

THE **New Era**

JULY 2011

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We're celebrating 40 years of the New Era. A regular feature of the magazine is the Mormonads. This year we are reprinting some of the most popular of our collection. Here's one with a message that needs to be passed along.



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OUR HONORED



PIONEER HERITAGE

We each can learn much from our early pioneer ancestors, whose struggles and heartaches were met with resolute courage and an abiding faith in a living God.

The Suffering of the Pioneers

“That first trek of 1847, organized and led by Brigham Young, is described by historians as one of the great epics of United States history. Mormon pioneers by the hundreds suffered and died from disease, exposure, or starvation. There were some who, lacking wagons and teams, literally walked the 1,300 miles [2,092 km] across the plains and through the mountains, pushing and pulling handcars.”¹

Inspiring Faith

“We each can learn much from our early pioneer ancestors, whose struggles and heartaches were met with resolute courage and an abiding faith in a living God. . . . Youth and children were among the thousands who pulled and pushed handcars or walked along that pioneer trail, just as they are among the Saints today who are pioneering in their own areas throughout the world. I think that there is not a member of this Church today who has not been touched by the accounts of the early pioneers. Those who did so much for the good of all surely

had as their objective to inspire faith. They met the goal in a magnificent manner.”²

Facing Hardships

“Time-marked pages of a dusty pioneer journal speak movingly: ‘We bowed ourselves down in humble prayer to Almighty God with hearts full of thanksgiving to Him, and dedicated this land unto Him for the dwelling place of His people.’

“The crude homes were described in these terms by one who was there as a small boy: ‘There was no window of any kind whatever in our house. Neither was there a door. My mother hung up an old quilt, which served as a door for the first winter. This was our bedroom, our parlor, our sitting room, our kitchen, our sleeping room, everything in this room of about 12 by 16 feet [3.6 by 4.9 m]. How in the world we all got along in it I do not know. I recollect that my dear old mother stated that no queen who ever entered her palace was ever more happy or proud of shelter and the blessings of the Lord than was she when she entered that completed dugout.’



**By President
Thomas S. Monson**

Jesus Christ was and is the ultimate pioneer. He has gone before, showing all others the way to follow.

“Such were the trials, the hardships, struggles, and heartaches of a former day. They were met with resolute courage and an abiding faith in a living God.”³

Pioneers Today

“We honor those who endured incredible hardships. We praise their names and reflect on their sacrifices.

“What about our time? Are there pioneering experiences for us? Will future generations reflect with gratitude on our efforts, our examples? You young [people] can indeed be pioneers in courage, in faith, in charity, in determination.

“You can strengthen one another; you have the capacity to notice the unnoticed. When you have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to feel, you can reach out and rescue others of your age.”⁴

The Ultimate Pioneer

“Turning the pages of scriptural history from beginning to end, we learn of the ultimate pioneer—even Jesus Christ. His birth was foretold by the prophets of old; His entry upon the stage of life was announced by an angel. His life and His ministry have transformed the world. . . .

“One sentence from the book of Acts speaks volumes: Jesus ‘went about doing good, . . . for God was with him’ [Acts 10:38]. . . .

“His mission, His ministry among men, His teachings of truth, His acts of mercy, His unwavering love for us prompt our gratitude and warm our hearts. Jesus Christ, Savior of the world—even the Son of God—was and is the ultimate pioneer, for He has gone before, showing all others the way to follow. May we ever follow Him.”⁵ **NE**

NOTES

1. “Come Follow Me,” *Ensign*, July 1988, 2.
2. “Teaching Our Children,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2004, 4.
3. *Ensign*, July 1988, 4.
4. “Pioneers All,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 93.
5. “Led by Spiritual Pioneers,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2006, 7–8.



Exodus 19:5–6

What are the blessings promised to the Lord’s people if we keep His covenant?



Keep My Covenant

Every saving ordinance is accompanied by a covenant, including baptism and temple ordinances. Here are some of the promises we make through the covenant of baptism, which we renew when we take the sacrament (see Mosiah 18:8–10; D&C 20:37, 77, 79):

- Take upon us the name of Christ.
- Always remember Him.
- Serve Him and keep His commandments.
- Bear one another’s burdens.
- Mourn with those that mourn, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort.
- Stand as witnesses of God at all times, in all things, and in all places.

An Holy Nation

“According to the [Old Testament] things or places were holy that were set apart for a sacred purpose. . . . The Israelites were a holy people because they stood in a special relationship to Jehovah. . . . The word *holy* . . . came to refer to moral character. . . . Israel must be holy in character because the God of Israel was holy.”

Bible Dictionary, “Holiness”

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on ‘eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore, if ye will ‘obey my voice indeed, and keep my ‘covenant, then ye shall be a ‘peculiar ‘treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

6 And ye shall be unto me a ‘kingdom of ‘priests, and an ‘holy ‘nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

7 ¶ And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord ‘commanded him.

8 And all the people answered to

A Kingdom of Priests

The Church is referred to as “a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9), and those who will inherit the celestial kingdom are referred to as “priests and kings” (D&C 76:56). This means that individuals and families who keep covenants can receive all of the ordinances and blessings of the priesthood and be exalted in the celestial kingdom with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

Peculiar Treasure



“In the Old Testament, the Hebrew term from which *peculiar* was translated is *cgullah*, which means ‘valued property,’ or ‘treasure.’ . . .

“With that understanding, we can see that the scriptural term *peculiar* does not mean ‘queer’ or ‘odd’ at all. It signifies ‘valued treasure,’ ‘made’ or ‘selected by God.’ Thus, for us to be identified by servants of the Lord as his *peculiar* people is a compliment of the highest order. . . .

“. . . These are [the] latter days. . . . We are the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We are, in fact, the hope of Israel. We are God’s treasure, reserved for our particular place and time.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “A More Excellent Hope,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1997, 62–63.

Obey My Voice

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.”

D&C 1:38

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

The ANSWER IN VERSE EIGHT

*Joseph Smith found his answer in James 1:5.
I found mine a few verses later.*

By Angelica Nelson

It was 11:00 at night, and I was in my bedroom after being out with a few high school friends. I knew I hadn't made the best decisions that night. "But," I reasoned, "I hadn't made the worst ones either."

Frustrated, I picked up a homework assignment. I was so tired that I just wanted to get it over with and go to bed. "I still need to read my scriptures. But I'll just skip them tonight," I thought.

I began thinking of everything I was expected to do. Read my scriptures, attend early-morning seminary, attend church and Mutual, get good grades, be involved in extracurricular activities, have a part-time job . . . The list went on.

I felt so much pressure in every area of my life, especially as the only female Latter-day Saint in my high school. I reminded myself again and again that I might be the only female Latter-day Saint my peers ever met, so I had to be a good example. Yet I knew I was starting to slip.

"I wish I could be carefree like my friends," I thought. I also wished I didn't

feel so awful when I went to a party or said a bad word, but the truth was I did. It made me feel physically sick when I made choices I knew weren't the right ones. For some reason, though, I continued to make them.

It was almost midnight when I finished my homework assignment. In five hours my alarm clock would be beeping. I would wake up, drag myself to seminary, and try to get through another day of high school.

Then it dawned on me. I didn't have to obey all the rules. I could stop attending church, seminary, and Mutual if I wanted to. Just because my family went, it didn't mean I had to.

It was such a liberating thought. I crawled into bed and was almost asleep when I had a strong impression to read the scriptures. "No," I thought. "I'm done."

Again I felt it. This time I thought, "Maybe just one last time."

In seminary that year, we had been studying the New Testament. I turned to where my marker was in James chapter 1. This was the chapter Joseph

Smith had read that inspired him to go to the Sacred Grove and pour out his heart to Heavenly Father. "How ironic," I thought. I started reading.

Verse 5 was familiar to me: "If any of you lack wisdom . . ." But it was verse 8 that opened my eyes that night. It said, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." I froze. Then I reread it.

I was being double-minded. I claimed to be a Latter-day Saint, but my actions were beginning to say otherwise. And if I continued, no matter what path I chose, I would be unstable and unsure and thus very unhappy.

I needed to know if the gospel was true. I needed to know if getting up every morning at 5:00 a.m. to study the gospel was worth it. I needed to know that I was trying to live my life to the best of my ability, despite at times being ridiculed, because it truly would bring me the most happiness and joy.

It was almost 1:00 in the morning then, but I knelt beside my bed and poured out my heart to my Father in Heaven. I asked Him to help me know what was right, to know which path to



take, to lead me by the hand and take away the confusion I was feeling.

Simply, clearly, and peacefully, the thought came to my mind, "You already know." And I did.

I got off my knees, shut off my light, and went to sleep. Four hours later my alarm went off. Sleepily, I shut it off. A minute later I was up getting ready for another day, early-morning seminary included.

It has been years since that wonderful midnight experience. My testimony still continues to grow. Sometimes it is stronger than at other times. The difference is I know and I have never once looked back. **NE**



I Will

By Cecilia Sorensen

I started with a bad attitude, but this pioneer trek helped me appreciate the sacrifices others had made for me.

But, Mom! I don't want to go!" There was no way she'd ever convince me. "Can you imagine what three days without showers or my cell phone will do to me? I'll die!"

"Oh, don't be like that." My mother dismissed my worries like they were nothing. "It'll be a good experience for you." That was the end of it; my fate had been decided. I moaned and groaned for an entire month, but that didn't change anything. I still had to go on pioneer trek with the youth in my ward.

We were scheduled for three days of wandering through what seemed a Wyoming wasteland, with only the "bare necessities" packed into a one-gallon paint bucket. I couldn't believe other people were excited to go on a trip like this. I tried every loophole I could find to get out of going. All I got was a lecture on the "importance of my ancestors and understanding how they lived." Personally, I appreciated the pioneers. I really did. But why did that mean going on trek? Couldn't I appreciate them from the comfort of my own home?

The last week in June found me awake at four in the morning to help load the cars and drive across endless miles of desert for six hours into the Wyoming wilderness to

reenact part of the early pioneers' migration westward. Grumbling, I took my gallon bucket and sat sullenly with my other muttering friends.

Our leaders cheerily greeted us with a smile and handed everyone pieces of paper. Looking down, I saw a mournful face in a very bad, very old photograph on a paper. Next to the small picture was the story of Bodil Mortinsen. She had traveled with the Willie Handcart Company in October of 1856. I had been assigned Bodil's name. I folded up Bodil's biography and stuck it in my pocket.

"The handcarts are here!" someone called out. "Everybody get your buckets!"

I lifted my bucket into a handcart and waited for more instructions. I lost count of the number of times we were lectured on leaving the snakes alone. The phrase "DON'T GO OFF THE TRAIL" was engraved into our brains over and over again.

"And . . .," the voice of our tour guide wavered in the hot afternoon sun, "please remember why you're here." What could he mean by that? I knew why I was here. I was here because my parents had told me to come here. I was here because the pioneers had traveled this exact same road and





apparently I had to too. I reached into my pocket and felt Bodil Mortinsen still there, limp from hours in the heat from my jeans.

“Off we go!” Brother Boulter called. He took hold of the first handcart, and moving with the methodical lethargy of a herd of cattle, the procession of teenage pioneers set off.

