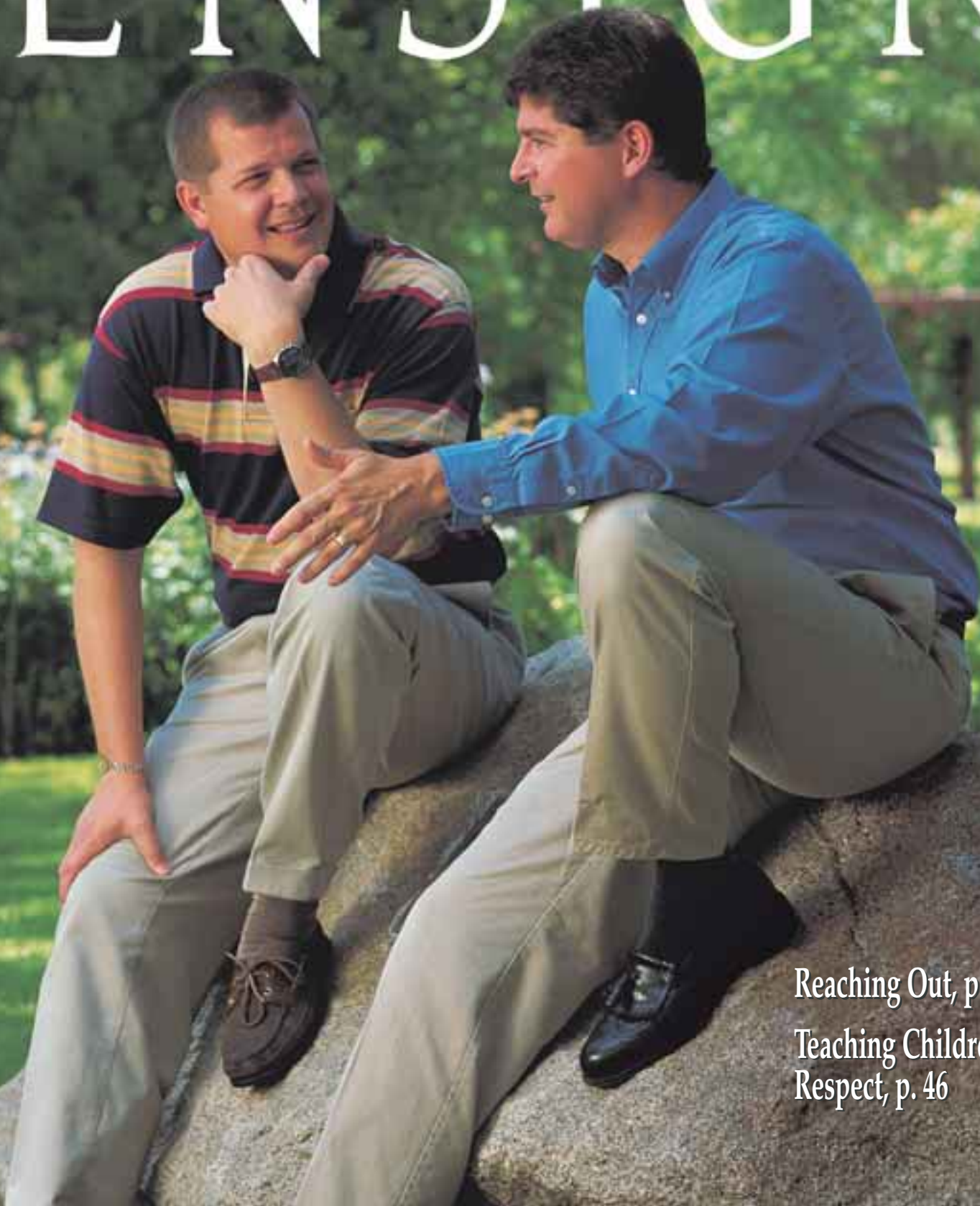


ENSIGN



Reaching Out, p. 50

Teaching Children
Respect, p. 46

Coming of the Gulls, by Geoff Dowding



In the early summer of 1848, as pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley were struggling to raise their crops, a pestilence of insects dubbed "Mormon crickets" began laying waste to their fields. Fires, trenches filled with water, and attacks with brooms and clubs could not stop the hordes of insects. The pioneers' deliverance came as flocks of seagulls arrived to devour the crickets. The work of the gulls went on for days, and the crops were saved.

ENSIGN

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 10

ON THE COVERS: *Front and back:* Photography by Steve Bunderson. *Inside front:* Coming of the Gulls, by Geoff Dowding, oil on canvas, 30" x 40", 1947. Courtesy of Museum of Church History and Art. *Inside back:* The Brother of Jared, by Del Parson, oil on canvas, 18" x 24", 1996.

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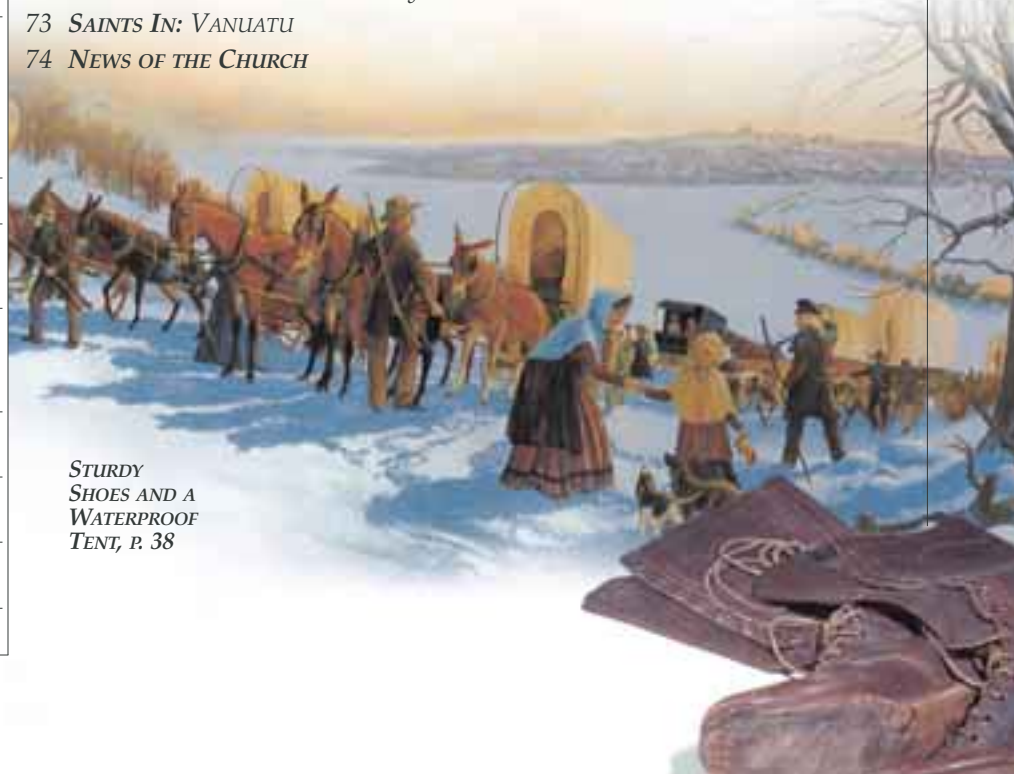
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STURDY
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Some happy homes feature large families with father, mother, brothers, and sisters living together in a spirit of love. Others consist of a single parent with one or two children, while other homes have but one occupant.

Hallmarks of a Happy Home



BY PRESIDENT
THOMAS S. MONSON
First Counselor in the First Presidency

“Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God.”¹

This description of such a universal goal was provided by the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was relevant then. It is relevant now. With such a clear road map to follow, why then are there so many unhappy people? Frequently, frowns outnumber smiles and despair dampens joy. We live so far below the level of our divine possibilities. Some become confused by materialism, entangled by sin, and lost among the passing parade of humanity. Others cry out in the words of the convert of Philip of old: “How can I [find my way], except some man should guide me?”²

Happiness does not consist of a glut of luxury, the world’s idea of a “good time.” Nor must we search for it in faraway places with strange-sounding names. Happiness is found at home.

All of us remember the home of our childhood. Interestingly, our thoughts do not dwell on whether the house was large or small, the neighborhood fashionable or downtrodden. Rather, we delight in the experiences we shared as a family. The home is the laboratory of our lives, and what we learn there largely determines what we do when we leave there.

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, former prime minister of

Great Britain, expressed the profound philosophy: “The family is the building block of society. It is a nursery, a school, a hospital, a leisure center, a place of refuge and a place of rest. It encompasses the whole of the society. It fashions our beliefs; it is the preparation for the rest of our life.”³

“Home is where the heart is.” It *does* take “a heap o’ livin’” to make a house a home.⁴ “Home! Home! sweet, sweet home! . . . Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home.”⁵ We turn from the reverie of such pleasant recollections. We contemplate parents gone, family grown, childhood vanished. Slowly but surely we face the truth that we are responsible for the home we build. We must build wisely, for eternity is not a short voyage. There will be calm and wind, sunlight and shadows, joy and sorrow. But if we really try, our home can be a bit of heaven here on earth. The thoughts we think, the deeds we do, the lives we live influence not only the success of our earthly journey; they mark the way to our eternal goals.

In 1995 the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles issued a proclamation to the world concerning the family. This proclamation states, in part: “Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”⁶

Happy homes come in a variety of appearances. Some feature large families with father, mother, brothers, and sisters living together in a spirit of love.

Others consist of a single parent with one or two children, while other homes have but one occupant. There are, however, identifying features which are to be found in a happy home, whatever the number or description of its family members. I refer to these as "Hallmarks of a Happy Home." They consist of:

1. A pattern of prayer.
2. A library of learning.
3. A legacy of love.
4. A treasury of testimony.

A PATTERN OF PRAYER

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed."⁷ So universal is its application, so beneficial its result, that prayer qualifies as the number-one hallmark of a happy home. As parents listen to the prayer of a child, they too draw close to God. These little ones, who so recently have been with their Heavenly Father, have no inhibitions in expressing to Him their feelings, their wishes, their thanks.

Family prayer is the greatest deterrent to sin, and hence the most beneficent provider of joy and happiness. The old saying is yet true: "The family that prays together stays together."

Our prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley, has stated: "Fortunate, indeed, are the boys and girls, including those in their teens, in whose homes there is the practice of morning and evening family prayer."⁸

Will you join me as we look in on a typical Latter-day Saint family offering prayers unto God. Father, mother, and each of the children kneel, bow their heads, and close their eyes. A sweet spirit of love, unity, and peace fills the home. As father hears his tiny son pray that his dad will do the right things, do you think that such a father would find it difficult to honor the prayer of his precious son? As a teenage daughter hears her sweet mother plead that her daughter will be inspired in the choice of her companions, that she will prepare herself for a temple marriage, don't you believe that such a daughter will seek to honor this humble, pleading petition of her mother, whom she so dearly loves? When father, mother, and each of the children earnestly pray that the fine sons in the family will live worthy that they

may in due time receive a call to serve as ambassadors of the Lord in the mission fields of the Church, don't we begin to see how such sons grow to young manhood with an overwhelming desire to serve as missionaries?

As we offer our family prayers and our personal prayers, let us do so with faith and trust in Him. If any of us has been slow to hearken to the counsel to pray always, there is no finer hour to begin than now. Those who feel that prayer might denote a physical weakness should remember that a man never stands taller than when he is upon his knees.

My wife, Frances, and I have been married 53 years. Our marriage took place in the Salt Lake Temple. He who performed the ceremony, Benjamin Bowring, counseled us: "May I offer you newlyweds a formula which will ensure that any disagreement you may have will last no longer than one day? Every night kneel by the side of your bed. One night, Brother Monson, you offer the prayer, aloud, on bended knee. The next night you, Sister Monson, offer the prayer, aloud, on bended knee. I can then assure you that any misunderstanding that develops during the day will vanish as you pray. You simply can't pray together and retain any but the best of feelings toward one another."

When I was called to the Council of the Twelve Apostles 38 years ago, President David O. McKay, ninth President of the Church, asked me concerning my family. I related to him this guiding formula of prayer and bore witness to its validity. He sat back in his large leather chair and, with a smile, responded, "The same formula that

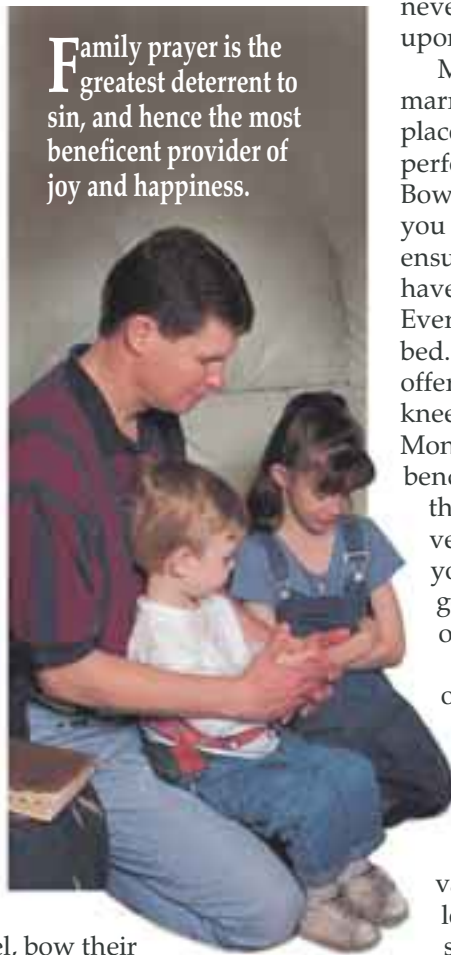
has worked for you has blessed the lives of my family during all these years of our marriage."

Prayer is the passport to spiritual power.

A LIBRARY OF LEARNING

A second hallmark of a happy home is discovered when home is a library of learning. Whether we are preparing to establish our own family or simply considering how to bring heaven closer to our present home, we can learn from the Lord. He is the master architect. He has taught us how we must build.

When Jesus walked the dusty pathways of towns



Family prayer is the greatest deterrent to sin, and hence the most beneficent provider of joy and happiness.



An essential part of our learning library will be good books. The standard works offer the library of learning to us and to our children.

and villages that we now reverently call the Holy Land and taught His disciples by beautiful Galilee, He often spoke in parables, in language the people understood best. Frequently He referred to home building in relationship to the lives of those who listened.

He declared, “Every . . . house divided against itself shall not stand.”⁹ Later He cautioned, “Behold, mine house is a house of order . . . and not a house of confusion.”¹⁰

In a revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith at Kirtland, Ohio, December 27, 1832, the Master counseled, “Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God.”¹¹

Where could any of us locate a more suitable blueprint whereby we could wisely and properly build? Such a house would meet the building code outlined in Matthew, even a house built “upon a rock,”¹² a house capable of withstanding the rains of adversity, the floods of opposition, and the winds of doubt everywhere present in our challenging world.

Some might question, “But that revelation was to provide guidance for the construction of a temple. Is it relevant today?”

I would respond: “Did not the Apostle Paul declare, ‘Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,

and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?’”¹³

Let the Lord be our Guide for the family—even the home—we build.

An essential part of our learning library will be good books.

*Books are keys to wisdom’s treasure;
Books are gates to lands of pleasure;
Books are paths that upward lead;
Books are friends. Come, let us read.*¹⁴

Reading is one of the true pleasures of life. In our age of mass culture, when so much that we encounter is abridged, adapted, adulterated, shredded, and boiled down, it is mind-easing and mind-inspiring to sit down privately with a congenial book.

Young children also enjoy books and love to have their parents read to them.

The Lord counseled, “Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.”¹⁵

The standard works offer the library of learning to us and to our children.

Several years ago we took our grandchildren on an escorted tour of the Church printing facilities. There, all of us saw the missionary edition of the Book of Mormon coming off the delivery line—printed, bound, and trimmed, ready for reading. I told the grandchildren, “The operator says that you can remove one copy of the Book of Mormon to be your very own. You select the

As parents, we should remember that our lives may be the book from the family library which the children most treasure. Are our examples worthy of emulation?



copy, and it will then be yours.”

Each removed one finished copy and expressed his or her love for the Book of Mormon.

I really don't remember other events of that day, but I shall never forget the honest expressions of love for the Book of Mormon—expressions which came from the hearts of those children.

As parents, we should remember that our lives may be the book from the family library which the children most treasure. Are our examples worthy of emulation? Do we live in such a way that a son or a daughter may say, “I want to follow my dad,” or “I want to be like my mother”? Unlike the book on the library shelf, the covers of which shield the contents, our lives cannot be closed. Parents, we truly are an open book.

A LEGACY OF LOVE

A third hallmark of a happy home is a legacy of love.

As a small boy, I enjoyed visiting the home of my grandmother on Bueno Avenue in Salt Lake City. Grandmother was always so happy to see us and to draw us close to her. Seated on her lap, we listened as she read to us.

Her youngest son, my Uncle Ray, and his wife occupied that same home after my grandmother passed away. On a visit to see my Uncle Ray last year, just before he passed away, I noticed that the fireplug on the

curb seemed small compared to its size when I climbed its lofty heights those long years ago. The friendly porch was the same; the quiet, peaceful atmosphere not altered. Hanging on the kitchen wall was a framed expression which my aunt had embroidered many years ago. It carried a world of practical application: “Choose your love; love your choice.” Very often this will take compromise, forgiveness, perhaps apology. We must ever be committed to the success of our marriage.

Seemingly little lessons of love are observed by children as they silently absorb the examples of their parents. My own father, a printer, worked long and hard practically every day of his life. I'm certain that on the Sabbath he would have enjoyed just being at home. Rather, he visited elderly family members and brought cheer into their lives.

One was his uncle, who was crippled by arthritis so severe that he could not walk or care for himself. On a Sunday afternoon Dad would say to me, “Come along, Tommy; let's take Uncle Elias for a short drive.” Boarding the old 1928 Oldsmobile, we would proceed to Eighth West, where, at the home of Uncle Elias, I would wait in the car while Dad went inside. Soon he would emerge from the house, carrying in his arms like a china doll his crippled uncle. I then would open the door and watch how tenderly and with such affection my father would place Uncle Elias in the front seat so he would have a fine view while I occupied the rear seat.

The drive was brief and the conversation limited, but oh, what a legacy of love! Father never read to me from the Bible about the good Samaritan. Rather, he took me with him and Uncle Elias in that old 1928 Oldsmobile along the road to Jericho.

When our homes carry the legacy of love, we will not receive Jacob's chastisement as recorded in the Book of Mormon: "Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you."¹⁶

May our homes reflect a legacy of love.

A TREASURY OF TESTIMONY

A fourth hallmark of a happy home is a treasury of testimony. "The first and foremost opportunity for teaching in the Church lies in the home,"¹⁷ observed President David O. McKay. "A true Mormon home is one in which if Christ should chance to enter, he would be pleased to linger and to rest."¹⁸

What are we doing to ensure that our homes meet this description? It isn't enough for parents alone to have strong testimonies. Children can ride only so long on the coattails of a parent's conviction.

A love for the Savior, a reverence for His name, and genuine respect one for another will provide a fertile seedbed for a testimony to grow.

Learning the gospel, bearing a testimony, leading a family are rarely if ever simple processes. Life's journey is characterized by bumps in the road, swells in the sea—even the turbulence of our times.

Some years ago, while visiting the members and missionaries in Australia, I witnessed a sublime example depicting how a treasury of testimony can bless and sanctify a home. The mission president, Horace D. Ensign, and I were traveling the long distance from Sydney to Darwin, where I was to break ground for our first chapel in that city. En route we had a scheduled stop at a mining community named Mount Isa. As we entered the small airport at Mount Isa, a woman and her two children approached. She said, "I am Judith Louden, a member of the Church, and these are my two children. We thought you might be on

this flight, so we have come to visit with you during your brief stopover." She explained that her husband was not a member of the Church and that she and the children were indeed the only members in the entire area. We shared lessons and bore testimony.

Time passed. As we prepared to reboard, Sister Louden looked so forlorn, so alone. She pleaded, "You can't go yet; I have so missed the Church." Suddenly the loudspeaker announced a 30-minute mechanical delay of our flight. Sister Louden whispered, "My prayer has just been answered." She then asked how she might influence her husband to show an interest in the gospel. We counseled her to include

him in their home Primary lesson each week and be to him a living testimony of the gospel. I mentioned we would send to her a subscription to the *Children's Friend* and additional helps for her family teaching. We urged that she never give up on her husband.

We departed Mount Isa, a city to which I have never returned. I shall, however, always hold dear in memory that sweet mother and those precious children extending a tear-filled expression and a fond wave of gratitude and good-bye.

Several years later, while speaking at a priesthood leadership meeting in Brisbane, Australia, I emphasized the significance of gospel scholarship in the home and the importance of living the gospel and being examples of the truth. I

shared with the men assembled the account of Sister Louden and the impact her faith and determination had made on me. As I concluded, I said, "I suppose I'll never know if Sister Louden's husband ever joined the Church, but he couldn't have found a better model to follow."

One of the leaders raised his hand, then stood and declared, "Brother Monson, I am Richard Louden. The woman of whom you speak is my wife. The children [his voice quavered] are our children. We are a forever family now, thanks in part to the persistence and the patience of my dear wife. She did it all." Not a word was spoken. The silence was broken only by sniffles and marked by many tears.

My brothers and sisters, let us determine, whatever our circumstance, to make of our houses happy homes.

Seemingly little lessons of love are observed by children as they silently absorb the examples of their parents.



Happiness does not consist of a glut of luxury, the world's idea of a "good time." Nor must we search for it in faraway places with strange-sounding names. Happiness is found at home.



PHOTO © DIGITAL STOCK

Let us open wide the windows of our hearts, that each family member may feel welcome and "at home." Let us open also the doors of our very souls, that the dear Christ may enter. Remember His promise: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him."¹⁹

How welcome He will feel, how joyful will be our lives, when the "Hallmarks of a Happy Home" greet Him, even:

- A pattern of prayer,
- A library of learning,
- A legacy of love,
- A treasury of testimony.

May our loving Heavenly Father bless all of us in our quest for such happy homes and forever families. □

Gospel topics: family, happiness, prayer, learning, love, testimony

NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 255–56.
2. Acts 8:31.
3. Nicholas Wood, "Thatcher Champions the Family," *London Times*, 26 May 1988.
4. Edgar A. Guest, "Home," in *The Family Book of Best Loved Poems*, ed. David L. George (1952), 151–52.
5. John Howard Payne, "Mid Pleasures and Palaces," *Hymns* (1948), no. 107.
6. *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
7. James Montgomery, "Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere Desire," *Hymns* (1985), no. 145.
8. "The Environment of Our Homes," *Ensign*, June 1985, 6.
9. Matt. 12:25.
10. D&C 132:8.
11. D&C 88:119.
12. Matt. 7:25.
13. 1 Cor. 3:16.
14. Emilie Poulsson.

15. D&C 88:118.
16. Jacob 2:35.
17. *Priesthood Home Teaching Handbook*, rev. ed. (1967), ii–ii.
18. In Conference Report, Oct. 1947, 120; or *Gospel Ideals* (1953), 169.
19. Rev. 3:20.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

Some Points of Emphasis

You may wish to make these points in your discussions:

1. The hallmarks for a happy home apply to all families, large and small, and those with but one occupant.
2. Prayer is the passport to spiritual power.
3. The standard works of the Church are the "best books" from which to seek learning.
4. Caring for family members is a legacy we should all strive to achieve.
5. A love of the Savior, a reverence for His name, and a genuine respect for one another provide a fertile seedbed for a testimony to grow in the home.

Discussion Helps

1. Are there some scriptures, quotations, or stories in this article that the family might read aloud and discuss?
2. Relate your feelings about the importance of living in a happy home.
3. Would this discussion be better after a previsit chat with the head of the household? Is there a message from the bishop or quorum leaders?

STRENGTHENING THE HOME



JOHN TAYLOR
(1808–1887)
Third President of the Church

“Do you have prayers in your family? . . .

And when you do, do you go through the operation like the grinding of a piece of machinery, or do you bow in meekness and with a sincere desire to seek the blessing of God upon you and your household? That is the way that we ought to do, and cultivate a spirit of devotion and trust in God, dedicating ourselves to him, and seeking his blessings” (*The Gospel Kingdom*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1987], 284).



JOSEPH F. SMITH
(1838–1918)
Sixth President of the Church

“What then is an ideal home—a model

home such as it should be the ambition of the Latter-day Saints to build? . . . It is one in which all worldly considerations are secondary. One in which the father is devoted to the family with which God has blessed him, counting them of first importance; and in which they, in turn, permit him to live in their hearts. One in which there is confidence, union, love, sacred devotion, between father and mother, and children and parents. One in which the mother takes every

pleasure in her children supported by the father—all being moral, pure, God-fearing” (“The Ideal Home,” *Improvement Era*, Mar. 1905, 387).



HEBER J. GRANT
(1856–1945)
Seventh President of the Church

“If there is any one thing that will bring peace and

contentment into the human heart, and into the family, it is to live within our means, and if there is any one thing that is grinding, and discouraging and disheartening it is to have debts and obligations that one cannot meet” (*Relief Society Magazine*, May 1932, 302).



GEORGE ALBERT SMITH
(1870–1951)
Eighth President of the Church

“We cannot force people into doing things, but we

may love them into doing what is right, and into righteousness” (quoted by Elder Arwell L. Pierce in Conference Report, Apr. 1951, 114).



SPENCER W. KIMBALL
(1895–1985)
Twelfth President of the Church

“An evening home with the family or an evening out to

some place of interest with your family only partly solves the need of the home evening. Basically

important is the teaching of the children the way of life that is vitally important. Merely going to a show or a party together, or fishing, only half satisfies the real need, but to stay home and teach the children the gospel, the scriptures, and love for each other and love for their parents is most important” (“The Foundations of Righteousness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 4).

“Concerning the governing of our families, we have been correctly taught that the family council is the most basic council of the Church. Under the direction of the father and mother, who should also counsel together, family councils may discuss family matters, discuss family finances, make plans, and support and strengthen family members” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 343–44).



EZRA TAFT BENSON
(1899–1994)
Thirteenth President of the Church

“Family study of the scriptures should be the practice

in our homes each Sabbath day.

“Daily devotionals are also a commendable practice, where scripture reading, singing of hymns, and family prayer are a part of our daily routine” (“Fundamentals of Enduring Family Relationships,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 60). □

TESTIFYING OF THE *Great and Glorious* ATONEMENT

*By personally understanding and believing in the Atonement,
you and I can teach and testify of it with greater gratitude,
greater love, and greater power.*



BY ELDER NEAL A. MAXWELL
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The very brevity of the missionary discussions reminds us of what a harvest basket the Restoration really is. Jesus asks us, when we give, to give in “good measure,” using the metaphor of a harvest basket which is pressed down, shaken together, and running over (see Luke 6:38). And out of that marvelous harvest basket we are to teach but a few key truths and concepts.

This reality is a powerful reminder about the need for the Spirit to impel the message we give into the hearts and minds of people—because the great things of eternity are being conveyed in some very brief teaching moments. Hence the need for the Spirit to accompany what we say.

When we share the gospel as members or full-time missionaries, our friends and investigators need to feel our convictions and testimonies about the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Yes, we are teaching a deep concept, but we should also be sharing a deep conviction about that powerful doctrine.

