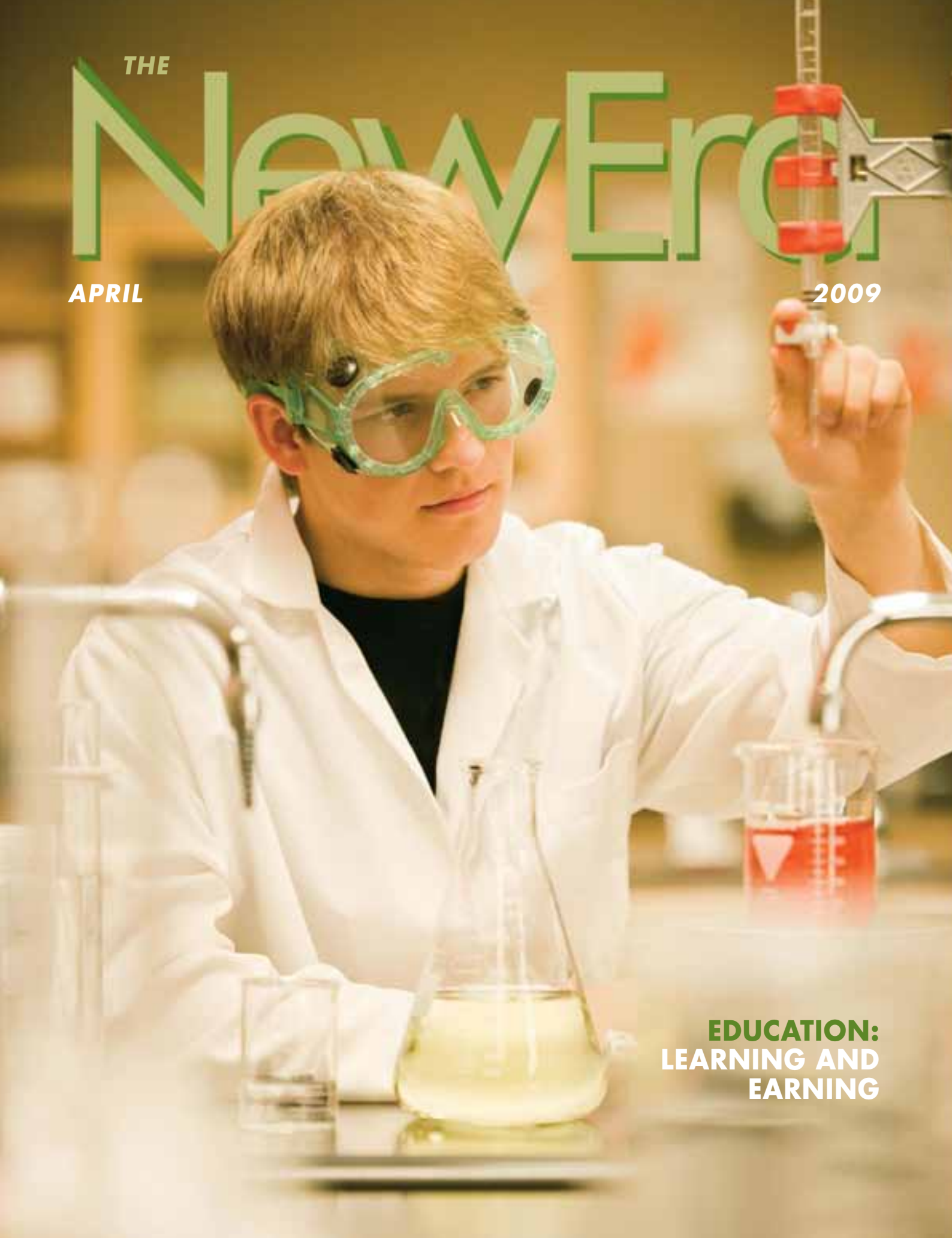


THE
New Era

APRIL

2009



**EDUCATION:
LEARNING AND
EARNING**

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EDUCATION

The gospel teaches us to seek knowledge and to become self-sufficient. In this special issue, we will help you to understand both of these goals, with articles about:

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Making school hard or easy (p. 28).
Discovering more than one way to learn (p. 36).
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You'll also find many stories of faith and encouragement, as well as advice from General Authorities and youth like you.



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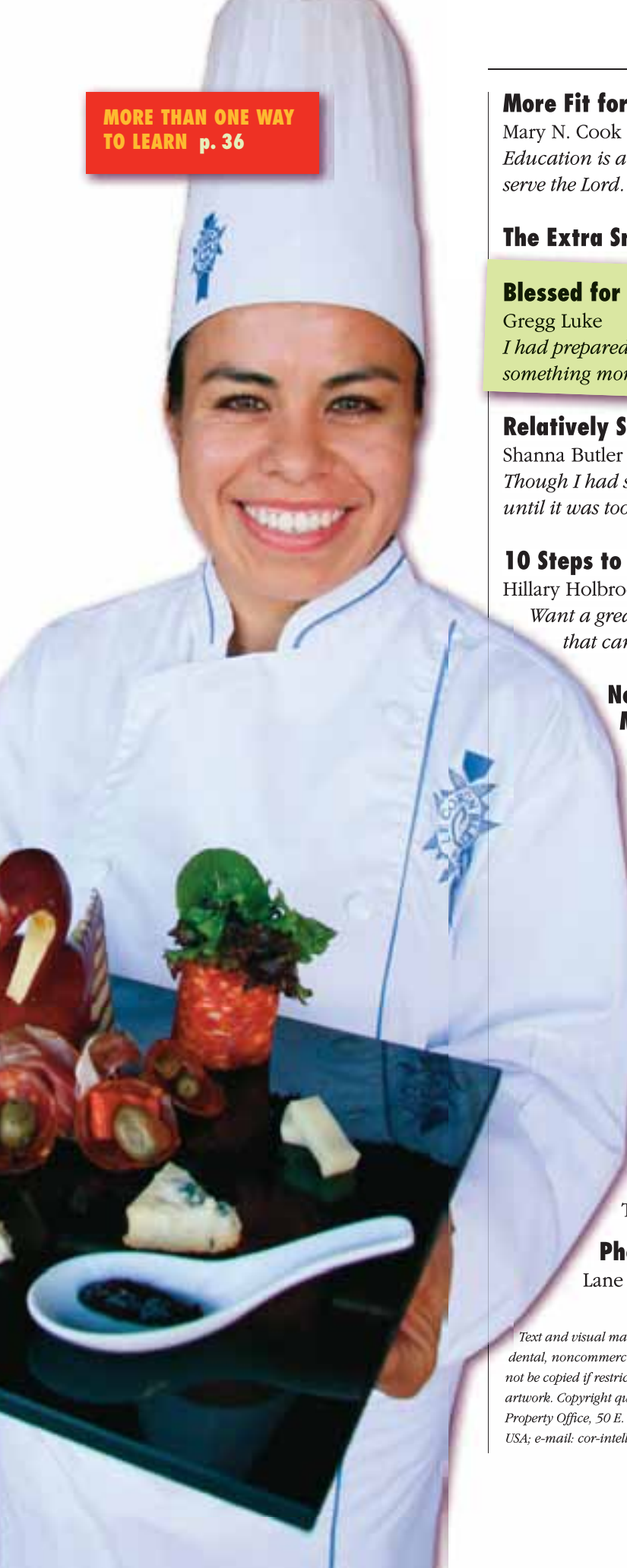
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Real-Life EDUCATION



BY PRESIDENT
HENRY B. EYRING

First Counselor in the First
Presidency

*All we can learn
that is true while we
are in this life will
rise with us in the
Resurrection.*

*Why worry about education?
Because learning is how we
prepare to serve both now and in
eternity.*

From the time of Joseph Smith to our own day, you can see evidence that conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ brings a desire to learn. Joseph Smith, as a very young man, translated the Book of Mormon from plates inscribed with a language no one on earth understood. He did it by a divine gift of revelation. But he later hired a tutor to teach him and other leaders of the Church ancient languages. Joseph Smith had essentially no formal schooling, yet the effect of the gospel on him was to make him want to learn more so that he could be more useful to God and to God's children.

When the Latter-day Saints were driven from Missouri by mobs, they built a city called Nauvoo on the banks of the Mississippi River. In poverty and living in the frontier, they still formed a university, "for the teaching of the arts, sciences and learned professions" (quoted in H. S. Salisbury, "History of Education in The Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Journal of History*, July 1922, 269).

"The first academic year in Nauvoo was that of 1841–42. The university probably was among the first municipal universities in the United States (see Wendell O. Rich, *Distinctive Teachings of the Restoration* (1962), 10). . . . The curriculum included languages (German, French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), mathematics, chemistry and geology, literature, and history." [Milton Lynn Bennion, *Mormonism and Education* (1939), 25]. . . .

"The charter of the University of the City of Nauvoo served as the foundation for the University of Deseret (now the University of Utah), established by Brigham Young in Salt Lake City in 1850. 'Education,' he once told this school's Board of Regents, 'is the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life' (Bennion, p. 115)."

When the Saints in Utah were still struggling to produce enough food, they started schools. They felt driven to lift their children toward light and to greater usefulness by education. That drive is more than a cultural tradition. It is the natural fruit of living the



Our first priority should go to spiritual learning. For us, reading the scriptures would come before reading history books.

Spiritual

The Church has placed institutes of religion across the earth wherever young members are gathered in sufficient numbers.

gospel of Jesus Christ. You see it today across the world as missionaries return home from their brief service in the field. Those who have planted the good word of God and have served faithfully invariably have awakened in them a great desire for self-improvement. And with that comes a desire to learn more and to gain greater skills.

The purpose of God's creations and of His giving us life is to allow us to have the learning experience necessary to come back to live with Him in eternal life. That is only possible if we have our natures changed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, true repentance, and making and keeping the covenants He offers all of His Father's children through His Church. True learning must have a powerful spiritual component. That spiritual element, when it is effective, refines and uplifts the aims of our total education.

Seek Learning to Serve God

The thirst for education can be a blessing or a curse, depending on our motives. If we continue to seek learning to serve God and His children better, it is a blessing of great worth. If we seek learning to exalt ourselves alone, it leads to selfishness and pride.

That is one of the reasons we should always put spiritual learning first. And that is why the Church has placed institutes of religion across the earth wherever young members are gathered in sufficient numbers. Their spiritual education in the institute will shape the purpose and speed the process of their secular learning.

The Lord said:

"I give unto you a commandment that ye shall continue in prayer and fasting from this time forth.

"And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

"Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;

"Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—

"That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you" (D&C 88:76–80).

The Lord and His Church have always encouraged education to increase our ability to serve Him and our Heavenly Father's children. For each of us, whatever our talents, He has service for us to give. And to do it well always involves learning, not once or for a limited time, but continually.

In the scripture above, the Master is clear about the process. Through prayer, fasting, and hard work, with a motive to serve Him, we can expect His grace to attend us. I can assure you from my own experience, that does not mean we will always be on the high end of the grading curve. It means that we will learn more rapidly and grow in skill beyond what we could do only with our unaided natural abilities.

That leads to some clear answers to the question of what all this means for us and what, therefore, we should do.

Spiritual Learning Gives Purpose to Secular Learning

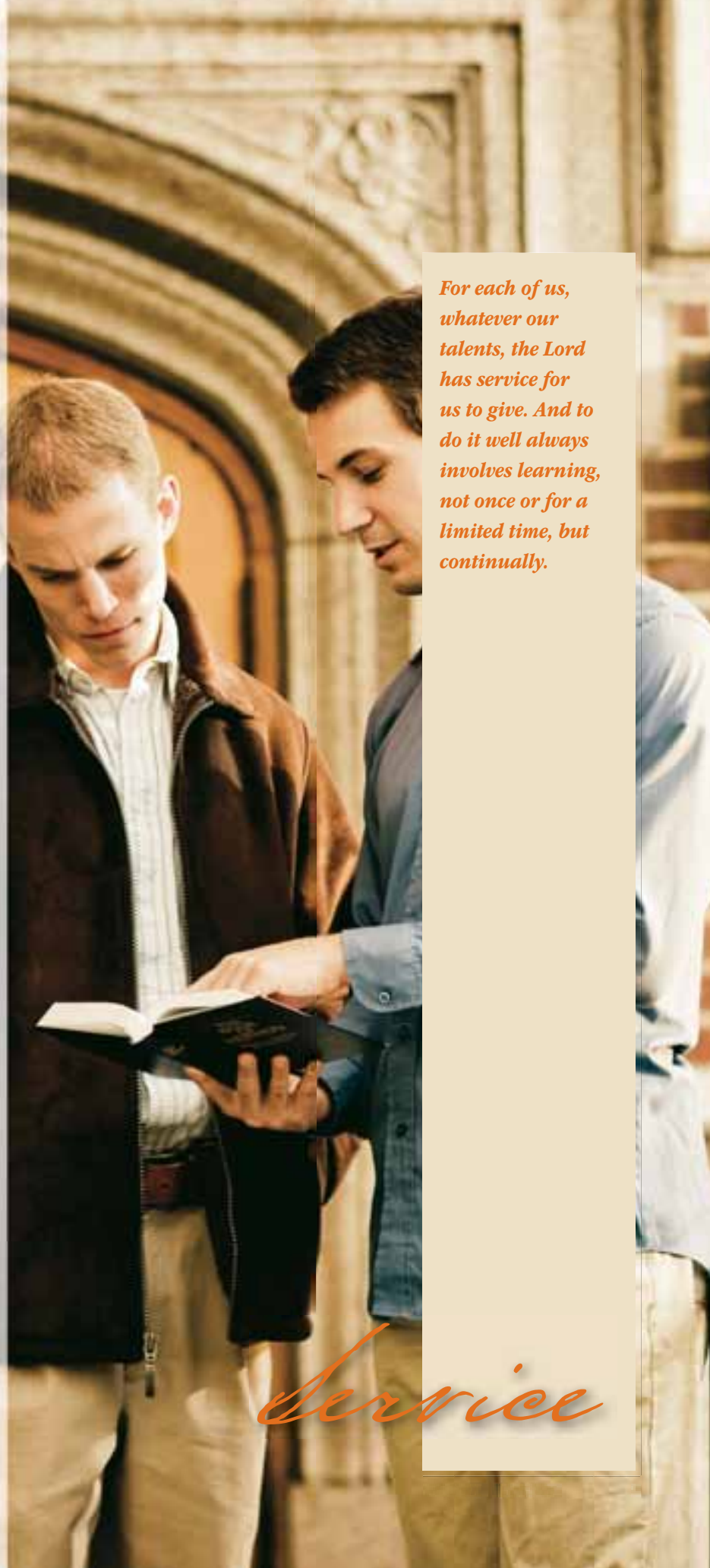
Our first priority should go to spiritual learning. For us, reading the scriptures would come before reading history books. Prayer would come before memorizing those Spanish verbs. A temple recommend would be worth more than standing first in our graduating class. But it is also clear that spiritual learning would not replace our drive for secular learning.

The Lord clearly values what you will find in that history book. And He favors not only Spanish verbs but also the study of geography. His educational charter requires that we have “a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms” (D&C 88:79). There is also an endorsement for questions we study in the sciences. It is clear that putting spiritual learning first does not relieve us from learning secular things. On the contrary, it gives our secular learning purpose and motivates us to work harder at it.

To keep spiritual learning in its proper place, we will have to make some hard choices of how we use our time. But there should never be a conscious choice to let the spiritual become secondary. Never. That will lead to tragedy. Remember, you are interested in education, not just for mortal life but for eternal life. When you see that reality clearly, you will put spiritual learning first and yet not slight the secular learning. In fact, you will work harder at your secular learning than you would without that spiritual vision.

For each of us, whatever our talents, the Lord has service for us to give. And to do it well always involves learning, not once or for a limited time, but continually.

Service



God Knows What You Need to Know

Part of the tragedy you must avoid is to discover too late that you missed an opportunity to prepare for a future only God could see for you. The chance to learn another language is for me a painful example. My father was born in Mexico. He grew up speaking Spanish as his first language. I lived in his home for more than 20 years. Sadly, I never asked him to teach me a word of Spanish. But my Church assignments have caused me to have contacts in Mexico, Central America, Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. It was no accident that I was born into a home with a Spanish-speaking father.

My father was a great teacher. He was a chemist. He even kept a blackboard in our basement for his children. He was eager to teach me mathematics. He spent hours trying to help me solve problems for my physics classes. He pled with me to think more often about those things that then seemed so uninteresting and unimportant. Years later I was called by the Lord to the Presiding Bishopric of the Church and given responsibilities for computing and communications systems. What a blessing I might have had if I had followed with my father the counsel I am giving to you now.

Your life is carefully watched over, as was mine. The Lord knows both what He will need you to do and what you will need to know to do it. You can with confidence expect that He has prepared opportunities for you to learn. You will not recognize those opportunities perfectly, as I did not. But when you put the spiritual things first in your life, you will be blessed to feel directed toward certain learning, and you will be motivated to work harder. You will recognize later that your power to serve was increased, and you will be grateful. Your service may not be in what the world would recognize as a lofty calling. But remember that when the real value of service becomes clear in the judgment of God, some people who worked in quiet anonymity will be the real heroes.

Learning Should Never Stop

A great teacher is always learning. The workplace in

every profession is changing so rapidly that what we know today will not be enough for tomorrow.

Our education must never stop. If it ends at the door of the classroom on graduation day, we will fail. And we will need the help of heaven to know which of the myriad things we could study we would most wisely learn. We cannot waste time entertaining ourselves when we have the chance to read or to listen to whatever will help us learn what is true and useful. Insatiable curiosity will be our hallmark.

Sometimes we feel that we must choose between spiritual and secular learning. That is a false conflict for most of us, particularly for the young. Before we have families, there is leisure time even in what is our busiest day. Too often we use many hours for fun and pleasure, saying, "I'm recharging my batteries." Those hours could be spent reading and studying to gain knowledge, skills, and culture.

