding for a wide variety of research projects is tempting to our accomplished faculty, but we consciously resist the quest for such resources until we can convince ourselves and others that these efforts will support and supplement our basic mission rather than compete with it. I am a witness of the soundness of this policy. Many excellent universities in this country have succumbed to the temptation to pursue support for peripheral projects and have found themselves deflected from their basic purposes—if they even remember what they really were.

Coupled with our philosophy concerning faculty compensation, we can see the wisdom that keeps all of us primarily loyal to BYU and its mission. It also protects us from the whims and vagaries of significant, but temporary extramural money that often has an eventually high price tag. When that external funding is no longer available—as is inevitably the case over time—the institution and faculty are left in a difficult position.

Having given this explanation, let me be clear that we value and favor research of high quality that supports our fundamental mission of superb undergraduate education. We know that often the best way to transmit current knowledge to our very able students is to involve them in the process of generating new knowledge by doing research and other creative work.

These considerations also apply to our graduate programs, which should not only be of the highest quality but contribute to rather than compete with our primary educational mission.

Hiring and Recruitment Policies for Faculty

I know of no other major university where the board of trustees reviews each prospective new faculty hire individually by name before

a final offer of employment is made. I certainly know of no other place outside the Church Educational System where a prospective faculty member is interviewed by a General Authority as part of the process. These differences are unique and dramatic for important reasons. Our leaders want everyone to be crystal clear that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is very concerned about education generally and also about what happens at BYU specifically. They also want full clarity on the tremendous support that BYU receives from the Church—not only financially but in every way.

The accountability inherent in our financial support and operating procedures is part of sending the clear message that what transpires at BYU is of great consequence. The support that we receive from the tithing funds of the Church is a very significant allocation of Church resources, and the membership and leaders deserve and require our assurance that their sacrifices in our behalf are completely consistent with the jointly agreed-upon mission and purposes of BYU.

While Church membership is not required for faculty members, staff, or students, absolutely consistent behavior in support of the university's Church-directed mission and our Honor Code is more than a suggestion. We expect it. Furthermore, it is a condition of employment for the faculty and staff and also for our students' continued enrollment.

Student Admissions and Recruitment

Fundamentally, the same standards mentioned for faculty and staff also apply to our students. Because there are so many more who would like to study at BYU than we can accommodate, we need to be as wise, thoughtful, fair, and appropriate as we can be. Ultimately, the selection and admission of students is a very human process that has significant subjective as well as objective components.

Paramount in our admissions process is the ecclesiastical endorsement. Only when we are

fully satisfied about a candidate's standing and conduct within her or his own religious community, and when BYU has received proper recommendations and assurance about matters pertaining to living within the parameters of the BYU Honor Code, do we then look closely at a prospective student's previous academic record and test scores. We also look carefully at applicants' potential to contribute to BYU in special ways and to develop themselves to be of particular service to their communities and church when they leave BYU. Because each student is unique, this is a very labor-intensive process. We also work hard to be sure that we are fair and always in full compliance with both legal requirements and policy from the board of trustees.

Having said all of the above, we are absolutely committed to admitting no student to BYU—for whatever seemingly compelling reason—who does not have the strong potential to be successful here. To do otherwise would not only be unfair to the student but unfair to all who support and have an interest in this university.

Because we are privileged to have such outstanding students come to BYU, we must continually do better to see that what we offer to them matches their potential. Virtually all of our students have multiple choices as to where they might study. Many come out of loyalty to our sponsoring organization, and this is commendable, but they also deserve a secular education so fine in the eyes of the world that it approximates the incomparable spiritual experience available only at BYU.

Honor Code Expectations

I, like my predecessors, speak regularly about our Honor Code. It is now tightly and permanently woven into the fabric of Brigham Young University and is one of the ingredients that helps BYU be what it is. It will continue to guide BYU as it becomes what it needs to become.

As you know, we have some new coaches and administrators in our athletic programs. We also have some outstanding leaders in this area who have been with us for some time. I want to commend them. Both privately and publicly they have done a great job in explaining why the Honor Code and following its precepts and principles is an asset and an advantage to BYU and its students rather than an obstacle or a disadvantage. We are who we are, and we will do our best to continue to be so. We stand by our values and standards with humility and respect for those who choose to follow a different course, but we are clear that the Honor Code is integral to all that we do here. We are grateful for the very many who understand and live consistently with it.

