

What Is Your Mission?

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My dear brothers and sisters, it is a great opportunity and privilege to come back to BYU. As I watched you coming from classes and met some of my former professors, I felt as though I, too, should be coming from class. BYU and our family are very intertwined. Not only did I graduate from here, but my wife did also; and, as has been mentioned, we have two daughters presently attending here. When our oldest daughter graduates next year, she will represent the fifth generation of our family to have graduated from Brigham Young University. My wife and I both graduated from here and met here; my mother graduated from BYU and met my father here; my grandmother graduated from BYU and met my grandfather here; my great-grandfather, George H. Brimhall, was one of the first students of BYU and, in fact, returned some time later to preside over this institution for close to twenty years. (He was married before he came here as a student.) So you can see that our family is pretty well immersed in BYU.

I ask for your faith and prayers that what is said and, particularly, what is heard this morning will be under the guidance of the Spirit of God. If we can all increase our faith and our determination to live closer to our Father in Heaven, then we will have accomplished the

purpose of this devotional. While my remarks may not be as entertaining as you may want, I think they will be important—at least the message is important.

Let me begin by asking you a very simple question. The question is this: What is your mission? You might think, “Well, I served in Japan,” or “I served in Virginia,” or wherever, and that is fine; but it is not what I am asking. I mean—what is your mission now? What is your mission in life? What does God expect you to accomplish during your sojourn here upon the earth? And are you doing it?

I hope that in the next few moments, with the help of the Spirit of the Lord, we can all realize, if we have not realized it before, or, if we have known it, reaffirm in our lives the importance of at least three things: first, that God, our Father in Heaven, does have a specific mission for all of us to fulfill and perform while we are here upon this earth; second, that we can, here and now in this life, discover what that mission is; and third, that with His

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help we can fulfill that mission and know and have assurance—here and now in this life—that we are doing that which is pleasing to our Father in Heaven. These are all very important concepts; and they are all true.

If we do not know what our mission it, if we are not sure, if we are uncertain as to whether we are in fact fulfilling it, or if we do not have the positive assurance in our lives that our actions and our performance are pleasing to our Father in Heaven, then it does not really matter what else we are spending our time doing—it is not as important as finding out what we should be doing and having the assurance that we are doing it. Or to put it another way, if we are really interested in doing our Father's will we had better pay the price—whatever price is necessary. We had better pray however fervently, study the scriptures and listen to the Brethren however intently we need to, or in short do whatever is required so that we can have the assurance that we are doing what our Father in Heaven wants us to do—that we are moving in the general area of the mission he has for us to perform. Obviously, that mission will be different for each of us.

Such a revelation will not come all at once. God will unfold it to us line upon line, according to what is best for us and how capable we are of handling it, and what is best for the progress of his work. But remember that you must start somewhere. I assure you that you should and can know that you are on the right path and that your performance, no matter where you are on that path—student, missionary, newlywed, or whatever—is pleasing to the Lord.

Listen to what Nephi tells us in 2 Nephi 32:9:

But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he

will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul.

That is powerful doctrine—powerful because it is true. Everything we do should be done for the Lord; and we ought to make sure that it is what he wants us to do.

Many of you will say, “Yes, I believe all that, but how do I go about finding what I am supposed to do? How do I know what my mission and calling is? If I were going on a full-time mission, I would send in a group of papers to Salt Lake and someone else would make the decision for me and send me to Germany, or Texas, or Japan, or somewhere. But what about this—this lifelong mission? How do I understand? How do I know? Who tells me?”

It has been said—not of this, but of another subject—“If you have to ask the question, there is no way of giving you the answer.” That is only partially true in this case, for while every person must ultimately receive his own revelation and assurance as to his life's mission, there are great helps available to us. I will review some of these with the hope that they will help all of us in discovering what our mission in this life is. I use the word “discover” advisedly, for it connotes the correct feeling of something that already exists but needs to be found by those who would benefit from its use.

