



President Hughes

Stake Presidency

At the last general conference, Elder Neil L Anderson of the 12, spoke about spiritually defining memories. He mentioned how Joseph Smith in his darkest moments was able to fall back on some of his spiritual defining memories, one such being the first vision. You remember that Joseph said after this that he had actually seen a vision, he knew it, and he knew that God knew it and he could not deny it.

I've been blessed brothers and sisters over the years, to have had many wonderful experiences.

A few years ago, I was able to go with my family and visit the sacred grove where the first vision took place. I was able to stand in the bedroom of Joseph Smith where he saw the angel Moroni. We were able to go to the printing press and see where the Book of Mormon was published. We visited the Hill Cumorah to see where the Golden plates were buried. We went to the Whitmer farmhouse where the church was organized 190 years ago. We've also been to Nauvoo and been able to see where the Saints lived. Been to the Nauvoo temple and visited the grave of Joseph and Hyrum. We've also been to Carthage jail and stood in the room where Joseph and Hyrum were martyred. A few years ago, with my family we were in Salt Lake and we had a miraculous meeting with President Monson the president of the church at the time. All these experiences though brothers and sisters do not appear on my spiritual defining memories. I would like to share two that do...

25 years ago, I was serving as a missionary in the Bristol mission. And I had an experience that I'll never forget. I remember I was serving in the Pontypridd area and one morning while studying the Book of Mormon sat on my bed, I had an overwhelming spiritual experience that I can't describe, but I knew that God knew, that I knew, that he was real, and that he was aware of me.

This is an experience that I've been able to fall back on many times over the years since coming home and getting married and having colleagues in the church and experiencing dark times in my life and trials I've always been able to recall that experience that I can't deny, which just helped me through.

Another experience I've had was more recent, about 18 months ago, I was asked to go and see Elder Sabin and Elder Dini Ciacci, when they came to reorganise the stake. At the time I was very unwell. I was just about recovering from a nervous breakdown; my brother and business partner David had left to serve a mission. He accepted the assignment to serve as the mission president in the Birmingham mission and so he left, but then it was as if all hell had broken loose. Because of Brexit the exchange rate changed and the business that we had, importing from America just wasn't sustainable anymore. And there was a lot of pressure on me at that time, because I was trying to support my own family, we employed about 30 people at the time and of course David was on his mission, and we had to support him, you know he went on the premise that would be able to continue to pay him. So out of nowhere my mind just broke and so here I was sat in front of Elder Sabin and Elder Dini Ciacci and I just poured out my soul to them. I just said I've never refused a calling, but you need to know my circumstances. I'll never forget what Elder Sabin said to me. He just looked me in the eye and said Brother Hughes do you pay a full tithing to which I said yes and then he said do you hold a current temple recommend, of course I did at the time. He then looked me in the eye and said Brother Hughes then all will be well. Then out of nowhere, I felt this overwhelming love. It was as if the Saviour was putting his arms around me, and I knew at that point more than I'd ever known any point in my life, that the Saviour was aware of me Peter Hughes and my circumstances and that he loved me. With the help of my youngest brother Bishop Hughes we've been able to start a new business and we've been able to support ourselves and our families and continue to support David on his mission. It's been a wonderful experience, it's been difficult and the days now more full of stress and pressure than they were back then, but we get through it, and no matter what our circumstances are we can feel the joy and the love that the gospel brings.

President Hughes continued

I'm grateful for all that I have. I acknowledge the Lord's hand in my life. I'm grateful for the spiritually defining memories that I have, two of which I've just shared. And I know that if you think of about your lives brothers and Sisters, you will be able to think of those spiritually defining memories you have and they will help you through difficult times. I have a testament that God lives. That he truly is our Heavenly Father. That he knows us by name and that he loves us. That we have a Saviour who came and paid the price for our sins, but also felt all our pains and difficulties. That He's the only person that can truly heal us. I know that if we turn to him, we will find the peace and reassurance that we need to get us through our trials. I'm grateful for you brother and sisters, it's a privilege to serve at this time with President Harrott and President Teal. We love all of you, we may not know you individually, but we have a great love for you and desire to serve. Again,

I'm grateful for all that I have and I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen