

Ensign



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MAY NOT BE COPIED

By Small Means, by Jeffrey H. Craven

In this baptismal scene, which has been painted as a small part of the larger landscape, the artist depicts a fulfillment of 1 Nephi 16:29, “that by small means the Lord can bring about great things.” Though small ripples rolled out from these early baptisms, in reality the results of these events brought about “great things” in the lives of Latter-day Saints worldwide.

Ensign



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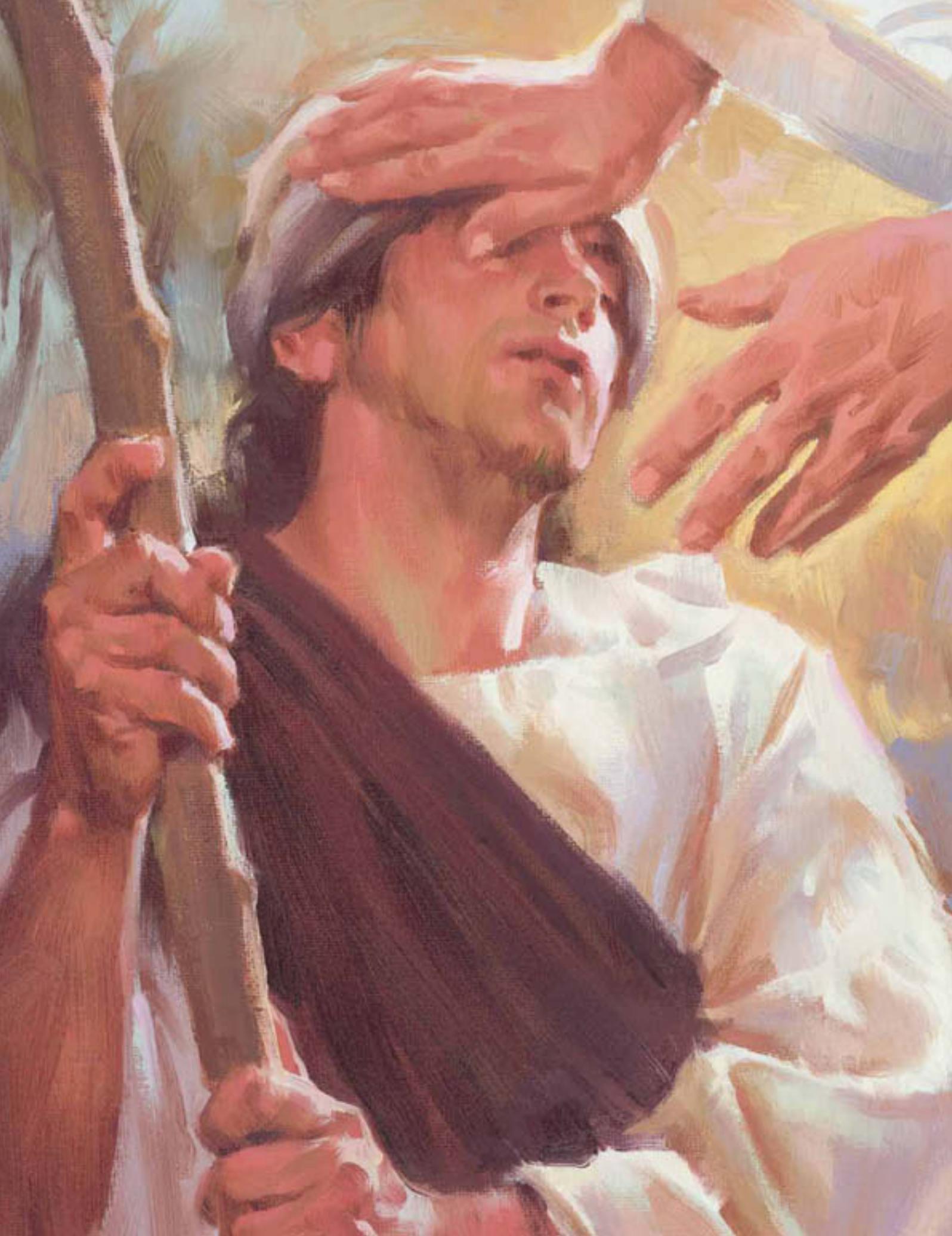
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To Truly See

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

First Counselor in the First Presidency

When Jesus walked and taught among men, He spoke frequently of having hearts that could know and feel, ears that were capable of hearing, and eyes that could truly see.

Each of us knows those who do not have sight. We also know many others who have their eyesight but who walk in darkness at noonday. These in the latter group may never carry the common white cane and carefully make their way to the sound of the familiar “tap, tap, tap.” They may not have a faithful seeing-eye dog by their side nor carry a sign about their neck which reads, “I am blind,” but blind they surely are. Some have been blinded by anger; others by indifference, by revenge, by hate, by prejudice, by ignorance, by neglect of precious opportunities. Of such the Lord said, “Their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”¹

Well might each of these people lament, “The gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored, and yet I am blind.” Some, like the friend of Philip of old, call out, “How can I [find my way], except some man should guide me?”²

Many years ago, while attending a stake conference, I noticed that a counselor in the stake presidency was blind. He functioned beautifully, performing his duties as though he had sight. It was a stormy night as we met in the stake office situated on the second floor of the building. Suddenly there was a loud clap of thunder. The lights in the building almost immediately went out. Instinctively I reached out for our sightless leader, and I said, “Here, take my arm and I will help you down the stairway.”

I’m certain he must have had a smile on his face as he responded, “No, Brother Monson, give me *your* arm, that I might help *you*. You are now in *my* territory.” The storm abated, the lights returned, but I shall never forget the trek down those stairs, guided by the man who was sightless yet filled with light.



Some have been blinded by anger; others by indifference, by revenge, by neglect of precious opportunities. Some, like the friend of Philip of old, call out, “How can I [find my way], except some man should guide me?”



Walter Stover chartered a train to bring Saints from all around Germany to meet, partake of the sacrament, and bear witness of the goodness of God.

The Light of the World

Long ago and at a place far distant, as Jesus passed by He saw a man who was blind from birth. His disciples questioned the Master as to why this person was blind. Had he sinned or had his parents sinned, causing him to have this affliction?

“Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. . . .

“As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

“When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

“And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam. . . . He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”³

A great dispute ensued among the

Pharisees concerning this miracle:

“Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man [Jesus] is a sinner.

“He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.”⁴

One thinks of the fisherman called Simon, better known to you and to me as Peter, chief among the Apostles. Doubting, disbelieving, impetuous Peter, in fulfillment of the Master’s prophecy, indeed did deny Him thrice. Amidst the pushing, the jeers, and the blows, “the Lord in the agony of His humiliation, in the majesty of His silence . . . *turned and looked upon Peter.*”⁵ As one chronologist described the change: “It was enough. . . . [Peter] knew no more danger, he feared no more death.’ . . . [He] rushed forth into the night . . . ‘to meet the morning dawn.’ . . . This broken-hearted

penitent [stood] before the tribunal of his own conscience, and there his old life, his old shame, his old weakness, his old self was doomed to that death of godly sorrow which was to issue in a new and a [nobler] birth.”⁶

The Apostle Paul had a similar experience to that of Peter. From the day of his conversion until the day of his death, Paul urged men to “put off . . . the old man” and to “put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”⁷

Simon the fisherman had become Peter the Apostle. Saul the persecutor had become Paul the proselyter.

The Light of Christ

The passage of time has not altered the capacity of the Redeemer to change men’s lives. As He said to the dead Lazarus, so He says to you and to me, “Come forth.”⁸

Said President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973): “Every soul who walks the earth, wherever he lives, in whatever nation he may have been born, no matter whether he be in riches or in poverty, had at birth an endowment of that first light which is called the Light of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, or the Spirit of God—that universal light of intelligence with which every soul is blessed. [Mormon] spoke of that Spirit when he said:

“For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.’ (Moroni 7:16.)”⁹

You and I know those who qualify for the Savior’s blessing in accordance with this definition.

Such was Walter Stover of Salt Lake City. Born in Germany, Walter embraced the gospel message and came to America. He established his own business. He gave freely of his time and of his means.

Following World War II, Walter Stover was called to return to his native land. He directed the Church in that nation and blessed the lives of all whom he met and with whom he served. With his own funds, he constructed two chapels in Berlin—a beautiful city that had been so devastated by the

conflict. He planned a gathering in Dresden for all the members of the Church from that nation and then chartered a train to bring them from all around the land so they could meet, partake of the sacrament, and bear witness of the goodness of God to them.

At the funeral service for Walter Stover, his son-in-law Thomas C. LeDuc said of him, “He had the ability to see Christ in every face he encountered, and he acted accordingly.”

The poet wrote:

*I met a stranger in the night,
Whose lamp had ceased to shine;
I paused and let him light
His lamp from mine.*

*A tempest sprang up later on,
And shook the world about,
And when the wind was gone,
My lamp was out.*

*But back came to me the stranger—
His lamp was glowing fine;
He held the precious flame
And lighted mine.¹⁰*

Perhaps the moral of this poem is simply that if you want to give a light to others, you have to glow yourself.

The Light of the Gospel

When the Prophet Joseph Smith went into a grove of trees made sacred by what occurred there, he described the event:

“It was on the morning of a beautiful, clear day, early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty. It was the first time in my life that I had made such an attempt, for amidst all my anxieties I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally.”¹¹

After enduring a harrowing experience from an unseen power, Joseph continued:

“I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. . . .



A blessing was given as he requested, and Brother Mulipola prayed, “Whether in Thy wisdom I see light or whether I see darkness all the days of my life, I will be eternally grateful for the truth of Thy gospel, which I now see and which provides me the light of life.”

“When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*”¹²

Joseph listened. Joseph learned.

On occasion I will be asked, “Brother Monson, if the Savior appeared to you, what questions would you ask of Him?”

My reply is always the same: “I would ask no question of Him. Rather, I would listen!”

Late one evening on a Pacific isle, a small boat slipped silently to its berth at the crude pier. Two Polynesian women helped Meli Mulipola from the boat and guided him to the well-worn pathway leading to the village road. The women marveled at the bright stars which twinkled in the midnight sky. The friendly moonlight guided them along their way. However, Meli Mulipola could not appreciate

these delights of nature—the moon, the stars, the sky—for he was blind.

His vision had been normal until that fateful day when, while he was working on a pineapple plantation, light turned suddenly to darkness and day became perpetual night. He later learned of the Restoration of the gospel and the teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His life had been brought into compliance with these teachings.

He and his loved ones had made this long voyage, having learned that one who held the priesthood of God was visiting among the islands. Brother Mulipola sought a blessing under the hands of those who held the sacred priesthood. His wish was granted. Tears streamed from his sightless eyes and coursed down his brown cheeks, tumbling finally upon his native dress. He dropped to his knees and prayed: “Oh, God, Thou knowest I am blind. Thy servants have blessed me

that if it be Thy will, my sight may return. Whether in Thy wisdom I see light or whether I see darkness all the days of my life, I will be eternally grateful for the truth of Thy gospel, which I now see and which provides me the light of life.”

He arose to his feet, thanked us for providing the blessing, and disappeared into the dark of the night. Silently he came; silently he departed. But his presence I shall never forget. I reflected upon the message of the Master: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”¹³

Today is a day of temple building. Never before have so many temples been erected and dedicated. President Gordon B. Hinckley, God’s prophet on this earth, has a vision of the vital ordinances performed in such houses of the Lord. Temples will bless all who attend them and who sacrifice for their completion. The Light of Christ will shine on all—even those who have gone beyond. President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918), speaking of work for the dead, declared, “Through our efforts in their behalf their chains of bondage will fall from them, and the darkness surrounding them will clear away, that light may shine upon them and they shall hear in the spirit world of the work that has been done for them by their children here, and will rejoice with you in your performance of these duties.”¹⁴

The Apostle Paul urged, “Be thou an example of the believers.”¹⁵ And from James: “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”¹⁶

I conclude with the words of the poet Minnie Louise Haskins, who wrote:

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of
the year:*

*“Give me a light, that I may tread safely into the
unknown!”*

And he replied:

*“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the
Hand of God.*

*That shall be to you better than light and safer than a
known way.”*

*So, I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod
gladly into the night.*

*And He led me toward the hills and the breaking of
day in the lone East.¹⁷*

May our light so shine that we glorify our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, whose name is the only name under heaven whereby we might be saved. ■

NOTES

1. Matthew 13:15.
2. Acts 8:31.
3. John 9:3, 5–7.
4. John 9:24–25.
5. Frederic W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ* (1874), 580; see Luke 22:61.
6. *The Life of Christ*, 581.
7. Ephesians 4:22, 24.
8. John 11:43.
9. *Stand Ye in Holy Places* (1974), 115.
10. Lon Woodrum, “Lamps.”
11. Joseph Smith—History 1:14.
12. Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17.
13. John 8:12.
14. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 247.
15. 1 Timothy 4:12.
16. James 1:22.
17. From “The Gate of the Year,” in James Dalton Morrison, ed., *Masterpieces of Religious Verse* (1948), 92.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach.

A few examples follow:

1. Show a lightbulb or candle. Invite family members to make a list of some of the different ways we use the word *light* (see the section headings from this article to help make the list). Use a story or two from this article to discuss what a great blessing it is to be able to see. Bear testimony of the light Jesus Christ has brought into your life.

2. Ask family members to listen for how Walter Stover and Meli Mulipola brought light to others. After you read these stories, discuss ways family members can bring the light of the gospel to their families and others.

3. As you share one of the examples or stories found in this message, invite family members to discuss how Jesus Christ brings light into people’s lives. Share an experience of when a teaching concerning Jesus Christ brought light into your life.



The Spirit of Revelation

BY ELDER M. GONZALO SEPÚLVEDA

Area Authority Seventy
Chile Area



If we will meditate over a situation that worries us, fervently pray to God for help, and strive to keep His commandments, revelation will flow into our minds.

Many years ago I had an experience with personal revelation that would forever change my life. I had recently graduated from college and was working for a good company. Everything seemed to be going well for me, but I had the unsettled feeling that something was missing. And I had many questions for which I could not find answers. I never thought that an invitation from my friend Imable to “meet the Mormons” would lead me to find answers to my questions—indeed, that it would have transcendent consequences for my life.

When Imable and I arrived at the meeting that Sunday in August 1974, the Church members—particularly the youth—greeted us with enthusiasm, as if we were old friends. We listened to a speaker who had great faith in what he was saying. When he finished I was surprised at the warm feeling I experienced.

Two days later I found myself in the home of one of the members, listening to the missionaries teach the gospel. Unfortunately my family would not allow the missionaries into our home because of our strong religious traditions and because they were afraid. I could understand their feelings; nevertheless, I

needed to know the truth for myself, no matter what the consequences. And so I studied it out in my mind (see D&C 9:8) and prayed to God for wisdom and knowledge.

One day, as the missionaries taught me about the First Vision, the Holy Spirit testified powerfully to me that the Prophet Joseph Smith had indeed seen the Father and the Son. I said to Elder Dennis Lamb, “It is true! I know it is true!”

That night I followed the missionaries’ counsel to pour out my heart to God and ask Him if the Book of Mormon was also true. Again I experienced that peaceful and joyful feeling I had felt earlier. I was grateful for the new life the Lord was offering me through the missionaries. My mind and heart were illuminated “by the Spirit of truth” (D&C 6:15), and I knew the sweet reality of a divine Father, who loves us and extends His arms to us through His servants.

The blessings soon followed. Two months after my baptism, I baptized my youngest sister and brother. And a year later I began my service as a full-time missionary in southern Chile. My mother was baptized while I was in the field, and I was able to baptize my

father when I returned home. My two sisters and my brother also served honorable missions. Months after I returned from my mission, I met my sweet wife, Adriana, and we were sealed in the temple. We were blessed with three children born in the covenant. All of this is because I listened to the quiet promptings that testified to me of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the restored Church. How grateful I am for the gift of personal revelation!

The Need for Wisdom

The prophet Joel foresaw the latter days approximately 3,000

I had recently graduated from college and was working for a good company. But I had the unsettled feeling that something was missing.

years ago and spoke about revelation. The Lord declared through him that after a spiritual drought, a time would come when “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions” (Joel 2:28). The same scripture was quoted by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, when about 3,000 souls were baptized (see Acts 2:17, 41). And it was proclaimed again by the angel Moroni when he visited the Prophet Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:41).

In our world today we see fear and confusion, violence and corruption. These emotions and actions are caused, in part, by not trusting in the Lord’s arm and by failing to seek wisdom through personal revelation.

Wisdom was the only desire in King Solomon’s heart: “Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?” (2 Chronicles 1:10).

Wisdom is generously offered to us, as stated in James 1:5: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” The Prophet Joseph Smith sought wisdom through revelation, and as a result, he brought to light monumental knowledge for humankind.

Seeking Wisdom through Personal Revelation

We can seek wisdom for our own lives through personal revelation. Most often it comes in quiet promptings and impressions. If we will meditate over a situation that worries us, fervently pray to God for help, and strive to keep His commandments, revelation will flow into our minds and we will be a light to those around us.

I testify that if we follow our Lord Jesus Christ and His teachings with faith and with repentant hearts, He will guide us with “the spirit of revelation” (D&C 8:3)—even in times of fear and doubt—and our lives will be blessed. ■

As the Dew from Heaven Distilling

Revelation is the means our Heavenly Father uses to communicate divine truth to us.

In accordance with God's plan, our mortal life is a time when we use our agency "to see if [we] will do all things whatsoever the Lord [our] God shall command [us]" (Abraham 3:25). To aid us in our struggles to overcome Satan's temptations and choose to come unto Christ, the Lord opens the heavens and reveals truth to us through the Holy Ghost. As Latter-day Saints, "we believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Articles of Faith 1:9).

Throughout time, revelation has been praised in the written word, in art, and in hymns. One example is found in the hymn "As the Dew from Heaven Distilling":

*Let thy doctrine, Lord, so gracious,
Thus descending from above,
Blest by thee, prove efficacious
To fulfill thy work of love.
(Hymns, no. 149)*

Following are artistic representations and scriptural references that support many types of revelation—from the divine revelation reserved for those we sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators in the Church to the personal revelations available to all who seek truth for their own lives (see Bible Dictionary, "Revelation," 762). ■

Types of revelation adapted from Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., Encyclopedia of Mormonism, 5 vols. [1992], 3:1225.



THE FIRST VISION, BY GARY L. KAPP, MAY NOT BE COPIED

Theophanies (seeing God face-to-face).

Among the few who have seen God face-to-face is the young Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–20). Other accounts of these rare revelations can be found in Isaiah 6; Acts 7:56; Ether 3:13–16; Ether 12:39; D&C 110:2; Moses 1:2; Moses 7:4; and Abraham 3:11.

Revealed knowledge from the Father that Jesus is the Son of God.

At the baptism of Christ, the heavens opened and the Holy Ghost descended "like a dove," and "there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mark 1:10–11). Other accounts of this type of revelation can be found in Matthew 17:5; 3 Nephi 11:7; D&C 93:14–17; and Joseph Smith—History 1:17.





Angelic visitations.

The angel Gabriel said to Mary that she would “bring forth a son, and [should] call his name Jesus” (Luke 1:31; see also vv. 28–38). Other accounts of angelic visitations can be found in Matthew 17:3; Luke 1:19; Acts 5:19–20; 1 Nephi 3:29; Jacob 7:5; Mosiah 27:11; Alma 8:14–17; Helaman 5:48; D&C 110:11–12; Moses 5:6; Moses 7:27; and Joseph Smith—History 1:30–32.

PAINTING BY DEL PARSON



Revelations through the Urim and Thummim.

The Urim and Thummim is an instrument prepared by God through which revelation may be received. The Prophet Joseph Smith described it as “two transparent stones set in the rim of a [silver] bow fastened to a breast plate” (History of the Church, 4:537). Other references to it can be found in Exodus 28:30; Leviticus 8:8; Revelation 2:17; D&C 3, 6, 11, 14 (revealed through the Urim and Thummim); D&C 17:1; D&C 130:8–10; Mosiah 8:13; Abraham 3:1–4; and Joseph Smith—History 1:35, 62.

Hearing the voice of God. When the child Samuel lay down to sleep, the “Lord called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I” (see 1 Samuel 3:1–10). Other examples of those who heard the voice of God can be found in Matthew 17:5; Mark 1:11; Acts 9:4–7; Acts 10:13–16; Jacob 7:5; Enos 1:5; Helaman 5:30; 3 Nephi 11:3–8; and Moses 4:14.



PAINTING BY HARRY ANDERSON



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Visions and Prophetic Manifestations. Above: On January 21, 1836, in the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet received a vision of the celestial kingdom wherein he saw his father, mother, and brother Alvin (see D&C 137). Other accounts of visions include Acts 9:10; Acts 16:9; Alma 19:16; D&C 76; Moses 1:27; and Moses 7:23. Left: The Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation at the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830, in Fayette, New York. Oliver Cowdery is at the table (see D&C 21).

A burning in the bosom.

When Oliver Cowdery attempted to translate the gold plates and failed, the Lord taught him how to recognize inspiration from God (see D&C 9). This more common form of inspiration and revelation is also mentioned in Luke 24:32 and 3 Nephi 11:3.



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Dreams. Among the most vivid and powerful dreams is Lehi's dream of the tree of life, recorded in 1 Nephi 8:2–36 and interpreted by Nephi in 1 Nephi 11. Other accounts of dreams as a form of revelation can be found in Genesis 28:12; Genesis 37:5; Genesis 46:2–4; 1 Kings 3:5; Daniel 2:1; Matthew 1:20; Matthew 2:12–13; and Ether 9:3.

Gifts of the Spirit. The ancient prophet Moroni lists the gifts of the spirit in Moroni 10:8–18. Other references to these gifts, some of which we all possess, can be found in Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 12; Alma 9:21; and D&C 46.





PAINTING BY ROBERT T. BARRETT

A still, small voice. The Lord spoke to Elijah in a still, small voice rather than in the wind, an earthquake, or a fire (see 1 Kings 19:12–18.) This familiar form of revelation is also mentioned in D&C 85:6.

The Light of Christ (knowing good from evil). All of us are blessed with the Light of Christ, which helps us know good from evil. We often refer to it as our conscience. Other references to the Light of Christ appear in John 1:9; Moroni 7:16; and D&C 84:46.



ADD TO YOUR FAITH, VIRTUE, AND TO YOUR VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, BY WALTER RANE



IN THE *Quiet* OF THE *Morning*

BY KAREN CALDWELL

For many of my adult years I loved to sit in Gospel Doctrine classes or firesides to learn about the gospel but rarely took time to learn on my own. I often felt the Spirit of the Lord in these settings and was in awe at the knowledge of others, but that was about where my gospel study ended. It was easy to rationalize that others had more time to study than I did because I was a busy mother. My days were always filled with the consuming tasks of running a household, cooking, cleaning, shuttling children to appointments and assignments. How could I find the time to spend more than just a few minutes a day reading scriptures? Although I learned to read and write as a child, I never learned to enjoy reading or take advantage of its blessings until several years ago. In the March 1996 *Ensign* I read about those who have been blessed by the gospel literacy effort. I have come to realize the truth of the statement that one who does not read is no better off than one who cannot read. I have

During my morning study hours I have come to know the gospel plan and have come to see my great need for the Savior.

learned that the Holy Ghost can bring to our memories, in our time of need, only the things we have put in them by our diligent study.

The turning point in my life came when my desire to learn the gospel and to know the Savior was more important to me than some extra sleep in the morning that I had been accustomed to giving myself. The early morning hours became my friend as I wrapped myself in a blanket on the couch in the living room feasting on the words of

Christ. In the quiet of the morning I have come to know the Savior's plan for me and have come to see my great need for Him. I have felt His love for me in spite of my shortcomings. I have come to know that our prophet and apostles are the Savior's special witnesses to us and that Christ speaks His will to them. I know that one of the best ways for my family to come to Christ is to listen and study the words of His special witnesses. The May and the November conference issues of the *Ensign* have become



like family home evening manuals. I have learned that my husband and I have been called to be witnesses of Christ to our children. It is our duty and responsibility to bring them up in light and truth (see D&C 93:40).

I learned to record my thoughts and impressions. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “Powerful spiritual direction in your life can be overcome or forced into the background unless you provide a way to retain it. Brigham Young declared, ‘If you love the truth you can remember it.’¹ Knowledge carefully recorded is knowledge available in time of need. Spiritually sensitive information should be kept in a sacred place that communicates to the Lord how you treasure it.”²

With this in mind I purchased a small journal that would fit into my purse so I could take it anywhere. I began taking notes of conference talks and highlighting the things I felt I should share with my family. I began recording quotes from the prophets, scriptures, and



insights of teachers and leaders. I have made it a point to read and reread my entries. Now, no matter where I am, I have inspiring words to fill my mind, and the Spirit witnesses to me all over again of their truth.

I soon found that studying for a period in the morning was not enough. I was hungering and thirsting for more. I began taking advantage of the institute program, the “Know Your Religion” series, firesides, devotionals, inspiring music, and audiotaped talks by the General Authorities. Much time was put to better use by listening to tapes as I did the laundry, washed dishes, or drove the car. Another fruit of my labor was a genuine desire to attend the temple more frequently.

On many occasions since my gospel study began, the Holy Ghost has pulled from the library of my mind things that my children needed to hear. I have been inspired to return to scriptures and quotations while preparing lessons and have been reawakened to solutions from the scriptures or the words of the prophets for challenges in my life. I was experiencing what Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke of when he said: “Today, as in ancient times, God opens windows of gospel light and truth by revealing ‘his secret unto his servants the prophets.’ Those who have ‘eyes to see, and ears to hear’ can learn eternal principles; view majestic vistas of knowledge, foresight, and wisdom; and receive direction on how to live their lives.”³

Many other areas of my life have been blessed because of my decision to study the gospel, especially from the Book of Mormon. It has opened my mind to a better understanding

of all things both secular and spiritual. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught that we should have proper balance and perspective as we seek knowledge: “We must recognize that secular knowledge alone can never save a soul nor open the celestial kingdom to anyone.

“The Apostles Peter and John, for example, had little secular learning—being termed ignorant, in fact. But Peter and John knew . . . the path to eternal life. They learned that mortality is the time to learn first of God and his gospel and to receive the saving priesthood ordinances.

