

Try, Try, Try

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The Savior is putting His name in your hearts. And you are feeling the pure love of Christ for others and for yourself.

My dear brothers and sisters, I am grateful for the opportunity to speak with you. This conference has been uplifting and edifying for me. The music sung and the words spoken have been carried to our hearts by the Holy Ghost. I pray that what I say will be conveyed to you by that same Spirit.

Many years ago, I was first counselor to a district president in the eastern United States. More than once, as we were driving to our little branches, he said to me, “Hal, when you meet someone, treat them as if they were in serious trouble, and you will be right more than half the time.” Not only was he right, but I have learned over the years that he was too low in his estimate. Today I wish to encourage you in the troubles you face.

Our mortal life is designed by a loving God to be a test and source of growth for each of us. You remember God’s words regarding His children at the Creation of the world: “And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them.”¹

Since the beginning, the tests have not been easy. We face trials that come from having mortal bodies. All of us live in a world where Satan’s war against truth and against our personal happiness is becoming more intense. The world and your life can seem to you to be in increasing commotion.

My reassurance is this: the loving God who allowed these tests for you also designed a sure way to pass through them. Heavenly Father so loved the world that He sent His Beloved Son to help us.² His Son, Jesus Christ, gave His life for us. Jesus Christ bore in Gethsemane and on the cross the weight of all our sins. He experienced all the sorrows, the pains, and the effects of our sins so that He could comfort and strengthen us through every test in life.³

You remember that the Lord said to His servants:

“The Father and I are one. I am in the Father and the Father in me; and inasmuch as ye have received me, ye are in me and I in you.

“Wherefore, I am in your midst, and I am the good shepherd, and the stone of Israel. He that buildeth upon this rock shall never fall.”⁴

Our prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, has also given that same assurance. Moreover, he described a way we might build upon that rock and put the Lord’s name upon our hearts to guide us through our trials.

He said: "You who may be momentarily disheartened, remember, life is not meant to be easy. Trials must be borne and grief endured along the way. As you remember that 'with God nothing shall be impossible' (Luke 1:37), know that He is your Father. You are a son or daughter created in His image, entitled through your worthiness to receive revelation to help with your righteous endeavors. You may take upon you the holy name of the Lord. You can qualify to speak in the sacred name of God (see D&C 1:20)."⁵

President Nelson's words remind us of the promise found in the sacramental prayer, a promise our Heavenly Father fulfills as we do what we in turn promise.

Listen to the words: "O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen."⁶

Each time we say the word *amen* when that prayer is offered on our behalf, we pledge that by partaking of the bread, we are willing to take upon us the holy name of Jesus Christ, always remember Him, and keep His commandments. In turn, we are promised that we may always have His Spirit to be with us. Because of these promises, the Savior is the rock upon which we can stand safely and without fear in every storm we face.

As I have pondered the covenant words and corresponding blessings promised, I have wondered what it means to be willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ.

President Dallin H. Oaks explains: "It is significant that when we partake of the sacrament we do not witness that we *take upon us* the name of Jesus Christ. We witness that we are *willing* to do so. (See D&C 20:77.) The fact that we only witness to our willingness suggests that something else must happen before we actually take that sacred name upon us in the most important sense."⁷

The statement that we are "willing to take upon [us]" His name tells us that while we first took the Savior's name when we were baptized, taking His name is not finished at baptism. We must work continually to take His name throughout our lives, including when we renew covenants at the sacrament table and make covenants in the Lord's holy temples.

So two crucial questions for each of us become "What must I be doing to take His name upon me?" and "How will I know when I am making progress?"

The statement of President Nelson suggests one helpful answer. He said that we could take the name of the Savior upon us and that we could speak for Him. When we speak for Him, we serve Him. "For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?"⁸

Speaking for Him requires a prayer of faith. It takes a fervent prayer to Heavenly Father to learn what words we could speak to help the Savior in His work. We must qualify for the promise: "Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same."⁹

Yet it takes more than speaking for Him to take His name upon us. There are feelings in our hearts we must have to qualify as His servants.

The prophet Mormon described the feelings that qualify us and enable us to take His name upon us. These feelings include faith, hope, and charity, which is the pure love of Christ.

Mormon explained:

“For I judge that ye have faith in Christ because of your meekness; for if ye have not faith in him then ye are not fit to be numbered among the people of his church.

“And again, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you concerning hope. How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope?

“And what is it that ye shall hope for? Behold I say unto you that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise.

“Wherefore, if a man have faith he must needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope.

“And again, behold I say unto you that he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly of heart.

“If so, his faith and hope is vain, for none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly in heart; and if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.”

After describing charity, Mormon goes on to say:

“But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him.

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.”¹⁰

My testimony is that the Savior is putting His name in your hearts. For many of you, your faith in Him is increasing. You are feeling more hope and optimism. And you are feeling the pure love of Christ for others and for yourself.

I see it in missionaries serving all over the world. I see it in members who are speaking to their friends and family members about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Men, women, young people, and even children are ministering out of love for the Savior and for their neighbors.

At the first report of disasters across the world, members make plans to go to the rescue, sometimes across oceans, without being asked. They sometimes find it hard to wait until the devastated areas can receive them.

I realize that some of you listening today may feel that your faith and hope are being overcome by your troubles. And you may yearn to feel love.

Brothers and sisters, the Lord has opportunities near you to feel and to share His love. You can pray with confidence for the Lord to lead you to love someone for Him. He answers the prayers of meek volunteers like you. You will feel the love of God for you and for the person you serve for Him. As you help children of God in their troubles, your own troubles will seem lighter. Your faith and your hope will be strengthened.

I am an eyewitness of that truth. Over a lifetime, my wife has spoken for the Lord and served people for Him. As I've mentioned before, one of our bishops once said to me: "I'm amazed. Every time I hear of a person in the ward who is in trouble, I hurry to help. Yet by the time I arrive, it seems that your wife has always already been there." That has been true in all the places we have lived for 56 years.

Now she can speak only a few words a day. She is visited by people she loved for the Lord. Every night and morning I sing hymns with her and we pray. I have to be voice in the prayers and in the songs. Sometimes I can see her mouthing the words of the hymns. She prefers children's songs. The sentiment she seems to like best is summarized in the song "I'm Trying to Be like Jesus."¹¹

The other day, after singing the words of the chorus: "Love one another as Jesus loves you. Try to show kindness in all that you do," she said softly, but clearly, "Try, try, try." I think that she will find, when she sees Him, that our Savior has put His name into her heart and that she has become like Him. He is carrying her through her troubles now, as He will carry you through yours.

I bear you my witness that the Savior knows and loves you. He knows your name as you know His. He knows your troubles. He has experienced them. By His Atonement, He has overcome the world. By your being willing to take His name upon you, you will lift the burdens of countless others. And you will find in time that you know the Savior better and that you love Him more. His name will be in your heart and fixed in your memory. It is the name by which you will be called. I so witness, with gratitude for His loving-kindness to me, to my loved ones, and to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.