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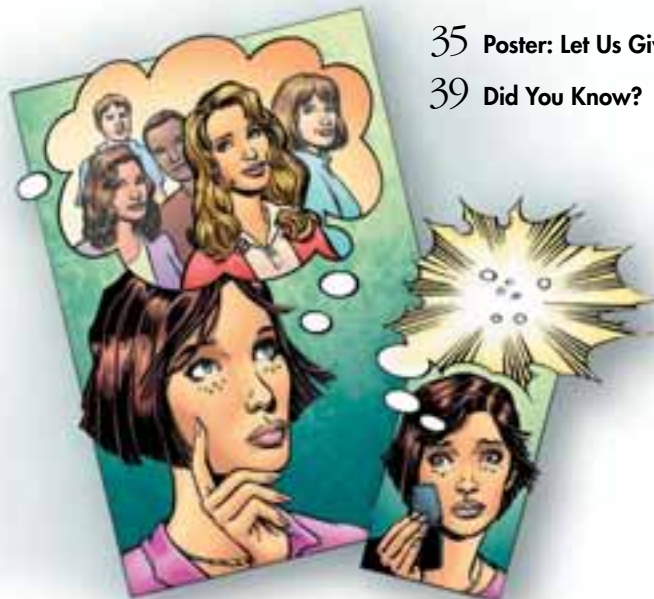
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Illustration by Scott
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See if you can find
the English CTR
ring hidden in this
issue. Choose the
right page!



Comment

A Spiritual Treasure

When I first became a member of
the Church, I was not interested in
subscribing to the *Liahona*. Then I
was less active for a time. When I set
a goal to return to Church activity, I
subscribed to the *Liahona*. It was then
that I realized what a spiritual treasure
I had missed out on. This magazine is
not just information from the Church
but a communication channel among
the members, through which it is possible
to share testimonies, experiences,
messages, and counsel for our time.
The magazine contains teachings to be
applied daily.

Cláudia Souza Alencar, Brazil

Encouraging and Instructive

I am not a member of your church,
but I feel that the *Liahona*, which
I receive from a friend at work, is
encouraging. It is also very instructive,
especially for children and youth. And
it helps me too. I like the articles from
regular members who share experi-
ences that have made their faith grow.
The illustrations are especially fascinat-
ing to me. They are drawn so clearly
and are so expressive. So let me say,
well done and thank you very much.
Beatrice Karrer Ulrich, Germany

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may be edited for length or clarity.



The Influence of Righteous Women

BY PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

The scriptures give us names of several women who have blessed individuals and generations with their spiritual gifts. Eve, the mother of all living; Sarah; Rebekah; Rachel; Martha; Elisabeth; and Mary, the mother of our Savior, will always be honored and remembered. The scriptures also mention women whose names are unknown to us but who bless our lives through their examples and teachings, like the woman of Samaria whom Jesus met at the well of Sychar (see John 4), the ideal wife and mother described in Proverbs 31, and the faithful woman who was made whole just by touching the Savior's clothes (see Mark 5:25–34).

As we look at the history of this earth and at the history of the restored Church of Jesus Christ, it becomes obvious that women hold a special place in our Father's plan for the eternal happiness and well-being of His children.

I hope that my dear sisters throughout the world—grandmothers, mothers, aunts, and friends—never underestimate the power of their influence for good, especially in the lives of our precious children and youth!

President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) said, “Without the devotion and absolute testimony of the living God in the hearts of our mothers, this Church would die.”¹ And the writer of Proverbs said, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

President Gordon B. Hinckley counseled the women of the Church:

“It is so tremendously important that the women of the Church stand strong and immovable for that which is correct and proper under the plan of the Lord. . . .

“We call upon the women of the Church to stand together for righteousness. They must begin in their own homes. They can teach it in their classes. They can voice it in their communities.”²

There is a saying that big gates move on small hinges. Sisters, your example in seemingly small things will make a big difference in the lives of our young people. The way you dress and groom yourselves, the way you talk, the way you pray, the way you testify, the way you live every day will make the difference. This includes which TV shows you watch, which music you prefer, and how



Women hold a special place in our Father's plan for the eternal happiness and well-being of His children.



The lives of women in the Church are a powerful witness that spiritual gifts, promises, and blessings of the Lord are given to all those who qualify, “that all may be benefited.”

you use the Internet. If you love to go to the temple, the young people who value your example will also love to go. If you adapt your wardrobe to the temple garment and not the other way around, they will know what you consider important, and they will learn from you.

You are marvelous sisters and great examples. Our youth are blessed by you, and the Lord loves you for that.

An Example of Faith

Let me share some thoughts about Sister Carmen Reich, my mother-in-law, who was truly an elect lady. She embraced the gospel in a most difficult and dark time of her life, and she liberated herself from grief and sorrow.

As a young woman—a widow and the mother of two young girls—she freed herself from a world of old traditions and moved into a world of great spirituality. She embraced the teachings of the gospel, with its intellectual and spiritual power, on a fast track. When the missionaries gave her the Book of Mormon and invited her to read the verses they had marked, she read the whole book within

only a few days. She learned things beyond the understanding of her peers because she learned them by the Spirit of God. She was the humblest of the humble, the wisest of the wise, because she was willing and pure enough to believe when God had spoken.

She was baptized on November 7, 1954. Only a few weeks after her baptism, she was asked by the missionary who baptized her to write her testimony. The missionary wanted to use her testimony in

his teaching to help others feel the true spirit of conversion. Fortunately, the missionary kept the handwritten original for more than 40 years, and then he returned it to her as a very special and loving gift.

A Testimony Born of the Spirit

Let me share with you parts of her written testimony. Please keep in mind that she wrote these words only a few weeks after hearing about the gospel. Before the missionaries came, she had never heard anything about the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith, or Mormons in general. In 1954 there were no temples outside the continental United States, except in Canada and Hawaii.

This is the English translation of Sister Reich’s handwritten testimony:

“Special characteristics of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that are not present in other religious communities include, above all, modern revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

“The Book of Mormon in its clear and pure language is next, with all the instructions and promises for the Church of Jesus

Christ; it is truly a second witness, together with the Bible, that Jesus Christ lives.

“Bound together by faith in a personal God, that is, God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who facilitates prayer and also influences personally.

“Also, faith in the premortal life, the preexistence, the purpose of our earthly life, and our life after death is so valuable for us and especially interesting and informative. It is clearly laid out, and our lives receive new meaning and direction.

“The Church has given us the Word of Wisdom as a guide to keep body and spirit in the most perfect shape possible to realize our desire and goal. So we keep our bodies healthy and improve them. All this from the knowledge that we will take them up again after death in the same form.

“Totally new to me, of course, is temple work with its many sacred ordinances, having families together forever. All this was given through revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith.”

Carmen Reich, my dear mother-in-law, passed away in 2000 at age 83.

A Unique Feminine Identity

The lives of women in the Church are a powerful witness that spiritual gifts, promises, and blessings of the Lord are given to all those who qualify, “that all may be benefited” (D&C 46:9; see verses 9–26). The doctrines of the restored gospel create a wonderful and “unique feminine identity that encourages women to develop their abilities” as true and literal daughters of God.³ Through serving in the Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary organizations—not to mention their private acts of love and service—women

have always played and will always play an important part in helping “bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (D&C 6:6). They care for the poor and the sick; serve proselytizing, welfare, humanitarian, and other missions; teach children, youth, and adults; and contribute to the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Saints in many other ways.



Because their potential for good is so great and their gifts so diverse, women may find themselves in roles that vary with their circumstances in life. Some women, in fact, must fill many roles simultaneously. For this reason, Latter-day Saint women are encouraged to acquire an education and training that will qualify them both for homemaking and raising a righteous family and for earning a living outside the home if the occasion requires.

We are living in a great season for all women in the Church. Sisters, you are an essential part of our Heavenly Father’s plan

Women will always play an important part in helping “bring forth and establish the cause of Zion.”



The virtue of your own life will be a light to those who sit in darkness, because you are a living witness of the fulness of the gospel.

for eternal happiness; you are endowed with a divine birthright. You are the real builders of nations wherever you live, because strong homes of love and peace will bring security to any nation. I hope you understand that, and I hope the men of the Church understand it too.

What you sisters do today will determine how the principles of the restored gospel can influence the nations of the world tomorrow. It will determine how these heavenly rays of the gospel will light every land in the future.⁴

Though we often speak of the influence of women on future generations, please do not underestimate the influence you can have today. President David O. McKay (1873–1970) said that the principal reason the Church was organized is “to make life sweet today, to give contentment to the heart today, to bring salvation today. . . .

“Some of us look forward to a time in the future—salvation and exaltation in the world

to come—but today is part of eternity.”⁵

Blessings beyond Imagining

As you live up to this mission, in whatever life circumstance you find yourself—as a wife, as a mother, as a single mother, as a divorced woman, as a widowed or a single woman—the Lord our God will open up responsibilities and blessings far beyond your ability to imagine.

May I invite you to rise to the great potential within you. But

don’t reach beyond your capacity. Don’t set goals beyond your capacity to achieve. Don’t feel guilty or dwell on thoughts of failure. Don’t compare yourself with others. Do the best you can, and the Lord will provide the rest. Have faith and confidence in Him, and you will see miracles happen in your life and the lives of your loved ones. The virtue of your own life will be a light to those who sit in darkness, because you are a living witness of the fulness of the gospel (see D&C 45:28). Wherever you have been planted on this beautiful but often troubled earth of ours, you can be the one to “succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees” (D&C 81:5).

My dear sisters, as you live your daily life with all its blessings and challenges, let me assure you that the Lord loves you. He knows you. He listens to your prayers, and He answers those prayers, wherever on this world you may be. He wants you to succeed in this life and in eternity.

Brethren, I pray that we as priesthood holders—as husbands, fathers, sons, brothers,

and friends of these choice women—may see them as the Lord sees them, as daughters of God with limitless potential to influence the world for good.

In the early days of the Restoration, the Lord spoke to Emma Smith through her husband, the Prophet Joseph Smith, giving her instructions and blessings: “[Be] faithful and walk in the paths of virtue before me. . . . Thou needest not fear. . . . Thou shalt lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better. . . . Lift up thy heart and rejoice. . . . And a crown of righteousness thou shalt receive” (D&C 25:2, 9, 10, 13, 15).

Of this revelation, the Lord declared, “This is my voice unto all” (verse 16).

Later, the Prophet Joseph Smith told the sisters, “If you live up to your privileges, the angels cannot be restrained from being your associates.”⁶

Of these truths I testify, and I extend to you my love and my blessing as an Apostle of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ■

NOTES

1. Heber J. Grant, *Gospel Standards*, comp. G. Homer Durham (1941), 151.
2. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Standing Strong and Immovable,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 10, 2004, 20.
3. “Women, Roles of: Historical and Sociological Development,” in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. (1992), 4:1574.
4. See “Hark, All Ye Nations!” *Hymns*, no. 264.
5. David O. McKay, *Pathways to Happiness*, comp. Llewelyn R. McKay (1957), 291–92.
6. *History of the Church*, 4:605.



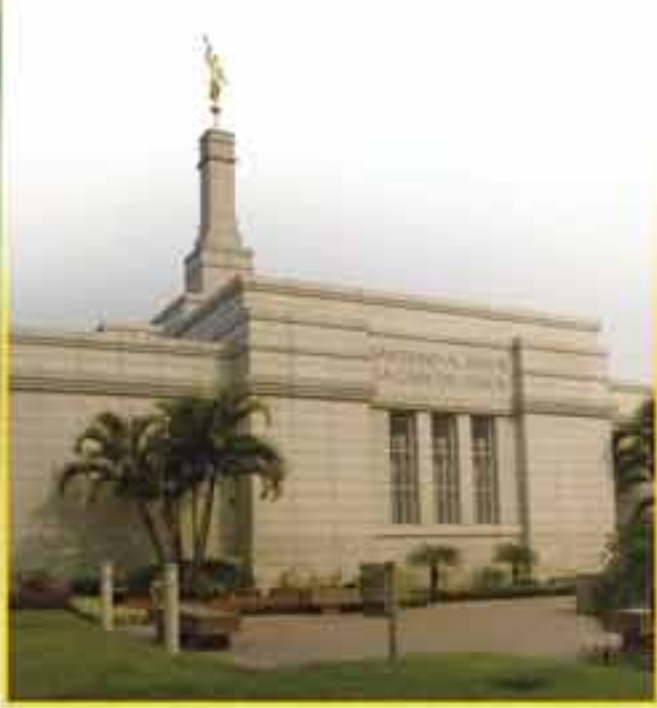
IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. From the section “An Example of Faith,” read President Uchtdorf’s description of his mother-in-law, Carmen Reich. Then read Sister Reich’s testimony, and discuss the gospel principles

she lists. Close by inviting family members to share examples of righteous women who have influenced their lives for good.

2. Referring to the section “A Unique Feminine Identity,” discuss the characteristics of a righteous woman. Using examples from the article, review ways that women can be righteous influences on others. Conclude by reading from the last section of the article.



One Family's

A Paraguayan woman's firmness in her newfound faith started a tradition of gospel service that now links five generations of her family.

BY DON L. SEARLE
Church Magazines

The children of Eulogia Diaz and Delio Cosme Sanchez remember this about their mother's service as branch Primary president: Back when Primary was held on weekday afternoons, Eulogia would shepherd a large group of children from her neighborhood—"our little band," one of her daughters recalls—on the long walk to church each week. It didn't matter whether or not they were members; if they wanted to be there and their parents allowed it, Eulogia would bring them along. She wanted as many children as possible to enjoy the blessings of Primary.

The children of Eulogia and Delio remember this of their father's service as branch president: He was always first at the meetinghouse on Sunday morning and last to leave later in the day, after he had made sure everything was in order. He continued that same dedication as the first president of the Paraguay District, back when it was part of the Uruguay-Paraguay Mission.

The Sanchez children, now middle-aged, some with grandchildren of their own, remember this too: For their parents, there was never a good reason to miss Church meetings. The family made that long walk to the

meetinghouse rain or shine. And in those early years when there were fewer members in the branch, family members took on many roles from teaching or leading music to helping clean the building.

The Church has since made great strides in Paraguay. Now there are 10 stakes and 11 districts, with approximately 66,000 members. The country has two missions. Paraguay hosts one of only four Beehive Clothing plants, producing temple clothing and garments, outside the United States.

The historic meetinghouse everyone loved, the first Church-built meetinghouse in the country—the one that everyone called "the Moroni chapel" because that was the name of a ward housed there—is gone. A temple now stands in its place. The Asunción Paraguay Temple is the centerpiece of "la Manzana Mormona"—roughly translated, the Temple Square of Paraguay.

Paraguayan members feel greatly blessed because of the progress. But older members have not forgotten the sacrifices that were necessary to build the foundations of today's Church in their country.

Building a Heritage

Eulogia Diaz de Sanchez was baptized in October 1960. A parish priest tried to persuade her to renounce the Church and return to the parish, but she was too sure of the testimony she had gained to be dissuaded.


Her mother, Castorina, was baptized the following month, along with Eulogia's daughter, Liduvina. Another daughter, Lina, wanted to be baptized, but her new husband opposed it.

Eulogia's husband, Delio, joined the Church in January 1961. A mechanic, Delio told his business partner he would no longer be able to work on Sunday. His partner accepted that easily because he valued hard-working Delio

Heritage of Service

Members of the extended Sanchez family gather for a family party. Opposite page: The Asunción Paraguay Temple.





and his contribution to the business. The partner would never regret his decision.

The story of Delio and Eulogia Sanchez and their descendants underscores the enduring power of example.

“I believe my parents’ love and patience helped us live our lives sharing the gospel,” Lina says. Even though she was not able to be baptized at first, she served in the Church as faithfully as anyone could who was not a member. Eventually, in 1986, when her husband’s opposition had softened because of the example of his wife and children, Lina joyfully entered the waters of baptism.

Her sister, Liduvina, recalls that their parents were constantly involved in sharing the gospel. For a time in the 1970s, the family home, where the aged Eulogia still lives, served also as a meetinghouse on Sundays. In addition to the more than 60 descendants of Delio and Eulogia in the Church, there are more than two dozen other people who joined because of their example of Christlike living. Liduvina says her parents were also examples of honesty, teaching their children never to do anything of which they would later be ashamed.

Delio and Eulogia were known for their kindness. Liduvina recalls that when the family was ready to eat a meal, their father might say, thinking of someone nearby, “I wonder if so-and-so has a plate of food right now.” He would ask a family member to take a plate of food to that person before the family ate.

Lina and her family lived next door to her parents for many years. Lina’s son, Enrique Ojeda, says of Delio, “My grandfather was always an example of the priesthood—those qualities mentioned in Doctrine and Covenants section 121 [verses 41–45].” Enrique says his grandmother Eulogia “is a valiant woman—valiant in her faith and valiant in her testimony.” Many people who were not members of the Church came to live in his grandparents’ home for a time (when Delio and Eulogia generously offered needed help) and left as members of the Church because of their example.

The children of Delio and Eulogia followed parental

example as they grew into adulthood and started families of their own. They too have served in many Church callings. Liduvina served a mission and worked for the Church for many years in Uruguay before returning to her native Paraguay. Delio and Eulogia’s son Silvio needed some time before parental example also helped bring him into the Church, but he too followed his parents’ pattern of service. He later helped establish a branch in Argentina, where he lived for a time.

New Generations

Enrique was born the year his grandfather Delio was baptized into the Church. Growing up, he frequently spent time with his grandparents next door or with his aunts, all of whom were active in the Church. (He calls Liduvina his second mother.) Though his father and mother were not members in his early years, “my brothers and sisters and I grew up in the Church.”

His father, Vicente, he recalls, wanted nothing to do with the Church—did not even want to talk about it. When Vicente’s children tried to give him a Book of Mormon, he literally tossed it back at them. But, Enrique says, “it was the example of his children that eventually changed my father.” Enrique’s patriarchal blessing promised that his father would join the Church because of the example of his children. Enrique and the rest of the family clung to that promise.

In 1986, while Enrique’s younger brother was serving a mission, their father’s opposition to the Church had softened enough for him to give consent for his wife to be baptized. After 25 years of attending and serving as she could, Lina was finally a member. Her husband, however, was far from ready to take that step. Family life went on for several more years with everyone but Vicente as a member of the Church. Then one Sunday morning in 2002, Vicente got up and dressed in his suit, ready to go to church—ready to be taught. He was baptized shortly afterward, and he and his wife were sealed in the temple in 2003.

