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What We Hold So Dear: Religious Toleration as a Precondition to the Restoration

David Pigott

David Pigott was a history professor at Brigham Young University–Idaho when this was published.

Considering the widespread religious intolerance and intense persecution during the early years of the Latter-day Saint Church, many may be surprised to learn that the United States in the early 1800s was a religiously tolerant place, relatively speaking. The Restoration of the gospel occurred at the dawn of an era when most people agreed that religious pluralism was a positive attribute of an increasingly complex society. Indeed, the increasing complexity of society led to the necessary acceptance of religious toleration, making the United States in the early nineteenth century the most religiously diverse and tolerant nation on earth. However, the widespread acceptance of religious toleration as a civic virtue is a relatively modern development. Barely two generations before Joseph Smith’s First Vision, religious toleration was the exception rather than the norm among the vast majority of Christians, both in America and in Europe, where the idea of toleration among a growing number of Christian faiths began.

Despite the risk of oversimplification, even a cursory study of some of the contributing ideas concerning the development of religious toleration may be of use in our continued efforts to understand modern religious pluralism. Religious toleration is so fundamental to our own culture and so necessary to peace abroad, yet few understand its precarious origins and the innumerable sacrifices made to contribute to its eventual acceptance. Nor do we fully understand the ideas of toleration within the context of the restored gospel.

The most striking reason for the relatively widespread level of religious toleration in America around the time of Joseph Smith was the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which had been written by the Founding Fathers. They, as we know through modern revelation, received divine inspiration in creating this nation: “for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose” (D&C 101:80). Such men as Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams learned from and built upon liberal ideas percolating in Europe, specifically France and England. Those ideas argued for equality before the law, an end to feudal privilege, religious toleration, and the need for a secular government detached from religious affinity. Religious toleration was an idea that influenced these inspired men and others like them. It was an idea that gradually gained wide acceptance.

Long-Standing Intolerance

Religious toleration today does not have the same meaning it did fifteen hundred (or even five hundred) years ago. Today it connotes a type of noble compassion, an acknowledgment of nonessential differences allowed to exist for the sake of civility; “to bear or endure; to nourish, sustain or preserve.”[1] This modern definition of *toleration* was widely accepted only in the late 1700s as the accepted definition of *tolerance;* the concept evolved into a positive meaning in an effort to maintain social unity at the expense of religious unity which had been shattered in the previous two centuries. *Toleration* had an ambiguous and indeterminable definition throughout the Middle Ages. The medieval precept expressed by Pope Stephen V in 817 summed up the general mentality throughout the Middle Ages: *quaedum tolerantur, non imperantur* (“whatsoever is tolerated, is not ruled”).[2] Centuries later, during the Protestant Reformation, religious toleration was seen as a form of weakness and as tacit approval for illicit actions, or, as religious [3]

historian Elisabeth Labrousse asserts, “a distasteful habit of lax complacency.”

A consistent theme in the development of religious toleration within Christianity was the tendency for those institutions that held predominant power (either religious or political) to exercise prejudice towards dissenting ideologies. This tradition received imperial support when Emperor Constantine empowered Catholic bishops with judicial authority at the Council of Nicaea (325). From this point onward, a repeating pattern of intolerance toward dissenting beliefs (especially within Christianity but later targeted also toward non-Christians) became common.[4] This tradition continued largely unabated throughout the Middle Ages, when persecution of dissident faiths or beliefs was a common occurrence. Among other methods of coercion for the sake of political and social unity were the various crusades against rival forms of Christianity in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the Inquisition.

Things changed during the Reformation, however, as new ideas (and the religions they spawned) became so widespread that resources proved insufficient to suppress them any longer. During the Protestant Reformation, experimental attempts were made to mediate the growing hostilities between Protestants and Catholics and to offer some form of legitimacy to the upstart religions. These attempts included the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and later the Peace of Westphalia (1648) which ended the Thirty Years’ War. However, these treaties proved more political truces rather than long-term solutions to the problem of tolerating a minority religion, and hostilities resumed.[5] This pattern was broken only after the Protestant Reformation proved too formidable an adversary, one which medieval Christianity could not overpower.