The most important thing we can do in preparing individuals to receive the full blessings of the Atonement is to understand it and to believe in it ourselves. By understanding and believing in the Atonement personally, you and I can teach and

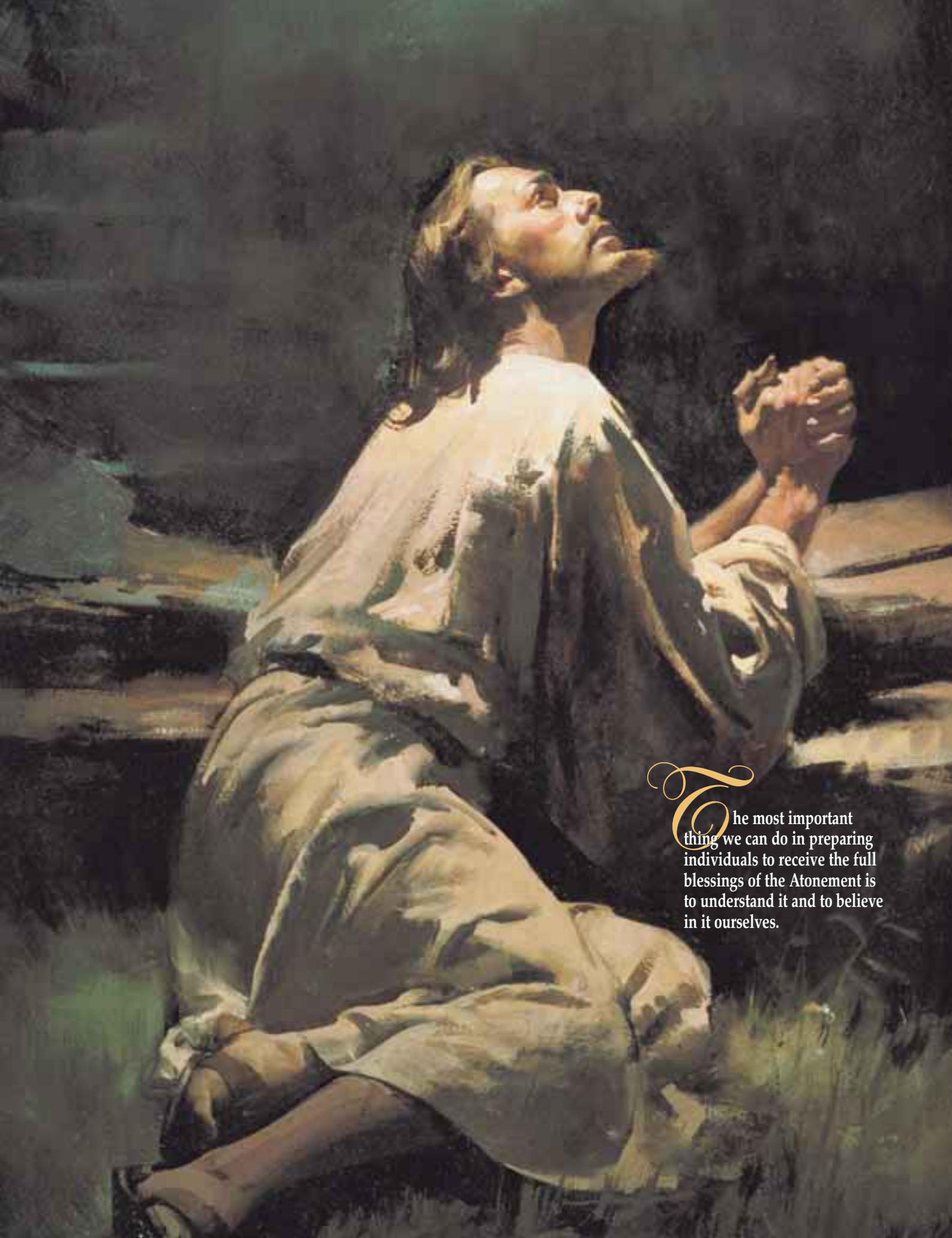
testify of the Atonement with greater gratitude, greater love, and greater power.

REPENTANCE MADE POSSIBLE

Jesus’ glorious Atonement is the central act in all of human history! It provides the universal Resurrection; it makes our personal repentance and forgiveness possible. Since all of us “have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23), the need for repentance is universal. And mercifully, Christ’s Atonement fits sins of all sizes—whether the smaller sins of omission or major transgressions. Hence, when we turn away from our sins, the required arc of that turning varies from person to person, but it is necessary for all.

The Greek word of which *repentance* is the English translation “denotes a change of mind, i.e., a fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world” (Bible Dictionary, “Repentance,” 760). This means we are to change our thoughts and then behavior until we are turned away from our sins and are aligned with God’s commandments. This change of mind means that we are actually progressing toward what Paul called “the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16). Repentance is thus a continuing process in which each of us needs to draw on the Atonement for real relief, real forgiveness, and real progress.

Christ gave us freely an enormous and unconditional gift: the universal Resurrection. However, Christ’s



The most important thing we can do in preparing individuals to receive the full blessings of the Atonement is to understand it and to believe in it ourselves.

proffer of the further gift of eternal life is conditional. As our Lawgiver, He sets the terms for receiving this great gift (see 3 Ne. 11:31–41; 15:9–10; 27:13–21). Therefore, our individual progress toward eternal life requires us to be willing to submit to Christ (see Mosiah 3:19). Then, if we are truly faithful and endure to the end, our wills can finally be swallowed up in the will of the Father (see Mosiah 15:7; 3 Ne. 11:11).

However, to begin such a significant transformation, we must first “give away all [our] sins” (Alma 22:18), and who else will take them anyway except Jesus? (see Alma 36:18–20).

No wonder there is such an urgency underlying our need to share the gospel! President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) declared:

“A great indicator of one’s personal conversion is the desire to share the gospel with others. For this reason the Lord gave an obligation to every member of the Church to be a missionary.

“Those of us who have partaken of the Atonement are under obligation to bear faithful testimony of our Lord and Savior. For he has said, ‘I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain steadfast in your minds in solemnity and the spirit of prayer, in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you’” (D&C 84:61) (“The Atonement and Missionary Work,” seminar for new mission presidents, 21 June 1994, 2).

Thus, all of us are to “remain steadfast . . . in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto [us]” (D&C 84:61). The forgiveness we need is correlated with our steadfastness in the work of the Lord.

BAPTISM AND THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST

Real repentance, therefore, requires the emancipating effects of baptism; it washes us clean. Think about it: how merciful when our yesterdays no longer hold our tomorrows hostage!

After the cleansing and emancipating effects of



*A*fter the cleansing and emancipating effects of baptism, we experience further fortifying effects by receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

baptism, we experience further fortifying effects by receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. We desperately need the Holy Ghost to help us choose the right. He will also help by preaching to us necessary sermonettes from the pulpit of memory. He will also testify to us of the truths of the gospel.

Given where we must go, we need the Holy Ghost as a constant companion, not just as an occasional influence.

We can also be further fortified after baptism by regularly partaking of the sacrament as we reflect on the Atonement and renew our covenants, including those



made at the time of baptism. This process of emancipation and fortification is made possible by applying Jesus’ Atonement to ourselves and to those we teach. We should regularly apply the Atonement for self-improvement, while enduring to the end. If we choose the course of steady improvement, which is clearly the course of discipleship, we will become more righteous and can move from what may be initially a mere acknowledgment of Jesus on to admiration of Jesus, then on to adoration of Jesus, and finally to emulation of Jesus. In that process of striving to become more like Him through steady improvement, we must be in the posture of repentance, even if no major transgression is involved.

DEVELOPING THE ATTRIBUTES OF CHRIST

As we turn from transgression and strive to become more loving, more meek, more patient, and more submissive, the remaining sins, for most of us, are the less visible sins of omission. However, these must also be

given away. Jesus has designated the attributes in that process for which we are to seek, such as faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, and patience. He further denotes the attributes of faith, hope, and charity, and having an eye single to the glory of God, and tells us that these qualify us for doing the Lord's work (see D&C 4:5-7; 2 Pet. 1:4-8). No wonder we are admonished to ask, seek, and knock in order to receive these gifts of the Spirit so that we can be much more effective in doing this grand work of the Lord. In this process of discipleship, we must never forget that the Atonement continues to be absolutely vital for all of us!

Jesus instructs us, for instance, that we are to come unto Him (see Alma 5:34; Matt. 11:28-30). However, as you have noticed, when we strive to come unto Him, we come to see how He will then make our weaknesses better known to us, sometimes painfully, in order to help us to progress. Christ even promises us that He will make some weaknesses into strengths (see Ether 12:27).

As to the location, nation, time, and circumstances in which our personal discipleship is placed, we should, as the scriptures say, be content with the things allotted to us (see Alma 29:3, 6). Yet there will be an accompanying divine discontent in order to spur us on as we strive to become more like Jesus.

Whether the needed attribute is good cheer, patience, submissiveness, meekness, or love, this process requires the steady help of the Holy Ghost. He will prompt us to repent further, such as when we

are too proud, too impatient, or less loving than we should be, including in marriages, missionary companionships, and other relationships. However, since such progress is not cost-free, we also need the Holy Ghost to comfort us as we pay the price.

Yes, it is by means of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, mercifully, that we can be forgiven. But it is through the Holy Ghost that we can know that we have been forgiven—a tremendously important knowledge for us to achieve. So we need not despair nor live a life in which we “droop in sin” (2 Ne. 4:28). Indeed, we can “press forward with a . . . brightness of hope” (2 Ne. 31:20).

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING AND THE RESURRECTION OF MANKIND

If we need any additional reminders as to the importance of our further developing the virtues of Christ, we should contemplate His glorious Second Coming. Then, among other things, the stars will fall dramatically from their places in heaven. Yet there will be no mortal comments about that, for the mortal explanations and exclamations will be about Jesus and will be words of praise for two of His many attributes: His goodness and His loving-kindness (see D&C 133:52). Remember, not only are we to have faith in Christ, but we are to strive to become more like Him in our goodness and loving-kindness (see 3 Ne. 27:27).

At that Second Coming, Jesus will not mention His

*P*resident Howard W. Hunter declared, “A great indicator of one’s personal conversion is the desire to share the gospel with others.”



having endured the crown of thorns, the awful scourging, the crucifixion, the vinegar and gall. He will, however, cite His awful aloneness: “And his voice shall be heard: I have trodden the wine-press alone, . . . and none were with me” (D&C 133:50; see also Isa. 63:3).

No wonder the Atonement lies at the very heart of Christ’s gospel. In fact, the Restoration’s central messages are really about Jesus and the Resurrection, and they fulfill this prophecy given to Enoch anciently:

“And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth.” Why? “To bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men” (Moses 7:62). Nothing is more central. Yes, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Jesus and His Atonement represent the most profound expression of Heavenly Father’s love for His children. How important the free gift of the Resurrection is for all mankind, and the proffer of the greatest gift which even God can give—eternal life for those willing to so live and to so qualify (see D&C 6:13; 14:7).

ADVERSITY

In this process of working out our salvation, adversity will provide part of the perspiration. Again and again for you and me, experience upon experience, we will have cause to ponder upon and rejoice in the great Atonement. For me, several scriptures have proved to be especially relevant and reassuring. When read aloud with and by some who suffer, these verses have been far better than anything I could say, especially to those valiant souls who have reached that point where they are sick of being sick.

First, consider what a perplexed but remarkable Nephi said: “I know that [God] loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things” (1 Ne. 11:17). We really do not need to know the meaning of all things if we know God loves us!

Likewise, our submissiveness to Him needs to grow, as in the words of King Benjamin, in order to become “a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and [become] as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father” (Mosiah 3:19).

King Benjamin’s use of the word *inflict* suggests to us customized challenges and tutoring which will require from us special submissiveness.

Similarly, our knowing of Jesus’ perfect empathy for us individually will help us greatly to endure our pains of various kinds. Christ “shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

“And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:11–12).

Jesus fully understands! His empathy is perfect! He knows how to help us!

BLESSINGS OF THE ATONEMENT

In summation, the Atonement of Jesus Christ blesses us in so many ways. Through it and it alone, a remission of our sins, bringing the needed emancipation discussed earlier, can occur.

Likewise, the Atonement makes significant personal progress possible by what the Book of Mormon calls “faith unto repentance” in Jesus, in the Atonement, and in the Father’s plan of salvation (see Alma 34:15–17). Otherwise, individuals who do not have faith unto repentance will wrongly reason, “Why

King Benjamin’s use of the word *inflict* suggests to us customized challenges and tutoring which will require from us special submissiveness.



PHOTO BY MATT REBER

bother to repent?” Little wonder the scriptures say that human “despair cometh because of iniquity” (Moro. 10:22). The Atonement, instead, can bring us a “brightness of hope” even amid our losses, crosses, sorrows, and disappointments (2 Ne. 31:20).

The spiritual submissiveness which is central to the blessings of the Atonement was well exemplified by Melissa Howes as she led her family in prayer a short while before her father died of cancer. Melissa was only 9 and her father 43. Consider unselfish Melissa Howes’s pleading, in her own words as reported to me by her mother: “Heavenly Father, bless my daddy, and if you need to take him and need him more than us, you can have him. We want him, but Thy will be done. And please help us not to be mad at you” (letter from Christie Howes, 25 Feb. 1998).

How many individuals, bereft of such an understanding of the plan of salvation, are angry with God instead of being grateful to Him and to Jesus for the glorious Atonement?

ur gratitude for Christ and His Atonement will grow with the years and the decades. It will never cease growing.

Not only is the Atonement the grand expression of Heavenly Father and Jesus' love for us, but through it we can come to know of Their personal love for us.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

We must never underestimate the power of the Spirit to stir people's souls beyond any teaching capacity or skills we may have. As you know, such occurred with Alma when he was in his extremity. And what did he remember? He said he remembered the words of his father about the Atonement of Jesus and said, "My mind caught hold upon this thought" (see Alma 36:17-18).

The Spirit can help those to whom you testify to likewise catch hold of your words in a way that their minds and hearts will grasp them, especially when those words concern the deep doctrines of the kingdom, like the Atonement.

In another inspirational moment that reflects cumulative teaching, mothers of the Nephite stripling warriors were aware that their sons had been given special promises before they went off to war. They were not as spiritually mature as their mothers, yet these dramatic promises were such that they were sustained by them. And we read that they did "not doubt [their] mothers knew it" (Alma 56:48).

Some of those whom you teach, under the direction of the Spirit and in like manner, will feel the power of your words about the Atonement and the restored gospel, and they will not doubt that you know it! These individuals are, to use Alma's phrase, "in a preparation to hear the word" (Alma 32:6).

THE GLORIOUS ATONEMENT

I give you my testimony of the glory and the reality of the great and glorious Atonement. I praise Jesus for enduring what He endured and for descending below all things in order to comprehend all things. I praise the Father for all that He experienced as He watched His Firstborn, His Beloved, and His Only Begotten, with whom He was well pleased, suffer all that Jesus suffered. I praise the Father for that divine empathy and



whatever He endured and experienced in that moment.

I testify that Jesus' grip on Himself in that atoning axis between Gethsemane and Calvary was really mankind's grip on immortality. Jesus finished His preparations, as He said, unto the children of men (see D&C 19:19). Now it remains for us as mortals to claim the blessings of the great Atonement. Our gratitude for Christ and His Atonement will grow with the years and the decades. It will never cease growing. And the scriptures foretell that we will praise Him forever and ever (see D&C 133:52).

I so praise Him for the glorious and great Atonement and ask Him to bless all of us that we personally will claim, and in our ministries will help people claim, the blessings of that great Atonement, won at so great a cost. Indeed, "there was no other good enough to pay the price" ("There Is a Green Hill Far Away," *Hymns*, no. 194). □

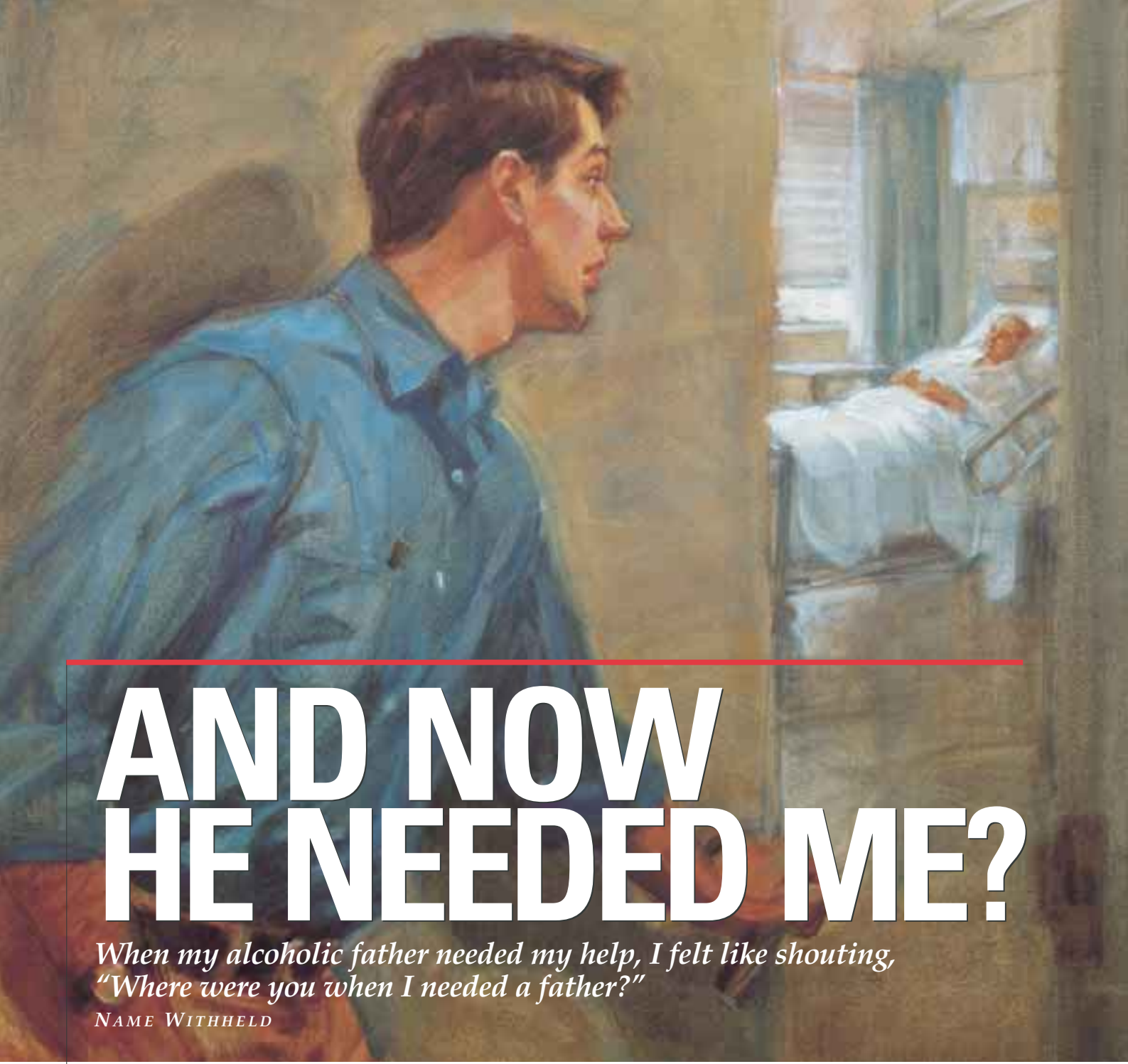
From a Church satellite broadcast on conversion and retention given at the Provo Missionary Training Center on 29 August 1999.

Gospel topics: Atonement, Resurrection, Second Coming, baptism, repentance

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Most Ensign articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. Why is it important that we have a personal testimony of the Atonement before we teach it to others?
2. Why must we continually be "in the posture of repentance"?
3. When we experience adversity, how can we draw upon the Atonement for strength?
4. How does the Atonement make our progress possible?



AND NOW HE NEEDED ME?

When my alcoholic father needed my help, I felt like shouting, "Where were you when I needed a father?"

NAME WITHHELD

Tammy* and I were newlyweds and moving into our first apartment. As I was unpacking books one afternoon, a picture of me at age nine fell from my copy of *Huckleberry Finn*. I paused, then picked it up and sat on the floor in the corner of the room looking at it. My father had taken this picture on the Fourth of July at home in Kansas City. I was dressed in a white sailor outfit and was leaning against an oak tree. I could still see the pain in my young face—bitter pain I carried throughout my childhood.

** Names have been changed.*

I remember clearly the day *it* happened. I had been over at my best friend John's* house. We were watching television when John casually said, "Hey, my mom told me that your parents are getting a divorce." My mind went numb. I just kept my eyes on the television set, but I didn't really see it. Another image filled my mind—my father's stern scowl directed toward my mother. They pushed, shoved, and threatened each other. Their faces were red and filled with anger as they hurled ugly insults with all their might. I saw myself curled up in a dark corner of the living room—too afraid to move. I covered my ears with my hands and

PEACE THROUGH FORGIVENESS



"Only the life, teachings, and particularly the atonement of Jesus Christ

can release us from this otherwise impossible predicament. Each of us has made mistakes, large or small, which if unresolved will keep us from the presence of God. For this reason, the atonement of Jesus Christ is the single most significant event that ever has or ever will occur. This selfless act of infinite consequence, performed by a single glorified personage, has eternal impact in the life of every son and daughter of our Father in Heaven—without exception."

Elder Richard G. Scott, "Finding Forgiveness," *Ensign*, May 1995, 75.

tried to concentrate on the ant that was crawling on the plant in front of me—anything to ignore those harsh words. I screamed in my mind, "Stop! Stop! Stop! Please stop!"

The phone at John's house rang and brought me back to the present. I ran home. But I decided that day that if my parents did not need each other, then I certainly did not need them. Many times after that I stood looking out my bedroom window struggling through my tears with clenched fists in a vain attempt to understand my life.

I forgave my mom. But my dad moved to Phoenix, and for a decade I kept my distance from him—both emotionally and physically.

At 18, I went to Arizona State University and lived just five miles away from my dad. I visited him occasionally, but he was usually drunk, and the sound of the carbonated spray from a just-opened beer can was never far away.

At 21, I joined the Church while still at Arizona State. For the first time in my life I knew there was a God who cared for me and was concerned about the kind of person I was. I felt as if He were smiling on me.

Two years later, while I was home in Kansas for Christmas vacation, my dad was rushed to the hospital by ambulance with a blood-alcohol level of 4 percent. He had almost drunk himself to death. He had to stay in the hospital until he could go through therapy with at least one family member. I was the only one in the family who could help, and deep inside I knew it was how it should be anyway—I was the eldest son. So I left Kansas City in the middle of my vacation and went to Phoenix to join him in therapy.

When I arrived, a nurse told me that my father was in room 16, all the way at the end of the hall. I had not seen my father in more than a year. I stepped into the room, not knowing whether to give him a hug or shake his hand. We embraced, but I felt no emotion. I should have been happy, but our estrangement was obvious even in that hug. I had never been a very good actor. In reality, I felt sorry for us because although we were father and son we were really just acquaintances.

Nevertheless I visited the hospital daily. After all, for the first time in my life, my father needed me. Everyone commented on what a fine son my father had raised. When I heard them, I felt angry inside and

wanted to shout, "He did not raise me—I raised myself!" I remembered all those times I needed him and he wasn't there. I felt like climbing up on the roof of the hospital, thrusting my arms skyward, and shouting, "Where were you? Where were you? Where were you when I needed a father?" But, as always, I kept on smiling, hoping to drown out the little boy inside who wept because he never had a chance to come out and play with his dad.

Yet things changed as we went through therapy together. I got to know him as a person, a sober person. I discovered things we had in common. I actually started to like him. The more I got to know him, the more I prayed I could understand what went wrong between him and my mother. By the time we were finished with therapy, I had let go of a lot of my bitterness.

When Tammy and I were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple, my dad was still sober and came and waited for us on the temple grounds. As Tammy and I entered the celestial room, we held hands and sat down close to each other.

I leaned my head back and looked at the intricate design of the ceiling high overhead. I thought about the faithful pioneers who had painstakingly carved and painted the labyrinth of surfaces. They must have worked as if Jesus Christ, the Master Builder Himself, were watching over their shoulders checking on the craftsmanship. I thought about my dad waiting outside for us. Christ, the Master Builder, had also watched over us as we had rebuilt our relationship. Gone was the sting of feeling abandoned, replaced by the soothing balm of the Atonement and the peace that forgiveness brings. I knew my dad and I would continue to grow together in our love and friendship.

So as I sat on the floor of our apartment as a newlywed, I slipped the picture back between the pages of *Huckleberry Finn*. I wiped tears from my eyes, grateful that at last, my father was there when I needed him. □

Gospel topics: forgiveness, fatherhood, divorce, repentance

More on this topic: See Boyd K. Packer, "The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 20; Ronald E. Poelman, "Divine Forgiveness," *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 85; Spencer W. Kimball, *Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969).

Visit www.lds.org or see Church magazines on CD.

NOT for the Body

Each day brings more and more evidence showing how important it is to live the Lord's law of health and how dangerous forbidden substances are to our bodies.

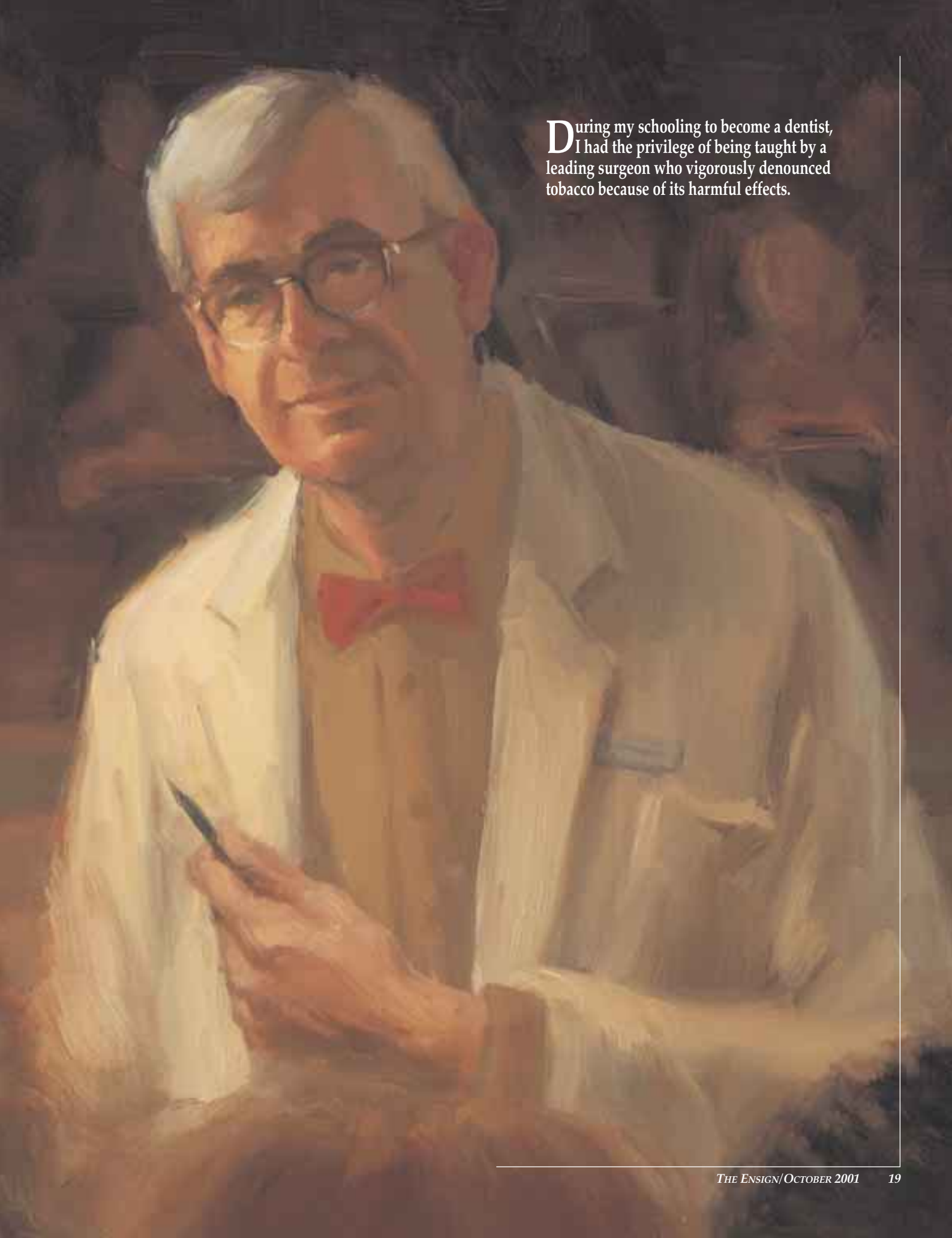


BY ELDER HAROLD G. HILLAM
Of the Seventy

Each day brings more and more evidence showing how important it is to live the Lord's law of health and how dangerous forbidden substances are to our bodies.

