

# THE NewEra

S E P T E M B E R

2 0 0 1

A photograph of two young boys. The boy on the left is wearing a red t-shirt and is holding a whole ear of yellow corn on the cob, looking at it with a slight smile. The boy on the right is wearing a blue t-shirt and is holding a large slice of watermelon, looking at it with a wide-eyed, excited expression. Both boys have short brown hair and are looking towards the camera.

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FAMILY,  
P. 30

**ONE SURE  
VOICE,**  
P. 4

**CONTEST  
WINNERS,**  
P. 12

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of Latter-day Saints

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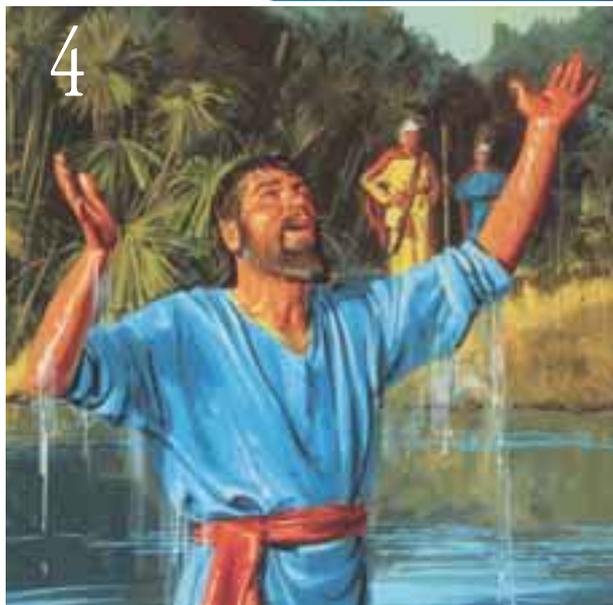
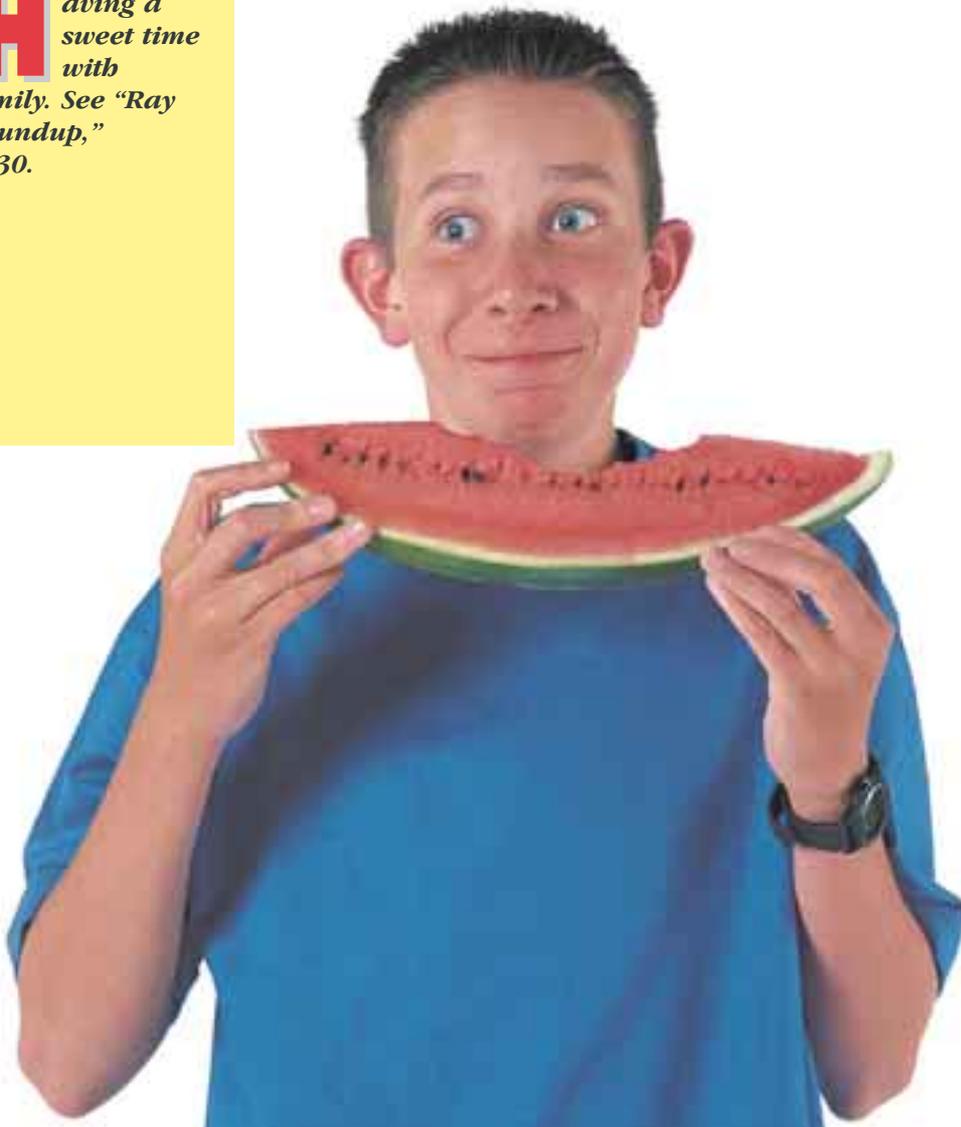
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Richard Bean of Lindon,  
Utah, enjoy getting to  
know their cousins at  
their family reunion. See  
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Cover photography:  
Welden Andersen (front),  
Jed Clark (back)

**H**aving a  
sweet time  
with  
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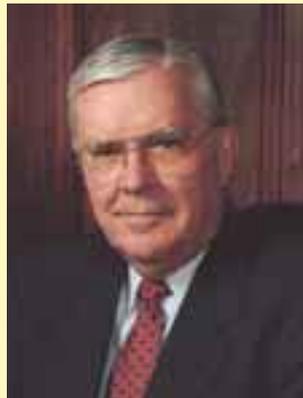
# Follow THE PROPHET

*I promise. If you will listen to the living prophet and the apostles and follow our counsel, you will not go astray.*

**H**ave you ever had the experience of driving around and around the streets of a city with the driver saying, “I know where it is; I’m sure I can find it”? Finally, in frustration, he stops and asks someone for directions. How much easier it is to find our way when we follow the directions of someone who knows how to locate our destination.

These are difficult times. Is there one clear, unpolluted, unbiased voice that we can always count on? Is there a voice that will always give us clear directions to find our way in today’s troubled world? The answer is *yes*. That voice is the voice of the living prophet and apostles.

It is no small thing to have a prophet of God in our midst. Great and wonderful are the blessings that come into our lives as we listen to the word of the Lord given to us through him. At the same time, knowing that President



by Elder  
**M. Russell Ballard**  
of the Quorum  
of the Twelve

**E**ach one of you is preparing now to be a leader in the Church in the future, and we need you to be clean and faithful and true to the Lord.

Gordon B. Hinckley is God’s prophet also endows us with responsibility. When we hear the counsel of the Lord expressed through the words of the President of the Church, our response should be positive and prompt.

### **Listen and do**

We know of the experience of Naaman, who was struck with leprosy and who eventually contacted the prophet Elisha and was instructed to “go and wash in [the] Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean” (2 Kgs. 5:10).

At first, Naaman was unwilling to follow Elisha’s counsel. He couldn’t understand the thing he had been asked to do—to wash seven times in the Jordan river. In other words, his pride and stubbornness were keeping him from receiving the Lord’s blessing through His prophet.

Thankfully, he finally went down, and “dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean” (2 Kgs. 5:14).

What a humbling thing it must have been for Naaman to realize how close he came to allowing his own pride and his unwillingness to listen to the counsel of the prophet to prevent him from receiving such a great, cleansing blessing.



*Illustrated by Larry Winborg*

**A**t first, Naaman was unwilling to follow Elisba's counsel. He couldn't understand the thing he had been asked to do—to wash seven times in the Jordan.

**What a humbling thing it must have been to realize how close he came to allowing his own pride and his unwillingness to listen to the counsel of the prophet to prevent him from receiving such a great, cleansing blessing.**

And what a humbling thing it is to contemplate how many of us might miss out on great and promised blessings because we do not listen *and then do* the relatively simple things our prophet is telling us to do today.

### **Remember the Bs**

In November of 2000, President Hinckley challenged you to set goals for yourselves to *be grateful, be smart, be clean, be true, be humble, and be prayerful*. The six “Bs,” as President Hinckley called them, are a marvelous standard for all Latter-day Saints.

It is significant to remember that President Hinckley petitioned the Lord on behalf of you young people. He said, “I want you to know that I have been on my knees asking the Lord to bless me with the power and the capacity and the language to reach into your hearts” (“A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 2).

Have we studied his counsel and identified the things we need to avoid or to do differently? I know a 17-year-old who, just prior to the prophet’s talk, had pierced her ears a second time. She came home from the fireside, took off the second set of earrings, and simply said to her parents, “If President Hinckley says we should only wear one set of earrings, that’s good enough for me.”

Wearing two pairs of earrings may or may not have eternal consequences for this young woman, but her willingness to obey the prophet will. And if she will obey him now, on something relatively simple, how much easier it will be to follow him when greater issues are at stake.

### **A simple promise**

Are we listening? Are we hearing the words of the prophet? Or are we allowing ourselves, as Naaman did *at first*, to be blinded by pride and stubbornness, which could prevent us from receiving the blessings that come from following the teachings of God’s prophet?

I make you a promise. It’s a simple one, but it is true. If you will listen to the living prophet and the apostles and heed our counsel, you will not go astray.

As I have traveled throughout the

Church these past few months, I have noticed that many of you are eagerly following President Hinckley’s counsel. Many of you have already made the decision to be even more well groomed than you were before. Many of you are striving more diligently to avoid evil talk, to choose your friends wisely, to stay away from pornography and illicit drugs, to not attend evil concerts and dangerous parties, to respect your bodies and keep yourselves morally clean in every way.

To those of you who have not listened yet, I caution you to not disregard the counsel of the President of the Church. He has spoken to you plainly. Study his words and strive to obey them. They are true and come from God. We encourage you who need to repent to go forward with faith and become clean before the Lord. Each one of you is preparing now to be a leader in the Church in the future, and we need you to be clean and faithful and true to the Lord.

Never forget how it felt to listen as President Hinckley prayed for you. Did you feel how precious you are as he prayed? “Bless them that they may walk acceptably before Thee as Thy cherished sons and daughters. Each is Thy child with the capacity to do great and noble things” (*Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 11).

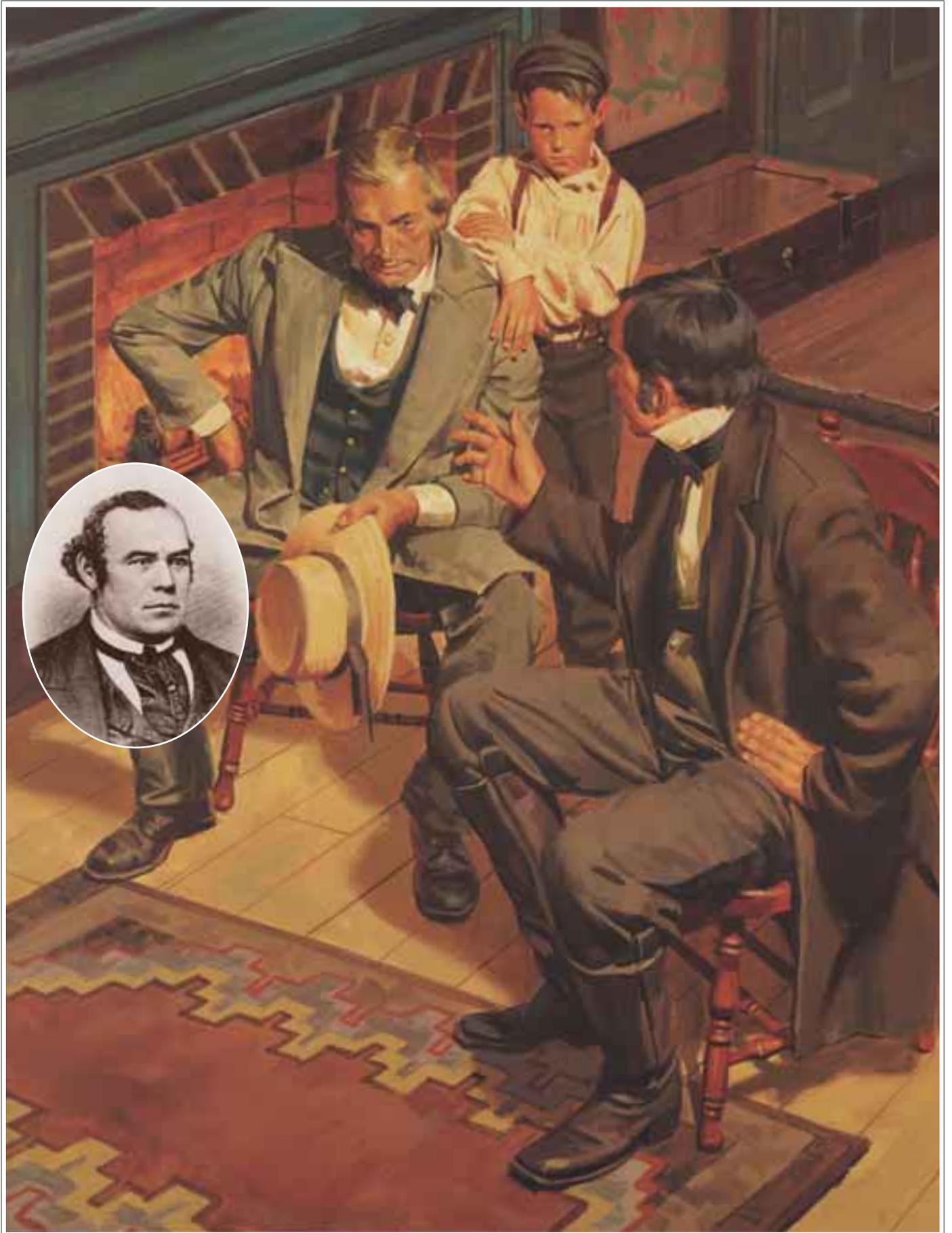
I promise you in the name of the Lord that if you will listen not just with your ears but also with your heart, the Holy Ghost will manifest the truth unto you of the messages delivered by President Hinckley, his counselors, the Apostles, and other leaders of the Church. The Spirit will prompt you to know what you should do as individuals and as families in order to follow our counsel, that your testimonies might be strengthened and that you might have peace and joy.

