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Jim Murray

Abby Kennedy

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Interview with Jim Murray, 3/28/99
Community of Church of Jesus Christ of Ladder Day Saints
by Abby Kennedy

AK: I'm Abby Kennedy is March 25th of 1999 and I'm in the Church of Ladder Day Saints of Jesus Christ in Mount Vernon, Ohio. And I'm talking with Jim Murray, the branch President.

Can you start by telling me a little bit about yourself. Like how you came to Mount Vernon, where you lived?

JM: My wife and I have been in Mount Vernon for just about 9 years now. We're both native Ohioans. We've lived here all our lives. We both grew up in Southern Ohio. I try very hard to say that distinctly (makes fun of accent), because we are from Appalachia down there. We grew up, didn't really know each other until I had just graduated from college at Ohio State and my wife at that time I met her at a summer job I was at. And she was going to school at Brigham Young University. So we met each other then and dated for several years while she finished up her schooling. Then we were married in 1985, lived in Columbus for about 5 years. Both of us are from the country, so we tried to move out. This is the direction we came. It's a lot of fun here, we enjoy it. It's a small community, from Columbus prospective, of course, but for both of us growing up we came from much smaller communities, too. But we like the fact that it's a very nice town.

AK: And what do you do?

JM: Well actually I work for Bank One down in Columbus. I am by degree, I have a bachelor of science, in computer information science from Ohio State University. Through the college of engineering, I have been with Bank One for almost 11 years. What I do for Bank One is I'm the manager. I manage programmers. I've been doing that for awhile now. I make the drove down every day, it's about an hour drive.

AK: So can you tell me a little bit about your involvement with the church?

JM: I grew up with a Methodist background. We as a family didn't really go to church that often. When I had a summer job and didn't really meet a young lady, but kind of saw her and found out who she was, I found out she went to school at BYU (Brigham Young University). And the following year, 1983, the following summer she came back from school and I had a chance to meet her, and that's my wife now. We got a chance to meet each other. I asked her boss to introduce us and he did. Of course, knowing that she was attending school at Brigham Young University I made a very good assumption that she was a Ladder Day Saint. Actually the previous year they had had a lot of flooding out in Utah. And the great Salt Lake had really risen up to some very high areas. And one of the things I can remember seeing on T.V. was the way the Ladder Day Saints had kept the community there from being really inodated by flooding by their community efforts to build these sandbag levies in the middle of the streets to take the water out of the mountains into the lakes. And keep the cities from being flooded. I said, could we do

that or would we just sit around and moan and groan about the fact. That was very impressive to me. I just thought that was a really cohesive group. And that just kind of peaked my interest about the Ladder Day Saints. I always knew that Utah, oh, that's where the Mormons are at.

I met my wife, met Marry, and we started to go out. We dated a few times and there is something very different about her, in my perspective. She was a very confident young woman, very grounded in her sense of right and wrong. She wasn't a preachy, moralist kind of person. And that just kind of really intrigued me. And she went back to school at BYU and to be very honest a lot of her friends at BYU were concerned about her dating me, I'm wasn't a Ladder Day Saint. What was that going to me, and being a Ladder Day Saint is not a casual type of situation. We continued to write and see each other and she came back home at Christmas. Actually that year, '83, I went out to visit her at Thanksgiving. And got a chance to see Utah, first time I had been to Utah. Traveled around and saw a lot of stuff. But that's all kind of a material thing, not really the spiritual side. We talked some about the church, but not a lot. And I've never really kind of invested that kind of time and energy in a relationship with somebody and so I'm thinking, if this is going somewhere, and I really thought that it was, I need to understand some stuff. Because I don't want to be going somewhere, if we're too incompatible... it was a very key point in our lives.

So she came over at Christmas and I literally had to ask her to go to church with her. Because she didn't want to push at all. So we went to church and the first meeting I went to, which I think you've been to a fast and testimony meeting. It's just a very different meeting than I think anybody's ever... And she was like are you sure this is the first meeting you want to go to? And I was really taken with how honest people were being about some things but yet not the weeping and wailing kind of stuff that you do associate with somebody bearing a testimony. And that really intrigued me, I just felt something there. So she went back to school and I just kept going back to church and when she came home at serious, we were pretty serious at that point. We had been dating for probably 6 months and been talking, goodness sakes AT&T made a fortune off of me!