Colonial America

Central to the development of toleration was the rise of secular governments, weary of the violence and destruction attached to religious dogmatism. Indeed, no such thing as religious liberty existed before colonial America —and there, only in the colony of Rhode Island, which was established by Roger Williams, who insisted on the distinct separation of church and state. Williams had been cast out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and labeled an atheist for his desire to take God out of government.[6] Religious freedom was the primary reason behind the *Mayflower* expedition to the New World. True to the pattern mentioned above, however, once these freedoms had been attained through the establishment of a state-church hierarchy, the Pilgrims promptly denied the same freedoms to those Europeans who followed, unless they were of the same religion.[7] Nathaniel Ward, a pastor in the early years of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, proudly declared the general mentality of the American settlers of the seventeenth century: “God does nowhere in his world tolerate Christian states to give toleration to such aversaries *[sic]* of his truth, if they have power in their hands to suppress them.”[8]

Such was the general attitude towards religious diversity in a land destined to serve as a beacon to future nations of toleration and freedom. Each colonial government was closely linked to the majority religion which had founded it: Anglicanism in Virginia, Dutch Reformed in New York, Catholicism in Maryland, Congregationalism in Massachusetts, and so forth. Other than Rhode Island, only Pennsylvania showed any tolerance for immigrants of different faiths, as it was not linked to a state-sponsored church.[9] Throughout most of the colonies, Catholics were particularly discriminated against. Indeed, the Massachusetts Bay Colony statute of 1647 specifically targeted “Jesuits, priests, and missionaries” to be “treated as ‘an enemy to the true Christian religion.’”[10]

Where did the Puritans who settled this continent get these ideas that tolerance was something to be avoided at all costs? From their homelands in Europe. We will begin here with the development of toleration theories stemming from the Protestant Reformation.

Conflict During the Reformation

One of the earliest to understand the importance of religious toleration to the stability of society was the great humanist Sir Thomas More. In his *Utopia* More described a land where "everyone was free to practise what religion he liked, and to try and convert other people to his own faith, provided he did it quietly and politely, by rational argument."[11] More wrote *Utopia* in 1516, just before society was torn apart because of the actions of Martin Luther. More remained a devout Catholic his entire life and should not be considered a "reformer" per se. However, his *Utopia* contains many elements of religious toleration and moderation, influencing future theorists on the subject. Religious toleration in the "Land of Nowhere" (Utopia) stood in stark contrast to the long-held tradition of religious intolerance and persecution in medieval Europe. Unaware of the profound effect *Utopia* would have on future thinkers, Thomas More ironically turned out to be one of the many "great religious reformers [who] began to throw off the rituals and dogmas that had been attached to Christianity during the dark ages and sought to return to the pure and simple truths of the New Testament," as Elder L. Tom Perry reminds us.[12]

Another of these reformers was Desiderius Erasmus. In his voluminous writings Erasmus only rarely mentions religious toleration directly. However, throughout his works "certain major themes . . . implied a tolerant attitude toward religious differences. . . . His philosophy of Christ made him oppose violence and fanaticism of any kind."[13] Writing to a colleague about the endemic violence erupting from Luther's movement, Erasmus emphasized the need for continued vigilance in the pursuit of truth, "not by taunts and threats, not by force of arms and injustice, but by simple discretion . . . by gentleness and tolerance."[14] Erasmus's most famous work, *The Praise of Folly* (1509), offered a satirical look at humanity's weaknesses, poking particular fun at the many eccentricities that had crept into the various monastic orders, while at the same time reminding the reader how far off course the current form of Christianity had deviated:

"One monk will point to his paunch, distended by eating every conceivable variety of fish; another will pour forth psalms by the bushel. Another will number up his myriads of fasts, and account for his bursting belly by the fact that he eats only one meal at midday. Another points to his huge pile of ceremonies performed, so many they couldn't be laden on seven naval transports. Another brags that for sixty years he has never touched money except with fingers protected by two pairs of gloves. Still another wears a cowl so dirty and slimy that no sailor would let it touch his body. Another boasts that for more than half a century he has led the life of a sponge, always fixed to the same spot. . . . But Christ, interrupting their boasts (which otherwise would never end) will ask, 'Where did this new race of Jews come from? I recognize no law but my own, and about it I hear nothing whatever. Long ago, speaking openly and using no intricate parables, I promised that my father's kingdom would be granted, not to cowls, prayers, or fasts, but to works of faith and charity.'"[15]

Sadly, Erasmus's message of reform within Catholicism often fell on deaf ears, and he became embroiled in the religious controversies that shook European life to its very foundations. An early supporter of Martin Luther's actions in Germany, Erasmus saw Luther become increasingly dogmatic and intolerant toward differing interpretations of scripture. As a result, Erasmus distanced himself from the German reformer and father of the Reformation and remained wholly devoted to changing Christian devotion from within the Catholic Church.

