

THE **New Era**

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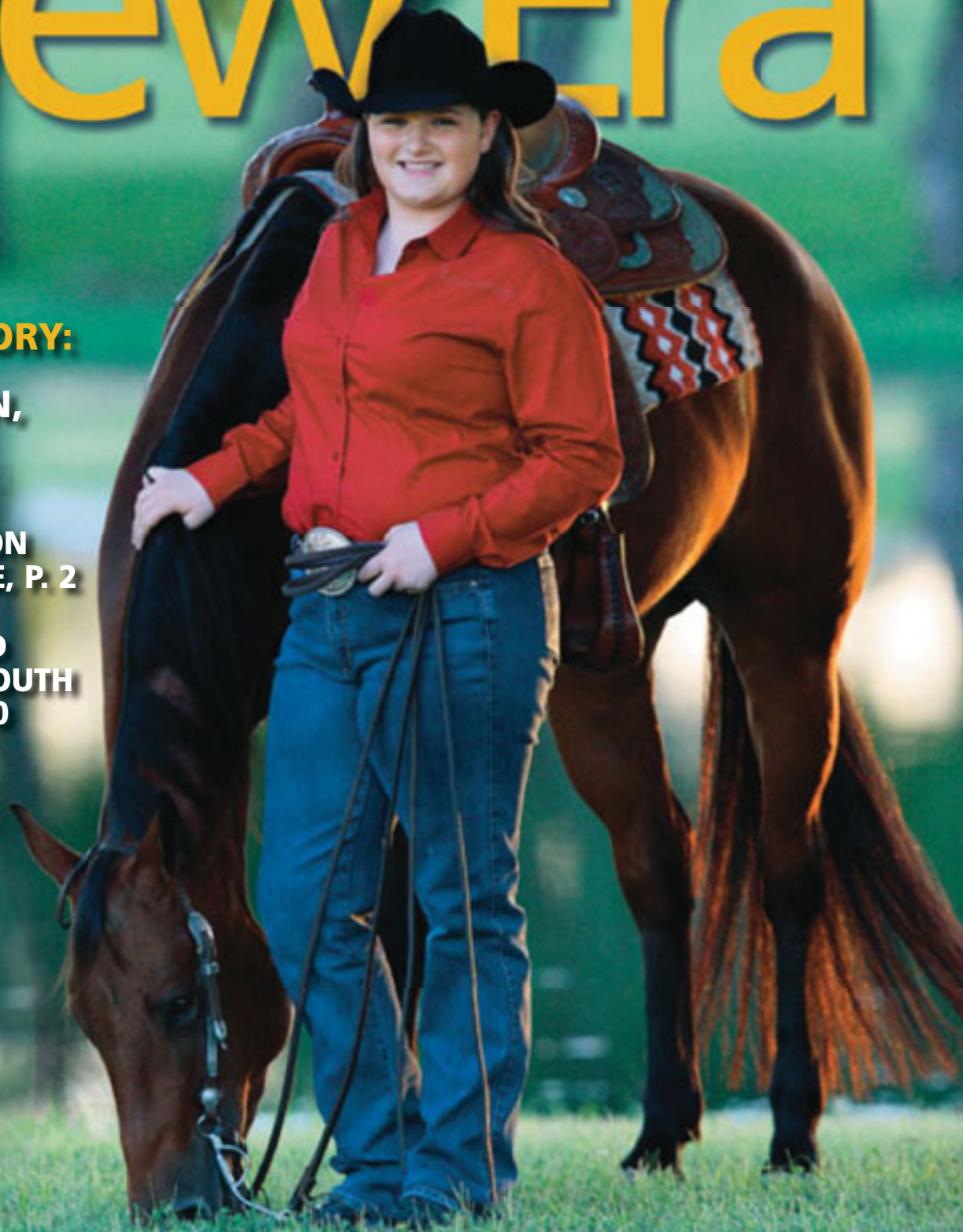
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WHAT'S ONLINE

What does it mean to be modest? Go to the Gospel Library at **LDS.org**, and enter "modesty" in the search bar. You'll find lots of links to loads of learning.



Eager to see Emily exhibit equestrian excellence? Go to **Youth.lds.org** and look under From Every Nation for a video titled "Easily Guided."



Seeking to improve the power of your personal prayer? Hear insights from an Apostle by looking for videos on prayer at **MormonMessages.org**.

What's on the New Era Web page? This month at **NewEra.lds.org** you'll find a video of South African soccer players giving their team cheer, plus Mormonads, experiences from youth, music, Q&As, games, and more.



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Cover: Emily Winegar has learned a lot through horse reining. See "Taking the Reins," p. 34.

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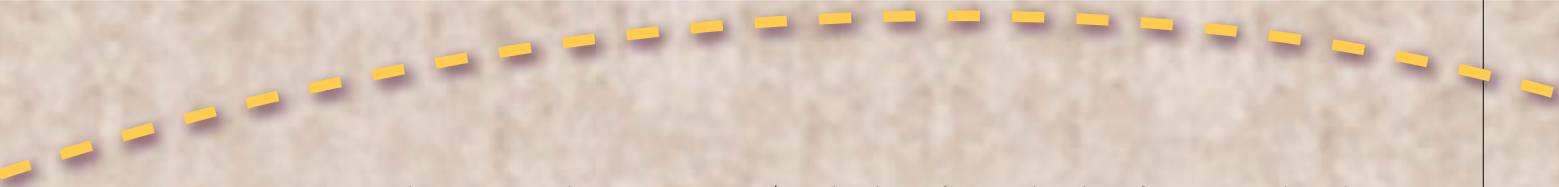
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Is There a Point of No Return?



By President Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

The gift of the Atonement of Jesus Christ provides us at all times and at all places with the blessings of repentance and forgiveness.



During my training to become an airline captain, I had to learn how to navigate an airplane over long distances. Flights over huge oceans, crossing extensive deserts, and connecting continents need careful planning to ensure a safe arrival at the planned destination. Some of these nonstop flights can last up to 14 hours and cover almost 9,000 miles.

There is an important decision point during such long flights commonly known as the *point of safe return*. Up to this point the aircraft has enough fuel to turn around and return safely to the airport of departure.

Having passed the point of safe return, the captain has lost this option and has to continue on. That is why this point is often referred to as the *point of no return*.

Are There Points of No Return in Our Lives?

Satan, “the father of all lies” (2 Nephi 2:18), “the father of contention” (3 Nephi 11:29), “the author of all sin” (Helaman 6:30), and the “enemy unto God” (Moroni 7:12), uses the forces of evil to convince us that this concept applies whenever we have sinned. The scriptures call him the “accuser” because he wants us to feel that we are beyond forgiveness (see Revelation 2:10). Satan wants us to think that when we have sinned we have gone past a “point of no return”—that it is too late to change our course.

What Is the Lord’s Plan for Our Safe Return?

Protection against the influence of the devil comes through the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the good news that Jesus Christ has made a perfect Atonement for mankind. It is the message of love, hope, and mercy that there is a reconciliation of man with God.

Sin is the willful transgression of divine law. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is the gift of God to His children to correct and overcome the consequences of sin. God loves all of His children, and He will never cease to love

and to hope for us. The plan of our Heavenly Father is clear, and His promises are great: “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world . . . might be saved” (John 3:17).

Christ came to save us. If we have taken a wrong course, the Atonement of Jesus Christ can give us the assurance that sin is *not* a point of no return. A safe return is possible if we will follow God’s plan for our salvation.

This plan enables us to experience a physical existence, including mortality, a time of probation, and to return to the presence of God and live in eternal happiness and glory. It is explained in the doctrines of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

How Is Divine Forgiveness Possible?

We acknowledge that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), but we also declare with firmness that repentance and forgiveness can be as real as sin.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ causes each person to be accountable for his or her individual sins. We will overcome the consequences of individual sin by claiming the blessings and benefits of the Atonement.

“For salvation cometh to none . . . except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Mosiah 3:12).

It is not repentance per se that saves man. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that saves us. It is not by our sincere and honest change of behavior alone that we are saved, but “by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23). True repentance, however, is the condition required so that God’s forgiveness can come into our lives.

What Does True Repentance Consist Of?

We need a strong faith in Christ to be able to repent. Our faith has to include a “correct idea of [God’s] character, perfections, and attributes” (*Lectures on Faith* [1985], 38). If we believe that God knows all things, is loving, and is merciful, we will be able to put our trust in Him for our salvation without wavering. Faith in Christ will change our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors that are not in harmony with God’s will.

Wherever
you find
yourselves
on this journey
through life,
whatever trials
you may face,
there is always
a point of safe
return; there
is always hope.

True repentance brings us back to doing what is right. To truly repent we must recognize our sins and feel remorse, or godly sorrow, and confess those sins to God. If our sins are serious, we must also confess them to our authorized priesthood leader. We need to ask God for forgiveness and do all we can to correct whatever harm our actions may have caused. Repentance means a change of mind and heart—we stop doing things that are wrong, and we start doing things that are right. It brings us a fresh attitude toward God, oneself, and life in general.

What Are the Fruits of Forgiveness?

True repentance blesses our lives with the effects of the Atonement: we feel God's forgiveness and His peace, and our guilt and sorrow are lifted away; we enjoy the influence of the Spirit in greater abundance; and we are better prepared to live with our Heavenly Father.

Jesus promised, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: . . . Let not your heart be

troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

The prophet Alma, who was reclaimed from sin to happiness by God's forgiveness, declared, "Wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10). He had witnessed the bitter pains of sin, but he also spoke with excitement about the happiness that accompanies true repentance and forgiveness: "Yea, I say unto you, . . . there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy" (Alma 36:21). Alma concluded with powerful and wise counsel to all who seek forgiveness: "And now, . . . I desire that ye should let these things trouble you no more, and only let your sins trouble you, with that trouble which shall bring you down unto repentance" (Alma 42:29).

How Can We Know That God Has Forgiven Us?

Once we have truly repented, Christ will take away the burden of

guilt for our sins. We can know for ourselves that we have been forgiven and made clean. The Holy Ghost will verify this to us; He is the Sanctifier. No other testimony of forgiveness can be greater.

The Lord said, “He that repents and *does the commandments*

of the Lord shall be forgiven” (D&C 1:32; emphasis added). And He said,

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). “Be faithful and diligent . . . and I will encircle thee in the arms of my love” (D&C 6:20).

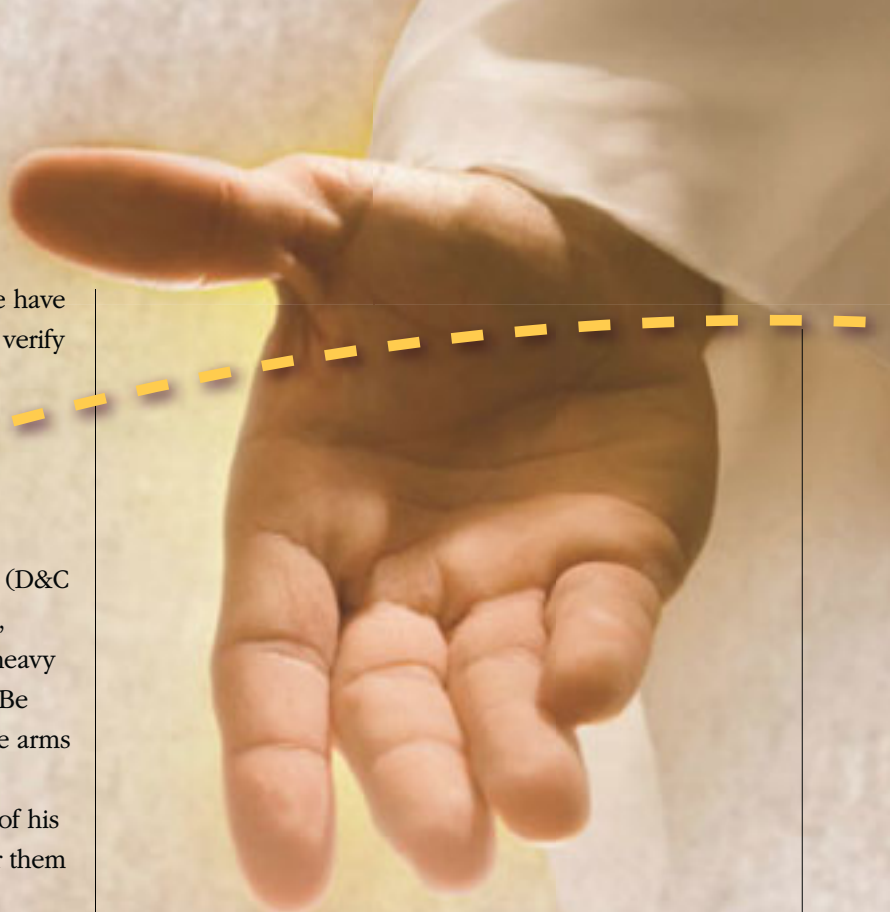
And He declared, “Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more” (D&C 58:42).

Satan will try to make us believe that our sins are not forgiven because *we* can remember them. Satan is a liar; he tries to blur our vision and lead us away from the path of repentance and forgiveness. God did not promise that *we* would not remember our sins. Remembering will help us avoid making the same mistakes again. But if we stay true and faithful, the memory of our sins will be softened over time. This will be part of the needed healing and sanctification process. Alma testified that after he cried out to Jesus for mercy, he could still remember his sins, but the memory of his sins no longer distressed and tortured him, because he knew he had been forgiven (see Alma 36:17–19).

It is our responsibility to avoid anything that would bring back old sinful memories. When we continue to have a “broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Nephi 12:19), we may trust that God will “remember [our sins] no more.”

How Does Extending Forgiveness Help Us to Receive God’s Forgiveness?

Jesus taught us eternal truth when He taught us to pray: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. . . . For, if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not . . . neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (3 Nephi 13:11, 14–15).



Therefore, extending forgiveness is a precondition to receiving forgiveness.

For our own good, we need the moral courage to forgive and to ask for forgiveness. Never is the soul nobler and more courageous than when we forgive. This includes forgiving ourselves.

