

CHURCH-SERVICE MISSIONARY DEVOTIONAL
SALT LAKE TABERNACLE, 14 OCTOBER 2012

ELDER TATE: After Brother Moriyama speaks, we'll hear from Sister Claudine Cable, who is the Communications and Training Coordinator for the Church-service missionary program. And she is one of our unsung heroes, brick and mortar of this program, and we appreciate her very, very much.

We will then be pleased to hear from this remarkable choir, the Elijah Choir, who will sing "O My Father." The director is Sister Susan Mills; the accompanist is Sister Marie Barnett. Incidentally, they serve with the Family and Church History Headquarters Mission.

After the choir sings "O My Father," we will be pleased to turn the time over to Elder Shayne M. Bowen of the Quorum of the Seventy, who presides at this meeting. Our closing hymn will be one we all know, "Called to Serve." And our benediction will be offered by Sister Karen Hansen, who is the Administrative Assistant in the Church-service missionary department. Brother Moriyama.

BROTHER MORIYAMA: Thank you, Elder Tate. I think I make everybody feel better because I'm always the shortest person in the room, and that always makes people glad when there's somebody shorter than they are.

But it is a great privilege for me to be here this evening, brothers and sisters, to celebrate and commemorate the great service that you provide for the Lord, His children, and for the Church. It's a great opportunity for me to be with you and to work with the Church-service missionaries in our office as well. I'm very grateful for them.

If you think about the changes that have occurred throughout the world in the last 30, 20, or even 10 years, it's just amazing how many changes there have been. I worked in the Information Systems Department of the Church for 26 years, so I saw a lot of changes of technology. I worked with the computer starting around 1978 through the mid-'90s—a long time ago. Several years ago my wife and I were visiting Washington, D.C., and we were touring the Smithsonian Institute. And it was a new experience for me to see all of the old computers that I used to work with were in the Smithsonian. That's how long ago it's been. And even they have probably been replaced by other outdated technology since then. But you think about the smart phones that we have nowadays, all that they can do, and even our little grandchildren can use those phones.

The other day our Calla, our little six-year-old granddaughter, was using her mom's iPhone. And my wife was telling her, "You know, Calla, when we were young, your age, these smart phones didn't even exist." And at that comment little Calla asked, "Did you guys talk through cans?" It wasn't quite that bad, but there have been a lot of changes. Many of you may remember those telephone party lines that we used to have in our homes. I think we had seven houses on our party line up there in northern Utah. And when we tell our kids and grandkids about those party lines, they just can't even imagine that it would ever happen that way.

But you know, things that do not ever change and will never change are those God-given Christlike attributes like love, patience, charity, gratitude, forgiveness. Those will never change,

nor will they ever become obsolete. And using those talents every day in your missionary service will help you keep the Savior at the center of your service. And as you do that, your missionary contributions will be blessed. The people you serve will be blessed. And you as a missionary will have many more great experiences on a mission, and that will make all the difference in your mission experience. These most important assets for your mission are divinely given by our Heavenly Father, and those are the ones that you hold within your heart.

Now, you may remember that Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve was a renowned heart surgeon before he was called to the apostleship. Many years ago when I used to work with the General Authorities, Elder Nelson and I were talking about the right kinds of food to eat, the right kinds of diets to go on and so on and so forth, to be healthy. And jokingly he said, “Joel, if it tastes good, spit it out.” Unfortunately, that’s not one of the counsels of the Brethren I’ve particularly held to.

In a 1998 General Conference talk, Elder Nelson talked about the marvels of the human heart and he said: “The heart is an incredible pump. It has four delicate valves that control the direction of blood flow. These valves open and close more than 100,000 times a day—36 million times a year. . . . Each day an adult heart pumps enough fluid to fill a 2,000 gallon tank. This work is equivalent to lifting a grown man to the top of the Empire State Building while expending only about four watts of energy.” To me, that is truly amazing.

President Thomas S. Monson taught us that proper service requires a ready mind, willing hands, and a pledged heart. Throughout our lives our hearts work continuously, quietly, dependably, day and night, never ceasing. They work even harder when we’re under stress or strain. And so it is for our love for God and others—that should be the first and last thing that is manifest in our service. Our love for those we serve and for those with whom we serve should be continuous, dependable, never ceasing. And our love, patience, and charity increase in times of difficulty or challenge. As we keep the Savior at the center of our service, everything that we say or do will in one way or another help bring souls closer to Christ.