Now Enrique’s generation has children who are

growing up in the Church, following in their own parents' footsteps. Eulogia and Delio's descendants in the Church include 6 children, 18 grandchildren (4 of whom served missions), and 23 great-grandchildren—so far. The choices that these great-grandchildren make are shaped by the teachings they receive in their homes.

Enrique's 19-year-old daughter, Adriana, says that of course there will always be temptations to face in life. When she and her siblings and cousins face them, she says, "We make the choices we make because of our testimonies." Her 18-year-old sister, Vivian, adds that when friends or acquaintances wonder why they do not smoke or drink or take part in some of the other practices that their friends have adopted, the opportunity to explain their standards is an opportunity to be a missionary.

William Da Silva, 19, is another of Eulogia's great-grandchildren; he is a son of Lina's daughter, Mercedes Ojeda de Da Silva. Like his mother, William was baptized at age eight and grew up in the Church. His older sister and brother have served missions, and now he is serving in the Uruguay Montevideo West Mission. William says that because of the teachings they have received in their homes, he, his brother and sister, and his cousins who are active in the Church operate from a different, stronger spiritual foundation than many of their friends. "It's interesting how much our friends or their parents have confidence in us," he comments. Parents of his friends, he explains, often tell their sons or daughters that if William or someone like Adriana or Vivian is attending an event, "then you can go too, because I know nothing bad will be going on."



Maintaining Their Standards

Adriana wears a long skirt that has been altered by the insertion of a panel in the side seam to close up what would have been a high slit. Her mother, Lydia (Enrique's wife), and her aunt Mercedes point out that it is often difficult for Paraguayan women to find modest clothing in stores, so the Sanchez descendants have done what others are often forced to do—make their own alterations or sew their own clothing. Lina, Mercedes' mother and Lydia's mother-in-law, has served as family seamstress, but now the younger women are also learning sewing skills.

Mercedes de Da Silva says life was not particularly hard for her while she was growing up as one of a few Latter-day Saints in her neighborhood. "My friends all knew I was a member of the Church," she explains. "They respected my beliefs." She says she was fortunate also to attend a Latter-day Saint school that existed in Paraguay for a time. "For my children, this stage of life is much more difficult than it was for me." The standards

Eulogia Diaz de Sanchez (center) led the way into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for her family in 1960. Daughters Liduvina (left) and Lina learned of serving in the Church by watching their parents' examples, and they in turn have passed this heritage of service on to their descendants.



Three great-grand-children of Eulogia Diaz de Sanchez take part in family home evening. From left: Eduardo, Adriana, and Vivian Ojeda. They are children of Eulogia's grandson Enrique and his wife, Lydia.

of society are now far more permissive. Mercedes says she and her husband, Ernesto Da Silva, have maintained high standards in their home, including a curfew even for their older children. “We talk a lot with them about the gospel, and we have family home evenings,” she says. “It’s a great strength for our children, and they know that.” President Ernesto Da Silva was released as an Area Seventy in April of this year and is now serving as president of the Uruguay Montevideo Mission.

The Da Silvas’ son and daughter who served missions, Christian and Karen, wrote home, in fact, to thank their parents for the high standards they were taught and for strong parental examples. Karen Da Silva, who returned from the Argentina Córdoba Mission in 2008, explains: “Since I was small, my grandparents and my parents have taught me not only by their words but also by their actions. They really lived what they taught.” What she had learned in her home, she says, helped her as a missionary to teach of the

blessings that come through obedience.

Christian, who recently returned from the California San Bernardino Mission, echoes his sister’s comments about the importance of parental example in his life and adds, “My own testimony of the gospel grew as I applied the teachings of my parents and grandparents in my life.” This happened in the way Alma described. Christian explains that he made a place in his heart for the seed to be sown, his parents taught him the

truth, and he saw in their lives that the fruit of the seed was good (see Alma 32:27–43). “I hope to go on nurturing with faith, nurturing the tree—my testimony—so it will take root, grow, and go on producing fruit.”

Mercedes de Da Silva recalls that as a young girl, when she saw the effect of gospel living on her parents’ and grandparents lives, “I always thought, ‘When I grow up, I will do the same.’”

Her brother Enrique says gospel living offers certain keys to rearing children in faith. “Three things: teach them the word, teach them by example, and help them learn the gospel as a way of life.”

Through the gospel, he says, his and his wife’s children, along with others reared in Latter-day Saint homes in Paraguay, can put down spiritual roots that many other young people do not have. “Their lives have a path—a purpose,” Enrique says. Their goals are eternal, and with the help of faithful, obedient parents, they are learning how to achieve them. ■

I KNOW IT IS TRUE

By Peter Amoa-Ohenakwah

Since my childhood I have heard members of the Church bear testimony of the Book of Mormon. I thought the words “I know it is true” were just traditional words that every member recited. It wasn’t until I entered the mission field to serve in Nigeria that I learned the truth behind the words.

One night my companion and I were returning home. We were riding our bicycles on a dark, untarred road that had deteriorated because of rain. Due to the water and the condition of the road, my companion crashed and fell off his bike. His clothing, his scripture bag—everything he had—was stained and wet.

When we finally reached our apartment, we carefully cleaned and dried everything damaged in the accident—except for the two copies of the Book of Mormon that remained in his bag after our day of proselytizing. I thought we didn’t need to worry about those copies because we had so many more in our apartment.

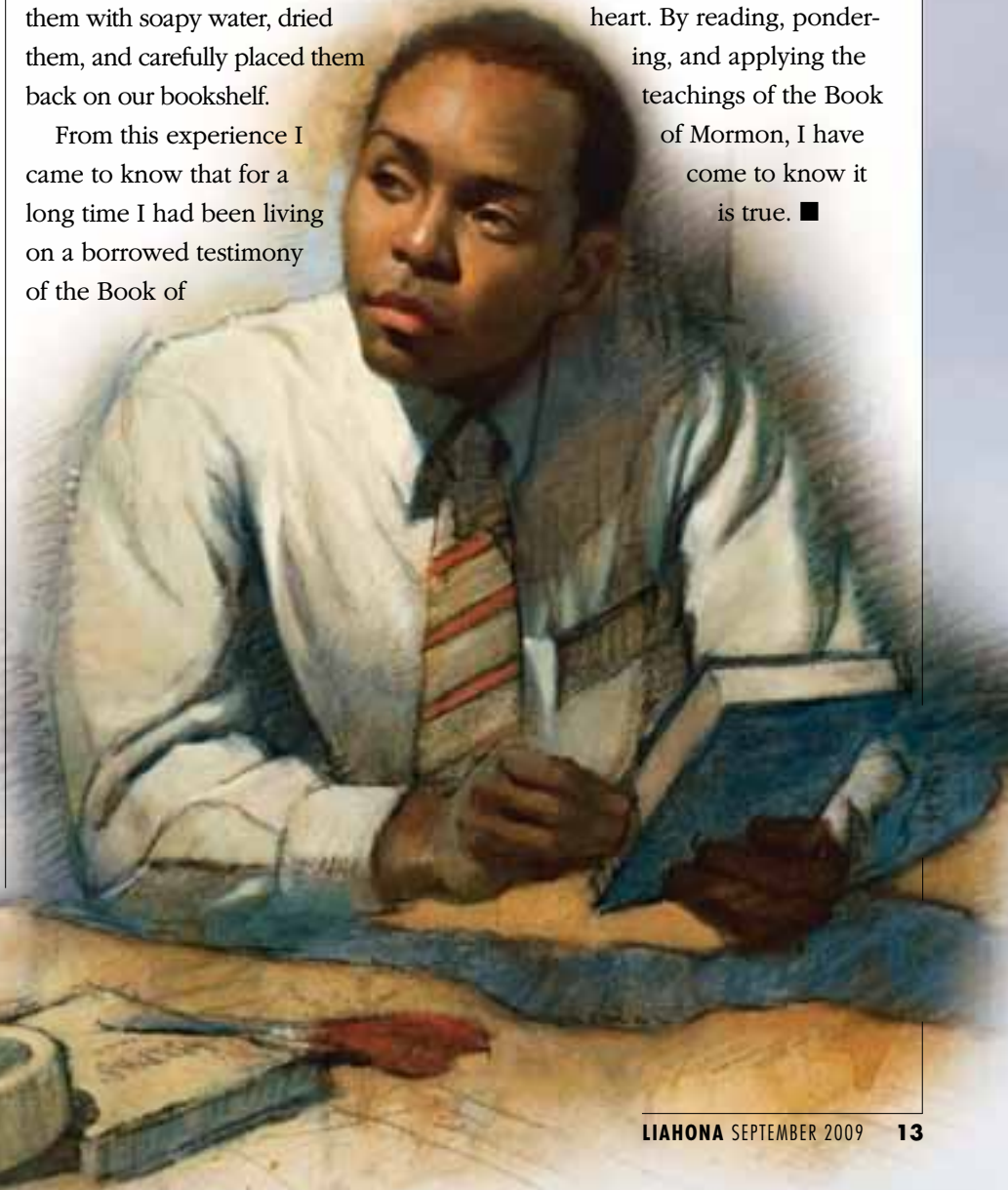
Several months after the incident, I was looking for a way to fix my torn hymnbook cover. I came across the stained copies of the Book of Mormon we had abandoned on a shelf and saw that the covers would be good for fixing my hymnbook. But as I was

about to cut the covers off the books, I was pierced in my heart: “Is this not the book you are preaching about? Is this the way to treat it? What would your investigators think?” I sat down and pondered for a long time. Then, instead of cutting the covers, I cleaned them with soapy water, dried them, and carefully placed them back on our bookshelf.

From this experience I came to know that for a long time I had been living on a borrowed testimony of the Book of

Mormon, even though I had attended seminary and institute. I have since come closer to this book, and I value it much more. I realize that our conviction of the sacredness of the Book of Mormon comes as we get to know it through experiences of the

heart. By reading, pondering, and applying the teachings of the Book of Mormon, I have come to know it is true. ■





Temple Teens in Aberdeen

For the youth of the Aberdeen Scotland Stake, an annual visit to the temple is a life-changing experience.

BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE
Church Magazines

Iwould not miss it for the world,” says Bethany Gilmour, 17, of the Bridge of Don Ward. “That one week at the temple strengthens my testimony more than

anything. And it keeps me wanting to come back every year. There are things I’ve learned on these temple trips that will stay with me for the rest of my life—things that will help me make the right choices in my life.”

This is just the kind of statement Aberdeen Scotland Stake president Christopher Payne said to expect if you asked the youth of his stake about their annual visit to the Preston England Temple. He wasn’t exaggerating.

Every summer the 60 to 70 young men and young women of the Aberdeen stake, along with their adult leaders and some young single adults from the stake, make the 6½-hour drive to Preston, England. There they spend 6 days at the temple. Every morning they’re in the baptistry for baptisms and confirmations; afternoons they’re busy with activities and service projects; evenings they’re gathering for firesides and scripture study. Their temple week ends with a testimony meeting that usually lasts about four hours. But the truly remarkable thing about these 6 days at the temple is how they affect the other 359 days of the year.



When these youth got together to discuss their annual visit to the temple, one after another agreed that things in life just seem to line up better for them when they are doing their best to keep the Lord’s commandments. There’s something special about these teens, and you can see it in their faces.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE AND COURTESY OF ABERDEEN SCOTLAND STAKE, EXCEPT AS NOTED; PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESTON ENGLAND TEMPLE BY JOHN LUKE

Temple Worthy All Year

The changes the temple brings in the lives of these youth are not short-term; they're a long-term transformation. Melanie Bews, 17, of the Aberdeen Ward says it this way: "The day you leave the temple you're preparing to go on the next trip. Throughout the whole year you're being worthy for something. You're striving to be worthy to go to the temple again." Melanie talks about a presentation from the stake youth leaders that included a poster with eight steps to help prepare them for the temple. "I used it as a checklist to make sure I was doing as much as I could to prepare. There were some things on the list I hadn't been doing which I started to do, like keeping a separate journal for spiritual experiences. That is one thing I've continued doing still."

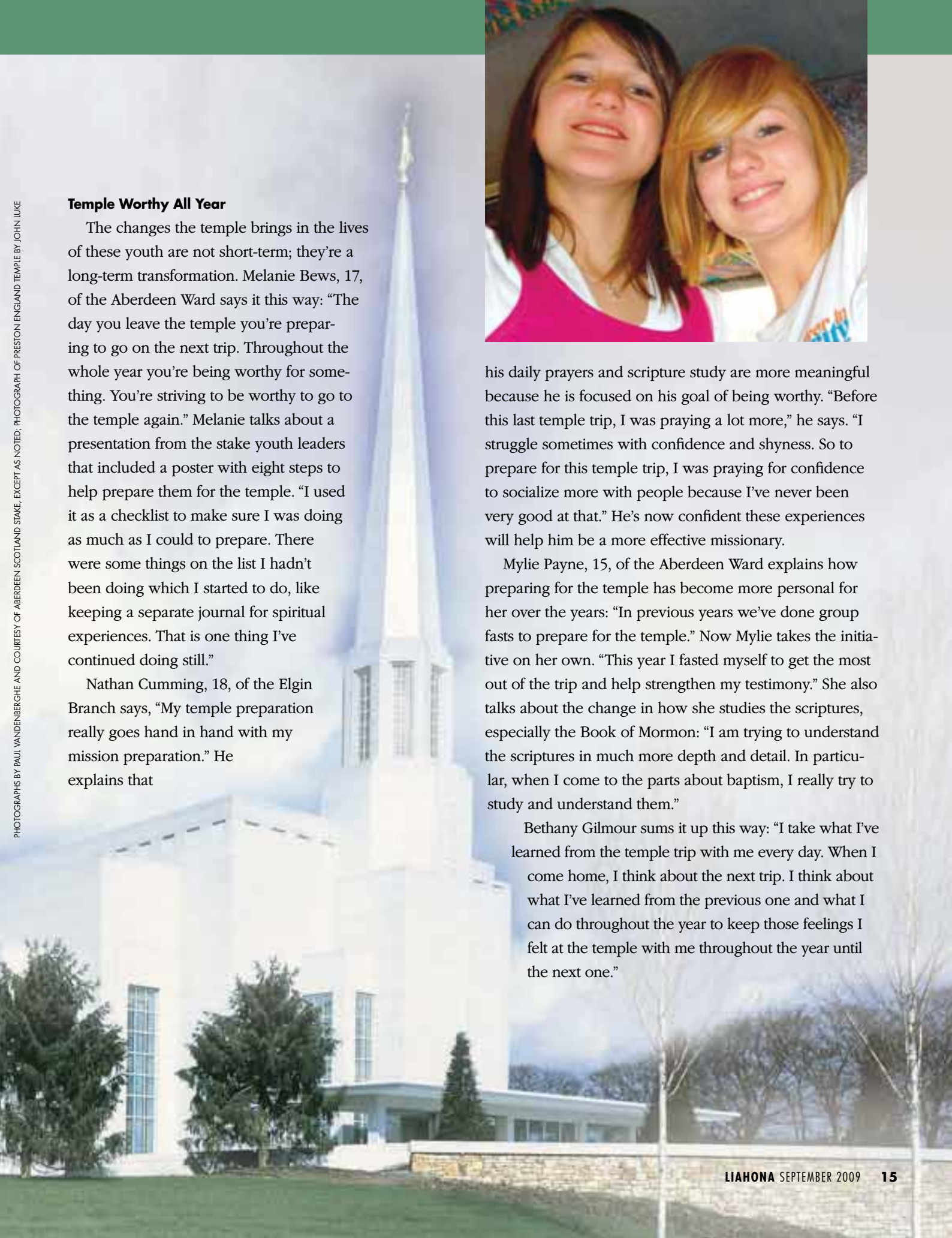
Nathan Cumming, 18, of the Elgin Branch says, "My temple preparation really goes hand in hand with my mission preparation." He explains that



his daily prayers and scripture study are more meaningful because he is focused on his goal of being worthy. "Before this last temple trip, I was praying a lot more," he says. "I struggle sometimes with confidence and shyness. So to prepare for this temple trip, I was praying for confidence to socialize more with people because I've never been very good at that." He's now confident these experiences will help him be a more effective missionary.

Mylie Payne, 15, of the Aberdeen Ward explains how preparing for the temple has become more personal for her over the years: "In previous years we've done group fasts to prepare for the temple." Now Mylie takes the initiative on her own. "This year I fasted myself to get the most out of the trip and help strengthen my testimony." She also talks about the change in how she studies the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon: "I am trying to understand the scriptures in much more depth and detail. In particular, when I come to the parts about baptism, I really try to study and understand them."

Bethany Gilmour sums it up this way: "I take what I've learned from the temple trip with me every day. When I come home, I think about the next trip. I think about what I've learned from the previous one and what I can do throughout the year to keep those feelings I felt at the temple with me throughout the year until the next one."





Highlights of the Highlight

“The temple trip is the highlight of the year,” says Hope Fraser, 18, of the Bridge of Don Ward. “Everyone looks forward to it.” But within that highlight of the year are highlights for each youth who attends. What stands out in Hope’s memory of this year’s visit to the temple was the special Laurel meeting. “It was amazing,” she says. “We were meant to be talking about dating and situations you’re not meant to get into. We ended up talking about the gratitude we felt towards each other.” It was an experience that even the Laurel advisers remember with fondness.

James Bowcutt, 18, of the Elgin Branch says the highlight of his service in the temple was having the chance to be baptized for some of his ancestors. For some time before the trip

James carried with him the names of his earlier family members for whom he would be doing baptisms. “I could read the names and really get to know them. I actually felt that they belonged to me, and I was proud to have my family names in my hands,” he says. “I definitely felt a stronger connection with people beyond the veil.”



The days spent at the Preston England Temple are both full and fulfilling. Each morning the youth are in the baptistry; then they’re busy with service projects and firesides. And there is also time for fun activities such as football.



Mylie Payne talks excitedly about being able to serve at the temple, not only by performing ordinances inside but by cleaning and weeding outside. “I loved being able to serve on the grounds. There was something special about making the Lord’s house seem even more beautiful,” she says. “It was amazing.”

“My favorite part was spending time with friends but not going shopping,” says Melanie Bews. “It was so fun to spend time with my friends around the temple and to get to know them better and build memories that are not so worldly. The best was spending time with each other while building our testimonies.”

The highlight mentioned most often by the youth was the testimony meeting. Janine Gall, 17, of the Buchan Ward says, “Even though the testimony meeting was long, it wasn’t paining at all. It felt like it only lasted about 10 minutes.” She adds that “it was good to hear other people’s testimonies to strengthen yours and to come closer to each other as youth. Because we are such a small community of youth, we need to get to know each other better, and I think we do that very well at the temple.”

