

THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • APRIL 2004

Ensign





Bless Them in His Name, by Walter Rane

Babies are given a priesthood blessing for the special purpose of having their name conferred upon them. Then the Melchizedek Priesthood holder giving the blessing bestows promises as directed by the spiritual impressions he receives.

Ensign



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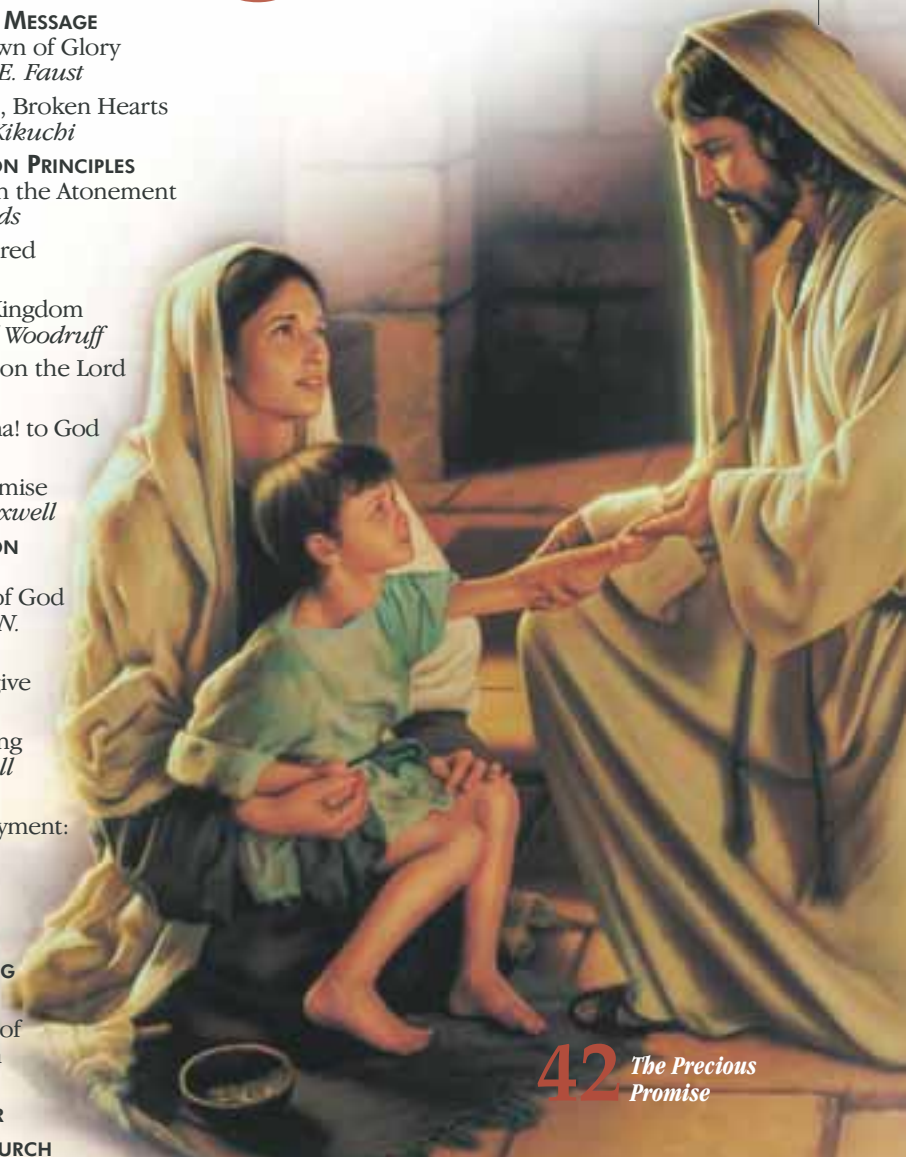


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To Receive a Crown of Glory

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

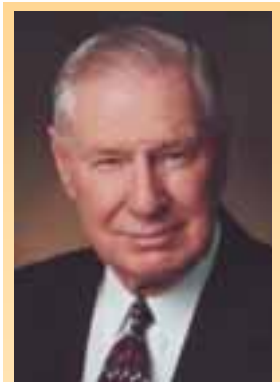
Life presents each of us with challenges that eat at us like thorns, briars, slivers, or a crown of thorns. Our Savior suffered as He wore a crown of thorns. And yet there is also exquisite beauty and fragrance to be found in life—and a crown of glory.

I wish that I better understood all of the divine purposes in having to contend with so many painful irritants in this life. Lehi explained one reason: that we will appreciate and savor the goodness and loveliness of the world.¹ Adam was told that the ground is cursed with thorns and thistles for our sake.² Likewise, mortality

is “cursed” with the thorns of worldly temptation and the slivers of sin so that we can be tested and prove ourselves. This is necessary for our eternal progression. The Apostle Paul explained, “Lest I should be exalted above measure . . . , there was given to me a thorn in the flesh.”³

The denial of our own sins, of our own selfishness, of our own weakness is like a crown of thorns that keeps us from moving up one more step in personal growth. If we deny that we are sinners, how can we ever be forgiven? How can the Atonement of Jesus work in our lives if there is no repentance? If we do not promptly remove the slivers of sin and the thorns of carnal temptation, how can the Lord ever heal our souls? The Savior said, “Repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you.”⁴

It is most difficult for us to pray for those who hate us, who spitefully use us, who persecute us. By failing to take this vital extra step, however, we fail to remove some of the festering briars in our



How can the Atonement of Jesus work in our lives if there is no repentance? If we do not promptly remove the slivers of sin and the thorns of carnal temptation, how can the Lord ever heal our souls?

own souls. Extending forgiveness, love, and understanding for perceived shortcomings and weaknesses in our wives, husbands, children, and associates makes it much easier to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner."⁵

No matter how carefully we walk through life's paths, we pick up some thorns, briars, and slivers. When I was a young boy and school was out for the summer, we went to the farm and off came our shoes. For the first week or two, when our feet were tender, the smoothest pebble or stick would be painful. But as the weeks came and went, the soles of our feet toughened so that they could withstand almost anything in the path except thistles, of which there seemed to be more than any other weed. And so it is with life: as we grow and mature and keep close to Him who was crowned with thorns, our souls seem to get stronger in withstanding the challenges, our resolve hardens, our wills become firmer, and our self-discipline increases to protect us from the evils of this world. These evils are so omnipresent, however, that we must always walk in the paths that are the most free of the thistles of earthly temptation.

As children we used to delight in waving thistledown stalks to watch the seeds float on the wind. Only later did we realize the effect that this had on our own and neighboring gardens. Many of us delight in flirting with temptation, only later to learn how we and others have sown the seeds of our own unhappiness and how we can also affect our neighbor's happiness.

The Defense of Conscience

There is a defense mechanism to discern between good and evil. It is called conscience. It is our spirit's natural response to the pain of sin, just like pain in our flesh is our body's natural response to a wound—even a

small sliver. Conscience strengthens through use. Paul told the Hebrews, "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."⁶ A sensitive conscience is a sign of a healthy spirit.

How are the thorns and slivers of life removed? The power to remove the thorns in our lives and in the lives of others begins with ourselves.

Moroni writes that when we deny ourselves of ungodliness, then the grace of Christ is sufficient for us.⁷

Too often we seek bandages to cover the guilt rather than removal of the thorn causing the pain. How much we resist the momentary pain of removing a sliver even though it will relieve the longer-lasting pain of a festering sore! Everyone knows that if thorns and briars and slivers are not removed from the flesh, they will cause sores that fester and will not heal.

A few years ago one of the members of our family had a remarkable dog named Ben. On a beautiful fall day, some of us were walking in the fields. Ben was going back and forth in front of us, sniffing the ground, tail wagging, obviously enjoying himself. After a while, Ben came limping up to his master and, with a pained look in his eye, held up his front paw. Between two of Ben's toes was a thorn. The thorn was carefully removed, and Ben ran off, no longer limping nor bothered by the pain. I was amazed that Ben instinctively seemed to know that the thorn needed to come out to relieve the pain and to know where to go to have it removed. Like Ben, we also seem to instinctively look for relief from the thorns of sin that inflict us. In contrast, however, we do not always seek our Master for relief, and many do not yet know who their Master is.



As children we used to delight in waving thistledown stalks to watch the seeds float on the wind. Only later did we realize the effect that this had. Many of us delight in flirting with temptation, only later to learn how we and others have sown the seeds of unhappiness.

Our Savior's Gift

The scourging of Jesus took place partly with thorns:

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.

"And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

"And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

"And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head."⁸

Perhaps this cruel act was a perverse attempt to mimic the placing of an emperor's laurel upon His head. He accepted the pain of the crown of thorns as part of the great gift He had promised to make. How poignant this was, considering that thorns signified God's displeasure as He cursed the ground for Adam's sake. But by wearing the crown, Jesus transformed thorns into a symbol of His glory. As Emily Dickinson so aptly described it:

*One crown that no one
seeks
And yet the highest head
Its isolation coveted
Its stigma deified.*⁹

Our Savior knows "according to the flesh" every dimension of our suffering. There is no infirmity He is not familiar with. In

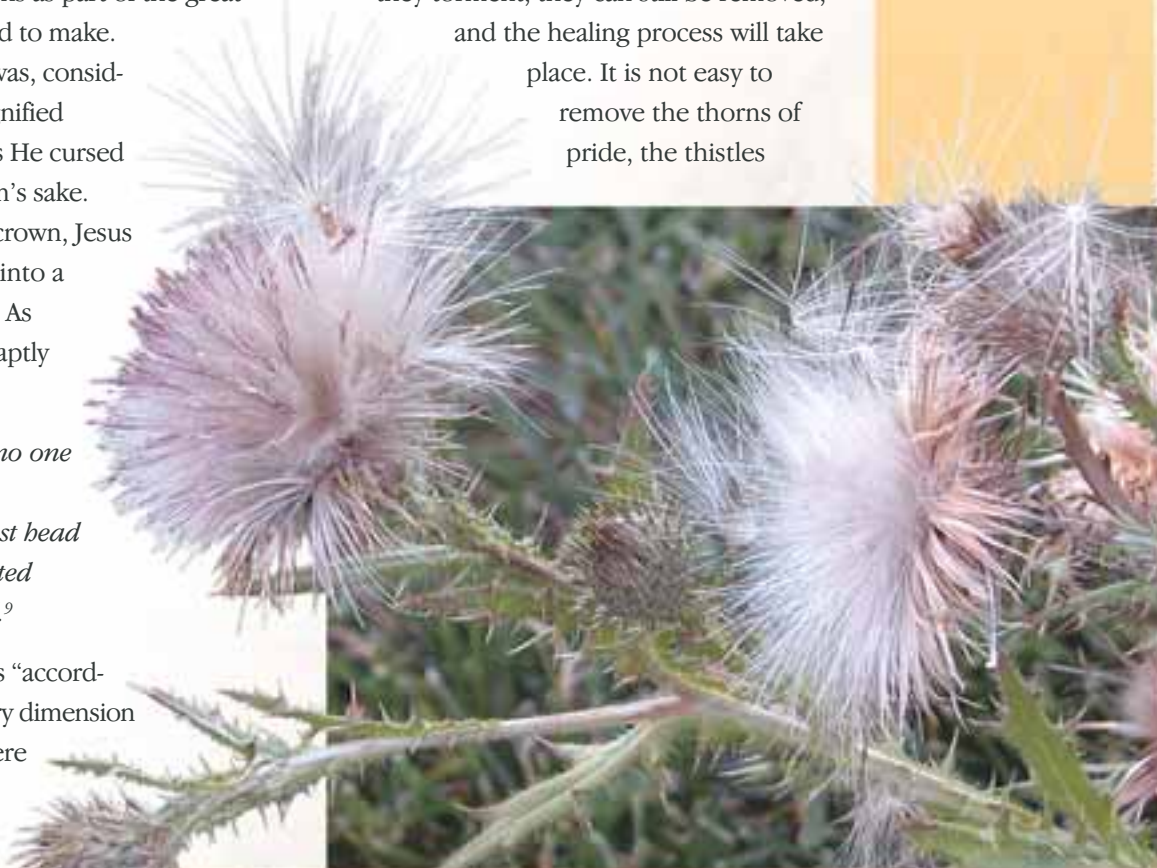
His agony He became acquainted with all of the thorns, slivers, and thistles that might afflict us:

"And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

"And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities."¹⁰

All irritants of the flesh and the soul should be removed before they fester. However, though they ulcerate and though they torment, they can still be removed, and the healing process will take place. It is not easy to remove the thorns of pride, the thistles

It is not easy to remove the thorns of pride, the thistles of selfishness, the slivers of ego, and the briars of appetite. But when the infection is healed, the soreness will leave. This process is known as repentance. Repentance and forgiveness are among the greatest fruits of the Atonement.





I would challenge all to put the thorns, slivers, and thistles we encounter in life in proper perspective. We should deal with them but then concentrate on the flowers of life, not on the thorns.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUNE, POSED BY MODELS

By removing the slivers of sin and the thorns of worldly temptation in our lives and by denying ourselves and taking up our own cross to follow the Savior, we can change a crown of thorns to a crown of glory.

of selfishness, the slivers of ego, and the briars of appetite. But when the infection is healed, the soreness will leave. This process is known as repentance. Repentance and forgiveness are among the greatest fruits of the Atonement.

In Roselandia, Brazil, outside the great city of São Paulo, there are many acres of beautiful roses. When one stands on a small hill above the rose fields, the aroma is delightful and the beauty is exhilarating. The thorns on the bushes are there, but they in no way lessen the enjoyment of the sight and the smell. I would challenge all to put the thorns, slivers, and thistles we encounter in

life in proper perspective. We should deal with them but then concentrate on the flowers of life, not on the thorns. We should savor the smell and beauty of the flower of the rose and the cactus. To savor the sweet aroma of the blossoms, we need to live

righteous and disciplined lives in which the study of the scriptures, prayer, right priorities, and right attitudes are integrated into our lives. For members of this Church, that focus sharpens inside of our temples. We will all surely encounter some of the thorns, but they are only incidental to the sweet fragrances and exquisite beauty of the blooms. Did not the Savior say: “Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather

grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?”¹¹

Following Him

British writer Thomas Carlyle stated, “Every noble crown is, and on Earth will forever be, a crown of thorns.”¹² The ancient Latin phrase *sic transit gloria mundi* means “thus passes away the glory of this world.” Earthly rewards can be a sore temptation. In contrast, those who are faithful and are committed to service are promised that they will be “crowned with honor, and glory, and immortality, and eternal life.”¹³ Thus, neither honors nor trials can defeat those who are faithful. Paul spoke of an incorruptible

crown,¹⁴ and James spoke of the faithful receiving a “crown of life.”¹⁵

I believe that earthly crowns such as power, the love of money, the preoccupation with material things, and the honors of men are crowns of thorns because they are based upon obtaining and receiving rather than giving. So selfishness can make what we think is a noble crown into a crown of thorns beyond our power to endure.

The call of Jesus Christ to each of us is “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”¹⁶ Is it not time that we begin denying ourselves, as the Savior counseled, and surrender and master ourselves rather than indulge ourselves in a do-my-own-thing, selfish little world? The question is not so much what we can do, but what God can do through us. Paul said, “If a man therefore purge himself . . . , he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”¹⁷

Taking up one’s cross and following the Savior is always a commitment to service. While going to school, I was very poor. I worked long hours in a canning factory catching steaming-hot cans for U.S. 25¢ an hour. I learned that selfishness has more to do with how we feel about what we have than how much we have. A poor man can be selfish and a rich man generous, but a person obsessed only with getting will have a hard time finding God. I have come to know that with any privilege comes responsibility—usually the responsibility to serve, to give, and to bless. God can take away any privilege if it is not used under His omnipotent will. Meeting that challenge to give, to serve, to bless in faithfulness and devotion is the only way to enjoy the crown of glory spoken of by the original Apostles. It is the only way true meaning comes to life. We will be able to receive earthly honors or scorn with equal serenity.

I conclude with the words of Ezekiel: “And thou, son of man, . . . though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid.”¹⁸ In our constantly changing world, may we continually cling to those

things that do not change: to prayer, to faith, to saving covenants, to love of families, and to brotherhood. By removing the slivers of sin and the thorns of worldly temptation in our lives and by denying ourselves and taking up our own cross to follow the Savior, we can change a crown of thorns to a crown of glory. I testify, as one of His humble servants called to be His special witness, that He lives. I witness from the depths of my soul that we are engaged in His holy work, through which, if we are faithful, we can be crowned with honor, glory, and eternal life. ■

NOTES

1. See 2 Nephi 2:8–13.
2. See Genesis 3:17–18.
3. 2 Corinthians 12:7.
4. 3 Nephi 9:13.
5. Luke 18:13.
6. Hebrews 5:14.
7. See Moroni 10:32.
8. Matthew 27:27–30.
9. “One crown that no one seeks,”
The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (1960), 703–4.
10. Alma 7:11–12.
11. Matthew 7:16.
12. *Past and Present* (1912), 173.
13. D&C 75:5.
14. See 1 Corinthians 9:25.
15. James 1:12.
16. Matthew 16:24.
17. 2 Timothy 2:21.
18. Ezekiel 2:6.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerful preparation, share this message using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach.

A few examples follow:

1. Read the story of Ben the dog on page 4. Ask family members to silently assess their own lives to determine whether they are carrying any thorns they need to ask the Master to remove.
2. Read the fourth paragraph of this article. Ask family members to consider whether there are those to whom they need to extend forgiveness before asking for mercy.
3. Read the next-to-last paragraph. Ask family members to list some ways in which they have already committed to serve in the kingdom of God. How are they fulfilling those commitments?
4. Read the last paragraph. Ask family members how we can change a crown of thorns into a crown of glory. How did the Savior change His crown of thorns into a crown of glory?

BROKEN WINDOWS

BROKEN HEARTS

BY ELDER
YOSHIHIKO KIKUCHI
Of the Seventy



Even as a boy I knew I had done something wrong when I broke the window and ran away. Now I know that it was because of “the Spirit of Christ” that I felt what I did was wrong.

As a young boy playing baseball with my friends, I hit the ball over the playground fence and broke the neighbor’s large glass window. The last few times the ball had gone over the fence, we were told to be careful. But I was not careful. Frightened, we all ran away.

In the evening, I felt so bad that I told my mother what had happened. My mother was a widow, and we were very poor at the time. But she said that I must go to the neighbor and apologize. And she said, “Here is the money you must take.”

I was afraid to go by myself, so my mother said, “I will come with you.” She apologized to the neighbor and paid the money for me.

During the next few months I earned small amounts every week and finally paid back what I owed my mother.

I learned a great lesson from my mother. The thing I did wrong must be apologized for and must be paid for. But at that time, I couldn’t afford to pay. So my mother sacrificed to pay on my behalf. If my mother had not helped me and insisted that I apologize, my feelings of guilt and shame would have stayed with me for a long time. And I could never have faced my neighbor again.

A Loving Lesson

Years later, after I had learned about the Atonement of Christ, I thought again about



what my mother had done for me. She taught me about justice and restitution, about love and sacrifice. At that time, we had not yet been introduced to the restored gospel. But I'm sure my mother was concerned about me and about the kind of man I would become. That is why she was so careful to teach me what was right as she understood it.

Imagine how Father Lehi must have felt as he taught his sons and their families one last time before he died. He was not just concerned about those he had brought to the promised land, but he was concerned about the generations who would follow. Lehi taught his children about the law and justice. He taught them about redemption, mercy,

and grace. He taught them of the sacred mission of Jesus Christ, of His Resurrection, and of the true meaning of the Atonement.

Speaking to his son Jacob, Lehi taught that “men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil” (2 Nephi 2:5). Moroni tells us that “the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil” (Moroni 7:16). Even as a boy I knew that I had done something wrong when I broke the window and ran away.

I knew that I must respect the property of others. Now I know that it was because of “the Spirit of Christ” that I felt what I did was wrong. Lehi says, “The law is given unto men. And by the law no flesh is justified; or, by the

When I broke the window, I was unable to pay for it at the time. And my poor mother was barely able to pay. By paying for my misdeed, she taught me about justice and restitution, about love and sacrifice.



Lehi taught his children about the law and justice. He taught them about sacrifice, redemption, mercy, and grace. He taught them of the sacred mission of Jesus Christ, of His Resurrection, and of the true meaning of the Atonement.

law men are cut off. Yea, by the temporal law they were cut off; and also, by the spiritual law they perish from that which is good, and become miserable forever” (2 Nephi 2:5).

Without Excuse

“By the law no flesh is justified” (2 Nephi 2:5). This statement teaches me several things. One is that because “the law is given unto men” (2 Nephi 2:5), we know the standard we must live by. Paul told the Romans, “Where no law is, there is no transgression” (Romans 4:15). But “by the law is the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20). Even though I did not mean to break the neighbor’s window, I really had no excuse. Because we are mortal and imperfect, we all break the law.

Another thing Lehi’s statement teaches me is that the law alone does not have power to save us, whether it is the law of Moses or the gospel law. Paul taught, “A man is not justified by the works of the law, . . . for by the works of

the law shall no flesh be justified” (Galatians 2:16). Abinadi warned that “salvation doth not come by the law alone” (Mosiah 13:28).

The Lord says that no unclean thing can dwell in His presence (see Moses 6:57). Sin causes estrangement from God our Father. Lehi explains, “By the law men are cut off. Yea, . . . they perish from that which is good, and become miserable forever” (2 Nephi 2:5).

Debtors All

When I broke the window, I was unable to pay for it at the time. And my poor mother was barely able to pay. If the damage had been greater, she too would have been unable to pay without borrowing the money. But she was able to pay, and I was even able to repay her over time.

The debt of sin is a very different matter. We are all in debt, unable to pay for our own sins, let alone pay for the sins of another. King Benjamin taught, “Ye are eternally

indebted to your heavenly Father” (Mosiah 2:34). He also taught that “the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins” (Mosiah 3:16). We are truly “indebted unto him” (Mosiah 2:24).

While they were still on their journey from Jerusalem, Lehi had taught his family that “all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on [their] Redeemer” (1 Nephi 10:6). Now, just before his death, Lehi repeated his teaching and testimony of the Savior and His redemption:

“Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth.

“Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered” (2 Nephi 2:6–7).

Our Sacrifice in Return

Jesus Christ gave Himself as a sacrifice for us. But He paid the price of sin only for those who offer their own sacrifice in return: “Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (D&C 59:8).

