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How Great Shall Be Your Joy

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:16).

BY ELIZABETH RICKS



Have you noticed that when you share something like a treat or a toy, you feel good? Of course you have. You can share things other than treats or toys, like knowledge. Sharing knowledge can bring great joy—not just to the receiver but also to the giver. The best kind of knowledge to share is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Nine-year-old Ashley felt the joy of sharing the gospel. After Ashley was challenged to share a copy of the Book of Mormon, Ashley’s father drove her to her school principal’s house, and Ashley gave a Book of Mormon to her. Ashley also gave the full-time missionaries her principal’s name. What joy Ashley felt! (See “Nine-Year-Old Member Missionary,” *Friend*, July 1997, 42–43.)

The most important thing you can share is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord called Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer to preach the gospel. He explained the

happiness they would receive:

“And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

“And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!” (D&C 18:15–16).

We show our faith in Jesus Christ when we share the gospel with others. And what great joy we receive when we help others know of Jesus Christ and of our Heavenly Father’s plan. ●

Activity

Write your name under one of the missionary figures. Cut it out, and glue it onto heavy paper. In family home evening, put your missionary figure next to each picture, and explain to your family how the person in each situation is being a missionary. Ask your family to act out the situations in the pictures or different situations they think of and let you practice sharing the gospel.

Sharing Time Ideas

(Note: All songs are from *Children's Songbook* unless otherwise noted; GAK = Gospel Art Picture Kit; TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call.)

1. Tell the children that we influence others by our example. Prepare pieces of paper on which you have written actions that set an example, good and bad. Have some children each choose a paper. Take turns reading them. Have the children decide if the situation sets a good or bad example. Attach the papers to the chalkboard under either a "Good Example" heading or a "Bad Example" heading. For example, "I wear modest clothing" would go under "Good Example," and "I swear sometimes" would go under "Bad Example."

Help the children look up, read, and memorize Matthew 5:16. Talk about the meaning of the scripture (see "Memorization," TNGC, 171-72).

Sing "Shine On" (p. 144). Invite a child to come to the front and think of a way to let his or her light shine and demonstrate it for the Primary. While you sing the song, have the other children follow the example of the child in front. Repeat several times, inviting many children to set the example. Bear your testimony that Jesus Christ set the example for all of us, and we will be blessed as we follow His example and set a good example ourselves.

2. Ask the children to think of a time when they hear others bear testimony. Explain that even though testimony meeting is a time set aside for sharing testimonies, we can bear our testimonies at other times too. Look up 2 Timothy 1:7-8. President Gordon B. Hinckley has said, "I wish that every member of this Church would put those words where he might see them every morning as he begins his day" ("Be Not Afraid," *Friend*, Feb. 2005, 2). He says that those words will give us courage, faith, and strength. Have the children write out verse 7 and the first part of verse 8 ("Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord") to take home and place it where they can see it every morning.

Help the children feel the power of the testimonies of the prophets and apostles. If available, play a recording of or read a testimony from a recent general conference or play the video *Special Witnesses of Christ*.

Teach "I Know That Jesus Lives" (*Friend*, Jan. 1991, 42-43) as a way of bearing testimony. (If you do not have access to this song, teach another song listed in the "Testimony" section of the *Children's Songbook* index.) Explain that when we say, "I know," we are bearing testimony. Have the children count how many times you say, "I know" as you sing the song (four). This song bears testimony of four different things. Display GAK 239 (The Resurrected Jesus Christ), GAK 520 (Gordon B. Hinckley), a copy of the Book of Mormon with an arrow pointing to the words "Another Testament of Jesus Christ," and a wordstrip with the word *TRUE*. Mix up the visual aids and sing the song again. Have the children put the visual aids in the correct order. Sing the song several times. Bear your testimony of the Savior, the living prophet, and the Book of Mormon.

Help for children with disabilities: Children who have difficulty speaking or being understood can sometimes use pictures to communicate. To participate in singing this song or as a way to bear testimony, a child with disabilities could be encouraged to use pictures. Post the GAK pictures, a picture of the Book of Mormon, and the wordstrip listed above, and let the child point to each picture while the other children hum the song.

3. Before Primary, make pictures of lambs (for a pattern, see the

Primary 2 manual, p. 123, or *Primary 1* picture 1-8). Make two lambs for every child: one blank and one with the child's name written on it. Attach the lambs to the walls of the Primary room.

Read John 10:14. Explain that each child is like a lamb and Jesus is the shepherd or leader (see "Comparisons," TNGC, 163-64). Cheryl Lant, Primary general president, has said: "Jesus knew each one of the children that He blessed in the New Testament account. He knew each of the Nephite children, and He knows each child today. He desires for each one of them to feel His love. He desires for each one of them to learn His word and gain a testimony. He desires for each one of them to receive the blessings of heaven that come through righteous living" ("Feed My Lambs," Primary open house, Sept. 2006, www.lds.org/pa/primary/PR_2006sep_PresMessage_eng.pdf).

Post GAK 240 (Jesus the Christ) at the front of the room. Invite the children to find their own lambs and bring them to the Good Shepherd. Ask the pianist to play "The Lord Is My Shepherd" (*Hymns*, no. 108) while the children, row by row, find their lambs and take them to the front. (Because the children may not be familiar with the hymn, you may want to explain before this activity how "The Lord Is My Shepherd" relates to the activity.) Remind them that there are many lambs that haven't yet entered into the fold by coming to Primary. Read Luke 15:4. Have the pianist play again, and invite each child to choose one of the lambs without a name on it. Invite them to think of someone whom they could invite to come into the fold. Have them write the person's name on the lamb and take it home to remind them to invite this "lamb" to follow the Good Shepherd.

Sing "Little Lambs So White and Fair" (p. 58), and testify that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and that He gave His life for us, His sheep.

4. Invite an active member of the Church to come to Primary pretending to be an investigator. Have the guest write a large question mark on a piece of paper and attach it to his or her shirt. Explain that this person is full of questions, and you are going to play a question-and-answer game. The tricky part is that the children must sing all of their answers.

Have the guest begin by asking the children, "Who are you?" Have the pianist quietly play the introduction to "I Am a Child of God" (pp. 2-3), and then have the children sing their answer. After each song, have the guest repeat the question and the answer. For example, "Oh, I see. We are all children of God and have been sent here because He loves us." Other examples might include, "Where did I live before I was born?"—"I Lived in Heaven" (p. 4); "What is faith?"—"Faith" (p. 96); "Where did Joseph Smith get the Book of Mormon?"—"The Golden Plates" (p. 86) or "An Angel Came to Joseph Smith" (p. 86). Let the children decide what songs to sing, and give a hint only if the children need one.

Read selected excerpts from the preface to the *Children's Songbook*. Share with the children the statement: "Someday you will be leaders of the Church and of the world. What you learn from these songs will help you to be faithful and to serve righteously" (p. iii). A wonderful way to prepare to serve a mission is to learn the songs of the gospel. Bear testimony of the value of music in learning and teaching the gospel.

5. *Friend* references: "A Prophet's Example," Nov. 2000, inside front cover; Fiction: "Do As I'm Doing," Mar. 1999, 36-37; "A Testimony Feels Good," May 1996, 34-35; "Testimony," Oct. 1998, inside front cover; "Missionary Work," June 2004, 31; "A Jar Full of Love," Nov. 2004, 40; "My Testimony Grows," Apr. 1991, 12-13; "Missionary Preparation," Sept. 2002, 48.