Each of you has been blessed with your own special missionary experiences. We delight in hearing about those stories, and they come from all over the world. It’s a great opportunity to hear all the spiritual experiences and blessings that have come into your lives and the blessings that you bring in the lives of those you serve.

There are an Elder and Sister Fisher who work in the Addiction Recovery Program in Naperville, Illinois. They told us the story about when they arrived early at their first meeting that they were going to facilitate. As they entered the empty room, they were surprised to feel the Lord’s Spirit there so strongly. And then they realized that the Lord loved these people so much that He arrived early to be sure that He was there to greet them.

The Lord loves, supports, and inspires His missionaries. As you faithfully serve with these Christlike attributes, you will change history one person at a time. I am very grateful for the service that you so selflessly provide, the love that you give to others, the souls that you lift, the lives that you literally save. The Lord is with us as we keep Him as the center of our service. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

SISTER CABLE: To speak from this pulpit in the Salt Lake Tabernacle is an honor I never dreamed that I would have, and it is truly humbling. To speak to some of the most dedicated members of the Church is indeed a privilege. I pray that the Spirit of our Father in Heaven will be with you and with me this night.

After Christ called Peter and others at the Sea of Galilee at the beginning of His ministry, He taught them; He set an example for them for three years. He was crucified, resurrected, and ascended to His Father. Then after that, the Apostles looked around and Peter said, “I go a fishing.” So they did.

The resurrected Jesus Christ found Peter and several of the Apostles at the Sea of Galilee. They did not understand who they were or what their life’s mission was. They had gone back to where they started when Christ first called them. What made the difference in their ministry from that point on? Christ asked Peter three times, “Lovest thou me?” When Peter affirmed three times that he did, Christ told him: “Feed my lambs. . . . Feed my sheep.”

When Peter got the vision of what it means to truly love God—to not only feel love for God but to also do something, to serve—everything changed. Peter left his nets and diligently served all the rest of his life.

I believe there is an increase in love of our Savior for those who serve as Church-service missionaries, whether they be young Church-service missionaries or mature Church-service missionaries. Your love of the Savior is demonstrated in your service to others. It helps you qualify for eternal life.

As President Eyring said, “For us to qualify for eternal life, our service in this life must include working with all our heart, might, mind, and strength to prepare others to return to God with us.” Then he promises, “I promise you if you do all that you can, God will magnify your strength and your wisdom.” And he adds, “I leave you my blessing that you will be able to recognize the glorious opportunities God has given you in calling and preparing you to His service and the service of others.”

You can remember from this last Conference the wonderful story that Elder Ballard told about the honeybees. In their entire existence, working as hard as honeybees do, they each only contribute about one-twelfth of a teaspoon of honey to the work of the whole. Each of us contributing our one-twelfth of a teaspoon of honey will together bring about that which is great.

This great love of the Savior, like that Peter demonstrated after that day on the Sea of Galilee, is exemplified in the life of a humble man in Mexico. The president of the Saltillo México República Stake, when calling Church-service missionaries, shared the following. These are his words:

“I held the interview with Brother Medrano, who is a convert to the Church, and he attends alone. He is very sensitive and humble. He works in farming his own land. I had a unique experience when I invited him to serve as a Church-service missionary. I explained it would not be necessary for him to leave his home; it would not be necessary for him to leave his family. I told him about what he would be doing in this new calling. He accepted the call. I asked him if he had any questions about the calling. He told me that he wanted to ask a favor. I

asked him what I could do for him. Then, with very strong faith that I will never forget, he told me, ‘I just wanted to ask you permission to work on my land once a week and help the animals I have, that they may not die.’ I remembered that I had not explained to him that he was only required to work 10 hours a week. He was able to serve. In fact, he served six days a week during the whole day. What a faith. What a decision. What an example.”

I am so thankful for the many Church-service missionaries that I meet. For all of you whom I hear about, your dedication, your faith, your service is outstanding. You come from all walks of life, and though you may have been amazing in the work that you did before you became a Church-service missionary, many of you feel inadequate to do what you were called to do in this new calling. But I know that your prayers are answered and you rise to the occasion. I see it happen every day. You are wonderful. You do not just “go fishing,” but you do the Master’s work. How He must love you. When we feel inadequate, God will help us. Then we can say, as Ammon did, “And this is the blessing which hath been bestowed upon us, that we have been made instruments in the hands of God to bring about this great work.”

