



An Eternal Perspective

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*Seminary
helps youth
in Bangalore,
India, to see
from a more
celestial point
of view.*



Many of the seminary students arrive at the chapel as passengers in three-wheeled, bright yellow auto-rickshaws that look more like a bicycle than a car. Most of the young women wear brightly colored saris, the traditional dress for women in India. But once the lesson starts, seminary in the Bangalore Second Branch is much like seminary anywhere—the teacher and the students sharing insights gained by studying the scriptures. And sometimes the discussion continues even when the formal lesson is through.

Familiar with the scriptures



“What are some of your favorite scriptures?” asks the teacher, Deepak Raj David Michael, a returned missionary. The students, still seated in their desks even though the hymn has been sung and the closing prayer has been said, offer plenty of answers.



“In 3 Nephi 12:16, it says that by setting a good example for others, we glorify our Father

in Heaven,” says Alisha Palikot, 16.

“I like John 14:15 because I love God, and I love to keep His commandments,” says Kevin Stephen, 15.

Angel Abishakam, 16, recites 1 Nephi 3:7. “Nephi’s example helps me to obey,” she says.

“Anyone else?” Brother Deepak asks, and Catherine Gracy Mary, 14, turns to John 3:16. “It says Heavenly Father loves us so much that He sent His Son to die for us, and I love Jesus Christ for being willing to do that for us,” she says.

Clinton Daniel Michael, 15, the last to be called upon, says he likes Doctrine & Covenants 4:5 because it talks about having an eye single to the glory of God. “That helps me with spiritual goals, educational goals, and all my goals,” he says. “It helps me to have an eternal perspective.”

And gaining an eternal perspective is what the gospel is all about, whether it’s in India or anywhere else in the world.

What can you do?

To help students gain that perspective, Brother Deepak asks what they can do to take upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ.

“One way to do that is through service,” Kevin says. He talks about the day the branch’s Aaronic Priesthood and elders quorum cleaned up the neighborhood around the



A geological monument in Lalbagh Garden is dedicated to the rock it stands on. Seminary students in Bangalore are dedicated to scripture study, which helps them stand strong.





Whether searching the scriptures during class (above) or visiting with the teacher afterward (far right), seminary students like Deepa and Suganya (below) are creating spiritual roots as deep as those of the trees in Lalbagh.

chapel. “People who live around the building saw us and were happy that we were doing something good,” he says. “Some of them worked with us and got to know us, and we all felt like friends.”

The students have moved outside the meetinghouse now, and as they speak they look out at the neighborhood they cleaned. The Church building is located on a side street near a major thoroughfare, and sounds of traffic are ever present. Tall trees shade the grounds, creating an oasis of peace. Some younger children are playing soccer on a concrete sports area behind the parking lot.

Kevin continues talking about service. He says another way the Aaronic Priesthood quorums help others is by preparing, blessing, and distributing the sacrament each week. “Helping with the sacrament is a service to all the branch members,” he says. “It gives them the opportunity to draw nearer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and to feel the Holy Ghost.”

Wise choices

Clinton says the Church teaches him correct principles he can apply in his everyday life. “For example, there are times when people outside the Church offer me coffee or

tea, and I tell them it is something I can’t drink,” he says. Clinton believes the gospel also teaches us to control our emotions: “President Gordon B. Hinckley said once that anger is a sin. I want to be free from anger so that it doesn’t control me.” Clinton is preparing to be a full-time missionary: “One of the most important things I’ve learned is that I can start right now.”

“Jolly happy”

Pooja Prabhakar, 18, says she has received many blessings because of the gospel. “I have been brought into the light of truth, and I am happy that I can prepare myself to go back and live with my Heavenly Father.”



She says that becoming a member of the Church has changed her life in many ways: “I begin each day with scripture study. I dress modestly. I use good language. I used to have a habit of making fun of others, but because of the Church I learned that I shouldn’t be



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doing that, so I stopped.”

She says she was 14 years old when she first attended Young Women. “I loved it,” she says. “I was very much reserved, but as I went on, I became jolly happy. I learned how to be a good daughter to my parents, a loving sister to my siblings, and a peacemaker at home. It’s been jolly nice, especially when I received my Personal Progress medallion.”

Pleasant memories

Now as she transitions into Relief Society, she has many pleasant memories—of singing songs at a residence for the elderly “to show our love;” of gaining a testimony that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and that President Thomas S. Monson is a living prophet; and of “learning more about the gospel every time I come to church.”

She tells of an experience she and her friends had one day on their way to school. “We saw an older woman who was trying to find her way to the chemist [pharmacy] to get a prescription filled, so we stopped and helped her.” They not only walked with her to her destination, but they went inside and made sure she was able to get what she needed.

“I’m glad to know God would let us help her,” Pooja says.



Powerful perspective

That’s the kind of perspective every seminary student should have, and the kind of insight teens in the Bangalore Second Branch are gaining as they attend seminary, prayerfully study and apply the scriptures in their lives, and discuss the feelings and experiences they have as they learn and live the gospel.

The students disperse now. Some get back into auto-rickshaws. Others join their families to walk or ride home. But it’s guaranteed they’ll be back soon. After all, in this place they share a perspective that brings them joy, a vision based on the gospel of Jesus Christ. It not only allows them to see clearly; it also permits them to glimpse into eternity. **NE**

