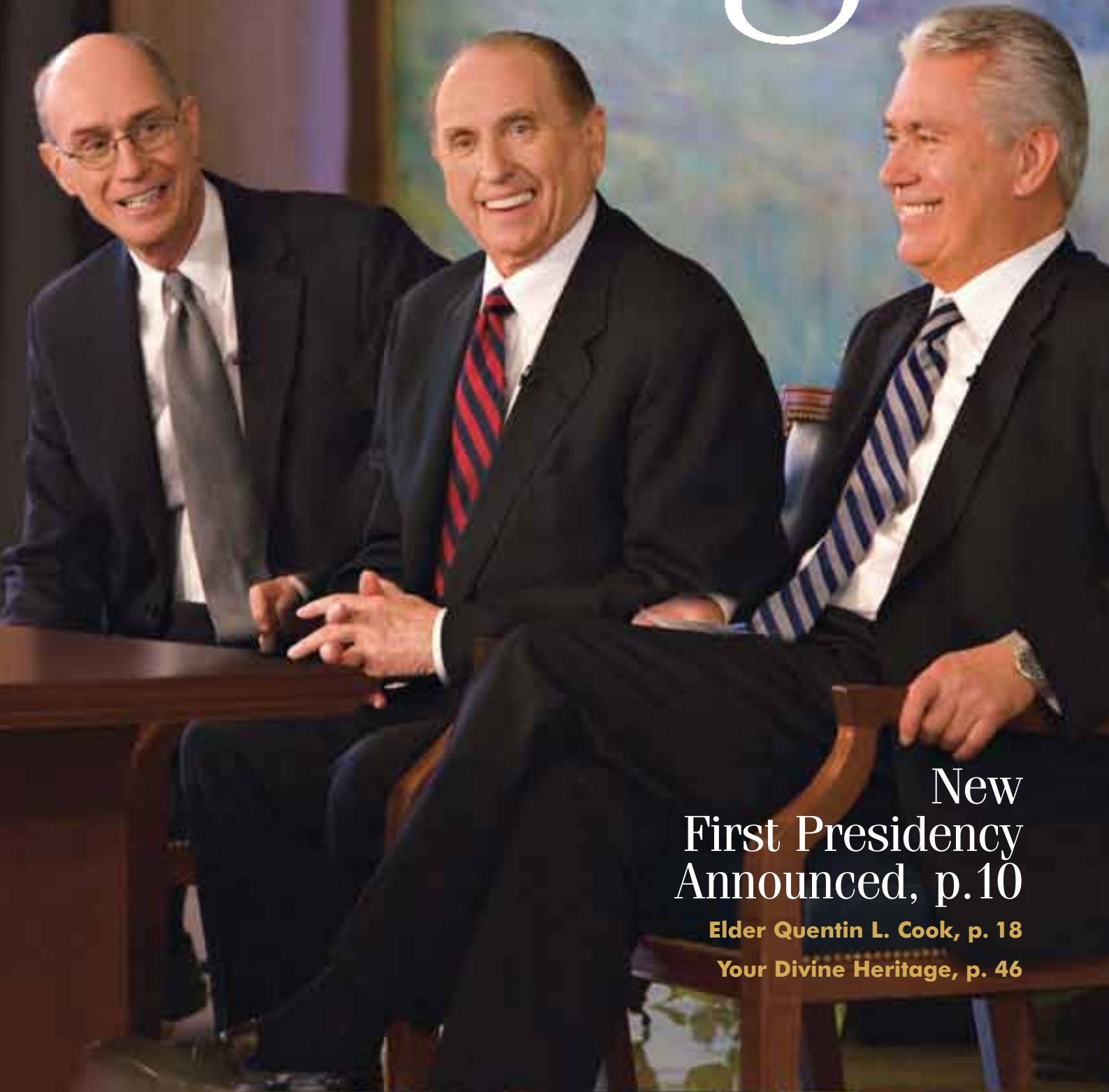


Ensign



New
First Presidency
Announced, p.10

Elder Quentin L. Cook, p. 18

Your Divine Heritage, p. 46



Returning to Nauvoo, 1844, by David C. Gaunt

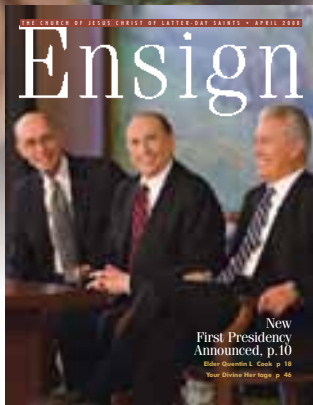
The Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum returned to Nauvoo shortly before their martyrdom. Previously Joseph had said of his life: "I understand my mission and business. God Almighty is my shield; and what can man do if God is my friend? I shall not be sacrificed until my time comes; then I shall be offered freely" (History of the Church, 5:259).

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DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

Although some Web content can be spiritually dangerous, the Internet also offers many positive opportunities. How have you and your family used this tool in beneficial ways, particularly in ways connected to gospel principles? Please label your response "Positive Use of the Internet" and send it by May 16.

We also welcome other submissions that show the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. **Ensign Magazine Writers' Guidelines** are posted at <http://ensign.lds.org> under "Resources."

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Ensign

AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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USING THIS ISSUE

Study with your children.

What kinds of music do you and members of your family listen to? For your next family home evening, consider studying “Worthy Music, Worthy Thoughts,” found in this month’s *New Era* magazine or online at newera.lds.org. In it, President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles notes that we can control our thoughts through listening to uplifting music. For examples of the power of music in people’s lives, see page 66.

Learn about new leaders.

Interested in learning more about newly called Church leaders? Press releases, photos, and video of recent press conferences are available online at newsroom.lds.org under “News Releases and Stories.”

