

“Teach Ye Diligently and My Grace Shall Attend You”

BRUCE C. HAFEN

I welcome the BYU community to the beginning of a new school year. Today is a day for candor, and I seek a particular interest in your prayers. That viola and piano piece by Johannes Brahms, just now exquisitely performed by Clyn Barrus and Mack Wilberg, was movingly beautiful. It occurs to me that this music also introduces my central theme. Shortly before he died, Brahms granted an intimate interview about his life and his work—on the condition that it not be published until 50 years after his death. Among many other revealing statements, Brahms described there the place of heavenly inspiration in his composing. He ascribed much of his gift to direct impressions from “the great Nazarene,” even though he had little use for the established churches of his day. He also predicted that no atheist would ever compose great and lasting music, for lack of the essential divine spark. But then he added that even inspired melodies would never amount to great music unless they were crafted and developed with what he called intellectual “structure.” I am thinking today of what inspiration and structure can do for each other.

As our new Joseph Smith Memorial Building was nearing completion a few years ago, it needed some kind of artistic capstone that captured and conveyed the crucial place of

religious education at BYU. We invited Franz Johansen of our art faculty to propose possible designs for a large relief sculpture near the building’s entrance. Franz brought in several beautiful sketches of Joseph the Prophet, but something was missing: the connection between Joseph Smith and the mission of BYU. Then a prayerful search found the answer in the Lord’s revelation to Joseph: “I give unto you a *commandment* that you shall *teach one another* the doctrine of the kingdom. *Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you*” (D&C 88:77–78; emphasis added). Even more significant than this text is its larger context, to which I will return later.

We “teach one another” through both teaching and scholarship. Thus the phrase “teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you” captures BYU’s complete mission, combining the relentless pursuit of intellectual diligence with unwavering faith in the gospel and grace of Jesus Christ. Last year we reaffirmed these twin commitments in discussions among BYU faculty and administrators who sought to define the central message the university

Bruce C. Hafen was the provost of Brigham Young University when this address was delivered at the Wednesday morning session of the BYU Annual University Conference on 25 August 1993.

should communicate to all its publics—trustees, the BYU community, Church members, the academic community, and the general public. With Clayne Pope as our draftsman, we determined that:

Institutional compromise on either aspect of this ideal is unacceptable. Both the life of the mind and the life of the soul are valued and desirable. Neither is to be depreciated in a misguided attempt to elevate the other. Intellectual achievement does not excuse moral culpabilities. Moral rectitude does not eliminate the responsibility for intellectual effort.

This combining of spiritual and intellectual excellence tells the world, as Commissioner Henry Eyring put it, that our belief in scripture and living prophets has shown us *a better way* to teach and learn—in the Lord’s words, we know a way to teach “more perfectly.”

Last winter I tried to articulate this two-part message in answering a question from a higher education writer from a major American newspaper, who was here doing an article on academic freedom issues at BYU. I told him of our deep commitment to intellectual inquiry, analytical rigor, and intense involvement in the national issues of the day. Then I began describing how seriously we also take our spiritual commitments—commitments not just to generic religion, but to the Restoration.

He interrupted me and said, “Look—I understand what you’re talking about. In fact, if I didn’t believe that BYU is deadly serious about its devotion both to academic excellence *and* to Mormon religious values, I wouldn’t be here. There would be no story. It’s the combination that makes you unique. I hope you succeed, but it won’t be easy.” He then compared BYU to another well-known university that has religious tradition, noting that the other school has evidently decided to follow a typical pattern by emphasizing academic values over its religious values. By contrast, he noted a number of lesser-known religious colleges that

relegate academic pursuits to a second-class status. In this context, BYU’s approach is both distinctive and needed.

This reporter’s reaction is typical of the way others are coming to see both BYU and the Church. They take this university very seriously. Their interest in academic freedom and related current issues here is a sign of our strength, not of our weakness. I cite the following examples of that interest not to imply that external attention matters more than substance, but to illustrate my view that recent controversies on the campus really are the growing pains of an institution that is gathering momentum along a sustained and significant growth path. Consider a few headline-style examples, first regarding the Church—of which BYU is such a visible part.

