

YOUNG ADULTS

FEELING DISCONNECTED?

We live in a time of distracted living and zero waiting. But to really connect with God, we need to slow down and be still.

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WITH A DIFFICULT
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THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



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“WE ... EXPRESS
GRATITUDE FOR LATTER-DAY
SAINT PIONEERS THROUGH-
OUT THE WORLD WHO
HAVE BLAZED—AND ARE
BLAZING—A GOSPEL PATH
FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW.”

ELDER RONALD A. RASBAND

From “Faith to Push Forward,” page 24.



**HEADED WEST,
BY DAVID MEIKLE**

From 1856 through 1860, 10 handcart companies made up of 3,000 Latter-day Saint emigrants from England, Wales, Scotland, and Scandinavia walked 1,300 miles (2,090 km) to join other Saints in Zion. These pioneers pulled everything they owned across the American plains in 3' x 5' (1 x 1.5 m) wooden carts.



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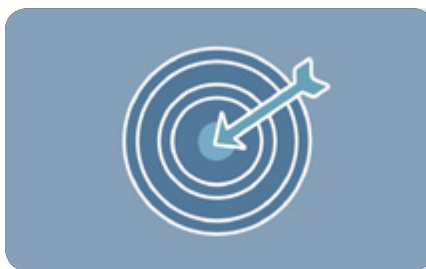
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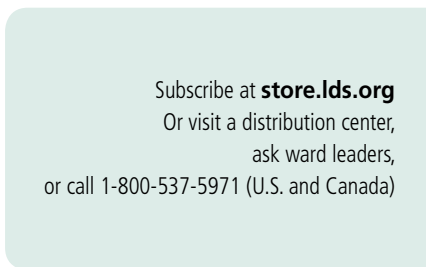
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PORTRAITS OF FAITH

Victor was born three months premature. As a result, he has several disabilities and was unable to walk until he was seven years old. Despite the challenges he faces, Victor has chosen to be a happy person. He finds joy in reaching out and showing love to others.

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

Victor Barbinyagra

Kharkiv, Ukraine

I do have problems, just like everyone else has. They're not bigger or smaller, and though we may not be able to solve them 100 percent, I know we can cope with our problems and we can move forward for sure.

Because of the Church, I know that you can be happy no matter what, because the plan of God is a plan of happiness. I believe that happiness is something that is inside of us, not outside.

Happiness comes from having faith, relying on God, and living the gospel. This helps us have the right attitude and use what we have to better ourselves.

FIND MORE

See more about Victor's journey of faith at liahona.lds.org.

Visit "Plan of Salvation" at lds.org/topics to find out how the plan of salvation helps us find happiness.

Ministering Principles

REACH OUT IN COMPASSION

*As you follow the Savior's example of compassion,
you will find that you can make a difference in others' lives.*

Compassion is having an awareness of others' distress along with a desire to lighten or relieve it. A covenant to follow the Savior is a covenant of compassion to "bear one another's burdens" (Mosiah 18:8). An assignment to watch over others is an opportunity to minister as the Lord would: with "compassion, making a difference" (Jude 1:22). The Lord commanded, "Shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother" (Zechariah 7:9).

The Savior's Compassion

Compassion was a driving force in the Savior's ministry (see sidebar: "A Compassionate Savior"). His compassion for His fellow man caused Him to reach out to those around Him on countless occasions. Discerning people's needs and desires, He

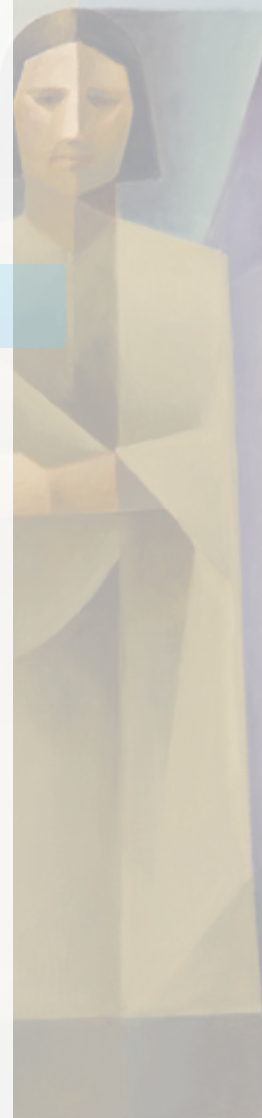
could bless them and teach them in ways that mattered most to them. The Savior's desire to lift us above our distress led to the ultimate act of compassion: His Atonement for the sins and suffering of humankind.

His capacity to respond to the needs of the people is something that we can strive for as we serve. As we live righteously and listen to the promptings of the Spirit, we will be inspired to reach out in meaningful ways.

Our Covenant of Compassion

Heavenly Father wants His children to be compassionate (see 1 Corinthians 12:25–27). To become true disciples, we must develop and show compassion to others, especially to those need (D&C 52:40).

Taking upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ through our baptismal covenant,





Ministering principles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as a message. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.

we witness that we are willing to exercise compassion. President Henry B. Eyring, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught that the gift of the Holy Ghost helps us do so: “You are a covenant member of the Church of Jesus Christ. . . .

“That is why you have a feeling to want to help a person struggling to move forward under a load of grief and difficulty. You promised that you would help the Lord make their burdens light and be comforted. You were given the power to help lighten those loads when you received the gift of the Holy Ghost.”¹

For example, a sister in Russia had a difficult family situation that prevented her from attending church for more than a year. Another sister in the branch reached out in compassion every Sunday by calling her to tell her about the talks, lessons, mission calls, babies born, and other news of the branch. When the housebound sister’s family situation was resolved, she felt like she was still a part of the branch because of her friend’s weekly calls. ■

NOTE

1. Henry B. Eyring, “The Comforter,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 18.



A COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR

Consider studying some of these scriptures to see how Jesus Christ’s compassion moved Him to heal, bless, and teach those around Him during His ministry: Matthew 9:35–38; 14:14; 18:27, 33; 20:30–34; Mark 1:40–42; 5:19; 6:30–42; 9:22; Luke 7:13; 10:33; 15:20.

Four Suggestions for Developing Compassion

While compassion is often increased after we experience our own trials, there are some things we can do today to develop compassion. Consider ways you could apply these four principles.

Pray for it. As you appeal to Heavenly Father, He will open your heart, and “you will come to feel a sincere concern for the eternal welfare and happiness of other people” (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], 118; see also Moroni 7:48).

1. Prayer

Practice it. You can show compassion by listening and understanding. Put yourself in their situation and consider how they might feel. If appropriate to the situation and timing, you could offer to help alleviate their pain, suffering, or distress.

2. Practice

COMPASSION

4. Friendship

Be a personal friend. Showing compassion can be as simple as showing genuine interest in peoples’ lives. Learn to listen well (see “Ministering Principles: Five Things Good Listeners Do,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, June 2018, 6–9). Your love for them will increase, and it will be easier to recognize ways to show that love.

3. Promptings

Follow promptings. The Lord can reveal to us ways to show compassion that we might not have noticed on our own. When you feel a nudge from the Spirit to help others, don’t hesitate to act on it.

KNOWING WHO YOU ARE— AND WHO YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN

By Sheri L. Dew

This series highlights the lives of devoted women and their messages, excerpted from the book *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women* (2017). It is available in the Gospel Library app and online at churchhistorianspress.org/at-the-pulpit.

Recently, my 16-year-old niece Megan and two of her friends came for a sleepover. As we talked that evening, one of them asked me what it had been like growing up on a farm in the olden days. . . . I told Megan and her friends that in the “olden days,” I had been painfully shy and had absolutely no self-confidence.

“How did you get over feeling that way?” Megan asked. A pat answer was on the tip of my tongue when I stopped, sensing that these terrific young women were receptive to more. So I told them that the reason was a spiritual one: It wasn’t until I began to understand how the Lord felt about me that my feelings about

myself and my life slowly began to change. Their questions then came in a hurry: How did I *know* how the Lord felt? And how could they find out how He felt about them?

For several hours, scriptures in hand, we talked about how to hear the voice of the Spirit, about how eager the Lord is to unveil the knowledge stored safely inside our spirits concerning who we are and what our mission is, and about the life-changing difference it makes when we know.

. . . There is nothing more vital to our success and our happiness here than learning to hear the voice of the Spirit. It is the Spirit who reveals to us our identity—which isn’t just who we



ABOUT SISTER DEW

Sheri Linn Dew was born in Ulysses, Kansas, USA, in 1953.

She is the oldest of five children, and by the time she finished fifth grade, she was driving a tractor on the family grain farm. On Sundays her grandmother Maudie Dew would pick her up early for church, which was held in a rented hall. They would sweep up cigarette butts and beer cans to prepare the room for church. Participating in a small branch meant she did a lot of speaking and teaching. She became the branch pianist when she was a young woman and served in her branch Primary presidency when she was 16.

After earning a history degree at Brigham Young University in 1978, she took a job as an editor with Bookcraft. She joined Deseret Book in 1988, becoming an executive vice president in 2000.

She was 35 when she joined the Relief Society general board during the presidency of Barbara W. Winder. She was only 43 when she became Mary Ellen W. Smoot’s Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency in 1997.

Sister Dew exhorted women to understand their worth during her discourse at the 2001 BYU Women’s Conference, excerpted here (punctuation standardized).

are but who we have always been. And that when we know, our lives take on a sense of purpose so stunning that we can never be the same again.

. . . Our spirits long for us to remember the truth about who we are, because the way we see ourselves, our sense of identity, affects everything we do. . . . It affects the very way we live our lives. So, today, I invite you to ponder in a new way not just who you are but who you have always been.

. . . Can you imagine that God, who knew us perfectly, reserved us

to come now, when the stakes would be higher and the opposition more intense than ever? When He would need women who would help raise and lead a chosen generation in the most lethal spiritual environment? Can you imagine that He chose us because He knew we would be fearless in building Zion?

. . . Noble and great. Courageous and determined. Faithful and fearless. That is who you are, and that is who you have always been. Understanding that truth can change your life, because this knowledge carries a

confidence that cannot be duplicated any other way.

. . . When you understand that *you* were chosen and reserved for now, and when you live in harmony with that mission, you'll be happier than you have ever been before.

. . . God is our Father, and His Only Begotten Son is the Christ. May we rejoice in once again standing tall for the Savior and serving with valor and vigor in His vineyard. And may we be fearless in building up the Zion of our God—because we know who we are and who we have always been. ■







CHAPTER 5

All Is Lost

This is chapter 5 of the new four-volume narrative history of the Church titled Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days. The book will be available in 14 languages in print, in the Church History section of the Gospel Library app, and online at saints.lds.org. The next several chapters will be published in upcoming issues until volume 1 is released later this year. Those chapters will be available in 47 languages in the Gospel Library app and at saints.lds.org.

After Joseph brought the gold plates home, treasure seekers tried for weeks to steal them. To keep the record safe, he had to move it from place to place, hiding the plates under the hearth, beneath the floor of his father's shop, and in piles of grain. He could never let his guard down.

Curious neighbors stopped by the house and begged him to show them the record. Joseph always refused, even when someone offered to pay him. He was determined to care for the plates, trusting in the Lord's promise that if he did everything he could, they would be protected.¹

These disruptions often kept him from examining the plates and learning more about the Urim and Thummim. He knew the interpreters were supposed to help him translate the plates, but he had never used seer stones to read an ancient language. He was anxious to begin the work, but it was not obvious to him how to do it.²

As Joseph studied the plates, a respected landowner in Palmyra named Martin Harris had become interested in his work. Martin was old enough to be Joseph's father and had sometimes hired Joseph to help on his land. Martin had heard about the gold plates but had thought little

about them until Joseph's mother invited him to visit with her son.³

Joseph was out working when Martin stopped by, so he questioned Emma and other family members about the plates. When Joseph arrived home, Martin caught him by the arm and asked for more details. Joseph told him about the gold plates and Moroni's instructions to translate and publish the writing on them.

"If it is the devil's work," Martin said, "I will have nothing to do with it." But if it was the Lord's work, he wanted to help Joseph proclaim it to the world.

Joseph let Martin heft the plates in the lockbox. Martin could tell something heavy was there, but he was not convinced it was a set of gold plates. "You must not blame me for not taking your word," he told Joseph.

When Martin got home after midnight, he crept into his bedroom and prayed, promising God to give all he had if he could know that Joseph was doing divine work.

As he prayed, Martin felt a still, small voice speak to his soul. He knew then that the plates were from God—and he knew he had to help Joseph share their message.⁴

Late in 1827, Emma learned she was pregnant and wrote to her parents. It had been almost a year since she and Joseph had married, and her father and mother were still unhappy. But the Haleses agreed to let the young couple return to Harmony so Emma could give birth near her family.

Although it would take him away from his own parents and siblings, Joseph was eager to go. People in New York were still trying to steal the plates, and moving to a new place could provide the peace and privacy he needed to do the Lord's work. Unfortunately, he was in debt and had no money to make the move.⁵

Hoping to get his finances in order, Joseph went to town to settle some of his debts. While he was in a store making a payment, Martin Harris strode up to him. "Here, Mr. Smith, is fifty dollars," he said. "I give it to you to do the Lord's work."

Joseph was nervous about accepting the money and promised to repay it, but Martin said not to worry about it. The money was a gift, and he called on everyone in the room to witness that he had given it freely.⁶

Soon after, Joseph paid his debts and loaded his wagon. He and Emma then left for Harmony with the gold plates hidden in a barrel of beans.⁷

The couple arrived at the Haleses' spacious home about a week later.⁸ Before long, Emma's father demanded to see the gold plates, but Joseph said he could only show him the box where he kept them. Annoyed, Isaac picked up the lockbox and felt its weight, yet he remained skeptical. He said Joseph could not keep it in the house unless he showed him what was inside.⁹

With Emma's father around, translating would not be easy, but Joseph tried his best. Assisted by Emma, he copied many of the strange characters from the plates to paper.¹⁰ Then, for several weeks, he tried to translate them with the Urim and Thummim. The process required him to do more than look into the interpreters. He had to be humble and exercise faith as he studied the characters.¹¹

A few months later, Martin came to Harmony. He said he felt called by the Lord to travel as far as New York City to consult experts in ancient languages. He hoped they could translate the characters.¹²

Joseph copied several more characters from the plates, wrote down his translation, and handed the paper to Martin. He and Emma then watched as their friend headed east to consult with distinguished scholars.¹³

When Martin arrived in New York City, he went to see Charles Anthon, a professor of Latin and Greek at Columbia College. Professor Anthon was a young man—about 15 years younger than Martin—and was best known for publishing a popular encyclopedia on Greek and Roman culture. He had also begun collecting stories about American Indians.¹⁴

Anthon was a rigid scholar who resented interruptions, but he welcomed Martin and studied the characters and translation Joseph had provided.¹⁵ Although the professor did not know Egyptian, he had read some studies on the language and knew what it looked like. Looking at the characters, he saw some similarities with Egyptian and told Martin the translation was correct.

Martin showed him more characters, and Anthon examined them. He said they contained characters from many ancient languages and gave Martin a certificate verifying their authenticity. He also recommended that he show the characters to another scholar named Samuel Mitchill, who used to teach at Columbia.¹⁶

"He is very learned in these ancient languages," Anthon said, "and I have no doubt he will be able to give you some satisfaction."¹⁷

Martin placed the certificate in his pocket, but just as he was leaving, Anthon called him back. He wanted to know how Joseph found the gold plates.

"An angel of God," Martin said, "revealed it unto him." He testified that the translation of the plates would change the world and save it from destruction. And now that he had proof of their authenticity, he intended to sell his farm and donate money to get the translation published.



Looking at the characters, Professor Anthon saw some similarities with Egyptian and told Martin Harris that the translation was correct.



“Let me see that certificate,” Anthon said.

Martin reached into his pocket and gave it to him.

Anthon tore it to pieces and said there was no such thing as ministering angels. If Joseph wanted the plates translated, he could bring them to Columbia and let a scholar translate them.

Martin explained that part of the plates were sealed and that Joseph was not allowed to show them to anyone.

“I cannot read a sealed book,” said Anthon. He warned Martin that Joseph was probably cheating him. “Beware of rogues,” he said.¹⁸

Martin left Professor Anthon and called on Samuel Mitchill. He received Martin politely, listened to his story, and looked at the characters and translation. He could not make sense of them, but he said they reminded him of Egyptian hieroglyphics and were the writings of an extinct nation.¹⁹

Martin left the city a short time later and returned to Harmony, more convinced than ever that Joseph had ancient gold plates and the power to translate them. He told Joseph about his interviews with the professors and reasoned that if some of the most educated men in

America could not translate the book, Joseph had to do it.

