

THE **New Era**

**AUGUST
2011**

COVER STORY

**BAPTIZING YOUR
RIVAL, P. 24**

**WHY IT'S THE ONLY
TRUE AND LIVING
CHURCH, P. 2**

**TIPS TO MAKE A GOOD
IMPRESSION, P. 30**

**PLUS, A MOBILE APP
FOR YOUTH! P. 39**



The First Presidency:

Thomas S. Monson,
Henry B. Eyring,
Dieter F. Uchtdorf

The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

Boyd K. Packer, L. Tom Perry,
Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, M. Russell Ballard,
Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales, Jeffrey R. Holland,
David A. Bednar, Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson,
Neil L. Andersen

Editor: Paul B. Pieper

Advisers: Stanley G. Ellis,
Christoffel Golden Jr.,
Yoshihiko Kikuchi

Managing Director:

David L. Frischknecht
Evaluation, Planning, and
Editorial Director:
Vincent A. Vaughn
Graphics Director:
Allan R. Loyborg

Managing Editor:

Brittany Beattie
Assistant Managing Editor:
Janet Thomas

Associate Editors:

David A. Edwards,
Paul VanDenBerghe
Publications Assistant:
Sally Johnson Odekirk
Editorial Intern:
Whitney Hinckley
Editorial Staff: Mindy Raye
Friedman, Susan Barrett, Ryan Carr, Jennifer L. Greenwood,
R. Val Johnson, Adam C. Olson,
Richard M. Romney

Art Director: Brent Christison

Senior Designer: Fay P. Andrus
Design and Production Staff:
Nicole Erickson, Collette Nebeker Aune, Eric P. Johnsen,
Scott M. Mooy, Jane Ann Peters,
Scott Van Kampen
Prepress: Joshua Dennis

Printing Director:

Craig K. Sedgwick
Distribution Director:
Evan Larsen

© 2011 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. The *New Era* (ISSN 0164-5285) is published monthly by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information:
Publication Agreement #40017431.

THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING CHURCH p. 2

The Message:**The Only True and Living Church 2**

Elder Dallin H. Oaks

What does it mean that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint is the only true Church?

I Chose Baptism 6

Alexis Ence

Baptism meant giving up a lot in life, but it was worth it.

A Song and a Prayer 8

Adam C. Olson

A talented teen overcame his greatest fear and sang for the Old Testament seminary soundtrack.

Stranded on a Lonely Road 10

Amy Salisbury

Remarkable events and a remarkable couple came to the rescue.

Being Modern Pioneers 13

We are all pioneers in our own sphere and circumstance.

Questions & Answers 14

"How can I respond when my friends say that no man can see God?"

Living with a Miracle 16

Michael Richard Nankervis III

Grandfather is a walking, breathing miracle, preserved by a priesthood blessing.

Singing in Singapore 18

Michelle Hsieh and Cerys Ong

Getting together as a choir helped teens enjoy friendship, singing, and, most of all, the Spirit.

Mormonad: There Is a Way Out 21**Feasting on Spiritual Things 22**

Jennifer Ricks

I was hungry on a campout, but I was soon satisfied with something better than food.

Everyone Wins 24

Richard M. Romney

Rival football quarterbacks in Arizona both won at something bigger than the game.

Good Manners Still Make Sense 30

Kaye Terry Hanson

These tips help you create a good impression whether at a table or with friends.

The Extra Smile 33

EVERYONE WINS p. 24

Memories to Carry into Eternity 34

Sally Johnson Odekirk

From Sierra Leone, Africa, to Spokane, Washington, youth conferences can have eternal consequences.

What's Up? 38

An Iditarod in Arizona; volleyball players united; a new app for youth.

Choose Goodness and Joy 42

Elder Gerrit W. Gong

The Lord will prompt us toward opportunities to find and experience joy as we choose to be good, learn, and believe.



STRANDED ON A LONELY ROAD p. 10

Instant Messages 46

A voice said, "Go back"; a priesthood blessing; a special deacon.

From Church Leaders: How to See and Remember God's Kindness 48

President Henry B. Eyring

It is the Holy Ghost who can help us see what God has done for us.

Poem: Morning 49

Jennifer Sainsbury Brown

The New Era is celebrating 40 years, and during that time, we've encouraged teens to submit their poems and great photos. We highlight them each month on the inside back cover.

Photo 49

Philip Christison

Text and visual material in the New Era may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use. Visual material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated in the credit line with the artwork.

Copyright questions should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA; e-mail cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org.

The New Era Magazine Volume 41, Number 8 August 2011

*Official monthly publication
for youth of The Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day
Saints*

Editorial Offices:

New Era
50 E. North Temple St.
Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024,
USA

E-mail Address:

newera@ldschurch.org

To Change Address:

Send old and new address
information to:
Distribution Services
P.O. Box 26368
Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368,
USA.
Please allow 60 days for
changes to take effect.

*Cover: Two quarter-
backs, Brandon McEuen
and Teren Bingham.
See "Everyone Wins" on
page 24.*

*Cover photography:
Richard M. Romney (front)*

TO SUBMIT MATERIAL:

Send stories, articles, photos,
poems, and ideas online
at newera.lds.org. Click
Submit Your Material, and fill
in the form. Or e-mail or mail
them to the Editorial Offices
address above. For return,
include a self-addressed,
stamped envelope.

TO SUBSCRIBE:

By phone: Call 1-800-537-
5971 to order using Visa,
MasterCard, Discover Card,
or American Express.
Online: Go to store.lds.org.
By mail: Send \$8 U.S. check
or money order to Distribu-
tion Services,
P.O. Box 26368,
Salt Lake City, UT
84126-0368, USA.

Visit us online at
www.NewEra.Lds.org.



THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING CHURCH

What does it mean that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true Church?

Our first responsibility and purpose is to testify of Jesus Christ to a world that suffers to know of His divine mission. As my response to that great responsibility, I will speak about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the only true and living Church. In doing so I know I speak against the powerful tide of what is called “political correctness.”

The fashionable opinion of this age is that all churches are true. In truth, the idea that all churches are the same is the doctrine of the anti-Christ, illustrated by the Book of Mormon account of Korihor (see Alma 30). That account was given to teach us a vital lesson in our day.

A revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1831, soon after the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, spoke of those who had been given “power to lay the foundation of this church.” The Lord then referred to the Church as “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased” (D&C 1:30).

Because of this declaration of the Lord, we refer to this, His Church—our Church—as the “only true Church.” Sometimes we do this in a way that gives great offense to people who belong to other churches or who subscribe to other philosophies. But God has not taught

us anything that should cause us to feel superior to other people. Certainly all churches and philosophies have elements of truth in them, some more than others. Certainly God loves all of His children. And certainly His gospel plan is for all of His children, all according to His own timetable.

So what does it mean that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true Church?

Three features—(1) fulness of doctrine, (2) power of the priesthood, and (3) testimony of Jesus Christ—explain why God has declared and why we as His servants maintain that this is the only true and living Church upon the face of the whole earth.

1. Fulness of Doctrine

When Jesus Christ was upon the earth, He taught the fulness of His doctrine, which is the plan that our Heavenly Father has outlined for the eternal progress of His children. Later, many of these gospel truths were lost through being diluted by the principles or philosophies then prevailing in the world where Christianity was preached and through the manipulations of political leaders. We call this loss of the fulness of truth the Apostasy.

Many church denominations or philosophies that exist in the world today contain, in greater or lesser measure, truths revealed



**By Elder
Dallin H. Oaks**

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



Priesthood authority had to be restored by those resurrected beings who had held it in mortality. That priesthood authority, together with the keys necessary to direct its operations, are in this Church and no other.

by God in earlier days, along with a mixture of the philosophies or manipulations of men. We believe that most religious leaders and followers are sincere believers who love God and understand and serve Him to the best of their abilities. We are indebted to the men and women who kept the light of faith and learning alive through the centuries to the present day. We want all who investigate our church from other churches or systems of belief to retain everything they have that is good and to come and see how we can add to their understanding of truth and to their happiness as they follow it.

Because so much had been lost in the Apostasy, it was necessary that the Lord restore the fulness of His doctrine. That began with what we call Joseph Smith's First Vision.

The fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ begins with the assurance that we lived as spirits before we came to this earth. It affirms that this mortal life has a purpose. It teaches that our highest aspiration is to become like our heavenly parents. We do this by qualifying for the glorified celestial condition and relationships that are called exaltation or eternal life, which will empower us to perpetuate our family relationships throughout eternity.

The doctrine of Jesus Christ, understood in its fulness, is the plan by which we can become what children of God are supposed to become. This spotless and perfected state will result from a steady succession of covenants, ordinances, and actions; an accumulation of right choices; and continuing repentance. "This life is the time for men to prepare to meet God" (Alma 34:32). This is made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and by obedience to the

laws and ordinances of His gospel.

The restored gospel of Jesus Christ is comprehensive, universal, merciful, and true. Following the necessary experience of mortal life, all sons and daughters of God will be resurrected and go to a kingdom of glory more wonderful than any mortals can comprehend. With only a few exceptions, even the very wicked will ultimately go to a marvelous—though lesser—kingdom of glory. All of this will occur because of God's great love for His children, and it is all made possible because of the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, "who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands" (D&C 76:43).

2. Power of the Priesthood

The second and absolutely essential characteristic of the "only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth" is priesthood authority.

The Bible is clear that priesthood authority is necessary and that this authority had to be conferred by the laying on of hands by those who held it. Priesthood authority did not come from a desire to serve or from reading the scriptures. When that priesthood authority was lost through apostasy, it had to be restored by those resurrected beings who had held it in mortality and who were sent to confer it. That happened as part of the Restoration of the gospel, and that priesthood authority, together with the keys necessary to direct its operations, are in this Church and no other.

As a result of our having the power of the priesthood, the leaders and duly authorized members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are empowered to perform the required priesthood ordinances, such as



We are not grounded in the wisdom of the world or the philosophies of men. Our testimony of Jesus Christ is based on the revelations of God to His prophets and to us individually.

baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the administration of the sacrament.

The keys of the priesthood, held by our beloved prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, and every other prophet and President of the Church, entitle him to revelation in behalf of the entire Church. This Church is “living” because we have prophets who continue to give us the word of the Lord that is needed for our time.

3. Testimony of Jesus Christ

The third reason why we are the only true Church is that we have the revealed truth about the nature of God and our relationship to Him, and we therefore have a unique testimony of Jesus Christ. Significantly, our belief in the nature of God is what distinguishes us from the formal creeds of most Christian denominations.

The Articles of Faith, our only formal declaration of belief, begin as follows: “We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.” We have this belief in the Godhead in common with the rest of Christianity, but to us it means something different than to most. We maintain that these three members of the Godhead are three separate and distinct beings and that God the Father is not a spirit but a glorified being with a tangible body, as is His resurrected Son, Jesus Christ. Though separate in identity, They are one in purpose.

Joseph Smith’s First Vision showed that the prevailing concepts of the nature of God and the Godhead were untrue and could not lead their adherents to the destiny God desired for them (see Joseph Smith—History 1:17–19). A subsequent outpouring of modern revelation clarified the significance of this fundamental truth and also gave us the Book of Mormon.

This new book of scripture is a second witness of Christ. It affirms the biblical prophecies and teachings of the nature and mission of Christ. It enlarges our understanding of His gospel and His teachings during His earthly ministry. It also provides many teachings by which we may know the truth of these things.

We are not grounded in the wisdom of the world or the philosophies of men—however traditional or respected they may be. Our testimony of Jesus Christ is based on the revelations of God to His prophets and to us individually. (See 1 Corinthians 2:1–5; 2 Nephi 28:26.)

So what does our testimony of Jesus Christ cause us to affirm?

Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God, the Eternal Father. He is the Creator of this world. Through His incomparable mortal ministry, He is our teacher. Because of His Resurrection, all who have ever lived will be raised from the dead. He is the Savior, whose atoning sacrifice paid for the sin of Adam and opened the door for us to be forgiven of our personal sins so that we can be cleansed to return to the presence of God, our Eternal Father. This is the central message of the prophets of all ages.

I solemnly affirm my testimony of Jesus Christ and the truth of His gospel. He lives, and His gospel is true. He is the Light and Life of the World (see D&C 34:2). He is the Way to immortality and eternal life (see John 14:6). To me, the miracle of the Atonement of Jesus Christ is incomprehensible. But the Holy Ghost has given me a witness of its truthfulness, and I can rejoice that I can spend my life in proclaiming it. **NE**

From an address delivered on June 25, 2010, at a seminar for new mission presidents.



*The peace I felt in the font
gave me the courage to continue
making good decisions.*

I Chose BAPTISM

By Alexis Ence

Stepping gingerly into the baptismal font, I felt a surge of peace flood my mind and heart. My bishop smiled and took my hand. At the threshold of baptism, I stood comfortably and intently awaiting my purpose.

My parents had raised me as a strict member of a different church. I attended every Sunday and sometimes went twice in one day all on my own. I had taken careful discretion in choosing friends so that I would be surrounded by good examples. During high school I observed the law of chastity and avoided alcohol, drugs, and anything else that my parents considered immoral.

Even the boys I dated had to uphold the same standards and values that I had. That is how I became friends with Jeremy, who introduced me to the Church and gave me a Book of Mormon. I took it home, and my parents quickly replaced it with several “anti-Mormon” books. I was deeply intrigued and read them all. I kept waiting for the moment to prove that my church was right. Eventually Jeremy left for a mission, and I lost interest, deciding that my parents were right even though I had not proved it to myself.

Jeremy’s family forwarded his regular e-mails, in which he told of the people he was helping. On one occasion, he sent me a tape. I sat on the floor with my college roommate and listened. He talked about his faith and bore testimony of his beliefs. Inwardly, I had been searching for such conviction. My roommate was in tears at the sound of something so powerful. She asked me if I had read the Book of Mormon, and her question ate at my conscience. Could I actually know a church without having studied its scripture? I decided to read the Book of Mormon.

Two weeks later missionaries began to teach me. I prayed that God would help me make the right decision

so that my conscience would be at ease. By the end of the lessons, my eyes had been opened to something I knew to be right.

My mother asked me to meet with a leader in our church. I knew him to be a very bright scholar and was somewhat intimidated. But the man I thought would confound me and have all the answers had none. All he could tell me was that many believed these matters, so who was I to question? He told me how disappointed my parents would be, and my heart ached. I had never outright disobeyed my parents. But how could I continue to be a part of something I knew was wrong? I had to stand up.

In the font, I knew the rest of my life would be different. It would be a lot harder, but I realized that part of growing up is making choices that are right. As I leaned back into the water, I felt peace! I could hardly believe the joy. I had decided what I believed and took courage in my own conviction.

My parents took back my credit card, my cell phone, and my car. They ignored me for a few months and would not let me speak to my brothers. My sister also found it difficult to accept me for a while. I moved to Utah for college, where I met a wonderful man and fell in love. My parents would not meet my husband when we were married, but now those tensions are slowly resolving, and I am in hopeful pursuit of my eternal family.

Growing up, trusting my decisions, and receiving consequences was not easy. But such joy has entered my life because I made the right decision. That moment of peace at my baptism has guided my life. Every big decision I make must have that peace, or I cannot live with it. I believe that if we choose what is right, we can get through anything. **NE**

A Song and a Prayer

When Dillon couldn't reach the high note, he reached even higher for the help he needed.

Dillon has a terrible problem: his greatest talent is also his greatest fear. "I love to sing," the 16-year-old Tongan says, "but not in front of people. I get too scared."

Imagine his mixed feelings when the Church in Tonga announced auditions for vocalists to record a Tongan version of the Old Testament seminary soundtrack. He was both excited and scared to death.

Three songs on the soundtrack require a male vocalist. After Dillon had sung the song for which he was auditioning, the producer surprised him by asking him to sing another of the songs on the soundtrack. As nervous as he was, he did it, and the producer said, "We found our boy."

Much to his excitement—and dismay—Dillon was offered the opportunity to record all three songs.

Dillon's Talent, Dillon's Fear

Dillon, a member of the Nuku'alofa Tonga Stake, excels in school. He's one of about 10 percent of Tongan students selected to attend the government school. He also enjoys seminary. "He wakes *us* up early so he can get to seminary," his mother, Malenita, says.

But singing is what he loves—though his family didn't even know he could until he was asked to sing a solo during a Primary program one year.

"Dillon's always been shy," his mother says.

He did so well in the Primary program that he was asked to sing during a conference of the Nuku'alofa Tonga Stake. After that he was hooked.

He told his mom, "One day I'm going to use my talent for God." After he was chosen to sing on the soundtrack, he told her, "Mom, I used my talent."

Dillon's older brother, Sione, says he tries to encourage Dillon to sing. "I would love to have the talent he does," he says. "Everybody wants him to share it."

"I like it when he sings," says his sister, Pea.

"I want to sing like him some day," says his nine-year-old brother, Paula.

Dillon is grateful for his family's support. "I love my family," he says. "I'm sure that with their help, I can make my weakness a strength."

Reaching Higher

As Dillon worked with the sound crew to record the songs, he struggled with one note. "I couldn't hit it," he says. "We rehearsed for hours."

Finally, exhausted and discouraged, he went home that night, knowing that the next morning he'd have to record the song.

"I went straight to my room and prayed to my Heavenly Father to help me," he says.

All he could think about was how important the soundtrack would be to the 50,000 members of the Church in Tonga, as well as thousands of others who speak Tongan around the world.

"It was one of the longest nights of my life," he says.

After a long night of prayer and a little bit of sleep, Dillon walked into the recording studio and hit the note.

"Hallelujah," he remembers saying. "I was happy."

Be Not Afraid

One of Dillon's favorite scriptures is Joshua 1:9: "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

To hear one of Dillon's songs from
the Old Testament soundtrack,
visit lds.org/go/811.

Dillon put that promise to the test, and he learned it was true. "I tried my best. I put my best effort and heart into the songs so the listeners will be able to feel the Spirit."

As Dillon grows out of his fear and into his talents, he recognizes he has received a lot of help—not only from his family but from his Heavenly Father.

"I know," he says, "that God answered my prayers." **NE**



By Amy Salisbury

*I had never
seen anyone
on this road,
and I desperately
needed help.*

It was a beautiful summer day in northern Alberta, Canada. I was 16 years old, and my dad had set me up with a great summer job at a goat farm. Every day I made the half-hour drive in his old pickup along the obscure, bumpy dirt roads that I doubt were on any map. I loved these drives as I cruised in silence due to the broken radio. The northern landscape is beautiful in the summer. There are forests, fields, and lakes that are virtually untouched by man. At times I would look around and feel like I was the only one around for miles and that all this was made just for me.

On one of these drives home after a long day of herding goats and fixing fences, my peaceful drive suddenly turned into a nightmare. It had rained the day before, and the familiar dirt roads had turned into washboard roads. I hit a few patches of consecutive

bumps that shook my old truck around pretty good, and I knew I had to slow down. I shifted down and continued a little more cautiously toward home. Suddenly I hit a patch of bumps that didn't stop. I could feel my truck losing control, and the rear end started to slide around. By the time I finally got traction, my truck was facing sideways, and I went tearing straight into the ditch.

I remember this almost like slow motion. I knew I was going off the road, and I knew that I was heading straight for a fence post. The only thing that went through my head was to cry out for help. As my truck caught air over the ditch, I cried out loud, "Heavenly Father, help!"

STRANDED ON A LONELY ROAD

I landed hard, but I did not roll as far into the post as I had anticipated. I was a little shaken but otherwise uninjured. My truck would not start, and it was good and stuck in mud and tall grass. I climbed out and walked back up to the road. I looked around, hoping by some chance that there would be a farmhouse in sight. Nothing. This was before the age of cell phones, so there I was a 16-year-old girl completely alone on an obscure road in northern Alberta.

I began to pray to Heavenly Father and ask Him which way I should start walking to find help. I chose a direction that I thought might be good and began to walk. I had only just started when I received the distinct impression to go back and wait. I reasoned in my head: *Wait? I have never once seen another vehicle on this road! What in the*



world would I be waiting for? Nevertheless, I felt calm and peaceful and knew that was the right thing to do. I stood on the side of the road and waited. Not five minutes later I heard a vehicle in the distance. *Please let them stop*, I pleaded in my head to Heavenly Father. The truck came into my view, and I simply stood there as it slowed in front of me.

An older, traditionally dressed Russian man and woman got out of their truck and surveyed my situation. I was a little cautious and did not know exactly what to expect from this couple. The wife smiled warmly and said in her thick accent: "It looks like you need some help."

Her husband moved to the back of their truck and started to hook up a towing hitch. While her husband was hard at work, the wife

told me how funny this situation was to them. That morning they had both had the feeling that they would need their tow hitch today, so they had put it in the back of their truck. They had kept it there all day and not needed it. They were now on their way home for the night when her husband decided to turn off the main roads and take the more scenic drive. That is when they came across me. She laughed at the coincidence of it all, but I was filled with the Holy Ghost testifying to me of my Father in Heaven's awareness and love for me.

Once my truck was released from the mud and grass, it quickly started up again. The Russian couple and I parted ways. I did not drive far before I was overcome with tears of gratitude. I know that the Lord has rescued me many times throughout my life, both physically and spiritually. I know that He was aware of my needs in advance in order to prepare this couple to come and help me. I also know it was the right thing to do to call out for His help as I was going off the road because He heard and answered my frantic prayer.

That the Lord has power enough to move mountains and part seas and yet still cares for little me enough to prompt an old Russian couple to come help me pull my truck out of the ditch is witness to me of God's love and personal level at which He works. **NE**

While stuck in a ditch on a lonely road, I learned that the Lord can inspire good people everywhere.



BEING Modern PIONEERS

Church leaders have taught us about the importance of the contributions we are making today.



We Are All Needed

We are all needed to finish the work that was begun by those pioneering Saints over 175 years ago and carried out through the subsequent decades by faithful Saints of every generation. We need to believe as they believed. We need to work as they worked. We need to serve as they served. And we need to overcome as they overcame. . . .

“ . . . The Lord isn’t asking us to load up a handcart; He’s asking us to fortify our faith. He isn’t asking us to walk across a continent; He’s asking us to walk across the street to visit our neighbor. He isn’t asking us to give all of our worldly possessions to build a temple; He’s asking us to give of our means and our time despite the pressures of modern living to continue to build temples and then to attend regularly the temples already built. He isn’t asking us to die a martyr’s death; He’s asking us to live a disciple’s life.

“This is a great time to live, brothers and sisters, and it is up to us to carry on the rich tradition of devoted commitment that has been the hallmark of previous generations of Latter-day Saints.” **NE**

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Truth of God Shall Go Forth,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 83, 84.

We Are All Pioneers

I have no ancestors among the nineteenth-century pioneers. However, since the first days of my Church membership, I have felt a close kinship to those early pioneers who crossed the plains. They are my spiritual ancestry, as they are for each and every member of the Church, regardless of nationality, language, or culture. . . .

“As the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is now being embraced around the world, we are all pioneers in our own sphere and circumstance.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Heeding the Voice of the Prophets,” *Ensign*, July 2008, 5.

The First Generation Blesses All

By being the first in your family to accept the gospel, you become the first generation, a chosen generation through which generations past, present, and future may be blessed. . . .

“ . . . In the Church we read and speak much about pioneers in early Church history. They were first-generation members just like you. . . .

“Their legacy can be yours as fellow members of the first generation. Be faithful, serve your fellowman, bless your family, and make proper choices. You are the first generation, a chosen generation to bless past, present, and future generations.”

Elder Paul B. Pieper of the Seventy, “The First Generation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 11, 13.