During my final two years of schooling to become a dentist, I had the privilege of being taught weekly by one of the world's foremost maxillary-facial surgeons. His personal preparation and training had been long and intense. After receiving his dental degree, he had received additional degrees in orthodontics, oral surgery, plastic surgery, and pathology. Because of his renowned ability, he was sought after by people from many parts of the world to repair mouths and faces following traumatic accidents or to remove destructive tumors that left faces deformed and in need of his talents at facial reconstruction.

We had weekly seminars with this noted surgeon. They were held in the medical theater, where the dental students could view a patient's particular disorder and see the results achieved following the surgical correction. In the sessions before the treatment, the clinical and laboratory findings were presented, and the possible cause or causative agents that might have contributed to the malady were discussed.



During my schooling to become a dentist, I had the privilege of being taught by a leading surgeon who vigorously denounced tobacco because of its harmful effects.

The don'ts in the Word of Wisdom (D&C 89) are clearly spelled out. But Church leaders and the scriptures, especially the Word of Wisdom, also talk about plenty of things you can do every day that will benefit your health.

"Were we more careful to obey the part of the Word of Wisdom that deals with the 'do's' it might be easier to obey the 'don'ts'" (John A. Widtsoe, in Conference Report, Apr. 1926, 110).

Do the Do's

Exercise: Spiritual well-being is vital, but how you feel physically is also significant. Are you getting enough physical activity every day? President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said, "Rest and physical exercise are essential, and a walk in the fresh air can refresh the spirit" ("Do Not Despair," *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 66).

Sleep: There is nothing in section 89 about how much rest we should have each night, but go back a couple of pages to Doctrine and Covenants 88:124: "Cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated."

Your body needs adequate rest. On the other hand, this doesn't mean you should sleep all day.

Food: Eating correctly is another way of taking care of your body. The scriptures tell us that all grains are good for us (see D&C 89:14) and that meat is "ordained for the use of man" but should be "used sparingly" (D&C 89:12).

Directions for happiness and health are continually given to us by a very kind Heavenly Father. By using our agency we can conscientiously follow that inspiration, and by so doing bless our lives daily. The world will eventually find these truths by its trial and error method, as I discovered as a young dental student. But the obedient believer will already be happily enjoying the blessings.

It was interesting how often the causative agent would be one of the harmful substances that the Lord had revealed to mankind through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The fact that the Lord had revealed the Word of Wisdom—with all its important counsel on the various substances that are beneficial, as well as those that are harmful to our bodies—long before that knowledge was taught by the medical community, has been a great testimony to me of the calling of Joseph Smith as the Lord's prophet of the Restoration.

During those lecture sessions, I could have closed my eyes and imagined that I was seated in one of our Church meetings being taught about the blessings of living the Word of Wisdom. At almost every session

this noted surgeon would vigorously denounce tobacco because of its harmful effects, and we witnessed it before our very eyes.

At that time evidence identifying smoking as a major cause of lung cancer was being documented. However, little was published about tobacco as a major cause of mouth and throat cancer. There in that theater as a dental student, I saw the devastating effects of cancer of the mouth and face, which were attributed not only to smoking but also to chewing tobacco. Keeping that powerful irritant in contact with the mouth tissue resulted many times in disfiguring types of facial tumors.

"And again, tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man" (D&C 89:8).

Alcohol was also condemned during those sessions as an irritant to the delicate tissues of the mouth and throat, causing other types of tumors.

"And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies" (D&C 89:7).

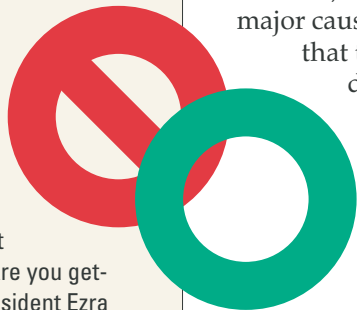
Tea and coffee were discussed, not only because of their adverse chemical effects on the body, but also because of the temperature of the drinks. The drinks were often taken so hot that, without realizing it, many individuals were drinking liquids close to the boiling temperature. Those detrimental effects were observed.

"And again, hot drinks are not for the body or belly" (D&C 89:9).

But why do these substances act as they do? Why does one person contract an infirmity, and another in the same situation and environment never have a problem?

Our renowned instructor explained that under normal conditions, the cells behave in a normal manner; however, certain factors can trigger the cells to go out of control. These cells then become fast-growing and destructive tumors that can disfigure and threaten life. The sensitivity level at which the cells respond to the triggering factor, or T-Factor as he called it, depends on the inherent nature of the individual. Some people are very sensitive, so just a small stimulus would cause the change, while other individuals appear to be more resistant. This inherent level at which the cells can be triggered to change could explain why some people live long and

I will ever be grateful for the wise counsel of a strong and inspired father when he taught, "If you always say no to the first temptation, you will not have to worry if you will be able to say no to the second one."



seemingly trouble free, while others are affected easily and early in life.

With this understanding, perhaps we might understand better the meaning of the words from the Word of Wisdom, “adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints” (D&C 89:3). For a person with a low level of resistance to a harmful substance, just one encounter may trigger unwanted and dangerous cellular changes.

It is interesting how far the medical community has come in vindicating the words of a prophet who revealed that great health law, the Word of Wisdom, when its principles were not very popular.

As a young dental student, I was extremely impressed with the knowledge of this outstanding maxillary-facial surgeon. He seemed to have great knowledge, and I was amazed with his skill. However, in reality, his knowledge was just a mite in comparison with the knowledge of the Great Physician—the one who healed the lepers, raised Lazarus from the dead, and made the blind to see.

The Word of Wisdom is from Him, and medical science is just barely catching up.

Now, each day brings more and more evidence showing how important it is to live the Lord’s law of health and how dangerous those forbidden substances are to our bodies. Public opinion has turned partly toward the truth. To be in good condition is popular. Millions of dollars are spent on exercise equipment and health clubs. To obey part of the Word of Wisdom is more acceptable today, but Satan always has a plan to replace one he loses—drugs, immorality, pornography, and the weakening of family bonds.

I will ever be grateful for the wise counsel of a strong and inspired father when he taught, “If you always say no to the first temptation, you will not have to worry if you will be able to say no to the second one.” It brought peace to know that when I had strength enough to say no to the first temptation, I did not have to worry about the second. I was in charge. □

Gospel topics: Word of Wisdom, health, obedience





Developing Character

Insights from
PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY
(1873–1970)



The following are some classic statements on the development of Christlike character by our ninth President of the Church.

TRUE GREATNESS

“The highest of all ideals are the teachings and particularly the life of Jesus of Nazareth, and that man is most truly great who is most Christlike. What you sincerely in your heart think of Christ will determine what you are, will largely determine what your acts will be. . . . By choosing him as our ideal, we create within ourselves a desire to be like him, to have fellowship with him” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1951, 93, 98).

“The true measure of a man is how he spends his time when he doesn’t have to do anything” (quoted by Robert L. Simpson, “Pollution of the Mind,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 113).

“AS A MAN THINKETH”

“No principle of life was more constantly emphasized by the Great Teacher than the necessity of right thinking. To Him, the man was not what he appeared to be outwardly, nor what he professed to be by his words: what the man *thought* determined in all cases what the man *was*.

No teacher emphasized more strongly than He the truth that ‘as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he’ [Prov. 23:7]. . . . Contentment, complacency, peace—all that makes life worth living—have their source in the mind of the individual. From the same source spring unrest, turbulence, misery—everything that leads to dissolution and death. . . . It is well for [every teacher and officer in the Church] to pause frequently and take stock of himself to ascertain ‘what he is thinking about when he doesn’t have to think,’ for ‘what he thinketh in his heart, so is he’” (“As a Man Thinketh . . .,” *Instructor*, Sept. 1958, 257–58).

“What a man continually thinks about determines his actions in times of opportunity and stress. A man’s reaction to his appetites and impulses when they are aroused gives the measure of that man’s character. In these reactions are revealed the man’s power to govern or his forced servility to yield” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1951, 8).

WE RADIATE WHAT WE ARE

“There is another responsibility correlated and even coexistent with . . . agency, which is too infrequently emphasized, and that is the effect not only of a person’s actions, but also of his thoughts. Man radiates what he is, and that radiation affects to a greater or less[er] degree every person who comes within that radiation” (“Free Agency . . . The Gift Divine,” *Improvement Era*, Feb. 1962, 87).

“Sickness may waste the body, but the true life is the spirit within, that which thinks and feels and loves and suffers and wills and chooses, aspires, and achieves. The purpose in life is to beautify, ornament, develop that something within. To develop a more radiant and lovely character is the true purpose in life” (*Gospel Ideals* [1954], 357).

THE APPROVAL OF CONSCIENCE

“Thoughts mold your features. Thoughts lift your soul heavenward or drag you toward hell. . . . As nothing reveals character like the company we like and keep, so nothing foretells futurity like the thoughts over which we brood. . . . To have the approval of your conscience when you are alone with your thoughts is like being in the company of true and loving friends. To merit your own self-respect gives strength to character. Conscience is the link that binds your soul to the spirit of God” (“Those Sculptors Called Thoughts and Ideals,” *Improvement Era*, July 1960, 495).

A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

“It is glorious when you can lie down at night with a clear conscience, knowing you have done your best not to offend anyone and have injured no man.

You have tried to cleanse your heart of all unrighteousness, and if you put forth precious effort, you can sense as you pray to God to keep you that night that he accepts your effort. You have a sense that you are God’s child, not a mere cog of the state, but a person whose soul God wants to save. You have the strength, the sense of resistance to evil. . . . You also have the realization that you have made the world better for having been in it” (*Gospel Ideals*, 502).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GRAND CHARACTER

“Day by day, hour by hour, man builds the character that will determine his place and standing among his associates throughout the ages. . . . More important than riches, more enduring than fame, more precious than happiness is the possession of a noble character. Truly it has been said that the grand aim of man’s creation is the development of a grand character, and grand character is by its very nature the product of a probationary discipline” (“Man’s Soul Is As Endless As Time,” *Instructor*, Jan. 1960, 1–2).

CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER

“True happiness is found in living the Christ’s life—on Monday as well as on Sunday. He who is virtuous only at intervals proves that his pretended virtue is but a sham. Such a person lacks sincerity, the foundation of true character, without which happiness is impossible” (*Gospel Ideals*, 502).

“What is the crowning glory of man in this earth so far as his individual achievement is concerned? It is *character*—*character developed through obedience to the laws of life as revealed through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who came that we might have life and have it more abundantly*. Man’s chief concern in life should not be the acquiring of gold nor fame nor material possessions. It should not be the development of physical prowess nor of intellectual strength, but his aim, the highest in life, should be the development of a Christlike character” (“Obedience Develops Character,” *Instructor*, Aug. 1965, 301; emphasis in original). □



What you sincerely in your heart think of Christ will determine what you are, will largely determine what your acts will be.

STRENGTH

During Struggles

The Lord can reassure that He is near and that He will lead us through the darkest days of our lives.



BY ELDER L. LIONEL KENDRICK
Of the Seventy

Life is not always easy to live, but the opportunity to do so is a blessing beyond comprehension. In the process of living we will face struggles, many of which will cause us to suffer and to experience pain. Many people will suffer in personal struggles, while others will suffer as they watch their loved ones in pain.

To gain strength in our struggles, we must have a positive perspective of the principles in the plan of salvation. We must realize that we have a personal Savior whom we can trust and turn to in our times of need. We must also learn and live the principles that the Lord has given to receive the strength needed during our struggles.

POSITIVE PERSPECTIVE

In the Grand Council in Heaven, the decision was made to “make an earth whereon these may dwell” (Abr. 3:24). This earth is the place to prove ourselves worthy and to prepare to return to the presence of the Lord. He explained, “And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abr. 3:25).

The Lord explained the purpose for which we must be tested during this earthly experience: “My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them” (D&C 136:31).

Part of the plan is “that there is an opposition in all things” (2 Ne. 2:11). We are given the agency to

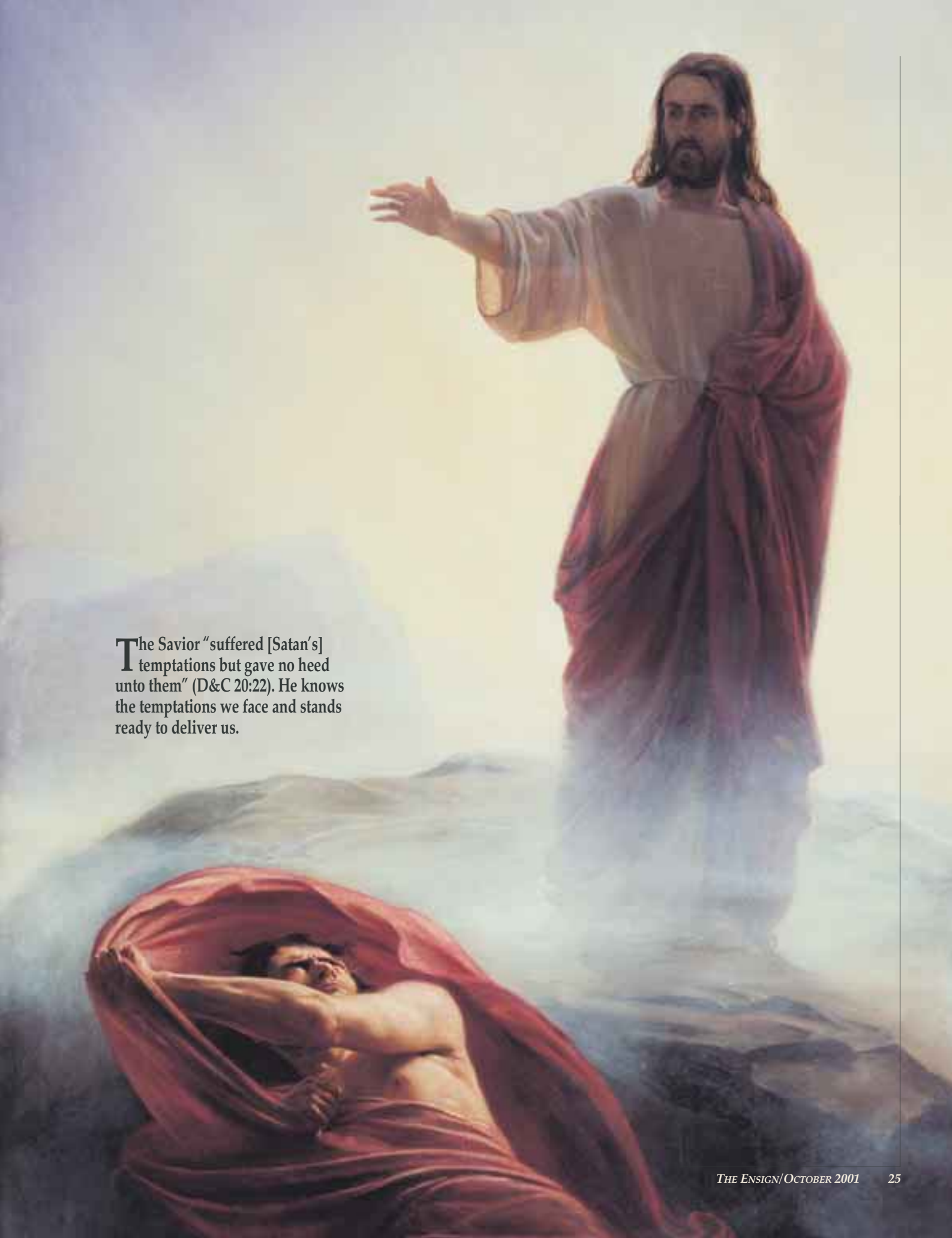
choose between these opposites in the proving process (see 2 Ne. 2:27; D&C 29:35). In our pre-earth life, we understood and sustained the plan of salvation with the principles of opposition and agency. We knew we would have experiences in this life that would cause us to struggle and sometimes to suffer.

Some of our struggles involve making decisions, while others are a result of the decisions we have made. Some of our struggles result from choices others make that affect our lives. We cannot always control everything that happens to us in this life, but we *can* control how we respond. Many struggles come as problems and pressures that sometimes cause pain. Others come as temptations, trials, and tribulations.

Yet struggles are a part of the sacred sanctification process. There are no soft or slothful ways to become sanctified to the point that we are prepared to live in the presence of the Savior. And there can be blessings in the burdens we bear. As a result of these struggles, our souls are stretched and our spirits are strengthened. Our character becomes more Christlike as we are tried and tested.

Even though these experiences may cause pain, suffering, and sorrow, we have this absolute assurance: “No pain suffered by man or woman upon the earth will be without its compensating effects if it be suffered in resignation and if it be met with patience” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 168).

The Savior gave comfort and counsel to the Prophet Joseph Smith while he was suffering in Liberty Jail, explaining the beneficial effects and blessings that come if



The Savior “suffered [Satan’s] temptations but gave no heed unto them” (D&C 20:22). He knows the temptations we face and stands ready to deliver us.

we bear our burdens well: "All these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good" (D&C 122:7). He continued:

"My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

"And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes" (D&C 121:7–8).

People respond to struggles in different ways. Some feel defeated and beaten down by the burdens they are called to bear. Many begin to blame others for their difficulties and defeats, and they fail to follow the counsel of the Lord. It is a natural tendency to seek the easy road on life's journey and to become discouraged, filled with doubt, and even depressed when facing life's struggles.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, then an Assistant to the Twelve, distinguished the difference in responses to difficulties: "The winds of tribulation, which blow out some men's candles of commitment, only fan the fires of faith of [others]" ("Why Not Now?" *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 12).

If we follow the revealed eternal principles, we will gain strength during our struggles and will be blessed as we bear our burdens and deal with difficulties and overcome obstacles in our lives. If we are to gain the strength that we need, we must come to know the Savior and follow His counsel.

A PERSONAL SAVIOR

The Savior knows each of us in a personal way. He has assured us of His personal acquaintance, His awareness of our needs, and His presence in our times of need. He counseled, "I say unto you that mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst and ye cannot see me" (D&C 38:7). Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, "The Savior is in our midst, sometimes personally, frequently through his servants, and always by his Spirit" (*The Lord's Way* [1991], 14).

The Savior knows all things past, present, and future. Jacob taught, "For he knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it" (2 Ne. 9:20). He knows the things that we stand in need of even before we ask (see 3 Ne. 13:8).

He also knows our thoughts and the intents of our hearts and sees into the innermost parts of our eternal spirits. He taught, "I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them" (Ezek. 11:5). Ammon

stated, "He knows all the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Alma 18:32).

He knows the temptations we face. The Savior was tempted beyond any temptation we could ever face. The scriptures say, "He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them" (D&C 20:22). He stands ready to deliver us in our times of temptation. Paul wrote, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour [help] them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:18). Peter proclaimed, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations" (2 Pet. 2:9).

The Savior "knoweth the weakness of man" (D&C 62:1). In spite of our weakness, He loves us in an incomprehensible manner and offers us great hope: "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" (Ether 12:27).

In addition to knowing our thoughts and intents, temptations and weaknesses, He knows all that we do in this life. He said, "Behold, mine eyes see and know all their works" (D&C 121:24; see also 2 Ne. 27:27). "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works" (Rev. 2:19).

The Lord stands ready to help us through our struggles. We have His assurance and His promise that He will be there to assist us in the days of our difficulty:

"Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

"Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, that is expedient for you" (D&C 88:63–64).

He stands ready to comfort and counsel us in our season of struggles and suffering. Jacob taught, "Look unto God with firmness of mind, and pray unto him with exceeding faith, and he will console you in your afflictions" (Jacob 3:1).

The Lord gives us a spirit of hope and a feeling of comfort and confidence that we can overcome the obstacles we face. He has shown the way to gain strength during our struggles. With His assistance, we have the ability to succeed. Listen to His words of counsel and comfort: "Fear not, little children, for you are mine, and I have overcome the world . . . ; and none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost" (D&C 50:41–42).

Again, with a feeling of love, He reassures us that He is near and that He will lead us through the



darkest days of our lives. His strength will sustain us during our struggles even when we feel weak: "Wherefore, I am in your midst, and I am the good shepherd, and the stone of Israel. He that buildeth upon this rock shall never fall" (D&C 50:44).

Because of His infinite love for us, He is our advocate with Heavenly Father. He pleads our cause with Him. He pleads to the Father for forgiveness of our sins and gives us this counsel of cheer: "Lift up your hearts and be glad, for I am in your midst, and am your advocate with the Father" (D&C 29:5; see also D&C 45:3; 62:1; 110:4).

If our struggle is with sin, we must remember that He stands ready to forgive us if we truly repent. Too often we forget that He is a loving, caring, and merciful God. Some may feel that there is no hope because they have failed too many times. The Lord has counseled that there is great hope for sinners if they truly repent:

"If he confess his sins before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive him also.

"Yea, as often as my people repent will I forgive them their trespasses against me" (Mosiah 26:29–30).

We must approach the Lord as Enos of old did. He said: "And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul; and all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens" (Enos 1:4).

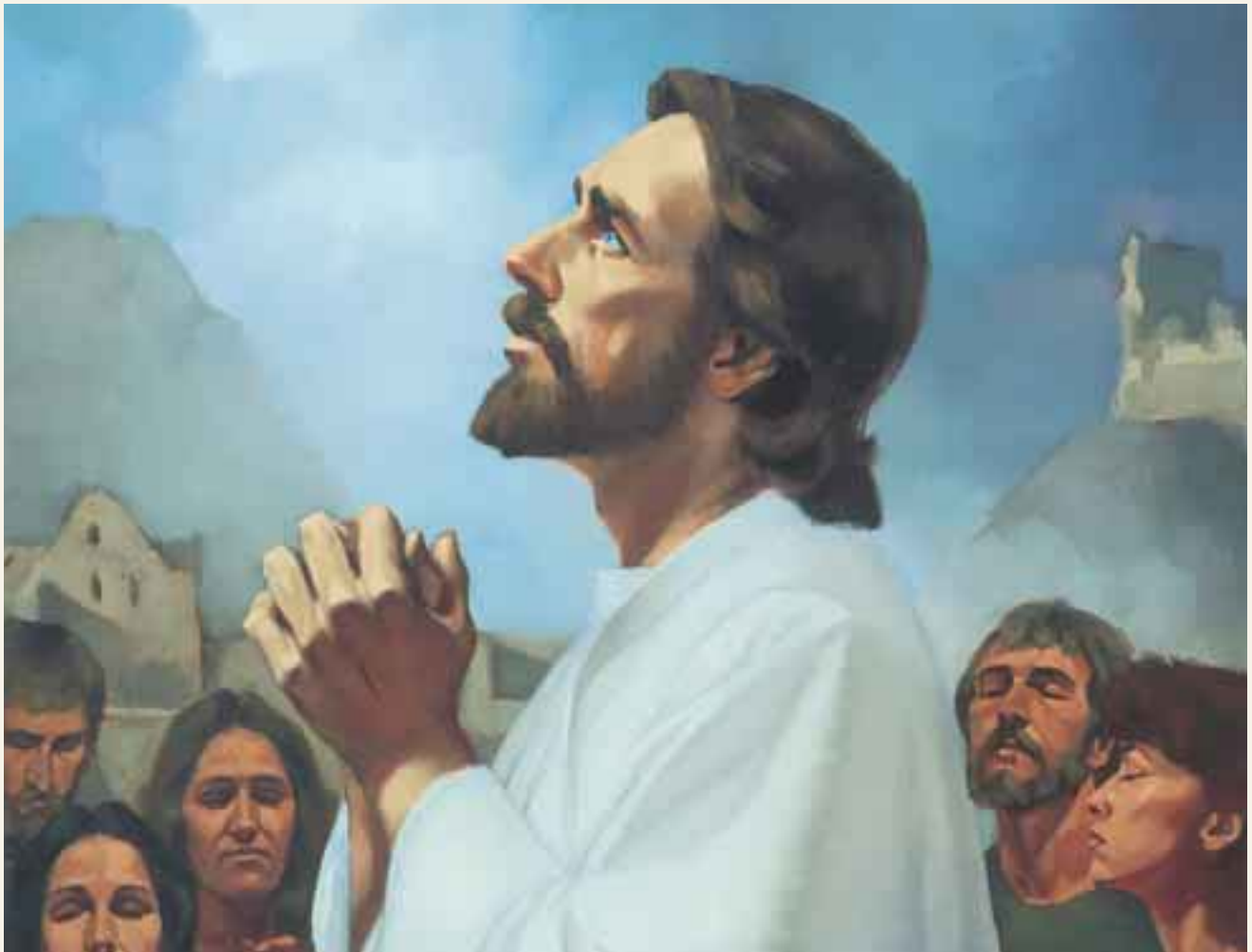
It may take this intensity of prayer to receive a remission of some sins. Serious sins must be confessed to a bishop, who is a common judge in Israel.

The Lord heard Enos and his sincere, soul-searching supplication.

"And there came a voice unto me, saying: Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed.

"And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie; wherefore, my guilt was swept away" (Enos 1:5–6).

As the Savior prayed to receive spiritual strength, we can petition (left) our Father in Heaven for power to resist temptations.



ABOVE LEFT, PHOTO BY JED CLARK; RIGHT, CHRIST PRAYING WITH THE NEPHITES, BY TED HENNINGER

The results of true repentance and remission of sins are feelings of peace, hope, joy, and a clearness of conscience (see Mosiah 4:3). Alma described the feeling with these words:

“I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more.

“And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!” (Alma 36:19–20).

Mormon taught the process that occurs when we receive a remission of our sins: “And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come” (Moro. 8:26).

The scriptures are replete with powerful promises to those who follow the Lord’s counsel. We should ponder (right) these powerful promises and develop trust in the Lord.

STRENGTH TO CHANGE

If the Lord is to help us gain strength during our struggles, we must do the things He has counseled us to do. This involves turning to Him and applying certain principles of the gospel.

Trust in Him. Trust involves humility, a willing and submissive spirit to rely on Him and His revealed counsel. The Lord counsels, “Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not” (D&C 6:36). We must submit our will to His will. Strength comes when we seek His will, not our will. He tenderly tells us to “be . . . humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers” (D&C 112:10). He is the way, and only through Him will we succeed.

