

October 2017 Stake Conference Talk Kimo Esplin Talk

- I recently received a Bloomberg business magazine that featured a section entitled 'Seek'...
 - Seek Action – with a ski vacation to Iceland
 - Seek Food – Honolulu Fine Dining
 - Seek Objects – modern vinyl record console and custom surf boards
 - Seek Retreats – Zen mansion in Thailand
 - Seek Rides – Ducati Scrambler motorcycle
 - Seek Drinks - \$3,000 bottle of Whisky
- Our hope this conference is that you will Seek to deepen your discipleship in one or more ways. I would like to suggest a few of the many you might consider...
- Not long ago I had dinner in New York with business colleagues and advisors.
 - I have experienced this situation many times. The Wine menu is passed around. I say 'no thank you', but invite the others to order.
 - On this particular evening – they pressed. "This is a wonderful bottle of wine - why not?."
 - *'I don't drink.' 'Why not?'*
 - *'I made a commitment not to drink alcohol.'*
 - *'When did you make that promise?'*
 - *'Promised not to drink it, go ahead. '*
 - *'When...8 years old. '*
 - *'You made a commitment when you were 8 years old and you have always kept it?? '*
 - *'Yes – I have always tried to keep it and have never had wine or alcoholic beverage.'*
- I think I have always believed the church was true and haven't had significant doubts in my life. It was a gift.
- But at times I have wondered how involved God was in our lives. It was at those times I wasn't seeking...

1. Seek to deepen your discipleship through regular Study and Prayer

a. Gordon B Hinckley –

- i. Last month in Stake Priesthood we watched the Church History Department's recent 5 minute video of the **First Vision**. At the beginning of the Stake Priesthood meeting the brethren stood and sang the hymn ***Praise to The Man***.
- ii. My prayer is that our young men of the Aaronic priesthood experienced something similar to what a **young Gordon B Hinckley** experienced as a newly minted deacon when his father was Stake President conducted Stake Priesthood at the **old Tenth Ward building** (beautiful building 420 South 800 East)
- iii. He said that over 400 men lifted their voices, some with accents of European lands – all singing:
 1. ***Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah!***

- iv. He said ***"I had been taught much of him in meetings and classes in our ward as well as in our home; but my experience in that Stake Priesthood meeting was different. I knew then, by the power of the holy ghost, that Joseph Smith was indeed a prophet of God.***
- v. **Please note – This is interesting:** He then said ***"It is true that during the years which followed there were times when that testimony wavered somewhat, particularly in the seasons of my undergraduate university work. However, that conviction never left me entirely, and it has grown stronger through the years, partly because of the challenges of those days which compelled me to read and study and make certain for myself."*** (From Pres Hinckley)
- vi. As we were reminded again and again in Gen Conference - the **Book of Mormon is the key to our testimony of Joseph Smith and the restored church.**

b. Sis Marriott

- i. This week I also read in the Deseret News about **Sister Neill F Marriott** of the YW Gen Presidency. (I may be the only person left who actually has a physical newspaper delivered to their door).
- ii. She is a convert to the church from Georgia
- iii. She recalled reading a quote from Pres Marion G Romney that inspired her to read the Book of Mormon daily with her children in an effort to calm the chaos in her home following the birth of her 11th child.
 - 1. He said ***"I feel certain that if, in our homes, parents will read from the Book of Mormon prayerfully and regularly, both by themselves and with their children, the spirit of that great book will come to permeate our homes and all who dwell therein. The spirit of reverence will increase; mutual respect and consideration for each other will grow. The spirit of contention will depart. Parents will counsel their children in greater love and wisdom. Children will be mores responsive and submissive to the counsel of their parents. Righteousness will increase. Faith, hope and charity – the pure love of Christ – will abound in our homes and lives, bringing in their wake peace, joy and happiness."*** Ensign May 1980
- iv. She handed the quote to her husband as he walked in the door and said – "I want this"
- v. They decided to read the Book of Mormon at Breakfast to her children
- vi. The BofM collected remnants of breakfasts over the years "– a gleam of syrup, a hardened spot of milk, a streak suggesting eggs."
- vii. Son in Stake Conf. – revealed it took them 7 years to finish! She wanted to screech. And then her son said: ***"What I do remember is that every single morning my dad reached for the Book of Mormon as we ate. And somehow I knew in my***

