

may not know is that the person who lives by these virtues has often achieved a life separate from the exploiter and by them is free of him. In this way Christianity is liberating. That Christianity in which one conforms, submits, is loyal to commands, conforms to the established, is blindly faithful to the given, heeds authority, finds security in law and order, is another kind of Christianity altogether: it is a trap. Radical Christianity is different in that it makes anarchic breaks with the past, the status quo, the inevitable, and it does so, not by regarding these virtues passively merely, or intellectually merely, or sentimentally merely, but by using them to actually change things for the better. They are active principles for breaking up the world. The New Testament, like the Old, is a manual for revolution.

The conventional argument I have heard all my life against extensive personal use of The Christian Break that I am trying to describe is the self-serving position that kind-

liness and forgiveness get smashed, that nice people get hurt, that Christian nations get beat. The position is both right and wrong-headed, since revolutionary Christianity has much more to do with dignity than with survival. Of course it is axiomatic that if someone cuts off your hand you don't give him your other hand if you want to play the piano. You don't stop bludgeoning a nation to death when it insults you and kicks you in the shins if you want to go on controlling the world. But then Christianity never did have very much to do with survival or with power, only with the *quality* of one's survival, the *quality* of one's life. And there it is revolutionary. To survive in the world one may unfortunately find it necessary to compromise with the world, help continue its rotten patterns, embody its stink, but to give it some quality, some meaning, one may have to break with it, even with oneself — Christianly. What else works?

A Peculiar People **Out of Limbo.**

SAMUEL W. TAYLOR

Particularly since he had been a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, loss of church membership was shattering to my father's professional, social and business affairs. One day John W. Taylor was revered as one of the Lord's anointed; the next, he found fair-weather friends crossing the street to avoid him. Business ventures collapsed; credit ceased. But what hurt most was that a man for whom the Church had been his entire life — he'd been an apostle since the age of twenty-five — now couldn't enter a chapel nor partake of the sacrament.

However, he made no complaints. In marrying plural wives after the Manifesto he had taken a calculated risk; he accepted without rancor the penalty for public exposure. And he remained serene about the ultimate verdict in the hereafter. "Things will be straightened out," he said, "over there."

Members of the family, however, were concerned about his status in limbo. Ten years after John W. Taylor's death my brother Raymond made inquiries as to what could be done to get him officially reinstated to Church membership. The reply offered the type of encouragement given by a doctor to someone with terminal cancer: there is always hope. Raymond received no intimation, however, that prospects for John W. Taylor's immortal soul to be delivered from Satan's buffetings could be realized in the foreseeable future.

A concerted effort by members of the great family might have created momentum; but the six widows and swarm of progeny were all

characterized by spirit, independence, and individuality. They could agree on nothing. (Even the simple matter of selecting a headstone involved a hassle that went on year after year while the temporary marker rotted away and it was distinctly possible that when the stone finally was placed it might be at the wrong grave).

One faction held firmly to the whispered rumor that John W. Taylor hadn't *really* been cut off at all (it was an empty form to appease the outside world). If this actually was the situation, Raymond felt it was high time for our father's name to be taken out of the shadows.

The ironical aspect of the whole thing was that John W. Taylor's troubles resulted from sheer bad luck. The matter of his plural wives became a *cause célèbre* during Senate hearings in the Smoot Investigation of 1904-1906. Except for this, he and his families would have lived quietly with nothing ever done about it. When I was a boy in Provo, everyone knew of plural families, the wives too young to have been married before the Manifesto; there were examples in every neighborhood. We knew the "old maids" who actually were secret plural wives. The Manifesto of 1890 had been interpreted in different ways. Actually there was not one but several, the last coming some fourteen years after the first. In 1910 the Salt Lake *Tribune* published a list of 220 men of standing in the Church who had taken wives after the 1890 date. John W. Taylor was only one of six members of the Quorum of the

Lives based on having are less free than lives based either on doing or on being.

— WILLIAM JAMES

Twelve on this list. Inasmuch as his fall was primarily a matter of bad luck, all the more reason to straighten things out.

Raymond never quit trying, and in the spring of 1965, thirty-nine years after he had begun the campaign, he wrote urging me to take up the matter of John W. Taylor's reinstatement with Church authorities. Now, he declared, the time was ripe. How he came by this conviction, I didn't know, nor why a letter from me would carry more clout than one from him. However, I wrote to Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency, asking advice on steps that might be taken. Elder Brown phoned in reply, saying that President David O. McKay would like to talk to me on the matter. Since I was in Hollywood, I suggested that Raymond was nearby at Provo, available within the hour. "President McKay," Elder Brown said, "would like to talk to you."

At Salt Lake, I had a conference with Elder Brown, who advised me to make the interview brief because of the president's limited vitality; then in company with him and Nathan Eldon Tanner of the First Presidency I went to President McKay's office on the eighth floor of the Hotel Utah. The Prophet, Seer and Revelator was 91 years old, sitting tiny and frail at his desk with a plastic tube taped to a nostril while a pump throbbing by his chair supplied oxygen. The voice was a thin reed, but the mind was razor sharp. He even retained his sense of humor. When a nurse came in he said, "Looks like breakfast," as she rolled up his sleeve for a shot.