“I cannot,” Joseph said, overwhelmed by the task, “for I am not learned.” But he knew the Lord had prepared the interpreters so he could translate the plates.²⁰

Martin agreed. He planned to go back to Palmyra, set his business in order, and return as soon as possible to serve as Joseph’s scribe.²¹

In April 1828, Emma and Joseph were living in a home along the Susquehanna River, not far from her parents’ house.²² Now well along in her pregnancy, Emma often acted as Joseph’s scribe after he began translating the record. One day, while he translated, Joseph suddenly grew pale. “Emma, did Jerusalem have a wall around it?” he asked.

“Yes,” she said, recalling descriptions of it in the Bible.

“Oh,” Joseph said with relief, “I was afraid I had been deceived.”²³

Emma marveled that her husband’s lack of knowledge in history and scripture did not hinder the translation. Joseph could hardly write a coherent letter. Yet hour after hour she sat close beside him while he dictated the record without the aid of any book or manuscript. She knew only God could inspire him to translate as he did.²⁴

In time, Martin returned from Palmyra and took over as scribe, giving Emma a chance to rest before the baby came.²⁵

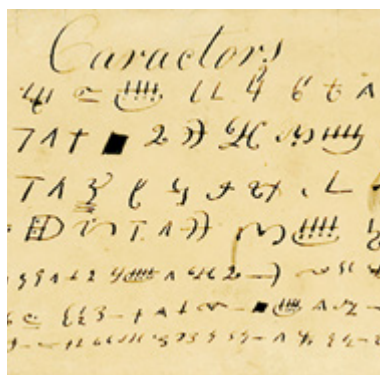
But rest did not come easy. Martin’s wife, Lucy, had insisted on coming with him to Harmony, and both Harrises had strong personalities.²⁶ Lucy was suspicious of Martin’s desire to support Joseph financially and was angry that he had gone to New York City without her. When he told her he was going to Harmony to help with translation, she had invited herself along, determined to see the plates.

Lucy was losing her hearing, and when she could not understand what people were saying, she sometimes thought they were criticizing her. She

also had little sense of privacy. After Joseph refused to show her the plates, she started searching the house, rifling through the family’s chests, cupboards, and trunks. Joseph had little choice but to hide the plates in the woods.²⁷

Lucy soon left the house and lodged with a neighbor. Emma had her chests and cupboards to herself again, but now Lucy was telling the neighbors that Joseph was out to get Martin’s money. After weeks of causing trouble, Lucy went home to Palmyra.

With peace restored, Joseph and Martin translated quickly. Joseph was growing into his divine role as a seer and revelator. Looking into the interpreters or another seer stone, he was able to translate whether the plates were in front of him or wrapped in one of Emma’s linen cloths on the table.²⁸



Facsimile of characters from the Book of Mormon plates.

Throughout April, May, and early June, Emma listened to the rhythm of Joseph dictating the record.²⁹ He spoke slowly but clearly, pausing occasionally to wait for Martin to say “written” after he had caught up to what Joseph had said.³⁰ Emma also took turns as scribe and was amazed how after interruptions and breaks, Joseph always picked up where he left off without any prompting.³¹

Soon it was time for Emma’s baby to be born. The pile of manuscript pages had grown thick, and Martin had become convinced that if he could let his wife read the translation, she would see its value and stop interfering with their work.³² He also hoped Lucy would be pleased with how he had spent his time and money to help bring forth God’s word.

One day, Martin asked Joseph for permission to take the manuscript to Palmyra for a few weeks.³³ Remembering how Lucy Harris had acted when she visited the house, Joseph was wary of the idea. Yet he wanted to please Martin, who had believed him when so many others had doubted his word.³⁴

Unsure what to do, Joseph prayed for guidance, and the Lord told him not to let Martin take the pages.³⁵ But Martin was sure showing them to his wife would change things, and he begged Joseph to ask again. Joseph did so, but the answer was the same. Martin pressed him to ask a third time, however, and this time God allowed them to do as they pleased.

Joseph told Martin he could take the pages for two weeks if he covenanted to keep them locked up and show them only to certain family members. Martin made the promise and returned to Palmyra, manuscript in hand.³⁶

After Martin left, Moroni appeared to Joseph and took the interpreters from him.³⁷

The day after Martin’s departure, Emma endured an agonizing labor and gave birth to a boy. The baby was frail and

sickly and did not live long. The ordeal left Emma physically drained and emotionally devastated, and for a time it seemed she might die too. Joseph tended to her constantly, never leaving her side for long.³⁸

After two weeks, Emma’s health began to improve, and her thoughts turned to Martin and the manuscript. “I feel so uneasy,” she told Joseph, “that I cannot rest and shall not be at ease until I know something about what Mr. Harris is doing with it.”

She urged Joseph to find Martin, but Joseph did not want to leave her. “Send for my mother,” she said, “and she shall stay with me while you are gone.”³⁹

Joseph took a stagecoach north. He ate and slept little during the journey, afraid that he had offended the Lord by not listening when He said not to let Martin take the manuscript.⁴⁰

The sun was rising when he arrived at his parents’ home in Manchester. The Smiths were preparing breakfast and sent Martin an invitation to join them. By eight o’clock, the meal was on the table but Martin had not come. Joseph and the family started to grow uneasy as they waited for him.

Finally, after more than four hours had passed, Martin appeared in the distance, walking slowly toward the house, his eyes fixed on the ground in front of him.⁴¹ At the gate he paused, sat on the fence, and pulled his hat down over his eyes. He then came inside and sat down to eat in silence.

The family watched as Martin picked up his utensils, as if ready to eat, then dropped them. “I have lost my soul!” he cried, pressing his hands on his temples. “I have lost my soul.”

Joseph jumped up. “Martin, have you lost that manuscript?” “Yes,” Martin said. “It is gone, and I know not where.”

“Oh, my God, my God,” Joseph groaned, clenching his fists. “All is lost!”

He started pacing the floor. He did not know what to do. “Go back,” he ordered Martin. “Search again.”



Joseph and Emma Smith’s home in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

“It is all in vain,” Martin cried. “I have looked every place in the house. I have even ripped open beds and pillows, and I know it is not there.”

“Must I return to my wife with such a tale?” Joseph feared the news would kill her. “And how shall I appear before the Lord?”

His mother tried to comfort him. She said maybe the Lord would forgive him if he repented humbly. But Joseph was sobbing now, furious at himself for not obeying the Lord the first time. He could barely eat for the rest of the day. He stayed the night and left the next morning for Harmony.⁴²

As his mother, Lucy, watched him go, her heart was heavy. It seemed everything they had hoped for as a family—everything that had brought them joy over the last few years—had fled in a moment.⁴³ ■

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HOW WE SUCCEEDED IN Sharing the Gospel

As recent converts, my wife and I didn't know much about how to be missionaries. But we set a goal to share with 100 people.

By Never Chikunguwo

Church History Adviser, Zimbabwe

My wife, Everjoyce, and I are from the small town of Mutare, on the eastern border of Zimbabwe. Soon after we were baptized and confirmed, we became excited about doing missionary work. We read that “the field is white already to harvest” (D&C 33:7), and even though we didn't know a lot about how to be missionaries, we decided we needed to “thrust in [our] sickles, and reap with all [our] might, mind, and strength.”

We were members of the newly created Dangamvura Branch located in one of the townships of Mutare. At that time, 1991, the branch had 25 members. Soon we were called as branch missionaries. We learned a lot from a senior missionary couple serving in our area. One suggestion they made was that we set goals.

We wanted to share the gospel with everyone, so we set the goal of sharing it with 100 people during the first year we were branch missionaries. Maybe we were naïve, but it seemed realistic to us. We trusted that the Lord would help us.

By singing hymns at Church meetings, we discovered that we had a hidden talent for music. We decided to use our talents, so we started singing for—and with—people who showed interest in the gospel as we met to teach them. The Spirit accompanied us as we sang sacred music, and He touched the hearts of those we were teaching. So did the message of the restored gospel. We encouraged everyone to join our branch choir, and many did, whether they were Latter-day Saints or not. As more people learned about the gospel, many entered the waters of baptism.

As we continued our missionary efforts, we continued to fast and pray for the families who had joined the Church. We felt that others in the community were witnessing these families' righteous examples. We received more and more invitations to teach families, and our teaching pool filled with prospective members.

As a result of learning and living the gospel, newly baptized couples became closer and more loving. Parents were able to leave behind traditions that were not compatible with



Never and Everjoyce Chikunguwo



gospel culture. They abstained from alcohol and tobacco. They taught their children correct principles. Many who had been overly absorbed in worldly things in the past were now able to accept callings in the Church. They became a blessing to their branch *and* their community. The hand of the Lord brought a mighty change to their lives.

Although great persecution arose in Mutare at that time, it did not stop the growth of the Church. It seemed that as opposition grew, so did the number of people who wanted to learn about the Church. For example, when men from the national army came in disguise to investigate the

Church for wrongdoing, they were touched by the Spirit. Many were later baptized and ordained to the priesthood.

With the Lord's help, we ended up sharing the gospel with many more than our original goal. Because we were willing to look for ways we could reach out to others, we were able to witness a mighty change in the lives of many in our whole community. ■

Editors' note: The rapid growth of the Dangamvura Branch soon led to the construction of a chapel. Missionary efforts spread to additional areas, and in 1995, Mutare was organized into a district with eight units.





By Elder
Jorge F. Zeballos
Of the Seventy

Let Us Not Fail to Feel

*There is a force more powerful than earthquakes, ferocious winds, or raging fires.
But it is still and small, and we must pay attention if we want it to guide us.*

On February 27, 2010, at 3:34 a.m., an earthquake of magnitude 8.8 on the moment magnitude scale violently shook much of Chile, causing panic, fear, and concern in millions of people.

A few days later, I was assigned to preside over a stake conference at a location close to the epicenter of this great quake. I wondered if the earthquake and the continuing aftershocks would affect attendance at the conference. I was surprised when attendance at each session of the conference was greater than it had ever been at previous conferences.

Apparently, the earthquake reminded stake members, at least temporarily, about the importance of getting close to God, sanctifying the Sabbath, and attending meetings. Several weeks later I telephoned the stake president. I asked if attendance at Church meetings was still high. He replied that as the number and magnitude of the aftershocks declined, so did attendance at church.

Similar behavior followed the sad events that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York, USA, in September 2001. Thousands of people turned to their churches in search of peace of mind and comfort they badly needed. But as time passed, this search lessened and things returned to normal. It is not earthquakes, storms, or

disasters and tragedies, whether natural or man-made, that develop faith, testimony, and lasting conversion.

Elijah and the Still, Small Voice

In the days of the prophet Elijah, Ahab was the king of Israel. Ahab married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess. She introduced the Israelites to the ways of the Phoenicians, including idolatrous worship. After Elijah challenged and overcame the priests of Baal who abounded in the court of King Ahab, Jezebel threatened the prophet's life and he escaped into the wilderness. (See 1 Kings 18:4, 13, 19, 21–40; 19:1–4.)

After being fed by an angel in the wilderness, Elijah walked 40 days and 40 nights to Mount Horeb (see 1 Kings 19:5–8). In the wilderness, the word of the Lord came to Elijah. He was told to come out of the cave where he had spent the night. As he stood upon the mount before the Lord, “a great and strong wind” arose, so powerful that it broke the rocks and the mountains, “but the Lord was not in the wind.” Then came an earthquake, “but the Lord was not in the earthquake.” Then came a fire, “but the Lord was not in the fire” (1 Kings 19:11–12). Despite the fierceness of the wind, earthquake, and fire, they were not manifestations of the Lord's voice to the prophet.

After these powerful expressions of the forces of nature, “a still small voice” came to Elijah, and he heard it (see 1 Kings 19:12–13). The soothing voice of the Lord told him whom to anoint as the next king of Syria, whom to anoint as the next king of Israel, and that he should anoint Elisha as the prophet who would succeed him.

Finding the Voice

The same voice that came to Elijah—the voice that told him what to do in a difficult time in his life and ministry—is still available to every child of God who sincerely wants to do the will of the Father. But in the midst of the many loud, worldly voices inviting us to travel dark and confusing paths, where can we find the still, small voice that will tell us what to do, what to say, and what God wants us to become?

Nephi counsels us to “feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:3).

And where do we find the words of Christ so that we can feast on them? We can look to the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon, which was written and preserved in its purity for us, the inhabitants of this generation. We also hearken to the words of modern prophets, who tell us the desires of our Eternal Father and our Savior Jesus Christ today.

The words of living prophets guide us when we face new and complex challenges. In recent years, for example, while the prevailing confusion of the world and its philosophies have sought to permanently alter the concept of marriage and family, the words of the prophets have firmly, courageously, and lovingly emphasized the sacred nature of the family, declaring that “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”¹

Today’s prophets and apostles have also stressed the



importance of observing the Sabbath at home and at church and achieving the salvation of our ancestors through family history and temple work. At every general conference, they provide additional spiritual guidance for the Church.

The Holy Ghost Will Guide You

Nephi further teaches, “If ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5). So, having reinforced the importance of seeking the words of Christ, now Nephi instructs us regarding the direct, personal communication we must have with the Holy Ghost, the third member of the Godhead.

Nephi knew exactly what he was talking about. Some 30 or 40 years earlier, while his family was still in the desert and he was building a ship that would take them to the promised land, Nephi rebuked his older brothers for committing iniquities, even after hearing the voice of an angel.



Nephi said to them, “Ye are swift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord your God. Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past feeling, that ye could not feel his words; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder, which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder” (1 Nephi 17:45).

Let Us Not Stop Feeling

God’s communication with His children usually comes through the Holy Ghost, who most often communicates with us in a voice that enters our minds and hearts, “the still small voice, which whispereth through and pierceth all things” (D&C 85:6). Let us listen to that gentle voice and not wait until someone must speak to us with a voice of thunder! Remember, Elijah learned that the voice of the Lord was not in wind, earthquake, or fire. The Lord spoke to him through the Holy Ghost, a still, small voice.

“The voice of the Spirit comes as a *feeling* rather than a sound,” said President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “You will learn, as I have learned, to ‘listen’ for that voice that is *felt* rather than *heard*. . . .

“. . . It is a spiritual voice that comes into the mind as a thought or a feeling put into your heart.”²

We *feel* the words from the Holy Spirit, more than those we *hear* with our ears, in our minds and hearts. Let us not fail to feel those promptings! May we open our minds and hearts to receive the words of the prophets. May we allow the Holy Ghost to continue to teach us through the still, small voice. Teaching His disciples about the Holy Spirit, which would be sent unto them after His departure, the Savior told them, “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance” (John 14:26).

Each faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has the right and the blessing of receiving personal guidance, inspiration, and personal revelation from heaven through the Holy Ghost.

President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) said: “Be influenced by that still, small voice. Remember that one with authority placed his hands on your head at the time of your confirmation and said, ‘Receive the Holy Ghost.’ Open your hearts, even your very souls, to the sound of that special voice which testifies of truth. As the prophet Isaiah promised, ‘Thine ears shall hear a word . . . saying, This is the way, walk ye in it’ [Isaiah 30:21].”³ ■

NOTES

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2. Boyd K. Packer, “Counsel to Youth,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 17–18.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “Believe, Obey, and Endure,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 129.



FAITH TO PUSH FORWARD

Armed with a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, members of the Willie handcart company pushed forward against hardship and hunger.

The story I would like to share began in the rolling green countryside of rural England, where John Bennett Hawkins was born in Gloucester in 1825. He was baptized a member of the Church in 1849 and left that same year for America with a company of Latter-day Saints on the ship *Henry Ware*. He arrived in Utah in August 1852 and was one of the pioneer blacksmiths in the early days of the Utah settlement.

His future bride, Sarah Elizabeth Moulton, also came from rural England. Irchester is a small village near the River Nene, about 65 miles (105 km) north of London and about the same distance east of Birmingham. Sarah Elizabeth was born there in 1837 to Thomas Moulton and Esther Marsh. Sarah Elizabeth's mother died when she was just two years old, and in 1840 her father married Sarah Denton.

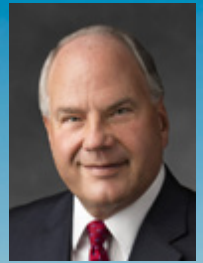
In June 1837, Elder Heber C. Kimball (1801–68) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and other Church leaders were in England doing missionary work. Among the many converts taught by these missionaries was a family who gave the Moultons a copy of the tract *A Voice of Warning*, by Elder Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Upon reading it, Thomas and Sarah were converted and baptized on December 29, 1841. At that time, their family consisted of just two children—Sarah Elizabeth, age four; and Mary Ann, seven months old.

