“The concept of being filled with light and truth became particularly important to me because of an experience I had many years ago. I attended a meeting where members of the Young Women general board taught about creating spiritually strong families and homes. To visually demonstrate this, a Young Women leader held up two soda cans. In one hand she held a can that was empty and in the other hand a can that was unopened and full of soda. First, she squeezed the empty can; it began to bend and then collapsed under the pressure. Next, with her other hand, she squeezed the unopened can. It held firm. It didn’t bend or collapse like the empty can—because it was filled.

“We likened this demonstration to our individual lives and to our homes and families. When filled with the Spirit and with gospel truth, we have the power to withstand the outside forces of the world that surround and push against us. However, if we are not filled spiritually, we don’t have the inner strength to resist the outside pressures and can collapse when forces push against us.”

Cheryl A. Esplin, second counselor in the Primary general presidency

“Perhaps my first lesson about truly good Saints without guile was learned when I was a young missionary. I moved into an area with an elder I didn’t know. I had heard other missionaries talk about how he had never received any leadership assignments and how he struggled with the Korean language despite having been in the country a long time. But as I got to know this elder, I found he was one of the most obedient and faithful missionaries I had known. He studied when it was time to study; he worked when it was time to work. He left the apartment on time and returned on time. He was diligent in studying Korean even though the language was especially difficult for him.

“When I realized the comments I had heard were untrue, I felt like this missionary was being misjudged as unsuccessful. I wanted to tell the whole mission what I had discovered about this elder. I shared with my mission president my desire to correct this misunderstanding. His response was, ‘Heavenly Father knows this young man is a successful missionary, and so do I.’ He added, ‘And now you know too, so who else really matters?’ This wise mission president taught me what was important in service, and it wasn’t praise, position, power, honor, or authority. This was a great lesson for a young missionary who was too focused on titles.”

Elder Michael T. Ringwood of the Seventy
Popularity or Faith?

“Figuratively, all of us need to transform ourselves into modern Captain Moronis in order to win the wars against evil. I know a very faithful young deacon who transformed himself into a modern Captain Moroni. Inasmuch as he has sought to follow the counsel of his parents and Church leaders, his faith and determination have been tested every day, even at his young age. He told me one day he was surprised by a very difficult and uncomfortable situation—his friends were accessing pornographic images on their cell phones. In that exact moment, this young man had to decide what was most important—his popularity or his righteousness. In the few seconds that followed, he was filled with courage and told his friends that what they were doing was not right. Moreover, he told them that they should stop what they were doing or they would become slaves to it. Most of his classmates ridiculed his counsel, saying that it was a part of life and that there was nothing wrong with it. However, there was one among them who listened to the counsel of that young man and decided to stop what he was doing.

“This deacon’s example had a positive influence on at least one of his classmates. Undoubtedly, he and his friend faced mockery and persecution because of that decision. On the other hand, they had followed the admonition of Alma to his people when he said, ‘And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things’ [Alma 5:57].”

Elder Ulisses Soares of the Presidency of the Seventy

A Decision at 19

“Several years ago, Sister Pearson and I were called to preside over the Washington Tacoma Mission. The call was a complete surprise. With some trepidation I met with the chairman and the CEO of the company where I was employed and informed them of my mission call. They were visibly upset with my decision to leave the firm. ‘When did you make this decision, and why didn’t you discuss it with us earlier?’ they demanded.

“In a moment of clarity, a profound answer came into my mind. I said, ‘I made this decision as a 19-year-old boy, when I made sacred covenants with God in the temple to follow the Savior. I’ve built my entire life on those covenants, and I fully intend to keep them now.’”

Elder Kevin W. Pearson of the Seventy