

THE **New Era**



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The RESTORATION

I would like to make this message my testimony of the “restitution of all things”—meaning, of course, the restoration of all things. This is the message and the testimony we all carry into the world.

I thank my wife, Harriet, for her witness and testimony of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. May I share with you the conversion story of my wife’s family many years ago?

One Sunday when I was a teenager attending the Frankfurt Branch in Germany, the missionaries brought a young mother and her two beautiful daughters to our Church meetings. I still remember the impressions I had when I saw those two young girls walking into our chapel—especially about the older daughter. She was about 13 years old, and with her large brown eyes and beautiful black hair, she immediately caught my attention. I thought, “These missionaries are doing a really great job!” Little did I know that this young lady would much later bless my life forever.

But I’m getting ahead of the story. Let me go back and start with how this young family met the missionaries.

The Conversion of Carmen Reich

In the fall of 1954 two missionaries were inside of an apartment house ringing the doorbells in the city of Frankfurt. Gradually

they began working their way up the floors without any success. Finally they rang the bell of the last door on the fourth floor. It was opened by young Harriet, who immediately asked her mother to invite them in. Sister Reich initially hesitated, but after some additional pleading by Harriet, Elder Gary Jenkins from California and his companion were invited in.

These two missionaries were truly guided by the Spirit, not only where to go but also what to say. After briefly explaining who they were and what the message was they wanted to share, the missionaries left a Book of Mormon with the mother, asked her to read the marked scriptures, and departed with a prayer and a blessing.

Two days later they returned. This time the missionaries received a friendly welcome and were invited in quickly. When they asked Sister Reich if she had read the marked scriptures in the Book of Mormon, Sister Reich answered without hesitation, “I read the whole book, and I feel that it is true.”

Sister Carmen Reich was only 36 at the time, a widow with two daughters. Only eight months before, she had lost her husband, a renowned musician, to cancer. After his unexpected death, the family struggled with a number of unanswered questions—Is there a purpose in life? Is there anything after death; and if so, what? Why are we born? Did



**By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf**

Second Counselor in the
First Presidency

*We should be grateful
with all our heart to
live in the time of the
Restoration and to bring
truth and eternal blessings
to our brothers and
sisters.*



To bring the message and the redemptive power of Christ and His Atonement to the people of the world, we need to declare with courage and clarity the events of 1820 and thereafter.

we live before this life?

Let me make it clear that Sister Reich was a religious person. She loved to read, and the Bible was one of her favorite books. She believed firmly that Jesus is the Christ, and as a family they tried to follow His teachings. They were good, honest people, and even the loss of their husband and father could not take away their feeling of family.

However, when Sister Carmen Reich read the Book of Mormon, book-end to book-end, in two days, she felt something she had never before experienced. By her own account, it was “the spirit of revelation.”

She said she could “feel pure intelligence” flowing into her, giving her “sudden strokes of ideas” about the “things of the Spirit of God.” These ideas related to her special circumstances. As the missionaries taught her the plan of salvation and the other doctrines of the Restoration, she continued to “grow into the principle of [personal] revelation” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 132). All the good things she had learned in her Lutheran faith received a new and deeper meaning, and all of a sudden life itself had a totally different and divine eternal perspective.

The Restoration’s Powerful Message

It was not that she felt any enmity for what she had believed for so many years. But when she heard the message of the Restoration, a door was opened into a world flooded with light and filled with love and hope. Looking back, she described her experience this way: It was as if something of great importance had been lifeless and inert but was now resurrected to life, beauty, and activity.

The key messages of the Restoration have the power to bring such feelings to the heart and mind of the earnest seeker of truth, irrespective of the person’s cultural or religious background. There are no geographic or cultural boundaries for the Holy Ghost.

The Restoration in its fulness completes and enhances the truths found in the religions of the world.

Let me finish the story of Sister Reich, my dear mother-in-law. She represents in many ways the multitude of converts who are coming into the Church every day from other religions, both Christian and non-Christian, and even from no religion at all. What characterizes them all is that they are willing and pure enough to believe when God speaks.

Sister Reich was baptized on November 7, 1954. In December, only a few weeks after her baptism, the missionary who baptized her asked that she write her testimony down. Elder Jenkins wanted to use her testimony to help others feel the true spirit of conversion. Fortunately, he kept her handwritten original for more than 40 years and then returned it to my mother-in-law as a very special and loving gift. Carmen Reich, my dear mother-in-law, passed away in 2000 at age 83.

Let me read to you parts of her written testimony. It shows what she, with her background, with her needs and desires at the time she met the missionaries, saw as the key points of the Restoration. This is the English translation of her handwritten testimony:

“Special characteristics of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that are not present in other religious communities include, above all:

“Modern revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

“Sacred priesthood authority as in the time of Christ, with a living prophet today.

“Next, the Book of Mormon in its clear and pure language, with all its instructions and promises for the Church of Jesus Christ—truly a second witness with the Bible that Jesus Christ lives.

“Faith in a personal God—that is, God the Father; and God the Son Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost, who facilitates prayer and guides us personally.

“Belief in a premortal life, the pre-existence. Knowledge of the purpose of our earthly life, and of our life after death, is extremely valuable for us to have and is especially interesting and informative. The plan of salvation is so clearly laid out in the restored gospel that our lives receive new meaning and direction.

“The Word of Wisdom. The Church has given us the Word of Wisdom as a guide to help us realize our desire to keep our body and spirit healthy and improve them. This is our goal because we know that we will take our body up again after death in the same form.

“Temple work, with its many sacred ordinances enabling families to be together forever. This doctrine, totally new to me, was given through revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith.”

So we see that the religion into which people are born may be incomplete, but it can still serve as a foundation for the reception of the fulness of the gospel.

Bringing the Message to the World

Just as we recognize and support the privilege of others to worship Almighty God according to their conscience, so we also claim the right to declare our faith and testimony of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ according to our beliefs.

To bring the message and the redemptive power of Christ and His Atonement to the people of the world, we need to declare with courage and clarity the events of 1820 and thereafter. These events, and the revelation that attended them, are what distinguish us from all other religions and from any other people with good intent.

The Prophet Joseph Smith went into the woods near his family home to offer his first vocal prayer to God. He said: “I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

“. . . When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17).

From that day forward the heavens were open again. Joseph learned line upon line, precept upon precept. He studied the scriptures, and he communed with angels. Apostles and prophets from ancient times came to confer on him sacred priesthood authority and keys. Heavenly messengers taught him the ordinances of everlasting life and the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Revelation flowed from on high.

I testify that today the keys of the kingdom of God are on earth and that they are held by Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. The President of the Church, who is the senior Apostle, holds all the keys necessary to preside over all the organizational and ordinance work of the Church. President Thomas S. Monson has this authority today. He stands as our prophet, the most recent in an unbroken succession of prophets and apostles from Joseph Smith to our own day.

Having the fulness of the gospel should not lead any of us to feel arrogant or harbor a holier-than-thou attitude. We should simply be grateful with all our heart for the privilege to live in the time of the Restoration and to bring truth and eternal blessings to our brothers and sisters.

Therefore, be humble and testify of the Restoration of the gospel and of Joseph Smith as a true prophet of God. Joyfully live the gospel and be true to the covenants and commandments our loving Heavenly Father has given us.

Be courageous. Have faith. Do not fear. Trust the Lord. **NE**

From an address delivered at a seminar for new mission presidents on July 27, 2006.

The Real Reward for

Once I learned the Book of Mormon is true, I just had to share it.

By Paul C. Hardin

For me, the key to choosing to serve a mission was gaining a testimony of the Book of Mormon. When I was 15, living near St. Louis, Missouri, my seminary teacher challenged us to read the Book of Mormon not just once, but *twice* during the school year. As a reward, she offered a steak dinner. Eating a steak dinner with the girls I knew would take the challenge sounded very appealing to me.

For the first time in my life I began a committed attempt to read the entire Book of Mormon. I had tried many times before, but I always got stuck in the Isaiah chapters. I pushed past those, and within a few months I had read all the way through for the first time. When I finished, I thought, “This is a really good book! But is it *correct*?”

I started reading again with the intent of determining whether it was factual or fabricated. I checked for consistency in dates and calculated the ages of the various prophets to see if they were realistic. I found evidence supporting the reliability of the Book of Mormon as an ancient text. When I finished reading the second time, I was convinced that it was correct.

At this point I had reached the original goal to read the Book of Mormon twice. I was surprised to realize that I was no longer interested in the steak dinner—this was becoming too important, too sacred, for such a reward. I was now convinced the Book of Mormon was good and correct, but was it *true*? To answer that question, I read it for a third time.

Before I read, I said a short prayer, asking, “Father, is what I’m about to read true? If so, please tell me through Thy Spirit.” Then, when I was finished reading for the day,

I’d close the book and ask, “Father, is what I have just read true?” I read it through this way the third time, and not long after that, the Spirit bore witness of its truthfulness in an unmistakable manner. I had found out for myself that the promise found in Moroni 10:3–5 really works!

Since that day, I have been on fire to share the gospel with others. I’d openly carry my Book of Mormon around school with me, hoping people would ask me about it. I would talk about it whenever I could.

I talked to my friends about it and invited them to Mutual, seminary, and church. Ultimately, three of my high school friends and the mother of one of those friends were baptized. It was very exciting!

After a year of college I was called to be a full-time missionary in Colombia. That was one of the greatest events of my life.

Do I love missionary work? You bet! Just as I learned for myself that the Book of Mormon is true, I learned that what the Book of Mormon says is true: “The Lord hath redeemed my soul from hell; I have beheld his glory, and I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love” (2 Nephi 1:15).

Just as gaining a testimony of the Book of Mormon was an anchor to my soul, going on a mission laid a foundation for my life. I still refer back to those special, sacred events that happened on my mission. Beyond the witness I received of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, these sacred experiences were further witnesses to me of God’s reality, divinity, and love. **NE**

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT GREER

Reading



THE BOOK IS TRUE

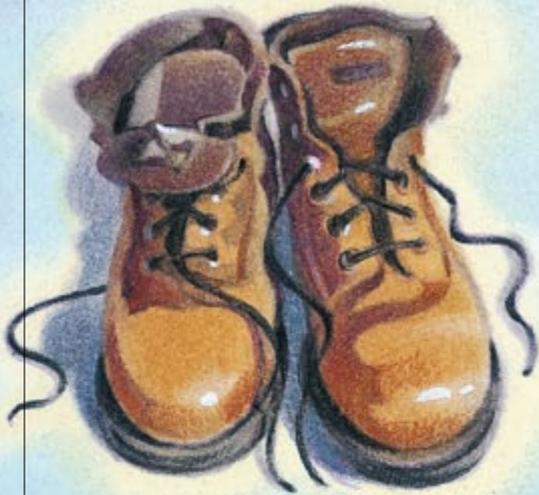
“Concerning this record the Prophet Joseph Smith said: ‘I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.’ . . .

“We invite all men everywhere to read the Book of Mormon, to ponder in their hearts the message it contains, and then to ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ if the book is true. Those who pursue this course and ask in faith will gain a testimony of its truth and divinity by the power of the Holy Ghost. (See Moroni 10:3–5.)”

Introduction to the Book of Mormon.

