

Book Reviews

CRAIG L. BLOMBERG and STEPHEN E. ROBINSON. *How Wide the Divide? A Mormon and an Evangelical in Conversation*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997. 228 pp. Paperback, \$11.99.

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THE GOOD NEWS—AND THE BAD

The good news is that Mormons and Evangelicals aren't as far apart in their theology as some had supposed. The bad news is that Mormons and Evangelicals aren't as far apart in their theology as some had supposed.

How Wide the Divide? A Mormon and an Evangelical in Conversation is a unique book and an excellent model for future religious dialogue between Mormons and other faiths and among Mormons themselves. It takes on one of the most notorious divides in Christianity, one fraught with stereotypes, acrimony, misinformation, and, in a word, much un-Christian behavior. The book provides clarity, insight, and, I hope, some healing of wounds. The authors are well-trained biblical scholars and experienced, able writers. In this book, they reveal themselves as devout believers in their respective Christian faiths and as thoughtful, gracious men.

The structure of *HWD*, carefully planned and worked through, is key to the book's success, since it requires genuine listening to each other's positions. The four chapters, each on a crucial, historically divisive issue, begin with a statement by one or the other author on the subject and a review of the usual uninformed "misconceptions" by others of their views. Each author then includes a quite critical section of "misgivings" about what they understand the other group believes and ends with "A More Positive Conclusion" that points toward a "Joint Conclusion" written together after the other has gone through the same process for their half of the chapter. Finally, the authors write a "Conclusion" to the entire book that pleads for mutual avoidance of labels like "cult" and "great and abominable" church, for greater understanding based on correct information from reliable sources, and for a new era of "interreligious conversation and cooperation in social and political action . . . [as] allies in the service of God." The authors list twelve "points of agreement," such as "There is no other name and no other way by which any individual may be saved other than through Jesus Christ" (195) and eleven "important issues [that] continue to divide us," like "Do people have a chance to respond to the gospel after death or not?" (196). The book ends with an invitation for further dialogue "characterized by speaking the truth to one another in love" (196).

All of this is very good news. I found myself authoritatively informed by both authors on some of the intricacies of traditional Christian thought and Evangelical belief, especially in the areas of biblical inerrancy and salvation by grace. The authors' careful dialogue reinvigorated my thinking about Mormon concepts of God, the Atonement, and the plan of salvation. I was delighted at the good spirit manifest in the exchanges, even during sharp disagreement about fundamentals. The authors were careful and attentive to each other and willing to rethink, restate, and even change their minds. They clearly respect and admire each other and are not threatened by continuing differences or failure to convert one another. I found myself yearning for similarly respectful, civil discourse *among Mormons* when they express or debate opposing views of Mormon history or theology.

The bad news is that some Evangelicals' intolerance for Mormons has taken extreme forms, including the claim that Mormons are not Christians and are therefore unworthy to associate in Christian causes, receive awards from Christian associations, or teach at Christian colleges. The persecution has even extended to the making or showing of viciously false and inflammatory films. Though such consequences are renounced by Blomberg, they may be partly a result of basic theological positions that Robinson seems more willing to compromise than Blomberg and that may be taking over popular Mormon thought and reducing tolerance for each other *within* the Church.

Robinson has already written thoroughly and persuasively on the matter of salvation by grace in works comparable in focus to those of Lowell Bennion and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland. His *Believing Christ*,¹ which contains his famous "parable of the bicycle," and *Following Christ*² have become popular antidotes to the common Mormon notion that people are saved solely by works and must "perfect themselves" to enter Christ's kingdom and inherit celestial glory. Perhaps this is the heresy that most offends Evangelicals and makes them think that Mormons aren't Christian.

In *Believing Christ*, Robinson uses ancient and modern scripture, lively argument, and touching personal experiences like the bicycle story to show that the crucial *beginning* of the journey of salvation (receiving Christ and being released from the bondage of sin—that is, becoming "justified") is made possible through *grace*, not merit or works. It is a free gift, something like that of the father in the bicycle parable who stalls his importunate daughter with "You save all your pennies, and pretty soon you'll have enough for a bike." Then, when she later comes to him with all she has, sixty-one cents, he makes up the rest.

