

nite power of the Lord by deciding *now* to be obedient to His teachings (see 2 Nephi 31:19-21).

If loved ones seem to ignore you, it is because they don't know what to do. Their past attempts to help have been rejected; you have not wanted help. Reach out to them trustingly. Ask for support in your sincere efforts to change. Give them reason to know that this time is different because you will do it the Lord's way.

As you make progress on the way back, you will discover feelings that you haven't had for a long time—feelings of concern for others, feelings of unselfish love, feelings of a desire to be near loved ones, and of self-respect and confidence. These stirrings are evidence of progress, like a growing light at the end of a tunnel.

I wish I could replace your doubt with my certainty, but I can't give it to you. I can provide an invitation: Please, decide now to repent and change your life. I promise you, in the name of the Lord, that He will help you. He will be there in every time of need. He gave His

life so that you can change your life. I promise you that you'll feel His love, strength, and support. Trust Him completely. He is not going to make any mistakes. He knows what He is doing. Please, decide now to change your life. Be obedient to His teachings, and He will bless you. I promise you He will bless you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

Elder Richard G. Scott, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just addressed us.

We shall now hear from Sister Barbara W. Winder, released yesterday as general Relief Society president. She has been called as a missionary to accompany her husband, Richard Winder, in his appointment as president of the Czechoslovakia Prague Mission.

Sister Winder will be followed by Sister Elaine L. Jack, who was sustained yesterday as general Relief Society president.

Barbara W. Winder

My dear brothers and sisters, my heart is full to capacity. As we have been released in the normal rotation of assignments, we want to welcome those who have been newly called and to offer them our love and sincere support.

A time to gather the harvest

Luther Burbank wrote: "Like the year [at the end of summer,] I pause now, toward the end of my allotted time, to glance backward and to gather my harvest of experience and growth and friendship and . . . memory. . . .

"[And] what has been my 'harvest. . . .?'

—"The harvest of work accomplished and aims achieved. . . .

—"The harvested experiences and lessons that have moulded and impressed . . . my . . . life. . . .

—"[And] the harvest of dear friendships, happy memories. . . .

"[And] the harvest is rich and heavy and abundant" (*The Harvest of the Years* [Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931], pp. 280-81).

The harvest of work accomplished

The work of Relief Society is focused on the pure and simple part of the gospel, to develop faith and bear testimony; to render compassionate service as we care for the needy; to strengthen our families here and in eternity; and to work with our "hearts knit together in unity and love one towards another" (Mosiah 18:21).

Our harvested experiences and lessons have been molded with many of you.

Your prayers on our behalf have been felt. We are grateful.

Your yearnings and desires shared by letter or visit have become the pleadings of our prayers.

Our assignments and invitations have brought us into your homes, families, and chapels, where we became acutely aware of how much you hunger and thirst after righteousness, for we with you, while we have been there, have been filled with the Holy Ghost (see 3 Nephi 12:6).

We have watched your tender mercies and ministrings to one another.

We have observed priesthood leaders and sisters and auxiliary leaders working together to strengthen families and bring them home to the Savior.

The harvest of happy memories and dear friendships is perhaps the sweetest of all the blessings:

"[For] that same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there, only it will be coupled with eternal glory" (D&C 130:2).

Gratitude for experiences

I am grateful for family support; grateful to have served with capable, committed counselors, general secretary, and board members, as well as officers and board members of our sister organizations, and our devoted, competent staff, volunteers, and hostesses. I am grateful for the support team in the Church offices.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve with our dear General Authorities, noble sons of our Heavenly Father. I have learned from them as I have observed integrity, loyalty, charity, compassion, and a stalwart devotion to Deity. How blessed I feel to have been a part.

Six years ago my husband presided over the California San Diego Mission. We were called home a year early for me to fill this assignment. And now we return to specific missionary work. This

time he will preside over the Czechoslovakia mission, where he labored as a youth.

Time for new challenges

It is humbling to look forward with my husband to yet another challenge. I desire to support him as he has supported me so steadfastly for the past six years. The spirit of missionary work is upon us, even as it was upon the sons of Mosiah:

"They fasted much and prayed much that the Lord would grant unto them . . . his Spirit to go with them, and abide with them, that they might be an instrument in the hands of God to bring . . . their brethren . . . to the knowledge of the truth" (Alma 17:9).

Recently while we were sitting in a mission presidents' training meeting, the challenges of our California mission flooded back into my mind. And I knew we would again face similar concerns, even with yet unknown problems.

In spite of these unsettled feelings, at the conclusion of the training meeting, I felt an excitement difficult to describe. I might liken it to how we may have felt in the premortal existence as we learned of the gospel plan. We knew there would be adversities in this earth life, yet we shouted for joy at the prospects of being able to come here.

Now our excitement causes us to shout for joy as we gather our resources and prepare for this new opportunity.

I will forever treasure this time in the Relief Society, filled with rich associations and experiences. Indeed, the Lord has allowed the harvest to be abundant, bursting with seed for yet another season. I am humbled and weak but I know with the help of the Lord we can be instruments to accomplish his purposes.

May we all feel his strength as we seek to serve him. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.