Nearly 48 hours later, I pushed my handcart from behind, completely exhausted. The sun hung high in the desert afternoon. It pulsed on my back, and I felt sweat trickling down my face. I felt the gritty texture of dirt mixed with the salty-sweet taste of sweat in my mouth but, surprisingly enough, didn’t complain. Suddenly, the caravan halted, and I wearily looked up. Brother Boulter had stopped at the opening of Martin’s Cove.

“We’re leaving the carts here,” he called out in a strained, hoarse voice. “Just bring your canteens and follow me.” We were led up a steep hill and came to several benches set up at the top of the mound. Gratefully, we dropped down and rested in the scorching midday sun.

“You are here,” Brother Boulter stated after a small pause, “to gain an understanding of what your ancestors went through. The Martin Handcart Company passed through this cove over 100 years ago. They suffered frost-bite and scurvy and even gave their lives so that you could live in a better place. We are so proud that you have come with such a great attitude.” My friends and I exchanged sheepish looks. “You all have around half an hour to walk through the cove and see where the Martin Company took refuge from the blizzard that killed 50 people.”

A quiet stillness overtook us as we meandered along the trail. I imagined the pioneers a century ago trying to

take shelter beneath their handcarts. I tried to imagine the feeling of freezing out here in the Wyoming wilderness, and my fingers became cold in the summer sun as I felt a nearness to my ancestors. Walking out of the cove, we took up our handcarts again. The story of Bodil Mortinsen was still in my pocket, growing steadily more limp.

We returned to Rocky Ridge. Here, the Willie Handcart Company had suffered a similar fate to that of the Martin Handcart Company until the rescue party from Salt Lake City found them. This time, the air hung heavy with rain, and we could smell the distant scent of wet sagebrush and sand.

Rocky Ridge was a small gully nestled between two grassy hills and cut in the middle by a quiet brook. A large boulder stood next to the trail with one word carved into it: “REMEMBER.”

“There,” Brother Boulter said, again at the front of our group and motioning to a point ahead of us, “is where the Willie Company buried their dead.”

Glancing up the trail, I saw two piles of rocks waiting at the crest of the hill. These graves were little more than two plots marked by jagged stones over their tops. The graves had been poorly dug, as it was wintertime when the Willie Company was here. The ground had been too frozen to make deep graves, and the pioneers had covered them with rocks to keep the dozen bodies from being destroyed by wild animals.

We stood there in silence. Suddenly, I realized that I had not read Bodil Mortinsen’s story. I carefully pulled out the wilted paper and looked again at the mournful black-and-white face. I read her story. I stood where she had stood and envisioned her grieving over a lost parent or brother or friend. At the bottom of the page, I read:

“Two of those buried at Rock Creek Hollow were heroic children of tender years: Bodil Mortinsen, age nine, from Denmark, and James Kirkwood, age eleven, from Scotland.

“Bodil apparently was assigned to care for some small children as they crossed Rocky Ridge. When they arrived at camp, she must have been sent to gather firewood. She

These pioneers had been real people—young girls just like me. They had suffered and traveled away from everything they knew to live in a better place.

was found frozen to death leaning against the wheel of their handcart, clutching sagebrush” (President James E. Faust [1920–2007], Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “A Priceless Heritage,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 84–85).

I had imagined Bodil standing here, perhaps mourning the loss of a family member. Now I realized that she hadn’t stood here at all. She was buried here. Tears pricked at my eyes. A nine-year-old girl was buried here, and her family had been required to leave and move on. They walked and walked until they reached the Salt Lake Valley. After starving, freezing, and suffering, they had not been afraid to continue on. If they could keep walking, surely I could too.

These pioneers had been real people. Old men, young men, widows, mothers, young girls just like me. They had suffered and traveled away from everything they knew to live in a better place. I lived in that place. I had lived in a good place all of my life because of my pioneer ancestors. They were not just people who lived a long time ago, and I was not here just to see what they had done. They were *my* people, and I was here, standing in front of the graves at Rocky Ridge, to get to know them.

I went home after that adventure with a newfound respect and appreciation for my heritage. I can’t ever forget how it felt to stand at those graves. The boulder said “REMEMBER,” and I will forevermore. **NE**



Helping Each Other in

By Elder Charles and Sister Carol Kewish

Senior Missionaries, Asia Area

When severe storms and typhoons devastated southern India in October 2009, young men and young adults from the Hyderabad and Bangalore India Districts sprang into action to help relieve the suffering of those affected by the floods.

According to President Prasada Gudey of the Hyderabad India District, “Our young men did a wonderful work in delivering food and water to those in need. The goods had been donated and had arrived in the province, but the government was not able to deliver them to the thousands of victims in more than 200 refugee camps. Our members stood out with their Mormon Helping Hands vests as they carried out their efficient work in getting the food and water to everyone.”

Some of the young men and young adults who served commented on how enjoyable and fulfilling service can be. **NE**

Right: “I felt very happy that I had an opportunity to serve my fellow beings. I had a wonderful experience, and I learned so many things by doing it, and at the same time we enjoyed being together with friends packing the food and supplies that were needed. I felt my Savior’s love and peace as I served others.”
—Venus Armstrong

“I was so happy to be able to help with this project. It brought me much joy to know that I was helping serve people who were in so much need. I prayed that the people would be blessed.” —Vishal Nakka

Below: Sixty members of the Church traveled to refugee camps in northern Karnataka State. They delivered blankets, tarps, and hygiene kits assembled by members of the Church. One young man exclaimed, “It was totally amazing to help with this flood relief project. I have always had a desire to help and serve others. I was so grateful to be able to serve. I had tears in my eyes as I was able to see those people who had lost everything in the flood. It was a great blessing to be able to help the people in my country.”



INDIA



DID YOU KNOW?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that a true Latter-day Saint “is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to provide for the widow, to dry up the tear of the orphan, to comfort the afflicted, whether in this church, or in any other, or in no church at all, wherever he finds them” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 426). Because of our desire to serve others, the Church sponsors humanitarian relief and development projects around the world. For example, in 2009:

- There were 763,737 days of donated labor at Church welfare facilities.
- Over 8,000 missionaries served in Welfare Services.

Between 1985 and 2011, the Church has given humanitarian assistance to 178 countries. Some specific projects include the following:

- Providing disaster relief after earthquakes in Haiti, Indonesia, Chile, and Japan; after a tsunami in Samoa; and after a typhoon in the Philippines.
- Funding a measles vaccination campaign in Africa.
- Sending out 10.3 million hygiene, newborn, and school kits.
- Distributing over 61,000 tons of food; over 13,000 tons of medical supplies; and over 89,000 tons of clothing.

NEmore

For more information about the Church welfare program, see providentliving.org.



Above: “When I told my friends at college about the service project, they were so happy for me. I explained what we were doing and shared Church principles with them. I felt wonderful when I was helping the people on the project. Thumbs up to the Church organization for giving us this opportunity to serve.”
—Deepak Sharma

Right: “It felt very good to serve on the flood relief project. I helped paint and pass out the bundles of food. It was a great blessing to be there with the other priesthood brethren and to be able to help and serve the people who were in great need.”
—Avinash Thomas



“I like family home evening, but my brother and sister don’t like it and make it difficult for everyone.”

What can our family do?”

Family home evening can be a memorable time to be with your family and talk about serious gospel subjects with just your family. It can be a time to have fun together and learn to love being together. When family home evening is not like this, then the family experience can cause frustration and friction.

What can you do? Being supportive of your parents’ efforts is number one. It is always right to bring your own good attitude. You may not be able to affect the attitudes of your siblings, but you can certainly not copy them. And you can set a good example, especially for younger brothers and sisters.

Be willing to help out with family home evening. You can offer to find games and skits connected to the subject that you can play if you have younger brothers and sisters. Make it fun. Or you can offer to make refreshments and perhaps get other family members to help.

Discussions over your siblings’ attitudes or behaviors at family home evening should be left between your parents and them. The thing you can do best is be a good example, and you’ll find the joy of having family home evening. **NE**

Set an Example



If you have younger siblings, you can understand that they have a hard time paying attention. I try to sit quietly and listen so that the others follow. I also try to participate and ask questions. Younger siblings always look up to you. Even if you are the youngest, you can set an example. Since I am now a deacon, I find it so much easier to sit, listen, and set an example for my brothers.

Blake B., 12, Utah, USA

Be Organized



Family home evening used to be the hardest day of the week for my family. We would argue who would do what and how long the stories would be. It wasn’t organized. So we made a chart showing who makes the snacks, picks the song, says the opening prayer, gives the lesson, and says the closing prayer. This helped everyone feel like a part of our family home evening. Now my family looks forward to that day of the week.

Kari T., 15, Florida, USA

Remember Family Is Important



There have been so many wonderful experiences for me in family home evening because I was with my family and we had a lot of fun. Come up with a game they’ll enjoy. The best lesson for your siblings right now is that family is more important than anything in this day and age.

Angelena F., 15, New York, USA

Have a Fun Activity



Sometimes my siblings seem to not be interested in what we are learning, or they don't understand it. Other times they just have too

much energy to sit down and listen. To help, I like to ask them questions or do the actions to Primary songs with them. Something else I like to do is have a game or activity where everyone is involved and having fun learning gospel principles. Doing these things during family home evening really brings the Spirit and helps it run smoothly. It seems to be more meaningful for everyone when we all contribute.

Ashley F., 14, Utah, USA

Create Fond Memories



If you stay positive and point out the benefits and good things that come from family home evening, maybe your siblings will understand and start to like it. You could even have a lesson on family home evening. Just try to turn their attitude to loving it and looking forward to it. You could do this by being excited for it or planning something everyone would enjoy. Creating fond memories of family home evening would definitely change their feelings about it.

Marissa N., 16, Utah, USA

Share Your Testimony



Try to think of activities or lessons that your siblings will be interested in and want to participate in.

Share your testimony of

forever families, and explain that sporting events and worldly activities don't last for eternity, but families do.

Briana I., 14, Illinois, USA

Start with Prayer



I've noticed that as we have made it a goal to start every family home evening and family scripture study with sincere prayer, the Spirit has been more present and we all calm down. Taking a few minutes to pray to the Lord to ask Him for peace and reverence makes us all want to be still and learn the gospel.

Christian M., 19, Washington, USA

Have a Fun Lesson

You can have your siblings interact with the lesson. Have them answer questions, and give them a hands-on project that they can do and enjoy, whether it's coloring a picture or playing a game. It's really easy to make a family home evening lesson fun!

Brooke A., 14, Utah, USA

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



LONG-LASTING LESSONS

"We cannot afford to neglect this heaven-inspired program [family home evening]. It can bring spiritual growth to each member of the family, helping him or her to withstand the temptations which are everywhere. The lessons learned in the home are those that last the longest."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Constant Truths for Changing Times," *Ensign*, May, 2005, 19.

NEmore

For more Q&A about the family, to view videos, and to read articles on family relationships, head to lds.org/go/711 or scan the QR code below for quick access (see page 39 for instructions).



NEXT QUESTION

The youth
in my ward split
into groups.
How can we get
more unity?

Send your answer and photo by August 15, 2011.

Go to newera.lds.org, click "Submit Material," and then select "Questions and Answers."

You can also write to us at newera@ldschurch.org

or
New Era, Q&A, unity
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA



ONE MAN'S *TRASH* IS ANOTHER MAN'S TREASURE

A book with gold letters on the cover became a treasure to one searching for the truth.