“How can I respond when my friends say that no man can see God?”

Your friends have probably read the few verses in the Bible that say that man can't see God (see Exodus 33:20; John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:14–16; 1 John 4:12). These verses seem to contradict other Bible verses that say that men—such as Jacob, Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah—have seen God (see Genesis 18:1; 32:30; Exodus 33:11; Isaiah 6:1).

Fortunately, we have the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, which clarifies the four scriptures that say that man can't see God. The Prophet's inspired revisions of those verses explain that *sinful* people can't see God—only those who believe. And even then, a righteous person must be changed—transfigured—to see God (see D&C 67:11). In the Pearl of Great Price account of Moses seeing God, Moses explains that it was his spiritual, not natural, eyes that saw God (see Moses 1:11).

You can let your friends know that “we believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly” (Articles of Faith 1:8). You can also bear testimony of Joseph Smith and of latter-day scripture, which helps us understand that “the pure in heart . . . shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). **NE**

Spiritually See Him



Alma taught that every aspect of nature testifies of a supreme Creator due to its infinite complexities and harmonies (see Alma 30:44). This is a great

opportunity for you to testify to your friends that you can feel His presence in your life every day through the Holy Ghost. You can also explain that we do not need to see God in order to believe He is there. That is why we have faith. If we could see Him, there would not be much effort required to believe and follow Him throughout our lives. There will be a time when we will see Him on the other side of the veil. Until then, your belief is enough to spiritually see His hand in your life.

Janel E., 18, Washington, USA

God Loves Me



A roommate once asked me how I could believe in something I could not see. I answered that it was because I can feel the Holy Ghost, who testifies that

God knows me, and this increases my faith and brings peace to my soul. I cannot see Him, but I know He loves me because I have faith and I feel His Spirit.

Samuel P., 18, Lara, Venezuela

Open Our Hearts

Few people have ever seen God while they were on earth, but we have all been affected. We see everything He has created, all the blessings He gives, and we can all feel His love. I feel it most when I bear my testimony. As long as we open our eyes and our hearts, we will see God all around us, as well as in each other, His children.

Katelyn E., 16, California, USA

We Will Stand before Him



When my schoolmates ask why I believe in God if I have never seen Him, I explain that we have not seen God because it is not time for us to see Him. After we are resurrected, we will come before Him to be judged (see D&C 137:9). I then share my testimony and explain that having faith means believing and having hope. If they have faith, they will see God like I see Him—with the eyes of my heart.

Daiana V., 18, Santa Cruz, Argentina

He Knew It Was True



One day my companion and I were teaching a couple, and we told them that the Father and the Son had

appeared to Joseph Smith in answer to his prayer. The man said that no one could see God. Immediately the alarm on my watch went off, letting us know that we needed to head home. We left their home that day without answering that statement.

The next day I read a scripture in the Bible that says, “If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision” (Numbers 12:6). I knew this scripture would help this brother believe.

The time of the next visit arrived, and we spoke about prophets. I showed him this scripture, and his countenance changed. His eyes filled with tears, and he said, “This is true. There are people prepared to see God.” Later we taught him about Book of Mormon prophets who have seen God, and he knew it was true.

Elder Diaz, 25, Mexico Mérida Mission

Faith That God Exists

Normally we don’t see God, but you can feel His Spirit. He wants you to get to know Him by reading the scriptures and having faith in Him. If you have faith in Him, you won’t have to see Him to know who He is and that He exists. Prophets, like Moses and Joseph Smith, who have actually seen God have had to be transformed to see Him.

Aaron F., 12, Oregon, USA

Bear Testimony



A friend of mine once asked me this question, and I asked her where she had gotten this idea. She told me that a man

had shown it to her in the Bible. I then remembered John 1:18, where he says that no man can see the Lord. With the help of seminary, I remembered other scriptures in the Bible that say men like Moses and Jacob, being full of the Holy Ghost, saw God. And so I was able to answer my friend confidently and bear my testimony.

Luis M., 17, Mato Grosso, Brazil

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.



UNDENIABLE KNOWLEDGE THAT HE LIVES

“Cultivate a diligent desire to know that God lives.

”This desire leads us to ponder on the things of heaven—to let the evidence of God all around us touch our hearts.

”With softened hearts we are prepared to heed the Savior’s call to ‘search the scriptures’ (John 5:39) and to humbly learn from them.

”We are then ready to ask our Heavenly Father sincerely, in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, if the things we have learned are true. Most of us will not see God, as the prophets have, but the still, small promptings of the Spirit—the thoughts and feelings that the Holy Ghost brings into our minds and hearts—will give us an undeniable knowledge that He lives and that He loves us.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Seeking to Know God, Our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 32.

NEXT QUESTION

“Pornography is ruining my life.

What can I do to repent and break the addiction?”

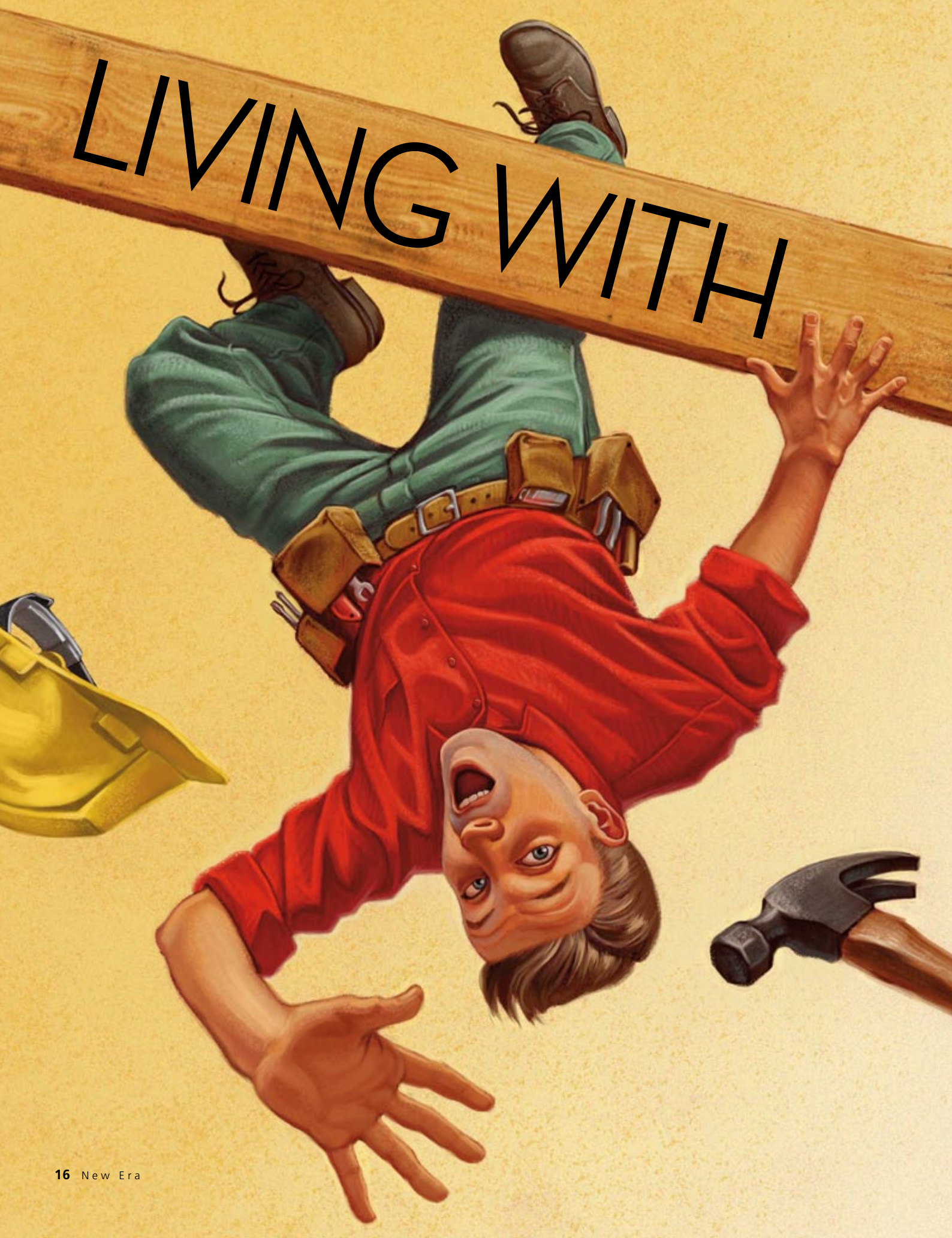
Send your answer and photo by September 15, 2011.

Go to newera.lds.org, click “Submit Material,” and then select “Questions and Answers.”

You can also write to us at newera@ldschurch.org

or
New Era, Q&A, pornography
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

LIVING WITH



By Michael Richard Nankervis III

A MIRACLE

The story of my grandfather's blessing has built my faith.

My grandfather loves to tell my brothers and me stories about events in his life. Many of them are funny, others are scary, and I love them all. But the greatest story my grandfather ever told me has affected my testimony and my faith in the Church greatly. I still cry when he tells the story—even when I just think about it.

Before I was born my grandfather was a recent convert to the Church after many years of opposing it. He was a construction worker and would work on many sites, including the construction of large buildings.

Just one week after joining the Church, my grandfather was working on a building while 30 feet up in the sky. He was trying to get to one end of the building to do some work on the roof. In order to get to where he needed to go, my grandfather had to walk on a high beam hanging out over the ground. When my grandfather got about

halfway onto the board it snapped, and my grandfather plummeted 30 feet onto the ground.

He was rushed to the emergency room. His neck was broken in three places, a lung was punctured, and a kidney was torn in half. Other parts of his body were ripped and bleeding. The doctors

said he wouldn't survive long enough to see the next day. During the whole ordeal my grandfather was still awake and in excruciating pain. He was sinking closer to death every second. Finally, my grandfather said he needed a blessing from a man with the priesthood.

Fortunately, a man who had helped my grandfather grow stronger in the Church had stayed home from work that day. When he received a call from the hospital stating that he was wanted there, he rushed to the emergency room and asked my grandfather what he needed.

My grandfather said, "I need a blessing."

The man told him the doctors had said there was nothing more they could do to help my grandfather. But my grandfather shook his head and repeated that he needed a blessing. Finally the man agreed and gave my grandfather a blessing.

After the blessing, my grandfather relaxed. The pain finally having left him, he fell asleep. Several days passed, and my grandfather was released from the hospital.

When he went back for a checkup, his doctor had some surprising news. "You are a walking miracle," he said. My grandfather had fully recovered from his deadly drop with no negative effects other than a few scars. The blessing from God that one man gave to my grandfather had saved his life and restored him to health.

When I first heard this story, I was too young to understand, but now that I am older, I understand it completely, and it has helped my testimony grow stronger. I know for a fact that through the priesthood, the Lord can heal those who truly ask for it in faith.

I will never forget the story, for I live with the walking miracle—my grandfather. **NE**



Singing in Singapore

Youth of the Singapore Stake learned the blessings of sacrifice and hard work by preparing a musical production.

By Michelle Hsieh and Cerys Ong

When the alarm went off at 5:00 a.m., 17-year-old Yee Mun Lim got out of bed and got ready for the day. She left the house at 5:20 for seminary. At 6:30 a.m. she hurried to school, where she stayed until 7:00 p.m. for classes and cocurricular activities. Then she rushed to the stake center by public transport to practice for the stake musical production.

This was the standard routine of most youth in the Singapore Stake every Friday for five months. Sometimes exhaustion and fatigue set in, but throughout the entire preparation for the musical production, *When a Prophet Speaks*, there were no complaints or regrets, because the youth felt that the sacrifices they made were worthwhile. “This is the most amazing, awesome, spiritually uplifting, fun-filled, and heartwarming event I ever took part in,” said Yee Mun.

