



By Elder Claudio
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Of the Seventy

Faith

TO LEAVE THE HARBOR

If you have faith in God, you will have the lighthouse of the gospel to help you and to bless your life.

Years ago, while visiting an institute building, I saw a beautiful painting on the wall. It was of a 16th-century ship with the sails tied to the mast, anchored safely in the harbor. At the bottom of the painting was this inscription: “A ship is safe in harbor, but that’s not what ships are for.”

Looking at that beautiful painting in the institute building, I was reminded that ships are meant to navigate the oceans and to experience adventure. I was also reminded that it is the same with us.

While pondering the meaning of that painting, I thought about the early members of the Church who sacrificed so much to do what the Lord had asked them to do.

Such a Spectacle

Joseph Beecroft, who traveled by train with a group of 700 Saints from Boston to Iowa City, was among those early pioneers. They spent the first part of their journey in cattle cars, sitting on their luggage.

“Joseph Beecroft reflected on how the gospel bonded people from different economic classes. For part of the way he rode next to a wealthy convert named Thomas Tennant. Joseph wrote about him with admiration and awe:





“We had among others Squire Tennant for a carriage passenger. . . . He had his wife, her mother, and his child. What has Mormonism done? Such a spectacle was scarcely ever witnessed as to see one who has been so rich [and] so high in life come [to] be huddled together with the poorest of the poor. [To] see how patiently he endures all things is truly wonderful.”

Before he left England, Thomas paid \$25,000 for a home Brigham Young was selling to raise money for the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. This payment “provided the greatest single contribution to financing the 1856 emigration.” Thomas, however, never saw the home. He died in October 1856 in Nebraska.¹

Another example is George Careless, who was known as a musical pioneer. He was 11 years old when he joined the Church in England in 1850. George, who had a clear soprano voice, gave up a position in a cathedral choir, which included a salary and musical training, when he accepted the gospel.

“In 1859 George began formal studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He passed the four-year course of studies in only three years and in 1862 began playing [violin] professionally. During the next two years

George played under many of the famous conductors then working in London. He also conducted the Goswell Branch choir and presented concerts for Church members and their friends as part of the London Conference meetings of October 1863 and January 1864.

“One Sunday evening early in 1864, Elder William Staines approached him. ‘Brother George,’ he said, ‘I had a dream about you last night, and was shown that you were advancing so rapidly in your profession that your fame and fortune would be made if you remained in London, and that you would not be able to sacrifice it if you did not immigrate to Zion this year.’”

Elder Staines counseled George to sail for Utah as soon as possible. He even offered to loan George money for the voyage. After trying for half an hour to persuade George to leave London, Elder Staines said, “You are wanted in Zion and I want you to go. What do you say?”

“I will go,” he said.

George Careless went on to serve as the “Chief Musician of the Church” and as director of the Tabernacle Choir. He is the author of many Latter-day Saint hymns. He sacrificed much, and he received great honors in his lifetime. Most

important, he remained a willing servant of the Lord.²

One more story comes from the life of Ida Jensen Romney, wife of President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), who served in the First Presidency. Her maternal grandparents joined the Church in Denmark.

“[My grandfather] left a wet farmland, green with fertility, to come to Zion. The missionary told him how wonderful it was to live in Zion and that he would be given 40 acres of farmland when he came. He was sent down to [central Utah] to colonize a land that was not nearly as verdant as the land he had left behind. He wanted to get on the first wagon

Being anchored with no progress in the harbor, my wife and I could not have experienced the color and excitement that have come into our lives.

that would take him back to the old country. Grandmother insisted that they stay.”³

Leaving the Safe Harbor

As I thought about these pioneers and the painting of the ship in the harbor, my thoughts took me back many years ago when I heard the story of Jonathan Napela, who joined the Church in 1852 after being taught the gospel by young missionary Elder George Q. Cannon. They became good friends, much like Alma and Amulek.

Jonathan (also spelled Jonathon and Jonatana) H. Napela was a judge and a

brave pioneer for the Church in the islands of Hawaii. He helped Elder Cannon translate the Book of Mormon into the Hawaiian language. He organized a school to instruct missionaries from Utah. He also served as a missionary. He was a good man, and he was married to a beautiful woman.

In 1873 tragedy struck when Jonathan’s beloved wife, Kitty, contracted leprosy. It was the custom of that time for persons with this terrible disease to be sent to live in confinement on another island. We can only imagine the intense suffering and degrading circumstances they endured.