It takes neither modern technology nor much money to seize the opportunity to learn in the moments we now waste. You could just have a book and paper and pencil with you. That will be enough. But you need determination to capture the leisure moments you now waste.

God Can Multiply the Effectiveness of Our Time

Some of you may feel overwhelmed by the lack of time. But there is another way to look at this. You can see it as an opportunity to test your faith. The Lord loves you and watches over you. He is all-powerful, and He promised: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

That is a true promise. When we put God's purposes first, He will give us miracles. If we pray to know what He would have us do next, He will multiply the effects of what we do in such a way that time seems to be expanded. He may do it in different ways for each individual, but I know from long experience that He is faithful to His word.

Years ago I was admitted to a graduate program for which I was poorly prepared. The competition was fierce.



Our education must never stop. If it ends at the door of the classroom on graduation day, we will fail. And we will need the help of heaven to know which of the myriad things we could study we would most wisely learn.

Secular

SEE, FEEL, AND WRITE

“Most individuals limit their learning primarily to what they hear or what they read. Be wise. Develop the skill of learning by what you see and particularly by what the Holy Ghost prompts you to feel. . . . Write down in a secure place the important things you learn from the Spirit. . . . Express gratitude for the help received and obey it. This practice will reinforce your capacity to learn by the Spirit. It will permit the Lord to guide your life and to enrich the use of every other capacity latent in your being.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To Acquire Knowledge and the Strength to Use It Wisely,” *Ensign*, June 2002, 32, 34.

On the first day the professor said, “Look at the person on your left and on your right. One of the three of you will not be here at the end.” The schedule of classes filled the five weekdays from early until late. Preparations for the next day’s classes lasted until nearly midnight, often beyond. And then late on Friday a major paper was assigned, with no way to prepare until the assignment was given and with the paper due at nine o’clock on Saturday night.

I can still remember the hours of frantic study and writing on those Saturdays. And as the nine o’clock deadline approached, crowds of students would stand around the slot in the wall of the library to cheer as the last desperate student would dash up to throw in his completed paper, just before the box inside the building was pulled away. Then the students would go back to their homes and to their rooms for a few hours of celebration before starting preparations for Monday classes. Most of them would study all day on Sunday and late into the night.

For me, there was no party on Saturday and no studying on Sunday. The Lord gave me an opportunity to test His promise. Early in that year He called me, through a humble district president, to Church service that took me across the hills of New England from the early hours of Sunday to late in the evening, visiting the tiny branches and the scattered Latter-day Saints in the area. I found joy in going to those places, loving the Lord, and trusting that somehow He would keep His promise. He always did. In the few minutes I could give to preparation on Monday morning before classes, ideas and understanding came to more than match what others gained

from a Sunday of study.

I cannot promise academic success, nor can I tell you the way in which He will honor His promise of adding blessings upon you. But I can promise you that if you will go to Him in prayer and ask what He would have you do next, promising that you will put His kingdom first, He will answer your prayer and He will keep His promise to add upon your head blessings, enough and to spare. Those apparent prison walls of “not enough time” will begin to recede, even as you are called to do more.

Real Life Is Eternal Life

The real life we’re preparing for is eternal life. Secular knowledge has for us eternal significance. Our conviction is that God, our Heavenly Father, wants us to live the life that He does. All we can learn that is true while we are in this life will rise with us in the Resurrection. And all that we can learn will enhance our capacity to serve. That is a destiny reserved not alone for the brilliant, those who learn the most quickly, or those who enter the most respected professions. It will be given to those who are humbly good, who love God, and who serve Him with all their capacities, however limited those capacities are—as are all our capacities, compared with the capacities of God.

I pray that you will feel a debt of gratitude to the Master Teacher, our Savior Jesus Christ. I pray that you will sense the great service that a loving Heavenly Father expects you to give to His children and that you will see the opportunities to learn that He has prepared for you. **NE**

From “Education for Real Life,” Ensign, Oct. 2002, 14.

GAINING KNOWLEDGE OF ETERNAL TRUTHS

The Prophet Joseph Smith understood the breadth of eternal truth and how to gain a knowledge of it.

Though he was relatively uneducated, the Prophet Joseph Smith received schooling from the Lord throughout his life. He learned the importance of knowledge (see D&C 130:18–19), and he obtained a clear understanding of what we must do to acquire knowledge of God and the eternities. Here are some of his teachings on this subject.*

EMBRACE ALL TRUTH

“Mormonism is truth; and every man who embraces it feels himself at liberty to embrace every truth. . . . The first and fundamental principle of our holy religion is, that we believe that we have a right to embrace all, and every item of truth.”

“When things that are of the greatest importance are passed over by weak-minded men without even a thought, I want to see truth in all its bearings and hug it to my bosom.”

GAIN KNOWLEDGE FOR SALVATION

“In knowledge there is power. God has more power than all other beings, because He has greater knowledge; and hence He knows how to subject all other beings to Him.”

“A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world. . . . Hence it needs revelation to assist us, and give us knowledge of the things of God.”

SEEK KNOWLEDGE

“The things of God are of deep import; and time, and experience, and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts can only find them out. Thy mind, O man! if thou wilt lead a soul unto salvation, must stretch as high as the utmost heavens, and search into and contemplate the darkest abyss, and the broad expanse of eternity—thou must commune with God. How much more dignified and noble are the thoughts of God, than the vain imaginings of the human heart!”

*“When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them.” **NE***

* From *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 264–68.

THE HIGHEST EDUCATION

“In a world that wonders and speculates and drifts, we can be certain who our Father is, who we are, and what our destiny is if we follow the path that has been marked for us. We can enjoy the highest of all higher education—the learning that comes, in both spiritual and temporal affairs, when our spirits and our minds respond to the light that streams from heaven to the faithful.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “What I Wish Every New Member Knew—and Every Longtime Member Remembered,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2006, 15.

Finding

BY ASHLEY MYERS



From the outside looking in, people saw a girl who was successful and accomplished. I started on a competitive basketball team, played the violin in the state championship orchestra, graduated as the salutatorian of my class, was involved in student government, and participated in numerous other extracurricular activities. I strove to excel, to be perfect.

On the inside, however, I was a completely different person. Like many teenage girls, I unsuccessfully fought to win the battle of insecurity. I struggled with my self-image. I felt alone, as it was hard for me to develop close friendships when so few people maintained similar beliefs and

morals. I was simply unhappy.

Without my even being aware of what I was doing, I tried to find not just solace, but also happiness, in being the best in anything and everything. My motto in life became “Mediocrity is not an option!”

Through my efforts, the awards began to pile up. However, I became more discouraged because I was not finding happiness. Sure I found a sense of *pleasure* in receiving such recognition, but it was not true happiness. I continually felt that I needed just one more award and then I would feel happy, only to be disappointed when that feeling did not come. Without my realizing it, this drive for perfection had taken over and had become the center of my life.

HAPPINESS IN

Christ



I decided that I wanted to become a different person when I entered college. Again, without being fully conscious of what I was doing, I developed a new center in my life, returning to basics I had learned at home, church, and seminary.

I began having meaningful scripture study and started pouring my soul out to my Father in Heaven. I became a spiritual sponge. I never would have thought such simple adjustments could make such a huge impact on my life. I truly have never been happier.

Sure, there have been times when I have felt sad and low. The difference is that I now know whole-heartedly that God loves me and hears and answers my prayers. I

also know that my Savior understands and has felt all my pains. He not only suffered for mankind's sins, but also for our sorrows and burdens (see Alma 7:11–13).

I have recently come to the conclusion that all high school students struggle in one way or another. For some it may be minor struggles, for others major. For some it may be worrying about weight or self-esteem. For others the struggle may be with grades or bullies. It may be a sense of pressure to succeed, or it may be temptation. Whatever the reasons or how hefty the struggles, I have discovered that everyone can experience joy through centering their lives on Christ and finding happiness through Him. **NE**

A Higher EDUCATION



As the Commissioner of Church Education, Elder Paul V. Johnson of the Seventy is responsible for overseeing seminaries and institutes. Here are some answers to questions raised during a discussion Elder Johnson had with students at the Alta High School Seminary in Sandy, Utah.

How does seminary relate to your schoolwork and to your general education?

I think it really lays the foundation. When you're studying other subjects, if you know who you are and what God's plan is for you, both during this earth life and afterward, it really brings into focus those other subjects.

Another secret a lot of people don't understand is that when you're doing what you should and you've got the Spirit in your life, it actually increases your capacities in your other schoolwork.

*Why seminary?
Why institute?
Because without
them your
education is
incomplete.*



What can I do to make my seminary experience more meaningful?

You're part of the process. Seminary isn't just a teacher lecturing to you. When you're willing to make comments or to explain a gospel principle or to bear your testimony, that helps to bring the Spirit into the class and into your life.

And there's another key that sometimes we don't think about to make seminary a really powerful experience. When you learn principles in the gospel, or relearn them, you apply them in your lives outside of class. And when you do that, the power of the whole seminary experience multiplies. That is what the gospel is about. It's what happens in your life. It's what you are becoming. And the way you become the type of person you are isn't just by listening to or being able to

explain gospel principles. It's to have them in your heart, and to use them when you deal with your friends or when you face challenging situations. That willingness to apply what you've learned is one of the most powerful ways to make seminary a great experience for you.

If seminary conflicts with sports or other activities, what should I do?

That type of question is going to come up a lot in your life, not just about seminary but about Church things generally. Find a way to fit it in and let the rest of your life flow around it. When you're doing what you're supposed to, the Lord will bless you.

Would that also go along with seminary studies and schoolwork?

I wouldn't make the seminary studies and the schoolwork one or the other. You really can find a way to do them both. You may have to cut out video games or movies or something, but do them both.

There's a scriptural principle: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;



Elder Johnson tells students that seminary and institute are vital and valuable.



and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). When we get our eye single to the glory of God, and we get our hearts right, we plug the spiritual things in first. We find a way.

Can you think of some things that you learned as a seminary student that helped you?

I gained an interest in studying the scriptures and learning about the doctrines of the gospel. Seminary really helped me to get ready to go on a mission.

I had a great family. My dad and my mom understood the gospel and taught it to us. But studying and trying to learn something on my own made a difference for me.

What's the difference between released-time and early-morning seminary, and what is home-study seminary?

Seminary is supposed to be a daily experience for everyone. Released-time seminary takes place in areas where schools allow students to be released from school for one class period to attend seminary, which is held off-campus at a nearby Church-owned building. Early-morning seminary is held before school, sometimes in a chapel and

sometimes in a home. Home study is used where members are really spread out and it's not possible to get together every day. Home-study curriculum is designed so that every day you study the scriptures, answer questions, and do activities. Then once a week you get together as a class.

So there's really no place in the world where you can't participate in seminary?

That's correct. In fact, right now we're actually studying the possibility of an online



seminary for people who are really isolated. We have seminary students in almost 140 countries right now, so it's really spread out.

Why go to seminary all four years? Couldn't you just go to one year and get enough out of that?

There are several reasons. For one, you get a chance to study all the standard works. For another, during each of those years, you get the advantages we've been talking about of being in touch with the gospel every day and learning something new every day. You get an in-depth study of the scriptures through that whole course. If you missed a year, that doesn't mean you shouldn't come the next year. But it really is a blessing in your life if you can come all four years. It makes a big difference.



As they talk, Elder Johnson and the students agree that the real knowledge is spiritual knowledge.



I've already been to seminary for four years and studied all the standard works. Why should I go on to institute?

Because it's the best! You don't want to miss it. No matter where you go for higher education, we've tried to provide an even higher education, through an institute program. When you're in seminary, you do get a basic foundation of the gospel and the standard works. Institute builds on that foundation. It gives you a chance to interact with other young single adults, to learn more about the gospel. It has courses that are outside the four courses that you've taken in seminary. You get a chance to serve other people. It is really a wonderful, tremendous opportunity. Don't miss it!

What's the difference between the lessons they teach in seminary and the lessons they teach on an institute level?

Institute offers a greater variety of courses. For example, they have a course about preparing for marriage. They also have courses about subjects you have already covered in seminary, but as you take a New Testament

class in institute, it will continue to expand your gospel knowledge. There's a little more flexibility in the institute curriculum. It focuses more on issues that may be relevant to the institute-age student rather than the seminary-age student. They're great courses. You're going to love them.

For kids who aren't old enough to go to seminary yet, is there something you could suggest to help them get ready, mentally and spiritually?

I'm going to turn that one back to you as students. What would you say?

Student: You can tell them that they need to read scriptures every day to get in touch with the Spirit. Start now to develop the habit of reading every day.

Student: In ninth grade, my brothers asked me why I go to seminary and what's so important about it. I showed them my scripture mastery cards. My brother was in third grade at the time. He went through his scriptures and marked all the scripture mastery scriptures. He asked me why those were important, and I said those were the ones we were asked to memorize. He started studying and learning them. It gave him a head start later on.

Student: First of all, be a good example to



ENROLL IN SEMINARY AND INSTITUTE

“Without guidance, [a] student may choose another elective instead of seminary, or another course instead of an institute class. That would surely be a mistake. It would be like adding one more brick to the house of knowledge when there is little mortar to hold it all together. . . . Students, if your values are in place, you will not hesitate to forego an elective class that may decorate your life in favor of instruction which can hold together the very foundation of it. Then, once enrolled, attend, study, and learn. Persuade your friends to do the same. You will never regret it; this I promise you.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Agency and Control,” Ensign, May 1983, 67.



them. If you say, “I had such a great day in seminary,” they’re going to think that seminary is cool. They’ll wonder what makes it so good, and they will want to take it when they get a chance. Have a good attitude. There’s always someone looking up to you and watching what you do.

Elder Johnson: Those are great ideas! Talk about it. Tell them what you learn in seminary. Let them see what you’re reading in the scriptures. Have them quiz you on scripture mastery scriptures. Tell them something that you learned.

At the distribution center, you can get the bookmarks and give them to your little brothers and sisters. Get them a red pencil. Explain what’s on the bookmark—the chronology, and so on. You can give it to them and say, “Here’s what we do,” and get them excited about it.

What would you say would be the most important thing a student can gain from seminary and institute?

The real testimony that Jesus is the Christ. The understanding that the *real* knowledge is the spiritual knowledge. It’s what comes from the Holy Ghost to our souls individually. That’s the most powerful truth, the most powerful thing that can come out of seminary and institute. It doesn’t just change what you know; it changes who you are, and it changes how you look at the world. And that kind of higher education helps to make your other education complete. **NE**

“Some of my friends are dropping out of school to get jobs. I don’t really like school either, but I know education is important. What should I do?”

Work and education are both important. But they should be done in order. This is a time in your life to focus mainly on study and learning. While a part-time job that doesn’t interfere with your studies may be a good way to earn money and gain work experience, finishing high school is necessary to get more education and good jobs later in your life.

After high school, it’s a good idea to continue your education. For many, that will include attending college, but other possibilities include going to a technical school, taking online courses, or enrolling in community education. Whichever direction you choose, you will enjoy your career more and be in a better position to serve others if you take the time now to train your mind. **NE**



Intelligence Will Rise with Us

I too believe education is very important. My counsel is to stick with it. Your knowledge and understanding will be one of the greatest benefits you will ever receive. I have often put this scripture in my locker at school to keep me on track with my studies: “Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come” (D&C 130:18–19). This is why I always try to do my best in school and why I am always trying to learn new things.

James M., 18, Utah



Education Is Important

Although it may be tempting to follow in your friends’ footsteps, what’s popular is not always right. Know that education is important, and your friends will

respect you for making the right decision. Stay in school, get an education, and have that great feeling that comes from doing the right thing.

Kathleen W., 14, Texas



More Knowledge

Just because your friends are doing it is no excuse for you to drop out of school.

The prophet counseled us to get as much education as we can. Don't sell yourself short. The more dedicated you are, the more blessings will come your way. You can never have too much knowledge because that is something you can take with you to the next life.

Whitney N., 17, Arizona

It Pays Off

I also find myself sitting at school wondering why I am here and not with my other friends making money at fast food joints. But you have to ask yourself, "If I quit now, where will I be in the future?" Dropping out will not help you, but staying in school will. Getting a good education will pay off.

Ewalani H., 16, California



Education Helps You Be Happy

Although it looks like your friends are making money without a degree, please stay in school. Your friends will have difficulty adequately supporting a family, and that is a commandment. Not having an education also makes it harder to study the gospel and limits how you can serve. We are also counseled

to seek learning (see D&C 88:118). Get an adequate education so that you will have an increased ability to serve in the Lord's kingdom and be happy because you can take care of yourself. Getting an education also increases your salary, job security, and the number of jobs you can choose from.

Ben S., 14, Pennsylvania



One Reason I Like School

One thing that has helped me like school more is to think every day of one reason that you like school. For example, I like science because I get to learn about the world and how it works. This helps me find the good in things. Try this for a while, and you may come to know that you actually like to go to school. You can also study with friends and try to make school a fun environment. Pray that you will find a way to learn to like school.

Brittany F., 16, Alaska

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

NEXT QUESTION

"How can I have clean thoughts when I see so much immodesty around me?"

Send your answer by May 15, 2009, to:

**New Era, Q&A, 5/09
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA
Or e-mail: newera@ldschurch.org**

The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter:

FULL NAME

BIRTH DATE

WARD (OR BRANCH)

STAKE (OR DISTRICT)

I grant permission to print response and photo:

SIGNATURE

PARENT'S SIGNATURE (IF YOU ARE UNDER 18)



BE SMART

You are moving into the most competitive age the world has ever known. All around you is competition. You need all the education you can get. Sacrifice a car; sacrifice anything that is needed to be sacrificed to qualify yourselves to do the work of the world. That world will in large measure pay you what it thinks you are worth, and your worth will increase as you gain education and proficiency in your chosen field."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth," New Era, Jan. 2001, 8.



