

gles, successes, questions, and provocations. I will try to define maturity and to describe the process of maturing in the Kingdom,

both as I have struggled with it personally and as I see it occurring or failing to occur in other lives.

FAITH AND REASON

Carrying Water on Both Shoulders

Lowell L. Bennion

Lowell Bennion was the favorite teacher, through both his Institute classes at the University of Utah and his books and essays, for thousands of young Latter-day Saint students in the 40s and 50s, he is now Associate Dean of Students and Professor of Sociology at the University of Utah and a Sunday School teacher and high Priest Group Leader in his ward. Shortly after his marriage he served a mission in Germany; his wife, Merle, then joined him at the University of Strasburg where he became a student of Max Weber and wrote one of the first treatises on his work.

A thoughtful Latter-day Saint who grows up in his faith and takes it seriously may encounter difficulties as he immerses himself in secular education, particularly on the graduate level, and more particularly if he is studying in the humanities or social and behavioral sciences. The tension between his cherished faith and his intellectual discipline is almost inevitable for a number of reasons. He learned his religion in the uncritical years of childhood through indoctrination and on the authority of others and through personal, subjective experience, whereas science and philosophy are studied in years of greater maturity, and their findings are accepted on their own merit on the basis of empirical evidence and logic. These studies also lend themselves to rational and critical modes of analysis, whereas religion does not to the same degree. Then, too, modern industrial and post-industrial society has become increasingly pluralistic and secular in character. Religious values — whether one is in college or not — are challenged and questioned by competing, secular values, ideas and behavior patterns of society. It is becoming increasingly difficult for anyone anywhere to preserve his faith by isolation. Religion, to survive, will have to win its way in the public market place of competing ideas, interests, and satisfactions.

When faith and reason meet in the life of a college student, something must give; some type of working relationship must be established. In observing how my students, friends, and I have reacted to this situation, it seems to me that there are

three logical models people develop to reconcile their religious faith and their secular studies. These models, which I shall describe, are abstract constructs of the mind. In real life, an individual does not follow any one of them totally or consistently, but borrows elements of all. However, it is useful to have these logically possible models to help clarify people's real positions.

One position a student can take is to hold fast to his faith and let no knowledge or experience gained in study disturb it. Religion becomes his standard and only that knowledge which does not disturb his religious views is considered seriously. A second position is to give reason reign. Accordingly, religion is judged by thinking and what does not square with one's increased learning is rejected. Thus religion tends to be reduced to one object of thought and its importance diminishes as it takes second place to secular studies. A third position is to choose to live in both worlds, to keep faith, as it were, with both one's religious commitments and with the ways of learning in the academic world.

In my own life, thus far, I have chosen the third model. I have had a profound respect for both the gospel of Jesus Christ, including its antecedents in the Law and the Prophets and its interpretation through the Restoration, and also for the understanding I have — limited though it be — of philosophy, literature, world religions, and science. In this brief essay, I shall explain why I have sought the best of these two worlds.

I.

The first model, in which one clings to faith and does not let reason disturb it, has meaning for some people. There is a simplicity about this approach. One is spared much mental effort and anguish by wearing blinders which shut out peripheral vision and even set boundaries to the view straight ahead. This kind of simple faith provides for the believer a total view of life, a fixed *Weltanschauung*. It also calls for full commitment. From it is born a sense of security as long as it proves adequate to the exigencies at hand.

I have seen this model function beautifully in the lives of humble converts in Germany. Their faith was of the heart, uncontaminated by abstract symbolic thought, which often stands between the thinker and the spiritual reality beyond his concepts. Their child-like humility brought them close to the kingdom of God. I respect and sometimes momentarily envy the quality of their faith.

But those of us who go to the University, who read books, who learn to view life from many angles of vision, thoughtfully and critically, cannot with integrity don blinders to reason in order to protect a child-like faith. To be sincere, to have integrity, faith must be examined and cherished in the context of one's total life experience. Furthermore, a faith that cannot withstand and transcend the light of reason, is not a faith worth keeping.

This is particularly true of the Latter-day Saint faith, which declares that "the glory of God is intelligence" and believes that man is a child of God, created in his image. And, if this is true, where then is the glory of man, if not in his intelligence? Religion without thought is deprived of its distinctly human attribute. I like Jesus' admonition to love God with all our mind as well as with all our heart.

II.

The second model, which places reason above faith, has great appeal in this modern, secular age in which religion has lost considerable ground as a viable force. I can understand why some of my friends prefer this to the first model. They are independent in their thinking, self-confident, and wish to keep their integrity. And there is no way to keep one's integrity except by trusting one's own judgment in the last analysis.

Then, too, there is much in the religious tradition that is discouraging. Religion has had a long and uneven history. If one looks at the whole of it — in primitive religions, and even into our Judeo-Christian tradition, one finds a great mixture of error and truth, of that which debases as well as that which glorifies Deity and man. Religion has one source in God and another in man. The human element is quite evident in the long story of religion. When this becomes clear to a person, he quite naturally begins to exercise reason in matters religious. He finds thinking rewarding here as well as in other fields.

While I believe in using my mind, in and out of religion, I do not believe in exalting reason above faith and in making all religious experience subservient to rational thinking. "Life divided by human reason leaves a remainder," wrote Goethe. The remainder is quite large. Life's ultimate meaning and ultimate values transcend man's thinking. "All thinking," said Albert Schweitzer, "leads to mysticism" — to something beyond empirical and logical thought. Religious experience, like aesthetic experience, as Rudolf Otto persuasively argues in *The Idea of the Holy*, is *sui generis*, is unique and distinctive and is not something that must be denied nor legitimated by scientific or philosophic thought.

III.

Because neither the first nor second model is satisfying to me, I choose the third. I am committed both to religious faith and idealism and to the best critical thinking of men. The reason for this dual commitment is that each has greatly enriched my life. I can deny neither at this point.

To live in two worlds is not easy. There is always tension, unresolved conflicts, and new problems in the offing. Some of my friends who have chosen the second model think the third one is impossible — full of compromises, dissipating of intellectual effort, and beclouding to intellectual clarity. They say, "You cannot carry water on both shoulders." In his famous lecture, "Science as a Vocation," Max Weber, Germany's greatest social thinker, said that "intellectual sacrifice is the decisive characteristic of the positively religious man."

These remarks notwithstanding, I believe one can be committed to religion and to secular thought, even though it is not an easy course to follow. Space will only per-