

The Bold Missionary

GEORGE D. DURRANT

Copyright 2011 by Devin Durrant. All rights reserved. This book or any part thereof may not be reproduced in any form whatsoever, whether by graphic, visual, electronic, filming, microfilming, tape recording or any other means, without the prior written permission from Devin Durrant, except in the case of brief passages embodied in critical reviews and articles.

YOU WILL BE BOLD

Great missionaries are bold. You will be a bold missionary. This book will help you be bold.

On your mission:

- ♦ Be you an extrovert or an introvert you will be bold.
- ♦ Be you a high school big wheel or a high school dud, you will be bold.
- ♦ Be you a quick learner or a slow learner, tough guy or wimp, social butterfly or wall flower, extraordinary or ordinary, impressive or unimpressive, confident or fearful, on your mission you will be bold.

The seeds of boldness are within you. On your mission, you will nourish those seeds and you will be bold.

Now please say word bold out loud. Here you go, “**Bold!**”

That was all right, but now say it with more boldness. Ready, “**Bold!!**”

That was better. Now really be bold and say it again. Here you go, “**Bold!!!**”

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BOLD

If you increased the volume of your voice each time you said the word, “bold,” you could miss the point of this book. Added volume in your voice or added zest in personality is not the kind of “bold” you are seeking. Brazen recklessness and abandon in your behavior is not the meaning of the “bold” that you seek on your mission. Those qualities are all right, but that is not the issue here. The “bold” we are talking about is not the dictionary definition of bold. We seek to be “spiritually bold.”

The “bold” we are talking about is not self-confidence. It is Christ-confidence.

The “bold” that we are seeking is not characterized by an attitude such as:

“I love to get up in front of a crowd and perform.”

“I feel real confident in every social situation.”

“I’ll be the head of a company by age thirty.”

“I’m willing to risk it even though it sounds impossible.”

“Nothing scares me.”

I’m sure you would like to have such confidence. However that is not the “bold” that will make you a great missionary.

The boldness you will have is not the tactic of using your testimony as if it was a six-shooter for settling religious differences by saying:

“You think your church is right, but I know that mine is the true church. So there (bang, bang, bang) take that.”

Instead your boldness will be in saying:

“Mr. and Mrs. Larsen, I sense by the spirit of the Lord that you are sincerely seeking the truth. I promise you, in the Name of the Lord, that as you read the Book of Mormon and pray about it, you will know that this book is the Word of God.”

The boldness that you will have is not, "Look at me," boldness. Instead it is, “Look to the Savior,” boldness. It is not, “Trust me,” boldness. It is, “Trust Him,” boldness.

You will have a Stephen of old type of boldness. When facing death, he was filled with the Holy Ghost and proclaimed, “I see the heavens opened and the son of man standing on the right hand of God.”

You will have a Christ-like boldness. His boldness can be found on almost every page of the scriptures. In His answer to Thomas’s question regarding the correct way. Christ boldly replied, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

Your boldness will come because, “Your confidence (will) wax strong in the presence of God.” When you feel His Spirit, you will know that you are in His presence and you will confidently and boldly speak His words in His name.

Such boldness will come to you as you “...let virtue garnish your thoughts unceasingly.” This will bring into your soul a quiet and non-compromising confidence. You will know that the Lord will back you up when you declare His truths in meekness.

With spiritual boldness you will quietly say things such as:

“Brother and Sister Larsen, we can feel the spirit of the Lord as we talk with you about these sacred truths. We feel a great love for you. We know that the Lord loves you. The Lord has promised, in the Book of Malachi, that you will be able to pay your tithing and you will also have enough money to pay all of your other bills. We promise you that through your faith in living this sacred law you will be blessed. Will you begin this week to pay your tithing?”

“Bold” is a great word. No other word sounds as bold as does the word, “Bold.” No other words pay higher tribute to a missionary than to say of him, “He is bold!”

Now say the word bold again. **“Bold!”**

That was good, but now think of this word’s spiritual meaning. Don’t say it louder; instead say it with more sincerity. Ready, **“Bold!!”**

Very good. Now really be bold and say it again as if you desired to have this quality with all our heart. Go ahead, **“Bold!!!”**

Just right.

Now let’s discuss the process of you nourishing the “bold seed” that is within you so it will be said of you, “He is bold missionary.”

A MISSION IS TIME AND PLACE FOR THE BEGINNINGS OF BOLDNESS

If you feel that you have been a bit “wimpy” and quite lacking in boldness in your past, your mission will be the perfect time and place to change that.

Not all missionaries begin their missions as equals. Some have past negative baggage which they will bring with them on their mission. Such baggage may include the emotional and spiritual scars of the past. Scars may have come because of poor academic achievements, past follies encountered on "fools hill," irresponsible behaviors, frustrations in athletics or other endeavors, unfulfilled desires for popularity, lack of confidence and self esteem, little self discipline. Is this the case with you? Remember that such inadequacies need not stop you from being a bold missionary. Your vision and a desire for the future will be more powerful than the restraint of your lack-luster past.

On the other hand, perhaps you, in your pre-mission days have been accorded many opportunities and have gained frequent successes. Maybe you have acquired pleasing social skills, developed spiritual awareness, and acquired sound organizational ability and many other ingredients of greatness. Is this your story? From such a foundation you can go on to become the kind of missionary who not only serves a quality mission, but who also helps many other missionaries to do the same. You should be aware that one missionary can change a whole mission. I've seen bold missionaries do that. Why not you?

The great equalizer and elevator between "have or have not new missionaries" is the intensity of each one's hope and desire to be a bold messenger of the truth. The desire to nurture the seeds of boldness which is within them, and the hope that they will have a glorious mission are the greatest predictors of a missionary's success.

Many years ago I was a freshman at BYU I first came to know a fellow classmate named Murray McInnis.

Murray was part of the "in" crowd and the girls swarmed around him. He knew how to talk with them and dance with them and laugh with them. He was always smiling and he had a seemingly fearless personality. He was the way I wanted to be, and because I wasn't the way I wanted to be, I resented him. I carefully avoided being overly friendly with him because I was sure he was not my kind of guy. Unbeknownst to me, two months before I was to leave for my mission, Murray McInnis was departing to that same mission.

In those days, all the missionaries took with them, not only their suitcases, but also a large trunk. A perspective missionary could pack a lot of stuff in such a trunk. I wasn't there in Eagar, Arizona when Elder McInnis packed his stuff. All I know is he must have needed a lot of room in the trunk to pack all facets of his natural and spontaneous personality, all his charm, and all his confidence.

A month later it was time for me to pack. I did not need much room for my confidence because I did not have much of that. I should have found confidence in my school, but instead that is where I'd somehow lost it. I lost part of it in the gymnasium. I lost another part in the lunchroom, and I lost a lot of it in the halls of the school and at the dances. Confidence is sort of invisible and once it wanders away, it sure is hard to find again. So I packed my extra navy blue suit in the part of my trunk where confidence should have gone. In those days the way I looked in navy blue with my white shirt and tie was the closest thing I could come to genuine confidence. I didn't need much room in my trunk for my charm or my personality. I only had a meager amount of each of those.

