The Stone and the Star: Fanaticism, Doubt and the Problem of Integrity

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In 1831, a revelation given through Joseph Smith echoing the book of Daniel, characterized the gospel set forth by the restored Church as a veritable monolith: "The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth until it has filled the whole earth." [1]

The metaphor suggests the growth of the Church through the process of bringing the restored gospel to ever-increasing numbers until all mankind is converted. However, the image of the monolith has come to apply to Mormonism in ways which its young founder could hardly have foreseen. As the Church has grown in size, it has placed increasing emphasis on uniformity of purpose, belief, and behavior leading to such developments as the phenomenon of correlation and a massive public relations effort to project a homogenized image of righteousness and unity from top to bottom and from the external particulars to the inner core. I know of no more thoroughgoing nor thought-provoking characterization of the gospel as monolith than Elder Bruce R. McConkie's summary under the heading of *unity* in *Mormon Doctrine*:

> This unity among all the saints, and between them and the Father and the Son is reserved for those who gain exaltation and inherit the fulness of the Father's kingdom.

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[1] D&C 65:2. See also Dan. 2:34–45; 8:25. In an address delivered in the Nauvoo Temple, 21 May 1843, Joseph Smith again uses the image of the rolling stone but this time reverses the metaphor by applying it to himself and suggesting that the stone is diminishing in size in the process of refinement: "I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priest craft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges . . . — all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty." (*History of the Church*, 5:401)

> *Those who attain it will all know the same things; think the same thoughts; exercise the same powers; do the same acts; respond in the same way to the same circumstances; beget the same kind of offspring; rejoice in the same continuation of the seeds forever; create the same type of worlds; enjoy the same eternal fulness; and glory in the same exaltation.* All this is the eventual unity that is to be achieved but even now in man's feeble mortal state he can yet attain unity in thought, desires, purposes, and the like.[2]

Almost as though anticipating the need to offset the potential for excess in the monolith of 1831, Joseph Smith published in 1842 the book of Abraham which develops the star metaphor underlining the fundamental individuality and distinctiveness of each intelligence:

> And I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God. . . . Howbeit that he made the greater star, as also, if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other, yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning. . . .
> And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they. (Abr. 3:2, 18-19).

The stone and the star — the all-encompassing monolith and the inviolate individual intelligence — constitute a basic polarity built into the very fabric of Mormonism. Either can be a threat to personal and institutional integrity, especially if it is not consciously acknowledged and dealt with. Ironically I did not become fully aware of these strains until I had occasion to discuss Mormonism with a group of Catholic students.

Some years ago, I was asked to teach a Gospel Doctrine class in comparative religion in the Federal Heights Ward of Salt Lake City. When it came to discussing Catholicism, I invited Father Merz, a young priest assigned to the Newman Center, the Catholic equivalent of the Institute of Religion on the University of Utah campus. It was an informative experience for the class and, to the best of my knowledge, was the first and last time a Catholic priest in full clerical attire attended and helped teach a Gospel Doctrine class. Several weeks after his visit, Father Merz called and asked me to return the favor, addressing his student congregation on some contemporary problems of Mormonism. At first, the assigned topic seemed to have a negative bias, but I realized that Father Merz had ended up discussing some contemporary problems of Catholicism, and I should be willing to reciprocate.

As it turned out, the evening I spent talking to a group of some forty Catholic students was enlightening and fruitful on both sides. All forty had met a number of LDS students, but not one of them had acquired a Mormon friend. They had all been asked the Golden Questions but had not given the "Golden Answers," and that was the end of that. They wanted to know why their young Mormon counterparts seemed so uptight and unapproachable, so I proceeded to explain what is expected of a good Latter-day Saint. By the time I had run through the list of basic requirements including the Word

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[2] Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979), p. 275.

of Wisdom, tithing, the building fund and ward budget, the call to fill a mission, ward and stake meetings and assignments, temple work including one's own endowments followed by the lifelong requirement to wear the garments and perform ordinances for the dead, lay priesthood duties, a strict law of chastity, and the need to develop and bear a solid testimony in addition to following the basic teachings of Christ — they were frankly astounded. They commented that the only way a Catholic could come under comparable religious pressures would be by entering one of the orders to become a priest, monk, or nun. Even then, he or she would have an "escape valve" — the confessional — which is not available to Mormons. Given the elaborate code imposed on Mormons, the young Catholics could finally understand the appellation, "Latter-day Saint." One would *have* to be a saint to live up to all that! The implication was clear: to be a true-blue Mormon, one would have to be a zealot, perhaps a fanatic.

