
EDUCATING FOR ETERNITY: HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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The role and place of religion in institutions of higher education in America have largely disappeared except for institutions sponsored by religious organizations. Even here, questions are raised as to whether these religiously oriented colleges and universities can retain their religious identity in an increasingly secular society that is often hostile towards religion. The marginalization and even dismissal of religious worldviews in the public square make the survival of religious institutions of higher education even more critical in our efforts to educate the whole person.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints embraces the belief of a dualistic human nature. A holistic approach to education includes the spiritual with the secular, teaching and learning by faith and by reason. The Church sponsors four institutions of higher education: Brigham Young University, Brigham Young University—Hawaii, Brigham Young University—Idaho, and LDS Business College. The challenge for these four institutions of higher education with a religious mission is how to integrate faith and knowledge, the sacred with the secular.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), sometimes referred to as the Mormon Church, was founded by the prophet Joseph Smith in upstate New York in 1830 with six members. From these very modest beginnings, Church membership now numbers over 11 million in 144 countries with membership doubling every 15 years. For theological and practical reasons, education has always played a very prominent role in the Church and a substantial portion of Church resources are directed toward a variety of educational opportunities for members of the Church. The prophet Joseph Smith taught, "one of the grand fundamental principles of 'Mormonism' is to receive truth, let it come from whence it may" (1978, p. 499).

The Church has established a Church Educational System to administer a variety of educational services, programs, and institutions to over 1.2 million people worldwide. The educational services and programs include religious education for secondary and post-secondary students, literacy programs, continuing education and personal development programs, elementary and secondary schools in Mexico and the South Pacific, and four institutions of higher education. The Church's flagship institution of higher education is Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. There are two affiliated campuses: BYU—Ricks located in Rexburg, Idaho, and BYU—Hawaii located in Laie, Hawaii. The fourth institution is the LDS Business College in Salt Lake City, Utah. In addition, the LDS Church Educational System sponsors an extensive religious education program for post-secondary students called LDS Institutes of Religion. These institutes of religion, comparable to Newman Centers sponsored by the Catholic Church, are found at major universities and colleges. Institutes of religion provide an opportunity for LDS college students to continue their study of the Gospel, its application in their personal lives, and integration of faith and knowledge as they prepare for their careers.

The purpose of this article is threefold: first, to outline some key concepts in LDS theology concerning knowledge and the importance of education; second, to present a brief historical overview of the development of LDS institutions of higher education; and third, to sketch the spiritual nature and foundation of LDS higher education as exemplified in the current policy and practice.

KNOWLEDGE, EDUCATION, AND LDS THEOLOGY

Education is the process through which we come to understand universal truths about ourselves, God, His purposes for us, and the universe we live in. An LDS philosophy of education comes from the scriptures and inspired teachings of Joseph Smith and his successors. For Latter-day Saints, there are absolute, universal truths. Truth "is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come" (*Doctrine & Covenants* 93:24). These truths ultimately come from a divine source, God, for "the glory of God is intelligence, or in other words, light and truth" (*Doctrine & Covenants* 93:36).

Knowledge of some of these truths and the realities of the world we live in can come from a variety of sources such as the physical senses, rational thought, and personal experience. There is, however, a second and most important avenue to access divine, eternal truth and that is through revelation from God. In fact, some kinds of knowledge can only be learned through divine revelation. For instance, the apostle Paul taught of the difference

between the “things of man” and that “which the Holy Ghost teacheth,” of knowledge that is “spiritually discerned” (1 *Corinthians* 2:11, 13-14). The apostle John later taught, “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (*Revelation* 19:10). Therefore, with two basic types of knowledge, there are also two fundamental learning modalities. One must “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (*Doctrine & Covenants* 88:118).

At the heart of an LDS philosophy of education are two concepts. One, we are dualistic in nature. We are both spiritual and physical. All people have a spirit, the essence of their identity, which is clothed with a physical body. The second concept is that of eternalism, the idea that all men and women are eternal beings going through progressive stages of development toward the realization of their full potential. Hence, Joseph Smith taught that “whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection; And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come” (*Doctrine & Covenants* 130:18, 19). Within the nurturing and enabling context of God’s grace, education with the acquisition and application of knowledge plays a critical role in this progressive development as children of God. Thus, education must be “education for eternity.... This means concern—curricular and behavioral—not only for the ‘whole man,’ but also for the ‘eternal man’” (Kimball, 1996, p. 43).