President Uchtdorf reminded us: “We have the incomprehensible promise of exaltation—worlds without end—within our grasp. And it is God’s . . . desire to help us reach it.” President Monson promised us: “I leave [you with] my witness and my testimony that God our Eternal Father lives and loves us. He is indeed our Father, and He is personal and real.” May we realize and understand how close to us He is willing to come, how far He is willing to go to help us, how much He loves us, and how much He does and is willing to do for us. I say this in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

ELDER SHAYNE M. BOWEN: Elders and sisters—may I call you elders and sisters? Because that’s what you are. And this reminds me of being at a zone conference with some of the greatest people in the world: our missionaries who are covenant keepers. I want to congratulate each of you for being a covenant keeper. We go into sacred places, and we raise our hand to the square and promise to dedicate all that we are and all that we may become to the building of the kingdom. And a lot of hands go up, but when the call goes out, not everyone goes. So again, I appreciate you for being covenant keepers and promise you that our Father in Heaven knows who you are and is pleased with the desires of your heart.

I have a favorite scripture for you, for missionaries. You know, it’s interesting—sometimes people will say, “What is the difference between an elder and a sister in the mission field and a member of the Seventy or the Quorum of the Twelve?” We’re called “Elder” all the time. The difference is, you are set apart as missionaries, and the Seventy and the Twelve are ordained as missionaries. So I want you to know that I’m a missionary. I am with you, and when you’re released, I will continue to be a missionary. So that’s why I’m grateful to speak with my friends and my fellow missionaries today.

There’s a scripture that’s found in Doctrine and Covenants section 31. This scripture applies to each of you; it was given originally to Thomas B. Marsh, but we’re told that we should apply the scriptures to ourselves. And as we look at this scripture, I want you to hear the admonitions from a loving Father and then the promises that are given to you. In verse three, section 31, it says, “Lift up your heart and rejoice, for the hour of your mission is come.” And

then a promise: “And your tongue shall be loosed,” and the admonition, “And you shall declare glad tidings of great joy unto this generation.”

Now, brothers and sisters, I want you to know—sometimes people will say, “Well, what is the purpose of life?” And they think they need to go to Nepal and climb a mountain and find a guru there. I’m telling you what the purpose of life is tonight. The purpose of life is the temple.

If we desire to return to the presence of our Father in Heaven and live in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom with Him; with our brother, Jesus Christ; and with our families, it requires the ordinances of the temple. A baptism without the temple isn’t worth a lot. Even receiving the Aaronic and the Melchizedek Priesthood, even the endowment, without those final ordinances in the temple, will not allow us to return to the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. So our purpose is the temple.

And if someone asks, “What is the purpose of the Church?” the purpose of the Church is to take the priesthood and the temples to the world. The brethren in this room are not the priesthood. They are holders of the priesthood, but they are not the priesthood. The priesthood is the power of God. And it is only through the power of God that we will be able to enter into covenants with our Father in Heaven and return to His presence. So again, the purpose of the Church is to take the priesthood and the temples to the world. And if that isn’t accomplished, the work of our Father in Heaven will be frustrated both for the living and for the dead.

So it goes on, and it says, “You shall declare the things which have been revealed to my servant, Joseph Smith, Jun.” Now, Joseph Smith received many, many great revelations and many great instructions for the Saints, but there is not a greater revelation that the prophet received than the Book of Mormon. And as you read in *Preach My Gospel*, it says that the strongest tool, the most powerful tools for conversion that we have in the Church, are the Spirit and the Book of Mormon. I hope that you are using the Book of Mormon in all that you do in your own life as you talk with other people. The Book of Mormon has power to convert.

Let me tell you a story about the Book of Mormon. When I was a young missionary in the LTM--that was a little after Noah--and I was preparing to go to Chile, one of our instructors was Brother Gonzales. Brother Gonzales was married and had two children. He used to be the secretary to the cardinal in Lima, Peru. He said one day he was walking down the street, and two missionaries approached him, and they said, “Sir, we’d like to share the scriptures with you.” Brother Gonzales knew who they were, and he was a scriptionist. And he said, “I kind of licked my chops and said, ‘I would love to have you come over and share the scriptures with me.’” He would’ve destroyed them. He was a scriptionist. He said they came to his door, knocked on the door, stepped inside the house, handed him a Book of Mormon, and each of the missionaries bore testimony that the book was true, and they left. He said, “I was so disappointed.” But he said, “They left this book, and I started thumbing through this book, and then I started to read.” He said, “I didn’t put the book down until the next afternoon,” after he had finished the entire book. And he said, “I knew that it was true, and I knew that my life had to change.” And here he was teaching missionaries in the LTM in Provo, Utah.