This led to a question about the practical implications of the almost impossibly high standards of the LDS Church. Do Mormons generally manage to live their religion with punctilious rigor, and, if not, what is the minimal level of religious observance below which one is no longer considered a Mormon in good standing? In responding, I had to admit that active Mormons almost always accept the assumption of total commitment and that no attempt has been made to describe a "minimal Mormon" corresponding to the "minimal Catholic" who attends mass and goes to confession once a year to avoid lapsing into a state of mortal sin. I also acknowledged the theological and ethical compartmentalization which Mormon perfectionism often produces among the faithful when they cultivate convenient features of Mormonism to compensate for those areas which they choose to ignore or neglect.

In retrospect, that exchange at the Newman Center taught me three major things. First, it was a valuable ecumenical experience in honesty. My willingness to admit that we have doubts and misgivings and my acknowledgment of the genuine challenge of being a "total" Mormon produced an atmosphere of sympathy and candor; the discussion became much more vital and substantial than I had anticipated. Second, it underscored the demands of being a full-fledged Latter-day Saint, demands so high that, viewed from without, Mormonism seems to demand a degree of dedication which borders on fanaticism. Third, it reminded me that the need to achieve perfection (or at least to appear perfect) and the physical impossibility of doing so almost always results in compartmentalization and the subterfuge of suppressing doubt and shortcomings.

It may be useful at this point to return to our metaphor of the stone and the star. It seems to me that the more we emphasize the stone, the more our monolithic thinking leads us in the direction of fanaticism, whereas the more we favor the star, the more our penchant for individual autonomy inclines us toward doubt. I would like to focus more specifically first on fanaticism, then on doubt, in an effort to ascertain why it is such a challenge for Mormons to balance these tendencies. I feel that our efforts to achieve and maintain true integrity will not be successful until we can.

It is my experience that Latter-day Saints are very uncomfortable with the concept of fanaticism and that we rarely use it to designate a fellow Mormon except in limited cases such as someone who strikes us as being "a fanatic" about the Word of Wisdom (or genealogy, etc.). Euphemisms like *dedicated*, *obedient*, or *strict* are more customary ways of describing the kind of excessive behavior which could well be equated with fanaticism. Perhaps this sensitivity lingers from the common nineteenth-century view of outsiders who saw Mormonism as a fanatical cult dedicated to such religious aberrations as visions, polygamy, polytheism, and blood atonement.

Examples abound, but a few should suffice: An 1833 newspaper account describes "a meeting of the citizens of Jackson County, Missouri, called for the purpose of adopting measures to rid themselves of the set of fanatics called Mormons." A letter written by a gentile in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1836 admits grudgingly that Mormons "are by no means, as a class, men of weak minds. Perhaps most fanatics and visionaries have intellects peculiarly though perversely active." In commenting on a visit to Salt Lake City with Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1871, James B. Thayer described a discourse of Brigham Young as being "marked by quaint sense, and yet flavored also with a revolting mixture of religious fanaticism and vulgar dishonesty." [3] While it might lead us too far afield to discuss the dynamics of the public perceptions and public relations that have led to the term's gradual disappearance, I would submit that, in reality, it has simply gone underground.

I would like to make it abundantly clear that I am *not* trying to paint a lurid picture of Mormons as wild-eyed fanatics. We generally tend to be a level-headed, down-to-earth, practical lot, imbued with the belief that the "glory of God is intelligence," and strongly committed to the Word of Wisdom precept that we should exercise moderation in all things, even though current practice is more exclusionary than moderate. In associating fanaticism with Mormonism, I wish to call attention to a potential danger which, given our unique belief system, sporadically erupts as an ugly reality in some Mormon circles. It can be a useful device to get us to see ourselves more objectively. As Miklos Molnar has so aptly pointed out, although "everyone is a potential fanatic. . . . the fanatic is always the Other." [4] Perceiving one's own penchant for fanaticism can be valuable, just as I discovered that evening at the Newman Center. Like it or not, there is evidence to suggest that we Mormons still fit the description as well as any group around.

