

ASIA LOCAL PAGES

ASIA AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

The Power of Members and Missionaries Working Together

By Elder Benjamin Ming Tze Tai

Of the Seventy

Last year I attended a dinner gathering of stake and mission leaders. After a blessing was pronounced on the food and as we began to eat, we discovered that each individual had been given one chopstick as their only eating utensil. Eager to taste the beautifully prepared food, we asked our hosts for additional chopsticks but were informed that we would need to eat with what was provided. After poking at our food in frustration for some time, we were finally given another chopstick to use to enjoy our meal. Over the course of the evening, we had an enlightening discussion about how, like eating with chopsticks, the work of salvation is more effectively accomplished when members and full-time missionaries come together as a unified tool in the hand of the Lord.

Just as some of us may not know how to use chopsticks, past practices, traditions, or lack of experience may prevent members and missionaries from being equally yoked in the work of salvation. Thankfully, it is never too early nor too late to change. President Thomas S. Monson has declared, “Now is the time for members and missionaries to come together, to work together,

to labor in the Lord’s vineyard to bring souls unto Him. He has prepared the means for us to share the gospel in a multitude of ways, and He will assist us in our labors if we will act in faith to fulfill His work” (“Welcome to Conference,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 4). We are blessed with many examples in the scriptures that teach us how to accomplish this.

One example is found in the Book of Mormon. The great missionary Ammon sacrificed much to dedicate



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his life to preach the gospel to the Lamanites. He shared the gospel through consistent acts of love and service, resulting in many lasting conversions. The Lord also sent others to help Ammon. In Alma 19:16–28, we learn of Abish, a Lamanite believer who had never before shared her beliefs with anyone. After witnessing the spiritual experiences of Ammon and the household of King Lamoni, she acted on a prompting to invite others to come and see and “ran forth from house to house, making it known unto the people” (Alma 19:17). When Abish realized that Ammon and those he was teaching were in need of help, she personally stepped in and lifted them up. By being sensitive to promptings, acting on them with courage and faith, and being present to encourage and lift, Abish played a pivotal role in the conversion of many of her people. Like Abish, we can each seek promptings by pondering the following questions:

- Do those around us know of our conversion to the Lord?
- Do we recognize the power of God in our daily lives and seek opportunities to share those experiences with others?

- How do we help others to recognize the power of God in their lives?
- How can we play a more active, personal role to help lift the missionaries and those they teach?

We too should act promptly on the impressions we receive.

Recently, I visited with a young man who is serving as a ward missionary. He shared with me how the members of his ward and the full-time missionaries assigned to serve there have transformed what has historically been an unproductive area for missionary work to one now filled with activity, enthusiasm, and conversions. He described how the missionaries spent several months serving the members with simple acts of kindness, sharing their talents and establishing trust through diligent, hard work. He further spoke of how the members, touched by the examples and spirit of the missionaries, developed a love and respect for them. Built on this foundation of love and trust, the missionaries invited members to assist in fellowshipping and teaching their investigators and the members began to invite the missionaries into their homes for home teaching and visits to the less-active and part-member families in the ward. Regular, nonmember-friendly Church activities were planned, and a culture of inviting friends and acquaintances to them was established. In this particular ward, members and missionaries

are now actively and joyfully engaged in the work of salvation together.

As the father of one the missionaries in this story, I am grateful for the kindness and actions of the members there and everywhere who work together with the missionaries. I am grateful for my son and every other full-time missionary who is serving

diligently with faith and love. I am grateful to my Heavenly Father and my Savior for the opportunity to work together with missionaries and members in the work of salvation. I have absolute faith that as we strive to work together as members and missionaries, this great work will move forward, changing lives for the better. ■

LOCAL PAGES

General Conference—A Blessing for Me

By **Madhubala**

Chennai First Branch

What I learned from the recent general conference was that when we come with a question, confusion, or a doubt, that is the right place to receive answers. These answers bring clarity to our thoughts and prompts us to positive action.

I have received answers to my questions. Confronted with confusion, I went to view the general conference in faith hoping to receive an answer. Here, I was able to receive a clear answer and solution to my question. The counsels I received from the servants of God are incredible, they grant us peace, comfort, and revelation to direct our lives in an orderly manner.

I love the conference and wait in anticipated excitement every six months so that I can listen and get clarity for my questions and doubts.

I hope you also wait like me. ■



Chennai District Youth Conference 2017



Participants of the Chennai District Youth Conference

The theme of this conference was “ASK.” A short theme, yet it had an in-depth meaning. This is a revolutionary word, which made the world revolve in the fulness of the gospel, taken from James 1:5–6.

The conference began with a homemade breakfast. The theme was introduced in the opening session. A beautiful hymn was sung and invocation offered. Thereafter the excitement began. The participants were divided into groups and

attended four different workshops. The four workshops were:

- Personal Progress and Duty to God
- Education
- Family History—Our Heritage
- Church Standards

After all these workshops concluded, there was some time for lunch, which was then followed by a service project. The service project focused

on a visit to the elderly people in an old-age home. This made the youth feel better. These service projects are really a boon to direct our Church youth to become great leaders on earth and serve others.

Finally, the conference ended with a testimony meeting. The participants bore powerful testimonies. The 2017 youth conference came to an end with closing remarks from the district presidency.

All of us enjoyed the youth conference. ■

Temple-Centered Families

“Matthew 16:19 is an inspired scripture which talks about sealing marriages and families together. Most of the time, anger, agency, and forgiveness have a direct effect in our lives. Temple attendance teaches us how to tame anger in our lives. When



I went to the temple, I felt God there. I am happy for the feeling in my heart that I can live with Him for eternity.

“We can protect our family’s sealing covenant through daily family scripture study time, prayer, service, and listening to our family members and keeping the commandments.”
—Ancil Sangeeth

“Through the miracle of sealing, husband and wife can be sealed for eternity. As I stepped into the temple, I felt like I was in heaven, and I had a greater knowledge about the plan of salvation.”
—Sangeeth Kumar

“I felt so happy to be in the temple. I felt like a little child and I was not willing to come out of the temple. My earnest desire is to have all Church members united in the kingdom of Heavenly Father. How great joy it would be. I say this from the bottom of my heart and with tearful eyes.”
—Sister Velankani

“It’s a really wonderful feeling to be in the temple. It’s a great blessing for me to have been sealed as a family in the temple.”
—Simon Sekar ■

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