

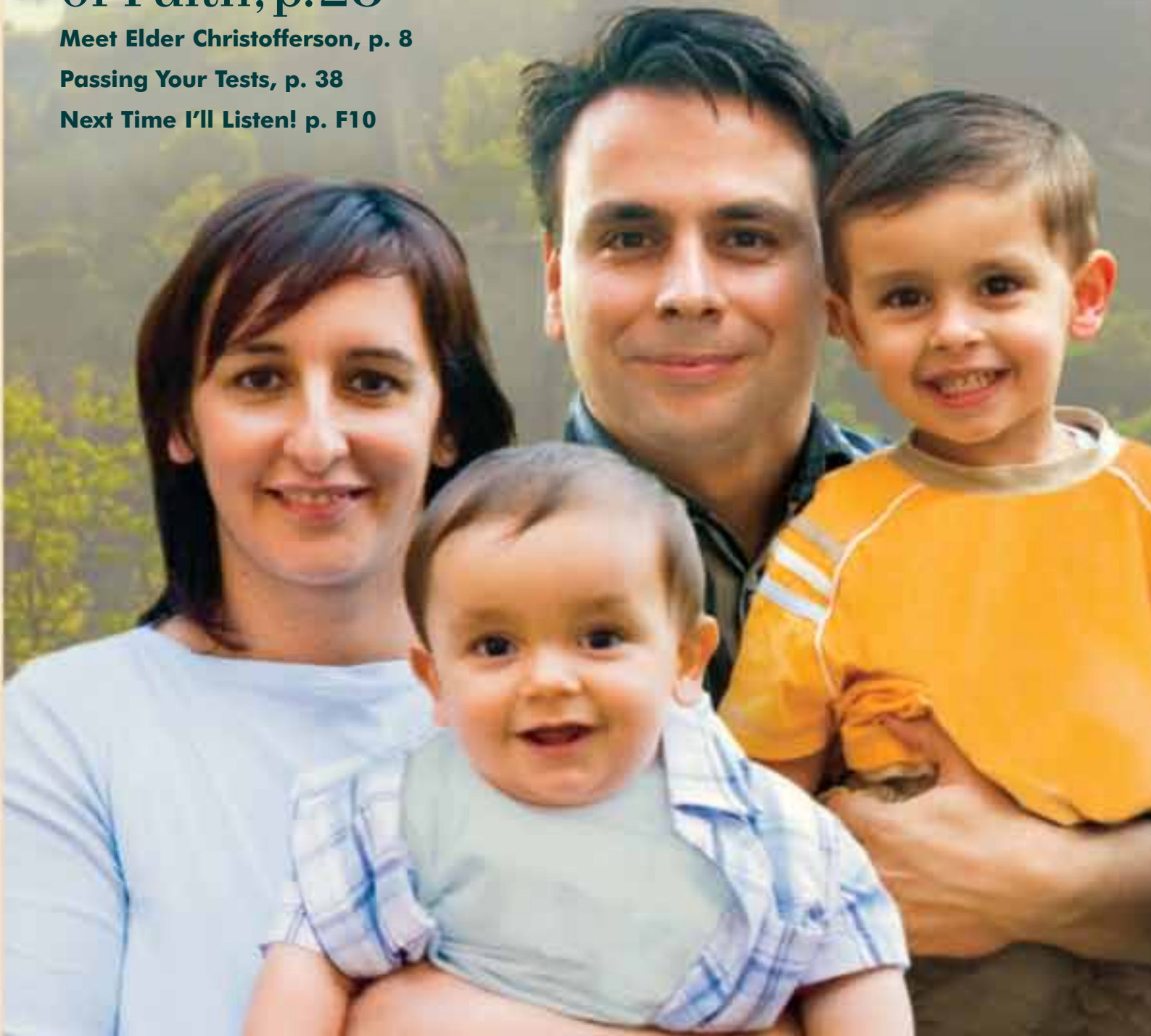
# Liahona

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### FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

*These ideas can be used for  
classroom teaching as well  
as in the home.*

**"Modesty: Reverence  
for the Lord,"** p. 18: Read  
the section "Modesty  
in Dress for Temple  
Attendance," and invite

family members to answer the ques-  
tions in the last two paragraphs. (In  
this discussion, remind your chil-  
dren of times they have dressed  
appropriately.) Invite your family to  
discuss how they should dress for  
other occasions, such as school,  
work, or social events (see *For the*

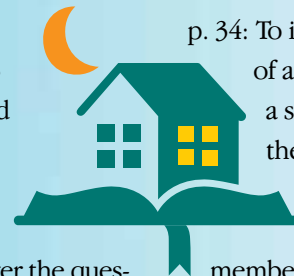
*Strength of Youth* [2001], 14).

#### **"Building an Eternal Family,"**

p. 34: To illustrate the importance  
of a solid foundation, build  
a small tower using blocks;  
then pull a block from the  
bottom. As you share  
the article, have family

members identify ways Elder  
De Hoyos's father created a solid  
foundation for his son. Discuss  
ways your family can strengthen  
its foundation.

**"The Biggest Test of Her Life . . .  
So Far,"** p. 38: On strips of paper,  
write several challenges that your



As you look for the Samoan CTR ring hidden in this issue, think of how you can choose the right by making and keeping baptismal covenants.



## FOR YOUTH

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- F12 Special Witness: How Can I Be Spiritually Protected? *Elder Dallin H. Oaks*
- F13 Coloring Page
- F14 Making Friends: Pablo's Practice

family faces. Tell Andrea's story, and read the sidebar "The Lord's Textbook." Invite family members to choose a strip of paper, and have them find a scripture that can help with that challenge.

**"Next Time I'll Listen!"** p. F10: Play the following game to illustrate how the Holy Ghost can guide us. Invite a family member to leave the room. Hide a picture of the Lord in the room. Have the person return and search for the picture. Guide him or her by saying "hot" when he or she is moving toward the picture and "cold"

when moving away. As you share Manuel's story, look for what he learned about trusting the Spirit. Conclude by reading Doctrine and Covenants 11:12.

**"Pablo's Practice,"** p. F14: Share Pablo's story. To help prepare family members for a mission, provide training on a skill missionaries must learn, such as teaching, ironing, planning, or scripture study (see *Preach My Gospel* for more ideas). End with a cooking session by making a treat. Plan to do something specific for missionary work now.

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# May We So Live

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

Suddenly and without warning, on a bright day in September almost seven years ago, two airliners crashed into the twin towers of New York City's World Trade Center, leaving devastating destruction and death. In Washington, D.C., and in Pennsylvania, two other airliners came down, also as a result of a terrorist plot. These tragedies snuffed out the lives of thousands of men, women, and children. Evaporated were well-laid plans for pleasant futures. Instead, there were tears of sorrow and cries of pain from wounded souls.

Countless were the reports we heard of those who were touched in some way—either directly or indirectly—by the events of that day. Rebecca Sindar was on a flight from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Dallas, Texas, on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. Her flight, like all others in the United States at that time of tragedies, was interrupted; the plane was grounded in Amarillo, Texas. Sister Sindar reported: “We all left the plane and found televisions in the airport, where we crowded around to see the broadcast of what had happened. People were lined up to call loved ones to assure them we were safely on the ground. I shall always remember the 12 or so missionaries

who were on their way to the mission field on our flight. They made phone calls, and then we saw them huddled in a circle in a corner of the airport, kneeling in prayer together. How I wish I could have captured that moment to share with the mothers and fathers of those sweet young men as they saw the need for prayer right away.”

## Death's Darkness Dispelled

Death eventually comes to all humankind. It comes to the aged as they walk on faltering feet. Its summons is heard by those who have scarcely reached midway in life's journey, and often it hushes the laughter of little children. Death is one fact that no one can escape or deny.

Frequently death comes as an intruder. It is an enemy that suddenly appears in the midst of life's feast, putting out its lights and gaiety. Death lays its heavy hand upon those dear to us and at times leaves us baffled and wondering. In certain situations, as in great suffering and illness, death comes as an angel of mercy. But for the most part, we think of it as the enemy of human happiness.

The darkness of death, however, can ever be dispelled by the light of revealed truth.

“I am the resurrection, and the life,” spoke



*How fragile life, how certain death. We do not know when we will be required to leave this mortal existence. And so I ask, “What are we doing with today?”*

**S**aul, on the road to Damascus, had a vision of the risen, exalted Christ. Later, as Paul, defender of truth and fearless missionary in the service of the Master, he bore witness of the risen Lord.

the Master. “He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”<sup>1</sup>

This reassurance—yes, even holy confirmation—of life beyond the grave could well provide the peace promised by the Savior when He assured His disciples: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”<sup>2</sup>

Out of the darkness and the horror of Calvary came the voice of the Lamb, saying, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”<sup>3</sup> And the dark was no longer dark, for He was with His Father. He had come from God, and to Him He had returned. So also

those who walk with God in this earthly pilgrimage know from blessed experience that He will not abandon

His children who trust in Him. In the night of death, His presence will be “better than [a] light and safer than a known way.”<sup>4</sup>

Saul, on the road to Damascus, had a vision of the risen, exalted Christ. Later, as Paul, defender of truth and fearless missionary in the service of the Master, he bore witness of the risen Lord as he declared to the Saints at Corinth:

“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

“ . . . he was buried, and . . . he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

“ . . . he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

“After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. . . .

“After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

“And last of all he was seen of me.”<sup>5</sup>

In our dispensation this same testimony was spoken boldly by the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he and Sidney Rigdon testified:

“And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him,



this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

“For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

“That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.”<sup>6</sup>

This is the knowledge that sustains. This is the truth that comforts. This is the assurance that guides those bowed down with grief out of the shadows and into the light. It is available to all.

### Doing Something Today

How fragile life, how certain death. We do not know when we will be required to leave this mortal existence. And so I ask, “What are we doing with today?” If we live only for tomorrow, we’ll eventually have a lot of empty yesterdays. Have we been guilty of declaring, “I’ve been thinking about making some course corrections in my life. I plan to take the first step—tomorrow”? With such thinking, tomorrow is forever. Such tomorrows rarely come unless we do something about them today. As the familiar hymn teaches:

*There are chances for work all around just now,  
Opportunities right in our way.  
Do not let them pass by, saying, “Sometime I’ll try,”  
But go and do something today.*<sup>7</sup>

Let us ask ourselves the questions: “Have I done any good in the world today? Have I helped anyone in need?” What a formula for happiness! What a prescription for contentment, for inner peace—to have inspired gratitude in another human being.

Our opportunities to give of ourselves are indeed limitless, but they are also perishable. There are hearts to gladden. There are kind words to say. There are gifts to be given. There are deeds to be done. There are souls to be saved.

As we remember that “when ye are in the service of your



***If we lift one weary hand  
which hangs down, if we  
bring peace to one struggling  
soul, if we give as did the  
Master, we can—by showing  
the way—become a guiding  
star for some lost mariner.***

fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God,”<sup>8</sup> we will not find ourselves in the unenviable position of Jacob Marley’s ghost, who spoke to Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens’s immortal *Christmas Carol*.

Marley spoke sadly of opportunities lost. Said he: “Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life’s opportunity misused! Yet such was I! Oh! such was I!”

Marley added: “Why did I walk through crowds of fellow-beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode? Were there no poor homes to which its light would have conducted *me!*”

Fortunately, as we know, Ebenezer Scrooge changed his life for the better. I love his line, “I am not the man I was.”<sup>9</sup>

Why is Dickens’s *Christmas Carol* so popular? Why is it ever new? I personally feel it is inspired of God. It brings out the best within human nature. It gives hope. It motivates change. We can turn from the paths which would lead us down and, with a song in our hearts, follow a star and walk toward the light. We can quicken our step, bolster our courage, and bask in the sunlight of truth. We can hear more clearly the laughter of little children. We can dry the tear of the weeping. We can comfort the dying by sharing the promise of eternal life. If we lift one weary hand which hangs down, if we bring peace to one struggling soul, if we give as did the Master, we can—by showing the way—become a guiding star for some lost mariner.

### Fill Others’ Hearts

Because life is fragile and death inevitable, we must make the most of each day.

There are many ways in which we can misuse our opportunities. Some time ago I read a tender story written by Louise Dickinson Rich which vividly illustrates this truth. She wrote:

“My grandmother had an enemy named Mrs. Wilcox. Grandma and Mrs. Wilcox moved, as brides, into next-door houses on the main street of the tiny town in which they were to live out their lives. I don’t know what started the war between them—and I don’t think that by the time I came along, over thirty years later, they remembered themselves what started it. This was no polite sparring match; this was total war. . . .

“Nothing in town escaped repercussion. The 300-year-old church, which had lived through the Revolution, the Civil War, and the Spanish War, almost went down when Grandma and Mrs. Wilcox fought the Battle of the Ladies’ Aid. Grandma won that engagement, but it was a hollow victory. Mrs. Wilcox, since she couldn’t be president, resigned [from the Aid] in a huff. What’s the fun of running a thing if you can’t force your enemy to eat crow? Mrs. Wilcox won the Battle of the Public Library, getting her niece, Gertrude, appointed librarian instead of Aunt Phyllis. The day Gertrude took over was the day Grandma stopped reading library books. They became ‘filthy germy things’ overnight. The Battle of the High School was a draw. The principal got a better job and left before Mrs. Wilcox succeeded in having him ousted or Grandma in having him given life tenure of office.

“When as children we visited my grandmother, part of the fun was making faces at Mrs. Wilcox’s grandchildren. One banner day we put a snake into the Wilcox rain barrel. My grandmother made token protests, but we sensed tacit sympathy.

“Don’t think for a minute that this was a one-sided campaign. Mrs. Wilcox had grandchildren, too. Grandma didn’t get off scot free. Never a windy washday went by that the clothesline didn’t mysteriously break, with the clothes falling in the dirt.

“I don’t know how Grandma could have borne her troubles so long if it hadn’t been for the household page of her daily Boston newspaper. This household page was a wonderful institution. Besides the usual cooking hints and cleaning advice, it had a department composed of letters from readers to each other. The idea was that if you had a problem—or even only some steam to blow off—you

wrote a letter to the paper, signing some fancy name like Arbutus. That was Grandma’s pen name. Then some of the other ladies who had the same problem wrote back and told you what they had done about it, signing themselves One Who Knows or Xanthippe or whatever. Very often, the problem disposed of, you kept on for years writing to each other through the column of the paper, telling each other about your children and your canning and your new dining-room suite. That’s what happened to Grandma. She and a woman called Sea Gull corresponded for a quarter of a century. Sea Gull was Grandma’s true friend.

“When I was about sixteen, Mrs. Wilcox died. In a small town, no matter how much you have hated your next-door neighbor, it is only common decency to run over and see what practical service you can do the bereaved. Grandma, neat in a percale apron to show that she meant what she said about being put to work, crossed the lawn to the

## IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. Discuss with the family how “the darkness of death . . . can ever be dispelled by the light of revealed truth.” Read parts of the article that teach about the Resurrection. How can these truths bring peace and comfort to those who mourn?
2. Point out the formula for happiness in the section “Doing Something Today.” Sing or read the hymn “Have I Done Any Good?” Ask family members why they think this formula brings happiness. What are some of the things they could do to inspire gratitude in others?
3. Ask family members to list some fond memories that a person could have at the end of his or her life. Read the story written by Louise Dickinson Rich and the last paragraph of President Monson’s message. Talk with the younger children about the things that matter most to them now. Encourage family members to live a good and joyful life, without regrets.



Wilcox house, where the Wilcox daughters set her to cleaning the already-immaculate front parlor for the funeral. And there on the parlor table in the place of honor was a huge scrapbook; and in the scrapbook, pasted neatly in parallel columns were Grandma's letters to Sea Gull over the years and Sea Gull's letters to her. Though neither woman had known it, Grandma's worst enemy had been her best friend. That was the only time I remember seeing my grandmother cry. I didn't know then exactly what she was crying about, but I do now. She was crying for all the wasted years which could never be salvaged."<sup>10</sup>

May we resolve from this day forward to fill our hearts with love. May we go the extra mile to include in our lives any who are lonely or downhearted or who are suffering in any way. May we "[cheer] up the sad and [make] someone feel glad."<sup>11</sup> May we live so that when that final summons is heard, we may have no serious regrets, no unfinished business, but will be able to say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."<sup>12</sup> ■

#### NOTES

1. John 11:25–26.
2. John 14:27.
3. Luke 23:46.

4. Minnie Louise Haskins, "The Gate of the Year," in James Dalton Morrison, ed., *Masterpieces of Religious Verse* (1948), 92.
5. 1 Corinthians 15:3–8.
6. D&C 76:22–24.
7. Will L. Thompson, "Have I Done Any Good?" *Hymns*, no. 223.
8. Mosiah 2:17.
9. (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1990), 34, 138.
10. "Grandma and the Seagull," in Alice Arlen, *She Took to the Woods: A Biography and Selected Writings of Louise Dickinson Rich* (2000), 211–13.
11. *Hymns*, no. 223.
12. 2 Timothy 4:7.

**I**n the scrapbook, pasted neatly in parallel columns were Grandma's letters to Sea Gull over the years and Sea Gull's letters to her. Though neither woman had known it, Grandma's worst enemy had been her best friend."



# Elder D. Todd Christofferson

## PREPARED TO SERVE THE LORD



BY ELDER QUENTIN L. COOK

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

As a teenager living in Somerset, New Jersey, Todd Christofferson participated in the cast of the Hill Cumorah Pageant near Palmyra, New York, for two summers. During the production his first year, young Todd remembered the words of a former bishop. He had encouraged the youth of the ward to never give up striving with the Lord until they had “burned into [their] hearts a testimony of the gospel.”

Todd had taken the words of his priesthood leader seriously and had prayed about his testimony from time to time. But there in Palmyra, the cradle of the Restoration, he determined this was the time and place he was going to get a sure confirmation.

“One night after the performance, I went to the Sacred Grove alone,” he remembers. “It was a beautiful summer evening. I took off my shoes, went in, and began to pray. I prayed very diligently for an hour, maybe more—and nothing happened.”

After some time, he gave up and left. Disappointment consumed him. What had he done wrong? Why hadn’t Heavenly Father answered his prayer?