By Andrej Bozhenov

It was a hot summer day on my mission. My companion and I had been walking all over the streets of St. Petersburg, Russia, hoping to find new investigators. That evening we met an elderly man near our home and began talking with him. Although he did not express any interest in the gospel, we both felt impressed to give him a copy of the Book of Mormon. Inside the book we wrote our good wishes for him, our testimonies, and our contact information.

Later that same evening, unbeknownst to us, a young man by the name of Ilya was out with his brother. While walking along a dimly lit underground street, Ilya spotted a glimmer of gold on the cover of a book on the ground. Stooping down to get a closer look, he read the gold letters embossed on the book—The

Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. He picked it up and carried it home.

The next day my companion and I were pondering how we could find new investigators. Thoughts flew through my mind: “We are trying our hardest searching for new opportunities. Where are the results? Maybe we need to change something we’re doing.”

A moment later the telephone rang. I picked up the receiver. The voice on the other end asked, “Is this an elder? I found your lost book in the subway crossing. I want to return it.”

I immediately glanced at the shelf where my scriptures lay. “I don’t think I lost my scriptures in the metro,” I answered. “No, I did not lose my copy of the Book of Mormon, but you can have it and read it.”

The young man said his name was Ilya and explained that he was

originally from Orsk, Russia, and had come to St. Petersburg to work.

“I would like to learn more about this book and your church,” he said. “May I meet with you?”

I jumped with excitement. It wasn’t every day that potential investigators called asking to set up a meeting to learn more about the Church.

“Of course we can meet, Ilya!” I responded joyfully.

When we met with Ilya, he listened attentively and asked questions. We were glad that he was so receptive to the gospel.

At one point during the lesson, I opened Ilya’s copy of the Book of Mormon. As I turned to the opening pages, I glimpsed some familiar handwriting—my own! I realized this was the same book we had given to the elderly man the day before. Apparently the man had discarded the book, which was soon discovered



by Ilya. I was filled with gratitude that my companion and I had chosen to leave the book with the elderly man, even though at the time we didn't understand why.

It wasn't long before Ilya chose to join the Church. He began to enthusiastically share the message of the gospel with his relatives and friends as well.

I have learned that Heavenly Father knows when a person is ready to receive His word. He requires us, as missionaries and members of His Church, only to fulfill His commandments and submit to His will as we seek to share the gospel. In this case God knew that although the original recipient of our Book of Mormon would overlook its value, Ilya would not (see 1 Nephi 19:7). **NE**

Just Keep Swimming

By Adam C. Olson
Church Magazines

Twelve-year-old Monica Saili loves swimming. She is one of the top young swimmers in New Zealand. She may be part fish.

Well, the fish part probably isn't true. But the only other explanation for why she's so good is because she trains so hard.

She's at the pool for two hours every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning at 5:00 a.m. On Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday she runs track or cross-country after school.

Her least favorite swimming drill is having to do the butterfly stroke with just one arm, keeping her chin up, and alternating arms every 100 meters. "Your shoulders really burn," she says.

But she's learned that when the going gets hard, giving up doesn't make life easier. Doing the hard work is what makes her stronger.

Hard Work and Hard Times

All that hard work has helped. She started winning medals at age 10. At 11 she was in the country's

top 10 for her age group in the butterfly stroke. At 12 she was selected for a development swimming camp with the national team and was picked to swim in the Oceania Games in Samoa against swimmers from other countries.

She says, "My dad always said, 'Success comes with hard work. It doesn't just land in your lap.'"

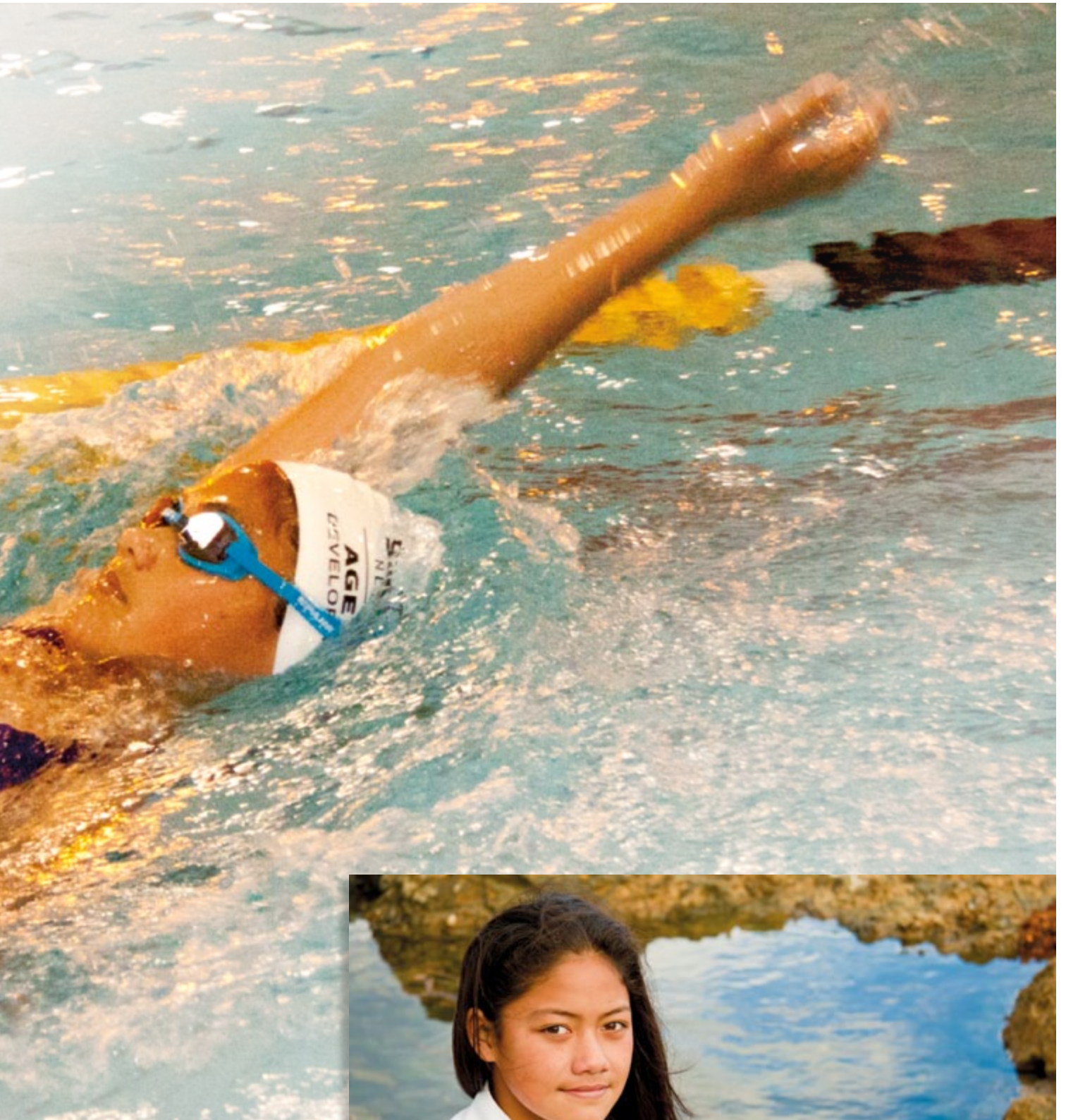
Monica learned that is true for swimming, and she found out it's also true in life when her father died unexpectedly a few months after her 11th birthday.

"I was very close to my dad," Monica says. "He started me in swimming. He took me to all my practices and competitions. When he died, I felt like I had no one to talk to."

Don't Give Up

Losing her father was hard. But Monica doesn't give up during difficult practices, so when her dad died, she wasn't going to give up on her faith in Heavenly Father either.





Monica Saili has learned that giving up when things get hard doesn't make life easier.





DON'T GIVE UP!

"There are occasionally hard days for each of us.

Do not despair. Do not give up. Look for the sunlight through the clouds."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "The Continuing Pursuit of Truth," *Ensign*, Apr. 1986, 2.

With her mother's help, Monica has made it through some hard times. Along the way she learned that hard things can't keep her from being happy.



"My dad was my example," she says. "He taught me how to live the gospel."

Since his death Monica has started studying the scriptures before bed, "trying to make it a habit," she says. She stands up for her beliefs at school. "I get a lot of questions about the Church," she says. And she serves as the ward music director.

"I am blessed for being a member," Monica says. "I am comforted when I get too stressed."

Stronger in the End

Monica still misses her father. But with the support of her mother and family, she keeps going.

Her life is full of piano and violin lessons, student council meetings, swimming, Personal Progress, and leading

the music during sacrament meeting.

She doesn't know yet how far her swimming will take her or how long she'll stick with it. But as far as the gospel is concerned, she is determined to stick with that to the end.

"Sometimes life is hard," Monica says. "But doing hard things can make us stronger. You just have to keep swimming." **NE**

NEmore

To view more photos from this story, visit lds.org/go/712.

MORMONAD

GOSSIP

DON'T PASS IT ON.



PHOTOGRAPH BY D. A. CLARK

My Mother

LOST HER SHOES

in the Susquehanna River

By Richard E. Ardmore

One lost pair of shoes eventually led our family to the Church.

It wasn't until I had children of my own that my mother shared with me her conversion story. She grew up shortly after the Great Depression. When she was young, her parents could not provide food for their children, and they were sent to live with friends and relatives.

My mother, then Dorothy Smith, was sent to live with a family in Pennsylvania. But she didn't have any shoes.

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT GREER



Eventually her parents sent her a pair of shoes, but they were too big. The father of the family told her to sit on the dock of the nearby river and soak her shoes so they would shrink. The name of that river was the Susquehanna River, the same one in which Joseph Smith was baptized.

She did as she was told, but the river was rain swollen and swift. No sooner had she put her feet in the water than the powerful current ripped the new shoes off of her feet and they were gone, sinking out of sight into the muddy water. To her and the family, it was a tragedy. She again had no shoes.

Years later when she was a young mother living in southern California, Dorothy and some neighbor ladies were taking missionary lessons. While walking home one of the ladies said, "How do we know if any of this stuff is true? How do we know if Joseph Smith really saw God or even if there was a Susquehanna River?"

My mother piped up at that moment and said, "I know that there is a Susquehanna River, because I lost my shoes in the Susquehanna River." The moment she said those words, the Spirit bore witness to her that all the rest of what the missionaries had said was also true.

My family was later baptized when I was about eight. After my mother passed away, it slowly occurred to me what the impact was of her losing her shoes in the Susquehanna River. All of her other family members eventually joined the Church. Many of my relatives and I went on missions and baptized many people, which in turn led to others going on missions and baptizing even more people. Many of my relatives and I have served as ward mission leaders multiple times in our respective wards. All in all, I estimate that about 2,000 people have been led to the gospel of Jesus Christ because my mother lost her shoes in the Susquehanna River. It is a marvel to me that a series of tragedies such as the Great Depression, which led to a family being separated and then my mother losing her only pair of shoes, would lead to such a marvelous blessing in the lives of so many.