In our quest to discover our calling in life, the first and most fundamental thing we must do is to follow the Savior—our Savior, the world's Savior. Learn of him, and learn what he did; then do it. The things that he did, even though they occurred two thousand years ago, have universal application. This may seem rather general to you, but it is the basis of all else. You will have to do this by personally studying the scriptures and his life and personally becoming acquainted with him. (And, incidentally, as you do that you will have your questions answered.) But en route to achieving

this personal relationship with the Savior, let me give you five specifics to help.

1. Become and remain worthy to honestly hold a temple recommend. That covers a big area. I am not going to go into detail; you can get the details from your bishop, and I suggest that you do so.

2. Obtain your patriarchal blessing; or, if you already have it, study it carefully and prayerfully yourself—not necessarily with others.

3. Read the scriptures daily and prayerfully. We must all do that.

4. Pray diligently and fervently at least every night and every morning.

5. Start moving in some direction. Start doing something—take a course, go on a date, choose a major. Start somewhere, in some area about which you at least do not feel negative. If you feel negative about everything, start in the area about which you feel least negative. In other words, do not just sit and wait for a big revelation. Do not wait for a change, or a transfer, or a move, or a different situation. Start where you are, now.

Let me mention an experience that fits directly into this subject. I had the opportunity, as was mentioned, or serving a full-time mission in Tonga over twenty years ago. I had two great and wonderful mission presidents. The first one, when I arrived, said, “I’ve got just the place for you. It’s a small island several hundred miles from here. It is nearly seven miles around and has about seven hundred people living on it. There are no white people there and no one speaks English. I want you to go there and not come back until you know the discussions and know how to speak Tongan.”

I went, and to put it mildly, there were lots of problems. I did not have a companion, in the traditional sense of the word. (I did have a priest, a better man than I was, who went with me.) Despite the problems—or more correctly, because of the problems—I experienced lots of growth. At one time we came close to literally

starving to death because of a hurricane and a wrecked boat. On another occasion we were subject to some serious physical threats and actual abuse. At one time we went a little over four months without mail. (I do not cry very often when missionaries tell me that they had had no mail for a week. Of course, things have improved there and everywhere.) Still, one learns to live with these things. We kept working. Even though there were only seven hundred people in a very limited area, even though I did not know the language, we kept moving—we were doing something.

I am sure that we did some things wrong—although I must add that whenever there was the possibility of our doing something seriously wrong the Lord let us know in no uncertain terms that it was wrong. And while we still could have done it, we could only have done it in deliberate defiance of his definite impressions to us. Thankfully, we never did. I give you the assurance that if you are striving to do right the Lord will let you know if you are starting to do something wrong—so listen! I am sure that we could have done much more good, but at least we never stopped. We kept going—we did something, and that is important.

The facts are that when I left that little island after thirteen months I was alive and well. I knew the discussions; I knew the language. Many souls had been baptized into the restored gospel. I had been present—not out of desire, but of necessity, because they thought white men knew everything—when many infants had been born and when several people had died, and I had held some in my arms as they passed away. I had learned quite a lot about life. But most important, I came away knowing at least three things—and we can all come away from our life’s experiences knowing these things; in fact, we should and we must.

1. I knew that God lived; that he had all knowledge and all power; that he was literally

the Father of our spirits; and that he loved us as his children, which we are. I knew that he loved us each personally and individually and that he especially watches over his missionaries. I did not merely have faith or confidence in that—I knew it.

2. I knew that Jesus Christ was his Son, our Savior and Redeemer, a real person, and a true friend; one who gave his life for us and will let us know that he gave his life for us; one who loves us and who we can love in a way that defies human comprehension; one who has helped us more than we may ever know and who now helps us in many great ways that we as yet do not comprehend; one through whom we can look forward to a glorious resurrection of our bodies, a forgiveness of our sins, and an eventual opportunity to stand in the presence of our Father in Heaven cleansed and pure—and this is very important. I plead with you to love him with all your heart; you will be a better person for it and you will be on the path to knowing your mission and calling in life. And that is the third point:

3. I knew that God had a mission for me and for all men and all women. I did not know exactly what it was in every detail, and that did not matter. I knew where to start. I knew that I had to live more closely in tune with him, and that I could trust him. I knew that our purpose here was to fulfill our mission. I knew that he would, in his own way and according to his timing, let me know what other things he would have me do to fulfill this mission he had in mind for me so that I could receive the joy that comes therefrom. I have not been disappointed, and neither will you be disappointed.