High school can be both a rewarding and challenging time. Although the main purpose is to get an education, you often must deal with other things in the process. Social pressures, friends, extracurricular activities, church, and work can also affect your experience. So how do you make it through? Here is advice from young adults who graduated from high school in the last few years:

High School Chemistry

BY MINDY RAYE HOLMES

Young adults who have been in your shoes share their formulas for survival and success.



Missy Wood

Age: 19

School: Lathrop High School

Location: Fairbanks, Alaska

Year graduated: 2007

Favorite subjects: math, English, ceramics

Least favorite subjects: history, science

Activities: diving, gymnastics, track, cheerleading, orchestra

Choosing Friends

"Friends make all the difference. I was the only member of the Church of all my friends, and that was really hard. Friends having the same standards as you makes a world of difference. Also, if most of your friends are non-members, don't be afraid to invite them to Church activities. You never know, they could have a good time."

Being Yourself

"Don't be scared to be yourself just because other people might think that you're different. Also learn how to remove yourself from bad situations. Don't be afraid to stand up for what you believe in even if you are the only person because you will be a good example to other people, and you won't have any regrets when you're older."



Scott McDermott

Age: 22

School: Walnut High School

Location: Walnut, California

Year graduated: 2004

Favorite subjects: English, Spanish,

math, music

Least favorite subjects: none

Activities: choir, drama, soccer

The Purpose of Learning

"A lot of my purpose in going to school was to get good grades as opposed to enjoying the learning process and enjoying all the things that I was learning. I was focused too much on the grades and not enough on the knowledge I was gaining. Enjoy learning and work for the pure expansion of your mind as opposed to working just to get good grades."

"The Lord blessed us with our minds. We have a great capacity to learn and grow. It's important to learn always, not just when we go to school, and to keep our minds working."

Going to Seminary

"I loved starting the day with seminary. It invited the Spirit so I could have the Spirit with me throughout the day. When you go to school, you learn lots of secular things. Balancing that with seminary helps to increase your spiritual knowledge. Seminary also helped me when I went on my mission because lots of the things I learned in seminary, like scripture mastery verses, were very useful as a missionary."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MINDY BAYE HOLMES AND COURTESY OF PERSONS PICTURED. EXCEPT AS NOTED, LEFT: MATTHEW REIER; BOTTOM RIGHT: © GETTY IMAGES



Lindsey Shurtliff

Age: 20

School: Westfield High School

Location: Houston, Texas

Year graduated: 2006

Favorite subjects: music, history

Least favorite subject: science

Activities: tennis, choir

Importance of Education

"Intelligence is one of the only things we can take out of this world. So that's something we should pay attention to. We need to learn how to learn because that's what life is about. Everything you do in life from learning how to take care of kids, learning how to fix a problem in your house, or learning how to deal with people—everything is about learning."

Discovering Yourself

"Find out who you are and find out what you love to do. Do a little bit of everything until you find something that you love. If you can figure that out in high school and start cultivating it, you'll be a lot happier in life. It's okay if you change it later, but find out who you are and do what you love to do."



Garrett Howell

Age: 22

School: Skyline High School

Location: Idaho Falls, Idaho

Year graduated: 2004

Favorite subjects: history and science

Least favorite subject: English

Activities: American football, working

Learning from High School

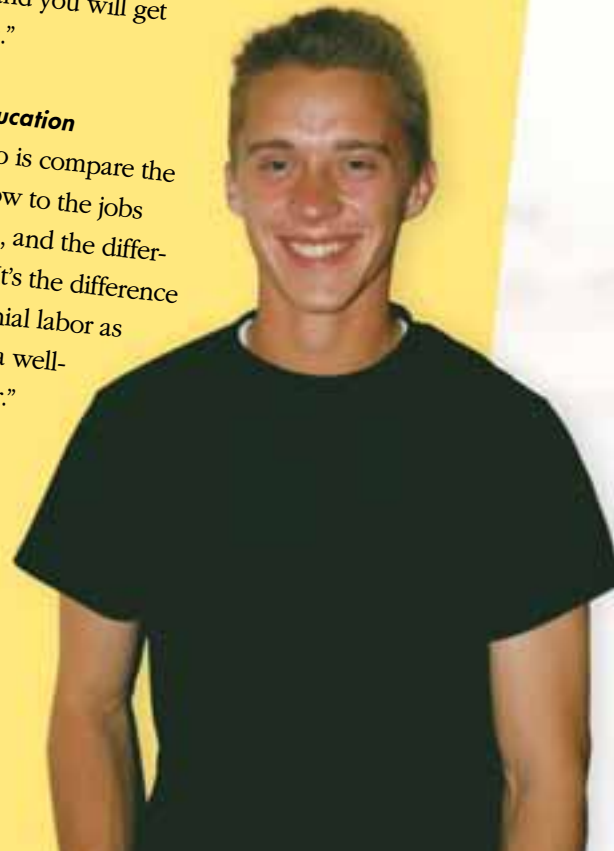
"I learned from my high school experience that many of the things you think are important in high school aren't. What everyone thinks of you isn't that important and neither are all of the activities at school. But what you learn from your classes and interacting with other people is important."

Surviving Hard Classes

"A lot of times when people don't like a class or it is hard, they will either half try or not do it at all. The best approach is to give a real effort, do all of the work, and you will get through the class."

Importance of Education

"All I have to do is compare the jobs I could get now to the jobs that I hope to have, and the difference is education. It's the difference between doing menial labor as opposed to having a well-paying job or career."



INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE, AND WISDOM

"Faced with an excess of information in the marvelous resources we have been given, we must begin with focus. . . . We also need quiet time and prayerful pondering as we seek to develop information into knowledge and mature knowledge into wisdom."

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Focus and Priorities," Ensign, May 2001, 82-83.



Marianne Shepherd

Age: 23

School: Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School

Location: London, Ontario, Canada

Year graduated: 2002

Favorite subjects: drama, art, music, French, Spanish

Least favorite subject: math

Activities: choir, orchestra, theater, art, audiovisual

High School Isn't Everything

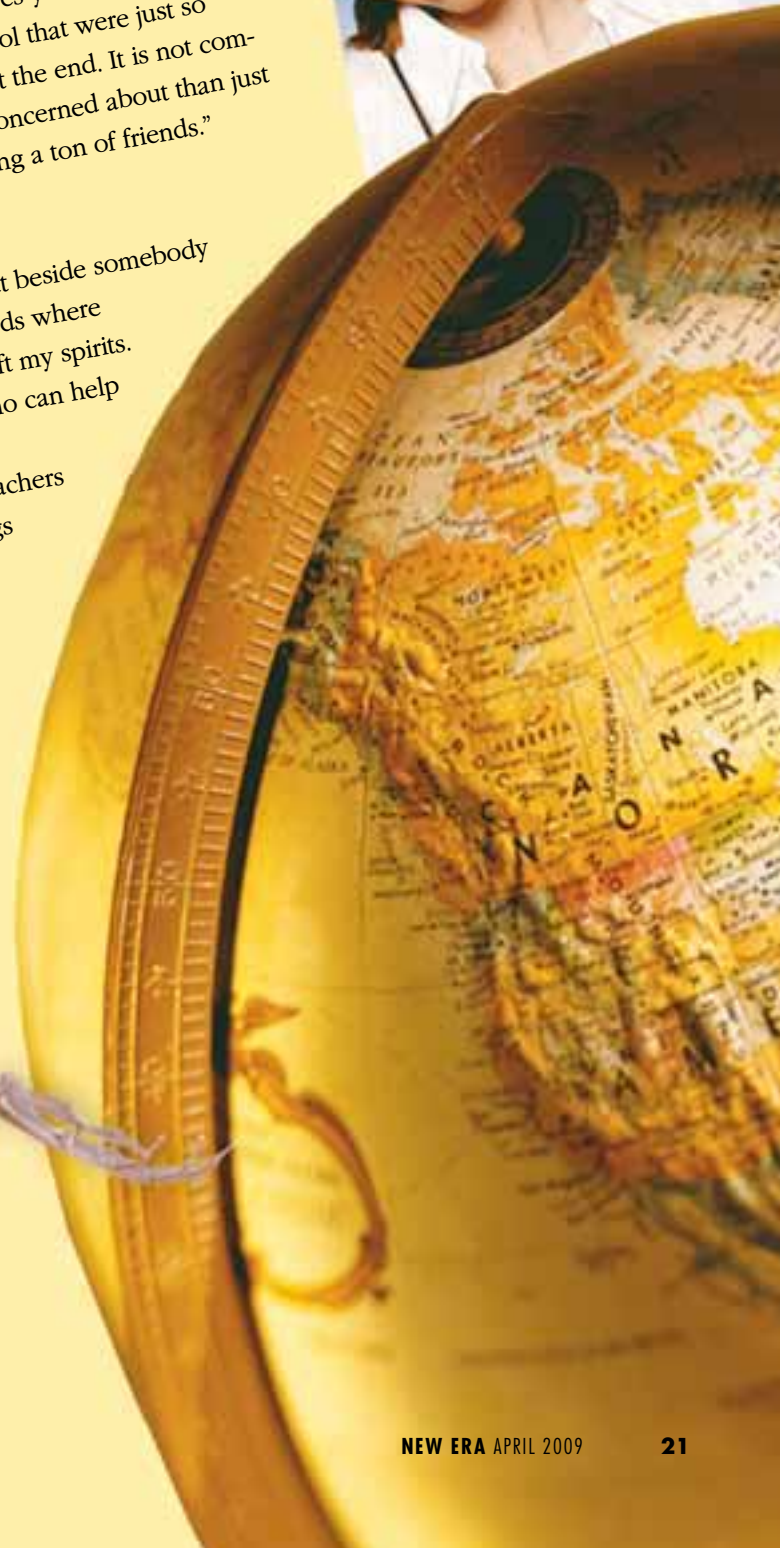
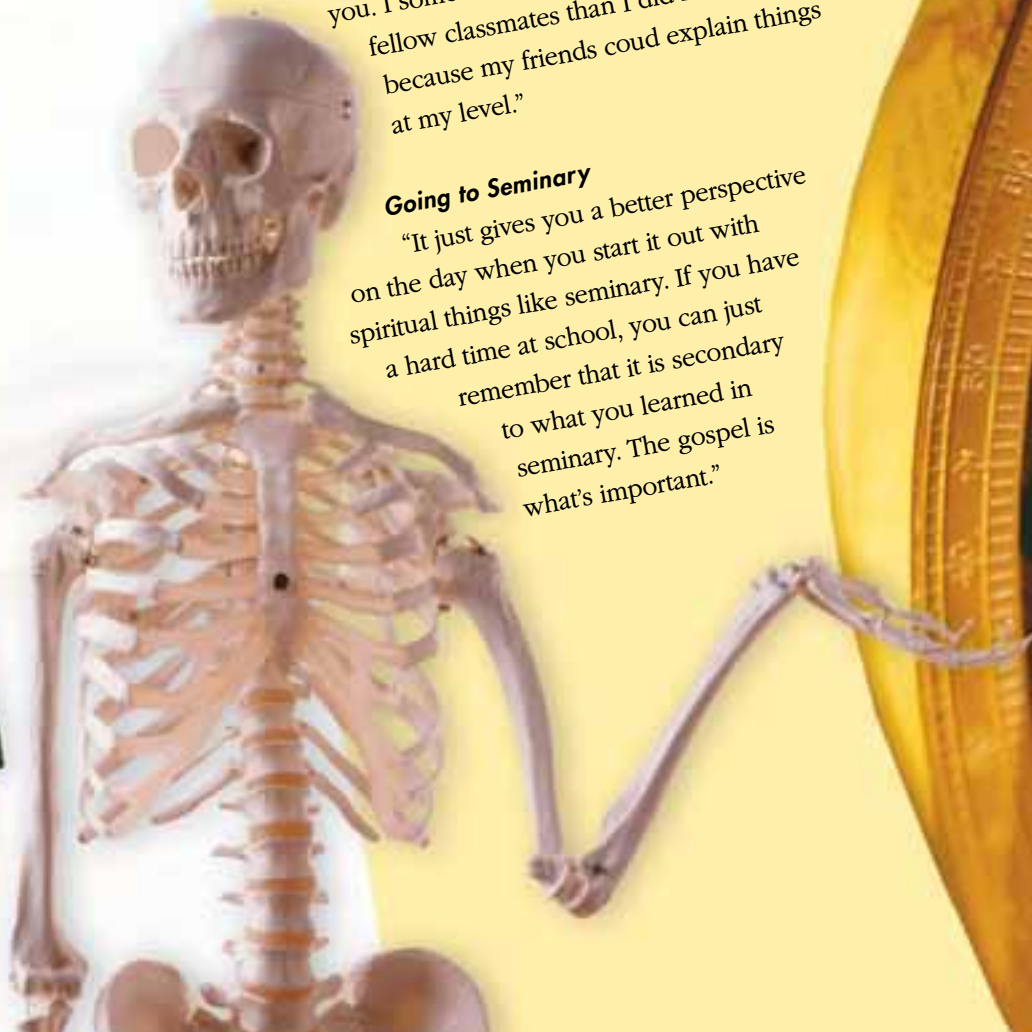
"A lot of times people think high school is all that shapes you. You have to belong to a group. We had lots of groups in high school that were just so absorbed in themselves. I realized that high school is not the end. It is not completely what shapes you. There's so much more to be concerned about than just being a part of a group, just being popular, or just having a ton of friends."

Getting through Hard Classes

"Enjoy the people you're taking the class with. I sat beside somebody who made me laugh. So when we would have periods where we would be working on assignments, she would lift my spirits. Find some friends who are good at the subject who can help you. I sometimes learned more from my fellow classmates than I did from the teachers because my friends could explain things at my level."

Going to Seminary

"It just gives you a better perspective on the day when you start it out with spiritual things like seminary. If you have a hard time at school, you can just remember that it is secondary to what you learned in seminary. The gospel is what's important."



BACKGROUND AND STILLS © GETTY IMAGES; GLOBE © CORBIS



James Havican

Age: 22

School: Tartan High School

Location: Oakdale, Minnesota

Year graduated: 2004

Favorite subjects: math and science

Least favorite subjects: English and art

Activities: track and field, American football

Importance of Education

“Education makes you more refined and a more respectable person. In my mission, there were a lot of people who were uneducated. Because of their lack of education they didn’t live well economically. Most didn’t really have moral values and they didn’t respect people as much or receive as much respect from people. Education plays a big role in many things.”

Balancing School and Other Activities

“You just have to be dedicated, and budget your time well. You have a certain amount of time for your activities and practices, so when you get done with that, start on your homework right away. Even though you want to go out and play with friends, if you really want to do well, you have to get your work done first.”

THREE KEYS TO LEARNING

“Remember these three beliefs: First, there is no limit to your potential learning as a child of God. Second, childlike humility is the key to teachableness. And third, living a clean life will allow the Holy Ghost to confirm and expand your learning.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Do What They Think You Can’t Do,” New Era, Oct. 1989, 6.



Tanner Tupou

Age: 20

School: Leumeah High School

Location: Sydney, Australia

Year graduated: 2005

Favorite subjects: English and

modern history

Least favorite subject: math

Activities: none

The Gospel Helps with School

“High school opened my eyes to see a lot of things. I learned that school didn’t have to be as hard as I made it. I always tried to separate Church from school and friends. I felt that I held a heavy burden in being an example to all my friends, who were non-members. I felt that I was forever being analyzed. Then I learned that I could use the things I got taught at home and by my Church leaders to help me at school. My testimony grew because I knew who I was, and that made it easier. I was the same person at home, at school, and with friends. I found that being a teenager in the gospel is a joyous thing.”

Importance of Education

“With education comes a better understanding. Your mind is more open, and you will be able to make smarter, wiser decisions based on the knowledge that you have gained. Education with assistance from the Holy Ghost will keep you on the strait and narrow path. Education will help you achieve your goals.”





Leslie Wilkins

Age: 22

School: Mesa High School

Location: Mesa, Arizona

Year graduated: 2004

Favorite subjects: English and math

Least favorite subject: none

Activities: Basketball, soccer, badminton, choir

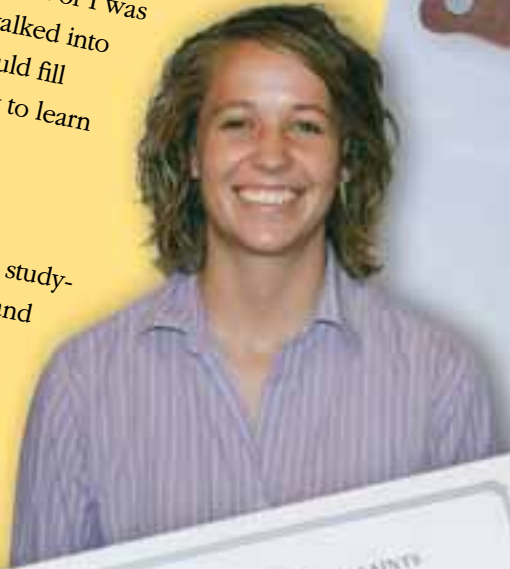
Going to Seminary

“Seminary is a breath of fresh air in your day. If something was going on at school or I was having a bad day, as soon as I walked into the seminary building, peace would fill my heart. It is also an opportunity to learn from the scriptures.”

Reaching Your Potential

“Learning, growing, knowing, and studying are so important for who we are and what we believe in. Learning gives us opportunities and the chance to be great, because we are great. We have so much potential, and if we strive and work hard, we can reach that potential.”

NE



A DREAM WORTH PURSUING
“We encourage our youth in every country to get an education. Even if at times it seems hopeless. With determination and faith in the Lord, you will be blessed with success. It is a dream well worth pursuing.”
President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To Be Learned Is Good If . . .” Ensign, Nov. 1992, 73.

