

Trust in That Spirit Which Leadeth to Do Good

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We grow closer to the Savior as we, out of pure love, serve others for Him.

I am grateful to be with you in this evening of worship, reflection, and dedication. We have prayed together. Our loving Heavenly Father has heard us. We have remembered our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, as we have been touched by hymns of praise to Him. We have been inspired to do more to help our Master in His work to lift up and to succor the children of our Heavenly Father.

Our desire to serve others is magnified by our gratitude for what the Savior has done for us. That is why our hearts swell when we hear the words sung “Because I have been given much, I too must give.”¹ King Benjamin, in his great sermon recorded in the Book of Mormon, promised that feeling of gratitude would come (see Mosiah 2:17–19).

When our faith in Jesus Christ leads us to qualify for the joy of His forgiveness, we feel a desire to serve others for Him. King Benjamin taught that forgiveness is not accomplished in a single moment.

He said it this way: “And now, for the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you—that is, for the sake of retaining a remission of your sins from day to day, that ye may walk guiltless before God—I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants” (Mosiah 4:26).

Alma’s great companion Amulek also taught the truth that we must continue in our service to Him to retain forgiveness: “And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and

say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith" (Alma 34:28).

I have thought tonight of the women in my life. There are 31 women and girls in our family, beginning with my wife and progressing to include our three newest great-granddaughters. Some are here with us this evening. Five are under the age of 12. This may be their first meeting in the Conference Center with their sisters in the Savior's Church. Each will take a different set of memories and make her own commitments from this experience tonight.

There are three memories and three commitments that I pray will stay with them over a lifetime and even beyond. The memories are of feelings. And the commitments are of things to do.

The feeling of greatest importance is love. You have felt the love of the great sister leaders who have spoken. And you have felt by the Spirit that they loved you without even knowing you because they felt Heavenly Father's and the Savior's love for you. That is why they want so much to serve you and to have you receive the blessings God wants for you.

You have felt love for others tonight—for friends, schoolmates, neighbors, and even someone who just came into your life, a stranger. That feeling of love is a gift from God. The scriptures call it "charity" and "the pure love of Christ" (Moroni 7:47). You have felt that love tonight, and you can receive it often if you seek it.

A second feeling you have had tonight was the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Sisters have promised you this day that the Holy Ghost will guide you to find the service the Lord would have you give to others for Him. You have felt by the Spirit that their promise was from the Lord and that it is true.

The Lord said, "And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit" (D&C 11:12).

You may have received that blessing tonight. For instance, a name or a face of someone in need may have come to your mind during this meeting. It could have been only a fleeting thought, but because of what you heard tonight, you will pray about it, trusting that God will lead you to do the good He wants for them. As such prayers become a pattern in your life, you and others will be changed for the better.

The third feeling you have had tonight is that you want to be closer to the Savior. Even the youngest girl here will have felt the reality of the invitation in the song:

“Come, follow me,” the Savior said. Then let us in his footsteps tread.”²

So, with those feelings, the first thing you must commit to do is to go and serve, knowing that you do not go alone. When you go to comfort and serve anyone for the Savior, He prepares the way before you. Now, as the returned missionaries here tonight will tell you, that doesn’t mean that every person behind every door is prepared to welcome you or that every person you try to serve will thank you. But the Lord will go before your face to prepare the way.

Time and again President Thomas S. Monson has said he knows the reality of the Lord’s promise: “And whoso receiveth you, there I will be also, for I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up” (D&C 84:88).

One of the ways He goes before your face is to prepare the heart of a person He has asked you to serve. He will prepare your heart as well.

You will also find that the Lord puts helpers by your side—on your right, on your left, and all around you. You do not go alone to serve others for Him.

He did that for me tonight. The Lord arranged “a cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1), both in words and music, to combine and multiply the power of what He wanted me to say. I just had to be sure that I could fit my part into His composition. I hope and pray that you will feel gratitude and joy as the Lord puts you together with others to serve for Him.

As you have that experience often, and you will, you will smile with recognition, just as I do, whenever we sing, “Sweet is the work.”³

You will also smile as you remember this verse: “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40).

The second thing you must do is remember the Lord as you go in service for Him. The Lord not only goes before our faces and sends angels to serve with us, but He also feels the comfort we give others as if we had given it to Him.

Every daughter of God who hears and believes the messages of this meeting will ask, “What will the Lord have me do to help Him give succor to those in need?” Each sister’s situation is unique. That is true for my little band of daughters, daughters-in-law, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters. To them, and to all of Heavenly Father’s daughters, I repeat the wise counsel of Sister Linda K. Burton.

She has asked you to pray in faith to know what the Lord would have you do in your circumstances. And then she spoke of the promise of the sweet comfort the Lord Himself gave to the woman who was criticized for having anointed His head with expensive oil when it might have been sold to help the poor.

“And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

“For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

“She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

“Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her” (Mark 14:6–9).

That short scripture is sweet and wise counsel for the faithful sisters in the Lord’s kingdom in tumultuous times. You will pray to know whom the Father would have you serve out of love for Him and for our Savior. And you will not expect a public memorial, following the example of the woman in Mark’s scriptural account, whose holy deed to honor the Savior of the world is remembered but not her name.

My hope is that the sisters in our family will do the best they can out of love for God to serve those in need. And the third thing I hope they will do is to be

personally modest about their good works. Yet I will pray that they will accept the counsel of the Lord, when He said—which I am confident we all need to hear:

“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.”

And then He said:

“But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

“That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:1, 3–4).

My prayer for the sisters in the kingdom, wherever they may be or in whatever circumstances, is that their faith in the Savior and gratitude for His Atonement will lead them to do all they can for those God asks them to serve. As they do, I promise that they will move up the path to become holy women whom the Savior and our Heavenly Father will welcome warmly and reward openly.

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I testify that this is the Church of the resurrected Jesus Christ. He is risen. He paid the price for all of our sins. I know that because of Him we will be resurrected and can have eternal life. President Thomas S. Monson is His living prophet. Heavenly Father hears and answers our prayers. I witness that we grow closer to the Savior as we, out of pure love, serve others for Him. I so leave you that sure witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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