The spirit of gathering was strong in the hearts of the converts in Europe. Their great desire was to immigrate to America, where they might be with the majority of the Saints. Like many others, the Moultons did not have enough money to fulfill this desire. But their resolution was strong, and they began to save money in a fruit jar.

Perpetual Emigration Fund

In 1849, President Brigham Young (1801–77) set up the Perpetual Emigration Fund to help Church members secure passage to America. The first to travel with the aid of this fund did so by wagon train, but this means of transportation was slow and expensive. Even with the help of the Perpetual Emigration Fund, few could afford to make the journey. Church leaders investigated the use of handcarts and learned that handcarts would make travel faster and less costly.

Left: Present-day Gloucester, England, countryside



**By Elder
Ronald A.
Rasband**

Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles

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Scotts Bluff National Monument in western Nebraska, USA

By then the Moulton family numbered seven children, but with their fruit jar savings, help from the Perpetual Emigration Fund, and the cheaper means of transportation, their dreams of immigration became a possibility. For a family of nine, it took careful planning to prepare for the trip. To save even more money for the purchases they would need to make, they lived chiefly on barley flour for nearly a year.

As the time of their departure approached, Thomas hesitated to make the journey because his wife was expecting a baby. But Sarah Denton Moulton was a woman of faith and could not be deterred. Before they left England, one of the missionaries gave Sarah a blessing in which he promised her that if she would go to Utah, she would make the journey safely without losing even one member of her family—quite a promised blessing to a soon-to-be family of 10!

The family, who set sail from Liverpool, England, in 1856 on the ship *Thornton*, welcomed a new baby boy just three days into the voyage. The *Thornton* had been chartered to carry 764 Danish, Swedish, and English Saints. They were under the direction of a missionary named James Grey Willie.

Six weeks later the *Thornton* sailed into New York Harbor. The Moulton family then boarded a train to make the long journey westward. They arrived in Iowa City, Iowa, in June 1856, which was the starting point for the handcart companies. Only three days before their arrival, Captain Edward Bunker's handcart company had pulled away from Iowa City, taking many of the available handcarts.

Handcart Headaches

About two weeks later, the Willie company was joined by another company of Saints, under the direction of Edward Martin. Church agents at Iowa City, who had worked hard to equip and send off the first three handcart companies, now had to struggle frantically to provide for an unexpectedly large body of late arrivals. They had to construct 250 handcarts before these Saints could continue their journey.

Every able-bodied man was put to work making handcarts, while the women made dozens of tents for the journey. Many of these amateur cart makers did not adhere to specifications but made carts of various sizes and strength, which would prove a handicap to them. Of necessity, the number of needed handcarts required that they be built out of green, unseasoned timber, and in some instances, using rawhide and tin for the wheels. Each cart carried food as well as the total earthly possessions of many of the Saints.

Often, 400 to 500 pounds (180 to 230 kg) of flour, bedding, cooking utensils, and clothing were loaded onto each handcart. Only 17 pounds (8 kg) of personal luggage on a cart was allowed each person.

Thomas Moulton and his family of 10 were assigned to the fourth handcart company, again under the direction of Captain Willie. It comprised over 400 Saints, with more than the usual number of aged folks. A report made in September of that year listed “404 persons, 6 wagons, 87 handcarts, 6 yoke of oxen, 32 cows, and 5 mules.”¹

The Moulton family was allowed one covered and one



open handcart. Thomas and his wife pulled the covered cart. New baby Charles and sister Lizzie (Sophia Elizabeth) rode in this cart. Lottie (Charlotte) could ride whenever the cart was going downhill. Eight-year-old James Heber walked behind with a rope tied around his waist to keep him from straying. The other heavy cart was pulled by the two oldest girls—Sarah Elizabeth (19) and Mary Ann (15)—and by brothers William (12) and Joseph (10).

In July 1856 the Moultons bade farewell to Iowa City and began their 1,300-mile (2,090 km) journey westward. After traveling 26 days, they reached Winter Quarters (Florence), Nebraska. As was customary, they spent several days there, mending carts and taking on supplies since there were no major cities between Winter Quarters and Salt Lake City.

It was so late in the season before the Willie company was prepared to leave Winter Quarters that a council was held to decide whether they should go or remain until spring. Some who already had been over the route strongly cautioned them against the danger of traveling so late in the season. But Captain Willie and many company members felt that they should go on because they had no accommodations to spend the winter in Florence.

Dwindling Provisions

With inadequate provisions, members of the Willie company started their journey again on August 18, thinking they could replenish their supplies at Fort Laramie (north of present-day Laramie, Wyoming). In the face of the warning

they had received, they placed an extra 100-pound (45 kg) sack of flour in each cart and trusted that they would meet supply wagons sent out from Salt Lake City. However, the drivers of the supply wagons, thinking there were no more immigrants on the trail, headed back to Salt Lake City in late September, before the Willie company reached them.

In Florence, the Moultons found it advisable to leave behind a box of supplies because the load they had to pull for a family of 10 was just too heavy. By then, they had left baggage at the port in Liverpool, a box of clothing onboard ship, a trunk of clothing at New York City, and a trunk of supplies containing most of their personal belongings at Iowa City. Even on the trail, they looked for ways to ease their burden.

It is difficult for those who enjoy all the comforts of modern life to imagine the daily misery of the Moulton family and the other remarkable men and women of those handcart companies. Can we imagine the blistered hands and feet, sore muscles, dust and grit, sunburn, flies and mosquitoes, stampeding buffalo herds, and Indian encounters? Can we imagine the river crossings and the difficulties of sand and slippery rocks as they tried to get the handcarts across swift or deep-running water? Can we understand the weakness that comes from a lack of sufficient nourishment?

During their travels, the Moulton children went into the fields with their mother to glean wild wheat to add food to their rapidly diminishing supplies. At one point the family had only barley bread and one apple a day for every three members.



Sweetwater River near Martin's Cove, Wyoming, USA

Just before dusk on September 12, a party of missionaries returning from the British Mission arrived in camp. They were led by Elder Franklin D. Richards (1821–99) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, my wife's great-great-grandfather. When Elder Richards and the others saw the difficulties of the handcart company, they promised to hurry on to the Salt Lake Valley and send back help as soon as possible.

On September 30 the Willie company reached Fort Laramie, Wyoming, 400 miles (645 km) east of Salt Lake City.

With the beginning of October, winter set in, and the difficulties multiplied as the company attempted to press onward. Provisions were running so low that Captain Willie was compelled to cut rations to 15 ounces (425 g) of flour for men, 13 ounces for women, 9 ounces for children, and 5 ounces for infants. Soon they would face howling wind and drifting snow. By the morning of October 20 the snow was 4 inches (10 cm) deep, and tents and wagon covers had been smashed by its weight. Five members of the company and some of the draft animals had died of cold and starvation the night before the storm, and five more members died over the next three days. Feeding the women, children, and sick first, many of the reasonably strong men were forced to go without anything to eat.

Relief Parties Set Out

Two miles (3 km) below Rocky Ridge on the Sweetwater River, the company made camp and waited in starvation, cold, and misery for the storm to pass.

When the Franklin D. Richards party reached Salt Lake City, they immediately reported to President Young the precarious condition of the immigrants. The Saints in the valley had not expected more immigrants until the following year, and news of their plight spread like wildfire.

Two days later, October 6, 1856, general conference was held in the Old Tabernacle. From the pulpit, President Young made the call for men, food, and supplies in mule- or horse-drawn wagons to leave the following day to render assistance.²

John Bennett Hawkins was in the Old Tabernacle on that day and answered the call to help. He was one of the hundreds of individuals in relief parties that set out from Salt Lake City. On the evening of October 21, the rescuer wagons finally reached the Willie camp. They were greeted with joy and gratitude by the frozen and starving survivors. This was the first meeting of John Bennett Hawkins and Sarah Elizabeth Moulton, who would become my great-grandparents.

On October 22, some of the rescuers pushed on to help the other handcart companies, while William H. Kimball, with the remaining wagons, started back to Salt Lake City in charge of the Willie company.

Those too weak to pull their handcarts placed their possessions in the wagons and walked beside them. Those unable to walk rode in the wagons. When they arrived at Rocky Ridge, another terrible snowstorm fell upon them. As they struggled up the side of the ridge, they had to wrap themselves in blankets and quilts to keep from freezing to death. About 40 of the company had already perished.³



The weather was so cold that many of the Saints suffered frostbite on their hands, feet, and faces while crossing the ridge. One woman was blinded by the frost.

We can imagine the Moultons, with their brood of eight children, pulling and pushing their two carts as they struggled through the deep snow. One cart was drawn by Thomas and his wife with its precious cargo—Lottie, Lizzie, and baby Charles—with little James Heber stumbling and being dragged along by the rope around his waist. The other cart was drawn and pushed by Sarah Elizabeth and the other three children. A kind, elderly woman, seeing little James Heber's struggle, grasped his hand as he trailed behind the handcart. This kindly act saved his right hand, but his left hand, exposed to the subzero weather, froze. When they reached Salt Lake City, several of his fingers on that hand were amputated.

Early in the afternoon of November 9, the wagons of suffering humanity halted in front of the tithing office building, where the Joseph Smith Memorial Building now stands in Salt Lake City. Many arrived with frozen feet and limbs. Sixty-nine had died on the journey. But the promise to the Moulton family in that blessing in England had been fulfilled. Thomas and Sarah Denton Moulton had not lost a child.

From Rescue to Romance

The company was greeted by hundreds of Salt Lake citizens anxiously awaiting their coming and ready to help with their care. Gratitude and appreciation toward one of the young heroes who had helped save the Moultons from

the grasp of death soon blossomed into romance and love for Sarah Elizabeth.

On December 5, 1856, amidst the happy wishes of her loved ones, Sarah Elizabeth married John Bennett Hawkins, her rescuer. They were sealed for time and eternity the following July in the Endowment House. They made their home in Salt Lake City and were blessed with three sons and seven daughters. One of those daughters, Esther Emily, married my grandfather Charles Rasband in 1891.

On July 24 we celebrate Pioneer Day, and we express gratitude for the many pioneers who gave everything to build up the Salt Lake Valley and many other communities in the western United States. We also express gratitude for Latter-day Saint pioneers throughout the world who have blazed—and are blazing—a gospel path for others to follow.

What moved them on? What pushed them forward? The answer is a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a great-grandson of pioneers, I add my witness and testimony that their struggles were not in vain. What they felt, I feel. What they knew, I know and bear record of. ■

From a Pioneer Day sunrise service message delivered at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City on July 24, 2007.

NOTES

1. Report by F.D. Richards and Daniel Spencer, "Smith, Marilyn Austin, Faithful Stewards—the Life of James Gray Willie and Elizabeth Ann Pettit, 95–120," history.lds.org.
2. See Brigham Young, "Remarks," *Deseret News*, Oct. 15, 1856, 252; see also LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* (1981), 120–21.
3. Of these, 19 had died prior to the company reaching Fort Laramie, including 7 who died on the ocean voyage and 4 who died at Iowa City. Another 19 died between Fort Laramie and the onset of winter, most in the days leading up to the rescuers' arrival.

KEEPING THE

Faith IN Isolation

By Ryan W. Saltzgeber
Church History Department

Most Latter-day Saints today worship in wards and branches, where they can “meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls” (Moroni 6:5). But Moroni, the prophet who wrote those words, did some of his most lasting work when he alone remained as a disciple after the destruction of his people.

Throughout Church history, many Latter-day Saints have kept the faith alone when circumstances left them isolated. Some, like Moroni, have lived out their days as witnesses and examples for future generations. Others have lived to see a day when they were again able to share their faith.

Praying for Years for This Day

Františka Brodilová could hardly have foreseen the role she would play in Church history when a missionary knocked on her

When war, disease, or other circumstances left these Church members alone in their countries, here's how they stayed faithful.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KEN SPENCER

door in Vienna in 1913. The year after her conversion, World War I engulfed the Austro-Hungarian Empire, missionaries returned home, and many male members were called into military service, leaving Františka and a few other sisters to meet on their own.

It was the most contact Františka would have with Church members for many years. After the war, Františka's husband, František, was promised a post in the new government of Czechoslovakia. After they moved to Prague, Františka was the only member of the Church in the country. František passed away a few months later, and Františka was left with two young daughters—Frances and Jane—to provide for.

On her own, Františka taught her daughters the gospel. "I was raised in the Church," Frances recalled. "The church was our home!"¹ Františka also wrote to Church leaders in Austria asking that



Františka Brodilová joined the Church in Vienna in 1913—a year before the start of World War I—and didn't have contact with other Church members until 1929.

Františka was present when Elder John A. Widtsoe (both in the middle row) dedicated Czechoslovakia for the preaching of the gospel in 1929.



missionaries be assigned to Czechoslovakia. Church leaders were reluctant because the last missionary in Prague, some 40

years earlier, had been jailed for preaching and then banished from the city. Despite the new government, Church leaders feared that little had changed.

Undeterred, Františka continued writing letters and praying for a mission to be established. In 1928, after Františka had been on her own for a decade, 83-year-old Thomas Biesinger—the same missionary who had preached in Prague years before—returned. It seemed that the family's isolation had come to an end. A short time later, however, Elder Biesinger's declining health forced him to leave the country.

Františka was discouraged but decided to keep writing letters to members and Church leaders abroad. Her perseverance was rewarded: on July 24, 1929, Elder John A. Widtsoe (1872–1952) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles arrived in Prague with a group of missionaries. That evening, Františka and the group climbed a hill near Karlštejn Castle, where Elder Widtsoe dedicated Czechoslovakia for the preaching of the gospel and formally organized a mission. "Few people can realize the joy we experienced," Františka later wrote. "We [had] been praying for years for this day."²

For nearly six months, the branch met in Františka's home. Františka eventually assisted her daughters in translating the Book of Mormon into Czech and laid a foundation for the Church in what is now the Czech Republic.

Like Františka, many Latter-day Saints have endured isolation. The following accounts describe the efforts of valiant men and women who were among the first to share the gospel and lay the foundation of the Church in their homelands.



After her husband died, Františka raised their two daughters alone.

Like Františka, many Latter-day Saints have endured isolation. These men and women nurtured the fire of their faith, shared the gospel, and built the Church in their homelands.

As the presiding elder, Fujiya Nara (in the dark suit) took responsibility for keeping in contact with members after the Japan Mission closed in 1924.



The Constant Gift of True Faith

When the Japan Mission was closed in 1924, many members felt lost and abandoned. Leadership for the approximately 160 members in Japan fell to Fujiya Nara, the presiding elder in the country, whose employment with the railroad allowed him to visit scattered members. When he was unable to visit, Fujiya maintained contact by publishing a magazine titled *Shuro (Palm Leaf)* in which he shared gospel messages and encouraged the remaining Saints through the turbulent years that followed.

After Fujiya's employment transferred him to Manchuria and his replacement as presiding elder died suddenly in 1937, contact with members in Japan was soon lost. "Even though we had no correspondence with Salt Lake City," Fujiya said, ". . . we had conviction the Church would reopen [here]."³

During World War II, Fujiya

returned to Tokyo, where he preached to his neighbors and organized weekly Sunday School meetings. After the war, Fujiya found a notice placed by Edward L. Clissold—a Latter-day Saint serving in the American military—inviting

Church members in the country to contact him. Fujiya immediately visited Edward in his hotel room. When Edward attended the Latter-day Saint meetings in Tokyo, he was surprised to find nearly 100 people attending.

"Through it all," Fujiya said later, "the greatest gift, and a constant gift, has been to know and embrace the true faith—that means to know Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost."⁴

Building the Church in Hawaii

Jonathan H. Napela was a well-respected judge on the island of Maui before he and his wife, Kiti, were baptized in 1851. After Jonathan was forced to resign his judgeship for joining the Church, he devoted his energy to building up the Church among Hawaiian speakers. Jonathan tutored missionary George Q. Cannon in the language, helped translate the Book of Mormon, and developed the first program for training missionaries in any foreign language.

As a result, more than 3,000 native Hawaiians joined the Church within three years. "It is very plain to us that this is the church of God," Jonathan wrote. "There are many upon these islands who have obtained strong faith by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ the Lord, that we might receive the Holy Ghost."⁵

In 1872, Kiti Napela contracted leprosy and was required to move

Right: One of the first converts in Hawaii, Jonathan Napela helped translate the Book of Mormon into Hawaiian. Below: Wilhelm Friedrichs (second from left) and Emil Hoppe (center, back row) attended the first baptisms in Argentina.



PORTRAIT OF JONATHAN NAPELA, COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

to the leper colony on Moloka'i. Rather than staying among the Saints, Jonathan petitioned the colony to admit him as well. "During the brief time remaining," he wrote to the board of health, "I want to be with my wife."⁶ The petition was granted, and Jonathan became the branch president in Moloka'i. Jonathan worked closely with the local Catholic priest, Father Damien, to minister to all those afflicted with the disease. Jonathan eventually died of leprosy he contracted in the colony.