The oft-used dichotomy of sacred versus secular knowledge is, in one sense, a false dichotomy. What might be termed “secular knowledge” is often part of universal truth. What may be referred to as secular education could be ultimately considered religious in nature and purpose. Bennion (1939) observes that “Mormon education embraces secular learning as a constituent part of universal truth, which emanates from a divine source. All education, therefore, is religious and essential to progress. Even the vocational aspects of education are permeated with moral and religious aims” (p. 123). Brigham Young, the successor to Smith, taught that

not only does the religion of Jesus Christ make the people acquainted with the things of God, and develop within them moral excellence and purity, but it holds out every encouragement and inducement possible, for them to increase in knowledge and intelligence, in every branch of mechanism, or in the arts and sciences, for all wisdom, and all the arts and sciences in the world are from God, and designed for the good of His people. (p. 147)

If God is the ultimate source of all knowledge and truth, then all knowledge and truth have a religious or spiritual character.

Within the LDS philosophical framework of education, the educational curriculum is expansive and includes all truth, religious or secular, wherever it is to be found. Topics to be taught and subjects to be learned embrace all

of God's creation, the spiritual as well as the temporal, things of heaven as well as things of the earth. The following LDS teaching illustrates the religious obligation to learn all truth:

And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom. Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that ye may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand; of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and kingdoms—that ye may be prepared in all things. (*Doctrine & Covenants* 88:77-80)

Brigham Young taught “this is the belief and doctrine of the Latter-day Saints. Learn everything that the children of men know” (*Journal of Discourses*, 16, 77).

Not all knowledge and truth, however, are of equal value. Maxwell reminds us that there is an “aristocracy among truths” (1973, p. 4) and that “in our passion for equality we sometimes wrongly assume there is a democracy among truths” (1992, p. 140). If one takes the long view, the eternal view, then the truths that only have relevance for this mortal life become worthless in comparison to truths which are universal and bring us back into God's presence. For example, the fact or truth that the sun rose this morning is of some value, but pales in importance to the truth that God does live and has provided a means whereby men and women can overcome physical and spiritual death through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Thus, Smith taught “it is impossible to be saved in ignorance” (*Doctrine & Covenants* 131:6). Salvation was impossible if one was ignorant of what? Not an ignorance of chemistry or physics but an ignorance of God and His Son Jesus Christ and the plan of redemption. B. H. Roberts (1898) observed that

in the Mormon point of view of education all departments in education, intellectual and physical alike, should be sanctified by being overshadowed by the spiritual.... All educational efforts should be undertaken and pursued with reference to their effect upon man, not as a being whose existence terminates with the grave, but who is to live forever and who may, if he will, become a conjoint heir with Jesus Christ to all thrones, principalities, powers, and dominions that the Father hath. (pp. 125-126)

With application to an institutional context, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., at the 1945 inauguration of BYU President Howard S. McDonald, stated that BYU

has a dual function, a dual aim and purpose—secular learning, the lesser value; and spiritual development, the greater. These two values must be always together; neither would be perfect without the other, but the spiritual values, being basic and eternal, must always prevail, for spiritual values are built upon absolute truth. (as cited in Lee, 1996, p. 96)

Barrett (1988) summarizes the basic principles that inform the educational philosophy of the LDS Church Education System:

- (1) education is required by God and is necessary for advancement in his kingdom;
- (2) education is to embrace all fields of learning without restriction;
- (3) a complete education includes a knowledge of the scriptures and of the principles and ordinances of the gospel;
- (4) the educational program of the Church is the primary concern of the prophet of God, who actively directs the education of his people;
- (5) education is necessary and should be available to everyone. (pp. 10-11)

For Latter-day Saints, education with its pursuit of knowledge of things as they really are, be it salvational truths or knowing how to improve the standard of living, is a religious duty. Through education a person acquires the spiritual dispositions to provide proper perspective of things that really matter, the conceptual tools to help make better sense of the world around us, and the technical tools to improve living conditions of everyone. The truly educated people, with a focus on eternity, are much more serviceable to God, their family, and the community.

AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND SECULARISM

The original purposes behind the establishment of higher education in the United States centered on the necessity of preserving and perpetuating a moral life grounded in religious worldview. For example, all nine colleges established during the colonial era were sponsored by various Christian denominations. The Harvard Statutes of 1646 stated that "Every one shall consider the Mayne End of his life & studyes, to know God & Jesus Christ, which is Eternall life" (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976, p. 8; see similar wording for Yale in Rudolph, 1977, p. 17). The Yale Laws of 1745 stated that "all Scholars Shall Live Religious, Godly and Blameless Lives according to the Rules of Gods Word, diligently Reading the holy Scriptures the Fountain of Light and Truth; and constantly attend upon all the Duties of Religion both in Publick and Secret" (Hofstadter & Smith, 1961, p. 54). As part of secularization of American society, these original nine colleges as well as most other American institutions of higher education have either abandoned or chosen

not to include a religious worldview and orientation in the institution's mission and purpose.

The sweeping shadow of secularism in higher education has grown quite large over the past 200 years. The doctrines and dogmas of the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries, coupled with the transit and transformation of the German research university model to the United States during the 19th century, have largely secularized American higher education (Brubacher, 1988; Graham & Diamond, 1997; Marsden 1994). Scholars such as Wilshire (1990), Thompson (1991), and Long (1992), have noted the loss of moral vision and character in American universities. Long argues that "higher education is fundamentally a moral enterprise that needs to be guided by commitments to what is morally right and fundamentally good" (1992, p. xiii). Billington (1991) asserts that the modern university has "created a dominant new subculture of alienation from both traditional religious values and common patriotic values" (p. 44). Sloan (1994) observes that

what had once been the mutually shared concern and responsibility for achieving a proper relationship between faith and knowledge, a balance also once thought necessary for meaningful and vital culture, had split apart. The Church was now the sole guardian of faith; the college and university the prime champions of knowledge. As a consequence, the Church found itself in the twentieth century on the periphery of American higher education, to be sure, welcomed, or at least tolerated for its adjunct services in the moral and social care of students, but excluded almost entirely from the central intellectual tasks that had come to define the essence of the modern university. (pp. 1-2; also see Packer, 1996)

The tragic consequences of this refusal to acknowledge the inherently religious and spiritual nature of education has created a moral vacuum and left students to default to a post-modern position of ethical relativism. The resultant blindness to spiritual realities and religious truths is due to what Palmer (1983) calls a "one-eyed education" (p. 10) which has produced college graduates who know how to make a living but not how to live, competent technicians without a moral compass.

As a cultural and religious counterpoint to this secularization of the American university, private religious colleges and universities have been established, much like their counterparts in the K-12 arena, by religious organizations. But even here, many struggle to retain a religious identity that reflects the basic beliefs and religious perspective of the sponsoring body. Questions are being raised in some quarters as to whether they can retain their organizational identity as religious institutions of higher education (Lutz, 1992; Randall, 2000).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LDS INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The establishment and evolutionary development of LDS institutions of higher education have followed a trajectory similar to those of other religious institutions of higher education. The purpose of this section is to give a brief historical sketch of this development.

The nascent Church, having been driven from New York by religious persecution, moved to frontier areas of Ohio and Missouri. In 1831, instructions were given to select and print schoolbooks for children and to establish schools. In January 1832, members of the Church were instructed to “lose no time in preparing schools for their children, that they may be taught as is pleasing unto the Lord, and be brought up in the way of holiness” (Smith, 1978, 1:276). The Church established the first K-12 schools in Missouri. One of the first and largest adult education programs in the nation was also established by Church members in both Ohio and Missouri in 1833. These schools for adults were referred to as the School of the Elders in Missouri and the School of the Prophets in Kirtland, Ohio. The primary purpose of these adult education schools was to prepare members for the ministry, to be effective messengers of the Gospel. Topics taught included theology, Hebrew, and Greek, “penmanship, English, grammar, arithmetic, philosophy, literature, government, geography, history, and vocal music” (Sorensen, 1992, p. 1269; also see Barrett, 1973; Roberts, 1965, 1:394). Religious persecution, mob action, and an executive order by Governor Boggs of Missouri compelling Mormons to either leave Missouri or be exterminated by the state militia forced members of the Church to leave Ohio and Missouri (Allen & Leonard, 1976). They moved to Illinois and built a new city called Nauvoo that, with a population of 15,000, rivaled Chicago.