Unity and Support

Even though they *are* a small community of Latter-day Saint youth, the young men and women of the Aberdeen stake are strong. Simon Robertson, 18, of the Aberdeen Ward says that during the year “we are all spread apart, but when we’re at the temple, we feel like one family. We’re all so happy because we’re at the temple, and we feel the Spirit almost constantly. Personally, I feel so peaceful at the temple. It gives me a stronger resolve to not only live the gospel but to live it better. I see what we can achieve when we are together. I want to try to feel that all the time.”

Janine Gall explains that “the nearest young woman to me is about 45 minutes away. It’s nearly impossible to meet up for activities or seminary, and so it’s hard to stay spiritually strong all the time. So I really enjoy going to the temple because it’s like a spiritual top off. My friends can uplift me at the same time as I can uplift them.”

Whether it’s sitting together in white as they wait to be baptized and confirmed, reading the scriptures together under the statue of the angel Moroni high atop the temple’s spire, or pulling weeds together on the temple grounds, these youth pull *together*. Paige Payne, 13, of the Aberdeen Ward remembers one activity that not only brought them closer together but also got them all soaking wet: “We were pulling weeds. They were growing

around some sort of plant, and we had to clear all the weeds—and there were millions. It was pouring rain, so we got all muddy. And we were on a slope, so every time you tried to walk, you would slip. It was really fun. The temple workers couldn’t believe we kept working. Since we were all doing it together, it sort of strengthened us all.”

Ethan Fraser, 18, of the Bridge of Don Ward adds that having friends who are strong in the gospel makes a difference in his everyday life. “I like that I’ve got great friends in the Church,” he says. “I know that if I go through trials, there is someone there to support me.”

The Difference

President Payne tries to explain just what it is that makes the youth of the Aberdeen stake so special. They go to church and to activities; they attend seminary; they strive to live the gospel. It’s what the youth in every other stake he’s lived in are also doing.

“Then I moved to the Aberdeen stake, and I went on my first temple trip,” he says. “Now it’s something I plan my whole year around. And the reason I do is because I see what happens to our youth. I believe this temple trip is what keeps the Spirit in the lives of these youth. They talk all year long about the temple trip. We ask them, ‘Are you going on the temple trip?’ And they say, ‘I wouldn’t miss it for the world.’

“Going to the temple—standing in that holy place—changes them. Not just for that day or for that moment, not for that hour or that week. It changes them forever.” ■





The Saga of Revelation: The



BY ELDER EARL C. TINGEY

Served as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy from 1996 to 2008

On February 8, 1835, Joseph Smith announced to Brigham and Joseph Young that he would organize the Twelve Apostles and the Seventy in accordance with a vision he had received (see D&C 107).

The Prophet then said: “I wish you to notify all the brethren living in the branches, within a reasonable distance from this place, to meet at a general conference on Saturday next. I shall then and there appoint twelve Special Witnesses, to open the door of the Gospel to foreign nations, and you,’ said he (speaking to Brother Brigham), ‘will be one of them.’ . . . He then turned to Elder Joseph Young with quite an earnestness, as though the vision of his mind was extended still further, and addressing him, said, ‘Brother Joseph, the Lord has made you President of the Seventies.’”

Although the Youngs knew of the existence of these priesthood offices in the Bible,

Top, from left: The first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the first Seventies were ordained in February 1835. The seven presidents of the 30th Quorum of the Seventy with their secretary, about 1890. Members of the 88th Quorum of the Seventy with their families, March 1897.

still the Prophet’s words “caused these brethren to marvel.”¹

On the following Saturday, February 14, members of the Twelve were appointed and ordained, and two weeks later members of the First Quorum of the Seventy were also appointed and ordained.

Two things that stand out in my mind as particularly important about the history of the Seventy are evident in this first calling of the Seventy in our dispensation: (1) the office of Seventy is doctrinally based in the scriptures and (2) the role of the Seventy is inextricably connected to the mission of the Twelve. As we study these two essential points, a third—equally if not more important point—becomes

Why is an understanding of the history of the Seventy important today? Because it provides a pattern for how the Lord reveals His will for His Church—and for our individual lives.



Unfolding Role of the Seventy

UNFOLDING EVENTS

February 1835: The Prophet Joseph Smith announced the establishment of the office of Seventy and organized the First Quorum of the Seventy.

March 1835: The Prophet Joseph Smith received instructions regarding the calling and role of the Seventy (see D&C 107).

January 1836: The Presidency of the Seventy received their anointings and blessings in the Kirtland Temple. Later the same month, members of the Seventy were anointed and blessed in the Kirtland Temple.

February 1836: Joseph Smith met with some of the Brethren to choose the Second Quorum of the Seventy.

April 1837: The Presidents of the Seventy were reorganized.

January 1841: Duties of the Seventy were outlined (see D&C 124:138–39).

December 1844: The Seventies' Hall was dedicated in Nauvoo.

1846: When the Saints left Nauvoo, the number of Seventies quorums had increased to approximately 30.

April 1883: The Lord told the First Presidency that He would reveal His will from “time to time” regarding the rolling forth of His kingdom.

evident: the Lord reveals His will line upon line, making the history of the latter-day Seventy a pattern of revelation for the Church and for individuals.

1. The Office of Seventy Is Doctrinally Based in the Scriptures

The first mention of the Seventy is the Old Testament instruction to Moses and “seventy of the elders of Israel” (Exodus 24:1).

The Lord told Moses to use the Seventy so that he need not bear his burdens alone: “Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel . . . that they may stand there with thee” (Numbers 11:16).

To properly empower the Seventy, the Lord took the “spirit” that was upon Moses and gave it also to the Seventy. “When the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease” (Numbers 11:25).

The New Testament Church likewise included the office of Seventy. The Savior Himself called and instructed the Seventy (see Luke 10) in a manner similar to the

instructions He gave the Twelve (see Matthew 10). He sent out the Seventy, explaining that “he that heareth you heareth me” (Luke 10:16; see also verses 1–15).

The effectiveness of the Seventy was evident as they reported on their commission, “saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name” (Luke 10:17).

2. The Role of the Seventy Is Connected to the Mission of the Twelve

The Seventies’ role in relation to the Twelve becomes particularly evident following the Savior’s Resurrection. The Church had grown so that the Twelve alone were not able to meet all the needs of the people. When some began to murmur that the widows were being neglected in the daily ministration, the calling of Seventies answered the challenges of growth. The Seventy bore some burdens so the Twelve need not neglect the assignments they alone could fulfill:

“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

“But we [the Twelve] will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:3–4).

This pattern was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the office of Seventy in relation to the office of the Twelve became clearly defined in modern revelation:

- “The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world” (D&C 107:25).
- “The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve or the traveling high council, in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations” (D&C 107:34).
- The Twelve are “to call upon the Seventy, when they need assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching

and administering the gospel, instead of any others” (D&C 107:38).

- The Seventy are “instituted for traveling elders to bear record of my name in all the world, wherever the traveling high council, mine apostles, shall send them to prepare a way before my face” (D&C 124:139).

I am confident that each Seventy today considers it a great privilege to support the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. And again Seventies help provide an

answer to the challenges of Church growth. While there will generally be only 3 members of the First Presidency and 12 members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, there is flexibility in the ranks and numbers of the Seventy.

3. The Lord Reveals His Will Line upon Line

When they arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, the early Saints, including Seventies, were dispersed to various settlements. The Seventies

had been organized into approximately 30 quorums. Lack of proximity made it difficult, if not impossible, for the members and leaders of the Seventy to meet in their original quorums.

As a result of this difficulty, in 1883 the First Presidency prayerfully prepared a written recommendation on how and in what manner the Seventy should be organized.

On April 14, 1883, the Lord accepted the recommendation and revealed: “What ye have written is my will, and is acceptable unto me: and furthermore . . . let not your hearts be troubled, neither be ye concerned about the management and organization of my Church and Priesthood and the accomplishment of my work. Fear me and observe my laws and I will reveal unto you, *from time to time*, through the channels that I have appointed, everything that shall be necessary for the future development and *perfection* of my Church, for the adjustment and rolling forth of my kingdom, and for the building up and the establishment of my Zion.”²



1899: Seventies began to participate in a missionary training program at Church schools.

1904: The number of Seventies quorums had increased to 146.

March 1936: Each stake began to have a stake mission, supervised by the First Council of the Seventy.

1953: Seventies quorums or units were organized in each stake.

June 1961: Four members of the First Council of the Seventy were ordained high priests, and members of the First Council of the Seventy were authorized to organize and reorganize stake presidencies.

January 1964: Members of the First Council of the Seventy were given the sealing power.

1967: Sixty-nine brethren were called as regional representatives of the Twelve.

March 1974: The First Presidency authorized stake presidents to ordain Seventies provided they had been approved by the First Council of the Seventy.

October 1974: Units of Seventies were discontinued, and each stake was authorized to have a quorum.

1975: Assistants to the Quorum of the Twelve were assigned outside North America as General Authority area supervisors.

October 1975: The First Quorum of the Seventy was reconstituted as a General Authority quorum.

April 1976: The First Presidency authorized that the Presidents of the First Quorum of the Seventy would be rotated from time to time.

October 1976: Assistants to the Twelve and members of the First Council of the Seventy were released, then called to the First Quorum of the Seventy.

October 1976: Authorization for ordination of stake Seventies no longer required approval from the First Quorum of the Seventy.

September 1978: Certain General Authorities would be given emeritus status.

February 1980: Seventies serving as Executive Directors of Church headquarters departments were called to the Presidency of the Seventy.

This “time to time” revelatory pattern is evident through a study of the history of the Seventy—a study that demonstrates how the calling, duties, and responsibilities of the Seventy have developed line upon line in accordance with the doctrinal foundation of the scriptures. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has said that the unfolding events in the organization of the Seventy “will prove to have been a great Godsend and a pattern of revelation itself.”³

Let us review just a few of the significant developments in this history to illustrate this line-upon-line pattern.

Organization of the Seventy. In February 1835, when the Prophet Joseph called the first Seventies of this dispensation, all of them had been members of Zion’s Camp, the group that marched from Ohio to Missouri in 1834 to aid the Saints.

Elder B. H. Roberts (1842–1933) of the Seventy noted that this service indicates “that the character of men who attain unto this high station in the Priesthood of God should be men who have made sacrifices for the work of God, or who are perfectly willing to make such sacrifices, even to laying down their lives for the cause.”⁴

Growth in Nauvoo. While the Saints lived in Nauvoo, “the number of the Seventy was greatly increased. . . . By the first of January, 1845, the number of quorums had increased to fourteen.” A year later the number of quorums had increased to 30.⁵

Dispersion in Utah. The dispersion of Seventies after the Saints’ arrival in Utah led to the recommendation of the First Presidency in 1883, which provided that the members of the Seventy associate themselves with a quorum located in the area where they resided.

As mentioned, the Lord accepted the recommendation of the First Presidency and promised that from *time to time*, He would continue to reveal necessary adjustments. It seems the saga of revelation was only beginning!

Seventies Quorums in Stakes and Missions. In April 1953, when the number of quorums was approximately 500, the First Presidency, concerned about some Seventies not affiliated with a quorum, announced that a quorum of the Seventy, presided over by seven presidents, should be organized in *each* stake or mission where there were 36 or more Seventies.⁶

In each stake or mission having fewer than 36 Seventies, a unit, rather than a quorum, would be presided over by a president and two counselors. The units and quorums were then organized in consecutive numbers to avoid confusion. In 1974 Seventies units were discontinued, and each stake was to have a quorum. The presidencies of the stake quorums served as the stake mission presidency.⁷

Previously, in March 1936, missionary work had been organized with a mission in each stake. These stake missions were supervised by the First Council of the Seventy, working through stake presidents.⁸

Reestablishing the First Quorum of the Seventy. October 1975 general conference brought a major milestone in the continuing saga of revelation. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) announced the reconstitution of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

This quorum of General Authorities would gradually be organized with 70 members and Seven Presidents.⁹

One year later, at the October 1976 general conference,

the First Quorum of the Seventy was expanded by the addition of the First Council of the Seventy and the Assistants to the Twelve. All members of the First Quorum were ordained to the office of high priest as well as to the office of Seventy.

President Kimball explained: “With this move, the three governing quorums of the Church defined by revelations—the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the First Quorum of the Seventy—have been set in their places as revealed by the Lord. This will make it possible to handle efficiently the present heavy workload and to prepare for the increasing expansion and acceleration of the work, anticipating the day when the Lord will return to take direct charge of His church and kingdom.”¹⁰

Discontinuation of Stake Quorums. On October 4, 1986, all stake quorums of the Seventy were discontinued, and Seventies at the stake level became members of elders quorums or were ordained to the office of high priest. The office of Seventy was thus reserved for General Authorities of the Church.¹¹

Establishment of the Second

Quorum. On April 1, 1989, the Second Quorum of the Seventy was created.¹² This began to put in place two Quorums of the Seventy: the First as General Authorities who would become emeritus at age 70 and the Second as five-year General Authorities.



WHAT WAS THE FIRST COUNCIL OF THE SEVENTY?

The Prophet Joseph organized the First Council of the Seventy when he organized the First Quorum of the Seventy on February 28, 1835. The First Council was made up of the Seven Presidents of the First Quorum. This council existed in some form until 1976, when its members (front: Elders S. Dilworth Young, A. Theodore Tuttle, and Paul H. Dunn; back: Elders Hartman Rector Jr., Loren C. Dunn, Rex D. Pinegar, and Gene R. Cook) were called into the reconstituted First Quorum of the Seventy as General Authorities.

The roles and duties of the First Council changed over the years as revelation unfolded, but their unchanging responsibility was to preside over other Seventies and to administer the work presently given to the Seventies.

April 1984: Six new members of the First Quorum of the Seventy were called to serve for a period of three to five years, establishing a new precedent for General Authority tenure.

July 1984: Members of the First Quorum of the Seventy were called as Area Presidencies to administer areas under the direction of the Twelve.

October 1986: Seventies quorums in stakes were discontinued.

April 1989: The Second Quorum of the Seventy was organized, made up of men who would serve for five years.

November 1991: Policy was established for members of the First Quorum to serve until age 70 and members of the Second Quorum to be released after five years.

April 1995: President Gordon B. Hinckley announced the release of regional representatives and the calling of Area Authorities effective in August 1995.

April 1997: The Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy were organized, made up of Area Authority Seventies.

June 1997: Under the direction of Area Presidencies, Area Authority Seventies began to preside at member-missionary coordinating councils, consisting of stake and mission presidents.

May 2001 and September 2002: Member-missionary coordinating councils were expanded to include most Church programs and various multistake concerns.

April 2004: The Fifth Quorum of the Seventy was divided to create the Sixth Quorum of the Seventy.

August 2004: Under the direction of the Twelve, the Presidency of the Seventy began to be responsible for all Church areas. Members of the Presidency of the Seventy no longer served as Executive Directors of major headquarters departments. The Seven Presidents were assigned to supervise all 11 areas in North America.

April 2005: The Seventh Quorum of the Seventy was created from the Fourth Quorum. The Third Quorum was divided to create the Eighth Quorum.

June 2008: The First Presidency announced an increase in the responsibilities of Area Presidencies.

Calling of Area Authorities. At the April 1995 general conference, all regional representatives of the Twelve were released effective in August of that year, and the office of Area Authority was announced. (Regional representative was a Church calling established in 1967 to train stake and ward leaders.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said of Area Authorities: “These will be high priests chosen from among past and present experienced Church leaders. They will continue with their current employment, reside in their own homes, and serve on a Church-service basis. The term of their call will be flexible, generally, for a period of approximately six years. They will be closely tied to the area presidencies.”¹³

Calling of Area Seventies. Two years later, in April 1997, President Hinckley announced that the Area Authorities would be ordained Seventies and would be known as Area Authority Seventies (now called Area Seventies). This was the beginning of a significant increase in the number of Seventies and in their responsibilities.

President Hinckley explained, “As Seventies they are called to preach the gospel and to be especial witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the revelations.”¹⁴

President Hinckley explained that these Brethren would have a quorum relationship. He organized the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy geographically.

Thereafter, Area Seventies began to preside at member-missionary coordinating councils (consisting of a mission president and all stake presidents in the mission). Later this meeting was renamed as a coordinating council meeting, and the agenda was



The First and Second Quorums of the Seventy, 2006.

expanded to include most Church programs and various multistake concerns.

Expanded Duties of the Presidency of the Seventy.

In April 2004 members of the Presidency of the Seventy were released as Executive Directors of major headquarters departments, and other Seventies were assigned to these positions. Several months later, in August 2004, the Presidency of the Seventy began to supervise all 11 Church areas in North America and to assist the Twelve in supervising all international areas.

The Presidency of the Seventy commenced meeting with the full Twelve each Tuesday. The Twelve are able to rely on the Presidency of the Seventy as the presidency is to “choose other seventy [and] to preside over them” (D&C 107:95).

The Seventy Today

The saga of revelation in the organization and duties of the Seventy continues today. The First Presidency has recently consolidated international Church areas and given more administrative responsibilities to Seventies serving in Area Presidencies.¹⁵

How could Joseph Smith have understood when he ordained the first Seventies that this office would grow to include, at this time, 315 Seventies in eight quorums throughout the world? I testify that Joseph didn’t have to know because the Lord knew and what Joseph established was a latter-day foundation based upon the doctrines

of the scriptures and a “vision showing the order of the Seventy” (D&C 107:93).

The Lord’s hand has been over the unfolding history of the Seventy from the beginning and in each subsequent development that moved the office of the Seventy to comply with its scriptural charter. Why study this unfolding history? As President Packer explained, it is “a pattern of revelation itself.” Line upon line, the Lord has revealed His will for the Seventy, and I know that He will continue to do so for the Seventy—and for you and me as individual members of His Church. ■

NOTES

1. Joseph Young, “History of the Organization of the Seventies” (1878), 1–2, as quoted in *History of the Church*, 2:181, note.
2. In James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1965–75), 2:354; emphasis added.
3. Boyd K. Packer, “The Seventy Is an Especial Witness of Jesus Christ” (address given on Sept. 29, 1987), 10.
4. B. H. Roberts, *The Seventy’s Course in Theology, First Year* (1907), 6.
5. B. H. Roberts, *The Seventy’s Course in Theology*, 8–9.
6. See Conference Report, Apr. 1953, 51.
7. See First Presidency letter, Oct. 11, 1974.
8. See “A New Plan for Missionary Work in the Stakes of Zion,” *Improvement Era*, May 1936, 273.
9. See Spencer W. Kimball, “The Time to Labor Is Now,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 4.
10. Spencer W. Kimball, “The Reconstitution of the First Quorum of the Seventy,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1976, 9.
11. See Ezra Taft Benson, “Godly Characteristics of the Master,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 48.
12. See Thomas S. Monson, “The Sustaining of Church Officers,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 17.
13. Gordon B. Hinckley, “This Work Is Concerned with People,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 52.
14. Gordon B. Hinckley, “May We Be Faithful and True,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 6.
15. See First Presidency letter, June 19, 2008.

