

NEW ZEALAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Yes, We Can Trust Him

By Elder Daniel G. Hamilton

Area Seventy

Like many faithful members, I have sometimes wondered why tough and trying times seem to touch even the faithful.

We want to believe and trust, but our doubt makes us feel so unworthy.

Disappointment comes when family members wander off from the gospel and appear lost.

Debilitating illness discourages some, and all of us experience death.

Some struggle with financial setbacks and career challenges, while others wrestle with a marriage that seems less than perfect. Many worry about not being married at all.

Tough times for some come due to nagging weaknesses that gnaw away at our souls, like Paul's "thorn in the flesh."¹

Whatever it is, there will be something that one day, or maybe even every day, will find us questioning, as did the Prophet Joseph, "O God, where art thou?"²

We may even at times feel to cry out in agony, as did the Son of God, the great Jehovah, exclaiming, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?"³

In desperation, despair and discouragement, some will give up eternal hope.

Yet in our hour of need, all we simply want to know and feel is that He cares for us and hears our cries, that He will reach down from the heavens and lift us up.

I testify we can feel so and that He will rescue us.

I don't have all the answers, but that's okay because neither did Nephi, who told an angel, "I do not know the meaning of all things."⁴

So, what should we do when all seems lost?

When overburdened with challenges, we can heed King Limhi's counsel:



Elder Daniel G.
Hamilton



Yes, we can
trust Him.

Northland Saints Talk Values

By Shilo Kino

Saints gathered from all over Northland earlier this year to hear leaders talk about the impact of values and standards on a person's life.

Visiting Member of Parliament Rt Hon Winston Peters, leader of New Zealand First, was there, along with other Members of Parliament, Kelvin Davis and Pita Paraone. Representing the City of Whangarei were Councillors Sue Glen and Jayne Golightly.

Mr. Peters shared some thoughts on the power of a person knowing her or his values and standards and then sticking to them.

He recalled watching former All Blacks rugby player Sid Going—who was also in attendance on Sunday evening, along with his wife, Colleen—play at Eden Park in Auckland.

Mr. Peters commended Mr. Going for being true to his values as a rugby player, including his decision to honour the Sabbath day.

Mr. Going said in an interview after the meeting that high moral standards are important for the way we live our lives.

"It's difficult for young people today," he said, "but one has to be strong enough to remember the purpose of your life."

"O ye, my people, lift up your heads and be comforted; for behold, the time is at hand, or is not far distant, when we shall no longer be in subjection to our enemies, notwithstanding our many strugglings, which have been in vain; yet I trust there remaineth an effectual struggle to be made.

"Therefore, lift up your heads, and rejoice, and put your trust in God."⁵

We trust those we have a relationship with, but remember, trust takes time.

A key to trusting Heavenly Father is found in our submissiveness to His will.

In a general conference message about the need for opposition, Elder Dallin H. Oaks quoted President Thomas S. Monson as saying, "Our Heavenly Father . . . knows that we learn and grow and become refined through hard challenges, heart-breaking sorrows, and difficult choices."⁶

As I have contemplated Elder Oaks's powerful message, three thoughts have distilled upon my mind.

1. The defining discipline of true Christian discipleship and submissiveness will develop when we accept Heavenly Father's will for us.
2. Submissiveness is a sign of our trust in Heavenly Father's love for us.
3. We demonstrate our trust in Heavenly Father when we live as one, full of hope, even when things go wrong.

H-O-P-E, by the way, is "Having Optimistic Perspective Eternally."

When things seem like they can't get any worse, remember that the scriptures say, "It came to pass," not "It came to stay."

In one of his darkest hours, the Prophet Joseph Smith was told, "Thine afflictions shall be but a small moment."⁷

Suffering for many months, about to perish from hunger, having poured out their souls in prayer to God, pleading that He would deliver them, the Nephite army took courage, as mighty Helaman records:

"Yea, and it came to pass that the Lord our God did visit us with assurances that he would deliver us; yea, insomuch that he did speak peace to our souls, and did grant unto us great faith, and did cause us that we should hope for our deliverance in him.

