

ASIA AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

Live an Obedient and Repentant Life

Elder Robert K. William
Of the Seventy



Elder Robert K. William


The first law of heaven as we know it is obedience (see D&C 130:20–21). Father Abraham, who was the very reason of the promised blessings and covenants we all enjoy, gained these blessings through his implicit obedience. There are other wonderful examples in the scriptures as we

think of obedience. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord because he was a just and a perfect man and he walked with God (see Genesis 6:8–9). When the Lord commanded him, he did all according to his commandment and showed forth obedience (see Genesis 6:22). Samuel taught a

powerful lesson to Saul when he said it is better to obey than to sacrifice (see 1 Samuel 15:22). The price that Saul had to pay for not being completely obedient was to be rejected from being a King of Israel. He feared his people more and obeyed their voice.



Repentance requires us to turn away from sin and return to God. It requires us to feel remorse. It requires restitution. More than all it requires us to feel "Godly sorrow".

A photograph showing a man and a woman in ancient, biblical-style clothing. The woman is wearing a white headscarf and a light-colored tunic, and she is embracing the man from behind. The man has dark, curly hair and is wearing a brown tunic. They are standing in a stone building with large, rough-hewn blocks. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the stone structure and some greenery.

When we sincerely repent and confess our sins and forsake them, we will be forgiven and the Lord will remember them no more (see D&C 58:42).

Unlike Saul there are many wonderful examples of obedience that we see in the Book of Mormon. Nephi proclaimed, “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded” (1 Nephi 3:7). In one of his toughest tests he did obey the voice of the Spirit and slayed Laban. Because of that act of obedience the children of men from that time were able to have the word of God and were able to have faith and belief.

“It [was] better that one man should perish than that a whole nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief” (1 Nephi 4:13).

Obedience brings blessings. Latter-day revelation teaches us that when we obey a law, the promised blessings associated with that law will come to pass (see D&C 130:21). By being obedient we can bind the Lord (see D&C 82:10) and see Him and know that He lives (see D&C 93:1).

He will nourish us, strengthen us, and provides means for us to accomplish the things that He has commanded us (see 1 Nephi 17:3).

In talking to the new mission presidents at the 2015 seminar, President Russell M. Nelson said, “Obedience allows [us] to receive guidance and direction from the Spirit,” he said. “A mission at its best is an exercise in obedience training. And exact obedience brings miracles.”

The other aspect that I want to address here is the principle of repentance. Our Heavenly Father through His great plan of happiness has provided a way for us to overcome sin and death. He provided a Savior for us so that we can be washed clean from our sins and enter His presence. This wonderful gift of Atonement is available to all mankind on condition of repentance. Repentance requires us to turn away from sin and return to God. It requires us to feel remorse. It requires restitution. Most of all, it requires us to feel “godly sorrow” (see 2 Corinthians 7:10).

The Savior taught that the heavens will rejoice over one sinner that repenteth (see Luke 15:7). How great is the joy of God in the soul that repenteth. When we sincerely repent and confess our sins and forsake them, we will be forgiven and the Lord will remember them no more (see D&C 58:42). The powerful teaching of King Benjamin caused his people to proclaim, “Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2). Sincere repentance leads

to conversion; it helps us to embrace good and shun evil.

Bishop W. Christopher Waddell said, “There is a pattern that the Lord has established. He has given us patterns, and the order of those patterns is significant. It is significant that repentance is the second step in that pattern and the first step is faith in Jesus Christ and in His Atonement.”¹ We cannot teach the principle of repentance save we first teach about faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement. As our understanding of the Atonement increases, the desire to repent and take full advantage of that marvelous act will multiply.

To all those who are embroiled in sin and have lost hope in life, I want to testify to you that there is hope in and through the Holy Messiah and through His sacred Atonement. If we sincerely repent and forsake our sins and turn to God with all our heart, might, mind and strength, the Savior’s Atonement will take its full effect and we will be cleansed from all our sins and the Lord will remember them no more. He loves us more than we can imagine, and He has paid the price for you and me.

As we live an obedient and repentant life, our journey towards our heavenly home will become undeviating. We will learn of His ways and receive the promised blessings.

Our understanding of these heavenly principles will increase and we will become better and better each day.

Jesus is the Christ. He lives. We are the offspring of our Eternal Father. We have the potential to become like Him. If we turn to Him and seek His help, He will extend His arm to us. In fact, His arm is extended to all people who will repent and believe on His name (see Alma 19:36). I testify of these truths in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTE

1. Seminar for New Mission Presidents, 2016.

LOCAL PAGES

Fishers of Men

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. (Matthew 4:18–20)

Seven years ago the Lord sent two of His servants to a house for two brothers, Simon and Samson.

We brothers were just as busy as those brothers in the scripture above. Our nets were probably the internet,

studies and all types of worldly entertainment that keep us going in the circle of life. We were invited to leave our nets and follow Jesus Christ to be baptized by someone who holds the priesthood authority of God.