When the new mission president arrived, he eventually found out where I was and transferred me to another area. (I worked in only two areas my entire mission; and in those days missions were a little longer, so it was nearly three years from the time I left home until I returned.) This second area consisted of sixteen small islands. The new mission

president told me that because we were so short of missionaries I would have to go out alone. He told me that I should preach the gospel and build up the Church on those sixteen islands; those were my instructions. (He forgot to tell me that we were supposed to fill out reports, and I thought that they had changed the procedure; so I did not fill out any more reports for the rest of my mission. I suppose that gave me more time to work; I am not sure.) But again I kept moving and trying to do some good.

There were members on some of those islands, and I often took them with me on preaching trips. Mostly we traveled in small sailboats. I suppose the Lord has his way of testing all of us. It seems that I was born with a weak stomach and most of my boat trips—which were many—found me very ill. We would go to an island, tract all day, and invite everyone out to a meeting that evening. The whole island usually came. (I must admit that there was probably not that much else to do on those tiny islands, and it was a novelty to hear a Palangi, or white man, speak the language.) The average island would have from a few hundred to several hundred inhabitants. I do not think any of them had into the thousands—possibly there were one or two.

When everyone had arrived, I went through all the lessons, because I knew that I would not be back for several months. I started with lesson one and spent three or four hours teaching all the lessons. When I concluded, I asked the people to pray sincerely that evening about what they had heard. Then I explained that those who felt it was true and had a testimony of it should come down to our boat by 8:00 A.M. the next morning to be baptized and confirmed before we left for the next island. We often baptized people, and they became good members of the Church. We gave them instructions and called couples from some of the other branches to come and help them. Then we left

for the next island and tried to come back a few months later.

Thus, by constantly going around, we gradually built up several good branches that have today evolved into some strong units with some fine leaders from among those people. There was lots of persecution in those days, so when people joined they were quite committed. They had had a spiritual conversion. It was not a social thing to join the Church; converts had to believe it.

I remember heading home, after completing one of these rounds in a more than usually successful way, in a very happy and grateful mood for the success with which the Lord had blessed us. The sea was rough; but we were not concerned, for we were in the hands of the Lord. As we got close to our home island, the rough weather became more severe, the wind became stronger, and the waves rose higher. Suddenly we found ourselves in the midst of a regular tropical squall which, though of short duration, can be very dangerous.

I felt, "Well, we will get through this all right. After all we have done and the success the Lord has blessed us with we shouldn't worry about this."

But the storm increased in intensity and suddenly, with the emergence of two huge waves, the captain shouted those fateful words to the six of us aboard: "Abandon ship!" You may hear a lot of phrases in this life, but there are few as fearsome as these, spoken by a captain in the midst of giant waves and the inconceivable turmoil of elements.

We did what we had to do and dove in as the gargantuan waves thundered down on our frail little craft, leaving it broken and listless as the six of us, sprawled on the surface of the boiling sea, struggled for our lives. I probably had not read all of the missionary rules, but I knew that missionaries were not supposed to swim; but sometimes one has no choice. We struggled against huge odds to make the nearest shore, a small island that we had just

passed. I remember thinking that this really should not be, that we should not be going through this; but we were, and all my thinking or wondering did little good. Only swimming and exerting all the energy and effort I had helped at all.