Fanatic is derived from *fanum*, the temple where oracles were set forth, and it has the same root as *vates*, which means prophet. Thus, "fanatics"

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[3] The examples which follow are cited in William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, eds., *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958); pp. 77–78: Minutes and resolutions of a meeting held 20 July 1833, published in the *Missouri Intelligencer and Boon's Lick Advertiser* (Columbia), of 10 Aug. 1833; p. 88: letter by James H. Eels 1 April 1836, which appeared originally in the *New York Evangelist*, and was extracted by the *Christian Journal* of Exeter, New Hampshire, 21 April 1836; and p. 384: James B. Thayer, *A Western Journey with Mr. Emerson*, 1884.

[4] André Haynal, Miklos Molnar, and Gérard de Puymège, *Fanaticism: A Historical and Psychoanalytical Study*, trans., Linda Buller Koseoglu (New York: Schocken Books, 1983), pp. 215, 8.

thronged the temple, while the "profane" (from *profanus,* literally "he who stands in front of the temple") was the uninitiated, alien to the sacred concerns of religion, and a threat to the sacred. It is noteworthy that fanaticism thus, from the very beginning, implied a strong we/they polarization, a dichotomy of the righteous and the unrighteous which categorically excluded the possibility of any middle ground.

Although *fanatic* originally had no pejorative connotation, it eventually came to be used by Christians to condemn the followers of pagan faiths, notably Muslims; and, as Christianity became progressively more schismatic, Christians began applying it scathingly to a selected few of their own number. However, it was not until the eighteenth century that the notion of fanaticism emerged as a clear negative in a society which generally shifted its emphasis from absolutism to tolerance. Gérard de Puymège summarizes this development:

> If fanatics abound and are often scorned in intolerant societies, the concept of fanaticism is not conceivable outside of tolerance, outside of pluralism. The fanatic's domain is the *religio,* within the framework of which he exercises his vocation as priest and his faith as a believer. He who fails to listen to the voice of the prophet spurns divine will . . . . It was only when fanaticism ceased to be society's unnamed norm — unnamed because unobjectivized — that it becomes the object of fear and repulsion from the pluralist world of the Enlightenment.[5]

The French *philosophes* used the term systematically to condemn superstition, various forms of irrational thinking and behavior, and, above all, intolerance. The French 1777 *Encyclopédie* described fanaticism as a kind of disease, "an aberration of the imagination," "a sickness of the people," "a sickness of religion which affects the brain," "a heavenly epilepsy," with such symptoms as "dark melancholy," "visions," and "pseudo-prophecy."

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, *fanaticism* has been applied with increasing frequency to secular activities such as politics and science. But even then, because of its strong religious overtones, it can only be applied to something which, for the fanatic, has taken on an aura of sacredness. Even the degeneration of *fanatic* into the *fan* of a popular culture hero has remained true to its origins. The fan identifies in a religious way with the idol — whether it be James Dean or the Beatles — around whom a cult develops which almost always engages in such excessive behavior as ecstacy, screaming, and fainting. Clearly there can be no fanaticism without some form of religious faith.

The most perceptive study of fanaticism to appear to date, namely, *Fanaticism: A Historical and Psychoanalytical Study,* by Haynal, Molnar, and de Puymège has direct applicability to Mormonism, though the authors did not write with Mormonism in mind:

> One thing is constant in fanaticism, and that is that the object to which the fanatic devotes his jealous, vindictive, and monomaniacal faith must acquire in his eyes an exclusively sacred character. Faith in the party, the leader, or the family leads to fanaticism by virtue of the exclusivity and the unique saving function it invests in its

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[5] Ibid., p. 20. The discussion which follows is largely drawn from this work, with citations from pp. 29, 33, 36, 41, 215–16, 218, and 226–27.

object. . . . In his illusion of having found the absolute and superhuman, the fanatic believes himself to be in possession of *the* truth, which confers upon him omniscience, omnipotence, and invulnerability — all superhuman conditions. . . . the feeling of omnipotence is accompanied by a narcissistic thrill at the idea of being among the elect of God or history. . . . The paranoid dichotomic system — true-false, black-white, friend-enemy — engenders radicalization of thought, channeling aggression toward an enemy. . . . The fanatic cannot tolerate scientific thought. . . . [The criteria which fanaticism entails are] exclusivity, intolerance, the search for an absolute, the conviction of being right, imperviousness to any line of reasoning that seeks to deflect it from its course. . . .

Faith, while not in itself implying fanaticism, does remain its matrix. The zeal that faith induces carries fanaticism within it unleashing it as soon as it becomes *excessive* . . . or *exclusive*. . . . [Fanaticism is also characterized by] "knowledge" of good and evil as absolutes, a binary and standardizing way of thinking, an aversion to anything that opposes the truth or questions it, however slightly. Fanaticism, through all these forms, pursues the same goal: perfection and harmony on earth or in the other world.

