

MY MTC:

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Of the Seventy

Being committed to something and working at it, no matter what, is an important part of preparing for a mission and for life.



What I learned about discipline and making good decisions helped me to be a better missionary.

Missions are not easy. It's hard work to get up early every morning and to work hard every day. Learning discipline, choosing good friends, and strengthening your testimony through study and prayer will help prepare you to be a successful missionary.

In high school I began running cross-country and track, but I didn't really know much about distance running. I had a friend, though, who had run long distance in another state, and he helped me capture a vision of how to succeed. That influence and the inward determination to follow through helped me learn discipline and to be a successful runner in high school and at Brigham Young University.

Running wasn't something that came easily for me. It took a lot of work—hard work. I studied and applied different training techniques. I read about distance runners who were setting world records and how they trained. A highlight for me was when a friend and I rode a bus all night to watch a world-class indoor track meet in a distant city. Success came as I caught the vision, studied, applied what I learned, and

disciplined myself to achieve my goals.

The lessons I learned from running helped prepare me for my mission.

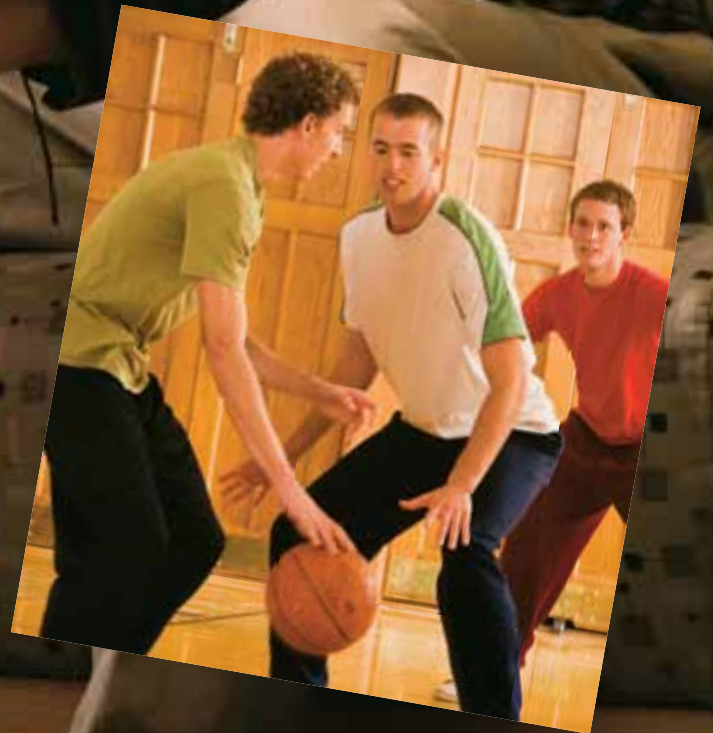
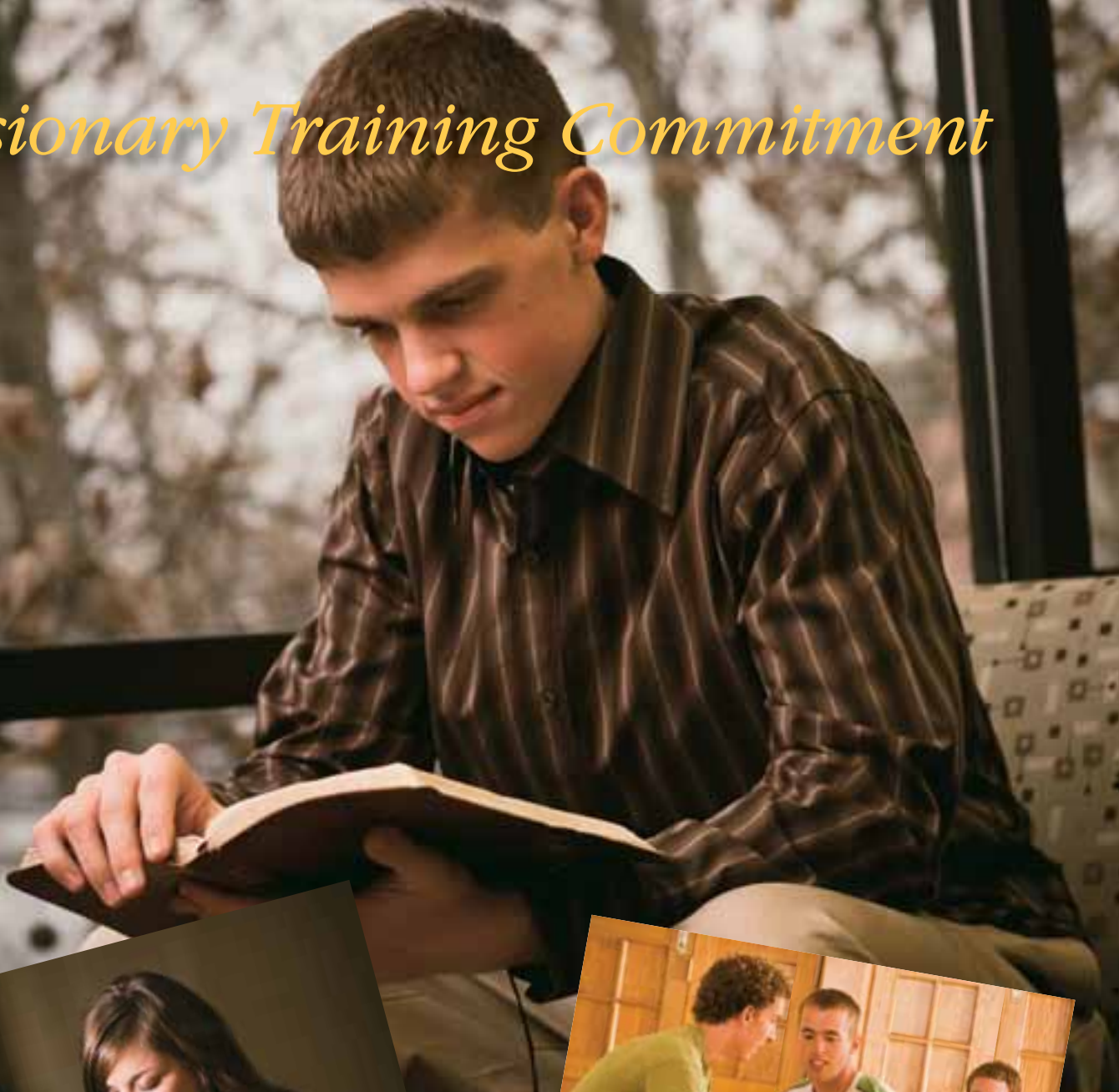
Pick the Best Friends, and Live Gospel Standards

