

# *Metamorphosis and Accountability: A Guide for the Future*

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**A**s a young man growing up in South Africa, I was blessed with a beautiful vegetable garden. It brought forth plentifully. Among the wonders of the garden were three lovely eggplants. Each was over three feet tall and produced large purple fruit of the highest quality.

One warm summer day I entered the garden to examine the plants and tend to the garden. Imagine my surprise as I approached the formidable eggplants to discover that one was missing! Upon closer examination I found only a short stem; the rest of the plant, leaves and all, was nowhere to be seen. By and by I located the culprit: a six-inch armored caterpillar sporting bright yellow spots on each of its green segments. In a few short days it had consumed the entire plant. On that day my reaction was, "What a nasty, destructive caterpillar!" However, since then my understanding of science and the Creation has grown. I now understand that this was a necessary part of the caterpillar's life cycle so that it could reach its full potential.

This concept of a metamorphosis interested me as a young boy: the possibility that a crea-

ture could change its appearance and abilities by obtaining nourishment and spending some time in a cocoon. The large caterpillar that ate my eggplant would become a beautiful butterfly. Instead of its slow crawling, it would soon fly. Instead of burdening my garden, it would soon contribute to the garden's beauty and fruitfulness as it visited each flower in search of nectar, thus aiding pollination.

Today is a celebration of the marvelous metamorphosis that has occurred in each of us. For the past several years we have pursued a largely selfish agenda: the enrichment of our own intellects. Was it hard work? Definitely—just as it was hard work for the caterpillar in my garden to consume the large eggplant. BYU has been a lush, formidable eggplant for each of us and an important part of our personal metamorphosis. Each of us has benefited from the trust and sacrifice of so many gardeners: those who understood what we needed to grow and to reach our full potential. Think back on

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*Conrad W. Rosenbrock spoke as the representative of his graduating class at BYU commencement on 25 April 2013.*

the many hours spent under the tutelage of great minds, the thousands of dollars in subsidized tuition, and the scholarships and grants and sacrifices of family and friends. Think about the many pioneers whose sacrifices from generation to generation have established the infrastructure and greatness of BYU as we have enjoyed it. Each of these beneficiaries believed in us. Each was willing to sacrifice because of what they believed we might become. Today it is our privilege to examine ourselves and see the fruits of their labors.

And yet the greatest measure of their success is not where we are today but where we will be tomorrow. To quote President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Every one of us who is here has accepted a sacred and compelling trust. With that trust, there must be accountability" ("Trust and Accountability," BYU devotional address, 13 October 1992).

"We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men" (Articles of Faith 1:13). And that is the standard to which we must remain true. Each of us has the opportunity today to make decisions that can shape our future contributions to the world. We can decide to always be perfectly honest, to contribute our skills and talents to our communities, and to build and serve everywhere we go. We can decide to live up to the expectations and to guard the trust of those who have sacrificed for us. Each of us can choose to be the person that they already believe us to be.

Finally, let us remember those we will represent forever after: we carry the names of our families, the name and standard of this institution, and the name of Christ. This is our time, and we are ready. Congratulations, Class of 2013.