As I was growing up, I was concerned about my family's lack of pioneer ancestors or connections to early Church founders. I made it a matter of earnest prayer and study. I received a deep spiritual confirmation that the rich pioneer heritage was a heritage for all people who join the Church, not just descendents of pioneers. The sacrifices that were made were for all of us. The strength of today's Church is *our* heritage. **NE**



2,000

people are

led to

the gospel

By Lynette Randall



Temple Walk



Early one morning a group of young women set out to walk the path that a dedicated man walked over a hundred years ago.



The most beautiful aspect about this challenge was the support and love we all had for each other. Girls took each other's arms, encouraging and lifting each other.

At 3:20 a.m. on a dark Saturday morning, 70 young women and our leaders from the Cedar Hills Sixth Ward, Cedar Hills Utah West Stake, gathered at a meetinghouse in order to walk 22 miles from the Draper Utah Temple to the Salt Lake Temple.



We were doing this in honor of John Rowe Moyle, who is a prime example of a person dedicated to the temple. He was a stonecutter for the Salt Lake Temple and was a man who represented hard work, dedication, and pure love for his Savior. We tried to exemplify him.

After gathering in the early morning, we climbed into cars and drove to the Draper Utah Temple. At 4:30 in the morning we began our walk.

In addition to the many leaders and young women walking, John Rowe Moyle's great-grandson James Moyle walked with us. He not only added to the spirit that was there but also made our journey more intimate as we honored his ancestor.

While walking, we had the privilege of watching the sunrise and seeing a brand new day unfold right before our eyes.

Every couple of miles we had an aid station. What a blessing those stations were. Each aid station was full of members from our ward who supported and lifted us up. There was also music, food, and smiles, which definitely lifted our spirits.



Challenge



Everyone was feeling pretty good as we continued on our journey to the temple. At about mile 19, things started to get difficult. People were tired, and bodies were aching, yet we still had another couple of miles to go.

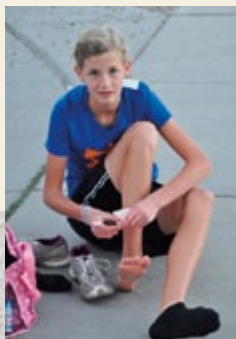
The most beautiful aspect about this

challenge was the support and love we all had for one another. We supported one another throughout the entire walk, but it was near the end when our love was evident. Girls took each other's arms, encouraging and lifting each other.

At mile 21, we stopped for lunch. We were within one mile of our final destination—the temple. As we ate lunch and massaged our swollen feet, we listened while Sister Elaine S. Dalton, the general Young Women president, spoke to us. Not only was she expressing her love for us, but she was also encouraging us. She gave us support and the boost we needed to finish.

Following our lunch, we put our shoes back on and continued on our trek. A couple of minutes in, we had an amazing surprise when the young men came to encourage and cheer us on for the last mile. Cheers were yelled in the air as they ran up to meet us. With the young men by our side, we finished the last mile.

Exhaustion and pain had taken hold of everyone, but as we rounded that last corner to the temple, none of that mattered. Shouts of



Exhaustion and pain had taken hold of everyone, but as we rounded that last corner to the temple, none of that mattered. There stood the temple of the Lord and our families who had come to welcome us.

NEmore

Read or view what Sister Elaine S. Dalton said about this experience at lds.org/go/713, or use your smartphone to scan the QR code below for quick access (see page 39 for instructions).



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE CEDAR HILLS SIXTH WARD





After walking 22 miles, we gathered together on the steps of the Salt Lake Temple, directly under the "Holiness to the Lord" inscription John Rowe Moyle had carved more than 100 years ago.

pure joy rang out on Temple Square. There, in all its majestic beauty, stood the temple of the Lord. To add to the spirit, our families were standing at the gates to the temple to welcome us. Everyone ran to their families as we completed the final steps of our long journey.

Following those reunions, all of the 70 walkers gathered together on the steps of the Salt Lake Temple, directly under the "Holiness to the Lord" inscription that John Rowe Moyle had carved 100 years ago. There we held hands, embraced one another, and cried tears of joy. We had done it. We had walked 22 miles from the Draper Utah Temple to the Salt Lake Temple, and we had done it together. **NE**



JOHN ROWE MOYLE

John Rowe Moyle . . . was a convert to the Church who left his home in England and traveled to the Salt Lake Valley as part of a handcart company. He built a home for his family in a small town a valley away from Salt Lake City. John was an accomplished stonecutter and, because of this skill, was asked to work on the Salt Lake Temple.

"Every Monday John left home at two o'clock in the morning and walked six hours in order to be at his post on time. On Friday he would leave his work at five o'clock in the evening and walk almost until midnight before arriving home. He did this year after year.

"One day, while he was doing his chores at home, a cow kicked him in the leg, causing a compound fracture. With limited medical resources, the only option was to amputate the broken leg. So John's family and friends strapped him onto a door and, with a bucksaw, cut off his leg a few inches from the knee.

"In spite of the crude surgery, the leg started to heal. Once John could sit up in bed, he began carving a wooden leg with an ingenious joint that served as an ankle to an artificial foot. Walking on this device was extremely painful, but John did not give up, building up his endurance until he could make the 22-mile (35-km) journey to the Salt Lake Temple each week, where he continued his work.

"His hands carved the words 'Holiness to the Lord' that stand today as a golden marker to all who visit the Salt Lake Temple.

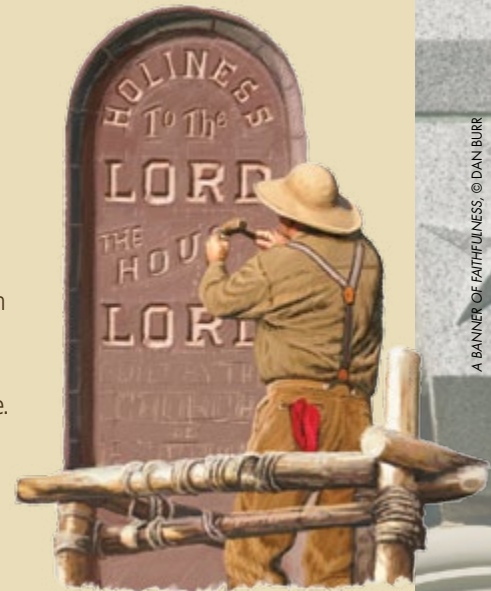
"John did not do this for the praise of man. Neither did he shirk his duty, even though he had every reason to do so. He knew what the Lord expected him to do.

"Years later, John's grandson Henry D. Moyle was called as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve and, eventually, served in the First Presidency of the Church. President Moyle's service in these callings was honorable, but his grandfather John's service, though somewhat less public, is just as pleasing to the Lord. John's character, his legacy of sacrifice, serves as a banner of faithfulness."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Lift Where You Stand," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 55–56.

NEmore

See a video about John Rowe Moyle's life on the new *Doctrine and Covenants Visual Resource* DVDs.



A BANNER OF FAITHFULNESS. © DAN BURR

N • E • V • E • R ALONE

By Hillary Slaughter

One day in January 2010 my world was flipped upside down. My younger sister was diagnosed with cancer. I could not believe it. How was it possible? My sister was only 14 years old and very active. She was part of the school show choir. She loved softball and basketball. How could she have cancer?

Not too long after that fateful day, I found myself home alone. I felt completely overwhelmed and lost. My comfortable life had been shattered. Cancer is a scary thing, and I had no idea how to deal with it.

As tears coursed down my cheeks, I felt the need to pray for some form of comfort or peace.

*My prayers
were answered
in a way
I didn't expect.*

Shortly after finishing my prayer I heard a knock on the door. Answering it, I found my Young Women leader standing on our porch. She took one look at my tear-stained face and asked what was wrong. More tears filled my eyes as I told her about Madey's diagnosis.

When I finished she simply said, "You're the reason why I'm here." She then told me to get my shoes on and to come with her.

I spent the next couple of hours with her and her grandson eating ice cream and talking. I told her about all that had been going on and how lost I felt. We talked about cancer and the possible treatments. When she brought me home, I felt lighter and more hopeful than I had since learning that my sister had cancer.

Sadly, my sister eventually lost her battle with cancer. But my Young Women leader's visit taught me a lot. Since that day I have come to recognize that I am never alone. Friends and family are there to assist, but more importantly, my Heavenly Father is always ready to listen to and help me.

I am so grateful that He is there and that He answered my prayer that day, starting with a sensitive Young Women leader. **NE**



ILLUSTRATION BY DILEAN MARSH

RODEOS



By Elyssa J. Kirkham

and Righteous Living

Quinn Kesler of Holden, Utah, is rarely seen without a rope in hand—and not just any rope. It's a lariat, or lasso, that Quinn uses when participating in the roping events at rodeos and competitions. He first got roped into roping when he was around six and went to his first championship when he was nine.

Now 17, Quinn is off to a right smart start in rodeo. His favorite event to participate in is team roping, in which a team of two works together to rope a steer. One is the “header,” who ropes the calf’s head, usually around its horns; Quinn prefers to be the “heeler,” who ropes the steer’s hind feet.

No Horsing Around

While he needs to have a good header to count on when team roping, he has an even more important teammate: his horse, Hickory. Quinn spends hours practicing roping, chasing after steers on horseback. The ranch dog, Roxy, chases after him, looking distinctly out of place on her short Dachshund legs.

The blue sky and golden grasses of rural Utah feel straight out of a Western movie, and it's hardly a wonder that Quinn loves to be outside. He spends the better part of his day roping, training horses, or doing odds-and-ends chores around the ranch. Quinn started with a talent for handling horses, but he has worked hard and invested countless hours to achieve his high level of skill in roping.

But Quinn still makes time to fit in daily scripture study, prayer, and seminary class. “I love seminary a lot. It's a big help in understanding the scriptures.”

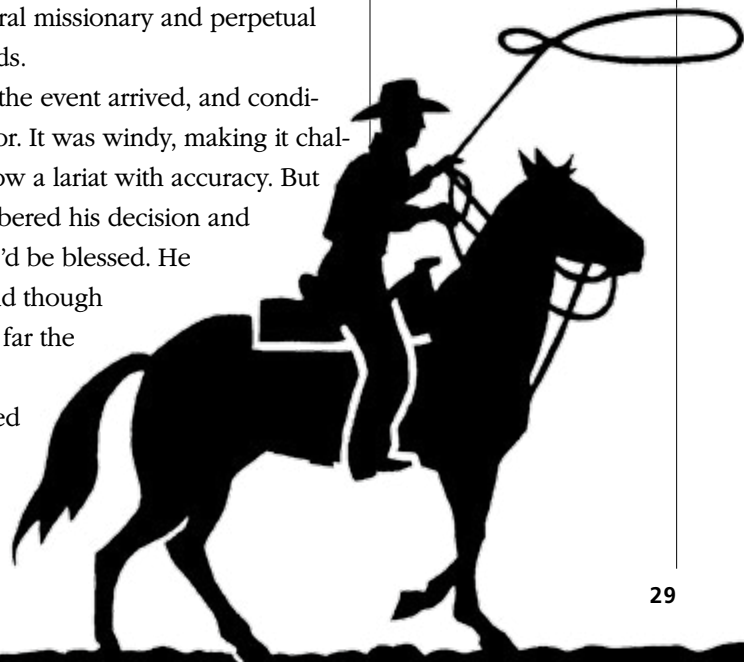
Quinn knows that the same principles of time and hard work that he has applied to roping have also helped him build up his faith. “If you study the gospel, put everything you have into it, and be all you can, you're going to get the best results,” says Quinn. “You're going to have success, as well as a strong testimony.”