An important part of preparing for a mission is to choose good friends and to have the courage to live gospel standards, no matter what others are doing. As we began high school, some of my friends began doing things that they shouldn't. While we remained on good terms, I chose to find new friends who wanted to keep the standards of the Church. I had always prayed and read the scriptures, which strengthened my commitment to keep Church standards and gave me the determination to live the commandments. That also helped me to make hard decisions and endure some lonely times.

Be Determined

Determination and the ability to make a commitment and then to stick to that commitment, no matter how difficult, give life meaning and teach discipline. That

Missionary Training Commitment



When we really understand what our Savior has done for us, then we want to share that message with others.



discipline—the ability to get up on time and keep going when it's raining, when it's hot, when it's cold, when it's miserable, and to go out and do what you need to do—is an important factor to success in running and in the mission field.

I always wanted to go on a mission, and preparing for a mission was always a part of me. I served in Aaronic Priesthood quorum leadership positions that taught me about service, how to lead, and how to do what the Lord would have me do. I earned my Duty to God and Eagle Scout awards, went to seminary, and took religion classes at BYU. I also went out with the full-time missionaries before my mission. I learned that daily prayer and scripture study are important and that everyone can make that decision and then do it each day.

Be Guided by Prayer

I was called to serve a mission in southern Mexico. When I was at the Language Training Mission in Provo, Utah, (which later became the Missionary Training Center) I had an experience with prayer that was a breakthrough for me in understanding and feeling a relationship with God. I gained a great love and appreciation for communication from the Holy Ghost. I remember one day, during my personal prayer, looking at the mountains and pouring out my heart to Heavenly Father and feeling for the first time in my life that there was real communication taking place. It was not just saying prayers; it was a true spiritual communication where I felt the Lord communicating with my spirit and confirming my testimony and determination to serve Him.

That experience was an important milestone for me, and I learned that the guidance of the Holy Ghost is one of the most important things that can happen in your life. There were times on my mission when the Lord would reveal to me the places that I should go and the people with whom I should talk. The Lord not only prepares missionaries, but also prepares people to hear the mes-

sage. I remember knocking on the door of a family in Veracruz, Mexico. They let us in because they had been praying to God to send messengers to teach them His truth. They didn't know if there was a true church or not, but they were reaching out for the truth. Two days later we knocked on their door. We were guided by the Spirit to be at that place and at that time to answer the prayers of those people.

Know the Savior and His Prophets

As a missionary, you need to know that Joseph Smith is a prophet, that the Book of Mormon is true, and that Gordon B. Hinckley is a prophet, seer, and revelator. In order to be effective, you also need to begin to understand the Atonement of the Savior. You should strive, through your own personal study and prayer, to really understand what the Savior has done for you—that He literally paid the price for your sins. If you really understand that, you are going to want to share that wonderful message with others. Sharing the message of the Atonement and watching it change the lives of people is a marvelous experience to witness as a missionary. The mission is not just about you; it's about the people you serve. The Spirit can prompt you, as a missionary, to respond because of someone else's faith and to help them recognize the Spirit and become converted. When you watch the people you teach come to that conversion by the Spirit, you know that their testimony and commitment will carry them through hard times.

Preparing for a mission should be a part of your life every day. Your decisions and the good things you are involved in can prepare you to serve in the mission field. That service and the love you gain for the people you teach and work among will bring you joy and satisfaction throughout your life. As you learn self-discipline, choose good friends, and strengthen your testimony through study and prayer, you will be prepared for your mission and a lifetime of service in the Lord's kingdom. **NE**