In what seemed like no time at all, the two-week stretch of pageant performances ended, and Todd returned to New Jersey. About a month later, as he was reading the Book of Mormon at home in his bedroom, he received his answer.

“Without my asking for it, the witness came,” he recalls. “It came without words, but I received a very powerful spiritual confirmation—





the kind that leaves no doubt—about the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith.

“Looking back on that experience, I realize that we can’t dictate to God when, where, or how He will speak to us. We just have to be open to receive what He disposes, when He disposes it. It comes according to *His* will.

“I’m glad that Heavenly Father didn’t respond to me that night in Palmyra. I might have thought that you have to be in a special place to get an answer to prayer or to gain a testimony. But you don’t have to make a pilgrimage to Palmyra to know that Joseph Smith was a prophet or that the Book of Mormon is true. You don’t have to go to Jerusalem to know that Jesus is the Christ. If Heavenly Father found me in Somerset, New Jersey, He can answer the prayers of anybody, anywhere in the world. He knows us intimately, and He can answer us whatever our place or circumstances.”

With that testimony “burned” into his heart, Todd Christofferson was preparing for a life of service in the Lord’s kingdom.

### **Idyllic Childhood**

David Todd Christofferson was born to Paul Vickery and Jeanne Swenson Christofferson on January 24, 1945, in American Fork, Utah. His father was in China, serving in the U.S. military near the end of World War II, so

Todd and his mother lived with Sister Christofferson’s parents, Helge and Adena Swenson, for approximately 18 months. This was the start of a close relationship between Todd and his grandparents, one that would be extremely influential throughout his life.

Todd and his four younger brothers were raised in Pleasant Grove and Lindon, Utah. They enjoyed what he describes as an “idyllic” and “wholesome” childhood, one in which the boys enjoyed unstructured time to play, invent, and learn.

“We had a very secure, happy home life,” Elder Christofferson remembers. “Father and Mother taught us through their examples and showed us how to live according to the pattern of the gospel.”

His parents, in turn, remember Todd as an obedient, happy son. “Todd was a good boy and always knew what kind of life he wanted to live,” his father says. “He was a great influence on his brothers.”

His parents also recall that he was eager to help wherever he saw a need. When Todd was 13 years old, his mother underwent significant surgery as part of cancer treatment. Elder Christofferson’s father, who was with her at the hospital, learned that Todd had gathered his brothers to pray for their mother.

The surgery was successful, but it limited Sister Christofferson’s ability to complete

**Opposite page: Todd Christofferson as a teenager at the Hill Cumorah Pageant in Palmyra, New York, in 1962. Above, left to right: Todd with his parents and brother Greg (right) in 1948; the Christofferson brothers—Tim, Todd, Greg, Tom, and Wade—with their grandfather Helge Swenson, 1964; Todd at approximately six years old. Elder Christofferson remembers his childhood as “wholesome” and “idyllic.”**



**Above, left to right: Elder Christofferson (left) with missionary companion Glen Willardson, in Salta, Argentina, 1965; Elder Christofferson at a baptism, 1966. Opposite page, left to right: Elder and Sister Christofferson on their wedding day in 1968, with their parents; Elder Christofferson with children Todd and Brynn, acting out the Nativity in 1977; the Christofferson family celebrating the United States' bicentennial in 1976.**



some routine household tasks. Todd knew how much his mother loved homemade bread—and how difficult it would be for her to continue to make it. He asked his grandmother to teach him how to bake bread, and he made it regularly for his family until he left for college several years later.

#### **New Home, New Experiences**

When Todd was about 15 years old, his father, a veterinarian, took a new job in New Brunswick, New Jersey. At the time of the family's move, Lindon, Utah, had very few people, so the transition to the more populated setting of New Jersey was a dramatic shift for the entire Christofferson family. Still, the next several years—full of new places, people, and opportunities—would be some of the most formative of Todd's life.

The only Church member in his high school class, Todd enjoyed friendships and associations with people from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds, something that would continue throughout his life. Todd discovered that many of his friends felt their beliefs as fervently as he felt his own, which caused him to think deeply and pray fervently about what he knew. "I began to see that the Church wasn't just nice," he says. "It was life-and-death important. I began to appreciate what I had."

Greg Christofferson, one of Elder Christofferson's brothers, who shared a room with him for over 16 years, remembers, "Todd was always spiritually inclined and exemplary

in his conduct." Greg notes that a few years after his brother graduated from high school, one of Todd's outstanding classmates had been praying with his wife about how to raise their young children. When Latter-day Saint missionaries came to their door, the man recalled how good and honorable Todd, one of the only Latter-day Saints he knew, had been. Because of that memory, the man invited the missionaries in, and he and his family joined the Church.

Young Todd's growing testimony—solidified by his experience after the Hill Cumorah Pageant—was further bolstered by a strong, supportive peer group of Latter-day Saint youth in the New Brunswick Ward in the New Jersey Stake, a group that Elder Christofferson says "lived to be together on Wednesdays and Sundays."

"The Church was the center of our family life," Elder Christofferson remembers. "It drew us close as a family, and it drew us closer to others in the ward."

#### **Mission to Argentina**

After graduating from Franklin High School in Somerset, Elder Christofferson attended Brigham Young University for a year and then left in September 1964 to serve in the Argentina North Mission, an event he considers seminal. His love for the people and cultures of Latin America has remained a significant part of his life.

During his mission, Elder Christofferson learned from "two exceptional mission presidents," President Ronald V. Stone and President Richard G. Scott, now a fellow

member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Elder Christofferson recalls with great fondness and appreciation the contribution of both presidents and their wives.

Elder Scott remembers Elder Christofferson as “an exceptionally outstanding missionary whose devotion and capacities were evidence that he would have a life of unusual significance.” Elder Scott notes that this young elder was particularly disciplined, obedient, and hardworking, and that he demonstrated “a gentleness of spirit that blessed each of his companions and endeared him to his investigators and converts.”

Elder Scott recalls a particular incident when he saw Elder Christofferson have a bicycle accident in which he damaged his suit and injured his hands. But he was undaunted. Elder Scott says, “He brushed himself off, climbed onto the bicycle, and headed off for an appointment with his companion.”

### **University and Marriage**

After returning from Argentina in December 1966, Elder Christofferson again enrolled at BYU, where he studied English and became involved in student government and intramural athletics.

Toward the end of the first semester after his mission, a pretty young woman he saw on campus caught his attention. Although he didn't meet her then, he did remember

her face and looked her up when the campus yearbook was published a few months later.

The student was Kathy Jacob, an attractive, gregarious young woman who had lived in both California and Utah. The following fall, when he was back in school, Todd arranged through a mutual friend to take Kathy on a date.

Over the next several months, they found they were compatible. Their love grew and matured, and the following spring, on May 28, 1968, they were married in the Salt Lake Temple.

“I knew Kathy was good and wonderful when we were first married,” Elder Christofferson says. “I just didn't know how deep her character and qualities and wisdom and goodness really were. I've been happily surprised as time has gone by how much better she is than I realized even then.”

The Christoffersons' daughter, Brynn Nufer, also attests to her mother's goodness. She says, “Everywhere we have lived, people have just loved her. She's super creative. She's real. And she's fun, fun, fun!”

### **A Distinguished Law Career**

Both Elder and Sister Christofferson graduated from BYU in 1969. Elder Christofferson went on to pursue a law degree





at Duke University. When he completed his schooling in 1972, he was hired as a law clerk to federal judge John J. Sirica, the judge who would later preside at the Watergate trials. *Time* magazine named Judge Sirica Man of the Year and called the Watergate affair “the worst political scandal in U.S. history.”<sup>1</sup> The scandal and its legal trials pervaded the U.S. news in 1973 and 1974.

Elder Christofferson had planned to clerk for one year and then work for a prominent Washington, D.C., law firm, from which he had received an employment offer. Elder Ralph W. Hardy, now an Area Seventy, has spent his career as a member of that firm and remembers that in those difficult Watergate days, Judge Sirica called the firm’s managing partner and said, “I can’t let Todd go. He is too valuable. He is the only person I can talk to.” As a result, Todd assisted Judge Sirica throughout the Watergate proceedings.

Elder Hardy recalls that much later, in 1992, a non-LDS attorney came into his office and exclaimed, “I’ve just come from the most inspiring funeral mass I have ever attended.” It was for Judge Sirica, whose family had requested that Elder Christofferson speak at the funeral. Elder Christofferson had taught the plan of salvation.

Following his clerkship, Elder Christofferson fulfilled an active duty requirement with the U.S. Army, followed by eight years in the inactive reserves. He completed his military commitment as a reserve captain.

Over the next 30 years Elder Christofferson had a distinguished legal career. He worked first at the law firm of Dow Lohnes PLLC, then as in-house counsel for a health-care system and several banking entities. He was associate general counsel of NationsBank Corp. (now Bank of America) at the time of his call to the Seventy. His work took the family to Washington, D.C.; Nashville, Tennessee;

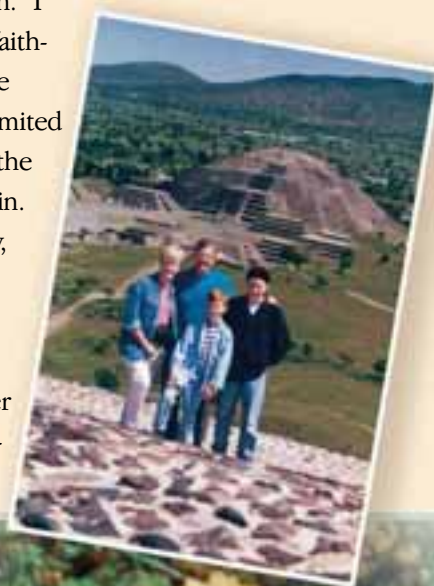
Herndon, Virginia; and Charlotte, North Carolina. What Elder Christofferson says he most enjoyed about the years he and his family spent living in the eastern United States was “association with good people of all walks of life and all faiths.” In addition to his Church service—which included callings as stake mission president, bishop, stake president, and regional representative—he participated in several interfaith and community service groups.

#### **Family Memories**

The Christoffersons have five children: Todd, Brynn, Peter, Ryan, and Michael. They also have eight grandchildren. The Christofferson children describe their upbringing as loving, caring, and centered on gospel principles. They remember a good balance of family fun and individual training.

Peter recalls serving as his father’s companion as a new home teacher during a particularly busy period in his father’s life. Elder Christofferson was working as corporate counsel and serving as stake president, but he still made time for teaching his children. “I was inspired by my father’s faithfulness in being a great home teacher, despite his having limited time,” Peter recalls. “One of the sisters we visited was a shut-in. Father cared for her tenderly, making sure that she always had the sacrament and that her needs were met.”

Brynn also remembers her father as being very thoughtful. Just two days after she





left home to attend Brigham Young University, she received flowers from him at her dormitory. The accompanying note said simply, “Have a great semester.”

“While Dad had high expectations of us, he was never preachy. He was very loving and low-key,” she says. “He was very happy, and he wanted us to be happy.”

**Service in the Seventy**

On April 3, 1993, Elder Christofferson was sustained as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. His initial assignment took his family to Mexico City, where he served for a time as Mexico South Area President.

On August 15, 1998, Elder Christofferson was called as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, where he served until his call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. His responsibilities included serving as Executive Director of the Family and Church History Department and then overseeing the North America Southeast Area. Most recently he has had responsibility for the North America Northwest and North America West Areas. His assignments have given him opportunities to meet with Latter-day Saints all over the world.

I am grateful for my association with Elder Christofferson in the Seventy and in the Presidency of the Seventy. He is very capable, is attuned to the promptings of the Spirit, and is loved and admired by the members of

the Seventy. He is known for his great sense of humor, and it is a joy to work with him.

**A Call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles**

Elder Christofferson says that when he received his new calling from President Thomas S. Monson, it initially “seemed impossible.”

“The Apostles are people I’ve admired and followed and listened to all of my life, and it seems impossible for me to be one of them,” he says. “The responsibility seems overwhelming as I contemplate it. But I have had wonderful tutors as I have worked with members of the Seventy and the Quorum of the Twelve over the last 15 years.”

He is also quick to emphasize on whom we all rely—the same Source of his answers when he was a teenager looking to solidify his testimony. “I am a great believer in the power of prayer,” he says. “We can always turn to prayer. Sometimes it’s all we have left, but it’s always sufficient for the need.

“In every crisis, in every transition, in every need I’ve ever had, Heavenly Father has been accessible through prayer. I have trusted in Him and have not been disappointed. Surely His promises are still in place. I know that He will give me the help I need here too.” ■

**NOTE**

1. “Judge John J. Sirica: Standing Firm for the Primacy of Law,” *Time*, Jan. 7, 1974; available at [www.time.com/time/magazine](http://www.time.com/time/magazine).

**Opposite page, left to right: Elder and Sister Christofferson with U.S. federal judge John J. Sirica, for whom Elder Christofferson served as a law clerk during the Watergate trials; the Christoffersons with their children and grandchildren; Elder and Sister Christofferson and their sons Ryan and Michael in Mexico, in 1994. Above, left to right: As one of the Presidents of the Seventy, 1998; Elder and Sister Christofferson with Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi of the Seventy and his wife, Toshiko, at the site where Japan was dedicated for the preaching of the gospel.**

# More Than Bread and Water

BY RYAN CARR  
Church Magazines

While we are blessed to have the chance to partake of the sacrament each Sunday, it can be easy to take it for granted because we take it so often. How can we better appreciate this sacred ordinance? Some young men from the Belgrade Second Ward, Bozeman Montana Stake, share a few ideas.

Brek and Jake Halgren and Michael and Evan Romrell want to remember the Savior and have His Atonement work in their lives. Taking the sacrament gives them—and each of us—that opportunity. It’s a chance to worship the Savior and to improve. And as the young men help with the sacrament, they use the priesthood to serve others.

## Feeling Reverence for the Sacrament

These young men also know the sacrament is important to ward members, so they take their priesthood responsibility seriously. What do they think about as they share the sacrament with the ward? Jake, 16, is grateful for the chance to serve. “You realize that you’re representing the Lord,” he says.

His brother Brek, 18, says, “As a priest, I’m

trying to make sure I’m doing everything correctly. But I’m also trying to think about the Atonement. Every week you have the incredible opportunity to repent of your sins, to have a new start on the week, to work on the things you need to work on. It’s a great opportunity to be spiritually uplifted.”

*How can you feel the Spirit more in sacrament meeting?*



## EMBLEMS OF THE ATONEMENT

“When an Aaronic Priesthood bearer’s hand is extended with a sacrament tray, he isn’t just

passing the sacrament. He is introducing into the lives of members the emblems of the holy Atonement and lifting the members heavenward.”

**Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, “The Miracle of the Priesthood,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2004, 28; *New Era*, Apr. 2004, 14.**



Michael, 17, also thinks about the Savior: “One of the strongest parts of my testimony is of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. I can think about mistakes I’ve made and know that if I repent, those mistakes are cleared because of what He did. Every time we take the sacrament, that reminds me of the Atonement.”

### **Being Worthy**

They understand that being worthy to hold the priesthood is important. Brek says it’s a privilege to hold the priesthood. “I see it as a great opportunity. You watch your actions throughout the week. It really helps.”

Evan, 15, says, “During the week, knowing I have the priesthood helps me choose the right so I can be able to help with the sacrament worthily.”

### **Learning Reverence**

These young men learned reverence for the sacrament when they were children. Their parents asked them to pay attention while the sacrament was being passed. That feeling has carried over to their teen years. Michael says, “I can’t stress enough how important the sacrament is to me. The sacrament represents the Lord’s body and His blood. We take His name upon ourselves. We go forth and proclaim His gospel and try to be good examples. There’s no way that we could ever return to our Heavenly Father if it were not for Him. The sacrament is that reminder.”

They also learned reverence for the sacrament by seeing other Aaronic Priesthood holders, including their older brothers, perform their priesthood duties. Evan, for example, remembers times when his older brother, who is now serving a mission in Brazil, talked to him about the sacrament, the priesthood, and other gospel topics.

Brek’s older brothers were good examples to him too. “As they prepared the sacrament, I always looked up to them,” Brek says.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN CARR AND COURTESY OF THE HALGREN FAMILY, EXCEPT AS NOTED; LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF SACRAMENT BY MATTHEW REIER



***The Halgren (top) and Romrell brothers help with the sacrament, and they do so reverently because of their testimonies of the Savior.***

Michael thinks of his mother's teaching: "She has stressed that the sacrament is the main reason why we come to church. We have the sacrament to remind us of the Atonement."

The Atonement of Jesus Christ was an act of service that affects the whole human family. On a smaller scale, Aaronic Priesthood holders can serve their ward or branch by helping with the sacrament, showing reverence for it, and living worthy to partake of it. ■

### **DRESS CAN SHOW REVERENCE**

Why do these young men wear white shirts and ties? To show respect for the Lord's sacrament. "Clothes tell others how you feel," says Evan Romrell. "If you dress sloppy, that's basically saying that you don't really care."

They want to dress nicely so they don't distract ward members from thinking of the Savior as they take the sacrament.

Jake Halgren says, "If you're in the congregation and you're watching deacons and priests and their shirts are hanging out or are dirty, people are going to be distracted by that. And they might question what you think of the sacrament. So if you're dressed well, you convey a sense of respect for the sacrament."



# FEAST



(SEE JOHN 4:14; 6:35.)

# MODESTY

## Reverence for the Lord

BY ELDER ROBERT D. HALES  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



*When we know who we are—children of God—and understand that our outward appearance affects our inward spirituality and ultimately our behavior, we show respect for God, for ourselves, and for those around us by being modest in dress and behavior.*

As the General Authorities and auxiliary Church leaders travel across the earth, it is apparent to us that the world is becoming increasingly casual and informal. This is manifested in many ways but particularly in the way people dress. This is also true among some members of the Church.

Such informality may come in part because of indifference. It may come from a lack of understanding or a lack of proper example. We are now two to three generations into wearing casual apparel, and we may not all have had good parental examples of appropriate and modest dress. Popular culture generally has not provided good examples either. The declining trend may also come in part because it is difficult to buy modest attire in today's market.