It was difficult for us. Something that we thought that was very common and famous in the world was now suddenly carnal and sin. In our own pace we took the invitation seriously.

We left our nets just like Peter and Andrew. We got baptized and were confirmed members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and our lives slowly changed. The feeling was great, as if a new life has started. My life was being led by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. The world looked different. People looked more precious. I developed great love for each one, even though I knew not who they were. I couldn't

keep this great blessing for myself. I wanted everyone to acquire it.

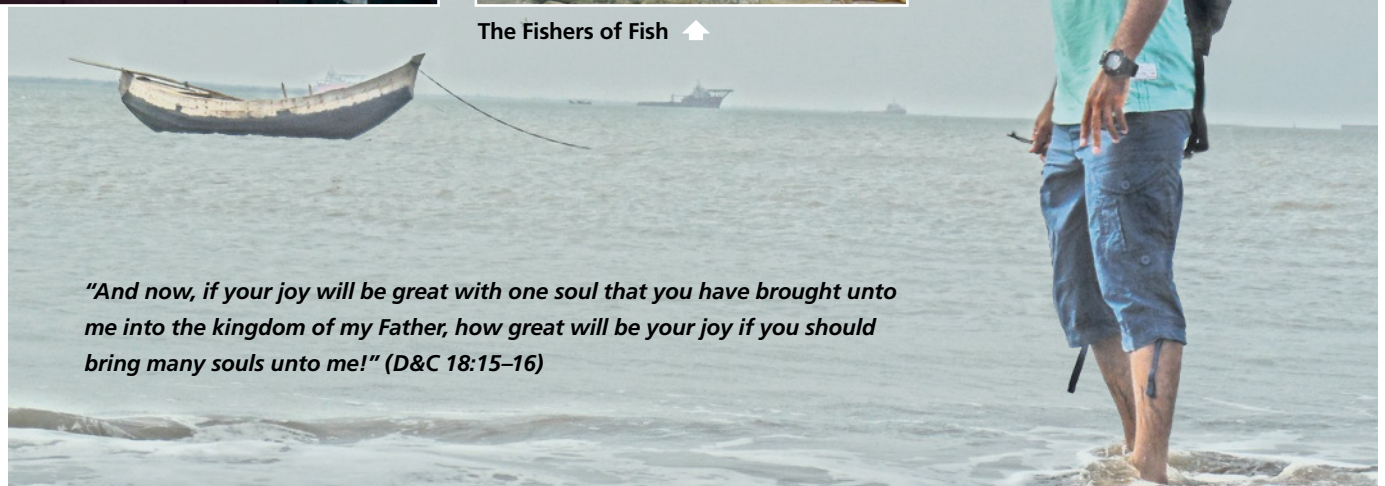
I decided to call out for others to leave their nets and follow Christ. So I desired to serve a mission for the Lord.

Today I stand as a broken vessel that has been made whole, a vessel to honor my Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ to follow Him and fish for all the men whom He has prepared beforehand. Just as you see the picture below, *The Fishers of Fish*, where they



The Fishers of Fish ↑

← Elder Samson



"And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!" (D&C 18:15-16)

have come together to collect the fish in the net, it could not have been possible for just one to fish for so many. With the help of all the fishermen and the crew, they were able to gather many fishes. In my service these two years, my companions, Church members, and other fellow missionaries helped gather all whom He prepared.

Our soul was filled with joy for a wonderful, marvelous work that has come to pass.

“And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

“And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!” (D&C 18:15–16)

I truly understand the joy that is expressed in these scriptures. I am a witness of this overflowing joy of bringing souls unto Him. I am not boasting of my success, but I stand side by side to what Ammon has said, “I do not boast in my own strength, nor in my own wisdom; but behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God.

“Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore



“And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him” (Matthew 4:18–20)

I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever.” (Alma 26:11–12)

I testified of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the plan of salvation all the days of my mission, and when those who heard gave space for the Holy Spirit to convert them, they repented and great was the change in their hearts and desires. Our joy was great when a soul repented and made sacred covenants with God.

I also learned and applied the principle in 1 Timothy 4:12: “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” Being an example to fellow missionaries, Church members, and converts was difficult, but it was made possible with the Lord’s help. I am confident that the Lord prepares our way when we do our best.

Let me share with you my five ways for success in life.

1. Learn diligently and obtain knowledge and wisdom.
2. Work hard to achieve goals and visions.
3. Live happily and face the trials and challenges.



*“Come, follow me,” the Savior said.
Then let us in his footsteps tread,
For thus alone can we be one
With God’s own loved, begotten Son.*

(“Come, Follow Me”, Hymns, #116)

4. Love unconditionally and care for one another.
5. Visit and serve the poor and the needy often.

One of my companions on the mission told me that the voluntary service as a full-time missionary may come to an end, but it doesn’t mean that the missionary work has to stop here.