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) defined a broken heart and a contrite spirit this way: “Godly sorrow . . . is a deep realization that our actions have offended our Father and our God. It is the sharp and keen awareness that our behavior caused the Savior, He who knew no sin, even the greatest of all, to endure agony and suffering. Our sins caused him to bleed at every pore. This very real mental and spiritual anguish is what the scriptures refer to as having ‘a broken heart and a contrite spirit.’”¹

But even after all we can do—repenting,

having a broken heart and a contrite spirit—Lehi reminds us “that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 2:8). As Nephi says later, “It is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23).

Lehi also bears testimony of the wonderful doctrine of the Resurrection. After the Savior laid down His life for our sins, He “taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, [He] being the first that should rise” (2 Nephi 2:8).

Divine Intercession

“Wherefore, he . . . shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved” (2 Nephi 2:9). The prophet Abinadi explains that Jesus Christ’s intercession means “standing betwixt [the children of men] and justice; having broken the bands of death, taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice” (Mosiah 15:9).

Compared to what the Savior has done for all of us, what my mother did for me is such a tiny thing. But in her wisdom, she planted in my heart the seed of an important understanding. When she paid for my “transgression,” she took me with her. I had to meet the offended neighbor face to face. Lehi tells us that “because of the intercession for all, all men come unto God; wherefore, they stand in the presence of him, to be judged of him” (2 Nephi 2:10).

If I was ashamed to stand in front of my neighbor, how would it feel to stand in the presence of God if I have not



We gain access to the atoning sacrifice of Christ through repentance. But even after all we can do—repenting, having a broken heart and a contrite spirit—Lehi reminds us that we are saved “through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah.”



Jesus Christ paid the price of sin for those who offer their own sacrifice in return: “Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.”

repented and not repaid what I have done and truly come unto Christ and been redeemed?

I am so grateful for my Redeemer. And I am grateful for the law. Lehi tells us that punishment is “affixed” to the law (see 2 Nephi 2:10), but happiness is also affixed. Then he makes the well-known statement that “it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11). Without the law there would be no sin and no punishment. But there would also be no goodness, no righteousness, and no happiness. And if there are none of those things, there is no God and no creation (see 2 Nephi 2:11–13). No small boys playing baseball. No loving mother. Nothing.

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: “When all is said and done, when all of history is examined, when the deepest depths of the human mind have been explored, nothing is so wonderful, so majestic, so tremendous as this act of grace when the

Son of the Almighty . . . gave His life in ignominy and pain so that all of the sons and daughters of God of all generations of time, every one of whom must die, might walk again and live eternally. He did for us what none of us could do for ourselves.”²

“Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth” (2 Nephi 2:8). And how great the importance for each of us to obey the gospel law and to have a broken heart and a contrite spirit. I know that the Savior’s words to the Prophet Joseph Smith are true: “No man shall come unto the Father but by me” (D&C 132:12). “Justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true. . . . Sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds, and strength” (D&C 20:30–31). ■

NOTES

1. “A Mighty Change of Heart,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1989, 4.
2. “The Wondrous and True Story of Christmas,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2000, 4.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Read the story in the first section together. Invite family members to think about or share similar stories from their lives. Then have them find in the article answers to the following questions: Who is indebted to God, and why? Who can pay the debt of sin, and why? For whom did Christ pay the price of sin, and why only for them? How can we offer a broken heart unto God?

2. Study 2 Nephi 2:1–13 together, using insights from this article. Read the last section, “Divine Intercession,” and invite family members to express their thoughts and feelings about what the Savior has done for us.



King Benjamin on the Atonement

King Benjamin's teachings help us understand that the Savior's Atonement provides for many, including those who sin in ignorance, little children, and all who repent of their sins.



BY SYDNEY S. REYNOLDS

First Counselor in the Primary General Presidency

Have you ever wondered what you would say if you were asked to give your “last lecture” to your family, friends, or coworkers? On college campuses and in other settings, prominent teachers, leaders, and thinkers often receive a request to deliver a “last lecture.” Such a request is an invitation for someone to compile thoughts and contributions and share with students the distillation of his or her thinking and the

most important message he or she would leave to posterity if it were, indeed, the last opportunity. The scriptures are full of “last lectures.” Remember Jacob blessing his sons, Lehi speaking to his family before his death, Abinadi before King Noah, and the Savior with His disciples at the Last Supper?

The powerful sermon of King Benjamin in the first chapters of the book of Mosiah might be seen as one such lecture. Mosiah,



An angel of God taught King Benjamin that the Lord would come to earth in a “tabernacle of clay,” teach the people, be crucified, rise again, and later judge the world.

the son of King Benjamin, was asked by his father to organize the setting and audience for this address. Mosiah called the people together, and they came in great numbers, bringing their entire families and also bringing the firstlings of their flocks that they might offer sacrifice according to the law of Moses. Each man pitched his tent with the door toward the temple so his family could hear what King Benjamin would say. A tower was erected for him to speak from because the number of families was so great that they couldn’t all be accommodated within the walls of the temple. Even then, as he spoke, it was necessary to write his words and send them forth for those who could not get close enough to hear his voice. (See Mosiah 2:1–8.)

In his message King Benjamin announced that Mosiah, his son, would be king in his place. He assured the people that if they kept the commandments of God, which Mosiah

would teach them, they would prosper in the land even as they had under his leadership. He reminded them of the important things he had taught them and the happy state of those who keep the commandments of God. And then he began to teach them what an angel of God had taught him. The message is a familiar one to us and is the most important one we can hear—it was “glad tidings of great joy” (Mosiah 3:3). The angel’s message was that the Lord Omnipotent would come to earth in a “tabernacle of clay” (Mosiah 3:5), go forth among men to teach and bless them, be crucified, rise again on the third day, and later judge the world. As Savior, He would atone for those who sinned ignorantly, for little children, and for all who have sinned knowingly if they repent of their sins and have faith in Him. Indeed, there is “no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the

children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent” (Mosiah 3:17).

Those Who Sin Ignorantly

In those times when the gospel has not been on the earth, many people lived whose hearts would have turned to the Lord if they had heard His message. Because of King Benjamin’s sermon we understand that whatever opportunity they need to make things right with the Lord, they will have it, thanks to the Atonement (see Mosiah 3:11). Even when the gospel is on the earth, people become responsible for heeding its teachings only as they are taught and receive a witness of its truthfulness from the Holy Ghost.

Latter-day Saints have the example of Alvin Smith, oldest brother of the Prophet Joseph, to further explain this concept. In his vision of the celestial kingdom, Joseph saw his brother Alvin along with some of the prophets of old. Joseph marveled at how Alvin had obtained such an inheritance since he had died before the Restoration and had not been baptized for the remission of his sins. The Lord answered:

“All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God;

“Also all that shall die henceforth without a



knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom;

“For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts” (D&C 137:7–9).

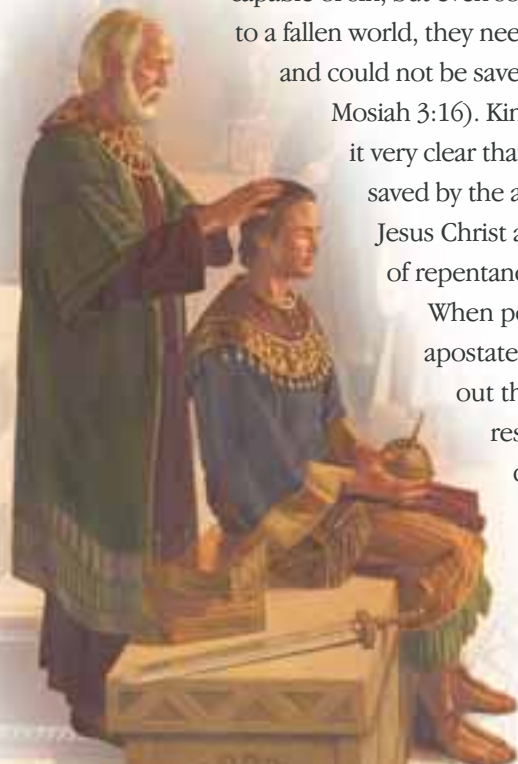
Little Children

Little children are likewise blessed through the Atonement. King Benjamin’s concern for children is especially impressive in his sermon. He believes that little children are not capable of sin, but even so, as they have come to a fallen world, they need the Atonement and could not be saved without it (see Mosiah 3:16). King Benjamin makes it very clear that little children are saved by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ and have no need of repentance.

When people are in an apostate condition—without the truth of the restored gospel—this doctrine is often misunderstood. Mormon reiterates in his troubled times that “little children are alive

The Prophet Joseph Smith’s vision of the celestial kingdom confirmed what King Benjamin taught: that those who have not heard the gospel in mortality will have the opportunity to accept it in the next life.

King Benjamin announced that Mosiah, his son, would be king in his place. He assured the people that if they kept the commandments of God, which Mosiah would teach them, they would prosper in the land.



in Christ, even from the foundation of the world” (Moroni 8:12) and need no baptism to be saved. Modern revelation also affirms that “all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven” (D&C 137:10).

Numerous individuals have tender stories regarding the loss of an infant child. The parents and sometimes the siblings have individually borne testimony of a sweet peace that came to touch their sorrowing hearts. Many have been reassured in heavenly ways that the spirit of their loved one yet lives and has inherited a better place. Especially sweet is the witness that the child is bound to the family eternally, thanks to gospel ordinances.

King Benjamin made it clear that little children are saved by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ and have no need of repentance.

Those Who Sin Knowingly

King Benjamin also declared that even those who sin and know that they rebel against God when they do—and that might include most of us at some stage of our lives—can be saved through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ because of the Atonement. The Atonement covers all of us *unconditionally* as it rescues us from the Fall of Adam and guarantees our resurrection. But for each of us who is accountable, the Atonement is *conditional* as far as our individual sins are concerned. Each of us is touched individually by the Atonement to the degree that we have faith in Jesus Christ, repent of our sins, and yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit.¹

In Mosiah 3:19, King Benjamin gives us one of the best descriptions of what each of us must do to put off the natural man and become a true follower of Christ:

“For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.”

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said this verse “has a fulness and specificity unrivaled in all of scripture. In my opinion, if King Benjamin had uttered only the words in Mosiah 3:19, the verse would still rank among the great gems in all our scriptures.”²

The message King Benjamin gave to the families who listened to him in those



long-ago days is clear and current for us today. We all have seen children who are meek, patient, and full of love, just as we have seen pride, impatience, and recalcitrance. As we read this verse, is it not easy to see ourselves as children of a loving Father and understand just how “childlike” we are or ought to be?

How wonderful that Mormon, the faithful abridger and compiler of the Book of Mormon, gave us King Benjamin’s “last lecture,” one of the most powerful in scripture,



Each of us is touched by the Atonement to the degree that we have faith in Christ, repent of our sins, and yield to the Holy Spirit.

in King Benjamin’s own words. It is beautiful, succinct, simple, yet amazingly complex. Here is another wonderful Book of Mormon witness that the ancient prophets, even before the time of Christ, knew of His coming and His mission. Time and again they assured the people that even though Christ had not yet come to the earth and they must still keep the law of Moses, His promises were sure and His Atonement was effective for them. These glad tidings of great joy were had among the people of Nephi long



MORMON ABRIDGING THE PLATES. BY TOM LOVELL

before He came to visit them after His Resurrection.

Reading King Benjamin’s sermon may cause us to reflect once again on our indebtedness to the Lord for giving us such scripture. The Book of Mormon came to us from the hands of ancient prophets through the hand of a modern prophet who translated it by the gift and power of God. What a blessing it is to have the Book of Mormon as another testament of Jesus Christ and of His great atoning sacrifice. ■

NOTES

1. See “Atonement,” *Bible Dictionary*, 617.
2. “A Manual for Discipleship,” in *King Benjamin’s Speech*, ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks, 1998, 16.

How wonderful that Mormon, the faithful compiler and abridger of the Book of Mormon, provided us with King Benjamin’s “last lecture.” It is beautiful, succinct, simple, yet amazingly complex.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Invite family members to prepare and briefly present what they would say if it were the last time they could speak with the family. Then read together the first paragraph of this article. Using the Mosiah 2–5 chapter headings, ask them to find the topics King Benjamin included in his “last lecture.” Discuss why these topics are important today.

2. Using sections 2–4 of this article and Mosiah 3:11–22, ask family members to make three lists summarizing what the gospel teaches about these groups: those who sin ignorantly, little children, and those who sin knowingly. How does sin affect each of these kinds of people? Invite family members to express their feelings about the Atonement.

3. Show a picture of King Benjamin and read the section “Those Who Sin Knowingly.” Discuss what it means to become “as a child” (see Mosiah 3:19). Bear testimony of principles in this article you feel apply to your family.

Priesthood Restored

Here are a few examples of the priesthood's worldwide influence—shared through testimonies of those who hold it.

When John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on the bank of the Susquehanna River on 15 May 1829, he conferred upon them the Aaronic Priesthood. A short time later, Peter, James, and John—three of Jesus Christ's New Testament Apostles—also appeared and conferred upon Joseph and Oliver the Melchizedek Priesthood.

For the next 175 years, the priesthood—the power and authority to act in God's name—has been conferred in an orderly way upon worthy young and adult men throughout the earth, giving them authority to perform sacred gospel ordinances that bless the lives of men, women, and children everywhere.

The Aaronic Priesthood

The Aaronic Priesthood is named after Aaron, the brother of Moses. This priesthood functions



John the Baptist conferred the Aaronic Priesthood upon the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery 175 years ago, on 15 May 1829.

under the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Those who hold it have authority to administer certain gospel ordinances that help people prepare to receive the Holy Ghost and to return to live with Heavenly Father. The principal duty of all Aaronic Priesthood holders is to “invite all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59). The Aaronic Priesthood helps those who hold it qualify for the Melchizedek Priesthood. The four offices in the Aaronic Priesthood are deacon, teacher, priest, and bishop.

Deacon. *A worthy young man may be ordained a deacon at age 12. He may then fulfill such priesthood duties as passing the sacrament, collecting fast offerings, acting as an usher, serving as a messenger for the bishop or branch president, and helping maintain Church property.*

“When I pass the sacrament I think about Jesus Christ sacrificing Himself for us. He remembers me, and I remember Him,” says Cornelius Williams, 13, of the Abura Ward, Cape Coast Ghana Stake.

It is an awe-inspiring responsibility to represent the Savior in giving the sacred



I have many expectations for our young men. I want them all to become faithful and diligent priesthood bearers.”

—Lu Ming-De,
bishop, Taiwan

emblems of the sacrament to members of the congregation. Such thoughts inspire reverence. “The bread represents the body of Jesus Christ, and the water represents His blood,” says Benjamin Opoku Gyewu, 12, also of the Abura Ward. “When it is my turn to pass the sacrament,” says Jacob Abow Acquah, 12, of the Cape Coast Second Ward, “I think about Jesus giving the sacrament to His Apostles.”

As deacons share these emblems of the Savior’s sacrifice, the ordinance can take on personal meaning. Jorge Benjamín Cervantes Gutiérrez, 13, of the Libertad Ward, Guadalajara México Reforma Stake, says, “Partaking of the sacrament means we can renew our covenants and repent of our sins.” He also sees that holding the priesthood is a blessing to his family. “My mother is grateful to have sons who hold the priesthood because she wants to have the blessings of the priesthood in our home. It is very important to her,” says Jorge.



Luka Pečnik, teacher, Slovenia

Many who hold the Aaronic Priesthood realize it is a preparation for a lifetime of service. Gerardo Emmanuel Bagnati, 12, of the Floresta Ward, Buenos Aires Argentina Liniers Stake, says: “I always looked forward to receiving the priesthood. I loved asking my father and grandfather about it and listening to their experiences. When my ordination day finally arrived, I woke up early and thanked the Lord for His confidence in me and promised Him I would never willingly disappoint Him. When my father put his hands on my head and ordained me a deacon, I felt I had ceased to be a child and had become an adult. I’ll never forget it.”

Teacher. *At age 14, a worthy young man may be ordained a teacher. While he may continue to fulfill the duties of a deacon, he also fulfills such additional responsibilities as preparing the sacrament, serving as a home teacher, caring for members of the ward or branch, and helping them live the gospel (see D&C 20:53–59).*

Luka Pečnik, 15, of the Celje Branch, Ljubljana Slovenia District, is “very happy to help with the sacrament.” Eager to learn more about his priesthood responsibilities, Luka says he does not want to miss any Sunday meetings. And he sees a connection between honoring the priesthood and keeping the commandments. “I try to live a worthy life so the Lord will be pleased with me,” he says.

Joshua Adduru, 15, teachers quorum president in the Bagbag Ward, Quezon City Philippines Stake, arrives at church “earlier than most members in our ward to see that the sacrament is ready before the meeting starts. It feels good to know that the Lord trusts me to assist Him in His work.” To explain why this assignment is so meaningful, Joshua quotes a scripture: “The Lord said



Alexandr Masenkov (right), priest, Russia

that His ‘suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit’ (D&C 19:18). No other person could do what Jesus Christ did for us. When we partake of the sacra-

ment worthily, we become closer to Him.”

The opportunity to go home teaching “is another way of blessing others,” says Joshua. “Every month we share the First Presidency Message with the families assigned to us. The messages help them cope with trials they face every day. Our visits help us become close to them. We ask how they are, what concerns they have, and what problems we can help with or relay to our bishop. We help them feel loved and welcomed. If there are youth in the family, I invite them to come to Mutual and other activities.”

Priest. *A worthy young man may be ordained a priest at age 16. While he may continue fulfilling the duties of a deacon and teacher, he also fulfills such additional*



duties as baptizing; blessing the sacrament; and ordaining other priests, teachers, and deacons (see D&C 20:46–51).

Alexandr Masenkov, 17, of the Nevsky Branch, St. Petersburg Russia District, was nervous the first time he blessed the sacrament. “I prepared for it all week,” he remembers. “As I blessed the sacrament that first time, the Spirit touched my heart. One day, my father and I were assigned to take the sacrament to a man who was blind and paralyzed. It was the first time I had blessed the sacrament outside of the meetinghouse. I felt I had a responsibility to be a servant and a witness of Jesus Christ and to do what He would do if He were there.”

Joel Bader, 16, of the Pratteln Ward, Bern Switzerland Stake, says he feels the Spirit “when I’ve prepared myself spiritually. When I really think during the week about who I truly am and what I should do, it’s easier to

keep the commandments and to make sure I use clean language and am a good example.” And he appreciates the opportunity to be a member of a priesthood quorum. “When you’re together in a quorum, you can learn a lot about getting along with others and how to plan and run meetings. The most important part about the priesthood is serving others—and receiving blessings through the priesthood.” Joel was baptized by his older brother, who was a priest at the time. And when Joel was ordained a priest, he asked a friend who was already a priest to help ordain him.

David Wichtermann, 17, a member of the Schwamendingen Ward, Zürich Switzerland Stake, knows what it’s like to be on the receiving end of priesthood service. “I was sick and in a lot of pain,” he says. “When my father gave me a blessing, the pain went away immediately. I look forward to the time when

When my ordination day finally arrived, I thanked the Lord for His confidence in me and promised Him I would never willingly disappoint Him.”

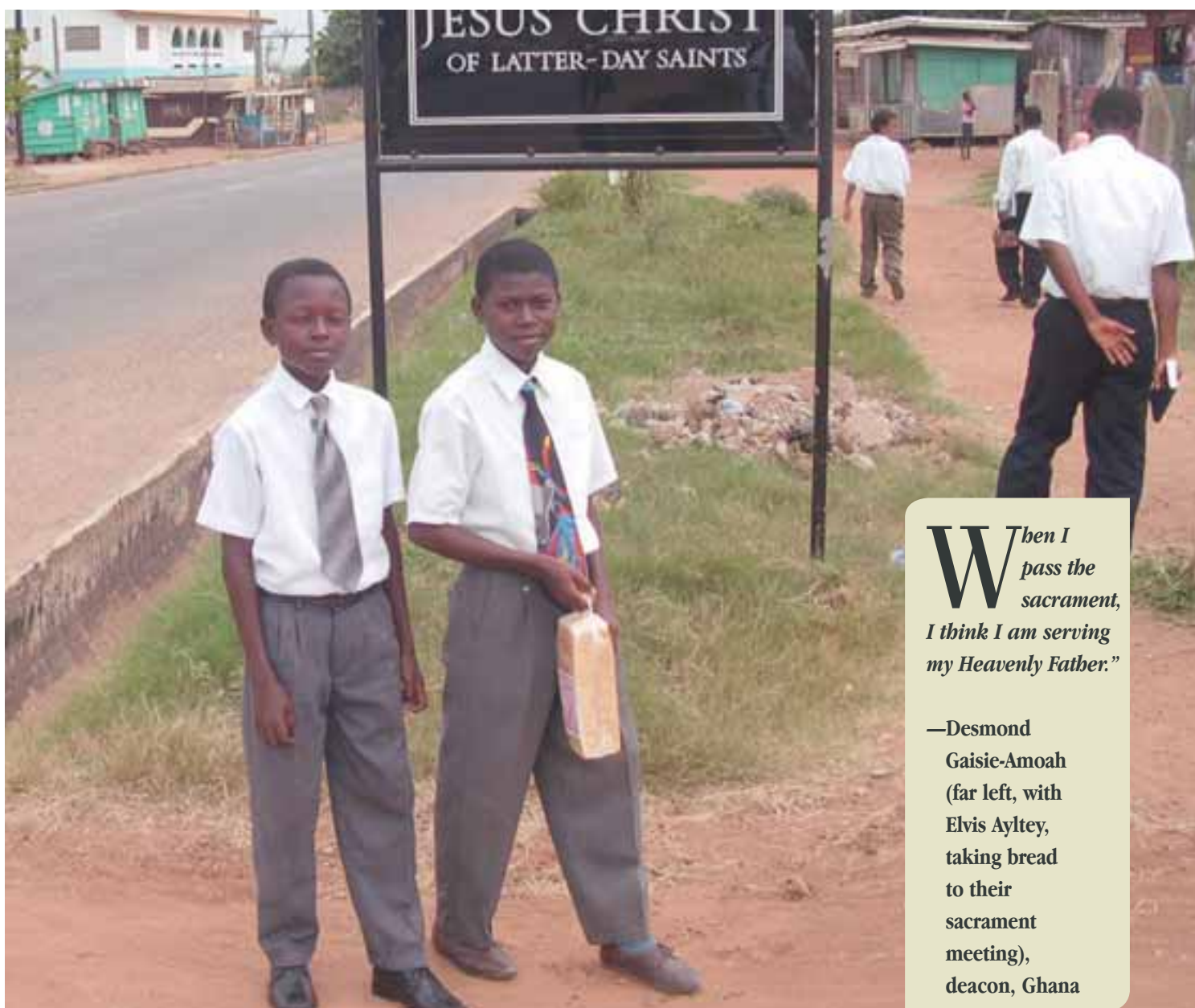
—Gerardo Emmanuel Bagnati (far right, with Norberto Hornos, ward Young Men president, center), deacon, Argentina

I can also use the priesthood to give blessings.” In the meantime David loves serving with the priesthood authority he already has. “I was able to help ordain my younger brother a deacon,” he says. “To participate in giving someone else the priesthood is a nice feeling.”