After a long time—well over an hour of swimming, as I recall—we finally made it to shore—exhausted, but alive and gratefully so. Just to feel the firm ground under our feet was a great blessing. How much more I appreciated life and solid ground than I had before! Just to be in that boiling sea and to realize how tenuous life is, how quickly this earth life could come to an end, made a great impression on me. Sometimes we literally have to travel over rough waters in order to appreciate some of the fundamental blessings we have—life, for instance. We probably do not begin to understand or appreciate life as we should until we begin to see or sense or recognize death and its closeness to all of us. As we sense these things, we can more clearly comprehend that there is a reason for our being here—in actuality, a mission for us to perform—and that we had better get with it.

The storm passed rather rapidly, but we were still stranded for several days before we got things together and were able to make our way home over much friendlier seas. The whole experience gave me a new outlook and appreciation for life that I had not had before. As I look back now, I see that there was much more than our strength involved in that horrendous task of getting to shore; but it still took all that we could do. In a similar manner, even though it will take all the effort we can put forth to fulfill our missions here, there will still be much more than our own efforts involved in accomplishing them.

I remember reading a poster once that said, "A ship in a harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are made for." I think that saying also applies to our lives. We may pass through troubled times, but if we constantly seek nothing

but physical security, we are probably not doing what we should. We need to seek the spiritual security of knowing that we are doing the Lord's will. Sometimes that will not give us all the physical security we may desire, but it will give us all we need.

Again, the important thing is: we made it. You will make it, too. Everyone will make it if they will do what they should. As you see, I am here. Some of you probably wish that I had drowned, but I did not. I am alive, I did return home, I did get married, we have been blessed with a family, we have been able to make a living, and we have received many great opportunities to serve in the Lord's kingdom. No matter what the Lord requires of you, if you keep trying you will be able to fulfill the mission he has in store for you.

While I would not have chosen that experience, or some other experiences I have had—and I must admit that there were times when I was not as positive as I would like to have been about the outcome—the fact remains that a big part of my subsequent happiness—and your subsequent happiness and joy—has to be traced back to some of those so-called “unwanted” experiences. We do not need to seek them; heaven knows they find us out more often than we may desire. All we need to do is try with all our might to live as we should, keep our eyes on our goal, and leave the rest to the Lord. Then we will realize the truth of the statement that problems are what we see when we take our eyes off the goal. Once we incorporate the available God-given directions in our lives, find our mission, and discover our calling—look out, world, here we come! That is the way we need to feel. That is what must happen for us to be happy and for us to do what the Lord wants us to do. We must have that assurance and the attendant drive in order to accomplish his purposes and build his kingdom and achieve the potential he has in mind for us.

Let us bring this thought back to reality and apply it to us here today. Most of you are students at BYU. You are concerned about several things. You are concerned about getting married if you are not already married—about meeting and being sure of the right person who will be your eternal companion; you are concerned about gaining a knowledge of some profession and finding a job and having time and means to help build the kingdom. This concern is, in effect, your desire to know your mission and calling in life.

Maybe you would like to be a teacher, but you know that there are not many teaching jobs available now; what do you do? Do you go into teaching, or do you go into, say, cabinetmaking, which may not require all the college education teaching does but could surely make you a lot of money? These are very valid questions, and they deal directly with what we are talking about: fulfilling your mission and calling in life. As you are obedient to the principles about which we have talked, I promise you that not only are you entitled to revelation, inspiration, and answers to these fundamental questions, but you will receive them. They are important to you and they are important to the Lord. You can receive that inspiration here and now, and you can feel good about the direction in which you are going.

As previously mentioned, I got a master's degree and taught for a while. I loved it. I would still be doing it except that I did not feel that was my calling—at least not in a professional sense. I went into the contracting and development business and felt a positive assurance that that was what I should be doing. I did not have any great revelation saying, “Be a contractor,” or “Do not be a teacher,” but I did experiment with a few things, and I turned from those about which I did not feel right and moved in the direction of those about which I did feel right. I soon ended up building homes, apartments, commercial buildings, and so on.

Such a course is not for everyone (and, fortunately not, because some of the greatest teachers I have run across are here at the Y, and I am glad they chose their calling in that field), but it was right for me. You have to decide and know what yours will be.

