

# Ensign



**Keeping It Real: The Challenges and Blessings of Technology, pp. 12, 16**

**Slowing Down and Putting God First, p. 29**

**Joyfully Living within Our Means, p. 63**



***Whither Thou Goest, by Sandy Freckleton Gagon***

*After Naomi's husband died, her two sons married—one to Orpah and the other to Ruth. About 10 years later Naomi's two sons died.*

*“Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.*

*“And [Naomi] said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.*

*“And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go: and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God” (Ruth 1:14–16).*

*Ruth remained, married Boaz, and gave birth to Obed, through whom came David the king (see Ruth 2–4).*



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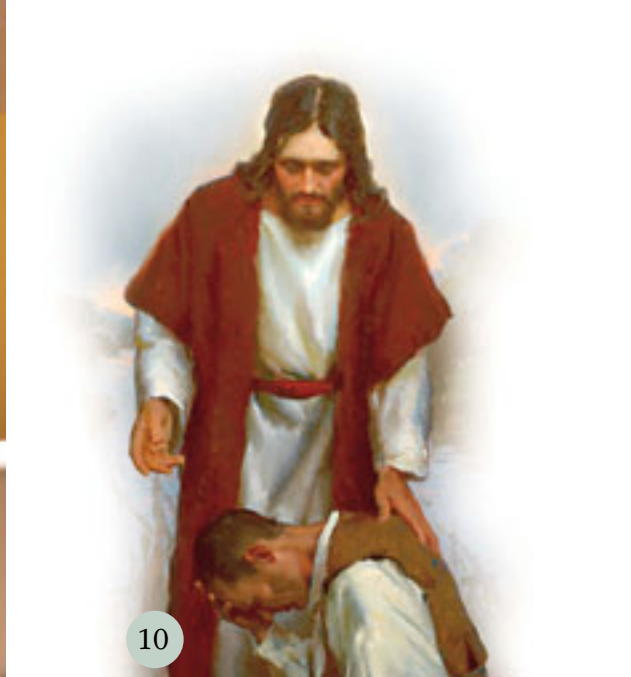


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**ADDICTION RECOVERY**

Two articles this month tell stories of overcoming addiction (see p. 10 and p. 54). If you or someone you love is struggling with an addiction, help is available. Visit [LDSFamilyServices.org](http://LDSFamilyServices.org) to learn about the Addiction Recovery Program, download the Addiction Recovery Program guidebook, and find a meeting near you. You can also visit the newly launched Combating Pornography site at [CombatingPornography.org](http://CombatingPornography.org).

**GOSPEL ANSWERS**

Have a question? Mormon Channel has answers. A new program on the Church's online radio channel features answers to audience-submitted questions using general conference audio clips, [LDS.org](http://LDS.org), and various other publications of past and present Church leaders. Visit [radio.lds.org](http://radio.lds.org) and select "Mormon Channel Q&A" under "Programs."

**MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE**

Looking for ways that you, your family, or a class or quorum can relieve suffering and do good locally or internationally? Visit the Humanitarian Services section of [providentliving.org](http://providentliving.org) to get information about current needs, service opportunities, or ways to make a donation. Visit [howtohelp.lds.org](http://howtohelp.lds.org).

**DO YOU KNOW?**

Would you like to make Church history part of your month? Read about places of historical significance and regional pageant performances at [LDS.org/placestovisit](http://LDS.org/placestovisit)—perhaps you can plan a trip to one in your area.

Even if you're not in North America, you can still experience many of the places via the Web. For instance, see the exhibits featured at the Church History Museum in Salt Lake City by visiting [LDS.org/churchhistory/museum](http://LDS.org/churchhistory/museum).



**DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?**

What does it mean to you to be a pioneer? What "modern pioneers" have influenced and inspired you? Whether you are a first-generation member of the Church or have Latter-day Saint ancestors who settled in the western United States, what connections do you feel to the Mormon pioneers of the 19th century? We welcome your insights and experiences; please label your submission "Pioneers" and send it to us by July 23.

We also welcome submissions on other

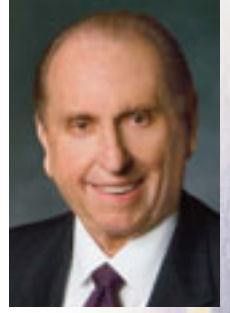
topics showing the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. On each submission, please include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and the name of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

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By President  
Thomas S. Monson

# Canaries WITH GRAY ON THEIR WINGS

Nearly 60 years ago, while I was serving as a young bishop, Kathleen McKee, a widow in my ward, passed away. Among her things were three pet canaries. Two, with perfect yellow coloring, were to be given to her friends. The third, Billie, had yellow coloring marred by gray on his wings. Sister McKee had written in a note to me: “Will you and your family make a home for him? He isn’t the prettiest, but his song is the best.”

Sister McKee was much like her yellow canary with gray on its wings. She was not blessed with beauty, gifted with poise, or honored by posterity. Yet her song helped others to more willingly bear their burdens and more ably shoulder their tasks.

The world is filled with yellow canaries with gray on their wings. The pity is that so precious few have learned to sing. Some are young people who don’t know who they are, what they can be or even want to be; all they want is to be somebody. Others are stooped with age, burdened with care, or filled with doubt—living lives far below the level of their capabilities.

To live greatly, we must develop the capacity to face trouble with courage, disappointment with cheerfulness, and triumph with humility. You ask, “How might we

achieve these goals?” I answer, “By gaining a true perspective of who we really are!” We are sons and daughters of a living God, in whose image we have been created. Think of that: *created in the image of God*. We cannot sincerely hold this conviction without experiencing a profound new sense of strength and power.

In our world, moral character oftentimes seems secondary to beauty or charm. But from long ago the Lord’s counsel to Samuel the prophet echoes: “The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

When the Savior sought a man of faith, He did not select him from the throng of the self-righteous who were found regularly in the synagogue. Rather, He called him from among the fishermen of Capernaum. Doubting, unschooled, impetuous Simon became Peter, Apostle of faith. A yellow canary with gray on his wings qualified for the Master’s full confidence and abiding love.

When the Savior chose a missionary of





## TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

When you teach . . . , it is often helpful to have learners look or listen for something specific" (*Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 55). To help family members understand President Monson's message, consider asking them to be prepared to share what they learn after reading the message together. Invite each person to share what he or she feels is an important point in the article. Conclude by bearing testimony of President Monson's message.

Teaching the word of God, as given through His prophets, can have a powerful influence on the lives of those we teach (see *Teaching, No Greater Call*, 50). President Monson states there is strength and power in knowing we are children of God. After reading the article, ask the family to share what helps them remember who they are.

zeal and power, He found him not among His advocates but amidst His adversaries. Saul the persecutor became Paul the proselytizer.

The Redeemer chose imperfect people to teach the way to perfection. He did so then. He does so now—even yellow canaries with gray on their wings. He calls you and me to serve Him here below. Our commitment must be total. And in our struggle, should we stumble, let us plead: "Lead us, oh lead us, great Molder of men, out of the darkness to strive once again."<sup>1</sup>

My prayer is that we will follow the example of the Man of Galilee, who could be found mingling with the poor, the downtrodden, the oppressed, and the afflicted. May a true song come from our hearts as we do so. ■

### NOTE

1. "Fight Song," Yonkers High School.

## YOUTH

### What Is True Beauty?

President Monson says in this message, “In our world, moral character oftentimes seems secondary to beauty or charm.” Young women might struggle with their image of who they are and what they can become. Consider these thoughts about true beauty from Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Seventy:

- A young woman whose countenance is aglow with both happiness and virtue radiates inner beauty.
- The virtuous smile is truly beautiful as it radiates in a totally natural way. This true beauty can't be painted on but is a gift of the Spirit.
- Modesty is an outward sign and requirement for inward beauty.
- If you are discouraged about your appearance, it will help to see yourself through the eyes of those who love you. Hidden beauty seen by loved ones can become a mirror for self-improvements.
- The kind of man a virtuous woman wants to marry also “seeth not” as the natural man seeth (see 1 Samuel 16:7). He will be drawn to the true beauty she radiates from a pure and cheerful heart. The same is true for a young woman looking for a virtuous young man.
- Our Father in Heaven expects all of His children to choose the right, which is the only way to lasting happiness and inner beauty.
- With the Lord, there is no competition. All have an equal privilege to have His image engraven upon their countenances (see Alma 5:19). There is no truer beauty.

To read the entire message, see Lynn G. Robbins, “True Beauty,” *New Era*, Nov. 2008, 30. Young men can find similar advice in Errol S. Phippen, “Ugly Duckling or Majestic Swan? It's Up to You,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2009, 36; *New Era*, Oct. 2009, 16.



## CHILDREN

### Sing Your Sweetest Song

President Monson told about Sister McKee's three canaries. Two were yellow all over. They looked perfect! The third didn't look perfect because it had gray spots on its wings. But Sister McKee loved it because it sang so sweetly.

Some people feel they are not as beautiful or as smart as others. But each person is valuable to the Lord. We can be faithful and brave and use our talents to serve others. Then we are like the yellow canary with gray on its wings. We are not perfect, but we are singing our sweetest song!

Color the picture of Sister McKee and her special canary. Then write down three ways you can sing your sweetest song for the Lord.



I can sing my sweetest song for the Lord by:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



## HELPS FOR VISITING TEACHING

As you come to know a sister and her family, look for ways you might help her renew her covenants through the sacrament. If she does not attend sacrament meeting, could you invite her to attend or offer help for her to do so (transportation, assistance with children, a friend to sit by, and so on)?

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

Luke 22:19–20

1 Corinthians 11:23–28

3 Nephi 18:1–12

## Renewing Covenants through the Sacrament



*Teach these scriptures and quotations or, if needed, another principle that will bless the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you visit to share what they have felt and learned.*

### Jesus Christ Instituted the Sacrament

“Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to his Apostles, saying, ‘Take, eat’ (Matt. 26:26). ‘This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me’ (Luke 22:19). In a similar manner he took the cup of wine, traditionally diluted with water, said a blessing of thanks for it, and passed it to those gathered about him, saying: ‘This cup is the

new testament in my blood,’ ‘which is shed . . . for the remission of sins.’ ‘This do in remembrance of me.’ . . .

“Since that upper room experience on the eve of Gethsemane and Golgotha, children of the promise have been under covenant to remember Christ’s sacrifice in this newer, higher, more holy and personal way.”<sup>1</sup>

*Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.*

### We Renew Our Baptismal Covenants through the Sacrament

“When we are baptized, we take upon ourselves the sacred name of Jesus Christ. Taking upon us His name is one of the most significant experiences we have in life. . . .

“Each week in sacrament meeting we promise to remember the atoning sacrifice of our Savior as we renew our baptismal covenant. We promise to do as the Savior did—to be obedient to the Father and always keep His commandments. The blessing we receive in return is to always have His Spirit to be with us.”<sup>2</sup>

*Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.*

“I was with an eight-year-old girl on the day of her baptism. At the end of the day

she said with all confidence, ‘I have been baptized for a whole day, and I haven’t sinned once!’ But her perfect day did not last forever, and I am sure she is learning by now, like we all learn, that as hard as we try, we do not always avoid every bad situation, every wrong choice. . . .

“. . . It is not possible to make real change all by ourselves. Our own willpower and our own good intentions are not enough. When we make mistakes or choose poorly, we must have the help of our Savior to get back on track. We partake of the sacrament week after week to show our faith in His power to change us. We confess our sins and promise to forsake them.”<sup>3</sup> ■

*Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.*

## NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “This Do in Remembrance of Me,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 67.
2. Robert D. Hales, “The Covenant of Baptism: To Be in the Kingdom and of the Kingdom,” *Liahona*, Jan. 2001, 8; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 8.
3. Julie B. Beck, “Remembering, Repenting, and Changing,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 110–11.



# AGENCY

## IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR ETERNAL PROGRESS

**O**ur Heavenly Father has given us agency. This ability to choose for ourselves is an essential part of the plan of salvation.

In the premortal Council in Heaven, our Heavenly Father presented His plan, which included the principle of agency. Lucifer rebelled and “sought to destroy the agency of man” (Moses 4:3). As a result, he and those who followed him were cast out. The rest of us chose Heavenly Father’s plan, which allowed us to come to earth and gain a physical body. It also provided a Savior, Jesus Christ, who would atone for our sins. Through repentance we could be forgiven. We shouted for joy (see Job 38:7)!

How we use the gift of agency in mortality affects our eternal happiness or misery. The scriptures teach us that “there is a law, irrevocably

decreed in heaven . . . , upon which all blessings are predicated” (D&C 130:20)—and to this law there is also “a punishment affixed” (Alma 42:22). Therefore, when we choose our course of action, we also choose the consequences of our actions (see Galatians 6:7). Although consequences may not be immediate, they will always follow. Choosing to follow God’s commandments leads us toward peace and eternal life. Choosing to accept Satan’s temptations leads us toward sin and heartache.<sup>1</sup>

The Old Testament prophet Joshua set the example for us when he said, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve; . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

#### NOTE

1. See *True to the Faith* (2004), 12.

1. Our mortal life is a period of testing to see how we will use our agency (see Abraham 3:25).



**A**fter the Fall, Adam and Eve “had moral agency or the ability to choose between good and evil. This made it possible for them to learn and progress. It also made it possible for them to make wrong choices and to sin” (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 49).





2. There must be “opposition in all things” so that we can see the differences between good and evil. This gives us the opportunity to choose. (See 2 Nephi 2:11–16; D&C 29:39.)



3. Our Heavenly Father gave each of us the Light of Christ so that we may know good from evil (see Moroni 7:12–17).



4. When we choose our course of action, whether good or bad, we also choose the consequences attached to our actions (see Deuteronomy 11:26–28; 30:15–20; Galatians 6:7; Revelation 22:12).



5. Because “[we] are permitted to act for [ourselves],” we are responsible for our actions (see Helaman 14:30–31).



6. When we choose to obey God’s commandments, our options increase, and we have more freedom (see 2 Nephi 2:27; D&C 58:26–28; 93:20).



7. When we choose to disobey God’s commandments, our options decrease, and we may become captive to wickedness (see 2 Nephi 2:29; John 8:34).



8. Our Heavenly Father “will not suffer [us] to be tempted above that [we] are able; but will . . . make a way to escape,” provided we choose to resist the temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).



9. We must humble ourselves and “pray continually” so that we can resist temptation (see Alma 13:28). ■

*“Wherefore, men are free . . . to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil” (2 Nephi 2:27).*

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY MATTHEW REIER, EXCEPT AS NOTED; PHOTOGRAPH OF EARTH © CORBIS; ADAM AND EVE CAST OUT OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, BY GARY KAPP; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION OF MAN AND POLICE OFFICER BY ROBERT CASEY

# Power to Change

Name withheld

Although I was born into the Church and was active through the age of 15, I wandered from the gospel during young adulthood. During that time, in search of something that could make me happy, I turned to drugs.

I struggled with an ever-increasing addiction, and my life felt like some sort of bad movie I could not turn off. Although I wanted to stop, I found I had hardly any control over my thoughts or actions. It wasn't until I was serving a prison sentence for a drug-related crime that I found what I had lost. I had a copy of the Book of Mormon and came across Alma 5:7: "Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awakened them out of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God. Behold, they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless, their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word."

I knew I was in the midst of darkness, and I wanted to have my heart changed.

It wasn't that I hadn't tried changing before. I had participated in various recovery programs. I had tried quitting for myself and for my family. Those things all worked for a little while, but I always slipped. This verse in Alma offered me hope in Jesus Christ—hope that even if I didn't have the power to change myself (and I knew I didn't), *He* could change me.



*Turning the burden of my addiction over to the Savior, I prayed and admitted to Heavenly Father, "I cannot do this on my own."*

I remember turning the burden of my addiction over to the Savior. I prayed and admitted to Heavenly Father, "I cannot do this on my own."

I entered the LDS addiction recovery program, a 12-step class taught by two missionaries, a husband and wife. What they taught in that class saved me. They nurtured the seed of faith that had been planted many years earlier, when as a child I attended church with my mother. The missionaries taught me about repentance and forgiveness. More important, they showed me love and told me I could find even greater love from my Heavenly Father and Savior. I felt "a mighty change wrought in [my] heart" (Alma 5:12), and I found that the happiness I had so long been searching for had been in the gospel all along.

It has been six years since I decided to turn to my Savior. It has been a lot of hard work, but through the strength of the Lord, I have overcome many obstacles.

I never would have imagined the happiness and joy I now have in my

life with my wife and children. I hold the Melchizedek Priesthood and have received temple ordinances. I attribute these positive life transformations to Jesus Christ. He is the power to change.

I testify to others who are struggling as I did—and to those who love them—that change is possible and that it's very real. You need not give up hope. There is a way to return to happiness, and it is through Jesus Christ. ■

For information about the addiction recovery program, please see your priesthood leader or visit [www.ldsfamilyservices.org](http://www.ldsfamilyservices.org). The program's manual, *Addiction Recovery Program: A Guide to Addiction Recovery and Healing* (item no. 36764), is available in many languages.

To learn more about the 12-step addiction recovery program, visit [www.ldsfamilyservices.org](http://www.ldsfamilyservices.org)



# THE PRODIGAL

By Ronald Petersen\*

*I lift my head unto the Lord and cry,  
"My son has strayed from Thee!"  
My thoughts resound,  
"I teach and love and pray,  
Yet he will not respond.  
Leave me not to fight alone.  
I love him so."*

*I cry at his and my infirmity.  
I search Thy word for help to guide,  
And with the Holy Spirit's aid,  
Reach out to find my prodigal.  
And, lo, in voice to touch my soul,  
I hear God's word.*

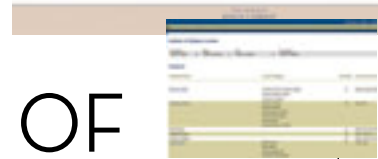
*"He's your son! He's My son!  
His will must be his own.  
My love's not less than thine.  
I tenderly entrust him to your care.  
Love him, lead him, and endure.  
If he will come at length,  
'Twill be through thee and Me.*

*"He's your son! He's My son!  
Together find our victory."*

\* The author passed away just before publication of this article.







# POSITIVE USES OF THE INTERNET

By Elizabeth Stitt

The Internet allows instant access to many resources that can strengthen and enrich our lives. Many spiritually uplifting Web sites give direction and inspiration. The following ideas can help you stay connected to reality without completely disconnecting from the good things the Internet has to offer.

## Limit Your Time

Rebecca Renfroe, from Idaho, USA, used to blog and read others' blogs almost daily. Her mind was always in "compose" mode—mentally writing a blog about what she did with her children instead of just doing things with them. She realized there had to be a balance.

She says, "The Spirit helped me to recognize that having a blog was not the problem—devoting too much of my time and energy to it was. I had literally been giving portions of my life away: trading away quality time with my children and my husband, trading away time for serious, in-depth study of the

scriptures, and even trading away hours of sleep that affected my ability to serve others, to be sensitive to the Spirit, and to maintain a healthy lifestyle."

Sister Renfroe learned not to let good things get in the way of better things, as Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles counseled: "Just because something is *good* is not a sufficient reason for doing it. . . . Of course it is good to view wholesome entertainment or to obtain interesting information. But not everything of that sort is worth the portion of our life we give to obtain it. Some things are better, and others are best."<sup>1</sup>

## Choose Uplifting Media

Amy Paulsen of Washington, USA, appreciates Web sites that other mothers have created that provide lesson ideas and activities for teaching children gospel principles. When she needs visual aids, she finds art online to print out. When she needs ideas, she finds links to Church magazine articles, conference talks, and online manuals.



### THE BEST CHOICE

Make sure that the choices you make in the use of new media are choices that expand your mind, increase your opportunities, and feed your soul.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Sharing the Gospel Using the Internet,” *Liahona*, June 2008, N2; *Ensign*, July 2008, 60.



### CHURCH WEB SITES

Church Web sites provide excellent resources for learning and teaching the gospel. From conference talks to Church history to help with your calling, the Church sites are designed to help members easily access gospel material. The following is a sampling of official Church Web sites available in different languages:

“The Internet has helped my husband and me prepare meaningful family home evenings for our children,” Sister Paulsen says. “It’s also comforting to know that there are so many other mothers out there who also ‘teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord’” (D&C 68:28).

### Use the Internet to Share the Gospel

One member, Lin Floyd of Utah, USA, created a family history Web site with ancestors’ photos and histories. His Web site and others like it have helped people learn more about the Church and its doctrine. Some have desired to be baptized or have returned to Church activity. Others have found helps for doing family history, fulfilling callings, and strengthening marriages.

There are many positive things we can do with the Internet. As you establish guidelines for Internet use—making sure that the sites you visit expand your mind, increase your opportunities, and feed your soul—the Internet can be a great resource for enriching your personal life and strengthening your family. ■

#### NOTE

- 1. Dallin H. Oaks, “Good, Better, Best,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 104, 105.



*Using Church Web sites, you can share the gospel, prepare lessons, and engage in family history work.*







- **LDS.org:** Research conference talks, read the latest news of the Church, and connect to many other Church resources, such as Church manuals and magazines. To find materials in your language, go to [languages.lds.org](http://languages.lds.org).
- **Mormon.org:** Refer your neighbors, family, and friends to this site designed for those who want to learn more about the Church. The site explains our basic gospel beliefs, including the nature of God, eternal families, and the plan of salvation. Available in many languages.
- **JesusChrist.lds.org:** Read testimonies of the apostles and prophets about the Savior Jesus Christ. Available in English and Spanish.
- **Ensign.lds.org:** Find your favorite articles from the *Ensign* as well as Web extras such as photo galleries and activities for children.
- **Youth.lds.org:** Watch, read, and share inspiring messages and stories for youth from Church leaders and others.
- **ProvidentLiving.org:** Learn about self-reliance topics such as food storage, employment, and Church humanitarian efforts.
- **LDSjobs.org:** Search for jobs, find information about schools, connect with job seekers, and learn how to help those in your ward or branch who are looking for employment. Available in English, Portuguese, and Spanish.
- **YouTube.com/MormonMessages:** Watch short audiovisual presentations about gospel principles. Available in English and Spanish.
- **Temples.lds.org:** View information about and pictures of temples around the world. Available in English, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.
- **New.FamilySearch.org:** Research your family line, and submit information about your ancestors. Prepare names for temple work. Available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.
- **FamilySearchIndexing.org:** Volunteer to help digitize and index Church family history resource records. Available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.
- **Countries.lds.org:** Many countries have their own Church Web site. For example, on Denmark's site you can watch videos showing the Copenhagen Denmark Temple. On the Argentina/Uruguay/Paraguay site, members can sign up to receive inspirational quotes from Church leaders through e-mail. On Korea's site you can watch several Church films. Other countries' sites have similar features.
- **Languages.lds.org:** Each language has a list of the translated material available on LDS.org. Most sites offer general conference talks and manuals online. Some offer additional resources.
- **Images.lds.org:** Download gospel art images, Church history pictures, photos of temples, and more.
- **Braille.lds.org:** Find Braille texts in English and Spanish; they are downloadable and printable.
- **Music.lds.org:** Listen to and print hymns and other music. Available in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. (At [music.lds.org](http://music.lds.org), click on **Music**, then **Hymns**, and then choose a language.)