My dear young friends, when the captain of a long-range jet passes the point of safe return, and the headwinds are too strong or the cruising altitudes too low, he might be forced to divert to an airport other than his planned destination. This is not so in our journey through life back to our heavenly home. Wherever you find yourselves on this journey through life, whatever trials you may face, there is *always* a point of safe return; there is always hope. You are the captain of your life, and God has prepared a plan to bring you safely back to Him, to your divine destination.

The gift of the Atonement of Jesus Christ provides us at all times and at all places with the blessings of repentance and forgiveness. Because of this gift, the opportunity to make a safe return from the disastrous course of sin is available to all of us.

For this I give thanks to our Heavenly Father, and of this I bear testimony with all my heart and soul. **NE**

From an April 2007 general conference address.

An illustration of a man in a blue jacket and a dark cap with a green brim, looking out over a campsite at night. The scene is lit with a cool blue light, suggesting moonlight or a night light. In the background, there are dark silhouettes of evergreen trees and a tent. The man's hands are tucked into his jacket pockets. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

on A TENT A ROCK

By Brian Robins

I chose to pitch my tent on soft, low ground. But my dad's spot turned out to be the better choice.



The summer I turned 12 our Scout troop undertook a 50-mile backpacking trip in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. For years I had heard about the exploits of my older brothers and their friends on previous outings, so I was excited to experience this great adventure for myself. And now I was finally old enough to go.


To my dismay, my father decided he hadn't been spending enough time with his middle child (me), so he announced he would join us on this trip. I had been looking forward to a sense of independence by being out in the wilderness without the usual parental oversight. These plans were now ruined, but I didn't let my dad know I was disappointed he was coming.

My dad insisted on hiking with me and giving me pointers and advice along the way. We shared a tent together, and he taught me the proper way to set up a campsite. While the other boys were off enjoying themselves by throwing rocks in the creek or poking sticks in the fire, my dad was showing me how to clear an area of rocks and debris and how to level the ground. He showed me how to lay a tent out and stake it in place, how to tie a taut line

so we could properly put up a secure rain fly. And then, just when I was about to burst from the boredom of learning all these details, we had to dig a trench around the tent so if it rained, the water would flow away from the tent and not under it.

When it was my turn to cook the dinner, I was again paired with my dad. We, of course, had to make sure the camp stoves were working properly and were cleaned and serviced. We had to make sure to read, understand, and closely follow all the directions on the freeze-dried dinner packages. Again I watched my friends running out into the woods to play. However, this was the first meal I had on that trip that was properly mixed, prepared, and sufficiently cooked.

After a few days we arrived at Hamilton Lake, where we would spend an extra day to rest. I talked with my dad about how I wanted to try camping on my own at this campsite, and he agreed. I was very excited to finally do things my own way. Upon arriving at the campsite, each Scout quickly scrambled to find a prime location for his tent. I found a place with soft dirt among a few trees to



set up my tube tent—a sheet of plastic made into a tube, requiring only that I put a rope through it and tie the rope to two trees. No stakes, no rain fly, no trench, no sweat. I threw my sleeping bag and backpack into the tent and in no time was off throwing rocks into the lake with my friends.

Later I stopped by my father's tent. He had set up his tent on the smooth and slightly rounded top of a very large boulder bordering the lake. His tent stakes had been hammered into crevices in the rock. Even the rain fly was staked and very taut. I felt a little sorry for him having to sleep on a rock, except that it was his own fault. While everybody else was dashing about claiming all the choice spots, he just stood there and waited until all the good ones were taken.

That night, as I excitedly lay for the first time in my very own tent, it began to rain. At first my tube tent kept me dry, but after a while the rainwater began to build up. I learned that my campsite was so soft and cozy because the rain would regularly wash all the silt, dirt, and sand from the area down into the little gully where I was trying to sleep. Soon there was a small river flowing through my tent. I looked up at the top of the boulder where my dad's tent stood. The taut rain fly was repelling the rain off the tent. All the water was draining away from the tent and down the sides of the boulder.

After trying to endure awhile longer, I called to my dad, and he invited me to come up and stay in his tent. I grabbed my sleeping bag and foam pad and tried to keep them dry under my jacket as I ran up to the tent. My dad lay inside dry and warm. I tried valiantly to get into the tent without getting anything wet. My dad scooted his sleeping bag over and held my sleeping bag while I got in. He seemed genuinely pleased to have me join him. There were no comments or lectures about my poor campsite decision or lack of preparation. We just talked, and I listened to another of his famous “shaggy dog” stories before falling asleep (a very long story with a very corny

***Remember that we all have
a loving Father in Heaven
who is there to help us
prevail against the rains and
the floods and the winds of
adversity.***

punch line). I happily camped and hiked with my dad the rest of that trip and still had plenty of time for fun with my friends.

When I think back on my growing-up years, I can no longer recall many of the things my parents specifically said to me. But when I sometimes feel far away from my Heavenly Father, when I wonder if He is still listening, if He is still there, and if He will accept me back, I remember the tent built upon a rock, prevailing against the rains and the floods and the wind (see Matthew 7:25). I remember the warmth and comfort I felt inside. I remember the love and acceptance I felt then from a kind and forgiving father. And I know my kind and forgiving Heavenly Father loves me too. **NE**

YOU ALREADY

Know

I believed the Church was true, but when did I receive that witness?

By Elizabeth Stitt

One day at school, a classmate and I somehow entered into the topic of religion. My classmate became a little antagonistic and started to criticize what I believed.

She looked me in the face and said, “You believe in your Church only because your parents raised you in it. Otherwise, you wouldn’t believe.”

I don’t remember what I said to her, but I kept thinking about her comment and wondering why she would say that. I had been raised in the Church, and, really, I had never questioned the Church’s teachings or doctrines. Ever since I was little, I felt the Church was true. Before I was even baptized, our family read the Book of Mormon together, and I knew it was true. I didn’t just believe; I knew it and had no doubts. But I couldn’t define a particular moment when I had received that witness. For some time that bothered me. I wanted to have a particular experience when I would pray and immediately the answer would come rushing to me. It never happened.

But what I could define was a moment

when my testimony was confirmed. After my first year of high school, I went with some other youth on a tour to Church history sites. When we arrived at the Sacred Grove, our tour guide invited us to seek a personal confirmation that what had happened there was true: that God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith and initiated the Restoration. I found a quiet place in the grove and read the account of the First Vision. Then I knelt down and prayed. I already knew the First Vision had happened and that Joseph Smith was a prophet. But I asked anyway. I finished my prayer, and nothing happened. No grand feeling, no vision, no angels. Nothing.

I found a rock and sat down and opened my patriarchal blessing and started to read. My blessing mentioned the Restoration of the gospel, and in my head the words repeated: “You already know. You already know.”

If I could go back to that moment when my friend challenged what I believed, I don’t know how I would describe how I know the Church is true. But I wish I had told her that while my parents had taught me what they knew to be true, I had to find that answer for myself. And I did.

I didn’t need to go to the Sacred Grove to know the Church was true. I didn’t need any great experience to know the Church was true. I just needed to be reminded, “You already know.” **NE**

For more on this topic, see Elder Neil L. Andersen’s October 2008 general conference talk, “You Know Enough,” at conference.lds.org.

BOUND TOGETHER THROUGH

God's Word

By David A. Edwards

Church Magazines

What do the scriptures mean to us? How do we gain a testimony of them? How can we better understand them?

Like many other Latter-day Saint teens throughout the world, the young women in the Dahlem Ward, Berlin Germany Stake, are finding answers to these questions by meeting each morning before school to study the scriptures in seminary. Their experiences with the scriptures have deeply affected their lives, and they are ready and willing to share their feelings.

Answers from the Scriptures

One of the important experiences these young women have had with the scriptures has been to find answers to their questions through scripture study.

Sometimes when Sariah Gruse, 16, is studying the scriptures, an answer will leap out from the page, she says. "But I usually don't find that scripture again the way it stood out to me before, because it was the thoughts

and the Spirit I received along with it that really helped me."

Denise Reiner, 16, has had similar experiences. She remembers having a question, opening her scriptures, and then seeing the answer on the page she opened to. This experience impressed her, but most often, she says, "you notice that you're guided a little more, that you really do find an answer to all your questions when you read in the scriptures regularly."

Unity through the Scriptures

These young women believe that the scriptures help us to be unified as Saints in Christ's Church. "The gospel is in the scriptures," says Elizabeth Clark, 16. "We shouldn't really debate and contend about it. The principles are in there. That can help us be unified."

Sariah agrees: "The gospel is the same throughout the whole world because of the scriptures. It doesn't matter where you go in the world. You can always feel at home at church because you'll find the same

A seminary group in Berlin, Germany, shares some thoughts on the scriptures.



Lesley's Favorite Scripture

1 Corinthians 13:3–8. "I like this scripture because it describes many important attributes."



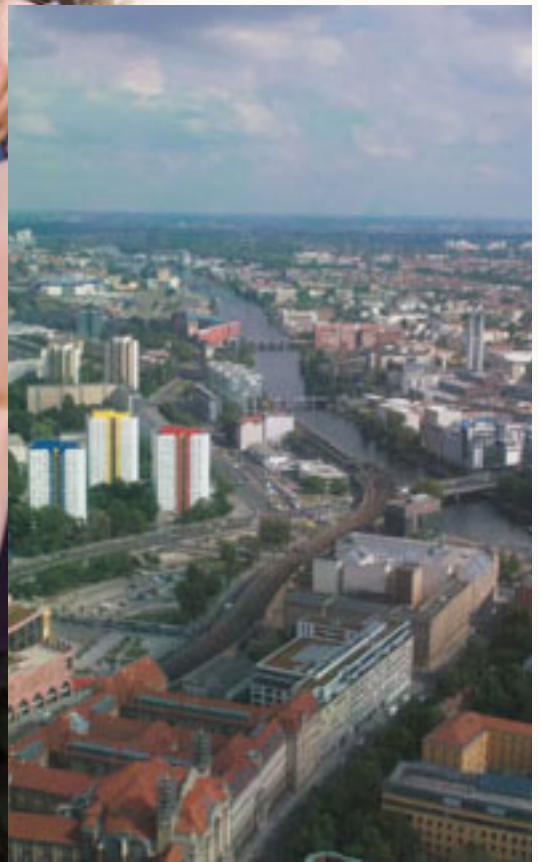
Denise's Favorite Scripture

2 Timothy 2. "It's just beautiful how Paul wrote the letter to Timothy with all of those words of comfort and shared with him all of his experiences. I think that's one of the most beautiful chapters in the scriptures."

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PHOTOGRAPH OF BRANDENBURG GATE © GETTY IMAGES



Amid the bustle of Germany's capital city of Berlin, a group of seminary students has learned the power of the scriptures.



teachings and the same beliefs.”

Sarah Clark, 17, believes that the Book of Mormon is especially important “because the gospel is expressed clearly there. If we follow it and the other scriptures, it helps us to become unified and stay unified.”

This unity fosters the Spirit, says Elizabeth. “When we’re all in agreement with the gospel, then you can feel the Spirit when it’s taught. When there’s contention, you can’t feel the Spirit at all.”

Better Understanding through Seminary

When it comes to developing a better understanding of the scriptures, these young women all agree that seminary has been indispensable. “In seminary you learn a lot about the people in the scriptures and the whole history behind them,” says Denise.

“Seminary is part of my life,” says Lesley Reiner, 17. “I know that it’s important. You should study personally, and then seminary is there for you to study together.”

Sarah adds, “I always look forward to studying the scriptures every morning in seminary. My testimony has been strengthened. I think it’s a special time.”

For Sariah, seminary has become a place to share her feelings. “At first it was hard for me because my mother is the seminary teacher and I had the feeling that I couldn’t really express my thoughts,” she says. But she overcame

her worries and has found seminary to be a place of safety and support in expressing her questions, thoughts, and feelings about the gospel.

The Effect of the Scriptures

The scriptures have had a very real effect on the lives of these young women, and they have been able to apply the scriptures in various ways.

For instance, scripture study has helped them answer others’ questions as well as their own. “If you understand the scriptures and the principles in them,” says Elizabeth, “then, if someone asks you something about the gospel, you can actually explain it better because you understand it yourself. That makes it a lot easier.”

In addition, Denise has found strength and encouragement through the scriptures. “If you simply read what kind of temptations the people had back then and how they were able to overcome them, that strengthens you today,” she says. “And when you read in the scriptures about all of the blessings of the gospel, then you know what you get in return for faithfulness, and that’s also good to know.”

Because of the effect the scriptures have had in their lives, these young women now see themselves on a path leading to even greater understanding and testimony. And they feel bound together in unity to Latter-day Saints everywhere through the word of God. **NE**



Sariah’s Favorite Scripture

D&C 14:7. “I like this scripture because it emphasizes that the greatest gift we can receive from Heavenly Father is eternal life.”



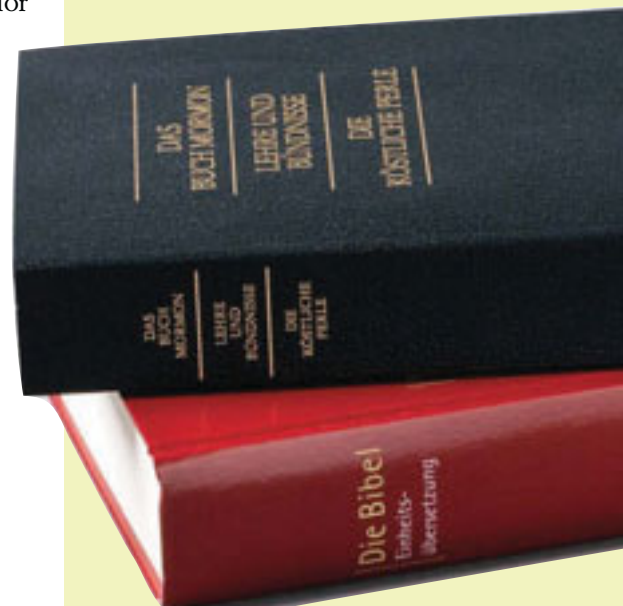
Sarah’s Favorite Scripture

1 Corinthians 10:13. “That is really a beautiful promise, because then I always know that I can withstand any temptations.”