Going National

Quinn has seen firsthand how trusting the Lord leads to success. His first big roping win came during the National Finals Rodeo in December 2005. Going into the competition, Quinn, then 12, decided that if he won, he would donate all of his winnings to the Church's general missionary and perpetual education funds.

The day of the event arrived, and conditions were poor. It was windy, making it challenging to throw a lariat with accuracy. But Quinn remembered his decision and trusted that he'd be blessed. He roped well, and though he was by the far the youngest one there, he placed first and third against tough competition.

No matter where his rodeo competitions may take him, roper Quinn Kesler stays on the strait and narrow path of righteous, clean living.





Even though there were a few things that Quinn might have wanted to buy, such as a new saddle, he put his money where his mouth was and donated the money.

“It opened my eyes—if you’re going to do something good for the Lord, He is sure to help you,” Quinn says.

A Simpler Choice

As his success has continued, Quinn has also continued to need that divine help. “The rodeo crowd can be kind of rough sometimes, with Word of Wisdom problems and swearing,” says Quinn. “It can be hard for some people to avoid getting caught in that sometimes.”



PHOTOGRAPHS BY WEDDEN C. ANDERSEN

For many, alcohol and tobacco are a part of the culture at rodeo events, and companies that sell these products are some of rodeo's biggest sponsors. But Quinn steers clear of those kinds of sponsors. "If I have committed to avoid it and it's against my beliefs, why would I endorse it?" Quinn says.

Quinn has been offered a drink a few times by his roping buddies during a rodeo event. They joked around about his standards and told him that just one wouldn't hurt. But Quinn refused.

When Quinn was younger, his father, Greg, told him that he would support Quinn in pursuing roping—if he did three things: kept his language clean, kept the Word of Wisdom, and stayed morally clean. Quinn also decided that he would keep the Sabbath day holy by not competing on Sundays. Knowing that he made those commitments early on helps Quinn stay on track. He knows where he stands, and for him doing what's right is a simpler choice.

Standing Tall

People have started noticing Quinn, and not just because he can rope a steer faster than you can say "Boy, howdy!"

"I want you to know that Quinn's on the cover not just because he's a great roper, but because he's a good kid," Greg remembers

an editor of a roping magazine telling him a few years ago. Outside of competition, it's Quinn's standards that people really notice. He is "an example of the believers" (1 Timothy 4:12), of the Light of Christ, and of the joy His gospel brings.

"There aren't a lot of guys in rodeo that are LDS. People watch me, and I know that I have to be a good example and live well," Quinn says. "If you're living right, people are going to notice."

The End of His Rope

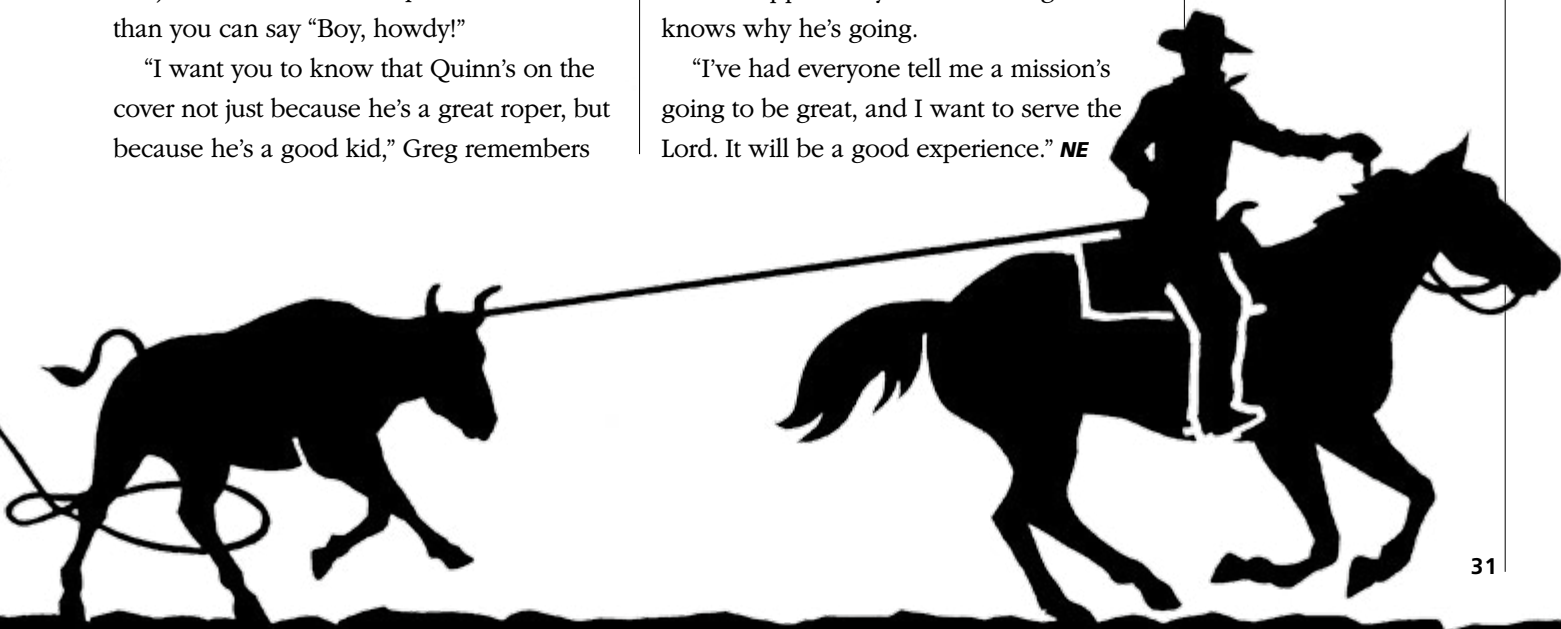
Quinn plans to leave the lariat behind for two years to serve a mission. He will be quitting less than a year after turning 18, the age of eligibility for participating in professional rodeo competitions.

"I'll probably compete some and then have to put it down to go on my mission. That will be a little tough," Quinn says.

Some people might think Quinn's crazy for leaving rodeo behind for two years almost as soon as he can go pro. Anyone can see that he has a promising future ahead of him, and to some, Quinn's decision to leave behind such an opportunity seems baffling. But he knows why he's going.

"I've had everyone tell me a mission's going to be great, and I want to serve the Lord. It will be a good experience." **NE**

Every day Quinn practices roping and horsemanship. This repetition, plus his natural ability, has led to Quinn making a splash in the rodeo world at an early age. Even with his success, Quinn is determined to live the kind of life that can be an example to others.



TO THE POINT

Why do we have to be completely under the water when we are baptized?

You may have attended a baptism where the person being baptized had to have the ordinance performed twice because he or she was not completely immersed in the

water the first time. Because baptism is a saving ordinance, it is essential that it be performed exactly and correctly.

Baptism is a symbolic act. It “symbolizes death, burial, and resurrection, and can only be done by immersion” (Bible Dictionary, “Baptism”). Going under the water represents the death and burial of Jesus Christ, but it also represents the death of our natural selves (see Romans 6:3–6). Being brought up again from the water is symbolic of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and represents being reborn as His covenant disciples. The two witnesses who stand beside the baptismal font watch to ensure that the person being baptized is completely immersed, symbolic of being completely born again.

When we are baptized, we follow the pattern set by the Savior, who was baptized by immersion in the river Jordan (see Matthew 3:13–17). Heavenly Father desires for each of His children to be cleansed of their sins so that they may live with Him again. To be baptized by immersion, as Christ was, is an essential part of His divine plan. **NE**





The Holy Ghost is supposed to be our constant companion, but I don't know that I feel the Spirit constantly. Is something wrong with me?

If you are worthy but do not feel the Spirit at all times, it may mean that you are still learning to recognize and act on the Comforter's guidance. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, "Even as we strive to be faithful and obedient, there simply are times when the direction, assurance, and peace of the Spirit are not readily recognizable in our lives" ("That We May Always Have His Spirit to Be with Us," *Ensign*, May 2006, 29).

If you do not know if the Holy Ghost is with you, take a moment to be still and listen. You may feel the Spirit's influence as a quiet, peaceful reassurance. Try recognizing the still, small voice when you are doing things that invite the Spirit, such as praying, studying the scriptures, or attending sacrament meeting. As you act on promptings and practice listening to the Spirit, your ability to discern those quiet, subtle feelings will improve.

You must live worthily for the Spirit to be with you (see Mosiah 2:36). If you do not feel the influence of the Spirit in your life, this may be a warning sign that you need to repent and reevaluate your priorities. You can invite the Spirit into your life with sincere repentance, prayer, scripture study, and other uplifting activities. **NE**

Is the Church against all video games or just violent ones?

There are many video games that are clean, challenging, and fun, and some multiplayer games can be an enjoyable social activity. The Church is not against video

games, but youth are urged to be smart in their selection of games and the amount of time they spend with them. We have been commanded to use our time wisely (see D&C 60:13). Just because something is clean and fun does not mean it is worth doing.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: "One of the ways Satan . . . weakens your spiritual strength is by encouraging you to spend large blocks of your time doing things that matter very little. I speak of such things as sitting for hours on end watching television or videos, playing video games night in and night out, [or] surfing the Internet" ("Be Strong in the Lord," *Ensign*, July 2004, 13).

It is all right to spend some of your time playing video games that adhere to the media standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*. But be willing to set down the controllers or turn off the computer and move on to something else. Don't let video games keep you from worthwhile activities like exercising, studying the gospel, doing schoolwork, or spending time with your family. **NE**

By David I. Robinson

When the Spirit says, "Jump," don't hesitate.

Growing up on a ranch in southern Utah taught me a lot about working with animals and how dangerous they can be. We ran a herd of Hereford cows, including several bulls. I truly enjoyed working the cattle from the back of a horse and generally living a ranch life.

My family was active in the Church, and when we were living on the ranch, we always made the 30-mile trip on a gravel road to town for Sunday meetings. My parents taught me to pray, and throughout my life prayer has helped me through some difficult circumstances.

One day I learned to respond to the promptings of the Spirit quickly, and I believe it saved my life. At least it kept me from serious injury.

I was 14, and I was working not far away from the ranch house one summer day.

I finished my work and was headed back through the corral that was enclosed by a very solid pole fence made of juniper posts and poles.

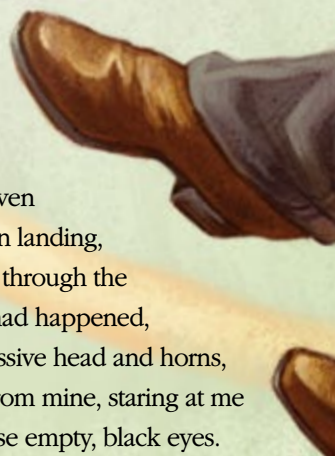
Inside the corral was a herd of about 30 range cows,

including our prime Hereford bull, Charlie, who weighed 2,000 pounds or more. My dad liked to have what he called "ton bulls," and that certainly described Charlie.

