

THE New Era

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See "Hearing Heaven,"
p. 46.*

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The 20-Mark Note

BY PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Why did this young elder hand me a 20-mark note? If you understand that, you will understand how our lives are really not our own. They are governed.

Over 30 years ago I was assigned with then-Elder Thomas S. Monson to organize a servicemen's stake in Europe. We met at Berchtesgaden, Germany, high in the Bavarian Alps. Originally it was a headquarters built by Adolf Hitler in an incomparably beautiful place. Seldom has there been on this earth anyone who has duplicated in personality and purpose the adversary quite as much as did Adolf Hitler. I thought that we had come full circle where that had taken place on that site, and now we were gathered there to organize a stake of Zion.

After we had finished setting apart and completing that organization, we were assigned to go to Berlin for a stake conference. We needed to get from Berchtesgaden high in the Alps down to Munich to the airport.

We got to the airport in ample time for our plane, which was scheduled to leave at about 10:00 in the morning, but it was fogged in. We sat there listening to the announcements for nearly 12 hours. They kept saying they thought the fog would clear. It did not clear.

That night near 10:00, two missionary elders came to the airport. We knew then that the planes would not fly. They told us there was a train leaving Munich for Berlin

at midnight. The elders took us to the train station, helped us buy our tickets, and saw us aboard the train, which would take from about midnight until about 10:00 the next morning to arrive in Berlin.

As the train was pulling out, one young elder said, "Do you have any German money?"

I shook my head no.

He said, "You better have some," and, running alongside, pulled from his pocket a 20-mark note. He handed that to me.

At that time the Iron Curtain was very "iron." The train stopped at Hof on the border between West Germany and East Germany, and the crews were changed. All of the West German crew members got off the train, and the East German crew got on the train. Then the train set out across East Germany toward Berlin.

The U.S. government had just begun to issue five-year passports. I had a new passport, a five-year passport. Before our trip, we went to have my wife's passport renewed, but they sent it back saying that the three-year passports were honored as a five-year passport. She still had more than two years left on her passport.

At about two o'clock in the morning, a conductor, a military-type soldier, came and asked for our tickets, and then, noting that



The elder who handed me the 20-mark note was David A. Bednar, a young elder serving in the South German Mission, who is now a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

we were not German, he asked for our passports. I do not like to give up my passport, especially in unfriendly places. But he took them. I almost never dislike anybody, but I made an exception for him! He was a surly, burly, ugly man.

We spoke no German. In the train compartment, there were six of us: my wife and a German sitting to the side of her and then almost knee to knee in a bench facing us were three other Germans. We had all been conversing a little. When the conductor came in, all was silent.

A conversation took place, and I knew what he was saying. He was denying my wife's passport. He went away and came back two or three times.

Finally, not knowing what to do, I had a bit of inspiration and produced that 20-mark note. He looked at it, took the note, and handed us our passports.

The next morning when we arrived in Berlin, a member of the Church met us at the train. I rather lightly told him of our experience. He was suddenly very sober. I said, "What's the matter?"

He said, "I don't know how to explain your getting here. East Germany right now is the one country in the world that refuses to honor the three-year passport. To them, your wife's passport was not valid."

I said, "Well, what could they have done?"

He answered, "Put you off the train."

I said, "They wouldn't put us off the train, would they?"

He said, "Not us. Her!"

I could see myself having someone try to put my wife off the train at about two o'clock in the morning somewhere in East Germany. I am not sure I would know what to do. I did not learn until afterwards how dangerous it was and what the circumstances were, particularly for my wife. I care a good deal more about her than I do for myself. We had been in very serious danger. Those whose passports they would not accept were arrested and detained.

Our Lives Are Guided

All of this comes to this point: the elder who handed me the 20-mark note was David A. Bednar, a young elder serving in the South German Mission, who is now a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

So why was it that this young elder from San Leandro, California, handed me the 20-mark note? If you understand that and understand what life is about, you will understand really all you need to know about life as members of the Church. You will understand how our lives are really not our own. They are governed—and if we live as we should

live, then we will be taken care of. I do not think he knew the consequences of what he was doing. That 20-mark note was worth six dollars, and six dollars to an elder is quite a bit!

As you go through life, you will find that these things happen when you are living as you ought to live.

If you can learn what the Spirit is, then you never need to be alone. In Doctrine and Covenants 46:2, it says, "Notwithstanding those things which

are written, it always has been given to the elders of my church from the beginning, and ever shall be, to conduct all meetings as they are directed and guided by the Holy Spirit."

Your Spirit Body

The doctrine explained in the scriptures, the revelations, tells us that we are dual beings. We know there is a spirit and a body. "The spirit and the body [when they are eternally combined, become] the soul of man" (D&C 88:15). So there are two parts of you. There is a spirit inside of a body.

You have a spirit body; your intelligence existed forever (see D&C 93:29). That is hard to get through your mind. We are going to live forever. You believe that, don't you? In the Resurrection, we will live eternally. That cannot be unless that is true of the past too, that we lived eternally in

Y*ou have a spirit body; your intelligence existed forever. We are going to live forever.*



the past. We are in the middle of something eternal here.

I have wondered about when the day comes that my spirit leaves my body. When that “unwrapping” takes place and your body is set aside and we are looking at your spirit, what are you going to look like? What will your spirit look like?

Some of you might be described as perfect athletes—perfectly coordinated, able to do anything! You have beautiful physical bodies. If we separated your body from your spirit, what would your spirit look like? You will learn, if you will study and pray and feel, that you could have a beautiful body and a shriveled, weak spirit. On the other hand, you can have a body that is limited in many ways, and yet in the eternal scheme of things, you can train and teach your spirit so that it becomes of imperishable worth.

You can look forward to the day when you are “unwrapped” and your spirit is separated from the body. Your spirit is young and vibrant

and beautiful. Even if your body is old and diseased or crippled or disabled in any way, when the spirit and body are put together in the Resurrection, then you will be glorious; then you will be glorified.

A man I knew—one of the great men I have known—was in a bunch of roustabout boys. They were always where they should not be and never where they should be. Finally, a wise, resourceful leader got them into a Sunday School class. The teacher was this old man—just an ordinary, homely old man. More than that, he was a convert from Europe, and he did not speak English very well. They giggled, “Our teacher? Him?” These boys, I suppose, had the reputation of running any teacher out.

Then my friend said that something happened. The teacher started to speak, and they all began to listen. This friend said, “You could warm your hands by the fire of his faith.” That meant that in that older, worn-out body that did not seem to be able to

Make sure you learn the things that you are not taught overtly. If all you know is what you read or what you can hear, you will not know very much.



Moments of reverence are so precious when you think and feel. That is why temples are so important. You can go to the temple and be out of the world.

erase an accent, there was a powerful spirit.

In the Resurrection the body—the dust of the earth, the carnal part of us—can be renewed and made powerful if it is to equal the spirit.

The Holy Ghost Will Guide You

If you can understand how the Spirit operates, you will be all right. There is not enough evil put together—if it was all brought together as some kind of a dark, ugly laser beam and focused on you, it could not destroy you, unless somehow you consented to it.

In the course of your learning, “wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding” (Proverbs 4:7).

Make sure you learn the things that you are not taught overtly. If all you know is what you read or what you can hear, you will not know very much. Moments of reverence are so precious when you *think* and *feel*. That is

why temples are so important. You can go to the temple and be out of the world.

The promise from the Lord is that when you receive the Holy Ghost, “he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

You will be doing some things automatically, almost unwittingly. Without thinking, you will find you have been prompted and guided by the Holy Spirit. That is why this young elder, without knowing why, took a 20-mark note out of his wallet as he was trotting alongside the train and handed it to me as the train was pulling out. He saved us from great danger.

That is how you will do things and then later look back and know that you were guided. And also that is how you will be warned. You will be warned, “Don’t go there! Don’t do that!” You will be warned, “Don’t go with him! Don’t go with her! Don’t be with them!” And then, “Do be in this company!” You will be guided, and the Lord will watch over you.

I know that the gospel is true, that Jesus is the Christ, that He lives, that this is His Church. Find a place in the world where you can, without embarrassment, without any hesitancy, declare to yourself: first, that you accept the gospel of Jesus Christ and, second, that what you *are* is more important than what you *do*. What you do, if it is guided, will make you what you *are* and what you can *be*. **NE**

Adapted from a devotional address given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on March 12, 2002. For the full text of the address, visit www.byui.edu/Presentations/Transcripts/Devotionals/2002_03_12_Packer.htm.

CHARITY

Charity is “the pure love of Christ,” (Moroni 7:47).

The prophet Mormon taught: “Charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things” (Moroni 7:45; see also 1 Corinthians 13:4–7).

Jesus Christ is the perfect example of charity. In His mortal ministry, He always “went about doing good,” teaching the gospel and showing compassion for the poor, afflicted, and distressed (see Acts 10:38; Matthew 4:23; Mark 6:6). His crowning expression of charity was His infinite Atonement. This was the greatest act of selflessness we will ever know.

The Savior wants you to receive His pure love, and He also wants you to share it with others. He declared to His disciples: “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (John 13:34–35). In your relationships with family members and others, look to the Savior as your example. Strive to love as He loves. (See *True to the Faith* (2004), 27–29; you can also read it online at lds.org in the Gospel Library.) **NE**

POOL OF BETHESDA BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH



CALLED
TO SERVE



“I pray that my spirit might be like that of Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin—whose passing brought about this call—a spirit void of any desire for personal attention, willing to go anywhere and do anything the Lord’s prophets would have me do, applying my full consecration in testifying of the Savior and building the kingdom of God until my final breath.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Come unto Him,” Ensign, May 2009, 79.

ELDER NEIL L.



ANDERSEN

Newly called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Elder Neil L. Andersen was serving as the senior member of the Presidency of the Seventy prior to his calling.

Born in Logan, Utah, and raised on a farm in Pocatello, Idaho, Elder Andersen remembers growing up doing typical farm work day and night. After having served in the France Paris Mission, marriage to his wife, Kathy Sue Williams in the Salt Lake Temple, and graduation from Brigham Young University, he earned a master's degree in business administration from Harvard University. He and Kathy then moved to Tampa, Florida, her hometown, where he worked as an advertising executive and a developer of real estate.

While they were living in Florida an incident with a persistent bug taught him a lesson about keeping small sins out of our lives. He wrote: "One evening as my neighbor and I stood on the front steps, he noticed a little bug crossing my sidewalk. 'You better spray your lawn,' he warned. 'There goes a mole cricket.' I had sprayed the lawn with insecticide not too many weeks previously, and I hardly felt that I had the time or money to do it again so soon.

"In the light of the next morning, I examined my lawn closely. It was lush and beautifully green. I looked down into the grass to see if I could see any of the little bugs. I could see none. I remember thinking, Well, maybe that little mole cricket was just passing through my yard on the way to my neighbor's yard.

"The story, however, has a sad ending. I came out the front door one morning, about 10 days after the conversation with my neighbor. Shockingly, as if it had happened overnight, brown spots covered my lawn. I ran to the garden store, bought the insecticide, and sprayed immediately, but it was too late. The lawn was ruined, and to return it to its former state required a new crop of sod,

long hours of work, and large expense.

"My neighbor's warning was central to my lawn's welfare. He saw things I could not see. He knew something I did not know. He knew that mole crickets live underground and are active only at night, making my daytime examinations ineffective. He knew that mole crickets did not eat the leaves of the grass but rather found nourishment in the roots. He knew that these little inch-long creatures could eat a lot of roots before I would ever see the effect above the ground. I paid a dear price for my smug independence.

"We live in a wonderful day. The blessings of our generation are lush and beautifully green. With faith in the Savior and obedience to the commandments, our lives can be full of satisfaction and joy.

"Our challenges in choosing to serve the Lord are more subtle than those of former days. There are spiritual mole crickets that burrow under our protective walls and invade our delicate roots. Many of these insects of wickedness appear small, at times almost invisible. Yet if we do not combat them, they will do damage and attempt to destroy that which is most precious to us. . . .

"With the influences of evil that surround us, can we even imagine going out in the morning without kneeling and humbly asking together for the Lord's protection? Or closing the day without kneeling together and acknowledging our accountability before Him and our thankfulness for His blessings? ("Debugging Your Life," *New Era*, Aug. 2000, 4).

Elder and Sister Andersen took their young family to France as he served as mission president of the France Bordeaux Mission. He also served as the stake president in Tampa Florida. Elder Andersen speaks French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Elder Andersen and his wife, Kathy, are the parents of four children and 12 grandchildren. **NE**

What about Mom and Dad?



BY MINDY RAYE HOLMES

Do you appreciate your parents and treasure your relationship with them? Read what these teens have to say.

Everyone comes from a different family situation, and everyone's parents are different. Some teenagers think having a relationship with their parents isn't cool or looks bad to their friends.

The gospel teaches otherwise. Families are central to our Heavenly Father's plan. It is important to realize how your parents have influenced your life, what they have taught you, what their strengths are, and how you can work to gain a better relationship with them. Here are some reflections and some advice from other young men and women on how to appreciate and talk with your parents.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM YOUR PARENTS?

I have learned to always enjoy life and to do stuff that makes me happy. I've also learned the gospel from them. They also have taught me the importance of getting good grades.

Genny H., 14, Oklahoma

I've learned to interact with people and always stay calm. My dad is good at that. I can get so mad at him, and he will never get mad back. He's really taught me to find the best in people and how to stay calm in situations when I want to lose it. I have also learned how to have a good relationship when I'm married. I admire that my parents sometimes act like they're still dating. I want that when I'm married.

Dallin J., 17, Missouri



WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU ADMIRE ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?

I admire that my parents work really hard, but then they play hard too. Even though they work a lot, they always make time to have fun with our family. We have both family time and one-on-one time together.

Kaitlyn J., 15, Oregon

I admire how strong my parents are in the gospel. We go to all of the Church activities, and they make sure we get there on time. They're very strong with their Church callings and that's a good quality that I admire.

Kristyn K., 14, Illinois



BE PATIENT WITH YOUR PARENTS

"Be patient with your parents. They love you so deeply. They are emotionally involved with you, and they may become too vigorous as they set their guidelines for you to follow. But be patient. Remember, they are involved in a big do-it-yourself child-raising project, and this is their first time through. They have never raised a child just like you before.

"Give them the right to misunderstand and to make a mistake or two. They have accorded you that right. Recognize their authority. Be grateful for their discipline. Such discipline may set you on the path to greatness.

"Be open with your parents. Communicate with them. Discuss with them your problems."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "You're in the Driver's Seat," New Era, June 2004, 9.

WHAT HAS HELPED YOU TO HAVE A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARENTS?

- My mom always tries really hard to unify our family. She makes sure we try to do as many family activities as possible. Talking with my parents helps too. When I talk to my parents, I tell them pretty much everything I do. They know all about all my friends, so they trust me when I go out with them. They know I won't do anything that they wouldn't want me to do.
- *Hollie V., 16, South Dakota*

THANK YOUR PARENTS

"Be thankful to your parents, who care so very much about you and who have worked so very hard to provide for you. Let them know that you are grateful. Say thank you to your mother and your father."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910-2008), "A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth," New Era, Jan. 2001, 8.



- They always like to play with me and make sure they get to spend time with me, so they can influence what I do. That really helps a lot to build our relationship.
- *Cody R., 13, Georgia*

HOW ARE YOU ABLE TO TALK TO YOUR PARENTS?

- My parents sit me down calmly and we talk things over. I listen to them, and then they listen to what I have to say. Then together we make a decision. Sometimes there is conflict, but it's easily solved. We just talk things through with each other and go on.
- *Carson L., 15, California*

- I learned at a young age that it's a lot easier to get what I want if I compromise. For example, if I tell my parents, "I'm going to go do this," they tell me no. But if I say, "If I do my chores, can I go out?" I normally get a yes. Also, there are a lot of times that my dad or mom will just take me aside, and I can talk with them a lot easier when it's just one-on-one.

Emily J., 16, North Carolina



WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUTH WHO ARE STRUGGLING TO GET ALONG WITH THEIR PARENTS?

The best way to improve a relationship is through loving them even if they do something you don't like or you get angry at them. I think just humbling yourself and giving them a hug and just saying "I love you" is a way to start a relationship if it hasn't already begun.

Kristen L., 16, North Carolina

Let your parents know what's going on. I figure if I just tell them, I don't have to worry about getting in trouble.

Adam M., 17, Pennsylvania

HOW HAS THE GOSPEL STRENGTHENED YOUR FAMILY

I think having the gospel as the center of our family relationship helps a lot. It makes our family closer because we can talk about and apply the gospel.

Whitney Harrison, 16, South Dakota

The gospel really is based upon families. The gospel teaches that families are really important and give life a good structure. So the gospel does help strengthen our family.

Sebastian D., 14, Georgia

HELP IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARENTS

Having problems in your relationship with your parents? The *New Era* has printed numerous articles on this topic. To find out more, try reading some of these at newera.lds.org:

- Questions and Answers, *New Era*, Feb. 2008, 14. (Sometimes my mom and I don't get along. We say things we shouldn't and end up with hurt feelings. I pray to love her, but the good feelings last only so long. What can I do to improve our relationship?)
- Questions and Answers, *New Era*, Feb. 2004, 16. (What can I do to stay close to my dad when we're both so busy?)
- Questions and Answers, *New Era*, Jan. 2003, 17. (I argue with my parents all the time. I love them, but we just don't seem to get along. What can I do?)
- "Communicating with Your Parents," *New Era*, Feb. 2008, 12.
- Shanna Butler, "How to Talk to Your Parents," *New Era*, June 2005, 30.
- Gordon B. Hinckley, Words of the Prophet: "Love at Home," *New Era*, Oct. 1999, 4.
- Larry A. Hiller, "The Truth about Parents," *New Era*, June 1991, 23.
- JeaNette Goates Smith, "Declaring Your Independence," *New Era*, Mar. 1990, 49.
- Anganette Jennings, "How I Get Along with My Family," *New Era*, May 1989, 8.
- Chris Crowe, "How to Talk to Your Parents," *New Era*, Feb. 1989, 14.



NEmore

How well do you know your mom and dad? Take a quiz at newera.lds.org.

“Some of my Church friends argue with nonmember friends over religion. I know contention is wrong, but how do I let my friends know how I feel about the gospel?”

Rather than trying to share your feelings when tempers are high and the Spirit isn't there, look for opportunities to approach your friends one-on-one, at a time and in a place in which the Holy Ghost can help.

Pray for opportunities to talk to your friends about the gospel. When given the opportunity, explain your beliefs and bear your testimony. Make sure you show them that you genuinely care about them. If your friends are interested in learning more, you could give them a pass-along card, invite them to church, refer them to Mormon.org, or contact the missionaries.

Pray for the guidance of the Spirit to know what to say to your friends and how to say it. Pray for help in avoiding contention. If your friends begin to argue with you, it is often best to change the subject or leave the conversation. **NE**

Pray for Direction



Contention does not come from God (see 3 Nephi 11:29), so it's not the right way to share this wonderful gospel. A good way to share the gospel is to invite your friends to go to church or activities.

Prayer has helped me know how I can share the gospel with my friends. I know the Lord answers prayers. He will always show you the right way to do things.

Celeste R., 22, California

Teach Them How They Can Know



When you argue or contend about what you believe, the Spirit leaves. He cannot be there to testify that you speak the truth. The best thing to do is testify. Simply state what you believe and how you know it to be true. When I talk to people about our Church, I tell them they can know

it is true for themselves by praying, reading the Book of Mormon, and listening to the feelings of their hearts. Your friends can still disagree, but they can't deny the power of your testimony.

Sister Clement, 22, Tennessee Knoxville Mission

Avoid Contention

I have a friend who belongs to another church. Last year he came to me at school one day and started to try to prove to me that the Book of Mormon was not true and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was not a Christian church. After replying to all of his questions, I began to realize that he wasn't even paying attention to my answers because he kept challenging me with the same question. From what I learned from this

experience, my advice is that all you can do is explain that you don't want contention and bear testimony of the truthfulness of the Lord's Church.

Jayden C., 13, Washington

Contention Creates Resentment



Contention has never been the right way. It chases away the Spirit of the Lord and leaves in its wake feelings of resentment and hatred. It also changes your way of looking at other people. Generally, what people end up debating about are points of doctrine, so it is really important to be a peacemaker and never forget to bear your testimony about the truths of the gospel and the good fruits it has brought you.

Carlos F., 19, Guárico, Venezuela

Respect Others' Beliefs



Instead of saying to your friends, "My religion is true, and yours isn't," share with them your testimony. Find a time when you and your friend are alone, and ask if you can share your testimony. I did that once with a close friend who is a Christian and is very faithful to her church. She thought it was great that I had a testimony. After that, we discussed what we believed, but it wasn't an argument. However, when you come up and say, "Your church is not true," you'll be disrespectful to something that could be near to their heart. Friends don't do that. You may disagree about points of doctrines with your friends, but a true friend will listen to your testimony and understand that the gospel is very important to you.

Amber P., 17, Utah

Live the Gospel



Live so that those who know you and do not know this true gospel would want to know about this gospel

because they know you. Let the joy of the gospel be seen in you. Be a light, a guide, and the very best example to your friends and others that you can be.

Elder Kamah, 20, Ghana Cape Coast Mission

Bear Testimony

The best way to share the gospel is to do so sincerely and lovingly. Arguing won't get you anywhere. Jesus Christ didn't argue with the Pharisees; instead, He taught them through love, word, and example. *Preach My Gospel* states: "People may sometimes intellectually question what you teach, but it is difficult to question a sincere, heartfelt testimony" ([2004], 199). Bear your testimony of what you know is true and how you know it. When the Spirit testifies of the truthfulness of what you say, that is the best opportunity for your friends to understand.

Ephraim S., 20, New South Wales, Australia

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

NEXT QUESTION

"I've prayed and studied the scriptures for a long time, but I don't seem to get an answer to my questions. How can I gain a testimony?"

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CONTEND WITH NO MAN



Ours is to explain our position through reason, friendly persuasion, and accurate facts. Ours is to stand firm and unyielding on the moral issues of the day and the eternal principles of the gospel, but to contend with no man or organization. Contention builds walls and puts up barriers. Love opens doors."

Elder Marvin J. Ashton (1915-94) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "No Time for Contention," Ensign, May 1978, 8.



WHAT ONE PERSON CAN DO

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY
Church Magazines

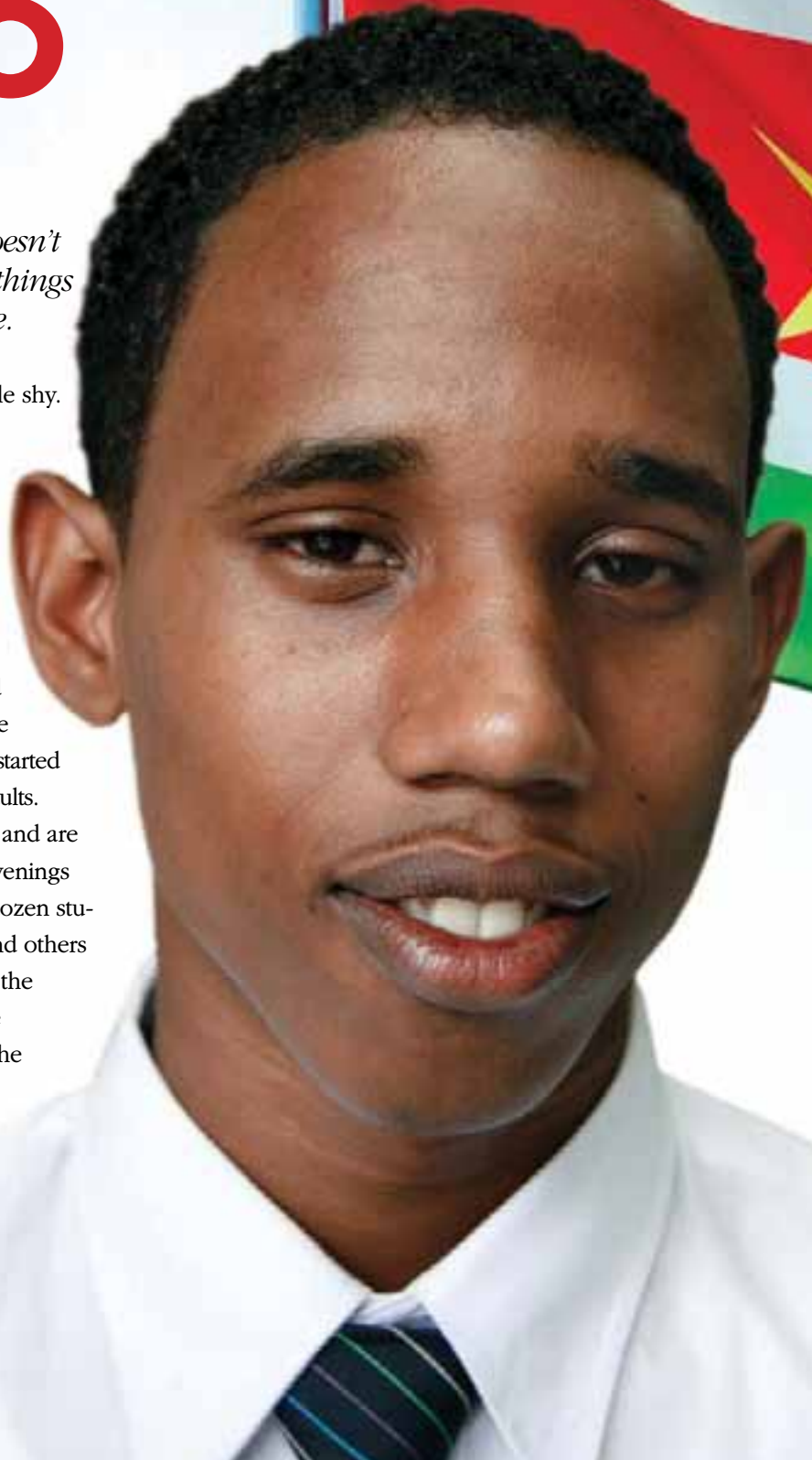
This young man from Suriname doesn't do dramatic things. But the simple things he does make a dramatic difference.