Living in MY FATHER'S SHOES

By Adam Hansen



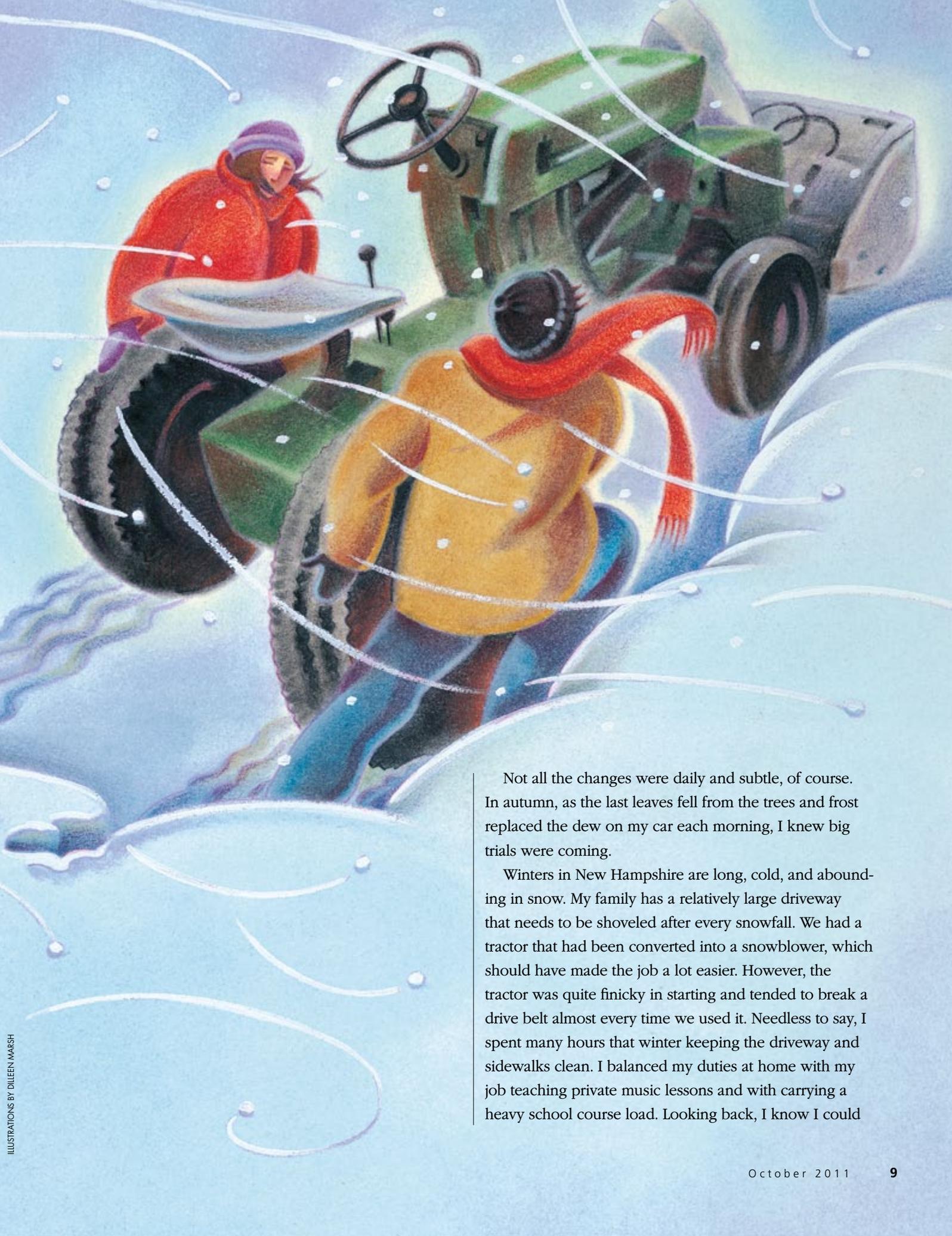
I had never realized how much my parents do for me until I had to fill in for my father.

The summer before my senior year of high school, my father was looking for work. After speaking with my mother, he approached me one day and explained that he had found a job that would meet our family's financial needs but that he would have to work in San Jose, California. We lived in New Hampshire, some 3,000 miles (4,800 km) away, and because of the economic climate at the time, we would not be able to sell our house and move to California. He would just commute back and forth across the United States.

I told my dad I supported his decision to accept the position. Because he would be able to fly home only every other weekend, my "support" included assuming some of his responsibilities at home. I had to be "the man of the house," he told me.

Although I was generally an obedient son, I think I—like many teens—failed to grasp just how much my parents really did for our family. But with this transition, my perspective, attitude, and behavior slowly began to change.

The changes were subtle at first—for example, I started making more of an effort to keep the house clean, help my younger sister with homework, and take the lead in home teaching our assigned families. I sacrificed a lot of personal time as well, even temporarily halting progress on my band's CD. I began to mature. I began to trust in the Lord more to keep myself organized and motivated daily.



Not all the changes were daily and subtle, of course. In autumn, as the last leaves fell from the trees and frost replaced the dew on my car each morning, I knew big trials were coming.

Winters in New Hampshire are long, cold, and abundant in snow. My family has a relatively large driveway that needs to be shoveled after every snowfall. We had a tractor that had been converted into a snowblower, which should have made the job a lot easier. However, the tractor was quite finicky in starting and tended to break a drive belt almost every time we used it. Needless to say, I spent many hours that winter keeping the driveway and sidewalks clean. I balanced my duties at home with my job teaching private music lessons and with carrying a heavy school course load. Looking back, I know I could

EXPRESS AND SHOW YOUR LOVE



"We can begin to become more diligent and concerned

at home by telling the people we love that we love them. Such expressions do not need to be flowery or lengthy. We simply should sincerely and frequently express love.

"... Children, when was the last time you told your parents that you love them?

"Each of us already knows we should tell the people we love that we love them. But what we know is not always reflected in what we do. We may feel unsure, awkward, or even perhaps a bit embarrassed.

"As disciples of the Savior, we are not merely striving to know more; rather, we need to consistently do more of what we know is right and become better.

"We should remember that saying 'I love you' is only a beginning. We need to say it, we need to mean it, and most importantly we need consistently to show it."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "More Diligent and Concerned at Home," *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 17–18.

not have done all this from my own strength; I had to rely on the Lord.

One time during a particularly intense blizzard, our tractor tore a drive belt in the middle of our driveway. My mother and I soon discovered we had no more extra belts. The tractor had to be pushed back into the garage. With the wind chill, the temperature was about 20 degrees below zero (-29° C). My fingers were so cold they had become almost nonresponsive. Unfortunately, the tractor wasn't going to go anywhere by itself, so Mom and I put it in neutral gear and tried to push it.

Our initial efforts were futile. Even with heavy-duty snow boots we couldn't get enough friction to push the tractor forward. I remember falling and bruising my knees several times as my feet failed to get any traction on the slippery ice. I was cold, I was miserable, and I wanted hot chocolate. If we were going to get this done, we needed a

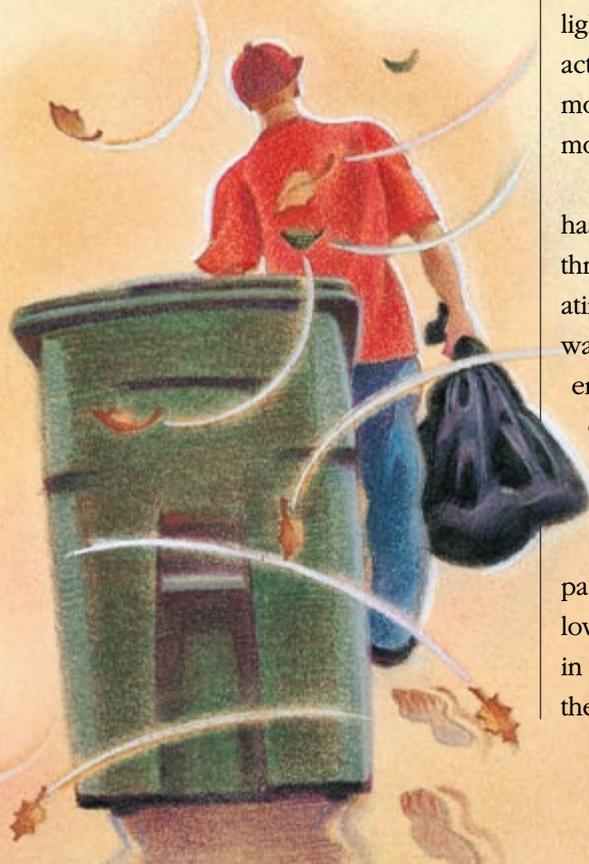
different approach.

It became apparent that we needed to literally put our "shoulders to the wheel," simultaneously pushing down with all of our strength on the front side of the tires. Because we were pushing down instead of forward, we were able to move the tractor! Slowly but surely, we pushed the tractor back into the garage.

That experience was just a single event, but there were many others culminating in my change of perspective. In that year of living in my father's shoes, I gained a tremendous new appreciation for everything my parents do for me. Just thinking about their love for me now brings tears to my eyes.

Perhaps one of my greatest realizations, however, was that many of these changes were things I could have—and should have—been doing all along. I didn't have to wait for my dad to work on the other side of the country to realize that daily service could lighten my parents' burden or that each kind act could make my family more unified and more receptive to the Holy Ghost, leading to more peace, happiness, and comfort.

My experience, as powerful as it was, has taught me not to wait until I find myself thrust into another's shoes to start appreciating them. Fortunately, that is not the only way to empathize with and appreciate others—through service and strong communication we can learn to see the world from another's point of view. I am grateful that I had this experience and have made more of an effort to recognize all that my parents do for me, thank them, express my love to them, and show that love by joining in their efforts to serve the *entire* family. **NE**



STAY ON YOUR TOES

The only safe path is straight and narrow.

(See 2 Nephi 9:41.)



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN LUKE

SPEAKING IN SACRAMENT MEETING?

By John Hilton III and Mindy Raye Friedman

You've been asked to speak in sacrament meeting. What do you do? First off, relax. Remember, the congregation is on your side, and everyone wants you to give a fabulous talk.

One of the purposes of sacrament meeting is to “provide gospel instruction” and to “strengthen faith and testimony” (*Administering the Church* [2010], 138). As a youth speaker, the Lord and your ward leaders have trusted you with part of this responsibility. You have the opportunity to teach and to inspire the members of your ward or branch. So, how can you write a meaningful talk? Here are some tips and ideas to consider as you prepare, organize, and deliver your talk.

TIPS FOR PREPARATION

- Start thinking about your topic as soon as you are assigned to speak.
- Pray for the Spirit to guide you as you determine what to say.
- Think about your own experiences with the topic and how you might share them.
- Read about the topic in the scriptures. Mark or write down things you feel inspired to use.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT YOUTH TALKS

Q. What is the purpose of a sacrament meeting talk?

A. To provide gospel instruction and strengthen faith and testimony.

Q. What should a sacrament meeting talk focus on?

A. Talks should focus on gospel subjects that help members build faith and testimony.

Q. Why does my bishop or branch president always have youth speakers?

A. Ward leaders are actually instructed by Church headquarters to regularly invite youth ages 12 to 18 to speak briefly in sacrament meeting on assigned gospel subjects.

Q. Can someone else write my talk for me?

A. You should prepare your own talk, though the bishopric may encourage your parents to help.

Q. What should I put in my talk?

A. Teach the doctrines of the gospel, relate faith-promoting experiences, bear witness of divinely revealed truths, and use the scriptures (see D&C 42:12; 52:9). Teach in a spirit of love after prayerful preparation.

Q. Is there anything I should avoid in my talk?

A. You should not speak on subjects that are speculative, controversial, or out of harmony with Church doctrine.

Q. What else do I need to remember?

A. To maintain an atmosphere of reverent worship in sacrament meetings, when speakers use scriptures as part of their talks, they should not ask the congregation to open their own books to the scriptural references.

Answers taken from *Administering the Church* (2010), 138–40.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

As you prepare your talk, remember the stories you have studied in the scriptures, and also consider studying the topic in these gospel references:

- **Bible Dictionary:** In the back of your Bible and online you can find definitions and scriptures by looking for your topic in the Bible Dictionary.
- **Topical Guide:** Also in the back of your Bible and online, the Topical Guide can help you look up scriptures on your topic.
- **General conference:** Talks given by Church leaders during general conference are a great resource for studying your topic. You can find conference reports in the May and November *Ensign* magazine issues or online at conference.lds.org. You can also find conference roundups with good quotes for youth in the May and November issues of the *New Era*.
- **True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference:** This booklet provides definitions and additional information on many gospel topics.
- **For the Strength of Youth:** Many of the topics you may be asked to speak on can be found in this booklet.
- **LDS.org:** On the Church's official website, LDS.org, you can search for articles, talks, and other material for your topic. Just type your topic into the search bar near the top-right corner of the website.
- **Youth.lds.org:** At youth.lds.org, designed specifically for youth, you can explore more about the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, find quotes and talks by Church leaders, and search for articles on your topic.

1. Prepare and Teach by the Spirit

Doctrine and Covenants 42:14 tells us how to obtain the Spirit's influence in our teaching: "And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith." Start your talk preparations with sincere prayer. The Holy Ghost can "show unto you all things what ye should do" in preparing and giving your talk (2 Nephi 32:5). Ask God to enlighten your mind so you can understand what you are to speak about and how best to present the information.

An important part of this preparation is to start writing your talk as soon as you receive the assignment to give it. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland said, "May I encourage you to start thinking about and planning early for any [talk] that you are to give" ("Teaching and Learning in the Church" [worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 10, 2007], *Ensign*, June 2007, 90). Preparing early will give you more time to receive insights and inspiration.



2. Organize ✓✓✓✓✓

As you prayerfully consider what to say in your talk, consider these four main elements, which can be organized in any order:

1. Share a doctrine or principle related to your topic.
2. Use scriptures to teach about the doctrine (see D&C 42:12; 52:9), and relate how they are important to the congregation.
3. Tell faith-promoting experiences—especially ones from your own life.
4. Bear your testimony of the topic and anything else you feel prompted to testify about.



3. Speak from the Heart

It is often better to prepare a simple outline of what you are to speak on instead of writing the talk out word for word and reading it. Reading a talk may tie you down to say exactly what is written instead of being able to adapt as the Holy Ghost gives you “in the very moment, what ye shall say” (D&C 100:6).

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught, “We must . . . speak out of [our] hearts rather than out of [our] books” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 619–20). By making your own experiences and testimony a vital part of your talk, you will be more likely to speak from your heart and affect those who hear your talk.

