

Full Time Mission Message #4

Elder / Sister xxxxxx,

Our son Nathan who lives in California gives the most profound talks in church. He has shared some of them with me. I have tried to write down some of the examples he uses in his talks. We wanted to share this one in particular with you because it is such powerful teaching principle to help people understand the gospel and the value of getting involved in doing the work with all our heart and soul. To me, this illustration he used especially applies to missionary work and success. Here is the experience he shared in his talk:

“There was a man at the gym I go to every day. He was at the gym every day when I went there to work out. But I noticed that every day he just leaned against the exercise equipment and talked to his friends. I never saw him actually work out. After a couple of months he was standing near me and I heard him remark to his friend that he simply could not understand why he had not lost any weight when he had been so faithful coming to the gym every day. Sometimes there are people in the church (or life for that matter) who just lean against the equipment but they don’t really participate in what they are involved in. For example some people go to church regularly but they don’t have home evening, they don’t go to the temple on a regular basis, they don’t do ministering to others, they don’t really study the scriptures, but they expect to still grow spiritually from going to church. They are in a sense just “LEANING ON THE GOSPEL” rather than using it to build their lives spiritually.”

I think this example really applies to missionary work as well. When serving on my mission I had companions who worked hard and others who were just there because their families expected them to serve so they did as little work as possible. We get out of life what we put into it. You will spend the rest of your life thinking about and talking about “WHEN I WAS ON MY MISSION”. Once the time is gone there will be no adding to the experiences to be remembered. Being a missionary is one of the hardest things you will ever do if you work with all your might, but also one of the most rewarding. It is not easy to keep going and going and going doing the work when sometimes it is so discouraging. But in the end your life and the lives of many other people will have been greatly blessed and the work you do there on your mission will go on for many generations after you are gone by the people you touch. I hope that when you come home you will bring home with you a pair of worn out shoes.

Brother and Sister Vail

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