

iChoose to Remember

A favorite scripture of mine is Joshua 1:9, “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” I love that in this scripture the Lord doesn't only comfort us with the knowledge that He will be with us, He *commands* us to be not afraid.

The following is a story about Joseph F. Smith from a talk by M. Russell Ballard:

When we covenant in the waters of baptism to “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places,” we're not talking solely about fast and testimony meetings. It may not always be easy, convenient, or politically correct to stand for truth and right, but it is always the right thing to do. Always.

Joseph F. Smith was 19 when he returned from his mission in Hawaii. As he traveled from California to his home in Utah, he was confronted one morning by a “wagonload of profane drunks . . . , shooting their guns, yelling wildly, and cursing the Mormons.” One of the drunks, “waving a pistol,” came toward him. Although Joseph “was terrified, he felt it would be unwise and useless to run . . . , and so he advanced toward the gunman as if he found nothing out of the ordinary in his conduct. ‘Are you a — — — Mormon?’ the stranger demanded. Mustering all the composure he could, Joseph answered evenly while looking the man straight in the eye, ‘Yes, siree; dyed in the wool; true blue, through and through.’ Almost stunned by this wholly unexpected response, the gunman stopped, dropped his hands to his sides, and, after looking incredulously at Joseph for a moment, said in a subdued tone, ‘Well, you are the — — — pleasantest man I ever met! Shake. I am glad to see a fellow stand for his convictions.’ So saying, he turned and walked away.” (M. Russell Ballard, “Standing for Truth and Right,” October 1997)

I love the courage with which Joseph F. Smith stood as God's witness. He lived Peter's counsel to “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:” (1 Peter 3:15). This is where missionary work begins. When we live this counsel we can indeed be “the light of the world” (Matthew 6:14).

It is my hope that we can all gain courage from the example of Joseph F. Smith and always stand as a witness of God while giving answer for the reason of the hope that is within us.

-Joshua Crockett

Hurrah for Israel!

Please submit your favorite family history story to me so that I can share it in an iChoose to Remember. Email your story to me at joshcrockett0101@gmail.com. I hope to get more stories than I can use! Feel free to explain the gospel principle your story demonstrates or to just send it to me on its own.