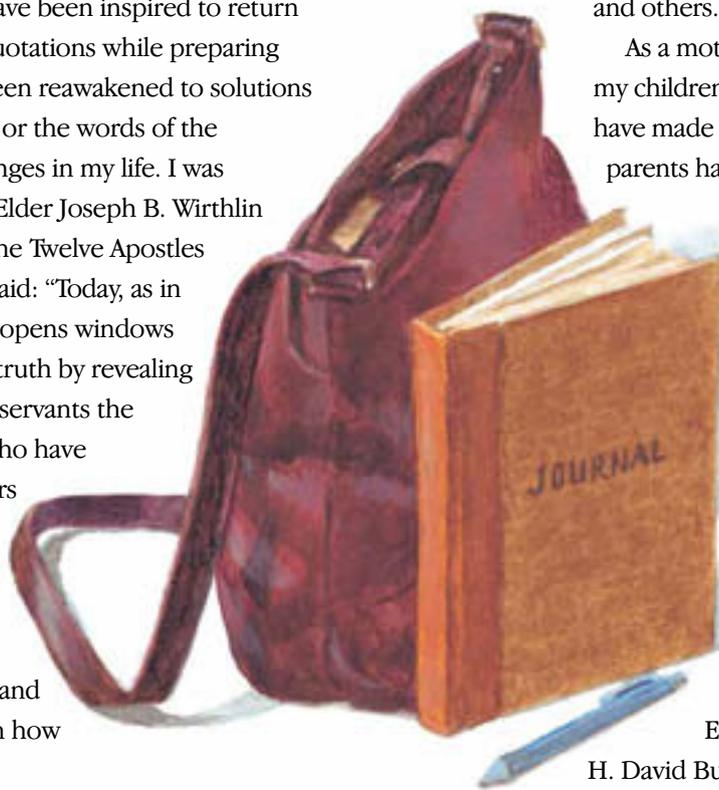
“Yet secular knowledge can be most helpful to the children of our Father in Heaven who, having placed first things first, have found and are living those truths which lead one to eternal life. These are they who have the balance and perspective to seek all knowledge—revealed and secular—as a tool and a servant for the blessing of themselves and others.”⁴

As a mother, I know the responsibility to teach my children the gospel is mine. The scriptures have made this plain: “And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

. . . And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord” (D&C 68:25, 28).

Echoing this revelation, Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop, said that we should “not leave the teaching and governance of [our families] to society, to the school, or to the Church.”⁵ This knowledge given to us by the scriptures and inspired

I purchased a small journal that would fit into my purse so I could take it anywhere.





I have been amazed how even the youngest children can understand the chronology of the Book of Mormon when it appears on a time line.

leaders has become most valuable to me as a parent.

The Lord expects us to have a wide variety of information so that we might have breadth and depth in our lives. We are to study “things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms” (D&C 88:79).

The First Presidency message in the March 1996 *Ensign* is a formula for success. President Thomas S. Monson writes: “Fill your minds with truth; . . . I’d like to suggest that when we search for truth, we search among those books and in those places where truth is most likely to be found. I’ve often referred to a simple couplet: ‘You don’t find truth groveling through error. You find truth by searching the holy word of God.’ There are those who for direction and inspiration turn to the philosophies of man. There a smattering of truth may be found, but not the entire spectrum. Sometimes the truth of such philosophies is based upon a shallow foundation.”

President Kimball taught that “*spiritual learning takes precedence*. The secular without the foundation of the spiritual is like the foam upon the milk, the fleeting shadow. . . . One need not choose between the two . . . for there is opportunity to get both simultaneously.”⁶ As I have tried over the years to teach my children, I have come to the knowledge that all learning is of some value, but all learning is not of equal value. I have been motivated to read great literature to my family that will build character, to keep a personal journal, and to write letters to missionaries and nonmember families and friends that share our testimonies.

One of the methods I have used to help my children remember dates, people, and events in the Book of Mormon is a time line where they plug in information. I have been amazed how even the youngest children can understand the chronology of the Book of Mormon when it appears on a time line. Then as we study Old and New Testament events, these too are plugged into the time line. This has helped

our family see the Lord’s dealings with His people in the Old World and in the New World simultaneously.

Our time lines have continued on to the more modern times of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the gospel. We have read books about great men and women in and out of the Church who have displayed courage and faith in Christ, some who have lost their lives in the fight for their religion and freedoms. Their names have been placed on our time line.

Scripture memorization is another area we have incorporated in our family home evenings. It has been fun for the children to earn small rewards for the scriptures they memorize, and I have felt great joy in seeing my children’s eyes light up when someone in sacrament meeting quotes one of “their” scriptures. Learning scriptures shows the Lord we value His holy word, and the Holy Ghost can bring these truths to our recollection in a time of need.

We live in a world of great trials, temptations, and sorrows; there are forces of evil all around us. I am grateful the Lord continues to give us wise counsel through prophets and apostles on how to safeguard our families from these evils. In spite of all that is wicked and bad, I can’t think of a better time to raise a family. There are so many resources to help us learn: the scriptures, living prophets, seminary, institute, family home evening, Sunday meetings, and the temple, to name a few.

The decision I made a few years ago to arise early in the morning to study the gospel has blessed my life and has helped me know what to share with my family. Studying together as a family, particularly the words of the prophets on specific subjects, has added a spiritual dimension to our lives. Studying the Book of Mormon and applying it to our lives has enlightened our understanding of all things, especially to what is happening in the world today. ■

Karen Caldwell is a member of the Perry Second Ward, Willard Utah Stake.

NOTES

1. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1954), 10.
2. “Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 88.
3. “Windows of Light and Truth,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 75.
4. “Seek Learning, Even by Study and Also by Faith,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1983, 3.
5. “I Will Go,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 44–45.
6. *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (1982), 390.

HOPE AND FAITH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN, EXCEPT AS NOTED



A Discussion with Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin

Recently a member of the Church magazines staff met with Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to discuss hope and faith. Following is a portion of their conversation.

Because of conditions in the world today, it may seem easy to become discouraged. How can we avoid such feelings and maintain hope and optimism?

Elder Wirthlin: There has always been discouragement, negativism, and temptation in the world because of Lucifer. These times in which we are living are not new times. When the Savior Himself was born, there were troubled times. The Prophet Joseph Smith lived in troubled times. It is interesting that during difficult times, the Lord has often intervened.

If willing to pray, every living person may be sustained by the Lord through whatever tragedy or problem might come upon him or her. This sustaining help results from our dependence upon the Lord—which is really our faith in Him, our knowledge of Him, and our testimony—as was so true with the

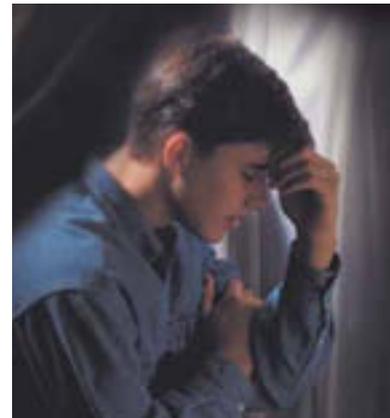
Prophet Joseph Smith. He was impressed to follow the admonition of James the Apostle: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God” (James 1:5). His simple prayer opened up the heavens and ushered in our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son in the most important revelation that has been given to mankind.

As with the Prophet Joseph Smith, we too can pray for answers to our questions and problems. Prayer is so important to maintaining hope. Even the Savior of the world prayed to Heavenly Father. Prayer is the entrance to heaven. And everybody has that privilege. What a great blessing.

What is it that we should hope for?

Elder Wirthlin: The first thing we should hope for is eternal life—to live eternally with our Father and His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and to live forever with our family.

One of the best scriptures about hope is Ether 12:4: “Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of



P *rayer is so important to maintaining hope. Even the Savior of the world prayed to Heavenly Father. Prayer is the entrance to heaven.*

God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God.” That’s the best verse I know of about hope.

What is the relationship between having a strong testimony of the gospel and having hope?

Elder Wirthlin: Well, I think that a strong testimony of the gospel comes after hope. In my opinion we hope that we will one day see God, we hope that we will see our loved ones, we hope for eternal life. With membership in the Church, as we partake of the sacrament, attend the temple regularly, and fulfill all the other requirements of gospel living, we develop strong testimonies.

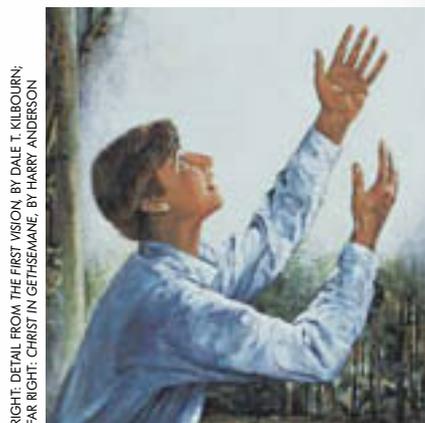
So hope is a requirement for having a strong testimony?

Elder Wirthlin: Yes, I think that hope comes first. It is also necessary for us to hope before we pray. We hope, we ponder, then we pray. I think that in the heart of Joseph Smith as a young boy, he hoped for an answer to his prayer. His experience in the Sacred Grove laid the

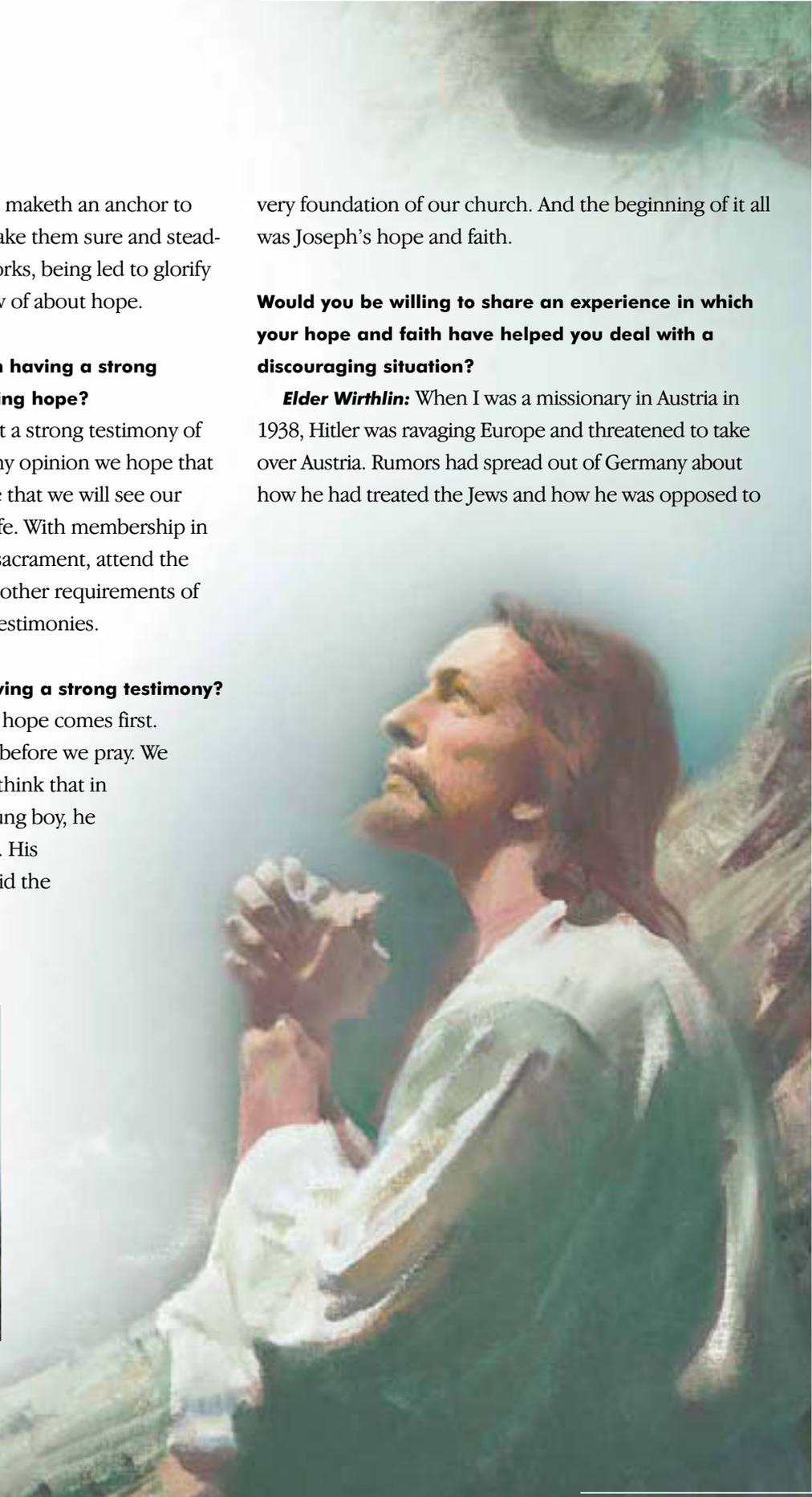
very foundation of our church. And the beginning of it all was Joseph’s hope and faith.

Would you be willing to share an experience in which your hope and faith have helped you deal with a discouraging situation?

Elder Wirthlin: When I was a missionary in Austria in 1938, Hitler was ravaging Europe and threatened to take over Austria. Rumors had spread out of Germany about how he had treated the Jews and how he was opposed to



RIGHT: DETAIL FROM THE FIRST VISION, BY DALE T. KILBOURN;
FAR RIGHT: CHRIST IN GETTSEMANE, BY HARRY ANDERSON



religion, and this led people to fear. But with all of the turmoil that was going on, I had an inner faith and hope because of the blessing I had received when I was set apart as a missionary by my father. I was told that I would be protected from whatever danger might come my way, so I had an inner peace and hope that despite the dangers that were very evident, everything would be OK.

Two weeks before what they call the “Anschluss”—Hitler’s annexation of Austria—I was transferred to Switzerland, which was neutral. I’ve always looked back on that as a blessing in times of peril.



Then another time, as I was coming home on the ocean, German submarines had just sunk a British passenger vessel called the SS *Athenia* off the coast of Ireland. Word was given throughout the ship that we were being followed by two giant submarines and that we could possibly be torpedoed. There again, faith came back to me, a feeling of faith, confidence, and hope that we would arrive in New York safely, which we did.

How can Church members develop that same hope that was such a strength to you?

Elder Wirthlin: Always have faith, first of all, in our Heavenly Father and in His beloved

Son, Jesus Christ. And always have a positive attitude about our prophet, seer, and revelator, about the leaders of the Church, and about one another.

Parents can be instrumental in helping their children develop hope and faith. I was taught by my parents from early childhood about Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. My parents tried to live lives that conformed to what the Savior taught.

I get a lot of my thinking from my parents. My mother was a very positive thinker; she was always active, always doing something good. I never heard her say anything negative about another individual. That was a great example to me.

We refer often to the term “faith of our fathers.” I would say “faith of our fathers and mothers,” because I think that we should never

forget our mothers, who are so instrumental in helping us develop faith and hope.

The scriptures speak of “a perfect brightness of hope” (2 Nephi 31:20).

How do we develop this type of hope?

Elder Wirthlin: What we want is for that perfect brightness of hope to develop into a perfect knowledge, a testimony of the Savior and our Heavenly Father. And to me, that perfect knowledge is that we don’t have a shadow of doubt. You’ve heard testimonies in fast meeting. Some will say, “I believe”; others



Parents can be instrumental in helping their children develop hope and faith. I was taught by my parents from early childhood about Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost.

will say, "I know." To know is to have an assurance, without a shadow of a doubt, that something is true.

What is it that you hope for?

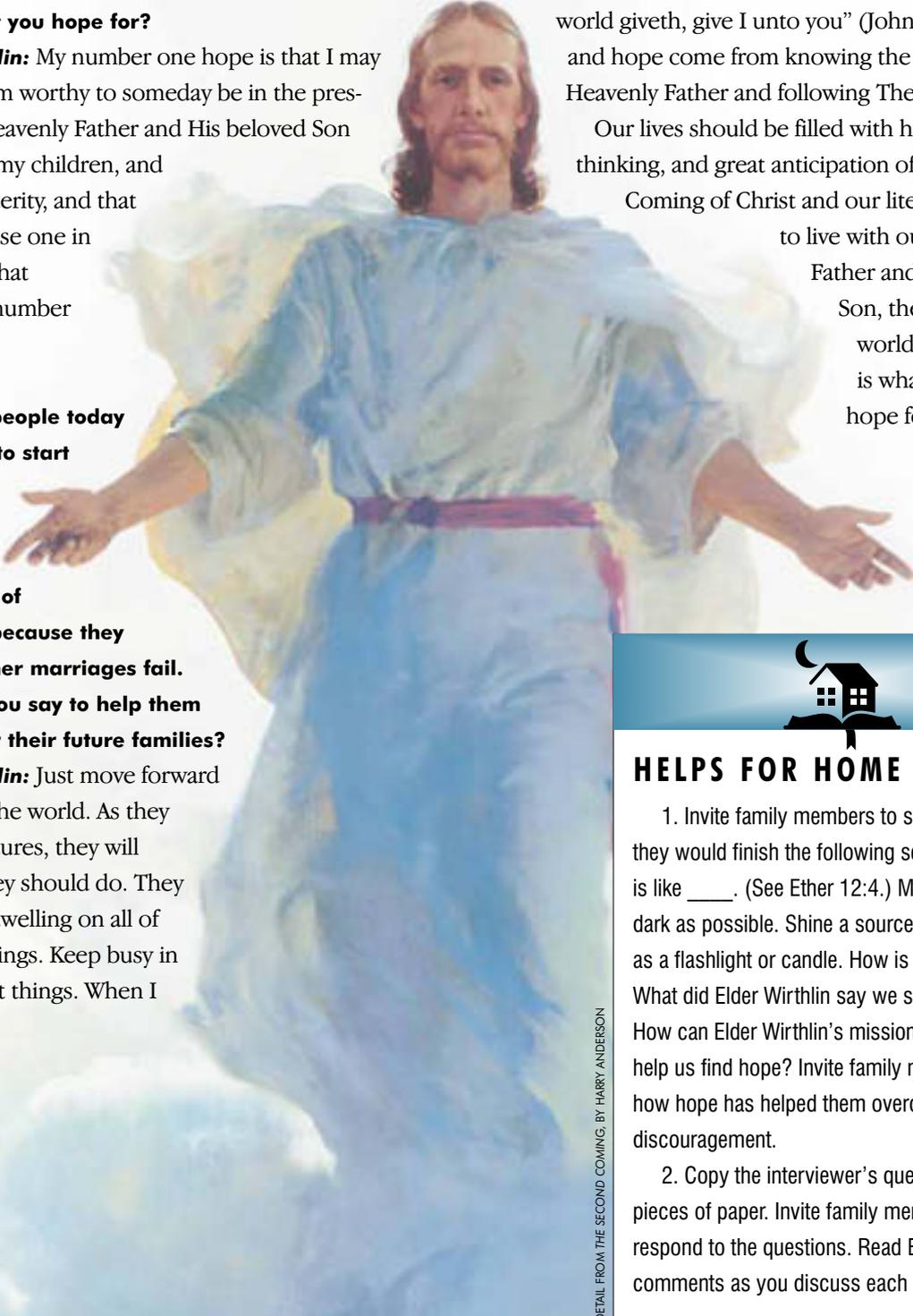
Elder Wirthlin: My number one hope is that I may live so that I am worthy to someday be in the presence of our Heavenly Father and His beloved Son with my wife, my children, and my entire posterity, and that we shall not lose one in this respect. That would be my number one hope.

Many young people today are reluctant to start families of their own because of the pressures of the world or because they have seen other marriages fail. What would you say to help them have hope for their future families?

Elder Wirthlin: Just move forward regardless of the world. As they read the scriptures, they will know what they should do. They shouldn't be dwelling on all of these other things. Keep busy in doing the right things. When I

have decisions or advice to give to people, I explain that it is all laid out in the scriptures. As the Savior said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27). Peace and hope come from knowing the Lord and our Heavenly Father and following Their way of living.

Our lives should be filled with hope, positive thinking, and great anticipation of the Second Coming of Christ and our literal resurrection to live with our Heavenly Father and His beloved Son, the Savior of the world, forever. That is what we should hope for. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY JED A. CLARK

DETAIL FROM THE SECOND COMING, BY HARRY ANDERSON



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Invite family members to share ways they would finish the following sentence: Hope is like _____. (See Ether 12:4.) Make a room as dark as possible. Shine a source of light such as a flashlight or candle. How is this like hope? What did Elder Wirthlin say we should hope for? How can Elder Wirthlin's missionary experiences help us find hope? Invite family members to tell how hope has helped them overcome fear and discouragement.
2. Copy the interviewer's questions onto pieces of paper. Invite family members to respond to the questions. Read Elder Wirthlin's comments as you discuss each question.

Losing Barbara, Finding the Lord

BY CLARK C. BRUDERER

After tragedy hit my home, I realized how much I needed to change in order to keep my family together forever.

I was born and raised as a member of the Church. I received my Eagle Scout and Duty to God Awards, went on a mission, was married in the temple, and was active in the Church my whole life—until several years ago. Then, I don't know exactly how or why, I found myself questioning and doubting some teachings of the Church.

These doubts led to a lack of motivation in performing my Church duties and attending meetings. When I did attend, I had great conflicts within my mind about what was being said. I became convinced that living according to answers to prayer or being obedient to Church teachings was for the weak-minded person who didn't take responsibility for his or her own life. I therefore decided to take responsibility for my own decisions, and I all but stopped praying. I continued to get more selfish with my free time. I watched football for most of the day on Sunday and on Monday night while my family did things together without me. Although Barbara stuck with me through all of this, my choices caused great stress on our marriage.

Suffering and Loss

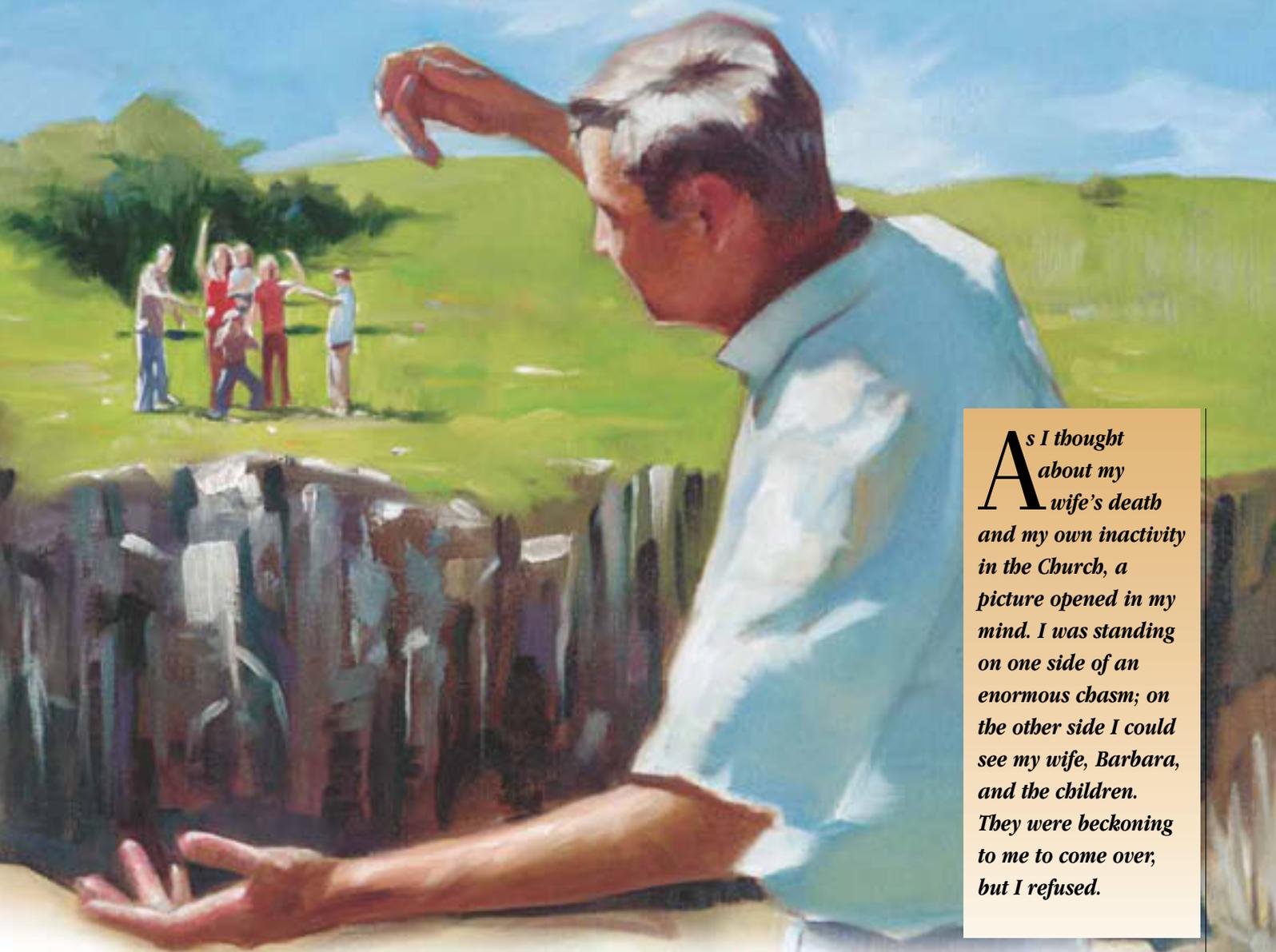
During this time Barbara went to the doctor about a lump that had developed in her breast. She had a biopsy, and it came back positive. Barbara had stage 4 breast cancer, which meant that the cancer had already spread to her bones. We were given only a very slim hope that she would survive.

We clung to this hope as we began a solid year of treatments: chemotherapy, surgery, more chemotherapy, a bone-marrow transplant, and then high-dose radiation therapy to

the affected bone areas. For Barbara, this was a year of indescribable suffering that is truly incomprehensible to anyone who hasn't experienced it. I was by her side for most of the treatments and all of her hospitalizations. Though I know I have no idea of how horrible it was for her, I caught a small glimpse every now and then of what she was enduring, and nothing has hurt me so deeply in my life as watching her suffer. In taking care of my sick wife, I performed the first significant and truly unselfish act I had done in a long time.

Barbara was given many priesthood blessings of health, comfort, and strength during this period. I remember having difficulty believing in the blessings she was given—but Barbara didn't. She was always strong and faithful. Through all my questioning and doubting, she held firm in her testimony and her faith in the blessings she had received.

Barbara finally made it through the treatments and enjoyed one year of good health. She was so very grateful for that healthy year. Then, without warning, her blood counts began to drop. Her bone marrow was failing to produce enough blood cells to keep her alive. For the next year, Barbara received blood transfusions twice a week. She suffered several life-threatening infections and serious bleeding episodes during this time. Near the end of that year, the cancer came back, in her liver this time. The doctors could do nothing for her, and on 1 December 2000, Barbara's suffering finally came to an end, in our home, with her loving family surrounding her.



As I thought about my wife's death and my own inactivity in the Church, a picture opened in my mind. I was standing on one side of an enormous chasm; on the other side I could see my wife, Barbara, and the children. They were beckoning to me to come over, but I refused.

Finding the Path

Even though I knew the end was coming, I was totally unprepared for the intense grief that overwhelmed me. I seriously thought many times that I would not physically survive it. Nothing seemed to have meaning anymore. I felt totally alone and lost.

At this time, however, I noticed my children had something I did not. I sensed it was their reliance on God. I grew to want what they had, but I didn't know how to obtain it. I knew that the scriptures said we needed faith in Christ in order to receive a witness of Him, but I could not summon that faith. I felt dead inside. One day when I was explaining this frustration to my oldest son, Steve, he said to me, "Dad, you don't have to already believe in Him; you just have to humble yourself and be open to feeling Him." I thought I could do that much.

This was the beginning of my path back to the Lord. I began to pray again. I hadn't been attending church, but

I knew Barb would want me to take the kids in her absence, so I began going out of respect for her. At first it was incredibly difficult to go, especially to fast and testimony meetings. Hearing testimonies of people's health being restored through the power of God was particularly difficult. I would look at the families sitting near us and notice that they all had dads *and* moms sitting with them. I pictured Barbara sitting with us; she always looked so angelic at church. I would invariably end up in the men's room sobbing for the last half of the meeting.

