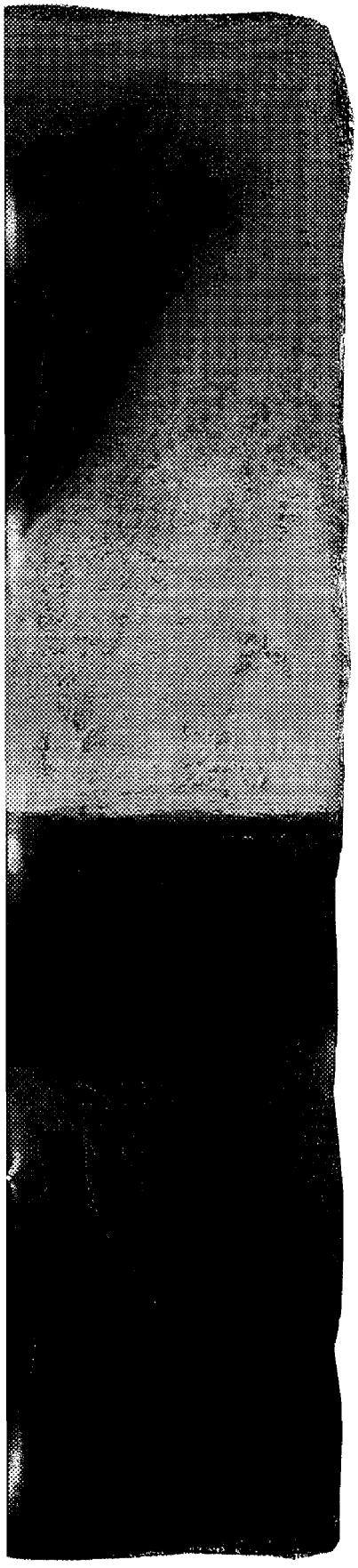


THE EVIDENCE WITHIN INTEGRITY

IT'S BEEN ABOUT 21 YEARS SINCE I FIRST LEARNED AS CHURCH COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, IN A CONVERSATION WITH ELDER MARION G ROMNEY, THAT IT WAS HIS STRONG DESIRE, ON WHICH HE SOON MADE GOOD, TO HAVE A LAW SCHOOL ☐ SINCE THEN, I THINK WHAT HAS BEEN AMASSED IN THE WAY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BY ELDER NEAL A. MAXWELL

This address was given at the Alumni Annual Dinner, October 23, 1992

ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN KERSHISNIK

is greater than even he would have ever imagined could occur in such a short time The illustrative measurements I'll use here just by way of introductory comments leave out, in my opinion, the more significant accomplishments that have to do with being good fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, neighbors, and citizens. But we have:

20 sitting judges
- 17 state
- 2 federal
- 1 tribal

1 congressman
2 congressional candidates
A major industrialist
Numerous state legislators and law professors
3 mission presidents
20 stake presidents
Numerous Relief Society presidents, Primary presidents, bishops, high councilors, etc.
Graduates practicing in 17 foreign countries
7 who have clerked for U S Supreme Court Justices

It's very impressive, and I think the box score, so to speak, is greater than any of us who have watched with interest would have ever expected

Of course, the on-rolling success of the Law School will be reflected as it now is in the lives of its graduates And its real accreditation will be a spiritual accreditation.

I repeat quickly two thoughts from a speech given a decade ago to the Utah State Bar:

Please don't let professional intensity cause you to falter in your own families A good day in court cannot compensate for a bad day at home Winning points at the office round table is not as vital as that which happens at your supper table Go on being a true friend to your family and neighbors as well as a good friend of the court.

One piece of current counsel before I speak to my major theme Please pace yourselves! Those of you whom I know are highly conscientious and have need of this counsel. On my office wall is a quote from Anne Morrow Lindberg, which says: "My life cannot implement in action the demands of all the people to whom my heart responds " It's a needed reminder for me, and I rather expect for you as well

Paralleling that counsel is this episode involving a report by a colleague to President Brigham Young The colleague made his report and was anxious to leave so as not to impose on President Young. But President Young said, "Oh, please sit a spell with me I am weary of men and things " How often do we "sit a spell" with spouse, children, colleagues, or friends?

