

Ward Missionary Message #7  
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Sharing the Gospel  
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Excerpts from his October 2000 General Conference talk

...We have heard all of this many times. Why don't we do better in providing referrals? It is not laziness, because Latter-day Saints are not lazy people. I believe that the fear of rejection or the fear of hurting a friendship are the more common restraints to sharing the gospel.

But are these fears valid? When you extend to a friend an invitation to meet with the missionaries, you are offering to share something that is most valuable and cherished. Is that offensive? Sister Oaks and I have not found this to be the case. In fact, we have found that when we offer to share the gospel, friendships are strengthened, even though the friends may not embrace the gospel message.

Consider that you are invited to a friend's house for breakfast. On the table you see a large pitcher of freshly squeezed orange juice from which your host fills his glass. But he offers you none. Finally, you ask, "Could I have a glass of orange juice?"

He replies, "Oh, I am sorry. I was afraid you might not like orange juice, and I didn't want to offend you by offering you something you didn't desire."

Now, that sounds absurd, but it is not too different from the way we hesitate to offer up something far sweeter than orange juice. I have often worried how I would answer some friend about my hesitancy when I meet him beyond the veil....

Brothers and sisters, I pray that we may put our fears and our hesitancy behind us and no more keep secret the great treasure that is ours....

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