I was walking along the pole fence, and Charlie was in my way, so I smacked him on his hip with my hand, and he scampered out of the way. I continued on past Charlie a few feet, with my back to him, when I heard what sounded like cows scuffling. I had heard that scuffling sound often and would have thought nothing of it, but something else went through my mind.

Quicker than I could even think about it, I knew I had to leap for my life. I lunged for the top pole of the fence, grabbed it, and yanked myself headfirst over onto the rocks and weeds on the other side. As I was about halfway across I had time to wonder if I had overreacted. I briefly even felt a bit embarrassed. Upon landing, I immediately looked back through the bottom poles to see what had happened, and there was Charlie's massive head and horns, his nose about six inches from mine, staring at me through the fence with those empty, black eyes.

A LEAP FOR MY LIFE



It came to me forcefully that if I had questioned that instantaneous prompting for even the briefest moment, Charlie would have crushed me against the fence.

I learned two things from that experience. First was to never be on foot around a range herd. They don't know you're the boss unless you're on a horse. Second, listen to the promptings of the Spirit without question—without hesitation. Satan is the one who tells you that you are overreacting. Living worthily (keeping the commandments, saying daily prayers, attending church, studying the scriptures) helped qualify me for spiritual gifts, especially a lightning-fast prompting to leap for my life.

I have not yet finished thanking my Heavenly Father for that blessing even though it's been more than 50 years. **NE**

ILLUSTRATION BY GREGG NEWBOLD



MAKING YOUR MARK

Marking your scriptures can help you focus on specific ideas and concepts as you study the gospel. There are many ways you can mark your scriptures; just make sure you find a method that works for you. Below are some suggestions for marking scriptures:

- Use pencils or colored markers. Avoid using pens that bleed through the paper.
- Shade, underline, bracket, or outline specific words, verses, or groups of verses that have special meaning to you.
- Avoid excessive marking. The benefit is lost if you can't understand your markings because you have made too many notes, lines, and colors.
- When several ideas in a verse or passage are related, number the ideas in the margin or text.
- Draw a small symbol in the margin for key verses to help you remember why you marked it.

FOCUSING ON SERVICE

A group of 43 teens in Larimer County, Colorado, were able to help a young man complete his Eagle Project, collect 1,800 pounds of food, take the Christmas spirit to the elderly, gather emergency supplies for disaster victims, and build relationships with each other—all in four days.

Each December these youth plan a special youth conference that focuses on building relationships with each other. Last year the youth decided they wanted to make their conference more meaningful. To do this, Sarah Fenton, 17, says, "We decided to focus on a service project."

By the last day, the youth had collected 1,500 pounds of food for the local food bank and another 300 pounds to go to 40 families in the community. This was 1,200 more pounds than their goal of 600. They then split into two groups. One group sorted and cleaned supplies for the homeless while the other group put together humanitarian aid kits to be sent to Korea. That evening the group went to retirement and assisted living homes to sing Christmas carols to the residents. The priests quorum president, Tanner Kahl, said it was his favorite youth conference and hopes they can do the same this year.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BRENDON CAMERON



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY



July 30, 1837

Outracing other baptismal candidates to the River Ribble, George D. Watt became the first convert in Great Britain when he was baptized by Elder Heber C. Kimball.

CALLING ALL POETOGRAPHERS

Have you ever wondered where we get the poems and photos you see on the inside back cover of the *New Era*? We get them from you—our readers. So if you're a poet, or a photographer, or even a poetographer, send us your poems or photos or both. Be creative. Rather than sending us another photo of a sunset, maybe send us a photo of a spider web or of popping corn. (We could actually use photos of both of these to go along with poems we already have.)

Send in your poems and photographs by going to newera.lds.org and clicking Submit Material.

Or send them by mail to:
New Era
 50 E. North Temple Street., Rm. 2420
 Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024
 USA

WRITE AWAY

What's Up with You?

As you can see, this is a new look and feel for the What's Up? section of the *New Era*. We hope you like it, and we hope you'll help us fill it with interesting ideas and events that are going on in your classes and quorums. Write in and tell us about what you and your friends are doing at Mutual or in seminary. Along with your story, remember to include some photographs of the activities too.

Send in your stories and photographs by going to newera.lds.org and clicking Submit Material.

Or send them by mail to:
New Era, What's Up?
 50 E. North Temple Street., Rm. 2420
 Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024
 USA

WHAT WE REALLY THINK OF YOUTH

"But, oh, what a wonderful time to be young! You have knowledge of many more things than we needed to have. It is my conviction that your generation is better and stronger than was ours—better in many ways! I have faith that you young men and young women can meet the world on its own terms and conquer it!"

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "To Young Women and Men," *Ensign*, May 1989, 54.

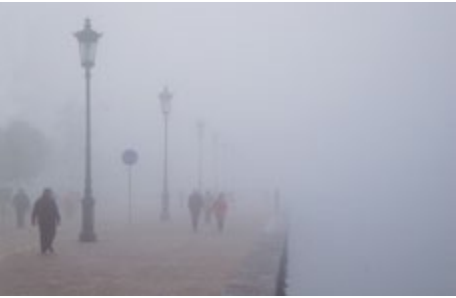
MOSES 1:39 SUDOKU

The objective of a regular Sudoku is to fill the 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time. For this puzzle, instead of numbers, use the scripture reference and the eight words in bold to complete the puzzle.

Moses 1:39

For **behold**, this is my **work** and my **glory**—to **bring** to **pass** the **immortality** and **eternal life** of man.

	immortality				life		glory	eternal
	eternal		glory	behold	immortality	Moses 1:39	life	
		Moses 1:39		work			bring	behold
work			pass					life
	glory			immortality	behold			Moses 1:39
Moses 1:39	behold			glory		bring		immortality
eternal					glory	life		
		life	work	eternal		behold		
immortality			behold			work	eternal	pass



I took this picture in Thessaloniki, Greece. It reminds me of the mist of darkness in Lehi's dream (see 1 Nephi 8:22–24).
Kevin K., Germany

IN A WORD

Ordinance: In the Church, an ordinance is a sacred, formal act performed by the authority of the priesthood. Some ordinances are essential to our exaltation and are called saving ordinances. These include baptism, confirmation, ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood (for men), the temple endowment, and the marriage sealing.

While other ordinances—such as naming and blessing children, administering to the sick, and father's blessings—are not essential to our salvation, they are valuable for our comfort, guidance, and encouragement.

BY THE NUMBERS

270,000

Number of books in the Church History Library collection. When stacked on top of each other, the books would be as tall as Mt. McKinley in Alaska!

GREAT GROUP DATE IDEA

Get together with a group of your friends for a photo scavenger hunt. Divide up into groups of four or six; each group will need a digital camera and a list of possible photos. Before the date, create a list of objects or activities that could be photographed for the scavenger hunt, and make sure to have lots of possible picture options (20 or 30). On the date, set a time limit for the scavenger hunt, and then meet up afterward for treats and a slide show of the photos. Award points for each picture.

Here are some photo ideas to get your list started:

- A cow wearing a hat (8 points)
- Someone playing a harmonica (7 points)
- \$7.82 in coins (5 points)
- A building at least six stories high (5 points)
- Someone in your group shaking hands with a police officer (7 points)
- Two people with matching shirts (8 points)
- Your entire group on a playground slide (10 points)



QUOTE FROM CONFERENCE

“By our example, let us teach our family members to have love one for another.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Finding Joy through Loving Service,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 47.

MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

2 Nephi 2:11

This verse has always been my guide and inspiration whenever I'm in doubt, despair, or a difficult situation. It has been my favorite passage since I have questioned why there needs to be an opposition. Why should there be contradictions? Why can't life just be positive, happy, easy, and good? Why should the bad exist?

This verse helped me understand life and its complexities. It helped me appreciate more the meaning of life. It made me realize the purpose of opposition and that I should be thankful for it. For without it, we would not know the real essence and beauty of life. Without opposition, we would not know how to love, how to be happy, or how to succeed. I've learned to love life and accept it as it is and to trust in the Lord because His wisdom is unquestionable.

Sheena P., Philippines

WHAT'S A QR CODE?

You may have noticed several QR codes (short for "quick response codes") like the one below in recent issues of the *New Era*. If you have a camera-enabled smartphone, you can scan a QR code to link straight to a video, article, or website without having to type in its web address. Here's how:

1. Search for QR-code apps in the app store for your smartphone. Free apps are available for most smartphones.
2. Install your selected app to your smartphone.
3. Open the app, and scan the QR code. Once the code registers, the item it links to will appear on your smartphone.

Try out the code below to go to youth.lds.org, and check out more on pages 15, 25, and 48.

This is an emerging technology that works best with iPhones and Android phones and may not work on all devices. E-mail feedback to newera@ldschurch.org.



THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES



During the Spanish-American War in 1898, two men from Utah who were members of a U.S. artillery battery, and who were also set apart as missionaries before they left the United States, preached while stationed in the Philippines. Missionary work ceased in the Philippines at the beginning of World War II.

In April 1961, President Gordon B. Hinckley (then Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles) rededicated the Philippines for missionary work. By 1969, the Church had spread to eight major islands and had the highest number of baptisms of any area in the Church. The Manila Missionary Training Center (above) was established in 1983.

Here are a few facts about the Church today in the Philippines:

Membership	641,284
Missions	16
Temples	2
Wards & Branches	1,100

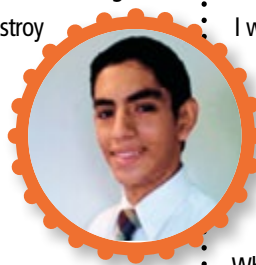
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE MISSIONARY DEPARTMENT

HOW TO HAVE CLEAN THOUGHTS

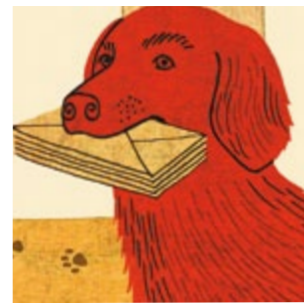
Even though bad thoughts come knocking at the door, we ought not invite them to come in and have a seat. The best time to defend ourselves against temptation is when the thought begins to take shape; destroy the seed, and the plant will never grow. When I find myself in this situation, I sing my favorite hymn and try to have the image of Jesus in my heart until I can resist. If we persistently resist bad thoughts, they will depart.

Jorge G., Venezuela

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JORGE G.



WE'VE GOT MAIL



Mutual Theme for 2011

When I saw the January 2011 issue, I really liked how it laid out standards of morality and achievement. I love the new theme and the articles expounding on it. I am always strengthened by the ever-present articles regarding standards, conversion stories, and the great examples set by Latter-day Saint youth for those around them.

Wesley S., Arizona, USA

We Are His Hands

During family home evening I read the story "We Are His Hands" (July 2010) and decided I would like to do a service project for teenagers like me. We looked online for humanitarian projects but could not find any specifically for teenagers.

Where can we find ideas?

Tarah H., Tennessee, USA

Editor's note: You can find nearly 100 ideas at lds.org/go/715.

Just scroll down to "Nifty Ways to Serve Your Brother."