Yves Verwey is quiet, maybe even a little shy. But that doesn't stop him from seeing things that need to be done and doing them.

Music Makers

For example, Yves, an 18-year-old from the Tamenga Branch, Paramaribo Suriname District, saw that when he played the keyboard at Church meetings and activities, lots of people were interested in learning how to play. So he started teaching free classes for children, teens, and adults.

The classes are taught at several branches and are open to anyone who wants to come. Most evenings when Yves teaches, there are at least a half dozen students in attendance, both Latter-day Saints and others who heard about the class from members of the branch. He also teaches flute when someone is interested. He leads the branch choir, and he directed a special presentation by the district choir. He says his musical involvement is a way of showing thanks for the missionary couple who taught him how to read notes and make music.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY



Like the star on Suriname’s flag, Yves shares his light with others. He teaches keyboarding to Latter-day Saints and community members who have an interest. He also meets regularly with friends to study the Book of Mormon.

Scripture Readers

Yves also found a way to help several of his friends who wanted to share with each other what they were learning in the scriptures. They were attending church and seminary or institute, speaking when assigned and



participating in lessons. But they wanted to talk with each other, youth to youth. So once a week they started reading the Book of Mormon together for about half an hour, and they started inviting others, especially some youth who were less active, to join them. Now they’ve been reading together for months, sometimes at one person’s house, sometimes at another’s.

“It started with my friends Larry Roseval, who’s in the Wanica Branch, and Saffira Zeegelaar from my branch. But now there are eight of us,” Yves says. “We read a chapter, talk about it, bear our testimony about it, and share something we learned during the week.”

These scripture readers have also encouraged each other in additional ways. For example, they challenged themselves to make fast Sundays more meaningful by fasting with a purpose. “Last fast Sunday we thought about specific people who are less active and fasted and prayed that they might return to full activity in the Church,” Yves explains.



The missionaries seem to have the same feeling about being with him. Yves generates an upbeat energy that lifts everyone, and they also know he is willing to share his testimony of the truth. Yves will soon turn 19, and he is eager to serve a full-time mission himself.

“Ever since I was in Primary,” Yves says, “I have

Missionary Friends

Full-time missionaries need support from members, and Yves has done something about that too. He goes with them to teaching appointments as often as he can. “I just love to be with the missionaries,” he says. “It makes me feel positive and happy.”

HELP FROM THE BOOK

Yves says the Book of Mormon helps him in many ways. “It gives me a better knowledge of things that *will* happen,” he says. “And I get gospel questions answered when I read about things that happened to other people long ago.”

He says the Book of Mormon, as another testimony of Jesus Christ, helps us to better understand the importance and purpose of the Bible. He quotes the eighth article of faith: “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.”

“The Bible has had some plain and precious things taken out of it,” Yves says, “but the Book of Mormon fills in those holes. You need to study both of them, as well as the other scriptures.”





repeated 1 Nephi 3:7, and I have sung the song about the same thing: ‘I will go; I will do the thing the Lord commands,’ so there’s no question about whether or not I will accept the call.”¹

Blessing Counters

Yves first became aware of the Church when his mother joined. He was seven years old at the time and was baptized and confirmed a year later. He has remained active, even through tough times like his parents’ divorce and seeing his family’s home sold to pay debts. He has endured being taunted by people as he walked to church on Sundays wearing a suit and tie. “I know why I dress that way to go to church, so it doesn’t really bother me,” he says. He has turned away when others tried to get him to smoke or drink. “I’ve never had trouble saying no. Obeying the Word of Wisdom brings me physical health and spiritual strength. Can they offer me something better than that?”

Through it all Yves has been a blessing counter. He encourages others to count their blessings too.

“As you learn about the gospel and how you should obey the commandments,” he says, “you understand more and more that Heavenly Father wants to bless us all. Happiness isn’t about being cool; it’s about having standards and living them. Happiness is about being grateful to God and to others for all the good things in life.”

Having such an attitude is just one more thing Yves sees that needs to be done. And so he’s doing it, and he’s encouraging others to do the same. **NE**

NOTE

1. See “Nephi’s Courage,” *Children’s Songbook*, 120–21.

Excited about missionary work, Yves reminisces with his mother about his baptism and prepares for his own full-time mission. He loves to mingle with members at meetings and to visit the historic district in Suriname’s capital, Paramaribo.

NEmore

For additional stories and photos about youth in Suriname, go to newera.lds.org.

LEARNING TO GET ALONG

Suriname, found in the northern part of South America, is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world.

Major population groups include East Indians (originally from India), Creoles (originally from Africa), Javanese (from Indonesia), Maroons (descendants of escaped slaves), Native Americans (many from the Carib tribe), and Chinese. The people speak Dutch (the official language), English, Sranan Tongo (a Creole language), Hindustani, Javanese, and some other dialects.



Suriname became independent in 1975. Before that it was Dutch, and before that it was British.

“In Suriname, everybody learns to get along with everybody,” Yves explains. “That helps when you’re sharing the gospel, because Surinamese are used to hearing about what other people believe.”

The first convert baptisms in Suriname took place in 1989. Today there are about 700 members attending six branches: Blauwgrond, Nickerie, Paramaribo, Tamenga, Uitkijk, and Wanica.



the

BY AMY WEIR

BAGGING PROMOTION



I'd never been faced with the prospect of having to work on the Sabbath.

You're going to have to work every other Sunday." My stomach churned like it was suddenly filled with rocks. Up until now, I'd only had to work after school and on Saturdays as a bagger. I'd never been faced with working on Sundays.

I had been so excited earlier in the day when my boss told me he was finally promoting me to checker; no more gathering carts in the icy, slushy grocery store parking lot. Nebraska winters were cold. But now that he was standing in front of the big calendar in the break room filling out my new work schedule, dread tightened my throat. I was speechless. He began putting my name in the squares for every other Sunday: "Amy, 12–6. Amy, 12–6."

In the past few months I'd asked my boss countless times if there was an opening for a checker yet, and I'd worked really hard to be the one chosen for the position now that the opening had come. The checkers got to stay in the warm store, their shoes stayed dry, and they made a lot more money than the baggers did.

My boss put my name in a few weekday squares and said, "Congratulations, you've earned this! Enjoy your last day as a bagger," then left to attend to other business. I walked out of the break room and back to my post at the end of

the check-out counter and began putting bread, eggs, and apples in plastic bags as the checker sent them my way on the black conveyer belt. I knew what I should have done, but I hadn't had the courage to do it. Never before had what I wanted been so at odds with what was right.

I tried to ignore those rocks in my stomach, but they just got heavier as my shift went on. In Young Women we'd learned about keeping the Sabbath day holy plenty of times, and I'd always thought it was one of the easiest commandments—until now.

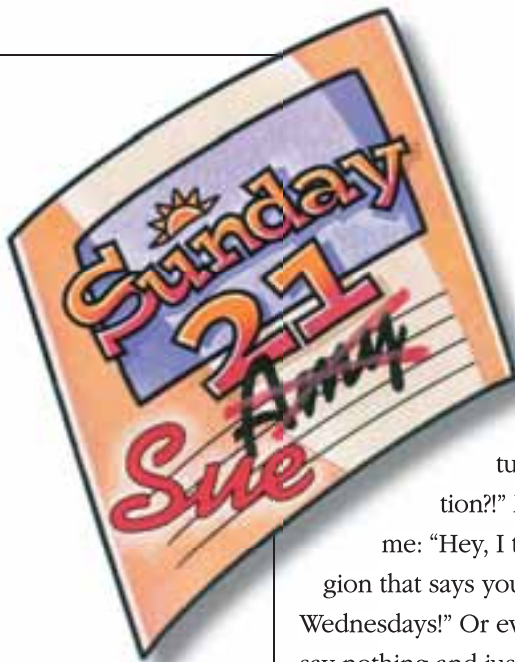
Would it matter that much if I worked on Sundays? It was only every other Sunday. But my conscience tugged at me. Surely it's okay to work on the Sabbath if your job requires it. I had to have a job.

"You can find another job," it piped up again. "Yeah, but for half the money," I mumbled, trying to shut my conscience up once and for all. "What's more important, keeping the Sabbath day holy, or money?" it replied. I rolled my eyes at my conscience, knowing it was right. I had a choice to make.

My shift dragged on. Finally, out in the cold parking lot trying to free a grocery cart that had frozen into a snow bank, I wondered how I'd feel in the bright cozy store checking groceries on a Sunday. My heart sank at the thought, and I knew what I had to do.

The rocks bumped around my insides as I went looking for my boss on my next break. "Choose the right. Choose the right," I chanted to myself under my breath, trying to work up the courage to face him.

I was terrified to talk to him about it. Would he be



When you rely on the Lord and keep His commandments, He truly will cause all things to 'work together for your good' (D&C 90:24). Be careful that you never compromise the principles that you believe in. Remember to always trust in the Lord."

Elder Gene R. Cook of the Seventy, Ensign, Mar. 1986, 78.

angry? I imagined him yelling, "You've bugged me for so long and now you're turning down the promotion?!" Maybe he'd make fun of me: "Hey, I think I'll start a religion that says you only have to work on Wednesdays!" Or even worse, maybe he'd say nothing and just look at me with annoyance and disgust.

"I can't take the promotion, Mr. Johnson," I began, after I'd asked him if I could talk with him for a minute in the break room. "I can't work on Sundays because of my beliefs." I was talking more to my shoes than to him, but I looked up when he didn't reply for a while. He was just staring at me thinking.

Right then I realized that no matter what he was thinking, and no matter what he would say next, the rocks were gone. And was that my conscience . . . cheering? I felt better than I had all day as my boss stood there wondering what to do with me.

He folded his arms and sighed, "All right, I won't make you work on Sundays since it's for church. The other checkers want Sundays off too, but they just want to party."

I thanked him as he crossed my name off the Sunday squares. He gave me a few more Saturday shifts instead, then left.

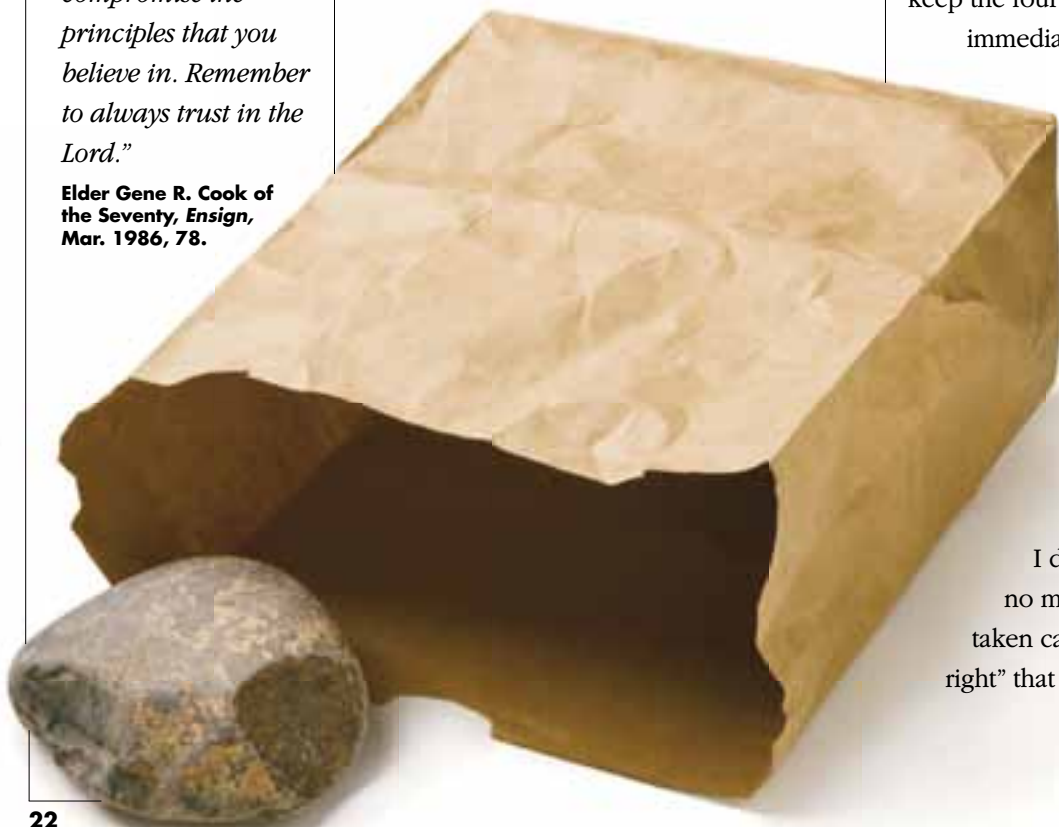
I floated through the rest of my last day as a bagger.

