

PLEASE SEND SOMEONE

During a difficult pregnancy with my second child, I needed to take medicine to keep me from miscarrying. The medicine amplified my feelings of fatigue and nausea.

To make matters worse, my husband was working 15-hour days, trying to keep up with his successful new business; we had recently moved to a new town; and my parents lived 400 miles (640 km) away. I knew no

one, was bedridden, and had to care for a toddler. I felt scared and alone.

In this state I turned to the One I knew wouldn't let me down—my Heavenly Father. I knelt by my bed and prayed, "Heavenly Father, I know that I have been promising for years that I would go back to church, and I think I'm ready now. But I don't have the courage to do it alone. Could Thou please send

someone to invite me to church."

The next day the doorbell rang. I was lying on the couch in my pajamas in a messy living room and feeling nauseated, so I didn't get up to answer the door. A few minutes later it hit me: what if that doorbell was the answer to my prayers and someone had come over to invite me to church?

I went back to my room, knelt again, and prayed, "Heavenly Father, I am really sorry for not answering the door. If Thou sent someone to



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talk to me, I promise I will be ready for them tomorrow if Thou will send them again."

The next day I got up, showered, dressed for company, and spent the day cleaning my house. Then I waited patiently for the doorbell to ring again. It did. When I opened it, I saw two women standing on my doorstep.

"We're your visiting teachers," they said. "Do you know what visiting teaching is?"

"Yes, I do," I replied, excited that they had returned. "Come on in."

One of those visiting teachers, the Primary president, began stopping by regularly to make sure I was all right. She even offered to take my toddler to church and to arrange for visits from the full-time missionaries. The visits strengthened my testimony and gave me the courage to return to church.

I can't believe I lived so many years without praying to Heavenly Father and receiving His security and guidance. It is such a blessing to have the Savior help bear my burdens with His love and mercy. I am a better person because of His love, and I feel more and more like the person I was when I attended church in my youth.

Heavenly Father has proven to me that all things are possible in Him. All He asks of us is that we have faith in His ability to answer our prayers. ■

Wendy Walkowiak, Utah, USA

OFFENDED BY MY FRIEND

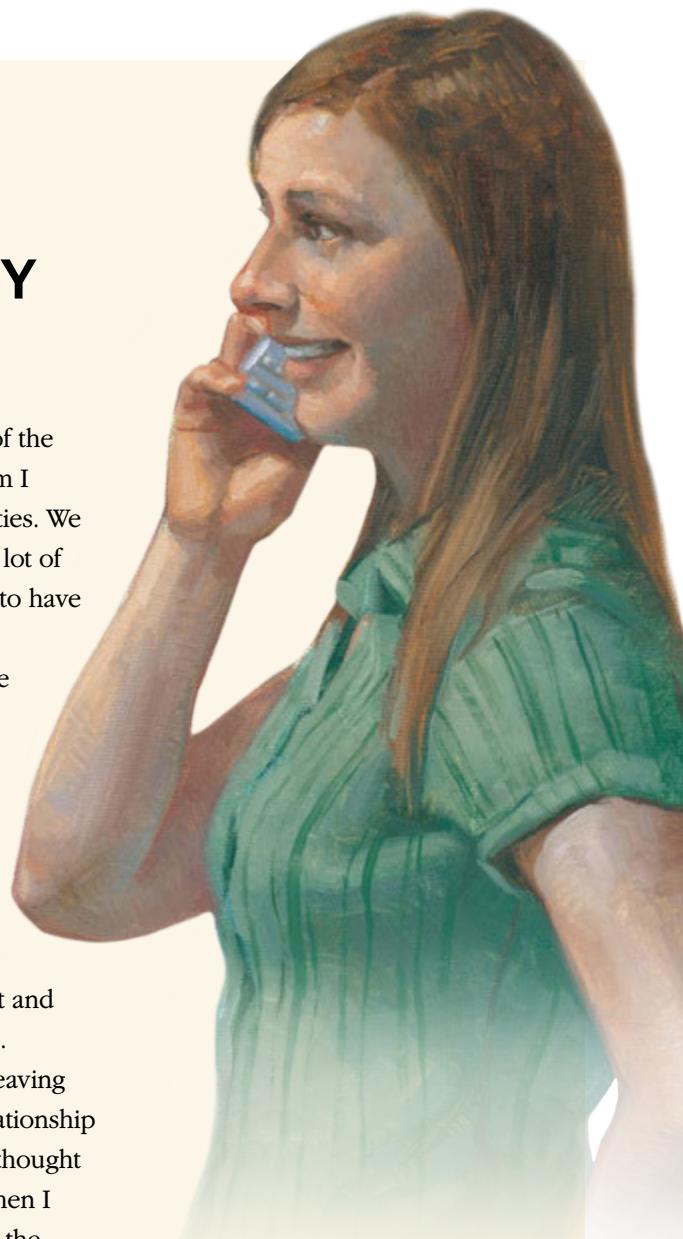
I had a friend in my branch of the Church in Russia with whom I socialized at all Church activities. We had a lot in common, I had a lot of fun with him, and I was glad to have such a good friend.

