



PRAYER and WORK



From an interview with Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Seventy; by Callie Buys

Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded (2 Chronicles 15:7).

I grew up on a small farm in Idaho, and I remember raising rabbits. They were soft and friendly and wonderful to snuggle with. But sometimes they would gnaw a hole in their little compartments and escape. This was very dangerous because dogs or cats could hurt them.

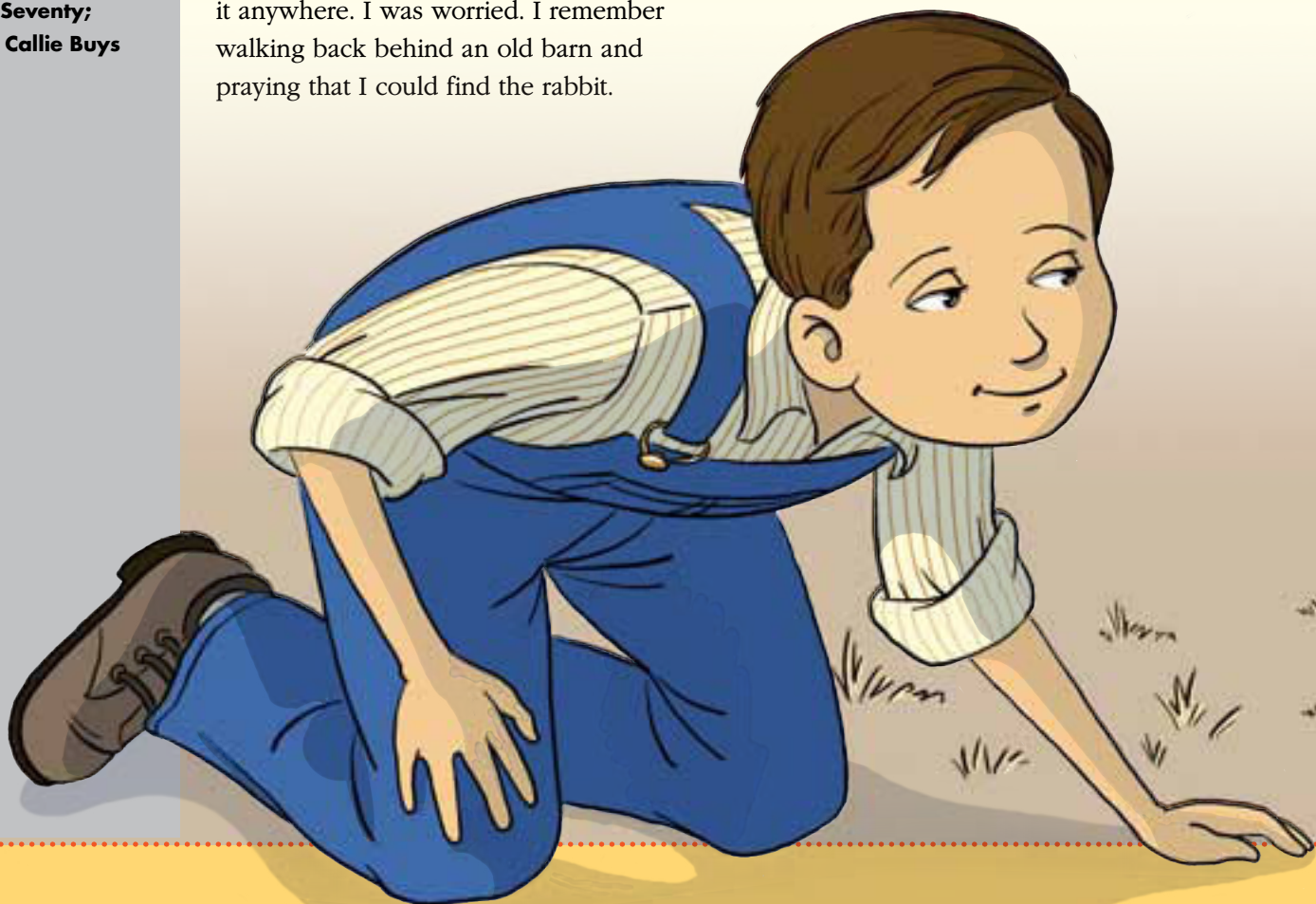
When I was about seven years old, a rabbit I especially liked got out. I looked all over our little farm, but I could not find it anywhere. I was worried. I remember walking back behind an old barn and praying that I could find the rabbit.

Immediately after the prayer, an image came into my mind of a spot beneath some boards. I had a feeling that I would find my rabbit there. And sure enough, I went to that spot and found my rabbit.

This experience taught me that the Lord responds to the small and simple prayers of all of us. In D&C 8:2 He says, “I will tell you in your mind and in your heart.”

The Lord answers the prayers of all who pray with a sincere heart, believing that He will answer those prayers.

As a young boy on our farm, I also





Elder Andersen (front middle) and his family

learned how to work. From the time I was about five years old, we always had cows to milk. In all seasons of the year we got up at 5:30 in the morning to milk our cows. I can remember milking them on Christmas morning, and leaving the events of our community on other holidays to go home to do the milking.

At the time, this seemed somewhat unfair to me since many of my friends did not have the same requirements. Now I realize that all of the things I learned when I was younger about working have blessed me. Work is a part of life. The Lord has said, “Wo unto you . . . who will not labor with your own hands” (D&C 56:17). We all must learn how to work.

Sometimes when our parents ask us to fulfill duties, we feel it is unfair, or we would prefer to play. But our parents have a responsibility to teach us how to work, and they do this because they love us.

Another principle I learned from working was the principle of paying tithing. My family did not have very much money, but my parents paid us a small amount for the work we did. I knew that all things came from the Lord and that 10 percent should be returned to Him.

It always gave me great satisfaction to fill out the envelope and give the small amount of tithing I owed to the Lord. The few nickels and dimes I gave as a young boy set a pattern that was easy to follow when I later received more money for my work. I still felt that same powerful feeling of satisfaction in knowing that by paying my tithing, I was doing what the Lord wanted me to do.

We learn many things when we are young. It is important that we listen to and obey our parents. They will help us learn those things that will bring us happy and righteous lives. ●