All that I have said is a rather lengthy preamble to what I would now like to address as I conclude my message this morning. With my trusted colleagues on the President's Council, the deans, faculty, staff, BYUSA officers, the President's Leadership Council, and our board of trustees, I have attempted during the past two years to solidify and clarify my approach to the contributions that I hope to make to BYU during my "days" here. My approach, I believe, might be described in two notions that I consider to be basic.

First, I believe that we can better fulfill our responsibilities and come closer to our potential when we choose carefully to do fewer things better. We cannot and should not try to do everything for everybody. When we work consistently and diligently on a small number of issues, it is more likely that we will be able to make progress of real consequence.

Second, I have a strong bias that the quality of what we do improves best with improved focus and not just more resources. Remarkable things have occurred in years past at BYU with very meager resources beyond the consecrated efforts of a committed and talented faculty and staff. We now live in an era of more resources and greater financial support than at any other

time in our history. While we are not at any great risk, in my judgment, of losing our great Church support, it is true that whenever we ask to do something new, we are also asked what we plan to stop doing. Thus we must sharpen our focus on the things that are most important and learn to prioritize more effectively how we will expend our energies and the treasured resources that come to us.

A hallmark of BYU has always been that we have attempted to do all that we do with absolute integrity. One of the issues that occasionally interrupts my sleep is the gap that occurs between expectations and reality—not only for our students, faculty, and staff but also with our broader communities, the Church membership generally, and especially with our board of trustees. You might think of several examples, but let me share some that I have observed since coming here. I do not mention them out of a sense of criticism but only because they seem to reflect variances in understanding or practice that are not reflective of what should be “the BYU way.”

Student housing receives considerable attention. Few students, their parents, the broader Utah Valley community, Church members, and especially landlords lack strong opinions or perceptions. Julie Franklin and her staff do an excellent job in a nearly impossible situation. One of the issues we have faced is that there has been wide variation in what people have thought “BYU-approved housing” means. We are taking steps to improve not only general understanding but also our policies and procedures so that our standards and expectations are crystal clear to all. In addition, we are working very hard as a university to make sure that BYU housing in a changing and evolving world is optimally situated to meet the needs and wishes of our students and their families. You will hear and see more in the months and years ahead.

Athletics also receives broad and extensive attention, often associated with high levels of

emotion. Sadly it is often the rare, negative occurrence that receives the most media consideration; meanwhile, the public fails to recognize that the vast majority of student athletes are not only fine students as well as athletes but also wonderful, exemplary representatives of BYU. I am very pleased to report the serious attention given and outstanding progress made by athletic director Tom Holmoe and his associates and coaches in making our realities in intercollegiate athletics congruent with our expectations.

You might easily join with me in identifying other examples, but our clear intent is to behave both publicly and privately in complete accord with our public statements about our standards of conduct.

As we complete this year’s cycle of campus strategic resource planning, I want to thank again the deans and directors who shared thoughtful and well-prepared presentations with the President’s Council, and I thank each of you who seek to use the sacred resources (importantly including your own time, talents, and other blessings) for the blessing of our students.

During resource planning this year, the story was told of a veteran faculty member orienting a new faculty member. Said the veteran faculty member, “Focus on FTE, space, and budget—nothing else matters.” I’d like to agree with that statement—and to disagree! It is true that our trustees generously provision BYU and that they, therefore, ask that we do not add FTE, space, or budget without their approval. This is why I, as does the board, constantly ask, “When you propose to add something new, what is it you propose to drop?”

We understand that our board must measure new BYU proposals in terms of how many temples, meetinghouses, and missions that same money might provide somewhere around the world. This is why we must each continue to be careful and thoughtful

whenever we propose new buildings, new programs, or new activities.

You have heard me say before that I have been more concerned about our “soft” infrastructure than about our “hard” infrastructure or physical plant. I initially made such comments for two reasons.

First, I believed—and continue to believe—that BYU has one of the finest campuses at any university anywhere.

Second, while some university presidents may want to be most remembered for the buildings that were built on their watch, I want to do what I can in my turn at the helm to help us become the best we can be in terms of our academic and spiritual standards and not just our buildings and monuments.

