

This is an assigned topic, continuing by request the theme of "Beyond Politics" which was the subject of the talk three years ago, and was given as a personal excuse for by-passing political activity. But the First Presidency tells us that we should be active in the field. And so the question arises, why should the Saints, endowed with knowledge from on high, bother with a petty and sordid business--Pfui Politik ein garstig Lied! says Faust. It is to that question that I now address myself. We must needs get into the action because we have no choice. Consider a classic story and example.

Behold Paul going up to the Temple at the time of Pilgrimage. He is spotted by some Jews from a town in Asia Minor where he had stirred things up and they try to stop him--"he is bringing Greeks into the temple!" they scream as they try to drag him away. As a result the entire polis flared up in instant rioting in the manner of Near Eastern cities to this day. The word polis is significant here since it designates the community in its political aspects. As a result the Temple gates were actually closed during the Pilgrimage.

Jerusalem at this time was an occupied city and the man in charge of keeping peace for the Romans was the Tribune Lysias, a freedman who had worked his way up the hard way and didn't want to lose his job and his head. Personally leading a formidable group of soldiers and centurions to the spot he arrested Paul and began to ask questions and take names. But there was so much shouting with everybody yelling at once that he couldn't go on and so he took Paul back to the headquarters heavily guarded, for the screaming mob followed them through the streets all the way. At the Castellum (which has recently been discovered and partly restored--an impressive structure) he asked Paul whether he was not a certain Egyptian, a very much wanted leader of the Sicarii, a political

action group then hiding out in the desert. The Sicarii carried little knives (sikkin) under their shirts and would use them in liquidating undesirables. Paul said no, he was on the contrary of an important city, and he asked for permission to address the crowd.

From the balcony he talked in Hebrew so that only the troublemakers understood him. He said he too was once a Zealot like them (that is the word used as we all know to designate a party of political extremists). He told them the story of his conversion and explained his mission to the whole world. The result was more rioting with Paul dragged back into the office where the Tribune was determined to clear things up among all these conflicting claims by examining Paul under the lash. As he was being bound Paul asked a Centurion if it was customary to beat Roman citizens without even giving them a hearing. The worried Centurion lost no time in reporting to the Tribune, who questioned Paul about his citizenship. To get out of a ticklish situation Lysias passed the buck to the High Priests and the Council of the Jews. Paul began by proclaiming innocence and was hit in the mouth. Paul's instant reaction was to call the man a damned hypocrite; but when they told him not to talk that way to the High Priest, he immediately apologized, and then in telling his story cleverly achieved a deadlock between the Pharisees and the Saducees by throwing their favorite apple of discord--the resurrection--into their midst. The result was not just a disputation among the scribes but another four-star riot which brought the Roman troops back to rescue Paul who was about to be torn apart.

Next, forty fanatics conspired to get Paul out of Roman hands long enough to murder him, the Chief Priests and Elders agreeing with the plot. But Paul's nephew overheard things and hurried to tell Paul at the Castellum. Paul called a Centurion and said that his nephew had news which would interest the top man. It would indeed, it behooved the Tribune to check on every threat and rumor in this powder-keg of a city. The Tribune we are told was "terrified"; things were getting out of hand. The one thing he wanted most was to get Paul out of

there. So there was a change of venue and Paul went with a very impressive escort to Caesarea on the coast with a letter declaring him absolutely innocent and passing the buck to Felix the Roman governor of the whole province. Paul was kept there in custody in Herod's palace now serving as a Praetorium or military headquarters. Hard on his heels came the delegation from Jerusalem, the High Priests and important Elders bringing a high-powered Roman lawyer with them. He reminded Felix in court that he was responsible for law and order, that Paul was stirring up the whole nation, nay, as ring leader of a sect which was troubling the peace of the entire empire he had crowned his criminal activity by causing a disturbance at the national shrine of the Jews. In his defense Paul addressing Felix "sitting as judge unto this nation" that there was no disturbance at all until the people from Asia started making trouble in Jerusalem, and that the council itself had found him guiltless. Felix said he would have to wait for Lysias the Tribune to come and confirm all this.

While Paul was being kept in house arrest Felix's wife, Drusilla, who was a Christian, drew Paul and her husband into some gospel conversations in which Paul's moral fervor alarmed the governor whose principals were not above reproach. He kept Paul for two years hoping for a payoff from the Christians (He knew about their organization from his wife).