It is with these observations and these challenges in mind that I wish to emphasize the need for reverence for our Heavenly Father and for keeping the covenants we have made with Him, particularly as relating to modesty and appropriate dress.

### **The Principle of Modesty**

Some Latter-day Saints may feel that modesty is a tradition of the Church or that it has

evolved from conservative, puritanical behavior. Modesty is not just cultural. Modesty is a gospel principle that applies to people of all cultures and ages. In fact, modesty is fundamental to being worthy of the Spirit. To be modest is to be humble, and being humble invites the Spirit to be with us.

Of course, modesty is not new. It was taught to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. "Unto Adam . . . and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21; see also Moses 4:27). Like Adam and Eve, we have been taught that our bodies are formed in the likeness of God and are therefore sacred.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

". . . The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

Our bodies are the temples of our spirits. Additionally, our bodies are the means by which we can bring souls from the presence of God to their mortal state. When we recognize our bodies as the gifts they are and when we understand the missions they help us fulfill, we protect and honor them by how we act and dress.

In everyday living, immodest clothing such

as short shorts, miniskirts, tight clothing, shirts that do not cover the stomach, and other revealing attire are not appropriate. Men and women—including young men and young women—should wear clothing that covers the shoulder and avoid clothing that is low cut in the front or back or revealing in any other manner. Tight pants, tight shirts, excessively baggy clothing, wrinkled apparel, and unkempt hair are not appropriate. All should avoid extremes in clothing, hairstyle, and other aspects of appearance. We should always be neat and clean, avoiding sloppiness or inappropriate casualness.<sup>1</sup>

Modesty is at the center of being pure and chaste, both in thought and deed. Thus, because it guides and influences our thoughts, behavior, and decisions, modesty is at the core of our character. Our clothing is more than just covering for our bodies; it reflects who we are and what we want to be, both here in mortality and in the eternities that will follow.

### **Modesty in Dress for Church Meetings**

When we attend a Church meeting, our purpose is to worship our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ. Our clothing should show our reverence for Them. We do not dress to attract attention to ourselves, thus distracting others and causing the Spirit to depart.

It is the responsibility of parents to teach their children how to dress and prepare for worshipping in the houses of the Lord. Mothers and fathers can teach their children by taking special care to dress in such a way as to show modesty and reverence in their own appearance and behavior.

When I was a boy, my mother taught me that I should wear my “Sunday best”—in other words, my best attire—to church. What happens in your home as you are preparing

to come to church? Is there a moment before you leave your home when you pause to look at yourself in a mirror or have a member of the family observe how you look?

Show respect for the Lord and for yourself by dressing appropriately for Church meetings and activities, whether they are on Sunday or during the week. If you are not sure what is appropriate, ask your leaders for guidance.

### **Modesty in Dress for Temple Attendance**

Imagine yourself approaching the temple ready to enter the house of the Lord.



**Show respect for the Lord and for yourself by dressing appropriately for Church meetings and activities.**



In your mind's eye, are you wearing flip-flops, blue jeans, and a T-shirt with your hair casually unkempt? Of course not. But is it appropriate to wear casual clothes of *any* kind to the temple? If you are coming to the Lord's house, shouldn't you be wearing your Sunday best?

The next time you approach the temple, pause to look at the temple grounds. Have you ever considered why the temple is surrounded by beautiful plants, reflecting pools, and architecture? They give an outward presence and feeling that prepares the patron for the sacred ordinances that await inside the temple. Even if a temple is in the

center of a large city, the architecture outside separates the building from surrounding structures.

Our clothing is equally important. It is the "landscaping" for presenting our bodies as temples. Just as the temple

grounds portray the sacredness and reverence for what takes place inside the temple, our clothing portrays the beauty and purity of our inner selves. How we dress portrays whether we have proper respect for temple ordinances and eternal covenants and whether we are preparing ourselves to receive them.

In the classic fairy tale, Cinderella wore a magnificent gown to the royal ball. Even her slippers reflected the significance of the evening! It would have been unthinkable for her to come in her working clothes. In fact, no one arrived at the ball dressed in inappropriate, casual clothing. They were all elegantly dressed for the occasion.

There will be no more significant occasion in your life than your wedding day. Your marriage will be one of the *most sacred* events of your life, and hopefully it will take place in the holy temple—Heavenly Father's *most sacred* edifice here on earth. If you truly understood the nature of the covenants that you will

be making, you would reflect that in your dress. Brides, you would choose a white temple dress with a bodice and sleeves that are appropriate for the wearing of temple garments. You would do this because of the endowment ceremony and covenants you took upon yourself in preparation for your sealing ceremony. Grooms, your clothing and appearance would be modest and clean. You would not wear a rumpled shirt or slouchy pants in the temple.

When that day comes for you, you will make holy covenants with Heavenly Father. You will want to look your very best as you reverently kneel at an altar before God.



**How we dress portrays whether we have proper respect for temple ordinances and eternal covenants and whether we are preparing ourselves to receive them.**



Parents, just as Cinderella's fairy godmother helped prepare her, you can help prepare your sons and daughters. Help them understand the significance of the covenants they will make. Honoring our covenants, starting with baptism, affects who we are and what we do, including the kinds of things we say, the music we listen to, and the clothing we wear. When we make and keep covenants, we are coming out of the world and into the kingdom of God. Our appearance should reflect that.

Before you attend the temple, whether it is to be married, to receive the endowment, or to perform work for the dead, pause for a moment and ask yourself these questions: "If the Lord were to be at the temple today, how would I dress? How would I want to present myself to Him?" Of course, the answer is clear. You would want to look and feel your best.

Ask yourself the same questions about attending church on Sunday at your local meetinghouse. There you will renew your baptismal covenants through partaking of the sacrament. Remember, you are coming to a house of the Lord that has been dedicated for worshipping Him.

### **Outward Appearance—the Messages We Send**

Imagine that you are watching a play. An actor comes on stage dressed as a clown but starts playing the serious part of the lead. You might react by thinking that this is inappropriate—there must be some mistake in the costuming or casting.

Now think of how inappropriate it is to go out into the world or come to church dressed in clothes that do not represent who you really are in spirit. Our outward appearance and

behavior give a message. What message are we sending? Does it reflect that we are children of God? When we go to church or the temple, it is important that we dress to demonstrate that we are prepared to worship and to indicate that we are mentally and spiritually ready to invite the Spirit to be with us always.

Years ago, as a father and bishop in the Church, I could not understand the rationale of youth who dressed in wild colors and provocative fashions to show their "in your face" independence from modest, conservative dress codes and traditions. Then I would observe that, ironically, the rigid compliance of these youth to their bizarre dress codes required far greater obedience and conformity to peer-group pressures than that desired by society as a whole.

When we dress for attention, we are not inviting the Spirit to be with us. We act differently when we are dressed for the world's attention. Moreover, what we wear will influence the behavior of others toward us.

Consider why missionaries dress conservatively in a skirt and blouse or in a suit with a white shirt and tie. How might someone respond if the missionary had unkempt hair and if he or she were dressed in blue jeans, flip-flops, and a T-shirt with a tawdry printed message? That person might ask, "Is this a representative of God?" Why would that person want to engage in a serious conversation about the purpose of life or the Restoration of the gospel with such a missionary?

Of course we don't need to dress like missionaries all of the time. There are certainly times when modest casual clothing is appropriate. The point is this: How we dress affects how people react to us. It also demonstrates where our heart and spirit really desire to be.

**W**hen we  
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and  
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**H**ow we dress demonstrates where our heart and spirit really desire to be.

How we feel on the inside shows on the outside. We show love and respect for ourselves and others by our attitude, speech, and dress. We show love and respect for Church leaders and ward or branch members by speaking, dressing, and behaving in a manner that does not bring inappropriate attention to ourselves. We show love and respect for friends and associates when our language, dress, and behavior are not provocative or unduly casual. And we show love and respect to the Lord through humble dress and behavior. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).

#### **Putting on “the Whole Armor”**

When we know who we are—children of God—and understand that our outward appearance affects our inward spirituality and ultimately our behavior, we show respect for God, for ourselves, and for those around us by being modest in dress and behavior.

My father, who was an artist, helped me understand this concept when I was a boy. He drew me a picture of a knight in armor and labeled the critical elements of “the whole armor of God” as described in the scriptures (see Ephesians 6:11–17; D&C 27:15–18). That picture hung in my bedroom and became a reminder of what we need to do to remain true and faithful to gospel principles.



**We show love and respect to the Lord through humble dress and behavior.**

Just as we are to “put on” the armor of God, we are to “put on” our clothes as protection for us and others. Clothing ourselves with modest dress and modest actions—mercy, kindness, humility, patience, and charity—will invite the companionship of the Spirit and will positively affect those around us (see Colossians 3:12, 14).

Are we determined to be Saints in the kingdom of God, or are we more comfortable in the ways of the world? Ultimately, how we dress will greatly influence our obedience to commandments and devotion to covenants. Dressing modestly will guide our attitudes and behavior as we conduct our daily lives. In time our dress may even determine who our friends and associates may be, thus influencing whether we live worthy of enjoying the blessings of happiness in this world and for eternity.

It is my fervent prayer that we will hold to our covenants and be modest in our dress

and behavior as we attend church, visit the temple, and go about our daily lives. As we do so, we will show respect for ourselves, our parents, our Church leaders, and others, and we will show reverence to our Heavenly Father and invite the Spirit to be with us always. ■

#### **NOTE**

1. See *For the Strength of Youth: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* (2001), “Dress and Appearance.”





## The Whole Armor of God

The “helmet of salvation” guards our reasoning, intellect, and thoughts.

The “breastplate of righteousness” helps us to have the Spirit with us always, guarding our heart and soul.

Having our “loins girt about with truth” gives us the foundation to build faith and develop our testimony.

The “sword of the Spirit” is the word of God to pierce the darkness so that we may have light and truth to guide our way in life.

The “shield of faith” helps us withstand the fiery darts of the adversary.

Having our “feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” by reading and studying the scriptures helps us be obedient to the laws, ordinances, commandments, and covenants of God.

—Elder Robert D. Hales

# COMFORT

## AT THE TIME OF DEATH

*The Prophet Joseph Smith knew that the plan of salvation can console us when a loved one dies.*

**D**uring his life Joseph Smith suffered the loss of many close relatives and friends, including his father, six children, and three brothers. Yet he also gained great comfort from the many revelations he received regarding life after death. Here are some of his teachings on this topic.

### DEATH IS A TEMPORARY SEPARATION

*“When I talk to these mourners, what have they lost? Their relatives and friends are only separated from their bodies for a short season: their spirits which existed with God have left the tabernacle of clay only for a little moment, as it were; and they now exist in a place where they converse together the same as we do on the earth.”*

*“The expectation of seeing my friends in the morning of the resurrection cheers my soul and makes me bear up against the evils of life.”*

### THE DEATH OF SMALL CHILDREN

*“I have meditated upon the subject, and asked the question, why it is that infants, innocent children, are taken away from us. . . . The Lord takes many away, even in infancy, that they may escape the envy of man, and the sorrows and evils of this present world; they were too pure, too lovely, to live on earth; therefore, if rightly considered, instead of mourning we have reason to rejoice as they are delivered from evil, and we shall soon have them again.”*

*“Children . . . must rise just as they died; we can there hail our lovely infants with the same glory—the same loveliness in the celestial glory.”*

### TRUST IN GOD

*“It has been hard for me to live on earth and see . . . young men . . . taken from us in the midst of their youth. Yes, it has been hard to be reconciled to these things. . . . Yet I know we ought to be still and know it is of God, and be reconciled to His will; all is right.”*

*From Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 174–78.*



## Each Sister Is a Beloved Daughter of Heavenly Parents and Has a Divine Destiny



Teach the scriptures and statements that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you teach to share what they have felt and learned.

promise. If you will keep the Lord's statutes and commandments and hearken to His voice, He has promised that He will make you high above the nations in name and honor and praise" ("You Have a Noble Birthright," *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 106, 108).

**President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency:** "A conviction that you are a daughter of God gives you a feeling of comfort in your self-worth. It means that you can find strength in the balm of Christ. It will help you meet the heartaches and challenges with faith and serenity" ("What It Means to Be a Daughter of God," *Liabona*, Jan. 2000, 123; *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 102).

**President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901):** "We believe that we are the offspring of our Father in heaven, and that we possess in our spiritual organizations the same capabilities, powers and faculties that our Father possesses, although in an infantile state, requiring to pass through a certain course or ordeal by which they will be developed and improved according to the heed we give to the principles we have received" ("Discourse," *Deseret News*, Jan. 24, 1872, 597).

### How Can I Understand and Attain My Divine Destiny?

**President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985):** "All of you need to drink in deeply the gospel truths about the eternal nature of your individual identity and the uniqueness of your personality. You need, more and more, to feel the perfect love which our Father in Heaven has for you and to sense the value he places upon you as an individual. Ponder upon these great truths, especially in those moments when (in the stillness of such anxiety as you may experience as an individual) you might otherwise wonder and be perplexed" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 222).

**Romans 8:16–17:** "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

**Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** "We are to be creators in our own right—builders of an individual faith in God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and faith in His Church. We are to build families and be sealed in holy temples. We are to build the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth. We are to prepare for our own divine destiny—glory, immortality, and eternal lives. These supernal blessings can all be ours, through our faithfulness" ("The Creation," *Liabona*, July 2000, 104–5; *Ensign*, May 2000, 86). ■



### What Does It Mean to Be a Beloved Daughter of Heavenly Parents?

**Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president:** "You are literally spirit daughters of Deity, 'offspring of exalted parents' with a divine nature and an eternal destiny. You received your first lessons in the world of spirits from your heavenly parents. You have been sent to earth to 'prove' yourselves. . . .

"You are treasured children of the

# "I have a couple of friends who don't come to church anymore. What are some ways to help them return?"

**E**very new member needs a friend at church, a Church assignment, and nourishment "by the good word of God" (Moroni 6:4).<sup>1</sup> While your friends may not be recent converts, these three things can help them.

You can also pray for help. In the Book of Mormon, one of the most powerful accounts of someone coming back to the gospel occurred because of prayer (see Mosiah 27:14).

Let your friends know that you care, and be a good example. Show them that living gospel standards is a great way to be happy (see Mosiah 2:41).

Finally, don't give up. The Lord respects our agency and allows each of us to come to Him when we are ready. For some this may take longer than others. But no matter how long it takes, your efforts will be worth it.

By helping your friends return to church, you are following the Savior's example. With love and compassion, He invited others to come unto Him, live the gospel more fully, and rise to their full potential.

**NOTE**

1. See Gordon B. Hinckley, "A Perfect Brightness of Hope," *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Oct. 2006, 4.



**Talk about Gospel Topics**

It worried me when I noticed that my good friend was not coming to church anymore. Her close friend, I found, had recently passed away, and she was beginning to doubt. One day I invited her to a party with some girls from church. I made it a goal to bring up the Church once. After the others left, we talked about various Church topics that I would have never thought to talk to her about. I learned that by doing my part, the Lord will take care of the rest. All we need to do is open our mouths (see D&C 28:16).  
Rebecca T., 16, Washington, USA



**Pray for Them**

Something that would help a lot is to visit them and show an interest in them. Invite them to Church activities. Pray a lot to Heavenly Father. Ask Him to help you see what the best way would be to help them to return, and pray for them so there can be a change in their hearts to replace any sinful desire with a desire to follow Christ. Give them a good example, and show them that the gospel brings happiness.  
Marilú P., 17, Nuevo León, Mexico

*Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.*



**Share Your Testimony**

The first thing I want to find out is why they aren't coming to church. After that I will invite them for dinner, family home evening, and some Church activities as well. At the same time, I want to let them know how much our Heavenly Father loves them by sharing some scriptures and inviting them to church. I will bear my testimony to them of the truthfulness of this Church, that it is the only way we can go back and live with our Father in Heaven. William V., 20, Tongatapu, Tonga



**Answer Their Questions**

Getting friends to come back to church is hard. People have many reasons for falling away. You should talk to your friends about their reasons for not coming. You can also help them understand the answers to the questions they have that could be keeping them from coming. Also let them know how much they are missed. When they do come to church, make them feel loved and welcome. Madison B., 14, Arizona, USA

**Be a Good Friend**

Just be the best friend you can. Be there for your friends. Be an example. Pray for them. Let the Lord show you how you can help your friends. He knows and loves His children and will lead them

back to the correct path if they will let Him.

Jenna K., 19, Lower Saxony, Germany

**Help Them Remember Spiritual Experiences**

Ask them to remember their testimony, which moved them to be baptized. Ask them to remember the miracles the Lord wrought for them according to their faith. Also have them remember the power of prayer and the power of the priesthood.

Anna R., 21, Donetsk, Ukraine

**Let Them Know You Care**

I have found that the easiest way to encourage them to come to church again is just telling them that you love them and that the ward loves them. I have recently gotten one of my less-active friends to commit to coming to our Mia Maid activities. God will show you how to touch their hearts.

Denali L., 15, Alaska, USA

**NEXT QUESTION**

*"My friend has started smoking. How can I offer to help her quit without offending her?"*

**Please send your answer by September 15, 2008, to:**

**Liahona, Questions & Answers 9/08  
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA  
Or e-mail: [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org)**

**The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter:**

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FULL NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
BIRTH DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
WARD (or branch)

\_\_\_\_\_  
STAKE (or district)

**I grant permission to print response and photo:**

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SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT'S SIGNATURE (if you are under 18)

**Lift Those Who Need Help**



*"Under the sacred and compelling trust we have as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, ours is a work of redemption, of lifting and saving those who need help. Ours is a task of raising the sights of those of our people who fail to realize the great potential that lies within them."*

**President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "What This Work Is All About," Liahona and Ensign, Aug. 2002, 5.**

# Family Faith

BY KIMBERLY REID  
Church Magazines

To this day centuries-old cathedrals are some of the tallest structures in Italy. Ancient ruins boast of past societies while medieval houses lie nestled along winding streets. Building codes prohibit modern high-rises from being constructed, and the rural Tuscan landscape is legally protected against overdevelopment. That's because Italian citizens are committed to preserving their history. If the renowned Renaissance man Michelangelo returned to earth today, Italians hope he would easily recognize his homeland.

