

# Liahona



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*The Twelve-Year-Old Jesus in the Temple, by Carl Heinrich Bloch*

*“[Joseph and Mary] found [Jesus] in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.*

*“And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.*

*“And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, . . . behold, [we] have sought thee sorrowing.*

*“And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:46–49; see Luke 2:46, footnote c; from Joseph Smith Translation).*

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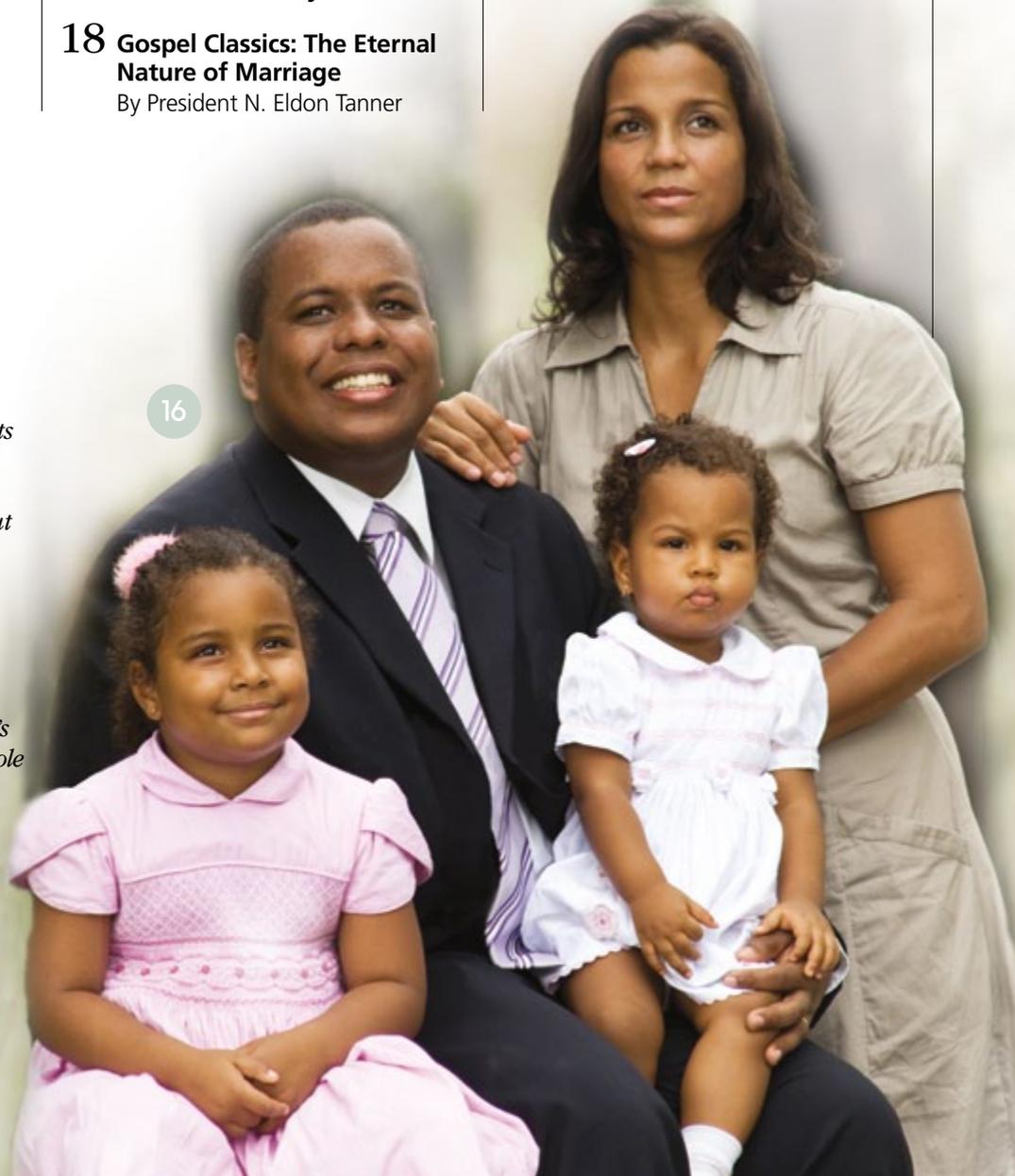
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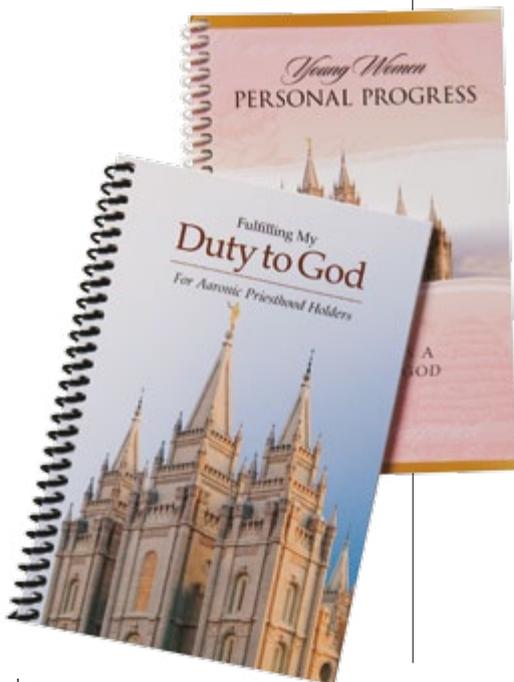
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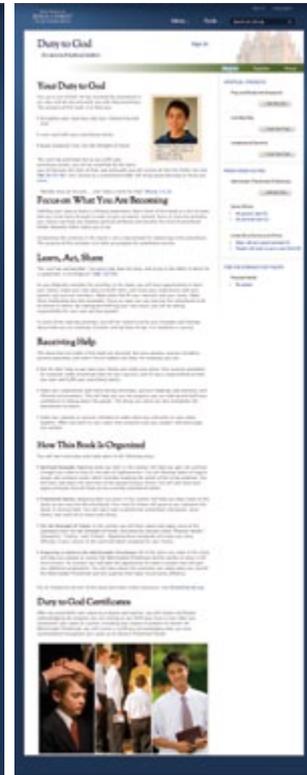
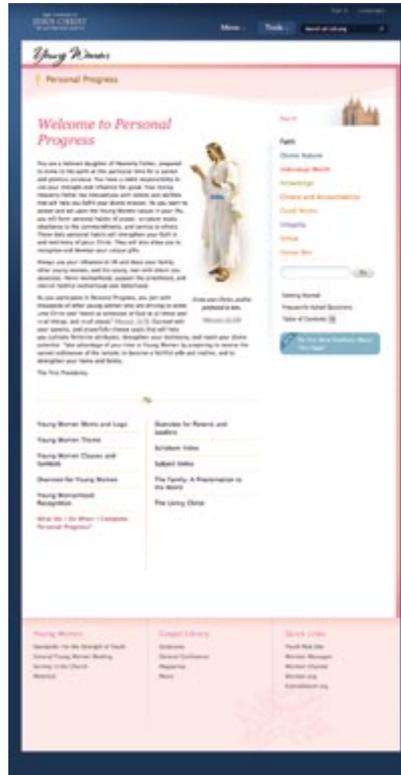
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## FOR YOUTH



The youth articles in this issue can help teens with Personal Progress and Duty to God. For interactive versions of and online help with Personal Progress or Duty to God, visit [PersonalProgress.lds.org](http://PersonalProgress.lds.org) or [DutyToGod.lds.org](http://DutyToGod.lds.org).

## IN YOUR LANGUAGE

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By President  
Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Second Counselor in  
the First Presidency



# GENERAL CONFERENCE— No Ordinary Blessing

A fine member of the Church was talking with a neighbor who was not of our faith. When the topic of discussion turned to general conference, the neighbor asked, “You say you have prophets and apostles? And twice a year in a worldwide conference they reveal the word of God?”

“Absolutely,” the member replied with confidence.

The neighbor thought about that for a moment. He seemed genuinely interested and then asked, “What did they say in the last general conference?”

At this point the good member of the Church went from feeling excited about sharing the gospel to feeling embarrassed. Try as he might, he couldn’t think of the details of a single talk.

His friend found this troubling and said, “You mean to tell me that God speaks to man in our day and you can’t remember what He said?”

The brother felt humbled by this exchange. He vowed that he would do better to remember the words spoken by the Lord’s servants in general conference.

We all know how hard it is to remember every message of general conference, and I’m confident that we need not be embarrassed if we don’t remember everything. Nevertheless, there are messages in each general conference given as a gift and a blessing from

heaven specifically for our personal life situations.

In preparation for general conference, let me suggest three basic concepts that may help us to better receive, remember, and apply the words spoken by the Lord’s servants.

## **1. Members of the Church are entitled to personal revelation as they listen to and study the inspired words spoken at general conference.**

As you prepare for general conference, I invite you to ponder questions you need to have answered. For example, you might yearn for direction and guidance by the Lord regarding challenges you are facing.

Answers to your specific prayers may come directly from a particular talk or from a specific phrase. At other times answers may come in a seemingly unrelated word, phrase, or song. A heart filled with gratitude for the blessings of life and an earnest desire to hear and follow the words of counsel will prepare the way for personal revelation.

## **2. Don’t discount a message merely because it sounds familiar.**

Prophets have always taught by repetition; it is a law of learning. You will hear repetition in themes and doctrines in general conference. Let me reassure you: this is not due

to a lack of creativity or imagination. We continue to hear messages on similar issues because the Lord is teaching and impressing upon our minds and hearts certain foundational principles of great eternal importance that must be understood and acted upon before we can move on to other things. A wise builder first lays the foundation before erecting the walls and the roof.

### **3. The words spoken at general conference should be a compass that points the way for us during the coming months.**

If we listen to and follow the promptings of the Spirit, they will serve as a Liahona, guiding us through the unknown, challenging valleys and mountains that are ahead (see 1 Nephi 16).

Since the world began, God has raised up prophets who speak the will of heaven to the people of their times. It is our responsibility to listen and then apply the messages the Lord provides for us.

Our merciful and loving Heavenly Father has not forsaken and will not forsake His children. Today, as well as in times past, He has appointed apostles and prophets. He continues to reveal His word to them.

What a marvelous privilege it is to hear God's messages for each of us during general conference! Let us prepare well for this great blessing of divine guidance delivered by His chosen servants.

For this is no ordinary blessing. ■



#### **TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE**

- Read the article together. Encourage the family to identify things to listen for during general conference.
- To help young children apply the counsel given by President Uchtdorf, show them a General Authority chart (found in the conference issue of the *Liahona* and *Ensign*). Let them know that the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will be speaking in general conference. Encourage children to listen to conference and draw a picture to help them remember what they learned. Parents can visit [conferencegames.lds.org](http://conferencegames.lds.org) for more conference activities for children.



ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL MANN

## Good, Better, Best

By Mary-Celeste Lewis

In his October 2007 general conference talk, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles talked about activities that are “good, better, and best.” When he got to

the part about “the overscheduling of children,” I squirmed guiltily in my seat.

I knew I was doing too much. I was in school plays, taking challenging classes in school, and was involved in several other activities. I hadn’t been attending Young Women activities faithfully, and my Sundays were filled with the stress of trying to complete last-minute homework. Practicing music and editing the school newspaper had lost their element of fun and had become work.

Elder Oaks’s talk made me take a good look at my schedule. My activities were good, but there were too many of them. I had to choose the best ones. As I tried to decide which activities to forsake, I realized that the gospel of Jesus Christ was the best priority anyone can have. I put prayer and scripture study at the top of my list, and since then, my life has run more smoothly.

Elder Oaks taught me that when we do what the Lord wants us to do *first*, everything else will fall neatly into place. If I study my scriptures before I play games or even before I do my homework, everything important will get done. When I base my life around the Lord, instead of adding Him in as an afterthought, my life has an added measure of peace and success.

Now I’m very careful to listen to the counsel given at general conference!

# CHILDREN

## I Can Find Answers through General Conference

President Uchtdorf teaches that if you think of some questions before general conference, the Lord can speak to you through His prophets and apostles during conference.

1. As a family or class, discuss what you need to learn, either individually or together. (For example: How do I strengthen my testimony? How should I deal with a problem at school?) On a piece of paper or

in your journal, write down your questions.

2. In the weeks leading up to conference, you could think and pray about these questions.
3. Listen carefully during conference (it may help to take notes). Then write how the Lord—through Church leaders—answered your questions.
4. On another piece of paper, you could draw a picture of yourself doing what you learned.

# Strengthening Families by Increasing Spirituality

*Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.*



Faith • Family • Relief

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president, said: “There has grown in me an overwhelming testimony of the value of daughters of God. . . . I have felt that there has never been a greater need for increased faith and personal righteousness. There has never been a greater need for strong families and homes.”

Sisters can help create strong homes and families as they act on personal revelation. “The ability to qualify for, receive, and act on personal revelation is the single most important skill that can be acquired in this life,” Sister Beck continued. “Qualifying for the Lord’s Spirit begins with a desire for that Spirit and implies a certain degree of worthiness. Keeping the commandments, repenting, and renewing covenants made at baptism lead to the blessing of always having the Lord’s Spirit with us. Making and keeping temple covenants also adds spiritual strength and power to a woman’s life. Many answers to difficult questions are found by reading the scriptures because the scriptures are an aid to revelation. . . . Daily prayer is also essential to having the Lord’s Spirit with us.”<sup>1</sup>

We also strengthen our family members spiritually as we help them understand Heavenly Father’s eternal plan. “What can we do to better prepare our children spiritually for their eternal roles?” asked Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Perhaps the most inclusive answer is: Teach them how to live the principles of the gospel.” This teaching comes through daily prayer, scripture study, and family mealtimes as well as weekly family home evening and Church attendance. Elder Ballard explained: “We prepare each day, right now, for eternal life. If we are not preparing for eternal life, we are preparing for something else, perhaps something far less.”<sup>2</sup>

## What Can I Do?

1. How can I help my sisters increase in spiritual self-reliance?
2. How can I improve my own ability to recognize and respond to the Holy Spirit?

## From the Scriptures

Proverbs 22:6;  
1 John 3:22;  
Doctrine and Covenants 11:13–14;  
19:38; 68:25

For more information, go to [www.reliefsociety.lds.org](http://www.reliefsociety.lds.org).

## From Our History

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught the sisters in an April 1842 Relief Society meeting that they had a solemn obligation to seek their own salvation. He said, “After [my] instruction, you will be responsible for your own sins; it is a desirable honor that you should so walk before our heavenly Father as to save yourselves; we are all responsible to God for the manner we improve the light and wisdom given by our Lord to enable us to save ourselves.”<sup>3</sup> He taught them to be righteous individuals, to become a holy people, and to prepare for temple ordinances and covenants.

### NOTES

1. Julie B. Beck, “And upon the Handmaids in Those Days Will I Pour Out My Spirit,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2010, 10, 11.
2. M. Russell Ballard, “Spiritual Development,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 65, 66.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 355.



# Small & Simple Things

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).

## CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD



### Sierra Leone

In 1981 a native of Sierra Leone, Michael Samura, heard the gospel in Holland and was baptized there. When he returned to Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, he requested missionaries, but because the Church was not ready to send missionaries there, he was sent only Church literature. Brother Samura began teaching others and holding unofficial meetings. Members who had been baptized in other countries and had returned to Sierra Leone did the same.

The year 1988 was a milestone for the country. In January the first official meeting was presided over by a member who had been baptized in Germany.

In May two missionary couples arrived, and in June the first 14 baptisms in the country were performed.

In August the first branch—the Goderich Branch—was established.

Ground was broken in 2004 for the first Latter-day Saint meetinghouse in Sierra Leone.



THE CHURCH IN SIERRA LEONE	
Membership	8,907
Missions	1
Districts	2
Branches	23

## WHOLESOME FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Families that regularly participate in wholesome activities together can feel greater love and harmony. Family activities provide an opportunity for parents to discuss the gospel with children, and children will often be more willing to listen to and obey parents when they feel close to them.

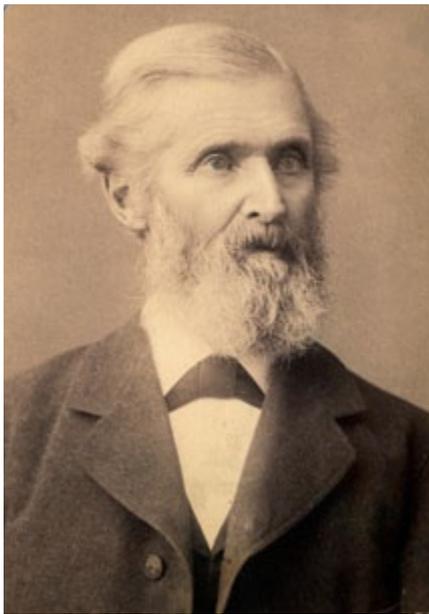
Wholesome family activities include:

- Family home evening:** President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said, “It is so important that fathers and mothers sit down with their children, pray together, instruct them in the ways of the Lord, consider their family problems, and let the children express their talents.”<sup>1</sup>
- Family service activities:** You could visit an elderly member of your ward or pick up trash around the neighborhood.
- One-on-one outings with Mom or Dad:** These allow children to build individual and personal relationships with parents.

### NOTE

- Gordon B. Hinckley, “To Men of the Priesthood,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 58.

# Truman O. Angell



Truman Osborn Angell (1810–87) served for several decades as Church architect, planning and directing the construction of many significant buildings, including the Salt Lake Temple. Throughout his years of service to the Church, Truman was humble and obedient.

He was born on June 5, 1810, in Providence, Rhode Island, USA. When he was a teenager, a local craftsman taught him carpentry and joinery, a specialized kind of woodworking.

At age 22 he was introduced to the Church by his sister, who had received a copy of the Book of Mormon from missionary Thomas B. Marsh. In January 1833 Truman was baptized along with his mother, Phebe, and his wife, Polly.

Shortly after Truman was ordained a member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy, the Prophet Joseph Smith

requested that he build a store in Kirtland, Ohio. Truman declined, telling the Prophet he was preparing to leave for a mission. The next day, however, Truman saw the First Presidency in the distance and felt prompted to accept the building assignment from the Prophet. He later recorded, “Accordingly I changed my determination and yielded obedience.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1856 President Brigham Young sent Truman on a mission to Europe, instructing him to “take drafts of valuable works of architecture” so he could “be better qualified to continue” to work on the Salt Lake Temple and other buildings.<sup>2</sup>

Truman was called as Church architect in 1867. (The Church no longer calls an official Church architect.) Although years of hard work had caused Truman’s health to suffer, he humbly accepted the call. He wrote in his journal, “I feel a

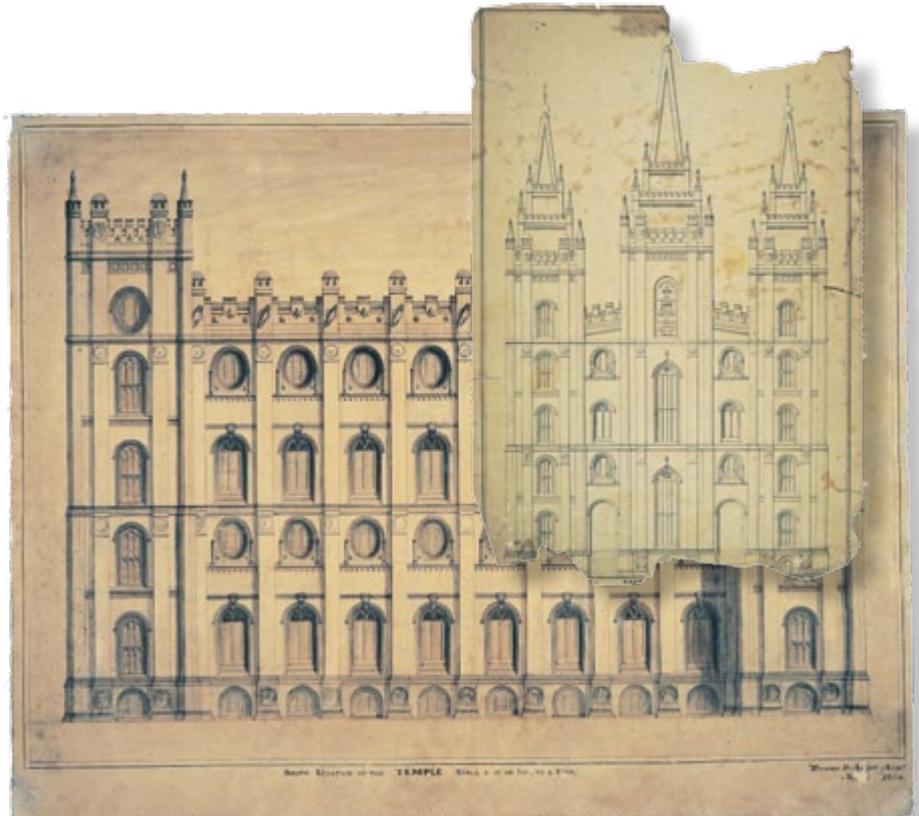
good deal worn out but if the President and my brethren feel to sustain a poor worm of dust like me to be Architect of the Church, let me strive to serve them and not disgrace myself. . . . May the Lord help me so to do.”<sup>3</sup>

Truman directed many building projects in Utah, including the Lion House, the Beehive House, the Utah Territorial Statehouse, and the St. George Utah Temple.

Truman did not live to see the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple in 1893, but he served faithfully as Church architect until his death in 1887.

## NOTES

1. Truman O. Angell, in Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 20 vols. (1958–77), 10:197.
2. See Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 10:204.
3. In Paul L. Anderson, “Truman O. Angell: Architect and Saint,” in *Supporting Saints: Life Stories of Nineteenth-Century Mormons*, ed. Donald Q. Cannon and David J. Whittaker (1985), 161; spelling standardized.



# QUALIFIED THROUGH CHURCH SERVICE

By Alice A. Lewis

*“Church members are responsible for their own spiritual and temporal well-being,” states Handbook 2: Administering the Church. “Blessed with the gift of agency, they have the privilege and duty to set their own course, solve their own problems, and strive to become self-reliant. Members do this under the inspiration of the Lord and with the labor of their own hands” ([2010], 6.1.1).*

I was 57, newly divorced, with little work experience outside the home, and desperately in need of a job. I had raised four children, and here I was alone after 32 years of marriage with a bit of college behind me and great trepidation in front of me to have to find a job at my age.

