

SPC xxxxx xxxxx Memorial Meditation

28 September 20xx

Schofield Barracks, HI

Of all the philosophies I've embraced over the years, there's one that I keep at the top of my list. The philosophy is simple: you haven't worked or played hard enough until there are stains to prove it. SPC xxxxx, whom we memorialize today, is one who both figuratively and literally "proved it."

The image and stereotype of a mechanic or "grease monkey" that many of us hold is that of an individual, halfway hidden underneath a vehicle, lying on a creeper to reach, pull, and twist in order to replace or repair. The distinguishing feature is always the same: a set of worn, greasy coveralls and a set of oil-stained hands. In this image, we see just how well xxxxx fit this stereotype. Just as his worn, greasy coveralls and oil-stained hands literally reflected the work he did underneath the hood, I think they also figuratively reflected his efforts in life. Xxxxx would often unselfishly roll up his sleeves to identify broken parts in others' lives, using his figurative wrench to reach, pull, and twist until those parts were repaired or replaced. To use maintenance lingo, many of us have been "serviced" by xxxxx and our spiritual engines now run better because of him.

Today as we reflect on his death, we have questions that simply cannot be answered. Why did he give up? What more could I have done? and Where was God when xxxxx needed him most? Try as we might, we may never understand. But as we reflect on our journey called life, we sense that his may have been especially difficult. Like many of us at certain points in our lives, Xxxxx felt alone on his journey. And at his most vulnerable moment, he was distracted from the clear, unmistakable path and pulled off course into a dark, strange place. While we don't know exactly what he was feeling, those of us who have been pulled off course ourselves know all too well that the symptoms follow a logical sequence: first frustration, then

discouragement, hopelessness, and despair. Somewhere along the way, the light begins to dim and there's a notion that our cries will not be heard, and our signals will not be seen. When dimness turns to darkness, when rescue and deliverance seem impossible, it is then that death becomes a practical escape. My friends, the tragedy of this day will be multiplied if we allow death to have the final say; if we allow ourselves to remain unchanged by the light and hope that God provides.

His desire is not that we become immobilized by this tragedy, but that we rise and reach above it and use the light to illuminate the way for others. God's word says, "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it." In other words, light has power. In the darkest of night, in the deepest abyss, even the simplest gleam of light will prevail. And it is toward that gleam that we must go. No matter how dark, how afraid, how alone you may feel, know that there are others who care for you. So, keep yelling for help, keep sending the signals. The search and rescue team will bring the light to find you. In the meantime, be patient. Believe in miracles. Keep walking, keep trying. Don't ever, ever quit. As one wise scholar taught, if, like God, you must drink the bitter cup, "drink it and be strong, trusting in happier days ahead."

It is light that brings us hope. And it'll come if we just hold on. Listen to the meaning of the following lyrics:

*The message of this moment is so clear,
And as certain as the rising of the sun,
If your world is filled with darkness, doubt, and fear,
Just hold on, hold on, the light will come.
It's a message every one of us must learn—
That the answers never come without a fight.
And when it seems you've struggled far too long,
Just hold on, hold on, there will be light.
Hold on, hold on, the light will come.
If you feel trapped inside a never-ending night,
If you've forgotten how it feels to feel the light,
If you're half-crazy, thinking you're the only one
Who's afraid the light will never really come,
Just hold on, hold on, the light will come.*

My friends, the light will come. And when it does, you'll once again feel its warm embrace, helping you anticipate a bright, new day. May each of us seek and discover the light and then use it to help others along the way.

References/Resources

Luke 1:79 "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Micah 7:8 "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me."

Psalms 46:10 "Be still, and know that I am God."

Psalms 31:9-12

"My dear sisters, your Heavenly Father loves you—each of you. That love never changes. It is not influenced by your appearance, by your possessions, or by the amount of money you have in your bank account. It is not changed by your talents and abilities. It is simply there. It is there for you when you are sad or happy, discouraged or hopeful. God's love is there for you whether or not you feel you deserve love. It is simply always there." ~Thomas S. Monson

"Don't you quit. You keep walking. You keep trying. There is help and happiness ahead—a lot of it—30 years of it now, and still counting. You keep your chin up. It will be all right in the end. Trust God and believe in good things to come." ~Jeffrey R. Holland

"Like a Broken Vessel" (Jeffrey R. Holland, October 2013 General Conference)

"Broken Things to Mend" (Jeffrey R. Holland, April 2006 General Conference)

"Count on the light at the end of the tunnel." ~Jeffrey R. Holland

-Look up!

-We must beckon others to come and discover the light

-Where Can I Turn for Peace (Hymn #129)