I'm sure that when Elder McInnis arrived in England his trunk fairly burst open, and its contents filled him inside and outside with the attributes of a successful missionary. A month later when I arrived and opened my trunk, I couldn't see a lot of personality there. However I did sense something that I couldn't remember packing. It was a big bundle of desire, surrounded with a good supply of hope. I wanted and hoped with all my heart that during my mission I'd be bold enough to get someone to join the Church. I was a bit doubtful of that happening because in the past I could not even convince a girl to go on a date with me.

After two days of training in London I had an interview with my mission president, A. Hamer Reiser. As we sat together, I sensed that he did not know of my past failures. He looked at me for several seconds and although he did not say so, I could tell that he thought that I was all right-maybe even more than all right. Finally after sizing me up, he said to me, "Elder Durrant, you go to Hull."

I was shocked and asked, "Where?"

He replied, "Hull." He then spelled it for me—HULL. An hour later I was on a northbound train headed for Hull. As I rode along through the beautiful English countryside I was filled with fear. No one in Hull had ever seen me before, nor I them. Then it occurred to me that perhaps the people in Hull would think I had been all-state, maybe even student body president and hopefully that I had been immensely popular. If they thought those things, I vowed to never set them straight. Hull would be a place for new beginnings—a place where my hoped for vision of the future would be greater than the baggage of my past.

CHOOSE, AS YOUR HERO, A BOLD MISSIONARY AND BE LIKE HIM

Two days later, I attended my first district missionary meeting. The two Elders from North Hull were a few minutes late. Hearing someone come in the back of the chapel, I turned. I was shocked to see a most familiar face. It was none other than Elder Murray McInnis my old classmate from BYU. As he approached me, he smiled broadly and with much warmth in his voice, said, "Hello, Elder Durrant. I'm glad you're in the District." He then startled me by saying, "I remember seeing a lot of you at BYU. You impressed me there."

I stammered and by the time I was ready to respond our District Leader called us to order and we began the meeting. I couldn't fully focus on what was going on because of the feelings I'd had in seeing Elder McInnis. His warm greeting and his expression about his feelings toward me had in an instant changed all my past, unjustifiable feelings toward him, and had replaced them with feelings of love.

That day, I was impressed with the way Elder McInnis smiled, the way he talked, the way he taught, the way he loved. Now instead of being envious of his attributes, I was admiring him and was longing to be like him.

A few weeks later, I was elated when I was told that I was to be the junior companion to my new hero. I know there have been other missionary companionships who have been dynamic-Alma and Amulek, Paul and Barnabas-but never, according to my memory, have there been two missionaries as dynamic as Elder Murray McInnis and me, Elder George Durrant. We rode a bicycle-built-for-two. It was called a tandem. It was a classic bit of machinery. Elder McInnis sat up in the front, and I brought up the rear. He steered and I followed. I didn't mind. I loved following him--his constant good mood and his genuine love for me and everyone, plus his confidence and friendliness made him easy to follow.

We wore hats in those days. I wish you could have seen them. They were sort of round on top. They had a narrow brim. As the English would say, we made a right smart looking pair of blokes as we cycled down the cobblestone streets of Hull. Elder McInnis had a distinctive look about him. He looked a lot like Billy Graham. Billy Graham, who was not too much older than us at that time, was immensely popular. Many people were shocked when they first came to their door and opened it, and they thought Billy Graham was standing on their doorstep.

As time went by, I watched every move Elder McInnis made and listened to every word that he spoke. Even now, more than forty years later, I can still see him standing there with his hat in his hand talking to a person who had just come to the door. "Good morning," he'd say warmly. His wide grin would cause even the most disturbed to have a difficult time to keep from smiling back. His natural, spontaneous, genuine love would get us in nearly every heart and in almost every door. I also observed that as the days passed he was adding something to his charm and warmth. He was becoming more and more bold.

Oh, how I desired to be like him. I tried to do so, but boldness did not come as easily to me as it did to him. I tried to speak as he did and smile as he did. I often wondered, as we peddled the old tandem bike, him on the front leading the way and me in the rear following perfectly, if I could ever be like him. At the same time I began to realize that there was a seed of boldness within me. Little by little I began to nourish that seed. In so doing I began unlocking part of myself that had long been imprisoned. I was coming out of myself and

feeling more like my wonderful companion. Soon I too could get people to smile and invite us to come in. Once inside while I was warming up as to what to say, Elder McInnis would be complimenting them on their beautiful children, the pictures on their walls, asking them "who decorated this house? It's beautiful."

His manners were meticulous. He had the bearing of a king and the graciousness of a secretary of state. Yet, he was as common as only an Eagar, Arizonian could be. As we talked, he was fearless in asking them to live a Christ-like life. His boldness in inviting them to come to church and to give up drinking tea--oh, how they loved to drink tea--to pay tithing, to be baptized would shock me. I'd think, "Don't push them so hard, Elder McInnis." It seemed to me that every time just as we were beginning to feel the Spirit, he'd spoil everything by challenging them to kneel with us in prayer and for one of them to lead the prayer. And then I'd be shocked myself when they'd say, "Yes, we'll do it." And I'd want to shout, "Way to go Elder McInnis, way to go!" The people liked and trusted him because of his loving boldness. And because I was trying to be like him they liked me too.

Those were golden days for me. I was becoming what I'd always longed to be. As I write about those experiences, I am near tears of joy that there was once a time like that. In my memory, I'm once again with Elder Murray McInnis. We're in a house in England winning the trust of a family, loving them and helping them feel the Spirit, helping them resolve their concerns and boldly inviting them to be baptized. Those were golden days for me because as we challenged others to do those things that would enable them to find out for themselves that the things we taught were true, I too did those same things. I too came to know with certainty that our message was God's message. Those were the days for me. For the first time in my life, I was becoming bold. I was in a place where no one knew me as being a timid one and I was with a man who modeled for me what I could be if I'd but be bold.

BOLDNESS COMES BY PUTTING YOUR HAND INTO THE HAND OF GOD

Then one day, a very sad day, a letter came from the Mission Office in London. The next day Elder McInnis was to be transferred to New Castle. I was now to be senior companion to Elder Kenneth Blair.

The next morning Elder McInnis and I rode the tandem together for the last time. At the train station, I said, "Elder McInnis, I don't know what I'm going to do without you." Tears filled his eyes and mine.

"You'll do great," he said, "You'll do great."

"You'll be the best man at my wedding," I said, in an effort to let him know just how deeply I respected him.

A few minutes later, we said the most difficult goodbye that I had ever said. Never had I felt so desperate for strength beyond my own. He boarded the train, and I watched as he leaned from the window for a last goodbye, and then Elder McInnis was gone. Emptiness is the only word that comes close to describing how I felt.

An hour later, Elder Blair arrived at the train station. As the two of us walked out of the station, neither of us spoke. We pulled the tandem bicycle from the brick wall against which we had left it leaning. I swung my leg over the unfamiliar front seat and Elder Blair climbed on behind. As we headed up the road, everything looked frighteningly different from the front. Now there was so much to watch out for, I felt so desperate for direction. I knew then that sometimes being bold is nothing more than the power to keep going.