I testify to you that the fulness of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Today we are blessed to be led by God’s prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley. May we *listen and then do* those things that he teaches us is my humble prayer. **NE**

*Adapted from an April 2001 general conference address.*



*Illustrated by Paul Mann*



# Pure TESTIMONY

*Do you wish to know—  
really know—the truth?  
Then follow Moroni’s  
counsel.*

One evening in April 1836 Elder Parley P. Pratt had retired early with pressing worries and a heavy heart. He didn’t know how he was going to meet his financial obligations. His wife had been seriously ill, and his aged mother had come to live with him. A year earlier the house he had been building had gone up in flames.

While he was deep in thought, a knock came at the door. Elder Heber C. Kimball entered and, filled with the spirit of prophecy, told Elder Pratt that he should travel to Toronto, Canada, where he would “find a people prepared for the fulness of the gospel” and that “many [would] be brought to the knowledge of the truth” (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 130–31).

Despite his worries, Elder Pratt departed. When he arrived in Toronto, at first no one seemed interested in hearing what he had to say. Among those he met was John Taylor, who had been a Methodist preacher. John received Elder Pratt courteously but coolly. John Taylor had heard distorted rumors about a new sect, their “golden bible,” and stories of angels appearing to an “unlearned youth, reared in the backwoods of New York”



by Elder  
**Joseph B. Wirthlin**  
of the Quorum of the  
Twelve

**T**he promise Elder Parley P. Pratt made to John Taylor 165 years ago is just as valid today as it was then. The Holy Ghost will confirm the truths of the restored gospel.

(B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor*, 34).

A wise man, John Taylor had been seeking the truth all his life. He listened to what Elder Pratt had to say. Among other things, the stranger from America promised that anyone who investigated the gospel could know for himself, through the influence of the Holy Ghost, that it was true.

At one point John Taylor asked, “What do you mean by this Holy Ghost? . . . [Will it give] a certain knowledge of the principles that you believe in?”

The Apostle replied, “Yes, . . . and if it will not, then I am an impostor” (*Deseret News, Semi-Weekly*, Apr. 18, 1882).

Hearing this, John Taylor took up the challenge, saying, “If I find his religion true, I shall accept it, no matter what the consequences may be; and if false, then I shall expose it” (*The Life of John Taylor*; 38).

Not only did he accept the challenge, but he “received that Spirit through obedience to the Gospel” (*Deseret News, Semi-Weekly*, Apr. 18, 1882). Soon he knew for himself what millions of others have since known, that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth. Eventually, this man who had devoted his entire life to seeking the truth became the third President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

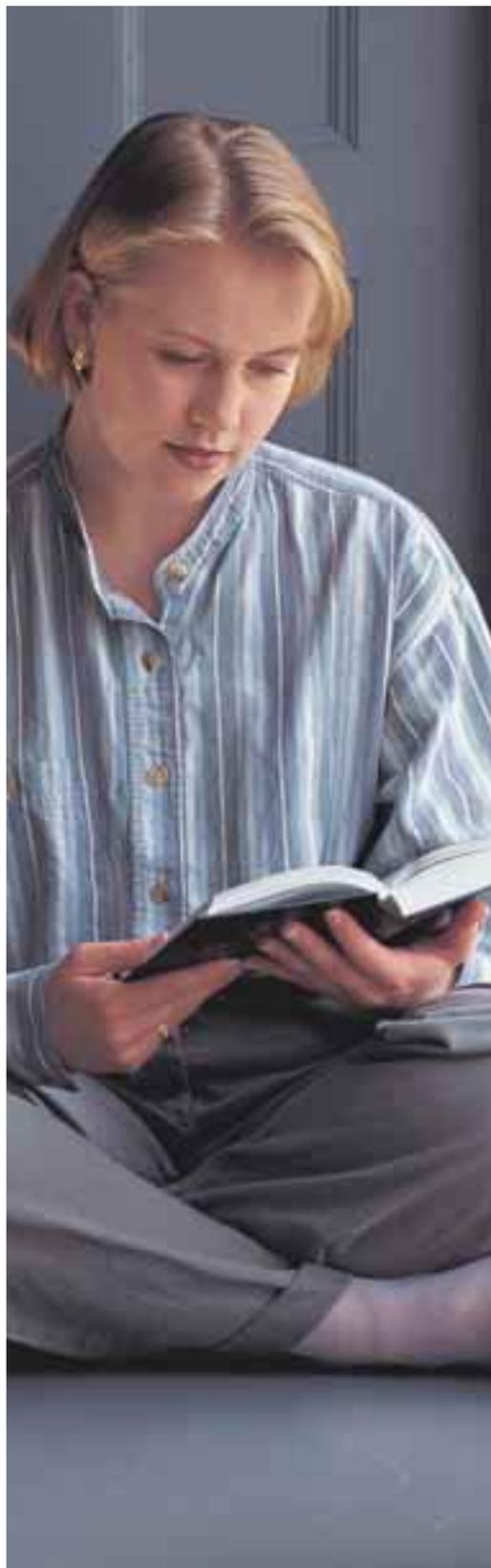
## **How do you get a testimony?**

Over time, much in the world has

## *The* SCRIPTURES HELP

I have always known that the Church is good and right, but there came a time when I wanted to know for myself that it's true. I really wanted a testimony. One night I was reading in Alma 32. In verse 27, it says to "exercise a particle of faith," and that "even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe." It helps me to know that if I keep praying and searching the scriptures faithfully, my testimony will grow. I can now say with all my heart that I know the gospel of Jesus Christ is true!

*Kate Webster, 16  
Kaysville, Utah*



changed. One thing, however, remains the same: the promise Elder Parley P. Pratt made to John Taylor 165 years ago is just as valid today as it was then—the Holy Ghost will confirm the truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. A loving Heavenly Father would not abandon His children without providing a way for them to learn of Him.

### **A testimony of your own**

How does one acquire a personal testimony?

Study the words of Moroni. He had little time and space on his plates to write a few final words. Since his own people were destroyed, Moroni wrote for our day. To us, he inscribed his precious words of farewell—his final words of counsel:

"Behold, I would exhort you," he wrote, "that when ye shall read these things . . . ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men . . . ponder it in your hearts.

"And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moro. 10:3–4).

Do you want to know the truth of the holy scriptures? Do you wish to know—really know—the truth? Then follow Moroni's counsel and you will surely find what you seek.

Be sincere. Study. Ponder. Pray sincerely, having faith.

A testimony of the truth of the gospel does not come the same way to all people. Some receive it in a unique, life-changing experience. Others gain a testimony slowly, almost imperceptibly until, one day, they simply know.

### **Don't be discouraged**

President David O. McKay tells how, in his youth, he knelt and "prayed fervently and sincerely and with as much faith as a young boy could muster" that "God would declare to [him] the truth of his revelation to Joseph Smith."

President McKay related that when he arose from his knees, he had to admit that “no spiritual manifestation has come to me. If I am true to myself, I must say that I am just the same [boy] that I was before I prayed.”

I don’t know how young David felt in his heart at that time, but I’m sure he must have been disappointed—perhaps frustrated that he didn’t receive the spiritual experience that he had hoped for. But that didn’t discourage him from continuing his search for that knowledge.

The answer to his prayers did come, but not until years later, when he was serving as a missionary. Why was the



**P**resident Boyd K. Packer said: *“A testimony is to be found in the bearing of it.” Bearing testimony drives your faith deeper into your soul.*

answer to his prayer so long delayed? President McKay believed that this spiritual manifestation “came as a natural sequence to the performance of duty” (*Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay*, comp. Claire Middlemiss, 16).

The Savior taught a similar principle. When the truth of His message was challenged, He declared, “If any man will do [God’s] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:17).

Don’t you be discouraged if the answer to your prayer does not come immediately. Study, ponder, pray, sincerely having faith, and live the commandments.

“Dispute not because ye see not,” Moroni taught, “for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith” (Ether 12:6).

### Take a leap of faith

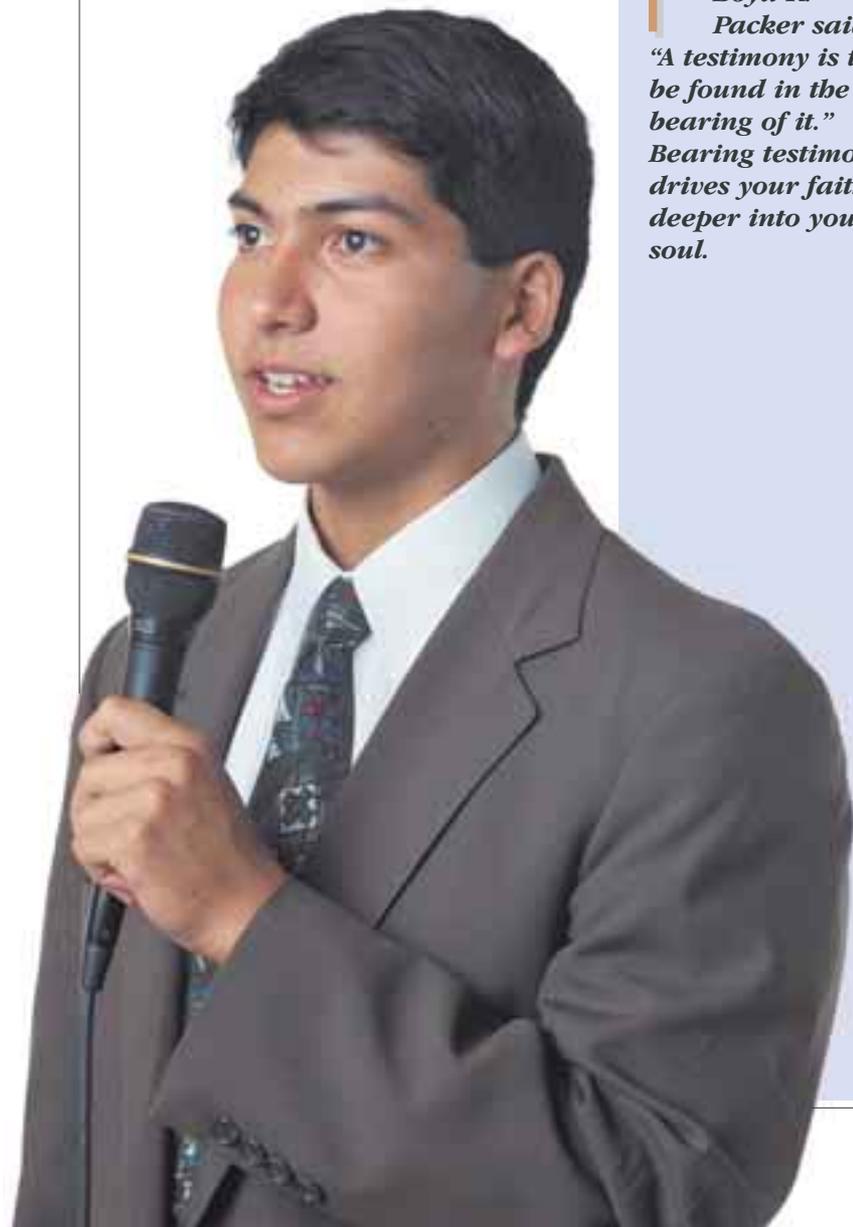
President Boyd K. Packer said: “A testimony is to be found in the bearing of it. Somewhere in your quest for spiritual knowledge, there is that ‘leap of faith.’ It is the moment when you have gone to the edge of the light and step into the darkness to discover that the way is lighted ahead for just a footstep or two” (*That All May Be Edified*, 340).

Making a determined and confident public statement of your belief is such a step into the unknown. Bearing testimony drives your faith deeper into your soul.

Now, I would like to bear my testimony—I know that Joseph Smith saw what he said he saw, that the heavens opened and God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to an unlearned youth reared in the backwoods of New York.

As a special witness of the name of Jesus Christ in all the world, I promise you that if you seek the Lord, you will find Him. Ask, and you shall receive. I pray that you may do so and testify to the ends of the earth that the gospel of our Lord and Savior is restored to man! **NE**

*Adapted from an October 2000 general conference address.*



C O N T E S T W I N N E R S

# SHARING *a* GIFT

*It is a gift to see the beauty of all creation mirrored in small things, or to recognize the elegant design in that which is simple. The winners of this year's New Era contest have been blessed with just such a gift, one they gladly share.*