little boy heart that this book was really important to my dad. Not it is important to me.” (Sister Marriott’s recollections)

c. **Brad Stewart**

- i. This past week in reading **2 Nephi Chapter 5**, I came across a note I wrote years ago about my Brother-in-law, Brad, when he was growing up in Moapa Nevada. (I am a believer in taking notes in my scriptures – Iphones don’t cut it for me!)
- ii. Brad’s Mother read the BofM to the kids before they would ride their bikes off to school. They lived in Alamo Nevada – woman who didn’t express her feelings much.
- iii. This is what he wrote: *“When she read this part of the story and I heard her voice falter I looked up and saw that she was crying – the first time I think I ever saw her cry. When I asked her why she was crying she said: it breaks my heart to think of a family breaking up like this. I suppose that was the first time I realized the BofM was more than just stories and that my Mother knew it was true. The BofM became a foundational part of my testimony”. (My Bro in laws words.)*
- iv. I felt the whisperings of the Holy Ghost as a young man and gained a testimony that the church was true from my earliest recollections. But it has deepened and strengthened through regular study and searching.

2. Seek to deepen your discipleship through sacrifice and consecration

1. Holladay 15th Ward Building

- a. This past year Kaye’s Mom and Dad passed away. As we were cleaning out the house we came across a scrap book that was given to my Father in law Paul when he was released as a Bishop in 1964.
- b. As I turned the pages and looked at the yellowing black and white photos – I sensed a bit of what life was like.
 - i. Paul was called as a Bishop when he was starting a family and establishing his carrier.
 - ii. He had served in the Korean War, and served a mission. At the time of his call he had just purchased his first home was working 2 jobs - as loan officer at First Security Bank and taught at Stevens Henagar college in the evenings. He and Rae Jean had 3 young daughters with a hope of more to come.
 - iii. It was a new neighborhood of modest houses with families at the same stage of life.
 - iv. **In the summer of 1960**, with a new neighborhood came the need for a new church building. In those days the members contributed a substantial share of the money needed for erecting their chapels. As well as making large cash

contributions to the building fund, ward members donated many hours of service working on the building.

- v. The practice of the church in those days was to wait until the building was fully paid for by the church and local members before it was dedicated.
 - vi. The Holladay 15th Ward **assessment for the new chapel was \$30,000**, the same amount as the other 2 wards in the building. Several pages of the scrapbook were evidence of countless Relief Society bazaars dances dinners and other fundraisers to raise that sum of money. **(They were in essence making food so they could have the privilege purchasing a ticket to go to the church to eat it.)** The money needed to be raised before **President Henry D. Moyle of the First Presidency could dedicate it on July 31st 1960.**
 - vii. The scrapbook details a warm Wednesday evening on **July 27th 1960, 4 days before the dedication** was scheduled, a **special Priesthood meeting** was held – 30 men attended. They were \$7,500 short.
 - viii. Bishop Paul Davis conducted the meeting. The Bishopric spoke, testimonies were given and the brethren were united in supporting the recommendation of the Bishopric to raise the money that night.
 - ix. Bro Dick Barlow, the ward clerk, distributed slips of paper for each to write their name and pledge. The total came to **\$2,700** - well short of what was needed.
 - x. More discussion and a few testimonies were given. Slips of paper were distributed a second time. The total came to **\$5,400** – still short.
 - xi. The record reads: ***“More discussion, several more testimonies, a few tears, much spirit of the Lord, and the proposal to “cast forth the lots” for the 3rd time. The pledges amounted to \$7,550.’ Just over the amount needed. It was an evening long to be remembered.***
- c. **President Henry D. Moyle** dedicated the building a few days later with the 3 Wards in attendance. (slow down)
- i. He told a Bishop of one of the other wards in the building “..I was constrained not to tell of the blessings the Lord had made known to me that were in store for them...”
 - ii. Dick Galbraith, a Counselor to Bishop Davis, recalls President Moyle specifically prophesying that there were men sitting in the chapel who would be called into the highest quorums of the church. I count 4 brethren in that congregation that were later called to the 1st quorum of Seventy
 - 1. **Jack Goaslund** (father of Rich Goaslund in the 3rd ward),
 - 2. **Legrand Curtis** (father of Rebecca Curtis Timmins in the 9th Ward),
 - 3. **John Madsen** –
 - 4. **Legrand Curtis Jr.** a current General Authority Seventy was just 8 years old, and likely sitting with his mother.

