



Sunday

IN A FOXHOLE

By Bruce DeYoung

The majority of my platoon had been killed earlier that week in a massive firefight. Our team had just come back from an extensive patrol near the Cua Viet River in Vietnam, and I was struggling with the harsh realities of war. It was Sunday—one of the few when we weren't in combat—and I was sharing a foxhole with two marines. In the afternoon I began my one-hour shift to stand watch while the others left for a break. I was grateful for these moments of privacy because they gave me the opportunity, with priesthood permission, to hold my own personal sacrament meetings. I was the only Latter-day Saint in our battalion.

Earlier that week I had saved some hard crackers so I could use them for my sacrament. I took out the crackers, filled a little can of water, and carefully placed them on a towel. I was living out of a small pack, and my resources were scant. I sang an opening hymn and offered a prayer thanking Heavenly Father for the opportunity to hold a sacrament meeting and for the peace of the day.

In this prayer and in others during that lonely time, I learned to pour out my heart to Him. Being in combat and facing the tragedies of war helped me recognize what I was truly thankful for. Heavenly Father was the only one

I could talk to about my worries and fears. At the conclusion of my prayer, I felt a closeness to Him and a feeling of peace and comfort. I sang a sacrament hymn and thought of my family attending their sacrament meeting at home that day. After the hymn, I knelt and read the sacrament prayers from Moroni chapters 4 and 5 of my miniature Book of Mormon, asking Heavenly Father to bless the bread and water before I partook of it.

I loved these little meetings and was sad when they came to a close. I ended by singing the hymn “I Need Thee Every Hour.”¹ I was alone in a foxhole, but in my mind I was singing with a congregation of Saints.

With tears running down my cheeks, I knelt and closed with a prayer. I thanked Heavenly Father for the hymns and for watching over me. I recognized His hand in all things. It brought me comfort to be reminded that the Lord was aware of my prayers and efforts to draw near to Him.

These simple but powerful meetings helped me find the peace and comfort I was seeking at such a dark and lonely time. Even in the battlegrounds of war, I could still feel the Spirit and the Lord's love for me. ■

NOTES

1. *Hymns*, no. 98.