

Ensign



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Adults, p. 56**

**The Book of Mormon and
the Gathering of Israel,
p. 26**

**Brazil: A Century of
Growth, p. 42**



“Sometimes we become the lightning rod, and we must ‘take the heat’ for holding fast to God’s standards and doing His work. I testify that we need not be afraid if we are grounded in His doctrine. We may experience misunderstanding, criticism, and even false accusation, but we are never alone. Our Savior was ‘despised and rejected of men’ [Isaiah 53:3]. It is our sacred privilege to stand with Him!”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Stand Strong in Holy Places,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 50.

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A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
July 2014 Volume 44 • Number 7

The First Presidency: Thomas S. Monson,
Henry B. Eyring, Dieter F. Uchtdorf

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Dallin H. Oaks, M. Russell Ballard,
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Family Home Evening Ideas

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening.
The following are some examples.



“Becoming Perfect in Christ,” page 14:

Using Elder Gong’s teachings about perfec-
tionism, put together a true-or-false quiz

for your family to help
them realize if they have
perfectionist tendencies.
You could use state-
ments like “I can be
happy even when I make
mistakes” or “It’s hard
for me to forgive others”
in your quiz. Together,
read what Elder Gong
teaches about relying
on the Savior. You could
also use pages 146–47
in *Preach My Gospel:
A Guide to Missionary
Service* to teach how to
set appropriate goals and
overcome perfectionism.

“The Gift of Our Physical Bodies,”

page 66: Consider discussing with your fam-
ily the section called “A Tool for Service and

Learning.” In what ways
do our bodies give us
opportunities for physical
and spiritual growth?
You may also want to
review with your children
the related article “My
Body Is a Temple” on
page 24 of this month’s
Friend. Use the ques-
tions in the *Friend* article
to teach your children
how to respect and love
their bodies. Encourage
them to reach out to a
child or teenager in their
ward, branch, or school
who has disabilities. You
could also sing “I’ll Walk
with You” (*Children’s
Songbook*, 140).

IDEA CONTAINER

For meaningful family home eve-
ning activities that require little
preparation, I like to put a variety
of ideas in a decorated container.
The day before family home eve-
ning, we draw out an idea and
make plans. Some of the ideas
we’ve used include dressing up
as scripture characters, reading
to housebound neighbors, and
delivering food boxes to the
needy. We’ve especially enjoyed
an activity we call “Consequence
Drive,” in which we travel along
a designated path in our home
and, at each intersection, flip
a coin to decide which way to
go. This can lead to a discussion
about the importance of small
decisions in our lives.

Karee Stosich, Utah, USA

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showing the gospel of Jesus Christ at
work in your life. Please submit articles
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whose work is selected for publication
will be notified.



**By President
Henry B. Eyring**

First Counselor
in the First Presidency

THE PROMISE OF Hearts Turning

My mother, Mildred Bennion Eyring, grew up in the farming community of Granger, Utah, USA. One of her brothers, Roy, followed the family business of raising sheep. As a young man he spent many weeks away from home. Over time he became less interested in the Church. Eventually he moved to Idaho, USA, married, and had three children. He died at the age of 34 when his wife was 28 years old and their children were small.

Even though Roy's little family was in Idaho and my mother had moved about 2,500 miles (4,025 km) to New Jersey, USA, she often wrote them letters of love and encouragement. My uncle's family affectionately referred to my mother as "Aunt Mid."

Years passed, and one day I received a phone call from one of my cousins. I was told that Roy's widow had died. My cousin said, "Aunt Mid would want you to know." Aunt Mid had long since passed away, but the family still felt her love and reached out to tell me.

I was struck by how much my mother had filled a role in her family similar to the role the Nephite prophets had filled in their families by staying close to relatives they wanted to bring to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Nephi wrote a record that he hoped would influence the children of his brothers to return to the faith of their patriarch, Lehi. The sons of Mosiah showed that same love as they preached the gospel to the descendants of Lehi.

The Lord has provided ways for us to feel love in families that can continue forever. Young people in the Church today are feeling their hearts turn to their families. They are searching for names of family members who did not have the opportunity to receive the ordinances of salvation in this life. They take those names to the temple. When they enter the waters of baptism, they have the opportunity to feel the love of the Lord and of the family members for whom they are performing proxy ordinances.

I can still remember the love in the voice of my cousin who called and said, "Our mother has died, and Aunt Mid would want you to know."

Those of you who perform ordinances for family members are reaching out in love, as did the sons of Mosiah and the prophet Nephi. Like them, you will feel joy for those who accept your offering. You can also expect to feel the same great satisfaction as Ammon, who said of his missionary service among distant family members:

"Therefore, let us glory, yea, we will glory in the Lord; yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full; yea, we will praise our God forever. Behold, who can glory too much in the Lord? Yea, who can say too much of his great power, and of his mercy, and of his long-suffering towards the children of men? Behold, I say unto you, I cannot say the smallest part which I feel" (Alma 26:16).



I bear testimony that the feelings of love you have for your family members—wherever they may be—are a fulfillment of the promise that Elijah would come. He did come. Children’s hearts are turning to their fathers, and fathers’ hearts are turning to their children (see Malachi 4:5–6; Joseph Smith—History 1:38–39). When you feel the urge to find the names of your ancestors and take those names to the temple, you are experiencing the fulfillment of that prophecy.

It is a blessing to live in the time when the promise of hearts turning is being fulfilled. Mildred Bennion Eyring felt that urge in her heart.

She loved her brother’s family, and she reached out to them. They felt their hearts turn in love to Aunt Mid because they knew she loved them. ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

You may want to read the prophecies about the spirit of Elijah with those you visit (see Malachi 4:5–6; Joseph Smith—History 1:38–39). Discuss ways to become involved with family history, including tools such as indexing, photography, and blogging. If those you visit are unfamiliar with FamilySearch.org, consider taking some time to show it to them.

Getting to Know My Grandmother

By Jewelene Carter



For one of my Young Women projects, I volunteered to help my grandmother find her ancestors by scrolling through sheets of microfilm at the family history center in Mesa, Arizona, USA. As we sat side by side and searched for our family, I began to wonder: “Do I really know very much about

my grandmother who’s right beside me?”

We found many family members, prepared their information, and went to the Mesa Arizona Temple to perform their baptisms and confirmations. Not long after, my grandmother gave me a bound compilation of her family history.

Because she suffers from rheumatoid arthritis, it is very

painful for my grandmother to type. I enjoy helping her on the computer. Together, we write the stories from her life for our family’s spiritual benefit. I love being a part of her life and learning so much about Church history as we collaborate on these projects.

The author now lives in Virginia, USA.

CHILDREN

Love at Home

*Kindly heaven smiles above
When there’s love at home;
All the world is filled with love
When there’s love at home.
 (“Love at Home,” Hymns, no. 294)*

Heavenly Father wants us to love our families so that we can be happy. The more we serve our families, the more we will love Heavenly Father and our family members.



Draw hearts like this one on a piece of paper and cut them out. Write happy notes or draw pictures on them and secretly deliver them to the members of your family. Watch how happy it will make them!

Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding the life and mission of the Savior increase your faith in Him and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to reliefsociety.lds.org.

The Divine Mission of Jesus Christ: Advocate

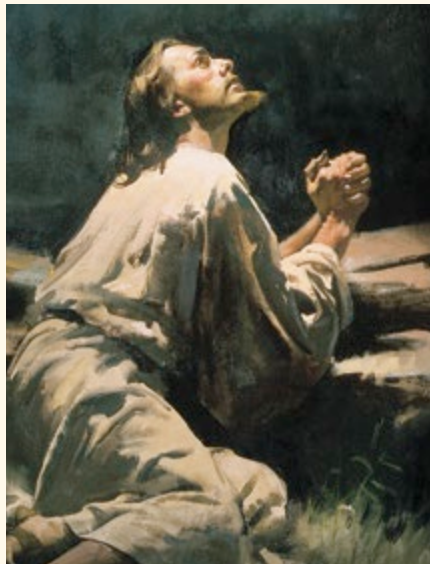
This is part of a series of Visiting Teaching Messages featuring aspects of the mission of the Savior.

Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father. The word *advocate* has Latin roots meaning “one who pleads for another.”¹ The Savior pleads for us, using understanding, justice, and mercy. Knowing this can fill us with love and gratitude for His Atonement.

“Listen to [Jesus Christ] who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him—

“Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified;

“Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life” (D&C 45:3–5).



Of Christ as our Advocate, Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “It is of great significance to me, that I may at any moment and in any circumstance approach through prayer the throne of grace, that my Heavenly Father will hear my petition, that my Advocate, him who did no sin, whose blood was shed, will plead my cause.”²

Additional Scriptures

Mosiah 15:8–9; Moroni 7:28; Doctrine and Covenants 29:5; 110:4



Faith, Family, Relief

From the Scriptures

Throughout the history of the Lord’s Church, female disciples of Jesus Christ have followed His example. Esther was faithful and courageous. Her cousin Mordecai sent her a copy of the king’s decree that the Jews should be destroyed, and he charged her “to make request before [the king] for her people.” He added: “And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:8, 14.)

Despite the danger, Esther agreed: “So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish” (Esther 4:16).

Esther then spoke humbly to the king and “fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears . . . to reverse the letters . . . to destroy the Jews.” She added, “How can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?” (see Esther 8:3, 5–6). The king’s heart was softened, and he granted her petition.³

Consider This

How can the advocacy of Jesus Christ inspire us to extend mercy and forgiveness to others?

NOTES

1. See Russell M. Nelson, “Jesus Christ—Our Master and More” (Brigham Young University fireside, Feb. 2, 1992), 4; speeches.byu.edu.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “I Know in Whom I Have Trusted,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 83.
3. See also *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 180.

APRIL 2014 CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

As you review the April 2014 general conference, you can use these pages (and Conference Notebooks in future issues) to help you study and apply the recent teachings of the living prophets and apostles and other Church leaders.

DOCTRINAL HIGHLIGHT



Marriage and Chastity

“[Recently,] the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve published a letter to leaders of the Church across the world. In part it read: ‘Changes in the civil law do not, indeed cannot, change the moral law that God has established. God expects us to uphold and keep His commandments regardless of divergent opinions or trends in society. His law of chastity is clear: sexual relations are proper only between a man and a woman who are legally and lawfully wedded as husband and wife.’ . . .

“As the world slips away from the Lord’s law of chastity, we do not. . . .

“While many governments and

well-meaning individuals have redefined marriage, the Lord has not. In the very beginning, God initiated marriage between a man and a woman—Adam and Eve. He designated the purposes of marriage to go far beyond the personal satisfaction and fulfillment of adults to, more importantly, advancing the ideal setting for children to be born, reared, and nurtured. Families are the treasure of heaven.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 19.

Elder Andersen discusses how to handle questions and concerns about difficult topics at lds.org/go/andersenE714.

PROPHETIC PROMISE



Courage

“In order for us to make the correct decisions, courage is needed—the courage to say no when we should, the courage to say yes when that is appropriate, the courage to do the right thing because it is right. . . .

“ . . . Inner courage also includes doing the right thing even though we may be afraid, defending our beliefs at the risk of being ridiculed, and maintaining those beliefs even when threatened with a loss of friends or of social status. . . .

“ . . . As we move forward, striving to live as we should, we will surely receive help from the Lord and can find comfort in His words.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Be Strong and of a Good Courage,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 66, 67, 69.

Learn from President Monson how we can cultivate courage at lds.org/go/monson2E714.

Hastening the Work of Salvation

Some of the most important topics are addressed by more than one general conference speaker. Here is what three speakers said about hastening the work of salvation:

- “No matter how good your [missionary] message is, you may not get a chance to deliver it without consistent, persistent follow-up.”¹ —Elder M. Russell Ballard. Learn more about Elder Ballard’s invitation at lds.org/go/ballardE714.
- “The Gilbert Arizona Temple . . . became the 142nd operating temple. . . . When all the previously announced temples

are completed, we will have 170 operating temples throughout the world.”² —President Thomas S. Monson. Learn more at lds.org/go/monsonE714.

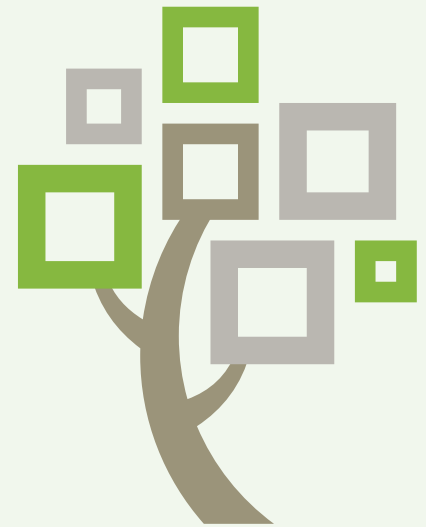
- “We are to ‘lay aside the things of [the] world, . . . cleave unto [our] covenants’ [D&C 25:10, 13], and come unto Christ and follow Him. That’s what disciples do!”³ —Linda K. Burton. Watch Sister Burton’s address at lds.org/go/burtonE714.

NOTES

1. “Following Up,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 78.
2. “Welcome to Conference,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 4.
3. “Wanted: Hands and Hearts to Hasten the Work,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 122.



To read, watch, listen to, or share general conference addresses, visit conference.lds.org.



HOW TO HOLD A “FAMILY TREE GATHERING”

“We finally have the doctrine, the temples, and the technology for families to accomplish this glorious work of salvation. I suggest . . . [each family] hold a ‘Family Tree Gathering.’ This should be a recurring effort.”

—Elder Quentin L. Cook, “Roots and Branches,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 47.

1. Gather with your family and share histories, stories, photos, and heirlooms.
2. Upload stories and photos to Family Tree and connect source documents with ancestors.
3. Determine which ancestors need temple ordinances to be done and make assignments to family members.

Find other ways Elder Cook says we can be blessed by family history at lds.org/go/cookE714.

WE TEACH BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST

We believe that teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost is essential to God's work of salvation. Effective teaching helps people grow in their faith and desire to live the gospel. Teaching can occur in many settings, such as giving lessons and talks at church; but we also teach when we discuss a scripture with a family member or when we explain to a neighbor what the priesthood is.

“Teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel.

“And they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit.

“And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:12–14).

Consider these four principles for effective teaching:

- **Love those you teach.** Get to know them. Prayerfully consider their needs as you prepare to teach. Try to use a variety of teaching methods: different ones can reach different people (see some ideas at right).
- **Teach by the Spirit.** Nephi taught, “When a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men” (2 Nephi 33:1). As you teach, you can invite the Spirit’s influence by bearing testimony and by using the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets. Pray for the guidance of the Holy Ghost as you prepare to teach. He can inspire you to know how best to teach.
- **Teach the doctrine.** Approved curriculum materials from the Church, such as scriptures, general conference talks, and

manuals, contain doctrine—eternal truths from God.

- **Invite diligent learning.** As you teach, remember that those who listen are responsible for their own learning. Encourage them to ask questions, share their thoughts on the topic, and ponder how they can live the principles of the gospel. Their testimony of those principles will grow as they live them (see John 7:17).

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) spoke of the importance of good teaching: “Eternal life will come only as men and women are *taught with such effectiveness* that they change and discipline their lives. They cannot be coerced into righteousness or into heaven. They must be led, and that means teaching” (quoted in Jeffrey R. Holland, “A Teacher Come from God,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 26). ■

For more information, see Doctrine and Covenants 50:13–22; Handbook 2: Administering the Church (2010), 5.5.4.

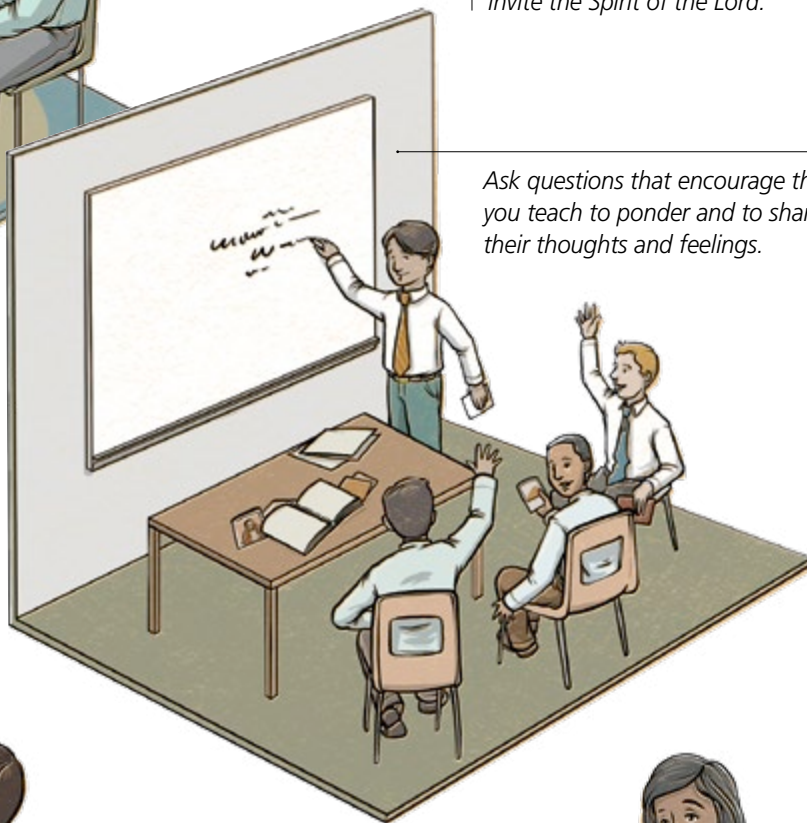
These are some teaching methods that can help you reach people with various types of learning styles:



Play or sing sacred music. Hymns and Primary songs can teach doctrine and invite the Spirit of the Lord.



Relate uplifting stories and examples, including stories from the scriptures and your own life.



Ask questions that encourage those you teach to ponder and to share their thoughts and feelings.



Display pictures and physical objects. Principles of the gospel can be compared to seeds, rocks, plants, and other familiar things.



Bear testimony of the principles of the gospel you are teaching. Testimony invites the Holy Ghost to bear witness of the truth.

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

Visit news.lds.org for more Church news and events.

LDS Charities Featured at United Nations Event

The work of LDS Charities was the subject of a recent panel discussion at United Nations headquarters in New York, USA. The event, “Discovering Mormonism and Its Role in Humanitarian Assistance,” was part of the Focus on Faith series sponsored by the nongovernmental organizations section of the U.N.’s Department of Public Information.

“This series aims to provide a broader understanding of how different belief systems share common foundational principles such as tolerance, mutual respect for those different than ourselves, and a commitment to reconciliation and peaceful resolutions to disputes,” explained panel moderator Felipe Queipo, a public information assistant at the U.N. who is a member of the Church from Spain.

“To care for the poor is a foundational duty of anyone who reveres God and the brother- and sisterhood of all—to serve, lift, bless, and relieve suffering independent of religious persuasions, social philosophy, nationality, tribe, gender, or

background,” said Sharon Eubank, director of LDS Charities, who participated in the discussion.

In her remarks she also reviewed the stated purpose of LDS Charities: to relieve suffering, foster self-reliance, and provide opportunities for service for families of all nationalities. Its key initiatives, she said, are clean water, neonatal resuscitation, vision care, wheelchair distribution, immunizations, food, and emergency response.

Other Latter-day Saint participants included Ahmad S. Corbitt, director of the Church’s New York Office of Public and International Affairs, and John P. (Phil) Colton, who is serving with his wife, Barbara, as a U.N. representative for LDS Charities.

Brother Corbitt said that there are “people of goodwill in all the world religions,” emphasizing the importance of working together. Brother Colton explained ways that LDS Charities provided help to nearly two million people in 132 countries during 2013. ■

Church representatives participate in a panel discussion at the United Nations.



NEW MISSION PRESIDENTS CALLED TO SERVE

The First Presidency has called 122 new mission presidents and their spouses to serve in their assigned locations effective July 2014. For information about the new mission presidents, go to lds.org/go/2014mission.

LEADERS OFFER COMFORT, SUPPORT IN PHILIPPINES

In February, 100 days after Typhoon Haiyan devastated Tacloban, Sister Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, and Sister Carol F. McConkie, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency, traveled to the disaster zone to offer support and comfort.

"I knew I needed to hug the sisters," Sister Burton said. "I knew I couldn't do much else, but I knew I needed to come to Tacloban and hug the people that I could."