It would be a simple matter to select passages from recent addresses of various General Authorities concerning Church history, the women's movement, the authority of the living prophet, and the theory of evolution, which would illustrate this catalogue. That exercise would be both unnecessary and ungracious for my present purpose, especially because it is not always possible to distinguish between deliberate fanaticism and rhetorical overstatement. The real danger lies in what de Puymège calls the "fanaticizer/fanaticized dialectic," according to which even a hint of fanaticism in the pronouncements of top-level leaders can be dangerously magnified by what de Puymège uncharitably calls "fanatical henchmen" at lower hierarchical levels.

As I have already suggested, *fanatic* and *fanaticism* rarely occur in Mormon discourse. For that reason, it is significant that Bruce R. McConkie, in *Mormon Doctrine*, defines fanaticism as "the devil's substitute for and perversion of true zeal. It is exhibited in wildly extravagant and overzealous views and acts. It is based either on unreasoning devotion to a cause, a devotion which closes the door to investigation and dispassionate study, or on an overemphasis of some particular doctrine or practice, an emphasis which twists the truth as a whole out of perspective." He concludes his comments with an italicized reminder that "*stable and sound persons are never fanatics; they do not ride gospel hobbies.*" [6]

Ironically, Elder McConkie's sweeping pronouncements in his 1980 address on "The Seven Deadly Heresies" [7] appear to be oratorical overkill typical of fanatics, all of which raises a serious question applicable to religious fanaticism in general: why so much vehemence in setting forth presumably self-evident points of doctrine? In the first issue of DIALOGUE, Frances Lee Menlove summarized this problem brilliantly when she observed: "Behind the mask of fanatical preservation may be the real fear that the truth of the Church is too fragile to tamper with, that an honest and open examination may destroy his

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[6] McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 275.

[7] McConkie, "The Seven Deadly Heresies," address delivered 1 May 1980, at Fourteen-Stake Fireside, Brigham Young University.

faith or his way of life. Thus the religious conservative may also be hiding from himself a basic lack of faith." [8] Josef Rudin, an exponent of the Viennese school of psychology, makes a similar observation when he asks: "Does fanaticism originate as compensation for one's own inner insecurity, as C. G. Jung emphasizes: 'Fanaticism is the brother of doubt'? Yet perhaps it can also be maintained that man becomes a victim of fanaticism only when educational and environmental differences have guided him into radicalism and intolerance," and he adds that "the psychotherapist probably meets fanaticism most frequently in the form of perfectionism and ethical rigorism." [9]

Haynal provides additional useful insights into the deleterious effects of compensatory fanaticism when he notes that "fanaticism always implies a betrayal of self which is manifested by an inner anguish — deep, gnawing guilt feelings which cannot be shaken despite attempts to camouflage them through loud protestations and tireless activity," and he refers to the accompanying " 'compromise of integrity' characterizing the defensive elimination of moral conscience and the replacement of ideals by satisfaction of a narcissistic order (power, opportunism, vengeance, ambition, et caetera)." [10]

If, as a rule, we Mormons are reluctant to own up to our predisposition to fanaticism, we are also less than candid about any inclination we may have toward disbelief. D. Jeff Burton at the 1982 Sunstone Symposium discussed "the closet doubter" as "an active Latter-day Saint who has secretly rejected one or more fundamental tenets upon which today's Church is based" yet chooses not to divulge his doubts to the "mainstream believer" to avoid family pain, embarrassment, or ecclesiastical retribution. [11]

If it is valid to single out "closet doubters," I would submit that it is equally valid to speak of "closet fanatics." I would reserve this designation for true believers who, while presuming to eschew the traditional popular image of Mormonism as an eccentric cult or sect, nevertheless live by the divine imperative — the assumption that the decisions and directives at all levels of Church leadership are divinely ordained and therefore require unquestioning obedience and even fanatical allegiance.

The point I wish to emphasize here is that, since doubt, however much denied or resisted, is so patently a major component of fanaticism, the closet doubter/closet fanatic syndrome is not so much a polarization of opposites as it is simply two sides of the same coin. It should be clear by now that since fanatics use their fanaticism to protect themselves from their own doubts as well as to denounce the doubts of others, the true meaning of the term "closet fanatic" is to be found in the instinctive effort to keep the doubts safely locked away in the closet of the unconscious mind. Furthermore, the closet fanatic constitutes a very real and present danger — much more so than the closet

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[8] Frances Lee Menlove, "The Challenge of Honesty," DIALOGUE 1 (Spring 1966): 48.