LEARNING BY FAITH
“Learning by faith cannot be transferred from an instructor to a student through a lecture, a demonstration, or an experiential exercise; rather, a student must exercise faith and act in order to obtain the knowledge for himself or herself.”
Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve, “Seek Learning by Faith,” Ensign, Sept. 2007, 64.



KEYS AND NOTEBOOK © GETTY IMAGES; CAP BY RANDALL PRYTON; DIPLOMAS BY FAY ANDRUS



BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY
Church Magazines

Michelle stands up for her standards all the time, both at her school, where the dress code is already strict, and in her family, which she helped to return to church. The Ramnauths live near Port of Spain (center photo), where coconut trees grow right outside their door.



Certain STANDARDS



Think your school is strict? Compare notes with Michelle Ramnauth of Trinidad, who is known for keeping all the rules—both at school and at home.

The sign at the entrance to Manzanilla High School near Sangre Grande, Trinidad, is clear. “No” it says in big red letters, and it itemizes what is forbidden by the dress code: Absolutely no short pants, skirts, or tops; and absolutely no thin straps, halter backs, strapless vests, or bare backs.

Some students balk at the restrictions, but for 17-year-old Michelle Ramnauth they’re no problem at all. “There’s nothing in the school dress code that isn’t already clear in *For the Strength of Youth*,” she says. And many people at the school know what *For the Strength of Youth* is, thanks to Michelle.

Sharing Strength

She explains: “After lunch every day we have 20 minutes for silent reading, and we can read any book we would like. So I would bring *For the Strength of Youth* and read it. One day I left it sitting out and some of the more mischievous boys took it.” But then they actually read it. “And that turned out to be good because they used to curse a lot, but now when they are around me they respect my standards and don’t do that anymore.”

In fact, word spread through the school that Michelle followed the “rules” in her church book, and that meant she had high standards. “If the way I conduct myself in school agrees with *For the Strength of Youth*, that’s exactly how I want it to be,” she says. “Some people think that means I’m too proud to talk to them, but that’s not it. When they’re telling dirty stories or using bad language,

I just don’t want to be around that influence. They’re being disrespectful, I would say. But I have two or three genuine friends who are now trying to change their ways because they respect me and appreciate me for who I am. So I would call them my *true* friends, and I’m happy if I can be a good example for them.”

Sister Solidarity

There is someone else at school counting on Michelle to do what’s right. Her younger sister, Melissa, 15, also attends Manzanilla High, and she has seen what her big sister’s example can do.

“It helps me to have a sister who stands up for what she believes,” Melissa says. “It makes it easier for me to do what’s right.” They see each other during the day and talk about how they’re getting along, and that helps both of them to stay strong.

“For example,” Michelle recalls, “one day some other girls were making fun of Melissa, saying unkind things about our nationality.” At lunch they talked it over, and Michelle was able to reassure Melissa, reminding her that she is a daughter of God with divine nature and of infinite worth. “That helped me feel better,” Melissa says. “It helped me remember who I am.”

In addition, they know there are two more sisters, Marissa, 9, and Marsha, 3, already looking up to them and watching what they do. “As sisters, we all have the responsibility to help each other,” Michelle says.

Standing Strong

Michelle has always tried to be a good influence in her family. The Ramnauths used to live in Guyana, a small

THE GREATEST EDUCATION

“You have a mighty spirit and so do I. The greatest education and the greatest thrust in our lives ought to be to build upon the things of the Spirit.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Go for It!” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 8.

Melissa and Michelle (top right) are known for keeping the standards in For the Strength of Youth.

country on the mainland of South America directly below Trinidad. In Guyana, their father David made his living driving a truck, but the family was struggling financially. He found he could make more money if he went to work in the interior jungles.

“I know he was just trying to provide for us,” Michelle says, “But we grew apart because the most we would see him was like two days in a month.” Eventually her mother, Pamela, got discouraged. “She eased up on going to church, and that really discouraged me,” Michelle says. “For a few Sundays, since I didn’t have my parents’ support, I didn’t go to church.”

Then rather than giving up, Michelle went into action. “I would press [iron] my clothes each Saturday and then get up early on Sunday and go to church by myself. I did that for a few months. It was kind of hard each Sunday because people would ask, ‘Where are your mom and dad?’ I felt a part of me was missing when I went to church by myself.”

So she turned to heaven for help. “I prayed and then cried myself to sleep at night, but I always asked Heavenly Father to help us find a way. I fasted a lot of Sundays by myself, and one or two times my mother fasted with me.”

Spiritual Solutions

Eventually, help did come. First, Michelle persuaded her mother to come to church again. Then a missionary couple, Elder and Sister Dunn, took an interest in her family. “They said they were going to fast for us and asked if I would join them,” Brother Ramnauth recalls. “I told them that ever since I became a member of the Church, I had never fasted. But I said I would.”

Michelle and her mother joined in that fast, too. The result was positive. “I found the strength to say that the

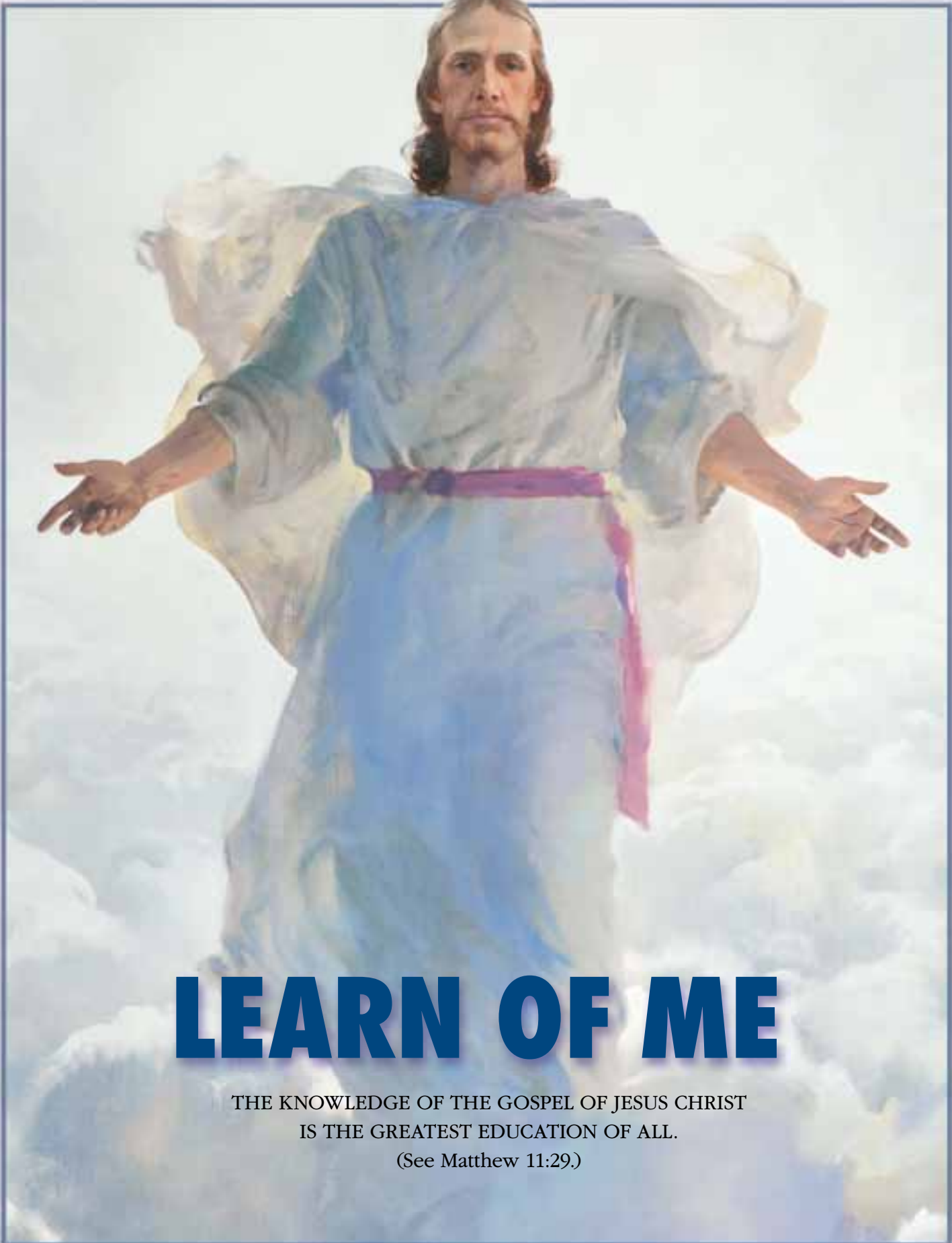
work situation I was in wasn’t good for my family and to realize that not going to church on Sunday was also bad,” Brother Ramnauth says. “So I started going back to church, and we started having family home evening.” He also was able to find a contract closer to home that allowed him to transport materials with the same truck.

“Our family became very active in the Church again,” Michelle says. “I would say it was an answer to prayer and that fasting helped, too.” It was only a few months later that the family moved to Trinidad, and in their new country they are still sticking to their standards. Michelle, Melissa, and their mother and father all have callings. Brother Ramnauth is serving in the branch presidency. “I see him sitting in front of the congregation, and I say, ‘Hey, that’s my dad,’ and I’m so proud of him,” Michelle says.

“Living the gospel has created a positive atmosphere in our home,” Michelle says. “You know when you have gospel principles and precepts behind everything you do, your standards aren’t just some rules you have to live while you’re in the classroom. Standards are rules for life, to be followed all the time.”

In fact, you could say that Michelle and her family have certain standards because their standards are *certain*. And that’s a lesson that’s valuable in school and also in the school of life. **NE**





DETAIL FROM THE SECOND COMING BY GRANT ROMNEY CLAWSON

LEARN OF ME

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST
IS THE GREATEST EDUCATION OF ALL.

(See Matthew 11:29.)

5 Easy Ways to Make School *Hard* and



Going to school is one of the few times when we pay and then *don't* want our money's worth. We just want learning to be easy. Perhaps that's understandable, but we have to decide if it both ways. So here are five easy *now* or easy *later*. We can't have hard right now and five hard ways to make school easy in the long run.

➔ 1. Focus on grades.

Live for them. Build your self-esteem on them. If grades and test scores mean everything, then you will have no problem justifying a little cheating. After all, it's all part of the hoop-jumping. Don't think that school has anything to do with learning or that learning can relate to your own personal interests and talents. Just think about grades. Imagine the Savior, the Master Teacher, delivering the Sermon on the Mount. Can't you just hear one of the disciples saying, "Is this going to be on the test?"

2. Go it alone.

Never ask for help. Talk yourself into believing that teachers are too busy or that they don't care. It's okay to complain to them after grades are given, but don't ask for help *before* the end of the semester. See your peers as competition. Don't help them and don't ask for help in return. Especially don't ask for help from family members (unless it is on the very morning an assignment is due).

3. Use your cell phone.

Don't let it out of your sight. Don't turn it off or even silence it in school. You can text when you're supposed to be reading. Texting even makes it easy to cheat

during a test. Convince yourself that a cell phone is essential—a need, not a want. Make sure you have the latest and greatest options with unlimited everything. Worry more about how many texts you can send and receive than what you're actually studying in school.

4. Play video games.

Once you get home, don't think about cracking a book, doing homework, or getting some exercise. Relax. Sit and "veg." Let the games begin. After all, we must improve that hand-eye coordination! Link up with total strangers online, and play all night. Don't sleep. You might lose your ranking. The computer can be a wonderful educational tool, but don't actually use it as one.

5. Blame the teacher.

If you're not enjoying school, blame the teacher. If you're unmotivated, tell everyone it's the teacher's fault. Don't think about taking responsibility for your own learning. That's the teacher's job. That's why teachers get paid the big bucks. Whatever you do, don't thank a teacher. Never consider his or her feelings or point of view. Never write a kind note or give a thank-you gift. The above suggestions are certainly easy—at first. In the long run they actually make school hard—even miserable—for yourself and everyone around you. Try another way. Challenge yourself to do some difficult things now that will ultimately make school a breeze.

PHOTOGRAPH ©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/DIANE DIEDERICH

5 Hard Ways to Make School Easy

BY BRAD WILCOX

Easy

1. Feed the need to read.

Start by making scriptures a habit. Then add the *New Era*. Discover the counsel and uplift that await you if you read beyond the joke page. Pick up other great books too. Unlike TV, which is a mentally passive activity, reading is mentally active. It stretches your mind. That's why if you have ever read a book and then seen a movie made from it, the book is almost always better.

2. Do the write thing.

Nothing can move you forward in your own learning more than a journal—whether or not it is an assignment. A journal provides a safe place where you can discover, think, reflect, plan, and dream. Journal keeping is a seedbed for insight and inspiration as well as the mark of a truly literate person and lifelong learner. If you think you're only making a record for your grandchildren, think again. The greatest value of a journal is what it can do for *you* right here and now.

3. Study another language.

Don't just take the required class, but listen to music in that language. Read the Book of Mormon in that language. Seek out those who speak it fluently, and converse often. Ask them to correct your mistakes. You live in a time in the world's history and in the Church's progress when a second language is vital. Even many of the General Authorities—as busy as they are—are learning and practicing multiple languages.

4. Ask questions.

We enjoy the blessings of the Restoration because a teenage boy questioned. He wasn't content to just accept the status quo. Like Joseph Smith, you too can let your questions drive your study and motivate your learning. Like Joseph, you can be patient when answers don't come easily or quickly. In your searching you'll encounter many opinions. Think critically. Just because something is on the Internet, accepted by a majority, or even made legal doesn't make it right or good.

5. Keep perspective.

All things are spiritual (see D&C 29:34). Don't separate Church, seminary, or institute from secular learning. Make time for all of them. The more connections you can make, the more satisfying your learning will be in all areas of your life. Does the Lord know about geology and physics? He certainly does. Does He value good art, music, and literature? Of course, and so do His living prophets. Latter-day Saint doctrine encompasses all truth. There is no truth you can learn that will not ultimately help you in your quest to become more like Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father. Education is not just about making a living. It's about making a life—now and eternally. **NE**

FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

“Faith and knowledge require equal effort and commitment. We cannot expect to have faith at the center of our lives if all of our efforts are expended on knowledge, sports, hobbies, making money, or other pursuits.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Strengthen Faith as You Seek Knowledge,” *New Era*, Sept. 2008, 2.



Easy

James 1:5-6

The Apostle James taught us the key to receiving wisdom from God.

Ask of God

Reading this verse led Joseph Smith to pray in the Sacred Grove, where he experienced the First Vision (see Joseph Smith—History 1:11–17). Can you think of examples from your family or your own experience in which a person seeking knowledge received an answer to a prayer? Write about it in your journal.

Liberally

Liberally—freely, generously, bountifully.

Upbraideth

Upbraideth—criticizes, scolds, reproaches. In other words, God will answer you and will never be upset with you for sincerely praying to Him for an answer to a question.



Giveth to All Men

“It is the privilege of the children of God to come to God and get revelation. . . . God is not a respecter of persons; we all have the same privilege.”

The Prophet Joseph Smith, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2007), 132.

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.
6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.



Ask in Faith

“The Prophet [Joseph Smith] said that after reading this verse he knew for a certainty he must either put the Lord to the test and ask Him or perhaps choose to remain in darkness forever. . . . He had read the scripture, he had understood the scripture, he had trusted in God his Eternal Father; and now he knelt and prayed, knowing that God would give him the enlightenment which he so earnestly sought. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught us the principle of faith—*by example*.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “The Prophet Joseph Smith: Teacher by Example,” *Ensign*, June 1994, 4.

It Shall Be Given

Heavenly Father hears and answers your prayers. His answers come in His own time and in various ways—for example, in the circumstances of your life, through the kind acts of others, or through the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost. Here are some ways you can prepare to receive guidance through the Spirit (from “Revelation,” *True to the Faith* [2004], 141–43):

- Pray for guidance.
- Be reverent.
- Be humble.
- Keep the commandments.
- Partake of the sacrament worthily.
- Study the scriptures every day.
- Take time to ponder.
- When seeking specific guidance, study the matter out in your mind.
- Patiently seek God’s will.

Editors’ note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected scripture, only a starting point for your own study.



A SHIELD OF PROTECTION

“I know the power that comes from associations in the seminary and institute programs. . . . It will put a shield of protection around you to keep you free from the temptations and trials of the world.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “What a Way to Grow,” *New Era*, Aug. 1998, 7.



Walking the **Extra Mile**

BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE
Church Magazines

When Stein Arthur Andersen was about 15 years old, he wasn't active in the Church. Neither was his family. They had moved several times to different areas of Norway. This time they were living in Stavanger.

It's the fourth-largest city in the country and is located on the southwest coast.

Stein had been to church in Stavanger a few times and had met some of the other Latter-day Saint youth in the area. One young man in particular left Stein with a pretty strong impression—his name was Tor Lasse Bjerga.

It was during one of those infrequent visits to church that Stein met Tor Lasse. "He was a couple of years older than I was, and he really impressed me," says Stein. "I felt a good spirit when I was around him, and I thought he was a cool guy." Had Stein not been impressed with Tor Lasse, he may not have been willing to listen to him when Tor Lasse made the trip out to Stein's home with a special invitation.

That invitation came in the mid-1970s, when the seminary program was introduced to Norway, and Tor Lasse had been called as the first seminary teacher. Since he was only 18 years old at the time, Tor Lasse was a little nervous taking on such a big responsibility. "I prayed about it quite a bit," he remembers. One thing he knew for sure was

that he wanted to reach out to the youth in his area who were less-active. Tor Lasse says, "I could feel right away that I should go visit Stein Arthur."

"I was probably one of the names on a list," says Stein. But to Tor Lasse, Stein was much more than just a name on a list. Tor Lasse remembers being impressed with Stein's intelligence and his quiet and determined character. So Tor Lasse decided to make a personal visit to invite Stein to take part in the new seminary program.