Typhoon Haiyan destroyed more than 1.1 million homes in the central Philippines, leaving more than 6,100 people dead, including 42 Latter-day Saints. Following the storm, the Church sent relief supplies and partnered with local and international organizations to assist with food, shelter, water purification, debris removal, and livelihood restoration.

Both Sister Burton and Sister McConkie reported that they found hope and optimism among the Saints, who are rebuilding their homes and strengthening their testimonies by serving each other.

CORRECTIONS

In the article "Emulating Eliza" (*Ensign*, March 2014, 37), the author refers to Eliza R. Snow as her ancestor, even though Eliza had no posterity. The author is a direct descendant of Erastus Snow, a distant cousin of Eliza's. Hence the word *ancestor* is used here to mean that Eliza is part of the author's extended family tree.

In the "Answering Questions" sidebar on page 72 of the April issue, replace the text starting on line 17 with the following: "On the 'Temple' page, select the names you would like to release and click **Share**. Your family names will become part of the temple file and be made available to other patrons so they can complete the ordinances. You may also release names back to Family Tree on FamilySearch.org so that other related individuals can request them. To do this, select the names and click **Unreserve**. (If you unreserve names that are already printed on cards, make certain that you tear up the cards to avoid duplication.)"



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland speaks to members in Taiwan.

Apostles Minister to Many Nations

Members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles continue to carry the ministry of the Church throughout the world. During recent assignments:

- Elder Russell M. Nelson and Elder Neil L. Andersen offered counsel and direction to Saints in Australia, New Zealand, French Polynesia, Fiji, New Caledonia, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea. Elder Nelson spoke of the need to strengthen families, and Elder Andersen reminded members to be of good cheer. On a separate assignment, Elder Andersen met with members and community leaders in areas of the Philippines devastated by earthquakes and tropical storms.
- Elder Dallin H. Oaks dedicated the Mexico City Missionary Training Center. He encouraged missionaries to study hard and dedicate themselves to the Lord.
- Elder M. Russell Ballard told Saints in the South America South Area that "the day of

the sons and daughters of Lehi is blossoming," with 4.5 million members and 14 temples in South America. This fulfills a prophecy made by his grandfather Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) that South America would become a power in the Church.

- Elder Jeffrey R. Holland encouraged members in Taiwan and Hong Kong to make the temple part of their lives by attending as often as they can.
- Elder David A. Bednar reminded Latter-day Saints in Uganda that they are pioneers in building the Church in their country. He reminded members in Kenya of the importance of consistently showing love at home.
- Elder Quentin L. Cook taught members in Central America of the importance of service to God, to each other, and to their neighbors.

To learn more about the ministry of the Apostles, go to lds.org/prophets-and-apostles. ■



By Elder
Gerrit W. Gong
Of the Seventy

BECOMING

Perfect in Christ

We sing with our children, “I feel my Savior’s love, the love he freely gives me.”¹

His atoning love, freely given, is as “milk and honey, without money and without price” (2 Nephi 26:25). Infinite and eternal (see Alma 34:10), the Atonement invites us to “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32).

Understanding the Savior’s freely given atoning love can free us from self-imposed, incorrect, and unrealistic expectations of what perfection is. Such understanding allows us to let go of fears that we are imperfect—fears that we make mistakes, fears that we are not good enough, fears that we are a failure compared to others, fears that we are not doing enough to merit His love.

The Savior’s freely given atoning love helps us become more forgiving and less judgmental of others and of

Understanding the Savior’s freely given atoning love can free us from self-imposed, incorrect, and unrealistic expectations of what perfection is.

ourselves. This love heals our relationships and gives us opportunities to love, understand, and serve as our Savior would.

His atoning love changes our concept of perfection. We can put our trust in Him, diligently keep His commandments, and continue in the faith (see Mosiah 4:6)—even as we also feel greater humility, gratitude, and dependence on His merits, mercy, and grace (see 2 Nephi 2:8).

In a broader sense, coming unto Christ and being perfected in Him

places perfection within the eternal journey of our spirit and body—in essence, the eternal journey of our soul (see D&C 88:15). Becoming perfect results from our journey through physical life, death, and resurrection, when all things are restored “to their proper and perfect frame” (Alma 40:23). It includes the process of spiritual birth, which brings “a mighty change” to our hearts and dispositions (Mosiah 5:2). It reflects our lifelong refinement through Christlike service and obedience to the Savior’s commandments and our covenants. And it recognizes the perfecting relationship between the living and the dead (see D&C 128:18).

The word *perfection*, however, is sometimes misunderstood to mean never making a mistake. Perhaps you or someone you know is trying hard to be perfect in this way. Because such perfection always seems out of reach, even our best efforts can leave



us anxious, discouraged, or exhausted. We unsuccessfully try to control our circumstances and the people around us. We fret over weaknesses and mistakes. In fact, the harder we try, the further we may feel from the perfection we seek.

In what follows, I seek to deepen our appreciation for the doctrine of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and for the love and mercy the Savior freely gives us. I invite you to apply your understanding of the doctrine of the Atonement to help yourself and others, including missionaries, students, young single adults, fathers, mothers, single heads of households, and others who may feel pressure to find perfection or to be perfect.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ

Prepared from the foundation of the world (see Mosiah 4:6–7), our Savior’s Atonement allows us to learn, repent, and grow by our own experiences and choices.

In this mortal probation, both gradual “line upon line” (D&C 98:12) spiritual growth and transformative “mighty change” of heart (Alma 5:12, 13; Mosiah 5:2) spiritual experiences help us come unto Christ and be perfected in Him. The familiar term “endure to the end” reminds us that eternal growth often involves both time and process.

In the concluding chapter of the Book of Mormon, the great prophet



Moroni teaches us how to come unto and be perfected in Christ. We “deny [our]selves of all ungodliness.” We “love God with all [our] might, mind and strength.” Then His grace is sufficient for us, “that by his grace [we] may be perfect in Christ.” If we “deny not” the power of God, we can be “sanctified in Christ by the grace of God,” which “is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of [our] sins,” that we can “become holy, without spot” (Moroni 10:32, 33).

Ultimately, it is the Savior’s “great and last sacrifice” that brings about “mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance” (Alma 34:14, 15). Indeed, our “faith unto repentance” is essential for us to come unto Christ, be perfected in Him, and enjoy the blessings of “the

Only our Savior lived a perfect life, but even He learned and grew in mortal experience.

great and eternal plan of redemption” (Alma 34:16).

Fully accepting our Savior’s Atonement can increase our faith and give us courage to let go of constraining expectations that we are somehow required to be or to make things perfect. Black-and-white thinking says everything is either absolutely perfect or hopelessly flawed. But we can gratefully accept, as God’s sons and daughters, that we are His greatest handiwork (see Psalm 8:3–6; Hebrews 2:7), even though we are still a work in progress.

As we understand our Savior’s freely given atoning love, we cease fearing that He may be a harsh, faultfinding judge. Instead, we feel assurance, “for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17). And we understand that time and process are needed for growth (see Moses 7:21).

Our Perfect Example

Only our Savior lived a perfect life, and even He learned and grew in mortal experience. Indeed, “he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness” (D&C 93:13).

He learned through mortal experience to “take upon him [our] infirmities . . . that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people” (Alma 7:12). He did not succumb to temptations, sins, or daily

pressures, but He descended below all of mortality’s trials and challenges (see D&C 122:8).

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Savior commands us: “Be ye therefore perfect” (Matthew 5:48). The Greek word for *perfect* can be translated as “complete, finished, fully developed” (in Matthew 5:48, footnote b). Our Savior asks us to become complete, finished, fully developed—to be perfected in the virtues and attributes He and our Father in Heaven exemplify.²

Let us see how applying the doctrine of the Atonement may help those who feel they need to find perfection or to be perfect.

Perfectionism

A misunderstanding of what it means to be perfect can result in *perfectionism*—an attitude or behavior that takes an admirable desire to be good and turns it into an unrealistic expectation to be perfect *now*. Perfectionism sometimes arises from the feeling that only those who are perfect deserve to be loved or that we do not deserve to be happy unless we are perfect.

Perfectionism can cause sleeplessness, anxiety, procrastination, discouragement, self-justification, and depression. These feelings can crowd out the peace, joy, and assurance our Savior wants us to have.

Missionaries who want to be perfect now may become anxious or

discouraged if learning their mission language, seeing people baptized, or receiving mission leadership assignments do not happen fast enough. For capable young people accustomed to accomplishment, a mission may be life’s first great challenge. But missionaries can be exactly obedient without being perfect. They can measure their success primarily by their commitment to help individuals and families “become faithful members of the Church who enjoy the presence of the Holy Ghost.”³

Students beginning a new school year, especially those leaving home for college, face both excitement and concerns. Student scholars, athletes, artists, and so forth go from being a “big fish in a little pond” to feeling like a minnow in an ocean with unfamiliar tides and swift, unpredictable currents. It is easy for students with perfectionist tendencies to feel that, no matter how hard they try, they have failed if they are not first in all things.

Given life’s demands, students can learn that it is sometimes perfectly fine to do all they can and that it is not always possible to be the very best.

We also impose expectations of perfection in our own homes. A father or mother may feel compelled to be the perfect spouse, parent, homemaker, breadwinner, or part of a perfect Latter-day Saint family—now.

What helps those who battle perfectionist tendencies? Open-ended, supportive inquiries communicate

acceptance and love. They invite others to focus on the positive. They allow us to define what we feel is going well. Family and friends can avoid competitive comparisons and instead offer sincere encouragement.

Another serious dimension of perfectionism is to hold others to our unrealistic, judgmental, or unforgiving standards. Such behavior may, in fact, deny or limit the blessings of the Savior's Atonement in our lives and in the lives of others. For example, young single adults may make a list of desired qualities in a potential spouse and yet be unable to marry because of unrealistic expectations for the perfect companion.

Thus, a sister may be unwilling to consider dating a wonderful, worthy brother who falls short on her perfectionist scale—he does not dance well, is not planning to be wealthy, did not serve a mission, or admits to a past problem with pornography since resolved through repentance and counseling.

Similarly, a brother may not consider dating a wonderful, worthy sister who doesn't fit his unrealistic profile—she is not a sports enthusiast, a Relief Society president, a beauty queen, a sophisticated budgeter, or she admits to an earlier, now-resolved weakness with the Word of Wisdom.

Of course, we should consider qualities we desire in ourselves and in a potential spouse. We should

maintain our highest hopes and standards. But if we are humble, we will be surprised by goodness in unexpected places, and we may create opportunities to grow closer to someone who, like us, is not perfect.

Faith acknowledges that, through repentance and the power of the Atonement, weakness can be made strong and repented sins can truly be forgiven.

Happy marriages are not the result of two perfect people saying vows. Rather, devotion and love grow as two imperfect people build, bless, help, encourage, and forgive along the way. The wife of a modern prophet was once asked what it was like being married to a prophet. She wisely replied that she had not married a prophet; she had simply married a man who was completely dedicated to the Church no matter what calling he received.⁴ In other words, in process of time, husbands and wives grow together—individually and as a couple.

The wait for a perfect spouse, perfect education, perfect job, or perfect house will be long and lonely. We are wise to follow the Spirit in life's important decisions and not let doubts spawned by perfectionist demands hinder our progress.

For those who may feel chronically burdened or anxious, sincerely ask yourself, "Do I define *perfection* and *success* by the doctrines of the Savior's atoning love or by the world's

standards? Do I measure *success* or *failure* by the Holy Ghost confirming my righteous desires or by some worldly standard?"

For those who feel physically or emotionally exhausted, start getting regular sleep and rest, and make time to eat and relax. Recognize that being busy is not the same as being worthy, and being worthy does not require perfection.⁵

For those prone to see their own weaknesses or shortcomings, celebrate with gratitude the things you do well, however large or small.

For those who fear failure and who procrastinate, sometimes by over-preparing, be assured and encouraged that there is no need to withdraw from challenging activities that may bring great growth!

Where needed and appropriate, seek spiritual counsel or competent medical attention to help you relax, develop positive ways to think and structure your life, reduce self-defeating behaviors, and experience and express more gratitude.⁶

Impatience impedes faith. Faith and patience will help missionaries understand a new language or culture, students to master new subjects, and young single adults to begin building relationships rather than waiting for everything to be perfect. Faith and patience will also help those waiting for temple sealing clearances or restoration of priesthood blessings.



For those prone to see their own weaknesses or shortcomings, celebrate with gratitude the things you do well, however large or small.

As we act and are not acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:14), we can navigate between complementary virtues and achieve much of life's growth. These can appear in "an opposition," being "a compound in one" (2 Nephi 2:11).

For example, we can cease to be idle (see D&C 88:124) without running faster than we have strength (see Mosiah 4:27).

We can be "anxiously engaged in a good cause" (D&C 58:27) while also periodically pausing to "be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10; see also D&C 101:16).

We can find our lives by losing our lives for the Savior's sake (see Matthew 10:39; 16:25).

We can be "not weary in well-doing" (D&C 64:33; see also Galatians 6:9) while taking appropriate time to refresh spiritually and physically.

We can be lighthearted without being light-minded.

We can laugh heartily with but not haughtily at.

Our Savior and His Atonement invite us to "come unto Christ, and be perfected in him." As we do so, He promises that His grace is "sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ" (Moroni 10:32).

For those burdened by cares to find perfection or to be perfect now, our Savior's freely given atoning love assures us:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

". . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28, 30).⁷ ■

NOTES

1. "I Feel My Savior's Love," *Children's Songbook*, 75.
2. See also Russell M. Nelson, "Perfection Pending," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86–88.
3. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 10.
4. See Lavina Fielding, "Camilla Kimball: Lady of Constant Learning," *Ensign*, Oct. 1975, 62.
5. See, for example, Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Four Titles," *Ensign*, May 2013, 58–61. President Uchtdorf also cautions, "Some might even think that their self-worth depends on the length of their to-do list" ("Of Things That Matter Most," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 20).
6. This insight comes from Carlos F. and Alane Kae Watkins, mental health advisers in the Asia Area, assigned in Hong Kong. Other insights for this article came from Susan Gong, Larry Y. and Lynda Wilson, Randy D. and Andrea Funk, Janet S. Scharman, and missionaries in the Indonesia Jakarta Mission.
7. See also Cecil O. Samuelson, "What Does It Mean to Be Perfect?" *New Era*, Jan. 2006, 10–13; Janet S. Scharman, "Seeking Perfection without Being a Perfectionist," in *Virtue and the Abundant Life: Talks from the BYU Religious Education and Wheatley Institution Symposium*, ed. Lloyd D. Newell and others (2012), 280–302.

Faith in GOD'S PLAN for Me

By Jessica George

I grew up near Kirtland, Ohio, and have always had a strong testimony of the events that occurred at this early Church site. The Kirtland Temple, Newel K. Whitney store, and nearby John Johnson farm all have a special spirit about them. For me, however, the stone quarry is the most meaningful site.

Located just a few miles down the road from the Kirtland Temple is a calm little river. Drill marks in the rock next to the river were likely made years after the Saints left Kirtland, but those marks are still a reminder of the purpose this area served in providing stone for the temple. While growing up, I could never explain why this site had such a deep impact on me. It would be years until I understood why it did.

At the time I left to serve a mission in Argentina, my life was just the way

I felt it was supposed to be. My college experience had gone well, and I planned on being able to graduate after just a couple of semesters when I returned home from my mission. But about a year into my mission, I got terribly sick and was sent home with an honorable medical release. Further tests revealed that my heart wasn't functioning properly. My symptoms were life changing and, unfortunately, untreatable. I became so weak that I had to be in bed for most of the day. Suddenly, everything was different.

I thought about my future and wondered, "Why me? Why did this have to happen?" I felt that my desires and plans had been good, and I didn't understand why I had to undergo a trial that changed those plans.

Time passed slowly. Weeks turned to months, months turned to years,

and my health remained poor. By painfully struggling through one class at a time, I eventually finished



school. Through the years, however, I began to see that while this was not the future I had anticipated, it was exactly the life God had planned for me. It was then that the importance of the stone quarry I had known from early in my life began to unfold in my mind. I could see parallels between my experience and that of the early Saints who had worked in that quarry.

Today when people visit the stone quarry, they can see the Kirtland Temple in all its glory just down the road. The early Saints did not have that privilege. Their sacrifice and work were done without the end result, the finished temple, in sight. They likely could not envision that this temple would be the first of hundreds that

would fill the earth and bring eternal blessings to God's children all over the world. They saw only the tools in their hands and the thousands of pounds of rock that needed to be removed. Yet their faith was strong, and they knew their sacrifice would bring forth great blessings.

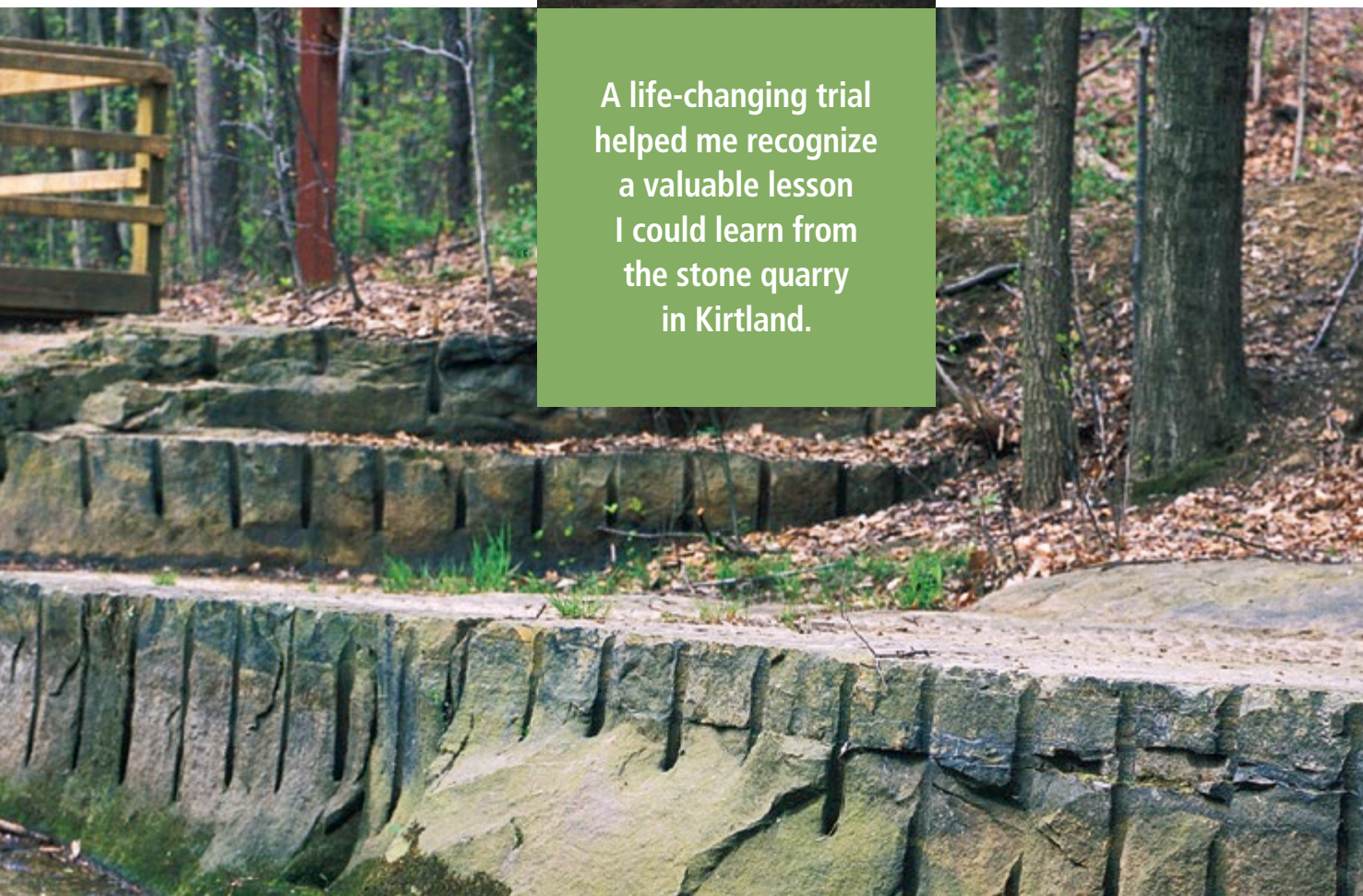


From those early Saints I learned that in every life there must be a “stone quarry”—a time and place where we must sacrifice and work before we can see the blessings.