It was in Nauvoo that the Church established its first institution of higher education—the City University of Nauvoo. On December 16, 1840, the governor of Illinois signed an act chartering the incorporation of the City of Nauvoo, the Nauvoo Legion, and the “University of the City of Nauvoo.” Section 24 of the act of incorporation gave the city council authority to “establish and organize an institution of learning...for the teaching of the Arts, Sciences, and Learned Professions, to be called the ‘University of the City of Nauvoo’...for the advancement of the cause of education” (Smith, 4: 243-244). The Prophet Joseph Smith envisioned that “The ‘University of the City of Nauvoo’ will enable us to teach our children wisdom, to instruct them in all the knowledge and learning, in the arts, sciences, and learned professions” (Smith, 4:269). The university opened its doors in 1841 with offerings in five languages—Hebrew, Greek, French, German, and Latin—as well as history, literature, mathematics, geology, and chemistry (Bennion, 1939). Later, supervision of the common schools in Nauvoo was transferred from

the city council to the board of regents of the University of the City of Nauvoo (Smith, 1978, 4:269, 301). However, despite a charter, a number of competent scholars as faculty, and some students, the operations of the City University of Nauvoo were not extensive and the nature of its scholastic offerings were more of a high school or junior college. As Bennion (1939) notes, "the data are too scant to reveal the scholastic rating of the instruction given. It was probably superior to the average secondary work of the time. The faculty represented considerable scholarship and indeed was a remarkable group to be found in a frontier city" (p. 25). Although the City University of Nauvoo was more of a university in name only, it was one of the first municipal sponsored universities established in America and functioned as a model for subsequent efforts by the Church to establish other higher education institutions.

The hope of Joseph Smith to "make this institution [City University of Nauvoo] one of the great lights of the world, and by and through it to diffuse that kind of knowledge which will be of practicable utility" was never realized (Smith, 4:269). The murder of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum at Carthage jail in Illinois and subsequent mob action against Church members in Nauvoo forced the saints to once again abandon their homes, temple, and their schools. Under the leadership of Brigham Young, Church members left Nauvoo and headed for the unsettled areas of the Rocky Mountains where they could be free of religious persecution, build their homes, and establish their schools.

In February 1846, the first of hundreds of wagons left Nauvoo for the West. The importance of education was never far from Brigham Young's mind. Along with instructions of how to prepare for a journey of more than 1,000 miles, Brigham Young also gave instructions for the collection of educational materials to take with them:

It is very desirable that all the Saints should improve every opportunity of securing as least a copy of every valuable treatise on education—every book, map, chart, or diagram that may contain interesting, useful and attractive matter, to gain the attention of children, and cause them to love to learn to read; and also every historical, mathematical, philosophical, geographical, geological, astronomical, scientific, practical, and all other variety of useful and interesting writings, maps, etc....to compile the most valuable works on every science and subject of the benefit of the rising generations. (as cited in Roberts, 1965, 3:312)

He was clearly anticipating the need for curricular materials for schools yet to be built.

The first group of Mormon pioneers arrived in Utah in July 1847. The first school began in October 1847 and by the spring of 1849 a number of

schools had been established in which "Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, German, Tahitian, and English" were taught (Roberts, 1965, 6:507). A provisional state government, the State of Deseret, was established by Brigham Young until Congress created Utah as a territory in 1850. One of the acts of this provisional government was the passage of a charter for a university on February 28, 1850, as the University of Deseret (Roberts, 1965, 3:449). The University of Deseret, the first university west of the Mississippi, later became known as "Utah University" and finally as the University of Utah. The university had a chancellor and a 12-member board of regents. It first opened its doors November 11, 1850, but had "nominal" existence until 1867 and conferred its first degrees in 1886 (Peterson, 1992; Roberts, 1898). Although the University of Deseret or University of Utah was a state institution, it represents the deep interest Latter-day Saints have in education and their willingness to create educational opportunities in higher education at great cost and in the most modest of circumstances.

The first schools in Utah were private schools, and a common public school system gradually evolved alongside. With the growth of the public school sector and the secularization and pluralization of Utah and other intermountain states came a loss of control over public schools. The response of Church leaders to this loss was to establish their own school system which would be "independent of the District School system...in all places where possible" (Clark, 1975, 3:86-87). In June of 1888, a letter from the First Presidency stated

we feel the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people. Religious education is practically excluded from the District Schools. The perusal of books that we value as divine records is forbidden. Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of those principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices. To permit this condition of things to exist among us would be criminal. (Clark, 1975, 3:168)

The First Presidency asked that each stake (equivalent to a diocese) form a stake board of education to oversee the educational matters in the stake and to establish an academy in every stake. During a 49-year period, from 1860 to 1909, the Church established 35 academies in Canada, seven western states, and Mexico. With the establishment of these academies, the Church once again would have control over the curricular content, conduct of these schools and who the teachers were. However, this private school system would not last beyond 1924. It became apparent that the burden on Church members to financially support their local Church academy and pay taxes to support the public school system was too great.