FICTION



FIRST PLACE  
Sheralee Bills, 19  
Spanish Fork, UT



SECOND PLACE  
Arianne Baadsgaard, 19  
Spanish Fork, UT



THIRD PLACE  
Megan Richey, 15  
Redlands, CA

HON. MENTION  
Nicole Hone, 19  
Brigham City, UT

Robyn Salazar, 18  
Salt Lake City, UT

Jason W. Wheeler, 20  
Hyde Park, UT

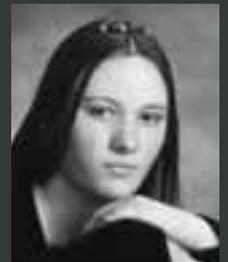
ARTICLE



FIRST PLACE  
Brenda Williams, 17  
Auburn, WA



SECOND PLACE  
Shallin Duncan, 17  
Roosevelt, UT



THIRD PLACE  
Megan Willis, 17  
Eagar, AZ

HON. MENTION  
A. Ginger Fairbanks, 16  
Sandy, UT

Nancy P. Kennedy, 22  
Gilroy, CA

Catherine Loveland, 15  
Victorville, CA

Lauren Waddell, 14  
San Diego, CA

**POETRY**



**FIRST PLACE**  
Kara Dixon, 22  
Spokane, WA



**SECOND PLACE**  
Melina Gottling, 23  
Thornton, CO



**THIRD PLACE**  
Sara Israelsen, 17  
Columbia, MO

**HON. MENTION**  
Jennifer Mower, 23  
Meridian, ID

Jennifer Rose, 21  
Bountiful, UT

Adrienne Thomas, 18  
Abilene, TX

Brenda Williams, 17  
Auburn, WA

Matthew G. Wright, 18  
Morgan, UT

**PHOTOGRAPHY**



**FIRST PLACE**  
Kara Louise Haynes, 19  
Queensland, Australia



**SECOND PLACE**  
Bridget A.J. Keogh, 17  
Casper, WY



**THIRD PLACE**  
Emily Lim, 18  
Ontario, Canada

**HON. MENTION**  
Devon Stewart, 13  
Dubai, United Arab  
Emirates

Sinikka A. Levanen, 17  
Peachtree City, GA

Amy L. Hawkins, 19  
Vernal, UT

**ART**



**FIRST PLACE**  
Sarah A. Treu, 22  
Salt Lake City, UT



**SECOND PLACE**  
Julie Harker, 21  
Idaho Falls, ID



**THIRD PLACE**  
Lauren Dickerson, 15  
Mesa, AZ

**HON. MENTION**  
Jared John Barnes, 18  
Cedar City, UT

Phillip Brown, 15  
Sandy, UT

Chad Fong, 12  
Holladay, UT

DeLynne Sperry, 21  
Roseburg, OR

**SONG**



**FIRST PLACE**  
Melissa Spencer, 19  
Albuquerque, NM



**SECOND PLACE**  
Terrah Lea Conrad, 19  
Rexburg, ID



**THIRD PLACE**  
Genessa Winn, 17  
Riverside, CA

**HON. MENTION**  
Elaina Gatrell, 19  
Salt Lake City, UT

DeeAura Thompson, 18  
Brigham City, UT

Christina Guymon, 19  
Blanding, UT

**SPECIAL CATEGORY**

Brooke Corbridge, 20  
Hyde Park, UT  
Choral Arrangement

Michelle Cheney, 16  
Idaho Falls, ID  
Claymation

**HYMN**



**FIRST PLACE**  
Benjamin Salisbury, 18  
Newton, UT



**SECOND PLACE**  
Christina Guymon, 19  
Blanding, UT



**THIRD PLACE**  
Rebecca Perry, 16  
Provo, UT

**HON. MENTION**  
Brooke Corbridge, 20  
Hyde Park, UT

Rachel Crook, 19  
Willard, UT

Ross David Adamson, 17  
Coos Bay, OR

**SPECIAL CATEGORY**

Christina Johnson, 21  
Salt Lake City, UT  
Instrumental  
Arrangement

Elisabeth Strein, 17  
Fort Collins, CO  
Musical

# MAYBE I WILL BE THERE

Words by Cynthia Mrazek Pyne  
Music by Melissa Henrie Spencer

*Thoughtfully* ♩ = 84-92

1. I	was - n't at	the man - ger	Nor	at the cru - el	cross.	I
	was - n't there	when He a - rose	To	wor - ship at	His	feet.
3. I	did - n't see	the mir - a - cles	Or	walk in Gal - i - lee.	I	
	nev - er knew	His	Or	heard Him call	me	friend.
5. My	time is in	the lat - ter days	When	truth has been	re -	stored.
	scrip - tures say	I need not fear	If	I will but	pre -	pare.
						And
						Then

did - n't lay Him in the tomb,	Feel numb with grief and loss.	2. I	land	As
was - n't in a Ne - phite				
did - n't see Him raise the dead,	Take chil - dren on His knee.	4. I	pain	He
was - n't there to see the				
though I've nev - er seen His face,	I know my Sav - ior's word.	6. The	up	And
with the just I'll be caught				

*Chorus*

He taught oth - er	sheep.	<i>f</i>		
suf - fered for all	men.		But may - be I will be	there
meet my Sav - ior	there.	(Last time only.)	(And)	When Je - sus comes
				a

gain.                      May-be I will hear His voice                      And see the an - gels — then.

Sure - ly I will praise His name                      When ev - 'ry knee shall bend.

May-be I will be — there                      When Je - sus comes a - gain!

*Repeat D.S. twice, then continue to ending after 3rd chorus.*  
*D.S.*

I pray that I will be — there                      When

*mf*                      *mp*

Je - sus comes a - gain!

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# Q & A

*“I am a good student, and sometimes people ask to copy my homework or answers on a test. I know it’s wrong to give them the answers, but I don’t want to seem like a snob. How do I handle this situation?”*

## NEW ERA

Snob, goody-goody, teacher’s pet, stuck up. As strange as it may seem, students who choose not to cheat, and don’t allow others to cheat from them, are often branded with these names.

You are in a difficult situation. It can be hard to choose between what you know is right and what your peers want you to do. It may seem like a choice between integrity and popularity.

But cheating is stealing.

President James E. Faust said, “Cheating in school is a form of self-deception. We go to school to learn. We cheat ourselves when we coast on the efforts and scholarship of someone else” (*New Era*, June 1997, 6).

If students copy your answers, they are cheating themselves. If you allow them to copy your answers, you are contributing to their dishonest behavior.

The first thing you need to do in this situation is let it be known that you will not participate in cheating—that means not giving or accepting answers. If you let someone cheat from your paper just once, it will become more difficult to say

**C**heating is stealing.

**I**f you allow others to copy your answers, you are contributing to their dishonest behavior.

**O**ffer to explain the assignment to your peers who don’t understand.

**I**f you let someone cheat from your paper just once, it will become more difficult to say no in the future.

**T**alk to your parents or your teacher if you ever feel bullied or threatened.

**P**ray for strength to do what is right.

## READERS

**Be sure to let them know in a positive manner how you feel. There is a nice way to say just about anything. Even if some resent the fact that you stay true to your standards, remember the worth of your personal integrity.**

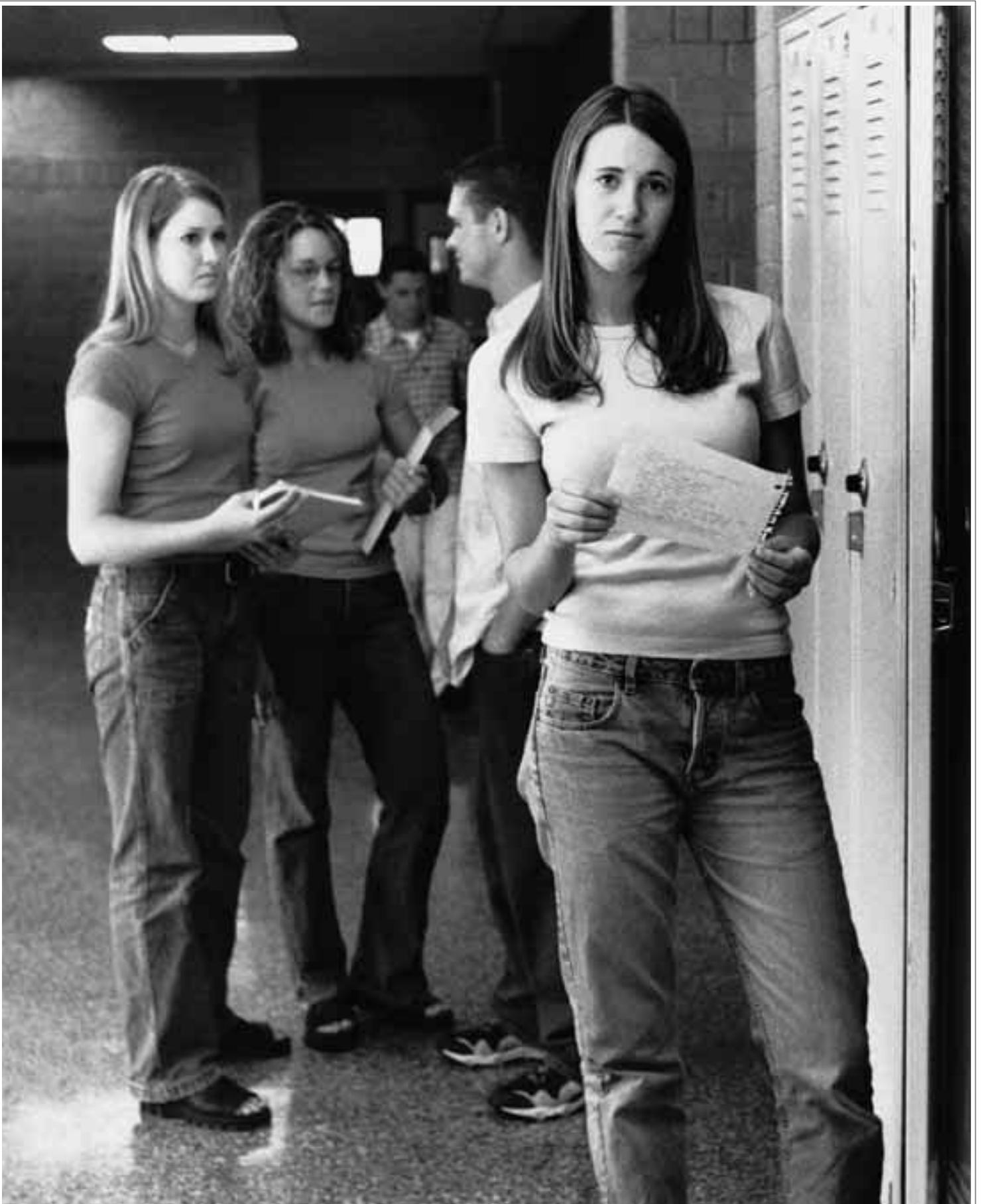
**Jeremy Nicoll, 19  
Taylor, Arizona**



**The best way I’ve found to handle this, if it isn’t a test, is to politely say, “No, but I’ll help you do it.” People usually agree. That way I keep my integrity, and the person gets the work done honestly. It shows Christlike love when you’re willing to spend time helping people.**

**Kristina Yarwood, 17  
Rancho Cordova, California**





no in the future.

But just because you aren't willing to give out answers doesn't mean you aren't willing to help. You could turn this situation into an opportunity to serve. If you understand the assignment and some of your peers don't, offer to help.

If they don't accept your offer and still push you to share answers, you may need to talk with your teacher about how to handle the situation. If you ever feel bullied or threatened, talk to your parents or your teacher immediately.

When people are in pursuit of a good grade, they often forget that the grade is intended to represent how much they learn. "The tremendous push to excel in secular learning sometimes tempts people to compromise that which is more important—their honesty and integrity" (Faust, 6). Cheating may help them get the right answers, but it won't help them learn, and it will damage their integrity.

We take knowledge with us through this life and into the next, not grades. We go to school to get an education, not a report card. If you focus just on grades, you may be willing to go to any length, including cheating, to get what you want. If your goal is learning, you may have to go the extra mile by studying more or staying after school to ask a teacher or classmate for help. Consequently, students who focus on learning generally get good grades and the satisfaction of knowing they did their best.

Be careful how you handle situations involving cheating. Although you wish to take the moral high ground, you don't need to make a scene or criticize your peers. President Gordon B. Hinckley counseled: "Rise above the evils of the world. We need not be prudish. We need not adopt a holier-than-thou attitude. We need only let our personal integrity, our sense of right and wrong, and simple honesty govern our actions" (*Ensign*, May 1999, 51). **NE**

*Answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.*



**J**ehovah . . . declared, 'Thou shalt not steal' [Ex. 20:15]. Stealing is an affront to God. This commandment is one of only 10. Cheating, lying, bearing false witness are all types of stealing" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 13).

—Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone of the Seventy

*Try to help them without condemning or criticizing. That way they will learn that you care about them and really want to help.*

Maggie Tangatakino, 15  
Mangaia, Cook Islands



*Explain that to give out the answers or let them copy hurts not only them but you. It hurts you because you lower yourself to cheating. And it hurts them because they are not learning.*

Matt Carroll, 17  
Annabella, Utah



*It can be really hard to do what is right, especially if it's your friend who is asking the favor. Just remember the many examples in the scriptures—Job, Joseph in Egypt, Abinadi, the Savior—and you will receive the strength you need.*

Kirsti Burr, 15  
Corona, California



## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

*Send us your answer to the question below, along with your name, age, and where you are from. Please include a snapshot of yourself that is 1 1/2 by 2 inches (4 by 5 cm) or larger.*

Q&A, New Era  
50 East North Temple  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

## QUESTION

*It's hard for me to follow the counsel in For the Strength of Youth to "avoid pairing off exclusively with one partner." I can't ignore my feelings for one person and date others. What should I do?*

*Please respond before November 1, 2001.*



**HE LOVES ME**  
**HE LOVES ME**  
**HE LOVES ME**

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD,  
THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON,  
THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT  
PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.  
(See John 3:16.)

SATAN'S BAG OF  
**SNIPES**





by Bishop  
**Richard C. Edgley**  
First Counselor in the  
Presiding Bishopric

*Our “hunt” was only a practical joke. Another hunt is going on that is deceitful, even deadly. Don’t become a victim.*

**A**s a young man having just finished my first year of college and needing to earn money for a desired mission, I spent the summer working at the new Jackson Lake Lodge in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

One co-worker was Jill, a young woman from San Francisco, California. Feeling that a young woman from a big city might be a little bit naive about her new environment, a few friends and I felt it our obligation to teach her about the ways of the real West. We decided to take her on a “snipe hunt.” For those of you who may not be familiar with a snipe hunt, it is a practical joke. The tools necessary for a snipe hunt are a stick and a cloth bag. The “hunter” is told to go through the brush, beating the bushes with a stick while calling the snipe in a high-pitched, ridiculous voice. The

nonexistent snipes are thus to be driven into the cloth bag.

We gave Jill her cloth bag and a stick and an area to hunt across the hill. The plan was to return to our starting point in about 15 minutes, at which time we would supposedly count our snipes.

When she did not return at the appointed time, we gloated and took delight in the seriousness with which she took her hunt. After about 30 minutes, we felt it was time to rescue her, explain the joke, have a good laugh, and all go to dinner. However, it became apparent that she had taken her snipe hunt more seriously than we had expected—she was not to be found in her assigned area. After searching rather extensively and still finding no evidence of her, we began moving into the woods, calling for her at the top of our voices, but to no avail.

Hoping she might have gone back to her dormitory, we returned and asked some young women to search for her there, but this also was to no avail. It was now turning dark, and our concern heightened. We enlisted all the young men we could from the boys’ dormitory, and with flashlights continued the search deep into the woods. Well into the darkness of night—frightened,

*We have been baptized. We have the Holy Ghost. And we have the power to discern between Satan's snipes and God's true principles of happiness.*

concerned, and hoarse from calling—we decided it was now time to report our ridiculous deed to the park rangers. While we were standing in front of the dorms, trying to determine which brave soul would have the privilege of reporting her disappearance, Jill suddenly appeared—not from her dormitory, but rather from that of a friend, with whom she had enjoyed dinner (which we incidentally missed) and a comfortable evening with her friends. Her first words to us as she approached said it all: “How do you fellows like hunting *snipe hunters*?”

The joke was on us, and I have never had a desire for any more snipe hunting.

**B**ut there is another “snipe hunt” going on all around us, and we may be the naive victims. It is not a practical joke, and it will not end with a good laugh and a little warm fellowship. Satan is the great deceiver, liar, and enemy to all that is good, including our happiness and our well-being. His great desire is to thwart our Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness and make us “miserable like unto himself” (2 Ne. 2:27). Being the very author and perpetrator of deceit, he in effect would invite us to join him in his snipe hunt, to fill our bags with excitement, fun, popularity, and the so-called “good life.” But his promises are as illusionary as the nonexistent snipe. What he really offers are lies, misery, spiritual degradation, and loss of self-worth.