Now, those were great missionaries. They didn’t use their debating skills, their persuasive skills; they knew the strength of the Book of Mormon. And all God needed was for two obedient missionaries to bear fervent testimony of a book that has power in and of itself to convert. I hope

that we keep the Book of Mormon nearby and that we also have a copy close by that we can give to others and that we will put our faith in the promises that are in that Book of Mormon—not decide, “Well, after I warm them up a little and get them moving along, then I’ll introduce the Book of Mormon.” That ought to be one of the first things that we introduce, and that’s what it says: “You shall declare the things which have been revealed to my servant, Joseph Smith, Jun. You shall begin to preach from this time forth, yea, to reap in the field which is white already to be burned.”

Elders and sisters, do you understand that the world changed last Saturday with the announcement of President Monson? The Church will never be the same. And this is a culmination of things that are coming together, including *Preach My Gospel*, including the new 12-week preparation for the new missionaries, the trainers, as they go into the field and receive the training and are prepared to be trainers in 12 weeks, with the new youth curriculum that has been announced that will go worldwide January 1 in 23 languages. God has hastened His work. And this is His work. And we will look back 10 years from now or 20 years from now and say, “I was in that conference when the Church changed.”

Elder Holland said recently, “I woke up at 10 minutes to two in the morning. I know it was 10 minutes to two because I looked at my clock. And I sat straight up in bed and said to myself, ‘What hath God wrought?’” Now, this is what is going to happen. We will see the work move forward in a way that we have never seen it move forward, and you are a part of that work; you are covenant keepers. You have dedicated yourselves to the building of the kingdom. You have answered a call of a prophet of God.

It goes on, and it says, “Therefore, thrust in your sickle with all your [souls].” And listen to this promise: “Your sins are forgiven you, and you shall be laden with sheaves upon your back, for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Wherefore, your family shall live.”

Now, brothers and sisters, I’m preaching to the choir here because you’re serving, and I would suspect many of you have served, full-time missions and Church-service missions. But let me say this. Sometimes I’ve talked with senior couples, and they will say, “Well, what about my grandchildren? Who will take care of my grandchildren?” The promise is, He says, “Go [away] from them ... for a ... time, ... and I will prepare a place for them.” Brothers and sisters, I testify to you that the greatest testimony that you can bear to your children or your grandchildren is your absence. There’s nothing that you can say that would be of greater testimony to them than to see Grandma and Grandpa or Mom and Dad serving the Lord in the mission field.

And when these young grandchildren, grandsons and granddaughters—isn’t it wonderful? We’re going to have many, many more sisters serving and many more young men and many, many more couples—but isn’t it wonderful to think when those grandchildren grow up, they can say, “Well, of course I’m going on a mission. We’re a missionary family. Grandma and Grandpa went. Mom and Dad went. We are going too.”

Any sacrifice that you think you’re making—I don’t believe we can make sacrifice. Sometimes people think tithing is a sacrifice. How can it be a sacrifice if we pay 10 percent, really insignificant sums, and then God blesses us a hundred or a thousand-fold and promises us all that He has? I have found that in my service in the Church.

As a missionary, I was young and foolish. As an 18-year-old, I thought, “I hope God is appreciative of the sacrifice I’m making to leave school and go out.” It took me about two hours in the LTM to realize that I was receiving much, much more than I was giving. And that has been my experience throughout my life—that any time I have given anything, He is a generous paymaster, and He has paid me back thousands of times.

I testify that He will do the same with you as you show your willingness to serve Him. He says: “Behold, verily I say unto you, go from them only . . . a little time, and declare my word, and I will prepare a place for them. Yea, I will open the hearts of the people, and they will receive you. And I will establish [my] church by your hand.”

Now, sometimes I’ve heard couples also say, “Well, but we aren’t out in the proselyting work. We just work in the office, or we just do this, or we just do” Brothers and sisters, there is no “just” in service. Service to our Father in Heaven is equal.

Sometimes the young missionaries, as they would serve in the office as well, they would say, “Well, we want to get out of the office so we can go and do real missionary work.” I understand that, and I was anxious to get them out of the office because they were young and they didn’t know what “no” meant. You’d ask them to march through a wall, and they were through that wall, and it was a miracle.

