

NewEra



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**SPECIAL ISSUE:
YOUR FAMILY**

**LOTS AND LOTS
OF SISTERS,
P. 26**

**JOSEPH SMITH'S
FAMILY, P. 42**

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Cover: Kelley Smith and
Ashley Greatbouse of
Columbus, Ohio, are
sisters in the gospel.
See "Sister Connection"
on p. 26.

Cover photography:
Janet Thomas (front) and
Christina Smith (back)

Sisters of Ohio
are an example
of support and
love. See "Sister
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YOUR FAMILY

Here are the spiritual blueprints for a happy home.

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

You will know no greater happiness than that found in your home (from *Ensign*, May 1998, 51).

The greatest joys of life are experienced in happy family relationships. The most poignant of sorrows, the most bleak and forlorn feelings of misery come of unhappy family life (from *Ensign*, Aug. 1992, 5).

The Stuff of Which Eternity Is Made

The family is divine. It was instituted by our Heavenly Father. It encompasses the most sacred of all relationships. Only through its organization can the purposes of the Lord be fulfilled (from *Ensign*, Jan. 1994, 5).



President Gordon B. Hinckley teaches us how to strengthen our families and increase our happiness at home.

We have learning to gain, work to do, service to give. We are here with a marvelous inheritance, a divine endowment. How different this world would be if every person realized that all of his actions have eternal consequences. How much more satisfying our years may be if in our accumulation of knowledge, in our relationships with others, in our business affairs, in our courtship and marriage, and in our family rearing, we recognize that we form each day the stuff of which eternity is made (from *Ensign*, Jan. 1994, 4).

Strengthen the Family You're in Now

Let us continually work to strengthen our families. . . . Let us not take one another for granted, but let us constantly work to nurture a spirit of love and respect for each other. We must guard against



faultfinding, anger, and disrespect one for another (from *Ensign*, May 1999, 88–89).

If we would look for the virtues in one another and not the vices, there would be much more of happiness in the homes of our people. There would be far less of divorce, much less of infidelity, much less of anger and rancor and quarreling. There would be more of forgiveness, more of love, more of peace, more of happiness. This is as the Lord would have it (from *Ensign*, May 1998, 51).

Pray Together to Stay Together

I feel satisfied that there is no adequate substitute for the morning and evening practice of kneeling together—father, mother, and



children. This, more than soft carpets, more than lovely draperies, more than cleverly balanced color schemes, is the thing that will make for better and more beautiful homes (from *Ensign*, Feb. 1991, 2).

In such a home, parents are loved and not dreaded; they are appreciated and not feared. And children are regarded as gifts of the Lord, to be cared for, nurtured, encouraged, and directed.

There may be an occasional disagreement; there may be small quarrels. But if there is prayer in the family, and love, and consideration, there will be a residue of affection that will bind forever and a loyalty that will always guide (from *Ensign*, Jan. 1994, 5).



Aim for a Temple Marriage

Every normal young man desires a wife. Every normal young woman desires a husband. Be worthy of the mate you choose. Respect him or her. Give encouragement to him or her. Love your companion with all your heart. This will be the most important decision of your life, the individual whom you marry.

There is no substitute for marrying in the temple. It is the only place under the heavens where marriage can be solemnized for eternity. Don't cheat yourself. Don't cheat your companion. Don't shortchange your lives. Marry the right person in the right place at the right time.

Choose a companion of your own faith. You are much more likely to be happy. Choose a companion you can always honor, you can always respect, one who will complement you in your own life, one to whom you can give your entire heart, your entire love, your entire allegiance, your entire loyalty (from *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 2).

A Strong Family Is Worth the Work

I believe in the family where there is a husband who regards his companion as his greatest asset and treats her accordingly; where there is a wife who looks upon her husband as her anchor and strength, her comfort and security; where there are children who look to mother and father with respect and gratitude; where there are parents who look upon those children as blessings and find a great and serious and wonderful challenge in their nurture and rearing. The cultivation of such a home requires effort and energy, forgiveness and patience, love and endurance and sacrifice; but it is worth all of these and more (from *Ensign*, Aug. 1992, 5–6).

When all is said and done, this is what the gospel is about. The family is a creation of God. It is the basic creation. The way to strengthen the nation is to strengthen the homes of the people (from *Ensign*, May 1998, 51). **NE**

PLAN NOW FOR THEN



BY KRISTI McLANE

Elder John H. Groberg of the Seventy said, “We [came] to this earth charged with a mission: to learn to love and serve one another. To best help us accomplish this, God has placed us in families, . . .” (*Ensign*, May 1982, 50). Eventually, we will have families of our own—a big responsibility. Here are some suggestions to help you to prepare now:

- ☞ Read and gain a testimony of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” Along with the scriptures, the proclamation is the perfect guide to help us live in and prepare to raise families.
- ☞ Participate in your family’s activities now, especially family prayer, family home evening, and family scripture study. You can help your family to establish these habits through your faithfulness.
- ☞ Attend special events that your family members are involved in. Support them in their activities and spend time with them.
- ☞ Pray for your family members,

and pray for help to know what you can do to make your family stronger.

- ☞ Pray and prepare for a temple marriage. As you prepare to go to the temple, you will live life in a way that will help you be a better spouse and parent.
- ☞ Interview your parents. Ask them questions like, “What did you do to prepare for a family? What would you do the same? What would you do differently?”
- ☞ Turn to the scriptures. Remember Nephi promised that if we “feast upon the words of Christ; . . . the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:3). Have faith and feast upon His words.
- ☞ Look to examples of good families. In the scriptures, in your extended family, or in your ward, you can find many examples of families who love each other and who are trying to live the gospel. **NE**

Kristi McLane is a member of the BYU 61st Ward, Brigham Young University Second Stake.





MY *Fathers*

Kind and caring leaders taught me what a father could be.

BY ROSEMARIE DEPPE

Most of our family's struggles were because of my father. He was angry and bitter, and our world at home was a dark place. I was very scared of him. Everything was uncertain and unpredictable when my father was around. I could feel darkness surrounding me, even at a young age. I felt so afraid and alone. It was hard to be home. I wanted a father who loved me, who took care of me and protected me. But I felt none of those things from my earthly father.

I sought refuge by going to church whenever he would let me. I loved to be in the chapel because it seemed like such a safe place. I was nervous, hesitant, and unsure about being close to my Heavenly Father because I wasn't sure what He was really like. I learned in church that I had another

heavenly friend who loved me. So I focused on Jesus Christ and His love for me. I loved Him because my Young Women leaders loved Him. I saw how happy they were when they talked about Him. I tried hard to keep the commandments and do all that He wanted me to do.

When our youth group was planning to do baptisms for the dead, I wondered what it would be like in my Heavenly Father's house. With great anticipation, I stepped inside the Los Angeles California Temple. I was overwhelmed at the feeling of peace there. Nothing could have been more opposite from my earthly home. I almost didn't dare breathe for fear the feeling would go away. But it was constant and calm.

I loved being in the temple. In His house, I did not need to be afraid. It was safe, calm, peaceful, and comforting. I wanted to live there. Heavenly Father's house was full of love. I was so happy. I wanted to hold on to that feeling and promised myself that I would be worthy to come back to His house again.

I wanted a father who loved me, who took care of me, and who protected me. I was missing that in my home. But at church I found "fathers" who, in the special times of my life, filled that role.



Through my Church and temple experiences, I learned that Heavenly Father is a loving father. He cares about me and is aware of my needs—both physical and spiritual.

Even though I lived with a father who didn't follow God's teachings, God placed others in my life to support me as a good father should. I had a wonderful bishop who always took a minute to say hello and see how I was doing. Bishop Hicken treated me the same way he did all the youth in our ward. He held interviews with us, went to our activities, and had us in his home for firesides. He was loving, kind, and patient. I watched how he treated his wife and children, and it helped me believe that my Heavenly Father was like that. He was a happy man, full of life and love. I tried to live better because he expected us to.

I was a late bloomer when it came to dating, and it seemed that when I got my first date, everyone knew about it—even my bishop. The big day arrived and the young man picked me up. While we were at a stoplight, someone very carefully bumped into the back of my date's truck. As we turned around to see who had done this, I saw a man marching up to the driver's side of the truck. It was my bishop! As my date rolled down his window, my bishop said, "That's my girl you have in there and I want her home by 10 o'clock." I don't remember much about that night except that I was home by 10:00. But I will never forget that I was "his girl" and that he loved me and cared about me.

I knew then that my Heavenly Father cared about me, too.

Another "father" who was placed in my life was a member of my stake presidency. President Merrill was always at our stake dances, Young Women camps, and youth conferences.

As I was preparing to leave for college, President Merrill felt I needed some fatherly advice before heading into the world. His voice was gentle and soothing. I could feel his concern. I knew he loved me. He told me he would go as far as the Salt Lake Temple to attend my wedding.

A few years later, I called my father to announce my engagement. He was cold and indifferent. Nothing had changed. I tried not to cry. I turned to my Heavenly Father in prayer, and the Spirit reminded me of President Merrill's promise. I wondered if he would remember what he had told me several years before. Did he really mean it? I picked up the phone and dialed his number. President Merrill answered. I stumbled through telling him of my engagement and asked if he remembered his promise to me. "What temple are you getting married in?" he asked.

"The Salt Lake Temple," I answered.

"Then I will be there," he said. He drove 13 hours in the snow to be there for me. When I walked into the sealing room with my future husband, he was the first person I saw. He was my father that day!

Years later, these "fathers" continue to be a part of my life. Their callings and circumstances have changed, but they have not. They are constant in their faith, their testimonies, and their love and interest in me. From them I learned that I could trust my Heavenly Father.

These great men were a link so that I could feel of my Heavenly Father's love and concern for me.

Rosemarie Deppe is a member of the Jennings Lane Ward, Centerville Utah North Stake.



ALL I ASKED FOR

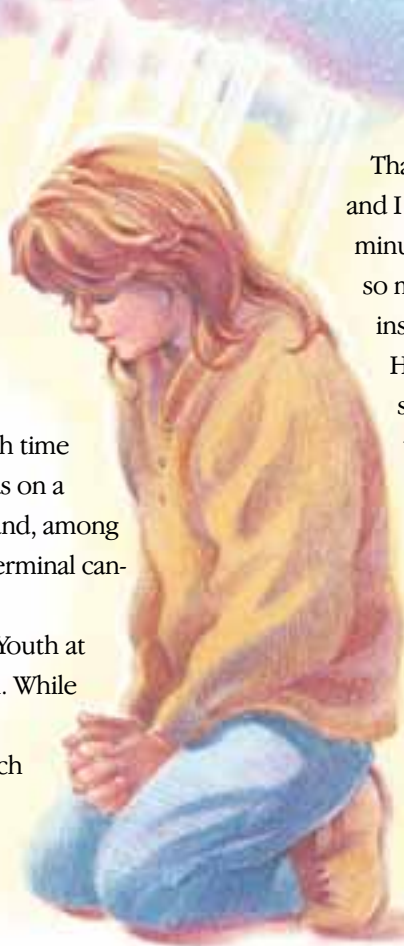
During a difficult time in my life, an answer from heaven was just what I needed.

BY BECCA AISEN

A few years ago I was having a rough time in my life. One of my brothers was on a mission, another was at college, and, among other things, we found out my dad had terminal cancer and wasn't going to live very long.

That summer I went to Especially for Youth at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. While I was there I had a really bad attitude. I didn't care about the gospel or the Church anymore. And I didn't care about Heavenly Father, because in my eyes He had abandoned my family and me. During one of the talks at EFY, the speaker mentioned that Heavenly Father loved and cared for us very much.

I was laughing inside, thinking, "Yeah, right, that's what you think." Yet something inside me really wanted to know if Heavenly Father did love me and did care for me. The speaker challenged us to ask Heavenly Father to see if the Church was true.



That night I decided to give prayer a try. I knelt, and I just asked. I was on my knees for a few minutes and nothing happened. I wanted to know so much that it seemed like something deep inside me was just begging for some love from Heavenly Father. At that moment I felt like someone was cradling me. My heart felt so warm and so peaceful. I felt this huge weight being lifted from my shoulders, and then I heard a quiet whisper: "I love you so much."

I started to bawl. I knew my Father in Heaven cared for me. I knew He loved me!

I didn't ask Him if the Church was true. I didn't ask Him if the Book of Mormon was true. All I asked for was love, and He gave it to me. As soon as He did, everything seemed to fall into place. I knew who I was. I knew the Book of Mormon was true. I knew the gospel was true.

Today I am so happy! My Father in Heaven loves me! He loves me so much that He gave His Son to save me and everybody else. He loves all of us. Christ loves us too, or He wouldn't have suffered and died for us. I'm grateful for their love for all of us. **NE**

Becca Aisen is a member of the Maryville Ward, Knoxville Tennessee Stake.