Just as I was ready to give up on going to church, I had an experience at a regional conference that changed my outlook. I sat stressing over my current plight. I believed Barb's spirit still existed. I had no proof, but I just felt she was still there. I wondered what she was thinking, what she was doing. As I thought, a picture opened in my mind. I was standing on one side of an enormous chasm; on the other side I could see Barbara and the children. They were

beckoning to me to come over to where they were. I refused and said, “I like it over here. You come to my side.” They insisted that I join them, but the distance between us seemed impossible to cross. Through this experience I realized that my current path in life would leave me all alone with an uncrossable gulf between my family and me. I realized that nothing else really mattered in life if I lost my family. I knew then I had to cross that chasm, no matter what.

This gave me renewed motivation to keep going to church. Even though it evoked hurtful emotions, I went, and gradually it became a little easier to get through sacrament meeting. I began looking forward to Sunday School and priesthood meetings. I didn’t fully realize it at the time, but I was being taught by the Spirit to understand and internalize gospel principles. Week after week, little by little, I would understand more. I marveled at how concepts seemed so clear and how I would understand them not only intellectually but also emotionally and spiritually. This was so opposite to my experiences of the past several years that the contrast was unmistakable.

A Conviction of Truth

I was finally receiving the testimony I had always wanted but somehow had never obtained. I was seeing the entire world through different eyes. I wondered why I had never had such unmistakable spiritual confirmations of truth until now. But with the help of the Lord and some good people in the Church, I think I finally understand why it took so long.

First, I lacked humility. Never before had I been humbled in the way Barbara’s death humbled me. Second, I hadn’t focused enough on keeping the commandments. My true focus in life was on other things—success in the business world, money, and my selfish pursuits—rather than on the gospel, the Lord, and my family. My perspective focused primarily on this world.

The Holy Spirit was now teaching me a much greater perspective of things. Losing Barbara and thinking about what she must be doing led me to study and pray about the

plan of salvation. Because of Barbara, I now felt much closer to the next world. I started to comprehend how short this life is. I felt comforted that someday the horrible wrong of losing Barbara would be made right and I would understand why it had to be this way, although my finite mind could not totally comprehend it now. Many people had tried to explain this to me in the days and months after Barb’s death, but it was not until the Holy Spirit explained it to my soul that I was able to accept it.

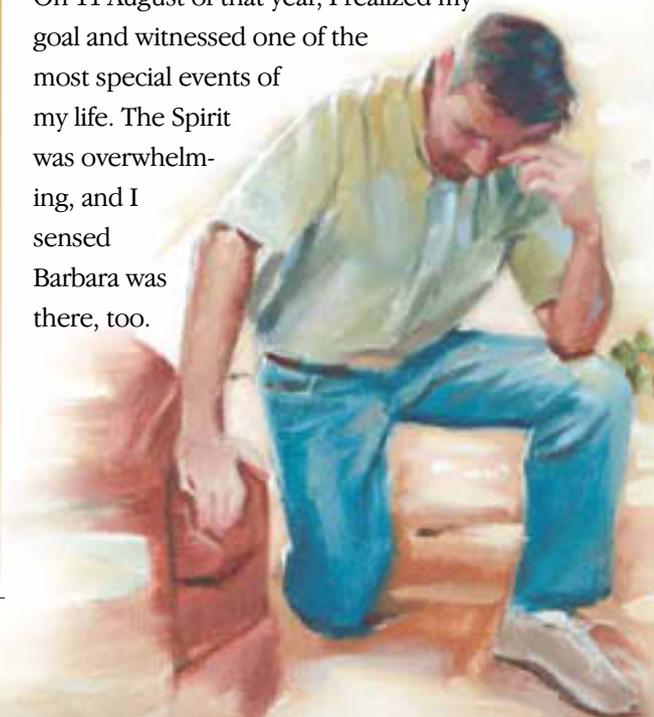
I remember receiving a distinct sense of urgency about turning my life around, following the counsel of the prophets, and making the gospel and my family my main focus. I learned that it is only through living close to the Lord and following His commandments that we can keep this sense of urgency.

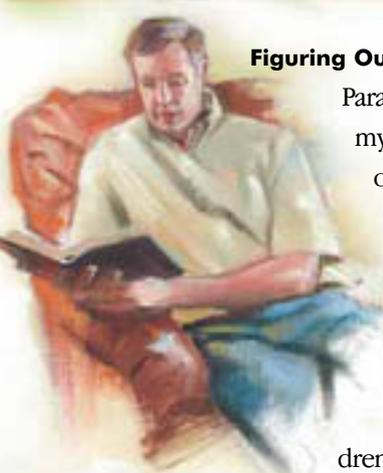
Armed with this new knowledge and conviction, I continued to progress in the gospel. I started paying tithing, doing home teaching, holding family home evening, and continuing with family and personal scripture study and prayer. I also suffered great remorse for my sins during this time. I felt something of what Alma described: “My soul was racked with eternal torment” (Mosiah 27:29). Only after experiencing this remorse did I feel cleansed and forgiven by the Lord.

Also during this time, my son Steve became engaged.

I set a goal with the bishop to be worthy to return to the temple before Steve’s marriage. On 11 August of that year, I realized my goal and witnessed one of the most special events of my life. The Spirit was overwhelming, and I sensed Barbara was there, too.

I realized nothing else really mattered in life if I lost my family. I focused on them, and through scripture study and prayer I struggled to repent and again be worthy to enter the temple. When I attended the temple for my son’s wedding, I felt very close to Barbara and to the Lord.





Figuring Out Fatherhood

Parallel to my conversion process was my attempt to cope with the grief of Barb's loss and the hardships of being a single parent. I remember feeling totally overwhelmed. Since

I was now the only parent, I had to take over the everyday duties that Barbara had always handled so masterfully—caring for sick children, driving them here and there, buying

clothes, helping them with homework, and fixing meals. After just a few weeks of this, I panicked when I realized that if I wanted to be a good parent, I would have to give up most of my treasured, selfish activities. But I decided the sacrifice would be worth it.

The little things I do for my family may not necessarily be enjoyable from a personal, selfish point of view, but the long-term rewards are amazing and eternal. I am so much more involved in my children's lives. They feel they know me and have said that I am finally the dad they always wanted.

For the first six months as a single father, I felt I was doing all these extra things because Barbara wasn't there and it was now simply my responsibility instead of hers. Then one day it dawned on me: everything I had been doing for and with the kids, I could just as easily have

done when Barbara was here. In fact, it would have been easier. I had to face the daunting fact that I had missed out on many of the true rewards of fatherhood all those years.

I had also not been a celestial husband in keeping Barbara first above all other things. Since losing her, I have realized profoundly just how important the marriage relationship is. Nothing in this world is anywhere near as important, except our relationship with our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ. In the end, all the other things we do in this life will pale in comparison.

A Second Chance

I feel so fortunate to have been given another chance to become worthy for eternal life. I cannot express how grateful I am to my wife and to the Savior for not giving up on me when I strayed from the truth. I know that I have been pulled back to the strait and narrow path because of the Savior's love for me. I testify that the Lord loves each of us, even us sinners, for I have felt His love for me in a way I cannot deny. I really, truly believe in Him as never before. It feels so very good. It will be worth whatever sacrifices we make in this life to be with our families forever. As Barbara said on one of her last days on earth, "Do whatever it takes to be an eternal family!" ■

Clark C. Bruderer is a member of the Old Mill Ward, Kaysville Utah Stake.



STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

OUR PROGRESS TOWARD PERFECTION

A continuing series giving insights for your study and use of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."

"In the premortal realm, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize his or her divine destiny as an heir of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave."¹

Premortal Life Is the Key

If we are to understand our purpose here on earth and reach our divine potential, we must understand that we lived as spirit children of our Heavenly Father before we were



born. "When we comprehend the doctrine of premortal life," said President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "we know that we are the children of God, that we lived with him in spirit form before entering mortality. We know that this life is a test, that life did not begin with birth, nor will it end with death. Then life begins to make sense, with meaning and purpose even in all of the chaotic mischief that mankind creates for itself."²

The Blessing of a Physical Body

In our premortal life we rejoiced at the opportunity to come to earth, obtain a physical body, and gain mortal experience. We

knew this was the only way we could become like our perfect Father in Heaven and eventually enjoy the kind of life He lives—eternal life. President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) explained: “Nothing should be held in greater sacredness and honor than the covenant by which the spirits of men, the offspring of God in the spirit, are privileged to come into this world in mortal tabernacles. . . . The greatest punishment ever given was proclaimed against Lucifer and his angels. To be denied the privilege of mortal bodies forever is the greatest curse of all. These spirits have no progression, no hope of resurrection and eternal life! . . . Spirits cannot be made perfect without a body of flesh and bones. This body and its spirit are brought to immortality and blessings of salvation through the resurrection. . . . In no other way, other than through birth into this life and the resurrection, can spirits become like our Eternal Father.”³

Walking by Faith

Although some of God’s children need only to obtain a physical body and are then called back to His presence, the rest of us come to earth for additional reasons: to learn faith, to develop Christlike qualities in the face of opposition, and to be tried and tested. President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency, taught: “In our upward climb, this mortal experience through which we are now passing is a necessary step. To obtain perfection, we had to leave our pre-earth home and come to earth. During the transfer, a veil was drawn over our spiritual eyes, and the memory of our premortal experiences was suspended. In the Garden of Eden, God endowed us with moral agency and, as it were, left us here on our own between the forces of good and evil to be proved—to see if, walking by faith, we would rise to our high potentiality by doing ‘all things whatsoever the Lord [our] God shall command [us]’” (Abraham 3:25).⁴



The sealing of generations does not happen automatically. We have the responsibility to search out our ancestors and employ the sealing power vicariously for them in the house of the Lord.

Eternal Family Relationships

When we speak of reaching our eternal potential, the ideal we have in mind is our Eternal Father. Those who inherit eternal life enter that high and holy station as married couples sealed by the power of the priesthood and enjoy relationships that endure beyond the grave. “That same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there,” taught the Prophet Joseph Smith, “only it will be coupled with eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy” (D&C 130:2). Although we will certainly rejoice in the eternal fellowship of close friends, the associations that will mean most to us are family relationships that have been sealed eternally in the house of the Lord through priesthood ordinances.

This sealing does not happen automatically. We have the responsibility to search out our ancestors and employ the sealing power vicariously for them in the house of the Lord. President Brigham Young (1801–77) said: “We are called . . . to redeem the nations of the earth. The fathers cannot be made perfect without us; we cannot be made perfect without the fathers. There must be this chain in the holy Priesthood; it must be welded together from the latest generation that lives on the earth back to Father Adam, to bring back all that can be saved and placed where they can receive salvation and a glory in some kingdom.”⁵

It is a great blessing to live in this dispensation. We have been taught of our premortal existence and our choices there, we understand our purpose in mortality, we have the priesthood and the temple ordinances necessary to seal families eternally, and we have the resources to move this great work forward. As the Prophet Joseph Smith asked, “Shall we not go on in so great a cause?” (D&C 128:22). ■

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. “The Mystery of Life,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 17.
3. In Conference Report, Oct. 1965, 27–28.
4. “Prayer Is the Key,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1976, 2.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 310.

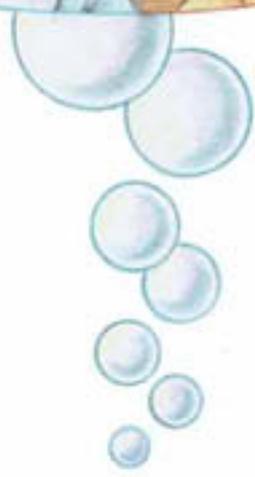
An illustration of a park scene. In the foreground, two women are sitting on a wooden bench, facing each other and talking. The woman on the left has short, grey hair and is wearing a light blue top. The woman on the right has long, wavy blonde hair and is wearing a yellow cardigan. In the background, there are green trees, a yellow and orange butterfly in the upper left, and a colorful kite in the upper right. The scene is framed by a circular border.

Jennifer ADVENTURES

BY LORI RIES

I loved my role as a mother, but lately, my almost-four-year-old daughter, Jennifer, was giving me more “adventures” than I had bargained for. After decorating my bathroom—and her hands, arms, and legs—with bright lipsticks and nail polish, writing on her bedroom walls and furniture with markers, throwing increasingly frequent tantrums, cutting her hair and clothing with scissors, creating a war zone in her bedroom just 20 minutes after I had cleaned it, ripping wallpaper, and sculpting her lunch instead of eating it, Jennifer was wearing out my patience—quickly.

I didn’t think that a child of mine would ever act like this. “What am I doing wrong?” I asked myself. Friends offered their best advice in the form of questions: “Have you tried time-outs?” “Do you believe in spanking?”

A vertical line of five blue bubbles of varying sizes, floating upwards.

J*ennifer, our three-year-old, was becoming more than I could handle. Then one night I had a dream.*

Frustrated to the point of crying, I called my husband at work. Was this ever to end? Was she always to be rebellious? Had I spoiled my child without knowing it?

Well intended as their suggestions were, my friends weren’t helping, and my husband needed to focus on his work during the day. “Jennifer adventures” continued, and so did my tears. Then one night, after a temper tantrum of my own, I thought of a scripture: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

I thought about how our Heavenly Father is the perfect father, about how infinitely patient He is. I decided to go to Him with my parenting trouble, and I fell to my knees to ask for guidance. The answer did not come immediately after I finished my prayer, but I felt calmer. As Jennifer adventures continued, I continued my pleading.



Then one night, I had a dream.

I was sitting on a bench in a peaceful park. I was enjoying the serenity when, to my surprise, my grandmother joined me. She was dressed in white, and her face radiated happiness where before it had been worn. Even so, I was initially nervous. However, the love I'd always felt toward her overcame the fear as she began to speak.

"Lori, you must play with your children," she said wisely. "You've simply forgotten how to play." Grandma told me I was a good mother and reminded me of when I had rolled with my children in the grass, tickled them, given them horsey rides, and lost at checkers. She reminded me that my older two children had also passed through this stage but that I had simply forgotten. Parents often make the mistake of focusing on their exhaustion, Grandma told me. "To have happy

children, you must play with your children."

After I woke up, I thought about the dream and realized that Grandma had been right. My life had become so much busier since my beginning days of mothering. Somehow, between driving my kids to their various activities, maintaining our home, and serving in the Church and in the community, I had arrived at the point where I no longer played with my children. Could the answer really be so simple?

As I began to remember what it was like to be a child—getting my hands dirty, becoming covered in dough while baking cookies, visiting the zoo, and painting with watercolors—Jennifer's tantrums disappeared. There was no more unwanted mural work—or frustration. The power of prayer enriched my understanding of motherhood and gave me rest, as well as Jennifer adventures to truly enjoy. ■

Lori Ries is a member of the Tigard First Ward, Tualatin Oregon Stake.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question

Several of my family members are not LDS, and they feel hurt because they cannot attend my temple wedding. What can I do to help them understand and to ease hurt feelings?

A temple wedding can easily arouse parents' fears of losing their child to a marriage and a church they don't understand. Once I realized this, I decided to spend extra time with my family and to express how much I loved and appreciated them. I found that as I increased my efforts in this direction, the conflicts disappeared.

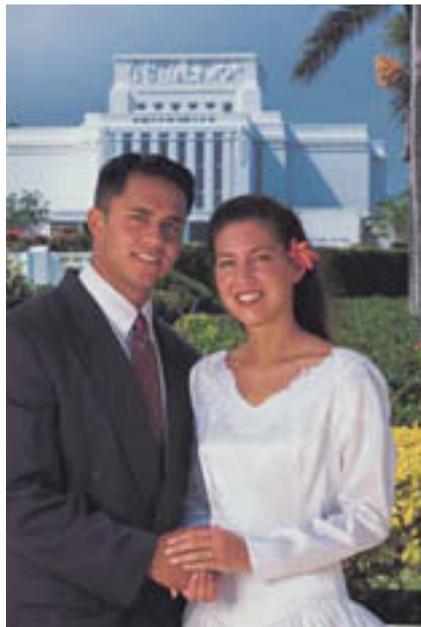
Lisa Elieson, Coppell First Ward, Lewisville Texas Stake

You might consider writing your feelings about temple marriage in a letter to your family members. A letter will give them a chance to think about what you have said without feeling a need to respond immediately.

Remember you are doing the right thing. The pain and heartache you may feel are momentary. It may not seem so now, but this too shall pass.

Amy Milligan, Jamestown Ward, Newport News Virginia Stake

My husband and I found that our family members had fewer hurt



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND; ALL PHOTOGRAPHS POSED BY MODELS

feelings about our temple wedding because we did not wait until we were engaged to explain that they would not be able to attend. Both of us had taken the time to explain the situation to loved ones on our own. Some learned about temple marriage from us even before we started dating.

Summer Thorp, London Fourth Ward, London Ontario Stake

As a former temple president, I have the following suggestions:

1. Help your parents understand that they will be given much recognition, respect, and appreciation at the wedding reception.
2. Help your parents feel complimented for teaching you to live an honorable life.
3. Share your concerns during the temple interviews with your bishop and stake president. These leaders can be helpful in relieving concerns and arriving at appropriate solutions.
4. Discuss your concerns with the sealer. In the Las Vegas Nevada Temple it is quite convenient for the sealer to come to the foyer and meet the parents. This gives the sealer the opportunity to compliment the parents and express his feelings about their son or daughter.

Samuel M. Davis, Morning Sun Ward, Las Vegas Nevada Sunrise Stake

I made a promise to myself that I would involve my family members as much as I could in my wedding plans. My stepmother helped me pick out my jewelry and helped with the flowers, and she and my father drove me to the temple and helped with photographs. I wrote letters to them frequently throughout my engagement and after the wedding,

thanking them for their help and support. While the flowers, jewelry, and photographs were not of eternal significance in themselves, they helped my family feel involved.

Lisa Asbby, Cherry Hill Ward, Flagstaff Arizona Stake

My fiancé and soon-to-be in-laws helped me come up with a possible solution to involve my parents and sister. We all met together for dinner one evening so that our families could get to know each other. After dinner we took my parents to the visitors' center near the temple. Inside were pictures of different temples and temple rooms. We talked about what it meant to be sealed. We also talked about the other purposes of the temple and why we attend. After that, we went into the foyer of the temple and showed them where they could wait while our marriage took place.

Not only did this night help my family understand the significance of our choice to be married in the temple, but it helped them to be comfortable in surroundings that were foreign to them. As the day of our wedding grew closer, I could see that the hearts of my family members were softening.

Heidi Beth Ryan, Ironwood Ward, Queen Creek Arizona Stake

To the extent possible, provide some ideas about the sealing ceremony. Someone expecting a ceremony in a large cathedral or hall may be quite surprised to learn that



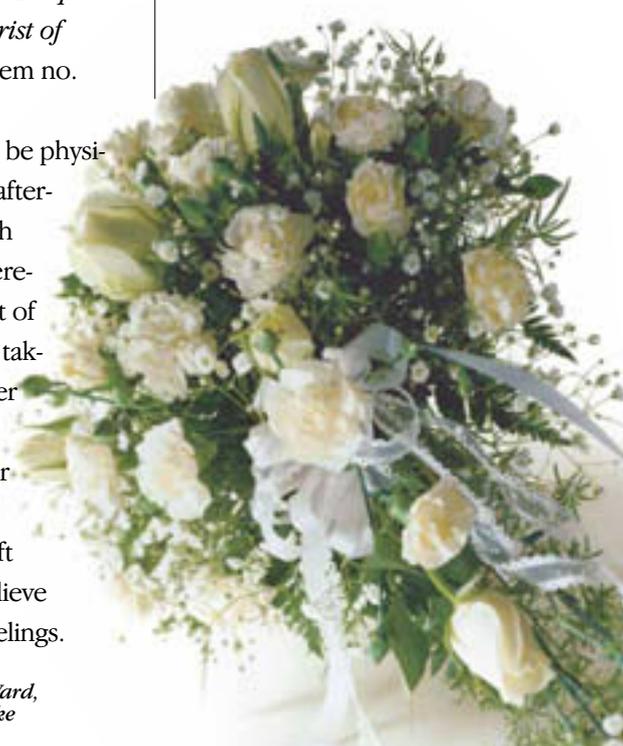
PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE BUNDERSON

only a few people are typically present for a sealing ceremony. You might show your family a picture of a sealing room from the booklet *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1999; item no. 31138000, U.S. \$2.00).

If your relatives will not be physically present to greet you afterward, be sure to speak with them shortly before the ceremony. With the excitement of the ceremony and picture taking, you may not remember to give your family a telephone call. I recall a tender phone conversation with my mother just before I left for the temple, which I believe helped soothe her hurt feelings.

Brad MacDonald, Lynnfield Ward, Cambridge Massachusetts Stake

The parents' desire to be involved in the weddings of their children is a sign of attachment and love.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

You might consider expressing your feelings in a letter to your family members.

In some countries a couple is required by law to be married civilly in addition to being married in the temple. That is not the case in the United States, but my fiancée and I considered having a civil ceremony after the temple sealing so that all of our family members could participate. We discarded that idea, however, because we felt we would not have been showing sufficient reverence for the sacred temple ceremony.

With the guidance of our bishop, we planned a simple family gathering that took place after the temple wedding, at the start of the reception. It was in no way a second wedding ceremony and did not contain any semblance of vows. We

only expressed our feelings of love for each other and how our rings represented the eternal nature of marriage. We also arranged for our parents to speak and welcome the new spouses into each family. Afterward the bishop spoke on our beliefs about temple marriage and eternal families. This gave our family members a sense of being part of the wedding.

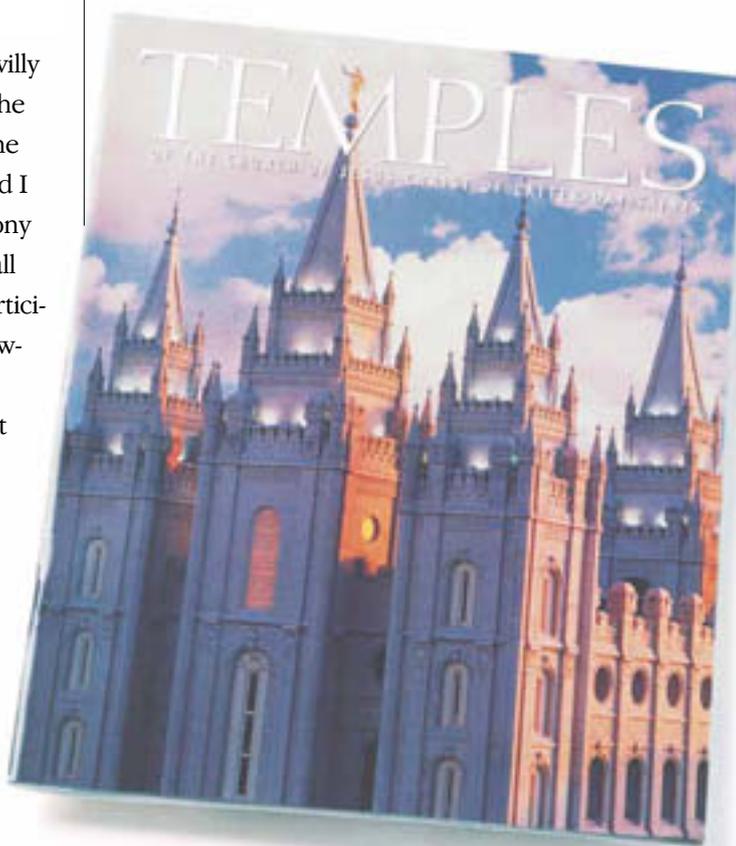
Donald Bigelow, Greenfield Park Ward, Mesa Arizona Kimball East Stake

My fiancé and I found out the approximate time when we would be leaving the temple after the sealing and asked our family to arrive at the temple shortly before. We arranged

for a good friend who was a Church member to greet our family outside the temple and wait with them in the waiting room. They seemed to feel that they were more a part of our wedding by being at the temple. Having them arrive in time to greet my husband and me kept the focus on what they could do instead of on what they were missing.

Cheryl Anne Merrick, Mapleton Seventh Ward, Mapleton Utah North Stake

I took strength from the scripture found in Mark 10:29–30: “There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this



The booklet *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can help family members better understand the significance of temples.*

time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”

The day of our marriage was bittersweet. The temple experience was magnificent. Although the simple ring ceremony did little to appease my parents, my husband and I decided to focus on the temple experience and hope that time would heal the wounds.

I'm happy to say that the passage of time and our having children helped soften my parents' hearts. They have come to see that I have a wonderful husband and family, and I continue to hope that one day they will recognize the positive influence of the temple in our lives.

Adrienne Vanderkooi, Osbawa First Ward, Osbawa Ontario Stake

When my husband and I were planning our temple wedding, we did not feel right about inviting a large number of people to attend the sealing when both of our immediate families would be waiting outside. When our wedding day came, my husband and I went to the temple to be sealed with only a few others in attendance. We felt blessed that it was simple and sweet and that our families did not feel so excluded.

Mary Ann Olsen, Fox Pointe Ward, Kaysville Utah Haight Creek Stake

There were many things that were helpful as I planned my wedding. First, the principles of prayer and fasting were reaffirmed in my heart.

BE UNDERSTANDING



“The young couple must understand that their parents may have looked forward

to the wedding day during the entire lives of the bride and groom. Their desire to attend the wedding, and their resentment when they cannot, is a sign of parental attachment. It is not to be resented by the young couple. It is to be understood and planned for carefully as a part of the wedding.”

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, *The Holy Temple* (1980), 66–67.

I asked my fiancé's family to participate in fasts for my family so that they might come to understand why a temple marriage was important to us.

I also did my own personal fasts. Second, every time I attended the temple, I put the names of my family members on the prayer roll. Third, I read my patriarchal blessing often. Most of all, I relied on my faith and testimony of the Savior Jesus Christ. It is through Him that I was able to have the strength to do what was right.