Usually, when one thinks of the great leaders of the Reformation, Martin Luther and John Calvin are the first to come to mind. It may seem ironic that as mature leaders of the two most powerful Protestant movements (later termed Lutheranism and Calvinism), both Luther and Calvin proved just as intolerant—and in the case of Calvin, perhaps more so—than the Catholic Church had been toward their reforms. Early in Luther's career as a reformer, his attitude toward heretics was mild, condemning the killing of heretics to solve the problem of discord—he was, after all, a heretic himself in the eyes of the Catholic Church. Indeed, in 1523 Luther argued that no authority other than God Himself can hold sway over a man s beliefs: "Since, then, belief or unbelief is a matter of every one's conscience, and since this is no lessening of the secular power, the latter should be content and attend to its own affairs and permit men to believe one thing or another, as they are able and willing, and constrain no one by force."[16] This and similar references to the

separation of the secular from the religious have led many to interpret in Luther the seedlings of the eventual separation of church and state, and he did remain consistent on his views that no authority can force a person to believe what that person does not believe voluntarily. However, for Luther, the freedom afforded the Christian was purely spiritual. Put bluntly, one could believe anything but could not act on those beliefs unless they were consistent with societal, political, and religious conventions.

Luther's early views on the role of secular authority contrast sharply with his later writings after his movement had taken shape and he had plenty of support from the German nobility in his struggle against Rome. Shortly after Luther witnessed the violent uprisings in Germany (after 1524) following his official break with Rome and he saw the many sects that followed his lead and formed their own communities (specifically the Anabaptists), his attitude toward religious dissenters echoed that of his Catholic rivals. Due to continued frustrations at establishing the kingdom of God on earth, by 1536 Luther insisted in his typically vitriolic tone that "secular authority is held to reprimand blasphemy, false doctrines and heresy and to inflict corporal pain on those who support such" (author's translation).[17] We should not read too much into Luther's refusal to condone a religiously pluralistic society. As a product of feudal Germany, Luther still retained the medieval concept that Christian society must be unified, that the Christian princes of western Europe held a fundamental obligation to uphold the Christian faith—naturally, as Luther interpreted how that faith should be practiced. With few exceptions, the rest of Europe generally agreed. The separation of church and state, a value held dear today, was inconceivable. The idea of religious coexistence, that one could be of a different religion and still be a loyal subject of one's sovereign, was considered too radical a notion for nearly all sixteenth-century society. Again with few exceptions, the vast majority of Protestants, themselves products of Catholicism in more ways than not, enforced conformity on their various members, just as Catholics had done for centuries previously.

As the Saints did in the early years of the restored Church, so the persecuted sects of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries interpreted intolerance towards their beliefs as a sign of election. The New Testament is replete with the Lord's description of persecution being a hallmark of the true church: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you" (Luke 6:22); "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake" (Mark 13:13; Luke 21:17). What is alarming compared to the persecutions inflicted on members of the restored Church in the mid-nineteenth century is that the Reformation churches tended to return the abuse in kind—hatred for hatred, resentment for resentment—against the Catholic Church trying to stem the tide of religious change, as well as against breakaway sects from within Protestantism. Nephi saw this era in his vision of "a church which is most abominable above all other churches which slayeth the saints of God" (1 Nephi 13:5).

There were during these times of trouble, however, a few calmer minds who felt that even the Catholic Church had no right passing judgment on a man's conscience; only Christ personally held that power. One of the earliest defenders of man's inherent right to "the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of [his] own conscience," as we read in the eleventh Article of Faith, was Sebastien Castellio, a man of great historical significance in the development of religious toleration. The life of Castellio (1515–63) is indelibly linked to that of John Calvin, the great father of the reformation that was then occurring in Geneva and that within a few decades spread to France, the Netherlands, Scotland, and finally America under the Puritans.