Tor Lasse telephoned ahead and talked with Stein's parents to make sure he would be home for the visit. To get to Stein's home, Tor Lasse had to take a bus ride of about 35 minutes to get to a ferry. Then he took a 45-minute ferry ride. Finally, he had to walk another 30 minutes. "I think about this all the time," says Stein.

"What Tor Lasse did was really going the extra mile."

Both men still remember well the spirit they felt during that meeting nearly 35 years ago. As they sat in the dining room, Stein's mind was going over all the things he was involved with. "I was very occupied with football and Scouting and playing my trumpet, and I was doing all kinds of things. I was very busy."

"Tor Lasse turned to me as he talked about seminary, and he said, 'Stein Arthur, would you sign up for the seminary program and start studying the scriptures with us?' I was sitting by the fireplace, and I said yes. By all logical thinking, I should have turned him down because I didn't have time. But I said yes. And that started the whole thing."

*Sometimes
putting forth
a little effort
produces great
things.*

The “whole thing” included getting up every morning to study the scriptures and his seminary lessons on his own at home. Then the small group of four or five students would meet together each week. “Gradually I started to feel the Spirit those early mornings, reading by myself, and I got up every morning,” Stein says. “After a while I felt like the day wouldn’t be what it could be if I didn’t study in the morning. And I started to gain a testimony without even knowing that I was.”

Stein explains that “after a while I understood what those feelings were. I felt good about what I was learning, and I felt the Spirit. I felt that this was right. And I knew that this was something I wanted to build my life on.”

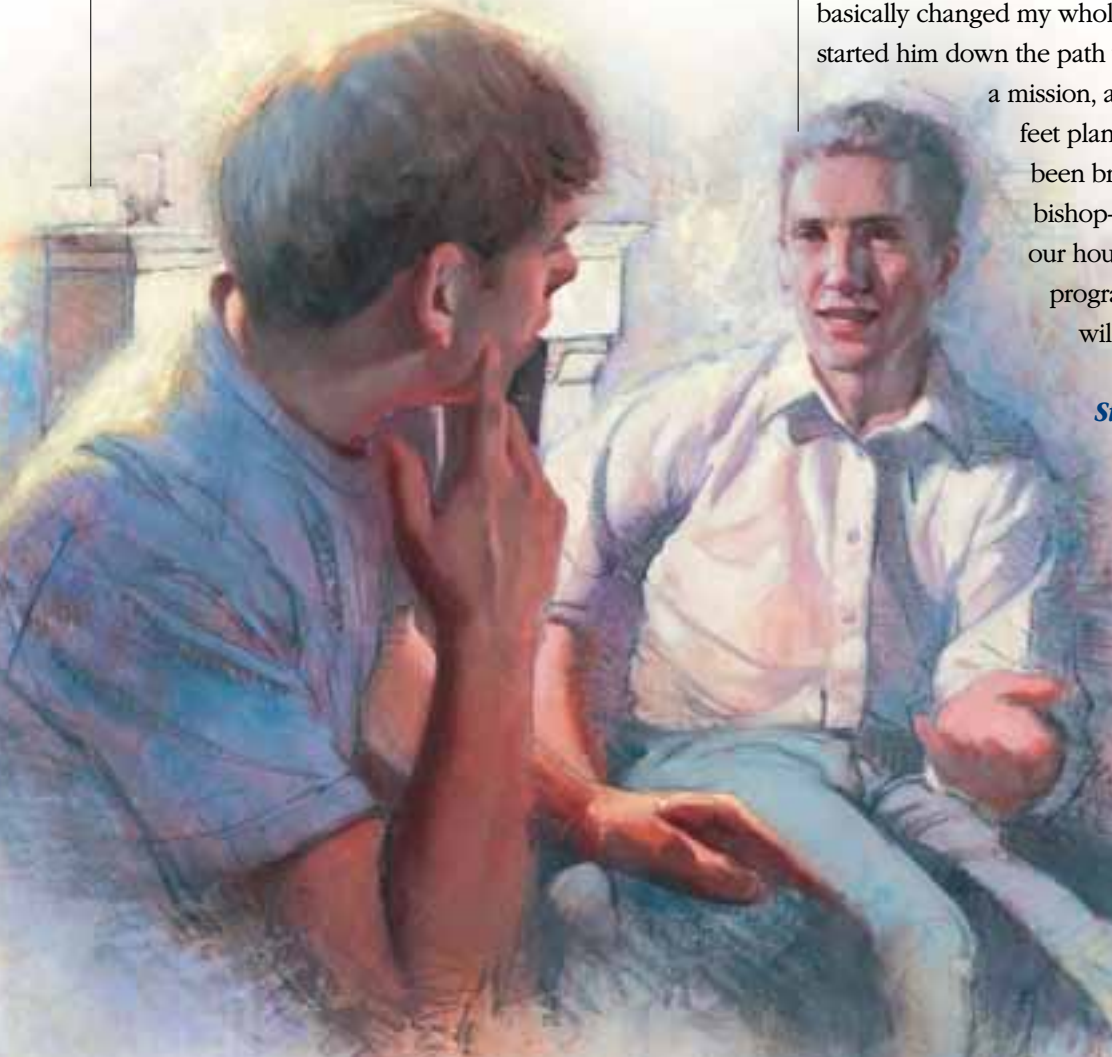
But why did Stein say yes when he had felt so busy? “I think the Holy Ghost’s influence worked on me,” he says. “I must have been prepared somehow. So when Tor Lasse came in faith, he came the extra mile, and I was ready to receive his invitation. That’s the way the Lord works.”

About a year or so later, Tor Lasse decided to go on a mission and was called to serve in Norway. During that time Stein continued to strengthen his own testimony of the gospel. “When Tor came back from his mission, that really started me thinking about a mission too,” says Stein. “I came to the conclusion that I should go because I wanted to serve the Lord, and I thought if I didn’t go, I might regret it for the rest of my life.”

Stein remembers that after talking with his priesthood leaders about going on a mission, he felt as if his feet were hardly touching the ground as he walked home. Before he left on his mission (also to Norway), Stein met his future wife, Hilde, at a youth conference in Oslo. They wrote to each other during his mission, and after he returned home, they were married. Now they have four children: two sons, who have both married in the temple, and two younger daughters, who are still at home and are active in seminary.

“That night when Tor Lasse came to our house—that basically changed my whole life,” says Stein. That visit started him down the path where he met his wife, served a mission, and started a family, all with his feet planted firmly on gospel soil. “I have been branch president, district president, bishop—all because Tor Lasse came to our house and I started the seminary program.” All because Tor Lasse was willing to walk the extra mile. **NE**

Stein said, “That night when Tor Lasse came to our house—that basically changed my whole life.”





Ida Andersen (right) with her sister, Ane, and her parents, Hilde and Stein.

I RAISED MY HAND

What would you do if your teacher at school started teaching things about the Church that weren't true? Stein Andersen's youngest daughter, Ida, was faced with this very situation. Ida's teacher had mentioned the Mormons on several occasions, teaching that they practiced polygamy. Since Ida didn't know what to say at the time, she didn't do anything. But when her teacher started to give incorrect information about the Church again, Ida knew she had to do something.

"I raised my hand and told her that what she was saying was wrong," says Ida. "I said that I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My teacher persisted, saying that

in Utah the Mormons did have several wives. I explained to her that there were some groups in the U.S. who practiced polygamy but that these groups were not part of the Church.

"The next day this teacher stopped me in the hall and said that she was very impressed with what I had said. She apologized for saying things that were wrong about the Church. She said that she didn't really know much about the Church but wanted to know more and she was sure there were many of the students in my class who would also like to know more. That's when she asked me to make a presentation about the Church for my class.

"Four days later I gave a presentation to my class. I was very nervous. I had never talked a lot about the Church in school, except to my closest friends. Most of the people in my class knew I was a member of the Church, but that was about all they

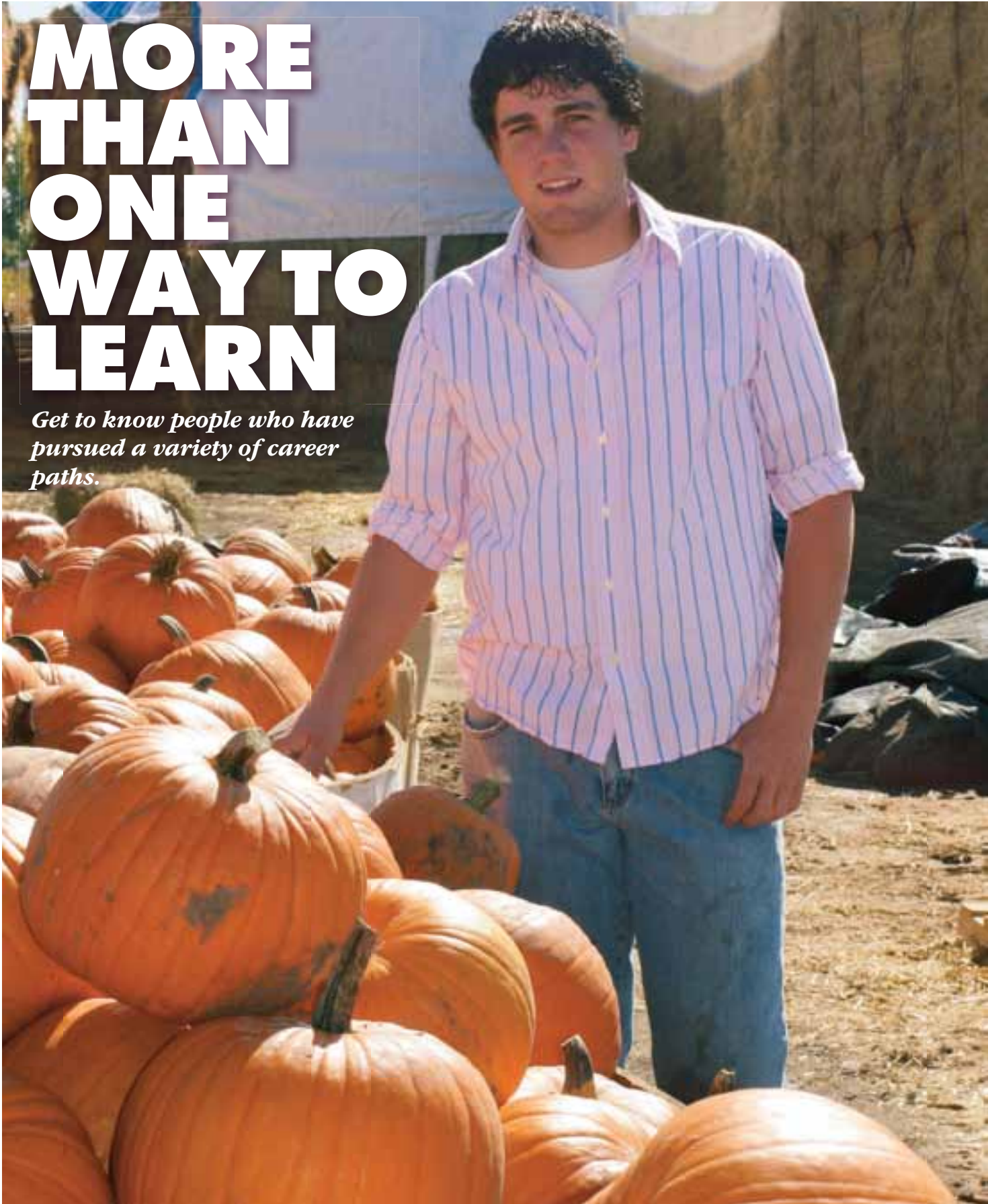
knew. I thought and prayed a lot about what I should say. I even had my father give me a blessing to help me.

"My teacher let the class know I would be talking about the Church. When I stood up, everyone was quiet. I started off, and all my classmates were taking notes. I talked for about 30 minutes. I told about the Church today, about the Restoration, the plan of salvation, missionaries, and Church standards. Then my classmates asked a lot of questions. Before this I had always been nervous when people asked me questions about the Church because I didn't always know if I knew the correct answers. But this time I was not nervous, and I had no problem answering the questions.

"My classmates were very surprised. Everyone said they were proud of me for standing up for what I believe in."

MORE THAN ONE WAY TO LEARN

Get to know people who have pursued a variety of career paths.



There are many different things you can do with your life, and not every career goal is reached through a university degree. Here are some young people who have chosen careers that take them on a variety of paths.

CHOOSING THE OUTDOOR LIFE

BY JANET THOMAS

Church Magazines

The day we interviewed Talon Hobbs of Franklin, Idaho, it was easy to see why he loved his small family farm so much. The hill behind their fields glowed gold in the sun and was plastered against the dark green of the mountains. The sky was intense blue. The air was clean and crisp, with the drifting scents of fresh hay and distant animals. It was the kind of day that makes you want to stand still and enjoy where you are and what you are doing.

In fact, that is exactly the reason Talon gives for wanting to go into the family business. At 18, he has learned from his father how to do virtually every job on the farm. “My dad tells me what I need to get done, but I can choose what I do throughout the day. It’s really quiet. You’re not stressed. You get to have your quiet time. That’s what I really like about it.”

More Than Chores

But it’s not easy work. There’s no such thing as procrastination when chores need to be done and animals cared for. “I figure you might as well get the worst job done first, then you get to do the easier ones. There is always something to do.”

And what about when it’s winter, when it’s 20° below with the snow blowing? Talon shrugs because he doesn’t really see that as the worst thing. “You just have to deal with it.” He goes on to explain how his parents will give their hired hands the day off on holidays such as Christmas. “We used to groan and moan about it when we were little, but now it’s our family tradition to be on the farm on Christmas Day doing the chores together.”

College Is Still in the Picture

Ironically, the only way that Talon Hobbs will get to own part of the family farm and the outdoor life he craves

is by getting more indoor learning. “I’ve always wanted to farm, even when I was little. I wanted to have some of my own animals, but Dad didn’t want me to get too tied down. He wanted to give us the opportunity to go to college. I plan to go into animal science. I’d like to take some plant science classes, and learn how to add to the farm and make it better. I’ll need to learn some small business management. I figure it’s better for me to take classes than struggle my whole life trying to figure it out.”

In the meantime Talon is getting ready for another kind of advanced education, his mission. Looking back, his mission preparation has been going on for years. He tells of meeting a girl just as they were starting high school and how he admired how she stood up for the gospel. He says, “I saw that she could be strong at that age, and her example made me realize that I also knew the Church is true. It made me think. Choosing to follow the Church may not always be the popular thing to do, but it’s always the best.” **NE**

SERVING UP SATISFACTION

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY

Church Magazines

Lya Luna Becnel doesn’t just slice fruit or arrange food. To watch her in a kitchen is to watch an artist in action.

She chooses the plate the way an painter selects a canvas. She wraps several flavors of Mediterranean olives in carefully selected slices of dry sausage, and does the same with salad greens. She places four types of cheese in the foreground, with an oriental ladle holding a sauce made of fruit and mustard. As her personal signature, she adds an apple, carefully cut and sculpted into the shape of a swan. The swan is a symbol with deep meaning to her.

An Incredible, Edible Swan

When Lya was a young girl growing up in Tehuacan, Mexico, she saw a food magazine that inspired her. “On the front cover was a beautiful white swan carved from jicama (an edible root) and on the back was an exquisite turkey made from pieces of watermelon and other fruit,” she says. “I can still remember the artistry of those sculptures. The image of them stayed in my mind, and a voice



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY

inside me said, ‘Someday, you will make one of those.’” It wasn’t until years later, in a professional cooking class, that Lya was trained to carve a swan exactly like the one she had seen so long before.

Food as Art

Today, Lya is fulfilling her lifelong dream to serve others (literally) by preparing beautiful, nutritious food. In Europe and the U.S. she counsels cooks about the quality of their meals, prepares fancy dinners at gourmet restaurants and in people’s homes, and also teaches cooking and nutrition classes. She is known for the excellent food she prepares and the way she presents it. “Food is art,” she says. “Having it look good is part of having it taste good.”

But getting where she wanted to be has not been, shall we say, a piece of cake.

“My parents wanted me to be a doctor,” she says. After counseling with them and praying, she finally agreed she would study nutrition. That would allow her to be around food and yet still be involved in a medically related field. After college, she began work as a nutritionist in Mexico City. She loved the working environment and the people, but she still longed to be a chef. After giving the job a fair chance, she counseled with her parents again and mapped out a new plan.

“I prayed to Heavenly Father and asked Him to guide me,” she says. “Then I did all the research I could about culinary schools.” She saved money, studied English as a second language, then enrolled in a cooking school in

London, England. That opened up the opportunity for her to also have apprenticeships—if she would work without pay. She did and gained experience as well as forming friendships with several of the top chefs in the world.

Hard Work, High Standards

“Working without pay was hard,” she says. “I had to cater private dinners on the side to pay my way through school.” She also found a job at a restaurant equipment company in France, preparing meals and demonstrating professional ovens. For a year and a half, between school and work and various apprenticeships in two countries, her days were filled with long, hard, work. “I had to pay the rent, and I had to pay for transportation, but I always had food because I was always allowed to eat in the restaurants.”

She also kept her standards high. “Living the Word of Wisdom was less of a challenge than some people might think,” she says. “For example, when people invited me to have a glass of wine, which is a big part of the restaurant business, I explained that I don’t drink alcohol. They respected that. And when people would party or suggest immoral activities, I would explain that my standards were different. We were colleagues at work, but I didn’t hang out with them in places that would bring me down.”

Lya and her husband, who is also a chef, offer this advice about careers: “Find something you love doing and that you’ll want to do for your entire life. Set goals and work hard, then pray, be humble, and follow your heart.” **NE**

SERVICE IN THE SERVICE

BY SALLY JOHNSON ODEKIRK

Church Magazines

Elizabeth “Buffy” Tateoka Fairbanks of Holladay, Utah, loves serving others, and she always wanted to work in the medical field. But by the time she graduated with a degree in biology, she realized medical school wasn’t for her.

