



November 1, 2010

Issue 3



## *Armenia Yerevan Mission*

Dear Elders, Sisters, and Senior Missionaries,

November is a month of THANKSGIVING!!! It's always good for us to "count our many blessings" and occasionally even to "name them one by one". When President Carter and I count each of our blessings we name each and every one of you. You have truly become blessings in our lives. We also know that you are blessings in the lives of many people here in

Armenia and Georgia. We pray that each of you can feel of our love and our prayers for you. We know that every person has concerns and personal challenges. We are sure that you worry about things that we are unaware of. We pray that you will be blessed with the peace that comes through knowing you are where you should be and that you are doing your very best to fulfill the calling that Heavenly Father has given to you. We all have days when we feel a little bit or sometimes even a lot down and dreary. On those days we need to pray extra

hard to be worthy to have the Spirit with us. We usually feel better if we can turn our thoughts to someone else and do something to help them. Maybe it's as simple as a phone call to see how someone is feeling. Or it might even be a smile for a passer-by on the street. Or a listening ear for someone who just needs to feel understood. Lifting another person's spirit will almost always lift our own. Our prayer is that each of us can carry the spirit of giving thanks in our hearts this entire month. By then it will be a habit and we can carry it with us always.

We love you and pray for your peace, health, happiness, and success,

## President & Sister Carter



### From Elders Carlson & Lush

The next few amazing experiences we had, took place with one of our investigator families. The family consists of a mom (Melan), her brother (Gago), her daughter (Lilit) and her "husband". The first three listed are investigators, and the "husband" is highly opposed to us and the church.

Gago is on track to quit smoking in 10 days. He started trying to quit last week and is doing fantastic. Can you imagine how difficult that would be??? This man has been smoking for at least 20 years, and he learned about the gospel of Jesus Christ, and he is about to quit after just 10 days. That is nothing short of a miracle.

Everyone but the husband came to church yesterday. The daughter is already assisting with the Primary aged children, and we're looking to give the mother a calling to play the piano in our Branch. Melan is incredible! She answers all of the questions in our Gospel Essentials class! Somehow she manages to see past all of the childish behavior of the members too. The Spirit must be shielding her eyes to those things or something. I'll have to take a picture of her for you, she is glowing.

We had a memorable meeting with her and Gago last night. I can't remember if I have told you or not but, if a single mother remains single (i.e. is not legally married) she can receive pensions and things from the government to support her family. Even with that money from the government, Armenians struggle to survive. Can you imagine how hard it would be

without that money to live here?? So the minute a woman becomes legally married, her governmental help is immediately cut off.

Well to be baptized, she has to be legally married or she needs to separate from her "husband." With this dilemma weighing heavily on our minds, we went to her house last night to teach her about the Law of Chastity and we saw the Spirit work with her in a remarkable way. The moment we started talking about Chastity, she started talking about the issue that she was not legally married to her husband. The Spirit communicated to her that that was a problem, not us. She explained that she can't legally marry the man that she lives with for a few reasons:

1. She said Armenian men are lazy dogs. That is a sweeping generalization but in all honesty, she is right in many cases.
2. She was worried that if she married her mister, a year later he would try and take everything that she has earned in her life, and she is a very successful, talented woman. She could potentially lose a lot.
3. She talked about the fact that if she legally married this man, she wouldn't have enough money to support her daughter who is about to start studying in college which requires a significant amount of money. Then she said "What can I do?" That question sounds like a question that people asked Peter right after Pentecost and right before they got baptized. Do you see how the Spirit is directing her to ask all of the right questions?? Just amazing!

Then this is the conclusion that she came to, not because of anything that we said, rather because of what the Spirit taught her as she was speaking and as we were listening. She said, my concerns are opposing the will of God. I am wrong. All that you have taught me is more important to me than this man and is more important than the money that I'll receive from the government to support my daughter. The day that you Elders came into my life with the gospel, every aspect of my life has improved. You have helped me realize many things and I feel like my eyes have been opened.

She simply and sincerely thanked us when really, we hadn't done anything. The Spirit taught her what her priorities ought to be and there wasn't a word that came out of our mouths.

This woman is going to kick her "husband" out of the house for her to be worthy to be baptized. Women don't do things like that in Armenia! It seems to me that she has received some pretty powerful answers to prayers to the point that she will do anything to can to follow those answers. She has real intent.

Her continuing conversion has been miraculous and it will inspire me the rest of my life. It was a powerful testimony to me that we really are just instruments in the hands of the Lord. The Lord worked a modern day miracle right before our very eyes last night. I can't remember this story without feeling so powerfully that this is the truth and it is worth making great sacrifices for. I hope you feel that power as well as you read this. Thank heaven that we have the truth!

Love, The Elders

Well....I know it's all true. The Book of Mormon is the word of God given as another testament and clearer guide to our heavenly home. With this testimony comes everything else, Joseph Smith is our prophet in this dispensation, he restored Christ's church on the

earth again. I know that Thomas S. Monson is a prophet of God along with the 14 other prophets, seers, and revelators. I know the priesthood has been restored along with all the keys we need to reach our fullest potential. I know that Jesus Christ suffered for us imperfect and unworthy creatures. I accept him as our Savior and Redeemer, the Almighty God.

These are things the Holy Ghost has born witness to me. I know them to be true.

**Elder Clark**

Just like the wonderful things in life I will make my testimony short and sweet. I know that this church is true. I know that our Savior, Jesus Christ, lives. He loves us and wants us all to return to our Heavenly Father. As I sit here, next to Elder Larson, trying to think of what to write, all that comes to my mind is that this church is true. So that's what I'll write, say, think, and leave with you, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen

**Elder Williams**

I have been so blessed to serve in this mission with so many wonderful missionaries. I am so grateful for the opportunity to share some of the things that I hold dear.

I know that God loves each and every one of us. I know that we can become like him someday. Jesus Christ is our Savior; He lives. He has felt every difficulty and trial that we have felt or are yet to feel. I know that through His atonement that we can change and become the people that we and God would have us be.

This work is the work of God. I know that as we give everything we have to Him and His work that we will become powerful tools in bringing salvation unto His children. As we continue pushing forward with all of our heart, might, mind and strength and have faith, doubting not, we will see miracles in our work and in our lives. God will make up the difference.

I know that God answers prayers. Spend time with Him. He listens and gives aid as we take our wants, worries, and needs to Him and humbly seek how we can improve. Miracles are wrought through prayer and faithful action. We are called and led by inspiration from God. This is His work and he leads and guides it. This is where the Lord wants us to be. I know that people are being prepared who we individually can reach out and help. The power of the spirit is real. It changes us and those we teach. As we seek for and strive to recognize the spirit, God will lead and guide us through it. We will be given what is needed to do and say. It will change our work and our life.

I love the Lord and I love His work. This can and will be the best time of your life if you want it to be. It has been the best of mine. This church is true. The Book of Mormon is the word of God. Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. We are led by a living prophet today, even Thomas S. Monson. Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of the world. This is my witness. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

**Elder Paul D. Stephenson**

**Happy Thanksgiving!**



**Happy Birthday**

**11<sup>th</sup> Elder Southwick**

**16<sup>th</sup> Elder Christensen**

**20<sup>th</sup> Elder Ervin**

**25<sup>th</sup> Elder Steele**