

# Ensign



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*“Even though we may feel lost in the midst of our current circumstances, God promises the hope of His light—He promises to illuminate the way before us and show us the way out of darkness.”*

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Hope of God’s Light,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 70.

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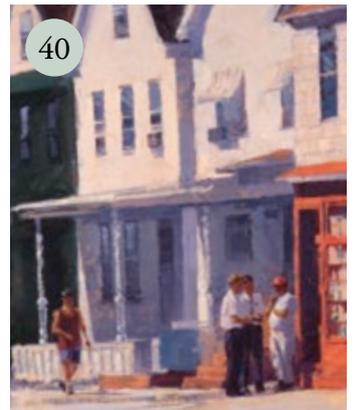
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## Family Home Evening Ideas

*This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening.  
The following are some examples.*



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CODY BELL

**“Act Well Your Part,” page 24:** Show to your family a picture of President David O. McKay ([lds.org/churchhistory/presidents/leaders.jsp](http://lds.org/churchhistory/presidents/leaders.jsp)) and read the story about him at the first of the article.

You could then read Romans 1:16 and discuss how the story and scripture relate to Elder Quentin L. Cook’s counsel about avoiding masks of anonymity and about acting in accordance with your true identity.

**“How Can I Be a Successful Missionary?” page 32:** Share with your family some of the insights the author gained about being a successful missionary. Consider reading together the sidebar “Becoming a Successful Missionary” and then discussing some ways family members

might measure success in their own missionary efforts. To further the discussion, select a few pictures from the article “Our Great Missionary Heritage” (page 40) and talk

about how the missionaries in those pictures were successful.

**“Becoming Men and Women of God,” page 60:** Ask a few family members to each tell the story of someone from the scriptures, Church history, or the present day who could be considered a man or woman of God. You could then discuss what characteristics make that person a man or woman of God. Compare your ideas with the attributes that Elder Craig A. Cardon highlights from Doctrine and Covenants 4:6.

### ESTABLISHING A PATTERN

After my husband’s passing, holding regular and meaningful family home evenings became a struggle for my teenagers and me. During a family council, we shared ideas about what we could do. We decided to try a pattern of lessons and activities that would allow us to work together on Duty to God and Personal Progress goals, teach the gospel to each other regularly, and participate in various recreational activities. This pattern has helped everyone feel more prepared and willing to participate, and we feel closer and happier because of it.

**Selena Rae Johnson, Utah, USA**

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By President  
Thomas S. Monson

# OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO Rescue

**F**or Latter-day Saints, the need to rescue our brothers and sisters who have, for one reason or another, strayed from the path of Church activity is of eternal significance. Do we know of such people who once embraced the gospel? If so, what is our responsibility to rescue them?

Consider the lost among the aged, the widowed, and the sick. All too often they are found in the parched and desolate wilderness of isolation called loneliness. When youth departs, when health declines, when vigor wanes, when the light of hope flickers ever so dimly, they can be succored and sustained by the hand that helps and the heart that knows compassion.

There are, of course, others who need rescue. Some struggle with sin while others wander in fear or apathy or ignorance. For whatever reason, they have isolated themselves from activity in the Church. And they will almost certainly remain lost unless there awakens in us—the active members of the Church—a desire to rescue and to save.

## Someone to Show the Way

Some time ago I received a letter written by a man who had strayed from the Church. It typifies too many of our members. After describing how he had become inactive, he wrote:

“I had so much and now have so little. I am unhappy and feel as though I am failing in everything. The gospel has never left my heart, even though it has left my life. I ask for your prayers.

“Please don’t forget those of us who are out here—the lost Latter-day Saints. I know where the Church is, but sometimes I think I need someone else to show me the way, encourage me, take away my fear, and bear testimony to me.”

While I was reading this letter, my thoughts turned to a visit I made to one of the great art galleries of the world—the famed Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England. There, exquisitely framed, is a masterpiece painted in 1831 by Joseph Mallord William Turner. The painting features heavy-laden black clouds and the fury of a turbulent sea portending danger and death. A light from a stranded vessel gleams far off. In the foreground, tossed high by incoming waves of foaming water, is a large lifeboat. The men pull mightily on the oars as the lifeboat plunges into the tempest. On the shore stand a wife and two children, wet with rain and whipped by wind. They gaze anxiously seaward. In my mind I abbreviated the name of the painting. To me it became *To the Rescue*.<sup>1</sup>

Amid the storms of life, danger lurks. Men and women, boys and girls find themselves stranded and facing destruction. Who will guide the lifeboats, leaving behind the comforts of home and family, and go to the rescue?

Our task is not insurmountable. We are on the Lord’s errand; we are entitled to His help.

During the Master’s ministry, He called fishermen at Galilee to leave their nets and follow Him, declaring, “I will make you fishers of men.”<sup>2</sup> May we join the ranks of the fishers of men and women, that we might provide whatever help we can.



It is my prayer that we might have a desire to rescue the less active and to bring them back to the joy of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that they might partake with us of all that full fellowship has to offer.

May we reach out to rescue the lost who surround us: the aged, the widowed, the sick, those with disabilities, the less active, and those who are not keeping the commandments. May we extend to them the hand that helps and the heart that knows compassion. By doing so, we will bring joy into their hearts, and we will experience the rich satisfaction that comes to us when we help another along the pathway to eternal life. ■

#### NOTES

1. The painting's full title is *Life-Boat and Manby Apparatus Going Off to a Stranded Vessel Making Signal (Blue Lights) of Distress*.
2. Matthew 4:19.
3. Ephesians 2:19.
4. See Matthew 22:39.

Ours is the duty to reach out to rescue those who have left the safety of activity, that such might be brought to the table of the Lord to feast on His word, to enjoy the companionship of His Spirit, and to be “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”<sup>3</sup>

### The Principle of Love

I have found that two fundamental reasons largely account for a return to activity and for changes of attitudes, habits, and actions. First, individuals return because someone has shown them their eternal possibilities and has helped them decide to achieve them. The less active can't long rest content with mediocrity once they see that excellence is within their reach.

Second, others return because loved ones or “fellowcitizens with the saints” have followed the admonition of the Savior, have loved their

neighbors as themselves,<sup>4</sup> and have helped others to bring their dreams to fulfillment and their ambitions to realization.

The catalyst in this process has been—and will continue to be—the principle of love.

In a very real sense, those persons stranded in the storm-tossed sea of Turner's painting are like many of our less-active members who await rescue by those who guide the lifeboats. Their hearts yearn for help. Mothers and fathers pray for their sons and daughters. Wives plead to heaven that their husbands may be reached. Sometimes children pray for their parents.

### TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

Consider asking the people you visit if they know anyone who has been struggling to attend church. You could choose one person and discuss ways to show love, such as inviting him or her to participate in a family home evening or to come over for a meal.

## The Gift of Jen

By Josi S. Kilpack

I made a series of wrong choices my sophomore year of high school. Those choices led to serious consequences and unhappiness, and I decided to use my summer break to begin making changes. When school started again, I ate lunch in a bathroom stall or empty hallway to avoid the bad relationships waiting to welcome me back.

I had never felt so alone.

Then God gave me a gift: He sent me Jen. She never judged me for my mistakes but instead encouraged me to

keep moving in the right direction. Knowing she would be at school helped me continue to read my scriptures and nurture my testimony. By the time graduation came, I had proven to myself that I was committed to change.

I wonder sometimes where I would be today if Jen hadn't reached out to me. Could I have stuck to my principles without her? Luckily, I will never know because she was there with her whole heart, ready and willing to help me.

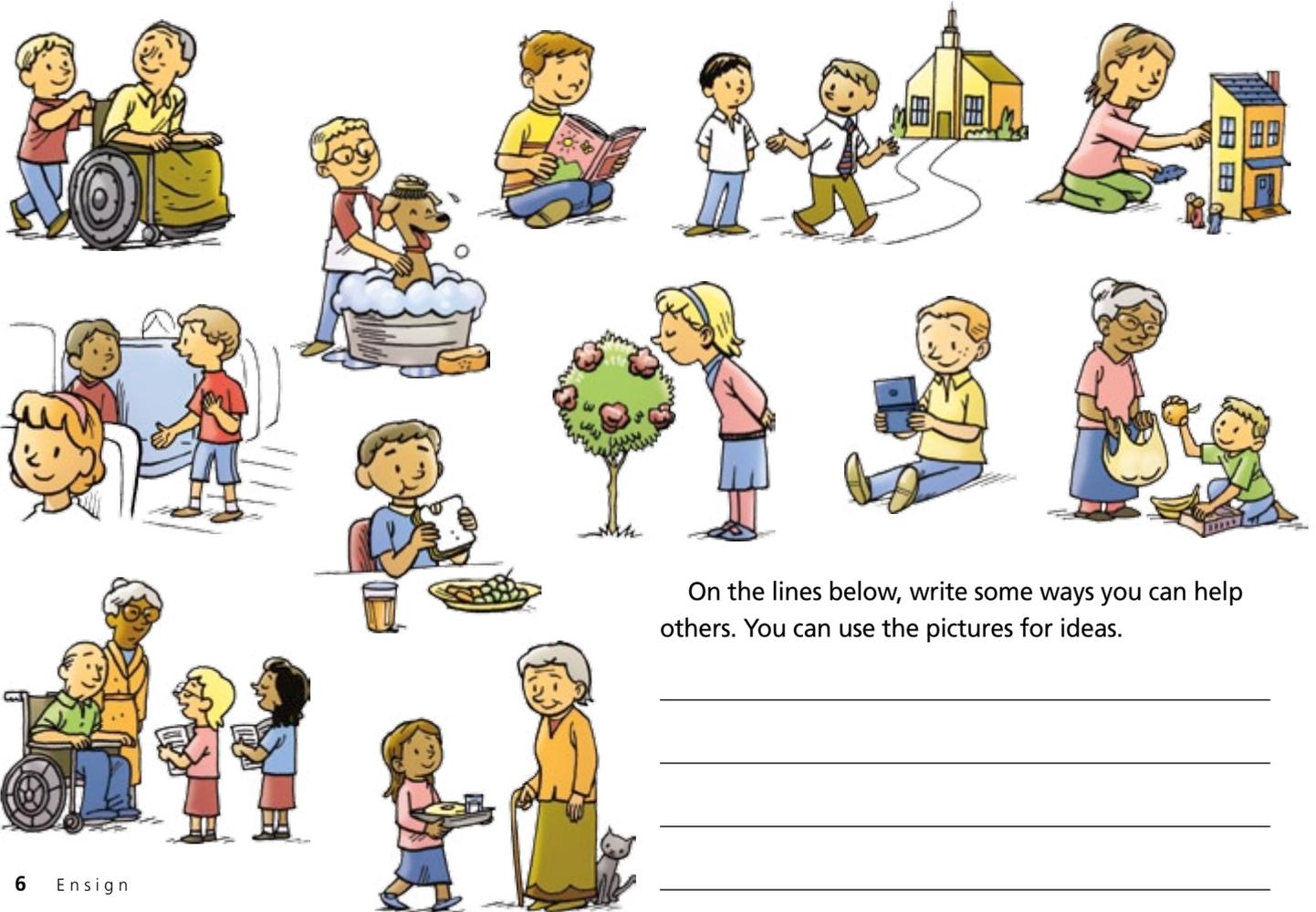
*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

## CHILDREN

### Ways to Rescue

President Thomas S. Monson teaches that we should reach out to others, including the elderly, widowed, sick, less active, and those who need

extra help. Look at the pictures below and circle the ones that show something you could do to help others.



On the lines below, write some ways you can help others. You can use the pictures for ideas.

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Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding the life and mission of the Savior increase your faith in Him and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to [reliefsociety.lds.org](http://reliefsociety.lds.org).

## The Divine Mission of Jesus Christ: Creator

This is the first in a series of Visiting Teaching Messages featuring aspects of the mission of the Savior.

Jesus Christ “created the heavens and the earth” (3 Nephi 9:15). He did so through the power of the priesthood, under the direction of our Heavenly Father (see Moses 1:33).

“How grateful we should be that a wise Creator fashioned an earth and placed us here,” said President Thomas S. Monson, “. . . that we might experience a time of testing, an opportunity to prove ourselves in order to qualify for all that God has prepared for us to receive.”<sup>1</sup> When we use our agency to obey God’s commandments and repent, we become worthy to return to live with Him.

Of the Creation, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said:

“We are the reason He created the universe! . . .

“This is a paradox of man: compared to God, man is nothing; yet we are everything to God.”<sup>2</sup> Knowing that Jesus Christ created the earth for



us because we mean everything to Heavenly Father can help us increase our love for Them.

### From the Scriptures

John 1:3; Hebrews 1:1–2; Mosiah 3:8; Moses 1:30–33, 35–39; Abraham 3:24–25

#### NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “The Race of Life,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 91.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “You Matter to Him,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 20.
3. Joseph Smith, in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 171.
4. *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 171.
5. Joseph Smith, in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 169.



## Faith, Family, Relief

### From Our History

We have been created in God’s image (see Moses 2:26–27), and we have divine potential. The Prophet Joseph Smith admonished the sisters in Relief Society to “live up to [their] privilege.”<sup>3</sup> With that encouragement as a foundation, sisters in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been taught to live up to their divine potential by fulfilling God’s purposes for them. “As they come to understand who they really are—God’s daughters, with an innate capacity to love and nurture—they reach their potential as holy women.”<sup>4</sup>

“You are now placed in a situation where you can act according to those sympathies which God has planted in your bosoms,” said the Prophet Joseph Smith. “If you live up to these principles how great and glorious!—if you live up to your privilege, the angels cannot be restrained from being your associates.”<sup>5</sup>

### What Can I Do?

1. How does seeking to understand our divine nature increase our love for the Savior?
2. How can we show our gratitude for God’s creations?

# GENERAL CONFERENCE IDEAS

By Tina Spencer



## “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?”

Fifteen days before the start of each general conference, our family hangs up our sign announcing the beginning of “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?” Then we add the latest pictures of our prophets, seers, and revelators from the previous conference edition of the Church magazines.

I prepare by researching the prophet we will welcome that night. Sometimes I find objects around the house to represent a few things I found out, and I put them on a plate. During dinner, as I tell stories about each item, everyone tries to guess who it is. Other times, I tell a story or two that the prophet shared during the previous general conference.

I am amazed at the things my children remember about our beloved

prophets and apostles, and I know this simple game has increased my love and knowledge of these great men also.

## My Own Copy of Conference

When Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and his wife, Kathy, visited during our stake conference, Sister Andersen shared a story with us. She said that when they were living in France, she made photocopies of the conference talks for each of their children—even the very young ones. She was shocked when she found out the price of the photocopies, which was very high. Then the thought came into her mind: “What is it worth to you for your family to have the words of the prophets?”

This story really touched me, and

I made sure everyone in our family had his or her own copy of the conference talks. Our daughters were very excited. We used them for family home evening and during scripture study. I loved seeing one daughter reading talks on her own and marking them with her highlighter. Another daughter, recently baptized, begged me to read talks with her one-on-one.

## Conference Challenge

As part of my lesson in Relief Society, I challenged each sister to review the talks from the previous conference; some sisters reread the talks, and others watched them online. Several sisters expressed how they felt much more prepared for the upcoming conference. ■

*The author lives in Washington, USA.*

# PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

For some youth, the failure to apply principles of physical fitness can become a major obstacle to making friends and building self-confidence. Moreover, physical and emotional health are critical but often underdeveloped aspects of preparing to serve a mission. On pages 42–43 of this month’s *New Era*, Elder Adrián Ochoa of the Seventy discusses how taking care of our bodies can safeguard physical and emotional health. He reminds us to exercise and to obey the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89) so that we will be healthier and happier. As you help your children learn and apply principles of physical and emotional health, they will be able to increase their self-confidence and prepare for future service.

As Elder Ochoa says: “Taking care of your body also blesses your mind and helps you to remember that you are a child of God and can be confident and happy. Our emotional, physical, and spiritual sides are all linked together.”

## Suggestions for Teaching Youth

- Read Elder Ochoa’s article together and develop a family

exercise plan with specific, realistic fitness goals.

- With your teenage children, read the section on physical and emotional health in *For the Strength of Youth* (pages 25–27). Discuss what it means to be healthy emotionally.
- Sing “Though Deepening Trials” (*Hymns*, no. 122) together and discuss what the resurrection teaches us about the importance of our physical bodies.
- Study the scriptures listed with this article and discuss what they teach about physical and emotional health.

## Suggestions for Teaching Children

- Show your child a picture of a temple. Discuss what it means when the Apostle Paul teaches that our bodies are “the temple of the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 6:19) and how this knowledge can help us take care of our bodies and minds.
- Make a list of wholesome recreational activities that your child would like to do as a family. Then create a plan for how to



## RELATED SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 16:32

Daniel 1:3–20

Luke 21:19

Romans 12:1–2

1 Corinthians 6:19–20

1 Thessalonians 5:14

Alma 38:12; 53:20

Doctrine and Covenants  
88:15; 89

make these activities a part of family life.

- Discuss ways to understand and manage emotions, including anger or sadness. Sing “If You’re Happy” (*Children’s Songbook*, 266), “I’m Trying to Be like Jesus” (*Children’s Songbook*, 78), or another song about emotions and making good choices. ■



# A CENTURY OF Scouting IN THE CHURCH

*For 100 years, the Church has used Scouting to build bridges of friendship, fellowship, and faith.*

When leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints embraced the newly founded Boy Scout movement 100 years ago, it was a decision that would end up blessing the Church, the Boy Scouts of America, and millions of young men and their leaders during the ensuing century.

Scouting in the Church has served as “an extraordinary bridge,” says Young Men general president David L. Beck. “For individual young men, it is a bridge that sets them on the path leading to self-reliance and manhood. For the Church, it is a bridge that has fueled real growth as thousands of individuals and families have joined the Church or become active again. For members of the Church, it is a bridge to join with good people of other faiths and organizations whose values and aspirations are similar to ours and to work together to bless all youth in our communities.”<sup>1</sup>

The book *Century of Honor*, recently published by the LDS-BSA Relationships Office, says: “The inspired decision made 100 years ago to affiliate Scouting programs of The Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter-day Saints and the Boy Scouts of America has resulted in countless good turns, strong relationships, and millions of lives positively affected by both organizations. A century later, this Scouting partnership continues to enable young men to successfully serve as missionaries, husbands, and fathers and fulfill their duty to God, country, and family.”<sup>2</sup>

## Connecting Heart and Mind

The story of the Church’s involvement in Scouting begins at the turn of the last century, when Church leaders were looking for a way to help youth, especially the young men, better internalize what they were learning in Church classrooms.

Leaders noted “a lack of energy” and a “slackness” among many Aaronic Priesthood holders. In addition, “a large number of boys and girls” who faithfully attended Sunday School, the Mutual

Improvement Association, and Primary nevertheless had begun “to fall out of the ranks at about fourteen years of age and upwards.”<sup>3</sup>



Young men needed hands-on training, said President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) during general conference in April 1903.<sup>4</sup> During general conference five years later, President Smith requested that the young men be given “something to do that will make them interested in the work of the Lord.” In response, the Church developed an ordination schedule for Aaronic Priesthood holders: “young men served as deacons from 12 to 15, teachers from 15 to 18, and priests from 18 to 21.”<sup>5</sup>

A few years later, the Church Priesthood Committee recommended various associated duties. Along with administering, preparing, and passing the sacrament, young men were to become involved in a variety of service projects.<sup>6</sup> Simultaneously, the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association (YMMIA) introduced athletic activities.

### Scouting Is Born

Church leaders weren’t the only ones who saw the wisdom in helping young men learn skills, build moral character, and serve God and their fellowman.

During his military tours to India and South Africa, an experienced British military officer named Robert Baden-Powell wrote a book titled *Aids to Scouting*, which taught scouting and outdoor skills.

Baden-Powell revised the popular book for boys after organizing “an experimental ‘scouting’ encampment” in 1907. The revision, *Scouting for Boys*, would go on to sell approximately 150 million copies, and his small scouting encampment of 20 boys would soon be duplicated throughout England and America.

“Boys everywhere rallied around the promise of adventure through outdoor activities. The enthusiasm of both youth and adults carried the movement forward at an astonishing pace, and Scout troops were soon organized throughout the world.”

Two years later, when American publisher William D. Boyce became lost while traveling through London, an English boy offered to help him find his way. The boy refused to accept payment for his good deed, declaring



### CAN I GO TO SCOUTS TOO?

The Pedro Chipana family’s journey to the Church began with Pedro’s simple question: “Can I go to Scouts too?”

Pedro, whose family had emigrated from Peru a few years earlier, became interested in Cub Scouts after striking up a friendship with elementary school classmate Cameron Moyle. Soon the two were attending a Wolf Pack together in Cameron’s ward in Holladay, Utah.

“We are so grateful we were welcome to Scout activities even though we weren’t members of the Church,” says Pedro’s mother, Tania. “People opened their hearts and homes to us.”

When Pedro turned 11, his father, also named Pedro, accepted an invitation to join his son on the first of many Scout campouts. On that campout he became friends with Mark Pace, a member of the stake presidency who had served a mission in Spain and would later invite the family to his home to hear the missionary discussions in Spanish.

Despite “many wonderful experiences on campouts” and the love, patience, and fellowshiping of Cub and Scout leaders like DeAnn Moyle, Drew Menlove, Matt Longson, Dee Hansen, Kristi and Ryan Taylor, and many others, the family

was not quite ready to accept the gospel. Pedro, however, continued attending Scout activities in Cameron’s ward even after his family moved from the ward’s boundaries. Both young men eventually earned their Eagle rank before Pedro’s family moved back to the ward after being gone eight years.

At that point, the family could no longer ignore the stirrings of the Spirit. On May 7, 2011, Pedro, his parents, and his younger brother, Aldo, were baptized. A year later they were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple.