Castellio gained some acclaim in his attack on the methods Calvin used to govern in Geneva, which he ruled essentially as a theocracy. (Rival Catholics across the border in France called Calvin the "Pope of Geneva.") In 1553 Calvin ordered the execution of Michael Servetus, with whom Calvin had corresponded for years beforehand. Servetus was extremely outspoken in his beliefs: He doubted the divinity of Christ and the relationship between Him and the Father, and he was involved in other heresies. For these beliefs, the last few years of Servetus's life were spent fleeing the Inquisition, living in secret as he was pursued by Protestant and Catholic authorities alike. He passed through Geneva on his way to Italy to seek refuge only to be recognized, imprisoned, tried, and burned at the stake at Calvin's order.[18]

Immediately after Servetus's painful death, Castellio published an attack on the methods used to convict him, accusing Calvin and all religions of participating in a thousand years of hypocrisy and intolerance, correctly noting that after the pagans stopped persecuting Christians in the Roman era, the Christians, emboldened by imperial support, began to persecute pagans and other Christians; the tradition had only worsened since the Reformation: "I can discover

no more than this, that we regard those as heretics with whom we disagree. This is evident from the fact that today there is scarcely one of our innumerable sects that does not look upon the rest as heretics, so that if you are orthodox in one city or region, you are held for a heretic in the next."[19]

A continuous theme throughout Castellio's refutation of Calvin was that all people believe in the truth of their religion and that one's beliefs are personal, as is the interpretation of scripture. The Prophet Joseph Smith took a similar stance in the heat of severe persecutions against him when he declared, "If any man is authorized to take away my life because he thinks and says I am a false teacher, then, upon the same principle, we should be justified in taking away the life of every false teacher, and where would be the end of blood?"[20]

Castellio concluded his tract against Calvin by asserting that constraint in religion forces people to pretend to believe so as to avoid public condemnation and that the Lord hated hypocrisy more than any of mans other vices.[21] In a time when priesthood authority was taken from the earth and men and women were left to search for the truth using only their limited understanding of scripture, Castellio advocated charity and tolerance in the name of peace. In this respect he anticipated our modern governments.

In our modern and "enlightened" society, Castellio's ideas seem obvious, even puerile. However, put in a sixteenth-century context, his views on toleration were revolutionary. His idea that a person's religion did not necessarily infringe upon his loyalty as a subject to the king had a great influence on future mediators in the widening religious conflict, especially in France, which had experienced nearly forty years of continuous religious bloodshed. As early as 1561, at the beginning of these wars of religion in France, the small minority of religious moderates known as the *politiques* and led by Chancellor Michel de l'Hopital realized that what was at stake with the Huguenots' (French Calvinists) insistence to worship freely was "not a question of constituting a religion, but of constituting a republic; and some can be citizens without being [Catholics]: even the excommunicated do not cease to be citizens."[22] L'Hopital's ability to separate religion from government anticipated the *philosophes* of the French Enlightenment by more than a hundred years.

The French wars of religion lasted nearly forty years and devastated Europe's most powerful kingdom. Hostilities temporarily ended at the signing of the Edict of Nantes (1598), which allowed limited toleration of the estimated one million Huguenots living in France.[23] The Edict of Nantes was relatively short-lived and was revoked under the absolutist rule of Louis XIV in 1685 for the sake of religious and political unity. Huguenot ministers were given the choice of exile or death; laypeople were required to convert to the French Catholic Church (often at gunpoint) or die for their faith. Virtually all converted publicly while continuing to worship in the Calvinist tradition in secret. Although they were prohibited from fleeing the kingdom by order of Louis XIV, an estimated two hundred thousand skilled Huguenot craftsmen and merchants fled France for lands where they could worship without persecution: Holland, England, America, Prussia, and even South Africa profited from this exodus. The French kingdom under Louis XIV was perhaps the least tolerant of all "civilized" nations of its day: Jacques—Benigne Bossuet, the great Catholic apologist under Louis XIV, boasted in 1691 that Catholicism was the least tolerant of all religions.[24]