"And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments; . . . therefore, if ye do keep his commandments he doth bless you and prosper you" (Mosiah 2:22).

I was blessed that day because I chose to keep the fourth commandment. I'd had the immediate blessing of a lightened spirit

and a clear conscience, and then the Lord softened my boss's heart right when I needed it. Even if my boss had been a mean man and fired me on the spot, I know that the Lord would have blessed me in other ways. Maybe He would have helped me find a new job. I'll never know. But

I do know without a doubt that no matter what, He would have taken care of me because I "chose the right" that cold winter afternoon. **NE**



THE POWER OF FORGIVING



The Prophet Joseph Smith knew the healing that comes through forgiving others.

Throughout his ministry the Prophet Joseph Smith was frequently persecuted by his enemies, and sometimes he was even betrayed by his friends. Though he was attacked and maligned, the Prophet consistently preached that we should follow the Savior's admonition to forgive others (see, for example, Matthew 6:12; 18:21–22). Here are some of Joseph Smith's teachings on the power of forgiving.*

ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL MANN

NEmore

For more about Joseph Smith, go to JosephSmith.net.

The Quality of Mercy

"One of the most pleasing scenes that can occur on earth, when a sin has been committed by one person against another, is, to forgive that sin; and then according to the sublime and perfect pattern of the Savior, pray to our Father in heaven to forgive [the sinner] also."

"Be merciful and you shall find mercy. Seek to help save souls, not to destroy them."

"Suppose that Jesus Christ and holy angels should object to us on frivolous things, what would become of us? We must be merciful to one another, and overlook small things."

Unity through Forgiveness

"It grieves me that there is no fuller fellowship; if one member suffer all feel it; by union of feeling we obtain power with God. . . . If [sinners] repent, we are bound to take them, and by kindness sanctify and cleanse them from all unrighteousness by our influence in watching over them. . . . Nothing is so calculated to lead people to forsake sin as to take them by the hand, and watch over them with tenderness."

* From *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 392–9.

*He
Will*



Your Pack

My dad and I started early, loading the woodcutting equipment into the truck well before sunrise and pulling out of the driveway just as the stars began to fade. As we snacked on toast and fruit drinks, we sang Scout songs and laughed at silly things I had done as a child. But as the first rays of sunlight splashed across the pristine Arizona sky, our talk turned to my mission—just two weeks away—and to the realization that this would be our last chance to spend time together like this for two years.

The sun left the horizon as we pulled off the main road and ascended into aspens and pines. An hour later we reached our destination: a small clearing at the top of a cliff overlooking a valley camouflaged in the yellows, reds, and greens of fall.

As I climbed out of the truck and peered over the cliff, my thoughts turned to my mission. Would I see such sights there? Would anything be similar so far from home? The knot that had formed in my stomach the day I opened my call tightened.

My dad quietly stepped up behind me and dropped one of his well-worn hands onto my shoulder.

“Are you ready?” he asked. I knew he was talking about cutting wood, but I instantly thought of my mission. Was I ready? Would I be able to learn Spanish? Would I love the people? Was my testimony strong enough?

The questions gathered around my heart like a great weight, threatening to crush my spirit. And then the memory of the greatest lesson my father had ever taught

me leapt into my mind.

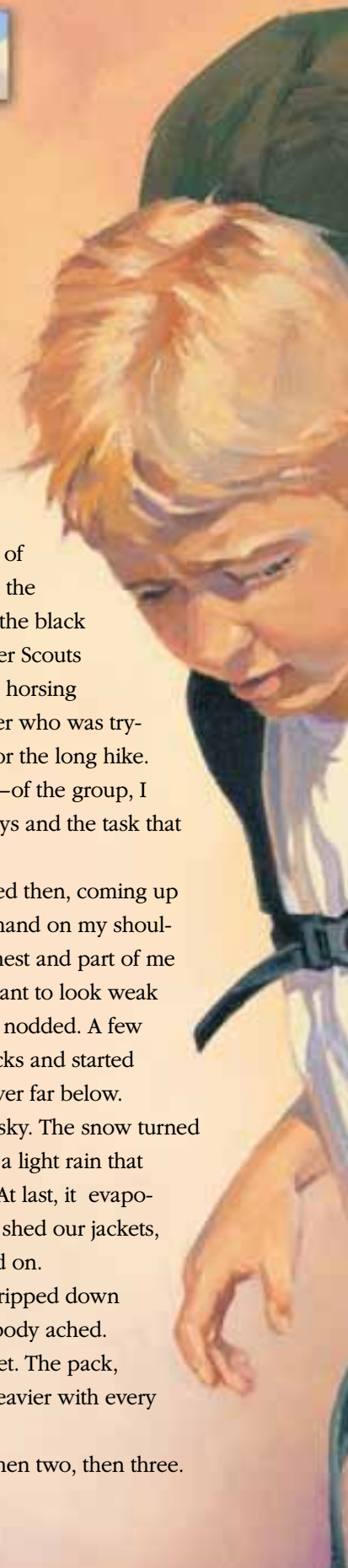
I was 11, shivering in a flurry of pre-dawn snowfall, staring from the edge of the Grand Canyon into the black void below. Behind me, the other Scouts were pulling on their packs and horsing around, ignoring the Scoutmaster who was trying to get everyone organized for the long hike. As the youngest—and smallest—of the group, I was intimidated by the older boys and the task that lay ahead.

“Are you ready?” my dad asked then, coming up behind me and laying a strong hand on my shoulder. My heart pounded in my chest and part of me wanted to say no, but I didn’t want to look weak in front of the other Scouts, so I nodded. A few minutes later, we hefted our packs and started down the winding trail to the river far below.

Slowly, the sun rose into the sky. The snow turned into freezing mist and then into a light rain that formed puddles in the red dirt. At last, it evaporated into a sweltering heat. We shed our jackets, applied sunscreen, and marched on.

The hours ticked by. Sweat dripped down my face, and every inch of my body ached. Blisters began to form on my feet. The pack, towering over my head, grew heavier with every step.

Miles inched past: first one, then two, then three.





BY JEFFERY A. MOULTON

*My father taught me a great lesson
about the Savior without saying
a word.*

Staring into the valley now, I no longer feared the long journey ahead or the trials I would face on my mission or at any other time in my life.

When we stopped for lunch, we had barely passed the halfway point and my legs were already turning to jelly. I dropped my pack to the ground and gratefully plopped onto a large rock beside the trail to eat my smashed peanut butter sandwich.

Relieved of their load, my muscles shook uncontrollably. I longingly watched a mule train pass on its way to the bottom. What would it be like to ride instead of walk? Much sooner than I would have liked, the Scoutmaster signaled the end of the break. I staggered as I hoisted my pack, but my dad caught me and helped me get it into place.

We started down the trail again and, almost immediately, I started having problems. Instead of resting my sore muscles, the break had tightened them. I almost stumbled with each aching step.

Ten minutes passed. My pack seemed to drag behind me, pulling me down and making it impossible to lift my feet. Still, I forced myself forward. I couldn't show weakness in front of the other Scouts. I had to keep moving.

But a few minutes later, I could go no farther. My heart beat faster as I gathered my courage to call for a stop. In my mind, I

could see the disappointment and frustration of the older boys at having to stop for the baby who shouldn't have been allowed to come in the first place. Tears welled up, and I choked back a sudden lump in my throat.

That was when my pack lifted and I suddenly felt lighter than air.

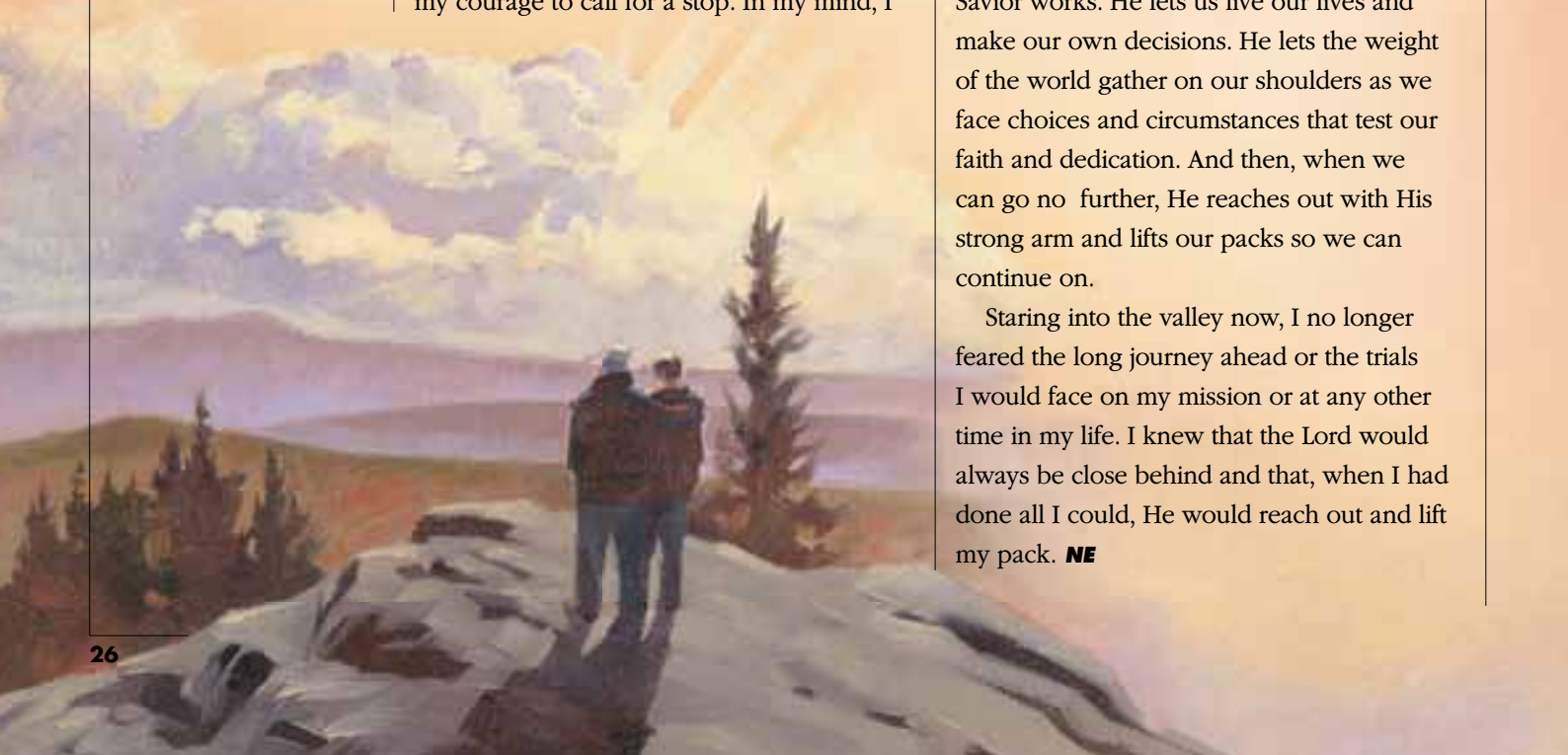
My father, who had been following close behind, had seen my distress and, just when I was about to give up, had reached out, grabbed the bottom of my pack, and lifted it with his strong arm. With the load gone, I suddenly felt like I could run down the trail.

We continued like this for several minutes, with me walking ahead and my father following close behind, lifting the pack from my shoulders. When he at last lowered the pack and removed what must have been a very sore arm, I had regained my strength and could continue on.

Over the years, the memory of that hike and what my father had done for me had faded. But as I stared into the valley that last morning before leaving on my mission, it came rushing back.