The Church is now the seventh-largest religious body in America. Its population exceeds that of most nations in the world. The *New York Times* recently ran a respectful front-page article on the Church’s growth. *Time* magazine reported last year that Utah has the nation’s youngest, best-educated, and most productive work force. *Forbes* and *Fortune* magazines regard the Wasatch Front as the nation’s new Silicon Valley. A new book from Yale University Press, *Heaven: A History*, calls the teachings of the LDS Church the most fully developed modern theology on the life after death, thus responding to a national hunger for heaven as a place where loved ones may reunite and be with God. And a recent national survey asked 5,000 Book-of-the-Month Club readers what book had influenced their lives the most. The Bible was number one—and the Book of Mormon was number seven. Only a few years ago, the Book of Mormon would never have been on such a list.

As for the university, I believe BYU is emerging as a major university of genuine national stature. Just a few examples: In its number of National Merit scholars, BYU ranks among the nation’s top 15 universities. Several

of our academic and professional programs are ranked as national leaders. Our faculty's output of scholarly books and articles has grown enormously, influencing thought in many disciplines. *U.S. News & World Report* tells us that the center of foreign language studying in the U.S. is no longer Cambridge or Berkeley, but Provo. National publications on computer-assisted language translation regard Provo as a world center. A family law scholar from Tokyo, Japan, just made a special trip to BYU on his first visit to the U.S. because he had found in reading the scholarship emanating from this place such a refreshing contrast to the corrosive individualism of modern American thought that he referred to BYU as "an oasis of hope in the land of the apocalypse."

I repeat what the visiting reporter was saying about this context: In a day when religious universities are a vanishing breed, our impressive combination of clear academic strength and genuine religiosity is an important story. The *Chronicle of Higher Education's* article on our recent tenure cases reflects this impression:

Brigham Young is facing the same kinds of . . . tensions that have become common at other research universities. It isn't unusual for scholars doing work in new areas to clash with more tradition-minded colleagues—particularly in the humanities. At the same time, academic standards have been rising [at BYU]. The debate is further complicated by BYU's religious identity.

These observers understand not only our nature as a university, but also the venerable place of religious universities in American history.

BYU's growing academic strength is attracting very able students, faculty, and visitors, some of whom may not have come here in the days when the Church's membership was less diverse and our programs were not as strong. As is often needed when a small, homogeneous group expands in both size and diversity, our

new friends are entitled to know our traditional policy framework. We have thus made our customs explicit not because we're slowing our academic growth, but precisely because we're moving on with it.

Academic freedom is only one of many important and challenging issues we are clarifying as BYU moves toward the 21st century in an environment of complexity and public attention. These matters include our policies on admissions, the student honor code and student ecclesiastical endorsements, helping more students graduate—and helping them graduate sooner—the nature of our allegiance to the Church and its values, continuing status and promotion standards, and the balance we should strike between teaching and scholarship in our commitment to academic excellence. In so clarifying, we move together in strength, building on those twin commitments to the life of the mind and the life of the soul.

In complex organizations, periods of transition toward greater growth are often marked with the discomfort of growing pains. BYU is now moving through such a period. It is a time when the clarification of our commitments, drawing upon open campus dialogues, will empower and move our community toward the next stage in fulfilling BYU's destiny. I have just described how I believe observers external to the campus accurately perceive the growth dimension of our growing pains. Meanwhile, because some of us internally are still working through the pain dimension of our growth, we must listen to each other carefully enough to avoid distortions that compound the pain.

The contemporary world has become increasingly complicated and combative. For instance, the Church always had its critics, but now local news stories routinely raise Church or BYU-related controversies. In many respects increased media interest compliments us. We have high standards, our success is attracting ever more attention, and—as I will discuss shortly—our sometimes paradoxical identity

as a Church university in a secularized, pluralistic society makes what happens here very interesting.

In this environment, we must all consider the implications of conducting BYU's business before a public audience. Sometimes our participation may unwittingly draw us into a media context that pursues agendas well beyond our own. Moreover, the public can't always hear the whole story, especially when a story is complex or has confidential elements. And, unfortunately, too many people still assume that if a story is in the newspaper, it must be not only true but important. Yet we still see stories in which unbalanced and unverified accounts on opposing sides of campus issues fuel uninformed emotions.