Understand who you are.

When you view situations, your life, and yourself with an eternal perspective, challenges can seem more bearable. This month’s issue includes several articles about this kind of perspective. See pages 44, 46, and 54.



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COMING IN MAY

Addresses from the
178th Annual General Conference

Treasure of Eternal Value



The Master spoke of riches within the grasp of all—even joy unspeakable here and eternal happiness hereafter.

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

When I was a boy, I enjoyed reading *Treasure Island*, by Robert Louis Stevenson. I also saw adventure movies where several individuals had separate pieces of a well-worn map which led the way to buried treasure if only the pieces could be found and put together.

I recall listening to a 15-minute radio program each weekday afternoon—*Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy*. As it began, a voice filled with mystery would emanate from the radio: “We now join Jack and Betty as they approach the fabulous secret entry to the elephants’ burial ground, where a treasure is concealed. But wait; danger lurks on the path ahead.” Nothing could tear me away from this program. It was as though I were leading the search for the hidden treasure of precious ivory.

At another time and in a different setting, the Savior of the world spoke of treasure. In His Sermon on the Mount, He declared:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth

corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”¹

The promised reward was not a treasure of ivory, gold, or silver. Neither did it consist of acres of land or a portfolio of stocks and bonds. The Master spoke of riches within the grasp of all—even joy unspeakable here and eternal happiness hereafter.

I wish to provide the three pieces of your treasure map to guide you to your eternal happiness. They are:

1. Learn from the past.
2. Prepare for the future.
3. Live in the present.

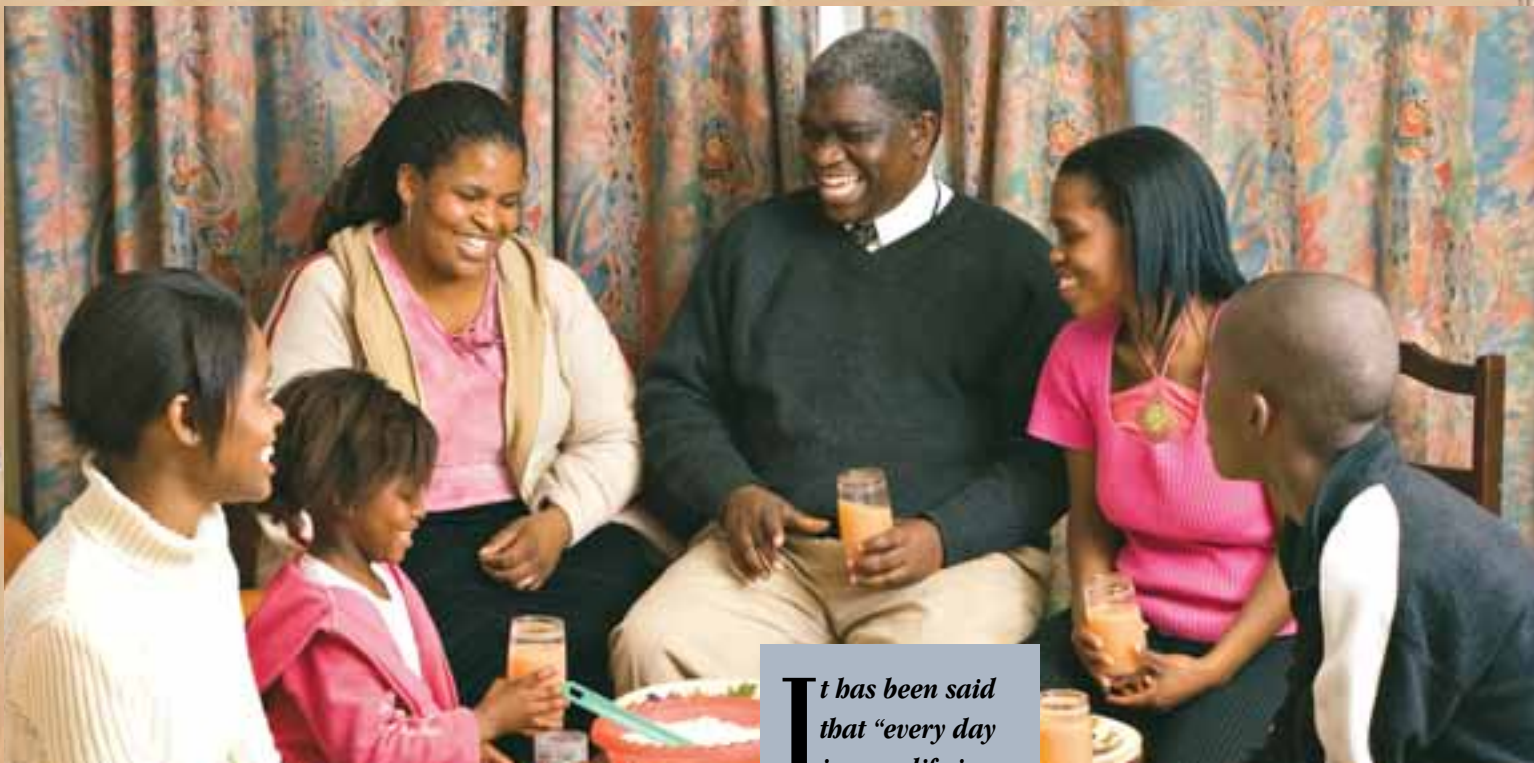
Let us consider each segment of this map.

Learn from the Past

Each of us has a heritage—whether from pioneer forebears, later converts, or others who helped shape our lives. This heritage provides a foundation built of sacrifice and faith. Ours is the privilege and responsibility to build on such firm and stable footings.

A story written by Karen Nolen, which appeared in the *New Era* in 1974, tells of a





Benjamin Landart who, in 1888, was 15 years old and an accomplished violinist. Living on a farm in northern Utah with his mother and seven brothers and sisters was sometimes a challenge to Benjamin, as he had less time than he would have liked to play his violin. Occasionally his mother would lock up the violin until he had his farm chores done, so great was the temptation for Benjamin to play it.

In late 1892 Benjamin was asked to travel to Salt Lake to audition for a place with the territorial orchestra. For him, this was a dream come true. After several weeks of practicing and prayers, he went to Salt Lake in March of 1893 for the much-anticipated audition. When he heard Benjamin play, the conductor, a Mr. Dean, said Benjamin was the most accomplished violinist he had heard west of Denver. Benjamin was told to report to Denver for rehearsals in the fall and learned that he would be earning enough to keep himself, with some left over to send home.

