
“The Promise of Diligence”

D&C 90:24

The most quoted verse in D&C 90 is “Search diligently, pray always and be believing, and all things shall work together for your good, if ye walk uprightly and remember the covenants wherewith ye have covenanted one with another” (D&C 90:24). The verse is a call to diligence with the promise that all of life’s experiences will work together for good.

Take, for example, the life of Robert Gardner Jr., who journeyed across the plains to the Salt Lake Valley. On the day of his arrival in October 1847, he recorded, “I unyoked my oxen and sat down on my broken wagon tongue, and said I could not go another day’s journey.” Yet as his life went on, he was asked to perform other journeys and went. After serving a mission in Canada, he—

returned to his family, and through hard work and diligence once again established himself and began to prosper.

Just a few years later Brother Gardner was entertaining some friends at his farm in Millcreek in the Salt Lake Valley. One remarked, “I am glad to see you so well recovered from being broke. You are nearly as well off as you were before you lost your property and went on your mission.”

Robert’s history records: “My reply was; ‘Yes I was well off once and it all went off, and I am almost afraid of another [mission] call.’ Sure enough, a few hours later some of my neighbors, who had been to a meeting in Salt Lake City called in and told me that my name was amongst a number of names who were called today to go south on a mission to make a new settlement and raise cotton. We were to start

right away.” He records, “*I looked and spit, took off my hat and scratched [my head] and thought and said; ‘All right.’*”¹

That is diligence. It is continuing on in faith, confident that in due time of the Lord “all things work together for our good” (D&C 90:24).

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf in his April 2010 general conference address told of a study that showed the long-term effects of waiting:

In the 1960s, a professor at Stanford University began a modest experiment testing the willpower of four-year-old children. He placed before them a large marshmallow and then told them they could eat it right away or, if they waited for 15 minutes, they could have two marshmallows.

He then left the children alone and watched what happened behind a two-way mirror. Some of the children ate the marshmallow immediately; some could wait only a few minutes before giving in to temptation. Only 30 percent were able to wait. ...

As time went on, he kept track of the children and began to notice an interesting correlation: the children who could not wait struggled later in life and had more behavioral problems, while those who waited tended to be more positive and better motivated, have higher grades and incomes, and have healthier relationships.

What started as a simple experiment with children and marshmallows became a landmark study suggesting that the ability to wait—to be patient—was a key character trait that might predict later success in life.²

Diligence coupled with patience, waiting upon the Lord, is a prescription for a happy life. The Prophet Joseph learned this lesson as the pressures of building Zion weighed heavily upon him. This revelation reassured him that the keys were his forever and he would receive revelations as needed, and that no matter his concerns, Zion “shall not be removed out of her place” (D&C 90:37).

¹ Robert Gardner Jr., “Self History and Journal,” 35, in Steven E. Snow, “Go On with Our Lives,” *Ensign*, May 2009.

² President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Continue in Patience,” *Ensign*, May 2010.