

## **"Service, Which Way do you Face?"**

BOWS Standards Night – January 11, 2015

Mike Baird

### ***Youth Speakers***

- Temple youth Challenge – Breven Hess
- Take Action on daily Challenges – Olivia Fitch

### ***Youth Theme***

- "Embark in the Service of God"

D&C 4:2

"Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day."

### ***Which Way do you Face?***

Elder Lynn G. Robbins (Presidency of the Seventy)

- Explore these thoughts and weave them together

### **"Embark in the Service of God"**

- Embark: begin a course of action, especially one that is *important or demanding*.
- You don't embark to go watch TV
- You don't embark to go eat dinner
- You would embark on a long back-pack trip
- You would embark on learning to play the violin
- What does that mean then to embark in the service of God
  - Share a few thoughts on this

## **Service**

### **"What shall we give" - Experience of cutting wood**

- Song "What shall we give?" in my thoughts during the Christmas season
- Day after the big windstorm in December
- Notice house with big tree down in the driveway on way to exercise
- Elderly couple "cleaning it up" on the way back
- Prompted to help
  - Was scheduled to go lunch with my wife
- Grabbed chain saw and returned
  - Called Jones
- 2.5 hours of work
  
- Mosiah 2:17  
"And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God."
  
- One way to "Embark in the service of God" is to embark in the service of our fellow beings
- How do I embark in the service of my fellow beings?
- Don't have to get your chain saw out to cut wood
  - Not always a big service event once a year in other words
- Service can be simple acts of kindness

## Undone by the kindness of a stranger

- Not always for strangers
- Simply consistently do for others
- Does it have to be a prompting in order to do service?
  - No – deliberately determining service actions is "**embarking**"
  - Individually
  - In your family
  - In your quorum or class
- We serve in callings, giving talks etc.
- We serve when we go to the temple

## Will you receive promptings to serve others?

- Yes I promise it
- How do these promptings come?
  - Thoughts in your mind
  - Strong feelings
- How do we receive these promptings?
- First of all **you have to be "listening"**
  - Stranger was clearly listening
  - One aspect then of listening is **where is my focus?**
  - Too much of an inward focus and we will miss promptings
  - Focus should be outward towards others – One aspect of "Which way do you face"
  - Too much focus on things of the world and the voice of the spirit is drowned out
    - Its like having headphones on listening to music – you can't hear when people speak
    - Immersed in texting or video games – you don't hear the voice
    - If we are immersed in sin then we won't hear that voice

Second – **you must act on promptings – you have to *do*** (Take action as Olivia said)

- Parable of the talents
- Maybe but then again if you have a friend that is unreliable will you keep asking them for help?
- I want to be someone that the Lord can rely on – Don't you?

**To Embark in the Service of God is to embark in the service of our fellow man**

### ***Why* embark in Service?**

Besides the good that comes to others?

- Let me give you another thought:

### **Sheep and Goats**

Matt 25:31-34, 41

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . .

. . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"

- Ahh Uhh... I think I want to be with the sheep don't you?
- How do we make sure we are with the sheep? What do we do?
- Understand that judgment (separate sheep from goats) is not like the scales

<< scales analogy >>

- Service doesn't earn us brownie points - it changes us
  - By doing we become like Christ

Joseph Smith

" If you will elevate others, the very work itself will exalt you " ("Recollection of Oliver B. Huntington in YWJ 2 (May 1891): 366;)

- embark in service: Callings, missionary too

### ***Which way do you face?***

- On the program after the theme it states: "Which Way Do You Face?"
- What does the statement mean?
- Right now I'm literally facing you in the audience and not facing those on the stand
  - Someone out there could stand up, wave his arms, do a little dance to get my attention and I would notice it
  - President Wight could stand up, wave his arms, do a little dance to get my attention and I wouldn't notice
    - Well maybe because of your reaction to him doing a little dance I might then turn and notice
- The question "Which Way do you face" is figurative and not literal however
- Question is figuratively asking "Am I facing the Lord or am I facing some other direction "
  - Am I listening to the Lord or some other voice?
  - Am I doing what the Lord would have me do or something else?
  - Am I keeping the Lord's commandments or doing something else?
  - Am I trying to please God or am I trying to please my friends instead?
- How does this relate to the theme? I can think of several reasons
  1. Already mentioned – we must face outward not inward in order to hear the Lord's calls to service
  2. From Scripture - In order to "serve him with all our might, mind and strength" we must be facing Him not elsewhere
  3. To embark in the service of God you need to face Him

## **What are the things that cause us to face away from God?**

- Peer pressure
  - Great and spacious building
- Trying to please others before pleasing God
- Giving in to temptations

### **Two-faced**

- All of us face both ways at different times – at times we are two-faced
- What does it mean to be two-faced?
  - We try to please both God and Man
  - Church face and the rest of the week face
  - We end up swinging back and forth
  - We don't want to be two-faced
- Why is "Which way you face" so important to you as a teenager?
  - Analogy
  - Personal Experience

### **Analogy** - In this life we are charting a course for eternity

- Analogy of a ocean liner
- In your teenage years you are charting a course for the rest of this life
  - Can you change at any time – yes of course
    - Think of the ocean liner
  - You are setting the initial direction as a teenager – which way you will face

### **My Experience as a teenager**

- Let me share from my own life the importance of this
- Up until 8<sup>th</sup> grade my ship was heading a steady course – I was facing the Lord
- Middle of 8<sup>th</sup> grade – my ship began to zig-zag
  - I was two-faced
  - Nothing horribly wrong
  - Listening to the people in the great and spacious building
  - What my friends thought became more important than parents at times
  - Steadily going off course
  - By the time of my sophomore year – football and basketball star
  - Yet I wasn't really happy – something was missing

- Clashing with my parents
- Pride – not a pretty thing

### **Disaster struck**

- Moved the summer after my sophomore year
  - Starting in a new school and ward
  - Smaller school – everybody knew everybody
  - Mormons were a very small minority – 4 or 5 in the school
    - Individuals were not popular at all
    - Made fun of mostly
    - Ward was scattered among several towns
  - Quarterback of the football team
  - Immediately popular
- I had a choice as to what I stood for – what kind of Mormon I would be – I had to choose which way I would face
  - Decided to choose to face the Lord
- Gradual change started my Junior year
- Middle of my Junior year I was called to be a stake missionary
  - What that meant then... 10 hours/week
  - Once again I faced a choice – to embark in the service of God or not
  - I chose to embark in the service of God and to serve him with all my might mind and strength
  - We taught our friends, brought them to church
  - Brad Walker
  - We baptized several - all of them served missions
  - Served until I left for college
- Looking back those last two years in high school set the course for the rest of my life
  - I turned to face the Lord
  - I embarked in His service
  - When the time came I turned down a basketball scholarship at a local College and chose instead to go to a church school and go on a mission.

## ***Challenge***

- Choose to face the Lord
- Embark in the Service of God
- Testify
  - Find greater meaning in your life
  - You will find peace
  - You will find yourself not adrift but with a sense of purpose and belonging