

Fallible but Faithful

HOW SIMON THE FISHERMAN
BECAME PETER THE ROCK

Brent L. Top

Brent L. Top is dean of Religious Education at Brigham Young University.

It is particularly gratifying to me that the focus of this symposium is the life, ministry, message, and enduring contributions to our faith of the Apostle Peter. He is one of my heroes—not in some superficial “hero worship” sort of way, but rather in what I consider to be the truest meaning of the word. A hero is one “who, in the face of danger and adversity or from a position of weakness, display[s] faith, courage, and the will for self-sacrifice . . . for some greater good.”¹ Unfortunately, in today’s celebrity-centric pop culture, few of those who are viewed as heroes to millions exhibit the virtues of faith, courage, or self-sacrifice. They are most often the sports stars, movie stars, rock stars, stars of reality TV (which is an oxymoron in my estimation), and stars who have become stars for really nothing whatsoever. No wonder worship of such “heroes” is like chasing a mirage—it looks like something, but it really isn’t.

My heroes are not perfect, Jesus Christ excepted. They have faults and foibles, frailty and fallibility—like me. That endears them to me. They have faith *and* faithfulness. That inspires me. Their faithfulness *with* fallibility, devotion *despite* deficiencies, gives me hope.

Unfortunately, Latter-day Saints are not immune to unhealthy hero worship. Some expect perfection from their heroes, whether they are prophets, apostles, bishops, or even religion professors. There is a tendency to view past and present church leaders and historical events through the sanitizing lens of a church video, portraying characters who never have a hair out of place, who always say and do the right thing, and who speak in soft, hushed tones. But that is not reality, and sometimes it does more harm than good. Recognizing, and even appreciating, the fallibility of church leaders can help us to avoid unrealistic and unhealthy hero worship, which has led some to lose their faith when their hero inevitably shows his or her fallible and fallen nature, despite also demonstrating great faith and devotion. Of this, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf recently reminded us:

Some struggle with unanswered questions about things that have been done or said in the past. We openly acknowledge that in nearly 200 years of Church history—along with an uninterrupted line of inspired, honorable and divine events—there have been some things said and done that could cause people to question. . . .

And, to be perfectly frank, there have been times when members or leaders in the Church have simply made mistakes. There have been things said or done that were not in harmony with our values, principles, or doctrine. I suppose the Church would be perfect only if it were run by perfect beings. God is perfect, and His doctrine is pure. But He works through us—His imperfect children—and imperfect people make mistakes. . . .

It is unfortunate that some have stumbled because of mistakes made by men. But in spite of this, the eternal truth of the restored gospel found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not tarnished, diminished, or destroyed.²

The Prophet Joseph Smith often worried about unrealistic hero worship among new converts to the church who, upon immigrating to Nauvoo, would have their first encounter with a *real* prophet. William Clayton recorded that on October 29, 1842, the Prophet “went over to the store where a number of brethren and sisters were assembled who had arrived this morning. . . . He said that he was but a man and they must not expect him to be perfect; if they expected perfection from him, he should expect it from them; but if they would bear with his infirmities and the infirmities of the brethren, he would likewise bear with their infirmities.”³ In a sermon preached a little over a month before he was martyred, Joseph

declared, “I never told you I was perfect—but there is no error in the revelations which I have taught.”⁴

My testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith is not weakened in the least by the fact that he was not perfect—that he, like each of us, had infirmities and fallibilities, even made mistakes along the way. In fact, it strengthens my testimony to know that God can do his work and perform mighty miracles through fallible but faithful disciples. “A man may have a wart on his cheek and still have a face of beauty and strength,” President Gordon B. Hinckley taught, “but if the wart is emphasized unduly in relation to his other features, the portrait is lacking in integrity. There was only one perfect man who ever walked the earth. The Lord has used imperfect people in the process of building his perfect society. If some of them occasionally stumbled, or if their characters may have been slightly flawed in one way or another, the wonder is the greater that they accomplished so much.”⁵