"I Rejoice in Being an Instrument in the Hands of God"

The Friedrichs and Hoppe families were the only Latter-day Saints in Argentina when they moved there from Germany in the early 1920s. Wilhelm Friedrichs and Emil Hoppe tried to share the gospel in their



new country, distributing pamphlets and inviting others to join their meetings. "I have full trust in my Heavenly Father that he will send sincere friends who will accept the Gospel," Wilhelm wrote, "for I rejoice in being an instrument in the hands of God."⁷

There were significant challenges, however. The families lived far apart and had to travel two hours to meet together. Because Emil was a deacon and Wilhelm a teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood, they were unable to administer ordinances such as the sacrament or give priesthood blessings.

In 1924, Hildegard Hoppe gave birth to a baby girl, who died two months later. As she mourned, Hildegard asked how the baby's name could be



Their persistence in laying the foundation of the Church allowed others to later share in the fellowship of the Saints.

For more information on these and other faithful Saints from around the world, visit Country Histories in the Church History section of the Gospel Library app or at history.lds.org.

When Phillipe and Annelies Assard (left) met Lucien and Agathe Affoué in Côte d'Ivoire, both couples rejoiced to know they were not alone in the Church there.



included in the records of the Church. As a result, Wilhelm began corresponding with Church leaders in Salt Lake City.

A year and a half later, Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was sent with other missionaries to meet the growing group of converts in Buenos Aires. When they arrived in December 1925, Elder Ballard baptized several converts and organized a branch. On Christmas Day, Elder Ballard dedicated South America for missionary work and organized the first mission on the continent.

Bringing the Gospel Back to His People

Phillipe and Annelies Assard had built a comfortable life when the missionaries knocked on their door in Köln, Germany, in 1980. They quickly embraced the gospel and felt “overwhelmed with blessings.” Phillipe

soon felt a powerful desire to return to his native country of Côte d’Ivoire to share the restored gospel. “So in 1986, after many prayers and fasting with my wife,” Phillipe recalled, “I decided to return to Ivory Coast to give what I had received, to improve the lot of my family and my people.”⁸

Before leaving Germany, Phillipe consulted with Church leaders. Though there were no Church units in Côte d’Ivoire, there were a number of members there who had joined the Church while in other countries. The Assards were given a list of their names and for the next year diligently wrote to each one. Gradually, the Assards rekindled the spark of faith in others and were given permission to begin holding Sunday meetings in their home. Wards and branches followed, and in 1997 the first stake in Côte d’Ivoire was organized. ■

NOTES

1. Frances McOmbler, in Ruth McOmbler Pratt, “Frantiska Vesela Brodilova,” unpublished manuscript (2009), 18.
2. Františka Brodilová, in Pratt, “Frantiska Vesela Brodilova,” 25.
3. Fujiya Nara, in Lee Benson, “Japanese Member Survives Adversity,” *Church News*, Feb. 17, 1979, 7.
4. Fujiya Nara, in Benson, “Japanese Member Survives Adversity,” 7.
5. Jonathan Napela, in “Foreign Correspondence: Sandwich Islands—Minutes of Conference, Makawao, April 1st, 1852,” *Deseret News*, Nov. 27, 1852, 4.
6. Jonathan Napela, in Fred E. Woods, “A Most Influential Mormon Islander: Jonathan Hawaii Napela,” *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, vol. 42 (2008), 148.
7. Wilhelm Friedrichs, letter, dated Mar. 5, 1924, Argentine Mission Correspondence, Church History Library.
8. Robert L. Mercer, “Pioneers in Ivory Coast,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1997, 27; *Liahona*, Mar. 1999, 19.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CODY BELL

The Book of Mormon Changes Lives

*These converts developed faith through
reading the Book of Mormon.*

The Book of Mormon is indeed a gift intended to bring us, God's children, to a knowledge of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Enrique Serpa Bustamante, a member from Lima, Peru, thinks of the Book of Mormon as letters from a loving parent: "Our Heavenly Father wrote 'letters' through the prophets, giving counsel, comfort, and guidance for our good and blessing us at all times. He is so wise in His plan that He knows how to give us those letters of love precisely when we have our hearts prepared to understand His blessings and His gospel."

Here are some testimonies from several converts around the world on what it was about the Book of Mormon that stood out to them when they were learning about the Church.

Another Testament of Jesus Christ

I saw a copy of the Book of Mormon in my niece's house in Ibadan, Nigeria. Being an avid reader, I was curious to understand why the book says it is "another testament of Jesus Christ," so I took the book and read it.

The subtitle "another testament of Jesus Christ" opened my mind to the possibility of a universal Savior rather than just the Savior of the Israelites, which at that time was a great concern to me. His visit to the Nephites and the establishment of His laws and

ordinances among those people got me wanting to know more about His ministry.

That subtitle led me to learn more about the Church. I started feeling the Spirit as I obeyed the admonitions written in the Book of Mormon, like praying to know the truth for myself (see Moroni 10:4). Now I know that the Savior lives and loves all of us.

Ezekiel Akeh, Idaho, USA

1 Nephi 8—Fruit "above All That I Ever before Tasted"

In 1 Nephi 8:11–12, Lehi describes the fruit of the tree of life as "most sweet, above all that I ever before tasted. . . . It filled my soul with exceedingly great joy." When I read these verses, I felt strongly that this fruit was very special, and I desired to have it too.

I felt a lot of empathy for Lehi. I thought about how if I were Lehi and this fruit did exist, I'd feel the same as him and would desperately want my family to eat it too. This felt especially true for me because my parents are not yet members of the Church; so even when I read these verses now, they seem to speak what is in my heart.

I knew that this fruit was special, even before I knew that it represented God's love and His gospel. Later on, once I understood the meaning of the fruit, I thought about how accurately it is described in the scriptures.

The scriptures are truly records of truth from the prophets and contain God's word.

Eun Jin Yeom, Gyeonggi, South Korea

Jacob 5:74—a Desire to Serve God

When I was learning about the Church, I read Jacob 5:74. It stuck with me from the moment I read it. I was a very active member of my previous church for my whole life and had always had a desire to serve God. I even hoped to one day study philosophy and theology in order to serve Him. I had already passed my entrance exams to study philosophy.

But I will never forget when I first read that scripture. I remember that it was the night after I had first attended an LDS Church service. During one of the breaks between classes, I saw on the bulletin board the revelation received

by President Thomas S. Monson concerning the lowering of the missionary age.

When I read Jacob 5:74 that night, I knew that I had to serve God. And somehow, looking at the missionaries—those two young men who were the same age as me—giving their lives for Him, I knew that this was how I could do so. The night before that Church service, I had decided to get baptized. The night after the service, I decided to go on a mission. Now I have returned home honorably after serving the beautiful people of the Philippines Cebu East Mission.

Josef Gutierrez, Batangas, Philippines

The Book of Enos—Forgiveness for Sins

When I first read the Book of Mormon, I didn't know where to start. I was struggling with forgiveness, especially in forgiving myself and knowing whether I was worthy of being forgiven. One of the sister missionaries told me that I would get the answer in the scriptures and that if I didn't know where to start, I should pray about it and the scriptures I needed would be there. I decided to flip through and read where I stopped—the book of Enos, verses 4–6. I knew the Book of Mormon was true at that very moment after reading it.

Jennifer Andreski, California, USA

Mosiah 27—The Opportunity to Change

When I first read the Book of Mormon, the section of the Book of Mormon that I liked the most was in Mosiah when Alma's son was renouncing the Church and trying to destroy it. But there was a huge change in him—he felt the Holy Ghost and he was transformed into a believer. I really loved that because the opportunity to change should be given to everyone.

Maria Gracia Henrique Gonzalez, Maule, Chile

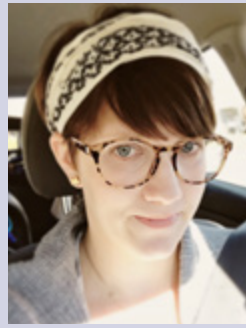




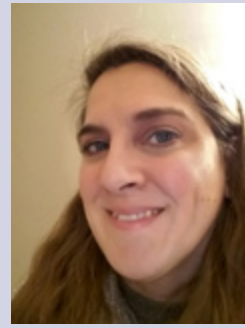
Ezekiel Akeh



Josef Gutierrez



Jennifer Andreski



Marie-Chantal Hogue



Venu Bhaskar Nakka

Mosiah 27:28–29—Happiness and Redemption

As a new member, I was impressed by Mosiah 27:28–29. I was—and I am still—so thankful that the Lord had mercy on me and redeemed me from a life of sin. Before my baptism, I thought I was happy, but nothing could compare to the happiness I felt once I accepted the restored gospel. I had never felt so confident and so certain that a bright future was in store.

After accepting Alma’s invitation to “come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye also may be partakers of the fruit of the tree of life” (Alma 5:62), I experienced the same comforting and peaceful deliverance as Alma the Younger when he wrote: “I was in the darkest abyss; but now I behold the marvelous light of God. My soul was racked with eternal torment; but I am snatched, and my soul is pained no more” (Mosiah 27:29). This passage helped me understand that my new lease on life and my newfound happiness was established upon the acknowledgement that Jesus Christ is my Savior and my Redeemer. Now I am infinitely grateful that my Savior paid the price of justice and allows me, over and over, to feel that same redeeming love each time I repent.

Marie-Chantal Hogue, Ontario, Canada

That Small Blue Book

I grew up in India, where I met the missionaries and first attended church. That Sunday happened to be Easter Sunday. Because of my work schedule, I came to church late and attended a youth Sunday School class, where one

of the missionaries taught the lesson. He quoted some scriptures from a blue book that I had never seen before but that sounded like the Bible. As he was teaching, I felt a strong feeling in my heart and knew that I too should possess this book.

I went directly to him after class and told him, “I need that book.” Since the book was his own set of scriptures, he could not give it to me, but he let me look at and feel it. I could see golden words embossed on the front: “The Book of Mormon.” I got the same feeling again that I needed the book for myself. The missionary got my address and promised to bring me one. Sure enough, the missionaries came to my house soon after and presented me with my own copy of the Book of Mormon. They then started teaching me the discussions.

That year, Easter brought an unbelievable blessing into my life: the Book of Mormon. That small blue book has brought a spirit of life into my life, and I am so thankful that I had the privilege to learn from it. ■

Venu Bhaskar Nakka, California, USA



POWERFUL TRUTHS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

“Something powerful happens when a child of God seeks to know more about Him and His Beloved Son. Nowhere are those truths taught more clearly and powerfully than in the Book of Mormon. . . .

“My dear brothers and sisters, I testify that the Book of Mormon is truly the word of God. It contains the answers to life’s most compelling questions.”

President Russell M. Nelson, “The Book of Mormon: What Would Your Life Be Like without It?” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 61, 62.

THE GOOD PEOPLE OF ST. GEORGE

When I was about 12 years old, I saw a Church movie that showed President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) praying for Latter-day Saints in St. George, Utah, USA, who were suffering from severe drought.

“Lord,” President Snow prayed, “bless the good people of St. George.”

That phrase, “the good people of St. George,” left a lasting impression on my young mind. Since I lived in Chile, I tried to imagine what kind of faithful Saints “the good people of St. George” must be. I wanted to meet them.

More than 30 years later, in 2005, my family and I took our second son to Provo, Utah, to join his brother, who was studying at Brigham Young University. The evening after we arrived, I said, “I want to go see the good people of St. George.”

“But, Papá,” my oldest son protested, “St. George is far away.”

“Look,” I replied, “Papá paid for the plane tickets. Papá is paying for the food. Papá is paying for the gas. Papá wants only one thing for himself. He wants to meet the good people of St. George!”

“OK,” my son said after he realized I was serious.

The next day we made the 260-mile (418 km) drive. After arriving in St. George, we went to the visitors’ center at the temple and toured the winter home of President Brigham Young (1801–77). We also visited the tabernacle, where I was invited to speak to my family for a minute from the same pulpit where President Snow had addressed “the good people of St. George.” We walked around the city, watching and meeting people. They seemed like normal, faithful Latter-day Saints.

I was happy we went. But when

we returned to Chile, I realized something: I had seen “the good people of St. George” before.

Because of my work and my Church callings, I have traveled throughout Chile. In Calama, I have seen young adults who strive to keep the commandments. In La Serena, I have seen dedicated parents who arrive early with their children for Church meetings. In Antofagasta, I have seen Latter-day Saints who fight for what is right every day. In Vallenar, Copiapó, Caldera, Tocopilla, and other cities, I have seen members who get on their knees to pray and then move forward even when things aren’t easy.

When I see faithful Latter-day Saints who obey and endure—no matter where they live or what challenges they confront—I say to myself, “These are the good people of St. George.” ■ Claudio Gonzalez, Antofagasta, Chile

When I see faithful Latter-day Saints—no matter where they are—I say to myself, “These are the good people of St. George.”



“ACTUALLY, I AM ONE”

I had just sat down on the bus when a man across the aisle leaned over to me and said, “You have a beautiful soul.”

Needless to say, I was surprised. I had never been complimented on my soul before. Unsure how to respond, I just said, “Thank you.”

The man told me he could tell because of his work with his religious group. I listened to him as he gave me advice on how to keep my soul beautiful.

When the bus rolled to a stop, we both stood to exit and he imparted a final thought to me: “Be sure you don’t listen to those Mormons.”

Time seemed to stand still for a moment. This man had seen something special in my countenance, but he had no idea that it was *because* of my religion.

How was I going to respond? To be honest, my first thought was to say nothing and pretend I hadn’t heard him. I was worried that if I told him I was a member of the Church, he might respond negatively or even harshly.

But then a scripture came to mind: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16). I realized that I was not ashamed of the gospel, and I knew that my soul could not shine for others if I did not stand as a witness. With my new resolve,



I knew that my soul could not shine for others if I did not stand as a witness.

I looked at the man and said, “Actually, I am one.”

The man stared at me and I stared back. To my surprise, he laughed and said he could not join the Church because he was too fond of coffee. I laughed too, and we went our separate ways.

To this day I am glad about the choice I made. I know that it can be difficult to stand as a member of the Church. Sometimes it can be terrifying! But when we stand for God, our souls can shine as lights to the world. ■

Abby Thorne, Utah, USA



My runs in the parking lot continued, off and on, for three years.

RUNNING INTO THE CHURCH

One day, while looking for a place to run, I decided to try the parking lot of a church in my neighborhood. I liked it because it was lighted and paved. I found that running 10 to 15 times around the building would complete my three-mile (4.8 km) workout.

My runs in the parking lot continued, off and on, for three years. From time to time, I would see people in the parking lot because I would sometimes run during Church services and other activities.

Several times, I had the impression that I needed to talk with someone about the Church, but I had no idea how to do it. On my way home from work one evening, I decided to stop by and see if I could find someone there. When I walked into the church building, I found the missionaries as

they were finishing interviews with their mission president. I introduced myself and we sat down in the foyer. That was where they taught me my first gospel lesson.

Over the next couple of weeks, I continued meeting with the missionaries. When I attended sacrament meeting, the members of the ward showed me love, acceptance, fellowship, and encouragement. As I thought about what I was learning, I realized that my curiosity about the Church had developed into the need for me to decide to be baptized. I felt I was being prompted by the Spirit to do what my Heavenly Father wanted me to do, but I continued to wrestle with the decision. Finally, I was baptized in November 2001, at the age of 36.

My decision to run in the church parking lot seemed unremarkable at the time. But it led to my greatest blessings: my membership in the Church; meeting my wonderful wife, Jennefer; and being sealed to her for time and eternity in the San Diego California Temple.

So, if you happen to see someone exercising in the parking lot of your meetinghouse, introduce yourself! You never know—he or she may soon become the newest member of your ward! ■

Daniel R. Thompson, California, USA

COUNSEL I DID NOT WANT TO HEAR

When my husband and I decided to start our own business, the first three years were difficult. We were failing to make a profit and falling into debt. We worked hard, but unimaginable problems made that time the most difficult of our lives.

It became worse when my mother-in-law passed away the day after Christmas and just a week later, on New Year's Eve, I became extremely ill. At the time, we were broke, we had lost our car, and worst of all, we had lost our health insurance.

Eventually, I was diagnosed with an aggressive type of cancer that had been developing for at least five years. It was serious and required immediate surgery. I was running out of time, and we had no money for the expensive medical care I needed.

