



By Elder
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ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID MALAN

EVEN IF YOU'RE SHY

Trust the Lord, and He will bless you in your efforts to share the gospel.

When I was a new mission president in Brazil, I was interviewing some elders. I asked one to tell me about himself.

“I am very shy,” he said. He worried that his shyness was getting in the way of being able to serve.

I asked, “Do you think the Lord can help you to be a good missionary anyway?”

“I believe the Lord can do anything.”

“Then let Him help you. Do you think you can do that?”

“I can,” he said.

I have to confess that as he walked away, I thought, “Well, I hope it works.”

Weeks passed and soon the same missionaries came for interviews again. This time the shy elder’s companion said, “President, I don’t know what you told him, but it certainly made a difference. He’s become great at talking with people.” And so I was looking forward to visiting with him again.

When he came into my office, he looked down at his feet. “I have some good news,” he said. “I’m still shy, but I asked the Lord to help me. Then I opened my mouth and started to speak. And you know what? I do it all the time now. I don’t even remember what I say. The incredible thing is that people like it. They feel the Spirit. They relate to me and to what I have to tell them.”

I was amazed to see how this missionary was transformed when he put his trust in the Lord. He became a great instrument in bringing happiness to many people.

“I’m still shy,
but I asked the Lord
to help me.”

Overcoming Fear

When we share the gospel, we sometimes feel nervous. But as this shy missionary demonstrated, the Lord will guide us if we trust in Him. The Holy Ghost will help us know what to say (see 2 Nephi 32:2–3), and when people feel the Spirit, they often respond in a positive way. Many become intrigued by what we believe and want to know more.

Great Joy

I have a testimony that Heavenly Father will guide us in our efforts to share the gospel, and in that process we will feel great joy. In fact, that joy will be with us not only now but also in the world to come. (See D&C 18:16.) That’s a good reason to step outside your comfort zone and do something, even if you’re shy. ■

THREE FEARS YOU CAN CONQUER

Beside shyness, I know of three additional fears that cause some of us to say, “I’m afraid that if I talk about the gospel, I’ll lose my friends.” Thank goodness that, with faith, those fears can be overcome.

1. I DON’T KNOW ENOUGH.

If you lack knowledge about the gospel, the full-time missionaries can help. They can teach us the message of the Restoration, help us strengthen our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and help us understand repentance and how to apply it in our lives and why baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost are important. Another great source of knowledge is *Preach My Gospel*. I would encourage every young man and young woman to have a copy and to make it part of your daily study with your scriptures.

2. I’VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE.

If you lack experience, practice with the missionaries! They can help you to know what to say or not to say in a certain situation. As you spend time with the missionaries, you will feel the love they have for the gospel and for their fellow man. They have found the courage to share the gospel; they can help you do the same.

3. I’M AFRAID TO SHARE.

When we share our testimony, we help our friends see higher things, and they begin to respect us and love us in a different light. This happens almost every time. A lot of young people say, “I was fearful, but when I spoke honestly, my friend began to trust me and to ask more questions.” We shouldn’t be afraid of sharing what we have. It is precious because it comes from God. And what better way to show love for our friends than to share with them what we know to be true?