

Magnifying Magnanimity

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I would like to share with you a fictitious story that was told to me by my friend Professor Jimmie Smith at Texas Tech University. Even though this story is fictional, it has, I believe, a very important and extraordinary message.

In an olden time there lived a king who wanted something very special and unique for his approaching birthday. To accommodate his desire, this king called together all the wise men in the kingdom and gave them a charge to invent a new and unique game in honor of this birthday. The king decreed that the game must be simple yet challenging. Most important, the game must give honor and respect to all kings everywhere. He declared that the individual who won this competition would receive the wish of his heart. After some time had elapsed, one of the wise men developed the game we now know as chess. He presented his creation as a gift to the king. The king thought the new game was just wonderful. He particularly liked it because everything about the game seemed to center on the king. In fact, as you probably know, the whole game of chess is focused on just one thing: protecting the king.

The king happily told the wise man he could have his wish realized for conceiving such a great game. The wise man responded

quickly by stating that all he wanted was a relatively simple thing that was based on the checkerboard used for the game. Recall that the chess checkerboard uses a grid of eight by eight alternately colored squares—a total of 64 squares. The wise man said that what he wanted was the volume of wheat generated by the process of placing one kernel of grain on the first square, two kernels on the next square, four on the next square, and so on. I believe you get the idea: each succeeding square doubled the number of kernels of grain that were on the previous square. The king thought that was a rather foolish, simpleminded wish but agreed to grant it forthwith. He ordered his squires to bring in a bushel of wheat. The king's squires began placing kernels of wheat on the board. In the beginning it seemed like it would be a very simple process. However, when they reached square 19, they had emptied the initial bushel of wheat. They went and got several more bushels, but, to their dismay,

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by the time they got to about square 30, they had exhausted all of the wheat in the kingdom.

Now, if we consider carrying this hypothetical story to completion, ponder that China is the largest producer of wheat in the world today. That country currently harvests about 3,700 million bushels of wheat a year. That's about the amount of wheat needed to fill to square number 52. To complete the process to square 64, it would take about 6,500 years of China's current production.

This is a fairly lengthy story to preface my remarks for this morning, but I have used this make-believe tale in introduction because of its powerful message. This message says that very simple things—like regularly doubling your effort—can have a tremendous magnifying effect.

Today I would like to speak with you about a relatively simple yet powerful personal characteristic. This characteristic is magnanimity. I have chosen this theme because I have a strong professional interest in ethical behavior—specifically, the ethical behavior of engineers. I know that being magnanimous is one of the highest forms of ethical conduct in both personal and professional behavior. If we will but incorporate magnanimous behavior in our everyday actions, our positive impact on others will be significant. Then, much like the outcome of doubling the grains of wheat in our fictional story, our positive impact will first affect a few individuals. Subsequently those individuals can affect others, and then others again, so that eventually the larger community in which we reside, even the whole world, could be influenced.

Magnanimity, as a word, does not appear directly in the scriptures. The 1828 edition of *Webster's Dictionary* gives the definition of *magnanimity* as

greatness of mind; that elevation or dignity of soul, which encounters danger and trouble with tranquility and firmness, which raises the possessor above

revenge, and makes him delight in acts of benevolence, which makes him disdain injustice and meanness, and prompts him to sacrifice personal ease, interest and safety for the accomplishment of useful and noble objects. [Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970), vol. 2, s.v. "magnanimity"]

Synonyms of *magnanimity* are *generosity, benevolence, unselfishness, altruism, kindness, and high-mindedness.*

The importance of magnanimity and how one can live this trait has been given to us fully by the teachings and living example of our Savior. His life was full of magnanimous actions toward both his disciples and adversaries. His words and instructions on the subject are clearly recorded in both ancient and modern scripture. Most notably, while on the cross, he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

He also taught that we should strive to emulate his very actions. In 3 Nephi 27:21, he instructed:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do.

The Saints of that day responded and did what they had seen the Savior do. The result was recorded in 4 Nephi 1:15–17:

And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.

And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.

There were no robbers, nor murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor any manner of -ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God.

This condition prevailed for about 200 years. It was an era of total love amongst the people.