“The best part of the story is that Pedro was baptized by his best friend, Cameron,” Tania says.

At his baptism, Pedro realized he now had an additional duty to God—to prepare for a mission. Today he is teaching the gospel in Spanish in the Nevada Reno Mission, while his friend Cameron is serving in the Mexico Chihuahua Mission.



For Pedro Chipana, pictured at left with Cameron Moyle (right) and Peter Searle (left), being baptized by Cameron was an experience he will never forget.



that he was a Boy Scout. Curious, Boyce looked into the movement and returned to America with information about Scouting. On February 8, 1910, the Boy Scouts of America was incorporated.

### Scouting Comes to Utah

That same year, English immigrant Thomas George Wood learned about Scouting from an uncle in England. He resolved to bring the program to the 50 “noisy and not easy to manage” young men in his Salt Lake City ward, organizing a troop on October 12. Other wards soon followed suit, organizing troops within their respective YMMIA organizations.

The following March, the YMMIA board organized a committee to study Scouting and to “investigate the possibility of standardizing Boy Scout troops within the YMMIA and affiliating with the national organization.” Shortly thereafter, the YMMIA officially integrated the program.

On September 2 of that year, the *Deseret News* reported that Scouting had been adopted “to promote discipline and develop character, to instill honor and trustworthiness in the lives of young boys and to inspire them with a sense of duty to parents, country, and religious ideals.”

With the organization of “MIA Scouts,” the foundation was laid for a partnership with the BSA.

By January 1913, approximately 20,000 young men were involved in the Church’s Scout program. That same month a committee that included Elder Heber J. Grant met with BSA leader Samuel A. Moffat to discuss a partnership. The meeting left Elder Grant “favorably impressed.” Two months later, on March 15, the YMMIA approved a resolution to affiliate with the national Boy Scout program, a move approved by President Joseph F. Smith.



### A Fruitful Partnership

With the issuance of an official charter to the Church on May 21, 1913, the Church became the first nationally chartered organization to affiliate with the Boy Scouts of America. The bridge that would bless the Church and the BSA for the next century was now in place. The welcome from the BSA immediately proved beneficial to both organizations, with the BSA readily adopting innovations that came from the Church’s Scouting program.

“The synergistic partnership propelled Scouting forward across the United States and throughout the Church as Scout troops were registered in every ward.” In addition, the partnership paved the way for the affiliation of other organizations with the BSA, which helped the organization acquire a national charter from Congress a few years later.

Because Scouting added achievement and excitement to MIA activities, it attracted and retained boys. By 1919, Scouting had become too large in Utah to be headed by a single Scouting commissioner. As a result, four councils were created with paid professionals administering the program. BSA soon duplicated the council structure throughout the nation.

About ten years after the Church affiliated with the Boy Scouts, Church leaders decided that MIA meetings would be dedicated solely to Scouting and no longer divide their time



### PREPARING YOUNG MEN TO WALK UPRIGHTLY

“In this world where some misguided men and women strive to tear down and destroy great movements such as Scouting, I am pleased to stand firm for an organization that teaches duty to God and country, that embraces the Scout Law. Yes, an organization whose motto is ‘Be prepared’ and whose slogan is ‘Do a good turn daily.’”

“The Aaronic Priesthood prepares boys for manhood and the weightier duties of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Scouting helps our boys to walk uprightly the priesthood path to exaltation.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “The Upward Reach,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 48.

Take part in the October 29 broadcast celebrating 100 years of Scouting in the Church. Go to [scouts100.lds.org](http://scouts100.lds.org) for details.





who became one of the first women to serve on the National Cub Scout Committee, to adapt the Primary curriculum to include Scouting and priesthood preparation for 11-year-old boys. Chief Scout Executive Joseph A. Brunton Jr. met with Primary leaders to help organize the program and, at the request of the Primary board, authorized women to serve as Scout leaders.

As Scouting matured in the Church, leaders took steps to correlate the program more closely with the Aaronic Priesthood, and Church manuals emphasized unity between the Aaronic Priesthood and Scouting.

between Scouting and religious activities. That determination rested on the conclusion “that religious training could naturally occur through Scouting activities.”

That approach reflected Robert Baden-Powell’s vision of Scouting. “There is no religious side to the movement,” he declared in 1920. “The whole of it is based on religion, that is, on the realisation and service of God.”

In 1928, when the Church named Scouting as the activity program for deacons, it created an advanced program called Vanguard Scouting for older boys. Five years later the Boy Scouts of America asked for, and received, permission to use the program as the basis for its own program for older youth, which it decided to name the Explorer program (the Church adopted this name in 1935).

In 1938, Latter-day Saints celebrated Scouting’s silver anniversary in the Church. During general conference that April, Ray O. Wyland, BSA director of education, said, “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is using the Boy Scout program in a larger way than any other church in existence.” He added that the Church “has given a volunteer and a loyal leadership and support that is unequalled by any other religious body in America.”<sup>7</sup>

In 1952, President David O. McKay (1873–1970) asked Primary general president LaVern Parmley to incorporate Cub Scouting into the Primary program. With the new program, Scouting was now available for LDS boys ages 8 through 18. President McKay also asked Sister Parmley,

The Church introduced the Venturing program in 1971, and LDS Scout leaders developed Varsity Scouting for youth ages 14 and 15 a few years later. Both programs eventually became national BSA programs.

After Elder George Albert Smith was appointed to the Boy Scout National Executive Board in 1931, the Church enjoyed increased opportunities to share its desires and opinions with other national Scout volunteers. That influence grew as members of the Young Men and Primary general presidencies and their boards began serving on national Scouting committees and later on the National Executive Board. Church influence also grew internationally through affiliation with international Scouting organizations.

Elder Ezra Taft Benson succeeded President Smith to the national board in 1949. President Thomas S. Monson, who succeeded Elder Benson in 1969 and has served on the board ever since, said on the 100th anniversary of Scouting, “To Scout leaders who build bridges to the hearts of boys, to parents of Scouts, and to you fine young Scouts yourselves, on this the 100th anniversary of Scouting in America, I salute you and pray our Heavenly Father’s blessings upon you.”<sup>8</sup>

Today the Church’s influence continues unabated. In 2012, Wayne Perry became the first Latter-day Saint to serve as national BSA president. And in May 2013, the Church’s Presiding Bishop delivered the keynote address to national Scout leaders at their annual Duty to God breakfast in Grapevine, Texas.



*Bill Mallett (at left with Elder Getúlio Carvalho Jr.) is grateful for mentors like David and Rebecca Melonakos (with Bill at far left) who reached out to him.*

## MENTORS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

Twelve-year-old Bill Mallett loved his first Scout camp-out, but as a new member he was hesitant to become fully active in the Church and its programs. Fortunately for Bill, his Scout leaders didn't give up easily.

"I always had people reaching out to me to keep me linked to the Church in some way," Bill says.

One Scoutmaster, William Faulkner, regularly drove across Newton, North Carolina, to give Bill rides to Scouting activities and Church meetings. During one of those trips, Bill remembers Brother Faulkner encouraging him to set and accomplish five goals: receive his Eagle Scout Award, graduate from seminary, serve a full-time mission, graduate from college, and be sealed in the temple. Bill says this simple conversation gave direction to his life.

"I doubt he knew at the time that it would have such an impact on me that I would look at those five things and would really want to do them because I admired him so much," Bill says.

Having grown up without a father in his home, Bill turned to his Scout leaders for good examples. Another Scoutmaster, David Melonakos and his wife, Rebecca, eventually took Bill in as a foster son.

For the first time, Bill lived in a home that had daily family dinner and weekly family home evening. He saw how a father could preside consistently and worthily in a home.

David mentored Bill through the process of receiving his Eagle Scout and Duty to God awards. Eventually, Bill graduated from seminary, became the valedictorian of his high school, received a top BSA scholarship, and attended Brigham Young University. In November 2012 he completed his mission service in the Brazil São Paulo South Mission.

"I've seen people run after me and do a lot of simple, little things that really changed my life and made me who I am," Bill says. "I really see the Lord's hand in my life through these people."

Bill is grateful to those inspired leaders who listened to the Holy Ghost, prayed for revelation, and helped him through Church and Scouting activities.

"That has made all the difference in my life," he says.

In his remarks, Bishop Gary E. Stevenson said: "Speaking on behalf of the organization I represent, . . . I feel that it is this common belief in duty to God that has forged the iron-strong connection with Boy Scouts of America we have shared over the last 100 years. . . . Duty to God is where the power lies. Duty to God is what changes lives."<sup>9</sup>

## The Bridge of Scouting

On a table in President Monson's office sits a small, sculpted bridge. A figurine of Robert Baden-Powell that President Monson purchased in London stood nearby until a visiting child picked it up and placed it on the bridge.

"Well," responded President Monson in deciding to leave the figurine on the bridge, "Lord Baden-Powell was definitely a bridge builder."<sup>10</sup>

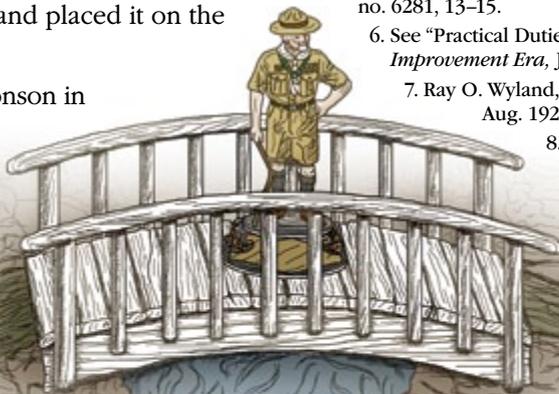
And so is the program he created, especially in the Church.

"With President Monson's vision and

leadership, we have never been positioned better to use that bridge to bless individuals and families," says Brother Beck. "This is a great day for the Church to utilize Scouting in the sacred work of salvation."<sup>11</sup> ■

## NOTES

1. David L. Beck, interview, June 13, 2013, Salt Lake City.
2. Unless otherwise noted, quoted material and historical information in this article come from *Century of Honor: 100 Years of Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (2013).
3. Joseph B. Keeler, *The Lesser Priesthood and Notes on Church Government* (1904), v, vi.
4. See *Improvement Era*, May 1903, 545.
5. Barbara Jean Jones, "A Century of Aaronic Priesthood," *New Era*, Jan. 2000, 30; see also *General Priesthood Committee Minute Book*, no. 6281, 13–15.
6. See "Practical Duties for Members of the Lesser Priesthood," *Improvement Era*, July 1916, 847.
7. Ray O. Wyland, "The Knighthood of Youth," *Improvement Era*, Aug. 1928, 860, 861.
8. Thomas S. Monson, "President Monson Discusses Strengths of Scouting" (video), [lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/2011/01](http://lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/2011/01).
9. Gary E. Stevenson, speech, May 23, 2013, [mormonnewsroom.org/article/bishop-gary-e-stevenson-boy-scouts-of-america-national-annual-meeting-keynote-speech](http://mormonnewsroom.org/article/bishop-gary-e-stevenson-boy-scouts-of-america-national-annual-meeting-keynote-speech).
10. As related by Thomas S. Monson.
11. David L. Beck, interview.





# Christ Healed the Sick

*My testimony was weak from neglect.  
I had become spiritually lame.*

**By Angela Fisher Wilt**

I was raised in the Church, but by the time I had reached my early 20s, I realized that I was living my life in opposition to the teachings of Jesus Christ. After a few failed attempts to return to Church, I began to believe I wasn't worthy of forgiveness. Satan's constant whisperings had convinced me that I didn't deserve Heavenly Father's love.

## **I Was Hesitant to Ask for a Blessing**

In the spring of 1999, I received some information regarding my health that concerned me enough that I desired a priesthood blessing. It had been years since I had asked my dad for a blessing, and I was hesitant to do so. My poor choices had caused my parents disappointment and heartache, and my relationship with my dad had been strained for quite some time. I wasn't certain he would give me a blessing even if I asked, so I tucked the thought into the back of my mind.

Nevertheless, the impression to request a blessing from my father grew stronger. I couldn't ignore it any longer. I knew that my need for this blessing was about more than just my physical health. It was time to turn my life around.

As I drove to my parents' home, I said a silent prayer asking for courage and strength. My knees barely held me as I walked through their door. I found Mom in the kitchen, and as I told her about the news the doctor had given me, she expressed concern. After a few minutes I asked where Dad was. She told me he was getting dressed because they were just getting ready to leave for a dinner date with friends. I thought, "Maybe this isn't the best time to ask." But the impression remained with me. I knew in my heart that it was now or never.

### **"What If I'm Not Worthy of Forgiveness?"**

When my father entered the room, the question I had been preparing to ask stuck in my throat. I saw my mother glance first at me and then at my father. My words just wouldn't come. I burst into tears when I heard my mother say, "Your daughter needs a blessing." I knew that the Holy Ghost was working through her to answer my prayers, because I hadn't even mentioned that I wanted a blessing.

To my great relief, Dad agreed. Immediately, he called John, the husband of the couple they were having dinner with that evening, and asked if he would assist in the blessing. John was more than happy to oblige. They decided to give me a blessing in his home before the couples left for dinner.

When we arrived, the men went into another room to prepare themselves to administer the blessing. As I waited for them to return, a sliver of doubt ran through me. "What if I'm not worthy of forgiveness?" I thought.

Almost immediately, a feeling of peace came over me and my thoughts turned to the Savior. I found myself thinking about how He had healed the lame, the deaf, and the blind. I felt a kinship toward those broken people because I had been deaf to the words of those who loved me, blind to righteous decisions, and too crippled to walk on the "plain road" (2 Nephi 4:32). I had not made "straight paths for [my] feet" but had allowed myself to be "turned out of the way" (Hebrews 12:13). I had become spiritually lame.

### **I Felt Whole Again**

I will never forget the emotions I experienced as those two priesthood bearers placed their hands upon my head and pronounced a blessing upon me. I felt the presence of the Spirit in the room. As I listened to the words that were spoken, I felt whole again. It was in that moment that I knew I'd been healed. I was lame no more.

In the years since that blessing, many great and wondrous things have come to pass in my life, including developing a healthy relationship with my parents and being sealed in the temple to an eternal companion.

Living the gospel is still a challenge sometimes. It is during these times that I remember that day when I came to an understanding of Heavenly Father's love for me and of the atoning sacrifice of our loving Savior. I also gained a testimony of the power of the priesthood and a testimony that Heavenly Father does send the Holy Ghost to aid and protect us in our times of need. I am grateful to Him for rescuing me. Not a day goes by that I don't pray for the guidance of the Holy Ghost, that I may be an instrument in the Lord's hands for others as my mother was for me. ■

*The author lives in Pennsylvania, USA.*

### **ANSWERING QUESTIONS**

#### **Who can receive a priesthood blessing?**

The blessings of the priesthood are available to all—men, women, and children. God has given priesthood authority to worthy male members of the Church so they can act in His name. Melchizedek Priesthood holders give blessings, by the laying on of hands and by inspiration, to those who are sick or otherwise in need of special counsel, comfort, or healing. If the blessing is for the sick, consecrated oil is used (see James 5:14–15). For more information, go to [lds.org/topics/priesthood](http://lds.org/topics/priesthood).

By Gary and Susan Carter

As temple workers, we have had the blessing of meeting with young adults coming to the temple to receive their own endowment. We have found that a temple preparation seminar was helpful to them, but the influence of righteous parents and leaders played a more significant role in helping them prepare to make temple covenants. As parents and leaders, we need to help youth not only prepare for full-time missionary service, which lasts for but a few months, but also for making and keeping temple covenants, which last for eternity. The first steps can begin in childhood.

### Preparing Children

Parents can show their children the importance of the temple by worshipping in the temple and by sharing their testimonies of temple work. Even in areas where frequent temple attendance is not possible, parents can instill in their children the desire to attend the temple.

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) taught parents: “Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple. And let us teach them more earnestly and more comfortably the things we can appropriately say about the purposes of the house of the Lord.”<sup>1</sup> Our children need to know that the temple is a place where we have received answers to prayers and where we feel God’s love.

# TEENS *and* TEMPLE COVENANTS

*With the lowering of the age requirement for full-time missionaries, tens of thousands more teenagers are now making sacred temple covenants.*

Parents can also teach their children to look forward to and live worthy of their own limited-use recommend that they have the opportunity to qualify for when they turn 12 years old. When the time comes for these youth to attend, we observe the joy and pride with which they present these recommends at the temple.

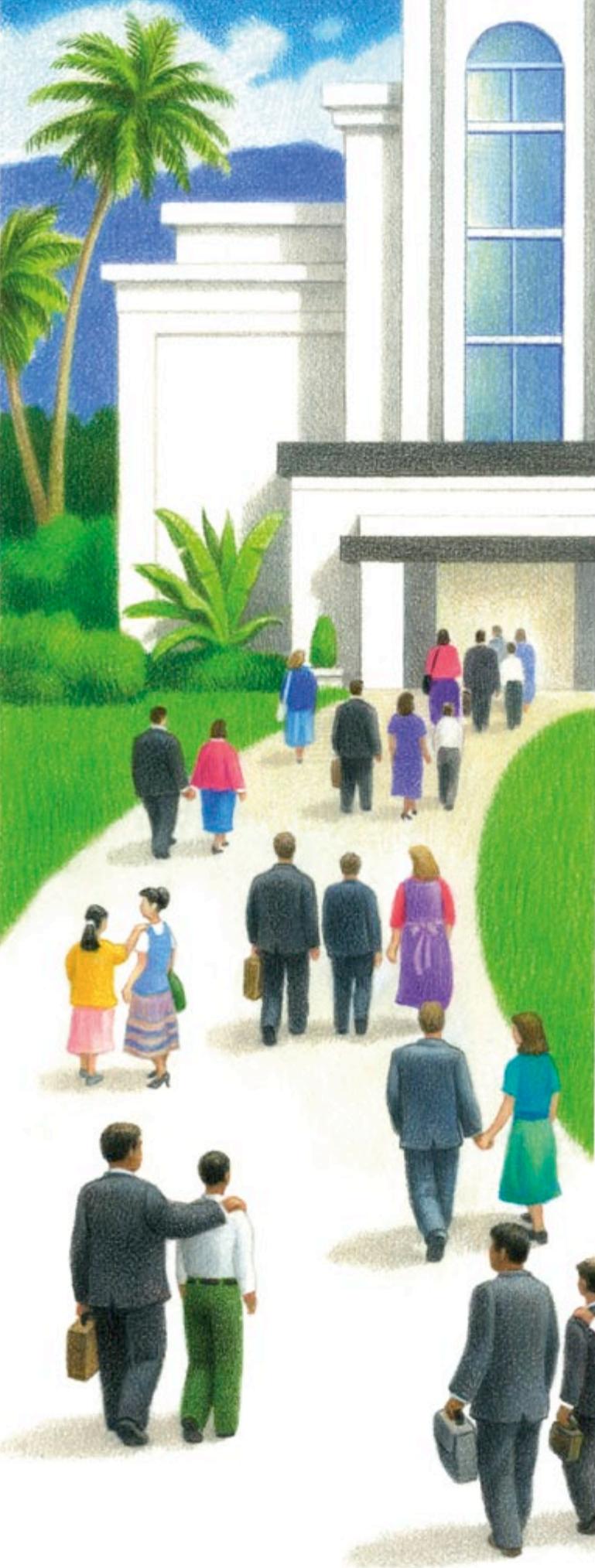
### Preparing Youth

Parents can help their children become involved in family history research so that when they turn 12 years old they can take family names to the temple. To the youth who do

so, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has promised: “Your love and gratitude for your ancestors will increase. Your testimony of and conversion to the Savior will become deep and abiding. And I promise you will be protected against the intensifying influence of the adversary.”<sup>2</sup>

We have seen many examples of this promise being fulfilled. Recently a young woman told us that after having researched her grandmother’s name, she had come to the temple to do the work for her. She said that as she was baptized for her, she had the clear impression that her grandmother would greet her in the next life. Experiences such as these strengthen testimonies and instill a desire to participate in further ordinances of the temple.





Many of the youth face temptations to dress immodestly. When parents and leaders wear attractive, modest clothing, youth will realize they can do so as well. Youth need to understand that the way they dress and how they treat their bodies can demonstrate their discipleship.

Parents can help youth prepare to enter the temple by helping them understand the covenants they will make there. The covenants of the temple include promises to “observe the law of strict virtue and chastity, to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant and pure; to devote both talent and material means to the spread of truth and the uplifting of the [human family]; to maintain devotion to the cause of truth; and to seek in every way to contribute to the great preparation that the earth may be ready to receive her King—the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>3</sup> Parents can testify that the youth will receive personal and powerful blessings throughout their lives as they keep these covenants, and these covenants will become more meaningful to the youth as their parents help them understand that both the blessings and the covenants are made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

There are many ways we can help prepare our children and youth to receive the blessings of the temple. The more prepared they are, the more likely they will be at peace and feel the Spirit and thus be able to have great spiritual experiences as they receive their endowment. An uplifting temple experience will make them more committed disciples of Christ and better missionaries—motivated to help those they teach to prepare to receive their own sacred temple ordinances. ■

#### NOTES

1. Howard W. Hunter, “Follow the Son of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 88.
2. David A. Bednar, “The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 26–27.
3. James E. Talmage, in *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (2002), 34–35.

# MAKING TIME FOR THE TEMPLE

*Planning and commitment have allowed these members to achieve their goal to participate regularly in temple worship.*



By David L. Packard

**R**yan Elmer of Texas, USA, was struggling to balance his responsibilities as a spouse, parent, and employee—not to mention the duties associated with a time-consuming Church calling. When he heard Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles speak in the April 2009 general conference about temple worship,<sup>1</sup> Brother Elmer decided to follow Elder Scott's counsel to set a goal to participate in temple ordinances with a specific frequency. However, he wasn't sure how he could fit one more thing into his life.

"My work travel seemed to increase after making the goal," says Brother Elmer, "and evenings home with my family were precious. I did not feel I could justify leaving them very often, even for something as positive as attending the temple."

With a new resolve to make the temple a priority, Brother Elmer began to see how he could make better use of some of his travel time. "I decided to utilize the nights away from home," he explains, "and rather than spending endless hours with clients in the evening, visiting sites in those cities, or working from the hotel room, I would attend the temple as often as my schedule allowed."

Since that time, Brother Elmer has been able to worship in the temple on multiple occasions in Alabama, Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Florida, Utah, Arizona, and California.

"It has been a great blessing to follow Elder Scott's counsel," he says. "The Spirit has been able to highlight the importance of my role as a father and as a husband. As I've gone to the temple more, it always seems to draw

me home into my roles in family relationships."

Making time for consistent temple worship can be a challenge. It requires finding proper balance among our various responsibilities. Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has observed: "There are many tasks to be performed in temple and family history work. We should encourage our members to make prayerful selection of the things they can do in their individual circumstances and in view of their current Church callings."<sup>2</sup>

The experiences of Ryan Elmer and others show that the Lord will bless our efforts. Planning and commitment—and not letting anything get in the way of that commitment—are key elements for success.

### **Creating Time through Careful Planning**

Matthew and Stacie Dalebout of Michigan, USA, are the parents of three young children. In order to attend the Detroit Michigan Temple, located 45 minutes from their home, the Dalebouts have to plan in advance.

"When our appointed time to visit the temple comes, we have to prepare our children and home for the babysitter and prepare ourselves spiritually for the experience," Sister Dalebout says. "It is amazing how the busyness of life gets in the way of our goal. If we have not properly planned, our visit to the temple can easily fall by the wayside."

When the Dalebouts do not have as much time or an endowment session is full, they have meaningful experiences by participating in other ordinance work. While the planning can become complicated, the blessings they



receive for their efforts to get to the temple far outweigh the sacrifice.

“We feel it is meaningful to participate in those sacred ordinances as husband and wife,” Sister Dalebout says. “Our marriage is strengthened as we are reminded of our covenants. We receive an increase of the Spirit into our lives and home, and we are more patient and loving with our children. We know that any sacrifices we make to regularly worship at the temple are made up to us and our lives become richer and more fulfilling.”

### **Enabling Others to Serve**

Traveling to the temple can also present a challenge to those trying to be consistent in their temple worship.

In 2003 it became apparent to Todd Bosen, a counselor

in a stake presidency in Arizona, USA, that many senior members in his stake were having a hard time attending the Snowflake Arizona Temple, which was a drive of about an hour and 15 minutes away. One widow, for example, hadn’t been to the temple in 20 years because she couldn’t drive by herself.

President Bosen felt inspired to issue a call to Nedra LeSueur, a member of the stake, to help these members get to the temple.

“I considered this challenge a calling from the Lord and wanted to help the fellow members of my stake to get to the temple more frequently,” says Sister LeSueur. “I knew that this would only be possible with the Lord’s inspiration.”

Inspiration came as Sister LeSueur devised a plan to organize a monthly caravan to the temple for the senior members

of the stake. As part of the plan, a member of each ward was designated to contact and invite all the senior ward members and arrange rides.

“When we first started, we would have over 30 people,” Sister LeSueur explains. “Some used walkers, and some moved with halting steps, just needing an arm to steady them. It had been so long since some of the seniors had been to the temple that they had to be helped and were embarrassed, but I told them that this is what it is all about—helping each other.”

Typically, participating in the ordinances of the temple is an individual’s act of service to others. In Sister LeSueur’s case, her temple-related service also includes helping dozens of additional members get to the temple to offer service.

“What a great blessing this has been for the senior members of our stake,” she says. “We all look forward to this trip every month. What a joy this experience is!”

### Establishing Our Own Goals

Whatever the circumstances may be, each Church member who holds a temple recommend can find his or her own way to make time for the temple. In the talk that prompted Ryan Elmer to act, Elder Scott counseled: “I encourage you to establish your own goal of how frequently you will avail yourself of the ordinances offered in our operating temples. What is there that is more important than attending and participating in the ordinances of the temple? What activity could have a greater impact and provide more joy and profound happiness for a couple than worshipping together in the temple?”<sup>3</sup>

As many temple-going Saints can testify, making temple worship a regular part of our lives can indeed bring blessings of joy and spiritual growth. ■

*The author lives in Arizona, USA.*

#### NOTES

1. See Richard G. Scott, “Temple Worship: The Source of Strength and Power in Times of Need,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 43–45.
2. Dallin H. Oaks, “Family History: ‘In Wisdom and Order,’” *Ensign*, June 1989, 8.
3. Richard G. Scott, “Temple Worship,” 43.



### BENEFITING MORE FROM TEMPLE WORSHIP

“Now I share some . . . suggestions of how to gain more benefit from temple attendance.

- Understand the doctrine related to temple ordinances, especially the significance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.
- While participating in temple ordinances, consider your relationship to Jesus Christ and His relationship to our Heavenly Father. This simple act will lead to greater understanding of the supernal nature of the temple ordinances.
- Always prayerfully express gratitude for the incomparable blessings that flow from temple ordinances. Live each day so as to give evidence to Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son of how very much those blessings mean to you.
- Schedule regular visits to the temple.
- Leave sufficient time to be unhurried within the temple walls.
- Rotate activities so that you can participate in all of the ordinances of the temple.
- Remove your watch when you enter a house of the Lord.
- Listen carefully to the presentation of each element of the ordinance with an open mind and heart.
- Be mindful of the individual for whom you are performing the vicarious ordinance. At times pray that he or she will recognize the vital importance of the ordinances and be worthy or prepare to be worthy to benefit from them.
- Recognize that much of the majesty of the sealing ordinance cannot be understood and remembered with one live experience. Substantial subsequent vicarious work permits one to understand much more of what is communicated in the live ordinances.
- Realize that a sealing ordinance is not enduring until after it is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. Both individuals must be worthy and want the sealing to be eternal.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Temple Worship: The Source of Strength and Power in Times of Need,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 43–44.



**By Elder  
Quentin L. Cook**  
Of the Quorum  
of the Twelve Apostles

**P**resident David O. McKay (1873–1970) often related an account that occurred while he was a missionary serving in Scotland. He was feeling homesick after being in the mission for just a short time and spent a few hours sightseeing at nearby Stirling Castle. When he and his companion returned from visiting the castle, they passed a building where the stone above the door had a carved inscription of a quotation, usually attributed to Shakespeare, that read, “What-E'er Thou Art, Act Well Thy Part.”

Recalling this experience, President McKay explained: “I said to myself, or the Spirit within me, ‘You are a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. More than



**ACT  
WELL  
YOUR  
PART**



*Be righteous. Build a family. Find an appropriate way to provide. Serve as called. Prepare to meet God.*

that, you are here as a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ. You accepted the responsibility as a representative of the Church.’ Then I thought [about] what we had done that forenoon. We had been sightseeing; we had gained historical instruction and information, it is true, and I was thrilled with it. . . . However, that was not missionary work. . . . I accepted the message given to me on that stone, and from that moment we tried to do our part as missionaries in Scotland.”<sup>1</sup>

This message was so important and had such an impact on him that President McKay used it as inspiration for the rest of his life. He determined that whatever responsibility he had, he would do his very best.

### **Avoid Acting out of Character**

In view of the enormous potential for good that you of the Church’s younger generation possess, what are my concerns for your future? What counsel can I give you? First, you will face great pressure to act out of character—even to wear a mask—and become someone who doesn’t really reflect who you are or who you want to be.

In early Church history, the Prophet Joseph, Emma, and their 11-month-old twins, Joseph and Julia, were in Hiram, Ohio, at the John and Alice Johnson home. Both of the children were suffering from measles. Joseph and his little son were sleeping on a trundle bed near the front door.

During the night a group of men with black-painted faces burst through the door and dragged the Prophet outside, where they beat him and threw tar on him and Sidney Rigdon.

The most tragic part of this mobbing was that little Joseph was exposed to the night

PHOTOGRAPH OF ELDER QUENTIN L. COOK BY CRAIG DIMOND; PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY SCOTT DAVIS

air and caught a severe cold when his father was dragged away. As a result, he died a few days later.<sup>2</sup>

Those who participated in the Martyrdom of the Prophet and his brother Hyrum also painted their faces to hide their true identities.<sup>3</sup>

In our day, when being anonymous is easier than ever, there are important principles involved in not wearing a mask and in being “true to the faith . . . for which martyrs have perished.”<sup>4</sup>



**Elder L. Tom Perry acted well his part while stationed in Japan.**

One of your greatest protections against making bad choices is not to put on any mask of anonymity. If you ever find yourself wanting to do so, please know it is a serious sign of danger and one of the adversary’s tools to get you to do something you should not do.

It is common today to hide one’s identity when writing hateful, vitriolic, bigoted communications anonymously online. Some refer to it as *flaming*.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

“Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God” (1 Corinthians 15:33–34).

It is clear that evil communications are not just a matter of bad manners. If practiced by Latter-day Saints, they can adversely affect those who do not have knowledge of God or a testimony of the Savior.

Any use of the Internet to bully, destroy a reputation, or place a person in a bad light is reprehensible. What we are seeing in society is that when people wear the mask of anonymity, they are more likely to engage in this kind of conduct, which is so destructive of civil discourse. It also violates the basic principles the Savior taught.

The Savior explained that He had not come to condemn the world but to save the world. He then described what condemnation means:

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

“For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

“But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:19–21; see also verses 17–18).

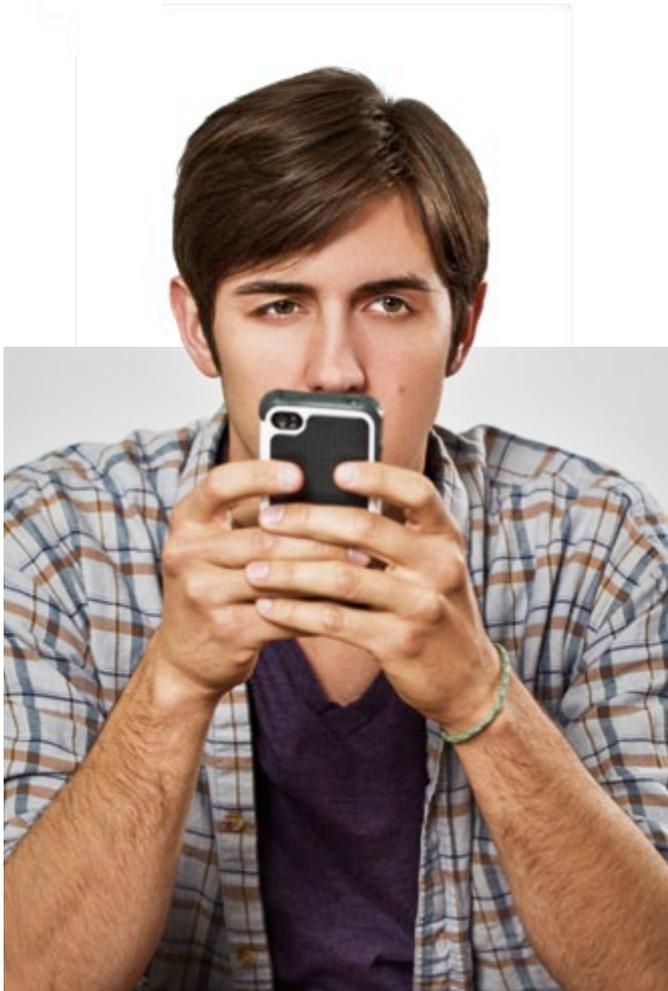
The righteous need not wear masks to hide their identity.

### **Act in Accordance with Your True Beliefs**

You act in accordance with your true beliefs by spending your time on those things that will build and develop your character and help you become more Christlike. I hope none of you see life as primarily fun and games but rather as a time “to prepare to meet God” (Alma 34:32).

A wonderful example of acting your part and using time appropriately comes from the life of Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, when, as a marine, he was part of the occupying U.S. force in Japan at the end of World War II. Elder Perry shared this account when he recorded his special witness of the Savior.

“I was among the first wave of Marines to go ashore in Japan following the signing of the peace treaty following World War II. As we entered the devastated city of Nagasaki, it was one of the saddest experiences of my life. A large part of the city had been totally destroyed. Some



*One of your greatest protections against making bad choices is not to put on any mask of anonymity.*

of the dead had not yet been buried. As occupation troops, we set up headquarters and went to work.

“The situation was very bleak, and a few of us wanted to give more. We went to our division chaplain and requested permission to help rebuild the Christian churches. Because of government restrictions during the war, these churches had almost ceased to function. Their few buildings were badly damaged. A group of us volunteered to repair and replaster these chapels during our off-duty time so that they would be available for the holding of Christian services again.

“ . . . We found the ministers who had been unable to serve during the war years and encouraged them to return to their pulpits. We had a tremendous experience with these people as they again experienced the freedom to practice their Christian beliefs.

“An event occurred as we were leaving Nagasaki to return home that I will always remember. As we were boarding the train that would take us to our ships to return home, we were teased by a lot of the other marines. They had their girlfriends with them and [were] saying good-bye to them. They laughed at us and indicated that we had missed the fun of being in Japan. We had just wasted our time laboring and plastering walls.

“Just as they were at the height of their teasing, up over a little rise near the train station came about 200 of these great Japanese Christians from the churches we had repaired, singing ‘Onward, Christian Soldiers.’ They came down and showered us with gifts. Then they all lined up along the railroad track. And as the train started down the tracks, we reached out and just touched their fingers as we left. We couldn’t speak; our emotions were too strong. But we were grateful that we could help in some small way in reestablishing Christianity in a nation after the war.”<sup>5</sup>

Please ponder and be proactive in choosing how you use your time. As you can see from Elder Perry’s example, I am not talking about wearing your religion on your sleeve or being superficially faithful. That can be embarrassing to you and the Church. I am talking about you becoming what you ought to be.

## Set Appropriate Goals

My third counsel relates to some of the goals you should consider. At approximately the same time that Elder Perry was in Japan with the marines, President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, served in Japan with the air force at the end of World War II.

In 2004, I accompanied President Packer and others to Japan. He had an opportunity to retrace some of his steps and reflect on some of the experiences and decisions he



*President Boyd K. Packer has been blessed for setting righteous goals.*

made at that time. With his permission, I share some of his thoughts and feelings.

President Packer described experiences that occurred on an island off the coast of Okinawa. He considers this as his mount in the wilderness. His personal preparation and meeting with other members had deepened his belief in gospel teachings. What he yet lacked was confirmation—sure knowledge of that which he had already come to feel was true.

President Packer's biographer captures what happened: "Counter to the peace of confirmation he sought, he came face to face with the hell of war against the innocent. Seeking solitude and time to think, he climbed, one day,

to a rise above the ocean. There he found the gutted remains of a peasant cottage, its neglected sweet potato field nearby. And lying amid the dying plants he saw the corpses of a slaughtered mother and her two children. The sight filled him with a deep sadness mingled with the feelings of love for his own family and for all families."<sup>6</sup>

He subsequently went inside a makeshift bunker, where he contemplated, pondered, and prayed. President Packer, in looking back on this event, described what I would call a confirming spiritual experience. He felt inspired as to what he should do with his life. He, of course, had no idea that he would be called to the high and holy calling he now holds. His vision was that he wanted to be a teacher, emphasizing the teachings of the Savior. He made up his mind that he would live a righteous life.

It came to him in a rather profound way that he would have to find a righteous wife and that together they would raise a large family. This young soldier recognized that his career choice would provide modest compensation and that his sweet companion would need to share the same priorities and be willing to live without some material things. Sister Donna Packer was, and is, for President Packer, the perfect companion. They never had enough excess money, but they did not feel deprived in any way. They raised 10 children, and they sacrificed. They now have 60 grandchildren and more than 80 great-grandchildren.

I share this true account because too often our goals are based on what the world values. The essential elements are really quite simple for members who have received the saving ordinances: Be righteous. Build a family. Find an appropriate way to provide. Serve as called. Prepare to meet God.

The Savior taught that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).

## Build Your Country and Community

In addition to personal attributes, qualities, and decisions, if you are to be the generation you need to be, you will build your country and the community where you live. Your generation will need to protect righteousness



*The Judeo-Christian heritage we have inherited is not only precious but also essential to our Father in Heaven's plan. We need to preserve it for future generations.*

and religious freedom. The Judeo-Christian heritage we have inherited is not only precious but also essential to our Father in Heaven's plan. We need to preserve it for future generations. We need to join with good people, including those of all faiths—especially those who feel accountable to God for their conduct. These are people who would understand the counsel that “what-e'er thou art, act well thy part.” The successful enhancement of Judeo-Christian values and religious freedom will mark your generation as the great generation it needs to be.

With the challenges that exist in the world today, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are particularly concerned that you participate appropriately in the political process in the country where you live. The Church is neutral in political contests and does not support candidates or parties. We do expect, however, that our members will be fully engaged in supporting the candidates and parties of their choice based on principles that will protect good government. Our doctrine is clear: those who are good, “honest . . . and wise . . . should be sought for diligently” (D&C 98:10).

We have great confidence in you. The leadership of the Church honestly believes that you can build the kingdom like no previous generation. You have not only our love and confidence but also our prayers and blessings. We know that the success of your generation is essential to the continued establishment of the Church and the growth of the kingdom. We pray that you will act well your part as you avoid wearing a mask, act in accordance with your true identity, set appropriate goals, and build your country and community. ■

*From a Church Educational System devotional for young adults delivered at Brigham Young University–Idaho on March 4, 2012. For the full address, visit [lds.org/broadcasts/archive/ces-devotionals/2012/01](http://lds.org/broadcasts/archive/ces-devotionals/2012/01).*

#### NOTES

1. David O. McKay, in Francis M. Gibbons, *David O. McKay: Apostle to the World, Prophet of God* (1986), 45.
2. See Mark L. Staker, “Remembering Hiram, Ohio,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 32, 35.
3. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 24.
4. “True to the Faith,” *Hymns*, no. 254.
5. L. Tom Perry, in “Joy—for Us and Others—Comes by Following the Savior,” <http://lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/what-are-prophets-testimonies>.
6. Lucile C. Tate, *Boyd K. Packer: A Watchman on the Tower* (1995), 58–59.



*We had  
endured  
so many  
challenges—  
why would  
the Lord  
allow our  
struggles to  
continue?*

# LEARNING TO Trust THE Lord

By Clarissa A. Noble

Many years ago, my husband's employer was having financial problems, and our paychecks came irregularly. We tried to be patient with the situation, but after several months, paychecks stopped coming altogether, and my husband started looking for other work.

As the weeks stretched into months, our resources dwindled and our spirits sagged. It became increasingly uncomfortable to answer inquiries from concerned ward members regarding my husband's job search—I knew they meant well, but I didn't like being reminded of our situation. I continued to attend ward meetings and fulfill my calling, but I kept to myself.

I prayed for relief for our family, but I became increasingly frustrated and resentful, especially toward the Lord. We had endured other challenges, including the death of a child, and I believed that our time for respite had come. I couldn't understand why the Lord would allow our financial struggles to continue.

One day I felt I needed to spend some time with our son. I called a friend, an older woman in our ward, to see if she would care for our young daughter while I joined my son at school for lunch. She cheerfully accepted.

When I finished lunch and went to pick up my daughter, I had every intention of quickly giving my thanks and slipping out, but my wise and loving friend stopped me and asked how I was doing. One thing led to another, and I shared, through tears, my

anger and resentment toward the Lord. "My prayers are not being answered," I told her. "If they are, I can't see the answers."

I will never forget the counsel she gave me. My friend explained that we are here on earth to be proven, and we will always have trials. Our job is to endure them well. She said she was enduring trials that had lasted for decades, including difficulties with a family business and complications of marrying outside of the Church. In a very loving way, she helped me see that I was not alone. She quoted Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."

When I returned home, I pondered my friend's words. Although her life was riddled with hardship, she recognized and showed gratitude for the Lord's hand in her life. I realized that by feeling sorry for myself, I had overlooked the blessings our family had been given. Our family was healthy; we had the food, clothing, and shelter we needed; and we were blessed with the gospel of Jesus Christ. As my thoughts turned to these blessings, my resentment began to fade away and I felt peace and comfort. I realized that the Lord had, indeed, heard my prayers.

It was still many months before my husband found work, and it was not the last time hardship would visit our family. But through the example of a loving friend who had a constant trust in the Lord, I have become better prepared to deal with life's trials and recognize the Lord's answers to my prayers. ■

*The author lives in Oregon, USA.*



### LEAN ON MY FAITH

"Hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes. . . .

. . . What was once a tiny seed of belief for me has grown into the tree of life, so if your faith is a little tested in this or any season, I invite you to lean on mine."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Lord, I Believe," *Ensign*, May 2013, 94, 95.

# How Can I Be a **SUCCESSFUL** Missionary?

*No matter how hard my companion and I worked, everyone was rejecting our message. What could we do to become successful missionaries?*

By Lauren Bangerter Wilde

I had been on my mission for little more than a year when I hit a particularly difficult time. We were right in the middle of a dismal, gray season—just coming out of a cold winter and moving into spring. And no matter how hard my companion and I worked, everyone we spoke to rejected our message outright. When we met with other missionaries, we learned that their work was going strong. I couldn't think of any reasons why we were so unsuccessful. I had been out long enough to speak the language well, my companion and I were good friends, we had established trust with the members, and we tried to follow the Spirit and obey the mission rules with exactness.

But no matter what we did, we faced rejection at every turn. After weeks and weeks of this, I let my sour attitude get the better of me. During one planning session I finally exclaimed, "What's the point? Nobody will listen to us anyway."

My companion, having a better perspective than I did, simply said, "We set goals to show our faith. We follow up on goals to count our blessings."

As I pondered her insight, I realized that I had been using the wrong measuring stick to judge my success as a missionary. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* provides a list of behaviors of successful missionaries,<sup>1</sup> and I realized that all those behaviors are within the missionary's control. I could not control whether or not the people in my mission would accept the gospel message, but I could control the type of missionary I chose to be. My companion showed me that greater faith in Jesus Christ and gratitude for His blessings would allow me to recognize the ways I already was a successful missionary.

## **Faith Illuminates Miracles**

It was humbling to realize that my faith was lacking. I looked for areas

where I could strengthen my faith and found that when things hadn't gone according to plan, I had let myself become discouraged. *Preach My Gospel* says: "Discouragement will weaken your faith. If you lower your expectations, your effectiveness will decrease, your desire will weaken, and you will have greater difficulty following the Spirit."<sup>2</sup> I realized that I had allowed our setbacks to weaken my faith.

I began by praying for a change of heart and more faith. I also relied on the promise given in Mormon 9:21: "Whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing, whatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him; and this promise is unto all, even unto the ends of the earth." This promise led me to pray more fervently for the blessings and miracles my companion and I felt we needed, always adding, "Thy will be done." These prayers helped me to accept changed plans and setbacks with greater faith,



## BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL MISSIONARY

You can know you have been a successful missionary when you:

- Feel the Spirit testify to people through you.
- Love people and desire their salvation.
- Obey with exactness.
- Develop Christlike attributes.
- Warn people of the consequences of sin. Invite them to make and keep commitments.
- Go about doing good and serving people at every opportunity, whether or not they accept your message.

From *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 10–11.



### SEEK THE LORD'S ACCEPTANCE

"With all my heart I invite you to seek the Lord's acceptance and enjoy His promised blessings. . . . We [can] come to know that we are accepted of Him, regardless of our position, status, or mortal limitations. His loving acceptance will motivate us, increase our faith, and help us deal with everything we face in life. Despite our challenges, we will be successful, prosper [see Mosiah 2:22], and feel at peace [see Mosiah 2:41]."

Elder Erich W. Kopischke of the Seventy, "Being Accepted of the Lord," *Ensign*, May 2013, 106.

knowing that Heavenly Father always answers prayers of faith—even when the answers come in ways we don't anticipate. I became more able to recognize the ways the Lord was guiding us throughout our day.

As I worked on strengthening my faith, I found the positive form of the statement from *Preach My Gospel* to be true: if you raise your expectations, your effectiveness will increase, your desire will grow, and you will be able to follow the Spirit better. Additionally, I was more optimistic about missionary work and my missionary service when I could recognize and appreciate the miracles that happened daily.

### Gratitude Counteracts Jealousy

The Lord began to show me that He worked miracles for us each day—but I had been unable to recognize them until I made a conscious effort to be genuinely grateful. Expressing gratitude is more than just a good habit or nice manners. When I expressed gratitude to the Lord and to others, I was empowered. I found myself being excited for other missionaries when they had success instead of being jealous (see Alma 29:14, 16). I was more able to focus on what I had and what went right rather than what I lacked and what went wrong.

I learned that gratitude is the antidote to comparing ourselves to others. Those times when I didn't feel like a successful missionary usually came because I told myself, "I'm not

doing as well as they are," or, "They are better at this than I am." I also learned that while it is the Lord's pattern to give us righteous examples to emulate and follow, it is Satan's counterfeit to tempt us to compare ourselves with them in order to determine our worth or success. But *Preach My Gospel* is clear on this: "Avoid comparing yourself to other missionaries and measuring the outward results of your efforts against theirs."<sup>3</sup> Ultimately, gratitude helped me avoid pride and reminded me that the Lord is in charge of His work. I did not need to be jealous because my fellow missionaries appeared to be having more success.<sup>4</sup>

### The True Measure of Success

Before I had this change in perspective, I had been so focused on a specific type of blessing that I had forgotten to leave my eyes open to the other ways the Lord was answering our prayers and blessing our missionary work. Eventually, the Lord began blessing the missionary work in our area in beautiful and unexpected ways. We did find people willing to accept our message, but I had learned by that time not to measure my success by the choices of others.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) shared one mission president's counsel about missionary work: "Do your best, your very, very best. Say your prayers and work hard



***In many ways, the measure of my success as a missionary could be judged by my willingness to repent and my determination to keep working.***

and leave the harvest to the Lord.”<sup>5</sup> *Preach My Gospel* teaches something similar about successful missionaries: “Do your very best to bring souls to Christ, and seek earnestly to learn and improve.”<sup>6</sup>

As long as I was willing to repent, as long as I could honestly account to the Lord that I was doing my best, I could feel confident that I was a successful missionary—regardless of whether people accepted our message. In many ways, the measure of my success as a missionary could be judged by my willingness to repent and my determination to keep working.

I have many miracles recorded in my journal from this time of my mission. As I strove to be more faithful and grateful, I had a better perspective,

I avoided discouragement, and I felt the Spirit more abundantly in the work. I found that what *Preach My Gospel* teaches is true: “When you have done your very best, you may still experience disappointments, but you will not be disappointed in yourself. You can feel certain that the Lord is pleased when you feel the Spirit working through you.”<sup>7</sup> And when I felt the Lord was pleased with me, I could endure any trial. ■

*The author lives in Maine, USA.*

#### NOTES

1. See *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 10–11.
2. *Preach My Gospel*, 10.
3. *Preach My Gospel*, 10.
4. See Jeffrey R. Holland, “Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 31.
5. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Find the Lambs, Feed the Sheep,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 106.
6. *Preach My Gospel*, 11.
7. *Preach My Gospel*, 11.

## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

*“I recently returned from my mission, and I feel like I’ve lost my sense of purpose. What should I do?”*

Returned missionaries, please tell us how you made the transition from your mission to returning home and getting back to school, employment, or other activities. Email your experience to [ensign@ldschurch.org](mailto:ensign@ldschurch.org) or submit it online at [ensign.lds.org](http://ensign.lds.org). Please include your full name, birth date, and ward or branch name.

# Hastening

## THE WORK OF SALVATION

*As we invite, love, and serve others, we become true disciples of Jesus Christ and help hasten the work of salvation.*

Although there is excitement about full-time missionaries working online and giving tours in meetinghouses, those changes are only a tiny part of the big picture of the work of salvation. Far more important is how we as members fit into the larger picture of hastening the work of salvation. We are not being asked to engage in a new program. We are simply being encouraged to be true disciples of Jesus Christ. Our role is to immerse ourselves in loving and serving those around us—comforting a co-worker in need, inviting our friends to a baptism, helping an elderly neighbor with his yard work, inviting a less-active member over for a meal, or helping a neighbor with her family history. These are all natural, joyful ways to invite less-active members and those not of our faith into our lives and consequently into the light of the gospel. Sharing with them the fun times and the sacred times of our lives may actually be the most effective way any of us can “labor in [Jesus Christ’s] vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men [and women]” (D&C 138:56).

### What Is the Work of Salvation?

The work of salvation is Heavenly Father’s work “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). This important work includes member missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel.<sup>1</sup> Too often, we think these aspects of the gospel are unrelated. But in *The Work of Salvation: Worldwide Leadership Broadcast* on June 23, 2013, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “the work really is indivisible. These efforts are not separate; they’re all part of the work of salvation.”<sup>2</sup>

The phrase “Hastening the Work of Salvation”—the name of the broadcast’s companion website ([hasteningthework.lds.org](http://hasteningthework.lds.org))—refers to the Lord’s promise: “Behold, I will hasten my work in its time” (D&C 88:73).



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID STOKER

Essential priesthood ordinances—baptism, confirmation, ordination to the priesthood for men, and temple ordinances—stand as milestones along our path to return to our Heavenly Father. As we participate in the work of salvation, we follow and inspire others to follow this covenant path.

### **Members and Missionaries Work Together under Priesthood Keys**

The time has come to refocus on the fundamental principle that membership in the Lord's Church means

being called to be fully engaged in His work of salvation. Stake presidents and bishops hold the priesthood keys of missionary work in their Church units<sup>3</sup> and help members do what true disciples of Christ do—share the light of the gospel. Mission presidents hold priesthood keys that enable them to direct the work of the missionaries they lead.<sup>4</sup> Full-time missionaries are trained to teach those who have been prepared to receive the gospel. They help the members with the members' missionary work, not vice versa. Full-time and member missionaries are thus



partners in bringing the gospel into the lives of those the Lord has prepared to receive it.

During the broadcast, President Thomas S. Monson said: “Now is the time for members and missionaries to come together, to work together, to labor in the Lord’s vineyard to bring souls unto Him. He has prepared the means for us to share the gospel in a multitude of ways, and He will assist us in our labors if we will act in faith to fulfill His work.”<sup>5</sup>

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke of the importance of love. He said, “We work together in faith and unity—faith that the Lord will guide our steps and unity with each other and with the missionaries, always motivated by our love for [Jesus Christ], our love for one another, and our love for those we serve.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Ward Councils Lead Out, Ward Mission Leaders Coordinate**

Under the direction of the bishop, the ward council facilitates, supports, and coordinates the efforts of ward members by planning and leading the work of salvation for the ward.<sup>7</sup>

As a member of the ward council, the ward mission leader “coordinates the ward’s efforts to find, teach, and baptize investigators. He coordinates this work with the work of the full-time missionaries.”<sup>8</sup>

Speaking to ward mission leaders, Elder Nelson said: “Help [the missionaries] to fill their appointment books with meaningful opportunities and appointments so that they won’t have time to knock on doors searching for people to teach. . . . [You] are the connecting link between



the missionaries, the ward council, and the members of the ward.”<sup>9</sup>

### The True Mark of Success

As Latter-day Saints we are blessed to be living in this time when the Lord is hastening His work. Because God has a purpose in placing us on earth at this time, we have the capacity to do more than we think we can. As long as we reach out in kindness and love to those who need our friendship and help, we will not fail. Missionary success comes by following the inspiration that flows into our minds and hearts and simply inviting others into our gospel-centered lives. The invitation is the mark of success, not whether people get baptized or become active in the Church. As Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said of the great army of missionaries now entering the mission field: “The hour is upon us in which we must now say, ‘Here they come.’ All of us must plan for and use this heaven-sent resource in the most productive way possible.”<sup>10</sup>

It is time for all of us to understand more clearly our role in hastening the work of salvation. As we make member missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel a natural part of our lives, we will experience great joy and be endowed with the spiritual gifts we need to strengthen the Church in the 21st century. ■

#### NOTES

1. See *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), chapter 5.
2. Russell M. Nelson, *The Work of Salvation: Worldwide Leadership Broadcast*, June 23, 2013, [hasteningthework.lds.org](http://hasteningthework.lds.org).
3. See *Handbook 2*, 5.1.6; 5.1.9.
4. See *Handbook 2*, 5.1.6.
5. Thomas S. Monson, *The Work of Salvation*, [hasteningthework.lds.org](http://hasteningthework.lds.org).
6. Neil L. Andersen, *The Work of Salvation*, [hasteningthework.lds.org](http://hasteningthework.lds.org).
7. See *Handbook 2*, 5.1.2.
8. *Handbook 2*, 5.1.3.
9. Russell M. Nelson, *The Work of Salvation*, [hasteningthework.lds.org](http://hasteningthework.lds.org).
10. Jeffrey R. Holland, *The Work of Salvation*, [hasteningthework.lds.org](http://hasteningthework.lds.org).

**F**or the video of *The Work of Salvation: Worldwide Leadership Broadcast*, visit [hasteningthework.lds.org](http://hasteningthework.lds.org). You can find *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* online at [lds.org/manual/handbook](http://lds.org/manual/handbook).



# OUR GREAT Missionary Heritage

*All missionaries, past or present, serve with the hope of making life better for other people.*

By **Linda Dekker Lopez**  
Church Magazines

**T**oday's missionaries carry on the great legacy of filling the earth with the knowledge of the Lord (see Isaiah 11:9). From Abraham to Paul to Ammon to Wilford Woodruff, missionaries in the scriptures and Church history provide modern-day missionaries with strong role models.

Whether we are member missionaries, preparing for full-time missionary service, serving a mission, or returning from a mission, we can draw courage and inspiration from these examples.

## **Our Missionary Heritage in the Bible and Pearl of Great Price**

Old Testament missionaries, such as Jonah, were called to deliver a voice of warning to the people (see Ezekiel 3:17–19). From Jonah's example we see the importance of repentance and obedience. The story of Abraham teaches us about the lineage and power of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

New Testament missionaries, such as Peter and Paul, worked to preserve the teachings of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, over time the world fell into apostasy. God restored the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. We are now working, as those missionaries did, to preserve and share the teachings of Jesus Christ.



Jonah on the Beach at Nineveh, by Daniel A. Lewis. Jonah repented and went about preaching and confirming that Jehovah reigns everywhere and does not confine His love to a single nation or people (see Jonah 1–4).



## **A VOICE OF WARNING**

“Because the Lord is kind, He calls servants to warn people of danger. . . . Think of Jonah. He fled at first from the Lord’s call to warn the people of Nineveh who were blinded to the danger by sin. He knew that wicked people through the ages have rejected prophets and sometimes killed them. Yet when Jonah went forward with faith, the Lord blessed him with safety and success.”

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Let Us Raise Our Voice of Warning,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2009, 3.**

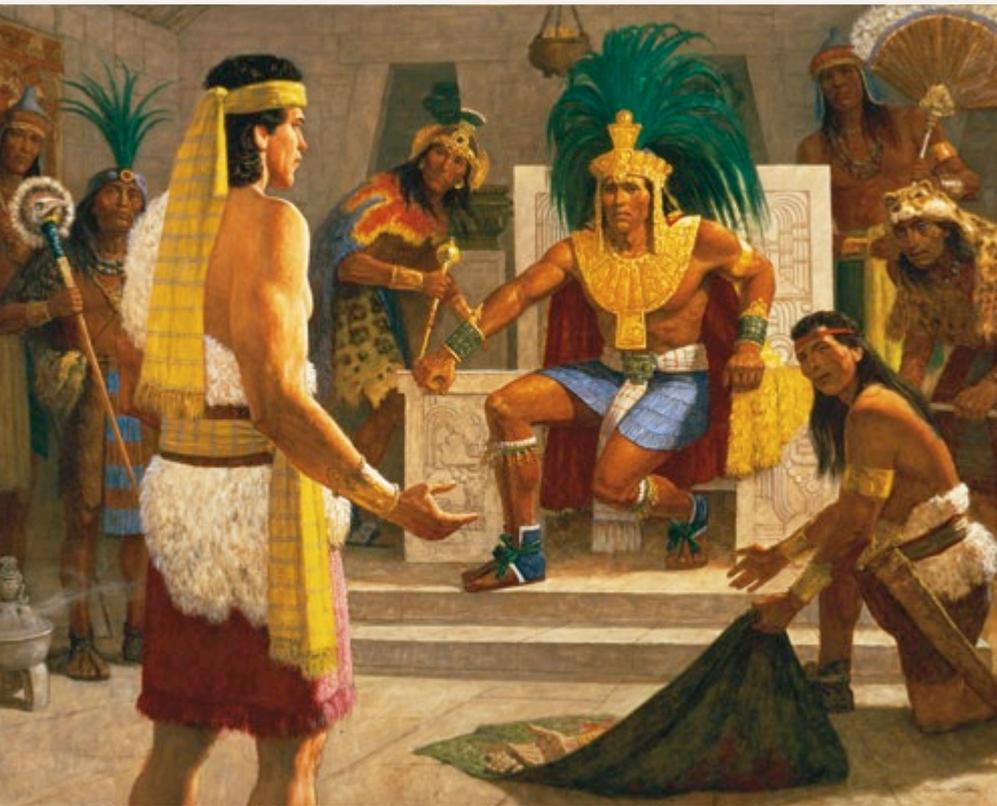


Peter and John before Rulers in Jerusalem, by Simon Vedder. Peter and John were brought before the council, and the high priest asked them, “Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. . . . Then Peter . . . answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:28–29).

The Apostle Paul, by Karel Skreeta. In his journeys and letters, Paul bore powerful testimony of the Savior throughout Asia Minor and much of the known world at that time.



Melchizedek Blesses Abram [Abraham], by Walter Rane. Melchizedek blessed Abram (see Genesis 14:18–20) and also gave him the priesthood (see D&C 84:14). At another time, the Lord appeared to Abram, saying, “I have purposed . . . to make of thee a minister to bear my name in a strange land. . . . And thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations” (Abraham 2:6, 9).



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**TEACHING UNBELIEVERS**

“The sons of Mosiah . . . went among the Lamanites. Teaching a people whose traditions were seemingly not conducive to spiritual growth, these faithful missionaries nonetheless helped bring about a mighty change in these Lamanites. We know that . . . ‘as many of the Lamanites as believed in their preaching, and were converted unto the Lord, never did fall away’ (Alma 23:6).”

Elder James B. Martino of the Seventy, “Repentance That Brings Conversion,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2012, 58.

Ammon before King Lamoni, by Gary L. Kapp. Ammon, one of the sons of Mosiah, saved King Lamoni’s flocks. When the king asked Ammon if he was sent from God, Ammon said that he was a man called by the Holy Spirit to teach the gospel “unto [Lamoni’s] people, that they may be brought to a knowledge of that which is just and true” (Alma 18:34).

**Our Missionary Heritage in the Book of Mormon**

Alma, Amulek, the sons of Mosiah, and Samuel the Lamanite are only a few of the great missionary role models we find in the Book of Mormon. In them we see examples of repentance, faith, obedience, and courage. Like them, we can rely on inspiration and revelation from God to guide our missionary service.

He Did Bring Glad Tidings to My Soul, by Walter Rane. An angel visited Samuel the Lamanite and brought “glad tidings to [Samuel’s] soul” concerning the Savior’s coming (Helaman 13:6–7). As part of his calling to preach to the Nephites, Samuel mounted Zarahemla’s city wall and shared these glad tidings with the people.



## Our Missionary Heritage in the Doctrine and Covenants

After the Restoration of the gospel, missionaries were essential. Missionaries such as Dan Jones, Orson Hyde, and Parley P. Pratt shared the Book of Mormon and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some, like the Prophet Joseph's brother Samuel, served close to their home. Others traveled far to share the gospel in places such as Thailand, the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), Denmark, and England.

These early missionaries often served long and multiple missions. They left parents, sweethearts, wives, children, and grandchildren just as we do. They serve as examples to us today of faith, courage, obedience, endurance, and diligence.



Mormon Preachers, by Arnold Friberg, based on an original by Christen Dalsgaard. This scene of an early Latter-day Saint missionary teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to a Danish family gathered in their rural home was typical of 19th-century proselytizing efforts. Missionaries also taught on street corners or in town meeting halls.



Wilford Woodruff Prepares for Baptisms at Benbow Farm, by Richard A. Murray. The Lord led Wilford Woodruff in the 1840s to John Benbow's farm in Herefordshire, England. "There was a people there who had been praying for the ancient order of things," wrote Wilford. "The consequence was, the first thirty days after I got there I baptized six hundred. . . . In eight month's labor in that country I brought eighteen hundred into the Church. Why? Because there was a people prepared for the Gospel" ("Discourse," Deseret Weekly, Nov. 7, 1896, 643).

*Newly arrived missionaries baptized natives in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) as early as 1851. This photograph dates from much later.*



MAY NOT BE COPIED

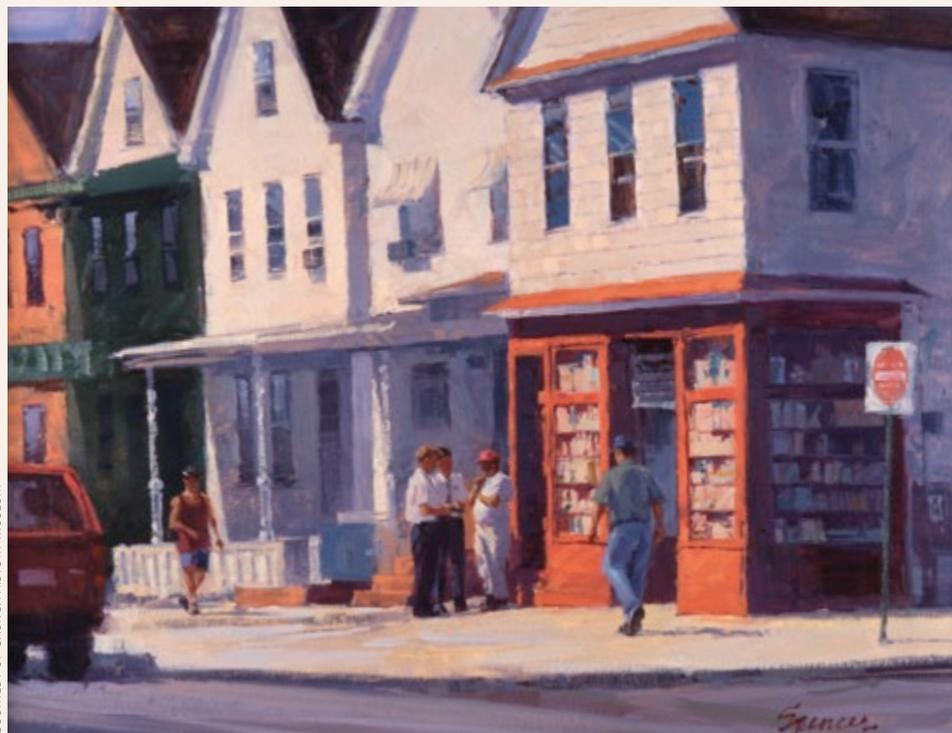
### Building on Our Missionary Heritage

Since President Thomas S. Monson announced in the October 2012 general conference that young men and young women could leave for a mission at a younger age, tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints have thronged the mission field.

In the April 2013 general conference, Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles added his witness of missionary work and encouraged each of us to become an important part of this unfolding miracle by helping to

find those ready to hear the gospel: “As surely as the Lord has inspired more missionaries to serve, He is also awakening the minds and opening the hearts of more good and honest people to receive His missionaries. You already know them or will know them. They are in your family and live in your neighborhood. They walk past you on the street, sit by you in school, and connect with you online” (“It’s a Miracle,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 78). ■

*Pioneering the Streets, by Ken Spencer. These two missionaries share the gospel with a man in front of a bookstore in New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA.*



COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM



### YOUR MISSIONARY BADGE

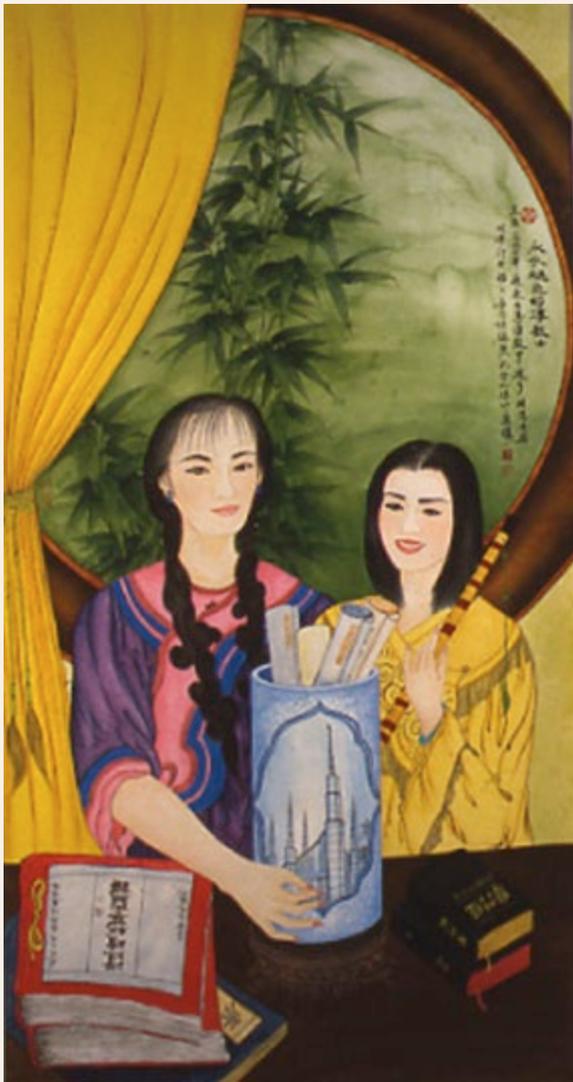
“If you’re not a full-time missionary with a missionary badge pinned on your coat, now is the time to paint one on your heart—painted, as Paul said, ‘not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.’”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “It’s a Miracle,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 78.



COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM

*The Lamanites Shall Blossom as a Rose, by Joselito Jesus Acevedo Garcia. This image captures the spirit of missionary work among Spanish-speaking people. Two missionaries prepare to teach the gospel while people go about their daily tasks. The Lima Peru Temple, sitting amid small homes and native animals, represents the growth of the Church.*



© IRI, COURTESY OF JUEI ING CHEN

*Unfading Missionaries, by Juei Ing Chen. Members of the Church in Taiwan, like member missionaries everywhere, seek to share their joy in the gospel and the scriptures. The scriptures are on the table; and the tall blue container holding scrolls features a picture of the Taipei Taiwan Temple.*



COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM

*Latter-day Saint Missionaries in Sierra Leone, by Emile Wilson. The first mission in Sierra Leone was organized in Freetown on July 1, 2007. Freetown became the 3,000th stake in the Church on December 2, 2012.*

# My Teachers Quorum IS AN MTC



*Working with the young men in my ward has taught me that the new youth curriculum enables missionary training to begin right now.*

**By Russell Wilcox**

**A**fter returning from my mission, I had the wonderful opportunity of teaching for nearly two years at the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah, USA. Every nine weeks my companion teacher and I would stand before a new group of missionaries with smiles on our faces and promise them that choosing to serve a mission was the best decision they had ever made. Over the next few days, those elders and sisters sometimes doubted us as they made the transitions necessary to succeed as full-time missionaries. But by the end of their time at the MTC, most felt well prepared to begin their labor.



## WHAT YOUTH SAY ABOUT COME, FOLLOW ME

How can *Come, Follow Me* help youth prepare for a mission? I asked several teenagers in my ward and received these enthusiastic responses:



“Since Primary, I’ve been learning the doctrines and principles of the Church. But I never realized what a challenge it is for missionaries to teach the basic principles and concepts of the gospel simply and effectively. The new curriculum helps me to practice that.” —Seth L.

### Use Time Wisely

When President Thomas S. Monson made the historic announcement lowering the ages for missionary service (see “Welcome to Conference,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 4–5), a former companion teacher contacted me and expressed concern about the shortened time elders and sisters would spend in the MTC. He said, “We barely had enough time as it was. What will they do now?”

I felt differently. “The way I see it,” I replied, “their preparation time has not really been shortened. It has actually been lengthened because of the new youth curriculum, *Come, Follow Me*.” I shared with him some of the

experiences I have had in working with the teachers quorum in my ward in San Antonio, Texas, USA. My friend quickly understood how time spent in Young Men, Young Women, and Sunday School, as well as in our homes, can actually provide additional preparation prior to the time spent in the MTC. This can effectively create extensions of the MTC in the quorum, class, and family.

We also discussed how three effective methods we used in the MTC can help young people as we implement *Come, Follow Me*: (1) practice with feedback, (2) ask open-ended questions, and (3) follow up on commitments.



“In our classes we’ve been practicing how to respond when someone asks us about the Church. Then the other day one of my friends asked me! Instead of not knowing what to say, I remembered some of the things we’ve been learning. I was able to answer all of his questions. The new curriculum is helping me to be a missionary right now.” —Jared M.



“At first it seemed like we were going over the same doctrine for several lessons in a row. But by the end of the first month I realized that several lessons aren’t enough to scratch the surface of everything I need to learn. Learning to love learning is great preparation for a mission.” —Daedra L.

### Practice with Feedback

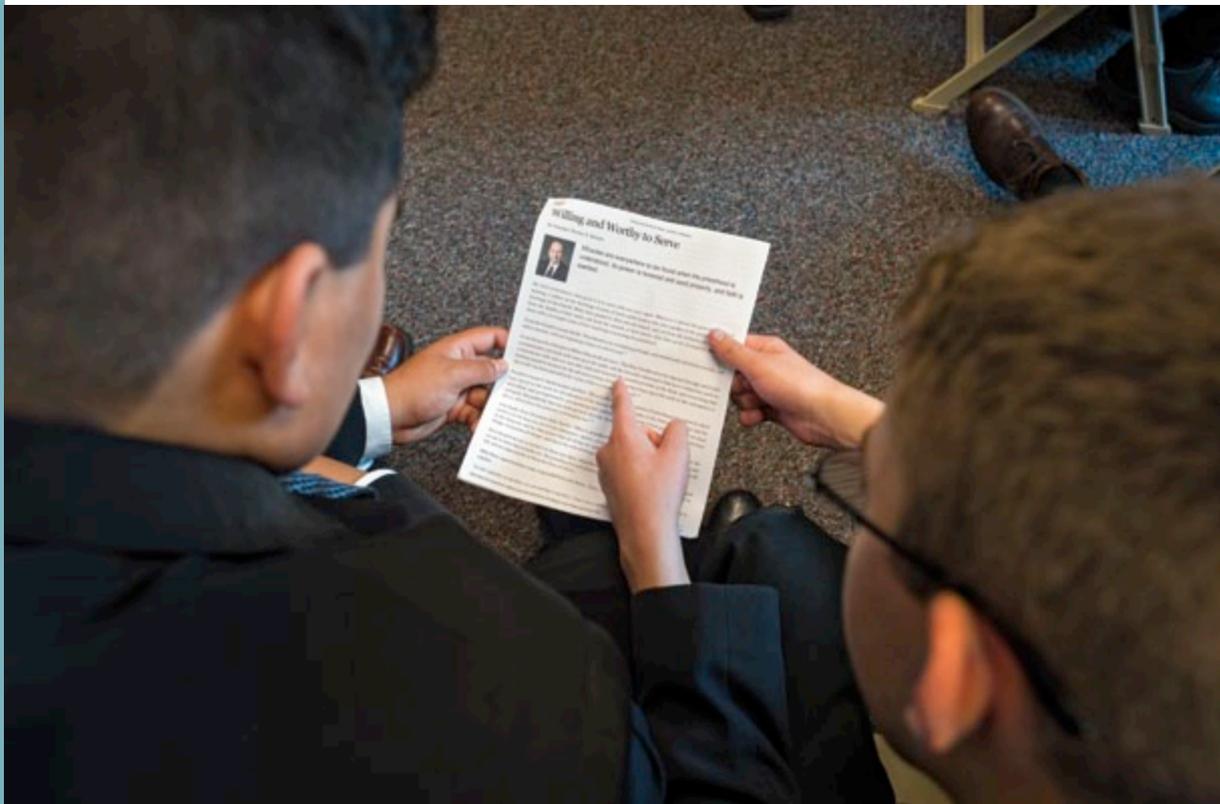
Soon after I returned from my mission, the children in my ward presented the annual Primary program in sacrament meeting. As I listened, I realized that I had also learned many wonderful principles in Primary but that it was when I was required to *teach* those principles to others that I fully internalized them.

In the MTC, missionaries prepare to teach by teaching. They teach each other, their teachers, and missionaries in other districts. They teach members of their branch presidencies and volunteers from the community, both members and people not of our faith. Most important, after they teach they receive feedback.

As part of *Come, Follow Me*, youth have the opportunity to share with others what they have learned. This can happen during informal discussions, but it can also

happen more formally. In our quorum we have created opportunities for the young men to join in teaching each other in our meetings, but we have also arranged for them to teach short lessons in Primary (under the direction of the regular teacher) and to participate in teaching their peers in other quorums and classes. The boys even made a video about preparing for a mission and posted it on the Internet.

In preparation for each of these teaching experiences, the young men have received feedback from me and other adults, as well as from each other. We have offered sincere compliments and made suggestions as to how they might improve. In the MTC we would explain, demonstrate, practice, evaluate, and then practice again. I am trying to do the same thing with the youth, and it is having positive results.



## PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES



"If we provide our young people with teaching opportunities, encouraging them not to be ashamed of the gospel, we will help them greatly."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, in "Tending the Flock: Teaching Leadership Skills to Youth," *Ensign*, June 2008, 18.



"My teacher asked me to help teach a part of the lesson about the Atonement. At first I thought, 'Wait a minute, you're the teacher.' But as I thought about it more, I realized that learning to teach with the Spirit is the best mission preparation."  
—Brandon L.

### Ask Open-Ended Questions

In the MTC we avoided questions for which there is only one correct answer ("Where did Joseph Smith go to pray?") and questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no ("Have you ever felt like Joseph Smith?"). The quality and quantity of responses always increased when we asked open-ended questions for which there are many possible answers ("How has God answered your prayers?" "What scriptures have motivated you to do something?").

In my teachers quorum, not only am I trying to invite more thinking and participation by asking open-ended questions, but I am also encouraging the young men to ask open-ended questions of others when they are leading discussions. When teaching about the Godhead, one young man asked, "What is the Holy Ghost?" After an awkward silence, another young man finally stated, "The third member of the Godhead."

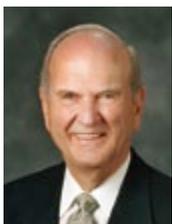
I then joined the conversation and asked the first young man to build on his original question by asking an open-ended question. He thought for a moment and then asked, "What if we didn't have the Holy Ghost? What difference would that make?" The discussion that followed was much more lively and meaningful. In the MTC we taught missionaries to use open-ended questions. I am trying to teach the young men to do the same thing, and they are catching on.

### Follow Up on Commitments

In *Preach My Gospel*, missionaries learn the importance of inviting their investigators to make commitments and then following up and making sure they keep them. At the end of the learning outlines in *Come, Follow Me*, teachers are encouraged to invite learners to make a commitment. That's simple enough, but we also have to follow up and make sure the commitments are kept.



"I feel a lot more involved in what we are learning now. The other day in class I sat back and thought, 'I bet study time on a mission will be a lot like this.' That got me excited because when I'm involved in learning it's a lot more fun."  
—Christian S.



### TEACH ONE ANOTHER

"You teenagers, embrace your new curriculum and teach one another the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Now is your time to prepare to teach others about the goodness of God."

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Catch the Wave," *Ensign*, May 2013, 45.

In one of my lessons I invited the young men to ask their parents to share a time when they had received an answer to prayer. The following week I asked the young men, "How many of you did it?" No hands went up. Instead of just moving on, I extended the same invitation again and promised the boys they would have a special experience with their parents and probably learn something they never knew before. I promised them that this experience would increase their testimony of prayer and would help them recognize answers in their own lives. The young men recommitted, and during the week I contacted the boys and reminded them. I assured them I would be asking them to share something about their experiences on Sunday. When Sunday came, everyone was prepared, and

the stories they shared allowed us to feel the Spirit in a memorable way.

Some may ask, "How will missionaries be prepared if the time in the MTC is shortened?" Those involved with implementing *Come, Follow Me* are realizing that young people today have the opportunity to be better prepared than ever. As I have implemented in the teachers quorum some of the same effective methods I used in the MTC, it has made a difference. Practicing with feedback, asking open-ended questions, and following up on commitments have helped make our time together much more productive. ■

*The author lives in Texas, USA.*

### MORE INFO

Find information and resources related to *Come, Follow Me* at [youth.lds.org](http://youth.lds.org).



“It has been fun to learn together as a class and then share what I’m learning with my family. I like to write to my brother, who is currently serving a mission, and explain the things we are learning.” —Stephanie S.



*Come, Follow Me* is helping the youth in my ward respond to the statement from the First Presidency, “We challenge you to rise to a new sense of commitment to assist our Father in Heaven in His glorious work” (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], v).

## FIVE STEPS TO BETTER TEACHING

This five-step process is used in the Missionary Training Center, and I have also found it beneficial in helping my quorum learn how to teach gospel principles. Leaders and teachers may find it helpful as they involve youth in the classroom, and parents may find it useful in the home.

1. Explain
2. Demonstrate
3. Practice
4. Evaluate
5. Practice again

Evaluation is particularly helpful for youth. Kindhearted feedback about what they did right and how they can improve helps them to become better teachers.



By Elder Eduardo Gavarret  
Of the Seventy

# PREPARED

## AGAINST THE DAY OF BATTLE

*May we, by placing our trust in the Savior, the Lord of Hosts,  
be prepared and not stumble on the field of battle.*

In 1485, Richard III was on the English throne. It was a time of instability, and Richard had to defend his crown more than once. But he was an experienced military veteran, a bold and shrewd warrior who had an army of between 8,000 and 10,000 men.

That same year, a pretender to the English throne, Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, challenged and confronted Richard in a place that gave the battle its name: Bosworth Field. Henry, unlike Richard, had little combat experience, and his forces numbered only 5,000. But at his side he had good advisers—noblemen who had taken part in similar battles, including some against Richard. The morning of the battle arrived, and everything suggested that Richard would be victorious.

A famous dramatic legend summarizes the events of August 22, 1485. That morning, King Richard and his men prepared to face Henry's army. The winner of the battle would be the ruler of England. Shortly before the battle, Richard sent a groom to see if his favorite horse was ready.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GREG NEWBOLD





“Shoe him quickly,” the groom ordered the blacksmith. “The king wishes to ride at the head of his troops.”

The blacksmith answered that he would have to wait. “I’ve shod the king’s whole army the last few days,” he said, “and now I’ve got to go get more iron.”

The impatient groom said he couldn’t wait. “The king’s enemies are advancing right now, and we must meet them on the field,” he said. “Make do with what you have.”

As ordered, the blacksmith did the best he could, making four horseshoes from a bar of iron. After hammering out the shoes, he nailed three of them on the horse. When attempting to fasten the fourth shoe, however, he realized he did not have enough nails.

“I need one or two more nails, and it will take some time to hammer them out,” he told the groom.

The groom, however, could wait no longer. “I hear the trumpets now,” he declared. “Can’t you just use what you’ve got?”

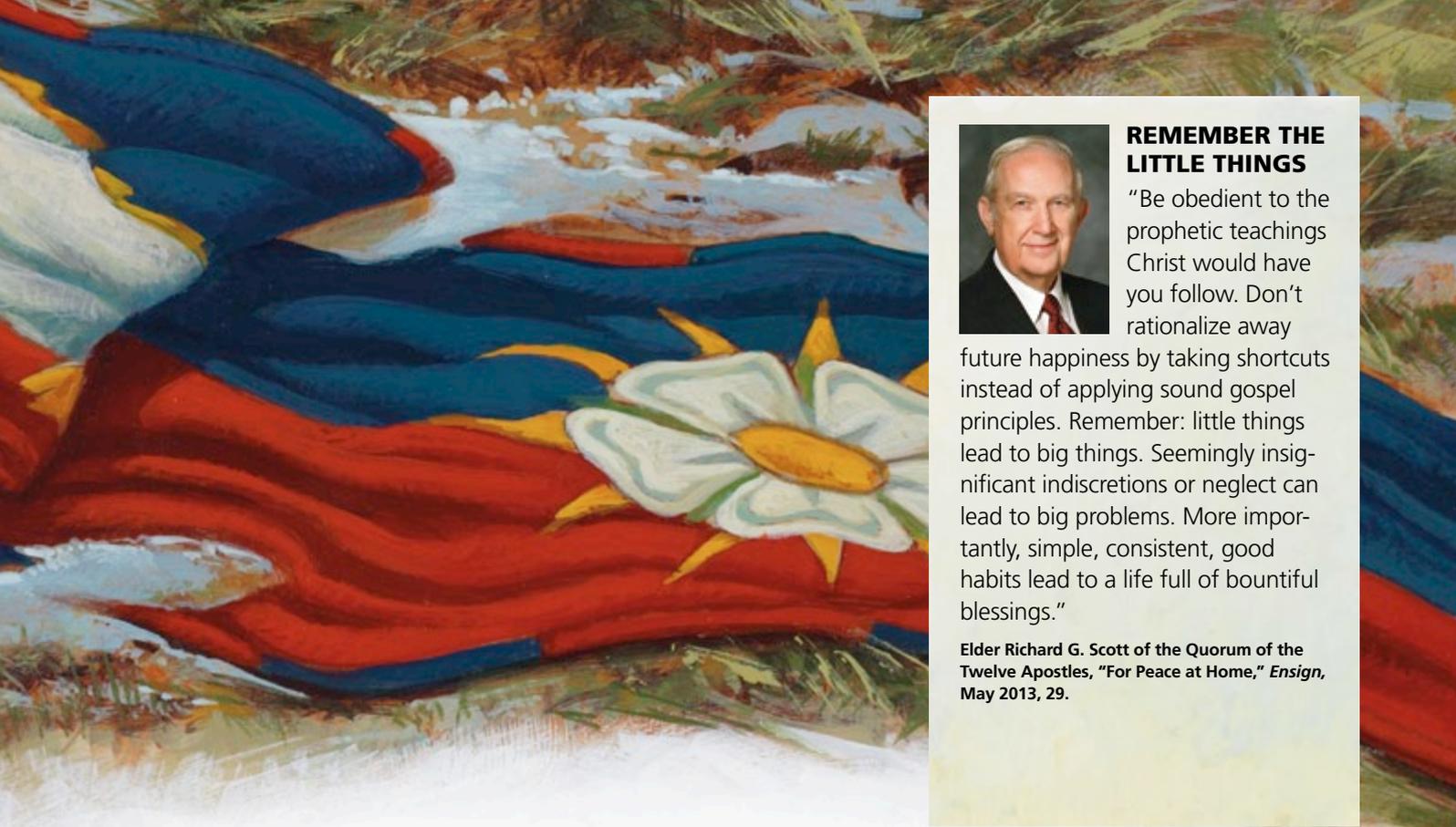
The blacksmith replied that he would do his best but that he couldn’t guarantee that the fourth horseshoe would hold.

“Just nail it on,” the groom ordered. “And hurry, or King Richard will be angry with us both.”

The battle soon commenced. To rally his men, Richard rode up and down the field, fighting and urging them with the call, “Press forward! Press forward!”

As Richard looked across the field, however, he saw some of his men falling back. Fearing that his other soldiers might also begin retreating, he galloped toward the broken line to spur them on. But before Richard could reach them, his horse stumbled and fell, throwing the king to the ground. One of the horse’s shoes, just as the blacksmith feared, had flown off during the king’s desperate gallop.

Richard jumped from the ground as his horse rose and galloped off. As Henry’s army advanced, Richard waved his sword high in the air, shouting, “A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!”



### REMEMBER THE LITTLE THINGS

“Be obedient to the prophetic teachings Christ would have you follow. Don’t rationalize away

future happiness by taking shortcuts instead of applying sound gospel principles. Remember: little things lead to big things. Seemingly insignificant indiscretions or neglect can lead to big problems. More importantly, simple, consistent, good habits lead to a life full of bountiful blessings.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “For Peace at Home,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 29.

But it was too late. By then, Richard’s men were fleeing in fear of Henry’s advancing army, and the battle was lost. Since that time people have uttered the proverb:

*For want of a nail, a shoe was lost,  
For want of a shoe, a horse was lost,  
For want of a horse, a battle was lost,  
For want of a battle, a kingdom was lost,  
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.*<sup>1</sup>

### Fastening Our Principles

As I think of this story, I reflect on how something as simple as a poorly fastened horseshoe nail led to such a turn of events. We can compare the missing nail to the principles of the gospel. A lack of gospel principles and their associated values and practices can leave us helpless on the field of battle against temptation and evil.

