

# THINGS WILL WORK OUT



**By Elder Erich W. Kopischke**  
Of the Seventy

*Have faith and trust in the Lord,  
and He will provide.*

I was born in Germany to good, caring parents who were members of the Church. During World War II, when my father was 10 years old, he was introduced to the gospel by a friend in Stettin, which is now part of Poland. Because of the war, there were no missionaries in Stettin at that time. After he accepted the gospel, my father taught his family, and they were converted. He later met my mother, who was also living in East Germany. There were no missionaries there either. My father taught my mother the gospel, and she accepted it. They were married and then moved to West Germany shortly before I was born.

In Germany at that time, there were not many members of the Church. At school I was the only member. At a young age I gained a strong testimony that God lives and that this is His true Church. I never doubted the truthfulness of the gospel. I held on to this testimony, and it helped me stay active through my youth.

## **Fear of Falling Away**

I had two friends my age who were also active in the Church. They were brothers, and we grew up together. However, I could see them only on Sunday because we lived almost

25 kilometers away from each other. We saw each other during priesthood meeting and Young Men activities. Even though we saw each other only once a week, being good friends helped all three of us stay active in the Church.

Later I noticed that many of the older youth became less active in the Church, and I had an absolute fear that one day I might lose my testimony. There were so few youth in the Church in Germany in those days that when they became less active, their absence was noticeable. It was frightening for my parents. They had given up everything to raise their children in religious freedom, and now they were thinking, “What can we do so that we will not lose Erich?”

One day when I was about 14 years old, my family was driving home from church. We had noticed, once again, that some of the youth had turned their backs on the Church. I said to my parents, “I want you to drag me to church until I am 21 years old, and then I will take care of myself!” I really told them that, and my mother often repeated it to me.

## **An Education Decision**

This concern explains why, when I was about 10 years old and attending primary school, my parents made a decision. In Germany you start a higher-education path

at a young age. My parents decided not to allow me to go into higher education because they had seen many young people leave the Church while attending these schools at that time. They said, “You can go anywhere, but not to the *Gymnasium* [university-track school], because we don’t want to lose you to the world!”

That decision meant that I received a basic education and later a vocational education; for me, that meant a degree in business. This limited many of my professional possibilities. I completed my training when I was 18 years old and was called to serve as a missionary in Munich, Germany. I loved being a missionary.

When I finished my mission, I

found myself without a lot of career options. I had finished my education. Two years after my mission, I married my wife, Christiane, and there was no chance for me to gain a university education. There was a moment when I felt sad about my parents’ decision because I felt so limited.

Then a thought came to me: “Whatever my parents did, they did to protect me. They did it out of love, and it will *not* be a disadvantage for me.” Even though at times it seemed to be a disadvantage in a worldly sense, I could now understand that it would never be a real disadvantage. I decided to make a career in the insurance business, and I later became an executive in the company where I worked.

One challenge for me was that I had always wanted to be a teacher, and you cannot be a teacher in Germany without a university education. However, I eventually did become a teacher—a religion teacher. I became a teacher for the Church Educational System. And in a manner of speaking, that is what I am now—a teacher. So I gained a testimony that it is worthwhile to listen to your parents, to follow their counsel, and to trust that they love you, pray for you, and know what is best for you. The desire to stay active in the Church was so strong on my part and the desire to protect me was so strong on my parents’ part that everything did come together for my good.

## SEARCHING IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

**W**hen you are young, you have questions, and your friends and others question what you are doing. One of the answers to those questions is in Moroni 7:19, where Mormon teaches us: “Search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.”