[9] Josef Rudin, *Fanaticism: A Psychological Analysis,* trans., Elisabeth Reineke and Paul C. Bailey (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), pp. 9, 15.

[10] Haynal, Molnar, and de Puymège, *Fanaticism,* p. 59.

[11] D. Jeff Burton, "The Phenomenon of the Closet Doubter," *Sunstone* 7 (Sept.–Oct., 1982): 36–38.

doubter — because he/she is less conscious of the root of the fanaticism than the doubter is of the doubt and wreaks ungodly havoc in the name of God. Fanaticism poses as holiness but is actually a form of hubris. Reinhold Niebuhr observes that "the tendency to claim God as an ally for our partisan ends is . . . the source of all religious fanaticism." [12] Indeed, to gratify one's own power needs, to engage in strident self-righteousness in the name of the Lord is to be guilty of a particularly insidious form of blasphemy. It is a contradiction of Christ's admonition to love our neighbor as ourselves, and it condemns the mote without seeing the beam.

Practically speaking, there is a synergistic relationship between the closet doubter and the closet fanatic. Whether externally perceived or internally sensed, doubt sparks the fanatic's fanaticism, and the fanatic's heightened zealotry drive the doubter farther into the closet. I am convinced that the only way to break this vicious circle is to bring doubt — and with it, fanaticism — out of the closet.

All too often doubt and religious faith seem to be antithetical, and, accordingly, doubt has come in for its full share of condemnation. Brigham Young, keenly aware of the Church's far-from-imaginary foes, warned that "if you allow yourselves to doubt anything that God has revealed, . . . it will not be long before you . . . find fault with the authorities of the Church." [13] Bruce R. McConkie, writing during an apparently more benign time, states that "faith and belief are of God; doubt and skepticism are of the devil," and he adds that "doubt comes from failure to keep the commandments." [14]

On the other hand, John A. Widtsoe made some subtle distinctions that gave doubt a more positive emphasis: "Doubt, unless transmuted into inquiry, has no value or worth in the world. . . . Doubt of the right kind — that is honest questioning — can lead to faith." [15] To claim never to have experienced doubt in religious matters or to call all doubt sinful is to deny a central fact of human experience and to ignore the very real doubts of some pivotal religious leaders. As Frances Lee Menlove points out, "No one should doubt that in some way, or for some reason, he is also a doubter." [16] Let's not forget that Jesus Christ himself expressed acute doubt when, in agony on the cross, he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34) Joseph Smith began his religious career by doubting that any existing church had the truth; and during his prayer in the grove, he experienced a moment of intense darkness and doubt before the enlightenment of the first vision burst upon him. Doubt and discouragement assailed him repeatedly throughout his

[12] Cited in Laurence J. Peter, *Peter's Quotations: Ideas for Our Time* (New York: Bantam Books, 1979), p. 187.

[13] Discourse, Salt Lake City, 15 Aug. 1876, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards 1854–82), 18: 215.

[14] McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 208.

[15] John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations, Volumes 1–2–3*, Arr., G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960), pp. 31–32.

[16] Menlove, "The Challenge of Honesty," p. 46.

career as a prophet.[17] J. Reuben Clark developed a rocklike testimony only after wrestling mightily with his doubts on a number of central religious issues such as the need to avoid self-deception in matters of faith by making "every conclusion pass the fiery ordeal of pitiless reason," the possibility that Joseph Smith's own readings or experience had contributed substantially to his formulation of doctrine, and the mind-boggling implications of the potential of individuals to achieve godly stature which led President Clark to ask: "Is Space or occupied portions of it divided among various deities — have they 'great spheres of influence'? Wars of Gods — think of the wreck of matter involved. . . ." However, out of this process came the provocative epigram, "If we have the truth, [it] cannot be harmed by investigation. If we have not the truth, it ought to be harmed." [18]