Remember, your ward leaders asked you to speak on the topic, so don’t just rely on the thoughts and stories of others. As you follow the Spirit in preparing and giving the talk, He will help you know what to say as you speak to your ward or branch members. **NE**

TIPS FOR DELIVERY

- Practice giving your talk in front of a mirror or a family member beforehand.
- Don’t start by telling everyone how unqualified you are or that you don’t want to be speaking.
- Make sure you speak slowly, clearly, and loudly enough for everyone to hear.
- Stand up straight as you speak.
- Try not to move your hands too much. For young women, if you tend to fidget with your hair or jewelry, consider wearing your hair back and leaving your jewelry at home.
- Don’t just read your talk with your head down. Look up as much as possible, and try to make eye contact with people in the congregation.
- If you get nervous, just pause and take a deep breath. Then move on with your talk.



What would my new friends think if I walked out on the movie?

Starting high school was scary. I felt lost in a massive student body, the big campus, and new classes. I tried to keep somewhat invisible so that I wouldn't embarrass myself.

Slowly I adjusted to my new situation. I got involved in the theater department and made some great friends. By October, I was invited to a birthday party for one of the older, popular boys in our theater group.

I was ecstatic! It was a costume party, and I spent hours putting together an Egyptian dress. The night of the party, my heart was pounding as I walked into the house and saw all my new theater friends in fantastic costumes. Many of them were juniors and seniors, and I still couldn't believe that they had invited me.

About an hour into the party, our host pulled out a movie and excitedly called all of us to go into the other room to watch it. My stomach clenched when I saw the movie's case. It was not a movie I wanted to see. Ever!

We all herded into the next room. I tucked myself into a corner of a couch and felt sick. My mind raced over what I should do. Everyone in the room seemed so excited to watch the film. They were my theater group. They were my new friends. I didn't want to ostracize myself so soon after finally feeling included.

As the title of the movie flickered onto the screen, I knew what I had to do. Without saying a word, I stood up from the couch and walked quietly to the kitchen and stood there in the dark for a minute. Then I turned on the light and considered my options.

I knew the movie would go on for about two hours. Should I call my mom to come get me? Should I wait around in the kitchen for two hours? I had no idea, but the sick feeling in my stomach had lessened, and I was surprised that I no longer felt afraid.

As I stood there in the kitchen trying to figure out what

to do, the door from the other room opened and a pretty, popular junior girl walked through. She smiled sheepishly at me and then confessed, "I really didn't want to see that movie, but I didn't want to be the only one who left. When I saw you leave and you didn't come back, I wondered if you felt the same way."

I nodded, and we both laughed. We hadn't said more than two sentences before the door opened and another girl came through.

"Did you want to see that movie?" she whispered timidly.

"No," we both admitted to her.

CHAIN

Over the course of the next five minutes, people kept walking through the door, confessing that they didn't actually want to see that movie. When at last our host came through the door, he announced, "I've turned off the movie. Does anyone want to play a game?"

Later that night, I thought about what had happened. Would we all have sat there watching that awful movie if no one had moved? How would I have felt now if I had stayed? I was struck by the thought that *no one* had really wanted to see the movie, but everyone had been too afraid to leave. I was surprised that I wasn't alone in wanting to do the right thing.

That thought gave me a new courage that later helped me make many other decisions before high school was over. Sometimes my decisions left me standing alone. But far more often, my decisions created a chain reaction of good choices by people around me, just like it did at that birthday party. **NE**



REACTION

**“I’ve heard that
the Book
of
Mormon
is written
for our day.
What does
that mean?”**

The Book of Mormon tells of the Nephites and Lamanites, but it wasn’t written for them. In fact, many of the Book of Mormon prophets knew that future generations would have the book (see, for example, 2 Nephi 25:21; Mormon 8:35). Near the end of the Nephite civilization, the Lord inspired Mormon to choose from the many records of his people the teachings and accounts that would be helpful to us today.

The main purpose of the book is to teach and testify of Jesus Christ. His gospel, which is taught clearly and powerfully in the Book of Mormon, applies to our day, as it does in any age. But even the events and story lines of the Book of Mormon can teach us. For example, if you look at the enemies and wars in the Book of Mormon as symbols for the spiritual battles we face today, you can learn how to strengthen yourself against temptation.

As you prayerfully study the Book of Mormon, your faith and testimony will be strengthened—and that is something we all need today. **NE**

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

Words of the Lord for Us



When I was 11 years old, I read the Book of Mormon from cover to cover in one year. That was a great experience for me. I have a strong testimony of the Book of Mormon. I know with all my heart that the things which are written there are true and written by chosen prophets of God. I strongly believe that these words were written for our time. The Book of Mormon is there to help us and to prepare us to return to Heavenly Father.
Katja K., 17, Brandenburg, Germany

Like an Iron Rod



The words of the Book of Mormon have always been like an iron rod guiding me in the gospel, even through the adversities we have as we try to arrive at the tree of life. Its words have always been a signpost telling me the direction I should go—just as the Liahona in Nephi’s days pointed the way they should go—according to the faith, attention, and diligence that I give to this sacred book (see 1 Nephi 16:28).
Elder Santos, 20, Japan Kobe Mission

A Book of the Restoration



The Book of Mormon was written by prophets of ancient times who lived in the Americas, and God wanted these sacred writings saved for the day of the Restoration of the gospel. This is why the book was reserved for such a long time—so that today we may study it and search it, since in it are found many sacred writings. We find stories like when God sent Lehi and his family to the promised land, the coming of Jesus Christ to the Americas, and many more uplifting stories for our lives. We also find doctrines and principles that God wants us to learn.

Monica V., 15, Santander, Colombia

Mormon Was Inspired



The Book of Mormon is a compilation of histories and sermons from a people who lived in the Americas. Hundreds of years ago, Mormon put these stories together after praying to God about what to put into the Book of Mormon. These stories can apply to us today because through Mormon, God composed the Book of Mormon so that it would speak to our day.

Dylan S., 16, Arizona, USA

Teachings to Help Us

The Lord knew the challenges we would face in our generation, even back in Nephite times. He knew exactly when the Book of Mormon would be brought forth, so He instructed the prophets who kept the records to write certain things that He knew would apply to our day. The Book of Mormon is a companion to the Bible to teach us doctrine but also to show us what happens when a population gets too wicked or prideful. The Lord made sure to include parables and examples that would help us fight against the temptations that we face today.

Amanda J., 17, Nevada, USA

Like a Journal

We are told to keep a journal. This is to help the generations after us know how it was in our day so our descendants can learn from the things we did. This relates to the Book of Mormon. It was written by prophets telling about the things they did and learned so that

we can have a guide to help us be closer to our Heavenly Father.

Rosa E., 19, Washington, USA

Prophets Guide Our Journey

The Book of Mormon tells us different principles that we can use in our daily decisions. Through reading it, we will realize that every story contains lessons and values that we may apply in our days. The stories of ancient prophets in the Book of Mormon can be our example in our journey today.

Hannah M., 19, Isabela, Philippines

Testify of the Book of Mormon



I know that the Book of Mormon is true and is for our day. Moroni saw our day in a vision and knew that his words

would be read at a future time. Mormon also was writing for our day.

I think this means that we need to read the Book of Mormon more and apply it to our daily life. We should also tell other people how it was written for our day. I have shared my testimony about the Book of Mormon with my

friends and my family. I feel happy when I talk about my testimony of the Book of Mormon.

Andrew K., 15, Virginia, USA



Watch a video with Elder Holland

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland talks about the Book of Mormon in a short video at lds.org/go/110.



A BOOK FOR OUR DAY

For whom was the Book of Mormon meant? Moroni, the book's last writer, speaking to us said,

'Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.' (Morm. 8:35.) God inspired Mormon, its chief compiler, to put into the book what we would need in our day."

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), "A New Witness for Christ," *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 6.

NEXT QUESTION

"What does it mean to honor the priesthood?"

Send your answer by November 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, honor priesthood
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

By Mindy Raye Friedman
Church Magazines

*This deacons
quorum president
served a quorum
member in a
unique way.*

RACING FOR





Imagine competing in a triathlon where you swim 500 meters, bike for 12 miles, and then run for 3.2 miles. Sound pretty hard? Now imagine pushing and pulling a good friend the entire time. That is what Spencer Zimmerman of Arizona did with his friend Dayton Hayward.

One of the guys

Dayton, 13, has cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder. He can't speak or walk, but in the deacons quorum of his ward, he is just one of the guys. When Dayton entered the Young Men program, his dad told the other deacons they would need to help Dayton fulfill his priesthood duties, and the quorum members have taken that challenge seriously.

"When I help Dayton pass the sacrament, I feel as if I am on a mission from Heavenly Father to give him the opportunity to participate in our deacon duties," says Hunter McKown, a fellow deacon.

The triathlon idea

Spencer loves to run and compete in triathlons. As the deacons quorum president, he encouraged his fellow quorum members to do a triathlon with him. But Dayton wouldn't be able to do it on his own.

"I thought it would be really cool to do a triathlon with Dayton," Spencer says. "He should have the opportunity to do and enjoy what everybody else does."



TWO

Along with passing the sacrament with help from his quorum members, Dayton collects fast offerings, does baptisms for the dead, and even goes on campouts with the other young men. They treat him like he is no different from anybody else. And no one is better at this than his quorum president, Spencer.

Spencer, 13, knows what it means to fulfill his priesthood duties, so serving his fellow quorum member just came naturally.

"When I got called to be the deacons quorum president, I felt a great sense of responsibility on my shoulders," he says. "I knew that I should watch out for everybody in the quorum and make sure they're doing good."



So Spencer talked to his parents and Dayton's parents about doing the triathlon with Dayton. Everyone thought it was a great idea, so they asked Dayton if he wanted to do it.

"Spencer went to Dayton and asked him, and Dayton just blinked really definitely like he was really excited about doing a triathlon with him," says Dayton's father, John Hayward.

SHARING ONLINE

After Spencer and Dayton's story was made into a video called "Dayton's Legs," on [youth.lds.org](#), a Church member in Florida sent the video link to his friend Tracy in Arizona.

Tracy knew that a Church that taught young men to serve like Spencer and Dayton was a Church she wanted her sons to be a part of. She went to church with Spencer and Dayton's families and met with the missionaries. The Spirit bore witness of the truth of the gospel, and Tracy and her family were baptized.

You can share the gospel by doing something as easy as sending a video link from [youth.lds.org](#). You never know whose life will change.

See Spencer and Dayton in Action

Watch a video about Spencer and Dayton at [lds.org/go/111](#).

Dayton's legs

So Spencer trained, and he and Dayton did the triathlon together. For the swim, Spencer pulled Dayton behind him in a small, inflated boat. On the bike, he attached a cart for Dayton to sit in, and on the run, he pushed Dayton in a jogging stroller. The race was hard, but Spencer says he and Dayton "loved every second of it," and he was grateful to have Dayton with him.

"Throughout the swim, the bike, and the run, I knew that Dayton was five feet from me the whole time," Spencer says. "It was awesome to know that one of my really good friends could be with me."

Spencer says he and Dayton grew closer together during the race and that he felt spiritually strengthened.

"Near the finish line was very spiritual for me and Dayton, because I felt that I was out of energy, but then Dayton started smiling. I started to speed up, and I had the energy to sprint the last few hundred yards into the finish line. I felt that the Spirit was there helping Dayton and me to finish that race."

They ended up finishing in an hour and 28 minutes and won first place in the team category. But Spencer doesn't want any credit or glory for what he did.

"The triathlon was such a neat experience, because it was hard for Spencer, and yet he made it look easy," says

Dayton's mom, Sherrine Hayward.

"And he always has given the glory to the team. He's been very humble, and he doesn't want the spotlight. He wants Dayton to look like the hero, and he's just Dayton's legs."



After the race

Even though Spencer didn't want the attention, many people were inspired by what he did for his friend. The mayor of the city was so impressed that he made Spencer and Dayton citizens of the month. Throughout the experience, Spencer didn't take credit for anything, something that really inspired his mother.

"Spencer has shown a lot of humility that has been an example to me," Shelly Zimmerman says. "He has gotten a lot of attention. Attention that he didn't want. And the whole time if anyone said, 'Spencer, this is so cool; you're so great,' he turns it around and says, 'It's Dayton. Dayton's on this team too.'"

Spencer was just happy he could serve his friend. "I fulfill my duty to God when I do service for others and I act on what needs to be done," he says.