What practices are missing in our lives and families? Are we neglecting personal or family prayer? Diligent study of the scriptures? Regular family home evening? Payment of a full tithe? Service to our brothers and sisters? Sabbath day observance? Temple worship? Love for our neighbors?

Each of us can take a look inside and find what we may lack—which principle or practice we need to *fasten* more

firmly in our lives and in our families. Then, after we identify that principle or practice, we can act with diligence and determination to *tighten the nail*—to live that principle more fully and to better prepare ourselves and our families to stand up for what’s right.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord counsels, “Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of my Spirit, which I will pour out upon you, and my word which I reveal unto you, and . . . be faithful until I come” (27:18).

To His faithful servants, the Savior has promised, “Their arm shall be my arm, and I will be their shield and their buckler; and I will gird up their loins, and they shall fight manfully for me; . . . and by the fire of mine indignation will I preserve them” (D&C 35:14).

May we remember that even if “the horse is prepared against the day of battle,” as Proverbs says, “safety is of the Lord” (21:31). May we follow Moroni’s invitation to “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32). And may we, by placing our trust in the Savior, the Lord of Hosts, be prepared and not stumble on the field of battle against evil. ■

### NOTE

1. See “For Want of a Horseshoe Nail,” in William J. Bennett, ed., *The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories* (1993), 198–200.

*As a 37-year-old widow with four children, I could never have guessed that my experience would mold me into someone more than I was before.*



# FINDING *Peace and Growth* IN WIDOWHOOD

By Jeanna Jolley

**I**t was about 8:30 in the morning on December 29, 1995. My four children, my husband, and I were enjoying a holiday vacation. I was at a Mia Maid activity when my husband, Lindsay, called, gasping in pain. He said he thought he needed to go to the hospital. I dashed home. Though his chest pain had subsided by the time I got there, I insisted we go to the hospital immediately.

Because he walked in, the medical staff at the hospital assumed the best—that this wasn't really an emergency, probably just some heartburn. They hooked him up to the EKG (electrocardiogram) and established that he was not having a heart attack. What I didn't know then was that an EKG can sometimes fail to detect that there's a problem.

We waited about 45 minutes for a physician, and then my husband went into cardiac arrest. As I watched the sudden scramble to action by the medical staff, I felt anxious but also strangely calm. Here was my husband having a heart attack, an obviously life-threatening event, but I was enveloped in both a "peace . . . which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7) and the terror and grief at possibly losing him.

The doctors and nurses worked on him for about 45 minutes and were going to give up, but I begged them to continue until his parents arrived. Upon arrival at the hospital, his dad immediately gave him a priesthood blessing, promising him that he would be here until his life's work was completed. After the blessing, I fully expected Lin to start breathing again and sit up. But he didn't.

Even now, almost 18 years later, the devastation of watching my best friend's life slip away fills me with terrible sadness. Yet as I reflect on my experience, I can see how, over time, widowhood has molded me into someone *more*, someone *better*, than I was before.



*As I have attended the temple, I have felt that Lin was there many times, sharing the outpouring of the Spirit and the new layers of knowledge that only come from repeated visits to that sacred place.*

### **A Knowledge of the Plan**

As painful as it was to lose my husband, during that time I was also filled with comfort because I knew God's plan for us. I knew where Lin was and where he would be until my own life's work was complete and I could join him. I believed in the plan of salvation. I felt that Heavenly Father had important lessons for my family to learn, things that could be learned in Lin's absence—and maybe *by* Lin's absence. It was an opportunity to put my faith in the plan to the test. Did I really believe it? Or was it all just theoretical? In those critical moments, I found that I really did believe in our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation.

Since Lin's death, I've had plenty of tests of my faith, but I have never questioned the plan. During the times when I'm feeling sorry for myself, I remember that countless widows and widowers have lived successful lives and raised their children and grandchildren without their partners.

There are those who might use the loss of a spouse as an excuse for a dysfunctional life, but I have never allowed myself to do so. I have been determined that my family will survive and thrive. I have tried to teach my children that success in life is not based on what happens to us but on how we handle what happens to us—what we choose to make out of our individual circumstances.

### **Sources of Love and Support**

Although my understanding of the plan of salvation strengthened me, the challenge of losing my husband was still formidable. My whole world was turned upside down. I was 37 years old. My children were 15, 10, 6, and 5. I had our business, our family, and our whole life to face without my partner and best friend. It would have been so easy to be overwhelmed.

Thankfully, I found great sources of support in my stake. Lindsay had lived in the area all his life, and his family was known throughout the stake for their steadfast loyalty to the gospel. Learning of our loss, people reached out to us in marvelous ways that let me know we were loved and valued and that Lin's legacy was treasured. People made money donations to help with funeral expenses, provided meals, made phone calls, and just showed love. I received many cards and letters, some of which recounted memories of Lin. All were precious and strengthening to me. We were also supported by good home teachers committed to serving and teaching us. These sources of support buoyed me up, keeping me from sinking down into bitter loneliness and constant longing for the companionship of my husband.

My experience taught me important lessons about what it means to “mourn with those that mourn” (Mosiah 18:9). I learned that even if we don't know what to say to someone who has just lost a loved one, we can provide comfort just by being there. We can cry with the person, offer a hand to hold or a hug, drop by for a visit, or simply send a note. It all helps. We might worry about saying the wrong thing, but if we focus on the person we wish to comfort rather than on our own anxiety, our love and good intentions will shine through. I knew that the intentions of those who

reached out to me were to comfort, uphold, support, and love me, and so I found it was almost impossible for them to do or say the wrong thing.

Because of the support I received, I didn't feel alone. Lin's life and death impacted many people. We grieved together and we comforted each other. It's true that his death affected me to a greater degree because I'm his wife, but the opportunity to share the grief with others was precious.

### **An Eternal Perspective**

At the beginning of my life as a widow, every day and every week that passed made me feel that I was moving further and further away from my husband. But on the first anniversary of his death, I realized that to place undue importance on this particular date was to limit my perspective. After all, as the prophet Alma taught, "all is as one day with God, and time only is measured unto men" (Alma 40:8). Rather than focus on a certain date in time, I needed to consider eternity and how my relationship with Lin would ultimately transcend time. So I note December 29 as the anniversary of my husband's death, but I don't make it a day to grieve more deeply or to be gloomier or sadder than on other days. I grieve when I need to, not on a specific day.

Now I feel that instead of moving away from Lin, I'm moving toward him. I try to make each day a wonderful one in which I feel gratitude for the gift of life and find opportunities to bring joy to others.

### **An Eternal Partner**

The Lord has richly blessed me throughout this whole experience. It has been extremely important to my emotional and

spiritual health to study the scriptures daily. I have found answers and comfort that couldn't have reached me any other way. As I have attended the temple, I have felt that Lin was there many times, sharing the outpouring of the Spirit and the new layers of knowledge that only come from repeated visits to that sacred place. I have relied heavily on the blessings of our temple marriage, knowing that ours is but a temporary separation. I know we will be together again. I am excited to see him, to find out what he's been doing all these years, and to share with him a new version of myself—a more evolved, more spiritually mature, more deeply committed eternal partner.

I still grieve when my feelings call for it. After all these years, I still cry sometimes. There are moments when Lin's death seems fresh again. I never think of myself as weak for grieving over my husband. I love him! I feel that it's okay to cry, to miss him. It will always be okay. But my grief is not inconsolable, because my Heavenly Father has been there every moment, filling me with His peace, His calm, His Spirit. The knowledge of His plan fills me with patience to wait upon His time for all things in my life.

I can absolutely testify that our Heavenly Father knows and loves us. Through the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ, our grief, pain, and loss can be lightened if we put our trust in that divine source of healing and strive to keep the commandments. The miracle of healing can surely deepen our faith in our Heavenly Father and the Savior and lead to growth beyond what we thought possible. ■

*The author lives in Washington, USA.*



### **THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST WILL BLESS AND COMFORT**

"The fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ brings great comfort in stressful times of mortality. It brings light where there is darkness and a calming influence where there is turmoil. It gives eternal hope where there is mortal despair. It is more than just beautiful doctrine. It is a reality in our lives that if we can be obedient and obtain the eternal rewards that God grants us, if we will draw nigh unto Him and embrace the eternal doctrine, we will be blessed."

**Elder Robert D. Hales**  
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Eternal Family," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 66.



**By Elder Craig A. Cardon**  
Of the Seventy

# BECOMING MEN & WOMEN OF GOD

*May each of you remember who you really are, what God expects of you, and that He has a mission for you.*

Several years ago, prior to my calling as a General Authority, Sister Cardon and I attended a dinner for members of the Dean's Alumni Leadership Council at the Harvard Kennedy School.

After the dinner the president of the council invited the council members and their companions to stand and introduce themselves. He suggested that each person share educational and professional background information, along with what each considered to be his or her most significant accomplishment. Because of the way the room was organized, our table would be the last to participate.

Sister Cardon later explained to me that as she saw all in attendance standing and listing their many academic degrees and professional accomplishments, she thought, "What can I possibly say to these people who have been ambassadors, high government officials, educators, professionals, and leaders of gigantic enterprises? I don't even have my bachelor's degree yet" (though she subsequently received it in 2008).

Sister Cardon's mind continued racing: "I've got to think of something to say. No, I've got to find an excuse to leave." Then, in an instant, she thought, "I'm going to pray."

She said a silent, earnest prayer, pleading with the Lord for His help



and direction. In that moment, a voice came into her mind with perfect clarity. It said, “Debbie, who in this room has achieved more important things in this life or has had more amazing experiences than you? You are a mother in Zion. You have brought eight children into this world. Those who are of age are happily married and are having children of their own. What is more important than that? Debbie, get up and tell these people with power what you have done.”

At that moment, the microphone was passed to our table. I had seen Sister Cardon shifting in her chair and looking a bit uneasy, so I extended my hand to take the microphone, thinking to give her additional time to prepare herself. Imagine my surprise when her hand stretched out in front of mine and literally grabbed the microphone.

She confidently stood, and with an elegance difficult to describe, she said, “A few years ago I accompanied my husband here to the Harvard Kennedy School. And my most important achievement is that I am the mother of 8 children and the grandmother of 18 grandchildren” (the number of grandchildren at the time).

With that statement, spontaneous applause erupted in the room. It was the only applause of the entire evening. Sister Cardon shared a few



**FAITH: THE BROTHER OF JARED**



**KNOWLEDGE: ABRAHAM**



**PATIENCE: JOSEPH SMITH**



**BROTHERLY KINDNESS: NEPHI**

***Thinking about an individual who managed to develop a divine attribute in his or her life provides a powerful example that may assist us in our efforts to do the same. Consider, for example, the attributes associated with the prophets above.***

additional thoughts relating to the central, societal role of the family and the happiness found therein. Then she handed me the microphone and sat down. I stood and added simply, “I’m her husband.”

The significance of what the Lord did through Sister Cardon was evidenced by the fact that for the remainder of the evening we were inundated with questions about families, children, and marital harmony—subjects eminently more important than anything else that had been addressed. Because Sister Cardon had earnestly sought direction from the Spirit and had exercised the faith and courage to respond to what she was told, the Lord had magnified her in a powerful way in furthering His purposes.

I desire to share some thoughts about such experiences, with a prayer that you will come to understand more fully what it means to be a man or a woman of God, and to invite you to become a man or a woman of God.

### **Examples from the Prophets**

The appellation “man of God” is used in scripture to describe Moses (see Deuteronomy 33:1; Joshua 14:6), Samuel (see 1 Samuel 9:6–10), Elijah (see 1 Kings 17:24), Elisha (see 2 Kings 4:7; 5:8), Abinadi (see Mosiah 7:26), Alma and his sons (see Alma 2:30; 48:18), Ammon and the other sons of Mosiah (see Alma 48:18), Captain Moroni (see Alma 48:18), and Nephi the son of Helaman (see Helaman 11:8,

18). Although not found in the scriptures, the companion appellation “woman of God” would accurately describe women such as Sarah, Ruth, Deborah, Sariah, Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary and Martha, and Mary Magdalene.

If we desire to become men and women of God, we might ask, “What are the attributes of a man or a woman of God?” Certainly, such attributes mirror the attributes of Deity. A listing of some of these attributes appears in the Doctrine and Covenants: “Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence” (D&C 4:6).

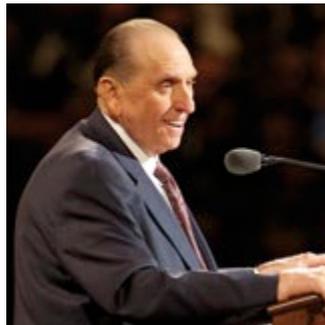
To give these attributes greater contextual meaning, have you ever attempted to associate an individual with each attribute? Thinking about an individual who struggled with the vicissitudes of life but managed to develop a divine attribute in his or her life provides a powerful example that may assist us in our efforts to do the same. Consider the following examples.

For the attribute of *faith*, consider the brother of Jared. Notwithstanding he was “chastened . . . because he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord,” yet he “repented of the evil which he had done, and did call upon the name of the Lord” (Ether 2:14–15).

As he prayed regularly, the brother of Jared was directed in his work. When a matter arose in which he needed further direction, the Lord invited him to find a



CHARITY: MORMON



DILIGENCE: PRESIDENT  
THOMAS S. MONSON

solution. This he did, taking 16 small molten stones to the Lord to ask for something that only the Lord could do. In deep humility, he asked the Lord to “touch [the] stones” (Ether 3:4). The brother of Jared then saw the premortal Savior “because of [his] faith.” The Lord told him, “Never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast” (Ether 3:9).

When I think of *knowledge*, I think of Abraham, who “sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto [he] should be ordained to administer the same; having been [himself] a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, . . . and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, [he] became a rightful heir” (Abraham 1:2).

Many prophets have endured difficult things that have imbued them with *patience*. I think of Joseph Smith and his words from Liberty Jail, which are perhaps most emblematic: “O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place?”

The Lord responded:

“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 121:1, 7–8).

For *brotherly kindness*, there could be no greater example than Nephi, whose older brothers bound him “with cords, for they sought to take away [his] life.” Through his exercise of faith, the cords were loosed from his hands and feet. His brothers eventually became “sorrowful, because of their wickedness.” Evidencing great brotherly kindness, Nephi simply records, “I did frankly forgive them” (see 1 Nephi 7:16–21).

For *charity*, consider Mormon. From the heart of this faithful prophet and valiant military leader who prepared the sacred book of scripture that bears his name comes this counterintuitive yet remarkably inspired counsel to his people, who were then immersed in despair and destruction:

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail—

“But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him” (Moroni 7:46–47).

For all who know President Thomas S. Monson, his life is synonymous with duty and *diligence*. His very being defines diligence. He said:

“I love and cherish the noble word *duty* and all that it implies.

“. . . Like a clarion call comes the word of the Lord to you, to me, and to priesthood holders everywhere: ‘Wherefore, now let every man learn his *duty*, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.’ [D&C 107:99; emphasis added.]”<sup>1</sup>

Like these men of God, we can develop divine attributes in our own lives.

### Doing the Will of the Father

Having considered the attributes of Deity, we are led to the essential, central question: what is the defining characteristic of men and women of God? Consider the following:

- Men and women of God understand the plan of the Father.

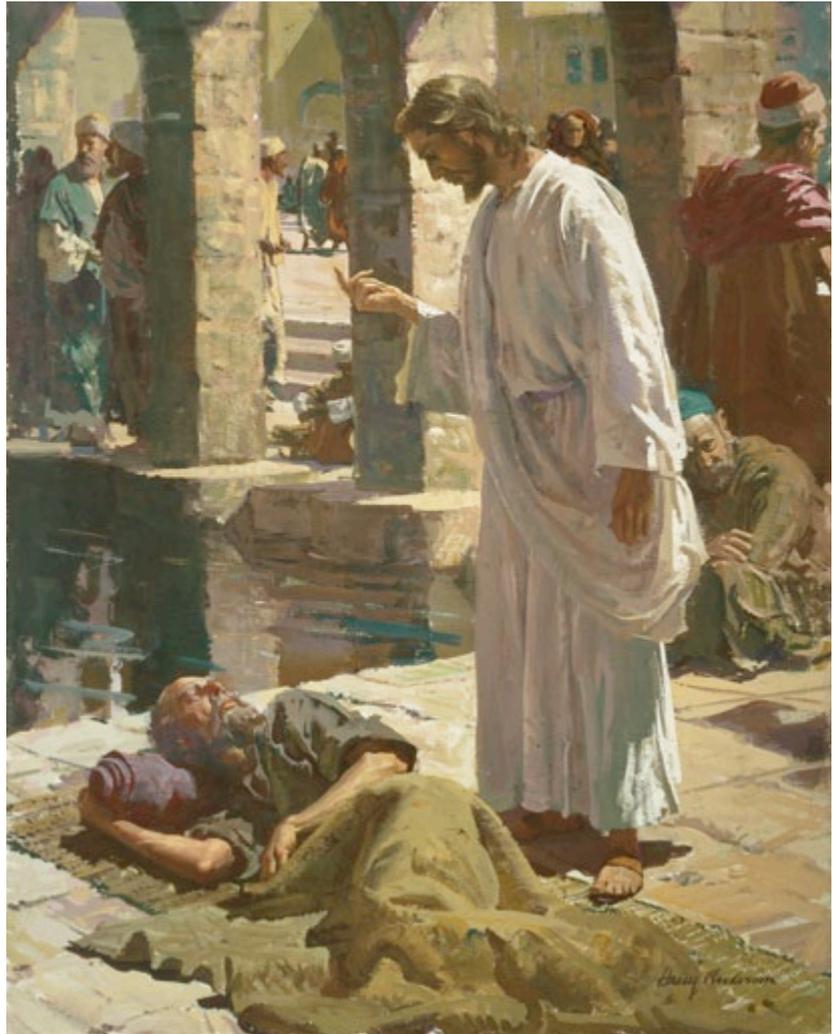
- They understand the will of the Father in accomplishing His plan.
- They do the will of the Father.

This defining characteristic—doing the will of the Father—may be developed, refined, and strengthened in our lives, but it takes effort. As you consider your own circumstances, the following statements may provide a helpful guide to making this characteristic a part of you, even defining who you are:

- An understanding of the Father’s plan comes from studying and pondering the word of God, from prayer, and from life’s experiences.
- An understanding of the will of the Father in accomplishing His plan comes from recognizing the “[Lord’s] voice, even the voice of [His] Spirit” (D&C 97:1).
- A conviction to do the will of the Father comes from exercising faith to follow the direction given by the Spirit.

As in all righteous endeavors, the Savior is our great Exemplar. Consider His thought-provoking question and loving invitation to his disciples in the land of Bountiful: “Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am” (3 Nephi 27:27). Now consider the following examples from the many found in the Savior’s life and teachings.

Understanding the Father’s plan, the Savior took the initiative at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day, knowing full well the consequences that would follow. Knowing the will of the Father in accomplishing that plan, the Savior saw a man who had been an invalid for 38 years and asked him, “Wilt thou be made whole?” (John 5:6).



As the man explained his futile attempts at receiving a blessing in the pool, “Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk” (John 5:8). When the Jews learned that Jesus had performed the miracle, they “sought to slay him” (John 5:16). In this setting, Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19). That pattern is characteristic of a man or woman of God.

***Learning and following the Father’s will, as the Savior exemplified during His earthly ministry, is characteristic of a man or woman of God.***

Later in His ministry, at the synagogue in Capernaum, the Savior gave what is perhaps the most succinct expression of this divine characteristic as He taught the people and the Jewish leaders, saying, “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38).

In terms of our own personal conversion, it is worth considering carefully the significance of the similar words the Savior used to define His gospel to his disciples in the land of Bountiful: “Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me” (3 Nephi 27:13).

### Remembering Who You Are

Jesus also exemplifies a final element I would like to address in becoming men and women of God. Jesus knew who He was and that His Father had given Him a mission to accomplish. He knew that His Father had sent Him. Similarly, a man or a woman of God knows and remembers who he or she is and that God has a work for him or her to do.

Note, however, that men and women of God must first become sons and daughters of Christ, being born of Him. King Benjamin said, “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters” (Mosiah 5:7).

The Lord wants you to know that you are children of the covenant. You are part of a

grand design, which is our Heavenly Father’s plan. And He wants you to remember that as you live faithfully, you are the means whereby the families of the earth are blessed and the Lord’s purposes are realized (see 3 Nephi 20:25).

I invite you to be men and women of God. You do this by continuing along the path on which you have set your feet. As Nephi said, “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” (2 Nephi 31:20).

In your efforts, you may look to the prophets for guidance, and you will find in Christ the perfect example.

May each of you develop the attributes of Deity in your personal life.

May each of you do the will of the Father, making this the defining characteristic of your life. You will be able to do so as you study and pray, experience life, come to recognize the voice of the Spirit, and exercise your faith in following that voice, just as Sister Cardon did.

And may each of you remember who you really are, what God expects of you, and that He has a mission for you to accomplish. I hope you all become men and women of God, that He may eventually say of you, as He said of Joseph Smith, “I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work” (2 Nephi 3:8). ■

*Excerpted from a devotional address given at Brigham Young University—Idaho on June 19, 2012. For the full address, visit [web.byui.edu/devotionalsand speeches](http://web.byui.edu/devotionalsand speeches).*

#### NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Willing and Worthy to Serve,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 66.

## ANSWERING QUESTIONS

### What does it mean for us to be sons and daughters of God?

“Seen in its true light, the doctrine of the Father and the Son is the doctrine of the eternal family. Every human being has existed previously as a spirit child with heavenly parents, with Christ being the Firstborn of the Father in this heavenly family.

“So it is with all of us. We are the children of our Heavenly Father. . . .

“. . . I bear my solemn witness and testimony of the reality, nearness, and goodness of our Eternal Father and His holy Son, Jesus Christ.”

