

Armenia Yerevan Mission

October 2012



Mission President's Message

At zone conference we spoke of our desires as missionaries to consecrate ourselves to this great work.

Here is food for thought:

CONSECRATION

"Consecration therefore means repentance. Stubbornness, rebellion, and rationalization must be abandoned, and in their place submission, a desire for correction, and acceptance of all that the Lord may require."

(Elder D.Todd Christofferson. Reflections on a Consecrated Life. October 2010 General Conference)

CONSECRATION

"In the private sanctuary of one's own conscience lies that spirit, that determination to cast off the old person and to measure up to the stature of true potential."

(President Thomas S. Monson. Looking Back and Moving Forward. April 2008 Gen conf)

CONSECRATION

"Let us once and for all establish our residence in Zion and give up the summer cottage in Babylon."

(Neal A. Maxwell, A Wonderful Flood of Light [1990], 47).

Love,
President Carter



Baptisms for Sept:

Anik, Haikush, Svetlana, Lena, Ofik, Galina, Angela, Mariam, Tigran, Gayane, Arus, Gayane, Erik

Birthdays for October:

Oct. 4 – Elder Zachary
Oct. 6 – Sister Boyle
Oct. 14 – Elder Hatch
Oct. 22- Elder T. Peterson
Oct. 23 – Elder Skidmore
Oct. 23 – Elder Hall
Oct. 26 – Elder Poulsen
Oct. 27 – Sister Stone

We welcome our Incoming missionaries to Armenia:

Elder Andersen
Elder Christensen
Elder Lake
Elder McDonald
Elder Yardley



Departing Testimonies:

Hey everybody! I guess it is time for my closing testimony. I know, as do you, that this Church is true. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored. We can become clean from our sins through this Gospel. God really does love each one of us, and He speaks to us today through His living prophets. What a great blessing we have. I am so thankful to have been able to share this message with these people here in Armenia. Hey! Thanks to everyone who has been a friend to me over the past two years. I have had a lot of "What the quan!" moments, and your friendships have done more to help me through those than you realize. I love you all (in a not awkward way of course)! Stay focused, work your hardest, and take care of this place for me. With my last love crystals, Elder Bott

It's difficult to describe the feelings I have as I wrap up my mission. There are a lot of..., yes, feelings. There's no better word to describe it than feelings: sad, happy, distressed, relieved, grateful, troubled, humbled, scared, courageous. And the list goes on, though I think that last one is important and worth noting: courageous. The only way I can be courageous is if I have faith. It's the first principle of the gospel; we teach it all the time. Looking back, I see how much my faith has grown throughout my mission. I've learned so much about my Heavenly Father, about Jesus Christ, and about His Atonement. I think the one thing holding me together now as I face the future, and which has held me together since the day I entered the MTC, has been faith in Jesus Christ - that because of Him it will be ok. Whatever happens, whatever paths lie ahead of me, whatever I'm called to do or pass through, whatever happens to the world around me, I can believe in Christ and remember that if I do what I know is right, and continue on, it shall be well. I know He is the Son of God, that through His Atonement all shall be made right in the end. I know that this is His Church, restored by a prophet today. I know that the Book of Mormon is true and outlines the path to come unto Him and His Atonement. I know He loves me, wants the best for me, and because I know that, I know He loves all and wants the best for all. I've done my best to love Him these two years, and though not perfect, I know it is enough because of His Atonement. And now, be it airplanes and dating or school and work or be it marshutnis and companions or new startlingly high standards of excellence, cling to faith. That's what I'm going to do. And it shall be well. I love you all and I'll see you on the other side. Best wishes, Elder Jarom Gropp

So this is not the most fun thing in the world. I feel like my mission just begun. I only want to say that I know that Jesus is the Anointed One who was chosen before the earth was formed, chosen by the Father to save all who would be saved. He was obedient. He is delegating his work to us--but is doing His work alongside and through us. He is the Savior. He is the keeper of the gate. He is the purifier of the souls of men if they will follow him. I know this to be true. The Father, through Christ's blood, cleans us every time that we sincerely repent. There is constant flow of peace only when we are diligent in applying this Atoning Sacrifice. This is the Lord's Church. I am so grateful to have come to know this. The Lord has been so merciful. I love him very much and have been endowed with His love for His children, including for each one of you. Miracles have been worked and are being worked and will continue to be worked through you. Every conversion is more than a miracle. The Lord is merciful. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. - Elder Wahl

President Eyring said, in effect, "The Lord will send his [progressing] servants to his [progressing] children". When you think that you have it all figured out, be scared. Be very scared that you have been "lulled away carefully" into a comfortably place. It is usually in that comfortable places that we stop to progress, we stop to "feel". Due to the rigors of missionary work the natural man tries to protect himself from pain by numbing the heart. When we stop feeling the pains of sin we also stop feeling the joy of progression. If our hearts are hard/numb he will not be able to help us; he said, "I will tell you in your mind and in your heart" Here are some things that I have learned concerning staying sensitive and not getting "lulled away carefully down to hell" or in other words numbness:

- Realize that "you aren't the sharpest marble" and allow yourself to be humbled by your mistake. I have always been humbled to know that only the Atonement will make up the consequences of our mistakes, like the loss of a soul.
- When appropriate, have a good laugh at yourself and keep moving forward. Patience requires a good sense of humor.
- Pray when the work seems dull and when you don't know what to do and before you do it and while you're doing it and when it's over and then thank Him for His help. In other words, pray always. Pray for others and ask for specific blessings
- The Armenian people have a lot to teach the world, see the child of God in each Armenian and learn of the attributes of godliness which they have obtained. Stereotypes create numbness.
- Be easily entreated. If you are grateful you will see the many roses that spring out of the concrete buildings, have a broken heart, you will see how the spirit guided you after the fact, your testimony will grow, your faith will grow and you will more readily repent, you will not hesitate to share the abundance of blessings that you have.