Then she discovered a 15-month accelerated nursing program that seemed a perfect fit. Still, she would need help with tuition expenses. Buffy looked into scholarships and found that the military offers tuition assistance programs for those on active duty as well as for those who finish their military service.

“I decided to join the Navy because my husband, Tom, is already in the Navy. He received a scholarship to pay for his degree in mechanical engineering,” she says. After discussing the idea with him, and making it a matter of fasting and prayer, Buffy applied for and received a scholarship “to help me get through nursing school and become a registered nurse.”

The Nurse Candidate Program

Buffy was accepted into the Nurse Candidate Program. “I wasn’t required to do anything but go to school and pass my state licensing exam after graduation,” she explains. “But once I graduated, I was commissioned in the Navy Nurse Corps.”

Nursing school, Buffy discovered, emphasizes critical thinking skills and ways to apply those skills as a nurse. “It was exciting to come through the program knowing how to help save people’s lives,” she says. “I enjoyed learning

TRUE EDUCATION

“I have spent most of my life involved in education. When I was younger, I thought education meant going to school, taking tests, and getting good grades. But as I grew older, I began to learn the difference between doing well in school and becoming educated. A person can do well on tests and still not be educated. True education is learning how to learn. Once I discovered that lesson, learning became fun.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Glory of God Is Intelligence,” *Friend*, Oct. 2007, 6.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JANET THOMAS

how to care for patients and getting to know them as individuals.”

The thought of serving in the Navy appealed to Buffy’s sense of adventure as well as her desire to serve others. “In addition to getting help to pay for my schooling, I also knew the Navy would provide opportunities for experiences that I otherwise wouldn’t have.”

Serving in the Military

Serving in the military means time away from home and family. Fortunately, Buffy and her husband are stationed near each other and they can be together. Even during times of separation, the Internet helps them communicate with each other frequently.

They also know how important it is to rely on their testimonies of Jesus Christ to repel Satan’s temptations. She says, “We are all faced with adversity throughout our lives, and sincere prayer and staying in tune with the Spirit are important to keeping us on the right path, and also help us when we have difficult decisions to make.”

Buffy knows that faith and prayer are important in choosing educational and career paths—and in life in general. She knows that for her, choosing to join the Navy and become a nurse helps fulfill her desire to serve others. **NE**



Making the Grade

LACEY MCMURRY

I was wasting my time and, worse, my parents' money. Something had to change.

Fear. That pretty much sums up what I felt as I shuffled my feet and tried to avoid the soul-searching gazes of my parents. They weren't going to like what I had to tell them at all.

I had just returned home for Thanksgiving from my first semester of college. I was telling my parents about my college experiences and new friends. But what started as an enjoyable conversation quickly turned uncomfortable when my mom casually asked the question I had been dreading: "So, how are your grades?"

Frantically, my mind began to dig for lame excuses that might help me out of the mess I was in. How had I let my grades slip so far? I had arrived at college with every intention of studying hard and doing well. But then I discovered that for the first time in my life, no one was looking over my shoulder telling me what to do. Parents that were 400 miles away meant no curfew, no chores, and no rules. I took advantage of this newfound freedom and was quickly in the habit of staying up late at night with my roommates. My life was filled with late-night movies, late-night trips to get ice cream, and late-night talks and games with roommates.

After this late-night fun, I was in no mood to wake up for early-morning classes. When

my alarm blared at 6:30 a.m., I would hit the trusty snooze button and burrow deeper under the covers. I missed class a lot, but what did it matter—college teachers didn't take roll anyway.

All of this explained why I was now sitting in front of my parents, shuffling my feet and afraid to meet their gaze. Instead of asking for forgiveness like I should have, I chose to get angry. I looked my parents in the eyes and said defiantly: "My grades aren't good right now. But I think it's unfair of both of you to expect me to spend all of my time at college studying. Are you trying to keep me from having fun?"

My mom looked at me and said, "It was really hard for us when you left home, but we let you go because we knew you needed an education. It's good to have fun, but you have to remember you are at college for a specific purpose. We have sacrificed a lot so that you can have this experience."



“Sacrifices? What sacrifices have they given up so I can go to college?” I wondered. And then I remembered. They had agreed to pay half of my tuition. Checks from my mom always arrived in the nick of time to help me meet my monthly rent payment. They were willing to let me leave and go to a strange new place because they knew I would learn from it.

As I listed the sacrifices in my mind one by one, it suddenly hit me—I *had* been selfish. Not once as I stayed out late or skipped class had I thought about what my parents had given up. I had forgotten what was important, and I was wasting their sacrifice because I wasn’t making the most of my education.

For the first time, I realized just what they had done for me, and I knew I could only make the most of the things they had given up for me by working hard in school.

It wasn’t until later that day that I heard it: a still, small voice in my mind that asked a simple question, “Are you discarding the

THE ABUNDANT LIFE

“Youth is the training period when busy hands learn to labor—and labor to learn. Honest effort and loving service become identifying features of the abundant life.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Hands,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1990, 2.

sacrifice that your Heavenly Father made in allowing His Son to suffer and die to atone for your sins, just as you have been discarding the sacrifice of your earthly parents?”

Suddenly, I remembered all of the days when I had forgotten my purpose on earth. The days when I fell into bed, too tired to say my prayers, and the mornings when I didn’t read my scriptures because I thought it was more important to look nice for school.

It dawned on me that I wasn’t living on earth just to entertain myself. I was here as part of Heavenly Father’s great plan of happiness. The Savior’s sacrifice—the Atonement—was made so that you and I, and all of God’s children, could learn the lessons of earth life. Because of that sacrifice, we have the opportunity to repent and return to live with Heavenly Father again. I want to be able to say that I used my time on earth to learn and grow as He intended. **NE**

Practically **OUT**



Get some tips on preparing for the big step.

By now you should have learned that growing up is a process, not an event. So whether you're planning on going off to college, a mission, or a job after you finish school, there are things you can do now to avoid the most common pitfalls of leaving home. Here are some practical suggestions from college officials and others who work with young, newly independent people.

Learn the Secrets of Time



- **Order your life around.** Time is a limited resource, so start learning to use it wisely.

Bring order to your life by organizing it. Even a little bit of scheduling can go a long way.

- **Learn the true meaning of balance.** Having too much on your plate can be a problem, but so can having too much free time. To achieve balance, you may need to eliminate some things from your schedule, or you may need to look for some structured activities to round out your schedule (for instance, work, leadership, or service).

Learn How to Manage Your Own Life



- **Make spirituality a personal matter.** Set times for personal prayer and scripture study. Take institute classes. Attend church, fast, and pay tithing without having to be encouraged or reminded.

- **Get out of the house.** Go to Scout camps, girls' camps, or other activities that take you away from Mom and Dad for a few days at a time.

- **Start making your own decisions and solving your own problems.** You still need to consult with your parents on many things right now, but when possible, try making

some decisions and handling some problems on your own.

- **But remember to call for help when you're drowning.**

If you really need help with something (a class, a person, a task), acknowledge it and seek help from the right people right now. Don't let a bad situation drag on.

Harness the Power of Practical Skills



- **Master the mysteries of money.** Try to gain experience with money. It may seem mysterious, but you can start small. Balance a budget (it's simple—don't spend more than you earn), and learn about checking accounts, credit cards, and loans.

- **Remember, there is no laundry fairy.** Nor are there tidying elves, dish-washing dwarfs, or floor-sweeping sprites. Cleaning doesn't just happen. Get used to doing it yourself.

- **Learn the recipe for physical health.** Learn how to cook and how to maintain a healthy, balanced diet. Discipline yourself to eat healthy and get enough sleep and exercise.

- **Master readin', writin', and 'rithmetic.** Seriously. Basic reading, writing, and math skills form the foundation for success in future schooling, work, and other experiences.

Have the Right Attitude



- **Take responsibility.** If you flunk a test, it's not because the teacher hates you. And global warming didn't make you late for class. Don't blame other people or circumstances for your failures and difficulties. Doing so limits learning and growth.

THE DOOR



• **Don't view your life as a checklist.** Open yourself up to new opportunities, and get out of your comfort zone. Your experiences can help you grow, but only if you view them as something more than mere items you check off of a predetermined list.

• **Spend time with different people.** Learn to get along with people who have different behaviors, mannerisms, likes, and dislikes. For the most part, there's no need to criticize or try to change them. Who knows? They may even teach you something.

○ Be Wise



• **Handle freedom wisely.** Many young people get in trouble because they go a little wild when they're finally on their own. Set limits and expectations for yourself—bedtime, study habits, and so on. And most importantly, commit to live by gospel standards at all times. **NE**

A GUIDE TO CHOICES

"Your testimony will be the strongest motive to select the right path and direction in your educational and vocational endeavors. It will help you to not live below your privileges and possibilities."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Your Right to Choose the Right," *New Era*, Aug. 2005, 8.

More Fit for the Kingdom

BY MARY N. COOK

First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency



Take advantage of every opportunity to learn. If we do, the Lord can better use us in many ways to do great things.

Whenever I hear the question “Why is an education important?” I think of a phrase from the hymn “More Holiness Give Me.” The phrase in the third verse says, “More fit for the kingdom, More used would I be” (*Hymns*, no. 131).

The reason we need more education is so that the Lord can use us to do His work and bless the lives of others. If we focus on becoming more fit for the kingdom, choosing more education is usually an excellent decision. Even if we do not always see all the possible uses for the things we learn, education is an important way we can prepare ourselves to serve the Lord.

GOOD GRADES PAY OFF

Let me give you a few examples. One of the most vivid for me happened while my husband and I were presiding over the new mission in Mongolia. All of the young missionaries assigned to Mongolia were required to teach English in the schools. This was a condition to have a visa to stay in the country. Our missionaries quickly discovered that those who had paid attention in school had an easier time teaching English to the eager students. I'm sure the missionaries never dreamed that

the things they learned in high school English classes would ever be put to such good use.

Such a simple thing as being interested in their high school classes blessed hundreds of people, many of whom were introduced to and joined the Church. The Lord was able to use these missionaries' basic skills for something greater.

TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY

Get in the habit of taking advantage of every opportunity to learn and remember. You can learn much from those who love and teach you best—your family. Let me share with you part of a letter I wrote to my grandchildren while on our mission:

“The one ‘pearl of wisdom’ that I might impart to you is how valuable *every* experience in life is. We have been amazed at how many times, since we have been here, that we have grasped onto some idea or skill we learned along the way. Mom’s ‘basic’ cooking lessons have helped me to creatively use what we have here—carrots, cabbage, onions, potatoes, eggs, rice, and mutton—to prepare nourishing meals.”

The Church also gives us many learning opportunities. Remember, starting in Primary, you learned step-by-step how to remain calm

and repeat the words you had practiced. As you grew you learned how to organize your thoughts, illustrate them with personal experiences, and gain the confidence to speak in front of a group. These kinds of experiences can lead to practical things like doing presentations in your classes, getting better job opportunities, and most importantly, being able to teach and speak comfortably in Church.

CHANCES ALL AROUND

Opportunities to learn are all around you. Join the choir and learn to read music. You'll be glad your whole life that you have this skill. When I visited young women in Colombia and Ecuador, the young women were the ones who conducted the music, making it possible for all of us to worship the Lord through song.

Take advantage by learning the skills taught at camp and in Scouting—first aid, different methods of cooking, and recreational safety. These skills can bless your families now and in the future.

Look for opportunities to learn to care for and teach children. Now is the time to prepare for your future roles as fathers and mothers. You can literally make a world of difference in the life of a child right now, let alone being a well-prepared parent in the future.

THE LORD WILL USE US

Most people want to know how to be happy. King Benjamin helps us understand that service is the secret to happiness. In Mosiah 2:17 he teaches:



A RELIGIOUS RESPONSIBILITY

“Because of our sacred regard for each human intellect, we consider the obtaining of an education to be a religious responsibility. Yet opportunities and abilities differ. I believe that in the pursuit of education, individual desire is more influential than institution, and personal faith more forceful than faculty.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Where Is Wisdom?” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 6.



“And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.”

What can you do as a teenager to learn to serve others? Learn as many skills and gain as much education as you can. This knowledge will allow you to be “more fit for the kingdom, more used.” And by giving service, you will unlock the secret to happiness.

Let me finish telling you about the missionaries in Mongolia. Because all the elders were expected to teach English, I became something of a teaching supervisor to help them provide the best classes possible. I would visit them in class, observe their teaching, and then give suggestions.

I never expected to have to supervise teachers on a mission. But the Lord needed someone who could help these elders do the job they needed to do in order to introduce the gospel to Mongolia. From one class I had taken in college, I knew enough to talk about the positive things they had done instead of focusing on the negative. I knew I had to build their confidence. Having these young men do a good job was so important to introducing the gospel to the Mongolian people.

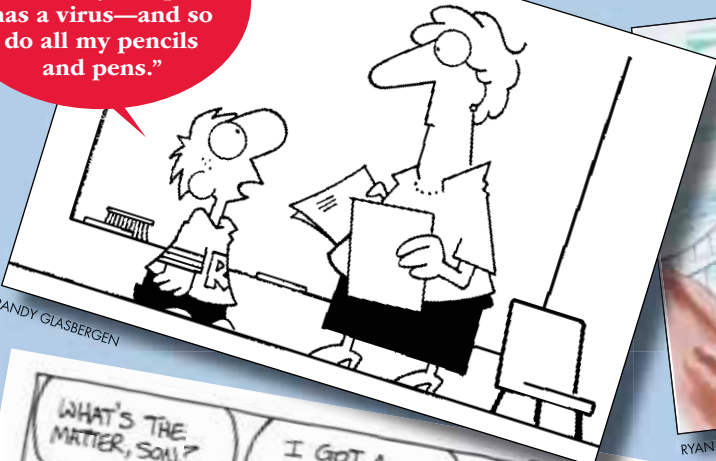
Much later, when we had returned from

the mission field and the missionaries I helped were pursuing their own educations, one elder e-mailed me and thanked me for the day I came to their class to watch him and his companion. The first thing I had asked them that day was to list all the things they had done right. They made their list, but what he remembers is that I came up with a long list of things they had done well. It changed his attitude. It gave him confidence. He had not done well in school before his mission, but now, because he felt he was a good teacher of English, he thought he could return to school and succeed. It wasn't until he had graduated from college that he wrote the e-mail to thank me. I had no idea that I was helping him. But the Lord knew how to use that bit of knowledge I had learned in college to help one of His missionaries while on his mission and afterwards in his own education.

That is the value of gaining and continuing to gain an education. Remember that being “more fit for the kingdom” will help you be a better mother or father, a better wife or husband, a better employee, a better servant of the Lord. Education of any and every type will help you become more useful to the Lord as we help each other return to live with Him. **NE**

"I couldn't do my homework because my computer has a virus—and so do all my pencils and pens."

RANDY GLASBERGEN



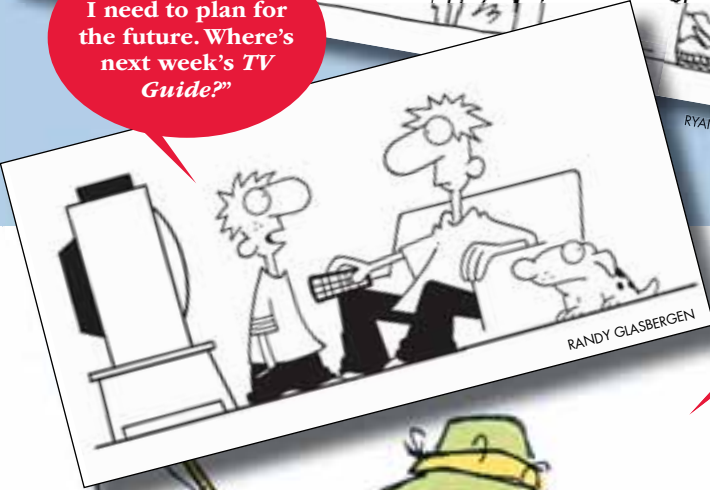
RYAN STOKER

"Whoa! Now that's an Eagle Scout project."



RYAN STOKER

"Dad says I need to plan for the future. Where's next week's TV Guide?"



RANDY GLASBERGEN

"Speaking of 'catch and release,' I've been meaning to talk to you about your dating habits, Son."



BLESSED

THE REAL VALUE OF LEARNING

“We are frequently taught in the scriptures to seek learning by study and by faith (see D&C 88:118). In our own lives, in our families, and in the Church, we can receive blessings of spiritual strength, direction, and protection as we seek by faith to gain intelligence and apply spiritual knowledge in righteousness.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Glory of God Is Intelligence,” *Friend*, Oct. 2007, 7.

“Blessed, they promised that they would of me and I did not often try to tell you these things that they had that they had been enlightened by of truth.” D&C 88:15.

TEST THE TEST

BY GREGG LUKE

I was prepared for the exam, but I knew I couldn't do it alone. I prayed for the help I needed.

When I first began college, I wasn't sure what career to pursue. All I knew was that I felt happiest when I helped people.

Through studying, pondering, and praying, I finally decided to go into a medical field. But this career choice meant taking some difficult classes. I did all right in my basic biology, math, and chemistry courses, but I wasn't confident I could handle the required upper-level courses.

Soon I found myself in a cellular biology course that was daunting, to say the least. I felt if I could pass the first exam, I could complete the course and eventually fulfill my goal. In preparation for this test, I studied extra hard—reading each chapter from the textbook two or three times, reviewing my class notes until they were almost memorized, and making flash cards with key words and concepts to review.

Just before the exam, my institute teacher taught a lesson on inspiration. One scripture he shared especially struck me: “Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and I did enlighten thy mind; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou hast been enlightened by the Spirit of truth” (D&C 6:15).

It dawned on me that the Lord might be willing to help in matters other than those strictly spiritual. I knew I had done my part in preparing for the test, but I also felt I could use His divine help.