I wanted to investigate. So I talked with the missionaries, and we talked for months. I went to church for probably 3 or 4 months before I ever really decided to be baptized. So I think that's probably good because I really understood what I was getting involved with. Understood what the gospel was, what the church taught, the expectations and things like that. And the whole time Mary was not really pushing me very hard. She was very pleased, very, very pleased with that. So she came home in the spring and I made a decision to be baptized and that happened in the spring of 1984. So I've been a member of the church since May 24th, 1984.

AK: And when did you become president here?

JM: I became the branch president on May 25th of 1994. So it's been almost 5 years that I've been the branch president.

AK: And what do you do specifically?

JM: I have 5 duties and responsibilities. And several of them are administrative and others. I'm

in charge of financial and membership records. I'm the person that makes sure that they're handled properly, that the money is handled correctly and that we do it properly according to church procedures and all that. I am the president of the Aaronic (sp?) Priesthood. Which means that in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints all worthy males over the age of 12 can hold priesthood. We believe which is the stewardship to act in the name of God. If you are a young man, 12-18-years-old, you hold the Aaronic Priesthood which we call the lesser priesthood. It's a preparatory priesthood such that the temporal things. You'll notice that the young men are the ones who pass the sacrament, prepare the sacrament, they go out on a semi-regular bases and collect fast offerings for people. They are the ones who are really supposed to be taking care of the building. Not putting a new roof on, but keeping it up and the grounds and things like that. So, they're responsible for things like that. As you become and adult, at the age of 18... Actually the Aaronic priesthood, I'm the president of that, one of my responsibilities is to work with all the young men. To train them, to provide leaders and teachers for them that can help them from that time from 12-18. You know, I grew up with a wonderful father who taught me many wonderful things, and I feel very blessed. As I've been an adult I've seen how that has not always been the case. And what I'm grateful for is that the church is here to help fathers to raise their sons. Not as a replacement for that, but to help them. So, that's the responsibility that I have.

I am also the leader of the priest quorum. Which is the oldest group of young men-- 16- and 17-year-olds. I am their leader, also. And so I meet with them on a regular basis so we talk. Get a chance to be with them and help them. Kind of give them another adult to talk with when it can be very awkward for young men that age to talk about some of those things with their father and even their mother. I'm not saying I'm being a surrogate father, but by the same token, they'll sit down and talk to me about stuff.

The fourth thing is a common job in Israel. What that means is that I'm the only person authorized in this branch to administer church justice if you want to call it that. And not justice in like, I can make decrees... But really based on persons membership in the church and/or to give them counsel and advice about things that they maybe doing in their lives. And they'll come and say they'll want to talk about things. And there's a great many things that I'm aware of that others may just have some passing--yeah, there's a problem with this situation-- but I tend to know all the particulars about what's going on. And I said I counsel with people--couples, families, children, individuals. I'm the person who is responsible for making sure that whatever is done is the proper thing. No one else in this branch has that authority or responsibility. Because I look at it more from a responsibility standpoint then an authority standpoint because it's not that I thought this position out for that.

And the last thing is just to be in charge of the general welfare of all of the members of the branch. That really means not just the membership of the church, but all of the members within a geographic boundaries of our branch--members or nonmembers. So we have a duty and responsibility to help within the community we're in. In Utah of course, you have 80, 90, almost 100% members in a unit within the members of the church. But here there's probably 50,000 people in Knox County and the size of the branch, but we only have about 250 that are actually Latter Day Saints. And so when things happen to the community we feel it's part of our responsibility to help out where we can and do stuff. That doesn't mean we jump in and do stuff,

but just in general wherever we can help we try to help. And we look after each other, and that's through the different programs in the church to make sure that peoples needs are met. If a family has need of--well this weekend for example. We're going to have, out at the Zigler's home out in Danville, he has a lot of extra wood that he wants to cut down and get out of the way and clear for his cattle. So we're going out a bunch of us and clear the wood out, saw it up and give it to members of the branch who need firewood. As a group it's amazing how much you can do. We have 20 brother with chain saws and 30 or 40 people moving stuff around it's amazing how much stuff you can get done. And it's organized well so it's not a crazy thing. In general, those type of welfare things we've been involved with, Habitat for Humanity. We have a blood drive every year. We want to go to two, it's difficult to get on that and do that. But we try to be actively involved in our community with the things that are going on.

AK: That's actually exactly what I was going to ask you about. Because the project is mostly on the action between the smaller community with the larger community of Knox County. One thing that we've, my partner and I, have become interested in from exploring the church was the rate of conversion. And I was wondering if you might have any ideas of why that rate might be so high? Or why people in Knox County, specifically, would want to convert to the church.