But what I want to say to you is in 1 Corinthians. It says, “For the body is not one member, but many.” Verse 18: “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” Twenty-one: “And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.” I don’t know if you’re the head, the feet, the ears, the nose—whatever you are, whatever we are, we need the whole body to be able to function. And the work that you do—maybe you’re not out knocking doors, maybe you’re not out proselyting every day, but the work you do is vital to the building of the kingdom. And if you weren’t doing it, the work could not and would not go forth as it can and should. So again, I would hope that you would never feel like “what I do is insignificant in the Church.” Nothing in the service of God is insignificant. And He will bless you and He will strengthen you.

I want you to know that you’re not alone. Some of you are here as couples. I want you to know that you have family members on the other side of the veil as well as on this side of the veil who are praying for you and working for you. Some of you are widows or widowers. I testify to you that the veil is thin and that your loved ones, your sweethearts, are on the other side of the veil or this side of the veil working with you.

This is His work. This isn’t our work. This isn’t a hobby; this isn’t a pastime we have. This is the work of saving souls. This is His work and His glory: to bring to pass our immortality and the eternal life of us, His children. And this life sometimes confuses that. We think sometimes that what goes on in this life is real. It really isn’t. When we leave this life, everything except our covenants and the knowledge that we gain and the building of the kingdom stay in the junkyard of life, and we take with us those things that are eternal. So you’re never alone.

Some of you sweet sisters have never had the opportunity to marry. I testify to you in the name of Jesus Christ that the prophets have taught—and I know this to be true—if you will keep your temple covenants, that is the great equalizer in the Church of Jesus Christ: keeping your temple covenants. And so whether you're single, divorced, widowed, widower—keeping your covenants, you are promised all of the blessings that God has to offer, either in this life or in the life to come.

So we should be the happiest, the most joyful people in the world because God knows us and we are in His work and He will direct us as we move forward. Nothing you can do is insignificant. And so if doubt and fear come from the adversary, they are the opposite of faith. If you ever have those thoughts enter into your mind—"I'm not really important in this work"—I promise you it's not coming from our Father in Heaven, but it's coming from the adversary. And get rid of it and let the light of faith come back in, and you go to work and make sure that you keep your covenants just as you're doing.

Now, I want to change subjects just for a moment, and I want to talk about what is essential to this work. Elders and sisters, we are nothing. God is everything. Moses even learned that. After he saw the Creation of the world, he said, "[Then I realized man was nothing,] which thing I [had never] supposed." We alone cannot do this work. Only with the direction from heaven can we do it.

The third member of the Godhead is the Holy Ghost. The Prophet Joseph taught that there are God the first, the Father, the Creator, Elohim; God the second, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer; and God the third, the Holy Ghost, who is the testifier of the Father and the Son. Normally, when we receive an answer to our prayers, that answer will come through the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost. And one of the greatest things that we can plead for is to have the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives on a daily basis.

President Uchtdorf recently said in a training meeting that as the world grows darker and darker, the opportunity for personal revelation will grow greater and greater. I believe that to be true, and as the world grows darker and darker, Zion will put on her beautiful garment, the world will see the light, and they will flock to the Church.

I want to talk to you about receiving personal revelation. Elder Tate, will you come up here with your scriptures? I just want to do a visual. Come closer. OK, take that. [Tosses the scriptures to him.] Take that. OK? Take it. [Tosses the scriptures to him.] All right. Elder Tate?

ELDER TATE: Yes?

ELDER SHAYNE M. BOWEN: Receive these scriptures. [Hands the scriptures to him.]

ELDER TATE: Thank you.

ELDER SHAYNE M. BOWEN: Thank you. Brothers and sisters, what principle of the gospel did you just see demonstrated? It's one word—somebody said it. It's one word, starts with an *a*. It's called agency. When I threw the book to Elder Tate, he didn't have any agency; it was more like self-defense. It was either catch it or drop his scriptures, and I didn't want to be

disrespectful to the scriptures. But he didn't have agency. When I said, "Receive these scriptures," he had the option of taking them as he did or saying, "No, thank you."

What is one of the greatest principles that God has given to us as His children? Agency. Think of the cost of agency. When the Father brought forth His plan—and it was His plan; He didn't say, "Who has a plan?"—He brought forth an eternal plan, and when He brought that plan forth, He said, "Who will carry this plan forward?" Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, stepped forward and said, "Here I am, send me. I will carry it forward."

