

John 20

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John 20:4-5 that other disciple...saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in

Russell M. Nelson

"...seniority is honored among ordained Apostles-even when entering or leaving a room. President Benson related to us this account:

"Some [years] ago Elder Haight extended a special courtesy to President Romney while they were in the upper room in the temple. President Romney was lingering behind for some reason, and [Elder Haight] did not want to precede him out the door. When President Romney signaled [for him] to go first, Elder Haight replied, 'No, President, you go first.'

"President Romney replied with his humor, 'What's the matter, David? Are you afraid I'm going to steal something?'

"Such deference from a junior to a senior Apostle is recorded in the New Testament. When Simon Peter and John the Beloved ran to investigate the report that the body of their crucified Lord had been taken from the sepulchre, John, being younger and swifter, arrived first, yet he did not enter. He deferred to the senior Apostle, who entered the sepulchre first. (See John 20:2-6.) Seniority in the apostleship has long been a means by which the Lord selects His presiding High Priest.

"Brethren, these matters are important. More than a century and a half ago, the Lord issued a sharp rebuke to His people. These are His words:

'Verily, condemnation resteth upon you, who are appointed to lead my Church, ... and also upon the Church; and there must needs be a repentance and a reformation among you, in all things, in your examples

before the Church and before the world, in all your manners, habits and customs, and salutations one toward another; rendering unto every man the respect due the office, calling, and priesthood whereunto I, the Lord, have appointed and ordained you.' (HOC 2:177)

"If any among us are also guilty of treating as trivial such things that are sacred, we may repent and resolve to honor the priesthood and those to whom the Lord has entrusted its keys." ("Honoring the Priesthood," *Ensign*, May 1993, 40-41)

John 20:7 the napkin, that was about his head...[was] wrapped together in a place by itself

The significance of the napkin being neatly wrapped and carefully placed by itself was that a grave robber would not be so meticulous. While the empty tomb was the first evidence of resurrection, the neatly wrapped napkin was the second-it suggested that the individual who wrapped that napkin may have been the resurrected Lord.

"...the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but *wrapped together in a place by itself.*' (John 20:5-7; italics added.) Why did John take note of that? 'Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre [John], and *he saw, and believed.*' ("John 20:8John 20:8, italics added.) What did he see that caused him to believe the Resurrection had taken place?

"In the quick preparation for burial, Joseph of Arimathaea and the women with him would have wrapped Jesus with long strips of linen in the manner of the Middle East. Finally they would have wrapped one strip around and around his face to cover it. It was that which John saw, 'not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.' (V. 7). Who wrapped it and folded it and laid it aside? I believe that Jesus laid aside his own burial clothes; he folded them up and laid them aside.

"I have been able to visit Jerusalem often. Every time I go into the Garden Tomb and see that empty tomb, I thrill again and understand, I think, what John meant when he said, 'He saw, and believed.' And the deepest thrill of all is to know that some day, because of what happened in the tomb that first Easter morning, we will come forth from the grave and lay aside and fold up our own burial clothes and know that we too will live forever and ever." (Gerald N. Lund, *Jesus Christ, Key to the Plan of Salvation*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 40.)

John 20:9 as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead

"The claim of the women that Jesus had appeared to them was rejected by the apostles 'as idle tales, and they believed them not.' (Luke 24:11.) 'For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.' (John 20:9.) No one was more surprised to see the risen Christ than those who were called to be his special witnesses. Indeed, the chief priests and Pharisees paid more heed to Jesus' statement, 'After three days I will rise again' (Matt. 27:63), than did his own disciples-hence the guard at the tomb (Matt. 27:62-66)." (Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 5: The Gospels*, ed. by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1986], 405 - 406.)

Neal A. Maxwell

"Faith is especially needed, however, when there is nothing in our memories to prepare us for something special. Jesus taught the Apostles about the resurrection. Yet it was difficult for them to understand so miraculous a thing-especially something that had never before happened in all of human history."john 20:9" (*Lord, Increase Our Faith* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1994], 104.)

John 20:15 Woman, why weepest thou?