Bishop. *In each ward, a high priest is ordained and set apart as bishop—an office of the Aaronic Priesthood. The bishop presides over the Aaronic Priesthood in his ward*

and serves as president of the priests quorum. He also gives leadership in caring for the poor and overseeing other temporal matters. As the presiding high priest, he has the authority to preside over the entire ward, serving as a judge in Israel and interviewing members for temple recommends, priesthood ordinations, and other purposes.

Lu Ming-De, 38, is bishop of the Neihu Ward, Taipei Taiwan East Stake. “I need to be a humble servant,” he



When I pass the sacrament, I think I am serving my Heavenly Father.”

—Desmond Gaisie-Amoah (far left, with Elvis Ayltey, taking bread to their sacrament meeting), deacon, Ghana

says, “so I can serve others as the Savior did. The priesthood must be used for blessing others, rather than for ruling unrighteously. It is for glorifying God, not the individual.”

As president of the Aaronic Priesthood in his ward, Bishop Lu has “many expectations for our young men. I want them all to become faithful and diligent priesthood bearers. This process takes time and requires much patience and love. I think there are some essential steps for young men as they grow in the priesthood: attending seminary, serving missions, and getting married in the temple.”

Much of a bishop’s work consists of counseling ward members. “An interview is an opportunity for members to experience God’s love and receive counsel,” says Bishop Lu. “It is an opportunity to remind members about doctrines and teachings that can help resolve problems and heal them spiritually.”

As bishop of the Alberto González Ward, Santiago Chile Conchalí Stake, Luis Alberto Rodríguez Alarcón, 43, strives to increase sacrament meeting attendance and “help each ward member prepare to return to the presence of our Father in Heaven.” One of his main responsibilities is his calling as president of the Aaronic Priesthood. “My goal is to strengthen the young men and help them prepare to serve full-time missions,” he says. On Sundays, he meets with the priests quorum. “I try to make sure that before any young man leaves the priests quorum, he has had a calling. We give all the young men opportunities to serve so they can grow.”

Bishop Rodríguez says success with the young men and young women has come because “I am not only their bishop but also their friend. I meet with them, talk with them, teach them, and love them. Whether it’s in the classroom, in my office, or at an activity, we

talk together and I encourage them to express themselves. My great concern is to be with them as much as I can. I had the same kind of leadership from my bishop in Concepción, Chile,” he recalls. “Bishop Pascual Saavedra always gave me support, and I try to do the same for each of my youth.”

The Melchizedek Priesthood

The higher priesthood was originally known as “the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God. But out of respect or reverence to the name of the Supreme Being, to avoid the too frequent repetition of his name,” it is referred to as the Melchizedek Priesthood, after “a great high priest” who lived in the days of Abraham (see D&C 107:2–4). Melchizedek Priesthood holders may fulfill Aaronic Priesthood duties. The offices of the Melchizedek Priesthood are elder, high priest, patriarch, seventy, and Apostle.

Elder. *Elders are called to teach, baptize, and watch over the Church. They have authority to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, conduct meetings, administer to the sick, and give little children a name and a blessing.*

When Makoto Ishizaka, 26, of the Senzokuike Ward, Yokohama Japan Stake, turned 18, he received the Melchizedek Priesthood and was ordained an elder by his father. Although Makoto was still a high school student, there was an urgent need for him to serve his family as a Melchizedek Priesthood holder. His 14-year-old brother, Isamu, had a malignant brain tumor.

As Isamu awoke from surgery, his first words were “Can I have a blessing?” For more than a year, Makoto joined his father in giving frequent priesthood blessings to Isamu. “Before giving blessings, I prayed and



Peter, James, and John—three of Jesus Christ’s New Testament Apostles—conferred the Melchizedek Priesthood upon the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

pondered in the small hospital room,” says Makoto. “When I give blessings, I feel Heavenly Father is using me as an instrument.”

While in the hospital, Isamu studied seminary lessons, did not murmur, and expressed gratitude for his blessings. When his condition suddenly became worse, Makoto prayed in desperation: “Why is this happening?” Then he felt the voice of the Lord. “It pierced my very soul. Through the Spirit, I knew Isamu was needed in heaven. My anger and uneasiness vanished and were changed to peace and hope. Forty-eight hours later, Isamu passed away. He was 16.” Makoto dedicated Isamu’s grave and received temple ordinances in his brother’s behalf. He later served a full-time mission. “The priesthood blesses both those who perform and those who receive ordinances—and it can purify both,” he says.

Simione Sema, 29, an elder in the Suva Third Ward, Suva Fiji Stake, is stake clerk and ward Young Men president. “When I was ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood,” he says, “it was new to me, and at times my wife had to remind me that I could bless the sick and perform other priesthood work.” After Simione, his wife, and son were sealed in the Nuku’alofa Tonga Temple, their daughter was born, and he gave her a name and a blessing. “It was an astonishing experience,” he says. “I was fulfilling the role of patriarch of my family! It is wonderful to bless my family and others through the priesthood and to know I can access a heavenly power that works through obedience and through the mighty name of Jesus Christ.”

High Priest. *High priests have the right and responsibility to preside. Brethren are ordained high priests when they are called to a stake presidency, high council, or bishopric or when otherwise determined by the stake president.*



Gérald Jean Caussé (center), high priest, with his counselors in the Paris France Stake presidency and other members.

Wolfgang Pilz, 50, a high priest in the Darmstadt Ward, is president of the Mannheim Germany Stake. “My life has been blessed by the power of the priesthood many times,” he says, “such as when my father, grandfather, bishop, stake president, or an Apostle of the Lord has laid his hands upon my head to confer priesthood authority or to set me apart for a Church assignment. They have spoken in the name of the Lord and invoked His blessings on me.” In return, President Pilz has been able to “call down the blessings of heaven on my loved ones. It has become natural for my children to ask me for a blessing when facing challenges.”

Presiding over a stake “often weighs heavy,” he says, “especially when I think of the hundreds of thousands of people in our stake area who have not yet become sufficiently familiar with the gospel. Through the priesthood and a direct connection to the heavens, I find the load bearable, unrest and nervousness melt away, and inner peace and security take over.”

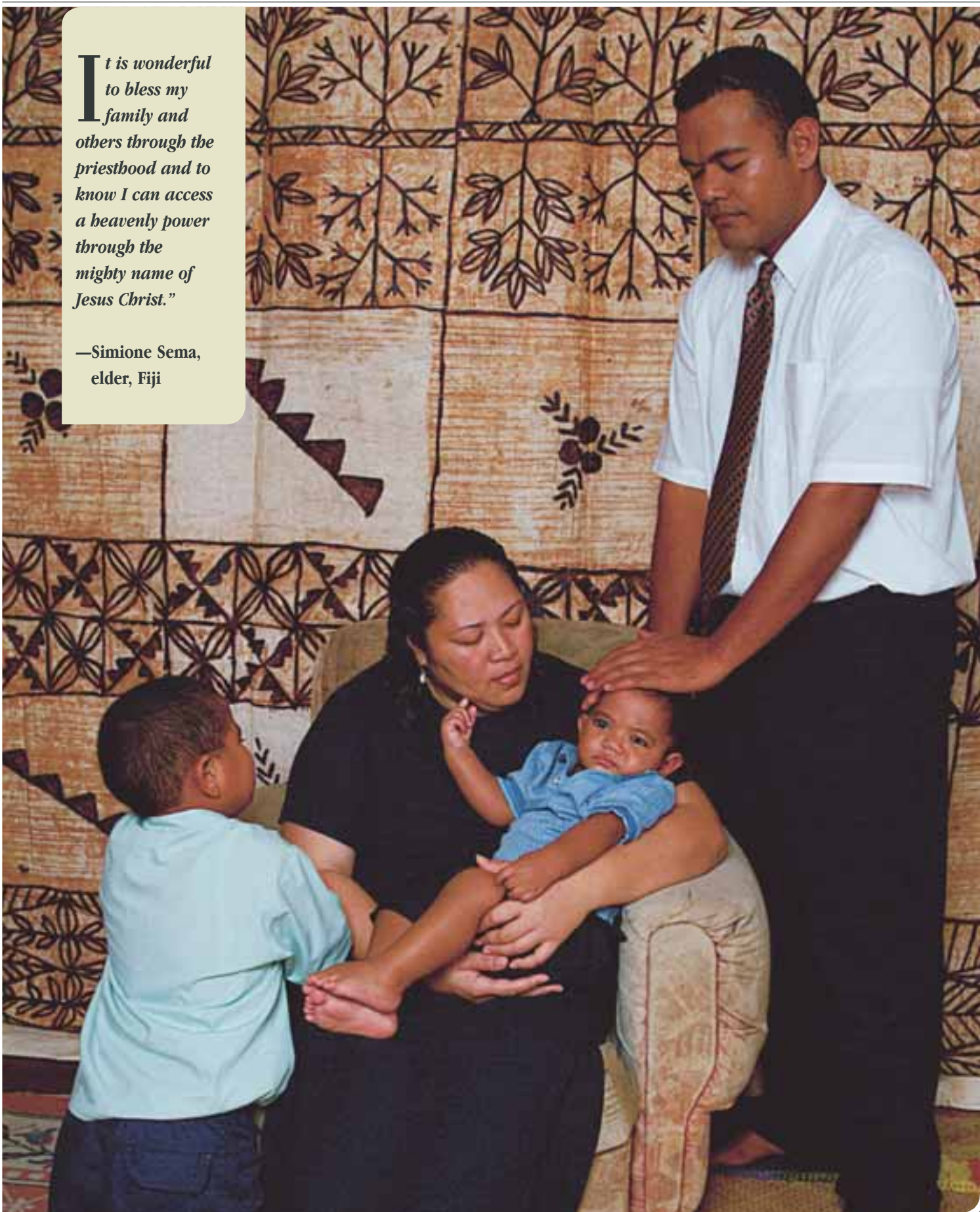
Some of the greatest experiences of President Pilz’s calling have come while helping Church members through the repentance process. “Nothing brings me more peace and satisfaction than experiencing with others the miracle of divine forgiveness,” he says.

Gérald Jean Caussé, 40, of the Versailles Ward, serves as president of the Paris France Stake. He tries to pattern his leadership style after “the example given by Jesus Christ,” he says. “He who presides must be the servant. He must not just give rules or tell people how to define their lives—but rather teach them to become spiritually self-sustaining. I achieve my objective when someone acquires the ability to search and receive through the Holy Ghost the inspiration to do what is right.”

Delegation enables others to help and grow. “I appreciate those around me with whom I share responsibility,” President Caussé says. “My counselors suggest good ideas and represent the Savior in their work. I feel the same about the members of the high council, the bishops, and

It is wonderful to bless my family and others through the priesthood and to know I can access a heavenly power through the mighty name of Jesus Christ.”

—Simione Sema,
elder, Fiji





A special witness of Jesus Christ is a witness to His saving work as Creator, Resurrector, Redeemer, Savior, Judge, and Light and Life of the World.”

—Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Apostle, Philippines

all of the leaders in the stake. The stake Relief Society president knows the sisters well and sees many things I would not see myself.”

The most strengthening part of his calling is interviewing stake members. “As I try to help someone during an interview, I am often enriched, filled, comforted, and consoled equally—even in the most difficult situations,” he says.

Patriarch. *Patriarchs give patriarchal blessings to Church members. These blessings are recorded and transcribed for a lifetime of study; they give the recipient insights into his or her spiritual possibilities and opportunities, indicate the person’s lineage, and give words of counsel and blessing.*

Humberto Ardón Hernández, 77, is a member of the Victorias Ward and serves as patriarch in the Guatemala City Guatemala Las Victorias Stake. “It is a unique privilege to be an instrument in the hands of the Lord to

bless His children,” he says. “The calling of a patriarch is to bless, not to attend to administrative affairs. A patriarch should give his calling total devotion and make sure he is living worthy to have the influence of the Spirit of the Lord.” To those who have not yet received a patriarchal blessing, Brother Ardón says, “I exhort you to do whatever may be necessary to obtain this marvelous blessing.” And to those who have a patriarchal blessing, he says, “Read it often. You will find messages from a loving Father who desires to bless you.”

Jack R. Carver, 62, is a member of the Yuma Fourth Ward and serves as patriarch of the Yuma Arizona Stake. To be prepared to give blessings, says Brother Carver, “I am a lot more serious about living the gospel the best I can every day. It’s always on my mind.” Brother Carver has also found that having the Spirit during a blessing has “a lot to do with the person who comes to receive

it. They have to prepare too and come with a prayerful attitude.”

José Humberto González Garza, 69, a member of the Campestre Ward, serves as patriarch in the Monterrey México Roma Stake and has seen patriarchal blessings change lives. He remembers an older woman who was promised she would be able to serve in the temple. She thought it could not happen because of her age and the distance to a temple. But a temple was later built nearby, and she found joy in serving.

“I feel so satisfied doing my duty,” Brother González says. Because he is partially blind, he uses a cane to help him get around. He also uses a hearing aid. And at times he feels he can’t do as much as he used to. But, he says, “when my children ask me, ‘Are you giving blessings, Dad?’ I tell them, ‘No, I’m receiving blessings.’”

Seventy. *Seventies are especial witnesses of Jesus Christ. They assist in building up, regulating, and strengthening the Church wherever they are assigned throughout the world. Members of the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy are sustained as General Authorities. Members of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums are sustained as Area Authority Seventies.*

“When they are ordained, members of the Seventy . . . receive apostolic authority to bear witness that Jesus is the Christ and to go forth in all the world as the Twelve may send them,” explains Elder Earl C. Tingey of the Presidency of the Seventy.¹

Elder Tan Su Kiong, 60, an Area Authority Seventy in the Asia Area, is a Malaysian citizen of Chinese descent, and he resides in Singapore. “My calling allows me to experience the worldwide Church in action,” he says. “My assignments cover Mongolia, Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka,



Humberto Ardón Hernández, patriarch, Guatemala

Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.” This assignment has greatly changed his perspective. “It is like being brought up to a ‘high mountain’ and being asked to ‘look’ (see 1 Nephi 11:1, 8). I am involved in mission visits, conferences, and stake reorganizations. These experiences all require relying on the Spirit as we help build leadership, faith, and understanding.

“As I attend meetings in these countries and hear the hymns of Zion sung, prayers offered, and testimonies borne in many languages,” he says, “and as I see missionaries teaching and testifying, I realize I am witnessing



Jack R. Carver, patriarch, United States of America

prophecy fulfilled: ‘It shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power’ (D&C 90:11).”

Elder Tan echoes what many priesthood leaders say about the importance of the support they receive from their families: “I would not have this privilege or blessing if my wife and family were not supportive. I am so grateful for my wife’s faith and testimony and for the wonderful influence she has on our children.”

Elder Lindsay T. Dil, 52, an Area Authority Seventy in the Australia/New Zealand Area, says that “as a Seventy you quickly learn to love people you don’t even know, because the Spirit confirms they are sons and daughters of God. I travel frequently, and everywhere I go I meet

faithful Latter-day Saints and wonderful priesthood leaders. It is humbling to feel so inadequate but, with the Spirit, to be able to do what the Lord requires.

“Wherever I go I try to share the message that Jesus is the Christ and witness that ‘there is no other way or means whereby man can be saved’ (Alma 38:9). My testimony of the Savior’s Atonement has been deepened because of this call. I am a witness of the Savior’s divine role.”

Apostle. *Apostles are special witnesses of Jesus Christ in all the world. As members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, they administer Church affairs worldwide. Although each Apostle receives all the keys of God’s kingdom on earth, he serves under the direction of the senior Apostle—the President of the Church—who exercises all of the keys.*

Elder Dallin H. Oaks, 71, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, currently serves as Area President in the Philippines. “The priesthood has blessed my life,” he says, “by putting me under covenant to use its authority and to spend my personal efforts to serve the Lord and His children. These obligations have had a profound disciplining influence on the choices I have made in my life. The priesthood of God has also blessed me with the assurance that those I love most are mine for eternity if we are faithful.

“As we keep the covenants associated with the priesthood, we inevitably bless the lives of others. We do this through our service to others and through our example of service, which benefits many more than those directly served. We serve by leading, by teaching, by officiating in the ordinances of the priesthood, and just by keeping the commandments.

“The most fulfilling parts of my calling are opportunities

to see people’s lives enriched as they are blessed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and to associate with the best people in the world—people who are willingly devoting their lives to serving the Lord and cheerfully making the sacrifices that entails.”

Elder Oaks explains the role of Apostles as special witnesses of Jesus Christ: “A special witness of Jesus Christ is a witness to the priesthood or authority of the Lord and a witness to His saving work as Creator, Resurrector, Redeemer, Savior, Judge, and Light and Life of the World. This means witnessing to the truth and power of the

plan of salvation with all of its doctrines, ordinances, commandments, covenants, and blessings and witnessing to its glorious purpose, which is for each of the sons and daughters of God to attain his or her divine potential of eternal life.”

Something Wonderful and Magnificent

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said that those who have received the priesthood “have had bestowed upon [them] something wonderful and magnificent, something of the very essence of godhood. . . . It is concerned with life and death, with family and Church, with the great and transcendent nature of God Himself and His eternal work.”² ■

For more information, see Gospel Principles (1997), 85–93; see also D&C 13, 20, 84, 107.

The following assisted the Church magazines staff in preparing this article: Michael and Marged Kirkpatrick, Ghana; Nestor Curbelo, Argentina; Albin Lotrič, Slovenia; Mike Ramirez, Philippines; Vladimir Egorov, Olga Dilevskaia, and Sandra VanDyke, Russia; Shirleen Saunders, Switzerland; Emily Chien, Taiwan; Marcela Opazo Sandoval and Claudia Moncada Valdés, Chile; Okada Takuji, Japan; Sera Balenagasau, Fiji; Mark McKenzie, Germany; Jean-Marie Hauser, France; Virna Rodríguez, Guatemala; David and Linda Thornell, Hong Kong/Singapore; and Susan Watkins, Australia/New Zealand.

NOTES

1. “Area Authority Seventies: ‘To Bear Record of My Name in All the World,’” *Liabona*, Oct. 2002, 28; *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 52.
2. “Loyalty,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 58.



**Elder Lindsay T. Dil (right),
Area Authority Seventy,
Australia/New Zealand
Area**

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM



BY PRESIDENT
WILFORD
WOODRUFF
(1807–98)

Fourth President
of the Church

*Wilford Woodruff
was born on
1 March 1807
in Connecticut
to Apek and
Beulah Woodruff.*

Zera Pulsipher, an early Church missionary, baptized him on 31 December 1833 in an icy stream near Richland, New York. He was ordained an Apostle by Brigham Young on 26 April 1839 and became Church President on 7 April 1889. He died on 2 September 1898 in San Francisco, California. This is a portion of the remarks given by President Woodruff on 2 June 1889 at a YMMIA conference.

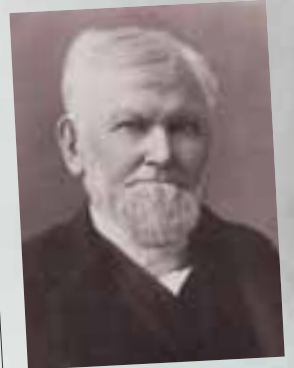


Before the close of this conference there is a subject upon which I wish to bear my testimony. . . . I am . . . the only one living in the flesh who was with . . . Joseph Smith, the Prophet of God, when he gave to the Twelve Apostles their charge


concerning the priesthood and the keys of the kingdom of God; and as I myself shall soon pass away like other men, I want to leave my testimony to these Latter-day Saint[s].

News of the Martyrdom

I was sitting with Brigham Young in the depot in the city of Boston at the time when the two prophets [Joseph Smith and his



I was just bidding my father-in-law farewell, when a man came out from a shop, holding a newspaper. He said, "Joseph and Hyrum Smith have been martyred!"



brother Hyrum] were martyred. Of course we had no telegraphs and no fast reports as we have today to give communication over the land. During that period Brother Young was waiting there for a train of cars to go to Peterborough. Whilst sitting there we were overshadowed by a cloud of darkness and gloom as great as I ever witnessed in my life. . . . Neither of us knew or understood the cause until after the report of the death of the prophets was manifested to us. Brother Brigham left; I remained in Boston, and the next day took passage for Fox Islands, a place I had visited some years before, and baptized numbers of people and organized branches upon both those islands. My father-in-law, Ezra Carter, carried me on a wagon from Scarborough to Portland. I there engaged passage on board of a steamer. I had put my trunk on board and was just bidding my father-in-law farewell, when a man came out from a shop—a shoemaker—holding a newspaper in his hand. He said, “Father Carter, Joseph and Hyrum Smith have been martyred—they have been murdered in Carthage Jail!”

As soon as I looked at the paper, the Spirit said to me that it was true. I had no time for consultation, the steamer’s bell was ringing, so I stepped on board and took my trunk back to land. As I drew it off, the plank was drawn in. I told Father Carter to drive me back to Scarborough. I there took the car for Boston. . . .

Next day I met Brigham Young in the streets of Boston, he having just returned, opposite to Sister Voce’s house. We reached out our hands, but neither of us was able to speak a word. We walked into Sister Voce’s house. We each took a seat and [covered] our faces. We were overwhelmed with grief and our faces were soon bathed in a flood of tears. . . . After we had done weeping we began to converse together concerning the death of the prophets. In the course of the conversation, he smote his hand upon

his thigh and said, “Thank God, the keys of the kingdom are here.” . . .

The Last Meeting

All that President Young or myself or any member of the Quorum need have done in the matter was to have referred to the last instructions at the last meeting we had with the Prophet Joseph before starting on our mission. I have alluded to that meeting many times in my life.

