

Lesson 11 – FAITH: Ask the Lord to ask someone to ask you

For most members of the church the greatest road block in doing missionary work is the fear of asking someone about the church. I have puzzled over that for many years and finally one day when I was asked to give a fireside to the youth in our ward on missionary work, it dawned on me that the perfect solution to the problem could be found in the Book of Mormon.

One of my favorite stories in the Book of Mormon is the story of the brother of Jared. Here is the story to refresh your memory of the details of the story.

The Book of Mormon – Ether

Chapter 2

¹⁶ And the Lord said: Go to work and build, after the manner of barges which ye have hitherto built. And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did go to work, and also his brethren, and built barges after the manner which they had built, according to the instructions of the Lord. And they were small, and they were light upon the water, even like unto the lightness of a fowl upon the water.

¹⁷ And they were built after a manner that they were exceedingly tight, even that they would hold water like unto a dish; and the bottom thereof was tight like unto a dish; and the sides thereof were tight like unto a dish; and the ends thereof were peaked; and the top thereof was tight like unto a dish; and the length thereof was the length of a tree; and the door thereof, when it was shut, was tight like unto a dish.

¹⁸ And it came to pass that the brother of Jared cried unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, I have performed the work which thou hast commanded me, and I have made the barges according as thou hast directed me.

¹⁹ And behold, O Lord, in them there is no light; whither shall we steer? And also we shall perish, for in them we cannot breathe, save it is the air which is in them; therefore we shall perish.

²⁰ And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: Behold, thou shalt make a hole in the top, and also in the bottom; and when thou shalt suffer for air thou shalt unstop the hole and receive air. And if it be so that the water come in upon thee, behold, ye shall stop the hole, that ye may not perish in the flood.

²¹ And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did so, according as the Lord had commanded.

²² And he cried again unto the Lord saying: O Lord, behold I have done even as thou hast commanded me; and I have prepared the vessels for my people, and behold there is no light in them. Behold, O Lord, wilt thou suffer that we shall cross this great water in darkness?

²³ And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels? For behold, ye cannot have windows, for they will be dashed in pieces; neither shall ye take fire with you, for ye shall not go by the light of fire.

²⁴ For behold, ye shall be as a whale in the midst of the sea; for the mountain waves shall dash upon you. Nevertheless, I will bring you up again out of the depths of the sea; for the winds have gone forth out of my mouth, and also the rains and the floods have I sent forth.

²⁵ And behold, I prepare you against these things; for ye cannot cross this great deep save I prepare you against the waves of the sea, and the winds which have gone forth, and the floods which shall come. Therefore what will ye that I should prepare for you that ye may have light when ye are swallowed up in the depths of the sea?

Chapter 3

¹ AND it came to pass that the brother of Jared, (now the number of the vessels which had been prepared was eight) went forth unto the mount, which they called the mount Shelem, because of its exceeding height, and did molten out of a rock sixteen small stones; and they were white and clear, even as transparent glass; and he did carry them in his hands upon the top of the mount, and cried again unto the Lord, saying:

² O Lord, thou hast said that we must be encompassed about by the floods. Now behold, O Lord, and do not be angry with thy servant because of his weakness before thee; for we know that thou art holy and dwellest in the heavens, and that we are unworthy before thee; because of the fall our natures have become evil continually; nevertheless, O Lord, thou hast given us a commandment that we must call upon thee, that from thee we may receive according to our desires.

³ Behold, O Lord, thou hast smitten us because of our iniquity, and hast driven us forth, and for these many years we have been in the wilderness; nevertheless, thou hast been merciful unto us. O Lord, look upon me in pity, and turn away thine anger from this thy people, and suffer not that they shall go forth across this raging deep in darkness; but behold these things which I have molten out of the rock.

⁴ And I know, O Lord, that thou hast all power, and can do whatsoever thou wilt for the benefit of man; therefore touch these stones, O Lord, with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness; and they shall shine forth unto us in the vessels which we have prepared, that we may have light while we shall cross the sea.

⁵ Behold, O Lord, thou canst do this. We know that thou art able to show forth great power, which looks small unto the understanding of men.

⁶ And it came to pass that when the brother of Jared had said these words, behold, the Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones one by one with his finger.