Understand and Live the Gospel of Christ



Teach these scriptures and quotations or, if needed, another principle that will bless the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you visit to share what they have felt and learned.

How Can I Better Understand and Live the Gospel?

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Faithful members of the Church should be like oak trees and should extend deep roots into the fertile soil of the fundamental principles of the gospel. We should understand and live by the simple, basic truths and not complicate them. Our foundations should be solid and deep-rooted so we can withstand the winds of temptation, false doctrine, adversity, and the onslaught of the adversary without being swayed or uprooted. . . .

“Spiritual nourishment is just as important as a balanced diet to keep us strong and healthy. We nourish ourselves spiritually by partaking of the sacrament weekly, reading the scriptures daily, praying daily in personal and family prayer, and performing temple work regularly. Our spiritual strengths are like batteries; they need to be charged and

frequently recharged” (“Deep Roots,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 75).

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency:

“Sisters, now more than ever, we need women to step up and be strong. We need women who declare the truth with strength, faith, and boldness. We need women to set an example of righteousness.

We need women to be ‘anxiously engaged in a good cause.’ We need to live so that our lives bear witness that we love our Heavenly Father and the Savior Jesus Christ and that we will do what They have asked us to do” (“Now Let Us Rejoice,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 116).

2 Nephi 31:12: “Follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do.”

How Does Understanding and Living the Gospel Bless Lives?

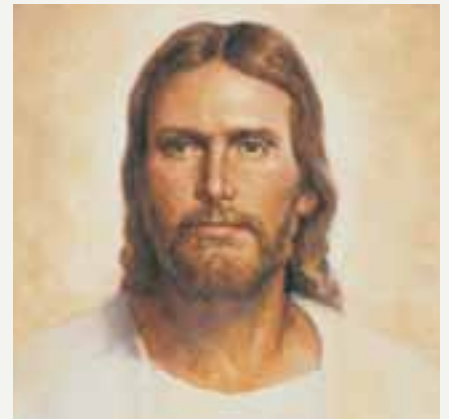
President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency:

“As we strive to understand, internalize, and live correct gospel principles, we will become more spiritually self-reliant. . . . I testify as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ that He lives, that the gospel is true, and that it offers the answers to all personal and collective challenges the children of God have on this earth today” (“Christlike Attributes—the

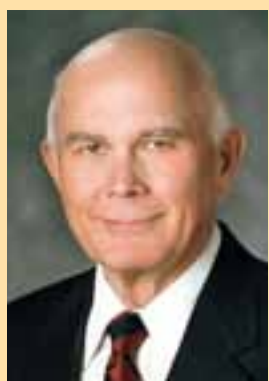
Wind beneath Our Wings,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 100, 101).

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “The plan of happiness is available to all of his children. If the world would embrace and live it, peace, joy, and plenty would abound on the earth. Much of the suffering we know today would be eliminated if people throughout the world would understand and live the gospel” (“Answers to Life’s Questions,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 23).

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We must live the gospel in such a way that we will have the Spirit to ever be with us. If we live worthily, the Spirit will always be with us. We can then teach by the Spirit. . . . The reason we pray, study the scriptures, have good friends, and live the gospel through obedience to the commandments is so that when—not if, but when—the trials come, we are ready” (“Teaching by Faith,” *Liahona*, Sept. 2003, 10, 14–15; *Ensign*, Sept. 2003, 20, 24–25). ■



Why Do We Do Missionary Work?



The purpose of our missionary work is to help the children of God fulfill a condition prescribed by our Savior and Redeemer.

BY ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The doctrinal basis of missionary work is contained in the Savior's statement to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

The "kingdom of God" referred to here is the celestial kingdom.

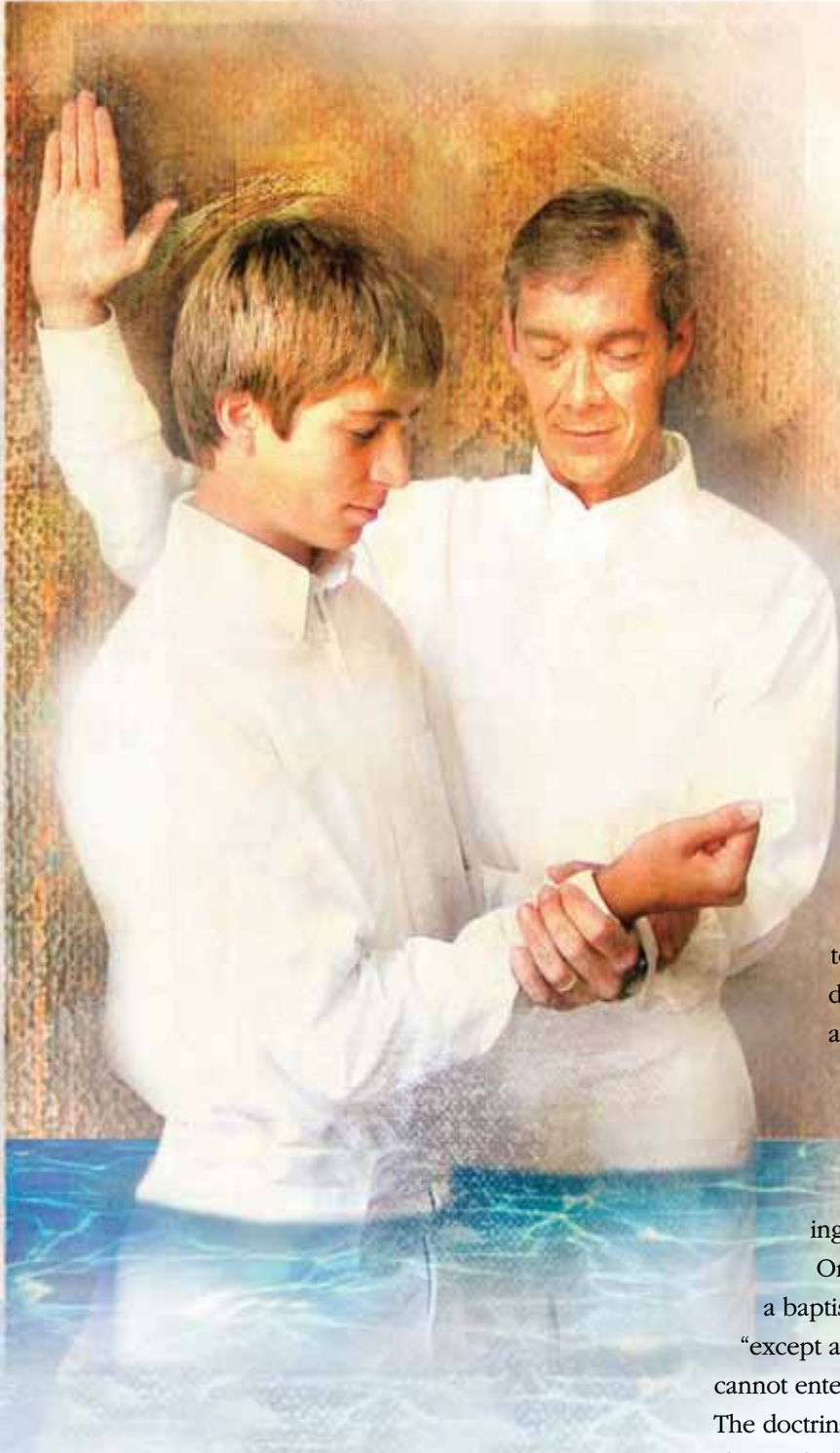
We do not preach and teach in order to "bring people into the Church" or to increase the membership of the Church. We do not preach and teach just to persuade people to live better lives. We honor and appreciate the



many ministers and others who are involved in the kind of ministry that makes bad men good and good men better. That is important, but we offer something more. One can qualify for the terrestrial kingdom instead of the celestial kingdom without the aid of this Church. We are concerned with a higher destination.

The purpose of our missionary work is to help the children of God fulfill a condition prescribed by our Savior and Redeemer. We preach and teach in order to baptize the children of God so that they can be saved in the celestial kingdom instead of being limited to a lesser kingdom. We do missionary work in order to baptize and confirm. That is the doctrinal basis of missionary work.

The restored gospel gives us added knowledge about Jesus Christ and His doctrine. But the uniqueness of our message is not just added knowledge. The requirement of baptism reminds us that the truths we teach are not academic. The restored gospel consists of doctrines *and ordinances*. We proclaim that baptism is necessary in order to redeem us from sins according to the conditions prescribed by the Redeemer and that only priesthood holders of this Church have the God-given authority that transforms the act of immersion in water into an ordinance



Only the priesthood of God can administer a baptism that will satisfy the divine decree that “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

prescribed that condition, again and again. His sacrifice paid the price for my sins, and He has prescribed the conditions upon which I can be saved by His payment. That is reason enough for me.

As the prophets of this dispensation have told us, the missionaries’ purpose of being in the mission field is to save souls, to baptize converts, which is to open the doors of the celestial kingdom to the sons and daughters of God.

No one else can do this.

Other churches cannot do it.

Good Christian living cannot do it.

Good faith, good desires, and good reasoning cannot do it.

Only the priesthood of God can administer a baptism that will satisfy the divine decree that “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

The doctrinal basis of missionary work is the word of God, revealed in every age, that man cannot be saved in the celestial kingdom without the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and that the only way to lay claim to the merits of that Atonement is to follow the command of its author: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you” (Acts 2:38). We are called to assist in this great effort. ■

From an address given at a seminar for new mission presidents on June 23, 1992.

of the everlasting gospel. Our preaching and teaching is unto baptism.

Baptism is a requirement, but why? Why is it necessary to be baptized in this way and by one holding particular authority? I do not know. But what I do know is that the remission of sins is made possible only by the atoning sacrifice of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and that He has

Who Is Ready?

BY ALLISON LEE BURTON

During my senior year of high school, I prayed for the Spirit to lead me to someone ready to hear the gospel. I had a friend in mind as I prayed. This friend of mine, Ashley (name has been changed), had expressed some interest in my religion, and she already held herself to the same standards as Latter-day Saint youth. I was convinced this was the time she needed to hear the gospel.

I was serving in my Laurel class presidency at the time, and during a bishopric youth committee meeting, I received a strong impression to suggest to the bishop that we have a missionary activity in Mutual. I felt impressed that the youth of our ward should invite nonmember friends to this activity for a question-and-answer session with the missionaries serving in our ward. My bishop enthusiastically set up the activity with the elders, and I was sure that this was the answer I had been praying for. Now Ashley could come and learn more about the gospel in an environment where she would not feel any pressure. I was confident that after Ashley came to the question-and-answer activity, she would be touched by the Spirit, ask to receive the missionary lessons, and in about a month would be baptized and confirmed a member of the Church.

Now my prayers turned to how to ask Ashley to the activity. I prayed to serve as an instrument in the Lord's

I thought my friend was prepared to hear the gospel, so why did I get this prompting?

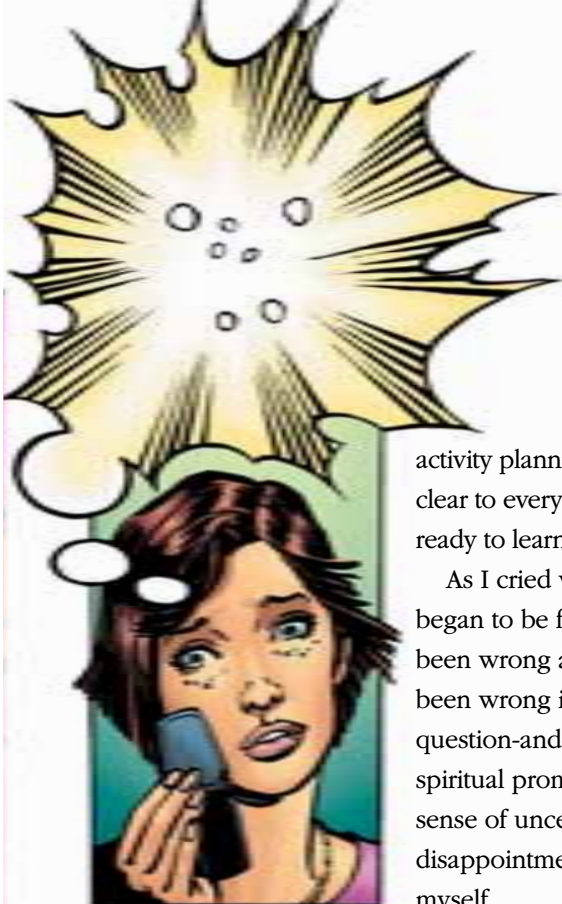
hands to introduce His plan and gospel to someone prepared to receive it. At school I invited Ashley to the activity, and she said she would ask her parents if it was all right with them.

Later that afternoon, I received a call from Ashley. She told me her parents were definitely OK with it. In fact, she explained that before her parents married, her father had lived with two LDS roommates and was very impressed with how they lived. I was overjoyed because the only obstacle I had envisioned was whether or not Ashley's parents would be OK with her pursuing another religion.

As I continued to pray about the upcoming missionary activity, I felt a calm reassurance that I was indeed an instrument in the hands of the Lord and that He was pleased I had acted on the prompting at the bishopric youth committee meeting. I looked forward to the activity with great anticipation. Ashley and I had been friends for many years, and I was excited to play a part in her introduction to the gospel and, of course, her resulting conversion.

On the morning of the activity, I received a phone call from Ashley. She had changed her mind and was no longer planning to come to the activity. I was devastated and confused. I had been praying for Ashley, I was sure she was ready, and she was the whole reason I had thrown myself into missionary mode. I also felt embarrassed. During the





It had to be Ashley! Of all the people I knew, she seemed the most likely to accept the gospel.

activity planning process, I had made it very clear to everyone that my friend Ashley was ready to learn and accept the gospel.

As I cried with frustration in my room, I began to be filled with self-doubt. If I had been wrong about Ashley, then maybe I had been wrong in believing that the missionary question-and-answer activity was actually a spiritual prompting. Engulfed in a teenage sense of uncertainty, anger, self-pity, and disappointment, I decided to skip the activity myself.

A few weeks later, as I was walking through the school library, my friend Brian asked me if I wanted to come to his baptism. Brian and I didn't have any classes together that year, so it had been quite a while since I had seen or spoken with him. The previous year we had sat next to each other in a history class and had partnered up for a class project. Our project topic, randomly assigned by our teacher, was "Joseph Smith and the Mormons." I remembered Brian had been quite interested in the topic as we did our research. However, he also liked to joke around, saying things like, "Remind me which wife number your mom is" and "There is going to be this fun party this weekend, but oh, wait—you're Mormon, so you would be no fun to go with." Thus, I initially dismissed his baptism invitation as another joke at the expense of my religion. He did not seem like the type ready to join a church with such "restrictive standards."

But the next words out of his mouth stunned me as he described the whirlwind of the past few weeks of his life. He explained

overhearing a fellow classmate and member of my ward invite someone to a question-and-answer activity at the Mormon church. When the person receiving the invitation declined, Brian asked our classmate if he could come along instead. Following the activity, he immediately began taking the missionary lessons. He read the Book of Mormon. He prayed about it. He knew it was true. He really was getting baptized, and if I wanted to, I was welcome to come. After all, he said, I was the one who introduced him to Joseph Smith and the Mormons.

In quiet amazement I realized that the Lord had heard my prayers. He was using me as an instrument in His hands to find someone He had prepared to hear and accept the gospel. It had never occurred to me to invite Brian to meet the missionaries because he did not seem, in my opinion, ready. Not like Ashley.

At that humbling moment I realized how vital it is that I act on all promptings I receive by the Spirit. Although I continue to pray that Ashley will be ready for the gospel, I learned a significant lesson from the unexpected outcome of my attempt at sharing the gospel with her. The Lord always has a purpose for the promptings He gives us, and I do not need to know or guess what it is. Instead, it is my responsibility to carry out the prompting confidently and resolutely. As I pray for missionary opportunities, act on promptings, and accept the Lord's will, rather than trying to impose my own, I can more fully serve as an instrument in the hands of God and help build His kingdom. ■

Our friends can influence us. But when we live the gospel, we can also influence them.

Friends Tend to Become Like You

BY JOSÉ MARÍA MARQUEZ BLANCO

I always admired the changes my brother's example brought about in some of his classmates. Through their friendship with him, they had become better people. Because of his example, I knew that the saying "Be careful whom you choose as friends because you will have the tendency to become like them" can sometimes also mean "Be careful whom you choose as friends because they will have a tendency to become like *you*."