The Prophet Joseph, I am now satisfied, had a thorough presentiment that that was the last meeting we would hold together here in the flesh. We had had our endowments; we had had all the blessings sealed upon our heads that were ever given to the apostles or prophets on the face of the earth. On that occasion the Prophet Joseph rose up and said to us: “Brethren, I have desired to live to see this temple built. I shall never live to see it, but you will. I have sealed upon your heads all the keys of the kingdom of God. I have sealed upon you every key, power, principle that the God of heaven has revealed to me. Now, no matter where I may go or what I may do, the kingdom rests upon you.”

Now, don’t you wonder why we, as Apostles, could not have understood that the prophet of God was going to be taken away from us? But we did not understand it. The Apostles in the days of Jesus Christ could not understand what the Savior meant when He told them, “I am going away; if I do not go away the Comforter will not come!” [see John 16:7]. Neither did we understand what Joseph meant. “But,” he said, after having done this, “ye Apostles of the Lamb of God, my brethren, upon your shoulders this kingdom rests; now you have got to round up your shoulders and bear off the kingdom.” And he also made this very strange remark: “If you do not do it you will be damned.”

I am the last man living who heard that declaration. He told the truth, too; for would not any of the men who have held the keys of the kingdom of God or an apostleship in this Church have been under condemnation and would not the wrath of God have rested upon them if they had deserted these principles or denied and turned from them

and undertaken to serve themselves instead of the work of the Lord which was committed to their hands?

The Keys Are Here

When the Lord gave the keys of the kingdom of God, the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood, of the apostleship, and sealed them upon the head of Joseph Smith, He sealed them upon his head to stay here upon the earth until the coming of the Son of Man. Well might Brigham Young say, "The keys of the kingdom of God are here." They were with him to the day of his death. They then rested upon the head of another man—President John Taylor. He held those keys to the hour of his death. They then fell by turn, or in the providence of God, upon Wilford Woodruff.

I say to the Latter-day Saints the keys of the kingdom of God are here, and they are going to stay here, too, until the coming of the Son of Man. Let all Israel understand that. They may not rest upon my head but a short time, but they will then rest on the head of another Apostle, and another after him, and so continue until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven to "reward every man according to the deeds done in the body" [see *History of the Church*, 1:245]. . . .

We Are in the Hands of the Lord

. . . I say to all Israel at this day, I say to the whole world, that the God of Israel, who organized this Church and kingdom, never ordained any President or Presidency to lead it astray. Hear it, ye Israel, no man who has ever breathed the breath of life can hold these keys of the kingdom of God and lead the people astray. . . .



Let us make up our minds to serve and honor God. Do not have any fears concerning the kingdom; the Lord will lead that aright; and if Brother Woodruff or any of the Presidency of this Church should take any course to lead you astray, the Lord will remove us out of the way. We are in the hands of the Lord, and those keys will be held and taken care of by the God of Israel until He comes whose right it is to reign. ■

Published in Millennial Star, 2 Sept. 1889, 545–49; subheads added; paragraphing altered; punctuation, capitalization, and spelling modernized.

The Prophet Joseph rose up and said to us: "I have sealed upon your heads all the keys of the kingdom of God. . . . No matter where I may go or what I may do, the kingdom rests upon you."

WAITING PATIENTLY on the Lord

Our family learned patience and humility—and many other lessons—as we watched Emily recover.

BY SUSAN WALDRIP

Our family had no premonition of disaster one April afternoon when we received a phone call that would so dramatically alter our lives.

The caller, from Western Medical Hospital, said: “Your daughter has been in an automobile accident. She has a severe head injury and multiple broken bones. You’d better get down here as fast as you can.”

Emily had just turned 16. I learned later that the small car she’d been riding in had been hit by a pickup truck going 50 miles per hour. Because Emily appeared to be dead, the ambulance personnel concentrated on the driver. Only after the car’s driver was safely in the ambulance did someone check for Emily’s pulse. The rescue workers were astounded to learn that she was still alive. Extricated from the gnarled wreck, Emily was airlifted to a nearby trauma center.

“Please, Let Her Live”

My husband was at work, so we made plans to meet at the hospital. On the way there, I pleaded aloud to Heavenly Father: “Let her live. Please, let her live—at least until I see her.”

The long ride to the hospital allowed time for me to get over the initial shock and to make an effort at being humble and submissive to Heavenly Father’s will. As I pulled into the left turn lane at the final corner, I had finally come to the point where I was able to say with all my heart: “Heavenly Father, she has been a truly good girl. If she must die, that’s OK. She’s prepared.”

Before the light turned green, however, I was filled with the overwhelming assurance that not only would Emily live, but she would be OK. At that moment, the Holy Ghost encircled me in love and provided courage for what lay ahead. Feeling a deep sense of gratitude for this assurance, I prayed in thanks. I had no idea at the time what she would be facing—or what lessons of patience and faith our family would be learning over the next several months. Yet our loving Father in Heaven would be there for all of us.

Learning to Pray and to Trust

When we first saw Emily, she was being wheeled to the intensive care unit. She had suffered severe fractures, yet there were no visible signs of injury. She was unconscious and exhibiting involuntary movements, which I later learned were signs of severe brain injury. The neurosurgeon was gruff with my husband and me as he tried to prepare us for the future.

My heart broke as he stated, “I cannot give you back your daughter,” adding that Emily likely would have mental and physical impairment and intermittent brain seizures throughout her life.

However, after much prayer, a priesthood blessing, and a fast by loving Church members—and because it was in keeping with the will of Heavenly Father—we felt assurance and hope from the Lord. What comfort and gratitude we experienced as we knelt to express our humble thanks for the hope we felt.



When we first saw Emily after the car accident, she was unconscious and suffering from a severe brain injury.



As I drove to the hospital, I pleaded aloud to God to let Emily live.

For six days Emily was in an artificial coma, induced to keep her brain from swelling and causing further damage. For the first two or three days she rested peacefully. But two long opera-

tions were required to set her broken bones, and the peace we had felt did not endure. She was hooked up to a multitude of machines, and my husband and I became expert at monitoring them for signs of Emily's progress.

Often during the critical hours after surgery, when Emily's temperature would rise dramatically or the pressure on her brain would climb to frightening levels, I was overwhelmed with fear. Then I would retire to pray in a small room nearby. Many, many times, both day and night, I would kneel on the cold tile floor in that room and pour out concerns to Heavenly Father. I asked for peace so that I might pray with more love and trust and humility.

In the Lord's Time

The doctors eventually brought Emily out of her coma. As she lay in intensive care with a feeding tube in her nose and a respirator down her throat, her eyes were closed. She could not speak because of the respirator, and we were not sure she would be able to speak when it was removed.

It soon became apparent that removing the respirator was critical to Emily's further progress. Normally, after a patient has been on a respirator for about 10 days, doctors

perform a tracheotomy to allow breathing through the neck. Oh, how I hoped Emily would not have to undergo this additional surgery that might complicate her recovery.

On the seventh day, after many humble, pleading prayers, I felt assurance that the respirator would be successfully removed and that Emily would be able to breathe on her own—soon. But her breathing was too shallow that day. Time crawled during the following days. Over and over I poured out my heart to Heavenly Father about the respirator, trying desperately to pray according to D&C 46:30: "He that asketh in the Spirit asketh according to the will of God; wherefore it is done even as he asketh."

I believed I had received an answer that the respirator would soon be successfully removed. But *when* was soon? Those days seemed to last a month. What did the Lord mean by soon? These were important growth experiences.

Perhaps one of the greatest lessons I learned through this long experience, other than the reassurance that Heavenly Father does hear us in our extremity, was the insight gained about "in the Lord's due time." During my many hours at Emily's bedside, I pondered the miracle of Heavenly Father's answer to prayer. From moments of fervent pleading with Heavenly Father to make it possible for the doctors to remove the respirator, it was indelibly printed on my mind and spirit that man's time is not the Lord's time.

Alma tells us, "Time only is measured unto men" (Alma 40:8). For the Lord and His prophets, soon might mean years, perhaps. Nearly 600 years before Christ came, Nephi, in interpreting the prophet Isaiah's prophecies concerning the last days, told his brethren that "the time cometh *speedily* that the righteous must be led up as calves of the stall, and the Holy One of Israel must reign in dominion, and might, and power, and great glory" (1 Nephi 22:24; emphasis added; see also vv. 15–16, 18, 23). He was speaking of the Millennium, an event we still await.

How often we assume our desired timetable should be the Lord's timetable! Yet we must learn the importance of "waiting patiently on the Lord" (D&C 98:2)—waiting not in a state of forlorn resignation, but "looking forward with an

eye of faith to the fruit thereof” (Alma 32:40). I learned that trusting the Lord’s timetable can help put our earthly experiences into a grander perspective that brings peace and understanding amid difficult times.

Finally the time came to remove the respirator. I shed a few tears before rushing to the hospital, filled with gratitude to God.

The Miracle of Healing

Our family members’ testimonies and my testimony grew and our hearts were full of gratitude as we watched Emily move toward recovery. Part of her healing occurred while she was still in a coma: she suffered a crushed pelvis yet had no internal injuries; the rib under her aorta artery was broken, but it had not severed the artery; and the bleeding in her brain receded shortly after the members’ fast.

After Emily awoke from her coma, we discovered that she had mentally regressed in age some 10 years and that the entire left side of her body was greatly weakened. She could not lift her hand or move her fingers independently or walk. But through many subsequent months of therapy, her body and mind slowly healed. She was able to return to her junior year in high school five months after the accident.

The last part of Emily’s recovery was the healing of an eye. Residual damage from the brain trauma, as well as injury to the optic nerve, had impaired her right eye. At first she could not open it. When it finally opened, she discovered the pupil was paralyzed, and the eye, having little movement, no longer saw in unison with the other eye. Her brain blocked its sight because the image it projected was so far apart from the image of the left eye.

For several years, Emily participated in



therapy in an attempt to reattach her right eye to see in unison with her left. During moments of extreme frustration, she would cry out, “If I just knew *when* I’ll be better, I could deal with this!”

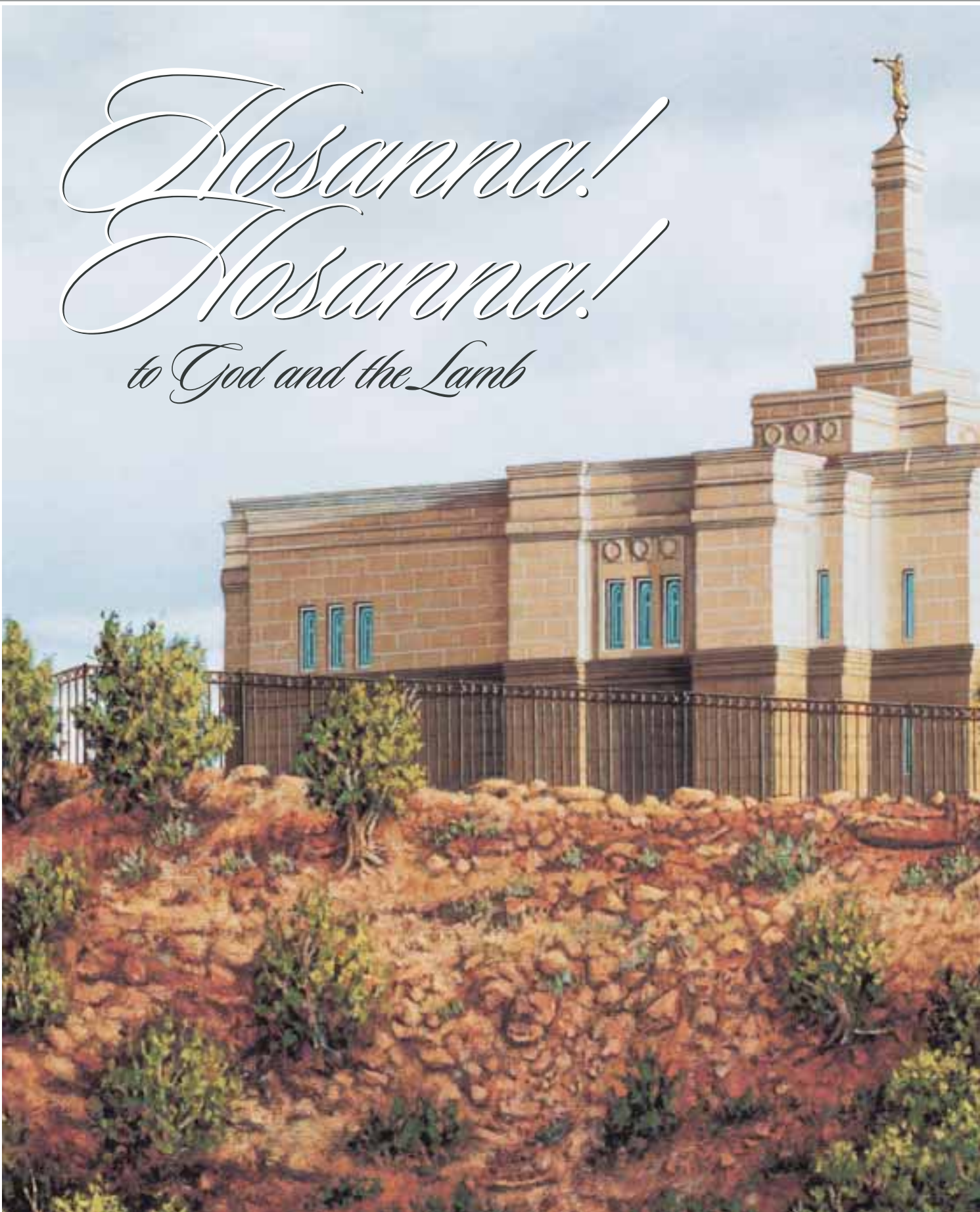
But that was one of our lessons—we didn’t know when. The healing of her eye served as a constant schoolmaster for us all, teaching us again and again the principles of faith, humility, patience, and persistence. Though we would not have chosen this trial, our family grew from the many lessons we learned.


Ultimately, in a manner and at a time we didn’t expect, the healing came. During the normal course of my husband’s work, he came in contact with an eye surgeon who mentioned a corrective surgery for Emily’s condition. Five years after her accident, Emily had the surgery, which was successful. Then, six months after the surgery, she left to serve a mission in the Brazil São Paulo North Mission, where in the Lord’s due time she was able to help others see more clearly. ■

Susan Waldrip is a member of the Orange First Ward, Orange California Stake.

The healing of Emily’s eye served as a constant schoolmaster for us all, teaching us again and again the principles of faith, humility, patience, and persistence.

*Hosanna!
Hosanna!
to God and the Lamb*





On 27 March 1836 the Prophet Joseph Smith dedicated the Kirtland Temple, the first temple built in the latter days. He prayed “that all people who shall enter upon the threshold of the Lord’s house may feel thy power, and feel constrained to acknowledge that thou hast sanctified it, and that it is thy house, a place of thy holiness” (D&C 109:13).

Following the prayer, the choir sang a new hymn written by W. W. Phelps especially for the dedication—“The Spirit of God.”

*We’ll sing and we’ll shout with
the armies of heaven,
Hosanna, hosanna to God
and the Lamb!*

*Let glory to them in the highest
be given,
Henceforth and forever; Amen
and amen!*
(*Hymns*, no. 2)

Since 1836 these words have not only been sung at every Latter-day Saint temple dedication but have filled hearts with the Spirit of the Holy Ghost in untold numbers of life situations.

Following are images that remind us that we are blessed to live in a time when more than 100 temples provide opportunities for the making of eternal covenants as well as serve as a haven of peace and personal revelation. ■

Here, Mitch Johnson features the natural setting of the Snowflake Arizona Temple.



Above: Watercolor artist Al Rounds chooses an unusual perspective of the Salt Lake Temple in *View from Quince Street, Salt Lake City*.



Keith Bond expresses his reverence for God's creations in a gold-leafed triptych titled *The Creation*. He won a Merit Award in the Church's Sixth International Art Competition.



Left: Peruvian Jeronimo Lozano won a Purchase Award in the Sixth International Art Competition for his clay and wood sculpture *The Truth Revealed*.

Below: James Ronald Bartlett honors the faith of the Nauvoo Saints in the Sixth International Art Competition. His sculpture *The Nauvoo Pillar* includes the tower of the temple, the flying angel, the pillar motif, and the familiar icons of sunstone, moonstone, and stars.







Opposite page, clockwise from far left: Italian Valeriano Ugolini's *Vision* represents a vision of the future, taken from the past to bless the future. Former astronaut Don Lind paints the Logan Utah Temple in a peaceful setting in *Sacred Sentinel*. He found peace in this temple after seven astronauts died when the space shuttle *Columbia* exploded. James Shirley includes the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Gordon B. Hinckley in *Return to Glory*, painted on old weathered wood. In *Nauvoo Full Circle: Mortality to Immortality*, Jill Cecil uses apples to represent mortality and butterflies to represent immortality. Cloyd Bedke has painted many versions of the San Diego California Temple. This view shows the temple from the west, facing the mountains on the east.

Left: In *Family Together Forever*, Nigerian artist Asemota Izevbigie shows a family offering prayers of gratitude. Their elongated necks depict their vision, strength, and dedication to God through temple ordinances. Below: Troy Wenzel honors his temple-going grandparents in *Omi and Opa*.

Except for the Cloyd Bedke painting in the lower, far-left corner, the artwork on pages 40–41 is from the Sixth International Art Competition.



The Precious Promise

BY ELDER NEAL A. MAXWELL
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

When so many mortals are falling and being dragged down, it is hard to imagine an exhortation and promise more relevant than Helaman's statement: "Remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; . . . whereon if men build they cannot fall" (Helaman 5:12). The Great Deliverer, Jesus Christ, can deliver on this precious promise as well as on all His other reassurances.

Building on His firm foundation requires us to emulate Christ's character. There is no joy nor is there any security in giving Him mere lip service. Emulating Him is the key, and our emerging character is the refined structure of our souls. After all the circumstantial scaffolding comes down, character is what is left.

THE PROCESS OF CHARACTER BUILDING

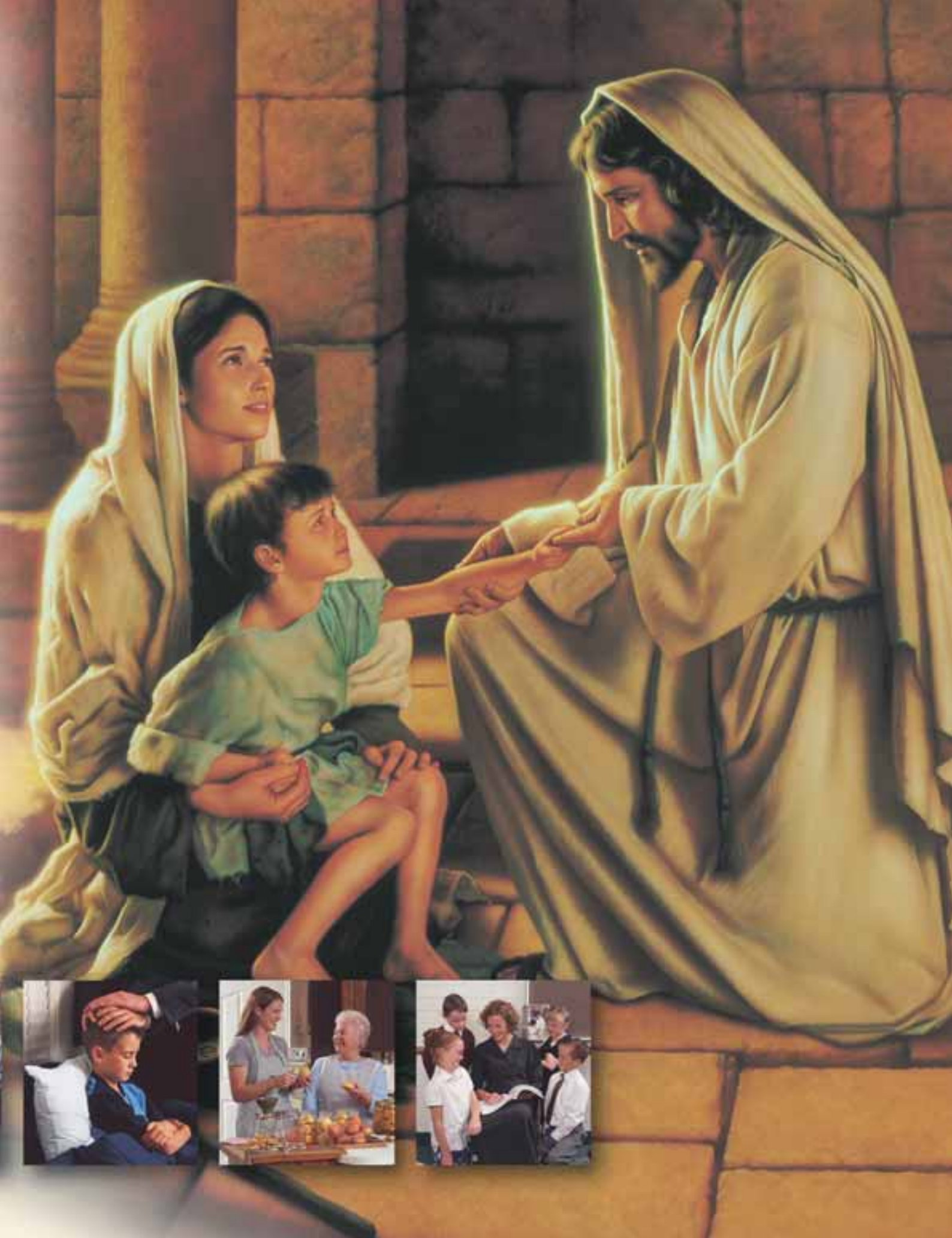
The traits of character to be focused on in the precious process of character building are all interactive; development of one hastens the development of another. You are likely to be doing much better than you realize. Paul

notes one spiritual sequence when he says, "Tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope" (Romans 5:3–4), and hope brings more of the love of God. If you and I will meekly submit to "our light affliction," whatever it is, this will lead later to a far greater "weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17).

So it is that while the "intelligence we attain unto in this life . . . will rise with us in the resurrection" (D&C 130:18), the gospel definition of intelligence isn't one's scholastic IQ. Instead, intelligence signifies the totality of the soul and reflects "the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). If we are diligent, we can develop faith, patience, godliness, kindness, and charity in greater abundance in our lives. These qualities, in turn, will make us fruitful "in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:8).