Although I can't see the blessings that will come because of my trials, I know I can trust in God's will for me. And because of the example of those early Saints working in the stone quarry, I know that if I press on, blessings will soon come into view. I am so grateful for the lesson the stone quarry taught me that I can have faith in God's plan for me even without the end in sight. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Conference Connection: Read a related talk from April 2014 general conference, “Your Four Minutes” by Bishop Gary E. Stevenson.



A life-changing trial helped me recognize a valuable lesson I could learn from the stone quarry in Kirtland.

Keeping a Journal **YOUR WAY**

By Tara Walker

One Christmas I traveled with my family to the Holy Land. A good part of each day we spent in a tour van as we traveled around Israel, visiting where the Savior walked. While en route to the Dead Sea, the hills of Bethlehem, Golgotha, and the Old City, I spoke into a digital voice recorder and talked about the beauty of the landscape, the juxtaposition of so many religious faiths in one place, and the reality of Christ's life and presence there. Making an audio recording proved to be one of the most convenient ways I have ever kept a journal. But using my recorder didn't stop me from writing things down or taking pictures and video. Using a variety of mediums, I was able to capture the richness of a trip of a lifetime, from how my father jokingly negotiated to sell me to a Bedouin man at the base of Petra for 24 racing camels and a souvenir shop,

to reverently singing hymns of worship with my family while we stood in the Garden Tomb.

When I was a little girl, my mother always encouraged me to keep a journal. It quickly became one of my favorite things to do because of the way it quieted my mind before getting into bed. Pouring out my heart on those pages also helped me make decisions. My journals are full of highs and lows, happy times and sad times. Each journal helped me to maintain eternal perspective and hope for the future. I was able to stay connected to and remember who I really am.

Now I'm a young adult, and keeping a journal is still a powerful way for me to express who I am as an individual

Keeping a journal can be a fun and exciting way to record your personal history. Consider trying one of these options for preserving your thoughts and experiences.

and how I fit into the fabric of God's eternal plan. You too can create a rich and meaningful history of your life experiences. What you have to offer to the world, and to the ongoing work of the restored gospel, is unique and powerful. What you give and share can start with a little introspection at the end of each day, week, or month. However you choose to keep a journal, remember that it is your chance to preserve your thoughts, feelings, and experiences for you and your posterity.

Following are some ways you can record your story. Find what works for you and stick with it. Not only will your own life be blessed, but someday countless others will express gratitude for the time you took to share your successes and failures in this life, thus connecting your past with the present and the future.

...to be...
...all...
...with...
...Saturday...
...better...
...for this...
...to attend...
...need to have...
The old
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have not cea
my life, now?
is key - and
someone, dev
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faith I ca
Not always
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Traditional Journals

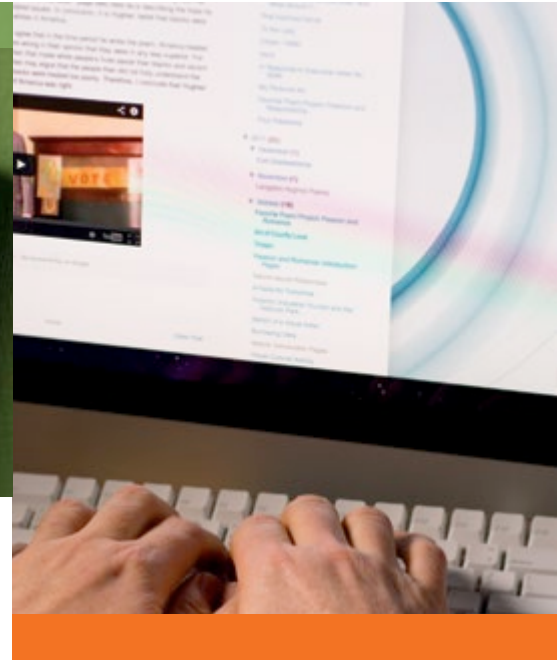
Find a paper journal that matches your personality and writing style. If you are unsure what to write about, try a journal that suggests a daily prompt. You can also make a traditional journal into an art journal by using paint, pastels, or colored pencils. Decide beforehand on a consistent time to write in your journal so that you can establish a habit. Regardless of the style or size of your journal, you can follow the counsel of President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, to seek “ways to recognize and remember God’s kindness”¹ and express gratitude for blessings in your life.

Online Journals

Online journals are a great option because you can write wherever you are without having to keep track of a traditional journal, and they allow you to compile more experiences, thoughts, and feelings in less time. Most online journal sites also give you the ability to upload other media to your journal entries. For example, you can add pictures and video, and you can embed

links to articles or websites that have enhanced your learning or experience.

Most online journal websites are private, so usually you don’t have to worry about confidentiality. And many of these sites provide sharing and publishing options when or if you decide to share or print a copy of your journal. All of your entries are archived on the website you use, so both you and your posterity will have access to anything you’ve recorded. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, reminds us that “technology can be a wonderful thing, and it is very useful when we cannot be near our loved ones.”²



Blogs

Blogging is an interactive way to keep a journal. You can make it a collaborative process by allowing family members to contribute their memories along with yours. Share your blog publicly or keep it private. Create a personal profile that illustrates your interests and goals. Be “an example of the believers” (1 Timothy 4:12) in a very open way by sharing what you’ve learned about life and living the gospel. People can freely read your testimony and ask questions, and you can provide informed and helpful answers.

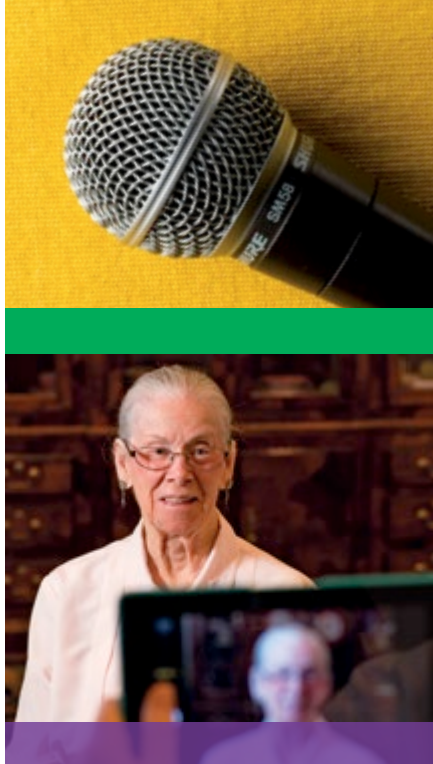


Scrapbooks

Scrapbooking is a fun way to keep a journal because it's hands-on. In this way, reminders of the experiences you've had can be preserved in the form of ticket stubs, magazine and newspaper clippings, programs, photos, fliers, and notes. President Uchtdorf has said: "Creation brings deep satisfaction and fulfillment. We develop ourselves and others when we take unorganized matter into our hands and mold it into something of beauty."³

Photo Journals

Photos are a marvelous way of capturing what you see as you experience life. You don't have to be a talented photographer to get involved in keeping this kind of journal, especially with all the technology available. Basic digital cameras for the budget conscious can provide good quality pictures, or you may simply want to use the camera feature that comes with many cell phones. There are several applications that provide tools for enhancing and sharing your photos. Print and store them in a photo album, or post them online. Either way, keeping track of your life



WHAT COULD YOU DO BETTER?

"What could you do better for your children and your children's children than to record the

story of your life, your triumphs over adversity, your recovery after a fall, your progress when all seemed black, your rejoicing when you had finally achieved?"

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), "President Kimball Speaks Out on Personal Journals," *Ensign*, Dec. 1980, 61.

through pictures is a great way to save memories now and share them later.

Audio Journals

Most audio recorders are digital and take up very little space, so you can take your handheld recording device with you anywhere. You can record thoughts or impressions you receive during the day by simply speaking into the device. You may find that articulating ideas in this way is easier than trying to write them down, since you don't have to worry about making your writing or typing speed keep up with your thoughts. The audio files you create can often be transferred from the device directly to your computer. You also may be able to download free transcription software if you want to turn your recordings into documents.

Video Journals

You can use a webcam on your computer or any other video camera to record yourself sharing stories and experiences from your childhood. Then consider interviewing your grandparents to preserve their stories too. You and your posterity will be able to watch and enjoy these videos years down the road.

Conclusion

Whichever method you choose, as you make the effort to keep a journal and capture your life's story, remember to enjoy the experience as well as be introspective. Doing so will bring blessings both to you and to the posterity you leave behind. ■

The author lives in Idaho, USA.

NOTES

1. Henry B. Eyring, "O Remember, Remember," *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 67.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Of Regrets and Resolutions," *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 22.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Happiness, Your Heritage," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 118.



By Elder
Russell M. Nelson
Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

THE Book of Mormon, THE Gathering of Israel, AND THE Second Coming

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a tangible sign to the world that the Lord has commenced gathering Israel and fulfilling covenants He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Chapter 5 of *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* is devoted entirely to the Book of Mormon. This chapter teaches that the Book of Mormon:

- Is the keystone of our religion.
- Testifies of Jesus Christ.
- Supports the Bible.
- Answers questions of the soul.
- Draws people nearer to God.



All of these assertions are absolutely true, but they are made from our point of view as mortal beings. What would be the perspective of our Father in Heaven and of His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, on the Book of Mormon?

Their perspective would surely be shaped by two long-standing promises They have made to all mankind. These two promises are interrelated, well documented, still in force, and yet to be fulfilled. The first is Their ancient promise to gather scattered Israel. The second is Their long-standing promise of the Second Coming of the Lord.

The Abrahamic Covenant and the House of Israel

In the dispensation of Abraham, God made a covenant with Father Abraham that through his lineage, people of all nations would be blessed. Other important components of

that promise were made as well. These promises, given first to Abraham and later reaffirmed to Isaac and Jacob, included:

- A large posterity.¹
- The inheritance of certain lands.²
- The seed of Abraham would bear the priesthood unto all nations, that all might be blessed through Abraham's lineage.³
- Those not descended from Abraham who accept the gospel would become the seed of Abraham through adoption.⁴
- The Savior of the world would come through Abraham's lineage.⁵

Many of Abraham's descendants—the tribes of ancient Israel—eventually rejected the teachings of the Lord and



killed the prophets. Ten tribes were carried captive into Assyria. From there they became lost to the records of mankind, though not lost to the Lord. Two tribes remained for a short time, but because of their rebellion they were taken captive into Babylon. When they returned, they were favored of the Lord, but again they rejected Him!

The Scattering and Gathering of Israel

A loving but grieving Father scattered Israel far and wide, but He promised that one day scattered Israel would be gathered back into the fold. This promise was just as emphatic as the promise of the scattering of Israel.⁶ Isaiah, for example, foresaw that in the latter days the Lord would send “swift messengers” to these people, who were “scattered and peeled” (Isaiah 18:2, 7).

As prophesied, *all* things were to be restored in this dispensation. Therefore, the long-awaited gathering of scattered Israel must come as part of that restoration.⁷ The gathering of Israel is interrelated with the second promise because the gathering is a necessary prelude to the Second Coming of the Lord.⁸ Again, that heavenly perspective is ever evident.



This concept of the gathering is one of the important teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Lord has declared, “I give unto you a sign . . . that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion” (3 Nephi 21:1).

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a tangible sign to the world that the Lord has commenced gathering Israel and fulfilling covenants He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.⁹ We not only teach this concept, but we also get to participate in it! We do so as we help to gather the elect of the Lord on both sides of the veil.

Mercifully, the invitation to “come unto Christ” (Jacob 1:7)¹⁰ can also be extended to those who died without a knowledge of the gospel.¹¹ Part of the preparation on behalf of those who live on the other side of the veil requires earthly efforts of those who live on this side of the veil. We gather pedigree charts, create family group sheets, and do vicarious temple work to gather individuals unto the Lord and into their families.¹²

This dispensation of the fulness of times was foreseen by God as the time to gather, both in heaven and on earth. The Apostle Peter knew that after a period of apostasy, a restoration would come. He declared:

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; . . .

“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:19, 21).

In our day, Peter, James, and John were sent by the Lord with “the keys of [His] kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel for the last times; and for the fulness of times,” in which He would “gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth” (D&C 27:13).¹³

Many aspects of the Abrahamic covenant have already been fulfilled. The Savior of the world did indeed come



through the lineage of Abraham, through Jacob's son Judah. Land was allocated for an inheritance long ago. A map in the LDS edition of the Bible shows how the land inherited by the tribes was divided among the descendants of Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh.¹⁴ We learn from the Book of Mormon that the land reserved for the lineage of Joseph was the American hemisphere.¹⁵

The great promise that *all* nations would be blessed by the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has yet to be fulfilled. But this promise of the gathering, woven through the fabric of all scriptures, will be fulfilled just as surely as were the prophecies of the scattering of Israel.¹⁶

The Gathering as a Prelude to the Second Coming

Why is this promise of gathering so crucial? Because the gathering of Israel is necessary to prepare the world for the Second

Coming! And the Book of Mormon is God's instrument needed to accomplish *both* of these divine objectives.¹⁷

The Book of Mormon is a gift from God to the entire world. It is the only book the Lord has testified to be true.¹⁸ It is a gift from Nephi, Jacob, Mormon, Moroni, and its inspired and martyred translator, the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Book of Mormon is purposely addressed to the remnant of the house of Israel.¹⁹

Regarding the Second Coming, we know it is "now nigh at hand, and in a time [yet] to come" (D&C 63:53). And when the Savior comes again, it will not be in secret.²⁰ Meanwhile, much work must be done to gather Israel and prepare the world for the glorious Second Coming.

The Gathering of Israel in This Dispensation

Thanks to the Book of Mormon, we know when this promised gathering will take place: "Wherefore, our father hath not

Saints in every land have equal claim upon the blessings of the Lord. Spiritual security will always depend upon how we live, not where we live.



In the temple we receive our ultimate and highest blessings, as promised to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled *in the latter days*; which covenant the Lord made to our father Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed” (1 Nephi 15:18; emphasis added).

Six hundred years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, prophets knew that the gathering of Israel would take place “in the latter days.”

To Latter-day Saints, the honored name *Abraham* is important. Each member of the Church is linked to Abraham.²¹ The Lord reaffirmed the Abrahamic covenant in our day through the Prophet Joseph Smith.²² In the temple we receive our ultimate and highest blessings, as promised to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.²³

We need to gain that heavenly perspective. We need to know about the Abrahamic covenant and understand our responsibility in helping to bring about the promised gathering of Israel. We need to know *why* we are

privileged to receive patriarchal blessings and learn of our connection to ancient patriarchs. We need to know that Jacob’s son Joseph became the birthright son after Reuben lost his birthright.²⁴ Joseph and his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, became the seed to lead in the gathering of Israel.²⁵ Other tribes were to follow.

Think of those heavenly messengers who brought precious keys of the priesthood to the Lord’s restored Church. On April 3, 1836, after the Lord had accepted the Kirtland Temple, came Moses, who restored “the keys of the gathering of Israel” (D&C 110:11). Next, “Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed” (D&C 110:12). Thus the Abrahamic covenant was renewed as part of the Restoration! Then came Elijah, who restored keys of the sealing authority, as prophesied by Malachi.²⁶ Those keys are necessary to seal the families of gathered Israel and enable them to enjoy the greatest of all blessings, that of eternal life.

What is the perspective of the Father and the Son regarding the Book of Mormon? They see it as evidence of the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith. They see it as the instrument by which people can learn more about Jesus Christ, believe His gospel, and join His Church. They see it as the text to clarify our connection with the biblical house of Israel. The Book of Mormon declares the advent of the gathering²⁷ and is God's instrument to bring about that gathering. Without the Book of Mormon, there would be no gathering of Israel.²⁸

The Book of Mormon contains the fulness of the gospel. Without the Book of Mormon, we would know little about the Atonement of Jesus Christ.²⁹ Because it teaches of the Atonement, the Book of Mormon helps us to repent, make and keep sacred covenants, and merit the ordinances of salvation and exaltation. It leads us to the temple, where we can qualify for eternal life.

Here on earth we can have that heavenly perspective in all we do. With that perspective, we see that missionary work is crucial to the gathering of Israel. In many nations, our missionaries search for those of scattered Israel.

Zion exists wherever righteous Saints gather.³⁰ Publications, communications, and congregations give nearly all Church members access to the doctrine, keys, ordinances, and blessings of the gospel, regardless of location. As a convenience to Saints across the globe, 143 temples are available, and more are coming.³¹

Saints in every land have equal claim upon the blessings of the Lord. Spiritual security will always depend upon *how* we live, not *where* we live.

The gathering of Israel is *not* an ultimate endpoint. It is but the beginning. The end to which we endure includes the endowment and sealing ordinances of the temple. It includes our entrance into a covenant relationship with God either by lineage or adoption and then dwelling with Him and our families forever. That is God's glory—eternal life for His children.³²

Our loving Father in Heaven truly wants His children to return to Him, not by coercion but by individual choice

and personal preparation. And He wants them sealed as eternal families.

That is our Heavenly Father's perspective. That is the Beloved Son's perspective. And it can be our perspective as well. ■

From an address given during the seminar for new mission presidents at the Provo Missionary Training Center on June 26, 2013.

NOTES

1. See Genesis 13:16; 22:17; Abraham 3:14.
2. See Genesis 12:1, 7; Abraham 2:6.
3. See Abraham 2:9, 11.
4. See Galatians 3:26–29; Abraham 2:10.
5. See Genesis 49:10, 24.
6. See Isaiah 11:12; 22:16–18; 3 Nephi 15:20–22; Abraham 2:10–11.
7. See 1 Nephi 15:18; see also the title page of the Book of Mormon.
8. See Doctrine and Covenants 133:8–17.
9. See Genesis 12:2–3; 26:3–4; 35:11–12; see also chapter headings for 3 Nephi 21 and 29.
10. See also Omni 1:26; Moroni 10:30, 32; Doctrine and Covenants 20:59.
11. See Doctrine and Covenants 137:5–8.
12. See 1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Peter 4:6.
13. Paul also prophesied of our day: “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times [the Lord] might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth” (Ephesians 1:10).
14. See Genesis 35:23–26; 41:50–52. The tribe of Levi provided priests among the people and was neither numbered as a tribe nor received a tribal inheritance. Two sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, were given land inheritances and were numbered among the tribes in the stead of their father. The number of twelve tribes was thus maintained.
15. See Ether 13:8; see also Genesis 49:22.
16. See Leviticus 26:44; Deuteronomy 4:27–31; 28; 29; 30:1–10; Nehemiah 1:9; Isaiah 11:11–12; Jeremiah 31:7–12; Ezekiel 37:21–22; Amos 9:14–15; Matthew 24:31; Jacob 6:2. See also Russell M. Nelson, “The Exodus Repeated,” *Ensign*, July 1999, 6–13. The gathering of Israel is particularly forecast in Isaiah 49–51 and Jacob 5.
17. See Matthew 24:14; Doctrine and Covenants 133:17.
18. See Doctrine and Covenants 17:6.
19. See Mormon 7:10; 9:37; Moroni 10:31–34.
20. See Isaiah 40:5.
21. The covenant may also be received by adoption (see Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8; Galatians 4:5–7).
22. See Doctrine and Covenants 124:58; 132:31–32.
23. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–40; 132:19; Abraham 2:11.
24. See 1 Chronicles 5:1.
25. Ephraim was given the birthright in Israel to bear the message of the Restoration to all nations and to lead the gathering of scattered Israel (see Jeremiah 31:7–9; Doctrine and Covenants 64:36; 133:32–34).
26. See Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16; see also Malachi 4:5–6.
27. The doctrine related to the scattering and gathering of the house of Israel is among the earliest lessons taught in the Book of Mormon (see 1 Nephi 10:14).
28. See Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (1985), 554.
29. The word *atonement* in any of its forms appears in only one verse of the King James Version of the New Testament (see Romans 5:11). It appears in 24 verses of the Book of Mormon.
30. See Doctrine and Covenants 97:21.
31. As of May 2014.
32. See Moses 1:39.



An illustration of Ammon, a man with a beard and a purple head covering, wearing a white tunic and a yellow shawl. He is walking on a rocky path, holding a wooden staff. In the foreground, there are several sheep, including a large brown one and a smaller white one. The background shows a rocky, hilly landscape under a bright sky.