Elizabeth’s Favorite Scripture

D&C 84:88. “It says that the Lord is always there for us and that we are protected. It’s comforting, and that’s why I like this scripture so much.”



READY OR NOT



The battle is on. The enemy won't wait. Now is the time to put on the whole armor of God. (See Ephesians 6:11–18.)

“I’ve prayed and studied the scriptures for a long time, but I never seem to

get an answer

to my questions. Why isn’t the Lord blessing me with a testimony?”

Some people describe dramatic, even miraculous, experiences through which they gained their testimonies. But more often a testimony comes gradually in a quiet way. If you haven’t received a powerful spiritual witness, don’t be discouraged. You’ve already taken the first step toward gaining a testimony by desiring to believe (see Alma 32:27). Your Heavenly Father loves you and wants to bless you with a testimony—but in His own time and in His own way (see D&C 88:68).

Not everyone receives a testimony in the same way. Some feel “a burning in the bosom” (see D&C 9:8). Others feel the Holy Ghost speak truths in their minds and hearts (see D&C 8:2). Your witness will also come through the still, small voice of the Spirit. Ask Heavenly Father to help you recognize these gentle promptings.

A powerful way to gain a testimony is to take opportunities to share the gospel with others. As you teach the truths of the gospel, the Spirit can bear witness to you, as well as to others, that what you say is true.

Continue to pray with faith and sincerity, waiting patiently for the Lord’s answer. As you keep the commandments, you will be worthy of the companionship of the Holy Ghost, the source of testimony. **NE**

Pray Always



I understand what you are going through. I have struggled through difficult times in which my testimony has been shaken.

The way I was able to get through it—and gain the strengthened testimony that I have today—was with constant scripture study and prayer. I read my scriptures every opportunity I got. I prayed morning and night, straining to feel the Spirit. Yet it all seemed to be in vain. But one day, when I got home from school, I knelt by my bed. I don’t know how long I prayed, but I did receive an answer. Just pray always. Study the scriptures. You will find the answer you’ve been looking for.

Christopher W., 15, Nevada, USA

Be Sincere



Heavenly Father knows your heart even before you ask; He is simply waiting for you to bring your questions before Him in sincere prayer. I have a personal testimony that He answers prayers. You might receive an immediate answer, or it might take a little longer, but I truly know He will answer. Be patient and continue in your faithfulness.

Sharon F., 20, Lagos, Nigeria

Listen to the Holy Ghost



Pray for guidance in seeking personal wisdom. Heavenly Father hears and answers all our prayers. Answers come through the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Ask in faith, be humble, keep the commandments, partake of the sacrament worthily, take time to ponder the scriptures, and patiently seek God’s will.

Ana Mae R., 20, Davao Oriental, Philippines

Bear Your Testimony

Church leaders have taught that in addition to asking, we ought to share our testimonies of what we want to know, even though we have not yet received a firm answer. I prayed for a testimony many times and did not receive the witness I was seeking until I shared my testimony of the gospel and the Restoration. Even though I had not yet obtained a firm testimony, I received that clear, soft, powerful confirmation of the Holy Ghost. I know that if you share your testimony, the Lord will strengthen it.

Aura O., 18, Huila, Colombia

Fast and Pray



Prayer and fasting will prepare the spiritual soil in which your testimony will grow, and your testimony will be a

strength and anchor to help you resist every trial and temptation. A testimony is achieved through consistency; our diligence helps us feel the truth. Many times we must fast as Alma did (see Alma 5:45–46). Your testimony may be small at first, but as you continue praying and searching the scriptures, you will begin to see the fruits of your faith.

Elder Zubieta, 20, Colombia Cali Mission

A Divine Revelation

As a new convert I had the opportunity to perform some baptisms for my ancestors. As I stood in the water to perform this sacred ordinance, I had a strong feeling that baptism for the dead is divine. Since then I have been able to build my testimony of baptisms for the dead. In my understanding, *testimony* is defined as divine revelation to the person of faith. To gain a testimony, we must pray, study our scriptures, and obey the

teachings of Jesus Christ. At the root of every testimony must be a righteous life; otherwise, the Spirit cannot bear witness of the work of the Lord in our day.

Mariam N., 19, Accra, Ghana

Never Give Up

Gaining a testimony may take time. There are many things you can do to gain an immovable testimony. Just never give up on asking Heavenly Father for answers to your prayers.

Wilben G., 18, Benguet, Philippines

Have Patience

Sometimes our prayers are not answered immediately. Answers may take time and will come according to the desires of one's heart. One of the qualities of a Saint is patience. Continue to pray, study the scriptures, keep the commandments, and listen to the testimonies of others. Also pay strict attention to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The answer may come when you least expect it.

Chioma O., 15, Abia, Nigeria

Be Still

Heavenly Father is always willing to answer us; however, something

within us can sometimes keep us from receiving the answers we seek. I think the best way to gain a testimony is to be still, spiritually as well as physically. That way, when we pray and read the scriptures, we will be ready to receive.

Monica N., 19, Lima, Peru

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



A FERVENT TESTIMONY

"We cannot merely ask in prayer for a testimony and expect it to be given immediately to us. . . .

"Search and ponder upon the truths you are learning about gospel principles. Think about them. Test them with further prayer. Relate them to what you know and feel. All the truths you will learn can eventually fit together into a fervent, undoubting testimony."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Importance of Receiving a Personal Testimony," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 20.

NEXT QUESTION

"How can I tell if my trials are meant to help me become better or if they are Heavenly Father's way of warning me that I am headed down the wrong path?"

Send us your answer and photo by July 15, 2010, to:

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

You can also write to us at:

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New Era, Q&A, trials

50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA



MODEST *by Design*

By Julia Woodbury

*Talk about
being dressed
for success!
These young
women know the
virtue of modesty.*

Modesty is the standard for LDS youth, no matter where they are. Just take a look at what young women in Utah and California have done to show how easy it is to be modest and beautiful.

While successfully planning and putting on modest fashion shows, these young women learned that beauty is in more than the cut of a dress or the style of a fabric. True beauty is in a young woman who knows that modesty is the best policy.

Choosing the Right in Rose Park

When the young women of the Rose Park Second Ward in Salt Lake City, Utah, got tired of putting up with a skimpy selection of formal dresses, they took matters—and the dresses—into their own hands. Spending an evening at a local dress shop owned by Beehive Elise Carnahan's grandmother, the young women drew the line for modesty by trying on a new line of formal dresses.

Altering for the Better

Amid the bustle of fittings and alterations, the young women learned some practical ways to make dresses modest.

“I had a cute black dress, and we added a bolero jacket that covered my back and shoulders,” said Laurel Leslie Abalos. “The jacket made the dress a beautiful, modest option. We didn’t even have to alter the gown.”

For Elise, the alterations were a little more extensive, but the result was just as rewarding. With the help and expertise of her grandmother, Elise constructed sleeves for her dress. “When you’re modest,” she said, “you can focus on what matters: how you act. I want to enter the temple one day, so I need to prepare now for that day. One of the ways I do that is by dressing modestly.”

A Night of Modest Fashion

Eager to share their new modest formals and show others how easy it is to be modest, the young women’s next step was to put on a fashion show. After a flurry of distributing flyers, making announcements, decorating, and preparing refreshments, the young women were ready to share the confidence and joy they found in being modest.

Yanyn Flores, a Mia Maid with Down syndrome, spoke through her actions at the fashion show. Her participation showed everyone how modesty is important to her.

Alyssa Reed, a Laurel, also told why participating in the show and modeling modesty was important. “Modesty shows respect for your body as a temple. You also respect the people around you, the gifts you are given, and Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.”

Mia Maid Kiko Makaya adds, “I want to set a good example to those around me by dressing modestly.”

And for Beehive Jonni Klus, modesty is a way of staying true to herself. “Modesty shows that you are happy with just being you.”

Worth the Effort

The fashion show was a packed event and a great success. Many more young women mentioned how dressing modestly helps them to be confident and focus on who they are rather than what they wear. Young Women leader Desirae Carnhahan was happy to see how the fashion show blessed their lives. “Our girls now know that modest additions are worth the extra effort,” she said.



Gift



MISS WYOMING ON MODESTY

Anna Nelson of the Rock Springs Wyoming Stake knows what it is like to be under pressure when it comes to modesty. As a competitor for the title of Miss Wyoming 2009, she stood out by standing up for her standards. By selecting an evening gown with sleeves and modestly modifying the other outfits she wore for the competition,

Anna lived her belief

that “you don’t have to be *of* the world to be successful *in* it.” Here’s what she has to say about modesty:

Why is modesty important to you? It is important to me because it is important to my Heavenly Father. There is a reason for every commandment. And that is what modesty is—a commandment.

What have you learned about modesty? One common misconception is that it’s difficult to be modest. It is difficult to find modest clothing ready-made, but it is always worth it to be modest rather than just making do with what the world gives you. There are always ways to add to an outfit to make it modest.

How do you stand up to pressure to be immodest? The most important thing to remember about modesty—any commandment really—is that Heavenly Father’s opinion is the only one that matters. I know that if I’m doing what I know to be true and I live up to His standards, then the rest will fall into place.

Do you have any advice for young women trying to be modest? Surround yourselves with people who value modesty as much as you do. Don’t fall into the trap of thinking that modesty isn’t as “big” of a commandment as others. It most definitely is. Remember that modesty is a reflection of who you are meant to be and a physical representation of what you stand for. Modesty *is* beauty. It will make you happier than you can possibly imagine.



Bright Ideas in California

In the San Diego California North Stake, the stake Young Women president, Sheryl Arrington, had similar ideas for helping her young women make the modest choice.

When they heard about plans for a modest fashion show, many young women rose to the occasion. “Modesty is important to me because it is important to the Lord,” said Hyesuhn Lee, a Laurel. “I know that being modest will help me reach my goal of going to the temple.”

Not the Only One

Several other Laurels like Hyesuhn were invited to participate in the show, and the enthusiasm spread to the Mia Maids and Beehives, who offered to help as well. The show was expanded to include casual clothes, modeled by the Beehives, and Sunday best, showcased by the Mia Maids. With so much participation, Laurel Paige Mange discovered that she was in good company. “The show reminded me that I am not the only one facing the challenge of staying modest.”

Being an Example

The show took as its theme “Be Thou an Example,” and the young women truly became examples by inviting the 11-year-old girls in the stake to come see modesty in action.

Christie Richmond, a Laurel, remembered the show’s simple lesson: “We can wear beautiful gowns and clothes and look pretty and be modest at the same time. Modesty will help you feel good about yourself because you know you are doing the right thing.”

Laurel Kierston Knobloch agrees. “I feel confident and comfortable when I know I don’t have to tug and pull at my clothes.”

Towards the Temple

The girls’ confidence was increased by their participation in the show. Not only did they get to wear beautiful, modest clothes, they also learned poise and posture so they could walk confidently down the runway built for the event. Best of all, however, was the temple cutout that adorned the stage, reminding the young women about their goals to stay obedient, pure, and worthy in dress and action so they could move

towards the temple. “Modesty makes me feel closer to our Heavenly Father,” reflects Laurel Bee Xiong.

Sister Arrington agrees that modesty is a way for a young woman to grow spiritually. For her girls in California, as well as for the young women in Utah and anywhere else, when it comes to modesty, “young women are always beautiful when they follow the Lord’s principles,” she says. **NE**

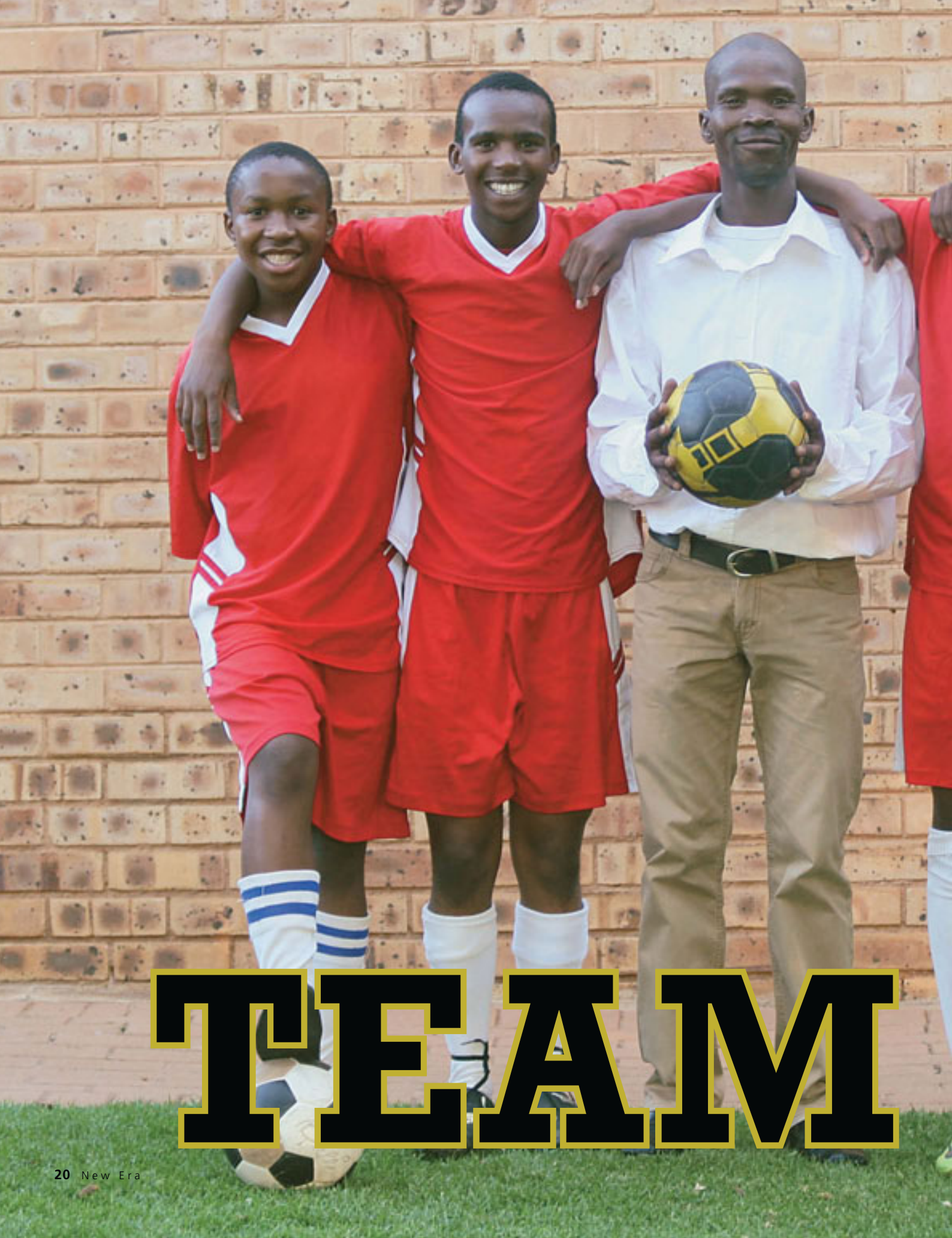


MODESTY TIPS

The young women from the San Diego California North Stake and the Rose Park Second Ward in Utah contributed ideas on how to be more modest. Here are some of the things they thought up:

- Wear camisoles under your outfits. The layers will add fun texture and color.
- Have someone help you with simple alterations (like adding sleeves to a dress).
- Get some cute jackets or cardigans to wear over your outfits.
- Learn how to sew your own modest clothes.
- Buy clothes that are already modest so you won’t have to alter them later on.
- Wear modest clothes around the house. That way you won’t be tempted to be immodest elsewhere.
- Shop at vintage shops where you can find fun, modest clothes from earlier eras.