OUR Greatest HAPPINESS

Sometimes we give the least to those who should matter most in our lives—our families. Here's what the modern-day prophets have said to help us turn our hearts toward our greatest joy.

All of the modern-day prophets have taught the importance of families. They understood that our greatest happiness in this life comes from our families. But to achieve this happiness, we have to work to strengthen our families each day. Here are some suggestions from each of the modern-day prophets on how to make your family a happy one.

KEEP AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

Joseph Smith (1805–1844)

First President of the Church

“A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race.”¹

Harold B. Lee (1899–1973)

Eleventh President of the Church

“The most important of the Lord’s work you will ever do will be within the walls of your own homes.”²

Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)

Thirteenth President of the Church

“There can be no genuine happiness separate and apart from the home. The sweetest influences and associations of life are there.”³





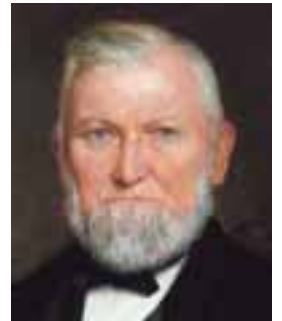
Joseph Smith



Brigham Young



John Taylor



Wilford Woodruff



Lorenzo Snow



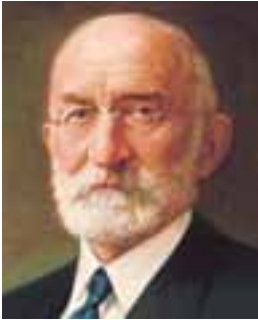
Joseph F. Smith

HONOR YOUR PARENTS

Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901)

Fifth President of the Church

“I would plead with you, my young brethren and sisters, to honor your fathers and your mothers, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord hath given to them and to you. Be obedient and loving to them.”⁴



Heber J. Grant

Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)

Twelfth President of the Church

“If we truly honor our parents as we are commanded to do, we will seek to emulate their best characteristics and to fulfill their highest aspirations for us. Nothing we could give them materially would be more prized than our righteous living.”⁵



George Albert Smith

PARTICIPATE IN FAMILY PRAYER

John Taylor (1808–1887)

Third President of the Church

“Do not forget to call upon the Lord in your family circles, dedicating yourselves and all you have to God every day of your lives; and seek to do right, and cultivate the spirit of union and love, and the peace and blessing of the Living God will be with us, and He will lead us in the paths of life.”⁶



David O. McKay

Heber J. Grant (1856–1945)

Seventh President of the Church

“I am convinced that one of the greatest things that can come into any home to cause the boys and girls in that home to grow up in a love of God, and in a love of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is to have family prayer.”⁷



Joseph Fielding Smith

George Albert Smith (1870–1951)

Eighth President of the Church

“[Do] we want our homes to be happy[?] If we do, let them be the abiding place of prayer, thanksgiving and gratitude.”⁸

READ SCRIPTURES TOGETHER

Howard W. Hunter (1907–1995)

Fourteenth President of the Church

“Families are greatly blessed when wise fathers and mothers bring their children about them, read from the pages of the scriptural library together, and then discuss freely the beautiful stories and thoughts according to the understanding of all.”⁹

COMMUNICATE WITH LOVE

Brigham Young (1801–1877)

Second President of the Church

“The greatest difficulty that exists in the little bickerings and strifes of [families] . . . arises from the want of rightly understanding each other.”¹⁰

“Anger should never be permitted to rise in our bosoms, and words suggested by angry feelings should never be permitted to pass our lips.”¹¹

David O. McKay (1873–1970)

Ninth President of the Church

“We contribute to an ideal home by our character, by controlling our passions, our temper, by guarding our speech, because those things will make our homes what they are.”¹²

Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–)

Fifteenth President of the Church

“There are good families everywhere. But there are too many who are in trouble. This is a malady with a cure. The prescription is simple and wonderfully effective. It is love.”¹³



Harold B. Lee



Spencer W. Kimball



Ezra Taft Benson



Howard W. Hunter



Gordon B. Hinckley

LIVE FOR ETERNITY

Wilford Woodruff (1807–1898)

Fourth President of the Church

“We want the Latter-day Saints from this time to trace their genealogies as far as they can, and to be sealed to their fathers and mothers. Have children sealed to their parents, and run this chain through as far as you can get it.”¹⁴

Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918)

Sixth President of the Church

“We are living for eternity and not merely for the moment. Death does not part us from one another, if we have entered into sacred relationships with each other by virtue of the authority that God has revealed to the children of men. Our relationships are formed for eternity.”¹⁵

Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)

Tenth President of the Church

“The primary function of a Latter-day Saint home is to insure that every member of the family works to create the climate and conditions in which all can grow toward perfection.”¹⁶ **NE**

NOTES

1. *History of the Church*, 4:227.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee* (2000), 134.
3. In Conference Report, Oct. 1947, 27.
4. *Deseret Semi-Weekly News*, 4 July 1901.
5. “Hold Fast to the Iron Rod,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 6.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* (2001), 148.
7. In Conference Report, Oct. 1923, 7.
8. In Conference Report, Apr. 1944, 32.
9. “Reading the Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 64.
10. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 175.
11. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 174.
12. In Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 149.
13. “Look to the Future,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 69.
14. In James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1965–75), 3:256–57.
15. “General Conference of the Relief Society,” *Relief Society Magazine*, June 1917, 316.
16. “Message from the First Presidency,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1971, 1.

Q & A

My brother isolates himself from the rest of the family. He spends most of his time with friends, and he never goes to church with us. How can I reach out to him?

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

NEW ERA

Behind this question lies the fundamental issue of agency. Sometimes when our loved ones stray from the gospel and the family, we feel so concerned that we may want to pressure or even force them to return. But this is not only impossible; it is contrary to the Lord's plan.

When we try to compel someone to return to the gospel path, we are using the strategy Lucifer proposed in the premortal world to "redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost" (Moses 4:1). Agency may seem like a difficult principle because it allows for bad choices and for grief and pain. But forced obedience can never build a godlike character; only obedience freely chosen can lead to eternal life.

Understanding the need for agency, however, does not mean there is nothing we can do to try to bring back a lost brother or sister. The parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son suggest there is much we can do (see Luke 15). First and

Respect the agency of others. Forcing them to follow the gospel path is what Lucifer proposed in the premortal world.

Loving acts of service can build bridges that will allow for the return of one who is lost.

Show through your actions and attitude that living the gospel makes you happy.

Be prayerful but be patient. It takes time to change.

Involve every member in family activities. The choice not to go to church shouldn't be a choice not to be part of the family.

READERS



I used to be the brother who withdrew from the family. My sisters' examples of service, love, and charity were some of the many ways they showed me what I was missing. Tell your brother you love and miss him. Those words are powerful from any family member. Elder Franco B. Ciammachilli, 20, South Africa Cape Town Mission



Perhaps your brother is confused about who he wants to be and thinks he is satisfied with what he is doing, even though he is searching. The best thing for you to do is pray diligently and search for answers in the scriptures. Then show him how much you care. Try to spend time with him. Do good deeds for him. Even if he rejects your kindness, never give up. The Lord will bless you for your diligence. Stephanie O'Brien, 18, Wichita Falls Ward, Lawton Oklahoma Stake



The way to help someone like your brother who is not helping himself is to fast and pray for him. The best scripture for someone

who does not read the scriptures is your example. Ask leaders and friends who care about your brother for help. Sometimes a person outside the situation can see something you do not.

Guerta Zwirtes, 20, Vitória Ward, Vitória Brazil Stake



For more than six years I isolated myself from my family. I thought my friends were more interesting, and going to

church was not in my plans. Finally the missionaries taught me about goals I could set, about how to grow closer to my family, and most of all about God. They helped me understand that I have great importance in God's eyes.

Sister Samantha Seiko, 23, Fiji Suva Mission



I know what it is like to have a family member isolate himself and not go to church anymore. The way to respond is with

pure love, just as Christ loves each of us. You can reach out by sharing your testimony and telling him you love him. Pray for your family members and yourself to have the strength to love

and forgive. *Alyssa Hansen, 17, Ridgefield Ward, Vancouver Washington West Stake*

NEW ERA

always, we must love those who stray. We must love them enough to serve them selflessly and to reach out to them even when they withdraw from us. Selfless acts of love given freely can build bridges between straying souls and other family members.

Sometimes, like the prodigal son, those who have turned away from the gospel and their families eventually wish for a way back, but they don't know quite how to go about it. If you are patient and nonjudgmental, your love can be a bridge.

Don't be afraid to bear your testimony, but don't bear it in a condescending or accusing way. Be sensitive to the Spirit and, when appropriate, share your feelings about the gospel, the Church, and your family. Show through your actions and attitude that living the gospel makes you happy.

Sometimes, though, a brother or sister may reject anything you say about the gospel. At these times all you can do is love him or her and make it clear that the choice not to go to church isn't a choice not to be involved with the family. Try to include your brother or sister in family activities that would make him or her feel welcome and valued. Remember that your brother or sister is a child of God and that Heavenly Father is doing everything He can to bring all of His children back into His presence. **NE**



All of us have family members or friends who need the gospel but are not now interested. To be effective, our efforts with them must be directed by the Lord so that we act in the way and at the time when they will be most receptive. We must pray for the Lord's help and directions so we can be instruments in His hands"

(Ensign, Nov. 2001, 8).

—Elder Dallin H. Oaks
Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

READERS



Try to plan family activities your brother would enjoy. Take every opportunity to show him how much you love him. Pray for guidance, and ask Heavenly

Father to soften your brother's heart.

Bill Younkin, 17, Huntington Beach 9th Ward,
Huntington Beach California North Stake



The first thing I would advise you to do is to pray for guidance.

I would also advise you to get closer to your brother and earn his trust. He may tell you why he

is not going to church. Then you can help him.

David C. Vallejo, 16, Choloma Ward,
Fesitranh Honduras Stake



You cannot force anyone to go to church, but you can fast and pray. Share your testimony, but it is up to him to decide what he will do.

Madeleine Wahle, 13,
Dortmund Ward, Dortmund Germany Stake

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send us your answer to the question below, along with your name, age, and the names of your ward and stake. Please include a snapshot of yourself that is 1 1/2 by 2 inches (4 by 5 cm) or larger.

Please respond by August 1, 2003.

Q&A, New Era

50 East North Temple

Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

QUESTION

"I need to earn money for a mission and college. The Church teaches that we shouldn't work on the Sabbath, but almost all the jobs I am qualified for require Sunday work. What should I do?"

HOME SECURITY



WARMTH, KINDNESS, AND CHARITY
CAN BE YOUR FAMILY'S SPIRITUAL SECURITY SYSTEM.
(See *Hymns*, no. 298.)



SPANNING THE Generations



BY SHANNA GHAZNAVI

Every family is different. And each of us has his or her own ideas about what an ideal family should be. Stephanie Spann loves and appreciates her family just the way it is—even as she works to make it, and herself, a little better.

At 17, Stephanie is the youngest in her family. Her brothers, Wayne and John, have grown and left home. Her parents, LaRee and Ed, are great examples to her and a big support in her endeavors. Stephanie loves her family, and one of her biggest role models where family is concerned is her grandpa, Frank Arrowchis. “Of all the things my grandpa has taught me,”

Stephanie says, “family is probably the biggest thing.”

Stephanie’s mom and grandma are members of the Church, but her dad and grandpa are not. For Stephanie, having a part-member family has its challenges. “I think it would make it a lot easier to know I would live with my family forever. I’ve always planned on a temple marriage,” Stephanie says.

Stephanie’s dad makes time for family home evening with his family and supports her in her schoolwork and at sporting events. She loves that he is always there for her, and she hopes her family will be sealed



*At Delicate Arch
Stephanie was
banded the
Olympic torch
by her grandfather,
a leader in the
Northern Ute tribe.*



Stephanie practices running the torch along the slick rock at Arches National Park. (Right) Stephanie with her parents and grandparents.

in the temple someday. “I think he’s coming around,” she smiles.

The Spanns’ extended family is also close, even though they don’t live very close together. “Everyone’s always there for each other. We’re always calling each other to check up on each other,” says Stephanie. “If anyone has anything, like a program or sports, we all always go to it.” Another way she likes to stay close to her family is hanging out with her nieces and nephews. It doesn’t have to be anything big. “We go to

the park and feed the ducks. I just enjoy spending time with them.”

Passing the Torch

Stephanie has a special relationship with her grandpa. “He’s a good guy. He’s my hero,” she says. Stephanie and her grandpa do as much as they can together and with the rest of the family—ice fishing, hunting, camping, and working together on her grandfather’s ranch in Whiterocks, Utah. From her grandfather, Stephanie has learned not only the importance of family but also respect for others and for her Native American heritage.