Elder Christoffel Golden Jr. of the Seventy, “The Father and the Son,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 101.

# Joining Hands with God

*The loss of our infant daughter taught me that the plan of salvation can help us through even our most difficult trials.*

By Joshua C. Irvine

As a young father, I felt there were a number of realities so far in the future that they did not need to be daily concerns: college for my boys, who were only ages two and three; retirement for me; and the death of immediate family members. While I had been affected by the death of relatives, the possible passing of my own wife or children seemed to be something that would just come later. As a teenager, I had attended my grandfather's funeral. As a missionary, I mourned with members of a small ward that lost a dear loved one. As a returned missionary, I was a pallbearer at the funeral of my other grandfather. And as a new husband, I held my wife as she wept at the passing of her last living grandparent. But nothing would more keenly teach me of the eternal role of birth—and its corollary,



death—than having to face the burden of burying my infant daughter.

People say the experience of expecting a child is different each time. However, after the joy with which I anticipated the arrival of our two sons,

I never dreamed I would experience the spectrum of emotions I did while we were expecting our third child, emotions ranging from anxiety and apprehension to melancholy and depression. Over the course of my wife's pregnancy, we discovered that our unborn child faced serious medical problems. As time passed, the severity of these problems became clearer, and we subsequently began to deal with the reality that our little girl would not labor long in mortality. Yet throughout this entire process, we were blessed to enjoy the comfort that only the sweet, tender mercies of the Lord can bring.

During this time, my thoughts continued to return to the beauty of the plan of salvation. I thought about the many lessons I had been a part of as a missionary. One day, while going about my normal routine, the words of Jacob came powerfully to mind: “Death hath passed upon all men, to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator” (2 Nephi 9:6). In my heart, I asked the Lord, “How is it merciful to be given the task of burying my little girl?” Then, in soft, comforting impressions, the reply came that death is an essential part of the whole plan. Its mercy is found in that it offers the means to return home. Knowing the necessity of death does not remove all the pain and suffering associated with it, but I realized that through the difficult trial of losing our daughter, we were joining hands with God to bring about His great work.

As I continued to think about the peace that filled my soul and soothed my spirit, my mind looked at both the creation of life and the reality of death. My wife and I had, indeed, joined hands with God to create a mortal body that would house a spirit. And yet all was in the care of a loving and all-knowing Heavenly Father. When He is ready, He will call us home, releasing us from our service in mortality to continue our efforts beyond the veil.

I know that our little Sariah was called home to carry on other missions and that her role in mortality was fulfilled. Of course, such a realization does not completely remove the pangs of separation. However, I find strength through my faith in the Savior, He who felt all pain and suffering in order to know how to come to our aid (see Alma 7:11–12) and how to wipe away our tears (see Isaiah 25:8). Through the Holy Ghost, I have been blessed with peace and comfort. Over time, I have come to learn for myself that the dawn of hope and eternal promise will come to each of us, breaking the darkness of doubt and pain, if we will but join hands with God and seek the source of all light. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

# Fear Not, My Child

By LaRene Porter Gaunt

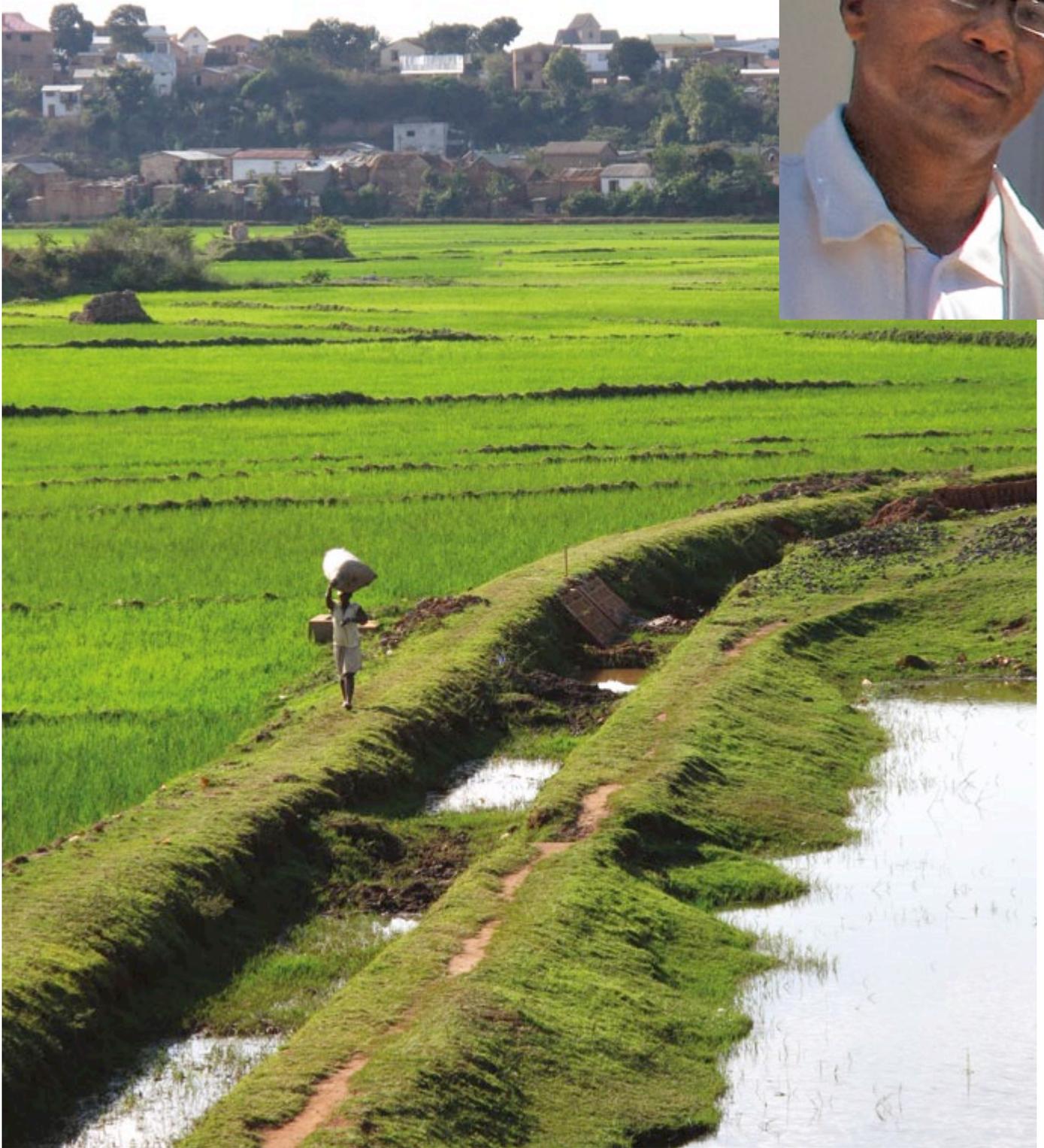
*You  
came to us from God—  
a child so pure  
that in your trip to earth  
you didn't need to stay and prove to Him  
that you would do His will.*

*God only needed someone willing  
to create for you a home—  
and then to let you go.*

*How blessed are we,  
for He has chosen us.  
And though we weep,  
peace comes in knowing  
that death will only bring  
the sleep that wakens you to life again  
to breathe the warmth of paradise.*

*Fear not, my child.  
We will be together soon  
and hold you in our arms—  
encircled in celestial love  
that unites us with our God.*

*Picking up the missionaries in a cab started Roger Randrianarison on the path to discipleship.*



PHOTOGRAPHS OF RANDRIANARISON FAMILY BY MATTHEW D. FELTON

# BECOMING A Man of Peace

*The temple, missions, and service helped Roger and his family move toward becoming an eternal family.*

**By Matthew D. Flitton**

Church Magazines

Roger Randrianarison knew something was missing from his family's life. "I prayed to God to help me find something to lead my family," he said. "I had a desire to lead my family in something good, something that would lead to the right path."

He was concerned about how to raise his three children—sons, Randrianandry and Sedindirina, and daughter, Nirina. He was unhappy that his short temper had led to challenges in the family. He wanted to be a kinder parent.

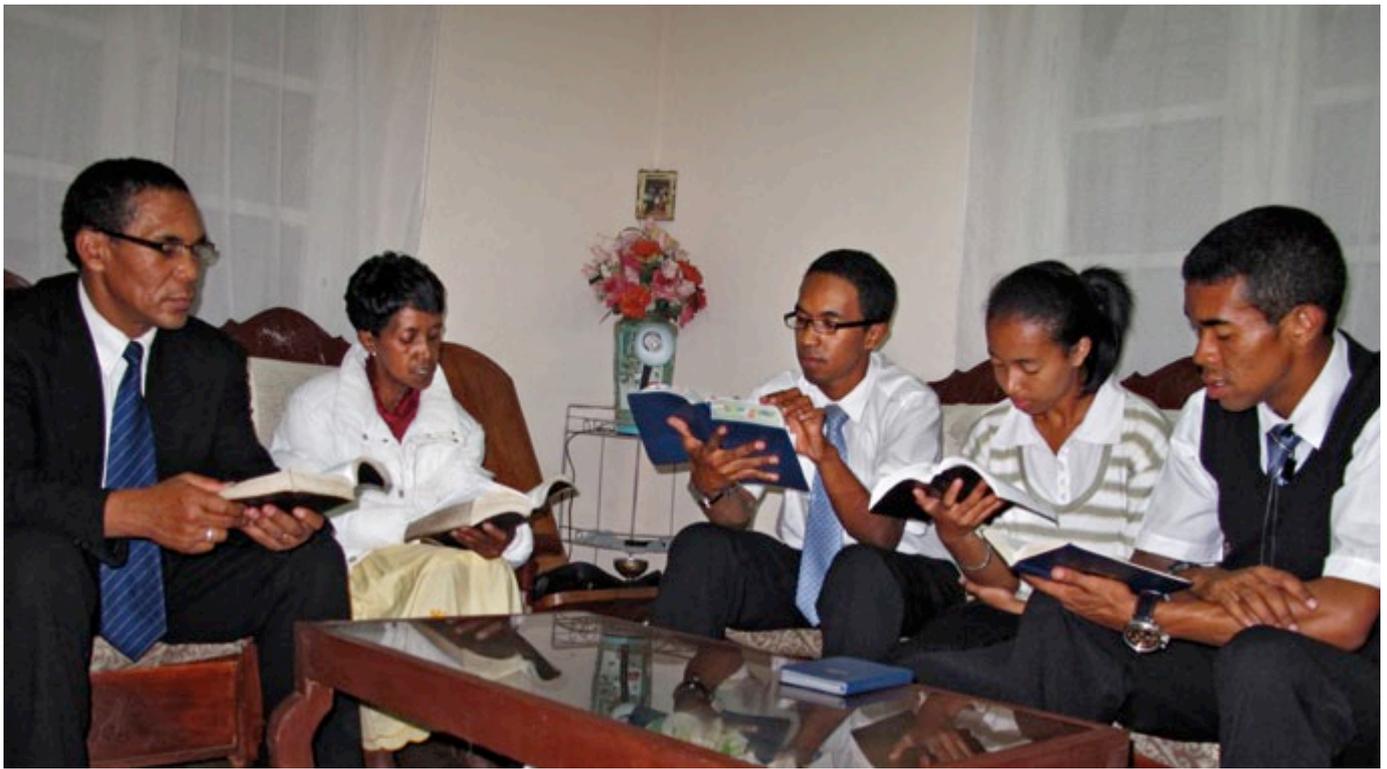
"I decided I was the one who had to change because I saw who I had become," he said.

Roger had lost his construction business a few years earlier and was working as a taxi driver in Antananarivo, Madagascar. One day he picked up two sister missionaries.

"Once they were in the car, they asked me my name and if I had a family," he said. "They asked if I knew who God was and if I prayed to Him."

The missionaries sang songs with Roger during the ride and invited him to church. He tried to go a few times but never could work the meetings into his schedule, and he lost contact with the missionaries.

About five months later Roger was working at home one day when he heard two missionaries talking to someone outside his fence. Roger knew they would come talk to him. He felt like he should answer yes to whatever questions they would ask him.



*Studying the gospel as a family has helped the Randrianarison family grow closer together.*

After introducing themselves, the missionaries asked him if he knew about God. Yes. Did he want to pray to God? Yes. Did he want to talk to the missionaries? Yes. When? Now. The missionaries said they would return in 20 minutes. When they came back, they had a member with them who lived nearby.

The missionaries taught Roger many times for a month in his home. Because of what they had heard about the Church, the rest of his family didn't want to study with the missionaries. After a month of learning about the gospel, Roger went to church with the missionaries. The kind reception he experienced left an impression on him. "The members received me like they had already known me for a very long time," he said.

Roger went home from church and told his family that he was going to be baptized in a month and that they were free to choose to join the Church or not. They asked him to wait so that they could join him. They started attending meetings and were also pleasantly surprised.

The first time he attended Church meetings left a lasting impression on Roger's oldest son, Randrianandry. "The first time I came to church I was so surprised because the people were so humble," he said. "First, they were properly dressed

for church. After that I realized they were really there for a purpose, not just to show off for other people."

The Randrianarisons were baptized as a family on February 20, 2003. At the time Nirina was 8, Sedinirina was 17, and Randrianandry was 19. The family stopped working on Sundays and made living the gospel a priority.

### **Changes**

"After I got baptized, I saw a lot of changes in our home," said Arelina, Roger's wife. "It became a spiritual home, and so many blessings, both temporal and spiritual, came from living the gospel."

From a temporal perspective, Roger credits Heavenly Father with helping him rebuild his business. After two years of driving a taxi and doing whatever he could to provide for his family, he started receiving construction contracts. "I believe that God always blesses me when I decide to follow Him," he said.

But his sons say the biggest change they have seen is in their father's temperament. They describe him now as an example of humility and kindness. Roger said the gospel convinced him that he had to change. Since he began studying it, Roger has tried to fill his life with good things.

“Because of the teachings of the gospel, I never lose my temper,” he said. “Sometimes there are provocations, but the gospel is in my heart, in my head, and in my spirit. It helps me stay calm.”

When upsetting situations arise, Roger is the one who calms down family members and reminds them to act as the Savior would.

“My father became humble and now cares for our family with love,” Sedinirina said. “When I look at the change in him, I’m so grateful for Heavenly Father, for the gospel, and for being members of the Church.”

### An Eternal Family

In 2006, with the help of the General Temple Patron Assistance Fund, Roger and Arelina went to Johannesburg, South Africa, to be sealed in the temple.

From 2009 to 2011, Sedinirina and Randrianandry served missions to South Africa—Sedinirina in Cape Town and Randrianandry in Johannesburg. Part of their motivation to serve was to help other families change, just as their family had.

“A miracle like this can happen, and it happened because missionaries came to our house,” Randrianandry said. “So I had the desire to do the very same thing for a family somewhere.”

That decision brought another blessing to the Randrianarison family. There was a nine-day period when both Sedinirina and Randrianandry would be in the Johannesburg Missionary Training Center. Roger arranged to fly to South Africa with Arelina and their daughter, Nirina, so the entire family could be sealed in the temple. Nirina, who was 14 at the time, said it’s difficult to describe

the experience and what she felt.

“It strengthened my faith and helped me feel closer to God,” she said.

Today the family members work to build and strengthen those around them. Roger serves as the bishop of his ward. Arelina works in the Primary with the Faith in God program. Sedinirina is an assistant stake clerk. Randrianandry is an assistant ward clerk. Nirina is the ward music director.

The gospel has been an answer to prayers in the Randrianarison home. It has healed old hurts, brought them closer, and given them the opportunity to be together forever. It has taught Roger to love. “Family life,” he said, “is a life full of love.” ■

***Traveling to South Africa to be sealed in the Johannesburg Temple strengthened the Randrianarison family.***



### THE TEMPLE PATRON ASSISTANCE FUND

“There are still areas of the world where temples are so distant from our members that they cannot afford the travel required to get to them. They are thus unable to partake of the sacred and eternal blessings temples provide. To help in this regard, we have available what is called the General Temple Patron Assistance Fund. This fund provides a one-time visit to the temple for those who otherwise would not be able to go to the temple and yet who long desperately for that opportunity. Any who might wish to contribute to this fund can simply write in the information on the normal contribution slip which is given to the bishop.”

**President Thomas S. Monson, “As We Meet Again,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 5.**



By Janet McClellan

I was sitting at the piano in Primary when a teacher quietly said in my ear, “Austin ran off. I followed him out of the building, but he was already across the street on his way into the park.”

Our son Austin has Down syndrome and loves to head out on his own whenever he can find the chance. I immediately ran out to find him, and as I arrived at the park, I saw 10-year-old Austin running across the lawn toward the little stream that runs through the park. I kicked off my dress shoes and started to run. “Austin!” I hollered as I ran after him. “Stop! Wait for Mom!” But on he ran, over the bridge to the rocky embankment on the opposite side of the stream.

I was suddenly stopped in my tracks by shooting pain in my feet. There, along the edge of the cultivated lawn, between me and Austin, was a large expanse of thorny weeds. I decided to walk through the thorns anyway, but the pain was too great and my feet too tender.

Freeing myself from the thorns, I ran back to retrieve my shoes. I quickly put them on and resumed my frantic chase. I ran over the thorns and across the bridge, then began to ascend an embankment.

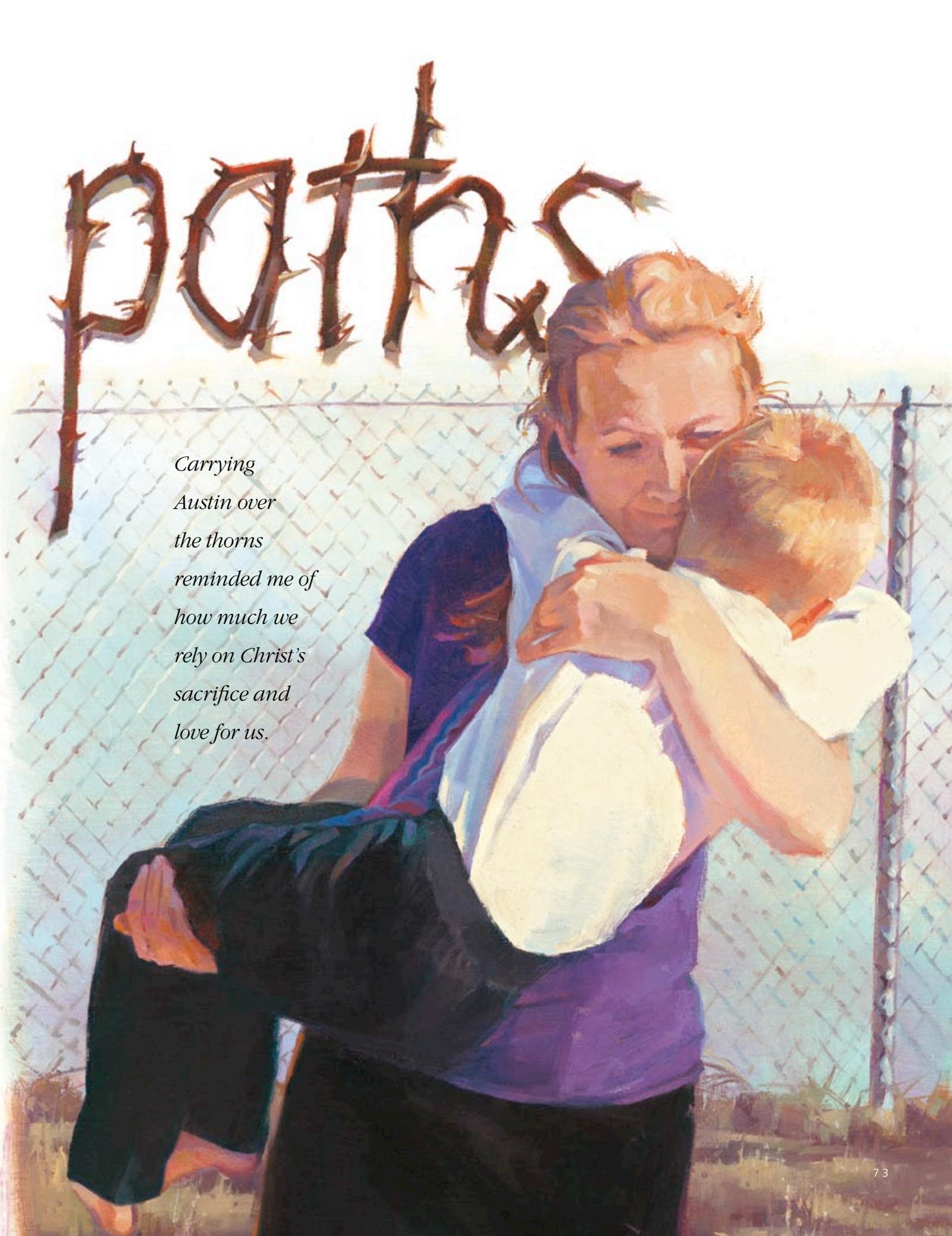
Again I hollered for Austin, but my strong-willed boy did not answer. The embankment crested, and I found myself looking through a chain-link fence. The property next to the park was a drainage area with steep, grassy slopes leading to a grate at the bottom. A large horizontal pipe opened over the grate, and sitting on top of the grate was Austin. He had removed his clothes and was looking in the pipe with determined curiosity.

“Austin!” I shouted. “Don’t go in there!” I began to army-crawl through an opening under the fence where the ground was hollowed out, and I realized that this ground too was covered with painful thorns that were digging into my knees. I tried to brush some thorns out of the way and prayed I would fit through the opening. Thankfully I did, and I emerged just as Austin disappeared into the pipe.