This is very good news, and I know that for many Mormons it evokes the gratitude and brings the change of heart that Paul felt when he first realized, with awe, the unique, unconditional quality of God's love, "While

we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). A person I know was pushed near the edge of despair when her son suffered a terrible accident that required years of patient tending. Struggling with questions like “Why my son?” and “How can I possibly do it?” this parent found the answers in Robinson’s book and was able to lay her burden on the Lord and find immense relief. Grace does in fact have the power to save, and Latter-day Saints too often cut themselves off from that power or delay its effects by overreacting to the traditional Protestant emphasis on “*grace alone*,” trying instead to do it all by themselves.

The bad news, however, is that reading Robinson’s discussion of grace and Atonement in *HWD*, especially his sympathetic responses to Blomberg’s Evangelical formulations, confirmed my feeling that the grace in the bicycle parable is more Protestant than Mormon. Protestant grace, as I understand it, is God freely doing something absolutely crucial *for* and *to* us in order to *save* some of us from hell. Mormon grace, on the other hand, involves God freely doing something absolutely crucial to *help* all of us *become* new, saved beings. Protestant grace begins in God’s omnipotence and absolute sovereignty and thus logically (as Calvin showed) is pre-destinated, irresistible, permanent, and results in an either-or reward—salvation or damnation. Mormon grace begins in God’s loving response to our intrinsic moral agency and thus emphasizes our choice, “growing in grace,” and trying to change ourselves through repentance and righteousness into “new creatures,” all of which results in a huge variety of “degrees” of individual salvation. The crucial difference, as I see it, is that between an absolute God *giving* us relief from his absolute demands of justice because we have no merit and a loving Father *helping* us to become Christlike because we can’t do it alone.

Recently an Evangelical pollster asked, “Can a good person earn their way to heaven?”³ The good news is that 76 percent of Mormons agreed they could. That’s also the bad news, because, as Elder Bruce C. Hafen has written, “Individuals lack the capacity to develop a Christlike nature by their own effort.”⁴ But Mormons aren’t the only inconsistent ones. An even higher number of Catholics, 82 percent, agreed they could “earn” their way to heaven, though, as Monsignor Francis Mannion, rector of the Cathedral of the Madeleine in Salt Lake City, points out, the question, as phrased, directly denies the central Catholic doctrine that no one can get to heaven without God’s grace.⁵ Even 22 percent of Assembly of God members and 38 percent of Baptists—though these are among the most “Evangelical,” “saved by grace” Christians—agreed they could “earn” their way to heaven.

Why the confusion on something so basic? I think it’s because the way the question is usually put, “Are we saved by grace or by works?” misdirects the discussion, even to some extent for Robinson and Blomberg. It

is also because the same scriptures, as Joseph Smith discovered as a boy seeking truth and as Robinson and Blomberg amply demonstrate, can be interpreted quite oppositely. This, however, is precisely why prophetic interpretation of the Bible and new modern revelations are needed, advantages that Blomberg will not accept and that Robinson, at least in this book, seems too willing to neglect.

Modern revelation opens up a whole new way of seeing salvation that escapes the trap of the traditional Protestant-Catholic argument proceeding from that misleading question about *amounts* of grace and works. It teaches that salvation is not a quid-pro-quo reward (or punishment) by God but a state of being (or lack thereof) and of spiritual growth toward Godhood achieved through whatever combination of grace and choice and effort best works for each of us.

The Catholic emphasis on salvation through obedience to church law, including submission to prescribed ordinances administered by proper church authority, could very easily lead to hypocrisy. A sinner could go through the motions without inner conviction or change; he could even, in the fifteenth century, *buy* “indulgences,” or means to salvation. Luther, offended by such practices, read Paul on salvation by grace and wrote “alone” in the margin of his Bible, adding his own (unscriptural) emphasis and thus moving most Protestants to the opposite extreme, which holds that actions and authority don’t matter, only a personal commitment to Christ that is rewarded with total salvation.

But such apparent opposites *both* offend common sense, and they lead to the confusion revealed in the poll cited above. Actions and outward ordinances can be what Mormon, condemning infant baptism, called “dead works” (Moroni 8:23). But there is something equally wrong with the notion that what we do and are doesn’t really or ultimately matter, that God will “give” salvation to certain people for “believing,” whatever their lives look like. The problem with both positions is that they imply that salvation is a *thing*, an *amount*, a reward that can be somehow “given” by God.