**By Elder  
David A. Bednar**  
Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

*I raise an apostolic voice  
of warning about the potentially  
stifling, suffocating, suppressing,  
and constraining impact of  
some kinds of cyberspace  
interactions and experiences  
upon our souls.*

# THINGS AS

**A**s I have looked forward to and prepared for this opportunity to learn with you, I have come to better understand the strong feelings of Jacob, the brother of Nephi. He said, “I this day am weighed down with much . . . desire and anxiety for the welfare of your souls” (Jacob 2:3). The message I want to share with you today has over time distilled upon my “soul as the dew from heaven” (D&C 121:45). I invite your earnest attention to a serious subject that has both immediate and eternal implications. I pray for the Holy Ghost to be with and teach each

of us during our time together.

I long have been impressed with the simple and clear definition of truth set forth in the Book of Mormon: “The Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls” (Jacob 4:13; see also D&C 93:24).

We will focus upon the first major element of truth identified in this verse: “things as they really are.” We first will review several

key elements of our Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness as the doctrinal foundation for knowing and understanding things as they really are. We then will consider methods of attack used by the adversary to distract us from or inhibit our capacity to discern



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION © CORBIS AND © GETTY IMAGES



# THEY REALLY ARE

things as they really are. And finally, we will discuss the responsibilities that rest upon you as the rising generation. You will need to be obedient, to honor sacred covenants, and to discern things consistently as they really are in today's world that grows ever more confused and wicked.

## Our Divine Destiny

In "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles declare that as spirit sons and daughters of God, we "accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize [our] divine destiny as heirs of eternal life."<sup>1</sup> Please note the primary importance of obtaining a physical body in the process of progressing toward our divine destiny.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught with clarity the importance of our physical bodies:

"We came to this earth that we might have a body and present it pure before God in the celestial kingdom. The great principle of happiness consists in having a body. The devil has no body, and herein is his punishment. He is pleased when he can obtain the tabernacle of man, and when cast out by the Savior he asked to go into the herd of swine, showing that he would prefer a swine's body to having none. All beings who have bodies have power over those who have not. . . .

"The devil has no power over us only as we permit him; the moment we revolt at anything which comes from God, the devil takes power."<sup>2</sup>

Our physical bodies make possible a breadth,

a depth, and an intensity of experience that simply could not be obtained in our premortal estate. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has taught, "Our spirit and our body are combined in such a way that our body becomes an instrument of our mind and the foundation of our character."<sup>3</sup> Thus, our relationships with other people, our capacity to recognize and act in accordance with truth, and our ability to obey the principles and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ are amplified through our physical bodies. In the classroom of mortality, we experience tenderness, love, kindness, happiness, sorrow, disappointment, pain, and even the challenges of physical limitations in ways that prepare us for eternity. Simply stated, there are lessons we must learn and experiences we must have, as the scriptures describe, "according to the flesh" (1 Nephi 19:6; Alma 7:12–13).

Apostles and prophets consistently have taught the mortal and eternal importance of our bodies. Paul declared:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

And in this dispensation the Lord revealed that "the spirit and the body are the soul of man" (D&C 88:15). A truth that really is and always will be is that the body and the spirit constitute our reality and identity. When body and spirit are inseparably connected, we can

receive a fulness of joy; when they are separated, we cannot receive a fulness of joy (see D&C 93:33–34).

The Father's plan is designed to provide direction for His children, to help them become happy, and to bring them safely home to Him with resurrected, exalted bodies. Lucifer labors to make the sons and daughters of God confused and unhappy and to hinder their eternal progression. The overarching intent of the father of lies is that all of us become "miserable like unto himself" (2 Nephi 2:27), and he works to distort the elements of the Father's plan he hates the most.

Satan does not have a body, and his eternal progress has been halted. Just as water flowing in a riverbed is stopped by a dam, so the adversary's eternal progress is thwarted because he does not have a physical body. Because of his rebellion, Lucifer has denied himself all of the mortal blessings and experiences made possible through a tabernacle of flesh and bones. He cannot learn the lessons that only an embodied spirit can learn. He cannot marry or enjoy the blessings of procreation and family life. He cannot abide the reality of a literal and universal resurrection of all mankind. One of the potent scriptural meanings of the word *damned* is illustrated in his inability to continue developing and becoming like our Heavenly Father.

Because a physical body is so central to the Father's plan of happiness and our spiritual development, we should not be surprised that Lucifer seeks to frustrate our progression by tempting us to use our bodies improperly. One of the ultimate ironies of eternity is that the adversary, who is miserable precisely because he has no physical body, invites and entices us to share in his misery through the improper use of our bodies. The very tool he does not have and cannot use is thus the

primary target of his attempts to lure us to physical and spiritual destruction.

### The Adversary's Attacks

The adversary attempts to influence us both to misuse our physical bodies and to minimize the importance of our bodies. These two methods of attack are important for us to recognize and to repel.

When any of Heavenly Father's children misuse their physical tabernacles by violating the law of chastity, by using drugs and addictive substances, by disfiguring or defacing themselves,



*"Our spirit and our body are combined in such a way that our body becomes an instrument of our mind and the foundation of our character."*

**President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.**

or by worshipping the false idol of body image, whether their own or that of others, Satan is delighted. To those of us who know and understand the plan of salvation, any defiling of the body is rebellion and a denial of our true identity as sons and daughters of God (see Mosiah 2:36–37; D&C 64:34–35).

Now, brothers and sisters, I cannot tell you all the ways whereby you may misuse your bodies, "for there are divers ways and means, even so many that I cannot number them" (Mosiah 4:29). You know what is right and what is wrong, and you have the individual responsibility to learn for yourself "by study and also by faith" (D&C 88:118) the things you should and should not do and the doctrinal reasons you should and should



not do those things. I testify that as you desire to so learn, as you “watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives” (Mosiah 4:30), you will be spiritually enlightened and protected. And according to your faithfulness and diligence, you will have the power to discern the deception and repel the attacks of the adversary as he tempts you to misuse your physical body.

Satan also strives to entice the sons and daughters of God to minimize the importance of their physical bodies. This particular type of attack is most subtle and diabolical. I want to provide several examples of how the adversary can pacify and lull us away into a sense of carnal security (see 2 Nephi 28:21) and encourage us to put at risk the earthly learning experiences that caused us to shout for joy in the premortal existence (see Job 38:7).

For example, all of us can find enjoyment in a wide range of wholesome, entertaining, and engaging activities. But we diminish the importance of our bodies and jeopardize our physical well-being by going to unusual and dangerous extremes searching for an ever-greater and more exhilarating adrenaline “rush.” We may rationalize that surely nothing is wrong with such seemingly innocent exploits and adventures. However, putting at risk the very instrument God has given us to receive the learning experiences of mortality—merely to pursue a thrill or some supposed fun, to bolster ego, or to gain acceptance—truly minimizes the importance of our physical bodies.

Sadly, some young men and young women in the Church today ignore “things as they really are” and neglect eternal relationships for digital distractions,

diversions, and detours that have no lasting value. My heart aches when a young couple—sealed together in the house of the Lord for time and for all eternity by the power of the holy priesthood—experiences marital difficulties because of the addicting effect of excessive video gaming or online socializing. A young man or woman may waste countless hours, postpone or forfeit vocational or academic achievement, and ultimately sacrifice cherished human relationships because of mind- and spirit-numbing video and online games. As the Lord declared, “Wherefore, I give unto them a commandment . . . : Thou shalt not idle away thy time, neither shalt thou bury thy talent that it may not be known” (D&C 60:13).

You may now be asking yourself, “But, Brother Bednar, you began today by talking about the importance of a physical body in our eternal progression. Are you suggesting that video gaming and various types of computer-mediated communication can play a role in minimizing the importance of our physical bodies?” That is precisely what I am declaring. Let me explain.

We live at a time when technology can be used to replicate reality, to augment reality, and to create virtual reality. For example, a medical doctor can use software simulation to gain valuable experience performing a complicated surgical operation without ever putting a human patient at risk. A pilot in a flight simulator repeatedly can practice emergency landing procedures that could save many lives. And architects and engineers can use innovative technologies to model sophisticated design and construction methods that decrease the loss of human life and damage to buildings caused by earthquakes and other natural disasters.

In each of these examples, a high degree of fidelity in the simulation or model contributes to the effectiveness of the experience. The term



**THIS AND SIMILAR IMAGES** are used as part of the planning and design process for each new temple that is constructed. The rendering portrays fabrics, furnishings, fixtures, lighting, scale, and proportion to show how each component will look and feel when finished. In essence, the entire temple and all of its elements are designed in detail before construction ever begins.



This image is a computer-generated rendering of a sealing room in the Newport Beach California Temple.

*fidelity* denotes the similarity between reality and a representation of reality. Such a simulation can be constructive if the fidelity is high and the purposes are good—for example, providing experience that saves lives or improves the quality of life.

Please notice the fidelity between the representation of reality in the computer rendering (page 26) and the reality of the completed room in the photograph on the next page.

In the example, high fidelity is employed to accomplish a most important purpose—the design and construction of a sacred and beautiful temple. However, a simulation or model can lead to spiritual impairment and danger if the fidelity is high and the purposes are bad—such as experimenting with actions contrary to God’s commandments or enticing us to think or do things we would not otherwise think or do “because it is only a game.”

I raise an apostolic voice of warning about the potentially stifling, suffocating, suppressing, and constraining impact

of some kinds of cyberspace interactions and experiences upon our souls. The concerns I raise are not new; they apply equally to other types of media, such as television, movies, and music. But in a cyber world, these challenges are more pervasive and intense. I plead with you to beware of the sense-dulling and spiritually destructive influence of cyberspace technologies that are used to produce high fidelity and that promote degrading and evil purposes.

If the adversary cannot entice us to misuse

our physical bodies, then one of his most potent tactics is to beguile you and me as embodied spirits to disconnect gradually and physically from things as they really are. In essence, he encourages us to think and act as if we were in our premortal, unembodied state. And, if we let him, he can cunningly employ some aspects of modern technology to accomplish his purposes. Please be careful of becoming so immersed and engrossed in pixels, texting, earbuds, twittering, online social networking, and potentially addictive uses of media and the Internet that you fail to recognize the importance of your physical body and miss the richness of person-to-person communication. Beware of digital displays and data in many forms of computer-mediated interaction that can displace the full range of physical capacity and experience.

Read carefully the following quote describing an intense romantic relationship a woman had with a cyberspace boyfriend. And note how the medium of communication minimized the importance of the physical body: “And so PFSlider [the man’s screen name] became my everyday life. All the tangible stuff fell away. My body did not exist. I had no skin, no hair, no bones. All desire had converted itself into a cerebral current that reached nothing but my frontal lobe. There was no outdoors, no social life, no weather. There was only the computer screen and the phone, my chair, and maybe a glass of water.”<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, we need to heed the admonition of Paul: “That every one of you should know how

to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour” (1 Thessalonians 4:4).

Consider again the example I mentioned earlier of a young couple recently married in the house of the Lord. An immature or misguided spouse may devote an inordinate amount of time to playing video games, chatting online, or in other ways allowing the digital to dominate things as they really are. Initially the investment of time may seem relatively harmless, rationalized as a few minutes of needed relief from the demands



**This is a photograph of the actual sealing room in the Newport Beach California Temple.**

of a hectic daily schedule. But important opportunities are missed for developing and improving interpersonal skills, for laughing and crying together, and for creating a rich and enduring bond of emotional intimacy. Progressively, seemingly innocent entertainment can become a form of pernicious enslavement.

To feel the warmth of a tender hug from an



eternal companion or to see the sincerity in the eyes of another person as testimony is shared—all of these things experienced as they really are through the instrument of our physical body—could be sacrificed for a high-fidelity fantasy that has no lasting value. If you and I are not vigilant, we can become “past feeling” (1 Nephi 17:45), as did Laman and Lemuel long ago.

Let me provide another example of disconnecting gradually and physically from things as they really are. Today a person can enter into a virtual world, such as Second Life, and assume a new identity. An individual can create an avatar, or a cyberspace persona, that conforms to his or her own appearance and behavior. Or a person can concoct a counterfeit identity that does not correlate in any way to things as they really are. However closely the assumed new identity approximates the individual, such behavior is the essence of things as they really are not. Earlier I defined the fidelity of a simulation or model. I now emphasize the importance of personal fidelity—the correspondence between an actual person and an assumed, cyberspace identity. Please note the lack of personal fidelity in the following episode as reported in the *Wall Street Journal*:

Ric Hoogestraat is “a burly [53-year-old] man with a long gray ponytail, thick sideburns and a salt-and-pepper handlebar mustache. . . . [Ric spends] six hours a night and often 14 hours at a stretch on weekends as Dutch Hoorenbeek, his six-foot-nine, muscular . . . cyber-self. The character looks like a younger, physically enhanced version of [Ric]. . . .

“ . . . [He] sits at his computer with the blinds drawn. . . . While his wife, Sue, watches television in the living room, Mr. Hoogestraat chats online with what appears on the screen to be a tall, slim redhead.

“He’s never met the woman outside of the

computer world of Second Life, a well-chronicled digital fantasyland. . . . He’s never so much as spoken to her on the telephone. But their relationship has taken on curiously real dimensions. They own two dogs, pay a mortgage together and spend hours [in their cyberspace world] shopping at the mall and taking long motorcycle rides. . . . Their bond is so strong that three months ago, Mr. Hoogestraat asked Janet Spielman, the 38-year-old Canadian woman who controls the redhead, to become his virtual wife.

“The woman he’s legally wed to is not amused.

‘It’s really devastating,’ says Sue Hoogestraat, . . . who has been married to Mr. Hoogestraat for seven months.”<sup>5</sup>

Brothers and sisters, please understand. I am not suggesting all technology is inherently bad; it is not. Nor am I saying we should not use its many capabilities in appropriate ways to learn, to communicate, to lift and brighten lives,

*If the adversary cannot entice us to misuse our physical bodies, then one of his most potent tactics is to beguile you and me as embodied spirits to disconnect gradually and physically from things as they really are.*

and to build and strengthen the Church; of course we should. But I am raising a warning voice that we should not squander and damage authentic relationships by obsessing over contrived ones. “Nearly 40% of men and 53% of women who play online games said their virtual friends were equal to or better than their real-life friends, according to a survey of 30,000 gamers conducted by . . . a recent Ph.D. graduate from Stanford University. More than a quarter of gamers [who responded indicated that] the emotional highlight of the past week occurred in a computer world.”<sup>6</sup>

How important, how enduring, and how timely

is the Lord's definition of truth: "things as they really are." The prophet Alma asked, "O then, is not this real?" (Alma 32:35). He was speaking of light and good so discernible they can be tasted. Indeed, "they who dwell in [the Father's] presence . . . see as they are seen, and know as they are known, having received of his fulness and of his grace" (D&C 76:94).

My beloved brothers and sisters, beware! To the extent personal fidelity decreases in computer-mediated communications and the purposes of such communications are distorted, perverted, and wicked, the potential for spiritual disaster is dangerously high. I implore you to turn away immediately and permanently from such places and activities (see 2 Timothy 3:5).

Now I would like to address an additional characteristic of the adversary's attacks. Satan often offers an alluring illusion of anonymity. Lucifer always has sought to accomplish his work in secret (see Moses 5:30). Remember, however, that apostasy is not anonymous simply because it occurs in a blog or through a fabricated identity in a chat room or virtual world. Immoral thoughts, words, and deeds always are immoral, even in cyberspace. Deceitful acts supposedly veiled in secrecy, such as illegally downloading music from the Internet or copying CDs or DVDs for distribution to friends and families, are nonetheless deceitful. We are all accountable to God, and ultimately we will be judged of Him according to our deeds and the desires of our hearts (see Alma 41:3). "For as [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

The Lord knows who we really are, what we really think, what we really do, and who we really are becoming. He has warned us that "the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed" (D&C 1:3).

I have raised a voice of warning about only a few of the spiritual hazards in our technologically oriented and rapidly changing world. Let me say again: neither technology nor rapid change in or of itself is good or evil; the real challenge is to understand both within the context of the eternal plan of happiness. Lucifer will encourage you to misuse and to minimize the importance of your physical body. He will attempt to substitute the monotony of virtual repetition for the infinite variety of God's creations and convince us we are merely mortal things to be acted upon instead of eternal souls blessed with moral agency to act for ourselves. Deviously, he entices embodied spirits to forfeit the blessings and learning experiences "according to the flesh" (1 Nephi 19:6; Alma 7:12–13) that are made possible through the Father's plan of happiness and the Atonement of His Only Begotten Son.

For your happiness and protection, I invite you to study more diligently the doctrine of the plan of salvation—and to prayerfully ponder the truths we have reviewed. I offer two questions for consideration in your personal pondering and prayerful studying:

1. Does the use of various technologies and media invite or impede the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost in your life?
2. Does the time you spend using various technologies and media enlarge or restrict your capacity to live, to love, and to serve in meaningful ways?

You will receive answers, inspiration, and instruction from the Holy Ghost suited to your individual circumstances and needs. I repeat and affirm the teaching of the Prophet Joseph: "All beings who have bodies have power over those who have not. The devil has no power over us only as we permit him."

These eternal truths about the importance of our physical bodies will fortify you against the

deception and the attacks of the adversary. One of my deepest desires for you is an ever-increasing testimony of and appreciation for the Resurrection—even your own resurrection with a celestial, exalted body “because of your faith in [the Lord Jesus Christ] according to the promise” (Moroni 7:41).

### The Rising Generation

I would like to speak specifically to you as you really are. You really are the rising generation in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In October of 1997, Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles visited Brigham Young University–Idaho to speak in a devotional. During the day he was on the campus, we talked together about a variety of gospel topics in general and about the youth of the Church in particular. I remember Elder Maxwell making a statement that greatly impressed me. He said, “The youth of this generation have a greater capacity for obedience than any previous generation.”

He then indicated that his statement was based upon a truth taught by President George Q. Cannon (1827–1901), First Counselor in the First Presidency: “God has reserved spirits for this dispensation who have the courage and determination to face the world, and all the powers of the evil one, visible and invisible, to proclaim the gospel and maintain the truth and establish and build up the Zion of our God fearless of all consequences. He has sent these spirits in this generation to lay the foundation of Zion never more to be overthrown, and to raise up a seed that will be righteous, and that will honor God, and honor Him supremely, and be obedient to Him under all circumstances.”<sup>7</sup>

Parents and Church leaders frequently emphasize that the young men and young women of this generation have been reserved for this season in the history of the world and are some of the most valiant of Heavenly Father’s children. Indeed, such

statements are true. But I often have wondered if young people hear this description so often that it becomes overused and trite—and that its importance and deep implications may be overlooked. We know that “unto whom much is given much is required” (D&C 82:3). And the teachings of President Cannon and Elder Maxwell help us to understand more fully what is required of us today. You and I are to be valiant and “obedient to Him under all circumstances.” Thus, obedience is the principal weapon upon which the rising generation must rely in the latter-day battle between good and evil.

**Y***ou and I are to be valiant and “obedient to Him under all circumstances.” Thus, obedience is the principal weapon upon which the rising generation must rely in the latter-day battle between good and evil.*

We rejoice that the Lord through His authorized servants has “raised the bar” for the young men and young women of today. Given what we know about who we are and why we are here upon the earth, such inspired direction is welcomed and appreciated. And we should recognize that Lucifer incessantly strives to “lower the

bar” by coaxing us to misuse and minimize the importance of our physical bodies.

The Savior has warned us repeatedly to beware of deception by the adversary:

“Jesus answered, and said unto them: Take heed that no man deceive you; . . .

“For in those days there shall also arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that, if possible, they shall deceive the very elect, who are the elect according to the covenant. . . .

“And whoso treasureth up my word, shall not be deceived” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:5, 22, 37).



Obedience opens the door to the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. And the spiritual gifts and abilities activated by the power of the Holy Ghost enable us to avoid deception—and to see, to feel, to know, to understand, and to remember things as they really are. You and I have been endowed with a greater capacity for obedience precisely for these reasons. Moroni declared:

“Hearken unto the words of the Lord, and ask the Father in the name of Jesus for what things soever ye shall stand in need. Doubt not, but be believing,



and begin as in times of old, and come unto the Lord with all your heart, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling before him.

“Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves of all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lusts, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will serve the true and living God” (Mormon 9:27–28).

As we heed that inspired counsel, we can and will be blessed to recognize and repel the attacks

of the adversary—today and in the days that lie ahead. We can and will fulfill our foreordained responsibilities and contribute to the work of the Lord in all the world.

I testify that God lives and is our Heavenly Father. He is the author of the plan of salvation. Jesus is the Christ, the Redeemer, whose body was bruised, broken, and torn for us as He offered the atoning sacrifice. He is resurrected, He lives, and He stands at the head of His Church in these latter days. To be “encircled about eternally in the arms of his love” (2 Nephi 1:15) will be a real and not a virtual experience.