Before he could collect anything Felix was replaced by Porcius Festus, a personal friend of Claudius the Emperor, who was out to achieve another step in his gradus honorum by keeping Rome's most difficult province under control-- for if there was one thing the Emperor did not want it was more trouble in Judea. Festus began his term with a courtesy visit to Jerusalem where the dignitaries joined in asking him to send Paul back to that city--for there was another plot to murder him as soon as he was out of Roman hands. But Festus properly pointed out that since the administrative headquarters were all at Caesarea, it would be better for them all to come there. In the Roman magisterium legislative, executive, and judicial authority all resided in

a single exalted official. Paul declared in the court that he had broken no laws of 1) the Jews, 2) the Temple, or 3) the Romans. To keep the Jews satisfied Festus asked Paul if he wouldn't be willing to go to Jerusalem. Why? said Paul, I am standing now before Caesar's judgment seat, the only proper court for this case; I am innocent and I appeal to Caesar. Conferring with legal council, Festus saw his chance to get rid of Paul by sending him to Rome.

Soon after, Herod Agrippa the king of the Jews came with his wife to pay a courtesy call on the new governor and among other things Festus raised the case of Paul whose position was now extremely dangerous; for Herod Agrippa was a personal friend of the Emperor Claudius with whom he had been to school, and had been made king of the Jews by the helping hand of the Roman Tenth Legion; only half-Jewish, the desire of his life was to be accepted by the people as their legitimate ruler. So here we have Herod eager to gratify the Romans and the Jews, Festus supporting him as his best chance of controlling the populace, and the only thing that would quiet them was to appease the rowdy factions; and the only thing that would satisfy them was Paul's head. Paul was to be the fall guy. The governor gave a magnificent reception for Agrippa and Bernice and Paul was brought in as part of the entertainment. As Professor Garrod has shown, the standard form of entertainment at high class Roman parties was listening to rhetorical recitals, as we listen to music. Paul was part of the show and played his part very skillfully by an oration that put everybody into high good humor. He flattered Herod as the great authority on all Jewish matters, and Festus as the model judge and governor. When Festus joked that Paul had become balmy with too much study they all laughed and when Agrippa topped that by saying that Paul (hic) had almost converted him they laughed even louder. When the high-ups and their wives talked it over among themselves they agreed that there was nothing wrong with Paul, but to Caesar he must go. So the little nobody who got some hoods mad at him in the streets of a provincial town in Asia Minor ends up with personal letters to the Emperor of the world--the Oecumene

These are typical episodes from Paul's missionary career, in which we find him perpetually in political hot water. Why? Because only under such strange circumstances could he accomplish his mission. What was that mission? At the time of his conversion Ananias said: "Brother Saul, receive they sight...The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee...For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. (Acts 22:13-14).

23:11. 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. [Two completely corrupt cities--How often does the Lord apply the word "corrupt" to our modern world in his first words to the Prophet Joseph!]

26:15. I am Jesus whom thou persecutest...But rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness...I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee-- [Why send him to the people and the Gentiles if he has to be delivered from them?] 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God..."

That was his mission: He had to go down into the gutter if he was to get anybody out of it! And you can be sure that Satan is not going to relinquish his power over anybody without a fight!

In all of this the attentive student of Church history recognizes familiar overtones. If we shift the drama from its setting of Olympian grandeur and unlimited wealth amidst the accumulated glories of inemmemorial antiquity to the plain homespun backwoods theater of the American frontier of the 19th century stretching from western New York to the great Salt Lake, we find the plot and the characters strangely intact. The Prophet Joseph and the Brethren go forth to preach; religious leaders raise up mobs against them; ambitious politicians see a chance to get into the act, the military are drawn in to quell or excite popular unrest, their leaders acting under the instruction of judges and governors until the case goes right on up to the President himself. Forty-six times Joseph Smith, appeared before the magistrates. The mobs were both political and religious led by ministers who as often as not were military officers, working in cooperation with murderous extremist conspiracies, while the

haut monde was kept agog in Europe and America by a sensation-mongering press. Everywhere the Elders went their itinerary was marked by rioting and arrest, and almost never were they proven guilty of any illegal behavior.

