



## A BIRTHDAY WISH FOR MY DAD

**M**y father was never raised in any religion, and my mother's family became less active when my mother was young. But one day my mother felt like she was missing something, so she decided to go back to the church she had grown up in, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My sisters and I went with her. But my father didn't like our attending church, and it tested my parents' relationship like never before.

I was baptized when I was eight,

and I learned how families can be together forever. Every year on my birthday, I blew out the candles secretly wishing for my father to be baptized. I prayed that my dad's heart would be softened. After many years, the missionaries were eventually able to eat dinner with us. But the gospel was never brought up.

Then one summer my father came with me on a Young Men camping trip. Though he wasn't a member, my dad was put in charge of a fireside! I was scared, but everyone helped by participating in the fireside. Then my friend bore his testimony of prayer. He shared a time my father had helped my friend's little brother and had been an answer to his prayer.

For the first time ever, I saw my dad cry. He felt the Spirit.

After that trip, my father wanted to learn more about the gospel with a new enthusiasm, and one morning he announced that he wanted to be baptized. We couldn't believe it!

My father's baptism was one of the best days of my life. The chapel was packed with everyone who came to support my dad, and I practiced the baptismal prayer a few hundred times because I was so excited. I was able to baptize my dad, and I can't even describe the overwhelming emotions I felt as I embraced my father in the baptismal font.

The next year my family and I were sealed in the temple. After the sealing, we stood in a circle—as an eternal family—hugging each other with tears of joy running down our faces.

From this experience I learned that anything is possible. Don't give up. I am going to try my absolute best to be worthy to be sealed in the temple with my future family.

**Cooper B., California, USA**



## WORKING THROUGH MY FAMILY TRIALS

**A**fter my parents were divorced, it was a hard time in my life. Going to church usually made me feel better, but it hurt me to hear talks on families because I didn't believe I had one.

My mother was less active and remarried. My father was an atheist and lived with another woman. Both of them had children with their new partners, and I felt like a weight—an error—as if I didn't

count for anything.

So I began to pray, read the scriptures, and meditate, and I tried to keep going to church. But I couldn't help but wonder: What would I do in the next life without my family sealed in the temple?

The answers didn't come right away, but they did come. I looked up the definition of *family* and read scripture verses on the subject, and I started seeing the brighter side of things. Instead of thinking that I didn't have a family, I learned that I could help bring God's children into the Church as a missionary. I learned to exercise patience and to be a light. I tried to better myself. I also realized that without a family like mine,

I may not have developed the faith that I have, and I wouldn't value the law of chastity and the plan of salvation as I do now.

I've come to understand that I *do* have a family. It has been hard, but I don't worry about what will happen to my family after death. I trust in God, and He knows why we aren't sealed for the time being. He knows how much I love them and what's best for me. We can't understand everything, so it's important to have faith in God to sustain us and help us know that everything will turn out OK.

I am thankful for my new and larger family, and I have faith that one day we can be found all together at the temple. I know God loves me and that He loves everyone, and I know that if I do His will, one day I'll return to Him with my family.

**Silvia C., Umbria, Italy**