TEAM



By Richard M. Romney

Church Magazines

One of the great stories coming out of Africa this summer is about soccer. But it's not about the World Cup.

Top soccer teams from all over the world are playing in South Africa this month, hoping to win the World Cup. Teammates will depend on each other, their coaches, and their fans to get them through to the finals. Among players and fans from each country, team spirit is so palpable you can feel it in the air.

But even though they won't be playing for the World Cup, no team will be more loyal to each other, their coaches, and their fans than the priests quorum of the Kagiso Ward, Soweto South Africa Stake. A little over a year ago, five of these young men were introduced to the Church by their soccer coach, who is himself a recent convert. Now they are at the heart of another team, their priests quorum, and working with another "coach," their bishop, as they live the gospel day by day and prepare to serve as full-time missionaries.

Coach Solomon Was Wise

Like many people in South Africa, 29-year-old Solomon Eliya Tumane loves soccer. He spends tireless hours each week coaching the Hurricanes Football Club. He loves his players and rejoices in their successes. They love and respect him

SPIRIT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY



Coach Solomon (second from right, above) was wise when he shared his testimony with his players Patrick Ntsekwa (insert), McDonald Manyakanyaka, Lawrence Tsetse, Thapelo Sesinyi, and Emmanuel Pebe. Now they look to their spiritual coach, Bishop Mahlubi (far right, above), and he is grateful for the priesthood strength they bring to the ward.

in return. So when Coach Solomon joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, his players were curious.

“He would come to practice straight from his institute class,” says McDonald Siyabulela Manyakanyaka, 17. “We could see the scriptures and Church magazines in his bag, so we started asking questions, and to answer, he would read to us,” says Thapelo Benjamin Sesinyi, 17.

“I was eager to teach these young ones because I love them so much,” Coach Solomon says. “I want them to go in the right path. I told one of them, ‘You would do well if you read the scriptures,’ so they all started reading the scriptures. They enjoyed it, so then I taught them about prayer. Then one day they surprised me. I got to practice early, and I was taking a nap when they woke me and said, ‘Coach, we need to visit your church.’ That was a day I will never forget, because I knew then that they were on the right path.”

With Approval

But the coach wouldn’t go further without parental approval. He went to each player’s home, one house at a time, to ask if it was all right to invite the players to church. The parents agreed. “We came to Church three weeks in a row,” Thapelo remembers. “We wanted to learn more and more.” So the coach again asked parents for permission, this time for the players to study with the full-time missionaries. Again the parents agreed.

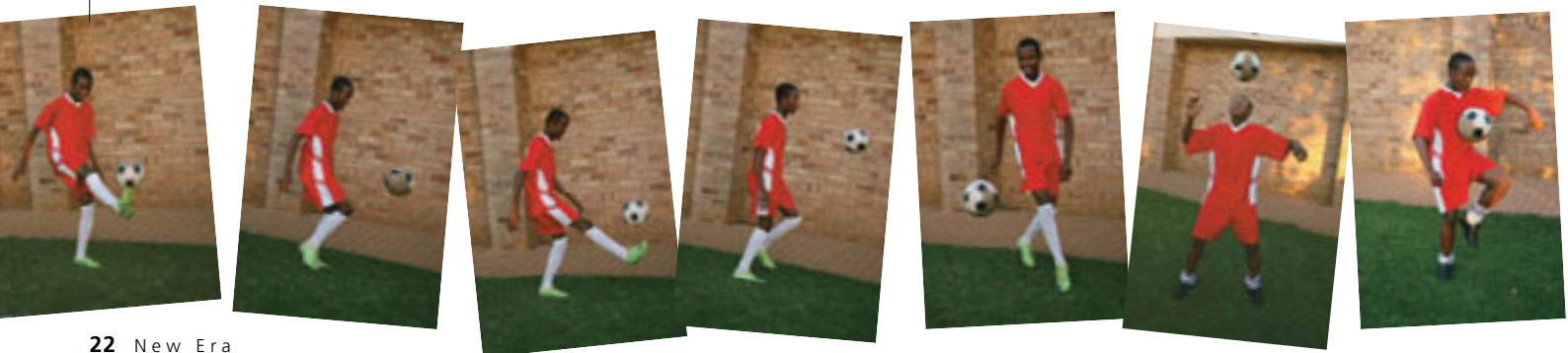
“The missionaries gave us each a copy of the Book of Mormon,”

McDonald says. “They told us to read it and pray about it because it is true, so we did. I prayed and read and found the Book of Mormon to be true.” So did other players, who were baptized and confirmed. Five of the team members are now Latter-day Saints.

Gospel Goals

Most teams set goals for a winning season, but these five young Hurricanes are also shooting for another goal in the not-too-distant future. With the guidance of Bishop Bongani Mahlubi, a man they consider a spiritual coach, they are preparing for full-time missionary service.

“They are a great strength in our ward,” the bishop says. “And they are part of that great priesthood team of Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood holders all over the world. These young men do everything together—they walk to school together, play soccer together, go to seminary together, and serve in the priesthood together. If I call one young man to ask if he



NO SOCCER ON SUNDAY

When Coach Solomon started sharing his religious beliefs with his players, McDonald was particularly interested. Even though he wasn't going to any church anymore, he had grown up in a religious home, and he still read the scriptures regularly. But Sunday was reserved for soccer.

"Then I joined Coach Solomon's team, and we don't play on Sundays. When I saw that my coach kept God's commandments and encouraged us to do the same, I said, 'Here is a man who teaches by example.'"



A COACH'S CONVERSION

Like many other young adults, soccer coach Solomon Eliya Tumane had questions about religion. "I wanted to know about God and why He asks us to pray, and about Jesus Christ and why He died for us. I was confused, but I was studying the scriptures, particularly the Old Testament.

"Then one day I was coming from work, and I saw two missionaries. I asked them the question about Jesus Christ. As they talked about Him, I could tell they loved Him. They invited me to come to church, and when I did, I felt something inside telling me that this was what I had been looking for all those years.

"The missionaries taught me to pray and that it is important because it is our way to talk to Heavenly Father and to find the truth. I accepted what the missionaries taught me. I knew it was the true gospel, especially when we would read the scriptures together and pray about them."



can help, I get all five." McDonald says the priests quorum also studies regularly from *Preach My Gospel*, and Thapelo says that in addition to inviting friends to Church, quorum members seek out those who no longer attend. "In many ways, we are learning to be missionaries now," he says.

"We often hear from these young men in testimony meeting," the bishop says. "They often promise Coach Solomon that they will go on full-time missions." Nothing would make their soccer coach happier. "I can't wait for them to serve," Solomon says.

Unity, gospel knowledge, and an orientation toward service—those are all part of a solid training regime for prospective missionaries. And in addition, these young men have already developed a great desire to work together to do good. Just like the soccer teams competing for the World Cup, they depend on each other, on their coaches, and on their fans (including ward members, families, and friends) to get them through to their "championship." With that kind of team spirit, their goals will be achieved. **NE**

NEmore

For a video of young men from the Kagiso Ward giving a soccer cheer, go to newera.lds.org.





Choose To Be Ready

By Edward S. Watson

Start getting ready now so that when a call to full-time missionary service comes, you'll be prepared.

You've probably grown up thinking CTR stands for "Choose the Right," and it certainly does. But those three letters can also stand for other things based on right choices. I have also come to think of CTR as a good reminder of how to prepare for full-time missionary service.

Here are three ideas—I call them the CTR of mission preparation—that can be of help to you as you prepare to serve:

C. CLEAN. I am clean and worthy to serve, or I will repent so that I can become clean and worthy.

T. TESTIMONY. I have or will gain a testimony that the gospel has been restored, and I

will prepare to share that knowledge.

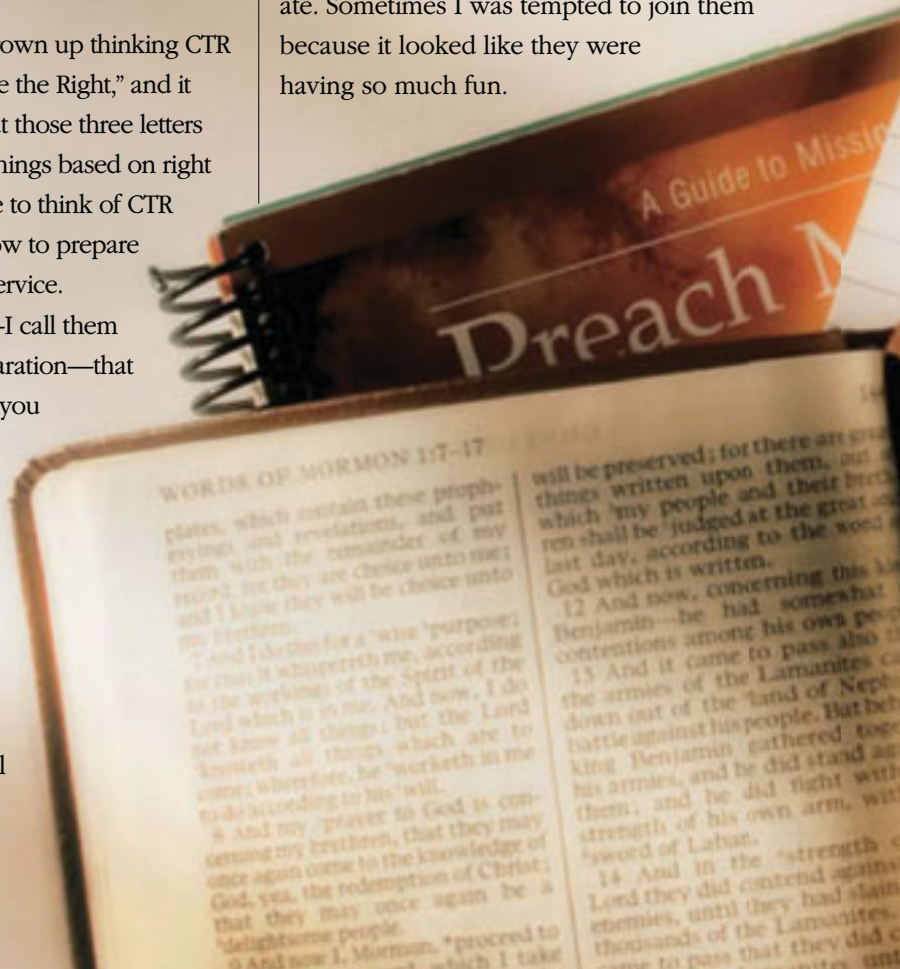
R. READY. I will be ready and willing to serve wherever I may be called to do so.

Here are some examples of what I mean.

CLEAN

The first time I passed the sacrament as a new deacon, I felt a great feeling of peace. I remember thinking to myself that I was doing something the Savior had done long ago when He blessed and administered the sacrament (see Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:24–25). I realized that the priesthood I had just received allowed me to pass the sacrament. I was acting on the Savior's behalf! It was a wonderful feeling, and I promised myself that I would keep myself clean and pure so that I could always use the priesthood to serve others.

During my teenage years, that decision was tested a number of times. I watched friends accept invitations to see movies and go to parties that I knew were not appropriate. Sometimes I was tempted to join them because it looked like they were having so much fun.



I mentioned to my bishop this frustration about feeling left out. He helped me keep things in proper perspective by reassuring me that being a teenager only lasts a few years and that those who exercise their agency properly during those years will actually have far more freedom in the future than those who choose a different path.

I realized that I didn't want poor teenage decisions to affect my opportunities later in life. I tried to date young women and associate with friends who felt the same way. It wasn't always easy, but my decision to be worthy of the priesthood, enter the temple, serve a mission, and later marry in the temple have made any tough times as a teenager worth it. You will never regret staying clean and pure. If you have already made mistakes that keep

you from feeling close to the Spirit, talk to your parents and your bishop. They will know what to do to help you feel whole again.

TESTIMONY

Bermi was a teenager taking the missionary discussions in Colombia. His sister was already a member of the Church, and he knew the discussions almost as well as the missionaries because he had been studying with them for so long. When asked why he had not yet been baptized, Bermi replied, "I have a desire to believe, but I don't *know* that I have a testimony yet."