Service in the quorum

Spencer knows Dayton loved the triathlon. He could tell from the smile on his face. But he also knows Dayton is happy whenever the members of their quorum include him, so

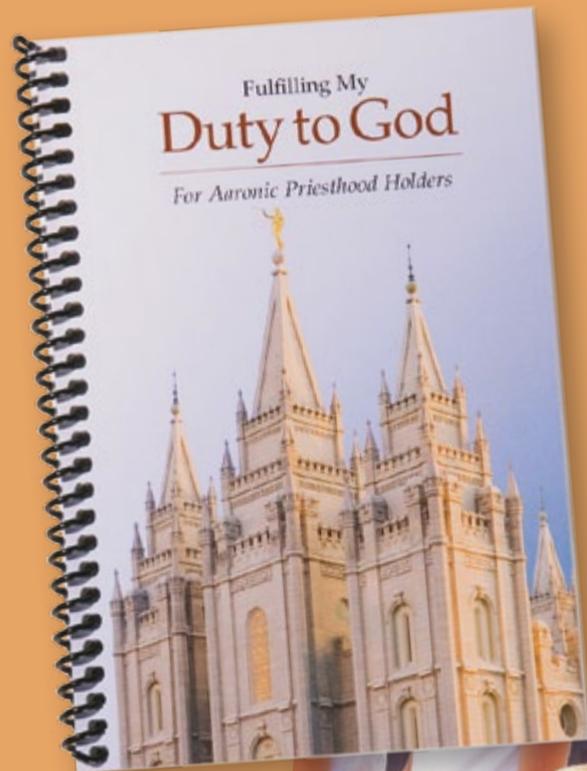


as their quorum leader, he is always encouraging them to serve one another.

“These boys are not inhibited by Dayton at all,” Sherrine Hayward says. “They’re not afraid or intimidated. They all really want to serve, and Spencer shows the boys that it’s not hard; it’s easy to serve.”

And that service goes both ways, as Dayton also serves the members of his quorum by teaching them. “Dayton is a true pleasure to be around because he may not talk but you can sure feel the Spirit when you are around him,” says quorum member Ryan Smith.

“Dayton has been a good friend to me because he has taught me a bunch of life lessons,” Spencer says. “He’s taught me that you can do hard things no matter what your circumstances are. You can be just like everybody else.” **NE**



A DUTY TO GOD

Spencer Zimmerman and Dayton Hayward both used their participation in the triathlon to help fulfill the physical health project for their deacon years in Duty to God.

“The physical health in the new *Fulfilling My Duty to God* book—we fulfilled that by doing this triathlon and training together,” Spencer says. “Dayton’s got his *Duty to God* book too, and he can fulfill projects. We can do projects for him that maybe he can’t do, but he does as much as he can, and he loves doing his Duty to God.”

“I like the new *Duty to God* because you’re able to create your own plans,” he says. “You get to decide what you do and then act on it. Then you get to share it with everybody and let them receive the blessing that you did and let them feel the way you felt.”



DAD'S KEYS AND

After I prayed, the Spirit guided me—and then warned me.

By Mark Elliott

As a 16-year-old I learned that the Lord does indeed listen to and answer sincere prayers, even those of a young man.

My father followed the counsel of the Brethren that we should be prepared with not only food but also fuel, and so each fall my younger brother and I would help him cut and haul firewood to be stored for future need. In the area of Virginia where we lived, trees were being downed to make way for new construction. There was a time allotted for those who wanted to cut up the wood and haul it off. One bright fall day, my father announced that we would drive out to one of these construction sites and get a truckload of wood.

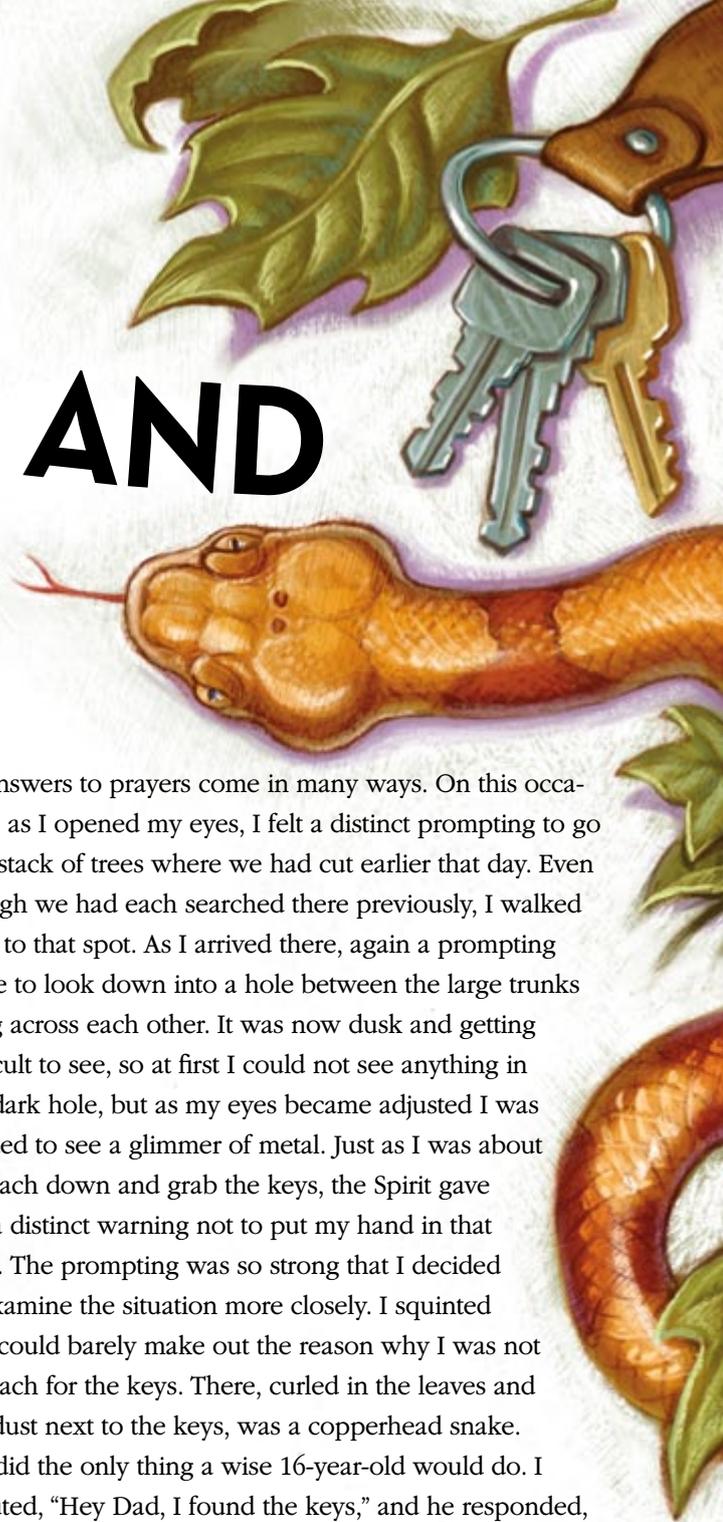
It was my father's job to work the chainsaw and cut the trees into pieces that my brother and I could haul to the truck. We had worked late into the afternoon when my father announced that we could pack up. After reaching into his pocket, he looked at us and said, "Oh no. I lost the keys." At first we thought he was kidding, but then he pulled his pocket inside out and revealed a large hole. All three of us started to search where we had been. We looked and looked but could not find the keys.

It was getting late and cold. We had not dressed for the cool of evening, and it would have been a hike of several miles on country roads to get to where we could reach a phone. It was not a life-threatening situation, but to a tired 16-year-old, it seemed desperate. After searching for as long as I could, and realizing the futility of our efforts in this maze of wood and sawdust, I took the only course I thought was left. I went behind the pile of trees and there humbly pleaded to our Heavenly Father. I explained to Him what our situation was and asked if He could help us find the keys.

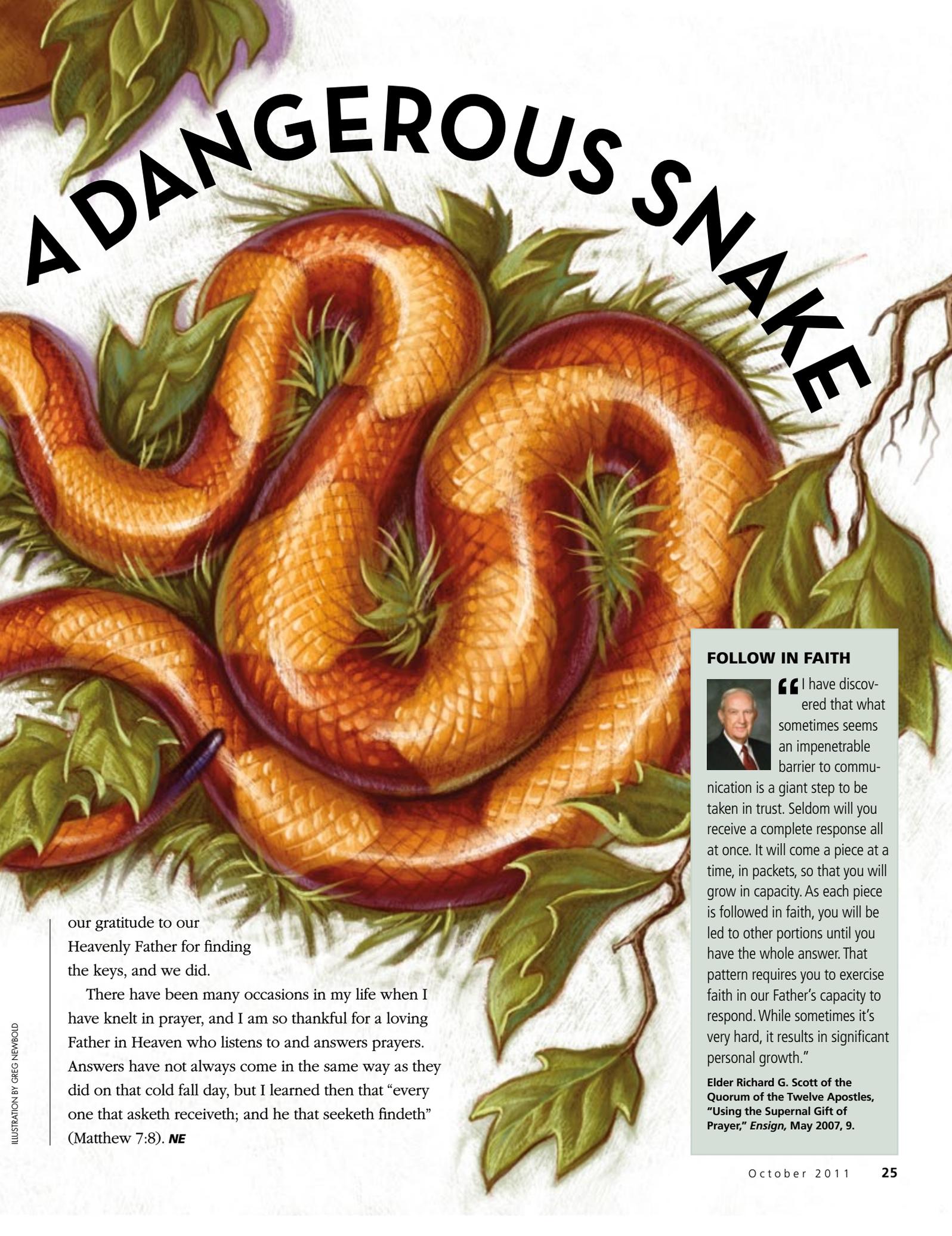
Answers to prayers come in many ways. On this occasion, as I opened my eyes, I felt a distinct prompting to go to a stack of trees where we had cut earlier that day. Even though we had each searched there previously, I walked over to that spot. As I arrived there, again a prompting came to look down into a hole between the large trunks lying across each other. It was now dusk and getting difficult to see, so at first I could not see anything in the dark hole, but as my eyes became adjusted I was excited to see a glimmer of metal. Just as I was about to reach down and grab the keys, the Spirit gave me a distinct warning not to put my hand in that hole. The prompting was so strong that I decided to examine the situation more closely. I squinted and could barely make out the reason why I was not to reach for the keys. There, curled in the leaves and sawdust next to the keys, was a copperhead snake.

I did the only thing a wise 16-year-old would do. I shouted, "Hey Dad, I found the keys," and he responded, "Where?" I yelled, "Over here." Then with a pause and a smile I added, "And you can get them out!" When my dad got to where I was, I explained to him our dilemma about the location of the keys and how our friend the snake was guarding them. My father got a long stick, slowly lowered it so as to not disturb the snake, and pulled out the keys.

Soon we were in a warm truck with a full load of wood and ready to head home when my father asked me how I ever found those keys. I told him. He believed me and reminded me that we should take a moment to express



A DANGEROUS SNAKE



our gratitude to our Heavenly Father for finding the keys, and we did.

There have been many occasions in my life when I have knelt in prayer, and I am so thankful for a loving Father in Heaven who listens to and answers prayers. Answers have not always come in the same way as they did on that cold fall day, but I learned then that “every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth” (Matthew 7:8). **NE**

FOLLOW IN FAITH



“I have discovered that what sometimes seems an impenetrable barrier to communication is a giant step to be

taken in trust. Seldom will you receive a complete response all at once. It will come a piece at a time, in packets, so that you will grow in capacity. As each piece is followed in faith, you will be led to other portions until you have the whole answer. That pattern requires you to exercise faith in our Father’s capacity to respond. While sometimes it’s very hard, it results in significant personal growth.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 9.

FEELING THE SPIRIT

What brings the Spirit into your life? Teens from British Columbia, Canada, share ways they've found to feel close to the Spirit.