I should like to address the topic of integrity, which for tonight's purpose will be defined as an undivided, uncorrupted, and unimpaired spiritual wholeness We are not therefore speaking of mere reciprocity as in "honor among thieves," but of wholeness in relation to God's principles. Hence integrity is an important remedy for the almost consuming tendency of compartmentalization in our society and in some of our lives. Compartmentalization is destructive of identity and productive of hypocrisy It retards putting off the natural man because there are so many places he can hide!

As I begin, I acknowledge that whether or not my remarks are at all helpful to you, this opportunity to reflect on what I yet lack with regard to integrity has been appreciated Integrity is crucial to happiness; it is also portable It will, brothers and sisters, to the degree developed, go through the veil of death with us, and it will rise with us in the Resurrection. How marvelous, isn't it, that God's long suffering, when you and I fall short with regard to integrity, gives us fresh chances to do better!

Of President Marion G. Romney, the initiator and early nurturer of the Law School, recipient of the Order of the Coif, his biographer, Elder F Burton Howard, wrote:

As [Elder Romney] *opened his first law office, he resolved to arrive thirty minutes earlier than any of his associates. He continued this practice for twelve years, during which he read the Book of Mormon nine times*

He learned that the solution to problems was generally to be found through reason and precedent Thus, he saw no conflict between his approach and the scriptural admonition to "prove all things; [and] *hold fast that which is good"* (1 Thessalonians 5:21) [Marion G Romney did not] *see any reason to compartmentalize his life into religious and secular segments* [F Burton Howard, *Marion G Romney, His Life and Faith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 89]

As the founder of the Law School that example should be powerful for all of us

The virtue of integrity is that it can respond to so many situations Integrity is never imitated by rivalry! General Robert E Lee, for instance, was asked for his opinion of a colleague Lee replied candidly but generously. Lee's questioner then said, in effect, "Well, he doesn't speak so highly of you," to which General Lee replied, "Sir, you have asked me for my opinion of him, not his opinion of me!" Clearly—to borrow a phrase from Walter Bagehot—Robert E Lee "had furnished his mind with fixed principles," which, in my opinion, is the best form of interior decoration!

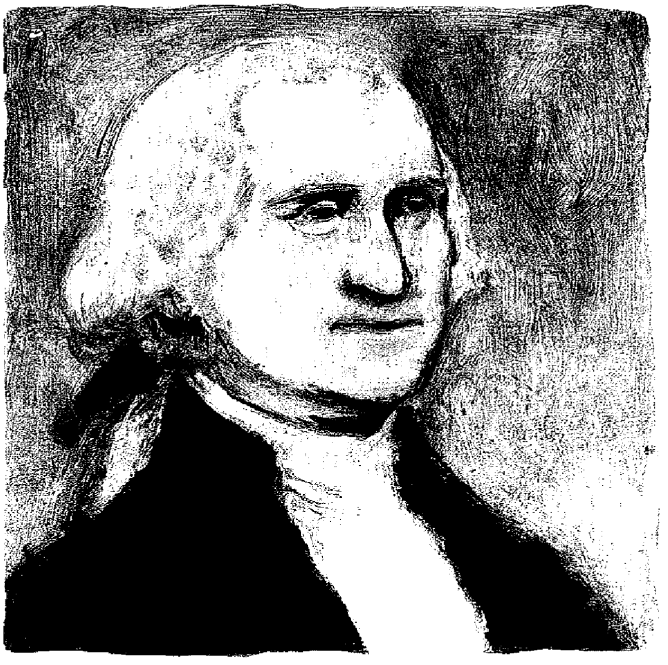
John the Baptist had quite a following, but commented meekly and with integrity on Jesus' growing influence that "[Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30) How one wishes for that kind of meekness and candor in public life today A similar response occurred in the few brief moments in Church history when President Harold B. Lee lay near death President Romney, his counselor, had come quickly to the hospital Soon Spencer Woolley Kimball arrived, president of the Council of the Twelve He meekly asked, "President Romney, what can I do to help you?" A few minutes later President Lee was dead, and President Romney said, "President Kimball, what can I do to help you?"