The day I moved from the back seat to the front seat of the old tandem, I learned more powerfully than ever before, that if invited there is a third companion who will sit on a seat just in front of the front seat. This companion only rides with us, or walks with us if we desire Him to do so. If we ask Him, He will take His seat and off we'll go. He will tell us

where to turn. If the hill we're going up is steep, He will help us make it to the top. If the weather is warm and humid, He will help us to still get through it. If it's cold and penetrating, He will give us inward warmth. If the people reject us He will be the most hurt. This companion will never be transferred, and if we desire Him to do so, He will be with us always and we'll never be alone. With Him up front we will feel bold for he will know that He will tell us what to say and he will back us up in every way.

He will go before us by sending the Holy Ghost to be our constant companion. Through the influence of The Holy Ghost, we will feel the reality of Jesus Christ. We will feel His love, His comfort and his direction. By following the whisperings of the Holy Ghost we will know the will of the Lord. When we follow such promptings we can boldly teach truths, extend challenges and make promises in the name of Jesus Christ. Knowing these things is the very key to being spiritually bold.

THE FOUNDATION OF BOLDNESS IS VIRTUE

We had street meetings in Hull. We found a vacant lot where people passed by on the sidewalk. We would stand ten feet of so off the sidewalk and shout gospel messages to the passersbys. To deliver such messages did not take much boldness because the people paid little attention to what we said. However it did help us to learn how to speak and to develop our lung power.

Elder Blair and I rode the tandem to the street meeting spot. This was to be his first opportunity at such an activity.

I gave my speech on the fact that the true church in the New Testament had apostles and so the true church today should have apostles also. I reasoned the same way on revelation. I pointed out that there could only be one true church and if another church was different than the true church then that church could not be true. It was a very good talk even if I do say so myself.

I was sure that Elder Blair would be impressed. I walked over to him and said. “It is your turn. Try to give a talk something like I just gave.” I then asked, “Seeing as this is your first time to do this, do you need me to give you a few ideas.”

He quickly replied. “I do not need your help. My mother told me what to say before I left home.” He then took his position and shouted, “My friends of Hull, I’m here to tell you to repent.” Then there was a long silence. He said no more. After a time he walked over to where I was.

I said, “Is that it?”

He replied, “That is it. My mother said my message was to tell the people to repent, and I did that. So let’s go.”

I thought at the time that my talk was surely better than his. Now, after all these years, I’m no longer sure of that. Bold missionaries are the ones who cry repentance to the people. Of course they put a bit more with it than Elder Blair did that day. If they had not done so the Book of Mormon and the other scriptures would be a bit shorter than they are.

As we rode away on the tandem, Elder Blair peddled a bit harder than usual.

Elder Blair was the most pure hearted man that I have ever known. He was not the most sophisticated of the missionaries, but he was pure. In his humble, sweet way Elder Blair was bold. When he gave a talk in a church meeting he would spend the first thirty seconds at the pulpit just standing there smiling at the people. Then, while he continued to smile, he would tell them of the things of which they needed to repent. The people loved to be called to repentance by Elder Blair. Not only did he do what his mother told him to do. He also did what the Lord told him to do.

He was a living illustration of the great principle that a missionary’s boldness is always directly proportional to his virtue.

Oh, he was not always the epitome of virtue. There were times when we did not get along perfectly. At the time I was certain that it was his fault. Once while we were tracting we got in an argument over a song we heard some Baptist ladies singing. I was sure they were singing, “Bringing in the sheep.”

Elder Blair told me that I was wrong that the words were, “Bringing in the sheaves.”

After arguing for a few minutes, I disgustedly decided that there was not way to convince him of his error. We had a bit of ill will towards each other and so we returned to where we had parked the tandem and headed home. We did not speak to each other all the way home. I could see little virtue in Elder Blair that day nor he in me. As the virtue went out of us we became discouraged and were not anxious to boldly approach any other houses. Later I learned that he was right about the song, but he was wrong in insisting that he was right.

Later that day we, out of duty, returned to our work. We both sensed that neither of us was filled with virtue, but we each knew that we each wanted to be.

You will find that if your boldness is predicated upon your perfect virtue, then you will suffer from a dramatic lack of boldness. Boldness is not predicated upon your being constantly virtuous but rather upon your deep desire to be so.

The key to boldness is to be in constant state of repentance. It is to have an emotionally healthy, but broken heart and contrite spirit because of the fact that you are not able to be all that you desire to be. You are glad that you are you and you really like yourself. While at the same time, you wish, with all your heart, that you could be better.

As time goes by you will get better at being better. But then you’ll lift your sights about what better is and you’ll still be in the midst of a great but wonderful struggle—a struggle that can only be won by turning yourself over to the Savior so that he can mend your wounds and lift your burden. It is in turning yourself over to Him that boldness comes.

King Benjamin said, "The natural man is an enemy to God." We know what that means. We've all felt natural where we felt as though we were not close to God, that our feelings were selfish, and that we didn't have brotherly kindness or patience.

King Benjamin went on to say,

"For the natural man has been an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam and will be forever and ever, (here are the words that I really love) unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit..."

I love the word "yields." It's a gentle word. It doesn't say "stop." It says "yield." It doesn't call these promptings commandments. It calls them enticings.

Nobody forces you to yield. You have to want to, "yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit and put off the natural man and (become) a saint."

We can through the atonement of Christ do this. We can, "... become as a child, submissive, meek, humble patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child does submit to his father."

Yielding to the enticings of the Holy Spirit is the only doorway through which you can go to get to where the virtues are. Sounds like I'm preaching and I want to preach. This is the most important thing I know about being an effective missionary. It is the key that opens the door to boldness.

As I considered the word "yield" I picture in my mind--Christ walking down a path, you're coming toward Him along a different path that crosses his path like a big x. When you're about to intercept with Him you can do one of three things:

1. You can timidly stop there and wait as the Savior passes by. Then continue down our path while he goes down his. As time goes by the further we get down each of our paths, the further apart we would be.
2. Or you can speed up and try to get to the intersection before he does and take His path but walk ahead of him.
3. Or you can see a sign which says "yield." As you're coming together and are about to merge with Him, you yield and let Him go first. Then you come in right beside but just slightly behind Him. You want to be just slightly behind Him, so that we can see where He's going to step, and then we can step there. You want to be close enough that when He speaks you can hear His voice and say what He says. You want to see how He treats people, so we can treat them that way. You want to be close enough so you can hear the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and when you yield your will to His and walk with Him-right at His side, only slightly behind. Then brotherly kindness charity, humility and diligence will all come to you because of Him.

Tomorrow will be another day with fresh new problems. Each day we repeat the journey. At times we will again lose our way. When that happens, we will need to come back to the cross roads and do whatever is necessary to yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit and again merge or will with his.

Alma gives another key to having the power to teach with boldness. He said to the people of Gideon,

"And now I would that ye should be humble, and be submissive and gentle; and easy to be entreated, full of patience and long-suffering; being diligent in keeping the commandments of God at all times, asking for whatsoever thing ye stand in need, both spiritual and temporal, always returning thanks unto God for whatsoever thing ye do receive."

