> "If they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them."
> *Ether 12:27*

WILL YOU GIVE A TALK?

Me? Speak in front of people? At church?

By Zachary Clifford

When I was 12 years old, my father was in the bishopric. There were benefits, such as being able to give my tithing to my father, but there were also some unexpected downsides. For example, people expected more of me. And there was another downside that was much more treacherous.

One day, as I sat at the computer, typing up an assignment, my father sat down beside me and started asking about my day. Not seeing a trap, I answered his questions. Then, he asked a question no one had ever asked me before.

"Zachary, will you give a talk next Sunday?"

I felt the color drain from my face. I frantically searched for a reason to not be there, but my father knew that I would be. He rambled something about it being a short talk and that I needn't worry, but my mind was moving too quickly to actually comprehend what he was saying.

I had stage fright. How could I give a talk? I had never given a public speech outside of the Primary room! Tears welled up as I felt the weight of a seemingly impossible task. My father wrapped his arms around me and told me that if I was too scared, I didn't have to do it.

However, just then, I began to feel something that I had never felt, or maybe never noticed, before. All of a sudden, I had a small glimpse of myself, slightly older, giving a powerful speech in front of a large crowd. I felt the Spirit whisper that one day, I would have no stage fright and could become a public speaker.

Three years later, I was at my first speech and debate meet. I confidently gave a persuasive and powerful speech convincing people to vote for me.

God knows us. He knows our weaknesses and he knows our strengths. I know that the promise in Ether is true: If we simply believe, and act on that belief, God will turn our weakness into strength (see Ether 12:27). **NE**

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