BE LIKE Ammon

*This hero from the Book of Mormon
can teach us a lot about missionary work
and activation today.*

Ammon is a heroic figure in the Book of Mormon, known for his valiant service that included defending the flocks of Lamoni, a Lamanite king (see Alma 17:25–39; 18:1–10). Ammon’s story, like many other scriptural accounts in the Book of Mormon, can teach us much about how to embrace the opportunities and overcome the challenges we face today.

A Meaningful Mission

Suzanne E. Tarasevich of Millville, New Jersey, USA, learned some lessons from Ammon while serving a full-time mission with her husband, Adolf.

“When the large, white envelope containing our mission call arrived in our mailbox,” she says, “my husband and I were ecstatic. We had fasted and prayed about our call. Not that we were concerned about the *where* of the assignment, but we deeply desired a confirmation that we would have the abilities to meaningfully fulfill our calling.

“Later that evening, with children and grandchildren gathered, we opened the envelope and read our call to the Poland Warsaw Mission. As we did so, we felt peace in our hearts that this was, indeed, an assignment meant for us. We were both overjoyed.”

However, having arrived in the mission,

Sister Tarasevich found herself struggling to understand exactly what she could contribute. “My husband had immediately been given duties that provided him with challenging, growth-promoting leadership opportunities,” she says. “Though neither of us could speak Polish, his service seemed to transcend the language barriers.” On the other hand, she says, “I frequently struggled with feelings of uselessness and isolation. I doubted the meaningfulness of my missionary efforts.”

Mighty Missionaries

Sister Tarasevich found herself thinking about great missionaries in the Book of Mormon. “During many years as a Primary teacher, I had often drawn on the inspiring and motivating power of the stories of Alma and the sons of Mosiah to teach the children about missionary work. Whenever I thought of missionaries, the image of a strong and powerful Ammon popped into my mind, and I could easily envision the dynamic young missionaries of our mission as modern-day sons of Mosiah. But I wondered if it showed a lack of humility for a gray-haired grandmother to aspire to such a role.”

While she was thinking, she says, an inner voice began to question her gently.



FIND THE ONE WHO IS LOST

“It is important for each of us to ponder how it feels to be lost and what it means to be a ‘spiritual’ shepherd who will leave the 99 to find the one who is lost. Such shepherds may need the expertise and assistance of the search and rescue team, but they are present, accounted for, and climbing right beside them to save those who are infinitely valued in the sight of God, for they are His children.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Bring Souls unto Me,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 112.

“What was Ammon’s first assignment?”

“To be a servant, to tend the flocks, and to gather the scattered sheep,” she responded.

“Well then, be an Ammon.”

Prepared to Serve

These thoughts provided Sister Tarasevich with insight. “Suddenly I understood exactly what the nature of my assignment should be,” she says. “I realized that while I hadn’t mastered the language skills needed to proselyte, years of Relief Society experience had prepared me to serve others—to seek out, find, and love those who felt forgotten and uninvolved.”

She began to view her missionary labors through new eyes. “I became aware of the many ways in which Christ-centered

principles could overcome language deficiencies,” she says. “I began to see what I could do to tend the flock and gather the scattered sheep.”

After that, she says, “life as a senior missionary became a wonderful period of learning and service as we were privileged to see the gospel change and enrich the lives of those who embraced it.” She often felt like singing what she calls Ammon’s hymn: “Behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God” (Alma 26:11).

Saving the Sheep

Peggy Wallace Poll of South Weber, Utah, USA, gained her insights from Ammon when she was assigned to teach about rescue and

Nourishing every person with love is a great way to follow Ammon’s example.



activation at a stake priesthood and auxiliary leadership training meeting.

“Reading the familiar story of Ammon, I noticed something new,” she says. “Remember, Ammon is serving a mission among the Lamanites. He has been given an assignment to tend the royal sheep. There are other servants with him, and as they are bringing the sheep to Sebus to drink, robbers scatter the flock. This is terribly frightening to the other servants. Apparently, others who have allowed the sheep to be scattered have been put to death, and they are certain they will now suffer the same fate. (See Alma 17:25–30.)

“But Ammon sees an opportunity,” Sister Poll says. “He tells the other servants to be of good cheer because he has a plan. Read Alma 17:31–33, and you’ll see it clearly laid out:

1. Notice as early as possible that sheep are missing.
2. [Rush] forth with much swiftness.’
3. Gather the sheep together.
4. Bring them safely back to the sheepfold.
5. Encircle them, keep them safe, and nourish them with love.”

Sister Poll says she was impressed with how this story can apply to activation: “It is possible to look at the story of Ammon as symbolic of Church leaders today, rescuing members who have scattered. There are many influences in the world that, like the robbers, can drive members away from the good word of the gospel. We must be vigilant and move quickly when one of His precious souls is missing from the flock.”

She quotes President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), who said, “I would hope, I would pray, that each of us . . . would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives.”¹ ■

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Reach with a Rescuing Hand,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86.



AMULEK CAN TEACH US TOO

Amulek is another great hero from the Book of Mormon. He shows what people can become when they return to the path of righteousness.

Wealthy and well-known, Amulek acknowledges that he had witnessed the mysteries and power of God but had hardened his heart. “I was called many times and I would not hear; therefore I knew concerning these things, yet I would not know,” he says (Alma 10:6; see also verses 4–5).

But the Lord sends an angel to tell Amulek to receive Alma, the prophet, into his home. Amulek feeds Alma, and Alma blesses and teaches Amulek and his household. Then Amulek joins Alma in the ministry, becoming a powerful second witness of gospel truths. (See Alma 10:7–12.)

Amulek becomes Alma’s companion in calling the people to repentance, and he preaches the gospel with such strength and authority that the people are astonished (see Alma 11:46). Bound and cast into prison, Alma and Amulek miraculously escape, establish the Church in Sidom, and then teach the gospel throughout the land (see Alma 14; 15; 31).

Just like Amulek, there are many in the Church today who, when they return to activity, will find that the Lord will bless them and that they can become powerful witnesses of the truth.

Today, Patrick and his sons enjoy coming to church together. Many members of their ward strengthened and helped them along the pathway to conversion.





Opening THE Door TO THE Gospel

An invitation was all it took to get Patrick started. Soon many in the ward were helping him to learn about the Church.

By Jacob Aaron Black

Missionary Department

“The priesthood will be strengthened, and we will experience profound success in missionary work and reactivation when ward councils, members, and full-time missionaries are united in the Lord’s purpose,” Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught during the worldwide leadership broadcast on June 23, 2013.¹ Through just such a united effort, the Stansbury Ward of the Stansbury Park Utah Stake experienced this promised success.

Entering the Chapel

It was a warm, late-summer Sunday when Patrick Willoughby decided to visit a nearby Latter-day Saint church. He and his three sons had just moved back from another state to live with his adoptive parents and siblings. Patrick wanted a better life for his boys, and while he wasn’t a member of the Church, he felt that a strong Latter-day Saint community would help them.

A few years before, when Patrick had been living in this same community, he was impressed by his employer’s happy lifestyle and his religious beliefs. His boss had invited him to church, and Patrick had been impressed by the friendliness of the members and the good feelings he felt there. He had occasionally asked his employer questions about the gospel, and was grateful that his boss took the time to answer his questions without pushing his religion on him.

With these memories in mind, Patrick decided to visit the local meetinghouse. Dressed in jeans and carrying a thrift-store copy of the scriptures that his boss had given him years earlier, he opened the door. He found his way to the back of the chapel, where elders quorum meeting was already in progress. The stake high councilor assigned to the ward noticed Patrick and, after the closing prayer, approached him.

“Hi! Are you visiting today?” the high councilor asked.

Patrick explained his recent move.

“Welcome!” the high councilor said. “We’re glad you’re here. Tell me, when you lived here before, were you baptized a member of the Church?”

Each ward council should report on missionary activities and discuss how to support individuals and families who are learning about the Church.



“Uh, no. I wasn’t,” Patrick replied.

“Is that something you might be interested in?” the high councilor asked.

“Maybe,” Patrick said, taking it as an invitation to learn more. “Is there a class or something?”

Receiving an Invitation

The high councilor smiled and said there was indeed such a class. He flagged down the ward mission leader and introduced him to Patrick. The ward mission leader greeted Patrick warmly and invited him to join the Gospel Principles class, which was about to begin. He also asked Patrick if he would like to meet with the missionaries.

“Yeah, that sounds good,” Patrick said.

After the class, Patrick stayed for sacrament meeting, and at the end of the meeting, the ward mission leader introduced Patrick to the bishop. Two days later, the bishop was in Patrick’s home, getting to know Patrick, his parents, siblings, and children.

The ward mission leader sent a text message to the sister missionaries assigned to the ward, passing on Patrick’s information and his desire to meet with them.

The missionaries were elated and quickly made their way to Patrick’s home. What they thought would be an introductory visit quickly became the first lesson. At the end of the lesson, one of the missionaries, Sister Sarah Jane Pratt, felt prompted to invite Patrick to be baptized. Patrick happily accepted her invitation.

Finding Lots of Support

In the weeks that followed, the missionaries taught Patrick and his three boys the missionary lessons. Members of the ward, including the ward mission leader, ward missionaries, and the bishop, attended every lesson. The high councilor continued to reach out to Patrick, inviting him and his boys over for weekly family home evenings. Patrick’s 14-year-old sister, Lindsey, also attended, and she began listening in on the missionary lessons from the other room. Patrick’s testimony of the gospel was growing rapidly, and a seed had been planted in Lindsey’s heart.

Each week in ward council, the bishop and ward council members reported back on their activities with Patrick and his family, and the ward mission leader followed up on and coordinated all the activities under the direction of the bishop. For example:

- The Primary president visited the boys several times and helped them get to know their Primary teachers and make friends in their classes.
- Members of the elders quorum befriended Patrick and helped him feel comfortable at church. They shared their testimonies with him and answered questions about the things the missionaries were teaching him.
- The Young Men president sought out Patrick’s 11-year-old son in anticipation of his upcoming 12th birthday.

Read seven suggestions about how to share the gospel. Go to lds.org/youth/article/share-the-gospel.



Individual members can also bless those who are discovering the gospel, by sharing testimonies and offering reassurance.

The high councilor reported Patrick's progress to the stake presidency, and at stake conference, the stake president made a special effort to introduce himself to Patrick. He encouraged Patrick and his family to continue faithfully studying the gospel with the missionaries.

Because of a transfer in the middle of Patrick's lessons, he was taught by two sets of sister missionaries. They committed Patrick and his sons to be baptized at the end of September. But Patrick was having a difficult time quitting smoking.

Overcoming a Challenge

The missionaries suggested he receive a priesthood blessing to help him overcome this challenge. The following Sunday, now approximately six weeks since Patrick first visited the ward, the bishop, the ward mission leader, the high councilor, and a couple of Patrick's friends from the elders quorum gave him a blessing. He was promised heaven's help in quitting smoking. The high councilor sent Patrick daily text messages supporting him in his efforts to live the Word of Wisdom. Patrick quit smoking for good a few days later.

Soon it was time for the baptism of Patrick and his three sons. The baptismal area at the stake center was full of people who loved and supported Patrick and his boys. Members who had attended the lessons with the missionaries, all four sister missionaries, the bishopric, the ward mission leader, and the stake president were all there

to see the high councilor baptize Patrick and his sons. Patrick's parents, siblings (including Lindsey), and other family members were also present to show their support, despite not yet being members of the Church.

A short time later, Patrick was ordained a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood and had the opportunity to bless the sacrament for the first time.

Supporting His Sister

Following Patrick's baptism, his sister Lindsey felt a strong desire to be baptized herself. The missionaries retaught her the lessons she had listened to from another room, with Patrick providing the powerful supporting testimony of a recent convert.

The Young Women president and the Mia Maid class presidency frequently visited Lindsey at her home and included her in weekly Young Women activities. They invited Lindsey to tour Temple Square with the Young Women president while the rest of the ward's youth participated in baptisms for the dead. Members of the Mia Maid class also greeted and talked to Lindsey when they saw her at school.

Lindsey committed to be baptized, and a few weeks after Patrick's baptism, the ward members, stake leaders, and family gathered again in the stake center to witness Patrick baptize his sister. And the next day, following Lindsey's confirmation, Patrick ordained his son a deacon and they passed the sacrament together.



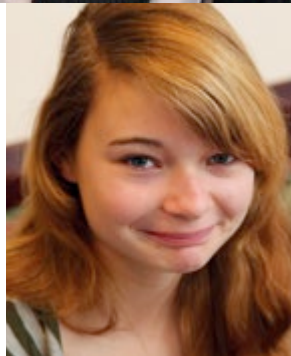
Sharing the Blessings

Since his baptism, Patrick has continued to share his testimony and conversion. He posted pictures from his baptismal service on Facebook. One of his cousins saw the pictures and expressed a desire to find the same happiness Patrick has found.

Six months after his baptism, Patrick was sustained in stake conference to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and was ordained an elder.

Patrick's stake president commented, "What a wonderful blessing it has been to be a part of Patrick and his family joining the Church. There's great power when the members and leaders of a ward and stake work together in a united effort with the full-time missionaries to bring these children of our Heavenly Father back to Him."

Patrick, dressed in a brand-new suit, shared his feelings about his conversion. "All it took was an invitation," he said about why he chose to meet with the missionaries. "When the high councilor asked me if I had been baptized, that started all this. Now I just



Above: Patrick and his sons after their baptism, with the sister missionaries who taught them. Inset: Patrick's example also led his sister Lindsey to investigate and join the Church.

want to help other people learn about the gospel. It has changed my life."

In this season of hastening of the Lord's work, when we have the largest full-time missionary force in the history of the world, the phrase "every member a missionary" has never been more true. Just ask Patrick Willoughby and his family, who have been blessed eternally by Church members, leaders, and missionaries who opened the gospel door and invited them to enter.

Elder Perry reminded members of the Church: "It is time for us to understand that we—the neighbors, friends, and family of less-active members and nonmembers—are ideally situated to offer an invitation with the proper love and consideration that the one we invite deserves. . . . We do not need, nor should we wait for, an assignment to invite our non-member family, friends, and neighbors to attend church, read the Book of Mormon, or meet with the full-time missionaries." ■

NOTES

1. L. Tom Perry, "Missionary Work in the Digital Age" (worldwide leadership training meeting, June 23, 2013), [lds.org/broadcasts](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts).
2. L. Tom Perry, "Missionary Work in the Digital Age."

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

By Lisa J. South

He returned,

missionary strong.

My joy was full when he asked,

“Mom, could we study the scriptures together?”

Now I sit before my scriptures

with new understanding.

I still pray for

enlightenment, knowledge,

but somehow it is different as I ask,

“Father, could we study the scriptures together?”



THE AUTHOR LIVES IN OKLAHOMA, USA. ILLUSTRATION BY ANNE MARIE OBORN.



THE CHURCH IN Brazil

THE FUTURE HAS
FINALLY ARRIVED

By Mark L. Grover

Retired Professor of Latin American Studies, Brigham Young University

In both physical size and population, Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world. But 100 years ago, its population was sparse, and few took advantage of its natural abundance: a tropical climate, rich land, and a wealth of minerals and water.

Max and Amalie Zapf were intrigued with Brazil and decided to make it their home. They had joined the Church in Germany in 1908 and immigrated to Brazil in March 1913. As the first known members of the Church to live in Brazil, they were excited to be in a country with so much promise. Yet the Church was not established in South America, and Max and Amalie soon realized how lonely they felt without the privilege of attending church and interacting with other members.¹

After 10 years in Brazil, Max and Amalie Zapf learned of another faithful Church member, Augusta Lippelt, who had emigrated in 1923 from Germany with her four children and nonmember husband to the Brazilian southern state of Santa Catarina. The Zapfs moved to Santa Catarina to be close to the Lippelts.

Two years later the South American Mission opened in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The second mission president, K. B. Reinhold Stoof, also from Germany, was inspired to establish the Church among the large German immigrant population in southern Brazil. In 1928 he assigned two missionaries, William Fred Heinz and Emil A. J. Schindler, to Joinville, a city with a large population of German immigrants. In 1930, President Stoof visited the Zapfs and Lippelts and established a branch, where both families could finally attend church together and partake of the sacrament.

What a difference 100 years has made. Before the Zapfs arrived in 1913, Brazil had no members, no missionaries, and no Church organization. Today more than



These missionaries served in Rio de Janeiro in the late 1930s, including Daniel Shupe, who helped translate the Book of Mormon into Portuguese.

mainly in the German language until 1940, when it changed to Portuguese, the country's official language. Missionaries were serving in numerous cities throughout the country until World War II required them to leave the country. Missionaries returned after the war, and the work began again.

In the city of Campinas, in the state of São Paulo, several young men and women joined and remained faithful. One of those early members was Antônio Carlos Camargo. He joined as a teenager in 1947, dated and married a member of the Church, and in 1954 attended Brigham Young University and later the University of Utah. He and his

TIME LINE

1928: First missionaries sent to Brazil among the German-speaking population in Joinville

1930: First branch organized, in Joinville

▼ 1931: First Church-owned meetinghouse in South America dedicated, in Joinville



► 1935: First mission created, headquartered in São Paulo



a million members live in Brazil, making it the country with the third-largest population of Church members (after the United States and Mexico). The Church now has congregations in all of Brazil's states and major cities. Max and Amalie's descendants enjoy the benefits of a strong and vibrant Church with a unique and fascinating history.

Growing Like an Oak

A prophecy given in Argentina in 1926 by Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggested that the region would initially have slow growth but that it would one day be mighty. He prophesied: "The work of the Lord will grow slowly for a time here just as an oak grows slowly from an acorn. It will not shoot up in a day as does the sunflower that grows quickly and then dies."²

Few joined the Church in the early years of the Brazil Mission, which opened in 1935. The Church operated

wife returned to Brazil in 1963 for his employment with a textile company and were surprised at the growth of the Church. When they left in 1954, there were only a few small branches, presided over by American missionaries. However, during their nine-year absence, almost 16,000 Brazilians had joined the Church, including many young families who had strong leadership abilities and a faithful commitment. Antônio stated, "They were great and noble spirits whom the Lord selected here in São Paulo."³

In 1966, 31 years after the Brazil Mission opened, the first stake in South America was organized in São Paulo. Elder Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, organized the stake with Walter Spät as president and Antônio as his second counselor.

Only a few of the new leaders had ever seen a functioning stake. But the Lord had prepared Antônio, who had significant experience with the Church in the United

States and was able to assist the stake presidency. From the leadership in the wards and branches of that first stake came leaders for many additional stakes. Their influence was felt throughout the country as the organization of stakes began at an impressive pace.

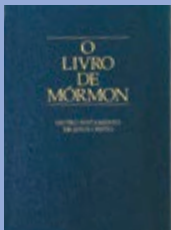
An Era of Growth

One unexpected announcement prompted greater growth of the Church in Brazil: the building of a temple. The members knew the importance of temples, but most had seen them only in photographs. The closest temples were in the United States, thousands of miles away.

that facilitated growth. Many Brazilians were moving to urban areas and becoming more open to new religions. At the same time, President Kimball asked Brazilian stake presidents to set goals to increase the number of Brazilian youth called to serve missions. Soon more than half the missionaries serving in Brazil were native Brazilians. These returned missionaries later became local leaders in the Church.

But Church growth highlighted a challenge: a lack of experience by the members. This challenge, however, had a positive outcome: it required increased faith and spiritual guidance among the members. For instance, in November

► 1939: *Book of Mormon published in Portuguese*



1954: *First time a Church President, David O. McKay, visits the country*

1959: *A second mission organized*

1966: *First stake created in South America, the São Paulo Brazil Stake*

► 1978: *First temple dedicated in South America, in São Paulo*



President Kimball visited Brazil in March 1975 and in a regional conference announced the construction of a temple in São Paulo. Great anticipation and financial sacrifice led to its completion in 1978. Members helped pay for the cost of building the temple through donations. Many of them sold their cars, jewelry, and land to obtain funds for their donations.

The temple's dedication in October and November 1978 was preceded in June by the revelation on the priesthood (see Official Declaration 2). This revelation meant that all worthy members in Brazil could participate in the dedication and the blessings of the temple.

The priesthood revelation and temple dedication were the catalysts for one of the greatest missionary successes ever seen in the Church: more than 700,000 Brazilians joined the Church in the next two decades.