These factors can combine with the sheer size of the university to place our sense of community at risk, impairing our mutual communication and our mutual levels of trust. In these complicated times, some hammer others in intolerant self-righteousness, and that doesn't help us. Some try to go public when they feel unlistened to, and that doesn't help us. Still others remain silent, when they need to reach out in loving and private willingness to offer suggestions—after understanding another's point of view. In these complicated times may we be as candid yet as kind as Moroni and Pahoran. Even when some think others are sitting "upon your thrones in a state of thoughtless stupor" (Alma 60:7), may we have Pahoran's empathy and charity: "In your epistle you have censured me, but I am not angry, but do rejoice in the greatness of your heart" (Alma 61:9). In that willing spirit, I pledge the administration's renewed desire to be accessible and to listen.

Meanwhile the BYU community is engaged in a large, diverse, and incredibly successful educational enterprise; and a new school year is a good time to get on with that enterprise. To that end, I offer a simple model intended to give some perspective both to recent events

and to our more fundamental tasks of teaching, learning, and scholarship. The university's dual heritage gives us membership in and allegiance to two different worlds—the world of higher education and the world of the Church.

Imagine two circles, side by side, representing those two worlds. Color the higher education circle red, and color the Church circle blue. Bring the two circles toward each other until they overlap somewhat. Color the overlap area purple, the color resulting from mixing blue and red. BYU belongs in the purple overlap area with its dual nature—it is genuinely part of the Church, yet genuinely also part of the American higher education, inevitably affected by what happens in either world. In this unique domain we have found a "more perfect" way to teach and learn.

Yet some people in the red world of education look at a purple BYU and say, "Hey, you're not red like us, you strange duck!" And some people in the blue world of the Church say, "Hey, you're not blue like us, you strange duck!" This can give BYU people feelings of tension, if not an identity crisis—despite being part of the great purple tradition of religious higher education. But that tension and our unique identity are the source of our greatest contributions to both the red and blue worlds—and our ability to contribute is improved every time someone in either of those worlds better understands how our purple nature can bless them in ways that a simple blue or a simple red entity never could. Consider some illustrations of how belonging to each world affects us.

When I refer to the world of education, I mean the ideal of traditional higher education that has made American colleges and universities the world's finest. Not everything about U.S. higher education today is healthy, and BYU's membership in the community of universities does not mean we uncritically accept every new academic trend or value. But in the simplest, most general sense, BYU is clearly a

player on the field of higher education. It thus differs in certain respects from other agencies sponsored by the Church, which explains our direct reporting line to a distinct board of trustees. Our sponsorship and our educational mission do make us accountable first of all to the Church, and if we ever have a truly irreconcilable conflict between higher education and the Church, we will choose the Church.

But we are also accountable in very serious ways to accrediting bodies, government agencies, the academic disciplines, the professions, and the larger academic community. Each of us at BYU is also accountable to the public. The day the Church created BYU as a serious university, it made a substantial contribution to *the public interest*. We are obliged to prepare our students to function successfully in that public world as well as in their private worlds of family and Church. BYU will never be “of the [public] world,” but it is unavoidably and wholeheartedly *in* that world.

In this spirit, I salute—and cheer for—the growing numbers of BYU faculty and administrators who are major contributors to their academic and professional fields. Our scholars, artists, and researchers are making a difference in a society that sorely needs their inspired and creative genius. In ways that also breath quality and excitement into our basic teaching mission, BYU faculty are making scientific and theoretical breakthroughs, discovering social insights, and exquisitely performing creative works—often at world-class levels. Our membership in the community of universities gives us not only the opportunity but the obligation to keep doing this. As Oliver Wendell Holmes said, “It is required of us that we share the action and the passion of our time, at the peril of being judged not to have lived.” In this demanding sense, BYU must be judged to have lived.