Our tongues are usually quick to reflect any lack of integrity Brigham Young said,

When a person opens his mouth, no matter what he talks about, to a person of quick discernment, he will disclose more or less of his true sentiments. You cannot hide the heart, when the mouth is open. [*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6 (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86), 74]

Since verbosity does disclose the heart, it has been observed that sometimes it is "in silence [that] man can most readily preserve his integrity" (Meister Eckhart, *Directions for the Contemplative Life*).

Competency and integrity were both present in the person of General George C. Marshall. In an early effort to preserve his integrity as chief of staff, Marshall refused to be palsy-walsy with his commander in chief. Early on, President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed Marshall as "George." General Marshall quickly responded, "It's General Marshall, Mr. President" (David McCullough, *Truman* [New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992], 534). Loyalty was blended with integrity!



Later, loyal General Marshall wanted very much to lead the Allied invasion force which was his deservedly to claim. But Roosevelt wanted him to stay on as chief of staff, and Marshall did. Thus Eisenhower got to lead the Allied crusade, and the rest is history. Marshall was more concerned about rendering service than with what his resumé would show! Meekness was blended with integrity!

Perhaps in its own way, genuine meekness is a special reflection of integrity's proximate reaction to ultimate reality, such as, where we really stand in relation to the God who created us and gave us his Only Begotten Son.

When integrity is missing, betrayal may take its place. In Kirtland, when Wilford Woodruff encountered Joseph, the Prophet held his hand and looked longingly and scrutinizingly into Wilford's eyes. Discerningly, Joseph said how glad he was to know Woodruff was his friend, for "I hardly know when I meet those who have been my brethren . . . who of them are my friends. They have become so scarce" (Mathias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff* [Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1909], 68). How blessed we are that Joseph persisted and completed his mission—even amid those who lacked meekness and integrity!

The episode just recited may explain this quote from President Woodruff from which the title of my remarks is taken. He said:

To me the principle of integrity *is one of the greatest blessings we can possibly possess. He who proves true to himself or his brethren, to his friends and to his God, will have* the evidence within *him that he is accepted; he will have the confidence of his God and of his friends.* [*Journal of Discourses* 8:266, emphasis added]

True integrity" does provide "the evidence within" of one's acceptance in a Higher Court! As professionals you deal with evidence. But you also understand (and this is part of what is different about this law school) that "faith is the . . . evidence of things not seen" and, likewise, how certain knowledge as Paul said is spiritually discerned (Hebrews 11:1; see 1 Corinthians 2:10).

Just as when one's conscience calls, it is with a voice which only he can hear. So, too, some assurances that come are highly personalized.

Perhaps it is the general paucity of integrity in public life that results in its being so noticed by all of us. There is something special about the authority of example. This episode from the American Revolutionary War involves sacrificing and unpaid officers:

Washington called together the grumbling officers on March 15, 1783. . . . He began to speak—carefully and from a written text, referring to the proposal of "either deserting our Country in the extremest hour of her distress, or turning our Arms against it. . . ." Washington appealed simply and honestly for reason, restraint, patience, and duty—all the good and unexciting virtues.

WASHINGTON APPEALED SIMPLY AND HONESTLY FOR REASON, RESTRAINT, PATIENCE, AND DUTY—ALL THE GOOD AND UNEXCITING VIRTUES —BART MCDOWELL

And then Washington stumbled as he read He squinted, paused, and out of his pocket he drew some new spectacles "Gentlemen, you must pardon me," he said in apology "It appears that I have grown gray in your service and now I find myself also growing blind "

Most of his men had never seen the general wear glasses Yes, the men said to themselves, eight hard years They recalled the ruddy, fullblooded planter of 1775; now they saw a big, good, fatherly man grown old. They wept, many of these warriors And the Newburgh plot was dissolved [Bart McDowell, *The Revolutionary War; America's Fight for Freedom* (Washington, D C : National Geographic Society, 1967), 190–91]

No wonder Flexner, Washington's biographer, wrote of our first president, "In all history few men who possessed unassailable power have used that power so gently and self-effacingly for what their best instincts told them was the welfare of their neighbors and all mankind" (James Thomas Flexner, *Washington: The Indispensable Man* [Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974], xvi)

Yes, "almost all men" abuse authority and power, but Washington was not among them (see D&C 121:39)