When she had gone, I was closeted with the First Presidency, and presented the case briefly.

"John W. Taylor was a good man," President McKay said. He remembered him well. "How do his wives feel about this?"

"It was my mother's greatest wish. She's gone, now. Only two of the wives are alive, May and Rhoda."

"Rhoda was one of the Welling girls, wasn't she? From up Centerville way."

"Yes, sir; Farmington. May lives in Los Angeles." Then I added, feeling that he'd like to know: "May is now just one hundred years old."

He nodded, smiling.

Elder Tanner quietly made a motion that my request for John W. Taylor's reinstatement be approved; this was done. "Write a letter for my signature," President McKay said. "I'm not as fast as I once was, but I'll sign it."

On a typewriter borrowed from Elder Brown's secretary I wrote the letter for approval by the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve. Ten days later, 21 May 1965, Raymond stood proxy in the Salt Lake Temple while John W. Taylor's priesthood and blessings were restored.

But that wasn't the end of the story. It took almost two years from that time before complications of the case were ironed out. Soon after the reinstatement a member of the Twelve asked Raymond for the name of the man who had performed John W. Taylor's last three marriages. Raymond suggested he ask the living witness, Aunt Rhoda.

"Would you do this for me?"

Raymond visited Aunt Rhoda. As he began talking about her marriage, she put a finger to her lips and gestured to the open door. Beyond, her middle-aged daughter, Young Rhoda, was watching T.V. "Please close the door, Raymond. This is a private matter." Such things weren't even for the ears of her own daughter. With the door closed, Raymond explained that a member of the Twelve had asked him to find out who had performed her marriage ceremony.

Aunt Rhoda considered awhile, then shook her head. "Please tell him that I would rather not talk about it."

It had been more than sixty years ago, yet Aunt Rhoda, like my mother and the other plural wives, had never really emerged from

the underground.

Nearly a year after this, a two-page memo from the Genealogical Society to higher authority outlined some of the problems attending the reinstatement:

Two living wives, twenty-eight living children and a host of grandchildren participating in the Priesthood Genealogical Programs will need to know their status in order to properly prepare their records.

It required eleven additional months of study before final determination of the case. The nub

of the situation was this: While John W. Taylor had been forgiven, could the modern Church officially recognize the validity of marriages taken after 1890? Rather than "opening Pandora's Box," the decision was that,

If the Lord should judge Brother Taylor in being justified in the last three marriages he then can adjust it in the realms beyond the grave . . .

This was exactly in accordance to my father's prediction in the matter.

Sounding Brass and Tinking Symbols

Wives Take Over

VICTOR B. CLINE

Since previously exposing myself in a sometimes quite personal way in this column I have had the heady and maybe trying experience of having some readers wishing to engage in a dialogue with me via the written letter and even through personal interaction. Sometimes this has involved receiving messages of stern rebuke, kindly persuasion, and even occasional support.

Some of the letters have raised questions which might have some interest for many readers beyond the original writer. This sort of interaction or stimulus-response is often quite personal but a wider readership might find it stimulating and informative to "eavesdrop." So in this issue's column I'll share a letter or two (apparently from L.D.S. women) and my response.

READER'S QUESTION: "I find myself constantly depressed and often think of taking my life. No one knows the full extent of my feelings, not even my husband. If it weren't for my religion and my children I don't think I'd be alive today. It seems that I just barely manage to get through each day. Any help you might offer would be appreciated."

Ms. M. Los Angeles

You are not alone. There are many men and women living lives of quiet desperation. I sense from your letter that you have a number of frustrations and problems that are not getting solved. You've endured them for a long time and somehow they get worse rather than better. Even Mormons, who have the advantage of a great positive religious faith, can have emotional and mental problems and stress which require, at times, professional care. I would strongly suggest that you see a

counselor. A clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, your Bishop, Stake President, L.D.S. Church Social Services—all might provide some assistance to you.

However in choosing a private practitioner (psychologist, etc.) I'd do a little home work rather than just look up a name in the phone book and make an appointment. Professional therapists vary in ability, skill, and competence just as in any other field. You could have a very bad experience if you went to a counselor who was not competent or possibly whose values were very different from yours. I'd first check through your friends' experience with therapists, professional associations' recommendations, your family physician's advice, etc.

This kind of help can be quite expensive (from \$25 to \$50 for a 50 minute session). And many problems are not resolved in three or four visits. You should check your family health insurance and see what it pays for psychotherapy. Some policies pay up to 80% and in some instances even 100% of the cost. Or rather than seeing a private therapist you might consider going to a community agency such as Family Service Society (focusing usually on marital problems) or a Community Mental Health Clinic (which treats the full spectrum of adolescent and adult problems at reduced fees). Usually their fees are adjusted to income so that anyone, no matter what his financial circumstances, can receive help. The occasional disadvantage with the community agency is that there is sometimes a wait of several weeks or months to get in and be seen and usually you do not have your choice of therapists. But for someone with limited income you can do no worse than try this.