In addition, because of our ties to this red educational world, we must be cautious about the way we integrate our academic disciplines with the gospel. As I discussed a year ago, the

sacred map of the universe is large enough to encompass the secular map, but the secular map is too small to include the sacred map. This perspective encourages us to have a sacred, as opposed to a profane, perspective on the whole of life. But this does not mean we *exclude* secular maps—we just see them in perspective. This understanding can also inform us when some value-laden premise from the red world is simply wrong. But that red world still offers much that is “lovely, of good report, and praiseworthy.”

Time precludes our exploring all the implications of our membership in the world of higher education, but we must at least note one more: BYU is unavoidably affected by—and must therefore come to terms with—developments in the academic disciplines. I note especially the newly radicalized disciplines with which all major universities are now concerned. For example, the critical legal studies movement in the law schools, which partakes of several postmodernist elements, has challenged the very foundations of not only legal education and law practice, but the very idea of a system of law. This movement asserts that law has no objective legitimacy and is simply a euphemism for power. Similar claims in the humanities and elsewhere challenge every discipline they touch.

Many of these arguments have value, forcing us to rethink prevailing paradigms and helping to unmask remaining pockets of discrimination and unfairness. But while some radical advocates have staked claims to new theoretical constructs, they also convey anti-intellectual overtones when they rely on simplistic conspiracy theories urged by “true believers” who refuse to deal rationally with the arguments against their positions. Some of these radicals are waging war against American universities, uprooting established disciplines and turning departments on many campuses into what one writer called “islands of repression in a sea of freedom.”

Some proponents of change put power-oriented “activism” ahead of rational discourse in their teaching and scholarship, a step that raises troubling questions for those who thought universities were designed to liberate us from making decisions in the streets. And, as NYU’s Joseph Salemi wrote, “Academic freedom [to some of these people] means [their] freedom to be hired and tenured without the inconvenience of competition or the necessity of producing real scholarly work.”

The new movements are asking large and searching questions, and we must not dismiss them out of hand. We must maintain open minds and a willingness to debate the issues honestly, that we may be among the good universities that thoughtfully distinguish the legitimate from the illegitimate arguments in this area. We must also struggle conscientiously to understand the place of activist teaching and scholarship that arguably rejects established disciplines and methodologies. Debate on such questions is terribly important in a free society. The question for *universities* is *how* this debate should occur in an academic journal or in the captive audience of a classroom, as distinguished from how it occurs in forums outside the academy. Our judgments about that question will affect our future understanding of what a university is.

As we encounter this trend, we must help our friends in the blue world of the Church to understand that not everything about the trend is bad. Moreover, the noisy debates the trend fosters can, if conducted civilly, be a sign of educational health, not a sign that BYU is falling apart. Yet we also belong to that Church world; therefore, our faculty who accept activist premises must not take lightly our need for the understanding and support of mainstream Church members.

Consider now some implications of BYU’s belonging to the blue world. First, let it be clear that we do not dilute everything blue with a dose of red. The doctrines of the Restoration

inform and shape us in utterly undiluted ways. In that sense and in other ways, my three-colored metaphor, like most metaphors, is obviously subject to important qualifications.

As we add organizational factors to doctrinal ones, our Church sponsorship is still the source of our greatest strength, even if it seems from a red-world perspective our greatest vulnerability. To be bluntly practical about it, compare BYU’s circumstances with those at other universities. I recently heard a professor from the University of Virginia report his findings from a survey of leaders in a large sample of American universities. As I share their five greatest worries, in order of importance, ask yourself how worried we are at BYU about these issues: (1) financing university operations, (2) attracting enough students to maintain enrollments, (3) financial support for facilities and technology, (4) financial support to maintain educational quality, and (5) strengthening the curriculum. Of course BYU has challenges, including some financial ones. But the Church’s support for BYU is almost unbelievable by higher education standards. Our basic operations are so well funded and we have so many students wanting to enroll that we can hardly relate to most current worries at other universities.

At the same time, our blue background gives our educational mission a distinctive hue. As President Kimball said in his celebrated Second Century address, “This university is not of the world any more than the Church is of the world, and it must not be made over in the image of the world.” He said, “I hope none will presume on the prerogatives of the prophets of God to set the basic direction for this university.” Yet he also urged BYU to “tower above other universities,” because *the First Presidency “expect[s] (we do not simply hope) that [BYU] will ‘become a leader among the great universities of the world.’”* A few among those who watch us may find that even this pattern is too blue to suit them. But we have yet to see their

reservations impose costs on BYU that even approach the benefits of our Church sponsorship—especially because those benefits are so much more than merely financial benefits.

