

THE

NewEra



JUNE

2005

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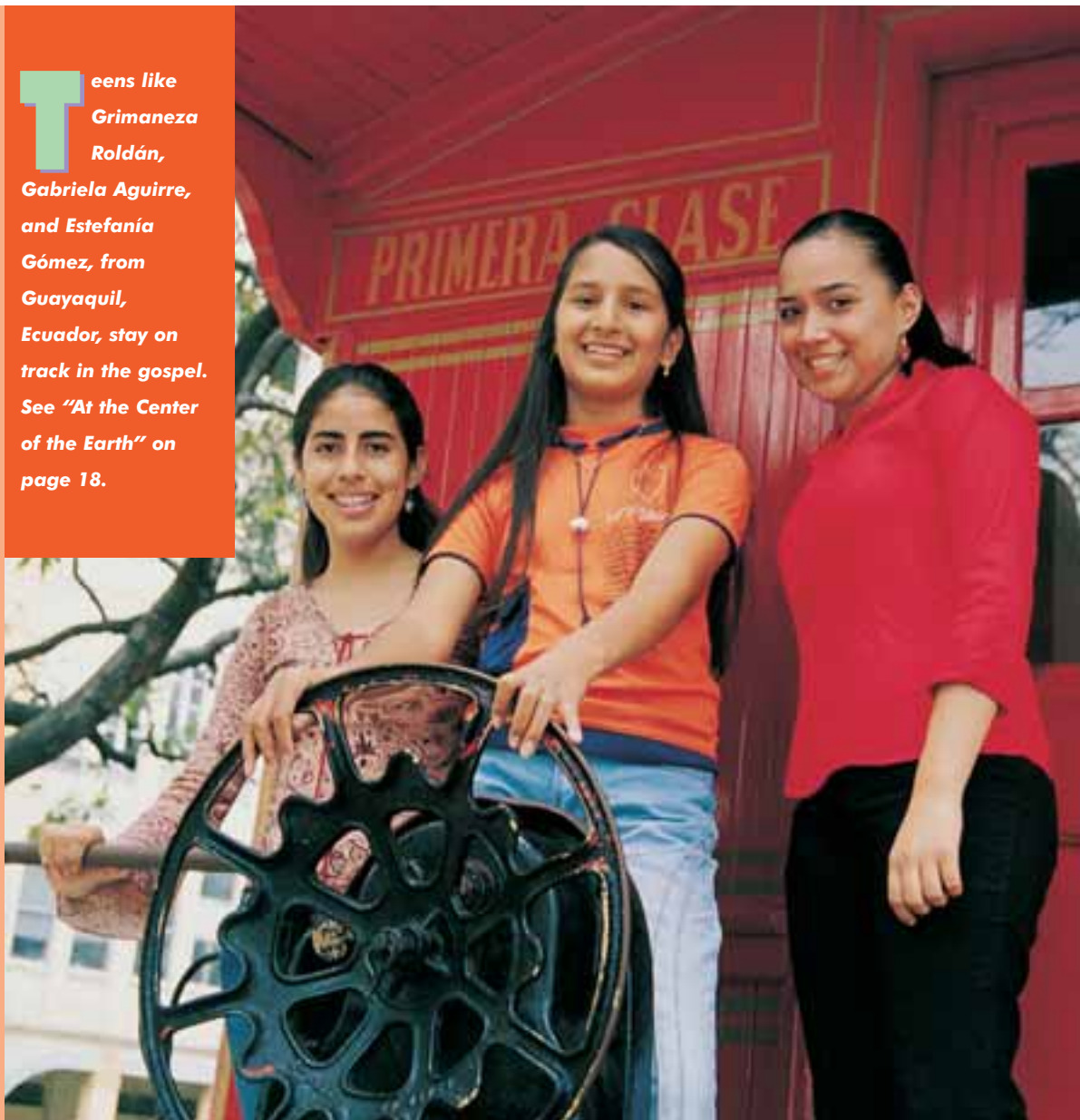
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Ecuador, literally strad-
dle the equator. See "At
the Center of the Earth"
on p. 18.*

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*Marvin K. Gardner
(front) and Craig
Dimond (back)*

Teens like
**Grimaneza
Roldán,
Gabriela Aguirre,
and Estefanía
Gómez, from
Guayaquil,
Ecuador, stay on
track in the gospel.
See "At the Center
of the Earth" on
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MAKING HARD

BY ELDER RICHARD G. SCOTT

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Determine now to always do what is right, and let the consequence follow. The consequence will always be for your best good.

To qualify for inspiration and direction from the Lord throughout your life, decide now to do what the Lord wants you to do—even though it may appear to be a sacrifice or very challenging. I have learned from personal experience how making the right decision at a critical time can bless your entire life. With a sincere desire to help you gain confidence in your ability to consistently make right choices, I will share a personal experience that taught me important lessons.

The Lord Began to Bless Me

After I graduated from college, served a mission, and got married, my wife and I moved to the eastern United States, where I found a job. Through a series of what I now see as unusual experiences, I was interviewed to have a job as an engineer in a new and exciting activity: the design and development of nuclear power plants for submarines. As I look back, it should have been virtually impossible for me to get that job. There were more experienced people applying for it. It just worked out that the Lord helped me.

That shows us that the Lord will bless our lives if we follow His promptings and do what the prophets say. We must exercise

courage and faith and choose the right, even though many around us are not.

After 11 exciting years of working at that job, I was in a meeting one night with those developing an essential part of the nuclear power plant. My secretary came in and said, “There’s a man on the phone who says if I tell you his name you’ll come to the phone.”

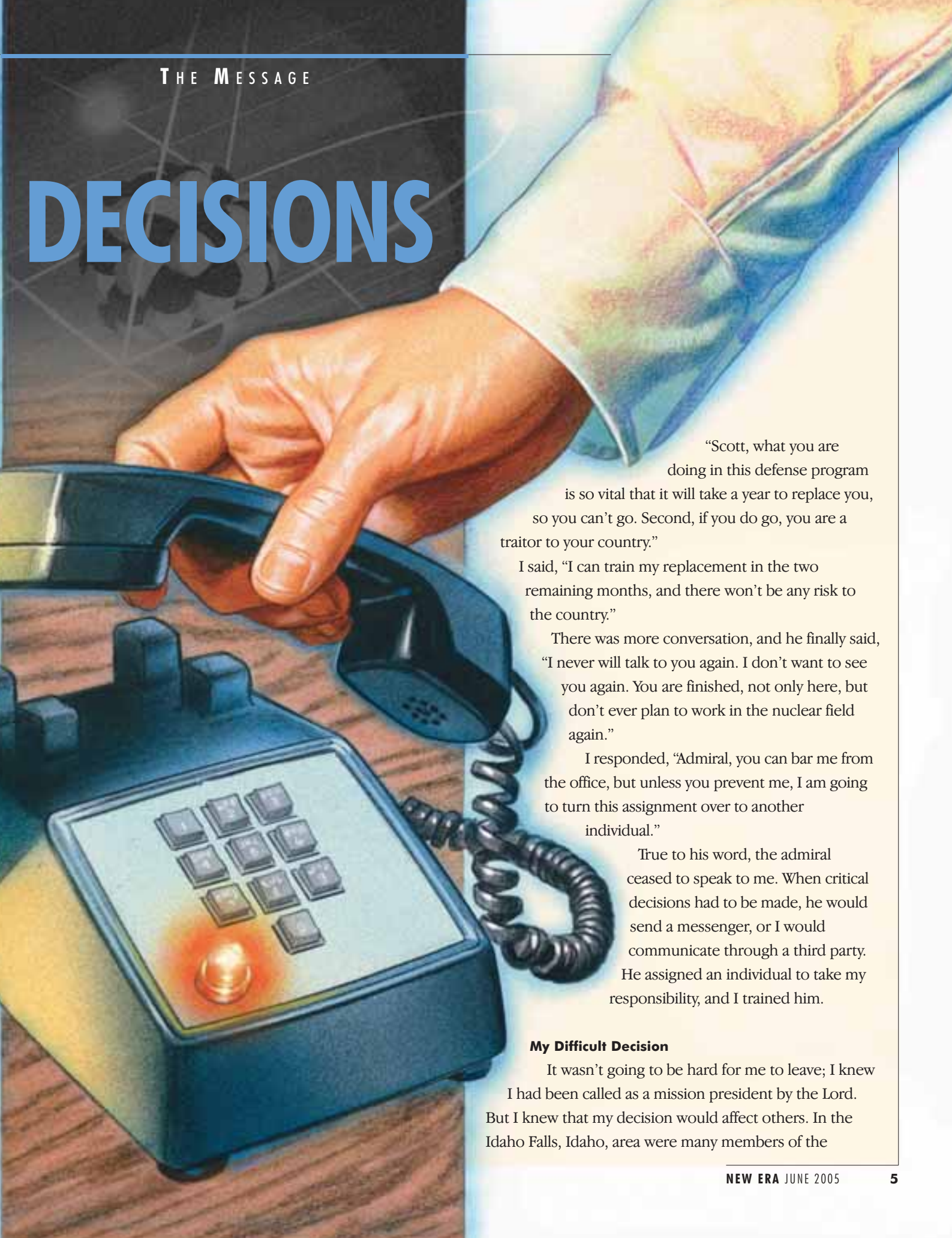
I said, “What’s his name?”

She said, “Harold B. Lee.”

I said, “He’s right.” I took the phone call. Elder Lee, who later became President of the Church, asked if he could see me that very night. He was in New York City, and I was in Washington, D.C. I flew up to meet him, and we had an interview that led to my call to be a mission president.

The head of the program I was working for was Admiral Hyman Rickover, a hard-working, demanding individual. I knew him well enough that I felt I needed to tell him as soon as possible that I was being called. As I explained the mission call to him and that it would mean I would have to quit my job, he became rather upset. He said some unrepeatable things, broke the paper tray on his desk, and in the comments that followed clearly established two points:

DECISIONS



“Scott, what you are doing in this defense program is so vital that it will take a year to replace you, so you can’t go. Second, if you do go, you are a traitor to your country.”

I said, “I can train my replacement in the two remaining months, and there won’t be any risk to the country.”

There was more conversation, and he finally said, “I never will talk to you again. I don’t want to see you again. You are finished, not only here, but don’t ever plan to work in the nuclear field again.”

I responded, “Admiral, you can bar me from the office, but unless you prevent me, I am going to turn this assignment over to another individual.”

True to his word, the admiral ceased to speak to me. When critical decisions had to be made, he would send a messenger, or I would communicate through a third party. He assigned an individual to take my responsibility, and I trained him.

My Difficult Decision

It wasn’t going to be hard for me to leave; I knew I had been called as a mission president by the Lord. But I knew that my decision would affect others. In the Idaho Falls, Idaho, area were many members of the



Church whose jobs depended upon working in the nuclear program. I didn't want to cause them harm. I didn't know what to do. My heart kept saying, "Is this going to turn out all right, or will somebody be innocently hurt who depends on our program for livelihood?"

As I prayed and pondered about it, I had a feeling about the hymn "Do What Is Right." A line from the hymn would come to mind: "Do what is right; let the consequence follow." Other words from the hymn were reinforcing such as "God will protect you; then do what is right!" (*Hymns*, no. 237).

My last day in the office I asked for an appointment with the admiral. His secretary gasped. I went with a copy of the Book of Mormon in my hand. He looked at me and said, "Sit down, Scott, what do you have? I have tried every way I can to force you to change. What is it you have?" There followed a very interesting, quiet conversation. There was more listening this time.

He said he would read the Book of Mormon. Then something happened I never thought would occur. He added, "When you come back from the mission, I want you to call me. There will be a job for you."

Your Difficult Decisions

As a youth, you will have challenges and hard decisions to make throughout your life. For a young man, your first hard decision may be whether you should be a missionary or not. That is not really a question. The Lord has indicated a mission is a privilege and responsibility. What's needed is to live worthy to serve as a missionary, to understand the teachings of the Lord, particularly the message of the Restoration, and to realize that you'll be able to bless many lives if you forget yourself in the service of the Lord.