The Church's response to this financial dilemma was threefold. First, it divested itself of nearly all of the academies beginning in 1913 and ending in 1924. Many of the academies were transferred to the state where they were transformed into public high schools or junior colleges, the Church "charging only nominal prices for their school buildings" (Roberts, 1965, 6:518-19). Examples of those academies which transitioned into state institutions of higher education include Brigham Young College in Logan, Utah, which became part of Utah State University; St. George Stake Academy became Dixie State College; Sanpete Academy became Snow College; Weber Stake Academy became Weber State University; and St. Joseph Stake Academy became Eastern Arizona Junior College.

The second response of the Church was to create a system of religious education. It was critical that LDS students attending public schools and public institutions of higher education participate in a structured and systematic instruction of the Gospel and Church teachings. Thus, the moral and religious dimension of education, which was excluded in the public sector, would be available through religious education. The first religion classes for LDS students in secondary schools began in 1912 in Salt Lake City and were called seminary. Students were released for one period a day from the public school to attend a religion class. At the post-secondary level, institutes of religion were created next to college campuses to provide religion classes to college students. The first institute of religion was established in 1926 adjacent to the University of Idaho (Barrett, 1988).

With the shift of Church emphasis and resources away from providing K-12 education except for private LDS schools in Mexico and the South Pacific, the focus of the Church had turned to providing daily religious programs and to higher education. The Church retained three academies with the purpose of transforming these academies into LDS institutions of higher education. The primary role of these institutions was similar to normal schools, to provide teachers for the public schools. If the Church could not afford its own private school system, then it would compensate for the loss of religious instruction through the creation of daily religious education programs off-campus and the preparation of teachers with a religious worldview to teach in the public schools. Although religion per se could not be taught, these teachers would reflect moral and religious values in their conduct and general perspectives.

These three academies, which became three of the four current LDS institutions of higher education, were Brigham Young Academy which became Brigham Young University, Ricks Academy which became a junior college and is now a 4-year college, and the Salt Lake Stake Academy which became the LDS Business College. The fourth LDS institution of higher education, the Church College of Hawaii, first originated as an elementary school in Laie, Hawaii. It was later elevated to a junior college and then to a 4-year college.

The LDS Business College is an accredited, 2-year institution with over 900 students located in Salt Lake City. The college offers associate of applied sciences degrees in accounting, business, information technology, interior design, medical careers, office technology, and general studies as well as certificates for technical training. As mentioned above, the college began as a stake academy in 1886 with Karl G. Maeser as the principal. The original intent of the Church behind the transformation from an academy into an institution of higher education was to make this new institution of higher education the premier higher education institution for the Church. With this intent, the name was changed in 1889 to the LDS College. However, the aspirations for the LDS College as the Church's leading institution of higher education never materialized. Another academy, Brigham Young Academy, later to be Brigham Young University, eclipsed the LDS College. The university portion of the college closed in 1894, leaving the department of business (Beesley, 1992, p. 816). The mission of the LDS Business College continues to be the provision of a

spiritually grounded education founded on the doctrines and principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints...by offering one- and two-year programs to train students in career skills that lead to productive employment...[in] an environment that encourages teaching by the spirit, the strengthening of personal testimonies of the Savior, and the development of a desire to follow His teachings and example. (*LDS Business College Mission Statement*, 2002)

The second LDS institution of higher education is the Brigham Young University—Hawaii. It began as an elementary school in Laie, Hawaii, in 1865. David O. McKay, the president of the Church from 1951-1969, had visited the elementary school in 1921. During this visit he pictured in his mind the creation of an institution of higher education. Thirty-four years later in 1955, a site for the Church college was selected and ground broken for a new campus, the Church College of Hawaii. Later that fall, some 153 students met in temporary facilities as the Church College of Hawaii began its first semester of classes (Wade, 1992). As part of David O. McKay's instruction to the college's administration, he admonished them to

always bear in mind these two things as you proceed with this college: First, the students must be imbued with the fact and be led to feel that the most important thing in the world is the Gospel (of Jesus Christ) and that the observance of its principles in their lives brings happiness and joy in this life and further progress and exaltation in the life hereafter; and secondly, the college must be fully creditable in all its instruction and activities. (*Brigham Young University—Hawaii History*, 2000)