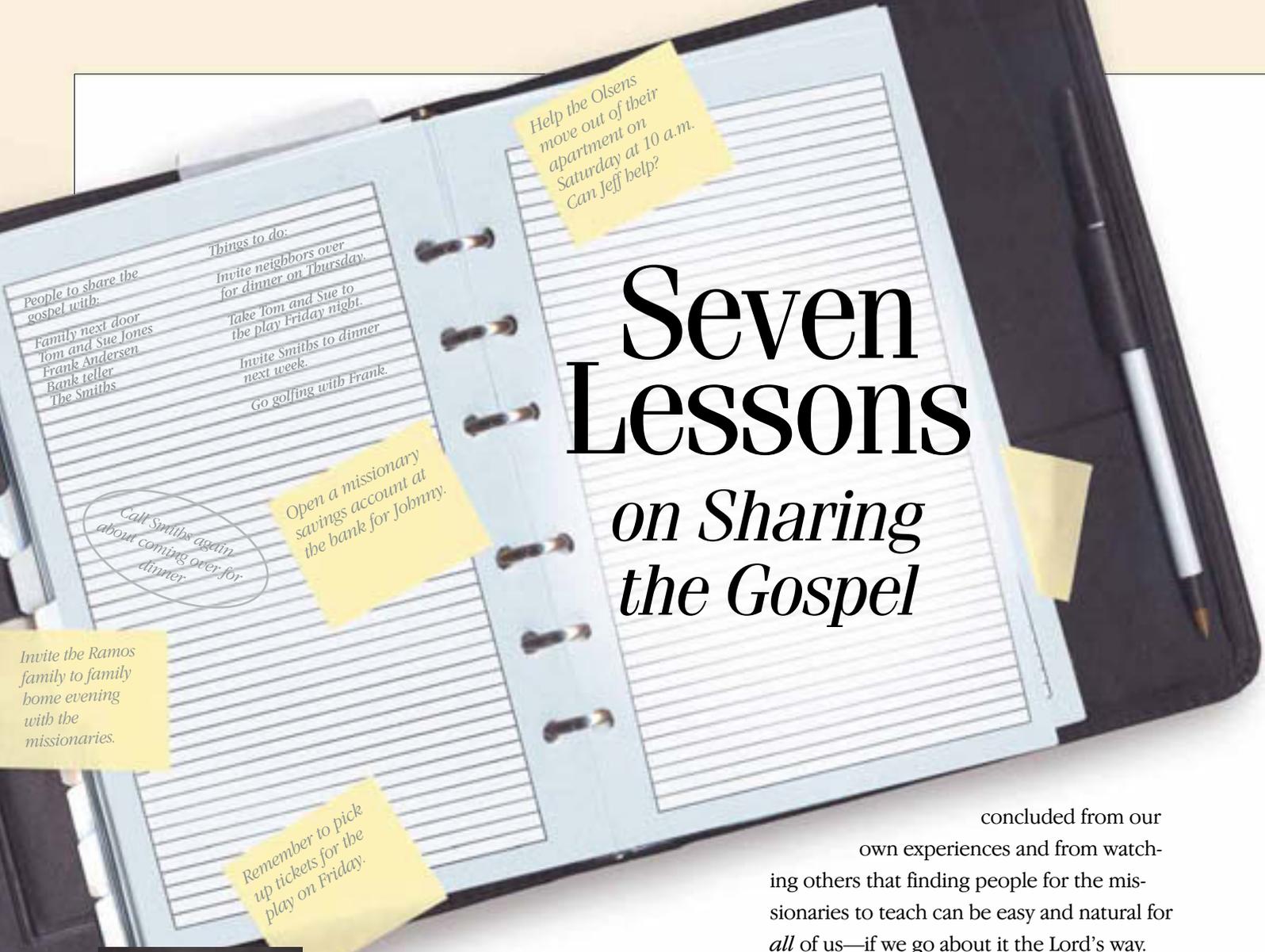
I knew I needed to follow Heavenly Father's commandments, and He provided the way. In the end, my parents' hearts were softened. Through the years, they have come to better understand why the eternal marriage covenant is so important to me.

Renee Senger-Layton, Oquirrh Seventh Ward, West Jordan Utah Oquirrh Stake



An outing to the temple grounds or visitors' center with family members before the wedding may be helpful.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND



Seven Lessons on Sharing the Gospel

Invite the Ramos family to family home evening with the missionaries.

Call Smiths again about coming over for dinner.

Open a missionary savings account at the bank for Johnny.

Remember to pick up tickets for the play on Friday.

Help the Olsens move out of their apartment on Saturday at 10 a.m. Can Jeff help?

Things to do:

Invite neighbors over for dinner on Thursday.

Take Tom and Sue to the play Friday night.

Invite Smiths to dinner next week.

Go golfing with Frank.

People to share the gospel with:

Family next door
Tom and Sue Jones
Frank Andersen
Bank teller
The Smiths

concluded from our

own experiences and from watching others that finding people for the missionaries to teach can be easy and natural for *all* of us—if we go about it the Lord’s way. Here are seven of the lessons we’ve learned about what His way is.

BY ELDER CLAYTON M. CHRISTENSEN

Area Authority Seventy
North America Northeast Area

AND CHRISTINE QUINN CHRISTENSEN

Prior to His ascent to heaven, the Savior charged His tiny band of disciples: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (Matthew 28:19). Although this task seems overwhelming, President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has called us to act with faith: “Some who measure that challenge quickly say, ‘Why, that’s impossible! It cannot be done!’ To that we simply say, ‘Perhaps, but we shall do it anyway.’”¹

The ability to share the gospel isn’t a “gift” that has been given to only a few Latter-day Saints and denied to the rest. We have

“Ideal Mormons” and “Deep Friendships”

The first two lessons, which we learned early in our efforts to be good member missionaries, have made sharing the gospel much easier: *We simply can’t predict who will or won’t be interested in the gospel, and building a friendship is not a prerequisite to inviting people to learn about the gospel.* We discovered these principles when we were newlyweds and the missionaries in our ward asked us to make a list of people with whom we could share the gospel. We were to start with those at the top of our list and begin “preparing” them through a twelve-step process. First, we were to invite them to our



Finding people for the missionaries to teach can be easy and natural—if we go about it the Lord’s way.

home for dinner and follow that by going to a cultural event together. The sixth, seventh, and eighth steps were to invite them to church, give them a copy of the Book of Mormon, and ask them to take the missionary discussions. The program culminated in the twelfth step—baptism.

We dutifully made this list, placing those we thought most likely to be interested in the gospel at the top. They looked like “ideal Mormons”—people whose values, such as clean living and commitment to family, mirrored our own. We then began building deeper friendships with them, adding additional social events to our already busy lives. One by one, those we thought might be interested in learning about the gospel declined our invitations when we got to steps six through eight. Our invitations didn’t offend them, but in their own way they told us they were happy in their present approach to religion. After much work over many months, we didn’t find anyone who was interested in learning more about the gospel.

New missionaries were then transferred to our ward. Knowing nothing of our history, they came to our home, unfolded an identical chart on our table, and asked us to make a list of people with whom we could cultivate friendships in preparation to teaching them the gospel. We protested, “We’ve tried this. It took a long time and didn’t work.” We explained that we felt we had honestly tried with everyone we thought was a candidate for hearing the discussions.

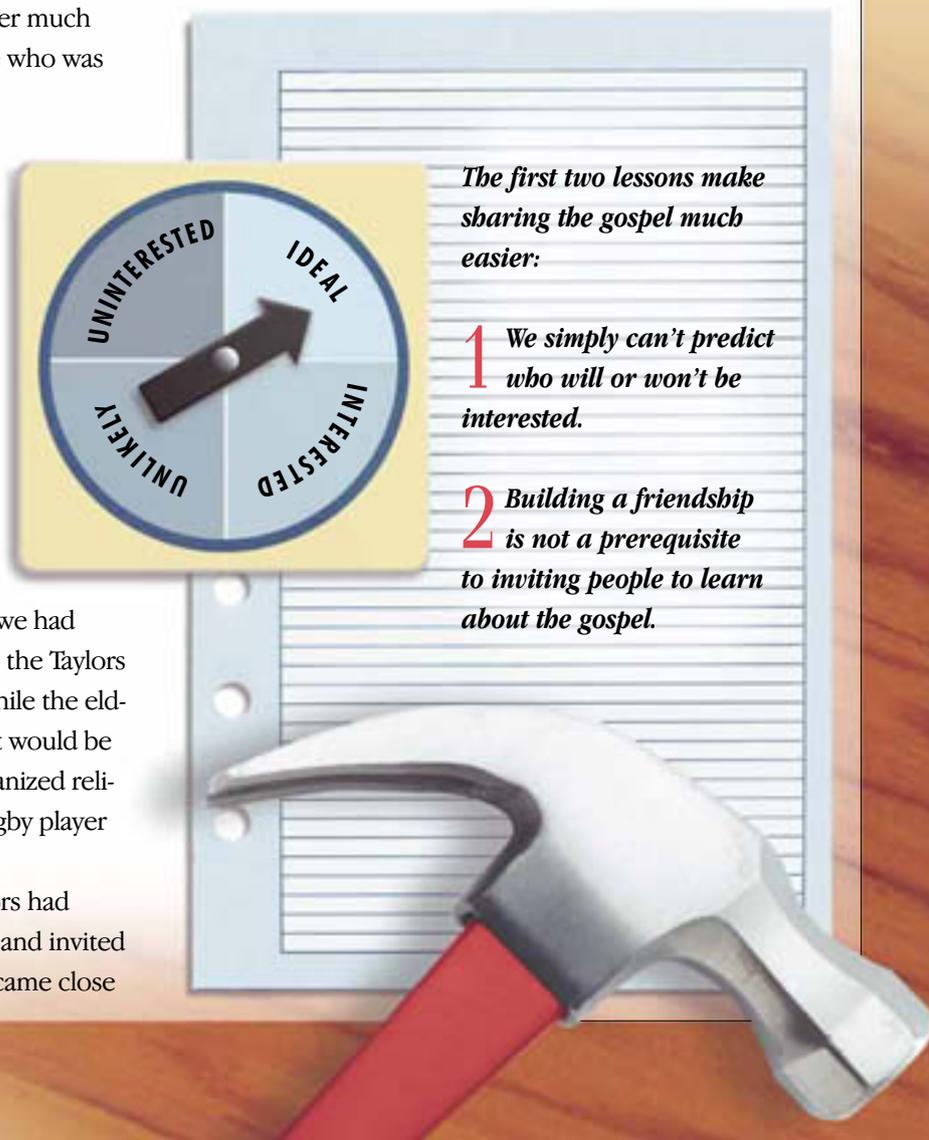
Desperate for a referral, the missionaries pleaded, “Don’t you know *anyone* we could visit?” We gave them the names of four couples we had excluded from our initial list. Among them were the Taylors (names have been changed). We warned that while the elders certainly could knock on the Taylors’ door, it would be a waste of time. Ken had bad feelings about organized religion of any kind. In addition, he was a tough rugby player and a high-volume consumer of ale.

The elders later returned, jubilant. The Taylors had invited them in, listened to the first discussion, and invited them back for the second. We subsequently became close

friends with the Taylors as we studied the missionary discussions together. We would never have imagined that they would have had any interest in the gospel.

We learned from this experience that we simply cannot know in advance who will and will not be interested in learning about the Church. We thought we could judge and therefore excluded from our list many people whose lifestyle, habits, or appearance made them seem unlikely candidates. As we reflect upon those who have joined the Church, however, it is clear that few of them would have been on our list of “likely members” when they first encountered the Church.

Many who accept the gospel are troubled or needy (see Alma 32:2–3). Living the gospel transforms them. The only way *all* people can have the opportunity to choose or



The first two lessons make sharing the gospel much easier:

1 *We simply can't predict who will or won't be interested.*

2 *Building a friendship is not a prerequisite to inviting people to learn about the gospel.*

reject the gospel of Jesus Christ is for us, without judgment, to invite them to follow the Savior.

This experience also taught us that in most cases we don't need to transform our relationships into deeper friendships as a prerequisite to inviting others to learn about the gospel. For most of our neighbors, classmates, work associates, store clerks, and those riding on the same bus, this was not necessary.

Full-time missionaries, for example, don't wait to become friends with their contacts. They talk with everyone. A relationship of trust is built when they have the chance to teach. Over the past 20 years, we have observed no correlation between the depth of a relationship and the probability that a person will be interested in learning about the gospel. But the reverse is almost always true: Everyone who accepts an invitation becomes a closer friend, regardless of whether or not he or she ultimately accepts baptism. We have also learned that even when people decline our invitations, they are not offended if they can feel our love and God's love when we invite them to learn about Christ's gospel. They typically have expressed gratitude that we cared enough about them to want to share something so personal and important.

Trust the Missionaries

We learned a third lesson as the missionaries were in our home teaching Jack, a colleague of Clayton's. One elder was newly arrived on his mission, and his senior companion from Argentina was still struggling with English. As a result, when questions arose, Jack would instinctively ask Clayton, who answered—confident that he could answer more clearly and convincingly than these

elders could. We got into a rhythm in which the elders would teach a concept, Jack would ask a question, Clayton would answer it, and then the elders would teach the next concept. Jack then asked a difficult question for which Clayton had no ready answer. And as Clayton paused, the Argentine elder offered a profound answer, given by the Spirit. When Jack asked the next question, Clayton waited to see if

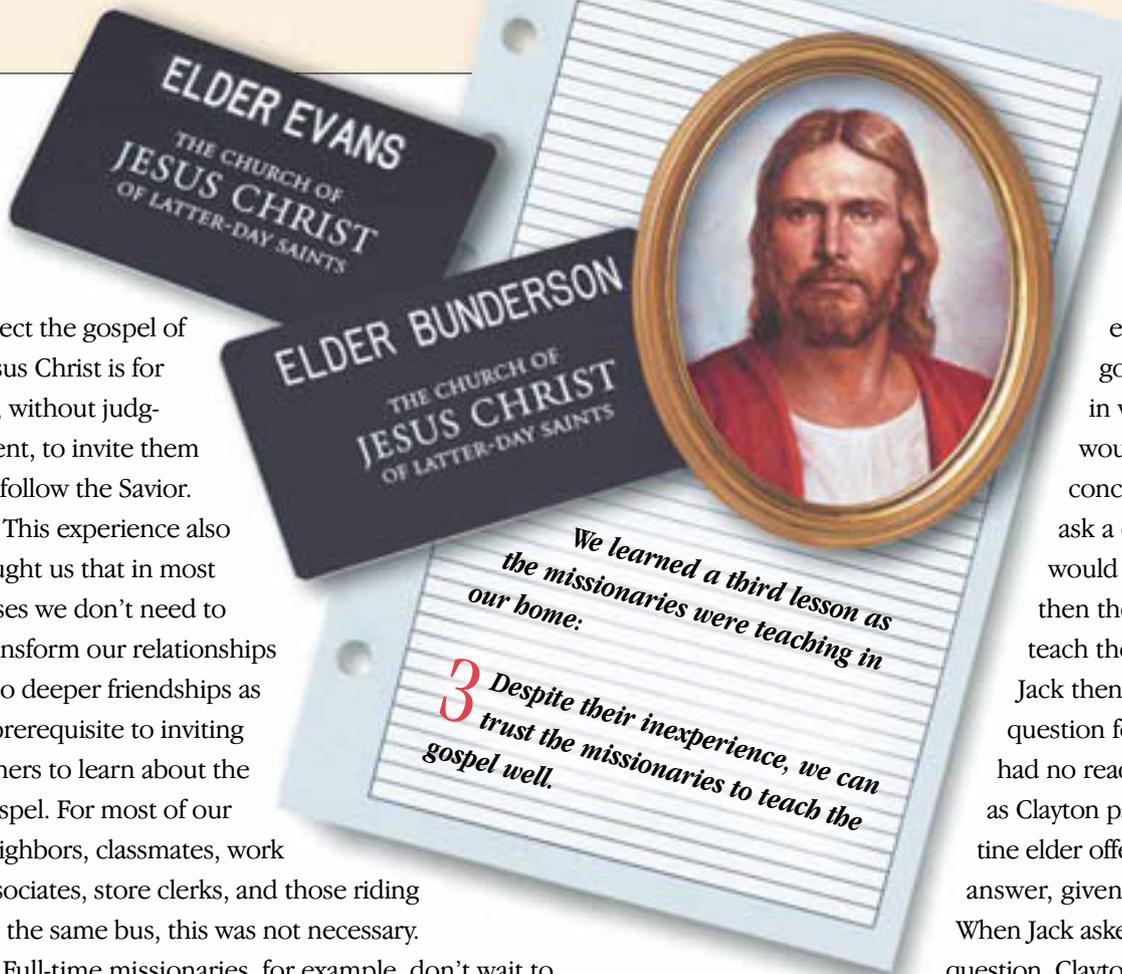
this elder could do it again—and he did. We learned an important lesson about sharing the gospel. Despite their inexperience, *we can trust the missionaries to teach the gospel well*, because whom the Lord calls, He qualifies.

People Need to Be Needed

The fourth insight coalesced as we moved an old, heavy refrigerator from the basement of an elderly sister Clayton home taught. We had tried to find another ward member to help us but could not. Desperate, we asked Jim, a non-member neighbor, who happily agreed to help. It was a hot, horribly humid summer day, and soon our clothes were soaked with perspiration. When we reached the first turn in the staircase and had balanced the fridge on the landing, Jim said, "So tell me about the Mormon Church."

Mopping his brow, Clayton responded, "Frankly, this is it." He then explained how home teaching works and noted how much this sister needed us. We also told him that because graduate students and their families were moving in and out of our area all the time, our family was often helping someone load or unload a rental truck.

Jim was incredulous. "At our church we just listen to the sermon and go home. I have no idea who might need my



help. They never ask, and there's no way for me to offer. Will you ask for my help again when you need an extra pair of hands? I like this kind of thing." Although Clayton had tried unsuccessfully to engage Jim in discussions about religion in the past, Jim was uninterested. But he was interested in opportunities to help others.

Here's what this experience taught us: Many people who are satisfied with their lives feel a need to give service. The Light of Christ creates this desire to help. When our invitations to investigate the Church emphasize doctrine, we often do not connect with what people are looking for at the outset. When we involve them with us in serving others, they often find that the Church addresses an important need.

Inviting others to help us with our work in the Church helps them feel needed and helps them feel the Spirit. When these feelings come, many people often then realize that something *has* been missing from their lives. By helping us do God's will, Jim learned far more about what the Church feels like than he ever could have through a conversation or from attending a ward social. As a result, Jim subsequently accepted our invitation to take the missionary discussions.

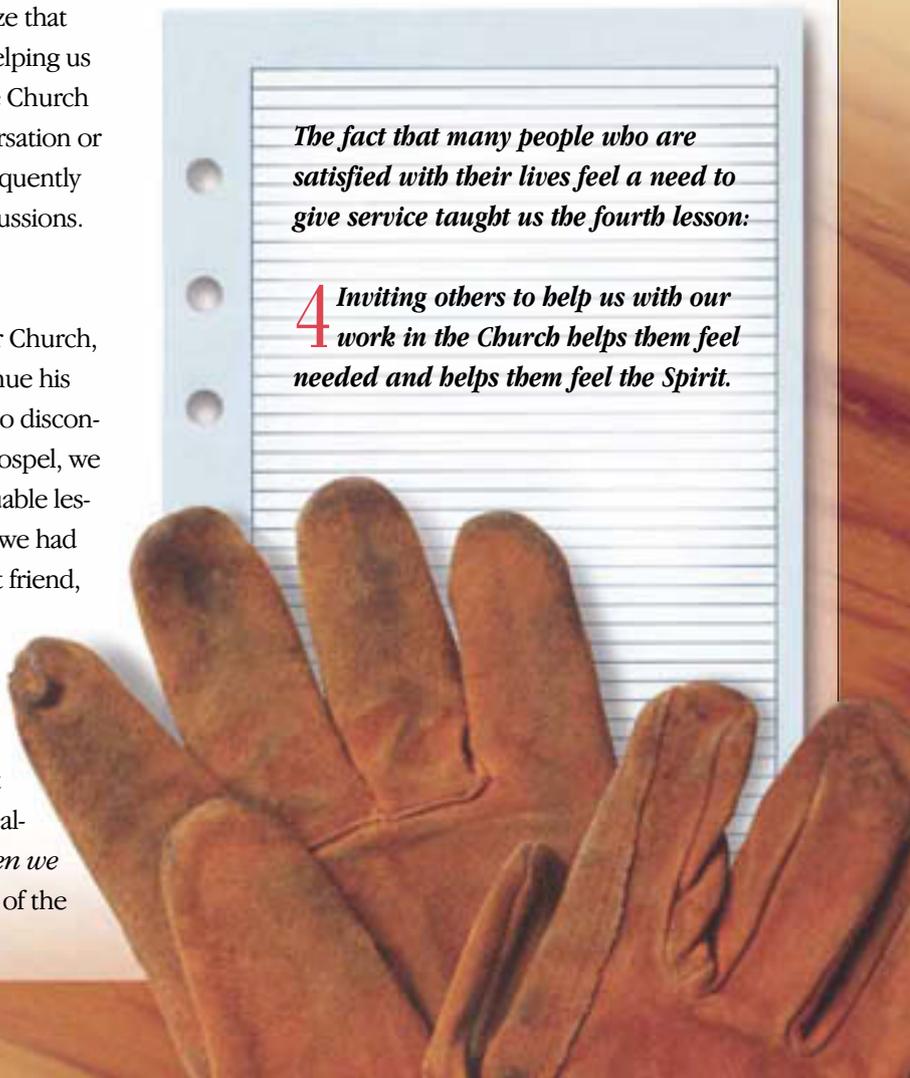
What Is Success?

Despite seeing much truth and goodness in our Church, Jim decided after the third discussion not to continue his investigation. Even though we know that many who discontinue investigating will later listen and accept the gospel, we were disappointed. But this taught us our fifth valuable lesson about member missionary work—we realized we had *succeeded* as missionaries. Jim had become a great friend, and we had given him the opportunity to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ more deeply. Whether or not he ever enters the waters of baptism, he has taken a step along the path of his own eternal progression and has made some important correct choices. Most of us fear failure. Once we realized that *we succeed as member missionaries when we invite people to learn and accept the truth*, much of the fear that kept us from sharing the gospel vanished.

Deadlines

Following the counsel of Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught us our sixth lesson: *Because we have so much to do in our busy lives, we need deadlines.* Like it or not, we tend to postpone activities without deadlines, while things that need to be finished by a particular time seem to get done. Without explicit deadlines, even rewarding responsibilities of eternal import—like missionary work—can easily get preempted.

To help us, Elder Ballard has asked us to regularly "write down a *date*." He explicitly counseled us that we need not write down a name. Rather, Elder Ballard challenged us to pick a date as a commitment to the Lord. He promised that if we then seek every opportunity to speak about the gospel with as many people as we can, the Lord will bless us by that date to meet someone who will accept our invitation to



The fact that many people who are satisfied with their lives feel a need to give service taught us the fourth lesson:

4 *Inviting others to help us with our work in the Church helps them feel needed and helps them feel the Spirit.*

listen to the missionaries.² Together we have accepted Elder Ballard's challenge and have found someone for the missionaries to teach every year. Each time we have prayerfully set a date, the Lord has provided someone for us to teach.

But the people we have found have rarely been discovered easily. It has required daily prayer, frequent fasting, and creating opportunities to have gospel conversations. We have found it helpful to use "Mormon" phrases in our conversations—referring to activities at church, our children who are serving missions, experiences we've had in Church assignments, and so on. When we use these phrases, it is as if we are opening a door, inviting the other person to walk in and talk about the Church. Most people choose not to come through that door, and that's fine. But sometimes they ask us about the Church. We then answer their questions. And

Lessons five and six help us identify and achieve success:

5 *We succeed as member missionaries when we invite people to learn and accept the truth.*

6 *Because we have so much to do in our busy lives, we need deadlines.*

Invitation

if it seems appropriate, we open a second door—inviting them to a Church meeting or to come to our home so we can tell them more. Most of those we have invited decline, but some accept. Regardless of the outcome, we have found that if they feel our love, they often express gratitude that we would care enough to invite them.

Several years ago Elder Christensen set a date of January 31. Early January came, and despite having initiated conversations with dozens of people and inviting several of them to meet the missionaries, he failed to find anyone who was interested. He was scheduled to travel to Honolulu, Hawaii, for an academic conference on January 20, and the way his schedule looked, it seemed clear that he had to meet the person he could introduce to the missionaries on his flight to or from Hawaii. There was no other time. He pleaded in daily prayer that God would cause a person to sit next to him on the plane who would accept his invitation.

After all that effort, he couldn't believe his eyes when he saw his seatmate—a man named Vinnie who was wearing a loud Hawaiian shirt unbuttoned to his sternum, sporting three gold chains on his hairy chest. Vinnie explained that he worked 11 months every year to save enough to escape to Hawaii for a month in winter to chase women. Clayton was so disappointed. He had tried and prayed so hard to find someone—and instead he got stuck next to a man who didn't seem to have a religious bone in his body. Discouraged, Clayton turned to some reading.

When the flight attendant brought lunch, Clayton put his reading down and made small talk with his seatmate. Vinnie asked Clayton if he had been to Hawaii before, and Clayton responded that he had attended a language training school in Laie en route to a mission he had served for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Korea. Surprisingly, Vinnie put his fork down and said, "So you're a Mormon? The funniest thing has happened to me over the past year. I've never had any interest in religion, but I've had this growing curiosity to know more about Mormons. I don't know why. Could you tell me a little about your church?"



For the next three hours, enveloped by a wonderful spirit, they discussed the gospel of Jesus Christ, article of faith by article of faith. Several times on the remainder of the flight, Vinnie interrupted to say thanks for telling him about the Church. As the plane landed, Clayton told Vinnie there were missionaries in his hometown and asked if they could visit him when he returned. Vinnie asked if there were missionaries in Honolulu. Clayton received this golden answer to his prayers by using a “Mormon” phrase to open the door to a conversation and by suspending his judgment of what might be in Vinnie’s heart.

Constants and Variables

We learned a seventh lesson from this experience: *When we are busy serving in the Church, we can expect God to bless us with miracles when we go and do the things He commands* (see 1 Nephi 3:7). In the equation that determines whether we can find people for the missionaries to teach, God’s role is a constant, not a variable. He always keeps His promises. The only variable is whether we have the faith to commit, obey, and expect miracles. Even more than other members, the busy men and women who lead our wards and stakes (or branches and districts) need to exercise this simple faith—because if they cannot speak in present-tense verbs and first-person pronouns about sharing the gospel, they cannot inspire others to fulfill our prophet’s member missionary call.

Blessings

Many of us know people who seem to be “natural missionaries,” almost as if they have an innate gift that makes sharing the gospel easy for them. We certainly are *not* naturals at this. We found the work to be uncomfortable and intimidating at the outset, but learning and following these

lessons has helped us share the gospel in ways that have become natural.

The blessings that have come to our family from doing this work have been incalculable.

Missionary work has brought the Spirit of God into our home and our hearts. About four years

ago, for example, we invited one of Clayton’s former students, Sunil, to take the missionary discussions in our home. The missionaries did a wonderful job, and at the close of the discussion they both testified of the truths they had taught us. We both bore our testimonies, and Clayton asked one of the missionaries to close with prayer. Just then our son Spencer raised his hand. “Dad, can I say something?” He then rose to his feet and, looking at Sunil with the purest gaze, said, “Sunil, I’m only 11 years old. But I want you to know that the things the missionaries have told you tonight are true. I know that God lives. I know that you and I are His sons and that Joseph Smith was truly a prophet of God.” As he shared his feelings, a sweet, powerful spirit came into the room.

The next day Sunil sent an e-mail saying that while he had appreciated the clear explanation of our beliefs that the missionaries and we had provided during the discussion, “when your son stood and said those words, I felt something inside that I have never felt before. This must be what you mean when you speak of the Spirit of God.”

Many blessings and friendships have come into our lives from trying to share the gospel. But this blessing has been one of the best: Having the missionaries regularly help us as a family teach the gospel to new and old friends through the power of the Holy Ghost has profoundly affected the faith of our five children and brought the Spirit of God into our home. ■

NOTES

1. “The Redemption of the Dead,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 97.
2. See “Write Down a Date,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 15–17; see also “We Proclaim the Gospel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 31–33.

Lesson seven teaches us that God always keeps His promises:
7 We can expect God to bless us with miracles when we go and do the things He commands.



THE *Temple Effect*

What happens in a community when a new temple is built? Members in the Lubbock, Texas, area can tell you from personal experience.