As part of that respect for heritage, Stephanie, her mom, and her grandmother all work on genealogy together at the Bennion Utah Stake Family History Center. Stephanie has done the research and submitted many family names for temple work, and she is getting better all the time at doing research on her Northern Ute ancestry.

Recently her grandfather was chosen to represent the Northern Ute tribe in the Salt Lake City 2002 Olympic torch relay. When officials asked Frank, Stephanie’s grandpa, to suggest someone for him to pass the torch on to, Stephanie was the first to come to his mind. “She’s really involved in sports,” her grandpa told them,

“and I know she’s in good shape. I know she can do it.”

Stephanie smiles. “He’s always taught me that girls can do anything guys can do.”

Stephanie is a soccer player for her high school, so she was in great shape to run the torch. She credits her grandfather with helping her succeed there too: “My grandpa has the best work ethic of anyone I know. This work ethic has helped me in my commitment to sports, to my religion, and to my personal goals.”

When Stephanie received the Olympic torch from her grandfather under the picturesque Delicate Arch in southern Utah’s Arches National Park, it seemed more symbolic than real. More important than giving her the torch is the legacy of love her grandfather and family have passed on. She wants to continue that legacy in her own family.

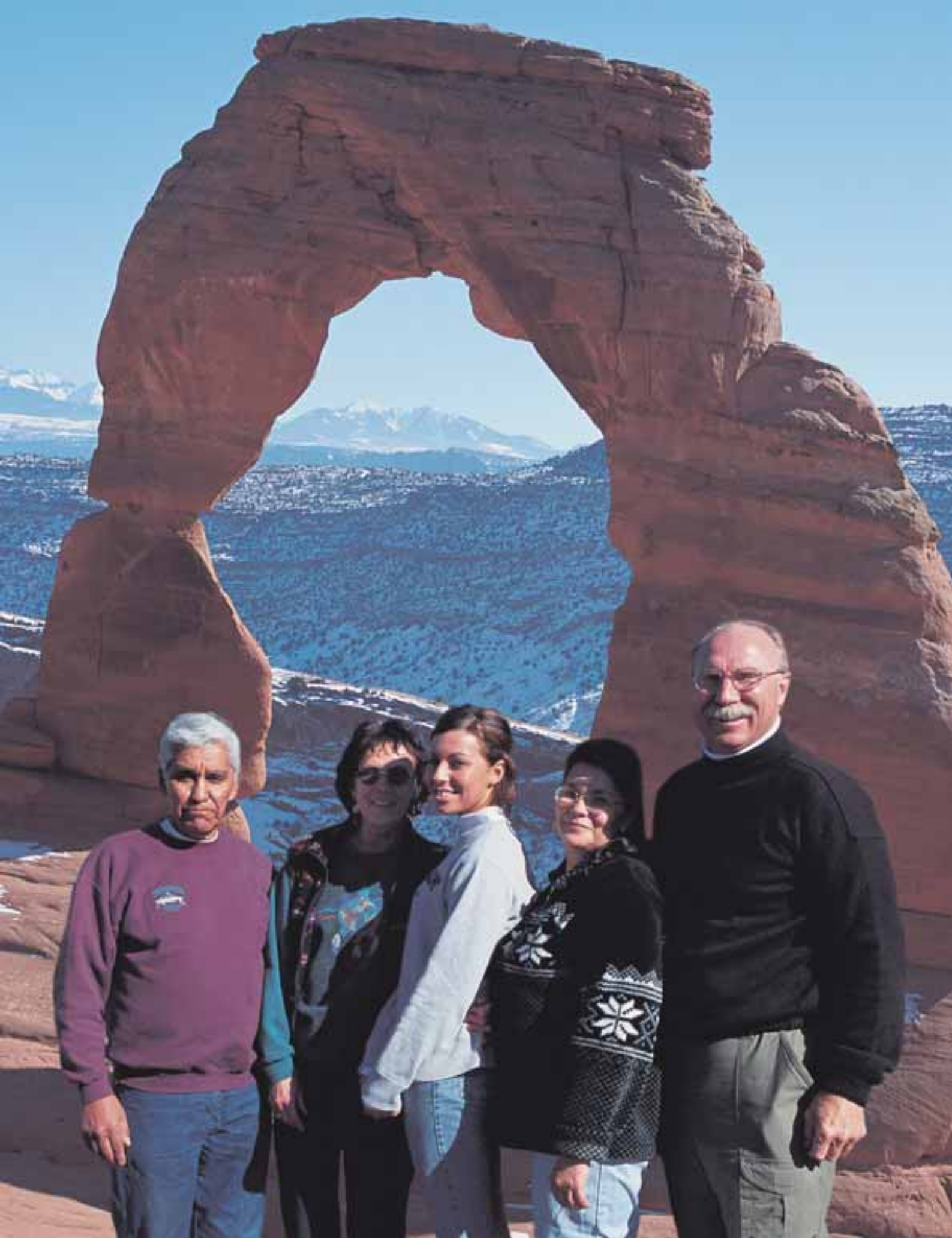
The Ideal Family

Stephanie realizes her family might not exactly fit the mold of the ideal family many of us picture. But she also knows her family is a good family, doing the best they can to love each other and to stay close to God.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said: “Throughout your life on earth, seek diligently to fulfill the fundamental purposes of this life *through the ideal family*. While you may not have yet reached that ideal, do all you can through obedience and faith in the Lord to consistently draw as close to it as you are able. Let nothing dissuade you from that objective. . . . Do not be discouraged. Living a pattern of life as close as possible to the ideal will provide much happiness, great satisfaction, and impressive growth while here on earth regardless of your current life circumstances” (*Ensign*, May 2001, 7).

That’s what the Spann family is striving for. Just as Stephanie was prepared to accept the torch from her grandfather and run with it, she’s prepared to carry on her family’s tradition of love and togetherness. The Spanns are a great family trying their hardest. Stephanie knows if they continue doing their best, they will continue to be blessed. **NE**

Shanna Ghaznavi is a member of the Church magazines staff.



WHAT A BOTHER

BY MAMIE HUNSAKER HAMMER

My brother was the cause of all my problems. I was going to be happy to see him go; that is, until he left on his mission.

Whenever we washed dishes, he would sneak some of the clean dishes back onto the counter. Once, I washed a cup six times. Then, after all his teasing, he'd go and do something nice for me.

Tears streamed down my face as I stood on my tiptoes and we hugged each other tightly at the Missionary Training Center. I probably dampened his new suit, but I don't think he minded. "I love you," I said.

I thought of the many times I had thought I disliked Tommy, even if he was my brother. Then I thought about how much things had changed over the years, how sad I was to see him go.

I remembered when we were younger and didn't get along well. Sometimes he teased me so much I thought I'd be happy to someday see him go away. Because we were close in age, we were always together—at home and sometimes even at school. I remembered being on his "work team" while doing chores around the house, like folding clothes and washing dishes. When we were on clothes crew together, we would both fold as slowly as possible in order to fold the least amount of clothing and thus make the other do more work. Because we both worked so slowly, it would always take all day.

Dishes were even worse! Whenever I was the washer, he would sneak some of the dishes that I put in his drain rack and put them back on the counter to wash. I remember once washing one cup about six times

before I figured it out.

I used to think Tommy caused all my problems, but now I realize he was just teasing, and it was probably my temper that caused many of our disagreements.

Sometimes I wondered why my parents never split us up or put us on different teams. But as we got older, I realized it was because those times together forced us to get to know each other and to learn to get along.

As time passed and we both matured, we started to talk to each other about school, teachers, friends, and all the other things that concerned us. Tommy and I actually became friends. In high school, Tommy was a senior when I was a sophomore, and it was nice to receive advice from an experienced student. We were both in the marching band, and even though we had our own friends, Tommy was always willing to talk to me or help me in any way. He had developed a real sense of humor, and I enjoyed spending time with him.

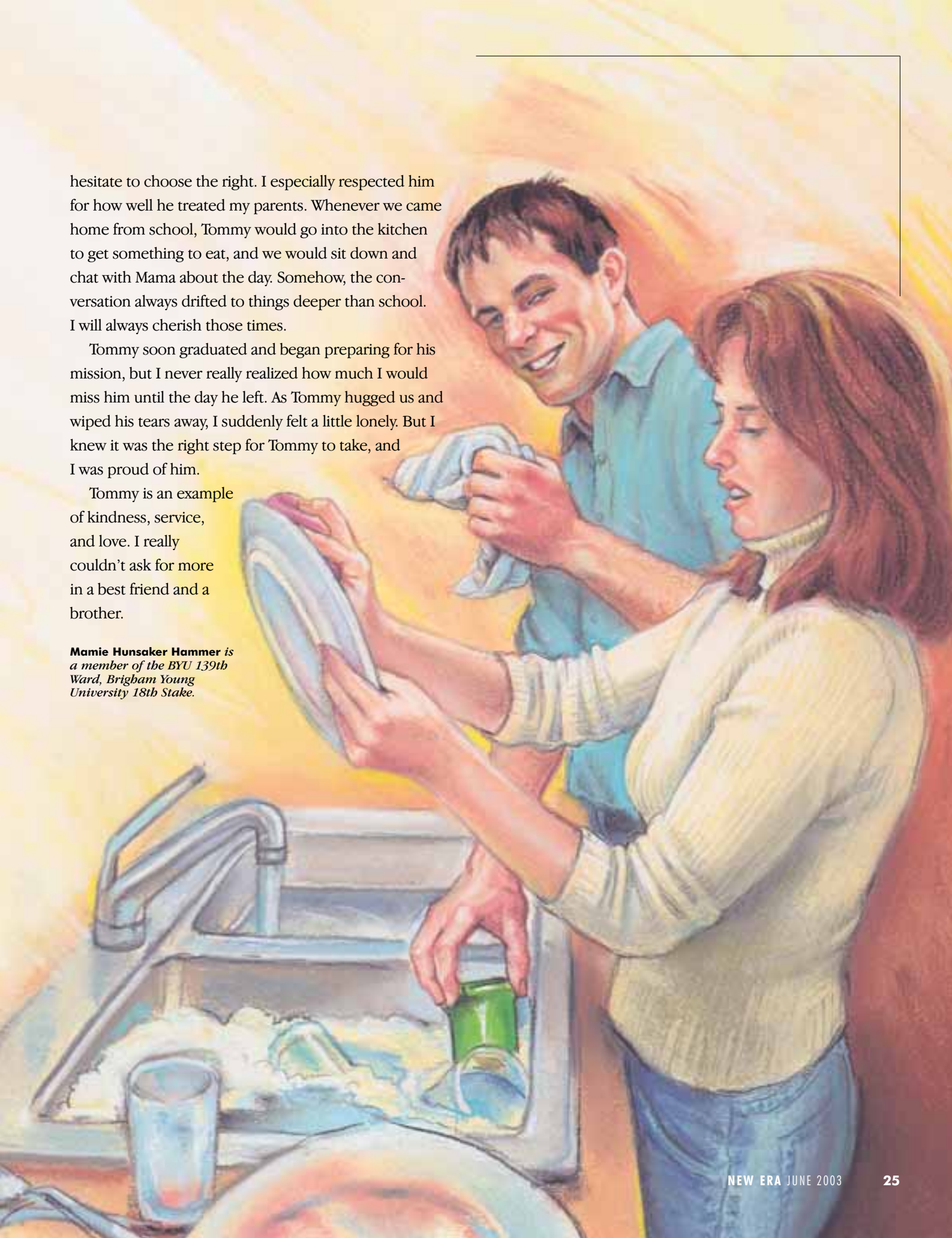
I remember nights when we would be the only ones up, doing our homework, and Tommy would serve us both some ice cream. We would talk late into the night. Tommy was a wonderful example to me, and I was always learning something from him. He chose good friends, and I never saw him

hesitate to choose the right. I especially respected him for how well he treated my parents. Whenever we came home from school, Tommy would go into the kitchen to get something to eat, and we would sit down and chat with Mama about the day. Somehow, the conversation always drifted to things deeper than school. I will always cherish those times.

Tommy soon graduated and began preparing for his mission, but I never really realized how much I would miss him until the day he left. As Tommy hugged us and wiped his tears away, I suddenly felt a little lonely. But I knew it was the right step for Tommy to take, and I was proud of him.

Tommy is an example of kindness, service, and love. I really couldn't ask for more in a best friend and a brother.

Mamie Hunsaker Hammer is a member of the *BYU 139th Ward, Brigham Young University 18th Stake.*



SISTER CONNECTION

A sister can be a friend, an example, and someone who shares your beliefs.

BY JANET THOMAS



These Welling sisters, Heidi and Andrea, from Columbus, Ohio, share an interest in sports and in music as well as a lifelong friendship.

