

MY WARD FAMILY

BY DALLAS SADLER

One night I went with my friends to a youth activity at the local ice rink. Around and around we went on the cold, slippery ice. I was feeling pretty confident and carefree, and I was glad I had gone to the activity.

My mind wandered as I glided along—this was my mistake! It only took one regrettable second for my feet to twist together like a pretzel, and down I went, smashing my face into the ice. Embarrassed, I collected myself and headed for the side of the rink to assess the damage. I quickly realized that my two front teeth were dangling by the roots.

My ward family stepped into place. Brother Kearns called my parents, but by the time they arrived, my ward family was already making arrangements. Brother Bryson comforted me as he helped me into the car to go see a dentist. It felt just like my family had been with me

the whole time. They had taken care of everything, and my mom and dad were grateful.

Heavenly Father planned for us to be born into a family where the most important learning takes place, but he has also given us a ward family to belong to. Wards are designed to support the family. They are a safety net, a listening ear, an opportunity to contribute and to participate together in learning. The Apostle Paul teaches us that we are one body with many members (see 1 Corinthians 12:12–27). We have a great need for each other with all our strengths, needs, love, and experience. We should be willing to bear one another's burdens



that they may be light, to mourn with those who mourn and comfort those who stand in need of comfort (see Mosiah 18:9). In 1 Corinthians 12:26 we read: “and whether one member suffer, all members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all members rejoice with it.”

Thank goodness for a family to help in our times of need! **NE**

WHAT HE SAYS, GOES

BY JADE MCDOWELL

Remember the Sunday when I first learned about President Hinckley’s challenge to read the Book of Mormon by the end of the year. Two weeks before, as part of a challenge from my Young Women president, I had finished reading the Book of Mormon in 65 days—the approximate time it took Joseph Smith to translate it. It averaged out to be about nine pages per day, and I had struggled to finish it in time. Now here I was sitting in sacrament meeting, listening to a letter asking me to read it *again*.

I started to think: “I’m going to be so busy this year in school; I’m not going to have time to read more than one page a day. President Hinckley just wanted us to read it this year, and I already did that. I’m sure he would understand.” By the time the sacrament was over, I had rationalized my way out of the challenge.

It was fast and testimony meeting that Sunday, and many people talked about the blessings that come from

START THE DAY OFF RIGHT

BY AVERY HINTZE

My name is Avery, and I am 13 years old. Even though I am still too young to go to seminary, my friends and I have found a fun way to prepare for it.

Every weekday morning, I wake up and get ready for school. Then I walk across the street to my friend’s house, and I meet up with two of my friends. Next we walk a little up the street to my Young Women leader’s house. We meet up with a few other friends, and we begin our walk over to the bus stop.

“OK,” I say, “today is my turn.” I pull a piece of paper out of my pocket and read it out loud. On it is a scripture I copied down the night before. I read

it and ask my friends what they think it means. We talk about it until we reach the bus stop. We each take a turn during the week looking up a scripture or a quote.

I enjoy doing this every morning because it helps me in many ways: (1) I learn more about the terms and meanings in the scriptures, (2) I learn to ponder about the things I have read, and (3) I am able to use the things I learn every day.

We also challenge each other to read the Book of Mormon and to learn about the lives of the prophets. Even if you don’t go to seminary yet, there are still many ways to start your day off with the Spirit. **NE**

scripture reading. “I’ll still read my scriptures regularly,” I thought to myself.

The next person to get up was a friend of mine. I listened complacently until he mentioned the Book of Mormon challenge.

“It’s going to be hard,” he said. “But the prophet asked us to do it, and whatever the prophet says, goes.”

Whatever the prophet says, goes. That statement hit me hard. What had I been thinking? It wasn’t just anyone who had asked us to read the Book of Mormon; it was a *prophet*, the Lord’s messenger. If an angel appeared to me, I would listen. This wasn’t any different. I was going to obey President Hinckley, no matter what it took.

I finished reading the Book of

Mormon, and I know I made the right decision. I don’t have any spectacular stories to tell about reading it, but I know that the experience as a whole strengthened my testimony. I *was* really busy that year, and having a goal motivated me to read my scriptures every day.

“Whatever the prophet says, goes” has sort of become a motto for me. When I am tempted with things such as immodesty or inappropriate movies, I think back to that memorable fast and testimony meeting.

I’m glad I was paying attention that day. I’m also glad that my friend got up and bore his testimony and that the Spirit carried his words into my heart. **NE**