So it is with Peter. He was not perfect. As a mortal, he had his full share of weaknesses. There is no record of his *directly* admitting, like Joseph Smith said, “I never told you that I was perfect,” but the New Testament record is an *indirect* admission. In the Gospels his shortcomings seem to be deliberately on display. The Gospel of Mark, a book that many scholars characterize as the “memoirs” of Peter, clearly has his “fingerprints” throughout it, and it may very well be the primary source material for the records of Luke and Matthew that were later written. “It has long been debated,” wrote Richard Bauckham, a Bible scholar not of the Latter-day Saint faith, “whether Mark’s predominantly negative portrayal of Peter, as the foolishly self-confident disciple who misunderstands Jesus and fails him, could plausibly derive from Peter’s own self-depiction. . . . A remarkable feature of this characterization of Peter is that it remains constant through all four canonical Gospels. Petrine material in the other Gospels that is not parallel to Mark’s displays the same character traits in Peter: impetuosity, self-confidence, outspokenness, and extravagant devotion to Jesus (Matthew 14:28–33; Luke 5:8; 22:33; John 6:68–69; 13:6–10; 20:2–10; 21:7, 15–19).”⁶

As a primary source for the Gospels, Peter may be consciously highlighting—even overstating—his weaknesses and failures while downplaying his accomplishments and understating his incredible faith in and devotion to the Master. We see his fallibility and imperfections “up close and personal,” but we also witness the remarkable transformation from Simon the fisherman to Peter the rock—the chief Apostle. As Bauckham concludes, “Thus the full and nuanced characterization of Peter has the effect of encouraging readers or hearers to sympathize and identify with him.”⁷ It is this notion upon which I wish to focus.

I do not profess to be a New Testament scholar. I was not trained in biblical studies or classical Greek. Neither do I have much background in first-century Judaism or what life was like in ancient Roman times. This paper is not intended to be a scholarly, in-depth cultural or linguistic examination of the texts associated with Peter's life and ministry. It is neither an examination of the chief Apostle's achievements nor a discussion of the doctrinal contributions of his teachings. Others more qualified than I will address those topics in the chapters that follow. This chapter is, however, my personal observation and testimony of Peter's faithfulness despite his fallibility and the transforming power of the grace of Christ.

I don't just sympathize with Peter. I empathize with him because I see myself in him in many ways. I can relate to him. Like Peter, I have been known to impetuously do or say something that I regret within minutes. Like Peter, I say things that I think are profound or clever only to realize that they fall flat, are inappropriate, or diminish the significance of the moment at hand. A couple of examples from the life of Peter illustrate this dimension of human nature (at least my human nature).

After the transcendent events that occurred on the Mount of Transfiguration—being ministered to and instructed by heavenly beings, beholding unspeakable visions of glory, and witnessing the remarkable Transfiguration of the Lord himself—Peter, in his enthusiasm, blurted out, “Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.” Much could be written on what Peter perhaps meant, but suffice it to say, as Luke editorialized, he spoke “*not knowing what he said*” (Luke 9:33; emphasis added). Luke was in essence telling us that what Simon had stated, though well intended, was a feeble attempt, at best, to capture the significance of the moment. It would be like Joseph Smith saying, as the First Vision concluded, “Wow! That was awesome!” I can imagine that as soon as the words escaped his mouth, Peter was hoping to reel them back in. Yet, despite this, he received under the hands of angelic ministrants the keys of the kingdom and the divine charge to lead the Savior's church after his Resurrection. The Master heard Peter's feeble, fallible—perhaps even foolish—words, yet looked into his heart and saw faithfulness and a future.

On another occasion Jesus taught the Apostles, as Mark records, “that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” (Mark 8:31). According to Mark, the Savior spoke of his death three times on the road to Jerusalem (see Mark 8:31; 9:31–32; 10:32–34). The first time, Peter “took him, and began to rebuke him” (Mark 8:32). Clearly he didn't understand all the implications of what the Master was teaching. Not wanting to hear that Jesus would

soon die, Peter declared, “Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be” (Matthew 16:22). Though speaking from his heart, Peter’s “rebuking” words to the Son of God were ignorant and inappropriate. Who did he think he was to correct or rebuke the Lord? Peter’s words resulted in a sharp rebuke from Jesus: “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man” (Matthew 16:23). This is a harsh rebuke! What had Peter said or done that warranted such a strong reaction? Was there some form of pride in his heart that needed to be subdued and replaced with humility and submission? Was he proud of his devotion to and protection of the Master? Was it that he valued Jesus’ life more than he, at that moment, valued what Christ’s death would mean? It may be that Jesus, in his rebuke, is reminding Peter that there are some things worth dying for. Did his words demonstrate that he had zeal without knowledge, courage without comprehension? Whatever the case, Simon’s words were not what he would wish they had been. No doubt he felt bad for his foolishness. Yet the Savior loved him and saw in him more *future* strength than *present* weakness.