Today I would like to share with you several powerful and true accounts of magnanimous acts and liken them to what the Savior taught. I hope that through these examples we might be able to consider how we can magnify this characteristic in our lives. I should mention that in an engineering ethics class that I teach, one of the assignments given is for each class member to take a personal value, such as magnanimity, and try living it completely for a week. The result of this assignment generally provides a new awareness of the positive effects of incorporating such ideals in our lives. You might consider such an assignment today as an experiment on magnanimity.

The first story is an inspiring illustration of true forgiveness and an example of being raised far above revenge. It seems that the elements of war often provide the grounds for magnanimous actions. This story took place in the course of the atrocities of war when an enemy soldier pursued a young civilian woman and her brother down a street. The siblings became cornered in an angle of a wall, and the brother was slain before his sister's eyes. She subsequently dodged down an alley, leaped a wall, and escaped. Later captured, and having been trained as a nurse, she was forced by the enemy authorities to work in a military hospital. Into her ward was brought, one day, the same soldier who had slain her brother. He was very ill. A slight inattention on the nurse's part would insure his death. The young woman faced a bitter struggle in her mind. Vengeance was a powerful conviction, as was the impression of love. In the end, the better side of her conquered, and she nursed him

as carefully as any other patient in the ward. The soldier had recognized the young lady as well, and, one day, being unable to restrain his curiosity, he asked his nurse why she had not let him die. She respectfully replied to him, "I am a follower of him who said 'Love your enemies and do them good.'" This statement caused the soldier to ponder the situation for a long time. At last he responded to her, "I never knew that there was such a religion. If that is your religion tell me more about it, for I want it." (Story paraphrased from Harry Emerson Fosdick, *Twelve Tests of Character* [New York: Association Press, 1941], pp. 166–67.)

The young nurse truly had adequate reason to at least have some other person administer medical help to the young soldier. But she understood what the Savior taught about forgiveness of enemies. In the story's end we see the beginning of another story. The follow-up story would likely result in a new direction for the life of the soldier. His life would likely be directed toward goodness, service, and love for mankind. It would be a life where he would delight in doing good. Thus we get a glimpse of the result of magnanimous actions. They not only allow good to be done on a one-on-one basis but open the door, by example and precept, for additional magnanimous actions.

The next story, which is equally instructive, is an episode in the life of the distinguished Confederate general Robert E. Lee.

When Robert E. Lee was a cadet at West Point, a classmate took a violent and irrational dislike to him. The animosity persisted into later life. For many years this fellow officer made malicious attacks on Lee. One day a mutual acquaintance asked Lee what he thought of this individual. To the questioner's surprise, Lee spoke in the highest terms of him. Then his questioner said slyly, "I guess you don't know what he's been saying about you for years." "You have not asked me," Lee replied, "for his opinion of me. You have asked me for my opinion of him." [As related by James G. Gilkey in

Stanley I. Stuber and Thomas Curtis Clark, eds., *Treasury of the Christian Faith: An Encyclopedic Handbook of the Range and Witness of Christianity* (New York: Association Press, 1949), pp. 775–76]

General Lee was known as a man of honor and as one who exemplified the highest of moral character. I am confident that his honorable actions were both observed and emulated by the soldiers who served with him. Thus General Lee is one who, by practicing acts of magnanimity, could double the effect and then have those effects doubled again by the actions of others.

I believe General Lee incorporated fully in his life the teachings of the Savior given in Matthew 18:21–22:

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

An example of how General Lee's character may have been taken and magnified by another is demonstrated in the actions of one of his soldiers, a Confederate sergeant named Richard Rowland Kirkland. Sergeant Kirkland's story took place in December of 1862. The Union army had just captured the town of Fredericksburg, Virginia, and had turned their sights to Marye's Heights. Marye's Heights was a large hill where General Lee had his soldiers well fortified and securely placed behind a prominent stone wall. These Confederate soldiers were totally out of sight of the Union army. It is important to note that the Confederate forces numbered only about 6,000 as compared to the Union forces, which numbered well over 40,000.