Satan’s sales pitch as he sends us off to fill our bags is “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die” (2 Ne. 28:7). His invitation may seem enticing and convincing. Nephi describes his sales techniques as pacifying, flattering, and lulling as he declares, “All is well” (2 Ne. 28:21–22). Among other things Satan would have us put in our bags is immorality in all its forms, including pornography, language, dress, and behavior. But such evil deeds bring emotional distress, loss of spirituality, loss of self-respect, and lost opportunity for a mission or temple marriage, and

sometimes even unwanted pregnancy. Satan would enslave us by having us put drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and other addictive behaviors into our bags.

Satan will tell us that these things are okay and that “everybody is doing it.” He will tell us that they bring popularity and acceptance. Satan’s lies can be very enticing, especially at that critical time in life when young people are craving acceptance and popularity.

However, there are certain clues to guide us as to what to avoid putting in our bags. You would recognize these clues because they are common and they are familiar—clues such as:

- ◆ “Everybody is doing it.”
- ◆ “Nobody will know.”
- ◆ “It is not really hurting anyone.”
- ◆ “It won’t hurt just this once.”
- ◆ “So what?”
- ◆ “You can repent later and still go on a mission and be married in the temple.”
- ◆ “Christ atoned for your sins; He will forgive you.”

When such justifications are given either outright by others or subtly by the whisperings of the tempter, you are warned. Don’t listen. Don’t experiment. Just don’t do it.

God, our loving Father, the source of all truth, has warned us of Satan’s deceit. Listen to what the Lord has said through His prophets:

Paul taught the Saints in Corinth: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy” (1 Cor. 3:16–17).

Jacob warned the Nephites of old: “But, wo, wo, unto you that are not pure in heart, that are filthy this day before God” (Jacob 3:3).

Alma reminded his wayward son, Corianton, regarding sexual impurity: “Know ye not, my son, that these things are an abomination in the sight of the Lord . . . ?” (Alma 39:5). And then further to Corianton, “Wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10).

Lest we think these warnings were for biblical times only, listen to what our

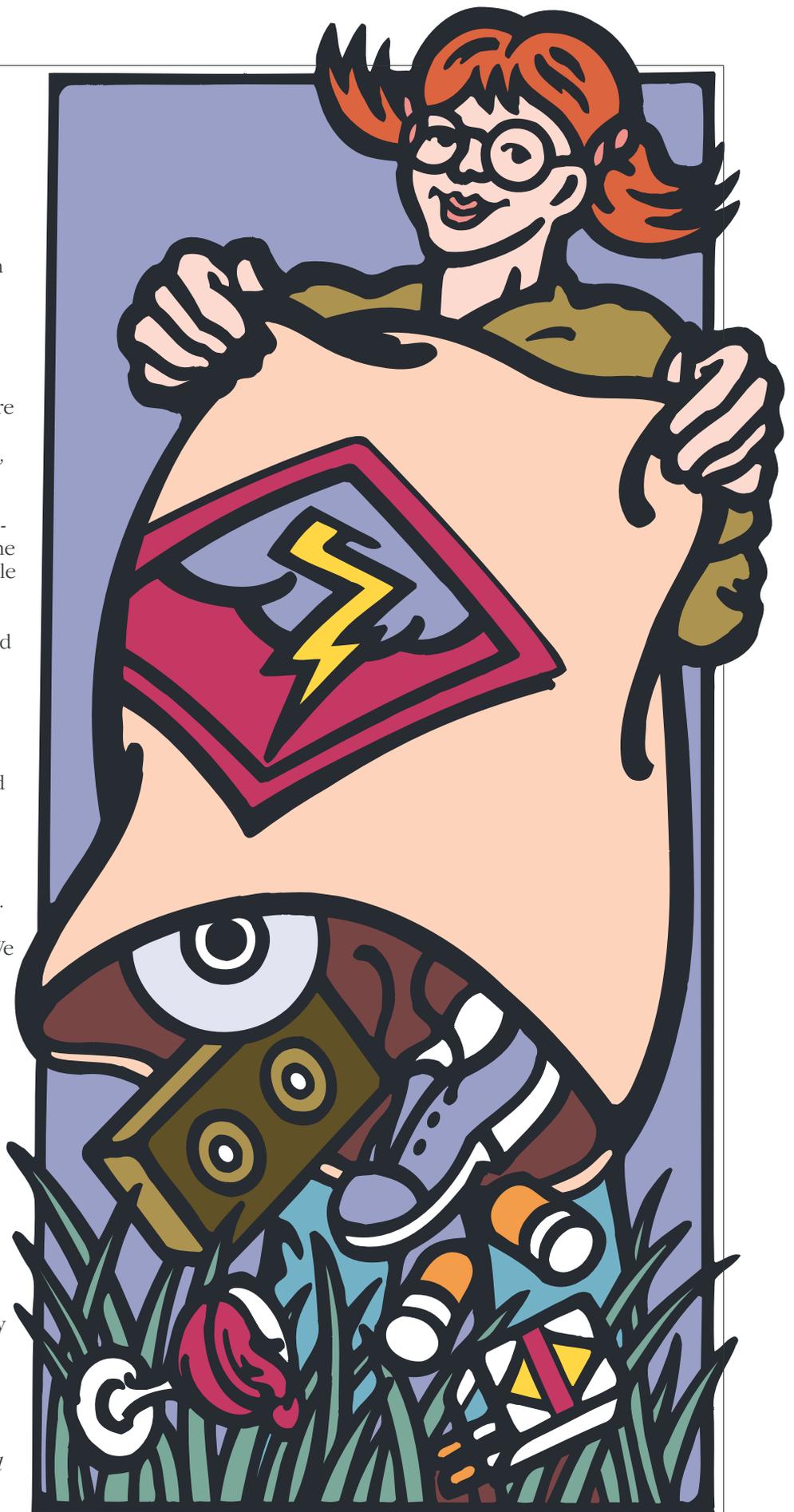
modern-day prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley, has said: “Notwithstanding the so-called ‘new morality,’ notwithstanding the much-discussed changes in moral standards, there is no adequate substitute for virtue. God’s standards may be challenged everywhere throughout the world, but God has not abrogated his commandments” (*Ensign*, Aug. 1988, 4).

So we ask ourselves, “Who are we going to believe in our search for happiness and well-being?” Will it be Satan, the author of all lies and deceit, whose single objective is to destroy us? Or are we going to believe a loving Heavenly Father, who is the source of all truth and happiness, whose sole objective is rewarding us with His eternal love and joy?

**W**e may come from humble circumstances, have limited education, and may even have what we consider unimpressive worldly accomplishments. And because of Satan’s deceit, we may at times feel unimportant, insignificant, or incapable. But let us never forget—we are the chosen ones. We have been baptized. We have the Holy Ghost. We know our relationships to our Heavenly Father, and that makes us somebody.

We are empowered. We are royalty. And we have the power to discern between Satan’s snipes and God’s true principles of happiness. Because we know who we are and because we are endowed with the Holy Spirit, we have the power to just say no. “No, Satan, I will not be a victim of your deceitful, vicious, and often deadly snipe hunt.” I testify that “wickedness never was happiness” and wickedness never will be happiness. I further testify that happiness and self-worth will come only from living the principles of Him who created the plan of happiness. **NE**

*Adapted from an October 2000 general conference address.*



# SEE WHAT THEY'VE DONE

**T**here is often profound truth and great beauty in the small and simple things of the world. However, discovering and portraying them is often anything but small and simple. Is it worth the effort? Absolutely. See for yourself.



## Missouri River Crossing

by Kara Dixon

The fathers fell, weeping,  
and mothers turned stone-cold faces  
to the wind,  
too weary to cry.  
As I watched those broken people  
I heard my mother say,  
*Go and bring them in.*  
Would she turn away if I returned  
with empty arms?

Gently, then, I gathered up a child  
and waded into waters  
so cold and sharp  
that my muscles clenched  
and tears froze on my face  
each time I crossed  
the aching, icy river.  
Hour after hour,  
numbly plodding on, I saw my mother  
in each stranger's face.  
And when they were all across  
they wrapped me in my mother's quilt  
and sang the quiet songs  
of heaven, and so cold and numb—  
I slept.  
And dreamed that I awoke  
in Mother's arms  
and angels seemed to shout *Hosanna!*  
And Father wept to have me  
home again.

## End of a Season

by Melina Gotling

The air is scented with exhaustion  
from a summer completely spent.  
Maples arch rounded backs against  
the sky  
and begin to shed their golden  
modesty  
to blanket the fainting grass.  
This corner of the park falls silent,  
except for the breathy wind  
laboring through the chapped leaves,  
whispering of a quiet June kiss  
under full, moist boughs—  
a kiss that, like the leaves, dried in  
summer sun  
and blew off in the first gust  
of September chill.



*Kara Louise Haynes*

### **Lamentation of Moroni**

by Kara Dixon

They disappear like sparks  
within the wind  
and desperately I try to hold them  
in my arms,  
but they just burn away and die.  
From up here on my lonely ledge  
their deaths are quiet, quick,  
so sadly familiar.  
I cannot be among them,  
holding their hands, hearing them  
call out *Abba! Abba!*  
as they fall, desperate and slow,  
into death.  
No, I am left here  
writing words that cannot  
save my people now.  
I am left to watch and wait,  
alone and cold  
as the fires die,  
one by one.  
I am left holding out  
my hands in supplication,  
bowing my head to the God  
that only they rejected,  
and I cry tears that mix with dead ash  
and stain my face gray.



*Sarah A. Treu*



*Kara Louise Haynes*



*Sarah A. Treu*

### **Lessons from Wisconsin**

by Sara Israelsen

We're sitting on the beach  
flailing at mosquitoes  
and watching the sunset.  
The smell of campfire lingers on  
the breeze,  
leaving liquid footprints as it tiptoes  
across the lake.  
Grandpa sits in his faded lawn chair,  
blue argyle socks falling down around  
white ankles.  
His hands rest in his lap, wrinkled and  
baby soft;  
he hasn't fished in 18 years.  
A water bug skirts across the lake.  
"Ewww, gross," I squeak.  
Grandpa looks at me and puts his finger  
to his lips.  
He points to the water,  
"Look, he's dancing . . ."  
I stare at the tiny body, leaping and  
bounding in the evening wake.  
"We're like that," Grandpa says, staring  
into the water,  
"except too many people see the bug,  
and not the dancer."

## Visiting Nauvoo

by Jennifer Rose

Nothing seemed real  
until I saw the sturdy brick and  
the creeping river  
and felt the humid warmth on  
my skin.  
I turned at a stirring,  
but tall grasses merely bowed to  
each other,  
and fresh fences peaked their way  
across the swaying fields.  
Then out of a sunny glint on  
the water,  
a town moved toward me.  
The air thickened with voices  
shouting, laughing,  
whispers from youth, wisdom from  
aged,  
all bustled by me, hurrying, hurrying.  
A muddy hound ran and sat at my feet,  
thumped his tail once, twice,  
then bounded along.  
A horse whinnied at my ear, and  
shading my eyes,  
I looked up into the face of Hyrum.  
He smiled and waved and turned his  
impatient mount away.  
A woman approached,  
children circled about her like a  
patchwork skirt,  
and before I could speak,  
Emma smiled, nodded, and  
hurried on.  
I moved toward the river, away from  
the crowded street,  
into tranquil shade of wizened  
branches.  
I saw a man sitting,  
gazing across the land,  
barely breathing.  
And Joseph stood, dear Joseph,  
and smiled and gripped my hand.  
And I wept as their lives flooded  
through me.



*Julie Harker*



*Bridget A.J. Keogh*



*Bridget A.J. Keogh*

### **Music**

by Adrienne Thomas

Music never runs out of itself.  
Existing, I believe,  
before the creation of Adam,  
new melodies,  
songs,  
pieces  
continue to be created.  
By now  
(thousands and thousands of years later)  
you would think  
we'd have run out of options—  
of melodies,  
of music—  
but it never ceases to stir new emotions  
and uplift the soul  
to new heights  
through new invention.



*Julie Harker*

### **Saints of God**

by Matthew G. Wright

Ye Saints of God, with joyful praise  
Give heart and strength to Him  
Who lends us hope to overcome  
And sends us power to win.

For with His power we'll heal the land  
And raise a glorious sound  
And send the gospel through the earth  
To nations all around.

Then Zion, O that blessed land,  
Through Christ, shall conquer all.  
The faith of just one righteous man  
Makes Satan's kingdoms fall.

If to the voice of that one man  
We add our own in power,  
We'll banish evil from the land  
And speed the millennial hour.

And from that hour all around  
Shall goodness never cease.  
His gentle love shall here abound  
And bring us heaven's peace.

Then man shall no more hate nor fear  
Nor heed the tempter's call,  
For only one voice shall we hear,  
Our Lord, Our God, Our All.

**Words of Wisdom**

by Brenda Williams

I marvel  
that throughout the centuries  
of great poets,  
sages, authors, philosophers,  
kings,  
the wisest words  
ever spoken by man  
came from the lips  
of a humble  
carpenter.



*Lauren Dickerson*



*Emily Lim*



*Emily Lim*

# RAY Roundup

*Cousins are family—it's automatic. But they can also be great friends, as these teens discovered at a special family reunion held just for them.*

**Y**ou're tagged," Macsen Viehweg yells. Rebecca Ray's feet slide out from under her, and she grabs at the nearest person for support, starting a chain reaction of bodies falling down into the irrigation ditch. They all laugh good-naturedly as best friends do. Just days before, many of these friends were only names on a family group sheet. Now the word *cousin* has taken on new meaning to the Ray family teens.

"We had so much fun," recalls Melanie Soelberg from Mesa,

Arizona. "I love being with my family. It was so cool to get to know all my cousins."

Each year Melanie's grandparents, Oakley and Janet Ray of the Mesa First Ward, Mesa North Arizona Stake, try to get the families of their 10 children together, but this year was special because only the youth from 12 to 18 were invited. "Before, the younger children would play around us, and the adults would visit, but we weren't getting as close to our teenagers as we wanted to," says Grandma Ray.

So they decided to hold an "Especially for Rays" reunion at their daughter's home in Weiser, Idaho, and sent each teenager an invitation with a list of 10 activity ideas to rank in order of preference. Then grandchildren ShaRee and Chad Walker, of the Weiser First Ward, tallied the results and organized four days of fun, excitement,



by Jane Forsgren

and spirituality for the group.

Each morning began with a devotional. "Two of our uncles are seminary teachers, so the lessons were great. One morning we talked about how we must continually work at being our best because Satan is trying so hard to turn us away from the things that are the most important," says ShaRee. "My favorite part was discussing gospel principles with each other and being taught by people we loved and respected."

