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6-27-2011

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Mon, Jul 4, 2011 at 12:09 PM

To: Phillip Larsen <phillip.larsen@myldsmail.net>

Cc: John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

My Dear Elder Phillip Edward Larsen,

Happy 4th of July! Happy Independence Day!

How I love your emails! I love to hear from you, love to know what you are doing. Is it all right with you if I tell Beverly what you said about your "transformation being relatively painless", and how you are learning what that means now? I think she would be pleased to know that.

We had missionaries come to dinner on Saturday night, and talked to them about what you said, about welcoming the investigators. They said they had never noticed a problem with that in Nashua, and I said that maybe your ward was just having an off night or something. You've said how friendly they are and how much love they have, so I'm sure they could love the investigators, too. Maybe they just need a gentle reminder. Let them know how much you appreciate what they do, and how important it is to embrace investigators, make them feel welcome and loved, as well as they love each other.

I think you are learning a lot from your mission, a lot from your experience. I don't know if it's all God wants you to know. I think you need to take it up with Him. Ask Him if there is something more for you to be learning. I'm thrilled with every letter you send, thrilled to see how you are doing. My boy is transforming into a man!

It's cool that you occasionally use Portuguese sentence structure in your English! That's a good sign, that you are learning the language. I'm continuing to listen to the audio lessons, and just need to learn more and more, and to also learn how the words are pronounced, as I read them. I've read some Portuguese comments on FB, both on Taylor's FB home page, and on a photo that a member posted of you. I could understand a word here and there, and some of it was like, "So that's what that word looks like!"

What kind of American cookies were the girls baking last week? Do the Brazilian people eat cookies? If so, are they different from American cookies? It's funny that Sabina's father was not happy about the missionaries being fed hamburgers! Did he

not think the food was fancy enough? I'm glad you enjoyed it! I love feeding the missionaries here. Lori said they never get to have them over. They can only have them over if they also have an investigator. I think it's good for the kids in the family to be around missionaries. It makes them feel more a part of it. Not just seeing the missionaries on Sunday doing their thing, and occasionally on the street.

Do you have a fan in your apartment? And do most people not have AC? We're enjoying our AC today. It's warm and humid, and I always think on those days that you have it even more warm and more humid.

I asked last week, but I'll ask again: when you approach people's houses, do you knock on their doors, or ring doorbells, or clap? Ricky mentions "clapping" people's doors, and I wondered if it's that way all over Brasil.

We had a new missionary come in this last transfer. The previous one, Elder Sorel, was only here for one transfer. But apparently, July 1st is the first day of the Massachusetts Boston Mission including the Connecticut Hartford Mission, so almost every companionship was affected. They were moved around so they were all mixed up, to get rid of the "them" and "us" feeling, and have unity in the newly-made bigger Massachusetts Boston Mission. That would be interesting to be called to one mission, and end up in another. I guess that happened to Paul Banks, when part of his mission was made into the Brazil Teresina Mission. Or maybe that happened after he returned, I can't remember.

Today we're going to go to Bradford's apartment and watch 1776, then go out to eat something and see the fireworks in Boston from some place at his school. We were going to go to the Noels' for a cookout, but we can't do both without rushing. Dad and I were also going to be in a parade in Amherst, walking with Mitt Romney. Jon Huntsman, former governor of UT, and also LDS, who recently announced his candidacy for President, is also going to be in the parade. But I felt like the day would be too rushed, and though it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, we decided to stay home, and get things done here, before heading to Bradford's house. Julia and I will go to AC Moore, too, to sign her up for a few art classes this summer. And we will take care of the Hawkins' rabbit and house. The Hawkins are in the Hill Cumorah Pageant this year. I'm so glad they get to do it when Youth Conference is the Pageant. So our kids will be able to see them in it.

Last night was Dad's concert for the MCA band. It was held indoors because of the threat of thunderstorms, and it had rained just before the concert. The building was very hot, but there were no bugs, so that was good. The concert was wonderful, and it was nice that the Army Band played with the MCA band. Julia read her book the whole time, but I think she listened, too.

Yesterday in church, Pam Eberhard bore her testimony. One thing she said is that she always relied on Tony's testimony, because it was so strong. But since he passed away, she has been immersing herself in the scriptures, and loving them, and gaining spiritual strengths and insights she never had before, and having wonderful spiritual experiences. It's amazing how the Lord works, to bless people with what they need to draw close to Him and to be more like Him, even in the midst of sorrow. Maybe because of the sorrow. Dad bore his testimony, too. I bore mine in Relief Society. The Spirit was strong in our meetings yesterday. I usually attend our own ward on Fast Sunday, and it's good to hear the testimonies of the members, and strengthen each other.

I was just pondering what to write next, and my eye fell on the paragraph in your email when you talk about worrying again. It made me think, that you have come by that naturally, from your Mom. (Sorry!) I worry, too. Quite a bit. I worry about whether I'm getting things done. And at the end of the day I have a hard time feeling glad for the things I did do, because I want to do everything. I worry about letting people down, and I find I do tons of stuff to please other people. Which is not always a bad thing (if you're doing some service to bring people joy and meet their needs, for instance), but which makes me choose things for the wrong reasons, sometimes. I guess advice I can give to you, and to myself, is to follow the Spirit, and do everything possible to stay spiritually in tune. Ask the Lord what He wants for you, and do it. And trust that if you do that, it will be right.

Has the package come? I guess if it has, we will hear about it in your email. Actually, two things for you to watch for, the large package, and the little padded envelope with the thumb drive in it.

Well, my turn to shower. Though we now have two showers, our stuff is all set up for upstairs. Also, there is only one water heater :). So we need to not have hot water being used in numerous places at once.

I love you, Phillip. I'm proud of you and the work you are doing, the Lord's work. Have a great 4th of July!

Love,
Mom

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