

MY DAD'S HANDS

By Jesse Cowley

As my 12th birthday approached, I attended a Priesthood Preview for the boys in the ward preparing to receive the Aaronic Priesthood. The only things I remember about the experience are getting a brand new white shirt and a talk about hands, given by my dad. He spoke of the importance of the priesthood holder's hands and how you must keep your hands clean and use them appropriately to be worthy to use the priesthood of God.

That talk left an impression on me. I don't think I realized this until some years later, but from that point on, I was very aware of my dad's hands.

My dad's hands always seemed to be involved in doing much good.

I noticed his hands as we did different landscaping projects, built a shed, helped move furniture, and did other projects together. His hands were tough farmer hands. Bulky, calloused, worn from farm days of his youth and years of service and work, his hands were well used and yet able to endure any labor they were called to perform.

For my own hands, this was not the case. I viewed the strength and toughness of his hands with awe and thought: "Wow. I wish I had hands like those." I hoped that one day, maybe, I would.

When I was about to receive my mission call, I had an experience with my dad that really impressed upon my heart and mind the importance of worthy hands.

I had the opportunity to accompany my dad to the house of a man we home-taught. This good brother had asked for a blessing. I was not yet a Melchizedek Priesthood holder, so I watched and listened as my dad placed his hands upon the brother's head and spoke the words that the Spirit put into his mouth. I felt the Spirit strongly during the blessing.

Afterwards my thoughts lingered on my dad's hands. Those rough, tough farmer hands had been kept clean by their owner. Because of that, they were able to be an instrument in the Lord's hands to bestow the blessings and power of heaven upon one of many whom my dad cared for. I viewed the sacred power of those hands with awe and thought: "Wow. I want to have hands like those." I knew that soon I could, but I would need to keep them clean throughout

my life to do any good.

My dad has always used his hands for good. He has kept them ever worthy to hold the priesthood of God.

We need to consider how we are using our hands. Are we keeping them clean? Are we remaining worthy of the blessings that come from honoring the holy priesthood?

If we strive to have a pure heart and clean hands, we will have great joy in life through the priesthood, and we will be ready and happy at the judgment bar of Christ (see Alma 5:19; D&C 88:86).

I'm grateful for my dad for setting an example and showing me the right way. **NE**

The author is currently serving in the Virginia Chesapeake Mission.

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ILLUSTRATION BY GREG NEWBOLD

