

By President
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CAN WE SEE THE Christ?

One night a grandfather was reading a story to his four-year-old granddaughter when she looked up and said, “Grandpa, look at the stars!” The older man smiled kindly and said, “We’re indoors, honey. There are no stars here.” But the child insisted, “You have stars in your room! Look!”

The grandfather looked up and, to his surprise, noticed that the ceiling was peppered with a metallic glitter. It was invisible most of the time, but when the light struck the glitter a certain way, it did indeed look like a field of stars. It took the eyes of a child to see them, but there they were. And from that moment on, when the grandfather walked into this room and looked up, he could see what he had not been able to see before.

We are entering another wonderful Christmas season filled with music and lights, parties and presents. But of all people, we as members of the church that bears the Savior’s name need to look beyond the façade of the season and see the sublime truth and beauty of this time of year.

I wonder how many in Bethlehem knew that right there, close to them, the Savior had been born? The Son of God, the long-awaited and promised Messiah—He was in their midst!

Do you remember what the angel told the shepherds? “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” And they said to themselves, “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and

see this thing which is come to pass” (Luke 2:11, 15).

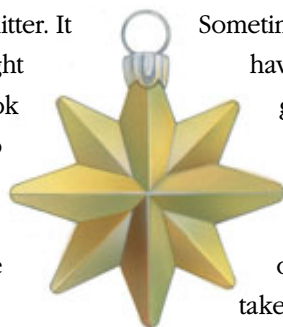
Like the shepherds of old, we need to say in our hearts, “Let us see this thing which is come to pass.” We need to desire it in our hearts. Let us see the Holy One of Israel in the manger, in the temple, on the mount, and on the cross. Like the shepherds, let us glorify and praise God for these tidings of great joy!

Sometimes the most difficult things to see are those that have been right in front of us all along. Like the grandfather who failed to see the stars on the ceiling, we sometimes cannot see that which is in plain sight.

We who have heard the glorious message of the coming of the Son of God, we who have taken upon us His name and have covenanted to walk in His path as His disciples—we must not fail to open our hearts and minds and truly see Him.

The Christmas season is wonderful in many ways. It is a season of charitable acts of kindness and brotherly love. It is a season of being more reflective about our own lives and about the many blessings that are ours. It is a season of forgiving and being forgiven. It is a season to enjoy the music and lights, parties and presents. But the glitter of the season should never dim our sight and prevent us from truly seeing the Prince of Peace in His majesty.

Let us all make this year’s Christmas season a time of rejoicing and celebration, a time when we acknowledge the miracle that our Almighty God sent His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem the world! ■





IDEAS FOR TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

1. "Attention activities can be used to create interest and to help learners focus their attention on the subject of the lesson. . . . Pictures are valuable tools for strengthening the main idea of a lesson and helping learners remain attentive" (*Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 160, 176). As you begin sharing this message, consider using an attention activity such as showing a picture or sharing a scripture and asking the family to think about how it applies to the message.

2. "One of your most important goals should be to help others apply gospel principles in everyday situations. . . . Help learners discover the blessings that come when we live the gospel" (*Teaching, No Greater Call*, 159). After sharing this message, consider inviting family members to share experiences they have had as they have focused on the Savior during the Christmas season.

YOUTH

Missionary Christmas

By Loran Cook

During my second Christmas as a full-time missionary, my companion and I were visiting a recently baptized member and her family. After a great Christmas dinner, we shared with them a Christmas message.

We asked the family to draw pictures of things that reminded them of the season, such as stars, presents, nativities, and Christmas trees. We then read some scriptures, including 2 Nephi 19:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." We sang "Once in Royal David's City" (*Hymns*, no. 205), watched a movie about the Nativity, and bore testimony of Jesus Christ.

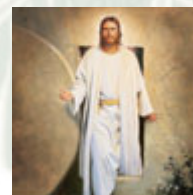
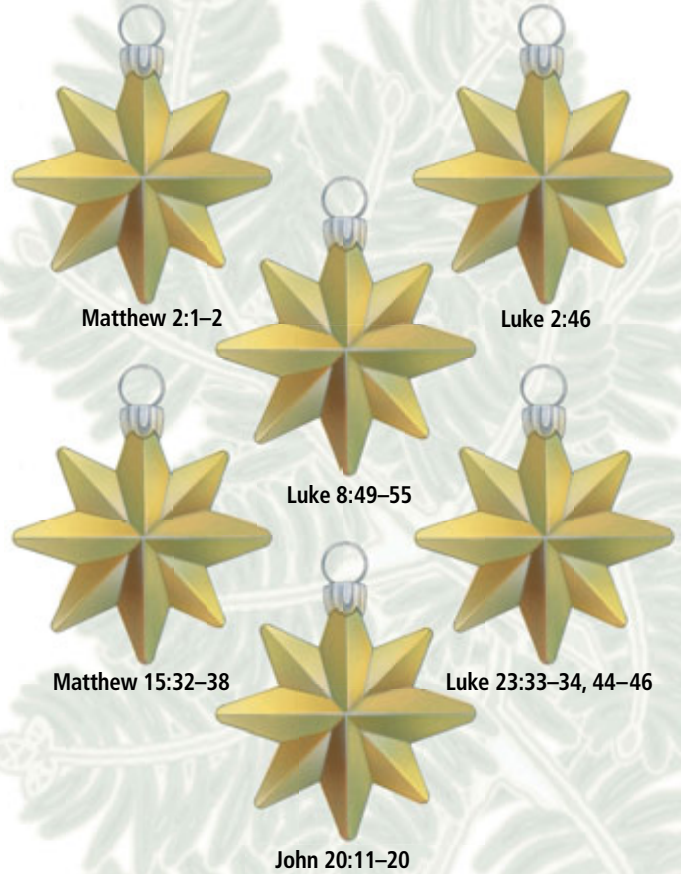
It was a Christmas in simple circumstances, away from our families and the usual Christmas celebrations, but as we bore testimony of the Savior, I felt a deeper love and appreciation for Him and His birth than I had known before. I realized it would be my last Christmas in full-time missionary service to my Heavenly Father, but I understood that His Spirit could testify to me of His Son wherever I was.



CHILDREN

Looking to See the Savior

President Uchtdorf said that at Christmastime we should look for things that remind us of the Savior's life. Look up the scripture references below. Find the picture that matches each scripture, and write the reference below the picture.



LEFT: ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL MANN; ILLUSTRATION OF ORNAMENTS BY JOE FLORES; CHRIST RAISING THE DAUGHTER OF JARUS; BY GREG OLSEN © 1990; BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE; BY PAUL MANN; CLAWSON © 191; THE CRUCIFIXION; BY HARRY ANDERSON © 191; ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL MANN; HE IS RISEN; BY DEL PARSON; THREE WISE MEN; BY PAUL MANN