The Union army began to attack the Confederates at Marye's Heights, but their offensive proved devastating. In the initial con-

frontation there were more than 12,000 Union soldiers cut down by the well-camouflaged Confederate guns. Many of the wounded Union men lay only a few yards away from where the Southern soldiers were positioned. On the cold winter night that followed, numerous maimed soldiers died from exposure to the elements. Many of the injured cried for help. A Confederate soldier, our Richard Rowland Kirkland, could not withstand the scene. To his commanding officer he said, "All night and all day I have heard those poor people crying for water, and I can stand it no longer. I . . . ask permission to go and give them water." Permission was initially denied, but finally, with canteens strapped around his neck, he went over the stone wall and began to give water and aid to the fallen enemy. The Union soldiers were at first too surprised to shoot. Then they began to cheer him when they saw what he was doing.

Sergeant Richard Rowland Kirkland became known as "the angel of Marye's Heights." There is a monument at that stone wall near Fredericksburg that honors the Confederate soldier. It was crafted by the same man who sculpted the famous Iwo Jima monument. The statue portrays Sergeant Kirkland lifting the head of the wounded enemy soldier and giving him water. A plaque honoring Kirkland hangs in the Episcopal church in Gettysburg. It reads: "A hero of benevolence, at the risk of his own life, he gave his enemy drink at Fredericksburg." (Story taken from Alexander B. Morrison, *Visions of Zion* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1993], pp. 33–35.)

Sergeant Kirkland's story demonstrates the heights of sublime love and compassion one can give to one's fellowman. This incident truly describes an individual who understood what the Savior taught when he said:

But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. [Luke 6:27–28]

In a 1984 BYU devotional, then president Jeffrey R. Holland taught of the magnanimity exemplified by the Prophet Joseph Smith (see “A Robe, a Ring, and a Fatted Calf,” *Ensign*, August 1985, pp. 68–72). The particular incident concerned a very significant event between the Prophet and Brother William W. Phelps.

In paraphrasing Elder Holland’s rendition of the story, we learn that in the early years of the Church, the Prophet Joseph had no more devoted and reliable assistant than William Wines Phelps. Brother Phelps had numerous talents. He was gifted musically and was a noted newspaper editor at the time he joined the Church. In the beginning he was faithful and devoted to his assignments. He wrote the beloved hymn “The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning,” which was sung at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple. He was sent as one of the first Latter-day Saints to Jackson County, Missouri. There he was called by the Lord as a member of the stake presidency of “that center stake of Zion” (Holland, “A Robe,” p. 71).

Unfortunately, troubles soon developed for Brother Phelps. These troubles were initially ecclesiastical aberrations. The concerns later became financial improprieties. Things became so serious that the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith that if Brother Phelps did not repent, he would be “removed out of [his] place” (HC 2:511). William Phelps did not repent and was excommunicated on March 10, 1838.

The Prophet Joseph and several others tried to love Brother Phelps back into the fold, but he would have nothing of it. Later that year, Phelps, along with several others, signed a very damaging and harmful affidavit against the Prophet and other leaders of the Church. The result of this affidavit was that the Prophet Joseph Smith was sentenced to be publicly executed on the town square in Far West,

Missouri. Fortunately, General Alexander Doniphan intervened, and the Prophet was miraculously spared the execution. But Joseph was not spared spending five months—November through April—in several Missouri prisons, including his time in the frightful, ill-named Liberty Jail.

This was a time of severe suffering for all the Saints. The Prophet was in a wretched prison. The persecutions of the Church intensified. The main body of the believers had to make their way to a malaria-infested swamp on the banks of the Mississippi River—a place called Commerce, Illinois. William Phelps caused much of this struggle, suffering, and heartache.

Two years later, William Phelps wrote to Joseph in Nauvoo. His repentant letter was full of anguish, remorse, and sorrow. He wrote:

Brother Joseph:

. . . I am as the prodigal son. . . .

I have seen the folly of my way, and I tremble at the gulf I have passed. . . . Says I, “I will . . . ask my old brethren to forgive me, and though they chasten me to death, yet I will die with them, for their God is my God. The least place with them is enough for me, yea, it is bigger and better than all Babylon.” . . .