"Easy to be entreated" is the quality more than any other that will make you bold. When your mission president and other mission leaders speak, you follow their counsel. When in prayer, you receive inspiration, you do it. You are not like Paul before he saw the Lord; instead you are like him after he saw the Lord.

It is a day to day struggle. One day you will feel positive and the next day not so much. I once gave a Sacrament Meeting talk in York, England on the subject of the three and eight witnesses of the Book of Mormon. I had studied long and hard and had prayed much about this talk. There was a man in attendance whose wife and three children were members of the Church, but he would not be baptized. I have never felt such power as I felt that night. I spoke boldly. There was no wavering. I felt an overpowering feeling of love for those who were there and especially for this man. He felt the spirit and was moved and desired to be baptized. As I rode the bus home, I felt I could just get out and fly home. I began to feel a bit prideful about what I had done.

The next day I woke up feeling negative. I was discouraged. I resented some of the suggestions my companion made. I felt far away from the Lord.

Sometimes when I feel empty and insecure, I start thinking negative thoughts. At those times, I remember past failures, and I feel certain that I'm probably going to fail again. Do you ever feel that way? I'm talking heart to heart with you, my friend.

These are the feelings I don't want to have and yet they creep in. The enticings of the Holy Spirit cause me to feel sorry. I'm then prompted to pray. (The only prayer that is always answered is the prayer for strength.) I began the struggle to yield, to be submissive so that I can regain the spirit of the Lord--so that I can once again feel bold in proclaiming the truth. Most missionaries go through these ups and downs. Perhaps this is the reason our mission time is often the most difficult time of our lives.

I remember an Elder Smith in Tennessee. His mission years were difficult for him. As he came to me for his appointed interview he was downcast. His health was not good. He had labored for some eighteen months without great success. His desires to be a leader were not being realized. He had come to the end of his rope. He did not wish to go home, but looking ahead he felt that he just could not endure another six months. As he told me these things, both he and I shed tears together. I had no great advice for him. I stood, walked behind him and laid my hands on his head and gave him a blessing. It was mainly a blessing to tell him how much the Lord loved him and appreciated all that he had done. It was an appeal for strength. It was a promise that as he hung on things would get better. After the blessing we shed more tears. We embraced and he went out into the cold. I could not go with him but the Lord could and did.

Six months later he came to his final departure meeting at the mission home. His last six months had not been spectacular. But his spirit was. He was filled with boldness as he proclaimed how much the Lord had blessed him. He was ready for all the remaining chapters of his life.

You'll have struggles on your mission. You'll be up and down. Being virtuous is not so much and end as it is a journey. It is not a sprint--it is a marathon and longer. You don't have to always hurry or run with perfect form. However you need to stay on the right tract. Some days you'll glide right along. Other days you will hit the wall. Keep running the race with a willing heart and then in those sacred moments of representing the Lord you will feel the Spirit and you will be bold in teaching the truth and in promising blessing to those who you love in the name of Jesus Christ.

BOLDNESS COMES AS YOU TURN WEAKNESSES INTO STRENGTHS

When I was called on my mission I went to the missionary training home in Salt Lake City. My first companion there was Elder Mahlon Edwards from Boulder City, Nevada. Our personalities and natures seemed to be on the same frequency. We could talk to one another about our deepest thoughts and concerns. On the third and last day of our training we walked to a place called Heinz Apothecary. There we purchased some Dramamine pills to take during our upcoming voyage to England. (We had been told that if we took these pills we wouldn't get seasick on the way to England. We later found that wasn't true.) As we walked several blocks together we had a very meaningful conversation which was filled with some seriousness and quite a lot of humor.

When we were nearly back to the Mission Home, Elder Edwards said something I've never forgotten. He said, "Elder Durrant, I'm glad we've become friends. I really like being around you. I like your sense of humor and your personality." He then added, "Promise me that while you're on your mission you won't change."

Now, as I look back on my mission, I feel that I really didn't change while I served in England. When I came home, I was the same George Durrant. Yet at the same time I was really a "new" George Durrant. I hope that I was the same in the ways that Elder Edwards had admired, but I believe I was different in the ways that the Lord admired.

Perhaps in some ways you do not want to change while you serve your mission. You don't want to lose any of your hair, your athletic prowess, nor your fun loving nature. You hope you will still have the same feelings toward your good friends as you have now and that you will be able to hang out with them in the same fun loving manner that you now enjoy.

When you return home you will be the same person that your friends, your family and even "you" now love. Your pre—mission associates will still know and love you. You'll still have the same personality. You will still enjoy many of the things you formerly enjoyed.

However, when you return home, you will be different. You will be bold, and that bold will have resulted because you have become different in many other ways that really matter.

Perhaps if we took a poll on the scriptures missionaries love the most, Ether 12:27 would be near the top. There, Mormon tells us:

“And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.”

This message is one of pure hope and it is the key to your entire future. The Lord promises you that as you humble yourself, listen to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and become easy to be entreated, your weaknesses, through your partnership with Jesus Christ, can become your strengths.

How does that happen? For you and for me the specifics of this promise will be different because we each have different weaknesses. At the same time the principle and the process for each of us will work in the same wonderful manner.

In my case here are some specifics:

In high school I wanted to be a star basketball player, but it's difficult to be a star from the bench. I wanted to be student--body president, but I was never nominated. I wanted to be popular but the girls in my school were dumb and so I went largely unnoticed.

Whenever I'd try to go down the freeway of life, Heavenly Father would say, “No, George you go down the back roads.”

I developed a feeling of inferiority. These feelings created a weakness within me that kept me from doing and being many things that I could have done or been. These feelings of inferiority were part of the baggage I took with me on my mission.

While I served as a missionary, I learned that in the name of Jesus Christ and by His Grace, I could do things that I had never before imagined. I found that although I could not rid myself of feelings of inferiority, I could declare my independence from such feelings. I could act as though I did not have such inward concerns. I began reaching out to others instead of always looking into my own self. I began acting and feeling in ways that I had never done before. At the time I was making these changes, I could still recall sitting on the bench during a basketball game and longing to be the star. With that and other "back-road memories," I could, with understanding and empathy, invite others who suffered from my ailment to stand up and get in the game of life. If they said, "What do you care? Why do you want me to change?" I could say, "Because I understand and because I've changed and because I want you to change. I love you. Now get up and get in the game."

Thus my weakness, my inferiority complex, became a strength in enabling me to understand, love and help others.

We can change our personal weaknesses into our personal strengths. That is one of the greatest principles that has ever been known. That is at the heart of religion. That is the heart of the atonement of Christ--his grace--which makes it possible for us to change.

As mission presidents interview missionaries they talk together about how the work can be advanced in the best manner. They discuss the personal welfare of the missionary. Sometimes the missionary in his desire to fully repent, tells the president of some of his personal weaknesses--weaknesses which have led to indiscretions and compromises of mission rules and the moral code. The missionary who wants to be worthy feels saddened that he is not able to bring his behaviors into compliance with his righteous desires. He feels he is weak and has little character or integrity.