The night before the exam, I went through my flash cards one last time then knelt by my bed and asked Heavenly Father for assurance and clarity of mind during the test. I felt immediate peace and comfort, and I knew the Lord would be with me.

That night I dreamed I was taking the exam. In my dream I entered the classroom, sat at my desk, and went through the exam page by page, answering each question with ease. It was a good dream and gave me a feeling of confidence the next morning.

As I went to class, I knew everything would be OK. I sat at my desk and opened my exam. The questions were remarkably similar to those on the exam in my dream. “What's going on?” I wondered. Then I remembered the verse my institute teacher had shared with us. I knew the Lord had enlightened my mind. I felt He had answered my prayer—not only helping me with the test but showing me He approved of my decision to pursue this course of study.

I breezed through the test, reviewed it once, and was the first student to hand it in. The following day, the teacher smiled as she handed me my exam with a bold “100% Great job!” written in one corner. It was the only perfect score in the class.

That night I knelt by my bed and poured out my heart in gratitude for Heavenly Father's abundant blessings. I knew if I had not done my part and studied as never before, the Lord might not have given me the help I needed. But I *had* studied, and I had been blessed more than I could have imagined. **NE**



RELATIVELY SIMPLE

BY SHANNA BUTLER

I had studied and prayed. Why wasn't I getting it?

All of a sudden I understood. But why didn't the Lord give me that clear understanding just a few minutes earlier while I was still taking the test?

Two twins get in a rocket ship. Wait, no, that's not it. One twin gets in the rocket ship, and the other stays behind. And when the twin in the rocket ship gets back he's older. No . . . he's younger than the one who stayed at home. And this all has something to do with traveling at the speed of light?

I stopped to scratch my head and let out a long sigh. The theory of relativity was one of the first things we had studied in my physical science class, and here I was, just about to take my first-ever university final and still completely in the dark about the speed of light.

Everything else in the class was as clear as a newly polished test tube, but for some reason my brain couldn't wrap itself around Einstein's theory. And I *had* to understand it since it would make up a significant part of my final exam.

I had been praying for help to understand it all semester. I had put all my effort into it and still wasn't any closer to even a glimpse of comprehension. Why wasn't the Lord helping me? Didn't he know how important this class was to me?

On the day of my physical science final, I answered every question until I got to the

dreaded relativity essay. "Heavenly Father," I thought. "I've done my best, now please help me to get this right!"

I sat and I sat, and nothing came. Finally I just finished the rest of the test and left downhearted.

As I stepped out the door of the testing center, into my mind came the theory of relativity but, this time, I completely understood all I had been taught. And I knew that this flash of pure knowledge came from Heavenly Father. After months of struggle, it was just there all of a sudden. I wondered why the Lord couldn't have revealed this knowledge to me a few minutes earlier while I was still taking the test.

As I pondered, the Lord taught me something else I needed to learn. The grade wasn't the most important thing. It was learning that mattered. And more important than learning the theory of relativity, I learned that all knowledge comes from the Lord. He can help me to understand anything if I do my part, regardless of whether I have an exam or not.

Years later I still have a clear understanding of what I learned about relativity, and the Lord continues to teach me about many other subjects as I diligently seek His help. **NE**



LEARNING IS FOREVER

“Education continues as long as we live. If there is ever an end to secular learning, surely there is no end to spiritual learning.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To Be Learned Is Good If . . .” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 72.

10

STEPS TO FINDING A GREAT JOB

BY HILLARY HOLBROOK

With preparation, patience, and perseverance, you can find a job that's right for you.

Are you 16 and looking for your first job? Or are you in college and looking for a job between semesters? Whether or not it's your first time seeking a job, the experience can seem intimidating. But with preparation and a willing attitude, you may find it easier to step out of your comfort zone and into the working world. Here are 10 tips:

1. Start early.

The best time to begin looking for work is before you are desperate. If you need a summer job, start looking in winter. If you want a great internship as a senior, start preparing for it as a sophomore or junior. Employers like employees who plan ahead.

2. Be realistic, but keep the big picture in mind.

To begin with, you may have to take whatever work is available. You may have to work to gain experience and show that you can be dependable. Any honest work is worthy of respect, and a great job—for now—may simply be one that provides employment. But if you can find a job that's interesting *and* that matches up with your long-term goals, you'll not only be working, you'll be working toward something.



3. Take a look at yourself.

You're more likely to get a job you'll enjoy if you know what you're looking for. Ask yourself: What are my talents? What do I like to do? What am I passionate about? What do I want to be 5 or 10 years from now? If you love nature, look for work at a summer camp or a store that sells outdoor equipment. If you love technology, look at an electronics or computer store.

Here's a word of warning: Be prepared for realities. When I was in college I thought about majoring in agricultural journalism. At first, I was excited when I was hired to work on a dairy farm. But it didn't take me long to realize that being around manure and sour milk was something I would never enjoy.

4. Think about others.

Now ask yourself: Do I interact well with other people, or do I prefer to work on my own? How can I bless others through my skills and abilities? You can help other people by working in a team, but you may also find that you'll help by providing a service on your own. In either case, you'll find greater fulfillment when you see how your work blesses others.

5. Talk to friends and family members.

According to LDS Employment Resource Services, over one-third of jobs are found by networking—talking to those you know, like friends and family members. You may be surprised how often people know other people who can open a door for you. If your uncle knows someone who is hiring people, see if he'll refer you. If your friend has a job she enjoys, ask her how she got it, and if there are additional positions available. If you apply, she might be able to put in a good word for you.

6. Use the phone book.

It might seem outdated to think that big, fat book (or the online equivalent) can help in the job hunt, but it can help you find local employers in areas you're interested in. LDS Employment Resource Services says approaching a company directly is the second-best way to find a job.



7. List your qualifications.

Think about what you can contribute as an employee. Though most jobs you will apply for at this time in your life will not require a résumé, you may want to prepare one. A résumé is a summary of your work skills, experience, personal interests, and accomplishments. Whether you feel experienced or not, you may be surprised at the

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

A good rule of thumb when meeting or interviewing with any future employer is to dress one step up from how the employees dress at the place you'd like to work.

For example, if you're applying to be a lifeguard at a swimming pool where the dress code is swimming apparel, T-shirts, and shorts, you might want to go to the interview dressed in khaki pants and a polo shirt. If you're applying to work at a bank where the dress code consists of blazers, skirts, or suit pants, then you'll want to wear a tie or, if you're female, a blouse with a nice skirt.

If you have a scheduled interview, arrive a few minutes early, but never arrive late. Greet the interviewer with a warm smile and handshake. See the list of do's and don'ts for advice on interview appearance.



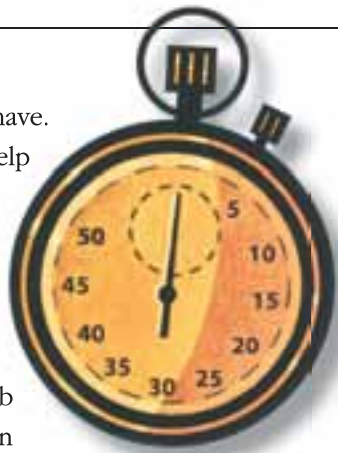
qualifications you already have. Have a parent or teacher help you with the wording for your résumé.

8. Prepare a 30-Second summary.

The first question in a job interview is often “What can you tell me about yourself?” What employers are looking for is basic information that is significant to the job. What they are not looking for is where you were born or what your favorite color is.

Prepare a three-to-five sentence response in advance, and make a good impression: “I am a responsible person who is trustworthy and punctual. I enjoy being around people and serving them, so learning to work in a restaurant will be no problem. I can handle many different tasks at one time. I have shown leadership skills in my church group for young women ages 14 to 15, where I’ve helped to plan activities, attended meetings, and met weekly commitments.”

Have a parent or writing teacher help you write a statement tailored for you, the job you want, and the qualifications you have. Then try to memorize it and say it in 30 seconds. Practice a few times with a parent or a friend, or out loud by yourself.



NOW IS THE TIME

“*Now is the time* to prepare for training, education, and an occupation. . . . Decide now to do your best in school and at work. Then, when opportunities knock, you will be ready to open the door and take advantage of them. We should all remember: ‘To every man is given a gift’ (D&C 46:11). Develop your gifts and talents. . . . Prayerfully select classes, training programs, and jobs that will prepare you for greater opportunities and more responsibility in the future.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To the Aaronic Priesthood: Preparing for the Decade of Decision,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 49–50.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR INTERVIEWS

DO

- **Come prepared** with a few neatly printed, mistake-free résumés. You might be handing out more than one at the job site.

- **Look professional.** This means dressing modestly, wearing appropriate shoes and attire, and being clean, well-groomed, and (for men) fresh-shaven.

- **Make eye contact,** and greet the interviewer with a warm smile and friendly handshake. Introduce yourself.

- **Ask questions.** The interview is an opportunity for you to learn about the job you’ve applied for. You may want to prepare a short, written list of questions ahead of time. The employer will ask, “Do you have any questions for me?” Ask what the job duties are and how much you’ll be expected to work.

- **Thank the employer** for the interview and time spent. If you still want the job afterward, send a thank-you note and follow up when the time is appropriate.

DON'T

- **Don’t wear a lot of jewelry.** A set of small earrings is OK for girls, but no hoops or multiple bracelets, rings, or necklaces.

- **Don’t bring your cell phone.** Leave it in the car or at home.

- **Don’t wear strong perfume or aftershave.** You don’t want to distract the interviewer.

- **Don’t chew gum,** but do make sure your breath is fresh.



THANK-YOU NOTES

It sounds old-fashioned, but writing a thank-you note can do a lot for you when you're trying to get a job. A thank-you card can keep you on the employer's radar screen as a potential hire. Write the note by hand and hand-deliver it, if possible, after every contact with the employer. The note might say something like this:

"Dear Mrs. (or Mr.) _____:

Thank you for spending time with me. I learned many great things about your company and have an even greater desire to work for you.

Sincerely,
(your name)"

9. Make personal contacts.

Now that you've prepared, you're ready to contact potential employers. Although many will ask you to apply online, going to the workplace shows your interest and may land you an interview on the spot, so dress accordingly (see the list of do's and don'ts for advice on appearance). Remember to present yourself well even in preliminary contacts.

10. Follow through.

If you're not given an interview immediately, do the best you can to keep the ball in *your* court. That means if the employer tells you they will be calling you back in seven days with an interview time or decision, you ought to call them on day eight if you haven't heard back. Be polite in asking if a time has been scheduled or a decision made.

Finding a job isn't always easy, but keep in mind that the more persistent you are, the stronger the chances are that you'll get a job. Remember to pray to Heavenly Father for the guidance of the Spirit. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). **NE**

For more tips on getting a job, go to providentliving.org, click Employment, and then click Tips to Get You Hired.



GROWING JOB AREAS

The jobs expected to have the greatest increase in numbers over the next seven years:

1. Registered nurses
2. Retail salespersons
3. Customer service representatives
4. Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food
5. Office clerks, general
6. Personal and home care aides
7. Home health aides
8. Postsecondary teachers
9. Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners
10. Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants
11. Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks
12. Waiters and waitresses
13. Child-care workers
14. Executive secretaries and administrative assistants
15. Computer software engineers, applications
16. Accountants and auditors
17. Landscaping and grounds-keeping workers
18. Business operation specialists
19. Elementary school teachers, except special education
20. Receptionists and information clerks

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition; available at www.bls.gov/oco



A hand is shown pulling a metal chain for a lamp. The background is a light-colored wooden surface with a vertical black pole and a lamp fixture. The title 'Not Burning the' is overlaid on the top half of the image.

Not Burning the

When it came time to graduate from college, I found that gospel principles had blessed my secular—as well as my spiritual—life.

BY CINTHYA VERÓNICA SALAZAR MÁRQUEZ

Even when I was a young woman, most of my callings in the Church involved teaching Primary children, and this influenced my decision to pursue a degree in elementary education. But the choice of a major wasn't the only way Church teachings affected my education. That became very clear as I prepared to graduate.

The last project I had to complete was a final paper that I would defend in an oral exam before three judges. The judges were some of the teachers who had taught my classes.

My paper carefully finished, I spent part of the evening before the oral exam with my boyfriend's family. When I left to go home, his mother said she hoped everything would go well and quoted, "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30).

The next day came. Dozens of memories passed through my mind. I remembered how I decided to leave the city where I grew up to further my education; I remembered all the sacrifices my family had made to finance it. I could not

Midnight Oil

disappoint them. My final exam had to be a success.

My classmates were also waiting to take their exams. All of us were concerned about the questions the judges might pose, but I felt secure because I had prayed for help and because I knew that God knew the effort I had made to organize, research, and write my paper.

My turn came. After explaining my paper to the panel, I began to answer questions. After asking several on the topic I had covered, one of the judges queried, "How much work did you put into this paper?"

"A great deal," I replied. "I gave it everything I had because I wanted it to be innovative."

"Burned the midnight oil?"

"No, I don't usually stay up late doing schoolwork," I said. "I organize my day so I can get my work done."

The faces of the judges clearly showed surprise. The same judge remarked, "I find it strange that you should admit you haven't stayed up late. We know your classmates have, for many a night."

One of the other judges said, "Let me tell you about this student. She has time for everything. I can say so because I know her. She has time for her studies, her friends, her family, and she even attends church."

"Really?" the other judge was again surprised. "What church do you attend?"

"I'm a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

"Oh, yes, I know what church that is," one said.

"And we are taught to go to bed early so we can be invigorated the next day."

I felt calm and safe talking about the gospel, even though I was surprised to be asked about religion during a professional exam.

"Your paper was written with great feeling. It is excellent. I suppose this is also due to the habits instilled in you by your church."

"Yes," I said. "I was taught at church how to teach children, and it has really helped with my degree."

"You took to it like a fish to water," one of the judges joked. "We hope you won't stop going to church, because you owe much to the values you have gained there."

Soon I was excused from the room so the judges could come to a decision. Two minutes later they called me back in.

"It wasn't hard for us to reach an agreement. In view of your exemplary conduct, your excellent grades, and the paper you defended today, our verdict is unanimous in favor of graduation, with honorable mention. Congratulations!"

When I told my family, they wept for joy.

I testify that when Heavenly Father commanded us to "retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and minds may be invigorated" (D&C 88:124), He did so with an eye to blessing us. I am grateful to Him for allowing the gospel to bring us happiness in all the areas of our lives. **NE**

WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT

BY CARLA CARROLL

I have always been ambitious about education and leap at every opportunity. One year in high school, I took courses at the local community college through a program funded by my school. I really like computer science, and I was excited to take a computer programming class so I could learn more.

When I got my schedule from the college, I realized that my programming class was at the same time as my Young Women activity every

week. I tried to ignore it at first and tell myself that education was encouraged by the Church and that I was doing the right thing. As the time for classes to start drew nearer, I felt more and more uncomfortable about taking the class. When the time came that I had to tell my Young Women leader that I wouldn't be making it to any of the

activities, she sounded devastated. She told me that I would be sorely missed, and she would do anything to help me.

After talking to her, I felt bad that I thought the class was more important. When I got home, I went to my room and looked at the goal board



I had made for Personal Progress. I had written on it, "If you want something, you've got to *prove* it." I read my scriptures with that in mind and came across Mosiah 2:21. I realized I had to prove that I was going to serve God and not myself by letting my desires get in the way. I cancelled the class the next day. I had a wonderful year of Young Women activities, and I was able to set a higher priority for the Church in my life. I know it was the right thing to drop that class, and I am really glad that I did. **NE**

THE BEST WAY TO LEARN

BY MALLORY JESPERSON

I felt so behind in everything. I had been having trouble with my algebra class. I wasn't turning in my homework, and I was doing poorly on tests. I was not used to failing at anything, so I didn't understand why I just couldn't get the hang of math. My discouragement was affecting my attitude in my other classes as well. I was starting to become really lazy, which was a total change in me. Just the year before, I was attentive in all my classes, and I asked for help if I didn't understand.

I finally decided I needed to do something about it, so I did

something I had never done before: I sat down without any distractions and said a heartfelt prayer to my Heavenly Father. I asked Him to help me understand the work and to help me feel the Spirit as well. I then went into my brother's old room, put on some Church music, and started to do my homework.

The easier problems went quickly, but when they got harder and harder, I was still able to answer them. I felt as if I were on a cloud. I was so relieved and overjoyed. I had never said a prayer for something and received the answer so quickly. From

then on I started doing better in all of my classes.

When fast and testimony meeting came on Sunday, I felt my heart try to leap out of my chest, and my hands became clammy. I finally got the courage to share my testimony. For the first time, I said the Church was true and really meant it in my heart. I still have a lot to learn about the Church—and about math—but I will gladly take anything that comes my way. Although it took a lot of time and effort, that one class taught me a lot about prayer and helped strengthen my testimony. **NE**



TRUE FRIENDS

BY DUMDI BARIBE

Being the only Church member in my school is hard. Although I have lots of friends, I sometimes feel alone because my friends don't have the same beliefs. I try so hard every day to avoid bad language, gossiping, and getting laughed at.

But I know one place I will always be accepted and loved is at church and Young Women. I have

the greatest friends there and I always look forward to seeing them. I love to go to Mutual and to church. I appreciate both my friends at school and at church, but I love to be with my friends from church the most because they say and do the right things.