**Building on Christ's
firm foundation
requires us to emulate
His character.**



He was and is
Lord of the
universe,
who under the
direction of the
Father created
“worlds without
number.” Yet He was
willingly known as
Jesus of Nazareth,
the carpenter’s son.
He always knew who
He was!

The development of Christlike character clearly qualifies as truly being “about [our] Father’s business” (Luke 2:49). The wonderful thing about this process is that amid the seeming mundaneness of daily life we can be about our Father’s business day by day, achieving imperishable things to be taken with us through the veil of death and to rise with us in the Resurrection.

Jacob wrote of “looking beyond the mark” by failing to see Christ as the center of it all, and he added ominously that people so

blinded and diverted “must needs fall” (Jacob 4:14).
Ignoring the Savior

includes failing to build Christlike character in order to be more rocklike ourselves.

Of course, conversion to the gospel and the Church can happen all at once in a burst of recognition and through the testifying of the Holy Spirit. However, the subsequent mentoring in order to further develop, for instance, a quality like patience takes time. Yes, patience does not come “right now”! Do not expect the world to understand or help in the precious process of character building that I’m attempting to describe.

Mercifully, the whisperings of the Spirit nudge us along the path in an almost private process. Through it all we will need to be strong enough for ourselves but also strong enough to help others, because there will be immigrants arriving from Babylon—there will even be some defectors from the “great and spacious building” (1 Nephi 8:26)—and they need to encounter people like you.

EXAMPLES OF CHRIST’S CHARACTER

A few examples of the character of Christ will illustrate what we are to emulate, even for the already conscientious. Because we view Christ as the Light of the World, it is by His light that we should see everything else. Disciples are the real realists, whatever irreligionists may say or think.

Unlike God and Jesus, who are omniscient, you and I are often perplexed. We can be unsettled by the unexpected or made uneasy by the unknown. We surely need all of this added perspective! Furthermore, whereas Jesus paid the full price in order to ransom us, you and I may still hesitate over paying the full costs of discipleship, including developing the key attributes of a disciple.



Likewise, though Christ successfully resisted all temptations, we still dally, and we may take some temptations under advisement. No wonder the eloquence of His example is so powerful, for the scriptures say He “gave no heed” to temptation (see D&C 20:22).

We also tend to shrug off the persistent reminders of our sins of omission, as if our avoidance of the super sins of transgression and commission were enough. It is my opinion that in the realm of the sins of omission we can make more major, though quiet, progress than in any other place. That is particularly true of a conscientious people.

Love

Like His Father, Jesus exemplifies love perfectly. He so loved the Father and us that He meekly and submissively let His will be completely swallowed up in the will of the Father in order to accomplish the Atonement, including blessing billions and billions of us with the unmerited, universal resurrection. What He did is staggering to contemplate. No wonder He can help us along. He knows the way.

So profound and comprehensive is Christ’s love that even during His infinite suffering, He still noticed and nurtured finite sufferers who endured so much less anguish than He had to bear. For instance, He noticed and restored an assailant’s severed ear in the Garden of Gethsemane. On the cross, He directed John to take care of His mother, Mary. He comforted a thief on a nearby cross.

In contrast, when you and I let ourselves get stuck in the ooze of our own self-pity, we fail to notice the needs of others. With a little more effort, we can become a little more noticing and a little more nurturing. Let us reflect on our circles of love. Are they increasing in size, or are they static? What is the quality of our caring for those within those circles? Do we avoid lazy stereotyping? It’s so easy to deal with people as functions and stereotypes instead of as individuals. Are we lovingly patient with others who are also striving

to develop? Or do we, judgmentally and impatiently, constantly pull up the daisies to see how their roots are doing?

President Brigham Young (1801–77) declared of love, so fundamental to everything else: “There is one virtue [or] attribute, . . . which, if cherished and practiced by the Saints, would prove salvation to thousands upon thousands. I allude to charity, or love, from which proceed forgiveness, long suffering, kindness, and patience.”¹ All other virtues are derivatives and reflections of love!



Can we partake of our tiny bitter cups without becoming bitter? What a wonderful way for us to witness, especially to those we love the most!

Patience and Long-Suffering

Jesus likewise exemplifies perfect patience and long-suffering. Think of the implications of the Lord’s course, which, He tells us, “is one eternal round” (D&C 3:2). Routine and repetition may bother us, may bore us. But God and His Son, Jesus, are never bored with Their “one eternal round” because of Their perfect love. God is patient with us in process of time. He also helps by trying our patience and our faith (see 2 Thessalonians 1:4; James 1:3).

If left untried, those qualities, which are portable and eternal, would remain underdeveloped. There’s something about the isometrics that are involved when we’re putting off the natural man or the natural woman while striving to become the man or the woman of Christ. These isometrics are a blessing in disguise, though I grant you sometimes the blessing *is* well disguised.

As striving disciples, therefore, are we willing to be so mentored? Tutoringly, the Lord has said, “Ye cannot bear all things now; . . . I will lead you along” (D&C 78:18). He knows our bearing capacities. Though we ourselves may feel pushed to the breaking point, ere long, thanks to Him, these once-daunting challenges become receding milestones.

Even outstanding and courageous Jeremiah was once discouraged. Being mocked and persecuted, he briefly considered refraining from speaking out anymore. But then he said God’s word was “as a burning fire shut up in my

bones, . . . and I could not stay” (Jeremiah 20:9). Jeremiah reached a breaking point, but he did not break!

Meekness and Humility

Jesus also exemplifies meekness and humility. Though ever supernal in His achievements, Christ always, always gave the glory to the Father whether in the first, second, or now in the third estate. He was and is Lord of the universe, who under the direction of the Father created “worlds without number” (Moses 1:33). Yet He was willingly known as Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter’s son. He always knew who He was! He meekly partook of history’s most bitter cup without becoming bitter.

Can we, in turn, partake of our tiny bitter cups without becoming bitter? What a wonderful way for us to witness, especially to those we love the most! Can we overcome our drives for status and preeminence or our mundane desires merely to be one up on other people?

In the ebb and flow of life, can we meekly respond as did the preparer of the Way, John the Baptist? Unselfishly he said, “[Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

How about meekness in our marriages? Is the pronoun *me* yielding ever more often to the pronoun *we*? The vertical pronoun *I* is best used in such situations as “I love you,” “I care for you,” “I hear you.” Otherwise, *I* can be drenched in ego: “I demand,” “I want,” “I need.”

Seemingly small, positive adjustments can make large differences in process of time. In our families, in the Church, and in other relationships, will we stop letting yesterday hold tomorrow hostage? Will we reclassify others, knowing that forgetting is part of forgiving?

A DIFFICULT PROCESS

So we see that building character is the most difficult form of construction. It requires faith and patience, using

divinely given blueprints. There are also the overruns resulting from overcharged emotions. It’s not easy to be meekly resilient after experiencing failures. It’s not easy to retrofit by repentance, especially when our pride suggests that we are doing pretty well.

Likewise, it is ever tempting to try to use cheap, mortal substitutes instead of building Christlike character. The substitutes—such as cleverness instead of goodness and smoothness instead of substance—do not survive when the winds and the rains pound on crumbling foundations. Furthermore, when we follow shortcuts, there is that awful subsidence, or sinking. Hence we can fall! All serious discipleship, therefore, requires our serious remodeling.

Christ is characterized as the Rock for so many reasons. We will find no fissures in His foundation. He never disappoints us. He never falters. His love never fails. He never fails to bring to pass His purposes.

Brothers and sisters, you can follow Peter’s counsel: Cast all your cares upon

Christ, “for he careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7). Don’t be reluctant to do that. You may need to do it again and again. Christ told His disciples to catch a particular fish with a particular coin in its mouth in order to pay taxes, or tribute (see Matthew 17:27). Upon finding the fish, the disciples so did! Such incredible awareness about a single fish and a single coin should console us regarding the Master’s full awareness of the details in the lives of each of us.

So “we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ.” Why? So that those we love the most “may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26).

SEIZE THE DEFINING MOMENTS

A word now about our own families. Some of us are older; some are in mid-passage; others have yet to begin. Some of us are parents, and some, grandparents.



With a little more effort, we can become a little more noticing and a little more nurturing. Let us reflect on our circles of love. Are they increasing in size, or are they static?

So profound is Christ's love that even during His infinite suffering, He still nurtured finite sufferers who endured so much less anguish than He had to bear.

Grandparents have empty nests. Such emptyings are part of the plan, of course. Yet, since our flocks have left their nests, we find ourselves remembering and savoring precious days now irrevocably past. We listen in vain but with eager ears for children's voices we once thought too shrill, too constant—even irritating. Yet that cacophony of children, which we once called noise, was actually sweet sound, a sound we yearn to hear again if we but could.

For the rest of you now amid the cacophony, seize the defining moments. Make more Mary-like choices and show less Martha-like anxiety. What are calories anyway, compared to special conversations? Of course, meals need to be served and consumed, but the mentoring memories will not be taken from you.

HIS LOVE IS INESTIMABLE

Whether we are old or young, married or unmarried, and with full or empty nests, the love of atoning Jesus for us is simply inestimable! Mercifully, the Lord tells us, "Mine arm is lengthened out all the day long" (2 Nephi 28:32). He waits with open arms to receive us, and on a later day, says the prophet Mormon, we can be "clasped in the arms of Jesus" (Mormon 5:11).

Whatever the remaining distance between us and Him, it is ours to travel. The beckoning stepping-stones are there. You have come thus far by faith in Him, though you have "miles to go before [you] sleep,"² and your faith will take you even farther.

Please ponder this eloquent pleading to the Father. It is by the same Jesus who volunteered in the premortal world by saying meekly and simply, "Here am I, send me" (Abraham 3:27). Here are the pleading words:

"Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him—

"Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified;

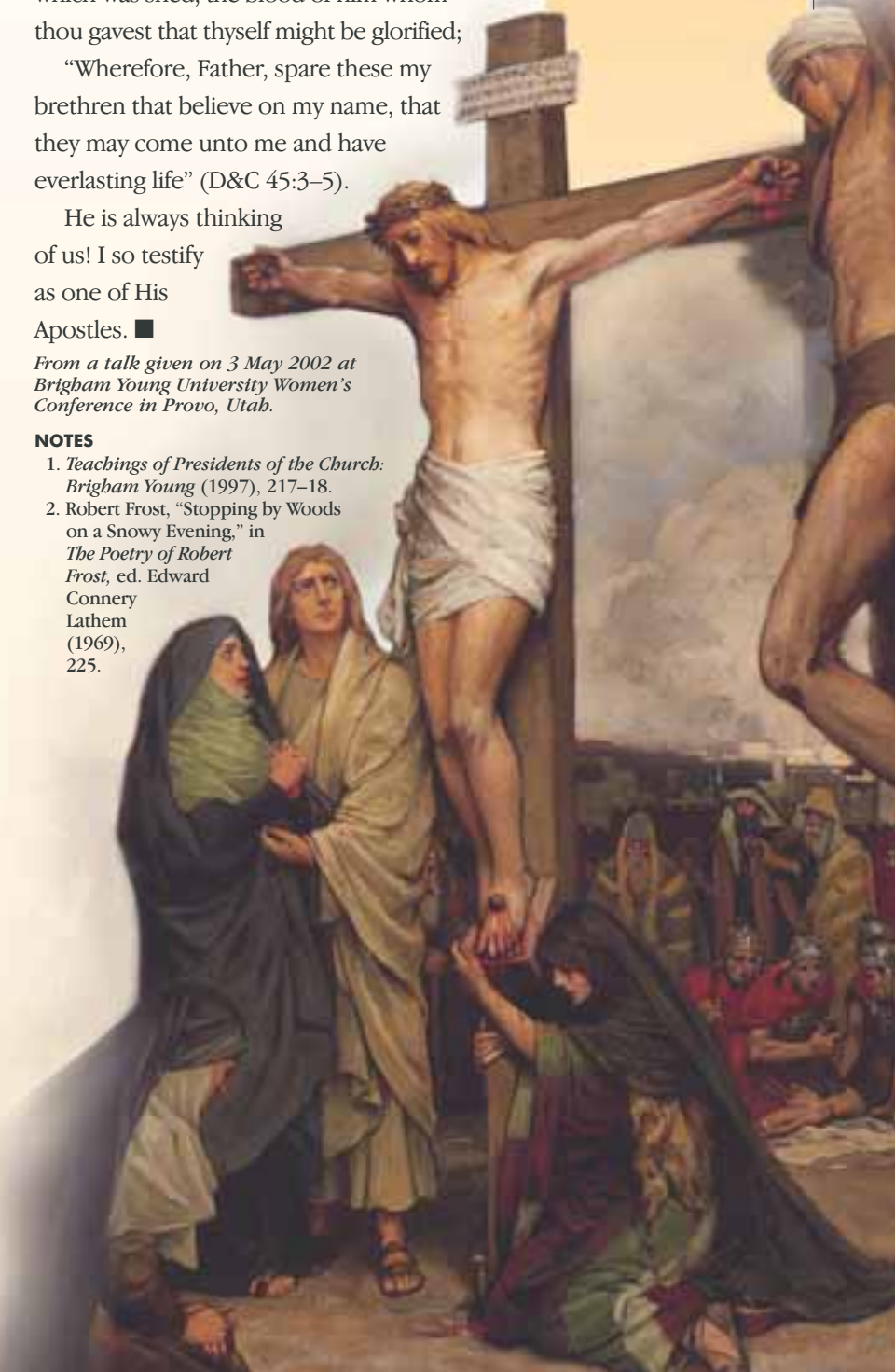
"Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life" (D&C 45:3–5).

He is always thinking of us! I so testify as one of His Apostles. ■

From a talk given on 3 May 2002 at Brigham Young University Women's Conference in Provo, Utah.

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 217–18.
2. Robert Frost, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," in *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, ed. Edward Connery Lathem (1969), 225.







Spiritually Born of God

BY ELDER ALEKSANDR N. MANZHOS

Area Authority Seventy
Europe East Area

On a cold winter day several years ago, I visited one of the branches in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine. It was fast Sunday, and we warmed ourselves in the glow of the testimonies borne in the poorly heated, rented space where we were meeting.

I especially recall the testimony of one sister whose inspired face I can still see in my mind. She was a single mother. She and her one-year-old child lived in the dormitory of the factory where she worked. Economic conditions were not good. Her wages were low and paid irregularly. Despair and then eventual hope in God brought her to the gospel.

Not long after her baptism, she was preparing food for herself and her child

Although faced with many challenges, one single mother bore inspired testimony of how baptism and faith in Jesus Christ changed her life, bringing her a certainty of a tranquil and happy future for her small family.

when a young woman who lived in the same building said: “I know things are difficult for you. Like me, you are a single mother, earning low wages, with no place of your own to live. There is little hope of a good future for yourself and your child. Like me, you have a gray, dull life. Like me, you fear for your child and the uncertainty of tomorrow. But why are you always smiling and your eyes always shining? Why does joy light up your face?”

The questions made this sister stop and think about the changes that had occurred since her baptism. As she gained faith in Jesus Christ, the fear that had corroded her life had disappeared. The path back to the Father that opened before her had permitted her to have hope, which had led her to baptism and developed within her a certainty of a tranquil and happy future for her small family. By receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, she had received a firm testimony. The false values of the world gradually gave way to the higher values of the gospel, and these higher values became a firm foundation for both thought and deed. She realized that it was precisely these



Through Alma’s revelation in Mosiah 27, we learn that to inherit eternal life, we must be spiritually born of God.



I asked the visitor, “What made you leave?” He explained that he was a poor man and felt he would not fit in with the members because they appeared to be rich. “Poor people cannot look so happy and content in this joyless life,” he said. I invited him to visit again and promised that the gospel had what he was looking for.

changes that had given her a new outlook on the world. Long-awaited joy and peace had come into her life.

Becoming Spiritually Born Again

I frequently recall that simple, humble testimony, full of the Spirit and the joy of the truth. It causes me to think that having repented and entered into the waters of baptism, we sometimes forget we have started on the path established for us by our Heavenly Father’s plan and made possible by the Savior’s great sacrifice. This choice is the starting point, not only for us, but for our future generations. Thus begin the rebirth and change of our existence in this life, opening the way to eternal life.

The Lord instructed Alma that all mankind “must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters; And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God” (Mosiah 27:25–26).

Sensing the Lord’s Spirit and feeling the powerful changes in our hearts—so much so that we no longer do evil but rather strive toward the godly—permit us to understand what it means to be born again, to be spiritually born of God. The deeper our understanding of this principle, the more carefully will we heed Alma’s warning: “Unless this be the case, they must be cast

off; and this I know, because I was like to be cast off” (Mosiah 27:27).

It is important for each person to recognize the danger of falling under the influence of carnal lusts, desires, appetites, and feelings more than under the influence of the Holy Ghost, because “if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him” (D&C 3:4).

Fear Not

Like so many in this world, we often ponder the meaning of our lives, our destinies, our futures, and our children’s futures. We seek answers to the questions that trouble us. How we rejoice when we learn of the Lord’s plan for us! We can be spiritually born again when we take upon us His name, are obedient to His commandments, and heed the power and influence of the Holy Ghost (see Mosiah 5:7).

Surprisingly, while pursuing the things of life, we sometimes artificially complicate the loving simplicity of His gospel.

That is why He commands us to be like children in the openness, sincerity, and simplicity of their perception of the world. The Lord tells us, “Fear not, little children, for you are mine” (D&C 50:41). The Savior calls upon us to believe in the light of the gospel that we might be children of light (see John 12:36). Mormon teaches that “if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ” (Moroni 7:19). Becoming like a child will bring rest into our lives and peace to our hearts.

A Rich Joy

At a recent sacrament meeting, a man came into the chapel and sat down near the entrance. His clothes were

untidy; his face was unshaven. He appeared somewhat uncomfortable, and I guessed this was his first visit to our branch. He seemed more interested in the furniture around him than in the meeting. This disappointed me because the talks that day were especially uplifting. When he left before the meeting was over, I followed him out. After a short greeting, I simply asked, “What made you leave?”

After a moment, he replied: “I am a very poor man, and the conditions of my life cause me a lot of suffering. I am looking for sympathy and compassion, and when I heard that good people attend your church, I decided to stop by. But I can see that your church is for the rich, and I probably will not find what I am looking for among those people.”

I was very surprised by his answer. The people in our branch are far from rich, and some of them have struggled with need and poverty for a long time. “What made you think that?” I asked him.

At first, his answer discouraged me. “They are so neatly dressed; they are quiet, and their children smile all of the

time. Poor people cannot look so happy and content in this joyless life.” Then I invited him to visit us again and promised that if he would investigate the restored gospel, he would find what he was looking for.

Subsequently, as I reflected on our branch, I realized that the man was right. We truly are not poor people because we do not feel that we are. And although need sometimes knocks at our door, we are at peace. We truly are rich because of our faith in Jesus Christ, our knowledge, our families, and our Church. The Lord has blessed us with the eternal riches of a spiritual rebirth and the promise of a future with Him: “Mine eyes are upon you, and the heavens and the earth are in mine hands, and the riches of eternity are mine to give” (D&C 67:2). ■

ALMA THE YOUNGER, BY SCOTT SNOW



The Lord instructed Alma that all mankind “must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters.”

MY QUEST TO FORGIVE

*Though I had been abused as a child,
I realized that by failing to forgive I brought
unnecessary suffering on myself.*

NAME WITHHELD

While I was a young child, my dad sexually abused me. I lived with this awful secret until I was 21 years old. I never told anyone. My dad, a violent man, threatened me, and I was afraid of what he would do. I thought my mom would leave my dad and wouldn't be able to take care of our big family. My mother and siblings were the only lifeline I had, and I couldn't bear the thought of life without them. I also thought I was the only person in the world who had been treated this way. I constantly watched how I acted and what I said for fear that somehow, someday, someone would find out. All of this was a heavy burden to carry.

My mom was a Latter-day Saint, and my dad was an atheist. This caused some major challenges in our home and in my personal life. I was torn between two worlds—my mother and Primary teachers taught me about a Father in Heaven who

cared about me, but my dad treated me in a way I knew was wrong. I became very confused and worried. However, I learned that I could pray to Father in Heaven and tell Him anything. He would listen, and no one else would know what I said. I began praying for help and comfort. I knew I was never alone.

When I was eight years old, the missionaries taught my brothers and me the gospel. We were baptized shortly after that. When I came out of the water I felt so clean and pure

that it literally took my breath away. I felt so glad to be a child of God, and I was so happy. I'll always cherish that moment. I didn't want to leave and go home because I knew that when I saw my dad I would lose all those wonderful feelings.

When I became a teenager, I desperately wanted to tell my branch president about my situation, but I felt I couldn't. I didn't want to tell

FORGIVING OTHERS



"To forgive one who is mean and offensive is the act of one near to perfection."

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985),
The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, ed.
Edward L. Kimball (1982), 204.



my district president since I felt comfortable around him, and I couldn't bear the thought of him treating me differently. So I just kept my feelings to myself.

My dad was betraying my mom, and he was making me lie to her too. I hated not only him but also myself. I thought of myself as a dirty person with no self-worth. Although I knew what was happening was wrong, I didn't know how to correct it. I had very few friends, and I mistakenly felt that Heavenly Father was upset with me.

Gaining Strength

It wasn't until I moved away from home that I really started to gain the strength I needed to tell someone. But I didn't know whom to tell. The Lord prepared a way. When the missionaries came over one night, we had a wonderful discussion about patriarchal blessings, and I felt a sudden urgency to get mine right away. The Holy Ghost prompted me that when the mission president interviewed me for my patriarchal blessing, I could tell him. The closer it came to my interview, the more my fears increased, yet the more

determined I became to tell the mission president.

As I met with President Brown (name has been changed), he started to ask me the questions about my worthiness. When I told him what had happened to me at home, I was shocked at his response. Somehow I was expecting to be lectured to, but President Brown listened empathetically to me with tears in his eyes. I will never forget that tender moment.

Turning It Over to the Lord

When he asked me if I felt worthy to go to the temple, I told him, "Oh, I can never go there." He dropped his pen, looked me in the eye, and said ever so softly, "Sister, why not?" I looked at him dumbfounded. I told him, "I'll never be clean enough to go there. I'm filthy." He told me, "No, *you* are not filthy. What *happened to you* is filthy, but that is *not* your fault. You can go to the temple one day and be married." I was so shocked by those words. It wasn't my fault, and someday I could go to the temple! That idea held so much hope for me.