Let me spend a moment on an item that I think a great many people, particularly members of the Church, do not understand. A lot of our people—including a lot of you—have great amounts of faith but sometimes tend to distort that faith a little by saying, “I am not going to move until I receive a positive assurance”—a burning in the bosom, as it were—“that that is the right thing to do.”

You are all familiar with the scripture where Oliver Cowdery was trying to translate and could not do it. The Lord explained that Oliver had to figure it out himself, and if it was right He would give him a burning in his bosom; and if it was wrong he would have a stupor of thought. Many people say, “I am not going to move because I do not have that burning in my bosom. I am not positive about this, that, or the other . . .” Too often we want to be positive about everything. We feel that we need to have this burning all the time. Often people say, “I am confused. I don’t know what to do”—and so they end up treading water and not doing anything, not making any real progress—and that, in and of itself, is a great sin. We should not do things wrong—and, as I said before, the Lord will let you know when things are wrong—but, for heaven’s sake, we should do something! This lengthening of our stride and quickening of our pace about which our modern-day prophet, the Lord’s spokesman, talks so much cannot happen if we are standing still. We must be moving, and we should be moving in the right direction.

Let me tell what I have discovered—and this is somewhat repetitious. I do not say that we will not get that burning in our bosom, for we will when it is the right thing. In my life there have been quite a few occasions where

there was absolutely no question about it—that burning was there. For instance, I have had the experience of installing stake presidents when there was absolutely no question, when I was positive that “that is the man to be the stake president now.” It has happened in other situations also, but generally it has worked the other way—that is by eliminating the wrong directions to reveal the right direction, especially concerning our opportunities for progress in life in what we often term the temporal sense. We must try to figure it out ourselves. In the past I have tried out whether I should go into business or into teaching or into the arts or whatever. As I have begun to proceed along one path, having more or less gathered what facts I could, I have found that if that decision was wrong or was taking me down the wrong path—not necessarily an evil one, but one that was not right for me—without fail, the Lord has always let me know just this emphatically: “That is wrong; do not go that way. That is not for you!”

On the other hand, there may have been two or three ways that I could have gone, any one of which would have been right and would have been in the general area providing the experience and means whereby I could fulfill the mission that the Lord had in mind for me. Because he knows we need the growth, he generally does not point and say, “Open that door and go twelve yards in that direction; then turn right and go two miles . . .” But if it is wrong, he will let us know—we will feel it for sure. I am positive of that. So rather than saying, “I will not move until I have this burning in my heart,” let us turn it around and say, “I will move unless I feel it is wrong; and if it is wrong, then I will not do it.” By eliminating all of these wrong courses, very quickly you will find yourself going in the direction that you ought to be going, and then you can receive the assurance: “Yes, I am going in the right direction. I am doing what my Father in Heaven wants me to do because I am not doing the

things he does not want me to do.” And you can know that for sure. That is part of the growth process and part of accomplishing what our Father in Heaven has in mind for us.

Let me quote from 2 Nephi, again from the thirty-second chapter, in verses one through three, where Nephi says:

And now, behold, my beloved brethren, I suppose that ye ponder somewhat in your hearts concerning that which ye should do after ye have entered in by the way [that is, after you have become members of the Church and been baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost or after you have really and seriously decided that you want to find out what your mission and calling is]. But, behold, why do ye ponder these things in your hearts [—why are you not sure]?

Do ye not remember that I said unto you that after ye had received the Holy Ghost ye could speak with the tongue of angels? And now, how could ye speak with the tongue of angels save it were by the Holy Ghost?

Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ [that is, study the scriptures, and listen to the modern-day prophets and your priesthood leaders]; for behold, the words of Christ [that is, what the Brethren tell you and what you read in the scriptures] will tell you all things what ye should do. [Emphasis added.]

That is rather powerful, is it not? *All things?* Even what I ought to do for a living? You read it—there it is in the thirty-second chapter of 2 Nephi. Yes, *all things* that are necessary.

I assure you that by following these procedures you can receive answers and assurances of all things necessary to the fulfilling of your mission and calling in life. That includes at least those two most important concerns of whom you should marry and what profession you should enter.