Church members throughout Italy are interested in preserving much more than architecture and landscape. They aim to preserve faith across generations. Like

many Church members around the world, Italian Latter-day Saints are pioneers in creating multiple-generation families joined in gospel covenants. These Church members face old traditions and pervasive secularism in the surrounding culture, but they focus on the Savior and try to build faith that will thrive in the hearts of their posterity.

## Revering Family

One of the first components in building family faith is the courage to *begin* a family. Marco and Raffaella Ferrini of the Firenze Second Branch, Florence Italy District, dated each other before serving missions. Soon after returning home, they both felt impressed in the temple that they should marry soon. "In Italy it's more common to get married in your 30s," Marco says. Some friends and relatives asked them, "Why are you getting married so young?"





*“I knew that if I raised my children in the gospel, they would have answers to their questions.”*

—Anna Ferrini

relationship made a positive impact on their children and their daughter-in-law. “When I first set foot in their home, it really hit me that they have a good family life,” Raffaella says. “They don’t yell at each other.

**Opposite page: Giulia, Marco, Raffaella, Lorenzo, Alessio, Anna, and Bruno Ferrini stand strong in the faith.**

The couple credits the influence of Marco’s parents, Anna and Bruno, for helping them value marriage. When Anna joined the Church in 1968, there were few Church members in Italy. After praying about her decision, she married Bruno, a man who respected her beliefs and allowed her to teach their children the gospel. “I never worried about marrying a Mormon because of the great respect Anna and I had for each other,” Bruno says.

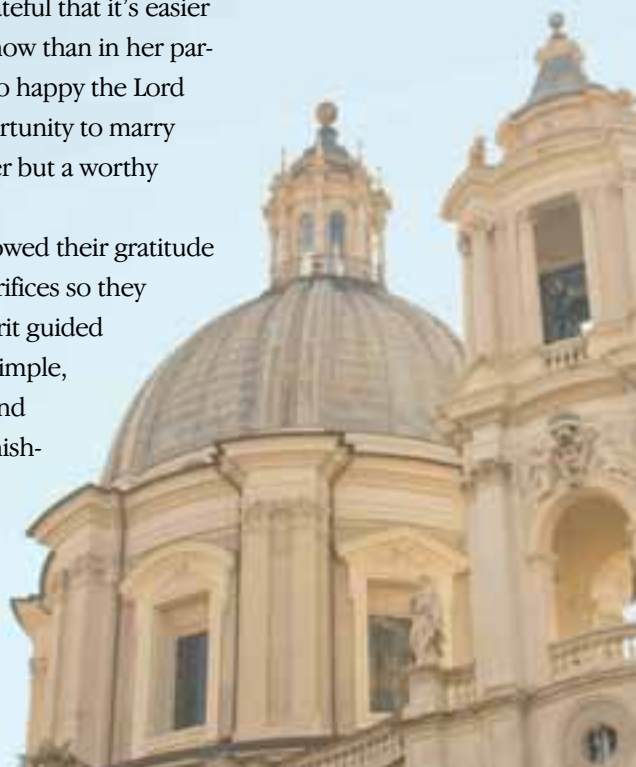
Although Anna felt pained because she couldn’t offer her children all the blessings of an eternal family, she says, “I knew my husband was a good man and eventually everything would fall into place.” In the meantime she taught her sons, Marco and Alessio, to make the Savior the center of their lives and to value the family.

Eventually Bruno joined the Church. Today he is president of the Firenze Second Branch. But during the 29 years that he was not interested in the Church, he and Anna still worked to have a happy marriage. Their loving

They are calm and nice to each other. I really wanted that.”

Raffaella also wanted a temple marriage. She says, “To marry in the temple is a good goal,” even though it may be harder to achieve in countries with fewer Church members. “Satan tries to convince us to make wrong decisions, but when we have a good goal clearly set in our minds, Heavenly Father will help us overcome everything so we can reach that goal.” She is grateful that it’s easier to meet Latter-day Saints now than in her parents’ generation. She’s also happy the Lord blessed her with the opportunity to marry “not just a Church member but a worthy priesthood holder.”

Raffaella and Marco showed their gratitude to the Lord by making sacrifices so they could marry when the Spirit guided them to. They planned a simple, inexpensive celebration, and Marco decided to delay finishing his university studies. “Everything is so expensive here that it’s hard to do more than one thing





at once—study, work, and have a family,” he says. Financial concerns prompt most Italians to finish school and establish careers before marriage, “but our main desire was to start our family,” Marco says. He realized that only three things were vitally necessary to be able to do so: a job, a place to live, and the faith to move forward. At first “I didn’t get a very good job, but it was enough,” Marco says. “Anytime you have to make a hard decision, you just have to jump in. You go by faith and try your best,” trusting that needed blessings will come. Eventually he was blessed with a better-paying job in the tourist industry, thanks to the foreign languages he learned on his mission. He also has a testimony of paying tithing because his young family has never been in need.

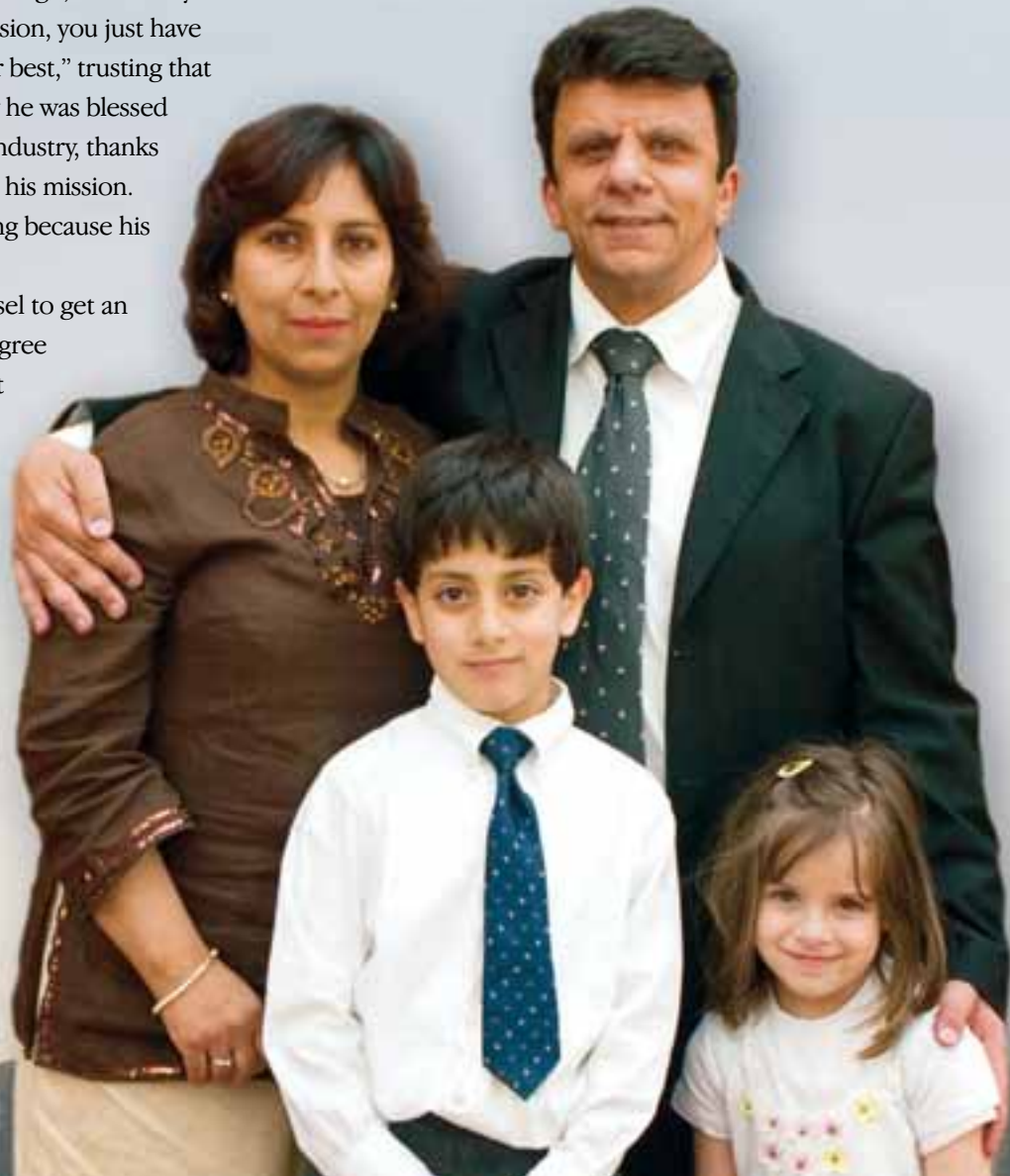
Marco values Church leaders’ counsel to get an education, and he plans to earn his degree when his children are a little older. But for now, “I feel the Spirit telling me that it’s important for me to be with my family. And since my two children, Giulia and Lorenzo, have been born, I haven’t regretted a thing.”

“We don’t have much money,” Raffaella says, “but we are happy.” They are grateful to participate in the plan of happiness and teach its truths to the next generation—the third generation in their family to receive gospel blessings.

### **United in Purpose**

Spiritual unity can be a crucial ingredient in building solid family faith, says Piero Sonaglia of the Rome Italy Stake. “Being united in purpose can be a source of strength for all families,” but it is especially a blessing when that purpose is to “move together toward Jesus Christ.” This is his family’s most important goal.

Piero didn’t always have such priorities. At age 15 he left the Church and didn’t look back until becoming a father and dealing with his own father’s near-fatal heart attack. These incidents sparked memories of gospel teachings he had learned as a child. “I knew very clearly that I had to





repent and put my life in order,” he says. He also knew that “such an important and drastic change” would affect his family. His parents had divorced, partly because of religious differences, and he wanted his own family to be united.

Piero’s wife, Carla, grew up practicing a different religion from his and had attended church each Sunday as a child. “But I would come home feeling more confused,” she says. For her, religion had been a matter of tradition rather than something to shape her life. Carla hungered for something more. She says, “I felt a strong desire to pray to Heavenly Father on my own, using my own words” instead of written prayers. Her heartfelt, prayerful relationship with the Lord prepared her to embrace the restored gospel when Piero returned to activity.

As parents now united in faith, Piero and Carla try to prepare their sons, Ilario and Mattia, against temptation—starting now, while they are young. “We read scriptures every night and have family home evening,” Carla says. “Our sons are happy to participate. We go to church. We pray together. We go to the temple.” Regular temple attendance for Piero and Carla is not a small feat when the nearest temples are in Switzerland and Spain.

“We try to recognize every moment as an opportunity to teach,” Piero adds. “At this stage in their lives, our young sons are especially learning to obey their parents.” Piero hopes this will help them learn to obey Heavenly Father, arming them with the strength and testimony necessary to remain



faithful throughout their teenage years and beyond. He knows—and wants his children to know—that lasting happiness is found only in obedience to God.

Like Piero, Andrea Rondinelli of the Rome Italy Stake found the gospel after a life-changing event, the death of his father. “I realized it could not end like that,” he says. He sensed that there must be life beyond the grave and purpose to life and death. He had encountered the Church 15 years earlier when his sisters were baptized. After his father’s death he sought out the missionaries and was baptized 15 days later.

Soon he received his patriarchal blessing. In it the Lord promised him an eternal companion. “While I was looking for her, I prayed a lot,” he says. He wanted a wife who would share a common spiritual purpose with him, and he ended one engagement when his fiancée didn’t want to be sealed in the temple. “I did everything I could to be ready for

**Opposite page: Andrea Rondinelli prayed for an eternal family. His wife, Mariela, and their children, Daniele and Valentina, are answers to his prayers. Above: Piero and Carla Sonaglia teach the gospel to their sons, Ilario and Mattia.**



**Lorenzo and Ilaria Mariani make sacrifices so they can teach their children, Gioele and Davide, how to keep an eternal perspective.**

the moment I would meet my wife,” he says. In answer to one of his prayers, Andrea had an impression that someday he would have a son. This experience helped him be patient until he met Mariela.

Mariela found the gospel in Colombia at age 11. After serving a mission in her native country, she visited Italy. She was surprised—and a little distressed—to feel the Spirit prompting her to stay permanently. “Everything was OK back in Colombia,” she says. “I had a job. I was involved in the Church. I had the opportunity to study. But I felt in my heart that I was here for a purpose, that my role was here.”

Andrea is grateful for that prompting. He and Mariela met two years after his baptism, and today they enjoy the kind of marriage they waited for—sealed in the temple, equally yoked in faith. They continue to build unity by “spending time together, like going on walks,” Mariela says.


Family home evening is also key. “Our son’s baptism involved the whole family,” Andrea says. For months they spent family home evening learning how to prepare for baptism and confirmation and “studying the principles that Daniele was going to embrace. We were all involved together, and we felt very much prepared for the occasion.” Whenever they hold family home evening, the children are involved. “Our daughter, Valentina, leads the music,” Andrea says. He smiles. “She’s very good.” Daniele chooses the hymns and sometimes helps prepare the lessons. “Every Monday is always a beautiful experience for all

of our family members,” Andrea says. Such experiences strengthen the spiritual foundation upon which their children and grandchildren may build.

#### **Living with Joy**

A third component in building family faith is to live with joy, says Lorenzo Mariani of the Pisa Branch, Florence Italy District. Lorenzo is a counselor in the district presidency while his wife, Ilaria, is a stay-at-home mother who serves in Young Women. They have a lot to do, and they try to accomplish it with a smile. They believe their visible happiness can help mold their children’s attitudes toward the gospel. “When we do something for the Church, we show a good example by not appearing stressed and by having a good attitude,” Lorenzo says. “Children can tell if you do something with joy or just because it’s a duty.”

“I think a lot every day about how to instill faith in my children,” Ilaria says. She hopes her constant loving care will show her sons, Gioele and Davide, the joy of families and that relationships



are more important than money. She says, “The forces threatening the family in Italy include people not wanting to get married or not having more than one child so they can pay for their child to have lots of privileges.” She acknowledges that other children have more possessions than hers, “but these are less essential” than taking the time to teach her children eternal truths.

Ilaria sometimes feels lonely when so many women are socializing in the workplace, but she prays for help and feels the Spirit filling her with happiness and strength. “I am also blessed with a lot of sisters in the Church who love me,” she says. Sometimes when she prays for help, a sister in the branch calls and offers support.

As for extended family support, Ilaria and Lorenzo look forward to the day their posterity will have multiple generations of faithful forebears to learn from and emulate. “We pray for our posterity,” Lorenzo says. As a second-generation Church member, “I feel a big responsibility on my shoulders to be the strong link in the chain.”

Lorenzo and Ilaria feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the privilege of being pioneers—some of the first in their family to raise children with gospel light. Lorenzo’s mother was the first to join the Church in his family, and Ilaria learned about the Church from her aunt. “The gospel

helps strengthen our marriage a lot,” Lorenzo says. It “gives us the eternal perspective of our family. We try to make the right choice in the eternal perspective instead of the mortal perspective.” These choices are the substance of strong links, connecting one faithful generation to the next.

“Sometimes when I hear stories in general conference about the speaker’s great-grandparents being pioneers, crossing the plains, I get a little jealous,” Ilaria admits. It’s hard for her to imagine having a whole family tree of people who sacrificed for the gospel. But she and Lorenzo are encouraged by the Church growth they have seen in their country. They are grateful for the first missionaries who planted seeds there, and they know a greater harvest is coming.

Ilaria smiles, envisioning that day. “I know that someday someone will be reading Great-Grandma Ilaria’s journal.” Family stories of faith are beginning with her today.

### **Preparing Their Posterity**

While Italian citizens preserve ancient monuments and Renaissance charm, Italian Latter-day Saints also *make* history. They create family history of eternal significance by keeping the commandments and teaching their children to do the same. They look forward to the Savior’s return and hope their posterity will be among His disciples.

To accomplish this they are striving to be true disciples themselves. They prove that it’s possible to endure, to be diligent, to be happy, and to establish faithful families united in temple covenants. By word and example they teach the rising generation what it means to nurture faith in Jesus Christ. ■

# Building an

BY ELDER BENJAMÍN DE HOYOS  
Of the Seventy



*My father was a master teacher of the scriptures. Now I think of those study sessions as my own seminary class with my father as the teacher.*

Growing up in Mexico, I had the blessing of belonging to a wonderful Latter-day Saint family. I loved coming home from college in the winter-time, opening the door, and smelling the cinnamon and flour tortillas. While we were a family poor in temporal things, we were a family rich in the gospel and testimony.

I especially loved my parents' testimonies of the Book of Mormon. My father was a wonderful student of the Book of Mormon. Many times, even when I was an adult, we would talk about the book and cry because the Spirit was strong. He understood the doctrines of the book. He was converted in 1917, when he was six years old, and many times he shared experiences he had had when he was a boy watching animals on the ranch. He always had in his bag a copy of the Book of Mormon.

My mother was a peaceful woman who always served her family and the Lord. She became a strong example of faith to our family, raising six children and continually serving in the Church. She served as a missionary in the 1940s, when our whole country was just a single mission.

## **My Father's Teachings**

While I was growing up, my father was a very busy man because he had a demanding job as a truck driver for construction projects. But he always took time for me. When I was in high school, my father would ask my five sisters when he came home from work, "Where is Benjamín?"

My sisters would come to me and say, "Father wants you."

I would leave playing with my friends and run to ask him, "What do you need, Father?"

