



My Big Decision

By Rebecca Shaw

(Based on a true story)

Their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands (D&C 68:27).

Nicole, the Johnsons are coming again tonight,” Mom said. “Have you prayed like they asked you to?”

“No, not yet,” I said.

Elder and Sister Johnson are a missionary couple in our ward. They’ve been coming to family home evening to teach me the missionary discussions.

My family hasn’t always gone to church, so there were some things I didn’t understand. Now that I’m about to turn eight, Mom says that I need to decide if I’m going to be baptized.

Last week Elder and Sister Johnson taught me about how Joseph Smith prayed to find out the truth. Then they asked me to pray about getting baptized.

“Pay attention to how you feel,” Sister Johnson said. “That’s how the Holy Ghost helps us know what is true.”

I thought maybe I could wait until I’m 14 like Joseph Smith was.

Tonight for our lesson Elder Johnson stacked cups on top of each other to make a tower. He said if you don’t have a good foundation, the whole tower falls down.

“Why do you think the Church has such a strong foundation?” he asked.

I remembered last week’s lesson. “Maybe it’s because Heavenly Father and Jesus told Joseph Smith how to restore it,” I said.

“Right,” Elder Johnson said. “And we have living prophets and apostles to keep it on the right track.”

That made sense. I always had a good feeling when I heard about President Thomas S. Monson.

Then Sister Johnson asked me the question I was dreading.

“Have you prayed about getting baptized?”

“No, not yet,” I said.

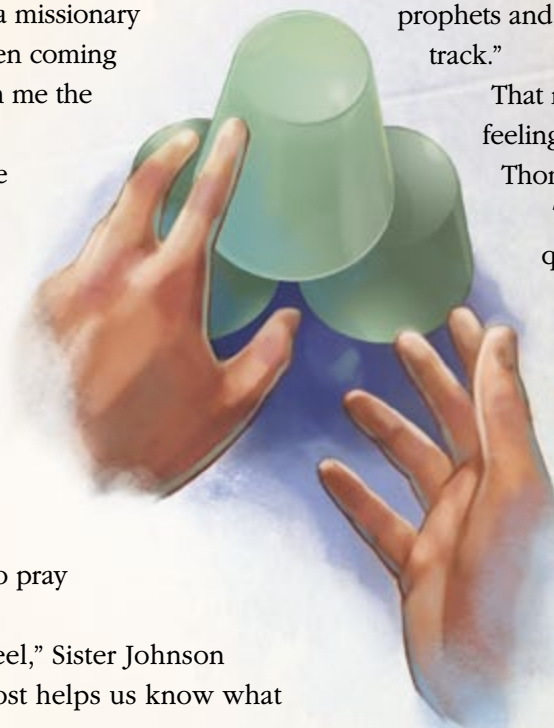
“Do you want to be baptized?” Sister Johnson asked.


I wished I could answer her, but I just shrugged my shoulders.

My little sister thinks I’m scared of being dunked in the water because that’s what she would be scared of. But I like the water, so I wasn’t sure what I was worried about.

“Are you afraid of the responsibility?” Sister Johnson asked.

As soon as Sister Johnson said that, I knew she was





"Father in Heaven knew that you would . . . be required to make some decisions that would be beyond your own ability to decide correctly. . . He included a provision for you to receive help . . . through the Holy Ghost."²

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



right. Mom said that after I'm baptized, I'll be accountable. That means I'll be responsible for what I choose. I'll have to be careful to keep God's commandments. I'm not sure if I'm ready for that responsibility. What if I stop going to church like my dad did?

"When you turn eight, you will be accountable for your choices even if you don't get baptized," Sister Johnson said. "But after you get baptized and confirmed, you'll have a lot more help in making good choices. That's because you'll have the gift of the Holy Ghost."

We talked about some of the commandments I would need to keep. I already knew that smoking and alcohol and drugs are bad for you, so keeping the Word of Wisdom didn't sound hard.

After the Johnsons left, I didn't feel afraid of being baptized anymore. I wanted to make right choices and keep Heavenly Father's commandments. And I was glad the Holy Ghost would help me.

I went to my room and knelt by my bed. While I was praying, I felt sure that it was a good idea to get baptized. I knew that feeling was the answer to my prayer. ♦