I sat waiting to interview for a position as a scheduling and productions specialist with the county library district, all the while thinking I must be out of my mind to believe I was qualified for such a position. I had just convinced myself to get up and leave when the secretary suddenly said they were ready for me in the conference room. I felt sick but straightened up, said a silent prayer, and stepped forward.

Two articulate and professional people told me that experience in certain areas was vital for this

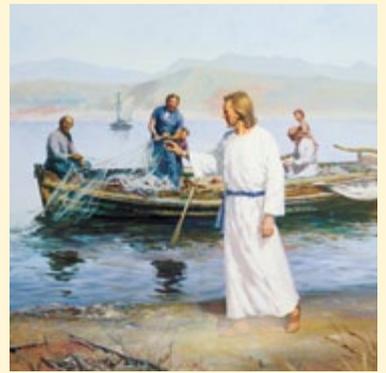
position and began to ask me about my experience. This job required a person who could make arrangements for large conferences, including announcements, invitations, catering, and cleanup. Did I have the experience needed? I was thinking I didn't when my mind suddenly captured an image of a stake Relief Society conference. I had been a counselor in the stake Relief Society presidency. From that experience I had learned how to organize large gatherings and shop for bulk food for large groups. I could honestly say I had experience doing exactly what was required.

The interviewers continued: “Are you proficient on the computer? You will be corresponding with patrons and will be required to keep a schedule of conference room use.” All I could think of was how grateful I was

to all the people who had taught me to use the computer so I could create the ward bulletin and calendar and write the stake newsletter. Yes, I was proficient on the computer.

“You will be expected to develop programs and provide classes for the public. Would you be able to teach classes to children and adults?” they asked. All those home-making and Cub Scout crafts I had done sprang to mind. I explained that I had taught classes to children and adults my entire adult life. I knew I was creative and artistic and felt sure I could come up with interesting programs for children and adults.

I was thrilled when I got the position. I loved the work and tried to do as I would in a Church calling: magnify my work, go the extra mile, and not whine about overtime.



### **A LIFETIME INVESTMENT**

“The Church may call upon you to make sacrifice. It may call upon you to give of the very best that you have to offer. There will be no cost in this, because you will discover that it will become an investment that will pay you dividends for as long as you live.”

**President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008),** “Life’s Obligations,” *Liahona*, May 1999, 6; *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 4.

I developed computer classes in English and recruited a young student to teach the classes in Spanish. I taught arts and crafts classes and hosted numerous authors and prominent speakers. I decorated the library for every holiday and displayed related books.

One day someone called me at work, claiming to be from the governor’s office and wanting to know if I would be interested in a position as the governor’s assistant. I laughingly asked, “Who is this?” He explained that the call was legitimate and invited me to come the next day for an interview. I went with a sinking feeling that it could be a joke. It wasn’t. The interview went well, and I was hired on the spot.

In my new job I used the skills I had gained from years of speaking in church. The governor could not

attend all the events to which he was invited; therefore, his staff members were expected to speak in his place. All those talks in church and from serving in leadership positions had given me the experience I needed to speak in public alongside senators, local and national dignitaries, and celebrities. I served as the governor’s assistant for seven years until we both retired.

Where would I have been without the wide range of experience I had received while serving in Church callings? All that I have learned as a servant of the Lord in His Church has given me a life rich with blessings. Not only was I helping others while serving, but I was also growing by leaps and bounds. I am deeply grateful for the gospel and have a solid testimony of the value of service in the Church. ■

By Elder  
Per G. Malm  
Of the Seventy



# Finding Peace

## IN TROUBLED TIMES

*“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).*

### IN A WORLD OF TRIBULATION

“The Savior [spoke] to His disciples as He faced His Crucifixion and as they faced fear, disarray, and persecution. In His last collective counsel to them in mortality, He said: ‘These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world’ (John 16:33).

“So, in a world of tribulation, let’s remember our faith. . . . And let’s live life more fully, with more boldness and courage than at any other time.

“Christ has overcome the world and made a path for us.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “This, the Greatest of All Dispensations,” *Liahona*, July 2007, 20; *Ensign*, July 2007, 54.

**I**n downtown Gothenburg, Sweden, there is a broad boulevard with beautiful trees on each side. One day I saw a hole in the trunk of one of the huge trees, so I curiously looked inside and saw that the tree was completely hollow.

I was surprised that the tree could still stand. So I looked up and saw a wide steel belt mounted around the upper part of the trunk. Attached to the belt were several steel wires, and they in turn were fastened and anchored to nearby buildings. From a distance it looked like the other trees; it was only when looking inside that one could detect that it was hollow instead of having a solid, strong trunk. In time, the tree could not be saved and had to be taken down.

Just as a young tree grows bit by bit into a sturdy tree, so we can grow step by step in our capacity to be solid and

filled from the inside out, in contrast to the hollow tree. It is through the healing Atonement of Jesus Christ that we may have the strength to stand tall and strong and to have our souls be filled—with light, understanding, joy, and love.

Faith in Jesus Christ and following His teachings give us a firm hope, and this hope becomes a solid anchor to our souls. We can become steadfast and immovable. We can have lasting inner peace; we can enter into the rest of the Lord. Only if we turn away from light and truth will a hollow feeling of emptiness, like the tree’s, occupy the innermost chambers of our souls.

Let us focus on those things that will sustain a lasting peace of mind and heart. Then our confidence will “wax strong in the presence of God” (D&C 121:45). The promise to enter into the rest of the Lord,



### HOW CAN WE FIND PEACE AND HOPE IN TROUBLED TIMES?

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles helps answer this question in “This, the Greatest of All Dispensations” (*Liahona*, July 2007, 18; *Ensign*, July 2007, 53):

to receive the gift of peace, is far from a temporary, worldly satisfaction. It is indeed a heavenly gift: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). He has the power to heal and strengthen the soul. He is Jesus Christ. ■

From “Rest unto Your Souls,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 101–2.

For more information on this topic, see Mosiah 24:15; D&C 6:34, 36; 59:23; 78:17–18; Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Peace Within,” *Ensign*, May 1991, 36; and Neal A. Maxwell, “Encircled in the Arms of His Love,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 16.

***“Great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus’ feet; and he healed them:***

***“Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel” (Matthew 15:30–31).***

1. “Live as faithfully as we possibly can. . . . We must not be paralyzed just because [of events] ahead of us somewhere.”
2. “Never let fear and the father of fear (Satan himself) divert us from our faith and faithful living.”
3. “Be faithful. God is in charge. He knows your name and He knows your need.”

***Consider searching the scriptures for verses on hope, peace, and faith in Jesus Christ.***

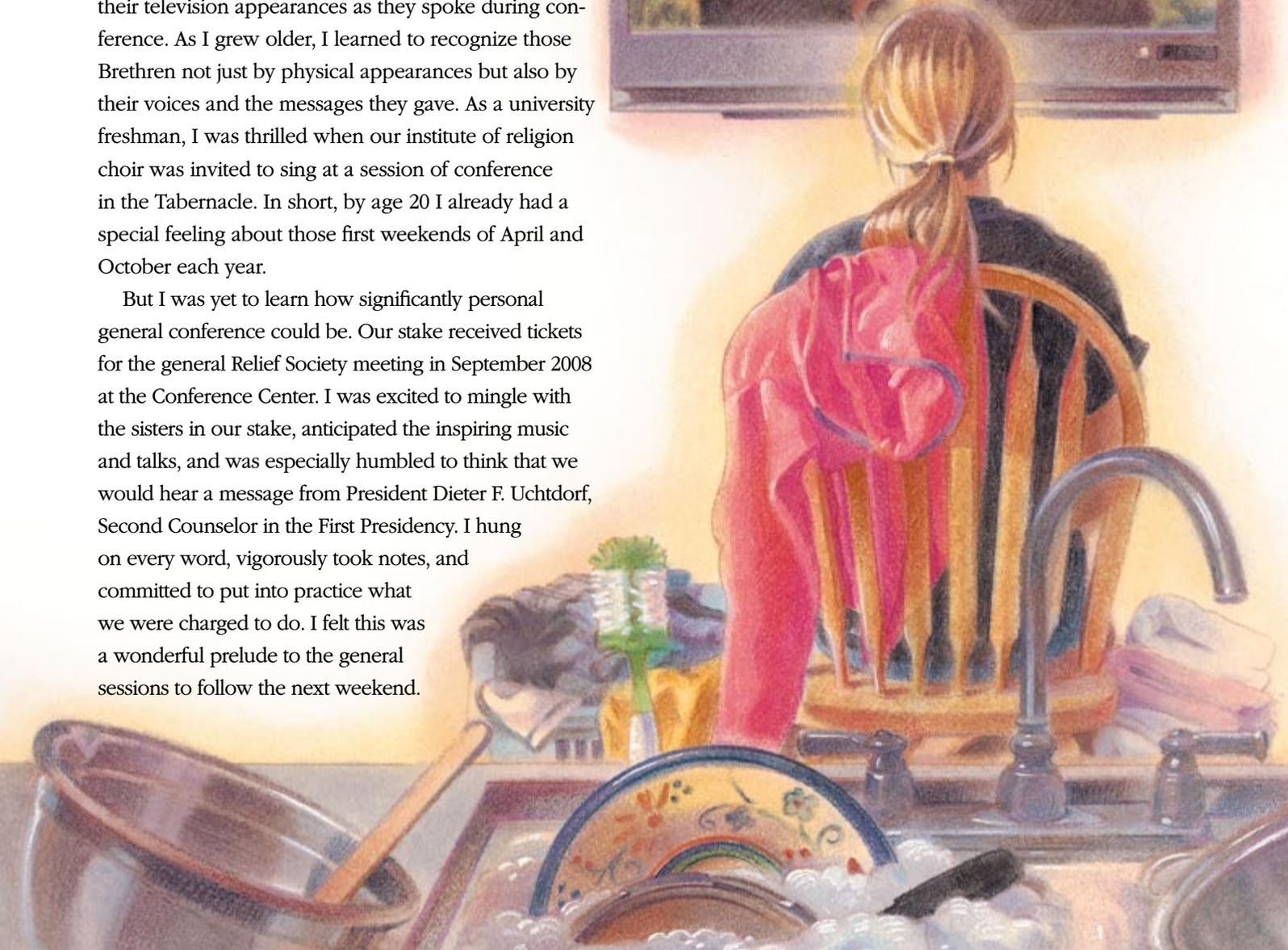
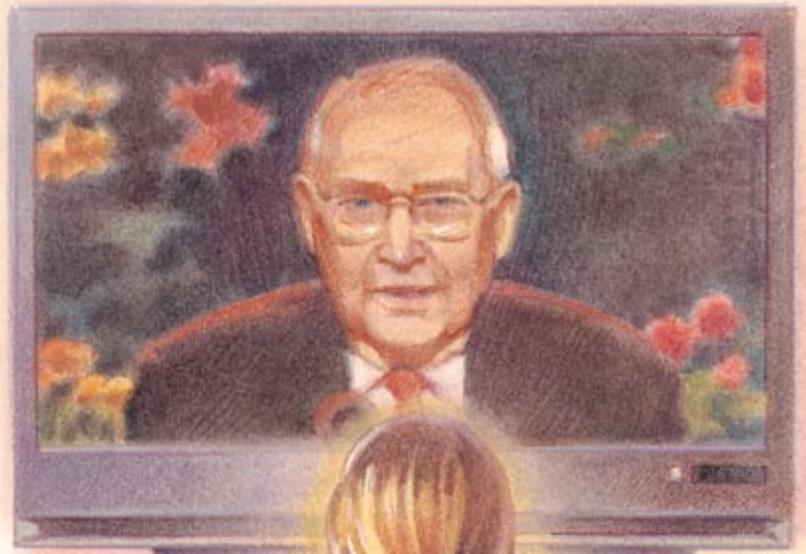
# A GENERAL CONFERENCE JUST FOR **MIE**

*What I was facing was terrifying, but Heavenly Father was aware of me that first weekend in October.*

**By Ann Singleton**

I grew up in a home where general conferences were as much anticipated as a holiday. I remember as a young girl being given a Sunday School assignment to match the pictures of the General Authorities with their television appearances as they spoke during conference. As I grew older, I learned to recognize those Brethren not just by physical appearances but also by their voices and the messages they gave. As a university freshman, I was thrilled when our institute of religion choir was invited to sing at a session of conference in the Tabernacle. In short, by age 20 I already had a special feeling about those first weekends of April and October each year.

But I was yet to learn how significantly personal general conference could be. Our stake received tickets for the general Relief Society meeting in September 2008 at the Conference Center. I was excited to mingle with the sisters in our stake, anticipated the inspiring music and talks, and was especially humbled to think that we would hear a message from President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. I hung on every word, vigorously took notes, and committed to put into practice what we were charged to do. I felt this was a wonderful prelude to the general sessions to follow the next weekend.



Then my world shattered. While at work the following Thursday, I received a telephone call from my doctor informing me that the tests I had had the previous week indicated cancer.

The next days were a blur of doubts, fear, anxiety, sadness, despair, and agony. So many emotions churned inside me that sleep did not come and my tears flowed constantly. I had never felt so afraid.

When Saturday morning came, I intended to listen to conference while doing other tasks. Staying busy, I hoped, would help focus my mind away from my trial. But I found myself putting down the laundry and letting the dishes sit in the sink as I was drawn to the television. My heart almost skipped a beat as Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles began the first session with this statement: “We can’t predict all the struggles and storms in life, not even the ones just around the next corner, but as persons of faith and hope, we know beyond the shadow of any doubt that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true and the best is yet to come.”<sup>1</sup>

Surely, I thought, the next topic would be on moral cleanliness or the Sabbath day. But each succeeding message was also one of hope in times of trial!

Sunday was a peaceful day as our family united in prayer and fasting on my behalf. I continued to hear words of hope just as I had the previous day, with a powerful concluding message in the afternoon from Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “I testify that the Atonement of Jesus Christ covers all of the trials and hardships that any of us will encounter in this life,” he said. “At times when we may feel to say, ‘Hope you know, I had a hard time,’ we can be assured that He is there and we are safe in His loving arms.”<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps it was the fasting or the prayers or simply my humble emotional state, but from beginning to end, I felt this was my own personal general conference with an audience of one.

The following days, weeks, and months brought many challenges as I faced tests, surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments. I wish I could say that I never felt despair during those 12 months. I did. But during those times, I also felt sustained by the prayers and fasting of ward and family members, priesthood blessings given by my father, and the faith of my mother. I read the Book of Mormon completely during the first few months of treatments, knowing that comfort can come through the word of God.

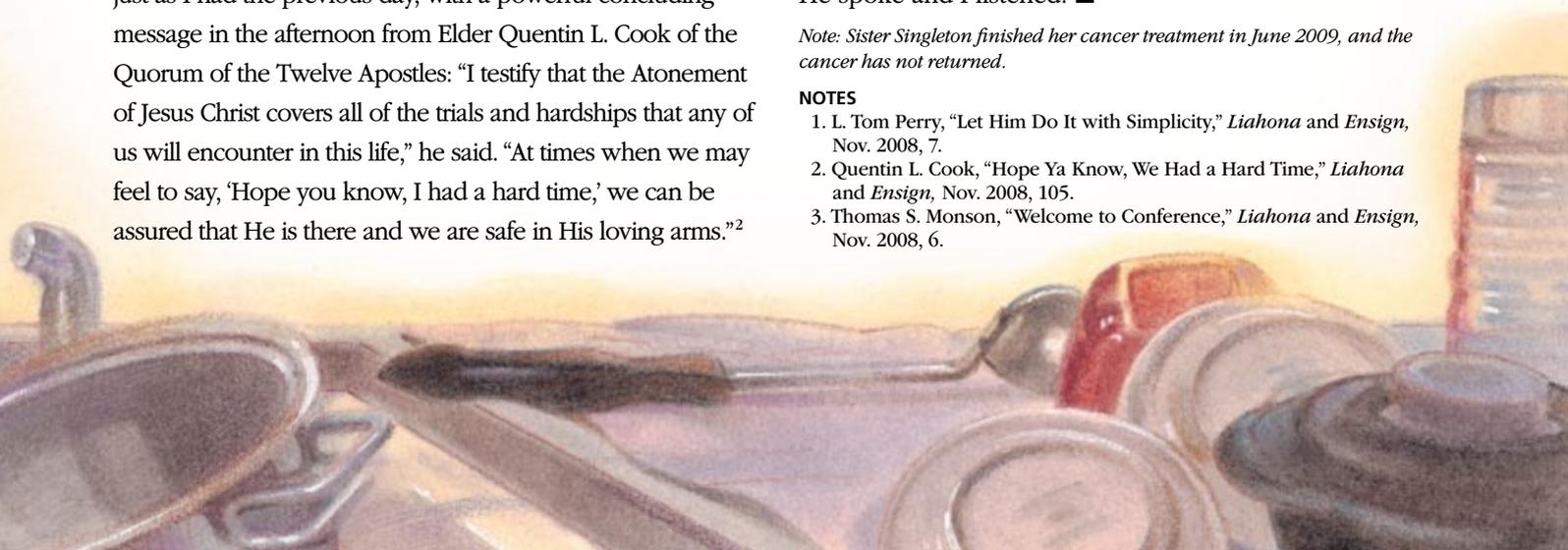
But on the darkest days, I always went to my well-worn copy of the November 2008 *Ensign* and reread those words that came from a loving Father through inspired servants and directly to my fearful heart. I was amazed at a phrase I hadn’t remembered President Thomas S. Monson saying in his opening address: “Our Heavenly Father is mindful of each one of us and our needs. May we be filled with His Spirit as we partake of the proceedings of this, the 178th Semiannual General Conference.”<sup>3</sup>

I had gained a testimony of that truth. Heavenly Father was mindful of me that weekend in October. He knew of my need of hope in His love and hope in His plan for me. He spoke and I listened. ■

*Note: Sister Singleton finished her cancer treatment in June 2009, and the cancer has not returned.*

#### NOTES

1. L. Tom Perry, “Let Him Do It with Simplicity,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 7.
2. Quentin L. Cook, “Hope Ya Know, We Had a Hard Time,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 105.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “Welcome to Conference,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 6.



# The Sealing Ordinance

LINKS  
FAMILIES  
ETERNALLY

While on earth, we can make sacred covenants (promises) with God in the holy temple through priesthood authority. Among these covenants is the opportunity for husbands and wives to be sealed (married for eternity) and their children to be sealed to them. This means that if we keep our covenants with the Lord and each other, death cannot permanently separate us. This sealing ordinance is an essential part of our Heavenly Father's plan for us to live with Him eternally. (See D&C 128:9–10; 132:19.)

Once we have made temple covenants for ourselves, we can gather our family history and perform temple ordinances for our deceased ancestors. This makes temple covenants available to them (see D&C 138:29–37).

The priesthood power to seal families was prophesied anciently (see Malachi 4:5–6) and in modern times (see D&C 2). Both prophecies revealed that the prophet Elijah “shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers” (D&C 2:2).

Elijah's promised return was fulfilled on April 3, 1836, in the newly dedicated Kirtland Temple in Ohio, USA, when Elijah among others

appeared and gave his priesthood keys to the Prophet Joseph Smith (see D&C 110:13–15).

Currently, there are 134 temples in operation throughout the world, where worthy Latter-day Saints can make covenants with God and be sealed as families for eternity. They can return to serve as proxies for their deceased ancestors, thus fulfilling the prophecy that the hearts of the children will be turned to the fathers. ■

For more information, see *Gospel Principles* (2009), 207–11; *True to the Faith* (2004), 44, 61–64, 97–101, 170–74; and “Being Worthy to Enter the Temple,” *Liahona*, Aug. 2010, 12–13; *Ensign*, Aug. 2010, 8–9.

*“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” (Matthew 16:19).*



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY LAURENI FOCHETTO, JOHN LUKE, CRAIG DIMOND, MATTHEW REIER, AND DAVID STOKER; PHOTOGRAPH OF RECIE BRAZIL TEMPLE BY LAURENI FOCHETTO

**We must receive certain covenants and ordinances in order to return to live with our Heavenly Father:**

1. *We are baptized and confirmed (see Matthew 3:16–17; John 3:5; 2 Nephi 31:5–18).*



2. *Men receive the Aaronic Priesthood and later the Melchizedek Priesthood (see D&C 128:11).*



3. *In the temple we make additional covenants associated with the endowment.*



4. *Husbands and wives are sealed (married) in the temple for time and all eternity.*



5. *Children born to a sealed couple are born “in the covenant.” Children who are not born in the covenant may be sealed to their parents.*



6. *We then prepare the names of our ancestors for temple work and perform necessary ordinances for them in the temple (see 1 Corinthians 15:29; D&C 128:15–16, 24).*

# THE ETERNAL NATURE OF Marriage



**By President  
N. Eldon Tanner  
(1898–1982)**

First Counselor in  
the First Presidency

*Nathan Eldon Tanner was born on May 9, 1898, in Salt Lake City, Utah. He was ordained an Apostle in 1962 and, between 1963 and 1982, served as a counselor in the First Presidency under four Presidents of the Church. The following is excerpted from his talk “Celestial Marriages and Eternal Families,” delivered in the April 1980 general conference. For the full address in English, go to [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org).*

One of the happiest times in a person’s life is when contemplating marriage. . . . It is safe to assume that at the time of marriage most couples are sure they are making the right choices; but all too often the honeymoon ends, and trouble begins, and the marriage terminates in divorce.

The frequency of divorce has led some to a lifestyle where they feel inclined to escape from the seemingly meaningless rituals, without benefit of clergy or other legal sanctions. I often wonder how well informed they are about the purpose of the Creation of the earth on which they dwell and how fully they have researched the scriptures to learn why God created man and woman and instituted the sacred ordinance of marriage.

Let us consider first the purpose of the Creation of the earth. The scriptures make it clear that it was for no other purpose than to provide a place for the sons and daughters

of God to dwell in mortality and prove themselves worthy, through keeping the commandments, to return to the presence of God from whence they came.