Modern revelation teaches that salvation is a *condition*, a soul’s state of being (Mosiah 3:12,19), in fact a variety of conditions. Mosiah 2:38–39 makes it clear that hell itself is a state of internal being rather than an external place. Such states of soul are not simply given or created by God; they are achieved or lost through a combination of our response to God’s enabling opportunities, to his potentially transforming love in the Atonement. Salvation requires *becoming* “new creatures in Christ” through our sincere participation in the saving ordinances and obedience to moral law, including service to others.

It seems to me unfortunate that Robinson’s parable is about *amounts*—a little bit of works (sixty-one cents) and total belief (a child’s heart) plus

Christ's infinite grace bring a bicycle—rather than being about what it is that makes it *possible* for a person to *become* justified through an inner change and then become continually more Christlike. Of course, Robinson knows that all analogies have their limits and that a bicycle is not very much like salvation. He is very clear, both in *Following Christ* and in some of his most effective responses to Blomberg (145–47), that a process of sanctification through obedience and service must follow the initial justification by faith in Christ or the faith is not really faith. But I still worry that Robinson's formulations about salvation and judgment, as well as other crucial concepts, seem more Evangelical than Mormon.

Obviously, I cannot cover here the theological import of the full constellation of concepts that are found in LDS or Evangelical doctrinal formulations, but as a general matter, theological issues tend to divide themselves over one great rift. The technical terms are “rationalism,” which posits a reasonable God and universe that consistently obey sensible and ultimately ascertainable laws, and “voluntarism” (from the Latin for “will”), which posits a sovereign God who creates and directs a universe solely by his own will, which can be irrational and capricious, indeed is essentially unintelligible to humans. Joseph Smith's theology seems to me to be quintessentially in line with the rationalistic. It even suggests that the laws by which our God became a god and by which we can follow him in gaining salvation are eternal and unchangeable even by him—and that they work in rational and understandable ways to produce good in the world and change in us. Evangelical theology is aggressively voluntaristic, insisting on a God totally different from us and indifferent to our reasoning, one to whose inscrutable, sovereign will we must simply submit, even in such crucial matters as why we were created, how some of us are to be saved, and why some are to be punished eternally—and I'm afraid Robinson inclines in that direction.

For instance, Robinson accepts, apparently without reservation, the Evangelical formulation of a “substitutionary” atonement—that is, that Christ fully and literally takes our place in suffering for the sins we have committed and thus meets the demands of God's will that there be such suffering. A rationalistic understanding of the Atonement, consistent I believe with insights from modern revelation, sees it not as some strange, impersonal, even metaphysical, contract involving an absolute, judgmental God and vicariously sacrificed Christ, which allows us to avoid a just damnation. Rather, it is as an infinite expression to each of us personally of God and Christ's unconditional love—expressed in Christ's loving life and teachings, his taking upon himself our sins and weaknesses, so completely in the Garden that he bled at every pore, and his willing death on the cross. Because the God who taught us the law is willing to do this for us who

break the law, the Atonement is reasonably able to “appease the demands of justice” and save us from sin and its *natural* punishments, *if* we let it move us to accept the gift and use the power it provides to repent.

The Atonement is not, as many Evangelicals believe, a mysterious “substitute” for our repentance and righteousness but rather a perfectly sensible enabler. It is, as the Book of Mormon teaches, the “means” given us that we might “have faith unto repentance” (Alma 34:17). Under this view, the Atonement is not a legalistic requirement on God to meet his own mysterious demands and thus free us from punishment *after* we have faith and repent; it is God’s effort to move us sinners, through our response to his unconditional love extended *before* we repent, in order to change what we are. We can thus avoid the inherent “demands of justice” Alma speaks of, both the moral majesty of God’s righteous nature and our own inner tendency to judge ourselves for going against that nature, and participate in God’s “plan of mercy” (Alma 42:15). Traditional “substitutionary” concepts tend to keep us focused on justice and our own undeserving, which, in my experience, often merely *increases* guilt and immobility in the face of sin, while the concepts in modern revelations that emphasize the rational ability of grace to move us to repentance are in fact powerful indeed to that end. It would be bad news indeed, in an effort to become more accepted as “Christians,” to lose those energizing and redemptive concepts.

