

By Leah Derham-Boyce

MY DOUBLE

My parents divorced when I was young, and when I was five, my father had to return to his home in the United States. Meanwhile, back in England, my mother met the sister missionaries and was baptised into the Church. Unfortunately, she became less active and moved away with my sister and me.

Then, by accident, one Friday evening in the summer of 2004, we saw the missionaries—elders this time—to whom I'm still grateful for following the Spirit's promptings leading them into a town in the middle of nowhere. They'd been inspired to come to us and were at the end of a very lonely, unsuccessful, disheartening day when we saw them.

Of course, my mother knew very well that young men in suits with badges could only be the Mormon missionaries, so she began talking to them. They gave us weekly lessons in our home, and we began attending church. The following March I was baptised. I have never regretted that choice, and as the only LDS teen in my town, I'm having to set the best example I can to show everyone what Mormons are *really* like!

I still visit my dad in Tennessee every year or so and have been able to attend church while there. That's where the double-life comes in—two families, two wards, two cultures, and yet only one true Church!

I find both families a wonderful strength to me, regardless of the fact that the English part are the only Church members. I find you can learn so much from your families about many things, especially because everyone has the light of Christ. It's great to be able to see that natural goodness manifest in people.

*I found the Church
comfortably the same
in both my worlds.*

DOUBLE LIFE

It's also great to see the similarities between both of my wards. It brings great joy to my heart to see that the amazing amount of strength and integrity the youth have is the same across the world. I think that the cultivation of such strength and ability to keep your standards is largely because of the Church Educational System and youth programmes. In my three years of being taught seminary by my mother in my own home, I've been strengthened greatly, learned about myself, gained some much-wanted knowledge about the scriptures, but most importantly, I've learned about the Saviour. The same goes for Mutual, Sunday School, and the Young Women lessons on Sunday (in *both* wards). They have all brought me immensely closer to Him. I love my Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and my glorious, magnificent Father in Heaven, and I *know* They love me.

I occasionally have doubts and wish to be "normal" sometimes, but I love the gospel, and I will never abandon my Saviour. And I pray that all youth may feel the same. The Lord loves you. He atoned for you. No matter what circumstances you live in, if you remember Them and "let virtue garnish [your] thoughts unceasingly; then shall [your] confidence wax strong in the presence of God" (D&C 121:45). My testimony is that the Saviour lives and that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet. **NE**

Editor's note: British spellings have been preserved.