BY DON L. SEARLE
Church Magazines

At first glance, the Lubbock area lives up to one of the stereotypes of Texas: you could stand in one of the plowed fields a few miles outside of this city, turn in a circle, and see nothing but horizon in any direction.

As you approach the city, its buildings, houses, and roads stand out from the plains like man-made intrusions meant to signal that humans passed this way.

But it would be a mistake to judge the area only by what you see at first glance.

Scientists at Texas Tech University could tell you there is a rich and varied environment on these plains. People of the city can tell you there is a rich cultural environment here too. Members of the Church will tell you that the hand of the Lord has touched this place, particularly since the dedication of the Lubbock Texas Temple in April of 2002.

The temple has blessed lives in many different ways.

Deep Roots

Duane Moss was employed by the government for 44 years, much of that time in soil conservation. He knows what will flourish on these fertile plains. He and his wife, Merlene, have lived in Brownfield, about 40 minutes south of Lubbock, since 1966. This agricultural town is surrounded by cotton fields. But step into the Mosses' backyard and you will find lush green lawn punctuated by fruit trees—peach, apple, and pear—and a grape arbor. A vegetable garden is tucked neatly into a space at the back.

In addition to the produce from their garden, the Mosses have seen other things blossom here: their family

of seven children, now serving in the Church in locations across the United States, and a local branch that flourishes despite its small membership.

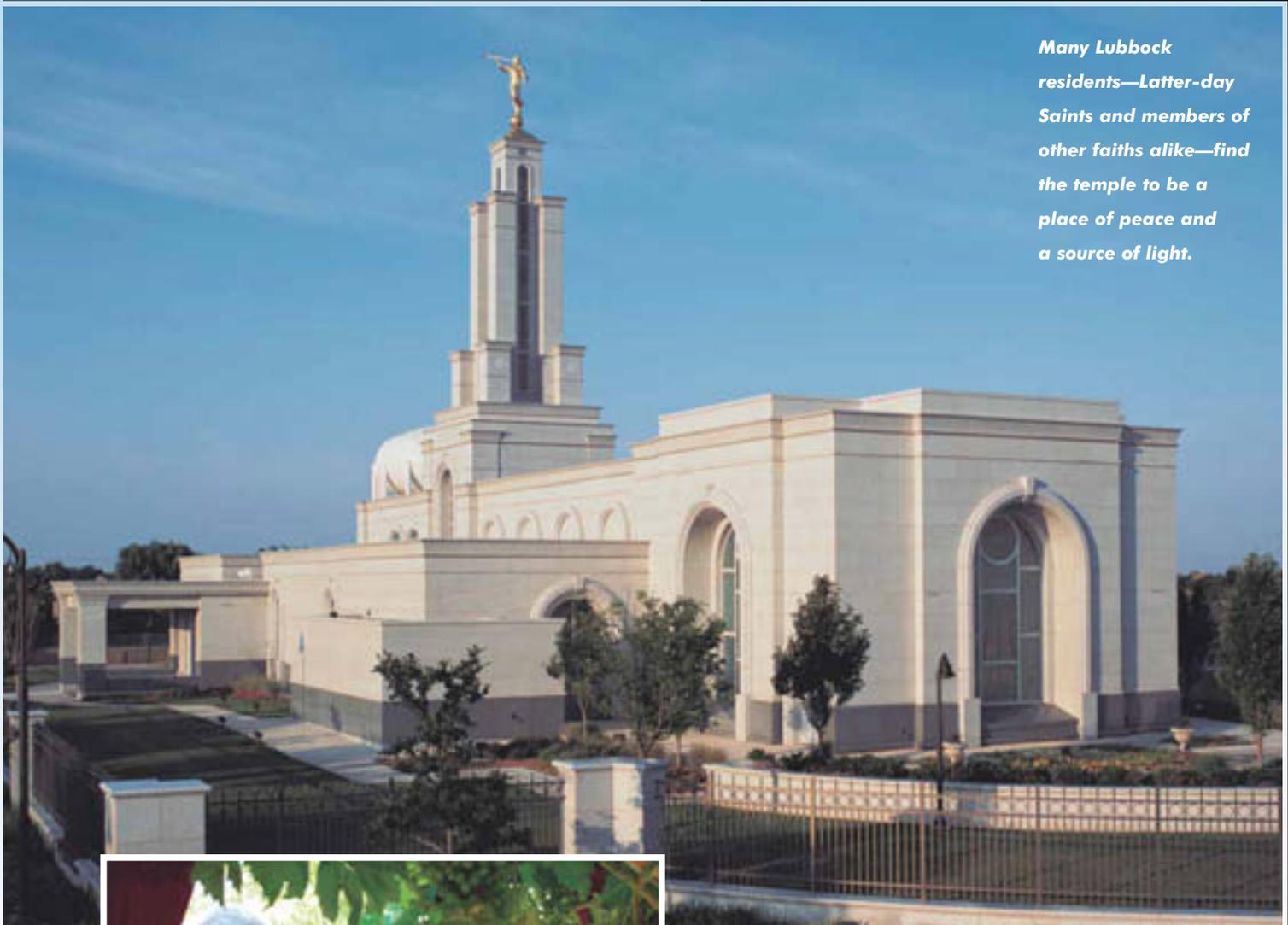
Between them, the Mosses have a wealth of experience in Church leadership positions. They are temple workers now, driving to Lubbock several times a month. Back in 1977 when Brother Moss was called as stake president, the stake extended more than 200 miles (320 km) from below Brownfield north through the panhandle of Texas to Oklahoma. Now the temple district covers that area and more—nearly 147,000 square miles (380,700 square km). It includes stakes headquartered in Abilene, Amarillo, Lubbock, and Odessa, Texas; in Roswell, New Mexico; and the district in Fort Stockton, Texas.

In the early 1960s, when the Mosses were baptized, the nearest temple was in Mesa, Arizona, a very long day's drive away. With the dedication of the Dallas Texas Temple in 1984, the drive was cut to about six hours. Now, most members anywhere in the Lubbock temple district can manage to fit a temple trip into one day.

Long-time members in this area have associated together in the Church for many years, and patrons appreciate the fact that temple workers know them when they go there, Brother Moss says. Members feel this is *their* temple.

Brother Moss is a temple sealer. "One of the blessings of the temple has been getting members more involved in family history work," he comments, listing several members in the area who are active in bringing family names for ordinance work.

Many Lubbock residents—Latter-day Saints and members of other faiths alike—find the temple to be a place of peace and a source of light.



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



Living on the plains of north Texas, Duane and Merlene Moss have found fertile fields for spiritual growth.

The Temple Found Them

Annabell Lines of the Lubbock Fourth Ward and her husband, Harrald, were among those members. Since her husband's death in November of 2003, she has focused more intently on family history, partly to ease her loneliness.

After two missions, the Lineses had planned to move near a temple where they could serve regularly. Instead,

they felt impressed to move near their son in Lubbock. It turned out that they were able to serve him in a time of need. And as it turned out, the temple found them.

When President Gordon B. Hinckley announced the building of the Lubbock temple during general conference in April of 2000, members in the Lubbock congregation wept for joy, Sister Lines recalls. Harrald put his arm around her and whispered, "Well, we're going to be near a temple." The Lineses, called as temple workers, began their training in Dallas immediately, working two shifts a day in the temple when they made the trip instead of just one.

One month after the dedication of the Lubbock temple, Harrald was diagnosed with cancer. They knew his time would be short, so they worked two shifts a week in the Lubbock temple for as long as Harrald could continue. "He loved that temple so much! When I'm in the temple, I feel close to him, and I feel at peace," Sister Lines says. "Without the peace and comfort of the temple, I don't think I could get through."

In Her Father's House

"I was one of those 'golden' contacts," says Dottie Kay, of the Lubbock First Ward. "I always knew, even as a little girl, that I had a Heavenly Father." When she learned of the gospel at 19, she accepted it immediately.

Life did not automatically become easier. Her two marriages ended in divorce; she has been single since 1995. A son served time in prison. But through all her difficulties, Church service has been a constant. She has taught every class in Primary; an avid student of the gospel, she believes that she gained more from those classes than anyone else. She has served in a wide variety of leadership positions. But the opportunity to serve in the temple after its dedication was a highlight to her. "I could not have survived the past 10 years without the temple."

While visiting her son regularly in prison, she drew spiritual strength from regular visits to the temple. Traveling to the Dallas temple meant arranging a day off work. Now, she says, "In 10 or 12 minutes, I can drive across town to the [Lubbock] temple to receive that strength."

Another of her three sons has had difficulties that have kept him out of the Church as well, but despite these, the spirit of the gospel touched him. In the two years after the Lubbock temple's dedication, Sister Kay was able to take more than 500 names there for ordinance work because of her son's service in preparing them.

"It has been truly the most wonderful thing in my life to know that I can go to my Father's house and work," Sister Kay says. For members, there is undeniable comfort in the knowledge, she says, "that the Lord wants you back home, along with your posterity."

"The Temple Is Home"

Bishop Steven Crooks of the Lubbock Second Ward and his wife, Donita, have never feared rearing their children

where they are not surrounded by Latter-day Saints. But, he says gratefully, "The temple is a strengthening influence."

Being near the temple has strengthened the Crooks children's sense of reverence. Oldest daughter Julie, now attending school away from home, said that standing just outside the baptismal area in the temple and looking in reminds her that others could be watching from beyond the veil of mortality. Amber, 18, calls the temple "an important little piece of heaven on earth." Shayla, 14, calls the temple "a place to forget the world and worldly things." Jacob, 12, thinks of it as "a very secure place."

Bishop Crooks's professional field is instructional design. He sees the temple as a place of learning where the Lord employs some of the best teaching techniques, but with powerful assistance not available in other set-

tings: the influence of the Holy Ghost. "To me, the temple is home, and it's light, and it's love. That's the feeling I have when I am there."

The Crooks' son Stephen, 17, says the influence of the temple has also been felt by many who are not members of the Church. It has offered numerous missionary opportunities as friends



Former stake president Jay B. Jensen was the first president of the Lubbock temple, and his wife, Alice, its first matron.

ask questions about Latter-day Saint beliefs and willingly listen.

So Many Doors

"The temple has opened up so many ways to talk about the gospel," says Karen Stratton, wife of stake president Lorum H. Stratton. One of her coworkers, not a Latter-day Saint, told Sister Stratton that when she feels troubled or has difficulties in her life, she often drives to a place where she can sit and look at the temple until she feels better.

Her daughter Shelley Stratton Nettles says this new community awareness led to discussions about the gospel



Dottie Kay finds joy in knowing that "I can go to my Father's house and work."

with the insect control man and with her son Cameron's soccer coach. Son Lance Stratton says when friends ask what Latter-day Saints do in the temple, he is able to give basic explanations about eternal covenants. Daughter LaRee Stratton Karren says, "There are many great Christian people around here, and when you talk to them about having an eternal family, they're thrilled."

Since Lubbock is located in the religiously active "Bible Belt" of the United States, community reaction to an LDS temple was expected to be strong. There was very little opposition. President Stratton, who served as a guide during the open house in 2002, said most visitors went away with deep, positive spiritual impressions, both surprised and changed by the experience. One woman, teacher of a comparative religions class in her Protestant church, apologized for teaching false information about the LDS Church. She promised it would not happen again.

The temple tour became a community event, with interest building as the open house went on. People came back and brought family or friends. Local residents who are not members of the Church still express gratitude for the opportunity to visit the temple.

Members who take advantage of the temple find strength to face individual challenges. Parents find the temple is a beacon for youth and little ones. (Anna Stratton, wife of Lance, says they cannot take their children to the stake center without stopping to look across the parking lot at the statue of Moroni atop the temple.) Husbands, wives, and children speak of how a spouse or parent is affected positively by temple attendance.

President Stratton says the spiritual level of the stake has risen because so many members and leaders are involved at the temple. Nine members of the stake's high council, for example, serve as ordinance workers.

Temple activity in the stake was high immediately after the dedication, then fell off a bit. "That is one of our challenges," President Stratton comments. One of the ways stake leaders are handling the challenge is to encourage those who have been strengthened and uplifted by temple attendance to share experiences and stories with other members, helping them see the value of temple worship.



Annabell Lines studies family history records for names that can be prepared to receive temple ordinances.

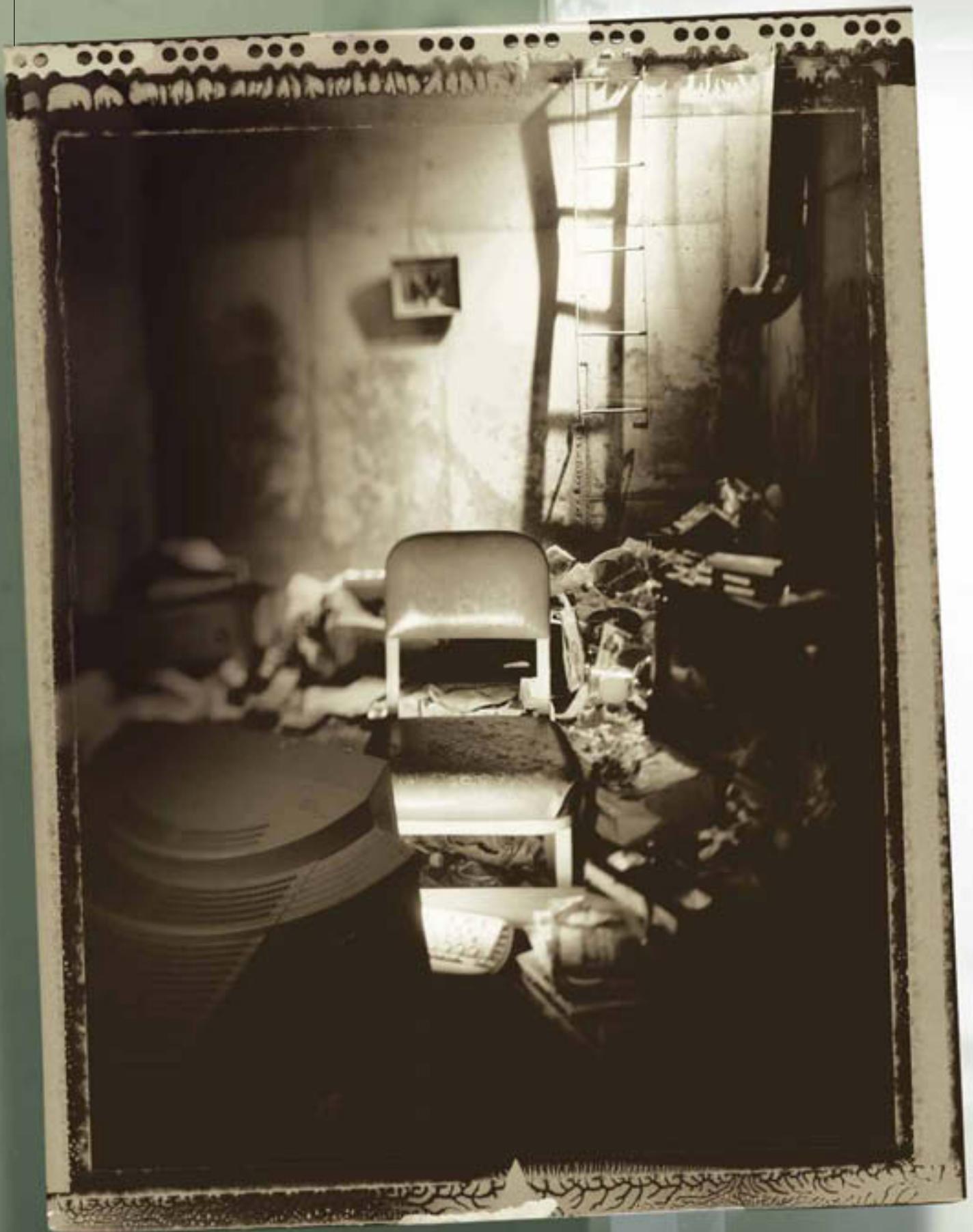
Toward the Temple

Some members of the Lubbock stake recall a memorable talk given by Jay B. Jensen, first president of the Lubbock temple. (He was released in November 2004.) President Jensen recounted the story of Nephites who gathered for King Benjamin's address and pitched their tents facing the temple so they could see and hear him (see Mosiah 2:6). President Jensen's point was the individual need to focus on the temple and its blessings.

Having served as stake president in Lubbock before the temple was built, he now sees the temple strengthening every individual who takes the opportunity to worship in it, starting with the temple workers. "It makes me want to be a better husband, a better father, and a better grandfather," he says. Unfortunately, the "tremendous impact" that the temple can have on individual lives "is lost on more of the members than it should be."

But those who take the opportunity to visit the temple frequently are gaining spiritual reinforcement against the debilitating influences of the world. Many are growing into leaders in the Church and in the community, he says.

Because of the temple, he adds, "I have a sense that this community is better, and better favored in the Lord's eyes." ■



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRADLEY SLADE

The Road Back: Abandoning Pornography

BY RORY C. REID

The Lord will support your efforts to overcome a pornography habit.

Pornography is increasing in popularity and accessibility, and many think of it as harmless fun. But Church leaders have consistently warned us about its destructive nature. President Gordon B. Hinckley cautioned: “Stay away from the great and terrible flood of pornography that is sweeping across the earth and makes a few men rich while it destroys many others who become enslaved to it. Stay away from it.”¹

Tragically, some have dismissed our prophet’s counsel and have become entangled in this salacious material. They have discovered that, like many other addictions, a pornography habit is extremely difficult to break.

But success is possible. As a psychotherapist counseling numerous clients struggling to overcome a pornography habit, I have observed several common denominators

among those who have successfully abandoned pornography. The following suggestions, while not comprehensive, are intended to provide some direction and possibly a beginning point for anyone who seeks to abandon the use of pornography.

Acknowledge the Problem

Many individuals minimize the extent of their problem because of feelings of shame. The Lord’s way, however, requires that we acknowledge our faults to Him (see Psalm 32:5; Alma 38:14; 39:13; D&C 5:28). Such confession is actually an exercise in honesty with ourselves, as we acknowledge to ourselves that which is already transparent to God. Involvement in pornography should also be acknowledged to one’s spouse (and for youth, one’s parents) and bishop or branch president.

Many who view pornography fear that a disclosure to their spouse may place their marriage at risk. Yet some studies indicate that

Those who become entangled in salacious material will find that it promotes selfishness, isolation, and secrecy. But through diligent effort and with the Lord’s help, it is possible to climb out of a pornography habit.

most marriages stay intact if both partners are willing to work through the problems together. Sometimes individuals put off disclosure because they fear they will hurt their spouse. A reason like this is usually just an excuse to protect the individuals with the problem from their spouse's reaction and from other consequences of their behavior. Thus they may continue to indulge in pornography while trying to keep it secret. But dishonesty in a relationship can be as damaging as pornography, and many spouses eventually discover the problem anyway. Spouses are more likely to offer support when approached in humility by a struggling partner who confesses the problem and requests encouragement in recovery.

Even if someone is able for a time to hide his or her actions, our secrets are never hidden from God. As Jacob tells us, "He knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it" (2 Nephi 9:20).

Being truthful frees up energy previously used to maintain secrets and can provide a sense of relief for the person disclosing the problem. In fact, many spouses report that their partner's disclosure, although painful, gave them relief because they learned that their suspicions were not based on their own insecurities. When someone establishes honesty and begins the process of repentance, the Atonement can remove the burden of sin. And through the Atonement, the spouse can be given the strength to forgive the violations of his or her sacred trust.

Accept the Atonement

The Hebrew equivalent for the word *atonement* is *kaphar*, a verb that means "to cover."² Therefore, the word *atonement* suggests that Christ can cover sins by "blotting" them out through His mercy if we repent (see Acts 3:19). As a result of this process, our sins can become "as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18).

In contrast, the adversary tempts those with a pornography addiction to try to hide, or cover, their sins—thus thwarting the repentance process and avoiding the true source of healing. In so doing they add the sin of dishonesty to the sin of pornography, "and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell" (2 Nephi 28:21).

Through the Atonement, Christ can cover sins by "blotting" them out if we will repent. As a result, our sins can become "as white as snow."



The story of Adam and Eve illustrates how Satan tries to enslave us. After transgressing one of God's commandments, Adam and Eve were shamed by Satan, who told them to cover themselves and hide. Similarly, Satan tries to get us to turn away from God when we make mistakes. But an angel of the Lord instructed Adam to "repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore" (Moses 5:8). Adam and Eve learned to turn their fear and shame into faith and trust. Likewise, individuals struggling with pornography must turn their fear and shame into faith and trust in the Lord and His Atonement.

When we accept the Atonement, we confess our sins and submit to the consequences of our choices. If we attempt to punish ourselves for sin through self-imposed guilt or shame, we erroneously try to usurp the authority of the Savior. The Savior has the right to extend mercy and the right to pass judgment. Our right is to submit our hearts to God and accept His mercy and justice in accordance with divine law. Although not entitled to mercy, we may qualify for it by the grace of God and through a broken heart and contrite spirit. This mighty change of heart, which sanctifies a son or daughter of God from unrighteousness, is a gift that comes through faith and trust in Him and by the power of His Atonement. Redemption from sin through this process will most likely take time, but eventually we can know, as the Spirit imparts assurance to our soul, that our sins are forgiven.

Be Aware

King Benjamin wisely admonished, "Watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds" (Mosiah 4:30). One

seeking to overcome a pornography habit should identify patterns and weaknesses in his or her life and be aware of events that may trigger indulgence in pornography.

One individual realized that when he experienced a negative emotion, he tried to escape his discomfort by thinking about pornography. As a result of this new awareness, he began to offer a silent prayer whenever he felt a negative emotion, asking for help to withstand the experience and to resist the urge to escape.

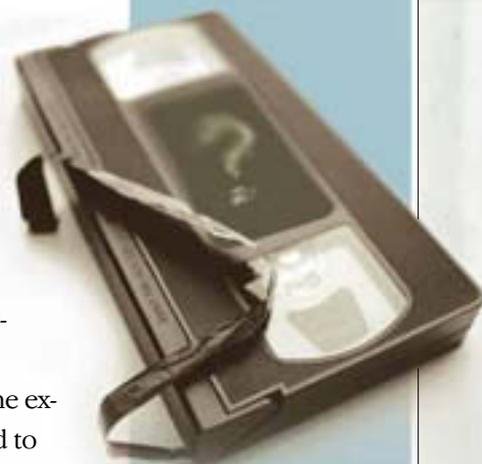
A Book of Mormon story helped this man understand how the Lord could help him with his problem. He noted that when the people of Alma were in bondage the Lord promised that their burdens would be made light (see Mosiah 24:14); He did not promise to completely remove their burdens. Likewise, this man did not expect the Lord to eliminate the negative emotions in his life but to help him cope with them in a healthy way.

As we take time to ponder our lives, awareness will come, especially if it is requested as part of sincere prayer.

Make Adjustments

In overcoming pornography habits, individuals must make many adjustments to their behavior or attitude. Often they have become "past feeling" (1 Nephi 17:45; Moroni 9:20). They must learn to reconnect with their feelings and with God, to be humble again, and to trust. The role of the Holy Ghost is paramount in this endeavor and can help individuals experience "a mighty change" of heart that will influence them "to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2; Alma 5:12, 14; see also Alma 5:26).

Help can also come from those around us.



WHAT IS PORNOGRAPHY?

Legal, academic, and other definitions of pornography vary widely, but in a practical sense, pornography is any visual or written medium created with the intent to sexually stimulate. If the work was not intended to stimulate but nevertheless causes sexual arousal in an individual, it constitutes pornography for that person.

If you find yourself asking whether a work is pornographic, the question itself suggests the material makes you uncomfortable. That should be enough to tell you to avoid it.

As President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught, the Lord often uses others to bring about His righteous purposes.³ Bishops or branch presidents, family members, and qualified counselors can help someone successfully abandon a pornography habit. As the old adage goes, the Lord helps those who help themselves. And we are expected to take advantage of resources available to us.

Another necessary adjustment includes rededication to a daily, consistent habit of studying the scriptures. Great strength can be drawn from regularly feasting upon the words of Christ. The book of Alma teaches that the word has a “more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else” (Alma 31:5). Similarly, Nephi told his brothers, “Whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction” (1 Nephi 15:24).

The power of the word is manifest in our lives when we live the principles we learn in our personal scripture study. The Lord will add to our sincere efforts the strength necessary to follow through with our righteous desires. He embraces us as we embrace His word.

Adjustments must also be made to the way we choose to interpret our experiences. Changing the way we think can be the most difficult change to make. Simply telling someone not to think about pornography is paradoxical in nature. To avoid thinking about something, people must know what they are to avoid, and so they must give thought to the very thing they’re trying not to think about.

Many who successfully abandon pornography report it is more helpful to focus on positive goals that are incompatible with viewing pornography than to divert all their energy to just not thinking about pornography. If individuals decide to focus instead on being more honest, for example, they could allow themselves to think often about honesty. This strategy avoids a focus on eliminating pornography—and subsequently thinking about pornography—that can trigger more pornography use.

I often suggest that people think honestly about their

temptations. One individual who tried this approach realized the women depicted in pornography would not act that way in real life. He learned that the images he saw were enhanced using computer technology and did not represent reality. He further discovered that some of the actors indulged in alcohol or drugs to numb their feelings, allowing them to participate in degrading activities. Because of this man’s honest approach to pornography and his efforts to recognize it for what it is, its attraction diminished significantly. He was able to cultivate more fully his ability to distinguish good from evil (see Genesis 3:5; Moses 4:11).

Be Accountable

Many people minimize their behavior by using phrases such as “I just happened to notice,” “I didn’t realize,” “It took me by surprise.” When we are accountable, we accept responsibility for our behavior. We are willing to make



REPENTANCE: A PROCESS OF CLEANSING

“Satan strives to convince one that sins can be hidden from others, yet it is he that causes them to be revealed in the most compromising circumstances. His objective is the enslavement of God’s children. All of his enticing, alluring temptations have as their root the destruction of the individual. . . .

“Seek out your bishop. He will show you how to repent and will help you do it. As you pray and act, you will be led to others who will support you. Repentance is a process of cleansing. It is difficult, but it has an end, a glorious end with peace and refreshing forgiveness and the miracle of a new beginning.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To Be Free of Heavy Burdens,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 87.

If you would like more information about pornography addiction, contact Michael Gardner, LDS Family Services program specialist in pornography, at GardnerMD@ldschurch.org.



changes in our environment that will make acting out less likely. For example, a person who is tempted by pornography on the Internet might agree to have filters installed on his or her computer, to leave the door open when using a computer, or to place a computer monitor so it faces high-traffic areas.⁴ The person would avoid being isolated in situations where he or she might be tempted to act out.

Consider the story of King David, who, “at the time when kings [went] forth to battle, . . . tarried still at Jerusalem” (2 Samuel 11:1). He should have been with the army, but instead he “walked upon the roof” and saw Bathsheba bathing (see 2 Samuel 11:2). He then made the mistake of succumbing to the temptation of lust. Likewise, those struggling with pornography should avoid any potentially compromising situations.

Abandon the Behavior

People struggling with pornography habits need to understand one aspect about their sins that is not often addressed: Sin and lust do bring temporary pleasure. If they didn't, they would have little power to entice us.

Focusing on positive goals that are incompatible with viewing pornography has proven to be an effective tool for those striving to overcome a pornography habit.