James E. Faust

"The Savior was speaking not just to the sorrowing Mary. He was also speaking to us-men, women, and children and all of mankind ever born or yet to be born, for the tears of sorrow, pain, or remorse are the common lot of mankind.

"The complexities of this life at times tend to be very dehumanizing and overwhelming. Some have so much, while others struggle with so very little...Jesus said, 'Be not faithless, but believing' (v. 27). Through faith and righteousness all of the inequities, injuries, and pains of this life can be fully compensated for and made right. Blessings denied in this life will be fully recompensed in the eternities." ("Woman, Why Weepest Thou?" *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 52)

John 20:16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary

James E. Faust

"One, only one, person could speak her name that way. With that single word all doubt, confusion, and uncertainty was swept away. Mary, in that instant, came to the grand, sublime realization that he for whom she mourned, even Jesus that was crucified, had risen from the dead, just as the angels early that very morning had testified, 'He is risen.' (See Luke 24:6.)" ("The Resurrection," *Ensign*, May 1985, 31)

Matthew Cowley

"Jesus then spoke to her but one word-and the tenderness with which the word was uttered revealed to her his identity...But only one word was spoken to the woman and she no longer supposed him to be the gardener. 'Jesus saith unto her, Mary.'

"The burden of a saddened heart was lifted when she heard her name thus spoken. Many times before she had thus been addressed by her Lord, but never before had her name been spoken by immortal lips. It was a woman's name, not the name of a disciple, that the resurrected Son of God first uttered. To him Mary was the most favored of names. It was not only the name of the first woman to whom Christ spoke as the risen Lord. It was the name of the sainted mother who had given him birth; it was the name of the sister of Lazarus who had seen him restore life to her brother; it was the name of the mother of James and John; and many others whom he loved no doubt bore the name which he had spoken to the woman in the garden near the place of his burial." (*Matthew Cowley Speaks* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 323.)

F. Melvin Hammond

"To the credit of gentle, loving women everywhere, our Redeemer chose as the first mortal witness of His resurrection from the dead a woman, Mary Magdalene." ("The Resurrection," *Ensign*, May 1990, 29-30)

George Albert Smith

"Mary was the first one in mortality to know of the resurrection. It is beautiful to me that to womankind has always come the first knowledge of a new life. Woman is the first to know that there is to be another birth. In the case of the resurrection it was to woman that our Lord gave the first actual knowledge that death was not the end, but that resurrection had overcome death and that we would live forever. (*The Teachings of George*

Albert Smith, edited by Robert McIntosh and Susan McIntosh [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 9.)

John 20:17 Touch me not

James E. Talmage

"One may wonder why Jesus had forbidden Mary Magdalene to touch Him, and then, so soon after, had permitted other women to hold Him by the feet as they bowed in reverence. We may assume that Mary's emotional approach had been prompted more by a feeling of personal yet holy affection than by an impulse of devotional worship such as the other women evinced. Though the resurrected Christ manifested the same friendly and intimate regard as He had shown in the mortal state toward those with whom He had been closely associated, He was no longer one of them in the literal sense. There was about Him a divine dignity that forbade close personal familiarity. To Mary Magdalene Christ had said: 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.' If the second clause was spoken in explanation of the first, we have to infer that no human hand was to be permitted to touch the Lord's resurrected and immortalized body until after He had presented Himself to the Father. It appears reasonable and probable that between Mary's impulsive attempt to touch the Lord, and the action of the other women who held Him by the feet as they bowed in worshipful reverence, Christ did ascend to the Father, and that later He returned to earth to continue His ministry in the resurrected state. (*Jesus the Christ*, p. 682.)

Bruce R. McConkie

"The seeming refusal of Jesus to permit Mary to touch him, followed almost immediately by the appearance in which the other women were permitted to hold his feet, has always been the source of some interpretative concern. The King James Version quotes Jesus as saying 'Touch me not.' The Joseph Smith Translation reads 'Hold me not.' Various translations from the Greek render the passage as 'Do not cling to me' or 'Do not hold me.' Some give the meaning as 'Do not cling to me any longer,' or 'Do not hold me any longer.' Some speak of ceasing to hold him or cling to him, leaving the inference that Mary was already holding him. There is valid reason for supposing that the thought conveyed to Mary by the Risen Lord was to this effect: 'You cannot hold me here, for I am going to ascend to my Father.'" (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 4: 264.)

