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“Trust in the Lord’s Plan”

Lessons Learned from the Rome Italy Temple

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I rejoice in this opportunity to speak to you determined BYU-Pathway students from all around the world. You have embarked on an educational journey that may include challenges and even setbacks along the way. My desire is to provide you with hope and encouragement when you face difficult times as you pursue your educational goals.

The recently dedicated Rome Italy Temple holds a special place in my heart. I participated in the construction process for this magnificent house of the Lord since the groundbreaking ceremony in September 2009. The excitement of everyone in attendance was palpable, and we all anticipated that the construction would proceed smoothly and swiftly. None of us attending that day would have ever imagined it would take almost 10 years to complete this beautiful edifice.

Unfortunately, as soon as construction began, problems arose. Then, for several years, obstacles of every kind got in our way that often impeded and delayed our progress. The finish date of the construction had to be pushed back several times. During these challenging times, I occasionally found myself asking: “Where is the Lord? Why doesn’t He come to help us?”

Finally, the construction of the temple was complete. Last March, I was invited to participate in the dedicatory sessions. Upon my arrival at the temple site, I looked upon the incredible beauty of the temple and was filled with overwhelming feelings of awe and gratitude. The house of the Lord was truly magnificent!

We proceeded with the final inspection of the building. Typically, during this inspection, a detailed list is drawn up of needed improvements and adjustments. However, this time, I couldn’t find a single flaw or imperfection. In amazement, I asked the construction managers: “Did you really build this temple? Everything is so perfect!” These professionals, with remarkable skills and many years of experience, could have boasted about their performance with legitimate pride. Instead, what I saw in their eyes was profound humility and infinite gratitude. They candidly responded: “We did so little. It was the Lord who did it!”

During the dedicatory weekend that followed, several remarkable events took place that marked pivotal moments in the Church. We all remember the historic meeting between President Russell M. Nelson and Pope Francis, as well as the amazing photograph of the First Presidency and the entire Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taken in front of the statues of Christ and His original Apostles. I suddenly realized that none of these events likely would have occurred if the temple dedication had taken place in prior years. The Lord had a plan, and He had perfectly orchestrated every detail of the construction of His holy house — including its somewhat elongated construction schedule.

My brothers and sisters, the life of a BYU-Pathway student sometimes may be like the construction of the Rome Italy Temple. As you pursue your education, challenging events may unfold in your lives. It could be that you are expecting a new baby, or you experience illness, or you have to work full-time to support your family. Completing your home study or attending group meetings may become more difficult and your graduation might be delayed. At times you may ask, “Where is the Lord? Why doesn’t He come to help me?”

I testify that there is a perfect plan for you, prepared in heaven, that is entirely devoted to your earthly and eternal success and happiness. The Lord is keenly aware of your efforts and desires. He has all power and will do everything to assist you in carrying out His plan for your life. It is written in the scriptures: “The Lord knoweth all things from the beginning; wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men; for behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words.”¹

If you remain faithful, you have the promise that your life’s work will lead to a perfect and glorious result. One day, you will look back at your earthly existence and, with tender feelings, recognize that the hand of the Lord has never failed you — that He was constantly assisting and guiding your steps. You will realize that obstacles, even setbacks, were there for a wise purpose that only He knew. Like the builders of the Rome Italy Temple, you will humbly exclaim: “I did so little. It was the Lord who did it!”

The Lord’s promises and our own faithfulness provide no assurances that what happens in our lives will always conform with *our* personal desires and expectations. Rather, when we keep our covenants, we receive a promise that all will be in accordance with *His* will and perfect plan for us.

The good news is that the Lord’s plan will bless us far more than our own. He has all knowledge and a perspective that we don’t have. He cares for us with infinite love. Therefore, the greatest thing you and I can desire is that His plan for us will be accomplished.

My dear brothers and sisters, Christ lives. He loves you more than you can ever comprehend. Your success in your studies as well as your eternal happiness depend in great part on the faith and trust you put in Him.

I invite you to seek personal revelation to know the Lord’s plan for you and to strive to align your life with His will. After you have done all in your power, if things don’t turn out the way you hoped or expected, keep going, live faithfully, and trust in the Lord’s promises. If you do this, I promise you that His hand will guide you and you will find peace, joy, and ultimate success in your endeavors. Of this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

¹ [1 Nephi 9:6](#)