A week after Benjamin received this good news, however, his bishop called him into his office and asked if Benjamin couldn't put off playing with the orchestra for a couple of years. The bishop told Benjamin that before he started earning money, there was something he owed the Lord. The bishop then asked Benjamin to accept a mission call.

Benjamin felt that giving up his chance to play in the territorial orchestra would be almost more than he could

It has been said that "every day in your life is a special occasion. . . . Each day, each hour, each minute is special."

bear, but he also knew what his decision should be. He promised the bishop that if there were any way to raise the money for him to serve, he would accept the call.

When Benjamin told his mother about the call, she was overjoyed. She told him that his father had always

wanted to serve a mission but had been killed before that opportunity had come to him. However, when they discussed the financing of the mission, her face clouded over. Benjamin told her he would not allow her to sell any more of their land. She studied his face for a moment and then said, "Ben, there is a way we can raise the money. This family [has] one thing that is of great enough value to send you on your mission. You will have to sell your violin."

Six days later, on March 23, 1893, Benjamin wrote in his journal: "I awoke this morning and took my violin from its case. All day long I played the music I love. In the evening when the light grew dim and I could see to play no longer, I placed the instrument in its case. It will be enough. Tomorrow I leave [for my mission]."

Forty-five years later, on June 23, 1938, Benjamin wrote in his journal: "The greatest decision I ever made in my life was to give up something I dearly loved to

the God I loved even more. He has never forgotten me for it.”²

Learn from the past.

Prepare for the Future

We live in a changing world. Technology has altered nearly every aspect of our lives. We must cope with these advances—even these cataclysmic changes—in a world of which our forebears never dreamed.

Remember the promise of the Lord: “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”³ Fear is a deadly enemy of progress.

It is necessary to prepare and to plan so that we don’t fritter away our lives. Without a goal, there can be no real success. One of the best definitions of success I have ever heard goes something like this: success is the progressive realization of a worthy ideal. Someone has said the trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never cross the goal line.

Years ago there was a romantic and fanciful ballad that contained the words, “Wishing will make it so / Just keep on wishing and care will go.”⁴ I want to state here and now that wishing will not replace thorough preparation to meet the trials of life. Preparation is hard work but absolutely essential for our progress.

Our journey into the future will not be a smooth highway stretching from here to eternity. Rather, there will be forks and turnings in the road, to say nothing of the unanticipated bumps. We must pray daily to a loving Heavenly Father, who wants each of us to succeed in life.

Prepare for the future.

Live in the Present

Sometimes we let our thoughts of tomorrow take up too much of today. Daydreaming of the past and longing for the future may provide comfort but will not take the place of living in the present. This is the day of our opportunity, and we must grasp it.

Professor Harold Hill, in Meredith Willson’s *The Music Man*, cautioned, “You pile up enough tomorrows, and you’ll find you’ve collected a lot of empty yesterdays.”

There is no tomorrow to remember if we don’t do something today, and to live most fully today, we must do that which is of greatest importance. Let us not procrastinate those things which matter most.

I remember reading the account of a man who, just after the passing of his wife, opened her dresser drawer and found there an item of clothing she had purchased when they visited the eastern part of the United States nine years earlier. She had not worn it but was saving it for a special occasion. Now, of course, that occasion would never come.

In relating the experience to a friend, the husband of the deceased wife said, “Don’t save something only for a special occasion. Every day in your life is a special occasion.”

That friend later said those words changed her life. They helped her cease putting off the things most important to her. Said she: “Now I spend more time with my family. I use crystal glasses every day. I’ll wear new clothes to go to the supermarket if I feel like it. The words ‘someday’ and ‘one day’ are fading from my vocabulary. Now I take the time to call my relatives and closest friends. I’ve called old friends to make peace over past quarrels. I tell my family members how much I love them. I try not to delay or postpone anything that could bring laughter and joy into our lives. And each morning, I say to myself that this could be a special day. Each day, each hour, each minute is special.”