There are 12 young women in the Riverside Ward, Columbus Ohio Stake. Just 12. But in that small group, eight of the girls are sisters—four sets. And best of all, these sisters are great sisters, good to each other and the best of friends. Plus, they consider the other young women in the ward to be sisters, as well.

Before the four oldest in the sets of sisters go away to college, they gathered with their younger sisters to talk about what it takes to have good relationships with each other.

It's great having a sister

Christy Frost is the bishop's daughter. She and her younger sister, Jenny, are a close and supportive pair. "The best thing about having a sister," says Christy, "is that she is always there. She is a built-in best friend."

Lindsay Shannon agrees that her younger sister Erin is a very good friend.

And she adds, "My sister is one person I can feel completely comfortable around. I

can tell her anything. She is always there to listen to me when I complain about stuff or I'm sad. She is always supportive of everything I do."

Heidi Welling doesn't like to do things alone, so she enjoys being with her sister, Andrea. "She'll even run errands with me," says Heidi. "We have fun hanging out on Friday nights if we both happen to be home. We like to play lacrosse and watch movies."

And for the Blanco sisters, Cristina and Michelle, a sister is someone to share clothes with and is a ready listener. "I'm sort of the designated driver of the family at the moment," says Cristina. "We spend lots of time in the car and have lots of time to talk with each other."

Looking up to someone

The younger sisters have noticed that their older sisters have learned things and have some good advice. They want to gain that wisdom and self-control too.



H

Heidi

Walser's older sister just left Young Women, but Heidi finds another kind of sisterhood with the girls in the ward.

(Below, right) The Shannon sisters, Lindsay and Erin, have found they can rely on each other in every situation.

(Opposite page)

Jenny and Christy Frost set good examples for each other, including sharing their testimonies of the gospel.



"It's cool to watch people who are older than you," says Michelle. "If you've grown up with them, like your sister, they seem to be your age. But then you hear them bear their testimonies, and you realize that they aren't your age. They are older, wiser."

Watching their older sisters gain their testimonies has been a big boost to the development of their own faith. Erin remembers her first year at girls' camp. She felt lonely, and the bugs were horrible. She wasn't having a very good time, but her older sister, Lindsay, was there to help.

"She was being so positive and was trying to help me have a good time. I remember my first testimony meeting. I was too afraid to get up, but she got up and talked about her feelings about the gospel and how much we share together. We were both crying. It really strengthened my testimony. Even though it was five years ago, it still is a really big faith builder for me."

And for Jenny, it's easier for her to relate to her sister. "When she gives her testimony, I see how much the Spirit moves her. I think, 'Well, if she can do that, then I can do it too.' It's nice to have her be such a good example and to always be there and see how much she loves the gospel."

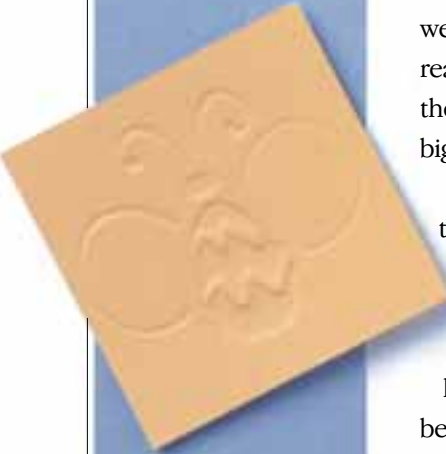
Kelley Smith and Heidi Walser both have older sisters who have now left home. The separation has been hard on them because they are close to their sisters. Heidi goes and stays with her sister whenever she has the opportunity. And Kelley says, "My sister would take me places I wanted to go. I can tell her anything. But since she moved out, I am telling those things to my mom."

How to be a good sister

Another interesting coincidence of this Young Women group is the fact that every set of sisters also has a brother of deacon age. In fact, Ashley Greathouse and Heidi Walser also have deacon-aged brothers. So these girls have some definite ideas about how to support their younger brothers in their new priesthood duties.

"It's really a nice change to see him on Sunday," says Lindsay. "It's nice to see him being respectful and serious. You can tell he knows the sacrament is not something to be taken for granted. He knows it's special."

"My brother's been coming with me when we have joint activities with the Young Men. And he went to the temple to do baptisms for the first time. That was really cool to be





A

ll but one of the young women in the Riverside Ward have a deacon-aged brother. Learning how to support their brothers as they enter the Aaronic Priesthood creates a bond among the youth.

(Opposite page) Cristina and Michelle Blanco find it's great to have someone to talk to, like a sister who really understands.



there with him,” says Andrea.

Jenny has some good tips for relating to her younger brothers. “Be there for each other whenever things get tough or if you ever need someone to talk to. My brothers like to play games. Just play with them. It will make their day. If you’re happy and you’re there with them, they’ll enjoy it.”

A family church

Andrea tells about a girl at school who asked about her weekend. She was amazed that Andrea and her sister, Heidi, did some shopping together and went to a movie. The girl asked, “Don’t you ever fight?”

Andrea answered, “No, not really. If we do, we get over it in two seconds.”

Andrea explained, “When people say that Mormons are really family oriented, we really are. That’s what makes us strong. To be a better sister, do stuff together.”

Erin says, “I can never stay mad at my sister because there’s always something I want to tell her. If something exciting happened, I want her to be excited with me.”

Christy Frost explains how she and Jenny

get over their differences. “We fight sometimes over something ridiculous when we’re in bad moods. We are both stubborn, but we just apologize and get it over with. And we’re friends again. We respect each other’s opinions.”

The connection between sisters is a strong one. A sister can be your best friend, not just in childhood but for your whole life. But the friendship needs to start at home, growing up. Be kind, and chances are your brothers and sisters will follow your example. Be the peacemaker, and arguing will decrease. Be a friend, and you’ll find the most loyal of friends in your own family.

Jenny talks about going to a school dance. She knew Christy was somewhere in the crowd. “It’s like we have a sister signal. I’m not really looking for her, but I always seem to find her. Whenever we’re in a crowd, it seems like Christy will pop up. It’s always fun to have a familiar face, a friend, someone to talk to.” **NE**

Janet Thomas is a member of the Church magazines staff.





Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

—The Family: A Proclamation to the World

TEST YOUR LDS I.Q.

The Prophet Joseph Smith’s family was being prepared for generations before he received the First Vision and before he could lead the restored Church in this dispensation. His immediate family was a continual support to him, and they loved each other very much. See how much you know about Joseph Smith’s family.

1 How did Joseph’s parents, Lucy Mack and Joseph Smith Sr., meet?

- a. Joseph came to work for Lucy’s father in Sharon, Vermont.
- b. Lucy came to visit her brother in Tunbridge, Vermont, and met Joseph there.
- c. They grew up on neighboring farms in Massachusetts.

2 How many children did Joseph and Lucy have?

- a. 10
- b. 11
- c. 16

3 Where was the Prophet Joseph Smith born?

- a. Sharon, Vermont
- b. West Lebanon, New Hampshire
- c. Palmyra, New York

4 Which of the Prophet’s immediate family were witnesses of the gold plates?

- a. Joseph Smith Sr., Alvin Smith, Hyrum Smith
- b. Hyrum Smith, Samuel Smith, Don Carlos Smith
- c. Joseph Smith Sr., Hyrum Smith, Samuel Smith

5 About which of his brothers did Joseph Smith Jr. say the following:

“[He] possesses the mildness of a lamb, and the integrity of a Job, and in short, the meekness and humility of Christ; and I love him with that love that is stronger than death, for I never had occasion to rebuke him, nor he me. . . .”

- a) Alvin
- b) Hyrum
- c) Samuel

Answers: 1 b; 2 b; 3 a; 4 c; 5 b (History of the Church, 2:338).

LEADERSHIP TIP

You might not be in your class presidency or an officer at school, but chances are there's someone in your home who really looks up to you.

Make it a goal to be a good example to your younger brothers or sisters. You can be an example of obedience, kindness, and the type of brotherly love the Savior would show if He were living in your home.



A SEW-SEW FATHER'S DAY

The 36 young women in the Ocean Springs Ward, Gulfport Mississippi Stake, made Father's Day special for their dads and learned a new skill while they were at

it. The young women chose material, cut out patterns, pinned, and sewed for hours. Finally, each of their fathers had a handmade tie to wear to church on Father's Day. The girls also

made extra ties for the bishopric, the Young Men presidency, and the ward's missionaries, who weren't lucky enough to have daughters in Young Women.



BEAUTY ALL AROUND

The family unit is forever, and you should do everything in your power to strengthen that unit. In your own family, encourage family home evenings and be an active participant. Encourage family prayer. Be on your knees with your family in that sacred circle. Do your part to develop real family unity and solidarity. . . .

"Your most important friendships should be with your own brothers and sisters and with your father and mother. Love your family. Be loyal to them. Have a genuine concern for your brothers and sisters. . . .

"Help keep your family strong and close and worthy of our Father in Heaven's blessings. As you do, you will receive faith and hope and strength, which will bless your lives forever" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 81–82).

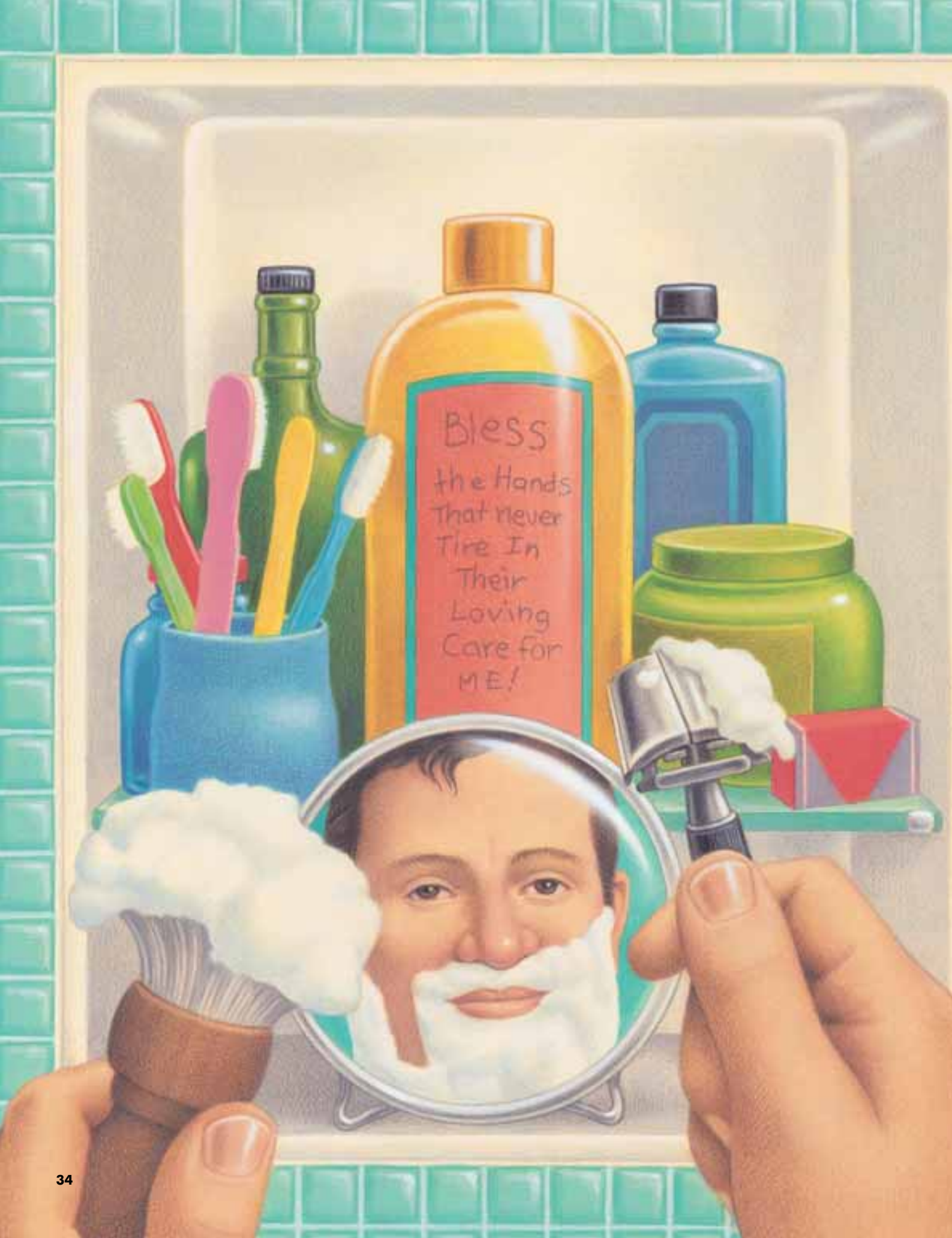
—President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)

TEMPLE WORK

The youth of the Huntsville Utah Stake couldn't all go to the Nauvoo temple for last year's dedication, so they decided to bring the temple to them. As part of their youth conference on temple work and worthiness, the youth and their leaders built a replica of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple. It was about one-fifth the size of the original Nauvoo temple, and the youth

worked on it in rotations, between workshops, speakers, and activities. The youth and their leaders also completed more than 1,000 ordinances for the dead in the Ogden Utah Temple.

