



ILLUSTRATION BY DAN BURR; PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

I LEARNED FOR MYSELF

One day when I was a freshman in high school, a person who is not a member of our Church visited our seminary class during a lesson on Joseph Smith and the First Vision. To close the lesson, our seminary teacher bore powerful witness that through Joseph Smith the Lord restored the true Church of Jesus Christ. He then asked if anyone else could add a second witness. With a nonmember present, I knew this would be a perfect time to bear

my testimony. I stared down at my desk, waiting for some sign or feeling to prompt me to testify or share my thoughts. Yet, to my surprise, the opposite happened. I realized that although I knew what words I would say if asked, they didn't yet mean anything to me personally. I'd learned about the First Vision ever since I was a child, yet now the real test had come and I didn't know if any of it is true. After two long, silent minutes, the bell rang and our discouraged

seminary teacher dismissed us.

Before heading home, I sat alone on the steps in front of the seminary building and pondered what had happened. I felt like I had failed in some way, and I knew I needed to know for myself. So I prayed and then asked myself: "Do I know that Joseph Smith saw Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and restored the true Church?"

Remarkably, the answer came instantly and powerfully. *Yes*. My prior discouragement was completely

gone as the Spirit testified to me of the truthfulness of the Restoration. The more I pondered about what I believed, the stronger I felt that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored. Right then I resolved to bear my testimony of the First Vision when future opportunities arose.

A while later I was sitting in seminary when the same teacher again bore his testimony of the First Vision. He again asked if anyone would bear a second witness. I was instantly reminded of the resolution I had made after the previous experience, and my heart leaped at this second chance. I was grateful that my previous inability to bear my testimony had motivated me to learn for myself that Joseph Smith did indeed see Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and was instrumental in restoring the true Church. I was filled with joy and did not hesitate to stand and proudly bear my testimony of the First Vision, because I had learned for myself.

Maggie J., Utah, USA

PROMPTING IN A TATTOO SHOP

It seems like everybody is getting a tattoo these days, and at one point I wanted one too. A lot of my friends had tattoos, and I thought they made you look cool and tough. Thankfully, Heavenly Father reminded

POWER OF PRAYER

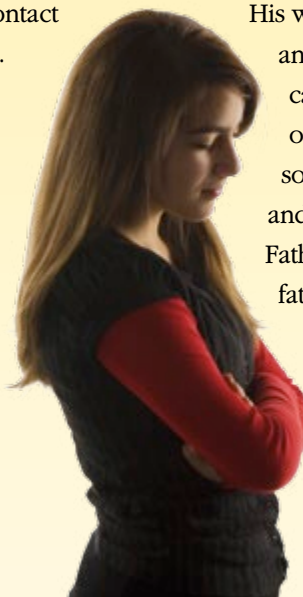
With modern technology, we can all keep in contact with our friends and family via social networking websites, phones, emails, and text messages. However, none of these methods can be used to keep in contact with our Heavenly Father. The only way we are able to talk with Him is through prayer, a method completely free of monetary charge.

A friend once told me, “Prayer is like a father and child talking.

A child who does not spend time with the father does not get to know him or learn from him.” It’s the same with us—without spending time talking to our Heavenly Father through prayer and hearing

His word through scripture and modern prophets, we cannot get to know Him or learn from Him at a personal level. Through prayer and the Spirit, our Heavenly Father can guide us like a father guides his child.

**Bronwen W., South
Australia, Australia**



me through the Spirit who I really am and gave me the strength to respect my body.

One day a tattoo shop my friends talked highly about was having a big sale. At that time in my life, I’d made some mistakes that had hurt and wounded my spirit, but I believed that Heavenly Father still loved me and could heal me. Still, I didn’t think a cool tattoo was that bad. As I went down to the tattoo place, I contemplated where I wanted to place the snowboarder tattoo I was about to get. As I sat down in the tattoo shop, however, the Spirit brought other questions to my mind: “Why do I

want something that would permanently alter my body just to fit in? Have I forgotten that my body is a temple?” (See 1 Corinthians 3:16–19.) The longer I sat, the more the Spirit prompted me that I was about to make a huge mistake. Fortunately, I couldn’t ignore what I was feeling, so I got up and left.

I’ve never looked back on that decision. I am grateful that Heavenly Father had not forgotten me and was willing to warn me through the Spirit. I know that Heavenly Father does care about all of us, no matter where we may be.

Chris S., Arizona, USA