

KEVIN

MADE IT HAPPEN

CHALLENGES WEREN'T GOING TO STOP HIM FROM SERVING.



By Ellice Tan

Sixteen-year-old Kevin S. listened from his hospital bed as a letter from his stake president was read to him.

The Spirit filled the room and his pain seemed to fade away as he received a call to help with family history. His age and circumstances made the calling unusual, but he knew the Lord would help him do it.

Ever since Kevin was a child, he had learned that no matter how impossible the task seemed, he could accomplish it. As long as he focused on what he could do, the Lord would provide a way. This calling would be no different.

Focusing on What You Can Do

At one year old, Kevin struggled to do many things that other babies do naturally. By age two, he started walking, but his parents noticed that he was very weak. Shortly after Kevin's second birthday, he was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), which causes intense exhaustion and progressively weakens muscles.

Growing up with DMD has been hard for



Kevin, but he never lets that get in the way of doing what the Lord wants him to do. A tray on his wheelchair helps him pass the sacrament, and he home teaches outside people's homes if his wheelchair can't go inside. He lives by this motto: "If you have the desire to do something, you can do it." Kevin does this by focusing on the things he can do rather than the things he can't.

"IF YOU HAVE THE DESIRE TO DO SOMETHING, YOU CAN DO IT."

Mission-Minded

You might be surprised to hear all the things Kevin does. For one thing, anyone who knows him would say he's incredibly shy. But just as with many other obstacles in Kevin's life, the Lord gave Kevin opportunities to work around his shyness and reach out to others.

Just after Kevin turned 15, one of his close friends started falling away from the gospel. Kevin wanted to help his friend come back. But he had never even borne his testimony out loud before—how was he supposed to do it now? "Facebook," he thought. Kevin hadn't used social media before, but if there was a good reason to start, this was it.

So Kevin began recording his testimony, typing out messages, and sending uplifting videos to this friend and others through social media. This was something he could do.

He started wondering if he could influence more people for good. He created a Facebook page to inspire others to live the Articles of Faith. His courage to bear his testimony also increased, and he began to reach out to others over the phone.

As Kevin's desire to share the gospel grew, so did his testimony of missionary work. Kevin wanted more than anything to serve a mission, but he knew that as his condition worsened, it was more and more unlikely.

Hard and Impossible Things

The next year a member of Kevin's stake spoke on the importance of family history indexing. That day Kevin went straight home, created an LDS Account, and began to index. Because of his illness, Kevin had a hard time in school, and reading was a challenge. He spent hours at his computer searching for letters he could recognize. Yet, one by one, he matched the letters on the screen with the letters on the computer keyboard. He soon began to understand the importance and impact of family history work, so he made a Duty to God goal to index a number of names.



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Halfway to the goal, however, his disease began to spread even more rapidly. He lost much of the mobility in his arms and couldn't reach the computer keyboard. A hard trial? Yes. But impossible to overcome? No.

Kevin knew that if the Lord wanted him to accomplish his goal, He would again provide a way. And that's what happened.

In December 2014, Kevin invited the youth from his stake to help him reach his goal. About 40 youth responded. Most of them had never indexed before, yet they too felt the importance of family history work and the desire to help their friend in need. So they planned a day when they could get together, bring computers, and bring in a few indexing gurus to help them take on the challenge.

When the day came to begin indexing names for Kevin's goal, the youth from the stake video-conferenced Kevin so that he and his family could watch them from his hospital room. Kevin had never realized he had so many friends—even friends he thought he'd been unsuccessful in reaching out to joined in the effort to help.

That day the young men and young women of Kevin's stake indexed hundreds of names. By the end of the year, they had met Kevin's goal—and then some.

Receiving the Calling

That day in the hospital, as Kevin sat in his bed and listened to his calling from the stake president being read to him, he thought again about how the Lord provides a way to accomplish His purposes. Though Kevin's health prevented him from serving a full-time proselyting mission, Kevin still knew that the Lord would allow him the opportunity to serve and bless others in some way.

Kevin hasn't led an easy life. He has endured many challenges, and his prayers certainly haven't always been answered in the way he expected. But through all of his experiences, Kevin has learned what it means to put his trust in the Savior and to be trusted by the Savior. Whatever the Lord wants him to do, the Lord knows he can do it—and so does Kevin.

Kevin knows that as long as he puts forth his whole effort, the Lord will bless him and also make up the difference for whatever he isn't able to do. As Kevin's favorite scripture says, "The Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them" (1 Nephi 3:7). "It's not about what I can do," Kevin says. "It's about what *we* can do." **NE**

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