Happily, as President Kimball’s language suggests, our board of trustees is deeply committed to our basic educational and scholarly interests. We may occasionally see an exceptional case in which the disproportionate visibility of a BYU person who appears to challenge board direction causes discomfort. But I find over and over again that our board enthusiastically supports and even admires our faculty, our staff, and our students. As President Hinckley said last fall, “Never in the history of this institution has there been a faculty better qualified professionally nor one more loyal and dedicated to the standards of its sponsoring institution. . . . This is a world-class university, a great temple of learning.” We should read that talk often, because it came from President Hinckley’s heart, and I believe it speaks for the entire board of trustees.

Our belonging to the Church world liberates rather than confines us in our multitude of campus activities. In nearly all matters of hiring, curriculum, academic programs, research projects and methods, organizational matters, and social activities, authorized faculty or staff personnel have enormous personal discretion. We must always strive for mature professionalism, but because of the religious worldview held by virtually all BYU people, Church values obviously shape our discretionary judgments in appropriate ways—not because we *have* to follow Church values, but because we *get* to follow them. Sometimes the blue world defines us in ways that people in the red world can’t understand, but those limits do what the Lord’s discipline always does—it enables *greater*, not lesser, educational perfection than the red world knows.

In an educational world that thrives on rationality, it helps us that we subscribe to what Elder John A. Widtsoe called “a rational

theology.” But we live also by faith, at times accepting the counsel of the Lord and his servants without a complete rationale. For instance, we have recently lived through a fascinating culture change on the social acceptability of tobacco smoke. I have wondered why the Lord didn’t just tell us in the 89th section of the Doctrine and Covenants about the risks of lung cancer. He just gave his conclusions and a promise—no more rationale than that tobacco “is not good for man.”

Thus has the Lord always worked. There is an entire theology explaining why it is better for our spiritual development when we freely choose to “be believing” rather than waiting until we are compelled—even by scientific evidence—to believe. That’s not easy for us university types who were trained in rational skepticism. But our experience in the blue world constantly verifies, like the tobacco example, why the Lord warned the Saints in the very next section:

And all they who receive the oracles of God, let them beware how they hold them lest they are accounted as a light thing, and are brought under condemnation thereby, and stumble and fall when the storms descend, and the winds blow, and the rains descend, and beat upon their house. [D&C 90:5]

A BYU friend of mine believes that now that the world has discovered how reasonable it is to avoid smoking, the Lord will find some test other than the Word of Wisdom to let us show that our allegiance to him is grounded in faith, not merely in threats that are obvious to everyone. (Another friend said, on hearing this, “I hope it isn’t ice cream! That would *really* test this people.”)

Another effect of our belonging to the Church world is that students, parents, and other Church members understandably link what happens at BYU to the Church’s sponsorship. This linkage is not always easy to apply at a strong university in a free society because

we seek to provide a rich educational experience that exposes our students to a wide array of ideas and approaches. Nonetheless, Church members and leaders are entitled to expect that our classes, programs, and performances are consistent with Church aspirations. As with any organization whose sponsorship implies some level of support, BYU is thus appropriately concerned with the “fit” between the university’s distinctive mission and those who occupy our platforms.

As we work through the overlaps between the Church world and the educational world, Henry B. Eyring, our commissioner of education, and Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who now chairs the executive committee of our board, have blessed us immeasurably in helping to secure effective zones of governance between the board and the university. We have now adopted, for example, a jurisdictional understanding that defines the separate functions of ecclesiastical and educational channels consistently with our academic freedom statement so that issues arising only because of one’s BYU personnel status will be handled by the university. We have also adopted on the campus a new student/faculty grievance policy that directs concerned students first to faculty members, then department chairs, deans, and the administration. When student concerns go outside this process, we should channel them back to it.