President Hinckley acknowledged that those who view pornography may find it to be exciting. “But,” he said, “it will destroy you.”⁵ This destruction may take months, even years, but it always occurs. Contemplating the wickedness of his people, Mormon said, “The Lord would not always suffer them to take happiness in sin” (Mormon 2:13).

Trusting the Lord enough to let go of pornography may be one of the most monumental steps people take on their road to repentance. But that's what repentance is about—a change of heart and mind and a willingness to abandon behavior that is contrary to God's will. Such abandonment replaces temporary gratification with permanent satisfaction in a healthy, meaningful marriage relationship, with closeness to God, and with the self-respect that comes from righteous living.

Know There Is Hope

If you struggle with a pornography habit, there is hope! Abandoning it and becoming free of its influence will require commitment, strength, and perseverance. Part of the battle will be fought by surrendering instead of fighting as you allow your will to be “swallowed up in the will of the Father” (Mosiah 15:7). Some battles will be fought within the silent chambers of the soul, where only you will know of your small victories along the road to recovery.⁶ The desire to abandon pornography is a righteous endeavor, one the Lord will support, provided you do your part. ■

Rory C. Reid is a member of the Pilgrims Landing Third Ward, Lehi Utah Jordan River Stake.

NOTES

1. “Selections from Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2001, 65.
2. See Russell M. Nelson, “The Atonement,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 34.
3. See *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 252.
4. See M. Russell Ballard, “Let Our Voices Be Heard,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 16–19.
5. “A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Liabona*, Apr. 2001, 37; *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 8.
6. See David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Oct. 1954, 83; see also Ezra Taft Benson, “In His Steps,” *Tambuli*, Feb. 1989, 3; *Ensign*, Sept. 1988, 2.

More on this topic: See “Danger Ahead! Avoiding Pornography's Trap,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2002, 12–17; *New Era*, Oct. 2002, 34–39; *Thomas S. Monson, “Pornography—the Deadly Carrier,”* *Liabona*, Nov. 2001, 2–5; *Ensign*, July 2001, 2–5; “*Breaking the Chains of Pornography,*” *Ensign*, Feb. 2001, 54–59.

SATAN

THE GREAT DECEIVER



There is a personal devil, and we had better believe it. He and a countless host of followers, seen and unseen, are exercising a controlling influence upon men and their affairs in our world today.

BY PRESIDENT MARION G. ROMNEY
(1897–1988)

Marion G. Romney was sustained as the Church's first Assistant to the Twelve Apostles on April 6, 1941, and was ordained an Apostle on October 11, 1951. He served as Second Counselor to Church Presidents Harold B. Lee and Spencer W. Kimball and later as First Counselor to President Kimball. After President Kimball's death, President Romney resumed his position in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and became President of the quorum on November 10, 1985. He died on May 20, 1988, at the age of 90. This talk was given in general conference in April 1971, while he was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

My beloved brothers and sisters and friends, I earnestly seek an interest in your faith and prayers. I particularly need the Spirit of the Lord today because I have decided to speak about His enemy, "Satan, the Great Deceiver." . . .

A corollary to the pernicious falsehood that God is dead is the equally pernicious doctrine that there is no devil. Satan himself is the father of both of these lies. To believe them is to surrender to him. Such surrender has always led, is leading now, and will continue to lead men to destruction.

Latter-day Saints know that there is a God. With like certainty, they know that Satan lives, that he is a powerful personage of spirit, the archenemy of God, of man, and of righteousness.

The reality of the existence of both God and the devil is conclusively established by the scriptures and by human experience.

Pre-Earth Council

Abraham's account of the great pre-earth heavenly council identifies both God and Satan as participators in that council (see Abraham 3).

Marvelous and important is the knowledge revealed in that account—knowledge of things as they were in the distant past, concerning God the Father and His spirit



children, and concerning His plans for the creation of this earth. It refers to the gospel plan and identifies Christ and Satan.

Amplifying the truths revealed to Abraham, the Lord said to Moses: “That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor” (Moses 4:1).

Satan’s Role in the Council

Old Testament prophets knew about Satan and his role in the great council. As though speaking directly to him, Isaiah said:

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . .

“. . . I will be like the most High.

“Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (Isaiah 14:12–15).

In this last dispensation, the Lord has confirmed what He revealed in former dispensations concerning Satan’s role in the great council. In September 1830

Satan’s methods are various, devious, and countless. “By every means he seeks to darken the minds of men and then offers them falsehood and deception in the guise of truth.”

He said to the Prophet Joseph: “The devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency” (D&C 29:36).

Rebellion against God

In February 1832 Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon testified that they saw in vision “that an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God, who rebelled against the Only Begotten Son . . . was thrust down from the presence of God and the Son,

“And was called Perdition, for the heavens wept over him—he was Lucifer, a son of the morning” (D&C 76:25–26).

Joseph Smith succinctly summed up the great pre-earth controversy when he said:

“The contention in heaven was—Jesus said there would be certain souls that would not be saved; and the devil said he could save them all, and laid his plans before the grand council, who gave their vote in favor of Jesus Christ. So the devil rose up in rebellion against God, and was cast down, with all who put up their heads for him.”¹

Satan Thrust Down

When Satan and those who followed him were “thrust down,” they came to the earth.

During the vision given to Moses, the Lord said:

“Because . . . Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down;

“And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice” (Moses 4:3–4).



At the opening of every dispensation he has made a frontal attack against the advent of truth. He deceived the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve in the first gospel dispensation.

Satan’s Temptation

Satan was in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve before the Fall. Not only so, but he continued to tempt them and their children after they had been driven from the garden. When Adam and Eve received the gospel, they rejoiced in it, “blessed the name of God, and . . . made all things known unto their sons and their daughters.

“And Satan came among them, saying: I am also a son of God; and he commanded them, saying: Believe it not; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish” (Moses 5:12–13).

From then until now Satan has been in the earth. We read in the Book of Job:

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

“And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it” (Job 1:6–7).

In his diary for August 11, 1831, the Prophet wrote: “After we had encamped upon the bank of the river, at McIlwaine’s Bend, Brother [W. W.] Phelps, in open vision by daylight, saw the destroyer in his most horrible power, ride upon the face of the waters; others heard the noise, but saw not the vision.”²

Satan Is Totally Evil

Satan is evil: totally and always. He ever seeks to defeat the gospel plan and “destroy the souls of men” (D&C 10:27).

“He persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him” (Moroni 7:17).

At the Last Supper just prior to His ordeal in Gethsemane, Jesus warned Peter: “Simon, Simon, . . . Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat” (Luke 22:31).

Satan is irrevocably committed to countering and overcoming the influence of the Spirit of Christ upon men. He

is the representative, promoter, and advocate of that “opposition in all things” referred to by Lehi in his instructions to his son Jacob (see 2 Nephi 2:11, 14–18).

Devious Methods

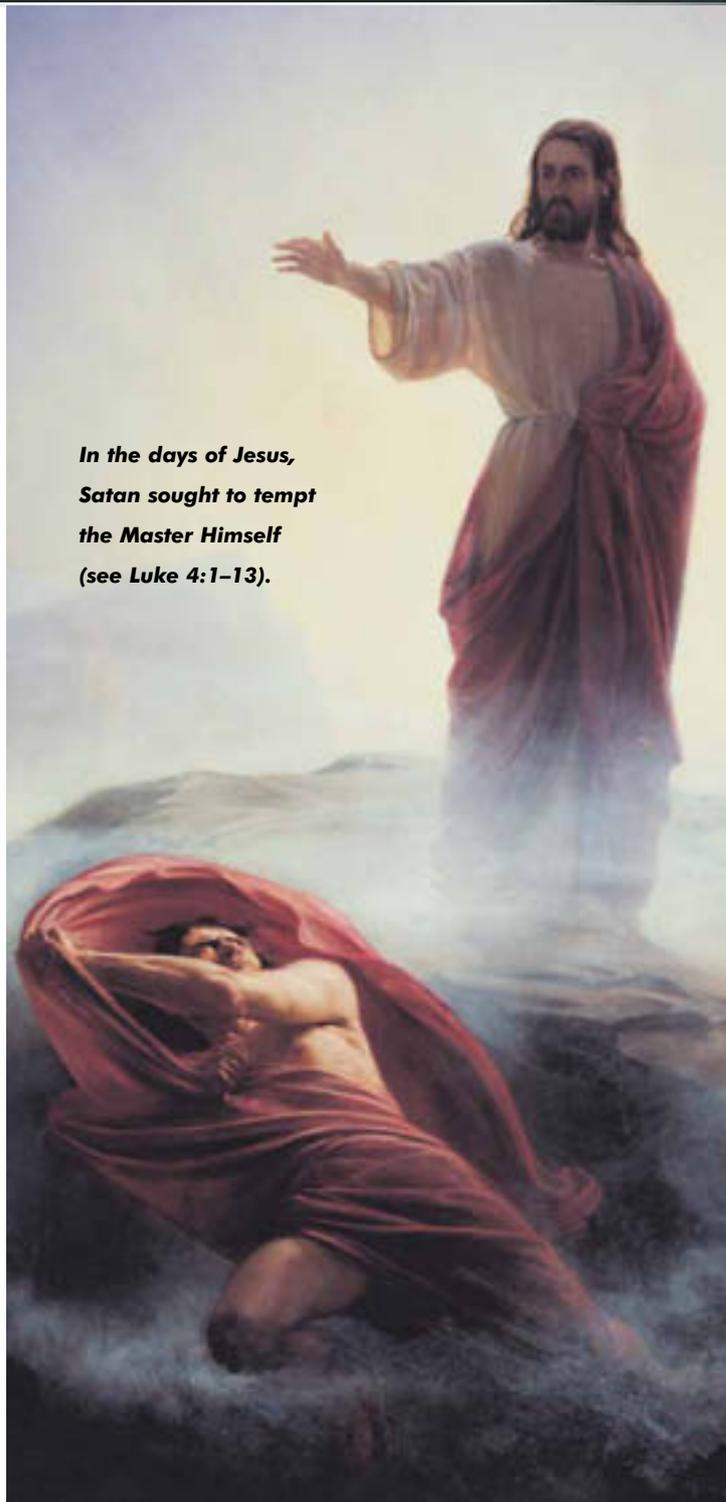
Satan’s methods are various, devious, and countless.

“By every possible means he seeks to darken the minds of men and then offers them falsehood and deception in the guise of truth. Satan is a skillful imitator, and as genuine gospel truth is given the world in ever-increasing abundance, so he spreads the counterfeit coin of false doctrine. . . . [As] the ‘father of lies’ he has . . . become, through the ages of practice in his nefarious work,” such an adept “that were it possible he would deceive the very elect.”³

Frontal Attacks against Truth

At the opening of every dispensation he has made a frontal attack against the advent of truth. As already noted, he deceived the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve in the first gospel dispensation.

At the beginning of the Mosaic dispensation, “Satan came tempting him, saying: Moses, son of man, worship me” (Moses 1:12).



*In the days of Jesus,
Satan sought to tempt
the Master Himself
(see Luke 4:1–13).*

In the days of Jesus, Satan attacked the Master himself (see Luke 4:1–13).

That Satan was present and contested the opening of this last dispensation we learn from the Prophet’s statement: “I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction” (Joseph Smith—History 1:15).

Satan’s attack against the coming forth of the Book of Mormon is detailed in the 10th section of the Doctrine and Covenants.

Another evidence of the devil’s effort to thwart the spread of the gospel is Heber C. Kimball’s account of Satan’s attack upon

the brethren who took the gospel to England in 1837.⁴

Reality of Satan

The general acceptance of Satan’s declaration, “I am no devil, for there is none” (2 Nephi 28:22), accounts in large measure for the decadence in our deteriorating society.

We Latter-day Saints need not be, and we must not be, deceived by the sophistries of men concerning the reality

of Satan. There is a personal devil, and we had better believe it. He and a countless host of followers, seen and unseen, are exercising a controlling influence upon men and their affairs in our world today.

Nephi's Warning

An ancient American prophet, envisioning our day and observing what is going on, prophesied that if Satan is not checked, he will bring this generation to destruction. Addressing himself to our present situation, Nephi said:

“The kingdom of the devil must shake, and they which belong to it must needs be stirred up unto repentance, or the devil will grasp them with his everlasting chains, and they be stirred up to anger, and perish;

“For behold, at that day [that's today] shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.

“And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

“And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance” (2 Nephi 28:19–22).

Tempo of Campaign Accelerated

Now I am not calling attention to these things to frighten, stampede, or discourage anyone. I refer to them because I know they are true, and I am persuaded that if we are to “conquer Satan, and . . . escape the hands of the servants of Satan that do uphold his work” (D&C 10:5), we must understand and recognize the situation as it is. This is no time for Latter-day Saints to equivocate.

Nor is it a time for us to panic. The difficulties of our



That Satan was present and contested the opening of this last dispensation we learn from the Prophet's statement: "I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me. . . . It seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction."

times have not come upon us unawares. A hundred and forty years ago the Lord clearly revealed the tenor of our times. We know that as the Second Coming of the Savior approaches, the tempo of Satan's campaign for the souls of men is being and will continue to be accelerated. We know that the experiences of the intervening years will try men's souls.

God's Purposes Roll On

We also know that God lives, that His “eternal purposes . . . shall roll on” (Mormon 8:22). We know that to qualify us to prevail against Satan and his wicked hosts, we have been given the gospel of Jesus Christ. We know that the Spirit of Christ and the power of His priesthood are ample shields to the power of Satan. We know that there is available to each of us the gift of the Holy Ghost—the power

of revelation which embraces the gift of discernment by which we may unerringly detect the devil and the counterfeits he is so successfully foisting upon this gullible generation. Our course is clear and certain. It is to strictly obey the commandments of the Lord as they are recorded in the scriptures and as they are being given by the living prophets.

In conclusion, I bear you my witness to the truth of the things I have been calling to your attention in these remarks.

I know that God lives. Through my own experiences I have come to know of His Spirit and His power. I know also that Satan lives. I have detected his spirit and felt of his power—not to the extent as did the Prophet Joseph, but in like experience.

Satan Shall Be Bound

I know that at the second advent of Christ, the signs of which are now mounting, “Satan shall be bound . . . [and] have no place in the hearts of the children of men” (D&C 45:55).

I bear further witness to the truth of the Savior's

prediction that at the time of His coming “they that are wise and have received the truth [that is, who have accepted the gospel], and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived [by Satan and his powers]— . . . shall . . . abide the day [of His coming].

“And [that] the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance; . . .

“For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver” (D&C 45:57–59).

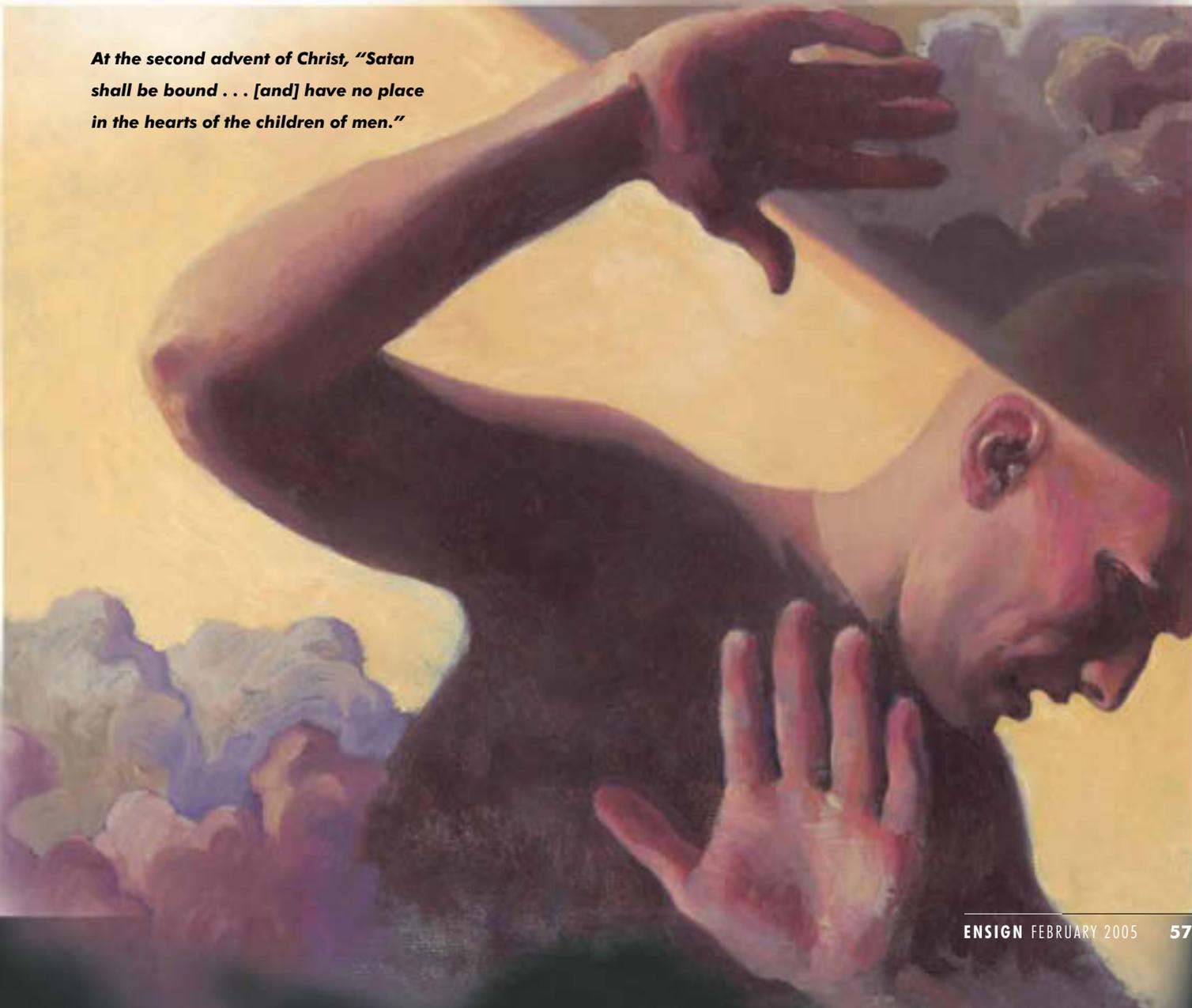
That we may take the Holy Spirit for our guide, recognize Satan, his representatives and their works, and not be deceived by them, to the end that we may be partakers of the promised blessings, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen. ■

Capitalization and punctuation standardized.

NOTES

1. *Teachings of the Propbet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 357.
2. *History of the Church*, 1:203.
3. Joseph F. Smith, in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Latter-day Propbets Speak* (1948), 20–21.
4. See Orson F. Whitney, *The Life of Heber C. Kimball* (1888), 143–45.

At the second advent of Christ, “Satan shall be bound . . . [and] have no place in the hearts of the children of men.”



THE TEACHERS QUORUM

The second in a series of articles about priesthood quorums and their purposes. Here members of the Presiding Bishopric share some thoughts about teachers quorums.

How can the quorum help individuals become spiritually stronger, especially during the critical teachers quorum years?

Bishop H. David Burton (above center), Presiding Bishop: Our young people need the opportunity to feel the Spirit in a Church setting. Imagine what it means to have a young man kneel with his peers around a classroom table, or whatever the forum is, in humble prayer. This practice can make a big difference in the lives of young men.

Imagine what it means to have a young man kneel with his peers in humble prayer for another quorum member.



Bishop Richard C. Edgley (far left), First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric: Think what it

does if they kneel in prayer for another quorum member who is sick or has gone astray or is having a problem. It starts to build the brotherhood these boys ought to be feeling. At these young men's age, so often their friends are most influential in their lives. We would like them to have friends in the quorum with whom they have spiritual experiences, with whom they share support, and with whom they develop a real brotherhood.

Bishop Burton: It's one thing to have a quorum adviser call to inquire about a quorum member's welfare. It's quite another to have his quorum president visit or call.

What were some of your early assignments (see D&C 20:53–55) as a teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood?

Bishop Keith B. McMullin (above right), Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric: I remember my first home teaching assignment was with a brother from Scandinavia who spoke broken English. He called me on the phone, and I tried hard to understand what he was saying. He invited me to come to his home. He was an older man, a very fine Latter-day Saint, and my senior companion. He invited me in and said in a heavy accent, "I think we should say a prayer." We knelt down and had a prayer. At that time in my home, our family prayers were reserved for

major occasions—they weren't an everyday occurrence. My home teaching companion, however, placed prayer into a much different category for me. I thought to myself, "Home teaching is really important, and prayer is an important part of home teaching." And of course I learned what a wonderful, precious experience it is.

Bishop Burton: I can remember how frightened I was the first time I was assigned to go home teaching. My companion was a less-active Melchizedek Priesthood holder, but he was a faithful home teacher. When we went into the homes of the people, that tough, large, rather rough-appearing man was as meek and mild as anyone could be and always insisted that we kneel in prayer with the families. He was a marvelous human being who taught me—a young teacher—how to be a home teacher.

You have talked about the important role of youth in quorum leadership. What about the role of adult leaders in a quorum?

Bishop Edgley:

You've got to include the bishopric. It starts there. I like the counsel President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has given. He said you talk

With the help of a devoted companion, a teacher can learn that home teaching is important and that prayer is an important part of home teaching.



A young man's course usually will be right and true if he has a family that gathers together regularly to pray in the home.

with your counselor responsible for the deacons and tell that counselor to make sure every single deacon becomes a teacher. You talk with the counselor responsible for the teachers and tell him to make sure every teacher becomes a priest. As bishop, you say, "I'll take the priests. I'll make sure every one of them receives the Melchizedek Priesthood." It can be done; it has been done.

What are some of the biggest challenges teachers face today, and how can we help them stand firm?

Bishop Edgley: A boy this age wants his independence. He's testing his parents and is trying out his freedoms. That is one of the reasons the teachers quorum has to make sure his freedoms fall within the right sphere of friends and the right environment.

Bishop McMullin: There is a window of receptiveness in a young man's life when he is 12 to 15 years of age. Young people this age are often more inclined to wonder about patriarchal blessings; they are more inclined to wonder about the Book of Mormon. This is a pivotal period.

Bishop Burton: If the sail is set, the course will be right. If a family has a long tradition of having family home evening, if they have even cursory gospel study in the home, and if they gather together on a regular basis to pray in the home—that is a great advantage. Parents should do everything possible to accomplish those three things. That is the best insurance policy they can have. ■



A TEACHER IN THE PRIESTHOOD

BY PAMELA REID

When Darron Moller and his family moved to New Zealand, Darron was assigned Scott, a teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood, as his home teaching companion.

“I didn’t know who Scott was, and when I asked, I was told, ‘Just look for someone taller than you.’ I soon found him,” Darron remembers.

Scott, 15, is a counselor in his teachers quorum presidency, and like Nephi, one of his heroes in the Book of Mormon, Scott is large in stature. He also has Nephi’s determination to follow the Lord’s commandments.

“At school I listen to people in my class congratulating each other about doing crazy things, and I just think, ‘I’m so glad I don’t do that,’” Scott says. “Ever since I was small it’s been in my mind that those things are wrong, and knowing the consequences makes it easier not to do wrong things.”

As a member of the teachers quorum, which has the responsibility to prepare the sacrament, Scott was faced with an unfortunate situation one Sunday: there weren’t enough sacrament cups for his large ward.

“I felt bad—feeling that we hadn’t fulfilled our duty,” Scott says. “We decided that the teachers had to be more



organized, and now our quorum presidency meets the hour before sacrament meeting for our presidency meeting to make sure everything is in order for the sacrament and to prepare for the next few weeks. I like the order in the Church. When there is order, you don’t have to worry.”

As his home teaching companion, Darron has found that Scott adds a new dimension to his calling. “I resolved to be 100 percent in visiting our families, and Scott definitely makes that possible. He calls me to make sure I’ve made the appointments. And when he taught the lesson the first time, he asked me to go early so I could hear what he’d prepared. Even the little children we taught listened to him.”

And how does Scott feel about being a home teacher? “I like going home teaching with Brother Moller. If it were two teachers going together, we just wouldn’t know as much. But by having someone older than me, I get to hear different viewpoints from different age groups. Sometimes it’s scary giving a lesson to just a few people—you don’t know how you’re going to be received. But it feels good when they listen.” ■

Pamela Reid is a member of the Birkenhead Ward, Auckland New Zealand Harbour Stake.





Fourteen Is Young

By Sharon Price Anderson

*Fourteen is young
to yearn for wisdom,
to study, ponder,
and ask for answers
that will change a world.
But early in greening grove
of a Palmyra spring,
youthful limbs
in outgrown homespun
bend among fresh ferns
unfolding on the forest floor.
A voice speaks fervently,
Father.*

*Evil, slithering
through confusion
of decaying leaves,
strikes suddenly,
binds the tongue,
strangles the inquiry—
Which one . . . ?
Struggling against
impending doom,
the sinking supplicant
prays more earnestly,
Father!*

*Eternity opens.
Descending light
dispels the gloom.
Believing eyes behold
both the Father
and the Son.*

*Fourteen is young
to disturb the powers
of darkness,
to learn who God is,
who we are, and
what we may become.*

The Priceless Gift OF THE PRIESTHOOD



A priesthood holder should frequently ask himself, “What would the Savior do if he were here?”

BY ELDER WILLIAM W. PARMLEY
Of the Seventy

When I was 17 years old, I left home to attend Harvard University. I was excited but also nervous at the prospect of living on my own for the first time. Before I left, my father put his hands on my head and gave me a priesthood blessing, assuring me that things were going to be all right. That blessing was a source of great peace and comfort to me.

That is only one of many experiences I had as a youth in which my father exercised his priesthood in my behalf. Each time he ordained me to a priesthood office, each time he pronounced a priesthood blessing upon my head, my testimony of the priesthood was increased, and my relationship with my father was strengthened.

The priesthood has been defined as the authority given to man to act for God. However, the scope and majesty of the priesthood cannot be conveyed in just this simple statement. The Prophet Joseph Smith defined priesthood as “an everlasting principle, [that has] existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years.”¹ President John Taylor (1808–87) said the priesthood “is the government of God, . . . for it is by that power, agency, or principle that all things are governed on the earth and in the heavens, and by that power that all things are upheld and sustained. . . . It is the power of God

delegated to intelligences in the heavens and to men on the earth.”²

The priesthood is a wonderful gift and blessing. Do we appreciate its power and significance as we should?

The Restoration of the Priesthood

To better understand the importance of the priesthood, let’s briefly review how it was restored.

Following the death and Resurrection of the Savior, the Apostles governed the Church through its many trials and persecutions. After their deaths, the Great Apostasy occurred as the people strayed from the true Church, and the priesthood was taken from mortals on the earth.

In order for the restored Church to be organized, the priesthood of God had to be returned to the earth. On May 15, 1829, John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood, through the laying on of hands, to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery (see D&C 13). Soon thereafter, Peter, James, and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery (see D&C 27:12). With the higher priesthood restored, the Church could be organized, and all of the necessary ordinations and ordinances could be carried out.

On April 3, 1836, in the newly completed Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received a remarkable visitation from heavenly beings. First, the Lord appeared and instructed them. Subsequently,



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE, POSED BY MODEL. INSET: THE RESTORATION OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD, BY KENNETH RILEY

My father gave me a priesthood blessing, assuring me that things were going to be all right. That blessing was a source of peace and comfort to me.