JM: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is one of the fastest growing churches in the world right now. And that's exciting but with that growth comes issues and concerns. The church leadership is dealing with that. As a matter of fact, there are probably close to 11 million members of the church, world-wide now. And the majority of them are outside the United States right now. That happened I think last year, one of those surveys. And in some places the rate of the growth of the church is just astronomical. I think in this country, and perhaps in this community in general, we place, the Latter Day Saints, place such a premium on families. And I want to talk about a potential downside of that in a minute. Right now there are so many social forces that are really, whether they are actually doing it or just as a byproduct of our society, are really kind of tearing families a part. Some of it within the boundaries of the family, some of it outside. So I think a lot of people look at the reputation and historical view that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has about families, and I think that intrigues people. Again, one of the things I talked about earlier was what caught my attention was the community of people that were able to do so many great things very quickly. And I think that--I've been involved in some situations that were absolutely chaotic, that weren't related with the church at all. And I've yet to be a part of something that hasn't been well organized and well planned and well thought out in the church as a large group. And that's a lot to do with the sheer practice of organizational skills. But there's something more to it than that, I believe. We can talk about the temporal piece of it but I think what that is, there is a component that I strongly believe that we are being blessed from the Lord for the things we are doing. And he's helping us do these things. We're not doing these things on our own, these are not our own works that we're doing them. We're doing them in his name for unselfish reasons for the righteous reasons we do them for, we believe as a consequence, we don't do them for our own benefit or gain. We serve in this church because that's what we believe the Lord wants us to do. As you've seen there are a lot of different things that go on here, but there's a structure to it

an organization to it, a process to it that has really worked over time and given we believe by direction from on high from the prophets that have helped us to lay out a foundation, and people are drawn to that. People see that. People see the positive value of that.

And we stress very strongly on families. One potential down side to that of course, is that people who aren't in a family may feel excluded or left out. And we've tried very hard to make sure people understand. We look at this, but we also look at the other issues, too. There's a great many single members of the church, a great many widowed and widowers in the church, young people who may not have a family or circumstance they may not become a part of the family or have come from a family that was very fragmented. And while we're unabashed in our praise of the family, we have to temper that with the understanding that we can't just trumpet that. We are a church of individual sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father and together we make up families. We make up a family here in this branch, family of the church. And so we really stride very hard to do that. It's just the focus that we have to be mindful of. Because I think what's happened is because the church historically when it was originally founded in 1830 and even really into the last part of the 1800s or maybe the 1920s or '30s was very much a small family church if you will. The church's growth has been astronomical and of course that creates problems. There's so many new members from so many new backgrounds that have to come in. The trials the saints went through in New York, in Pennsylvania, here in Ohio, in Missouri, in Illinois, and the trek across the plains to Utah, tended to make people have a common experience that they could draw on. And the growth of the church really was from within. And a lot of times there were a lot of members who joined the church, especially from Europe from the mid parts of the 1840s, 50s, and 60s. People outside the church have made comments that by the year 2080 I think it is, if the growth continues at the same right it is now, we'll be about close to 250 million members of the church. Now I don't know if that's true. And I don't know that I care one way or another. It's not about numbers, it's about doing things in the Lords way. And if that's his will then okay, if it's not then that's the way it works.

So that's why I think people are drawn to our church. They see the things that we do. The commercials. I can remember growing up all the little commercials you'd see. They seemed to always get to the heart of the matter about some truism about the family. About not having enough time or maybe they were kidnaping Dad and putting him in the back of a camper and off they went on a weekend or whatever. Those were very touching things to me. And I've had so many experiences in the church that have confirmed that those are very genuine things. Almost to the point of being naive about the way the world is, but we look at the way the world should be. And I think that attracts people. That draws them to us.

AK: You were just talking actually about the increasing diversity within the church. How do you think that's effected the way the church is run and kind of the focus of...