I testify we can and will be blessed with the courage and determination to face the world and all the powers of the evil one. Righteousness will prevail. No unhallowed hand can stop this work from progressing. I bear witness and testify of these things as they really are and as they really will be, in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen. ■

*From a Church Educational System fireside address delivered at Brigham*

*Young University—Idaho on May 3, 2009.*

#### NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 211, 214.
3. Boyd K. Packer, “The Instrument of Your Mind and the Foundation of Your Character,” *Brigham Young University 2002–2003 Speeches* (2003), 2.
4. Meghan Daum, “Virtual Love,” *The New Yorker*, Aug. 25 and Sept. 1, 1997, 82; or Meghan Daum, *My Misspent Youth* (2001), 19.
5. Alexandra Alter, “Is This Man Cheating on His Wife?” *Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 10, 2007, pp. W8, W1.
6. Alexandra Alter, *Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 10, 2007, p. W8.
7. George Q. Cannon, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, May 31, 1866, 203; see also *Journal of Discourses*, 11:230.



By Elder  
Kenneth Johnson  
Of the Seventy

# Called AND Set Apart TO SERVE

*Formal callings in the Church are not complete until we have been set apart by proper priesthood authority.*

In a vision given to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon at Hiram, Ohio, on February 16, 1832, we find these words of comfort and encouragement:

“I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious unto those who fear<sup>1</sup> me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth unto the end.

“Great shall be their reward and eternal shall be their glory” (D&C 76:5–6).

During my years as a member of the Church, I have experienced a growing appreciation for what it means to be called of God and for the promised blessings associated with responding to the Lord’s invitation to serve Him.

When leaders pray to know the will of the Lord before extending a call to serve, they receive a feeling of assurance that confirms the correct action to be taken. It is both essential

and gratifying to obtain a personal witness through prayer that we have been called of God. Through His servants, the Lord invites us to participate in His work so that we can come to know and love Him more fully (see Mosiah 5:13).

Upon receiving a call to serve, we might experience feelings of inadequacy comparable to what Enoch felt when he was commissioned by the Lord to lead and teach the people (see Moses 6:31). The words “My Spirit is upon you, wherefore all thy words will I justify” (Moses 6:34) must have brought assurance to Enoch as he gained a vision of how the Lord would empower him to fulfill his sacred assignment. The scriptures further record what a great leader Enoch became as “he walked with God” (Moses 6:39). The experience of Enoch contains valuable lessons for each of us as we serve in the Lord’s Church.

The principle of setting apart those called to serve is expressed in the counsel of the Lord to Moses when He instructed Moses to “lay thine hand upon [Joshua]. . . . And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him” (Numbers 27:18, 20).

Through this divinely established pattern, we can rise above our individual frailties, limitations, and even opposition. Consider the experience of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman: “The Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they could speak forth marvelous words” (Helaman 5:45; see also verses 17–19).

## Teaching by the Spirit

In a revelation to Joseph Smith, the Lord posed the following question: “Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question—unto what were ye ordained?”<sup>2</sup> (D&C 50:13). The Lord responds, “To preach my gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter which was sent forth to teach the truth” (D&C 50:14).

Clearly, there are constraints concerning the manner in which we should teach sacred truths:

“Remember that that which cometh from above is sacred, and must be spoken with care, and by constraint of the Spirit” (D&C 63:64).

“He that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth

by the Comforter, in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

“And if it be by some other way it is not of God” (D&C 50:17–18).

When we are called to a position in the Church as a leader or a teacher, our commission is to teach the word of God by the Spirit of God, not by “the philosophies of men interlaced with a few scriptures.”<sup>3</sup> Like Enoch, Nephi, and Lehi, we too can receive help from on high through the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

We might conclude that having heard or read information concerning a doctrine or principle will suffice. But such an approach reflects a failure to recognize that a deeper comprehension of principles comes through personal revelation (see Job 32:8). Consider this inspired observation by Hyrum Smith, brother of the Prophet: “Preach the first principles of the Gospel—preach them over again: you will find that day after day new ideas and additional light concerning them will be revealed to you. You can enlarge upon them so as to comprehend them clearly.”<sup>4</sup>

### Following the Savior’s Example

Our greatest example in all things is the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom it is written:

“And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

“For he taught them as one having



authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:28–29; see also Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 7:36–37).

Alma, the great Book of Mormon prophet, exemplified this approach: “And now, as the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God” (Alma 31:5).

When entrusted with the sacred responsibility to teach the gospel, let us follow the example of the Savior and declare with Him, “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me” (John 7:16). ■

#### NOTES

1. In scripture, our “fear” toward Deity relates to the concept of “reverence.” President David O. McKay (1873–1970) provided insight into this divine characteristic, stating, “Reverence is profound respect mingled with love” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1967, 86).
2. In scripture, “ordain” and “set apart” are used interchangeably (see D&C 20:67; 25:7; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:106).
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “A Teacher Come from God,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 26; see also Mosiah 18:19–22.
4. Hyrum Smith, in *History of the Church*, 6:323.



### BEING SET APART

“The setting apart is an established practice in the

Church and men and women are ‘set apart’ to special responsibility, in ecclesiastical, quorum, and auxiliary positions. . . .

“To some folk the setting apart seems a perfunctory act while others anticipate it eagerly, absorb every word of it, and let their lives be lifted thereby.

“The setting apart may be taken literally; it is a setting apart from sin, apart from the carnal; apart from everything which is crude, low, vicious, cheap, or vulgar; *set apart* from the world to a higher [plane] of thought and activity. The blessing is conditional upon faithful performance.”

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 478.





# Moving THE FOUNTAIN

By Jeffrey E. Niven

**M**y next-door neighbor recently invited me over to his backyard to see some changes he was making. He had already constructed a small pond and lined it with rocks. A sculptured stone fountain, which needed to be placed in the center of the pond, was sitting on the grass next to it. My neighbor explained to me how the water from the pond would eventually be pumped up through the fountain and spill over into the pond. As I reached over to the large sculpture and attempted to move it back and forth, I quickly realized how heavy it was.

“About 400 pounds (181 kilograms),” my neighbor volunteered, reading my mind. “I need to figure out a way to lift the fountain and place it carefully in the center of the pond.”

I listened as he suggested some of the methods he had been considering to move the fountain. He had thought about hiring a crane to lift it over the edge of the pond and carefully lower it into position.

The solution seemed obvious to me. “Why don’t you just get a bunch of guys to lift it up and put it where you want it?”

My neighbor’s response to my suggestion made me realize how blessed I was to be a member of the Church. He looked at me and

asked, “Where would I find that many men who would be willing to help me?”



## LIFT WHERE YOU STAND

**M**ost of the priesthood bearers I know . . . are eager to roll up their sleeves and go to work, whatever that work might be. They faithfully perform their priesthood duties. They magnify their callings. They serve the Lord by serving others. They stand close together and lift where they stand.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf,  
“Lift Where You Stand,”  
*Liahona and Ensign*, Nov.  
2008, 54.

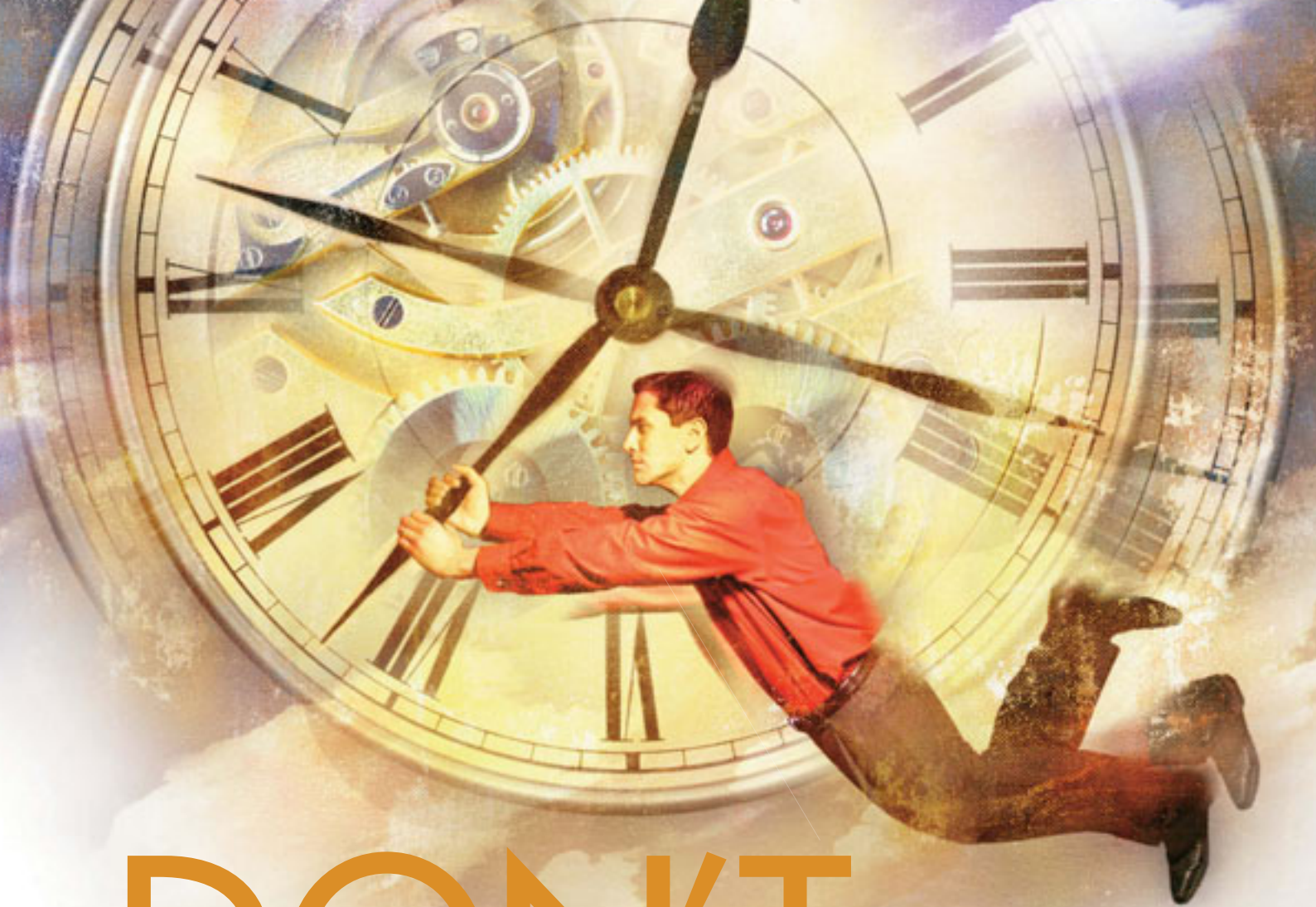
A lump of gratitude formed in my throat as I gratefully responded, “You name the date and time, and I will get all the men you need.”

Before I left, we discussed how he would construct a wooden framework around the sculpture to allow at least 10 men to lift it.

A few days later, at the appointed time, men and young men from our ward Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood quorums arrived to help a man they had never met. My neighbor had finished building the wooden frame that would allow the large group of men to get a firm grip and lift the heavy sculpture.

Under my neighbor’s direction, these brethren easily lifted the heavy fountain and placed it gently in its prepared location. The job took less than 10 minutes. Everyone shook my neighbor’s hand and offered further help. This was a spiritual experience for me, for the ward members, and for my neighbor.

We may sometimes take for granted the blessings we receive from being a part of a ward. Being surrounded by a ward family filled with love and a willingness to serve and help each other is just one of those blessings. ■



# DON'T BE IN A HURRY

**By John C. Thomas**

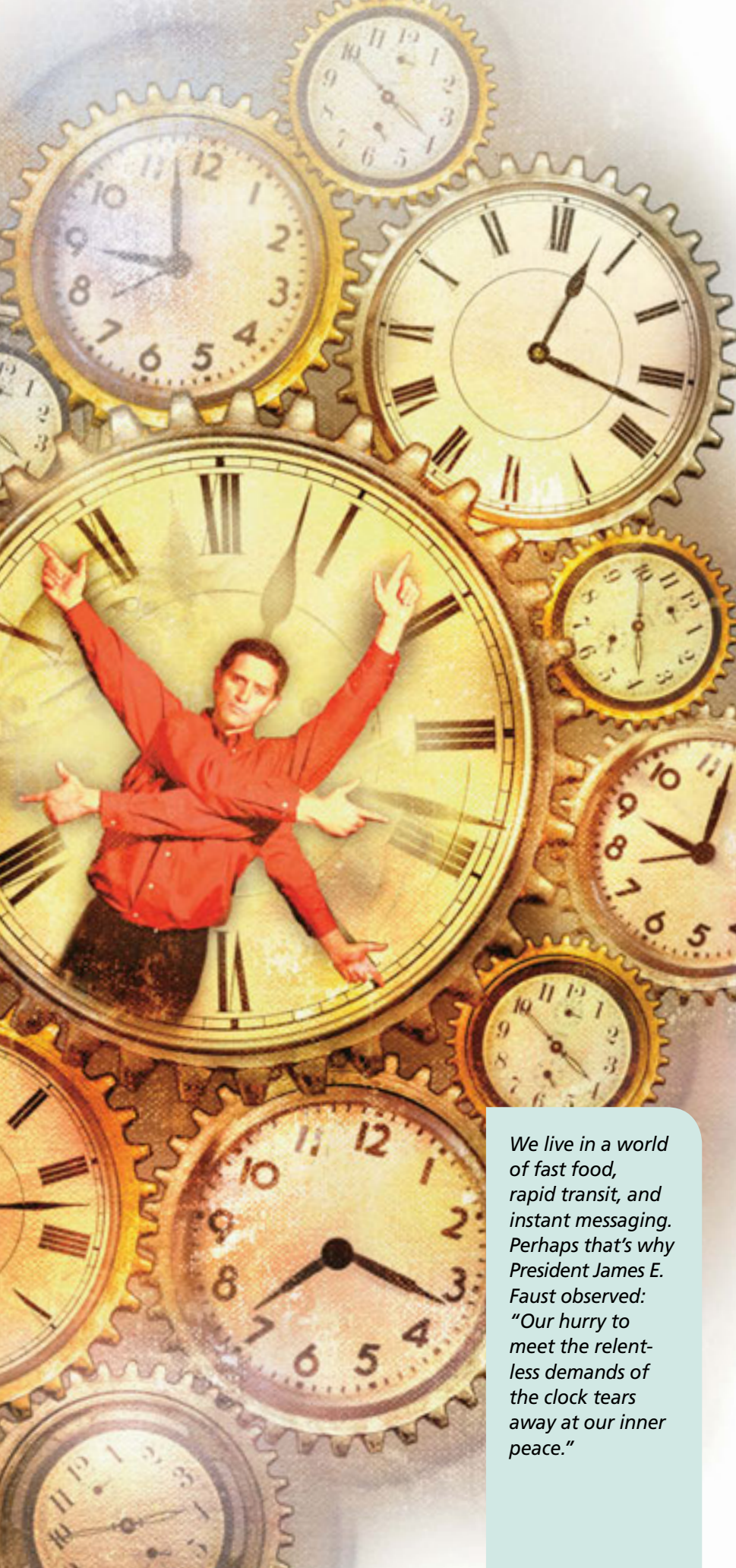
BYU—Idaho Religious Education Department

*The counsel that President Brigham Young received in an 1845 dream may be just as important to us now as it was to him then.*

**T**he year 1845 was a busy one for Latter-day Saints in Nauvoo, Illinois. Still mourning the violent death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Saints continued their efforts to complete the Nauvoo Temple, spread the gospel, and gather believers even

as conflict with critics and dissenters hastened plans for an exodus to the West. On a Sunday in August 1845, Brigham Young (1801–77) paused from the demands of leadership to record a dream he'd had the previous night. "I dreamed . . . I saw Brother Joseph Smith," he wrote, "and as I was going about my business, he said, 'Brother Brigham, don't be in a hurry.'" President Young said Joseph repeated the counsel twice more with "a degree of sharpness": Brother Brigham, don't be in a hurry. Brother Brigham, don't be in a hurry.<sup>1</sup>





As important as that message was to Brigham Young in his day, it may be even more vital today. Think how the pace of life has quickened since then, and think of all the things—mundane and meaningful—that compete for our attention every day. We live in a world of fast food, rapid transit, instant messaging, and constant claims about how to get rich quicker, get fit faster, and succeed now. Despite the proliferation of supposed time-saving tools, we often feel pressed and stressed by the demands on our time.

Perhaps this is one meaning of the prophecy that “all things shall be in commotion” in the latter days. If so, it is troubling that the scriptures link that “commotion” with men’s hearts failing them (D&C 45:26; 88:91). As President James E. Faust (1920–2007) observed, “Our hurry to meet the relentless demands of the clock tears away at our inner peace.”<sup>2</sup> It’s easy to see how sin can harden a distracted heart, love can fade, and fear can rise in a hurry.

Let’s explore four areas where the tendency to hurry may blind us to the “immediate goodness of God” (Mosiah 25:10), and then let’s consider how we can obtain the peace He wants us to enjoy, even in a world of commotion.

### **Don’t Be in a Hurry to Forget the First Commandment**

In the midst of our modern-day frenzy, how well do we remember that our time

*We live in a world of fast food, rapid transit, and instant messaging. Perhaps that’s why President James E. Faust observed: “Our hurry to meet the relentless demands of the clock tears away at our inner peace.”*

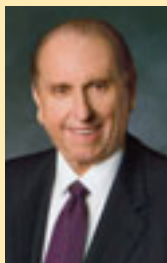


on earth is actually a gift from God? While we go about our business, this earth is spinning on its axis, and all the while the Lord is “preserving [us] from day to day, by lending [us] breath that [we] may live and move and do” what we will, and “even supporting [us] from one moment to another” (Mosiah 2:21).

Do we recall, when complaining that there’s just never enough time, that God actually prolonged the days of our first fallen parents, granting them time to repent and find joy in this life and beyond (see 2 Nephi 2:21, 25)? Can we remember, when peeved at pauses and delays, that we live on borrowed time, purchased by the Savior’s blood, and that everything He does is “for the benefit of the world” (2 Nephi 26:24; see also 1 Corinthians 6:19–20)?

In return for all He gives us, the Lord invites us to love Him. Jesus taught that the first commandment is to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . soul, . . . mind, and . . . strength” (Mark 12:30; see also Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37; D&C 59:5). Do we sometimes forget the power of keeping the first commandment in our hurried pursuit of other good things?

“When we put God first,” President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) promised, “all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives.”<sup>3</sup> This is one reason President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) could say that “we will move faster if we hurry less.” Undistracted by other gods, we trust the Lord to help us allocate our time and talent to their very best uses each day. As a result, we do more good and we make real progress.<sup>4</sup>



#### MAKING TIME FOR CHRIST

**B**efore we can successfully undertake a personal search for Jesus, we must first prepare time for him in our lives and room for him in our hearts. In these busy days there are many who have time for golf, time for shopping, time for work, time for play—but no time for Christ.

“Lovely homes dot the land and provide rooms for eating, rooms for sleeping, playrooms, sewing rooms, television rooms, but no room for Christ.

“Do we get a pang of conscience as we recall his own words: ‘The foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.’ (Matthew 8:20.) Or do we flush with embarrassment when we remember, ‘And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.’ (Luke 2:7.) No room. No room. No room. Ever has it been.

“As we undertake our personal search for Jesus, aided and guided by the principle of prayer, it is fundamental that we have a clear concept of him whom we seek. The shepherds of old sought Jesus the child. But we seek Jesus the Christ, our Older Brother, our Mediator with the Father, our Redeemer, the Author of our salvation; he who was in the beginning with the Father; he who took upon himself the sins of the world and so willingly died that we might forever live. This is the Jesus whom we seek.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “The Search for Jesus,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1990, 4–5.

#### Don’t Be in a Hurry to Do It All Yourself

This life is more than an earthly career; it is “a time to prepare to meet God; a time to prepare for that endless state . . . after the resurrection” (Alma 12:24). God knows infinitely more about that state than we do, and so He invites us to “call upon [Him] in the name of the Son forevermore” (Moses 5:8).

I love knowing that He asks us to pray and serve in the name of His Son, for I know that I am weak, but the Savior is “full of grace and truth” (Moses 5:7). Nephi put it this way: “Ye must pray always, and not faint; . . . ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul” (2 Nephi 32:9).

Missionaries honor Nephi’s injunction every morning, consecrating their day to the Lord in prayer and study. What about the rest of us? Decades after that dream of Joseph, Brigham Young asked a congregation in Utah if they had prayed that morning as families. Observing that many had not, he proposed an all-too-familiar reason: “I was in too much of a hurry.” Then President Young gave us wise counsel. “Stop! Wait!” he pleaded, “When you get up in the morning, before you suffer yourselves to eat one mouthful of food, . . . bow down before the Lord, ask Him to forgive your sins, and protect you through the day, to preserve you from temptation and all evil, to guide your steps aright, that you may do something that day that shall be beneficial to the kingdom of God on the

earth.”<sup>5</sup> That counsel will bless our lives as it reminds us each morning to kneel in prayer before we tackle the tasks ahead.

### **Don’t Be in a Hurry to Fill Your Days with “Busyness”**

A national journalist shared the following blunt assessment: “A good Mormon is a busy Mormon.”<sup>6</sup> A historian has also observed that “in Mormon culture . . . action is esteemed over contemplation.” Noting the Church’s mandate to prepare the world for the Millennium, the author wondered if our sense of “urgency, [initially] fed by noble purposefulness, [might] morph into busyness.”<sup>7</sup>

It is true that we have work enough to do, but when it comes to busyness, we may be taking our cues from the world rather than the Lord and His servants. Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles cautioned us against a “frantic, heedless busyness . . . [that often] crowds out contemplation and . . . leaves no room for renewal.” He likened thoughtful “intervals between [our] tasks” to “the green belts of grass, trees, and water that . . . interrupt the asphalt,” and he said that when we “plan some time for contemplation and renewal,” we will feel drawn to our work instead of driven to it.<sup>8</sup>

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve observed how easily we fill our lives with “appointments, meetings, and tasks” and then act frightened at the prospect of some quiet time. Why would that be? He feared that we might “feel that the busier we are, the more important we are—as though our busyness defines our worth.”<sup>9</sup> On another occasion, he reminded us that “being busy is not necessarily being spiritual”—for in fact, noise and busyness can actually crowd out the still, small voice of the Spirit.<sup>10</sup>

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) prescribed a remedy for this fever of busyness: meditation, or pondering, or introspection. President Hinckley recalled that his father “never ceased growing” because he made time for “thinking, meditating, [and] pondering.”<sup>11</sup> You may have to turn off your TV, computer, cell phone, or MP3 player, but it’s worth it. As Sister Bonnie D. Parkin, former Relief Society general president, put it: “Take time to slow down and ponder so that you can feel the Lord’s love for you.”<sup>12</sup>

### **Don’t Be in a Hurry to Be Done**

Do you know the feeling of “I wish I were done”? It shows up everywhere, even in the way we think and talk about our testimony, our conversion, and the Lord’s redeeming work in the world. If we hurry, we can short-circuit the marvel of conversion and miss the moments that God has given us to help us feel His love and renew our hope in Christ.