5. By the way, **M. Russell Ballard was a Bishop** of the an adjoining ward in the Stake – I suppose he could have been in attendance too.
- d. **Sister Norma Barlow** is 82 years old and lives in the 7th Ward. Her husband was Dick Barlow, the ward clerk that passed the slips of paper out that warm Wednesday evening in 1960.
 - i. She recalls her husband coming home late that evening – and asking if they had raised all the money needed? He responded ‘yes’, but didn’t tell her how much he had contributed until bed time.
 - ii. He asked her if she remembered the **savings they had for Norma to return and visit her family in Denmark**. She said ‘of course’. He said they would need to postpone that trip as he had contributed all of the money saved for the trip to the building fund. He said they could start saving again to go at a later time.
 - iii. Brother Barlow told Norma he had been praying to know if he should contribute the money that during the priesthood meeting he had received an answer. ***Norma said she was stunned but she trusted her husband’s faith and “never doubted ...that if the Lord said it would be alright, it would be.”*** It wasn’t until 2 years later they had saved enough and made the trip to Denmark – it would be the first and only time Dick would meet his in laws.
 - e. I am sure this sort of sacrifice and faith was repeated throughout the church in those days. They were faithful people who gave all they had to the Lord.
 - f. **We have a heritage of faith in this church that began with the early saints and has been passed to each generation – we now pass it to our own children.**

2. Willow Creek Stake ?

- a. The Lord has poured out his blessings on this generation of saints in this valley and specifically on this area. We aren’t called upon to make those kinds of financial sacrifices. So many of us enjoy financial flexibility to travel, participate in all kinds of hobbies and activities. **With this prosperity comes an opportunity and I think an obligation to sacrifice time.**
 - i. It is wonderful to see our Stake members currently serving:
 - ii. **125 members in the Draper Temple**
 - iii. **28 members in the Granite Family History Center**
 - iv. **64 Church Service Missionaries and Long Term Volunteers**
 - v. **73 Full time missionaries**
- b. **Senior Missionary Couples.** We currently have 3 Sr Couples serving full time missions with an additional 4 couples that have received calls. My hope is that we will have many times more serving full time missions in the years to come.
- c. **Family History Goal** – For the past 2 years we have encouraged every member of the Stake (older than 12 years) to find and perform a temple ordinance for an ancestor.

Stats not representative – 1 year the number of members submitting names to the temple increased 50% .

3. Seek to deepen your discipleship through Christ like acts of kindness & service

a. 7th Ward Brother

b. When I was Bishop a family moved into the ward. When I met them I could tell they were either non members or very inactive. The Father told me he had only advanced to the office of Teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood but wanted to get worthy to become an Elder. He told me the following story:

i. He worked at the **SLC Cemetery** on the grounds crew.

ii. When Sister Marjorie Hinckley passed away he noticed that there was a problem with the sprinkling system on the hill where she was buried and the grass was dying. He spoke to his supervisor who wasn't concerned and didn't want to do anything special for the Mormon President. After repeated urging, **the supervisor gave this brother permission to work on the area but he wouldn't be paid.** In a few weeks the grass began to green up. He spent time after work tending to the area.

iii. One day while he was working on the grass near Sister Hinckley's grave, **President Hinckley approached him** . President Hinckley had noticed that he had been working on the area and thanked him for the noticeable improvement. They visited for a few minutes and then President Hinckley left.

iv. **This visit with the Prophet deeply touched him. Because of President Hinckley's kindness and willingness to speak to someone as insignificant as him,** he decided then and there to get worthy. It has been a few years since that experience but he did become worthy, became active in our ward and was ordained an Elder. He then baptized two of his grandsons and his wife in our ward. While they have moved, they continue to attend ward parties at Christmas and in the summer. They are our dear friends.

- **I love this church! I want be more of a disciple of the Savior – but it will require the discipline – the root word of discipleship, to regularly study the scriptures, consecrate my time, to serve and be more Christ like.**