But then something strange happened. For no reason that I could determine, he offended me badly. He did not ask for forgiveness, and I stopped associating with him. I did not even greet him on Sundays. That went on for two months. I was hurt and unhappy, but he said nothing.

Then I found out he was leaving our city. I didn't think our relationship should stay the way it was; I thought we should reconcile. About then I remembered a scripture from the Book of Mormon: "Go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I will receive you" (3 Nephi 12:24).

It was difficult for me to humble myself and take the first step, but I prayed and then called him. I didn't know what his reaction would be, and I was ready for the worst. What I heard shocked me.

He sincerely asked me for forgiveness, and I could tell by his voice that he had suffered a lot because of his action—just as I had. Most of



all, I remember one sentence that he repeated three times: "Natal'ya, thanks for calling!"

I was so happy! He moved a short time later, but we separated the best of friends.

Learning to love and forgive each other is one of our most difficult tasks. Forgiveness—especially when we are not at fault—requires that we be humble and overcome our pride. I learned that taking the first step to forgive and reconcile is worth it. ■

Natal'ya Fyodorovna Frolova,
Netherlands

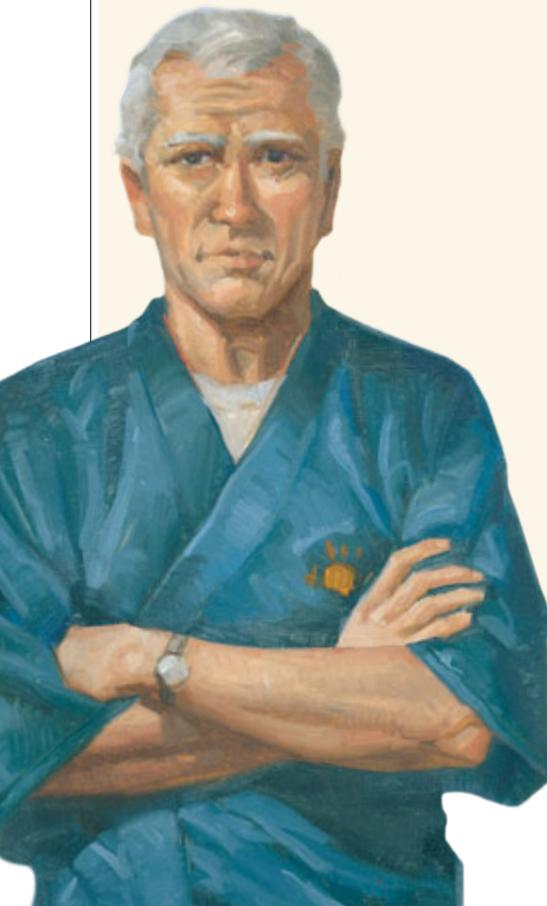
I DON'T WANT TO KNOW YOU!

With a sincere prayer in my heart and my 14-year-old companion at my side, I knocked on Andy's door. This was our first visit to his home as his new home teachers. We had recently accepted the responsibility to visit him despite his reputation for being difficult. The door opened, and there he stood, dressed in a Japanese kimono.