John 20:17 I am not yet ascended to my Father

Spencer W. Kimball

"...we as members of the Church also stand in jeopardy if we do not do our temple work. Much of our time is taken up with the mundane details of everyday living, which must be done, of course; but those who are members of His kingdom at this critical time should endeavor to give much time and effort to this important work.

"These things of eternity pertaining to the spirit world and the hereafter were on the mind of the Savior when he was crucified. This is reflected in his statement to the repentant thief, which has puzzled many people: '...To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.'

"You will remember also that when the woman came to the tomb of the buried Savior, the Savior was not in his tomb. When he met her in the garden, he said, 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father [in heaven]: but ... I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.' (John 20:17.) He had still not been to see his Heavenly Father, so he hadn't gone directly to the heaven we think of. He had gone some other place." ("The Things of Eternity-Stand We in Jeopardy?" *Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 5)

Theodore M. Burton

"If Jesus wasn't with his Father in heaven during that time, where was he and what did he do?

"During that period between death and resurrection, Jesus went into the spirit world, as he had promised the thieves on the cross. There he organized the preaching of the gospel to the spirits in prison." ("Neither Cryptic Nor Hidden," *Ensign*, May 1977, 28)

John 20:17 I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God

Elder Charles H. Hart

"...we are the spiritual children of God the Eternal Father. Jesus makes this plain in His answer to Mary, who was first at the sepulchre, when He said, 'Touch Me not for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to

My God and your God.' He proclaims there, the Master does, the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God; that we are the children, the spiritual children of our Heavenly Father, just as He was the spiritual Son of the Eternal Father. We are told in Psalms that He was the first-born of every creature, meaning, of course, the first-born spiritually...As He was the spiritual Son of the Eternal Father, so are we the spiritual children of the Eternal Father." (*Conference Report, October 1912, First Day-Morning Session. 15 - 17.*)

Sterling W. Sill

"Recently I read a book written by a popular minister, in which he attempted to analyze the great Christian doctrines as taught in the Bible, and then he made comparisons with some of the doctrines currently being taught.

"For example, he said that the God of the Bible is a personal God-there can be no question about that. But he said, 'We don't believe that any more.' And then to substantiate his statement he quoted answers to direct questions about what some prominent ministers had said about their conception of God. One minister said, 'No one can possibly know about God. He is absolutely immeasurable, undiscoverable and indiscernible. He is not limited to boundaries and we can be sure that he has no body or shape.' Another minister said that 'God is an eternal principle.' Another said that God is 'a giant electronic brain.' Another said that God is 'a mobile, cosmic ether.' This minister pointed out how completely contrary these concepts were to those of the scriptures. He said, 'Imagine Jesus praying to a mobile, cosmic ether. Jesus prayed. . . Our Father which art in heaven....' (Matt. 6:9.) He said to Mary, . . . go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God, and to your God.' (John 20:17.) That statement must be perfectly clear to everyone. And yet this great minister said, 'We don't believe that any more.'" (*Conference Report, April 1959, Second Day-Morning Meeting 61.*)

Joseph Fielding Smith

"If we are the sons of God, then he *is* our Father. Christ taught this doctrine to his disciples. 'I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.' Does not this mean family organization? Can we be heirs and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and not be sons? If sons, then we are members of the family. This is the hope we have in God our Father. O how

great is his love for his children!" (*The Way to Perfection* [Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1949], 256.)