Moses appeared to deliver the keys of the gathering of Israel. Next, Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham. Last, Elijah appeared to restore the sealing powers of the priesthood and thus begin the great work of turning the hearts of the children to their fathers (see D&C 110).

A Source of Power

All members of the Church today have benefited from those momentous events in the early years of the Restoration.

The priesthood is a source of great power. I remember one occasion when I was asked to participate in giving a blessing to a man who was seriously ill. He had



Peter, James, and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood when they ordained Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

just had major surgery and was lingering between life and death.

I offered to give a ride to the stake patriarch, who would be pronouncing the words of the blessing on this man's head. I hurried to his home, anxious to be on our way and give the needed blessing. But when I arrived, the patriarch taught me an invaluable lesson. He invited me into his home and said, "Let's have a prayer and find out what the Lord would have us do, and then let's go do it." He offered a humble prayer, full of faith, and then said, "Now I know what the Lord wants us to do."

After we arrived at the man's bedside, I anointed him. The patriarch then laid his hands on the man's head and

said words I had never heard uttered in quite the same way. He commanded every organ in the man's body to quickly heal. Needless to say, the man recovered and was able to leave the hospital soon thereafter.

Of course, not every blessing turns out this way. Many times it is not the will of the Lord that an individual be healed. But this experience was a testimony to me of the power of the priesthood and of the importance of seeking the Lord's will in exercising that priesthood.

The Priesthood in Everyday Life

Sometimes I worry that many men exercise their priesthood in a limited way. They may tend to use it only on Sunday or when fulfilling a specific priesthood assignment. Then they put the priesthood aside for the rest of the week.

In my calling as a Seventy I attend many stake priesthood leadership meetings. I often ask those in attendance, "How did you use your priesthood last week?" Usually the men will think for a minute, and then someone will say, "I blessed my wife." That will be followed by several similar responses. Finally someone might say, "I presided at family home evening" or "I presided at family prayer this morning."

Priesthood holders should be using their priesthood multiple times a day. It should be a natural part of their lives. They should preside over family prayer, family home evening, and family councils. They should set a good example in their family by engaging in personal prayer and scripture study, living the commandments, paying a generous fast offering and a full tithe, attending all meetings, going to the temple, and sharing the gospel with others. They should better understand when someone needs a good word or a pat on the back, for the priesthood can help them increase their sensitivity to the promptings of the Spirit.

Because the priesthood is the authority to act for God, a priesthood holder should frequently ask himself, "What would the Savior do if He were here?" The answer to that question is, He would bless people. He might not necessarily put His hands on their head, and He might not necessarily raise them from the dead. But He would be helping and serving others at all times.

Priesthood holders are frequently admonished to mag-

nify their callings in the priesthood. As Elder Delbert L. Stapley (1896–1978) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: "To magnify is to honor, to exalt and glorify, and cause to be held in greater esteem or respect. It also means to increase the importance of, to enlarge and make greater. . . . Can a man magnify his calling who is not willing to sacrifice and consecrate all for the building of God's kingdom in righteousness, truth, and power in the earth?"³

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, spoke about the importance of worthiness when exercising the priesthood:

"Your authority comes through your ordination; your power comes through obedience and worthiness. . . . Power in the priesthood comes from doing your duty in ordinary things: attending meetings, accepting assignments, reading the scriptures, keeping the Word of Wisdom."⁴

The priesthood is a priceless gift that blesses the lives of both men and women. Let us not underestimate its significance. It is the very power and authority to act for God and is one of the great blessings of the Restoration. ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 157.
2. "On Priesthood," *Millennial Star*, Nov. 1847, 321.
3. In Conference Report, Apr. 1957, 76–77.
4. *That All May Be Edified* (1982), 29–30.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Invite family members to write down a few words and phrases that describe what they think the priesthood is and what they think it is not. Have them find answers to these questions in the article: What is the priesthood and how was it restored? The priesthood is a "source of great power" to do what? How can priesthood holders magnify their callings?
2. Discuss what a gift is and how the priesthood is a priceless gift. Invite family members to share how the priesthood has blessed their lives. According to the article, what are some ways the priesthood can be used in everyday life?

Rejoice in Our Knowledge of the Godhead

Prayerfully select and read from this message the scriptures and teachings that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Share your experiences and testimony. Invite those you teach to do the same.

Joseph Smith—History 1:17: “I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description. . . . One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*”

What Do We Know about the Nature of the Godhead?

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “I believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. I was baptized in the name of these three. I was married in the name of these three. I have no question concerning their reality and their individuality. . . . Miracle of miracles and wonder of wonders, they are interested in us, and we are the substance of their great concern. They are available to each of us. We approach the Father through the Son. He is our intercessor at the throne of God. How marvelous it is that we may so speak to the Father in the name of the Son. I bear witness of these great, transcendent truths. And I do so by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost” (“The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” *Liabona*, Mar. 1998, 8–9; *Ensign*, Mar. 1998, 7).

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “[Joseph Smith’s] experience clarified for mankind the existence of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Thus to the world came the vision that three personages comprise this great presiding council of the universe and have revealed themselves to mankind as three separate beings, physically distinct from each other. . . . The Holy Ghost . . . is a personage of spirit. The Holy Ghost is a witness of the Father and of the Son declaring to man their attributes, bearing record of the other personages of the Godhead” (“The Articles of Faith,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 23–24).

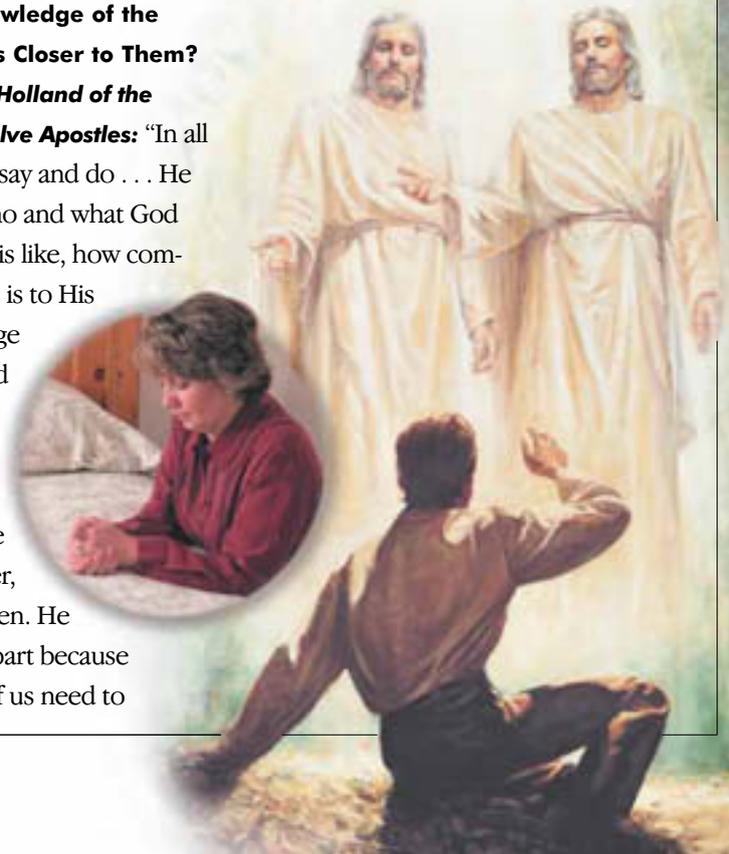
How Can Our Knowledge of the Godhead Draw Us Closer to Them?

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “In all that Jesus came to say and do . . . He was showing us who and what God our Eternal Father is like, how completely devoted He is to His children in every age and nation. In word and in deed Jesus was trying to reveal and make personal to us the true nature of His Father, our Father in Heaven. He did this at least in part because then and now all of us need to

know God more fully in order to love Him more deeply and obey Him more completely” (“The Grandeur of God,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 70).

Anne C. Pingree, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency: “As Latter-day Saint women who have made covenants, all of us must have a clear understanding of the nature and roles of the members of the Godhead. Praying to a Father in Heaven, who knows and loves us; having confidence in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Redeemer; and feeling the companionship and promptings of the Holy Ghost, who teaches and testifies of the Father and Son, bring peace and joy to us in these perilous times.”

Ether 12:41: “Seek this Jesus . . . that the grace of God the Father, and also the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of them, may be and abide in you forever.” ■



Should We Climb?

By Michael T. Richie

A few years ago several friends from institute and I planned a two-day backpacking trip. We were experienced campers, quite familiar with the areas we would be traveling in and well equipped for most situations. We would soon learn, however, that without the guidance of the Holy Ghost our gear and knowledge would have been next to useless.

A few days before our trip the sky was clear and the temperatures were moderate. Our destination was Mount Chocorua in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. While it is true that the mountains of our region do not boast summits as high as those found in other parts of the world, the elevation gain from trailhead to

summit is often quite substantial, and New England is known for its highly unpredictable weather.

The day before our departure it started to rain. Normally this would not concern me; it often rained as we hiked. This time, however, I felt a growing sense of unease. I checked the forecast—light showers, nothing more. Still, I felt very uncomfortable as the evening progressed. The feeling grew as I prepared for bed, read

my scriptures, and said my prayers.

Finally I went to my pack and pulled out my guide map of the White Mountain National Forest. As I located Mount Chocorua on the map, my sense of unease doubled. It was so intense I considered calling off the trip, but that didn't feel right either. I found another

mountain we had on our list to climb and immediately felt better. After a prayer I felt good about this new destination. My only concern was possibly disappointing my friend Glenn, who had put much effort into planning this trip.

The next morning it was still raining lightly. After we all arrived at our departure point, I voiced my concerns and told my friends of my prayers and feelings. To my relief, two others had had the same feelings, and Glenn was more than willing to change mountains. We then prayed and asked the Lord to watch over us

After we had arrived at our departure point, I voiced my concerns. To my relief, two others had had the same feelings.



in our travels and to help us make the right decisions. We all felt comfortable with our new plans and departed.

Although the rain continued, our drive and climb passed without incident. After dinner the rain stopped and the clouds broke, revealing a beautiful sunset. Our spirits lifted, and we went to bed.

At midnight we were awakened by an intense electrical storm that lasted most of the night. While the rain, wind, and lightning were heavy where we were, we felt no impending danger. The lightning was far worse to the east where, from my vantage point, it was striking a particular area nearly every second and continued to do so for at least an hour. Glad that I was not there, I drifted back to sleep. The remainder of the trip was wet but passed safely and was very enjoyable.

A few days later I attended an institute cookout. All those who had gone on the backpacking trip were there. When Glenn arrived he had a curious look on his face. He showed us a section of a guidebook for the White Mountains. It stated that while Mount Chocorua is not as elevated as its neighbors, its bald face and position make it dangerous as one of the mountains in North America most frequently struck by lightning. We also confirmed that the area we saw bombarded by lightning was the Chocorua area.

How grateful we were that we were warned by the Holy Ghost not to go there at that time. ■

Michael T. Richie is a member of the Scituate Ward, Providence Rhode Island Stake.

Jazmín and the Sabbath Day

By Marcela Colaberardino de Mitillo

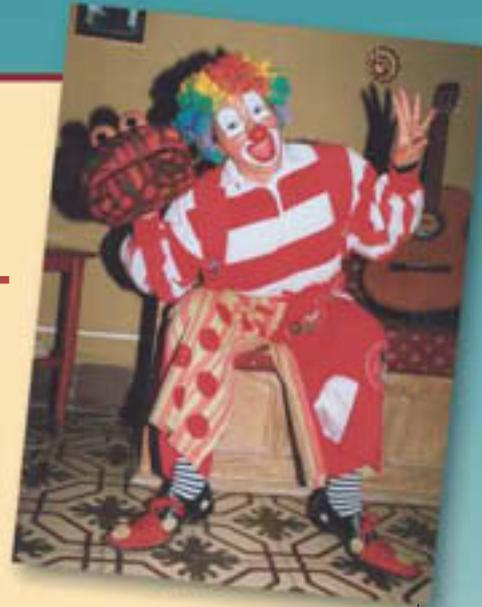
When my husband's salary was suddenly reduced by 30 percent several years ago, I began to think of ways I could help my family meet our expenses.

I had often organized birthday parties—including dressing up as a clown, providing games, and performing puppet shows—for my two children, and relatives had asked me why I didn't turn this into a job for other people's celebrations. Now seemed like a great time to turn their suggestion into action.

I began putting up posters at local businesses. Shortly thereafter Jazmín the Clown had her first job.

It wasn't a smooth start, however. For the first six months, most of the parties I received requests for were held on Sunday. Everyone, it seemed, needed a clown on the Sabbath! While I had promised the Lord I would never work on the Sabbath, it was discouraging to have to reject work when I needed it so much.

On one occasion I received an offer from the city government to help at the celebration for the Day of the Child, which was to be held on



Sunday. The officials offered to pay me well, but I couldn't break my promise. Some of my friends told me I would never be successful if I didn't accept work on the Sabbath, but I knew I couldn't disappoint the Lord. In the face of such opposition, I tried to focus on the promises He has made to those who honor the Sabbath (see D&C 59:9–13).

In time, circumstances began to improve. Now, some years later, I have lots of work on Saturdays and weekdays. I have even been able to persuade some of my clients to change their parties from Sunday to Saturday.

Initially, I wondered if I would be successful when it seemed that so many people treated Sunday like any other day of the week. But now I understand that when we show the Lord we are willing to keep His commandments and do our part, He will provide a way for us to do so. ■

Marcela Colaberardino de Mitillo is a member of the Roque Sáenz Peña Ward, Río Cuarto Argentina Stake.

A “Chance” Meeting

Name Withheld

It was a gray, rainy day—very unusual for sunny southern California. My husband and I had just finished a full-to-overflowing endowment session as part of our stake temple day. My husband braved the driving rain to get the car while I waited inside the temple’s door.

As I quietly chatted with a member of my ward, a sister I did not recognize

approached us. She was dripping wet, and it appeared she had been crying. She explained that she had inadvertently left her vehicle’s headlights on and was now unable to start the car. She recognized us from the temple session—she was the only patron in that session not from our stake—and wondered if we had battery jumper cables she could borrow.

As we talked

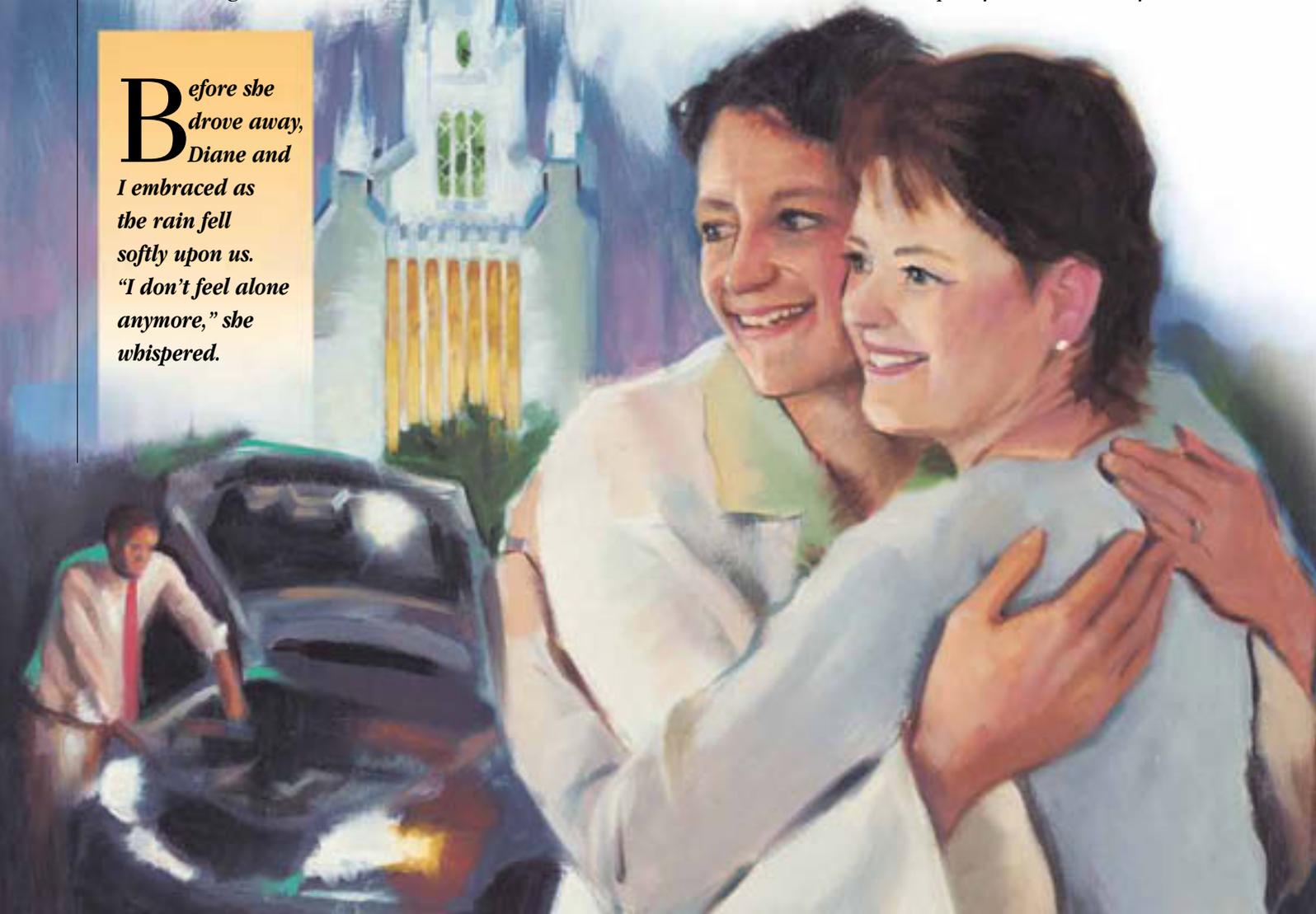
she began looking intently at me and finally asked, “Aren’t you Cathy West?” (Names have been changed.)

Surprised, I exclaimed, “That was my maiden name!”

“I’m Diane Cody Hart,” she replied, “Anne Cody’s little sister.”

Anne Cody—the name struck me like a bolt of lightning. I had not seen Anne for years. Three decades before and a thousand miles away, Anne had been my childhood friend—and my link to the Church. My mother and sisters and I were members of the Church, but my father was not. No one in my family was active. Anne quietly and consistently took

Before she drove away, Diane and I embraced as the rain fell softly upon us. “I don’t feel alone anymore,” she whispered.



me with her to church and Young Women and included me in Church activities. During those crucial years I remained active more because of Anne's friendship than because of my own testimony of the gospel.

That tenuous connection to the Church sustained me through my parents' divorce. It inspired me to counsel my heartbroken father to start attending church and to listen to the missionary discussions. It was strengthened as my father joined the Church and my parents remarried. It was my guide through the turbulent teenage years.

Through it all Anne remained my friend and example. When she decided to go to Brigham Young University, I didn't want to be left behind, so I went too. During that time good friends and full participation in the programs of the Church helped my testimony mature.

Then during my sophomore year, an unexpected tragedy befell my family. My oldest sister, who had suffered from emotional problems for years, took her own life. Our newly found testimonies comforted us through those difficult days.

I subsequently met a returned missionary and planned a temple marriage. The day before my wedding, my parents received their endowments, and we—my deceased sister included by proxy—were sealed as a family. Anne's quiet influence had brought the blessings of the temple not only to me but to my family as well.

I embraced Diane and expressed my appreciation for her sister's

friendship and example. When my husband arrived with the car, he reported that we had no jumper cables but insisted that Diane accompany us to a nearby mall to buy a set.

Diane and I waited in the car while my husband went inside to search for jumper cables. I asked Diane about her family, and she replied that they had all attended simultaneous temple sessions that evening—Anne in Chicago, Diane in San Diego, and their parents in Reno—while sacred temple ordinances were performed by proxy for her younger brother, who had died the previous year. Diane had come to the temple alone to participate in the special session while her husband took care of their three children.

I squeezed Diane's hand and asked how her brother had died. She began to weep and whispered that her brother—to whom she had been very close—had taken his own life. Through her tears Diane related how alone she had felt, even in the crowded endowment session, as she thought of the circumstances of her brother's death.

I could see the Lord's hand in bringing the two of us together that evening. To the gentle patter of the rain on the roof of the car, I told her about my sister's suicide many years earlier and my family's struggle to understand and cope. I held her hand and expressed my understanding and empathy until my husband arrived a short time later with jumper cables.

We returned to the temple, and my husband started Diane's car. Before

she drove away, Diane and I embraced as the rain fell softly upon us. "I don't feel alone anymore," she whispered.

As Diane disappeared into the rain, I marveled at Heavenly Father's goodness. He had brought me together with one of His daughters who needed comfort I was uniquely prepared to provide. And He had granted me a priceless opportunity to repay in some small way the special service a dear friend had given me 30 years before. ■

He Served Me Before He Met Me

By José Salvador Yanez López

I was baptized in Comayagua, Honduras, in February 1992. After serving a mission in El Salvador, I moved to San Pedro Sula, Honduras. There I met Brenda, a beautiful young woman who had been home from her mission for only nine days. Some months later we were married in the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple.

We established our home in the Fesitranh Ward in Honduras, and before long I was called as the first counselor in the bishopric. At a priesthood executive committee meeting, the bishop informed us that one of our ward members, Brother Fidel Durón, was moving to another ward in the



stake. He told us that Brother Durón was a very service-minded person and that every ward member no doubt had something to thank him for.

Brother Durón helped anyone in need, whether it involved an electrical problem, some construction work, a broken pipe, or an early-morning trip to the hospital. His service was not limited to Church members but was also extended to his neighbors and acquaintances. He was loved and respected by all. The bishop gave us an assignment to find all those members who had something to thank Brother Durón for. A meeting was planned to honor him for the selfless service he had given for such a long time.

I said to myself, “I don’t have anything to thank Brother Durón for.” I had lived in the ward for just a short time and had spoken with him on a few occasions. He seemed to be a pleasant person, but I didn’t think I

had had the opportunity to be the recipient of an act of service at his hand.

Some time later I was called to be a member of the high council and assigned to the López Arellano Ward, the ward Brother Durón now attended. One Sunday I was in Sunday School in this ward, and the teacher asked class members to share personal experiences regarding service.

I happened to be seated to the left of a sister named Adela Rosa de Santos. She started to tell how the man at her right, Brother Durón, had served as her home teacher when she and her family were new members of the Church. She told how his kind service had given them strength and encouragement when they needed it and how he had blessed their lives. She concluded by saying,

Sister Adela told how her home teacher’s kind service had blessed their lives. *“If it weren’t for Brother Durón, I wouldn’t be here,” she said.*

“If it weren’t for you, Brother Durón, I wouldn’t be here.”

I could hardly believe my ears. Sister Adela’s daughter, Suyapa, was the missionary who had knocked on my door five years earlier, and now I was a member of the Church and my life had been filled with the richest possible blessings. I had been given

the opportunity to serve a mission, the privilege of receiving my temple ordinances, and the glorious hope of having an eternal family.

At that moment I learned that 20 years before, a humble man who was true to his commitment to serve others had unknowingly labored for the welfare of my soul. I was filled with a joy that is

hard to express and with love for my brother, Fidel Durón. I had once thought I didn’t have anything to thank Brother Durón for. Now I considered myself to be first and foremost on the list the bishop had asked us to make.

That special meeting for Brother Durón was never held, because he returned to the Fesitranh Ward for a time. We now have a beautiful friendship. I have so many reasons to be grateful to Jesus Christ for all He has done for me and also to Brother Durón for the love he showed me 20 years before he ever met me. ■

José Salvador Yanez López is a member of the Fesitranh Ward, Fesitranh Honduras Stake.

Leading Our Youth with Love

Unfamiliar with the youth program because I joined the Church as an adult, I understandably felt nervous when I was called to be a Young Women adviser. Though some aspects of the program would take time to learn, I

knew that I could immediately share my love with the girls. After much praying and pondering, I discovered several ways to earn their trust and friendship. Following is a sampling of those ideas, which leaders can easily adapt to show their love for the young women and young men in their wards.

Learn their names. Whether at church or elsewhere, greet the youth by their names. They become more than a name when we keep them

in our personal thoughts and prayers, seeking inspiration to help them. Classroom prayers, with specific names mentioned as appropriate, can also touch each young person's heart as we pray for individual needs.

Be there. Instead of just touting the importance of attending a fire-side or activity, attend with your youth group. If you sense someone needs individual attention, follow any spiritual promptings to extend a personal visit or arrange some casual time together.

Show your care. Letter writing can be an effective way to personally tell your youth that their Father in Heaven loves them and has a purpose for them here on earth.

Prepare your lessons well.

The youth will not only feel your love for them but will more likely participate when they see your enthusiasm for the gospel and feel the Spirit testify of its truths.

Though my calling has changed, I still feel close to the young women I taught. I try to continue to be a good example to them, and I hope they know I will always love and respect them.

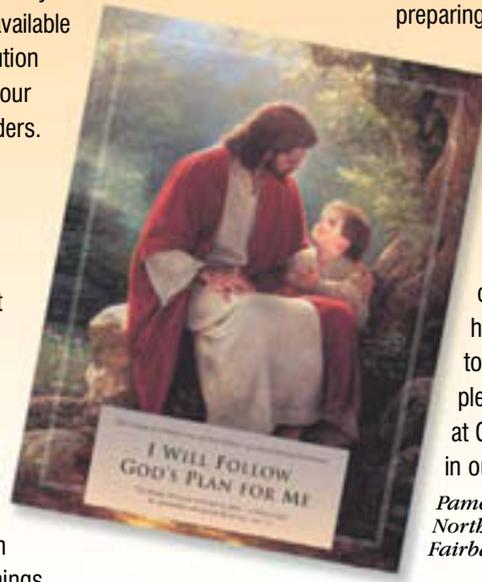
*Kersten Campbell, Pullman First Ward,
Pullman Washington Stake*





Primary Theme Home Evening

Did you know that a lesson outline for teaching your Primary-age children at home is available? Your local Primary leaders do! It's the annual Primary program outline, available at Church distribution centers or from your local Primary leaders. Each year a main theme is selected, along with supporting monthly themes, pertinent scriptures, and song selections. Also included are Sharing Time ideas, which can easily be adapted for use in family home evenings.



And there's little concern of duplicating what your children learn in Primary, since the outline suggests more ideas than leaders can use. Conversing with your children each Sunday about what they learned in Primary, specifically Sharing Time, should give you a pretty good idea of what outline suggestions have been used.

But some repetition can be an effective teaching method.

Each issue of the *Friend* magazine also supports the monthly Primary themes. Of course, families may choose other topics pertaining to their needs, but many lesson ideas are already provided in these great resources.

We have found that preparing for our home evenings has been much easier since we started using the Primary outline. More important, our young children have been blessed to have the principles that are taught at Church reinforced in our home.

Pamela Richardson, North Pole Ward, Fairbanks Alaska Stake

your next step should be to enhance your career in that field.

2. What resources do I have? List your abilities, talents, skills, and education. Be sure to include your experience on this list, because training and education can't replace good common sense, decision-making skills, people skills, and stability gained through experience.

3. What steps do I need to take to obtain the career goals I have set?

After writing down and prioritizing each step, share your goals with your family and ask for their support. Be especially careful to plan how you are going to provide for your family during any career transitions.

