

# BUILDING ON A SURE FOUNDATION

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Not far from the vast expanse of the Ohio River lies a small town on the outskirts of Louisville, Kentucky, called Anchorage. Once a farming community where a riverboat captain established his last portage, it has become home to families of many diverse faiths.

It was there in church, at home, and while exploring the marvelous world beneath the woods of sycamore, oak, maple, chestnut, and willow trees that I learned one of the fundamentals of Christianity: that Jesus came as the master teacher, instructing us in the ways of goodness and integrity.

My parents were good folks, faithful in their church. They taught me how to be a good person and that there are certain things that are right, such as being kind to others, and certain things that are wrong, such as stealing. On the other hand, they also taught that what one person believes to be true is just as valid as what someone else believes to be true, even if those beliefs differ in fundamental ways. In this philosophy, as I understand it, there are no eternal principles true for everyone, just personal viewpoints that intelligent people have the right and obligation to determine are true for themselves.

Because of those underlying tenets of moral relativism, I had a difficult time believing what the Mormon missionaries taught me about the



*A testimony can become unshakable.*

need for the Atonement, priesthood authority, and prophets. Indeed, my journey to conversion took me six long years of constantly challenging and questioning who I was, what I believed, and whether there could, in fact, be a God who had established eternal principles of truth and error, sin and consequence.

Remarkably, I did receive a spiritual confirmation, but it did not come until I was humble

enough to accept it. First came a witness of baptism, then of the Book of Mormon, then of Joseph Smith as a true prophet. Additional witnesses followed, line upon line, regarding today's prophets and apostles.

Eventually, there came a point in my life when I didn't just believe the gospel was true—I knew it. The culmination of many little witnesses created a foundation upon which my faith was sure, a bulwark against which challenges to testimony break.

It is our divine right to seek answers from the Lord. And we must keep spiritually nourishing ourselves every day so our testimonies remain strong. But I also know that in the Lord's program, it is not productive to keep questioning principles about which we have received a witness. In fact, it may lead to apostasy.

I no longer struggle with the moral relativism of my youth. I know that when the prophet speaks, his words are from God. When circumstances arise that challenge my testimony, I trust in the witness I have already received, and then I do my best to live by it. That is the road to peace; that is the way of happiness. ■