



“GET OVER YOURSELF”

By Collin Braithwaite

An Apostle's unexpected advice helped me know how I should prepare to serve a mission.

Ever since I was young, I knew I wanted to serve a mission. And when I opened my mission call, I felt the Spirit stronger than I ever had before.

During the time I was preparing to receive my mission call, I had the opportunity to attend a devotional where Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke to a group of youth and young single adults. I had no idea that he'd be coming, and when I saw him, I couldn't wait to hear what he had to say. He said he wanted to have a question-and-answer session. And when he asked for questions, I jumped at the opportunity.

"What is the most important thing I can do to prepare to be an effective missionary?" I asked.

He looked right at me and said, "Get over yourself." At first I was taken aback. I had to think twice to make sure I hadn't said something wrong, thinking maybe I was being scolded a little.

But then he explained that serving a mission is not about me; instead, it's about serving the Lord and completely losing myself in that service. This advice completely changed my missionary preparation and my outlook on missionary service.

For future missionaries, including me, it can be easy to become prideful and say, "I can't wait to baptize lots of people." But this isn't a good mind-set to have. Instead, it would be better to say, "I can't wait to serve the Lord. I will do what He wants me to do

because I'm serving Him and He is giving me a chance to participate in His work." It's all about getting over yourself and serving others.

Since Elder Bednar gave me that advice, I've thought about it every day. If I'm ever tempted to not read my scriptures because I'm too tired, I imagine Elder Bednar saying, "Get over yourself." While it would be nice to get some extra sleep, studying the scriptures is something that Heavenly Father wants me to do every day. Besides, it's not about me; it's about serving Him.

I've also started putting more effort into my scripture study since I received this advice. My goal is to not just read them, but also to understand them so I'll be more prepared for my mission. Now when I read my scriptures, I take out my journal and write down a question. As I read, I look for answers to that question and write those answers down. One time I wrote down the question, "What are the traits of an effective missionary?" As I studied the scriptures, I learned about traits I can develop as I prepare for my mission.

I can't wait to serve a mission. I'm excited to lose myself in missionary service as an instrument in God's hands. It's a chance to just focus on the Lord and His people. It's not about me. It's about doing all of the small and simple things the Lord wants me to do. **NE**

Collin Braithwaite received a mission call to the California San Bernadino Mission and is now serving there.



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"Those first few weeks [of my mission], because of illness and the opposition which we felt, I was discouraged. I wrote a letter home to my good father and said that I felt I was wasting my time and his money. . . . He was a wise and inspired man. He wrote a very short letter to me which said, 'Dear Gordon, I have your recent letter. I have only one suggestion: forget yourself and go to work.' Earlier that morning in our scripture class my companion and I had read these words of the Lord: 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.' (Mark 8:35.)

"Those words of the Master, followed by my father's letter with his counsel to forget myself and go to work, went into my very being. With my father's letter in hand, I went into our bedroom . . . and got on my knees and made a pledge with the Lord. I covenanted that I would try to forget myself and lose myself in His service."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "Taking the Gospel to Britain: A Declaration of Vision, Faith, Courage, and Truth," *Ensign*, July 1987, 7.