It would also be bad news if we lost our enlightened, rationalistic understandings of the nature of God and man and of the nature and authority of scripture, given through modern revelation. Thus, it was surprising to read Robinson’s rather complete capitulation to what seems like scriptural literalism (“There isn’t a single verse of the Bible that I do not personally accept and believe,” 59). It was especially surprising after his accurate summary of the rather liberal Mormon understanding, through modern revelation, that God speaks to his “servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language” (D&C 1:24) and his admission that this means that all scripture is “recorded by men who can and do make mistakes” (57). Though Robinson is very good at critiquing Evangelicals for using mainly nonauthoritative Mormon sources to construct false notions of Mormon beliefs, he seems to want to define the resources for Mormon theology much too narrowly.

What is at stake is nothing short of our concept of God’s nature in relation to our own. The worst news, it seems to me, is that Robinson appears willing to give up the unique, rationalistic, concepts of God revealed in the Doctrine and Covenants and developed clearly and fully in the King Follett Discourse. Blomberg rightly points out that the Evangelical concept of an absolute, sovereign God is crucial to the concept of a substitutionary atonement sufficient to save. Both concepts stand or fall together, and

Robinson lets both stand. He effectively faults Evangelicals for claiming biblical sufficiency and inerrancy and at the same time basing much of their thought and language on the postbiblical councils, which, according to him, are “wedded to Greek philosophical categories and assumptions” (88, 92). Yet Robinson seems to accept quite uncritically the unbiblical concept of God that arose in those councils, that is, as a static, “omnipotent,” “omniscient,” and “omnipresent” being, entirely different in nature from humans. As Robinson puts it, directly addressing perhaps the major difference between Mormons and other Christians, “Many Evangelicals are convinced, wrongly, that Latter-day Saints believe in a finite, limited or changeable god, even though that notion is repugnant to us” (88).

“Repugnant” to Mormons? What about President Brigham Young: “The God that I serve is progressing eternally [in knowledge and power], and so are his children.”⁶ Or twentieth-century Apostle John A. Widtsoe: “If the great law of progression is accepted, God must have been engaged, and must now be engaged in progressive development.”⁷

Yes, I know these are what Blomberg and even Robinson would call “noncanonical” sources, and *literal* interpretations of certain scriptures do support an all-powerful, absolute, and static God. But that shows precisely how dangerously limiting scriptural literalism is. The three “omni”s directly contradict what modern revelation and common sense tell us about God, and there is no need to be bound to literal interpretation of their scriptural use. For instance, the scriptures say God is “all-powerful” and “infinite,” but they also say “God is love” and “God is a consuming fire.” All these are worshipful metaphors and should not be taken as literal, definitive theology. Modern scripture makes clear that God *cannot* create intelligence and elements (D&C 93:29–33) and that he cannot break eternal law (D&C 130:20). And modern prophets, from Brigham Young to Joseph Fielding Smith, have recognized that the absolutistic scriptural language concerning one God, who has “all” power and knowledge sufficient to save us, can well apply to our limited sphere of existence, in which God is indeed “unchangeable”; at the same time, other language about many Gods in eternal progression of knowledge and power is equally true and orthodox when applied to spheres beyond our own.⁸ The problem is not so much that Robinson is “wrong” as that he claims only half the story is orthodox.

The “voluntaristic” Evangelical understanding seems to be that God is an absolute and infinite being, perfect and self-sufficient in every way, existing “before” and therefore unconditioned by time and space and material and law. This would seem to imply that God “decides” for some unaccountable reason (he certainly doesn’t *need* anything, being “absolute” by definition) to create beings to love him, makes them out of nothing—and thus wholly determines what they will be. Then God puts billions of

them in a world where the huge majority endure mainly pain and sorrow, comes among them as Christ and rewards those who believe on him with eternal bliss and punishes those who *don't* (including the huge majority who have never heard of him!) with eternal torment. No wonder that many in our century have decided that such a God is at best irrational and at worst a cruel creator. If he was already perfect, why did he “need” to create this world at all, and if he's all-powerful, why couldn't he just make an Adam and Eve that would have done things right in the first place or (since they were made out of nothing) destroy them and start over—or at least just send sinners back into nothingness rather than eternal torment (or make Christian teaching available to more than 10 percent of his children or prevent the Holocaust, and so forth)?