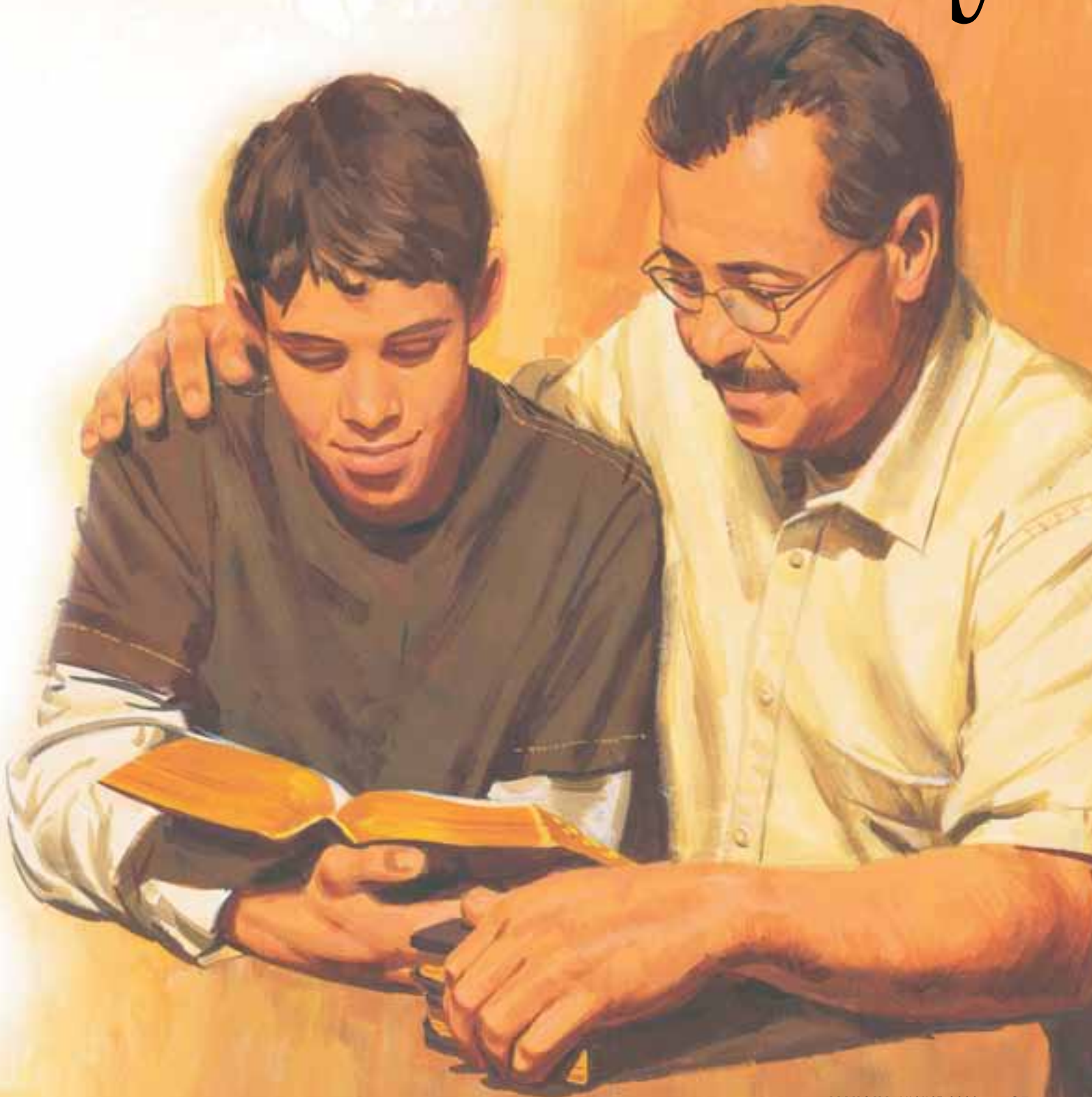
He would say, "Bring your scriptures, and come with me."

Two or three times a week we would read the scriptures together like that. He was a master teacher of the scriptures. At that time we did not have seminary in Mexico. Now I think of those study sessions as my own seminary class with my father as the teacher.

While reading the scriptures and hearing my father explain them to me, I learned for myself what the Spirit feels like in my heart and in my mind. Many times the Spirit was very strong as he would explain the scriptures.

These kinds of experiences with my father were the beginning of my own testimony of Heavenly Father and the Church. I always thought that the Church was true, but just

# Eternal Family





**O**nce when I was in a car with my friends, they drove really fast. A policeman pulled us over, and I was scared. I remembered the words of my father about taking care of the future. That experience helped me make a decision about the kinds of friends I wanted to have.

*thinking* so was not enough. My father took my hand and put it on the iron rod. His manner of taking care of me was the key for my testimony and my inner security in the gospel.

During those meetings, not only did I learn many things from him about the scriptures, but I learned that my father loved me in a way that I couldn't quite understand at the time. Many other times he would invite me to a movie or to eat, and I know that I was protected by my father's care for me.

Now I am a father, and I know that he loved me in a special way.

#### **Choosing Friends Carefully**

When I was 16, most of my friends at school weren't members, but they knew that I was a member of the Church. They started to smoke and do other things I wouldn't do. So things began to change between us; our types of conversation were very different, and our thinking and activities weren't compatible.

One day my father asked me, “Why aren’t you thinking about your friends’ effect on you?” He counseled me to be careful and think about the necessity of changing my friends.

When I started at the university, I became very busy and didn’t spend a lot of time with my friends, but one time when we were together, they decided to do something bad. We were in a car, and they drove really fast. A policeman pulled us over, and I was scared. I remembered the words of my father about taking care of the future. That experience helped me make a decision about the kinds of friends I wanted to have.

I became very involved in Church activities. Attending Mutual was wonderful because I decided to have those kinds of friends. I learned that my father was right—that I should take care of my relationship with good friends. I needed friends who would help me prepare for a mission.

### **A Loving Heavenly Father**

As my father did with me, my Heavenly Father takes care of me personally. I know that Heavenly Father loves me. In many ways and in many circumstances, He takes care of us individually. Sometimes we do not hear and we are not willing to listen because our friends may get our attention more than He does. But I know that Heavenly Father loves us, and He will give us the opportunity to know in our hearts that He will be with us as we ask for His help.

### **The Privilege of Passing the Sacrament**

I especially remember feeling the love of Heavenly Father as a youth participating in the sacrament. In my ward there were only a few young men, so every Sunday I passed the sacrament. When I served as a teacher, every Sunday I prepared the bread and the water. At that time we used glass cups, which I had to wash one by one.

When I passed the sacrament, I could see the eyes of the people. Old people, young people, children—each

had a special feeling while taking the bread and water. I could see that they felt the love of Heavenly Father personally. Those experiences with the sacrament marked my life forever. Every week I remember the Lord, who died for us. I remember that if we are worthy, we can be together as a family eternally.

### **Comfort from Testimony**

When my father was an old man, we talked about the possibility of his death. He did not have fear; he felt peace. When he spoke about death, he knew that he would be with his family again. Because of the Atonement and Resurrection, both of us had great inner security. We were always very grateful to the Lord because of the miracle of the Resurrection.

Because of the teachings of my father, I knew since I was a child that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true—not just in my mind but also in my heart. Many times the Spirit has let me know that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith is a prophet, and that we have a prophet today, President Thomas S. Monson. Knowing that I have the gospel makes me happy. And I know with certainty that the Lord cares about us and knows us. Consequently, I have my own personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and because of His sacrifice, I know that I can be with my father and the rest of my family again. ■



### **THEY WILL HELP YOU**

“Honor your fathers and mothers. They will help you make good decisions. . . . Choose friends who have high ideals. Choose friends who will help you to be good.”

**President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), “To the Children of the Church,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 82.**

# The Biggest TEST of Her Life . . . So Far

*While preparing for her big test, Andrea learned the key to passing the ultimate test.*

BY ADAM C. OLSON  
Church Magazines

As a young teen growing up in Santiago, Chile, Andrea González never had much except for a dream—a university degree that would allow her to support her family if necessary. To get there, she hoped to graduate from seminary, get good grades at school, and score high

enough on her college placement exam (PSU) to go to a university where she could study engineering.

But by the time she had started her final year of high school in preparation for the PSU, she started to wonder if any of that was possible. “All my goals seemed impossible to achieve,” she recalls.

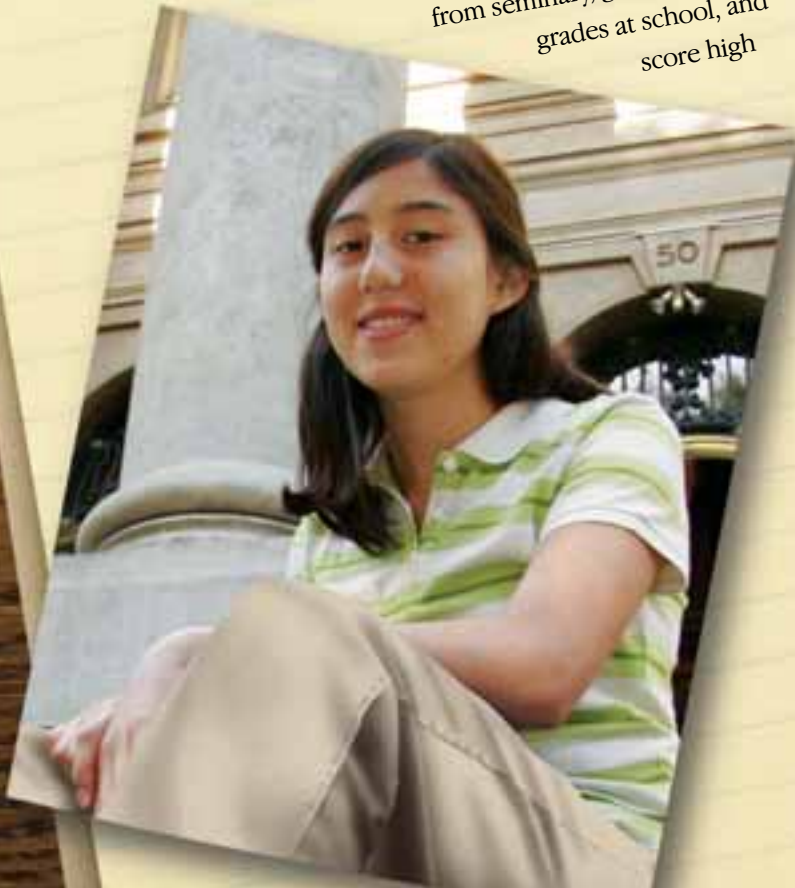
## No Easy Goals

Andrea was trying to break into a competitive and male-dominated field of study. Because of the competition, the top universities were looking for extremely high scores on the math portion of the PSU, scores usually earned by those who could afford to attend private schools.

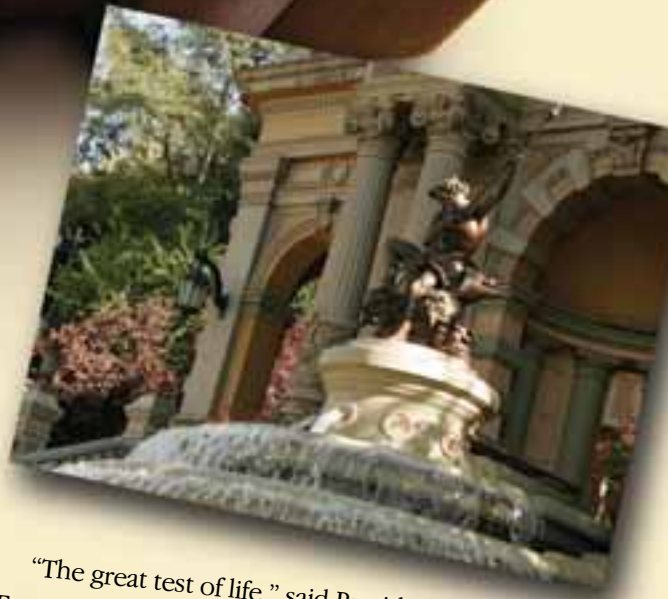
To try and overcome these obstacles, Andrea kept a daunting schedule her final year. She was up early and studying after school until late, eating when she had a free moment and squeezing in seminary four nights a week.

“It was discouraging sometimes,” she says. “I had to sacrifice a lot. I don’t know how many times my friends heard me say, ‘No, I’ve got to study’ or how often I’ve been teased for being smart.”

But she knew she couldn’t give up if she wanted to secure her future.







### Passing the Test

Her sacrifices paid off. On the math section of the PSU, Andrea was one of 200 students in the country to earn a perfect score of 850 and one of only two girls from public schools to do so.

She also graduated from seminary, got the good grades she studied so hard for, and was named by her classmates as the year's "Best Friend" because of all of the time she spent helping others with their own studying.

But Andrea believes her success has less to do with how much she *knows* than it does with what she knows she must *do*. In other words, blessings come from following the Lord's counsel, not our own (see 2 Nephi 9:28–29). "It's not worth anything to be smart if we ignore God," she says. "You always have to put God first."

### The Other Test

Learning that principle as she studied for her college entrance exam was critical to the *other* test Andrea was taking—the test of life that everyone must take.

The Lord Himself explains this test in the scriptures: "We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them" (Abraham 3:25).

"Heavenly Father tests us to see what we will do," Andrea says, thinking back on the difficult schedule she had to keep and the teasing she sometimes had to endure. "To pass life's test, we have to be obedient," Andrea says.

And not just when things are going well but during the hard times too.

"The great test of life," said President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "is to see whether we will hearken to and obey God's commands in the midst of the storms of life."<sup>1</sup>

### No Test Is Too Much with Him

Often her two tests collided. That's when Andrea learned that putting God first was the secret to passing both tests.


Many times she had to choose between Church activities and school activities, between studying the gospel and studying for her test. She says she learned early on that she felt better if she chose Church first. It strengthened her testimony that Heavenly Father would help her with *her* concerns if her first concern was *Him*.

These experiences also taught Andrea another important lesson. "He is capable of helping me with the tests He has given me," she says.

Or as one of her heroes, Nephi, said, "I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them" (1 Nephi 3:7).

Andrea knows that even though she has passed her first test, there is a lot she must learn before she'll feel ready to pass the next.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM C. OLSON, EXCEPT AS NOTED; BACKGROUND: PHOTOGRAPHS BY CRAIG DIMOND



But she knows if she puts God first, He'll help her pass that test too. ■

**NOTE**

1. "Spiritual Preparedness: Start Early and Be Steady," *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 38.

### THE LORD'S TEXTBOOKS

As Andrea prepared for her big test, her math and science texts weren't the only books she studied.

"The scriptures are the Lord's textbooks," she says. "In the scriptures are the things God wants us to understand. We have to study the scriptures."

When she was discouraged, she didn't turn to her schoolbooks. "I read the Lord's texts to lift my spirits. When you're discouraged, reading the scriptures will help."

She especially learned to love the Book of Mormon. "It has changed my life," she says. "The examples of those people in the scriptures have really helped me."

The way Nephi trusted that God could help him get through his trials was a great example as Andrea has faced her own tests. "Nephi has helped me a lot," she says.

It was Nephi who said, "But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance" (1 Nephi 1:20).

To learn from Nephi's example of faith in the Lord, read the following verses: 1 Nephi 3:7; 4:1; 7:12; 9:6; 17:3, 50; 2 Nephi 4:19, 34.



Congratulations,  
Andrea, on a  
perfect test  
score!



# Keeping Scripture Study Alive

*As members throughout the Church can attest, there are many effective ways to study the scriptures.*

In an 1830 revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord invited, “Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me” (D&C 19:23). President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) reaffirmed this promise of peace and direction: “I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that no divine ear is listening and no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns.”<sup>1</sup>

Here members share their insights on some ways we can immerse ourselves in the scriptures.

## **Study the Prophets**

I have read the Book of Mormon many times, looking for different themes and teachings each time. This time I chose to approach it with the idea that I wanted to know more about the prophets of the Book of Mormon. When I began in 1 Nephi, I made notes on Lehi in six categories: teachings, personal characteristics, relationship with family, relationship with God, God’s relationship with him, and ways he received revelation. I then studied the same things with the next prophets, Nephi and Jacob. I am trying to identify the similar qualities of the men the Lord calls as prophets and to recognize each prophet’s key teachings.

*Deb Walden, California, USA*

LEHI AND HIS PEOPLE ARRIVE IN THE PROMISED LAND, BY ARNOLD FRIBERG

**N**ephi wrote, “My soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children” (2 Nephi 4:15).

### Ask Questions

I ask questions while I read. My questions fall into two categories. First, I try to understand the scripture and see how it might apply to my life. I ask questions like: What in my life is like this situation? What is the principle that is being taught? Why did the author include this? How can I apply this to my life right now? Second, I ask questions about things I am struggling with in my life: situations or problems for which I am searching for an answer. These could be anything from dealing with a family situation to making a career change. As I ask these questions, I may find I spend all of my scripture reading time on just a few verses as I try to listen to the Spirit and find what the Lord is trying to teach me. I have found that answers come when I read with questions in mind.

*Joanne Z. Jobanson, California, USA*

### Picture Yourself in the Scriptures

Whenever I approach the standard works, I do so with a purpose. I try to have the desire to search for something that would

be interesting and useful to me and to others. I find a place free of noise and conversation. I avoid distraction and banish thoughts that are not related to the scriptures. To do this I imagine the physical location where the events I am studying took place and live them as if I were a spectator. My concentration is such

that I completely withdraw from the world around me.

*Juan de Dios Sánchez, Dominican Republic*

### Keep a Scripture Journal

As I reflected on the times in my life when I was immersed in the scriptures, unvaryingly I was keeping a study journal in which I wrote impressions and scripture passages that inspired me. So I found a notebook and a pen and put them with my scriptures. At first, writing about what I read was a chore; it took too much time and effort. Really, I just wanted to have a spiritual snack and then move on with my daily work. But I persisted, and the scriptures came alive. I found myself thinking, dissecting passages, and applying them to my life. Simple phrases provided solutions to perplexing parenting problems. I soon found I could take notes, and it didn't really take any longer than reading alone. I have also found that as I reread past reflections, I find answers to current questions and concerns. It is as if the Lord gives me insight a couple of weeks before I need it.