As a mission president, I saw how young men and women were given opportunities that caused them to grow enormously while they richly blessed the lives of others. The missionaries who found the work easiest had studied the scriptures and

internalized the gospel message.

Because of the missionaries' willingness to make the difficult decision to give up things that would appear attractive to teenagers, the Lord gave them opportunities to serve and, later, wonderful companions in marriage. They became outstanding servants of God because of their discipline, hard work, and trust in the Lord. A significant number of them have been leaders in the Church, and they are truly outstanding in their professions.

For Your Good

Determine now to always do what is right, and let the consequence follow. The consequence will always be for your best good. You will learn that it is easiest over the long run to stand for what is right and do the difficult thing to begin with. Once you take that position, following through is not too hard.

I have never been sorry when I stood for what was right—even against severe criticism. As you learn that truth, you will also discover that when you are obedient, you will be inspired to know what to do and have the capacity to do it.

With all of the love in my heart, I ask you to decide to keep the standards of the Lord. Live so that the Holy Ghost can inspire you to consistently do what is right. I testify that, as a result, your worthy dreams or something even better will be yours.

Your Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son love you. They want your happiness more than you can now possibly know. They will help you attain that happiness as you steadfastly do all you can to obey the commandments. **NE**

Parts of this article were taken from "Do What Is Right," Ensign, June 1997, 51–55.

DECIDING ON A MISSION

BY ISAÍ LIMÓN TORRES



When I was young, my family and my Primary teachers asked me if I was going to go on a mission when I was older. I always said yes. When I was 12 years old, I was ordained to the office of deacon. My leaders started saying that I would be going on a mission in just seven years. It seemed so far away.

When I was ordained a teacher, the reminders of an upcoming mission became more frequent. When I was ordained a priest, they became even more frequent. I started to get worried because I had only three years left.

I liked the idea of going on a mission, as some of my older brothers had done. But

the thought of being away from my family for two years in another part of the world was frightening. I realized that I was afraid to go on a mission because I didn't have a strong desire to go.

I told Francisca, my sister, about my problem, and she sat down next to me and said, "Isaí, I understand what you're saying, and I have just two things to say to you. The first is that a mission is where people can have the Spirit 100 percent of the time when their eye is single to the glory of God. The second thing is to ask the Lord to help your desire to go on a mission grow. The Lord will help you."

I followed her advice and started to pray that my desire to serve a mission would become strong.

April 6, 2000, was a day of decision for me because that was the day my home teaching companion left to go on his mission. I went to the airport to see him off. When he got on the plane, I felt a nervous excitement about doing the same thing. But

instead of feeling afraid, I had a feeling of peace. I concluded that these feelings were the answer to my prayers. I knew the Lord wanted me to serve a mission. From that day on, I had a firm desire to go on a mission when I was 19.

I was called to serve in the California San Jose Mission, and I have just recently returned. My years there were the best of my life. I found that even though I was far away from my family, when I had hard times or needed help, the Spirit of the Lord comforted and helped me. I came to know and love my Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. I could say with certainty that the Book of Mormon is true. My testimony of living prophets and of the Restoration grew. I came to love the people I was serving. And I learned that the gift of tongues is real—because I learned to speak and teach in English.

What I thought would be a big sacrifice became the greatest blessing in my life. **NE**

Isai Limón Torres is a member of the Matamoros First Ward, Matamoros Mexico Stake.

GET ME OUT

BY KEITH R. WATERS

I didn't want to go where my friends were going, but I couldn't come up with an excuse they would accept.

I guess I knew it would happen sooner or later. You know, have one of those experiences you only hear about in Sunday School or seminary lessons—the “what would you do if . . .” kind. It happened to me during the summer following my high school graduation.

One evening, two friends and I went to see a movie. It was almost midnight when the movie let out. On the way to the parking lot, one of my friends suggested we head to another theater to watch an X-rated movie scheduled to begin about 30 minutes later. My other friend quickly agreed.

I wasn't tempted to go; I knew I would not go. But I was not sure how I would get out of going. One excuse after another flashed through my mind. None of them sounded convincing to me, and I was sure they would not convince my friends. I thought about saying I wasn't feeling well—and at that point, I wasn't! In the end, I simply said I did not want to go.

My friends tried their best to persuade me. Among other things, they said if they took me all the way home, they would be late to the other movie. Thinking fast, I told them I had a friend who lived just around the corner. I said they could take me there.

“What friend?” they asked.

“Just a guy I know,” I answered.

“Who is he, and what's his name?”

“His name is Bill.” I was sure my friends were not buying this. I cleared my throat and swallowed hard.

They persisted. “Ah, he won't be up this late. Just come

with us,” they said.

“He'll be up,” I said, hoping I was right.

My friends finally agreed to drive by Bill's home, and if the lights were on they would stop and let me out. Otherwise, they were taking me with them.

A few minutes later, we arrived at Bill's house. What a relief! The lights were on. I got out of the car and went to the door. My friends waited to see if someone would answer. I knocked, and after what seemed like an eternity, Bill opened the door. I quickly explained what was happening and asked if I could call my dad and wait inside for him to pick me up. Bill agreed and practically pulled me into the house as I waved my friends on their way.

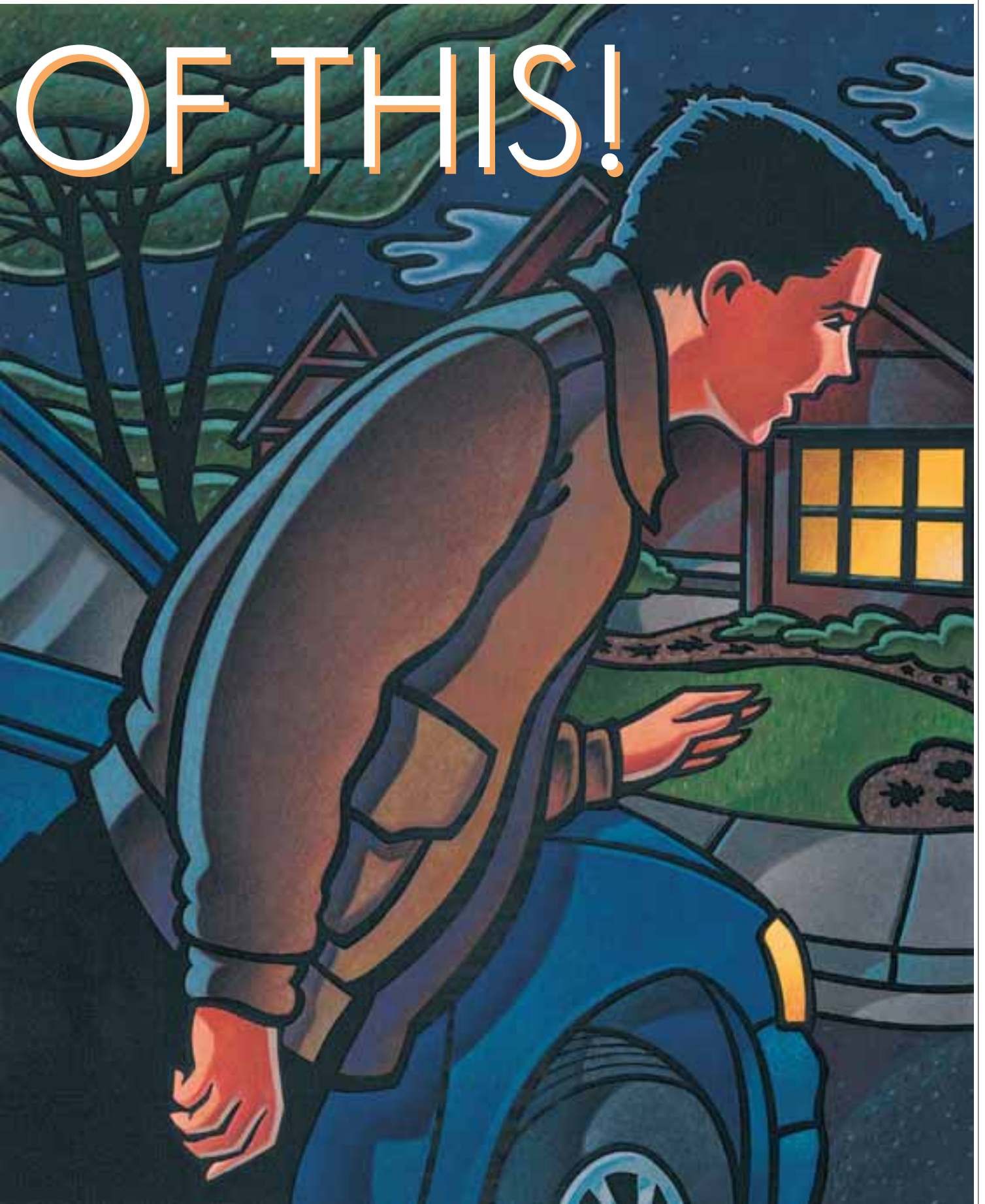
While we waited for my dad, Bill told me he had decided to watch television for a few minutes before going to bed. “Otherwise,” he said, “I would have been in bed a long time ago.”

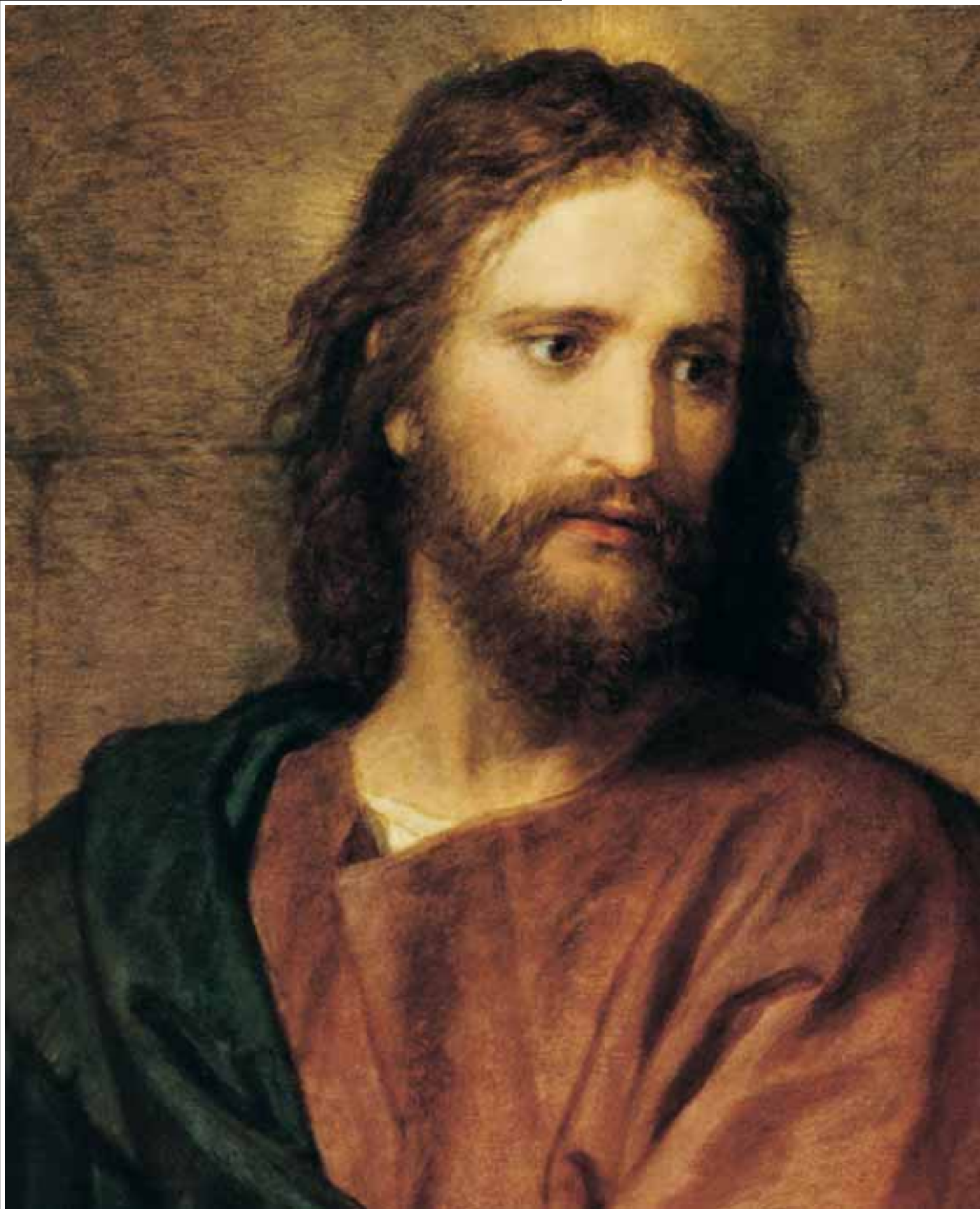
It wasn't long before my dad came to take me home. As we drove, my dad said if I were ever in trouble like that again, he would drive across the state in the middle of the night to get me out of the situation.

