



## JUST 200 MORE FEET

One summer, my mother and I went on a humanitarian trip to Guatemala. One day, we went to the Semac Champey, a park with pool after pool of deep blue water connected by rock terraces overflowing with water.

Our group hiked up the steep, rugged path to the cliff top overlooking the pools. The hike involved many staircases along a sheer drop-off. Several times we had to stop by a bench just to catch our breath.

After hiking for hours, my mother was winded and tired. She stopped alongside the trail, saying she would join us on our way back down.

I continued about 200 feet farther and came to the clearing with the lookout. The view was beyond words. Hurriedly, I ran back to my mother and encouraged her to come and see it.

As we rested and took in the view, I thought about how that hike is like our lives. Though the pathway of the gospel is straight and narrow, sometimes it seems like a vertical climb. We get discouraged as friends give up or turn back to paths that seem easier. And the adversary is constantly there, telling us that we're foolish or just not spiritually cut out for the journey.

But we shouldn't give up. Eternal

life, just like that view, will be beyond words. Though we won't achieve perfection in our mortal state, we can reach any heights through Christ, and He will always be there to help us for those last 200 feet.

Since this experience, I've tried to not give up on my hike to heaven. The Lord has blessed me in my efforts to fulfill His commandments and serve others. I know that He will help all of His children. Our part is to keep pressing on.

**Ryan Q., Missouri, USA**

## A PRIESTHOOD BLESSING

One night, I became very sick and spent most of the night moaning. I wasn't able to keep anything down and my stomach was doing somersaults. It took a while, but I finally got up enough courage to ask my dad for a blessing. It was the first father's blessing I had requested personally, and my dad was not expecting it. He found his little container of oil and blessed me that I would be well and be able to sleep peacefully. As soon as he finished, I felt so much better that I started to cry. The Spirit has never touched me so completely as it did then, and my testimony grew a lot.

So if you're ever in a difficult situation and you need a priesthood blessing, don't be afraid to ask your father (or home teacher). It takes courage and strength, but you just feel so much better after. It doesn't have to just be an illness—anything can call for a blessing, no matter how small it may seem.

**Hannah C., Idaho, USA**

## A STRONG CONNECTION

I'd lost my cell phone. No matter how hard I searched my room, I couldn't find it. I knew this phone was of no worth in the grand scheme of things, but it was still important to me. I decided, "Why should I keep looking? I'll never find it," when all of a sudden I felt the need to pray.

I knelt down and prayed for help. When I opened my eyes, I was staring at a certain spot in between my bookcase and my bed. It was covered by my blanket, so I moved it. I looked under the bed, and there was my cell phone! I was so relieved.

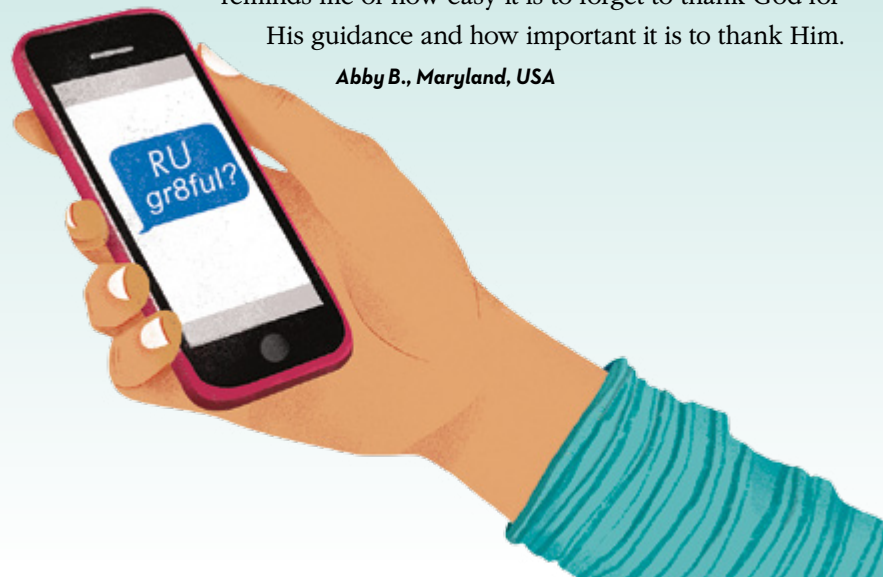
I suddenly remembered all of the *Friend* magazine stories I'd read about children thanking their Heavenly Father for helping. So that's what I did. I thanked Heavenly Father for helping me find my cell phone, an earthly item that could have been replaced.

After this happened, I began to think of the parable of the 10 lepers. In this parable, Jesus healed 10 lepers and only one returned to thank Him. This man was blessed greatly because of his humble heart. This

reminds me of how easy it is to forget to thank God for

His guidance and how important it is to thank Him.

**Abby B., Maryland, USA**



## SAY HELLO

There's a girl in our school who doesn't have many friends. The other day I was walking into school with some of my friends when I saw her. She walked to the doors just in front of me and very shyly said hi. I didn't want my friends to think I was weird so I wasn't sure what to do, but I walked in the door and said hi

back. Immediately, I knew that simply saying hi was the right thing to do.

Sometimes just saying hi can brighten someone's day, and I try often to say hi and be more kind in my day-to-day life. It's made me a better person.

**Brad B., Alberta, Canada**