My husband and I met with our bishop and asked for help. We explained that this was literally a case of life or death. The bishop was concerned, but he told us that he felt prompted to wait a little longer before giving assistance to see if another way might be opened to us. He assured us that if our faith was sufficient, the Lord would provide a way for me to get the help I needed.

At first, the bishop's response made me angry and resentful. I felt that both he and the Lord had forsaken me. But I had a testimony of the gospel, and I believed that our bishop was called of God. Despite my heartache, I prayed

that Heavenly Father would help me continue to love, respect, and support my bishop. When I prayed for this, I was comforted and felt that the Lord would help me in some way.

My husband and I moved forward with faith, and I received needed medical tests and scheduled my surgery, despite our lack of money. The day before my surgery, we sold our business for a good price, which allowed us to pay all my medical bills.

It now became clear why my bishop had hesitated to help. He had acted on inspiration in order for me to have a valuable spiritual experience. That experience taught me to trust the Savior, even when the path seems frustrating and scary. I am grateful for the counsel I did not want to hear from my bishop. I know now that God is a God of miracles and that He never forsakes us. ■

Name withheld, Porto Alegre, Brazil



Three Modern Pioneer Journeys

By Sarah Keenan

While I was serving my mission in Melbourne, Australia, I was in a ward that was made up of international students. When they were learning about pioneers in Sunday School, I wondered how interested they would be—they were almost all recent converts, and none of them had any ancestors who crossed the plains of North America.

Surprisingly, many of the international students were captivated by the stories shared. Some of them mentioned how they related to the early Saints on a personal level: just like the pioneers, these international students were new converts and had made sacrifices to establish the Church in the areas they lived in. For some of these members, the Church was either small or nonexistent in their homeland. They were modern pioneers, forging

a new religious heritage for future generations.

Here are three experiences from converts who have joined the ranks of modern pioneers.

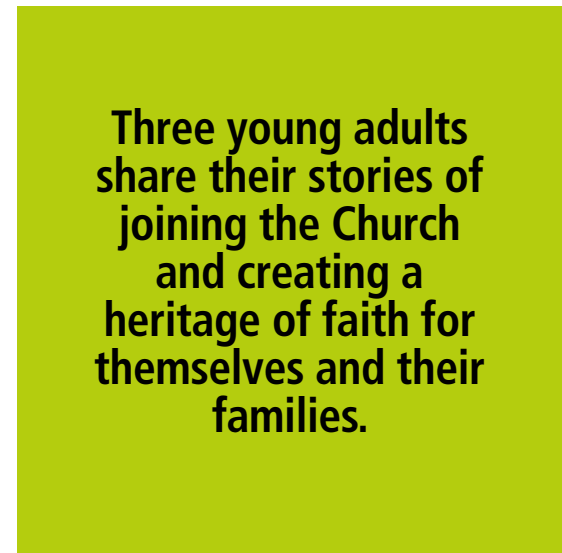
HONORING MY FAMILY IN NEW WAYS

Nami Chan, Taoyuan, Taiwan

My family and a lot of my extended family in Taiwan are Buddhist.

When I was young, I remember helping prepare sacrifices for ancestors and multiple gods on Chinese New Year and other holidays. It was a family tradition for us, as well as a way to commemorate our ancestors and bring peace and prosperity to my family.

When some of my relatives joined a nondenominational Christian church,



Three young adults share their stories of joining the Church and creating a heritage of faith for themselves and their families.

it had no impact on my family at first. But during the Ching Ming Festival, when you worship ancestors and burn incense at their graves, my Christian relatives refused to participate. They said that they were committed to following the Ten Commandments, particularly “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). My family had not



discussed any other beliefs before, but from that day on, Christianity represented the destruction of traditions in my family's eye and was seen in a negative light.

When I was attending a university, I met LDS missionaries on the street. Normally, I wouldn't have been interested in what they had to say, but some experiences had readied my heart to receive their message. While meeting with them, I agreed to pray and read the Book of Mormon, and I began developing a personal testimony of what I was being taught. But, because of my parent's feelings against Christianity, I didn't want to tell them I wanted to be baptized. Many months after my first meeting with the missionaries, I finally told my parents that I wanted to

get baptized and that I wanted to serve a mission. They were upset, but I knew I was making the right choice.

I don't have any pioneer ancestry, but I do feel like I understand their sacrifice. It is difficult to give up some traditions and face opposition from family members. Even now, five years after I joined the Church, in which time I have served a mission, my family doesn't completely support my decision, but they've come to accept it. Joining the Church has allowed me to honor my family in new ways, by doing family history and researching my ancestors. My testimony of Jesus Christ and His Atonement help me in resolving any conflict I may have with my family.

FINDING JOY FROM THE GOSPEL

Harry Guan, Utah, USA

I grew up in China and considered myself a Christian, despite the fact that I never actually went to church. I was interested in God and Jesus Christ, and I thought Christian doctrine was very comforting.

When I moved to the United States for college, I started attending a

nondenominational Christian church. After a few months, I heard about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from some friends who were considering attending Brigham Young University. I asked a few students at the Christian church about the Latter-day Saints and was surprised when they fervently warned me to stay away from the “Mormons.” I listened to their advice at first, but as I was scrolling through social media about a week later, I came across an address by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. In the talk, he mentioned that members of the Church should be respectful to other religions (see “Faith, Family, and Religious Freedom,” [lds.org/prophets-and-apostles](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/prophets-and-apostles)). As I listened to Elder Holland, I felt what I now know as the Spirit and decided that I needed to learn more about the Church.

I ended up going to church and later met with missionaries. I was touched by their teachings, particularly the plan of salvation.

My parents weren’t too happy when I decided to be baptized, but they accepted that I was old enough to make my own decisions. When my grandparents visited me in America a few months later, I was able to teach them about the gospel. They both decided to be baptized.

The gospel has brought me so much joy and it has led me to my soon-to-be wife. It is worth every sacrifice I have had to make or will make.

PAVING THE WAY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Brooke Kinikini, Hawaii, USA

I joined the Church when I was 15 years old, but I had been going to church and developing my faith and testimony since I was a child. Even though I was the only member in my family, my faithful friends loved me and led me by their example.

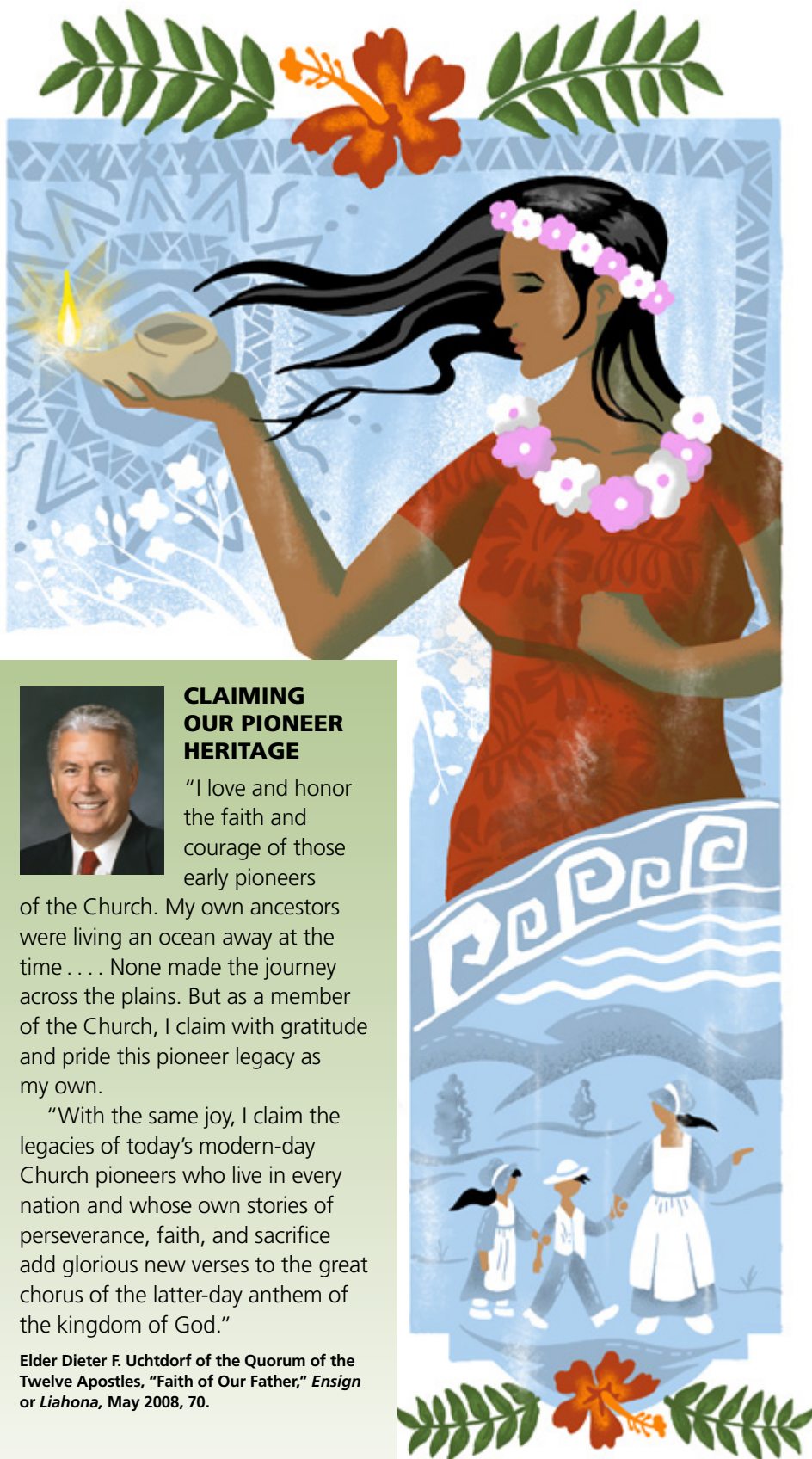


Unlike the pioneers of old, I never had to trudge with a handcart across the frozen plains. In fact, I didn't face many hardships at all when joining the Church. Sure, I lost some friends and I had to attend church alone and go to seminary by myself. But when I think about the impact it has had and continues to have on my family, I know that it was one of the best decisions I ever made. My decision to be baptized, to be sealed in the temple, and to remain faithful to my covenants has created a chain reaction that will positively impact the lives of my three beautiful children, as well as future generations, forever.

Being a pioneer is about paving the way for others. I like to think that one of the many blessings I've received for being a faithful member of the Church is that I can help bring others unto Christ. A seemingly small event—like the baptism of a 15-year-old girl in Maui, Hawaii, or the humble prayer of a 14-year-old boy in a grove—can change the lives of families in the past, present, and future.

The modern title of pioneer isn't just reserved for converts. As we seek to build a lasting heritage of faithfulness for future generations, we can all become pioneers. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



CLAIMING OUR PIONEER HERITAGE

"I love and honor the faith and courage of those early pioneers

of the Church. My own ancestors were living an ocean away at the time . . . None made the journey across the plains. But as a member of the Church, I claim with gratitude and pride this pioneer legacy as my own.

"With the same joy, I claim the legacies of today's modern-day Church pioneers who live in every nation and whose own stories of perseverance, faith, and sacrifice add glorious new verses to the great chorus of the latter-day anthem of the kingdom of God."

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Faith of Our Father," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 70.

Feel Disconnected? Try Slowing Down

By **Charlotte Larcabal**

Church Magazines

If you rank standing in long lines right up there with spiders and snakes on your list of personal nightmares, you're not alone.

Whether we're standing in line, sitting in traffic, or watching for the bus, we hate waiting.

Luckily for us, wait times are truly becoming the stuff of nightmares: a dreaded possibility but not a daily reality. We live in the age of zero wait times. Technology is speeding everything up so much that we have shorter attention spans than goldfish (yes, really).¹ When the need to wait does arise, we try to fill our time—usually by turning to a mobile device.

There's nothing inherently wrong with technology or efficiency, but a rapid pace and constant distractions might be keeping us from something more important.

More Than a Quippy Scripture

Not long ago, I was feeling spiritually adrift. I couldn't understand it. I was going to church, rattling off

prayers, and glancing at my scriptures. I occasionally felt spiritual promptings, but overall, I felt somewhat disconnected.

As I told Heavenly Father this in an anxious prayer, these words came to mind: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

It was as if the word *still* was highlighted, underlined, and in bold type.

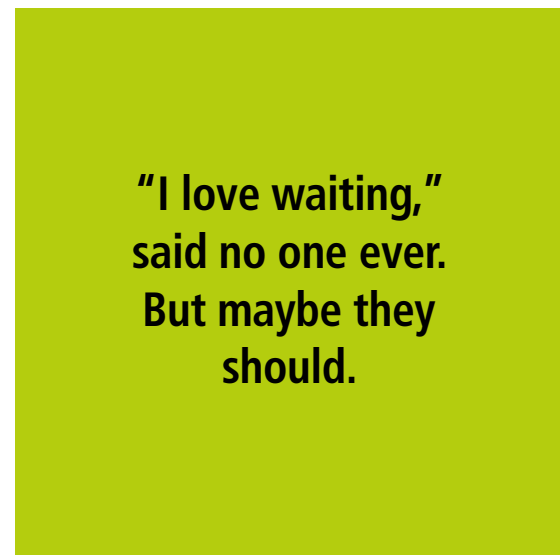
I may have been doing all the right things, but I was doing them at high speeds and with shallow focus. I had adopted a distracted approach to living the gospel.

No religious practice could bring me deep spiritual connection if my participation was cursory and distracted. It was much more than a quippy scripture. To come to know God and to connect with the divine, permeating knowledge I was craving, I needed to slow down and be still.

Heeding that prompting wasn't easy. But it made all the difference.

Now, Slow Down There . . .

Nephi teaches that those who "*diligently seeketh* shall find; and the



**"I love waiting,"
said no one ever.
But maybe they
should.**

mysteries of God shall be *unfolded* unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost" (1 Nephi 10:19; emphasis added).

Let's break it down: Learning the mysteries of God requires *diligently seeking*. It's a consistent and intentional practice, not a onetime google. Next, the mysteries don't pop up; they gradually *unfold*. This process takes time. And that time is critical! The *time* we take to ponder and seek gives us *time* to connect to the Spirit, by whose power answers come.

President David O. McKay (1873–1970) declared that meditation—“deep, continued reflection on some religious theme”—is “one of the . . . most sacred doors through which we pass into the presence of the Lord.”² By slowing down, we can open a door to revelation. We can transcend

the world’s pervasive ideals and connect with the divine. We *need* that door. We need to slow down.

It Takes Effort

For me, slowing down meant kneeling and speaking out loud as I prayed. The reverent posture and my

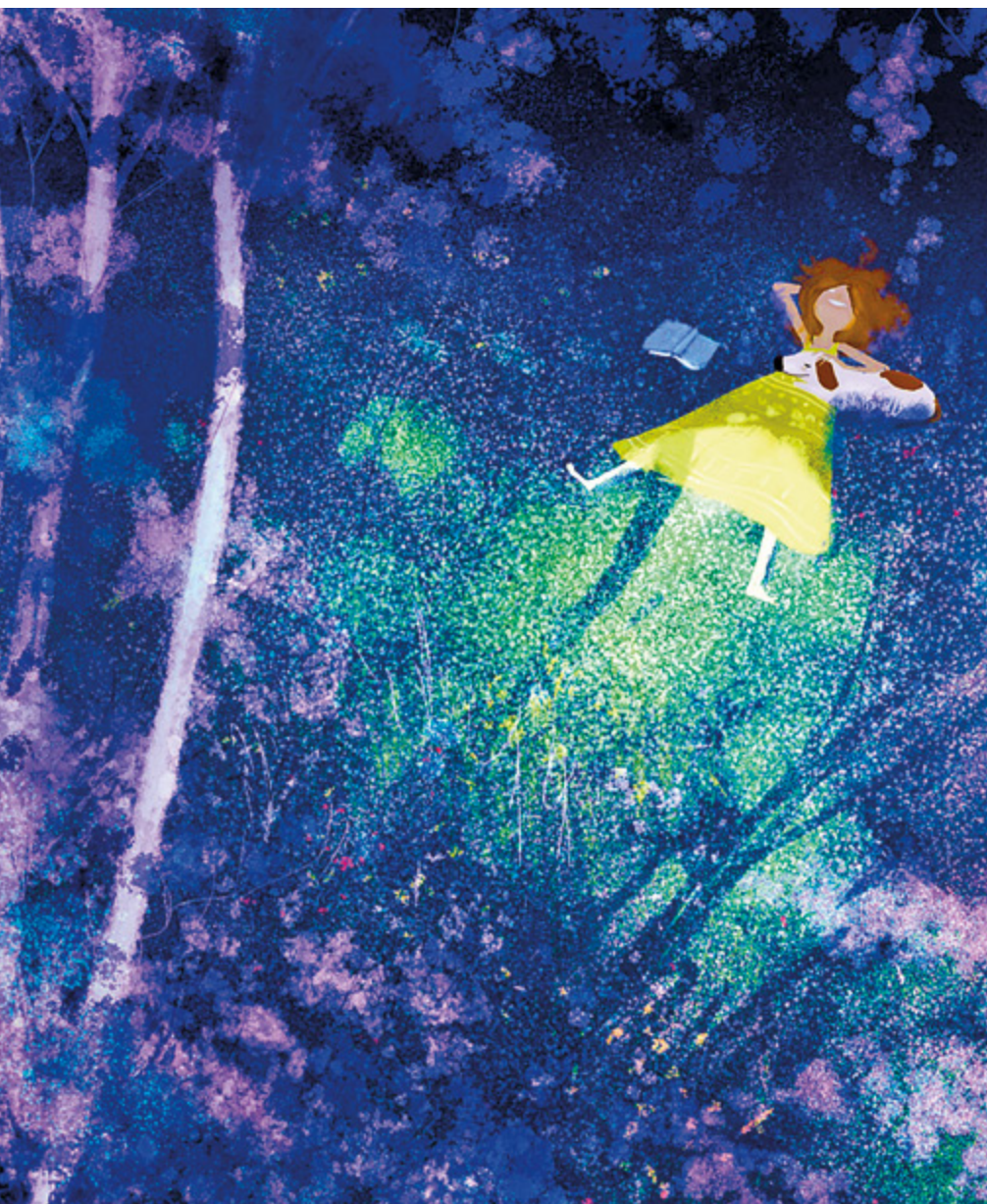
own audible words helped me focus better. Slowing down meant studying from physical scriptures and taking physical notes. It takes more effort and time, and that increased effort and time is a good way to “awake and arouse your faculties,” thus allowing the Spirit and the desire for truth to “work in you” and that seed of testimony to “get root, and grow up, and bring forth fruit” (Alma 32:27, 37).