That's probably a pretty good place to end one of these Sunday School stories. But here's just one more thing. You see, before that night I had never referred to my friend Bill Cantrell by his first name. I had always called him Bishop Cantrell. **NE**

Keith R. Waters is a member of the Goldenrod Ward, Orlando Florida Stake.

OF THIS!





KNOW WHAT WE BELIEVE

BY PRESIDENT SPENCER W. KIMBALL (1895–1985)

Twelfth President of the Church

This article is the first in a series on the Articles of Faith. In future issues, look for the “Articles of Faith” label at the top.

Some years ago a young Primary boy was on a train going to California in the days when we traveled on trains. He was all alone. He sat near the window watching the telephone poles go by. Across the aisle from him was a gentleman who also was going to California. The attention of the gentleman was called to this very young boy traveling all alone without friends or relatives. He was neatly dressed and well-behaved. And this gentleman was quite impressed with him.

Finally, after some time, the gentleman crossed the aisle and sat down by the young man and said to him, “Hello, young man, where are you going?”

He said, “I am going to Los Angeles.”

“Do you have relatives there?”

The boy said, “I have some relatives there. I am going to visit my grandparents. They will meet me at the station, and I will stay with them a few days during the school vacation.”

The next questions were “Where did you come from?” and “Where do you live?”

And the boy said, “Salt Lake City, Utah.”
“Oh, then,” said the gentleman, “you must be a Mormon.”

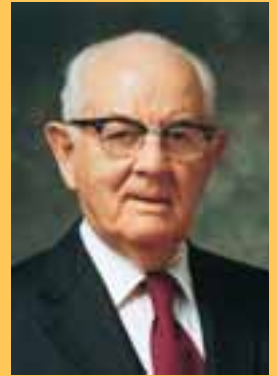
And the boy said, “Yes, I am.” There was pride in his voice.

The gentleman said, “Well, that’s interesting. I’ve wondered about the Mormons and what they believe. I’ve been through their beautiful city; I’ve noticed the beautiful buildings, the treelined streets, the lovely homes, the beautiful rose and flower gardens, but I’ve never stopped to find out what makes them as they are. I wish I knew what they believe.”

And the boy said to him, “Well, sir, I can tell you what they believe. ‘We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:1).

The businessman was a bit surprised but listened intently, and the boy continued, “ ‘We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:2).

And the traveling companion thought,



You are always prepared with a sermon when you know the Articles of Faith.



CHRIST ORDAINING THE TWELVE APOSTLES, BY HARRY ANDERSON, MAY NOT BE COPIED

We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth” (Articles of Faith 1:6).



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

“This is rather unusual for a mere boy to know these important things.”

The boy went on: “ ‘We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:3). And the gentleman was amazed at the knowledge and understanding of a mere boy—he was yet to be a Scout. But he continued and gave the fourth article of faith and said, “ ‘We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.’ ”

“That is wonderful,” said the gentleman. “I am amazed that you know so well the doctrines of your church. I commend you.”

With a good start and with encouragement, Johnny continued. “ ‘We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who

are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:5).

“That’s very solid doctrine, my boy,” the gentleman said. “I am curious now to know how they get called of God. I can understand how they would receive the call and be established with the laying on of hands, but I wonder who has the authority to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.”

They discussed the matter of calling and sustaining and laying on of hands. Then the lad said, “Would you like to know more?”

The gentleman thought that was very unusual for a boy in these tender years to know what the Church taught, and he said, “Yes, go on.”

So Johnny quoted, “ ‘We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:6).

That brought some other discussion. “You mean that your church has Apostles such as James and John and Peter and Paul, and prophets such as Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and Daniel, and also evangelists?”

And the boy responded quickly, “Yes, even evangelists. We call them patriarchs, and they are appointed in all parts of the Church where there are stakes. And by

inspiration they give to all the members of the Church, as required, what is called a patriarchal blessing. I have already had my patriarchal blessing, and I read it frequently. Now we have 12 Apostles who have the same calling and the same authority as given to the Apostles in the days of old.”

The gentleman came back with these questions: “Do you speak in tongues? Do you believe in revelations and prophecies?”

And the boy brightened up as he quoted, “‘We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:7).

The gentleman gasped. “This sounds like you believe in the Bible!”

And the boy repeated again, “We do. ‘We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:8).

The gentleman discerned that we

WHO WROTE THE ARTICLES OF FAITH?

Joseph Smith did, two years before his death, in a letter to a newspaper editor, John Wentworth. Mr. Wentworth had asked for information about the Church. The Prophet Joseph wrote to him about the First Vision, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the organization of the Church, and the persecution Church members faced. The Prophet finished the letter by listing 13 of our key beliefs, which are now called the Articles of Faith.

To read the Prophet Joseph’s entire letter, see “Gospel Classics: The Wentworth Letter” (*Ensign*, July 2002) in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org.

believe both in the scriptures and in revelation. And the boy quoted, “‘We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:9). And then he continued, “‘We believe [also] in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:10).

The gentleman was listening intently. He showed no interest in crossing the aisle back to his own seat. Then Johnny came in again. He said, “‘We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:11). He then continued, “‘We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law’ ” (Articles of Faith 1:12).

And then as a final contribution, the boy repeated the thirteenth article of faith: “‘We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.’ ”

This youngster relaxed now as he finished the Articles of Faith. The gentleman was clearly excited, not only at the ability of this young boy to outline the whole program of the Church, but at the very completeness of its doctrine.

He said, “You know, after I have been to Los Angeles a couple of days, I expect to go back to New York where my office is. I am going to wire my company that I will be a day or two late and that I am going to stop in Salt Lake City en route home and go to the information bureau there and hear all the things, in more detail, about what you have told me.”

I am wondering how many of you know the Articles of Faith. . . . Have you repeated them? You are always prepared with a sermon when you know the Articles of Faith. **NE**

From an article printed in the October 1978 New Era.

Q & A

*“I try to read my scriptures every day,
but I don’t really learn much.
How can I get more out of my personal scripture study?”*

NEW ERA

That’s great that you are already reading the scriptures. However, if you’ve been “snacking” on the scriptures and want more spiritual nourishment, these ideas can help.

First, “feast upon the words of Christ” (2 Nephi 32:3). Begin your feast with prayer to thank the Lord for the scriptures and to invite the Spirit to teach and testify to you. Then dig in. You don’t have to start in 1 Nephi. You could start in 3 Nephi 11 and read about the Savior’s visit to the Nephites. Or start in D&C 133 and learn how to prepare for the Second Coming. Or go to the Index or Topical Guide to study a topic of interest, such as hope or repentance.

Second, when you first study a chapter, it may be helpful to read just to get the story line. See who and where the people are and what they are talking about. Then study again, looking for gospel teachings. Look for lessons you can apply to your problems, questions, and interests. For instance, what can you learn about protecting yourself against evil as you

■ **Daily scripture study brings the peaceful influence of the Spirit and many other blessings into your life.**

■ **Feast on the Lord’s word for a set amount of time each day.**

■ **Try studying one topic of interest, asking questions, pondering insights, and checking the footnotes.**

■ **Pray before you read.**

■ **Apply the teachings to your life, and practice what you learn.**

■ **Attend seminary. Your teacher can help you better understand the scriptures.**

read about the Nephites and Lamanites’ battles?

Third, you could study with a notebook and ask questions as you read: Who’s speaking? To whom? Why? Where? Jot down your testimony, insights, questions, related verses, other topics to study, and so on.

Fourth, when you come to verses that are hard to understand, don’t give up. Pray for understanding. Ask your parents, Church leaders, or seminary teacher. Use the tools provided in the scriptures—especially the Topical Guide and Index. Also, footnotes in the scriptures give you cross-references, alternate and explanatory words, and parts of the Joseph Smith Translation. And *True to the Faith*—a book available at Church distribution centers and online in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org—can help you study by topic.

Finally, set aside some quiet time each day to study the scriptures. Homework and novels can come after a higher priority—studying the word of God. Daily scripture study will comfort, inspire, and bless you



with peace. It will invite the Spirit into your life, giving you strength to resist temptations. It will help you make better decisions as you learn where the Lord stands on certain issues. And it can teach you truths, which the Spirit will bring to your mind when you need them most.

Think of your scripture study as an appointment with the prophets. One day you meet with Captain Moroni. The next day you meet with Moses. Don't keep the prophets waiting. They have so much to share with you. **NE**

READERS



*Litia A. Tuaniu, 18, Mesepa Second Ward,
Pago Pago Samoa Mapusaga Stake*

We should pray first and ask for Heavenly Father's Spirit to be with us during our reading. We will understand and learn more from it.

Before reading your scriptures, ask the Lord to help you understand. If you are still struggling, you can ask for help from someone such as your bishop or Sunday

School president. There are also seminary and institute books that explain the scriptures chapter by chapter. Most important, don't stop reading.

*Guillaume Delattre, 18, Mouscron Ward,
Lille France Stake*

To make daily scripture study more beneficial, I look up a specific topic that I may be struggling with or having questions about. That way, I can more easily apply what I read to my current situation.

*Camron Lee, 17, Meadowlark First Ward,
Spanish Fork Utah East Stake*

Scripture reading should include understanding what we have read, pondering over it, and finally practicing what we have learned. Practicing what we have learned helps us more than just reading.

Felix Ewusi, 17, Abura Ward, Cape Coast Ghana Stake



I get more out of my personal scripture study by searching diligently, pondering, and praying before I read. I invite the Spirit to help me understand. By the Holy Spirit we will know the truth of all things (see Moroni 10:5).

Sonny Nelson C. Yap Jr., 16, City Branch,
Ozamiz Philippines District

I use the seminary manuals with my reading. They explain the political situation of the place, note some things we should give attention to, and tell about interesting details. My study is much better with the manual.

Ramon Alexandre de Oliveira, 16, Jardim Taboão Ward,
São Paulo Brazil Taboão Stake



When I started to read the scriptures, I did not understand them. My parents suggested that I read at least one chapter and pray. After thinking about what the chapter is saying, I try to apply what I have read to a real-life situation.

Ekaterina Tufanova, 12, Shakhty Branch,
Russia Rostov-na-Donu Mission

Read every single day. Pray before you read so that you will already have the Spirit with you to understand the scriptures more fully. To quote my seminary teacher, "If you're not using your foot- notes, you're just reading, not studying."

Julie Dunford, 15, Nazareth Ward,
Scranton Pennsylvania Stake



It is better to have a set amount of time to give scriptural study each day than to have a set amount of chapters to read. Sometimes we find that the study of a single verse will occupy the whole time."

—President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95),
"Reading the Scriptures,"
Ensign, Nov. 1979, 64.

I don't always understand, but I read and reread. I pray before and after to ask the Lord to help me understand and put it into practice. I try to share what I have learned with other people.