We will recall that the ancient Apostles went through the same routine and for the same reason, going forth "as sheep among wolves" to "turn the world upside down", as the charge ran against them. Like the missionaries in this dispensation the nature of their activity naturally involved them in showdowns with every level of society. This is what we call being "in the world", where they had to go in order to call people out of the world. Exactly the same applied to the Lord himself. The complicated threads of his trial and execution are still being untangled, but always the same cast of characters and the same reaction; and from the human side the story is predominantly political in nature.

Earlier Daniel and his friends held high political office and served well, but they ran afoul of leaders of religion and jealous political rivals, who stirred up the King and the nation against them to encompass their death. This was possible because of the unflinching religious and moral position they took, which made them conspicuously peculiar and a standing rebuke to the society at large--and also made possible trumped-up charges against them. It was very effective but a very dangerous form of publicity for their cause.

Still earlier, the Prophets all achieved maximum attention from the highest to the lowest of the people by addressing the crowds in the streets and at the Temple or in the desert, or chatting intimately with kings upon their thrones--and by preserving their peculiar aloofness and persisting in their unwelcome message, courting and often achieving martyrdom. Moses, brought up at the Court of Pharaoh and intimate with the chieftains of the desert, was a political as well as a religious leader, for the Law he gave to Israel was their civil as well as their religious code. Abraham the Wanderer was constantly making contacts and contracts with kinglets, priests, sheikhs, individual land-owners,

most of them, taking advantage of him, but everywhere preaching the Gospel as Abraham the Missionary. The friend of God and the friend of man, in a hysterically insecure and restless world (drought was the ruling influence), he always did the fair and politic thing, and paid the highest prices for his independence-- he would deal and bargain, but he would not join up. Enoch came as a missionary, "a strange thing in the land..a wild-man has come among us!" Great publicity. So they came forth to hear him and were at first alarmed by his teaching; then "all men were offended" by it; but he began to make converts and draw them off, founded his own Church, then his own city, and finally brought all those who would follow him out of the world. That was Paul's assignment also: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God..."

All these men were "in the world but not of the world"--up to their neck in politics, yet maddeningly aloof from political commitment to any party or faction. It is very much a political drama, this Restoration of the Gospel. It seems so astonishingly uniform regardless of time or place that one must ask: Can this be a part of God's Plan for the salvation of the human race, this steady immersing of God's chosen messengers--human affairs at their most distracting, tumultuous, and corrupt level? The answer is found in what are structurally the strangest passages in the Scriptures, sections that are more suggestive of a graphically worked-out diagram than ordinary narrative or doctrine.

I refer to Chapters 14, 15, and 17 of the Gospel of John and Chapter 19 of III Nephi. The summary of all our relationships to other beings is given in these chapters from the lips of the Savior. Chapter 17 is a prayer and it corresponds to another prayer delivered by the Lord in the Book of Mormon III Nephi 19:20-23 and 28-29. Those six short verses contain no less than 71 personal pronouns; the three chapters in John 14 (31 verses) contain 165 personal pronouns; 15 (27 verses) 136; 17 (only 26 verses) 168--in all some 469 personal pronouns in three short chapters.

In Nephi's version the whole relationship of every man to every other person in the universe is set forth using a vocabulary of just 32 words: 9

personal pronouns repeated 71 times, 6 prepositions, 7 verbs, 4 participles, and only 5 nouns: "Father, Holy Ghost, world, words, and faith". From this tiny packet the whole system is set forth. The structure using personal pronouns as bricks, with prepositions and a few verbs as mortar. The few nouns are the all-important indication to show what all those pronouns refer to.

This is what we find in the three chapters of John:

There are seven parties working on seven different levels: Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Apostles, Saints, the World, the Prince of this World, each of the first five acting on behalf of all those below:

"The Father is greater than I."

"You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you..."

"I am the vine; you are the branches; if I am in you you will bear fruit." (15:1)

The upper five are in upward motion. This is expressed in terms of glory:

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are." (17:22).

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. (15:8)

("This is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." Moses 1:39).

Those above strive to raise up the others to their own level:

By teaching: "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (14:26).

By testifying: "I will send him (the Holy Ghost) from the presence of my Father; he will go forth from my Father to testify of me, and when you hear him, you (in turn) will testify for you were with me in the beginning."

The teachings are commandments, instructions: 14:21, And they who receive them respond by believing and doing:

"Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very work's sake...He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also..." (14:11,12).

"You are my friends if you keep my commandments." (15:14).

Also those who accept the teaching from the Apostles must do the same works:

"...if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." (15:20).

