

## SAVE ME!

**W**hen I was about 14 years old, my brother, some friends, and I went to a nearby pond to go row boating.

One of my friends challenged me to race her to the shore. I really didn't know how to swim well, but it wasn't very far, so I said yes, but what I didn't realize was that my jeans would take on water and get really heavy.

I got into the water, and my jeans immediately began pulling me down. I thought for sure I was going to die. My brother and another friend came in and pulled me to shore, but what surprised me was that in my panic I tried fighting them off because I thought they were trying to drown me.



This experience reminded me of how easy it is to make bad choices and how we sometimes pull away from those who are trying to help us. Like my brother and our friend, the Savior is always there to try and help us, even when we initially resist. I couldn't save myself from drowning, but my brother and friend could. Through the Atonement, our Savior can help each of us to return to His presence if we just let Him. Satan gives us many temptations that are hard to resist, but if we stay close to the Lord, He will help us overcome them.

—Janice C., Oregon, USA

## COMING UNTO CHRIST

Coming unto Christ, for me, is part of bringing others unto Christ also. There is a teenager in my ward who does not believe in Christ or this gospel. One Sunday afternoon I had the opportunity to walk to the temple with him and bear him my testimony. When he asked me questions, I was never without an answer, because the Spirit was there helping and guiding me the whole way. When I got home, the Spirit I felt was so strong that I knew, through my actions and this experience, I had come closer unto Christ and had hopefully brought my friend closer also.

—Jessica H., Utah, USA

## A RING FOR MOM

Several years ago our house was robbed. Almost everything of worth was taken, including my mother's wedding ring. We'd never been able to afford a new one.

One year as we approached another Christmas season, my six-year-old brother, Jason, and I were coming home from an activity. Jason leaned toward me and whispered in my ear that he wanted to get Mom a new wedding ring. He said she should have one. I told him it was a good idea and that I would think about how to do it.

I thought about it, I planned, I schemed, and I tried to think of some way we could save enough money. I figured we could slip away for a few minutes while Christmas shopping with Dad. Before we went off on our own, however, Jason decided that we should let Dad in on the secret. Dad was surprised but happy and said that was the sweetest thing he had heard all day. He said we could all go together and choose the ring after we had finished the rest of our shopping.

We spent a while looking at different rings. Jason made the final decision, choosing a ring with a ruby in the center surrounded by three tiny diamonds on each side. It was perfect!

On Christmas morning our gift was the second present opened.



As my mom unwrapped it, I felt tense. A thousand thoughts went through my head: what if she doesn't like it, what if it's too big, what if she doesn't think it's right for her kids to be giving her a wedding ring?

When Mom saw the ring, Jason explained what we'd done. Her face broke into the hugest smile, and she hugged him. She put the ring on right away and said "thank you" a dozen times over. She told Jason that someday she and Dad would replace the stolen ring, but until then, the ruby ring would be her wedding ring.

I sat in the background and just watched the whole thing, feeling extremely relieved and happy.

I have never had a better Christmas. I was so happy to see my mom happy that I hardly cared about my own presents. I believe that is the true spirit of Christmas: giving. We can find so much more happiness in giving than in receiving. Although I've known this truth for years, I've never been more struck with it than I was on that morning.

Catherine W., Utah, USA