While the devotionals focused on spiritual matters, the days' remaining activities kept the teens at a fast pace: horseback riding, floating down the Weiser River, playing tag football in a water-soaked field, going on scavenger hunts, and enjoying each other's company.

Fun and games weren't the only activities, however. The Rays wanted their grandchildren to experience the joy of service, so one day the youth went to a ward member's ranch, where they branded and vaccinated sheep. "Although it was a service project for us, they were really the ones doing the service by letting all of us come and help," says ShaRee.

**A**ny "youth only" reunion will involve good food and good fun.

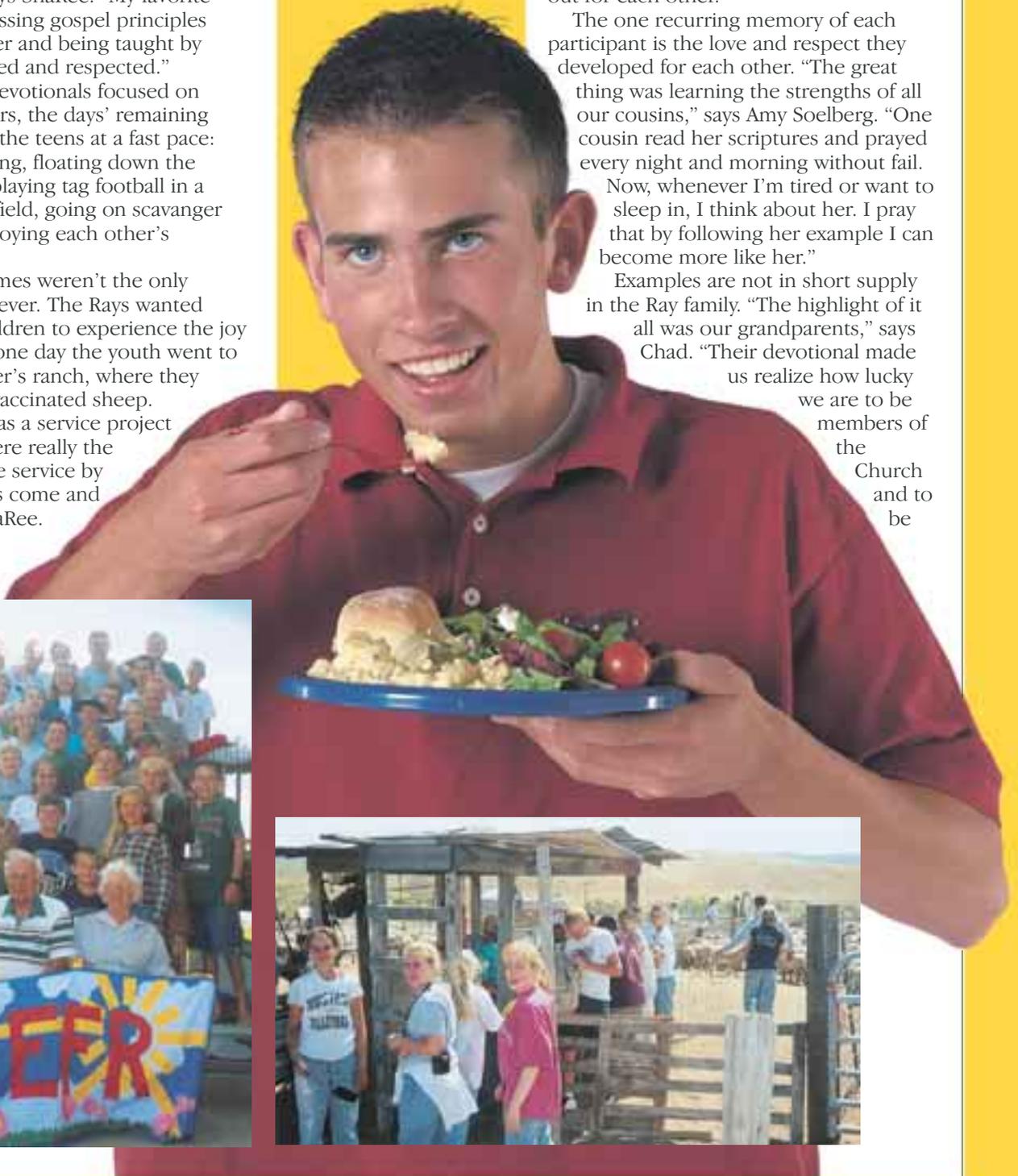
"All the older cousins made a real effort to include the younger ones during this project," says Melanie, one of the city slickers. "We had to hold the sheep so tight that we were really sore afterward, so we sat in a big circle and gave each other back rubs! The whole four days were like that. We were always looking out for each other."

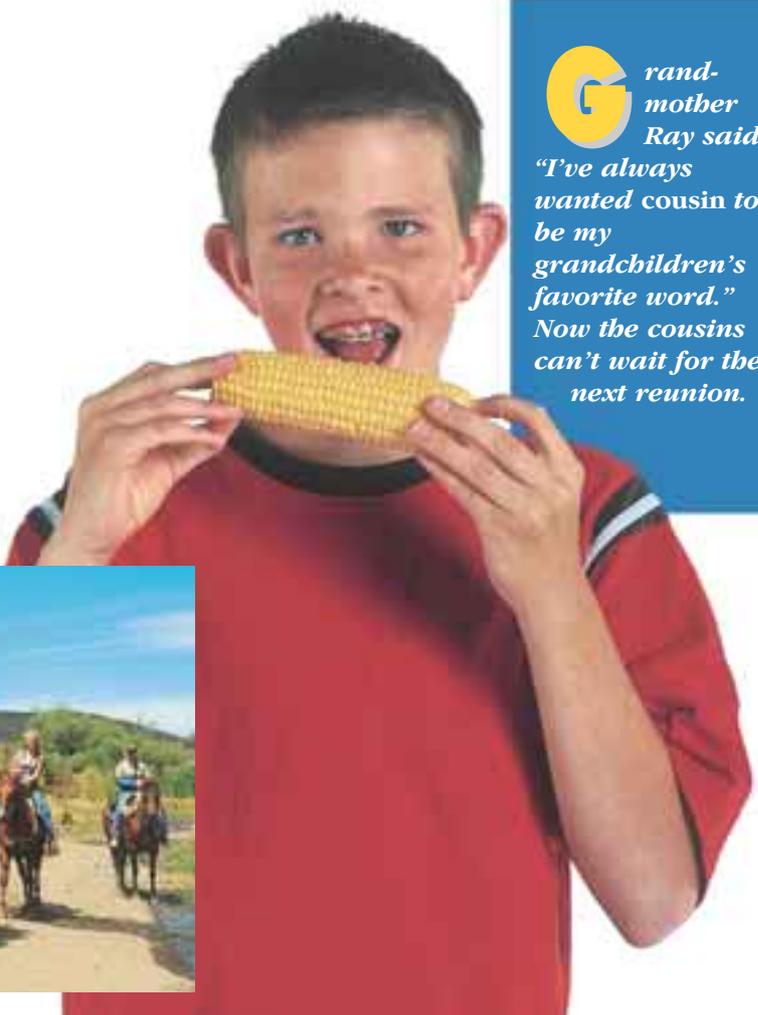
The one recurring memory of each participant is the love and respect they developed for each other. "The great thing was learning the strengths of all our cousins," says Amy Soelberg. "One cousin read her scriptures and prayed every night and morning without fail.

Now, whenever I'm tired or want to sleep in, I think about her. I pray that by following her example I can become more like her."

Examples are not in short supply in the Ray family. "The highlight of it all was our grandparents," says Chad. "Their devotional made

us realize how lucky we are to be members of the Church and to be





**G**randmother Ray said, "I've always wanted cousin to be my grandchildren's favorite word." Now the cousins can't wait for the next reunion.

part of the Ray family. They told each one of us what a special part we play in the family and in the world. My grandparents are the best role models I could have."

And the chain of role models continues as four of the participants received mission calls. One cousin just left for Panama City, Panama, and the other three will be at the Missionary Training Center together this summer.

Plans are already being made for the next "Especially for Rays" reunion. "I can't wait to turn 12 and be able to go," says Jenica Soelberg.

In fact, every eligible grandchild is looking forward to the next teen reunion, where best friends will have four fun-filled days together again. "I've always said I wanted *cousin* to be my grandchildren's favorite word," says Grandma Ray, "and I believe the Lord inspired us to help make that happen." **NE**

## NOT JUST FOR GROWN-UPS

by Emily Wing

When my Young Women adviser suggested I do a Laurel value project about my family, I immediately knew we needed a family reunion.

I soon found out that planning a reunion takes time, persistence, and some hard work. It doesn't hurt to have help from family members either. Here are some ideas that worked for me:

- \* **Select a date.** Choose a date well in advance for better attendance.
  - \* **Choose a meeting place.** Use parks, pavilions, gymnasiums, or even backyards.
  - \* **Decide on a menu.** Make food assignments or go potluck.
  - \* **Send out invitations.** Make a list of all the relatives. Leave no one out.
  - \* **Plan activities that everyone will enjoy.** Plan for swimming, board games, and art projects, just to name a few.
  - \* **Include a memento or souvenir of the reunion for each participant.** Some families have screen-printed T-shirts. Others offer door prizes. The prizes can be as simple or ambitious as photos, scrapbooks, or recipe books.
  - \* **Don't forget to send thank-you notes.** Be sure to thank everyone who helped you with the planning and preparation or who donated their time or talents.
- My reunion was hard work but so satisfying. I realize now what family reunions are all about.

## WHY BOTHER WITH SEMINARY

**L**ife is stressful enough with school, social pressures, and family responsibilities to juggle every day, so why bother with seminary?

There are lots of reasons. In fact, sticking with seminary might just be one of the smartest things you ever do. Here are just a few of the potential rewards waiting for those who make seminary a part of their daily schedule this school year.

**Testimony.** A personal testimony of the restored Church and the Savior's divine mission is the most valuable knowledge you can gain in this life.

**Good friends.** You'll get to know other youth from your area who share your beliefs and standards.

**Blessings from obedience.** You'll gain great peace knowing you're doing what your Heavenly Father wants you to do.

**Scripture mastery.** With a little work, you can learn and understand the scriptures. Through the scriptures, you can come to know the Savior better.

**Inspiration.** A daily dose of spirituality can open and enlighten your understanding, maybe just when you need it most.

**Rest.** Leave your earthly cares in your locker for an hour. When you're through, your mind will feel clearer.

**Spiritual confidence.** With a little study, you'll feel more comfortable discussing gospel topics. You'll also find it easier to answer questions from friends.

**Missionary preparedness.** In just a few years, you'll be ready to teach the gospel on your own. Soak it in now—you'll thank yourself later.

**Gospel knowledge.** There's so much to learn, from Adam and Eve to Lehi's dream and Joseph Smith's First Vision. **NE**

## GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS?



President Hinckley wants you to "Be Smart." What are some things you can do to exercise your brain while you're out of school during the summer? Send your ideas to Idea List, *New Era*, 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150. Or e-mail us at [cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org). Please send your ideas by November 1, 2001.

by Darrin Lythgoe



# MY TERRIBLE HORRIBLE

**I'd embarrassed myself at an audition, a close friend had turned cold, and school pressures were piling up. Nothing was going right!**

by Brenda Williams

*Stress, doubt, and more stress. How was I going to deal with it all?*

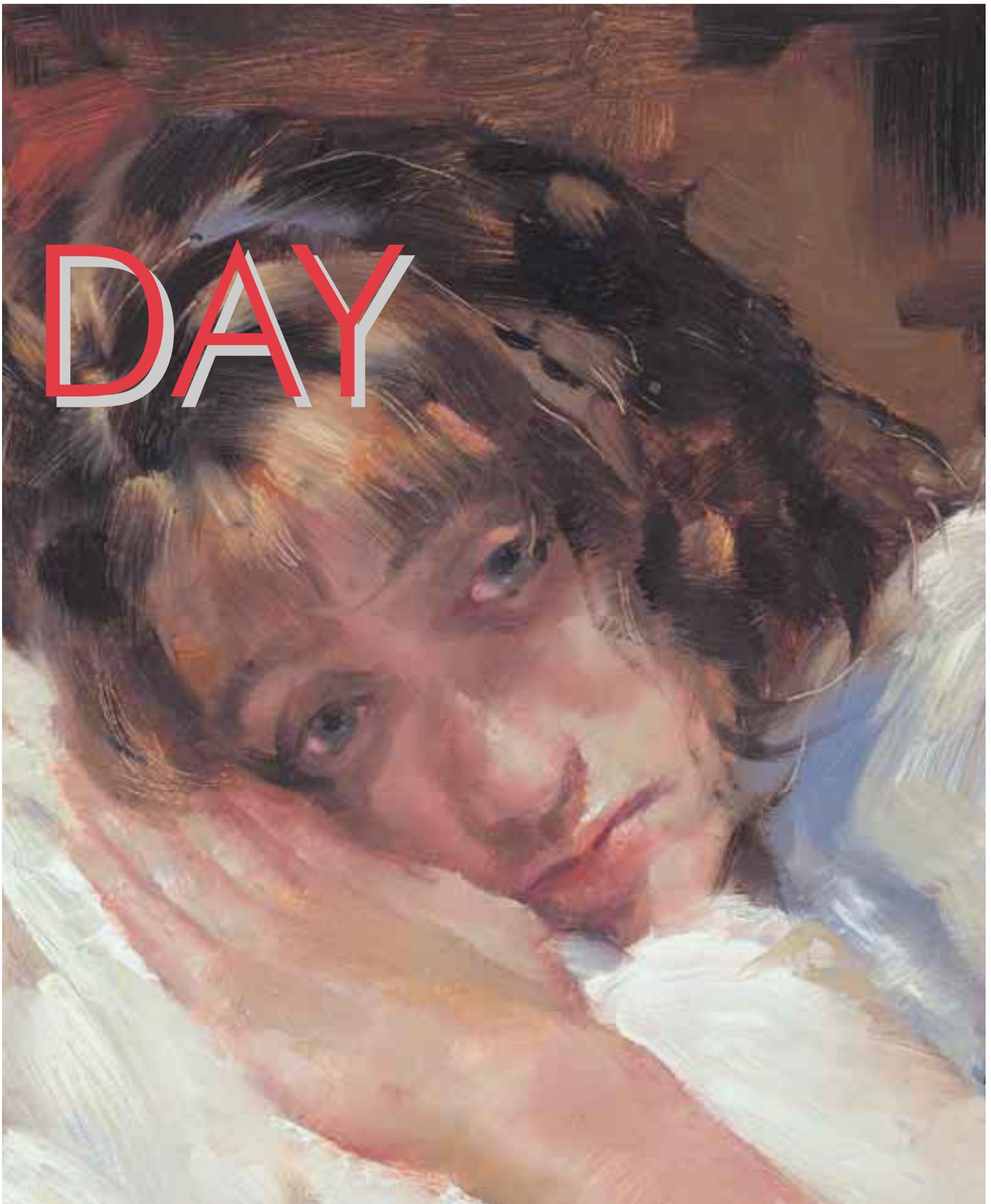
I sat alone at the edge of my bed, balancing my thick biology book as I attempted to study for the next day's test. I slowly turned through the complicated chapter on cellular respiration, my jaw tight as I tried to concentrate. But it was useless.

