Trust and

By Karen Dupaix
(Based on a true story)

They were perfectly honest and upright in all things (Alma 27:27).

"Stephen, will you come here, please?" Stephen's mother called from the living room.

"Sure, Mom," Stephen said. He put down the video game controller. "I'll be right back, Josh," he said to his little brother.

In the living room, Stephen was surprised to see a police officer talking to Mom. What surprised him even more was that the police officer was holding the blue bike Stephen had gotten for Christmas last year!

"Is this your bike, Son?" the officer asked.

"It looks like mine," Stephen said. "I think I left it down at the end of the block."

"That's where I found it," the officer said. "Someone started a fire near where your bike was, and some neighbors said they saw you playing in that area. Would you mind telling me what you were doing there? Were you playing with fire?"

"No," Stephen said. "I rode my bike there to play with my friends. We played tag for a while, and then some older boys came around. They looked kind of mean, so we left. I must have left my bike there. Then I came home and played video games with my brother. I didn't start any fires."

The officer folded his arms and looked stern. Stephen felt his cheeks getting hot. What if the police officer didn't believe him?

The officer turned to Stephen's mother. "Does Stephen tell the truth?" he asked.

"Stephen has never lied to me," Mom said. "If he says he didn't start the fire, he didn't start it."

The police officer asked a few more questions and then thanked Mom and Stephen for talking to him. Before he left, he told Stephen to take better care of his bike.

A few hours later, Stephen and his mother learned that the police officer found the older boys Stephen had seen, and they admitted to starting the fire.

"I'm glad you believed me when I said I didn't start the fire," Stephen told Mom.

"I knew you didn't do it," Mom said. "You have always told me the truth, even when it might get you in trouble. I always know I can trust you."

Stephen smiled and gave his mom a hug. It felt good to be trusted. It was a feeling he always wanted to have. ◆

Stephen had told the truth. But what if the officer didn't believe him?

ILLUSTRATION BY MATT SMITH

Stephen has integrity. He always tells the truth.