

It's Not Easy

. . . being the only member in my family. But I'm really not alone.

BY KELLI WILLIAMS

I grew up in the Methodist Church. Even though my family usually attended church only on Christmas and Easter, I always knew I had a Father in Heaven. My brother and I used to pray with my mom. What my parents taught me as a child prepared me for what I would learn in the future.

In sixth grade I learned that my parents were getting divorced. I was heartbroken and felt very alone. My friend Courtney could relate to me because her parents divorced when she was a little girl. She became my best friend.

Courtney and I were sitting on my bed talking when she first introduced the Church to me. She didn't go into detail about it. She just asked me if I wanted to attend church with her on Sunday. I started going to church with her every once in a while, and then I went every Sunday. After I turned 12, I even attended Mutual. There was something there. I didn't know what it was, but I enjoyed it.

In seventh grade Courtney and another good friend, Aubrey, introduced me to the missionaries. I soon learned what the missionaries meant when they talked about feeling the Spirit. I knew the Church was true after the second discussion.

Despite my testimony of the gospel, I was scared to death to ask my parents if I could be baptized. I continued to go to church and have incredible testimony-building experiences, but I put off the "big question" for two years.

In my freshman year of high school, I enrolled in seminary, and by November I knew I had to ask. I talked with my mom. She told me the Church had only made changes in me for the better, and if being baptized was what I really wanted, then I should go ahead and do it. My first



thought was, "Why in the world did I wait so long?"

Then I called my dad, but he wasn't very excited. When I asked him if I could be baptized, he said no. He said he wanted me to attend some other churches first. So I went to some other churches, and I met some amazing people—people who lived very righteous lives. But nothing could change the feeling I felt when I stepped

into a Latter-day Saint chapel. In February I called my dad and said, "I'm getting baptized on March 7th. I hope you'll be there."

My whole family came, including my dad. To have my family there meant the world to me. It was the most incredible day of my life.

Sometimes people ask me: "How do you do it? How do you stay so strong in the Church all by yourself? You don't have anyone to wake you up and make you go to church or seminary. You're all alone."

Well, the answer is simple. I'm not alone. I have had my struggles since my baptism—it's not easy being the only Church member in my family. But the Lord has promised that He will never leave us alone (see John 14:16–18). Heavenly Father loves us so much that He sent Christ to die for us. How could He forget us?

Life is hard, and we have all gone through times when we have felt that our strength is gone and our faith is weak. But if we will cling to the One who loves us the most—Heavenly Father—and strengthen our relationship with Him through study and prayer, we will make it through. The Lord promised: "I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up" (D&C 84:88). ■

