

## ASIA AREA LEADER MESSAGE

### The Blessings of Missionary Service

By Elder David F. Evans

Asia Area President



Elder David F. Evans

Some years ago, I was invited by the First Presidency to serve on a committee that was seeking to find out what were some things the Church could do to significantly bless the lives and strengthen the faith of the rising generation. This committee was composed of leaders of the auxiliaries of the Church as well as members of the Twelve Apostles and other General Authorities. Many possibilities were considered. However, after months of study, the committee recommended only one thing. That one thing was to lower the age of missionary service to age 18 for young men and age 19 for young women.

In response to this study as well as to the revelation to the Lord's prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, missionary age was lowered and thousands of young people responded to the call to serve. During the service of the missionaries who were then called and continuing in the service of those who

now serve, their testimony of and faith in our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and in Their true Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was and continues to be strengthened. Their love toward their fellow man has deepened. Hundreds of thousands of God's children all over the earth received the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and made their first covenants by receiving baptism

and the gift of the Holy Ghost. The commitment to temple marriage and eternal, sealed families for the missionaries and those they taught was strengthened, and their desire to be temple-worthy and have their own eternal, sealed family was made strong. Such are the blessings of missionary service.

President Nelson has spoken much about the "covenant path" of



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discipleship. In his first remarks to the membership of the Church he said: “Now, to each member of the Church I say, keep on the covenant path. Your commitment to follow the Savior by making covenants with Him and then keeping those covenants will open the door to every spiritual blessing and privilege available to men, women, and children everywhere.”<sup>1</sup>

The “covenant path” consists of those covenants we make with God that lead us back to Him and His presence as individuals and families. There is nothing in a young person’s life that binds him or her more to this covenant path than the choice to faithfully serve a mission.

So it was in my life. The decision to set aside two years and serve a mission for the Lord has had a greater impact for good than any other thing. In fact, every good thing in my life is a result of my decision to serve a mission. It was during my mission that I received a clear and unmistakable witness of the Spirit that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was the Lord’s prophet of the Restoration. I realized my biggest desire was to be sealed to my wife and, with her, raise a family in righteousness. I determined to serve God and His children all of my life. I made the covenant with God that I would keep His commandments, repent, and continue to call on His name all of my life. I came

to know God love and trust Him. I knew that He loves His children and that “he doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world, even that he layeth down his own life that he may draw all men unto him” (2 Nephi 26:24). I knew that God loves me and other members of the Church and that “he inviteth . . . all to come unto him and partake of his goodness” (2 Nephi 26:33). All of these deepened my love for God and for His children, wherever I have been blessed to meet them.

This is not all. It was during my mission that I knew the joy of sharing the gospel with others. I love the people I taught. One of the great joys of my life is to see their children being raised in the gospel and their grandchildren being blessed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only did I love these wonderful people, but they have loved and strengthened me and my family over all these years.

It is my witness and testimony that the Lord desires for His sons and many of His daughters to serve missions. Come and join with us in missionary service. The blessings of missionary service cannot be overstated. Indeed, as the Lord said to other young people who were considering missionary service, “And now, behold, I say unto you, that the thing which will be of the most worth unto you will be to declare repentance unto this people, that you may bring souls unto me, that you may

rest with them in the kingdom of my Father” (Doctrine and Covenants 15:6). I bear my witness that choosing to serve a mission is one of the greatest worth to you and to those you will serve. I love the Lord, and I am forever grateful that He allowed me to serve a mission and come to know Him through serving His children. ■

**NOTE**

1. Russell M. Nelson, “As We Go Forward Together,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2018, 7.

**LOCAL PAGES**

## Turn on Your Light

**By Violet Ram**

Convent Road Ward, Bengaluru Stake  
“*Every wise woman buildeth her house*”  
(*Proverbs 14:1*).

There are many trailblazing women in the history of the world who are empowered. Likewise the women of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are encouraged to be aware of their strengths and capabilities and make small but prominent sketch marks in their everyday life. At the Bengaluru Stake Relief Society activity on November 1, 2018, the theme was “Turn on Your Light.” Sisters were to turn on their talents to show—they could act, dance, or even speak. Language was no bar, as many sisters did not know English.



*Sisters from the Convent Road Ward*

## Testimony

By Priyanka

Visakhapatnam District

Hello! I'm Priyanka. I live in Visakhapatnam. I love Jesus Christ and His teachings. I used to attend different churches. One fine day I told my friend who is a Christian that I wanted to get baptised. Then she introduced me to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I really liked the fellowship of the members and the standards of the Church. I took the lessons from the Elders, and I asked my parents' permission to get baptised. They told me that I could attend church but not get baptised. So I continued attending church and read Book of Mormon with my friend. After a few months, my mom started coming to church, but she didn't gain her testimony yet. After two years I thought of being baptised without informing my parents.

One day as I was reading a message shared in the *Liahona* magazine, I strongly felt that I should ask my parents about my baptism again. I did, but my dad again said no. Then my mom spoke with him, and he finally agreed. I, along with my mom, got baptised on April 9, 2017—a most memorable day in my life. Because I followed the Holy Spirit's promptings and asked my parents again, the Lord blessed me so much that my family members and friends attended my baptism. As the

We, the Convent Road Ward sisters, with a skit, gave a glimpse into the life of one of the most prominent women in Latter-day Saint history—Emma Smith, whose life is a spiritual wonder and a mystery. The experience of portraying her life with all the challenges and trials was truly uplifting.

There was a feeling of stage fright and anxiety when the Relief Society sisters performed on the stage for the first time. But like a balanced equation, all the sisters got knit and bonded together while engaging in the activity. Other branches too performed various

activities in relation to the theme: Turn on your light in different angles. It was dynamic and was done in an original way involving all of us in a process of inquiry and reflection. All these activities kept us involved, interested, energized, and invigorated. We were thrilled to attend the event. We returned to our home empowered with knowledge and skills after absorbing every bit like a sponge. The activity provided a new perspective on our approach to us—sisters overall! We felt like becoming more like heroines “quietly doing [our] part,” to quote Sister Elaine L. Jack. ■



prophet Nephi described his feelings in the scriptures, “And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do” (1 Nephi 4:6). Similar were my feelings when I think about my baptism.

I’m so happy to be a member of this true, restored Church. I believe

the Book of Mormon was translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith by the power of the Holy Spirit. I truly believe that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith. I know God lives and loves us. I bear my testimony in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

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**President Nelson Stresses Importance of Jesus Christ in Church Name: “It Is His Church”**

President Russell M. Nelson spoke at length on the importance of the Church’s full name.

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**4th AREA LEADER MESSAGE**

**“Always Having a Temple Recommend”**

By Steve Peterson

Like our predecessors, we experience an early joy and happiness that also includes responsibility and obligation. We are grateful for the temple recommend that helps us keep an eternal perspective throughout our journey and for a temple recommend that keeps us on the road and upon the path, even when the journey seems long.

Among the numerous announcements and churches of the present day, the LDS Church has an distinguished tradition of temples.

President Howard W. Hunter (1970-80) said, “In the Lord Himself who, in His revelations to us, has made the temple the great symbol for members of the Church.”

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**Ministering to Members Bring Miracles—M!**

By Steve Peterson

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