So at BYU we live in two worlds—the red world of higher education and the blue world of the Church. I realize that some people see red when they think BYU looks blue, and other people turn blue when they think BYU looks red. I also realize that, as this model reveals, BYU personnel are the only people in the world who can be equally vilified by their Mormon and non-Mormon relatives at the same family reunion. Still, I plead with those who see mostly one or the other of these worlds to experience the other world more fully. We all work within a complex sphere, even though some departments naturally deal

more with one color than another. It hurts us and drives the Lord’s spirit from our midst when some who think mostly in either red or blue terms sit in harsh judgment on those who think mostly in terms of the other color.

Against the background of this incomplete sketch of BYU’s exciting life in the land of the purple overlap, I wish to mention briefly three specific topics: the general quality of our work, the recent three-year reviews, and the matter of gender and feminism.

First, I plead for excellence and quality in all we do here. Our involvement in two worlds gives us twice as many reasons to do our best. For example, knowing that BYU’s work is part of God’s kingdom lets us view whatever we do as a religious offering, whether that work is done by BYU cooks, custodians, carpenters, or clerks. As C.S. Lewis said, whether work is done by a Beethoven or a bootblack, it becomes holy on the same condition: whether it is done for the glory of God. I am struck by the learning that the fathers of both President McKay and President Kimball taught them as young boys to give the best of their harvest to the Lord when paying their tithing in kind. For the McKays, this meant their best crop of hay. For the Kimballs, the best and largest eggs were the “tithing eggs.”

Could we thus think of our daily labor, whether in staff support, teaching, or scholarship, as a consecration of our best personal harvest? Knowing that the world regards our work as representing BYU and its sponsoring Church should bring out the very best that is in us. When it does, as Paul Cox put it, the gospel is

not a filter, but a catalyst that requires me to act on my knowledge to confront directly the issues and problems that affect all of mankind. Rising violence, serious disease, widespread poverty, and worldwide environmental degradation are moral and spiritual issues that I, as a follower of Christ, am required to face. Rather than aspire to higher position, each of us should aspire to higher performance.

We must also insist on both rigorous analysis and impeccable judgment in doing work that integrates the gospel with academic disciplines. When such work is poorly done, it can turn on the Church either because it just isn't very careful work, or because it may appear to judge the Church by the limited lights of the academic discipline alone. Let us not stretch unwisely, therefore, to include Church issues in our work. But let us also avoid the extreme of believing that being independent of or critical of the Church is the best evidence of educational quality. Our dual commitment asks for mutually reinforcing, not mutually exclusive, forms of excellence.

One other matter under the heading of quality: In his message this morning, President Lee will discuss a range of issues relating to the subject of time-to-graduation. I wish to add my voice to his as we emphasize educational quality rather than mere efficiency in whatever we do. I welcome the prospect of reexamining every academic course requirement we impose on students because I believe the discipline required to do this will, if we insist on it, greatly increase our analytical rigor. In the same way that poetic or other artistic forms force clarified thought and focused expression, the challenge of designing a leaner curriculum can force us to clarify and focus our thinking about how and why we teach what we do.

Second, a word of perspective on the recent third-year reviews. Since some appeals from those cases are still pending, my comments will be limited. Some have wondered if the administration has stated the "real reasons" why five of this year's 50 applicants for continuing status were not initially granted candidacy. The university did not publicize these cases, because they involve confidential faculty personnel issues and because publicity may inhibit the candor required in future evaluations. Most universities still regard their files as so private that they don't even show them to tenure candidates. One dean at the University

of California said this policy is necessary to protect the academic freedom of the faculty who conduct the reviews.

For these reasons, we are not free to discuss the details of the current cases, even though most people on campus have been talking about them—without the benefit of adequate information. In responding publicly to questions, the university has stated that the initial decisions were based on the professional judgment of established *faculty* committees in the same peer review process that characterizes any good university. The administration upheld the judgment of the university-level Faculty Council on Rank and Status in all five cases and sent each candidate the rationale reported by that council. That council has reached its bottom-line decisions following very careful reviews of the candidates' teaching, their scholarship, and their university citizenship.