How It All Started

“Our initial purpose was to unite the youth,” said Kate Loreto, the stake Young Women president. “We have youth in eight different wards and from various

cultural backgrounds. It's hard for them to interact with each other. So we thought, why not do a musical to bring them together?"

The leaders chose music inspired by the list of B's from President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008).¹ This music was chosen "so the youth could internalize the lyrics of the songs, feel the Spirit, and live the standards," said Connie Woo, the general director of the production. "We wanted to involve as many youth as possible," said Sister Woo. In all, 78 youth performed.

Perhaps not all of the youth came with the same motive at the beginning, but almost all of them kept coming to rehearsals because they enjoyed the friendship, the singing, and, most of all, the Spirit.

Testimonies and friendships were strengthened as youth of the Singapore Stake performed together.

the youth looked.

Canden Petersen, age 15, was appointed choir president to help make sure that every practice ran smoothly. His responsibilities included assigning prayers, rallying and herding the youth for practices and games, and announcing seating on the stage. "I was also asked to have some young men help set up and take down the set and oversee the youth in fulfilling their assignments," he said. "I felt that this responsibility was good for the youth. Hopefully it helped them understand that the Lord calls leaders now, not just from among the adults. They can and should sustain their leaders whatever their age or experience level."



Amanda Ho



Olivia Hoe



Michael Lee



Yee Mun Lim



Canden Petersen

Getting Involved

After the theme was chosen and practices were organized, the youth were assigned to different parts in the production and to different committees that suited their talents.

Ally Chan, age 18, volunteered to help on the costume committee. "We needed to choose something that was modest, which was very important, and it had to be economical, youthful, and at the same time look good on the stage," she said. Not only did she learn how to make decisions based on gospel standards and working with others, but she was also happy about how

Kandace Lim, age 18, helped by taking multiple roles, including being a member of the costume committee, the choreography committee, and the photography committee and also by singing a solo. About her many responsibilities, she said: "It was my mum who inspired me to take on these assignments. She taught me that if there's a chance to serve, just go for it. If you accept the task and put in your best effort, the Lord will definitely help you get through any difficulties you might face."

Besides these administrative responsibilities, performers were also needed. John Lee, age 17, was one of the brave souls to

volunteer for a solo part. His reason was simple: “I just like to sing! And it makes me feel special.”

Ezra Tadina, age 17, didn’t feel like he could sing, so he found another way to contribute. “I chose to be involved,” he said, “and I am actually the one who narrated the part about being involved. I feel the message because I know it’s true.”

No Small Sacrifice

The practices extended from November 2009 until March 2010. During this time, the youth gathered at the stake center to rehearse every Friday night, except on holidays. The amount of time and commitment required of the youth was no small sacrifice, considering the strenuous schedule of a typical Singaporean youth.

First-year junior college student Olivia Hoe chose to participate because “no matter how life throws mud at me, at the end of the day, it’s the gospel that’s going to keep me standing and pull me through the rubble. Knowing that there’s One who’s looking out for me and loving me completely gives me plenty of comfort, and I think that’s more than enough to get me going every day.”

Many of the youth had other commitments, but they knew that the Lord had laid a path for them. Such was the case of 16-year-old Amanda Ho. “I had dance practice, which clashed with some of the rehearsals for this musical, but miraculously the school changed the practice schedule, which enabled me to turn up for the musical rehearsals,” she explained.

It’s Showtime

After months of practice, the show was finally ready to be performed. Thanks to the teens’



Kandace Lim



Ezra Tadina



Ally Chan



Cerys Ong



John Lee

enthusiastic promotion, more than 700 people showed up to watch them at three performances. As the youth shared their message through songs, dance, instrumental music, and their own testimonies, many in the audience were touched.

The group was also challenged to invite non-member friends to see their performance and to make it a missionary opportunity. Michael Lee, age 18, took this challenge seriously. “I invited six friends to come, and three of my schoolmates and a schoolteacher came,” he said. Their performances especially left an impression on his teacher. “He said that it was a great experience. He even requested a copy of the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet. He said that he felt the energy through the many hopeful hearts of the youth.”

The leaders’ initial purpose of bringing the youth together was certainly fulfilled. “As I sat there and looked up at each of them during the performance, my heart was filled with joy,” Sister Woo said. “It was not about how good they looked, how well they sang and played, or how well they delivered the narrations. It was not about which school or country they came from. They were one.”

The Message in the Music

The musical helped many gain a stronger testimony. Some say they hum the tunes and sing the lyrics of the songs wherever they might be, and the message in the songs helps them get through their daily challenges. Many of them became not just good friends but spiritual supports who can lift each other up when the going gets tough. They can help each other stay on the narrow path and grow spiritually. **NE**

NOTE

1. The nine B’s are be grateful, be smart, be involved, be clean, be true, be positive, be humble, be still, be prayerful; see Gordon B. Hinckley, *Way to Be!* (2002); see also “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2001, 30; *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 4.

MORMONAD

THERE IS **A WAY OUT**



When we sin, we paint ourselves into a corner.
Repentance is the only way out.

(See Doctrine and Covenants 58:42.)

FEASTING ON SPIRITUAL THINGS

*After a day
of hiking, my
hunger was
filled in an
unexpected
way.*

By Jennifer Ricks

"All right, girls, load them on the fire," Brother Andersen called as he stepped away from the circle of smoldering coals.

When we had arrived at our destination, everyone had piled their backpacks around the fire and taken off to swim in the lake for a few hours. By the time I was done swimming and had changed back into my hiking clothes, the fire was hot and burned down to coals, ready for our lumpy foil-dinner packets.

One by one all my peers put their dinners into the coals. Each one was marked with the girl's name, so we could identify our own. I, however, was left frantically searching my backpack for my foil dinner but couldn't find it anywhere. I desperately racked my memory. I remembered double-checking that my foil packet was in my bag before we had left in the morning. Sister Robinson had been stern about us double-checking because she said we wouldn't have anything to eat if we forgot. Maybe I had taken it out of my bag at the lunch spot and forgotten it along the trail.

All of the dinners were in the fire now and would take a little over half an hour to cook. I didn't have the courage to tell my leaders that I had lost mine. I was worried and embarrassed that they would scold me and would have to give me theirs. Instead, I sat around and waited with the group. As everyone started eating, I took off looking like I

was going to the bathroom, when really I just waited for a while until the group was mostly done eating.

I wandered back into the group after 15 minutes or so and found that my plan was working almost perfectly. No one had noticed that I had been gone or that I hadn't eaten. The only problem was that I was hungry. I drank a lot of water, but it only left me with that full-of-water-and-nothing-else feeling. The only thing I could hope for was a few marshmallows—mere sugary puffs of air. But now I was surrounded by the aroma of hamburger patties baked with hearty chunks of potatoes, carrots, and onions. It was torture!

All I could think about was foil dinners and how much my stomach really wanted one. I looked around for something to distract me. All the girls were playing around, happy and filled with a good dinner, and getting ready to start roasting marshmallows. Off in the corner I saw Rachel, the Big Sister assigned to me, surrounded by a group of my friends. She was telling them something, and they were listening intently. I was shy to join in, but something pushed me towards the group anyway, and I sat down with them.

I was surprised to find that Rachel wasn't telling them about a wonderful guy she knew or a favorite vacation. She was teaching them the gospel. They were taking turns asking her questions about scripture stories, gospel doctrine, or her personal testimony. I entered



the circle as she was telling about Mary, the mother of Christ, and how brave and obedient she was. From the moment I sat down at the foot of my friend and Big Sister, I could feel the Spirit teaching me that what she was telling us was true. I instantly forgot about my stomach and that I hadn't eaten. I even forgot to fill up on marshmallows as a last resort because we were all too engaged in discussion and searching the scriptures.

At 13, out in the wilderness with a group of girls my same age and an entirely empty stomach, I truly feasted on the words of Christ for the first time. I listened to the testimony of a girl who was only four years older than me, but what she taught was something that satisfied my hunger much more than any foil dinner. As we hiked home under the stars, I felt like I didn't even need a flashlight

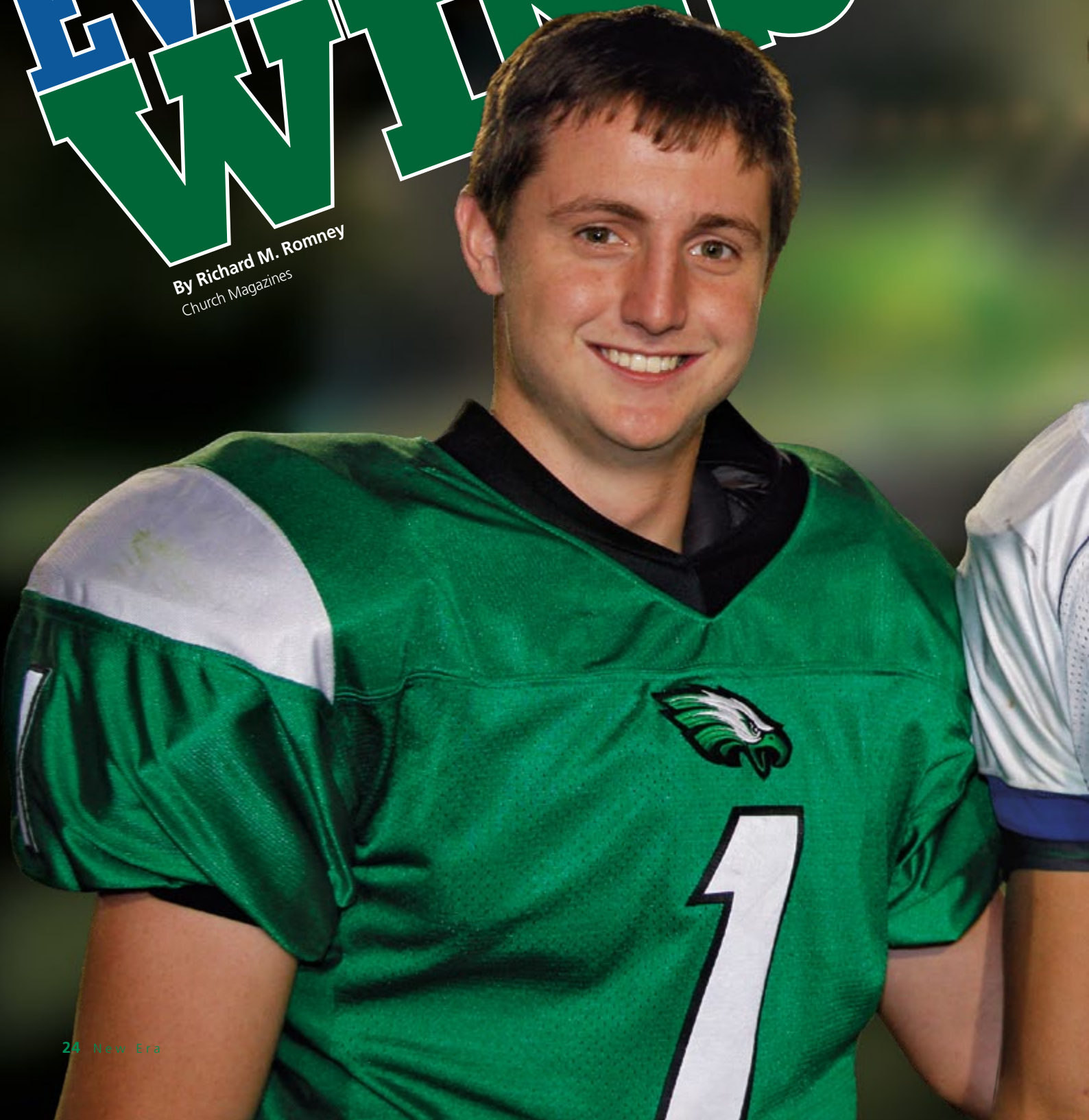
because there was a light burning in my heart as my testimony had grown that night.