A wonderful example of this philosophy was shared by Arthur Gordon many years ago in a national magazine. He wrote:

“When I was around thirteen and my brother ten, Father had promised to take us to the circus. But at lunchtime there was a phone call; some urgent business required his attention downtown. We braced ourselves for disappointment. Then we heard him say [into the phone], ‘No, I won’t be down. It’ll have to wait.’

“When he came back to the table, Mother smiled. ‘The circus keeps coming back, you know.’

“‘I know,’ said Father. ‘But childhood doesn’t.’”⁵



The old adage
*“Never put off
 until tomorrow
 what you can do
 today” is doubly
 important when it
 comes to expressing
 our affection to
 family members
 and friends.*

Elder Monte J. Brough, formerly of the Seventy, tells of a summer at his childhood home in Randolph, Utah, when he and his younger brother, Max, decided to build a tree house in a large tree in the backyard. They made plans for the most wonderful creation of their lives. They gathered building materials from all over the neighborhood and carried them up to a part of the tree where two branches provided an ideal location for the house. It was difficult, and they were anxious to complete their work. The vision of the finished tree house provided tremendous motivation for them to complete the project.

They worked all summer, and finally in the fall just before school began, their house was completed. Elder Brough

said he will never forget the feelings of joy and satisfaction which were theirs when they finally were able to enjoy the fruit of their work. They sat in the tree house, looked around for a few minutes, climbed down from the tree—and never returned. The completed project, as wonderful as it was, could not hold their interest for even one day. In other words, the process of planning, gathering, building, and working—not the completed project—provided the enduring satisfaction and pleasure they had experienced.

Let us relish life as we live it and, as did Elder Brough and his brother, Max, find joy in the journey.

Do Not Delay

The old adage “Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today” is doubly important when it comes to expressing our love and affection—in word and in deed—to family members and friends. Said author Harriet

Beecher Stowe, “The bitterest tears shed over graves are for words left unsaid and deeds left undone.”⁶

A poet set to verse the sorrow of opportunities forever lost. I quote a portion:

*Around the corner I have a friend,
 In this great city that has no end;
 Yet days go by, and weeks rush on,
 And before I know it, a year is gone.
 And I never see my old friend's face,
 For Life is a swift and terrible race. . . .
 But tomorrow comes—and tomorrow goes,
 And the distance between us grows and grows.*

Around the corner!—yet miles away. . . .

“Here’s a telegram, sir. . . .”

“Jim died today.”

And that’s what we get, and deserve in the end:

Around the corner, a vanished friend.⁷

In the spirit of the thought in that verse, I determined a few years ago that I would no longer put off a visit with a dear friend whom I hadn't seen for many years. I had been meaning to visit him in California but just had not gotten around to it.

Bob Biggers and I met when we were both in the Classification Division at the United States Naval Training Center in San Diego, California, toward the close of World War II. We were good friends from the beginning. He visited Salt Lake once before he married, and we remained friends through correspondence from the time I was discharged in 1946. My wife, Frances, and I exchanged Christmas cards every year with Bob and his wife, Grace.

Finally, at the beginning of January 2002, I was scheduled to visit a stake conference in Whittier, California, where the Biggers live. I telephoned my friend Bob, now 80 years old, and arranged for Frances and me to meet him and Grace, that we might reminisce concerning former days.

We had a delightful visit. I took with me a number of photographs which had been taken when we were in the navy together over 55 years earlier. We identified the men we knew and provided each other an update on their whereabouts as best we could. Although not a member of our Church, Bob remembered going to a sacrament meeting with me those long years before when we were stationed in San Diego.

As Frances and I said our good-byes to Bob and Grace, I felt an overwhelming sense of peace and joy at having finally made the effort to see once again a friend who had been cherished from afar throughout the years.

One day each of us will run out of tomorrows. Let us not put off what is most important.

Live in the present.

Your treasure map is now in place: **Learn from the past. Prepare for the future. Live in the present.**

I conclude where I began. From our Lord and Savior:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. Ask family members how they prepare for an event. How far in advance do they prepare? Explain that we need to prepare for eternal life by laying up treasures in heaven. Read Matthew 6:19–21, and invite family members to take turns reading sections of the message.