“There seems to be little evidence,” Elder Richard L. Evans (1906–71) of the Quorum of the Twelve once said, “that the Creator of the universe was ever in a hurry. Everywhere, on this bounteous and beautiful earth . . . there is evidence of patient purpose and planning and working and waiting.”<sup>13</sup>

When young Joseph Smith found himself in the fight of his life, “seized upon” by a powerful enemy who wanted to choke his prayer with despair and destroy him, when it took “all [of Joseph’s] powers [simply] to call upon God to deliver” him, “at [that] moment of great alarm,” how did deliverance come? In a “pillar of light . . . which descended *gradually*” (JS—H 1:15–16 emphasis added).

So where should we begin? For me, it is significant that the first step King Benjamin taught his people about becoming Saints was to yield “to the enticings of the Holy Spirit” (Mosiah 3:19). Learning to yield is foundational in the tests that follow. It is certainly prerequisite to more advanced tutorials that require us to be “meek, humble, patient, full of love, [and] willing to submit” to whatever the Lord requires (Mosiah 3:19). The word “yield” reminds me of another verb—to let—as in “let the solemnities of eternity rest upon your minds” (D&C 43:34), or “let your hearts be comforted” (D&C 98:1), or “let your hearts rejoice” (D&C 100:12).

If we commit our hearts and minds to love and serve God and our neighbors, our “small” deeds will bring about something “great” in us in time (see D&C 64:32–34). “Becoming Christlike is a lifetime pursuit,” taught President Benson, “and very often involves growth and change that is slow, almost imperceptible.”<sup>14</sup> If we are in a hurry, the growth *is* imperceptible, but as we slow down, the Holy Ghost can help us recognize true progress—renewing our hope even as He teaches us what we yet lack to become like Christ (see Moroni 8:26; 2 Nephi 32:5).

*Rather than succumb to busyness and hurry, we can pause for meditation and pondering—or, in the words of the Psalmist: “Be still, and know that I am God.”*

Perhaps all this was summarized in eight words by the Psalmist long ago: “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). The Lord reaffirmed that counsel in our day during a time of great commotion for the Prophet Joseph and early members of the Church: “Be still, and know that I am God” (D&C 101:16). I suppose that can be read as two separate commands, but I think it works especially well as a statement of cause and effect. If we will be still, put God first, call on Him first, and wait on Him always, then we will come to discern His still, small voice reminding us how well He knows us and how much He loves us, and He will teach us how to love and serve our neighbors as ourselves (see 1 Kings 19:11–12; 1 Nephi 17:45). As we do so, the promise is sure, “even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23). ■

*Adapted from a devotional address delivered at Brigham Young University—Idaho on November 6, 2007. For the full text, visit [web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches](http://web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches).*

#### NOTES

1. *History of the Church*, 7:435.
2. James E. Faust, “He Healeth the Broken in Heart,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Jul. 2005, 2.
3. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Great Commandment—Love the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 4.
4. Spencer W. Kimball, “Let Us Move Forward and Upward,” *Ensign*, May 1979, 83.
5. *Deseret News Weekly*, Jun. 5, 1872, 248.
6. Kenneth Woodward, *New York Times*, Apr. 9, 2007, [nytimes.com/2007/04/09/opinion/09woodward.html](http://nytimes.com/2007/04/09/opinion/09woodward.html).
7. Philip L. Barlow, *Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 33, no.1 (2007), 11, 16.
8. Neal A. Maxwell, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1976, 26.
9. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Follow Me,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 15–16.
10. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “The Unspeakable Gift,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 27; see also 1 Kings 19:12.
11. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Life’s Obligations,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 5.
12. Bonnie D. Parkin, Spring 2005 Relief Society Open House Message.
13. In Conference Report, Oct. 1952, 95.
14. Ezra Taft Benson, “A Mighty Change of Heart,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1989, 5.







# MY TEMPLE RECOMMEND HAD **Expired**

By Julie Wright

*I could only sit by and watch as the young women I was supposed to be leading entered the temple without me.*

I left the building quickly and took long strides to put some distance between the stone walls and myself. I didn't break into sobs until I had rounded the corner where no one could see me. I sat down and let myself wallow in self-pity for a moment. All I could do was wait for our youth group to finish performing baptisms for the dead. How could I have been so foolish?

It had been a long time since my last visit to the temple because I lived a good distance away. I had wanted to go for months, and chaperoning the young women on this trip had given me a reason to *make* the time.

I had entered the temple lobby feeling fine. Although the past year had been difficult, I felt that all the trials and stress had refined me into a better person. I felt prepared—like I was genuinely striving to do the things Heavenly Father wanted me to do. I went to the temple fasting, anticipating an outpouring of the Lord's Spirit there in His house.

At the recommend desk, an older gentleman in white smiled as he took my recommend, and then he frowned. "It's expired," he said and handed it back.

"It's expired?" I echoed incredulously. I looked toward the tiny entrance to the baptistry. It was filled with young men and young women as well as the leaders, one of the bishop's counselors, and my husband. I desperately wanted to move forward. But how could I with an expired recommend? My mind raced. Certainly the situation was due to an error, I thought. Perhaps during my interview the stake president had handed me the old recommend instead of the new one when he was done signing it. There was no way it could be expired. It hadn't been that long.



Or had it? I stretched my memory to find the last time I had taken the time to go to the temple. It had been long enough that I couldn't remember. I finally faced the truth. I hadn't checked the date on my recommend. It had expired, and now I couldn't enter the house of the Lord.

At that moment I felt a kinship to those 10 virgins awaiting the bridegroom (see Matthew 25:1–13). They all had invitations to attend the wedding celebration, but there were five who were not truly prepared. But the bridegroom didn't come right away. Eventually, when the 10 virgins heard the bridegroom was coming they all stood to trim their lamps. Five of the 10 virgins had thought ahead and brought extra oil to replenish their lamps. Five had not. Their oil burned out. They started the evening out right and were partway there. But, as my grandma used to tell me, when you're drowning it doesn't matter that you swam most of the way across the ocean. In the end, being partway isn't good enough.

When the bridegroom arrived late and the five foolish virgins *weren't* prepared, they asked to borrow oil from the five wise virgins. But the answer was no. When I was younger I

used to think the five wise virgins were selfish. Why couldn't they hand over a bit of oil? I've since realized that some things can't be shared, just as none of my friends could have shared their temple recommends with me so that I could enter the temple.

I imagine those five foolish women standing on the wrong side of the door feeling sorrow and embarrassment. We have no indication they were evil people. They had been worthy to receive invitations to the wedding celebration, but they were not fully prepared.

How foolish.

I certainly felt foolish. I wasn't an evil or bad person. I just wasn't as prepared as I thought. As a result, my husband had to go on without me. It felt symbolic, that moment of being left behind, that moment of being turned away when I yearned to go inside.

Unlike the five foolish virgins, I had a second chance. Because I was spiritually prepared to enter the temple, I could be interviewed, renew the recommend, and come back another time. And I would treasure the lesson I had learned about always being sure my lamp was properly trimmed and about having extra oil. ■



#### **LIVE WORTHY OF A TEMPLE RECOMMEND**

**L**ive worthy to hold a temple recommend. There is nothing more precious than a temple recommend. . . . Whether you can go there frequently or not, qualify for a temple recommend and keep a recommend in your pocket. It will be a reminder to you of what is expected of you as a Latter-day Saint."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "Inspirational Thoughts," *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 4.





By Joshua J. Perkey  
Church Magazines

*Inspired by the Lord, members of this small Kentucky branch have experienced great success in family history work.*

# A Bountiful

People in Bardstown, Kentucky, have a deep sense of history, for they live right in the middle of it. Bardstown was settled in the 1780s and is one of the oldest towns west of the Appalachian Mountains. On its historic central square sits an old inn looking much as it did more than 200 years ago. Just a few blocks north is the Civil War Museum with its original period buildings. A little to the east sits Federal Hill mansion, the early 19th century plantation believed to be the inspiration for the state song, “My Old Kentucky Home.” On the outskirts of town are found monuments to historical events—where duels were fought during an age of honor and where armies clashed during the Civil War.

Steeped in history, Bardstown bridges the gap between now and then, between who we are and where we came from. Coupled with the gospel, such feelings have inspired members of the Bardstown Kentucky Branch to connect with their past in ways that have led to extraordinary success with their family history.

If success were measured by numbers, this little branch—with 55 members in sacrament meeting on a good Sunday—has done amazingly well over the past few years. In 2007, branch leaders had a goal to prepare 1,000 names for temple work; they submitted about 6,000—so many they had to send nearly 4,000 to Church headquarters in Salt



PHOTOGRAPH BY GETTY IMAGES

Lake City so the temple work could be performed by others.

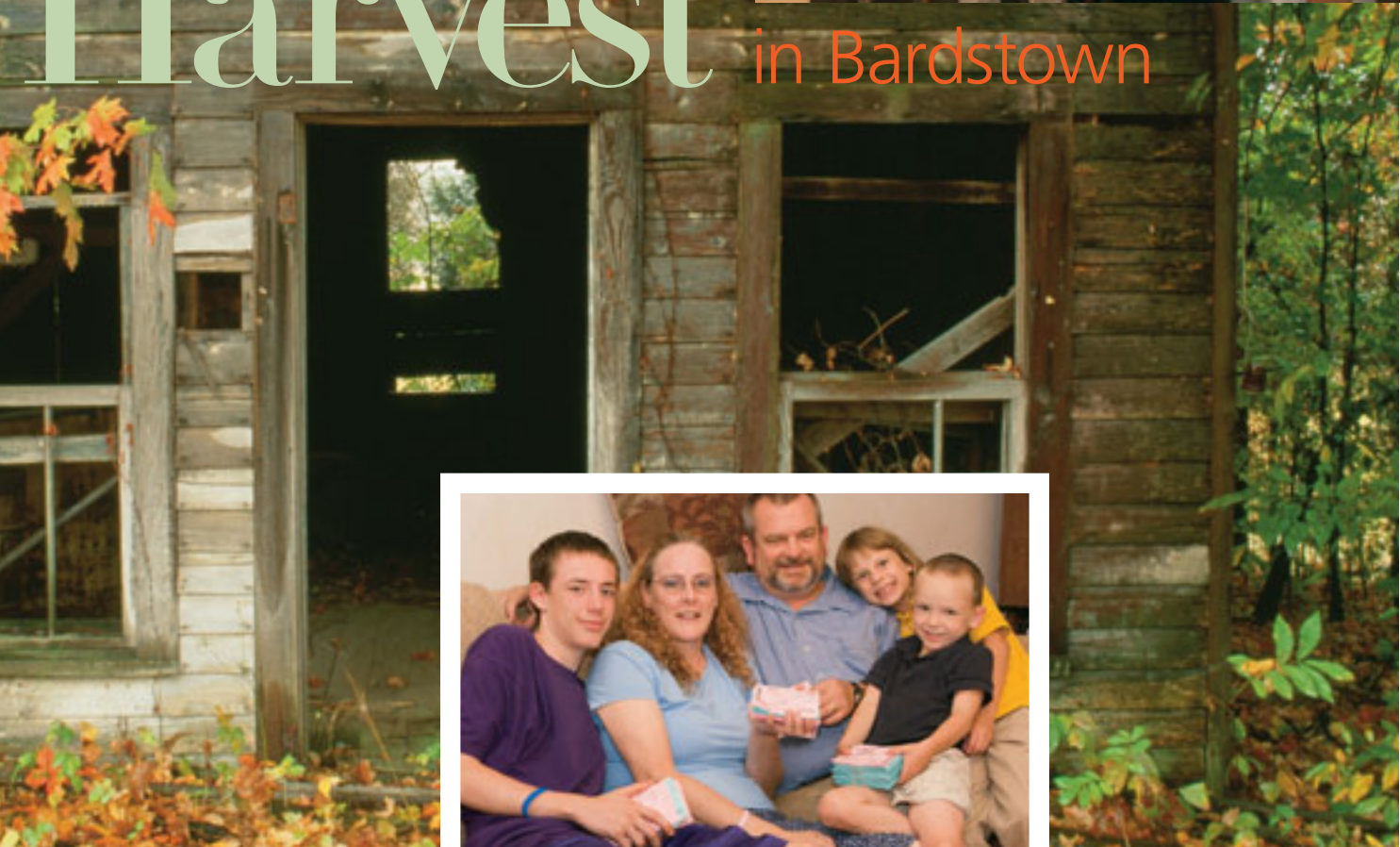
The numbers may be impressive, but the effort behind that work is the real story. As leaders consider the process, they say they have felt the hand of the Lord preparing the members of the branch for many years. Branch members have magnified their call to be saviors on Mount Zion (see Obadiah 1:21) even as they have developed deep, personal connections to their ancestors. As branch member John Charles explains, “What

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUTHOR, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED





# Harvest in Bardstown



you see here, you might call miraculous. It's a result of what happens when the Lord tells you to do something, and you do it."

### Inspired Leadership

"The Spirit guided us right from the start," says Matthew Hubbard, the branch president. "Leaders started receiving impressions at about the same time. I remember being impressed that we needed to do family history work. Then Dale and Norma Hettinger and John

**Top, left: Maryann Hahn and John Charles; Top, right: John and Angelika Charles with Norma and Dale Hettinger; Above: Jacob, Susan, Daniel, Courtney, and Isaiah Scholle with family file cards.**

Charles began their efforts."

Brother Charles, who was an assistant in the high priests group leadership at the time, felt inspired to help the branch create a family history center. The nearest center was in Elizabethtown, about 20 miles away. "Our situation is unusual. Many of our people are of limited means. Many are new members with no family history experience. There are a number of them who don't have their own transportation. Most of them don't own or know how to use a computer." He believed



Shortly after her baptism, Cheryl Bakley—seated above left with Helen Nalley (standing) and Dawn Hubbard—attended the temple for the first time to do baptisms for her deceased ancestors. “I was in awe at the Spirit I felt,” Cheryl says. “The place was just beautiful. It’s humbling. The work that I had done was the first step in drawing the families together so that, when the time comes, we will be connected.”

that having the resources and personal assistance of a family history center would make a difference.

With the support of President Hubbard and Walter Liebegott, the high priests group leader, Brother Charles sought and received approval from Church headquarters for a family history center in Bardstown—but branch members would have to find a way to fund the center locally. And they did. Over time, Brother Charles was instrumental in obtaining several computers for the center and arranged for a free Internet connection from the city of Bardstown as long as the center would be available for public use. Branch members then converted a large storage room in the church building into a family history center.

To get the center up and running, branch members needed to learn how to do family history work. That’s where Dale and Norma Hettinger enter the story. Now serving as the temple president and matron of the Louisville Kentucky Temple, the Hettingers were the third set of local Church service missionaries called by stake leaders to serve in Bardstown. Lyle Stucki, president of the Louisville Kentucky Stake, remembers calling them “without knowing why the Lord had inspired their calling.”

The Hettingers brought great talents to the

branch. Sister Hettinger had served for 13 years as the stake family history consultant. She not only knew how to use the computer programs, she had years of experience helping people prepare their own family history information for temple work. At the same time, Brother Hettinger was serving in the temple twice a week. “Norma would help people get their records ready, and I would take them to the temple to have the cards prepared,” he says.

Initially the Hettingers went to members’ homes and taught them. After the center opened, they met members there. They trained them, helped them do their research, and made sure the work was ready.

As President Stucki explains, “We asked bishops and branch presidents to have new members focus on their family history and going to the temple. It strengthens them and ties them to their families.”

Still, getting records ready was only the first step. As the Hettingers helped members prepare names for the temple, Brother Liebegott arranged temple trips with ward members. The branch now sponsors baptismal trips every other month, and the entire branch is invited. Branch member David Ahern says, “These temple trips have been an absolute blessing for the branch because members of all ages, as well as new and long-standing members, are excited to attend the temple and do the work for their ancestors.”

### Tapping the Treasure Trove

Branch members witnessed the hand of the Lord helping them gather large numbers of family names even before the Hettingers were available to help them prepare those names for temple work.

For example, although Susan Scholle has been a member her whole life, Susan’s husband, Daniel, was an adult convert. Brother Scholle says, “Before I joined the Church,



my mom and aunt had been looking up the Scholle family tree. My aunt would find a branch and take it as far as she could. Then she'd find another branch and go on. Then she'd share with us what she found. Between my aunt and my mom, they gathered about 4,000 names."

A few years ago, Brother Scholle began to earnestly prepare his family names for temple ordinances. "I didn't know how to submit them, so I went to the family history center. The Hettingers helped me put it together." With their help, Daniel was able to extend his family tree to almost 7,000 names. "Most of the work hadn't been done yet," he says.

Other converts—like Helen Nalley and her sister Maryann Hahn—brought records with them when they joined the Church a couple of years ago. The sisters had a cousin who worked at the main library in Bardstown. For 12 years Sister Hahn regularly went to the library to do family history work. "It's habit forming," she says. The deeper she dug, the more she learned about her family. Although poor health has since made her research difficult, by the end of 2008 she had filled 29 notebooks, each 3 inches thick, with family history records from her family line. She completed much of this before she joined the Church.

President Hubbard's wife, Dawn, joined the Church when she was 13

**For Alexandra Ahern (seated at computer, with mother, Heidi, and grandmother, Abbey Schluter), discovering the compelling stories of her ancestors motivates her to do family history work.**



## LOVING THE TEMPLE

Jamie Fulkerson (above, center) loves his Heavenly Father's house. He attends up to twice a month—or as often as time allows him to make the one-hour journey. It's not easy for Jamie. He was hit by a car as a boy, an accident that severely damaged his physical capabilities. Now 36, Jamie may not talk, but he understands. The look in his eyes shines with the love he feels for his Heavenly Father.

His parents, Shirley and Philip Fulkerson, help him through the temple. His dad helps him dress for endowment sessions and sealings, and Jamie sometimes acts as a witness for baptisms. The workers congratulate him—they know he is doing the Lord's work and they know Jamie's infectious smile encourages others to attend.

years old. "When we moved here, I felt the urge to do family history," she says. "I discovered that I have many ancestors from here in Nelson county and the surrounding counties. I went to the public library, and without a lot of effort I was able to find 80 names. So many of my ancestors grew up here, stayed here, and had their children here—it was kind of easy.

"I felt like having that strength from the other side [of the veil] was going to be a great help building up this area. And I think that that does happen as these people work on their local family names."



## A Personal Work

Temple work becomes personal very quickly for those who engage in it. Philip Fulkerson, a member of 30 years who comes from a family of 20 siblings, says, “I’ve done the work for my mother, and my dad, grandfather and grandmother, a couple of my brothers, and even my son. When you go through for a family member, it’s just special.”

For Cheryl Bakley, a recent convert who serves as the family history center director, much of the excitement has come through helping branch members. “Other people have family lines we are really able to dig into,” she says. “The Aherns have traced their line back to about 1300! And the Hettingers helped a friend of mine who has traced her line back to the Salem witchcraft trials. We also found a report that described how a relative drowned when the Titanic sank. That history is just so interesting.”

Finding out about their family history has inspired Alexandra Ahern. She discovered a printed interview about “Old” Henry Francisco, her sixth great-grandfather, who it is believed lived to be 134 years old. As she shared it, her whole family became engaged.

“He was a drummer boy at Queen Anne’s coronation [1702],” Sister Ahern shares. “He fought in the French and Indian War [1754–1763], then for the Americans in the American Revolutionary War [1775–1783] at age 91. It’s really inspiring to have someone that was



## BINDING HEARTS

Many of your deceased ancestors will have received a testimony that the message of the missionaries is true. . . . Someone in this world must go to a holy temple and accept the covenants on behalf of the person in the spirit world. That is why we are under obligation to find the names of our ancestors and ensure that they are offered by us what they cannot receive there without our help.”

President Henry B. Eyring, “Hearts Bound Together,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2005, 78.

Though few in number, the youth in Bardstown find strength in each other, especially as they prepare for temple trips. Shown here: Justin Hubbard, Ashley Wainscott, and Jessica Wimsatt.



such a patriot in our family.”

The interview also describes “Old” Henry’s characteristics, including what he looked like and his personality traits. As Sister Ahern read that part of the interview, her grandmother Abbey Schluter began to cry because “Old” Henry was so much like her. “He even liked bread and butter instead of toast and butter, just like she does,” Sister Ahern adds.

## Personal Blessings

The coming of the Louisville temple in 2001 has energized Saints in the area. As David Ahern explains, “The greatest thing about having a temple close by is that when you go to the temple, you feel peace. It’s like you get to charge your batteries up again.”

For Shirley Fulkerson, having the temple nearby means the family can attend frequently and renew their covenants. “It’s wonderful. We were sealed in the Washington D.C. Temple. But we could only go back once a year. Then we had Atlanta—just an eight-hour drive. Then St. Louis was built and we only had to drive five hours. But when we heard a temple was coming to Louisville, I was really excited. It’s something special. It’s just an hour away.”

“We go at least once a month, sometimes twice a month,” her husband, Philip, adds.

President Hubbard says that having the temple nearby has had a domino effect on members preparing family names for temple work.

“The temple is here. They can see it. They can go visit it. They can take their picture in front of it. They realize they can go into it and do work for their kindred dead,” he says.