Having accepted the Word, it is vitally important that they "remain", "abide", and "persevere" in it:

"If you abide (meinete) in me and my sayings also abide in you, whatever you ask will be given." (15:7).

The steps are summed up in a single verse:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained (set apart) you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name I have made known unto you."

All have a piece of the action, and all engaged in this activity form a single community in which the binding and motivating force from top to bottom is

Love:

"If ye Love me, keep my commandments." (14:15).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is the loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him..." (14:21).

"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come, and make our abode (remain) with him." (14:23).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." (14:24).

"As the Father hath loved me, so I have loved you: continue ye in my love." How? "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love: even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love." (15:9,10).

They must pass it on down:

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." (15:12).

By this love they "abide in" each other. They are "in each other"--a complete identity, which results in the parties concerned becoming completely one.

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (14:20).

"Abide in me and I in you." (15:4ff).

"Holy Father, keep through thine own name these whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we." (17:11).

"Neither pray I for these (the Apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as Thou, Father art in me; and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us..."

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be for one even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." (17:20-23).

This oneness is characterized by a perfect reciprocity:

"Whatsoever ye ask in my name, I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (17:22).

The Son is glorified in the Father:

"Herein is my Father glorified that ye bring forth much fruit." (15:8).
"And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." (17:10).

The five levels at the top form an unbroken continuum, "a single universe of discourse," as Cherbonnier puts it, which does not embrace the two lowest levels; the World and the Prince of the World operate on their own principles on the other side of a great gulf. Here visitors from above are not welcome; they are treated as trespassers and offenders, despised, rejected, persecuted wherever they go.

The Lord shows himself in his true nature to the Apostles, but not to the World. (14:22).

When the Comforter comes in his place, "the World cannot receive him, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." (14:16f).

The Lord leaves his peace with the saints, "Not as the World giveth peace give I unto you." (14:27).

"Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the Prince of this World cometh; and hath nothing in me. Yet a little while and the World seeth me no more." (14:30, 19).

This dangerous and hostile territory was the scene of Christ's earthly mission.

Why? For the same reason Paul was sent there--to testify to a benighted world and give them a chance:

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. That the word might be fulfilled: They hated me without cause. (He gives them a chance to accept or reject not only himself but the Father). "But now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father." For "He that hateth me hateth my my Father also." (15:22-25).

The Apostles are included in the scheme:

"If the World hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." (15:18).

"If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you..." (15:20).

"All these things will they do for my name's sake, because they do not know Him that sent me, even as they do not know and cannot receive the Holy Ghost." (15:21). (This is the complete reversal of the Celestial order of Love.)

In leaving the world behind, the Lord leaves the Apostles there to carry on the work--the same work he did; and their prospects are equally gloomy:

"As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world..." (17:18).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world." (17:11).

"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from evil." (They must face it). (17:15).

All are in the World together:

"That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they may also be one is us, that the World may believe that Thou hast sent me." (17:21).

In short, the Saints must be in the world to do their dangerous work of recruiting other Saints out of the world:

"If ye were of the world the world would love his own...but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (15:18).

"I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me...out of of the world." (17:9).

"I have given them my word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (17:14).

Those on both sides of the line are of the same human family: some make the crossing over, but for them to do that they must hear and accept the word.

"I have chosen you, and set you apart, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." (17:16). The world supplies the fruit; flee from Babylon, is the call--but bring others with you!

All these things may seem perfectly obvious once they are pointed out, but we tend easily to forget them and identify with the world by the simple process of following the way of least resistance. Once in the world even the angels are tempted.

The posture of "sheep among wolves" is a difficult one to maintain. In fact in most cases the sheep were "turned into wolves". Almost invariably the easy way, offering "the flesh-pots of Egypt" or "the precious things" at Jerusalem, is the winner against the hard way of life in the wilderness. The famous ancient myth of The Pearl, the story of the "Watchers", the tragedy of Ghost." (15-16) and many a fallen Sage and Saint, all admonish us to beware:

"When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart...He that receiveth the word into stony places...yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. Also he that received seed among the thorns...the care of this world, (merimna tou aionos--"concern for temporal affairs), and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. (Mt. 13:19, 20,22).