Following the Creation of the earth, “God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . .

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:26–28).

When God created woman and brought her to the man, He said, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24).

Yes, marriage is ordained of God, and following that first reference to husband and wife, we find recurring scriptures as evidence that men and women became husbands and wives in marriage ceremonies followed by wedding feasts. We are not here just to “eat, drink, and be merry” (2 Nephi 28:7). We have been given an earth to subdue and instructions to multiply and replenish it. It is interesting to note that God said “multiply” and not just “replenish” the earth (see Genesis 1:28).

It is important for us to understand, as we can learn from the scriptures, that God



is eternal, that His creations are eternal, and that His truths are eternal. Therefore, when He gave Eve to Adam in marriage, that union would be eternal. Marriage as ordained of God and performed in His holy temples is eternal—not just until death. In Ecclesiastes we read, “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever” (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

When Christ asked Peter to tell Him who He was, Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus gave Peter the assurance that he knew this by revelation from God the Father and that it would be upon this rock of revelation that He would build His Church. Then He said, “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou

***N. Eldon and Sara Tanner with their daughters, about 1927. Their fifth and last child, Helen, was born in 1931.***

shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (see Matthew 16:15–19).

When the Pharisees came to Jesus, tempting Him, to ask about divorce, His answer included the following:

“Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

“And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4–6).

These scriptures indicate that celestial marriage, ordained by God and performed by His authority in His holy temples, is eternal, and couples so united are sealed for time and all eternity, and their children are born in the covenant of the everlasting gospel. They will be an eternal family according to their faithfulness. . . .

Jesus Christ came to earth to give us that very message—who we are and what we are supposed to do. He gave us the gospel plan of life and salvation and said there was no other name under heaven whereby we could be saved (see Acts 4:12). We have that same gospel restored in these latter days, with the living prophet today . . . to speak for God, as has been God’s method of communication with man through the ages. . . .

I know that through the gospel of Jesus Christ and through keeping the commandments of God and the covenants we make with Him, we can each make of our home a heaven on earth while we prepare ourselves and our children to return to our Heavenly Father. ■

*Spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing standardized.*

# BUILDING MY Eternal Marriage

By Rosana Pontes Barbosa Neves

When I was a teenager, I developed faith that marriage could be a wonderful and eternal experience. It was difficult for me to always believe, however, because the examples of marriage I had growing up were not strong ones, and I kept a fear of marriage in my heart. But I determined that failure and unhappiness didn't have to be the rule and that Heavenly Father would help me know how to have a happy marriage.

When I was 26 years old, I married Sidnei in the São Paulo Brazil Temple. While we were still dating, we tried to prepare ourselves spiritually and emotionally for the most significant event of our lives. We decided what type of marriage we wanted, we established goals together, and we shared our thoughts—our testimonies of the gospel, our wishes and worries, and our dreams. We also read together the counsel of the prophets on marriage. We did everything we could to prepare, wishing to provide happiness and security to each other and our future children. We asked the Lord to give us wisdom to live a happy life.



Now we have been married for 18 years. During these years, we have continued to learn from the precepts of the gospel, the counsel of our leaders, and, of course, the Spirit. Some of the things we have done to have a strong, happy marriage are:

1. Pray together every day. When we pray at night, we thank Heavenly Father for our marriage, for the love we have for each other, and we ask that our feelings will be strengthened and that we can become strong individually in the face of the



## MARRIAGE IN HEAVENLY FATHER'S PLAN

As a husband and wife are each drawn to the Lord (see 3 Nephi 27:14), as they learn to serve and cherish one another, as they share life experiences and grow together and become one, and as they are blessed through the uniting of their distinctive natures, they begin

to realize the fulfillment that our Heavenly Father desires for His children. Ultimate happiness, which is the very object of the Father's plan, is received through the making and honoring of eternal marriage covenants."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan," *Liahona and Ensign*, June 2006, 86.



other, and when we're with others, we speak positively about each other.

4. Defend the institution of marriage. Whenever we have a chance—and especially if we are around people who are criticizing the institution of marriage—we stand up for families and what we believe in.
5. Talk a lot and listen. We stop what we are doing to really listen when the other person is talking.
6. Treat each other with love and consideration. We do not insult, accuse, or criticize each other.
7. Continue to seek help and counsel about marriage from the scriptures and the words of modern prophets. We do not know everything. We are imperfect and prone to forgetting and making mistakes. We prefer not to wait for problems to afflict us, but instead we work to build a strong marriage before a situation can hurt us.

These things have been instrumental in strengthening the relationship between my husband and me. I know that if we share our lives and our feelings with Heavenly Father and seek counsel from Him, the Holy Ghost will inspire us and we will be able to become an eternal family, overcoming all difficult times. We also know that Heavenly Father will help us as we seek to know and do His will. ■

- designs of the adversary, who works to destroy families.
2. Ask for forgiveness. We work to never allow pride to keep us from asking for forgiveness or admitting we are wrong. Love and unity are more important than who is right or who is wrong.
  3. Never speak evil of each other. It is obvious that neither of us is perfect, but we don't say bad things about each

## SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGES

Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities."

"The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.



# A LITTLE ON Heaven Earth

*A celestial marriage requires living a consecrated life of worthiness and celestial principles, which leads to happiness in this life and exaltation in the next.*

**T**emple marriage describes the place you go to have a marriage performed. *Celestial marriage* is what you create by being true to the sacred covenants you make during the temple marriage ceremony.

After the vows are taken, a celestial marriage requires living a consecrated life of worthiness and celestial principles, which leads to happiness in this life and exaltation in the next. If we live the laws pertaining to celestial marriage, we will, with our spouse and with our family, be able to have a little heaven on earth. And when we live those laws, we are practicing the same laws that are practiced in heaven. We are practicing how to live with the Father and the Son and with our families in the eternities to come. That to me is the message to the world of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

By Elder  
**Robert D. Hales**  
Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles





***When you are choosing your companion, make sure that both of you have a desire for a celestial marriage relationship, a desire to have a companion for eternity, a desire to have a family for eternity, and a desire to live in the presence of our Heavenly Father.***

### Selecting a Companion

Single members of the Church often ask, “How do I find the right person to marry?” Let me suggest an approach. Measure the spiritual level of your potential future companions. First, if they are members of the Church, are they active and fully committed, or are they passive or antagonistic? Second, if they are not members, are they receptive to the gospel and its teachings, or are they noncommittal or antagonistic?

If you marry an active member in the temple for time and all eternity in the new and everlasting covenant, will you have problems? Yes. Will you be able to solve them? Yes. Will your chance be better to solve them and strengthen your testimony than if you had not married in the temple? Yes. But if you marry somebody who is antagonistic to the Church or passive toward the gospel, you are placing yourself in a position where you will find someday that you may have to choose between that individual and the Church. That is a very heavy responsibility.

When you are choosing your companion, make sure that both of you have a desire for a celestial marriage relationship, a desire to have a companion for eternity, a desire to have a family for eternity, and a desire to live in the presence of our Heavenly Father.

### Abiding the Law

The Lord has made it clear that we can be together in eternity with our

companion only if we abide the law. In modern revelation He says:

“Prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same.

“For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant” (D&C 132:3–4).

Every member of the Church should read and study section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Do you realize that there is no one between the Lord and the sealer when he performs the sealing ordinance? It is a beautiful and a touching ceremony.

The deep underlying purpose of temple marriage was clarified by the Redeemer Himself when He said, “As pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant [of marriage], it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned” (D&C 132:6).

The Lord also said, “Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me nor by my word, and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world” (D&C 132:15).

Do we realize that in the Doctrine and Covenants we are told that unless

we enter into celestial marriage, we cannot reach the highest degree of glory in the celestial kingdom (see D&C 131:1–4)? It is also clear what will happen to those who never receive the blessings of temple marriage: their binding is until death do they part—a very sad thing to contemplate.

The aim of the gospel and the purpose of celestial marriage are not only to keep us together but also to make us eligible for our Heavenly Father's highest reward: exaltation in the celestial kingdom, increase in that kingdom, and eternal life with our families.

### Ascending Together

Celestial marriage is like climbing a mountain. You tie yourself to an eternal companion, and you start up the mountain. As children come along, you tie into them as well and continue your journey. The ropes will hold all of the mountain climbers together, but the wind, rain, snow, and ice—challenges of the world—will tear at you to pull you off that mountain.

How do you reach the summit? If Mom or Dad gives up and cuts the rope that binds them to each other and their children, chances are that one or the other may fall off the mountain and perhaps pull down other family members with them. The whole family could fall off that mountain and not reach the eternal summit. We can't take that chance.



Let us always be mindful that as members of a family, we are tied to a mountain team that is attempting to return to the presence of our Heavenly Father.

A popular proverb says, “Thee lift me and I’ll lift thee, and we will ascend together.”

A marriage partnership is not a crutch. You do not marry somebody you think is a little higher than the angels and then lean on that person. Rather, you develop yourself and your own gifts and talents. As you develop, you grow together, supporting and strengthening one another.

*Celestial marriage is like climbing a mountain. You tie yourself to an eternal companion, and you start up the mountain. As children come along, you tie into them as well and continue your journey.*



***The secret of a happy marriage is to protect the Achilles' heel and not take advantage of the weaknesses of those you know the best, love the most, and ultimately can hurt the most.***

Before my wife and I were married, I said to her, "You know, Mary, I feel that to be successful in business I will have to work hard domestically and perhaps internationally. Do you want to go on that trip with me?" She said she did. Ten years after we were married, I was asked to go to England, and there she was with me. Then we went to Germany and later to Spain. She became international, multicultural, and bilingual because she had made up her mind that we would work and grow together.

Remember to treat each other with kindness and to respect each other for who you are and what you want to be.

I remember a woman in my ward some years ago when I was a bishop. She and her husband were having marital problems. As they spoke with me, she began to tear down her

husband in all the key areas that a man needs praise in order to respect himself. She talked of his inadequacy as a father, his inadequacies in marital relations, his inadequacy as a provider, and his inadequacies socially.

I asked her, "Why do you do this to a man you should love and sustain?"

She replied, "It's much better to argue with someone you love because you know where you can hurt him the most."

And she *meant* it.

As Latter-day Saints, however, we are to use our moral agency and utilize our opportunities for growth. Everyone has weaknesses. The adversary knows the Achilles' heel of your loved ones, your friends, your roommates, your brothers and sisters, and your parents. Do you understand *your* Achilles' heel? Do you know the situations you have to stay away from and what your weaknesses are? The secret of a happy marriage is to protect the Achilles' heel and not take advantage of the weaknesses of those you know the best, love the most, and ultimately can hurt the most.

"Therefore, strengthen your brethren in all your conversation, in all your prayers, in all your exhortations, and in all your doings" (D&C 108:7). In other words, every day you are to help one another as you pray and speak in your exhortations and in your doings.

I remember a young couple just out of college. One parent gave them a home; the other parent gave them

furnishings and a new car. They had everything in the world given to them. Within three years they were divorced. They hadn't worked and sacrificed. They had leaned on each other and on their parents as a crutch, had crippled themselves, and hadn't grown. They hadn't learned the hard part. They hadn't worried about making their marriage work. Make sure you sacrifice, share, and grow together.

### Supporting One Another

After I had served as an elders quorum president, a branch president, and a bishop over a period of five years, we moved to a new ward. My wife was soon called to be the Relief Society president. She went to her first meeting with the bishop while I chased our two youngsters up and down the halls and through the parking lot and cultural hall. I had my first experience with waiting. I waited one and a half hours. When Mary came out of the bishop's office, I had one boy in my arm and the other by the hand. I didn't have the courage to say anything, but I just gave her a look that said, "Do you realize you've kept me waiting an hour and a half?"

All she did was raise five fingers and say, "Five years." That is how long she had been waiting for me. Then I began to realize it was going to be my job to support my wife in her calling just as she had supported me in my callings.

I ask you not to lean on your spouse as a crutch but to stand strong, strengthen each other, and ask for



help as you pray together each night. I bear testimony that those moments in my life when I have been unhappy, depressed, or sad are when I have deviated, even to a minor degree, from the teachings of the Lord. That you might have true happiness and find the joy of a celestial marriage with a little heaven on earth is my prayer. ■

*From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University on November 9, 1976. For the full text in English, visit [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).*

***I ask you not to lean on your spouse as a crutch but to stand strong, strengthen each other, and ask for help as you pray together each night.***



# Giving God

## A CHANCE TO BLESS US

By Michael R. Morris

Church Magazines

*How does a district in Argentina with only a few small branches have 17 temple marriages in less than four years? Leaders say the answer is simple: obedience.*

When 21-year-old Gisela Silva moved with her family from Mendoza, Argentina, to the nation's southernmost city of Ushuaia, she wondered whether she'd left behind her chances of marrying in the temple. Mendoza, after all, has a stake filled with wards of Latter-day Saints, while isolated Ushuaia—located on the island of Tierra del Fuego—has only about 600 members attending three small branches.

“My parents had married in the temple, and I wanted this blessing for myself—to marry a faithful member of the Church, someone with whom I could form an eternal family,” she recalls. “But when I arrived in Ushuaia, there were so few young adults here that I wondered whether that would happen.”

Lucas Romano had the same concerns as Gisela. During his mission to Uruguay, his family had moved to Ushuaia. When he joined them after completing his mission, he quickly noticed that young single adult men outnumbered young single adult women. He was determined, nevertheless, to obey the counsel of local leaders to date only members of the Church.

That counsel became easier to follow after Lucas met Gisela at church and she enrolled in English classes at a school where he teaches. He began walking her home after class, and they soon began dating. As they prayed individually about their growing



PHOTOGRAPH OF BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA TEMPLE BY NÉSTOR CURBELO; MAP BY MOUNTAIN HIGH MAPS © 1993 DIGITAL WISDOM, INC.

relationship, they say that confirmation came “line upon line, precept upon precept” (2 Nephi 28:30; D&C 98:12).

In April 2005, Lucas and Gisela married civilly, as required by Argentine law, and then were sealed in the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple. Their sealing was significant for the young Church membership in Ushuaia: it was the first of 17 temple marriages in less than four years.

### **A Great Success Story**

How does a district with only a few small branches have so many temple marriages in such a short time? The answer, according to local leaders, is simple: obedience.

“This is a great success story,” says Marcelino Tossen, former president of the Ushuaia district. “These young people are setting a great example for Church members. One of the qualities they have is that they obey the Lord, the prophets, and their local leaders, and they follow the impressions of the Spirit. This quality unites the young people here in the Ushuaia district.”

President Tossen admits, however, that local leaders “had to work on this districtwide effort for a while” before their teaching and counseling about the importance of temple marriage bore fruit.

Roberto Ignacio Silva, Ushuaia district president, says what got his attention after he moved with his family to Ushuaia in 2004 was the number of unmarried returned missionaries and young adult women. His daughter Gisela became part of that group. He said young adults had a goal to marry in the temple but needed some encouragement and direction.

“I told them that if we desire an eternal companion, we don’t have to look for someone perfect,” says President Silva. “But we must pray and ask the Lord to help us, and we must remain faithful in the Church.”

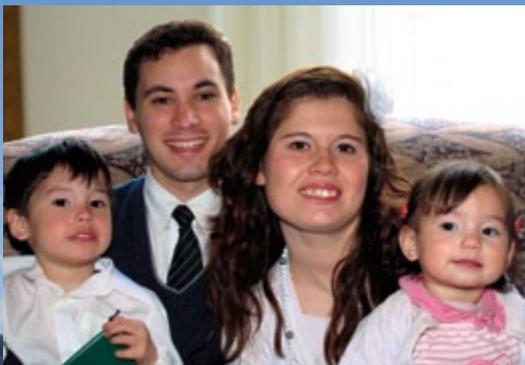
In addition to increasing activities for young single adults—including firesides and combined activities with young single adults from Rio Gallegos and other cities to the north—leaders emphasized the importance of prayer, faithfulness, and worthiness. They also encouraged young adults in Ushuaia to muster sufficient faith to overcome their fears.

### **We Had Nothing**

“One big preoccupation the young people have here is how they can marry if they don’t have much,” President Silva says. “We have helped them understand that we don’t have to have everything before we get married.”

*“The largest blessing of being married in the temple is the happiness I feel in knowing that we are united as an eternal family,” says Ruth Silva, pictured at right center with her husband, Emanuel, and their daughter, Banira. Top: Ezequiel and Marina Frau, with their daughter, Ailin. Bottom: Lucas and Gisela Romano, with their children, Benjamin and Rebeca.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL R. MORRIS, EXCEPT AS NOTED; BACKGROUND © ISTOCKPHOTO



Ruth Rodríguez got to know Emanuel Silva when the two were asked to help organize a combined district young single adult activity in Rio Gallegos, more than 200 miles (320 km) to the north, in February 2006. The friend who asked the two to work together hoped they would hit it off. “It worked,” recalls Emanuel, who had been home two years from serving in the Arizona Tucson Mission.

When he and Ruth married six months later, their preparation—spiritual and temporal—helped them overcome their fear of the future.

“I felt the love of my Father in Heaven and that He wanted me to form my family,” Emanuel says of answers to his prayers. “Once I set that goal, He showed me the way and helped me find a wife.”

Ruth adds that goals they set as a couple, including working hard to save money for their trip to the temple, helped them move forward. “Sometimes there were things we wanted to buy,” she says, “but we said, ‘No, we have to save so we can go to the temple.’”

The cost of their flight to and from the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple in 2006 exhausted their savings. “Afterward we had nothing,” says Emanuel, echoing a common newlywed refrain. Today he and Ruth laugh at that memory, grateful that their faith afforded them the “beautiful experience” of being sealed in the temple—an experience that still means everything to them.

“We can have a lot of fearful feelings as we contemplate marriage,” says Ruth. “What about the things we lack? What about our economic situation? What about raising children? But if we are obedient to the word of the Lord, go to the temple, and start our families, we don’t need to worry. The Lord will bless us in ways we never could have imagined.”

## You Can't Plan Everything

When Ezequiel Agustín Frau lost his job in early 2006, he'd been home from his mission to Colombia for nearly two years. He was still single but felt that his future wife was not in Ushuaia. He decided to go to the temple to seek direction.

"I wanted to be more in contact with the Holy Ghost, learn the Lord's will for me, and seek inspiration," he says. "The temple helped me find it."

When he reached Buenos Aires following a three-day, 2,000-mile (3,200 km) bus ride, he stayed with friends and then a relative while frequenting the temple. Several weeks later Ezequiel was running out of money and considering a return to Ushuaia. A local bishop found him a job, however, so he decided to stay.

At a Church activity a short while later, Ezequiel met a young woman named Marina Mas. They found it easy to talk, and he quickly felt comfortable around her. When he saw Marina again at a young single adult gathering, she said something that impressed him.

"We should be living at the level of the kind of person we are looking to marry," Ezequiel recalls Marina saying during a discussion about goals.

For her part, Marina had been praying to find a worthy companion. She knew a lot of young men but was immediately impressed with Ezequiel's spirituality.

A mutual friend helped Ezequiel find a place to live that was closer to his work, then three hours by bus from where he was staying. It turned out that his new apartment—in a city of 13 million people—was only two blocks from Marina's home.

"I didn't plan to live two blocks from her home," he recalls. "I didn't even know where she lived."

Living in close proximity gave Ezequiel ample opportunity to see Marina, whose family gave him a warm welcome. The confluence of events was an answer to his prayers.

The couple dated and soon began planning their future together. After marrying in the temple in the fall of 2006, they moved to Ushuaia.



## THE DIVINE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE

"How wonderful a thing is marriage under the plan of our Eternal Father, a plan provided in His divine wisdom for the happiness and security of His children and the continuity of the race. . . .

"Surely no one reading the scriptures, both ancient and modern, can doubt the divine concept of marriage. The sweetest feelings of life, the most generous and satisfying impulses of the human heart, find expression in a marriage that stands pure and unsullied above the evil of the world."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "What God Hath Joined Together," *Ensign*, May 1991, 71.



“We can’t always understand the vision our Father in Heaven has, and we can’t plan everything,” Ezequiel says in retrospect. “But we can be obedient and give Him a chance to bless us.”

### **It’s a Beautiful Thing to Have a Family**

President Tossen says one of the greatest blessings temple marriage has brought to Ushuaia is that “the day is arriving when the Church will be led by children of the covenant. The gospel will spread here as a result, and the Lord will bless the Church”—just as He is blessing faithful couples who marry in the temple.

“When I was small and our leaders spoke to us of marriage, all the stories were happy ones,” says Ruth Silva. She realizes that “happily ever after” takes work, “but I feel that those stories were true. The largest blessing of being married in the temple is the happiness

I feel in knowing that we are united as an eternal family.”

Her example helped her father enter the waters of baptism in 2008 and then take his family to the temple, where they were sealed a year later.

“The blessing I enjoy the most, in addition to rearing my children in the gospel, is the joy and peace in my heart of knowing that I have complied with the saving ordinance of eternal marriage,” adds Lucas Romano.

“Being with my wife and children renews that feeling of happiness. Like a rolling snowball, it’s constantly growing. Every day I’m more grateful to the Lord that I got married and started a family.”

Marina Frau adds, “It’s a beautiful thing to have a family. It can be difficult at times because there’s much to learn, but it’s beautiful.” ■

*“If we desire an eternal companion, we don’t have to look for someone perfect. But we must pray and ask the Lord to help us, and we must remain faithful in the Church,” Roberto Ignacio Silva, Ushuaia district president, told young adults, many of whom (pictured above) have taken that advice to heart and have married in the Buenos Aires Temple.*



**By Julie B. Beck**  
Relief Society General President

# Relief Society History:

## A LOOK AT THE LORD'S VISION FOR HIS DAUGHTERS

*As daughters of God seeking eternal life, we can go forward with confidence inspired by examples of those who have gone before us.*

When we were called as a new Relief Society general presidency, we were given a history of the Relief Society to study. We prayerfully did so, searching to know what the Lord wanted us to learn and then do as a result of that study. Our study revealed a heritage rich in the spiritual power and contribution of Latter-day Saint women. It was an impressive record of the Lord's dealings with His daughters and His expectations for them. Through our study and the inspiration that came with that effort, we came to know the purposes of Relief Society. We learned that in our preparation for the blessings of eternal life, the Lord wanted His daughters to *increase faith and personal righteousness, strengthen families and homes, and seek out and help those in need*. As sisters today prayerfully read their history, they will receive insights, answers, and inspiration just as we did.