“It’s always special when we go to the temple as a family to do baptisms together,” says Brother Ahern. “It’s touching when you see your children get so excited about being baptized for people who are related to us. It draws us closer together as a family and it draws us closer to our extended family, many of whom we’ve never met before. Someday we will.” ■

**BABY BLESSING DRESS  
AND BONNET, by Elizabeth  
Peterson, bobbin lace**

This artist carried on a tradition of creating bobbin lace started by her grandmothers, one in Switzerland and the other in England. Shown here in detail, the dress was created in five sections using a total of 708 threads. It took about 650 hours to make, and the matching bonnet (not shown) took 250 hours.



SEEING  
BEYOND  
THE

# Practical

A handmade dress or quilt can be just that—a practical solution to an everyday need—or it can be much more. Here is what happens when an artist sees beyond the practical and creates a work of fine art.

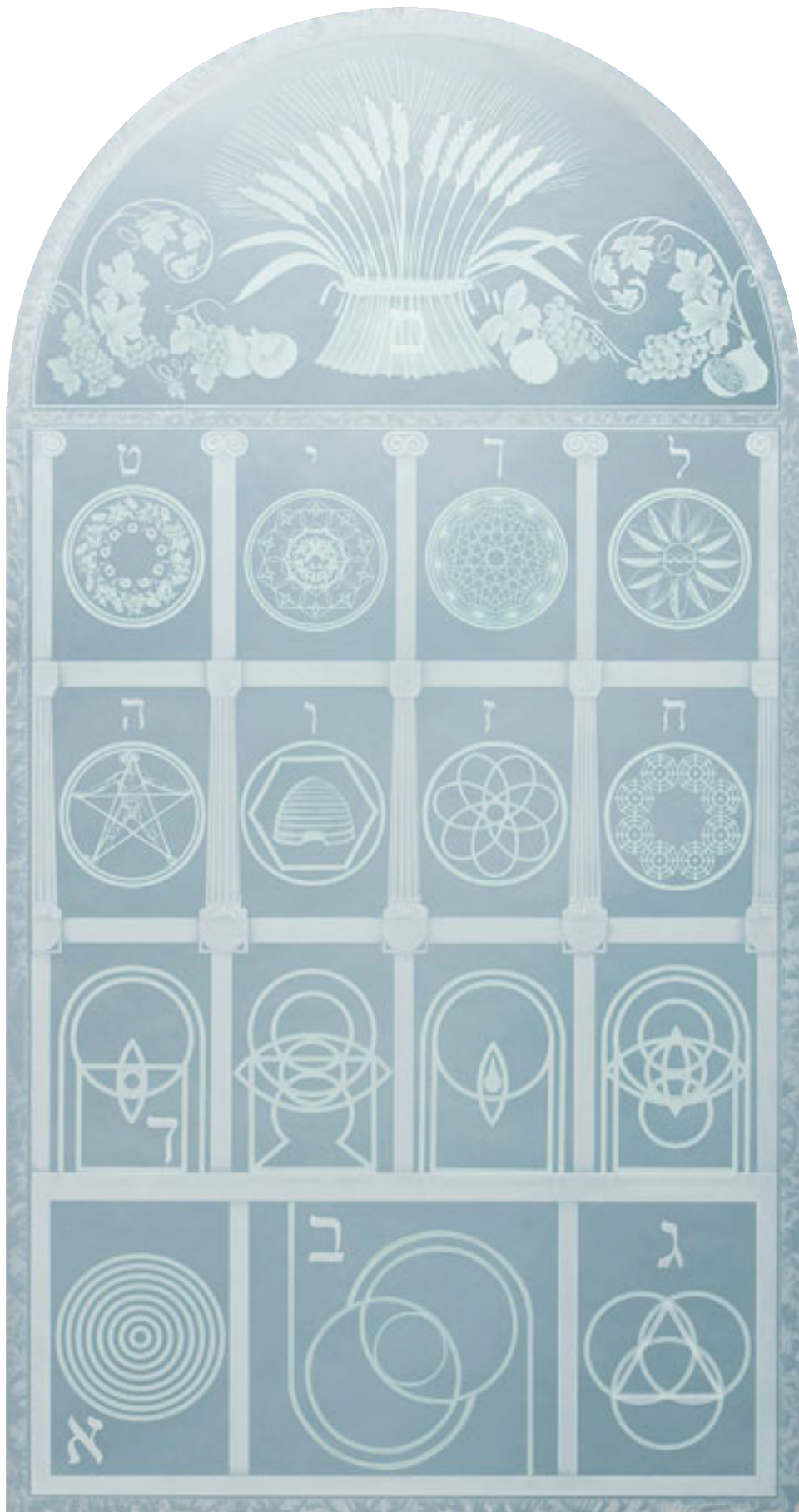
To see the Eighth International Art Competition in full, visit [LDS.org/churchhistory/museum/competition](https://LDS.org/churchhistory/museum/competition)

**LINE UPON LINE, PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT, by Yvonne Hawkins-Bent, glass etching, wood door**

This etched glass, which is set in a wooden frame, is a full-sized door. It is a wonderful way to symbolize the passages we make as we progress through eternity. This artist used etched glass as she sought to show connections between progressive geometric shapes and the plan of salvation. She says that these connections emphasize “the beauty, depth, and majesty of God’s plan.”

**THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WERE FINISHED (GENESIS 2:1), by Shu Kuan Tai Shen, embroidered fabric**

“Twelve embroidered pieces [represent] the six days and six nights of the creation,” says the artist of her Xiu Qiu. She also embroidered a scripture on another heart-shaped pouch.







**TENDER MERCIES,  
by Eleanor Holt,  
acrylic painting**

This artist chose an unusual table as the object to decorate with the “tender mercies” of her life. She says, “I wanted to illustrate some of the abundant joys and gifts given to me by God—my temple marriage, my eternal family, animals, trees, flowers, [and] music.”

**HEIRLOOM BLESSING DRESS,  
by Irene Monson Jenkins,  
sewn fabric, Merit Award,  
Eighth International Art  
Competition**

When this artist made the decision to create a blessing dress for her granddaughter, she also decided to create a family heirloom that could be passed on for generations. Made of the finest fabrics and ribbons, this dress also has a white slip with three generations of family history stitched into it—an ever-present reminder that each child is a part of an eternal family.

# YOUR MISSION IN LIFE IS **NOW**

**By Jan Pinborough**

Church Magazines

*Three principles can help us step into the future with greater confidence, energy, and faith.*

**I**n my young adult years, I spent a lot of time wondering about my future. Mission, marriage, education, career—all of these were open questions, and I didn't have many answers. I was willing to fulfill whatever mission the Lord had in mind for me, if I could only find out what it was.

My patriarchal blessing gave me the big picture of my life's purpose. But in some ways I felt like I was trying to find my way to the grocery store using a map of the solar system. What if I made a wrong turn somewhere? Would I still be able to find and fulfill the mission the Lord had for me?

Since then, I have discovered three principles that have helped me step into the unknown with greater confidence, energy, and faith.

## **1. For a Little Season**

The first principle has to do with the preciousness of the present.

Starting in 1831, many of the early Saints spent about seven years in Kirtland, Ohio. They had left behind

homes, businesses, and farms in New York and Pennsylvania to venture to an unfamiliar place. And the Lord told them that this place would be only temporary:

“And I consecrate unto them this land for a little season, until I, the Lord, shall provide for them otherwise, and command them to go hence;

“And the hour and the day is not given unto them, wherefore let them act upon this land as for years, and this shall turn unto them for their good” (D&C 51:16–17).

I like to picture those early Saints hearing the Lord's instructions and getting right to work. They plowed fields they didn't know they would harvest, planted trees whose fruit they might never eat, and built a beautiful temple they would ultimately have to leave. I picture them living busy, productive lives, not peering endlessly into the unknown, wondering where they would go next and when. They acted “as for years,” trusting that their work would not be in vain.

By the time they left Ohio in 1838,



*The early Saints in Kirtland acted “as for years,” trusting that their work would not be in vain. As you too trust in the Lord and act “as for years,” you can make the most of every stage of your life.*

## 2. A Mission Every Day

A second useful principle came from a simple realization. My mission in life was not waiting for me in the vague and distant future. It was daily and ongoing.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) explained: “There is neither man nor woman in this Church who is not on a mission. That mission will last as long as they live.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, my mission in life had already started. I didn’t so much need to find it as to recognize it.

I found one way to recognize it by understanding three elements that were already part of my life:

- A unique set of personal gifts.
- A unique set of personal challenges.
- Specific needs in the world that the Lord wants me to respond to.

Simply put, we fulfill our mission whenever these three elements intersect and we choose to act. Consider how this worked in the life of Joseph in the Old Testament (see Genesis 37–47).

Joseph had many gifts. He was raised in a family that had a knowledge of God, and he was an heir to the Abrahamic covenant. He had the spiritual gift of interpreting dreams.

He also had many challenges. It seems to me that some of Joseph’s challenges included a father who showed favoritism, jealous brothers, and his own lack of tact in dealing with them. In his young life he was sold into slavery in a foreign land, falsely accused of immoral behavior, and cast into prison.

the Saints had helped lay a strong foundation for the Church’s future growth. Consider what transpired during that precious and productive period:

- The Prophet Joseph Smith organized the School of the Prophets, finished his inspired translation of the Bible, and received many important revelations.
- The First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the Seventy were organized.
- The Kirtland Temple was built and dedicated. There Joseph Smith and

Oliver Cowdery saw Jesus Christ and received priesthood keys from Moses, Elias, and Elijah.

- The first missionaries were sent to England.

My young adult years were an extremely valuable “little season” given to me by the Lord. During our young adult years, physical and mental energy are at their peak. We can make the most of them by determining to trust in the Lord and act “as for years.” Then these years can become a consecrated period of extraordinary productivity, growth, learning, and service.



But Joseph was also willing to act, using both his gifts and his challenges to respond to specific needs in his world. On several occasions, including in prison, he chose to use his spiritual gift to interpret people's dreams. This choice, in turn, opened up an opportunity to work for the pharaoh, storing food for the Egyptian people. Because he was faithful and diligent in this assignment, Joseph was able to perform a life-saving mission, rescuing many, including his own family, from starvation.

Joseph's gifts and his challenges combined to put him in a unique position to respond when famine came to the land. Because Joseph was who he was and where he was and because he chose to act faithfully and obediently, he fulfilled a unique mission in serving the Lord, the people of Egypt, and his own family.

But these three elements don't intersect just in the lives of people we read about in the pages of scripture. They intersect every day in each of our lives.

A young adult woman had a gift for writing and some personal experience with depression. When her teenage sister was dealing with a difficult situation at school, she was able to recognize that her sister was slipping into despondency. Heeding the Spirit's promptings, she wrote her sister a series of beautiful notes, expressing her love and confidence, one for each day of an especially trying two-week period. In that small



*Because of his gifts, his challenges, and his faithfulness, Joseph of Egypt could fulfill a unique mission in serving the Lord and others. These same three elements intersect every day in each of our lives.*

choice to meet her sister's need, this young woman was living her mission.

When this choice to heed the Spirit and to act continues day after day, week after week, and year after year, it creates a larger pattern that we will later come to recognize as the mission the Lord had for us to fulfill.

### **3. Be Still and Know**

Years beyond my 20s now, I can finally recognize that my life has unfolded in the very way described in my patriarchal blessing many years ago. That certainly wasn't because I knew exactly what I was doing and where the future would take me. I most definitely didn't.

My life had some twists and turns and disappointments that made me wonder if it was going off track. But

as it turns out, I didn't need to worry. The Lord always knew where I was and where He wanted me to go. I kept trying my best to follow His commandments, serve Him, and listen to the Spirit. Even though I often couldn't discern it at the time, I now recognize that His hand was always guiding my life.

The young adult years are filled with crucial decisions and some inherent uncertainty and stress. But greater confidence comes when we learn to rely on the Lord's ability to bring about His purposes for our life—day by day. Then we are better able to “be still, and know that [He is] God” (Psalm 46:10). And in so doing, we experience peace. ■

#### **NOTE**

1. Brigham Young, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, July 3, 1867, 201.

# Update Your Spiritual Status

Young adults throughout the Church responded to Elder David A. Bednar's fireside address "Things as They Really Are," which he gave in May 2009 (see page 16 in this issue), by evaluating their use of computers, cell phones, and other technologies. Here, a few of them talk about the changes they made in response to the message and the blessings they received as a result.

## The Need for Focus

Some technologies, like portable music players, can keep you from focusing on



what's going on around you. Elder Bednar's talk helped me

realize that as I prepare to serve a mission, I need to become more accustomed to interacting with other people. I know that I need to be less dependent on technology, even though it's fun. As a missionary I will need to focus on other people and the work I'll be doing for the Lord.

Andrew Hovey, Massachusetts, USA

## Relationships Strengthened

Elder Bednar's message is one that is sometimes treated lightly or even ignored because the negative effects of technology misuse might seem trivial. Now I realize that I should

avoid anything that distracts me from being in tune with the Spirit. For example, some of the functions that my cell phone offers, such as mobile banking services, are handy and convenient. However, other functions are mostly time-consuming and can take my attention and focus from things that matter more.



I am now making more efforts to pay personal visits to my

friends and family rather than using other electronic communication. Because of this, my relationships have been strengthened. Now I have an even greater appreciation for the things that are truly important in my life.

Jayoung Lee, Seoul, Korea

## A Commitment to Myself

I evaluated my use of technology and realized that perhaps some technology has become too much a part of my daily



life. I made a commitment to myself to value the

time I have and to use it wisely. Instead of sitting at the computer and engaging in social networks, I'd rather spend my time reading a good book or learning a new skill that will provide learning experiences and promote growth. I try to spend more time with people to build friendships and share good laughs.

Ruth Barilea, Manila, Philippines

## Technology Traps

I own a cell phone business and am an electronic engineer, so technology has always been part of my daily life. The Internet, video games, electronic media and devices—all are supposed to provide healthy entertainment. However, most of them can easily be used in unrighteous ways.

I can't imagine how our Heavenly Father feels when we fall into technology traps



and waste our time with things that do not edify. Because of

Elder Bednar's inspired words, I have made a goal to always use technology appropriately and spend my time wisely. ■

Christian Alejandro Zerlin, Managua, Nicaragua



## Cambodian Latter-day Saints: Moving in a **New**

By **Chad E. Phares**  
Church Magazines

# Direction

*Despite facing severe trials in the past, Cambodian Latter-day Saints are discovering that the gospel of Jesus Christ is giving them a reason to hope for the future.*

In the midst of the late spring rainy season in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, the Tonle Sap River—which has poured into the Mekong River for months—defies its natural movement and changes course to flow in the opposite direction.

This directional change causes the Tonle Sap Lake at the head of the river to swell to five times its size, bringing much-needed nutrients to the fish and birds that feed there.

Like the river that changes direction, members in Cambodia have felt how the gospel of Jesus Christ has helped change the direction of their own lives. Their hearts now overflow with the joy and peace the gospel brings. This swell of joy provides spiritual food for their souls.

Although the country has faced dark times, the gospel of Jesus Christ has helped many Cambodians see the light of a new day shine through the darkness of the past.

### Changing Direction

During the country's political turmoil in the 1970s, many Cambodians

were driven from their homes and lost family members.

Loy Bunseak, president of the Siem Reap Branch in the Cambodia Phnom Penh Mission, was nine years old in 1975, when he and his family had to leave their home. They—along with millions of others—were



required to perform hard manual labor in the country's vast fields.

During this time, President Loy lost both of his parents and five of his eight siblings.



Despite the hardships, President Loy always had at least one thing to help get him through his pain.

“I always had hope,” he says.

The determined hope that helped President Loy get through the trials of his childhood is the same hope that later allowed him to recognize the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.





Opposite page: Loy Bunseak, a branch president and tour guide in Siem Reap, shows visitors the city's ancient temples. He also finds opportunities to teach about Latter-day Saint temples by displaying a photo of the Hong Kong Temple in his tour van. Left: Despite feeling hopeless at times during his younger years, Sen Sok Branch president Khan Sarin joined the Church after his wife, Suon Sokmo, invited him to study the scriptures with her. Top: Phnom Penh.



received my testimony of its truthfulness from God,” President Loy says. “I could see how living by the teachings of the Book of Mormon made my family happier.”

President Loy’s experience is not unusual. Khan Sarin, president of the Sen Sok Branch in the Phnom Penh Cambodia North District, was separated from his family as a teenager and forced to work in the fields.

“I felt hopeless at this time,” President Khan says. “I did not know if I would survive.”

Because Cambodia is largely a Buddhist country, President Loy grew up without a knowledge of Jesus Christ. He began to learn about the Savior when Latter-day Saint missionaries came to his home and told him and his family they had an important message to share.

“I had never heard of Jesus Christ until I met the missionaries,” he says. “I wanted to learn more about Him.”

After intense study and discussion, President Loy and his family were baptized in 2001.

“The missionaries helped me learn from the Book of Mormon, but I

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*“After I became a member of the Church, I . . . received a new light that I never had before.”*

**Khan Sarin**

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**Below: A recently completed meetinghouse accommodates the growing membership in Cambodia's capital city of Phnom Penh. Bottom: When they were young, Pich Sareth and his wife, Seng Tha, were separated from their families for extended periods of time. They feel grateful to have the opportunity to spend time with their children and raise them in the Church.**

Looking back, President Khan feels that the Lord protected him from harm several times in his life. As a young man he joined the army and was shot at from as close as 20 feet (6 m) away but was not hit. He also stepped on many active land mines that did not explode. One land mine he stepped on did explode, but he was not seriously injured.

Because of the dangerous circumstances soldiers found themselves in, they did whatever they could to be protected. Several men in the military got tattoos because they believed the tattoos could help keep them safe.

“Before I became a member of the Church, I didn’t know anything,” President Khan says. “Now I know that it was Jesus Christ—not the tattoos—that saved me.”

After President Khan’s wife, Suon Sokmo, met the missionaries and was baptized, he was impressed by the changes he could see taking place within her. He accepted her invitation to study the scriptures together, and he soon decided to be baptized.



“The most important thing that I ever received in my life is the testimony I obtained from studying the scriptures,” he says.

Pich Sareth, a member of the Phnom Penh 12th Branch in the Phnom Penh Cambodia North District, also saw trials at a very young age. He was only five years old when he was separated from his family and forced to work in the fields. He would sometimes find crabs or frogs he could eat to quell his hunger.

Brother Pich’s wife, Seng Tha, and her family were also forced from





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*“I cannot even explain the joy I felt in the temple. . . . I know that the temple is necessary for families to live together forever.”*

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**Loy Bunseak**

their home. Because she was only four years old and small, she was not required to work, as other children were. She was separated from her family much of the day and was watched by elderly women who could not work.

After meeting the missionaries in 1995, Brother Pich and his wife began to learn about the love Heavenly Father has for them. “When I had problems, I could see that praying helped me get through them,” Brother Pich says. “I knew Heavenly Father cared.”

After Brother Pich decided to be baptized, his wife also gained a testimony of the gospel and was baptized.

### **A Swell of Joy**

Since their baptisms, Brother Pich and his family have recognized the joy that stems from gaining a testimony of Jesus Christ. The Pich family takes time every day to read the scriptures. As they have done this, the joy of the gospel has permeated their souls.

“We feel we are on the right path

now, and we want to stay on this narrow path and continue to progress,” Sister Seng says. “I am grateful every day that we can have our children on this path with us.”

The joy that President Loy feels extends in both directions—to his ancestors as well as his descendants. President Loy and his family visited the Hong Kong China Temple in 2004. Not only were President Loy’s wife and children sealed to him, but the saving ordinances of the temple were also completed for his father, mother, and the brothers and sisters he had lost.

“I cannot even explain the joy I felt in the temple,” President Loy said. “I knew my family was being made strong. I know that the temple is necessary for families to live together forever.”



President Khan and his family also had the opportunity to be sealed together as an eternal family in the Hong Kong Temple. “The feeling I felt at the temple is something I had never felt before. It is hard to express my feelings in words,” President Khan says.

### **Nutrients for Survival**

Thanks to the spreading of the gospel, members in Cambodia are receiving the spiritual nutrients they need







## MIRACLES CAN OCCUR

The Church was officially recognized in Cambodia in 1994. Today there are about 8,000 members in 24 branches. The gospel of Jesus Christ can spread to other areas of the world where the Church currently has little influence. President Thomas S. Monson counseled us to pray for this growth: “I would ask that your faith and prayers continue to be offered in behalf of those areas where our influence is limited and where we are not allowed to share the gospel freely at this time. Miracles can occur as we do so” (“Welcome to Conference,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 6).

to survive. Although the Church is growing in Cambodia, members hope that this growth is just a precursor to a huge blossoming of the gospel in their country.

Just as the fish and animals receive needed nutrients when the Tonle Sap Lake overflows, a growing number of Cambodians are receiving the spiritual nutrition they need thanks to the overflowing desire in members’ hearts to share the gospel.

“When a pot is covered, it boils over,” President Khan says. “This is the feeling I have in my heart. I must

Although ancient architecture and temples abound in Cambodia, the gospel has brought a sense of newness to the lives of Church members here.



open my heart to tell everyone what it is feeling.”

President Loy hopes the residual effect of the gospel being taught in his home will be that his daughters will continue to embrace the gospel and teach their children.

“After I found out about Jesus Christ, everything became better in my life and with my family,” he says.

“Having the priesthood in our home brings us together. If we have a problem, we sit and discuss it as a family.”

Since the government of Cambodia granted the Church legal recognition in 1994, thousands of Cambodians have accepted the gospel. The Pich family looks forward to the day when the gospel will spread across all parts of the

## HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

Latter-day Saint Charities has played a significant role in meeting the needs of Cambodians who have lacked the basic commodities and services needed to be healthy.