That is a wonderful scripture. The Light of Christ is our conscience; it is a gift to every child of our Heavenly Father. We should think constantly about things that are good, and we should cleave to those things and condemn them not. I have

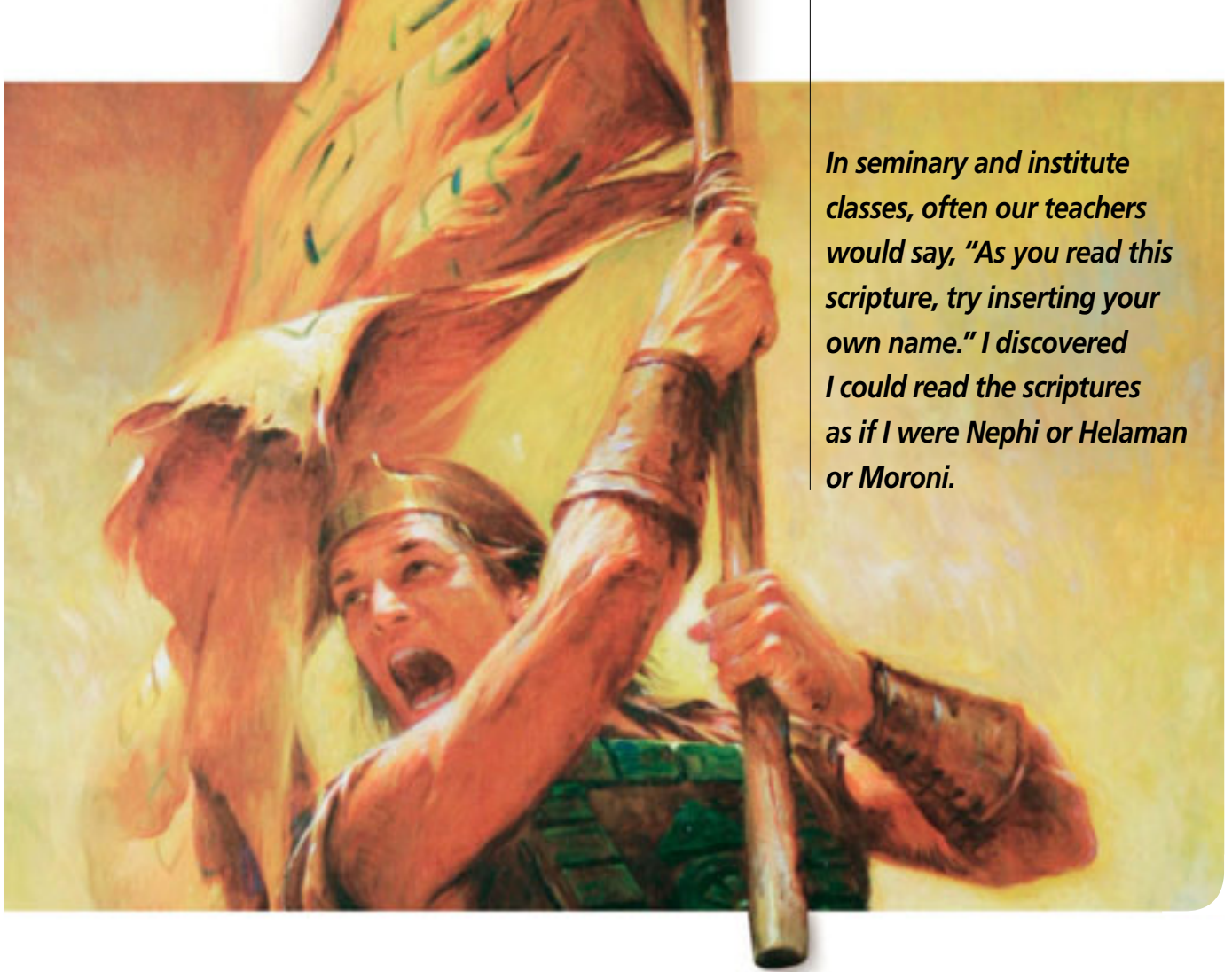


always thought that if everyone in the world would do that, whether he or she is a member of the Church or not, this

promise, as prophesied, would be fulfilled; and we would become better sons and daughters, better friends, better employees, better missionaries, better people. As Paul said, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

I have seen so many people in the world around me say, “I will take this good thing, but I will not take that one.” They keep themselves from the truth. But the scriptures invite us to hold on to everything that is good and to search our conscience in the Light of Christ.

Elder Erich W. Kopischke of the Seventy.



