

How the Experience of SSA Can Bless our Church
Membership

Magnifying Our Membership

Visualizing our membership

Membership: Organization vs. Kingdom

Organization

- “I didn’t feel like going.”
- “The speakers are boring.”
- “I was on vacation.”
- “I don’t belong there.”
- “The other members of Elder’s Quorum or RS or HPG don’t relate to me.”
- “My Bishop isn’t kind to me.”
- “All they do is talk about sports.”

The Baptismal Covenant

“And now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to **bear one another’s burdens**, that they may be light;

“Yea, and are willing to **mourn** with those that mourn; yea, and **comfort** those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life...”

-Mosiah 18:8-9

Magnification

- We are not simply members of an organization
- We are bound to each other in a *covenant relationship*
- Subject to an *eternal King*
- How does that change how we see our membership?

Kingdom

- See other members as wounded (this is an ER, not a beauty contest or championship competition).
- This is about placing an offering, not American Idol
- We all are pledged to the one true King
- Follow the Brethren, not the Brother
- The ideal (Zion) is still in the future

Membership versus Callings

- Even as a regular member, we are called to certain things:
- Specific callings come and go
- But the consecration attitude is to remain
- It doesn't matter where you serve, but how you serve
 - Is that true for you?

Psalm 84:10

“For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand [elsewhere]. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.”

Dealing with Church leaders

D&C 21:5

“For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all **patience** and **faith.**” (emphasis added)

- Why does following Church leaders require faith and patience?
- What does the Lord know about His leaders that we sometimes forget?

Turn it around

- Have I ever been...
 - ...insensitive?
 - ...ignorant?
 - ...uninterested in others' & their interests?
 - ...angry or hateful?
 - ...judgmental?
- What do I want the Lord to do about that?

Jeffrey R. Holland

“No, whatever you do, don’t ask for justice. You and I know that what we plead for is mercy—and that is what we must be willing to give. Can we see the tragic and ultimate irony of not granting to others what we need so badly ourselves?”

-“I Stand All Amazed,” Ensign, August 1986

“The atonement works for that too”

- What we would plead for from Christ about our own mistakes—that we be forgiven, and the Atonement heal the wounds we caused and cannot repair ourselves—is what we must plead for when we are hurt by others, especially leaders in the Church
- And if we are wounded, even by God’s chosen leaders, that too atonement can heal that.

Going Inactive

Is is justified?

Magnifying our inactivity

“And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness... but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked... But that the members should have the same care one for another.

“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

—1 Corinthians 12:23-27

Success through failure

- We don't fail when we make a mistake
- We fail when we fail to learn from our mistake
- D&C 121:36-37:

“...when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.”
- Even our failures, if repented of, can bless the Church.
- And so can our leaders' failures!

**Be the Change You Want to
See in the World**

"It's not fair!"

A friend of mine who passed through a most severe trial, when I discussed it with him, he said simply, "if it's fair, it isn't a trial."

—Neal A. Maxwell, "If Thou Endure it Well."

Our Trials Can Bless Others

“Patience... helps us to realize that while we may be ready to move on, having had enough of a particular experience, our continuing presence is often a needed part of the learning environment of others.”

—Neal A. Maxwell, (“Patience,” Ensign, October 1980, p.29)

Conclusion

“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

—Matthew 5:15-16