

*“Strength from Grace: Faithful LDS Women
Grace Under Pressure”*

Neill F. Marriott
Second Counselor, Young Women General Presidency

This address was given Friday, May 2, 2014 at the BYU Women’s Conference

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For further information write:

BYU Women’s Conference

161 Harman Continuing Education Building

Provo, Utah 84602

801-422-7692

E-mail: womens_conference@byu.edu

Home page: <http://womensconference.byu.edu>

In February I traveled to southern Africa on a Church assignment. While there I noticed women with beautiful posture, carrying bundles on their heads. Here is a photo taken of five young women who have just come through a rainstorm carrying water buckets to their homes.



Notice the grace and flowing purpose of their barefoot strides as they hurry along with their heavy water buckets. Aren’t they beautiful and awe-inspiring? See the little one in front, and their skirts swinging as they move quickly along?

Do you feel like these girls sometimes? Like you are walking as fast as you can through a rainstorm, barefoot, with 25 pounds of water on your head?

In Zimbabwe I talked with many young women who are strengthened by the Savior’s grace as they deal with pressure from many directions in their lives. One in particular stands out.

I asked her to tell me about a typical day in her life. She began, “I get up at 5:00 a.m., sometimes 3:00 a.m., to take the bucket to get water for the family. When I carry it on my head, the pressure

of the bucket hurts my neck. When I return home I awaken the children and get them dressed and fed. Then I get ready for school. In Africa the tradition is that the oldest daughter takes care of the younger children.”

Think about her life and her ability to carry on with a smile and faith, despite heavy responsibilities! And in addition to these burdens, she told me that she carries the weight of having been abused when she was younger. Despite all these difficulties, she manages life with a smile. Why? Because she turns to Jesus Christ. She feels the hope and reassurance of His love. Whether it is a heavy water bucket, family responsibilities, or school challenges, she moves with grace—the Savior’s grace.

The Savior took all the pressure of all the evil of the world upon Himself and paid the price of justice. Thus He completed the Atonement for us and has the power to give us grace—that is, His divine help. Moroni tells us, “If ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you” (Moroni 10:32).

This lovely young woman of Africa has personal grace under pressure. It is the capacity to continue in strength, in understanding, even in kindness when you have great pressure, wounds, duties, and responsibilities.

The source of our strength, hope, and power is the Savior’s grace. His divine help remains right beside us, minute to minute. Without Him, we are powerless.

My father’s favorite hymn was “Amazing Grace,” and we sang it as a family. Listen to the final verse penned by John Newton:

Thro’ many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

Don’t we all want to be brought safely home?

Don’t we all have heavy things pressing on us, like heartaches, duties, and fears?

How do we keep walking with purpose in our personal rainstorms? The answer is that we can come through all troubles because we have a Savior, Jesus Christ. He will “lead [us] home.”

In the face of opposition, an African girl is staying faithful, and she receives strength to carry heavy buckets of water in the dark *and* feel the spirit of hope and joy.

I testify that we too have access to the Savior’s enabling power in our own lives as we come unto Him with all energy of heart and love Him with our might, mind, and strength. I know this gift of grace can be ours because I have pled for it and have been strengthened and filled with hope and comfort.

Jesus Christ has the power to heal your life, lift your hope, and guide you forward. Reach for the Savior’s grace, trusting in His love and availability. He is real. He is near.