"And we did take courage . . . and were fixed with a determination to conquer."⁸

I don't know the meaning of all things, but this I do know from observing faithful Saints who have trusted in God: in time the fog lifts, and looking back they can see that their trust in Him was well worth the wait.

Yes, we can trust Him. ■

NOTES

1. 2 Corinthians 12:7.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 121:1.
3. Mathew 27:46.
4. 1 Nephi 11:17.
5. Mosiah 7:18–19.
6. Thomas S. Monson, quoted in Dallin H. Oaks, "Opposition in All Things," *Ensign*, May 2016, 116.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 121:7.
8. Alma 58:11–12.



↑ *Rt Hon Winston Peters (right) shakes hands with stake president Ronald Reti.*

Members of Parliament in attendance included Pita Paraone and Kelvin Davis. Representing the City of Whangarei were Councillors Jayne Golightly and Sue Glen.



“There are six other days in a week, and sports now seem to take over the Sabbath day. For me, it was a decision I made as a young person taught by my parents. There is more than just this life; there’s an eternal part of our plan.”

“It is wonderful to see Sid made it all the way to the All Blacks having

respected his church’s views you shouldn’t play sport on Sunday,” Mr. Peters said. “It’s not an easy thing to do. Most people have to compromise [their] values.

“My message for young people is this: No matter how difficult it is, it won’t help if you go off the beaten

path. If you go off the wrong track, whatever your problem is, it will only get worse.”

Mr. Peters said that churches play an important role in the community in teaching values and standards.

“Critics have no idea what kind of society it would be if we didn’t have influences like churches in our country,” Mr. Peters said.

Young Latter-day Saint Rhaydyn Teokotai also spoke on Sunday evening. He referred to the culture of “competing, comparing and never being enough.”

“As young people today,” Mr. Teokotai said, “we see the world and think we can’t do it. We see the world and not the Saviour. It’s simple. We need to turn out attention to the Saviour, keep our steady focus on Him and we can overcome everything.”

He added, “Life isn’t easy. School isn’t easy. But if we live our values and show the world our values, other people will start to live them.”

Closing the evening, President Reti urged those in attendance to put themselves in positions where they can make a difference.

“We need to be in the world, to participate as members of the Church, so others can see what we’re about.”

During the event, President Reti presented Mr. Peters with a framed copy of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” ■

New Chinese Class a Miracle

By Shilo Kino

There is estimated to be almost 90,000 people from China who are now currently living in New Zealand.

And institute director President Philip Skeen calls the new Chinese classes a “miracle”.

“Chinese is the most-spoken class in the world, so the new Chinese institute classes needed to happen,” he said.

“The classes are a miracle.”

The new institute class began in early May this year and is taught at the Auckland City Institute building by former missionaries Shilo Kino, Manu Edwards, Tahir Nin and Joseph Satele. Shilo recently returned from her mission in Hong Kong, while Manu served in Auckland, Tahir in Taiwan and Joseph in Melbourne, Australia.

“We are promised the gospel will be preached to all nations, kindreds and tongues. The Chinese students will be able to hear the gospel in the language

of their heart and feel the Spirit more fully. That’s what it’s all about. If there’s a group of Chinese people that can benefit from this, then why not?” President Skeen said.

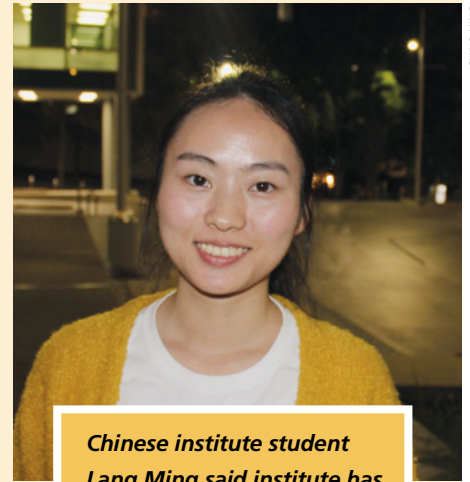
The class will be an hour and a half long and will be based on the teaching and doctrine of the Book of Mormon.

