

verted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:31-32; italics added).

Perhaps it is time that we humble ourselves and overcome the obstacles to faith, and then become converted as Peter did. Why go through life with two candlepower when more than four hundred watts are available? The tasks are so great! How can we possibly take the gospel to all the world and redeem the

dead at the same time? I don't know, but the power and energy to do so must and will come by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, brethren, let's plead fervently with the Lord as the Apostles of old did: "Lord, Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). Then let's use our increased faith as the primary power source in all of our callings. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder F. David Stanley

The principle of work

More than 6,000 years ago, father Adam received the commandment, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Genesis 3:19).

Some 2,700 years ago a Greek poet observed that "in front of excellence the immortal gods have put sweat, and long and steep is the way to it" (Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 1.287, in John Bartlett, comp., *Familiar Quotations*, 14th ed. [Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1968], p. 67).

My young friends of the Aaronic Priesthood and you trainers of this great army of Christ, the principle of work has been taught from the foundation of the world. It is the bottom line of any forward motion of success. The frightening disappearance of work as a part of our basic ethic is alarming. We constantly hear statements such as "It's too hard," "Give me something easier," "I want it now," and "I can't wait that long" coming from our young people. The ugly disease of "nothing to do" is growing in epidemic proportions among us. It undermines the basic fabric of our nations. The prophet Ezekiel clearly defined iniquity as an "abundance of idleness" (Ezekiel 16:49).

We are what we are as a people because our ancestors were not afraid of honest, hard work. Our forefathers understood the necessity of it; sheer survival demanded it. A common ingredient

among all successful people is an understanding of what constitutes paying the price of success. Basic in that formula of paying the price is an inner determination that "I'll do whatever it takes." That means, "I'll work hard, with integrity, to achieve my goal."

Work comes before blessings

Hard work is a blessing of God. It involves going after it "with all your heart, might, mind and strength" (D&C 4:2). That alone is the difference between the average and the excellent.

Great athletes are hard workers. Points, rebounds, assists, tackles, goals, and home runs are all the result of long hours of painstaking practice and hard work. The bulk of that practice will always be on your own, away from the coach. Victory is brought to pass by one's personal diligence and commitment to hard work. The view of a champion, and the glory that surrounds him, must never be overshadowed by the long process of becoming one. There is a time of preparation and a time of victory. The second mile of hard work is what makes the difference between the exhilaration of achievement and the acceptance of mediocrity.

While I served as a mission president, many times missionaries would say to me, "But, President, I want baptisms now."

My answer was then and always will be, "You must work hard, be diligent, be humble, and exercise your prayers of faith."

"It's too hard"

Young men, are you spending too much time desiring what you want to be instead of establishing a course of discipline and working hard on what you are going to be? As I sat with two of our missionaries in a home one night, they challenged a young investigator to begin reading the Book of Mormon. His answer overwhelmed us as he sat in his recliner sipping from a twelve-ounce container from the corner convenience store. He said, "It's too hard."

Someone once said, "Thou, O God, [doth give us] all good things at the price of labor" (David Hume, *Human Nature*, in Burton Stevenson, sel., *The Macmillan Book of Proverbs, Maxims, and Famous Phrases* [New York: The Macmillan Co., 1948], p. 1331).

This young man had felt the Spirit; but, alas, the seed was sown on stony ground, and he was not willing to work hard and pay the price to gain his individual testimony. We feared that evening that by saying "It's too hard," he may have made a decision that could jeopardize his eternal life.

The secret of missionary work

Among the saddest events for all mission presidents is observing elders and sisters coming into the mission field not having learned how to work. President Ezra Taft Benson gave us a powerful key in one of his addresses on missionary work: "One of the greatest secrets of missionary work is work! If a missionary works, he will get the Spirit; if he gets the Spirit, he will teach by the Spirit; and if he teaches by the Spirit, he will touch the hearts of the people and he will be happy. There will be no homesickness, no worrying about families, for all time and talents

and interest are centered on the work of the ministry. Work, work, work—there is no satisfactory substitute, especially in missionary work" (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], p. 200).