"Yes?"

"Hi, I'm Irvin, and this is my companion. We are your home teachers and would like to visit with you."

His wife was sitting at a table behind him, dressed in the same fashion. They were having a Japanese-style dinner.



"I think you can see that we're having dinner and don't have time for you," he said.

"Perhaps we could come back some other time?" I asked.

"Why?"

"So we can get to know you," I responded.

"Why do you want to get to know me?" he asked. "I don't want to get to know you!"

I suppose we could have resigned as their home teachers right then, but we didn't. When we returned the next month, Andy actually let us in. We sat facing a wall lined with empty beer bottles that were arranged in the shape of antique cars. Our meeting with Andy was short, but we learned that he was a retired air force colonel. Our subsequent visits were also short and yielded little results.

One night as I was leaving a Church meeting, I heard a voice within me telling me to visit Andy. "No, thank you," I thought. "Not tonight."

When I stopped at a red light, the prompting to visit Andy came again. I thought, "Please, I'm in no mood for Andy tonight."

As I made my last turn for home, however, the same prompting came a third time, leaving me sure of what I needed to do.

I drove to his home and parked, praying for guidance. Then I approached his door and knocked. When Andy let me in, I saw a Book

of Mormon and a book of genealogy on the table. I felt a different spirit in his home; something was different about Andy too. He spoke softly of his love for his mother and his sister, who had compiled the genealogy.

For the first time, he talked openly with me. He told me about pain he'd been feeling in his back, adding that he was going to the March Air Force Base hospital in nearby Riverside, California, the next day. I asked him if he would like a priesthood blessing. Without hesitation he answered in a quiet voice, "I'll take it." I called our elders quorum president, who came to help give the blessing.

The next day doctors told Andy he had inoperable lung cancer. After receiving the news, he went to see the bishop. Within a few months, he was confined to his bed.

One evening when I arrived at his home for another visit, his wife ushered me to his room, where he lay in a frail condition. I knelt beside his bed and cradled him in my arms. I whispered, "I love you, Andy." With all of his strength, he put his arm on my shoulder and, with great effort, told me that he loved me too. Two days later he died.

His wife invited me to the funeral. Besides the four members of his family, I was the only one in attendance.

I'm so grateful I listened to the Spirit's promptings to visit Andy. ■
Irvin Fager, Utah, USA