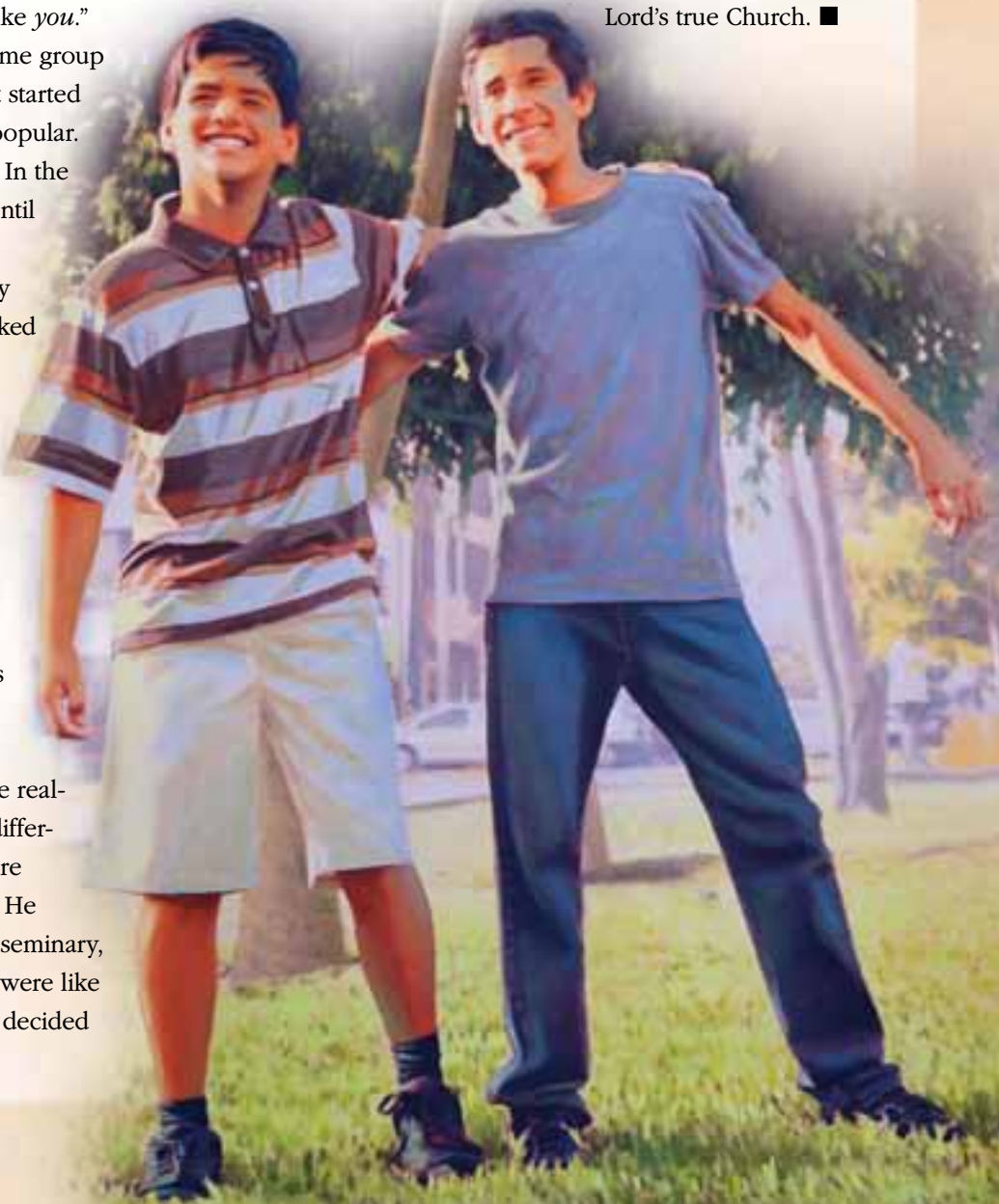
All through school, I had had the same group of friends. But one year, a new student started at our school, and unlike me, he was popular. But I still somehow became his friend. In the months following, we became closer until we were best friends.

I was in the habit of going to seminary immediately after school. One day he asked me where I went every day. I decided to explain all about the Church, but from the look on his face, I realized this wasn't the best way to talk to him. So I stopped talking so insistently.

A few months later the elders were coming over to my house at the same time some friends and I were meeting there to do homework. This friend was one of them, so I asked the elders to talk a little about the Church. He was interested in what they were saying. He realized that some things in my life were different from what he and other friends were doing, and he wanted to find out why. He started coming to church, Mutual, and seminary, and he saw that all my Church friends were like me, with the same principles. Soon he decided to be baptized.

At his baptism, the bishop asked him to bear his testimony. He stood and said: "I am here today thanks to a friend and how different he was from other people. I hope that everyone will see the differences in all of you too."

I hope we can all try to be friends with others, whether they are like us or not. We never know who is going to have the tendency to become, like us, a member of the Lord's true Church. ■



Baptism Comes First



Elder David B. Haight served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for 28 years. In this October 1976 general conference address, he encourages Latter-day Saints to share the gospel so that others can enjoy the blessings of a “forever family.”

What about the millions of our Heavenly Father’s children who, if they were baptized, could receive blessings which would lead to becoming an eternal family?

BY ELDER DAVID B. HAIGHT (1906–2004)

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The family home evening manual . . . has a most inspiring first lesson. The theme is “Families Are Forever.”

Families are instructed to place a number of items on a table, among which are a marriage certificate, a temple recommend, a picture of a temple, and a baptismal certificate. . . .

Church members know that all of these items placed on the table have a relationship to temple marriage and the possibility of a

“forever family.” . . . I would like to highlight one of those items on the table—the baptismal certificate.

A “forever family” requires that couples possess baptismal certificates, be worthy members of the Church to qualify for temple recommends, and possess a marriage certificate signifying a celestial marriage. Now what about the millions of our Heavenly Father’s children who, if they were baptized, could receive blessings which would lead to becoming an eternal family?

Our full-time missionaries are having increasing success in all parts of the world in bringing souls into the waters of baptism. But their success could be multiplied many times if they had the enthusiastic cooperation of the members of the Church. It would



seem most members of the Church have a built-in reluctance to share the gospel with their friends and neighbors. Many of us take pride in referring to the growth of the Church or the success of the worldwide missionary effort but have never fellowshiped an acquaintance or a neighbor. When returning mission presidents are asked, “How could you have had more conversions in your mission?” we hear the same reply: “If only we could get the members to assist the missionaries by preparing their friends and neighbors to receive the elders.”

Have we forgotten our obligation? Have we forgotten what the Lord said?

“Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor. Therefore, they are left without excuse” (D&C 88:81–82). . . .

[Our missionaries] are trained to teach the gospel, to teach in an orderly, inspired manner, which hopefully leads to baptism. To a missionary, every hour is precious and must be productive. Do you realize missionaries baptize about one person for every 1,000 homes they tract? These same missionaries will baptize 600 people for every 1,000 who are taught in the homes of members—600 times more converts when members participate with conviction.

More of these exciting young servants of the Lord are in your wards and branches than ever before. Missionaries are going out better trained, better prepared, with higher hopes and aspirations. Every family that has accepted the gospel is obligated to share it with its neighbor. We can interest people in the gospel by just being natural and sincerely showing our love for them. . . .

On an airplane flight, a friend of mine engaged a lady in conversation. He told her about his trip to Anderson, South Carolina, to visit a fourth cousin because he was seeking information concerning some of his ancestors. He



A friend of mine asked a fellow passenger, “Would you like to know why I am interested in my ancestors who died long ago?”

asked this lady sitting next to him, “Would you like to know why I am interested in my ancestors who died long ago?”

“Yes, I would,” she replied.

“I was trying to find information about my forebears so I could perform certain work for them in the temple. Do you know where the Savior was during the three days His body lay in the tomb following the Crucifixion?”

“No. Where?”

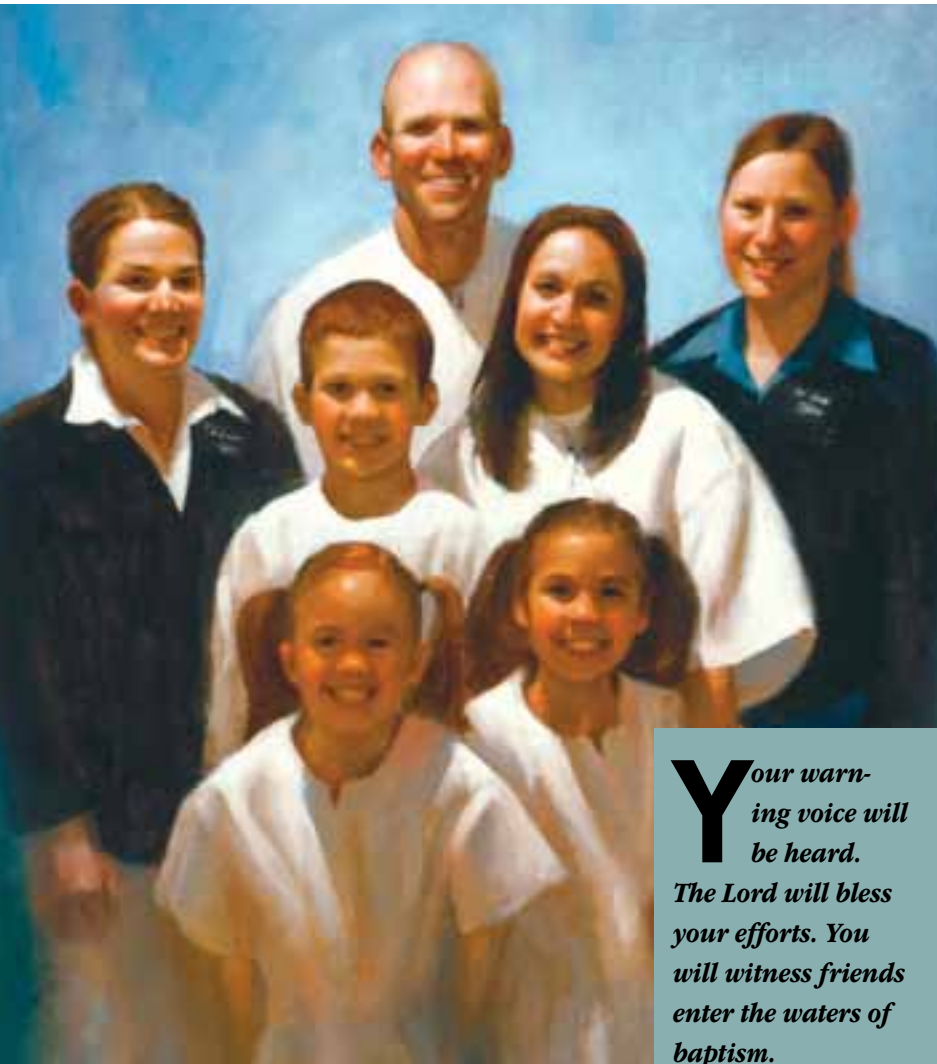
He continued, “Peter, the Apostle, said Christ preached to the spirits in prison who were disobedient in the days of Noah.” And then he said, “Now, do you think the Savior of the world would spend three days preaching to such people if they could not do anything about it?”

“No, I don’t. I have never thought of that,” she said.

He proceeded to explain baptism for the dead and the Resurrection. He quoted Paul: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” (1 Corinthians 15:29).

“Do you remember the phrase ‘until death do you part’ being used when you were married? Your marriage contract ends when either of you dies.”

She replied, “I guess that’s right, but I had never thought of it that way.”



Your warning voice will be heard.

The Lord will bless your efforts. You will witness friends enter the waters of baptism.

He continued, “My wife died the forepart of last month, but she is my wife eternally. We were married by one having the priesthood authority to bind in heaven that marriage performed here on earth. We belong to each other eternally; and furthermore, our children belong to us forever.”

Just before landing he said to her, “Do you know why we met? It is so you too can learn about the gospel and be sealed to your husband, your children, and your progenitors for eternity—to become an eternal family.”

Soon after this incident, he mailed a copy of Elder LeGrand Richards’s book, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, to this lady and her family and tucked his name card inside. The name of this woman eventually found its way to some full-time lady missionaries laboring in her

city in Pennsylvania. After the missionaries’ first contact with her, they wrote, “The lady we called upon was extremely gracious. You should have seen the light in her eyes when she met us. [The gentleman she met on the plane] had planted a most fertile seed with his testimony and confidence that he and his loved ones would be together after this life. As missionaries we felt at peace. We were impressed that the Lord would attend our efforts because this family was prepared.”

Now to you I would say, do you remember the essentials of a “forever family”: baptismal certificates, temple recommends, marriage certificate? But first your friends and neighbors must have a baptismal certificate. . . .

The Lord declared:

“For all men must repent and be baptized. . . .

“And by your hands I will work a marvelous work among the children of men, unto the convincing of many of their sins, that they may come unto repentance, and . . . may come unto the kingdom of my Father” (D&C 18:42, 44).

If you will involve your whole family—pray as a family for success; select a family

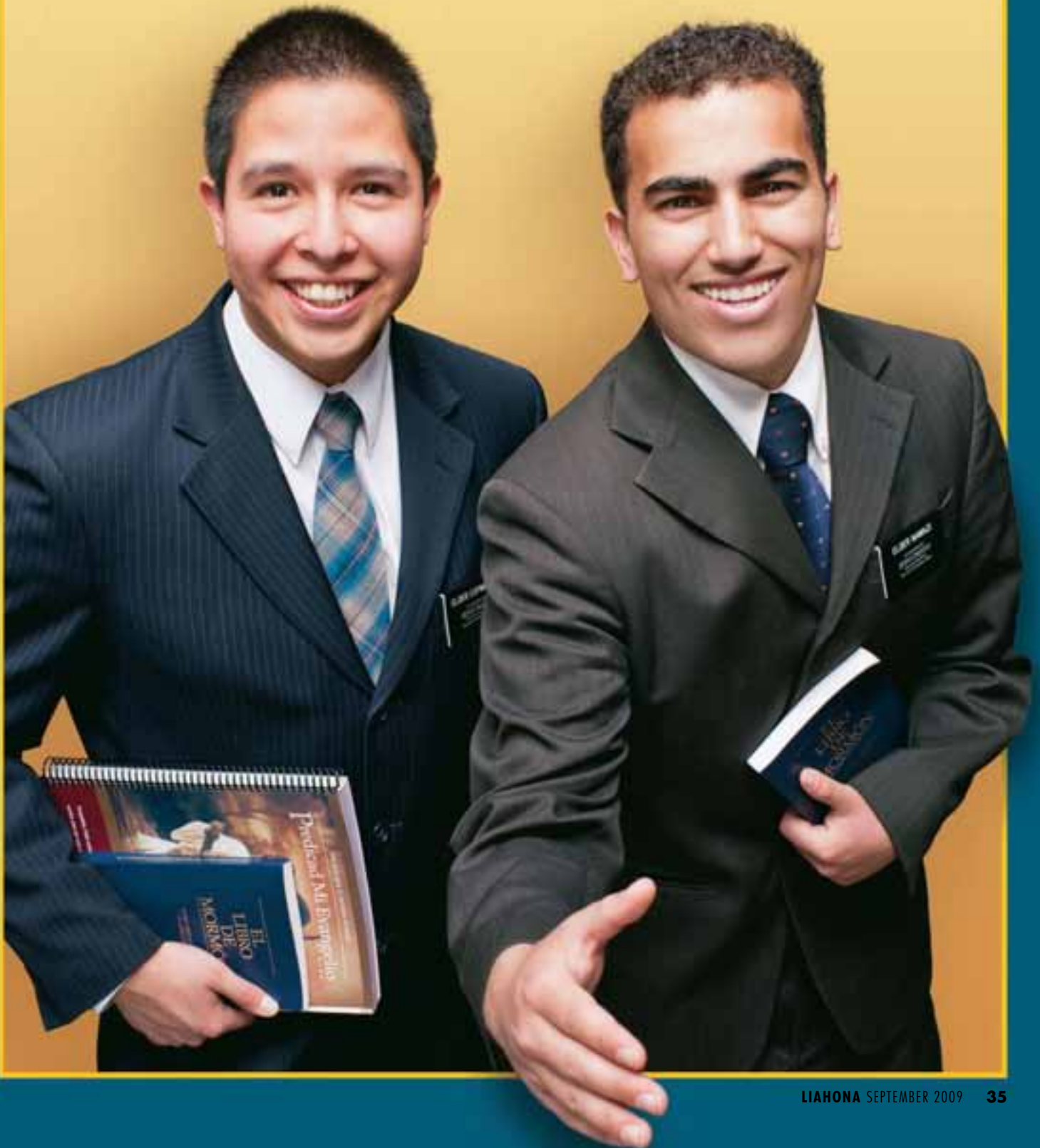
to fellowship; set goals and dates for accomplishment; commit yourselves to do whatever is appropriate; then fast and pray, and then pray and fast—I promise you that your warning voice will be heard. This is the day when the harvest is ripe, the press is full. The Lord will bless your efforts. You will witness friends enter the waters of baptism.

The lives you touch may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel. Families are forever, I testify to you in all humility, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen. ■

From an October 1976 general conference address; citations, punctuation, paragraphing, and capitalization standardized.

LET US GIVE YOU A HAND

AS FULL-TIME MISSIONARIES, WE ARE READY, WILLING, AND ABLE TO TEACH THE GOSPEL.
PLEASE INTRODUCE US TO YOUR FRIENDS. (SEE D&C 18:15.)



Four Talks, Four Lives Changed

Every April and October, millions of Latter-day Saints listen to the servants of the Lord. Here, four members of the Church share how general conference has influenced their lives over the years.

Good Things Do Come

Shortly after my husband received his master's degree, he considered returning to school for a PhD. This prospect daunted us since earning his master's degree had been so difficult. We had two small children and longed to have a good job and maybe even a house.

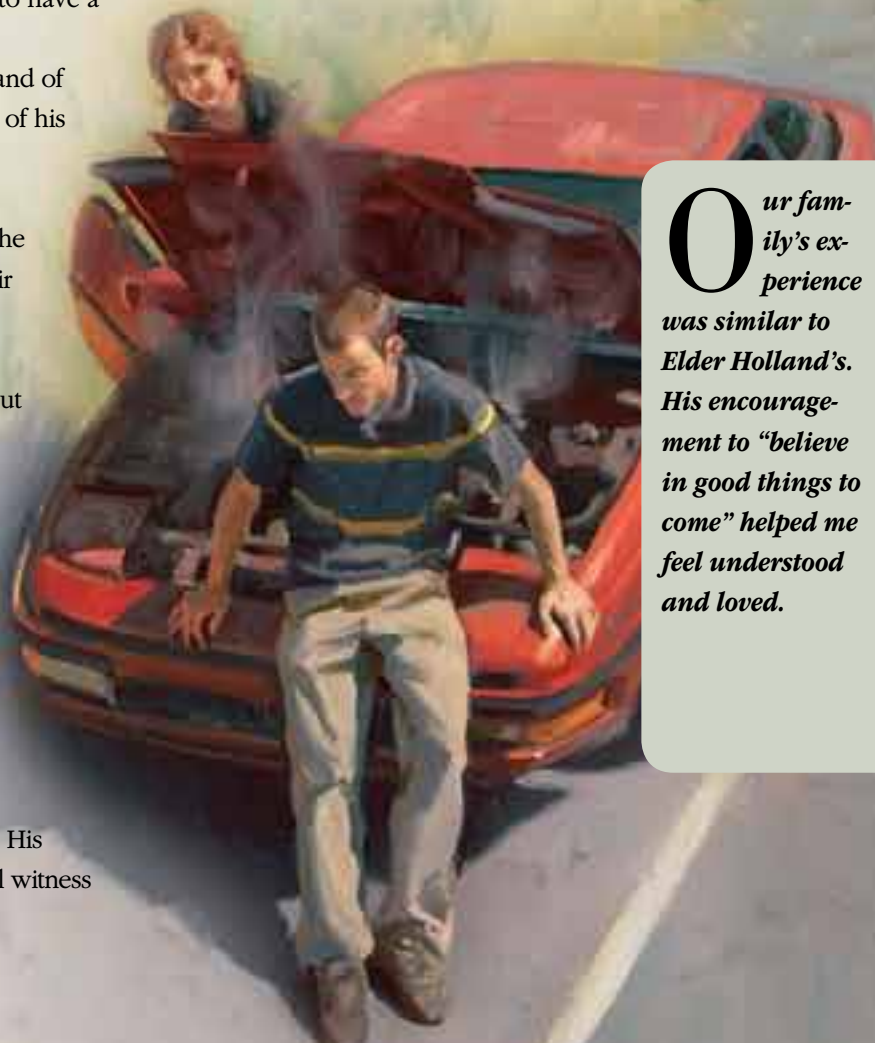
That October conference, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared some of his experiences related to moving his young family to Connecticut for graduate school. We had also moved to Connecticut for graduate school. Then he described how he and his family had fit all of their possessions into their little car—we had done the same. He explained that when the trip began, his car had overheated and broken down not once but twice! Our vehicle also broke down twice.