Third, regarding feminism and gender at BYU, let us distinguish at the outset between two very different forms of feminism that are frequently confused today. There is a broad spectrum of feminist thought. At one end of the spectrum, "equity feminism" represents the very general goal of fairness and equal dignity for both genders. BYU, the Church, and most Americans have shared this goal for many years. In pursuit of this goal we maintain a superb equal opportunity staff; for years we have carefully monitored university hiring, compensation, and promotion patterns to ensure gender equality; we have recently created a Women's Resources and Service office, and we have adopted a very complete sexual harassment policy, which is now available on the electronic handbook; and for over three years members of the President's Council have received very thoughtful advice in an ongoing dialogue on gender issues with a committee of able women headed by Kate Kirkham of the Marriott School of Management faculty. Professor Kirkham is a nationally known expert on race and gender issues.

At the other end of the spectrum of feminist thought is the “radical feminist critique.” In between equity feminism and the radical critique is a large variety of feminist ideas and approaches, many of which are emerging in the academic disciplines. Many forms of academic feminism along this spectrum emphasize the unique dimensions of women’s experiences and perspectives. They also seek to broaden society’s governing paradigms to include such female values as nurturing, cooperation, and personal relationships. These aspirations have great merit. Only by including women’s perceptions with those of men can our social institutions reflect and foster meaningful interdependence. In addition, as Cheryl Preston has shown, greater awareness of women’s unique experiences can help men to see how their own failures to model the attributes of godliness can undermine the ability of women to develop a correct perception of God.

However, the radical critique at the extreme end of the feminist spectrum goes on to hypothesize that all Western institutions were designed by men to perpetuate male power over women and that the male paradigm of meaning not only pervades but controls these institutions. Some radical feminist writers thus argue that Western institutions and ideas on every subject from marriage and family life to literature and the legal system are so contaminated with male bias that we must discard all prevailing assumptions and revolutionize the culture. For instance, as Mary Stovall Richards has found, the radical critique regards “the family as an institution of repression for women.” This challenge can prod us to discover insights about ourselves that we might otherwise miss. But, as we have recently learned about Marxism, any single-issue explanation of human history must be examined with healthy skepticism. My biggest concern about the radical feminist critique is its potential to undermine religious faith when it rejects hierarchical and patriarchal institutions

to the point of rejecting scripture, priesthood authority, and prophets. My biggest problem with the radical critique, then, is not that it favors women, but that it can disfavor divine revelation.

When we confuse equity feminism with radical feminism, not even seeing the broad spectrum between those two points, those who fear the destructive potential of radical feminism may unwittingly undermine our commitment to equal treatment, dignity, and fairness for women. We must clearly distinguish between these two opposite ends of the feminist spectrum. Let us also constantly reaffirm the value of educating—and educated—women. In 1975, then President Dallin H. Oaks issued a “Statement on the Education of Women at BYU” that deserves frequent repetition. He stressed that the “primary orientation toward motherhood” of LDS young women is “not inconsistent with their diligent pursuit of an education,” including their efforts in vocational studies. Thus, BYU makes “no distinction between young men and young women in our conviction about the importance of an education and in our commitment to providing that education.”

Among the educated people I value most are the highly competent women who serve this campus as faculty, staff, and administrators. Some of our most significant personnel appointments in recent years include a number of very fine women faculty. They also include Addie Fuhriman, Carolyn Lloyd, Maren Mouritsen, and Margaret Smoot, who now occupy some of the university’s most responsible and sensitive administrative positions in the areas of Graduate Studies, Human Resources, Student Life, and Public Communications. I also express both personal and institutional appreciation to Carol Lee Hawkins, who has served the last five years with great distinction and sensitivity in a part-time employment and committee role, chairing the committee that plans the annual Women’s

Conference sponsored jointly by BYU and the general Relief Society. That conference has given, and continues to give, BYU people an extraordinary opportunity to serve the interests of Latter-day Saint women.

Given the obvious support of our board of trustees for the education and the professional advancement of women at BYU, it is simply wrong for anyone on this campus to sit in judgment—or to allow students to sit in judgment—on any other person’s marital status, family circumstances, or other personal dimension. Our professional women at BYU deserve both our appreciation and our respect.

