



On the cover: Bridal Veil Falls, Provo, Utah.

PHOTO BY ANN-MARIE MAIR
(RINGLITEPHOTOGRAPHY ON FLICKR)

EDITOR'S NOTE

Balancing Spirit and Intellect

Teachers that balance spirit and intellect are truly a gift to the classroom. They are a delight to listen to, and they shape lives in profound ways. We've all been touched to some degree by a teacher, whether at the university, grade school, or church. Great teachers seek to improve, they study and subsequently adjust their teaching style and approach, and they dig deeper into the subject matter. This issue of the journal represents, in large part, the efforts of faculty and administrators from Seminaries and Institutes to present a spiritually grounded and intellectually informed gospel message. The majority of the essays arose out of a yearlong process of researching, writing, and editing and then submitting that work for peer review.

The first two-thirds of the essays found herein envision a religion classroom with students growing in their understanding. They are built upon the model that the teacher guides and directs students to truth, having already partaken of the waters of life freely. The essays are therefore a study in the quest to refine the teacher, who are in these essays the authors, while those same teacher-authors seek to build faith for students who are eager to learn. I believe they have presented us with some profound ideas. Highlights include an interview that was conducted over a three-year period with Elder Kim B. Clark, the Commissioner of the Church Educational System; a discussion of the new Pathways program and the global initiative; and a thoughtful perspective on women and priesthood by the first female Mormon chaplain.

These essays are rounded out with a qualitative study of missionaries who return from their service early for various reasons, including sin, health challenges, and otherwise. The project grew out of an effort to help these missionaries re-assimilate into institute and Church activity after a period of feeling disillusioned and marginalized. It is a fascinating study and will certainly help teachers grow in their understanding of the challenges faced by early-returned missionaries.

Thomas A. Wayment
Editor-in-chief