4. What tools, information, and resources do I need to reach employment self-reliance?

This is the kind of question that a Church welfare specialist over employment can help you answer. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Find a mentor in your own company.** Ask a trusted, understanding superior for help in deciding how to upgrade your career. Find out if your company will help pay for educational expenses. In technical fields, brief certification courses often lead to improved career opportunities.

- **Ask for help within your ward or stake.** Ward and stake employment specialists can provide useful resource lists. Members who work in the field you've chosen or in similar employment might be able to offer career counseling, educational and

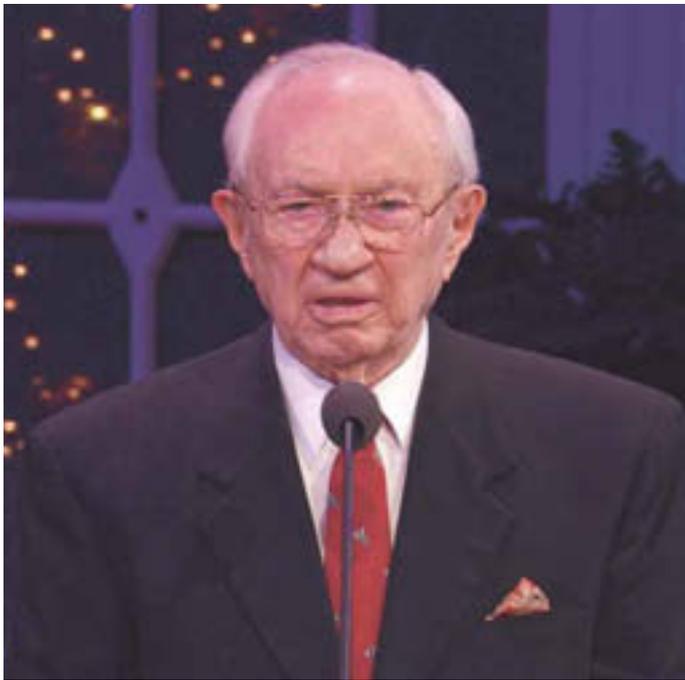
vocational training suggestions, and even one-on-one training.

- **Look for assistance in your community.** Local educational institutions may offer courses that would be beneficial or would lead to a degree if that is needed. Some universities and colleges have excellent nontraditional accredited degree programs that offer credit for on-the-job or practical experience and require little or no time spent in classes. Internet sites or local libraries and bookstores offer catalogs that list accredited universities and colleges with nontraditional programs.

- **Check the Internet for training and educational opportunities in virtual classrooms.** These courses are offered by a number of institutions, including Brigham Young University—Provo.

This four-step self-reliance process, prayerfully applied, works because it is consistent with correct principles of temporal and spiritual welfare. Throughout the world, Church members in all types of jobs are using it to change their lives.

Sharon Worlton, Woodridge First Ward, Naperville Illinois Stake



President Gordon B. Hinckley addresses members around the world during the First Presidency Christmas Devotional.

First Presidency Emphasizes Following Christ's Example

During the annual First Presidency Christmas Devotional in December 2004, members of the First Presidency taught and testified of the Savior's significance and encouraged members to make the Lord's life their example.

"God be thanked for the gift of His glorious Son, the only perfect man ever to walk the earth," said President Gordon B. Hinckley. "There is none to excel Him. There is none to compare with Him. He is the great example for all of us, our revered teacher and, most importantly, our Redeemer."

Members of the Church tuned in to the annual devotional by satellite, Internet, television, and radio to watch

or listen as the First Presidency, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and the Orchestra at Temple Square focused on the Savior.

"Our Conference Center here in Salt Lake City is filled with people, and our image, as we speak, travels . . . across the earth—to lands of winter and lands of summer," President Hinckley said. "We are all together as one great family to sing and speak of the joys of Christmas."

He Lives

President Hinckley taught of the Savior's mortal life from beginning to end, from birth to Atonement. "Let us never forget as we celebrate Christmas with song and story, with gifts and

mundane baubles, the greater message that Jesus Christ, the Firstborn of the Father, came into the world that 'the world through him might be saved' (John 3:17).

"Let us remember always that through His infinite Atonement salvation will come to all, and the opportunity for exaltation will be afforded those who walk in obedience to His commandments."

President Hinckley also testified of the Savior's continued ministry after His death and in years to come. "He has come again to usher in a dispensation. And He will come yet again in clouds of glory to usher in a millennium and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

The President of the Church also honored the Prophet Joseph Smith, born 199 years ago. President Hinckley added his testimony to that of the dispensation's first prophet regarding the Savior, saying: "He lives, resplendent, magnificent, the wondrous Lord Immanuel. He lives, the Eternal Son of the Ever Living Father. He lives, the Great Creator, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Savior of the New, the Wondrous Light in a dark and troubled world. He lives to bless us, to teach us, to heal us, to touch our troubled hearts, to give substance to our greatest dreams, to assure the immortality of our souls."

In His Footsteps

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency,

explained that "to catch the real meaning of the Spirit of Christmas, we need only drop the last syllable, and it becomes the Spirit of Christ."

He testified: "With the birth of the babe in Bethlehem, there emerged a great endowment, a power stronger than weapons, a wealth more lasting than the coins of Caesar. . . . Born in a stable, cradled in a manger, He came forth from heaven to live on earth as mortal man and to establish the kingdom of God. His glorious gospel reshaped the thinking of the world.

"At this blessed season of the year, as we follow in the Savior's footsteps, we too will have an opportunity to bless the lives of others."

President Monson taught: "There is no better time than now . . . for us to rededicate ourselves to the principles taught by Jesus the Christ."

Agents of God

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, related the story of a man who had no money to buy his father a Christmas gift during the Great Depression, so he gave him a diary in which he had recorded a good deed he had done every day that year.

"We are each the agents of our Father in Heaven to do Christlike deeds for [the] Father's children, even as [the Savior] offered to do in the grand premortal council when He said, 'Here am I, send me' (Abraham 3:27). 'Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever' (Moses 4:2)." ■

Translation Work Taking Book of Mormon to More People in More Tongues

Imagine believing in the gospel but not being able to read or study about it. Imagine having a testimony of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon but not speaking any language the book is printed in. Imagine your joy, after years of faith, in having a copy of the Book of Mormon

presented to you in your native language.

As time goes by, more members are receiving the Book of Mormon as more translations are being produced in the earth's many languages. In D&C 90:11 the Lord said, "For it shall come to pass in that day, that every

man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Almost 175 years after

Joseph Smith first published the book in English, 104 different language editions are now in print, including 74 full editions of the Book of Mormon and 30 editions of *Selections from the Book of Mormon*.

The prophet Moroni said that the Book of Mormon "shall shine forth out of darkness, and come unto the knowledge of the people" (Mormon 8:16). Since its initial printing in 1830, it is

Full Editions of the Book of Mormon

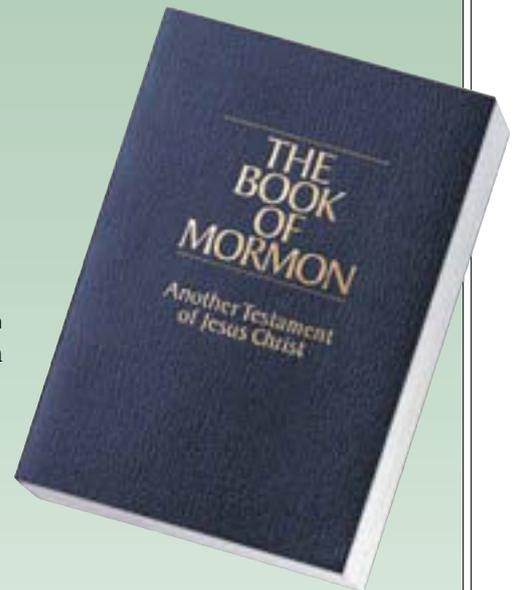
Afrikaans
 Albanian
 American Sign
 Amharic
 Arabic
 Armenian East
 Aymara
 Bulgarian
 Cambodian
 Catalan
 Cebuano
 Chinese
 Chinese Simplified
 Characters
 Croatian
 Czech
 Danish
 Dutch
 English
 Estonian
 Fante
 Fijian
 Finnish
 French
 German
 Greek
 Haitian
 Hawaiian
 Hindi
 Hmong
 Hungarian
 Icelandic
 Igbo

Ilokano
 Indonesian
 Italian
 Japanese
 Kekchi
 Kiribati
 Korean
 Latvian
 Lithuanian
 Malagasy
 Maori
 Marshallese
 Mongolian
 Neomelanesian
 Norwegian
 Pangasinan
 Polish
 Portuguese
 Rarotongan
 Romanian
 Russian
 Samoan
 Shona
 Slovenian
 Spanish
 Swahili
 Swedish
 Tagalog
 Tahitian
 Telugu
 Thai
 Tongan
 Tswana

Turkish
 Ukrainian
 Vietnamese
 Welsh
 Xhosa
 Yapese
 Zulu

Selections from the Book of Mormon

Armenian Western
 Bengali
 Bicolano
 Bislama
 Cakchiquel
 Chamorro
 Efik
 Guarani
 Hiligaynon
 Kisii
 Kuna
 Laotian
 Lingala
 Mam
 Maya
 Navajo
 Niuean
 Palauan
 Pampango
 Papiamento
 Persian
 Pohnpeian
 Quechua—Bolivia



With 74 full editions and 30 partial editions, the Book of Mormon is available in more than 100 languages.

Quechua—Peru
 Quiche
 Quichua—Ecuador
 Sinhala
 Tamil
 Trukese
 Tzotzil
 Urdu
 Waray

estimated that more than 120 million copies of the Book of Mormon have been distributed, with millions more to be printed in the future.

One of the most recent translations of the Book of Mormon is in Slovenian. Additional languages are currently being produced, along with some *Selections* being expanded to full translations of the Book of Mormon. After 1998 the Church stopped translating *Selections from the Book of Mormon*; each new approved translation will now be a full edition.

The Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles considers recommendations from Area Presidencies for new translations of the Book of Mormon. Before the Book of Mormon is translated, *Gospel Fundamentals* and other basic doctrinal items such as the Articles of Faith are translated (if they haven't been already) in order to establish standard terminology. Translation work for the Book of Mormon is carried out by worthy, qualified members who are assigned specifically to the task.

From the beginning of the translation process to the end, great care is taken to ensure that the translation is accurate. The manuscript goes through many reviews before it is approved and printed. Once the books are available on distribution center shelves, a letter from the First Presidency is sent to wards and branches in the language area announcing the new book.

To obtain a copy of the Book of Mormon in any of the languages listed here, visit www.ldscatalog.com or your local distribution center. ■

the fund was well-established. It now reaches into additional countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Cambodia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, India, Jamaica, Mongolia, Paraguay, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

President Hinckley reported that after the first six months of the program, the fund had already helped 1,200 young Latter-day Saints. By October 2004, more than 15,000 students had received assistance. The participants have earned or are earning degrees or certificates that will help them to better provide for a family and serve more effectively in the Church. It will enable them to obtain the promised blessings from the payment of tithes and offerings.

Applicants to the program take a course called "Planning for Success." In the course, many of them discover that they can achieve their goals without needing a loan. After

Perpetual Education Fund: The Inspired Program Rolls On

By Patricia S. Norwood, Church Magazines

Rodrigo Fontt of Osorno, Chile, has experienced the fulfillment of prophecy. His life has been changed just the way President Gordon B. Hinckley said lives would be changed when he announced the Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) to the Church more than three years ago.

Six months after its inception, President Hinckley said, "With greatly improved opportunities, they [young men and women] will step out of the cycle of poverty which they and those before them have known for so long. They have served missions, and they will continue to serve in the Church. They will become leaders in this great work in their native lands" ("Reaching Down to Lift Another,"

Ensign, Nov. 2001, 53–54).

While serving in the Chile Santiago West Mission, Brother Fontt worked in the mission office, where he learned what it was like to work in an administrative position. He enjoyed it, but in 2000, a year before the announcement of the Perpetual Education Fund, Brother Fontt returned home where he faced limited prospects for the future. Many returned missionaries around the world find themselves in similar situations. They have the desire but not the skills needed to rise above the poverty they and their progenitors have experienced.

The Perpetual Education Fund has been established to help those young men and women who need an

education but who are unable to pay for it to improve their future. In the beginning, participation in the program was limited to five countries—Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, and the Philippines—until



Bishop Rodrigo Fontt and his family are reaping the blessings of the Church's Perpetual Education Fund.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

Musicians perform on stage in the Conference Center as part of "Luz de las Naciones," a celebration of Hispanic culture held in Salt Lake City.

Program Testifies of the "Light of the Nations"

By Don Searle, Church Magazines

More than 16,000 Spanish-speaking people gathered in the Conference Center on Temple Square in Salt Lake City on November 13, 2004, for "Luz de las Naciones" ("Light of the Nations"), a program that celebrated Hispanic culture and focused on the central role that the Savior of the world plays in every individual's life.

The program was prepared for those of Hispanic heritage, whether members of the Church or not. They were welcomed by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and taught of the Savior by a member of the Seventy.

Speaking briefly in English at the end of the program, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave them an impromptu welcome in behalf of the First Presidency and the Twelve. He commented, "What a beautiful program you have put on!"

Then he reminded them in good humor to "be careful as you go home. Don't forget that tomorrow is Sunday. Go to church."

Elder Ballard was preceded by Elder Jay E. Jensen of the Seventy, who spoke to the group in Spanish about the meaning of the title for the program. We "declare to the world Jesus Christ is the Light of the Nations," he said, and testified that the people of all nations must look to their Redeemer for peace and salvation. He quoted from "The Living Christ," the testimony of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "We solemnly testify that His life, which is central to all human history, neither began in Bethlehem nor concluded on Calvary. He was the Firstborn of the Father, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh, the Redeemer of the world" (see *Ensign*, Apr. 2000, 2-3).

Elder Jensen recounted the story of Christ walking on the water (see Matthew 14:24-33) and drew four lessons from it.

hearing about the program and taking the course, Brother Fontt qualified and applied for a PEF loan and began working toward a degree in finance and administration. Though he now has a wife and young child and is working full-time to support them, he is currently in the third year of his educational program. He has become a leader in the Church, serving as bishop of the Antillanca Ward, Osorno Chile Stake.

Bishop Fontt is just one of many working hard to improve their lives. With his education, he and his wife say that they are progressing not only temporally but also spiritually. They are achieving goals they would not have otherwise been able to reach.

Many students experience improved employment opportunities even before they earn their diplomas. Some large firms hire students before they graduate because the firms can see success in the students' futures. For participants in the countries currently served by the program, the average increase in income after graduation is 400 percent. PEF students also have the opportunity to grow spiritually while in school as they participate in their local institute program.

The Perpetual Education Fund has another goal aside from helping young Latter-day Saints get an education. While the PEF is helping more than 15,000 students, it is also bringing blessings to the thousands of members around the world who contribute to the fund.

"Every day, every week . . .

small contributions arrive to build the fund. If there were no other result than this outpouring of love and sacrifice, we would have to conclude that the fund had increased the spirit of sacrifice among the Saints everywhere in the world, thus exerting a powerful influence for good among them," said Elder John K. Carmack, managing director of the Perpetual Education Fund ("The Perpetual Education Fund: A Bright Ray of Hope," *Ensign*, Jan. 2004, 42).

Thousands of members have contributed through their local priesthood leaders, who receive small sums from Primary children, up to much larger contributions from more affluent donors. Some have made monthly commitments. Others have given up savings for long-planned-for trips or home improvement projects. The Lord recognizes every sacrifice.

"We again invite all who wish to participate to make a contribution, large or small," President Hinckley has said. "We can then extend this great work which will make it possible for those of faith and latent ability to rise to economic independence as faithful members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (*Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 54).

With the help of this inspired program, members are leaving poverty behind, growing in the gospel, and, through the repayment of their loans, helping to provide a brighter future to others. They are evidence of a prophecy being fulfilled. ■



One of many performers dressed in traditional garb greet the public in the Conference Center lobby during “Luz de las Naciones.”

First, “the winds were contrary then, and now,” and we face many “contrary winds” in the problems common in the world today.

Second, “when we take our eyes off Jesus Christ and His gospel, we will sink—then, and now,” just as Peter did when he took his eyes off the Master and focused on the contrary winds around him.

Third, “those who accept the Savior’s invitation to have faith in Him and in His words will find peace and calm in their lives and will declare, then and now, ‘Of a truth thou art the Son of God’” (Matthew 14:33).

Fourth, “Jesus did not wait until they were in better circumstances to invite Peter to come to Him. In the midst of contrary winds and high-tossed waves, Jesus spoke reassuringly to ‘come.’ And when Peter began to sink, He ‘stretched forth his hand, and

caught him’ (Matthew 14:31). And He does so today!”

Elder Jensen explained that the Lord’s invitation has gone out across the world to gather His people, to the mountains of North America in the early days of the Church, and later in their own lands. Prophets in earlier times testified that the gospel of Jesus Christ would be taken to His covenant people in the latter days through the Book of Mormon. “Our greatest desire is to bless you and your family with the fulness of His gospel, which is found in the Book of Mormon,” Elder Jensen said.

He pointed out that two testaments of Christ had been spoken of during the program: the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. “I testify that the Book of Mormon is Israel’s book. It is true. In it you will hear a familiar voice, the voice of the Spirit, the light of the nations saying, ‘Come unto Christ, . . . Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him’” (Moroni 10:30, 32).

In closing, he paraphrased an invitation from President Gordon B. Hinckley to people of all faiths to come and learn gospel truths: “We say to the people, in effect, you bring with you all the good that you have, and then let us see if we can add to it” (Nairobi, Kenya, member meeting, Feb. 17, 1998; quoted in *Church News*, July 4, 1998, 2).

Prior to the inspirational message by Elder Jensen, “Luz de las Naciones” offered selections of dance and music from many Spanish-speaking

countries. It was the third year in a row that such a program has been held in the Conference Center.

The colorful strains of *mariachi* music are not often heard in the Conference Center, but they rang through its halls before the beginning of the program. Musicians and dancers performed for crowds entering the building. Paintings by Hispanic Church members were displayed in a hallway near the Main Street-level terrace entrance.

The program opened with a Latin American music and dance number featuring children waving colorful banners. Musical and dance numbers from several countries followed, with scenes from the countries projected on the large screens in the Conference Center auditorium during some of the numbers. Familiar Church hymns were also among the musical numbers on the program. These included a classical guitar rendition of “I Stand All Amazed” and choir renditions of “I Know That My Redeemer Lives” and “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing.” The choir consisted of Church members from Utah.

The program also included several brief vignettes that featured individuals testifying of the Savior and His influence in their lives.

More than 1,000 volunteers were involved in preparing and performing in the program. Performers in the program came from every Spanish-speaking country of the Americas and also from Spain. The two masters of ceremonies for

the program were Omar Canals, a recently returned mission president who was born in Uruguay, and María Angélica Carr, an entertainer born in Cuba. ■

Member Tops Peak, Breaks Record to Aid Needy

There isn’t any single characteristic that sets Carl Haupt apart as unusually newsworthy. Many people have a similar passion for hiking. He is a compassionate do-gooder, but the world is filled with compassionate people. And while ascending Tanzania’s 19,452-foot-high (5,900 m) Mount Kilimanjaro is noteworthy, climbers from around the world conquer the mountain on a regular basis.

But combine the ingredients above and throw in the fact that Brother Haupt suffers from arthritis, battles prostate cancer, and has undergone nearly 30 surgeries in his 78 years and you’ll have something special.

When Brother Haupt, of the Benson Ward, St. David Arizona Stake, decided to climb Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa, it was not to satisfy his passion for hiking; it was to help destitute families in Agua Prieta, Mexico.

Brother Haupt began taking supplies to families there during 2003. “There were two of us who went, and we took a truckload of things,” he said. “I had heard about it but

saw for myself the poverty.”

Once he saw the one-room shacks families lived in and how hungry they were, Brother Haupt knew he had to do more. In little more than a year he made nearly 150 trips to the city just across the border from his home in Benson, Arizona. He and his wife even started a nonprofit organization called “The Starfish Difference.” But he felt as though there was still more he could do.

Brother Haupt knew there were a lot of generous people willing to give money to make a difference, so when he planned his climb he asked residents of his area to donate one dollar for every 1,000 feet he climbed.

The hike was far from

easy. On top of the physical challenges was the mental obstacle—no one his age had ever accomplished the goal. The oldest recorded climber to top the mountain was 75. But Brother Haupt knew that every step could mean another piece of bread for a hungry child or another blanket for a cold baby.

He began his ascent on August 25, 2004. By the end of his six-day trek he had achieved his goal—he had reached the top and raised nearly \$6,000.

Since then Brother Haupt has continued raising funds for Agua Prieta. He is now working to purchase a mobile home to be used as a health clinic in the town. ■

rescued from a rooftop. All missionaries are reported safe.

More than 100,000 homes were totally or partially destroyed; among them were many members’ homes. More than 800,000 people in nine provinces were significantly affected by the storms. Hardest hit was the Quezon province. Aside from the

torrential rains, the storms brought winds with gusts of up to 165 mph (270 kph) and coastal waves of up to 33 feet (10 m) high.

The Church authorized emergency relief for those affected and designated 33 meetinghouses as emergency response locations.

About 20 typhoons hit the Philippines each year. ■

In the News

Location Announced for New Temple in Salt Lake Valley

The Church’s 12th temple in Utah and 3rd in the Salt Lake Valley will be built in Draper, a community in the southeast of the valley and one of the fastest growing in the state. The temple will share a large site with a stake center already under construction.

In a letter read to local members, the First Presidency noted that the temple “will be a blessing to the many faithful Saints in this rapidly growing area” and will accommodate overcrowding at the Jordan River Utah Temple.

No groundbreaking date has been set.

Members in Philippines Battered by Multiple Deadly Storms

Over the period of four weeks last November and December, five tropical storms inundated the Philippines, making 2004 the nation’s worst storm year since 1991. More than 1,000 were killed in the storms, including two members of the Church who lost their lives during the heavy flooding and widespread landslides.

As of press time more than 500 people were still missing, but none of the other 517,000-plus Church members in the country had been reported missing or dead. Many had to be rescued from rising floodwaters, including two missionaries who were

Comment

Photographs Evoke Memories

I wish to express my gratitude to all the photographers who give of their time during conference. Two years ago my parents, my five-year-old son Jacob, and I made a quick trip to Salt Lake City for a family wedding. While there, we had time to visit Temple Square. The other day I heard Jacob call, “Mom, come quick.” As I hurried to him to see what was wrong, I found him pointing to a picture in the November 2004 *Ensign*, a photo of the outside of the visitors’ center showing the statue of the Christus through the window. “Mom, that’s where I want to go again,” he said.

Until that day I didn’t realize the impact our visit had on him. He is now seven, but his feelings are still very strong, and your photo reminded him of a special time. Thank you again for all you give to our Heavenly Father’s children.

*Eva Streibel,
Queensland Ward,
Calgary Alberta South Stake*

Parents with Different Standards

I was touched by the article “Parents with Different Standards” in the October 2004 issue. As an adult convert to the Church, I felt the items discussed in the article reflected exactly many of the difficult things I have struggled with for some years, both before and after joining the Church. The sentiments expressed in the article brought me to tears and put into words what I have felt and experienced. Thank you for helping me understand that I am not alone in struggling to make peace and cope with parents who do not share my gospel standards.

Name withheld

Miracles

I absolutely loved reading the October 2004 Gospel Classic about the miracles our Heavenly Father performed through Elder Matthew Cowley. I always look forward to the Gospel Classics.

*Jared Benware,
Riverdale Second Ward,
Riverdale Utah Stake*

MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 5



Sharing the Gospel

Some members don't feel comfortable sharing the gospel with friends and acquaintances. "Seven Lessons on Sharing the Gospel" offers some ideas that might work for you. See page 36.

Stories That Teach

- How would you deal with the death of a spouse? Read of one man's painful and joyful odyssey on page 24.

- Has the Spirit ever prevented you from making a terrible mistake? Read about a spiritual prompting that saved a group of hikers from danger, page 66.

- Tempted to break the Sabbath for financial reasons?

Living by Revelation

"One day, as the missionaries taught me about the First Vision," writes Elder M. Gonzalo Sepúlveda, Area Authority Seventy in the Chile Area, "the Holy Spirit testified powerfully to me that the Prophet Joseph Smith had indeed seen the Father and the Son. I said to Elder Dennis Lamb, 'It is true! I know it is true!'" To read more about how personal revelation can bless your life, see "The Spirit of Revelation," page 8; "As the Dew from Heaven Distilling," page 10; and "In the Quiet of the Morning," page 16.

The Great Deceiver

"Satan . . . is the representative, promoter, and advocate of that 'opposition in all things' referred to by Lehi," said President Marion G. Romney, former First Counselor in the First Presidency. To read about understanding and resisting Satan's deceptions, see the gospel classic on page 52.

See how Jazmín the Clown kept the Sabbath and succeeded, page 67.

- Sometimes a "chance" meeting is more than coincidence. See page 68.

Escaping Pornography

If you are struggling with an addiction to pornography or know someone who is, you can find help in "The Road Back: Abandoning Pornography," page 46.

Temple Weddings and Temple Blessings

- Are you planning a temple wedding but have family members who will not be able

to attend the sealing ceremony? What can you do to ease hurt feelings? See what others in your situation have done, page 32.

- What happens in a community when a new temple is built? What blessings come into people's lives? Members in Lubbock, Texas, can tell



"The Temple Effect," page 42

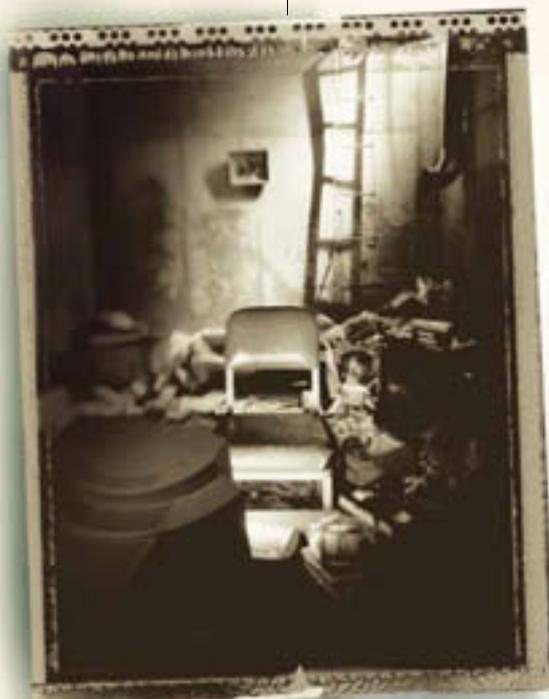
you from personal experience. See page 42.

Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 65.

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"Abandoning Pornography," page 46



MAY NOT BE COPIED

Memory Grove, by Al Rounds

This view of the Salt Lake Temple in the early winter after its dedication on April 6, 1893, is from a peaceful area northeast of the temple near what is now known as Memory Grove.

4 *Inviting others to help us with our work in the Church helps them feel needed and helps them feel the Spirit.*



Inviting others to help us serve is one of seven suggestions for member missionary work. For the other six, see “Seven Lessons on Sharing the Gospel,” p. 36.