JM: Well I think, I will hit it from 2 angles. The first I think is an administrative issue. Historically the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, until the Lord says otherwise will have its headquarters in Salt Lake City. And the way in which the church programs are administered, and we're a very hierarchical church from that prospective. I report to a stake president who reports to an area authority who reports to a regional or an area president who

reports to general authorities in Salt Lake City who reports to the prophet. That line. That line is always there. With the increased growth of church, you're having more and more congregations being formed. If we were to double in size in 5 years, and then double again. There's a lot of people coming in. How do you absorb and teach them the gospel and the programs that help us administer the gospel in a very temporal way. Because we look at that as a very linked situations. This is not a Sunday church at all. It's a lifestyle, it's a way you live, and almost everything and every day that you do. That requires a lot of understanding on peoples part because as a new member of the church I can remember being bewildered by what I thought were so many things that were there and things to learn. And a lot of them are very different from what I grew up with. And how things were handled. And so just the administration, just the numbers. It's a concern, it's being addressed, it's being handled. Not with out some growing pains. We certainly do not have the issues that other denominations have where you have groups that come along who are members of the same denomination under name, but not really in doctrine. And in purpose sometimes. And you have one group in America arguing with another group, I use the example in Rome. We don't have that in our church. I think however that's what our prophet is looking at as a concern of his. Because of the growth, he wants to make sure that we as church members do all we can to help people understand and grow and do it in an orderly fashion so that people are able to come in, able to learn, able to become acclimated to the ways of being a Ladder Day Saint, things like that. And that's the administrative piece of it.

The church has always been a very culturally diverse group. Even from almost the very first. There were so many Ladder Day Saints, really the majority that helped the church grow up in Utah were from Europe. Not from the East here. England, Scandinavia--very much an artisan class. Not so much a wealthy class at all. Very used to working with their hands. And then that was replaced by large numbers of new members coming in the church in the Pacific. A great number of missionaries that went out in the mid to late 1800s to Asia, to Hawaii, to Samoa. So a great influx from that perspective. Then from South America, from continental Europe, and the latter part of this century Asia and Africa. If you look at the leadership of the church, the president and his two counselors and the quorum of the twelve what you have are people who have a long background at the church. But what you're seeing at the next level down is a great many men of the church who are from all over the world. And in another generation, that will be the leadership of the church. It will truly be a leadership that is from all over the world. It's how faithful someone is for their whole life as they progress and become leaders of the church. Even in the sisters in the organizations that they lead. One of the highest leaders in the women's organization of the church for many years was a convert from Japan.

(Talks about upcoming conference)

There's this mental picture of these old white men, and that's what's there, make no bones about that. But there's other levels of people that are coming and they're going to be old Polynesian men, they're going to be old African men, old Chinese or old Japanese. And that's a generation away, but it's coming, it's going to be there. Because just as we live our lives, it's a journey, it's a race of endurance. This is the same way, the responsibilities and the duties of those callings require somebody who has proven to the Lord over time that they are faithful in all the callings and duties they have. Because these are gentleman who have had responsibilities in all manners,

who have been in some very difficult situations, and others who have served in lots of capacities. And that's one of the things we as Ladder Day Saints do. We serve wherever we're asked to serve at and do whatever we can to serve. You know, this calling I'm in now. My time in this calling will end and I'll have another calling. And I could be right here in this room with the little ones in the nursery. That could be my calling. Or I could be in charge of sizzors in the library, or whatever. And that's not a demotion, it's not anything other than a change in what I do. No one's calling that really is any greater than anybody else, in the church. I'm not judged on what somebody else does in their calling, I'm judged on what I do in it. So if I do it well, then that's all that matters.

If people could get past the stereotypes they have of the church, and see what the church really is like. I know I did, I know I had my stereotypes. This is a group of people that would do anything for me, for my family and that really get me, it just rubs off on you and you want to do the best you can do for somebody. I found that when I feel like I'm getting a little selfish of myself and my time and I'm feeling a little sorry for myself, I find that if I lose myself and try to help somebody else that goes away. That really does go away. That's putting the Lord's plan into action. I think that's what's the beauty of our church and I really do... It's not just that we come in on Sunday and we sit down and we worship, but that there is an organized program to take that spiritual training that we have and put it into practice for the good of the Ladder Day Saints and good of the world in general. I think that's the essence of the church. So many people want to talk about grace or works. And we look at that and go no, it's both. We truly believe, and we know in our hearts that we cannot as individuals--we believe in Jesus Christ as the son of God and the savior of this world, we believe that with all our hearts. We believe he atung for all of our sins. And we are living in a fallen state and we cannot get back to our Heavenly Father without him and we have to have faith in him, take upon ourself his name in baptism, and believe in him as the literal son of God so that we can do that. To make ourselves perfect we are fallen. And that doesn't mean we're going to walk around hanging our heads, it's that we're very conscious of the fact that we have that debt to him that we can never repay. And the only we can even attempt to repay it is to try to do the things he would have us do. We feel that the church and the programs of the church are there to help us in an organized way do that. Because there's a lot of people in this world that do wonderful amounts of good. And I don't mean to say that we are the only place on earth that has that, because we're not. But we believe that we're the true church because we have a prophet and we believe that we get revelation through him from our Heavenly Father about what we need to do right now. The gospel doesn't change, but the way we implement it, the way we live our lives, the things we do. Those kind of things may change over time. Because of the growth of church. We've had a large change in how we administer some things. To have a faith in Jesus Christ is essential, but on top of that we believe that we have to prove to him, to Jesus Christ, that we are serious in our faith by our works. That we're not sanctimonious about it, that we're not self-righteous about it, that we don't do it for prideful reasons. That's our way of proving to the savior that we're his disciples. That we believe in him and want to be like him and want to follow him. So it is to us grace and works, not grace or works. We know that we cannot earn our way back, but we can know that when we live this earth and we are judged for what we've done that we can either be able to look our savior in the eye or we can't.