Finally, he described a more recent experience of driving a reliable car by the spot where his car had broken down 30 years earlier. In his mind's eye, he saw himself as a young father and said these words: "Don't give up, boy. Don't you quit. . . . There is help and happiness ahead—a lot of it. . . . You keep your chin up. It will be all right in the end. Trust God and believe in good things to come."¹ Elder Holland's experience helped me feel understood and loved. His example gave me the courage to seek the spiritual witness

that more education for my husband was the will of the Lord for our family. Five years and two babies later, my husband finished his dissertation. School was definitely challenging, but we were happy. We had followed the Lord's will, and He had blessed us physically, spiritually, and financially.

Since that conference, I have often thought of Elder Holland's talk. I have learned that as I strive to trust God through obeying the counsel of His prophets and apostles, good things really *do* come. ■

Melinda McLaughlin, Maryland, USA



Our family's experience was similar to Elder Holland's. His encouragement to "believe in good things to come" helped me feel understood and loved.

I Came to Appreciate Grandma

As a child, I enjoyed writing to my grandmother. She lived across the country, so I rarely saw her more than once a year. But as a teenager, I gradually became too busy to write, and our relationship slowly faded. When Grandma would come to visit for a few days, I would occasionally ask her a question or make a comment, but our conversations were seldom genuine or heartfelt. By the time I turned 16, I barely knew her, and I didn't know how to talk to her.

On the last day of one of her visits, I was alone in the kitchen preparing dinner when she came in and sat down. I greeted her, but afterward I found myself at a loss for words. I could tell that she wanted to talk to me and had probably been seeking an opportunity for some time, but how was I supposed to strike up a conversation with a 75-year-old woman with whom I thought I had nothing in common?

I commented on what I was cooking, but that subject didn't last long. Finally, I asked Grandma about what her life was like at my age. She told me stories about work and social activities, then talked about meeting my grandfather and falling in love. I realized that her life and desires as a teenager weren't that different from my own.

A few months later, President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, spoke about grandparents in general conference. In his talk, "The Golden Years," he spoke of the wisdom and guidance older members of the Church can provide. His theme made me reflect on my relationship with my grandmother, and I realized I was missing out on a valuable friendship.

I decided to write to Grandma again. I still wasn't quite sure what to say, so I just wrote about work, friends, family, and what I was doing. She responded to each of my letters and told me about other relatives, her garden, and her day-to-day activities. The next time we were together, talking to her was easy.

I'm grateful for the conference talk that came at a time when I was ready and willing to get to know my grandmother again. Through President Packer's words, I realized that I had overlooked the "priceless resource of experience,



MAKE CONFERENCE A PRIORITY

"Decide now to make general conference a priority in your life. Decide to listen carefully and follow the teachings that are given. Listen to or read the talks more than once to better understand and follow the counsel. By

doing these things, the gates of hell will not prevail against you, [and] the powers of darkness will be dispersed from before you [see D&C 21:6]."

Elder Paul V. Johnson of the Seventy, "The Blessings of General Conference," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 52.

wisdom, and inspiration"² that my grandmother really is. Now I have come to appreciate this wonderful woman and have been blessed by her example and friendship. ■

Laura A. Austin, Utah, USA

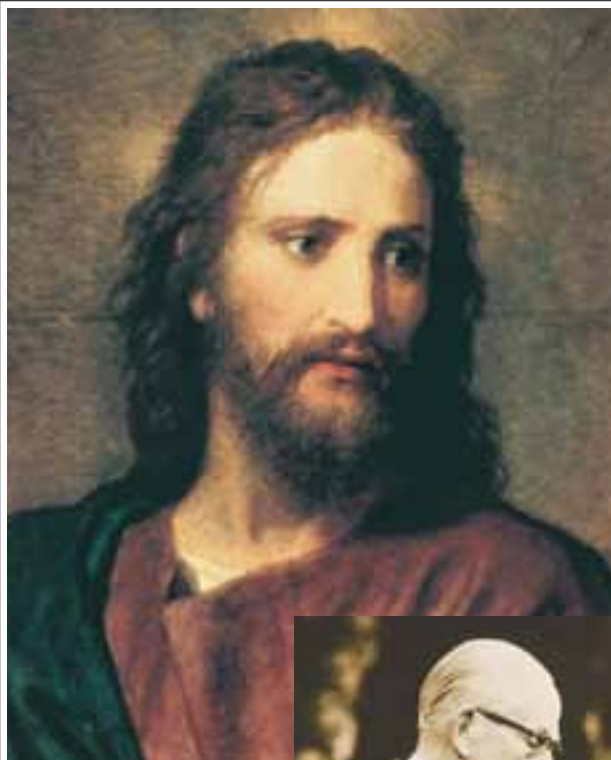
I Learned for Myself

I confess that when I left on my mission, my testimony was limited to knowledge about the plan of salvation and the Book of Mormon. I recognized that my testimony lacked the depth I wanted it to have, and as a result, I felt inadequate as a missionary.

Like most French members of the Church at the time, I had never attended a broadcast of general conference. We had always attended rebroadcasts, where we listened to conference in French through an interpreter. Now, as a missionary serving in Wales and speaking English, I was going to hear the voice of the prophet, President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), firsthand.

When the session started, the local congregation sang with the members present in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. I also sang and was quickly taken aback by an overwhelming feeling of joy and belonging. These feelings testified that I was a member of Jesus Christ's Church.

While I was sitting there, an idea came to mind: "What if I asked the Lord to confirm to me that President Benson is His prophet?"



I asked the Lord to testify to me that the man who was going to speak was His prophet.



I knew that I could “ask God” (Moroni 10:4), but I was afraid that somehow I would offend Him with my questions. After a minute of reflection, I decided to try anyway. I bowed my head and asked the Lord to testify to me that the man who was going to speak was His prophet, seer, and revelator. Before long an intense feeling of peace and happiness entered my heart. I raised my head, opened my eyes, and listened to President Benson testify of the Book of Mormon.

From that moment on, I knew for myself that the Lord leads the Church through a chosen prophet. As a result of that testimony, I left conference with new goals, and I knew that it was up to me to reach them. I changed

the focus of my mission and looked forward to attending future general conferences. I also eagerly awaited the arrival of the Church magazines so that I could read the sacred words of the Lord’s servants. ■

Thierry Hotz, France

Tell Them You Love Them

In the October 2007 general conference, Elder Claudio R. M. Costa of the Presidency of the Seventy talked about not waiting until tomorrow to do the things we can do today, especially when it comes to our families.³ At the end of his talk, he shared some lines based on a poem by Norma Cornett Marek. Elder Costa’s message and the words of that poem touched me deeply and encouraged me to start regularly expressing my love to my parents, my sisters, and my friends.

Of course I loved my family and friends before I heard that conference talk, but I was not in the habit of telling them that I loved them, at least not every day. Maybe they *did* need to hear those special words from me more regularly. I wasn’t sure at first how they would take it, but when I received a positive reaction, I decided to continue this practice. Over the next several months, I saw that my relationships were strengthened in part because I had heeded Elder Costa’s words.

Now I am serving as a full-time missionary thousands of miles from my home in Costa Rica. I miss my family, but it’s OK. I know they love me, and I also know that they know I love them. I feel peace because I took (and still take) opportunities to express my love.

I am grateful that we have the opportunity to regularly listen to leaders called by God. I know that as we follow them, our lives and the lives of those we love will be blessed. ■

Elder Hugo Lino Rivera Mena, Idaho Boise Mission

NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “An High Priest of Good Things to Come,” *Liahona*, Jan. 2000, 45; *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 38.
2. Boyd K. Packer, “The Golden Years,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 82.
3. See Claudio R. M. Costa, “Don’t Leave for Tomorrow What You Can Do Today,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 73.

DID YOU KNOW?



“The fundamental purposes for the gift of agency were to love one another and to choose God.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Tender Mercies of the Lord,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2005, 101.



The Church in the United Kingdom

The first missionaries to go overseas were sent to England in 1837, only seven years after the Church was founded. A group of seven missionaries arrived in England on July 19, 1837, preached in Preston, and baptized 9 new converts on July 30. By the next week, 41 more converts were baptized.

Between 1837 and 1900, as many as 100,000 converts emigrated to join the main body of the Church in the United States. In fact, by 1870 nearly half of the population of Utah were British immigrants. In the 1950s, membership in the United Kingdom (which includes England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) increased as Church leaders encouraged members to stay and build the Church in their native lands.

In 1958 a temple was dedicated in London. In 1998 another temple was dedicated, in Preston, the site of the first preaching more than 170 years ago. Preston is the home of the oldest continuous branch of the Church anywhere in the world, dating back to 1837.

Here are a few facts about the Church today in the United Kingdom:

Membership	181,756
Missions	7
Temples	2
Wards and Branches	347
Family History Centers	120



By the Numbers

52,494

Number of full-time missionaries who were serving worldwide in 2008.



My Favorite Scripture

Matthew 5:14–16

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

This is my favorite scripture because it helps me remember, especially when I’m not at home or at church, that I have a responsibility to be an example. Through me, many can know about the Church.

Laura Z., 15, Lima, Peru





THIS IS OUR RELIGION,





BY ELDER ERICH W. KOPISCHKE

Of the Seventy

A favorite hymn that we often sing in priesthood meeting is “Ye Elders of Israel,” with lyrics by Cyrus H. Wheelock. The third verse reads:

*We'll go to the poor, like our Captain of old,
And visit the weary, the hungry, and cold;
We'll cheer up their hearts with the news
that he bore
And point them to Zion and life evermore.¹*

“I will tell you that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the Celestial Kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. *Go and bring in those people now on the plains.*”²

Cyrus H. Wheelock sat in those meetings. He became a member of the first rescue party that left Salt Lake City on October 7 to search



Brigham Young told those sent to rescue the stranded pioneers that our religion is to save souls. In our time, conditions have changed drastically. But President Young's statement has not changed. We will always be under an obligation to rescue those in spiritual and physical need.

TO SAVE SOULS

On the Saturday before general conference in October 1856, Elder Franklin D. Richards and a handful of returning missionaries arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. They reported to President Brigham Young that hundreds of pioneer men, women, and children were scattered over the long trail to the valley, facing the early onset of winter. The people were hungry, and many carts and wagons were breaking down. People and animals were dying. All of them would perish unless they were rescued.

Sunday morning President Young assigned all those who would speak that day and during the conference that followed to address the pioneers' plight. In his address he said:

“That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess. It is to save the people. . . .

for the Saints scattered on the plains.

Later, George D. Grant, who headed the rescue party, reported to President Young: “It is not of much use for me to attempt to give a description of the situation of these people, for this you will learn from [others] . . . ; but you can imagine between five and six hundred men, women and children, worn down by drawing hand carts through snow and mud; fainting by the wayside; falling, chilled by the cold; children crying, their limbs stiffened by cold, their feet bleeding and some of them bare to snow and frost. The sight is almost too much for the stoutest of us; but we go on doing all we can, not doubting nor despairing.”³

The text of “Ye Elders of Israel” may have been on Brother Wheelock's mind during those difficult days of 1856. The rescuers literally reached out to the weary, hungry, and

cold. They cheered them up and showed them the way to Zion in the Salt Lake Valley.

Saving People

In our time of jet planes, when it takes less than a day to travel from Europe to the Salt Lake Valley, settings and conditions have changed drastically. But President Young's statement has not changed—it is still our religion to save people. As members of the Lord's Church, we will always be under an obligation to rescue those in spiritual and physical need. As the Lord stated to the elders of the early restored Church: "Remember in all things the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, for he that doeth not these things, the same is not my disciple" (D&C 52:40).

We want to be true disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. We declare that we love God and want to follow His commandments. Every Sunday we renew our baptismal covenants, worship God in our meetings, and praise Him for the many blessings He extends to us. King Benjamin's reminder is still true: "When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17).

When the Lord wants to bless someone's life or help someone in need, He often sends a neighbor, friend, or family member. This is one way He brings support and salvation to others. By doing so, He helps us understand the great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:39).

Is it any wonder that we are often the greatest beneficiaries of our reaching out to others? The Lord has promised, "He that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul" (D&C 4:4). Bringing salvation to others brings salvation to our own soul.

Keeping Our Eyes Open

There are many ways we can reach out to others and help those with physical and spiritual needs. If we walk through life with open eyes, the Lord will show us opportunities that will bless others and ourselves.

Recently I attended a conference of Church humanitarian missionaries in Jordan. As I met with them, I saw two sisters knitting. They told me they were knitting little caps for newborns. In the northern part of the capital city of Amman is a hospital that delivers 50 babies a day. The people there are very poor. After delivery, mothers and babies are sent back to their homes, where there is no heating. Many of these babies suffer from disease and die because of a loss of body heat. I asked for two samples of their knitting.

After I returned home, my wife took the samples to Relief Society. As a result, a miracle began—just as it so often begins in many of our Relief Society meetings around the world. During the Christmas season many sisters from our surrounding wards started to knit and sew baby caps. They did it alone, with friends, at home, or at Church activities.

One day I asked a friend how he was doing. With a twinkle in his eye, he replied, "I am a 'victim' of baby caps. We are talking baby caps night and day. We are surrounded by them." One sister called and asked me, "Isn't it warm in the Middle East?" When I assured her that the caps were needed, she went to work.

When I returned to Jordan, I had more than 800 baby caps in my suitcases. As we turned them over to the senior consultant of the hospital's baby station, he thought they were a godsend. Jordan had just experienced the coldest winter in 16 years, with temperatures well below freezing.

Reaching Out to Others

Reaching out and helping is not limited by age, health, time, skills, or financial resources. Everybody who has the desire can help others in need. We can participate in organized welfare projects. We can give a generous fast offering. We can visit and comfort a friend who is sick. We can invite someone facing problems into our home. We can faithfully visit the families we home teach and the sisters we visit teach. We can invite a friend struggling with adversity to our Sunday meetings. We can accompany the

full-time missionaries. We can do family history work and serve in the temple often. We can listen to our children and grandchildren, teach them, and encourage them to walk in the light.

Sometimes reaching out is as easy as offering a sincere prayer, making a phone call, or writing a short note. If we are too busy to reach out to someone in need, then we are *too* busy. When we go about doing good, we act upon the invitation of the Savior:

“I give unto you to be the light of this people. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

“Behold, do men light a candle and put it under a bushel? Nay, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house;

“Therefore let your light so shine before this people, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (3 Nephi 12:14–16).

Pointing Others to Zion and Life Evermore

Reaching out to others is simply caring for people. We do not care about numbers or statistics but about the well-being of the people around us. If we do good, reach out, and provide spiritual and physical help according to our strength and ability, we automatically point others to Zion. They will be attracted by what we are and what we represent. They will be blessed by what they see and feel. Their testimonies will be established or strengthened. Then the assurance of the Lord will reverberate in our souls:

“Be faithful; stand in the office which I have appointed unto you; succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.

“And if thou art faithful unto the end thou shalt have a crown of immortality, and eternal life in the mansions which I have prepared in the house of my Father” (D&C 81:5–6).

Truly, our religion is to rescue and save souls. ■

NOTES

1. “Ye Elders of Israel,” *Hymns*, no. 319.
2. Brigham Young, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, Oct. 15, 1856; see also LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* (1960), 120–21; LaRene Porter Gaunt and Linda Dekker, “Go and Bring Them In,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2006, 43.
3. *Handcarts to Zion*, 228.



A MISSION OF SAVING



“All about us there are many who are in need of help and who are deserving of rescue. Our mission in life, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, must be a mission of saving.”

**President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008),
“Our Mission of Saving,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 59.**



The Church or My Girlfriend?

My maternal grandmother joined the Church in 1962. Her children were also baptized, but over time they all became less active. Years later, one of them, my aunt, moved from Costa Rica to the United States and became active in the Church there.

As a teenager I went to visit my aunt in 1991. During my stay she introduced me to the full-time missionaries, and I met with them a few times in my aunt's home. They asked me if I wanted to learn more about the gospel, but I told them I wasn't interested.

I returned home to Costa Rica, only to have missionaries visit me there. (My aunt had given them my address.) I still didn't have any interest in their message, so I asked them to leave.

Four years passed. I was dating a woman with whom I had been friends for many years, and our relationship progressed to engagement. As I thought about our future together, my heart turned to things of a spiritual nature, and I told my fiancée that I wanted to know God. We decided that I would attend church with her to learn about Him. In the meantime I prayed privately to God for opportunities to come to know Him.

During this period of searching,

My fiancée was not pleased with my decision to be baptized. She told me that I had to choose between her and the Church.

Frustrated that they had returned, I told them to go away, and then I shut the door. But at that very moment, a thought struck me: "You've been praying to know God. What if these men have some answers for you?"

I opened the door again and called after the elders. I invited them to come in and teach me.