5 SCRIPTURES TO PICK YOU UP WHEN YOU'RE DOWN

- D&C 136:29
- D&C 61:36
- Psalm 55:22
- Matthew 11:28–30
- 2 Nephi 10:23

My Grandfather's Testimony of



By Elder Cecil O. Samuelson
Of the Seventy

Both of my grandfathers were working men. My mother's father was a machinist for the railroad, and my other grandfather was a handyman who worked at a downtown hotel all of his career. He was a very skilled carpenter and painter.

When I was young I would sometimes work with my grandfather. One time he asked me to help him paint the frame part of their old home in Salt Lake City. I remember working with him and how I thought he was so careful in trying to teach me how to paint correctly. We spent lots of time with the wire brushes and the sandpaper and putty and making sure the surfaces were all prepared well. Then he taught me to paint a board working with the grain, starting at the top and working down.

Doing all these kinds of things, I really thought he was teaching me to be a painter. And although I learned some of the techniques and I've done a lot of painting around the house, I know he was really teaching me more than how to paint. While we were working, my grandfather would talk and tell stories. And, in retrospect, I know that he was teaching me.

Paying his tithing

One of the lessons he taught me was the importance of paying tithing. He told me

about my father, who was born in 1912, and my uncle, who was born a few years later. Both of these boys grew up in the Depression, a tough time. Because of the economic circumstances of the time, most of the young people didn't get a chance to serve missions or they had to serve missions late.

Despite these circumstances, my grandfather said, "You know, we were really blessed because both your dad and your uncle got to go on missions. And I'll tell you why they got to go. Because we were always honest in paying our tithing, so the Lord blessed us."

He said they never had enough money, and people wondered how they sent not only one but two boys. He told me that they worked hard and saved money and were very careful, but they were also very blessed. He emphasized that the blessings were evident because they didn't have any money fly out of heaven. Instead, grandfather was always able to get extra work and extra jobs.

He was a hard worker and had always worked 12 hours a day six days a week and sometimes more. He said, "Every time we thought that we'd be out of money, somebody would call me and ask me to build a room on their house or ask me to build a set of stairs or to do some painting for them."

Because of those blessings, my father and

Tithing



I thought my grandfather was teaching me how to be a painter, but he was really teaching me lessons on life and the gospel.

his brother were both able to serve missions. I have a copy of my father's missionary journals, and I saw the record he kept during his mission of when he got money from home. Although those dates were somewhat sporadic, they are evidence of my grandfather's testimony of tithing.

Of all the commandments tithing has probably been the easiest one for me to keep in my life because of my grandfather's faith and the testimony he bore. He taught me the principle of tithing because he absolutely believed it all of his life and he was blessed because of his obedience.

Receiving the blessings

Tithing is a wonderful measure of people's faithfulness, but it is also a great evidence to people that if they are faithful in their tithing, they are blessed. That lesson that I learned and remember so vividly has been reinforced for me over and over again.

Tithing has always blessed me and my family in our lives. During the time that I was in school, my wife and I were very busy and really very poor. There were times when we wondered if we would have enough money. But we had made the commitment that we'd always pay our tithing first, and we always had enough. We've done that all of our lives. There have been challenges, but somehow there's a way when you pay your tithing that you can do the kinds of things you need to.

This doesn't mean that people who pay their tithing can't get into financial difficulty. I know perfectly faithful people with respect to tithing who have lost jobs and businesses and homes, but I'm convinced the Lord honors those who honor Him. When people pay their tithing faithfully, not grudgingly, He helps them find a way out of their financial problems and difficulties.

Following the command

As with all the commandments, if you make a firm decision early about tithing, then you never have to decide it again. And that's the way I grew up. You always paid your tithing first, and there was never a question about when you pay your tithing. You pay your tithing, first, because

You pay your tithing, first, because it's a commandment, second, because it's a blessing, and third, because it helps you keep the other commandments, because it allows you to have the Spirit that reminds you that everything you have is really the Lord's.



it's a commandment, second, because it's a blessing, and third, because it helps you keep the other commandments, because it allows you to have the Spirit that reminds you that everything you have is really the Lord's.

In addition to recognizing that nothing is actually yours, one of the blessings that comes from paying tithing is how you use the other money that you have. You learn the principles of thrift, and you're likely to listen to what the prophets have to say about avoiding unnecessary debt and deciding what is a want versus a need. The law of tithing is both substantive in the sense that it is real and you can count it, but it's also symbolic in terms of how you feel about other things.

Being perfect in tithing

Some of the commandments are hard to measure, like being kind and having charity or being meek and lowly and being all the other things you ought to be. But tithing is one of those things where you can say: "OK. This is what it is. This is what I'm going to do. And I may not be perfect in other things, but I can be perfect in my tithing." I'm a firm believer that being perfect in your tithing will help you to become more perfect in other things.

If you would like to have all of the blessings that Heavenly Father has prepared to give you, a very good place to start is being a full tithing payer and being honest in your tithes. That will help you do the other things you need to do, and it will ensure that, as the scriptures teach us, the windows of heaven will be open for you. **NE**



LOVING WORDS

Name: Elisa Brinton
Age: 17
Location:
Post Falls, Idaho
Favorite Scripture:
Alma 46:12
Interests: writing,
drama, music, travel
Accomplishment:
Recently had a book
of short stories about
young women
triumphing over
adversity published
by a national publisher

A writing assignment in the second grade inspired Elisa Brinton to develop her talent of researching and writing about subjects of interest to her. She continues to explore new ideas and writing styles and appreciates the power of the written word. "I hope that what I write will inspire others to follow their own dreams and passions, whatever they might be."

How do you think words affect people? It's often been said that the pen is mightier than the sword, and that's very true. You can change the world with words. For example, the Declaration of Independence was just words, but look what it led to. Words have an incredible power for good or for evil; you can encourage or destroy someone with words.

Why do you think stories are important? Stories are one of the best ways to learn. For example, scripture stories are powerful and inspirational, and they teach us important things that we need to know.

What have you learned from the experience of writing down your stories? Writing stories and developing characters helps me to get in touch with my own imagination.

When I develop the characters I am writing about, I have to adapt to different points of view and write about the way others might think and feel. This helps me to understand people in the real world better because I can put myself in their shoes and appreciate their unique qualities.

Do you feel like your writing is a gift from Heavenly Father? Absolutely. We all have our gifts; there are so many different skills and abilities out there. With some people, it's music; they may have a beautiful voice or a way with instruments. Others have mathematical minds and can solve complicated equations. Mine is writing. Gifts take time to develop, but the important thing is to find what makes you happy and keep working on improving your skills.

What advice would you give to those who want to start writing but are afraid to? Start writing. You don't have to show it to anyone else until you're comfortable with it. Make sure you read, read, read, and read. Reading a wide variety of books helps a lot, because it will broaden your horizons. **NE**

—As told to Sally Johnson Odekirk, Church Magazines

A SECOND CHANCE

"I don't know how we're sisters. It's like we're from two different planets," I complained to my best friend as I saw my older sister walking away from me at school.

Catheryn and I were three years apart and had been best friends until she turned eight. I think she realized it wasn't cool to be friends with your little sister, and we started making new friends.

When I was 17, I moved to Orem, Utah, where Catheryn had moved for college. We seldom saw each other. She left for a semester abroad, and I was busy finishing up my senior year of high school.

When she returned, however, things began to change. She never said anything about the two of us not being friends. Everything clicked, and we began to have a real relationship. It was more than just friends; we were sisters again.

We spent the next year and a half getting to know each other. We would talk on the phone, go shopping, have dinner together, and of course we loved to share clothes. It was my dream come true.

Then in November of 2006 Catheryn and her husband, Steve, were involved in an accident at a reservoir. They were



both killed. In an instant my new best friend was gone, and I felt like a part of me was gone with her. I didn't understand why Heavenly Father would take my sister away when I was just starting to get to know her again. "If only we had more time," I thought.

Each day I prayed to understand the Lord's plan and why Catheryn had died. I didn't think I would ever feel whole again.

One night as I prayed, I felt completely surrounded by the love of God. His Spirit wrapped around me like a thick, warm quilt and filled the emptiness I had been feeling. I changed my bitter attitude to a thankful one. I was grateful Catheryn and I had become friends at all. And more than that, I was grateful to have a Father who answered my prayers and could understand exactly how I felt.

Stacey W., Idaho, USA

THANKS— I NEEDED THAT

All my life I've had difficulty adjusting to new places and making new friends. A few years ago, my family and I moved. After being in our new home for only a couple of days, we rose early to attend church on Sunday. I didn't know a soul, but a few girls from Young Women came up and greeted me. Everyone was very friendly that first Sunday, but I still felt a twinge of loneliness and longing for my old friends.

A couple of months later, I prepared to go to girls' camp. The first few days were filled with physical, mental, and

A SIMPLE EXAMPLE

I was taught a powerful lesson about the influence of setting an example. I strive to read my scriptures each night before I go to sleep. At times, I do well studying and feeling of the Spirit. Other times I barely read a few verses with sleepy eyes before setting my scriptures back on the nightstand and dropping off to sleep. Although my study is not perfect, I try to remain consistent in my goal to read every night.

One afternoon I had had a difficult day at school. I came home grumpy and discouraged. After I kicked off my shoes, my eyes fell to my nightstand. I scooped up my scriptures and settled into my bed, eager for some needed comfort. As I opened the pages, a paper fell to my lap. I discovered it was a letter.

The letter began with an apology for intruding. The writer explained that he had been playing with my brother when strangely, in the middle of the day, my alarm went off. After the blaring alarm did not

spiritual activities that drew me away from my personal worries as I enjoyed myself. But sitting on my bunk during a break time, I felt the strain brim over, and I quietly cried. I didn't understand why we had had to move and break away from all that was familiar to me.

After we shared our testimonies while munching on s'mores by the fire that night, I went up to the cabin with all the other girls to go to bed. As I came to the door, a tall Laurel turned

automatically turn off, the writer had entered my room and switched it off. He had seen my scriptures sitting next to the alarm. He wrote that he was impressed by my example because my scriptures were out and ready to use while his lay forgotten somewhere in his closet. He was so moved that he began to read again and expressed his gratitude for my example.

On that discouraging day the kind note reminded me of the quiet influence I can be on others. I realized that if he had not thought to write this note I would never have known that I had been an influence in someone's life. It taught me that each of us can be a powerful example in our simple daily actions.

Jessica B., Utah, USA



around and said kindly, "Let's have a good-night hug!" As I embraced her, I could feel tears welling up inside me again, but they weren't tears of self-pity. They were tears of appreciation and gratitude. She cheerfully said good night and left, but the feeling she'd brought with her stayed. I can still feel it now, three years later. I just want to say, "Thank you immensely, and may the Lord bless you!"

Noelle-Marie S., Colorado, USA

BEST LESSON

When I was 16 years old, I had been attending church regularly for almost a year, but I was not a member of the Church yet. I really enjoyed going with my friends. However, my parents did not have kind feelings toward the Church or my attendance. This fear that I would join the Church led my family to decide that moving across the country from Arizona to North Carolina would be best. I was really upset, and I did not want to leave, but I had little choice in the matter.

On my last Sunday in Arizona the leaders knew that I was leaving and decided to have a testimony meeting just for us boys. It was amazing for me to hear the testimonies of my closest friends and others in this meeting.