Maybe you noticed the change when you were baptized and confirmed a member of the Church. Maybe you felt a calm assurance while listening to general conference. Or maybe you felt that uplifting warmth in your heart as you listened to friends bear testimony in church or at youth conference. Most of us have felt the comforting presence of the Holy Ghost at one time or another. For some it is a common occurrence. For others it doesn't happen very often. If you feel like you fit best in this second group, maybe putting into practice some of the ideas shared by a group of priests and Laurels from British Columbia, Canada, will help you feel the Spirit more regularly.

Every one of us who has been baptized and confirmed has been given the gift of the Holy Ghost, which means we have the right, whenever we are worthy, to have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. So now the key is to stay worthy and do things that will help bring the Spirit into our lives.

Did You Think to Pray?

One of best ways to invite the Spirit into your life is to ask for it. In the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord said, "And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith" (D&C 42:14). You should pray every day specifically for the guidance and help of the Holy Ghost. As you strive to live gospel standards and follow the example of Jesus Christ, you will receive spiritual promptings that will help you in everything you do.

"When I pray in the mornings and at night, I always feel a difference in my life," says Lorena D. "I remember there was a time when I wasn't reading my scriptures and I didn't pray for a long time. I seemed to have a lot of problems at school. But when I started to pray again everything lightened up. After I started praying again things became better for me."

**"Every one of us
can be guided
by the spirit of revelation
and the gift of the Holy Ghost."**
President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles, "Guided by the Holy Spirit,"
Ensign, May 2011, 33.

"Faith comes by the witness of the Holy Spirit to our souls, as we hear or read the word of God. And faith matures as we continue to feast upon the word."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Blessing of Scripture," *Ensign*, May 2010, 35.



Ariel C. shares the story of a time when she was applying for an important summer academic program. "I prayed every morning and night for it," she says. "I prayed before tests and every single day. I

prayed that I would do well on the tests so that my GPA would be good and I might get accepted." Six months later Ariel was accepted into the program, and she's sure that because of her hard work and preparation, as well as her daily prayers, she received divine help and guidance from the Holy Ghost. The experience "reinforced to me that Heavenly Father really does answer our prayers and that He doesn't forget us," she adds.

Seminary and Scriptures

Seminary and scripture study are two sure ways to invite the Spirit into your life. "I think that having seminary at the start of the day helps bring the Spirit," explains

Brandon G. "Just starting the day off reading the scriptures and being around people with the same standards, it's a reminder that there are other people like you," he explains.



Alvin L., who recently graduated from high school, says: "When we graduated from seminary our teacher gave us this pocket-sized Book of Mormon, and now that I am in university I always keep it in my backpack. When things

tend to become crazy during the day and it gets busy and I'm running all over the place and when things get heavy for me, I just remember it's in my backpack."

Alvin says that when the rush of the day becomes overwhelming, he takes out his Book of Mormon and sits down for a short break. As he reads from the scriptures, he is able to feel the Spirit return, which helps him feel calm and at peace again. "I don't have to read for very long, maybe a minute or two," he says. "But I always have that Book of Mormon with me. It just reminds me of who I am."

Ariel shares a similar experience: "One day I was rushing to school, and I don't know why, but something told me to take my scriptures with me. So I quickly put them in my bag and went to school." She goes on to say, "It just so happened that I had a really bad day. I think I was in the last class of the day, and I was looking in my bag and saw my scriptures there. Just seeing them made me happy and brought the Spirit to me, and I knew that this bad day wasn't so bad and that everything would be okay."



Megan C. likes to carry her *Young Women Personal Progress* booklet with her to school. In her wallet she also carries the small version of *For the Strength of Youth*. She says that when she needs to

feel spiritually recharged, “I’ll take it out, and people sometimes ask me what it is. And I’ll say, ‘Well, it’s standards that I follow.’” So sometimes reading these inspired guidelines from the First Presidency can be a missionary opportunity to share her beliefs. But for Megan, every time she reads about the standards “it brings the Spirit to me when I’m having trouble during the day.”

If You’re Happy and You Know It

“Sometimes I just try to smile,” says Lorena. It may sound simple, but smiling and having a positive attitude really helps Lorena feel the Spirit—especially when she starts to feel down at school. “I see the people at school and all their sad faces and how they don’t want to be there. I always try to be positive, and I try to bring out a positive attitude with my friends and the people around me.”

Often Lorena’s positive attitude rubs off on others and helps them feel a little bit better. As she is able to help her friends brighten their outlook, it has definite benefits for Lorena too. Helping others feel good inside “makes me happy and brings the Spirit to me,” she says.

“Yeah, same here,” chimes in Ronald O. He tells about walking home from school each day and how many of the people around him seem grim-faced and unhappy. Ronald says that when they notice the smile on his face, they often wonder what’s wrong with him. “Why is that?” he wonders. “Why should it be that when you’re smiling, people around you think you have issues? I’m often smiling while I’m walking home. And it helps me feel the Spirit.”

In 2 Nephi 2:25 the prophet Lehi taught, “Men are, that they might have joy.” So be joyful, and don’t be afraid to let it show. Lorena and Ronald are sure you’ll feel the difference when you smile—and so will the people around you.

A Perfect Picture

“In my locker I always keep a picture of the temple, so throughout the day every time I go to my locker between classes I’ll look at it and think, ‘That is where I want to go someday,’” says Sandra W. She explains that seeing the temple every time she opens her locker helps her feel the Spirit and “reminds me to keep my standards, and it will help me get to where I want to be.”

Alvin says that placing gospel pictures around his room helps make his bedroom a place of spiritual strength and peace. “Beside my bed I have one picture of the Salt Lake Temple,” he says. “Then on my wall I have another picture of the Vancouver British Columbia Temple. I also have a picture of Jesus Christ in my room. All of these pictures really remind me of where I want to go. I want to go to the temple, so I have to conduct myself in such a way that I’ll get there.”

“I have a picture of the temple on my wall as well as this framed picture and poem about baptismal covenants and keeping yourself clean,” says Stephanie W. She also has a poster from a Young Women lesson that says, “Yield to the promptings of the Spirit while dating.”

The common thread for these three teens is that having a picture of the temple or the Savior where they can see it regularly helps them feel the Spirit. “I look at my pictures and they keep me in tune,” adds Stephanie. Like carefully tuning in a station on the radio to keep the signal strong, if we live worthy of the Spirit and keep righteous goals like the temple in sight, we can help strengthen the Spirit’s signals and better hear and feel the daily promptings of the Holy Ghost in our lives. **NE**

*“But the Comforter,
which is the Holy Ghost,
whom the Father will
send in my name, he
shall teach you all things,
and bring all things to
your remembrance”
(John 14:26).*



See a *Mormon Messages* video about tuning in to the “Voice of the Spirit” at lds.org/go/112.

TO THE POINT

Is it OK to play sports that involve immodest dress, or should we seek a change?

While you should wear clothing suited for the activity you are engaged in, you should also use good judgment in applying the principle of modesty.

If a sport or performing art requires a specific uniform or costume, it is usually tailored to that activity. In swimming, for instance, a sports swimsuit would be appropriate; for dancers, leotards are often the uniform.

However, if you feel a uniform or costume is unnecessarily

provocative or revealing, speak up about it. Politely let your coach or team know what your standards are and ask them to respect your commitment to dress modestly. You may even encourage more modest choices in uniforms. Be firm but respectful, and don't make demands. **NE**

How is a bishop called?

When the stake president feels directed to release a bishop, he fasts and prays for inspiration to know whom the Lord has chosen as his replacement. When he feels he has identified the Lord's



What is the “sealed portion” of the **Book of Mormon**, and will we ever know what’s in it?

choice, the stake president then sends a recommendation to the First Presidency for approval. (There’s actually a form the stake president fills in and sends to the First Presidency.) The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles then prayerfully consider the person recommended by the stake president. Once the person recommended is approved, the stake president can extend the call to the potential bishop and ask his wife for her support. If he is worthy and accepts the call, the new bishop is then presented to the ward for their sustaining vote and is ordained and set apart, usually by the stake president. **NE**

When Moroni was finishing the Book of Mormon record, he was commanded to seal up some of the plates, and Joseph Smith was later commanded not to translate them. This sealed portion contains the complete record of the vision of the brother of Jared (see Ether 4:4–5). This vision included “all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof” (2 Nephi 27:10–11; see also Ether 3:25). So basically the Lord revealed to the brother of Jared the history of mankind, and the sealed portion of the plates was Moroni’s translated copy of it.

Few people have seen the sealed record—for instance, the

Nephites in the land Bountiful at the Savior’s coming (see Ether 4:1–2) and Moroni (see Ether 12:24). The Lord said the sealed portion would be revealed to the world “in mine own due time” (Ether 3:27). He also said it would “not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord” (Ether 4:6; see also 2 Nephi 27:8).

According to Joseph Smith’s associates who saw the golden plates, anywhere from half to two-thirds of all the plates were in the sealed portion (see Kirk B. Henriksen, “What Did the Golden Plates Look Like?” *New Era*, July 2007, 31). **NE**

Some youth wear their **formal outfits** **to church on the Sunday** **after a school’s formal dance.** **Is this OK for Sunday dress?**

For the *Strength of Youth* says, “Show respect for the Lord and for yourself by dressing appropriately for Church meetings” ([2001], 16). So the answer to this question depends on what “appropriately” means.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught a principle that helps us understand what is appropriate dress for sacrament meeting.

“There should be nothing about [your] personal appearance or actions that would call special attention to [you] or distract anyone present from full attention to the worship and covenant making that are the purpose of this sacred service” (“Sacrament Meeting and the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 20).

Prom dresses, formals, and tuxedos belong at a dance, not

at church. This special type of dress is worn for certain special occasions and would unduly call attention to itself at church.

A priest blessing the sacrament in a tuxedo would be distracting, as would a young woman attending church in a formal dress.

Also keep in mind that there may be young men or young women at church who did not attend the dance. Seeing others in gowns and tuxes could be hurtful and disrupt their worship experience. Be mindful of how you dress, because it could affect those around you, as well as your own worship. **NE**

BOOK *of* BOOKS



By Elder Marcus B. Nash

Of the Seventy

Reading the Book of Mormon is like planting a seed. If you do not cast it out in unbelief, it will begin to be delicious to you, and there is no better or more important time to do so than in your youth.

When I was in my teenage years, I decided I would read the Book of Mormon on my own. It was a decision made quietly, privately. I simply wanted to know for myself whether it was what Joseph Smith proclaimed it to be. I grew up in Seattle, Washington, where there were not many members of the Church, so we had seminary early in the mornings before school. I did not know that our upcoming course of study that year was to be the Book of Mormon, but by the time seminary started, I was well into my reading of the book. While some may say it was a happy coincidence, I believe it was more than that. I would read one chapter a night before I went to bed.

As I read the Book of Mormon day by day, I felt goodness, substance, and light grow within me—and it was a good feeling, even delicious. I felt more complete. Despite being a very busy teenager involved in many and varied activities (which means I was pretty tired at night), I looked forward to those quiet minutes before going to bed when I would read a chapter. In fact, there were a few times when,

after reading the book and praying, I would hold it to me as I fell asleep—I loved what I was feeling from reading the book.

Early one gray, drizzly Seattle morning, our seminary teacher led us in a discussion based on Alma 32. Sister Kopeinig (a wonderful teacher who left an indelible mark on my soul) may not remember the discussion that morning and may even have felt it had little effect (some of us were a bit bleary-eyed at that hour), but I remember well the realization that came to me as we read:

“Now, we will compare the word unto a seed. Now, if ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold, if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold, it will begin to swell within your breasts; and when you feel these swelling motions, ye will begin to say within yourselves—It must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the word is good, for it beginneth to enlarge my soul; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, yea, it beginneth to be delicious to me”
(Alma 32:28).

As we read this passage in class, I leaned back and thought, “This is





I looked forward to those quiet minutes before going to bed when I would read a chapter of the Book of Mormon. I loved what I was feeling from reading.

the perfect description of what I'm experiencing with the Book of Mormon itself!"

As that year went on, I completed my personal reading of the Book of Mormon. I was changed for the better because I had read, pondered, and allowed it to influence how I lived. As I knelt by my bedside the night that I finished the book, I already knew it was true. The response to my prayerful inquiry was as quiet, still, gentle—and real—as had been my experience as I had read the Book of Mormon. Again, I felt the swelling motion within that was delicious to my soul. I realized that the book had enlarged and enlightened my very being. I felt a quiet, settling confirmation: "Yes, as you know, it's true." Ever since then, hardly a day has gone by that I have not read from the Book of Mormon. I love the book with a passion. It is a part of my daily life.