They learned how to saw wood and staple fabric, but more importantly they learned how they could lay strong foundations for their testimonies of the temple and their worthiness to go there.



Bless
the Hands
that never
Tire In
Their
Loving
Care for
ME!

MESSAGE ON A BOTTLE



BY ELDER
RONALD L. LOVELAND
Area Authority Seventy

My mother's abiding love taught me more about the Atonement of Jesus Christ than anything else in my childhood.

When I was 11 years old, I had a wonderful Primary teacher. One day in class, she walked in on a discussion among us 11-year-old boys about our mothers and how tough they were on us. Our mothers would insist that we make our beds, help with the dishes, take out the garbage, and even help with other housework.

Our teacher said nothing but went ahead with our lesson. At the end of the class, she said that on the coming Saturday morning we were

going to have a special activity at her house.

That Saturday, we peddled our bicycles to her home. She gathered us around her dining room table where she had some liquids in bottles. She also had small, empty bottles for each of us. We poured so much of this and so much of that through a funnel into our bottles. We learned that we were making hand lotion for our mothers.

When we finished, our teacher gave us a small piece of paper on which she had written a verse. We each copied it down and taped the verse onto our bottles. We proudly took the lotion home to our mothers as a gift.

My mother was wise so, instead of using the lotion, she put it on the middle shelf of our bathroom's medicine cabinet. It remained there through all my teenage years. Every day, as I opened that cabinet to get my toothbrush or comb, there on the shelf was the bottle

with that handwritten verse. It was still there the day I combed my hair before leaving for my mission.

That verse impacted my life permanently. It said, "Bless the hands that never tire in their loving care for me." That message, which I read every day, drove deep into my heart love, respect, and appreciation for my mom.

Another story about my mother had an even greater impact on me. It shaped how I resolved to live my life.

When I was a priest, my assignment one Sunday was to bless the sacrament in Sunday School. In those days, we took the sacrament during Sunday School in the morning, and then returned for sacrament meeting in the evening.

I had a 1946 Chevy coupe that I had made into a hot rod, and I wanted to compete in some races that were being held that Sunday. I knew that my parents would not approve, so I said nothing. I am ashamed to say it, but I left church and went to the drag races. I raced one time and lost.

When I returned home, my mother was standing at the kitchen sink, finishing up the dinner dishes. I could see tears on her cheeks. I asked, "Mom, what's the matter?"

She turned and asked, "Son, where have we failed as parents that you feel you can violate the Lord's holy day?"

I couldn't bear it! My dear mother was taking the blame and burden for my wrongdoing.

That moment helped me understand more about the Atonement of Jesus Christ, that someone else was willing to bear the burden of my wrong choice. I began to understand how the Savior could do that for me because I saw my mother do it in this instance.

To you who may find yourselves in similar situations, I say: I hope you learn before you get hurt—spiritually or physically. I hope that you have parents like I have who put an arm around me and taught me. I hope you listen to them. They will help you make decisions that will bless you the rest of your life. **NE**

ASK YOURSELF

We asked some teens what they liked best about their families, about their family traditions, and about staying close to brothers and sisters. Try answering these questions about your own family.

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “We are trying to make the world better by making the family stronger” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 209). The *New Era* wanted to know what teens are doing to strengthen their families, what they like about their families, and what they think about eternal families. As you read their answers, ask yourself these same questions. Maybe you will think of new ways to strengthen the family you are in now and prepare for the family you will one day have. By making your family strong, you can help make the world a better place.

What do you like best about your family?

There are six kids in my family. It can be challenging at times to get along with all of them, but when I do,



it is so worthwhile. I like my family because they love me unconditionally.

*Brett Price, 16
Anchorage 13th Ward, Anchorage
Alaska Stake*

I grew up as the youngest of four children, the only girl, with three older brothers. Because I’m the “baby girl” of the family, I’ve been looked over and protected by my brothers and parents. Even though it can be hard and a little annoying sometimes, I love it.

*Jodi Meyerson, 16
Doylestown Ward, Philadelphia
Pennsylvania Stake*

I love my family so much. I want to spend eternity with them because I love them, and they are my best friends. Their love for me and for the

gospel really lifts my spirit and helps me stay strong as I try to follow their examples.

Beth Whitlock, 17

Alma Ward, Fort Smith Arkansas Stake

Even though we have so many different talents, qualities, and hobbies, we all have the same belief in Christ. This belief helps us understand and love each other.

Lesley Stewart, 16

Palm Harbor Ward, St. Petersburg Florida Stake

What are some of the traditions that help strengthen your family?

One of our favorite things to do as a family is to sit around after church and watch Church history movies. We learn a lot and come together as a family.

Michael Labusky, 18

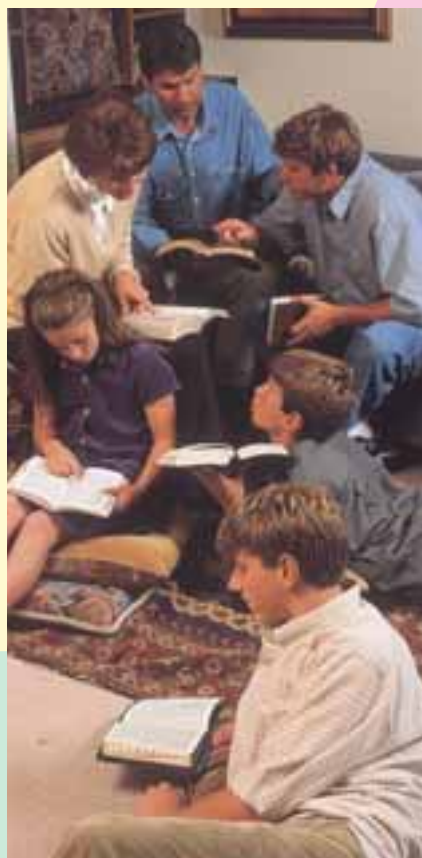
Navarre Ward, Pensacola Florida Stake

Every day before we go to school and seminary we read a scripture and pray together. We also try to make a point of eating dinner together every day. I usually hang out with my family over the weekend instead of with my friends. I love my family so much.

Leta McClean, 17

Dublin Ward, Columbus Ohio Stake

The most important tradition my family has is not on a specific date or



anything, it is just that we spend plenty of family time together. And we always have family prayer. That unites us more every day. During this family time we get a chance to express our beliefs, worries, challenges, or anything that we feel like sharing.

Lisanne Murphy, 17

Paper Mill Ward, Roswell Georgia Stake

We have family home evening every week. Also, we read our scriptures as a family whenever we can and eat dinner together every night.

Brandon McEntire, 16

Wadsworth Branch, Akron Ohio Stake

What are some ways you can stay close to brothers and sisters even if they are a lot older or younger than you?

I have three brothers and two sisters, and we try as much as possible to be together. When another sibling has an event or activity going on, we always try to be there to support him or her. Since there are so many of us, sometimes that's hard, but it's helped us stay close.

Jessie Shaw, 14

Clarksville Branch, Fort Smith Arkansas Stake

When you have questions about life, ask your older siblings. They know what you are dealing with, and it is a wonderful way to strengthen a weak relationship. We have always had open communication in our family. We are able to go to our parents or siblings with anything because we have such a strong love for one another.

Justin Hutchings, 16

Lake Villa Second Ward, Buffalo Grove Illinois Stake

I am the only child left at home, so I don't get to see a lot of my family. We talk on the phone a lot and send e-mail as often as possible. When I do see them, we just laugh and have a good time. But communicating with them is most important.

Michelle Brewer, 17

Mustang Ward, Oklahoma City Oklahoma South Stake

If they are younger siblings, you can draw closer to them by giving them the attention they desire and crave. If they are older, like my brother, you can hang out with them. But if they are away, like on a mission, you can support them and make them feel good by writing them letters of encouragement.

Douglas Allen, 17

*Spotsylvania Ward, Fredericksburg
Virginia Stake*

Why is family important to you?

I love being with my family, laughing and just having fun. We are so close. I love the fact that we can be together forever.

Emily Smith, 17

*Doylestown Ward, Philadelphia
Pennsylvania Stake*

I can always fall back on my family. Friends may not always be friends, but my family is always there.

Shannon Haight, 16

*Fayetteville Fourth Ward, Fayetteville
North Carolina Stake*

We've moved all over the country, and family is the only constant I have wherever we move.

Isaac Madsen, 17

*Cedar Valley Ward, Oklahoma City
Oklahoma Stake*

Family is the strongest unit in the Church. These are the people we will be sealed to for all eternity. We need



to strengthen our bonds with our parents and brothers and sisters so we can grow and develop into a strong family unit that will result in eternal exaltation and happiness.

Dallin Andersen, 17

*Anchorage Fifth Ward, Anchorage
Alaska Stake*

Why do you want to be with your family forever?

I want to be with my family forever because I love them, and they are a part of who I am. I can't imagine life without one of them. My family is a major reason I strive to do what is right because if I don't, I wouldn't be able to be with them forever.

Teresa John, 16

*Fayetteville Fourth Ward, Fayetteville
North Carolina Stake*

I feel the most peace, comfort, and safety when I am with my family. I know they all love me and understand me. I know they want me to be the best daughter of God I can be.

Martha Baldwin, 14

*Rockbridge Ward, Buena Vista
Virginia Stake*

Even though everyone in my family is busy with clashing schedules, my family is the place I feel I belong and feel loved and supported.

Kevin Hallam, 17

*Mount Pleasant Ward, Charleston
South Carolina Stake*

My immediate family is the only family I have who are members of the Church, so they're really important to me. I look forward to the time when we will be together forever.

Will Johnston, 15

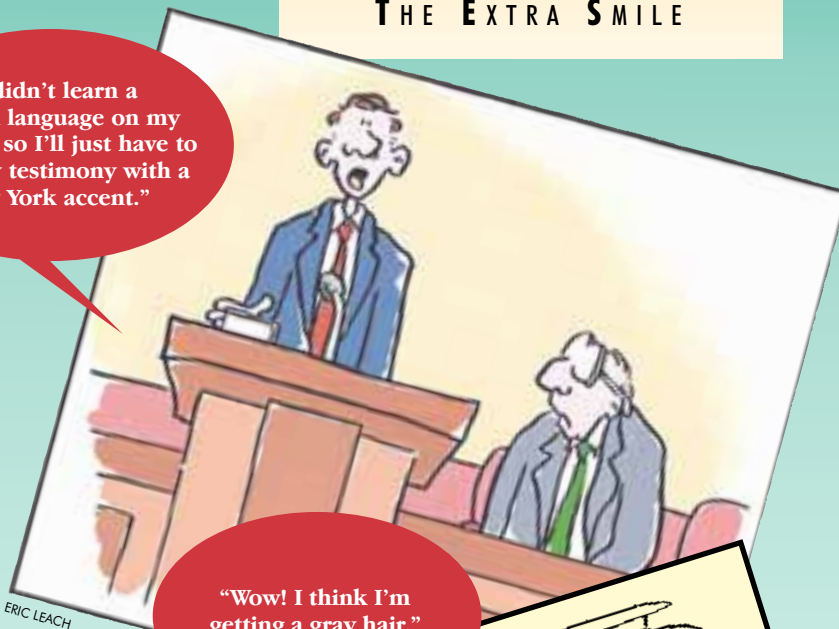
*St. Cloud Ward, Orlando Florida
South Stake*

THE FAMILY IS DIVINE

“The family is ordained of God. . . . Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

THE EXTRA SMILE

"I didn't learn a foreign language on my mission, so I'll just have to bear my testimony with a New York accent."



ERIC LEACH

"Wow! I think I'm getting a gray hair."

"Whoopee."



RYAN STOKER

"Oh for goodness' sake. First ants then bees. What's next?"



RYAN STOKER

One Sunday we held sacrament meeting during a power outage. The counselor who was conducting announced the closing hymn. He seemed confused at the sudden outbreak of laughter. We then closed by singing "The Light Divine." (*Hymns*, no. 305).

Chris Davis
Crescent Fourth Ward
Sandy, Utah

TAGALONG

My little sister always tagged along. This time I was glad she did.

BY BREIGHAN OLSEN

Please. Please. Please.”
“No. And stop following me around.”
“But I want to come with you,” she continued to beg in her six-year-old voice.