Peter’s words, at times, showed his mortal fallibility in all its glory—insensitivity, impetuosity, and even ignorance. Yet those words, even when they didn’t come out right, also showed faithfulness—his love for and devotion to the Savior, albeit without full comprehension of what that love and devotion would require. Two such examples are seen in John’s account of the Last Supper:

[Jesus] riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. (John 13:4–7)

To Peter, having the Savior girded in a towel—the symbol of a household servant or common slave—doing a most menial and unpleasant task seemed as the utmost humiliation. He would have no part of it. He saw the towel, the basin of water, the Master on hands and knees, but he did not see the symbolism: “Thou shalt never wash my feet.” Peter’s words were aimed to protect the Savior from humiliation.

Or could it be a glimpse of Peter's own prejudice—a feeling that one in a position of importance need not and should not lower himself to such servitude? In the next moments, however, he would once again wish that he hadn't been so quick to speak. His words, though uttered with noble intent, would once again miss the mark as he began to realize that the Master spoke not of physical cleansing, but of becoming clean from sin through his Atonement. "Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (John 13:8).

Beginning to understand the deeper meaning, Simon Peter said to him with typical passion and overstatement, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" (John 13:9–10).

The Savior's words served to tamp down Peter's overzealousness. Zeal can be a virtue, but to a point. Thereafter it becomes a vice. This was a challenge that at times plagued Peter. Another example illustrates this.

During the Last Supper, Jesus once again plainly taught the Apostles of his imminent death: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. . . . Little children, yet a little while I am with you. . . . Whither I go, ye cannot come" (John 13:31, 33). Like at the Mount of Transfiguration, the real meaning of the Savior's words went right past Peter, sticking neither in his head nor heart.

Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. (John 13:36–37)

From the lips of Simon came another bold declaration of dying devotion and steadfast faith—at least for the moment, for the mortal fallibilities of fatigue and fear would dramatically manifest themselves before the sun rose and the cock crowed. His zeal and courage would surely be tested. As much as I hate to admit it, I see myself much like Simon Peter at that moment. There have been times when my actions haven't exactly squared with my words—my behavior hasn't matched my beliefs. Like Peter, I have at times declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16), and have covenanted to take his name upon me and keep his commandments, yet, spiritually speaking, I fall asleep when he needs me most. "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" (Matthew 26:40). Jesus asks me today as he did Peter that night in Gethsemane. Like Simon, there have been times when, in my own unique

way, I have said, “I go a fishing” (John 21:3) when the Savior has invited me to “feed [his] lambs,” “feed [his] sheep,” “feed [his] sheep” (John 21:15–17). And I am not alone. “So many of us are so much like [Peter],” President Gordon B. Hinckley taught.

We pledge our loyalty; we affirm our determination to be of good courage; we declare, sometimes even publicly, that come what may we will do the right thing, that we will stand for the right cause, that we will be true to ourselves and to others.

Then the pressures begin to build. Sometimes there are social pressures. Sometimes they are personal appetites. Sometimes they are false ambitions. There is a weakening of the will. There is a softening of discipline. There is capitulation. And then there is remorse, self-accusation, and bitter tears of regret.⁸

In the end, however, Simon’s faithfulness overcomes his fallen, foolish, impetuous, speaking-without-thinking nature. He did what he said he would—lay down his life for the Savior’s cause. Will my faith be greater than my foibles? Will I allow my mortal selfishness to be consumed by charity, service, and sacrifice, as it was for Peter?

In a way Simon Peter, like Adam, is a type not only of prophets, but for all of us. We see both the effects of the Fall and the Atonement in him—fallibility and faithfulness, the natural man and the Saint (see Mosiah 3:19). There is one scriptural account where this is most evident. It is the account of Peter’s walking on water and the events associated with that miracle.

But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid. (Matthew 14:24–27)

It is in the next few verses where we see so clearly in Peter both faith and fallibility.

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, *if it be thou*, bid me come unto thee on the water. (v. 28; emphasis added.)

I have thought a lot about this one verse and have wondered what Peter's words really meant. At first glance, it appears that fearful Simon—the simple Galilean fisherman who had fished those very waters and had experienced many storms on the lake—was calling out to the ghostly figure approaching them. “Who goes there?” I can almost hear him yelling. Upon hearing those words, “Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid,” undoubtedly Peter felt a sense of relief. At that point, both his and the other disciples' hearts were lifted with hope for rescue from a sinking ship. But could there have been some doubt in their minds? They had never seen another man walking effortlessly on the top of crashing waves. Could their minds be playing tricks on them? Was it a ghost? Was it really the Master? If so, how could that be? How could any mortal man comprehend that miracle, at that moment, under those frightening circumstances? Could it really be?