It’s just the beginning. Figuratively, I was fishing for the Lord in a pond; now He is calling me to fish in the ocean. He has trained me well to use the tools to fish wisely, and I myself have become a tool for the Holy Spirit to move the work forward.

I am ready to work even more than I have ever worked before. The field is white and ready to harvest.

I invite each one of you to get engaged in this marvelous work and experience the great joy in it.

I know my Heavenly Father lives and He knows all of us by name. His plan of salvation is real. Jesus Christ is His Only Begotten Son in the flesh, who is the center of the plan. His Atonement is real, He is resurrected and He lives. He has restored His gospel and His Church through the Prophet Joseph Smith in these last days. The Book of Mormon is the evidence of this truth. Today the living prophet is President Thomas S. Monson, who receives continuing revelation.

Let us all leave our nets and follow our Master, even Jesus Christ, amen. ■

Elder Samson—India Bengaluru Mission

God Answered Our Prayer—Immediately

Prema Kumari Nixon

Ramamurthy nagar Ward, Bengaluru India Stake

We as a family travelled to Mysuru for a wedding. There was fun, thrills, and lots of food to eat as we enjoyed the journey on the train.

The train journey to Mysuru was enjoyable for me and my kids, Dallan and Dennis. We spoke to each other, shared jokes and food, laughed together and at times were grateful for the beauty that we were seeing outside the window of the train. The green rice fields, flowing rivers, canals, hills, and valleys were a treat to the eyes and made us grateful to God for creating this beautiful world.

We were in Mysuru for my cousin's wedding. After resting for a while, we went to my cousin's house to participate in the pre-wedding family get-together. After we had a great time, we started to get back to the hotel. It was late. It was already 10:00 p.m., and we wondered if we would be able to find city buses to get back. We nevertheless started to walk to the bus stand. The host family was trying to arrange a van, but we did not want to trouble them, so all eight of us walked. The group was my two sons, my brother's wife and her two children, and my cousin,

Allan, and his wife. We came to the main road and waited for a bus but did not find any bus. We asked a few people, who told us there may not be any buses available. We looked for an autorikshaw or a taxi, but nothing was coming. We again made a decision to walk further to the ring road hoping to find a bus, autorikshaw or taxi to go to the hotel. We reached the ring road and waited for some time—probably about 10 minutes.

Not finding anything for a while, we went into a huddle to discuss what to do. We made a decision to pray. That was the last resort we had come to. I knew we had tried our best to find a means to go to the hotel, but not finding any, I knew the only source was to seek our Heavenly Father's help. We all held our hands forming a circle. My cousin Allan offered the prayer, asking the Lord fervently for any means to reach the hotel. The moment we all said "amen," there was a man with a small van calling us to get in and offering to drop us where other means of transportation would be available.

None of us could believe that our prayer was answered at a speed that

cannot be measured by any man. It was astonishing. My faith just got strengthened

by the generosity of our Heavenly Father in sending someone to help us. The speed with which Heavenly Father answered us cannot be calculated by any earthly means that I know of. Even before we could speak about the miracle that had happened, we all got into the van. All of us were so exhausted by the miracle. We all spoke glorifying Heavenly Father and His care, love and watch over His children on earth. The feeling of the Spirit was burning strong for a long time because of the miracle that had happened. We spoke with others of the miracle, glorifying our Heavenly Father's love and care for us.

This is one incident that I will not forget. This will be a beacon throughout my life to trust in my Heavenly Father at all times. I bear witness that God lives. He hears and answers our prayers. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■



Prema Kumari Nixon



Young Single Adult Conference

The Multi-Stake and District All India YSA conference was held in Hyderabad from October 26–28, 2016. Here are a few responses:

It was my great privilege to be part of the YSA Conference held in Hyderabad from 26–28 October 2016.

I have attended almost eight young single adult conferences so far, but this I felt was the most inspired conference that I've attended. The conference was well organized and brought a lot of

meaning to me personally to inspire and motivate me.

I liked the workshops. One needs mentioning here. The workshop done by Brother Suresh Natarajan and his wife helped me find answers to some of the questions that I had and has resulted in a change in myself.

I liked the principle of unity showed by the committee members, which caused the success of the YSA conference. I thank the visionary leadership of the Hyderabad Stake to organize the conference.

—David George, Indiranagar Ward, Bengaluru Stake

It was my third YSA conference and only the second all-India YSA conference. I enjoyed meeting all fellow YSA's across India. I had even more joy in meeting with the members who I had made friends while serving my mission and also my converts. It was like Alma

and the sons of Mosiah meeting. My joy was as great as theirs.

The workshops helped me a lot to make wise decisions in life, which I know will increase my testimony in the coming months and years. The theme of the conference "Decisions Determine Destiny" also helped me to remember to stay focused in my life by making righteous decisions. ■

—Terence Kanikaraj, Indiranagar Ward, Bengaluru Stake



David
George



Terence
Kanikaraj