In 1961, the Church College of Hawaii had upgraded its academic program sufficiently to be accredited as a 4-year liberal arts institution. As with other LDS institutions of higher education, the preparation of teachers for the public schools continued to be a primary activity of the college. Continued development of course offerings and degree programs led to the designation of the college as a campus of Brigham Young University and to its present name, Brigham Young University—Hawaii in 1974. With an international student body of approximately 2,400 students from over 50 countries, the BYU—Hawaii campus seeks to provide excellent academic training in a spiritual setting primarily for those in the South Pacific and the Pacific Rim (Britsch, 1986; Law, 1972). BYU—Hawaii offers baccalaureate and associate degrees in business, education, and the arts and sciences. Associated with BYU—Hawaii is the Church sponsored Polynesian Cultural Center, which works to preserve the various Polynesian cultures through research and publications as well as creating actual “villages” where visitors may see demonstrations of various cultural traditions.

As with the LDS Business College, BYU—Hawaii seeks to integrate the spiritual with the secular, the academia with religion. The mission of BYU—Hawaii is “to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life and in their efforts to influence the establishment of peace internationally” (*Brigham Young University—Hawaii Mission Statement*, 2001). This mission is accomplished through the creation of an “environment enlightened by living prophets and sustained by those moral virtues which characterize the life and teachings of the Son of God” (*Brigham Young University—Hawaii Educational Goals*, 2000) and the realization of four institutional goals for all students: be taught the Gospel of Jesus Christ; receive a good, liberal arts education; acquire a specialization in a particular field; and engage in creative and scholarly work.

The third LDS institution of higher education is Brigham Young University—Idaho. Similar to the LDS Business College, the origin of BYU—Idaho was a Church-sponsored academy located in Rexburg, Idaho. Early Mormon settlers in Rexburg felt the local public schools were antagonistic toward their faith. In 1888, Church members under the leadership of Thomas E. Ricks, the president of the Bannock Stake, established an elementary school, the Bannock Stake Academy. Ten years later, in 1898, the elementary school expanded to include secondary courses. In 1903, the name of the academy was changed to Ricks Academy in honor of Thomas E. Ricks, and in 1915 college level courses were added to the academy’s curriculum (Samuelson, 1992). Two years later, Ricks Academy was accredited by the state to produce graduates who could teach in the public schools and became known as Ricks Normal College. In 1923, the college was simply called Ricks College. The college struggled for the next 20 years with an enrollment of around 200 students. Under more visionary leaders, enrollment at the col-

lege increased to 5,300 by 1971. Ricks College went on to become the largest private, 2-year college in the United States (Crowder, 1997). Enrollment continued to increase and the status of Ricks College was changed by the Church from a junior college to a 4-year institution in 2000. With this change in status to a university came a change in name and affiliation with Brigham Young University. On August 10, 2001, Ricks College became an affiliated campus of BYU and was designated as Brigham Young University—Idaho.

Brigham Young University—Idaho currently enrolls over 10,000 students. It offers associate degrees in 29 academic areas and baccalaureate degrees in 28 areas with plans to offer degrees in an additional 22 academic programs. Even with all of the changes in status, increased enrollment, and academic programs, the mission of BYU—Idaho to integrate the spiritual with the secular remains the same:

1. Build testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and encourage living its principles.
2. Provide a quality education for students of diverse interests and abilities.
3. Prepare students for lifelong learning, for employment, and for their roles as citizens and parents.
4. Maintain a wholesome academic, cultural, social and spiritual environment. (*Brigham Young University—Idaho Mission Statement, 2002*)

The flagship institution of higher education and the crown jewel for the LDS Church Education System is Brigham Young University. At its 600-acre campus in Provo, Utah, nearly 30,000 full-time students and over 4,300 part-time students pursue degrees offered by eight colleges: Biology and Agriculture; Engineering and Technology; Family, Home, and Social Sciences; Fine Arts and Communications; Health and Human Performance; Humanities; Nursing; and Physical and Mathematical Sciences; and by three professional schools: education, business, and law. Along with these colleges and professional schools, academic programs are offered through the College of Religious Education and the Kennedy Center for International and Area Studies. In addition, BYU has the largest continuing education program in the United States with more than 442,000 enrollments from all 50 states and other countries. Baccalaureate degrees are offered in 203 academic programs. Although BYU is primarily an undergraduate institution, it offers master's degrees in 70 program areas, doctoral degrees in 26 areas of study, and a juris doctorate degree. It is classified as a Research II institution. In keeping with the traditional mission of LDS higher education in providing teachers, BYU graduates more than 1,000 teachers a year, usually more than any other university in the United States. Brigham Young University is the largest private university in the United States and the tenth largest overall.