But Washington did not come to the American presidency fully formed. Instead, as a younger officer Washington learned from the reproof inherent in his earlier mistakes Of his capacity for introspection, Flexner said:

As his character and his world view expanded, more meanings became clear to him He accurately defined his failures and worked out the reasons why he had failed The results of this protracted self-education were to prove of the greatest importance to the creation of the United States [*Washington,* 38]

However, brothers and sisters, self-improvement requires integrity in order for one to benefit from introspection

Inherent in integrity is the blessing of being more settled, which makes integrity conducive to generosity Generosity in politics, for instance, is so rare, and we are bound to notice it

As you know, Churchill had steadily and vigorously attacked Neville Chamberlain's failed policies of appeasement He once said Chamberlain looked at foreign affairs "through the wrong end of a municipal drain pipe" (William Raymond Manchester, *The Last Lion, Winston Spencer Churchill: Visions of Glory, 1874–1932,* 1st ed. [Boston: Little, Brown, 1983], 786) Nevertheless, at the time of Chamberlain's death, Churchill and Parliament generously observed:

History with its flickering lamps stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days The only guide to a man is his conscience; the only shield to his memory is the rectitude and sincerity of his actions. It is very imprudent to walk through life without this shield, because we are so often mocked by the failure of our hopes and the upsetting of our calculations; but with this shield, however the fates may play, we march always in the ranks of honor. [Robert Rhodes James, ed , *Churchill Speaks: Winston S Churchill in Peace and War: Collected Speeches, 1897–1963* (New York: Chelsea House, 1980), 734]

Life gives us so many clinical experiences to help us, but it takes introspection and integrity working together to break down the compartmentalization

Integrity also insists that we draw upon our instructive memories, including past mistakes Churchill chose these words as the motto for his last volume of his World War II history: "How the Great Democracies Triumphed, and so Were able to Resume the Follies Which Had so Nearly Cost Them Their [Lives]" (Winston S Churchill, "Triumph and Tragedy," in *The Second World War,* vol. 6 [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1953], ix).

Without integrity, memory is diminished!

Integrity can help us as it combines with meekness to keep us from the excesses of ego You and I can so easily be victimized by role suction, that powerful, almost silent process by means of which we can become so entrapped in a particular role that we reflect its accompanying viewpoints automatically, not reflectively Hence the saying you and I all know, "Where we stand depends on where we sit " Granted, where we sit can bring wider perspectives, but it can also induce a refusal to reflect or to face the results of reflection.

In World War I, General Douglas Haig (along with other generals and their political leaders) got "locked" in the awful and inconclusive trench warfare. One historian described Haig as, "inflexible, intolerant . the perfect commander for an enterprise committed to endless abortive assaulting" (Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* [London: Oxford Press, 1975], 12)

Just how disastrous was the "abortive assaulting"? One morning, waves of British soldiers climbed out of their trenches and began to walk

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forward "Out of 110,000 who attacked, 60,000 were killed or wounded on this one day Over 20,000 lay between the lines, and it was days before the wounded in No Man's Land stopped crying out" (Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* [London: Oxford Press, 1975], 13)

Unlike Washington, who learned from his errors, Haig's "diary contains no admission of his errors, no recognition of his fallibility"

Without integrity, it is so easy to "gratify our pride," or "our vain ambition" and even to "cover our sins" (D&C 121:37) In fact, this pattern is a *leitmotif,* recurring again and again in human affairs!

For instance, Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin flinched from the facts just preceding World War II because of worry over being re-elected He later confessed as prime minister, a "confession" which stunned many in Parliament:

Supposing I had gone to the country and said that Germany was rearming and that we must rearm, does anyone think that this pacific democracy would have rallied to that cry at that moment? I can think of nothing that would have made the loss of the [general] *election from my point of view more certain* [Roy Jenkins, *Baldwin* (London: Collins, 1987), 27]

A very damaging, startling admission

President John F Kennedy fretted over the growing U S buildup in Vietnam, but as in this reported episode, he shared Baldwin's reluctance:

The President said, he knew what the influential Senator wanted to hear, that he [Kennedy] *was beginning to agree about a complete military withdrawal "But I can't do it until 1965—until after I'm re-elected" To do it before could cause "a wild outcry" against him* [Barbara W. Tuchman, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam,* 1st ed (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1984), 303]

With those episodes from history as a backdrop, what of you and me? What of our individual samples of humanity—those lying within our circles of influence—whom God has given to us to love and to serve with integrity?