This talk is not on courtship and marriage—although I realize that this is a popular subject at the Y, but I do want to make just one point in this regard. Unless the feeling of love and desire to want to be together forever is mutual, between the boy and the girl, it is probably not of God. I have been a mission president and have known the positive sureness and aggressiveness of outstanding young elders, and I would only caution you—all of you—that you cannot receive a one-sided revelation from God that is sure and true and correct in regards to an eternal marriage. Only as both parties feel the same way can you have the assurance that it is from the Lord. Those who try to force another’s free will into their supposed-revelation mold are doing a great disservice to themselves and to their friends. Until the feeling is mutual, the good envisioned in such a union will not come to pass. So do not succumb to a one-way revelation; but on the other hand, when you feel it is right—and it may not come all at once—do not try to fight it. The Lord’s greatest institution and the means whereby he always has and always will bring to pass his greatest blessings is the family unit you have the opportunity of creating by making the proper decision. Just make sure that you are right—not forced, but not withholding either—and God will bless you now and forever.

As to the second concern—namely, a profession or occupation—I want to leave you my assurance that He will bless you in this area. You can know within general areas what He wants you to do for a living. Sometimes we feel that God is interested in helping us choose a companion, that he is interested in helping us on our full-time missions, and that he is interested in helping us fulfill our assignment as a bishop or elders quorum president or Sunday School teacher or whatever, but that for some reason or another he is not interested in helping us as we struggle to decide whether to become an engineer or a teacher or a building

contractor or whatever. I do not believe that. I believe that God is very interested in what we do for a living. I believe that he is interested in our relationship to him, to our fellowmen, and to this earth that he has created for us. All things are spiritual to the Lord.

I have often thought that in our day and age—and I believe that there is some precedence in the scriptures for this, such as references to pollution in the last days and so on—one of the areas at which we could look seriously and about which we could feel good is this area of cleaning up our environment. I have a feeling that pollution is going to get worse and that there are going to be a lot of jobs in this area.

I am convinced that the Lord is against pollution. He is against perversion. He is against prostitution—and prostitution has a much broader meaning than just its limited sexual sense; it really means perverting something from its correct use to an incorrect use. I would think that prostitution and pollution and perversion are all about the same, and God is against such things. How we treat him is reflected in how we treat others who are his children, and how we treat the elements and other forms of life on this earth, which are his. He created them. If there were one safe area in which to look for a livelihood, I think it would be in this area. I do not know whether this would be your avocation or not, but you might think about it.

I am convinced in my own mind that we have not really fulfilled our mission in life as individuals or as a Church until we have demonstrated and shown as much advancement in other areas as we have in theology. We know how government ought to be, we know how society ought to be, we know what cleanliness ought to be, we know what the environment really should be; we should lead out in these areas. For instance, we recognize that we have environmental problems. I am not sure what the answer is, but I do not think the

answer is what some “environmentalists” think it is—that is, to stop whatever we are doing—because we as a race must produce. I am not sure how to do it, but I am sure that there is a right way; we just need to discover it. I do not believe that the Lord is pleased with the constant corruption and pollution we so willingly endure—not just spiritually, but physically—to achieve some of our goals. I personally cannot help but believe that there is a better way. I cannot help but feel that God knows how to transform all of these base materials into useful tools without all the choking clouds of dust and the stench of pollution in our rivers and streams. He put our resources here, he put us here, and he knows what we need. He knows what is here and how to get things done. I do not think that he is against energy. I think that he is for all of these things, and wants us to use them in the proper way to get around, do his work, and build up his kingdom. But my faith is that there is a better way than we now know. He wants us to use the elements—to mold them for our use—but in a different way.

Now should that not be something that you students here at BYU could figure out—with the Lord’s help? (And who should be closer to him than you?) We have talked about missions for individuals, and we are all aware of the Church mission. In my mind, BYU, as part of the Church, should become the pollution-control center of the world—not only spiritually, but physically. I feel that this is important. We take the gospel to all the world in a spiritual way; we ought to do it in other ways, also.