Twenty-four-year-old Lang Ming is from Chongqing, China, and joined the Church in April last year. She recently graduated from Auckland University with a master’s in accounting.

A desire for a change of scenery brought Lang Ming to New Zealand over a year ago.

She said attending the Chinese institute class has helped her immensely.

“When I first arrived, I didn’t like the environment. I felt lonely, and it was tough getting over difficulties without any help. Institute made me feel warm, and I had so much support.



Chinese institute student Lang Ming said institute has given her a lot of support.

“When you have class all day, you are tired and sometimes find it hard to catch up to what the teachers are saying in English. Chinese is easier for me.”

Teacher Manu Edwards finished his mission over two years ago. He said the Chinese classes are important to the Chinese members.

“Most of them are first generation members and are still learning about the gospel,” he said.

“They will be the future leaders of the Church for those in China and around the world. They will be instruments for their own family for receiving the gospel.” ■

The new Chinese institute class is held every Tuesday 7pm at 9 Governor Fitzroy Place, Auckland City. All are welcome.



Teachers Shilo Kino (left) and Manu Edwards (right) with students from the Chinese institute class.

Victor and Lee Peihopa are pictured with recently returned missionary son Ephraime. They said it is "awesome" having three sons out on a mission at the same time. ➔



Three Brothers on a Mission

By Shilo Kino

It's hard enough having one son away for two years.

Try having three sons all on their missions at the same time.

That's what mum Lee Peihopa and husband Victor Peihopa experienced when their sons Ephraime, Dante and Gianni served missions.

Ephraime returned in May from Calgary, Canada, while Dante returned from Quezon City, Philippines, in July. Gianni is in Adelaide and will come home next year.

Lee Peiopa said she wouldn't have it any other way.

"It's awesome," she said.

"We don't know how we did it. Three kids on a mission. But we did it, and that's because the Lord is blessing us. We really see the blessings, especially seeing how each of our sons' personal testimonies are strengthened. It brings us joy."

The Peihopas have seven children; the two youngest are foster children. Their oldest, Conrad, also served a mission in Indonesia. Victor is the former bishop of Lincoln Ward and currently serves as the ward mission leader. Lee teaches in Sunday School.

"When the kids were young, they always knew they were going on a mission," Lee said.

"Church is just the way of life. It became our culture and they knew that."

Lee and Victor are both converts to the Church, so they were determined to give their children an upbringing they never experienced.

Being married in the temple and having children born in the covenant is the

Elder Gianni Peihopa is currently serving his mission in Adelaide. He will come home next year.



PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY SHILO KINO

➔ **Elder Dante Peihopa served his mission in Quezon City, Philippines.**

"greatest blessing," said Victor Peihopa.

"We did everything we could to get our kids to church and to activities. We taught them to serve from a young age. They were hungry and tired, but we would go out and visit the elderly and they would stop complaining. It's the best thing we could have done."

Ephraime said his parents never gave up on him.

"There were points in my life when I didn't want to serve a mission. I didn't want to do it. They didn't stop loving me. They always told me it would be okay and they taught me why I should live the gospel and how. Church was always something we did."

Ephraime said that on his mission he grew to love Heavenly Father.

"I was spat on and doors were slammed on me, but one of the biggest blessings I could receive is to feel Heavenly Father's love more abundantly

in my life. I felt that with me on my mission."

Their three sons have inspired Victor and Lee to do their own missionary work.

When they go out, Lee makes sure to tell everyone about her sons serving missions.

"The reaction is really good," she said.

"And even better, we can tell our sons we are doing missionary work on our end too."

While being a mission mum can be tough, Lee said she has only one responsibility.

"It's not easy serving and our missionaries get tested. They are in a strange country and they are stretched and pushed to their limits. They get smashed to the ground, so my job is to pump them up!"

While they are happy that their sons are serving and can see the blessings, Victor said it isn't the main goal.

"The goal is not for them to serve missions but to help get them into the temple. I wouldn't have loved my sons any less if they didn't serve." ■

Meet the “National Treasure” Who Helped Build the Church in Auckland

By Shilo Kino

Anita Chote smiles when she is asked about her extraordinary life.