Our circles of influence vary in size, but size is less important than the quality and integrity of what we do within those circles J R R Tolkien wrote wisely,

It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till What weather they shall have is not ours to rule [Gandolf in *The Return of the King* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1965), 190]

Without integrity, brothers and sisters, there are so many ways in which you and I can fail to "succor" and to uproot the evil in the years and the situations wherein we are set

You and I have been asked to put off the natural man and the natural woman In your profession, as in every other, there are so many inducements to keep the natural man and woman comfortably intact—if only to do battle with other natural men and natural women! No wonder becoming the men and women of Christ is the great and persistent challenge (see Mosiah 3:19)!

If we are spiritually improving, whenever another individual encounters us—"at all times and in all things, and in all places"—he or she will experience a spiritual wholeness and a constancy—not perfection, but serious discipleship (Mosiah 18:9).

Occasionally, by worldly standards spiritual wholeness will prove costly Disciples' rewards are often not only deferred, they are often quite different Our retainers will come in the coin of a different realm At times, therefore, we really do give up certain things of the world in order to maintain integrity

"Do what is right; let the consequence follow" contains homely but splendid advice Happily, faithful members of the Church have been promised the gift of the Holy Ghost, who will show us "what is right" in all things and in all situations (see 2 Nephi 32:35)

Living in such a way that we can be shown what to do is a demanding challenge, and it takes integrity

Erastus Snow warned of the barriers that we interpose to God's spirit when we seek to gratify our own wills instead of his What are these barriers, brothers and sisters, except more compartmentalization?

One verse of scripture gives an immensely significant insight into Jesus' integrity It tells us that he suffered "temptations of every kind" but "gave no heed unto them" (Alma 7:11; D&C 20:22) With his keen intellect and unusual sensitivity, he would surely have noticed each and all of the temptations Yet he "gave no heed" unto them It is giving heed unto temptations that gets us in trouble! My mission president used to say we may not be able to stop all evil thoughts from coming into our minds, but we don't have to offer them chairs and tell them to sit down

Many of us may not have any major problems with integrity, but we have lots of small gaps in our integrity One may not lie, but a nuance of an expression, otherwise accurate, nevertheless inflects to convey advantage We may not personally engage in bashing others, but we do engage sometimes in conversational cloak-holding by failing to speak up

If integrity were more operative, its emancipating effects on the human scene would be enormous It would free us to focus our energy, time, and talents on the real issues rather than on game playing or maneuvering Moreover, with higher levels of shared trust, there would be greater shared perceptivity as to problems and solutions.

As in all things, the ultimate example is Jesus I never tire of bearing witness of him—not alone that he lived and lives, but also how he lived! Even in what might be described as small episodes, he gives us such large lessons He was a fully integrated, righteous individual, fully congruent in character

Some small episodes as I close: Previous to the events immediately preceding the crucifixion, Pilate and Herod had been "at enmity." Yet, at a point of crisis, they "made friends together" (Luke 23:12). Opportunities existed for Jesus to take advantage of this temporary alliance had he been willing to "shrink" from going through with the Atonement (see D&C 19:18, 19). Pilate found no fault with Jesus; Pilate was reachable. So was Herod, who had been desirous "to see [Jesus] of a long season" and "hoped to have seen some miracle done by him" (Luke 23:8–9). Though standing before Herod and fully aware of the ruler's expectations and the opportunity to please him, Jesus, nevertheless, "answered him nothing" (Luke 23:9, see also Mosiah 14:7).

Jesus' integrity was not for sale. There would be no demonstration to purchase amelioration. Jesus maintained his integrity even in the midst of an opportunity a lesser individual would have gladly seized.

Earlier, when his enemies came for Jesus—the Light of the World—in Gethsemane, they ironically came with lanterns and torches (see John 18:3). Amid that and so many other ironies, Jesus kept his poise. He endured so much irony, and irony is the crust on the bread of adversity. Irony, in my opinion, tests integrity more than almost anything else, and Jesus endured it.