The Savior said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). I knew that it was an evening that I would never forget. More than anything I wanted to build my own testimony to be like Rachel's so that I could share it with others and they could feel that wholeness that I had felt that night, having feasted on the words of Christ and been completely filled with the Spirit of God. **NE**



EVERYONE WINS

By Richard M. Romney
Church Magazines





When rivals meet, anything can happen. Even baptism.

When rivals play football, emotions run high. Players gear up to perform beyond normal expectations. Whole communities don school colors as neighbors debate with neighbors about the greatest game ever played. Who will win bragging rights for the coming year?

That's the type of intensity that builds in Arizona each time the Safford Bulldogs and the Thatcher Eagles meet in a rivalry that spans 80 years. So imagine what the Safford quarterback, Brandon McEuen, and the Thatcher quarterback, Teren Bingham, might discuss face-to-face the day before the big game.

How about baptism?

That's right. On Thursday they reviewed plans for Brandon's baptismal service. On Friday they faced each other as starters on opposing teams. Then on Saturday, Teren Bingham of the Eagles baptized Brandon McEuen of the Bulldogs.

Play by Play

Let's rewind and watch again so you can see what happened.

The story actually begins with basketball. Clear back in grade school, Teren and Brandon played recreational ball and became friends. "Brandon was always a better athlete than everyone else," Teren says. "I was just hoping to get into the game." As they continued to play various sports, they remained friends, even when they were rivals. And they both became stellar athletes.

Fast-forward to more recent times, about two years ago. David Palmer, having spent several years teaching at the Safford High seminary, had recently become principal of the Thatcher High seminary. Brother Palmer had been playing rec league basketball, where he became acquainted with Brandon. Brandon learned that Brother Palmer's son, Matthew, age 8 at the time, was about to have surgery to remove a lump in his jaw. Doctors feared it might be cancer.

"Brandon asked if he could visit my son after the surgery," Brother Palmer explains. "When

SAME JERSEY

"As priesthood bearers, we must realize that all of God's children wear the same jersey. Our team is the brotherhood of man. This mortal life is our playing field. Our goal is to learn to love God and to extend that same love toward our fellowman. We are here to live according to His law and establish the kingdom of God. We are here to build, uplift, treat fairly, and encourage all of Heavenly Father's children."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Pride and the Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 56.





Brandon breaks free for another impressive run, as he did throughout the game. Above (left to right), Teren leads the Eagles on a successful drive despite a stubborn defense, Brandon scores big in seminary attendance, and both athletes build strength and endurance through scripture study with seminary principal David Palmer.

NEmore

See a video about this story at lds.org/go/812 or by scanning the QR code below (see page 40 for instructions). Also see a photo gallery at youth.lds.org.



he visited, he gave him a note and said if Matt would let him know when he came to a game, he'd make a three-point basket and then point to him in the stands." Sure enough, when the next Thatcher versus Safford basketball game rolled around, there was Matt in the stands with his father. On the first play, Brandon was open for three, sank the shot, and then turned and pointed to his young friend.

Brandon scored 30 points that night, with several baskets from beyond the arc. Each time he scored a three, he pointed at Matthew. That cemented Brandon as a hero to Matt.

Team Prayer

That night in family prayer, Matt started asking Heavenly Father to guide Brandon to join the Church. The Palmer family had already been praying to find someone who would want to learn the gospel, and Matt was sure Brandon was an answer to that prayer.

And the Palmers weren't the only ones praying. So was Teren. "In priests quorum we quote section 4 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which says we should serve God with all our heart, might, mind, and strength," Teren says. "I felt there must be something right in front of me that I was missing." He asked Heavenly Father to help him figure it out. "That's when Brandon started taking an interest in the Church, and I said to myself, 'I want to help with that.'"

The Conversion Is Good

Brandon already knew a little about the Church. "I had been to meetings with Teren and with his cousin before," Brandon says, "but I wasn't as consistent as I should have been. Then the Palmers invited me to their family home evenings." One of the first lessons was about Joseph Smith's efforts to find the true Church.

"I liked how Joseph was looking for the right Church, wanting to gain peace and faith like I wanted to," Brandon recalls. The Spirit bore witness that Joseph's story was true, and Brandon accepted the commitment to study and pray. That was a turning point. The next day he sent a text message to Brother Palmer: "I asked God, and He told me this is true."

The more he studied and prayed, the more he found answers. He started coming to seminary, going to church, and meeting with the missionaries. "The discussions were good," he says. "The missionaries explained things. They made it easier to understand, and they taught me the commandments—the Word of Wisdom, tithing, all of the things that Heavenly Father wants us to do."

But what impressed him the most was how he felt about showing his love for the Savior through service. "The gospel has brought me closer to Christ," Brandon says. "I've learned a lot about how important it is to serve others, because when you do, you're serving Him."

Time Out, Time In

Had the time come for baptism?

"Brother Palmer asked me if I would be baptized," Brandon recalls. "I had already told him yes. Then the missionaries asked, too. I remember that was on August 4. They said, 'How about September 4?' I said, 'That's the day after the big game. I don't know if that will work,' and he called for time out to think it over. It didn't take long. He thought about what he had learned and the answers he had already received.

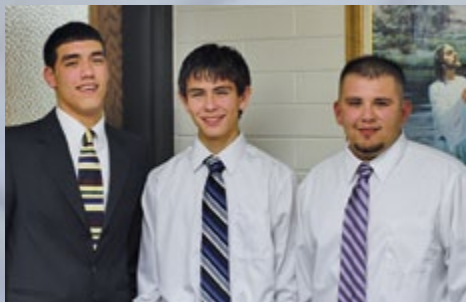
"I knew I had to decide," Brandon said, "And once I made the decision, I knew it was right. I knew I would fulfill my promises to the Lord with all my heart."

The same way—with heart—that both he and Teren played in the rivalry game.

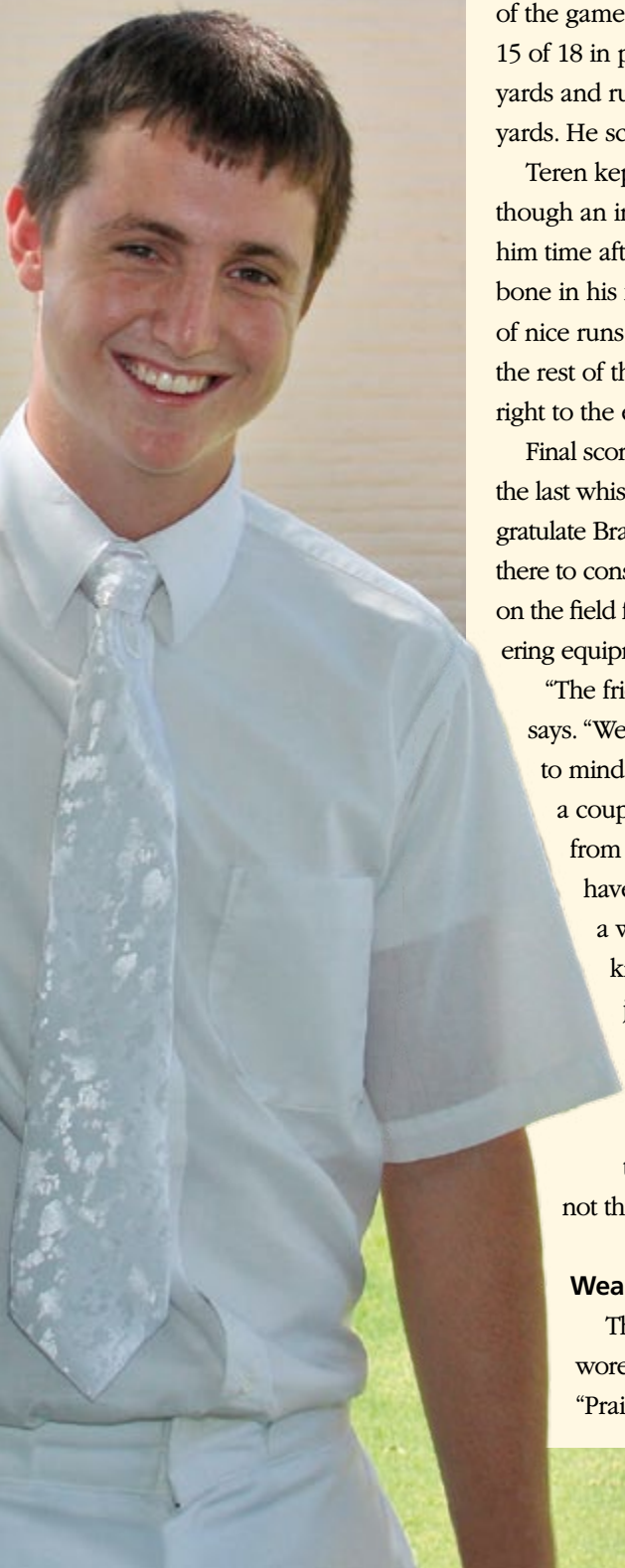


OVER TIME, VICTORY

The big game, as well as Brandon's baptism and confirmation, took place in September, 2010. But that's not the end of the story. Before joining the Church, Brandon had already started working on Duty to God. When he read the section about inviting all to come unto Christ, he felt inspired to share the gospel with at least three people during the year. He began talking with friends about his own conversion, and one of them, C. J. Villalba, has joined the Church, along with his older brother and his father. Brandon performed the baptism for C. J.



Brandon, Brother Palmer, and Teren are joined by dozens of friends and family members at Brandon's baptismal service (above, right). Matt Palmer, one of Brandon's most loyal fans, is proud of his friend (left). After his own baptism, Brandon continues to share the gospel (see sidebar, left).



High Score for Friendship

More than 3,500 fans filled the stands that Friday night. On the second play of the game, Brandon raced for 49 yards. Moments later, he rifled a 21-yard pass to a fellow seminary student for a touchdown. By the end of the game, Brandon was 15 of 18 in passing for 260 yards and rushed for 203 yards. He scored five touchdowns.

Teren kept rallying the Eagles, even though an intense defense crashed in on him time after time. Despite a fractured bone in his foot, he broke free for a couple of nice runs and threw solid passes. Like the rest of the Eagles, he kept playing hard right to the end of the game.

Final score: 44-21, Bulldogs. And when the last whistle blew, who was there to congratulate Brandon? Teren. Likewise, who was there to console Teren? Brandon. They met on the field for a photo as others were gathering equipment and heading for the buses.

"The friendship was there first," Teren says. "We've always had that." It brought to mind something else he had said a couple of days before: "Ten years from now, when I'm 27, I want to have been married in the temple to a wonderful wife and have some kids. I want to have a successful job so I can provide for my family. And I want to still be friends with Brandon. I hope people see that it's a fun thing to have a rivalry, but it's not the most important thing."

Wearing White

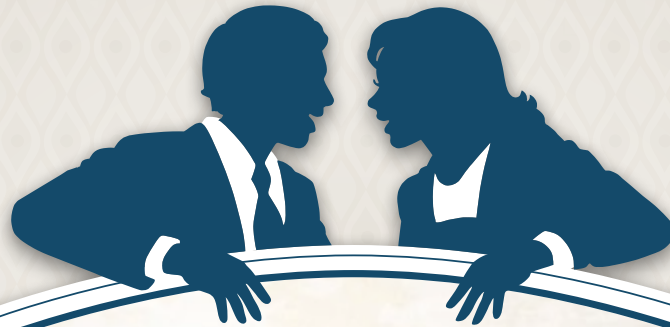
The next day, both young men wore white. The congregation sang "Praise to the Man" (*Hymns*, no. 27),



chosen by Brandon because Joseph Smith's experience was key in helping him gain a testimony. Teren, limping on his broken foot, and Brandon, with a broad smile on his face, entered the baptismal font together."

In the talks at the baptismal service, football analogies were often repeated. The armor of God was compared to a football uniform. Brandon was welcomed to the "priesthood team"—like joining a football team, only better. The analogies were valid and memorable. One statement in particular, however, stayed on the minds of many people: "The Church of Jesus Christ doesn't have boundaries or borders or rivalries. The Church of Jesus Christ is for everybody."