Additional events encouraged this growth. The country was going through important political and social changes

1992 a stake was organized in Uruguaiana, on the western side of Brazil, far from established stakes of the Church. When a faithful and longtime member of the Church, José Candido Ferreira dos Santos, was called as the patriarch of the newly created stake, he was concerned. He explained to the General Authority: "I can't be a patriarch. I have no idea what one is. I don't recall ever meeting a patriarch and do not have my patriarchal blessing." The General Authority suggested a solution. In the neighboring city of Alegrete, a new patriarch, Rui Antônio Dávila, had also recently been called and was in a similar situation. The two patriarchs needed to give each other patriarchal blessings.

As Brother Santos was receiving his blessing from Brother Dávila, he was surprised as he heard blessings pronounced relating to his past and his personal desires that the patriarch had no way of knowing. When Brother Santos in turn pronounced a blessing on the head of Brother Dávila, again tears flowed as the same experience occurred. The two men



embraced afterwards with a deep understanding of what had just happened.⁴ Just as the Spirit inspired them to give their first patriarchal blessings, the Spirit inspired them as they gave hundreds more. The Lord provided many such spiritual blessings in a country where Church experience was limited.

Perpetual Education Fund

A lack of education among members was another challenge. Often, when missionaries returned home, they were spiritually

in Brazil, stated, “It is a blessing to see the young members finish their education and get good jobs, but the real success of the program is to see the level of confidence in them increase. They have greater hope.”⁵

Dedicated Members

The strength of the Church in Brazil is not just the number of members but also their dedication to the gospel. For example, Gelson Pizzirani, a retired airline administrator, was offered a challenging and lucrative



◀ 1985: Elder Helio R. Camargo is called as a General Authority, the first from Brazil

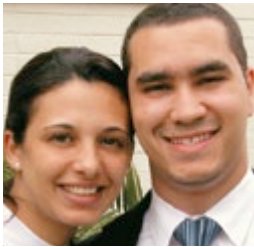
1986: Brazil becomes the fourth country to have more than 50 stakes

1987: The Brazil Area is created

1993: Brazil becomes the third country to have 100 stakes



◀ 1997: The Church's second-largest missionary training center is built in São Paulo



prepared but lacked the education to obtain adequate employment. Reinaldo Barreto, a stake president in São Paulo, explained, “It was a significant challenge to find work. Many missionaries lost hope of progressing, even losing the spiritual strength they had on their missions.” Education was often key to overcoming this challenge.

Consequently, the establishment of the Perpetual Education Fund by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) in 2001 has blessed thousands of Brazilian returned missionaries. It provides them with training opportunities, which have resulted in better employment. Members are better able to support a family and extend their educations even further. President Barreto, who became the administrator of the PEF program

Since 1999, thousands of Brazilian members have served in their communities as part of the Mormon Helping Hands effort.



job: help build a new airline in Brazil. At the same time, he and his wife, Míriam, were called to preside over the Brazil Brasília Mission. There was no question what to do. Since their baptisms as teenagers, they have dedicated their lives to the Church. Prior to their marriage, Brother Pizzirani was called to serve as a branch president. He was called to be a stake president at age 25 and accepted numerous other callings, including Area Seventy. Sister Pizzirani has served in stake and ward Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary callings. She expressed her feelings concerning the blessings of the gospel: “My life has been profoundly blessed because I have tried to keep the commandments.



▲ 2000: Recife and Porto Alegre Brazil Temples dedicated

2002: Campinas Temple dedicated

2002: Mormon Helping Hands receives national recognition as one of Brazil's most important volunteer organizations



◀ 2008: Curitiba Temple dedicated



▲ 2012: Manaus Temple dedicated

For every commandment I keep, I receive a blessing.”⁶

After finishing their mission in Brasília, their plan to settle down at home was interrupted by a short-term call to serve as president of the Brazil Campinas Mission. After a few months rest, they accepted a call in 2013 to be president and matron of the Recife Brazil Temple. One of the missionaries who baptized Brother Pizzirani was recently called with his wife to serve in the Recife Temple, where missionary and convert will serve together.

The example of the Pizziranis giving up career opportunities to serve the Lord is impressive but not unusual among the faithful members in Brazil.

The 100 years since the Zapf family arrived in Brazil have seen numerous positive changes but also occasional setbacks. Prophets who have visited, however, have never hesitated to express faith in the future of the country. Those prophecies are coming to fruition as Brazil takes its place in the world as a leader in economic growth and

GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN BRAZIL

1935	1938	1948	1958	1968	1978	1988	1998	2008	2013	THE CHURCH IN BRAZIL *
148	216	536	1,454	31,635	54,410	265,286	703,210	1,060,556	1,239,166	Members: 1,239,166
										Stakes: 242
										Missions: 32
										Temples: 6 in operation, 2 under construction



* As of November 2013

development. The descendants of the Zapfs—both their literal descendants and those who followed their footsteps in the gospel—are reaping the benefits of the hard work and patience of those early efforts to plant the gospel seeds. The second part of Elder Melvin J. Ballard’s prophecy given in 1926 has come to pass: “Thousands will join the Church here. It will be divided into more than one mission and will be one of the strongest in the Church.” ■

NOTES

1. Sibila Hack Nunes (granddaughter of Max and Amalie Zapf), interview by Michael Landon, Curitiba, Brazil, July 30, 2004, Church History Library.
2. Melvin J. Ballard, in Bryant S. Hinckley, *Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin Joseph Ballard* (1949), 100.
3. Antônio Carlos Camargo, interview by Mark L. Grover, São Paulo, Brazil, May 27, 2006, Harold B. Lee Library, p. 22.
4. Jose Candido Ferreira dos Santos, interview by Mark L. Grover, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, May 4, 2010, Harold B. Lee Library; Rui Antonio Dávila, interview by Mark L. Grover, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, May 5, 2010, Harold B. Lee Library.
5. Reinaldo de Souza Barreto, interview by Mark L. Grover, São Paulo, Brazil, June 16, 2006, Harold B. Lee Library, p. 14.
6. Míriam da Silva Sulé Pizzirani, interview by Mark L. Grover, São Paulo, Brazil, March 21, 1982, Harold B. Lee Library, p. 7.



**By Bishop
Dean M. Davies**
Second Counselor in
the Presiding Bishopric

Heavenly Help

FOR OUR MORTAL JOURNEY

Some time ago I participated with Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in a series of priesthood leadership meetings in Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA. On Friday evening we held a devotional with LDS cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

After the opening hymn and prayer, Elder Holland determined that in place of formal talks or presentations, the time would be given to the cadets to ask questions. Elder Holland fielded the first few questions, and then a young man stood and sincerely asked the following question: “Elder Holland, does the Lord give us challenges that are intended to impede our progress?”

I thought to myself what a great question that was. Then, after a moment of thought, Elder Holland responded, “Well, that sounds like a Bishop Davies question!”

For a moment I froze. But in those few seconds before giving a response, and with a prayer in my heart, I thought about those attending. The bright and capable cadets are there for a minimum of four years. They cannot marry, they have limited outside access and contact, and they are learning how to defend their country. They love God, are committed to keeping their covenants, and want to progress.

My response came easily and without hesitation: “No, the Lord does not give us challenges that are intended to impede our eternal progress.”

The scriptures teach that in our personal search for support and assistance, there is one, even Jesus Christ, who can help us.

A Time of Trial and Testing

In the beginning, I explained to the cadets, while we were in the presence of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, we learned that mortality would be a time of trial and testing. We learned that mortality would include such challenges as disease, disability, temptation, calamity, natural disaster, and war. Some of the Father’s children would be born with imperfect bodies; others would experience poverty. Unwise choices by some of His children would bring heartbreak and discouragement.

Thankfully, as President Thomas S. Monson has observed, “our Heavenly Father did not launch us on our eternal voyage without providing the means whereby we could receive from Him guidance to ensure our safe return.”¹

Essential to our personal faith and development is the unmistakable knowledge that our Father and our Savior want us to succeed. They want us to return to Their presence. Because of Their love for us, They have given us resources to obtain comfort, direction, and strength for our journey home. I speak of prayer, the wonderful



and sublime ability to communicate and share our concerns with the Father; the Holy Spirit, which will enlighten and comfort us; and the words of the prophets, both ancient and modern. These resources give us understanding and direction in dealing with our challenges.

It is important to understand that blessings often accompany our challenges. For example, those who suffer pain and afflictions are often better able to understand and have compassion and sympathy for others who similarly suffer.

Challenges Come to All

Some of life's disappointments and challenges may be found in the place dearest to us—our family. Sister Davies and I love our five children and have striven to do the things the prophets have instructed. We have prayed together, held family home evening, read the scriptures, attended Church meetings, and shared with our children our testimonies of the gospel.

Nevertheless, one of our beautiful daughters has chosen to leave the gospel and her covenants. It breaks our hearts, but we still love her and pray for her. And we are comforted by the Lord as we continue to do so.

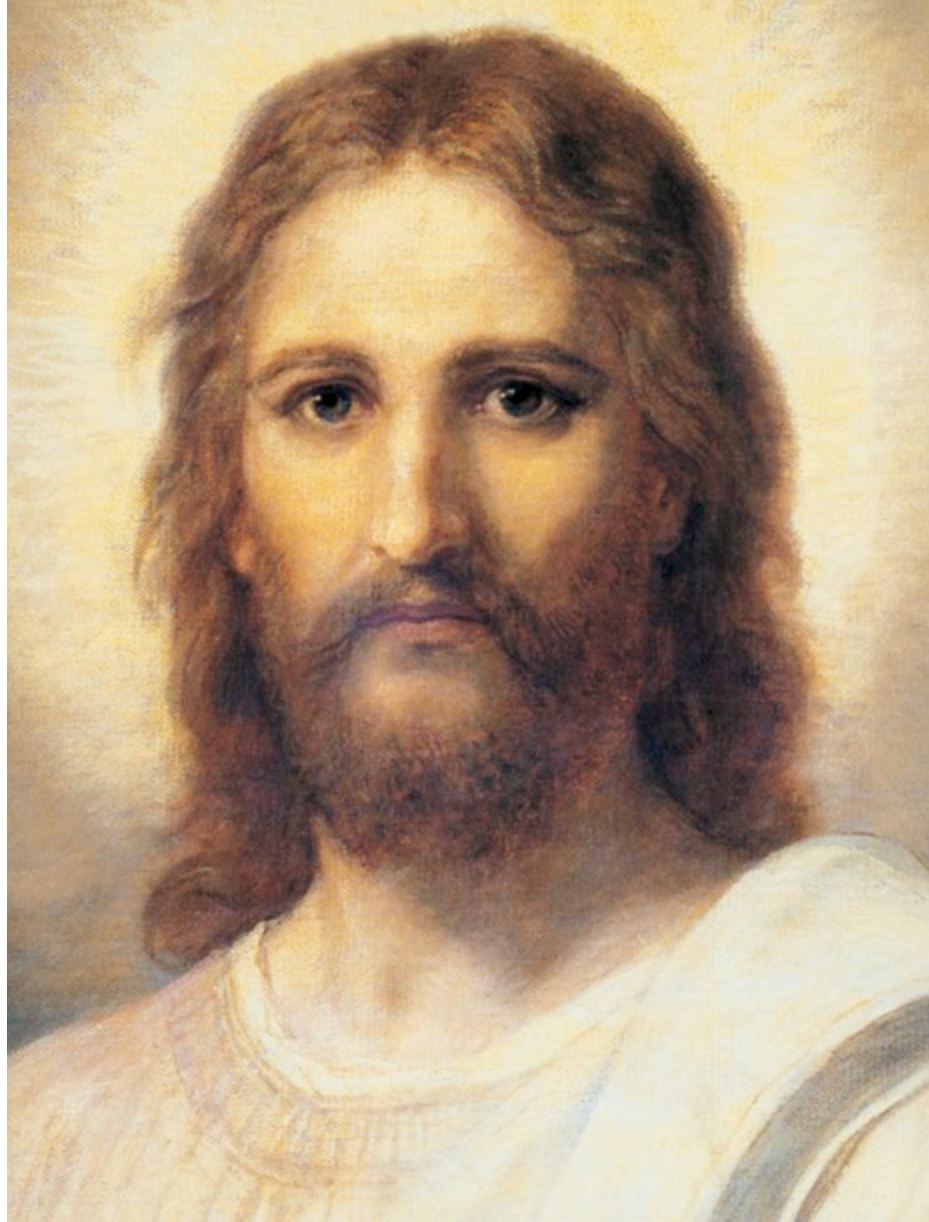
I love the words Lehi spoke to his son Jacob:

“Behold, in thy childhood thou hast suffered afflictions and much sorrow, because of the rudeness of thy brethren.

“Nevertheless, Jacob, my firstborn in the wilderness, thou knowest the greatness of God; and he shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain” (2 Nephi 2:1–2).

Life's challenges take place in a multitude of settings—at home, at school, and at work. Challenges may come in the form of physical limitations, temptations, or social or emotional difficulties. Relief from our challenges may come slowly or quickly; in some cases full relief may not come until after this mortal existence.

Sometimes challenges are miraculously resolved.



Certainly the Savior's life was filled with healing the sick and afflicted and even raising the dead. Our personal faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and our devotion to God will greatly influence the outcome of our challenges. We can have confidence that the Lord knows at all times what is in our best interest and that where there is faith, and in accordance with His will, miracles can occur.

A Change of Heart

Before being called to the Presiding Bishopric, I had the blessing of helping to identify and acquire sites for temples. In 2008, President Monson announced the Philadelphia Pennsylvania Temple. After the First Presidency gave permission to search for a temple site, we identified a number of possible locations. Two properties across the street from each other emerged as highly desirable. We evaluated the

properties and made an offer. To my surprise, the owner of the first property accepted our offer without negotiation.

When I met with the owner, he said he had owned the property for almost 25 years and could have developed it several times. He added that he had always felt that the property had a “higher and better purpose.”

Shortly thereafter, however, the city of Philadelphia, through a city-controlled agency, filed an action to stop the Church purchase. We did everything we could to remove the claim but were unsuccessful.

We had felt good about the property and that it was the right place for the temple. So, as a last resort, we determined to meet with the mayor. The Church temple architect and I flew to Philadelphia, and before the scheduled meeting, we met with local legal counsel, an Area Seventy, and two local Church members.

One of the members was Vai Sikahema, a well-known local celebrity who had played football at Brigham Young University and then played professional football for the Philadelphia Eagles. After retiring from football, he became a sports announcer on a local television station. In our pre-meeting we knelt in prayer to seek the Lord’s blessing on our efforts.

At our meeting with the mayor, it soon became clear that he was set against the project. His staff had assured him that this property was better suited for a commercial office building or a hotel that would generate jobs and tax revenue. We would need to look for another site.

I asked him if the architect could show a drawing or two of how the temple might look. As the architect began to stand, Brother Sikahema said, “Mr. Mayor, may I say something?” The mayor knew Brother Sikahema and said, “Of course.”

Brother Sikahema humbly said, “Many years ago when I was a young boy in Tonga, my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and I sold our home, sold fruit and vegetables, sold everything we could to raise enough money to travel to Hamilton, New Zealand, to be sealed as an eternal family in the temple. You need this temple. This temple will bless your city. It will bless the people.”

He sat down, and the Church architect then showed the mayor a few drawings. As he sat down, a city councilman who was not a member of the Church stood.

“Mr. Mayor,” he said, “I have spoken with the leaders in the community and the neighbors of this property. We want this temple. We need this temple. It will bless our city. It will bless our community. It will bless our people.”

The Spirit had come into the meeting. We were all touched. The mayor’s heart was changed. The temple would go forward on the site selected. At the end of the meeting, to my surprise, the mayor asked if I would offer a prayer.

The Lord Will Help Us

The Lord knows the end from the beginning. He knew almost 40 years before then that Vai Sikahema would need to share his faith and testimony to help advance His work.

The scriptures teach that in our personal search for support and assistance, there is one, even Jesus Christ, who can help us. He has offered this sweet counsel:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:28–29).

Does the Lord give us challenges in life that are intended to impede us? No. When we face tests and trials, rather than feeling sorry for ourselves, let us ask these questions: “What can I learn from this experience?” and “How will this experience strengthen me and help me prepare for the future?”

I humbly bear testimony of Jesus Christ and His Atonement—that He lives and that He is fully capable of assisting us throughout our mortal journey. ■

From a devotional address, “We Will Prove Them Herewith,” given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on May 14, 2013. For the full address, visit web.byui.edu/devotionalsand speeches.

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “The Race of Life,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 92.

Conference Connection: For a similar message from April 2014 general conference, read “Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease” by Elder David A. Bednar.



Scout Training

WAS THE ANSWER

*Scout training changed me; more important,
it changed the young men.*

By Christopher M. Grimes

While serving as the bishop of my ward, I thought I was too busy to attend Scout training. As a result, after being released as bishop and called as Varsity coach, I wasn't sure what a Varsity coach was or did.

What I did know is that we had a teachers quorum of 12 young men—one of them my son—who lacked unity and had difficulty showing up on Sunday, doing their home teaching, and fulfilling other priesthood assignments. They hadn't held activities consistently, and they hadn't gone camping in over a year.

When the teachers quorum adviser and I tried to plan some activities for them, they responded, "Whatever." They didn't follow up on related assignments we gave them, and the more we tried to promote our ideas, the more lackluster the young men became.

A Light Came On

I wondered if there was more I could be learning and doing as a Varsity coach and Young Men leader, so I read several talks by Charles W. Dahlquist II, former Young Men general president. He said:

"It is time we received the training . . . to help us become better priesthood and Young Men leaders and [it is time we] recognized that Scouting is a vital part of the Aaronic Priesthood activity program and can help greatly to build better-prepared missionaries, better husbands and fathers, [and] help prepare our young men to receive the ordinances of the temple, and help reactivate those who have drifted."¹

I thought to myself, "This is coming from our Church leaders. They're not asking me if I would like to go to training if I have time. They're saying that *all* those



with responsibility for young men have a duty to be fully trained in Scouting and Aaronic Priesthood in order to help strengthen and save our youth.”

Out of obedience, I bought a uniform and went to a whole day of position-specific training. Then I went to the Red Cross and got CPR and first-aid certified. Then I completed Outdoor Leader Skills. Then I went to Wood Badge. I also read the *Varsity Guidebook* and the *Boy Scout Handbook* cover to cover, and I got all the books on program features for Varsity Scouting.² I also began to study more earnestly about Aaronic Priesthood and Duty to God.

In the process, a light came on. Suddenly I began to see and feel the vision the Lord has for the young men, which helped me see there was much more I could do to help them.

We’re in This Together

“Here is some of the stuff you can do,” I told the young men after I became acquainted with the 27 Varsity team program features. They liked the idea of a knife-throwing competition, which is part of the Frontiersman program feature. A couple of days later I found my son Blake throwing steak knives into our nice wooden yard furniture.

“You’re really interested in this, aren’t you?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said.

“All right, let’s work on it,” I said. “First, let me get you a board to throw at.”

Suddenly the young men got excited, and we leaders got out of the way. Knives were expensive, so they decided to make their own. Blake called a brother in our ward who had tools and access to metal. Then he called a brother in another ward and asked if they could use his shop. The quorum president, acting as Varsity team captain, assigned the young men as program managers³ and gave everyone something to do.

Next, the young men decided they wanted activity shirts and voted on a shirt logo. When they showed up for our first high-adventure backpacking trip, they all had on their shirts. This encouraged unity, and they wore the shirts for their activities afterward.

Around the campfire during the first night of our hike, I handed out bracelets I had learned to make at Wood Badge. “Put one on your neighbor,” I said. “We’re brothers, and we’re doing this week together.” After our trip, some of those young men would not take the bracelets off.

Where once they had been lackluster about “our” activities, they became enthusiastic about “their” activities, which they chose, planned, and carried out under the direction of their quorum president/team captain.

I Didn't Have to Reinvent the Wheel

Once the young men became engaged, other things fell into place. As they got excited about going on high-adventure activities, they started working together as a team, hanging out, and being more diligent in priesthood service. They started stepping up in ways we never could have imagined. I had no idea that Scouting would play such a big role, but it enhanced everything else and gave us opportunities to teach priesthood principles.

By using Scouting to help the young men learn priesthood leadership, our quorum did a complete 180. The deacons and priests quorums, seeing what we were doing, started stepping up as well.

The teachers quorum president was reluctant at first as we increased our focus on encouraging him to use his priesthood keys. But we'd say, "It's your call. You hold the keys." Success took time and consistency, but he started to feel more comfortable with his responsibility.

My training gave us a uniform, organized way to help the young men plan their activities. I didn't have to reinvent the wheel; I just had to implement my training. Before, we racked our brains about what we were going to do each week for Young Men night. Now we didn't have enough weeks to do all the activities the young men wanted to do. Once they became engaged, we had no problem planning a year ahead.

The more time we spent outdoors with the young men, the more opportunities we had to instruct them on leadership principles and the more chances they had to teach each other.

The more time we spent outdoors with the young men, the more opportunities they had to learn leadership principles and to teach each other.

My Eyes Were Opened

As I began praying more about each young man, I could feel my love for them grow. And as I studied the *Varsity Guidebook*, the *Boy Scout Handbook*, Duty to God, and the scriptures and then prayed about my calling, my eyes were opened. At times I would receive inspiration, and thoughts would come to me about how to better encourage and strengthen the young men in their priesthood duties.

During one court of honor, a young man presented me with his mentor pin, hugged me, and whispered, "You've been like a father to me." I hadn't realized how much our relationship meant to him. I believe that would not have happened had I not followed the counsel of the Brethren.

If we are having trouble getting our young men to advance in the priesthood, we may not be doing everything the Brethren have asked us to do. Scout training made my calling 10 times easier, and we had 10 times the results. The young men caught fire and carried the program themselves. My training changed me; more important, it changed the young men. ■

The author lives in Washington, USA.

NOTES

1. Charles W. Dahlquist II, "Strengthening and Vitalizing Aaronic Priesthood Quorums," address given at Young Men open house, Sept. 2004.
2. Varsity Scouting has five areas of emphasis that are supported by 27 detailed program features that help Scouts and leaders plan activities.
3. Program managers are young men assigned to oversee each of the five areas of emphasis in Varsity Scouting: advancement, high adventure/sports, personal development, service, and special programs and events.



"Scout training made my calling 10 times easier, and we had 10 times the results," says Christopher M. Grimes, pictured above with his wife, Marcie, and their sons (left to right), Blake and Matthew.

TEN TIPS

for Parents of Young Adults

By Wendy Ulrich
Licensed Psychologist

When my husband and I helped our children move into college dorms or enter the missionary training center, we felt a combination of sadness and liberation to think that they—and we—were finally “done.” We soon realized, however, that along with gaining new competence and freedom, our children faced additional challenges. While our actual control over their lives evaporated, their need for support—a different kind of support—actually increased.

TODAY'S CHALLENGES

Here are some of the challenges young adults face in today's world, along with questions those challenges generate for parents.



LONGER SINGLE LIFE.

Societal trends of starting families later in life can leave some young adults feeling like perpetual adolescents. Others stress out, wondering if they will ever marry or have children. As parents, how can we best help them have an eternal perspective?



FINANCIAL UNCERTAINTY.

Many of today's young adults may not match their parents economically. They may find it difficult to obtain a job—even with a college degree—or to provide for a family. As parents, should we pitch in economically, or should we assume our children will grow from figuring out their own finances?





OVERWHELMING

OPTIONS. Today's young adults may have a greater variety of career choices. But sometimes all those choices can seem overwhelming. How can parents help adult children explore options but also decide on a satisfying career?

Despite the challenges of today's world, parents can continue to bless their young adult children by providing righteous support and guidance.

LIVING WITH PARENTS. Whether or not they marry, a growing number of young adults between ages 18 and 34 are living with parents. When adult children live with their parents, how should parents properly negotiate matters such as who pays for groceries and how to discipline grandchildren?



RELIGIOUS AFFILIA-

TION. Today, young adults of all faiths are less likely to affiliate with a church than they were just one generation ago. How can we as parents encourage our adult children to remain active in the Church? How can we spiritually support them even if they opt out of Church activity?

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

Even as our adult children may surpass us in some ability or accomplishment, they still need and deserve parental support to navigate the world. Following are 10 guidelines to consider.

1. FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILDREN WANT AND LOVE. Instead of telling your young adult children how to get what *you* think they need, ask about *their* values, goals, and dreams. They may ask you to help them map out a path to get there. If they do, let *their* dreams guide your conversations. Explore pros and cons, pray for guidance, and keep talking. If they don't know what they want, encourage them to meet with a guidance counselor, take vocational interest tests, or get more experience through work and volunteering.

2. PRAYERFULLY STUDY DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 121:34-46. These verses apply beautifully to mothers and fathers. They teach correct principles about how to provide righteous guidance to our adult children.

3. INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH MANY YOUNG ADULTS. You may find that other people's children are also interested in how you navigated your

20s and 30s. Young adults are curious about how older adults balanced competing priorities, chose careers, or knew when they had found their spouse. When you interact with these young adults, you will understand more about the challenges their generation faces.

4. POINT OUT THEIR GIFTS. Helping young adults discover their talents and interests can help them imagine a satisfying future. Point out that people seldom enjoy anything until they invest enough effort to be competent. Even those with a lot of raw talent must spend time developing it in order to succeed.



5. TRUST THEM WITH THEIR DECISIONS.

This doesn't mean believing that they will always make perfect choices. It means trusting that they can be resilient, that God is forgiving, and that life can be deeply meaningful even when it includes overcoming failure or enduring trials. Young *children* can be scarred by trauma, but young *adults* grow from overcoming obstacles rather than avoiding them. Provide emotional and practical support, encourage breaks from the stress, pray with and for them, and inject a little humor.



6. PRAISE THEM FOR THEIR EFFORTS.

Praising young adults for hard work and resilience helps them stick with tasks longer, take on more challenges, and find more enjoyment in their work. A formula shared by President Thomas S. Monson states, “Work will win when wishy-washy wishing won’t.”¹

7. SEEK FOR INSPIRATION. Our prayers and faith help us open our hearts to let God change us. One woman I know felt concern about the TV shows her adult children let their children watch. She felt the shows modeled disrespect and quarreling, even though they were considered age-appropriate. Not wanting to intrude, she prayed and fasted repeatedly about what to do or say. One morning her daughter-in-law called to ask for advice about how to manage disrespect and quarreling among her children. My friend shared her observation about the TV shows, an influence her daughter-in-law had never noticed. The young parents addressed the issue with their children. Changes were agreed upon, and the atmosphere in the home improved.



8. TALK ABOUT MONEY. With sensitivity to your own situation and the maturity of each child, prayerfully decide what financial help, if any, to give your children. Perhaps they need your help only to create a budget. If you give them financial assistance, be clear from the start if you want the money repaid or used in a certain way. Then cheerfully give them



the responsibility to manage their funds and learn from mistakes, including doing without tomorrow if they overspend today.

9. BE HUMBLE. When you feel inclined to berate yourself for parenting mistakes, try to deepen your humility instead of your humiliation. Apologize gracefully, say what you’ll do to improve, and then move forward with confidence. Let your children conclude from observing you that mistakes are not the end, apologies are not a sign of weakness, and forgiving others and ourselves brings peace.

10. MEASURE TRUE SUCCESS. When we focus too much on how others will judge us for our children’s choices (either for good or bad), we lose objectivity, and we often lose the Spirit. Remember that our success as parents is not defined by how well our children live our values but by how consistently and selflessly *we* live them.

As we prayerfully consider the needs and personalities of each of our young adult children, the Spirit can help us guide without criticizing, support without suffocating, and step back without abandoning. As we do so, our young adult children will come to trust that both we and the Lord are on their side. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Great Expectations” (Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Jan. 11, 2009), 6, speeches.byu.edu.

May 5, 1850: Sarah Louisa (Louie) Bouton is born in Norwalk, Connecticut. (Right: Engraving of Norwalk, circa 1855.)



Sept. 19, 1866: Louie meets Joseph H. Felt, a returned missionary escorting the Saints on their journey from Omaha to Salt Lake City. They marry on December 29, 1866.

1867–69: Louie and Joseph leave in November 1867 for the Muddy River Mission (in present-day Nevada). Eventually, due to harsh living conditions and other factors, Brigham Young orders the mission abandoned. Louie and Joseph return to Salt Lake City.

Aug. 25, 1878: Aurelia Spencer Rogers organizes the first ward Primary (illustrated at right).

Louie B. Felt

DEDICATING HER LIFE TO CHILDREN

Although Louie B. Felt did not have children of her own, her deep love for all children and her intense desire to better their lives manifested themselves throughout her lengthy service in the Primary organization.

By Janet Peterson

Louie B. Felt, the first Primary general president, and her counselor May Anderson were walking along a street in Salt Lake City, Utah, one afternoon and saw a boy, apparently disabled by polio, having difficulty maneuvering on his crutches. As they continued their walk, they discussed the plight of sick children, especially those whose parents could not afford adequate medical care. Louie and May conceived the idea of providing a room for children at a local hospital. In 1911, the First Presidency approved establishing one room for boys and another for girls at the Groves LDS Hospital. While a small beginning, these convalescent rooms provided a way to help ailing children and led to the founding of the Primary Children's Hospital. Louie always wanted the best for children; the hospital was just one example of this desire.





*Sept. 14, 1878:
Louie is called as
Primary president
in the Eleventh
Ward (pictured
at right).*



*June 19, 1880:
Louie is sustained
as Primary gen-
eral president.*

*Oct. 5, 1889: President
Louie B. Felt conducts
the first Primary
convention for stake
leaders.*



*During her
45 years of
service as
Primary
general
president,
Louie B. Felt
“mothered”
100,000
children and
guided 30,000
Primary leaders.*

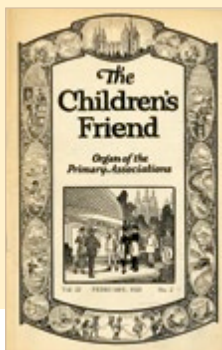


1895–96: Louie attends training classes of the Utah Kindergarten Association. She and her counselors implement child-centered education and age-group classes in Primary.



July 1897: Pioneer jubilee celebrations in Salt Lake include a children's parade.

Jan. 1902: The first issue of the Children's Friend is published.



May 29, 1902: The first Primary general conference is held in the Assembly Hall on Temple Square to aid communication among Primary units. All Primary leaders are invited.



Although Louie did not have children of her own, her deep love for all children and her intense desire to better their lives manifested themselves throughout her lengthy service in the Primary organization. Despite suffering ill health most of her life, she was described as being full of life: "Her face is pale, refined and spiritual in its expression; her spirit buoyant and cheerful, and her animated manner and smile as frank as a child's."¹ Louie's strong testimony of the gospel and desire to serve others, coupled with her determined nature, shaped how she approached challenges in her life.

Childhood to Marriage

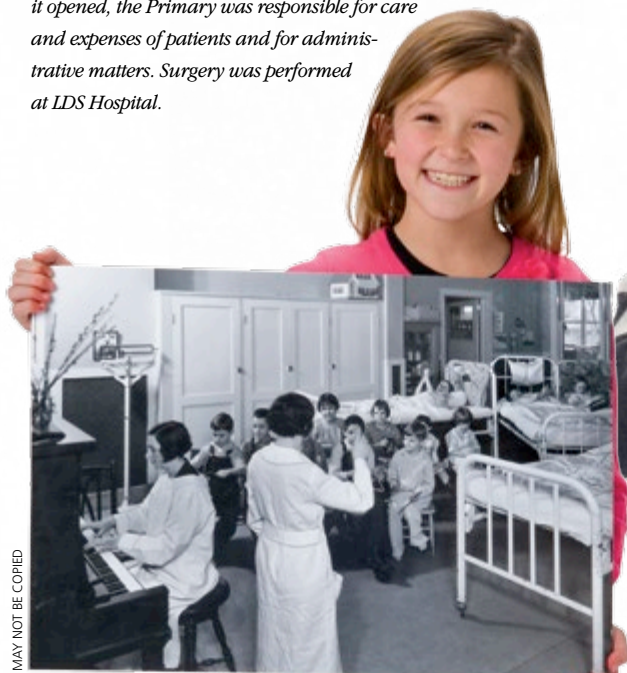
Known throughout her life as Louie, Sarah Louisa Bouton Felt was the third of Joseph and Mary Barto Bouton's five children and was born in Norwalk, Connecticut, on May 5, 1850. The Boutons had joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints prior to her birth. Louie enjoyed many family

outings gathering berries and nuts, dredging for clams and oysters in the Long Island Sound, and tapping maple sap. She especially liked to ice skate in the winter. Louie learned homemaking skills from her mother and strict observance of the Sabbath from her father. During her youth, Louie developed a firm testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When Louie was 14 years old, the Bouton family decided to join the Saints in Utah. While they were en route by train to Omaha, Nebraska, a fire in the baggage car destroyed all their belongings. They thus returned to Norwalk to prepare for the trek once more. Louie's father, Joseph, however, became seriously ill while they were en route again. Part of the family stayed near Omaha to care for him, but he insisted that Louie and two of her brothers continue traveling to Zion.

It was during this part of the journey that Louie met Joseph H. Felt, the leader of the wagon train and recently returned from a Scandinavian mission. Joseph was attracted

When the Primary Children's Hospital was built, the Church donated necessary equipment and renovated the Hyde home north of Temple Square. After it opened, the Primary was responsible for care and expenses of patients and for administrative matters. Surgery was performed at LDS Hospital.



MAY NOT BE COPIED



Top right: The Hyde home as it looked when it was converted to the first Primary Children's Hospital.

Bottom left: Children singing in the interior of the 1922 Primary Children's Hospital.

1912–13: Primary revises its curriculum to focus on social and ethical training and activities.

1913: A two-room children's ward opens in Groves LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City, with partial funding from voluntary donations of pennies from Primary children. (Below: Example of a fund-raising bank used in later years for Primary Children's Hospital.)



1915: The Pioneer Day parade includes a horse-drawn float by the Primary. It features children dressed as flowers inside a huge woven basket.



to the tall, blue-eyed, blonde Louie and she to him. Once settled in Salt Lake City, 26-year-old Joseph and 16-year-old Louie married on December 29, 1866.

Family Life

The following October, President Brigham Young called the Felts to help settle the Muddy River Mission (near today's Moapa in southeastern Nevada). They stopped in St. George, Utah, along the way, and it was around this time that Louie suffered a miscarriage (leaving her unable to have children). Joseph asked Louie about the possibility of staying in St. George. She characteristically replied, "We were not sent to St. George; we were sent to the Muddy. You may do as you please; I am going on."²

Once they had arrived at the Muddy, the colonists suffered extreme conditions in the arid, hot weather as they lived in tents and wagons until they could build adobe huts. Sandstorms filled irrigation canals and cut off water to the young shoots and plants that simply wilted in the heat. Two years later, when President Young saw the Saints' harsh living conditions, he closed the mission. Upon the Felts' return to Salt Lake City, Joseph found work at ZCMI, a co-op general store.

Becoming a Leader of Children

Though "denied the great privilege of being a mother," Louie found fulfillment in loving, teaching, and serving others' children. She firmly believed that God gave her "many, many lovely children through other mothers, that I may pray for, think of, and love."³

In 1878, shortly after Aurelia Spencer Rogers started the first ward Primary in Farmington, Utah, leaders called Louie as president of the Eleventh Ward Primary. One of



Spanish Fork Primary, circa 1917

her co-workers observed: "Louie had a most wonderful influence over the little children of the Eleventh Ward. They were fascinated by her gracious manner. Every child was willing and anxious to do whatever she suggested."⁴

Primary quickly spread throughout other Latter-day Saint communities, aided by Relief Society general president Eliza R. Snow, who

encouraged the organization of Primaries as she traveled throughout Utah and surrounding Latter-day Saint settlements. By 1888, almost every ward had its own Primary. All the children met together and participated in singing and other activities.

At the morning session of a special women's meeting in June 1880, President John Taylor (1808–87) created presidencies for the three reorganized auxiliaries. Louie B. Felt was sustained as the Primary general president. In the afternoon session, Eliza R. Snow was sustained as general president of the Relief Society and Elmina S. Taylor as general president of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association. Thirty-year-old Louie knew this calling came from the Lord. While she felt unqualified and unprepared and did not want to be in the limelight, she nevertheless said, "I will do the best I can."⁵ That determination, combined with her faith, fostered organizational as well as personal growth during her lengthy administration.

Louie visited Primary leaders, held conferences, and conducted meetings in many parts of Utah, despite health challenges of partial paralysis and rheumatism. During one train trip, Louie met May Anderson, a young convert from Liverpool, England. That initial introduction led to a lifelong friendship; Louie was like an older sister to May, and they

1917: Primary girls join in the effort to knit socks and bandages for World War I soldiers.



1918: Primary is not held during the worldwide flu pandemic.

May 11, 1922: President Heber J. Grant dedicates the Primary Children's Hospital, a 35-bed facility across the street from Temple Square. Primary children donate birthday pennies to help support the hospital. (Right: Patients on an outing to Liberty Park in Salt Lake City.)



Oct. 6, 1925: At age 75 and in failing health, Louie, upon her request, is released as Primary general president. She is made an honorary general board member.

served together for 35 years in the Primary. Louie's husband, Joseph, supported her in her new calling. Twice during the 1880s, he was called as a full-time missionary, as many married men were: he served in the Indian Territory Mission (in present-day Oklahoma) and later in the eastern United States.

Shaping a Child-Oriented Primary

Early Primary classes followed the same pattern as 19th-century education: children learned by drill, rote, and reciting. Louie, however, became aware of an educational movement, the "kindergarten movement," that was gaining ground in the United States in the 1890s. It was child-centered and focused on a child's development, nature, and needs. Teachers served as leaders rather than taskmasters. Learning took place through activity, art, play, experimentation, freedom, curiosity, and interest.

Both Louie and May enrolled in classes for this progressive kindergarten movement and together opened a private kindergarten. Their training and teaching had a profound influence on the development of Primary as the two women saw ways to implement child-centered education in Primary. Following educational trends, they created age-groups and geared lessons to the various levels of children's development. Singing, storytelling, drama, dancing, and arts and crafts began to fill weekday Primary meetings.

Establishing the *Children's Friend*

Louie felt a great need to communicate with local Primary leaders and provide printed lessons for each age-group. She suggested to the First Presidency that the Primary publish a periodical. During this time in Church history, each auxiliary was responsible to raise its own money to support its work. Church leaders told Louie that a magazine would be too costly. Still, she continued to repeat her request. In 1901, President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) gave approval for a magazine with the provision that the Primary manage it and keep it out of debt. Louie thus offered her own home as collateral. Louie's counselor May oversaw the new magazine.

First published in 1902, the *Children's Friend* was initially a magazine to help leaders and teachers and did not contain illustrations or stories for children. Later, the magazine became fully child-oriented and was eventually renamed the *Friend*.

In 1907, Louie's husband, Joseph, passed away at the age of 67. Now a widow at 57, Louie continued her dedicated work in behalf of children.

Aiding Children through the Primary Children's Hospital

With the opening of two convalescent rooms at the Groves LDS Hospital in 1913, Louie realized her dream to improve the physical well-being of children. This space, however, soon became inadequate to handle the number of children who needed care. Seeking to learn more, Louie and May visited convalescent hospitals in the East to study modern practices but learned little. They decided to develop their own hospital program.

In 1922, Louie oversaw the conversion of a large home across the street from Temple Square in Salt Lake City into the LDS Children's Convalescent Hospital. While the Church donated the building and equipment, the Primary paid for the expenses of caring for patients and of hospital administration. During the facility's 30 years of operation, nearly 10,000 children received inpatient or outpatient care.

To raise funds for this hospital, the Primary, under Louie's direction as general president, initiated the Penny Parade, which called for children to donate a penny for every year of their age. These pennies provided a large portion of the hospital's funding for many years. In 1952, the hospital moved to a larger and full-service facility on Twelfth Avenue, with the Primary paying half the cost. Until the Church turned the hospital over to a private organization in 1975, the Primary general presidency was responsible for the administration and operation of what was called the Primary Children's Hospital. In 1990 the hospital was moved to its current location on the University of Utah campus and is regarded as an extraordinary children's facility.

Feb. 13, 1928: Louie B. Felt dies at home at age 77. (Right: Elder David O. McKay with Primary children in Hawaii, 1921.)



