

That Book Made Me Curious

I stared at the Book of Mormon and pondered the message the missionaries had taught.

By Wilfredo Valenzuela

One day my friends and I got together to celebrate. At my friend's house, we were talking, drinking, and smoking. But one of my friends, Patrick, didn't join in. I then realized that Patrick never tried any of the stuff the rest of us did; I remembered that he was a Mormon.

As it got late, everybody separated except Patrick and me. We left together in a jeepney. Still wondering why Patrick didn't join in, I thought back to a day four years before, when we were 16. I remembered we were walking in the street near our school when I told him I wanted to be a priest someday.

"In our church you could already be a priest," Patrick replied. "You just need to be ordained. Then when you turn 19, you can preach the gospel as a missionary."

"That's ridiculous," I said, thinking he didn't know much about the gospel. "How can a 19-year-old preach to people? Priests take a lot of time to study so they can preach."

Patrick insisted that 19-year-olds in his church could preach. He told me that his



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church also has another book of scripture, and he gave me a copy. I browsed through it at home, and I felt something mysterious in that book. But I didn't really care about it; I just stuck it in a box, where it lay for the next four years.

Now, as we rode in the jeepney after the party, I asked Patrick where he was going. "I'm meeting some friends. They're elders—missionaries." I remembered having seen them around. I asked Patrick if he would take me to the elders so I could ask them some questions about their church.

We met up with the missionaries at a store near their subdivision, and they greeted us by shaking our hands. It was very

formal. But after they introduced themselves to me, I realized they seemed like any other guys. They wanted to set up an appointment to answer my questions.

"OK, I'll just get your number so if I'm available, I will text you," I replied. I wasn't really planning to text them.

When I got home, I got the book Patrick had given me four years before—something about it made me curious. The next morning I texted the missionaries to teach me. They started with the Restoration of the gospel. It sounded so different, and I told myself, "Why

do people want to restore things when they know that older generations are different than our generation now?”

After two discussions I decided not to pursue them anymore. When asked why, I replied, “I’m just not interested anymore.” One week passed. I sat staring at the Book of Mormon, pondering the message I had been taught. I started to read what the missionaries told me to in 3 Nephi 11. I read that Jesus went to another nation to show that He was the Savior and Messiah. In 3 Nephi 15, I recognized one passage that I had read before in the Bible, in John 10:16. It was something the missionaries hadn’t even taught me yet.

Tears fell down my face, and I found myself weeping in my room. I realized the love Jesus Christ has for us. He loves us so much that He gave His own life to save us from our sins. I didn’t hesitate to pray, asking to know if the Book of Mormon I was holding is true. Praying in my room, all alone, I suddenly felt that somebody was there listening to me.

My heart was softened by the impressions I had received. I stood up and said, “This is the true Church. I know that this is the Church that Jesus Christ restored.”

The day before my baptism, I repeated the process of praying. Again what I had heard and felt sank into my heart, and I knew the Holy Ghost had revealed the truth to me. I knew the truth that Jesus is the Christ. I felt in my heart and mind that I desired to be baptized, believing that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ I could be cleansed.

Jesus Christ atoned for our sins, and this is the very reason I was converted. I know that He was the only one who has the power and the authority to rebuild His Church in our dispensation. Now as a missionary serving in the Philippines Cagayan de Oro Mission, I am doing the best I can to help people feel the great happiness I have now. ■

Would you like to share how you gained or strengthened your testimony? We welcome articles about faith-promoting experiences. You can e-mail your story to liahona@ldschurch.org. Please put “How I Know” in the subject line.