I am so grateful to have the gospel in my life and to have such great friends in Young Women and Young Men. **NE**

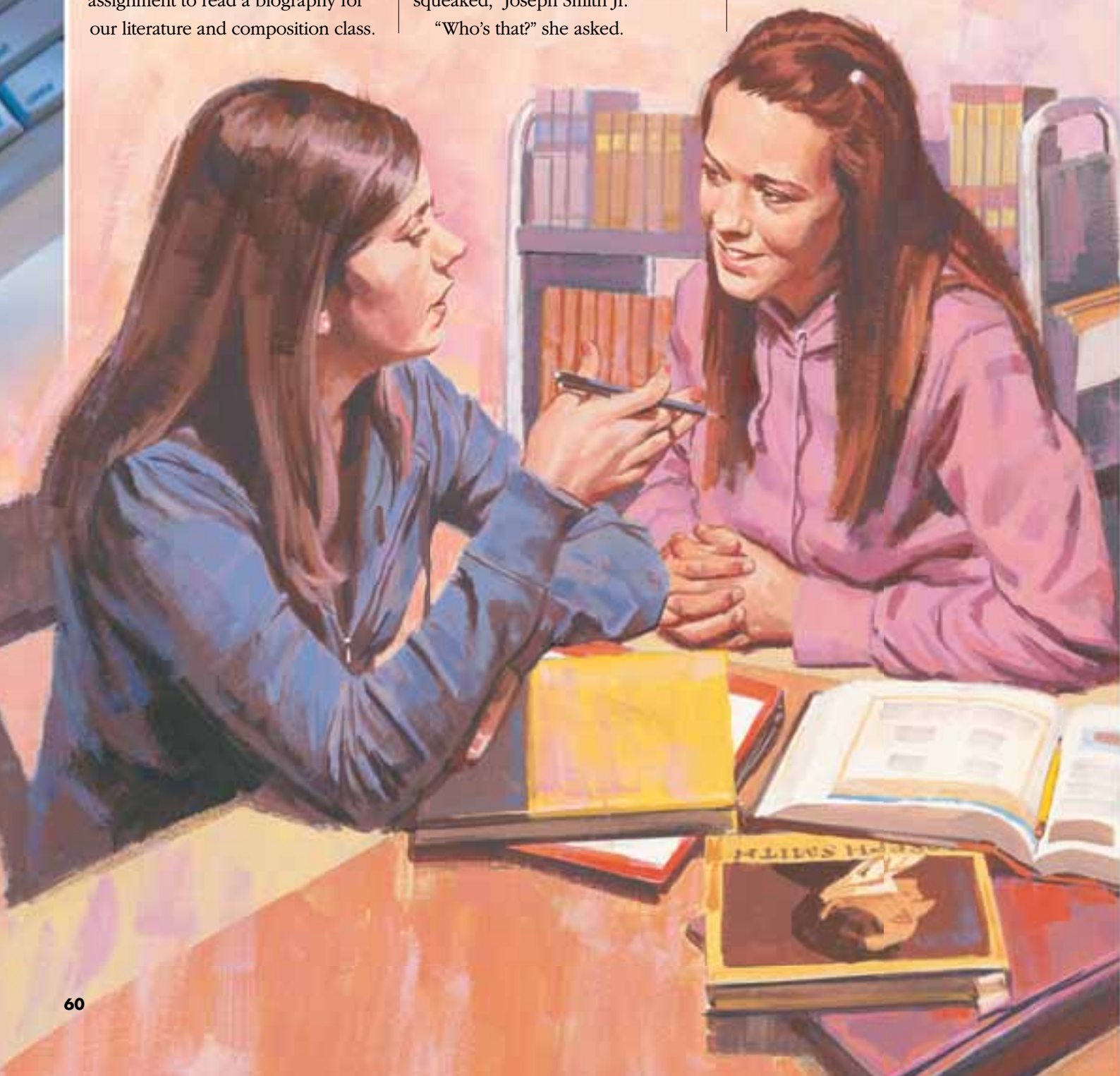
THE BEST SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT

BY SIERRA HOFFMAN

Who are you doing your biography on?" my best friend, Jasmine,* asked. We were in the library working on an assignment to read a biography for our literature and composition class.

My head started whirling. Jasmine wasn't a member of the Church. What would she think? Mustering up my courage, I opened my mouth and squeaked, "Joseph Smith Jr."
"Who's that?" she asked.

The butterflies in my stomach fluttered about as I spoke. "A prophet of God who lived in these latter days."
"A prophet?"



“Yeah, like Abraham and Moses,” I explained. She only shrugged.

Not knowing how to continue, I simply returned to reading the biography I had chosen. How do you describe someone who is that incredible? With a troubled heart, I said a sincere, silent prayer that the Holy Ghost would help me know what to say, but the bell rang. It was too late. Disappointed with myself, I left for home.

The next day, Jasmine and I were working in the library again. We both sat down and began reading our books. Then I stopped myself. I was sitting here with a perfect missionary opportunity before me but was unsure how to approach the situation. But my problem was solved when Jasmine asked, “Hey Sierra, where do you think we go after we die?”

With truth in my mind and warmth in my heart, I explained to her why we were here, where we are going, and the importance of getting there.

As the days went on and we had that precious time together in the library, we had wonderful conversations. I told her about the Restoration of the gospel and Joseph Smith. Eventually I bore my testimony of the Prophet. I didn’t realize it at the time, but my testimony was growing as well. I realized that Joseph Smith really was a prophet of God and that God speaks today. I had had my doubts, but the day I finished the book, I finally could say that I knew that Joseph Smith saw Heavenly Father and Jesus in the Sacred Grove, and he really did translate the Book of Mormon. Somehow, I just knew

it. No visions, no voices, no angels, just the calm reassurance that Joseph Smith was a prophet.

As I walked back to class that day with the book under my arm, I found myself humming the hymn “Praise to the Man” (*Hymns*, no. 27). My arm tingled just knowing I was carrying a book about such a marvelous man.

MY DAILY SCRIPTURE GOAL

BY TRISHA MALLORY

At the beginning of each year, I make at least one resolution. Last year, I resolved to read the Book of Mormon every day. But I didn’t want to just read it like I would any other book. I committed to really study and ponder the things I would read.

The night that I resolved to do this, I said a prayer and asked Heavenly Father to help me stick to my goal. Then I started reading. As I read, the Spirit filled my room, and I knew this was going to be one resolution that I would keep.

There were many nights that I couldn’t put my book down to go to sleep because I was so involved with what I was reading. As I read about the prophets, they came alive to me. I felt like I was getting to know them each individually. They were becoming a part of my life like never before.

Whenever I experienced a trial or hardship, I would think of the trials that Nephi, Abinadi, or Alma went through. For the most part, my

I don’t know that Jasmine believed what I told her, but perhaps I planted a seed that will sprout someday. One thing I do know for certain, though, is that reading a biography on Joseph Smith was definitely one of the most meaningful school assignments I have ever completed. **NE**

* Name has been changed.

trials seemed small in comparison. But the lessons I learned from my trials were similar. I learned faith, patience, humility, and forgiveness. Most important of all, I learned how important and how real the Atonement of Jesus Christ is.

I am grateful that my testimony of the Book of Mormon has been strengthened, and that my love for the prophets and for my Savior has deepened. **NE**

INSTANT MESSAGES *features personal experiences, insights into favorite hymns and scriptures, and other uplifting thoughts. If you have a personal experience that has strengthened your testimony and you'd like us to consider it for Instant Messages, please e-mail it to*

newera@ldschurch.org

or send it to:

New Era, Instant Messages
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Please limit submissions to 400 words or less. They may be edited for length and clarity.

Median Weekly Earnings by Educational Attainment (U.S.—Second Quarter 2008)

Less than a high school diploma	\$449 (\$23,358/year)
High school graduates, no college	\$620 (\$32,240/year)
Some college or associate's degree	\$727 (\$37,804/year)
Bachelor's degree and higher	\$1,105 (\$57,460/year)

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, NEWS RELEASE, JULY 17, 2008; AVAILABLE AT [HTTP://WWW.BLS.GOV/OPUB/TED/2008/JUL/WK3/ART01.HTM](http://www.bls.gov/OPUB/TED/2008/JUL/WK3/ART01.HTM)

Unemployment Rates and Educational Attainment (2005)

Number of 25-to-64-year-olds in unemployment as a percentage of the labor force aged 25 to 64, by level of education attained

	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	Higher education	
			College or Vocational	University
Australia	5.9	3.3	2.9	2.4
Canada	9.0	6.0	4.8	4.4
New Zealand	3.8	2.2	1.6	2.0
United Kingdom	6.6	2.1	1.9	2.1
United States	9.9	5.1	3.6	2.3

SOURCE: ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 2007; AVAILABLE AT [WWW.OECD.ORG/EDU/EAG2007](http://www.oecd.org/edu/EAG2007)

“Some of the most important guidelines for your life are found in the pamphlet For the Strength of Youth.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “See the End from the Beginning,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 44.

IMPORTANCE OF GCSEs IN ENGLAND

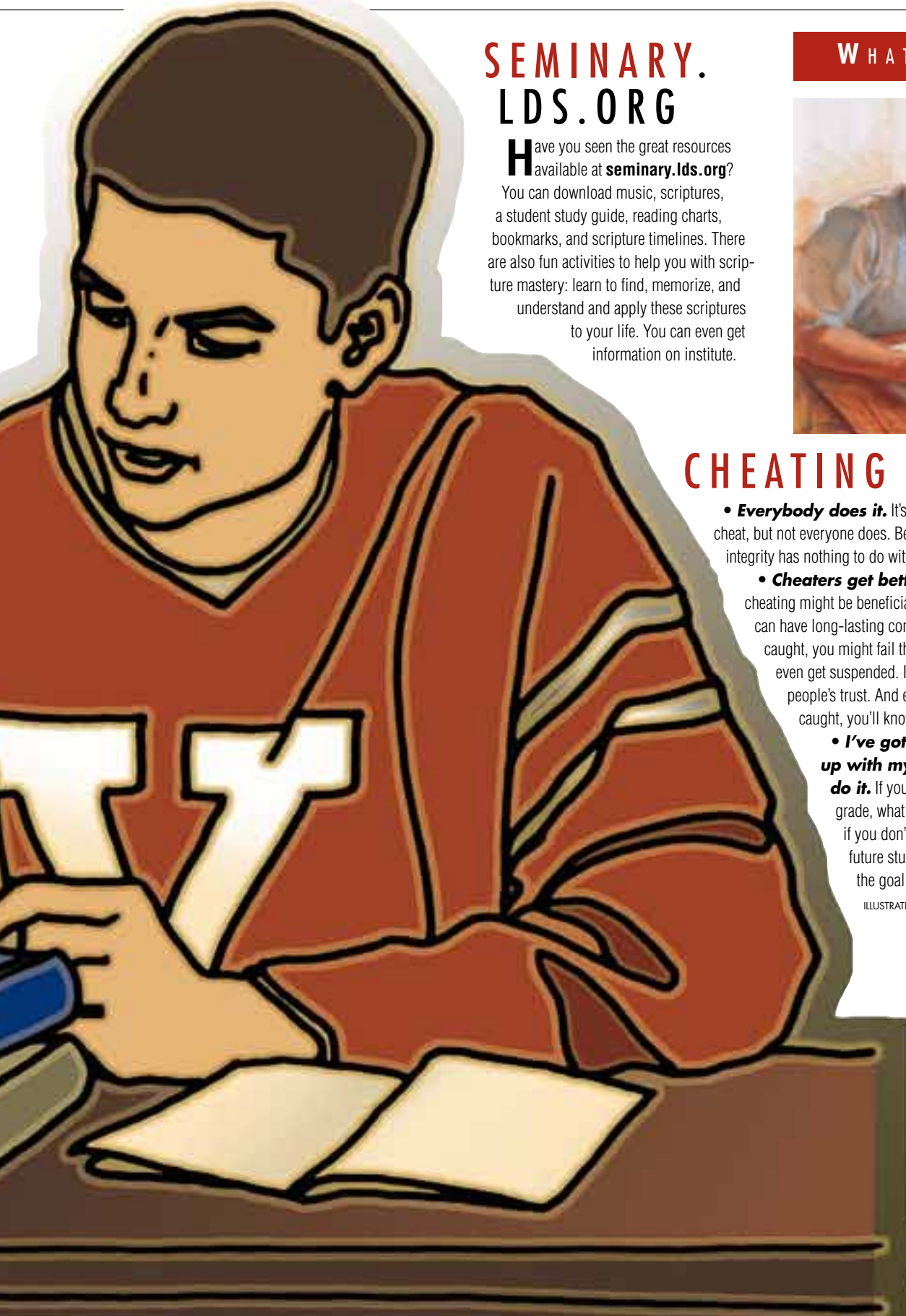
In England, **22 percent** of employers say they would not recruit job-seekers with less than five good GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education—sort of like a U.S. high school diploma) or the vocational equivalent. And **15 percent** completely ignore resumes if the applicant does not have these basic qualifications. Of the employers who would recruit someone with less than five good GCSEs, **47 percent** would only offer unskilled positions with low pay and limited prospects.

SOURCE: U.K. LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL NEWS RELEASE, AUGUST 24, 2006; AVAILABLE AT [HTTP://READINGROOM.LSC.GOV.UK/LSC/2006/EXTERNALRELATIONS/PRESS/NAT-GCSEDROPOUTSUNEMPLOYABLE.PR.AUG2006.PDF](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/2006/EXTERNALRELATIONS/PRESS/NAT-GCSEDROPOUTSUNEMPLOYABLE.PR.AUG2006.PDF)

10 STUDY & TESTING TIPS

1. Take good notes in class. Focus on the important points—one hint is to make sure anything your teacher writes on the board is in your notes.
2. Attend class every day, and pay attention.
3. Complete all of your assignments, and do them on time.
4. If there's something you don't understand in class, ask about it right then.
5. Try to set aside a study area in your home where you can be free from distractions.
6. Don't wait until the night before a test to study. Make a schedule with time to study regularly during the week.
7. As you study, try making charts, graphs, diagrams, and lists from your notes and textbooks.
8. Try studying out loud. Read aloud, talk to yourself about the important points, even ask yourself and answer the questions aloud.
9. Get a good night's sleep before exam day. Eat a good breakfast that morning, and take a few minutes to review your notes and charts. But remember, this should not be a “cram” session.
10. Check every one of your answers on quizzes and tests at least once.





SEMINARY. LDS.ORG

Have you seen the great resources available at seminary.lds.org? You can download music, scriptures, a student study guide, reading charts, bookmarks, and scripture timelines. There are also fun activities to help you with scripture mastery: learn to find, memorize, and understand and apply these scriptures to your life. You can even get information on institute.

WHAT'S UP?



CHEATING MYTHS

• **Everybody does it.** It's true that lots of people cheat, but not everyone does. Besides, your personal integrity has nothing to do with what other people do.

• **Cheaters get better grades.** While cheating might be beneficial in the short term, it can have long-lasting consequences. If you get caught, you might fail the test, your class, or even get suspended. It's not worth losing people's trust. And even if you don't get caught, you'll know you cheated.

• **I've got to cheat to keep up with my classmates who do it.** If you cheat to earn a good grade, what have you learned? Plus, if you don't know the material, future study is harder. Learning is the goal of education, not grades.

ILLUSTRATION BY KEITH LARSON

ILLUSTRATION BY PATRIC GERBER

NewEra.Ids.org

What's New?

Log on to the *New Era* online and find:

- A new (online only) Sudoku puzzle on D&C 93:36.
- Take an online quiz.
- Look at extra photos from the articles.
- Keep checking for new Mormonad videos.

TOP FIVE

If you want to read some great articles about dealing with hard times, read these five. Look them up in past issues online.

Rex D. Pinegar, "Man in the Stands," Feb. 1995.

Q&A (why bad things happen to good people), Dec. 1998.

Shanna Ghaznavi, "Sage's Story," Feb. 2000.

Brenda Williams, "My Terrible, Horrible Day," Sept. 2001.

John Bytheway, "Five Scriptures That Will Help You Get through Almost Anything," Sept. 2008.

BE SMART—GO ONLINE

For information on your continuing education, the institute program, and Church colleges, go to besmart.com.

Fiction

Malcolm Tent was still a young man when he began putting rocks in his pockets. It started one day when his boss, Mr. Gump, got angry at him for something that wasn't his fault. He couldn't yell back at his boss, because he might get fired. In fact, there wasn't anything he could do except be angry inside. "But," he thought, "I'm not going to forget this. No way."

On the way home from the bus stop that night, he thought to himself, "I've got to remember how angry I am. I don't want to forget this in the morning." Suddenly he had an idea. There was a small rock on the sidewalk in front of him. He picked it up and said softly to himself, "I'll keep this rock in my pocket to remind me of how unfair Mr. Gump was." And that's what he did. That night he put the rock on his dresser with his keys and his comb. The next morning, when he got dressed to go to work, into his pocket went the ugly gray rock.

Read the rest online in "Pockets Full of Rocks," by Larry A. Hiller (from Jan. 1996).

ONLINE VIDEO SERIES: BEYOND SCHOOL AND SEMINARY

Go to our Web site or besmart.com to watch the video series "Education: Your Key to Opportunity." It shows what awaits you beyond school and seminary, including the amazing opportunities offered through institutes of religion.

RESOURCE LINKS

If teachers need additional articles to use in preparing lessons for Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood, look online under Lesson Helps for suggestions. Each month we'll add more lessons to the list.

BEHIND THE SCENES

In our special issue on education, we wanted to include some suggestions about what you can do to make school better. We asked an expert, an education professor (but also a great writer and funny guy) to help us. Brad Wilcox has had lots of experience teaching teachers how to teach, and he has taught school himself. So he knows what he is talking about. He wrote "Five Easy Ways to Make School Hard and Five Hard Ways to Make School Easy"

(probably the longest title we've ever run in the *New Era*.)





LIFE

BY TAUNA HICKEN WILKINSON

Reading a book is like
Turning the pages of life:
Something new and unexpected
On each page.

With the joy and the laughter
Come the pain and the tears.
But wrapping ourselves in a
Blanket of hope, love, and prayer,
We read on.



THE REAL PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

“It is important to know who you are and who you may become. It is more important than what you do, vital as your work is. You pursue an education to prepare for life’s work, but you also need to prepare for life—eternal life.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Identity, Priority, and Blessings,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2001, 6.

SEE US ONLINE AT WWW.NEWERA.LDS.ORG