Students come from all 50 states and more than 120 countries with the largest percentage of international students coming from the Far East. The

student body is split nearly evenly along gender lines (51% men, 49% women), and 99% of the students are LDS with the remaining 1% from other religious traditions. Nearly 72% of the students speak more than one language and large percentages have served Church missions in other countries. Language instruction is available in 76 languages. The average GPA for entering freshmen is 3.76 and the average ACT score is 27. Students are admitted to BYU and the other three institutions of higher education without regard to religion, race, gender, or national origin. Students are taught by 1,607 full-time and 476 part-time faculty. BYU excels in intercollegiate athletics and the performing arts. Its business school is ranked 29th and the law school is ranked 37th nationally. The Harold B. Lee Library holds over three million volumes and the university's Museum of Art is "one of the largest art museums between Denver and San Francisco" (*Brigham Young University Fact File*, 2003).

The Brigham Young University of 2003 is a far cry from its humble beginnings in 1875 as an academy personally established by Brigham Young on a one-acre plot of ground he owned in Provo, Utah. Brigham Young was the president of the Church at the time and saw education as "the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life" (as cited in Brimhall, 1920, p. 831). Brigham Young Academy began instruction with 29 elementary students taught by Karl G. Maeser who was asked soon after to be the school principal in 1876. In an effort to remind Karl G. Maeser of the spiritual nature of education, Brigham Young gave a brief charge to the new principal: "Brother Maeser, I want you to remember that you ought not to teach even the alphabet or the multiplication tables without the Spirit of God. That is all. God bless you. Good-bye" (as cited in Kimball, 1996, p. 54).

For the first 21 years of the academy's precarious existence, it was without formal financial support or funding except for voluntary contributions by individuals or the Church. In 1896, the academy was incorporated as an educational entity by the Church, which then assumed financial responsibility for it. Even this action did not guarantee the survival of the academy. As late as 1945, questions were still being raised about financial feasibility of Brigham Young University and whether it should continue to exist. A major argument in favor of retaining BYU was the key role it played in preparing teachers for the public schools. The name of the academy was changed in 1903 to Brigham Young University, even though it continued to offer high school courses as well as college courses. The Board of Trustees limited enrollments in the high school to 1,300 students and 250 students for the university (Wilkinson & Skousen, 1976).

In 1915, BYU granted its first baccalaureate degree. Enrollments in the university slowly increased to 1,500 by 1945 and then exploded to 27,000 by end of the 1970s (Butler & Lambert, 1992; Wilkinson & Skousen, 1976). An

enrollment cap of around 30,000 was later placed on the university by the Board of Trustees. The historical development of Brigham Young University has been characterized by Wilkinson and Skousen (1976) as a

Cinderella story. The school was born in poverty, nurtured in conflict, orphaned by the death of Brigham Young...nearly abandoned on many occasions because of the lack of funds to carry on.... It survived only because of the financial sacrifices made by its faculty and Board of Trustees and voluntary gifts from its friends and from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints....so much progress has been made that it is inconceivable that anyone with ordinary vision...could have foreseen the status of the school today. (pp. xi-xii)

Brigham Young University has indeed become the Church's university. Spencer W. Kimball, president of the Church from 1973-1985, gave a charge to BYU that it become not just a great university in the world, but a unique university, in fact, an "educational Everest" (Kimball, 1996, p. 63).

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH IN LDS HIGHER EDUCATION

Fifty years ago, M. E. Sadler (1953), president of Texas Christian University, pled for the return of religion to a prominent place within higher education. If religion were to return as a pervasive influence in education, it

[would] not suffice to have religion merely as one stone in the total education building. It must be the overreaching beam, the focalizing center, the permeating spirit, the uniting force which gives meaning and significance to *all* subjects and *all* courses. If God is the ultimate and controlling reality of life, learning is obviously inadequate unless it does confess Him as its Foundation. (p. 7)

Brigham Young University exists to see if such an experiment can be successful, to determine whether religion can not only be a significant part of an institution of higher education but also give structure and meaning to all that is done (Bateman, 1996a). Gordon B. Hinckley (1992), current prophet and president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in an address to faculty and students, observed that BYU is a

continuing experiment on a great premise that a large and complex university can be first class academically while nurturing an environment of faith in God and the practice of Christian principles. You are testing whether academic excellence and belief in the Divine can walk hand in hand. And the wonderful thing is that you are succeeding in showing that this is possible—not

only that it is possible, but that it is desirable, and that the products of this effort show in your lives—qualities not otherwise attainable. (p. 4)