I looked up at the glow-in-the-dark stars clustered above my bed, dull in the light of my lamp, the sharp edges blurring as my eyes filled with tears. I had done a horrible job that evening trying out for the play. It had been my first attempt at high school theater. Although untrained in the arts of dancing, acting, and singing, I had undertaken the challenging musical tryouts at the urging of my friends. I hadn't done well. My dancing on the first night and my singing audition seemed about average. But tonight had been the final test, the portion I had counted on for success—a memorized humorous monologue, performed in under a minute, before the critical eyes of the director and audition board. I had prepared for my monologue

days in advance, writing and memorizing the script carefully until I was certain I could perform it even in my sleep. But when I had reached the school, I couldn't think clearly. I was not only nervous but also tired and worried about my two difficult tests scheduled for the next day. I tried to remember my lines, those words that I knew so well, but they slipped from me in fragments and spilled out shaky and uncertain.

A hot tear brushed my lips, and I tried to muffle a sob. Nothing seemed to be going right the past few weeks. Between the recent cold distance of one of my closest friends, the stress of my difficult schedule, and the nagging doubts of applying to college, I was finding my senior year to be nearly impossible. And now, after the embarrassment of tonight's audition, I didn't know how I could study or even sleep. I shut my biology book and placed it on the floor, emotions roiling as I buried my head in my pillow.

Then I heard my door open and the concerned voice of my mother. "Do you need a blessing?" she asked softly. I looked up, tempted to send her away. My puffy red face, streaked by wetness, held the imprint of my pillow's seams. But I knew, even as I pulled myself into a sitting position so that I could see both



my parents in my doorway, that tonight a blessing was what I needed most of all. I nodded wordlessly, sniffing a bit as I stood and followed my parents across the hall into their room.

I've heard of blessings given by pioneers. And even in modern times I've heard of blessings for fire victims, children in comas, and people who are not expected to survive. I had a testimony of the priesthood before that night. I had been given my patriarchal blessing two years prior and knew of the unique truthfulness and love it contained. But as my father placed his hands on my head that evening, I could feel divine power in his phrases, in the gentle pressure of his hands. His blessing swept past my superficial wants into what I needed to hear most. And as he concluded, my heart sang at the power in those words, those simple, healing words that I knew were not his. My father couldn't remember what he had said, but I could, and my dark tangle of stress and fears had loosened into a soft and gentle peace.

I smiled at my mother, grateful for her inspired suggestion. As I turned around and hugged my father, I could feel in the warmth of his arms an echo of the love of my Heavenly Father and His Son, both watching and caring for me more than anyone else ever could. I felt so grateful for that single modest blessing, those quietly powerful, comforting words. That night I slept deeply for the first time in weeks, unworried and sure of my future as a beloved daughter of God. **NE**



**M**y mother's question reminded me that a powerful source of comfort was close at hand.

# Erica's SONG

**A**t 14 she's already had her own musical produced. Yet her greatest desire is simply to have her music express her testimony and bless others.

by Jane Forsgren

**E**rica Glenn is just 14. But she was asked to write a song for her stake's November 2000 Young Women celebration fireside. She lives in the Utah Pleasant Grove East Stake. Erica turned to her scriptures. "I wanted to find an example of a woman who really stood as a witness," says Erica. "The story of Abish in the Book of Mormon (Alma 19:16-17, 28-29) really impressed me. She showed great courage by running from house to house to tell the people

about the gospel and help them believe in God's power."

While writing songs was nothing new to Erica, this was her first experience at composing something for a Church program. "It was very difficult," she says. "I fasted and prayed a lot about it. I wanted it to be as beautiful as it could because this was the most important purpose I had ever written a song for."

Erica has been composing since she was six and feels blessed that the words and tunes come quickly. This time was different. "I actually started two months before the music was due. I worked on it every spare minute. I was so scared that it wouldn't be all it should." But with the Lord's help, the song, entitled "Meditation on Alma 19," complete with flute, violin, and piano accompaniment, inspires all who hear:

*Running forth from house to house  
Abish spreads the story.  
She knows that soon all will see  
God's great love and glory.  
Abish was a witness of Thee.  
Father, may I be as Abish  
Full of courage, standing firm.  
Lift me that I, too, may be  
Eager to share what I learn  
And be a witness of Thee!*

Erica can think of no greater way to be a witness of God than by using her talents to proclaim the gospel. She feels music can inspire people everywhere, especially the youth, to feel close to Heavenly Father.

Erica believes everyone is special and has talents. "Heavenly Father gave everyone talents," she says. "If someone thinks they don't have a talent, I tell them just to wait because it will eventually come out and be just as important as any other talent." She includes being honest, having a positive attitude, and sharing a testimony as very important talents. **NE**

## BE TRUE . . . TO YOURSELF

“Every one of you was endowed by your Father in Heaven with a tremendous capacity to do good in the world. Train your minds and your hands that you may be equipped to serve well in the society of which you are a part. . . .

“You need never feel inferior. You need never feel that you were born without talents or without opportunities to give them expression. Cultivate whatever talents you have, and they will grow and refine and become an expression of your true self appreciated by others” (*Ensign*, May 1995, 99).

—President Gordon B. Hinckley

## YOU CAN DO IT!

Leadership tip: Whether you are the Mia Maid class president or a home teacher, you might find your calling challenging. But the Lord has promised to help you. President Thomas S. Monson said: “The greatest force in this world today is the power of God as it works through man.’ If we are on the Lord’s errand, we are entitled to the Lord’s help. That divine help, however, is predicated upon our worthiness. . . . Through humble prayer, diligent preparation, and faithful service, we can succeed in our sacred callings” (*Ensign*, May 2000, 46, 48).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SEMINARY!

Just think, if you had been in high school 100 years ago, you wouldn’t have been able to go to seminary. Lucky for you, seminary has been around for 89 years, and you can receive all the blessings that come from seminary attendance.

The Church’s first seminary began in September 1912 near Granite High School, in Salt Lake City, Utah; seminary classes were taught during released time from school. Early-morning seminary classes began in September 1950 in southern California. Seminary is now established in more than 100 countries, and its enrollment has increased from 70, in 1912, to nearly 400,000.



## I WILL GO

**H**eber C. Kimball was ordained an Apostle in 1835 by the Prophet Joseph Smith, who considered him a man of great integrity. Two years later, while sitting in the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph whispered to Elder Kimball that the Lord wanted him to go on a mission to England. He would be the first Church missionary sent to a foreign country, a thought that was overwhelming to Elder Kimball.

“The idea of such a mission was almost more than I could bear. . . . I was almost ready to sink under the burden which was placed upon me,” he said. But despite the inadequacy he felt, Elder Kimball accepted the call and went to England. “The moment I understood the will of my Heavenly Father, I felt a determination to go at all hazards, believing that He would support me by His almighty power, and endow me with every qualification that I needed.” (See *History of the Church*, 2:489, footnote.)

Elder Kimball had the faith of Nephi. He knew that “the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them” (1 Ne. 3:7).



## TEST YOUR LDS I.Q.

**Match these six members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles with the places they served full-time missions:**

- 1. President Gordon B. Hinckley**
- 2. President James E. Faust**
- 3. Elder L. Tom Perry**
- 4. Elder Neal A. Maxwell**
- 5. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin**
- 6. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland**

- a. Canada**
- b. The British Isles**
- c. Brazil**
- d. England**
- e. Northern States**
- f. Germany, Austria, and Switzerland**

Answers: 1b, 2c, 3e, 4a, 5f, 6d.

# Beauty Tips

*Is beauty always the most important thing? What if a girl is funny, smart, and considerate? Doesn't that count for anything?*

**T**he first thing is always beauty. Sorry, that's just the way it is. I mean, there are things you can do. I mean, you can help yourself out. . . ."

He is blushing, all six feet three inches of him, because he is in a Young Women meeting, not in the high school gym. He is our male expert for our dating lesson today, and I think the only reason Jodi asked, "What's the first thing that attracts a guy to a girl?" was to capture his brown-eyed attention. Only now he's not looking at her. He's staring at the floor,

**T**rying to buy beauty in a bottle or jar is useless. There is only one place to turn for peace and beauty.

by Sheralee Bills

embarrassed to have been so openly honest in church.

Serves him right, I think. I don't ask my question: What if a girl is ugly and fat but funny, smart, and considerate? Is beauty such a vital virtue that a girl can't be considered for a date without it? Anyway, what does he know about "helping yourself out"?

I say that because I've been helping myself out for the past three years. I do it with a rattail brush and Sticking Pretty hair spray, with Glitter n'Glo eye shadow and Perfectly Pink lipstick. I even practice a weight-loss program called Body Be Good. But I am 16 years old, and I am just as pathetic as I was before self-help. I am five feet tall and weigh 165 pounds. My hair is 22 inches of beetle-brown seaweed. My eyes are blue BBs, legally blind, buried beneath the inch-and-a-half thick lenses of my steel-rimmed glasses. My mouth is in its fourth year of orthodontic



intervention, and my face ought to be intervened with too—by a dermatologist. I imagine this is the self-help to which Dr. Dating refers.

It is noon. The lesson ends, and I plod out of the Young Women room while Jodi simpers about our stellar speaker.

All the way home, I stare out of the car and remember the first thing is always beauty. My pudgy cheeks and frazzled hair hover in the window, superimposed on all the trees and houses that we pass.

**W**hat are you thinking about, Marie?" Dad asks when he spies

**W**hy is it that the first thing people mention is how cute or pretty a girl is?

me in the rearview mirror, moping at my reflection.

"Nut'uhn," I grunt.

"What?"

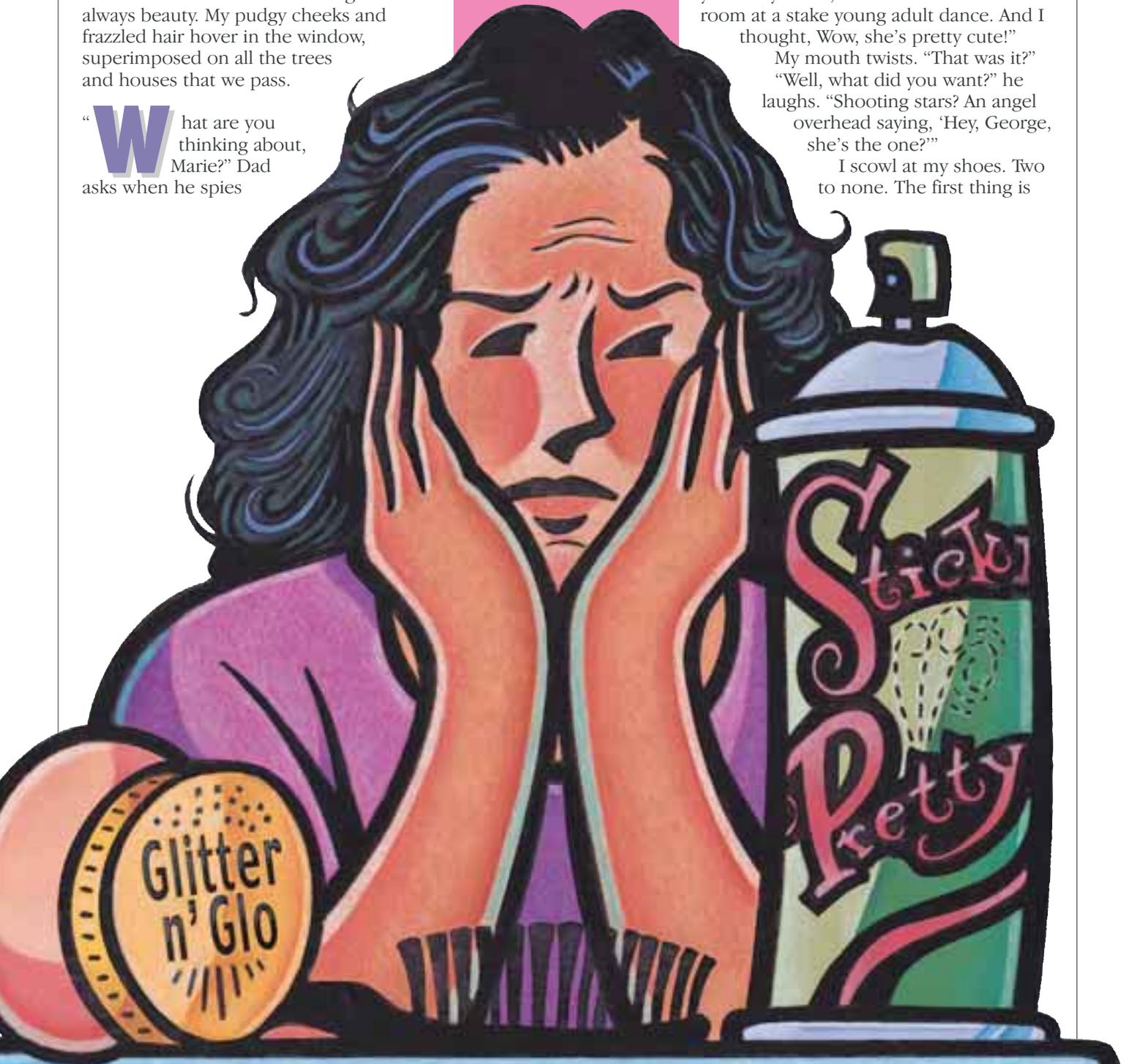
I gulp, deciding it's worth a second opinion. "Dad, what first attracted you to Mom?"

He grins over at Mom like they met yesterday. "Well, I saw her across the room at a stake young adult dance. And I thought, Wow, she's pretty cute!"

My mouth twists. "That was it?"

"Well, what did you want?" he laughs. "Shooting stars? An angel overhead saying, 'Hey, George, she's the one?'"

I scowl at my shoes. Two to none. The first thing is



always beauty.

“Why do you ask?” Mom asks as she turns to face me.

“Never mind,” I sulk.

**L**unch is a Body Be Good banana shake. Mom and Dad and Anna eat baked potatoes and talk about Sunday School. When Mom asks me what my Laurel lesson was about, I mutter, “Datin” and don’t clarify when she tells me to enunciate.

