

## LOOK BACK; LOOK AHEAD

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One of the important ways that we progress is by looking to the past, taking experience from it, and applying what we learn to the future. The Church has recently done that in a wonderful way, the Nauvoo Temple having been rebuilt and dedicated. Every Church member can't help but be stirred by this event. The original building was paid for with sweat, sacrifice, dedication, and determination by early Church members. As the Saints were driven from the City Beautiful, they looked back upon their work. They knew it was good. However, they turned their faces westward and moved toward the future, as they realized they must—some were still on hand to see the fire.

This issue of *Perspective* takes time to remember as well as anticipate what is coming. Articles on Nauvoo and the temple dedication are included. It is exciting to look back at Nauvoo and remember the past, and also to anticipate the future and what will next unroll from history's scroll. Regaining the Nauvoo Temple encourages us to think in new ways of the word "restoration," along with the concept, promises, and processes alluded to by it.

The first graduation for Brigham Young University-Idaho was held this year, a historic occasion. President Hinckley, Elder Eyring, and President Bednar were the speakers. We realize that their counsel to the graduates applies to the community at large. As students left behind the warmth and safety of our halls, so we now leave what we cozied down in at Ricks College: the faculty is also a graduating class. Reading the commencement addresses over may show us glimpses of what can be made of what is to come.

The Ricks College athletic program was extremely successful, universally acknowledged as a national leader. A select and specially chosen group—both faculty and students—gained notoriety, fame, and lots of admiration as a result of the program and the parts they played in it. It is difficult to look forward when the past was so good to these individuals. You will find several reflective articles about past glories. Winning is wonderful, but contributors give special attention to the power of competitive sports to develop athletes' strength of character, the inner victory.

BYU-Idaho approaches the tremendous opportunity of the nascent activities program. What if it teaches people to be motivated, not by wanting to win a competition but by wanting everyone (themselves included) to do well, to do better, to become happier? Maybe games could be invented to teach this, and maybe the activities program will invent them. Are there activities in which everybody wins or else everybody

loses, and the object of the game is not to win more than everybody else wins? As Elder Maxwell explained consecration in April, self-surrender is a victory. The converse would be that what is self-serving is self-defeating. Within the athletic metaphor, maybe this means that the worst thing that can happen so someone is to win the tournament. A central question about the activities program is whether it will complement the academic mission of the University or whether it will just grow into an expanded intramural program, competing with classroom, laboratory, and library for students' energy. It is already too easy to sublimate academic failings into tangential successes.

The tendency to look backward and forward is a central trait of humanity. Sometimes we tend to always look back, failing to anticipate the future. The opposite can also be true. It is not easy to give up something so successful-like leaving the temple and the beautiful homes in Nauvoo and move on to something else. Some of the pioneers of that era gave their very lives to obtain something better.

Today we don't literally give our life's blood. But as we become BYU-Idaho the spiritual sacrifices called for can seem very large. What goes under the innocuous name "retooling" may involve wrenching displacements from friends and programs. Having a program cancelled, as in the case of athletics, cannot help but cause deep questions about a life's work. Without stretching the comparison between departing from the Beautiful City and leaving Ricks College behind, we note that nature itself attaches our core values and self concepts to the work we do, and the greater the will with which we work, the more tightly we attach ourselves. Unless, of course, we work first of all to build up Zion.

Another way to view the change is through our support system and the future purpose. We could go to the Nauvoo web site and actually see the daily progress being made on the temple during its construction. One of the more difficult physical tasks we had to do was to get a ticket for the dedication. Compassion and resolution would both seem appropriate in the present situation at BYU-Idaho. If any have remained in their comfort zones, we don't know of them. We know we are moving on to something better. The greatest strength shows in the sternest test, and yesterday's suffering is painful no more.

We hope this issue of Perspective recalls the past and anticipates the future in ways that invite productive adaptation and inspired innovation. We are limited only by our ability to imagine. ∞