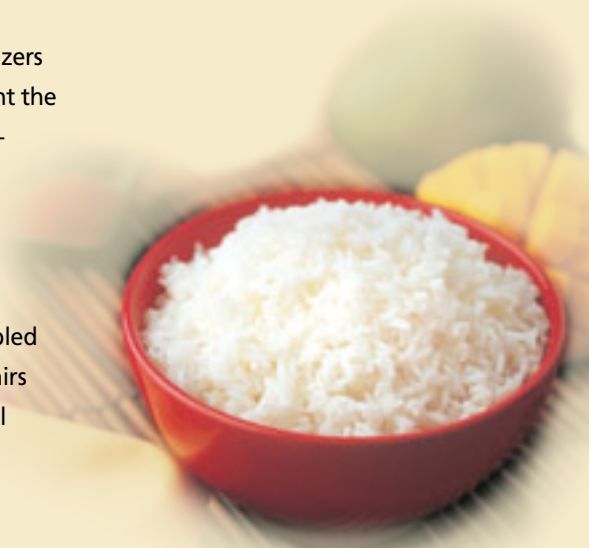
### Family Food Production

LDS Charities has focused efforts on helping farmers harvest more rice and produce healthier rice by teaching them how to use organic fertilizers

and decrease the use of chemical fertilizers and insecticides. Farmers are also taught the importance of producing rice for themselves as well as rice that can be sold.

### Wheelchairs

In December 2009, LDS Charities delivered more than 1,000 wheelchairs to the National Center for Disabled Persons in Phnom Penh. The wheelchairs were given to Church members as well as to other Cambodians in need.



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*“When I had problems, I could see that praying helped me get through them.”*

**Pich Sareth**

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country. Brother Pich says, “I hope someday there will be a temple in Cambodia.”

Sister Seng agrees: “Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, are alive. My hope for the future is that the Church will continue to grow so a temple can be built.”

President Khan recognizes the ways his life has changed since

learning of the Savior. He believes the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only thing that can heal Cambodians from their past trials.

“After I became a member of the

Church, I lost a lot of the pain I felt from things that had happened in the past. I’ve received a new light that I never had before,” he says.

“Everything feels new.” ■

## **Water**

LDS Charities has provided Cambodian villages with soap, water filters, toilet facilities, rain-harvesting systems, and resources to perform water-quality analysis. LDS Charities has also overseen the drilling of several wells, which are helping thousands of people.





## Name Withheld

About a week after my husband and I were married in the temple, I learned he had not lived the virtuous life that I thought he had. Surprised and devastated, I literally ran away for a couple of hours. Over the next several years, additional details about his behavior crept out. Over and over again my heart was “pierced with deep wounds” (Jacob 2:35). Each time, I hoped it would be his last confession.

Although my husband had given up many wrong behaviors since his youth, he eventually told me that he had problems with viewing and listening to inappropriate media and keeping his thoughts clean. He explained that he had not been able to stop having sexual fantasies. Because I’d had some training in behavior change, I realized that these behaviors were likely part of a lifelong sex addiction.

Because he was not physically acting out on his addiction for the most part, it was easy for him to justify his behavior. He rationalized that because so much of it was in his mind, it was not that serious. However, he still knew that the behavior was wrong. He wanted to stop and he repeatedly asked for forgiveness every time he slipped. He wanted to experience the true “change of heart” and receive the image of the Lord in his countenance (Alma 5:14). He knew

that to do this, he needed to get out of the rut he was in and get on a higher spiritual plane through sincere prayer, fasting, meditation, serious scripture study, and other activities that could bring him closer to Heavenly Father. With that desire, we began working with our bishop—both separately and together—toward repentance and recovery.

We found endless help for *him*, but it was more difficult to find it for *me*. True, he was the one facing the addiction, but I hurt too. In fact, my heart ached as though my husband had been physically unfaithful. I no longer trusted him. The Savior’s declaration “that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:28) ran through my mind, and Alma’s teachings that “our thoughts will also condemn us” (Alma 12:14) caused me to worry for my husband. I felt sick, angry, hurt, and betrayed. I asked, “Why did this happen to me?” and “Why didn’t he have the decency to tell me about this before we were married?”

I continued to feel this way, even as my husband was taking steps toward change and making great progress. Of course, this was not how I wanted to feel in a celestial marriage. I knew that if I could set aside my hurt and anger, I could be a true “help meet” to my husband

# Pierced

## WITH DEEP WOUNDS

.....



(Abraham 5:14). We also knew it was not good for him to go through this alone (see Abraham 5:14). This could be an opportunity for me to help bear his burdens (see Mosiah 18:8).

As we worked through the recovery process, I found that although I could not control my husband's thoughts and behaviors, I could control my thoughts and feelings toward him. And, although at that point I felt I could not trust my husband, I knew I could trust the Lord. I found comfort in my scripture study, temple worship, Church meetings, fasting, and priesthood blessings. Beyond these traditional sources of comfort, I found several great helps in overcoming my hurt and anger: prayer and personal revelation, education, and support. These things eventually helped me to rebuild trust and love.

### **Prayer and Personal Revelation**

There were many times, day and night, when I found myself in tears, praying for help and comfort. How grateful I am for personal revelation that brought customized answers, often more quickly than I had expected. I could feel that the Lord was aware of our challenges and that He was helping us win this battle.

One of the most helpful things I recognized early on was that my husband was a son of God. This meant that he had divine potential. How sad that a son of God would be plagued with such a trial! However, because of his godlike potential, my

*The only way through this trial is for both husband and wife to be headed in the same righteous direction.*



husband could overcome this. That brought me great comfort and peace.

A while later, I learned my husband was truly my brother. I have wonderful earthly brothers of whom I think highly. If I learned one of them had a sex addiction, my first reaction would be sorrow. I would do everything I could to support and love him as he worked to overcome his trial. Every time I remembered this, I felt a softening influence, and my desire to help my husband would grow.

I also realized that this addiction was primarily *my husband's* trial, not mine. *He* needed to overcome it by faith and repentance through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. This helped me feel compassion toward my husband. I could support, pray for, listen to, encourage, coach, share my feelings with, and love him, but I could not change him myself, and I must not police his actions or take his behavior as a personal attack.

I also felt that if I did not forgive my husband and let go of all my angry feelings, then the "greater

*When I learned of my husband's sexual addictions, my heart ached as though he had been physically unfaithful.*

sin” lay upon me (D&C 64:9). It seems easy to say that his sins were more severe than my negative thoughts; but, if he truly repented of his behavior and I continued to harbor ill feelings, then surely I would commit the greater sin.

Our Heavenly Father wants us *all* back, whether we have committed great or small sins, for “there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:10). The Savior would not turn my husband away, so why should I? I should forgive my husband as often as required (see Matthew 18:21–22). Of course, personally forgiving someone doesn’t mean *not* holding them responsible for their actions. I could forgive him while still helping him work through the real consequences of his behavior.

I know that sometimes a wife feels so hurt that she justifies reopening her husband’s past wounds to make him



## HE HEALS THE HEAVY LADEN

Come unto me,’ the Savior said, ‘and ye shall find rest unto your souls’ (Matthew 11:28–29). . . .

“A woman whose marriage was threatened by her husband’s addiction to pornography wrote how she stood beside him for five pain-filled years until, as she said, ‘through the gift of our precious Savior’s glorious Atonement and what He taught me about forgiveness, [my husband] finally is free—and so am I.’ As one who needed no cleansing from sin, but only sought a loved one’s deliverance from captivity, she wrote this advice:

“ ‘Commune with the Lord. . . . He is your best friend! He knows your pain because He has felt it for you already. He is ready to carry that burden. Trust Him enough to place it at His feet and allow Him to carry it for you. Then you can have your anguish replaced with His peace, in the very depths of your soul’ (letter dated Apr. 18, 2005).”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “He Heals the Heavy Laden,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 8.

suffer for the pain he has caused her. I came to realize that doing this hinders progress and widens a gap between spouses. The only way through this trial is for both husband and wife to be headed in the same righteous direction.

## Education

As part of our recovery, my husband and I chose to attend counseling together, which greatly helped my husband, because it gave him someone outside our home to whom he could report his progress. Counseling was beneficial to me because I was able to get a clear picture of where my husband was in his recovery. It also allowed us to talk to someone who was an expert and who could tell us what to expect in cases like ours.

For me, even more important than counseling was personal study and education. Of course, because everyone’s experience is different, everyone’s education will be too. Thankfully there are many appropriate resources available for understanding and overcoming sex addictions. I studied many gospel-related materials on the topic, including the Addiction Recovery Program workbook from LDS Family Services, articles on LDS.org, BYU Education Week lectures, and many books. My study taught me

more about addiction, withdrawal, and relapse and it taught me how to help and be supportive. As I read accounts from other women whose spouses have sex addictions, I learned that it was natural for me to experience hurt and anger. By empowering myself with knowledge, I felt secure in doing all I could.

## Support

My husband and I were talking with our counselor and were very open with each other, but for





some reason, I still needed to talk with a woman. Because of the sensitivity of the subject, I did not feel that I could talk with my mother, my sister, or my friends. I felt totally isolated. One evening while meeting with our bishop, I told him that I needed to talk to someone in a similar situation, but how?

He told me that LDS Family Services had a missionary-led support group in our area for the spouses of those addicted to pornography. That was exactly what I was looking for! Still, I went with much anxiety to my first group meeting. I was met, though, with warm smiles and a comfortable atmosphere. I was able to cry and share my feelings of hurt, anger, and disappointment and to learn wonderful, healing gospel principles from others through the Spirit. The associations I made there became strong as I was able to “mourn with those that mourn” (Mosiah 18:9). I continue to wonder about and sometimes pray for the sisters from our group meeting.

### Rebuilding Trust and Love

As time has passed and my hurt and angry feelings have subsided, I continue to work on trusting and loving my husband. The Spirit is the only one who can tell me when the time is right to trust. We still have hard days, and it is an ongoing battle, but as my husband confides his innermost thoughts and feelings to me each day, I am able to have increased trust that he’s not hiding anything from me anymore. As my trust grows, so does my love.

With sufficient time for trust to be restored—between us and between my husband and the Lord—I felt, and my husband agreed, that to keep him and us strong we needed to attend the temple more frequently. We try to alternate temple dates with more interactive dates, thus improving our spiritual relationship and our friendship. When I see my husband’s increased dedication to the Lord, it improves my trust in him. When my husband shows sensitivity toward me by arranging dates

*My husband and I alternate temple dates with more interactive dates, thus improving our spiritual relationship and our friendship.*



and helping with household duties, he invites me to love and trust him.

The Atonement is the last but most important thing that has brought me increased trust and love. With a problem so trying, I had to give it to the Lord; I could not carry it alone. The Savior will heal each of us—no matter our problem—if we will let Him. He suffered for our pains, afflictions, temptations, sicknesses, and infirmities (see Alma 7:11–12). Although my husband and I struggled in different ways because of this addiction, the Savior’s healing was powerful and uniquely suited for each of us. When we trust Him, peace will come, and we will be able to forget our anger and hurt. Once again, we will be able to have confidence in those who have pierced us with deep wounds but who have, through the process of true repentance and the power of the Atonement, worked to regain our trust and love. ■

*The Church offers support groups, sponsored by LDS Family Services, for those addicted to pornography as well as for their spouses and others who might be affected. To find out more, visit [ldsfamilyservices.org](http://ldsfamilyservices.org) or contact the LDS Family Services office nearest you.*

### ADDITIONAL ARTICLES

For more on this subject, see the following:

1. Dallin H. Oaks, “He Heals the Heavy Laden,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 6–9.
2. Michael D. Gardner, “Hope, Healing, and Dealing with Addiction,” *Ensign*, July 2008, 50–53.
3. Name Withheld, “My Husband’s Addiction,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2006, 20–23.

### Service Given and Received

**W**hen our two-year-old son was diagnosed with a life-threatening disease and started chemotherapy, he couldn't attend church anymore. Members of the Relief Society brought in meals for our family and helped with babysitting our other three small children. Our bishop released my husband and me from our callings, and we took turns going to church with our healthy children. Our home teachers arranged for the sacrament to be administered to whoever stayed home with our son. The bishop also asked us if the ward could fast for our son; we hadn't thought of that and readily agreed.

A few months after his diagnosis, our son was recovering from a bone marrow transplant in another city, and I was there with him. The ward in that area arranged for me to receive the sacrament every week.

We are so thankful for our home and hospital ward families. They reached out to us and provided much-needed service during a difficult time.

Even though I was unable to do much besides care for our son, Heavenly Father helped me find opportunities for service. I had the opportunity to talk to our son's nurses about the Church and to give a Book of Mormon to a new friend whose child had a transplant. Even though I didn't have a calling and could not go to church at that time, I was pleasantly surprised at the opportunities I had to grow spiritually.

**Tonya A. Belau, Connecticut, USA**

### A Simple Note

**A**t age 81 my mother was thrilled to accept a calling to be a visiting teacher. Because she is unable to walk due to osteoarthritis, she is

# Homebound BUT Active

*Many members of the Church are unable to attend Sunday meetings and weekday activities because of poor health or other constraints. If you or a member of your ward or family is in a similar situation, here are some ways to stay involved.*







housebound much of the time. Still, she makes sure she contacts the three sisters she visit teaches every month with a handwritten note.

In each note my mother tries to think of interesting things to say to these sisters, known to her only by name. She invites them to ward events, sends the visiting teaching message for the month, inquires about how they are, and wishes them good health and happiness. Days turn into months and then into years as my mother faithfully writes to these three sisters.

As I mailed the notes, I sometimes wondered about these sisters and how they felt about the little gifts of love my mother prepared every month. Did they just throw the envelope away, unopened and unread? Did they read the sweet notes and wonder why a total stranger would continually write to them? Did it bring the gospel into their lives in some small way?

One Sunday morning one of the sisters who had been the recipient of these notes came to church. She was hoping to meet my mother and was disappointed to learn that Mother was housebound and not able to be at church. She told me, “Your mother has written me every month for the past two years. I wanted so much to meet her and thank her for all the cards and letters she has sent to me. I look forward to them every month.”

I was speechless for a minute as tears welled up in my eyes. I told her that my mother would be so happy to hear this. I mentioned that I had wondered how the notes were received from someone she had never met, and I told her how much mother enjoyed sending them. The sister said, “It made me happy to see that someone cared enough to write to me! When they came, I taped them to my refrigerator.”

*Mother didn't let her osteoarthritis stop her from being a visiting teacher; every month she completes her service with a handwritten note.*



*My illness has given me reason to become much more computer savvy. The Internet and television have become my windows to the world and have opened opportunities to me.*

She said she had a gift for mother. It was a vase of silk flowers with ink pens on the tips of the stems, given so that her visiting teacher would always have a pen to send notes!

I left church that day as if walking on air. I felt so grateful for the Relief Society program. I felt thankful for the sensitivity of a Relief Society president who gave a sister a chance to be a visiting teacher even though she could not leave her home. I felt especially thankful for a mother who shows me daily what commitment and love really mean, and for a Savior who has His loving arm around us all, no matter what our status in life is.

I will never doubt the importance of visiting teaching. This experience taught me that we can

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## ACCEPTING AND GIVING SERVICE

By Alison Palmer

In a church that focuses so heavily on serving others, many of us find it difficult to be on the receiving rather than the giving side of service. Yet, at some point in our lives, we may have to look outside ourselves to have our needs met. How do we ask for service and how do we graciously receive it?

None of us likes to admit that we are unable to help ourselves. Usually the need for help comes in times of crisis or change in our lives. The changes may be brief or long lasting, but they require an adjustment that makes it difficult or impossible to fulfill our responsibilities. These are the times when we ask for help.

### Gentle Steps

I had to spend the greater portion of two pregnancies in bed. In addition to being uncomfortable, I was completely overwhelmed at the thought of being dependent on others. During the first pregnancy, I refused most of the help that was offered and spent a good deal of time crying over my perceived inadequacies.

Thankfully, I was a little more insightful the next time around. I learned that there are gentle steps that can be taken toward relieving some burdens.

Most people who offer to help sincerely want to help, yet they don't know what you feel would be most appropriate for them to do. If you turn them away, they may feel even more timid about offering help in the future. Assess your own needs and comfort level, and decide where you need help the most. Your laundry will need to be done, whether you like the way someone else starches your collars or not, but some things just need to be ignored. Create a list of things that must be done and of things that can wait, both small, occasional needs and large, consistent ones. Then, when a well-meaning person asks "What can I do to help?" you will have an answer.

### Small Tasks, Large Tasks

Begin with the small things that mean the most to your well-being. Perhaps you will feel better if someone at church talks with you about the lessons or tells you when members of your ward or branch



all render service regardless of our challenges.  
**Fran Ramsell, Pennsylvania, USA**

### Staying Connected through the Internet

I am homebound because my body cannot tolerate or process the wide variety of chemicals used in our society today. The combined smells of perfumes, colognes, hair products, deodorants, cleaning supplies, and even copy machines make it virtually impossible for me to step into a church meetinghouse and other public buildings.

Since learning what was making me so ill, I have become much more computer savvy. The Internet and television have become my windows to the world. I'm so grateful that the *Ensign* and other Church publications are available online because the ink in most magazines now makes

me sick too. My husband brings home ward news, and members of my ward and stake check in on me via telephone. I have visiting teaching assignments and do my visiting teaching with cards, letters, and phone calls. I am also able to serve as a visiting teaching supervisor in my ward.

My testimony is that praying without ceasing (see Mosiah 26:39) brings physical and spiritual blessings. I have received relief from intense pain after uttering a simple silent prayer. Friends have run errands and made sacrifices on my behalf. I have discovered that I am still able to contribute to the world through my blog and by the quilts I make for premature infants and donate to hospitals with neonatal intensive care units. Indeed, there are blessings to be found in every affliction.

**Sue Brown, Washington, USA**

receive new callings. Could you use a new book to read or a few wildflowers to brighten your room? It might be something as small as having someone clean the window by your bed so that you have a clear view. Consider what things can be done by family members and what will require outside help.

There will also be larger tasks that should be brought to the attention of your priesthood and Relief Society leaders. Where appropriate, ask your leaders to work with you on a comfortable plan to meet your needs. Be honest about things that can be problematic. For example, long visits and strong perfumes caused me discomfort during my pregnancies. I also had to specify dietary needs.

Most important, your spiritual well-being cannot be sacrificed, so don't hesitate to ask for help in that area also. We need to keep our spiritual reservoir full in order to deal with our challenges. For example, you might ask if the sacrament can be administered in your home. I had never had the sacrament brought to my home before and I was tempted to say "No, thank you" when the elders offered. I felt it was an imposition on their time, and the effort of getting out of bed and being presentable for them and for the ordinance seemed beyond me. Thankfully, they insisted. Partaking of the bread and

*Continued on the next page*



*As you come to better know those who serve you, you can find ways to bless their lives too.*



*I discovered that being homebound did not have to keep me from calling others to see how they were doing or to encourage them.*

### Lessons Learned

**B**ecoming homebound was the last thing I thought would ever happen to me. I had always been physically active, but some time ago I had an accident that left me temporarily confined to my home.

One of the greatest lessons I learned from this time was the importance of reaching out. I discovered that being homebound did not have to keep me from calling others to see how they were doing or to encourage them. I also learned the importance of volunteering to help other people. Some were hesitant to ask me for help because of my situation, but when I offered, I was blessed with opportunities to serve.

On the other hand, it was also important for me to learn to graciously accept help from others, including my home teachers. By accepting help, we give others the opportunity to serve.

I am grateful for my experience. Even though my situation was a temporary one, it taught me empathy for those whose health prevents them from regularly participating in church activities. It has been a blessing, not only during the period of my recuperation, but also beyond. I hope that I have learned to be more sensitive to the needs of others and more mindful of opportunities to give and receive service. ■

**David H. Campagna, Iowa, USA**

water meant so much to me. The sacrament ordinance on Sundays gave me strength to make it through difficult times.

### Looking Beyond Burdens

How do we accept service from others? Sometimes it is a matter of changing our perspective and realizing that although we may not be able to give physical service back to those who help us, we can offer service of a spiritual nature. When we allow others to serve us, we can invite the Spirit by asking Heavenly Father to help us grow closer to the individuals serving us. Be personable; learn to feel of their spirit and love and then give it back to them. This spiritual service is expressed in our attitude.

On the other hand, pushing the Spirit away with our discomfort and discouragement in our own abilities is not the Savior's way. When we decline needed service, we are more focused on our own problems than we are on the people around us. We are succumbing to pride rather than being humble. Remember the Lord's counsel in Ether 12:27: "I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me,

then will I make weak things become strong unto them." This verse does not promise that we will be instantly healed or conquer our trials and weaknesses. It asks for humility and faith so that the Lord may show us where our strengths lie.

Though illness and other trials may hinder our abilities, they don't take away our love for others. If the Holy Ghost is present when people come to serve you, they will feel peace and acceptance of their actions. As you come to know them better, you will have a greater capacity to bless their lives.

By accepting help from others, we gain strength to express love and give service back to them. We can bless the life of the sister cleaning your home by having her small child curl up beside us to share a picture book. We can bless the lives of other members who bring us a meal or mow our lawn simply by asking about their welfare. We can bless lives with thank-you notes, cards that say "I thought of you today," or by picking up the phone and sharing our thoughts and being a good listener in return.

Accepting service and giving service back lightens our own load, and, in turn, lifts those who serve us. Everyone is blessed as we strive to listen to the Spirit and do things as the Lord would have us do them. ■



# Questions and Answers

*My spouse and I are struggling to make ends meet. How are couples who are dealing with this challenge maximizing resources in the best ways possible to provide housing, basic necessities, and education for their families?*

We feel that these years are preparing us to control our spending and to make wise financial decisions in the future when we have more resources.

**Natalie Meacham, Pennsylvania, USA**

Shortly after my husband, Sam, and I married, we realized we needed to make some serious lifestyle changes in order for me to be at home once we had children.

We began by living only on his income and putting mine aside to pay off our debts. We ate out less frequently and ate simple meals at home instead. I stopped shopping for non-necessities. We evaluated our budget and determined what were needs and what were wants. (For us, cable TV, cell phones, Internet, and name-brand food and clothing were not necessities.) These practices continued as our daughter and son were born.

Has it been easy? No. My husband and I were both in our 30s before we were able to purchase our first home. We thought we had gotten past living like college students years ago. It turns out we still live much like college students, eating a lot of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, but it is worth it because these sacrifices have blessed our family in many ways.