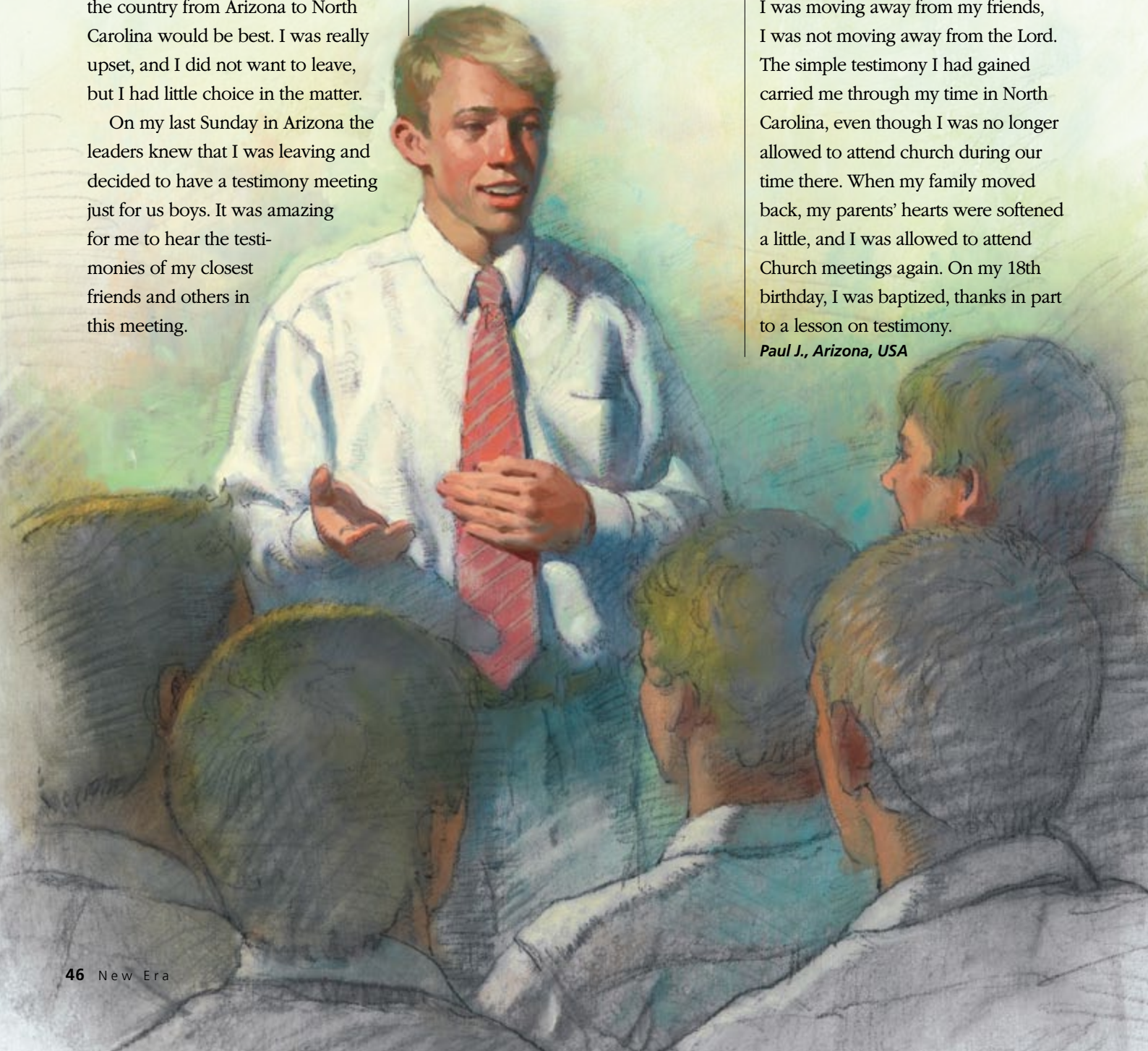
I could feel the Spirit so strongly I could almost touch it. As the boys took their turns bearing their testimony, I could not stop myself from standing.

I bore a simple but heartfelt testimony that I knew the Church was true and that Jesus is my Savior. I had never borne my testimony before, but as the words came out of my mouth, I realized how much I knew they were true. As 16-year-old youth, it was hard for any of us to show our feelings, but

I know that I was not the only one a little choked up. I felt so good, and it was a feeling of eternal joy. I was home. It was at that meeting that I knew that I would join myself with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My whole conversion process can point to this one moment as the turning point.

I am so glad I had this lesson, because despite all my prayers, my family and I moved to North Carolina. I had hope, for I knew that just because I was moving away from my friends, I was not moving away from the Lord. The simple testimony I had gained carried me through my time in North Carolina, even though I was no longer allowed to attend church during our time there. When my family moved back, my parents' hearts were softened a little, and I was allowed to attend Church meetings again. On my 18th birthday, I was baptized, thanks in part to a lesson on testimony.

Paul J., Arizona, USA



Since you're the ward employment specialist, we're counting on you to find all of us babysitting jobs.

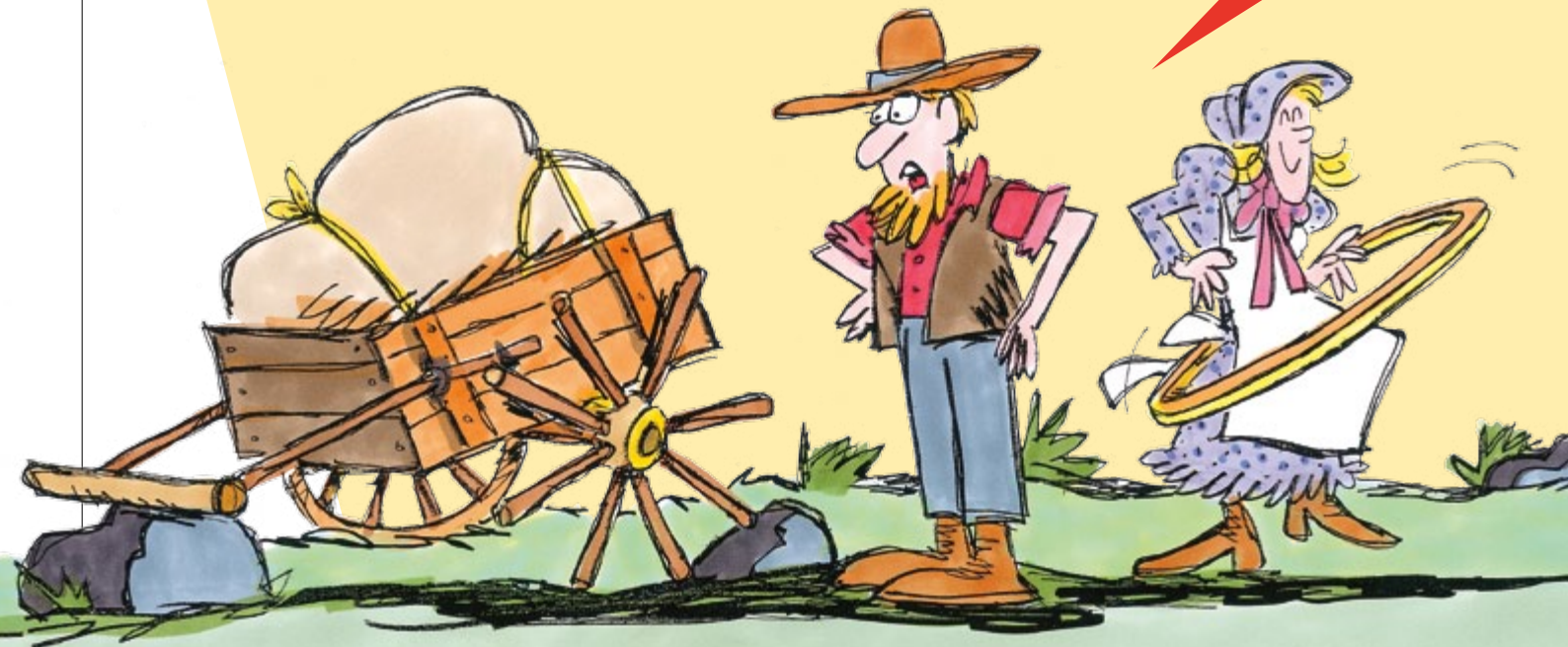


ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF



RYAN STOKER

I wonder what happened to the wheel rim.



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

HOW TO SHARE THE GOSPEL



By Elder Russell M. Nelson

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

HOW HAVE YOU APPLIED THIS?

"I use the Articles of Faith to explain the Church to people, and I also recommend some verses from the Book of Mormon."
Bismarck D.

"I talked to my friend about the Book of Mormon when I started to read it on a recent school trip."
Brian R.

You have not yet been full-time missionaries. But all can be member missionaries.

- 1. Be an example of the believers.** Each of you can live in accord with Christ's teachings.
- 2. Prepare for questions.** Let your response be warm and joyful. And let your response be relevant to that individual.
- 3. Be ready to take the next step.** An invitation to attend a Sunday meeting with you or to participate in a Church social or service activity will help to dispel mistaken myths and make visitors feel more comfortable among us.
- 4. Reach out** to those you do not know and greet them warmly. Each Sunday extend a hand of fellowship to at least one person you did not know before. Each day of your life, strive to enlarge your own circle of friendship.

5. Invite a friend to read the Book of Mormon. Explain that it is not a novel or a history book. It is another testament of Jesus Christ.

6. Invite friends to meet with full-time missionaries in your home.

7. Invite friends and neighbors to visit the new mormon.org website. If you have blogs and online social networks, you could link your sites to mormon.org.

Each exemplary follower of Jesus Christ can become an effective member missionary. Members and full-time missionaries may walk arm in arm in bringing the blessings of the gospel to cherished friends and neighbors.

From the October 2010 general conference address "Be Thou an Example of the Believers" (Ensign, Nov. 2010, 48–49).

NEmore

Share *your* experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other youth by going to lds.org/go/714, or scan the QR code below (for instructions, see page 39).



Under Heat

By John Nelson Schneider

Hot,
Devil hot
Through the thick air
The sun beats down
Upon my brow,
The heat my heart
To make faint.
The land of green
Baked red and black.
And I, fallen to my knees,
Turn my eyes toward the sky,
And with a gasp of breath
Find strength within the light.



WHAT'S ONLINE

New Mobile App for LDS Youth

If you want mobile access to Mormonads, Extra Smile cartoons, videos, and articles specifically for youth, then you won't want to miss our new app for iPhone and Android devices. You'll find it in the Apple and Android app stores under "LDS Youth."

Youth Videos

Want to watch something inspirational? Check out youth videos online at **youth.lds.org** (click on "Videos"). You'll find how youth just like you are making a difference as they choose the right.



More on the 2011 Mutual Theme

See how youth are exemplifying the 2011 Mutual theme in our video and article features. Just head to **youth.lds.org** and click on "Youth Theme 2011."

Explore Mormon Channel

If you haven't discovered Mormon Channel yet, you'll be surprised at how many interesting things you'll find there. Go to **lds.org** and click on Mormon Channel, and then select "Programs" at the top of the page and click on "All Programs" to find some great things to watch and listen to. Just pick a program and click on it. A long list of episodes will come up.



And you'll have a good time listening to stories of some extraordinary people, plus a lot of episodes that are fun and interesting. You can even watch the entire movie *Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration*. To link directly to the movie, visit **lds.org/go/716**.