Enlightenment Ideals

Louis's infamous Revocation of the Edict of Nantes inspired one of the greatest contributors to the eventually accepted notion that peace can be attained amidst religious diversity: John Locke (1632–1704). When news of the Revocation was released, Locke was exiled to Holland. Locke was a Puritan who had fled the resurgent Catholic monarchy in England. He had already gained significant recognition in England and France as a philosopher, and he would become one of the founding fathers of the Enlightenment. After the widespread distribution of Locke's works, the ideas formulated by men like Castellio in the sixteenth century would come to maturity and gain general acceptance by the educated minds of Europe.[25]

Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689) was the culmination of decades of deep reflection on the role of the magistrate in religious matters and was influenced by the political and religious uncertainties taking place in England under the overtly Catholic James II. Locke wrote the *Letter* while in exile in Holland, which at that time was a haven for exiles due to its liberal policies toward religious dissidents. Although the constitution in Holland still officially maintained a state-sponsored church (Dutch Reformed), the Low Countries were perhaps the best example in early-modern Europe of religious coexistence because dogmatism and intolerance were overlooked in the name of peace and commerce. Locke begins his *Letter* with a summation of its message: "I esteem that toleration to be the chief characteristical mark of the true church . . . for every one is orthodox to himself."[26] He defends this point throughout in typically Lockean prose: "The toleration of those that differ from others in matters of religion, is so agreeable to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the genuine reason of mankind, that it seems monstrous for men to be so blind." Locke was more clear in expressing the need for separating church and state than any of his predecessors, and he anticipates Doctrine and Covenants 134 concerning the relationship between religious institutions and civil government: "It is not my business to inquire here into the original of the power or dignity of the clergy. This only I say, that whencesoever their authority be sprung, since it is ecclesiastical, it ought to be confined within the bounds of the church, nor can it in any manner be extended to civil affairs; because the church itself is a thing absolutely separate and distinct from the commonwealth. The boundaries on both sides are fixed and immoveable. He jumbles heaven and earth together, the things most remote and opposite, who mixes these societies, which are, in their origin, end, business, and in every thing, perfectly distinct, and infinitely different from each other."[27]

Therefore, according to Locke, the sovereign was required to tolerate all religions that did not threaten the civil government. In Locke's view, toleration was much more effective at safeguarding the people than was repression, which bred recriminations and long-standing rivalries detrimental to the general prosperity. As Castellio argued, a government that mandated conformity to one religion merely reinforced hypocrisy among its subjects.[28] Along these lines, Locke echoes the sentiments of Roger Williams in colonial America, advocating toleration for all within the bounds of civil law.

More than any other event, the eventual acceptance of religious toleration was due to the long-lasting effect of the Protestant Reformation. The creation of several rival religions in short succession made it impossible for the Catholic Church to suppress them as it had successfully done before. What made the Protestant Reformation different from previous schisms within Christianity was the rapid growth in converts made possible by the effectiveness of the printing press, invented in the previous century. Greater access to printed materials made it impossible for the Church to control the growing number of readers of inflammatory pamphlets attacking the clergy; Luther's *Ninety-five Theses* was only one of many dozens that soon followed, attacking clerical abuses and fomenting rebellion.[29]

As the number of sects grew, so too did the need for peaceful coexistence among them and a government that was above the fray of disputes. Enlightenment thinkers such as Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jefferson, Franklin, and Thomas Paine all insisted on the innate freedom to follow one's conscience unrestrained by political pressures. Some of these great leaders were antagonistic toward any form of organized religion but fought vehemently for the freedom to believe according to one's conscience, even if they might not agree with those beliefs.

Thus, the centuries of religious conflict resulted in the development of a healthy skepticism as to the veracity of any one religion over another one—healthy because without this skepticism from the Founding Fathers, it is likely that the newly formed United States would have continued in the tradition of state-sponsored churches, thus perpetuating intolerance. Voltaire, perhaps the greatest writer of his day, commented insightfully on the need for religious diversity. Concerned over the atrocities he witnessed committed against Huguenots worshiping clandestinely to avoid penalties, Voltaire defined religious tolerance as "the endowment of humanity . . . the first law of nature." Advocating greater, not less religious diversity, he continued: "If there are two religions in your country, they will cut one another's throats; if there are thirty of them, they will live in peace."[30]

Secularization was a positive development in advancing the idea of religious toleration. It was also a necessary

environment for the gospel to be restored. If there had been only one state religion in America in the early 1800s, Joseph Smith's efforts would have had a much more concentrated opposition. That there were dozens of sects allowed the restored gospel to take root. This is not to minimize the harsh persecutions experienced by the early Saints. However, it could have been worse. As we have seen, when only two religions exist, they will usually become rivals; when many religions exist, a climate of toleration is much more likely.

