

A YOUNG MISSIONARY

By Laukau Mokofisi

It was my best friend's birthday, and she was turning 13. I rushed to find a present for her before school, but I couldn't find anything. Then I saw the Book of Mormon. I decided to challenge myself by giving it to her as a gift. I felt good inside but sort of scared because I had never given anyone the Book of Mormon before. I was afraid she might not accept it.

When I arrived at school, I looked for her and told her that I had a special book for her. She took the book and saw a picture of my family in the front. I told her that it was the Book of Mormon, a book that tells the truth of why we are here on earth. I also told her that I was sorry for not giving her a better gift.

She looked me in the eye and said it was the greatest thing I could have given her. Her words touched my heart, and I nearly cried. I felt like a missionary already! I can't wait until I'm old enough to go on a mission so I can share the gospel with other people like my friend. ■

SEARCHING FOR A FAVORITE HYMN

By Michael Paul Inyang

Our mission president had been admonishing the missionaries in the Ghana Accra Mission to "stay focused." He was famous for using this phrase. At one of our zone conferences, he suggested ways we could do this, and a key point in his list was having a favorite hymn.

He told us to select a favorite hymn, memorize it, and sing it at times we may be tempted or down. This statement echoed in my memory throughout the day.

I was homesick. Nobody in my family had written to me recently, and I felt depressed. I had been less focused.

This was the moment I needed to select a hymn to uplift my spirit. I was familiar with many hymns in our green hymnbook, but which did I love the most?

That night, I took an old hymnbook and flipped through the dog-eared pages, searching for a hymn that had a comforting meaning to me. Immediately, I had an idea. Elder Sheldon F. Child of the Seventy, then Africa West Area President, had visited our group in the missionary training center and spoken about the Atonement. He concluded, "If all you young missionaries understood the Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, there would be no need of mission rules."

That was the kind of hymn I needed. I was no longer confused. If I had a hymn about the Atonement, I would feel the love of my Savior, be comforted, and stay focused on what He wants me to do.

I finally chose hymn number 136, "I Know That My Redeemer Lives."

Today I am grateful to my mission president for his wise counsel. Now I have a favorite hymn memorized, which I ponder always and remember to sing in times of depression, trials, and difficulties. "I know that my Redeemer lives. What comfort this sweet sentence gives. . . . He lives to bless in time of need." ■