Follow His counsel. Great strength comes from following the counsel of the Lord. Jacob said, “Seek not to counsel the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand” (Jacob 4:10). Alma taught, “Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good” (Alma 37:37).



LEFT: O JERUSALEM, BY GREG K. OLSEN, COURTESY OF MILL POND PRESS; RIGHT: PHOTO BY STEVE BUNDERSON

The Lord gives counsel in the answers to our prayers. He counsels us as we search the scriptures for answers to our concerns. Nephi wrote, “Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do” (2 Ne. 32:3).

The Lord gives counsel through His chosen servants. He said, “Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38). Inspired counsel may also come from loved ones. When we are struggling, we do not always see and think clearly. This is the reason we should listen to counsel.

It takes courage to respond to the counsel that we receive. The Lord has warned us that when we think that we are above His counsel and that of His servants and those who care, we will “fall and incur the vengeance of a just God” (D&C 3:4).

Ponder His promises. The scriptures are replete with powerful promises to those who follow His counsel. We should ponder these powerful promises and develop faith and trust in the Lord. His promises are sure.

Through King Limhi we receive a great promise of strength: “If ye will turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart, and put your trust in him, and serve him with all diligence of mind, if ye do this, he will, according to his own will and pleasure, deliver you out of bondage” (Mosiah 7:33).

The Savior gives us other marvelous promises that should strengthen us during our struggles:

“Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you” (D&C 68:6).

“And inasmuch as ye are humble and faithful and call upon my name, behold, I will give you the victory.

“I give unto you a promise, that you shall be delivered this once out of your bondage” (D&C 104:82–83).

The Lord has revealed other powerful principles to gain inner strength. If we apply these principles, we will be blessed with power and peace of mind.

Take responsibility for our choices. To admit and accept responsibility for our choices and their consequences is a critical, initial step in the process of change. The Lord explained that “because thou hast seen thy weakness thou shalt be made strong” (Ether 12:37; see also D&C 135:5). In the grand plan the Lord ordained “that every man may act . . . according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment” (D&C 101:78).

When we place blame for our actions on others or circumstances that we find ourselves in, we can never gain the strength to change. Some have a tendency to rationalize their behavior or to make excuses. These approaches are deceptive devices that are used to relieve guilt and gain temporary escape from the feelings of failure to make proper choices in life. They weaken our character and prolong our suffering and stress.

Cultivate faith. Faith gives us power to make necessary changes in our lives (see 2 Ne. 1:10). If we do not have sufficient faith, we cannot change or be healed of our infirmities (see 3 Ne. 17:8). Our weaknesses can never become strong without full faith. It takes faith to get answers to our prayers (see D&C 10:47). Moroni taught, “Behold, I say unto you that whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing, whatsoever

he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him” (Morm. 9:21).

We must never underestimate the power of the Lord even when we feel powerless. Nephi reminds us of the infinite power of the Lord with these words: “Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? Wherefore, let us be faithful to him” (1 Ne. 7:12).

He is indeed a God of miracles.

He testifies, “I am God; and I am a God of miracles” (2 Ne. 27:23). Moroni cautions, “For if there be no faith among the children of men God can do no miracle among them” (Ether 12:12). The Lord cautions us concerning faith, “Remember that without faith you can do nothing” (D&C 8:10).

Develop righteous desires. Our motivation to change comes from the desires of our hearts. Without a deep, divine desire to repent, there will be no change. Our spirit must crave the need to change. Alma taught this powerful principle when he said, “I know that he granteth unto men according to their desire” (Alma 29:4).

Deepen our commitment. Without commitment, our desires tend to diminish and die. Commitment gives us strength and power to make the appropriate changes we desire. This commitment should be like that of Nephi of old. When given a difficult assignment, he responded with a Christlike commitment to succeed: “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them [to] accomplish the thing which he commandeth them” (1 Ne. 3:7; see also 1 Ne. 3:15).



Fast and pray. The Lord has commanded us “that [we] shall continue in prayer and fasting from this time forth” (D&C 88:76). Great power is received as we fast and pray concerning our struggles and our spiritual welfare.

When we fast we should do so with a purpose, with prayer, and with “an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 4:5). We should strive for mastery of self, have pure thoughts, and ponder spiritual things. We can gain strength through scripture study during the fast. We should listen to the promptings of the Spirit as we seek for solutions.

We should petition the Lord in prayer for strength and deliverance from the bondage of our behaviors (see Alma 58:10; Jacob 3:1). We should pray for strength to resist temptations. The Lord warns and counsels us to “pray always, lest you enter into temptation and lose your reward” (D&C 31:12; see also D&C 61:39; 10:5). We should pray to seek forgiveness and to express our love and gratitude to Heavenly Father.

As a result of our sincere repentance, prayers, and fasting, we will receive forgiveness. We can feel the

fruits of the Spirit as joy (see D&C 59:13). We can become sanctified (see Hel. 3:35) and inherit eternal life (see Omni 1:26).

Fasting and prayer will help us control our thoughts, feelings, passions, and appetites. We can bring these and our bodies under subjection of our spirits. We will experience added spirituality, strength, power, humility, and testimony. We will be able to get answers to our prayers and enjoy feelings of peace and comfort. Our guilt will be swept away as we truly repent. We will enjoy the companionship of the Spirit. We will experience an increase of love. Ill feelings will be removed from our souls. We will have added power to resist temptations and to overcome weaknesses. We will become free from undue worry. Our faith and hope will be increased. Feelings of doubt and discouragement will be dispelled.

Like those who were blessed by the Savior in ancient times, we can seek a priesthood blessing today (right). This blessing can be a great source of counsel from the Lord.



LEFT: CHRIST HEALING A BLIND MAN; BY DEL. PARSON; RIGHT: PHOTO BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

Remember priesthood blessings. When we are struggling, we may seek a priesthood blessing. For the blessing to be effective, we must be humble and teachable. We must be willing to submit our will to the will of the Lord as spoken to us in the blessing. This blessing can be a great source of counsel from the Lord. Our minds can be enlightened and our knowledge and understanding quickened. Our vision can be expanded. He has given a powerful promise concerning that which will be spoken by the priesthood holder who is giving the blessing: “And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost . . . shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God” (D&C 68:4).

We must have full faith and complete confidence in the counsel we receive. We must have the courage to follow it. If we do so, we will receive added power to succeed in our struggles.

A priesthood blessing should be a great source of comfort to us and can bring feelings of peace, hope, and love. Our confidence can be restored as a result of the blessing. Our mind and body can become invigorated. Our spirit can be renewed, and we can feel a divine determination to deal with our difficulties. We can feel the presence of the Lord and the companionship of the Spirit.

Ponder our patriarchal blessings. Our patriarchal blessings are another source of increased strength during our struggles. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) gave great insight into one of the purposes of our patriarchal blessings. He said of the Savior: “He knows in advance every strategy the enemy will use against you. . . . He knows your weaknesses and He knows your strengths. By personal revelation you may discover some of your strengths through a careful and prayerful study of your patriarchal blessing” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 214).

President James E. Faust, while serving as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught the principle of power in patriarchal blessings: “God knows our spirits; he knows our strengths and weaknesses. He knows our capabilities and our potential. Our patriarchal blessings indicate what the Lord expects of us and what our potential is. Our blessings can encourage us when we are discouraged, strengthen us when we are fearful, comfort us when we sorrow, give us courage when we are filled with

anxiety, lift us up when we are weak in spirit” (“Patriarchal Blessings,” *New Era*, Nov. 1982, 6).

CONCLUDING COUNSEL

If our struggles are with sin, we should ponder the passionate plea of Alma:

“And now, my brethren, I wish from the inmost part of my heart, yea, with great anxiety even unto pain, that ye would hearken unto my words, and cast off your sins, and not procrastinate the day of your repentance;

“But that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering;

“Having faith on the Lord; having a hope that ye shall receive eternal life; having the love of God always in your hearts” (Alma 13:27–29).

The words of the Savior are appropriate counsel on struggles that are not the result of sin:

“Search diligently, pray always, and be believing, and all things shall work together for your good, if ye walk uprightly and remember the covenant wherewith ye have covenanted one

with another” (D&C 90:24).

All of the counsel in the scriptures and from the Brethren are words of hope. They reflect the love the Savior has for us and His desire that we succeed. There are no other ways to gain strength in our times of need. If we follow His counsel, we will find infinite strength during our struggles. □

Gospel topics: adversity, agency, faith in Jesus Christ, repentance

More on this topic: See Dallin H. Oaks, “Adversity,” *Ensign*, July 1998, 6–12; Richard G. Scott, “Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 16–18; Ronald E. Poelman, “Adversity and the Divine Purpose of Mortality,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 23–25.

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LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. How does an eternal perspective help us face our trials?
2. How can we access the Savior's help in overcoming our challenges?
3. What gospel principles can aid in our growth during these times?



Easing the Burdens of **MENTAL ILLNESS**

We can offer comfort to those with mental illness and their families by extending love and support without judging.

BY DAWN AND JAY FOX

“When my daughter first showed signs of mental illness, I kept denying that there was anything wrong,” says Cheryl,* a Latter-day Saint mother. “I wanted her to just get over the outbursts, the disorganized thinking, and the bizarre behaviors. Through the persistent encouragement of some very close friends, I finally sought help for my daughter and found some solutions.”

According to the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, one in five families in the United States has a member who suffers from a serious mental illness.¹ These illnesses include, among others, major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and anxiety disorders such as panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or phobias (see sidebar, p. 35). Mental illness can result in much heartache and suffering, not only on the part of those afflicted but by their loved ones as well. Church members with these disorders, together with their families, are in particular need of the blessings of the gospel and tender support of their ward members.

The New Testament contains numerous examples of the Savior’s ministry among the sick and afflicted, including those suffering from what we now term as mental illness.² The Lord also extended His healing touch to those with other

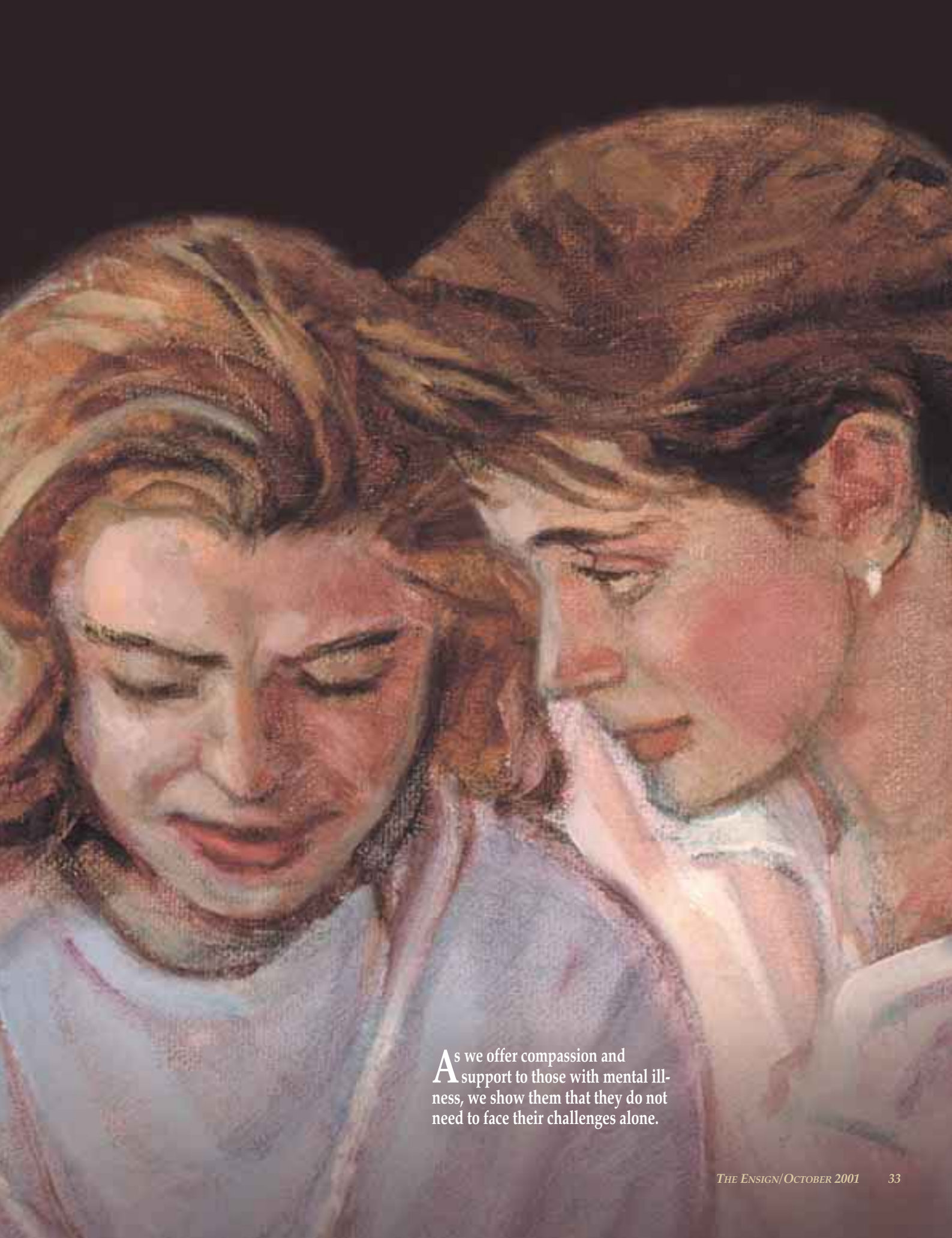
**Name has been changed.*

diseases accompanied by considerable stigma, such as leprosy.³ In biblical times most lepers were shunned by their communities and forced to live in isolation. Today, many of the mentally ill are treated similarly: all too often they are ignored and stigmatized.

The Savior has commanded, “The works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do.”⁴ How can we follow His example in regard to those with mental illness and their families?

First, we can be a friend. Many people are frightened by mental illness and do not know what to say or how to respond to an individual with such a disorder. It may seem easy to turn away from those who are afflicted and their families, but this only increases their suffering and isolation. Taking time to listen, including them in our activities, being there for them in times of crisis, and treating them as we would want to be treated helps lift their burden and shows our love for them.

The parent of a daughter with schizophrenia said: “When I realized the true impact of my daughter’s illness on her life, I lost all hope. That was a very dark and helpless place. But as I allowed others to reach out to me, teach me,



As we offer compassion and support to those with mental illness, we show them that they do not need to face their challenges alone.

“WE ALL NEED EACH OTHER”



“How sorrowful must a brother or sister feel when they

think they are abandoned, when they think no one cares! Perhaps it was this feeling that caused the psalmist to write, ‘I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul’ (Ps. 142:4).

“The church of our loving Lord cannot function that way! We all need each other.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Love Thy Neighbor,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1987, 72.

and offer me their strength, my hope was restored.”

Second, we can encourage those afflicted and their families to draw upon the power of the priesthood and personal revelation in dealing with their challenges. While all health problems will not be healed during mortality, individuals can often find hope, improvement in some areas, increased spiritual strength, and the assurance of Heavenly Father’s love through priesthood blessings and personal prayers. Through these channels individuals and family members may also be guided to people or organizations that can offer them needed assistance.

Heavenly Father stands by, ready to help. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “our heavenly Father is more liberal in His views, and boundless in His mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive. . . . He will be inquired of by His children. He says, ‘Ask and ye shall receive.’”⁵

Third, we can help the mentally ill and their families understand the role of trials in our lives and the power of the Atonement to help us endure and grow through trials. We know that suffering can refine us and bring us to Christ.⁶ And we know that through the Atonement the Savior took upon Himself not only the sins but also “the pains and the sicknesses of his people” so that He might “succor his people according to their infirmities.”⁷ The Lord comprehends perfectly the anguish of those who have been affected by mental illness, and He can help them find peace (see John 14:27)—even the “peace of God, which passeth all understanding.”⁸

Fourth, we can offer compassion and support without judgment. Sometimes good parents of mentally ill children are told by the unknowing that perhaps the child’s illness could have been avoided if they had practiced better parenting skills. Yet scientific evidence shows that there is a strong biological component in many of these disorders. For example, research performed by Brigham Young University professor Erin D. Bigler shows actual differences in the brains of those with various mental disorders. Dr. Bigler believes that “major psychiatric disorders have physiological underpinnings.”⁹ These illnesses may develop in even the best of environments.

As we become better informed, we can help family members avoid the guilt that so often accompanies these challenges.

Fifth, we can refuse to support the discrimination and stigma often associated with mental illness. We can object to television programs, cartoons, advertisements, and movies that inappropriately portray those suffering from mental illness.

The media have contributed greatly to stigma against the mentally ill, giving wide press coverage to violent acts committed by a small percentage of people with serious disorders, and producing movies and television shows that sensationalize these acts. Consequently it could appear that all people with mental illness are violent—but this is far from the truth. According to the National Mental Health Association, “The vast majority of people with mental illnesses are not violent. In the cases when violence does occur,

the incidence typically results from the same reasons as with the general public such as feeling threatened or excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs.”¹⁰

Sixth, we can help people find the resources they need. LDS Family Services, which can be accessed through one’s bishop, offers support and professional counseling to individuals and families within the context of Latter-day Saint values and, if necessary, makes referrals to hospitals or other treatment centers. Community mental health centers help people find treatment in environments that are less restrictive than hospital settings. Local and national mental health organizations provide education and support and can be located on the Internet or in a local telephone book. Many books and articles also contain useful information and can be found in local libraries or on the Internet, but use discernment to select the best resources.

A *seventh* suggestion is to understand the emotions people may experience when confronting mental illness, and then to help them deal with their feelings. Experts say that when individuals become ill, they and their family members commonly experience shock and fear at first, then denial, followed by anger, guilt, and grief before they move into understanding.¹¹ A knowledge of these stages can provide a framework for discussing and empathizing with the feelings involved.

Eighth, we can understand that many forms of

treatment can and do help. New medications have been developed in the past 10 years that treat a variety of symptoms, with fewer side effects than older medications. Behavior modification programs can help individuals suffering from depression, panic disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder change their thoughts and reactions and thus decrease the symptoms of their illness.

Ninth, we can recognize and help others understand that mental illnesses are not rare, that “mental illnesses are more common than cancer, diabetes, or heart disease.”¹² Based on statistics from a 1999 U.S. Surgeon General report, a group of 500 people ages 18–54 may include 7 individuals with schizophrenia, 8 with panic disorder, 12 with obsessive-compulsive disorder, 9 with bipolar disorder, 25 with agoraphobia (fear of open, public places), and 33 who will suffer from at least one episode of major depression.¹³ If some of these figures seem high, remember that much mental illness is kept hidden because of the stigma against it, and many of the most seriously ill are homeless or clustered in hospitals, prisons, nursing homes, or low-income areas.

We know that everyone will one day be resurrected with perfect bodies, including brains that are free of structural or functional problems. Our challenge, then, is to help those with afflictions that are not healed during mortality. When we as Church members reach out to them with love, we help keep our covenant to “comfort those that stand in need of comfort.”¹⁴ Our efforts to understand and

support the mentally ill and their families can do much to help ease their burdens. □

Dawn and Jay Fox are members of the Orchard First Ward, Orem Utah East Stake.

Gospel topics: *mental illness, compassion*

NOTES

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4. 3 Ne. 27:21.
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6. See 1 Ne. 20:10; D&C 98:3; 122:5–7.
7. Alma 7:11–12.
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Visit www.lds.org or see Church magazines on CD.

SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESSES

The following are basic descriptions of some of the more common serious mental illnesses.

Anxiety Disorders

Phobias: Irrational fears of a particular object, situation, or activity.

Panic Disorder: A disorder in which an individual experiences unexpected episodes of intense dread, often accompanied by chest pain, choking or smothering sensations, shortness of breath, dizziness, or abdominal distress.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: A disorder in which a person has recurrent, unwanted thoughts and may feel compelled to engage in repetitive, ritualistic behavior that interferes with daily life.

Mood Disorders

Bipolar Disorder: A disorder, also known as manic depression, in which the individual has extreme mood swings, alternating between mania (a hyperactive, elated state) and depression. Moods may last for days, weeks, or months.

Depression: A disorder in which an individual experiences feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and lethargy for an extended period of time.

Schizophrenia: A disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels, and acts. An affected person may experience hallucinations and/or delusions, may withdraw from society, and may have impaired reasoning and incoherent speech. □

Individuals with mental illness and their families can find help through LDS Family Services and other mental health resources.





Thomas E. Ricks

A MAN OF FORESIGHT

BYU—Idaho, formerly Ricks College, traces its roots to the foresight of colonizer Thomas E. Ricks.



Thomas E. Ricks (1828–1901) was invited by President John Taylor (1808–87) to colonize all of eastern Idaho north of Pocatello. Thus, on 11 January 1883, Brother Ricks, in company with others, arrived at the present site of Rexburg, Idaho, to establish a colony there, which was soon named in his honor. These early settlers were very poor, and Brother Ricks gave financial credit to all and bore a large portion of the colony's expenses, which eventually caused him financial problems.

"I was called here and have expended my means for the benefit of the people," he said in February 1890. "My means have been used up, and I am comparatively poor. But my faith has been increased in the Lord, and I acknowledge the blessings of the Lord."

Although he had little education, Brother Ricks understood its value. In 1888, as chairman of the stake board of education, he offered the dedicatory prayer that marked the

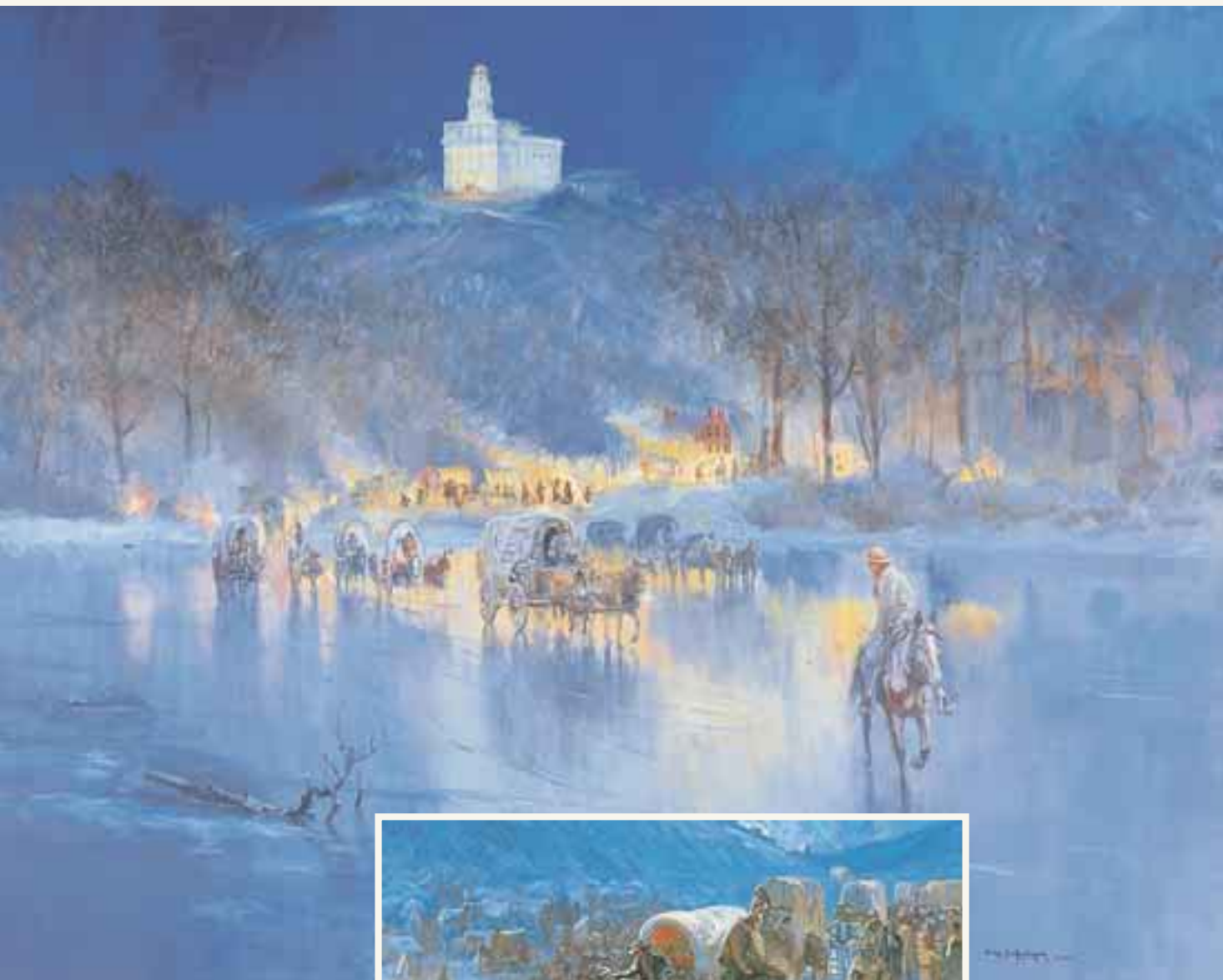
beginning of Bannock Stake Academy. Thomas E. Ricks died on 28 September 1901. The school's name was changed to Ricks Academy two years after Brother Ricks's death. Later it became Ricks College, which served as a two-year junior college until 1949, when it served as a four-year college until returning to two-year status in 1956. On 21 June 2000, President Gordon B. Hinckley announced that Ricks College would again become a four-year college and be renamed Brigham Young University—Idaho.

Of Brother Ricks, President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) said, "It may be a long time before we find another man his equal in honor, mind, and unswerving loyalty to the cause of God and His people."

Shown are three scenes from the life of Thomas E. Ricks painted by Latter-day Saint artist Glen S. Hopkinson. The paintings currently hang in the Hyrum Manwaring Student Center on the BYU—Idaho campus. □



Left: *Announcing Bannock Stake Academy.* In November 1888, stake president and board of education chairman Thomas E. Ricks introduced Jacob Spori as principal of Bannock Stake Academy. He said the academy "was to give spirituality precedence over worldliness; the principles of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ were to be taught side by side with arithmetic, geography, [and] reading."

