

## **Intro: I was asked to talk about Dealing with Doubts**

I know when we hear the word **doubt**, it can sometimes sound negative or unwanted.

Doubts and questions are natural. They are by design. Like temptations or sins they are a part of our earthly experience. They happen. What we decide to do with our doubt is up to us. We can actually grow and become stronger if we sincerely search, ponder and pray. We will come through these doubts and questions with an increase in our faith and spiritual knowledge. **If** we sit idle, without working through our doubts and questions, we cannot expect to get through them and might find ourselves falling further away from the knowledge we already have.

**Sometimes all we can do is JUST believe.** Either during a hard situation in life or if we are just starting out with our own testimonies.

I know that as a new missionary in the MTC I really was running on “belief fumes”. **I believed** all I was learning and what I was going to be teaching people, was good and seemed right. I believed my parents /friends testimonies and knew this was the right thing to do ... but some doubts and lack of a strong testimony really weren't helping my needed knowledge in order to testify as a missionary. As Elder Holland said this was the first step to conviction...Its when I realized that I needed to put in the sincere time/effort to take my “just believing” and few doubts to the next level, this is when and how I gained my testimony.

Doubts can occur even with a solid testimony. Like I mentioned earlier, Doubts and questions are by design. They are there to help us grow, even when we think we can't grow anymore.

I really love **Elder Holland's talk, Lord, I Believe...** it has so many good points about this topic. I will use it as a guide for the next section of my talk:

***Elder Holland outlines 3 observations of this critical step of believing and holding onto the faith that you already have in times of doubt and questioning.***

### **Observation 1:**

When those moments come and issues surface, the resolution of which is not immediately forthcoming, ***hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes.*** It was of this very incident, this specific miracle, that Jesus said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."<sup>6</sup> The size of your faith or the degree of your knowledge is not the issue—***it is the integrity you demonstrate toward the faith you do have and the truth you already know.***

**STORY:** The Linns (A couple from China, studying at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, IA. Where I served my mission ) We taught them the first 2 lessons and then we challenged them to pray at the end of our lesson. They had a non-christian background, I think they were atheist, so this was there VERY first time praying EVER, this was such a sweet experience where they used their newly found belief and exercised it to action. I still can remember that prayer... they simply prayed to our Heavenly Father by thanking him for bring us (The Missionaries) to them, they thanked God for each other and I remember that they asked for help and patience as they were trying to become pregnant with their first baby. I was grateful to be apart of such a simple yet life changing moment. They understood the principal of **demonstrating integrity towards the faith they had and the truth they already knew.**

Back to Elder Hollands Talk...

### **Observation 2:**

When problems come and questions arise, do not start your quest for faith by saying how much you **do not** have, leading as it were with your "unbelief." That is like trying to stuff a turkey through the beak! Let me be clear on this point: ***I am not asking you to pretend to faith you do not have. I am asking you to be true to the faith you do have.*** Sometimes we act as if an honest declaration of doubt is a higher manifestation of moral courage than is an honest

declaration of faith. It is not! So let us all remember the clear message of this scriptural account: Be as candid about your questions as you need to be; life is full of them on one subject or another. But if you and your family want to be healed, don't let those questions stand in the way of faith working its miracle.

*In this Church, **what we know** will always trump what we do not know.*

*And remember, in this world, everyone is to walk by faith.*

I love this observation! It goes to show the value and pricelessness of our spiritual knowledge and the faith that we do have.

### **Observation 3:**

When doubt or difficulty come, do not be afraid to ask for help. The scriptures phrase such earnest desire as being of "real intent," pursued "with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God."<sup>11</sup>

I testify that in response to *that* kind of importuning, God will send help from both sides of the veil to strengthen our belief.

### **A final piece for Elder Holland's talk:**

A 14-year-old boy recently said to me a little hesitantly, "Brother Holland, I can't say yet that I know the Church is true, but I believe it is." I hugged that boy until his eyes bulged out. I told him with all the fervor of my soul that **belief** is a precious word, an even more precious act, and he need never apologize for "only believing." I told him that Christ Himself said, "Be not afraid, only believe,"<sup>12</sup> a phrase which, by the way, carried young Gordon B. Hinckley into the mission field.<sup>13</sup> I told this boy that belief was always the first step toward conviction and that the definitive articles of our collective faith forcefully reiterate the phrase "We believe."<sup>14</sup> And I told

him how very proud I was of him for the honesty of his quest.

**Testimony on doubts, just believing and way to further progress yourself and your testimony.**