John 20:19-21 The Apostles see the resurrected Lord

Joseph Smith

"The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it." (*History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7 vols. 3:30*)

Gordon B. Hinckley

"Can anyone doubt the veracity of that account? No event of history has been more certainly confirmed. There is the testimony of all who saw and felt and spoke with the risen Lord. He appeared on two continents in two hemispheres and taught the people before His final ascension. Two sacred volumes, two testaments speak of this most glorious of all events in all of human history. But these are only accounts, the faithless critic says. To which we reply that beyond these is the witness and the testimony, borne by the power of the Holy Ghost, of the truth and validity of this most remarkable event. Through the centuries untold numbers have paid with the sacrifice of their comforts, their fortunes, their very lives for the convictions they carried in their hearts of the reality of the risen, living Lord." ("This Glorious Easter Morn," *Ensign*, May 1996, 67)

Gordon B. Hinckley

"'If a man die, shall he live again?' (Job 14:14.) This is the great universal question framed by Job. He spoke what every other living man or woman has pondered. The Christ alone, of all the millions who up to that time had walked the earth, was the first to emerge from the grave triumphant, a living soul complete in spirit and body. He became 'the firstfruits of them that slept.' (1 Cor. 15:20.) Were greater words ever spoken than those of the angel that first resurrection morn-'Why seek ye the living among the dead?' (Luke 24:5.) 'He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.' (Matt. 28:6.)

"His death sealed the testimony of His love for all mankind. His resurrection opened the gates of salvation to the sons and daughters of God of all

generations. . . ." (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 552.)

Spencer W. Kimball

"Only a God could bring about this miracle of resurrection. As a teacher of righteousness, Jesus could inspire souls to goodness; as a prophet, he could foreshadow the future; as an intelligent leader of men, he could organize a church; and as a possessor and magnifier of the priesthood, he could heal the sick, give sight to the blind, even raise other dead; but only as a God could he raise himself from the tomb, overcome death permanently, and bring incorruption in place of corruption, and replace mortality with immortality.

"... Ever since mortality came upon Adam, men had feared death, the one enemy which could never be conquered. Herbs and medicines, prayers and surgery, medicine-men and priests, sorcery and magic, all had been used for millenniums in an attempt to overcome or at least to postpone death-but, in spite of all the machinations and efforts of men in all the earth, up to this time they had failed; and the rich and poor, ignorant and educated, black, brown, red, or white, priest and people, all had gone down in death and gone back to mother earth.

"But now came the miracle-the revolution, the unbelievable marvel which none could explain and which none could deny. For the body which these hosts had seen persecuted, tortured, and drained of its life's blood, and left dead upon the cross; the body from which all life had ebbed; the body which lay entombed those long hours in a small, closed and sealed, oxygenless room into the third day; the person who had suffered the fate of death like hundreds of millions before him was calmly walking in the garden, animated, fresh, alive!

"...And so we bear testimony that the being who created the earth and its contents, who made numerous appearances upon the earth prior to his birth in Bethlehem, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is resurrected and immortal, and that this great boon of resurrection and immortality becomes now, through our Redeemer, the heritage of mankind." (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, edited by Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], 17-18.)

John 20:22 he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost

Interestingly, the Savior doesn't always follow protocol. Instead of giving the Gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, he just breathes upon the apostles and says, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' Many times he performed miracles without the laying on of hands. The Lord never lets form supercede function. If the Lord wants to give this gift in another way, that is his privilege, but for us, we are instructed to administer this ordinance by the laying on of hands, 'now I give unto thee a commandment, that thou shalt baptize by water, and they shall receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, even as the apostles of old' [administered this ordinance] (DC 35:6). Similarly, though the Master administered to the sick in a variety of ways, we are commanded to attend to this by the laying on of hands, 'whosoever among you are sick...the elders of the church, two or more, shall be called, and shall pray for and lay their hands upon them in my name' (DC 42:43-44).

A second concept is worthy of discussion. Notably, there is no record of a manifestation of the Spirit at the time the apostles are given the Holy Ghost. In fact, it was almost 50 days later, on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), that the apostles really felt the Spirit in fullness. This delay is significant because it is so common today. Some investigators may expect a spiritual outpouring on the day of confirmation and not receive it. While others might feel the Spirit right away, that is probably the exception not the rule. Many lifetime members can barely remember their feelings on the day of their baptism, but they will never forget the time when the Spirit made a significant change in their heart and life. Such is the gradual process of being born again. Like the apostles, the purification by the Spirit often comes later than the ordinance-in a piecemeal fashion, line upon line, as it were.

"Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained in 1976 to students at Brigham Young University that 'we are born again as we die as pertaining to unrighteousness and when we live as pertaining to the things of the Spirit. But that doesn't happen in an instant, suddenly. That . . . is a process. Being born again is a gradual thing, except in a few isolated instances that are so miraculous that they get written up in the scriptures. As far as the generality of the members of the Church are concerned, we are born again by degrees, and we are born again to added light and added knowledge and added desires for righteousness as we keep the commandments' ("Jesus Christ and Him Crucified," in *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year, 1976*, 399-401).

"President Ezra Taft Benson taught that 'we must be careful, as we seek to become more and more godlike, that we do not become discouraged and lose hope. Becoming Christlike is a lifetime pursuit and very often

involves growth and change that is slow, almost imperceptible. The scriptures record remarkable accounts of men whose lives changed dramatically, in an instant, as it were: Alma the Younger, Paul on the road to Damascus, Enos praying far into the night, King Lamoni. Such astonishing examples of the power to change even those steeped in sin give confidence that the Atonement can reach even those deepest in despair.

"But we must be cautious as we discuss these remarkable examples. Though they are real and powerful, they are the exception more than the rule. For every Paul, for every Enos, and for every King Lamoni, there are hundreds and thousands of people who find the process of repentance much more subtle, much more imperceptible. Day by day they move closer to the Lord, little realizing they are building a godlike life. They live quiet lives of goodness, service, and commitment. They are like the Lamanites, who the Lord said were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not. (3 Ne. 9:20; italics added.)' ("Mighty Change of Heart," *Ensign*, Oct. 1989, 2-5)." (Robert L. Millet, *Alive in Christ: The Miracle of Spiritual Rebirth* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 180 - 181.)

John 20:23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained

Bruce R. McConkie

"Those to whom power is given to bind on earth and seal in heaven have power to remit the sins of the saints on conditions of repentance or to retain them if they do not repent. In the ultimate sense, God alone forgives sins; but he can and does use his servants to speak for him in this as in many things, and whether by his own voice or by the voice of his servants, the result is the same. Needless to say, this, the Lord's system of forgiveness, operates only in the Church and kingdom of God on earth; only legal administrators who have been endowed with power from on high can either remit or retain sins; and they must be guided by the power of the Holy Ghost in all that they do, or their acts will not be binding on earth and sealed everlastingly in the heavens." (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 4: 283.)

Joseph F. Smith

"...you...have no reason to find fault or to rise up in judgment upon President Taylor or upon President Young, or upon the Prophet Joseph Smith, or upon the Twelve Apostles. We have no right to rise up in judgment upon the President of the Stake, or upon our Bishop, or upon the Priesthood in any shape or form, unless we can do so agreeably to the laws of the Church. If they decide against us inasmuch as God has conferred the keys of this Priesthood upon them...and inasmuch as the decision is reached and rendered agreeably to the laws and commandments of God, then it would be our bounden duty to humbly submit, and bow to it and acknowledge it. You or I might think it hard, and possibly feel that it was unjust, but as it would be impossible to make it otherwise, we must submit. 'What,' says one, 'submit to an unjust decision? No, sir!' Who says it is unjust? You...say it is; but twelve High Councilors and the Presidency of the Stake say it is just, and in holding to our idea of the unjustness of the decision, we put our judgment against that of fifteen disinterested (or unbiased) men. Who then is to decide on the justice of the case? They, not me; and it is my business to acknowledge it and yield to it. There is, however, a supervisory authority in the First Presidency; and they may exercise in some degree the pardoning power, for unto them is given power under the laws of God to forgive. 'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.' President Taylor holds the keys of that authority in this Church." (*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 24: 193 - 194.)