For instance, we are closer as a family because we have to work together and communicate to make ends meet. Perhaps because we are more aware of our own needs and of our reliance on God, we have become more observant of the needs



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT CASEY

My husband, Taylor, has been a college student for the entire seven years we've been married. Money has always been tight, especially since we added two daughters to the family and I left my job to be home with them. The recent downturn of the economy has made finances even more challenging. One thing we're learning is to put time and thought into what we think we need or want to purchase. If we do, we realize that a lot of the items are ones we don't need, are not worth the

**We evaluated our budget and determined what were needs and what were wants.**

money taken out of the budget, and in some cases, aren't ones we really want anyway.

For other things that we decide actually are important, we pray and seek for guidance on the best way to provide them for our family. I know that a loving Heavenly Father is looking out for us and has continually blessed us to provide for our family.



**BECOMING PROVIDENT PROVIDERS**

All of us are responsible to provide for ourselves and our families in both temporal and spiritual ways. To provide providently, we must practice the principles of provident living: joyfully living within our means, being content with what we have, avoiding excessive debt, and diligently saving and preparing for rainy-day emergencies. When we live

providently, we can provide for ourselves and our families and also follow the Savior's example to serve and bless others. . . .

"With all the love I have in me and with the Savior's love through me, I invite you to come unto Him and hear His words: 'Wherefore, do not spend money for that which is of no worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy. Hearken diligently unto me, and remember the words which I have spoken; and come unto the Holy One of Israel, and feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted' (2 Nephi 9:51)."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Becoming Provident Providers Temporally and Spiritually," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 8, 10.

of others. Our children, even though they are young, are learning about priorities. And I personally have found that my desire to shop—something that was previously a stress-relieving activity for me—has been curbed. I feel that this isn't due to my own willpower but that it is a blessing from my loving Heavenly Father.

We have found that it is in Him that we have security, not from making a certain amount of money. We know from experience that He will always take care of us.

**Anne Sharp, Idaho, USA**

**M**y wife, Heather, and I have a favorite principle regarding our finances, found in Jacob 2:18–19: "Before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God.

"And after ye have obtained a hope

in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good."

As we have tried to seek the kingdom first and go to the Lord for direction, we have found answers regarding education, vocation, where to live (including renting vs. purchasing a home), how much to save, how much to donate in fast offerings, and whether we should both work. With each answer we received, we saw doors open to allow us to accomplish what we felt prompted to do.

This doesn't mean things come easily. We still have to prioritize to pay tithing, save for the future, and make ends meet. When we were first married, our only car was an economical used one. For years we kept the hand-me-down furniture we'd received in college. None of our appliances were

new. We didn't have cable, satellite, or a big-screen TV, and we rarely went out to eat. But modest as the various homes we've lived in have been, we have tried to keep them clean and inviting to the Spirit.

Several years and four children later, we still drive used cars and don't have that big-screen TV, but we feel happy and blessed.

Not everyone's situation will be like ours, so the specifics of what my wife and I have done won't work for everyone. But what will work across the board is putting the Lord first. I know that as we do so, listening to and following the promptings of the Holy Ghost and sacrificing our wants, the Lord will provide answers and direction.

**Darin Palmer, Kentucky, USA**

**I**t has been a challenge being a stay-at-home mom while our family lives on a tight student budget, but several principles have helped us. Among the most important have been to believe that with the Lord's help by paying our tithing and a generous fast offering and by being careful with our finances, we will be able to reach our goals. The following are other ideas that have helped us.

**Live by old adages.** They may seem outdated, but we've taken to heart adages like, "A penny saved is a penny earned," "If you're trying to avoid a second income, look for ways to save instead of earn," and "Remember that pennies really do add up!" Other useful sayings have been,





### SHARE YOUR IDEAS

An upcoming Questions and Answers feature will focus on the following question:

Today's clothing trends aren't always modest, but it is still possible to maintain an "attitude of humility and decency in dress, grooming, language, and behavior" (True to the Faith [2004], 106). What ways can I be modest, specifically in finding and wearing appropriate clothing?

If you would like to share your ideas, please label your submission "Modesty" and follow the guidelines under "Do You Have a Story to Tell?" in the contents pages at the beginning of the magazine. Please limit responses to 500 words and submit them by July 23, 2010.

"Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without," and "The best things in life are free."

**Look to older generations for counsel and inspiration.** It has been helpful to turn to my grandparents and others for advice. They have been through tight times and know how to get through them. It has also provided me with a stronger connection to and respect for them. Things that seem extreme or comical in prosperous times start to make a lot of sense in tight times.

**Have your goal in mind when you have to make sacrifices.** Making sacrifices is hard unless you have your goal in mind, such as

owning a home or becoming financially independent. A lot of the things we may think are necessities aren't. Keeping the big picture in mind can help us evaluate our lives and what's really important to us.

**Avoid feelings of deprivation.** It is important when maintaining frugality as a long-term lifestyle to avoid feelings of deprivation. You can do this by using creativity and resourcefulness to fulfill your wants. For example, try shopping for your favorite brand names at secondhand stores. Take advantage of free or inexpensive entertainment such as those offered through public libraries, free concerts and lectures, and parks.

**Beth Graham, Ohio, USA ■**

*To read additional responses, please visit [ensign.lds.org](http://ensign.lds.org).*

*For more information see All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Finances (Item number 04007000) and All is Safely Gathered In: Home Storage (Item number 04008000).*

## HELP ME!

**O**n my second night of study abroad in St. Petersburg, Russia, I met with my friends downtown to play American football. After the game I decided to experiment with taking the bus home. I had never taken the bus in Russia, but my host mother had told me that bus 7 or bus 1 would take me home. So when bus 7 arrived, I climbed aboard.

As we drove along, I looked at the shops and watched the people mingling on the sidewalk. Slowly, the area began to grow unfamiliar. I checked my watch and realized that I had been riding for 30 minutes.

Suddenly the bus stopped, the lights went out, and everyone got off. Trying not to panic, I looked around for assistance. I knew that if I could

locate the metro, I could arrive home safely. I spotted a young couple down the street and walked toward them.

“I am lost,” I said. “Do you know where the metro is?”

“The metro is very far from here,” the man said. “But there is a bus stop over there. Get on bus 5, and it will take you to the metro.”

I thanked him and walked quickly down the street. When a bus approached the stop, however, it was not a number 5 but a number 1. I thought back to my host mother’s words: “Get on bus 7 or bus 1, and it will take you home.”

I reluctantly got on, but once again we drove and drove. The

passengers exited one by one until I was the only one left.

Finally, the bus pulled to the side of the road.

“You must get off,” the driver said. “This is the last stop.”

My whole body shook as I struggled to breathe and hold back tears. It was getting late, and if I couldn’t find the metro before it closed, I would have to spend the night on the streets of St. Petersburg.

“Help me, Father in Heaven,” I prayed quietly and began walking. Then, breaking into a run, I started waving at passing taxis. None stopped.

I soon came to another bus stop, which was crowded with people. The lights of an approaching bus—a number 7—shone down on us. I hesitated. Buses had only gotten me

lost, but a strong force from behind pushed me up the steps and into the bus. I sat down heavily in a seat, glancing at my watch. It was 11:50 p.m. The metro would close in 10 minutes.

I closed my eyes, whispering again, “Help me.” When I opened my eyes, I saw the bright lights of a metro station as the bus came to a stop. I ran off the bus and into the metro to catch the last train of the night.

As I sat down, I thought of how our Father in Heaven numbers His sparrows (see Matthew 10:29–31), and I silently thanked Him. I knew on that dark night in that vast city, He had led me home. ■

Tiffany Lewis, Texas, USA

**I**t was getting late, and if I couldn’t find the metro before it closed, I would have to spend the night on the streets of St. Petersburg.





**I** was about to accept their invitation, but then I remembered what I had been taught in seminary about not going to places where the Holy Ghost would not go.

## INVITATION TO DISASTER

Shortly after I began my mandatory service in the Brazilian army, I was selected as corporal over a dozen men. Unfortunately, my 12 young soldiers seemed to have the lowest standards in the barracks. I came to discover that they were or had been involved in drugs, theft, sexual immorality, and other serious sins.

Rather than allow myself to be influenced by their low standards, I took advantage of every opportunity I had to share the gospel with them. For example, during breaks or when we were cleaning rifles together, I talked to them about the gospel. I thought they would make fun of my standards and ridicule me, but they listened and came to treat me with respect. However, despite my efforts to teach them gospel doctrines, they didn't change their attitudes or behavior.

Our time in the army finally ended, and on our last day as soldiers, the men invited me to celebrate with them at a small ranch. "Corporal, you have to come to our party," one of them said to me. "You aren't going to insult us by not showing up, are you?"

I was about to accept the invitation so as not to insult them. But the thought came to me that their party standards would be contrary to my Latter-day Saint standards. I remembered what I had been taught in seminary about not going to places where the Holy Ghost would not go. Despite their resentment, I told the group that I wouldn't be attending. I said goodbye and headed home.

Months passed before I again saw one of the soldiers from that group. What he told me made me grateful

that I had skipped their farewell celebration, which featured lots of alcohol. While under the influence, the men had begun throwing alcohol on each other. Then, as a

joke, one of them threw a match on his buddy, who was so badly burned that he died a few days later. As a result, all of the participants at that party faced criminal charges related to his death.

Had I attended the party—even without drinking—I would have been in the same predicament. That incident would have followed me and could have hindered my future. I mourned for the young man who had died, but I was grateful that I had followed the promptings of the Spirit and the counsel of Church leaders. ■  
Cesar A. Minutti, Brazil





## I CHOSE NOT TO DRINK

**W**hile traveling to a youth conference in Stuttgart, Germany, I had the opportunity to speak with an elderly woman about the temple and about my faith in the restored gospel. She was acquainted with the Church and had a fairly good idea of some gospel doctrines.

During our conversation, however, the woman said something that made me sad. When she was introduced to the Church approximately 40 years before by a Latter-day Saint friend, something her friend had said still stood out to her. “I’m *not allowed* to

drink,” her friend had said. The woman then added that she knew of a few Latter-day Saints who did drink “now and then.”

Contrary to what this woman thought, the gospel is not forced upon anyone. We all have the right to make our own decisions. Heavenly Father gave us the Word of Wisdom to help us keep our bodies holy, but each of us must choose whether to live His law of health because He also gave us our moral agency.

**G**od’s commandments are gifts to us, and if we keep them, they will lead us back to Him.

I decided several years ago when I was baptized that I would follow Jesus Christ. For that reason, I don’t drink alcohol. God’s

commandments are gifts to us, and if we keep them, they will lead us back to Him.

From this simple encounter, I was reminded that as members of the Lord’s Church, we are always examples to others. We choose, however, what that example will be. ■

Torsten König, Germany

## TURN OFF THE TV!

The Saturday night following the Thanksgiving holiday, I found myself alone in my off-campus apartment. I didn't have much to do, so I flipped through the channels on the TV until I came across a movie that had just started.

It didn't take more than a few minutes for me to realize that the movie was inappropriate. For a minute I thought, "What's the big deal? No one is around. After all, it's on TV, so all of the worst parts must be edited out."

The Spirit, however, prompted me to turn off the TV. I decided to read a book instead.

About half an hour later I heard a knock at the door. It was a member of my elders quorum, who told me that one of the young women he home taught was sick and needed a blessing. He had spent the past 30 minutes calling around and knocking on doors, trying to find someone who was home and able to help him. Finally, he had come to my door. I agreed to help and quickly changed into Sunday dress.

While we were walking to her apartment, I asked him how ill she was. All he knew was that he had received an urgent call from the young woman's roommate, requesting that he come right away.

When we arrived at the apartment, it was apparent that she was not well. She had a high fever and looked pale.

Her roommate said she had been sick for several hours, was weak, and was unable to eat because of an upset stomach.

I had assumed that I would anoint her with oil, but the brother from my elders quorum asked me to give the blessing instead. I felt inadequate



and was not sure what I would say. I had not had time to mentally prepare to give a blessing, but I silently prayed that God would direct my words.

After the anointing, I addressed the young woman by name and pronounced the blessing. I found myself making promises of restored health and providing words of comfort that

were not my own. I then closed the blessing. As we opened our eyes, I saw a huge smile on the young woman's face, and she thanked us for the blessing. She soon recovered and was able to return to her studies and finish the semester.

As I reflect on that experience, I feel great gratitude for the opportunity to hold the priesthood. The experience lasted only about 10 minutes, and I

am sure the ill young woman has since forgotten about it. But it has had a lasting impact on me.

I am grateful for the whisperings of the Spirit, which prompted me to avoid temptation and to remain spiritually ready. Additionally, I am grateful the Spirit directed the brother from my elders quorum to my apartment.

Most of all, I am grateful for a kind and merciful Heavenly Father, who strengthened me in my inadequacies, guiding my words in the blessing and then fulfilling the words He had me speak.

I know that as we remain

worthy, we will have the Spirit to guide our path so that we can be ready to serve those around us. ■

Jonathan H. Westover, Utah, USA

**The Spirit prompted me to turn off the TV. About half an hour later I heard a knock at the door.**

# Small & Simple Things

*“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).*

## CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD

### Nigeria

During the 1950s, several Nigerians began learning about the Church through magazine articles and Church literature. They sent letters to Church headquarters expressing their desire to learn more about the Church’s teachings.

In response, Church leaders looked into initiating missionary work in the country. However, a civil war, difficulties with visas, and the challenge of having enough local priesthood holders to administer the Church prevented leaders from establishing official Church units in the area.

The Church was finally able to establish a missionary presence in 1978. When the first missionaries arrived, they found large groups of people interested in the gospel. The first baptism was performed in November of that year, and on the same day, the first branch of the Church was organized.



By 1987 Church membership there had reached nearly 10,000, and in 1999, Nigeria had more members of the Church than any other African nation, with membership totaling 42,746. Nigeria now has a temple in Aba, which was dedicated in 2005 by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008).

**Above:** Members and missionaries of the Church in Nigeria gather to watch general conference.  
**Right:** The Aba Nigeria Temple.

The Church in Nigeria	
Membership	83,919
Missions	4
Stakes and Districts	32
Wards and Branches	256
Temples	1

### HOW TO IMPROVE FAMILY COMMUNICATION

- Turn off or put away electronic devices before you begin family gatherings such as meals, scripture study, and family home evening.
- Try to have at least one meal together every day.



- Plan regular family activities. They don’t have to be complex. Have a picnic, go on a walk, or play a game together.
- Have family discussions in which everyone’s opinions or concerns can be voiced. Listen intently without judging or lecturing, and don’t interrupt each other.

LEFT, FROM TOP: PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN OLU FAOSEKE; PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER; ILLUSTRATION BY BETH M. WHITTAKER. RIGHT, FROM TOP: BACKGROUND © GETTY IMAGES; PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DESERET NEWS; PHOTOGRAPH BY CHAD E. PHARES



# Tithing—a Commandment Even for the Destitute

By Elder Lynn G. Robbins

Of the Seventy



## HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME?

There are 24 hours in a day. You probably spend much of that time sleeping and working (or studying), but you likely have a few hours each day that can be spent on other activities. How much of that time do you spend watching TV or surfing the Internet? If you spent only one hour each day on one of the following ideas, how many goals, projects, or tasks could you complete during a week? a month? a year?

- Reading the scriptures or memorizing scripture mastery verses.
- Participating in sports or exercise.
- Learning a new hobby or talent: cooking, singing, sewing, gardening, or playing a musical instrument, for instance.
- Participating in family home evening or spending time with your family.
- Reading a good book.
- Writing an uplifting letter to a missionary from your ward or branch.
- Learning a foreign language.
- Doing family history work.
- Going home or visiting teaching.
- Fulfilling your Church calling.
- Writing in your journal.

**R**ead more about being a wise steward of your time in Elder David A. Bednar's article on page 16.

In October of 1998 Hurricane Mitch devastated many parts of Central America. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) was very concerned for the victims of this disaster, many of whom lost everything—food, clothing, and household goods. He visited the Saints in the cities of San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa, Honduras; and Managua, Nicaragua. And like the words of the loving prophet Elijah to a starving widow, this modern prophet's message in each city was similar—to sacrifice and be obedient to the law of tithing.

But how can you ask someone so destitute to sacrifice? President Hinckley knew that the food and clothing shipments they received would help them survive the crisis, but his concern and love for them went far beyond that. As important as humanitarian aid is, he knew that the most important assistance



President Gordon B. Hinckley visited Church members in Honduras following the hurricane in 1998.

comes from God, not from man. The prophet wanted to help them unlock the windows of heaven as promised by the Lord in the book of Malachi (see Malachi 3:10; Mosiah 2:24).

President Hinckley taught them that if they would pay their tithing, they would always have food on their tables, they would always have clothing on their backs, and they would always have a roof over their heads.

*From an April 2005 general conference address.*

## Increasing My Testimony

As I work to develop my testimony of Jesus Christ, I find that consistently doing simple things allows my testimony to grow. Because I strive to pray, go to church, read the Book of Mormon, and stand as a witness



of Christ, my testimony of the Savior continues to increase.

Although there are trials and problems that present themselves, I have been able to avoid things that would be harmful to me by listening to the promptings of the Holy Ghost, who

teaches me the paths I should choose.

As I follow the counsel given by the leaders of the Church, I feel my testimony grow and I know that I am coming closer to my Father in Heaven.

**Eng Sodavy, Cambodia**

## GREAT LIVES REMEMBERED

## President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)



**E**zra Taft Benson was the great-grandson of an Apostle whose name he bore. Raised on a farm in Whitney, Idaho, USA, he could, by the age of five, already drive a team of horses.

He later became an expert on farming and on the issues that affected farmers and served as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture from 1953 to 1961. At that time Secretary Benson was already Elder Benson, having been called as an Apostle in 1943. Elder Benson served in the U.S. government with the permission of Church President David O. McKay (1873–1970). The Bensons, with their emphasis on family and down-to-earth values, were the subject of many print articles and even TV programs, and the Church benefited from the favorable publicity. Because he never wavered in his convictions, even those who opposed Secretary Benson's farm policies admired him for his integrity.

One of the most remarkable periods of Elder Benson's life came

immediately after World War II when the relatively new Apostle was sent by the Church to Europe in 1946 to reestablish contact with Church members and to arrange for relief supplies. Much of Europe was in ruins, travel and communications were under military control, and civilian travel was restricted. But through faith and frequent divine intervention, Elder Benson visited 13 nations, bringing both temporal and spiritual relief to thousands.

Ezra Taft Benson became

President of the Church on November 10, 1985, following the death of President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985). One of the hallmarks of his administration was a renewed emphasis on studying the Book of Mormon.

For more about President Benson's life, see July 1994 *Tambuli* at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org).



Above: President Benson while Secretary of Agriculture on the cover of *Time* magazine, 1953. Left: In 1946, following World War II, President Benson traveled throughout Europe to help arrange for delivery of relief supplies.



## TEMPLE SPOTLIGHT

## Buenos Aires Argentina Temple

**P**resident Thomas S. Monson dedicated the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple in January 1986. In the dedicatory prayer he said, “May all who enter this, Thy house, be privileged to say, as did the Psalmist of old, ‘We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company’”<sup>1</sup> (see Psalm 55:14).

The beautiful six-spire temple has an exterior of light gray Argentine granite and is a highly visible landmark when entering the city from the airport. It was the first temple built in Argentina and the fourth in South America.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles recounts that the “marvelous commitment of the Saints of South America was demonstrated by the dear sisters hand crocheting sixty-four altar cloths for the Buenos Aires temple when only seven were requested.”<sup>2</sup>

A missionary training center and a patron housing facility were built adjacent to the temple and dedicated in 1994.

## NOTES

1. See “Dedicatory Prayer,” [ldschurchtemples.com/buenosaires](http://ldschurchtemples.com/buenosaires).
2. M. Russell Ballard, “The Kingdom Rolls Forth in South America,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 12.



### GIVING BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY

**L**ooking to serve in your community in a meaningful way? Think of your personal interests. There are clubs and organizations whose missions—from watching nature to researching family histories—align with your hobbies and talents. Talk to your friends, and find out how they choose to contribute. Perhaps you share common interests.

Rea Gregson Skelton, Canada



# The Law of Moses and the Golden Rule

Throughout my life, I've learned that the scriptures help us solve life's problems. At one time, there was quite a bit of bickering and fighting among the children. My wife and I became frustrated as we tried to teach Christlike behavior to our children and wanted a happier, more peaceful family.

At our next family home evening, I gathered the family together and sternly explained that we were going to start following more rules in the house. I unraveled a long list of rules written on several pieces of

paper I had taped together. "Absolutely no running in the house. No yelling. No eating here or there. . . ." The list continued with many "don'ts" and some "do's."

The children appeared stunned. They began to ask, "What does this rule mean?" "How will we remember all these rules?" And "What happens if we break the rules?"

I then held up another, single sheet of paper. I explained that we could either follow the long

list of rules or obey one simple rule. Then I turned it around to read, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (see Matthew 7:12).

I explained that the long list of rules was

the way some people might see the Law of Moses. We also discussed the benefits of treating others as we want to be treated. As visual reminders, we posted our long list of rules and the Golden Rule on the refrigerator.

Our family experienced more peace and order after focusing on the Golden Rule. We were blessed as we "likened" the scriptures to our family's needs.

**Shapiro Joslin, Arizona, USA**

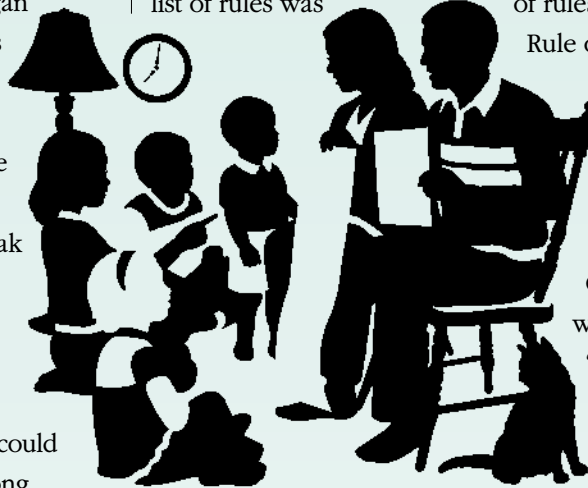


ILLUSTRATION BY BETH WHITAKER

## HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

**"Things as They Really Are," on page 16.** Consider reading the article in advance and prayerfully selecting parts that apply to the needs of your family. You may want to use this article for two family home evening lessons.