Marília Rodrigues de Oliveira, 18,
Bandeirantes Ward, Belo Horizonte Brazil Stake



Before my mission, I found it hard to find time to study until I set a personal goal of reading at least a half hour to an hour every night, no matter what. Acquiring good study habits has helped immensely on my mission.

Elder Taylor Housley, 21, Brazil Brasília Mission

I have learned to have a question in mind, search for and then ponder the answer I find, write my feelings down, close with a prayer, and then apply the answer in my life.

Caley Porter, 17, Rose Second Ward, Blackfoot Idaho Stake

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

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Send your answer to the question below, along with your name, birth date, ward and stake, and a photograph (including your parent's written permission to print the photo) to:

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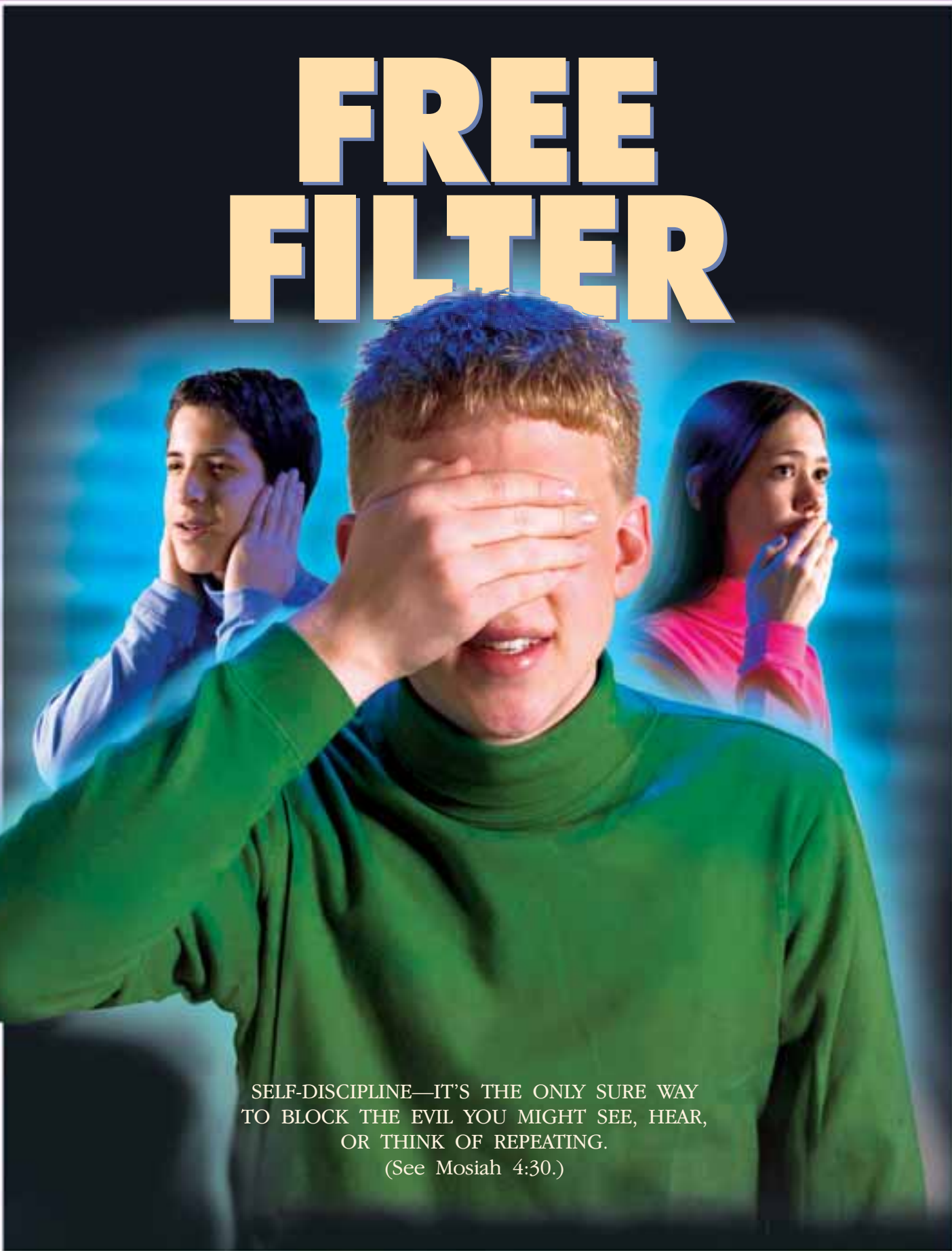
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QUESTION

"What is the best way to introduce the Book of Mormon to a friend who is a member of another faith?"

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SELF-DISCIPLINE—IT'S THE ONLY SURE WAY
TO BLOCK THE EVIL YOU MIGHT SEE, HEAR,
OR THINK OF REPEATING.

(See Mosiah 4:30.)

AT THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

BY MARVIN K. GARDNER
Church Magazines

Youth in Ecuador enjoy living at the center of things—like planet earth. The gospel helps teens put the Savior at the center of their lives.

Opposite page: Visiting the Mitad del Mundo (Middle of the World) monument in Quito.

From left: Jhon Tobar, Christian Lizano, Diana Flores, Sariah Moya, Luis Miguel Meza, Alejandro Flores, María Alejandra Cabeza de Vaca, and Ivanessa Romero.

What's it like living at the middle of the world, where the distance to the North Pole is the same as to the South Pole, and where you can stand with one foot in the Northern Hemisphere and the other in the Southern? It might be easy to start feeling you're the center of everything.

But Latter-day Saint teenagers who live near the equator in the South American nation of Ecuador know that the real center of everything is Jesus Christ. And they are keeping both feet on the Lord's side of the line.

The Strength of Youth in Quito

The capital city of Quito has a little bit of everything—from traditional colonial architecture to modern high rises. Navigating

busy city streets can be a challenge, as can steering through the temptations of life. For many teens, the booklet *For the Strength of Youth* has become a road map.

"I appreciate the part in *For the Strength of Youth* that says we need to dress appropriately," says María Alejandra Cabeza de Vaca, 12. "One day at school we were allowed to dress any way we wanted. I felt really bad because some of my friends dressed immodestly. I said to one of them, 'Tomorrow I'm going to bring you something that will help you a lot.' I gave her a copy of *For the Strength of Youth*. She read it and said she felt it was true and didn't want to dress immodestly anymore. It's good to share what we have so the world knows the good things we're learning."

Alejandro Flores, 13, discovered the importance of doing as well as knowing. "Last Sunday," he says, "my grandmother asked me to teach a family home evening lesson about dress standards, using *For the Strength of Youth*. Some of my cousins and I had the habit of following worldly styles, and I felt uncomfortable giving the lesson. But now my cousins and I are doing better in the way we dress." His lesson and example helped prepare his cousins for an important event. "They're getting baptized next week!" he says.

*Youth in Quito, a busy city on the equator,
find that the gospel helps them
navigate through life.*



ALONE NO MORE

“For a long time,” says Jhon Tobar, 17, of Quito, “I let myself be carried along by my friends, and I didn’t have a good relationship with my parents. But I have learned that if you lose the trust of your parents and brothers and sisters, it’s like being alone. I just had an interview with my bishop this morning—my bishop is my dad. I can say now that I have no better friend than my own father. I love him a lot. He is my best example.”



For Christian Lizano, 14, one of the most important topics in *For the Strength of Youth* is service. “Giving service should be our standard,” he says, “even something as simple as giving up a seat on a bus. Simple things can say a lot about members of the Church.”

When Ivanessa Romero, 15, found herself starting to follow the example of friends in using bad language, she knew she needed to change. One day she told them, “From now on, whenever anybody says a bad word, I’m going to charge a penny.” After a few days, she had collected four dollars! Her friends said, “Iva is going to be a millionaire!” Using *For the Strength of Youth*, Ivanessa encouraged her friends to clean up their language. “They’re making progress,” she says. In the meantime, she learned something about example. “I realized my friends are looking for the light. Every little thing we say or do is an influence on others.”

Saría Moya, 15, became friends with a young woman who said she and her family were atheists. But she admired Saría’s standards and her willingness to be true to them amid criticism. They talked about the gospel many times, Saría gave her a copy of the Book of Mormon, they prayed together, and Saría’s friend went to church with her. “Yesterday she came to a Young Women activity, and we sang a hymn,” Saría says. “Afterward she told me, ‘I do believe in God.’ I realized that my example had helped someone find Heavenly Father.”

Over the past couple of years, Luis Miguel Meza, 17, has begun feeling distant from the friends he has known since his first year in school. “They began to smoke and drink and put pressure on me to do so,” he says. “I had to be strong in the face of lots of criticism.” He prayerfully studied the section in *For the*

Strength of Youth on choosing friends wisely. “As time passed, I had opportunities to become friends with people who don’t drink or smoke and who respect me for my standards. I still see my old friends, and we say hi to each other. But because I was willing to make a sacrifice, Heavenly Father was there to give me a hand.”

“I used to do the right things out of habit,” says Raquel Alonzo, 17. “I was raised in the Church, and because I had been taught to choose the right, I did. But I didn’t really feel it in my heart. One day while talking to my mom, I truly felt the Lord’s Spirit.” Her mother told her about huge sacrifices she had made as a young woman to be faithful to the gospel and to serve a mission, even though she was going against her father’s



At Church in Otavalo. Front (from left): Laura Córdova, Jéniffer Santacruz, Tamía Moreta. Back: Zasha Maldonado, David Tabi, Jesús Ruiz, Armando Arellano, and Yolanda Santillán. Right: Jéniffer proudly wears her Young Women pin.

wishes. “She said the only reason she is so happy now is that she was smart enough to cling to the Savior throughout her life. At that moment, my testimony grew more than ever. I am a child of God, and Heavenly



Even though life in Otavalo is quieter than in the big cities, the struggles are just as real.

Father loves me. Even if the world falls in on me, He is going to help me.”

The Power of Prayer in Otavalo

Life in the mountain valley of Otavalo is not as hectic as in Quito. Many Latter-day Saints in Otavalo weave and embroider beautiful fabric for items sold throughout the world. Many do their work by hand. Most of the people here speak Quichua at home and Spanish elsewhere. Many walk an hour or more each way to church. Although the youth wear uniforms to school, they proudly wear traditional attire to church.

But even though life may be quieter here, the struggles are just as real. Young men and women find that it takes great effort to stay close to the Lord. By making that effort, they have learned the power of prayer.

“When my mom didn’t have any work,” says Jéniffer Santacruz, 12, “I prayed that she would find a job fast. The Lord heard my prayer, and within a day or two she found

a good job.”

Perhaps the most fervent prayer Tamía Moreta, 13, has uttered was when her mother was having problems delivering a new baby. “I prayed,” she says, “and Heavenly Father answered my prayer. My mother had a cesarean section. My little brother is now one year old, and he and my mother are healthy.”

Before she was 10 years old, Laura Córdova, now 15, prayed for a testimony. “I heard others say that the Book of Mormon and the Church were true,” she says. “So I prayed to know for myself. And the Lord gave me my testimony.”

Zasha Maldonado, 15, remembers being frightened by a terrible rainstorm that was flooding her home. As family members were frantically trying to save their possessions, one of the children said they ought to say a prayer. “We all knelt down in the water and pleaded with Heavenly Father to help us. After a few minutes, the rain started to die down. Heavenly Father answered our prayer. With Him, nothing is impossible.”

Prayer also helps in less dramatic ways. Jesús Ruiz, 14, says he often turns to the Lord for help as he weaves fabric. “Sometimes I don’t remember the patterns,” he says, “and I ask the Lord to help me. He always does.”

The same applies to schoolwork. “When I have a test at school,” says Armando Arellano, 16, “I ask Heavenly Father to help me remember what I have learned. He opens my mind and brings back what I’ve studied.”

Yolanda Santillán, 17, says her most sincere prayers were “that someday I would be able to go to the temple with my family to be sealed. Heavenly Father answered those prayers. We did go to the temple! Now we can be together always.”