One of the elders had been studying in Alma chapter 32 and asked Bermi to turn to verse 27: "But behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words."

As Bermi read those words, the Spirit confirmed to him that his desire to believe was enough for him to say that he had a testimony—a small testimony, but a testimony nonetheless. The elders reassured him that not everyone needed to have an experience like Joseph Smith or the Brother of Jared to say that they had a testimony. Even a *desire* to

believe was the start of a testimony. Bermi prayed

and expressed his desire to believe to

the Lord. A short time later he

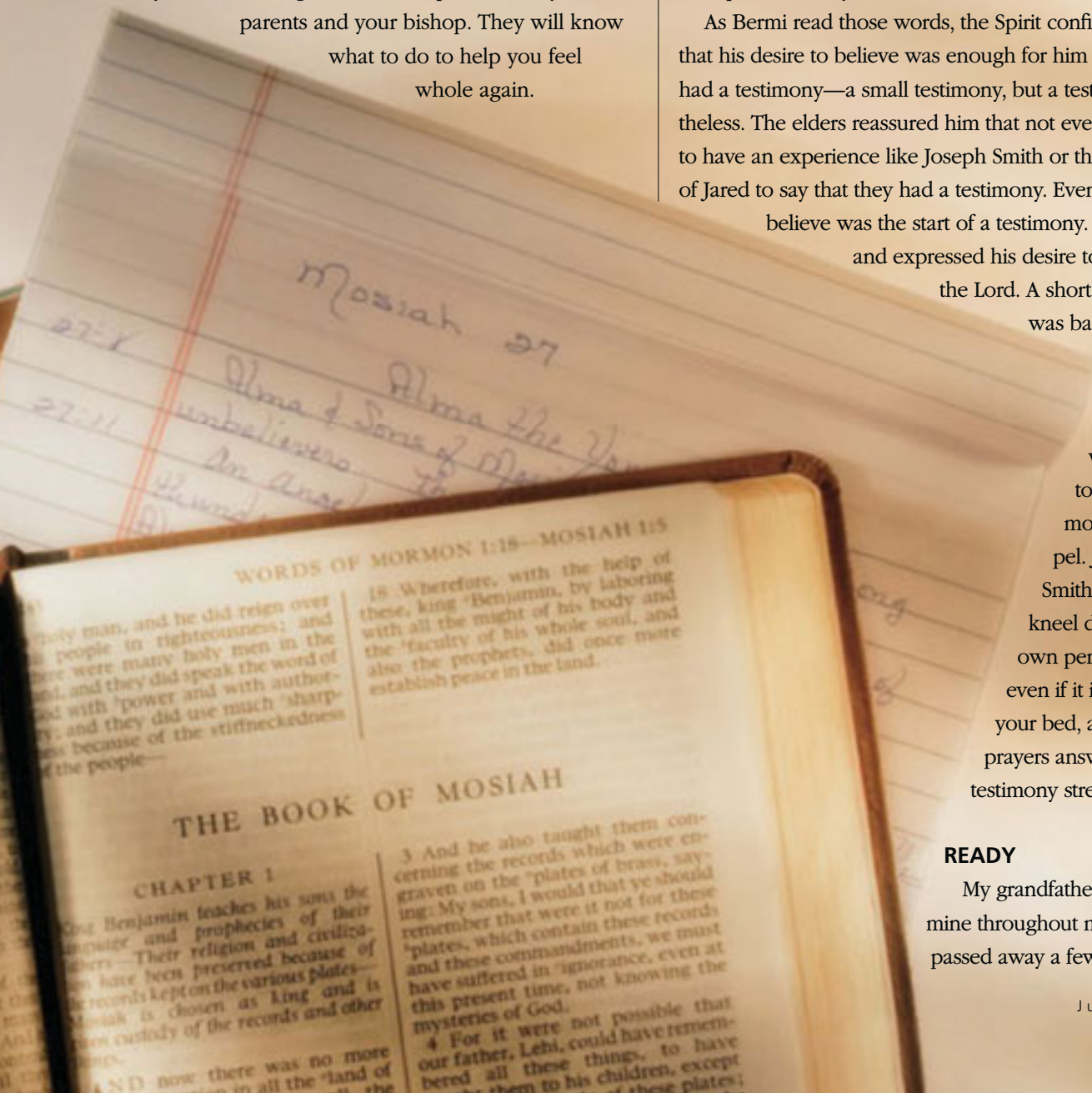
was baptized and

confirmed.

You do not need to have a vision in order to have a testimony of the gospel. Just like Joseph Smith, you too can kneel down in your own personal place, even if it is just next to your bed, and have your prayers answered and your testimony strengthened.

READY

My grandfather was a hero of mine throughout my life. He passed away a few years ago. I



You can begin to be a great missionary now. Then, when the time for a full-time mission arrives, you'll have no hesitation about accepting the call from the Lord that is meant for you.

had watched his health decline from a strong former football and basketball star to a wheelchair-bound elderly man whose body had suffered the ravages of cancer, Parkinson's disease, and other debilitating conditions. Through the years of his decline, what I remembered most was the strength of his testimony. Even when he could barely talk loud enough to be heard at family reunions, he would still bear his witness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Restoration, and the true Church.

For years when I visited their home, I would notice my grandparents' temple recommends sitting on the mantle above their fireplace. I knew that their health seldom allowed them to attend the temple, and eventually Grandpa was too weak to go at all. But still he kept a current temple recommend. He always wanted to be "ready."

As a teenager and throughout my life, I have remembered Grandpa and Grandma's example of always being ready and worthy to serve the Lord.

If you are age 12 or older, you can hold a temple recommend. Attending the temple now as a youth and renewing your recommend regularly will give you the opportunity to learn to love serving others. It will keep you on track to make and keep additional sacred covenants as an adult. It will also keep you focused on preparing to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and serving a mission.

Start Doing These Things

You can start doing all of these things right now by being where you are supposed to be, doing what you are supposed to be

A NOTE TO YOUNG WOMEN

Perhaps, at the appropriate age, you will approach your bishop because you have felt an impression that you should serve a mission. If so, these CTR steps will assist you along the way. But whether or not you feel impressed to be one of the many wonderful sister missionaries, decide now that you will prepare yourself spiritually to worthily enter the temple to be sealed for time and all eternity to a faithful returned missionary.

Young women play an important role in the life of future missionaries. That "boy" that over the years has teased you, insulted you, thrown spit wads at you, smelled funny on occasion, and then for some reason has now begun to progress from annoying to handsome and desirable—yes, *that* boy—is a missionary and servant of God in training. Please help him to live up to the standards that he should achieve. That is best for him and best for you, too, as you prepare for a future full of happiness on the road to eternity.

doing, dressing like you are supposed to dress, and acting like you are supposed to act. Remember, worthy Aaronic Priesthood holders have more spiritual power and authority than any king, president, or other worldly ruler.

Choose to be ready. You can begin to be a great missionary now, at home, at school, at work, and wherever you go. Then, when the time for a full-time mission arrives, you'll have no hesitation about accepting the call from the Lord that is meant for you. **NE**



One of my siblings asked, “Why not have our family home evenings with Dad via the Internet?”

By Luis Felipe Viera-Mesones

As a family we consistently hold family home evening; however, my father often travels for extended periods of time for his employment. Sometimes that means he is out of town when it’s time for family home evening.

Then two years ago, when my father got his own laptop, one of my siblings wondered, “Why not have our family home evenings with Dad via the Internet?”

Since that time, when our father is away during family home evening, we simply agree on a time, and we connect. We can see and hear him, and he can see and hear us. The

Internet and the computer have allowed our father to participate in our home evenings.

We do not have to depart from our established schedule: if it is Dad’s turn to give the lesson, for example, he gives it. One of our family’s traditions is to evaluate our personal goals each week; this is never interrupted anymore. And another important thing: our reading of the Book of Mormon as a family is now continual, since we no longer have excuses not to read.

My father also uses the Internet to keep in touch with us in other ways. When he is away from our home in Peru, he connects and finds out what

we’re doing and where we are. And when it is time for interviews or family councils, these are carried out at the appointed time, even when he’s traveling.

There are many good and useful technological advances that we often don’t put to good use because we fear their misuse and the harm they can cause us. However, if we use such technology wisely and humbly, it can be of great help.

We feel very thankful in our family for the Internet because it has become a great tool for removing the obstacles that might otherwise keep our family apart. **NE**

Long-Distance **FAMILY HOME EVENING**

To CHEAT *or* NOT



By Shery Ann de la Cruz

As a 17-year-old nursing student, I found my second year of college a challenging one. (In the Philippines we finish high school at age 16.) I found the endless quizzes, research projects, and reading assignments to be exhausting. I felt as though I always had dark circles under my eyes, since I normally got little sleep. Despite the heavy workload, I always tried to remember that “sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven.”¹

to CHEAT

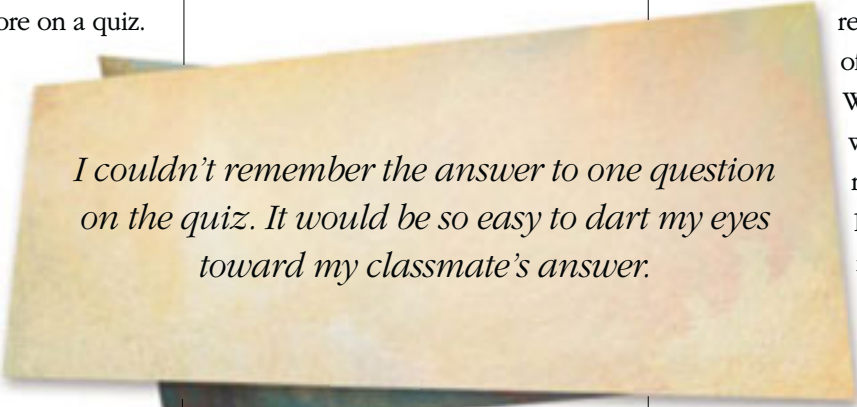
I knew that if I worked hard, I would have a better future. Whenever I wanted to give up and go to bed without studying, I imagined how sad and defeated I would feel the next day if I did poorly on a quiz or assignment. This was enough motivation to keep me awake so I could study.

Many of my classmates were upset when they got a low score on a quiz. However, they did not want to work and study hard. As a result, students would often “help” one another by sharing answers during quizzes or tests, allowing others to look at their papers when the professor wasn’t watching. I was often tempted to do the same, but I never dared. I have read countless times in Church magazines that members of the Church should have high standards, which means no cheating. So I studied hard and resisted the temptation, even though this sometimes meant getting lower grades than my classmates, since they had each other’s help.

On one particular day I had classes from 7:00 in the morning until 7:00 in the evening, and I had a quiz scheduled in each class. I studied 10 pages for my first quiz alone. “How will I get through all this?” I wondered. Thankfully, I did well on my first quiz. During lunch I studied for my next one. When I went to class and started

the quiz, I realized that I knew the answers to every question but one. “How can this be?” I thought. “I’ve studied hard for this quiz. I should know this answer!”

As I tapped my pen furiously on my chair, it occurred to me that it would take just a moment to turn my head, give my hair a flip, and dart my



I couldn't remember the answer to one question on the quiz. It would be so easy to dart my eyes toward my classmate's answer.

eyes toward my classmate’s answer. “I could do this just once,” I thought, “and I’ll ace the quiz. Just once won’t hurt. Besides, it’s so unfair for me. I study hard, yet I get lower grades than my classmates because I don’t cheat!” Still, I felt uncomfortable. I fidgeted in my chair, trying to make a choice: to cheat or not to cheat.

Then a voice inside me said, “No, Shery! Cheating is wrong, and you know it!” Suddenly I realized that even if I got a perfect score on the quiz, I wouldn’t feel good about my score if I cheated. My Heavenly Father was counting on me to make the right choice—this choice was the real test.

Just then a scripture I’d learned in Sunday School came to my mind:

“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:9). I knew that Heavenly Father had helped me through countless challenges, including many quizzes and school assignments. How could I forget all He had done for me and choose to sin?

To this day I can’t remember the result of that particular quiz. Whether I came up with the answer or not, I can’t recall. But I have always remembered that I felt good for making the right choice.

Now as a junior I still face the same mountain of schoolwork and the same temptations; however, choosing not to cheat isn’t difficult because I’ve made that choice already, at a time when the temptation was hard to resist. I’ve learned that the joy and satisfaction of getting high grades is greater when I work hard and earn it. Wickedness, indeed, never was happiness (see Alma 41:10). True happiness is found in keeping the commandments and following the counsel of our prophet and other Church leaders. I truly believe the words “Keep the commandments. In this there is safety and peace.”² **NE**

NOTES

1. “Praise to the Man,” *Hymns*, no. 27.
2. “Keep the Commandments,” *Hymns*, no. 303.

Lessons from



By Elder Kent D. Watson
Of the Seventy

While growing up, I saw how hard my father worked to provide for our family. He was a very thrifty person. We didn't own a home until my father could pay cash for it, and because he didn't believe in buying on credit, we simply walked everywhere until he could afford to buy a car for our family. He owned a retail furniture store in Cedar City, Utah, and we were expected to work there. The only problem was that my father didn't pay us to work in his store. When we were kids, I thought the reason was because he was a tightwad. It was only later that I realized that he wanted us to learn about the value of work.

The fact of the matter is my dad had a very successful business, which he started from scratch, and he never owed anyone so much as a nickel. I learned much from my father, but in today's economic environment, the principles he most exemplified—industry, thrift, and self-reliance—are especially pertinent.

Learning to work hard

From the time we were old enough to sweep the sidewalks or dust the furniture, if we were out of school and did not otherwise have a job, we worked at my father's store. My first jobs at the store included sweeping the sidewalks, washing windows, dust-mopping the floors, dusting the furniture, shining the appliances, and unpacking and delivering furniture.

