Dobro jutro in zivjo Bratje in sestre, Moje ime je Sestra Higgins.

I am so excited to stand before you today and bear witness of Christ and his love for each of us. For those of you who don’t know, next Wednesday I will be entering the Provo MTC where I will spend 9 weeks preparing to serve in the Adriatic North mission. My mission…

Those who know me, know that I have a deep love for children. Two weeks ago on fast Sunday, some of my favorite people bore their testimonies. Most only occupied the mic for less than a minute, while they bore simple testimonies of about their families, Jesus, and this church. Those who were in the meeting, can testify of the spirit we all felt as these small children courageously bore small and simple testimonies. The thought jumped into my head while I was in the audience… how did they know what to say? How did they know the church was true? How did they know their family loved them? For the next 18 months, I will be teaching, with the help of the Holy Ghost, others these topics and helping them find similar testimonies. So how are these things brought to pass? In Alma 37: 6-7 we read… while preparing my talk, I decided to look for advice from some of my favorite people. Sister Raegan Sasser said “As missionaries, we invite people to do certain things to prepare them to make and keep covenants. We commit them to small things (church, pray, read the Book of Mormon) so they will begin to understand and feel the spirit tell them this is true. The small commitments lead to baptismal covenants and eventually temple covenants. That is something I have learned to love… all the small things matter. Small decisions determine destiny.” I also asked Sister Jessa Gardner what she thought about small and simple things. She said “The most important time for investigators is the time between the lessons. The things they choose to do on their own are the things that will truly strengthen THEIR relationship with God. One of the most common answers when asking converts what helped them fill the “gap” between lessons, was being fellowshipped and loved by other members. Be friendly, loving, and welcoming. Smile at everyone and invite them to come unto Christ.” She then quoted St Francis with: “Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words.” What a great reminder that we are always showing others what the gospel is, by being who Christ wants us to be.

Elder M Russell Ballard spoke on small and simple things in April 1990. He read a letter from a sister missionary who was serving in South America. She wrote: “At first glance, the Church here looks absolutely nothing like the Church in downtown Orem, Utah. I have to keep reminding myself it is the same church and we all follow the same prophet. We have a sacrament meeting in the country each week because the members there really can’t afford to come into town. And as I sit there outside on a wooden chair on the plain ground, with the sun setting and the six people in attendance, as we sing hymns, pray, and partake of the sacrament, I wonder if that isn’t closer to Christ’s church than at home. But I guess it is really the same. The things that matter, the true elements of the gospel as Christ taught in 3 Nephi 11, are the same here as they are in Orem, Utah.” He then testified of her words and added “As I meet with some of these humble members, I observe that the Church is, by necessity, being established among them in the most simple way possible. The gospel is taught from the scriptures and from the Gospel Principles manual. The people feel the Spirit and bear testimonies as they come unto Christ and are baptized in his name. Their love for the Lord radiates from their faces. They know that faith, repentance, baptism, the Holy Ghost, service to others, and keeping the commandments are the essentials for exaltation in the celestial kingdom”

After I accepted my call to serve, I thought, I wanna be the best missionary ever! One of those legendary missionaries. So I decided to look at what those missionaries do. The first example of amazing missionaries that I thought of, were Alma and Amuleck! In Chapter 17 of Alma, they are preparing to go their separate ways to declare the gospel to the laminates. In vs 2-4 we read their preparations. They “searched the scriptures diligently”, they gave themselves to “much prayer and fasting.” And “confessed their sins” when I read these things I thought oh cool these mighty missionaries were given the ability to preach because they are awesome and prophets and the Lord gives amazing experiences to prophets. But then I asked if there is anything they did that I cannot do? I can search the scriptures diligently, I can pray and fast and confess my sins. Does this mean I am going to be just like Alma and Amulek? Not really! But It does mean that I can prepare the same way they did!!!! And that is through small and simple things.

Now, small and simple things are not important to just missionaries. Sincerely think about this. If the Lord asked you tight now to drop what you are doing and take your family to Peru and go strengthen the members there by building homes or helping with health oriented things…would you do it? Duh right? Of course you would! What if the prophet asked you? Still of course right? Because as we all know, “Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same. “ You would go because the Lord is asking YOU individually to do something to build his kingdom. I know a lot of you in the audience and I know that your personal commitment to the Lord is so great that you would do ANYTHING he asks you to do. So what does this mean for his instructions: come follow me… or love one another… or obey the commandments? Or what about more recently from the prophet? Hold family home evening, seek only after good media, wear modest clothing, and attend all of your church meetings… why are we not as eager to do these things as we are to go to Peru? Isn’t the instruction coming from the same source? Isn’t he still asking us individually to do something that will build his kingdom? So why the slothful response? Alma 37:46…. Sometimes…. The easiness of the way is the stumbling block for so many.

How do you think Elder Holland became Elder Holland? Did the Lord come down and in an instant he knew everything he knows? Or maybe an angel? I don’t think so… I think he would have told us if that happened. Do you think Elder Holland or President Monson ever read first Nephi chapter one vs 1? Do you think they ever prayed for their first time? Do you think they ever took moronis promise in Mormon chapter 10 vs 3 and ask if this is true? I bet ya they did. They did the small and simple things that the lord asks us to do and they have received witness of the truthfulness of it.

The Lord is not the only one who uses small and simple things – Elder Ballard said “ I am sobered by how small and simple things can be negative and destructive to a person’s salvation. A series of seemingly small but incorrect choices can become those little soul-destroying termites that eat at the foundations of our testimony until, before we are aware, we may be brought near to spiritual and moral destruction.” Most of us know the story of the frog in the boiling water. If you put a frog in a pot of boiling water, he will jump right out to save his life. But, if you put a frog in cold water, and slowly turn on the heat, he will hardly notice the increase in temperature until it is too late. The first time I heard that story I was like guys why are we plotting ways to kill frogs? But now I realize that this tory has some excellent points!!! Let’s be real, Satan doesn’t ask us to commit the big sins right off! He slowly talks us into small but incorrect choices which could lead to our destruction.

I want to close with a quote from President Hinckley. He said “The course of our lives is not determined by great, awesome decisions. Our direction is set by the little day – to – day choices which chart the track on which we run. “

I am so grateful for the small and simple things that I did that led me to this moment. I am grateful for my amazing family who helped get me here today by doing the small and simple things like saying prayers morning and night and holding family home evening. Not to mention just loving me. I am grateful for the choice I made to go to college and room with someone who made it easier to be closer to the savior and follow his example. I know the church is true. I feel my saviors love every single day! It is my honor and sincere privilege to go on a mission and preach this gospel. I am grateful to those who came to support me this day. I love each of you.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.