I know my situation, you know it, and God knows it, and I want to be saved if my friends will help me. . . . I have done wrong and I am sorry. . . . I ask forgiveness. . . . I want your fellowship; if you cannot grant that, grant me your peace and friendship, for we are brethren, and our communion used to be sweet. [HC 4:141–42]

The Prophet wrote back immediately. This letter of the Prophet’s demonstrates the magnificence of his soul—in other words, his magnanimity. As Elder Holland said in his talk about this story, “There is a lesson here for every one of us who claims to be a disciple of Christ” (Holland, “A Robe,” p. 72). The Prophet’s letter read:

Dear Brother Phelps: . . .

You may in some measure realize what my feelings . . . were, when we read your letter. . . .

. . . We have suffered much in consequence of your behavior—the cup of gall, already full enough for mortals to drink, was indeed filled to overflowing when you turned against us. . . .

However, the cup has been drunk, the will of our Father has been done, and we are yet alive, for which we thank the Lord. And having been delivered from the hands of wicked men by the mercy of our God, we say it is your privilege to be delivered from the powers of the adversary, be brought into the liberty of God's dear children, and again take your stand among the Saints of the Most High, and by diligence, humility, and love unfeigned, commend yourself to our God, and your God, and to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Believing your confession to be real, and your repentance genuine, I shall be happy once again to give you the right hand of fellowship, and rejoice over the returning prodigal. . . .

*“Come on, dear brother, since the war is past,
For friends at first, are friends again at last.”*

Yours as ever,

Joseph Smith, Jun.

[HC 4:162–64]

It is most significant to remember that William Phelps was selected to preach Joseph's funeral sermon. It was also he who penned the magnificent hymn that memorialized the martyred prophet, “Praise to the Man.” He became an outstanding citizen of Utah. He was an ordinance worker in the Endowment House, a member of the state constitutional convention, surveyor general and chief engineer of the Great Salt Lake Valley, speaker of the House of Representatives, and a member of the board of regents for the University of Deseret (see Susan Easton Black, *Who's Who in the Doctrine and Covenants* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997], p. 226). Surely Joseph was practicing the gospel in its fullness in his actions toward Brother Phelps. They were in complete adherence to

the Lord's teaching in section 64 of the Doctrine and Covenants, verses 9–10:

Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.

Again, in this story we can understand the magnifying effects of magnanimity. In essence, when one magnanimous act is done, it propagates many, many more similar acts.

In a recent incident on December 11, 1995, a devastating fire destroyed the majority of Aaron Feuerstein's Malden Mills textile plant in Lawrence, Massachusetts. (For the following story, see Joel C. Adair, “Resolving Problems in Engineering Ethics, Precept and Example,” master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1999, pp. 91–98.) Only a single production structure survived, and it was damaged and without power. However, this meager remaining portion of his enterprise was enough to convince owner Aaron to rebuild.

The decision to rebuild this industry may not seem significant; however, consider the broader picture. The U.S. textile industry had its origins in New England, but now Malden Mills was among the last of the textile manufacturers to remain in that region. Most manufacturers left the area to reestablish themselves in regions of cheaper labor. Malden Mills remained because Aaron felt that to produce the high-tech fabrics that had made his company successful, he needed skilled workers who had unfaltering work ethics and who took pride in their product and in the company. These workers he rewarded with high wages and fair treatment.

To rebuild, he had to act quickly to ensure that valuable customers would not be lost. Rebuilding would go against everything that corporate America expected. Feuerstein was 70

years old and could have easily collected the insurance money and begun a comfortable retirement. Doing so, however, would have left 2,320 employees without work. This was the time that Aaron Feuerstein totally lived up to the things he had learned during his Orthodox Jewish upbringing. In his understanding, he needed to be a “*mensch*.” This expression comes from a Yiddish proverb that states, “When all is moral chaos, this is the time for you to be a *mensch*.” A *mensch* is a person who exhibits exceptional moral courage, a person who does the right thing when nobody else will. Being a *mensch* means to be magnanimous.