As a teenager, I especially liked driving

the furniture delivery truck. One evening when I was backing the truck out of the driveway to go back to the store, I came to a sudden stop accompanied by a loud crash. I pulled forward and then backed up only to crash again. When I got out to inspect, I discovered that I had left the tailgate down, and it had punctured the door of a car parked across the street from our driveway. When I had pulled forward and then backed up to see what had happened, I had crumpled the fender of another car. I waited until I got home later that night to tell my dad and was relieved that he only gave me a stern talking to rather than a licking. Actually, I think he was pleased that I had told the truth.

Earning my own money

As a young boy, I wanted to have a paying job. My brother and sister and I started our own fish bait business. We put our stand on a busy street corner where fishermen could conveniently stop on their way to the many fishing spots up the canyon. We did not sell common variety fish bait like some of the other kids in the neighborhood; rather my father taught us that we were *worm merchants*. We distinguished ourselves from our competition by offering the liveliest worms at the best price. To keep the worms active we actually fed them coffee grounds that my dad brought home from the local drugstore. Our harvesting tactics were a closely guarded secret, and we had several prime spots for catching worms after nightfall. Our enterprise

My Father



*The Cedar Home
Furnishings delivery
truck with future delivery
drivers (left to right) Paul
and Kent Watson. (Top)
L. Dee Watson, their father.*



The Watson worm merchants show off the effectiveness of their fish bait. (From left to right) Kent, Paul, and Jean Watson.

was so successful that it not only funded much of my education, but I still had \$300 left of my earnings to buy a diamond ring for my wife when I got married.

When I wasn't selling worms or helping in my father's store, I delivered newspapers and later worked in a cafe as a dishwasher and fry cook. When I was in college, I worked in a chemistry lab and on a U.S. Forest Service survey crew. At the conclusion of my mission in Taiwan, I studied accounting at Brigham Young University and, after graduating, began my professional career in accounting. I remember my dad always said, "It doesn't matter what you do, as long as you do your very best." I frequently give that same advice to young people who are trying to decide what career to pursue.

When it starts to get tough

Complaining was never allowed when I was growing up. If ever we would murmur because it was too hard, or we were too tired, or it was too late, we knew exactly what our father's response would be: "When it starts to get too tough for the other guys, that is when it is starting to get just right for a Watson." Years later, while serving as a mission president in Taiwan, I taught this same adage to the missionaries: "When it starts getting too tough for other missionaries, that is when it is starting to get just right for a Taiwan Taichung missionary."

Pay tithing first, yourself second

My father not only taught me to work hard, but he taught me about the value of saving money, or thrift. I've always believed that you should pay your tithing first and yourself second. If you pay your tithing, then heaven is committed to bless you. After

you pay your tithing, the second check you should write out every month is to yourself. It doesn't make sense to work as hard as you have to work, especially today, and not have anything to show for it. There's a difference, however, between saving for unexpected expenses or "rainy days" as I call them, and saving for something that will help you become self-reliant, such as education. I recommend that if you have to use your savings, use it only for something you can take with you to the next life.

Being self-reliant allows us to bless others

The Church constantly emphasizes self-reliance because when we're self-reliant, we can bless the lives of others. King Benjamin teaches us in the Book of Mormon: "Ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish" (Mosiah 4:16).

A few verses later King Benjamin says, "I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants" (Mosiah 4:26).

I've always liked what President Harold B. Lee once said, "You cannot lift another soul until you are standing on higher ground than he is" ("Stand Ye in Holy Places," *Ensign*, Oct. 2008, 47). If you practice industry, thrift, and self-reliance, you will be on that "higher ground" President Lee speaks of, and like my father, you will bless the lives of many. **NE**

A LAST-MINUTE

Invitation

By Sierra Register

I was just inviting Ashley to dinner, but she was hungry for the gospel.

My dad invited a woman he worked with and her husband to come over for dinner on Thursday to meet with the missionaries, but on Wednesday they called to cancel. The elders couldn't come over without a nonmember present, so I quickly called my best friend, Ashley, to see if she would come over for dinner the next night. She agreed, and I told her that the missionaries would be over for dinner as well.

Thursday night came, and we all sat down for dinner. I had told the elders that Ashley was just here to meet them and not for a lesson. But after dinner they proceeded with the first discussion.

I could tell Ashley was caught off guard. I was thinking, "Oh, dear. Ashley is going to be mad at me because this is not what I told her they were going to do." But I didn't stop the elders from teaching, and Ashley didn't either, so I let them continue.

Ashley answered the elders' questions and seemed very interested. My nervousness started to go away. Throughout the lesson the Spirit was present, and there was no denying it. I knew Ashley felt it too. The lesson ended, and the elders asked to set up another appointment. She agreed, and we decided to meet the following Tuesday. The elders gave her a Book of Mormon and a chapter to read.

When I walked Ashley out to her car, she gave me a hug, said thank you, and started crying. She said she had been looking for something and had been waiting for me to ask her if she wanted to learn about my Church. I told Ashley that I had felt for a long time that I should ask her, but I never knew how.

With her parents' permission, Ashley took all the discussions with the missionaries and was baptized within a short time. Her baptism was amazing, and the Spirit was so strong. What I really learned through this experience is that Heavenly Father is preparing people all the time to hear the gospel, and He had been preparing Ashley. I felt the prompting many times to invite Ashley to learn about the Church but never acted upon it. If my dad's friends had not canceled, I probably still wouldn't have asked Ashley to learn more. The Lord took it into His own hands. Now Ashley has the fulness of the gospel. **NE**

PHOTOGRAPH BY CODY BELL



TAKING THE

Reins

When it comes to setting goals, this world champion is easily guided.

You could say that Emily Winegar is pretty good at horse reining. She was recently crowned the American Quarter Horse Youth Association World Champion. She was named the National Reining Horse Association's Youth of the Year in 2008. She's rigorously training for the junior U.S. team for the World Equestrian Games.

Maybe we should rephrase: Emily Winegar is *really* good at horse reining.

Horse reining is a western riding competition in which a horse is judged on its athleticism and controllability by performing a series of circles, stops, and spins. The rider must control the horse with extremely limited movement, and Emily has worked hard to become proficient at it. She says that her many accomplishments can be traced back to one important habit: she sets goals for herself and takes the steps necessary to achieve them.

Emily says that she likes the Young Women Personal Progress program because it encourages setting goals, like reading her scriptures every day and getting married in the temple. But Personal Progress has proven fruitful in other ways, too. For her Knowledge value project, Emily started a dog breeding business. Though the project only called for 10 hours of work, Emily didn't stop there. Two years later, her business continues to thrive, and she's earned enough money for college.

Emily completed her Personal Progress and is now doing it for the second time. "A lot of Wednesday nights, we do activities related to Personal Progress, and I started

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN BRASSEAUX





Name: Emily Winegar
Age: 15

Location: Aubrey, Texas
Major

Accomplishments: Crowned American Quarter Horse Youth Association World Champion in 2009; named the National Reining Horse Association's Youth of the Year in 2008; Palomino Horse Breeders Association Youth World Champion for the last four years.

NEmore
To see a short video about Emily, go to youth.lds.org.



thinking, 'Oh, I've done this before.' A girl in our ward finished the program about the same time I did, and she started doing it again. I thought it was really cool, so I decided to start working on it again, too."

Setting goals and meeting them successfully requires ambition, practice, and in Emily's case, a full schedule. On top of practicing for competitions, she's a good student as well as an active participant in Church activities, and she makes sure to spend plenty of time with her family. "It's not as hard as a lot of people think it is. Every night I make a to-do list and make sure I get everything done. It happens line upon line, just like the gospel."

But Emily has even more to think about: she has to be a good example. "Everyone knows that I'm Mormon, and they watch to discover what that means," Emily says. "I realize I may be a person's first introduction to the Church, so it's important that I radiate the gospel in my life. The scripture I keep on my mind most often is Alma 5:19, which says, 'I say unto you, can ye look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands? I say unto you, can you look up, having the image of God engraven upon your countenances?' I hope others can look at me and see the image of God in my countenance. I want them to know I'm a daughter of God."

"You can't be perfect overnight," she says. "You have to take it step by step, even if it means reading five minutes a day in your scriptures. If you try to perfect the things you do, I think it helps you become a better member of the Church." Spoken like a true champion. **NE**



HONORING MILITARY VETERANS

The young men and young women of the Loomis First Ward, Loomis California Stake, noticed that several members of their ward were military veterans whose service had never been acknowledged. They decided to correct that. The priests and Laurels planned a special program on a day set aside to honor those who have served their countries. The day is known by several different names: Veterans Day, (US); Armed Forces Day (UK); Remembrance Day (Commonwealth nations); Armistice Day (other countries).

The Laurels and priests gathered photos and information from the veterans ahead of time and then put together books complete with photos, descriptions of military service, and letters of appreciation from the youth in the ward. Jennifer Beddes said, "The Veterans Day program opened my eyes to how much the veterans have given to us and how much they continue to support the community."

During the program, the youth presented the veterans their books. Mikaela Kester, Laurel class president, said, "The event turned out even nicer than expected. It made me appreciate even more what these men have done, and I loved being able to show my gratitude through this program."

Colin Fluckiger summed up the feelings of the young men and young women who participated: "It was a great time to honor the veterans from our ward and give them the respect and honor they deserved."



"Spirituality yields two fruits. The first is inspiration to know what to do. The second is power, or the capacity to do it."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "To Acquire Spiritual Guidance," *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 7.

NEW YOUTH WEB SITE

The Church's new Web site is designed especially for you. At youth.lds.org you'll discover a lot of young members of the Church just like you who love the gospel and want to share their testimonies with each other.

Choose the tab labeled For the Strength of Youth and then select We Testify to see a wall of photos of young men and women. Behind each photo is a teen with a testimony. Click on a photo to see that person's message. You can even leave your own testimony once you've registered for the site. (You'll need your membership number from your ward or branch clerk in order create an account.)

There are stories and videos of regular teens who are great examples of the believers. Throughout the site, you'll find extra photos, videos, and audio recordings that will inspire and uplift you. Current messages from Church leaders for youth are added regularly. You can even leave a personal response to the questions asked after each message.

This brand new site is just getting started, so check back often to see what's going on with young Latter-day Saints just like you all around the world.

BY THE NUMBERS

3,200,000

Number of ice cream sandwiches that could be stored on the shelves of the cold storage vaults in the Church History Library. (These vaults help preserve historical documents.)





STEP INTO FAMILY HISTORY

Last summer, youth in the Val Vista Ward in Mesa, Arizona, participated in what they called the “STEP” program: Students Trying Elijah’s Promise. First the youth became familiar with the Church’s Web site new.familysearch.org, where they each got a sign-in name and password. Then they went to work researching their ancestors to find those who needed temple work.

The ward also held an all-day Especially For Youth program on July 24. The event was designed to focus on family history and temple work and featured workshops, games, food, and research time on computers. “It was one

of the most amazing events I have ever been a part of,” said Bishop Charles Doane. “In one day the youth found over 500 family names for ordinance work.” The young men and women continued searching for names, and by the time they went to the temple in August they had nearly 1,200 names ready.

“I really didn’t know a lot about family history and why we did it,” said Bryce Waite, 14. “STEP was an amazing experience for me, and I learned so much from it. Every time I found a new name, I was so excited for them. I now know why we do baptisms for the dead.”

The first missionaries arrived in Costa Rica in September 1946. They presented the president of the Republic with a copy of the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. During the 1950s and 1960s Costa Rica was part of neighboring missions, but in 1974 the Costa Rica Mission was organized. The first district conference was held in 1968, with 296 people in attendance. The San Jose Costa Rica Stake was created in 1977. At that time there were 3,800 members in the country. Here are a few facts about the Church today in Costa Rica:

Membership	36,666
Missions	1
Temples	1
Wards & Branches	77
Family History Centers	12



THE CHURCH IN COSTA RICA

MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

1 Nephi 3:7 This is my favorite scripture because it helps me remember that the Lord helps us gain confidence, and if we follow His path, He will bless us and be at our side.



Livio de Rosa, Italy

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

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LIVIO DE ROSA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY © MELANIE WIEGNER KESTER; DAN BRANDENBURG/ISTOCKPHOTO; INTELLECTUAL RESERVE, INC.; AND MARK WABBY

Better Friends, Better



I knew that if I wanted to change my life, I needed to change my friends.

I was a senior in high school when I knew I needed a change from my best friends. There were seven of us who had been best friends since middle school, and we did everything together. All of our fathers worked for the railroad, so we rode the train with them for free from southeastern Idaho to Salt Lake City and back many times to attend general conference and shop for school clothes. Sometimes when we were together we laughed so hard we would be bent over with side aches. We were really close.

The problems started in my junior year. The parties my friends and I attended changed. Things started happening that I didn't feel good about. Sometimes there were overnight parties when parents were out of town, and boys who had been drinking started coming.

One time a boy put a can of beer up on a bookshelf in the living room and started laughing about how my friend's father would react if he could see it there. But I didn't think it was funny. I liked my friend's parents a lot. Their home had been my home away from home for years—a home where I loved to kneel with them in family prayer.

By the time summer came I was more uncomfortable with what my friends were doing with their lives. I didn't want to follow them, but I didn't know what to do about it. Then a wonderful change came into my life. With school out, my parents let me take the train to California to visit my aunt and uncle for three weeks. My family didn't go to church, but in California, not only was my uncle active, but he was also the bishop of the ward. The teenagers in his ward included me in everything they did during my visit.

My new friends shined with the light of the gospel, and

I was impressed with how much fun they had while living gospel standards. My cousin took me on a short trip with some of her friends. They impressed me with their integrity and goodness while having a great time. At the end of the three weeks, I came home with a determination to change my life to be more like the Savior, even if it meant having to change my friends.

When I returned home, I turned down opportunities to hang out with my old friends. At the end of the summer I met a wonderful LDS guy with a great smile and big dimples who lived his religion and was planning on a mission. I hung out with him and his friends for the first half of my senior year. Then he left for his mission.

Up until then it had been easy to spend time with my old friends at school and with new friends on weekends. But I knew I had to make some major changes if I wanted to stick with my goals.