For example, a missionary desires to get out of bed on time each day. He pledges to the president and to himself that he will do so. He does so for several mornings and then he falters and sleeps in. He regrets doing so, but seems incapable of overcoming this weakness. In his next interview with the president he feels guilty and decides that if he is asked about this he will be untruthful. He feels relieved when the president does not ask him specifically about this matter.

Soon sleeping in is a habit. He feels discouraged. His scripture study time is gone. He senses that he has little power as a person and as a teacher. He feels timid and insecure. He feels little self worth.

He feels desperation as he considers his ways. Then he, like the prodigal son, comes to himself. He listens to the enticings of the Holy Spirit. The next morning he gets up on time. He writes a letter to the mission president in which he says, "President I sleep in, but I don't want to. I didn't come out here to sleep in. It's hard for me to get up, but I did it this morning and I'll do it from now on. Would you write down that I'm going to get up on time and the next time you see me the first question I want you to ask me is, 'are you getting up on time?' And I'll tell you the truth. The truth is I'm going to get up on time because I want to be a person of integrity. I didn't come out here to sleep in. I want to get up and walk with Jesus Christ. I know He starts his day early and I want to be with him so I'll get up on time."

Overcoming his personal weakness will make that missionary one who can boldly declare, "Mr. Johnson, you can overcome smoking. I know by personal experience that we can be stronger than our appetites and habits. The Lord wants you to do this. Giving up smoking, starting today will change your entire life. I promise you in the name of the Lord that you will be blessed with the power to overcome this habit. Will you, from this moment on, forsake smoking?"

This missionary is now, in this matter, a man of integrity. From this foundation he can build a mission and a life of integrity.

Another missionary had in high school been shaped by peer group pressure. He feels weak in his power to withstand the forces of such pressure. He comes on a mission with such a weakness. At first he desires to overcome this weakness. He has an intense desire to do the right things. Soon some missionaries call him "gung ho." He feels they are ridiculing him. He decides to "lighten up."

One day, those in his district say, "Let's drive over there. There's a cave over there and we can go through it today on our preparation day."

He says, "Well, that's out of the district."

And they say, "So what?"

He says, "I don't think we should go there."

"We're going. Anyway, who's going to know about it?"

So they go and the missionary goes with them. All the while he feels guilty. The next time he goes along again. He feels weak and his spiritual confidence begins to wane as his compliance with mission rules become less and less.

He feels his mission will never end. He wishes it was over now. He is far less effective as a missionary than he dreamed that he would be. He prays fervently for help. He hears the enticings of the Holy Spirit. He decides to be his own master. If that makes him unpopular with some then so be it.

Again some suggest something that is outside the rules. When he balks at their suggestions they say, "No one will know."

He says with a smile, "I'll know about it, and I won't go."

They reply, "Well, we can't go without you."

And he says, "Why don't we all stay here and play a little softball?"

So they say, "Good idea."

The missionary now has greater strength. Now he feels inclined to be more meek and submissive and easy to be entreated. He becomes bolder in teaching and challenging the people. He also becomes bolder in encouraging other missionaries to rise up above mediocrity. Overcoming his former weakness makes him a missionary with power and boldness.

Oh, my dear friend, what a joy it is to be obedient. Not because you have to, but because you want to be. Such an attitude will enable you to serve with joy on your mission and all your life.

Some missionaries, in their adolescent years developed a habit of personal immorality. This habit of self abuse becomes very difficult for them to overcome. They tried to rid themselves of it prior to their mission, but then it returns as they serve. Their desire to be worthy causes them to feel that they must avoid this habit, but, in a time of weakness, it

happens. When it does all the joys of missionary work are lessened. Their spiritual sensitivities are deadened, and their confidence departs. They become timid and uncertain. The enticings of the Holy Spirit seem silenced. This awful habit can be overcome. But to do so requires a marshalling of all the forces that can be mustered.

I now write boldly to a missionary who has this problem:

Dear Missionary,

No one needs to add to your feelings of guilt. You already feel that feeling. Remember, guilt is a great motivator when coupled with a positive plan for recovery. Pray to Heavenly Father that he will bless you with strength far beyond your own. Tell Him of your desire to overcome this weakness.

Talk to your mission president and no one else about this problem. He will not punish you. He will encourage you. He will serve as someone to whom you can report regarding your goals to overcome this habit.

Try to go longer this time between the occurrences. If you fall back, contact your president and renew your efforts. Get up on time. Stay with your companion. Avoid being alone in the places where the problem occurs. You know the feelings that precede this indiscretion. Read the scriptures; look at pictures of your family and of the Savior.

Be bold in prayer and in proclaiming to yourself that you know you can win this battle--and it is a battle—a battle that can and will be won. A battle that when won, will forever enable you to be a bold missionary—a missionary who can boldly promise others, in the name of the Lord, that they can win their battles. Overcoming this weakness will give you a foundation of strength that will enable you to live a life of chastity, virtue and spiritual power.

In all matters of weakness your personal efforts coupled with prayer is your main source of strength. Your mission president can be your partner in assisting and encouraging you. He is the Lord's agent and his stewardship includes your physical and spiritual welfare. He

will receive inspiration from the lord to assist you. Turn to him. Trust him. Make him your partner, not your adversary. He can only help if you allow him to do so.

Jesus Christ is not a future savior to you. He is your savior now-everyday. Through His grace we can gain the strength to change inward lust to heartfelt virtue. That is the message we teach. When you experience that power, then and only then will you be able to boldly promise others that they can change their lives.

Other weaknesses which can become strength are:

Changing From deception to integrity

Missionaries can cease from any desire to deceive. Some, just a few, are a bit deceptive. They try to get away with stuff. It saddens to write what I just wrote. I would edit it out except it is true. Such missionaries make up false reports and in their interviews, they don't tell the truth. They're trying to see what they can get away with. Such elders could never speak boldly of trusting God for they know that they are not trustworthy. Perhaps this is the easiest weakness to overcome but the rewards will be everlasting. The main requirement to make this change is a decision to be honest in all your dealings with yourself and your fellowmen. When this is changed the missionary's greatest strength will be his integrity.

From boisterousness to dignity

A missionary can change from being a loud mouth, to being sort of a quiet guy. They don't have to change completely because often they are charming and they are good for the morale of others. But some are just a little too loud, a little too boisterous. They can change by turning down the volume of their spoken words and their laughter. They can add a flavor of dignity to their exuberance.

From self centeredness to others centeredness

Some missionaries love to be center stage. Once in a while, it's really nice for them to just step off center stage and push their companion out there. Tell him, "Get out there Elder and take a bow." In meetings, praise him. In teaching, always say, "My companion and I" instead of, "I." Use the word, "We instead of "I."

One of the chief characteristics of a bold missionary is that he has a great companion. He considers it his primary responsibility to make his companion great. To do this, be liberal in complimenting him for the good that he does. Let him have the center stage. If he is one of those that doesn't ever want the center stage, one who kind of wants to hide, boldly encourage him, in the name of Jesus Christ to get out there and take center stage. Tell him that you know he can do it.