AK: How would you characterize the community of this church in Knox County? Like demographics, socioeconomic-economic status, racial diversity-- I feel like although I've been here on a lot of Sundays I haven't really gotten to know people outside of church.

JM: Well, the majority of us are converts to the church. I think that we have a pretty broad spectrum of economic backgrounds. We have a good chunk that are professionals, I can name probably 3 or 4 Ph.D.'s, others who are active in the community, and then just others who are members of the community, very much middle class. And we have folks who are really struggling. So it's all over the board, from an economic standpoint. And I would say probably from a social standpoint, too. I would probably say from a social standpoint that with a couple of exceptions we're not particularly represented in the community. We have one gentleman who is major of one of the communities here in Knox County. But other than that, we're pretty much low key. All Ladder Day Saints are certainly heavily involved in their schools. I don't know what a stereotype would be, but we're very much supporters of public education versus home schooling or private education. Typically private education is of other denominations-- and that can obviously create problems for Ladder Day Saints. We're all over the board on what's going on, things we're involved with, types of careers. Typically you won't find many bartenders or situations like that. So I think it's a relatively broad cross-section. We've got folks at Kenyon, who teach at Kenyon, go to school at Kenyon. Folks who have all kinds of different levels of education, different types of professions.

Now from a racial standpoint. I don't know that Knox County, if you will, is not really diverse. Other than Kenyon probably, it's not really a racially diverse county. It's historically been an agricultural, rural community. And typically that's, at least in this part of the country is usually a white, European background. I don't know if that's a problem. I've been in wards where I've traveled and you walk in and you're the only White person when you walk in. I think that's not so much an issue. I know that perhaps that is in other denominations, but not so much in ours. I certainly am very sensitive about that. I would be very upset if I had members of this branch who were what I considered a little bit less than sensitive to people and their backgrounds. And I grew up in a very, to use the term, redneck area part of the country. And that was not tolerated in my home at all. In the world areas of the church, I think you'll probably find a predominately European flavor. But you go to branches or wards in large urban areas and you get a real large mix. I was out in San Francisco last summer, well of course San Francisco itself is such a culturally diverse community. I just was amazed of who all was there. I just enjoyed that immensely. There's just a vibrancy in that. Different communities, different cultures coming together, and in a very good way. They didn't rub each other the wrong way, they brought the best out, and everybody got over the silly stuff that they kind of attach to that kind of situation.

AK: Now do you feel like the church is pretty tolerant of other religions as well?

JM: I think we're very tolerant. I don't know that that's a perception. I think there's a public perception that people think we sit and talk about other churches. We don't. Not at all. When