President Brown will never know the impact he had on my life that day with his soft-spoken words. I could feel the awful weight of guilt being lifted from my shoulders, and I left the interview crying tears of joy. I was overjoyed that I had listened to the Spirit and had been guided to President Brown.

Temple Marriage

Within the next two years I was married in the temple, just as my patriarchal blessing and my mission president had promised me. My wedding day was a bittersweet one for me—I was elated to enter the house of the Lord to be sealed for eternity, but I was scared to be alone with my sweetheart for the first time.

I had not told my husband about my past abuse. During my interview with President Brown, I had asked him if I needed to tell my future husband about the abuse. He said it would be up to me, so I decided not to tell. I felt too ashamed and scared my future husband wouldn't love me anymore. I prayed that things would work out.

Then one morning after we had been married about a year, my husband and I were sitting in our living room with our baby son. My husband told me my mother had called and shared with him that she had just found out my father had abused me. My heart dropped.

I looked carefully at my sweet husband to see his reaction to this awful news. He just sat there calmly, looked at me tenderly, and asked me to tell him about it. As I told him, he cried with me. I could see he still loved me. He was hurt that I hadn't told him before but grateful that now he could give me emotional and spiritual support. I loved him so much at that moment.

Cast Your Burden on the Lord

Knowing that the Savior sacrificed His life for us played an important part in helping me be able to forgive my dad. I knew of the mistreatment the Savior had endured, and yet as He hung on the cross He begged His Father to forgive those who had harmed Him. This was a powerful example to me.

I also learned from the scriptures:

“Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

“I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men” (D&C 64:9–10).

That put things in perspective for me. Suddenly, I was more afraid of losing my Savior's forgiveness than of doing what had to be done to forgive my dad.

I knew Jesus Christ had taken upon Himself the sins of the world, including the sins of abuse. He willingly suffered for people like me. I felt I was letting Him down by going through life being miserable, hurt, and distrustful and by harboring feelings of hatred and anger toward my dad.

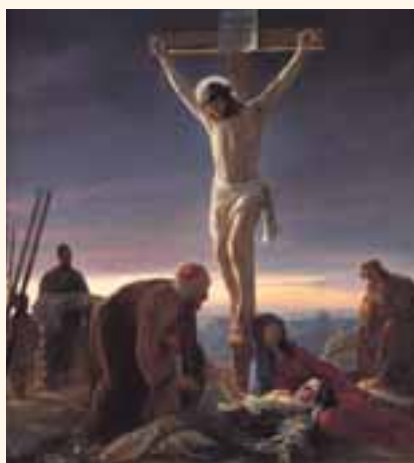
I realized that if I failed to forgive, I would continue to bring suffering on myself. So I put my trust in the Lord and went to Him in prayer. I asked Him to help me forgive my dad because I didn't need to carry that burden anymore. I could turn it over to the Lord and let it all go.



ADVERSITY

“If only we would look beyond our present suffering and see our struggles as a temporary chrysalis. If only we would have the faith and trust in our Heavenly Father to see how, after a little season, . . . we can emerge from our trials more refined and glorious.”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Finding a Safe Harbor,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 60.



THE CRUCIFIXION, BY CARL HENRICH BLOCH



Seeing My Dad

I quickly learned that it was one thing for me to say I forgave my dad when he lived many miles away and I rarely saw him, and another thing to actually see him in person. Now I had a daughter of my own, and I was suddenly afraid for her. I wasn't sure how to act when we visited my dad. Once again I knelt in prayer and turned to the scriptures. I came to realize that I did not need to keep company with a person who had sinned a grievous sin and not repented. So I decided to treat my dad civilly but that would be the extent of the relationship. When I came home I would talk to him politely and treat him cordially. Nevertheless, I continue to keep my daughter next to my side whenever he is around, and he is aware of what I am doing.

Today my dad and I have a simple relationship. That's enough for now. I did not go to him and say, "I forgive you," but he knows that I don't hate him. Do I trust him? No. Do

Christ willingly suffered for people like me. *I felt I was letting Him down by going through life being miserable, hurt, and distrustful and by harboring feelings of hatred and anger toward my dad.*

I hate him? No. Do I think what he did was right? No, but I leave all those feelings back in the years when the abuse happened. This is now, and I don't want to let what has happened in the past destroy my life or my family's life today. I have gained confidence, feel happy, and enjoy life to its fullest.

I have learned that if we have a forgiving heart, we can overlook and forget the offense. President Gordon B. Hinckley urges us "to stand a little taller, rise a little higher, and be a little better."¹ I know that when we forgive, we truly can stand a little taller, rise a little higher, and be a little better. As a result, I have made the Savior an integral part of my life, and my hatred for my father has been replaced with the sweet, peaceful feeling that comes from forgiveness. ■

NOTE

1. "Come, Listen to a Prophet's Voice: Excellence," *Friend*, Nov. 2003, 2. *More on this topic:* Ann F. Pritt, "Healing the Spiritual Wounds of Sexual Abuse," *Ensign*, Apr. 2001, 58; "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102; Richard G. Scott, "Making the Right Choices," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 38; Maxine Murdock, "Hope and Healing," *Ensign*, Jan. 1993.



ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL MANN

LESSONS ON HEALING

BY ELAINE S. MARSHALL

Dean of Brigham Young University College of Nursing

I remember the first day I set out to practice healing. I could hardly sleep the night before I began working as a qualified nurse. Two conflicting feelings left my heart pounding. First, I felt courage and couldn't wait to perform my first procedure. On the other hand, I was afraid that by sheer inexperience I would violate my promise to "do no harm." I carefully pulled on my support hose, white nylon dress, and ugly prescription shoes.

My crowning glory was the starched white cap that held my long hair tucked tightly beneath. I couldn't wait. I wanted to cure; I wanted to care; I wanted to heal.

I have learned a lot about healing since that day. I have learned that healing is a process of restoring and becoming whole. And I have come to realize that the process involved in physical healing mirrors in many ways the spiritual healing we all require at difficult times in our lives. Through caring for my patients and enduring my own heartaches, I have learned six lessons about "the healer's art."¹

Healing Hurts

First, healing hurts. When I was a young nurse in the hospital, hardly a day went by that a patient did not ask, "Will it hurt?" If I had been truthful, the whispered answer

would nearly always have been, "Yes, it will hurt." I have learned that healing hurts. Life hurts. Healing really begins only when we face the hurt in its full force and then grow through it with all the strength of our soul. For every reward of learning and growing, some degree of pain is always the price. Author M. Scott Peck suggests that if you do not want love or pain, you "must do without many things."² I think you would do without friendship, dating, working, getting married, or having children.

Sometime in your life you will know a crashing crisis or heavy heartache that will threaten all sense of logic or hope or certainty, from which, no matter how you emerge, nothing will ever be the same. Hurts come as unique losses, unwelcome surprises, fading hope, or grief.

You may not get your first choice in school or career. Perhaps that special person did not have the same "revelation" you think you had. Maybe this is the best you will ever look. Maybe someone you counted on didn't help or support you. Perhaps someone in your past hurt you deeply. I know that pain. I also live a little of every day waiting for heaven to see my son and mother again. Last year two of my nursing students lost their fathers. I imagine that no success in school or career or life will be quite the same for them.

Some of us suffer the wrenching consequences of sin

Each of us may come to know the Master Healer, partake of the gift of the Atonement, and learn "the healer's art."

or just poor judgment. You may now be entangled in activities with others—or perhaps on the Internet—that you wish you had never started. Or you may have fallen into a trap of debt. We hurt when we see our own failures or helplessly watch the unwise decisions of others. Our lives are changed forever not only by the pain but by facing our need to heal.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles warned:

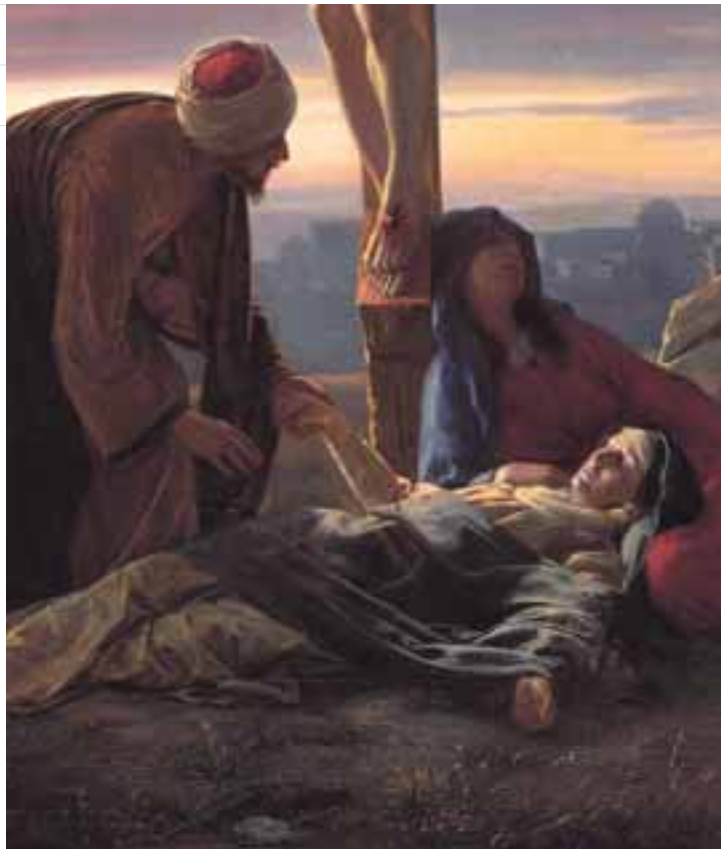
“The world around you is an increasingly hostile and sinful place. Occasionally that splashes onto us, and perhaps, in the case of a few of you, it may be nearly drowning you. . . .

“ . . . You can change. You can be helped. You can be made whole—whatever the problem. All he asks is that you *walk away from the darkness and come into the light*, his light, with meekness and lowliness of heart. . . . Christ has ‘borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows,’ Isaiah declared, ‘and with his stripes we are healed’—if we want to be (Isaiah 53:4–5).”³

We can partake of the healing offered through the Atonement of our Savior, who promised, “I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee” (2 Kings 20:5; see also 3 Nephi 18:32).

Healing Is Active

My second lesson is that healing is active—you have to participate. Your friend, your husband or wife, your mother cannot do it for you. You have to face the problem and the pain. To begin healing, you must acknowledge and *feel* the hurt. Only those who don’t feel, those without conscience, cannot heal.



My mother told me of an experience she had one winter morning as she drove to check the cattle in the lower pasture. She noticed a car off the side of the road. Inside she recognized a young mother and three children. When my mother asked if they needed help, the woman tearfully reminded her that this was the place of the accident that killed her husband two weeks earlier. She said, “We are just here to feel the hurt.”

On that first day as a nurse, I assumed cure and healing to be synonymous. I have learned they are not necessarily the same. Cure is clean, quick, and done—often under anesthesia. The antibiotic kills the pathogen; the scalpel cuts out the malignancy; the medication resolves the distorted chemistry. But healing may involve a lifelong process of recovery and growth in spite of—perhaps because of—enduring physical, emotional, or spiritual assault. It often requires time. We may pray for cure when we really need healing. Whether for cell reconstruction, for nerve and muscle rehabilitation, for emotional recovery, or for spiritual forgiveness, healing can require work and time and energy.

Healing Is Private

My third lesson is that healing is private. The hymn “Lord, I Would Follow Thee” describes “hidden sorrow” in a “quiet heart.”⁴ Saint-Exupéry wrote, “It is such a secret place, the land of tears.”⁵

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“There is, in the suffering of the highest order, a point that is reached—a point of aloneness—when the

individual (as did the Savior on a much grander scale) must bear it . . . alone. Even the faithful may wonder if they can take any more or if they are in some way forsaken.

“Those who . . . stand on the foot of the cross often can do so little to help absorb the pain and the anguish. It is something we must bear ourselves in order that our triumph can be complete.”⁶

Private healing is not healing by abandonment. Healing is not only private, it is sacred. There is something so sacred about partaking of the power of the Atonement to overcome suffering, disappointment, or sin that it happens in the privacy of that special relationship between the mortal and the divine. Healing involves a private, personal communion with the Savior, the Master Healer. It inspires a very personal reverence and awe. While on the earth, Jesus often began the healing process in private and then departed. He often charged, “See thou tell no man; but go thy way” (Matthew 8:4; see also Luke 8:56).

To say that healing is private is not to diminish the marvelous power that comes from the help and compassion of others. Indeed, private healing often may not happen without the help of others. Nevertheless, much of the work of healing is done alone, inside the heart, in the company of the Spirit of the Lord.

Such secret healing is not a single event. It happens as a process of living. You cannot simply take a day off and return healed. It happens quietly, while you face the pain, and over time as you live, work, study, and give to others.

Healing Teaches Us

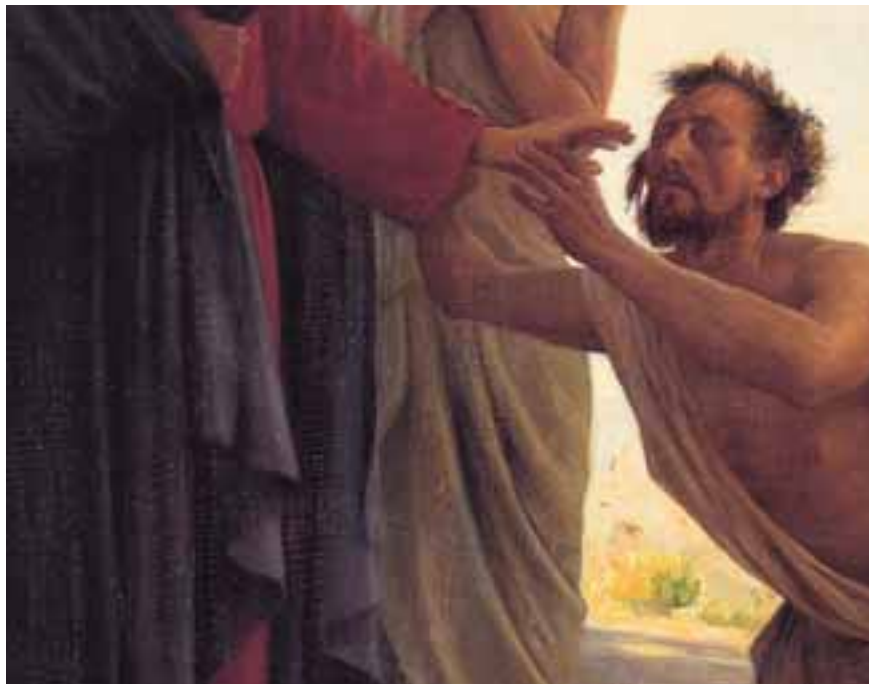
The fourth lesson of the healer’s art is that healing teaches us. When we have a terrible loss or pain, we may seek to get back to normal or to the way things were before, but they will never be the same. Pain changes us but not in the same way healing teaches us. Healing can help us become more sensitive and more awake to life.

Healing inspires repentance and obedience. Healing invites gifts of humility and faith. It opens our hearts to the profound complexities of truth, beauty, divinity, and grace.

Elder Orson F. Whitney (1855–1931) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote: “No pain that we suffer . . . is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of . . . patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer . . . , especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more



Healing involves a private, personal communion with the Savior, the Master Healer. It inspires a very personal reverence and awe.



LEFT: DETAIL FROM JESUS HEALING THE BLIND, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERÖD, DENMARK; ABOVE: PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE BUNDERSON

worthy to be called the children of God . . . and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we [came] here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven.”⁷

We Must Help Others Heal

The fifth lesson of learning the healer’s art is the obligation and great gift it is to help others heal. President Gordon B.

Hinckley has admonished: “As members of the Church of Jesus Christ, ours is a ministry of healing, with a duty to bind the wounds and ease the pain of those who suffer. Upon a world afflicted with greed and contention, upon families distressed by argument and selfishness, upon individuals burdened with sin and troubles and sorrows, I invoke the healing power of Christ.”⁸

Every day someone in your path is hurting, someone is afraid, someone feels inadequate, or someone needs a friend. Someone needs you to notice, to reach out, and to help him or her to heal. You may not know who that is at the time, but you can give encouragement and hope. You can help heal wounds of misunderstanding and contention. You can serve “in the cause of the Master Healer.”⁹

Healing Is a Divine Gift

The last and greatest lesson of healing is that it is a divine gift always available from a loving Heavenly Father. If you have a pain or sorrow or disappointment or sin or just a grudge that needs healing, the Savior simply says, “Come unto me.”

For a few weeks, I studied the scriptures by reading only the accounts of Jesus’ healing. I have been humbled and



amazed at how much of the Lord’s mission on this earth was devoted to healing. When Jesus called and ordained the Twelve, He specifically gave them the power to heal (see Matthew 10:1; Mark 3:14–15) and instructed them to go about using their gifts “freely” (see Matthew 10:8).

As Jesus healed, the scriptures say, “All the people were amazed” (Matthew 12:23). They brought their sick, their

“blind and dumb” (Matthew 12:22), those that were “possessed with a devil” (Matthew 12:22; see also Mark 1:32), and their dead. So great were His reputation and His healing power that they sought to “only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole” (Matthew 14:36). “Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching . . . and preaching the gospel . . . , and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matthew 9:35).

When Nephi was shown the vision of his father, Lehi, he saw the multitudes and the sick who were “healed by the power of the Lamb of God” (1 Nephi 11:31). When the Savior appeared in the Americas, He healed “every one as they were brought forth unto him” (3 Nephi 17:9).

President Hinckley has promised: “Jesus of Nazareth healed the sick among whom He moved. His regenerating power is with us today. . . . His divine teachings, His incomparable example, His matchless life, His all-encompassing sacrifice will bring healing to broken hearts, reconciliation to those who argue and shout, even peace to warring nations if sought with humility and forgiveness and love.”¹⁰

“We make solemn covenants based on Christ’s atoning sacrifice, and . . . we take upon us his name,” Elder Holland

LEFT: DETAIL FROM CHRIST RAISING THE DAUGHTER OF JARUS, BY GREG OLSEN

reminds us. “In as many ways as possible, both figuratively and literally, we try to take upon us his identity. We seek out his teachings and retell his miracles. We send latter-day witnesses . . . around the world to declare his message. We call ourselves his children, and we testify that he is the only source of eternal life. We plead for him to swing open the gates of heaven in our behalf and trust everlastingly that he will, based upon our faithfulness.”¹¹

Each of us may come to know the Master Healer, partake of the gift of the Atonement, and learn the healer’s art. I know He lives, the Savior, the Master Healer, the One “with healing in his wings” (Malachi 4:2). ■

From a devotional address given on 8 October 2002 at Brigham Young University—Provo. Elaine S. Marshall is a member of the Pleasant View Fifth Ward, Provo Utah Sharon East Stake.

NOTES

1. “Lord, I Would Follow Thee,” *Hymns*, no. 220.
2. *The Road Less Traveled* (1978), 133.
3. “Come unto Me,” in *Brigham Young University 1996–97 Speeches* (1997), 189.
4. *Hymns*, no. 220.
5. *The Little Prince*, trans. Katherine Woods (1943), 28.
6. *All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience* (1979), 43.
7. In Alma P. Burton and Clea M. Burton, eds., *For They Shall Be Comforted* (1964), 9.
8. “The Healing Power of Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 59.
9. *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 52.
10. *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 59.
11. *Speeches*, 188.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Invite family members to think about or share memories of when they needed healing (emotionally, spiritually, or physically). What did they or others do to help the healing? What did the Lord do? Read the last section of this article and bear testimony of the power of the Atonement in your life.

2. Discuss the different ways we can experience pain in this life. List the six lessons the author learned about healing. Read each section and discuss how believing and living each lesson could help draw us closer to the Master Healer.

3. Using the scriptures, the Topical Guide, and this article, find a story from the life of Jesus Christ that illustrates each of the six lessons. What can we learn from the Savior about “the healer’s art”?



If you have a pain or sorrow or sin or just a grudge that needs healing, the Savior simply says, “Come unto me.”



LEFT: O. JERUSALEM, © 1995 GREG OLSEN, DO NOT COPY; ABOVE: ILLUSTRATED BY DOUG FRER

PRINCIPLES

HELPING MARRIAGE SURVIVE UNEMPLOYMENT

NAME WITHHELD

After 30 years of steady employment, my husband lost his job, and we suddenly faced a new set of challenges and strains on our marriage.

Several years ago my husband was called into his manager's office and given notice of termination, effective that moment. Jim (name has been changed) had been employed by a large computer firm. "One of the most secure jobs in the nation," we had thought when he hired on as a manufacturing engineer 26 years earlier. But two years before his layoff, we had begun to hear rumors of "downsizing." We survived the first two series of layoffs, but then our time ran out. My husband, at age 55, was unemployed.

