

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.

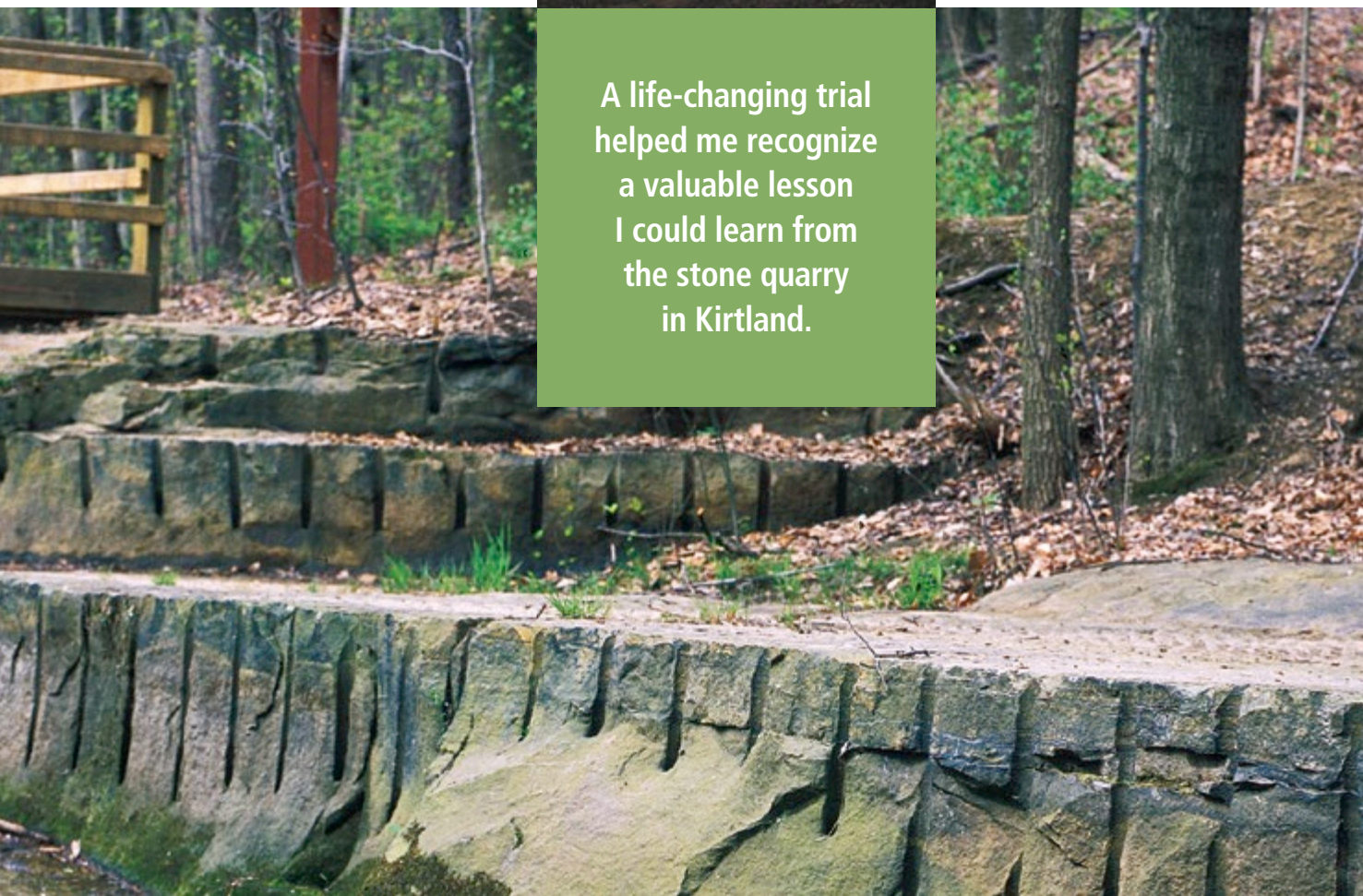


From those early Saints I learned that in every life there must be a “stone quarry”—a time and place where we must sacrifice and work before we can see the blessings.

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.