Satan stepped forward and said, "I have a better plan." And he knew, and God knew, that he was striving to change eternal principles. And in Moses 4 it says that Satan was cast out because he sought to take away the agency for man. Because of that principle, our Father in Heaven lost one-third of our brothers and sisters, one-third of His children. But that's how important agency is.

Now, I have a question. As we understand that principle, when you were baptized and had hands placed upon your head, what were the words that were uttered to you? "Receive the Holy Ghost." What does "Receive the Holy Ghost" imply? Choice and agency. Is it possible for me to not receive the Holy Ghost? Will God force Him upon me? Never, because that violates my agency. So I was baptized, hands were placed upon my head, and the same words were said: "Receive the Holy Ghost." Is it possible to go through the ordinance of baptism, have hands placed upon your head, and never receive the Holy Ghost? It is.

Are there certain things that we can do in our lives that can guarantee that we won't receive the Holy Ghost? Those are the lies, the imitations of Satan. And if we go to certain places physically, mentally, certain places on the Internet, we can be assured that the Holy Ghost will not be with us.

Let's take it a little bit further. When you went to the temple for the first time, what did you go to do? Receive the endowment. See, sometimes I hear people say they go to "take out" their endowment. I don't like those words. I go to In-N-Out Burger for takeout. And we don't go to take out anything. We go to receive an endowment from God. To receive an endowment is not a one-time event but a process. Just as receiving the Holy Ghost is not a one-time event but a process, we go to the temple to receive our endowment.

I'm striving on a daily basis to receive the Holy Ghost. I'm striving on a daily basis to receive my endowment. And I look forward to the day, and I'm striving to live my life in such a manner that I, one day, will be able to stand before the Savior and He will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," and let me enter into the kingdom, and then introduce me to my Father again, and He can say, "I'm his Advocate. He wasn't real good, but I made up the difference for him because he did all that he could." Do you see what I'm talking about, the importance of receiving? And it's an ongoing thing.

Now, let me ask another question: why do we have the Doctrine and Covenants? What do you think? Why do we have the Doctrine and Covenants? Instruction? Very good. Why else? Pardon? Modern-day revelation? Let me make it very simple. We have the Doctrine and Covenants because Joseph Smith had a question, or someone else had a question and went to the

prophet and asked that question. Stop and think about that for a minute. We have this modern-day revelation because Joseph Smith had a question.

Let me ask you this question: do you have any questions? And if you don't have any questions, how are you going to know when God answers one? This is how we can increase the personal revelation that we receive. Personal revelation shouldn't be an annual thing; it shouldn't be every six months at conference time. It ought to be a daily thing and oftentimes an hourly thing. But we need to be prepared, and we need to invite the Holy Ghost to teach us.

One of the things that I like to do is, I keep a study journal and I write down my questions. As I'm studying the scriptures, as I'm listening to talks, I will write down those questions because I want God to know that I'm listening and that I'm searching.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if all we had to do was say, "Heavenly Father, tell me everything I need to know"? Do you think that's going to work? It's not going to work because it's not that easy. We haven't done our part. The Prophet Joseph—receiving answers to the questions was not easy for him. As I understand it, translation of the Book of Mormon required physical and mental and spiritual effort and strength. Sometimes developing the question is the work. And sometimes it will take a long time to develop those questions. But again, I would say, if we don't have questions, how will we know when God is answering them?

In any of your callings, you work with people; you work with your families. An inspired question would be—let's say John is your son, and he's going down the wrong path—"Heavenly Father, what is the doctrine that, if John understood it, would change his behavior?" We all have heard President Packer: the study of doctrine changes behavior more quickly than the study of behavior will change behavior.

What I'm saying is, we need to invite the third member of the Godhead, who is one with the Father and the Son, into our lives on a daily basis. And when He reveals things to us, we need to write those things down. There is nothing more important that you can do as a missionary than to have a clear conduit between heaven and you. That way God can bless His children through you. When you receive an answer to one of your questions, make sure that you stop and maybe kneel down—or maybe it's just in the car—but you say, "Heavenly Father, thank you. I recognize that as an answer."