In that moment, I saw that my father had shown me an incredible example of how the Savior works. He lets us live our lives and make our own decisions. He lets the weight of the world gather on our shoulders as we face choices and circumstances that test our faith and dedication. And then, when we can go no further, He reaches out with His strong arm and lifts our packs so we can continue on.

Staring into the valley now, I no longer feared the long journey ahead or the trials I would face on my mission or at any other time in my life. I knew that the Lord would always be close behind and that, when I had done all I could, He would reach out and lift my pack. **NE**



MORMONAD

TAKE THE NEXT STEP



DON'T LET WORRIES OR DOUBTS KEEP YOU FROM
SERVING A FULL-TIME MISSION. GET READY, GET SET, AND GO!

(See D&C 15:6.)

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY

For a gallery of past Mormonads, go to newera.lds.org.

NEW ERA JUNE 2009

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Mile-High Perspective

In the Denver, Colorado, area you'll never be completely disoriented, even if you're in an unfamiliar place. All you have to do to get your bearings is look up to find the Rocky Mountains, which cut their rugged outline along the western horizon.

Similarly, Latter-day Saint youth living around Denver know how to find their spiritual bearings in a world of uncertainty and shifting values. By looking to the Lord and standing up for their values, they stand apart among their peers.

What You Say

Latter-day Saint teens seem to agree that one of the things that distinguishes them more than just about anything is using good language. Brett Hellbusch, 18, of the Denver Colorado North Stake, says, "Language at school is so atrocious. The way we talk is drastically different."

BY DAVID A. EDWARDS
Church Magazines

Teens in the Denver, Colorado, area stand out by standing tall.



Ian Griffey, 17, of the Arvada Colorado Stake agrees. “You can totally tell when someone is LDS. They don’t swear.”

Sometimes there is pressure. “Kids try to get me to cuss because they think it’s funny,” says Ethan Forbes, 15, of the Arvada Colorado Stake. “But actually they think it’s cool that we don’t cuss.”

Beyond avoiding profanity and vulgarity, LDS teens’ language is also different in other ways. As Amanda King, 16, of the Arvada Colorado Stake says, “We don’t degrade people.”

Kathryn Jones, 18, of the Arvada Colorado Stake says that an LDS teen stands out “by the way you treat another person with tolerance and patience. You don’t feel like you need to put somebody down, because you know who you are and who other people are—you’re a child of God.”

What You Do

It can be challenging when your standards are not valued or understood. “I struggle too,” says Kathryn. “Who doesn’t? For instance, the no-steady-dating rule. It’s hard. People don’t get it. People make fun of you sometimes. And sometimes they say things that are supposed to shake your faith, but you have to stay strong even though you struggle.”

For example, when Kathryn’s basketball team competes in a tournament camp that lasts through Sunday, her parents pick her up on Saturday night. “You have to deal with your teammates’ rolling their eyes and stuff when you explain our beliefs,” she says.

Dress standards also distinguish these teens. “We wear modest clothing,” says Amanda. “No tank tops; no low-cut blouses. Boys wear clothes that are not too baggy. Especially prom—members of the Church wear appropriate dresses, so you can definitely tell them apart.”

Like most LDS teens, these teens often get asked why they live by such strict standards. Kathryn responds, “When you know the truth, you want to live it and share it.”

Left: Ian Griffey tries to follow Nephi’s example: “His whole attitude—‘I will go and do’—is cool. You should put yourself aside and truly focus on what the Lord asks you to do.”

Right: Kathryn Jones looks up to someone special in her life: “My hero is my brother, who’s on a mission in Oregon. He is my spiritual, all-around hero. He shares the gospel with no fear. He’s not arrogant about it. He finds ways to share it. He’s always prepared to answer any question. He never passes up an opportunity to share what he knows. He’s always there for me to help me with problems.”





Why deviate from it when you know it's what you should be doing?"

A sense of being on the Lord's side strengthens these teens' resolve to maintain their standards despite being different. As Ethan says, "It's a great feeling to know you're one of the few."

Ian offers this perspective: "It's OK to be different from everyone else—if you are following Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ."

Music and Other Talents

Though they often receive attention because of what they *don't* do, these teens also get noticed for what they do, especially when it comes to developing and sharing their talents.

Music is something many of them seem to have in common. "Most LDS kids are involved in music—drama, band, choir, orchestra," says Amanda, who plays violin in her school orchestra and sings in the school choir.

Kathryn, who also plays violin, agrees. "Music is big," she says. "It's seldom that you find an LDS kid who isn't in band, orchestra, or choir." In fact, although only a few students at her school are LDS, so many of them participate in music that the hallway where the band, orchestra, and choir rooms are located is sometimes called "the Mormon hall."

Brett has played trumpet in the school band and sung in the school choir. He first grew to enjoy singing by participating in ward and stake youth choirs.

The Church also played a role for Brandi Hadfield, 17, of the Denver Colorado North Stake, in getting started in the theater. When she was younger, she participated in a ward road show. "I felt silly at rehearsals," she says. "It was a silly part. But when the lights went up, my heart beat, and I did awesome. I loved that feeling, so I decided to try out for more."

Since then she has performed in several school and community productions. And, she explains, she had a secret weapon that once helped her land a leading role in a musical—Primary. "They auditioned four different girls and looked for who was the most confident singing. I was

Left: Brandi Hadfield, a theater enthusiast, loves family and children: "With me, family comes first. I love spending time with my family. And I love children. Especially with community theater, there are a lot of little kids. I like youth theater better than school plays because it's more for children. I have a big heart for children. I've been babysitting for Relief Society enrichment night since I was 12."



PREPARING FOR A MISSION

As the young men in the Denver, Colorado, area turn their minds to missionary service, they start seeing things a little differently.

Stuart McFadden, 19, of the Denver Colorado North Stake, who was recently called to serve in the Mexico Tijuana Mission, says, "A mission is two years of sacrifice, of showing gratitude for what we've been given. It's a chance to serve the Lord and your fellowmen."

He feels that his most recent Church calling in the Primary helped him prepare to teach the gospel. "I got to teach the really young kids—CTR 5," he says. "They're full of energy and light. Just seeing the light in their eyes is a powerful thing. When you're talking from the heart, you can see what they feel, that they know it's the truth."

His Primary calling was also helpful in other ways. "It definitely helps you deal with some stressful situations," he says.

He has also been studying the Book of Mormon, which he says is "the truest book on earth." In addition, he has studied *Preach My Gospel*, noting how it encourages a sort of spiritual self-reliance. "It always suggests that you write down notes and pray about it," he says. "It's like it's saying, 'Here's what you're going to teach. Take it from here.'"

For Ian Griffey, 17, of the Arvada Colorado Stake, the closer a mission gets, the more focused he gets. "Before, it wasn't on my mind

as much," says Ian. "In interviews with the bishop it always came up, but I would just say, 'Of course I'm going on a mission.'"

But, he says, things are slightly different now. "I'm shifting my emphasis," he says. "When I was 16, it was a little more about fun and stuff. Now I'm more focused on the Lord. A mission gives you a purpose."

Keeping that focus can be hard, says Ian. "One part of me wants to just mess around with my friends. But a mission shifts your focus, especially with dating and the world's view of dating."

But Ian has one bit of advice that has helped him: "Keep your focus on what you truly want for your life."

Brett Hellbusch, 18, of the Denver Colorado North Stake started thinking seriously about a mission when some of his older friends started leaving. "A mission is something you really ought to do," he says, "but you actually have to be ready and worthy to go."

Part of Brett's preparation has included sharing the gospel now. He frequently goes with the full-time missionaries to teach, and three of his friends have been baptized and confirmed in the past few years. From these experiences, he has witnessed the effects of the gospel of Jesus Christ in people's lives. "You can see how much happier they are," he says. "You can tell that their lives are better because of it."

These and other experiences have also built up his motivation for serving a mission. "You have to come to a point where you really want to go, not just because your parents want you to," he says. "Have that desire yourself, and work for it. Go on a mission for the Lord, yourself, and the people you're helping to convert."

The Savior is at the center of his desire to serve a mission. "Because of Him, you can return to live with Heavenly Father," he says. "He atoned for all your sins, so the least you can do is go on a mission." **NE**



Above: Stuart McFadden says that a mission is "two years of sacrifice, of showing gratitude for what we've been given." He studies *Preach My Gospel* and the Book of Mormon, which he calls "the truest book on earth."

Below: Brett Hellbusch loves all kinds of music and has shared his musical talents in many ways. He has also shared the gospel with his friends, three of whom have been baptized. "You can tell that their lives are better because of it," he says.





Right: Ethan Forbes loves family, friends, and the outdoors. He knows that "having higher standards keeps you safe. You're happier."

Below: Amanda King is in a wheelchair because of a birth defect affecting her spinal cord: "I just try to do everything. I try to be a regular person, because I am."

"The Church helps me realize that my family will be together forever and that if someone dies, I'll see them again."

"I believe that the Church has helped me throughout my life to be more confident and do more things."



picked for the lead, I think, because I had been singing for years in Primary."

For these youth, sharing talents is a way of reaching people at a spiritual level. As Brett says, "Music's a really good way to get spiritual things across."

Going to Seminary

Another thing that makes these teens stick out is how they stick together—particularly before school.

"I'm surrounded by Mormons before school," says Amanda. And Brandi describes a similar phenomenon at her school: "People tell me, 'I see you in your Mormon circle every morning.'"

This "Mormon circle" is formed, quite simply, because of early-morning seminary. The teens meet to study the scriptures and then go to school and talk together for a while, usually before most others have arrived. People notice them there and sometimes ask questions. "The most common question is 'How could you get up earlier?'" says Brett.

Their demeanor also makes them stand out. Brandi says, "The Mormons are the happy ones in the morning because we've already been up for a couple of hours."

It's not always easy, though. "Getting up for seminary is hard," says Ian. "It's a good way to start your day, but with the stress of school, it's hard to get up." But he sees mostly the benefits. "When you go, the day isn't as stressful," he says.

For Brandi, it builds a foundation. "Because of seminary, if I'm having trouble with anything, I know what to look for in the scriptures; when I give a spiritual thought, I'm able to go deeper and not just say, 'I like this scripture.' When I study at night, I understand it a lot better."

Standing Tall

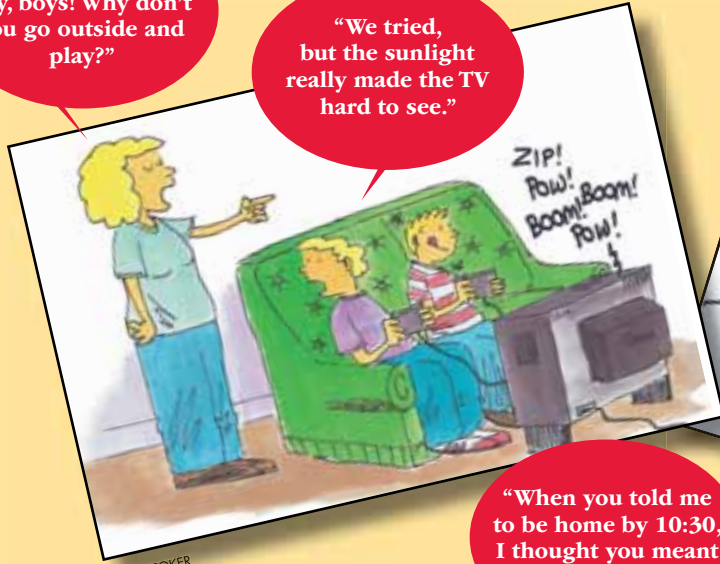
Teens in the Denver area choose to live by Church standards because of the perspective they gain through the restored gospel. This perspective allows them to get their spiritual bearings in a confusing world so that they can clearly see who they are

and where they're going. And by standing tall, they really stand out. **NE**



THE EXTRA SMILE

"It's a beautiful day, boys! Why don't you go outside and play?"



RYAN STOKER

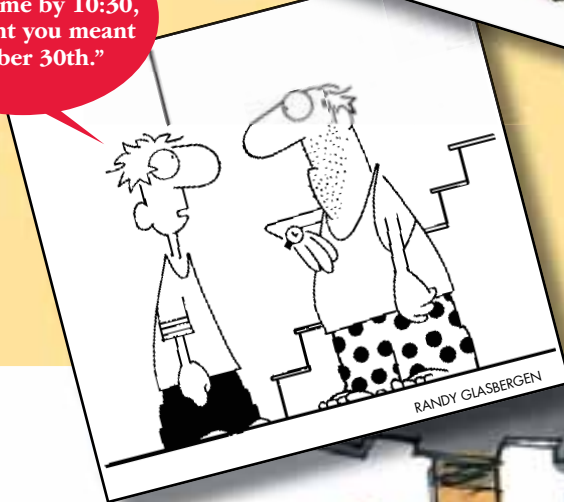
"We tried, but the sunlight really made the TV hard to see."

