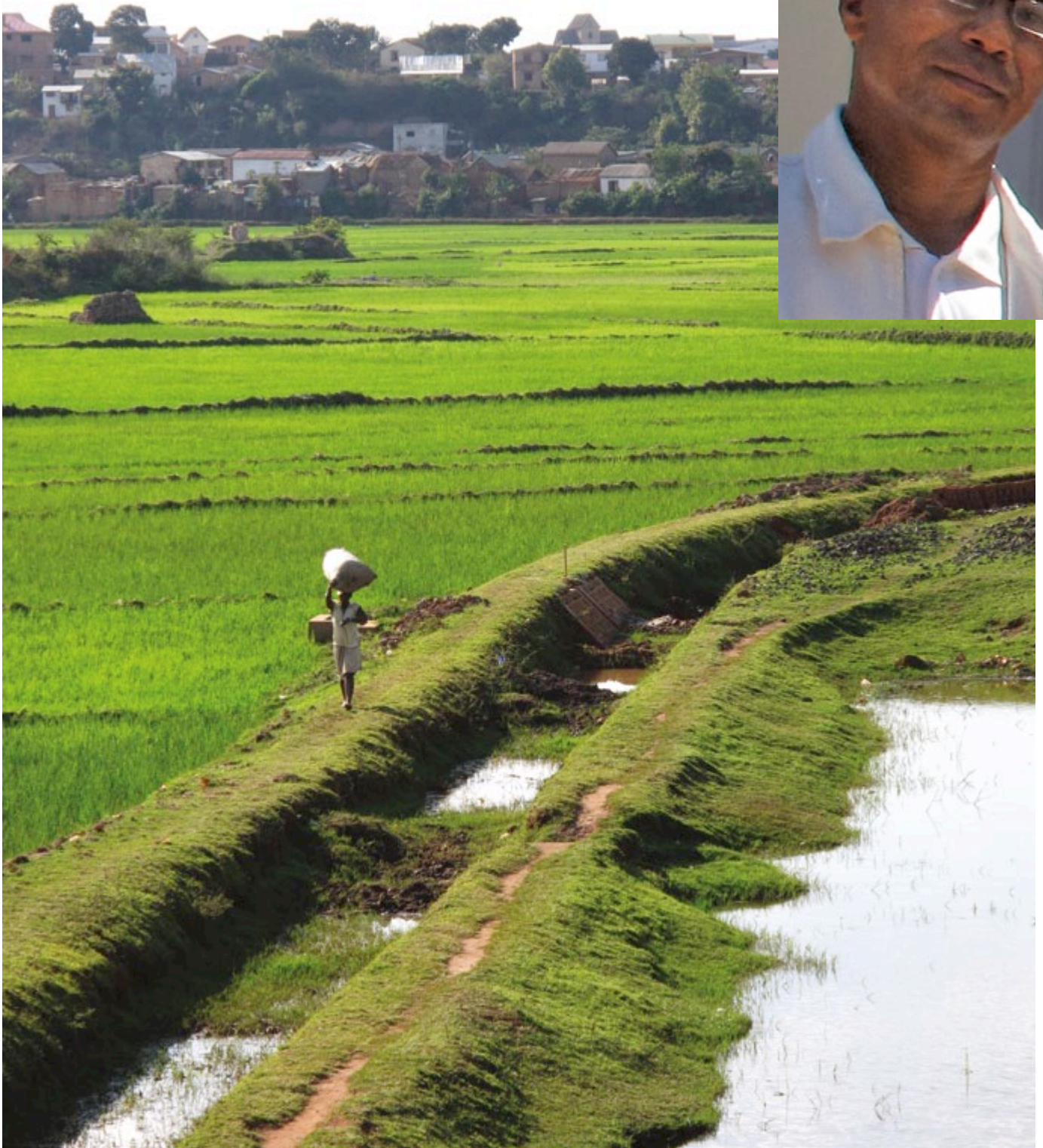


Picking up the missionaries in a cab started Roger Randrianarison on the path to discipleship.



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 Sedinirina, and daughter, Nirina. He was unhappy that his short temper had led to challenges in the family. He wanted to be a kinder parent.

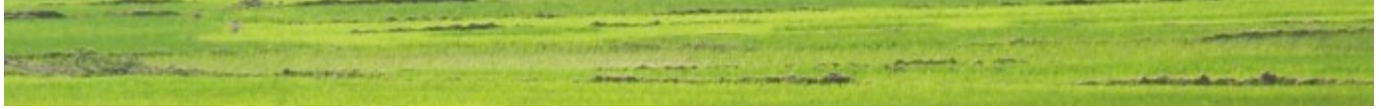
"I decided I was the one who had to change because I saw who I had become," he said.

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.