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### **My Higher Education**

Something else that helped me stay strong as a youth was the seminary program, which was introduced in Germany in 1972, when I was 14 years old. It had a great impact on my life. I can still remember my seminary teacher, because she left a great impression on me and influenced me in such a positive way.

Because of my seminary experience and my individual study of the scriptures as a youth, I learned to love the scriptures. My study strengthened my testimony, and I have never lost my love for seminary and institute classes. I taught one of the first early-morning seminary classes in Germany. It was a great class. The young people loved it, and

they came every morning. Some of them traveled quite a distance. Out of that group, the young men all went on missions, and almost all of those young men and women have stayed active in the Church.

When I think about how I gained my testimony and what had the greatest impression on me for good, I really can say that it was the seminary and institute classes I attended. It was the learning of gospel principles and doctrines from the scriptures, with a group of friends, from a teacher we admired.

One of the best things to do when studying the scriptures is to apply them to yourself. Often our teachers would say, "As you read this scripture, try inserting your own name."

I discovered I could read the scriptures as if I were Nephi or Helaman or Moroni. That changed the whole setting for me when I read the scriptures. It was like a dream; all of a sudden I could see myself in the same situation as those I was reading about.

The scriptures helped me understand that faith is something real. It is not just knowing about things in the scriptures in a theoretical way, but faith connects us to the Lord's reality for us. This is something I gained from my time in seminary as a youth. I have a sure faith that if the Lord gives an assignment, we can "go and do" (1 Nephi 3:7), and He will provide what we need to accomplish that assignment.

### Strength from the Scriptures

A scripture that really helped me when I was young is Joshua 1:6–9. It says, in part: “Be strong and of a good courage. . . . Observe to do according to all the law. . . . Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper.”

As a young man, I thought, “Once I receive an assignment from the Lord, I will not turn to the right or to the left.” I had some good experiences as a result. For instance, one day while I was in business training, I had to go to a Church meeting, but I had a work responsibility related to the mail. Normally this responsibility would take me and the other trainees as much as an extra hour after our regular work hours. But I had to go to Hamburg on the 5:30 p.m. train to get to my Church meeting. I told the others of my dilemma, and they said to me, “Good luck. It is not going to happen.”

I said, “Sure it will, because this is an important meeting.” They shrugged their shoulders and said sarcastically, “Yeah sure—you and your faith. You think just because you are religious that everything is going to work out. That means that we would have to finish the mail by 10 minutes to 5:00. It has never happened.” I said, “Well, whatever happens will happen. But I need to be in Hamburg on time tonight.”

Now, believe it or not, for the first and only time in three years, everything was finished that day at 10 minutes to 5:00, and I made it to the train

on time. This impressed my fellow trainees and opened the door for me to have some gospel conversations with them.

I have complete trust and faith that when the Lord gives you an assignment, it will work out somehow if you “do not turn to the right or to the left.” I did not know that the mail duty we had would be finished early that day. You won’t always know those kinds of things in advance. You cannot tell the Lord how it should happen, but with faith and trust in Him, it often will work out well.

My study of the scriptures and my parents’ example gave me something very important, even as a young man. Together, they helped me develop great faith that in my day-to-day living, the Lord would help and bless me. ■



### A MISSION WILL KEEP YOUR PATH CLEAR

One of the most important things a young man can do is prepare to serve a mission. It is important to prepare spiritually, physically, and educationally. Study the scriptures diligently. Study them every day, with the help of seminary and institute classes. Then go on a mission, and do and be the very best you can.

You will come to know that your mission experiences are the best education for you. It is a wonderful way to practice all the good things you have learned in your family, in the Church, and in seminary and institute classes. If you young men, and you young women who so desire, will prepare for and serve a mission, it will keep your life’s path clear for you. I would wish for my sons and daughters and for you, the youth of the Church, to be worthy to go on a mission when you reach the right age and to

wholeheartedly seize and magnify that opportunity.

I would wish for you all, including my own children, great faith and trust in the Lord, that you might enjoy His marvelous promises. I know that the Lord will provide the experiences, challenges, and blessings He knows will be for your good. I have a sure testimony that when we have great faith and trust in the Lord, He will provide.

Elder Erich W. Kopischke of the Seventy.