"I've tried to hum my favorite hymn, but I sound so horrible that it just gives other people bad thoughts."



JON CLARK

"When you told me to be home by 10:30, I thought you meant October 30th."



RANDY GLASBERGEN

"At one Mutual activity my Beehive adviser was telling us that she had served her mission at the Liberty Jail for a time. One girl, who had only heard part of the conversation, looked up in shock at our adviser. "What crime did you commit?" she asked wide-eyed. Our adviser looked back bewildered. The girl went on, "You said you served time in jail!"

—Melissa M., Texas

"We're here as a service project to repair the damage from the last service project."



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

NEmore

See a different Extra Smile online every week at newera.lds.org.

MAXED Out

BY SEAN JOHNSON

It pays to learn early how to manage money and credit cards wisely. I found that out the hard way.

Maxing out your credit cards will leave you drowning in debt. Start now to keep your head above water.

It was the kind of hot summer Saturday that makes you want to drop everything and head to the beach. My buddies and I, about to begin our last year of high school, decided to do just that. We packed ourselves into an old, blue pickup, cracked the windows and cranked the radio, and began the two-hour drive to the California coast.

As we neared our destination, I asked my friend to pull over at a sporting goods shop so I could buy a swimsuit. The woman at the register scanned the price tag of the suit I had picked out as I reached for my credit card. I didn't even have to look at my wallet to find it; my fingers, from habit, knew exactly where to go. I handed it over and the woman swiped it.

"It says, 'Insufficient funds,'" she told me, tapping a finger on the countertop. "Got any cash?"

Surprised and embarrassed, I mumbled a "hold on a minute" and went back out to the car. "Hey, something's wrong with my card. Can someone spot me twenty?" One of my friends did, I went inside and paid, and we

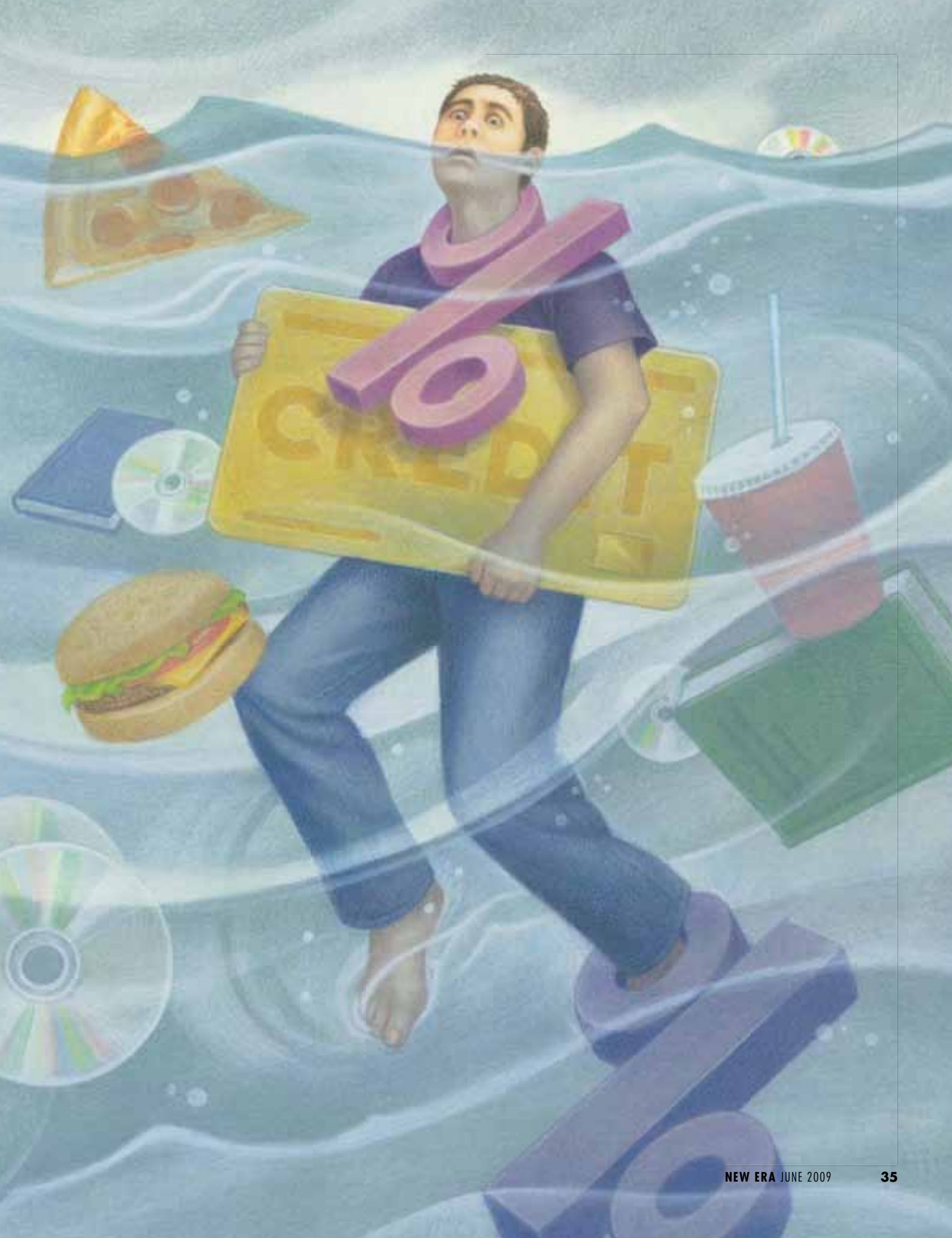
continued on our way.

Everyone else had a good time at the beach that afternoon, but for me the trip was spoiled. How had I maxed out a couple-thousand-dollar line of credit? I had a part-time job, but I didn't make nearly enough to be racking up that kind of a bill. I couldn't think of any major purchases I had made recently. How had this happened?

Spendthrift Drift

Like a lot of teens, I got my first job when I was 16. The paycheck I earned from cleaning tennis courts was nothing to brag about, but I was excited to have some personal income. Because my parents covered a lot of my expenses (they bought a used car for me and my brother to share, and even paid for gas and insurance), the money from my job left over after tithing became spending money. I would spend hours after school at music stores, picking out albums by my favorite bands. An avid reader, I loved going to bookstores and would rarely leave one without a stack of novels tucked under my

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEVE KROPP





Stay afloat by controlling your credit cards instead of the other way around. *Know how much money comes in and goes out.*

arm. I bought clothes and DVDs, concert tickets and guitar accessories. I loved to eat out with friends, sometimes almost every day of the week. Having money to do these things made me feel more mature and independent.

When I first started my job, my parents helped me open checking and savings accounts. I signed up for a credit card also. Though I didn't plan to use it regularly, my parents and I thought it would be helpful to have in case of an emergency. It was more convenient to carry around a couple of cards in my wallet instead of cash and cumbersome spare change, so I switched to plastic. No more counting out bills and coins at check stands; all I had to do was key in a PIN number or show my ID and *presto*. I hardly had to think at all.

But not having to think much turned out not to be such a good thing. It was so easy

to spend money that I began to spend more and more. Online shopping was getting popular at the time, and with a few clicks of the mouse on our home computer, I could have almost anything arrive at my door in two days. With digital music stores beginning to spring up on the Internet, buying music no longer required driving to the store or waiting for a package to arrive in the mail. All I had to do was click the "Purchase Now" button and I could be listening to a new album instantly.

Of course, there was nothing wrong with spending *some* of the money I earned on music or dinner with friends. But as my spending habits got worse, I began to spend money that I didn't really even have. Several times I overdrew my checking account and had to pay a fine. My parents encouraged me to slow down my spending and work out a

budget, but I didn't take their advice seriously. Instead, if I didn't have enough money in the bank, I began to charge purchases to my credit card and say to myself, "I'll pay it off in a few days when my paycheck arrives. No big deal."

It was a bigger deal than I thought. A few days turned into a few weeks, then a few weeks into months. It wasn't long before I had empty checking and savings accounts, mounting debt, and a credit card bill that I couldn't handle. I was stuck.

A Price to Pay

I wish I could say that was when I learned my lesson and turned things around—that I stopped overspending, paid my debts, and became wiser about handling finances. In fact, I was able to pay off my credit card debt, with plenty of help from my parents. For a while I was more responsible with my spending. But only for a while.

Having my parents bail me out, I later realized, gave me an unhealthy sense of security. Though I told myself that I needed to change my spending habits, I also felt that if I did mess up again, there would be a safety net to rescue me, just as there had been the first time. And so I soon fell back into my old habits. I wasn't making large purchases, but I never hesitated to shell out a few dollars here, a little more there—either with my checking card or with my credit card. It depressed me to know how much I spent, so I stopped checking my balances altogether. I got a raise and more hours at work and convinced myself that I was probably doing OK. After all, I wasn't going out and spending hundreds of dollars at a time.

My experience that summer day at the

sporting goods store was an unpleasant awakening. Those smaller purchases had added up, and I found myself in an even bigger mess than before.

A few years later, as I'm about to graduate from college, I think of Alma's admonition to "learn wisdom in thy youth" (see Alma 37:35). Even though I'm on a better track now, I still wonder how much money I could have saved for a mission, college, or marriage had I learned financial wisdom when I was younger—and how many headaches I could have saved myself.

I finally figured out that buying lots of things and being overindulgent won't make you happy, and that learning to live within your means makes all the difference. It has for me. I just wish I had figured that out sooner. **NE**

think of Alma's admonition to "learn wisdom in thy youth." I still wonder how much money I could have saved had I learned financial wisdom when I was younger.

BUCKING BAD HABITS

Don't always bank on your parents. Relying too much on your parents to pay your way today can create habits that are hard to break tomorrow.

Check your checkbook. If you use a bank account, keep track of what's in there. Learn to balance your checkbook and view spending reports on your bank's Web site if they're available.

Slow down. Guard against impulse buys. When you see something you want to purchase, try waiting a while first to make sure it's worth the money. Think about your potential purchases for a day or two, and you might decide on a better way to use your resources.

Set a budget, and don't budge it. After paying tithing and fast offerings and putting some of your earnings into savings, figure out how much money you have left over, and plan accordingly.

Avoid debt. It's better to save up for what you want and use cash or a debit card so that you spend only what you know you have on hand. Don't use a credit card unnecessarily.

“Now
 IS THE TIME
 FOR EACH
 OF US
 TO ARISE
 AND
 UNFURL
 A BANNER
 TO THE
 WORLD
 CALLING
 FOR A
 RETURN
 TO VIRTUE.”

Elaine S. Dalton,
 “A Return to Virtue,”
Ensign, Nov. 2008, 80.

WHAT'S UP?

1 TIMOTHY 4:12 SUDOKU

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

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no man despise thy **youth**; but be thou an **example** of the **believers**, in **word**, in **conversation**, in **charity**, in **spirit**, in **faith**, in **purity**.

For the solution, or do this puzzle online, go to newera.lds.org and look under “Games” for the 2009 Mutual Theme Sudoku.



BY THE NUMBERS

13,508,509

Total Church membership as of 2008.



CAMPING IN NEW DELHI

A number of firsts occurred in 2008 for young women in the New Delhi India District. At the first ever Young Women camp in the district, young women built wood fires, cooked over open flames, slept in tents, and learned survival and camping skills while filling the air with friendly laughter.

“My favorite part of camp was talking to and getting to know the girls,” said Hanna Smith of the New Delhi First Branch. “I got to make friends with girls I had never met before.”

For many of the young women it was their first experience camping, and they learned the basics of outdoor survival and living. The girls also learned how to interpret maps and how to read and conduct music. Youth camp leaders taught a variety of other skills, including dancing, sewing, water safety, and glass painting. Cumorah Taylor, one of the young women in the district, said she felt more confident in her abilities after the camp ended.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ASHLEY BARNES

THE CHURCH IN CANADA — ALBERTA

Latter-day Saint railway crews from Utah first became familiar with Alberta when laying track for the Canadian Pacific Railway as early as 1883. In 1886, a church leader from Utah explored southern Alberta, looking for a suitable place to colonize. In 1887, he left with a small advance party and started a settlement that later became Cardston, where a ward was organized the next year.

The Alberta Stake was created in 1895, the Taylor Stake in 1903, and the Lethbridge Stake in 1921. By 1914, more than 10,000 Latter-day Saints lived in the vicinity. In 1913, ground was broken in Cardston for the Alberta Temple, which was dedicated in 1923. A second temple, the Edmonton Alberta Temple, was dedicated in December of 1999.

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

Membership	73,630
Missions	2
Temples	2
Wards and Branches	205
Family History Centers	34

Information from Newsroom at lds.org.