Our hope is that as we study the history and work of Relief Society we will see how our Heavenly Father helped sisters in the past. As we

learn how He helped them, we will gain a testimony that He will also help us today. We will learn that if, through the Holy Ghost, God could guide a woman more than a hundred years ago, He can do the same for women in our day.

Sister Eliza R. Snow, our second Relief Society general president, was a strong and faithful early leader. She understood that the Spirit "satisfies and fills up every longing of the human heart, and fills up every vacuum." Through different seasons in her life, she struggled with poor health and loneliness. However, she was strengthened, as she was able to receive and act on personal revelation. To her, personal revelation and the constant companionship of the Spirit were like a fountain. She said, "And is it not our privilege to so live that we can have this constantly flowing into our souls?"<sup>1</sup>

Examples such as this throughout our history help us remember that the ability to receive and act on personal revelation is the single most important skill we can acquire in this life. With it we cannot fail; without it we cannot succeed.



## *Increase Faith and Personal Righteousness*

great capacity in the women of the Church, which come from their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His restored gospel. This faith has given women the ability to make correct choices and overcome challenges and difficulties. It has enabled them to call upon the fire of their faith and the power of their covenants to be exemplary in their mortal experiences. In every country, there is found a legacy of faith among the women who have helped to establish the Church and strengthen the homes of the Latter-day Saints.

Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, has told of her mother, Hilda Alvarenga, who was called to serve as Relief Society president in a branch in El Salvador when she was a convert in her 30s. She told the branch president that she

### **Relief Society history is important for sisters throughout the world today.**

Our history reveals a long line of strong, righteous, faithful, dedicated women. This legacy began with Eve, and the stories of these women belong to each of us and give us vision for our future. If we are going to continue this legacy of righteous, dedicated women, it will be because we build upon what they have done. Through our study of history we learn that there is strength and

was inexperienced, unprepared, and inadequate. But the branch president called her anyway. While serving, she learned leadership skills and developed new gifts, such as teaching, public speaking, and organizing meetings, activities, and service projects. She helped others in the branch become builders of the kingdom.<sup>2</sup> Today, as in our past, Heavenly Father expects His daughters to have a leadership role in every ward or branch. Sisters such as Hilda Alvarenga are becoming pioneers and role models for future generations.



## *Strengthen Families and Homes*

their lives by doing those things that would be most enduring, thus ridding themselves of less rewarding activities.<sup>3</sup> Her counsel is still valuable today. A study of our history helps us gain the perspective we need to keep our focus on the essential things that will bless our lives eternally.

**Increasing faith, strengthening families, and serving others are as important today as they were when Relief Society was organized.**

Our history teaches us that strong faith is a propelling and stabilizing force in the lives of righteous women. Faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ not only heals us, but it also enables us to do difficult things and live in an exemplary way. Our history teaches us that charity, the pure love of Christ, which never fails, has helped women endure beautifully through some very

**History can help today's women, who have many pressures in their lives.**

As our presidency has traveled throughout the world, we have been in the homes of the sisters. We have seen their struggles and know the heartbreaking troubles they deal with. Many sisters feel overwhelmed. Some of them find it hard to make time for daily prayer and scripture study and to do the things that will help them feel the Spirit in their lives. We live in increasingly challenging times and are surrounded by beliefs and practices that could detract us from our eternal goal. Because we as women have great influence on those around us, we must do all we can to keep ourselves spiritually strong.

Our Relief Society history helps us focus on what is important and prioritize what we do. Every day we are given the opportunity to make choices that will increase our faith and strengthen our families. Over 60 years ago, Belle S. Spafford, our ninth Relief Society general president, asked sisters to appraise their interests, evaluate their activities, and simplify

difficult trials. We increase our faith and personal righteousness when we make choices to align our will with God's will. As we do, we feel peace. When we are misaligned, we feel guilt. That is the Spirit telling us we need to repent and realign ourselves with God's will. Repentance is a principle we use daily to remain spiritually strong.

We learn from our history that strong families are not an accident. Living the Lord's plan with precision, intention, and determination is a conscious faith-filled choice in today's world. It is a faith-filled, charitable service to strengthen those around us and nurture all families.

Our history is rich with role models of sisters who embraced the charge to "relieve the poor" and to "save souls."<sup>4</sup> Amy Brown Lyman served as the eighth Relief Society general president during World War II. She counseled the sisters to strengthen their faith and hold on. She turned their focus to making their homes a safe place and a priority in their lives.<sup>5</sup>

Upon entering Relief Society, every sister becomes part of a great worldwide sisterhood, united in discipleship. This

## Seek Out and Help Those in Need

is when she begins to participate with others who also are determined to keep their covenants and to give all they have to building the Lord's kingdom.

### **Our history helps us understand our inseparable connection to the priesthood.**

The Lord has important work for His sons and for His daughters. Priesthood quorums and Relief Societies do the Lord's work. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "I will organize the women under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood."<sup>6</sup>

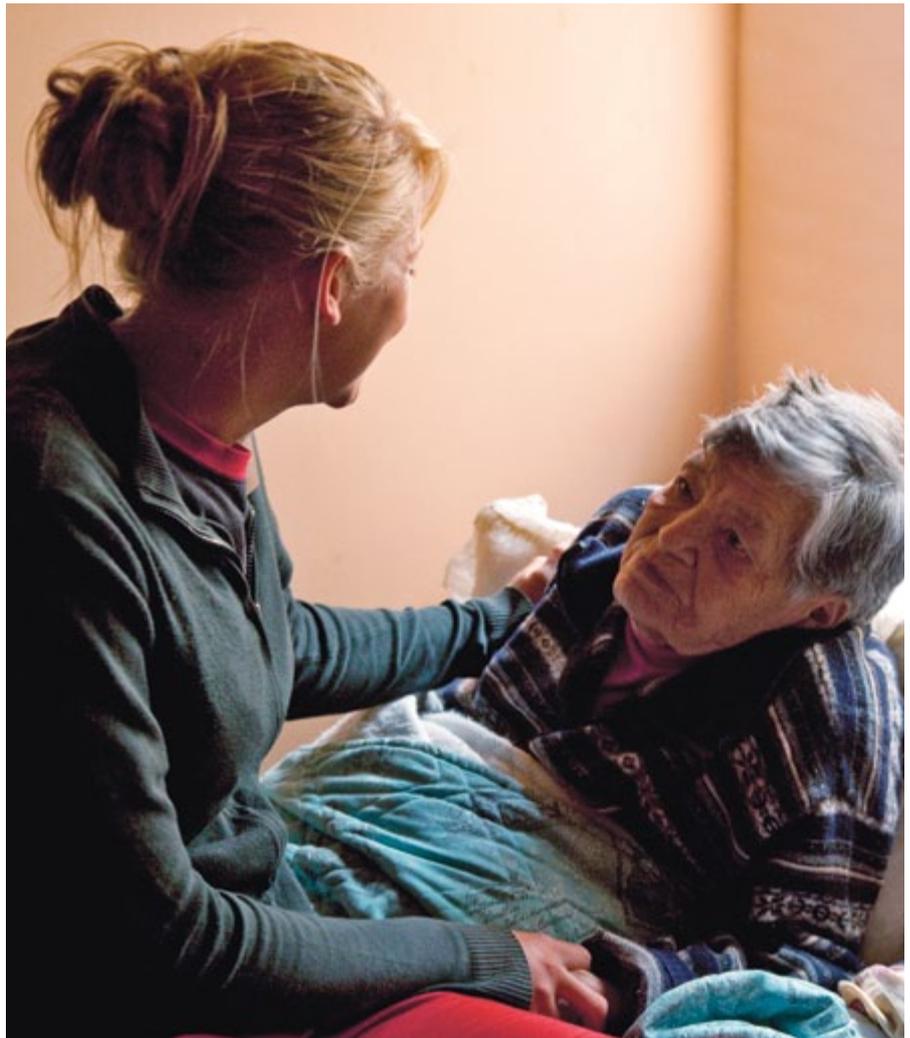
Now as in the past, the Relief Society president functions under the direction of the bishop or branch president, who holds the keys of the priesthood to lead the ward or branch.

Barbara W. Winder, our 11th Relief Society general president, said, "I want so, and desire so, that we be unified, one together with the priesthood, serving and building the kingdom of God here today."<sup>7</sup>

Additionally it is no small thing to know that each sister has access to all of the ordinances of salvation and can make covenants that enable her to fulfill her earthly and eternal mission. Each sister can have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost to guide her, bring her comfort, and affirm her righteous actions. She also has full access to spiritual gifts that enhance her ability to live her life with confidence and protection. Our history teaches us how the women of the past utilized these blessings.

### **Knowing our history helps us prepare for the blessings of eternal life.**

In the past we learn that Relief Society sisters faced difficult times, but today we are also battling a determined



enemy who wants to destroy our faith and families and leave us alone and suffering. Our Relief Society history provides context for everything we do. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Savior gave women of this dispensation a call to help carry out His work.

We learn through our history who we are and our vital role in our Heavenly Father's plan. We can't delegate our responsibilities to someone else. Because our Heavenly Father knows us and loves us, He will sustain us as we seek to align our will with His. "Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life" (2 Nephi 31:20). ■

#### NOTES

1. Eliza R. Snow, quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 46.
2. See *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 91–92.
3. See *Daughters in My Kingdom*, xiii.
4. See *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 17.
5. See *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 67–68.
6. Joseph Smith, quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 12.
7. Barbara W. Winder, quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 140.

## HIS PROMISE WAS FULFILLED

**D**uring a combined priesthood and Relief Society meeting in 2009, our high priests group leader explained our stake presidency's desire for every adult to take a family name to the temple within a year. He introduced stake and ward programs to help members achieve that goal. As he concluded, he gave an authoritative promise by virtue of his responsibility for the family history program that if we would try to achieve the stake's goal, we would succeed.

After the meeting my wife and I discussed the promise and agreed that it could not apply to me; we had already spent 40 years investigating every branch of my family tree. My ancestors were difficult to find, and

we had made no significant progress for several years. We believed nothing more could be done. Nevertheless, the group leader's promise echoed in my mind for the next few days. I decided to take him up on his promise. Staring at my pedigree chart, I tried to think of what I could do.

After three days of careful thought, I felt inspired to look in a specific place for information about one of the end-of-line people on my chart. In less than half a day of research on the Internet, I discovered that another man had researched that family name in an English parish. One of the most recent names he'd located was my end-of-line person. Using his data, I was able to extend my line another

five generations—back to 1650—and include the maiden names of several women in my line and the names of several brothers and sisters. My wife and I were stunned and delighted.

Some time later I started hunting for information on the Internet about a great-great-grandfather who had seemingly disappeared. After a brief search, I found him. I discovered that he had moved from Pennsylvania, USA, to Wisconsin, USA, shortly after his first wife's death. With information gathered from Wisconsin records, I added more than 400 names to my family history.

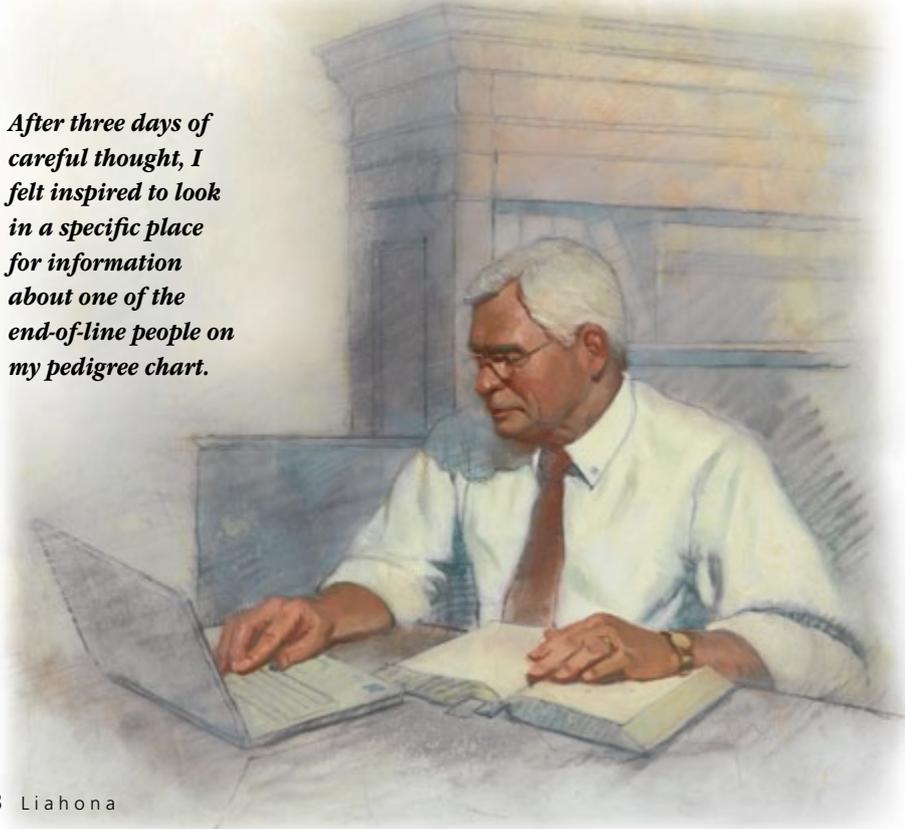
Later I discovered 100 ancestors who had fought in America's Revolutionary and Civil Wars. I traced six lines to the 1600s.

During my previous 40 years of research, I had recorded about 65 names on my pedigree chart and almost 3,000 names in my database. In the 20 months after my high priests group leader made his promise, I added more than 70 names to the chart and more than 17,000 names to the database, including two presidents of the United States!

The Lord tells us that His word "shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same" (D&C 1:38). Truly, Heavenly Father's promise, given through an inspired, authorized priesthood leader, was fulfilled. ■

Ted Bainbridge, Colorado, USA

*After three days of careful thought, I felt inspired to look in a specific place for information about one of the end-of-line people on my pedigree chart.*



## THE SPIRIT SPOKE THROUGH ME

When I received my call to serve in the France Toulouse Mission, I was excited to serve in a foreign country and learn a new language. Despite not having studied French before, I was confident I would be able to learn to speak the language easily.

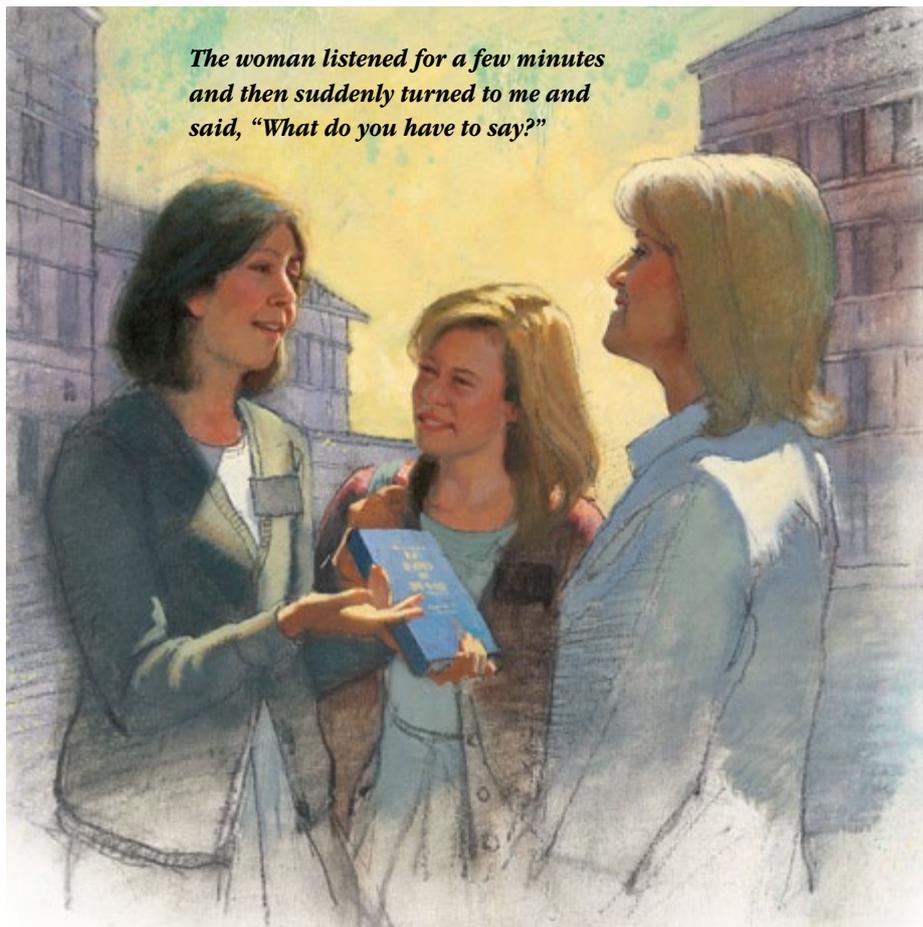
My stake president blessed me with the gift of tongues when he set me apart as a missionary. This blessing added to my confidence that I would be able to learn French quickly.

When I arrived at the missionary training center in Provo, Utah, I was eager to begin, but my time at the MTC was humbling. I was overwhelmed and struggled every day. When I left the MTC, I felt I had made few advances with French. I wondered when the gift of tongues would come.

My first assignment in the mission field was in a small town in southern France. One afternoon, just days after I had arrived, my companion and I were street contacting. I didn't say much when we spoke with people—I could hardly understand them, and they could hardly understand me.

We approached a woman, and my companion began telling her about the Church. The woman listened for a few minutes and then suddenly turned to me and said, "What do you have to say?"

*The woman listened for a few minutes and then suddenly turned to me and said, "What do you have to say?"*



I anxiously and desperately tried to remember something I had learned. In a trembling voice, I bore a simple testimony about Heavenly Father and the Book of Mormon. As I did so, the Spirit bore witness to me that what I had said was true. I don't know if the woman felt anything, but she smiled, turned back to my companion, and asked her to continue with her message.

This experience taught me an important lesson. I learned that even though I couldn't speak French well, the Spirit could speak through me. I learned that perhaps the blessing I had received from my stake president was actually a blessing to be able to speak the language of the Spirit.

President Thomas S. Monson taught: "There is one language . . . that is common to each missionary—the language of the Spirit. It is

not learned from textbooks written by men of letters, nor is it acquired through reading and memorization. The language of the Spirit comes to him who seeks with all his heart to know God and keep His divine commandments. Proficiency in this language permits one to breach barriers, overcome obstacles, and touch the human heart" ("The Spirit Giveth Life," *Liahona*, June 1997, 4; *Ensign*, June 1997, 2).

Years later, this experience still influences me. I am not required to preach the gospel in French anymore, but I need the help of the Spirit when I am asked to teach a lesson or give a talk in church. When I feel that I am struggling to express myself, I find comfort in remembering that the Spirit is able to speak to the hearts of all of God's children. ■

Christy Rusch Banz, Utah, USA

*Our marriage is something I will always cherish and includes a story I will never forget.*

## THE TEMPLE WAS CLOSED!

Our marriage in the temple was set for July 7, 2009—a date that we eagerly anticipated. Having grown up near the Aba Nigeria Temple, we were pleased that even though we had moved away, many friends and family members still living in the area would be able to join us either in the temple or later at a reception.

We arrived in Aba after traveling more than six hours from Lagos and made our final preparations for our sealing and reception. But three days before our scheduled wedding date, we were told that the temple was unexpectedly closed until further notice. We were distraught and confused. No one could tell us when the temple, which had closed because of unrest in the area, might reopen. Disappointed, we told friends and family that our sealing was being postponed, and we sadly returned to Lagos without knowing when we might reschedule another sealing date at the temple.

Upon returning to Lagos, we prayed fervently for the Aba Nigeria Temple to reopen. A week passed without any news about a reopening date. This one week seemed like one year to us. We looked forward to our temple marriage and celebrating with friends and family as soon as possible.

As time passed with no news regarding a reopening date, we felt

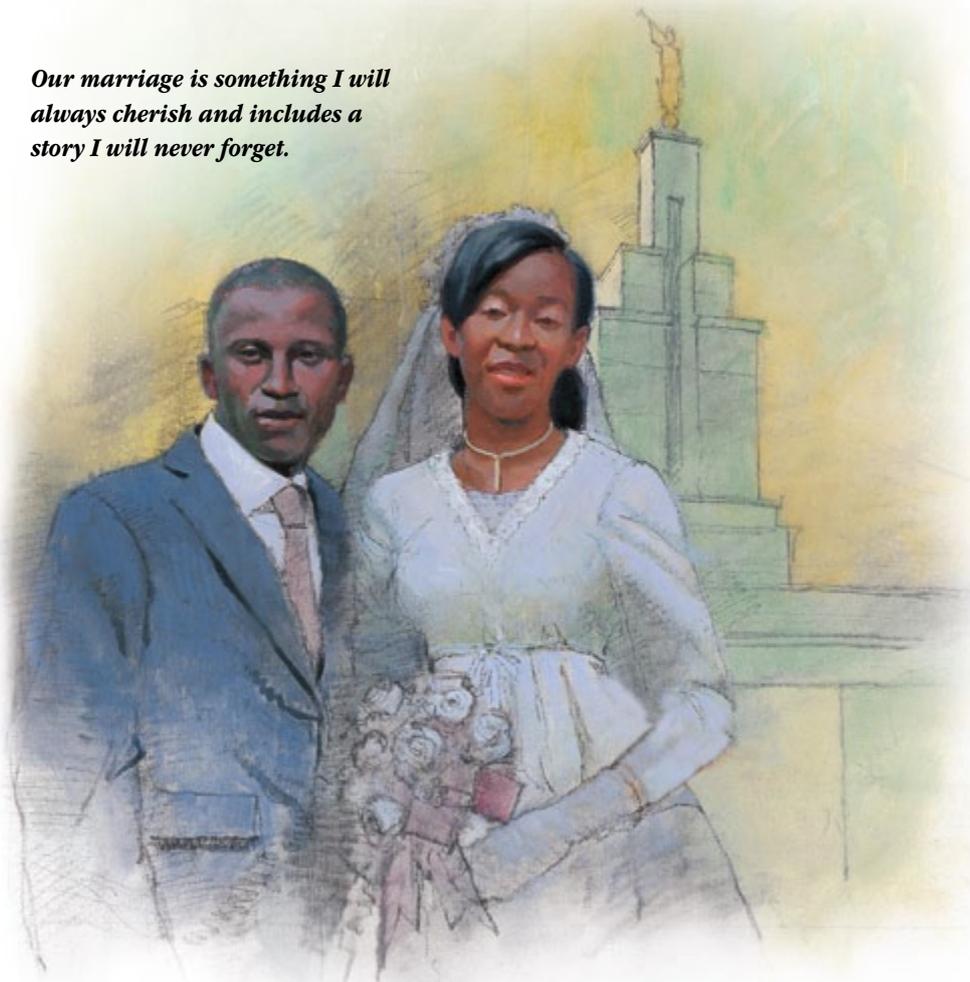
that we should consider alternatives. Because the Aba Nigeria Temple is the only temple in Nigeria, we realized that we would have to travel to the Accra Ghana Temple if we were going to be sealed anytime soon. Unfortunately, the trip would cost money we did not have. But we had always planned on a temple marriage, and we knew that we should move forward.