MY TITHING COULDN'T WAIT

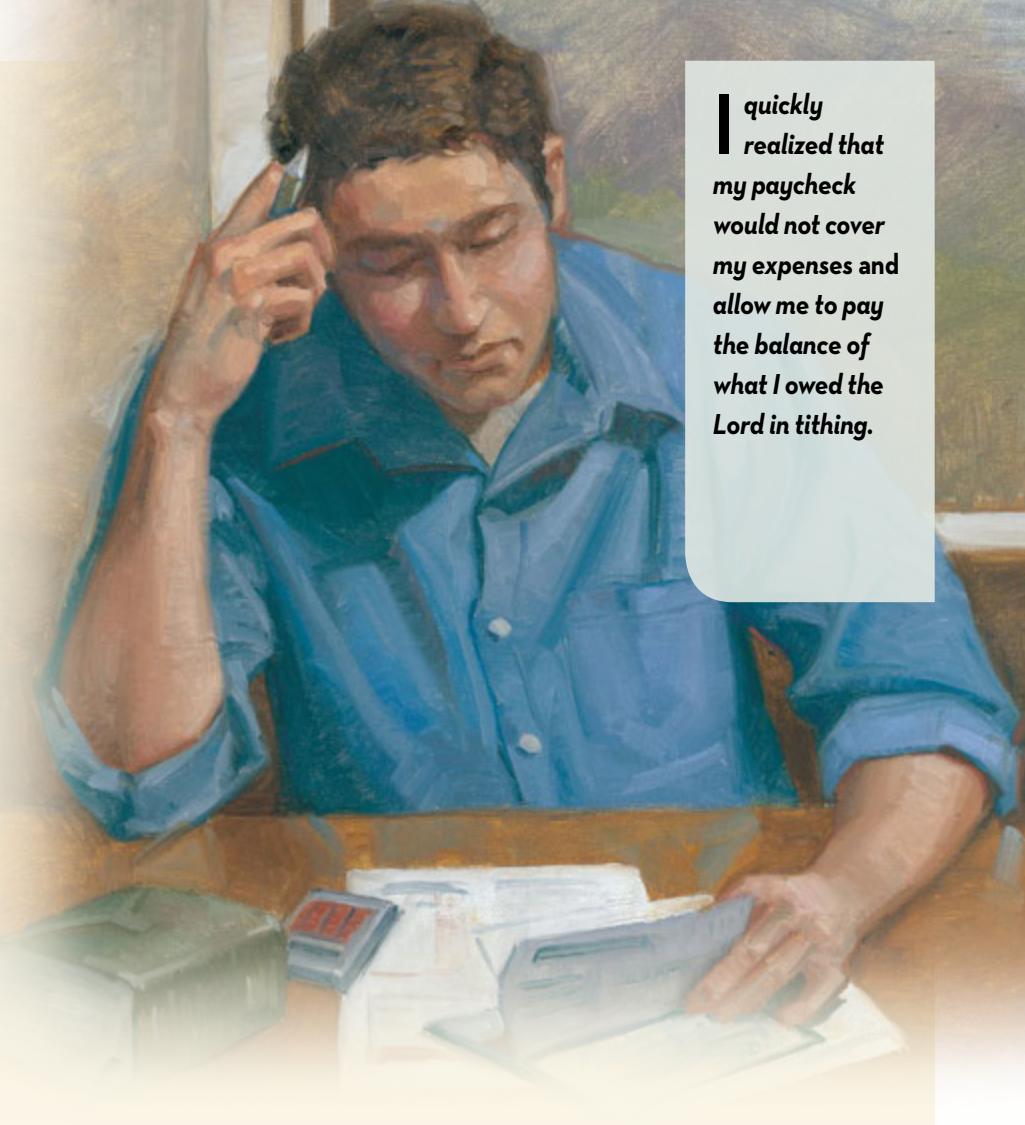
In my late teens, as I started spending time with the full-time missionaries, I realized how crucial it was to have a testimony of the principles I would soon be teaching as a missionary. I decided that one of the principles I wanted to understand better was tithing.

Many people gain a testimony of tithing during times of financial hardship. But growing up, I always had more than enough. If I ever had a financial need, my parents took care of it. I was grateful for that, but while I knew that they would pay for my mission, I decided that I wanted to finance half of my mission myself through my work as a part-time teacher.

About the same time, I realized that I hadn't paid a full 10 percent tithing from my last paycheck. I decided that with my next paycheck, I would make up the difference so that I could be a full-tithe payer.

When I was paid for the month, however, the amount was less than I had expected. The work I did was somewhat irregular, so my salary varied from month to month. I quickly realized that the paycheck would not cover my expenses *and* allow me to pay the balance of what I owed the Lord in tithing from my previous paycheck.

I considered my options and then



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thought, "I'll just have to catch up on tithing next month." But then I remembered an institute of religion lesson on tithing. I particularly remembered what the Lord says in the Old Testament: "Prove me now herewith" (Malachi 3:10). This was an opportunity for me to put the principle to the test and to gain a stronger testimony of what I would soon be teaching others.

When I paid my tithing, I felt good about being caught up. But the opportunity to "prove" the Lord came the very next day—much sooner and in a greater way than I could have ever expected—when I was offered a full-time job as a kindergarten

teacher. I would be able to work right up until I left for my mission, and the money I would earn would be more than I needed to pay half of my mission expenses. This blessing dramatically increased my testimony of tithing. That testimony was bolstered again and again as I shared it with the people I served in the Germany Munich/Austria Mission over the next two years.

I know that the principle of tithing is true and that the Lord does "open [us] the windows of heaven" and pour out a blessing so great "that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10). ■

David Erland Isaksen, Norway