Above: Group portrait of members in Canada featuring President Heber J. Grant.



Left: Cardston Alberta Temple.

WRITE AWAY

Tell us about how you have come to know the Savior better through your personal experiences? How have you gained a greater appreciation for and understanding of the Atonement, repentance, the Plan of Salvation, or other aspects of Jesus Christ's ministry and mission?

Send your responses to us at newera.lds.org. After clicking Submit Your Material, select Call for Articles and type Coming unto Christ. You can also write to us at newera@ldschurch.org or *New Era*, 50 E. North Temple Street., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.

MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

Moroni 10:4–5 is my favorite scripture because I know that if I have any question or doubt, I can ask God, and I know He'll respond. Earlier this year, when I wanted to know for myself if the Church is true, I prayed and asked. I can't explain the feeling of peace I had, but I began to cry because I was so happy.

Lady D., 14, Lima, Peru

Tell us about your favorite scripture in one or two sentences. Go to newera.lds.org and click Submit Your Material.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM OLSON

FLAG AND PEN © GETTY IMAGES; GROUP PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD JAMES WOOD; CARDSTON ALBERTA TEMPLE BY JED A. CLARK

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a white dress, is being baptized by a priest. The priest's hands are visible, holding the girl's hands. The background is a light blue wall. The text 'TO THE POINT' is written in large blue letters, with 'TO THE' in a smaller font above 'POINT'.

TO THE POINT

Some of my
friends have asked
**why we
are baptized
at age eight.**
What should I tell them?

Baptism is an essential ordinance for us to return to our Heavenly Father.

When Jesus Christ was on the earth, He told His disciples that no one can enter the kingdom of God without being baptized (see John 3:3–5). Many other religions believe in baptism, but the correct manner of baptism is a disputed and controversial topic.

Fortunately, through modern revelation we have been told that baptism must be done by immersion and by someone with priesthood authority. Also, the person being

baptized must be above the age of accountability, which means that he or she is old enough to understand right from wrong. The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith that “children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old” (D&C 68:27). Explain to your friends that this is one reason why it is so important to have modern revelation—so we can know God’s will concerning baptism.

One purpose of baptism is to make covenants with our Heavenly Father and become a member of the Church. We believe that by the time normally developed children are eight years of age, they are ready to keep the commitment of baptism. **NE**

My mom and I used to go to church together all the time. Now she doesn't want to go anymore. What can I do?

Seeing the people you love fall away from the Church can be very painful. But you don’t have any control over their actions. Continue to show love and be a good example to your mother. You can also continue to tell her about what you learned in church, bear your testimony to her, and encourage her to come to church with you. It’s also very important to be patient and understanding with her.

Talk to your bishop about your predicament. He’ll have some helpful advice. You can also ask for a priesthood blessing and pray for comfort and guidance through this hard time. **NE**

What if others make fun of me because of my standards? They say I expect too much from myself. What can I do?

Fortunately, you have been provided a wonderful guide to standards called *For the Strength of Youth*. It explains many important things, and two of them are:

1. “Standards will help you make correct choices” (p. 40).
2. “A true friend will encourage you to be your best self” (p. 12).

Consider giving your friends a copy of *For the Strength of Youth* and explaining why standards mean so much to you. It’s important to understand that you are not trying to put yourself above other people; you are simply trying to become more like the Savior. That’s not expecting too much (see Matthew 5:48).

Each of us can turn individually to the Lord in prayer for help in understanding and applying gospel standards. *For the Strength of Youth* promises that the Lord “will give you the help you need to meet your trials and challenges” (p. 42). By staying close to Him through daily prayer and scripture study, you can come to know if your actions are pleasing to Him. True friends will support you in that.

Remember, standards aren’t meant to tie you down. Rather, they are guidelines to help you become truly free. Living gospel standards means that as a child of God, you are living in a way that is pleasing to Him.

Be careful, however, not to confuse gospel standards with personal goals and preferences. Some of us have a tendency to try to do even more than is needed. (See Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “Our Strengths Can Become Our Downfall,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 11). **NE**

NEmore

Got questions? We’ve got answers. Go to newera.lds.org.

Most Valued Per



Why did Jill say she wanted to be like me when she seemed to make it a point to be unkind to me?

Jill' stumbled around our shared room in the motel where we were staying with the rest of our high school basketball team, ranting about why she'd do something so stupid as to drink beer. She fell across me, pinning me to my bed. I tried to push her off, but she was about a foot taller than I was.

Then, with her nose way too close to mine, she asked a question I'll never forget: "Deb, why can't I just be like you?"

Like me? What? Jill had complete athletic control of her six-foot four-inch frame. She got good grades in tough classes, and the previous week she'd accepted a full ride scholarship to play ball at an elite university. So why did she want to be like me?

I was confused, especially given her treatment of me during the past few months. We

both played volleyball too, and our volleyball team elected me captain. Jill made it clear she didn't think I was fit for the honor. Slyly, quietly, Jill used hurtful comments to isolate me from the team. She claimed I was jealous of her and made fun of my missed plays and personal habits. A promising season fell to an early loss in the state volleyball tournament, resulting in a huge squabble among our players. Tempers flared, and fingers were pointed.

In an effort to patch things up, our basketball coach assigned us to share the same motel room. Now here lay the drunken MVP of the tournament. After I finally moved her to her bed, I listened to her snore and worked on the puzzle in my mind.

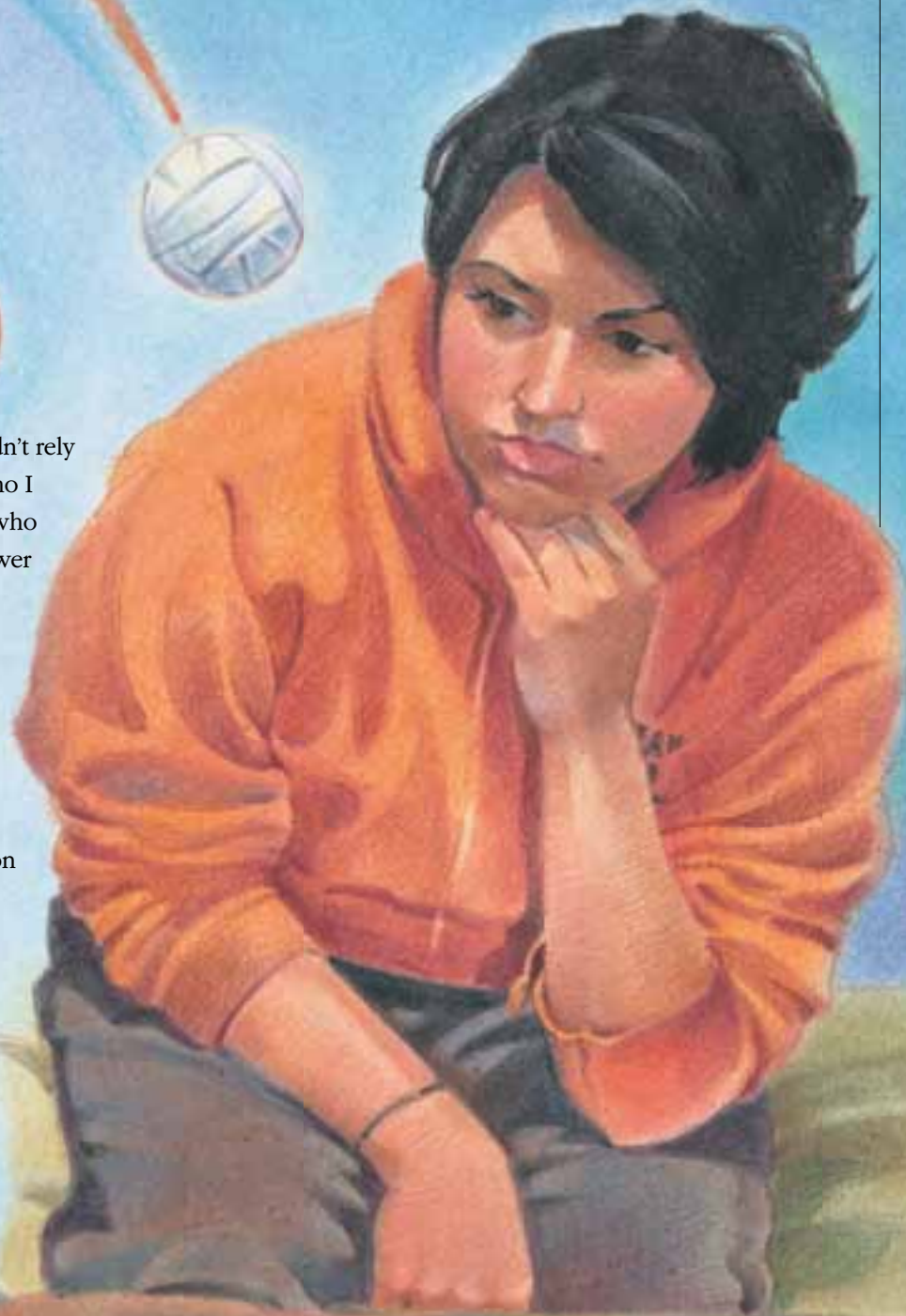
What did I have that she could want? I began to list my blessings. I had parents

son

who supported me and a future that didn't rely on making every shot I took. I knew who I was—a daughter of a Heavenly Father who loves me. I knew the Savior and the power of His Atonement. Tears welled in my eyes as the Spirit bore witness of the truth of the gospel and the power of living it.

That experience started my quest to understand those who are unkind and to see them through the Savior's eyes. From that moment, our basketball season moved forward and ended successfully. We didn't take state, but we made it to the semifinal game as a close-knit team, not as finger-pointing individuals. My greatest hope is that Jill saw the Savior's image in my countenance for the remainder of our senior year. **NE**

* Name has been changed.



PROUD OF WHO I AM

BY MICHELLE RUSHTON

As an 11-year-old, I prepared for my first real babysitting job, and I didn't quite know what to expect. As I entered the home I became a little nervous at the sight of cigarettes on the table and various containers of alcohol on the kitchen counter.

As the mom explained the basic babysitting procedures for her children, she also asked me where I went to school and what my favorite subjects were. Then she asked what church I went to. At that moment I froze.

I didn't know how to answer because I didn't know what kind of reaction I would get from someone who obviously didn't live by LDS standards. I tried to pretend I didn't hear her, and I continued to prepare the baby's crib for her nap. A little louder and more curious, she asked again, "Where do you go to church?"

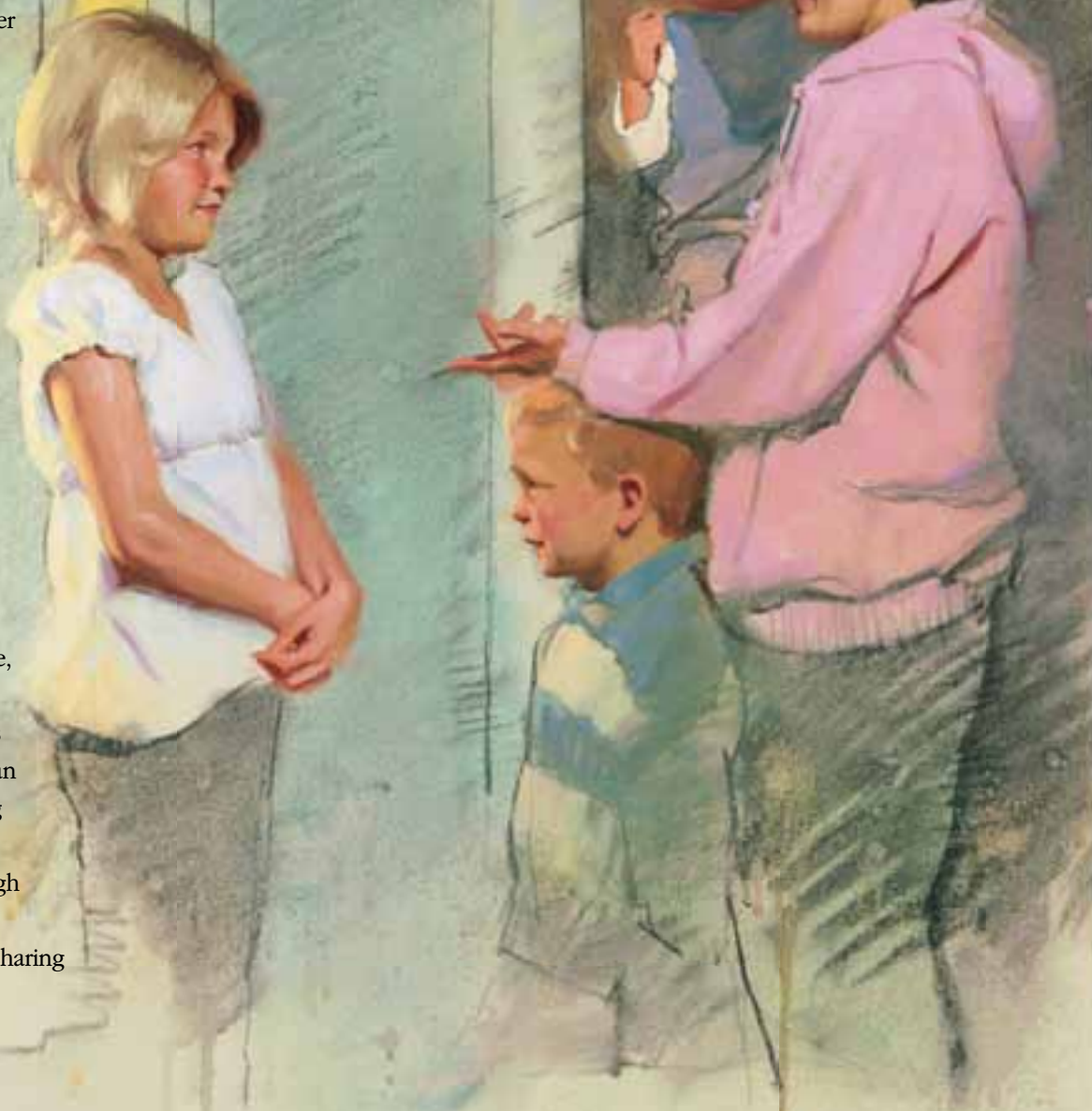
I turned around slowly and with my head slightly lowered whispered, "I'm Mormon." Although my response was barely audible, she knew exactly what I said. Contrary to what I was expecting, this woman began to reprimand me for lacking the confidence to be proud of being a Mormon. Although I don't remember her exact words, I do remember her sharing