We can find almost any information with a few keystrokes, but spiritual understanding and conversion requires *time* and diligent *effort*. *How* you slow down and devote effort to the gospel isn’t important, just that you do! When we are spoon-fed information, we eliminate much of our personal participation in our own learning. We eliminate chances to connect with the Spirit.

We can certainly embrace the technology and advances that make daily tasks easier and enable us to use our time more efficiently. But we can’t afford to adopt the distracted living and shallow thinking that so often come with it. Instead of dreading the need to wait, we can embrace it as an opportunity to slow down, meditate, and deepen our connection with the Spirit. ■

NOTES

1. See Leon Watson, “Humans Have Shorter Attention Span Than Goldfish, Thanks to Smartphones,” *The Telegraph*, May 15, 2015, telegraph.co.uk.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay* (2011), 31, 32.



Dealing with Difficult Questions:

3 PRINCIPLES THAT CAN HELP

Here's how to seek answers in a way that strengthens your faith.



Have you ever had a question about the gospel or the Church? Have you ever worried whether your question means that you don't have enough faith or that your testimony isn't strong enough?

Questions are a normal and necessary part of your

journey through mortality. They can lead you to greater insight and faith. However, your attitude, motivation, and process for finding answers affect the outcome.

In seminary you will learn these three doctrinal mastery principles that can help guide you to eternal truths.

1. Act in Faith

When you have a question, you can act in faith by choosing to trust God and turn to Him first for answers. God gives answers “line upon line, precept upon precept” (2 Nephi 28:30). It is important to rely on the testimony you already have in times of doubt.

“Doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith.”¹

—Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

“Hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes.”²

—Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

2. Examine Concepts and Questions with a Gospel Perspective

If you consider questions in the context of the plan of salvation and the teachings of the Savior, you can begin to see things the way God sees them. This will help you reexamine your questions using God’s standard of truth rather than the world’s.

“Being anchored to eternal truth . . . will give us the peace that comes from faith in Jesus Christ and the knowledge that we are on the pathway to

eternal life.”³ —President Dallin H. Oaks

“If you discover anything that seems to be blocking the light and joy of the gospel in *your* life, I invite you to place it in a gospel perspective. Look through a gospel lens and be vigilant not to allow insignificant and inconsequential matters in life to obscure your eternal view of the great plan of happiness.”⁴ —Elder Gary E. Stevenson

3. Seek Further Understanding through Divinely Appointed Sources

God has given you multiple sources to use as you seek truth. These include the Holy Ghost, the scriptures, your family, Church leaders, and even sources outside the Church that strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ. When looking for answers,

be sure to distinguish between unreliable sources and reliable sources, which will strengthen your faith and invite the Holy Ghost into your life.

“Rich benefits . . . come from your efforts to enlarge, extend, and increase your understanding

of truth. Use the scriptures and the declarations of the prophets to expand your knowledge.”⁵

—Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015)

“We continually seek truth from all good books

and other wholesome sources. ‘If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things’ [Articles of Faith 1:13].”⁶

—Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Try it for yourself!

The following examples show how it can be done. Note that these aren’t complete answers, just examples of how a young man or young woman might try to answer these questions for themselves.

You’ll want to continue studying and praying about the topics you have questions about to find answers and strengthen your testimony.

Why does a loving Heavenly Father let bad things happen?

Act in faith: I have felt God’s love for me and know that He exists, even though I don’t understand why God lets bad things happen.

Examine concepts and questions from a gospel perspective: Agency is an important part of the plan of salvation. God sent us to down to earth to experience trials, make decisions, and receive a physical body. But allowing people to make decisions means that sometimes people will make wrong choices and affect other people’s lives. And trials that are not a result of poor choices—such as natural disasters, disability, and death—can provide opportunities for us to strengthen our testimonies and trust in God.

Seek further understanding through divinely appointed sources:

What do the scriptures and modern prophets say about why we go through difficult things? “Thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; and then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high” (D&C 121:7–8). Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “God never leaves us alone, never leaves us unaided in the challenges that we face.”⁷ I don’t know the reasons for all of my trials, but I believe that Jesus Christ performed the Atonement for me and for everyone. I can turn to Him and to Heavenly Father for peace, strength, and support during my trials (see Alma 7:11–12).



How can I tell when the Holy Ghost is talking to me?

Act in faith: Even though it is sometimes hard for me to tell when I am receiving inspiration, I know from hearing the testimonies of others and reading the scriptures that the Spirit will help me understand if I keep trying to hear His counsel.

Examine concepts and questions from a gospel perspective: God gives us the gift of the Holy Ghost so we can receive inspiration to do what is right. If I am getting a prompting to do something good, I can know that it is from the Spirit, even if it sounds like my own thoughts.

Seek further understanding through divinely appointed sources: The scriptures teach: “Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers” (D&C 112:10). Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “sincere desire and worthiness invite the spirit of revelation into our lives.”⁸ If I am trying to be humble and doing my best to be worthy of the Spirit, the Lord will help direct me to answers. He will teach me how the Spirit speaks to me specifically.

Conclusion

Questions are not a sign of lacking faith; they are often an indication of a growing testimony. As you act in faith, examine concepts and questions from a gospel perspective, and seek further understanding through divinely appointed sources, you can find helpful answers to your questions and greater faith in Jesus Christ. ■

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Come, Join with Us,” Oct. 2013 general conference.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Lord, I Believe,” Apr. 2013 general conference.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, “As He Thinketh in His Heart” (Church Educational System devotional for young adults, Feb. 8, 2013), lds.org/prophets-and-apostles.
4. Gary E. Stevenson, “Spiritual Eclipse,” Oct. 2017 general conference.
5. Richard G. Scott, “Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge,” Oct. 1993 general conference.
6. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “What Is Truth?” (Church Educational System devotional for young adults, Jan. 13, 2013), broadcasts.lds.org.
7. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Ministry of Angels,” Oct. 2008 general conference.
8. David A. Bednar, “The Spirit of Revelation,” Apr. 2011 general conference.

WATCH HOW THIS WORKS

Watch the video “Madison’s Story” to see a young woman go through this process to answer her own question. Visit lds.org/go/71853.



*How could I take care
of someone with such a
difficult attitude?*

WHEN **SERVING** WAS HARD

By Lyka T. Valdez

One of the most challenging things I've ever overcome was my "I don't care" attitude. If I wasn't passionate about what I was doing, I was cold and impatient with people.

This all changed one school break when I was asked to care for my 76-year-old grandfather. "Dadi," as we called him, had suffered a stroke, which left him half-paralyzed. When my family asked me to care for him for two months, I couldn't even imagine how!

I had to wake up early to prepare his breakfast, his bath, and his medicine. I helped him walk around for his daily exercise. Since he had difficulty moving, I was by his side at all times, including during his bath and his toilet. As an 18-year-old girl, this was the hardest part.

Aside from all this, he was difficult to be with. He is not a member of the Church and has different principles than I do. He was a man full of regrets—always shouting, never smiling, and constantly saying, "I'm dying!" Because of this attitude, it was hard for us to share a good bond.

At first, I did all I could to avoid my tasks, but that didn't work. So I decided to change my attitude and give my best effort.

After a week of this new attitude, serving Dadi became a joy to me. My patience grew, and I came to understand his affliction. As I served him, I stopped thinking of being with him as a burden but rather as an opportunity to create good times with him.

Dadi changed too. This frowning old man became a smiling, gentle grandpa. He even came to like listening to Especially for Youth songs!

One night I heard him making some noise, so I looked into his room to find out what he was doing. He was praying for the first time. I'm inspired every day by this change.

Now I'm back at college, but I still go twice a month to visit Dadi with my family. We eat with him and sing for him. His health has worsened, so now the most powerful help that I can give is prayers on his behalf.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to watch over Dadi because it helped me see what I'm capable of giving. Love is a very powerful thing—it softened both my heart and Dadi's. I have learned the meaning of sacrifice and compassion. Truly, charity enlightens every heart! ■

The author lives in Santiago, Philippines.



SERVING YOUR FAMILY

“Begin your service in your own homes and within your own families. These are the relationships that can be eternal. Even if—and maybe especially if—your family situation is less than perfect, you can find ways to serve, lift, and strengthen. Begin where you are, love them as they are, and prepare for the family you want to have in the future.”

Bonnie L. Oscarson, former Young Women General President, “The Needs before Us,” Oct. 2017 general conference.



PREPARING THE TALK

1. USE THE SCRIPTURES AND TEACHINGS OF MODERN PROPHETS (SEE D&C 52:9). This is the heart of your talk. After all, that's one of the main reasons we're at church—to teach and learn the gospel of Jesus Christ. You can study your topic with the help of Guide to the Scriptures (at scriptures.lds.org) and general conference talks (search by topic at gc.lds.org). Be sure you understand the scriptures and quotes you are planning to use in your talk. If you need help, ask your parents or Church leaders.

2. INVITE THE SPIRIT. It's always a good idea to pray and prepare beforehand to have the Spirit with you as you speak. The Spirit not only provides comfort for your nerves, but He also testifies of truth (see D&C 42:14). Invite the Spirit into your sacrament meeting by bearing testimony of what you believe to be true.

3. THINK OF A PERSONAL STORY. One of the best ways to make connections with others is through stories. We like hearing others' experiences and what their lives are like. So try to think of a fun, unique, or challenging experience you've had that relates to the gospel principle you've been assigned to talk about. What did you learn from that experience? How did it help you? This is a great way to open your talk if you're stumped about how to begin.

4. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE! After you've written your talk, you might want to practice speaking it out loud by yourself, and then in front of family members or friends. You can find out if your talk is within the given time limit and if there are parts you need to clarify. If it's OK with your bishop, you can even try going to your church building beforehand to go through your talk at the podium!

7

TIPS for GIVING A TALK

*Speaking in sacrament meeting soon?
Try these tips.*

By Sarah Hanson



I don't know about you, but when I'm assigned to give a talk in sacrament meeting, I feel really nervous—not about writing the talk but actually *presenting* the talk. I always worry, “What if I'm too boring? What if I forget to say something? What if I mess up a word?”

Ever felt the same way? (Hopefully I'm not the only one.) If so, it's not the end of the world! Check out these seven tips to improve your speaking skills and give an engaging talk.

GIVING THE TALK



5. AVOID THE “I DON’T WANT TO BE UP HERE” OPENER. This opener can take many different forms, but most listeners recognize it right away. It’s usually something like, “When the bishop called me to ask if I’d give a talk, I tried to think of some excuse to get out of it.” Most Church members can empathize with how uncomfortable it can be to give a talk, but when you’re basically saying, “I don’t want to be here,” people could hear that as “Please don’t listen to me.” It’s best to avoid this opener altogether—be enthusiastic about your topic!

6. SPEAK CLEARLY. It isn’t unusual for someone to speak too quickly or too quietly because of nerves. I can totally relate! But it’s important to speak clearly as you give your talk so the congregation can understand you. Make a conscious effort to slow down, pronounce your words, and project your voice (yes, even with a microphone, it’s possible to be too quiet). People want to hear what you have to say!

7. KEEP LOOKING UP. Eye contact is a very important part of good communication. It shows that you’re sincerely focused on and invested in a conversation. Now, you definitely don’t have to make eye contact with everyone in the congregation as you speak, but even if you frequently look up at the back or front of the room, you’ll be much more interesting as a speaker. Avoid keeping your eyes glued to your notes! Your listeners want to see your smile, not the top of your head.

Even with these seven tips, you still might slip up on a word or notice someone snoozing on the third row. But does that mean you’re a terrible speaker? Of course not!

When we’re a little out of our comfort zone, it’s normal to feel nervous or make small mistakes. But as long as you try your best and invite the Spirit, it doesn’t matter if you stutter or forget to say something. You are doing God’s work and helping His children learn more about the gospel!

If you teach and testify of what you believe, everything will turn out great. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

What Do We Do in the Temple?

The temple is a sacred place where we can draw closer to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. In the temple, we are taught important truths, participate in priesthood ordinances, and make covenants (sacred promises) with God that prepare us to return to His presence.

We can receive temple ordinances for ourselves as well as for our ancestors. For example, youth can participate in baptisms in behalf of their ancestors and others who didn't have the chance to be baptized by proper authority when they were alive. For adults, other temple ordinances include the endowment and sealings (such as temple marriage).



GILBERT, ARIZONA, TEMPLE BAPTISTRY

Baptism and Confirmation for Our Ancestors

Baptism and confirmation are essential to the salvation of every accountable person who has lived on earth (see John 3:5). However, many people died without having the opportunity of hearing the gospel or receiving these ordinances. Through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ, a way has been prepared for everyone to receive these blessings. In temples, worthy members of the Church can perform baptisms in behalf of those who have died. In the spirit world, the gospel is preached (see D&C 138), and those who hear it can choose to accept it and the ordinances performed in their behalf.

HOW ARE YOU PREPARING?

How does keeping your baptismal covenants help you prepare to receive temple ordinances?

.....

What else do you need to do to get ready to receive temple ordinances?

.....

Is your temple recommend current? If you don't have a recommend, you can make an appointment with your bishop or branch president.

.....



To learn more about going to the temple for the first time, visit "Inside Temples" at lds.org/temples.

THE TEMPLE: A SYMBOL OF OUR FAITH



"Each temple is symbolic of our faith in God and an evidence of our faith in life after death. The temple is the object of every activity, every lesson, every progressive step in the Church. All of our efforts in proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead lead to the holy temple."

President Russell M. Nelson, "Prepare for the Blessings of the Temple," *Ensign or Liahona*, Oct. 2010, 41.

Endowment

The word *endowment* means "gift." The temple endowment is a gift from God whereby He gives special blessings to you, including "power from on high" (D&C 95:8).

When you joined the Church, you received two ordinances: baptism and confirmation. The temple endowment is also received in two parts. First, you receive the initiatory ordinance, where you are symbolically and modestly "washed" clean and receive special blessings regarding your divine heritage and eternal potential. In the second part, you receive the remainder of your endowment as you learn more about the plan of salvation, including the Creation, our purpose on earth, and the mission and Atonement of Jesus Christ.

During the endowment, we make solemn promises to obey God, follow Jesus Christ, be morally chaste, and help build the kingdom of God. If we keep our covenants, we have the promise of receiving all of God's eternal blessings.

Sealings

Families are central to God's plan for our happiness. Uniting families forever is the crowning blessing available in the temple through the sealing authority of the priesthood—the same authority Jesus told His Apostles about (see Matthew 16:19). Temple sealings enable husbands and wives and children and parents to be together forever if they are faithful to their covenants. ■

A Case of the SABBATH

*I knew I should
love the Sabbath,
but I didn't
know how.*

By Alyssa Nielsen

The scriptures say the Sabbath day is a holy day, a joyful and delightful day, a day of rest, a day to celebrate.¹ But a few years ago, while in my late teens, I found Sundays miserable. Instead of peace, I felt stress. Instead of joy, sadness. Instead of hope, guilt. I had a full-on case of the Sabbath blues.