It can be a challenge to live the standards that allow you to attend the temple. But prayer has helped David Tabi, 17, deal with the pressures. “My classmates smoke, drink, and do all those things,” he says. “They always invite me to join them. I don’t pay attention to them. I try to find other friends. There’s a guy in my class who is also a member. We support each other.”

Finding Friends in Guayaquil

Guayaquil is a bustling seaport city. A beautiful new temple overlooks a part of the city, shining luminously at night. Another radiant light is the warm friendship you receive from teens when you come here—the same genuine friendship they give anyone needing a lift.

When Gabriela Aguirre, 17, first moved to Guayaquil, she felt alone. “I didn’t know anybody here, and I felt sad because people at school seemed distant. But I found friends at church! There are 14 young women, and we’re united. We get along well with the young men too. My true friends are my Church friends.”

“When the young men and young women in our ward get together,” says Tatiana Alarcón, 16, “it’s a good experience because we’re so united. We’re more than friends—we’re like brothers and sisters. We take care of each other.”

And then they reach out to others needing friendship. They recently visited a home for the elderly. “I could really feel the pure love of Christ,” says Tatiana. “We showed affection to the people and sang to them, and



On the temple grounds in Guayaquil. Top (from left): Katherine España, Tatiana Alarcón, Estefanía Gómez, Grimaneza Roldán, and Gabriela Aguirre. Above: Olmedo Roldán, Jared Rivera (standing), Alex Arancibia, and José Olivares.

A beautiful temple helps youth stay on course in the busy seaport city of Guayaquil.

they were happy. They asked us when we were coming back.”

At a party the youth gave for underprivileged children, “the children were happy with the activity and with the gifts we gave them,” says Katherine España, 14.

“We love to get together for parties, activities, and dances,” says Estefanía Gómez, 17. “And we also get together to do the Lord’s work. The bishop has called many of us as ward missionaries. My companion is my sister, and we encourage new converts and less-active members. When the missionaries teach a family that has a teenager, they ask us to help. We visit them, fellowship them, and invite them to activities. That way the young converts already have friends when they come to church.”

In wards with fewer youth, the young men and young women still reach out. “I’m the only active young man in my ward,” says José Olivares, 14. “So I go with a brother in the elders quorum to visit the young men who aren’t coming.”

“As the deacons quorum president,” says Jared Rivera, 13, “I encourage the deacons to bring others to church because we all need the Lord’s help to fight temptations. We come to church before sacrament meeting starts and have a prayer that the sacrament will go well that day. And we visit quorum members who don’t come to church. We want to find out how they are.”

Helping at the sacrament table is an important way of serving the members of his ward, says Alex Arancibia, 17. “Every time I kneel to say the sacrament prayer, I feel good knowing that I’m helping others renew their covenants. It’s a feeling that the Lord approves of what I’m doing. Thinking about my Sunday responsibilities helps me

make the right choices during the week.”

Olmedo Roldán, 18, sees missionary work as a natural result of friendship. “A few days after I was baptized,” he says, “I read in the *Liabona* about a young man who helped the full-time missionaries even though he had just been baptized. So the next day I helped the missionaries too! And I loved it. Now the bishop has called me to serve as a ward missionary, and I’m preparing to serve a full-time mission. It was through missionary work that we found the Church. A lot of people need the Church and are looking for it. We can help them find it.”

“I don’t have a calling,” says Olmedo’s younger sister, Grimaneza, 14, “but I try to help by fellowshipping. I was new in the Church just 14 months ago, and I know how important it is to have friends support you. When there’s a new girl at church, I sit next to her, get to know her, and encourage her to continue learning about the gospel. And I invite her to come to Young Women with me.”

Prepared to Face Everything That Comes

“As youth, we sometimes want to change the world,” says Diana Flores, 17, of Quito. “But I think we need to look a little closer to home and start with changing ourselves.” Diana and other youth in Ecuador are grateful for the ways the gospel teaches them to put Jesus Christ and His Church at the center of their lives. “Heavenly Father loves us very much,” she says, “and He has given us all the tools we need, such as the scriptures, the gospel, the temple, our families. We know we are His children and that we are here to progress. We can be at peace, knowing that we are being prepared to face everything that comes to us.” **NE**



JUST A GET-TOGETHER?

“One night I had to make a choice between a party at the Church and another party where no one was a Church member,” says Estefanía Gómez, 17, of Guayaquil. “I decided I didn’t want to go to the Church party. When I got to the other party, there was a lot of cigarette smoke and everybody was drinking. I really felt bad—and I felt lonely. The One who I try to keep with me, the Holy Ghost, stayed outside because He doesn’t go into unclean places. After 10 minutes, I phoned my brother to take me to the other party.”

“We need to take advantage of the parties and friends we have in the Church. A lot of our friends may be at other parties, and they may say it’s just a little get-together. But it’s not just a get-together. It usually turns into something else—and that’s not good for anything!”

WHAT'S IN A

Mame?



BY RACHEL C. MURDOCK

It was as clear as the writing on the wall that I was in big trouble at girls' camp.

The summer I was 15, a new family with teenage daughters moved into the ward. While my family was considered “goody-goody,” this family, though they were active, was definitely not goody-goody. The teenage girls always seemed to be having fun, and I felt awkward and left out when I was around them. But when it was time for girls' camp that summer, I, of all people, was assigned to their cabin. I was determined to prove that I was not as goody-two-shoes as I seemed.

The campground where we had girls' camp was used by other groups throughout the summer. On the rafters of the cabins, some of them had written their names and the year they were at camp. We were on the top bunks, reading some of the names, when one of the girls said, “We should put our names up there too.”

“Sure!” I agreed.

“No way *you* would do that,” said the other girl.

“Sure, I would,” I said. I decided that one more name wouldn't really be noticeable. I also noted that the other girls thought it would be something on the edge—a thing *they* might do, but not something a straight arrow like me would do.

We pulled out some markers and began. The other girls wrote their names in small letters and with little flourish. I, however, wrote my name, the date, and “Girls' Camp” in 5-inch-high flowing script with a decorative flower finish. The other girls were impressed, and we went to bed. I thought no more of it.

Others did, however. During cabin inspections, our decorations were discovered, and we were given bleach, water, and sandpaper to try to repair the damage we had done. I couldn't erase my ink, which had penetrated the rough wood beams. After the fruitless scrubbing, the other girls were dismissed, and I got a lecture.

I heard how my actions would hurt the Church's

reputation. I heard how disappointed the leaders were that I would do something like that. “We wouldn't expect it of you,” I heard over and over. And every evening, my name glared at me from the rafter overhead, shaming me in brilliant blue.

I was allowed to stay at camp and eventually stopped hearing about my transgression. But I heard more once I got home. The camp staff had called my parents.

My mom didn't get angry, but her disappointment was deep. She asked why I did it. I explained how I felt left out and how I wanted to do something to show I could walk on the edge.

After talking to my mom I realized that I had done to my family and to myself the same thing I had done to the Church. By plastering my name where it shouldn't have been in an act of vandalism, I had demeaned my parents' good name.

I also realized that when I pursue popularity at the expense of respect, I am in danger of dishonoring the name of Christ or giving others the impression that I don't belong to His family.

Since this experience I have often thought what a blessing it will be if, at the end of this life, we can give a good report to our Savior when He asks what we have done with His name. None of us will want to admit that we sold our good name for social acceptance or that we gave it up for a questionable video, for a girlfriend or boyfriend, for a bottle of beer, or for the laughter of friends. I know we will want to say that we have preserved our name by standing for truth and righteousness at all times—when it's easy and fun and even when it's not.

What's in a name? As I realized that summer at girls' camp, it can be quite a lot. When I think of my name blaring bright blue to future generations of campers, I remember the blessing and responsibility of carrying a good name, both for my mortal family and for the Church and family of Christ. **NE**

Rachel C. Murdock is a member of the Janesville Ward, Madison Wisconsin Stake.

A SWINGIN' CHOIR

BY JANET THOMAS
Church Magazines



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL HURST, EXCEPT AS NOTED

Two hours a week on Thursdays. That's what it costs 45 young people from several stakes in the St. Louis, Missouri, area to be in—as they call it—swing choir.

The real name of the choir is Rising Generation, and its style of performing is like a choir that sings upbeat songs and sometimes adds choreography. The youth choir was organized five years ago by youth leaders to encourage musical talent and provide entertainment for the local

communities. It was also to be a missionary effort, to introduce the people of St. Louis to some great Latter-day Saint teens.

But that's not all. Those who participate in the choir get all sorts of bonuses, such as making new friends, learning how to sing great songs, being around others who share their standards, bringing tears to listeners' eyes, and laughing and talking and having loads of fun.

Posing in front of the St. Louis Arch, these choir members love to sing for their community.





Ward says, "We're all friends, and as a bonus, they are perfectly nice, temple-worthy girls."

The choir is also a serious boost in the lives of individual members. Brian Johnson of the Oakville Ward says, with a note of grave sincerity in his voice: "If I weren't in this choir, I wouldn't have known any of these guys, and we wouldn't have become such great friends. This choir has changed my life completely."

Just in the past two years, the choir has added some instruments, and they are working toward having an orchestra. They all like singing with live musicians rather than the taped backgrounds they have sometimes used.

Everyone in the choir and the orchestra makes a sincere commitment to the group. "This is the first choir I've ever been in," says Trevor Slezak of the Lake St. Louis Ward. "I've started singing more and loving music because we sing spiritual songs. I love feeling the music." Trevor now sings in several choirs at school.

Doesn't sound like too much of a sacrifice. "It's not that much time," said Ryan Roberts of the Parkway Ward. "It's a nice break during the week." A chorus of voices adds to Ryan's comment. It's unanimous. Not a single choir member can think of a better way to spend a Thursday evening.

"Thursday is my favorite day because I get to go to swing choir," says Angela Denton of the Dardenne Creek Ward.

Sitting close by, Laura Noble of the Parkway Ward explains her feelings in more detail: "Swing choir has given me a lot of hope for the future. I'm blown away by these young men, who say they want us girls to be modest, and the young women, who say they're not going to date until they're 16. I'm so proud of them all."

In talking about what a good example the boys in the choir are, Jessica McLaws of the Rockwood First Ward says: "We're such good friends with the guys. They treat us so well. You can really tell they have the gospel in their lives. They have testimonies. They treat us with respect. I think it's cool to come to a place where everyone treats each other with respect. We have a special bond."

When asked what was the best thing about being in the choir, a chorus of boys' voices said, "The girls!" Matt Morgan of the Lake St. Louis



The Rising Generation youth chorus use their talents to portray a fine example of Church standards during performances (above). Choir members participated in celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark expedition, which explored the western United States and was launched from St. Louis, Missouri (right).



Putting on a Show

The choir leaders work with the region's public affairs office in organizing places and times to sing. The choir is often included in public performances where the audience is not well acquainted with the Church. When asked about their most memorable performance, they immediately mention a Christmas program held at the local YMCA. Rachel Neifert of the Maryland Heights Ward says: "There were all kinds of choirs there. We sang, 'This Is the Christ.' Afterwards people were asking us, 'What was that feeling?' It was the best we have ever done. I didn't know we could sound that good."

"I think before every performance at least one person says, 'Let's try and make this like the YMCA performance.' That was the most spiritual experience," adds Carolyn Rees of the Spencer Creek Ward.

Trevor remembers a lady holding up her cell phone during one choir performance and saying into it, "Listen to this."

Kevin Stauffer of the Lake St. Louis Ward explains just how awesome it is for the choir when they are performing well: "Whenever we get to perform, it brings a really strong emotion. It often brings us to tears."

Although a few have never quite conquered the butterflies while performing, they have all learned the power of being involved in good things like swing choir. Carolyn Rees says: "I think when other teenagers see us, it hits them hard that we are people their same age that have strong beliefs. I love being a part of this." Who knew that dressing up in white tuxedo shirts and bowties or shiny blue blouses and getting up in front of an audience could do so much to bring such good feelings into so many lives. **NE**



Using a wide variety of music styles and dance, the chorus performs during special community events throughout the year.