Both the extraverted and the introverted missionaries can change, and yet they can still be their old self. When they go back to Delta, Utah or Ely, Nevada, people will still know who they are. They will be the same and yet they will be different. The loud fellow will still have that gregarious personality, but there will be a beautiful balance of restraint and dignity. From such a foundation the missionary will be bold in influencing others for good.

The quiet, more timid departing missionary will still be quite reserved upon coming home. However his quiet nature will be tempered with a boldness that amazes those who engage him in private conversation, or who hear him speak and teach. His former weakness which gave the impression of humility, will now through his faith in Christ, be true humility and the resulting power.

From negative to positive

Some missionaries specialize in the weakness of negative thinking. They think everything is wrong. They are cynical and make light of those who strive to do the right things. They see the dark side of everybody and every situation. Such thinking blocks out the spirit of the Lord.

Sometimes missionaries think they are clever and fascinating when engaged in sarcastic gossip. Some missionaries like to talk to them to hear the latest dirt. Be careful in your association with such disgruntled ones. It is easier to tear down than to build. Negative missionaries are never spiritually bold, and they can strip boldness from others.

Such missionaries can change. Often they are intelligent and insightful. They realize the price they are paying for the supposed luxury of being a chief critic, when they come to themselves, and they will. Through their prayers and their inward sense of what is right they can be prompted to change. They can decide to use their skills to build their companions, the mission rules, the missionary leaders, and the mission president. They can, in the name of Jesus Christ and through his power, listen to the enticings of the Holy Spirit. They can make this former weakness into a force for good that will help change the atmosphere of the entire mission.

From fearful to confident

One of the changes that was really difficult for me was changing from timid to confident. The most common enemy to change is fear. Some of us, at least at times, just don't feel like we could ever be another Elder McInnis--we just don't think it's in us. It scares us to think about it. We fear that if we're on the front seat of the tandem that we won't know where to go and what to say.

We're fearful that if we try new things we will look bad in the eyes of others. We're afraid if a big bearded guy comes to the door when we're tracting. We'd sooner talk to little ladies than big tough looking guys. We're afraid that people will think it's strange if we start talking to them on a street corner or in a bus when they don't even know us. We fear that if we're really obedient to the mission rules, the other missionaries will think that we are apple polishers or something like that. We're afraid they'll reject us. We're really afraid of the opinions we feel the other missionaries have of us. Most of all, we are just kind of afraid of ourselves.

While in high school I covered many of my fearful feelings by making light of things. Once on kind of a self—dare, I asked the girl of my dreams to go to the movie with me. I was shocked when she accepted. I walked fearfully to her house and the two of us walked silently to the theater. As we entered I stopped and bought a bag of popcorn. As we watched the movie I began to eat the popcorn. I knew that I should offer her some but I was fearful to do so. What would I do if she said no? I could not stand such rejection and so I ate the whole bag myself. I know that this sounds ridiculous but it is true.

I had gained more self assurance by the time I received my mission call, but I was still painfully timid.

Another personal pre--mission story will explain the key to my mighty change.

Another girl who I liked so much that I did not dare talk to her sat right in front of me in my history class. Every day as I walked to school I would think of clever things to say to her that day. However, when we were in class my courage failed me and I said nothing.

One day my big athletic handsome friend who sat two rows over sent me a note. The note read, “Ask Louise if she will go to the movie with me Friday night.”

With the note in hand, I boldly tapped her on the shoulder. She turned around. I smiled a charming smile and asked, “What are you doing Friday night?”

She replied, “Nothing.”

“How would you like to go to the movie?” I asked.

She replied, “I’d love to.”

“All right, Don over there wants to take you.”

What made the difference that day? Why did my fears depart and allow courage to take over?

I became Don's agent. When I was speaking for another it gave me the courage to be bold.

The greatest discovery I made while on my mission was the fact that I did not speak for myself. I spoke for the Lord. Figuratively speaking, I had a note from him which said. "Ask people to repent and be baptized. Do it in my name." With such a charge from Him I became His agent. I proclaimed the gospel in his name, and that allowed me to be bold.

Probably none of the weaknesses we just discussed are your weaknesses. Yet it is a certainty that you have your own personal weaknesses. As you serve the Lord, the degree of boldness you will have in asking others to change will be directly proportional to the dedication that you have to making your weaknesses into strengths.

Even to make a little change is difficult, let alone a mighty change such as the one that the scriptures tell us we ought to make. Always remember that a little change really is a mighty change. I wished you could see me now because I'd like to demonstrate how you make a mighty change. Picture me facing toward you. Now watch me carefully. I turn just a slight degree or two, and now as I begin to walk forward, the further I go the more I am away from where I would have been if I had kept going the direction I was faced before. You get the picture, don't you? So a meager little change now can soon become an absolute mighty change—the mighty change that the Lord wants us to make. It is in making these small, but mighty changes that we receive the strength that makes us bold in speaking for Jesus Christ in inviting others to change.

THE PROCESS OF BEING BOLD

In the Doctrine and Covenants, The Lord said to one group of missionaries,

"But with some I am not well pleased, for they will not open their mouths, (I wonder why they wouldn't open their mouths?) but they hide the talent which I have given unto them," (Why?)

The Lord says it is,

"...because of the fear of man. Wo unto such, for mine anger is kindled against them. And it shall come to pass, if they are not more faithful unto me, it shall be taken away, even that which they have."

"Because of the fear of man." Those words rank as the saddest words that could ever be said of a missionary. How would you like your mission president, in your final release letter, to your folks, to write, "Your son is coming home. He would have been a great missionary except for his fear of man."

Many, who are afraid of little else, are timid and afraid when it comes to talking seriously to people who they don't know very well. Such feelings are often part of the natural man. When it comes to teaching, speaking or meeting a stranger, many feel timid. They can't seem to overcome such fear.

What is the cure?

Mormon said,

"I speak with boldness, having authority from God; I fear not what man can do; for perfect love casteth out all fear."

Therefore the answers seem to be, if we feel timid and fearful when we're walking up to a door, we should not pray that we won't be afraid and that we'll feel bold. Rather we should pray somewhat like this:

"Heavenly Father, I'm going up on that porch. Help me to love the people who come to the door. Help me to love them with a perfect love.

Then, just as the Lord has promised, all our fears will be cast out and through the Holy Spirit, we will be bold. Why? Because perfect love casteth out all fear.

As a missionary, I had a dream of what I desired to be. I longed to speak with power and authority. I longed to be bold. Elder Stephen Covey was the assistant to the president in my mission. He was the boldest man I had ever known. He and his companion, Elder Otteson, would travel all over the mission and encourage all us other missionaries to be bold.

Elder Covey and Elder Otteson came to Hull to speak to me and the other seven missionaries there. They told us of some of the bold things that other missionaries were doing in the mission. They recounted personal experiences about how, when on buses or on street corners they spoke up and delivered gospel messages. The more they talked the more excited I became about being more bold.