Borrowing money from family and friends, we arranged for an international passport, called the Accra Ghana Temple to schedule a date, and purchased airline tickets to fly to Ghana.

We arrived in Accra on August 14, 2009, and went to the temple the next day. In the sealing room, only the temple sealer and two witnesses

joined us. No friends, no family, and no one we knew was with us. But in an unfamiliar country, in an area far from our home, we knew we were where we should be, doing what we should be doing. During that moment, we felt the powers of eternity and understood more clearly the love Heavenly Father has for us and for all of His children.

Tragically, my wife died in 2010 after giving birth to our first child. I miss her deeply but take great comfort in knowing that we have been sealed in the temple. I am eternally grateful that we didn't put off our temple marriage by waiting for a convenient time. Our marriage is something I will always cherish and includes a story I will never forget. ■  
Chinedu Enwereuzo, Lagos, Nigeria



## COULD I FIND A JOB?

I stared at the folded bill in my hand as I realized I still needed to pay tithing on money I had earned during the last week of my summer job. I owed 90 rands in tithing, and I had one R100 bill.

I had just started my final year of medical school and had many school expenses. I sat there fiddling with the R100 bill, thinking about paying tithing. My summer job had ended, and it was unlikely I'd find a job that would fit into my busy schedule. However, my parents had taught me to pay a full tithe. This money belonged to the Lord, and I knew it. With that thought, I placed the money in the envelope and paid my tithing.

In the days following, as I searched for a job, I prayed that the windows of heaven would open for me. I needed a job that would fit my schedule, pay well for low hours, and still allow me time to study. In short, I needed a miracle.

Two weeks later a friend suggested that I apply for a job at the hospital where our medical school had just opened a new education floor. I walked to the office and knocked on the door. The woman inside, who had taught our class two years before, remembered me.

"I was wondering if you were looking to hire any tutors for your new program," I said. "If you are, I would like to be hired."

"We are indeed," she replied. "We are looking for someone to tutor a

group of second-year medical students for an hour in the afternoons. It's a flexible start time and will require you to study a different patient each day and then to teach the students. Can you do that?" she asked.

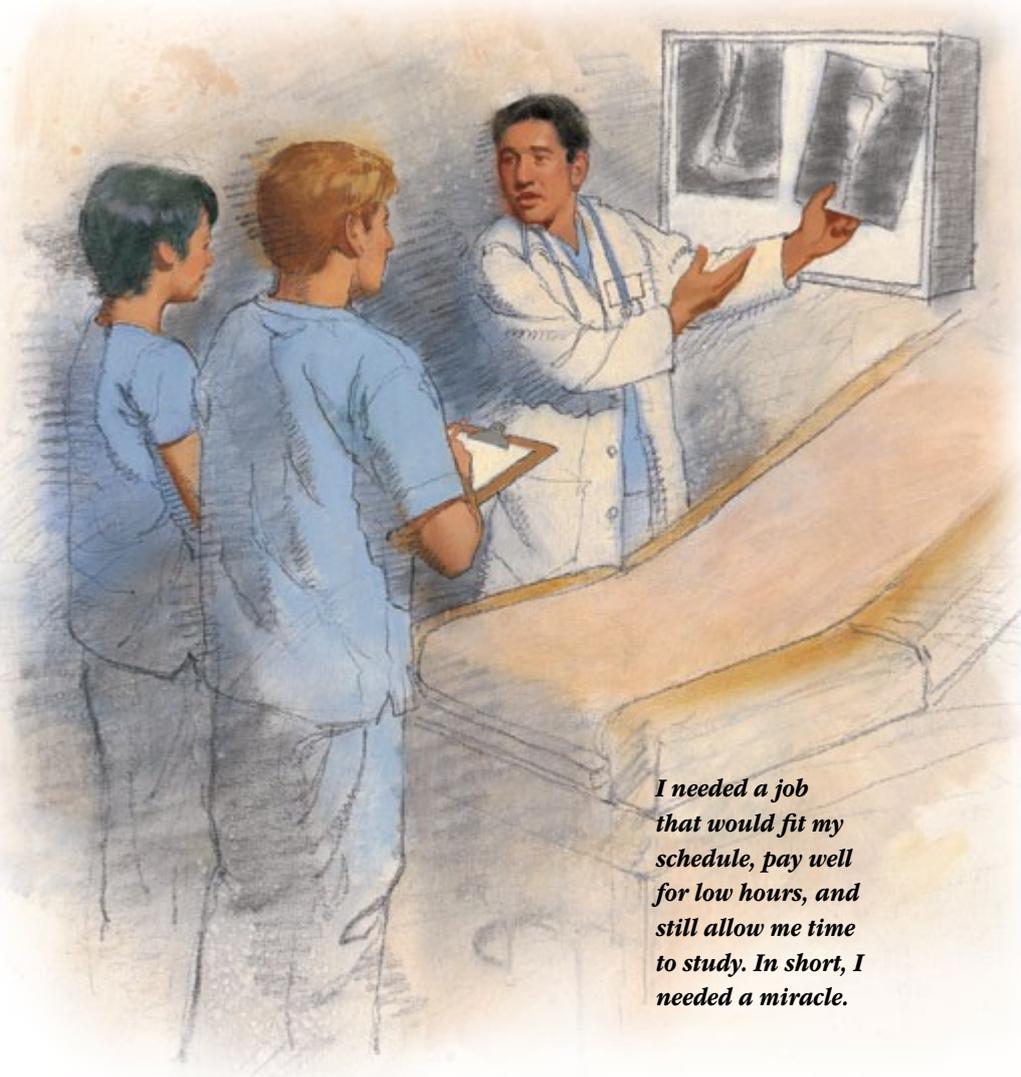
The Lord had helped me find a job that was exactly what I needed! It was the answer to my prayer.

After working a month, I found out just how much I had been blessed.

My paycheck showed that I was being paid a monthly salary three times higher than I had thought. In addition, I received vacation pay.

The Lord had opened the windows of heaven and showered me with blessings far greater than I had ever expected. As a result, my faith was strengthened in the principle of tithing. ■

Greg Burgoyne, South Africa



*I needed a job that would fit my schedule, pay well for low hours, and still allow me time to study. In short, I needed a miracle.*

# COURAGE TO SERVE



*Modern prophets have asked every worthy and able young man to serve a full-time mission and have welcomed the service of young women. Young adults around the world are responding to this call to serve, but following the prophet requires faith and courage. In the following stories, young returned missionaries share how they found the strength to overcome the obstacles that come with deciding and preparing to serve a mission.*

## STICKING TO MY DECISION

When I turned 21, I started feeling promptings to serve a mission. I had never planned on a mission, so these thoughts were unexpected. My priesthood leader encouraged me to pray about it, and I did so.

My answer came very clearly: I knew that God wanted me to serve a mission. I initially felt excited about serving, but leaving on a mission was more challenging than I had anticipated.

My boss did not understand why I would leave for 18 months, and he

didn't want to give me time off to prepare for leaving. He gave me an ultimatum: "Work or don't work. It's your choice." As scary as it was to not work in the final weeks before my mission, I chose to leave that job.

Completing the medical requirements was also complicated. My doctor in my native country, Russia, had never seen the Church's missionary medical documents before and refused to sign them.

Obstacles like these made me wonder whether I had really made the right choice. Several times I came close to changing my mind. But in those times of doubt, I remembered

the answer I had received to my prayer and was able to stick to my decision to serve. Eventually, I found solutions to these and other challenges I encountered.

I was called to serve in the Russia St. Petersburg Mission. The first few months in the mission field were not easy. But because of what I learned in dealing with the obstacles I faced in preparing to serve, I was able to confront the challenges of my mission. My mission—and the difficulties I faced in preparing for it—taught me that I can do difficult things with the Lord's help.

Elena Ogneva Anderson, Utah, USA

## MY LIFE BELONGS TO HIM

When I turned 18, a lot of members in my ward and stake began telling me I should go on a mission. Even though I had always planned to serve a mission, I didn't like all the pressure.

Soon I began my first year of college. As a result of hard work, I won a scholarship that allowed me to study in Germany. Germany was very different from my native country, Mexico, but I became immersed in the culture and learned the language quickly.

Eventually I was offered a permanent job at a prestigious European company. Serving a mission suddenly felt more like a duty than a desire. I thought that I could take this job and enjoy worldly success.

One snowy day I traveled to the city of Heidelberg with my friend Melanie. After several hours, the highway was covered with snow, and we became sleepy. We were driving around 65 miles (105 km) per hour when we passed through a red light and hit a bus.

When I woke up, I saw the police, the ambulance, and Melanie, who was crying. The car was destroyed, and I was still in it. Tears came to my eyes when I realized how blessed we were to be alive. I began praying and thanking



my Heavenly Father for letting us survive, but a new fear came to me—I was not able to move my legs.

On our way to the hospital, I heard the nurses saying that if I had a spinal injury, I probably wouldn't be able to walk again. I prayed with all my heart to my Heavenly Father. First I thanked Him again for letting me survive, realizing that my life was not my own. Then I promised Him, "If my legs are OK and I can walk, I will serve a mission with all my heart and mind."

After four hours at the hospital, my diagnosis was promising: I would walk again. I no longer had any hesitation about serving a mission. Instead I felt a strong desire to share my testimony that God lives, that He is our Father in Heaven, and that He can perform miracles in our lives.

After that experience I decided not to take the job I'd been offered. I knew that my time and everything I have belong to the Lord. Why shouldn't I give Him a little of that time and serve Him for two years?

After graduating, I was called to serve in Frankfurt, Germany. During my mission I testified of my Heavenly Father. I know that He lives, that He is my Father, and that He protects me. He has given me my life, and it will always belong to Him.

**Mahonry Gonzalez, Morelos, Mexico**



## I CHANGED MY MIND

I was 21 years old and part owner of a beauty salon. I taught a Primary class at church. My life was good, but I felt restless. It seemed that there was something else that I needed to be doing—I just didn't know what.

My bishop called me into his office one Sunday and asked me if I had considered serving a mission. I was totally caught off guard. I had been a member of the Church for only two years and had never thought of serving a mission.

I told the bishop that I didn't think a mission was right for me. As I was leaving his office, he said, "Well, if you change your mind, let me know." I thought the topic was closed, but the bishop's words continued to echo in my mind.

I asked myself how I could possibly serve a mission. I was the only member of the Church in my family. How would my family feel? What would I do with my share of the beauty salon? Could I handle serving for a year and a half?

As I pondered these questions, I was prompted to read the Book of Mormon. I picked it up and turned to the eighth chapter of Alma. As I read about Alma and Amulek embarking on their mission, I knew that I also needed "to declare the words of God" (verse 30). The next Sunday I told my bishop that I had changed my



### ENTITLED TO THE LORD'S HELP

"Some of you may be shy by nature

or consider yourselves inadequate to respond affirmatively to the call to serve. Remember that this is the Lord's work, and when we are on the Lord's errand, we are entitled to the Lord's help. The Lord will shape the back to bear the burden placed upon it."

President Thomas S. Monson, "The Lord Needs Missionaries," *Liahona and Ensign*, Jan. 2011, 4.

mind and I wanted to serve a mission.

My family was supportive, and I was able to sell my share of the beauty salon. I served in Caracas, Venezuela, and I continue to reap the blessings of having honorably served the Lord.

Jessica Baksis, Idaho, USA

## CONVERTED TO THE GOSPEL—AND A MISSION

I grew up in the Church and had always planned on serving a mission. Yet as the time for me to serve approached, I longed to have a powerful conversion experience of my own such as I heard other people talk about when they described joining the Church.

I knew that leaving on a mission would require sacrifices. I had a good job that paid well, and I wondered if I would be able to find one as good upon my return. I worried about interrupting my education and

leaving family and friends. But I knew deep down that serving a mission was right, so I continued to prepare.

As part of that preparation, I went with the elders in my area to their teaching appointments. One evening the missionaries and I were teaching a man about the Word of Wisdom, but he would not accept the principle. When we left his home, I could tell that the elders were discouraged, and I felt sad too.

I wasn't sure why I should be sad though, because I didn't really know this man. I kept thinking about it, and I realized that I had these feelings because I had felt the Spirit during the lesson. I was saddened that this man had rejected something that had brought me so much joy.

With that thought I realized I *was* truly converted. I knew the gospel was true, and I couldn't wait to share it. I was soon called to serve in the Italy Rome Mission.

I was blessed abundantly for the sacrifices I had made in preparing for my mission. I taught the gospel to many wonderful people, I made lifelong friends, and I learned English. The blessings continued after my return home. I was hired at the same job I had before my mission and even received a promotion.

Perhaps the greatest blessing, however, was an increased testimony of the gospel. My mission was a period of unparalleled spiritual growth, for which I will always be grateful. ■  
Marco Brando, Italy

# Our Families' Personal Progress

By Hillary Slaughter  
and Elyssa J. Kirkham

Sometimes one person can change everything around him or her. If you start with yourself—if you have courage to start with yourself—then everything around you may order itself in time,” says Katya Kalashnikova from Kyiv, Ukraine.

Through faith and Personal Progress, Katya Kalashnikova and Ivanna Rubanchiuk of the Voskresens'kyi Ward were able to find that courage, giving them the opportunity to strengthen their families and prepare for the temple.

## Making a Change

Both Katya's and Ivanna's families joined the Church shortly after the Kyiv Ukraine Mission was organized in 1992. But both families drifted into

inactivity before either girl was old enough to be baptized.

Ivanna's family moved when she was 13 to a home near a Latter-day Saint chapel. As she and her mother walked past it, her mother remembered the goodness the Church had brought into her life. She encouraged Ivanna to go to church. “My mother knew that in the Church they would teach me only good things in comparison to the world,” Ivanna says. She began attending church and activities and meeting with the missionaries, and when the missionaries asked her if she would be baptized, she agreed.

## Katya's Story

At age 15 Katya was returning from a trip with a community youth group. She was surprised when her father told her that he had invited the

missionaries to teach her. He made it clear that while she was welcome to listen, he was not interested.

Katya set a time to meet with the missionaries. “As I listened, I felt that this is the right way to go. I remembered those feelings I'd had going to church as a child. And after a while, I decided to be baptized,” she says.

## Progressing Personally

Both young women had to make adjustments to become members of the Church, and Personal Progress helped them make the transition. “I was still growing. I had my own habits. Even my manner of dress needed to change,” Katya recalls. “Personal Progress little by little helped me change. It gave me power to be a daughter of God, not just in church but every day.”

Through Personal Progress, Ivanna and Katya were able to establish habits that would spiritually strengthen them, such as prayer, scripture study, and watching appropriate media. They also learned how to teach lessons and serve others. Overall, it helped them draw closer to God and become better examples to their families.

“Personal Progress helped me. Every completed assignment gave me growth; it added knowledge

*Katya Kalashnikova gained knowledge by doing Personal Progress, which influenced her parents to join her in attending church. Opposite page: Katya and her friend Ivanna Rubanchiuk in front of the Kyiv Ukraine Temple.*



*Personal Progress helped two young women in Kyiv, Ukraine, make positive changes in their lives and in their families' lives.*



and courage,” Ivanna says. “It was especially good for me because most members of my family aren’t active members of the Church.”

### Leading by Example

The changes Ivanna made through Personal Progress helped her be an example to her family. “All this time my parents have seen how I’ve changed. They were very happy that I was going to church,” Ivanna says. She attended church and activities alone until one day her mother decided to come with her to sacrament meeting. Now they attend church together.

Katya’s example also touched the lives of her family. Shortly after Katya joined the Church, her mother started to come with her and then her father. The families of both of these young women noticed the difference Personal Progress and Church activity made in Katya’s and Ivanna’s lives. They saw how happy they had become and wanted to take part in that joy.

***Ivanna credits Personal Progress with helping her set a good example for her family. Ivanna and her mother now attend church together.***



### Entering the House of the Lord

The joy of Katya and her family continued to grow. As Katya participated in Personal Progress, she noticed that it focused on the importance of the temple. “There is a whole section dedicated to going to the temple, and I really wanted to get to the temple, but my parents weren’t ready,” she remembers.

Katya was able, however, to attend the temple with her seminary class. She recalls, “I did temple work for the first time. I was really happy, and I wanted to go again. I really wanted my family to go there and be sealed for eternity.”

Katya’s family prepared and finally felt that they were ready to go to the temple. Two years after her first visit to the temple, Katya returned, this time with her family. “I understood that it really is a place where families can become eternal,” Katya says. They were sealed in the Freiberg Germany Temple.



### DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

“The Young Women program has in it [a] powerful pattern to develop spiritual

strength in the young women and to offer the opportunity for us to help. Personal Progress helps young women prepare to receive the ordinances of the temple. They are helped by the examples of mothers, grandmothers, and every righteous woman around them in the Church.”

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Help Them on Their Way Home,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2010, 24–25.**

### Continuing in Faith

Katya and Ivanna are grateful for the Church, and both have benefited from its offerings, especially Personal Progress. “My testimony of Personal Progress is that it makes us stronger and helps us be perfected in every aspect of our lives,” says Katya.

Ivanna feels that Young Women and Church organizations have helped her prepare to be a missionary. Ivanna is positive about missionary work. She says, “Don’t get discouraged, but always be an example of how the Church changes our lives. We’re happy in it, and every person wants to be happy. And if we take people and show them that happiness, then they will follow our example. We always can—with small steps—help those people, serve them, and in some wonderful moment, they will be ready.” ■

# ONE WORD AND A LESSON OF A LIFETIME

**By Heather Wrigley**

Church Magazines

*Integrity is the way you act when you think no one is looking.*

It was a blistering 115 degrees F (46°C) outside, typical for a summer day out on the farm in Brawley, California, USA. I kicked the tire of the huge water truck that had broken down for the third time in four days. I relied on my summer job to pay for entertainment, school clothes, and

eventually college. Despite the heat, I hated having to cut a day's work short, but it looked like I was going to have to do so again.

David, a member of our ward and a family friend, walked over from the mill to take a look at the truck. Venting my frustrations to him, I was tempted to say a word I had heard others use when they were annoyed. The moment before I actually said it, the thought crossed my mind that I shouldn't because I knew it was a bad word. But in an instant, I brushed it off, thinking no one would ever find out. I said the word, but it didn't make me feel any better.



## INTEGRITY AND SELF- RESPECT

"Perhaps the surest test of an individual's

integrity is his refusal to do or say anything that would damage his self-respect."

President Thomas S. Monson, "In Search of an Abundant Life," *Liahona*, Aug. 1988, 3; "In Quest of the Abundant Life," *Ensign*, Mar. 1988, 4.

Looking up, David told me he and Dad would fix the truck when they could. In the meantime, I found other work to do for the rest of the day.

Hopping into Dad's truck at the end of the day, we began the drive home. Not too long after getting on the road, Dad looked over at me and mentioned that David had told him about my reaction to the truck breaking down, swear word and all. "David said he never expected to hear something like that come out of my daughter's mouth," Dad said.

"He respects you too much, honey."

I hung my head, and the tears came quickly. I had lowered myself in the eyes of people whose opinions I cared about. But most of all, I felt disappointed in myself and knew God did too. I realized that was why saying the word hadn't made me feel any better.

I made a promise never to say that word again or anything else that would not please God, not because I didn't want to make my dad and David ashamed of me but because it was the right thing to do. Integrity, I learned, is the way you act when you think no one is looking. ■

# Am I a Child of God?

By Valarie Schenk

*One verse in the Old Testament helped me understand my divine nature.*

**A**s a 21-year-old college student, I was looking for the truth and ecstatic to hear the gospel message from the missionaries. I accepted the message slowly but wholeheartedly. I joined the Church, but I was the only member of my family to do so.

After being a member of the Church for about one year, I realized my testimony was growing stronger every day, but something was missing. I didn't know that I was a child of God.

It was true that I had accepted God as the Father of all. I had not, however, realized how intimately He knows each of His creations. "With all that there is in this world," I asked myself, "how could He possibly know me personally? How could He consider me His daughter? How could He love me as His child?"

It was with these questions in mind that I turned to Heavenly Father in prayer. Shortly after, during scripture

study, I stumbled across 1 Chronicles 28:9. King David told his son, "Thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."

No other verse of scripture has brought me closer to my Father in Heaven than this one. It testified to me not only that I am a daughter of God but that if I seek Him, I can find Him. It testified to me of my divine nature. I had not, in my heart, been fully converted to the idea that I was a child of God. I had hoped that these things were true but couldn't grasp the knowledge of such a loving Father in Heaven. I couldn't fathom a Being who could know my innermost thoughts and aspirations. I couldn't accept His love, knowing my shortcomings and the many mistakes I had made.

The scripture taught me many things. First, David, who had made many mistakes of his own, counsels his son Solomon to seek the Lord and serve Him with full purpose. By this

Solomon can find the Lord. Reading these words awakened in me a strong desire to develop a personal relationship with my Father in Heaven. I was learning more about Heavenly Father's loving ways. I knew that, like David and Solomon, I could be found of Him. Our relationship was growing. This scripture gave me a formula to live by, and I found it to be true.