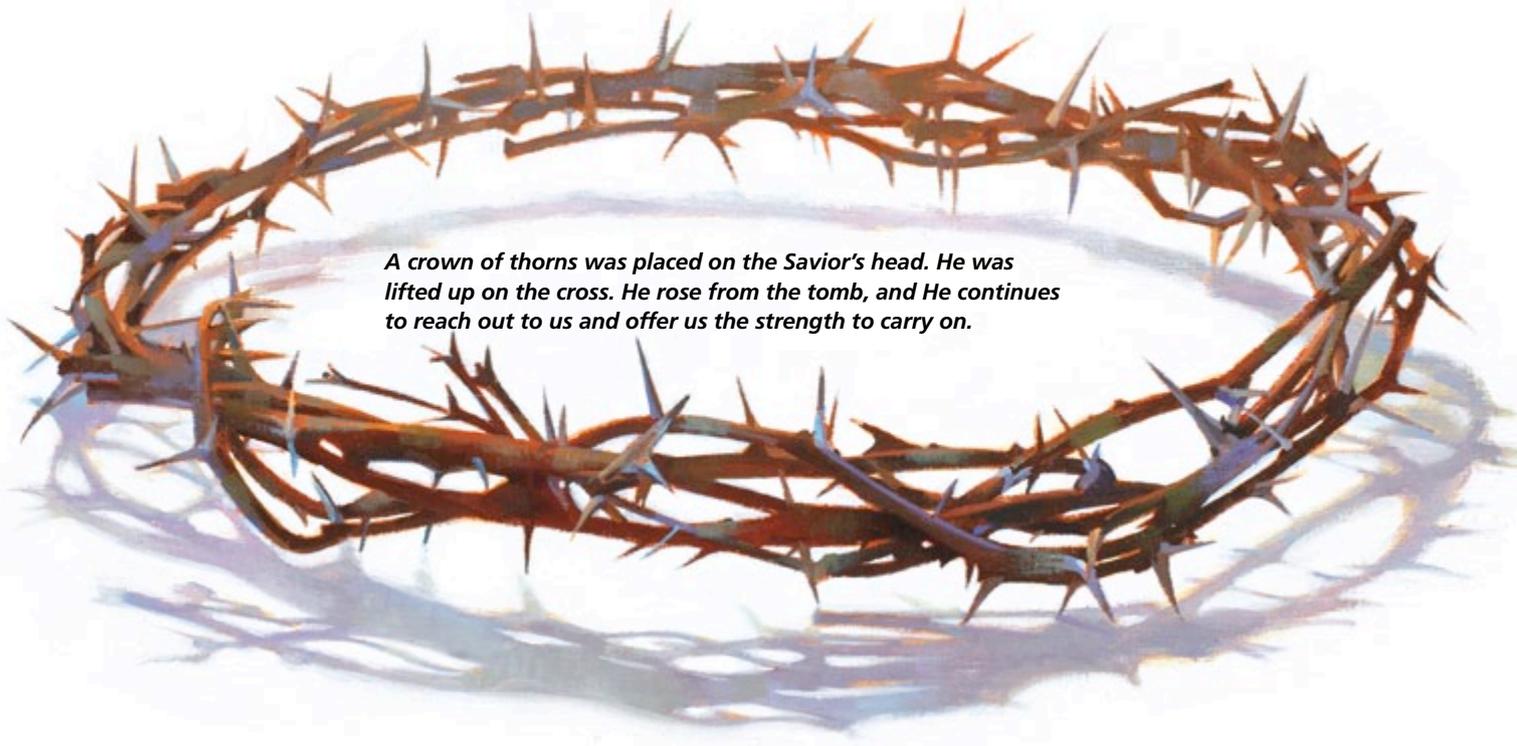
“Austin! Come out of there! You will get hurt!” No response. I half ran, half slid down the steep hillside until I reached the grate where Austin’s shirt and pants lay crumpled. I sat down on the grate and pleaded with Austin to back out of the pipe. Strong resolve echoed back down the pipe in Austin’s resounding, “No! I can’t!” which I knew meant, “I don’t want to.”

Realizing that I needed help, I bowed my head and prayed. In a short moment, Austin began backing out of the pipe. I hugged him and told him I was so glad he wasn’t hurt. As I helped him get dressed again, I asked him where his shoes were. He pointed through the grate, and there, a few feet beneath us, were his brand-new church shoes and socks. Frustrated, I told him he’d just have to walk barefoot.

We began to climb up the steep hillside, but Austin took only two steps before he cried out in pain. Looking around, I realized that this was not a grassy slope but a well-mown thorny slope. I thought about the pain I had felt as the thorns in the park had pierced my feet, and I knew that Austin could not bear that much pain as we climbed up the steep ground. I bent low and helped Austin climb onto my shoulders.



*Carrying  
Austin over  
the thorns  
reminded me of  
how much we  
rely on Christ's  
sacrifice and  
love for us.*



***A crown of thorns was placed on the Savior's head. He was lifted up on the cross. He rose from the tomb, and He continues to reach out to us and offer us the strength to carry on.***

Slowly and carefully, I began to climb up and out, carrying Austin. My shoes had slippery bottoms, so it was difficult. I was afraid I might drop Austin or that we both might fall and tumble back down to the bottom. But with a prayer in my heart and on my lips, I carried Austin to the top of the slope. As I reached the top with him still perched on my shoulders, I bent down and cleared all the thorns away from the opening in the fence, then set him down. He said, "I can't!" but I convinced him that he could and that I would be right behind him.

Finally back on the safe side of the fence, I held Austin in my arms as I walked across the thorny ground. At last, we hit grass, and I set Austin on the cool comfort of it. Off he ran, with me trailing behind. I had thorns in my hair and my dress, and I was exhausted.

As we sat in sacrament meeting later that day, I was still a bit shaken up and pre-occupied with my adventure with Austin. Suddenly, I saw clearly in my mind a picture of the Savior carrying a lamb over his shoulders. I realized that in our lives we sometimes run headlong into dangerous situations. We may be warned by family,



#### **REST TO OUR SOULS**

"I testify of our Savior, Jesus Christ, whose teachings and example we seek to follow. He invites all of us who are heavy laden to come unto Him, to learn of Him, to follow Him, and thus to find rest to our souls (see Matthew 4:19; 11:28)."

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Followers of Christ," *Ensign*, May 2013, 99.**

friends, and Church leaders, yet we often fail to heed their call, stubbornly believing that our desires will not lead us into danger. At times we get so far into trouble that we simply cannot get out on our own and we must rely completely on the Savior.

Many paths can lead us astray, and we sometimes feel the pain of thorns so deeply that we seem paralyzed and unable to move back to the paths of righteousness that we desire. But Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, with all the great and godly love He has for us, longs to stretch out His arms and guide us back. If we but exercise our faith, completely turning to Him, He will strengthen us and help us overcome our deepest woes.

Though I was unable to bear the pain of those small thorns that pierced my feet, Jesus was not only able but *willing* to suffer pains beyond my own weak comprehension for the sake of me and all of God's children. A crown of thorns was placed on His head. He was lifted up on the cross. He rose from the tomb, and He continues to reach out to us and offer us the strength to carry on. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*



## WOULD MATTHEW RETURN?

We had a strong group of young men in our ward, but our son Matthew gravitated to a nonmember who shared his love for cars and anything mechanical. Unfortunately, this young man came from a family that did not value religion. His parents allowed drinking and smoking in their home and didn't believe that being morally clean was important.

Matthew had earned the top rank in Scouting, but he did not participate in the awards meeting because he had stopped living Scouting standards. I gathered all his Scouting awards and made a display case. Then I put it away, hoping that one day it would be of value to him. By the time he was 16, Matthew was smoking, drinking, and doing drugs. He dropped out of school and moved in with his girlfriend. For a couple of years, we rarely saw him.

We were devastated. We didn't

know if he would ever return to his family and faith, but we decided to follow Alma's example in dealing with his wayward son. Alma continued to love his son and prayed with faith that he would "be brought to the knowledge of the truth" (Mosiah 27:14).

We prayed constantly that the Lord would intervene in Matthew's life, and we took every opportunity to express by word and action how much we loved him. When he would come home, we did not say anything he might interpret as criticism or judgment. We simply expressed our joy at seeing him.

One day Matthew came home and said he wanted to talk. He said he had met a girl at a party who had questions about the Church. Before he could tell her that he no longer knew the answers, words started coming out of his mouth. He found himself answering

her questions as fast as she asked them. Matthew said he did not remember having learned the things he spoke, but he knew his words were true. He wondered why he was living as he was when he still believed the gospel.

After three days of soul-searching, he decided to leave behind the life he had been leading. He had come home to ask for help in starting over.

Matthew called a cousin in another state who had overcome similar difficulties and asked if he could stay with him. His cousin agreed, and Matthew began attending Church meetings with him and met with the bishop to get help with the repentance process. He felt love and support and became active in the Church.

In time he met a lovely, righteous young woman. They fell in love and were married in the temple.

When their first child was born,

I came for a visit and brought the display case I had made of his Scouting awards. He was thrilled and proudly hung it in a prominent place in his home.

An angel did not appear to our son, as had happened to Alma the Younger. But Matthew's return to the truth was just as miraculous. ■

Name withheld



I gathered all of Matthew's Scouting awards and made a display case. Then I put it away, hoping that one day it would be of value to him.

# I WAS HOME

As part of a service project, I traveled to Rwanda along with a few other physicians to help with medical needs. After two weeks, near the end of my trip, homesickness crept in. I missed my family, my comfortable bed, and my home.

On my last Sunday in Africa, I was able to coordinate my schedule so that I could attend church. Though the Church was not yet formally recognized in Rwanda, I was able to find a meeting time and directions on the Church's website.

And what directions they were: "Walk down the cobblestone road across from the Ministry building. Look for an open gate. Then walk down the steps."

As I followed these directions, I began to hear the distinct refrain of a familiar hymn. I descended the steps, and the words of "How Firm a Foundation" (*Hymns*, no. 85) reached my ears. The steps ended at a small building, where dozens of smiling people were milling around the entrance. Despite the fact that I

was a stranger to the congregation, I felt immediate kinship. Dozens of Rwandan brothers and sisters stepped forward to shake my hand, and as they did, an oppressive load of loneliness lifted off my back—I was home!

Entering the building, I attended a typical three-hour meeting block that was no different from the one in my home ward in California. Holders of

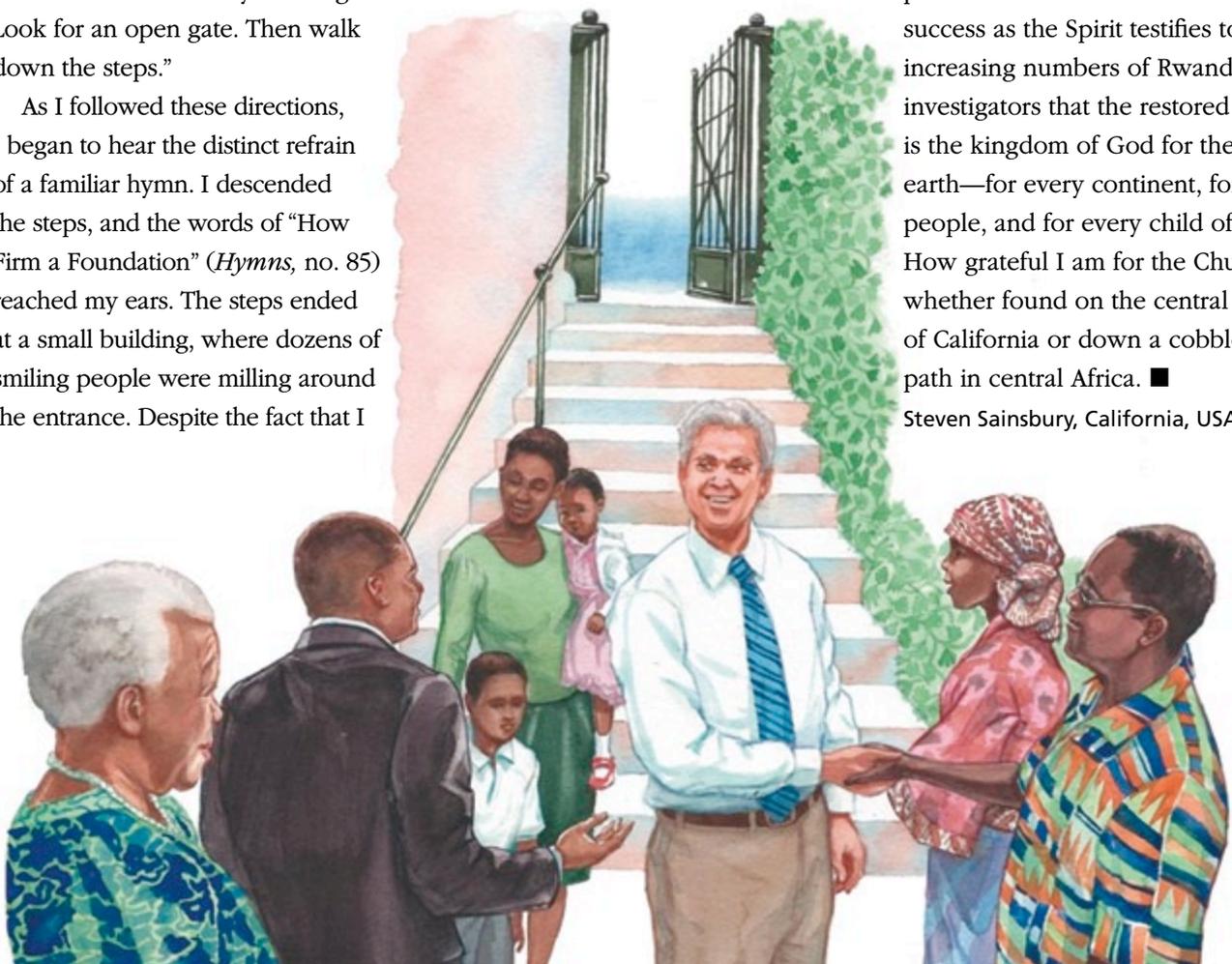
Despite the fact that I was a stranger to the congregation, I felt immediate kinship. Dozens of Rwandan brothers and sisters stepped forward to shake my hand.

the Aaronic Priesthood passed the sacrament, the talks centered on the Savior, and even the Sunday School lesson was the same one taught in my home ward that week.

Most important, the Spirit of the Lord permeated the services. Clearly, the Lord smiled favorably on these good people trying their best to serve Him. I learned that during the previous year, only a handful of Rwandans attended services here. Yet I counted more than 100 attendees, half of them smiling children.

Now that Rwanda has been opened to missionary work, I suspect the missionaries will find great success as the Spirit testifies to increasing numbers of Rwandan investigators that the restored Church is the kingdom of God for the entire earth—for every continent, for every people, and for every child of God. How grateful I am for the Church, whether found on the central coast of California or down a cobblestone path in central Africa. ■

Steven Sainsbury, California, USA



## WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO REXBURG?

After decades of living where members of the Church are a minority, my husband and I moved into a neighborhood in Rexburg, Idaho, USA, that contained only two nonmember families. It was our good fortune to live next to one of them.

The father was mowing his lawn the first time we drove into our driveway. My husband and I crossed our lawn to get acquainted. As I put out my hand, I asked, “So what brought your family to Rexburg?”

He replied, “My job—and we searched specifically for a town that needed to be introduced to Christ.”

I felt as though a bucket of cold water had been thrown in my face, but

I smiled. I determined at that moment that no matter what our new neighbor said or did, we would become the *best* neighbors the family ever had. We would try to respond in every interaction with them in a kind, loving, and reasonable way, as the Savior would.

The following eight years brought many shared activities between our families. The mother was invited to and attended Relief Society activities. She invited me and many of our Latter-day Saint neighbors to a Christian women’s retreat sponsored by her church. My husband and I were invited to their children’s dance and piano recitals.

I determined that no matter what our new neighbor said or did, we would become the *best* neighbors the family ever had.

Their family was included in neighborhood cookouts and parties. And we received calls from their older children when they needed rides home from work and couldn’t reach their parents.

The parents worried that their children might begin to like Latter-day Saints too much, so they didn’t let their sons join our ward Scouting program. But our home was considered a safe place, where they let their children play when our grandchildren visited.

Every time our neighbors tried to help us see “the error of our ways,” we reminded them that we had the utmost respect for their beliefs and the way they lived and nurtured their children. We then added that we expected the same respect for our beliefs, which also centered on the Savior’s teachings.

When the mother tried to make our differences into a deep, uncrossable chasm by claiming that Latter-day Saints believed in a “different Jesus,” I reminded her that we both believed He is divine and the beloved Son of God. Eventually she and I enjoyed a warm and friendly relationship.

Their family moved without joining the Church. But if they can say, “We lived among Mormons; they are good and respectful people with sincere hearts,” then I feel we succeeded in being good neighbors and

in helping them become more open and fair in their assessment of Latter-day Saints. ■

Sandra Rush, Idaho, USA



## A BOX OF PICTURES

Several years ago my husband and I were dumping a load at the local landfill when I noticed one of the ladies who worked there picking up a box put into the incinerator. Suddenly the box broke open, and some photographs fell out.

As I watched, I had a strong impression to go and get that box of pictures. I jumped out of the car to help pick up the pictures. The lady and I both felt that the photographs had been thrown out by mistake, and I convinced her to let me take the pictures to try to find someone who would like to have them.

Sifting through the hundreds of photographs in the box, I found an envelope addressed to someone in Warburg, Alberta, Canada. Over the next several years, I wrote a few letters to people with the same last name, but I never got a reply.

After my family got access to the Internet, I discovered that there was a historical society in Warburg. I asked if anyone who worked there recognized the names I had found on the back of the pictures.

One month later we received a call from a man who had been contacted by the historical society. He said his sister lived close to us, and he asked if she could see the pictures. Of course we said yes.

The next day, Floyd and Beth Hawthorn, both Latter-day Saints, came to see the pictures. When I

opened the box, Brother Hawthorn said, "Well, there he is," pointing to the picture on top. It was a picture of Sister Hawthorn's grandfather.

As they picked up picture after picture, Brother and Sister Hawthorn told us stories about the people in each photograph. The Hawthorns doubted that they were related to the person who had discarded the pictures, and

they had no idea why the photographs had ended up at the landfill.

I feel strongly that Heavenly Father helped me return the photographs to the Hawthorn family. I testify that family history work is one of the most important works to be done. If we are willing to do the work, the Lord will help us do it. ■

Cindy Heggie, Alberta, Canada

Suddenly the box broke open, and some photographs fell out. As I watched, I had a strong impression to go and get that box of pictures.



# I SWEAR . . .

By R. Val Johnson  
Church Magazines

The look on my mother's face broke my heart. Shock. Dismay. Disappointment. All filled her eyes one after the other and then merged into one emotion—betrayal.

Despite her teaching me all my 15 years to honor Heavenly Father in word and deed, there I stood, guilty of letting a particularly offensive word slip past my lips.

I hadn't meant to swear. Before that year, I had never used foul language. But that summer I had worked for Utah's Fish and Game Department and picked up the habit from other boys working alongside me.

Our main job was cutting burdock off the side of state roads. We quickly decided that *Arctium minus* is a particularly evil weed. It grows in volumes just about anywhere, and it crowds out most other plants. Its burs stick to anything that comes near.

Shovels in hand, we battled that nemesis all summer to the point of exhaustion—and dirty language. At first I found my comrades' language offensive. Then I tolerated it. Finally, I adopted it. By the end of the summer, swearing was sticking to my words as securely as burdock burs to dog hair.

My mother's reaction to my slip of tongue, however, convinced me that I needed to change.



*Swearing was sticking to my words as securely as burdock burs to dog hair.*

It wasn't easy. Swearing is not just a choice of words. It is also a pattern of thinking. The conversations we allow into our lives, the words we read, and the images we view shape our thoughts. I soon learned that I needed to change what I invited into my mind if I wanted to change the words I used.

Thankfully, I was active in attending church and seminary. Swearing had crowded out higher thoughts, but being in an environment where I was exposed to those higher thoughts allowed them to take root again. I concentrated on reading the scriptures every day and praying. I stayed away from movies and television programs that reintroduced dark thoughts.

Gradually, I found my language improving. By the end of the year, I was free of my swearing habit.

Since that experience, I've learned a lot about the power of words. Words can create or destroy. They can hurt, or they can heal. They can cut people down, or they can plant seeds of hope and love.

I find it interesting that the Savior Himself, the Creator of heaven and earth, is referred to as the Word (see John 1:1–4; D&C 93:6–11).

I've learned that swearing has a positive meaning as well as a negative one. We swear to tell the truth in a court of law. We solemnly promise, or swear, to keep God's commandments when we're baptized. Similarly, we make sacred promises to keep our temple covenants in order to receive the greatest of Heavenly Father's blessings.

The bottom line is this: We become more like the Word when our words honor Him and reflect His glory. ■

# INSIGHTS



## **What does President Thomas S. Monson think of the Boy Scout movement?**

“Impossible to measure is the great good which has come from this organization during the past century. Skills have been learned, values have been established, good deeds have been done, and lives have been enriched. . . . How many boys have had their lives blessed, even saved, by the Scout movement begun by Baden-Powell? How many careers have been made, how many lives made more productive because of Baden-Powell? . . . For over 40 years now, I have served on the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America. I believe in Scouting. I believe in the goals of the organization. I believe in the power of Scouting to bless and enrich lives for good. I’m honored to be associated with such a fine organization.”

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**President Thomas S. Monson**, “President Monson Discusses Strengths of Scouting” (video), [lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/2011/01](https://www.lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/2011/01).



*“As parents and leaders, we need to help youth not only prepare for full-time missionary service, which lasts for but a few months, but also for making and keeping temple covenants, which last for eternity. The first steps can begin in childhood.” See “Teens and Temple Covenants,” page 18. This and other articles inside can help members, young and old alike, better prepare to share and live the gospel.*

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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