How to Talk to

BY SHANNA BUTLER
Church Magazines

Listening to and loving our parents can make a big change for the better in our families.

When I was younger I thought my parents spoke a different language than I did. Now that I'm older, I realize they

probably thought the same thing about me. Somehow, to them, "I want to go to a party on Friday" would translate to "I'm heading off into a dangerous world where people will tempt me to do bad things." And a "No!" from them would say to me, "We don't really care about your social life. Why don't you just stay home and read a book?"

Although "parentese" might be a difficult language to understand at times, to feel unity and love in our families we need to listen to and love our parents. And we need to communicate clearly. Doctrine and Covenants 50:21-22 tells us how we can better understand each other:


"Why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth?"

"Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together."

In other words, we need the Spirit to be



Your Parents



“I’m old enough to go out without you checking on me all the time.”

able to communicate effectively and lovingly and build each other up. Verse 23 goes on to say, “And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness.”

Learn to Be a Good Communicator

Poor communication can ruin good relationships in a hurry. Let’s say Susan, a Laurel, is just coming home past her curfew. Her dad is waiting up for her.

Dad: Where have you been, Susan?

Susan: Don’t you trust me?

Dad: Your mom and I were worried.

Susan: I’m old enough to go out without you checking up on me all the time.

Dad: I don’t know if you should go to any more parties for a while if you can’t get home on time.

Susan: But Dad, I’m only a little late. You’re so unfair!

Susan then storms up to her room and slams the door. Obviously, not much family unity is being built in this situation.

Besides coming home on time, here’s a better way Susan could have dealt with this situation:

Dad: Where have you been, Susan?

Susan: Sorry I’m late, Dad. I lost track of time, and traffic was bad.

Dad: Your mom and I were worried.

Susan: Thanks for worrying about me, but I’m fine. I’ll try not to be late next time, and I’ll call if I am so you won’t be worried.

Dad: Thanks, but I don’t know if you should go to any more parties for a while.

Susan: Can we talk about this, Dad? I am getting older,

and most of my friends have later curfews than I do. Can we discuss moving my curfew to a later time?

Susan and her dad stay up for a while working things out.

Notice the first thing Susan did was apologize. A smart move. Proverbs 15:1 says, “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” If her dad had been upset at her, Susan’s soft answers would probably make him less upset.

She also listened to what her dad was really saying—with his words *and* his actions. If he really didn’t care about her, he probably wouldn’t have waited up. She realized her dad wanted her to come home on time because he loves her and not because he wants to ruin her life.

It Takes Two and Time

Communication takes at least two people. What if Susan’s dad had been unreasonable or unwilling to listen? It would be hard to improve the communication in your family all by yourself, but you can do a lot of good just by changing your attitude. If you always think you are right and everyone else is wrong, you’ll spend much of your life arguing with others. But if you are willing to listen to others, to be understanding of their views, and to speak openly and honestly, your communication will improve, and you will have the Spirit with you more often.

Changing communication patterns that have been built up over years can take time, but it is possible, especially when you have the Holy Spirit with you. You can also ask the Lord to soften the hearts of others who are not as willing to communicate as you are and to help you know what to say.

More Than Words

Communication is more than words. Our body language and actions also communicate as much as, or more, than our words. Have you ever told your mother you would do something, and then you didn’t do it? Your words said one thing; your actions said another. Which do you think your mother believed?

Would you keep reading a book while your father is trying to talk to you, or would you put your book down and look at him? Which action do you think shows him you care about what he is saying?

Improving our communication involves watching our actions as well as our words. King Benjamin said, “Watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds” (Mosiah 4:30).

Tips from Someone Who Knows

Here are some ideas from Ross Clement, a program specialist and counselor for LDS Family Services. He has seen many families with communication problems and has learned much about good communication.

1. Follow the Savior’s example of good communication.

The Savior forgave, comforted, uplifted, and counseled others to do good. You can do the same. (See the sidebar on page 34.)

2. Identify and correct what you are doing wrong if there is a communication breakdown.

Think about your behavior, and be willing to admit when you make a mistake. If you realize you are behaving inappropriately, stop that behavior.

3. Look for the good in others.

If you are always concentrating on the negative in your parents’ actions and decisions, it is hard to see the positive. It is easy to distort others’ words in a negative way. Take the time to communicate with your parents to find out what they are really trying to say.

4. Talk respectfully.

Relationships can be damaged by hateful or hurtful words spoken in anger. Their memory can last a lifetime, long after the situation that prompted them is forgotten. The Apostle James stated: “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body” (James 3:2). Remember to talk respectfully to your parents.

5. Be interested and willing to listen.

Try listening to your parents, even if you think they’re not listening to you. Listen respectfully and try to understand what they are saying.



“Your mom and I
were worried.”

“Sorry I’m late.
I lost track of time.
Thanks for worrying
about me.”

BE A BETTER COMMUNICATOR

- Follow the Savior’s example of good communication. (See the sidebar on page 34.)
- Identify and correct what you are doing wrong if there is a communication breakdown.
- Look for the good in others.
- Talk to others respectfully.
- Be interested and willing to listen.
- Respectfully let your parents know how you feel.

6. *Let your parents know how you feel.*

As you do this, try not to be upset or angry. When you feel upset by something they have done, you could let them know how you feel instead of blaming them.

While most teens can improve the quality of communication with their parents, a few cannot. Some live in homes with parents who are physically, emotionally, or sexually abusive. Don't place yourself at risk by trying to talk to them if they might respond inappropriately. Brother Clement suggests that you talk to your bishop, school counselor, or another trusted adult about how to deal with the situation.

Happy Together

My parents and I are much better at communicating now. I've learned to see them as real people who are not perfect but who love me very much and want the best for me. The Lord said, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long" (Exodus 20:12).

Following my parents' guidelines and my Heavenly Father's commandments has helped me to

I've learned to see my parents as real people who are not perfect but who want the best for me.

Tell us what you think of this article. E-mail us at cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

be a happy adult, married in the temple, and ready to teach those same guidelines and commandments to my future children so they can be happy too. I only hope we will be able to speak the same language. **NE**

For more information about communication in families, visit www.ldsfamilyservices.org.

THE SAVIOR'S EXAMPLE

Our Savior Jesus Christ has shown us the way to communicate. Here are a few examples from His life and teachings that can help us be better communicators. As you search the scriptures you will find many more.

He teaches us to return good for evil. In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).

He teaches us to be loving. He commanded His disciples to "love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

He is forgiving. On the cross, the Lord pleaded in behalf of His persecutors: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

He is an example of service. The scriptures say Jesus "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed" (Acts 10:38).

He is grateful. The Savior always gave thanks to Heavenly Father: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Luke 10:21).

He is slow to condemn. He encouraged the woman taken in adultery to repent: "Where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

"... Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:10-11).

He listens. The Israelites said, "When we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice" (Numbers 20:16). And Alma said, "I remember what the Lord has done for me, yea, even that he hath heard my prayer" (Alma 29:10).

THE EXTRA SMILE



“Elder, I’ve finally figured out why I was sent out on a mission to Switzerland!”

During family scripture study, we were having a discussion about the different kinds of plates mentioned in the Book of Mormon: brass plates, large plates, small plates. My six-year-old brother asked what kind of plates our prophet writes on now. We tried hard not to laugh and patiently explained that he doesn’t write on plates anymore because we now have paper. “Oh,” he said. “So now we have the paper plates.”

—Chong Fei Min, Kuala Lumpur Branch, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia District



“Where do I plug this in?”



“My grandpa has gold plates too. But he got his from the dentist.”



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

PRESIDENT, I'M READY

FOR MY MISSIONARY INTERVIEW!



While I was serving as mission president, an amazing thing happened. A deacon knocked on my door and told me he had come to fill out his missionary application.

BY WILLIAM D. OSWALD
Second Counselor in the Sunday School
General Presidency

One Sunday while I was serving as mission president in Vladivostok, Russia, a rather amazing thing happened. I had gone to my office to gather some materials when a 13-year-old young man, Vladimir, whose friends call him Vova, knocked on the door. Vova is a deacon in the Vladivostok First Branch. He asked to visit with me in my office. He was accompanied by Sister Olga Vyachyeslavna Dryagunova. This sister speaks wonderful English, and the boy had asked her if she would act as his interpreter. Vova speaks no English, and I speak only a little Russian.

Vova had been an orphan, abandoned at birth because he was born with a cleft palate. The birth defect has since been partially repaired, leaving a scar. He was adopted by a wonderful woman who has treated him as her son. The boy is always happy. He has a smile on his face and a wonderful countenance when he passes the sacrament. He wears the mantle of a deacon as well as any boy I have ever known. He

regularly bears a sweet and brief testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel. He is everything that a deacon ought to be.

At our meeting Vova spoke Russian and Sister Olga interpreted. She told me that Vova had come to fill out his application to serve as a full-time missionary. I asked, without a hint of a smile, “How old is he?”

She asked and he answered, “Nearly 14.”

Retaining my composure, I said, “Does he understand that he needs to be 19 before he can serve a mission?”

She responded, “He does, but he does not want to be tardy in getting his application in.”

I assured them that there was still time before we needed to send his missionary application to Moscow and then on to Salt Lake City. Neither the branch president nor I would forget when it was time for him to fill out his forms. I walked to the wall displaying pictures of the 44 missionaries then serving in the Russia Vladivostok Mission. I told Vova I was worried that the missionary papers might be returned if it appeared that I was recommending a 13-year-old boy for a mission.



What would happen if, in five years' time when this young deacon is ready to serve his mission, there were another 2,000 Russian deacons preparing to serve just like he is?



Then I explained that since he was in my office where I conducted interviews with the missionaries, I thought it appropriate to ask him the questions that will be asked of him when he is 19, just to make sure that he was currently worthy to serve a mission. I then went through all the worthiness questions as though Vova were one of my full-time missionaries but tactfully passed over the boy-girl questions, thinking them premature. Besides, I didn't want to embarrass Sister Olga.

Vova answered all my questions with the appropriate responses and with the wisdom of a boy twice his age. Upon further reflection, I guessed that he may have even asked one of the elders what interview questions he might anticipate from the mission president. I then told Vova that he could come back every six months, and we would repeat the interview process.

He then asked with some concern what he should say to let me know he was ready for another interview six months from now. I said to him, through Sister Olga, that it was now time for him to have his first English lesson. I then said slowly, "This is what you should say to me, 'President, I am ready for my missionary interview.'"

He repeated the important words he needed to know three times.

As I was ready to end the interview, Vova asked Sister Olga to ask me one last question. "President," he said, "what advice do you have for me to prepare for my mission?"

I was a bit taken aback. Few of my mature elders would have the wisdom to ask such a timely question. I pondered for a moment and then told him to do three things: First, I told him to read the scriptures each day. Second, I suggested that he pray to his Heavenly Father each morning and evening.

Third, I told him to practice his English.

I confess that the last suggestion was a little selfish on my part, as I was thinking how I would enjoy speaking with him in English and asking him questions about the things of his heart. I suggested he attend the free English classes taught by the missionaries, but he said his mother would not allow him to be out after dark. We agreed that he would work harder each day in his English class at school.

Later, when I saw the deacons in the hall after church, I asked Vova if he would like to repeat the phrase he needed to use to ask for his next interview. This he did in a fine manner. Then to my great surprise, I learned that each of the other deacons in the branch had also learned the magic words. Each one repeated while looking right at me, "President, I am ready for my missionary interview!"

Oh, the power of example! The joy of one willing to open his mouth and share the things he had learned with another was something I was trying to get all of my missionaries to experience! These Russian deacons were on the road to perfection.

As I sat at my desk, I wondered what could be done in advancing the missionary work in this vast land of Russia if, in five years' time when Vova is 19 years old and ready to serve his mission, there were another 2,000 young Russian deacons preparing just like Vova. The answer, of course, is found in Alma 57. There a prophet named Helaman had 2,000 young men, and he was able to perform miracles with boys of great faith and devotion who had been taught by their mothers (see v. 21).