“Knock it off, Linzie. Just once I’d like to go somewhere without you coming with me.” I could feel the anger in my voice rising. I was so tired of her being my tagalong. Everywhere I went she had to come too or else she would throw the biggest tantrum. She knew that even the slightest whimper would get her anything she wanted. This time was no exception.

“Where are you going, Bree?” my mom called from the kitchen, where she was making dinner.

“I have to go to the store to get some paper for school. I’ll be gone only 10 minutes.”

“Well then you can take Linzie with you.”

“Yea! Yea! Yea!” The tears immediately ceased when Linzie realized her victory.

“Mom, she’s such a pain. Why do I always have to take her with me?”

“Because she’s your sister, that’s why.” I should have expected that one.

“Fine. Whatever. Hurry up, and get your shoes on, Linzie.” I knew I was acting like a brat, but I had hours of homework to do.

“Okay, let’s go,” Linzie said angelically.

During the drive to the store, I turned up the radio so I wouldn’t have to talk to my sister. We both stared straight forward. The store was busy, and the lines were long. All I could think about was all the homework that awaited me, and how I was going to be up past midnight

finishing it. The ride home started off as solemn as the ride to the store. I was determined to let Linzie know how annoyed I was.

“Bree, Bree,” she said timidly.

“What, Linzie?” I didn’t bother turning down the radio.

“You know why I always want to go with you everywhere?”

Her sincerity caught my attention. “No, why?”

She sat quiet for a moment before responding. “Because—because I’m gonna miss you a lot because you’re going to college soon.”

I looked at her. She was staring at me with her beautiful blue eyes. I really didn’t know what to say. “I’ll miss you too. A lot. I’ll still get to come home sometimes, though.”

“Will we be able to do stuff when you come home?”

“Of course, silly girl.”

“Good,” she said as we rounded the corner onto our street.

That was all that was said, but that day I learned a huge lesson about the importance of developing a lasting relationship with my sisters and brother—even when they’re young. It reminded me of the scripture in Mosiah 3:19: “Becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him.”

I don’t think Linzie knew the huge impact her innocent comment had on me. Now I try to be more tolerant of the things that my younger siblings do, because when I’m gone, I will miss them. **NE**

BreighAn Olsen is a member of the BYU 215th Ward, BYU 19th Stake.



JOSEPH'S



BY ELDER M. RUSSELL BALLARD

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Each person who has a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ should love and appreciate Joseph Smith Jr., for he is “the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, [who] has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it” (D&C 135:3).

The ancient prophet Nephi wrote that he was “born of goodly parents” (1 Nephi 1:1). So was the Prophet Joseph Smith; he once declared, “Words and language are inadequate to express the gratitude that I owe to God for having given me so honorable a parentage.”¹

The Prophet’s Father

The Lord foreordained his father, Joseph Smith Sr. to be one of the earthly parents of the Prophet. Joseph of Egypt prophesied that the latter-day seer whom God would

raise up to do his work would be “called Joseph” (Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:33), and his name would “be after the name of his father” (2 Nephi 3:15). The heavenly messenger Moroni admonished young Joseph to go to his father following a glorious night of sacred instruction. In Joseph’s words, this messenger “commanded me to go to my father and tell him of the vision and commandments which I had received. I obeyed; I returned to my father in the field, and rehearsed the whole matter to him. He replied to me that it was of God, and told me to go and do as commanded by the messenger” (Joseph Smith—History 1:49–50).

Joseph Smith Sr. was in tune with the Spirit of the Lord. He knew that his young son spoke the truth. He not only believed the boy’s words but encouraged him in the work he had been called to do.

Joseph Sr. endured ridicule and persecution because of his prophet son’s experiences and claims. Yet, he was unwavering in

We should show honor, respect, and gratitude to the Prophet Joseph Smith and his family for the roles they played in restoring the fulness of the gospel.

FAMILY



Despite persecution against his son, Joseph Smith Sr. not only believed young Joseph's words, he encouraged Joseph in the work he was called to do.



The Prophet's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, gave continual support and strength to her son. She was the first person with whom Joseph shared his experience in the Sacred Grove.

Lucy also faced a hostile mob, giving comfort to Joseph and Hyrum when all she could see were their hands.

his loving support and defended his son.

He saw and handled the plates of gold from which the Book of Mormon was translated and testified throughout his life to the truthfulness of that sacred book. His name remains firmly affixed, with those of the other witnesses to the Book of Mormon, in the front pages of that second witness of Jesus Christ. On one occasion he was imprisoned and told he would be released if he would deny the Book of Mormon. Not only did he not deny it, but he converted two persons during his 30-day confinement.

At the time of his death, Joseph Smith Sr. was described as “a man faithful to his God and to the Church in every situation and under all circumstances through which he was called to pass.”²

Just a few months following his passing from this life, the Lord revealed that Joseph Smith Sr. was in His presence, and “blessed and holy is he, for he is mine” (D&C 124:19). Indeed, Joseph Smith Sr. played a vital role in establishing the kingdom of God upon the earth.

The Prophet's Mother

Perhaps less visible than the Prophet's father, but equally important in shaping and influencing his life, was his mother, Lucy Mack Smith. She gave birth to 11 children and endured faithfully as all but 4 preceded her in death. During her life, she watched six of her immediate family and one grandson die as a result of ruthless mob violence and persecution.

Early in her marriage, Lucy prepared herself to raise a prophet. On one occasion she became seriously ill, and the doctors said she would die. Lucy records that she “made a solemn covenant with God that if He would let me live I would endeavor to serve him

according to the best of my abilities.” After a voice assured her that she would live, she told her mother, “The Lord will let me live, if I am faithful to the promise which I made to him, to be a comfort to my mother, my husband, and my children.”³

She gave continual encouragement, support, and strength to her son, Joseph the Prophet. His mother was the first person with whom young Joseph shared some of his momentous experiences of the Sacred Grove. Years later, he shared with her the joy and relief he felt when the Lord allowed others to view the sacred plates of gold.⁴

The Prophet's mother shared also in his sorrows, sufferings, and persecutions. One time a mob took Joseph and his brother Hyrum prisoner and threatened to shoot them. The two brothers were confined under a cloth cover in a wagon. Their courageous mother risked her life and forced her way through the hostile mob to comfort her sons. Joseph and Hyrum could not see their mother and could only extend a hand from under the confining cover. As Lucy's hand and the hands of her sons touched, the wagon drove off, literally tearing the sorrowing mother from her two sons.

Like great parents of all ages, Lucy turned to prayer for divine help to sustain her family. During the march from Ohio to Missouri known as Zion's Camp, Joseph and Hyrum were seriously ill with cholera, and their lives were almost taken. At one point, “Hyrum sprang to his feet and exclaimed, ‘Joseph, we shall return to our families. I have had an open vision, in which I saw mother kneeling under an apple tree; and she is even now asking God, in tears, to spare our lives. . . . The Spirit testifies, that her prayers . . . will be answered.’ ”⁵

Lucy's sons Joseph and Hyrum ultimately

sealed their testimonies with their blood. As the grieving mother looked upon their lifeless remains, she cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken this family!” As a kind blessing to a faithful mother, the Lord softened her grief and granted to her the peace that only God can bestow. A voice spoke to her soul: “I have taken them to myself, that they might have rest.”⁶

The Prophet’s Brother Hyrum

Hyrum Smith, older brother, friend, and mentor to the Prophet, showed absolute, unequivocal love, loyalty, and allegiance to the Lord and to his younger brother, Joseph. Their brotherhood may be unsurpassed. The scriptures tell us, “In life they were not divided, and in death they were not separated!” (D&C 135:3).

Throughout Hyrum’s life, he guarded his younger brother as tenderly as if the Prophet had been his own



son. Joseph surely knew the value of true and faithful associates because he had trusted many who later proved to be false.

Hyrum was unwavering, even in the face of death. Following one period of great deprivation and persecution, he wrote:

“I thank God that I felt a determination to die, rather than deny the things which my eyes had seen, which my hands had handled [the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated], and which I had borne testimony to, wherever my lot had been cast; and I can assure my beloved brethren that I was enabled to bear as strong a testimony, when nothing but death presented itself, as ever I did in my life.”⁷

From the Prophet Joseph and Hyrum, we can learn many valuable lessons. While standing in Nauvoo at the foot of the headstone of these noble men, I had the impression that they would have me counsel all members of the Church to remain anchored to the basic and simple principles of the gospel. Study the scriptures, look to the leaders of the Church for guidance in these troubled times. Be careful of the schisms, divisions, and contentions that are among us today. Keep the commandments so the Holy Ghost will be with you in your search for truth and knowledge.

I bear humble witness that Joseph Smith is one of the great, noble ones to come to the earth. He and his brother Hyrum deserve our honor, respect, and gratitude as do other members of their family who assisted with the restoration of the fulness of the gospel. Jesus, our Lord and Savior, stands at the head of the Church. Our Heavenly Father lives and watches over each of His children. To this I humbly testify. **NE**

From an October 1991 general conference address.

NOTES

1. *History of the Church*, 5:126.
2. *History of the Church*, 4:192.
3. *History of Joseph Smith, by His Mother, Lucy Mack Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley, 1979, 34.
4. See *History of Joseph Smith*, 152.
5. See *History of Joseph Smith*, 229.
6. See *History of Joseph Smith*, 324.
7. *Times and Seasons*, Dec. 1839, 23.





ANOTHER MOTHER

I did not want some lady trying to take the place of my mom. Nobody could take her place.

BY TRACIE HOHL

I heard the garage door open, and I knew what he would tell me. I lay quietly in bed. My father's figure appeared in the doorway.

"Tracie, are you awake?" My heart was breaking as I felt my dad sit on the edge of my bed. "Lynn and I are going to get married," he said. I was silent as he tried to explain.

"This does not mean that I love your mom any less. I know it will be hard, but I need you to be a good example to your sisters." His sentences swirled around my mind, blurring into a mass of tears, weighing harder and harder on my heart.

"Good night, Tracie. I love you."

As he left, my eyes overflowed with tears. My mind wouldn't stop spinning. Why did my dad have to get married again? We were doing fine. Grandma didn't mind helping us out. Mom wouldn't want him to remarry. I didn't want a stepsister my age. I have only one mom. I will be loyal!

Was I disloyal to try to love a new stepmother and stepsisters? I didn't know if it was possible for our two families to blend.

I was eight years old when my mother died of cancer, and it changed me. I had always been shy, but my mother's death caused me to turn completely inward. My friends distanced themselves from me. Home was my only safe place, and in it I grew up quickly as I became the part-time caretaker of my two little sisters. I must have blocked some things out because there's not much I remember. I do know, however, that I became a hardened little girl.

It was during that stage that my dad told me he was inviting Lynn and her daughters to our house for a visit. They were family friends, so my little sisters were excited to play with Lynn's two girls, Meghan and Paige. I hated the idea from the start. I suspected my dad's intentions, and I decided I was opposed to the idea. I was determined that I would not forget my mother.

I felt betrayed that my dad would even consider remarriage. How could Mom's memory live on with another woman in the house? I thought all my dad's love would go to Lynn, and she would try to take Mom's place.

I was wrong, and I am constantly amazed at how my views over the years have

changed. It has been a long, hard process, but it has contributed a great deal to my character and has helped sculpt me into the person I am.

Learning to Love

The first thing I needed to do was learn to love Lynn. I thought she was a nice lady, but that was where it stopped. She tried to tell me what to do, and even worse than that, she loved hugs and kisses. I did not want to kiss her and went to great efforts, at least at first, to avoid it.

Lynn and my mom are about as different as two people could be. They were actually best friends, and where one had strengths, the other had weaknesses. I have many memories of my mother waking up at five in the morning to read her scriptures and bake bread. She was friendly, but at the same time a bit shy. Lynn was the bold, outgoing one who loved talking and meeting people. This was something I had to deal with; she was just so different.

I think it was these differences, though, that made it possible for me to love her. I had respected Lynn from the beginning because she was my father's new wife, and I wasn't a rebellious child. But it was different when I started to love her. I saw that she was good to us. She drove us places and helped us with our problems. It was nice to have a woman in the house, especially during my early teenage years. She made my

think it was their differences that made it possible for me to love this new woman in my life. Now I love both my moms and am proud to be a little like both of them.

dad more happy and relaxed than he'd been in a long time, and it was nice not to have so much responsibility for my sisters. But there was still a wall between us. I loved and appreciated her as a person, but she wasn't my mom.

Over time, Lynn's role in my life changed. I matured, and Lynn became a great help to me. She loved it when I talked to her. Sometimes I would just plop down on her bed and talk to her for a long time.

I really started to trust Lynn, to depend on her.

I now consider Lynn my second mother. The wall is gone. I used to think if I loved Lynn, my love for my mom would decrease; but just the opposite has happened. I love them both and appreciate their strengths and the many things they have taught me. I don't compare them since they are both so loving and kind and have so many wonderful qualities. It took me a long time to admit I love Lynn and my stepsisters, but since I did, I have realized that love is sweet and powerful.

