

Roll Up Your Sleeves

I remember our efforts to get our house in Colorado ready for sale so we could make our move to Utah. There was a lot of work to do. Chad did a marvelous job on the siding. We raked up debris, trimmed bushes, cleaned the pool and a million other things. However, the toughest challenge was painting the trim on the house to match the new siding.

I can remember putting up the ladder to reach the highest part of the house. It was flat out scary to crawl up the ladder with a bucket of paint in one hand and a paint brush in the other. The ladder, extended to its highest level, would bounce and sometimes skip at the bottom. A couple of times it felt like I lost control of all bodily functions! As a matter of fact, I pretty much chickened out of the job. So...who dune it? Annie.

I was so impressed with her bravery to roll up her sleeves, grab the bucket of paint and shoot up the ladder. Mom did some of the painting, but, Annie did the lion share of the work. Was she afraid? Yes. Did it stop her? No. But the more she did it the more comfortable she became with the task.

I think there is an important principle behind Annie's example. I heard Elder Hartman Rector, Jr. speak once in General conference where he said that many times we get the spirit of our job and responsibilities when we actually go to work. For example, we may not want to do our home teaching or visiting teaching, but when we actually make the telephone calls and make the visits, we receive an infusion of the spirit that helps us appreciate the service we are rendering. And...we feel good about what we have done.

If we do our part we know our heavenly Father will fill in the areas where we fall short. I know this is true from personal experience. I can remember as a young bishop being called on to meet and counsel with a married couple twice my age. I felt so inadequate. I prayed like I had never prayed before. I really did not want to go. However, I went and it was one of the greatest testimony-building experiences of my life.

I said things during that meeting with a very troubled couple where I did not know the reason for saying them. I thought I was flapping my gums. I left wondering if I had done any good. Two days later I was at a bishop's training session. The stake president announced a visitor from LDS Social Services. He was there to talk to us about counseling married couples. I felt the confirmation of the spirit about my marriage-counseling experience as he named technique after technique that I used just a few days before. Where I was inadequate, the Lord filled the gap.

Next time we have a challenge ahead of us, in addition to humble prayer, let's remember to roll up our sleeves and go to work. There is no witness until after the trial of your faith.