AURELIA SPENCER ROGERS (1834–1922)



Though Aurelia Rogers never served as Primary general president, she has always been recognized as its founder. As the mother of 12 children, 44-year-old Aurelia felt that the neighborhood boys should be taught values that would prepare them to be responsible adults. At this time there was no auxiliary for children, so she discussed her ideas with Relief Society president Eliza R. Snow. Soon, with the approval of President John Taylor, Aurelia received a calling from her bishop to begin a Primary in their ward. Leaders decided that boys and girls ages four to fourteen would be invited. Under the direction of the priesthood, Aurelia and others taught 224 children in that first Primary meeting on Sunday, August 25, 1878, in Farmington, Utah. (See “History of Primary,” [lds.org/callings/primary/getting-started/history-of-primary](https://www.lds.org/callings/primary/getting-started/history-of-primary).)

Serving Children for Four and a Half Decades

At age 75 and experiencing a marked decline in health, Louie asked for a release, which was extended at the October 1925 general conference. During her 45 years as Primary general president, it is estimated she “mothered” 100,000 children and supervised 30,000 teachers and leaders. In turn, Louie was beloved by Primary children and their leaders. As one board member expressed it, “Not only has she intelligently directed the affairs of the Primary Association of the Church but she has held the sisters together in love.”⁶ Louie’s co-workers hosted a party to celebrate her birthday in 1911. At another celebration, 1,500 Primary children sang and danced in her honor.

Louie B. Felt died February 13, 1928, at the age of 77. By turning her life’s sorrow into loving service, she blessed children throughout the Church. Her determination to better their lives was manifested through the programs she initiated as the longest-serving auxiliary general president in the history of the Church. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. “Louie Felt,” in Augusta Joyce Crocheron, comp., *Representative Women of Deseret* (1884), 59.
2. In “Louie B. Felt,” *Children’s Friend*, Oct. 1919, 408.
3. Louie B. Felt, in “Report of the Sixth Annual Convention of Primary Association Workers,” *Children’s Friend*, July 1908, 276.
4. Lillie T. Freeze, in “Louie B. Felt,” *Children’s Friend*, Oct. 1919, 413.
5. Louie B. Felt, in Adelaide U. Hardy, “Living for a Purpose,” *Children’s Friend*, Dec. 1918, 476.
6. “Louie B. Felt: A Tribute,” *Children’s Friend*, Nov. 1925, 424.

Unlike today, the Primary was responsible for funding its own magazine. To keep the Children’s Friend out of debt, Louie offered her home as collateral. One of her counselors, May Anderson, resigned her teaching position at the University of Utah to work on the magazine. Right: Early magazines—such as those from 1921 (2) and 1916 (3)—were small (6" x 9"). They have been enlarged here for easier viewing. Other issues shown here—1925 (1), 2014 (4), and 1969 (5)—are actual size.



*I can honor my
Heavenly Father
by caring for my
body and using it
for wise purposes.*



The Gift

OF OUR

PHYSICAL BODIES

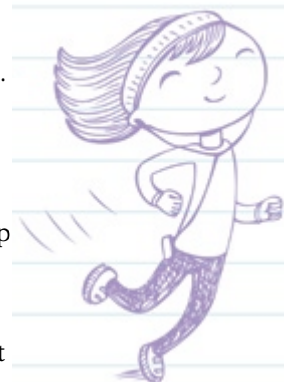
By Victoria Webb Rutherford

Years ago as an early teen, I began to be aware that my body, the precious tabernacle I had likely yearned for in the pre-earth life, was much bigger than might be physically or socially healthy for me, and I wondered what that would mean for my life. It was a confusing time as I struggled to reconcile the contradictory views being thrown at me: God looked on the heart, but it seemed His children, both old and young, cared a great deal about what size I was and what clothes I wore. I did not then understand the relationships between healthful eating, physical exercise, and my appearance, but I did know that God loved me and that He had a plan for me.

My Identity as a Daughter of God

I once confided to my Young Women leader that I was afraid that the boys might not be interested in me because I was overweight. She wisely told me to concentrate on being a friend to all, both boys and girls, and assured me that a person who was a friend to all would be very attractive to the right kind of person. She told me that what we find attractive is a type of mirror into our own souls: “For intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; wisdom receiveth wisdom; truth embraceth truth; virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light” (D&C 88:40). I tucked her message into my heart and prayed to Heavenly Father to know if it was true.

I remember praying often to Heavenly Father about the struggle with my weight. In my prayers I attempted to strike a bargain with Him, suggesting that if I read my scriptures every day and prayed to Him day and night, He might respond by making me thin. For days and weeks I kept my end of the so-called deal, yet my body altered little. Even after years of praying, I still found myself bowing on plump knees. Fortunately, beneficial change is not only physical, and in my effort to pour out my heart to Him and keep His commandments, He was working a miracle in my heart. In those days and years of drawing close to Him, I came to feel the sweet companionship of His Spirit testifying that I was His daughter.





The Role of Challenges

In order to avoid these traps, I found it helpful to ponder deeply what God wanted me to learn from an experience in *this* particular body and why a physical body is indispensable in the process of becoming more like Him. I began to see similarities between my struggles and other people’s seemingly unrelated challenges. I discovered that often their problems, like mine, followed the pattern God set for Adam and Eve when he said to them, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; . . . thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; . . . in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground” (Genesis 3:17–19). In other words, Adam and Eve had to consistently and recurrently work very hard to tame things that spontaneously grew out of control in their lives, but in a sense, God cursed the ground and caused the thorns to grow *for their sakes*. This insight helped me to recognize the numerous blessings I had experienced in my life by working through my challenges.

Additionally, as I learned more about the Savior’s life and more closely observed struggles in the lives of others, my ability to perceive and recognize beauty grew. The promise of my Young Women leader—that being a friend to all would attract the right kind of person, that “light cleaveth unto light”—was fulfilled in an external way; a truly great-hearted man came into my life and we eventually married. But it was also fulfilled *within my own heart*. Jesus, of whom Isaiah wrote, “He hath no form nor comeliness; and . . . there is no beauty that we should desire him” (Isaiah 53:2), was a friend to all, and the more I learned about the remarkable ways He coped with challenges in the flesh, the more I wanted to know Him. He mastered His body through fasting, prayer, and self-discipline—not so that He could become an admired physical specimen but so that his body could become a living testament of God’s love for the human family. He used His flesh in a unique, profoundly selfless way to bring about the salvation of all mankind, and He did so in a way that could be called nothing less than beautiful.

Choices concerning My Body

As I learned more about my identity as God’s daughter, I experimented with ways that I could use my agency to affect change in my physical body. Through the foods I chose to eat and the activities in which I participated, I worked very hard to achieve and later maintain a healthy body weight. I discovered that I could honor my Heavenly Father through caring for the gift of my physical body and using it for wise purposes.

However, I also realized that if I wasn’t careful, I could easily become distracted and fashion my body after a worldly image or even reject the gift of my body because it did not measure up to impossible worldly standards. Worse yet, I became tempted to believe Korihor’s philosophy that we “[fare] in this life according to the management of the creature” (Alma 30:17)—that my value would somehow increase or diminish depending upon my ability to achieve a certain size or number on a scale. I learned that improved body management *may* be an outcome as God helps us make weak things strong, but as an end in itself, “fixation on the physical . . . is spiritually destructive.”¹



A Tool for Service and Learning

Today, I too desire that my body might be a testament of God's love. Like many people, I work hard every day to reign in my body's natural predispositions as well as combat worldly "vain imaginations" (1 Nephi 12:18),² but because of Christ's example, when I keep His perspective, my body becomes a tool to bless the lives of God's children, and proper maintenance and care of that tool demonstrates my recognition of His noble purposes.

My body also continues to be a vehicle through which I can learn more about Heavenly Father and the Savior. I experience the wonders of nature and creation to a greater degree because of my body, and I find that hiking and running are specific ways I can commune with heaven. My heart echoes the sentiment expressed by a runner in the film *Chariots of Fire*: "When I run I feel [God's] pleasure." I love to feel my pulsing heart provide cleansing, sustaining blood to my inner vessel, and it reminds me of the life-giving blood of the Lamb. It assures me I am a living thing—and indeed it is great to be alive! Similarly, when I truly nourish my physical body through good food and clean water, I feel my very cells respond to revitalization and life, and I see clearer connections with the bread and water He offers us. Even when I am ill, injured, or not as well conditioned as I might like to be, I appreciate what these situations teach me about opposition in all things, faith, line-upon-line growth, and gratitude for any small capacity I may possess.

I feel like Louise Lake, polio victim, who once said, "I love my body . . . because I have disciplined this flesh, and in times when normally it would have said, 'Oh I can't, this is too much, too difficult,' I have said to my

flesh, 'Arise, you *will* get out of bed, you *will* prepare this, you *will* do that, you *will* attend this.'"³ Though it may seem ordinary or unremarkable to the eyes of the world, my corporeal collection of cells is a miraculous testament of His grace and love.

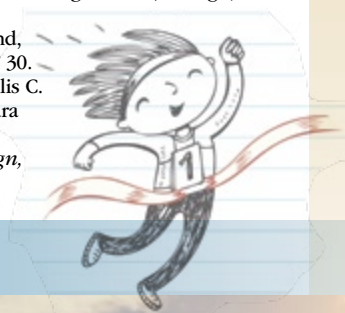
May the God of heaven and earth be praised for the flesh—for the bodies that give us opportunities for both physical and spiritual growth. Although the flesh may be weak and can sometimes be the source of trials in this life (see Matthew 26:41), it is also a sweet gift that our wise Father in Heaven has bestowed upon us, His children—a gift through which we can be made strong and become more like Him. ■

The author lives in Oregon, USA.

An article on this same topic for children can be found on page 24 of this month's Friend.

NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, "To Young Women," *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 30.
2. See Jeffrey R. Holland, "To Young Women," 30.
3. Louise Lake, in Phyllis C. Jacobson and Barbara Vance, "'Fit' Is More Than Not Fat," *Ensign*, June 1978, 48.



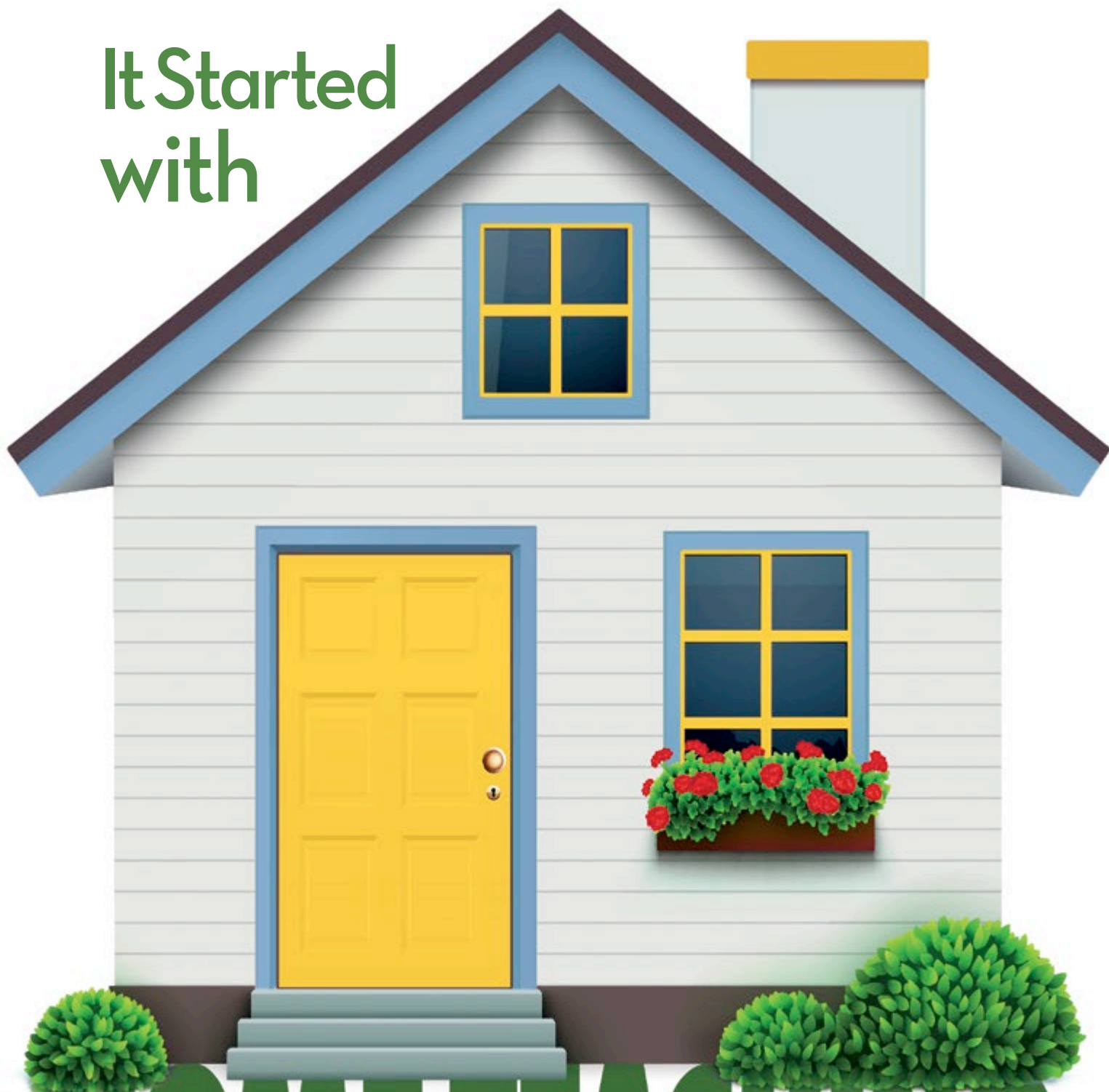
ACCEPT YOUR BODY

"I plead with you young women to please be more accepting of yourselves, including your body shape and style, with a little less longing to look like someone else. We are all different. Some are tall, and some are short. Some are round, and some are thin. And almost everyone at some time or other wants to be something they are not! . . . Every young woman is a child of destiny and every adult woman a powerful force for good."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "To Young Women," *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 29.



It Started
with



HOMETEACHING

Priesthood quorums came to the rescue of a family in need.

By David Jeppson

I was the home teacher of a less-active sister who lived with her children in a home that was falling apart. I helped her make some minor repairs, but they were insufficient. Considering the condition of the home, I recommended that they find another place to live. But she simply couldn't afford to leave the home she had inherited from her parents. So our bishop decided we should make the needed repairs to the house. He assigned me to evaluate the situation and report back to him.

As I examined the home, I saw that the wood siding was rotting as well as the framework that held it in place. Small animals had accelerated the damage by gnawing through the wood in search of shelter. When I walked around the attic, I could see the sky through holes in the wood siding. In the front room, the flooring was about to collapse. And the teenage daughter's room flooded whenever it rained heavily.

Although I served as a ward welfare specialist, I was not an expert in any of the skills needed to repair this house. I also felt that the ward members didn't have the skills to repair it either. So I prayed and asked Heavenly Father for help. The thought came to me to heed the counsel given by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008): "I am satisfied, my brethren, that there is enough of expertise, of knowledge, of strength, of concern in every priesthood quorum to assist the troubled members of that quorum [or ward] if these resources are properly administered."¹ Despite the

obstacles we faced, I decided to propose that we put the prophet's counsel to the test.

When I reported back to the bishop, he agreed that we should ask the priesthood quorums in the ward for help. He drew on fast-offering funds to purchase some of the needed materials. I coordinated the efforts for repairs and made phone calls to local vendors and community members for donations of materials. We circulated a sign-up sheet in the elders quorum and high priests group, asking for brethren to work on the house for the next few Saturdays. To my surprise, we found brethren who had expertise in construction, carpentry, plumbing, and flooring installation.

When we ran into challenges, the Lord provided someone who knew how to solve our problem—whether it was fixing a broken water pipe, repairing a patchy roof, or replacing rotted wood framing. Among them was a full-time missionary who had previously worked as a carpenter. The ward youth painted the house, and they reached out in friendship to the teenage daughter. The priesthood quorums worked every Saturday until the work was done. The sister who owned the home provided linoleum flooring for her daughter's room, and her young single adult son trimmed back the trees near the house.

Members performed a miracle for this family, but those who had pulled together were also blessed. They had put the prophet's counsel to the test and were astonished at how much they had accomplished by working together. And it all started with home teaching. ■

The author lives in Texas, USA.

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Welfare Responsibilities of the Priesthood Quorums," *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 85–86.



CONSCIENTIOUS IN OUR CALLING

"Home teaching answers many prayers and permits us to see the transformations which can take place in people's lives. . . .

"Brethren, it will be our privilege through the years to visit and teach many individuals—those who are less active as well as those who are fully committed. If we are conscientious in our calling, we will have many opportunities to bless lives. Our visits to those who have distanced themselves from Church activity can be the key which will eventually open the doors to their return. . . .

". . . Ours is the sacred privilege to brighten, to touch, and to save those precious souls entrusted to our care."

President Thomas S. Monson, "True Shepherds," *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 67, 68.

LEADING LIKE THE SAVIOR

By Ryan Carr

Church Magazines

There is a stark contrast between the worst leaders in the world and the perfect leader, the Savior of the world. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) explained: “Those leaders in history who have been most tragic in their impact on mankind were tragic precisely because they lacked to almost any degree the qualities of the Man of Galilee. Where Jesus was selfless, they were selfish. Where Jesus was concerned with freedom, they were concerned with control. Where Jesus was concerned with service, they were concerned with status. Where Jesus met the genuine needs of others, they were concerned only with their own needs and wants. Where Jesus was concerned with the development of his disciples, they sought to manipulate mortals. Where Jesus was filled with compassion balanced by justice, they have so often been filled with harshness and injustice.”¹

To succeed as leaders in the Lord’s Church, we must follow His example. The following ideas can help us become more Christlike in our leadership.

Christlike leaders serve “with an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 4:5), seeking to do the will of Heavenly Father. The Savior said, “I came down from heaven, not to do mine

own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38).

Christlike leaders do not rely on “the arm of flesh” (2 Nephi 4:34). They humbly pray for guidance. They wait upon the Lord and seek to do His work in His time and His way instead of depending on their own talents and abilities.

Christlike leaders do not seek for positions in the Church; they see callings as opportunities to serve, not as promotions. Nor do they see releases as demotions. A release is inherent with every calling.

Christlike leaders are servants; they help, teach, and encourage those they serve. They seek to bless others, as the Savior did: “He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world” (2 Nephi 26:24). They see themselves as the Lord’s representatives to help others return to Him.

Christlike leaders seek to help others develop. President Kimball also taught:

“Jesus trusts his followers enough to share his work with them so that they can grow. That is one of the greatest lessons of his leadership. If we brush other people aside in

“BUT I DON’T HAVE ANY LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE!”

Don’t worry if you don’t have much experience yet. You have been called by inspiration, by one having authority (see Articles of Faith 1:5). The Lord sees what you can become. Your call to lead can be an opportunity to develop your strengths and overcome weaknesses.

In business and other organizations, a leader’s education and experience are often key qualifications, but the Lord’s way is different. President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) taught: “[The] apostles which God called, which Jesus, the Son of God called, . . . were not educated; they did not comprehend the sciences, they did not occupy high positions in Judeah—they were poor and illiterate; of humble callings in life. . . . Well, then, the Lord is different. He makes His calls different from those calls made by men.”¹ Fortunately, whom the Lord calls He qualifies!²

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 151.
2. See Thomas S. Monson, “Duty Calls,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 44.



FOR LEADERS WHO COUNSEL WITH CHURCH MEMBERS

As you meet with Church members who need your help, they might want you to solve their problems for them. But doing so would deprive them of personal growth. They might come expecting an immediate solution, but their problems will often need more time to work themselves out. These are some common challenges. The following questions, suggested by priesthood leaders, can help as you prepare to counsel with members:

- Do you counsel and help members in such a way that overcoming their challenges remains their responsibility?
- Are you guiding members to find answers on their own?
- Are you following up on tasks they agreed to do?
- Are you helping them find resources to solve their own problems?
- Are you encouraging them to cry unto the Lord?
- Does your counsel encourage members to progress?

Of course, all situations are different, so it will be important to follow the guidance of the Spirit. Serving with love, patience, and spiritual sensitivity will lead to good results.

order to see a task done more quickly and effectively, the task may get done all right, but without the growth and development in followers that is so important. . . .