None of us can know what was going on in Simon's head. We can only speculate why he said what he did. Was it just typical Peter impetuosity—speaking without thinking through what his words could mean? Was it just another example of Peter's zeal or bravado? Or could it be something more? I do not know the answer, but there is a possibility that, at least to me, gives special meaning to the events that follow.

Could it have been that when Peter declared “*If it be thou,*” he was throwing down the gauntlet, as it were—challenging or testing the person walking on the water and claiming to be Jesus, the Son of God, to prove his identity? He was not sure at that moment. If it is a ghost, there is fear. If it is merely a figment of Peter's imagination, then there is false hope, no promise of rescue. However, if it truly is the Christ, then there is hope—then Peter can have faith and confidence. But what if it isn't him? *If thou be the Son of God? If?* Peter's “challenge” at that moment—whatever his intentions—is reminiscent of another such “challenge”—clearly not uttered in faith or devotion. “*If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread*” (Matthew 4:3; emphasis added). “*If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down*” from the pinnacle of the temple and give the angels charge that “in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone” (Matthew 4:6; emphasis added). *If thou be the Son of God, “fall down and worship me”* (Matthew 4:9).

Please do not misunderstand. I am not equating what Lucifer says to Jesus with what Peter says. Satan was taunting, tempting, and desirous to destroy. Peter, in a moment of desperation, worries and wonders aloud, faith wavering, perhaps a nagging doubt adding to the terror of the night. Lucifer was rebuked and summarily dismissed by Jesus. Simon Peter, however, received an invitation: “Come” (Matthew 14:29).

And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, *wherefore didst thou doubt?*

And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying; *Of a truth thou art the Son of God.* (Matthew 14:29–33; emphasis added)

Faith and fallibility are on full display in this scriptural account. Much has been said and written about this account through the years. Most often the focus has been on either Peter’s faltering, “little faith” that caused him to sink when the waves crashed against him, or his miraculous, supernatural ability to actually walk on water. Both perspectives accurately reflect the scriptural account. But to me, there is another message—symbolism, types, and shadows, if you will—that testifies of Christ’s saving and enabling power—divine grace that snatches⁹ fallen man from the depths of despair and certain death (see 2 Nephi 9:10).

Whether Peter momentarily doubted Jesus’ divinity, couldn’t comprehend what he was seeing and experiencing, feared for his life, temporarily lost his focus, or any combination of these factors became irrelevant when he stepped out of the boat. Simon could have easily cowered in the back of the boat with the others. He could have ignored the Savior’s invitation to walk to him. Yet, despite some understandable doubt and fear, he had sufficient faith to step out of the boat and take some steps toward the Savior. As remarkable as it was that he walked on water a step or two or more (which was dramatically more than had been or would ever be done by any other mortal), what he and the other disciples experienced after he sunk into the sea was infinitely more remarkable and life-changing.

To me, this is a story of triumph and transformation more than of failure or lack of faith. The focus should not be on Simon’s sinking but on Jesus’ lifting—not on Peter’s human *fallibility*, but Christ’s divine *ability*. I am convinced that Peter’s faith became stronger and his leadership more tempered from sinking than had he continued to walk on water. If he had walked to the Savior and then back to the boat, no doubt the other disciples would have been in awe of that miracle, and perhaps of Peter. But that is not what he and the other disciples needed. The chief Apostle’s triumph, however, came later—in a different way, in *what he learned*

from the Master and in *what he became* because of this experience—a transformation that resulted from sinking and then being rescued by the Lord.

“And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased” (Matthew 14:32). That is a short and simple verse, but it raises many questions. How far were Jesus and Peter away from the boat? How did Jesus lift Peter out of the water? How did they get back into the boat? The scriptural record is silent with regard to those things, but perhaps in that silence we can see the message of the miracle. I believe that Simon the fisherman, despite his experience and skill as fisherman on that very lake, thought he was going to drown in that very moment. In terror, he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me” (Matthew 14:30). Have you ever felt like you were sinking—drowning, as it were—and called out to the Savior for rescue and relief? Peter’s anguished cry for physical rescue mirrors those of the Book of Mormon prophet Alma, who cried out to the Lord for spiritual rescue, “O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death” (Alma 36:18).

Returning to Peter’s story, Jesus “immediately stretched forth his hand, and caught him” by the hand and lifted him back to the surface, like a father would lift a fallen child back to his feet (Matthew 14:31). To me the miracle is not so much that Peter may have taken a step or two on the surface of the water at first but rather, as he cried out, “Lord, save me,” and caught hold of the Savior’s outstretched hand, that he walked back to the boat on the water—*with the Savior*.

