

# 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.**