John 20:25 except I shall see...I will not believe

Gordon B. Hinckley

"Have you not heard others speak as Thomas spoke? 'Give us,' they say, 'the empirical evidence. Prove before our very eyes, and our ears, and our hands, else we will not believe.' This is the language of the time in which we live. Thomas the Doubter has become the example of men in all ages who refuse to accept other than that which they can physically prove and explain-as if they could prove love, or faith, or even such physical phenomena as electricity." ("Be Not Faithless," *Ensign*, Apr. 1989, 2)

John 20:27 Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side

Bruce R. McConkie

"Thomas was absent on this occasion and believed not the testimony of his fellow disciples; eight days later the Lord made a similar appearance to the whole group and said to him: 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.' Thomas said: 'My Lord and my God.' (See John 20:24-28.)

"All this was done to show that Jesus had come forth from the tomb with a tangible body. It was the Lord's way of giving to Peter and his associates a witness of the truth and divinity of his divine Sonship. If he rose from the dead, he was the Son of God; if he was the Son of God, then the gospel of salvation they were proclaiming was true; and so their obligation was to establish in the minds of men that Jesus rose from the dead. Now as I say, they might have attempted to do this by quoting Isaiah, or reasoning out of the revelations, which of course they did; but having so done, they then had to bear a personal witness." ("Upon Judea's Plains," *Ensign*, July 1973, 29)

John 20:27 be not faithless, but believing

Gordon B. Hinckley

"To all within the sound of my voice who may have doubts, I repeat the words given Thomas as he felt the wounded hands of the Lord: 'Be not faithless, but believing.' Believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the greatest figure of time and eternity. Believe that his matchless life reached back before the world was formed. Believe that he was the Creator of the earth on which we live. Believe that he was Jehovah of the Old Testament, that he was the Messiah of the New Testament, that he died and was resurrected, that he visited these western continents and taught the people here, that he ushered in this final gospel dispensation, and that he lives, the living Son of the living God, our Savior and our Redeemer." ("Be Not Faithless," *Ensign*, May 1978, 59)

Gordon B. Hinckley

'Be not faithless, but believing' (John 20:27). In what shall we believe? In the first place, we shall believe in God our Eternal Father...Be not faithless, but believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the great Creator, who condescended to come to earth and walk among men and be abused and persecuted and crucified unto death. But He arose the third day and stands

at the side of His Father, the Living Son of the Living God, to pour out His blessing upon each of us.

"Be not faithless, but believing in the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who had the greatest vision that has occurred in all this modern world, when God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son appeared to him and parted the curtains to usher in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

"Be not faithless, but believing in this sacred book which we call the Book of Mormon, another testament of Jesus Christ. It was said of old, it was said by the Savior, that in the mouths of two or more witnesses shall all things be established. Here is the Bible, one witness. Here is the Book of Mormon, the other witness. They go hand in hand testifying of these things which we have spoken.

"Believe in the truth and divinity and be not faithless concerning The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Lord declared it to be 'the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth' with which He was pleased (D&C 1:30). That is not my statement. That is the statement of the Lord himself. A minister once said to me, 'Aren't you very arrogant to make a statement concerning such magnitude as that?' I said, 'I didn't say it. The Lord said it, and because He said it, I believe it is true.'"
("Inspirational Thoughts," *Ensign*, July 1998, 2-4)

John 20:31 these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ

L. Lionel Kendrick

"Some have suffered death to make it possible for us to have the scriptures today. Historically, the scriptures in the Bible were reserved for the clergy, with the reading of them by others being denounced. At times laws even prohibited the public or private reading of them. What a marvelous blessing we have to not only possess the most complete collection of scripture in history but also to have the freedom to search and to use them!

"One of the most sacred purposes for which the scriptures were written was to make it possible for all to know Christ. The scriptures teach and testify of Jesus Christ. They teach us much that we need to know and to do to return to the presence of the Savior. John was specific in giving the purpose of the scriptures when he said: 'But these [things] are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.' (John 20:31.)

"Nephi bore witness as to the reason he had recorded the revelations when he said: 'And I, Nephi, have written these things unto my people, that perhaps I might persuade them that they would remember the Lord their Redeemer.' (1 Ne. 19:18.)" ("Search the Scriptures," *Ensign*, May 1993, 13)

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