As a young missionary in Denmark, I gained a greater appreciation for this miracle as I read the Bible in the Danish language. The word that is translated as “come” in English is “kom” in Danish. It sounds the same and means the same—mostly. But there is an additional meaning in Danish that isn’t necessarily found in English. The Savior’s invitation to “come unto me” (“*kom til mig*”) can be translated “walk to me” or “walk *with* me.” Jesus beckoned Peter to “come”—not just walk *to* him, but walk *with* him. That is the great miracle!

“Of a truth thou art the Son of God,” the disciples cried out in amazement (Matthew 14:33). “What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!” (Matthew 8:27). What manner of man indeed! No wonder Peter and the other Apostles glorified God! Not only did Jesus walk on water and silence the storms by his very word, but he *enabled* Peter to do the same. What a great learning experience for Peter, who would be expected to lead the kingdom at the Savior’s death, and each of us, whatever our own roles and responsibilities: when “walking on water” by yourself, you will always sink. That is a fact of life for fallen, fallible man. But when you take hold of the Savior’s outstretched

hand of grace and walk *with* him, you cannot fail. “And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:27).

Simon the fisherman—with all his faults, failings, and fallibility that come with mortality—became Peter the rock only through the grace of Christ. It is his grace that enables and transforms. “The enabling power of the Atonement of Christ strengthens us to do things we could never do on our own,” Elder David A. Bednar explained.¹⁰ “[This] enabling and strengthening aspect of the Atonement helps us to *see* and to *do* and to *become good* in ways that we could never recognize or accomplish with our limited mortal capacity. I testify and witness that the enabling power of the Savior’s Atonement is real.”¹¹

Peter is my hero because, like me, he had his share of weaknesses, he sometimes said dumb things, acted impetuously, faltered, failed, doubted, denied, and even stepped on some toes and cut off an ear along his way. I can relate to all that (except the cutting-off-an-ear part). He is my hero not because of those fallibilities, but in spite of them. He is my hero because of what he became—not what he made of himself, but what Christ made of him. He was a simple fisherman who tried to do good, but didn’t always. He was well intentioned but, like Joseph Smith, was a “rough stone” that needed some refining to become “a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty.”¹² He was a natural man who, through the Master’s touch, was transformed into a mighty man of God in whose very shadow the sick and afflicted, the fallible and fallen, were also healed by the grace of Christ (see Acts 5:14–16). “When the Savior sought a man of faith,” President Thomas S. Monson explained, “he did not select him from the throng of the self-righteous who were found regularly in the synagogue. Rather, he called him from among the fishermen of Capernaum.” When Peter heard the call, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,” he followed (Matthew 4:19). President Monson testified that “doubting, disbelieving, unschooled, untrained, impetuous Simon did not find the way of the Lord a highway of ease nor a path free from pain. . . . Simon, man of doubt, had become Peter, apostle of faith.”¹³

Peter is my hero—in the truest sense of the word. I don’t worship him, but I am inspired by him. Although I can empathize, I don’t need to emulate his foibles and fallibilities. I have plenty of my own. But I am inspired by what he became through the grace of Christ. I can only hope that, just as Jesus could make something of Simon the fisherman, he will do the same for me.

Notes

1. “Hero,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero> (accessed March 18, 2014).
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Come, Join with Us,” *Ensign*, November 2013, 22–23.
3. Andrew H. Hedges, Alex D. Smith, and Richard Lloyd Anderson, eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Journals, Volume 2: December 1841–April 1843*, vol. 2 of the Journals series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011), 164.
4. *The Words of Joseph Smith*, ed. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 1980), 369.
5. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Continuing Pursuit of Truth,” *Ensign*, April 1986, 5.
6. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 177.
7. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 177.
8. Gordon B. Hinckley, “And Peter Went Out and Wept Bitterly,” *Ensign*, May 1979, 65.
9. See footnote *d* for Mosiah 27:29; see also Alma 26:17.
10. David A. Bednar, “In the Strength of the Lord,” *Brigham Young University 2001–2002 Speeches* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 2002), 127.
11. David A. Bednar, “In the Strength of the Lord,” *Ensign*, November 2004, 77; emphasis added.
12. *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, comp. and ed. Dean C. Jessee, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 100.
13. Thomas S. Monson, *Pathways to Perfection: Discourses of Thomas S. Monson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 83–84.