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A letter from Dad: 3 Feb 2011

John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Thu, Feb 3, 2011 at 10:35 AM

Reply-To: john@larsen-family.us

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

Cc: joyce@larsen-family.us

Dear Phillip,

Wow. Here it is, Thursday morning, and I haven't written a single thing yet this week. Somehow it isn't surprising. We have been blasted with snow storms this week. I've had very long commutes and long work days, and somehow the week just sped by. Julia had a snow day on Wednesday and there is a delayed opening this morning, Thursday.

The "Ricky Nelson" band finally got together last Friday for a rehearsal. That's my first rehearsal since a single one in November. We don't have a trumpet player right now since Carl Belnap moved to Utah. The Merrimack Concert Band rehearsals start this coming Tuesday, Feb 8th (Heather's birthday), and there is a trumpet player there that I'm going to talk to about the "Ricky Nelson" band. She's a really good trumpet player, but I don't know if she would have any interest or not. However, unless I ask, I won't know. It was nice to start playing again.

This past Sunday was a 5th Sunday, so we had combined meetings with the Relief Society. All the meetings were really good this past Sunday. The youth speaker for Sacrament meeting was "sick" and didn't come so Bishop McFadden asked the new missionary, Elder Wilder, to bear testimony, which he did very well. He was followed by Sister Johnson. She gave an excellent talk, but I don't remember much about it now. (Your Mom does really well with taking notes during meetings. She took three pages of notes this past Sunday, which indicates how good everything was.) During Sister Johnson's talk she talked about something and quoted scripture that got me to thinking. She read some verses where Christ is talking to the inhabitants of the Americas when he revealed himself to them. She read 3 Ne 17:7...

"Have ye any that are sick among you? Bring them hither. Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them, for I have compassion upon you; my bowels are filled with mercy."

I had an insight that I hadn't noticed before. There was Christ in all his perfection,

power, and glory, the resurrected Savior. He could have easily gone through the crowd searching out the sick and afflicted and healing them. He could have made a pronouncement from where he was and healed everyone by simply commanding it to be done. But, what does he do? He tells the people to "Bring them hither and I will heal them..." Even though he was and is all powerful, he still had the people be the intermediaries. The people had to search among them and find those who were ill or "afflicted in any manner." The people used their faith and works to bring the afflicted to him and then he healed them. So, even in that setting Christ needed the believers to have faith and do the work. It is similar to that today. Who in the world today isn't "...afflicted in any manner?" Are we not all afflicted in some way, some more than others? We think of afflictions usually in the physical mortal sense. However, everyone is afflicted in the spiritual sense as well. You are actively "...bring[ing] them hither..." You search and find, teach and testify, and bring individuals to Christ so that he heal them. Christ's relationship is individual with each of Heavenly Father's children. He needs us. President Uchtdorf gave a talk in April 2010 conference entitled "You Are My Hands". You might remember it, about the statue of Christ in a German city that was damaged by bombing raids during WW2. We are Christ's hands. We must "...bring them hither." That's how all are blessed, the afflicted and those that help them.

Anyway, that had an impact on me.

Brother Henkel came home teaching this past Sunday. He is looking good. He has been working at his new job for several months now. He is on the road a lot again and very busy. He would rather not be on the road so much, but what a blessing! Heavenly Father has richly blessed him through his very serious medical issues and surgeries.

The first snow storm to hit was Tuesday. School started at the normal time, but the storm started about 8:00 AM. They had an early release to get everyone home. I got caught with a 90 minute commute going in that morning. I had several things to get done that morning. I did the gym as usual, but drove directly to church from the gym to turn all the computers back on. PSNH had arranged for power to be shut off to the building Monday morning so all the computers had been turned off Sunday night. After that I came home and got ready for work. My new glasses were ready so I really wanted to pick them up from Nashua Eye Associates on Coliseum Drive. So after getting ready for work I drove up there. I felt prompted to fill up two five gallon gas cans in preparation for the storm, so did that on the way home. By then the storm had started and it took me 90 minutes to get there. I worked late to make up for getting to work at 10:30. It was an adventure getting home.

The second storm started early Wednesday morning. School was cancelled. I dug myself out and drove to work. The roads were in pretty good shape and traffic was light because so many people stayed home. The storm was kind of crazy during the

day. I actually went for my noon walk, but I only saw one other person out for a joy walk. The park was impassable. I was in the street much of the walk. The drive home was another 90 minute commute, but I arrived home at 8:30pm. Since it was Feb 2nd we had to stick with tradition and watch "Ground Hog Day". That was fun.

The second storm ended mid day and then the third storm started in. It didn't deliver as much as they were predicting. They said the total for the two storms would be up to 20 inches in our area. However, there is SO MUCH SNOW that there isn't anywhere to put it. I'm going out in a few minutes to chop the tops off piles so there will be room for the next storm which is supposed to hit this Saturday followed by more storms next week. It feels like I'm driving through "half pipes" everywhere. The streets are narrow and getting more narrow. This is an amazing winter. I like the snow. Other people are complaining about it, but I think it is awesome. So... I'm going outside now to do that task. I'll take some pictures too.

Whew.... 2 hours and 20 minutes later I'm done. Now to shower. Okay. That's done. Now to get the pictures uploaded and head to work.

Your Mom asked me to include the picture of Ricky with his mission president and mission mom. She thinks its really cool how Ricky has the exact same name tag as you do.

One other incident that happened this past Monday while Heather and I were out for our noon walk. The streets and sidewalks were really messy. You know the place in downtown Concord right where the railroad tracks are. We had just gone past the railroad tracks and I was getting ready to step out into the road to cross the street. I stepped with my left foot on a blob of ice. You know that feeling you get when you know you're foot is going to slip and down you'll go? Well, I had that feeling and then instead of falling I had the feeling that some force was holding me up and making my foot stick. It was a strange sensation. I think my guardian angel was holding me up for that brief moment until I could step off. I mentioned this to Heather later in the walk because I kept thinking about it. I wasn't supposed to fall that time. I'm glad.

Well, off to work now. Love you. I'm proud of you. You are maturing. I can sense it in your emails over time. You're an awesome missionary.

Love,

Dad

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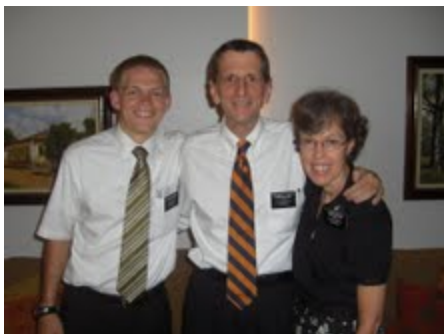
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