Conclusion

Why consider the idea of tolerance as a priority at a time when The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is well established in the developed world and when religion in general seems to be falling prey to the growing skepticism of absolute truth? As the Church grows, its members will continue to come in contact with cultural traditions they must treat with respect and dignity. Religious coexistence—harmony among differing faiths—has been a common theme in several of the most recent addresses of the General Authorities. President Hinckley has maintained a consistent word of counsel to "cultivate a spirit of tolerance for those of varying religious and philosophical persuasions," confirming that it is "possible to disagree without being disagreeable."[31] Applying this idea to our surroundings, Elder Russell M. Nelson said that "this broadly includes neighbors in our own family, our community, our nation, and our world."[32]

We must remember that toleration should not spill over into complacency. As Elder Dallin H. Oaks has stated, "Carried to an undisciplined excess, love and tolerance can produce indifference to truth and justice."[33] We must never compromise our beliefs in an effort to "fit in." Nor must we appear self-righteous and judgmental toward the beliefs and practices of those with whom we may disagree. As Joshua told the elders of Israel, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). It is indeed possible to disagree without being disagreeable. The true application of religious toleration can be achieved only under the direction of the Holy Ghost as we try to understand those with whom we may not see eye to eye. In short, religious toleration is a form of compassion and charity. It is in one aspect the true love of Christ. It will always yield the results intended by the Lord if practiced under the influence of His Spirit.

We are indeed "a chosen generation . . . a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9). Our peculiarity in a historic sense will be manifested if, when we achieve a majority in numbers or economic power (already present in some areas), we remain tolerant rather than falling into the age-old trap of persecuting others simply because we can. President Gordon B. Hinckley has counseled: "We can be a little more tolerant and friendly to those not of our faith, going out of our way to show our respect for them. We cannot afford to be arrogant or self-righteous."[34]

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[1] The Oxford English Dictionary defines toleration as "the action of allowing" *(Oxford English Dictionary, Abridged Version* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971], s.v. "toleration").

[2] Quoted in Mario Turchetti, "Une question mal posee: La qualification de perpetuel et irrevocable' appliquee a l'Edit de Nantes," *Bulletin de la societe de I'histoire du protestantisme frangais* 139 (1993): 68.

[3] Philip P. Wiener, ed., *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (New York: Scribner's, 1973), 4:113; see also Edmond Huguet, *Dictionnaire de la langue frangaise du XVIeme siecle* (Paris: Didier, 1961), 7:1026.

[4] In addition to the examples given on medieval and early modern attitudes toward tolerance, one could offer ample illustrations of religious fundamentalism in all of its variations today: Christian, Islamic, Jewish, and so forth.

[5] Augsburg gave princes authority to declare the religion of their subjects (either Lutheran or Catholic). Augsburg was a step in the right direction, but we should remember that there was no concept of religious toleration in 1555, as Catholics were forced from Lutheran lands and vice versa, according to the declared religion of the feudal prince. Rather, Augsburg is remembered for "legitimizing" Lutheranism. The Peace of Westphalia hastened a long trend of separating religious from political interests; however, religious persecutions continued thereafter well into the eighteenth century. See Jeffrey Parker, *The Thirty Years' War* (London: Routledge, 1984); DeLamar Jensen, *Reformation Europe: Age of Reform and Revolution* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1992), 88,152, 215.

[6] For a brief overview of religious toleration in colonial America, see George M. Marsden, *Religion and American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1990).

[7] The most well-known example is the state church established by the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1629–30 under the auspices of John Winthrop. See his "Little Speech on Liberty" in Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 41–46.

[8] Quoted in Johnson, *History of the American People,* 41.

[9] Quakers were, however, the majority faith in Pennsylvania and wielded the bulk of the political and economic power of the colony (Marsden, *Religion and American Culture,* 23).

[10] Ralph Pyle and James D. Davidson, "The Origins of Religious Stratification in Colonial America," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42 (2003): 60. My thanks to Professor John Thomas for leading me to this article.

[11] Thomas More, *Utopia,* trans. Paul Turner (London: Penguin, 1965), 119.

[12] L. Tom Perry, "God's Hand in the Founding of America," *New Era,* July 1976, 45.

[13] Perez Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[14] Quoted in Johann Huizinga, *Erasmus and the Age of Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 152.

[15] Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly and Other Writings,* ed. amd trans. Robert M. Adams (New York: Norton, 1988), 63.

[16] Martin Luther, *Secular Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed,* in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings,* ed. John Dillenberger (New York: Doubleday, 1961), 385.

[17] See Henry Kamen, *L'Eveil de la tolerance,* Jeanine Carlander, trans. (Paris: Hachette, 1967), 41.

[18] Calvin based his judgment to execute Servetus on anachronistic reading of Roman Emperor Justinian's seventh-century law mandating the death penalty for those who denied the official Church doctrine of the Trinity and for those who rejected the practice of infant baptism (Zagorin, *Religious Toleration,* 93–99). Servetus, Castellio, and many others like them who criticized Christian orthodoxy (either Catholic or Protestant) and the authority of

religious leaders were usually labeled as *heretics,* an ironic word of Greek origin meaning one "able to choose"—ironic because of the fundamental role choice (or agency, as we call it) plays in the divine plan of eternal progression (Walter W. Skeat, ed. *A Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961], s.v. "toleration," 238; see also the *Oxford English Dictionary).* Although central to the divine plan as explained in the restored gospel, in times past one's freedom to choose was not at the personal level but at the communal level and was directed by those leaders charged with keeping not only order but orthodoxy. Individualism, what we might consider a social norm today, would not become visible for the historian until the Renaissance humanists reintroduced it beginning in the mid-fourteenth century.

[19] Quoted in Zagorin, *Religious Toleration,* 107.

[20] Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 344.

[21] Castellio seems to be echoing the spirit of Doctrine and Covenants 121:37 in his condemnation of Calvin's actions toward Servetus. "But when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves: the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man" (D&C 121:37).

[22] Quoted in Donald Nugent, *Ecumenism in the Age of the Reformation: The Colloquy of Poissy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 84.

[23] See Philip Benedict, *The Huguenot Population of France, 1600–1685: The Demographic Fate and Customs of a Religious Minority* (Philadelphia: Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 1991); Elisabeth Labrousse, *L'edit de Nantes et sa revocation: histoire d'une intolerance* (Paris: Seuil, 1985); Warren C. Scoville, *The Persecution of the Huguenots and French Economic Development, 1680–1720* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960).

[24] See Wiener, *Dictionary of the History of Ideas,* 4:112.

[25] It should be noted that several other influential authors wrote on religious toleration in the late seventeenth century. Most notable besides Locke was Pierre Bayle, an exiled Huguenot living in Holland at the same time as Locke. Bayle's most influential work was his *Philosophical Commentary on Christ's Words 'Compel Them to Come' (Commentaire philosophique sur ces paroles de Jesus-Christ 'contrains-les d'entrer,* 4 vols. [Amsterdam, 1686–88]), in which a rising tone of secularism can be discerned.

[26] John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration,* ed. John Horton and Susan Mendus (London: Routledge, 1991), 15–16.

[27] Locke, *Letter,* 26.

[28] Locke reportedly had in his library at his death works from Castellio, as well as anti-Trinitarian works, which would have made him sympathetic to Michael Servetus's beliefs and worthy to be burned at the stake in John Calvin's Geneva (John Harrison and Peter Laslett, *The Library Catalog of John Locke* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965]).

[29] See Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

1983).

[30] Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary,* trans. Peter Gay (New York: Basic Books, 1962) 2:482, 485.

[31] Quoted in Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996), 536.

[32] Russell M. Nelson, "Teach Us Tolerance and Love," *Ensign,* May 1994, 70.

[33] Dallin H. Oaks, "Our Strengths Can Become Our Downfall," *Ensign,* October 1994, 12.

[34] Gordon B. Hinckley, "Thanks to the Lord for His Blessings," *Ensign,* May 1999, 88.