If you allow yourself to feel, your heart to be soft you will learn how to repent daily. You will be guided by the spirit "in all aspects of the work", whether or not you know it. I know that this is the work of God and that we have been called by God's living prophet. I know that many have sacrificed beyond our comprehension so that we could have this opportunity. This is a sacred trust from the Lord. -Elder Cook

Spending my time focused on preaching the Gospel has made me happier than I have ever been before in my life. It has helped me learn things that the Lord wanted me to know about my need for personal growth, my ability to help others, and the difference that individual efforts can make for good.

I love the Armenian people a lot and want to say a few things about their culture. When Armenians want to feed you, it's an expression of their love towards you. The Armenain word 'hyuraser' is just that - guest loving. You are their guest. When Armenians talk about their history, their church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, or what they believe, be grateful that righteous people in the past have left such an impression on the Armenian people. They love their history, and believing in Christ is part of their culture. If it were not for the Armenian Apostolic Church, Christianity would not have been preserved in Armenia, taxi drivers would not put up pictures of Christ in their cars, and Armenians would not put up pictures of Christ in their homes or sell them in their stores so much. Armenians love families and family relationships are very important in their culture. So is knowledge of their ancestors and their national history. Armenians respond well to talking about their family and your family. - Best of luck, Elder Kurth

I would feel so very ungrateful if I didn't again express my gratitude to my Father in Heaven for this amazing experience that he has blessed me with. My mission literally has come to mean the world to me. I have grown and changed so much and I am so very grateful for that. I look back at who I was 3 years ago in amazement. I'm so grateful for the changes that the Lord has helped me make and who He has helped me become. I pray that those I love will be able to feel and see those changes as well. I am also so very grateful for the growth that all those I love have experienced during my mission as well. I've gained some of the best friends I have ever had in my whole life, and have strengthened relationships with family members and old friends to a degree that I never imagined possible.

This handful of blessings that I have mentioned have been so wonderful and have made such an impact on me that those blessings alone have made my years of service as the Lord's missionary far more than worth it. I am so grateful for a loving Father in Heaven who loves me enough to not only bless me with those experiences and tender mercies during my mission, but so much more...

These people have changed my life. Thanks to the Armenian people I have learned to love to an extent that I didn't know was possible. I have truly felt what it feels like to want the best for someone so badly that you would do whatever it takes to make it happen for them. I have felt what it feels like to be an instrument in the Lord's hand in changing someone's life forever. I have been blessed with the unquenchable desire to serve the Lord with my whole heart, might, mind, and strength for as long as my soul exists.

As is obvious, I cannot even begin to put to words what my mission has meant to me and how much the Lord has blessed me. But I pray that you feel, at least to an extent, my gratitude for my mission.

-Elder Chance Chad Steglich

The following was left off of Elder & Sister Watkins remarks: P.S. Please keep in touch. Invite us to your welcome homes and your weddings (sorry if that's a bad word), and we'll come if there is any way we can. We can be reached at rlwatkins42@gmail.com

Missionary Miracles

Sister Broadbent and I had an amazing experience this past week. We have started teaching an incredible woman named Gayane who is so prepared for the gospel in her life. One of our first meetings- Gayane asked us if in our church we smoke, drink, etc. We briefly explained that we do not- and a couple of the reasons why. We then continued on with our normal planned lesson. About a week later- we came to her home and just walked into her home and she had a cigarette in her hand and was just about to light it. She looked really shocked that we were there and quickly put her cigarette away. We hadn't taught the Word of Wisdom fully yet, but learned in that lesson that she smokes, drinks, and drinks coffee. This past week- we were able to teach the Word of Wisdom fully. When we asked her if she would keep the Word of Wisdom- she told us she had already completely quit drinking, smoking, and everything! She said the very first lesson that we told her we don't do those things- she quit! (Cold Turkey) She said that it was really really hard and one day she was just really really frustrated and angry and really needed to smoke. She said that she took out her cigarettes and was just about to light it- and we walked in! She had forgotten that we were coming and she said that God chasisted her for almost smoking again. She said that she will never again have the desire to smoke or drink again because she will remember that experience. Sister Broadbent and I had no idea that any of this had even happened. It just really made my testimony grow that God really does place us where we need to be at exactly the right time. I am so grateful for the small miracles that we experience every day and for how much we can learn from our investigators and their faith. This really is God's work and we really are acting as his hands in our areas. I feel so blessed to be a part of this work! - Sister Tolman

We also were teaching a lesson to a really less active. We were concerned because everytime we would be on the phone with her she would tell the other people that it was the "Mormons" and we always thought 'Well you're technically a "Mormon" too.' haha We wanted to find out why she would address us that way. Anyway we figured out that she had HUGE misconceptions about the church and we actually had to opporutnuty to teach her daughter-in-law about the Book of Mormon and its purpose. I'm so happy to be a missionary and to teach simple truths to people who want to change. Her daughter-in-law actually wanted us to come over again and explain more about Joseph Smith and such. Just awesome :) Heavenly Father works in mysterious ways. - Sister Beal