I discovered that Heavenly Father knows me personally. I continued to study this scripture until the phrase "the Lord searcheth all hearts" was embedded in my mind. Each time I read it, the Holy Ghost whispered to my heart that Heavenly Father knows everything, even "all the imaginations of the thoughts." I knew that He was not just my Creator but that He was my loving Father and I was His beloved child. I had finally come to accept that He knows me. He knows my private thoughts, aspirations, dreams, desires, fears, intents, and, of greatest importance to me, my imaginations. He knows me as my parents here on earth know me but even more so. It was with these insights that I gained a testimony that I am a child of God. ■



### BELOVED DAUGHTERS OF HEAVENLY FATHER

"On the first page of your *Young Women Personal Progress*

book, you will find these words: 'You are a beloved daughter of Heavenly Father, prepared to come to the earth at this particular time for a sacred and glorious purpose' [(booklet, 2009), 1].

"Sisters, those words are true! They are not made up in a fairy tale! Isn't it remarkable to know that our eternal Heavenly Father knows you, hears you, watches over you, and loves you with an infinite love? In fact, His love for you is so great that He has granted you this earthly life as a precious gift of 'once upon a time,' complete with your own true story of adventure, trial, and opportunities for greatness, nobility, courage, and love. And, most glorious of all, He offers you a gift beyond price and comprehension. Heavenly Father offers to you the greatest gift of all—eternal life—and the opportunity and infinite blessing of your own 'happily ever after.'

"But such a blessing does not come without a price. It is not given simply because you desire it. It comes only through understanding who you are and what you must become in order to be worthy of such a gift."

**President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Your Happily Ever After," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 124–25.**

# LEARN, ACT, **SHARE**



**By Adam C. Olson**  
Church Magazines

**H**elaman Ayala loves ninjitsu (a Japanese martial art). This priest in the Hacienda Ward, Mexico City Tecamac Stake, has spent a lot of time practicing what he has learned. Often his friends ask him to show them different techniques.

*Three words  
give you the key  
to fulfilling your  
duty to God.*

He also loves music and has taken some guitar lessons. “But I don’t have a lot of time to practice,” he says. “So I haven’t progressed much. And I can’t share it much.”

Helaman understands the importance of practicing what you learn and then sharing it. “You can’t just know. You must do,” he says. “We can learn things, but if we don’t put them into practice, they won’t do us any good. And sharing is essential to help you make sure you’ve learned it.”

That’s what he likes about the new *Duty to God*. “I like the idea of ‘learn, act, share,’” he says. “It has helped me a lot. Knowing more and applying what I’ve learned has helped my testimony.”

He uses the plan of salvation as an example. It’s a doctrine he has heard many times. “But studying it for myself, I saw the love Heavenly Father has for us. The Holy Ghost touched my heart, and I felt inside that it is true. I came to feel the love He has for me that He would send His Son.”

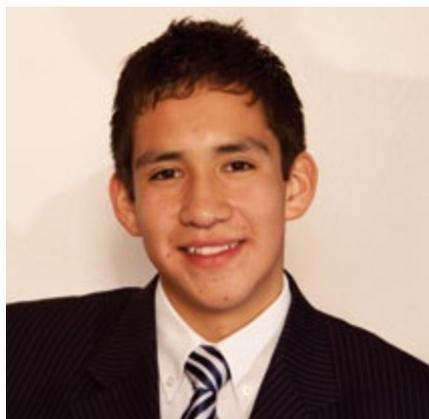
As Helaman sets and works on his *Duty to God* goals, he appreciates the support he receives from his parents. “My parents encourage me, they remind me when I forget, and they ask me if I’ve set my goals,” he says.

His father, who is the bishop of their ward, spends time helping him.

“He helps me understand things I don’t understand,” Helaman says. “My father and mother both support me a lot in that respect.”

Helaman says the goals *Duty to God* asks young men to set are for their good. *Duty to God* has strengthened his faith and helped him resist temptation. It has also helped prepare him for the future. “The book helps you to prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and teaches you many of the things you’ll need as a missionary.”

Just as he has progressed in



ninjitsu through setting goals to learn, acting upon what he has learned, and sharing with others, Helaman knows that “to progress in life, we need to set goals and look to the future.”

Using *Duty to God* and with his parents’ help, Helaman has made a good start. ■



## DILIGENCE AND TRUST

“Just a few weeks ago, I saw a new deacon start on [the] path of diligence. His father

showed me a diagram his son had created that showed every row in their chapel, a number for each deacon who would be assigned to pass the sacrament, and their route through the chapel to serve the sacrament to the members. The father and I smiled to think that a boy, without being asked to do it, would make a plan to be sure he would succeed in his priesthood service.

“I recognized in his diligence the pattern from the new *Duty to God* booklet. It is to learn what the Lord expects of you, make a plan to do it, act on your plan with diligence, and then share with others how your experience changed you and blessed others. . . .

“You will become more diligent as you feel the magnitude of the trust God has placed in you. There is a message from the First Presidency for you in that *Duty to God* booklet: ‘Heavenly Father has great trust and confidence in you and has an important mission for you to fulfill. He will help you as you turn to Him in prayer, listen for the promptings of the Spirit, obey the commandments, and keep the covenants that you have made’ [*Fulfilling My Duty to God: For Aaronic Priesthood Holders* (booklet, 2010), 5].”

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Act in All Diligence,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2010, 60–61.**

# Duty to God with DAD

By Paul VanDenBerghe

Church Magazines

*Need help with Duty to God?  
It's close to home.*

After learning about the new *Duty to God* booklet in a fireside last year, Aleks Miller—deacons quorum president of the North Shore Ward, Vancouver British Columbia Stake—was eager to get started. He and his father set up a schedule to meet each Sunday to work on a section of the booklet together.

“My dad and I, every week, sit down and look through a section of the book,” says Aleks. “We start with a prayer, and then we learn the stuff and read the scriptures. We answer the questions in the section and then write down how we can implement what we’ve learned.” Aleks often shares with his mother what he and his father are working on. “I talked with my mom about the sacrament and the meaning of the sacrament prayers and wrote down some ideas about how I, as a deacon, could help make the sacrament more meaningful for her.”

After only a few weeks of these Duty-to-God-with-Dad meetings, Aleks noticed it was making a difference in his life. “It makes me feel



## YOUR FUTURE BECKONS

“Active service in the Aaronic Priesthood will prepare you young men to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, to serve missions, and to marry in the holy temple.

“You will ever remember your Aaronic Priesthood quorum advisers and your fellow quorum members. . . .

“Young men of the Aaronic Priesthood, your future beckons; prepare for it. May Heavenly Father ever guide you as you do so. May He guide all of us as we strive to honor the priesthood which we hold and to magnify our callings.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Do Your Duty—That Is Best,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 59.

really good,” he says. Sitting down with his father is not always the first thing Aleks wants to do on a Sunday afternoon, “but once we start learning and reading together, I’m a lot happier and I feel better about doing it.”

Aleks has set new goals and is gaining a greater understanding of the gospel as he studies and learns with his father. “One of the sections in *Duty to God* suggested we study five topics in *For the Strength of Youth* and then write down a goal for each one so that you can do better,” explains Aleks. “I chose honesty. So one of my goals was to let my parents know when I do something wrong instead of just keeping it to myself.”

Another topic Aleks chose was education. “My goal was to go an entire month in school with no messing around in class and finishing all my work so I wouldn’t have any homework. It’s going pretty well, and now I have a lot of extra time.”

Now Aleks is encouraging all the deacons in his quorum to work on fulfilling their duty to God. And he offers the same advice to any other young men who are thinking about opening their booklets and getting down to work: “Just do it,” he says. “If you can’t seem to get started on your own, do it like I do and ask your dad to do it with you.” ■

# Calling My QUORUM

By Mark Tensmeyer

*I was serving a family in my ward, and I needed help to get everything done.*

One Saturday afternoon I received a phone call from the father of a family I home taught. “I was wondering if you could watch our kids while Cindy and I go visit her grandma,” Brother Stevens asked (names have been changed). “She hasn’t been doing well, and we think this might be our last chance to see her.”

I assured Brother Stevens I would be glad to help. “That’s great!” he said. “And if you could, it would be nice if you could straighten up around the house, since today is our anniversary.”

When I arrived, Brother and Sister Stevens left me with some microwavable noodles and a list of chores to do around the house. Then they drove off. I had a strong impression that I should do more than just watch their children. This was a difficult day for them, and I wanted to make it a bit better. I decided to do all the chores on the list and more, including washing the

dishes and mowing and edging the lawn.

Obviously, I couldn’t do all of that and take care of their three kids in just three hours, so I thought I should call some

members of my priests quorum. There was just one problem: I wasn’t exactly friends with the guys in my quorum. We got along all right, but aside from the Church, we didn’t have a lot in common. We went to different schools, and I rarely saw them outside of Church functions. I felt awkward calling them for something like this.

I called the Young Men president and asked if he could get some of the guys together to help. He kindly replied that he was simply an adviser and explained that I should call Peter, the first assistant to the bishop, who had the calling to help me in my priesthood responsibility. That was exactly what I was afraid he would say.

Nervous and with a little hesitation, I called Peter and asked if he could come over. “Sure,” he said. “I’ve got Scott and Kevin here, and I’ll bring them over too.”

Together, we mowed and edged the lawn, did the dishes, and straightened up the house. Brother and Sister Stevens came home just as we were finishing.

That experience taught me that priesthood quorums are united by faith in Jesus Christ *and* in service, regardless of differences in interests, personalities, or backgrounds. ■



# A GREATER GOAL

*Inviting others to Church activities is a great way to help us fulfill our priesthood duty of inviting “all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59).*

**By Nereida Santafe de Salinas**

**O**ur stake, the San Cristóbal Venezuela Stake, decided to organize a football tournament for the Aaronic Priesthood youth. This activity had more than one purpose, including building friendships and strengthening the various priesthood quorums.

The stake leaders said that only the young men of each ward or branch were allowed to participate and they were to encourage new members and less-active members to join them so they would have full teams for each age group. In our ward, the Tárriba Ward, there were only two deacons, one teacher, and a few priests.

## **Building a Team**

My son, José Francisco, whom we lovingly call “Junior,” was part of the deacons quorum, with his good friend Oscar Alejandro. It was obvious that there were not enough boys to participate in the football tournament. So they worked with the missionaries and ward leaders to find all of the less-active youth. They spent time each

week seeking out these young men, encouraging them and gaining their trust. Because of the efforts of this pair of 12-year-old boys, they were able to get enough young men for a team. One of the miracles that resulted from their efforts was that our ward gained several more active youth!

During the week they would pick up their new friends and then practice on a community field. It was a lot of work, and they were always tired. They had little coaching or strategy, but the young men didn’t let that stop them. They were happy with what they were doing.

## **Starting the Tournament**

At last, the first day of the competition arrived. Our valiant team of deacons arrived at the stake center. They didn’t have much of a crowd to cheer them on, nor did they have a coach to help them or uniforms like most of the other teams. But they played with enthusiasm, unity, and love.

They lost the first game by a landslide. But they didn’t give up, and the entire stake began to encourage

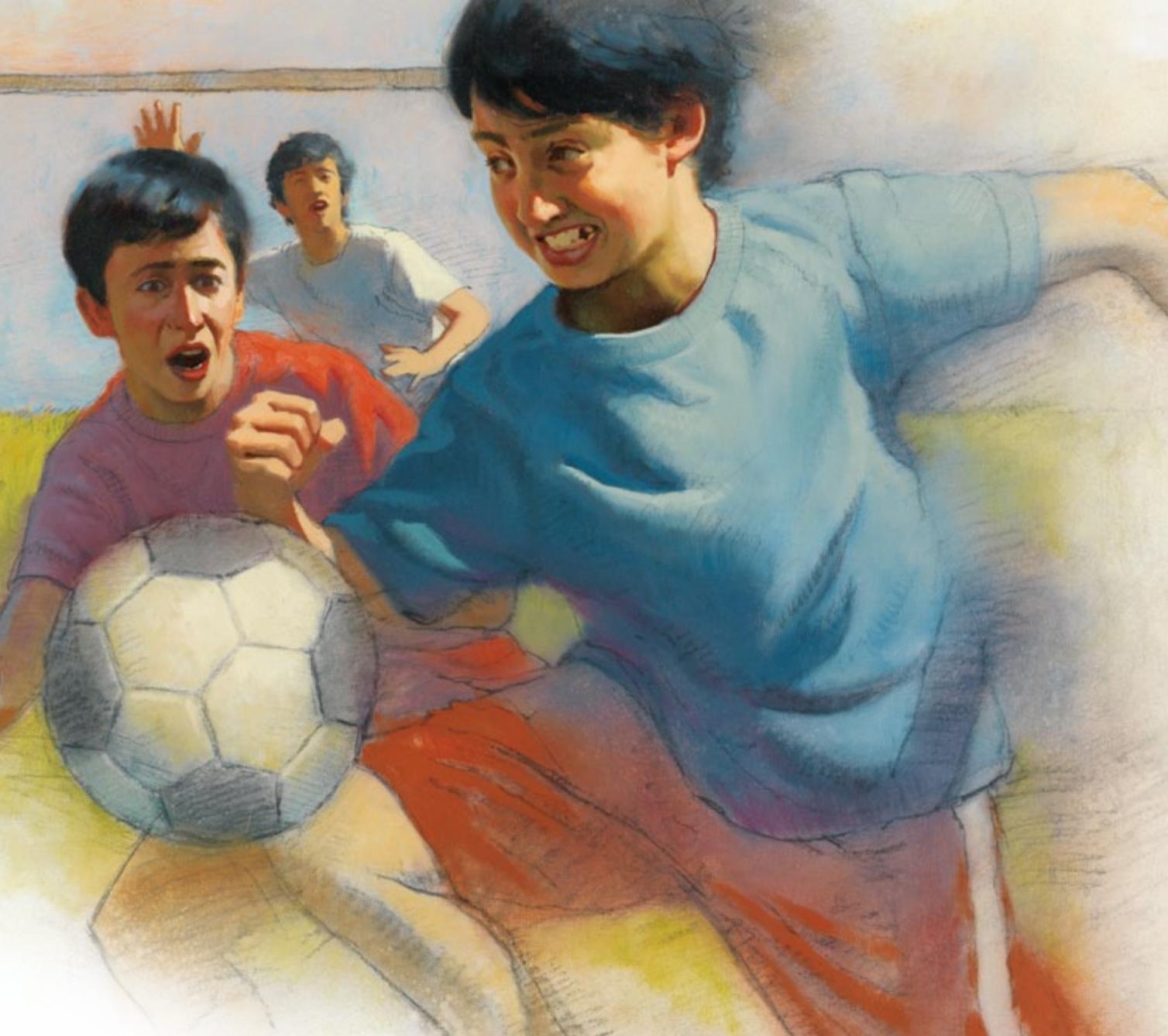
them, saying that the boys from the Tárriba Ward were such good examples.

Junior was the goalkeeper. He defended the goal with such fervor that the balls he blocked left marks on his hands. That night at home, he told me that his hands really hurt and that he needed some gloves. We got out our savings so we could buy him a pair of gloves. But the gloves at the store were more than we could afford, so we had to buy some fabric gardening gloves. He took them with much gratitude.

I don’t know where his team got the motivation to continue. They were last in the rankings, but they kept playing.

Finally it was time for the elimination rounds. Due to the lack of deacons in the stake, this valiant group was able to play in the finals, but they played against a practiced team whose coach was a very good player. He had spent a lot of time working with his team. They were the top team; they had matching uniforms and exhibited





the discipline that came from training. Their coach likely felt confident about winning the game because my son's team was not very good.

My husband had just returned from a trip, so he decided to help the deacons. He encouraged them, gave them some pointers, and surprisingly they won. So they were able to face the other stake team. Our young men won again!

When the game ended, everyone applauded. The crowd could hardly believe that those young men were

able to win first place in the deacon's category and third place in the stake for the entire Aaronic Priesthood.

#### **Accomplishing Their Goals**

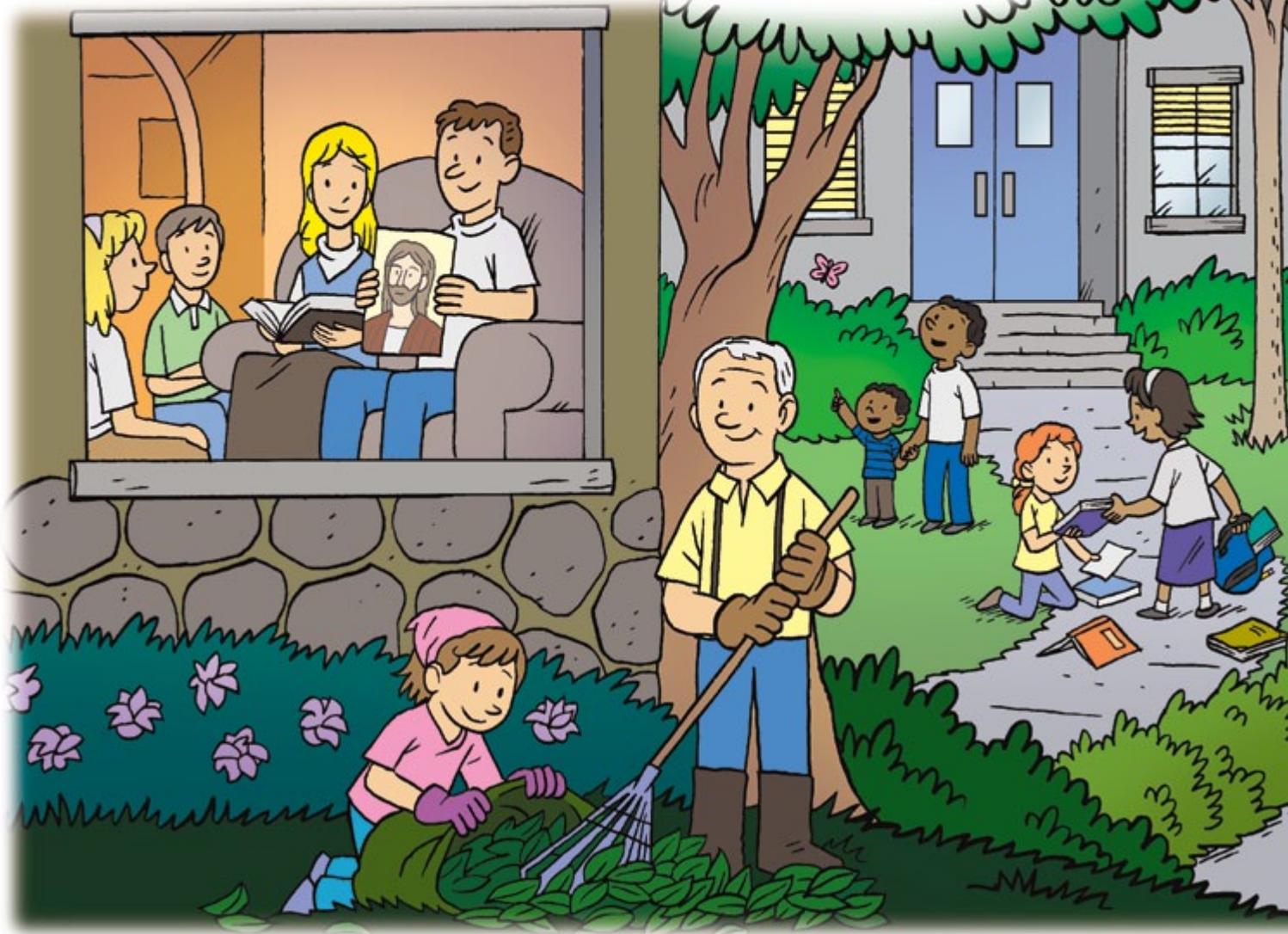
This experience taught us about principles and eternal truths that

would serve us here in this life. The young men of the stake were examples of love, activation, perseverance, enthusiasm, and working together as a team. They demonstrated the true objective of the activity. They built bonds of friendship with others. ■

# Be a Family Builder

Have you ever thought about all of the families you are part of? All of the families described on these pages are important and help you grow. For each family, find two scenes below that show a way you can be a family builder.

*“I am a builder working each day to build my family” (“My Eternal Family,” 2009 Outline for Sharing Time and Children’s Sacrament Meeting Presentation, 10–11).*



## HEAVENLY FATHER’S FAMILY

You have perfect, immortal heavenly parents who love you perfectly and know everything that goes on in your life. You will always belong to this family, and so will all of Heavenly Father’s other spirit children. This means that every person on earth is your spirit brother or sister.

## YOUR FAMILY

These are the people you know best—mother, father, brothers, and sisters. Heavenly Father put you in a family so you would have people to love you, teach you, and help you grow.

## YOUR EXTENDED FAMILY

Grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles are all part of your extended family. This gives you even more people to love!



### YOUR FUTURE FAMILY

The person you will one day marry and the children you will have will be part of this very important family. Plan to be sealed in the temple and live the gospel in your home so your family can be together forever.

### YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

The members of your ward or branch are like family members who care about and try to help each other. Members of the Church call each other "Brother" and "Sister" because they have been baptized into Jesus Christ's gospel. All the members of the Church around the world are one great family! ■

# Preparing to Do Baptisms for the Dead

By Elyssa J. Kirkham

**W**hen you are 12 years old, you may have the opportunity to go to the temple to be baptized and confirmed for those who died without the opportunity to accept the gospel. Here are some ways to prepare to enter the temple and feel the Holy Spirit there.

## How to Prepare

- Have faith in Jesus Christ. Be baptized and confirmed a member of His Church. Boys must hold the Aaronic Priesthood.
- Keep the commandments and make good choices. Repent when you do something wrong.
- Have an interview with your bishop or branch president. If you are worthy, he will give you a limited-use temple recommend.
- Help do family history work so you can take family names to the temple, if possible.
- Study the scriptures and Church publications (such as the October 2010 *Liahona*) that will help you understand temple work.

