

## *Judging Others*

For your testimony of the restored gospel to be complete, it must include a testimony of Joseph Smith's divine mission. The truthfulness of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints rests on the truthfulness of the First Vision and the other revelations the Lord gave to the Prophet Joseph. President John Taylor, the third President of the Church, wrote, "Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it" (D&C 135:3).

Additional references: Isaiah 29:13–14; 2 Nephi 3:3–15; D&C 5:9–10; 135; Joseph Smith—History

*See also* Prophets; Restoration of the Gospel

## **Judging Others**

Sometimes people feel that it is wrong to judge others in any way. While it is true that you should not condemn others or judge them unrighteously, you will need to make judgments of ideas, situations, and people throughout your life. The Lord has given many commandments that you cannot keep without making judgments. For example, He has said: "Beware of false prophets. . . . Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:15–16) and "Go ye out from among the wicked" (D&C 38:42). You need to make judgments of people in many of your important decisions, such as choosing friends, voting for government leaders, and choosing an eternal companion.

Judgment is an important use of your agency and requires great care, especially when you make judgments about other people. All your judgments must be guided by righteous standards. Remember that only God, who knows each individual's heart, can make final judgments of individuals (see Revelation 20:12; 3 Nephi 27:14; D&C 137:9).

The Lord gave a warning to guide us in our judgment of others: "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you

again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother: Let me pull the mote out of thine eye—and behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye" (3 Nephi 14:2–5).

In this scripture passage the Lord teaches that a fault we see in another is often like a tiny speck in that person's eye, compared to our own faults, which are like an enormous beam in our eyes. Sometimes we focus on others' faults when we should instead be working to improve ourselves.

Your righteous judgments about others can provide needed guidance for them and, in some cases, protection for you and your family. Approach any such judgment with care and compassion. As much as you can, judge people's situations rather than judging the people themselves. Whenever possible, refrain from making judgments until you have an adequate knowledge of the facts. Always be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, who can guide your decisions. Remember Alma's counsel to his son Corianton: "See that you are merciful unto your brethren; deal justly, judge righteously, and do good continually" (Alma 41:14).

Additional references: 1 Samuel 16:7; Moroni 7:14–19; D&C 11:12

*See also* Charity; Forgiveness; Love; Mercy

## Justice

Justice is the unchanging law that brings consequences for actions. Because of the law of justice, you receive blessings when you obey God's commandments (see D&C 130:21–22). The law of justice also demands that a penalty be paid for every sin you commit. It requires that no unclean thing be permitted to dwell with God (see 1 Nephi 10:21).

When the Savior carried out the Atonement, He took our sins upon Himself. He was able to "answer the ends of the