On Sunday, Brandon was confirmed a member of the Church and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. He was interviewed by his bishop, and they talked about when he would receive the priesthood. Then Brandon was introduced during priesthood meeting and met the other young men who would now become part of his life. After the confirmation, Teren went to his own ward and joined in a priesthood lesson, even though he kept his leg propped up on a chair. The rivalry game had come and gone, but the priesthood teamwork was continuing. When that happens, everyone wins. **NE**



Good Manners

STILL MAKE SENSE

PEOPLE NOTICE IF YOU HAVE GOOD MANNERS

By Kaye Terry Hanson

Jenna doesn't like parties because she feels like everyone is watching her. Tyler is uncomfortable at the family reunion because he has to meet too many strangers. Jenna and Tyler and maybe you would have a lot more fun at gatherings large and small by following these three suggestions:



1. Know that good manners make good sense.



2. Try meeting and greeting and talking to people.



3. Say thank you and other nice things.



1 Know That Good Manners Make Good Sense

At a backyard barbecue, dinner before the big dance, or your cousin Amy's wedding, people may make judgments about you by how you eat. To make a good impression, try this:

- Learn mealtime manners by watching someone with good manners and copying what they do.
- Wait for the host or hostess to tell you where to sit at a table.
- Put your napkin on your lap.
- Sit up straight.
- Don't talk with your mouth full.
- Wait until everyone at the table has been served before you begin eating.
- When asking for something to be passed to you, say please and thank you.
- Alert the host or hostess before you arrive if you have allergies. They will likely be glad to adjust the menu to make you feel welcome and comfortable.

Two young boys I know are allergic to peanuts. I have watched their mother carefully teach them to ask when they arrive at a birthday party, "Are there peanuts in the ice cream or the cake?" Those boys are learning early to be responsible for managing their own allergies.

- When serving yourself, take small portions the first time at a buffet or the first time the food is passed around.

I know a senior missionary couple who invited two elders to eat breakfast with them. The senior sister cooked four times as much as usual for her and her husband. The first elder took all the eggs from the plate and said, "I hope these are for me." He should have taken a small amount and waited to be offered more.



2 Try Meeting and Greeting and Talking to People

Nothing convinces others that you have good manners more than the way you talk. Learning to meet people and carry on short conversations is a valuable skill. Like all skills, what you say gets better (and much easier) with practice. Try this:

- Stand when an outsider—man or woman—enters the group.
- When you are introduced, shake hands, make eye contact with the new person, and say their name, "Hello, Tiffany," or "Hello, Mr. Roberts."

- Learn to introduce people to each other.

The concept behind introductions is simple: remember to say the name of the most important person first. What makes someone important? Age, gender, or title. So, say the older person's name first: "Grandpa, this is my friend, Jason." If people are about the same age, say the woman's name first, "Lucy, this is my friend, Tyler." Or, first say the person with a title, "Bishop Manwaring, this is my uncle Max Johnson."

- Stop thinking about yourself. Think about making the other person comfortable.
- Prepare three harmless questions to start a conversation, like "Tell me about [your work, your vacation, your hobbies, your family]." Or, "What do you like best about [living in Cincinnati, winters in Colorado, the first half of the play]?"
- Avoid saying "I," "me," or "mine" all the time.
- Remember, being interested is more important than being interesting.
- Watch for people nearby whom you can include.
- Choose language that portrays courtesy. Offensive words are insensitive to everyone.

IT COSTS YOU NOTHING

“Kind words and good manners will cost you nothing and will add greatly to the happiness of those around you.”

President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98), *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham (1946), 267.



3 Say Thank You and Other Nice Things

Handwritten notes are treasures. A thoughtful teenager will learn how to dash off a note of substance that is both gracious and charming. A phone call, a typewritten letter, a text message, or an e-mail are also great methods of thanking people, but none of them carries the weight and the personal touch of the handwritten note. Here are some ideas about thoughtful thank-you notes:

- A thank-you note should mention the gift or service specifically and include a sentence or two about how that gift or service is valuable to you.

*Dear Aunt Alice,
Thank you for the book about sea creatures that you sent for my birthday. This book will be great for a report I'm working on for school. I'll think of you every time I read the book.
Love, Darrin*

- When someone does you a favor, however small, you should thank them. You will gain a reputation of being well-mannered, because you are.
- Consider thanking someone you don't even know for a speech you heard, a fireside they organized, or a book they wrote.
- Write a note of congratulations on a promotion, an achievement, or reaching a milestone.

- Learn to accept compliments by smiling and saying thank you.
- Learn to say "You're welcome."

Your friends and neighbors will be so amazed at your newfound skills that they will start watching you to learn how something is done well. You'll be welcome at gatherings of every kind. So try it! **NE**

I heard you were going on your first date tonight! And so did Aunt Debbie ... and Uncle Phil ... and Grandma ...

MOM!

DING
DING
DING / DING



RYAN STOKER

"Boy-when they said they were raising the bar, they sure weren't kiddin'!"

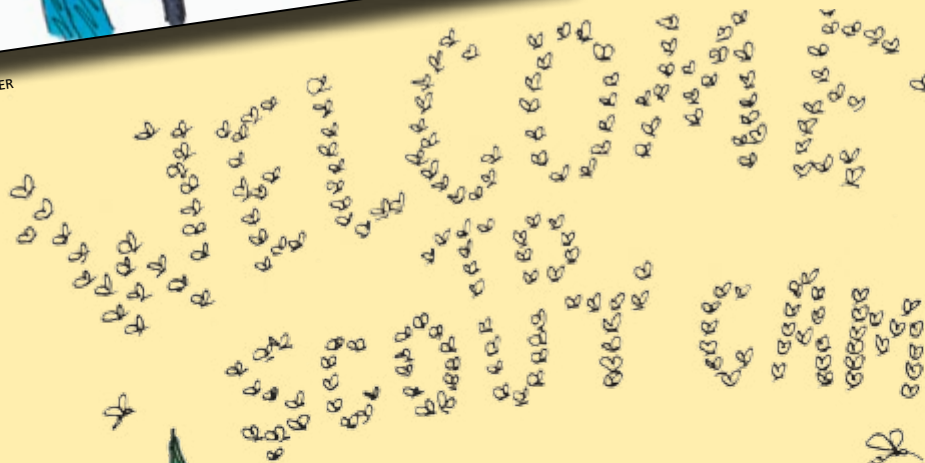


JON CLARK

We were building a patio in the backyard using concrete pavers. The pavers were stacked at the bottom of a hill in our front yard, and our kids were using a wagon to bring them to the backyard. Loaded down with pavers, the wagon was heavy enough, and the slope was steep enough, that the younger kids pushed from the back of the wagon while the older kids pulled from the front. Before long I heard them coming around the house. Suzy was singing:

"For some must push
and some must pull,
"As we go marching
up the hill;
"So merrily on our way
we go
"Until we reach
the PATI-O."

Chet D., Washington, USA



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

Memories to Carry into

By Sally Johnson Odekirk
Church Magazines



Youth conferences around the world build testimonies and friendships.

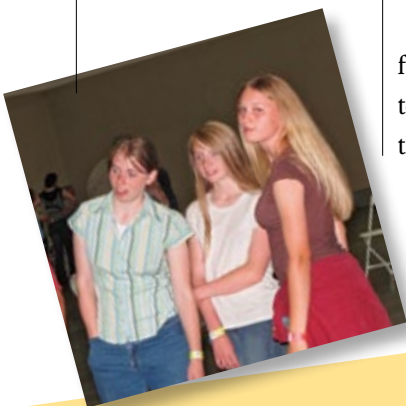
When Eric Uptain, 17, of the Spokane Washington East Stake heard about an 11-stake youth conference in his area, he decided he needed to be there. He says, "I was scheduled to work that week. I had to go through a lot to arrange to be there, but it was important to me to go."

Youth conferences have long been a way for young Latter-day Saints to strengthen testimonies and meet others who believe in the same principles and standards. President

Thomas S. Monson, in particular, has encouraged such events. He says, "Give them memories to carry into eternity, and your name will be called blessed by the Lord" (see "Mutually Beneficial," *Ensign*, Aug. 2010, 26).

Devan Fillmore, 16, of the Spokane Washington West Stake explains: "I'm glad we have them so that we can see people who are living the gospel. We can see that they are happy and having a good time, and we can see that we can have that, too."

Here are reports on several youth conferences that took place around the Church.



Col. Greg Adams of the Spokane Washington Valley Stake and the U.S. Army Reserves, spoke during a service project: "Your faith in God will carry you through life's trials. Have the courage to do what's right, no matter how hard it might be. You have the armor of God to give you spiritual protection."



Africa West Area Youth Conference: “A Mighty Change”

Young men and young women from the Africa West Area celebrated the 180th anniversary of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon last August. The event was held simultaneously in 20 venues across Africa and included over 11,000 youth from 27 stakes and 32 districts from the seven nations of the Africa West Area: Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. It was performed for an audience of more than 30,000. Hundreds of yards of cloth were cut, labeled, and packaged for delivery to outlying stakes and districts. Provided with basic patterns, drawings, and construction ideas, each area created the scenery, costuming, and special effects to stage reenactments of Book of Mormon scenes. Casts ranged in size from 40 to 1,700 participants.

Many found themselves feeling a kinship with the stories they portrayed on stage. Samuel Bagbansoro, 14, of the Abeokuta Nigeria District said, “I acted as one of the guards to the wicked King Noah. The scene with the prophet Abinadi made a great impression on my heart. I know now that whoever is filled with the Spirit of God cannot be subdued by men.”

As practices progressed and the final performances were held, young men and young women found themselves internalizing their respective roles. “Playing the part of Sariah made me seriously ponder on my role when I will be a mother and how I will be able to have the strength,” Chidinma Ijeomah said.

Standing atop the tower erected for the Accra production, Calvin Sowah of the Ghana Accra Adenta Stake, took on the role of King Benjamin. During a television news interview following the production, Calvin shared his perspective on the need for humble leadership in government based upon principles of righteousness. He said, “I realize that most leaders in the world today are proud. I believe that if, as King Benjamin, we will make Jesus Christ the cornerstone of our leadership, we will be good leaders.”

Submitted by Sisters Pamela J. Page and Linda J. Petersen,
missionaries in the Africa West Area



Eternity

Ezekial Sunny Oni of the Lagos Nigeria Stake sums up the feelings of many who participated in this event. “I know the Book of Mormon is true and for us, our time, and our good, a gift to be cherished from our Heavenly Father,” he says.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM TAGGART

"'Arise' was amazing. The Spirit was so strong, and it was great to see so many people come out and support it. Several people told me afterwards that it was like seeing angels out on the field," says Karen Unander.

Ogden Dance Festival: "Youth Spectacular—Arise"

After 18 months of preparation, including writing, choreography, and making costumes for 3,500 youth from 31 stakes around Ogden, Utah, the production *Arise: Youth Spectacular* was performed for over 45,000 people on three different evenings at a football stadium.

Aleisha Keller, 14, of the Ogden Utah Weber Heights Stake explains, "Three councils, each including 10 stakes, presented a 20-minute dance and musical program. Our stake represented youth from Scotland dancing to live bagpipe music, and the whole group also sang three songs, including 'Called to Serve,' when each of us held up our own copy of the Book of Mormon.

"But my favorite part of the youth spectacular," she says, "was the last song, 'Arise!' Some of the words are: 'Arise, shine forth! Be a light unto the world!' It made me feel wonderful inside that we can all work together to be a standard to everyone we associate with."

In addition to being an evening of uplifting music, the dance festival changed the lives of those involved. Matt Sakurada, 18,



of the Roy Utah North Stake says: "There were lots of missionaries participating. That meant a lot to me because my brother is serving, and it felt as if he were there. This 'Arise' program helped me to realize that I should go on a mission, too."