**"Don't Be in a Hurry," on page 29.** Some possible ways to apply this article to your family are listed below:

1. Consider arriving for sacrament meeting early to ponder and listen to the music before the meeting begins.
2. Take a few minutes at the beginning of your lesson to sit quietly and think.
3. Suggest a time or place in your home to encourage personal gospel study. Prayerfully consider other ways to apply this idea in your family.

**"Your Mission in Life Is Now," on page 44.** Ask a family member to define "intersection." Consider reading the section "A Mission Every Day." Then ask family members to share an experience where they or others have seen a need and were able to help fill it.

**"Homebound but Active," on page 58.** After reading the article, discuss ways you could continue to serve if placed in a similar situation. You could also discuss ways your family could serve those who are unable to attend Church at this time.

**Service Given and Received**  
When my two-year-old son was diagnosed with a life-threatening disease and started chemotherapy, he couldn't attend church anymore. Members of the Relief Society brought me meals for our family and helped with his care. Our other three small children, our baby who was on his husband and our first son who was with our healthy children. Our home teacher arranged for me to be able to be administered whenever needed home with our son. The bishop also called on the ward council for me and we had a prayer for him and really prayed.

**A Simple Note**  
A few months after his diagnosis, our son was recovering from a heart surgery performed in another city, and was home with us. The ward in that area arranged for me to receive the sacrament every week.

**Many members of the Church are unable to attend church because of poor health or other constraints. If you or a member of your ward or family is in a similar situation, here are some ways to stay involved.**

to be only by name. She writes that to read events, send her using the link message for the needs, requests about how they are, and when they go back and happiness. They turn into members and they are open to the member fully when in those times.

As I talked to my sister, sometimes we worked about these ideas and how they fit about the things of how the member received every week. Did they just have the envelope open, unopened and unopened that they read the word and said, "wonder why a real stranger would continually write to them that is being the gospel we have been to some help?"

she told me, "Your mother has written me every month for the past two years. I would be ready to meet her and thank her for all the work and letters she has sent to me. I look forward to those every week."

I have questions for a return or a member would be so happy to have this. I'm excited that I had wondered how the same member would be so happy to have this. I'm excited that I had wondered how the same member would be so happy to have this. I'm excited that I had wondered how the same member would be so happy to have this. I'm excited that I had wondered how the same member would be so happy to have this.



# News of the Church

## Sunday School Presidencies Learning Important Role

By Lauren Allen  
Church Magazines

Each Sunday in the Highland Utah 30th Ward, Richard Christiansen and his counselors in the Sunday School presidency go through a routine familiar in almost every unit of the Church. They make sure that each class has a teacher and help students get from the hallways to the classrooms.

However, Brother Christiansen has caught the vision that his responsibilities are not limited to herding students and ringing bells.

One of the primary roles of each quorum and auxiliary organization is to teach members gospel principles essential to their salvation. The role of the Sunday School presidency, such as Brother Christiansen and his counselors, is to assist auxiliary and priesthood leaders in this charge by acting as teacher training specialists within the ward.

“Teaching is the primary means the Church has to strengthen members, help them deepen their witness of the Restoration, and gain salvation and exaltation,” said Russell T. Osguthorpe, Sunday School general president.

As ward Sunday School president, Brother Christiansen has the responsibility to serve as a resource for parents, leaders, and teachers to help improve the instruction that occurs in the home and in the Church.

“Teaching is what it’s all about, and being effective as a teacher helps others be excited to learn,” Brother Christiansen said.

One of the tools at the Sunday School presidencies’ disposal is the teacher improvement course that may be offered during Sunday School. The course consists of 12 lessons found in the *Teaching, No Greater Call* manual and may be taught by a member of the Sunday School presidency under the direction of the bishop.

“This is a course that can be helpful to any Church member who is interested in improving his or her teaching skills,” Brother Osguthorpe said, whether in the home or the classroom. “The lessons help participants learn how to teach by the Spirit, how to invite active, diligent learning, and how to teach so that members will be eager to apply the principles of the gospel in their own lives.”

According to Brother Osguthorpe, Sunday School presidents attend ward council regularly, as outlined in *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, so that they can understand the bishop’s goals for the members of the ward and can counsel together on how to help improve teaching so those goals can be reached.

During a ward or branch council the Sunday School president could be invited by the bishop or branch president to provide



instruction on principles relating to gospel teaching and learning. Brother Osguthorpe suggests that he could also report on attendance in youth and adult Sunday School classes and invite the help of other ward leaders to assist those who may be struggling.

“The most effective teaching in the Church occurs in homes where faithful parents live gospel principles and teach those principles to their children. The auxiliaries exist to support the home in these most sacred duties. The Sunday School presidency is a resource in the ward to help both parents and teachers fulfill their responsibilities,” said Brother Osguthorpe.

Successful gospel teaching on the part of parents and Church leaders can strengthen members’ testimonies and help them come unto Christ, he said.

“The only reasonable way to measure the effectiveness of gospel teaching [in a ward] is to observe the faithfulness of the members. If more young men are serving missions, if more youth are [growing up and] marrying in the temple, if more parents are reading the scriptures, holding family home evening, and worshiping in the temple regularly, teaching is improving.” ■

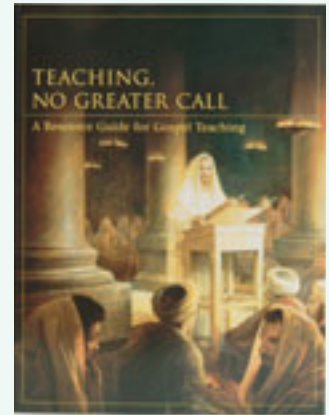
## RESOURCES TO IMPROVE TEACHING

Through use of the scriptures, the *Teaching, No Greater Call* manual (item no. 36123), and the “Gospel Teaching and Leadership” section of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, members may improve their teaching and fulfill the call of President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ “better than we have ever done before” (“We Have a Work to Do,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 88).

“We must strengthen ourselves and our people to get our teachers to speak out of their hearts rather than out of their books, to communicate their love for the Lord and their precious work, and somehow it will catch fire in the hearts of those they teach,” said President Hinckley (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1977], 619–20).

The purpose of the Teaching the Gospel course found in *Teaching, No Greater Call* is to help Church members develop their teaching abilities and realize the importance of improving gospel teaching. The course covers topics such as teaching by the Spirit, inviting diligent learning, and using effective teaching methods.

The *Teaching, No Greater Call* manual is available in more than 30 languages. Contact local distribution centers for availability.



## CHANGES TO TEACHER IMPROVEMENT EXPLAINED

In a letter dated November 17, 2006, the First Presidency announced changes to how teacher improvement should be handled.

### DISCONTINUED:

The *positions* of stake teacher improvement coordinator and ward teacher improvement coordinator were discontinued.

Quarterly teacher improvement meetings were discontinued.

Some confusion persists. The following identifies what the policy discontinued and what it did not.

### CONTINUED:

The *responsibilities* of the teacher improvement coordinator now belong to the ward Sunday School president.

The teacher improvement course in *Teaching, No Greater Call* may still be taught as needed.

## Education Is Key to Protecting Families from Pornography

A good friend, family member, or neighbor may be one of the millions trapped. Pornography lures people of all types and ages.

“We have in America today a crisis of pornography,” said Patrick Trueman, former chief of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Criminal Division.

Mr. Trueman was the keynote speaker at the ninth annual conference of the Utah Coalition Against Pornography. He discussed how the \$97 billion pornography industry has addicted men, women, and even children across the United States and is destroying marriages, families, and lives.

Pornography hijacks the brain by fueling dopamine production, which provides excitement, but no endorphins are emitted to help the brain feel satisfied, he explained. This cycle leads users to fall deeper and deeper into their addiction as they seek a satisfaction that will never come.

The worldwide Web can be a great tool and resource for information, but it is also a tool widely and intricately packed with pornography and other

obscene materials.

Parents can do many things to safeguard their homes from harmful materials found on the Internet. At the conference, Ken Knapton, Internet safety expert and author, offered tips for protecting families against Internet pornography.

Youth in this generation are “digital natives,” he said. They have been inundated by technology since birth. However, their parents have not, and as a result, need to educate themselves about technology in order to recognize the dangers.

Installing filters on computers



**Parents who know how to safely use technology can teach their children to be safe too.**

can be helpful in sifting out harmful material, he said, but filters will not block everything, and there are other ways to access the same material besides through the computer. Many video game systems have the ability to connect to the Internet, he explained. Cell phones are also becoming a common venue for accessing Web content.

By placing computers and televisions in an open, public area of the home, parents can monitor the content on the screen. It is also important to supervise the amount of time family members spend surfing the Web and to

### NEW CHURCH WEB SITE COMBATS PORNOGRAPHY

LDS Family Services has launched a new Web site to help people learn about and overcome pornography addictions. The Web site, combatingpornography.org, targets five different audiences: individuals with a problem, spouses, parents, youth, and leaders.

The Combating Pornography site was not designed as a treatment site, but rather a site to provide people with accurate information from a gospel perspective and to educate them about the problem of pornography, said Michael Gardner,

product manager for developing the site.

Within each of the target audiences, the Web site is divided into four main categories: prevention, recognition, overcoming the problem, and support. Each category contains resources and information specific to each audience.

For example, individuals struggling with pornography addiction will find information, various articles, videos, and other resources available on the Web site, including advice from the First Presidency and leaders of the Church on overcoming pornography addictions. Spouses will find information on how to cope and deal with



teach children to use chat groups, instant messages, and social networking sites with caution, Brother Knapton said.

He urged parents to talk to their children and continue to build open, honest relationships with them. Ensure that they understand that they should never give out their private information over the Internet. Teach them to shut down the computer and tell an adult if they accidentally encounter a pornographic Web site, and assure them that they will not be punished for these accidents.

Children will likely encounter obscenity throughout their lives, he said. Parents, friends, and leaders need to teach them to run from it, not indulge in it. ■

a partner's addiction and be supportive during the recovery process. Parents can find information about preventing pornography addictions in their home, identifying the signs of pornography use, and helping family members to overcome pornography.

The site also has information about the Church's 12-step Addiction Recovery Program, and a copy of the addiction recovery manual may be downloaded.

## Cardinal Lauds Efforts to Defend Religious Freedom

In the first address given by a cardinal at Brigham Young University, His Eminence Francis Cardinal George said Catholics and Latter-day Saints must stand together in defense of religious freedom.

"When government fails to protect the consciences of its citizens, it falls to religious bodies, especially those formed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, to become the defenders of human freedom," he said.

Cardinal George, the Archbishop of Chicago and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, addressed 12,000 students and faculty members at BYU.

He expressed gratitude "that after 180 years of living mostly apart from one another, Catholics and Latter-day Saints have come to see one another as trustworthy partners in the defense of shared moral principles."

Both churches have stood together on issues such as abortion, pornography, and gay marriage, he noted. With these issues, as well as other rising concerns, religious groups must stand together.

"Religious freedom cannot be reduced to freedom of worship,

nor even freedom of private conscience," he said. "Religious freedom means that religious groups as well as religious individuals have a right to exercise their influence in the public square."

## Romanian Members Celebrate 20 Years

Dressed as historical figures from the scriptures, members of the Church in Romania shared stories about the Savior, the Apostasy, Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon during a special program for members and friends. The program was part of a



PHOTOGRAPH BY TEODOR DUMITRACHE

**Members of the Bucharest Romania District ascend the hill where Romania was dedicated for the preaching of the gospel 20 years ago.**

celebration of the 20th anniversary of the dedication of Romania for the preaching of the gospel.

The celebration was held in February 2010 and included a gathering at the place where Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicated the land in 1990. An excerpt from the prayer became the basis for the celebration's theme, "Romania: A Beacon of Light

to Neighboring Nations.”

“During the event we felt the Spirit and the happiness of members to be a part of this great work,” said Vasile Doru, president of the Bucharest Romania District. “We all pray that soon we will grow to become a stake in Zion and ‘a beacon of light to neighboring nations.’”

After the program, members divided into small groups and gave away copies of the Book of Mormon.

## Couple Receives Madagascar Award

A senior missionary couple in Andrainarivo, Madagascar, recently received the country’s highest civilian honor for their humanitarian service.

During their 18-month mission, Elder Robert and Sister Susan Bird, from Fruit Heights, Utah, USA, helped provide humanitarian aid, including projects that provided potable drinking water to approximately 100,000 people.

The Minister of Water in Andrainarivo, the honorable Nhiry-Lanto Hery Andriamahazo, presented them with the Medal of Honor and offered kind words regarding the Church, saying missionaries in Madagascar are recognized as part of the Malagasy society. ■

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Ogden Utah Temple to Undergo Renovation

The nearly 40-year-old Ogden Utah Temple will undergo a major 18- to 24-month renovation. The core design of the temple interior will remain the same, but the exterior will feature a new design, with new stone and glass. The building will be remodeled to meet seismic requirements, will feature the latest technology, and will include more energy-efficient equipment. An underground parking structure also will be added.

### Honor Bee Charm Created

The Honor Bee charm is now available to young women who go beyond the regular Personal Progress requirements. To receive the charm, a young woman may reread the Book of Mormon and complete 40 additional hours of service after receiving her Young Womanhood Recognition medallion. This service must include helping another young woman complete her Personal Progress goals. The small honeybee charm is worn on the same necklace with the medallion.



### Exhibit Features Latin American Saints

The Church History Museum is featuring an exhibit called “Mi Vida, Mi Historia: Stories of Faith and Inspiration from Latin American Saints.” The bilingual exhibit highlights spiritual experiences from the lives of 24 members. Their photos are hung throughout the exhibit, and interactive audiovisual kiosks allow visitors further insight into participants’ lives. All of the information in the exhibit is available online at [lds.org/museum](https://lds.org/museum). Click on **Exhibits and Galleries**, then on **Current Exhibits**.

### Family History Classes Now Online

The Family History Library has made eight family history research classes available online at [familysearch.org](https://familysearch.org) (click on **Free Online Classes**). The classes are made up of multiple lessons in video or pdf formats that teach specifics of family history research in countries such as England, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Russia, and the United States. Seven classes are available in English and one in Spanish. Additional languages will be added in the future. ■

# In Other Church Magazines

## THE NEW ERA

### A Safe Return

In the June 2010 issue of the *New Era*, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf uses his experiences as a pilot to talk about the importance of the directions we follow. He said, “If we have taken a wrong course, the Atonement of Jesus Christ can give us the assurance that sin is *not* a point of no return. A safe return is possible if we will follow God’s plan for our salvation.”

### Horse Reining

Emily Winegar of Aubrey, Texas, is a champion in horse reining, a demanding competition where the rider has complete control over his or her horse. Emily knows how much focus and practice it takes to meet the goals she has set. For her,

living her religion is an opportunity to set a good example for others.

### The Gospel Goal

Young men in Africa formed a fun-loving soccer team, but the real joy was in bringing the team into the gospel.



## THE FRIEND

### Hidden CTR Ring

Each month a picture of a CTR ring is hidden in the *Friend*. You can find a clue about where the ring is hidden on the contents page of the magazine. Searching for the ring in the magazine allows children to get more exposure to the articles, activities, and other features included in the *Friend* each month.



Hidden CTR Ring



### Summer Activities

Looking for things to keep you and your children busy this summer? Take a look at pages 24–25 in the *Friend*. These pages feature 20 activities that children can do on their own or with the family during the summer.

## COMMENTS

### Happy with New Ensign

I received my January 2010 copy about an hour ago, and haven’t been able to put it down. I am so happy with the new and improved *Ensign*.

Thank you for adding ideas for home teaching families with youth and children to the First Presidency Message!

Thank you very much for moving the Visiting Teaching Message to the front of the magazine, right after the First Presidency Message. It reinforces the importance of visiting teaching.

I like the new layout, the new departments, and the new visuals.

**Julie Oakford Pettit,**  
Utah, USA

### Easier to Read

The new *Ensign* for January 2010 is exciting for me. My vision is challenged and I have a hard time seeing print when it is transposed over a picture or colors. The new *Ensign* does not have any of that.

**Ava Hill,** Oregon, USA



## Transparent Adversity

By Felipe Urbina

**O**n the bus to work one morning, I took a window seat. Before long I became aware of a little bee trying to get itself out of a fix. It was trapped between the two glass panels of the window, and no matter how hard it tried, it couldn't find its way out. Encased in a transparent prison, it could see freedom but couldn't find an escape route. Perhaps frightened, it beat its wings furiously and desperately threw itself against the glass.

I've always been a person who didn't like to see anyone or anything hurt. So after observing the bee for some time, I began to try to get it out of its difficulty. But lacking trust and understanding of my desire to help, it didn't take advantage of the assistance I offered. In fact, all it did was continue to throw itself against the window. Finally I began to get a bit irritated.

But then I started to think about how sometimes people find themselves in similar situations. We get into predicaments—some not of our own making. We also make mistakes, even serious ones. Like the bee, we may feel imprisoned by these adversities.



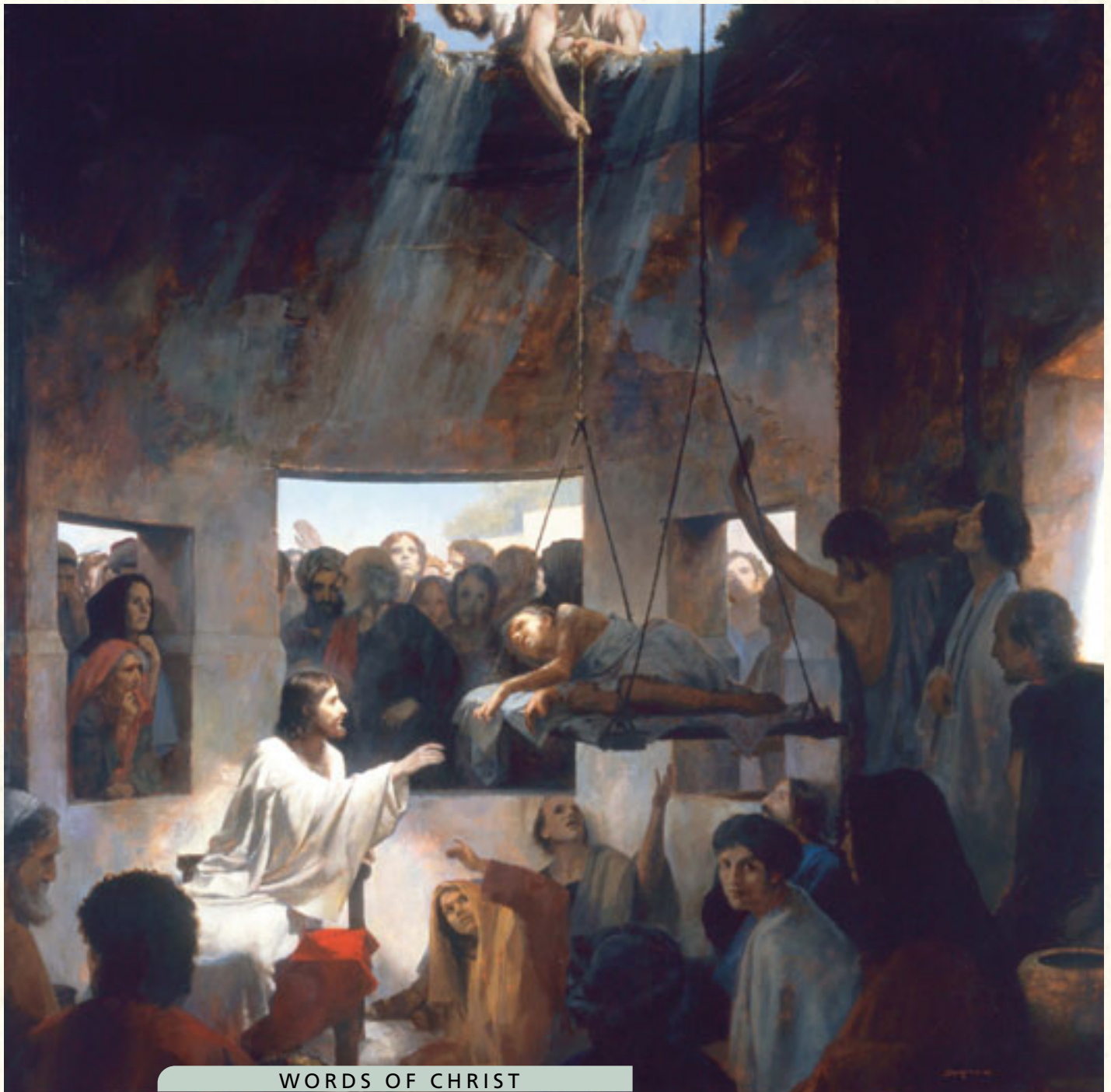
ILLUSTRATION BY JORGE COCCO

*A bee and a bus ride helped me see that there is a way out of trouble—but often we must trust someone who has the vision to see.*

Unfortunately, even though the Lord knows what we need in order to escape our trials, we often don't turn to Him—or to those He has called to lead us—for help in our times of need. We give no heed to the whisperings of the Spirit and try to face our challenges on our own, rather than relying on those who have greater vision.

As Latter-day Saints, we actually do know how to overcome adversity: we have the scriptures, prayer, and the companionship of the Holy Ghost. Our leaders have been called by the Lord and are ready and willing to help.

Before I got to my stop and after the poor little bee had suffered much, it managed to get out of its predicament. From it I learned that we also can overcome trials—suffering less if we turn to and trust in Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, to whom all adversity is transparent. ■



## WORDS OF CHRIST

### ***Christ and the Palsied Man,*** by J. Kirk Richards

*When the people of Capernaum gathered to see the Savior, it was so crowded that a man who was paralyzed had to be lowered through the roof.*

*“When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.”*

*Then Jesus said to the doubting scribes, “Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven*

*thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?*

*“But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)*

*“I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.*

*“And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God” (Mark 2:5, 9–12).*



*While the Internet can disconnect us from reality (see “Things as They Really Are,” page 16), used appropriately, it can connect us to helpful and uplifting sites. On official Church Web sites we can study the gospel, listen to hymns, learn about self-reliance, and research our family history. See “Positive Uses of the Internet,” page 12.*