*Erica Miller, Utah, USA*

### Start with a Prayer

It wasn't until I grasped the concept of praying before I started reading that I noticed a significant improvement in my understanding of the messages that were in the scriptures. I realized that fervent prayer before starting to read allowed the Holy Ghost to speak to my mind. A sincere prayer, stated with real intent to my Father in Heaven, allowed my spirit to commune with the Holy Ghost while I studied and pondered the scriptures. Over time I have found many answers to questions in the scriptures. By focusing my prayers on specific questions

### GO WITH A QUESTION

“Sometimes I go to the scriptures for doctrine. Sometimes I go to the scriptures for instruction. I go with a question, and the question usually is ‘What would God have me

do?’ or ‘What would He have me feel?’ Invariably I find new ideas, thoughts I have never had before, and I receive inspiration and instruction and answers to my questions.”

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “A Discussion on Scripture Study,” *Liahona*, July 2005, 8; *Ensign*, July 2005, 22.**



relative to my current situation and asking Heavenly Father to bless my mind with understanding, I am able to receive new insight into areas of concern in my life. As I earnestly seek guidance before I begin reading, I find situations in the scriptures that I can liken unto myself (see 1 Nephi 19:23).

*Jess Rudd, Washington, USA*

### **Look for the Teachings of the Savior**

While serving as a full-time missionary in the Chile Santiago West Mission, I gained valuable insight into scripture study and how to make it more effective for investigators and myself. One day while teaching a beautiful young family, I felt the clear impression to not only encourage them to read 3 Nephi 11 but to give them a purpose in reading. Rather than simply testifying that they would learn about the Savior's visit to the Americas, my companion and I challenged them to look for what the Savior taught, specifically the first thing He taught. In addition, we involved the children by describing the reading as a treasure hunt; as we did so, we had their undivided attention. With the children excited to help their parents find hidden treasures of truth in the Book of Mormon, we felt much more confident that the family would follow through with their commitment.

When we returned the following day, not only had the family read and not only had they discovered Christ's first teaching to the ancient American inhabitants, but they had outlined almost all of His teachings in the entire chapter. Even the children were excited.

*Ryan Gassin, Minnesota, USA*

### **Incorporate General Conference and Hymns**

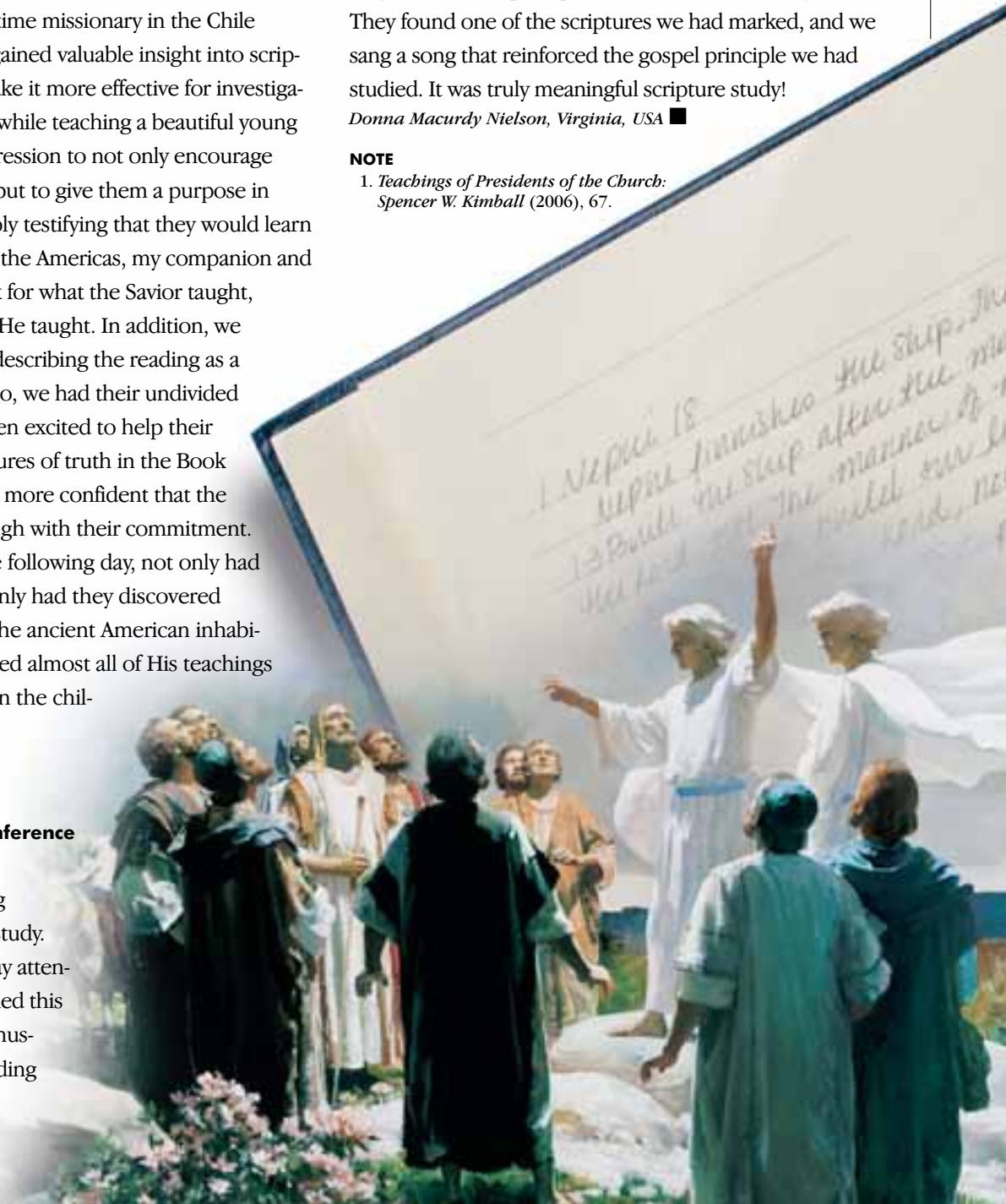
We had been struggling with our family scripture study. Getting our children to pay attention was difficult, so we tried this technique as a family. My husband and I took turns reading


general conference talks out loud to the family, and when we got to a scripture, we called it out. When our children found it, everyone marked it and then one of them read it. As we did so, our kids were poised on the edge of their seats, scriptures and pencils in hand. When we ended, they said, "Oh, please, can't we do just one more scripture?" We finished our scripture study by singing a hymn. As we got ready to sing the closing song, we showed our children how they could look up scriptures in the back of the hymnbook. They found one of the scriptures we had marked, and we sang a song that reinforced the gospel principle we had studied. It was truly meaningful scripture study!

*Donna Macurdy Nielson, Virginia, USA* ■

### **NOTE**

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 67.





**A**s her voice  
echoed from the  
church's high  
ceilings, tears began to  
flow as parishioners  
comprehended the hymn's  
comforting message.

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## *Hymn in a Cathedral*

By Collin Allan

**I**n September 2004 I traveled to the Netherlands with two of my grandchildren, Jim and Arianne, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Dutch liberation during World War II. We had been invited by the Dutch Historical Group to participate in the commemoration because my brother Evan, a co-pilot of a B-24

bomber, had died while helping with the liberation in 1944.

While there we traveled to Hommersum, just over the border into Germany, to attend a ceremony dedicating a plaque where my brother's plane had crashed. Father Gerard Thuring, one of the event organizers, and I spoke during the

ceremony, after which 17-year-old Arianne sang the U.S. national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner," and Jim, 15, helped raise the U.S. flag.

Afterward I told Father Thuring that we would like to attend the special liberation Mass the following day at his church in Oosterhaus. He welcomed our interest and invited us to attend. I then summoned the courage to suggest that Arianne, with whom I had consulted earlier, would be willing to sing at the meeting.

Surprised, he asked, "What will she sing?"

"I Am a Child of God,"<sup>1</sup> I told him.

This good and kind man thought for a moment and then said, "We are all children of God. Let's do it."

When we arrived for the liberation Mass early the next morning, the church was full. Partway through the program, Father Thuring invited Arianne to come up and sing. After escorting her to the front, he said,

“We will now hear a song from a Mormon girl from Utah.”

Without the benefit of music or accompaniment, Arianne began. As her voice echoed from the church’s high ceilings, tears began to flow as parishioners comprehended the hymn’s comforting message.

At the close of the meeting, many in the congregation expressed appreciation and love to Arianne for singing the hymn. The experience was a powerful reminder that all of us—regardless of race, religion, or language—are children of God. ■

**NOTE**

1. *Hymns*, no. 301.

## The Golden Contact I Couldn’t Remember

By Perry W. Carter

**W**hile going through my e-mails one morning, I noticed a name I could not place: Enrique Jorge Dias. The subject line read, “*Saludos* [greetings] from a golden contact.”

I had no idea what the message might be about, and I considered hitting the delete key. Curiosity got the best of me, however, and I opened it. It was written in Spanish.

As I read, I learned that when Enrique Dias was 18, he was living

in Adrogué, Argentina, where I served as a full-time missionary more than 30 years earlier. One morning as he was walking through the center of town, I stopped him and handed him a pamphlet about the First Vision. My companion and I, in accordance with instructions from our mission president, often spent mornings handing out pamphlets on the sidewalks of Adrogué. We probably spoke with hundreds of people, though we seldom got their names. Most of our conversations lasted no more than 30 seconds.

More than three decades later, there was no way I could remember speaking to a young man, but he remembered me. A few weeks before I received his

**M**ore than three decades later, there was no way I could remember handing a pamphlet to a young man on a sidewalk in Argentina.

e-mail, I had posted my name on the Argentine Mission Web page, where Brother Dias had found it.

In his e-mail he explained that he took the pamphlet home and showed it to his mother, who encouraged him to learn more about Joseph Smith. By the time he tried to find the missionaries a few months later, I had been transferred to a new area.

Enrique received the discussions

and was baptized and confirmed. I labored in Argentina for another 20 months but never heard anything about his baptism.

The brief conversation we had shared in the street that morning long ago had transformed his life and the lives of many others. Two years after his baptism he was called on a mission to northern Argentina. Afterward he married and



continued faithful in the Church, serving in a variety of callings, including bishop, counselor to two stake presidents, and high councilor. He added that his oldest son had served a mission in La Paz, Bolivia.

Words cannot express the joy that came to my heart from reading that e-mail message. My mission was filled with many gratifying moments, but this long-delayed news from Enrique Jorge Dias made all of my memories of serving as a missionary even sweeter. ■

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## Loaves and Testimonies

By Vida H. Liddell

**O**ne fast Sunday during Relief Society, a sister in our ward stood to bear her testimony. After stating that she had learned how much the Lord loves and cares about her, she shared the following experience.

She had been ill with pneumonia, and one morning she was having a particularly difficult time. Her appetite had diminished considerably, and the only thing she thought she could eat was some homemade bread. She was getting discouraged and had been praying for help to endure her trials.

That very morning her visiting teacher came to the door with a loaf

of homemade bread. The sister bore testimony of the love she had felt from Heavenly Father. He had heard her prayers and provided her with exactly what she needed.



As I listened, I realized that I was that visiting teacher. I thought back on that morning, trying to remember why I had decided to take bread over at that time. I hadn't heard a voice or felt a burning in the bosom. I just woke up that day and felt like making bread.

As I was preparing the loaves, I thought of a sister in our ward who was ill. I had felt helpless throughout her illness because I didn't know what I could do to relieve her suffering. The thought came to my mind that I should take her a loaf of bread. I tried to talk myself out of it because the loaves turned out somewhat

misshapen. But when I tasted one, it seemed fine. "At least she will know that I was thinking about her," I thought.

I wrapped the warm, odd-looking loaf, and took it to her house. As I presented it to her, she smiled and thanked me but refused my offer of further assistance. I went home feeling good but still concerned that I hadn't helped much.

Months later, when I heard her testimony, I understood that the Holy Ghost had prompted me in answer to her prayers. This experience taught me a great lesson about the importance of responding to the promptings of the Spirit. If an idea comes to us to do something good, we should do it. The Savior said, "Whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do good is of me; for good cometh of none save it be of me" (Ether 4:12).

Anytime we have a thought to do good, we can assume that it comes

from the Spirit. We never know how important such promptings can be. I had no idea that a loaf of homemade bread would be an answer to a prayer that would strengthen a testimony. And when the sister was prompted to share her experience in Relief Society, she had no idea of the valuable lesson I learned about recognizing the Spirit. ■

**I had no idea that a loaf of homemade bread would be an answer to prayer and would strengthen a testimony.**



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## Did I Really Know?

By Justin Geracitano

After an eventful evening in Australia in 1998, my best mate asked if I could give him a lift. On our way to his home, our conversation turned to our basic beliefs. He was an atheist, and I was a Latter-day Saint. I had always known that there was a God; he had always believed that there was no God.

That evening I did something I had never done before. Just before I dropped off my friend, I told him I know that God lives, that Jesus is our Savior, and that Joseph Smith saw Them in vision.

I had often talked about these things with him, but I had never told him that I knew them to be true. I realized, however, that if I were to leave him with a lasting impression, I would have to leave him with my testimony of these things.

As he opened the car door, he shook my hand and said, “Hey, man, that’s cool. We all need to be firm in our beliefs.”

The problem, however, is that I didn’t know—not really. At the time, it felt right to say those things, but I had never received a spiritual confirmation of their truthfulness.

I had a 20-minute drive home. Those 20 minutes changed my life. As I reviewed our conversation, I started to think about my life and the direction I was headed. While I was thinking, the hymn “I Know That My Redeemer Lives” came into my mind and penetrated my soul. I started to sing aloud:

**I** felt right bearing my testimony of these things, but I had never received a spiritual confirmation of their truthfulness.

*I know that my Redeemer lives.  
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!  
He lives, he lives,*

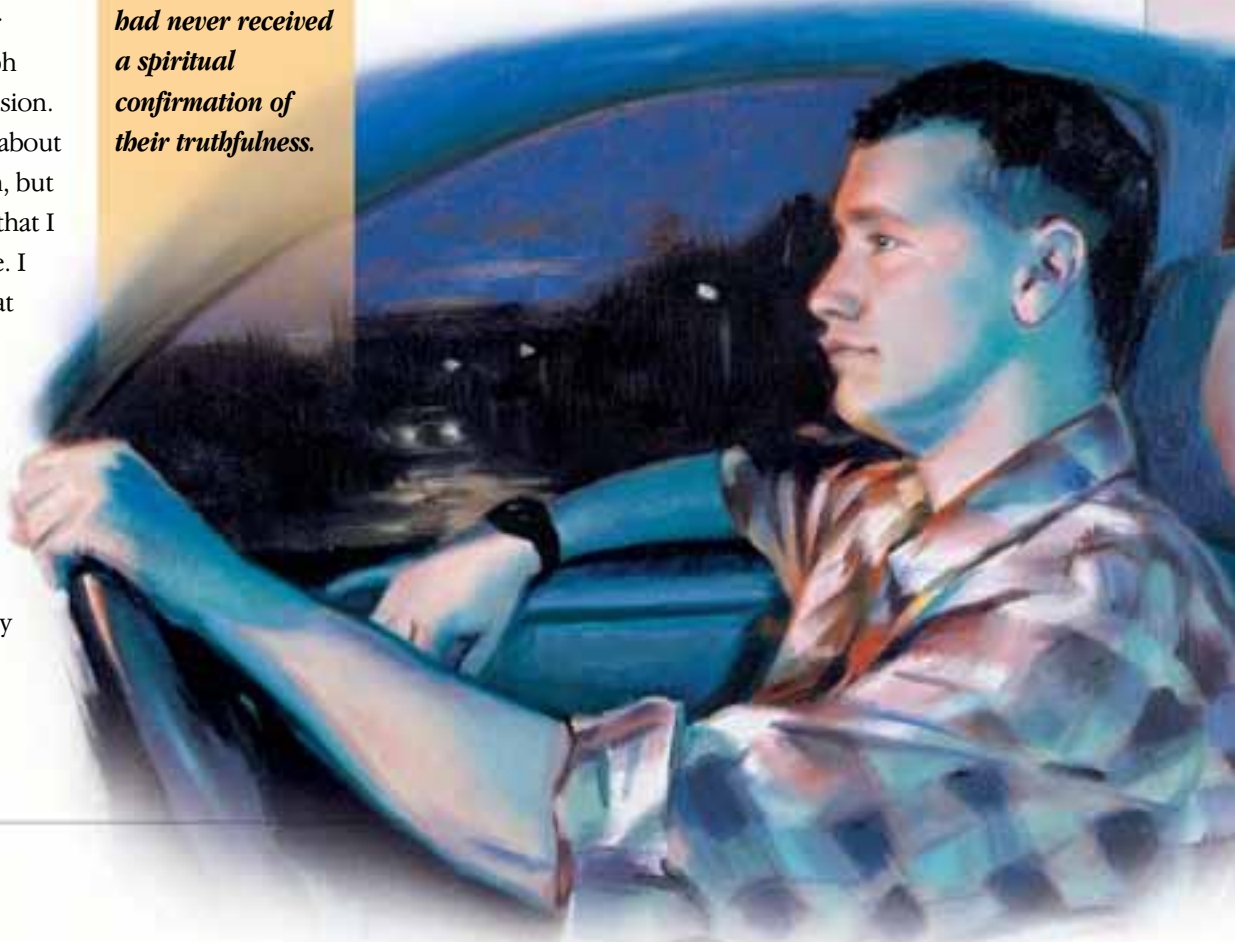
*who once was dead.  
He lives, my ever-living Head.<sup>1</sup>*

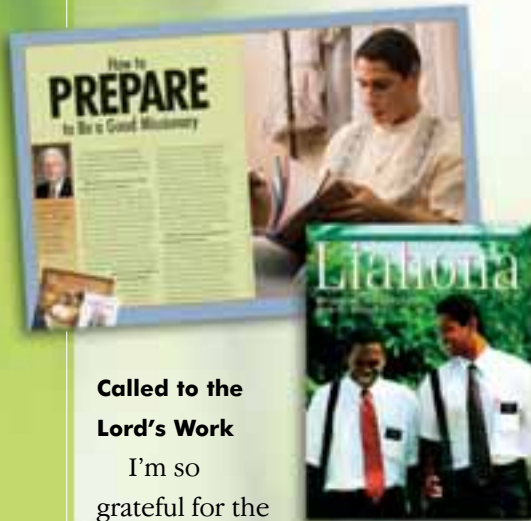
As I sang, tears came to my eyes as the Spirit witnessed to me the truthfulness of those words and confirmed that my testimony was true. I realized then that a testimony can be found in the bearing of it.<sup>2</sup>

I will never forget the Spirit witnessing to me the truthfulness of my testimony. I know that my Redeemer lives because the Spirit witnessed it to my soul—a witness I was happy to share a short time later as a full-time missionary. ■

### NOTES

1. Hymns, no. 136.
2. See Boyd K. Packer, “The Quest for Spiritual Knowledge,” *Liabona*, Jan. 2007, 18; *New Era*, Jan. 2007, 6.