I can't help preferring the rationalistic, Mormon concept that sees God as an exalted *person*, existing in time and space and with a real environment of matter and energy and law which can be organized and created within but cannot be called into being or destroyed or absolutely controlled—a being whose work and glory it is to help other beings develop in the ways he has developed so they can enjoy his glory, too. This God sacrifices his son in an atonement of infinite love, powerful enough to resurrect us all to immortality and to move those of us who *will* to repent and improve until we become like him, with the same joy and creative and loving powers. Others he simply lets experience fully the results of what they have become or can still become, in infinite variety, rather than consigning them absolutely and irrevocably to pain or bliss.

We encounter here, of course, the crucial issues of judgment and punishment. In the rationalistic view, there are certainly natural and unavoidable consequences for all violations of natural, universal law, and God's justice will always hold us to strict account for our choices and shortcomings—but his Atonement appeases all need to suffer additional punishment if we will repent, and thus, I believe, all God's punishment is never vindictive. Modern revelation strongly suggests that “eternal” punishment does not mean “endless” (D&C 19:12), though certainly some will choose to become incapable of repentance and suffer the pain that entails. God is indeed the long-suffering, compassionate, reasonable, unconditionally loving Savior who takes no “pleasure at all that the wicked should die” but hopes they will “return from [their] way, and live” (Ezek. 18:23).

The voluntaristic view, on the other hand, is quite willing to accept, perhaps even approve of, God's irrational punishment on his creatures. Thus, despite the intelligence and graciousness of Blomberg, I grew increasingly depressed by the dreary, even mean-spirited implications of Evangelical theology: (“[Though] it is not fair to imagine the . . . Adolf Hitlers of this world experiencing the same punishment as the friendly,

hardworking non-Christian homeowner down the street; . . . they will spend an unpleasant eternity apart from God and all his people” [174]). I was even more depressed to find Robinson using “lake of fire” language (151) that is usually associated with vindictive punishment.

“Gospel,” of course, means literally “good news,” but (*mea culpa*) I just can’t find much good news in such ideas about God’s punishment. According to Blomberg (and Robinson seems to some extent to agree), God has controlled the writing, preservation, and canonization of the Bible so miraculously that it can be called essentially inerrant, sufficient, and binding for our salvation—and yet that same all-powerful, meticulous God has been unable to make the Bible and its saving message available to more than a small fraction of his children. Blomberg recognizes this “vexing” problem but can do no better than the old Catholic answer (rewards given according to “divine awareness of how they would have responded had they heard the gospel” [171]). But this only compounds the cruel irrationality by reminding us that humans have a nature that God *gave* them but will not change and, worse, punishes them for it.

That all seems to me quite *bad* news. It certainly fails the marvelous test Joseph Smith suggested for the revelation in the King Follett Discourse of the very rationalistic doctrines of God’s finitude and man’s potential deification: “This is good doctrine. It tastes good. . . . [W]hen I tell you of these words of eternal life that are given to me by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the revelations of Jesus Christ, you are bound to receive them as sweet. You taste them and I know you believe them.”⁹ But by all means, people should read the book and decide for themselves whether Robinson and Blomberg’s doctrinal formulations taste good. It may, after all, in the end be mostly a matter of personal temperament whether individuals tend toward “rationalism” or toward “voluntarism.” Some are genuinely attracted to the securities of an absolute, sovereign, justice-oriented God and some to the adventuresomeness of an open, progressive universe and an infinitely loving God working with us eternal moral agents. I remember how shocked I was when I first read the great Evangelical divine Jonathan Edwards tell how he, after previously being “full of objections” to what seemed “a horrible doctrine,” became converted to “God’s sovereignty, in choosing whom He would to eternal life, and rejecting whom He pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell.” After his conversion, Edwards’s “reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it” and “the doctrine . . . appeared exceedingly pleasant, bright, and sweet.”¹⁰ I was appalled; that doctrine did not, and does not, taste sweet to me at all. But I could see, and accept, that good, intelligent people could feel that way and that I might have something to learn from them.