Our ward had a large Young Women program, and though they had not been my closest friends, I liked these girls. They loved and lived the gospel teachings, and they were so much fun to be around. They accepted me wholeheartedly into their circle, and my senior year ended up being a great year. Not only was it fun, but it also pointed me firmly in the direction I wanted my life to go—towards the gospel.

I will always be thankful for my California friends who inspired me to take my life in the right direction. I am also thankful for a great group of friends in my home ward who welcomed me when I needed to make a change of friends. And the guy with the big dimples—we were married in the Idaho Falls Temple a few months after he returned from his mission. **NE**

Me

By Vicki H. Budge





A once-a-year temple trip became an opportunity for more than temple work.

Standing (from left to right): President Clive Collins, Elise Bell, Henry Burns-Ziegelbauer, Sarah Bell, Ben Mayler, Lusila Aisa, Kaleb Lee, Mary-Jane Aisa, Isobel Ware, Natasha Lim, T. J. Aisa, Sam Krever. The patriarchs seated in front (from left to right): Wallace Rea, Kendall Davie, Walter Fell, and Harry Guy.

By Dirk Smibert and Janet Thomas

With Cyclone Charlotte threatening to dump rain and close roads, the youth and leaders of the Cairns Australia District set out on a 1,700-kilometer (1,100-mile) drive to the temple in Brisbane Australia. It took the group of 35 youth and 8 adults over eight months to organize and prepare for the journey. And now, on the morning of departure, it seemed that the storm was putting their trip in danger of being canceled. But with group and individual prayers asking for a delay in the storm, the group loaded onto the bus, which pulled out onto the Pacific highway ahead of the rains.

After the 24-hour journey, the bus arrived safely in Brisbane with those on board thanking the Lord for the blessings and protection they experienced.

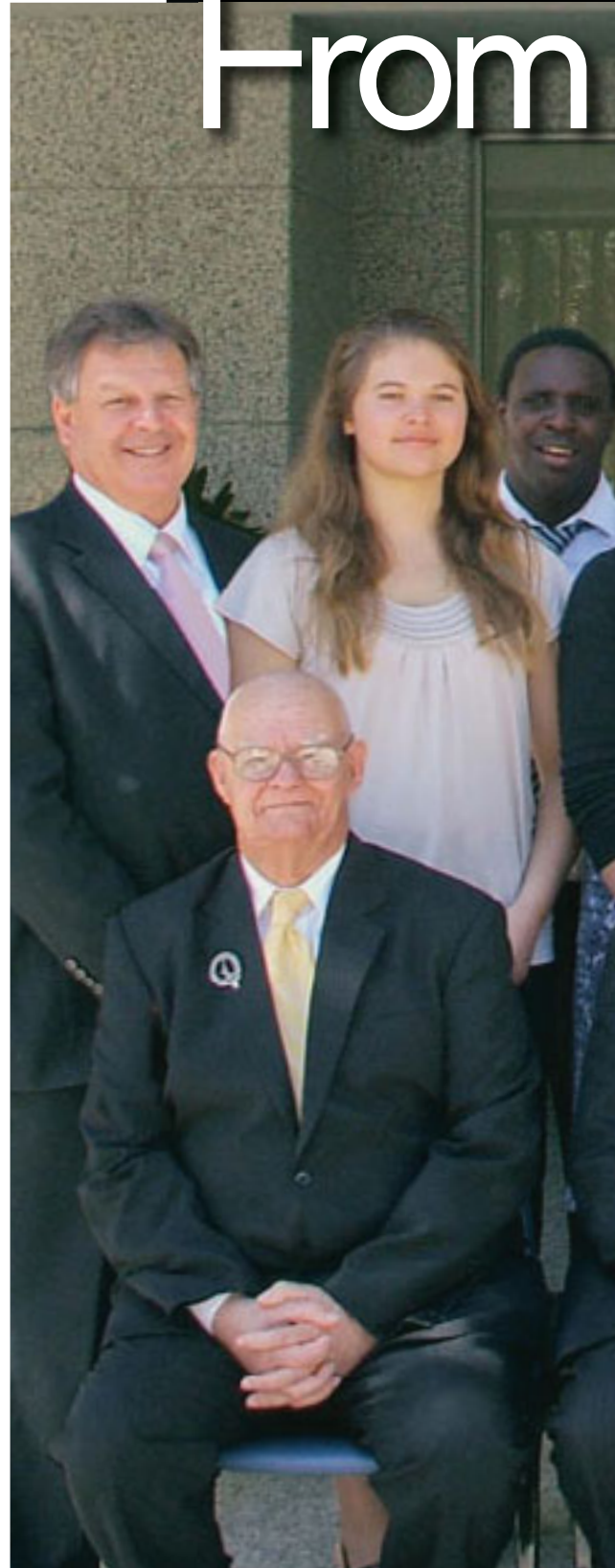
The group spent two days attending three baptismal sessions and were baptised and confirmed on behalf of 2,000 people, most of whose names they had researched and added to the family files from their area.

A highlight of their trip was the opportunity 11 teens had of receiving their patriarchal blessings. Because so many youth wanted to receive their blessings, parents and priesthood leaders arranged for four patriarchs from four different stakes to give the youth their much-anticipated patriarchal blessings. Some of the teens were moved to tears by their blessings.

The youth were able to meet in a fireside and hear from the area leaders as well as bear their testimonies. When they returned home, the rains had subsided. The journey, plus the good accomplished personally and in the temple, made for a memorable week. **NE**

Editor's note: Australian spelling has been preserved.

From



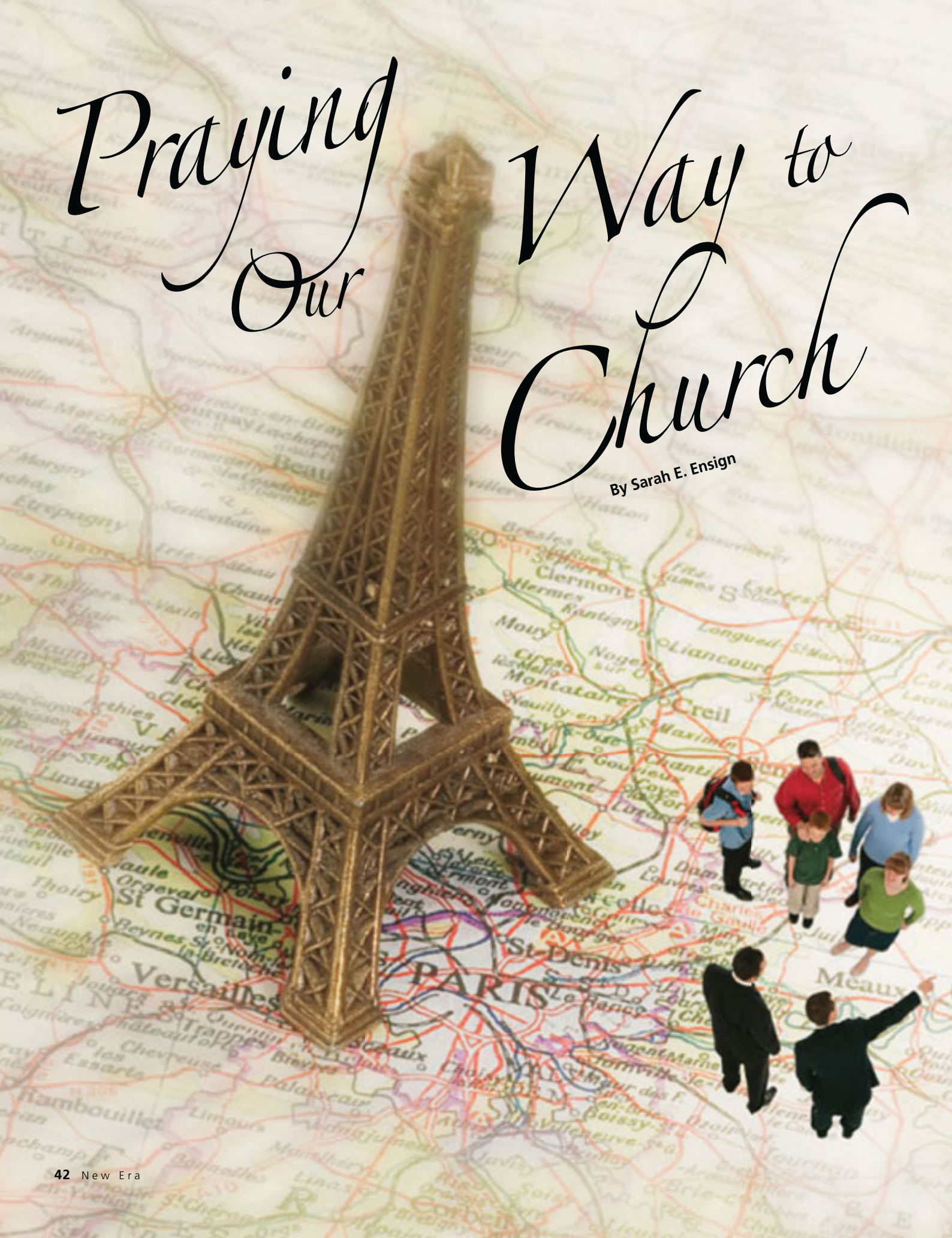
PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH BELL

Cairns to Brisbane



Praying Our Way to Church

By Sarah E. Ensign



We were in one of the largest cities in Europe, surrounded by signs we could not read and a language completely foreign to our ears. And unlike home in Utah, Paris did not have LDS meetinghouses every few blocks. So far, I had not even seen one. How did my parents expect us to go to church on Sunday?

Ever since I was young, my family decided that whenever we went on vacation we would not treat Sundays like a vacation. Even though we did not have our own ward to go to, we still wanted to keep the Sabbath day holy by attending church wherever we were visiting. However, we had never encountered a language barrier before, and since we did not speak French, I did not know how we were going to find an address of a meetinghouse, let alone maneuver our way around an unfamiliar city to get there. Even so, we still had the desire to partake of the sacrament.

Throughout the week in Paris, my dad, mom, brother, and I prayed as a family, and each one of us had a prayer in our hearts that Heavenly Father would help us find a way to attend church. The days passed quickly as we toured many magnificent sites. Saturday came and we woke up early to set out for another adventurous day in the city. We hopped on the Metro—the underground train—to head out for the day. Much to our pleasure and surprise we discovered LDS missionaries riding the same Metro as we

were. We quickly introduced ourselves, and just before they got off one stop later, we got an address of the meetinghouse.

Sunday we dressed in our best and said another prayer to Heavenly Father, thanking Him that we were able to get an address

of the church and asking Him to guide us through the huge city. As we were waiting for the Metro, a couple came up to us and said, in English, that they had noticed our nice Sunday clothes and asked if we were going to church. We replied that we were trying to find The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We discovered they, too, were LDS, and gratefully we traveled with them to the building, where we were able to attend meetings and partake of the sacrament.

I know Heavenly Father answered our prayers through the missionaries and the LDS couple

that approached us. Even though we were in a city with over two million people, Heavenly Father cared that my family had the opportunity to partake of the sacred ordinance of the sacrament and receive the spiritual nourishment church provides.

As it says in Matthew 7:7, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” I have a testimony that when we ask, He will answer our prayers. The answer might come through other people or in a way we aren’t expecting, but Heavenly Father will not leave us alone, because He cares about and loves each of us. **NE**



Each one of us had a prayer in our hearts that Heavenly Father would help us find a way to attend church.

My family was lost in Paris until, through a couple of blessed coincidences, we were guided to the local meetinghouse.



NEmore
Use the Meetinghouse Locator to find out where to go to church when you're on vacation. Go to maps.lds.org.

FINDING MARY REDHEAD

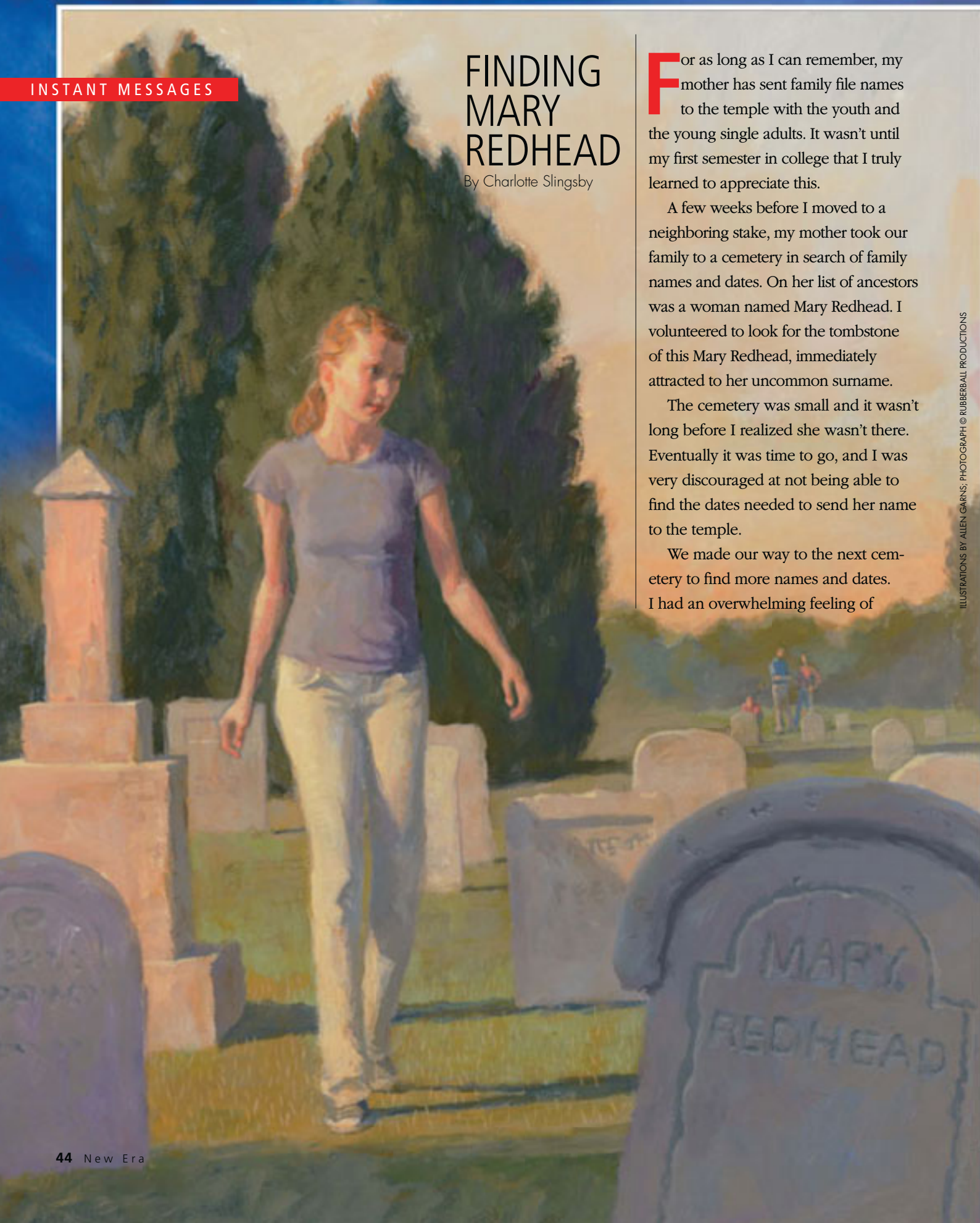
By Charlotte Slingsby

For as long as I can remember, my mother has sent family file names to the temple with the youth and the young single adults. It wasn't until my first semester in college that I truly learned to appreciate this.

