

You Know Enough compiled talk

By Cam Hansen

I am grateful for this opportunity to speak. I'm even more grateful that my husband and I were asked to speak this month, because what better way to start off a brand new year than speaking in front of a brand new ward. Although we are new here, I don't feel as new as time would tell, because we have already been welcomed so graciously by you. You've personally introduced yourselves to us, served us in huge ways, visited us in our home or invited us to yours, delivered dinner and treats to us, invited us on adventures, one of you even got me to sign up for a triathlon. Even though we haven't met every single one of you, we have been blessed by your testimonies and comments and lessons here at church the last few months we've been here. So thank you.

Now being at the beginning of a new year has got me thinking a lot, because its a weird time for me. The month of January in particular. To me its a month of highs and lows. It seems to start off with high energy and excitement. Lots of people are setting new goals, feeling motivated by the support of others, and refreshed about the possibility of a brand new start. And I have to say that I am no exception to those feelings. I too feel positive and motivated to make some improvements myself for the new year ahead. So, like so many others, I decide to set some goals as well. And It is exciting! The lows come later on in the month when the excitement wears off and the reality of WINTER starts to set in. The process of making changes and reaching goals isn't easy by nature. So I still can't figure out why I decide to start that process in the middle of winter every year. I like winter. I do. But the honest truth is that day to day living during the winter months is not easy for me. For whatever reason (and I've learned this about myself over the years and so I work really hard to combat, it) maintaining the happy active

lifestyle I like to live always, during this particular time of year, becomes a mental struggle for me. So it is in January that the polarizing highs and lows in my life are most obvious. And this year I've really reflected on that.

Now the reason I even mention this is because I think that spirituality can be very much the same. It is exciting and enjoyable when we are living life spiritually "high" feeling strong and edified, but it is also honest to say that there will be times or situations when our spirituality may be weakened. And we might hit a spiritual low. Whether that be from a difficult trial in our life or that of someone we love. Or maybe it is from a question we are having a hard time answering or a situation or circumstance we don't understand. But the question is, not when, but HOW prepared are we to deal with these difficulties when they do enter in to our lives?

Elder Anderson said it this way "While there are many experiences [we have] full of spiritual power and confirmation, there are also days when we feel inadequate and unprepared, when doubt and confusion enter our spirits, when we have difficulty finding our spiritual footing. Part of our victory as disciples of Christ is what we do when these feelings come.

So, having those moments, or even prolonged phases, of spiritual weakness where we may face challenges or difficulties or have questions or doubts — those are all part of our mortality. And I feel its also important to mention that feeling this way at times, is OK. We just each need to remember that we have not been left to navigate through these hard times alone. Elder Anderson reminds us that "we have enormous spiritual reservoirs of light and truth available to us."

And so thats what I wanted to focus my talk on today. I want to talk about a few of the "reservoirs of light and truth" that Elder Anderson mentions and also some things that I added

that have helped me through spiritually low times in my own life.

Now something that Elder Anderson puts great emphasis on throughout these points is to remember that “YOU KNOW ENOUGH”

He says “Our spiritual journey is the process of a lifetime. We do not know everything in the beginning or even along the way. Our conversion comes step-by-step, line upon line. We first build a foundation of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We treasure the principles and ordinances of repentance, baptism, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. We include a continuing commitment to prayer, a willingness to be obedient, and an ongoing witness of the Book of Mormon. We then remain steady and patient as we progress through mortality. At times, the Lord’s answer will be, “You don’t know everything, but you know enough”—enough to keep the commandments and to do what is right. Remember Nephi’s words: “I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things.”

And so with that in mind I want to keep it simple so I narrowed it down in to four important “reservoirs of light and truth” These are four things to remember when you are faced with trials of doubt. And these really are in no particular order.

1. REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE AND LEARN ABOUT YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

As simple as it sounds YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD. Its a powerful statement, but even more profound when you take the time to learn about the man that is your Heavenly Father. If we make it our focus to strengthen our relationship with God, then through the process it will help each one of us to have that unwavering faith in Him. The better we understand the nature of our Heavenly Father, the better we understand our own divine potential as His spirit children.

Remembering this can really help us through times of spiritual lows. I really liked C.S. Lewis' perspective when he said this "Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on; you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make any sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of - throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself." Brothers and Sisters, we each matter INDIVIDUALLY to God. He knows us personally and recognizes in each one of us our unique and incredible potential. If we can work hard to strengthen our testimony that we are each one of his beloved children and to trust that He allows some earthly suffering because He knows it will bless us, like a refiner's fire, to become like Him and to gain our eternal inheritance — to trust His plan for us — then we know enough to be able to enduring life's challenges.