Not only is it evident that doubt can be respectable and positive, it is also unavoidable if the gospel is to be subjected to the unhampered intellectual scrutiny which it needs and deserves. I would even assert that, as free agents emulating that divine intelligence which we have been told is God's true glory, it is our God-given duty to doubt wherever honest inquiry requires it and to transcend that doubt in developing a valid testimony based on our own deepest experience and our own hard-won convictions. A so-called testimony based on blind obedience, bland conformism, and the desire to look good expressed in various forms of mindless activism simply is not a testimony but a sad compromise, a convenient, undernourished, and less-than-inspired embryo of a testimony. No one should settle for such a substitute in an institution with the all-embracing truth claims of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which promises its faithful members nothing less than the splendor — and magnanimity — of godhood itself. As Parley A. Christensen, the late beloved and outspoken professor of English at Brigham Young University, observed, "God himself is limited when men cease to think." He also affirmed that "true religion removes conflicts everywhere. It puts man at peace with himself and

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[17] One of the most dramatic instances of Joseph's very human proclivity to doubt occurred in 1828 when he discovered that Martin Harris had lost the first 116 pages of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon translation. According to his mother, he cried out, "Oh, my God! . . . All is lost! all is lost! What shall I do?" Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (Liverpool, England, 1853), p. 121. Another instance occurred in May 1837 at the climax of the Kirtland banking disaster when Joseph wrote, in a moment of despair, that "it seemed as though the powers of earth and hell were combining . . . to overthrow the Church at once and make a final end." Fawn M. Brody, *No Man Knows My History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), p. 203. At the end of his career when his enemies were gaining the upper hand in Nauvoo, Joseph's first impulse was to cross the Mississippi in an effort to flee to the west. But when Emma pleaded with him to return and many of the Saints accused him of cowardice, he commented: "If my life is of no value to my friends, it is of none to myself." At that point, reduced to a state of total doubt, he turned first to Porter Rockwell asking, "What shall we do?" and then to his brother Hyrum asking, "You are the oldest, what shall we do?" Hyrum replied, "Let's go back and give ourselves up." Joseph deferred to his brother, leading, of course, to their mutual assassination in Carthage. Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith, the First Mormon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), p. 402.

[18] Cited in D. Michael Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1983), p. 24.

other men. It gives him inner integrity and outer compassion. There is something wrong with a religion that puts head and heart, mind and emotion, knowledge and faith, at odds with one another. Religion is not doing what it is supposed to do if it fails to draw people of all faiths together in mutual respect and sympathy." [19]

It may not be realistic to expect the Church to achieve Christensen's broad ecumenical ideal. But surely the Church is big enough and generous enough to pursue the kind of internal ecumenicalism that would bring together such diverse factions as closet doubters and closet fanatics through an honest confrontation and compassionate discussion of their respective doubts, fears, and expectations. After all, *integrity* derives from the Latin word for wholeness, and it has come to connote probity, completeness, and unity. The Church cannot be whole and complete without making room for its thinkers and doubters as well as its true believers. It cannot achieve probity unless it deals forthrightly — and compassionately — with those core doubts which have generated the factionalism so painfully evident in the Church to anyone who looks beneath the surface. The monolith must accommodate the star, just as the star must acknowledge the monolith.

I make no claim to being a model of integrity, although I admire it whenever I see it because I know the difficulty of achieving and maintaining it. Perhaps the finest summary of the point under discussion has already been made by Lowell Bennion, a dear friend and a man of the highest integrity who has made his peace with the stone while moving steadily toward the star:

> One ought not — in the words of Levi Edgar Young — to pulverize the Gospel, live it piecemeal, one rule or principle at a time bolstered by a single text. It is more prudent to keep in mind the Gospel as a whole. . . . For example, Latter-day Saints believe in the fatherhood, justice, love, and intelligence of God. . . . Everything that men have said and done in the name of God cannot be accepted at face value unless it is consistent with His character and purpose. And for me, Jesus Christ best reveals the character, spirit, and will of God. What I cannot square with Christ's teachings, I will question no matter what the source. The nature of God becomes then a basic, rational guide with which to interpret the religious and moral life. This in my judgment, is the most significant purpose of theologizing. [20]

The balance between stone and star is a delicate one: however great the authoritarian claims of the monolith may be, they must ultimately come to judgment at the bar of a personal testimony of the teachings of Jesus Christ. If, as Lehi declares, "it must needs be that there is opposition in all things," then there is really nothing alarming about the counterpoise of stone and star even at the very heart of Mormonism. Living the gospel fully and with integrity means recognizing and accepting the ever-present need to reconcile the stone and the star, for as Lehi also observes, "all things must be a compound in one." (2 Ne. 2:11)

[19] Parley A. Christensen, *Of a Number of Things* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1962), p. 25, 11.

[20] Lowell L. Bennion, "Faith and Reason: The Logic of the Gospel," DIALOGUE 6 (Autumn–Winter 1971): 162.