

**John Larsen <theclaw56@gmail.com>**

101027: Letter to Phillip

John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Wed, Oct 27, 2010 at 10:45 PM

Reply-To: john@larsen-family.us

To: joyce@larsen-family.us

Missionary Name: Elder Phillip Larsen

Mission: Provo MTC

Date Submitted: October 27

Hello Dear Phillip,

Thank you very much for that nice snail mail letter you sent me. Your words warmed my heart. I have always tried to be a good father and provider, so it's uplifting to understand your feelings about me.

We did miss an opportunity before you left on your mission for me to give you a father's blessing. Joyce and I talked about it. At the time you had just been set apart by President Coopridge, and the words in his blessing seemed to say it all. I hope you still have the written copy of that blessing. If not, I can send it to you again. That said, we should have made the effort to give you a blessing. I look forward to the opportunity to do so later.

Several years ago, actually almost ten years ago now, when we went to Utah for my parent's 50th wedding anniversary, I asked my Dad for a father's blessing. I wish I had a written record of that blessing. I don't remember any of it except that it happened. I remember at that time giving my Mom a blessing because she was having severe back pain. I was still recovering from my own back pain at the time. After we gave my Mom a blessing I had my brother Mark and my Dad give me a priesthood blessing of healing. At the time I was taking about eight pain killers a day trying to keep the edge off the pain. After the blessing I was able to completely stop taking any pain medications. I still had pain, but was able to deal with it. Slowly over time through gym workouts and chiropractic visits I grew stronger and the pain finally went away. There were things that I needed to learn from all that, and that's why the healing wasn't immediate. Life is like that. The duration of experiences is whatever the Lord sees fit. He knows what we need. We must use faith everyday and in every experience.

Brother Henkel is improving steadily. He is starting to go up and down stairs now. That's a big step (no pun intended) proving that his abdominal muscles are getting

back to normal. He is wanting visitors, so I'm hoping to figure out a time to get over there. I also need to get over to Sister Stevens' home. A few weeks back there was a service project to get her moved from the upstairs to the main floor. No the push is to get the upstairs completed to the point where it can be rented. Having a renter will bring in much needed income. So, I've been asked to go over there and make a list of everything that needs to be done to make the place rent worthy. It's a little more challenging going over there now because my old home teaching companion is no longer available. I need to find someone to go over there with me and also need to find an opportunity to do it.

The last several days I've been spending some time transcribing Tony Eberhard's brief personal history from the video into a Word document. I've done 24 minutes of the 1:17 total. I felt strong promptings from the spirit to do this for Pam and her family. Also, this will make it easier to share with people. Once I have the whole thing transcribed then I will contact Pam to see what pictures can be scanned and added to the document. Once that is done then I'll make some books out of it similar to the "A Day of Passing" books that I made about Stanford with a GBC binding. I will also be able to share it with you and others.

That's interesting that you've seen Elder Nelson "live" three times. I hope you have opportunity to hear other Apostles. I'm reminded of an experience I had many years ago in December 1974, when I was about your age, 18 years old. As you know, I worked in the Church Office Building (COB) as a janitor for about two years before I left on my mission. That December they held a special Christmas devotional for Church employees in the Tabernacle. I remember going to the devotional with my older brother Doug who also worked at the COB. We were up in the balcony on the left side as you face the podium, almost directly to the side of the podium. We were waiting for President Kimball to come out. When President Kimball came walking out from under the choir seats to the podium the spirit filled my soul. It was a tremendous feeling, an overwhelming feeling of peace and assurance that he was the Lord's prophet. It was a very neat experience.

We haven't been back to the Brazilian BBQ since the time we went with you. We have done other things though, like King Richard's Faire and Ruby Tuesdays. There are only so many Saturdays and money to do things. I'm sure we'll get back there eventually.

I plan on scanning the pictures you sent us and the ones Gwen sent us so that I can put them on your Facebook page. I haven't done it yet, but hope to get to that task this weekend.

Joyce plans on sending you a package very soon, maybe on Thursday. It will have the 45 pictures I picked up from Wal-Mart on Saturday. I still need to do another picture

order with Winston in them and others.

I did take your sword to King Richard's Faire, but realized that I didn't want to deal with it poking out the back the whole time I was there, so I left it in the car. But, it was there!

We hear from many people that they have received letters from you... Shin, Blanchette, Rachel, others that I can't remember right now. I think that is wonderful of you to write letters like that. Like in "Pride and Prejudice" when Lizzy gets a letter and her mother is trying to read it over her shoulder. Her mother complains and wonders why Lizzy always is getting letters. The statement was made that she gets letters because she writes letters. Well, your chances of getting letters from people go way up when you send letters first. I hope people answer back.

If we're related to any Larsens in Denmark it would be very very distant. It would be challenging to figure out the connection. I'm not a family history expert by any means.

About being homesick... It reminded me of something my Dad put in his autobiography about when he was training in the army air corps. They spent part of their training in North Dakota. Here is a snippet from his biography:

"To show how homesick I was there, let me tell you this humorous, rather pathetic incident. Between North Dakota and Utah there are 1500 miles, and Utah is southwest from North Dakota. I was living in the northeast corner of the dormitory. I struck a bargain with a Brigham City man who was a couple years older than I who was living in a room on the southwest corner of the same dormitory. I asked him if he would trade rooms with me so I could be on the southwest corner of the building and look out toward Utah thinking that might help my homesickness. Nothing helped except time. It gradually got better with time and as I matured a little bit."

I don't remember being homesick much in the LTM. I did get homesick in France around the holidays. I arrived in France on November 24, 1975, my Dad's birthday. I don't remember if that was before or after thanksgiving. However, my first Christmas in France was somewhat bleak. I was used to the decorated Christmas tree and home, and there I was in France with a very small live tree with paper rings for ornaments. We gave gifts to each other. What made it somewhat bearable was being invited to the Branch President's farm house for lunch. We ended up staying there all day long and riding our bicycles home late in the evening. Again, it wasn't like being home and I missed my family terribly. However, we kept working hard and I gradually grew used to being away.

It's time for bed here. I hope things continue going well for you there. I'm keeping very busy with work. There is a lot going on there.

We pray for you all the time. We're so proud of you. We miss you, of course, but know that you're doing exactly what you need to be doing at this time in your life. Keep working hard and giving it your best effort and the Lord will bless and strengthen you.

Love,

Dad

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