### Called to the Lord's Work

I'm so grateful for the March 2007 *Liabona*, which talks about how to prepare to serve a full-time mission. Through its message I made a firm decision to serve a mission. A few months later I got my call. The articles in the *Liabona* helped me realize that now is the time the Lord has called me to assist Him in His work. The *Liabona* directs us to make the right decisions.

*Sister Juvy Sevilla, Philippines*

### It Touched My Heart

The *Liabona* is very dear to me; I cannot imagine going without it. In fact, it played an important role in my conversion 21 years ago. At that time the way families were presented to me in the articles impressed me tremendously: families praying together, families going to church together, families expressing their love. All of that touched my heart and helped me understand the gospel. Thank you all for the wonderful work you are doing.

*Beatrice Sunke, Switzerland*

### Strengthening Marriages

I have a friend who got married recently, and I gave her a *Liabona* magazine that talks about marriage and the sacred responsibility to love each other and care for each other. Even though my friend is not a member, she read the magazine with her husband, and she thanked me sincerely because it helped her strengthen her marriage. The *Liabona* brings blessings to both members and nonmembers.

*Beatriz de Guaigua, Venezuela*

### Heartfelt Thanks

I just want to express my heartfelt thanks to Heavenly Father and to the editors for providing the *Liabona* for us to receive His message in this part of the world. The *Liabona* has given me the confidence to stand bold at all times, even in the midst of my friends, to work to erase the negative thoughts they may have concerning the Church. Please keep on with the good work. I know the gospel will be spread to this part of the world.

*Asuquo Dominic Ekpenyong, Nigeria*

### The Best Magazine

I am a new member of the Church, and I have learned many things about the gospel from the *Liabona*. My roommates are very interested in the *Liabona*. They wait every month for it, even though they belong to a different religion. One of my friends said that this is the

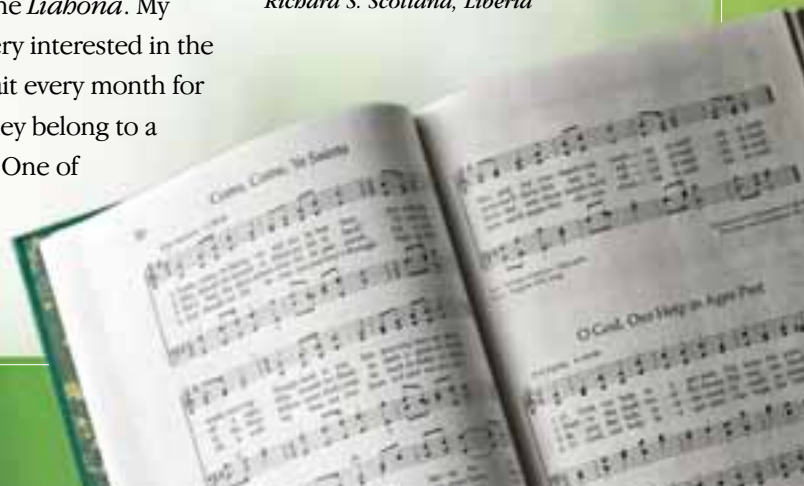
best magazine he has seen in his life. We were all very interested in the financial chart (see the "Budget Worksheet" in the *All Is Safely Gathered In* insert, Sept. 2007), and everyone promised to follow it, except instead of paying tithing, my roommates are planning on saving.

*Raja Salamon, India*

### Moved by a Hymn

While reading through the May 2007 issue of the *Liabona*, I was deeply moved by Elder Jay E. Jensen's talk, "The Nourishing Power of Hymns." I too have a strong testimony of the power of hymns. In February 2000, while listening to a local radio show, I heard a song I had never heard before. I not only enjoyed the flow of the music, but I also enjoyed the manner in which the group sang and the message the song carried. I later learned that this song was by a group called Latter-day Saints. I wanted to get the full text of this song. I decided I must visit this church. The first Sunday I attended, my first task was to get a hymnbook. There it was—hymn number 30, "Come, Come, Ye Saints." I was baptized a few months later.

*Richard S. Scotland, Liberia*



# the Friend



# The Most Powerful Motivating Force

BY PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF  
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

**O**ur motives and thoughts ultimately influence our actions. Let me share a personal experience from my own youth about the power of righteous motives.

After the turmoil of the Second World War, my family ended up in Russian-occupied East Germany. When I attended fourth grade, I had to learn Russian as my first foreign language in school. I found this quite difficult because of the Cyrillic alphabet, but as time went on I seemed to do all right.

When I turned 11, we had to leave East Germany overnight because of the political orientation of my father. Now I was going to school in West Germany, which was American-occupied at that time. There in school all children were required to learn English. To learn Russian had been difficult, but English was impossible for me. I thought my mouth was not made for speaking English. My teachers struggled. My parents suffered. And I knew English was definitely not my language.

But then something changed in my young life. Almost daily I rode my bicycle to the airport and watched airplanes take off and land. I read, studied, and learned everything I could find about aviation. It was my greatest desire to become a pilot. I could already picture myself in the cockpit of an airliner or in a military fighter plane. I felt deep in my heart that this was my thing!

Then I learned that to become a pilot I needed to speak English. Overnight, to the total surprise of everybody, it appeared as if my mouth had changed. I was



**President Uchtdorf teaches about righteous motivating forces in our lives.**

able to learn English. It still took a lot of work, persistence, and patience, but I was able to learn English!

Why? Because of a righteous and strong motive!

The testimony of the truthfulness of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is the most powerful motivating force in our lives. Jesus repeatedly emphasized the power of good thoughts and proper motives: “Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not” (D&C 6:36).

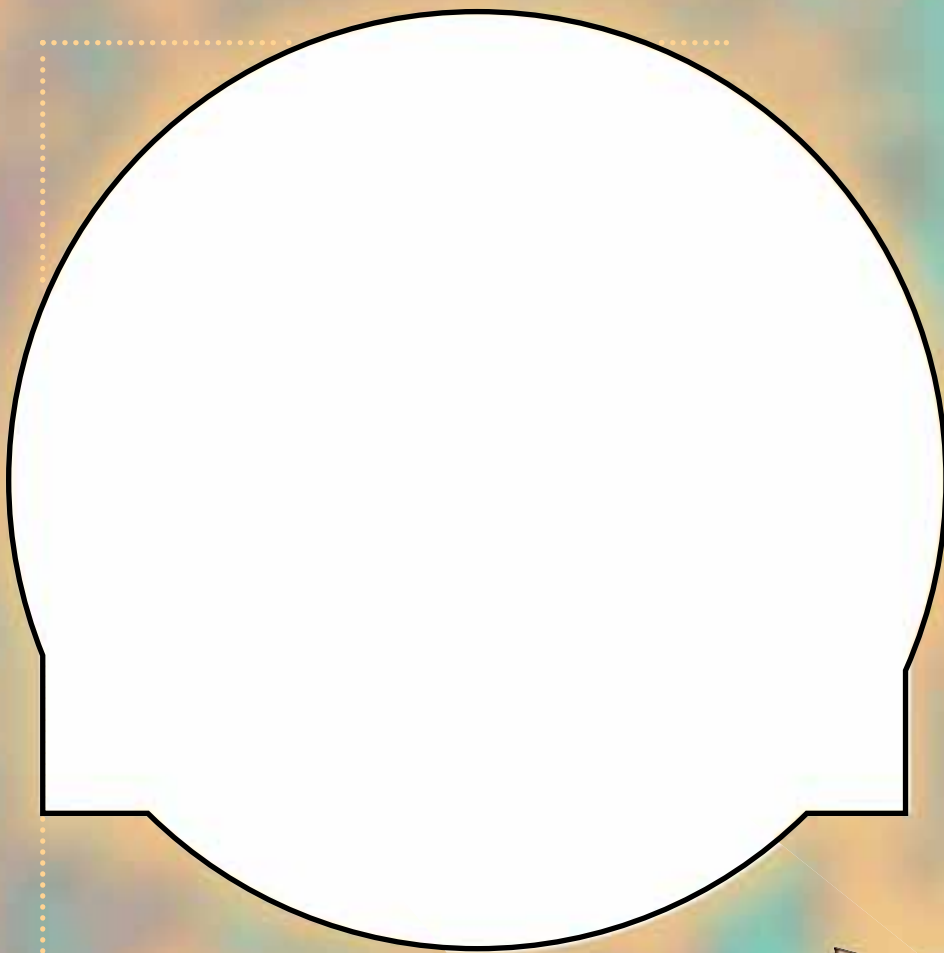
The testimony of Jesus Christ and the restored gospel will help us in our lives to learn of God’s specific plan for us and then to act accordingly. It gives us assurance of the reality, truth, and goodness of God, of the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, and of the divine calling of latter-day prophets. Our testimony motivates us to live righteously, and righteous living will cause our testimony to grow stronger. ●

*From an October 2006 general conference address.*

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- 1. After President Uchtdorf found out that he had to learn English to be a pilot, was it easy for him to learn the language? What changed so that he was able to learn it?**
- 2. What do you think makes a desire righteous or unrighteous? How was President Uchtdorf’s desire to learn English righteous?**
- 3. What can testimonies motivate us to do? How can you make your testimony the most powerful motivating force in your life?**





“Receive the Holy Ghost,  
ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5).



“If ye will enter in by the way, and  
it will show unto you all things what ye

**Activity**

Cut out the blank circle and the two halves of the divided circle. Glue each piece of the divided circle to the blank circle to complete the puzzle. Read the scripture, and think about how baptism and confirmation go together.

*Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org). For English, click on “Gospel Library.” For other languages, click on “Languages.”*

# The Kingdom Up on High

**“And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands” (D&C 68:27).**

BY LINDA CHRISTENSEN



*Jesus came to John the Baptist,  
In Judea long ago,  
And was baptized by immersion  
In the River Jordan's flow.*

*“To fulfill the law,” said Jesus,  
When the Baptist questioned why,  
“And to enter with my Father  
In the kingdom up on high.”*

*Now we know that we must also  
Witness faith in Jesus' word,  
Be baptized to show obedience,  
As was Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
 (“Baptism,” *Children's Songbook*, 100–101)*

McKenzie, age eight, has recently been baptized and confirmed. She said, “The best part of being baptized was when I went into the water. I felt pure, comfortable, excited, and happy.” Matthew, age seven, is looking forward to his baptism and confirmation. He said, “Men with the priesthood will put their hands on top of my head.”

Matthew and McKenzie understand that being baptized and confirmed is a commandment. They know that they need to follow Jesus's example so they can enter “the kingdom up on high” to live with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ someday (see 2 Nephi 31:17–18).

Complete the circle puzzle described on page F4 to remind you that being baptized by immersion, being confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost



are some of the most important things you will ever do.

## Sharing Time Ideas

1. Prepare the materials for the question-and-answer game found in Primary 3, lesson 11, p. 53.

Provide the questions and an item to toss for each class. Teach the children that it is a commandment to be baptized and confirmed (see D&C 68:27). Display Gospel Art Picture Kit 208 (John the Baptist Baptizing Jesus), and review the story of Jesus's baptism. Invite the children to share what they know about baptism and confirmation. Review the covenants made at baptism. Pass out the game to each class, and allow enough time for them to complete it. Share the story about a young girl who wanted to be baptized (see Primary 3, p. 53). Bear testimony of the importance of baptism and confirmation, and sing a song about baptism or the gift of the Holy Ghost.

2. Write the word *Remember* on the chalkboard. Invite the children to share things they think are important to remember. Add the words *Jesus Christ* so that the chalkboard reads, *Remember Jesus Christ*. Invite the children to share why they think it is important to remember Jesus Christ. Explain that you are thinking of an important way to remember Jesus Christ. Share three or four simple clues to help the children guess that you are thinking of the sacrament. Display Gospel Art Picture Kit 603 (Blessing the Sacrament) and 604 (Passing the Sacrament). Invite the children to share what they know about the sacrament. Read the sacrament prayers (see D&C 20:77, 79), and ask the children to listen for the word *remember*. Discuss what occurs in sacrament meeting to prepare for the sacrament and why it is important to be reverent. Review the covenants made at baptism, and help the children understand that during the sacrament we have the opportunity to renew the covenants we have made. Conclude by role-playing situations where understanding baptismal covenants can help the children make good choices. ●



FROM THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

# Miracles along Joseph's Journey



In the spring of 1832, Joseph and other Church leaders traveled to Missouri to visit and teach the Latter-day Saints living there. After finishing their work, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Newel K. Whitney boarded a stagecoach to return to Ohio.

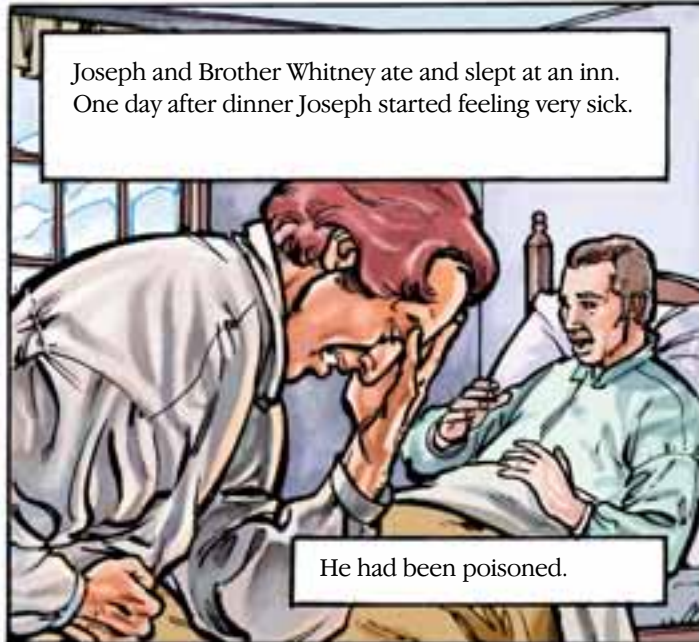
It is good to rejoice with the people of God.

While traveling at full speed, the horses pulling the stagecoach got scared. Brother Whitney tried to jump, but his coat got stuck, and he caught his foot in the wheel. He broke his leg and his foot. Joseph jumped out of the coach unhurt.



Brother Rigdon traveled ahead while Joseph stayed with Brother Whitney for four weeks and took care of him while he recovered.

Joseph and Brother Whitney ate and slept at an inn. One day after dinner Joseph started feeling very sick.



He had been poisoned.





Brother Whitney gave Joseph a blessing.



Joseph was healed immediately, even though the poison was very powerful. He knew Heavenly Father had blessed him.

Thanks be to my Heavenly Father.

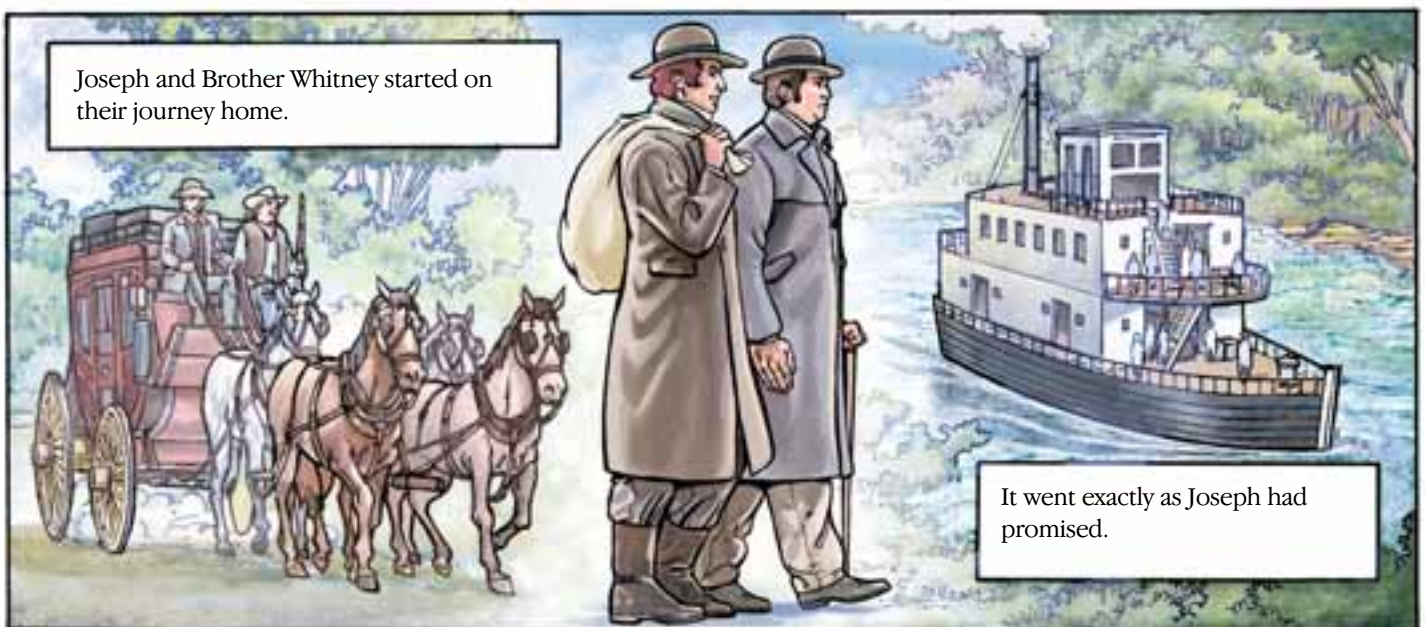


Though Brother Whitney had not moved from his bed for nearly four weeks, Joseph asked him to start traveling again the next morning. Joseph promised him that the journey would go well.

