

Kindness



From an interview with Elder Won Yong Ko of the Seventy, currently serving in the Asia North Area; by Melvin Leavitt, Church Magazines

“Kindness begins with me” (Children’s Songbook, 145).

When I was a 16-year-old high school student in Seoul, Korea, a Latter-day Saint classmate invited me to a branch activity. I was amazed at how many people greeted me as if I were an old friend. I thought, “What a wonderful church this must be to have such kind members!”

That Sunday I returned and was again greeted warmly. I was also introduced to the missionaries, and they soon began teaching me the gospel. Two months later I was baptized and confirmed. I didn’t yet have a deep understanding of the gospel, but I felt good about the principles I had learned. I especially liked the plan of salvation and the doctrine of eternal progression. It was comforting to know that if I would do all I could for myself, the Savior would do the rest. But the warmth of the members was what really led to my conversion.

Since then I have tried to be nice to everyone I meet. I want to pass on the kindness I received from the members of

that branch. I don’t ever want to be a roadblock to anyone joining the Church.

After my baptism I helped clean the chapel and the grounds every Saturday. Nobody asked me to. I did it because I felt it was a great honor. When I was ordained a deacon, I learned that one of my responsibilities was to clean the meetinghouse. I kept doing so, and it was still a pleasure.



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But in some sense it had been more rewarding when it wasn't expected of me.

So, children, always do your duty. But don't hesitate to do more than you are asked to do. You will find great joy in that kind of service.

Although I didn't attend Primary as a child, I learned what a blessing Primary is when I had children of my own. Once our family moved into a new home in downtown Seoul. After moving in we discovered that there were some bad places of entertainment in the neighborhood. My wife and I worried about how this might affect our children. One day we heard our daughter and her younger brother talking in the backseat of the car. "When you go to school, some friends might ask you why you are living in such a bad neighborhood," our daughter said. "But don't worry. In Primary we learn how to live the gospel of Jesus Christ. As long as we follow the teachings of Jesus, we will be safe."

My son answered, "Yes, it doesn't matter where we live if we choose the right."

They were talking to each other, not to us. As I listened, I felt overwhelming gratitude to their wonderful Primary teachers. My daughter and son both grew up to be faithful Latter-day Saints. So enjoy Primary, and do the things your teachers tell you. You will be better, safer people if you do. ●