Three days after the fire, Feuerstein announced to his workers that he would continue to pay them full salary for the next 30 days, even though they would likely not be able to work. He had intended to announce full salary for 90 days, but the other major executives of his business wanted to be more cautious, so Aaron agreed to the 30-day announcement. He told the executives, however, “Well, it doesn’t make any difference. I’ll announce at the end of the first 30 days another 30 days, and at the end of that another.” Full insurance coverage was also provided his workers for the three months. In addition, since Christmas was near, each employee’s paycheck after the fire contained a \$275 Christmas bonus. Feuerstein also made his annual contribution of \$20,000 to several local charities.

During the reconstruction period, a significant conflict developed between Feuerstein and his corporate executives. Since most of the equipment had been totally destroyed, it made good sense to the executives to consider more automated processes for their product. Such changes could improve quality and reduce costs, thus leading to significantly higher profits. However, Feuerstein remained vehemently opposed to such a shift. He believed that it was the workers’ skills that resulted in their supe-

rior products and that adopting highly automated systems would displace workers to whom he had promised employment. In the end, Feuerstein’s concern for his workers prevailed.

It is significant to note that by the end of December, production of Polartec, the company’s primary product, was back to 20 percent of normal, and by May the production was back to 85 percent of the normal output.

Aaron Feuerstein’s example of magnanimity has earned him several prominent awards. He maintains, however, “I haven’t really done anything. I don’t deserve credit. Corporate America has made it so that when you behave the way I did, it’s abnormal” (Adair, “Resolving Problems,” p. 98). After being presented with George Washington University’s 1996 CEO of the Year Award, he explained:

In 1866, Arlington Mills built its first plant. Just a year later, a conflagration destroyed the entire mill. The proprietors then were determined to rebuild, without publicity and without celebrity status. At that time it was normal to care about your business and community. The value system of 130 years ago is the same value system that my grandfather and father taught me; nothing’s changed. So why all of a sudden this celebrity status? Perhaps it’s a reflection on some of the modern CEOs of today. As a CEO, it is my responsibility to make sure our employees’ spirit isn’t broken and their American dream isn’t crushed. They’re not just a pair of hands and a cut-able expense. Without them we can’t succeed. [Adair, “Resolving Problems,” p. 98]

The magnanimity demonstrated by Aaron Feuerstein is truly inspiring. His story is one of true Christlike behavior in the face of devastating personal loss. Our world would be a better place if all corporate leaders had the same values and commitment to community as was demonstrated by Aaron.

I believe that the Apostle Paul may have best described the actions of Brother Aaron Feuerstein when he taught:

Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.
[Philippians 2:2–4]

A circumstance that often leads to the opportunity to exercise magnanimity is when misunderstandings take place and these misunderstandings lead to significant difficulties. This is a common occurrence. An example of such a situation, and the resulting magnanimous action, is recorded in the Book of Mormon in chapters 60 and 61 of Alma. (See also Neal A. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1987], pp. 23–25.) Let me set the stage for you of this significant incident.

The chief judge and governor of the land at this time was the righteous and beloved leader Pahoran. During Pahoran's leadership there were great contentions in the land resulting in violent tumult and war. The main strife was between those loyal to Pahoran and the group we know as the "king-men," who were trying to establish a monarchy for the government. Fortunately for Pahoran, his chief military leader was the great Book of Mormon patriot General Moroni.

This Moroni is truly one of the most popular and inspirational leaders of the Book of Mormon. It was this Moroni who wrote the title of liberty on his coat and rallied his people to patriotically defend their homeland.

As we have noted previously, the acts of war often provide the grounds for magnanimous acts. So it is in this case. However, the situation here was not between those who

perceived themselves as enemies but between those who likely had the utmost respect for each other: Moroni and Pahoran. Moroni was in dire need of supplies and reinforcements for one of his supporting generals, Helaman. Moroni sent a letter to Pahoran requesting that support be sent to assist Helaman.