That evening these two dynamic missionaries stayed with us. Elder Otteson teamed up with my companion and Elder Covey with me. Off we went to do missionary work. I told Elder Covey that we wouldn't likely find very many people at home because it was Saturday night and all the people were at the movies. He suggested, "Well, if they're down at the movie house, why don't we go there and speak to them on the streets as they go to the movie and as they come out?"

That was a new idea to me. I could not see how that would work, but I offered no resistance. Elder Covey had a car and so we drove to a movie theater. When we arrived there about 200 people were lined up and waiting to enter the theater. Seeing this captive

audience, Elder Covey rubbed his hands together with enthusiasm, smile broadly and said, "Let's go talk to those people."

I replied, "We can't do that."

"Why not?" he asked in surprise.

"Well, those people would have to listen. If they go anywhere, they will lose their place in line."

He replied, "Elder Durrant, that's the idea." He started walking toward them. As we grew closer, he turned to me and said, "You know, Elder Durrant, it was your idea to come down here. I've never done this before, so you speak first and show me how it's done and then I'll speak." His words left me limp. I knew I couldn't just walk up there and start to speak. I also knew that I had to.

The people were lined up against the brick wall of the theater on the inside edge of the sidewalk. I took my position on the opposite edge, my heels up against the curb and gutter. I was as far away from them as I could get and that was about five feet. In a panic, I removed my hat, held it in my left hand, stood on one foot and then the other. A few people noticed me and wondered what I was up to. I had no idea what to say. I opened my mouth and with a shaky voice began to speak, "My friends of Hull, I'm Elder Durrant and I'm a Mormon."

About thirty of the closest people ceased their private conversations. All of their attention focused directly on me. After uttering that first sentence, my panic started to lessen, and I continued, "Many of you might think us Mormons have many wives (I paused and added with a smile). I'm a Mormon and I don't have a wife at all." They didn't smile, but I could tell they were thinking, "We can understand that."

Now I felt more relaxed and excited. I felt a surge of boldness going up and down my spine. I continued, "Mormons don't practice polygamy in these times. I'd like to tell you what Mormons do believe. In the year 1820, a young man named Joseph Smith went out into a sacred grove of trees and he asked God which church was true. In response to his prayer, he saw God, Our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ."

I went on to tell those people the story of Joseph Smith and the First Vision. All the while I was talking; there was one large man who had his eyes fixed right on me. He was as tall as I am and even huskier than me, if you can imagine that. His large size and his intent expression caused me to feel uneasy. I'd sweep my eyes from one person to another. Each one looked, at least slightly pleasant, except for this man. He looked deeply disturbed by my words. As I neared the end of my message, I felt that when I finished speaking, this man would actually come out of the line and attack me. I spoke a bit longer than I had intended.

When I stopped, just as I had supposed, he came out of the line straight at me. I couldn't back up because of the gutter behind me. I braced myself for his assault. As I was expecting the worst, he stopped, smiled and extended his hand in a firm handshake. Then he said, "I have never seen anyone with courage like you've got." He continued, "I'd give anything to know God as you do." He added, "I wish I had the courage to do what you just did."

He then thanked me for my words and my example. To me, this man, was at that moment, a spokesman for the Lord. To me, this was the Lord's way of telling me, "Elder Durrant, don't ever be afraid to speak up and when you do, remember I'll be there to back you up. I spoke at other movie lines, but never did anyone else respond as this man did. And never once when I did things such as that, did I ever feel as though I was alone.

I didn't become as bold as Elder Covey, but I became much bolder because of his example. Each time that I was bold I had joyful feelings inside. Thus the Lord's Spirit helped me to be more bold by working within me.

A timid guy like George Durrant becoming bold, wow! That is amazing. That's what can happen, if we want it to happen. The next day Elder Covey and Elder Otteson were gone. Their tales to tell other missionaries now included the story of how Elder Durrant speaks to people who are waiting in line to go to movies.

Strangely enough, I found that having occasionally boldness by doing such things as speaking to people in movie lines was easier than having "everyday boldness" on each doorsteps or when teaching a family in the privacy of their home. In the days that followed Elder Covey's visit, Elder Rasmussen and I were in our area going from house to house. Now, the true test of boldness would come. We now needed to approach each door with the same zest that we felt in the movie line. True boldness is not a one-time public act of bravado. Instead it is a continual attitude of speaking the words of the Lord in thousands of almost private circumstances and teaching situation. It is those missionaries who are truly bold in very private situations, with whom the Lord is well pleased. He is pleased with them because they are willing to open their mouths. These are the missionaries who love rather than fear the people. It will be among these bold missionaries that you will stand.

It is not as if we can ever say that on a specific date in time, I quit being timid and haven't been timid since. The battle between timid and bold must be waged each day and each hour. When we feel a bit weak and timid, we usually need to repent and to change some weakness into a strength. We need to pray aloud and silently for love and for good feelings. Then we will feel the power come back into us which will enable us to be sweetly bold.

I love talking about being bold because if I don't talk about it, I won't be bold. I feel as though I can, in the name of the Lord, be bold in promoting His work. I can be bold in inviting people to come unto Him. To assist in this work, you and I just have to be bold. We must not do less than we should because of fear--the fear of man. We must open our mouths, so the Lord will be pleased with us, but more than that, so that people will have the opportunity to hear and know the truth.

I recall a talk I gave a month or two after Marilyn and I were married. I'd been home from my mission to England for several months. As I went into the chapel where I was to speak,

a friend of mine pulled me aside. He said, "George I've got some visitors here with me from England. They are of high social-standing. I want you to really inspire them, but be careful what you say. Don't offend them by being too direct."

That made me nervous. When I'm nervous, I start to lose my boldness. I said things such as, "It is our feeling that Joseph Smith was a prophet. We know others would feel differently, but it looks like from all that he did that he was probably a prophet, or at any rate, I'm sure you'd all agree he was a great man." As the talk wore on, I found myself diluting all my points.

After the meeting, as Marilyn and I rode home, she didn't say anything. I wondered what she was thinking. I finally said, "Marilyn, what did you think of my talk?"

She softly replied, "Oh, George, you were so wishy-washy."

Her words cut me to the very core because I knew what she was said was true—I had been wishy-washy. We rode the rest of the way home in silence. It was in that silence I determined that, although I would have other faults, I would never again be wishy-washy. Since then, I have constantly tried to present the Gospel principles as facts in humility, with faith.

The Lord wants his gospel to be taken to the whole world. To allow us to help Him, He has given us a sacred gift. This gift is the key that unlocks the door to spiritual communication. He explains this holy process in this way:

"Therefore, verily I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men;

For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say.

But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness in all things.

And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this the Holy Ghost will be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say."

The faith to lift up your voice is Lord's invitation to you to be bold.

Then he gives you the key to being bold.