The Gospel goes its own way; it may never commit itself wholly to one faction or another. Once it does, endowing that faction or party with religious sanction and moral supremacy, infinite mischief is done. Let us see what happened in the ancient Church: I have written a good deal on the subject and will cash in on it now. But first an important background note, showing how men in every age have been decoyed away from the real contest, a sad and miserable side-show that is ever engaging the energies and emotions of mankind in the sort of futile contention which is Satan's masterpiece.. [This is from the Reynolds Lecture given at the University of Utah at their Centennial in 1950.] We give here the official formulas of royal power for ancient rulers from Pharaoh to the Byzantine emperors, the kings of France, the Khans of Asia, Popes, Caliphs, etc. and conclude:

It is clear and unequivocal in each case: (1) the monarch rules over all men; (2) it is God who has ordered him to do so and, significantly, none claims authority as originating with himself, but even the proudest claims to be but the humble instrument of heaven; (3) it is thus his sacred duty and mission in the world to extend his dominion over the whole earth, and all his wars are holy wars; and (4) to resist him is a crime and sacrilege deserving no other fate than extermination. The most obvious corollary of this doctrine is that there can be only one true ruler on earth. "The eternal command of God is this," wrote Mongu Khan to Louis IX, "in heaven there is one eternal God; on earth there is no other master than Chingis Khan, the Son of God." (Western Pol. Quart. 4:234).

This is the world's answer to John 14:15,17; a hierarchy of fear and compulsion. This political imperative polarizes human society:

Highly characteristic of the hierocentric doctrine (of the old sacral state) is an utter abhorrence of all that lies outside the system. The world inevitably falls into two parts, the heavenly kingdom and the outer darkness, a world of monsters and abortions. Whoever is not of the frithr is a nithung, without rights and without humanity. All who do not willingly submit to Alexander or Constantine are, according to Dio Chrysostom and Eusebius, mad beasts to be hunted down and exterminated. For the Roman, all the world is either ager pacatus or ager hosticus, says Varro (Ling. Lat. i), the only alternative to submission being outrageous rebellion. Anyone who resents the Roman yoke is a guilty slave, says Claudian (Get. 355), who should be consumed by remorse of conscience. For the Moslem, all the world is either Dar-al-Islam or Dar-al-Harb, the latter being any spot in the world that has refused to pay tribute and thereby made itself guilty of rebellion, because everything in the world without exception is the legitimate property of the Moslems. We have already noted the claim of the khans that whoever resisted them were guilty of crime against God.

To Attila, those who resisted his yoke were runaway slaves (Jordanes, chap. 52), and the Assyrian kings constantly declare that whoever will not take and keep an oath to them must needs be exterminated as "wicked people" and "rebels". In a word, "the world without the 'Kingdom' remains in its state of primordial rebellion," and all who do not recognize the divine king are truly "children of destruction." (Ibid. 244-245).

Thus the whole world has been engaged in a counterfeit version of the combat between good and evil in which Shiz and Coriantumr, Lamanites and Nephites, destroy each other in the illusion that it is good guys fighting bad guys. This is a constant tendency in politics, against which Elder Wallace F. Bennett warns us in a forceful statement in the current Ensign, discussing the necessity of compromise, a thing which many Latter-day Saints consider a threat to their integrity. But see what effect that hypnotic polarization had on the ancient Church, completing its ruin in the fourth century:

The church fathers, diligently reconstructing history in retrospect, made it appear that the Church and Rome had always been one... "One Empire was set up over all the earth, wrote Eusebius, and all men became brothers having one Father and one Mother--true piety." (WPQ 6:643).

The cultural background or national heritage had such a strong attraction that the Christians identified themselves wholly with their culture:

Thus Western Civilization was nursed in the schools on a legend of Western Goodness: Hic est Ausonia, the Western World of clean, fresh, simple, unspoiled pioneers. This fiction became the very cornerstone of the official Virgilian doctrine of Pomanitas--Rome was great because Rome was good. The emperors who after the second century took the names of Pius and Felix were giving expression "to the old Roman belief in the close association between piety and success," while indulging in the ingrained Roman vice, blatantly paraded throughout the whole of Latin literature, of dwelling with a kind of morbid fascination on one's own simple goodness. School boys have been told for centuries that the Romans were a simple, severe, and virtuous folk, with a near-monopoly on pietas and fides, because, forsooth, the Romans themselves always said so, though almost every page of the record contradicts the claim. What better demonstration for the effectiveness of the official propaganda? Teachers and orators drilled the essentials of Western Goodness into their pupils and auditors until, by the fourth century, when hardly a speck of ancient virtue remained, men could talk of nothing but that virtue. They go right on sinning, Salvian reports, in the sublime conviction that no matter how vilely they may act, or how nobly the barbarians behave, God must necessarily bless them and curse the barbarians for being what they are. Yet Salvian himself shows how well the lesson has been taught when he stoutly affirms that, after all, no barbarian can be really virtuous!