Unfortunately, Moroni did not know that Pahoran himself was under siege and had been forced to flee from Zarahemla. Because of the prevailing circumstances, Pahoran was unable to refortify Helaman's forces. Since no aid was rendered, Helaman's army suffered great losses. The anxious Moroni was incensed at what he perceived as indifferent behavior by his government and his country's leader. Moroni immediately sent his leader another letter and spared no words in his condemnation of Pahoran. Moroni accused Pahoran of great neglect, thoughtless stupor, slothfulness, wickedness, sitting in idleness, and being a traitor. He even threatened to come and cleanse the inequity that he perceived existed in the government.

Moroni's letter, however, did not overly disturb Pahoran. His response in Alma 61 is magnanimous:

And now, in your epistle you have censured me, but it mattereth not; I am not angry, but do rejoice in the greatness of your heart. I, Pahoran, do not seek for power, save only to retain my judgment-seat that I may preserve the rights and the liberty of my people. My soul standeth fast in that liberty in the which God hath made us free. [v. 9]

Therefore, my beloved brother, Moroni, let us resist evil, and whatsoever evil we cannot resist with our words, yea, such as rebellions and dissensions, let us resist them with our swords, that we may retain our freedom, that we may rejoice in the great privilege of our church, and in the cause of our Redeemer and our God. [v. 14]

Then, in verses 19–20:

And now, Moroni, I do joy in receiving your epistle, for I was somewhat worried concerning what we should do, whether it should be just in us to go against our brethren.

But ye have said, except they repent the Lord hath commanded you that ye should go against them.

In the first verse of chapter 62, we read of Moroni's feelings after reading Pahoran's letter:

And now it came to pass that when Moroni had received this epistle his heart did take courage, and was filled with exceedingly great joy because of the faithfulness of Pahoran, that he was not also a traitor to the freedom and cause of his country.

This outstanding Book of Mormon story teaches us much about proper behavior between individuals in times of extreme stress. We learn that even among the strongest of leaders, misunderstandings can easily be generated. The Savior taught in the Sermon on the Mount:

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. [Matthew 5:23–24]

Moroni did indeed reconcile his concerns with Pahoran and then went about the Lord's work.

In closing, I am sure that it is obvious that each day provides numerous opportunities to practice magnanimity. We can practice it with our loved ones, within the classroom, at our place of employment, with our friends and associates, and also with those with whom we choose not to associate. Be the relationship that of professor to student, husband to wife, parent to child, brother to sister, supervisor to employee, or any other one-on-one relation-

ship, we will have the opportunity to be magnanimous. These opportunities will not simply occur on an occasional basis but will present themselves time and time again.

I also know that it is one of the most difficult Christlike values for us to emulate consistently. Brigham Young taught:

One of the hardest lessons for me to learn on earth is to love a man who hates me. . . . I do not think I have got this lesson by heart, and I do not know how long I shall have to live to learn it. I am trying. [JD 14:97]

To be severely wronged by another, yet to return love, compassion, and care, as was done by the nurse, is most difficult. Also, to be slandered without returning slander, as was accomplished by Robert E. Lee, is a powerful illustration of implementing self-control and altruism. The Confederate soldier, Sergeant Richard Kirkland, demonstrated benevolence and love for his fellowmen, even though they were his declared enemies, by providing comfort to them when they needed it most. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught us how to truly forgive and act toward one who has intentionally caused us significant harm. Aaron Feuerstein showed that being benevolent was far more important than being personally secure. And finally, the reconciliation between Moroni and Pahoran set a pattern for us to emulate when misunderstandings develop between the best of friends. If we can incorporate the essence of the virtue of magnanimity into our character, not only will our personal life be enriched, but the effect for good that we have on others will be profound.

The hymn we sang to begin this devotional today, "Lord, I Would Follow Thee" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 220), has a powerful connection to the subject I have been sharing with you. Recall some of the phrases of this inspired music, in particular the passage "To the wounded and the weary I would show a gentle heart." Those

words seem to characterize both the young nurse and Sergeant Kirkland. And the expression “I would be my brother’s keeper” describes clearly the actions of both Aaron Feuerstein and the Prophet Joseph. Most important, the basic message of the hymn that we should follow the Savior, that we should

walk in the path that he has shown, provides us the model for all of our actions.

I hope that we may continually improve our behavior toward others in the way our Savior would have us do, to be magnanimous in our thoughts and deeds. To this end I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.