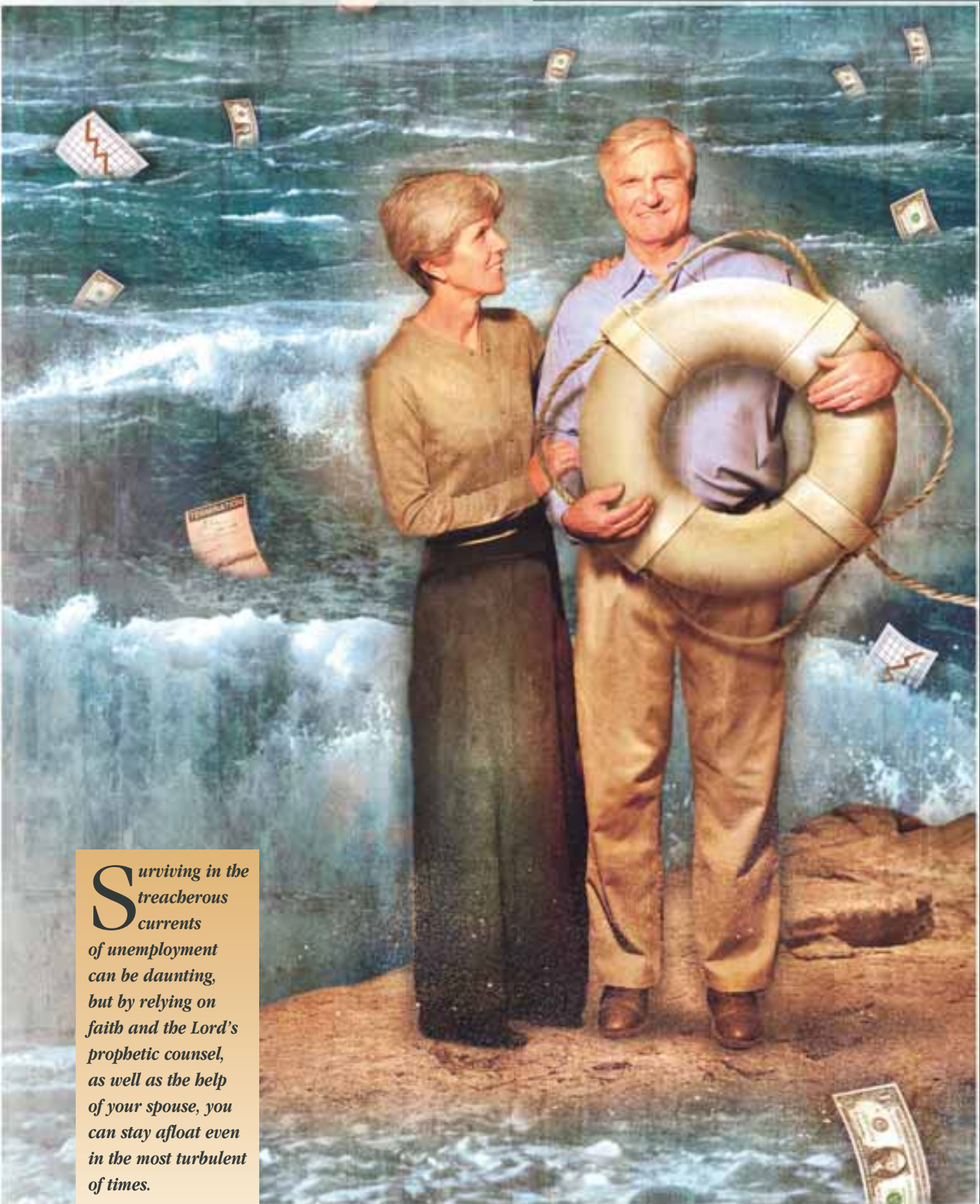
The shock of unemployment to Jim, as breadwinner of our family, had many dimensions. First there was the sheer adjustment of not having to get up and go to work after more than 30 years of employment. Then there were the physical ramifications, as stress, embarrassment, and worry took their toll. Eating and sleeping patterns became disrupted. Jim also found it hard to interact with ward members and other acquaintances. Social relations often became

uncomfortable. "I felt I had lost part of my identity," Jim said. "When you are in a group of people, conversation almost always starts by someone asking what you do for a living."

In the months that followed, Jim did the most obvious things: prepare résumés, register with the Church and state employment agencies, respond to newspaper ads, and check the temporary agencies. We prayed a lot.

We counseled together and took inventory of our resources. With his termination, Jim had been given some retirement and severance pay. We had savings and investments and food storage. How grateful I am we had followed the counsel of the Brethren to save for emergencies. Things could have been worse. Still, the added stress and frustration of being out of work affected both of us. In addition, I had taken a sabbatical leave from my school teaching job that year, so we did not have that income to rely on.

Time passed. Engineering jobs with my husband's



Surviving in the treacherous currents of unemployment can be daunting, but by relying on faith and the Lord's prophetic counsel, as well as the help of your spouse, you can stay afloat even in the most turbulent of times.

ACCEPT INTERIM EMPLOYMENT



“Periods of unexpected unemployment can happen to anyone. We should not allow ourselves, when

we are out of work, to sit back and wait for ‘our type of job’ if other honorable interim employment becomes available.”

Elder Marvin J. Ashton, “Guide to Family Finance,” Liahona, Apr. 2000, 47.

experience were scarce, so we began to explore new options. What were Jim’s other interests and abilities? For years he had been interested in finance. He decided to take a tax class. Tax season was approaching and the temporary income, however small, could give him something to work at while he assessed other possibilities.

I never loved Jim more than on the day he received his first paycheck as a tax preparer. It was barely above minimum wage. He showed me the check

and began to chuckle. A sense of humor can help in many tense situations.

Putting our trust in Heavenly Father, we continued to pray and

explore options. At

about that time I learned of a colleague at the elementary school where I had worked who

was going to take maternity leave

the second half of the school year. I contacted the school about possibly returning from my

sabbatical to fill the position. I sighed with relief when my request was approved.

Meanwhile Jim interviewed for available accounting positions. Time after time he was passed over for positions he seemed well qualified to hold. I began to worry about the demoralizing effect of this on his usual optimism. It was the subject of many fervent prayers on my part. Then one day I had lunch with an acquaintance. She knew of our situation and said, “Your husband may not

be interested in this, but my church is looking for an accountant.”

Jim had served as both ward and stake financial clerks, so we recognized this as an immediate answer to our prayers. Jim applied and was hired for this part-time job. The pay was meager, but the experience and interaction with

the wonderful people of that large denominational church was a welcome blessing to Jim’s sense of self-worth.

Since Jim was working only part time, he was able to take some accounting and engineering classes to increase his experience and update his expertise. Two and a half years later, his résumé attracted the attention of an engineering firm that manufactured medical equipment. He was hired, and a little more than a year later he was promoted to project manager.

Our story was certainly not the worst-case scenario and it had a happy ending, but this does not minimize the stress that losing a job placed on our lives and on our marriage. Looking back on our experience, we have identified seven important lessons learned while dealing with the strains of unemployment:

1 EXERCISE FAITH



2 PREPARE IN ADVANCE



3 USE ALL RESOURCES



Exercise faith. Though it took two and a half years for our crisis to be resolved, the Lord guided us to opportunities that made us grow. During that time we were also mindful of the blessings tithing brings. We continued to pay our tenth on earnings, no matter how small. We counted on the promise of Malachi that our vine would not cast its fruit before its time (see Malachi 3:10–11).

Prepare in advance for possible unemployment. Because we had followed prophetic counsel, our savings, investments, and food storage prevented a feeling of panic—something that can be extremely harmful to a marriage. Our reserves enabled Jim to pay tuition to further his education.

Use all resources. Be willing to explore many options. Some of the other men who lost their jobs when Jim did were unable to adjust their thinking to include options other than the kind of job they had been accustomed to. Months of frustration resulted. Jim's willingness to try new things kept him busy and his focus away from despair.

Take time to nourish your marriage relationship. The spouse of an unemployed person must be

sensitive to the trauma that losing a job can be. Resist criticism and the impulse to “fix” things. Unemployment is a problem both partners must work out together through praying and counseling and encouraging.

Develop new skills. Jim kept adding to his pool of skills by taking classes. A class he took in computer-



5 DEVELOP NEW SKILLS

assisted design was a key in landing him a new engineering job in the end.

Take time to do fun things. Jim felt that even though our budget was limited we needed to take time to do some fun things: a walk in the park, a picnic, going out for ice cream. They don't have to be big things; just enjoying time spent together is beneficial. This did a lot to help distract us from our preoccupation with the lack of

gainful employment.

Keep your sense of humor. Jim's willingness to see the humor of a difficult situation—as when he was able to chuckle over his small paycheck—helped us both keep our perspective.

Unemployment is a traumatic experience for any family. We would not have chosen it “for our



6 DO FUN THINGS TOGETHER

growth” or “to make us humble,” but both of these things were products of the experience.

Our marriage is stronger for having relied on the Lord as we worked together through the problems and stresses of unemployment. ■



7 KEEP A SENSE OF HUMOR



4 NOURISH YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Christamae's Courage

By Christine Zimpel

Christamae, my oldest daughter, suffers from muscular dystrophy. And although for several years she was able to get about without a walker or wheelchair, she moved awkwardly and fell easily.

When she was eight years old, she had a part in the children's sacrament meeting presentation. Christamae loves to get attention, and she was very excited about saying her part. I had helped her with her talk, and I remember feeling very strongly that what she was saying would be profoundly important. She was speaking about what Jesus Christ's sacrifice meant for her. "Because He loved me so much and was so very brave," she practiced, "I can be forgiven when I repent. And someday when I am resurrected, I will have a strong, healthy body."

On the day of the program I watched anxiously as she stood to go

to the pulpit, her face wreathed in smiles and her eyes twinkling. Then on her way to the stand, Christamae fell face first to the floor. I knew she would be unable to stand without help, but a

loving Primary teacher quickly came to her aid. As she lifted my daughter to her own shoulder and comforted her, I was grateful there were loving arms around Christamae. I nearly went to get her, but the Spirit reminded me of the importance of the message she had to give. I also knew that she would be disappointed in herself if she did not stand and say her part.



ILLUSTRATED BY BRIAN CALL

As her tear-filled eyes met mine across the chapel, I saw that she was deeply embarrassed but she seemed unhurt. At that moment, in a very small way, I felt I could relate to our Heavenly Father's suffering while His Son performed His mission of sacrifice. While I choked back my own tears, I mouthed to her to go on and give her talk; everything would be OK.

I could barely believe her courage as she stood at the microphone and delivered her talk in a clear voice. Nearly every eye filled with tears as she spoke of her gratitude to the Savior for the strong body she would someday have. I learned through this experience that some missions cannot be accomplished in healthy bodies. The message she gave that day just wouldn't have had the same impact if it had been given by someone else.

This lesson was an especially important one for me, since Christamae has a sister with the same condition and I too suffer from a mild form of muscular dystrophy. On that special day Christamae's courage taught us about the ultimate miracle of Jesus Christ's Atonement and Resurrection. ■

Christine Zimpel is a member of the Ceres Second Ward, Turlock California Stake.

On her way to the stand, Christamae fell face first to the floor. A loving Primary teacher quickly came to her aid.

I Had Never Felt Such Joy

By Daniel S. Hidalgo

Some time ago I went into a flower shop and started talking to the owner about the plants he was selling, and we exchanged ideas about the different ways of growing them. After that, each time I worked in that area, I would go into this shop and talk to the owner about his work and mine, until little by little I began to talk to him about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I started by talking about God and sharing what I felt about Him. Diego, the owner of the flower business, told me he didn't believe in Jesus Christ; he just believed in an entity who had the power to create all things. This surprised me, and I told him I wanted to give him something that was very important to me—the Book of Mormon. I also told him I wanted to introduce him to the missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Diego agreed. I set up the appointment, and later the missionaries went to his business. After he had received three discussions, he invited the missionaries to his home.

At this time my work area changed, but one day I happened to run into the missionaries who were teaching Diego. I asked about him and tried to find out what kind of progress he was making. They told me he was going to

be baptized, but they didn't know when. A week later I learned that Diego's family had been baptized, except for his daughter Carla. I was happy to hear about their decision. My contact had borne fruit.

Two weeks later at a stake meeting, I heard about a convert named Diego Páez who had recently been baptized and who was very enthusiastic about the Church. Later the mission president told me they were going to confirm him on Sunday.

The following Sunday I went to Diego's ward and saw him sitting with his family on one of the pews. I sat down next to him, and he smiled and said, "Thank you, Daniel."

When Diego sat in the chair where the elders quorum president would confirm him a member of the Church, I was invited to join the circle. I did so, and when the elders quorum president said the words "Receive the Holy Ghost," I too could feel the influence of the Spirit. My heart beat hard, and peace completely overwhelmed me.

I had never felt such joy. When Diego stood up, I embraced him. Tears sprang from my eyes. I felt strengthened, as described in Doctrine and Covenants 50:22: "Wherefore, he that preacheth and



he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together.”

As for Diego’s daughter Carla, she was baptized the following week by her father. The Páez family has continued to progress. Milagros, who was three years old at the time of the baptisms, kneels down and says prayers with her parents, asking Heavenly Father to bless her family. Diego and his wife, Gabriela, work to share the gospel with others.

There must be a lot of Páez families all over the world—just waiting for someone to bring the light of truth to their lives. What a joy it is to share what we feel for the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be able to help others feel the way we do. ■

Daniel S. Hidalgo is a member of the Trapiche Ward, Godoy Cruz Argentina Stake.

Not Enough Bread

By Evelyn B. Caesar

I can still remember the storm that first Sunday of September 1989. I was living in the Cadiz Ward of the Cadiz Philippines Stake. The skies filled with great, black clouds, and rain poured down.

Sacrament meeting started punctually at 9:00 A.M. I looked around the chapel and saw that most of the benches were empty. In fact, only five people were in attendance. It was hard for the members to get to church in the rain, especially those who lived far away.

A few more people filtered in while we were singing the opening

The members began to flood in. The two brethren at the sacrament table knew that no matter how they broke the bread, there wasn’t going to be enough.

hymn. More continued to arrive while the names of new ward members were being read.

When we began to sing the sacrament hymn, I looked around again. I was surprised to see an unusually large congregation of about 100 people. I looked at the two brethren breaking the bread for the sacrament. Something was troubling them—I could tell by the looks on their faces. The hymn ended, and one man knelt

to offer the blessing on the bread.

To my surprise, after the prayer the men at the sacrament table did not proceed immediately. Their heads remained bowed for a moment. Then they started handing the trays to the Aaronic Priesthood holders. The young men also had sober looks on their faces as they accepted the trays. I didn't know what was wrong, but I closed my eyes and said a silent prayer too.

After the sacrament had been passed, the bishop gave the members time to bear their testimonies. The first person to come to the pulpit was one of the men who had blessed the sacrament. He spoke of the great love God has for all His children. I felt my bosom burn within me as I listened. I was filled with joy and gratitude for my testimony that God lives and that He does love us.

This speaker was followed by his companion at the sacrament table. In an emotional voice, he told us that we had witnessed a miracle that day. He explained that the bishop had brought only two small rolls of bread for the sacrament. Since the rains were heavy, he probably expected the congregation to be smaller than normal.

Then the members began to flood in. The two men knew that no matter how they broke the bread, there wasn't going to be enough. So after the sacrament prayer, they said another prayer and told the Lord there were only about 40 pieces of

bread to serve 100 people or more. They asked for divine intervention.

Then the bread was passed to the people. The two brethren watched carefully as every person desiring to do so partook of the sacrament. There was enough for all.

As we learned what had happened, the congregation was silent for a few moments. The Spirit could be felt so strongly that nobody wanted to break that silence. Tears filled our eyes.

The silence was finally broken by the voice of our bishop, who stood to tell us how blessed we were to have the priesthood of God. With God, he said, nothing is impossible. Heavenly Father moves in mysterious ways to bestow blessings on His children. If we pray in faith, He hears our prayers and answers them. ■

Evelyn B. Caesar is a member of the Lopez Jaena Branch, Sagay Philippines District.

The Good Samaritans in Coutts

By Alan P. Kingston

My wife and I are retired senior citizens from Portsmouth, England. We've been married for 48 years and are Anglican Christians. Before a memorable trip to Canada, we had the impression that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints were a bit pushy, overly religious, and determined to convert everyone not of their faith. However, a snowstorm in Canada began changing our impressions.

We were in a group of mainly older British tourists traveling through Banff, Canada; Yellowstone National Park; and the Rocky Mountains. Unfortunately, the weather was not very kind to our group. After staying in Lethbridge, Canada, we awoke to find it had snowed in the night. Later that morning as we traveled toward the U.S. border, the rain turned to snow, and at the border we discovered the road was closed on the American side. There was nothing we could do but turn back. Five miles (8 km) down the road we encountered a jackknifed truck and trailer blocking the highway. We were unable to go forward and unable to go backward.

Stranded in our bus, we settled down to guessing games, a sing-along, and general fun, confident that help would arrive and that we would be safe in the bus until then. More than five hours later, help finally did arrive.

A Royal Canadian Police Mountie on a snowmobile found us, and a fire truck managed to carve a track in the snow, allowing the bus to turn around. Weary and hungry, we made our way to the nearest community and found ourselves pulling up to the church that several of the firefighters attended—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints meeting-house in Coutts, Alberta, Canada.

The Anglican church we attend is 150 years old, with a small communal hall and limited facilities, so the thought of a church congregation taking in 40 strangers stranded in the snow didn't seem feasible. But within an hour of our arrival, the women and young people of the ward had served up a full meal of jacket potatoes and chili.

We were particularly impressed when we discovered that our rescuers had pressing problems of their own. A young mum had had the power cut off to her home, but she left her younger children with a kind friend

and came with her older children to help us. A counselor to the bishop gave us a tour of the building and took time to ensure that we were cared for before going to work that evening.

Before we went to bed, the youth of the Coutts Ward treated us to an impromptu performance of a play they had been rehearsing. And finally the central heating was turned up, and we were made comfortable for the night.

The next morning the roads had improved sufficiently for us to continue our journey. After the ward members prepared breakfast, we set out again on our enjoyable trip. But

we remained overwhelmed by the hospitality shown by the Latter-day Saints. They willingly opened up their church and provided food, bedding, and, above all, friendship to stranded strangers.

Although we had believed Latter-day Saints to be somewhat pushy, we saw instead kind, caring people who demonstrate their beliefs in their day-to-day lives. Back in England, we keep our holiday fresh in our minds, and we thank God for our Latter-day Saint friends and Samaritans. ■

Alan P. Kingston lives in Portsmouth, England.



A Royal Canadian Police Mountie found us, a fire truck carved a track in the snow, and we made our way to the nearest community.

Feeling the Love of the Lord through Repentance

Prayerfully select and read from this message the scriptures and teachings that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Share your experiences and testimony. Invite those you teach to do the same.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We weave into the fabric of our lives the pattern that we will present as our finished product. Our mortal lives are woven each day as we add our deeds into something intricately beautiful, following the Master Designer’s plan. When we make wrong choices, we must . . . retrace our steps through repentance and remove errant threads we have woven into our character and replace them with the finer threads that our Maker intended for us to use” (“The Time to Prepare,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 16).

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985): “Repentance can never come until one has bared his soul and admitted his actions without excuses or rationalizations. . . . Those persons who choose to meet the issue and transform their lives may find repentance the harder road at first, but they will find it the infinitely more desirable path as they taste of its fruits. . . . Millions of Saints have found peace along this path and lived beautiful and

satisfying and abundant lives with the gospel of repentance as their guide to personal improvement and to harmony with God” (“The Gospel of Repentance,” *Tambuli*, Mar. 1983, 3–6; *Ensign*, Oct. 1982, 4–5).

Sydney S. Reynolds, first counselor in the Primary general presidency: “We must repent of anything we are doing which would alienate us from the Spirit of the Lord, and we must show our love for God by keeping his commandments and loving his children, that the Lord might forgive our sins and make us spotless by his grace. . . . We have a Savior, who paid the price for any sin, mistake, or imperfection we may have for which we are willing to repent” (“Be Ye Therefore Perfect,” in *The Rock of Our Redeemer: Talks from the 2002 BYU Women’s Conference* [2003], 153–55).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “I testify that Jesus Christ paid the price and will satisfy the demands of justice for all who are obedient to His teachings. Thus, full forgiveness is granted, and the distressing effects of sin need no longer persist in one’s life. Indeed, they cannot persist if one truly understands the meaning of Christ’s Atonement. . . .



“When memory of past mistakes encroaches upon your mind, turn your thoughts to the Redeemer and to the miracle of forgiveness with the renewal that comes through Him. Your depression and suffering will be replaced by peace, joy, and gratitude for His love” (“The Path to Peace and Joy,” *Liabona*, Jan. 2001, 33; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 26).

Moroni 8:26: “The remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God.”

• *What are the blessings of repentance?*

• *How does repentance help you feel the love of the Savior and gratitude for His Atonement?* ■

Free-for-All

What if someone told you that you could spend time with friends, go shopping without spending any money, and generate donations for charity—all at the same time? It may sound too good to be true, but it's actually quite easy. Here's how to do it:

Call a few of your friends or neighbors who have similar

clothing tastes and sizes, and invite them to a “shop-for-free” party. Before the party, have them go through their closets and select clothing that is still in good shape but just doesn't fit anymore or hasn't been worn in over a year. Come party time, have your guests lay out the clothing they've gathered in your living room.

After everyone has had a chance to see what's available, take

turns selecting desired clothing items until everyone has all that they want. When you're finished, there will still be some good quality clothing; bag it up and donate it to your local Deseret Industries or another charity. You could also do the same thing with outgrown children's clothing, shoes, books, kitchen items, electronics in good working order, and so forth. It's a great way to “de-clutter” your home, get free things you need for yourself and your family, generate goods for charity, and have a fun time with friends.

Sometimes I run into a friend who's wearing something that used to be mine, or vice versa. Whenever that happens, we smile at each other and say, “Great outfit! Where did you get it?”

Barbara Jean Jones, Wasatch Ward, Salt Lake Hillside Stake

Our Family History Timeline

I have a historical book that shows yearly timelines, linking people with events, literature, arts, science, and more. Since this format was helpful to my understanding of history, I thought, “Why not adapt this for our family?” Using a table format, I created our family history timeline.





Family Home Evening Times Two

With preschool-age children, our family home evening lessons tend to be basic—and brief. As a couple, we found ourselves yearning to spend more time discussing gospel principles. As a result, we decided to hold another, less formal, parents’ family home evening after our children are in bed. Sometimes our discussion continues from what we have just taught our children. Other times we use the following ideas:

- Select an article from a Church magazine or a passage from individual scripture study to read and discuss.
- Read the Sunday School study assignments together.
- If one of us is teaching Sunday lessons, we often discuss an upcoming lesson together or share something from a lesson already taught.
- Read selections from *Teachings of the Living Prophets*, especially the chapters assigned for upcoming Relief Society and priesthood lessons.
- Discuss general conference talks.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “It is a striking fact that the family home evening is the ideal time to accomplish almost every type of family togetherness” (“Parental Leadership in the Family,” *Ensign*, June 1985, 11). We find that by extending our family home evening, we keep that special feeling of togetherness in our home. We enjoy the extra time, and the right spirit, to discuss any concerns we might have about our children or any goals we want to achieve.

*Kristen J. Gough,
Westchester Second Ward,
Westchester New York Stake*



To begin, I chose 9-by-14-inch paper, though other sizes would work, and divided the page into columns and rows. In the first column, I listed years. Across the top in the first row, I wrote categories such as “General,” “Parents,” “Child.” To personalize a timeline, you could list names. For me, these categories best organized the information, making it easy for me to tell what had occurred in a specific year for each person in our family.

In the “General” column, I recorded family events like “Grandmother’s 70th birthday party” or worldwide news such as “Neil Armstrong walked on the moon.”

Under “Parents” I listed events that affected the entire family as well as things that were specific to us as parents.

In our children’s columns, I listed their births, the years they began school, various achievements, their graduations and marriages, careers, moves, and their children’s births. Since I wanted to include events they felt were significant, I asked for their input.