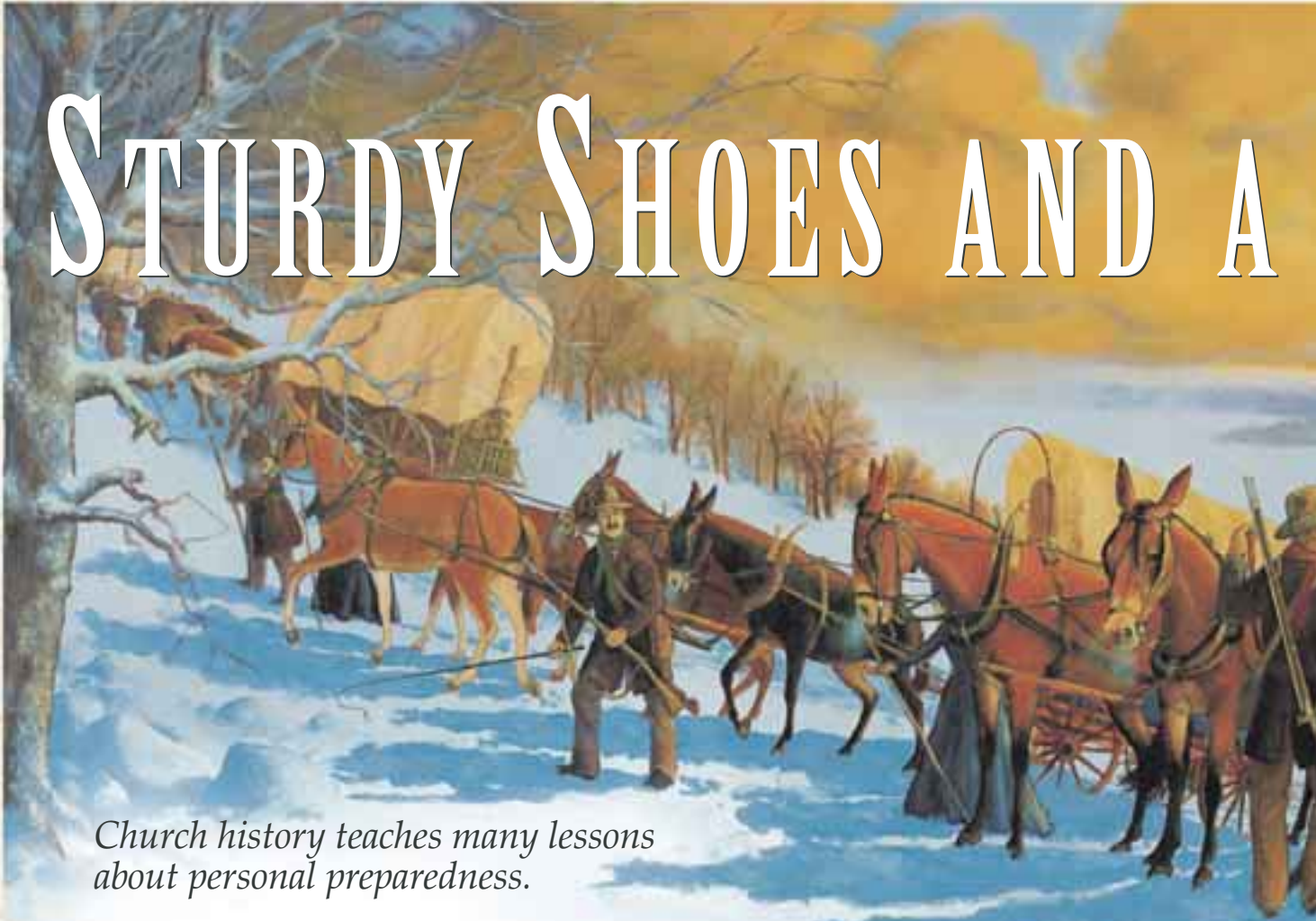


Above: *Leaving Nauvoo*. In fall of 1845, 17-year-old Thomas E. Ricks worked alongside his father, Joel, and others to complete the temple in Nauvoo, Illinois. In February 1846, he crossed the frozen Mississippi as a teamster with some of the first families to leave Nauvoo on their exodus to the West.



Left: *Handcart Rescue*. In October 1856, ten days after 28-year-old Thomas E. Ricks returned home from a Church mission, he and others were called at general conference to rescue the Martin and Willie handcart companies stranded by an early snowstorm in Wyoming. They left immediately and were successful in helping rescue the companies.

STURDY SHOES AND A



Church history teaches many lessons about personal preparedness.

BY WILLIAM G. HARTLEY

If men could learn from history, what lessons it might teach us!" wrote Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1831.¹ While it may sound surprising, a look at Church history can teach us about preparedness for our day.

LESSONS FROM CROSSING THE PLAINS

For more than 60,000 Saints who journeyed to Utah during the wagon train period (1846–69), outdoor trail realities tested their preparation and showed what worked and what didn't.

Lesson 1: When we ignore preparedness counsel, we can expect unhappy consequences.

Before leaving Nauvoo, members had Church-published lists of what to take with them. But when the first companies left in February 1846, several hundred members panicked and crossed the Mississippi River without proper clothes, food, or shelter. As a result, they brought suffering upon themselves, slowed down others, and drained resources from those properly prepared.

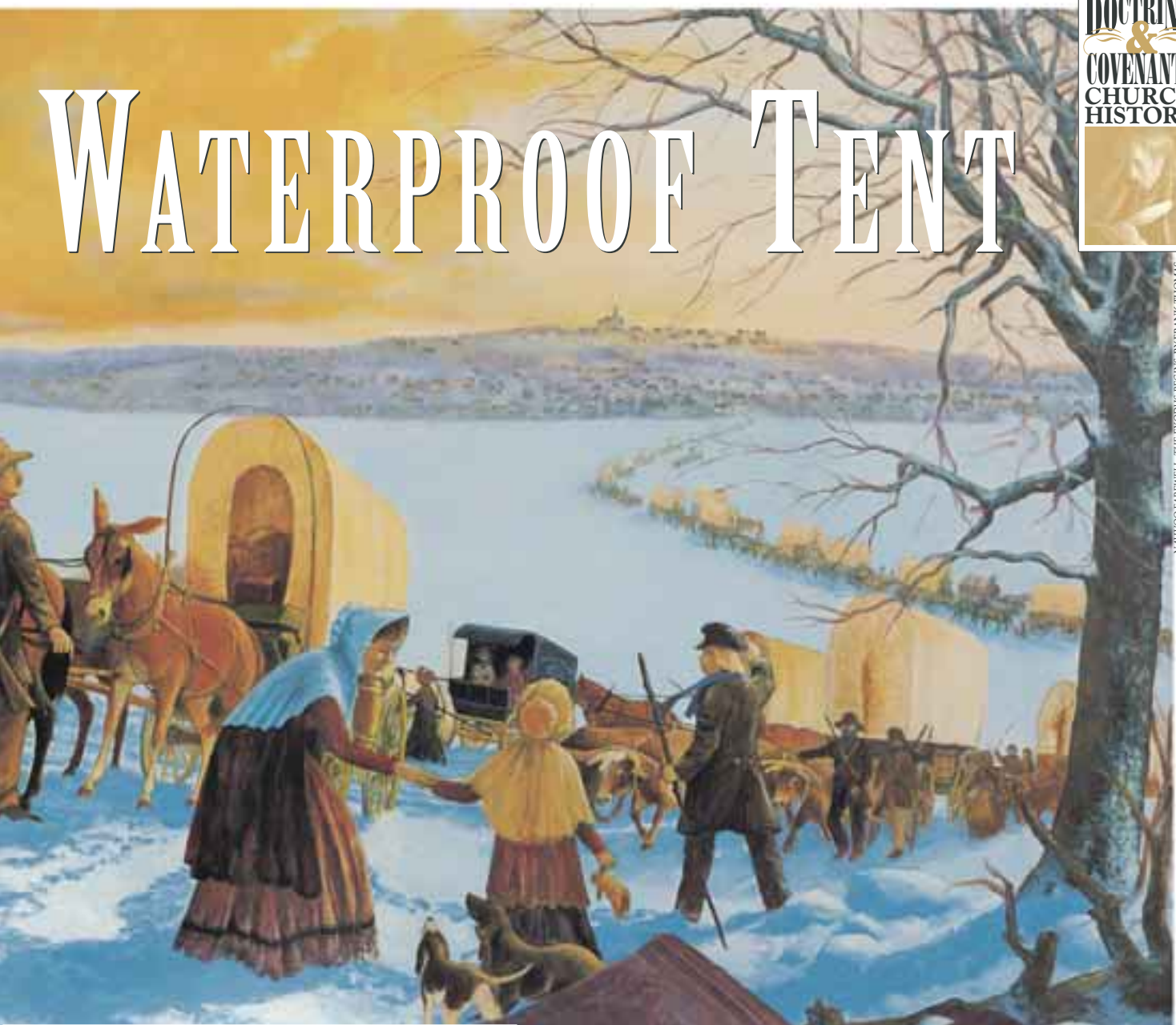
Lesson 2: Protect against nature.

Trail death tolls reveal that the highest numbers of deaths were among infants and the elderly. Some pioneers became cold and wet because wagon covers and tents were not waterproof. Others suffered sunburns when they lost their hats. Their lips chapped from the dry air, wind, and sun. Many suffered diarrhea and lacked medicine to stop it. Some travelers, while dressed properly for summer heat, lacked coats and gloves for the cold mountain temperatures experienced before reaching the Salt Lake Valley. In addition, pioneers had to guard against wildlife, particularly snakes and wolves. In many campsites they suffered from swarms of mosquitoes that badly hurt children and angered horses and cattle.

Lesson 3: Be accident cautious.

Accidents injured or killed many on the trail. Pioneers lamented their carelessness when they lost hats, binoculars, knives, axes, guns, watches, pans, shovels, and even horses and cattle. A few became so busy and distracted that even their children wandered away and became lost. When emergencies

WATERPROOF TENT



NAUVOO FAREWELL: THE EXODUS BEGINS, BY FRANK THOMAS;
ELK HORN RIVER FERRY, BY FREDERICK PIERCE, PHOTO BY KELLY LARSEN



Top: Not all the pioneers who left Nauvoo in 1846 were prepared. We can learn from them.
Above: Elk Horn River Ferry in Nebraska.



occur, we must be extra careful not to hurt ourselves by falls, burns, knife and axe cuts, or similar accidents. We need to be strict about putting things away.

Lesson 4: We should protect ourselves from uncaring or dishonest individuals.

Pioneers learned to guard against potential theft, assault, and even kidnapping. Some were put in charge of enforcing basic rules of conduct and expelling those who would not cooperate. And, as happens in groups during major crises, pioneers had to tune out complainers, whiners, and even rabble-rousers and doomsayers.

Lesson 5: Protect against discouragement.

Our best protection against discouragement during a crisis is to maintain our health by not becoming overly exhausted, which can lead to sickness and bad judgment. Some unwise pioneers were afraid to ask for help when they needed it, thereby bringing suffering upon themselves and those they cared for. Most wagon train travelers, in order to keep up their spirits, made friends with fellow travelers, held dances, sang together, and helped those whose wagons broke down or who became ill.

Lesson 6: Be creative and adaptive in difficult times.

Pioneer women took advantage of the bumpiness of the wagons and filled tubs with soap, water, and dirty clothes. By day's end the clothes had been agitated clean. Some women also put cream into containers hung underneath the wagon and let the jostling churn the cream into butter.

LESSONS FROM THE MORMON BATTALION'S MARCH

In 1846–47, the majority of the Mormon Battalion, an infantry unit of nearly 500 men in the U.S. Army of the West during the Mexican War, marched about 2,000 miles from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to San Diego, California.² We learn several lessons from their experiences.

Lesson 1: During a crisis we may need to leave our family to meet community needs.

On 3 July 1846, President Brigham Young, Elder Heber C. Kimball, and Elder Willard Richards began recruiting men for the Mormon Battalion. Recruiting continued until 20 July. At noon on Tuesday, 21 July, the battalion began its historic march. All this took place in the midst of the members'

migration across Iowa and left hundreds of women and children to cross the plains without these men to help them.

Lesson 2: Water-purifying pills or filters are essential.

Thirsty people will drink contaminated water, if necessary. Crossing a dry stretch in Kansas, the battalion suffered severely from heat and lack of water. So thirsty were they that they drove a herd of buffalo from an insect-infested pond and gladly drank the discolored and disgusting water. "No luxury was ever more thankfully received," Sergeant Daniel Tyler wrote. Afterwards, "many were attacked with summer complaint."³

Lesson 3: Writing materials and a camera are helpful resources.

About 20 soldiers kept diaries during the trek, using a strange assortment of notebooks and papers—whatever they could find to write on. In order to "show" what he was experiencing, one man drew sketches in his diary.

Lesson 4: Bread or other grain products are important.

In January 1847 at Warner's Ranch in southern California, previously famished battalion men received four pounds of beef a day as their ration. Beef, however, did not satisfy their hunger. The men craved bread, which was unavailable.

LESSONS FROM THE SALUDA DISASTER

On Good Friday morning, 9 April 1852, the Missouri riverboat *Saluda* blew up near Lexington, Missouri, killing nearly two dozen Latter-day Saints traveling from St. Louis to Council Bluffs on their way west to Utah. Important lessons are learned from this tragedy.

Lesson 1: When the Spirit cautions us against something, we need to obey.

One passenger, William C. Dunbar, later admitted he had ignored warnings from the Holy Spirit to stay off the vessel. When Latter-day Saint agents chartered the old,

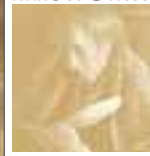


SELF-RELIANCE



"The responsibility for each person's social, emotional, spiritual, physical, or economic well-being rests first upon himself, second upon his family, and third upon the Church if he is a faithful member thereof. No true Latter-day Saint, while physically or emotionally able, will voluntarily shift the burden of his own or his family's well-being to someone else."

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 77.



EMIGRANT TRAIN, BY GEORGE M. OTTINGER, COURTESY OF SPRINGVILLE MUSEUM OF ART, PHOTO © DIGITAL STOCK

slow *Saluda* to move Saints from St. Louis upriver to the wagon train camps, Brother Dunbar and his friend Duncan Campbell looked it over. Both felt strongly impressed that “something awful was going to happen,” such that each saw tears coursing down the other’s cheek. This was a warning that went unheeded. By contrast, Abraham O. Smoot was similarly prompted and refused to board the boat, even when offered free passage.

Despite his bad feelings about the *Saluda*, Brother Dunbar determined that he and his wife, Helen, and their two small children would go. But on departure morning the Dunbar family missed the boat because supplies they purchased did not show up on time. Brother Dunbar later reflected that “some friendly unseen power was at work in my behalf, trying to prevent me from going on board with my family.” Two days later they boarded another riverboat, but Brother Dunbar insisted that its captain put him aboard the slower *Saluda* if they caught up with it so they could rejoin the Latter-day Saint company. Before long they caught up with the *Saluda*, but river ice prevented the Dunbars from transferring. Upriver the passengers on the Dunbars’ boat disembarked, but Brother Dunbar made the captain drift their boat back to a dock where the *Saluda* was waiting for the ice to clear. There the Dunbars boarded the *Saluda* the night before it blew up. They joined about 175 passengers, 90 of them Latter-day Saints.

The Dunbars slept that night behind a canvas wall on the deck—directly over the boat’s boilers. Friday

Music and a sense of humor helped pioneers maintain a good attitude during times of challenge and helped make things more bearable.



morning Brother Dunbar stepped briefly to another part of the deck to watch the crew working. Stokers fired up the boilers so the *Saluda* could start upriver. When pumps shot cold water into the red-hot boilers, they exploded. The blast was “heard and felt” throughout nearby Lexington. Two-thirds of the *Saluda*’s superstructure disintegrated in a cloud of smoke, flame, and dust. Passengers were blown ashore and into the river.

Brother Dunbar wrote, “I witnessed just two revolutions of the paddle wheels, when I remember nothing more till I found myself lying on the bank of the river within three yards of the water’s edge, with my clothes drenching wet, and my head all covered with blood.” When conscious, he found the lifeless body of his one-year-old boy. Then, in a temporary hospital, he saw his wife, Helen, breathe her last. Searching among the dead, he found the body of his five-year-old daughter. He lost his entire family. For the rest of his life he



Lessons learned from the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire (shown above) could help us be better prepared today.

regretted that he ignored several voices of warning.⁴
Lesson 2: Up-to-date rosters of people are important, and parents need wills that specify who should have their children.

To this day, no one knows for certain how many members were aboard the *Saluda*, how many were lost, or how many reached Utah. Lexington townsmen, with charitable instincts but who also wanted to save children from Mormonism, took a number of Latter-day Saint orphans into their homes and raised them. Leaders had no list to check off to see how many children they needed to locate and claim.

LESSONS FROM THE PIONEER FAMINE OF 1856

Members in Utah suffered through a harsh famine in early 1856 caused by a drought, grasshopper plague, and severe winter. From April to October 1855 no rains fell. Grasshoppers cleaned county after county of grain and fruit. Dry forests burned that fall. Deep winter snows and cold killed thousands of cattle. By January 1856 the pioneers faced starvation. Their efforts to survive suggest lessons about food storage, food shortages, and food rationing.

Lesson 1: In times of dire food shortages, we should be willing to share our personal food storage with others.

By mid-March 1856, wards were taking inventories to determine how much food was left in the community. It became clear that everyone would need to share what they had. Presidents Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball of the First Presidency, as well as many others who had supplies, reduced rations in their own families and helped those who were suffering. "I sell none for money," President Kimball wrote, "but let it go where people are truly destitute. Dollars and cents do not count now."⁵

By July 1856 the Church's tithing office and the people were running short of supplies. One city bishop "found 5 lbs of flour on three blocks and no meat."⁶

One sister recalled that during the famine she gave away flour. As her supply dwindled, she gave away a loaf of bread. Finally, with little flour left, she gave away slices of bread. People picked up crumbs when she cut the slices. "Women would offer me their jewelry, fine clothing, anything they had for bread," she remembered.⁷ Some people paid speculators \$24 per hundred pounds of flour, when the normal price was \$6. Bishop Aaron Johnson of Springville, Utah, sold flour at the going price of \$6 and refused to raise his rates, even though people would pay four times that price.⁸
Lesson 2: During times of famine we might choose to fast more often to provide for the needy.

In 1856 fasting made more food available for others. In April, President Brigham Young said that his family saved a considerable amount "by frequent fastings," which they gave to the poor. One bishop whose ward was "very poor" said he "had nothing to begin with, but he immediately called a fast and the brethren have done pretty liberally."⁹

Lesson 3: When the course of our normal life is disrupted, it helps to fill free time with constructive activities.

A history about circumstances in Spanish Fork, Utah, in 1856 includes this description: "Having no crops to gather, the settlers built bridges, made fences, opened a road up the canyon for the purpose of getting out wood poles and all the men turned out for weeks on these public works, donating their labor."¹⁰

LESSONS FROM THE 1906 SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE

The U.S. earthquake against which all earthquakes are still measured is the San Francisco earthquake of 18 April 1906. The great quake caused terrible damage to buildings, roads, water systems, law



enforcement, communications, and transportation. Fires broke out and caused more damage than the quake. Separations were common. Food, water, and sanitation became terrible problems.

Some 120 Church members—branch members, missionaries, and city visitors—were in the city at the time. Some wrote about how they survived the quake.¹¹ Their accounts identify several problems we could face if caught in a major earthquake or other catastrophes, such as hurricanes, cyclones, tornadoes, or fires, and they provide several preparedness ideas.

Lesson 1: Have sturdy shoes and durable clothing nearby in case of a sudden nighttime emergency, whether at home or away from home.

The 1906 quake struck before morning while people were sleeping. Frightened people ran into the streets in nightclothes and barefoot. Mission

president Joseph Robinson hiked all over San Francisco trying to locate and help Church members. Broken bricks and glass quickly shredded his shoes.

Lesson 2: Have fire extinguishers in our homes.

Less than four blocks away from the Church's mission home, a woman cooking breakfast accidentally started a fire. Firemen were too busy to respond to this "ham and eggs" fire. By the early afternoon, in order to keep the fire from spreading, firemen had to dynamite the area where the mission home stood.

Lesson 3: Have emergency water on hand in sturdy, non-glass containers.

Faucets went dry when the water mains broke. Thirsty people broke into stores and bars to find liquid. Thirsty members, who flocked to the mission home, were glad to be offered bottled fruit (fortunately the bottles had not broken).

Lesson 4: Have minimal cleaning items, such as moist towelettes, toothpaste, deodorant, face towels, and even small bags of detergent.

"It was a real trial," said missionary Elder Leo Gardner, bound for the Pacific islands, "to endure our thirst and to go without washing our faces and hands which were getting blacker with the dust and smoke."¹²

Lesson 5: Have emergency food as we have been taught.

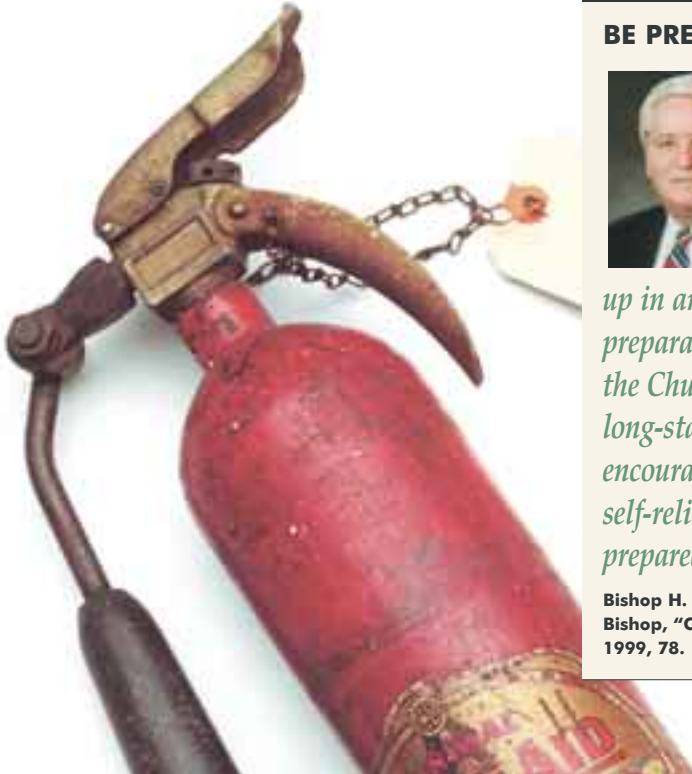
San Franciscans rushed to local markets to buy up bread, creating panic buying. By noon, as fires spread through the city, martial law was declared, and anyone trying to enter stores, even store owners, were shot on sight as looters. Within a day or two the city

BE PREPARED



"While it is sincerely hoped that members do not get caught up in any hysteria or obsessive preparations for disasters, the Church continues its long-standing practice of encouraging members to be self-reliant and reasonably prepared."

Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop, "Conversation," Ensign, Sept. 1999, 78.



provided bread for people who stood in breadlines that were four people wide and blocks long.

Lesson 6: It is important to have two or three meeting places where family members can find each other in case disaster strikes and the family is scattered.

President Robinson's toughest task for about a week was reuniting families separated during the disaster. Evacuations had become necessary. With homes damaged and the Church's mission home dynamited to create a firebreak, members scattered. President Robinson tried to let members know where other members were camped out by posting in the mission home ashes a sign indicating where the main Latter-day Saint camp was located.

Lesson 7: Be prepared to leave cherished belongings.

Fleeing the fires, many families grabbed belongings and tried to haul them on foot. One trunk "weighed a ton," as Harold Jenson described it in his diary.¹³ One family member pushed a wheeled sewing machine. Harold strapped family belongings to his bicycle. Too burdened, the family eventually left some of their belongings on the roadside.

Lesson 8: Ignore wild rumors that spread in panics and don't pass them on.

The earthquake severed the city's communications with the outside world, so rumors spread that Los Angeles was destroyed, New York was no more, and that the Great Salt Lake had inundated Salt Lake City!

ONE FINAL LESSON

Along with all of the practical lessons history teaches, one more lesson comes through: maintain

In 1856 Ephraim Hanks brought food to stranded handcart pioneers. Today our fast offerings help feed those in need.



good attitudes during troubled times. A sense of humor is like salve on a wound.

On 6 April 1846 about 2,000 Saints with about 400 covered wagons were bogging down in Iowa rains and mud, trying to reach campsites beside Locust Creek. "I was in the rain all day," President Young noted in his diary, "arranging the wagons, pitching tents, chopping wood until all were comfortable." That dreary day most members had good excuses to feel miserable. However, Patty Sessions noted in her diary that "[Brother] Brigham came up with his company driving his team in the rain and mud up to his kne[e]s as happy as a king."¹⁴

We would do well to follow Brother Brigham's example, as well as that set by other Latter-day Saints who have had to deal with disasters and crises. By learning from the lessons of the past, we better prepare ourselves for the future. □

William G. Hartley is a member of the Riverside Third Ward, Murray Utah North Stake.

Gospel topics: preparedness, resourcefulness, obedience, courage, compassion

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BY KJIRSTIN YOUNGBERG

Margret had been an old woman for as long as Jane could remember. When Margret was the Beehive instructor, she had taught Jane how to sew. Later, she had helped Jane through the crisis of teenage dating, her engagement and temple marriage, and the births of her children.

Margret had always been there for people—a shoulder to cry on, the apple pie baker, the woman who performed compassionate service without being asked. She had lots of energy, as an exhausted Jane discovered when Margret came over and stayed up all night caring for a sick child so Jane could sleep.

“What must life be like for her now?” Jane wondered as she drove along the tree-lined street toward the convalescent home where Margret was now dying. At 97, nearly every part of her body was worn out, and she passed her days lying in bed.

At least she isn't in any pain, Jane thought to herself. *What can I say to her to help her feel better?*

After parking her car, Jane walked quickly down the long corridor toward Margret's room. She knocked softly and entered. Margret's face looked very small. She was blind and too weak to turn her head.

“It's Jane,” Jane said, hoping Margret had not heard her voice crack.

“How good of you to come,” Margret said. “What can I do for you?”

Jane was startled by her question, but managed a light laugh. “Now, Margret, you've been ‘doing for’ people all your life. It's our turn to do for you.”

“Oh,” said Margret, “but now I can finally do some good!”

“What are you talking about?” Jane asked.

By now Margret's face was glowing. “Before I came here, there was so little time,” she said. “I always had places to go and children to read to. Now I have uninterrupted time from morning until night. The nurses and orderlies come in and tell me their problems and the problems of their children. I can spend the entire day praying for them, and I know the Lord hears my prayers. He has answered every one.”

Tears filled Jane's eyes as she realized she had been taught a lesson in serving to the end. □

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Gospel topics: service, prayer, elderly

SERVING TO THE END

Margret had always served others. Now she was bed-ridden, but her face glowed as she said, “Now I can finally do some good!”



One day a substitute teacher, standing in an unfamiliar classroom, could not figure out why there was much muffled giggling each time she turned to write on the blackboard. Feeling something lightly brush her hair, she ran her hand through her curls and came away with four or five raisins. They had been thrown there by a group of students who had organized a contest: one point if you hit her with a raisin, three if it stuck.

When the regular teacher returned, the incident was rehearsed for her in person by an upset principal and summarized in a note left by a hurt substitute teacher. When the teacher asked the students how such a game had come about, one of them mumbled, "Well, she was boring."

The teacher looked at the student and asked, "Even if that were true, does that justify treating someone disrespectfully?" Silence followed.

Underlying principles of respect that were once commonplace in society have increasingly given way to unkind behavior. To help our children and youth set aside the many negative examples that bombard them, we must first understand respect, reasons we sometimes act disrespectfully, gospel principles that apply, and ways we can be better teachers and exemplars of respect.

UNDERSTANDING RESPECT

There are at least two definitions of *respect*. The first refers to being polite or civil to those we meet or with whom we interact. This would include being respectful of a teacher. We hope grandchildren will treat grandparents respectfully during visits. We usually treat strangers with polite respect.

Another meaning, however, refers to our feelings toward those who merit respect through honorable living. We admire their commitment or standards. For example, we might respect a sailor who gave up winning a boat race to save a man overboard. On the other hand, we do not respect one who embezzles or another who treats a child harshly in the supermarket. Yet if we were to interact with these people, we would likely treat them with respectful or polite manners, regardless of our

feelings about their transgressions. Ultimately, we can treat people respectfully because they are human even if we do not honor or admire their acts.

As parents and leaders, we are to honor both definitions. We want children not only to treat us

with respect—using good manners—but also to honor our standards, which we seek to exemplify through Christlike living.