“Can I be excused?” is all I say.

Mom looks at Dad and nods, and I head to my bedroom.

I look at the picture of the Bountiful Utah Temple above my bed and shake my head to shoo away thoughts of self-pity.

That’s when I remember the family’s love and romance expert, my Grandpa John, who courted my grandma via the postman while he was in Europe during World War II and she was in Casper, Wyoming. Grandpa and Grandma passed away when I was little, but Mom still tells the stories about how they fell and stayed in love. Mom has all of Grandpa’s letters to Grandma. I will make it a survey. Grandpa is source number three.

The letters are in Mom’s closet on the high shelf, so I have to lug a chair to reach them. I create a clunking racket as I rummage through journals and baby books and photo albums. Mom comes in to ask me what I’m doing.

“I’m just looking for Grandpa’s letters.”

“Marie, is something bothering you?” Mom raises an eyebrow, but I’ve found the letter box. I pull the chair back to Dad’s desk and retreat to my room with the letters from the expert.

“Dear Emma,” reads the first one I open. It smells like smoky dust. “Hello beautiful. I miss the glow of your pretty face. . . .”

I quit there and tally the score: three to zero.

**T**hink beautiful,” I whisper to myself in the mirror. I’ve shed my glasses, so I have to squint with my nose an inch from the mirror to scrutinize my reflection. My eyelids are glittering. My lips are pink. My eyelashes are lengthened with Anna’s mascara. I twirl pieces of my hair onto the top of

“**T**hink beautiful,” I whisper to myself in the mirror. I’ve shed my glasses, so I have to squint. I shake down my hair. It’s hopeless. I’m hopeless.



my head to configure an elegant up-do. Twisting my face from side to side, I experiment with different expressions. But even in profile, my cheeks are too pimply. My eyes are too tiny. My hair is too fuzzy.

I shake down my hair. It’s hopeless. I’m hopeless. I have no beauty. I return my glasses to their perch on my nose.

**T**he next Young Women lesson is about eternal marriage. Bishop Wright and his wife are this week’s guest lecturers. They are gentler and more profound than Dr. Dating. They do not talk about beauty, except as it exists in the house of the Lord. I feel my insides tingle. It is my deepest desire to go to the Lord’s house so I can return to live again with Heavenly Father.

Sister Wright’s eyes moisten when she bears testimony of the temple. “Girls,” she says, “we may joke sometimes about being better than men, about being better looking, smarter, or more sensitive. But the truth is neither men nor women can achieve exaltation alone. In 1 Corinthians 11:11, we read, ‘Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.’ Only with your eternal companion can you attain the highest degree of glory in the celestial kingdom.”

I feel a warmth within my chest, and I know her testimony must be true. But my stomach lurches. I have a question which I am too frightened to ask. What if a girl is ugly and fat, with no beauty to which an eternal companion will ever be attracted? I picture my reflection in my mirror under the up-do, and I shudder, and it’s not because I feel the Spirit.

**M**om has told me ever since I could read that I can always find answers in the scriptures. I have never wanted an answer as badly as I want one now. When we get home from church, I tell Mom that I feel funny, and I don’t want lunch. I shut myself in my room. Frantically, I look up all the scripture weddings I can remember: Rebekah, Rachel, Esther. They are numbers four, five, and six in my first-thing-that-attracts-eternal-companions survey. I devour the words.

“And the damsel was very fair to look

upon. . . . And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her" (Gen. 24:16, 67).

Four to zero.

"Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. And Jacob loved Rachel; . . . And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her" (Gen. 29:17, 20).

Five to zero. My heart squeezes Spandex-tight.

"And he brought up . . . Esther . . . and the maid was fair and beautiful; . . . And the king loved Esther above all the women" (Esth. 2:7, 17).

Six to zero.

**T**he score is running six to zero against me. *It isn't fair.*

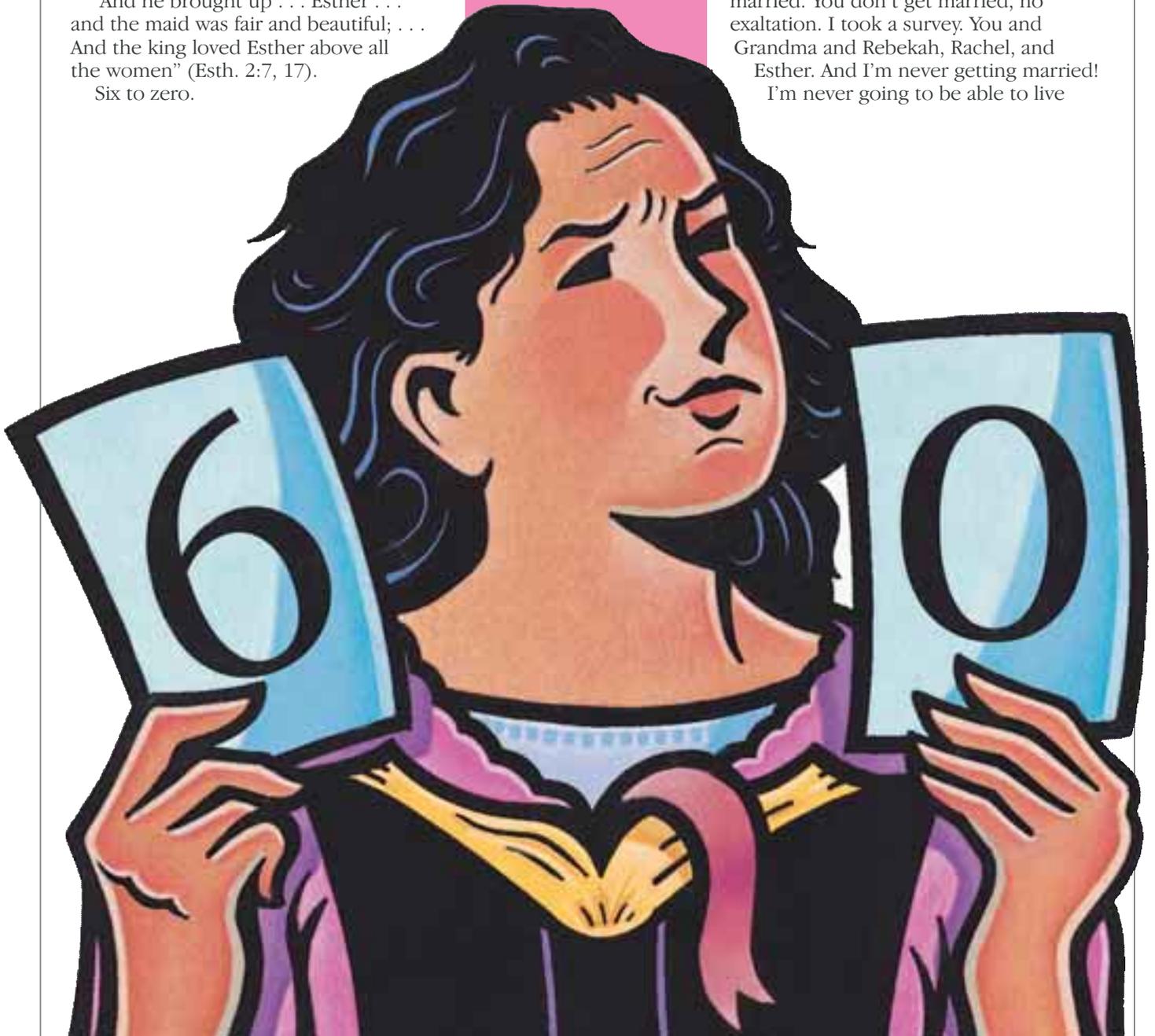
It isn't fair. No beauty, no hope, no exaltation.

**M**y door creaks, and in steps Mom. "Marie, what's the matter?" She sees my scriptures and my watery eyes. "What are you doing, honey? What's wrong?"

It splutters out of me all at once. "Boys will only love you if you're beautiful. It's always the first thing. They aren't attracted unless you've got beauty. They don't get attracted, you don't get married. You don't get married, no exaltation. I took a survey. You and Grandma and Rebekah, Rachel, and

Esther. And I'm never getting married!

I'm never going to be able to live



with Father in Heaven! Look, look at this verse. “I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly fair and white. . . . A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins . . . bearing a child in her arms” (1 Ne. 11:13, 15, 20).

**M**om touches my arm gently and lifts my scriptures from my hands, “Bearing a child,” she slowly repeats and looks at me with soft eyes. “Marie, may I read you another scripture about that child?”

She doesn’t wait for a response. “He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a

**“M**arie, you don’t have to look like Grandma or Esther or Rachel or Rebekah. For all we know, their kind of beauty was as invisible as our Savior’s. The only beauty you have to cultivate is His.”

man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: . . . he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows” (Isa. 53:2–4).

She pauses while I lower my chin into my chest.

“Maybe . . . maybe you’re right, Marie. Maybe men only love and desire that which they think is beautiful. After all, they didn’t love our Savior. They despised Him. They crucified Him.”

I shake my head slowly. “But He was the most beautiful of all.”

Mom doesn’t respond. Her eyes are expectant. She wants me to say more.

“They just . . .” I pause. “They just couldn’t tell.”

“Why not?”

“Well, they didn’t recognize it. They couldn’t tell that it was beauty. He was beautiful because . . .” I blow a frustrated gust of air through pursed lips. “I can’t explain it. He was beautiful in the way you just can’t see.”

Mom nods in agreement and reads, “Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am’ (3 Ne. 27:27). Marie, you don’t have to look like Grandma or Esther or Rachel or Rebekah. For all we know, their kind of beauty was as invisible as our Savior’s. The only beauty you have to cultivate is His. If you can be beautiful like He was beautiful, you won’t have to worry about winning an Isaac or Jacob. Men who saw no beauty in our Savior may also not see your beauty. But men of Christ, acquainted with His grief, will come to love you and say, ‘She is the most beautiful of all.’ There may be pain caused by those who don’t know you, but you will draw closer to the Savior as you emulate Him. And until your Isaac or your Jacob comes, you will know that Christ has borne your grief and carried your sorrows. And He will comfort you.”

She places my scriptures back in my lap, squeezes my hand, and drops me a tissue for my sniffing nose. Then she slips out of my bedroom and closes the door.

After a minute, I wipe tears and mascara and Glitter n’Glo off my eyelids. In my heart I feel a beauty that I know must be His. **NE**



T H E E X T R A S M I L E



"It's easy having a two-year supply of food. You keep buying stuff we won't eat."

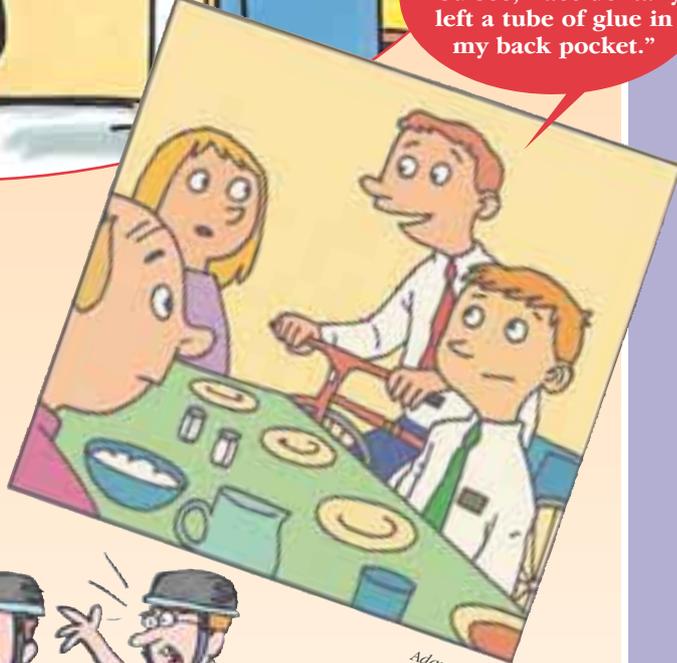
"It's actually quite a funny story. You see, I accidentally left a tube of glue in my back pocket."

"Today in seminary we learned about the Begat family."

Val Chadwick Bagley



Adam Koford



Adam Koford

"Elder, no one likes a backseat driver."



Val Chadwick Bagley

# NO BIG DEAL?

*We must take the priesthood seriously because the Lord does.*

**W**hen a young man I know was on his mission, his mother prayed each day, reminding the Lord, in detail, of her son's needs. One day she concluded that maybe she shouldn't take so much of the Lord's time with her long list of concerns. She said, "I just condensed it to, 'Heavenly Father, please bless Bob to honor his priesthood.'"

If that simple plea were fully realized in our lives, it would satisfy most needs and prevent most problems. "Bless me, Father, to honor the priesthood." This should be our daily petition.

At a recent stake priesthood meeting, a young man was sustained to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. When congratulated, the boy's response was surprising: "Why? That's no big deal, is it?"

No big deal? If he only knew how big! I wondered how he reached such a conclusion. If I were his father, his bishop, his quorum adviser, how would I feel to hear that response?

We often say impulsive things as youth that we probably would not say with more maturity. I hope this young man is now serving a mission and getting a better idea of what it really means to bear the Melchizedek Priesthood.

## Receiving priesthood power

President Ezra Taft Benson said: "The greatest power in this world is the power [of the] priesthood. . . . No greater honor or blessing can come to man than the



**W**hen congratulated on being sustained to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, the boy's response was, "Why? That's no big deal, is it?" If only he knew how big!

by Elder  
**J. Richard Clarke**  
Emeritus Member of the  
Seventy

authority to act in the name of God" (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 219). What a privilege! What a trust!

## Live righteously to merit the power of the priesthood

To have the priesthood conferred upon us does not automatically bless us with power any more than receiving a driver's license makes us a responsible driver. The Lord declared, "The powers of heaven [can] be controlled . . . only upon the principles of righteousness" (D&C 121:36).

The power of the priesthood comes gradually. Even our Savior grew "grace for grace" until He received a fulness. (D&C 93:12–13). We may also, if we are true and faithful to our covenants.