The bad news for me is that those (both Evangelicals and Mormons) with the voluntaristic temperament seem so unwilling to tolerate and learn from those with the rationalistic and, that partly through that influence, American and now Mormon *cultures* seem to be increasingly intolerant of other people, both politically and theologically. There seems to be a tendency for those who believe in an absolute, sovereign, all-determining, and punishing God to have absolute assurance that he has given them (perhaps through an “inerrant” Bible) absolute Truth, which they are justified in using any means, including the law and even illegal force, to impose on others. A few years ago, I confronted some evangelical “Ex-Mormons for Jesus” who, in an effort to embarrass the Church, had dishonestly obtained and then circulated a private letter. They claimed they had a perfect right to do *anything* to destroy Mormonism, which God had told them was evil.

The good news is that *HWD* is designed to bring greater tolerance between Evangelicals and Mormons by showing that much of what we believe, once we get past false stereotypes and different definitions, is the same. The bad news is that the unspoken premise of the book seems to be that we *have* to believe more alike in order to be more tolerant. Even if Blomberg and Robinson were totally wrong and Evangelicals and Mormons really did have completely different beliefs, we still shouldn’t be treating each other the way we do.

The worst news is the spirit of “no compromise” underneath even Blomberg’s urbane, well-informed politeness. He and other Evangelicals approve of Robinson’s “bicycle parable” for being *closer* to the “truth” (*their* truth) about grace but would have him remove even the sixty-one cents the daughter contributes! Blomberg says that Evangelicals “hope and pray that influential modern LDS authors like Prof. Robinson are indeed shifting the balance back toward grace” (177), and they are already starting, in print, to call such people part of “Evangelical Mormonism”—apparently the only Mormons acceptable to them as Christians (182).

Robinson and others may indeed be shifting the balance of popular Mormon theology. This is not necessarily bad news. Perhaps it is just a historical shift in temperament or response to our terrible, anxiety-producing century or even a useful “correction” to a popular Mormon overemphasis on salvation by works or God’s finitude. But if, as past experience with Evangelicals suggests, “Evangelical Mormons,” rather than following the example of this book, become more intolerant of those who differ with them—that would be very bad news indeed.

I don’t expect that to happen. I trust that Mormons will cling to doctrines of modern revelation that encourage *both* grateful acceptance of grace and a serious, continuing, personal effort to grow in grace. Those doctrines reveal a compassionate God who does not ask us to see all we are

and do (including being damned!) for *his* glory, a God whose work and glory, always, is to enable *our* immortality and eternal life. In the Book of Moses, Enoch, given a vision of heaven and earth, sees God weeping over human wickedness. He is astonished because, having a traditional (voluntaristic) concept of God as absolute and all-powerful, he assumes that God should be able to simply prevent—or at least change—what might make him weep. God explains that his children have “agency,” cannot be coerced, and thus “the whole heavens shall weep over them . . . seeing these shall suffer” (Moses 7:32–37). Enoch sees into God’s heart, changes his concept of him—and is moved to new compassion himself: he “wept and stretched forth his arms, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned; and all eternity shook” (Moses 7:41). This is the good news—for both Mormons and Evangelicals.

The real test of whether genuine efforts for mutual understanding, like *HWD*, are successful is if those efforts help people to embrace the *fullness* of the gospel, beyond their own partial emphases—if they help Mormons to better appreciate the good news of grace emphasized by Evangelicals and if they help Evangelicals to better appreciate the good news of God’s genuinely related, intelligibly merciful nature and his “means”—providing divine atonement that helps us change our nature, as taught in modern revelation. Finally, what will most determine the success of these efforts is the degree to which both faiths treat one another with respect and compassion, whether they agree more or not.

1. Stephen E. Robinson, *Believing Christ: The Parable of the Bicycle and Other Good News* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1992).

2. Stephen E. Robinson, *Following Christ: The Parable of the Diver and More Good News* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1995).

3. Cited in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 3, 1998, C1.

4. Cited in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 3, 1998, C1. See Bruce C. Hafen, *The Broken Heart* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 155–73.

5. Cited in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 3, 1998, C1.

6. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 11:286, January 13, 1867.

7. John A. Widtsoe, *A Rational Theology* (Salt Lake City: General Priesthood Committee of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1915), 30–31.

8. For the evidence, see Eugene England, “Perfection and Progression: Two Complementary Ways to Talk about God,” *BYU Studies* 29, no. 3 (1989): 31–47.

9. Stan Larson, “The King Follett Discourse: A Newly Amalgamated Text,” *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 204.

10. Jonathan Edwards, “Personal Narrative,” in *Harper American Literature*, ed. Donald McQuade and others (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 326.