2. Read the first paragraph under the heading "Learn from the Past," and invite family members to tell about a person or experience that has positively influenced their lives. Testify that learning from our past is one way to guide us to eternal happiness.

3. Share one or two of the accounts under the heading "Live in the Present." Ask family members to each set a goal to do one important task they have been putting off. Next month, you could invite family members to tell about their experience.

moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."⁸ ■

NOTES

1. Matthew 6:19–21.
2. See "Benjamin: Son of the Right Hand," *New Era*, May 1974, 34–37.
3. D&C 38:30.
4. "Wishing (Will Make It So)," lyrics by B. G. DeSylva.
5. *A Touch of Wonder* (1974), 77–78.
6. In Gorton Carruth and Eugene Ehrlich, comp., *The Harper Book of American Quotations* (1988), 173.
7. Charles Hanson Towne, "Around the Corner," in *Poems That Touch the Heart*, comp. A. L. Alexander (1941), 1.
8. Matthew 6:19–21.

Maintaining the Course

Members of the new First Presidency bring their past experience to bear on the Church's future direction.

BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

The day after he was ordained and set apart as 16th President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President Thomas Spencer Monson addressed the media on Monday, February 4, 2008, honoring his predecessor and expressing his desires that his administration be one of unity, cooperation, and reaching out.

With his newly called counselors, President Henry B. Eyring and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, sitting at his right and left, President Monson paid homage to President Gordon B. Hinckley, who died Sunday, January 27, 2008, after serving as President of the Church for nearly 13 years.

"President Hinckley's passing has affected all of us," he said. "We shall miss him, yet we know that he has left us with a wonderful legacy of love and goodness."

Though following in President Hinckley's footsteps might seem daunting, President Monson said it would not be difficult because, "He blazed the trail."

Continuing the Course

The two men served together in the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for more than 40 years and met together on an almost daily basis while in the First Presidency, making decisions and discussing goals.

Having worked with President Hinckley so closely, President Monson said, "It is inevitable that our thinking

would be similar. Therefore there will be no abrupt change from the courses we have been pursuing. . . . We will continue the commitment of those who have gone before us in teaching the gospel, in promoting cooperation with people throughout the world, and in bearing witness to the life and mission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Among the hallmarks of President Hinckley's administration that President Monson said he hopes to continue are temple building, traveling, and the Perpetual Education Fund.

There is no doubt that the Church's building of new temples will continue, President Monson said, "because the Church keeps growing, and we must provide that holy edifice in areas where the Church is sufficiently large to justify it."

President Monson, who has traveled to dedicate seven temples and attended the dedications of others in many countries, said, "I love to meet the people and be out among them."

"I do plan to travel," said President Monson, who will serve in the wake of the most widely traveled President in

President Thomas S. Monson, center, became the 16th President of the Church on February 3, 2008. His counselors in the new First Presidency are President Henry B. Eyring, left, and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf.



Church history. “Traveling is difficult when you go for long stretches at a time, but you always come back refreshed, feeling that you have accomplished something.”

President Monson feels that the Church is accomplishing something with the Perpetual Education Fund and proclaimed that it will continue “far into the future.”

“[The fund] is expanding,” he said. “And those young people are finding jobs, and they’re able to repay the loans. It is a *perpetual* education fund. It has lifted them out of poverty to a life comparable with others who otherwise had the chance and the money to provide an education [for themselves]. It’s a miracle.”

Working Together

Though President Monson announced no abrupt changes to policies or programs, he made it clear what he hoped the tenor of his administration would be—working together in the spirit of cooperation and reaching out in the spirit of love.

“It has been my opportunity to work somewhat closely with leaders of other faiths in solving some of the challenges facing our community and indeed the entire world,” he said. “We will continue this cooperative effort.”

President Monson said he believes each member has a responsibility to be active in his or her community and to work cooperatively with people of all faiths and organizations to bless lives.

“It is important that we eliminate the weakness of one standing alone and substitute for it the strength of people working together,” he said.