## On the Day

- Dress in your church clothes. Be clean and well groomed.
- Read the scriptures or Church magazines, or listen to uplifting music.
- Pray to feel the Holy Ghost when you are in the temple.
- Don't take books, electronics, or music on the way to the temple that will not help you feel reverent.

## In the Temple

- You will be given white clothing to change into. White is a

symbol of purity and cleanliness.

- At the baptismal font you may be able to watch others being baptized for the dead.
- While you wait, you can pray and ponder. The temple is a special place where you can be close to Heavenly Father.
- You will be confirmed for people who have already had their baptisms performed for them.
- Think about those you were baptized and confirmed for and the blessings that will now be available to them because of your temple service. ■



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA SMITH

# Happy in the Gospel

*“We will glory in the Lord; yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full” (Alma 26:16).*



*From an interview with Elder Carlos A. Godoy of the Seventy; by Jacob Fullmer*



went along with her. I was excited to finally find out what they were doing inside that church.

When we got there, we saw some members playing a simple game. They looked so happy, and that got my attention. **“Why are they so happy?”** I wondered.

**I found out when I took the missionary discussions and was baptized.** Happiness comes from inside. My conversion changed my life, the life of my children, and generations ahead and behind.

Whatever you do outside the teachings of the Church will not bring you happiness. Maybe it will bring you a laugh or a small moment of excitement, but real happiness is within the gospel.

Even if your friends sometimes make fun of you, they will admire you for standing by your principles.

Your parents love you. Whatever they ask you to do is not because they are being hard on you; it is because they want to protect you.

Always be grateful for your parents, the gospel, and the happiness it brings into your life. ■

**W**hen I was 14, my school was across from a Latter-day Saint chapel. I watched men in white shirts going in and out of that big building. I wondered what they were doing inside.

One day my friends and I wanted to play football, but there

was no more room on our school grounds. Someone said, “Let’s play at the church. They have a nice place outside to play.” That was my first contact with the Church—outside the building.

Two years later one of my brother’s friends invited my sister to go to the LDS Church, and I

# Our Page

## WITH PRAYER, FEAR AND PAIN SOON PASS

**O**ne Sunday a sick cat got into our house. It meowed loudly and strangely, and it would not go out of the house. I was afraid of the cat, so I decided to pray. When I ended my prayer, Mama had been able to get the cat out of the house.

Mama recently had a painful operation. I prayed hard that the operation would go well. When she came home from the hospital, I saw her crying, and she said she was in pain. I asked her if she wanted me to say a prayer, and she said yes. I knelt down and asked Heavenly Father for her pain to pass. When I ended the prayer, my mother was smiling, and she hugged and kissed me.

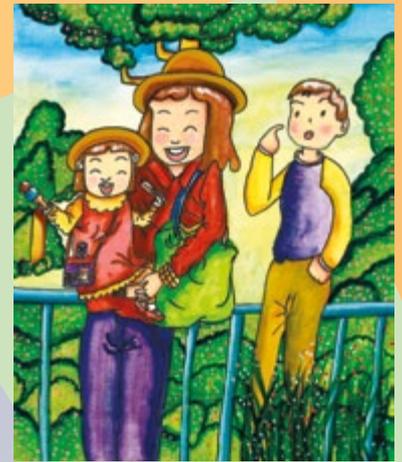
I know that Heavenly Father is loving and kind, and I know that when I am afraid or in pain, I can pray to Him and the fear and the pain soon pass.

**Helaman F., age 5, Brazil**

**Helaman and  
his brother,  
Ezra, age 10**



Milagros T., age 11, Peru



Guo J., age 10, Taiwan



**Primary children in the Tumán Ward, Pomalca Peru  
Stake, wait reverently for Primary to begin.**

**I**f you would like to submit a drawing, photo, experience, testimony, or letter for Our Page, e-mail it to [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org), with "Our Page" in the subject line. Or mail it to:

*Liahona, Our Page*  
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Each submission must include the child's full name, gender, and age (must be from 3 to 12 years old) plus the parent's name, ward or branch and stake or district, and the parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to use the child's photo and submission. Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.

BRIGHT IDEA 

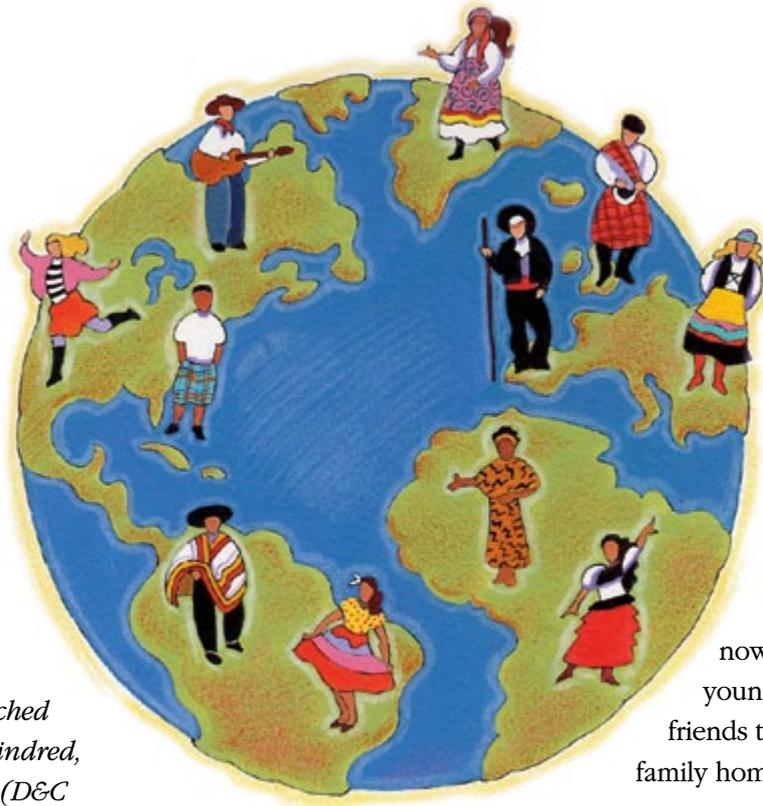
**“You are never lost when you can see the temple.”**

Elder Gary E. Stevenson of the Seventy, “Sacred Homes, Sacred Temples,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 101.



You can use this lesson and activity to learn more about this month's Primary theme.

# The Gospel Will Be Preached **IN ALL THE WORLD**



By Ana Maria Coburn  
and Cristina Franco

*"This gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (D&C 133:37).*

**H**ave you ever realized that very few people in the world have the blessings you have because you belong to Jesus Christ's true Church? Many people don't know they are Heavenly Father's children and that they can pray to Him and He will answer. They don't know about the blessings they can have because of the gospel. Heavenly Father

wants us to share the gospel with everyone.

Because there are so many people who need to hear the gospel, missionaries are called to serve in different parts of the world. The missionaries teach people what they need to know and do to return to live with Heavenly Father and Jesus.

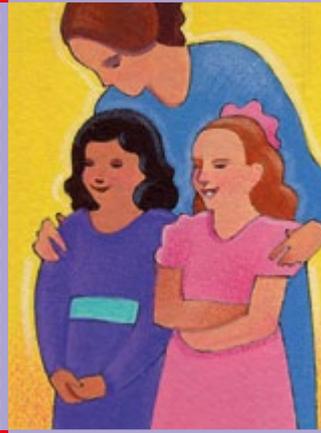
President Thomas S. Monson said you can prepare to be a missionary

now, even when you are young. You can invite your friends to church, activities, or family home evening. The best ways you can be a missionary now are by showing love and being a good example for your friends.

## Activity

Mount page 65 on heavier paper and cut out the 16 cards. Place the cards facedown on a flat surface. Take turns turning two cards over at a time, trying to find the word card and picture card that match. As you play, think of things you can do to be a missionary now. ■

**TAKE A  
FRIEND TO  
PRIMARY**



**CHOOSE  
THE RIGHT**



**“THIS  
GOSPEL  
SHALL BE  
PREACHED  
UNTO EVERY  
NATION.”**



**ELDERS**



**SISTER  
MISSIONARIES**



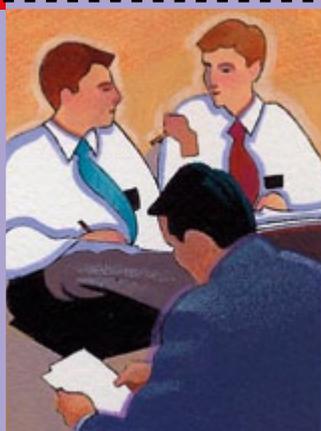
**BAPTISM**



**SCRIPTURES**



**MISSIONARY  
TRAINING  
CENTER**



*“Breaking bread from house to house, [they] did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart” (Acts 2:46).*

# The Dinner Game

By Rene Riding

Based on a true story

**T**he spicy scent of spaghetti sauce wafted through the air as Joseph and his family sat down for Sunday dinner. Dad said the prayer, and the food started its way around the table.

“Let’s play Movie Quotes!” Joseph declared.

Movie Quotes was his favorite game to play around the dinner table. His mom, dad, and two sisters, Jill and Julia, enjoyed the game too. One person would quote from a movie the family had seen. Then everyone else would try to be the first one to guess which movie the quote was from.

“Perhaps we should play a different game,” Mom said. “Since it’s Sunday, maybe we should play Scripture Quotes.”

“What’s that?” Joseph asked.

“I’ll think of a quote from the scriptures, and all of you try to guess who said it,” Mom said.

“That sounds boring,” Joseph said. “Besides, I don’t know any quotes from the scriptures.”

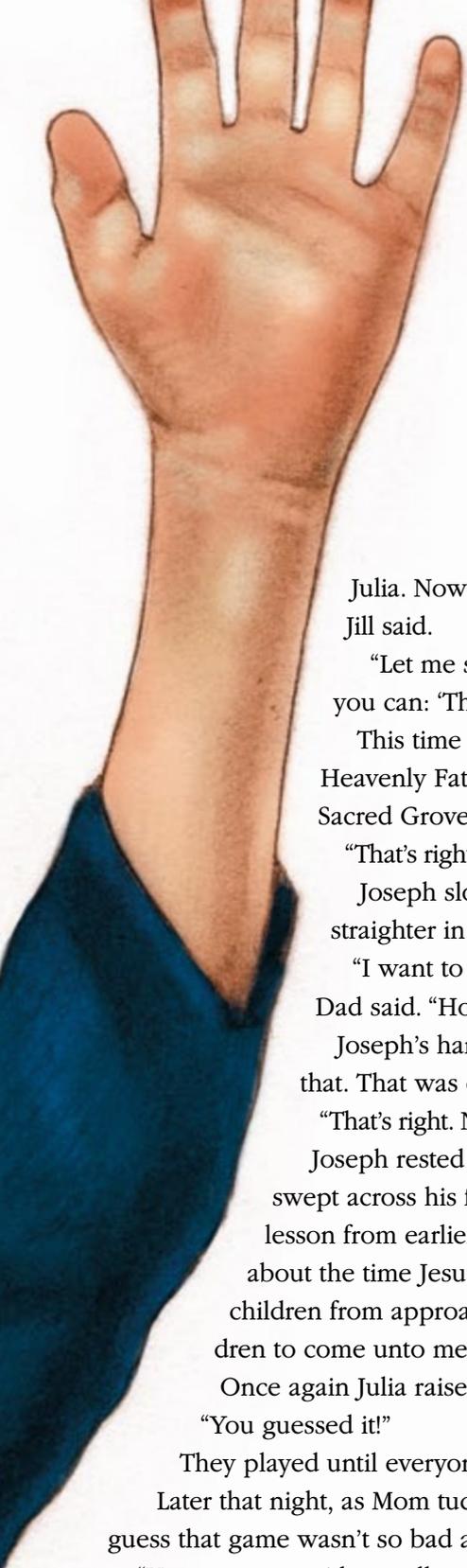
“I’ll go first!” Jill said. “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded.”

Julia’s hand shot up.

“Nephi said that!”

“You guessed it,





Julia. Now it's your turn to think of one," Jill said.

"Let me see. . . . All right, guess this one if you can: "This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!"

This time Dad raised his hand. "That's what Heavenly Father said to Joseph Smith in the Sacred Grove."

"That's right," Julia said. "Way to go, Dad!"

Joseph slowly began to sit up a little straighter in his chair.

"I want to come up with a really hard one," Dad said. "How about this: 'Let my people go.'"

Joseph's hand popped up. "Hey, Moses said that. That was easy."

"That's right. Now you think of one," Dad said.

Joseph rested his chin on his hand. Then a smile swept across his face as he remembered his Primary lesson from earlier that day. Sister Morris had talked about the time Jesus's disciples had tried to keep some children from approaching Him. "'Suffer the little children to come unto me,'" Joseph said.

Once again Julia raised her hand. "Jesus said that."

"You guessed it!"

They played until everyone had finished dinner.

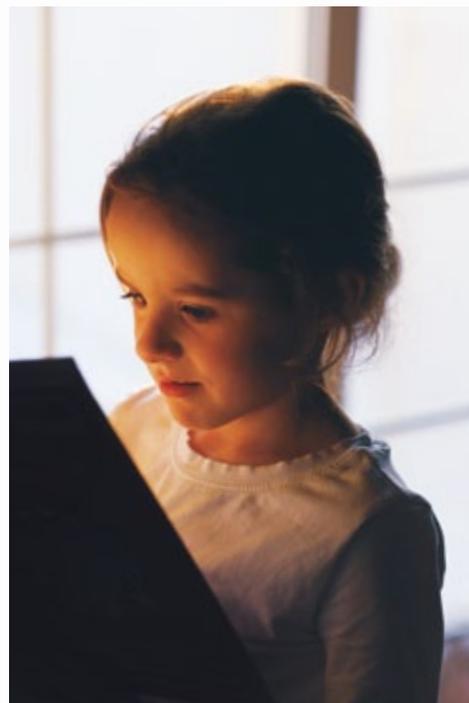
Later that night, as Mom tucked Joseph into bed, he said, "I guess that game wasn't so bad after all."

"You came up with a really good quote today," Mom said.

"Thanks. Can we play it again next Sunday?"

"I think that's a great idea," Mom said. She gave him a hug and a kiss and left his room.

Joseph snuggled into his covers, smiling. A new Sunday tradition had just begun. ■



**B**ecome acquainted with the lessons the scriptures teach. . . . Study them as though they were speaking to you, for such is the truth."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Be Your Best Self," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 68.

## HOW TO PLAY SCRIPTURE QUOTES

Here are three different ways to play Scripture Quotes:

- Try playing as Joseph's family did, naming the person who said the quote.
- Try guessing the book of scripture where the quote is found. For example, "I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded" is found in 1 Nephi.
- Name a book of scripture and then have others tell a quote or story from that book. For example, the book of Ether contains the story of the Jaredites crossing the ocean.



# Jesus Teaches How to Treat Others



## SAMARITANS

**T**he people of Samaria lived in an area west of the Jordan River. They had a heritage that was partly Jewish. The Samaritans worshipped Jehovah, but they had changed some of the commandments. The Jews thought they were better than the Samaritans.

By Diane L. Mangum

**T**he Jews and the Samaritans did not get along with each other. The Jews did not like the people who lived in Samaria. They thought they were better than the **Samaritans** and tried not to travel in their land. If they saw Samaritans, they would not talk to them.

But Jesus taught that you should treat people just as you would like them to treat you. Could that mean treating people kindly even if you didn't know them or if they were Samaritans?

Jesus said people should love their neighbors. But was a neighbor only someone who lived nearby or someone who was like you? Jesus told a story to help

the people understand how they should treat others.

In the story a Jewish man was traveling on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. It was a dangerous road that climbed through steep hills. Thieves would often hide behind big rocks and then try to stop and rob travelers.

The thieves attacked the man and hurt him very badly. They took his clothes and left him by the side of the road to die.



## PRIESTS AND LEVITES

**P**riests and Levites were Jewish men who served in the temple. They were supposed to be righteous and set good examples for others.

## GOLDEN RULE

**J**esus's teaching to do unto others as you would have them do unto you is called the Golden Rule. When we follow this rule, we are happy and help others to be happy too.



A **priest** traveling on the road saw the wounded man. But he hurried to the other side of the road and went on his way.

Next, a **Levite** man came by and saw the injured man. He too crossed to the other side and hurried by, not stopping to help.

Last, a man from Samaria came by. When he saw the Jewish man who had been attacked, he felt compassion and stopped to help.

The Samaritan washed and

bound up the man's wounds, put him on his own mule, and took him to an inn, where he could rest and get food. The Samaritan paid the innkeeper money to care for the wounded man until the man was well.

The Samaritan showed the wounded man kindness and mercy. He treated him like a neighbor.

Jesus wants us to treat others as the good Samaritan did. ■

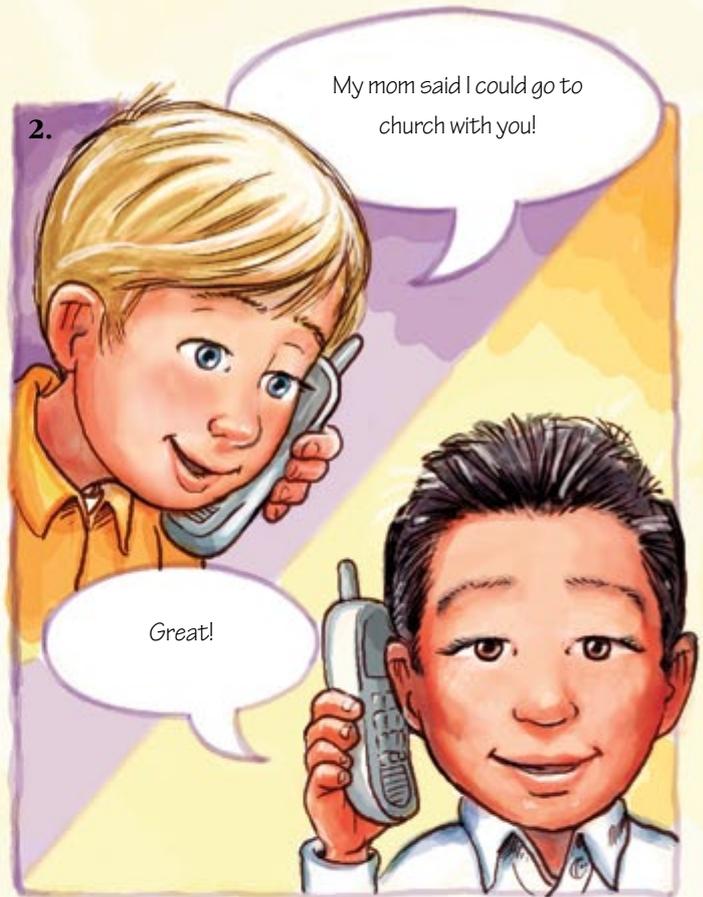
*From Luke 10:25–37.*

# Inviting Jacob

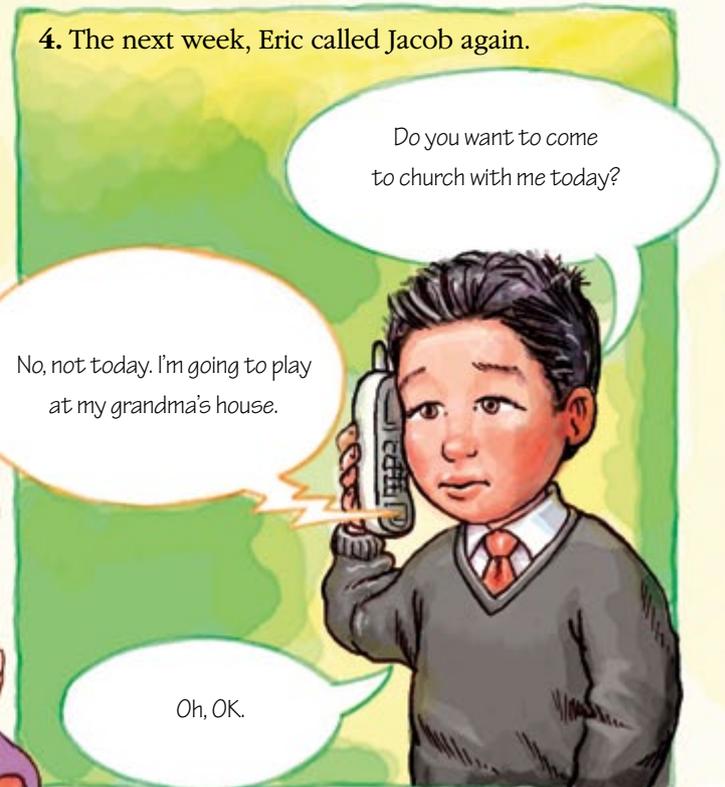
By Chad E. Phares

Based on a true story

*"Therefore, if ye have desires to serve  
God ye are called to the work"  
(D&C 4:3).*



3. Eric and Jacob had a good time at church. They learned about prayer and sang songs during sharing time. Eric was glad he invited Jacob.



5.



6.