If you agree to start for home, we will take a wagon to the river, and there will be a ferryboat waiting to take us across.

Then we will find another boat waiting for us, and we will have a prosperous journey home.

I will go.



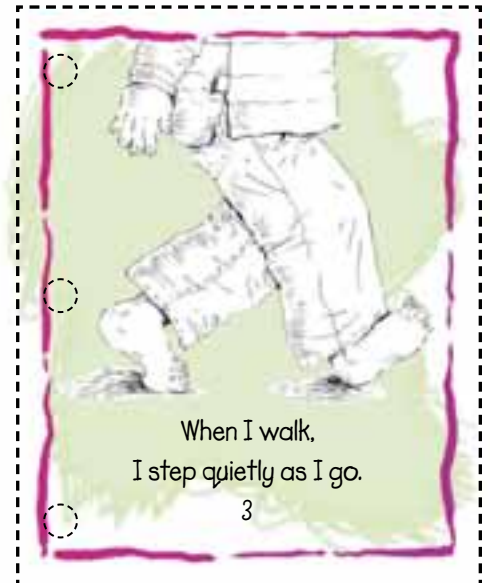
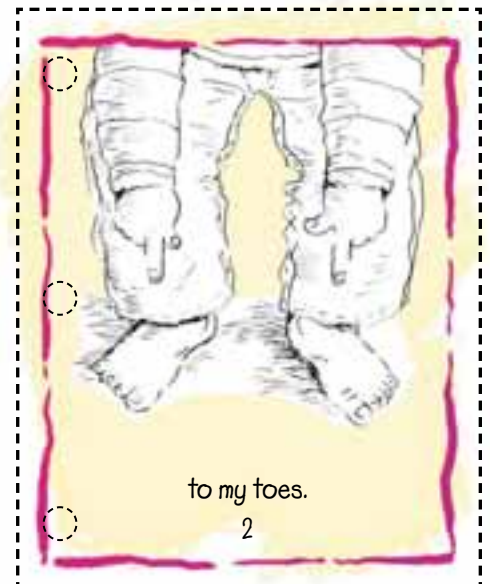
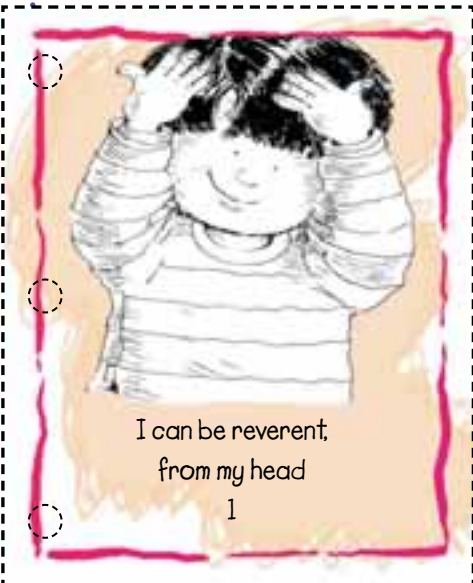
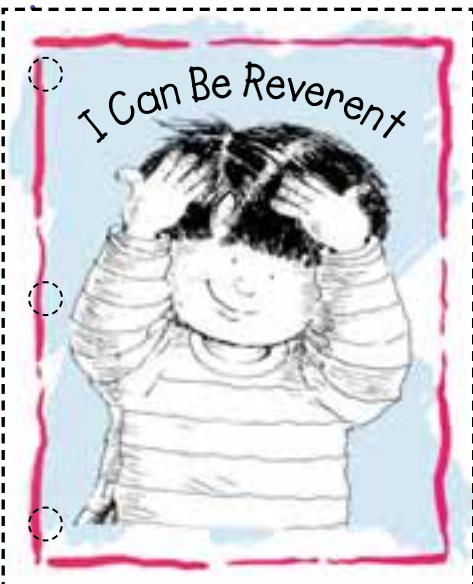
Joseph and Brother Whitney started on their journey home.

It went exactly as Joseph had promised.

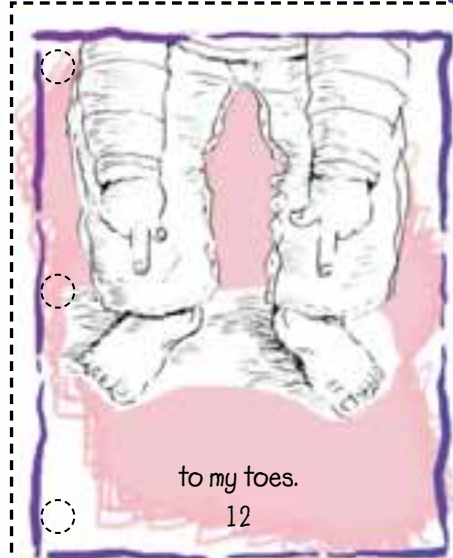
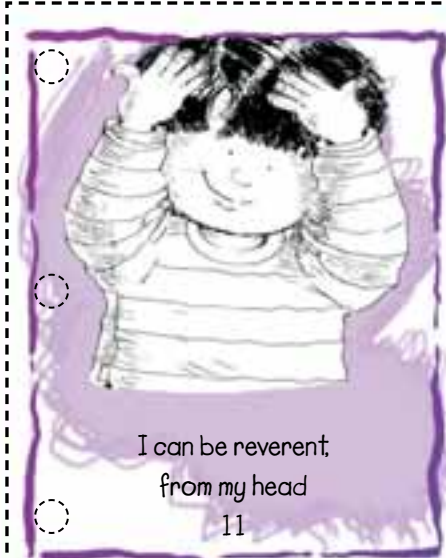
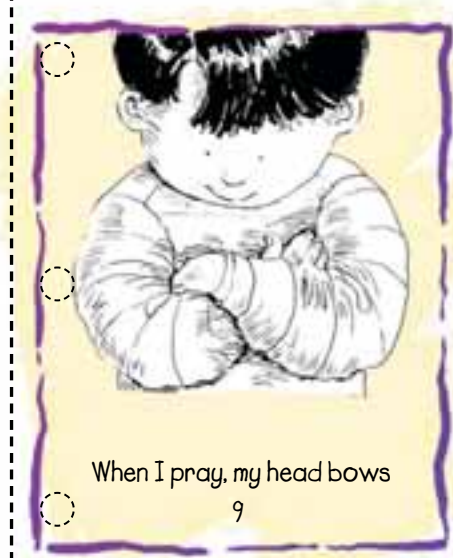
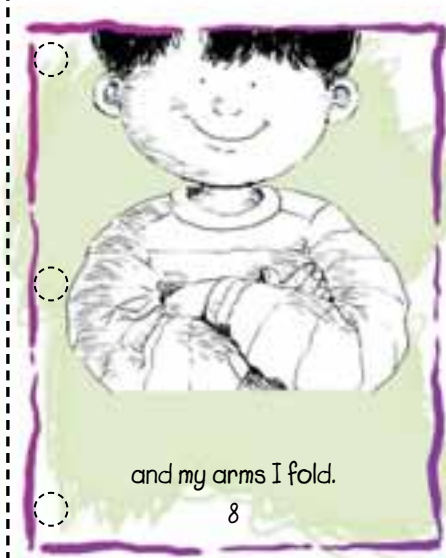
# I CAN BE REVERENT

By Diana Eckersell Janson

**Instructions:** Color these two pages, and mount them on heavy paper. Cut out the picture pages on the broken lines. Punch holes along the sides of the pages as marked. Place the picture pages on top of each other in order, with the title page on top. Line up the holes, and tie your book together with ribbon or yarn.



*Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org). For English, click on "Gospel Library." For other languages, click on "Languages."*



# Next Time I'll Listen!

*"Put your trust in that Spirit which  
leadeth to do good" (D&C 11:12).*

BY SUNNY McCLELLAN MORTON

Based on a true story

**A**lmost finished,” Manuel whispered. He glanced down at the box under his arm. Nearly all the candy was sold. Now his box held an envelope filled with money.

As the sun beat down on Manuel’s head, he thought of home and his mother and grandmother waiting there. He smiled to think of how happy they were lately. Manuel felt the same happiness, and he knew why—they were all going to be baptized next Sunday.

“Get out of the way!” someone suddenly yelled from behind Manuel. Four boys on bikes raced by as Manuel jumped into the gutter.

Manuel had seen those boys earlier, riding on the opposite sidewalk. A thought had crossed his mind: stay away from those boys. But as they pedaled away, Manuel had relaxed and forgotten about them. Now the feeling returned even stronger. Still, he wanted to finish selling the candy, so he kept going.

Manuel had just sold the last of the candy when the boys returned. One of them grabbed his shoulder as he rode by. The box slipped from under Manuel’s arm, and another boy whizzed past and grabbed it. “No!” Manuel cried. He watched sadly as they carried off his box of hard-earned money.

That evening, Manuel heard a knock at his bedroom door. “Manuel! Please come out!” His mother sounded worried.

“I told you, Mamá, I don’t feel well.”

“But the missionaries are here to see us.”

Manuel got to his feet, took a deep breath, and squared his shoulders.

“*Hola*, Manuel,” Sister Santos said as Manuel joined his family in the living room.

Usually Manuel listened carefully to the missionaries. But tonight he was thinking about the boys and the box of money. He wished he had run away the first

time he had seen them. But how was he supposed to know what to do? Would he ever feel safe walking down the street again? He frowned and started listening to the lesson.

“The Holy Ghost is a messenger from Heavenly Father,” Sister Santos said. “He can guide and inspire our thoughts. He can help us make good choices and warn us of danger.”

Manuel looked up. “What do you mean?”

“Well, have you ever had a strong thought come into your head?” Sister Santos asked. “Maybe it was a prompting to do something. Maybe it just seemed like a great idea.”

Manuel’s eyes widened as he remembered the strong feelings he’d had earlier about getting away from the boys on bikes. “I think it happened today,” he said slowly.

The missionaries looked at him with interest. So did Manuel’s mother and grandmother. He told them about the boys and the stolen box.

“Oh, Manuel, I’m so sorry,” his mother whispered. “That’s why you’ve been so upset this evening. Later I want you to tell me more about those boys. Maybe we can get your money back.”

“I’m sorry too,” Sister Santos said. “But I think you are right. That was probably the Holy Ghost you felt inside.” She paused. “You will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost after your baptism when you are confirmed. That means you will be able to have and feel those messages a lot more often. As you stay worthy, the Holy Ghost can be your constant companion. How do you feel about that?”

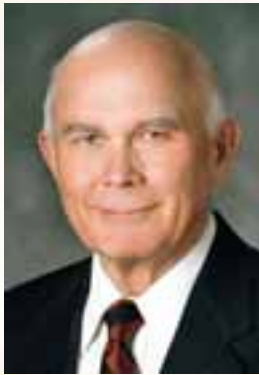
A relieved smile crossed Manuel’s face. “Much better!” he said. “I was starting to think I would always be afraid to walk outside. But if the Holy Ghost will warn me again, like He did today, I’ll be fine.” He grinned at his mother. “Because the next time the Holy Ghost speaks to me, I’m going to listen!” ●



“The Spirit of the Lord can be our guide and will bless us with direction, instruction, and spiritual protection during our mortal journey.”

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “That We May Always Have His Spirit to Be with Us,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2006, 31.**

# How can I be spiritually protected?



*Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares some of his thoughts on this subject.*

**Repent of your sins each week and renew your covenants by partaking of the sacrament with clean hands and a pure heart.**

**Hold fast to the scriptures, whose teachings protect us against evil.**



**Keep the commandments, pray for guidance, and attend church and partake of the sacrament each Sunday.**



**Never do anything to drive away the Spirit.**

**You have been taught righteousness and assured of its truth, so stay with it.**



**We must never take things into our bodies or do things with our bodies that drive away the Spirit of the Lord and leave us without our spiritual protection against deception.**

*From "Be Not Deceived," Liahona and Ensign, Nov. 2004, 45-46.*



ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT

**I WILL SHOW MY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST BY BEING BAPTIZED AND CONFIRMED**

“And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands” (D&C 68:27).

# Pablo's Practice

*Children all over the world pray, sing Primary songs, and learn about the gospel—just like you! This month let's meet Pablo Chiroy of Ciudad Vieja, Guatemala.*

**P**ablo Chiroy can't wait to be a missionary, so he's practicing now. He loves going to church and learning about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ; he rides his bike every chance he gets; and he's already sharing the gospel with his friends and neighbors in Ciudad Vieja.

#### **Pablo's Baptism**

When Pablo turned eight, he was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church. He was grateful his





father was there because Pablo was not only excited, but he was a little nervous too.

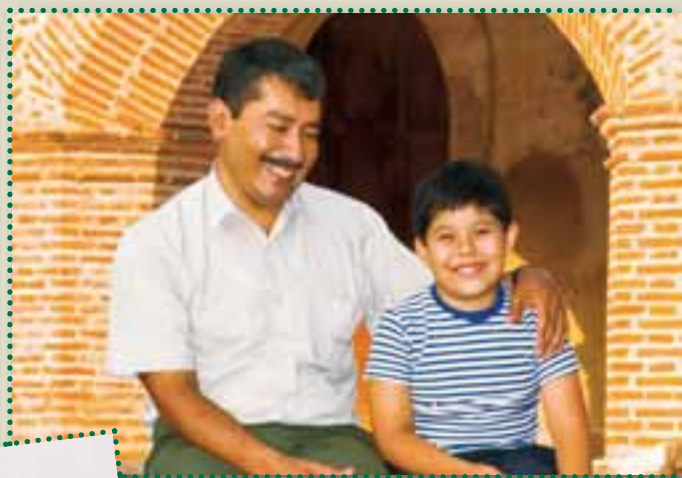
“I was a little afraid I would drown,” he says. But of course he didn’t. And afterward he felt something new. “I felt good—different.”

It was such a good feeling that he wanted to share it with others.

### **Pablo’s Missionary Work**

When the missionaries asked Pablo’s family to help them find people to teach, Pablo took one of their pamphlets. The next morning on the way to school he gave it to his friend’s mother at the bus stop.

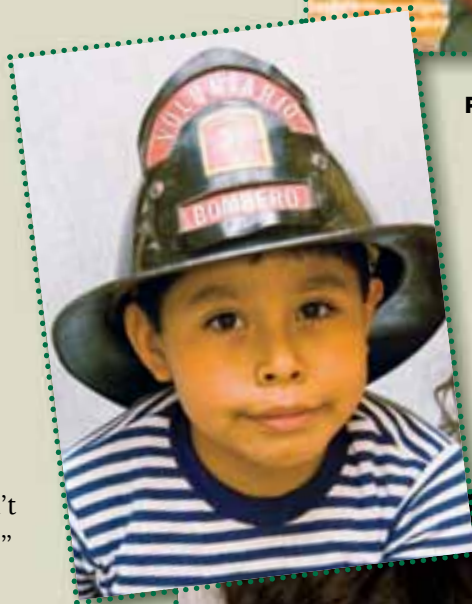
“He asks her every morning if she has read it,” says his father. “I’m sure he won’t give up until she has.”



### **Pablo’s Guatemala**

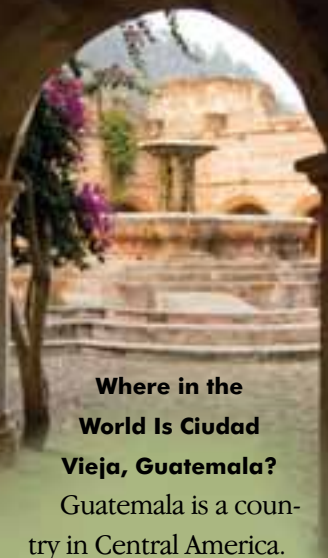
Pablo loves to visit new places and see interesting things. Lucky for him he lives in a very interesting place.

Pablo lives just outside Antigua Guatemala, a city whose name means “Old Guatemala.” The city is almost 500 years old. Because the people have



***Pablo Chiroy and his family live near Antigua Guatemala, a city with many old buildings. Pablo loves to sing hymns and hopes to become a volunteer firefighter like his father (above).***





**Where in the World Is Ciudad Vieja, Guatemala?**

Guatemala is a country in Central America. Spanish is the official language, but there are more than 50 different languages spoken by the native people. More than 200,000 Latter-day Saints live in Guatemala.

Ciudad Vieja was one of the early capitals of Guatemala before the government moved just three miles (5 km) away to Antigua (shown above and below).



preserved the beautiful old Spanish colonial-style buildings, tourists from all over the world now visit Antigua.

Pablo gets to see all of the interesting things where he lives, and his parents work as tour organizers, taking people to interesting places in Guatemala. Pablo loves it when his parents let him go with them. "I like to travel with my family," he says.

**Pablo's Family**

Pablo's family loves being together. They especially enjoy singing together



for family home evening.

Pablo has two younger sisters: six-year-old Andrea and two-year-old Sofia. He says, "We get along, sometimes good and sometimes bad."

But he tries to be a good big brother and plays with them. Andrea likes that. They look up to him just as he looks up to his father.

Pablo's dad serves as a volunteer firefighter, and Pablo hopes that after he has helped people as a missionary, he'll get to help people as a firefighter someday too. ●

**Above: Pablo likes to play with his tops. Right: He and his parents, Jorge and Claudia, and his younger sisters, Andrea and Sofia, live in a valley surrounded by volcanoes (below).**



**Pablo's Favorites**

- Playing with his tops
- Singing "Called to Serve"
- Riding his bike
- Traveling with his family
- Playing fútbol (soccer)
- Reading (especially the scriptures and the *Liabona*)
- Eating chocolate ice cream





**Nephi's Broken Bow, by Jeremy Winborg**

*“And it came to pass that as I, Nephi, went forth to slay food, behold, I did break my bow, which was made of fine steel; and after I did break my bow, behold, my brethren were angry with me because of the loss of my bow, for we did obtain no food” (1 Nephi 16:18).*



**L**ike many Church members around the world, Italian Latter-day Saints are pioneers in creating multiple-generation families joined in gospel covenants. These Church members face old traditions and pervasive secularism in the surrounding culture, but they focus on the Savior and try to build faith that will thrive in the hearts of their posterity. See “Family Faith,” p. 28.