



As I look to the Lord, He expands my limited, mortal vision to an eternal perspective.

Looking to the Lord

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While my husband and I were serving in the Asia Area, we would often walk up Wan Chai Gap, a trail near our home in Hong Kong. The ascent is steep and difficult to climb, particularly on hot, humid summer days.

One Saturday I noticed that I wasn't enjoying our walk, which seemed more like punishment than exercise. Looking down at the pavement for nearly the entire walk, I felt as though we were never going to reach the top.

I made an interesting discovery that day. When I looked down, my vision was limited to a narrow stretch of pavement. Trudging along, I saw the same narrow view of pavement, pavement, pavement. But when I looked up, I had a gorgeous view ahead of me. I saw trees with bright yellow flowers. I saw birds flying and singing melodious songs. I saw Tai Chi students rhythmically opening colorful fans as part of their exercise routine. Soon we reached our goal, Stubbs Road, and beyond that I saw bright blue skies and fluffy white clouds.



Looking to the Lord

When we look down, focusing on the narrow view of our circumstances, we may miss seeing many of the opportunities the Lord has in store for us. Do we allow our circumstances to limit our view, or do we look up to the Lord, who can expand our vision?

Challenges—such as poor health, loss of a loved one, accident, divorce, or financial reversals—are a part of everyone’s life. We all encounter unplanned difficulties. Responding positively to those difficulties is a great challenge.

In *For the Strength of Youth*, the First Presidency promises: “The Lord will make much more out of your life than you can by yourself. He will increase your opportunities, expand your vision, and strengthen you. He will give you the help you need to meet your trials and challenges.”¹

The sons of Mosiah understood this principle and looked

to the Lord when they faced difficult circumstances. In the book of Alma we read:

“They had many afflictions; they did suffer much, both in body and in mind . . . and also much labor in the spirit. . . .

“And it came to pass that they journeyed many days in the wilderness, and they fasted much and prayed much that the Lord would grant unto them a portion of his Spirit to go with them, and abide with them, that they might be an instrument in the hands of God to bring, if it were possible, their brethren, the Lamanites, to the knowledge of the truth, to the knowledge of the baseness of the traditions of their fathers, which were not correct” (Alma 17:5, 9).

Then, rather than focus on their afflictions, they looked for ways to be instruments in the hands of God to lift and bless others. In answer to their fasting and prayers and their faith and works, the Lord gave them the help they needed in their difficult circumstances.



I didn't wait to be included; I looked for opportunities to be included.

Courage to Go Forth

I was 37 years old when I was sealed to my husband in the Salt Lake Temple. My single years presented many unique challenges. I had always thought that I would be married and have children by age 25, but I found myself in circumstances that were far different from my plans.

Many times I found myself looking down at the pavement, focusing on *me* and my circumstances. My perspective was narrow. Life seemed hard and unfair. I became discouraged. I lost my self-confidence.

I remember a significant point in my life when, like the sons of Mosiah, I looked to the Lord. I had always remained active in the Church and had a “knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Timothy 3:7), but I desired more. I made the decision to be more diligent in my scripture study, to be more prayerful, and to live more worthy of the guidance of the Spirit. I longed to be an “instrument in the hands of God,” as were the sons of Mosiah.

It “took courage to go forth” (Alma 17:12) and look for new opportunities. I set professional goals and enrolled in a graduate program to improve my job situation. I chose to move from a singles ward into a family ward. I became involved, attending family picnics and dinners and programs for adults. I joined the ward choir. I came to know the bishop well. He was a wise and caring man who extended callings to me that blessed my life.

Through visiting teaching and Relief Society activities, I became friends with many women, and they often included me in their family activities. But I didn't *wait* to be included; I looked for opportunities to be included. I volunteered to watch their children, and I invited their families to dinner. Their children became my children.

I also realized that the best place to love and be loved is within your own family. My brother had three children, and I became interested in their lives, schoolwork, and activities.

Because I was contributing, my self-confidence improved, and I found life to be more interesting and fulfilling as I looked to the Lord. Just as I saw the trees, flowers, birds, and people along the path when I looked up on Wan Chai Gap, looking to the Lord helped me see new opportunities for my life.

As I continue to look to the Lord, I recognize that He expands my limited, mortal vision to an eternal perspective. Through answers to prayers, I have learned that the Lord knows me, loves me, and is aware of me and of my circumstances. This knowledge has given me the faith that He *will* continue to help me meet future trials and challenges as I look to Him for opportunities and “choose righteousness and happiness, no matter what [my] circumstances.”² ■

NOTES

1. *For the Strength of Youth* (2001), 42.
2. *For the Strength of Youth*, 5.