RATIONALIZING DISRESPECT

While the gospel teaches us to be respectful toward others without qualification, sometimes we may find ourselves

falling into rationalizations about being disrespectful based on their behavior. A person who causes a problem is often seen as *warranting* disrespectful treatment. Here are two examples:

A man in his 70s came out of a movie theater. He stumbled into a group of teenage boys who might be described as tough guys. One boy spoke, "Hey, old man, watch what you're doing!" The boy justified his complaint by seeing an old man as unworthy of respect. A girl of perhaps 10 years of age came around the corner of the theater and, with hands on her hips, said, "Hey, he's not an old man; he's my gramps! Please don't talk to him like that!" Incredibly, the boy apologized, and the group moved on.

The second example is of a woman driving a car slowly through a grocery store parking lot. A sedan suddenly pulled in front of her, and she had to brake quickly to avoid hitting it. A bag of groceries on the seat beside her flew forward, and its contents scattered, including a dozen eggs, some of which hit the windshield and oozed down to the floor. Because her window was down, it was a simple matter to yell at the careless driver.

The sedan driver stopped and got out right in the middle of the parking lot. As she approached the car, the offended lady was preparing a barrage of accusations when she recognized the woman. It was her favorite aunt! She quickly swallowed her angry words.

If we could ask either the teenage boy or the lady with the broken eggs why they were about to treat these anonymous people unkindly, it is likely they would have cited these people's behavior as their excuse. In other words, if *others* would behave differently, *we* would not have to behave badly. This kind



BY TERRANCE D. OLSON

To help our children learn respect, we must be teachers and exemplars of respect ourselves.



TEACHING CHILDREN RESPECT



“Teach your children to respect their neighbors. Teach your children to respect their bishops and the teachers that come to their homes to teach

them. Teach your children to respect old age, gray hairs, and feeble frames. Teach them to venerate and to hold in honorable remembrance their parents, and to help all those who are helpless and needy. . . . Teach your children that when they go to school they should honor their teachers in that which is

true and honest, in that which is manly and womanly, and worth while. . . . Teach your children to honor the law of God and the law of the state and the law of our country. Teach them to respect and hold in honor those who are chosen by the people to stand at their head and execute justice and administer the law. Teach them to be loyal to their country, loyal to righteousness and uprightness and honor, and thereby they will grow up to be men and women choice above all the men and women of the world.”

President Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 293.

lack of caring or concern for us. After a lecture I once gave to a California school group, a 15-year-old girl approached me and said: “You know that story you told? You must have been talking about my father. And I don’t see how

of thinking shifts responsibility for our behavior to others. It makes us think that our disrespectful acts are someone else’s fault.

Children pick this up quickly. When they are impolite, they often justify their disrespect with the excuse that the other person does not deserve good treatment. “I would respect my father if he weren’t so impatient,” or, “I can’t respect that teacher because he yells all the time.”

RESPECT AND BROTHERLY LOVE

Respect is an expression of our sense of universal brotherhood or sisterhood—a testimony of our membership in the human family. It acknowledges our common humanity and shows our reverence for children of God. The gospel teaches us that we are to hold the same esteem for others that we hold for ourselves (see D&C 38:25; Matt. 7:12). Acting disrespectfully suggests we do not esteem the other person as ourselves.

For example, prejudice is a result of disrespect for our fellowman. We cannot participate in attitudes of prejudice without distancing ourselves from others. True respect, then, comes as we develop our ability to love our brothers and sisters as ourselves.

Gossip, another everyday form of disrespect, is incompatible with love. What we say about people in their absence should be what we would say to them, with love, if they were present.

Empathy. Feeling empathy for others is a symptom of respectful behavior, while feeling unsympathetic is a symptom of disrespectful acts. A fourth-grade student, Mark, befriended a new boy in school who had a limp. One day, coming in from recess, Mark found his new friend being teased by a group of boys from Mark’s soccer team. Mark blurted out, “Leave him alone!” The boys turned their teasing on Mark for standing up for the new boy. While Mark had felt empathy for the new boy, his soccer friends had not. To ridicule others is to deny our brotherhood and sisterhood.

Care. Respect is also synonymous with care and concern. We respect those we care about. Sometimes we excuse our disrespect, even for people we care about, by holding against them *their*

you could expect me to respect a man like him!”

“Tell me about your father,” I replied.

“Well, he never pays any attention to what I do; he doesn’t come to my school activities [she was in a play]; he never came to see my science fair projects, even when I won a prize; and when Mother is sick and I fix supper, he just says, ‘Why is dinner late?’ How can I respect a man like him?”

Her message was clear: Dad doesn’t care about me, so why should I care about him? I looked at her. “Tell me what life is like for a man who doesn’t see that he has a daughter who does her best, contributes to school activities, tries to do well in science, and, when her mother is sick, leaps into the kitchen to help without being asked.”

Her countenance changed; a faraway look came into her eyes. “You know,” she finally said, “he is the loneliest man in the world. I don’t think he has *any* friends.” With that, she began to see her father with compassion, even a degree of sorrow, for his circumstances. To feel compassion, she’d had to give up her attitude of resentment and disrespect. She had transformed herself and no longer used *his bad behavior* to justify *her own poor behavior*. In scriptural language, she had gone from nursing feelings of contention to no longer having “a mind to injure one another” (Mosiah 4:13). And it came without any change on her father’s part.

TEACHING RESPECT

To promote greater respect within families and youth groups, we must teach correct principles and share good examples. Parents can use personal examples (I recall a time I was unkind to my math teacher), tell stories (such as the time one team gave a standing ovation to a player on the opposing team), ask thought-provoking questions (How could the class have helped Mrs. Johnson when she fell?), or pose problem situations (If you were a student in the raisin-throwing class, what might you have done?).

Parents can also comment on circumstances

reported in the media. While there are many examples of disrespect, there are also stories of those who have shown consideration for others, such as the Olympic gold-medal winner who raised the arm of the silver medalist many thought should have won.

Perhaps more than any other means, however, parental example is a child's best teacher of respect. A father who joined the Church in a Third World country and then moved to a more economically advanced nation shared with his children his love of his native land—a land they had never seen. Then his eldest son was called to be a missionary to his father's homeland. The father rejoiced, but after seeing him off, he worried about something he had not thought of before. His country was a land of poverty, of stark living conditions, and of little education. His son had been reared in a land of plenty. What if his boy, upon arrival in the country his father loved, was disillusioned by the pitiful circumstances he found?

A year into the mission, the father received a particularly touching letter from his missionary son: "Dear Dad, my mission is going all too fast. But as I walk down the streets, I feel good. I love this place! I love the people. Dad, I feel so close to the people here! I feel as if these people were my people."

His father wept. At the time, his son was serving in his grandfather's birthplace. They *were* his people.

Respect is an expression of Christlike living. It is closely linked to all other qualities we are counseled to cultivate: patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, and love unfeigned. It is a feature of selfless service and humble repentance. It is essential when healing or dissolving hostilities. Respect for others shows reverence for God and for His creations. Through showing respect,

Learning to love and respect
our ancestors can help us
learn to respect all of Heavenly
Father's mortal family.

we truly feel more a part of the human family and recognize and honor our common divine parentage. □

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Gospel topics: respect, worth of souls, love, kindness, good manners

More on this topic: See Harold G. Hillam, "Future Leaders," *Ensign*, May 2000, 10–11; Darnell Zollinger, "I Have a Question: How can I best teach my children to have respect for others, including those placed in authority over them?" *Ensign*, June 1974, 56–57.

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LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. How do we know when we are being treated respectfully? disrespectfully?
2. Do we sometimes rationalize our treatment of others because of their behavior? How can we avoid this?
3. Why does developing love for others lead to respectful treatment of them?
4. Are you aware of someone who is being treated disrespectfully? How might you show respect to that person?



Will You?

Implementing the Mission of the Church

To invite with “Will you?” evokes a yes or no answer, which is an exercise of a person’s moral agency.



BY V. DALLAS MERRELL

In October 1996 President Gordon B. Hinckley said to the Church: “There are those who were once warm in the faith, but whose faith has grown cold. Many of them wish to come back but do not know quite how to do it. They need friendly hands reaching out to them. With a little effort, many of them can be brought back to feast once again at the table of the Lord” (“Reach with a Rescuing Hand,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86). His call to reach out and bring people back is fundamentally tied to the Church’s mission statement to “invite all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59).

Much has happened since the Church’s beginning in 1830. We have grown to a membership of 11 million members, with curriculum materials in 145 languages. Members are gathered in about 2,600 stakes, and full-time missionaries serve in over 300 missions. Why all this organization, brick, and mortar and all these missionaries, programs, officers, and teachers? *It is because of our purpose, our mission: “to invite all to come unto Christ.”* This is not a slogan. It is the Savior’s very reason for His Church. It must be the gauge of our success.

COME UNTO CHRIST

To invite people to come unto Christ is the ultimate purpose of all that is related to the Church. This divine invitation is clearly stated by Moroni in the Book of Mormon: “Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moro. 10:32).

The Book of Mormon is the great divine “hand-book” on how this is done. A great discourse focusing

on Jesus Christ as the center of Heavenly Father’s marvelous plan of happiness is found in 2 Nephi 31:20–21:

“Ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.

“And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

How do we come unto Christ? How do we become perfected in Him? How do we take upon us the name of Christ?

Learn the doctrine of Christ. Clearly, coming unto Christ involves differing steps or processes. I have identified four. The first of these is that we must learn the doctrine of Christ. The doctrine of Christ is one of the central themes of the Book of Mormon, and the phrase is used therein several times (2 Ne. 31:2, 21; 2 Ne. 32:6; Jacob 7:2, 6; 3 Ne. 2:2; see also 3 Ne. 11:30–39). In the first three articles of faith the Prophet Joseph Smith summarized doctrine he learned by revelation and from translating the Book of Mormon. Those articles of faith cover who God is, what our accountability is, and how we are to be rescued:

1. “We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.”
2. “We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression.”



We are to invite all to come unto Jesus Christ, including those who were once warm in the faith but whose faith has grown cold.

3. "We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel."

Live by correct principles. Once we have learned the truth of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we must *do something* about it. This is the second important aspect of coming unto Christ—living by correct principles. The thing we must do is to apply the principles of the gospel, as explained in the fourth article of faith:

4. "We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance. . . ."

It is essential that we have faith in Christ. That is, we need to align our hearts and souls with Christ and then, as we surely falter and fail, to keep working on that alignment by

With love in our hearts, we can reach out to those who wish to come back but do not know quite how to do it.



repentance, always keeping our eyes and hearts on coming unto Him.

Are faith and repentance enough? No. We must continue to press forward with a steadfastness in Christ. Let's finish the fourth article of faith: "... third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Receive priesthood ordinances and make covenants. The third part of coming unto Christ involves priesthood ordinances and covenants. Through priesthood ordinances we bind ourselves to Him by covenant. We maintain our alliance with the Savior by being faithful in keeping the covenants we made as we received those ordinances. President Hinckley has said, "We are leading toward one objective for each individual member of the Church. That is for all to receive the ordinances of the gospel and make covenants with our Heavenly Father so that they may return to his presence. That is our grand objective. The ordinances and covenants are the means to achieving that divine nature that will return us into his presence again" (closing remarks, regional representatives' seminar, 3 Apr. 1987). No soul will enter the highest degree in the celestial glory without obtaining the essential priesthood ordinances, which are:

- Baptism and confirmation
- Ordination of males to the

Melchizedek Priesthood

- Temple endowment
- Temple sealing

Keep the covenants made. Receiving each of these ordinances and faithfully keeping the sacred covenants associated with them are necessary to come unto Christ. Thus, the fourth step in coming unto Christ is to keep the covenants made. Ordinances and covenants are required of all people who would take part in the mission of the Church, and this Church is the only place where they can be obtained.

The focus of the Lord's mission for His Church might be illustrated by an experience in the island nation of Fiji in 1995. We had just finished a stake conference, and as we were leaving, some missionaries pointed to a woman who wanted us to meet her non-member husband of 30 years, a Fijian high chief. I shook his hand and, after greetings were exchanged, asked if he had heard the missionaries. "Yes," he said. "How do you feel about the Church?" I asked. He said he felt good about it. I then asked, "Will you be baptized today?" He looked into my eyes, then away at the sky, the ground, and from side to side. Eternity pressed

on this moment. Then came his answer: "Why not?" So I asked, "Is that a yes or a no?" "Yes!" he exclaimed.

His wife burst into tears of joy. We had a jubilant baptism. The mission of the Church had been put into action. This brother was invited and he then took an essential step in coming unto Christ. Baptism was the gate (see 2 Ne. 31:17), but he needed to press forward after baptism. I returned to Fiji a few months later and found that our new member was already an elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood. A year after his baptism, he and his wife were endowed and sealed.

We are supported in keeping covenants as we receive the sacrament weekly in sacrament meetings. Participating in this continuing ordinance refreshes and renews us and is part of the process of strengthening our faith in Christ. The sacrament is a vital part of the ongoing process of repenting. Repentance is the continuous, lifelong process of aligning, correcting, and tying ourselves with the Father and His desire to bring us back into His presence, to help us become even as He is.

Thus, we come unto Christ.

INVITE ALL

Now, let's go back to the mission statement: "Invite all to come unto Christ." The mission statement of any organization

defines the ends and the reasons for the organization's being. The Church's mission statement not only defines our purpose—to come unto Christ—but also contains the instruction for its implementation—to invite *all*. The statement is immensely profound. It contains both ends and means.

What does it mean to invite all? Under the direction of inspired priesthood leaders, every accountable soul must be invited to come unto Christ: "For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated" (D&C 1:2). There are many "golden contacts" among the *all* who live with existing members, those whom President Hinckley has pleaded with us to reach out for and invite back.

While assigned to the Pacific Area Presidency and living in Sydney, Australia, I made a long trip across the continent to Perth, in Western Australia. Perth had two small stakes, the last organized 17 years earlier. For years local leaders had been hoping for a third stake, although even as we met they were barely qualified for the two. We knew that the growth of the



Priesthood leaders should often ask prospective elders a simple, direct question: "Will you come for an interview with the bishop for the Melchizedek Priesthood?"

Church required considerable individual spiritual progress. We discovered that many members were lost and their addresses unknown; others had requested that the Church not contact them; others were part-member families; and too many families were headed by prospective elders and were without the Melchizedek Priesthood.

The two stake presidents and the mission president in Perth committed to find and invite all of the lost or wavering souls, including those just mentioned, to come and each receive essential priesthood ordinances. Full-time missionaries joined with the members in this process. Each week this effort was correlated in the ward priesthood executive committee meetings.

After just a few months, many families had been found and invited to come and complete all priesthood ordinances. A large majority of those newly contacted families were taught the missionary discussions, and many, many of those families came back to the Church. Many miracles were evident. In just five months they were amply qualified for the third stake. After two years there were four stakes in Perth, and they are now preparing for the fifth.

Under the direction of the bishop or branch president, we must invite *all* prospective elders, *all* less-active members, *all* unbaptized family members. *All* includes the unendowed, those who are not sealed, those young men not ordained at the appropriate age, those without current temple recommends. The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have told Church leaders that *all* includes families, adults, young men, young women, children, all members and nonmembers now living, and all who have lived or who will yet be born into mortality in this earth. *All* means *all*.

Some of the *all* who need to be invited are in our chapels with us but are missing essential priesthood ordinances. Many are less active, those whom we seldom see. *All* includes many who are near and dear to us. When I returned to the United States, I asked faithful sisters in the East Montana District to give us the names of those they loved who lacked essential priesthood ordinances and for whom they had been praying—their *wives, husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers*. The priesthood leaders and full-time missionaries then focused their combined service on each of the 104 men identified by those sisters, and within six months 52 of these brethren and more than 20 others had been ordained to the

Melchizedek Priesthood, and the district became a stake.

Literally, *all* are invited; *all must* be invited and nurtured to come unto Christ.

INVITE UNDER PRIESTHOOD DIRECTION

So that the work of the Lord can be done in order, he has established presidencies, quorums, councils, auxiliaries, committees, and so forth. It is in meetings of these bodies that we are trained, lists are shared, names are reviewed for invitations, and interview times are scheduled. There priesthood leaders set in motion a host of disciples who invite members and nonmembers to come partake of all the Father wants us to receive. Occasionally, some invitations might be delayed for confidential reasons.

The Lord has also appointed judges in Israel to give approval or to recommend. Anyone may invite, but only those with priesthood keys may recommend or authorize one to receive a priesthood ordinance. We are all to teach, prepare, and open the door. The one who interviews determines readiness to enter and helps every desirous soul prepare to become worthy. No priesthood leader interviewing as a judge would ever discourage one who has been invited.

Some priesthood leaders and full-time missionaries have, after proper authorization, visited the homes of prospective elders with a simple, direct question: "Will you come for an interview with the bishop for the Melchizedek Priesthood?" They have also gone to less-active sisters with the question, "Will you come for an interview with the bishop for a temple recommend?" To both questions, most have answered yes. I am convinced that those who honestly answer yes intend to qualify. We have also learned that many of those invited have never before been invited to come for an interview for the priesthood or for the temple. They must be invited. That is our commission.

Thus, we invite under the guidance of those leaders the Lord has called and given keys to direct the work of the Church. Through this revealed means, the mission of the Church is implemented with vision, commitment, and results in an orderly way.

INVITE WITH "WILL YOU?"

We are to "warn, expound, exhort, and teach" (D&C 20:59), that all may learn and understand the



Coming unto Christ involves priesthood ordinances and covenants. Through priesthood ordinances we bind ourselves to Him by covenant.

Making sacred covenants in the temple helps us come unto Christ.

pure doctrine of Christ and be invited to come unto Christ. We invite by asking a person, "Will you?" To invite with "Will you?" evokes a yes or no answer, which is an exercise of individual moral agency. Individual moral agency is at the heart of Heavenly Father's plan. The War in Heaven was fought over the principle of agency, and a third part of the sons and daughters of Heavenly Father made a different decision than our Father would have preferred.

Is the phrase "You should" acceptable as an invitation, as in "You should go to church"? No. "You should" is assertive, telling—maybe even pushy or demanding—and therefore often arouses passive or active resistance. "You should" is a challenge, not an invitation.

Another option—"Would you?"—is tentative or contingent. Asking "Would you?" may elicit a yes, but it might be with a condition—"if you paid me enough," "if I believed." If we say, "I would like to invite you to," it may seem like an invitation but could receive the response "That's nice, thank you." The person remains uninvited.

Satan's "You will!" demands compliance. It is coercive. In fact, we are instructed that the "powers of heaven" can be "handled only upon the principles of righteousness" and that our influence will be ineffective and unacceptable if it is exercised in "unrighteous dominion." To invite with a loving "Will you?" meets the standards for power and influence in the Lord's service (see D&C 121:36–44).

Ammon's approach to King Lamoni is a great example of inviting: "Now Ammon being wise, yet



harmless, he said unto Lamoni: *Wilt thou* [will you] hearken unto my words, if I tell thee by what power I do these things? . . . And the king answered him, and said: Yea, I will believe all thy words” (Alma 18:22–23; emphasis added).

The question “Will you?” triggers moral agency and promotes genuine spiritual progress by the one responding yes. If the one invited answers no, a witness is established of the response. “Will you?” lays spiritual matters on the table. It defers properly to the person’s agency. “Will you?” respects intelligence. In fact, it is possible that the very nature of intelligence with which we were formed and born as spiritual children of Father in Heaven is most fundamentally “free to choose” (see D&C 93:29–30).

SEEK THOSE WHO NEED HELP

Responsibility for inviting is shared broadly in the Church—by leaders, teachers, home and visiting teachers, parents, and others. We must invite! *Will you* join us for family prayer? *Will you* come to seminary tomorrow? *Will you* come to institute? *Will you* come to sacrament meeting? *Will you* come to Young Women? *Will you* come for the missionary discussions? Missionaries can ask, *Will you* be baptized?

We must be certain that all are invited to receive each essential priesthood ordinance. Our inviting should lead them to obtain each of these ordinances and to be faithful in keeping the covenants associated with those ordinances.

When teachers present a doctrine or a historical event, they should teach a related principle—something hearers should *do*, something they should apply to their lives. Then what? We invite! *Will you* live according to this principle? *Will you* pray? *Will you* live revealed moral standards? *Will you* tithe your income? *Will you* show by your smile and friendliness the joy of the gospel?

Although our personalities, gifts, and callings differ, our inviting will not fall on neutral ears, especially when prompted by the Spirit. For when we invite with “Will you?” the Holy Ghost will testify of our invitation and encourage others to say yes. Everyone who has come to earth has already responded positively to the Father’s plan in the premortal world. We must give them the opportunity to respond positively again. As you teach and invite, remember this: The

Savior has promised that His Spirit will go before your face. His Spirit will be in your heart. His words will come forth from your mouth. Angels will be round about you to bear you up. The veil of heaven will be penetrated tenderly, and the Holy Spirit will whisper to the one invited to remember from heaven’s days the truths you speak. Heavenly Father will help the person feel the earlier heavenly decision and encourage him or her to say yes to your invitation.

As members and leaders invite all to come to Christ, President Hinckley has focused us squarely on our responsibilities: “My brethren and sisters, I would hope, I would pray, that each of us . . . would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86).

Will you follow the prophet? Will you assist in accomplishing the

mission of the Church? Will you “invite all to come unto Christ”? Will you invite? Will you ask “will you” questions?

The greatest joy I have as a Church member is inviting brothers and sisters to come unto Christ. I testify that if you will invite others to come unto Christ, you will experience this same joy. □

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From an address given at the Church Educational System Symposium at Provo, Utah, on 12 August 1997.

Gospel topics: activation, agency, missionary work



PHOTO BY STEVE BUNDERSON

There are many “golden contacts” among those who live near us.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. How can we be more effective in inviting others to come unto Christ?
2. When have you invited others to Christ? Were those experiences positive or negative?
3. What steps can we personally take to draw nearer to the Savior?

Safety in Keeping Divine Covenants

As we make and keep sacred covenants, we are blessed with power to withstand adversity, resist temptation, and enjoy a fulness of gospel blessings. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles teaches, “If we will keep our covenants, the covenants will keep us spiritually safe” (“Overcome . . . Even As I Also Overcame,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 71).

WHAT IS A COVENANT?

A covenant is a sacred two-way agreement between God and a person or a group of people. God sets the terms of His covenants. If we obey the terms of the covenant, we receive the blessings He promises. In a loving bond with us, He promises, “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say” (D&C 82:10).

All of Heavenly Father’s commandments are based in covenants. Covenants are made through saving ordinances such as baptism, the sacrament, and those ordinances administered in the temple.

WHAT ARE THE BLESSINGS OF COVENANT KEEPING?

With every covenant we keep, specific blessings follow.

For example, when we worthily take the sacrament and renew our baptismal covenant, we are promised that we will always have the Lord’s Spirit with us (see D&C 20:77, 79). Those who obey the terms of “the new and everlasting covenant” of celestial marriage are promised that “they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, . . . to their exaltation and glory in all things” (D&C 132:19).

As we bind ourselves to God by obeying sacred covenants, we are blessed with protective power against the adversary. Especially during times of trial, covenants can give us strength. Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains: “The fruit of keeping covenants is the companionship of the Holy Ghost and an increase in the power to love. That happens because of the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ to change our very natures. . . . Greater spiritual power [comes] to those who accept covenants and keep commandments” (“Witnesses for God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 32).

A PERSONAL CONNECTION

A sister who was unable to attend church because of some difficult health challenges came to know how sweetly personal God’s covenants are. Because of these unusual circumstances, Aaronic Priesthood holders, at the direction of the bishop, came to her home to administer the sacrament. She knew they would be coming, but she did not anticipate the outpouring of God’s love she would feel as they knelt and blessed the bread and water—just for her. “I’ll never forget when they held the sacrament tray with one piece of bread and then one small cup of water on it. As I took the sacred emblems, I felt such a personal connection with my Savior. I knew that His Atonement really was for me. I felt of His mercy and His love. In every way, I was renewed and strengthened to meet the challenges that were uniquely mine.”

Fully aware of our human frailties and personal challenges, Heavenly Father gave us covenants to assure our safe passage through mortality. The more diligent we are in keeping our covenants, the more we find spiritual safety in our obedience to the Lord. □

Gospel topics: covenants, commandments, obedience

One sister felt an outpouring of God’s love as the sacrament was administered to her in her home.



Welfare Square

SERVICE BY THE BOTTLE AND LOAF

Bottles of rich, red spaghetti sauce wind their way along the conveyor to the cooling tunnel, then the labeling machine, and finally to boxing and stacking for temporary storage. But their eventual destination is the dinner table of Church members in Los Angeles or Atlanta or some other place where a Latter-day Saint family is in need.

Or maybe some of them will end up on the table of a family, Latter-day Saint or not, who were left without food because of a disaster.

The spaghetti sauce is one of the products of the Church cannery at Welfare Square in Salt Lake City. And the cannery is just one of the facilities on the square where members have the opportunity to help provide for those in need.

Laid out on some 13.5 acres about a mile west of downtown Salt Lake City, the square also includes a



Far right, facing page: A volunteer from a Salt Lake area stake stacks freshly sliced bread in the bakery at Welfare Square.

Above right: Bottles of spaghetti sauce from the cannery are among the goods available in the bishops' storehouse.

Near right: A missionary at Welfare Square's employment center helps a job seeker check possibilities listed on the computer.

Second right: A Deseret Industries sign greets visitors at the south entrance to Welfare Square. The cannery is at right, with grain storage silos in the background.





bakery, a dairy plant, a Deseret Industries thrift store, a bishops' storehouse and store serving families that receive Church assistance, an employment center, and tall silos for storing wheat.

The cannery at Welfare Square, one of 97 Church cannery facilities in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, produces bottled spaghetti sauce and salsa, applesauce, and raspberry, strawberry, and peach jams—foods too acidic for long-term storage in metal cans—that go to bishops' storehouses.

Products from this cannery and from the bakery and dairy plant on Welfare Square are found in the store attached to the bishops' storehouse, along with canned meat or vegetables and staple goods produced by Church welfare operations in other areas.

The Deseret Industries thrift store on the square offers the public donated clothing and other household items at reasonable prices. It also provides employment and job training for those who work there.

The bulk of the food produced at the cannery goes into the Church's welfare system, but a portion is also donated to food banks and other charitable operations throughout the United States. Several million pounds of food are distributed from Welfare Square each year.

Local members do much of the work in food production and certain other operations on the square. Volunteers from stakes in the Salt Lake City area donated some 200,000 hours in labor at Welfare Square last year. □

Gospel topics: welfare, service, self-reliance

Far right, facing page: Volunteers put lids in place on bottles of fresh, hot spaghetti sauce. The conveyor system carries the bottles to a lid-tightening machine, then a cooling tunnel.

Above right: Canned pears stacked in the bishops' storehouse at Welfare Square.

Center right: Checkout area in the newly remodeled Deseret Industries store.

Right: Freshly sliced blocks of cheese go into packages in the dairy plant.

SANCTIFYING TO THE GIVER AND RECEIVER



"We are anxious to make our people independent, industrious, and self-sufficient. We want to accomplish this in a way which will be sanctifying to the giver as well as the receiver. When we can understand this principle, our current welfare activities will take on more meaning."

President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988) of the First Presidency, "Work and Welfare: A Historical Perspective," Ensign, May 1982, 87.





