

A String of Good

Should I give my music teacher a copy of the Book of Mormon?

I had been playing the violin for three years before I started taking private lessons. My teacher, Robert Stoyanov, had emigrated from Russia some years before I was born and was a well-respected member of the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Stoyanov enjoyed chatting. Occasionally, he would tell me stories about his childhood in Russia, and he often questioned me about how my family was doing and asked about school.

One time, the conversation turned to religion, and I told him I belonged to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. When he gave me a puzzled look, I said, “Most people know us as Mormons.” He then told me of several LDS students in the past. In future lessons, he would occasionally inquire about what we believe, and I would explain to the best of my ability.

One day he asked about something, which led to something else, which led to something else, and for 20 minutes, I was in a question-and-answer session. It was then that I started thinking about giving Mr. Stoyanov a copy of the Book of Mormon.

I had my doubts, of course. Mr. Stoyanov was a professional, well-educated man. I wondered if he would be receptive to the Book of Mormon at all.

I resolved to give him a copy of the book at my next lesson. My mom suggested we find a copy in Russian. We looked for a couple of days with no success and had almost given up when a good friend provided us with a copy she had purchased when her son was called to serve a mission in Ukraine. I wrote a quick note, wrote down the nearby missionaries’ address, slipped in a pass-along card about eternal families to mark Moroni 10:3–5, and went to my lesson.

I presented him with the gift and waited anxiously for his reaction. “This a present for me? Oh, thank you! Thank you so much. Your family are such wonderful people! God bless you.” He said this very fast and in a heavy Russian accent. Mr. Stoyanov had many more questions, which I answered as guided by the Spirit.

On my way out, he told me I was as well-grounded as all of his other Mormon students had been.

Later I started thinking about this remarkable experience and realized his acceptance of that priceless gift was not due to my example alone. Each of his Latter-day Saint students before me had planted seeds of faith. Each had left a small impression on him, and these impressions gradually prepared him to receive the Book of Mormon with enthusiasm. Never again will I think that no one is watching my actions. Someone always is. **NE**

Examples



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