When I finished gathering the information, I created a table of our timeline on a computer and saved it on a disk. Now I can update the chart easily and print copies for my children. Our family timeline provides a useful record for us now as well as an accurate history for future generations.

*Constance L. Brown, Red Deer First Ward,
Red Deer Alberta Stake*



President Gordon B. Hinckley and Elder Russell M. Nelson visit with members of St. Kitts-Nevis Branch in the Caribbean.

President Hinckley Visits Caribbean, Cape Verde Saints

On his way to and from the dedication of the Accra Ghana Temple, President Gordon B. Hinckley met with Saints in the Caribbean and the Cape Verde Islands. He was accompanied by his wife, Marjorie, and Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

On Thursday, 8 January 2004, preceding the dedication of the Accra Temple, President Hinckley dedicated the new Basseterre meetinghouse on the island of St. Kitts in the Caribbean and spoke to members of the St. Kitts-Nevis Branch about living gospel principles and gaining an assurance of their

validity through obedience. Elder Nelson spoke of the home and family as a sanctuary, counseling the Saints to apply gospel principles in their homes. Local government dignitaries attended the event, including St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Dr. Denzil L. Douglas, who commended the Church's growth in the area.

On his return from west Africa, President Hinckley met with 40 members of the Sal Branch during a refueling stop on Sal Island in Cape Verde (off Africa's western coast). Members and friends gathered in a room at the fueling service center to hear his counsel.

The prophet assured the members of the Lord's love for them, instructing them to be prayerful, study the Book of Mormon, pay their tithing, and share the gospel with their friends. Elder Nelson advised members to "follow the prophet."

Following his visit in Cape

Verde, President Hinckley met with and counseled members on the Caribbean islands of St. Thomas, St. John, St. Croix, Tortola, and Puerto Rico to keep the commandments and live the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■
Church News contributed to this report.

Youth Need "Inoculation" Against the World

By Melissa Merrill, Church Magazines

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, addressed the need for teachers in the Church Educational System to help "inoculate" young people against the world during a CES devotional held on 6 February 2004.

"These are days of great spiritual danger for our youth," President Packer said. He said that he knows of no time when worse things were so widely accepted in the world, not even in the time of Sodom and Gomorrah. While evil was localized then, he pointed out, it has now spread across the world.

Although facing evil of "epidemic proportions," students can be inoculated through a knowledge and testimony of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, President Packer taught. He also said that while teachers play an important role in fortifying youth, they are not the first line of defense against the effects of the world.

"The Lord places that responsibility on parents first.



A testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ can help protect young people against evil, President Packer told teachers in a CES devotional.

All the saving ordinances center on the family. The shield of faith is handmade in the cottage [and] . . . polished in the classroom."

After relating how he decided on a career in education and sharing some of his experiences as a teacher, President Packer said it may sometimes seem that we are losing the war in maintaining high moral, social, political, and intellectual standards. But, he continued, "Satan cannot win."

President Packer described the town-wide quarantines of former days against physical illness and outlined the immunity-building power of studying the standard works to guard against spiritual illness. After naming some of the principal doctrines taught in each course of study, President Packer explained that we have not been left without knowledge of what to do.

He quoted Christ's "supernal prayer" for the Apostles,

in which the Savior asked not for them to be taken out of the world, but for them to be sanctified through the truth (see John 17:15-17). He advised teachers against seeking intellectualism without the gospel core and against focusing merely on activities in their teaching.

The task may seem daunting, but teachers should not fear, President Packer said. "For they that be with us are more than they that be with them" (2 Kings 6:16). ■

Humanitarian Services Lifting Lives Worldwide

By Adam C. Olson, Church Magazines

Saints in Peru can see, villagers in Ethiopia can drink water without fear of disease, children restricted by mobility problems in Kosovo have been set free by their first wheelchair, and newborns around the world will get a better chance at taking their first breath. People all over the world are being blessed through Church Humanitarian Services.

The Church's emergency relief efforts in response to crises around the globe are often publicized. But even when nature is calm and the earth is still, the effects of the Church's humanitarian aid can be felt worldwide.

Current humanitarian efforts are focused on four major initiatives: providing vision care, providing neonatal resuscitation training for doctors, providing clean water, and providing wheelchairs.

All of the initiatives are aimed at helping people help

themselves. "I love my job," said Gary Winters, a manager for major initiative projects. "These projects help people with self-reliance. It's helping them live the doctrine being preached by the Brethren."

Let Him See Who Has Eyes to See

The gospel has always helped to open the eyes of the spiritually blind. Through its vision care projects, Humanitarian Services is helping thousands of Saints and members of other faiths overcome physical vision challenges. With projects already in more than a dozen countries around the world, the Church has partnered with foundations and doctors to provide free cataract surgeries and eyeglasses while training local ophthalmologists.

In Nigeria, for example, Humanitarian Services set up two-day clinics in six cities during the latter part of 2003

and early 2004. In each location, up to 100 cataract surgeries were performed while local doctors watched, and 1,000 pairs of eyeglasses were distributed to those who needed them.

Similar clinics have been held in Peru, Uganda, and Kenya. Requests from Area Presidencies for such clinics are continually being evaluated by Humanitarian Services.

The Water of Life

Human dependency on water became the basis for a number of the Savior's teachings. Life cannot exist without water. Unclean water leads to millions of deaths every year due to a variety of diseases. According to the World Health Organization, about two million people die every year from diarrheal diseases alone (about 88 percent of which are caused by unsafe water supplies), and most of the victims are children under 5.

Providing clean water for household use is currently one of the Church's major

focuses. Humanitarian Services is rehabilitating wells and piping spring water to villages and communities worldwide. Projects in Ethiopia, Ghana, Ecuador, Peru, Uganda, Kenya, and Armenia have provided countless families with clean water. But the benefits go beyond avoiding disease. In many locations, women and children were walking several miles each day to fetch water, carrying as many as 8 gallons (30 l) of water, which weigh about 66 pounds (30 kg).

"It's a huge burden," says Brother Winters. "And even after all that effort, the water wasn't always clean. Bringing the water closer to the people frees up the mother to help the family more, and frees the children up to be in school more frequently."

In January, the Church turned over 70 borehole water pumps it had rehabilitated, which are now serving the residents of more than 25 communities in Ghana. Piping water takes more time. The Church hires engineers to plan the project, members



An Ethiopian woman straps a five-gallon jug of water to her back to carry home for her family's needs. The Church later rehabilitated a well closer to her home.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY WINTERS



Students from Mexico's Benemérito (LDS) school set up wheelchairs being donated by the Church.

of the community do the labor, and humanitarian missionaries oversee it all. More clean-water projects are being planned. Brother Winters expects the effort will expand into southeast Asia this year.

Wings to Those Who Can't Walk

Being unable to walk can negatively affect an entire family. Without a wheelchair, fathers may not be able to work, mothers may struggle to care for their children, and children may not be able to attend school without someone with them constantly to carry them where they need to go.

Partnering with the Wheelchair Foundation, the

Church has already provided more than 30,000 wheelchairs to people in need. Those wheelchairs have been spread all over the world from Mexico and Central America to Africa to the South Pacific, Asia, eastern Europe, and even war-torn Iraq.

"Often the first thing we hear from children who are finally receiving a wheelchair is, 'Now I can go to school,'" said Brother Winters, who oversees the wheelchair initiative for Humanitarian Services.

In January, the Church and the Wheelchair Foundation donated 500 wheelchairs to the people of Kosovo in a ceremony hosted by Kosovo Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi. The Church hopes

to be able to distribute wheelchairs in Brazil, Russia, and southeast Asia this year, as well as continuing to support projects in Mexico, Central America, and Africa.

A Second Chance at a First Breath

The infant mortality rate in many nations is discouragingly high. A number of infant deaths occur simply because those present at the birth don't know how to help a newborn to breathe.

Working with the ministers of health in various countries, the Church is sending neonatologists and neonatal nurses to train physicians and nurses in neonatal resuscitation. At each session, Humanitarian Services trains up to 100

newborn-care providers with the expectation that each of them will later train an additional 10 people using equipment donated by the Church.

According to Wade Sperry, a manager of major initiative projects, Humanitarian Services has made a major push in the last year to provide neonatal resuscitation training to doctors around the world. In 2003, training was conducted in 12 countries—Bolivia, Ecuador, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova, Peru, Samoa, Tonga, and Uganda. Training will be completed in Fiji, Uganda, Cape Verde, and various parts of Brazil by early April. Other locations are being evaluated for future training sessions. ■

Anchorage and São Paulo Temples Rededicated; Idaho Site Announced

President Gordon B. Hinckley rededicated temples in Anchorage, Alaska, and São Paulo, Brazil, in February, and a location has been announced for the new temple in Rexburg, Idaho. As of March, the Church is operating 117 temples worldwide and has 11 more announced or under construction. The next scheduled temple dedication is in Copenhagen, Denmark, in May.

Anchorage Alaska Temple

President Hinckley rededicated the Anchorage Alaska Temple during a single session on Sunday, 8 February

2004, after an expansion nearly doubled its size from 6,800 to 11,937 square feet.

"Touch those of this temple district with Thy Holy Spirit, and stir within them a desire to use this beautiful facility in the accomplishment of Thy divine will," President Hinckley said during the dedicatory prayer. "May they find great joy in coming here. May it be a haven of peace from the cares and stress of the world, a refuge from the hurried pace of their lives. As they here serve, may they be lifted in spirit, and may there come into their vision something of



The Anchorage Alaska Temple was enlarged to meet the needs of area members.

the divine light that is of Thy nature.”

The public toured the temple during an open house held 27–31 January 2004. Originally dedicated in 1999, the temple was one of the first to be built under the small temple concept announced by President Hinckley in 1997.

The temple serves more than 27,000 members in seven Alaska stakes and one district in northwest Canada. Remodeling on the temple began in April 2003. Additions include a second ordinance room, a laundry facility, men and women’s dressing rooms, a waiting room, and office space.

São Paulo Brazil Temple

Just over 25 years after its original dedication, the São Paulo Brazil Temple, the first temple in South America, was rededicated on 22 February 2004 after extensive renovation.

Outwardly, the addition of a statue of the angel Moroni was the only change to the 53,246-square-foot temple

during the 16-month closure.

Inside, a non-patron waiting room, a marriage waiting room, a temple worker dressing room, and a sealing room were added. The chapel was enlarged, as were the other sealing rooms. The cafeteria and youth waiting area were remodeled, and a special art-glass representation of the Savior appearing in the Americas was placed in the lobby.

Ninety percent of all materials used in the project were Brazilian, from fabrics to the mahogany and granite. Much of the original furniture crafted by Walter Spat, the first stake president in South America, was refurbished.

Local Latter-day Saints performed during a special celebration held 21 February at the 50,000-seat Pacaembu Stadium. (Coverage of the cultural celebration will be included in a future issue of the *Ensign*.)

President Hinckley presided at the single dedicatory session, which was broadcast to all 185 stakes

throughout Brazil. (A transcript of the dedicatory prayer was unavailable at press time.) Brazil also has temples in Porto Alegre and Recife, both dedicated in 2000, and in Campinas, dedicated in 2002. A temple has also been announced for Curitiba, Brazil.

Rexburg Idaho Temple

Latter-day Saints in Rexburg, Idaho, are preparing themselves for a new temple that will stand prominently on “Rexburg Hill,” south of the BYU—Idaho campus. The new temple, announced in December 2003, will be

located on the southwest corner of Seventh South and Second East. A timetable for temple construction had not been decided before press time.

The Church currently operates two temples in Idaho—the Idaho Falls Idaho Temple, dedicated in 1945, and the Boise Idaho Temple, dedicated in 1984. There are more than 360,000 members of the Church in Idaho.

With more than 17,000 residents, Rexburg has five stakes. There are seven more at BYU—Idaho, where 11,000 students were enrolled last fall. ■

President of Colombia Receives Priesthood Blessing

By Nury Lara N.

The president of the Republic of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe Vélez, welcomed Elder Claudio R. M. Costa of the Seventy, President of the South America North Area, along with Elder Roberto García, Area Authority Seventy and Second Counselor in the Area Presidency, and five other leaders and members of the Church to the presidential palace on 7 November 2003.

President Uribe thanked the members for the humanitarian work the Church is doing in Colombia in coordination with the First Lady, Lina María Moreno de Uribe (see “Church, Colombian First Lady Team Up to Aid Needy,” *News of the Church, Ensign*, Feb. 2004, 75–76). “I am very grateful for all you do and for the kind of citizens

you make. On behalf of the government, please accept my support, endorsement, and gratitude.”

Elder Costa testified of Jesus Christ and explained the priesthood authority. As one holding that power, Elder Costa offered to give the president a priesthood blessing, which President Uribe accepted. During the blessing promises were extended to the president, his family, and his country. A president of the republic has never before received a priesthood blessing.

Elder Costa also presented the president with a copy of several generations of President Uribe’s and the First Lady’s family histories, along with a CD containing Family Search™ Personal Ancestral File software and a statuette of a family. ■

In the News



Missionaries help clean debris from the road after a tropical cyclone swept across the island of Niue.

Cyclone Hits Pacific Islands; Missionaries, Members Safe

Tropical cyclone Heta swept over the Pacific island of Niue, northeast of Tonga, on 5 January 2004, washing away 70 homes, destroying a hospital, and leaving nearly 200 people homeless. All six missionaries and 203 members on Niue were reported safe. The homes of seven member families were completely destroyed, and a chapel in the small village of Alofi sustained damages, including broken

windows and flooding.

Members were organized to clear water and debris from the Alofi Branch meetinghouse, where 20 people sought shelter. Missionaries cleared roads of debris, providing access for emergency vehicles. A small welfare team from the Church's Pacific Islands Area office in New Zealand was sent to Niue to determine the need for Church assistance.

Cyclone Heta also hit the northern islands of Tonga,

destroying one member's home on Niuatoputapu and tearing roofs off several others. The Vaipoa Branch meetinghouse in Niuatoputapu served as a temporary shelter for displaced families. The Church's Tonga Service Center sent emergency supplies to severely damaged areas. No members or missionaries in those areas were injured.

The Luatuanu'u Ward meetinghouse on the Samoan island of Upolu lost several classrooms, a bishop's office, and numerous windows when it was struck by water and high winds; a meetinghouse in Pago Pago, American Samoa, incurred minor damages when a coconut tree fell on its roof. *Church News* contributed to this report.

Museum to Sponsor Children's Art Contest

The Museum of Church History and Art invites Latter-day Saint children ages 4 to 12 to submit original works of art for possible display in an exhibit in honor of the 200th

Women's Conference to Be Broadcast Worldwide

Brigham Young University's Women's Conference 2004 will be held 29–30 April. Eight hours of selected talks will be broadcast on those days from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M. MDT over the Church satellite system to meetinghouses throughout the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Latin America. The broadcast will also be available on KBYU-TV Channel 11, BYU-TV, BYU Radio, and on the Internet at www.byubroadcasting.org.

Church units in Europe, Asia, the British Isles, and South Africa can capture the broadcast later in May. For more information, call 1-801-378-7692 or access the Web site at womens.conference.byu.edu. ■

anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The exhibit, *Follow the Prophet*, will be on display from 10 December 2004 to 16 October 2005. Images can reflect the life, teachings, or

Policies and Announcements

The First Presidency has sent the following letter, dated 27 January 2004, to priesthood leaders.

Member Communication with Church Headquarters

Members of the Church continue to place telephone calls and write letters to Church headquarters about doctrinal issues and personal matters. With an ever-increasing membership, the

ability of General Authorities to respond personally to these inquiries presents an almost insurmountable task and makes it difficult for the Brethren to fulfill the duties for which they alone are responsible.

The Lord, in His wisdom, has so organized His Church that there is accessible to every member a bishop or branch president and a stake, district, or mission president,

who serve as spiritual advisers and temporal counselors. We have the utmost confidence in the wisdom and judgment of these priesthood leaders. By reason of their callings, local leaders are entitled to the spirit of discernment and inspiration to enable them to counsel members within their jurisdiction. Accordingly, in most cases, correspondence from members will be referred back to their local leaders for handling. Priesthood leaders

who have need for further clarification about doctrinal issues may write in behalf of their members to the First Presidency.

It is our desire that all members feel they have the support and guidance they need; however, all things should be done in wisdom and order. We believe that both members and local leaders will be blessed as they pray and counsel together in an effort to resolve matters of concern to them. ■

2004 Church Pageant Schedule

Pageant	Location	Date
<i>Jesus the Christ</i>	Mesa, Arizona	1–3 April (Spanish); 6–10 April (English)
<i>Mormon Miracle</i>	Manti, Utah	17–19, 22–26 June
<i>America's Witness for Christ</i>	Palmyra, New York	9–10, 13–17 July
<i>And It Came to Pass</i>	Oakland, California	20–24, 27–31 July
<i>Castle Valley</i>	Castle Dale, Utah	22–24, 27–31 July
<i>City of Joseph</i>	Nauvoo, Illinois	30–31 July, 3–7 August
<i>Martin Harris, the Man Who Knew</i>	Clarkston, Utah	13–14, 17–21, 24–27 August

All pageants are free of charge, but the Clarkston and Oakland pageants require tickets. This is the final year of the Nauvoo pageant. For more information on any of these pageants, call 1-801-240-7800 or visit www.lds.org and click on "Other Resources," then "Places to Visit." ■

experiences of any prophet from Adam to President Gordon B. Hinckley.

Works should be two-dimensional, no larger than 11 x 14 inches (28 x 36 cm), and may be done in any medium. The child's name,

age, address, and ward or branch should be included on the back. All entries become the property of the museum and will not be returned.

Judges who are sensitive to children's art will make the selection of works to be

exhibited. The museum's deadline for receiving artwork is 4 October 2004. Mail entries to: Marjorie Conder, Curator; Museum of Church History and Art, 45 North West Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-3470. ■

New Guidebook Helps Explain Doctrine Behind Church Standards

The Church has issued a new doctrinal guidebook aimed at youth, young single adults, and new members. *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* is a collection of brief, simple statements on gospel doctrines and principles.

Almost 200 pages in length, the book is intended to supplement the scriptures and the

counsel of current Church leaders. Young men and young women may use it as a resource to assist them in achieving their Duty to God and Personal Progress awards. The book is designed to accompany the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet and explains the doctrine behind the standards it contains. Priesthood quorums and

Relief Society groups may also offer the book to new members to better acquaint them with the doctrines of the restored gospel. *True to the Faith* is available at Church distribution centers for \$1.50. ■



Comment

He Was Teaching Me Directly

I want to thank the *Ensign* and Elder Henry B. Eyring for his article in the February 2004 issue. He must be a wonderful teacher because I learned so much from "The Book of Mormon Will Change Your Life." I felt that he was teaching me directly. I am a

recent convert to the Church, and what he said meant a lot to me.

Sandra Miller,
Miami Shores Ward,
Hialeah Gardens Florida Stake

"Joy in the Journey"

Since my baptism in 1969 I have read every issue of the Church's magazines, but no article has impressed or uplifted me as much as "Joy

in the Journey" (*Ensign*, January 2004). The fulfillment of the dream of temple marriage, the acknowledgement that we don't have the wisdom to succeed in life without the Lord's help, the understanding that "obedience is happiness," the knowledge that "ordinary men and boys can bring such blessings into the lives of others in the Savior's name"

through the priesthood, and the "blessing and honor it is to be a Latter-day Saint" are just a few of the article's gems of wisdom and inspiration that truly touched my heart and strengthened my soul.

Larry D. Kump,
Antietam Ward,
Frederick Maryland Stake

Call for Articles

If you have had experience with the following situation, we invite you to share your suggestions:

Several of my family members are not LDS, and they feel hurt because they cannot attend my temple wedding. What can I do to help them understand and to ease hurt feelings?

Send responses by 17 May 2004 to *Ensign* Editorial, 24th Floor, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA, or to cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org. Clearly mark your submission "Questions and Answers," and on the top of your submission, write your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, ward, and stake (or branch and district).

While we cannot acknowledge receipt of individual responses, authors whose submissions are selected for publication will be notified. If you would like your manuscript returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and allow up to a year. ■



MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

A P R I L 2 0 0 4

familiar with the process of healing. But have you ever considered how similar the process of spiritual healing is? Elaine S. Marshall, dean of Brigham Young University's College of Nursing, shares lessons she has learned in her profession and ties them to the spiritual healing we all can seek. See "Lessons on Healing," page 56.

From Pain to Peace

Could she forgive the father who had sexually abused her? A woman recounts her own journey from pain to peace and explains how she determined not to let her past destroy her or her family's life today. See "My Quest to Forgive," page 52.

Coping with Unemployment

The financial, emotional, and physical stress of job loss can take its toll not only on you but also on your marriage. Read how one couple

dealt with the problem in "Helping Marriage Survive Unemployment: Seven Principles," page 62.

Worldwide Influence for Good

Since its restoration 175 years ago, the priesthood has given worthy men opportunities to perform sacred gospel ordinances. Read in their own words how Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood holders throughout the world are honoring the priesthood and blessing lives of the members around them. See "Priesthood Restored," page 18.

Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find your monthly messages on pages 2 and 71.

General Conference Online

You may know that you can watch general conference proceedings live April 3–4 on the Internet, but you may not know that transcripts of conference



addresses will be available online prior to their publication in the *Ensign* and *Liabona*. The talks, which will be available online in 41 languages, are scheduled to be posted 7 April at www.lds.org.

Especially for Parents

Do you wish you and your spouse had more time to talk about the gospel together? One couple found that after their brief, simple lesson with their young family, they could enjoy continued study together in another less formal version of Family Home Evening. See "Family Home Evening Times Two" in Random Sampler, page 73.

Finding a Firm Foundation

In this ever-shifting world, Christ is our only promise of a sure foundation. "We will find no fissures in His foundation. He never disappoints us. He never falters. His love never fails. He never fails to bring to pass His purposes," says Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Building on Christ's foundation requires us to emulate His character, as Elder Maxwell explains in "The Precious Promise," page 42.

Knowing the Master Healer

Anyone who has been sick or undergone surgery is



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A Test of Faith and Ice, by Larry Winborg

In February 1846 a snowstorm in Nauvoo was followed by falling temperatures that, in a rare occurrence, left the Mississippi River frozen over. Though Latter-day Saints had been crossing by ferry, hundreds now hastened to cross the wide river while it was frozen.



Jesus saith unto her, *Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master” (John 20:15–16). See President James E. Faust, “To Receive a Crown of Glory,” p. 2.*