

I THINK I'LL BE MYSELF

By Jutta Baum Busche

This series highlights the lives of devoted women and their messages, excerpted from the book *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women* (2017). The book is available, along with seven bonus chapters, in the Gospel Library app and online at churchhistorianspress.org/at-the-pulpit.

I remember well the adjustments we had to make when we went to live in Utah. My first call in our ward was to serve as a Relief Society teacher. I watched the other teachers very closely and was deeply impressed with their striving for perfection in their teaching. Even their hairdos and immaculate dress showed their striving for perfection. I admired how fluent and articulate they were in the English language. How could I, with my poor English, compete with them and be their teacher? I was eager to learn and was so glad to hear that there was a stake preparation class for Relief Society teachers.

When I attended the training meeting for the first time, I was full of high hopes. I was not prepared for the question I was asked about what kind of centerpiece I would use when I gave my lesson. How incompetent I felt! I had no idea what a centerpiece was or what its purpose in the presentation of a lesson could be. Negative feelings about myself began to undermine my confidence. . . .

I continued to feel inferior as I watched the sisters in my ward and

saw them planting gardens and canning the produce. They exercised daily by jogging. They sewed and bargain-shopped. . . . They took dinners to new mothers and the sick in their neighborhoods. They took care of an aged parent, sometimes two. . . . They were faithful in doing temple work, and they worried about catching up on their journals.

Intimidated by examples of perfection all around me, I increased my efforts to be like my sisters, and I felt disappointed in myself and even guilty when I didn't run every morning, bake all my own bread, sew my own clothes, or go to the university. I felt that I needed to be like the women among whom I was living, and I felt that I was a failure because I was not able to adapt myself easily to their lifestyles.

I could have benefited at this time from the story of a six-year-old who, when asked by a relative, "What do you want to be?" replied, "I think I'll just be myself. I have tried to be like someone else. I have failed each time!" Like this child, after repeated failure to be someone else, I finally learned that



ABOUT SISTER BUSCHE

Jutta Baum (b. 1935) grew up in Dortmund, Germany. She married Enzo Busche in 1955, and the two were baptized on January 19, 1958, in a Dortmund public swimming pool.

In October 1977, they attended a conference in Berlin so that Enzo, a Church regional representative, could translate for President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985). At the end of the conference, President Kimball spoke privately with Enzo and called him to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy—a full-time position that would require the Busches to move.

Their first assignment was in Munich, Germany, where Enzo led the mission for two years; then they moved to Utah in 1980. They traveled a great deal, visiting Church members all over the world, and Jutta spoke at regional conferences with her husband.

With the dedication of the Frankfurt Germany Temple in 1987, they became its president and matron. Sister Busche had never been a temple worker, so President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) advised her at a training seminar, "The most important thing is to have love and love and love." She took his counsel to heart. She asked temple workers to make it their top priority to help patrons feel God's Spirit.

This message is an excerpt of an address Sister Busche gave at Brigham Young University's Women's Conference in 1989.

I should be myself. That is often not easy, however, because our desires to fit in, to compete and impress, or even simply to be approved of lead us to imitate others and devalue our own backgrounds, our own talents, and our own burdens and challenges. . . . I had to learn to overcome my anxious feeling that if I didn't conform, I simply did not measure up.

. . . When I tried to copy my wonderful sisters as I taught my class with

a special centerpiece and other teaching techniques that were unfamiliar to me, I failed because the Spirit still talks to me in German, not in English. But when I got on my knees to ask for help, I learned to depend on the Spirit to guide me, secure in the knowledge that I am a daughter of God. I had to learn and *believe* that I did not need to compete with others to be loved and accepted by my Heavenly Father. . . .

. . . Our efforts should not be to *perform* nor to *conform* but to be *transformed* by the Spirit. . . .

Many pressures bind us to the world. Being honest in heart frees us to discover God's will for our lives. . . .

. . . Although we might be absorbed in meeting our daily challenges and opportunities for growth, we cannot afford to live one day or one minute without being aware of the power within us. ■

