

Emma Fleming
Foothills Ward
Salem Stake Conference
January 28, 2018

Rising Above

- I'd like everyone to close their eyes and imagine with me. Imagine how differently the world would be if every person knew they have a Heavenly Father and Savior who loves them? Take it down a step, imagine how different our community would be? Our stake? Our households? Imagine how differently we would treat people, but more importantly, how differently we would treat ourselves if we knew how much our Heavenly Father and Savior loves us, individually. Please brothers and sisters, if you don't know this love... or believe in this love... seek it. Seek to understand it and I promise you that the truth of this will be given to you.
- I was asked to share my thoughts about something the youth and everyone of this stake should hear from the Lord. I feel inspired to talk about limits. I'm sure we all remember when we were kids how we wanted to grow up and be astronauts. Then the next day it was a football player. Then the next day we were ballet dancers, geologists, scuba divers, singers...
- But then when you grow up and so called "reality" hits, those dreams fade away because we limit ourselves. We set these limits on ourselves. We only think we are capable of achieving so much, and that's our limit. When we hit it, we are stuck there. If we could see ourselves as Heavenly Father sees us, I don't think we'd settle for our mediocre self-made limitations and say, "That's enough". We would instead rise, because we would know for certain that we are capable. It's the uncertainty and being pushed outside of our comfort zones that creates these limits.
- Why do we put limits on ourselves? Why do we settle for mediocracy? Last night in the adult session, it was talked about how simply doing the day to day things of the gospel wouldn't be enough for the last days, but we limit ourselves to doing just that much. With Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, we are limitless because they are limitless. In the latest General Conference, Elder John Pingree said, "Divine assignments are not reserved for a privileged few but are for all of us – regardless of gender, age, race, nationality, income level, social status, or Church calling. Every one of us has a meaningful role to play in furthering God's work." He continues to say, "Some of us question whether Heavenly Father can use us to make important contributions. But remember, He has always used ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things." Don't let the opportunity to fulfill the work that Heavenly Father has for you slip away due to self-made limits. When yoked with Christ, we cannot fail.
- How do we break these limits? We rise. Rising up requires us to leave something behind. Something has to be risen from. When Christ rose on the third day, he rose from death

because death had been conquered. Whatever it is we are rising from (pornography, substance abuse, distractions, family struggles), by rising, we are becoming closer to our Heavenly Father and Savior Jesus Christ. We are choosing to be done with the lesser things.

- Yesterday I attended the 50th wedding anniversary party of my grandparents. I consider their story one of rising up. My grandfather's dad was an alcoholic, and although he was a member of the church, he didn't support the family in attending weekly meetings. My grandfather was the first in his family to serve a mission even though he was the second youngest of ten. A mission was something he wanted to do because he knew it was good. My grandmother came from a physically and mentally abusive home and was disowned by her family when she joined the church at age 19. When my grandfather and grandmother got married, they made a purposeful choice to raise their family is gospel principles contrary to the way themselves had been raised. The fruits of their purposeful choice are their six children being married in the temple, and their 22 grandchildren living the gospel and serving missions.
- In a revelation given to Emma Smith found in D&C 25:10, it says, "And verily I say unto thee that thou shalt lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better."
- How do we rise above and lay aside the things of this world? If someone asked me, I would say three things:
 - First, remember that you are a son or daughter of a divine celestial God who loves you more than you are able to comprehend. He desires for us to rise to him.
 - Second, go to the temple. The temple is our heavenly home. I recently went through the Payson Temple to receive my own endowment and I know now more than before that Christ resides in his holy temples. It is his home. It is our home and we are welcomed into our home. There isn't a better way to lay aside worldly things than by going to go to Heaven on Earth and partaking in ordinances for ourselves and for those who have passed on. I promise that you will be blessed for faithfully going to the temple.
 - Third, serve. You'll find that the most important role you will ever play in this life is the role of mother, father, husband, wife, daughter, son, sister, brother, neighbor, and friend. Serve the people who have given you those roles. They are the ones you are most grateful for in the end. As you demonstrate the pure love of Christ through service, your soul will be filled with the warmest joy you'll ever feel which then lets you rise above the circumstances of life.
- We were created to have joy, but true eternal joy only comes through the Gospel of Jesus Christ and abiding by its teachings. Our souls hunger for goodness. It's the very essence of having the Light of Christ within us. President Hinckley said this, "Life is to be enjoyed, not just endured."

- Enjoy life brothers and sisters. Rise above the mediocre things we chain ourselves to. It's not worth it. Centering ourselves in Christ is worth it and buckling down because Satan won't back down from trying to corrupt those who seek light. Please don't ever settle for less. Continue to learn, grow, and change... be a change by rising above.