

I CAN DO THIS!

It was evening during the Christmas season, and a heavy blanket of snow lay on the ground. For months my companion and I had braved the cold German weather, knocked on doors, and handed out copies of the Book of Mormon. Even then, 15 years after World War II had ended, many Germans were wary of Americans.

But that night Ingeborg Bienmuller was to be baptized. On the long bus ride to the United States Air Force base, however, she was quiet. I sensed her growing feeling of distress.

As we approached the bus stop, Ingeborg turned to us and said, “Do

you know how difficult this is for me? The Allied forces killed my husband in the war, and bombing raids killed many other family members.”

She touched her leg. “I was hit with shrapnel from a sulfur bomb. My leg will never heal. I don’t know if I can go in there.”

We sat silent as her words sunk in and the bus came to a stop. Ingeborg sat rigid. My heart pounded. I prayed she wouldn’t turn away in fear.

She then rose from her seat and declared, “Heavenly Father has given me a testimony of the truthfulness of the Restoration. I know the Book of

Mormon is true. I can do this! Elder Atkin, please help me walk.”

We made the long walk to the gate, Ingeborg’s breath coming hard as we passed the guards. We changed into our white clothing and found the pool at the base. The pool became a sacred place, and peace settled over us. The distress on Ingeborg’s face changed to joy as she stepped into the water and was baptized a member of the Church.

“The night the elders left a Book of Mormon with me, I was thrilled,” she told us as we rode home. “I stayed up reading until I came to Mosiah 18, where Alma invites the people to be baptized: ‘Behold, here are the waters of Mormon . . . and now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, . . . what have you against being baptized?’” (Mosiah 18:8, 10).

She softly continued, “I fell asleep reading those words, and I had a dream. I was standing near a beautiful body of water like the Waters of Mormon. On the other side of the water stood people dressed in white—my family! My husband, who had been killed in the war, was smiling and beckoning me to be baptized.”

That night Sister Bienmuller became a member of the Würzburg Branch and one of the many in Germany who eventually overcame their fears and joined the Church. ■

Roy Atkin, California, USA

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