



Turning the Other



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Served as a member of the Seventy from 1998 to 2006

Few of the Savior's teachings have been so often repeated as this counsel from the Sermon on the Mount: "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew 5:39). On numerous occasions I have observed how this principle can bless lives and heal hearts.

For example, some time ago when I was serving as a mission president, there was considerable contention among priesthood leaders, members, and missionaries in one area of the mission. Harsh words were spoken, unity in the work vanished, and keys to Church buildings were withheld from missionaries. The situation became so intense that the Spirit of the Lord had withdrawn, and the work was at a standstill.

I met with the zone leader in this area to discuss what needed to be done to resolve the situation. We made it a matter of fasting and prayer. A few days later the zone leader called me. "I was reading about Ammon and his experience with King Lamoni," he said. "Ammon asked one very significant question of King Lamoni, and I believe that question will resolve our situation." The question: "What wilt thou that I should do for thee, O king?" (Alma 18:14).

The zone leader began encouraging the

missionaries in his zone to ask the members and priesthood leaders, "What can we do for you?" As the days went by, it was amazing how quickly the contention began to ease, how the Spirit of the Lord returned to the work, and how the love and unity between members and missionaries increased. The work began to prosper again, and miracles happened because the zone leader chose to help the missionaries turn the other cheek and put others' needs before their own.

Long after the zone leader left that area, the missionaries continued asking that same question, and the work continued to flourish as never before.

After a year passed, the local stake president said to me, "We have more full-time missionaries serving from our stake now than we have ever had." I asked him what he thought was the reason for this. I shall never forget his response: "It is the example of the full-time missionaries. Our young people want to be just like them."

In our own lives, when we find ourselves feeling offended or experiencing contention and strife, let us consider turning the other cheek by asking the question "What can I do for you?" In many cases miracles will happen, peace will replace contention, and the Spirit of the Lord will be in our hearts. In following the Savior's counsel, we will become His true disciples. ■

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Cheek



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions, personal reflections, or teaching the gospel in a variety of settings.

1. Ask everyone to complete the phrase “Turning the other cheek means ____.” Ask family members to think of times when it would have been wiser to turn the other cheek. Challenge family members to apply the Savior’s counsel.

2. Read the article to find how missionaries in one mission learned to turn the other cheek. Make missionary tags with the phrase “What can we do for you?” to help remind family members to always seek to serve.