2. REMEMBER TO BE GRATEFUL AND RECOGNIZE BLESSINGS

Growing up, I remember my dad was in the habit of saying how blessed he was. He was so blessed to be able to go with his daughters to see a movie. "We are so blessed with modern technology" he would say. When he would pray his prayers would go on and on naming blessing after blessing he was so grateful to have. To me, his eldest teenage daughter it often seemed like too much. It was embarrassing and not cool to use that word "blessed" so often. Especially when he's say it on front of my friends and then give me a big kiss on the top of my head. As much as I rolled my eyes then, his ability to recognize the blessings in his life and be vocal about them is a lesson that has stuck with me. Now that I'm older. I've looked back at that

time and realize that there were many difficult circumstances in his life and I'm sure that it wasn't an effortless thing for him to do. To feel so blessed all the time. Yet he always chose that. To recognize how blessed he was despite the trials he was experiencing. I have a strong testimony now that it was his recognition of his blessings and what he did have, that carried him and my family through difficult times.

And that ties perfectly in with the next recommendation which is to

3. REMEMBER TO STAY FOCUSED

Immersing oneself in persistent doubt, fueled by answers from the faithless and the unfaithful, weakens one's faith in Jesus Christ and the Restoration.¹⁷ "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him."¹⁸

When we are faced with uncertainty it is important to rely more heavily on what we do know instead of what we do not. In other words what is our focus?

We have this children's board book for our little boy. And my husband and I laugh about it because we can't stand the book. The illustrations aren't that great and the story was frustrating to us. We honestly don't know where it came from but at one point it was Ozzy's favorite book and he'd ask us to read it to him all the time. And I hate to do this to you, but I'm going to tell you the story.

Its about a Bumblebee who was jumping in mud puddles and suddenly lost her stripes. She begins to frantically look for her stripes. Under a wheel barrow, up in a tree, everywhere. She finally bumps in to another bug friend, a beetle who suggests she look in the pond. So she does.

And as she is looking in the pond the water starts to wash away the mud she had been jumping in and reveals her stripes underneath. And she is so happy and excited! But the frustrating part is that the first thing she decides to do to celebrate is to immediately start jumping in more mud puddles. And that's how the book ends. Terrible book, terrible message. huh

How this book related to me is that You won't be able to enjoy what it is that you have - the ways you are blessed - the truths you do know — if you are too busy jumping in mud puddles. How can we strengthen our testimony and recognize the blessing of the gospel in our lives if we are pouring all of our energy in to the things we don't yet understand. We need to choose what will be our main focus and our actions and faith will follow.

I remember a very specific conversation with my husband. We were getting ready for bed, brushing our teeth, stuff like that and catching up from the day. Around that time it seemed like we were being told from more than a few friends and some of our very close family members that the church wasn't for them anymore. These were life long members we grew up with. We respected all of them and valued their opinions about everything up to this point. This was a very confusing time for us. Not only as individuals, but as a couple. And our faith was shaken. So in that conversation we came to the conclusion that we were on the fence. It wasn't about how we got there anymore, it had happened before we even realized. We were there already and we needed to pick a side. That was a huge moment for both of us. A crushing moment. We had faced trials before both together and separately, but neither of us had been so close to such a crisis of faith. It was what we decided to do next that changed everything for us. We decided together, that it would not be right for us to throw away everything we had believed up to that point before giving it another true and sincere effort again. So we refocused on the things we knew. It was and still is and may always be a continual process. But focusing on the simple testimonies we did have helped us to intentionally invite the spirit back in to our lives. We

decided that we would stop putting all of our energy in to jumping in the mud puddles. which were those things we couldn't understand. By changing our focus to the Light and knowledge we did have our actions followed, and then our faith. We were reminded of why we belong to this church and we eventually began to feel the power of it in our lives again.

4. REMEMBER TO SINCERELY ASK

Addressing honest questions is an important part of building faith, and we use both our intellect and our feelings. The Lord said, "I will tell you in your mind and in your heart."¹³ Not all answers will come immediately, but most questions can be resolved through sincere study and seeking answers from God. Using our mind without our heart will not bring spiritual answers.

And Elder Andersen says that "Faith never demands an answer to every question but seeks the assurance and courage to move forward, sometimes acknowledging, "I don't know everything, but I do know enough to continue on the path of discipleship."¹⁶

4. REMEMBER TO CHOOSE FAITH

Through the years we take important spiritual steps over and over again. We begin to see that "he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day."⁵ Our questions and doubts are resolved or become less concerning to us. Our faith becomes simple and pure. We come to know what we already knew.

How we live our lives either increases or diminishes our faith. Prayer, obedience, honesty, purity of thought and deed, and unselfishness increase faith. Without these, faith diminishes. Why did

the Savior say to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not"?¹² Because there is an adversary who delights in destroying our faith! Be relentless in protecting your faith.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is not something ethereal, floating loosely in the air. Faith does not fall upon us by chance or stay with us by birthright. It is, as the scriptures say, "substance ..., the evidence of things not seen."⁵ Faith emits a spiritual light, and that light is discernible.⁶ Faith in Jesus Christ is a gift from heaven that comes as we choose to believe⁷ and as we seek it and hold on to it. Your faith is either growing stronger or becoming weaker. Faith is a principle of power, important not only in this life but also in our progression beyond the veil.⁸ By the grace of Christ, we will one day be saved through faith on His name.⁹ The future of your faith is not by chance, but by choice.

We must choose Faith and when we do this we are able to rely on what you do know to help lift you from those times of spiritual weakness.

That is my testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen