

REMEMBERING

ELDER RICHARD G. SCOTT

(1928–2015)



After joining the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1988.

From a young age, Elder Richard G. Scott had a desire to do what was right, even when faced with peer pressure. One summer during high school, he worked on an oyster boat off Long Island, New York, USA. His coworkers tried to get him to do things he knew were wrong. Because he consistently said no, he gained their respect. One night when one of them fell overboard, Richard was the only one who could save his crewmate—because he hadn't gone partying like the others. He said, "Finally, when they understood I would not abandon my principles, we became friends. Then privately, one by one, they asked for help."¹

Richard was outgoing. He was elected high school class president, played the clarinet, and was drum major for the marching band. He did well in school and had many friends, but he felt lonely and lacked confidence. He realized later, after becoming active in the Church, "that those feelings need not have been part of my life if I had really understood the gospel."²

By age 22, Richard was thinking about marriage and a career. But the woman he was dating, Jeanene Watkins, encouraged



His wedding day with Jeanene Watkins. July 16, 1953.

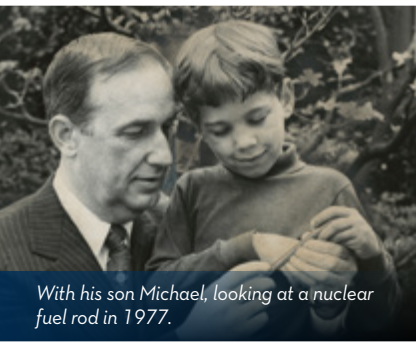
him to serve a mission. After praying about it, that's exactly what he did. "That decision thoroughly changed my life and laid the foundation . . . for a marvelous experience in life together."³ Two weeks after he returned from his mission to Uruguay, they were sealed in the Manti Utah Temple.

Elder Scott taught and lived by the motto "Do what is right; let the consequence follow."⁴ That motto guided him in 1965 when, after receiving a call to serve, he told his boss he would be leaving his job to serve as a mission president in Argentina. His boss, a navy admiral, was angry. He said he would never talk to him again and that Elder Scott would never again work as a nuclear engineer.

Two months later, Elder Scott gave his boss a Book of Mormon. His boss said he would



As a missionary in Uruguay.



With his son Michael, looking at a nuclear fuel rod in 1977.



Time spent watercoloring—a favorite hobby.



The Scott family, from left to right: Ken, David, Linda, Jeanene, Elder Scott, Mike, and Mary Lee.



In the basement workshop of his home, circa 1939.



In his navy uniform.

read it and then surprised Elder Scott when he said, “When you come back . . . , I want you to call me. There will be a job for you.”⁵

After his mission, Elder Scott worked as a nuclear engineering consultant until he was called to the First Quorum of the Seventy in 1977. In 1988 he was called as an Apostle. Fulfilling the call was one way he kept a covenant he had made years before: “When I was very young,” he said, “I made a covenant with the Lord that I would devote my best energies to his work. I have repeated that covenant throughout the years.”⁶

Elder Scott taught how to cope with trials and receive guidance from Heavenly Father. He testified that when we face challenges like doubt, depression, sin, or abuse, we can find strength and relief through faith in Jesus Christ.

He also taught about the importance of making correct choices, that forgiving others heals painful wounds, that sincere prayer opens the door to heavenly guidance, that temple worship and scripture study bring peace and answers, and that marriage and family is central to God’s plan. His faith in Jesus Christ was firm, as was his hope in the blessings that would come in the future. **NE**

NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, “Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 37.
2. In Marvin K. Gardner, “Elder Richard G. Scott: The Real Power Comes from the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1989, 7.
3. “Elder Richard G. Scott: The Mind of a Scientist, the Soul of an Apostle of God,” mormonnewsroom.org.
4. “Do What Is Right,” *Hymns*, no. 237.
5. Richard G. Scott, “Making Hard Decisions,” *New Era*, June 2005, 4–5, 6.
6. In “Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 101.

FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Born November 7, 1928, in Pocatello, Idaho, USA.
- Studied mechanical engineering at George Washington University.
- Served full-time mission in Uruguay from 1950 to 1953.
- Married Jeanene Watkins in Manti Utah Temple in 1953. They are the parents of seven children.
- Worked on top-secret nuclear program for U.S. Navy.
- Called to serve as mission president of Argentina North Mission in 1965.
- Sustained to First Quorum of the Seventy in 1977 and to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1988.