“I’m just an ordinary woman with an ordinary life,” the 93-year-old insists.

But Anita Chote—or “Neat,” as her friends call her—is anything but ordinary, according to the Saints in New Zealand.

Good friend and current Hamilton temple matron Christine Roberts calls Anita a “national treasure”.

Anita and her husband, Matt Chote, are pioneers for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, two of many members who helped establish the Church in Auckland during the early 50s and 60s.

Anita has four children with her late husband, Matt, along with 14 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Anita was born in Christchurch to a mother who was a devout Anglican and a dad who believed in Presbyterianism. Matthew Cowley, who would later become an Apostle, was serving in New Zealand at the time. He asked Anita’s family if the missionaries could live with them. The rest is history.

“God and Jesus Christ always seemed like a fairy tale to me,” she said.

“Meeting with the missionaries allowed me to see my relationship



Anita and her husband, Matt Chote, are pioneers for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, two of many members who helped establish the Church in Auckland during the early 50s and 60s.

with Heavenly Father as clear and personal. He became a reality.”

Anita moved to Auckland and was baptized in 1948 after she turned 21. She said it was an honour to be confirmed by Matthew Cowley.

“I’m forever grateful for the blessings and challenges I’ve had in my life that make my testimony firm.”

The original Auckland Branch was formed in June 1880, and more than

70 years later in 1951, Anita’s husband, Matt, was called to be the branch president of the new Auckland Branch.

“Matt Chote as President of the Branch has really made me feel as good as if someone were scratching my back. You will find him dependable. He is someone that makes success,” Matthew Crowley wrote in a letter.

Anita was the Relief Society president of the new Auckland Branch. During her time as a member of the Church, Anita has been Relief Society president five times and also served a temple mission with her husband in 1989–1990.

She calls the Saints in the early days “pioneer people” who made huge sacrifices. Anita lived in Mount Roskill with “two little girls and no car.” She travelled to church by tram.

“I have a different concept of church when I’ve been in Auckland from the beginning. It’s totally different now to what it used to be.

“Everyone had to come from miles away to get to church. I often say you never appreciate a chapel until you’ve done the hard work. In those days we used to billet and cook the meals for all the labour missionaries, and nowadays you walk into a ready-made chapel.”

One of her cherished memories is a five-course meal put on for over a thousand people, organized by the Church members to raise funds for a new building.

MISSIONARY MOMENTS

“Those were great days. Everyone worked hard together and we raised the money needed,” she said.

“There was even an article in a magazine on how many tons of potatoes we used for potato salad.”

Pacific Area Church history advisers Tina and Lindsay Dil said the Chotes have always been great leaders and stalwarts of the Church in New Zealand.

“We love them and think of them as amazing role models who always exemplified dedicated service, good humour, good judgement and kindness to all. They both blessed so many lives, and Neat continues to be a gracious example of the best of Latter-day Saint womanhood. The strength of the Church in New Zealand today grew out of the unselfish and whole-hearted service of Saints like the Chotes. What a blessing this special couple have been.”

The new Matthew Cowley Pacific Church History Centre was dedicated as part of the Temple View project. It features interactive exhibits and displays that will inform visitors about Latter-day Saints in New Zealand, Australia, and the islands of the South Pacific over the last 177 years.

And it is something that Anita is looking forward to seeing.

“History is very, very important,” Anita said.

“We need to know where we come from. And Matthew was a brilliant man.” ■

Returning Home Early: How Jashon Waters Got Back Up and Served

By Jashon Waters

Returning home early from my mission was by far one of the hardest things I have ever done in my life. I had always wanted to be a missionary. I don't think anyone ever plans on coming home early, but painfully, it happened to me.

I understand that there are several reasons why a missionary may return home early from a mission. My goal is not to compare but hopefully to uplift and encourage those who seek to do good even when times get tough. This is my story.

I was called to the Adriatic South Mission in June 2013, assigned to preach the gospel in the Albanian language. Excitedly, I reported to the Provo Missionary Training Center in January 2014. I absolutely loved my time there. I learnt so much and grew spiritually. I remember being anxious to get to the mission field and teach real people! The moment finally came two months later and I started my journey for Albania. However, while I was waiting in the Salt Lake City airport for my flight, a life-changing event occurred.