Now how does that relate to our doing missionary work? As I spoke to the kids that night I re-told them this story about the Brother of Jared and pointed out to him that the Lord did not tell him what to do. To me that is one of the key points to the story. He built the arks and then went to the Lord with his problem telling the Lord that they were dark inside:

O Lord, behold I have done even as thou hast commanded me; and I have prepared the vessels for my people, and behold there is no light in them. Behold, O Lord, wilt thou suffer that we shall cross this great water in darkness?

And when he asked the Lord that question here was the answer the Lord gave him:

What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels?

I love that answer. That is so profound. I can hear the Lord asking us that same question. He ask asked us to do missionary work. So we have decided to do it and we say to the Lord, "OK, I am willing to do missionary work. I want to do missionary work. But I am afraid to ask people for fear they will reject me. So what can I do?" And the Lord is saying to us then:

What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels?

What do we want the Lord to do that we can have light in our vessel? We know that great blessings will come into our life and the lives of our family if we have the courage to do missionary work. But we are afraid. We want the light be we are afraid to do the work. So we ask Him what we can do. We ask Him to give us courage. And what does He do? He is expecting us to come up with something.

So here is what I proposed to the youth that night and would like to propose to you now. I proposed to the kids that night that the solution to our being afraid to ask people about the church is to do what the Brother of Jared did. He went forth and made 16 stones and then asked the Lord to touch them. He came up with a solution and then he showed forth faith. He came up with a solution and went back to the Lord and asked that He would stretch forth His finger and touch the stones.

therefore touch these stones, O Lord, with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness;

That night, I ask the youth if they would be willing to try an experiment with me for the next year. I asked them if they would get a copy of the Book of Mormon (like having the 16 stones) and then exercise faith as the Brother of Jared did. I asked them to ask the Lord to reach forth His finger and touch that book and then ask Him to ask to ask for it. Yes that is right. I ask them to ask the Lord to touch their book to make it a special book and then ask the Lord to then impress someone to ask them for that Book of Mormon. Not just any Book of Mormon. That book that they had ready. So there you have it. The perfect solution to the fear of doing missionary work. I ask them to ask the Lord to ask someone to ask them about the church.

Now how much would that solve the fear of asking someone in your own life, if they asked you about the church with out you having to say anything? I ask them to take their Book of Mormon and every morning when they left for school, stop on the porch and say a little prayer. And in that prayer say to the Lord, "Heavenly Father, I have the Book. I want to give it to someone. Would Thou reach forth thy finger and touch someone and ask them to ask me for my book".

The next morning when I went to work, my boss came over and sat on the edge of my desk and said, “Could I ask you about something”. In my mind I thought, “Oh boy, I am in trouble... YIKES!!!”. So I hesitantly said “Sure”. And he said, “Are you a Mormon?” Well you know the rest of that story without me even telling you.

It was amazing, the results we had with the youth in our ward. Almost immediately one of the young girls in our ward told me that she got on the bus and the girl behind her who she did not know that well, stood up and said, “Could I look in your back pack”. She was very surprised she would ask that, but she told her to go ahead. And the girl looked around in her things and saw the “THE BOOK” and said, “What is this Blue Book. Can I have it”.

Do you think that God would let her down when she stopped on the porch that morning and asked Him to reach forth his finger and touch someone and ask them to ask her for her book? I am always so thrilled at the faith of our youth when I work with them. If you tell them something they believe it. If you ask them to do something they have the faith to do it and they do it. It is so amazing to me, the power that they have to accomplish when they set goals. I surely can see why the Savior admonished us to be like little children. That next year the youth in our ward baptized 23 people under the age of 20. The Lord reached forth His finger and touched someone and asked them to ask them.

So if you are having trouble with the fear of asking people about the church but want to do missionary work, I would like to challenge you to try that exercise in your life. Read this story of the Brother of Jared. Think about the implications of the faith he demonstrated. Then take courage that the Lord would extend that same blessing to you if you have the faith to believe that He will do it. Ask Him to ask someone to ask you about the church. Exercise your faith and believe that it can be possible and then go forth believing it will with your copy of “THE BOOK”. Get a special Book of Mormon in your back pack ready to give it to them and believe that someone will ask. I know it works because besides asking the youth to do this, I have done it myself many times.

If you are afraid to ask people about the church then there is the perfect solution for you. Ask the Lord to ask someone to ask you. Surely we all have the courage to tell someone about the church if they ask us first.

I know the Lord will bless you and answer your prayers if you will have the faith to believe and the will to do it.

Cordell Vail

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