

Testimony

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Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Wednesday, June 25, 2014

What a wonderful opportunity to be with you this afternoon. You are embarking on an adventure that will be a growing, stretching, and learning opportunity. It will be a time of immense spiritual growth. You will have profound joy and intense sorrow. You will have days where you are more tired than you can imagine, and days where you are energized beyond your wildest dreams.

Each year as this seminar rolls around, I find myself reflecting on the years I served as a mission president with my precious wife at my side. I treasure the memory of that time together.

You have spent the past few days receiving intense training on many topics. May I add just two simple suggestions?

First, presidents, you are likely feeling a need to immerse yourself in the work as soon as you can. You are likely feeling a desire to really get to know your missionaries and the members quickly. I suggest that you be careful to make sure your wife and your children, if they are with you, are settled first. Meeting the needs of your family first will make a difference in your effectiveness over the next few years. But also involve your family in the missionary work in every appropriate way.

Second, sisters, you have a much less structured role, as you have been called and set apart as a companion to your mission president husband. You have the blessing to define your role in the manner that works best for you and your family's needs. Some of you will be actively and vigorously involved in the work and regularly at your husband's side. Others will need to be less prominent as you care for your children. You will receive promptings that will guide you in your responsibilities. But there is one role you can fill regardless of your circumstances. As women, you have the ability to communicate love without words. That is the most important responsibility you have. The missionaries will need to feel that from you. The members, investigators, and everyone else you come in contact with need to be loved. You have the ability to share the love of our Father in Heaven with all of them. Cultivate and use that natural gift.

Brethren and sisters, I am grateful you have qualified yourselves to be here. This is an exciting time in the history of the Lord's kingdom on earth. Our work is to share with individuals and families the truths of the Restoration, to help God's children to find the peace and happiness that are the precious fruit of a righteous life.

As a mission president and wife, you are responsible to make sure your missionaries understand the vital role of Jesus Christ, and then help them learn how to teach it to others. By understanding the Atonement of Jesus Christ, you and they will see that our Father in Heaven is an absolutely perfect, compassionate, understanding Parent. He is our forgiving Father. He is willing to entreat, counsel, strengthen, lift, and fortify. He so loves each of us that He sent His perfect, sinless, absolutely obedient Son to experience the indescribable agony and pain, and to give Himself as a sacrifice for all.

I testify that with unimaginable suffering and agony, at an incalculable price, the Savior earned His right to be our Intermediary, our Redeemer, our Final Judge. Through faith in Him and the receipt of the necessary ordinances and covenants, we earn our right

to the blessings of eternal marriage made possible through His infinite Atonement. We can qualify through continuing obedience and repentance for the glorious privilege of eternal life in the celestial kingdom with our qualified loved ones. What could be better than that?

I love Him. I solemnly bear witness that He lives. It is He that guides His work on earth through a magnificent prophet. Jesus Christ is at the head of His Church. He is not an absent individual. He is intensely active. You will discover even more than you ever have before in your life how deeply He loves us. He loves your missionaries, He loves you, He loves the people you teach, and He will guide you as you love and trust Him.

I testify that He is a glorified, resurrected being of perfect love. I know that Jesus Christ lives. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.