I quickly discovered the power of the truths they taught, and I embraced the restored gospel. Three weeks later, on March 12, 1995, I was baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

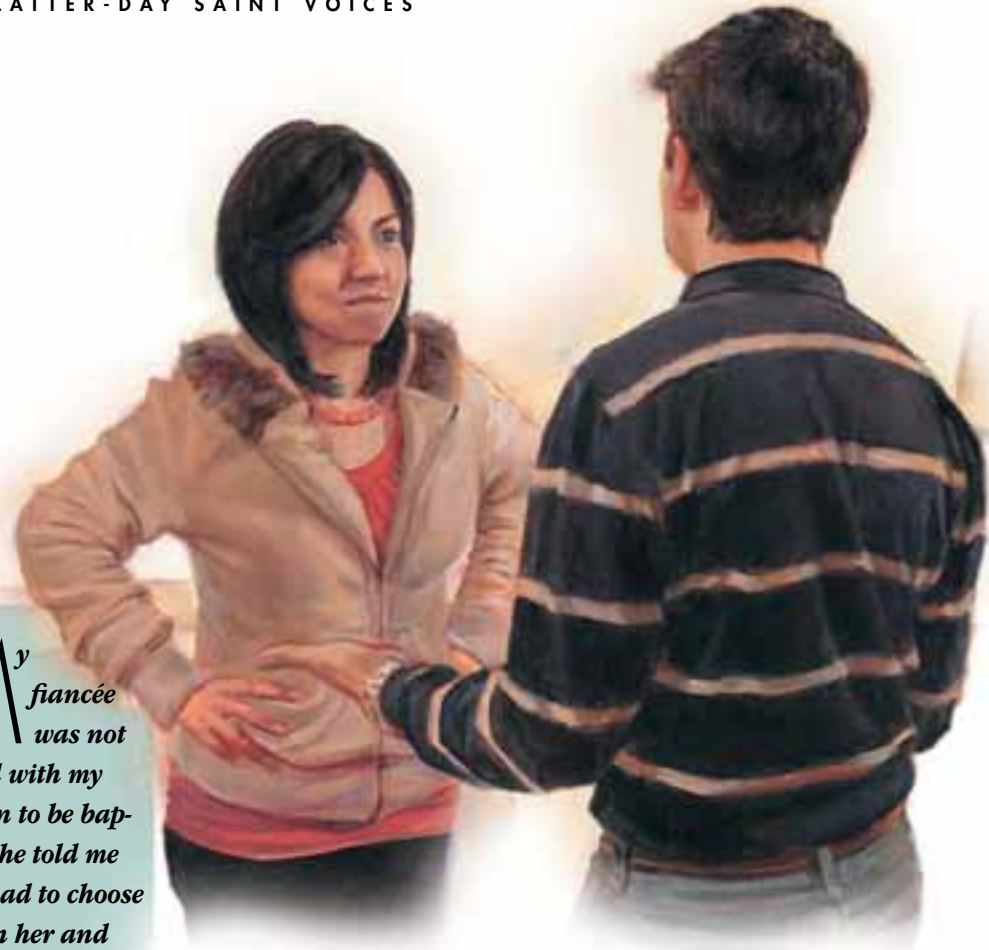
My girlfriend was not pleased

missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint again knocked on my door.

with my decision. One night about three months later, she told me that I had to choose between her and the Church. What a painful decision! After a lot of pondering and deliberating, I chose the Church.

I felt that I had made the right decision, but the months following our breakup were a dark time in my life. Nevertheless, I found hope in living my newfound religion, especially in coming to know my Heavenly Father, as I had prayed to do.

A year after my baptism, I left for a full-time mission in Nicaragua. My service there brought me great joy, and my knowledge of and love for my Heavenly Father grew. Several months after I returned from Nicaragua, I met Lili, the woman who would later become my wife.



Making the gospel a priority in our lives isn't always easy. The decisions I made were difficult ones. But I learned then—and have continued to learn since—that whenever we make sacrifices to know our Heavenly Father, He will reveal His will for us and our lives. The happiness that comes from following His plan and His commandments is always worth the effort. ■

Diego Ortiz Segura, Costa Rica

Of Greatest Worth

When I selected the painting of the Savior, a couple of my brothers and sisters snickered. Items that they thought were more valuable still remained among the things that had belonged to Mom and Dad.

We were gathered at our childhood home, where Mom had been living when she died a few weeks earlier. Dad had passed away five years before, in 2001. Now it was time to divide up their belongings. We drew numbers and selected items, the person with the lowest number making the first pick.

The bedroom set went first, followed by the refrigerator, dining room table and chairs, and late-model car. I selected the piano, even though I don't play. We had enjoyed music in our home when I was growing up. Dad often served as ward music

director, and both my parents sang well. My father, who was a big man with a powerful voice, never turned down an opportunity to sing. The piano meant a lot to me, as did the painting of the Savior.

When I chose the painting, which was framed alongside a copy of "The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,"¹ it was hanging on the wall of the family room, where we were sitting.

At such a time I couldn't help but think about the Savior, the plan of salvation, and how much my parents meant to me. And I couldn't help but feel gratitude for the way they had raised us, the gospel they had taught us, and the example

they had set for us, including their willingness to serve.

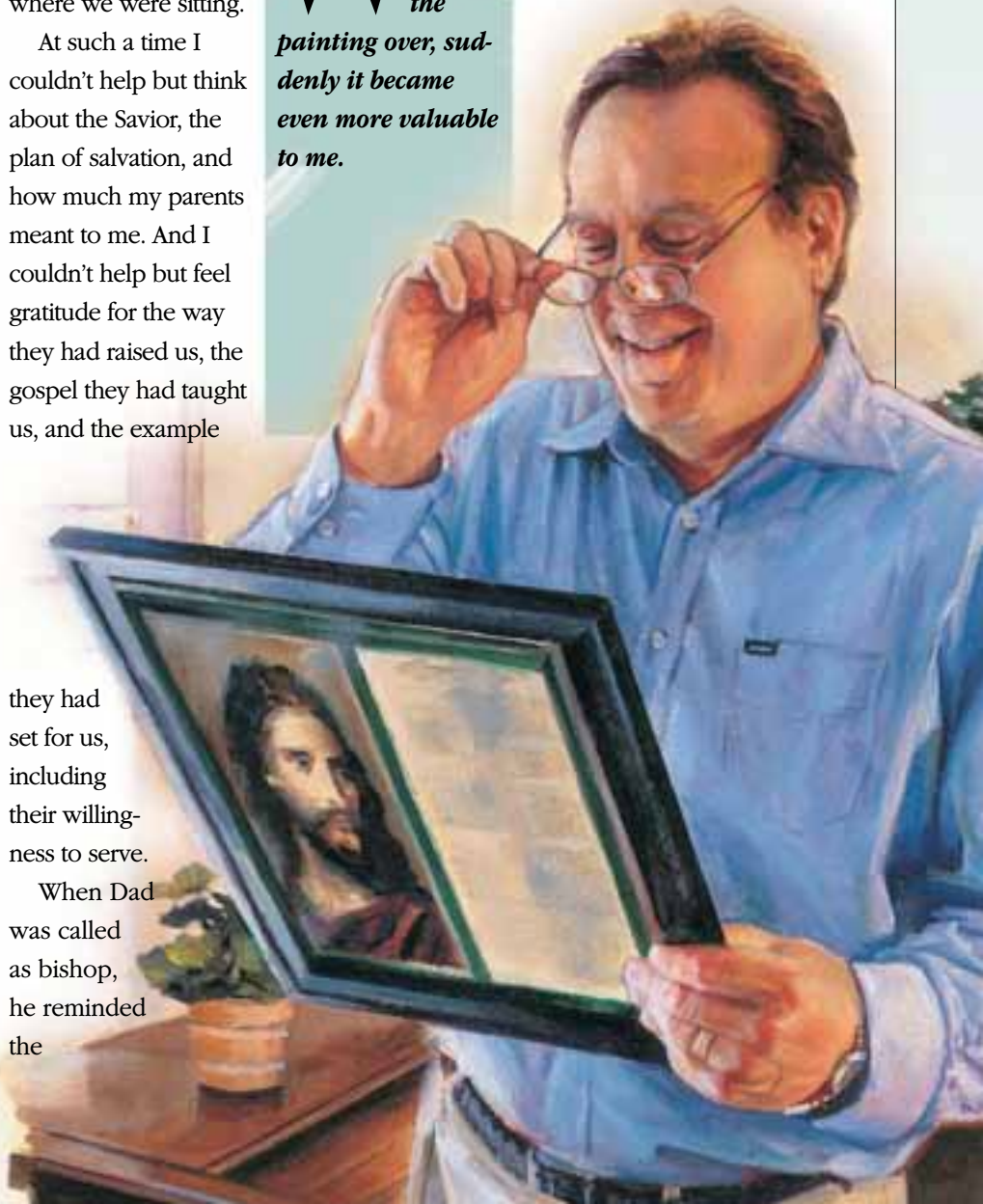
When Dad was called as bishop, he reminded the

stake president that he was 70 years old. "I think you've got the wrong guy," he had said.

"How old do you think the Brethren are up in Salt Lake City?" the stake president had asked in reply. "You weren't our first pick. You weren't even our second pick. You were the Lord's pick."

Dad knew that he had been called of God, and he became a good bishop. There was nothing flashy about him. He was

When I flipped the painting over, suddenly it became even more valuable to me.



not an expert on the scriptures. He was just a down-to-earth man who showed a lot of empathy for ward members.

While Dad served as bishop, I served as a counselor in another bishopric in our stake. As we attended leadership meetings together, our relationship became focused on Christ, and I got to know his spiritual side.

When Dad was called as bishop in 1994, he was suffering from health problems. “Does this calling guarantee me five more years of life?” he jokingly asked the stake president. Two years after Dad was released, he passed away.

These thoughts crowded upon my mind as we finished dividing up my parents’ belongings. After returning home, I looked for the right place to hang the painting of the Savior. As I flipped it over, to my surprise I saw that it had been dedicated to my father: “We will always remember Bishop Taylor as a big man with a heart to match.” It was signed by our stake presidency: “President Cory, President Carter, President Stubbs.”

Suddenly the painting became even more valuable to me. Today it hangs on a wall in my home above my parents’ piano. There are still some things at our old home that I selected but haven’t picked up. It doesn’t matter. I have the things of greatest worth. ■
Ray Taylor; Utah, USA

NOTE

1. “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Apr. 2000, 2–3.

I Finally Took the Challenge

How are you coming on reading the Book of Mormon?” the bishop asked our family during tithing settlement in 2005.

We had just finished talking about my many responsibilities at church and at home with two toddler boys. I stammered something about how hard it was to read a whole chapter every day, but in my heart I knew I was making excuses. The simple fact was that though I had done many good things the past few months, I had not attempted to read the Book of Mormon from cover to cover as President Gordon B. Hinckley had challenged.¹

As the new year began, the Spirit pricked my soul. I felt like the leper Naaman, who at first refused to undertake the simple task of washing himself in the waters of Jordan, as requested by the prophet Elisha (see 2 Kings 5:1–14). Reading the Book of Mormon is also a simple task.

The next fast Sunday, several brothers and sisters bore testimony of how the prophet’s promises were realized in their lives. I knew I had missed out on those blessings because I had not listened to his voice. I resolved to read the Book of Mormon from cover to cover in 2006—and the next year and the next year—so that, like President Hinckley, I could gain a love for it.

As the year drew to a close, I reflected on my goal, knowing that I would finish the book by the end of the year. I realized that I had gained insights that I could not have gained from any other source. I had grown closer to my Heavenly Father and my Savior. I had found more opportunities to share the gospel throughout the year because I had read the Book of Mormon and could testify of its truthfulness.

I wish I had taken President Hinckley’s challenge in 2005. Just like Naaman, who finally washed himself in the waters of Jordan, I could have enjoyed the blessings of the Book of Mormon much sooner than I did.

I am grateful that I have learned the importance of taking even simple challenges from the prophet. I look forward to a new year full of blessings from reading the Book of Mormon—again. ■

Jennifer Garrett, California, USA


NOTE

1. See Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Testimony Vibrant and True,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Aug. 2005, 6.

Look Out!

On the evening of July 23, 1991, Elder Charles Larsen and I were returning home from the Auckland International Airport after dropping off a missionary who had completed his mission. It was winter in New Zealand, and it had been raining for several days.

I was driving our car toward the

A man in a dark suit and tie stands next to a severely damaged car at night. He has a look of surprise or alarm, with his mouth open and hands gesturing. The scene is dimly lit, with a street lamp visible in the background. A text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Suddenly I heard a loud and distinct voice say, "Look out!"

large Harbour Bridge, which connects Auckland to Takapuna. As we approached a turn on the lower portion of the bridge, a small car passed us going very fast. As the speeding car started to make the turn, the driver lost control on the wet surface. The car fishtailed to the left and then went hard right, hitting a cement barricade, which kept it from falling off the bridge and into the harbor.

Bouncing violently off the wall, the car rolled and slid to a stop. Shocked by what we had just seen, I immediately pulled into the median and put on our hazard lights. Instinctively, Elder Larsen and I both jumped out to see if we could help. Before we could get to the car, a man climbed out of a broken window and made his way off the bridge and down to

the water's edge, where he disappeared in the dark. We called out to him, but he didn't respond.

I made my way to the small wrecked car, which was lying on its side with the passenger door facing up. The window was missing, so I climbed partway in to see if there was anyone else inside. Suddenly I heard a loud and distinct voice say, "Look out!" Startled by the voice, I quickly jumped back. Almost instantly, another car traveling at high speed came around the corner and hit the wrecked car I had just been leaning in.

Because of the turn in the road and the tall cement barricade, oncoming drivers couldn't see the wreckage ahead. Several other cars added to the pileup. Elder Larsen and I quickly ran around the turn, waving our arms

to stop other drivers. The police soon arrived, and we learned that the first car had been stolen.

As we returned home, I was thinking about my close call and thanked Elder Larsen for warning me of the oncoming car. He looked at me with surprise and said, "Elder Soelberg, I didn't say anything. I wasn't close to you and didn't even see that car coming around the corner."

We sat there for a moment, feeling an overwhelming sense of gratitude. That night we knelt and thanked our Heavenly Father for the warning that had literally saved my life. Since that experience, I have shared my testimony many times of the importance of being receptive to the Lord's Spirit and listening for His voice. ■

Mark H. Soelberg, Utah, USA

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

These teaching suggestions are provided to give you some ideas. You can tailor them to your family.

“One Family’s Heritage of Service,” p. 8: Summarize the story, emphasizing how the good examples of family members inspired others. Create a future genealogy chart: on a piece of paper, list the names of the children in your family, and invite each of them to choose a few names for their future children. Conclude by discussing how the children’s example and testimony can influence their descendants and connect them with their ancestors.

“Friends Tend to Become Like You,” p. 31: Set out a number of similar objects and one that is different from them. Point out that the different object is easy to spot. Read the story. Discuss the meaning of the statement: “I hope that everyone will see the differences in all of you.” Make a goal to be a better example of Jesus Christ so others will want to learn more about the gospel.



“This Is Our Religion, to Save Souls,” p. 40: Read the section “Keeping Our Eyes Open,” and announce that you are going to have a weeklong service scavenger hunt. Set out a container and some beans or pebbles to track the services. Discuss how “keeping our eyes open” can help us serve others. Set a goal to look for ways to serve others during the coming week at home, school, work, and church. Each time someone completes an act of service, he or she can put a bean in the container. Next week, count how many beans have been collected.

“Campfire Stories and Testimonies,” p. F4: Using a blanket, re-create the experience of sitting inside a tent. Pass out snacks to eat during the lesson. Read the story, and have two family members role-play the conversation between Kent and Brett. Testify that the Holy Ghost can prompt us to know when to share our testimonies

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and what to say. Encourage family members to be worthy to receive promptings from the Holy Ghost and to follow them.

“Comforting Lucy,” p. F10: After reading this story, reread the mother’s statement: “The Holy Ghost helped you know what to do so you would feel better.” Invite the younger children to draw a picture of a situation in which prayer and the guidance of the Holy Ghost could be helpful. Conclude by singing a favorite Primary song together, and bear testimony of the comforting power of prayer and sacred music.

Study the Gospel Together

Monday evenings should be reserved for family home evening. Local leaders should ensure that Church buildings and facilities are closed, that no ward or stake activities are planned

for Monday evenings, and that other interruptions to family home evenings be avoided. The primary emphasis of family home evening should be for families to be together to study the gospel. We remind all that the Lord

has admonished parents to teach their children the gospel, to pray, and to observe the Sabbath Day. The scriptures are the most important resource for teaching the gospel.”

First Presidency letter, Aug. 30, 1994.

YOUR FAVORITE HOME EVENING

Send a description of your favorite family home evening to liahona@ldschurch.org. Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.

the Friend



COME LISTEN TO A PROPHET'S VOICE

SHOWING THE LOVE IN YOUR HEART

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON



President Monson loves poetry. He often quotes poems in his talks, including the poem below, "Which Loved Best?" It was printed in an old textbook that helped teach children how to read.



F 2

Love causes change. Love brings healing to the soul. But love doesn't grow like weeds or fall like rain.

Jesus taught, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34).

Little children can learn the lesson of love. They respond readily to a favorite verse:

*"I love you, mother," said little John;
Then, forgetting his work, his cap went on,
And he was off to the garden swing,
Leaving his mother the wood to bring.*

*"I love you, mother," said rosy Nell;
"I love you better than tongue can tell;"
Then she teased and pouted full half the day,
Till her mother rejoiced when she went to play.*

*"I love you, mother," said little Fan;
"To-day I'll help you all I can;
How glad I am that school doesn't keep!"
So she rocked the babe till it fell asleep.*

*Then, stepping softly, she fetched the broom,
And swept the floor, and dusted the room;
Busy and happy all day was she,
Helpful and happy as child could be.*

*"I love you, mother," again they said—
Three little children going to bed;
How do you think that mother guessed
Which of them really loved her best?"¹*

The desire to lift, the willingness to help, and the graciousness to give come from a heart filled with love. True love is a reflection of Christ's love. ●

From "The Doorway of Love," Liahona, Oct. 1996, 4, 5, 6; Ensign, Oct. 1996, 2-3, 5, 7.

NOTE

1. Joy Allison, "Which Loved Best?" in *McGuffey's Third Eclectic Reader* (1879), 146-47.

THREE MEANINGS OF LOVE

Love has at least three different meanings: (1) It is a feeling in your heart. (2) It is a word you can say. (3) It is an action. The best way to show the love you feel in your heart is to tell others you love them and do something nice for them too.

Look at the pictures below. What can the child in each situation do to show love for someone? Color the four scenes.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY SCOTT JARRARD

Campfire Stories and TESTIMONIES

“Therefore, declare the things which ye have heard, and verily believe, and know to be true” (D&C 80:4).

BY BRETT NIELSON

Based on a true story

Ring! It was the final bell of the school day on Friday afternoon. I jumped from my desk and raced to the door. My friend Kent had invited me and two other boys to camp out that night by his house. I had been looking forward to it for two weeks.

When I got home from school, I gathered my sleeping bag, pillow, flashlight, comic books, and a bag of snacks. When I got to Kent’s house, he and his father were just spreading out the tent. We took turns hammering the stakes that kept the tent secure on the ground.

Then Kent’s dad barbecued hamburgers, and we all played hide-and-seek in the woods. As soon as the sun went down, we turned on our flashlights and went exploring.