stories about all the Mormons she had encountered in her life and how wonderful they were. She lectured me about standing up for what I believe in, holding my head up high, and being proud to be a Latter-day Saint.

The rest of the evening I babysat and pondered this woman's words. I knew that if I was going to be a good member of the Church, I had to give it my all. I don't remember how much money I made that evening or even how long I babysat, but I do know that once you discover you have a

testimony, you have to stand up for what you know is right.

Sometimes it takes someone else to remind us how important the gospel really is in our lives before we realize how strong our testimonies are. Hold your head up high and stand up for what you believe. **NE**



BEARING TESTIMONY TO THE BISHOP

BY ERICA LAYNE NIELSEN

I smoothed my skirt and took a deep breath. It sounded like the meeting on the other side of the door was coming to an end. The bishop stood in the doorway and shook hands as people filed out. He turned to me as I sat in a chair outside of his office, and he smiled broadly.

“Come on in, Erica,” he said with his hand extended.

I stood and shook his hand, suddenly feeling older than 12 years old.

Bishop Morris was a kind man whose love you could always feel. I felt more at ease as soon as I saw him. I told myself to quit being nervous, to remember that interviews with the bishop are regular occurrences once you are in Young Women. Still, I just didn't know what to expect.

Soon the bishop had me talking about my family, school, and friends. He asked about my goals. And then we talked about testimony.

He asked me to share what I believed with him.

Suddenly my nervousness returned. I had only shared my testimony once before. So I gripped the chair handles and started with the first thing that came to mind—Joseph Smith. I told Bishop Morris that I believed Joseph Smith saw God the Father and Jesus Christ. I said I believed that Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon.

THE COVER-UP

BY JOSEPH RAMIREZ

My first couple of months of months working at the grocery store were the toughest. As a courtesy clerk, I bagged and carried out groceries, cleaned toilets, swept the floors, emptied the garbage cans, and stocked the shelves. It wasn't

easy getting into the rhythm and learning where everything was, but I managed.

One day during those first two months, I was bagging groceries when I noticed a pornographic magazine cover in the magazine rack across from the checkout stand. At first I just tried to avoid it by working at other checkout stands. Eventually I realized that plan wouldn't work, because sooner or later I would have to work in that checkout stand. So when things slowed down a little, I got one of the store advertisements from the newspaper rack and stuffed it in front of the magazine.

I hoped that my trouble was over

I expressed my belief in this book, my gratitude for my family, and my admiration of our current prophet.

Before I knew it I had tears in my eyes. Goosebumps began to spread from my toes upward as I started talking about the Savior. I told the bishop that maybe I didn't know a lot

and that eventually they'd just throw out those magazines and put new ones in. But a week later I went in to work, and the advertisement I had placed in front of the magazine wasn't there. Someone must have taken it down.

The store was swamped with customers. I didn't

know what to do. The requirements of my job were such that I had to stay and work in that checkout stand. I was looking away as best I could, but that picture was right there, constantly tempting me. I was afraid that I would give in and look. So I said a silent prayer in my heart.

Five minutes after I prayed, the supervisor of the whole store came down from his office and placed a plastic shield in front of that magazine.

When we do our best to avoid temptation and ask Heavenly Father for help, He will hear us. Prayers are heard and answered. **NE**

yet but that I did know that Jesus Christ lived and died for me.

Until this moment, I hadn't recognized my own testimony. I read my scriptures and said my prayers, and I knew I had felt the Spirit, but I didn't know I had a testimony of my own. When I finally bore testimony, I knew. **NE**



HEARING HEAVEN

BY SALLY JOHNSON ODEKIRK
Church Magazines

John Yoo makes the piano sing as heavenly sounds reach out and touch his audience. Last summer John performed with renowned pianist Marvin Goldstein and several other LDS musicians as they shared their testimonies through music. “John’s talent with the piano is something he came to earth with. It is a blessing to others,” Brother Goldstein says. “Through it, people will feel the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

John, a teacher in the San Fernando Fourth (Korean) Branch, started developing this talent at an early age.

When did you start playing the piano? When I was seven years old I listened to my older brother Samuel play the piano, and I wanted to play, too. I copied whatever he did and practiced with him for about six months.

How do you learn a new piece of music? When I learn a new piece of music, I want to hear what the piece sounds like, so I listen to it on a CD and memorize it. My favorite composer is Franz Liszt because his music is so grand and brilliant. My favorite hymn is “Families Can Be Together Forever” (*Hymns*, no. 300) because I love my family so much.

How do you feel about developing your talents? I like the advice of Alma to his son Helaman (see Alma 37:35). I believe the wisdom we should seek is not only spiritual knowledge but also physical learning. For me, that means developing my musical talent. One way I do that is through playing in piano competitions, even though it makes me nervous. Another way I develop my talents is through teaching music to younger students twice a week. The best part is when I tell them

Name: John Yoo
Age: 14
Location: Santa Clarita, California
Major accomplishments: Awards from the MTAC Los Angeles Scholarship Competition, the Korean Times Annual Children’s Music Competition, and the Virginia Waring International Piano Competition. John has also won awards in the Glendale Junior Piano Competition, the Long Beach Mozart Festival; and in the music chamber series for the Young Music Foundation. John was awarded youngest concerto winner in the Liszt International Piano Competition, and recently was awarded first prize winner at the Antelope Valley Gail Newby Concerto Competition resulting in performing a concerto with the Antelope Valley Symphony Orchestra.

to practice and they actually do it and show the improvements I expected.

What do you do in your spare time? I like to play video games, read books, swim, and play soccer with my friends.

John says, “I hope that through what I play others will be able to hear heavenly music.” **NE**

NEmore
To hear John in performance, go to newera.lds.org.



NewEra.Ids.org

What's New?

Log on to the New Era online and find:

- A new video about dating.
- Take an online quiz about how well you know your mom and dad.
- Look at extra photos from the teens in Suriname.
- Submit photos for Photo of the Month and add a paragraph about why you took that particular photo.

TOP FIVE

If you want to read some great articles about money management, read these five. Be sure to check out the article "Maxed Out," by Sean Johnson, on page 34 of this issue. Look these articles up in past issues online.

Q&A (addicted to shopping), Jan. 1995

Elyssa Renee Andrus, "Fantastic Plastic?" Apr. 2001

"Stay Out of Hot Water" (poster), May 2003

Kristi Linton, "Money Matters," Sept. 2004

Danielle Nye Poulter, "Taking Credit," Aug. 2006

BEHIND THE SCENES

You may have noticed that we have three questions with answers in a department called To The Point that appears every few months. We found that we needed a place to answer questions that basically have a single answer. So we started this section to take care of questions you might have that can be answered simply. To see a collection of all the To The Point questions and their answers, check online.

Fiction

Will Strickland flipped switches, turned dials, and moved levers on the lighted control panel; the metal robot sitting at the far end of the living room stood up and walked ponderously toward him.

Will's fingers moved rapidly among the controls as he piloted the robot in a slow circle about the room.

At last!

He finally had the robot perfected to the point where it could walk more than six steps without falling on its chrome steel skull. . . .

Read the rest of "Cyrano de Cybernet," by Jerry Emerson Loomis in *New Era*, Jan.–Feb. 1981.

RESOURCE LINKS

If teachers need additional articles to use in preparing lessons for Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood, look online under Lesson Helps for suggestions. Each month we'll add more lessons to the list.

SAYING "NO!"

I really liked the article "Drawing the Line" (Mar. 2009). I believe sin is too readily accepted by the world, and we need to stand up and say, "No!" If kids do worldly things when they are young, it can ruin their lives. Youth of today live in trying times and need to have strong testimonies. I know God can help us overcome these trials. Thank you for publishing great articles. I know they help people, and I enjoy reading the *New Era*.

Levi P., Iowa

GOING TO THE TEMPLE

Thank you for including "Why Do We Baptize For the Dead?" in the March 2009 *New Era*. I recently turned 12, and the article helped me understand the important ordinance I could participate in. I appreciate and enjoy having such a helpful, uplifting magazine in my home.

Cassie H., South Carolina

FINDING ANSWERS

Thank you for this amazing magazine. I often have doubts about how I should behave in certain situations, and I find answers in the *New Era*. I know my Heavenly Father knows and helps me all the time, and He often does it through the magazine.

Marina G., Uruguay

MUSIC MAKERS

Thank you so much for this wonderful magazine. The article "Music Makers" (Mar. 2009) truly inspired me. I have been playing the piano for four years. Recently I have been learning hymns and sharing them

I often have doubts about how I should behave in certain situations, and I find the answers in the New Era.

at Mutual activities. Your report showed how other kids can do this, too. I now know that playing these hymns can really influence people's lives. I even wonder if I could learn the organ and share my skills with others in sacrament meeting. Again, thank you.

Sam L., California

MORMONAD

I just want to say that the Mormonad "Just Looking" (Feb. 2009) is fantastic—a startling comparison to the dangers of pornography and other

traps. I wish you could make that image into a T-shirt. I avoid pornography like the plague, but now I want to avoid it even more. This poster reminds me of President Boyd K. Packer's talk "Spiritual Crocodiles" (Oct. 2001).

Robert A., Utah

WHY AM I LDS?

I really enjoyed the article "Why Am I LDS?" (Mar. 2009) by Blake Faulkner. It's true about the way we face things, and how people of different religions react to them. It truly is a lifestyle, and it has the ability to be personal for every follower. I appreciate the message it shared and for the inspiration, knowledge, and exact words to describe why people are LDS. Thank you, Blake!

Kayla L., Utah

SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

The *New Era* magazine is very helpful to Latter-day Saints all over the world. For me, it is a wonderful source of inspiration. It builds character! In the article "Climbing Back Up" (Mar. 2009), life is like climbing on a cliff. It has great options. How we deal with life is really a matter of personal choice. I am grateful that Heavenly Father is always willing to help us if we humbly turn to Him.

Mitzi G., Qatar

We love hearing from you. Write to us by going online to newera.lds.org and clicking on Submit Your Material.

Or you can e-mail us at newera@ldschurch.org or write to New Era, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024.





A WALK WITH MY FATHER

BY LAURA A. AUSTIN

Come child, I want to show you
The moon shining through a thin
veil of clouds,
The stars that seem just out of reach
Reflected in a silver lake.
Now close your eyes—be still a
moment.
Feel the warm breeze touch your
skin and hair.
Listen as it rustles the leaves of
aspen trees.
Breathe in the perfume of dying
lilacs.
Walk with me in the twilight tonight
And I will fill your soul with light.



COMING NEXT MONTH

- *A 12-stake youth dance festival.*
- *What it means to have Christian courage.*
- *How to change your life in 30 minutes a day.*
- *Marching with the Mormon Battalion.*
- *A young woman from Uruguay who reached the top in order to go to the bottom of the world.*
- *Giving up first place.*

Just a few of the articles in the upcoming July 2009 issue.

SEE US ONLINE AT WWW.NEWERA.LDS.ORG

