


THREE BOOKS SHARED



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I prayed to know if the Church is true, and then I discovered Heavenly Father had already been answering my question.

By Kevin Ludlow



As I entered the chapel, I quickly realized that no one was wearing a T-shirt and cargo pants like I was. When my soon-to-be-missionary friend had invited me to hear him speak, I assumed he was talking about a party or an open house, not a sacrament service. The meeting I was observing was unlike any church meeting I'd ever attended, and I had attended quite a few.

A trip to Israel when I was 14 had sparked my interest in religion. Over the next few years, I visited many different churches and heard a variety of pastors and teachers express their views. As passionately as they spoke, I still felt like there were some basic answers I was not hearing, including who Jesus Christ really is.

After high school graduation, I worked with a young man who was a recently returned missionary. One day we began talking about religion, and I was amazed by how much he knew about the Savior. "Where did you learn all that?" I asked. A few days later, he presented me with a copy of *Jesus the Christ* by Elder James E.

Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Not long after that, he changed jobs and I didn't see him again.

I was almost finished reading the book when I heard that an LDS friend of mine was going on a mission. I called him and told him what I was reading. He was the one who had invited me to church on that Sunday when I showed up in a T-shirt.

So, there I was at the meeting, feeling out of place in my casual clothing. As I looked around, I noticed families sitting together. I had not seen many children in other churches. I also noticed that everyone, not just the choir, sang the hymns. Young men passed the sacrament. Regular members spoke instead of a pastor. I liked what I saw.

I began to feel a greater desire than ever to learn about Jesus. I enjoyed my friend's talk and his excitement about serving as a missionary. Later I told my friend how jealous I was of him because he was going to be a missionary like Paul in the New Testament. I told him how much I would like to do something like that.

He said, "I have a book that will help you prepare, and I want you to have my copy." It was a book by another Apostle in the Church called *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*.

I studied that book along with the Bible. Through this study, I got answers to many questions, as well as a desire to pray. Based on what I'd read about Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:5–19), I felt sure that God would also answer my prayer.

I knelt by my bedside and called out to God with all my heart and soul. I told Him that I was seeking the truth, and then I waited for my heavenly messenger. Nothing happened. I tried again. Still nothing. Finally, I simply asked God if the things I was reading and studying were true.

After my prayer, I began thinking of all I had learned. While reading the two books my LDS friends had given me, I had discovered answers. That felt good. Ever since I went to Israel, I'd

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wanted to know more about Jesus. Now I did. That felt good, too. Suddenly I realized God *was* answering my prayer. He loved me enough to send friends and books to tell me about the Restoration of the gospel, and I felt good. How would I feel if the Lord had literally told me the same thing? I would feel the same way. That was my answer.

Full of excitement, I wanted to call my friend, but he was on his mission, so I called his mom instead. I awkwardly explained that I had read the book her son had given me and that

I would like to find out how I could join their Church. She was silent for a long time, and then she started to cry. Through her joyful tears she told me how to contact the missionaries.

A few weeks later I called my friend's mom again. This time it was to invite her and her family to my baptism. Along with the other books I'd read, I had now read the Book of Mormon and gained a testimony of its truthfulness.

I invited my own family to attend my baptism as well. My twin brother came into town the night before. He didn't understand why I wanted to get baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He asked a lot of questions, especially about the Book of Mormon. The only things he'd ever read about the book were false and negative. I stayed up most the night attempting to answer his questions.

The baptism was beautiful. This time I didn't show up in a T-shirt and cargo pants. This time I was in a white shirt and tie, and I felt totally comfortable and at home. Four months later my twin was still asking questions. I told him that I was happy to talk to him about it but that ultimately he would have to ask God for himself. A few weeks later he came to me and said:

"I asked, and now I know the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was a prophet. How do I get in touch with the missionaries?"

Imagine my joy a month later when I had the opportunity of baptizing my twin brother. We

both served missions; I was called to Chile and my brother to Mexico. Like Paul of old, we are trying to give back a little of what we received. **NE**

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