What I Learned at Carthage

By Wayne F. Hull

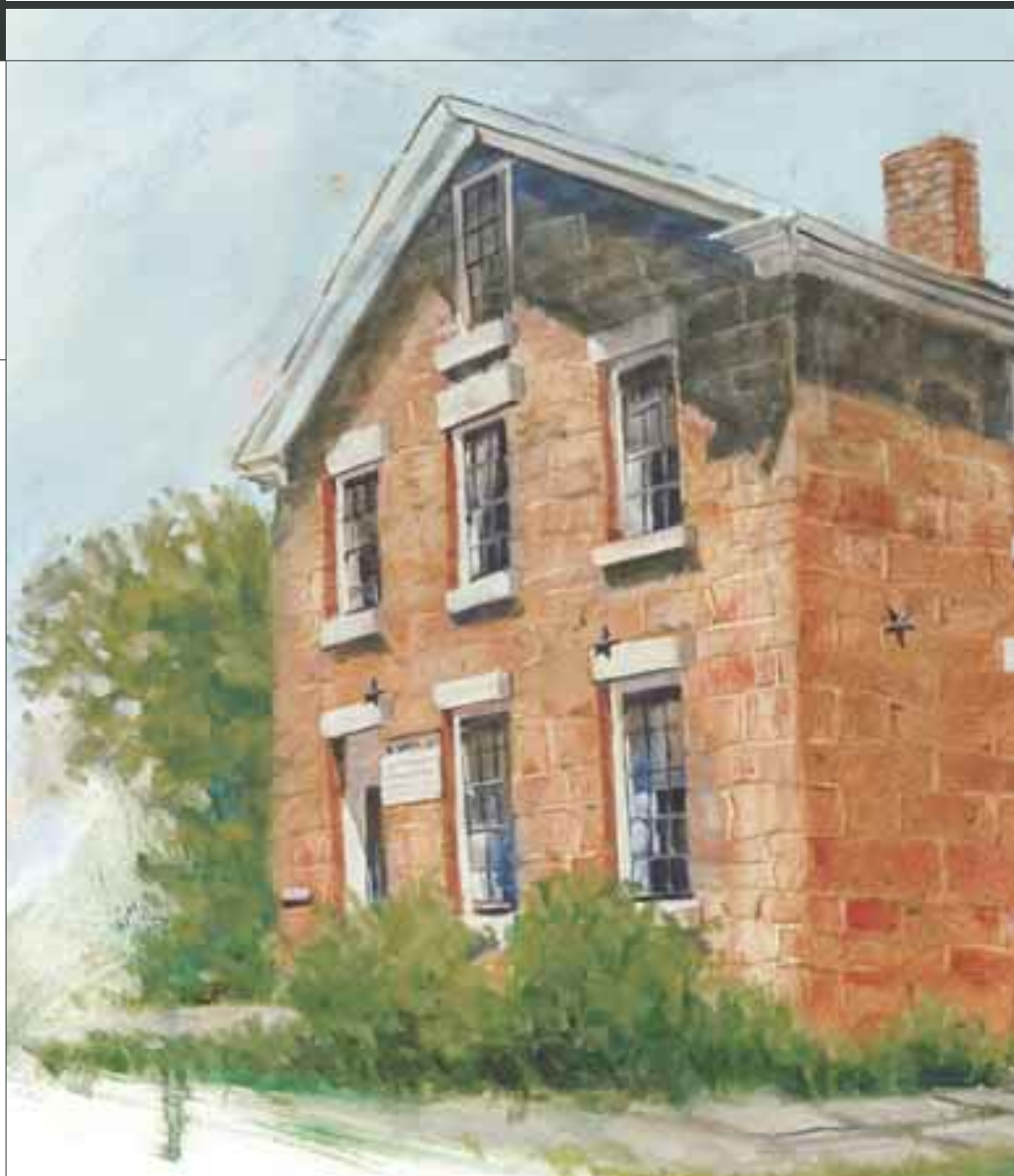
How was the Prophet Joseph Smith able to accomplish what he did despite trials and suffering? What did Heavenly Father bless him with that allowed him to endure so much and at the same time strengthen others? Sitting on a bench outside of Carthage Jail in Illinois one autumn day, I reflected on these questions and on my own responsibilities as a priesthood leader.

My thoughts drifted to a family back home in Salt Lake City, where I served as a bishop. Ken and his wife, Miriam, had recently returned to activity in the Church, but Ken had died not long afterward. Having to travel east on business, I would not be able to attend the funeral service. My heart ached that I couldn't be there to help nurture the family during their time of sorrow.

I expressed in prayer how much I loved Ken. As I did so, I was filled with an overpowering sense of love, and I realized that by saying the words "I love you" to others around me, I could share God's love and touch their hearts. I reflected that God's love must have been an essential source of the Prophet's strength.

Tears rolled down my face as I sat there on the bench and reflected on the faithfulness of the Prophet and many of his associates. No matter what was done to them, the undeniable and unequalled love from God sustained them.

It became clear to me that any words I might speak and any leadership skills I might have would not be sufficient to sustain Ken's family and the rest of the ward.



What they would need to help them be equal to their struggles and hardships was the power of God's love. I realized that to be an effective bishop, I would need to be an instrument through whom the Lord could manifest His love to the people I served. And I knew that the Lord's love could help compensate for my own limitations and give me strength to face my challenges.

As I sat there, I reflected on the example of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He was instrumental in changing the lives of many

Sitting outside the Carthage Jail, I pondered the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith—how he endured so much while at the same time strengthening others. How could his example help me as I faced my own challenges?



because he allowed the Lord to manifest His love to the people through him. Many people who at one time were considered adversaries of the Church changed their thinking when they met the Prophet and felt of the peace and love that radiated from him.

How grateful I am to have had this realization that autumn day in Illinois. I know that when I am willing to express the words “I love you” to people, the Lord is more able to work through me to touch their hearts, lighten their burdens, and help resolve their problems. □

Wayne F. Hull is a member of the Emerson Ward, Salt Lake Sugar House Stake.

Gospel topics: love, service, Joseph Smith

“I Found Them!”

By Madeleine Kurtz

While serving a full-time mission in the Philippines, my husband, Robert, and I traveled to Cagayan de Oro to set up a Family History Center in the Cagayan de Oro East Stake Center and to do some training. We also invited members from the Malaybalay district to join us. Non-Filipinos are not allowed to go into some parts of the region, and Malaybalay was an area where we could not go. For almost a year, the Malaybalay district had had the equipment for a Family History Center; all they needed was some training to be able to set it up.

We made contact with the Malaybalay district president, Leandro Miole, and asked him if he and the Saints in Malaybalay could come to the Cagayan de Oro East Stake Center for our seminar. President Miole responded that they would be happy to come, even though it meant a drive of

more than two hours on mountain roads. My husband wrote a letter to President Miolo confirming the date, place, and time of our training session.

On the day of the seminar as I was doing my portion of the training, a man walked in and started talking with my husband. The man drew a letter from his pocket and opened it for my husband to read. I could see the conversation was quite serious.

At the end of our training session, my husband informed me that the man was President Miolo from the Malaybalay district and that he and 10 members of his district had been waiting at the Cagayan de Oro Stake Center since 8:00 A.M. President Miolo had shown my husband the letter stating the details of the training. To my husband's chagrin, he realized he had forgotten to identify the place as the *east* stake center. We felt bad that these faithful Saints had waited hours for training that had never come, and we happily agreed to go to the Cagayan de Oro Stake Center to conduct the training session.

The Saints were happy to see us when we arrived. We opened with a prayer and a hymn, then launched into the training.

As I began demonstrating how to use the microfilm reader, I noticed that a film had been left in the reader. So instead of using the film I had brought for the demonstration, I used the film already in the reader. As my husband turned the crank and I showed where to look on the film for names, I heard someone crying softly. Looking up, I realized President Miolo was in tears. I quickly asked if I had said something to distress him.

Through his tears he quietly said, "I found them!" Pointing to the names on the screen of the microfilm reader, he told us he had searched and prayed to find

these names—the names of his ancestors—for more than three years. And now, there they were—on a microfilm reader he hadn't planned to look at, in a building he hadn't planned to be in.

That day we were reminded that "by small and simple things are great things brought to pass" (Alma 37:6). □

Madeleine Kurtz is a member of the Fort Macleod Second Ward, Fort Macleod Alberta Stake.

Gospel topics: family history, prayer

"Give Us a Blessing!"

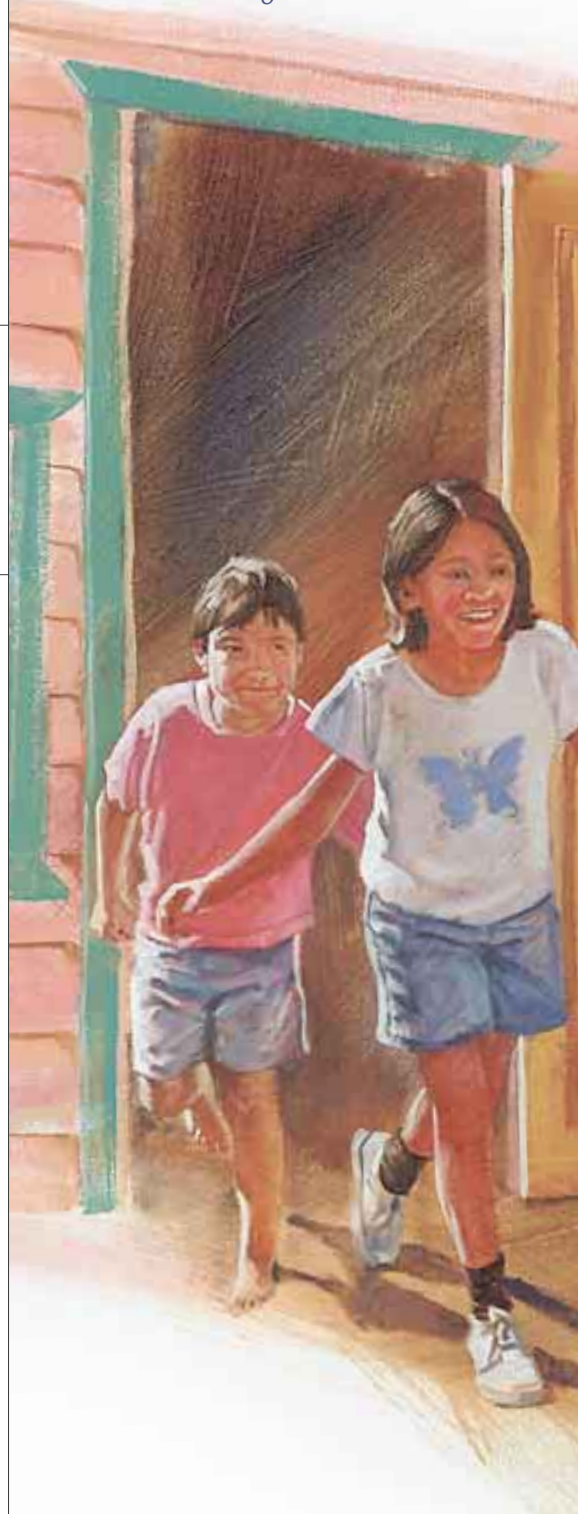
By Lesly Augusto Tobar Correa

Otavalo, a beautiful city in northeastern Ecuador, is even more beautiful in my memory because of an experience I had there while serving in the Ecuador Quito Mission. One afternoon in September 1996, my companion and I were walking to a teaching appointment. Suddenly, some children ran out of a small, humble house, crying, "A blessing! A blessing! Give us a blessing!"

We were astonished and didn't know what to think. We considered ignoring them and continuing on, but something prompted us to find out what was happening. We feared something terrible had taken place.

The children quickly ran back inside the house. We followed them and found a lady who was as surprised to see us as we were surprised to see her. We explained what had happened, and smiling, she told us, "The children were just playing." We talked for a few

My companion and I were astonished when some children ran out of a small, humble house, crying, "A blessing! A blessing! Give us a blessing!"



minutes, took her name as a referral, then left.

Two days later we returned and discovered she was a member of the Church. She hadn't gone to church for a long time, she said, mostly because she hadn't felt anyone had encouraged her. Her

children were not members of the Church. We sensed that she wanted the gospel of Jesus Christ to be part of her and her children's lives.

We shared the message of the gospel with her children, and they were baptized two weeks later. At the baptismal service, one of the children began to cry with joy. He said his mother had changed, and he was very happy the Lord had sent the missionaries to their house.

Little did those children know that when they so playfully asked for a blessing, the Lord would answer them—in abundance. Today, the family continues to be strong and faithful in the Church.

Many people in the world are like those children. Without knowing it, they desire a blessing from our Father in Heaven. They simply need to ask, and He will answer. For as He said, "Ye are little children, and ye have not as yet understood how great blessings the Father hath in his own hands and prepared for you" (D&C 78:17). □

Lesly Augusto Tobar Correa is a member of El Porvenir Ward, Milagro Ecuador Stake.

Gospel topics: blessings, missionary work

Surrounded by Swearing

By Douglas J. Vermeeren

My wife and I were relieved when the call came to board the bus. We were on our way home to Canada, and while waiting in the bus station we had endured overhearing all kinds of foul language from people around us. After being seated on board, we felt happy to be leaving behind the scene of swearing.

As the bus pulled away, however, disappointment fell heavy on our hearts. From the seats behind us came many of the same words we had heard in the bus station. The filthy comments seemed to pound on my ears. I was getting frustrated and wasn't sure what to do.

Finally, I closed my eyes and said a prayer in my heart.

Just as I finished my prayer, my wife turned to me and surprised me with the following question: "How do *you* recognize



the promptings of the Spirit?"

We began to discuss ways that the Spirit of the Lord spoke to us personally. This soon led to our talking about examples from the scriptures of how the Spirit had touched others. As we discussed these things, I could feel the Spirit there with us, and it was wonderful!

Then something interesting happened. The gentleman sitting in front of us stood and turned


around. He was rather tall and had the appearance of a businessman returning from a long trip. I worried that perhaps our conversation had spurred him to challenge us and our beliefs.

But the challenge did not come. Instead he introduced himself and apologized for interrupting us. Then he asked us, "What religion are you?"

When we told him, he said, "I thought so." He explained that

he had met some members of the Church before and was quite impressed. "Why are you the way you are? The members of your church always seem to be so excited to go to church. What makes you so excited to live as you do?"

Recognizing a wonderful opportunity to share the gospel, my wife and I spoke to him of the Restoration and soon gave him a Book of Mormon. We expressed our love for the book, explained



Apparently overhearing our conversation about spiritual things, the man in front of us stood and turned around. What he said next surprised us.

the Prophet Joseph Smith's calling, and spoke of the Savior's divine mission. Then we told him about Moroni's promise found near the end of the Book of Mormon.

It was exciting to see his interest grow. He was enthusiastic and sincere about reading the book. We invited him to pray about it, and he said he would. Again I felt the strong presence of the Spirit. Telling our new friend about the missionaries, we encouraged him to meet with them.

Before long we reached our friend's stop. He was going home to his family. We bid him farewell and promised to keep in touch.

After our conversation ended, I sat for a moment and then realized something: the swearing around us had stopped. In fact, everything around us was silent.

The power of prayer and the influence of the Holy Spirit had transformed a distressing situation into one in which the gospel could be shared. I am thankful that Heavenly Father hears and answers prayers and that He is willing to bless us with His Spirit to guide, strengthen, and comfort us. □

Douglas J. Vermeeren is a member of the Calgary 14th Ward, Calgary Alberta Stake.

Gospel topics: profanity, prayer, Holy Ghost, missionary work

Rescued from the Darkness

By Heri Castro Veliz

The accident happened while I was riding home following a soccer game in a town south of Santiago, Chile. My younger brother had played for one of the teams, and while

my parents waited for him I went ahead on my bicycle. My eight-year-old cousin asked if he could go with me, so I sat him on the bar of my bike and took off.

As I pedaled, I felt a twinge of guilt. The night before, after celebrating the triumph of my own team in another local game, I had ended up intoxicated. At 18 years of age, I wasn't doing much with my life.

While the wind buffeted our faces, my cousin shifted uncomfortably. As he did so, he caught one of his feet between the tire and the front of the bike. The bike flipped forward, and I hit the rough asphalt face first. When I touched my face, I thought my nose was damaged beyond saving. Fortunately, my cousin was fine. My parents arrived shortly, then a police officer, and finally an ambulance. I was taken into surgery, where they stitched up part of my nose and grafted some tissue onto my forehead. After a few hours in the hospital under observation, I was sent home. That night I experienced an intense pain that kept me from sleep.

The following night the pain was even worse. Finally, exhausted from the intensity of the pain, I fell asleep. In a frightening dream, I seemed to see myself lying on the bed with my arms folded over my chest—the only position I found comfortable. Then I saw a dense vapor of darkness and felt a hand pulling me toward it. Terrified, I struggled to get free.

Suddenly I saw my younger brother on my other side, pulling me away from the darkness and into the light. But his help was not enough; I became desperate and cried out. As I did, I woke up. My father came in to calm me. The pain came back, and for the first time in my life, I saw my father cry.

I was moved into my parents'

room, next to Mama. Mama and my brother had been baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints a few months before, and I had seen how much she loved the Book of Mormon. She read to me from it as I fell asleep again.

Almost immediately, I had the same dream. This time when my brother started to pull on my arm, I understood the significance of it. The darkness represented the world in its fallen state, and my brother represented the gospel and a life of hope—the life he wanted for me. I knew I had fallen into bad habits. I had not opened my heart to what the missionaries taught us, and I had never prayed to find out if what they taught was true. At that moment, I promised my Father in Heaven I would be baptized.

I woke up crying. Mama cried too and prayed for me.

The pain continued the following day, and Mama asked the missionaries to give me a priesthood blessing. After that, I began to get better. Throughout my recovery, my desire to be baptized grew stronger.

I began to receive the missionary discussions again, and this time I opened my heart. I did not yet have a great deal of knowledge of the gospel—but the dream, combined with Mama's faith and the priesthood blessing, helped me know God loved me and had provided a way for me to obtain eternal life. I took an important step toward that goal on the day I was baptized.

I used to think I had plenty of time to worry about finding the true Church, if it existed. But the accident helped me understand that we must not postpone making good choices. □

Heri Castro Veliz is a member of the Puente Alto First Ward, Santiago Chile Puente Alto Stake.

Gospel topics: repentance, conversion, dreams

Personal History on Tape

Writing your personal history can seem overwhelming. One imagines countless hours recalling past events and feelings and then laboring to write them for family and future posterity to read. The good news is there's a simpler way. Here is an easy method that has worked for our family.

First, use a tape recorder to record your thoughts. To help you plan what to say, think of events from a few of the following categories: childhood, teenage years, mission, college, friends, dating and marriage, career, Church callings, raising a family, spiritual experiences, vacations, the golden years, and special talents and accomplishments. From each category, share two or three of your experiences. Remember, detail is not necessary, nor is recalling every event. Your family will be grateful that they have your voice on tape. As you relate your experiences, include stories from difficult times in your life and explain what you learned from them. Try to tell at least one event from each category.

Recording your personal history need not be time-consuming. By taking half an hour each week to record one or two stories, you can progress quickly. Your history can be simple and short. Don't worry about how you speak; just say it in your own words. Think of how grateful you would be to have a tape recording of a great-great-grandfather sharing experiences from his life.

When you finish recording your experiences you can make copies of the tape or even have it



copied to a compact disc. Of course, tapes deteriorate over time, and technology changes. If you would like your history to be written, you can transcribe the tapes or ask someone to do this for you. At this point, if you wish, you could edit your personal history and include more details or experiences. Prepare a title page and use the categories listed above as your table of contents. Don't let spelling, grammar, and punctuation concerns keep you from typing your history.

Once everything is typed, insert photocopies of pictures of yourself, and make copies for family members. If you'd like to

bind your finished work, you can do this at many photocopy stores. As an alternative, you could purchase folders or three-ring binders and assemble them yourself. To further personalize your history, sign and date each copy. You could then give your personal history as a gift for the holidays or other occasions.

By keeping it simple, you are more likely to record your personal history, instead of feeling overwhelmed and putting it off. And for years to come your family will cherish the memories you share.—**Gail Ratliff Glende, Olive Knolls Ward, Bakersfield California Stake**

Pay Yourself a Reward

Do you struggle with following through on plans to get out of debt? Here's a technique you can use as a motivator: pay yourself a reward.

People seem to thrive on rewards. Try this formula for success in achieving financial self-reliance: Set a goal to pay off one or more debts, write a specific plan to accomplish this, and reward yourself when you have reached your goal. The key to the successful implementation of your plan is to set milestones along the way and give yourself small rewards as you reach them.

Let's face it. It's tough to sacrifice and discipline ourselves to stick to a budget, pay off debts, and save for a rainy day. But attach an appealing reward, and the process becomes enjoyable. Try hanging a picture of the anticipated event or item on the refrigerator. Perhaps you have wanted to attend the ballet or enjoy a relaxed day at the lake. Or how about a quiet dinner at a favorite restaurant?

The best part is that your reward will be paid for in cash with the retired debt payment that is now available. While this amount will be small at first, it will grow as each debt is eliminated. And the rewards of this system go far beyond the movie or day at the amusement park. Who can measure the value of counseling together as a family and working toward a common goal or of the confidence and self-reliance instilled in family members? Not only will you reap the financial harvest at the completion of your goals, but also you'll enjoy the sweet rewards along the way. —Chris Wright, Liberty Third Ward, Huntsville Utah Stake



Family Sports for Family Home Evening

One Monday evening our parents announced we were going to have a sporting event patterned after the Olympic Games. Each of us took turns competing in simple athletic events they had planned for us in the backyard.

First, we ran an obstacle course—jumping over the swing, running under the slide, jumping three times on the trampoline, winding our way through ropes and bars, and sprinting to the finish line.

Then we enjoyed throwing the “discus” (a softball) and measuring the distance, teaming up for three-legged races, and passing the baton in the team relay.

Everyone cheered for everyone else. When the competition ended, we returned to the living

room and our parents passed out our “trophy.” When we caught a glimpse of our awards, we were excited; we did not even notice they were secondhand trophies. Attached to each was a handwritten tribute: Laurie—Best Sportsmanship; Shannon—Fastest Runner; Joel—Greatest Flexibility; and so on. Everyone got some kind of trophy. For a long time, those trophies held a place of honor on top of our dressers. Seeing them reminded us of that family home evening and helped build family unity and feelings of self-worth.

Activities such as this don't take a lot of money, just some creativity, some time, and a lot of love. In those few hours together, we learned important lessons about teamwork, encouraging others, the need for everyone to feel part of a group, and the importance of families.—

Bonnie B. Larsen,
Wellsville
Eighth
Ward,
Wellsville
Utah
Stake



Remarks at Pioneer Day Commemoration Concert

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY
22 July 2001

My beloved brethren and sisters, what a pleasure it is to meet with you this summer Sabbath evening.

We have heard and will continue to hear the music of this wonderful choir which was first organized in pioneer times, and also of the orchestra, recently organized and which already is doing so very, very well.

I proposed that we hold a meeting of this kind to emphasize the spiritual elements of the coming of the pioneers. We invite all of our friends of other faiths to join with us. We are met in this great new and magnificent Conference Center, a building unique in all the world which will be spoken of with honor and respect more and more as the years pass. It has been constructed under the inspiration of the Almighty in the spirit of those pioneers who built other structures in a manner both bold and beautiful.

This city and state have now become the home of many people of great diversity in their backgrounds, beliefs, and religious persuasions. I plead with our people to welcome them, to befriend them, to mingle with them, to associate with them in the promulgation of good causes.

We are all sons and daughters of God. We state in our articles of faith that "we claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship



how, where, or what they may" (A of F 1:11).

I repeat the words which Brigham Young (1801–77) spoke in 1866, 135 years ago. He said: "To be adverse to Gentiles [as the word was then used], because they are Gentiles, or Jews, because they are Jews, is in direct opposition to the genius of our religion. It matters not what a man's creed is, whether it be Catholic, or Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Quaker, or Jew, he will receive kindness and friendship from us" (quoted in Preston Nibley, *Brigham Young: The Man and His Work* [1936], 416).

I echo those sentiments. As I have said before, we must not be clannish. We must never adopt a holier-than-thou attitude. We must not be self-righteous. We must be magnanimous and open

and friendly. We can keep our faith. We can practice our religion. We can cherish our method of worship without being offensive to others. I take this occasion to plead for a spirit of tolerance and neighborliness, of friendship and love toward those of other faiths. In the furtherance of this attitude as the years pass, there will likely be an increasing tendency to emphasize this diversity in the 24th of July parade and associated festivities.

But I have felt that we must never permit ourselves to lose sight of the great and singular achievements of those who first came to this valley in 1847. They came not for riches or gold, but rather to find a place where they could worship God under the revelations which are the foundation of this work. They were outcasts, driven and hounded, persecuted and peeled. Their reliance was on the God of heaven. When they reached this place, they stopped in spite of entreaties to go on to California or the Northwest. As I have said before, they knew nothing really of the climate of the area, of the conditions of the soil, of the crickets or the grasshoppers with which they soon became acquainted. They had learned all they could concerning the Great Basin, but that was precious little. No one before them had ever grown a potato or an ear of corn or moved a plow to break this sunbaked soil.

I absolutely marvel at the boldness of Brigham Young. In 1868 he said, speaking of their coming here: "We made and broke the road from Nauvoo to this place. . . . Some of the time we followed Indian trails; some of the time we ran by the compass. When we left the Missouri River we followed the Platte. And we killed rattlesnakes by the cord in



The Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square helped furnish the music that was a large part of the program.

some places; and made roads and built bridges till our backs ached. Where we could not build bridges across rivers we ferried our people across, until we arrived here, where we found a few naked Indians, a few wolves and rabbits, and any amount of crickets; but as for any green tree or a fruit tree, or any green fields, we found nothing of the kind, with the exception of a few cottonwoods and willows on the edge of City Creek. For some 1,200 or 1,300 miles we carried every particle of provisions we had when we arrived here."

He went on to say: "We prayed over the land, and dedicated it, and the water, air and everything pertaining to them unto the Lord, and the smiles of heaven rested on the land and it became productive, and today yields us the best of grain, fruits and vegetables" (quoted in Nibley, *Brigham Young*, 441-42).

We must never allow recognition of their trials, of their sacrifices, of their tenacity, of their faith and their prayers in establishing this great community

to lapse or be forgotten.

Even after they had made their first beginnings, the temptation to move to California was powerful. Gold had been discovered there in January of 1848. Their own brethren of the Mormon Battalion had participated in that discovery.

Many were discouraged here, and some said they would go there and get rich and then return. In these circumstances President Young stood before the people and said: "Some have asked me about going. I have told them that God has appointed this place for the gathering of his Saints, and you will do better right here than you will by going to the gold mines. Some have thought they would go there and get fitted out and come back, but I told them to stop here and get fitted out. Those who stop here and are faithful to God and his people will make more money and get richer than you that run after the [god] of this world; and I promise you in the name of the Lord that many of you that go thinking you will get rich and come back, will

wish you had never gone away from here, and will long to come back, but will not be able to do so. Some of you will come back, but your friends who remain here will have to help you; and the rest of you who are spared to return will not make as much money as your brethren do who stay here and help build up the Church and Kingdom of God; they will prosper and be able to buy you twice over. Here is the place God has appointed for his people.

"We have been kicked out of the frying pan into the fire, and out of the fire into the middle of the floor, and here we are and here we will stay. God has shown me that this is the spot to locate his people and here is where they will prosper; he will temper the elements for the good of his Saints; he will rebuke the frost and the sterility of the soil, and the land shall become fruitful. Brethren, go to, now, and plant out your fruit seeds. . . .

