

YOUR GUIDE TO USING THE Ensign



By Don L. Searle
Church Magazines

The magazine offers a spiritual banquet for readers each month. You can enjoy it better if you know how to find your favorite items on the menu.

Often at the *Ensign* we receive letters asking, “Would you please do an article about _____?” We consider and respond to those requests because our job is to serve the spiritual needs of readers. But sometimes we find that the magazine has recently run an item or items on the requested topics, and readers, for one reason or another, may have missed those articles.

In this article, we will try to help you by pointing out where you can find items on many of the topics that interest you. And along the way, we’ll point out a few new features you will find in the *Ensign* starting this month.

Items on the Menu

One of our challenges is to serve a wide range of readers, from young single adults to elderly widows or widowers, married couples, and readers from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The magazine, as directed by Church leaders, supports the family in its divine, eternal design—father, mother, and children—as outlined in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102). Yet we know that a significant portion of adult Church members are not married, and many do not live in a family that matches this model.

Although we are not able to address each segment of our readership every month, we believe that a majority of the articles in the magazine apply to every member, single or married, old or young. We seek articles that teach universal gospel principles. In this issue, for example, please see “The Best Is Yet to Be,” on page 22, by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



How to Read the Menu

In the *Ensign's* monthly table of contents, titles convey a general idea of what an article covers. We also add a “teaser.” For example, “The Courage to Comfort,” on page 52: “When my mother died, I needed comfort and understanding. Here are some things that helped me.”

Some of the articles or items you like best, such as Latter-day Saint Voices, may be listed under Departments in the table of contents.

Many of the longer pieces in the magazine are listed under Feature Articles. But if you're one of those readers who skip over the table of

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Above: The table of contents can be your menu as you consider what you want to savor in the magazine.

contents or start from the back of the magazine, there's still help in identifying topics of interest. The first page of each feature article contains an introductory sentence or two summarizing the theme of the article. See, for example, “Being Independent, Being Prepared,” on page 62. The introduction at the beginning says, “How some young adults are applying principles of preparedness to their busy, mobile lives.” The article relates experiences single adults have had with home storage and other aspects of provident living.

New This Month

You'll see a few new items in the *Ensign* this month. Some of them were developed for the



Liahona, the Church's international magazine, and will be carried in the *Ensign* as well:

We Talk of Christ—doctrine about the Savior or a testimony of Him and His influence in our lives.

Serving in the Church—counsel and examples of how we can serve better in Church callings and in our personal opportunities to touch other lives.

What We Believe—brief explanation of basic gospel doctrine, designed to help us as members understand the doctrine better and help us explain our beliefs to others.

Small and Simple Things—a section of factual information about the Church today and its history.

Family Home Evening Ideas—thoughts and suggestions you could consider as you prepare for family home evening. But remember that the best preparation is to ask for the Lord's help, through the Holy Ghost, in tailoring a lesson to meet *your* family's needs.

Until We Meet Again—a brief personal essay offering spiritual insights.

WHAT TO EXPECT EACH MONTH

The *Ensign* tries to maintain a focus on certain topics regularly—on material supporting personal spiritual growth and supporting the family. You may expect to see certain topics covered in specific months. For example, each January when adult and youth classes are beginning a new course of study, the magazine will have an article on the year's Sunday School curriculum. In this issue, for example, please see "Moses, My Son," by Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Presidency of the Seventy, page 42.

There will also be an article on the priesthood and Relief Society course of study; for example, you may enjoy in this issue the introduction to the new Gospel Principles manual on page 28 by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Following is a list of some topics that are covered in specific months.

- January—Introduction to the adult curricula for the year; improving gospel teaching
- March—The history and influence of Relief Society and women in the Church; topics of special interest to sisters
- April—The Resurrection and roles of Jesus Christ (when Easter falls in this month)
- May—general conference talks and news
- June—Joseph Smith and his mission
- July—Church history and pioneering
- September—improving teaching; education and learning; Book of Mormon
- November—general conference talks and news
- December—the birth and mission of Jesus Christ



Above: "What We Believe"

Right: "Until We Meet Again"





You can usually expect to see certain topics covered in the magazine in specific months.



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Want to Write an Article?

We are glad to receive contributions from readers. Your best opportunity to contribute may be in sharing spiritual insights that have come through personal experiences.

There are a couple of things to remember that may help make your article more useful and appealing: (1) the Church magazines' audience is worldwide, including readers who may not understand the culture and circumstances familiar to you; and (2) ordinarily, articles interpreting doctrine are written by those called and sustained to positions of general leadership in the Church.

Please submit your story, article, poem, artwork, or photograph electronically if possible by going to **ensign.lds.org** and clicking on **Submit Your Material**. You can also mail typewritten submissions to *Ensign* Editorial, 50 E. North Temple Street, Room 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. Include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, ward (or branch), and stake (or district). Send a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want your material returned. ■

FINDING WHAT YOU WANT ONLINE

There are several ways you can look for material on specific topics in the *Ensign* online.

- Go to **ensign.lds.org**. There are links to the monthly First Presidency and visiting teaching messages, to other articles, and to information on how to subscribe or submit material to the magazine. You can reach the same page by going to **LDS.org**, selecting **Gospel Library**, then **Magazines**, then from the left-hand pane select **Ensign**.
- You can select either **Past Issues** or **Search Ensign** to begin your search. Select **Past Issues** if you know the date of the item you are seeking. You will be able to select the year of publication, then the month, then the name of the article from the table of contents for that month.
- Select **Search Ensign** from the left-hand pane to look for material by topic. You will be able to enter key words in a search box to bring up a list of articles on a topic, or to look for a particular article. The more specific your key words, the more likely you are to find the desired article. For example, entering "Ezra Taft Benson pride cleansing" immediately turns up a link to "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," by President Benson in the May 1986 magazine.
- Would you like to see the article as it looked on the magazine page? From the **LDS.org** home page, select **Gospel Library**, then **Media Formats**, then **PDF**.

Click on the **Ensign** magazine and you will then be able to select a year as far back as 2001. After you click on a year, click on the cover of a magazine. You will see a larger picture of that cover with a table of contents pane on the left of your screen. In that table of contents, you will find a link to the first page of the article you want.

Submission form from Ensign.lds.org

