

Being Content

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content (Philippians 4:11).



From an interview with Elder Alexander A. Odume, Area Seventy in the Africa West Area; by F. Onyebueze Nmeribe

I grew up in a village in southern Nigeria. My father made a living as a farmer, growing yams, maize, cassava, plantain, and other crops to sell. My parents taught me by their example to work hard. We all worked on the farm, and we had enough food to eat. My father believed that if a man worked hard and lived a decent life, he would succeed.

My parents were not members of the Church, but they believed in God. They taught me that God lives and that Jesus Christ is the Savior.

My father also taught me the principle of respect for my elders—being obedient to those in authority. It is a tradition in my community to give honor to one's elders.

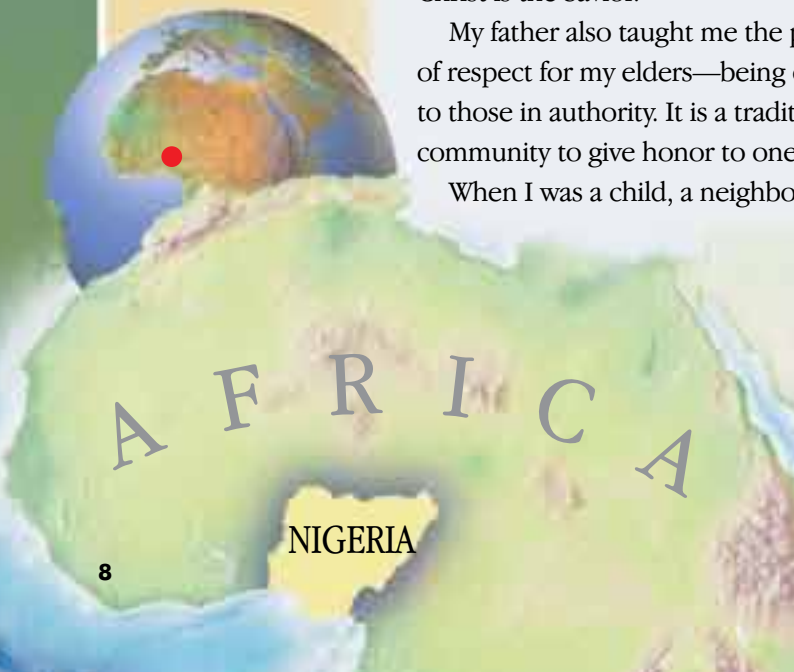
When I was a child, a neighbor brought

us food during a celebration. When our family receives such a gift, it is customary in my home for my father to decide when the family eats the food. This time, my father was not home. I desired so much to eat the food that I cried and begged my mother to give me some. My mother didn't want to disrespect my father's traditional role, but she also didn't want me to be unhappy. She cut some of the food and gave me a little to eat.

Later, when my father came home, he was unhappy about what I had done. He invited me into his room and told me he was disappointed that I had not shown contentment for what I already had. He taught me that peace of mind and a good life are only for those who are content with what they have.

Years later I started visiting many churches, but I never felt at home. One day I returned home from work, and my landlady told me that my wife and I must move out by the next day. I could not think of any wrongdoing or problems that would cause her to ask us to leave.

I went to a friend's house to ask for help in quickly finding a new apartment, and there I met the missionaries. They



introduced themselves and said they could answer my questions at the end of the lesson. As they taught about the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the gospel, I thought about how I had moved from one church to another without finding the truth. I made an appointment with the missionaries, and they taught my wife and me. Soon we were baptized and confirmed.

Since that time I have held several callings in the Church. I found out that my parents had laid a very solid foundation for me to believe in God, to be content with what I have, and to know that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can be saved.

Children, listen to your parents' counsel, and follow the teachings of your Primary teachers and leaders. I know that if you will be obedient, if you will read the Book of Mormon, if you will honor your baptismal covenants, the Lord will bless you. ●