I love both my moms, and I am proud I am a little like both of them. I feel at peace, because I know the Lord's plan for my family has been fulfilled. I have grown so much through these experiences and rejoice that I have learned to accept different people, to express myself to others, and most importantly that I now cherish a person I vowed I would never love. **NE**

Tracie Hohl is a member of the New Canaan Ward, Yorktown New York Stake.



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Personal Improvement

• Make a point of praying for specific things in your personal prayers. Read "All I Asked For" (page 11), and think about one idea or question you have. Study the issue out in your mind, then offer sincere prayers in faith.

• In "What a B(r)other" (page 24), the author discovers that her brother has helped to strengthen their relationship through small acts of service. Think of one way you can serve one of your siblings or a friend, perhaps by doing something as simple as spending some time with him or her.

Young Men and Young Women Activity Ideas

• Your Mutual nights can help foster family togetherness. Read "Sister Connection" on page 26. Then plan a night of fun games. Consider inviting younger brothers and sisters, who are not yet old enough to attend Mutual, to attend on this special night.

• Preparation is the key to success in most aspects of life, and Personal Progress is no exception. The Idea List, "Plan Now for Then" (page 7), suggests several ways to prepare for your success. Use these ideas at your next Personal Progress night to help the girls in your class get on track.

• Stephanie Spann's grandfather, who received the Winter Olympics torch, passed the torch to Stephanie (see "Spanning the Generations," page 20). For your activity, talk about your families' traditions. Then make a "torch" out of tinfoil. For the flame, write on slips of yellow paper traditions you want to pass on. Pass the torch around, placing the yellow papers in it.

Family Home Evening Ideas

• Read President Gordon B. Hinckley's article, "Your Family," (page 4). Then choose one of his ideas as a family "theme." Base your lessons for the month on this theme.

• Many of the articles in the *New Era* this month are about family unity, harmony, and happiness. Read this issue, then choose the article you feel best applies to your family situation. Choose one or two favorite quotes from Church leaders in "Our Greatest Happiness" (page 12) to share with your lesson.

Seminary Devotional Idea

• Ask class members to list ways they honor their mothers and fathers. When they're done making their lists, read aloud the short article, "All I Asked For" (page 11). Remind the class that they have a Heavenly Father who loves them. Read Mosiah 13:20 to the class and discuss why it's important to respect your parents even if you disagree at times.

READERS' RESPONSES HELP

I enjoy reading Q&A. A previous edition had a question about cheating (Sept. 2001). I was faced with a similar problem, where one of my classmates wanted to copy my test answers. So I was reading these young people's responses to the question, and I took some of their advice. I prayed about it, and then I spoke to my friend, telling her that I would not break the commandment but instead I would help her as best as I could. Your magazine has not only helped me but also a lot of teenagers who were faced with the same problem.

*Oddett Allicock
West Coast Demerara, Guyana*

WRITTEN FOR US

Earlier this year, I was diagnosed with lupus, and I was put into the intensive care unit at the medical center. As I lay motionless in bed, attached to about six different IV's, my older sister and my mom would read to me. My sister read the *New Era* to me. We all were amazed because the stories seemed like they were written especially for me and my family at that time. "To Be Healed," "Rising above the Blues," "Reach Out and Climb," and "Be Prayerful" were some that touched me a lot (see April 2002).

I am doing much better now, thanks to the gospel and priesthood blessings.

*Chandra Painter
Ogden, Utah*

CALM AND INSPIRATION

I wanted to thank you for printing the story "Everyone But Me" (April 2002). I read it on the bus where many profane words are being used. It calmed me to know that my Savior was with me. I love to read the *New Era* every month because it gives such inspiration to me.

*Paige Irwin
North Augusta, South Carolina*

"After I read this article, I fell on my knees and communed with my Heavenly Father."

BEING PRAYERFUL

Thank you for printing the article "Be Prayerful" (April 2002). I hadn't been praying correctly, but after I read this article, I fell on my knees and communed with my Heavenly Father. I felt that I got this prayer thing correct. Thank you especially for the "Righteous desires of the heart" part of the article.

*Julie Christiansen
Idaho Falls, Idaho*

WHOLESOME ADVICE

I was pleasantly surprised to see "Of All Things: A Word to the Wise" (Aug. 2002) about type 2 diabetes. A balanced diet is important. But the phrase "lots of whole grains" may lead youth to believe that eating lots of bread is good for you, which in many cases is the main culprit in this problem. Youth are eating too many foods that are white-flour based. To avoid major health challenges in the future, the emphasis needs to be on eating a diet balanced with proteins, vegetables, fruits, and limited whole grains, plus a regular exercise program.

*Ann Curtis Packard
Del Mar, California*

HELPFUL MAGAZINE

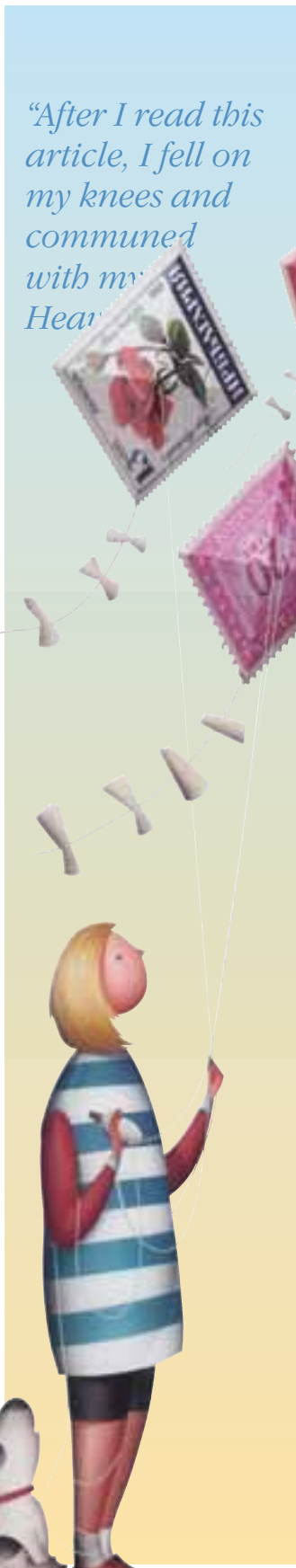
I am always grateful to receive the *New Era*. This magazine helps me so much. It makes me feel not alone, that many kids are facing the same challenges too. Many articles help me with certain challenges. I will always look forward to receiving your magazine.

*Eric Espinel
Draper, Utah*

We love hearing from you. Write us at
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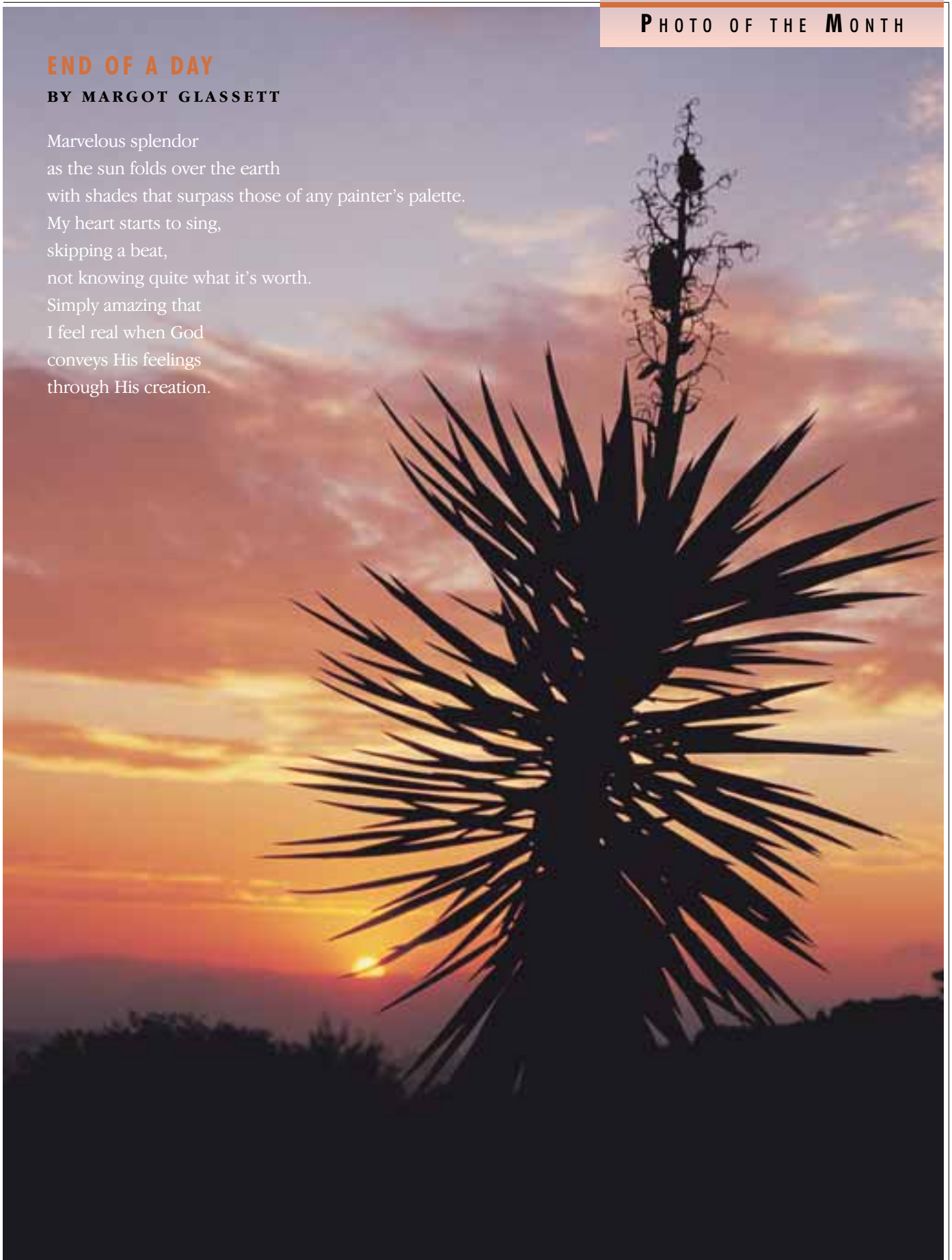
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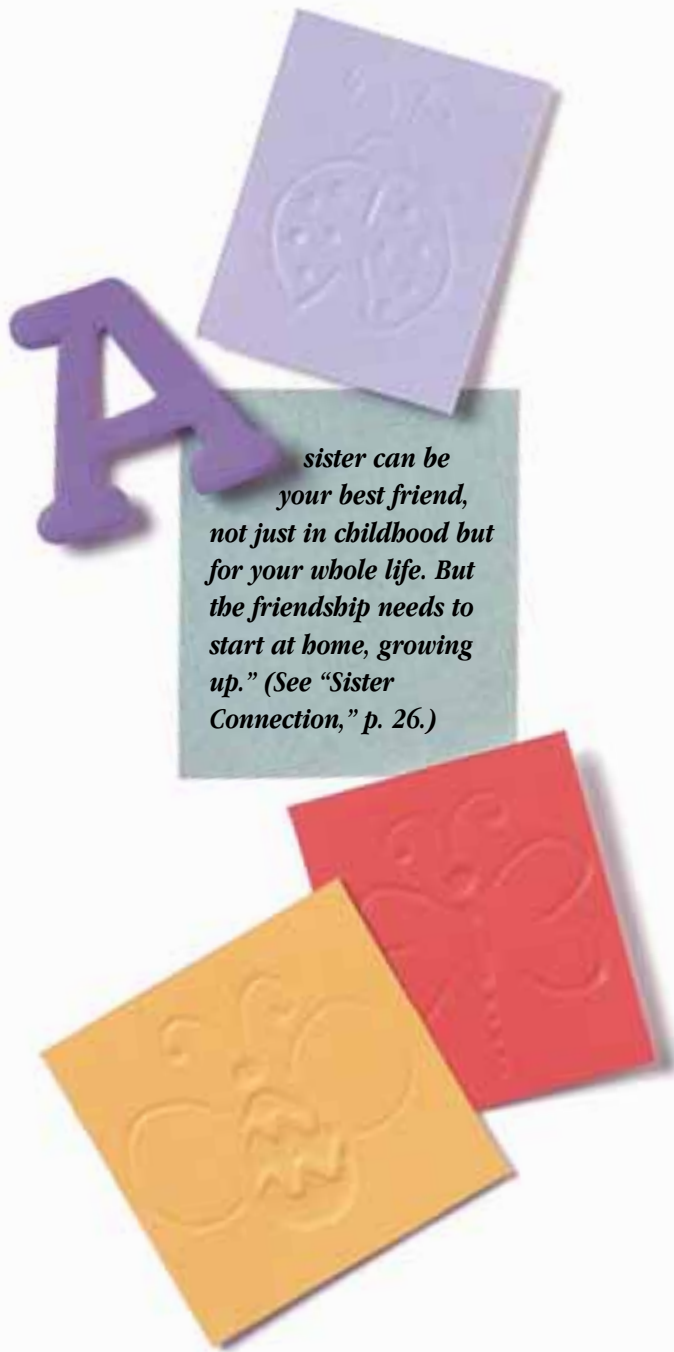


END OF A DAY

BY MARGOT GLASSETT

Marvelous splendor
as the sun folds over the earth
with shades that surpass those of any painter's palette.
My heart starts to sing,
skipping a beat,
not knowing quite what it's worth.
Simply amazing that
I feel real when God
conveys His feelings
through His creation.