There you have it, fathers and trainers of future missionaries. There you have it, my young friends who are now preparing for your missions and you who are currently serving. If you want to be successful, start with the bottom line of work. Recently we noticed a surge in baptisms in one of our missions. The mission president was asked the reason for the surge. He said, "Baptisms come from hard work. We must work smarter and much harder."

The prophet Alma said it very well while glorying in the success of Ammon and his brethren. He said, "Behold, they have labored exceedingly" (Alma 29:15).

That is a pure definition of work.

Say less and do more

Just over eight months ago a monstrous hurricane swept into Florida. Jack Demaree of the Montgomery Alabama Stake and many like him drove over two thousand miles round trip, using their vacation time to assist the hurricane victims. He brought back an article from a Florida newspaper: "In hot, humid conditions Saturday, about 12,000 volunteers—including 9,000 Mormon church members from six states who brought chain saws, plywood and tar paper—swarmed into South Florida. . . . So many people [were] at work that only two hundred showed up Saturday morning for an outdoor prayer service . . . despite the . . . prediction that more than 5,000 would attend" (Sheryl Stolberg, "Tent Cities Begin to Fill In," *Ocala, Florida, newspaper*, 6 Sept. 1992).

In my conversation with Brother Demaree about his experience, he said, "All I did was cut up trees that were blown down by the hurricane."

Brethren, using that as an analogy, cutting trees is more important than thinking about cutting trees or planning to cut

trees. We are becoming the world experts in meeting, thinking, planning, and organizing about working the work, but we need to *do it*. We need to *work*.

While many are sitting and saying and even shouting great swelling words of marginal effectiveness, hard-working Latter-day Saints will always be found diligently doing. Contrary to the belief of many, *say* and *sit* will never replace *diligently do*. When you accept an assignment or commit to work for someone, work for him. Your integrity to that commitment will follow you throughout life. Any group of young men in any quorum knows who the workers are—those hallowed, quiet few who simply know how to *get it done*. My young friends of the Aaronic Priesthood, say less and do more. Get it done.

Teaching youth to work

I am so grateful for parents who taught me how to work. There was no option in our home. It was an absolute requirement.

Fathers of Zion, teach our youth the value of honest, hard work. There is no substitute, no other alternative. Be careful that you don't train up couch potatoes. With all the advantages each of us desires to place before our children, be sure that undergirding all is the absolute of honest, hard work. Young men, learn it and do it. Let it become a part of you.

God lives, and I know it. This is his work, and he expects each of us to do it. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

We have just listened to Elders John K. Carmack and F. David Stanley of the Seventy.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "Now Let Us Rejoice," following which we shall hear from Bishop H. David Burton, who was sustained as First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric at October conference.

The choir and congregation sang "Now Let Us Rejoice."

Bishop H. David Burton

One of my heroes, Nephi, often used the phrase "My soul delighteth." Tonight my soul delighteth to be part of the many thousands who have gathered to learn more about our priesthood responsibilities.

Hero: Nolan Ryan

Next Monday the words "Play ball!" will ring out in major league baseball parks throughout the United States and Canada. I am saddened because one of my heroes, pitcher Lynn Nolan Ryan, Jr., recently announced that this baseball season will be his last.

Nolan will likely be elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame the first year he

is eligible. He will be remembered for his record twenty-seven major league seasons. His 95-mile-an-hour fastball is legendary; 5,600-plus strikeouts is a record that will stand for a very, very long time. Nolan Ryan is not only a great baseball pitcher; he is a wonderful, sensitive human being.

A successful baseball pitcher is able to hurl the ball with velocity and accuracy. His pitches are disguised in order to deceive the batter. A pitcher, by changing his grip on the ball or the way he releases it from his hand, makes the ball curve, slide, drop, wobble, or slow down as it approaches the batter. In baseball, good pitchers, like Nolan Ryan, are masters at deceiving batters.