Each Sunday morning, after an embarrassing amount of time hiding under my covers, I'd finally admit it

was indeed Sunday and get dressed for church. At church, I'd review my past week. During the sacrament, I would add up all my failures, never finishing before the first speaker got up. The rest of church became a battle of staving off tears as the guilt intensified with the new regret of feeling so rotten at church.

The afternoon was much the same. I'd feel guilt about past choices, stress about future choices, and sadness

about present circumstances. Without school and extracurricular activities to distract me, I would spend my time dwelling on negative thoughts.

After listening to, reading, and then re-reading President Russell M. Nelson's October 2015 general conference talk about how the Sabbath is a delight, I prayed for peace and love for the Sabbath rather than the misery I currently felt.² And an answer came.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID STOKER

BLUES

Focus on Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ

I felt prompted to shift my focus from my woes to my relationship with Heavenly Father and the Savior. Rather than ponder my failures, I took time to ponder Their involvement in my life.

When negative thoughts came, I repeated to myself what I knew and believed about God and Jesus Christ: I am a child of God. He loves me. Jesus Christ is my Brother, and He atoned

for me. They want me to be happy and return to Them. The Sabbath is a gift from God.

I began to exercise faith in this testimony.

Actively Accept the Sacrament

Changing my focus led me to also reconsider how I approached the sacrament. For so long I had treated the sacrament as time to punish myself. But that's not its purpose. The

sacrament is a sacred ordinance to renew our covenants. It is a chance to become clean again through the atoning power of Jesus Christ. Focusing on the ordinance and the covenant with faith and a repentant heart, I realized that the sacrament offered peace as I accepted the gift of forgiveness, kept my covenants, and received the Lord's Spirit (see D&C 20:77, 79).

Thinking of Christ's Atonement during the sacrament brought another gift to my mind. Not only could I be forgiven, but I could also receive healing because my Savior took upon Himself my pain and infirmities (see Alma 7:11–12).

Through His Atonement and the sacrament, I could find peace and strength on the Sabbath—or on any other day—rather than stress and sadness.

And I found that peace. My Savior is there for me on Sundays and always!

Practice Patient Faith

This wasn't a one-week fix. It was a struggle, and it took time. "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:25). I kept working on my focus and praying to feel love for the Sabbath.

In time, I did find peace and delight on that holy day, but I couldn't quit there or I'd again slide into the Sabbath slumps. Each week requires diligent focus on the Savior and the purpose of the Sabbath, but I know the promise of peace and joy is true. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. See Exodus 20:11; Exodus 31:15; Leviticus 23:32; Isaiah 58:13; Doctrine and Covenants 59:13.
2. See Russell M. Nelson, "The Sabbath Is a Delight," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 129–32.

BRACKETS

SOME

LAST A MONTH



FOREVER

OTHER BRACKETS LIVE

This bracket represents the 2014 World Cup and is not a prediction of any future tournament.

You Can Be Temple Worthy

By Elder Quentin L. Cook

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

It is our great desire that members of the Church will live to be worthy of a temple recommend. Please don't see the temple as some distant and perhaps unachievable goal. Working with their bishop, most members can achieve all righteous requirements in a relatively short period of time if they have a determination to qualify and fully repent of transgressions. This includes being willing to forgive ourselves and not focus on our imperfections or sins as disqualifying us from ever entering a sacred temple.

The Savior's Atonement was accomplished for all of God's children. His redeeming sacrifice satisfies the demands of justice for all those who truly repent. The scriptures describe this in a most beautiful fashion:

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18).

"And I will remember [them] no more" (Jeremiah 31:34).

We assure you that living righteous principles will bring you and your family happiness, fulfillment, and peace. Members, both adults and youth, self-certify their worthiness when

they answer the temple recommend questions. The essential requirement is to increase our testimony of God the Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Restoration of His gospel and to experience the ministering of the Holy Ghost.

Please know how earnestly we desire that everyone make any necessary changes to qualify for the temple. Prayerfully review where you are in your life, seek the guidance of the Spirit, and talk to your bishop about preparing yourself for the temple. President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) has said, "There is no more important goal for you to work toward than being worthy to go to the temple."¹

I pray that each of us will honor the Savior and make any necessary changes to see ourselves in His sacred temples. In doing so, we can accomplish His holy purposes and prepare ourselves and our families for all the blessings the Lord and His Church can bestow in this life and eternity. ■

From an April 2016 general conference address.

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, "The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World," Apr. 2011 general conference.



Born in **Logan, Utah** on September 8, 1940

From 1960 to 1962, he served in the **British Mission.** Elder Cook and Elder Holland were companions at one time.



Sustained as a member of the **Quorum of the Twelve Apostles** on October 6, 2007



Played in state championship games in both **football** and **basketball** in high school

Marrried Mary Gaddie in the **Logan Utah Temple** on November 30, 1962



Has **3 children** and **11 grandchildren**



Isabelle's Journey



By Jessica Larsen

Based on a true story

Brazil, 1992

Isabelle squinted up at the deep blue sky. There were no clouds in sight. She licked her dry lips.

Her parents were talking quietly with President Santiago, the stake president. The motor of the boat was so loud that she couldn't hear them. But she knew what they were talking about. There was no more drinking water.

Isabelle tried to focus on the reason for their journey. They were going to the temple to be sealed as a family! She remembered hearing her parents talk about the beautiful temple in São Paulo ever since she was a little girl. Going there almost seemed like a fairy tale. After all, Isabelle's family lived in Manaus, deep in the Amazon rainforest, and the temple was more than 2,000 miles (3,219 km) away.

Then President Santiago had planned a six-day trip to get there. More than 100 members had decided to go. "It will be a sacrifice," *Mamãe* had told her. "But sacrifice brings blessings."

At first, the trip was exciting. They slept in hammocks on the deck of the boat, sang hymns, and read scriptures.

But then the drinking water had run out, and the river water was too dirty to drink.

Isabelle felt *Mamãe* touch her arm. "President Santiago is gathering us all together," she said. "We're going to pray for rain."

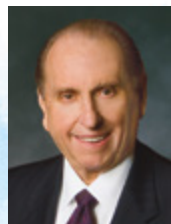
Isabelle joined the group, and the prayer began. After the prayer ended, she felt cool air tickle her neck. She raced to the side of the boat and gasped. Gray storm clouds were moving toward them. Soon rain began to pour down! She opened her mouth to catch the raindrops on her tongue.

"Quick!" cried *Mamãe*. "Grab buckets, pans—anything!"

Isabelle grabbed a pan and held it out. She wanted to catch all the water she could. Everyone worked together, laughing and celebrating. Soon they were having a giant soaking party! The storm lasted for 15 minutes. It was long enough for them to get all the water they needed. It was a miracle.

Soon the boat reached land. But they still had 1,500 miles (2,414 km) to go. Everyone got on a bus for the

The trip would be long and dangerous, but getting to the temple would be worth it.



PRICELESS BLESSINGS

“The blessings of the temple are priceless.”

President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018), “Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 93.



rest of the trip. For days, the bus jolted over the rough roads. One time it bounced so hard that the windshield broke! Sometimes they rode through hot, crowded cities. But at least the roads there weren't so bumpy!

Everyone was always grateful when they stopped at a village or town to eat. They ate at chapels or with Church members along the way. The first night, they arrived so late that Isabelle was afraid that no one would be waiting. “Don't worry,” *Mamãe* said with a tired smile. “Look!”

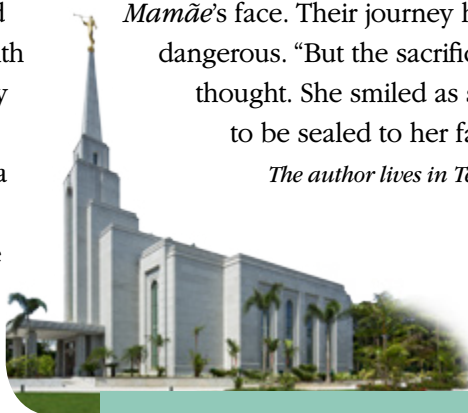
The branch president and Church members were lined up across the road. They held a banner that read “Sacrifice brings blessings.” Isabelle smiled. *Mamãe* was right!

After three bumpy days, they finally reached São Paulo. Isabelle stood on her seat to get a better view as the bus drove around a curve. Suddenly everyone on the bus burst into cheers. “*O templo! O templo!*” They could see the tall, thin temple spire rising above rows of palm trees. Sunlight shone on the golden angel Moroni.

Everyone was exhausted, but no one wanted to rest.

They wanted to be sealed right away. When it was time for her family to be sealed, Isabelle carefully dressed in white. As she walked into the sealing room, she saw her father beaming. Tears of joy streamed down *Mamãe's* face. Their journey had been long and even dangerous. “But the sacrifice was worth it,” Isabelle thought. She smiled as she took her place to be sealed to her family forever. ■

The author lives in Texas, USA.



In 2012, a temple was built in Manaus, Brazil, where Isabelle grew up. By then, Isabelle and the other children were grown up with families of their own. Many of them came to see this beautiful new temple and remember their own journey.

By Jenna Koford

Based on a true story

"I have a fam'ly here on earth. They are so good to me"
(Children's Songbook, 188).

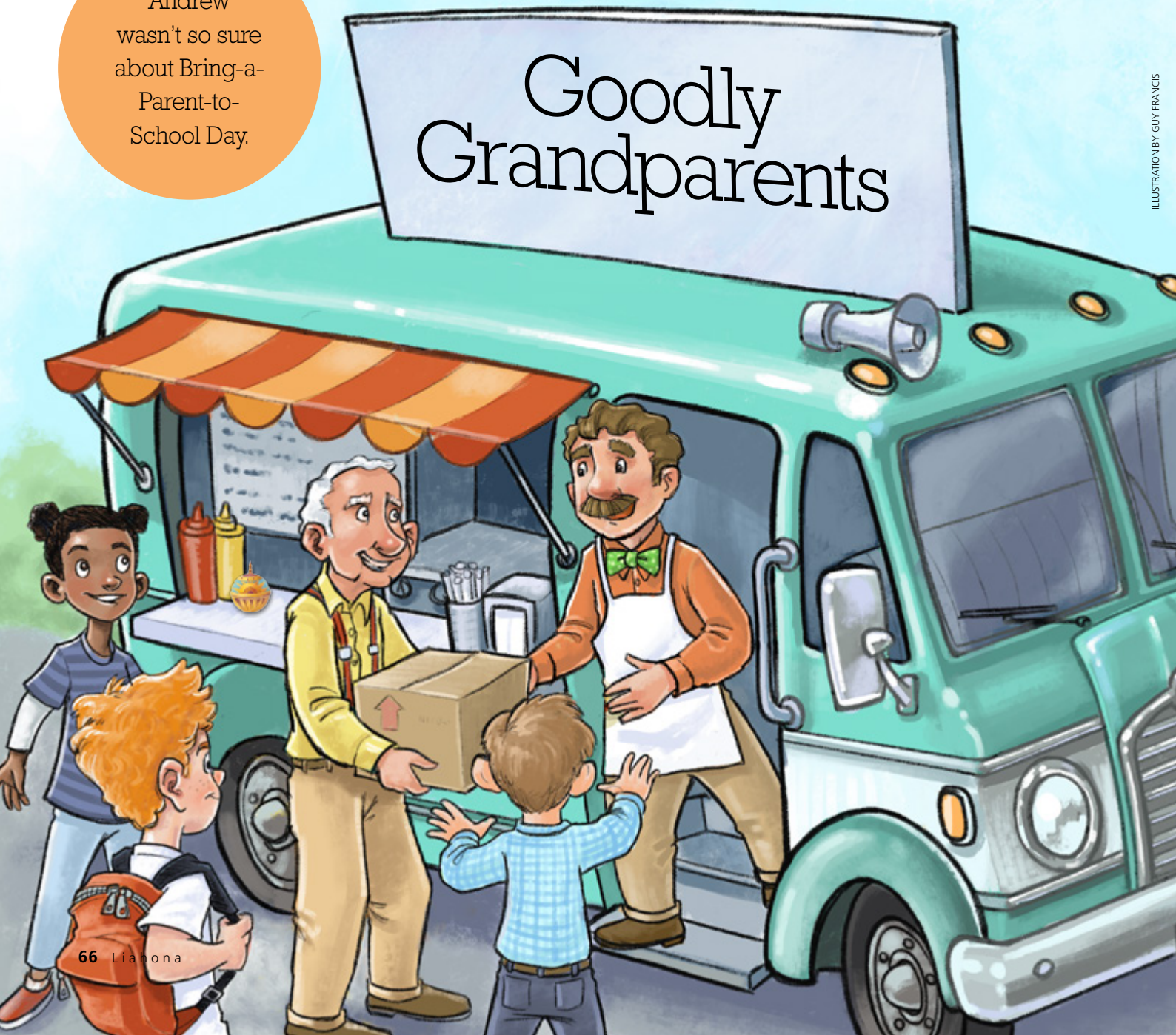
"Andrew! The bus is here!" Nana called.
Andrew raced out the door. He waved goodbye to Nana, Papa, and his little sister, Amy. Amy was too little to go to school, so she stayed home with Nana and Papa.

Andrew liked school. He liked playing with his friends at recess. He liked his teacher, Ms. Kimball.

After morning recess, Ms. Kimball said, "Next week we are going to have Bring-a-Parent-to-School Day. When your parent comes, make sure they bring something from their job to show us. We're excited to hear from them!"

Andrew
wasn't so sure
about Bring-a-
Parent-to-
School Day.

Goodly Grandparents



Andrew's face got hot. He didn't have anything to say about his parents. He didn't remember a lot about his mom. She left when he was little. And Andrew didn't even know his dad.

Andrew listened as other kids talked about their moms and dads. Tony's mom was a firefighter, and Jessica's dad worked at the zoo. Everyone hoped her dad would bring a monkey or sloth to class!

"What about your parents?" Tony asked Andrew.

Andrew looked at his feet. He shrugged. "I live with my grandparents."

Andrew loved Nana and Papa, but they didn't have cool jobs. Nana sold blankets and baby clothes. Papa drove a big food truck. Andrew wasn't so sure about Bring-a-Parent-to-School Day.

That night Andrew read the first chapter of the Book of Mormon: "I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents . . ." (1 Nephi 1:1).

"I don't live with my parents," Andrew thought. "I just live with Nana and Papa."

Just then, Amy walked into Andrew's room, hugging a fuzzy blanket. She held it up for Andrew to see. "Nana made!"

"Yeah, Nana made that blanket for you." Andrew smiled a little.

He thought about all the nice things Nana did for him—making breakfast before school, helping with homework, playing games with him and Amy. Nana was a lot like a mother.

Then Andrew thought about Papa. Papa read stories to Andrew every night. He helped with homework too. He also taught Andrew how to ride a bike. Papa was a lot like a father.

Andrew's smile got bigger. He was really grateful for Nana and Papa. He still felt nervous about bringing a grandparent to school. But it was going to be OK. "I may not have goodly parents," he thought, "but I have goodly grandparents, and that's something special."

On Bring-a-Parent-to-School Day, Andrew sat with Papa in the back of the class and listened to the other kids' parents. Tony's mom brought her firefighter uniform. She let everyone try on her helmet. Jessica's dad brought a turtle from the zoo.

"Your turn, Andrew," Ms. Kimball said.

Andrew walked to the front of the class with Papa. He took a deep breath and said, "My Papa drives a big truck and delivers food. He meets lots of people, and he works really hard."

Andrew looked up and saw Papa smiling. Then Papa talked about driving his truck. He also gave everyone a treat from his work! The kids in Andrew's class asked Papa lots of questions about his job.

Andrew was happy to have Papa with him. He and Papa and Nana and Amy were a family—and they were a goodly one. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA



Finally a Forever Family



By Jane McBride

Based on a true story

“Whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven” (Helaman 10:7).

What does ‘Families Are Forever’ mean?” Mia asked. She moved her game piece across the board. She and her best friend, Zoey, were playing a game in Zoey’s living room. On the wall was a picture that said, “Families Are Forever.” Mia liked the sound of that.

“It means that even after you die, you’re still a family,” Zoey explained. She put down a card and moved her game piece.

Mia looked around the room. It looked normal. There were couches, tables, pillows, and a TV. But Zoey’s house felt different from her own. “Do you have a forever family?” Mia asked.

Zoey looked up from the game with a smile. “Yes! My mom and dad were married in the temple. So we can be together forever.”

“Is that why your house feels different?” Mia asked.

Zoey looked confused. “Different?”

