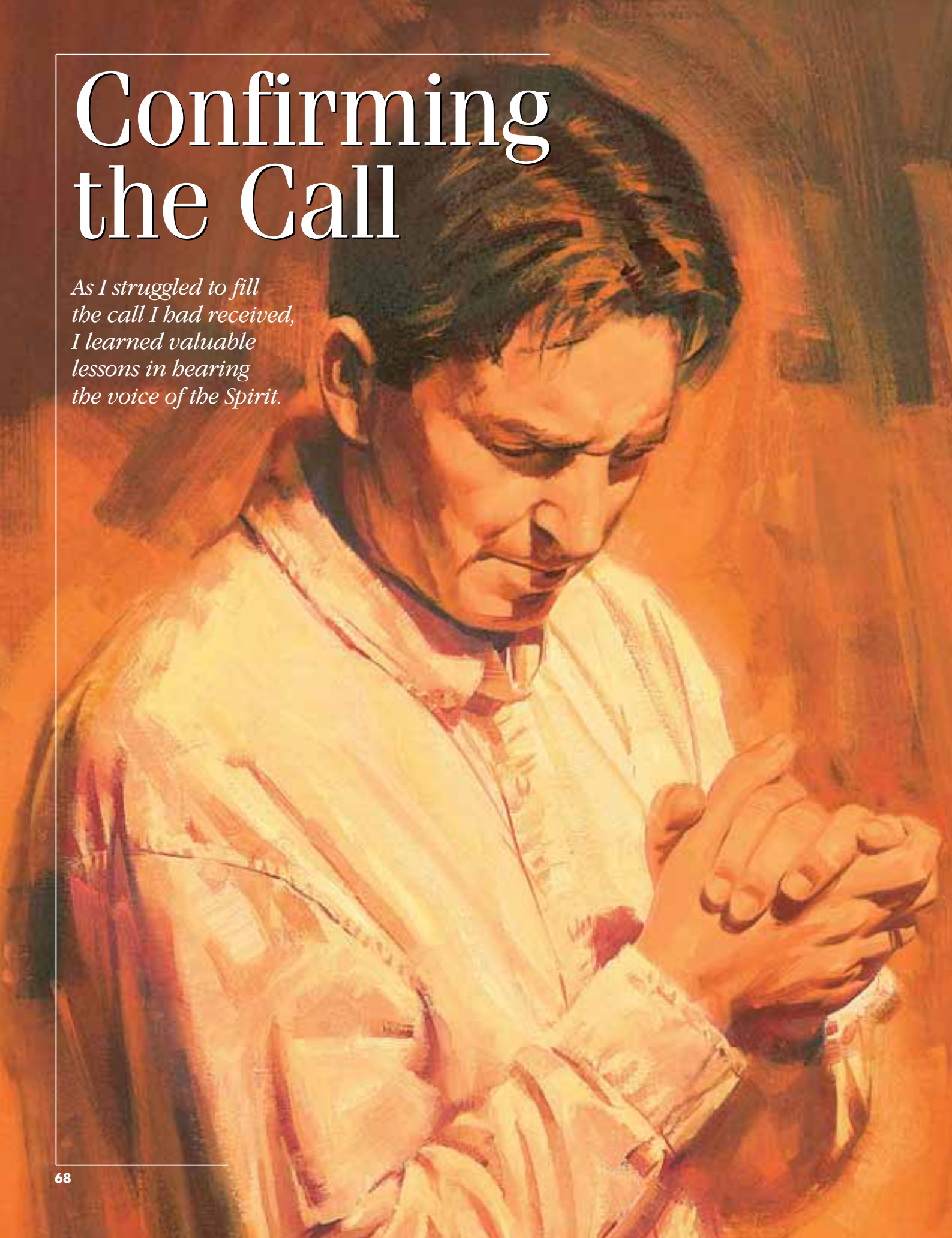


# Confirming the Call

*As I struggled to fill  
the call I had received,  
I learned valuable  
lessons in hearing  
the voice of the Spirit.*



BY A. WAYNE BAKER

**A**s president of a stake auxiliary, I needed a secretary. Heeding the pattern set forth in Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–9, I studied the readiness and abilities of many brethren, made a selection, and on a Sabbath afternoon placed the decision before the Lord. I thought I understood the process fairly well because I'd used it many times before. However, I felt no confirming feeling from the Spirit. After meditating, I asked again but still did not get an answer. What was wrong?

I changed my prayer and asked instead, "If this brother is not the correct selection, please cause my bosom to burn within me." Nothing happened.

Lesson one for me: The Spirit does not bear witness to that which is not correct. Neither request could be answered because both dealt with wrong decisions. Suddenly I realized that I had experienced a "stupor of thought" (D&C 9:9) in both cases and that I needed to "study it out" (v. 8) again.

Another day came, and I presented another name to the Lord. Still no confirmation came. For some time after that, I studied scriptures and prayerfully meditated upon the problem. After I had presented more than a dozen names, all without results, the selection process became more difficult: I would have to consider brethren for whom human wisdom cried out, "There is little chance the Lord will approve *him* at this time."

In the meantime, a very close friend of mine who served as secretary in a social club was making a struggle to become active in the Church. He had great ability and was a man of integrity but lacked, in my judgment, spiritual maturity. Nevertheless, I finally submitted his name to the Lord. A penetrating burning filled my bosom. There could be no mistake. He was the one the Lord wanted to serve as secretary in the organization I presided over.

Lesson two for me: Stay at it until you receive confirmation or experience a stupor of thought. Sometimes we pray for inspiration but fail to take time to determine "if it be right" (D&C 9:8). The Lord counseled Oliver Cowdery,

"You have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me" (v. 7). When answers don't come immediately, I've learned to return to studying out the issues and forming new decisions until these steps bring a discernible result.

I hurried to submit the name of this friend to the stake presidency so they might issue the call. Proper procedure was followed, but there was a question about the brother's spiritual readiness to fill the calling. I was asked to consider another name.

What a dilemma! I knew my leaders to be inspired men of God, yet they had not acted upon my recommendation. Had their spiritual insight been different from my own? Perhaps I had made an error. Fasting, I approached the Lord in prayer once more. Again I received a strong confirmation that this brother was the one to call.

Wanting to sustain my stake leaders, I decided to call the counselor over my auxiliary, explain my dilemma, and ask for counsel. He listened and promised to bring the matter to the attention of the stake president. Upon hearing about my experiences, the president reconsidered his earlier decision and then said, "Issue that call right now!"

The call was issued and accepted. My friend was sustained and set apart. I said to him, "I want you to know that you were truly called of God," and I related the struggle I'd had and the sweet confirming Spirit I'd eventually received.

He replied, "I know that is true because I have been praying that I would be called to be your secretary." Tears of joy were shed. In time this good brother went on to serve as a bishop, then as a counselor in a stake presidency.

Lesson three for me: When we follow the Lord's instructions to study, ask, and receive confirmation of the Spirit before moving ahead on a decision, the Lord's will can be revealed and His purposes more readily accomplished in our lives. I'm grateful for the lessons I learned and for the abiding trust I know we can place in our Heavenly Father to lead us aright. ■



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