The pageant also touched the hearts of those who saw the production. Jolette Neeley, 20, of the Ogden Utah YSA First Stake says, "When I went to work on Monday following the performance, I ended up talking to one of my coworkers. She had been invited to the performance and pointed out that she had seen me singing and told me how much she had enjoyed it. We continued talking, and I learned that she had not been to church for some time. I was grateful for the opportunity I had to share my testimony with her and gave her the Book of Mormon that I had from the performance. I can testify that our program really did touch lives and planted seeds."

Submitted by Jerry Nelson



North America Northwest Area Youth Conference: "Be Strong and of a Good Courage"

Excitement built as word of the multistake youth conference spread. Levi Jeppson, 16, of the Lewiston Idaho Stake says, "I was really stoked, because there would be a total of 11 stakes and 1,600 kids. When we all gathered together, it was astounding. I don't think I have ever been with that many LDS kids at the same time."

The North America Northwest Area youth conference reflected the theme found in Joshua 1:9: "Be strong and of a good courage." Two days of activities, service projects, music, and inspiring messages helped teens realize that they are not alone in living clean lives and building strong testimonies.

When they came together in Spokane, Washington, enthusiasm abounded as young men and young women from the area met, made friends, worked together, sang together, and enjoyed the spirit of unity and kindness toward each other. Katelyn Ferraro, 16, of the Colville Washington Stake says, "We found we could do fun things together but be serious and spiritual as well. It makes me happy to have such a blessing in our lives and that we can make new friends."

One of the highlights of the conference was a musical program. Then Elder Whitney L. Clayton of the Seventy spoke. "We don't need to fear the future if we live the way we should," he said. "The promise to Joshua is as true today as it was in ancient times. Positive consequences follow good decisions as surely as night follows day."

Hillary Lake, 18, of the Spokane Washington Valley Stake describes the effect of youth conferences. She says, "Being with others who have a light in their eyes gives me incredible hope for the future and makes me want to be a better person."

Alyssa Cozzens, 16, of the Coeur d'Alene Idaho Stake: "If you come together with good, strong friends who support you in doing right, you have a better chance at being successful in doing what's right."

Colorado Springs North Stake Dance Festival

By Gwen Brewer



One of my favorite stories is when Nephi is asked to build a ship so his family can cross the sea. Although Nephi had complete faith, his brothers had a hard time believing this was possible; however, when it was finished, he and his family received the blessings of living in the promised land. I thought of this story when more than 350 youth in the Colorado Springs North Stake were asked to participate in a dance festival last May.

There were weekly rehearsals split into three age groups, each performing a different set of dances. "The most difficult thing for me to learn was the Tininkling [a traditional dance from the Philippines] because of the poles," says Brendyn Baker, a 13-year-old deacon in the Palmer Divide Ward. Emery Reid, a Beehive in the Chapel Hills Ward, adds, "The hardest thing about the dance festival was getting down the beat and memorizing the steps."

We persevered and kept practicing and preparing. "When it was frustrating, the thought of how it would be when it was all done kept me going," says Samantha Hacker, a Beehive in the Briargate Ward. Others had to sacrifice time and school functions to attend weekly practices. Corinne Bullock of the Gleneagle Ward was working a lot, "so sometimes I had to come straight from work," she says. David Skalla, a teacher in the Palmer Divide Ward, had to skip a swim meet for the long dress rehearsal.

Nearly 4,000 people attended the three performances given at a local high school on two evenings in May. When the lights dimmed and the crowd hushed, excitement began to build as we realized the fulfillment of the blessing of unity that our stake president promised when we began preparing for the festival.

Just as Nephi and his family received blessings after the ship was constructed, we feel the blessings received from being in the dance festival. Austin Bradley, a teacher in the Monument Ward, speaks for many. He says, "I made a lot of friendships at the dance festival, and it's a lot easier to be at stake dances now because I know a lot of people."



AN IDITAROD IN ARIZONA

So your first question is "What's an Iditarod?" Well, it's a famous sled-dog team race held each year in Alaska. Your next question is "An Iditarod in sunny Arizona?" The answer to this question has more to it.

For the past six years the young men and Scouts from four different stakes in central Arizona have participated in a modified Iditarod race at their annual winter campout in Flagstaff, Arizona. Only instead of dog power, these sleds use Scout power. This past January, 375 young men were divided into teams of

about 10. They pulled sleds over and through snow, mud, and dirt to the finish line. Each team built a sled equipped with both skis and wheels to handle any conditions. The course was two-and-a-quarter miles long with 10 activity stations along the way where Scouts competed in activities like archery, log sawing, and target ax throwing. The winning time along with the individual scores in the events determined the winner.

Friday night before the race, camp was set up, dinner prepared and eaten, and campers gathered around a campfire for a genuine fireside, where they heard an inspiring message from a member

of the Peoria Arizona North Stake presidency. Saturday morning two teams at a time set out every 15 minutes to begin the race. An awards ceremony rounded out the day of fun and team building.

Brett Wood from the Sierra Verde Ward said, "The Iditarod is so awesome. The race course competition challenges you mentally and physically. It teaches you teamwork. It is hard but rewarding."

"We really enjoyed the Iditarod," added JC May from the winning Daisy Mountain Ward. "It is a time for us to get to know each other and work as a team. Everyone pulled together and worked hard."



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF STEVEN ELCOCK

LDS YOUTH APP

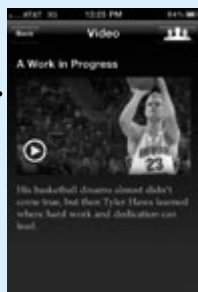
Did you know the Church has designed a mobile app just for youth? It brings articles, videos, music, cartoons, and Mormonads right to your fingertips—and allows you to take them on the go. Plus new stuff is added every week. Check out some of the features:



If you want to download this free LDS Youth app to your mobile device, visit your app store, or just use your smartphone to scan the QR code below for quick access to the Church's mobile device page (see page 40 for instructions).



The opening page of the app lets you see all the content available. Each horizontal ribbon shows you a different type of content: videos, articles, music, and Mormonads. The top ribbon shows currently featured content of all types.



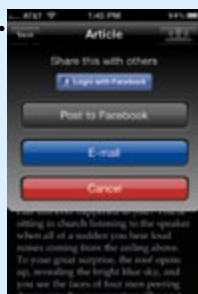
Tap on any one of the videos or articles to go directly to that item.



Tap on a song from the music ribbon and a music player opens where you can listen to the song or skip to other songs.



Tap on a Mormonad to see it larger. Then flip through the ribbon to look at others. You can even download Mormonads and use them as wallpaper on your mobile device.



To share any item from the LDS Youth mobile app, simply tap on the Share icon in the top right of the menu bar and then post the item to your Facebook profile or share it in an e-mail.

QUOTES FROM CONFERENCE

“Much of what we accomplish in the Church is due to the selfless service of women.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “LDS Women Are Incredible!” *Ensign*, May 2011, 18.

SAFETY IN 16

Why are we counseled to wait until we're 16 to date? The guideline against dating before 16 is based on principles of physical, emotional, and spiritual safety. In *For the Strength of Youth* it says, “Do not date until you are at least 16 years old. Dating before then can lead to immorality, limit the number of other young people you meet, and deprive you of experiences that will help you choose an eternal partner” [2001], 24).



WHAT WE REALLY THINK OF YOUTH

"I express my love for the youth of the Church. I have great respect and admiration for the righteous choices you are making each day. You are so faithful in these troubled times despite the many challenges which face you."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Fulfilling Our Duty to God," *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 41.

USING QR CODES

You may have noticed several QR codes (short for "quick response codes") in recent issues of the *New Era*. If you have a camera-enabled smartphone, you can scan a QR code to link straight to a video, article, or website without having to type in its web address. Here's how:

1. Search for QR-code apps in the app store for your smartphone. Free apps are available for most smartphones.
2. Install the app on your phone.
3. Open the app, and scan the QR code. Once the code registers, click Open, and the item it links to will appear on your smartphone.

Try QR codes on pages 27, 39, and 48.

5 SCRIPTURES CONTAINING PRINCIPLES OF SCIENCE OR MATHEMATICS

- 1 Kings 7:23 (pi—approximately)
- Matthew 7:24–27 (erosion)
- Helaman 12:15 (heliocentrism)
- Alma 30:44 (planetary motion)
- D&C 93:33 (conservation of mass/energy)

BECAUSE WE LOVE YOU

Amanda Siler of Inkom, Idaho, sat in Sunday School with the other girls in her Mia Maid class—they were all writing down their goals. Amanda wrote, "To walk with my walker." You see, when Amanda was seven, she developed a neurological disorder that affected her balance and caused her to lose all of her muscle strength and some of her motor control. Through the years, Amanda has worked hard to strengthen her body, and although life continues to be a struggle for her, she is always smiling.

The Young Women and their leaders saw Amanda's goal, and after a lot of research and inspiration, they found a way to help their friend. They secretly ordered Amanda a special three-wheeled bike she would be able to ride on her own.

Last September the ward held a family activity night at a local park. Unaware of the surprise, Amanda and her family were asked to sit facing the group of Young Women. They sang her a song and then presented Amanda with a huge card that read, "Because We Love You." The card had signatures from everyone in the ward and community who helped purchase the bicycle. Amanda's friends helped lift her out of her wheelchair and placed her in the seat of the bike. There were many tearful eyes as Amanda rode more than half a mile that evening—with loving friends by her side.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JULIE SILER



IN A WORD

Edify

The dictionary definition of *edify* is to instruct and improve someone, especially in moral or religious knowledge.

A great footnote from 1 Corinthians 8:1 improves our understanding of this word—it says, “builds up, strengthens, establishes, repairs.” So you could say this footnote is quite edifying.

MISSIONARY PREPARATION

Being spiritually prepared for serving a mission is critical, but being fit, both mentally and physically, is also important. Here are some things to consider as you prepare yourself in every way to serve the Lord on a mission:

- Exercise regularly.
- Develop good sleeping habits.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Learn to be comfortable away from home.
- Work to overcome extreme shyness.
- Learn to work hard and be reliable.
- Keep a positive attitude.

THE WINNING LOBAS

Basketball season for the Academia Juárez varsity girls began just like any other

season: a winning season was their goal. The Church-owned school in Colonia Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico,

is unique in that the majority of the sports programs require the players to travel internationally to play their games. Another interesting fact is that the entire 2010–11 varsity girls’ team, the Lobas, are all active Latter-day Saint young women. They stand out because they are just as united off the court as they are on the court.

And they did have a successful season, winning the majority of their games and taking first place in two tournaments. To end their season, they decided to go to the temple together as a team and do baptisms for the dead. Their coach, Bishop Russell Robinson, made the arrangements. He says, “Never have I seen a group of girls who love each other and love the Lord like these girls do.”

As Colonia Juárez Chihuahua Mexico Temple president Robert Whetten met them at the doors of the temple, he said, “I don’t know of anywhere in the world where a competitive sports team makes coming to the temple a priority to cap off their season. This truly is a great group of young women.”

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF KELLY ROBINSON



MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

D&C 78:18 “And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours.”

I like this scripture because it says that God will help us with our trials and will help us back to our Heavenly Father’s home.

**Matt A., 14,
New Mexico, USA**

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MATT A.

Tell us about your favorite scripture in a paragraph or two. Send it to us, along with a photo, by going to newera.lds.org and clicking on Submit Your Material.



CHOOSE GOODNESS AND Joy



By Elder Gerrit W. Gong

Of the Seventy

Heavenly Father wants us to be happy and gives us opportunities to choose joy, happiness, and goodness.

Many seminary students will know this scripture mastery verse: “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25). But we sometimes forget that it’s really true. We are meant to have joy, which means to be *genuinely* happy, in an eternal sense.