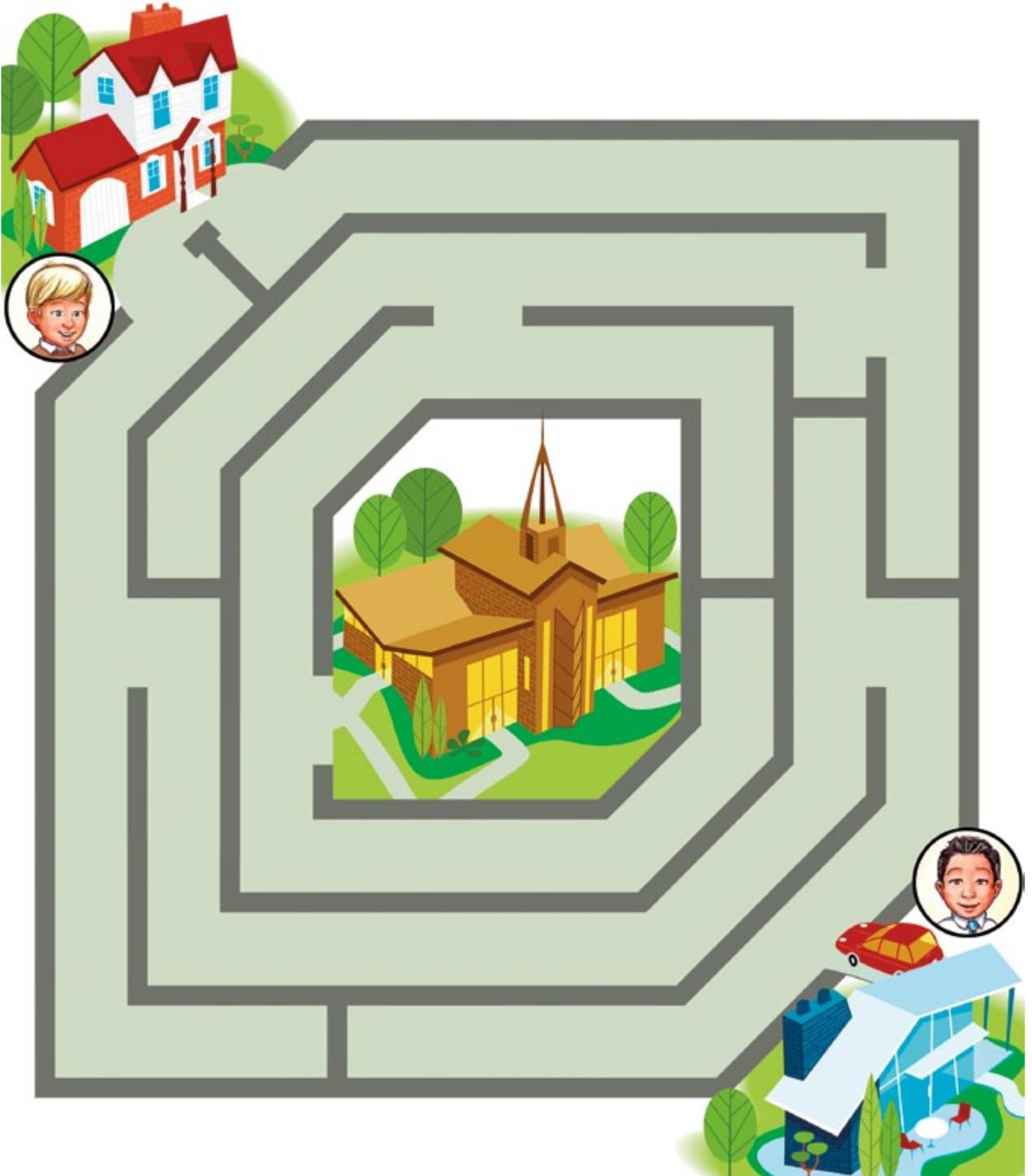
7. Eric called Jacob again the next week.



8. Eric was glad Jacob went to church with him again. Eric knew that Jacob could choose for himself if he wanted to go to church or not, but he decided to always invite Jacob in order to give him the chance.

# Going to Church

Eric and his family are going to pick up Jacob and take him to church with them. Help Eric find the way to Jacob's house and then to the meetinghouse.



# Making a New Friend

By Val Chadwick Bagley



**T**he boy in this picture is inviting another boy to play with him and his friends. See if you can find these items in this picture: adhesive bandage, banana, clock, comb,

cracked egg, crayon, cup, envelope, fish, fishing pole, ladder, ladybug, paintbrush, pitchfork, tennis racket, toothbrush, watch, and worm.

## Called to Serve: **You**

By Heather Whittle Wrigley

Church Magazines

**T**he First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has asked all Church units to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Church welfare plan by organizing their own day of service during 2011.

“The service may be undertaken at any time during the remainder of this year, and its length may be flexible depending on the service rendered,” a letter from the First Presidency read.

The call to serve comes on the heels of President Henry B. Eyring’s conference talk during the Saturday morning session of April general conference.

“The feelings of unity will multiply the good effects of the service you give,” President Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said. “And those feelings of unity in families, in the Church, and in communities will grow and become a lasting legacy long after the project ends” (“Opportunities to Do Good,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2011, 25).

The First Presidency offered guidelines for members planning service projects, including inviting community members and full-time missionaries to become involved and designing projects so that families and individuals can participate. Publicizing the projects to raise awareness and interest was also encouraged.

Many wards, branches, districts, and stakes have already answered the call. Some service crews donned yellow Mormon Helping Hands shirts while others just rolled up their sleeves, but from donating blood to sprucing up community buildings, the response by members has been overwhelming.

Elder Walter F. González of the Presidency of the Seventy presides over Church affairs in the North America Southeast Area. He first challenged every congregation in his area to give a day of service in 2009.

Every year since then members in the southern United States have organized annual days of service. Elder

González said he is happy to see that congregations throughout the Church will have that opportunity this year.

“We serve because it’s a Christlike attribute, and it’s an opportunity to become a little like Him, to cultivate an *attitude* of service—a habit of serving by nature,” he said. “As we serve without consideration for religion or denomination or race, our helping hands will become linking hands, cultivating relationships with the community.”

In Jacksonville, Florida, USA, 11 congregations answered the call to serve by donating food and giving blood on April 16. Several LDS meetinghouses were used as drop-off locations for food donations, while others were staging places for blood donations.

Chainsaw-wielding members of the Jonesboro Ward in Georgia, USA, gathered at the Stately Oaks Plantation, legendary site where the movie *Gone with the Wind* was filmed, on May 14 to haul broken branches.

The last week of April, Saints in California and Hawaii, USA, joined with community volunteers for the annual Mormon Helping Hands Day.

In San Diego, California, USA, 150 volunteers helped clean 3,000 headstones at the Fort Rosecrans Memorial Park, a veterans’ cemetery.

Latter-day Saints in Palos Verdes, California, USA, partnered with a nonprofit organization called Clean San Pedro to sweep and clean the streets and sidewalks in the central area of San Pedro, collecting over one ton (900 kg) of refuse and litter.

The head of Clean San Pedro, Steve Kleinjan, said, “We love to work with this church. They always have such a good turnout of volunteers.”

Members of the Charlotte North Carolina (USA) South Stake answered the First Presidency’s call for a day of service during 2011 by partnering with a local charity to put on a welcome basket item drive.



**Editor's note:** The Church Welfare Department is gathering stories of members who are participating in a day of service during 2011 in response to the First Presidency's call. To share your experiences, go to [providentliving.org](http://providentliving.org), click on **75 Years of Self-Reliance and Service**, then on **Day of Service** in the left margin, then on the **share** button under "Share your Service Activity."



More than 2,000 paper bags with a list of much-needed items were placed throughout the community. A week later, nearly 130 volunteers spent 150 hours collecting the bags and donating the items to families transitioning from homelessness to new housing.

Primary children from the ward made "Welcome Home" signs for the families.

In Georgia, USA, the Griffin Ward came together on Saturday, May 21, to scour the inside and outside of a local homeless shelter, the House of Hope.

In Clinton, Missouri, USA, Latter-day Saints met to spruce up the Jackson Zoo, mulching flower beds, painting, and repairing equipment.

Elder González emphasized that members' service will bless both those within the Church and those who are not members.

"There are so many different ways to serve and create links with the community," he said. "And as we serve others, we will also see the hand of the Lord in the lives of our members." ■

**Members in California, USA, clean up their city.**

## Church to Restore Site of Priesthood Restoration

The First Presidency has announced plans to restore a historic site formerly known as Harmony (near present-day Susquehanna), Pennsylvania, USA, where the Prophet Joseph Smith translated much of the Book of Mormon and where John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood in 1829.

The project will include construction of historic buildings and the farm setting at Harmony as well as monuments commemorating the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods in 1829. The groundbreaking is expected to take place in 2012, and the project is estimated to take two years to complete.

Harmony, Pennsylvania, was the site where Joseph Smith translated much of the Book of Mormon between 1827 and 1830. There the prophet received 15 of the earliest revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants.

At the same site, as recorded in Joseph Smith—History 1:66–75, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the Aaronic Priesthood from John the Baptist in 1829. Peter, James, and John conferred

the Melchizedek Priesthood upon them at a location nearby a short time later.

Mark Staker, senior researcher in the historic sites group of the Church History Department, said that the department has already begun archeological research to identify the location of some of the original buildings in the area.

“We are looking to restore the home where Joseph and Emma lived in Harmony as well as the birthplace of Emma Smith and her family home,” he said.

A sculpture of the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery receiving the Aaronic Priesthood already exists on the 90-acre (36 ha) site. Plans for new monuments are being designed. There are also plans to construct a visitors’ center at the site.

Church leaders have invited members who are interested to make a small, one-time contribution to the project. This can be done by specifying “Priesthood Restoration Site” in the “Other” category on the tithing slip that is available from bishops and branch presidents. ■



*A 90-acre (36 ha) site in Pennsylvania is being restored to commemorate the restoration of the priesthood and the translation of the Book of Mormon.*

### Maintaining Church History around the World

Several Church departments work with historians, architects, archaeologists, lawyers, artisans, contractors, and groundskeepers to preserve places of historical significance around the Church. These places fall into three categories:

**Historic sites** are places where events of great significance to Church history occurred, such as the Joseph Smith farm or historic Kirtland. About two dozen historic sites dot the United States, with one site outside the United States—Worcestershire’s Gadfield Elm Chapel, the first chapel of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in England.

**Historic landmarks**, of which there are about four dozen, comprise temples, tabernacles, and meetinghouses that are distinctive in architectural or aesthetic value.

Finally, because not every important site can be restored, **historic markers**—more than 100 of them—identify other places the Church desires to preserve in the hearts and minds of Latter-day Saints. Markers can also designate areas (such as the Far West Temple site) where there is not enough information to restore the site accurately. There are dozens of international historic markers.

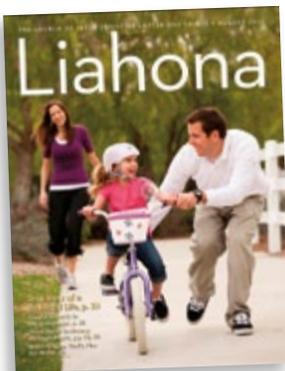
## *Liahona* Expanding Online Offerings

The Church is working to improve online access to materials translated into languages other than English, most notably the *Liahona*, the Church's international magazine.

The goal is that by the end of 2011, each month the *Liahona* is printed in a specific language, Church members will be able to access the entire issue online in PDF format as well as the individual sections of the magazine in text-only format. This will apply only to magazines published in April 2011 and beyond.

The Church is also working to regularly publish the First Presidency and Visiting Teaching Messages online in 80 languages. These messages are traditionally included in the *Liahona* or published as a separate item for languages in which the *Liahona* is not yet available.

Beginning with the June 2011 issue, audio of all of the material printed in the *Liahona* will be recorded and posted online in Spanish and Portuguese. In addition,



the first four issues of 2011 will be recorded retroactively. Audio versions of the *Liahona* in other languages are coming soon.

The amount of translated general conference material available online is also growing. For the April 2011 general conference, talks were translated into 92 languages. Audio versions of all are posted at conference .lds.org. The *Liahona* publishes a printed version in 33 of those languages. These are available from the contents page of the May 2011 *Liahona* at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org).

A project to publish online general conference materials from 1990 to the present in 25 languages is also under way. From 1990 on, if a session of general conference was published in the Church magazines in one of those 25 languages, it will be scanned and placed online in PDF and HTML formats. ■

## Church Logo Published in 100 Languages

With the recent releases of the Church logo in Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Persian, Tshiluba, and Yapese, the Church identifier has now been published in more than 100 languages.

The project began in December 1995, when President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) directed that a new Church logo be adopted. The logo was designed so that the name of the Savior was the most prominent

feature in the Church's official name, and it has been translated and typeset into various languages since.

Because the Church's name and logotype are important identifiers—and because they are registered trademarks or otherwise protected worldwide—the Church has created guidelines for appropriately using the name and logotype of the Church.

Local units may use the written name of the Church (not the logotype) when all of the following conditions are met:

- The activity or function with which the name is associated is officially sponsored by the unit—for example, a sacrament meeting program.
- The name of the local unit is used as a prelude to the name of the Church.
- The typeface does not imitate or resemble that of the official Church logotype.

The Church's official logotype is to be used only for items approved by the Correlation Department at Church headquarters, such as the following:

- Official Church publications and stationery
- Missionary name tags
- Meetinghouse exterior signs

The logotype may not be used as a decorative element or a computer screensaver. It also cannot be used in any personal, commercial, or promotional way. ■

### Website Brings Church Store to Members around the World

With the addition of three languages to [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org), access to Church materials just became much easier for thousands of members. The website, which replaces [ldscatalog.com](http://ldscatalog.com), was originally released in English, Russian, and Spanish, but now French, German, and Italian are also available.

Gospel materials—study aids, music, media, art, garments, temple clothing, and other resources—ship free of charge wherever the site is available.

Plans are in place to make [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org) available in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Portuguese in the future.

### Updates Released for Gospel Library App

The Church has released updates to the Gospel Library app for the Android, iPad, and iPhone at [mobile.lds.org](http://mobile.lds.org).

While the previous Android app offered only a few key publications, the update provides access to Church magazines, manuals, and more.

The update to the app for iPad and iPhone will allow users to synchronize scripture annotations between the mobile app and My Study Notebook on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org), making it possible to view notes, highlights, and tags both online and on a mobile device. ■



*The Atlanta Georgia Temple*

### Members Celebrate 50 Years of Church in the Philippines

To commemorate the 50th year of the rededication of the Philippines for the preaching of the gospel, thousands of Saints gathered in Quezon City to participate in a Jubilee cultural show on April 30 and an area conference on May 1.

Nineteen stakes came together on Saturday to celebrate the rich cultural heritage and the growth of the Church in the Philippines through song and dance. On Sunday, May 8, members gathered for a nationwide conference with local leaders and with General Authorities via satellite.

### USNS *Comfort* Offers Aid at 12 Locations

In April, the USNS *Comfort*, a full-service medical ship, set sail for 12 locations in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America to provide medical care and to train medical professionals.

Volunteers from the Church, the United States Navy, and other relief organizations will provide humanitarian services and teach skills that will help people help themselves after the ship has left.

### Atlanta Temple Opens Doors after Celebration, Rededication

Following a weekend of cultural celebration and two Sunday sessions of rededication by President Thomas S. Monson, the Atlanta Georgia Temple opened its doors on May 3, 2011, for formal temple work to resume. In addition to President Monson, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Elders Walter F. González and William R. Walker, both of the Seventy, attended the rededication.

The temple, originally dedicated in 1983, closed on June 1, 2009, for extensive renovations. ■

## NEW PRODUCTS

### Old Testament DVD Released in New Languages

The Old Testament Visual Resource DVD set is now available in 11 languages with another 10 languages to follow shortly.

American Sign Language, Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Mandarin, Portuguese, Samoan, Spanish, and Ukrainian are available now; Danish, Dutch, Finish, Indonesian, Norwegian, Russian, Swedish, Tagalog, Thai, and Tongan will be available between now and the end of the year.

The set of three DVDs has over

300 visual resources and 54 videos to guide members through their study of the Old Testament and is available at Church distribution centers or at [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org).

### Triple Combination Available in Samoan

A Samoan edition of the triple combination of the scriptures—the Book of Mormon; the Doctrine and Covenants; the Pearl of Great Price; and the Guide to the Scriptures, a study aid, all bound together—is now available through distribution centers and at [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org). ■

## FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

*This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are a few examples.*

### “Finding Peace in Troubled

Times,” page 12: Before reading the article, you may wish to ask your family to list some specific challenges they face. Then use Elder Malm’s suggestions to discuss ways to find peace during trials.



### “The Sealing Ordinance Links Families Eternally,”

page 16: Before reading the article, you might invite your family to discuss what the word *promise* means. Consider reading Doctrine and Covenants 82:10 and talking about why it is so important to make and keep promises with the Lord. As you read the article together, consider bearing your testimony about how keeping covenants has blessed your life.

“Duty to God with Dad,” page 54: Taking inspiration from this article, you could begin working on an activity from Duty to God or Personal Progress, even if you don’t have teenage children (you can find the material at [DutyToGod.lds.org](http://DutyToGod.lds.org) and [PersonalProgress.lds.org](http://PersonalProgress.lds.org)). If you do have teenage children already participating, consider having fathers work with daughters and mothers work with sons.

“The Gospel Will Be Preached in All the World,” page 64: In addition to playing the memory game for younger family members, you could sing “Called to Serve” (*Hymns*, no. 249). Consider developing a family missionary plan, including goals such as inviting a family to a Church activity or writing letters to missionaries serving from your ward. ■

## COMMENT

### A Blessing without Measure

The Church does not have a branch in the city where we live, and it is difficult to go through a whole week with no contact with other members. The feeling we have as we read an article or talk from the *Liahona* is that the person who wrote it is speaking personally to us. To have the words of the prophet in our home is a blessing without measure. In this way, we feel strongly connected to the Church even though we are physically distant from a meetinghouse.

Fábio André Haab, Brazil

### Counsel Builds Strength and Faith

Thank you for the great blessing of the magazine—each month I

find messages that touch my heart. The counsel we receive from the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gives me strength and fills my spirit with faith.

Dorris Cantor, Honduras

### A Channel for Answers

One of my goals is to read the *Liahona* each month. Every part of the magazine helps me become more like Jesus Christ. It is one of the channels by which the Lord answers my prayers. ■

Gilberto Júnior de Paula Rodrigues, Brazil

*Please send your feedback or suggestions to [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org). Submissions may be edited for length or clarity.*

## TEMPLE BLESSINGS NOW AND ETERNALLY

By Stacy Vickery

I remember seeing pictures of the temple from the time I was very small. Though too young to understand the blessings of the temple, I knew I wanted to go there someday. In Young Women, I started to understand the blessings that would come from the temple. At that time my family was less active, and I prayed each day that we could be sealed as an eternal family.

In the fall of 1993, two weeks before I turned 18, my family did go to the temple. I remember the feeling I had in the Provo Utah Temple, becoming an eternal family with my parents and siblings. As I left the temple that day, I thought I understood the blessings it brought me.

Two years later, in the summer of 1995, I was engaged to be married, so I went to the temple to receive my own endowment. How wonderful to receive another blessing of the temple! Three days after receiving my endowment, I was sealed to my husband for time and all eternity in the Manti Utah Temple. I realized another blessing that I had not previously experienced—my husband and I could be an eternal family. Again I thought I had experienced all the blessings of the temple.

Six years into marriage, we found that we were expanding our family. We were so excited to raise our son and teach him the gospel. But 24 weeks into the pregnancy, our little boy was born fighting for life. After just



*My understanding of temple blessings has grown as my need for them has increased.*

eight weeks he returned to Heavenly Father. As I held him for the last time, I recognized yet another wonderful blessing of the temple: our son had been born in the covenant and could be ours forever.

Eighteen months after the passing of our son, we received a phone call from LDS Family Services saying that a young woman had chosen to place her baby with us. Knowing that we could not have more biological children, we could not have been more excited.

When our little girl was six months old, we finalized her adoption and took her to the temple to be sealed to us. Four years after our little girl became part of our family, another young woman chose us to be the parents of a sweet little boy. Again we had the blessing of taking a six-month-old to the temple. I will never forget how I felt when I saw my children, all in white, in the temple with my husband and me to be sealed to us for eternity.

I now realize that I did not understand all the blessings the temple could bring when I was in Young Women or when I was sealed to my husband or even when our son passed away. And even though I recognize many more blessings than I have in years past, I now understand that the temple is a place of *eternal* blessings, blessings that will come to us in this life and in eternity. Some we may realize easily today, and others will teach us, strengthen our testimonies, and help us someday to reach our eternal home.

The temple is a place of peace and comfort, joy and newness. I am more grateful than ever for the temple and pray that as I return there, I can continue to learn and appreciate the blessings of the temple. ■



*Kirtland Reflections, by Al Rounds*

*On Easter Sunday, April 3, 1836, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery retired to the pulpit in the newly dedicated Kirtland Temple and knelt in prayer. Afterward, Jesus Christ appeared to them and said:*

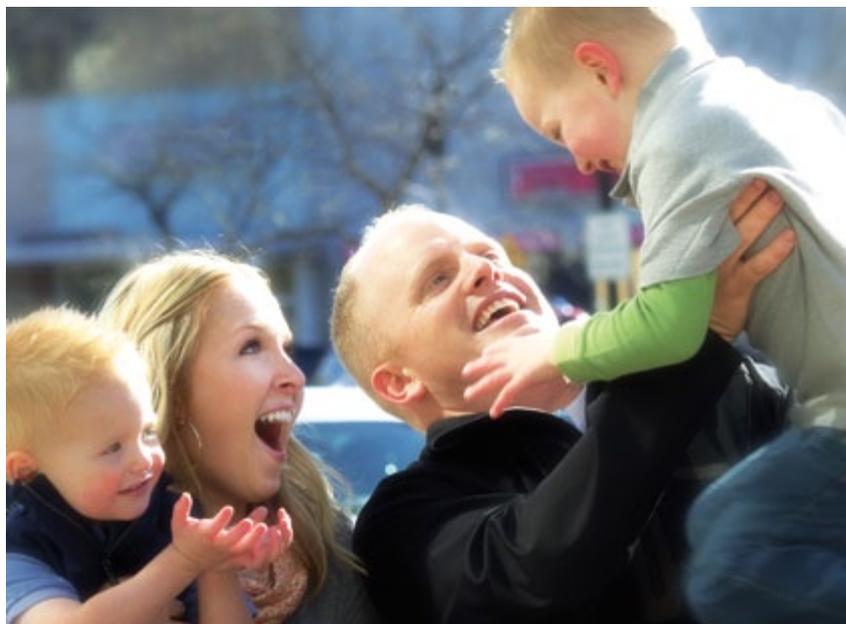
*“I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father.*

*“Behold, your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me; therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice.*

*“Let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name.*

*“For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house. . . .*

*“And the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands; and this is the beginning of the blessing which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people. Even so. Amen” (D&C 110:4–7, 10).*



“If we live the laws pertaining to celestial marriage, we will, with our spouse and with our family, be able to have a little heaven on earth,” teaches Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “And when we live those laws, we are practicing the same laws that are practiced in heaven.” See “A Little Heaven on Earth,” page 22.