I return now to the Doctrine and Covenants for a final perspective. We are approaching the 21st century. The Church will grow so rapidly in the coming years that we must rethink why BYU exists. During earlier times, our model was the Church academies—colleges that educated all the youth of Zion who chose to attend. But in the approaching new century, when the Church can have only one university, the academy model may no longer fit as well. BYU must somehow become a university that serves the international Church while enrolling only a small fraction of its members. What kind of place must this be to help build the worldwide Zion? The most obvious answer to that question is that this must be a truly excellent university, as President Kimball told us the First Presidency so fully expects. Mediocrity will not advance the reputation and the cause of Zion across the globe.

The 88th section, first given to guide the Saints who were building Zion in 1832, is still the best perspective on building Zion with a “more perfect” form of excellence. It speaks first of the light of Christ, which enlightens every person and fills every space. That light, said Parley P. Pratt, is the source of instinct in animals, reason in man, and vision in prophets. It is the light of human conscience and of natural laws in the universe. If we live in the light, we may grow in the light. Those who

leave the light will become without feeling or conscience, for they “seeketh to become a law unto [themselves], and willeth to abide in sin” (88:35).

But for those who live in the light, section 88 unfolds an amazing pattern of personal progression. As we grow in understanding and obedience, we receive more light. This includes the promptings of the Holy Ghost, then comes the Gift of the Holy Ghost, then ratification by the Holy Spirit of Promise (see 88:3). As the light increases, section 88 speaks of making our calling and election sure (88:4), which prepares us, said Joseph Smith, to receive in this life the Second Comforter—the presence of Christ. And finally comes glorious sanctification in the Father’s holy presence. So it is that “he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (D&C 50:24).

We at BYU have chosen education. We love to learn. We seek to *comprehend* the mysteries of life. Then what more stirring promise could fill our ears than 88:67-68, which describes the culmination of the fullness of light:

And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things.

Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.

Now consider the verses that follow this promise. The Lord speaks of a solemn assembly where the laborers for Zion may purify themselves so that he by his atoning power may make them clean. He testifies of that cleansing power and asks the laborers to fast and pray. It is from *this* stirring train of thought that these words then flow:

And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, . . . in doctrine, . . .

Of things both in heaven and in the earth, . . . things which have been, things which are. . . .

. . . seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.

[D&C 88:77–79, 118]

These words and those that surround them are the most celebrated words in all scripture on the subject of teaching and learning—the most quoted at BYU gatherings. Now, what are these verses doing in section 88, mixed with the promises of sanctification and being filled with light? Could it possibly be that if our teaching is diligent enough and if our eyes really are single to God’s glory, the grace of the holy atonement would attend us? What is the connection between “comprehending” and learning and receiving more light? What is “an eye single to the glory of God?” What must we do to invite this understanding into our lives and the lives of our students? Given such a vision, what more promising life could there be than being a teacher and a learner at BYU?

Seeking the answers to these questions is the quest of a lifetime. Franz Johansen lifts my eyes to look for the answers with the powerful lines of grace and light that he carved streaming

from heaven in the new relief sculpture at the Joseph Smith Building. Richard Cracroft lifted my heart to feel some of the answers when he so gently reminded us at this summer’s devotional how the Lord stretches forth his finger to touch and change our lives in a multitude of ineffable but undeniable interventions of the spirit. Richard spoke much of “Hosannah moments” in the mission field, but he also moved me to remember that that same spirit fills this campus, too. Every day here, many, many times, unknown to the newspapers, that spirit “shall enlighten our mind, [and] fill your soul with joy” (D&C 11:13). We all knew what Richard was talking about. We have felt it. We must feel it often and—someday—always. It is the spirit of section 88, seeking to grow brighter and brighter until the perfect day. By that light and by our diligence, we have found a better way to teach and learn.

They who seek to build Zion have always known about the growing pains and the cloudy days that may briefly hide the light. But the builders of Zion always keep moving and growing, guided by the spirit of section 88, which flows freshly from the heavens, flooding our earth every day with its clear light. That light shines nowhere more brightly than it does on these precious acres we call the BYU campus. May we lift our eyes to the light, cleanse ourselves, and teach with all diligence, and the Lord’s grace will attend us.