In this view it is always the others who are the bad guys:

Just as all obedient subjects are embraced in a single shining community, so all outsiders are necessarily members of a single conspiracy of evil, a pestilential congregation of vapors of such uniform defilement that none can be ever so slightly tinged with its complexion without being wholly involved in it corruption. A favorite passage with the churchmen of the period was that which declared that to err in the slightest point of the law is to break the whole law. (Ibid. 644).

It must be our side or nothing:

All virtue is comprised in the fact of membership in Our Group, all vice consists in not belonging. It can be shown by a most convenient syllogism that since God is on our side we cannot show any degree of toleration for any opposition without incurring infinite guilt. In the fourth century everybody was officiously rushing to the defense of God; but John Chrysostom's pious declaration that we must avenge insults to God while patiently bearing insults to ourselves is put in its proper rhetorical light by the assumption of Hilary that an insult to himself is an insult to God. Therein lies the great usefulness of the doctrine of guilt and innocence by association that became so popular in the fourth century: one does not need to quibble; or compromise there is no such thing as being partly wrong or merely mistaken; the painful virtue of forbearance and the labor of investigation no longer embarrass the champions of one-package loyalty. No matter how nobly and austere heretics may live, for St. Augustine they are still Antichrist--all of them, equally and indiscriminately; their virtues are really vices, their virginity carnality, their reason unreason, their patience in persecution mere insolence; any cruelty shown them is not really cruelty but kindness. Chrysostom goes even further: the most grossly immoral atheist is actually better off than an upright believer who slips up on one point, since though both go to hell, the atheist has at least the satisfaction of having gratified his lust on earth. Why not? Is not heresy in any degree a crime against God? And is not any crime against God an infinite sin? The insidious thing about such immoral conclusions is that they are quite logical. The cruelty of the times, says Alföldi, "cannot fully be explained by the corruption of the age...the spirit of the fourth century has its part to play. The victory of abstract ways of thinking, the universal triumph of theory, knows no half-measures; punishment, like everything else, must be a hundred percent, but even this seems inadequate." Compromise is now out of the question: God, who once let his sun shine upon the just and the unjust should cease to exist, that only wheat should grow in the earth, and that only sheep should inhabit it. In all seriousness the Emperor Justinian announced to the churchmen his intention of forcing the Devil himself to join the True Church, and thus achieving in the world that perfect unity "which Pythagoras and Plato taught." (Ibid, 645-6).

We have just noted the use of absolutes in clerical polemic. The results were what might have been expected, but the ferocity of party conflict within the Church as described by the writers of the fourth and fifth centuries exceeds the wildest imaginings. Even those men, St. Basil reports, who had fought the uphill fight for decency and striven conscientiously through the years to be just and fair with others, in the end found themselves forced to surrender and become just like the rest, who were all engaged in a frantic game of testing each others' loyalty. The result, he says, is that the Church is entirely leaderless, everyone wants to give orders, but no one will take them; the self-appointed have grabbed

what they could and broken up the Church in a spirit of such savage, unbridled hatred and universal mistrust that the only remaining principle of unity anywhere is a common desire to do harm: men will cooperate only where cooperation is the most effective means of doing injury to others. It was characteristic of the Age of Constantine, says Burckhardt, "that a man could be intensely devout and at the same time grossly immoral." There was nothing contradictory in that--men had simply discarded personal integrity for a much easier group loyalty. "Who can swim against the tide of custom?" cries St. Augustine. (Ibid. 647).