*sister can be
your best friend,
not just in childhood but
for your whole life. But
the friendship needs to
start at home, growing
up.” (See “Sister
Connection,” p. 26.)*

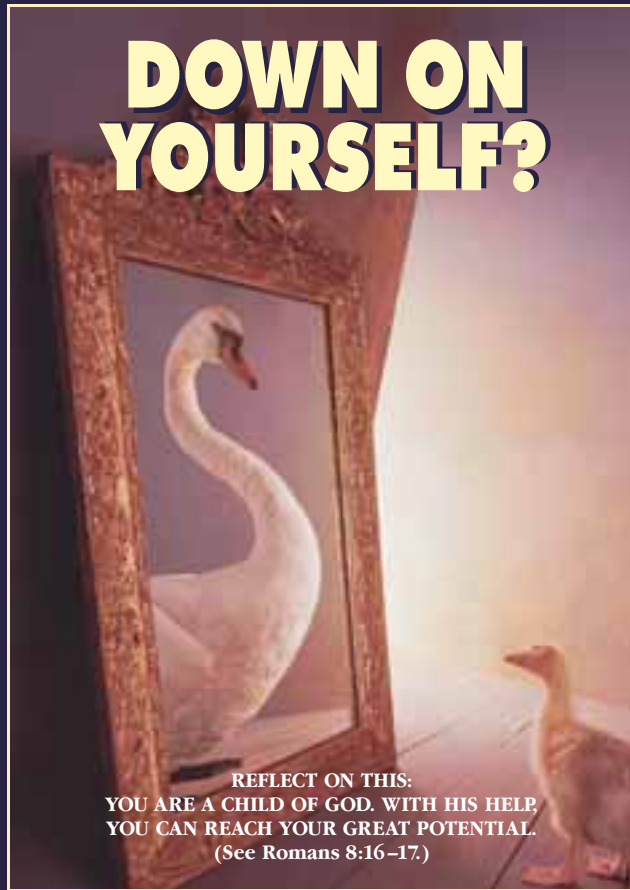
REACH UP



LET HIM LIFT YOU.
(See James 4:10.)

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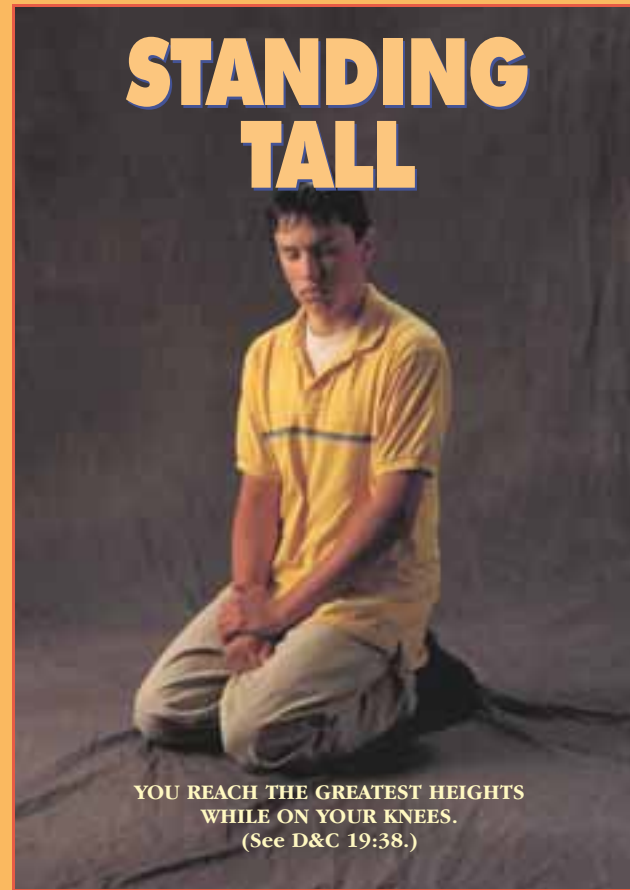
DOWN ON YOURSELF?



REFLECT ON THIS:
YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD. WITH HIS HELP,
YOU CAN REACH YOUR GREAT POTENTIAL.
(See Romans 8:16-17.)

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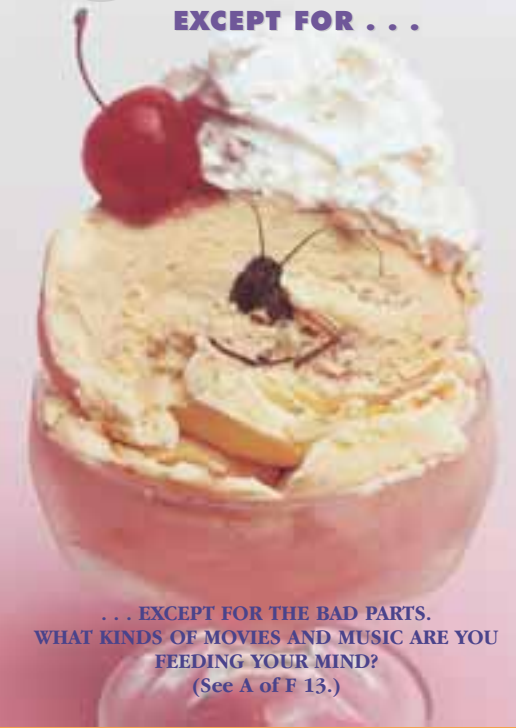
STANDING TALL



YOU REACH THE GREATEST HEIGHTS
WHILE ON YOUR KNEES.
(See D&C 19:38.)

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IT'S GREAT EXCEPT FOR . . .



. . . EXCEPT FOR THE BAD PARTS.
WHAT KINDS OF MOVIES AND MUSIC ARE YOU
FEEDING YOUR MIND?
(See A of F 13.)

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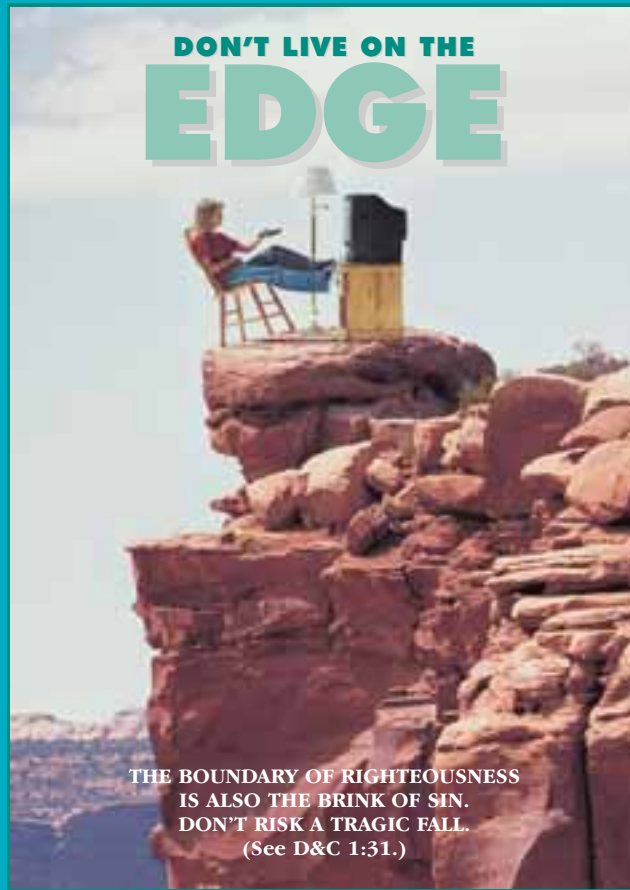
DON'T TRY BENDING THE RULES



SURE, YOU CAN BEND THE RULES,
BUT YOU END UP GOING IN
THE WRONG DIRECTION.
(See 2 Nephi 9:41.)

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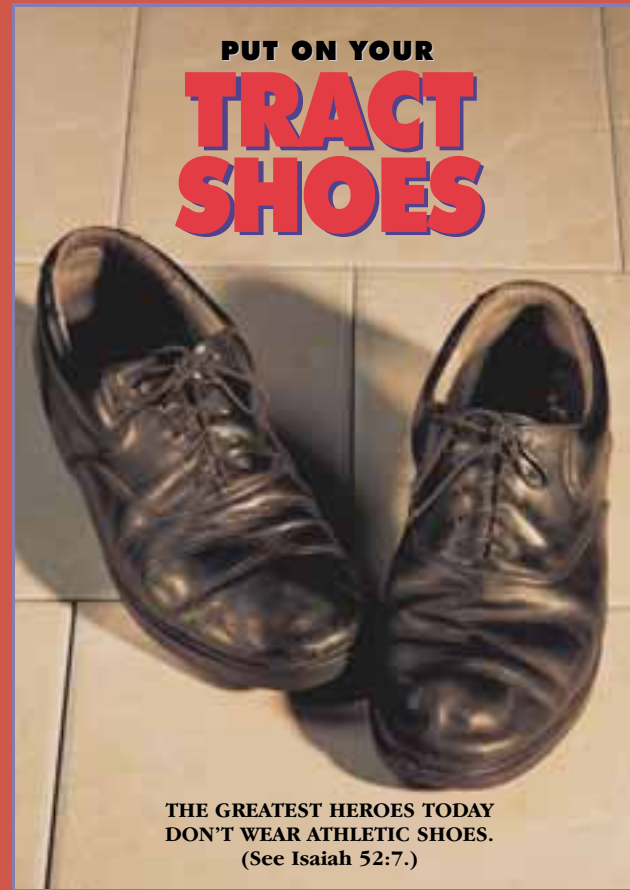
DON'T LIVE ON THE EDGE



THE BOUNDARY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
IS ALSO THE BRINK OF SIN.
DON'T RISK A TRAGIC FALL.
(See D&C 1:31.)

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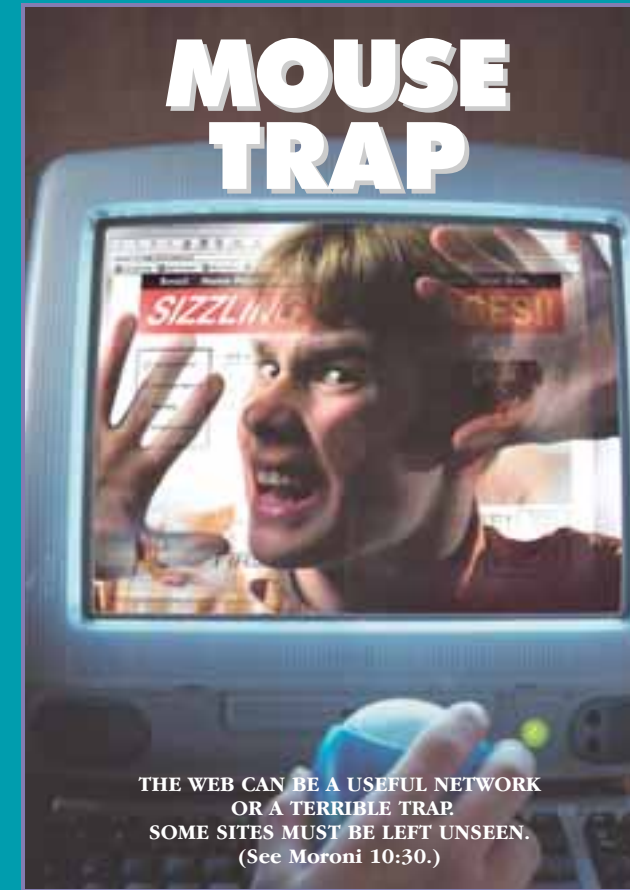
PUT ON YOUR TRACT SHOES



THE GREATEST HEROES TODAY
DON'T WEAR ATHLETIC SHOES.
(See Isaiah 52:7.)

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MOUSE TRAP



THE WEB CAN BE A USEFUL NETWORK
OR A TERRIBLE TRAP.
SOME SITES MUST BE LEFT UNSEEN.
(See Moroni 10:30.)

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