After a while, Kent’s mother called us all back from the woods and told us it was time to settle in for the night. We ran into the tent, laid out our sleeping bags, and got comfortable. Soon we were sharing snacks and listening to some of Kent’s amazing adventure stories. Kent always made us the heroes in his stories. We could always fly, and we always saved the day.

As it got late, everyone was tired and began to fall asleep. I could hear the crickets chirping in the night air and a train passing in the distance. I began to think about Kent’s stories. I realized that even though Kent had told me a lot of great stories, there was one important story he didn’t know. It was the true story of Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the gospel. The more I thought about it, the more I felt I

should share this special story with my friend.

“Kent, are you still awake?”

“Yes. What’s up?”

My heart started beating a little faster and I felt anxious, but I kept talking.

“I was just wondering. Do you believe in God?”

“Yes, of course,” he said.

“Do you believe in the prophets in the Bible?”

“Yes,” Kent said as he sat up in his sleeping bag.

“Well, what if I told you that we have a living prophet on the earth today, just like in the Bible?”

“What do you mean—a prophet like Moses?”

“Yes, that’s exactly what I mean.”

“Well, that’s something new,” he said. “Tell me about it.”

My anxious feeling began to melt away, and excitement grew in its place. I told Kent about the Prophet Joseph Smith and how the gospel was restored to the earth. I told him about the living prophet and apostles on the earth today.

When I finished, I asked Kent what he thought about it.

He was quiet for a few moments. “I think that’s an amazing story that I really need to think about. Do you really believe it?”

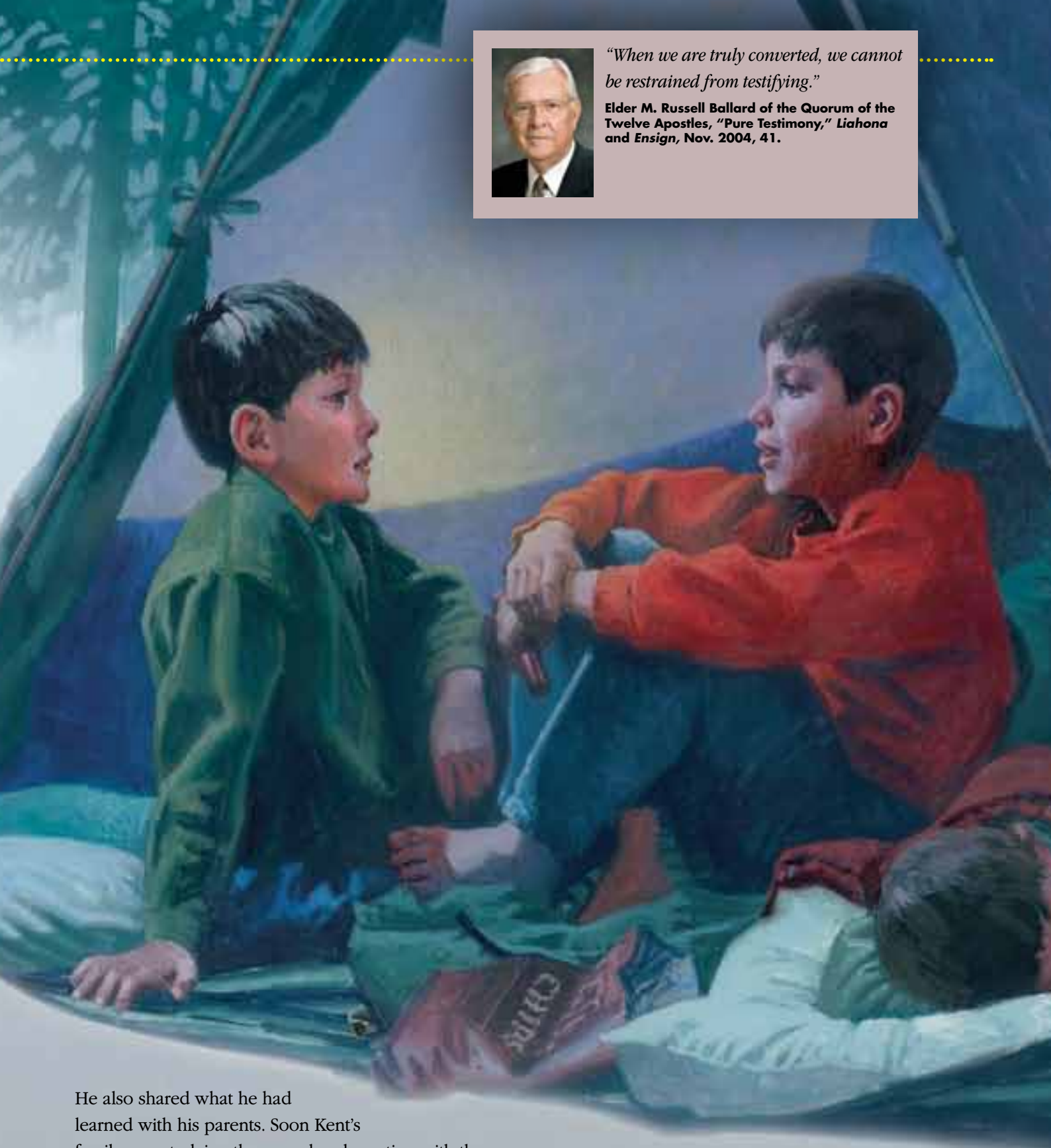
“Yes, I really do.” I felt warmth inside my chest, and I knew I had said what Heavenly Father wanted me to say. I said a silent prayer that Kent would find out for himself that what I had said was true.

I later learned that Kent did pray to find his answer.



“When we are truly converted, we cannot be restrained from testifying.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Pure Testimony,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 41.



He also shared what he had learned with his parents. Soon Kent's family was studying the gospel and meeting with the missionaries. It wasn't long until Kent's whole family was baptized and confirmed members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

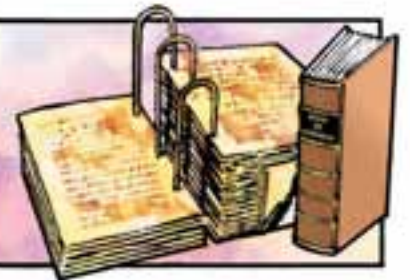
Although many years have passed since then,

Kent and I are still great friends. We both served missions, and we attended Brigham Young University together. I'm so glad that I took the time to share the gospel with my friend. ●



FROM THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

The Inspirations of a Prophet



By November 1833 most of the Latter-day Saints in Jackson County, Missouri, had been persecuted and driven from their homes.



In 1834 the Lord commanded Joseph Smith to organize a group of Latter-day Saints to march from Kirtland, Ohio, to Jackson County, Missouri. The group was called Zion's Camp.



I need as many men as will come. We'll march to Jackson County and recover the land that was taken from us.

Over 200 people walked more than 900 miles (1,450 km). They often didn't have enough food or water. Some men chose to quarrel and criticize the Prophet.

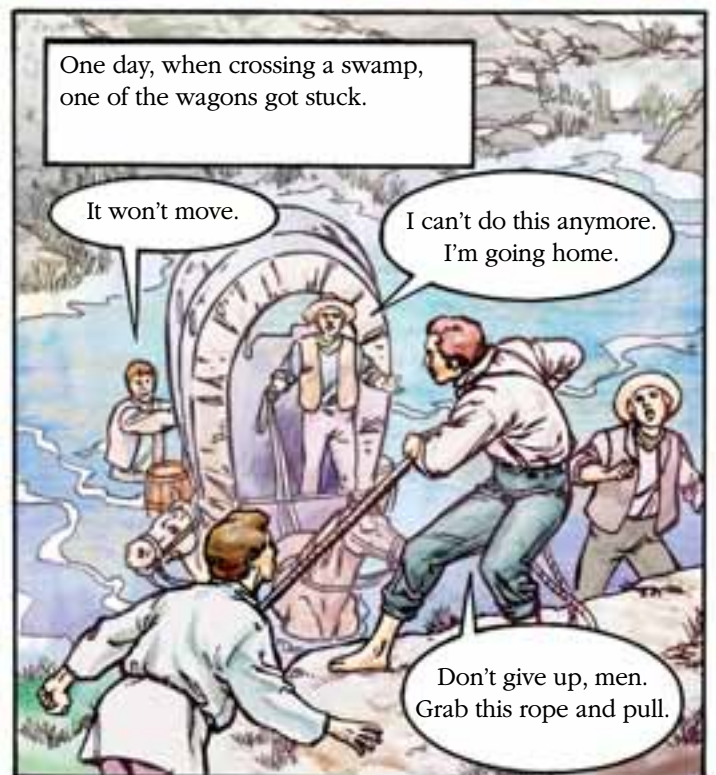


I'm tired of marching so far. We deserve better food.

I didn't think this would be so hard.

I miss my wife and children.

One day, when crossing a swamp, one of the wagons got stuck.



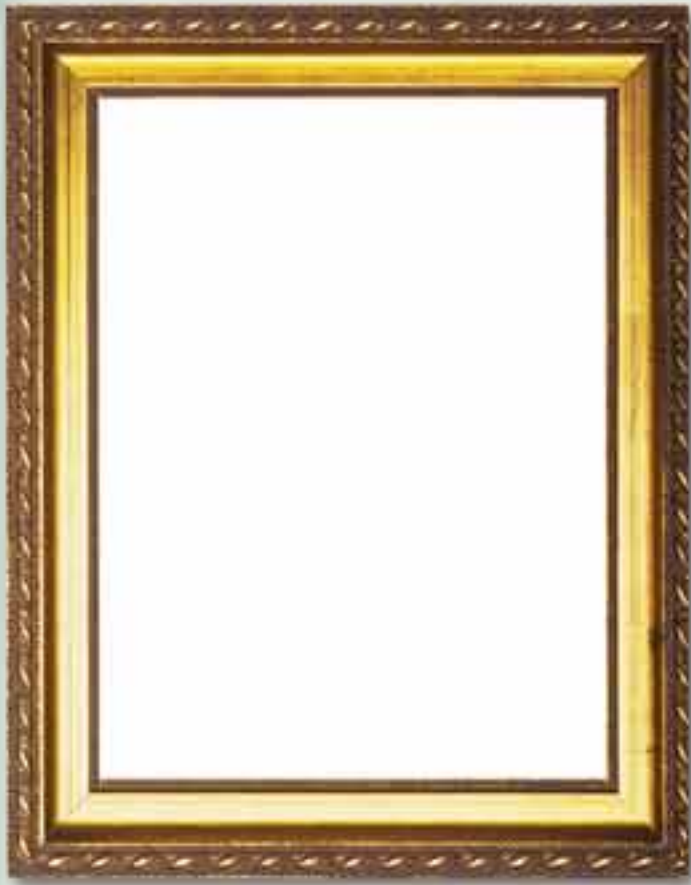
It won't move.

I can't do this anymore. I'm going home.

Don't give up, men. Grab this rope and pull.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SAL VELLUTO AND EUGENIO MATTOZZI





Prophets Teach Me How to Strengthen My Family

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken . . . ; whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

BY CHERYL ESPLIN



Families are ordained of God. Before we were born, we lived as spirit sons and daughters of Heavenly Father. When it was time for us to come to earth, Heavenly Father planned for us to come to a family. He knew that families were the best way to help us prepare to return to live with Him.

Heavenly Father calls prophets to testify of Jesus Christ and teach His gospel. Prophets help families know what they need to do to be happy and to return to live with Him.

We can read about the teachings of the prophets in the scriptures. We can listen to the prophet in general conference. If we listen carefully, we can learn what Heavenly Father wants us to do. When we obey the prophet's counsel, our faith will grow. We will be able to help strengthen our family.

Activity

Remove page F8 from the magazine, and mount it on heavier paper. As you listen to the prophet during general conference next month, listen for what he teaches that can help strengthen your family. In the picture frames, draw pictures of you and your family doing what the prophet taught. Put your pictures in a place where they can remind you and your family of what the prophet taught.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Book of Mormon prophets teach me how to strengthen my family. Explain to the children that Book of Mormon prophets saw our day and the dangers that our families face. Book of Mormon prophets teach us what to do to protect and strengthen

our families. Using name tags or simple costumes, have children dramatize accounts of Book of Mormon prophets that teach principles that will strengthen our families (see “Dramatizations,” Teaching, No Greater Call [1999], 165–66). For example: The story of Lehi leaving Jerusalem with his family, emphasizing Lehi's obedience to the Lord's commandments (see 1 Nephi 2:1–7). Have the child who portrayed Lehi read 2 Nephi 1:4, and then discuss with the children the result of Lehi's obedience. Ask: If the Lord protected and blessed Lehi's family for being obedient, what will the Lord do when your family is obedient? (He will protect and bless your family.) Dramatize the account of Alma praying for his son Alma the Younger (see Mosiah 27:8–37). Talk about how praying for family members can help strengthen our families. Encourage the children to watch for examples of other Book of Mormon prophets they can follow.

2. The prophet today teaches me how to strengthen my family. Help the children memorize “What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken . . . ; whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38; see “Memorization,” Teaching, No Greater Call, 171–72). Tell the children you are going to describe one of the Lord's servants. Have them raise their hands when they recognize who it is: he worked in the printing business; his middle name starts with an S, which stands for Spencer; he is the 16th President of the Church; he is the living prophet on earth today. Show a picture of President Thomas S. Monson. Emphasize that when he speaks, it is as if the Lord is speaking. Write on the board and have the children repeat “President Monson teaches me how to strengthen my family.” Give each class a different quote by President Monson that teaches us how to strengthen our family (see conference issues of the Liahona). Have the children discuss with their teacher things they could do to live that particular teaching. Invite a child in each class to share the teaching. Sing “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet” (Hymns, no. 19). Bear testimony that when we follow the living prophet, we are following the Lord. ●



Comforting Lucy

"[The] Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love" (Moroni 8:26).

BY JULIANNE DONALDSON

Based on a true story

Lucy was curled up in a corner of her bedroom when her mom came in to say good night.

"What are you doing over there, Lucy?" Mom asked.

"I just wanted to be alone to think," Lucy said, burying her face in her favorite blanket—the yellow one with flowers that had belonged to Mom when she was a little girl.

"Do you want to talk about it?" Mom asked, sitting down in the rocking chair.

Lucy nodded and climbed up on Mom's lap. "I was thinking about Grandma Eliza," she said quietly, rubbing her blanket across her eyes.

"Oh," Mom said, rocking her gently. "You know, Grandma Eliza is in heaven now. I think she must be very happy there."

Lucy sniffed. "I know," she said. "But I miss her, and I'm not happy that she's gone."

"I miss her too," Mom said as she stroked Lucy's hair. "Why don't we pray about this?"

"OK," Lucy agreed. With Mom's help, Lucy prayed, "Dear Heavenly Father, I feel

sad that Grandma Eliza died, and I miss her. But I know she's in heaven and she's happy, and I know that I'll see her again when she's resurrected. Please help me not to feel so sad. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

After she said "amen," Lucy sat quietly for a moment. Then she had an idea. "I know what to do! Aunt Emma told me that singing Primary songs helps her feel happy. Maybe we should do that!"

"That sounds like a good idea," Mom said.

Together, Lucy and Mom sang "I Am a Child of God," "I Love to See the Temple," and "I'm Trying to Be like Jesus." When they finished, Lucy said, "I feel happy now, Mom."

"The Holy Ghost helped you know what to do so you would feel better," Mom said.

Lucy smiled. "I know. Heavenly Father answered my prayer." Now as she thought about Grandma Eliza, she felt like her favorite blanket was wrapped around her heart. She was comforted.

"I love you, Mom," Lucy whispered before she fell asleep. "And I love Grandma Eliza too." ●

"Most often, answers to prayers come as a feeling of peace. They come as a feeling of reassurance. They come as a feeling that Heavenly Father knows you and me personally and wants to bless us."



Vicki F. Matsumori, second counselor in the Primary general presidency, "Answers to Prayers," Friend, Nov. 2006, 9.

Missionary Appointment

BY ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

These missionaries are returning to an apartment building for an appointment with a family interested in learning the gospel. But the missionaries have forgotten the apartment number. Can you help them find the door they are looking for? ●



Preparing for a Mission

BY VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

There are things you can do right now to help you prepare for a mission someday. To find out what you can do, read each statement and fill in the blank with the correct word from the list in the center.



Study the _____ .



Go to _____ .



Learn how to _____ .



Learn how to do _____ .

language
cook
saving
testimony
scriptures
church
iron
laundry



Share your _____ .



Start _____ .



Learn how to _____ .



Learn a second _____ .

How to Treat Others

“By love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).



From an interview with Elder Francisco J. Viñas of the Seventy, currently serving as President of the Caribbean Area; by Sarah Cutler

How do you build an eternal family? The first step is to learn from your parents. My parents were baptized in 1951, when I was four years old. We were among the first members of the Church in Uruguay.



From my parents I learned how to treat other people. They taught me to reach out to everyone, even to those who were not from our own country or culture. One time a Norwegian ship captain came to Uruguay. He was alone, without his family. My family invited him to stay in our home. Many people already lived in our little house, but we took in one more.

Seeing my parents take care of others taught me a simple principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ: be friendly to others, treat them well, and do not judge them. Be kind, and help people when they have a need.

I also saw how my parents served in the Church and how they helped the



missionaries. Before I was called as a priesthood leader, I had already received great training in my home from my parents.

The sooner in your life you start living the gospel, the better your life will be. Someday you will be able to pass the same gospel message and heritage to your children and then to their children. You can start a new generation of an eternal family if you learn the basic principles of the gospel.

My parents' example was a great heritage for me and my family. I hope it will continue to be for all the generations to come. My wife and I have a great relationship with our children. We have tried to help them understand what my parents taught me, that if you love others and help them, you are blessed. Our children have had many challenges, but all of them have been sealed in the temple. They are active in the Church, and we hope they will pass on this heritage to the next generation.

My grandchildren are the fourth generation of our family in the Church. We hope that we can share with

them the same ability to accept others, to help them, and to lift them up. We are working to establish a family based on faith in Jesus Christ and a strong testimony of His gospel. ●





PROPHETS TEACH ME HOW TO STRENGTHEN MY FAMILY

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).



That Good Part, by Elspeth Young

"Mary . . . sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

"But Martha was cumbered about much serving. . . .

"And Jesus . . . said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

"But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her"

(Luke 10:39-42).



“The virtue of your own life will be a light to those who sit in darkness, because you are a living witness of the fulness of the gospel,” writes President Dieter F. Uchtdorf to the women of the Church. “Wherever you have been planted on this beautiful but often troubled earth of ours, you can be the one to ‘succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.’” See “The Influence of Righteous Women,” p. 2.