Jonathan chose to leave his safe harbor and move with his sweet wife to the leper colony. He loved her so much and could not leave her alone in that dreaded place. Jonathan also contracted leprosy, but even in his own suffering he continued to serve the temporal and spiritual needs of his people in the leper colony. He died in 1879, a little over two weeks

before his sweet and eternal wife.⁴

I thought about my own wife at the time we were married. She was safe and comfortable in the harbor of her family. As a single woman, she lived with her parents and had a high position in her profession. She was making good money. She left the security of her harbor and married me. She came to live with me in very humble conditions. We had a small studio apartment.

I thought about the great adventures of our mortal lives when we decided to have a family. Each time one of our four children came into the world, it was like leaving the



CHART YOUR COURSE, SET YOUR SAIL, AND PROCEED

“The lighthouse of the Lord beckons to all as we sail the seas of life. Our purpose is to steer an undeviating course toward our desired goal—even the celestial kingdom of God. A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder, never likely to reach home port. To us comes the signal: chart your course, set your sail, position your rudder, and proceed.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Guided Safely Home,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 68.

harbor and navigating the oceans in a new and marvelous adventure. Bringing children into the world brought more responsibility to us, and it also brought great joy.

I testify that every time we left the security of our harbors, it brought more happiness to our lives. It has been much better than being anchored with no progress in the harbor, where we could not experience the color and excitement that have come into our lives.

Even when turbulence caused by the storms of life comes our way in this mortal existence, we can be led by the lighthouse of the gospel and by our testimonies of the Savior Jesus Christ.

The Savior's Example

I am reminded of our Savior and Redeemer, who left the comfort of being at the right hand of His Father to give His life as an atoning sacrifice for all mankind. All that He did in this life He did because He loves us, and He set the example for us.

He had committed no sins but went to John the Baptist to be baptized “to fulfil all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15).

He stood against the temptations of Satan and admonished, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10).

Our Savior knew at all times what it was like to leave the safe harbor: “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).

He taught us to have perfect faith: “Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . .

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:31, 33).

When Jesus was in Gethsemane, he “began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy” (Mark 14:33). He was feeling the weight of our sins and the injustices of mortality.



He prayed, “Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt” (Mark 14:36).

It would have been easier for Him not to experience the agony of Gethsemane, but Jesus chose to do the will of His Father. He chose to carry out His assignment because of His love for His Father and for us. Just as we might prefer not to suffer, Jesus prayed, “Take away this cup from me.” But again, He set the example for us in our suffering: “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly” (Luke 22:44).

In every way, Christ set the example for how to live, how to serve, and how to find the answers we need to meet the daily challenges of life.

Don't Be Afraid

I know that when you make decisions about the future, the Lord will show you in which oceans you need to navigate. Don't be afraid to leave for the open sea. Don't be

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afraid to confront the waves of your future, the storms of professional challenges. Prepare to the best of your ability for the challenges of having a spouse and family.

Abraham took Isaac on that long walk to the altar, believing it would be his last moments with his beloved son. The Lord had commanded Abraham, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, . . . and offer him . . . for a burnt offering” (Genesis 22:2). I am sure this was not a safe harbor for Abraham. But he obeyed God's commandments.

President Hugh B. Brown (1883–1975), a former member of the First Presidency, said that God commanded

Abraham to sacrifice Isaac because “Abraham needed to learn something about Abraham.”⁵

Of course, this is the lesson for all of us: to grow in faith and obedience so that we will have the confidence to do what the Lord asks us to do. We have examples from the scriptures and from Church history of people who had faith to leave their safe harbors and accomplish great things. We have the capacity to follow their example.

I promise that if you have faith in God, you will have the lighthouse of the gospel to help you and to bless your life. God will be with you. You are part of the most marvelous generation that has lived on the earth, and you are a great hope for the world. Your example and testimony will touch the lives of all you meet in the great adventure of your mortal life. ■

From a devotional address, “Ships Are Safe in the Harbor,” delivered at Brigham Young University on November 2, 2010. For the full address, visit speeches.byu.edu.

NOTES

1. See Andrew D. Olsen, *The Price We Paid: The Extraordinary Story of the Willie and Martin Handcart Pioneers* (2006), 227–28.
2. See David Maxwell, “The Morning Breaks’: George Careless, Musical Pioneer,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1984, 47–50.
3. Ida Jensen Romney, in Maurine Jensen Ward, “General Authorities’ Wives: Sister Ida Jensen Romney,” *New Era*, June 1975, 18.
4. See Joseph H. Spurrier, “Jonathon Napela: Quiet Hero of Hawaii,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1978, 49–51.
5. Hugh B. Brown, in Truman G. Madsen, *The Highest in Us* (1978), 49.