Drenched in deep suffering at the time of his arrest, Jesus might have let himself become so swollen with understandable self-concern—he's working out the Atonement for the human family—that there would have been no capacity to think of others at all. Instead, empathic Jesus restored the severed ear of a hostile guard (see Luke 22:50–51). His way was not the way of the sword (see Matthew 26:52).

On the cross Jesus spoke only several recorded sentences. One was to assure that his mother, Mary, would be cared for by the Apostle John. Another reassured a pleading thief by Jesus' side. While Jesus was literally saving the world, he still nurtured proximate individuals. He was and is the Perfect Shepherd, full of integrity and full of empathy! When you and I suffer, sometimes we pass it along, don't we?

Jesus always individualized remarkably The Nephite Twelve, for instance, were interviewed by him "one by one" (3 Nephi 28:1) Clearly, he knew beforehand what their individual desires were, yet he still gave each individual an audience Contrast how able-and-idealistic Woodrow Wilson tried to get his league of nations approved As his biographer said:

[Wilson] *did not consult with the Senators and Representatives When he wanted to tell them something, he sent for them. There was little give and take when they appeared He explained what was desired, and dismissed the callers When men offered information he already possessed, he cut them off by saying, "I know that"* [Gene Smith, *When the Cheering Stopped* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1964), 30]

Universal Jesus is so personal! Jesus honored the integrity of each moment instead of worrying about audience size He was especially disclosing to a believing and solitary woman of Samaria:

The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things
Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he
[John 4:25–26]

It was the same audience size with an imprisoned Paul: "And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23:11)

Jesus' sensitivity and integrity combined so beautifully To the mother of James and John, who wrongly craved status for her sons in the world to come, Jesus gave mild reproof, "Ye know not what you ask," further indicating the Father had already made that determination (Matthew 20:22) Jesus never shrank from giving counsel, but he always took into account the receiving capacity of the hearers It takes caring to customize and perceptivity to know how One could care but not know how Or one could see what needs doing but not care sufficiently to do it. Integrity mobilizes all the other virtues!

Jailed John the Baptist sent followers, doubtless concerned with John's situation, to inquire of Jesus about his Messiahship "Do we look for another?" they said (Matthew 11:3) Jesus praised, not scolded John, indicating that no greater prophet had been born of woman (see Matthew 11:11) To the inquiring delegation, he said go and tell John that the blind see, the lame walk (see Matthew 11:4, 5) What is your phrase? *Res ipsa loquitur?*

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Of the once confident Peter who had faltered briefly, Jesus later pointedly and reprovingly asked him three times, "Lovest thou me?" (John 21:15–17)—evoking, as you know, Peter's heart wrenching responses This was apparently a necessary spiritual cleansing It seems to me, brothers and sisters, that post-doctoral disciples often have the toughest curriculum

Jesus was so perfect in his integrity that he never sought to prosper or to conquer, in the words of the Book of Mormon, "according to his genius" (Alma 30:17) Yet he was the brightest intellect ever to grace this planet!

How many mortals have done precisely opposite while wanting recognition for their dominance! Contrast meek Jesus and his integrity with the poet Shelley's lines about one mortal ruler celebrated by a statue:

Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies,

And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away
[Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Ozymandias," *1817*]

The key may be seen in what concerned Jesus in the depths of his agony in the Atonement What concerned him? "That [he] might not shrink" (D&C 19:18)! Mercifully for all of us, he did not pull back He did not shrink but, instead, completed, with full integrity, his "preparations unto the children of men" (D&C 19:19)

No wonder Paul declared, "in [Christ] all things hold together" (Col 1:17, RSV) He certainly held together during that awful Atonement! He not only had the integrity to do the Father's will, but, just as he had premortally promised, he gave all the glory to the Father!

As I conclude, the words of Jacob come to mind: "O be wise, what can I say more" (Jacob 6:12)?

May you and I develop sufficient additional integrity so that we can receive the blessing Wilford Woodruff promised and obtain "the evidence within," so that, though imperfect, we can be "accepted" and "have the confidence of God" And then, on one later day, shall our "confidence wax strong in the presence of God" (D&C 121:45)

God bless you and yours, in the name of Jesus Christ Amen