" . . . We shall build a city and a temple to the Most High God in this place. . . . This will become the great highway of the nation. Kings and Emperors and the noble and wise of the earth will visit us here, while the wicked and ungodly

The program memorialized the tenacity of the pioneers.



COVERED WAGON. BY GARY L. KAPP



FIRST PLOWING, BY VALOY EATON

The consecrated labor of the pioneers, President Hinckley said, caused the desert to blossom.

will envy us our comfortable homes and possessions" (quoted in Nibley, *Brigham Young*, 127–28).

Think of those prophetic words in terms of what we see today and, in a particular sense, in terms of what will occur next February when the Winter Olympics are staged here and people in great numbers will come from across the earth. It is nothing short of marvelous. It was nothing short of the power of God resting upon this man when he spoke those prophetic words.

We all need reminding, and this is the purpose of this service tonight, that our people came here and settled these valleys so that they might worship God according to their desires. They came and stopped here because of the faith they had in their prophet-leader. And he came and stopped here because of his faith in the living God. I have not the slightest doubt that Joseph had seen this place in vision. I have not the slightest doubt that Brigham Young saw this place in vision. There is no other

explanation for what occurred.

I am only the third generation of my people in this valley to which my grandfather came 151 years ago, a widower who had buried his young wife along that forlorn trail.

I am old enough to have known a little of what those pioneers went through. My own remembrances go back to the time of candles and kerosene lamps, of horse-drawn buggies and wagons, scythes and sickles, hand-milked cows, and irrigation turns through the summer nights. These were all a part of their temporal living, all to the end that they might have freedom of worship.

Now, we have instituted these services as a feature of our Pioneer Day celebration, lest we lose sight of the hand of God in establishing our people in these valleys of the mountains. It was their faith that brought them here. Others came after them, and they were made welcome and will continue to be made welcome. But it was to find a place where those first pioneers and their posterity could continue

in the exercise of their worship that they came to this valley. It was their labor, consecrated labor, in causing the desert to blossom as the rose, as Isaiah had predicted (see Isa. 35:1). On the anvil of adversity they were hammered and shaped and tempered. It was the conviction they carried in their hearts, strong and secure and immovable, that God had restored His work in these latter days and that from this place where the house of the Lord should be established in the tops of the mountains, the work of God would roll forth to the nations of the earth. This gathering tonight is an expression of remembrance and appreciation and thanksgiving.

In all of our celebrations of the 24th of July, let us never forget it. Let us remember with gratitude and reverent respect those who have gone before us, who paid so dear a price in laying the foundation for that which we enjoy this day, is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. □

Gospel topics: tolerance, friendship, love, pioneers

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CONNIE AND RALPH ANDERSEN



Latter-day Saint students from the island of Ambae show their certificates for completing one year of seminary.

Vanuatu: Gospel Growth in the Islands of the Sea

Vanuatu is a lush, tropical country of more than 82 islands in the South Pacific. The Ni-Vanuatu, as the people of these islands are called, have a willingness to hear the teachings of the gospel, and many of these friendly people are joining the Church.

From a small beginning in 1973 with a handful of missionaries and a few member families from Samoa and Tonga, there are now approximately 1,400 members in two districts and nine branches scattered over five of Vanuatu's islands: Éfaté, Tanna, Espiritu Santo, Ambae, and Malakula. In 14 seminary classes and four institute classes, young members are learning doctrines of the gospel. About 30 missionaries, including several natives, currently serve in Vanuatu.

Things have not always been so promising for the Church here. In 1981 the Vanuatu government told the missionaries to leave the country. But, as Paul Hilliman, president of the Port-Vila District explains, missionary work went on as members continued to share the gospel with friends and family. Edwin Basil, who joined the Church with his family in 1982, helped convince the country's prime minister to allow missionaries to return,

which they did in 1986.

President Berry Taravaki Vigouroux is the president of the Luganville District, which includes the islands of Espiritu Santo, Ambae, and Malakula. He has hopes for great growth in the Church in Vanuatu and is

working to move the work forward.

"I'm trying to push hard. It's the Lord's work, and we want to establish His kingdom," he says. He was

baptized in 1991 and sustained as the district president in 1999. He and his family and other district members plan to go to the new Suva Fiji Temple.

Bislama, a pidgin English, is spoken in Vanuatu, along with over 100 island languages. Work on translating the Book of Mormon

Obediah Massing (front) participates in a get-acquainted activity during Vanuatu's first young adult conference.



and other Church materials into Bislama is in progress. For three years Mariella Kaun, a member of the Port-Vila First Branch, Port-Vila District, has been translating Church materials, including the monthly First Presidency message and visiting teaching message. "When we translate the monthly messages and other materials, the members understand the principles of the Church better and they understand the teachings of Jesus Christ better. They try to improve their lives," she says. Sister Kaun anticipates increased Church growth when the Book of Mormon is completed.

In September 2000 the first young adult conference was held in the capital city of Port-Vila, bringing together 110 young members from five islands. Over two and a half days, this group performed service projects, danced and sang, participated in workshops, attended church, and received counsel from Elder Jean Tefan, an Area Authority Seventy. For the first time these young adults were able to mingle with a large group of Latter-day Saint youth from other islands.

Getting an education is a challenge young people face in Vanuatu. Many students go through grade six but then are unable to continue, often because of lack of money for school fees. The recent announcement of the Perpetual Education Fund has brought great hope for young members here. "I have always dreamed of continuing my education, but I wondered how I could achieve it," says Obediah Massing of the Port-Vila District. "My family cannot afford to give me financial support, so I thought I would never get the chance. But when I learned about the PEF, I was thrilled. I know it is the Lord's way to help His children. I am so grateful."—**Connie and Ralph Andersen, Cascade Fifth Ward, Orem Utah Cascade Stake** □

Gospel topics: Church growth, missionary work, Perpetual Education Fund



Top: President Hinckley speaks. Above left and right: This authentic pioneer wagon was among decorations for the program, at which the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square performed.

Never Forget Pioneers, President Hinckley Says

On Sunday evening, 22 July, President Gordon B. Hinckley addressed a Conference Center crowd of nearly 21,000 in what was called the first annual Pioneer Day Commemoration.

"I proposed that we hold a meeting of this kind to emphasize the spiritual elements of the coming of the pioneers," said President Hinckley. "We have instituted these services as a feature of our Pioneer Day celebration, lest we lose sight of the hand of God in establishing our people in these valleys of the mountains."

The hour-long commemoration included the performance of nine

pioneer hymns by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Orchestra at Temple Square. The program was broadcast on the Internet and to Church meetinghouses in the

United States and Canada.

"I take this occasion to plead for a spirit of tolerance and neighborliness, of friendship and love toward those of other faiths," President Hinckley

said. "In the furtherance of this attitude as the years pass, there will likely be an increasing tendency to emphasize this diversity in the 24th of July Parade and associated festivities.

"But I have felt that we



"We must never permit ourselves to lose sight of the [pioneers'] great and singular achievements," President Hinckley said. Above: Video clips of reenacted pioneer scenes were shown as part of the program.



President Faust represented the Church in Salt Lake City's annual Days of '47 parade.

must never permit ourselves to lose sight of the great and singular achievements of those who first came to this valley in 1847." (For the full text of President Hinckley's talk, see p. 70.)

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, spoke at a Days of '47 committee luncheon on 24 July in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building. His remarks included praise for Brigham Young, who led the pioneers, he said, with an absolute belief that he was doing the will of God, while expending the energy and effort to accomplish what needed to be done.

Prior to the luncheon, President Faust represented the Church in Salt Lake City's annual Days of '47 parade, watched by thousands of spectators. The parade's theme was "Welcoming Pioneers from All Nations."

Early on the morning of the 24th, Elder Rex D. Pinegar of the Seventy was the featured speaker at the 55th annual Days of '47 Sunrise Service in the Salt Lake Tabernacle. "We plainly see about us the fruits of the labors of those who came before us," he said. "From many countries they came with courage and faith to an

unknown, untamed land. With miraculous determination and valor they conquered the desert, created settlements, and contributed everything they had to give to establish a new

way of life."

Elder Pinegar referred to Brigham Young's bold statement that the Salt Lake Valley "will become the great highway of nations. Kings and emperors and the noble and wise of the earth will visit us here."

"Those promises were as seeds of hope planted by our faithful ancestors to be harvested in our day as a prophecy fulfilled," Elder Pinegar said. "We have indeed become a great highway and friend to all nations! This coming year we will welcome the world to our beautiful city that was established as an ensign for all nations (see Isa. 5:26)."

Utah governor Michael Leavitt also spoke of welcoming the world as he offered remarks at the Days of '47 luncheon, referring to the forthcoming arrival of the Olympic flame to Salt Lake City "as an affirmation and as a tribute to the pioneers who entered this valley." Governor Leavitt said some 3.6 billion people worldwide will watch the flame come into a modern city that the pioneers settled more than 150 years ago. When the Olympics begin in February 2002, "may we all recognize the affirmation and tribute we will pay to the pioneers," he said. □



PHOTO BY ROSS EZRA KENDELL

Joining President Thomas S. Monson (center) at the dedication were President Byron P. Hughes of the Germany Leipzig Mission (left); President Frank Jentsch of the Dresden stake; Hans Schult, a former Berlin district president; and Elders D. Lee Tobler and Merrill J. Bateman of the Seventy.

President Monson Dedicates Maeser Statue in Germany

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, dedicated a statue honoring Karl G. Maeser at the Dresden stake center in Germany on July 14.

"One country, one continent, could not hold the talents of Karl G. Maeser," said President Monson, honoring the man who was the first convert to the Church in Saxony, Germany, and later the second principal of the Brigham Young Academy, known today as Brigham Young University. The bronze statue is a replica of an original which stands on the BYU campus.

Brother Maeser and his wife, Anna, immigrated to

the Salt Lake Valley in 1860. In 1876 President Brigham Young selected him to develop in Provo, Utah, an institution where students could learn through the Spirit of the Lord. Brother Maeser went on to influence the development of Brigham Young University and education in western America through the introduction of new educational methodologies, the implementation of a model honor code, and the training of early leaders of the Utah territory and the Church.

"We are assembled here in the city of Dresden, where Karl G. Maeser was baptized," said President

Monson in his dedicatory prayer. "We are grateful to the land of Germany and the state of Saxony from whence he came, where he, like the Savior, grew in stature and in wisdom and in favor with God and man."

More than 350 people attended the dedication, including Church members and local civic leaders. "I am glad I can be here for the dedication and unveiling of the statue of our son, Karl G. Maeser," said Dr. Thomas Pollock, mayor of Meissen, the community in which the Dresden stake center stands.

President Monson was accompanied by Elder D. Lee Tobler of the Seventy, President of the Europe Central Area, and by Elder Merrill J. Bateman of the Seventy, president of Brigham Young University. Speaking at the ceremony, Elder Bateman said that the fundamental honor code developed by Brother Maeser is still in use at BYU today. "I'm proud to be a successor to Karl G. Maeser," he said. □



PHOTO COURTESY OF EUROPE CENTRAL AREA PRESIDENCY

Elder M. Russell Ballard (center) recently dedicated the Republic of Moldova for the preaching of the gospel. With him were President and Sister Jarvis of the Romania Bucharest Mission (left); President Ion Varlan of the Chisinau Moldova Branch; Elders D. Lee Tobler and Ronald A. Rasband of the Seventy; and two missionaries.

Elder Ballard Dedicates Moldova

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicated the Republic of Moldova for the preaching of the gospel on 16 May.

Located between Ukraine and Romania, Moldova is part of the Romania Bucharest Mission and has had missionaries in the country since October 1997. Moldova currently

has one branch with some 100 members.

In his dedicatory prayer, Elder Ballard prayed for the people of Moldova. "Help them to strengthen their families and the nation," he said. "Bless the people that their hearts may be touched by the light of the gospel so that the message of the restoration of Thy Church and kingdom may penetrate their

hearts and their minds."

Elder Ballard was joined at the dedication by Elders D. Lee Tobler and Ronald A. Rasband of the Europe Central Area Presidency; Romania Bucharest Mission President George K. Jarvis and his wife, Kathryn; President Ion Varlan of the Chisinau Moldova Branch; and two full-time missionaries. The dedication took place on a hill overlooking Chisinau. □

Vital Records Index for Scandinavia Released

The Church recently released a new family history tool for those who want to learn more about their Scandinavian ancestors. The Vital Records Index for Scandinavia on CD-ROM contains 4.5 million records extracted from original birth, christening, and marriage certificates from Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. Volunteers extracted the

information from church records kept from the late 1500s to 1905.

"Birth and christening records usually included the parents of the child. Marriage records often included the parents of the bride or the groom. Therefore, with 4.5 million of these vital records, the total number of individuals available in the database could easily be

over 10 million," said Paul Nauta, communications manager for the Family and Church History Department. The database also includes source information, which enables users to refer to the original record on microfilm for additional data.

The set of seven discs (item no. 50108) can be purchased for U.S. \$16.50 (shipping and handling



included) through Church distribution centers worldwide. The discs can also be ordered on the Internet at www.familysearch.org. □



Elder Arthur Minasyan of Armenia (left) greets members Hakob Ghrjoyan, Artush Harotyunyan, and Houhannes Topchyan at a presentation in Gyumri, Armenia.

Open Houses Introduce Eastern Armenian Book of Mormon

Seventeen hundred years ago, Armenia officially recognized Christianity as its religion. During the year 2001 as the country celebrates its long religious tradition and history, the good news of the restored gospel is being taught in Armenia by a small but dedicated group of Latter-day Saint missionaries.

Armenia—at one time a Soviet republic—struggles with social and economic challenges. However, some of its citizens have begun to embrace The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Armenia Yerevan Mission was organized in 1999 as part of the Europe East Area. Although they cannot proselyte, the full-time missionaries have worked with member referrals, and Church membership has grown steadily.

During the year of elaborate celebrations to commemorate 1,700 years of Christianity, Latter-day

Saint missionaries held open houses in two cities to introduce the newly published Armenian Book of Mormon to the people. On 28 December 2000, the full Eastern Armenian translation of the Book of Mormon rolled off the press, making it one of the 100 languages into which the Book of Mormon has been translated.

The first open house was held on 3 March 2001 in Yerevan, the capital city of Armenia; another occurred in the second-largest city, Gyumri, on 16 March. Although the open houses required hundreds of hours of preparation, the 57 referrals received from the 400 people who attended made the work worthwhile.

“What better way to celebrate the 1,700 years of Christianity than to bring them the fulness of Christ’s gospel in their own tongue,” says Elder Michael King from

Fruit Heights, Utah.

The presentations and displays explained such topics as “What is the Book of Mormon?” “Why does the world need the Book of Mormon?” and “Why should a person read the Book of Mormon?”

Now that Armenians can read the Book of Mormon in their own language, missionary work is much easier, full-time missionaries explain. Trying to understand the treasures of the Book of Mormon in a foreign language can be difficult and confusing. But that confusion will no longer be a stumbling block for Armenian members and investigators.

“It’s amazing to be able to share the Book of Mormon with people here in Armenia in their own language,” says Elder Marcus Draper from Danville, California. “It has opened so many doors that weren’t open before we received the Book of Mormon in Armenian. It has strengthened people’s testimonies in the Church and has helped new converts become a lot stronger.”

“I have felt a change in the atmosphere of this country,” adds Elder Luke Petersen from Riverton, Utah. “I believe the Spirit has begun to be poured out more abundantly upon the people of Armenia.”

As the country continues its celebration, few people may realize the significance of the Armenian translation of the Book of Mormon. But those who do are grateful for the role it will have for years to come in bringing

people unto Christ.

Following are comments from a few members in Armenia about the blessings of reading the Book of Mormon in their own tongue:

Sargis Ayvazyan: “When I read the Book of Mormon in Armenian, I feel peace. I read the Book of Mormon in two other languages before reading it in my language. Now I understand more. The new translation has helped me to have a greater understanding of Jesus Christ and how to serve Him.”

Margarit Matanyan: “The Book of Mormon fills my heart with warmth and love toward others and helps me to love Heavenly Father and serve Him. I know the Book of Mormon is the word of God, and I appreciate that great gift.”

Jennik Mannusyan: “I am one of very few people in Armenia my age who cannot understand Russian. The Armenian translation is a blessing in my life. I read the Book of Mormon every day before I go to bed. I am going to keep reading every day because the more I read, the more I understand.”

Hasvira Minasaryan: “While I worked on the team that translated the Book of Mormon from English into Armenian, every word and sentence of the book passed through my mind, my spirit, and my heart, leaving an indelible testimony in my soul. I began to recognize the ways of God, the significance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ in my life, and the love, mercy, and grace of my Savior.” □

Policies and Announcements

The First Presidency sent the following letter, dated 29 June 2001, to General Authorities; Area Authority Seventies; stake, mission, and district presidents; bishops and branch presidents, to be read in sacrament meeting.

Members of the Church have responded with great interest and generosity in donating funds to the Church for the Nauvoo Illinois Temple Construction Fund since the announcement of the temple. We wish to express our love and appreciation for the devotion and sacrifice of the members in providing funds to rebuild this temple.

Many have inquired if it would be appropriate to continue donating to this fund. Even though a significant amount has already been received for the construction of the temple, additional donations would be appreciated.

We would like to encourage those who wish to contribute to the Nauvoo Illinois Temple Construction Fund to do so by placing the donation under the "Other" category on the donation slip, and designate the donation as a contribution to the Nauvoo Illinois Temple Construction Fund. The ward will forward these funds to Church headquarters.

May the Lord continue to bless you and your families for your continued support of this wonderful era of temple growth in the Church. □

Museum Sponsors Sixth International Art Competition

The Museum of Church History and Art is seeking entries for its Sixth International Art Competition, to be held in 2003.

The exhibit, which is scheduled from 21 March to 1 September 2003, is titled *Latter-day Saints, Yesterday and Today: Belief, History, Life*. Entries should represent themes, stories, people, places, and ideas related to one or more of the following: (1) Latter-day Saint doctrines, beliefs, and teachings, including messages and stories from the scriptures and teachings of the prophets; (2) important events, places, and people in the history of the Church; (3) the application of gospel teachings and values in Latter-day Saint life, including Church, family, and individual activities and programs.

The competition is open to all members age 18 and older. Each artist may submit one work of art. The museum welcomes a variety of cultural and aesthetic traditions, styles, approaches, and artistic media. These media may include painting, sculpture, quilts, textiles, pottery, ceramics, jewelry, wood carving, metal work, photography, drawing, original prints, and so forth. Entries must have been completed after 1 January 2000. The maximum size limit for artworks is 83.5 inches (213



PAINTING BY SYLVIA HUEGE DE SERVILLE

Taking the Stick of Joseph to the Children of Hagoth was an entry in the Church's Fifth International Art Competition.

centimeters), including frame, in the longest dimension.

A jury will evaluate slides and prints of the artwork in the first round of judging. The slides and prints will not be returned. Artists should not send original art to the museum for first-round jurying.

Artists whose works are selected for the second round of judging will be notified after 15 December 2002. Artists who are notified that their work has been accepted and who live outside the United States and Canada should deliver their original art to the nearest Church distribution center by 7 January 2003. These entries will be juried again to develop the final selection for the museum exhibit. Artwork will be judged on the creative and successful expression of the theme and on the excellence of aesthetic and technical accomplishment.

Entry forms for artists living outside the United States and Canada will be available at local distribution centers after May 2002.

Artists may also request a copy of the entry form by sending their name and address to the museum. Entry forms should be sent directly by mail to the Museum of Church History and Art. The entry forms must be received in the museum by 22 November 2002.

For information, write to Museum of Church History and Art, 45 N. West Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3810, USA. Or e-mail to churchmuseum@ldschurch.org. □

Appointments

E. Marshall and Suzanne McCoy of the Centerville Ward, Fremont California Stake, have been called to serve as president and matron of the Oakland California Temple.

Bruce F. and Suzanne Sorenson of the Monument Park 17th Ward, Salt Lake Monument Park Stake, have been called to serve as president and matron of the Boston Massachusetts Temple.

In the Spotlight

RICKS COLLEGE BECOMES BYU—IDAHO

On 10 August, Ricks College quietly changed its name to Brigham Young University—Idaho and officially became a baccalaureate university. Along with the name change, the university implemented 16 junior-year level courses that will eventually lead to bachelor's degrees.

During summer semester 2001, the university had a record enrollment of 2,282 students, a 228-student increase from the same semester last year.



BYU, BYU—Idaho, and BYU—Hawaii now share similar identifying marks, such as this new medallion.

MONGOLIAN PRESIDENT HONORS EDUCATOR

The president of Mongolia, Natsagiyn Bagabandi, honored Church member Malan R. Jackson with the "Friend of Mongolia Award." Brother Jackson, a member of the Sharon First Ward, Orem Utah Sharon Stake,



Mongolian president Natsagiyn Bagabandi presents award to Malan R. Jackson.

received the award for his work while he served as director of the Butler Institute for International Understanding at Utah Valley State College in Orem, Utah.

As the Butler Institute director, Brother Jackson began a program to educate and support Mongolian students and leaders in their country's transition from communism to democracy. Many Mongolian university administrators and government officials, including the prime minister, have been trained at the Butler Institute.

LATTER-DAY SAINTS SERVE IN ALBERTA CABINET

Church members Ian McClelland, Greg Melchin, and Broyce Jacobs were recently elected as members of the Legislative Assembly in Alberta, Canada.

Brother Melchin, a member of the Calgary 17th Ward, Calgary Alberta West Stake, has served in the Legislative Assembly since 1997, and after his reelection was appointed to the Alberta cabinet as minister of revenue. Brother McClelland, of the River Valley Ward, Edmonton Alberta West Stake, served as a member of Parliament before his election to the Legislative Assembly. Brother Jacobs is a member of the Mountain View Ward, Cardston Alberta Stake.

OREGON STAKE GIVES MAJOR SERVICE

During the week of 16 July, 1,100 members of the Oregon City Oregon Stake were joined by 400



More than 1,000 members of the Oregon City Oregon Stake teamed up with others to spruce up their community.

residents of Canby, Oregon, in giving an estimated 7,000 hours of community service.

The stake had originally approached the city government seeking opportunities to serve the community. As a result, service projects were carried out throughout the city, from cleaning and restoring several community centers to collecting food and clothing for local food banks and shelters.

Because organized service on this scale was unprecedented in Canby, a local television station helped the stake produce a training video to show other community organizations how to work with the city in carrying out large-scale service.

TEXAS STAKE'S FAMILY- THEMED FLOAT WINS PRIZE

In an effort to call attention to the need for strong families, the Plano Texas Stake entered a family-themed float in a local Fourth of July parade and won the Grand Marshal's prize for best float. More than 60 stake members

walked beside or rode on the float, which was titled "Families, the Heart of America."

BYU BALLROOM DANCE COMPANY WINS CHAMPIONSHIP

The Brigham Young University Ballroom Dance Company placed first in the Standard and Latin divisions of the British Formation Championships held recently in Blackpool, England.

"The teams compete at the championships every three years, and since 1989, both the Modern and Latin teams from BYU have won first place," said Curt Holman, a BYU dance faculty member. □



Members ride the Plano Texas Stake's award-winning float.

Comment

Seeking the Son

I so much appreciated the article, "Seeking the Son" (April 2001). I, too, am a mother of a disabled son, and I received this issue at a time when this article could have been written about me.

I am usually very optimistic

about our challenges, but like the daffodil fighting for a ray of sunshine, there are times when I find myself having to work very hard to seek out the Savior's light and to remember that He is mindful of my little family. Sometimes it seems easier just to wither away, but I know He is there. It is up to me to seek Him and allow Him to replenish my faith and my strength.

Keri Gillespie
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Enlarging the Soul

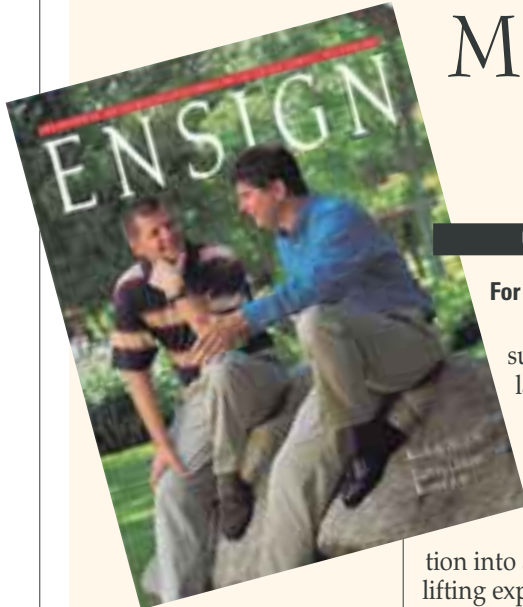
I write to express appreciation for the Latter-day Saint Voices section of the *Ensign* and to share an experience I had relative to it.

In the February issue, I read "The Lost Pamphlet," a story of a Guatemalan brother whose prayer was answered by the arrival of the missionaries. I then read "Go Check on Wendi," a story of a mother responding to the prompting of the

Spirit of the Lord. Her young daughter's prayer was answered.

My experience in reading those stories is reaffirmation of a fundamental and significant truth: God does hear and respond to the petitions of His children. The sincere prayer of a child of God, young or old, does not go unheeded. I felt that testimony enlarge my soul and bring tears to my eyes.

Joseph B. Romney
Rexburg, Idaho



Making the Most of This Issue

OCTOBER 2001

For the Family

- When you feel surrounded by bad language, do you wonder what you can do about it? See how one couple turned a negative situa-

tion into a spiritually uplifting experience, p. 65.

- "I love you." Read how one member learned from the Prophet Joseph Smith's example the difference those words could make, p. 62.

- Can an obstacle course, a three-legged race, and a team relay really be part of family home evening? One family shares ideas for creating a memorable sports activity, p. 69.

Forgive Him?

Abandoned as a child by an alcoholic father, a grown son now has to deal with the dying father's plea for help. What will he do? See p. 16.

Easing Mental Illness Burdens

According to some statistics, one in five families has a member who suffers from a serious mental illness. What can you do to help people struggling with these burdens? See p. 32.

Strengthen Your Character

Counsel from President David O. McKay, ninth President of the Church, offers rich insights into developing "that something within." See p. 22.

Your Tour of Welfare Square

The many aspects of Church welfare, from fruit canning to finding employment, can be seen in the model operations at Welfare Square in Salt Lake City. For a quick pictorial tour of the square, see p. 58.

Think You're Prepared?

How can the experiences of the Mormon Battalion or the Latter-day Saints who survived the 1906 San Francisco earthquake help us become better prepared today? See p. 38.

Ending the Struggle with Debt

Want an incentive to pay off a debt? Reward yourself as you do it. For ideas on reaching the goal to be debt-free, see p. 69.

Member-Missionary Work

Are there people you would like to help come

back to the Church? People you would like to see enjoying gospel blessings? This article explains how we can increase the effectiveness of our member-missionary work. See p. 50.

Home Teachers and Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pp. 2 and 57.

Did You Know?

Each month's issue of the *Ensign* has an article supporting the family, focusing either on marriage or parenthood. This month's is on teaching children to respect others. See "Cultivating Respect," p. 46.



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The Brother of Jared, by Del Parson



*"And the brother of Jared [was] a large and mighty man, and a man highly favored of the Lord"
(Ether 1:34).*



*“I would hope, I would pray, that each of us . . .
I would resolve to seek those who need help
. . . and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace
of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts
will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and
put them on the way of happy and productive lives.”
—President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Reach with a Rescuing
Hand,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86.*