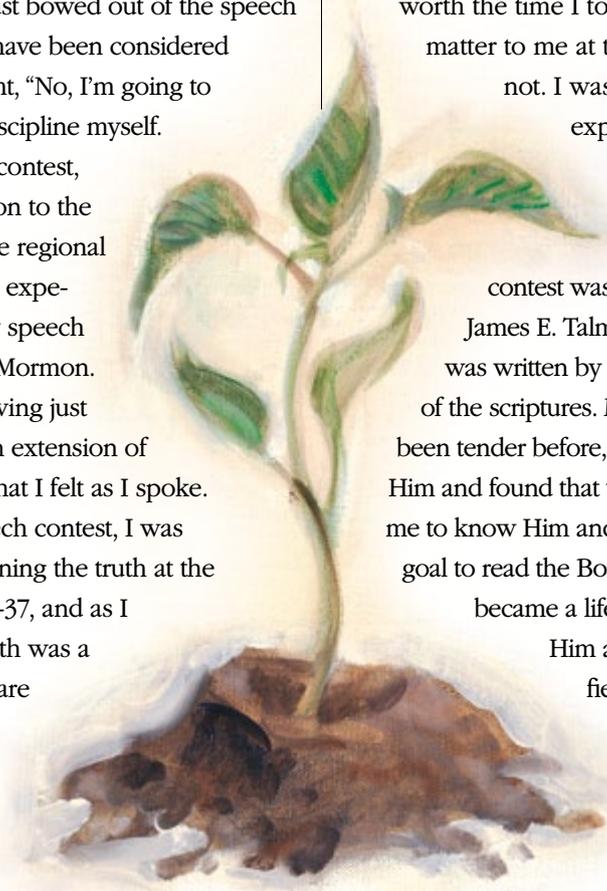
Toward the end of that year of seminary, we had a final seminary activity—a stake scripture chase coupled with a stake speech competition. I was involved in a lot of things in our high school—sports, drama, student leadership, and such. In the past, I would have just bowed out of the speech competition because it may not have been considered "cool" to participate. But I thought, "No, I'm going to do this." Maybe I did so just to discipline myself.

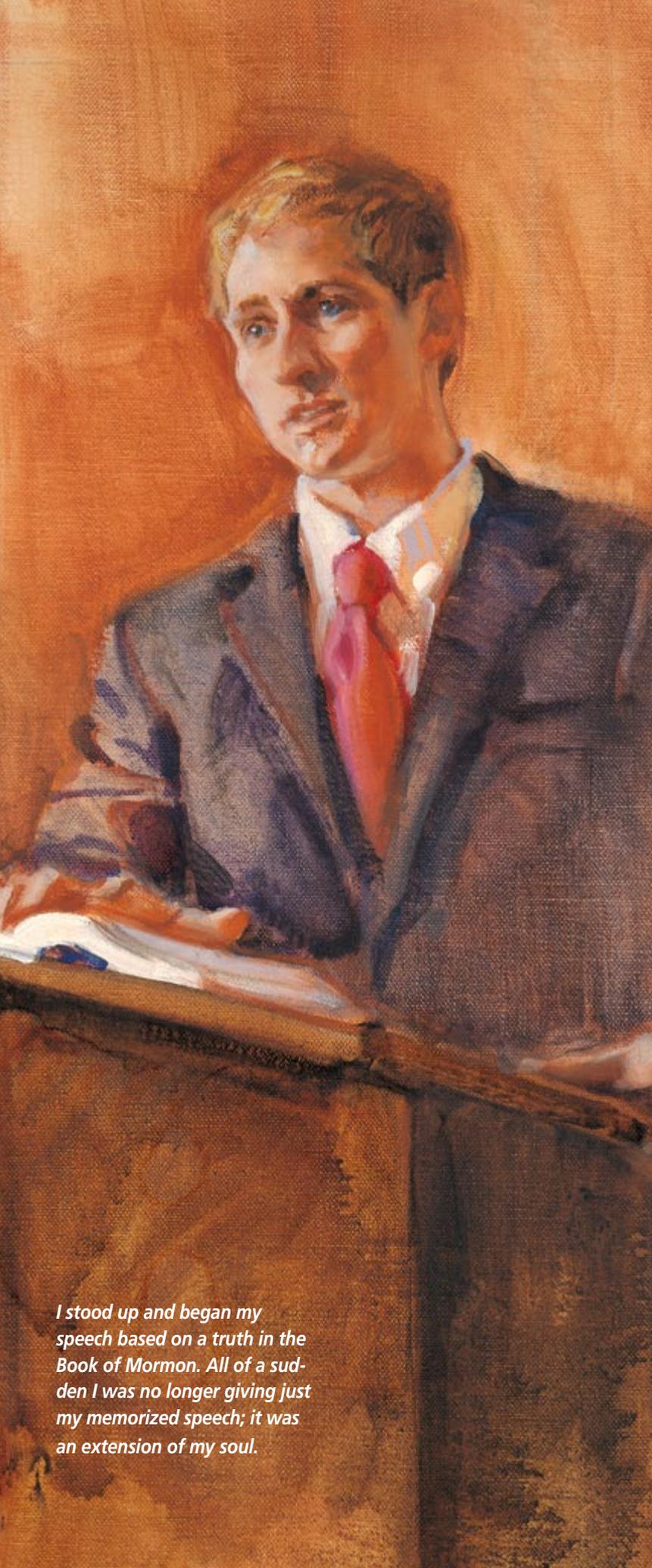
I didn't win the stake speech contest, but I placed high enough to go on to the regional competition. Then in the regional competition, I had an interesting experience. I stood up and began my speech based on a truth in the Book of Mormon. All of sudden I was no longer giving just my memorized speech; it was an extension of my soul. It is hard to describe what I felt as I spoke. Instead of participating in a speech contest, I was bearing witness to truth and learning the truth at the same time. I quoted Alma 37:35–37, and as I did I knew and testified that youth was a season to learn wisdom, to prepare for the later season of performance of our lives. Citing Elder

Richard L. Evans (1906–71) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, I taught that youth was like springtime: a time to plant the seed of the word of God such that when summer comes, the seed can be cultivated. Then, as we enter the fall season of life, the fruits of the seed can be harvested, so that, upon the arrival of the winter of our lives, we have laid up in store all we need to be able to bless others around us.¹ I realized as I spoke that reading and pondering the Book of Mormon was precisely what one should do in one's youth, because it brings the Holy Ghost in such abundance that our lives will become fruitful inasmuch as we cultivate the words of the book by reading, pondering, living, and sharing them. I knew as I spoke that a life so lived is lived in season. The Spirit flowed through me strongly, and I knew—again—of the power of the Book of Mormon.

When I sat down, I thought, "That wasn't about the competition at all; it was about the Spirit." It was a unique experience for me. I have had it many times since. But that was the first time for me to feel that witness *to me* as well as *through* me as I spoke. The experience was worth the time I took to prepare the talk! It did not matter to me at that moment whether I won or not. I was simply grateful for what I had just experienced.

I was named the winner of the speech contest, and the gift I received for winning the speech contest was a copy of *Jesus the Christ* by James E. Talmage. I took it home and read it. It was written by an Apostle and was full of the words of the scriptures. My feelings for the Savior, which had been tender before, became profound. I was drawn to Him and found that the words of the scriptures helped me to know Him and taste of His love. What began as a goal to read the Book of Mormon to know of its truth became a lifelong hunger and thirst to know Him and His word—a thirst that is satisfied fully and deliciously by reading, pondering, living, and sharing the truths of the Book of Mormon.





I stood up and began my speech based on a truth in the Book of Mormon. All of a sudden I was no longer giving just my memorized speech; it was an extension of my soul.

Thus it is that I discovered in my teenage years that the words in the scriptures—especially the Book of Mormon—bring the Holy Ghost and thereby connect us to heaven and to the Lord. Since that time I have held to the scriptures as a veritable rod of iron and source of joy and light, and they have never failed me. It is to our advantage and blessing to discover this for ourselves while we are young, since so much depends upon the decisions we make in our youth.

I relate to the following quote by Parley P. Pratt about the first time he read the Book of Mormon (he did not take nearly so much time as I did to read it for his first time!):

“For the first time, my eyes beheld the ‘BOOK OF MORMON’—that book of books. . . .

“ . . . I opened it with eagerness, and read its title page. I then read the testimony of several witnesses in relation to the manner of its being found and translated. After this I commenced its contents by course. I read all day; eating was a burden, I had no desire for food; sleep was a burden when the night came, for I preferred reading to sleep.

“As I read, the spirit of the Lord was upon me, and I knew and comprehended that the book was true, as plainly and manifestly as a man comprehends and knows that he exists” (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, ed. Parley P. Pratt Jr. [1938], 37).

I echo that feeling. It is the “book of books” because of its unique ability to bring us to the King of kings. Reading and abiding by the truth and precepts it contains will draw us closer to God than any other book, just as the Prophet Joseph Smith testified. I too know it is true as I know I exist—as you will know as well. Such is the promise to each who reads, ponders, asks God sincerely, and lives the truths it contains. **NE**

NOTE

1. See Richard L. Evans Jr., *Richard L. Evans—The Man and the Message* (1973), 231.



Revelation

DROP BY DROP

By Adam C. Olson
Church Magazines

Luis Andres Varela watches closely as a drop of water collects at the end of a stalactite in the Caves of Taulabe in Honduras. Each drop makes the stalactite grow by adding a little more to what previous drops have left behind.

But Luis sees more than just a stalactite—he sees a lesson about himself.

“Stalactites grow drop by drop,” he says. “That’s how our testimonies grow too. The Holy Ghost teaches us little by little. Each drop helps us grow in knowledge about the gospel.” (See 2 Nephi 28:30.)

Luis remembers such an event in his life. One day while his family was reading the scriptures, he felt a calm,

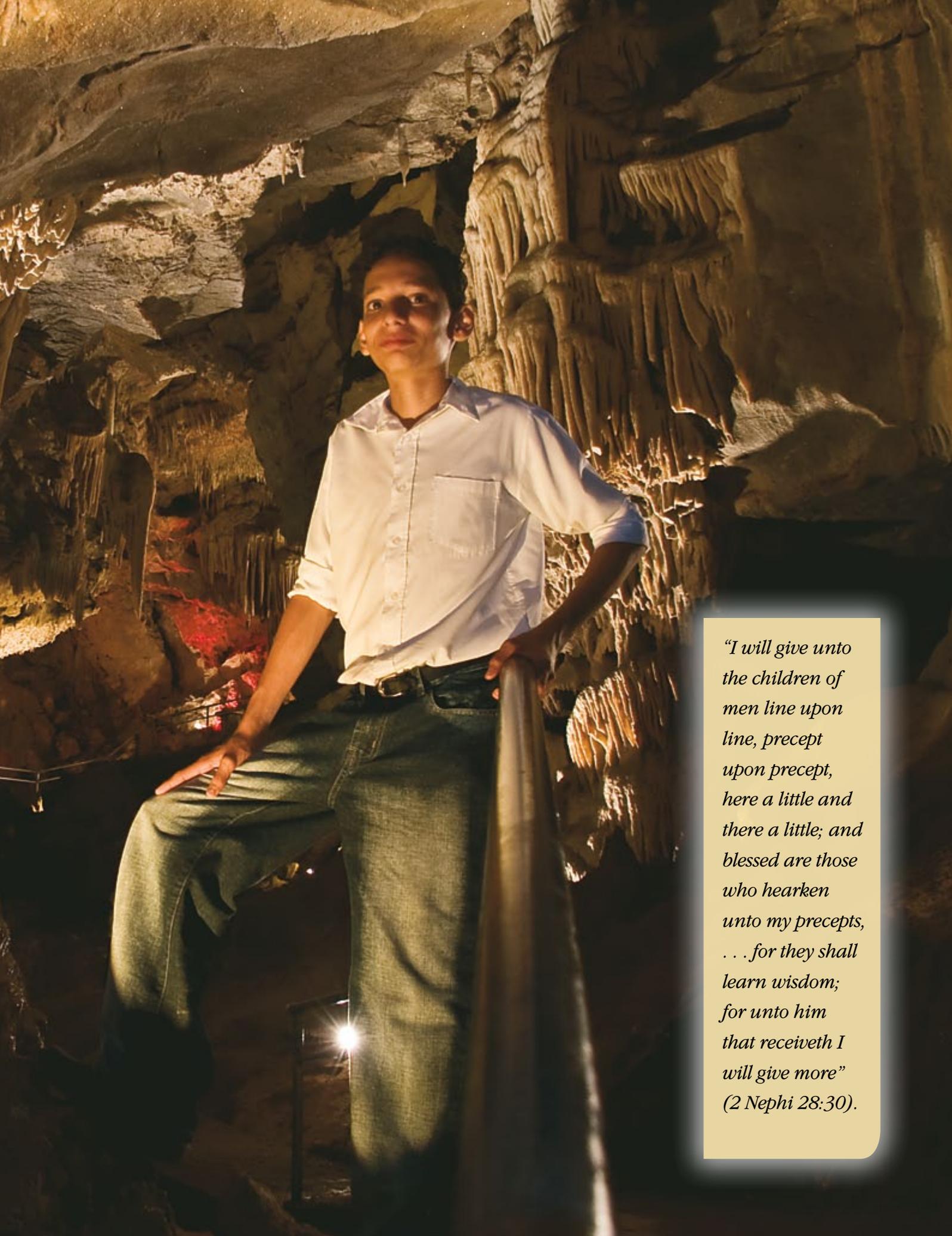
reassuring feeling that what he was reading was true.