Brigham Young University is a “religious institution with a divine mission, even though secular education is a key part of its purpose” (Bateman, 1996b, p. 5). The motto of the university is taken from one of the revelations to Joseph Smith: “The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth” (*Doctrine & Covenants* 93:36). BYU is, indeed, a place of spiritual and secular learning “where the soul is nurtured while the intellect is trained” (Hinckley, 1992, p. 12).

Several factors contribute to the growth of Brigham Young University as an excellent university with a spiritual mission. First, the Board of Trustees is comprised of the presiding leaders of the Church. The chairman of the board is also the president of the Church. In addition, the current president of BYU, Merrill J. Bateman, occupies a prominent ecclesiastical position in the Church. Having the key ecclesiastical leaders of the Church providing general oversight and establishing policy provides an important anchor to prevent BYU from drifting away on the tides of secularism. For example, the religious character and mission of BYU, in conjunction with academic excellence, is clearly articulated in “The Mission Statement of Brigham Young University” and the “Aims of a BYU Education,” both documents approved by the Board of Trustees. A portion of the Mission Statement states that

the mission of Brigham Young University—founded, supported, and guided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life.... To succeed in this mission the university must provide an environment enlightened by living prophets and sustained by those moral virtues which characterize the life and teachings of the Son of God. (*Brigham Young University Mission Statement*, 1981)

The four major aims of a BYU education, the outcomes of attending BYU, are “(1) spiritually strengthening, (2) intellectually enlarging, and (3) character building, leading to (4) lifelong learning and service” (*Brigham Young University Aims of Education*, 2003).

A second major factor in maintaining the religious identity and mission of BYU is the hiring of faculty who are faithful and devoted members of the Church. Local ecclesiastical leaders are asked to verify each year whether faculty members attending their congregations are living the principles of the Gospel and adhering to the standards of the Church. Every student who is admitted to BYU, church member or not, must agree to abide by standards of conduct outlined in the Honor Code and Dress and Grooming Standards. These standards include such things as honesty; chastity; avoidance of profanity; modest dress; and abstinence from the use of tobacco, alcohol, coffee, and tea as well as illegal drugs.

Another factor is the explicit encouragement and effort to integrate religion and knowledge, the secular with the spiritual. These efforts to create a unique university ethos imbued with a religious perspective take many forms. Classes often begin with prayer and class discussions often contain references to religious values and teachings. Faculty, staff, and students attend weekly devotionals. Graduation requirements include 14 semester hours of religion classes. Many of these religion classes are taught by faculty and administrators from the larger campus community. Faculty members are encouraged to examine their academic disciplines through the lens of the restored gospel and to incorporate gospel principles in providing insights to problems within their disciplines. Faculty members are expected to be scholars of faith, scholarly disciples of Jesus Christ. Former Church President Spencer W. Kimball (1996) summarizes the expectations for faculty and students at BYU to integrate knowledge and faith, the sacred with the secular:

The faculty has a double heritage which they must pass along: the secular knowledge that history has washed to the feet of mankind with the new knowledge brought by scholarly research—but also the vital and revealed truths that have been sent to us from heaven.... Your double heritage and dual concerns with the secular and the spiritual require you to be “bilingual.” As LDS scholars you must speak with authority and excellence to your professional colleagues in the language of scholarship, and you must also be literate in the language of spiritual things. (p. 64)

CONCLUSION

Charles H. Malik, former president of the United Nations General Assembly, once voiced the following belief:

I believe a great university will arise somewhere...to which Christ will return in His full glory and power, a university which will, in the promotion of scientific, intellectual and artistic excellence, surpass by far even the best secular universities of the present, but which will at the same time enable Christ to bless it and act and feel perfectly at home in it. (as cited in Wilkinson & Skousen, 1976, p. 758; see also Newman, 1938)

It would be difficult to articulate a better vision of Brigham Young University and the other three institutions of higher education sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This vision is firmly grounded on the realities of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: the existence of absolute truths; eternal existence and the supernal realm; and the critical importance of knowing who we are, why we are here, and where we are going, that is, of knowing about things that matter most. Educating for eternity is the goal of the LDS Church Educational System.

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