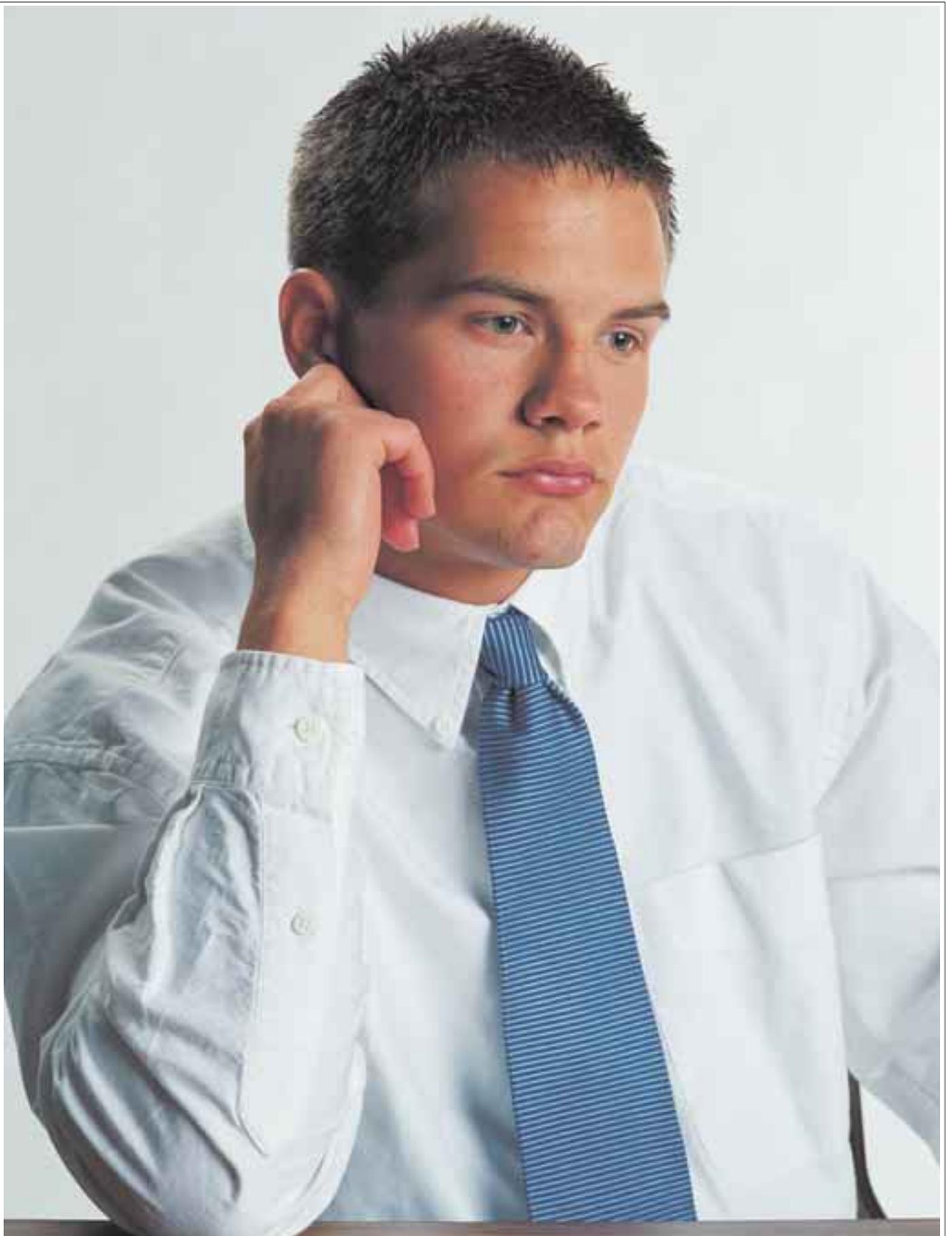
## "Be ye clean"

However, we may forfeit priesthood power when we commit transgression. Spiritual powers are sensitive and withdraw from evil influences. As Peter warned, we must escape "the corruption that is in the world" (2 Peter 1:4).

I was proud of a young priest from Georgia, who reported his experience at a rock concert. He observed the drinking, dress, profanity, and general crudeness of the young people there. He said, "I suddenly remembered who I am and felt that I was out of place, so I left."

Sometimes we forget who we are. The other day, I stopped at a magazine shop to buy a newspaper. I was shocked to see a man whom I knew well, a high priest, viewing a magazine in the "adults only" section. He was unaware that I saw him. I was quite disappointed. The thought occurred to me: What if I had been his son, who looked to his dad as a hero?

I remembered a conversation between a father and son in Arthur Miller's play *All*



*Photography by Jed Clark*



*My Sons.* The son discovers that his father has compromised ethical principles in business. Knowing that losing his son's esteem is one of the greatest losses he could have, the father says, in effect, "Son, I know; I'm sorry. But really, I'm no worse than anyone else."

The son replies, "Dad, I know; but I thought you were better."

For those who bear the priesthood, young men or adults, there is only one standard of moral decency. Any film, television show, music, or printed material unfit for youth is also unfit for parents.

Those who rationalize acceptance of immoral material on grounds of maturity or sophistication are deceived. Those who excuse transgression by saying, "Well, I'm not perfect," may be reminded that conscious sin is a long way from perfection. We would do best to consider

**W**e are the  
sons of  
God. We  
have been  
commissioned of  
Jesus Christ to  
bear His holy  
priesthood and to  
build up His  
church.

this counsel of President Brigham Young: "Be . . . as perfect as [you] can,' for that is all we can do. . . . The sin . . . is [not doing] as well as [you know] how" (*Journal of Discourses*, 2:129–30).

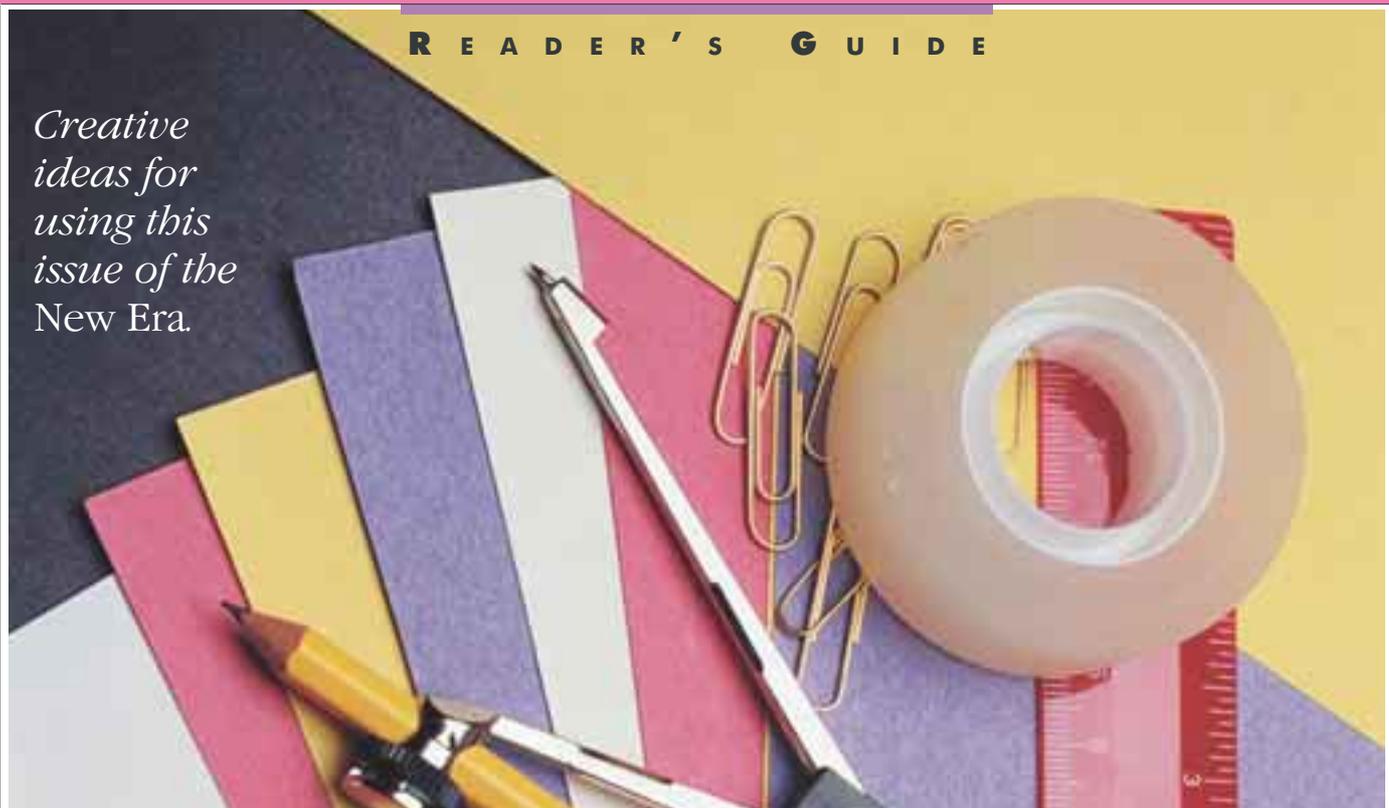
### **Be faithful in Christ**

Brethren, we are the sons of God. We have been commissioned of Jesus Christ to bear His holy priesthood and to build up His church. In order to do so, we need to live righteously.

In his last tender letter to Moroni, Mormon concluded, "My son, be faithful in Christ" (Moro. 9:25). I believe that would be the loving counsel of every father or mother to a son: Be faithful in Christ. So may we be, and honor His priesthood. **NE**

*Adapted from an April 1991 general conference address.*

*Creative ideas for using this issue of the New Era.*



**Personal Improvement**

- Read Elder M. Russell Ballard’s article on page 4, “Follow the Prophet.” Review President Gordon B. Hinckley’s list of the six Bs. Write them on a card. Keep the card in your locker or book bag where you’ll see it often.
- Read the Idea List on page 33. If you haven’t already enrolled in seminary for this year, do it today!

**Leadership Tip**

□ Bishop Richard C. Edgley’s article, “Satan’s Bag of Snipes” on page 20, talks about the pitfalls of worldly activities. At your next presidency meeting, identify two or three of the things you feel your class or quorum is struggling with; then plan a month’s worth of activities designed to help your class members overcome these temptations. Focus on choosing uplifting entertainment, dating standards, or keeping the Word of Wisdom.

**Young Men and Young Women Activity Idea**

□ Have an old-fashioned talent show. In addition to musical numbers and skits, display artwork, sewing, and woodworking creations from youth in the ward. Serve homemade refreshments made by a budding chef. If you have the time, you may also want to have a poetry or essay reading. This might be a fun evening to invite parents and siblings to attend.

**Laurel Value Project**

□ Planning a family reunion is an ambitious undertaking, but since reunions generally take place in the summer months, starting now will give you plenty of time. Read “Ray Roundup” on page 30 for tips. If you’re overwhelmed planning a whole reunion, ask the family member coordinating the reunion for an important assignment. Do you have cousins who are also Laurels? Consider splitting up the work.

**Seminary Devotional**

□ Arrive early and place a piece of paper and pencil on each desk. Once everyone arrives, tell them to imagine they are riding in an airplane that just blew its final engine. They have only two or three minutes before the plane will crash, and there will be no survivors. Invite your classmates to write a letter to their family and friends. Encourage them to include the things which are most important to them. After the allotted time, collect the letters and tear them up one by one. Ask the class members how they felt when the things they had written, intended for their loved ones left behind, were destroyed. Explain that the Lord and His prophets who wrote and prepared the scriptures are distressed when we ignore their words. Share 2 Nephi 4:15 and stress the importance of scripture study.

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**Helped answer**

I would like to thank you so much for the wonderful stories and messages the magazine gives. I've been a member of the Church for three years and can tell you that I have found a lot of answers from reading the *New Era*. I love the story "Chapter and Verse" (Mar. 2001). It's a great story that helped me answer my friend's questions. I am going to continue reading because I love the *New Era*.

*Ratchatapong Seangwong  
Kobn-Kaen, Thailand*

**Great help**

I just want to thank you for the *New Era*. It's really been a great help to me. I enjoy reading it, and I love to read about other people. Thank you so much for taking time to help youth like me.

*Stephanie Johnson  
Sacramento, California (via e-mail)*

**Dealing with it**

I need to write and thank you for "Master Your Anger" in the August 2000 issue. I have a hard time finding ways to avoid my anger, and this article helped me deal with it a lot better. I also need to thank you for the magazine. It gives me such inspiration in all I do. It's great to have a magazine just for youth.

*Megan Belingheri  
Henderson, Nevada*

**Revealing message**

Being one of the few members of the Church in our place in the Philippines, I really find living the gospel hard because I am surrounded by many worldly things. The Word of Wisdom and law of chastity are two big problems. The article "The Long and Short of It" in the March 2000 issue really did strike me because I know I have clothes that are too revealing. That article helped me overcome my habit of wearing clothes like that. I'm hoping that many young women will read and ponder the message in the article.

*Ivy E. Bentoso  
Prosperidad, Philippines (via e-mail)*

*"I love the New Era. The magazine always seems to be written just for me."*



**Very important**

I'm writing about a story that appeared in March 1997. Thank you for the article "The Temple: The Place for You." I recently attended the London England Temple for my endowment, and now I visit the temple once a month. The temple is a very important place.

*David Remington  
London, England*

**Makes her smile**

I just want to say how much I enjoy reading the *New Era*. It helps me with my problems and makes me smile when I'm upset. Keep up the good work.

*Toni Jackman  
Kidderminster, England (via e-mail)*

**Answers**

I love the *New Era*. The magazine always seems to be written just for me. I love all of the articles, and each time I get the magazine, it has answers that help me.

*Roxanne Karren  
Provo, Utah*

**More music, please**

I wanted to say how very much I appreciated the song "He Is There" in the September 2000 issue. All of the music you print seems to be just what I need to hear. Please print more music in future issues.

*Lance K. Barden  
Colorado Springs, Colorado*

*We love hearing from you. Write us at  
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Salt Lake City, Utah 84150*

*Or e-mail us at  
cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org  
Submissions may be edited for length  
and clarity.*



# We, the Youth in ZION'S ARMY

With conviction ♩ = 100-120

Words and music by  
Benjamin Salisbury

1. We, the youth in Zi - on's ar - my, War - riors true of righ - teous - ness,  
 2. Free from Sa - tan's foul op - pres - sion, Free to choose a great - er plan,  
 3. Guid - ed like a stead - fast ar - row, Scrip - tures wit - ness - ing the truth,  
 4. Sound the trum - pet! Christ is com - ing — He who saves us from de - feat.

Heed the call to spread the king - dom, Saints u - nite, and na - tions bless.  
 Heed - ing ev - er His di - rec - tion, With Je - ho - vah we shall stand.  
 Hear - ing proph - ets warn of per - il, On - ward, then, O Zi - on's youth!  
 We'll pre - pare and serve Him hum - bly; Christ, our King, we soon shall greet!

Hear, O Lord, our de - clar - a - tion: We are built on sta - ble ground.

Mess - en - gers of Thy sal - va - tion, May our hearts with Thee be found!

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***“The great thing was learning the strengths of all our cousins.”***

***See “Ray Roundup,” p. 30.***