I've had many miraculous experiences. I'll tell just one. Whenever I'm with one of the Twelve, I always put on my spiritual ears, and I always have questions. And if I have an opportunity, I will ask those questions. We were in Buenos Aires, and we had a special sacrament meeting with our Area Presidency, the Seventy, and their wives, and Elder and Sister Holland came. Now, I thought, "I'm going to have on my spiritual ears because I'm going to receive answers from Elder Holland." Sister Holland stood up, and she gave a three-minute testimony—maybe not even three minutes—two-minute testimony. And in that two-minute testimony, she answered a question that I had had for years. Now, do you think she knew that? Of course she didn't know that. But God put her there at that time for me.

And there's another principle—we never know when we're going to have those questions answered. That's why it's important that you're here tonight. This is where you ought to be. That's why it's important that you're at all sessions of General Conference. It doesn't work to

say, “Father, I’ve got this question, but I’m only going to be able to watch the ten o’clock session Sunday morning because I’ve got everything else I’m doing. Can you give me the answer then?” It doesn’t work that way. Brethren, maybe you’ll have to go home and read the Relief Society session. Sisters, maybe you’ll have to go home and read the priesthood session. But if you’re where you’re supposed to be, doing what you’re supposed to do, God will answer your questions.

That’s the blessing of being in a group like this. I don’t know how many we are here tonight—a few hundred. But God, through the Holy Ghost, will answer your questions individually. I’m certainly not the teacher tonight. If you’re listening, the Holy Ghost will whisper things to your heart and to your mind. That’s what you ought to write down—what He’s telling you and what He’s teaching you. Keep track of those things, and soon you will have a book of personal revelation that is sacred to you. Don’t share it with the world. Share it with your companion; share it with your children if they’re involved in that. But don’t get up on fast Sunday and say, “I received these revelations.” Again from President Packer: as we treat lightly sacred things, we will have fewer of those experiences.

Elders and sisters, the Holy Ghost is real. He is the third member of the Godhead. His role in that Godhead is to be the testifier of the Father and the Son. He will come to us; He will teach us; He knows the truth of all things. He is one with the Father and with the Son. He will burn out within us the natural man that we read about in Mosiah. He will change our desires, He will change who we are, and He will sanctify us. He is the sanctifier, and He will make us more like our Father in Heaven and the Savior, Jesus Christ. And as we allow Him to work in our lives and we allow the atonement of Jesus Christ—which will make up the difference which we can’t make up—we will become like the Father and like the Son. But that will come through personal revelation and our willingness to change.

Let me just say this: missionaries teach repentance. Brothers and sisters, *repentance* isn’t a dirty word. It’s not something that just sinners do. It means to change, every one of us. I repent on a daily basis. I want to change on a daily basis so that I can be more like my Father in Heaven and more like the Savior, Jesus Christ. And the Holy Ghost will tutor me and help me, and I know that.

I know also that as I participate in the missionary work that my sins will be covered and my sins will be forgiven, and that’s a promise that has been given here. That’s why I can’t think of any greater work than the missionary work, because I recognize that I am nothing. And I recognize that without my Father in Heaven, without His love, without His grace and the love and the grace of Jesus Christ, without His infinite Atonement, without the tutelage of the Holy Ghost, it’s impossible to return to Their presence.

I testify that They want us home. God has declared: You are my work; you are my glory. And when you come home, and when you become exalted like I am, I increase in glory. And that joy and happiness is what my purpose is. I testify that God lives. I testify that Jesus is the Christ. He is the Son of God. He is the Redeemer and the Savior of the world. He is the resurrected Christ. The tomb was empty. And He directs as a glorified being of flesh and bone. He is real. He directs His Church today, and He is preparing it so that we can return back to the presence of the Father.

I testify to you that the power of God is upon the earth today. The power of God is the priesthood. And that priesthood power came through hands placed upon the head of Joseph Smith, through Peter, James, and John, who had hands placed upon their heads by Jesus Himself. That power has moved from prophet to prophet to prophet until today. There is one man upon the face of the earth who holds all priesthood keys and has authority from God to exercise those keys—the power to seal on earth and in heaven—and that is Thomas S. Monson. And that sealing power has been delegated to the temples that dot the land. And we will see those temples continue to increase and grow in number because God wants us home, and it is only through the temple that we can return to Him.

The Holy Ghost will lead us home if we will listen. He will lead us to the doctrine of Christ, which allows us to enter into the gate and receive those saving ordinances. He will guide us to the temple, where we can enter into sacred, binding covenants which will allow us to one day receive all that the Father has, as He has promised. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.