

The Power of a Righteous Example

By Jerry Stringam

In April 1992 my family and I were living in Provo, Utah, where we had moved from Canada so I could complete a degree in engineering at Brigham Young University. My son Jase, who was 17, had become friends with a young woman named Krista.

On the Saturday evening of general conference weekend, Jase came into the living room and asked if he could borrow the car to take Krista out for a milk shake. I tossed him the keys, and he went into the kitchen to call her. I could hear one side of the conversation, which went like this:

“Hi, Krista,
it’s me, Jase.

I was wondering if you would like to go out for a milk shake.” **Silence.**

“You mean after priesthood meeting?
Well, OK,
I’ll call you then.
See ya.”

Jase hung up the phone and came back into the living room.

“So are you going out with her?” I asked.

“She said she would like to go,” he replied, “but she told me to call her back after I get home from the priesthood session.” With a dejected look on his face, he slunk off to his room.

Something hit me like a ton of bricks. I had grown up in southern Alberta, nearly 80 miles (130 km) from the stake center. No one had expected me or even my parents, who had leadership positions in our branch, to show up for conference sessions, let alone the priesthood session. Now someone was counting on it.

What would my response be to my son’s look of sadness as he went to his room? I knew that my decision would set a precedent for years to come.

I got up from my chair and called down the hall to Jase and my second son, a newly ordained deacon, “Change your clothes. We have 10 minutes to get to the priesthood session at the stake center.” I hurried to get ready, and when I came out of my bedroom, both boys were ready, and we headed for the car.

I don’t remember the talks very well, but I remember that we felt the Spirit. It felt good to be at the priesthood session with my sons. When we came home, Jase felt good about himself, which made me feel good. He called Krista, and they went to get milk shakes.

In the two decades that have passed since that day, the priesthood holders in our family have not missed a single priesthood session of general conference. Because a righteous young woman stood up for her beliefs, our family had the opportunity to change, and we continue to hear the words of latter-day prophets and feel the Spirit in the priesthood session of general conference. ■