Having said this, we will continue to work very hard in upgrading this beautiful campus. Just two weeks ago we rededicated the George H. Brimhall Building after an extensive remodeling project. Next month we believe that President Gordon B. Hinckley will be on campus to dedicate the magnificent new Joseph F. Smith Building. Recently the board of trustees appropriated millions of dollars to do a complete remodeling and expansion of the Jesse Knight Building. Other projects are in various states of planning and dreaming and will continue. But it is not in the buildings that we find a great university. It is what is in the hearts and minds and efforts of a superb student body, a wonderfully talented faculty, and a most able and dedicated staff that ultimately determines what we will really become.

That is precisely why in leadership meetings over the last year or more we have asked these questions:

- Who are and who should be the future students who will come to BYU? What will and should happen to them while they are here? How do we best optimize their experience in the context of what BYU is and should become?
- Who are the new faculty that need to come to BYU if we are to reach the higher ground to which we aspire? How do we identify them, recruit them, train them, support them, and empower them when they come? How do we help the current faculty, as good as they are, reach even higher to become their best selves? How does each one of us better fulfill our individual responsibilities to further the mission of BYU and assist our students in reaching their potential?
- What physical resources do we really need to accomplish our special mission? How do we clearly differentiate these needs from our wants and wishes? How do we prioritize among the many good things we might or even should do? How do we place our requests for support in the proper context of the Church’s resources and worldwide ecclesiastical responsibilities?
- By what standards should BYU be measured? I have mentioned accreditation, and I hope you believe the case we have made as to its importance to us. Other standards or measures, of equal or even greater importance, are those that I think of as internal—meaning that we impose them ourselves because it is the right thing to do even if not recognized or appreciated by others. Which of these standards and measures are really the most important? How do we deal with those that are intangible as well as tangible?

In addition to these questions of a general nature are corollaries or subset issues that are best wrestled within small groups, departments, and committees. I will focus on a few. This list is not inclusive, and all of these matters cannot receive the same level of attention—nor probably should they. As I give a few examples, I hope you will think of others and find a way

to share them with us and with each other across the campus.

1. What do we need to do with respect to simplification in courses, curriculum, and requirements?
2. How can we achieve necessary improvements in student advisement?
3. Can we appropriately do more to shorten the time to graduation?
4. What should be our next steps in distance learning?
5. How can we best integrate new technologies into our teaching and learning?
6. What will be the emerging and future relationships between BYU and the Church? Examples might include: BYU and the BYU Salt Lake Center in downtown Salt Lake City, BYU Broadcasting, the joint Church–BYU Data Center on our campus, and future synergies with various Church departments.
7. What will be the future BYU housing?
8. What will be the new or replacement buildings built on campus in the years ahead?

As is obvious, we cannot do it all—or at least all at once. Therefore an honorable question is “How do we choose?” We will need to continue to refine our priorities and also understand our possibilities better. Some matters that will need to receive proximate, intense attention will be those that affect the rest of what we must do. Others will be things that might not rise to an urgency on their own merits entirely but, because of unique opportunities that occur, might be pursued since they are not competitive with higher priorities and involve resources that are not transferable to other areas or initiatives.

Let me conclude with some advice having a scriptural basis that I believe applies to all of us.

First, we need to know what is urgent and must be pursued now and be able to contrast these things with those that are best left to wait. The Lord said, “I will hasten my work in its time” (D&C 88:73). But He also said, “All things must come to pass in their time” (D&C 64:32). Through the principles and processes of study, prayer, and obtaining necessary counsel, we need to determine which is which.

Second, we need to deal with what we do in terms of our real capacities. King Benjamin advised, “And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength” (Mosiah 4:27). Likewise, Joseph Smith was told in the very pressing days of trying to complete the translation of the Book of Mormon, “Do not run faster or labor more than you have strength and means” (D&C 10:4). The “wisdom-and-order” and “strength-and-means” tests need to be applied to all of our undertakings.

Third, we need to have the faith and capacity to move forward with the knowledge that when we are doing the right things in the right way, even when we face difficulties and challenges, we can expect and rely on blessings from heaven. The instruction given during the dark days in Missouri still applies in the relative light and ease of our days in Provo:

Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation.

For after much tribulation come the blessings.
[D&C 58:3–4]

What a great place to be, and what a wonderful time to be here! Thanks go to each of you for your significant contributions and efforts that make this so. May heaven help us understand our rightful places in this tremendous work, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.