“I’m only 14, but I know that I’ve received revelation because I have felt the Holy Ghost telling me the Church is true and Joseph Smith is a prophet,” he says. “Maybe I haven’t received a lot yet—I’m still like a very small stalactite—but if I do what I should so I can receive revelation, my knowledge and testimony will continue to grow.”

Luis says going to church, attending seminary, studying the scriptures, and fasting and praying all prepare us to receive “revelation upon revelation” (D&C 42:61).

“If I do these things,” he says, “my faith, like those stalactites, can stretch from here to heaven.” **NE**

ABOVE: PHOTOGRAPH © PHOTONONSTOP/SUPERSTOCK; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM C. OLSON



“I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, . . . for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more” (2 Nephi 28:30).

WHAT WE REALLY THINK OF YOUTH

“I want to say to . . . the youth of the Church whom I meet around the world how extraordinarily proud we are of you. Moral and physical danger exists almost everywhere around you and temptations of a dozen kinds present themselves daily, yet most of you strive to do what is right.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To Young Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 28.



A ROOM WITH VALUES

By Kayla R.

“OK,” our mom said, “it’s finally time to remodel your bedroom, girls.” My sister Shannara and I were so excited! We had been waiting a long time to fix up our room. Our mom told us we could do anything we wanted. Then my sister, who is almost a Mia Maid, said, “How about if we do a Young Women theme?” As soon as she said it, we knew that was what we wanted.

We painted all of the walls and even the ceiling. We chose a beautiful blue color for the walls. My dad added crown molding and put up new blinds. The best part was the frames we made to hold the Young Women values, each represented in their value color. We hung them on the wall with ribbon and crystal drawer knobs. Finally, we put up a mirror and a big picture of the Sacramento California Temple. Just under the temple picture we put a picture of my sister and me when

we were small, wearing my mom’s wedding dress. We love everything about our room. I like knowing that we could work hard and make something beautiful. But more than that, I love how I feel when I am in there. It is so calm and peaceful, and I like to look around and see everything that is important to me. I’m glad I have a wonderful new room, but I’m even more glad for the values that make both my room and my life beautiful.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF KAYLA R.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

October 3, 1924 General conference was broadcast for the first time over KSL Radio, a Church-owned radio station. Before 1924, speakers at general conference had to rely on the power of their voices and the acoustics of the Tabernacle to be heard by the audience.

Listen to some audio recordings from Church history at lds.org/go/113.



QUOTES FROM CONFERENCE

“Don’t let a day go by without doing something to act on the promptings of the Spirit.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Your Potential, Your Privilege,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 59.

PHOTOGRAPHS © PHOTODISC AND GETTY IMAGES

HELP PRODUCE MEDIA FOR THE CHURCH AT CREATE.LDS.ORG

Do you love taking high-quality photos or videos? How about writing or performing music? If you've ever wanted to help produce media content for the Church, then now's your chance! Whatever your talent is, you can share it at create.lds.org, and your work may end up in a Church publication, video, and more—including youth.lds.org and the *New Era*!

What and How to Submit

Create.lds.org allows you to contribute your work in the following ways:

- Photos
- Music
- Design
- Casting
- Videos
- Audio
- Writing
- Contests

Just visit the site and click on the tab you're most interested in. Each tab shows you how to get involved and what is needed to submit, and each section even has galleries, spotlights, and tips and tricks. For example, you may be able to create something as simple as a video where you stand in front of the camera and share an experience you had in living the gospel or as elaborate as gathering footage of events happening in your area.

Not sure what to submit? Check out the "Current Needs" section for submission ideas both immediate and ongoing. And be sure to check regularly for updated "Current Needs."

Submission Guidelines

Because these submissions will be used by the Church, it is important to follow these guidelines before submitting:

- Do not submit anything that goes against Church standards.
- Do not submit another person's work. Only submit work you own the copyright to.
- Do not submit anything with trademarks or logos.
- Make sure to include releases of anyone included in videos and photos (including yourself).

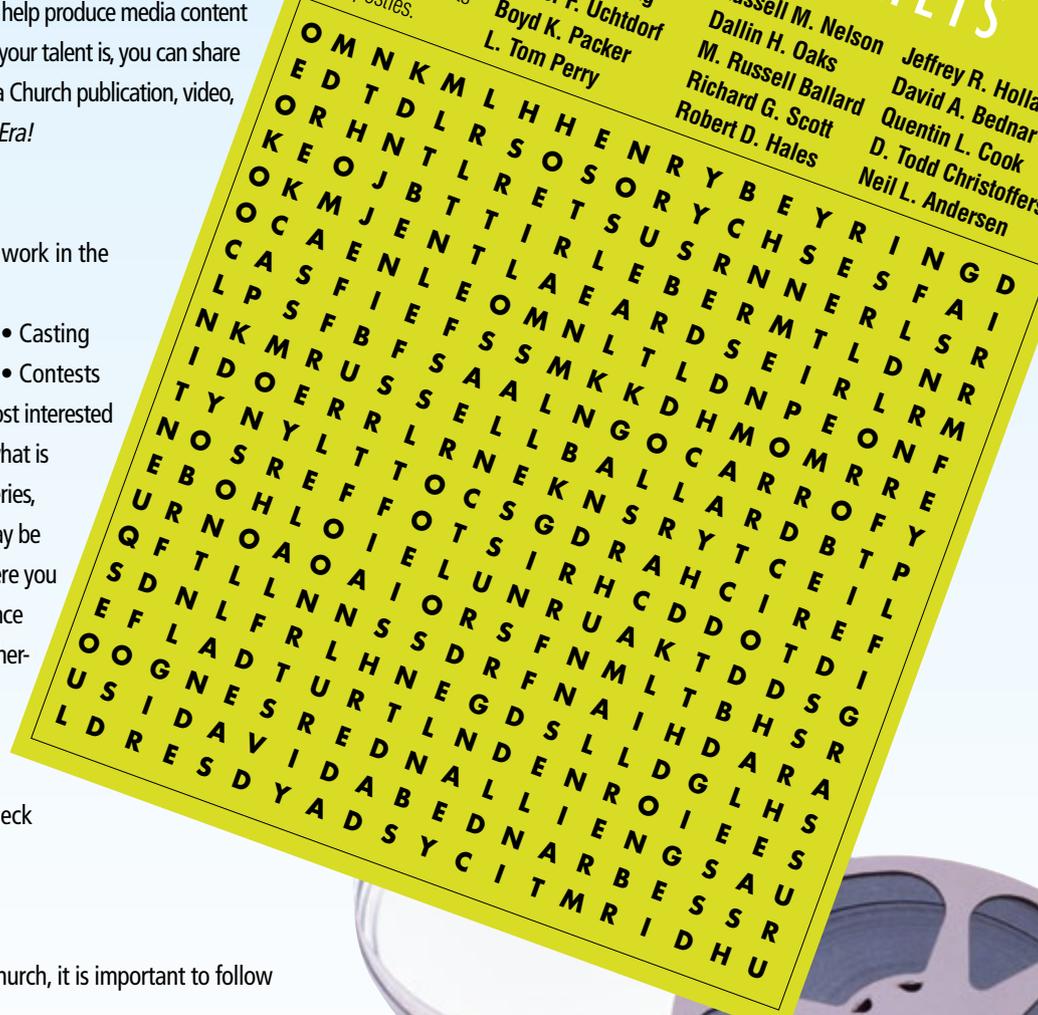
5 MISSIONARY RULES YOU MAY NOT BE AWARE OF

- Do not keep pets of any kind.
- Do not ask family members or friends at home to donate to local causes where you are serving.
- Never suggest that people emigrate to another country, even for work or schooling.
- Do not counsel members or nonmembers on personal problems.
- If you play basketball, play only half-court.

FOLLOW THE PROPHETS

See if you can find the names of the Latter-day prophets and Apostles.

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





WE'VE GOT MAIL

Checking Messages

Thank you so much for including "Checking for Messages" in the October 2010 *New Era*. I had been feeling very low in spirit, and this article helped me realize one of the main reasons why. I didn't realize how much I was neglecting prayer and scripture reading in favor of blogging and receiving calls from friends. You really don't need messages to convince yourself that you're worth something and that God loves you. This article was beautiful and inspirational, and I really needed to hear the message.

Noellemarie S., Minnesota, USA

The Extra Smile

One day after school, my best friend, Erica, and I were upstairs in my room, looking for something. I found a little folder filled with the "Extra Smiles" from older issues of the *New Era*. Erica didn't know anything about our Church, so we spent time looking through the "Extra Smiles." She enjoyed reading through them, and I had the privilege of talking with her about the gospel.

Mikayla S., California, USA

Not a Single Baptism

I enjoyed the story "Not a Single Baptism" in the February 2011 issue. It taught me that everything we do in teaching the gospel to others means something. We have no idea what kinds of seeds we are planting in others. No matter what we do, it makes a difference, even if we can't see it at the moment. If we are teaching the gospel and we are doing it for the right reasons, we will never fail.

Eli C., USA

FACEBOOK SURVEY RESULTS

What is the most challenging issue for Latter-day Saint teens today?

Here are the top six issues as voted on by other teens.

1. Dress standards 23%
2. Language (swearing, dirty jokes, etc.) 19%
3. Peer pressure 17%
4. Dating 10%
5. Finding your own testimony 7%
6. Feeling out of place 7%

Go to the *New Era* Facebook page at [facebook.com/NewEra](https://www.facebook.com/NewEra) magazine to see more results or take other surveys.



MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURES

Alma 26:12 "Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things."

Luke 1:37 "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

These are my favorite scriptures because they remind me that with God I can do anything, because everything is possible with His help. It helps me to have more faith and to look to the Lord for help.

Naomi A., 16, Arkansas, USA

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 Material."

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF NAOMI A.

24 YEARS WITHOUT A MISS

It's not easy getting to the church by 6:00 a.m. every school day, but it sure seems to make the day go smoother," says Blake N. of Illinois, who recently graduated from early-morning seminary with a record of four years of perfect attendance.

Smoother days are nice, but the real motivation for Blake was that he wanted to follow the example

of his older brother Conner, who graduated from early-morning seminary in 2008 without missing a day. Conner received his motivation from Derek, who graduated in 2005. Derek followed Jacob, a 2003 seminary graduate. Jacob took after Aryn, who graduated in 2001. Aryn followed Michael, who started the string of perfect attendance when he graduated in 2000. All six brothers combined for a total of 24 years of perfect attendance

at early-morning seminary. "We've always tried to support each other, but we also all have somewhat of a competitive streak. Nobody wants to be outdone," says the oldest brother, Michael. The camaraderie has paid off in other areas. All six brothers are Eagle Scouts. The oldest five have served missions, and Blake has submitted his papers and is waiting for his call.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ROBERT N.



"I think it's a great missionary costume, I just can't get through the front door."



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

"Roger, you visit me once a month because you're my home teacher—it doesn't mean we're going steady."



KEVIN BECKSTROM

"So the Liahona was a Nephite GPS?"

"Did it offer any directions other than 'choose the right' and 'return with honor'?"



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

SO WHAT DO YOU GUYS DO IN SCOUTS ANYWAY?

LOTS OF COOL STUFF!



IN FACT, THIS WEEK WE GET TO RACE CARS IN OUR ANNUAL "PINEWOOD DERBY"!



UH, THEY'RE TOY CARS.

AH.



RYAN STOKER

A GREATER GOAL

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

By Nereida Santafe de Salinas

Our stake in Venezuela decided to organize a soccer tournament for the Aaronic Priesthood youth. This activity had more than one purpose, including building friendships and strengthening the various priesthood quorums.

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

Building a Team

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

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

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

Starting the Tournament

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

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

saying that the boys were such good examples.

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

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

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





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

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

When the game ended, everyone applauded. The crowd could hardly

believe that those young men were able to win first place in the deacon's category and third place in the stake for the entire Aaronic Priesthood.

Accomplishing Their Goals

This experience taught us about principles and eternal truths that

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

ACCOMPANIED BY THE SPIRIT

Before the curtains opened, I stood nervously backstage in the dark silence. Many precious hours were sacrificed in preparation for this moment. The curtains opened to reveal a high school choir poised and ready to sing. Our conductor stood in the wing across from me. She caught my eye and smiled before entering the stage.

I was the accompanist for the high school concert choir. Our conductor chose a series of songs that meant a great deal to her. The music was difficult, especially for a high school choir. I had labored long and hard over these songs, attempting to perfect each note. At this moment, however, I wondered if I had done enough to prepare. I worried that I might not live up to my conductor's expectations.

I cautiously stepped onto the stage, sensing a thousand pairs of eyes on me

as I sat down at the piano. Although shaking, I positioned my hands for the first chord and waited for my conductor's cue. She looked into my eyes, and together we began the piece. Immediately, I felt a change come over me. The notes came easily and comfortably to my trembling fingers. It seemed that I was not playing the piano alone—something else inside of me was. I believe that the Spirit was there, guiding my fingers and calming my heart. Each song was better than the last. The choir sang with surety and deep emotion. I had never felt the Spirit so strongly in my young life.