“Jesus gave people truths and tasks that were matched to their capacity. He did not overwhelm them with more than they could manage, but gave them enough to stretch their souls.”²

The Prophet Joseph Smith described how he led the people so well: “I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.”³ This is the essence of the Lord’s approach to leadership. ■

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, “Jesus: The Perfect Leader,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1979, 7.
2. Spencer W. Kimball, “Jesus: The Perfect Leader,” 6.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 284.

ELIJAH

“Elijah was one of the greatest of the prophets, and the Lord conferred upon him the sealing power.”¹ —President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)

Ministered as a prophet in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.² Due to the Israelites’ wickedness, I sealed the heavens against rain, causing a famine in the land. During the famine, I lived by a brook and ravens brought me food, but then the brook dried up.³

The Lord commanded me to go to a widow who lived in Zarephath, and she would feed me. I found her gathering sticks to prepare a final meal for herself and her son. I told her that if she fed me first, her “barrel of meal [should] not waste, neither [should] the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.”⁴ She exercised faith, and the Lord fulfilled His promise.

While I lived with her family, the widow’s son died. I pled, “O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child’s soul

come into him again.”⁵ The Lord heard my cry, and her son lived again.⁶

Later, I demonstrated the Lord’s power to the people of Israel by challenging the priests of Baal to a contest. The priests prepared a sacrifice and called upon Baal all day long to send down fire, but no fire appeared. I constructed an altar of 12 stones, symbolic of the 12 tribes of Israel, and dug a trench around the altar. Then I had the altar and its sacrifice soaked with 12 barrels of water, drenching the wood and filling the trench. I called upon the Lord, and He sent down fire that consumed the sacrifice, the altar, and the water. Afterward, I prayed unto the Lord, and He opened the heavens to rain.⁷

At the end of my life, I did not die but ascended into heaven in a

chariot of fire.⁸ During Christ’s mortal ministry, I appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration and gave priesthood keys to Peter, James, and John.⁹

I appeared again in the latter days “to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers,” coming to the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836, and restoring the keys of the sealing power to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.¹⁰ ■

NOTES

1. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, ed. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. (1957–1966), 4:193.
2. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Elijah,” scriptures.lds.org.
3. See 1 Kings 17:1–7.
4. See 1 Kings 17:8–16.
5. See 1 Kings 17:21.
6. See 1 Kings 17:8–24.
7. See 1 Kings 18.
8. See 2 Kings 2:11.
9. See Matthew 17:3; Guide to the Scriptures, “Transfiguration,” scriptures.lds.org.
10. See Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16.



ELIJAH RAISES THE WIDOW'S SON FROM DEATH, BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; ELIJAH CONTENTS AGAINST THE PRIESTS OF BAAL, BY JERRY HARSTON; ELIJAH ASCENDING INTO HEAVEN, BY W. H. NARGESON, COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM; THE TRANSFIGURATION, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERÖD, DENMARK; ELIJAH APPEARING IN THE KIRTLAND TEMPLE, BY DANIEL A. LEWIS; ILLUSTRATION OF CROWS BY KOZHMISTOCK/THINKSTOCK



WORK AND SELF-RELIANCE

As youth and children learn to work hard and be self-reliant, they are preparing to “contribute to the world in which [they] live” (*For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 40).

On pages 30–31 of this month’s *New Era*, Randall L. Ridd, second counselor in the Young Men general presidency, shares what he learned doing construction work with his dad. He discusses the importance of working hard, having a good attitude, and building the Lord’s kingdom. Brother Ridd reminds us: “So who needs work? We all do! It’s the mother of self-reliance, achievement, and joy in this life. As you cheerfully engage in work, all those around you will reap a rich harvest because of the seeds you sow.”

Suggestions for Teaching Youth

- *For the Strength of Youth* says, “Set high goals for yourself, and be willing to work hard to achieve them” (40). You may want to watch with your children the Mormon Messages for Youth video “A Work in Progress” (see the Marriage and Family videos at mormonchannel.org/come-follow-me). Then work together to set some goals and make plans to achieve them.
- Work is a lot easier when we have a positive attitude. Read

“Moving Pipe in Muddy Shoes” on pages 32–33 of the July *New Era* and discuss how your attitude affects your work.

- “One form of idleness is spending excessive amounts of time in activities that keep you from productive work, such as using the Internet, playing video games, and watching television” (*For the Strength of Youth*, 40). Ask your children about the benefits and the dangers of the Internet, video games, and television. When do these tools turn into distractions? What blessings come from productive work? Consider helping your children experience these blessings by putting all technology aside for a time and working on a project together.

Suggestions for Teaching Children

- Missionary work is hard work, and learning to be self-reliant will help children prepare for that work. With your children, make a list of household chores that missionaries should know how to do (doing laundry, cooking, and cleaning, for example). Then do some of those chores together.
- In his article, Brother Ridd reminds us that the most important work is God’s work. How



SCRIPTURES ON THIS TOPIC

Isaiah 55:2

2 Nephi 5:17, 27

Mosiah 4:16–21

Doctrine and Covenants
58:26–29

Joseph Smith—History 1:55

can your family further the work of the Lord? Think of an activity you could do together that would help bring others closer to Christ.

- Part of self-reliance is learning how to manage money. Teach your children the principles of budgeting and the importance of making tithing a part of their budget. ■

NEPHI ANSWERED MY QUESTION

I was born in the Church, but my family rarely attended while I was growing up. Despite this, I always found a way to get to church on my own. In the early 1970s I was serving as a seminary teacher in Pittsburg, Kansas, USA. When we studied the Book of Mormon, I challenged the class—myself included—to read the entire book. One day while reading, I received a powerful testimony that it is true.

A few years later my parents came for a visit. While they were visiting, my father brought up some subjects we disagreed on that I didn't want to discuss with him. He persisted, however,

I turned to the story about Nephi and the broken bow, and I felt prompted to go to my father and ask for guidance and a priesthood blessing.

until I was close to losing my temper. I excused myself for a moment and went to my bedroom, where I knelt and prayed to Heavenly Father and asked Him for help in dealing with my father. The answer came in the form of a thought: the account of Nephi and the broken bow.

I turned to the story in 1 Nephi chapter 16. I thought about Nephi being humble enough to go to his father, who had murmured against the Lord, to ask where he should go to obtain food (see verse 23). With that thought, I felt prompted to go to my father and ask for his guidance as well as for a priesthood blessing.

When I returned to the living room and asked Dad for a blessing, his heart was touched and he began to cry. “Let me think about it,” he said.

Over the next few days he fasted and prayed. Then, before Dad and Mom left, he gave me a beautiful blessing.

After that experience, Dad began to turn his life around. On their way home from Kansas, my parents visited Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri, USA, where my father had a powerful spiritual experience.

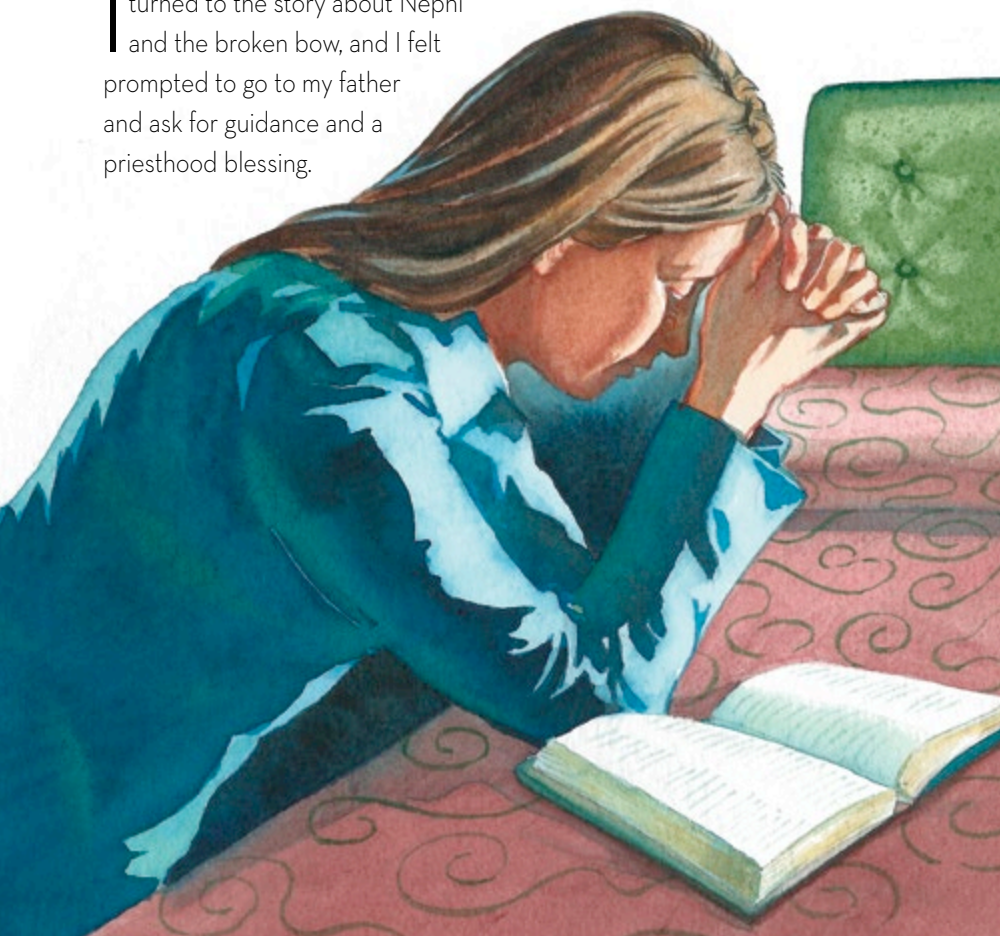
Before long, my parents became active and committed Latter-day Saints. Over the next several years, they served two missions together—one in Germany and one on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. Dad was serving as a stake patriarch when he died in 1987.

The Lord knew that Dad was a good man. It was through the Book of Mormon that I received my answer, and it was through my acting on that prompting that Dad came to know he needed to be a leader for our family. This experience changed everything for us.

I have learned that the Book of Mormon truly is another testament of Jesus Christ and that it is written for our day. I know that I can turn to it whenever I am discouraged and in any situation. The answers are there.

Indeed, the “words of Christ will tell [us] all things what [we] should do” (2 Nephi 32:3). ■

Judy M. Smith, Kansas, USA



TWO LETTERS FROM MOM

In 1996 my wife and I had two sons, ages four and seven. We were a typical busy young family. Late one night my wife made time to write a letter to my nephew, David, who was then serving a mission in Finland.

For some reason, she felt she needed to write a long letter—one filled with details about what each family member was doing, where they were spiritually, what was happening in my Church calling and in her Church calling, the story of her conversion, her feelings about missionary work, and her testimony of the gospel.

It was a great letter, but I wondered if my nephew really needed that much information. Later she wrote him again.

Six years later, while I was serving as bishop and our boys were 10 and 13, my world suddenly changed. On January 2, 2002, my wife, only 42 years old, died of a heart attack.

At home I tried to continue following the principles in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”¹ I found that I could preside and provide, but I fell short in giving my sons the nurturing they needed. Nevertheless, we moved on as best we could.

In June 2012 my younger son, Sam, then serving a full-time mission in the Colorado Denver South Mission, sent me an email. “Something really cool happened this week,” he wrote. “I got two letters from Mom.”

He explained that he had received a package from his cousin David that

included the letters she had written to him while he was in Finland.

“He told me that these two letters Mom sent him on his mission were really written for me while on my mission,” Sam wrote. “So he sent them to me, and they were incredible!”

Learning of his mother’s conversion, testimony, and feelings toward missionary work was “a great moral support at this time,” Sam wrote. He said he planned to photocopy the letters and send the originals home.

“I had no idea that you had ever served as an elders quorum president or as the ward mission leader,” Sam wrote. He learned that when he was four years old, he “would jump on the bed after prayers and shout ‘I want to be a missionary.’”

The letters were powerful, personal, and poignant when written in 1996, but given the events of subsequent years, they had become even more so.

Then he added something he had learned about his mother: “Mom must have known that I would become a wrestler because she said that I could charm the socks off a pro wrestler. :)”

I was moved to tears by Sam’s reaction to the letters. A few weeks later he mailed them home. They were powerful, personal, and poignant when written in 1996, but given the events of subsequent years, they had become even more so.

My wife’s letters had strengthened my nephew, but like “casting bread upon the water” (see Ecclesiastes 11:1), they returned years later to bless her missionary son and widowed husband. ■

Ken Pinnegar, California, USA

NOTE

1. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.



I SAW YOUR MOTHER'S FACE

One Sunday in the summer of 2002, I woke up thinking of my mother, who had recently passed away. I was visiting my old home ward in Pacific Palisades, California, USA, where my mom had worshipped for almost 50 years.

I knelt in prayer to tell the Lord how much I missed her and to ask for a spiritual experience that day.

That afternoon I planned to attend the rededication broadcast of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple at the stake building in Santa Monica,

California. Unfortunately, I arrived too late to be admitted to the session. I returned to my car and headed back onto the freeway.

As I drove, I heard a voice say, "Randi, go check on Mary!" Mary is a dear friend of our family and a devout member of another faith. She and her daughter Natasha lived next door to my Aunt Ruby for more than 25 years. Because they had no family nearby, they became part of ours. After my aunt passed away in 1984, my mother often dropped by to visit Mary, always

bringing a small gift or something she had baked.

At first I ignored the prompting. I couldn't just drop in unannounced, and I didn't have my cell phone to call her. Suddenly the voice came again, louder this time: "Randi, go check on Mary!" This time I heeded the counsel, although I barely had enough time to make my exit off the freeway.

When I arrived at Mary's, she greeted me but looked ill. I could tell she had been crying. I asked her what was wrong. She responded that she had been quite sick and in pain from a neck injury. Also, she was extremely low on food. She said she had been too ill to walk to the pharmacy or the market.

When I asked her why she hadn't called someone in our family, she said, "I prayed and asked Heavenly Father to send someone to help me."

I told her that Heavenly Father had heard her prayers and sent me. We hugged, and then she told me something I'll never forget. She said, "When you arrived on my doorstep, I saw your mother's face, not yours."

I immediately felt my mother's sweet spirit near me, and I felt prompted to serve just as my mother would serve. Her life, after all, was filled with serving others.

I hope that I never forget the importance of heeding the voice of the Spirit and the example my mother set for me of serving others. ■

Randi Reynolds Allen, California, USA



When I arrived at Mary's, she greeted me but looked ill. I could tell she had been crying.

YOU SAVED MY MARRIAGE

When I did construction work in Oman from 1979 to 1986, I worked for the ministry of defense. The ministry gave me projects located in the most inaccessible section of the country, and most of the time I was the only supervisor looking after the projects. I was also the only member of the Church working for the ministry.

One day at our company headquarters, I ran into an electrical engineer who, as he had in the past, made negative comments about the Church. I tolerated his comments because I was usually at headquarters for only a short time before I was away on another project.

Later, however, this man was assigned to inspect electrical work at projects being constructed along Oman's border with Yemen. We were scheduled to spend about an hour together before he flew back to headquarters.

When he arrived, he inspected the work and found everything to his satisfaction. During our time together, I centered our conversation on work and then drove him to the landing strip to see him off.

It was monsoon season, and the landing strip, located on a mountain plateau 6,000 feet (1,830 m) above the Indian Ocean, was covered with clouds. My co-worker's flight would be delayed.

My heart was pounding as I realized that I would have to wait in the

car with this man. After I said a silent prayer, a thought came into my mind to ask the man about his family, especially his wife.

I did so, and the engineer suddenly burst into tears, saying that he had just received word that his wife was seeking a divorce. The word *love* immediately came into my mind, and for the next two hours we talked about the love we should have for others and the love the Lord Jesus Christ has for all of us. Before I knew it, we had become friends. As we ended our conversation, the clouds cleared and the engineer boarded his flight. Soon I heard that he had resigned his position and returned home.

A few years later while on an outing with Aaronic Priesthood young men in Plymouth, a city on England's southern coast, I noticed a man making his way

toward me. As he approached, he said, "I thought it was you, Neil."

It was the electrical engineer from Oman. The next words he spoke have remained in my heart: "Thank you for talking to me about love that day on the mountain. You saved my marriage, and I will be forever grateful."

We shared a few more words, and he left. I haven't seen him since.

I will always be grateful for the inspiration I received in Oman. It blessed the engineer and gave me strength to maintain my Church beliefs when I was alone and far from home. ■

Neil S. Roy, Yorkshire, England

My heart was pounding as I realized that I would have to wait in the car with a man who had made negative comments about the Church.



KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SHORE

By Richard M. Romney
Church Magazines

A canoe trip to an island in a nearby national park sounded like the perfect opportunity to get closer to my son. The Aaronic Priesthood leaders and the young men in our ward had been planning the trip for months, and I was able to accompany them.

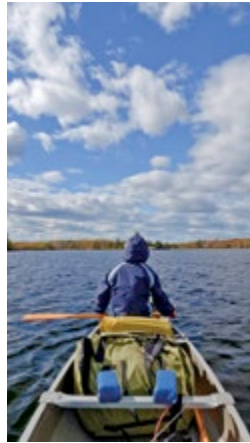
My son McKay was in great condition, participating in three sports in high school. That's probably one reason the leaders put us in the same canoe—they knew he could paddle hard if the need arose. I had some experience guiding a canoe, so we seemed like a good team.

I was also eager to have the time on the lake to talk. McKay had been through a lot since the death of his mother, and I hadn't always been able to respond in the best way to his needs and interests.

We had training, we had life vests, we knew how to swim, and we had experienced leaders guiding us.

What we hadn't counted on was the wind. We had paddled for several miles, then cut across the middle of the lake and were nearing the shore when an unusually strong headwind kicked up.

The other canoes were able to make it to shore, but McKay and I were in the final boat. The waves were picking up, and we were turning off course as we paddled and paddled,



My son taught me a powerful lesson about where to look and how to endure.

trying to make any progress at all. I was becoming exhausted and alarmed. I dug into the water and pulled with all my might, trying to steer us back on course, but we seemed to stay exactly in the same position.

We were in danger of capsizing when finally I admitted aloud that I didn't know if I had the strength to continue. Then my son said, "You're looking at the waves, Dad. You won't get anywhere doing that. You've got to keep your eyes on the shore. See that tree on the hill? That's our goal. Focus on that, and we'll make it."

He was right. Once I focused on the tree, I could stay on course. My arms felt renewed strength. McKay called cadence for the strokes—"Pull. Rest. Pull. Rest." And steadily, we moved.

We reached the shore, others reached out to help, and we sat and caught our breath. That night in our tent we talked, father and son, about our experience.

Together, we remembered what President Thomas S. Monson has taught about the lighthouse of the Lord: "It beckons through the storms of life. It calls, 'This way to safety; this way to home.'"¹

That afternoon, a tree on the shore had been our lighthouse. When I was close to despair, my son had wisely counseled me not to look at the waves but to keep my eyes on the shore. And we had pulled together, in more ways than one. ■

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, "Standards of Strength," *New Era*, Oct. 2008, 2.

INSIGHTS



How can I maintain a spirit of gratitude, even in times of trial?

“We can choose to be grateful, no matter what. This type of gratitude transcends whatever is happening around us. It surpasses disappointment, discouragement, and despair. It blooms just as beautifully in the icy landscape of winter as it does in the pleasant warmth of summer. When we are grateful to God *in* our circumstances, we can experience gentle peace in the midst of tribulation. . . . In the cold of bitter sorrow, we can experience the closeness and warmth of heaven’s embrace. . . . How much of life do we miss by waiting to see the rainbow before thanking God that there is rain? Being grateful in times of distress does *not* mean that we are pleased with our circumstances. It *does* mean that through the eyes of faith we look beyond our present-day challenges. This is not a gratitude of the lips but of the soul.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Grateful in Any Circumstances,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 75, 76.



In **Church** Magazines

Ensign: Understanding the Savior’s freely given atoning love can free us from incorrect and unrealistic expectations of what perfection is. See “Becoming Perfect in Christ” on page 14.

New Era: Help your youth overcome fears they may have about commenting in Sunday School, priesthood meetings, or Young Women groups. See “Let Your Voice Be Heard” (page 36).

Friend: Help children learn why their bodies are so important. Turn to page 24 in the *Friend* to find answers to questions children might have about why we have bodies and how we should treat them. See page 66 in the *Ensign* for a related article that reminds us that our mortal bodies are gifts from God.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