Think how blessed the mission president will be who gets Vova as one of his stripling missionaries. **NE**

WAKE UP

IDEA LIST



TO SEMINARY

The nine students in the *early* early-morning seminary class in Silverdale, Washington, go to seminary at 5:15 a.m. so they can get to school on time at 6:20 a.m. At such an early hour, they have learned how to make the most of their time in seminary. If you attend early-morning seminary, here are some of their ideas you can use:

- ◆ Be on time so you can participate in the opening prayer and invite the Spirit to teach you during the lesson.
- ◆ Go to bed on time. A good night's rest will help you be more refreshed for early-morning seminary.
- ◆ Try to eat a healthy breakfast before you go so you'll have energy.
- ◆ Say a personal prayer before class, and ask the Lord to teach you during seminary.
- ◆ If you drive to seminary, listen to music that invites the Spirit.
- ◆ If you are asked to say the opening prayer, ask Heavenly Father for the Spirit to be with you, your classmates, and your teacher.
- ◆ Come to seminary eager to learn the gospel.
- ◆ Participate in the lesson by asking questions, volunteering to read, or helping in whatever way you can. You will understand more, and the teacher will feel more appreciated.
- ◆ Continue learning about the gospel outside of seminary by studying the scriptures and memorizing scripture mastery verses.
- ◆ Come with a positive attitude. It really brightens the atmosphere!
- ◆ A little exercise or stretching before class can help you stay more awake and attentive.
- ◆ Learn to love the people in your class. You will build a positive feeling in your class and invite the Spirit.
- ◆ Seek for ways to build others' testimonies as you strengthen your own through gospel study. You could serve members of your class or bear your testimony to them.
- ◆ Seminary is what you make it. Your cheerfulness, sense of humor, and kindness to others in your class can make seminary a really fun place to be with friends. **NE**

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS TRADE ROLES

How would you like to switch places with your mother for a day? That's what the young women from Manurewa and Pukekohe in New Zealand did for a role-reversal debate.

In the role reversal, the mothers argued that girls 12 years and older should be able to do as they pleased. The young women argued that there should be reasonable limits.

There were also mother-daughter duets, followed by presentations on motherhood from both the young women and their mothers.

Heather Maloney, the mayor of Franklin, New Zealand, was one of the judges for the debate. She praised the mothers and daughters for their courage in public speaking and thanked the girls for their high standards and values and for the respect they showed in honoring their mothers.



A. Stacey Onekawa and her mother, Lenise.
B. Saifia Talisa and her mother, Patricia.
C. Amanda Thompson and her mother, Vernice.
D. Olga Bartley and her mother, Dolores.
E. Melissa (left) and Jessica Heteraka with their mother, Steph.

THE WHOLE BOOK IN TWO DAYS

Last July, 25 youth of the Bentonville First Ward, Rogers Arkansas Stake, got together to take the 48-hour Book of Mormon challenge. The goal was to read the entire book in two days. They started at 7:00 a.m. on Friday morning, taking turns reading for the entire group. At 11:00

Benjamin, Ammon, and Samuel the Lamanite.

Everyone had a list of scripture mastery verses, and whoever called out "scripture mastery" first when the group came to a scripture mastery verse was rewarded with a candy bar. Then the entire group would recite the



p.m. the youth split up by classes and quorums to spend the night in members' homes. Then the whole group got back together at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday for breakfast and to begin reading again. At 5:30 p.m. the group completed the challenge by reading aloud together the last three verses, Moroni 10:32–34.

Throughout the two days, the youth welcomed guest readers, or "prophets," who came to reenact their parts in the Book of Mormon. There were visits from King

scripture together.

"The Spirit I felt throughout the reading amazed me," said Kara Barnes, 16. "The thing I loved most was how it all made sense. Everything fell perfectly into place. I love the Book of Mormon. The Spirit it brings is just wonderful."

"What impressed me the most was the many times the Nephites and Lamanites switched off in righteousness," said Carl Monson, 14. "It showed how the missionary work went through the whole land."



CHRIST CALLING PETER AND ANDREW, BY J. T. HARWOOD

FOLLOW THE LEADER

The most encompassing short course on leadership was given by the Savior Himself: 'And he saith unto them, Follow me' (Matthew 4:19). A leader cannot ask of others what he is not willing to do himself. Our safest course is

to follow the example of the Savior, and our security is to listen to and follow the direction of His prophet, the President of the Church."

—President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "These I Will Make My Leaders," *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 35.

"There is no greater question that you can ask in this world. 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' I challenge you to make that the uppermost question of your life."

—President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), "Think on Christ," *Ensign*, Mar. 1989, 4.

IT HAPPENED IN JUNE



ILLUSTRATED BY GARY KAPP

June 4, 1837: Seven years after the Church was organized, Elder Heber C. Kimball of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was called to serve a mission to England. He was the first person called to an overseas mission in this dispensation.



ILLUSTRATED BY GARY E. SMITH

June 27, 1844: The Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred by a mob at Carthage Jail.

June 9, 1895: The first stake outside the United States was organized in Canada: the Alberta Stake.

June 14, 1969: The Germany Dresden Mission was organized. There are now four missions in Germany.

June 23, 2005: President Gordon B. Hinckley's 95th birthday. He was born in Salt Lake City, Utah.

ROOM FOR

Hope

BY ELDER F. MELVIN HAMMOND

Of the Seventy

We should never give up on someone who is in need of change. There is always room for hope.



We were ushered into a small concrete building where those from the outside were allowed to spend time with the inmates.

Alma the Younger faced the distress of having his son, Corianton, forsake his mission to the Zoramites to follow “after the harlot Isabel.” This moral failing influenced the Zoramite rejection of the gospel message, “for when they saw your conduct,” Alma told his son, “they would not believe in my words” (Alma 39:3, 11).

The situation provided one of the greatest father-son teaching moments ever recorded. Alma focused on key doctrines concerning repentance. He exhorted Corianton to recognize his sin: “Acknowledge your faults and that wrong which ye have done” (Alma 39:13). He taught his son that “wickedness never was happiness” and that the things we make part of our lives in mortality will be part of our characters in the resurrection (see Alma 41:10, 13–15).

Alma taught that because of justice, “the law inflicteth the punishment” unless “mercy claimeth the penitent” through the great Atonement of the Savior, Jesus Christ. The prophet told his son to remember the mercy of God “and let it bring you down to the dust in humility” (Alma 42:22, 23, 30).

Alma’s wayward son followed his father’s lovingly given counsel, repenting and

returning to the mission field (see Alma 42:31; 43:1–2; 49:30). This inspiring story from the scriptures should give great hope, as well as doctrinal direction, to everyone in the Church.

Never Give Up

A boy I knew had been sent, at great sacrifice by his parents, to a university to acquire an education. He went with little aspiration or desire to succeed, seeking instead to have a “good time.” Shortly after he arrived, he became involved in a case of petty theft, “just for the excitement,” he said later. He was caught and put on probation. But when his search for good times exhausted the limited resources provided by his parents, in desperation he tried to steal a large sum of money—and was caught again. This time he went to the state prison.

His bishop, knowing that I would be traveling in the vicinity of the prison, asked if I would visit the young man. I was a stake president at the time, so I took a member of the stake high council with me. The large gate swung shut behind us, a guard searched us carefully, and then we were ushered into a small concrete building where those from





the outside were allowed to spend time visiting with inmates.

I had in my mind a picture of a hardened criminal—mean, surly, dangerous, someone to be feared. Then the door opened, and one of the most handsome young men I had ever seen stepped into the room—neat, clean-shaven, hair nicely combed. He smiled at me in recognition and offered his hand in greeting. “President, what are you doing here? You have probably never seen me, but I heard you speak once at a stake conference,” he explained, then asked earnestly, “How is my family?”

After I reassured him about his parents, we talked about him: how soon he would be released and how he was being treated. He seemed in good spirits and cheerful despite the bleak surroundings. As we visited, I asked him if he had really done all the things he was accused of. His

reply was prompt and direct: “Yes, and more. I deserve all of this.” The motion of his hand took in the confining room and its surroundings. “I have lost nearly everything—my self-respect, my friends, the confidence of my family—almost everything.” His chin quivered and his face became anguished. He broke down crying. Sobs shook his body, and I tried to comfort him.

When he regained his composure, we continued our visit. It proved to be a marvelous moment to teach him; he was humble and eager to learn. We talked about faith, repentance, and the divine mission of our Savior, Jesus Christ. I reminded the young man that Christ gave His own sweet life in holy sacrifice as payment for the sins of those who repent and obey. The Spirit touched each of us during those moments together. My young friend was contrite, filled with hope and a greater understanding of God’s love.

On the morning of his release from prison, a loving father and mother embraced their son and welcomed him to a new life. They visited at our home. The son was repentant and eager to start anew. He expressed his great love for the Savior and his gratitude for the opportunity to progress through blessings offered in the Church. I assured him of my respect, my confidence, and my love for him.

Over a period of several years, I received occasional telephone calls from him advising me of his progress. He was doing well. He had worked through the repentance process with his bishop and the Lord. There were still difficulties and obstacles to overcome, but his progress was steady. The call that touched me most was the one in which he told me that he would be taking a young woman to the house of the Lord to be married. He had come full circle, from wickedness and despair to righteousness and joy. The Spirit of the Lord had led him to the Living Waters, and he had drunk deeply.

Certainly there is no promise that all men

and women will take advantage of the Lord's plan for happiness, but we should never give up on someone who is in need of change. There is always room for hope.

What Creates the Change?

It is essential that people embrace the saving principles of the gospel if they are to enter the presence of the Lord pure and clean. The catalyst that moves them to embrace these principles is always love—sincere, abundant, felt to the very core by the giver and the receiver. It is the kind of love shown not by what people say but by what they do. This kind of love has the power to melt the hardest heart, to create a change in the most vile sinner, to bring men and women to their knees in humble worship.

It is within our power to offer this deep, continuing love to the wayward ones. And after all else, we can rely on faith in “him who is mighty to save” (2 Nephi 31:19), who loved us enough that He gave His own life as a sacrifice to redeem us. **NE**

From an article printed in the January 1994 Ensign.

He had come full circle, from wickedness and despair to righteousness and joy. He was to be married in the temple.



“How grateful we should be that God sent His Only Begotten Son to earth. . . .

“Let us follow the Son of God in all ways and in all walks of life. Let us make Him our exemplar and our guide. We should at every opportunity ask ourselves, ‘What would Jesus do?’ and then be more courageous to act upon the answer. We must follow Christ, in the best sense of that word. We must be about His work as He was about His Father’s. We should try to be like Him, even as the Primary children sing, ‘Try, try, try’ (*Children’s Songbook*, 55). To the extent that our mortal powers permit, we should make every effort to become like Christ—the one perfect and sinless example this world has ever seen.”

—President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), 14th President of the Church, “What Manner of Men Ought Ye to Be?” *Ensign*, May 1994, 64.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

To learn more about hope and repentance, read these scriptures: Ezekiel 18:21–22, 31–32; Ether 12:4; Moroni 6:8; 7:40–42; 8:26.

And read the following articles in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org: “Three Choices” (*Ensign*, Nov. 2003) by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin and “There Is Hope Smiling Brightly before Us” (*Ensign*, May 2003) by Julie B. Beck.

NO NEED TO FEAR

BY KAREN EAGAR MEEKER

My companion elbowed me. “Why don’t you talk to the next person?”

Her words terrified me. Why would anyone want to hear what we had to say? These people were all on their way to work or out having fun for the day. I was positive that no one would appreciate being interrupted by a couple of women with a spiritual message. Central Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts, just didn’t seem to fit with a couple

of Latter-day Saint missionaries.

The man I was to approach didn’t look particularly intimidating, just an everyday commuter. But at that moment, there couldn’t have been a more frightening sight. I’m used to listening and observing, not talking and being noticed. My companion, on



the other hand, was a tall, beautiful, forthright woman. I couldn't understand why she wouldn't let me remain in my silent, comfortable world. After all, I was just on exchanges with her. I wasn't a real missionary.