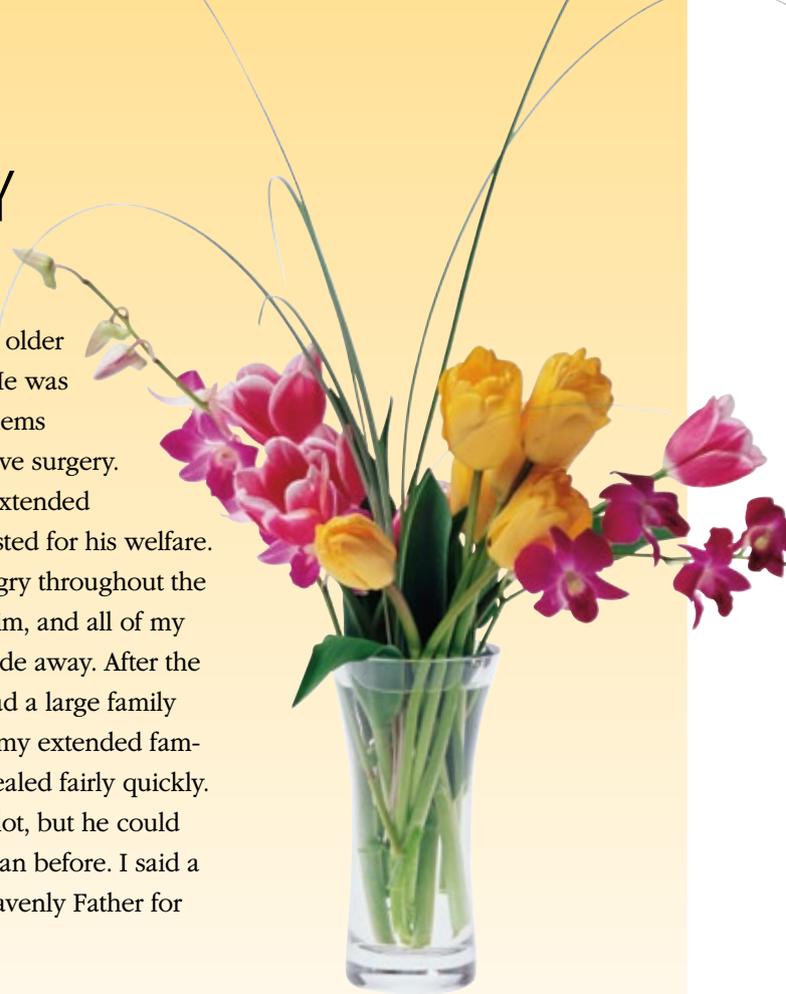
My eyes brimmed with tears as the last notes lingered on the piano. The audience was struck silent for a moment before they applauded and gave us a standing ovation. They had also felt that overwhelming influence of the Spirit. After taking our bows, my conductor and I left the stage. She fell into my arms and we both cried because the Spirit had touched us so deeply. I received many compliments, but in my heart, I knew that I did not play those beautiful pieces alone that night. Something much more powerful than I had delivered those songs with such divine beauty.

Just as I did my part to practice the music, I know that when I do what the Lord asks me to do, He will bless me and guide me. My efforts were blessed that night on the stage and are continually blessed in my daily life as I strive to do my best to obey His commandments. I may fall short, but He can make up the difference. I gained a testimony one night on a bright stage while sitting at a piano.
Adrienne B., Colorado, USA

A FAMILY FAST

I once fasted for an older relative of mine. He was having back problems and was going to have surgery. A great deal of my extended family in the area fasted for his welfare. Whenever I felt hungry throughout the day, I'd remember him, and all of my selfishness would slide away. After the day of fasting, we had a large family home evening with my extended family. Thankfully, he healed fairly quickly. His back still hurt a lot, but he could do so much more than before. I said a prayer, thanking Heavenly Father for watching over him.

Luke E., Texas, USA



COMFORT IN THE SCRIPTURES

I turned to the scriptures for comfort the night before my first day of high school. My family had moved from Utah to Australia just two weeks before, and I felt nervous about starting school halfway through the year in a place and culture that was new to me. The uniform and strict rules against makeup and jewelry made me feel even more unsettled. Then I read Doctrine and Covenants 84:81–84:

“Therefore, take ye no thought for the morrow, for what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed.

“For, consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin; and the kingdoms of

the world, in all their glory, are not arrayed like one of these.

“For your Father, who is in heaven, knoweth that you have need of all these things.

“Therefore, let the morrow take thought for the things of itself.”

It was like Heavenly Father was speaking directly to me. My fears about the coming day were calmed as I realized that whether I wore what I wanted was not important and that Heavenly Father was aware of my specific situation and would help me through it. I know Heavenly Father speaks to us through the scriptures, and we can always find comfort and guidance when we turn to them.

Kimberly C., Utah, USA

THEN SINGS MY SOUL

Sister Simmons, my MTC companion, loved to sing. She had a beautiful voice. Sometimes at night while we were in our beds, with the lights off, she would sing a comforting lullaby, and we slept soundly.

After we left the MTC, I didn't see her for several months. Then I was transferred into her area. Stake conference came around, and she sang an arrangement of "How Great Thou Art" (*Hymns*, no. 86). She sang for everyone, but it felt like she sang just for me.

As she sang, I realized how meaningful the words of the hymn are. She began to sing smoothly, beautifully, until verse three when she stopped with tears running

down her cheeks. She had to just speak the words. She faltered and then started again strong, with passion and feeling. Beautifully, with tears in her eyes, she continued to verse four. "When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation"—she smiled, and I smiled. "And take me home"—she paused. Home, our true home. "What joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in humble adoration and there proclaim, 'My God, how great thou art!'" She finished strong and with power, smiling.

When she said "then sings my soul," I felt my soul singing in tune with her words. That was being in tune with the Holy Ghost. That feeling was worship. That is why we have hymns. That is why we sing in church. That was my soul singing.

Heather G., Utah, USA



Moses 7:18

This verse helps us understand what it means to be called Zion.

Zion

We sing of Zion in many of our hymns, such as “Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise” (*Hymns*, no. 41). Page 428 of the hymnbook lists many more. What do you learn about Zion from these hymns? How does singing these hymns make you feel about establishing Zion? Write about it in your journal.

In the scriptures, the word *Zion* has a few different meanings (see Bible Dictionary, “Zion”; and *True to the Faith* [2004], 189–90):

- The pure in heart (see D&C 97:21)
- The Lord’s people, or the Church and its stakes (see D&C 82:14)
- A specific place where the Lord’s people live, such as:

- The city of Enoch mentioned in this verse
- The ancient city of Jerusalem (see 2 Samuel 5:6–7; 1 Kings 8:1; 2 Kings 9:28)
- The city to be built in the latter days near Jackson County, Missouri, to which the tribes of Israel will gather (see D&C 103:11–22; 133:18)

Dwelt in righteousness

Righteousness is “being just, holy, virtuous, upright; acting in obedience to God’s commands; avoiding sin” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Righteous, Righteousness,” scriptures.lds.org).

of the Lord, which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land, and they were blessed upon the mountains, and upon the high places, and did flourish.

18 And the Lord called his people “ZION, because they were of ^oone heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.

19 And Enoch continued his preaching in righteousness unto the people of God. And it came to pass in his days, that he built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even Zion.

No poor among them



Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “In the Lord’s Own Way,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 26.

“Every person . . . baptized who receives the gift of the Holy Ghost, which seals the ordinance, is under solemn covenant with the Lord to obey his commandments. Caring for the poor is one of those commandments.”

One heart and one mind

To prepare the Saints to become Zion, the Lord told them through the Prophet Joseph Smith, “Let every man esteem his brother as himself.” And then, for emphasis, He repeated Himself in the very next sentence: “And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself” (D&C 38:24–25). He then commanded the Saints, “Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (verse 27).



“The miracle of unity is being granted to us as we pray and work for it in the Lord’s way. Our hearts

will be knit together in unity. . . .

“. . . We know from experience that joy comes when we are blessed with unity. We yearn, as spirit children of our Heavenly Father, for that joy which we once had with Him in the life before this one. His desire is to grant us that sacred wish for unity out of His love for us.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Our Hearts Knit as One,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 69.

Editors’ note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected scripture verse, only a starting point for your own study.

HOW TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS



By President
Thomas S. Monson

FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

"You are responsible for the choices you make. . . . You have the ability to choose righteousness and happiness, no matter what your circumstances.

"You are also responsible for developing the abilities and talents Heavenly Father has given you. You are accountable to Him for what you do with your abilities and how you spend your time."

For the Strength of Youth (2001), 5.

I have been thinking recently about choices and their consequences. As I've contemplated the various aspects of choice, I've put them into three categories.

1. The Right of Choice

President David O. McKay said, "Next to the bestowal of life itself, the right to direct that life is God's greatest gift to man" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay* [2003], 208). Within the confines of whatever circumstances we find ourselves, **we will always have the right to choose.**

2. The Responsibility of Choice

With the *right* of choice comes the *responsibility* to choose. Our Heavenly Father provided the means whereby we could **receive from Him God-given guidance.** I speak of **prayer**, of the **whisperings from that still, small voice** within each of us, and **the holy scriptures.** Each of us has come to this earth with all the tools necessary to make correct choices. The prophet Mormon tells us, "The Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may **know good from evil**"

(Moroni 7:16).

To make decisions wisely, **courage is needed**—the courage to say no, the courage to say yes. I plead with you to **make a determination**

right now **not to deviate from the path** which will lead to our goal: eternal life with our Father in Heaven.

3. The Results of Choice

All of **our choices have consequences**, some of which have little or nothing to do with our eternal salvation and others of which have *everything* to do with it.

Whether you wear a green T-shirt or a blue one makes no difference in the long run. However, whether you decide to push a key on your computer which will take you to pornography can make *all* the difference in your life. If a friend pressures you to drink alcohol or to try drugs and you succumb to the pressure, you are taking a detour from which you may not return. May we **keep our eyes, our hearts, and our determination focused on that goal which is eternal** and worth any price we will have to pay.

You are of a noble birthright. Eternal life in the kingdom of our Father is your goal.

From the October 2010 general conference address "The Three Rs of Choice" (Ensign, Nov. 2010, 67–70).

Share Your Experiences

Share your experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other youth by going to lds.org/go/114.



sounds of cold

By Melissa Farnsworth

walking with my dad
on a chill day
in crystal autumn
the cold is stinging
the wind whips at my hair
and bites my nose
all around
tall grasses bend elegantly
in the wind
and small plants tumble
around my ankles
high above me
a choir of trees is singing
with the running wind
a seasoned conductor
first singing shrilly
now whispering icy secrets
the brilliant leaves
red orange gold
quiver bravely against an
ice blue sky
and I can hear the cold



WHAT'S ONLINE

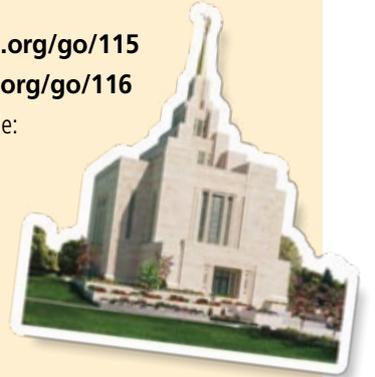


Watch Videos of Temple Cultural Celebrations

When you've heard the prophets talk about a cultural celebration when a temple is dedicated, have you ever wondered what they're like? You can see video footage from three celebrations online at youth.lds.org. Just follow these links:

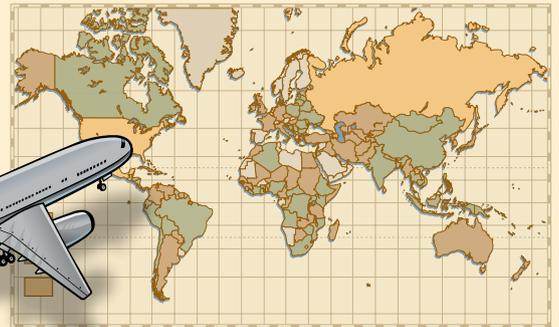
- Kyiv Ukraine Temple: lds.org/go/115
- Laie Hawaii Temple: lds.org/go/116
- Gila Valley Arizona Temple: lds.org/go/117

While you're there, you can share your own experiences and testimony.



Follow the Travels of Modern Prophets

LDS.org has a special section of its website called "Prophets and Apostles Speak Today." In that section, you can read recent messages from our living prophets and follow their travels around the world.



See a Winning Video

Last year, the Church hosted an international video contest. You can see one of the winning videos, "Honesty—You Better Believe It!" at lds.org/go/118. It shares an important message about being honest in the classroom. It's a great reminder that you're not alone when you stand up for your beliefs. If you'd like to create a video to submit to the Church, read about create.lds.org on page 39.