we talk about things we talk about the things we need to do. Jim Murray looks in the mirror every morning and decides what Jim Murray is going to get better as a person. And that's not going to do any good to talk about Baptists, or Methodist, or Nazerene, Catholics, or anybody. It's ridiculous to do that. No, that's just not a conversation that goes on at all. And in my leadership position in the church I've been involved in a great many situations where we've had church councils--that never, ever comes up. So no, we do not talk about other churches. We do not concern ourselves with those situation. Last year for example, I believe it was the Southern Baptists had their annual conference in Salt Lake City. And they went their with the expressed purpose of converting the poor Ladder Day Saints to Christianity. That's what they said. One of the things the Southern Baptists (Methodists?) wanted to do was put together a video, and they did put together a video and they called it "The Mormon Puzzle." And it was all about our church and what it was. I actually got a chance to see it. One of the local religious channels here. And I don't know what they were trying to accomplish, but it gets to the end. As a Ladder Day Saint and a long time Ladder Day Saint if you watch that you can tell they have things that they have pictures of that the only way they could get these is if our church is like sure, come on in. They're taking right inside the missionary training center out in Utah, talking to missionaries, showing sacrament meetings. Now I'm watching this as a Ladder Day Saint and when it got done I'm thinking, if the point was to try to condem Ladder Day Saints I just didn't see it. Maybe from another point of view you would have thought of it differently. They got a lot of things truthfully said, from an outsider perspective, and that's fine. Historically that hasn't always been the case. Historically perceptions have not always been very fair to Ladder Day Saints. Now part of that, I think we've brought upon ourselves by our being isolated as a community for such a long time in Utah. The way in which we pretty much just left the United States. By the time we left--we left Illinois in 1846. We literally left the United States at that point and went to Utah, and it was almost 50 years later that it became a state. It was 1896 when it actually became a state. So from that perspective, and I say we, as Ladder Day Saints, I mean I have no stake at all in Utah. It's just where the home of the church is. So inside the church, no, I don't see it at all. Again, and occasionally that happens where someone will start to make a comment, and I'm like okay, let's move on. This is not what we do as Ladder Day Saints. And others do, too. But it's not something that's taught, that's an issue. And we welcome people of all faiths. We make no apologies for the fact that the gospel that we believe the Lord has given to us is in a lot of ways very different than what a lot of people are familiar with or their traditions teach them. So as a consequence, it goes back to that if it's different it must be bad. The temple being probably the greatest example of that. But from the same perspective, we hold no ill will towards anyone. Do you want to talk about how we think we're perceived? Is that what one of your questions?

AK: Yeah, that is one of my questions. Especially in Knox County. Like if you have ever felt that people perceive you differently because of the church.

JM: I think we've had, I've not personally experienced it. So I'm going to say something that is hearsay. Now people that told me, I trust implicitly, so I believe that it occurred. We had a situation where one of the local churches decided they were going to do their best to make

themselves look their best at the expense of this branch, basically. So they were stirring the pot against the Ladder Day Saints here in Knox County.

AK: Was this really early on?

JM: No, this has been in the last, maybe late '80s, something like that. Well we're all still here and that good brother is no longer pastor of his church and everybody decided that was one of those, everybody decided to get mad at each other and let's run him off and let's split the church kind of mentality that does that kind of stuff. But that's really about all we've ever had. I've had the chance to meet with other pastors. There's a local organization for clergy. I'm not involved in that so much, because I really can't be. My job, I work a 40 or 60 hour week sometimes. And we try to get involved in causes that are community based, but we tend to shy away from those that are doctrinally based that get us into standing and carrying signs and standing at clinics and things like that. We try not to get involved in that as an organization.

We feel we have a good relationship. None of us feel the least bit persecuted or anything like that. And I think as time has gone by, people have gotten away from those very negative stereotypes. And again we feel that by us living our lives. Here we are, these are Ladder Day Saints, this is what we do. No, we're not 2-headed, we're not walking around with 7 wives and 33 kids and what not. We're the same as everybody else, really. And I have this conversation all the time with people. They want to ask questions and I'm always very open about that. That's probably the issue. People know us as people, as members of the community, and support the community. One of the saying that we live with is: We should strive to be in the world, that we're here, but that we should not be of the world. Which is try to stay away from those things that are worldly. That we don't get caught up in the pursuit of wealth. That we try to rise above that. That we look outward, that we don't look inward. That we don't be selfish and difficult. And I think a lot of program in the church that really try to do that. I look at the missionary program. In theory, if we were doing it in a worldly manner why do you say that 19 and 20-year-old young men teach the gospel. From a worldly perspective that make no sense. They're still in their teens. I know what I was like when I was there age. What it does, is it teaches these young men, it beats out of them that selfish streak that they've grown up with. It teaches them that no you're not the center of the universe. And it's amazing to see those who serve missions, men and women both, how that touches the whole rest of their lives. Also as you get older you can serve missions as couples... But it's not just to go teach the gospel. It's to go teach English, it's to go teach farming, it's to go teach agriculture and to teach people how to take care of themselves, how to be self-reliant.

(Talks about Y2K and food provisions)