I woke up in an ambulance. The paramedic told me, “You had a seizure in the airport and you fell and cut your head.” The doctors kindly attended to my wound, and a few days later, it was

decided that I needed to go home, sort my health out and wait at least six months before I could continue my mission.

I was devastated. Was this really the Lord's plan for me? My heart was already in Albania. I had no clue what I would do when I got home. The pain and reality of it all didn't sting until I stepped off the plane and saw my family at the airport.

Coming home early was the most spiritually and emotionally difficult time of my life. Instead of being on a mission, I found myself struggling immensely. Old habits crept in; good habits were forgotten. My resilience to temptation grew weak, my desire to re-serve my mission was fading and internally I was suffering deeply.



Jashon Waters overcame many trials to serve his mission in the Adriatic South Mission.

I came to a point in my life where I needed to decide what I was going to do. I thought of disregarding my mission to follow other aspirations, and at a point I was even considering abandoning my testimony altogether. In this important time, I decided to do what I had been taught my whole life—to pray. I got on my knees and begged for guidance for the first time in a while, and received an unquestionable answer. I needed to set an example for my little brother, shape up and serve the rest of my mission—so I did.

It wasn't the easiest process, but it was well worth it. I put my head down and made the necessary preparations. A year later, on the 5th January 2015, I was set apart once more as a missionary. I flew to Albania the next day.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said in the recent April general conference: "Adversity should not be viewed as either disfavor from the Lord or a withdrawal of His blessings. Opposition in all things is part of the refiner's fire to prepare us for an eternal celestial destiny" ("Foundations of Faith", *Ensign*, May 2017, 130).

I loved my mission and the people that I served. I look back with so much contentment and happiness, especially knowing that I overcame major trials to get there. The experiences that I have had testify to me that God has a unique plan for each of us. Sometimes

it involves heartache and pain, but it doesn't go unnoticed and is nothing that our Saviour doesn't understand. I have a testimony that He lives, that He knows and understands us and still

loves us. I have felt His love that He has for me. He is there for us every step of the journey, even when we feel He is not. He stands with open arms, waiting for us to trust and turn to Him. ■

TIP OF THE MONTH

Showing Integrity

LDS Family Services

"Blessed is my servant Hyrum Smith; for I, the Lord, love him because of the integrity of his heart" (D&C 124:15). This high praise that the Lord bestowed on Hyrum Smith is a powerful admonition to each of us to act with integrity in our lives.

We live in a world where many seek to satisfy their wants by false, deceptive, opportunistic and exploitative means to achieve instant gratification. However, as Latter-day Saints and disciples of Jesus Christ, we need to show integrity in all of our choices and behaviours, both public and private. This includes not associating ourselves too closely with others who demonstrate a disregard for integrity.

"Success will come and go, but integrity is forever. Integrity means doing the right thing at all times and in all circumstances, whether or not anyone is watching. It takes having the courage to do the right thing, no matter what the consequences will be. Building a reputation of integrity takes years, but it takes only a second to lose, so never

allow yourself to ever do anything that would damage your integrity."¹

When we build our lives on a foundation of integrity, we can be confident of the Lord's approval and blessings, and we will find that we will not only protect ourselves spiritually but also strengthen our relationships with others. Men and women who act with integrity are generally respected and trusted by others. The strength of character that integrity develops will not only help a person to be more resilient but will also enlarge their circle of influence over others. Furthermore, as Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught, "the consummate reward of integrity is the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, . . . [who will] guide us in all we do."²

No matter the trials, challenges and temptations of life, may we strive to have an eternal perspective and live as Job of old did, proclaiming, "Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me" (Job 27:5). ■

NOTES

1. Amy Rees Anderson, "Success Will Come and Go, but Integrity Is Forever," www.forbes.com/sites/amyanderson/2012/11/28/success-will-come-and-go-but-integrity-is-forever/2/#56c1401c470f.
2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Personal Integrity," *Ensign*, May 1990, 33.