Our Heavenly Father loves us and wants us to have many opportunities to learn and grow. To do that, He provided a wonderful world that He declared to be good and gives us the opportunity to choose goodness and joy. We know the commandments are to bless and help us, but we don’t always remember they also help us have joy.

Choose to Be Good

We feel glad when we make good decisions. This includes choosing to be morally good and obedient.

On occasion, courage means to be with

and stand by our friends. Other times it means that we have to stand a little apart, not judging them or feeling superior but choosing the right by doing something different.

When I was in junior high school, my friends were planning to go and throw eggs at cars during Halloween. I had good friends, but I knew that having fun at the expense of other people, including their property, wasn’t right.

“You know, this really isn’t what we want to do,” I said. But they were set on it, so I said, “Well, I’m just going home.”

I walked home that night, and my parents asked me why I was home early. When I told them, I knew my parents and Heavenly Father approved of what I had done—and it made me feel *good* to do the right.





As we choose to learn new things, the Lord can use the things we learn to bless others.

Choose to Learn

As we grow, everything we learn can be used by the Lord to bless someone, somewhere.

As a Scout I learned Morse code. Years later, while I was on my mission, an investigator came into sacrament meeting, and I felt inspired to write him a short note in Morse code which said something like, “Welcome to sacrament meeting. Happy to see you here!”

It turned out he was a radio operator, and it was a great delight to him to have somebody write him a note in Morse code. Imagine how happy I was when this investigator, with a big smile, said, “I’m so glad that you wrote me this message in Morse code!” I was amazed that something I had learned years earlier could help me on my mission to reach a certain individual in a particular way.

As we are open to new things and to learning in our lives, the Lord knows what we have learned and can use us to bless others. Morse code is a specific example, but if we are willing, the Lord can use us as instruments to bless the lives of others and bring joy to their lives and our own.

Choose to Believe

Belief is a choice. “Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend” (Mosiah 4:9).

When we choose to believe, we understand and see things in a different way. When we see and live that way, we are happy and joyful in a way that only the gospel can bring.

Sometimes we do our very best to understand a question. We study it out in our mind and try every way we can to come to our best decision. At that point, we will sometimes receive additional guidance—things we hadn’t thought of, protection from dangers we couldn’t anticipate, an open pathway we wouldn’t have thought of.

Normally the Holy Ghost doesn’t tell us things that we *know* we should do. I’ve never had the Holy Ghost tell me to go to bed on time. I knew I was supposed to do that. Usually, the Holy Ghost helps alert us to things after we’ve done everything we can.

When I was deciding about graduate school, I had been granted a scholarship at a wonderful school. Yet, after studying things as best I could and coming to what I thought was my best decision, I had a very clear feeling that I should apply to a different school.

So I did and ended up attending a different graduate school than I had initially planned. At that critical juncture, after I had done all I could, quiet guidance took me from one set of opportunities to another that opened many possibilities and blessings I would never have anticipated on my own.

We do everything we can. We live as obediently and faithfully as we can. And then we allow the Lord to prompt us toward opportunities to find and experience joy in our lives and in the lives of our friends and families, in our professional and academic experiences, and in our dating and marriage to our eternal companions.

My father used to say we make three great choices in life. First is our faith, second is our spouse, and third is our profession. I testify that in each of those key areas, we can choose joy. We can choose obedience, and we can choose faith. Our Heavenly Father wants us to be blessed with that which is good for us.

“All Things Shall Work Together for Thy Good”

In Doctrine and Covenants 90:24, we’re taught, “Search diligently, pray always, and be believing, and all things shall work together for your good, if ye walk uprightly and remember the covenant wherewith ye have covenanted.” We see the word *good* again. Search diligently, pray always, and be believing, and *all* things will work together for your good.

In choosing good, we also have the opportunity to become our best selves. Once, many years ago as a teenager, I didn’t see some things the same way my parents did. During one exchange with my father,

I realized certain things I could say might sound smart, but they wouldn’t be true and would be hurtful. I realized I could choose not to say those things.

That was an important lesson for me. I realized that I could choose what I said and that it felt good and right not to talk back in a hurtful way. We can be better, and making good choices can help. As we do so, we feel good because we know we’re doing the right thing—and we can feel joy.

Please remember, we can choose to be good, to learn, and to believe. Heavenly Father knows how all things will work together, and He knows how all things can work together for our good. That’s a great promise. It’s also my humble testimony. **NE**

When we live as obediently and faithfully as we can, we allow the Lord to prompt us toward opportunities to find and experience joy in our lives.



"GO BACK"

I had a very long, exhausting day, and I wanted to go home after school to spend some time with my family before I called it an early night. I packed my bag as the final bell rang. I got up and started to walk out of my ROTC class, heading to the other side of the school, where my car was parked. When I went through the door I had an impression to go find my



friend Alex. I dismissed it, because I was tired and wanted to go home.

When I was about to walk out of the back door, it was as if someone screamed in my head to stop. A few seconds later, the impression to go talk with Alex came into my mind again. This time I heeded the prompting and headed back to my ROTC class on the other side of the school.

I walked back into my classroom, where my unit was practicing for an upcoming event. I found Alex off in a corner by herself and walked over to talk with her. As we talked, I found out that she was having a very down week. Everything had gone wrong for her. She then told me she had really been down and was having destructive thoughts. We talked for a while, and it started to get late. I made sure she felt better and then left.

The next morning when I came in, I ran into Alex. She wasn't the sad, down girl she had been yesterday. She was full of love and peace, and she was happy and cheery again. She thanked me for being a friend in a time of need. She then went on to say that if I hadn't taken that time to talk with her, she might have done something.

I thought back to when I first had ignored the prompting to talk with her. I didn't listen to it. I could have lost a very dear friend to me that day.

Whenever I get a prompting from the Lord, I always remember this event, and I act immediately, for we are answers to people's prayers, angels to others, and instruments in the hands of the Lord to work miracles in the lives of others. When the Lord prompts us, we need to act.

Benton C., Maryland, USA

ABLE TO SERVE

The members of our ward in the Grand Junction Colorado Stake were taught the true meaning of service as we witnessed a new deacon pass the sacrament for the first time. I never thought I would be a witness to such a humbling event that had most of the members shedding a tear or two.

Brother Braden Anderson bowed his head during the sacrament prayer then looked up to get ready to pass the bread to his section of the ward. He was helped by Brother Renner as he reached to take the tray of bread. You see, Braden Anderson has cerebral palsy, which makes it difficult for him to move, talk, or reach for a tray.

As I saw a big smile cross his face, I looked immediately to our good bishop, Braden's father. I saw the face of Bishop Anderson turn from anxiety to gratitude that his son could fulfill his duties as a new deacon.

I heard some members whisper to each other, "Look at Braden. He's smiling, wow! He's fulfilling his duties." I saw some other members take off their glasses to wipe away the tears

caused by understanding the important lesson that unfolded before our eyes.

For me, Braden's strength lifted me up so much that there was not room for tears—just the excitement of knowing that he was doing something others would have deemed impossible. Though he had help from Brother Renner, it was Braden who was doing his duties as a deacon.

There was another first in the meeting. After the second counselor bore his testimony, I wheeled myself up in my wheelchair to express my gratitude to Heavenly Father for letting Braden do his duties. Though my speech is always slurred and not easily understood, I didn't care, because Braden Anderson lifted me up more than anyone could have done.

Chris L., Colorado, USA



PRIESTHOOD BLESSING

Just recently I was very sick and hurt so badly I could not move. I had prayed a couple of times to ask Heavenly Father if He could help me. It just kept getting worse. So I called my dad at work and asked if he could come home to give me a blessing. He agreed.

When he got home, I had prayed four times already and told no one

about it. What was so surprising is that in his blessing he said that he knew I had prayed about it and that if I kept praying, then I would heal very quickly. I know it was Heavenly Father talking to me through my dad, because Heavenly Father was the only other person who knew that I had prayed. I thought that was amazing.

Preston A., Utah, USA

HOW TO SEE AND REMEMBER GOD'S KINDNESS



By President Henry B. Eyring

First Counselor in the First Presidency

HOW HAVE YOU DONE THIS?

I write in my journal every night, and I try to record spiritual experiences or blessings the Lord has given me. Then when I go back and read them, I feel the Spirit again.

Chelsey F.

I write about all the good and bad things that happen. When I am worried about something or have problems, I can look at the times I've been blessed and helped, and I know everything will be OK.

Emily P.

When our children were very small, I started to **write down a few things** about what happened every day. I never missed a day no matter how tired I was or how early I would have to start the next day. Before I would write, I would **ponder this question**: “Have I seen the hand of God reaching out to touch us or our children or our family today?” As I kept at it, something began to happen. As I would **cast my mind over the day**, I would **see evidence** of what God had done for one of us that I had not recognized in the busy moments of the day. As that happened, and it happened often, I realized that trying to remember had **allowed God to show me what He had done**.

More than gratitude began to grow in my heart. Testimony grew. I became ever more certain that our Heavenly Father hears and answers prayers. I **felt more gratitude**

for the softening and refining that come because of the

Atonement of the Savior Jesus Christ. And I **grew more confident** that the Holy Ghost can bring all things to our remembrance—even things we did not notice or pay attention to when they happened.

Seek the Holy Ghost

I urge you to **find ways to recognize and remember God's kindness**.

It will build our testimonies. The key to the remembering that brings and maintains testimony is **receiving the Holy Ghost as a companion**. It is the Holy Ghost who helps us see what God has done for us. It is the Holy Ghost who can help those we serve to see what God has done for them.

Pray and Ponder

Tonight, and tomorrow night, you might **pray** and ponder, asking the questions: Did God send a message that was just for me? **Did I see His hand in my life?** I will do that. And then I will find a way to **preserve that memory** for the day. I testify that He loves us and blesses us, more than most of us have yet recognized. **NE**

From the October 2007 general conference address “O Remember, Remember” (Ensign, Nov. 2007, 66–69).

NE more

Share *your* experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other youth by visiting **lds.org/go/813** or using a smartphone to scan the QR code below for quick access (see page 40 for instructions).



Morning

By Jennifer Sainsbury
Brown

A dawn drawn song
swooped
 me
 you
up into
pale blue
 where
geese clouds skittered.
We littered the
fair air
with our
 laughter.
After,
when the sun shook
 out
birth wet rays,
we danced down
a silver
 sunbeam
 maze
of mirth
and caught
the earth.



WHAT'S ONLINE

Find the *New Era* on Facebook

The *New Era* has a Facebook page at **facebook.com/NewEra.magazine**. At the page, you'll get:

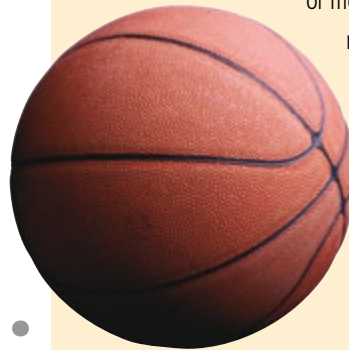
- Updates about cool, new videos and articles posted on **youth.lds.org**.
- Inspirational quotes from prophets and apostles.
- Tips for teens.
- Scriptures for your day.
- And so much more.

Find the page and like it the next time you're online!



Watch an Inspiring Video of a Basketball Star

Basketball star Tyler Haws shares his secrets to success both on and off the court. You'll learn tips that will help you in your life, whether you're into basketball, tennis, academics, or more. You'll even find out how many free throws Tyler has made in a row (it's more than 100!). Head to **lds.org/go/814** to watch it.



Share Your Experiences Online

You already know sharing the gospel is important, but have you thought about how you can share it with others through technology? One way you can do this is by going to **youth.lds.org** and sharing your experiences in living the gospel. Once you sign in, you'll be able to leave thoughts and share experiences anywhere on the site. Think of how many youth you'll be able to help and inspire who are going through similar experiences!

Tip: To sign in, you'll need to create a free LDS Account, which you can do after getting your membership record number from your ward or branch clerk.