You can swim in the river, but how long can you resist the current? And how do you achieve unity in such a system? Not by persuasion, but simply by winning:

The Emperor's formula for establishing perfect unity and loyalty in the Church and the Empire was that plan which the clergy themselves constantly urged upon him and his successors, importunately demanding that he proscribe, banish, and anathematize whoever withheld allegiance from their particular parties. The Vita Constantini tells how the Emperor attempted to end each crisis by outlawing all opposition, thereby inevitably sowing the seeds of the next crisis. But how could one expect a simple soldier to question the proposition that compulsory loyalty is the secret of universal peace, when it was being pressed upon him by all the cleverest men of the age? "The barbarians reverence God, because they fear my power," he had declared, and everyone had applauded his doctrine of compulsory reverence. But it didn't work. No sooner had Constantine removed his last civil and military opponents than the issue between his Christian and pagan subjects became acute. No sooner had he "given profound peace and security to the Church" by restraining her pagan opponents than the churchmen started accusing each other of heresy with a wild abandon that surpassed--as the Emperor himself observed--any performance of the heathen. No sooner had his successors removed the last heretic and received the undying thanks of the Church, than the true believers were at each others' throats. Ambrose notes that it is harder to make orthodox Christians live together in peace than it is to eliminate heretics. The problem was never solved, for the doctrine of absolute, one-package loyalty would allow no compromise. (Ibid. 647-8).

This year the subject of the Annual Session of the American Academy of Religion (Journal xliv, March 1976) was Restitution, i.e. Restoration, a fitting theme for the Bicentennial, it was thought--the Restoration of the Gospel in America! What short memories we have! Restoration was a very naughty word just a few years ago, but the concept is now being recognized as fundamental to the Christian preaching. Speakers pointed out that every Church has thought of itself as returning to pure primitive Christianity, but in a spiritual sense, i.e. it was really a reformation of the Church. In a survey of the whole problem, Samuel S. Hill, Jr. decides that the most tangible form of restoration, "Institutional

Restitution, is exemplified almost perfectly by the Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints, the Mormon people, and stands as the most radical or revolutionary of all American enterprises aiming toward building the Church on earth to correspond to the exact specifications disclosed in the divine revelation... (in the conviction that their institutional form is the form intended by Christ.

Mormonism presents so many angles for seeing this point that it can hardly be missed." (p.69). What follows is a remarkably fair and accurate statement of the Mormon position, concluding:"...Intact, it is neither Catholic nor Protestant, though of course emphatically Christian. One has to say finally, that it is not classifiable with any other branch of Christianity, since it is its unique self, quite distinct--and of course separate--from all traditional ecclesiasticism. Mormonism is a separatist and religious modality, because its base is the one institution which possesses the authority of the Restored Gospel." (p.69).

"Clearly the LDS live by a unique and significantly different theology separating them from all other Christians...(p.70). "Mormonism introduces something without precedent and in the process modifies the old." (p.71).

The points to note here are 1) that Mormonism, though "emphatically Christian" is neither Catholic nor Protestant, and 2) that it defies identification with or absorption by any other movement. It is an astonishing phenomenon: Here you can be a loyal follower of Christ without being either Catholic or Protestant. During World War II if you were a Christian you had to have either P or C on your dog-tags. "Look bud," said the angry quartermaster, "if you're not Catholic, you're Protestant and that's all there is to it." They could not conceive of anything else. But Mormonism does not commitus to either Shiz or Coriantumr. The same applies in politics. For many years if you were not a Republican, you had to be Democrat; if you were not right wing you had to be left wing; if you were not "conservative" you had to be "liberal". Last week someone wrote in the Universe quite smugly noting that we do not allow radical speakers at the BYU, but if Mormonism is "the most radical or revolutionary of all American enterprises" in religion, then

game because he owns the treasures of the earth. They could see he owns them as loot, and by virtue of a legal fiction with which he has, in Joseph Smith's terms, "riveted the creeds of the fathers," (JST 146), but still the students would ask me in despair, "If we leave his employ, what will become of us?" The answer is simple. Don't you trust the Lord? If you do, he will give you the guidance of the Holy Spirit and you will not end up doing the things that he has expressly commanded us not to do.

May God help us all in the days of our probation to seek the knowledge He wants us to seek.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

¹ Nigel Calder, The Mind of Man, p. 25.

² Ibid., p. 169.

³ l.c.

⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 29, 184.

⁶ Arthur Clarke, Profiles of the Future (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 197.

⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

⁸ D.H.C., 3:295f.

⁹ Calder, p. 33.

¹⁰ Clarke, p. 83.

¹¹ Lyall Watson, Supernature (N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1973), p. 239.

¹² Calder, p. 77.

¹³ Carl Sagan, The Cosmic Connection, (N.Y.: Dell, 1973), Ch. 34.

¹⁴ Matt. 6:25ff, Mark 13:11ff, Luke 12:11ff, 3 Nephi 13:25ff, D&C 84:81ff.

¹⁵ Clarke, p. 16.