A few weeks before I moved to a neighboring stake, my mother took our family to a cemetery in search of family names and dates. On her list of ancestors was a woman named Mary Redhead. I volunteered to look for the tombstone of this Mary Redhead, immediately attracted to her uncommon surname.

The cemetery was small and it wasn't long before I realized she wasn't there. Eventually it was time to go, and I was very discouraged at not being able to find the dates needed to send her name to the temple.

We made our way to the next cemetery to find more names and dates. I had an overwhelming feeling of



desperation as I searched stone after stone. I didn't have much success until we were about to leave. I came to a tombstone that was barely readable. I traced my fingers along the carvings hoping for some luck. Mary Redhead. There she was! I couldn't explain why it meant so much to me to find her.

Weeks went by and I found myself busy with all the anxieties and stress that come when a person leaves home to go to school for the first time. I forgot about Mary Redhead. It was on the night of a tri-stake young single adult temple trip when I remembered her again.

I was filing through the pink cards that the matron gave me when I came across the name of Mary Redhead. It didn't occur to me that my mother would have submitted the names we had looked for, but there she was. I was overwhelmed. I felt as if Mary had chosen me to be baptized for her. I have never felt so close to my ancestors in all my life.

I truly have a great love for my ancestors and genealogy now. I am blessed to know that families are forever and that we need each other no matter what side of the veil we're on. **NE**

I WASN'T NERVOUS ANYMORE

By Boris Antúnez

We were going to hand out pamphlets to find missionary referrals for our stake youth conference activity. I had been reading *For the Strength of Youth*. When the activity began, I tossed it back on

POWER OF PRAYER

By Jordan Hall

I have always believed in the power of prayer. When my family first moved to a new city, I had to wait to start school for two months until a new semester began. Although I enjoyed spending time with my family, I wanted a good friend with the same beliefs I have. I eventually met all of my neighbors, and although some were the same age, they didn't have the same standards. When I was able to go to school, I met a lot of kids my age and made some friends.

One time I went out for dinner with friends. After dinner some of

them left, but the rest still wanted to do something and decided they wanted to go drink. They invited me, but I told them no. I felt even more lonesome. I went home that night and prayed to find a good friend.

A few weeks later I went out to dinner with friends again and made it clear that I wouldn't drink with them. After dinner all but one other person left to go drinking. We started to talk and found that we had the same standards—standards we kept by personal choice. I know that Heavenly Father always answers prayers. **NE**

the table where I had found it. But the thought occurred to me that I should take it with me. So I picked it up and put it in my scriptures.

We were all nervous about talking to strangers about the gospel, but when we stopped to talk to a woman hanging laundry in her yard, she was very friendly and took one of our pamphlets. During the conversation she told us about her concerns for her family. One son in particular was struggling with drugs and other problems. We did our best to console her and then moved on.

A few minutes later I opened my scriptures. When I saw my *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet, I

remembered what the woman had said about her son, and I felt like I should go back. I wasn't nervous anymore.

We found the woman still outside. I told her I had something she might like. I explained about the standards our youth follow and gave her the pamphlet to read with her son. I could tell it made her happy. She called her son outside, and we were able to set up an appointment for both of them with the missionaries.

I felt like a missionary! It was great to have the opportunity to teach and maybe help this young man. I know it was the Holy Ghost who told me to take that pamphlet with me. **NE**

THE STRENGTH TO GET ON MY KNEES

By Patrick Soderholm

My childhood dream was coming true. I was about to turn 19 and was training to be a professional firefighter. But throughout the hard training, I wanted to know if this was what the Lord wanted for me. I asked Him in prayer if I was on the right track, and if I was where He wanted me to be. I got an answer that I didn't want—no.

At about this time, knee surgery

kept me off my feet for eight months. I had a lot to reflect on, so I read the Book of Mormon. In my prayers I asked, "What should I do now?" The answer came. I knew the Book of Mormon was true, and I needed to share it with others.

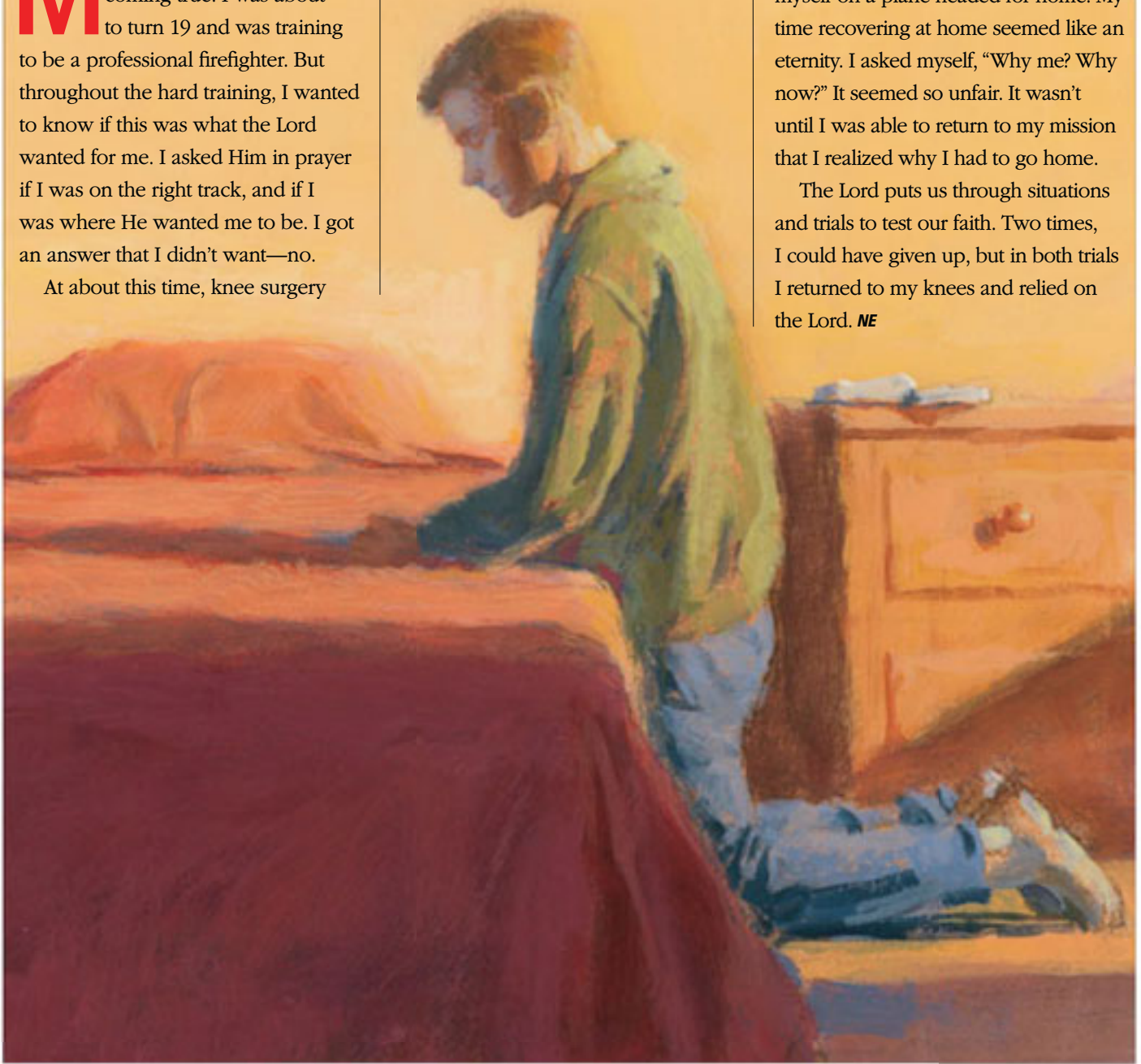
I began to prepare for a full-time mission. It was not easy. My papers were sent back to me once because of my injury, but finally I was called to

serve in the Nebraska Omaha Mission.

For the first 14 months of my mission, everything was great. The Spirit was with me more than I could've imagined. Sure, it was hard kneeling to pray, but after not being able to kneel at all for eight months, it was wonderful to be on my knees once more.

Then I injured my knee again and needed surgery. I begged my mission president to let me stay, but I found myself on a plane headed for home. My time recovering at home seemed like an eternity. I asked myself, "Why me? Why now?" It seemed so unfair. It wasn't until I was able to return to my mission that I realized why I had to go home.

The Lord puts us through situations and trials to test our faith. Two times, I could have given up, but in both trials I returned to my knees and relied on the Lord. **NE**



"Hey Mom, how long do I need to bake the Jell-O?"



RYAN STOKER

"When you were a teenager was it just the Era or the Old Era?"



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

"1. Create world peace. 2. End poverty. 3. Teach adults how to text message. Your ideas for an Eagle project are good, Devin, but number three seems a bit ambitious."



JON CLARK

"Let us all press on ..."



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

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POWER OF A QUESTION

I really appreciated “The Power of a Question” (Jan. 2010). I have had the pleasure of watching one of my own friends grow in the gospel. Like Kerstin, he is not able to be baptized yet. Nevertheless, he has a strong testimony, and I am grateful to his other LDS friends who invited him to church and seminary.

Jonathan T.

GOOD FRIENDS

Elder L. Tom Perry had an article in the Feb. 1993 *New Era* entitled “Good Friends.” This article was a good lesson for me. It made me realize that I should start making more friends. I’m grateful to Elder Perry for using his time to write this for the people who need this message. I think everyone should be kind to each other. I know I need to start being nicer.

Jaqson B., Idaho

Editor’s note: You can find articles from our past issues at our Web site, newera.lds.org.

WARM HANDS, WARM HEART

I read the article “Warm Hands, Warm Heart” in the January 2010 *New Era* about charity and selflessness. I realized that these are two qualities I will need on my mission. If I want to be successful as a missionary and in life, I need to prepare now for those things. One way to prepare is to fast and pay fast offerings. This is something I can sacrifice now that will help others.

Bradley D., Colorado

*If you keep true
to what you believe,
in spite what
the world will throw
at you,
you will stand tall
at the last day.*

WAITING FOR MY TESTIMONY

Thank you for the article “Waiting for My Testimony” (Feb. 2010). I had been feeling the same way. I read the Book of Mormon twice in the last year, trying to find an answer to whether it’s true, and I felt like no one was answering. I had a feeling that I should pick up the *New Era* lying on the counter, and the first thing I saw was, “I get it. The truth of this book isn’t always manifest in burning bosoms and visions of angels; it’s manifest in the lives of people who read it and put it to use.” Thank you for the answer to my prayers.

Claire M., Idaho

**EDUCATION ISSUE**

I appreciate all the articles about education, especially the April 2009 issue on education. They have helped me in making decisions about my future.

Sara D., Ontario, Canada

TREASURE VAULT

I really enjoyed “The Parable of the Treasure Vault” (Feb. 2010). It struck true to me, and I found that it closely related to my life. If you keep true to what you believe, in spite of what the world will throw at you, you will stand tall at the last day.

Spencer S., Texas

BE STRONG

When I receive the *New Era*, I open to a random page and start reading. This month I happened to open up to the Mormonad page, “They Are Ten Commandments” (Feb. 2010). I had been trying to get into the “popular” crowd, and that seemed to require not keeping the commandments. When I turned the page, I read the lyrics to the song “Be Strong.” I read the words and knew I had to change what I was doing. I need to be strong to resist the world’s temptations. I know that when we do, God will be with us always.

Alycia S., Arizona

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Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024.*

Contribution

By Kimberly Webb Reid

Spires reaching heavenward,
gold glinting in the sun
against a radiant sky,
show sacrifice.

Each granite stone,
chiseled to perfection,
each weary footstep
to reach Zion,
every tear shed as
Saints bled and sweat
to build their temple
that stands in glory
and reverence.

I stand before Him
and hosts who went before,
prepared to enter in
and offer up my contribution:
sacrifice the world

for humility of heart.

And add my granite stone—
roughly hewn, but becoming
smooth through His Son—
to build the kingdom
of God.



BEHIND THE SCENES

When we first heard how well Emily Winegar rides horses, we were impressed. She is, after all, the reigning reining champion of the world. That means she not only rides horses, but she guides them well, too. When we interviewed Emily on the phone, we were even more impressed. She's modest, unassuming, and loves her family. After the interview we shared her story with a film crew, and they made a video called "Easily Guided," which you can see at Youth.lds.org.

Check out "Taking the Reins" on page 34.



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