Mia didn’t know how to explain the feeling in Zoey’s house. It was happy and warm. But that sounded silly to say. “Never mind,” she said. “Let’s keep playing.”

That night Mia couldn’t stop thinking about Zoey’s forever family. She loved the feeling in Zoey’s house. Mia’s family was going to move to Ontario, Canada, in a few days. She wondered how their new house would feel.

“Mom, Zoey’s house feels so happy,” Mia said as Mom tucked her into bed. “I want our new house to feel like that.” Mia thought about how much she loved Mom, Dad, and her little brothers. “I want our family to be forever too.”

Mom listened quietly. Then she said, “I do too.”

The next day, Mom called Zoey’s mom. She found out that Zoey’s family went to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

“I want to go to that church,” Mia told her parents while they packed. Their house was almost empty now.

“Zoey’s mom said she could help us find a church building,” Dad said as he taped up a box.

Mia smiled and felt a flutter in her stomach. Maybe their new house could feel as warm and happy as Zoey’s!

Once they were settled in their new house, Mia’s family started going to church. The people there were very nice. Everyone called each other “Brother” and “Sister.” Mia went to Primary with her little brothers. She loved singing songs and reading the scriptures.

Soon two young women came to Mia’s house. Their names were Sister Justin and Sister Ramos, and they were missionaries. They told Mia’s family about Heavenly Father, Jesus, and the Book of Mormon. Mia loved hearing about the gospel. Even her brothers sat quietly and listened!

Mia told Sister Ramos and Sister Justin about Zoey’s house. “I want a forever family like Zoey’s.”

“Heavenly Father wants all of us to have forever families,” Sister Ramos said with a big smile. “He wants us to be happy.”

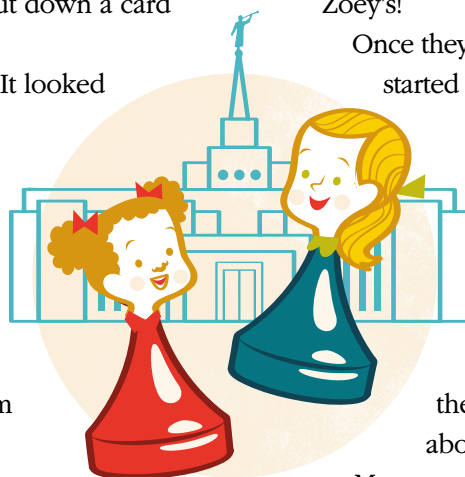
Soon Mia’s family decided to be baptized.

Zoey and her family drove all the way to Ontario for the baptisms. A year later, they came back again. This time it was because Mia and her family were being sealed in the temple!

The day of the sealing, Mia stood outside the temple with her family, dressed in white. They were all smiling from ear to ear. Mia felt warm and peaceful inside. “We’re a forever family now!” she said happily.

“That’s right,” Dad said. “We’re a forever family.” ■

The author lives in Colorado, USA.



A Friend and a Missionary

Hi!

My name is Juan Bautista, and I'm from Argentina.

I shine my light by sharing the gospel.



Best Friends

My best friend Facundo and I have known each other since we were five. We both love football! I invited him to a lot of Church activities.



2

Facundo's First Question

Once when Facundo was having dinner with us, he asked, "Why does your family always pray?" I said it's because Heavenly Father blesses us, and this is how we thank Him. He was amazed!



3

Family Home Evening

Facundo came to a family home evening when my brother Benjamin was getting ready for baptism. Facundo felt the Spirit, and he asked if he could get baptized too! My father then talked to Facundo's parents.

The missionaries taught Facundo's family. Then Facundo and his sister Augustine both got baptized! His parents come to church, but they haven't been baptized yet.



4

Facundo's Second Question

Facundo asked my mom if he would ever know as much as I do about God. She smiled and said that if he studies his scriptures and prays, he could learn even more!

HOW CAN YOU SHINE?

- Invite a friend to a Church activity or family home evening.
- Be a good example of kindness and love.
- Pray for help and inspiration.

SEND US A STAR!

Jesus asked us to "let your light so shine before men" (Matthew 5:16). How do you let your light shine? Cut out a star and write your story on it.

Ask a parent to email a picture of your star, along with their permission, to liahona@ldschurch.org.





“I have faith in and a testimony of Jesus Christ and of His role as our Savior and Redeemer.”

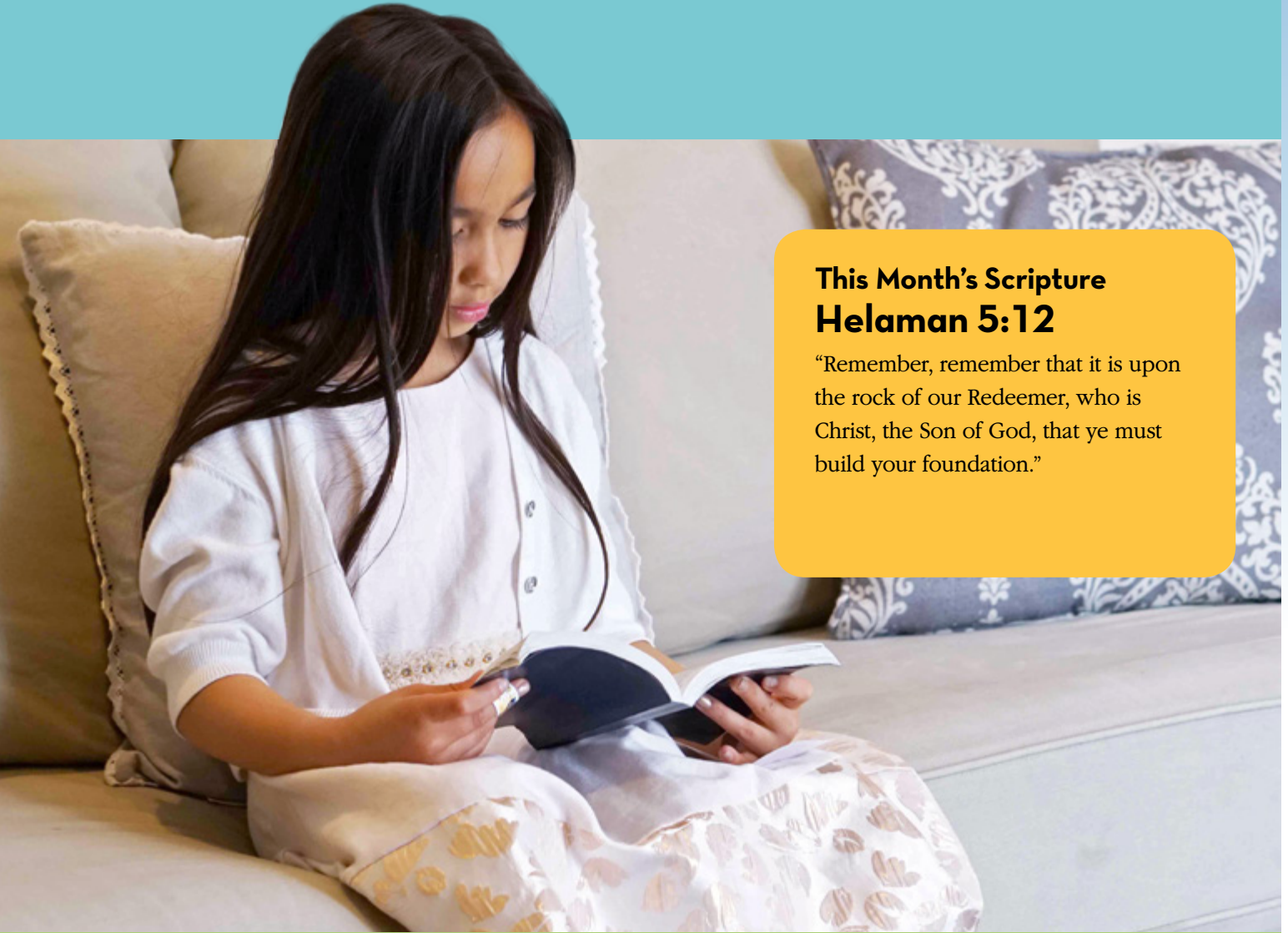
By Elder Gary E. Stevenson
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

*From “A Gospel Perspective” (Brigham Young University–Hawaii devotional, Sept. 19, 2017),
devotional.byuh.edu.*

Book of Mormon Reading Club

JOIN IN BY READING THE BOOK OF MORMON!

You can read on your own, with your family, or with a friend. Then send us a photo of you reading the Book of Mormon and tell us about something you've learned or your favorite story from the Book of Mormon. Submit it through liahona.lds.org (click "Submit an Article").



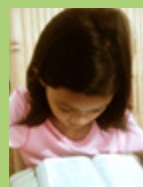
This Month's Scripture Helaman 5:12

"Remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation."



My family is reading the Book of Mormon. Sometimes we role-play the stories. This is so fun. I learn new words and things daily. Doing these things helps me stay focused on sacrament meeting and Primary. It also helps me stay close to my family.

Amaron I., age 7, Phnom Penh, Cambodia



I've loved reading the Book of Mormon ever since the missionaries introduced it to us. My favorite story is in the book of Mosiah, when King Benjamin led his people through his faith. I want to be faithful and obedient to what my parents ask me to do.

Janice S., age 10, Iloilo, Philippines

OUR PAGE



"First Vision," by Alana L., age 7, São Paulo, Brazil



Marco Z., age 9, Lima, Peru



I am very happy to be baptized in the true Church of Jesus Christ. I know the Book of Mormon is true, and I love to read it every day. It makes me a more responsible older brother to my siblings.

Andrei L., age 10, Iloilo, Philippines



Harada K., age 8, Yokohama, Japan

Ruth Was a Loyal Friend

A woman named Naomi lived with her two sons and their wives. When both sons died, Naomi told their wives that they could move back with their own families. But one of the wives, Ruth, was very loyal. She chose to stay and help take care of Naomi. Ruth went to gather grain from a nearby field. The owner had heard what a good person Ruth was. He was kind to Ruth. Ruth decided to marry him. Ruth and Naomi stayed good friends, and Naomi helped care for Ruth's son. Years later, Jesus was born into this family line. That means Ruth was one of Jesus's ancestors!

Read about Ruth in Ruth 1-4.



"Ruth was kind and loving," by Kylee Q., age 8, Virginia, USA

ILLUSTRATION BY DILLEEN MARSH



RUTH

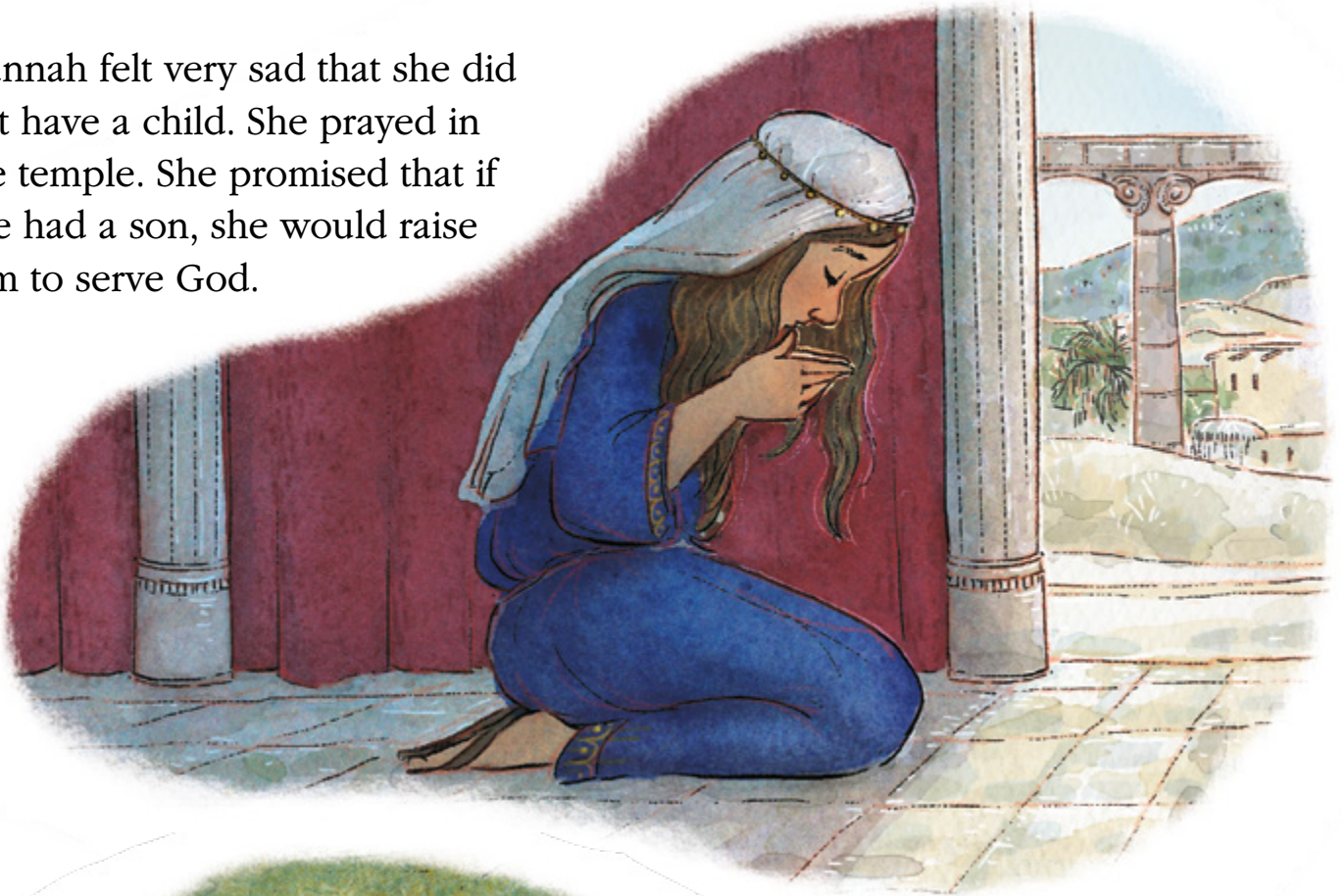
Ruth chose to be a loyal friend, and I can too!

- Memorize Ruth 1:16.
- To be loyal means to support someone even when it is hard. Write in your journal about a time someone was loyal to you.
- Make a new friend this week. Learn three fun things about them!
- I can be a good friend by ...

Hannah and Samuel

By Kim Webb Reid

Hannah felt very sad that she did not have a child. She prayed in the temple. She promised that if she had a son, she would raise him to serve God.



Hannah and her husband did have a baby! Hannah named him Samuel. She knew that God had answered her prayers.



As Samuel grew, Hannah kept her promise. She asked Eli, the priest at the temple, to teach Samuel how to serve God. Eli helped take care of Samuel.

One night when Samuel was in bed, he heard a voice. He asked if Eli had called him. Eli said that God was trying to speak to Samuel. The next time Samuel heard the voice, he listened. Then God spoke to Samuel. Samuel listened to God and followed Him.





I can learn about God and follow His commandments! ■

From 1 Samuel 1-3.

I Can Share with Others



ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT



By President
Ezra Taft Benson
(1899–1994)

THE BOOK OF MORMON BRINGS ABUNDANCE

There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study.

Is there not something deep in our hearts that longs to draw nearer to God, to be more like Him in our daily walk, to feel His presence with us constantly? If so, then the Book of Mormon will help us do so more than any other book.

It is not just that the Book of Mormon teaches us truth, though it indeed does that. It is not just that the Book of Mormon bears testimony of Christ, though it indeed does that, too. But there is something more. There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power



to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the strait and narrow path. The scriptures are called “the words of life” (D&C 84:85), and nowhere is that more true than it is of the Book of Mormon. When you begin to hunger and thirst after those words, you will find life in greater and greater abundance. . . .

These promises—increased love and harmony in the home, greater respect between parent and child, increased spirituality and righteousness—are not

idle promises, but exactly what the Prophet Joseph Smith meant when he said the Book of Mormon will help us draw nearer to God. . . .

Over ten years ago I made the following statement regarding the Book of Mormon:

“Do eternal consequences rest upon our response to this book? Yes, either to our blessing or our condemnation.

“Every Latter-day Saint should make the study of this book a lifetime pursuit. Otherwise he is placing his soul in jeopardy and neglecting that which could give spiritual and intellectual unity to his whole life. There is a difference between a convert who is built on the rock of Christ through the Book of Mormon and stays hold of that iron rod, and one who is not.”

. . . Let us not remain under condemnation . . . by treating lightly this great and marvelous gift the Lord has given to us. Rather, let us win the promises associated with treasuring it up in our hearts. ■

From “The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” Ensign, Nov. 1986, 4–7.