- ♦ He promises you that He will put into your heart, at the very moment you need to know, the thoughts that he desires you to say.
- ♦ Then He makes this glorious promise to you when you are bold, "And inasmuch as we (you) do this, the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say."
- ♦ Then he counsels you on the responsibility you have to insure that you can be effectively bold. He commands you, to use this sacred principle of communication, "with solemnity of heart and a spirit of meekness." Such solemnity of heart will only come when you have an intense desire to be worthy to speak for the Lord. Meekness will come as you sense the power you have is not in you but is through you. (John Ruskin)

I really don't know of anything quite so sacred, as having the Lord put a thought in your heart, having it come out in your words, and having the Holy Ghost rush in and tell people that what you just said is true. When you follow this principle of spiritual communication your words, though not loud, will be genuine, sincere and powerful. This is the key to being bold.

Let's now act as though you and I are teaching a young couple. You are my companion, and as you are speaking, a gentle thought comes into your heart. You feel a feeling which says to you, "Tell these people that you love them." You follow that prompting by saying, "Mr. and Mrs. Jamison, my companion and I feel a great love for you." Because, this thought was put in your heart by the Lord, and then you spoke the words which express the thought, sent by the Holy Ghost, the people will know that we truly do love them.

As you continue, you feel other impressions in your heart, so you say, "We consider it a great honor to be in your home. We feel the spirit of love and kindness here. Some day we want to have these same feelings in our homes. We know you folks love the Lord. You know the priesthood of our Heavenly Father has been restored to the earth, and is found only in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

The couple listens intently. Inside their souls, the Holy Ghost quietly confirms to them that what they have just heard is true. The feeling then comes into your heart, "Invite them to be baptized next Saturday."

You say, "Brother and Sister Jamison I feel impressed to tell you that baptism is essential to your salvation. Because of that, Jesus Christ wants you to take upon yourselves His name and become members of His Church by being baptized. We are going to have a baptism next Saturday at three o'clock. Will you be baptized at that time?"

The Jamisons know by the power of the Holy Ghost that they should be baptized and they agree to do so.

As we speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost, our words, "shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation." Salvation--our words will help people gain salvation."

Alma told his son Shiloh, "Use boldness but not overbearance..." When you feel the Spirit you're never overbearing. The difference between being bold or overbearing is that

when you have the Spirit, you are bold. If you're just trying to do it on your own, you're overbearing. It's as simple as that.

BOLDLY TEACH THE GOSPEL AS FACTS AND NOT AS WISHY WASHY IDEAS

One of my favorite stories is that of Sister Franks. (Told in, *The Missionary Guide*)

A sophisticated man, after hearing Sisters Franks tell of the origin of the Book of Mormon, said in a skeptical tone, "So, you claim that this man, Joseph Smith, saw an angel. The angel told him about a set of golden plates buried in a hill. You further claim that Smith went out and got those plates and translated them from an ancient language into English. Is that what you're saying?"

Sister Franks leaned forward, looked into his eyes and replied, "That is exactly what we are saying."

I love that reply. "That is exactly what we are saying."

"Are we saying that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior?"

"That is exactly what we are saying."

"Are we saying Joseph Smith was a prophet of God?

"That is exactly what we're saying."

"Are we saying the Book of Mormon is the word of God?"

"That is exactly what we're saying."

"Are we saying the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true and living church upon the earth?" That is exactly what we're saying."

Just saying these things boldly, and as facts, fills my soul with hope and love and gratitude. Presenting the gospel principles as facts, received within your soul from the Holy Ghost and expressed as facts invites the Holy Ghost to witness to those we teach that our words are true. We say, "God answers prayers." The Holy Ghost says inside of their souls, "That is true."

In order to boldly testify to the Lord's words and to teach the gospel principles as facts, we must constantly yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit. We must be easy to be entreated. We must constantly seek virtue. Then with solemnity of heart and the spirit of meekness, we can speak boldly, in the name of Jesus Christ.

ONCE YOU HAVE FOUND YOUR BOLDNESS NEVER LET IT GO

Sometimes at the beginning of your mission, you may think that your time there will never end. However all too quickly it will. Almost suddenly, it will be time for you to return home. Because you will yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit and will easy to be entreated the time will fly by. Because you will change your weaknesses into strengths the time will seem all too short. Because you will teach boldly, in the name of Jesus Christ, you will wonder why the time of your mission is passing so quickly.

When the end approaches, the thoughts of going home will not be what you, in the earlier days, had imagined. In your final interview with your mission president, you will likely say to him:

"Oh, president, why didn't you let me go home when I first came? That is when I longed to be home. Now after all this time here, I feel I cannot bear to leave. The people here are my friends. They need me. The people I have taught depend on me. I feel I must stay here to help them continue in the Lord's way. The younger missionaries seek my advice and my support. I can't desert them. President, I love this place and I love these people. I feel if I leave this whole mission might collapse."

Your mission president will smile a warm and understanding smile, and say:

"Oh my dear Elder, when I consider you going home, I too think this mission might collapse. You have really been something. The people and the other missionaries will miss you. Your bold teaching has influenced every one of them. Most of all, I will miss you. I have always known that when I didn't know where to turn to help a troubled missionary, I could always turn to you."

He might well read you the words which The Lord spoke to Nephi,

"Blessed art thou... (Elder), for those things which thou hast done; for I have beheld how thou hast with unweariness declared the word, which I have given unto thee, unto this people. And thou has not feared them, and has not sought thine own life, but hast sought my will, and to keep my commandments."

Then the Lord added,

"And now, because thou has done this, ... I will bless thee forever; and I will make thee mighty in word and deed, in faith and in works. Yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word; for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will."

Your president continues:

"Those are powerful promises Elder. I believe that you qualify for those same blessings. You've worked with unweariness. You haven't been afraid. You've spoken boldly. You've not sought your own will, but the Lord's. You've yielded your will to His, not because you had to, but because you wanted to."

Then the president says,

"You've been like Nephi. You've been fearlessly bold in declaring the Lord's word to these people and inviting them to be baptized. Now it is time for you to go home. You'll soon find a young woman. You will love her, and she will love you. You will boldly ask her to marry you. The two of you will be blessed forever because you will continue to be bold in your spiritual life and in teaching your children.

The president adds, "As the Lord said to Thomas B. Marsh, he says to you,"

"Lift up your heart and rejoice, for the hour of your mission has come; and your tongue shall be loosed, (the Lord will tell you what to say) and you shall declare glad tidings of great joy unto this generation."

And my dear Elder, as your mission concludes, the Lord promises you, as he promised Thomas B. Marsh, that because of your faithful missionary service, "...(He) will bless you and your family, yea, your little ones; and the day cometh that they will believe and know the truth and be one with you in my church."¹¹

What a blessing! You, your future spouse, and your future children, (who are not yet even born, but they are in heaven waiting) will be blessed forever because you have boldly served your mission.

There is a super tandem waiting for you at home. Instead of having two seats, it will have many seats. There will be a seat for you, and a seat for your sweetheart, and a seat for each child. There will also be a front seat which only you and your family will be able to see. It will be the seat where Christ, through the Holy Spirit, shall sit. Lean forward so that your ear will hear His every word. Yield to His word. Do His will at home, just as you did on your mission. Be easy to be entreated at home, just as you were on your mission. Be bold at home, just as you were on your mission.

God bless you while you serve your mission and forever my dear, wonderful and bold friend.

George D. Durrant