We can make great contributions to the world as we find better sources of energy, or a way to conquer cancer (and I understand that you are making some progress on that here at the Y), or a better method of transforming iron ore into steel, and so on. These are all things on which we could work and feel good. I guess we could say that, as far as our life’s mission is concerned, both spiritually and physically, we

could feel good about doing away with pollution and putting purity in its place. That is a real challenge and is something that we should do. You at this University should be the leaders in doing it.

I hope that you can catch the vision and see clearly the truth of these things. I hope that you can really understand that our Father in Heaven does have a mission for you to perform. I hope that we all understand that we can know what our mission is, and know it now—at least the part that we need to know—maybe not a long way ahead, but enough for the present. I hope that we can all understand that principle and fulfill that mission, and I hope that we can all have the assurance that we are on the correct path right now.

What does the Lord mean when he tells us that we cannot be saved in ignorance and that we must gain knowledge in order to be saved? Knowledge of what? (You are here to study something, I hope.) Knowledge of the gospel? Of course, but even more than that, I think. I believe that the knowledge he is talking about—the knowledge that saves and that he requests us to seek—is the knowledge or assurance that we are fulfilling our mission, that we are doing his will, and that he is pleased with our efforts.

Let me close by briefly relating an experience that occurred a few years ago, again in the islands. It will demonstrate the universality of the basic premise with which we began: That all people do have a mission and can perform it, no matter where they are or under what circumstances they may live, be it here in the United States or on a small island in the Pacific. As I conclude with that story and testimony, let us reevaluate our lives and make sure that we are doing with them what the Lord would have us do.

Years ago, as a young missionary, I was impressed by an older island couple who always seemed to be helping the missionaries and others. Every time I went to their home I

would find them reading the scriptures, fixing a meal for a missionary, tending a neighbor's child, preparing a Relief Society lesson, or rendering some sort of service. They were not blessed with children of their own, but they were always helping so-called "outcast" children.

I was soon moved to another area and left for home without ever returning to that area. I often wondered about that couple who had so impressed me. I was sure that the Lord would bless them.

Years later I was again in the area and a messenger came and asked if I would visit a certain widow named Luisa. Upon inquiring, I realized that it was the family I had wondered about all these years. Her husband had obviously passed away; and as the messenger gave me the address I realized that she still lived in the same old house where she had lived those many years before. Of course we made arrangements to visit her.

It was late afternoon when we drove up to the home. I was surprised to realize that hardly anything had changed; it was a neat and clean home, but a very humble one. As I walked up to the house I noticed her waiting by the open door. She held her hand out in a slightly waving fashion, and I realized she had gone blind. As I took her in my arms, I realized also that she had not long to stay in this life, for I felt nothing but the frailest body of skin and bones.

As we sat and visited, she talked about her desire to help the "poor" people. I suggested that she might need some help herself rather than giving help. She kindly informed me that she was rich and had nothing to worry about. I was a little confused and began to inquire. I found that they had often saved money to pay their airfare to the temple, only to end up lending it to someone else who needed it more. When all the facts came out I asked, "Luisa, how can you say you don't have anything to worry about? You have no husband, you have no children, you're blind, you are in poor

health, you live in a poor home, you haven't been to the temple. How can you say that you are rich?"

She stopped all of my questions by quietly informing me that she was rich because she knew that the Lord was pleased with her life. She said, "I know that I will be with my husband soon. I know that the Lord will bless us with a family. I know that I have not done all that I should, but I know that the Lord is pleased with what I have done."

I cannot express fully what happened at that time. However, I would like you to listen to the seventh verse of the sixth section of the

Doctrine and Covenants, wherein the Lord says, "Seek not for riches but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you [even the discovering of your mission and calling], and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich." You see, Luisa had taken the time to discover her mission and calling in life and had done whatever was necessary to fulfill it.

Again, what is your mission? I plead with you—discover it and fulfill it! I assure you that it is worth it. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.