

Go forth . . . , and I will make an instrument of thee in my hands unto the salvation of many souls (Alma 17:11).

When I was growing up, I loved hearing returned missionaries speak in church because I felt the Spirit they carried. I wanted to be a missionary too.

As I grew older, the world was changing. There was a war, and as a result, the number of missionaries each ward could send was limited. I didn't think that I *could* go on a mission at age 19 even though I had always wanted to.

Then one day my mother said to me, "The bishop wants to see you this afternoon."

When I arrived at the bishop's office, he said, "David, our ward has been given the blessing of being able to send one more missionary. The bishopric has been praying about who should go, and I want you to know that *now* is the time that the Lord would have you serve your mission."



From an interview with Elder David F. Evans of the Seventy; by Kimberly Reid

I was stunned. I had no idea that's what we were going to be talking about. I had always known that President David O. McKay wanted me to serve a mission, that my mom wanted me to serve, and that I wanted to serve. But no one had ever said to me, "The Lord wants you to do something *now*."

I asked the bishop if I could think about it for a week. Then I got in my car and drove around for an hour before ending

up back at the church. I went to the bishop's office and knocked on the door. When I opened it, he was still sitting there. Nothing was on his desk. He didn't seem to be doing anything. "Bishop, what are you still doing here?" I asked.

He said, "I'm waiting for you."

I told him, "Bishop, if the Lord wants me to go,



Fishing as a young boy

Now Is the Time to Obey



At age 11

then I will go.”

I'm grateful I did. Children, do what the Lord asks you to do when He asks you to do it. If the bishop asks you to do something, obey. If your Primary teacher asks you to do something, say yes. The Lord will bless you, even as you face challenges.

One of my challenges was fear. As the time to leave on my mission approached, I started to feel almost homesick. The night before I left, I was feeling very alone. As I sat in my room writing a letter of love and testimony to my parents, tears were dripping on the page.

Then my mother knocked on my door. She came up to me, hugged me, and kissed my cheek. “David, I promise you that everything will be all right,” she said. From that very moment, all of my worry disappeared. Her faith strengthened mine.

Soon after I was reading about the sons of Helaman and their experience with their mothers. Alma 56:47–48 reads:

“They had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them.

“And they rehearsed unto me the words of their mothers, saying: We do not doubt our mothers knew it.”

When I read that, I had a wonderful feeling. I knew that I'd had a similar experience. Because of my mother's faith, I no longer feared what was going to happen. I knew not only that I was having the same experience as the stripling warriors, but I also knew that the Book of Mormon was true. Somebody

who had felt the same feelings I had felt had said this.

As you read the Book of Mormon, understand that it was written for you. It may be a different setting and time, but you're having some of the same experiences people had a long time ago and learning the same lessons.

My testimony is that the Lord knows us. He knows what we can learn and what can happen if we'll do what He asks us to do. My mission to Japan began a remarkable set of experiences for me. Years later I went back to Japan as a mission president. After that, I returned as a General Authority.

I wrote my mom a letter recently and said, “Who could've imagined all that would happen because of that one interview with my bishop that day?” My mother wrote back, “I imagined it.”

Trust your parents. Recognize that as they ask you to do good things, they're doing it because they have faith in Heavenly Father and they have faith in you. As you obey them, not only will your parents be pleased, but your Heavenly Father will also be pleased and bless you for it. ●

On top of Mount Whitney at age 12 with his dad