The man was standing on the train platform next to us now, so my companion gave me another healthy nudge. I walked slowly up to him and said, "Hello. My name is Sister Eagar, and this is Sister Hippolyte. We're from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and we were wondering if you had some time so that we could share a message with you."

My face turned red, and I waited nervously for his reaction. To my great astonishment, he answered with a smile and said, "Yes, I have some time until my train comes." Sister Hippolyte gave him some pamphlets and information. The man had questions for us, and I helped with the answers as best I could. His train came, and he left with a friendly good-bye.

Similar things happened throughout the day. People didn't brush us off as I had expected them to. They were actually friendly. I had been sure we would make no contacts at all and come home with our backpacks as full as when we had left in the morning. But I was wrong!

It made me think of a scripture, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). I had no reason to fear. We were preaching the truth, and the Lord was on our side. He loved those people and wanted them

I am not easy to wake up in the morning. My mum used to declare that she needed a crane to wake me up for early-morning seminary. So it came as no surprise that in my first year at

university, I was one of the few who didn't wake up to the fire alarm practice. Luckily, I had friends who came to my room and collected me.

Later that day we were discussing the morning's events and laughing about what had happened, when another girl asked what I would do if the fire alarm went off for real. I was taken aback by the question but soon realized the gravity of the situation. One of my friends replied that she would come and warn me, and other friends assured me that they would check if I had left the building before they did. They would do this because they loved me.

to hear the gospel and understand it. We may not have been able to hold the attention of even one individual if we had to rely on our own strength, but we were serving the Lord. He was our strength. I felt ashamed at my lack of faith and resolved to be fearless in our future tracting.

I now know that the Spirit guides



That night I thought of the Lord's commandment recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 88:81: "Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh

WAKE UP!

BY DIANA GRAINGE

every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor."

I realized that just as being warned of potential fires is important for my temporal welfare, so my sharing the gospel message is important for my friends' spiritual lives. Just as they loved me enough to warn me of dangers, I realized that I loved them enough to share my knowledge of the gospel with them. That night I recommitted myself to obeying the commandment of the Lord by testifying of Jesus Christ and warning my neighbor. **NE**

Diana Grainge is a member of the Lowestoft Ward, Norwich England Stake.

the missionaries of this Church and leads them to those who are ready to accept the Savior, Jesus Christ. If we listen to the promptings of the Spirit and heed them with faith that the Lord will help us, we have no need to fear. **NE**

Karen Eagar Meeker is a member of the Aspen First Ward, Orem Utah Aspen Stake.

A LESSON ON TALENTS

BY JEAN LUKER WIRTHLIN

Hey, Jean,” Mark called from across the school parking lot. “Do you know if you’re going to California yet?”

“Nope,” I said and let out a sigh. “My parents still don’t want me to go.” “They don’t want you to go?” he repeated, astonished. “But this is the biggest cross-country race of the year for us. Why don’t they want you to go?”

The problem was that my parents have a big reunion every couple years with their cousins. It is one of their favorite things, and they had been planning it for a long time. It happened to be on the same weekend as the race. They wanted me to stay home and babysit my brothers and sisters while they were gone for the weekend. I was stuck.

I brought the subject up again with my mother. “There are millions of people in the world. Why can’t you find somebody else to babysit?”

“Jean, we’ve been through this,” my mom said. “There is nobody I trust as much as you to stay with them. And hiring somebody to stay with the kids is expensive. It just works out so much better to have you here.”

“But you don’t understand,” I protested. “You’re squelching my talents. Besides, our Church leaders always say you’re supposed to develop your talents.”

I let that last comment sink in and started waiting for my victory. Instead of just agreeing with me, she drew a long, deep breath. “Okay, Jean, if you really think it’s that important, I’m going to let you make your own decision. But you have to promise me that you’ll think about it and pray about it for a few days before you decide.”

“I can do that,” I assured her.

“How hard can this decision be?” I thought to myself. “To go to California or not? This really should be a no-brainer.” I knew Heavenly Father wanted me to build my talents, so I just had to wait for the right time to break the news to my parents. I determined that Sunday was going to be decision day.

On Sunday, when I got to Young Women, I was happy to see the word

talents written on the board as the subject of the lesson.

“This is it,” I thought. “California, here I come!”

Each time Sister Nelson said we needed to “build up our talents” and “let our light shine,” I packed another item in my mental suitcase. I was just about to say a silent thank-you to Heavenly Father for such a great answer when Sister Nelson stopped talking and got very serious.

“Now it’s very important for you to remember,” she said, her eyes filled with concern, “that you should never seek to build up your talents at the expense of others, especially your family members.”

That wasn’t the answer I was expecting, but it took only a moment before I knew it was the answer I was looking for. Silently, I said a small prayer of gratitude and then quickly unpacked my mental suitcase. **NE**

Jean Luker Wirthlin is a member of the Tuscaloosa Ward, Bessemer Alabama Stake.



INSTANT MESSAGES features personal experiences, insights into favorite hymns and scriptures, and other uplifting thoughts. If you have a personal experience that has strengthened your testimony and you’d like us to consider it for *Instant Messages*, please send it to

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Or e-mail it to
cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

Please limit submissions to 400 words or less. They may be edited for length and clarity.

Mutual Activity

• The stakes in St. Louis, Missouri, have formed a youth choir (see “A Swingin’ Choir,” page 26). For one night, form your own choir. Arrange for an accompanist and a conductor. Learn one or two fun, lively songs. Be sure to include everyone, even those who say they can’t sing. It’s great fun just to get together and sing.

Service Project Suggestion

• The author of the article, “What’s in a Name?” on page 24 learned the problems with defacing property. Under the direction of your leaders, see if the youth in your ward or branch can help clean up graffiti from a business or public area in your community. Make sure you check with the proper authorities first.

Family Home Evening Ideas

• Read the article, “How to Talk to Your Parents,” on page 30. Ask one of your parents to read the article, “Talking with Teens,” on page 32 of the June 2005 *Ensign*. Share the family home evening lesson by taking turns presenting the information.

• Read the article, “Know What We Believe,” on page 10. Have a contest among your family members about the subjects covered in the Articles of Faith. Make two identical cards for each article of faith, with the number and a short description. Mix up the 26 cards, and turn them face down on a flat surface. Take turns turning over two at a time. When a matching pair is uncovered, leave them face up until all the cards are turned over.



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SUNDAY LESSON HELPS

In addition to the Resource Guides (printed in May and November in the *Ensign* and *Liabona*), Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood teachers may find these additional resources helpful in enhancing lessons 21–25.

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Lesson 21: Learning to Share the Gospel

Spencer W. Kimball, “Know What We Believe,” this issue.
Q&A: “I love the gospel, but talking about it with others terrifies me. . . .” *New Era*, Feb. 2005, 16.

Lesson 22: Eternal Perspective

Q&A: “I have an inferiority complex. . . . What can I do to gain confidence?” *New Era*, Apr. 2005, 16.
Russell M. Nelson, “Next to the Angels,” *New Era*, Mar. 2005, 4.

Lesson 23: Overcoming Opposition

Brenda Williams, “My Horrible, Terrible Day,” *New Era*, Sept. 2001, 34.
Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Gift of the Holy Ghost,” *New Era*, Jan. 2005, 4.

Lesson 24: Agency

Rachel C. Murdock, “What’s in a Name?” this issue.
“Are You Saved by Grace or Works?” *New Era*, Mar. 2005, 38.

Lesson 25: Obedience

Shanna Butler, “How to Talk to Your Parents,” this issue.
Dee Jardine, “On Top of Old Mossy,” *New Era*, Mar. 2005, 26.
Kenneth Johnson, “The Proof Is in the Doing,” *New Era*, Mar. 2005, 42.

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Lesson 21: The Role of the Quorum

L. Lionel Kendrick, “The Quorum,” *New Era*, May 1993, 57.
Mervyn B. Arnold, “Strengthen Thy Brethren,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 46.

Lesson 22: Duties of Priests

Don Searle, “We Stick Together,” *New Era*, Mar. 2005, 20.
Dallin H. Oaks, “Your Sacred Duty,” *New Era*, May 1999, 4.

Lesson 23: Preparing for the Melchizedek Priesthood

William D. Oswald, “President, I’m Ready for My Missionary Interview!” this issue.
Bruce R. McConkie, “Only an Elder,” *New Era*, Jan. 2003, 36.

Lesson 24: Follow the Prophet

Robert Marcum, “The Guide,” *New Era*, Mar. 1990, 10.
Keith Crockett, “Follow the Trail,” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 42.

Lesson 25: Every Young Man Should Serve a Mission

Richard G. Scott, “Making Hard Decisions,” this issue.
Idea List: “Ready to Serve?” *New Era*, Feb. 2005, 15.



READY, SET, . . .

Thank you for your Idea List titled "Practically Prepared" in the March 2005 issue. This article has helped me find ways to start preparing now for my future mission. I recently gave a talk in sacrament meeting on preparing to be a missionary. I have been reading the *New Era* for only a year, and I find many things I like to read. Thank you for having a magazine that is for my age. I will read the *New Era* every month for many more years.

*Jonathon Felton, Evansville Ward,
Evansville Indiana Stake*

CLEAN ANSWER

I really appreciated the Q&A in the March issue about keeping a clean room. I have had a hard time keeping my room clean, especially since I have four siblings running in and out of there. The article encouraged me to keep trying to keep my room clean. Thanks.

*Jessica Scott, Clarksville Branch,
Fort Smith Arkansas Stake*

TIME FOR QUESTIONS

I'd just like to express my appreciation for your magazine, especially for the Questions and Answers section. The questions are usually simple, yet most of them are things we don't find the time to think about in our studies at seminary and church. I enjoy reading the answers from different kids my age around the world, and it really helps when it comes to living our everyday lives. It has been a great influence and a crutch at times. I look forward to future issues.

*Chase Barnes, Canyon Lake Ward,
San Antonio Texas North Stake*



"I enjoy reading the answers from different kids my age around the world."

THANKS, MOM

I have enjoyed reading your magazine. I especially liked the article "Next to the Angels" (Mar. 2005). It reminded me of the thankfulness we should have for our mothers.

Thank you very much.

*Brian Peterson, White Rock Ward,
Santa Fe New Mexico Stake*

INSPIRING WORDS

I really enjoyed the article by Dee Jardine, "Old Mossy," in the March 2005 *New Era*. As a teenager it is sometimes difficult to listen and obey everything your parents tell you to do.

I am so grateful for the words of inspiration that come each month in the *New Era*.

Thanks for the help you give us in these challenging times.

*Issac Demke, Kaw River Ward,
Lenexa Kansas Stake*

CAFÉ DINING

Thank you so much for the article "Internet Café" (Mar. 2005). It answered a lot of questions I had about the Internet. I don't use the Internet very often, and when I do, I feel vulnerable because of my lack of knowledge about the Internet and its many dangers. This article will help me understand and be more prepared when I use it.

*Aaron Hastings, McKinney Third Ward,
McKinney Texas Stake*

We love hearing from you. Write us at the following address. Please include the names of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

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Or e-mail us at

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Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.



ON TRAILS UNKNOWN BY MATTHEW WRIGHT

Alone I travel on trails unknown,
On untrod paths far from my home,
But never will I question why,
Never, friend, will I deny
The truth.

Though I'm chased by murderous bands,
Savage mobs with bloodstained hands,
Who threaten me with calls to die,
Friend, I swear, I'll not deny
The sacred truth.

I'll fight with all my strength possessed,
'Til heart and mind lose life and breath,
'Til under mounds of earth I lie.
No, friend, I will not deny
The Christ.

Now to thee, these words I pass,
On worlds where truth may always last.
From olden days and times I cry,
Please, my friend, do not deny
The Christ.



“Latter-day Saint teenagers who live near the equator in the South American nation of Ecuador know that the real center of everything is Jesus Christ. And they are keeping both feet on the Lord’s side of the line.”

See “At the Center of the Earth” on p. 18.