President Monson applies that same principle to Church administration. Expressing gratitude for his counselors and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, he explained, “Our purpose is united, and we work together in complete harmony in a spirit of love and cooperation.”

President Monson was ordained an Apostle on October 10, 1963, and has served as an Apostle for more than 44 years, including his time as Second Counselor to President Ezra Taft Benson and Howard W. Hunter and as First Counselor to President Hinckley.



However, in spite of his long experience in Church leadership, he said he plans to rely heavily upon the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Quorums of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric in moving forward.

“This is not a one-man or three-man leadership situation in the Church,” he said. “These are very competent and vastly different individuals in their backgrounds and in their training.”

Known for his tender stories of caring for individuals, President Monson hopes that members will also reach out to those in need both temporally and spiritually.

“As a Church we reach out not only to our own people but also to those people of goodwill throughout the world in the spirit of brotherhood which comes from



the Lord Jesus Christ,” he said. “We desire to cultivate a spirit of kindness, of understanding, of love. We seek always to follow our Savior, ‘who went about doing good’ ” (Acts 10:38).

Among those who stand in spiritual need are those Church members who are not actively participating. Addressing them directly, President Monson said, “Don’t give up. We need you.” He then explained, “My purpose is to provide ways that we as active members can put our arms around those who are less active and bring them back to the fold. I am dedicated to that principle.”

Pursuing the Spirit of Helping Others

President Monson attributed his desire to lift those in need to the example of his mother:

Born on August 21, 1927, to G. Spencer and Gladys Condie Monson, President Monson spent his younger years living near railroad tracks on the west side of Salt Lake City. Young men coming west to seek employment during the Great Depression would frequently stop at their home, having heard that food or help was available there.

“I saw my mother minister to those men, totally unafraid, no fear in her at all,” he said. “In fact, she gave them each a lecture that he

The new First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles meet with members of the media.

should write his mother and tell her where he was and that everything was going to be all right.

“That same spirit carried forward with me,” he said. “I have had great satisfaction in pursuing that same spirit of helping others.”

President Monson’s desire to serve others has blessed the lives of many both in and out of the Church. He has served as a member of the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America since 1969. In 1981, U.S. President Ronald Reagan appointed him to serve one year on the President’s Task Force for Private Sector Initiatives.

As bishop of the ward with the largest welfare load in the Church at age 22, he spent one week of personal vacation time each Christmas to visit each of the 84 widows in his ward. These visits continued decades after President Monson was given other Church assignments for as long as the widows lived.

“Each would ask me to speak at her funeral,” he said. But concerned about how much traveling he did, he would reply, “Good heavens, I’m overseas sometimes five weeks at a time, and I won’t be here.”

“No,” they would say, “we pray that you’ll be here.”

Between 1950 and 2000, President Monson spoke at the funerals of all 84.

Looking to the Future

As he looks at the road ahead, President Monson said he recognizes challenges but remains optimistic.

“Our young people live in a world of many challenges, and they should be prepared to meet them and not be overcome by them,” he said. He laid the responsibility upon parents to teach their children how to pray.

“Sometimes the best answers that young people can



President Thomas S. Monson addresses the media after being introduced as President of the Church.

give to the questions of life are found when they are upon their knees, calling upon our Heavenly Father. I testify that if they will remember that the Lord is mindful of them and will answer their prayers, they will be able to meet every challenge that comes to them.”

President Monson expressed optimism based on the strength of Church members. “How grateful we are for the dedication, the faith, and the strength of the people of the Church, who now number more than 13 million in 176 nations and territories throughout the world.

“We’re proud of our young people. . . . They stand as beacons of goodness in a world of shifting values and standards. We know the future of this work will be in good hands.”

Of that work, President Monson testified that it is the Lord’s. “I have felt His sustaining influence,” he said.

Following the death of President Hinckley, President Monson said he went to his knees, “thanking my Heavenly Father for life, for experience, for my family, and then directly asking Him to go before my face, to be on my right hand, to be on my left hand, and His Spirit in my heart, and His angels round about me to bear me up” (see D&C 84:88).

Buoyed by the strength of the Lord and in good health—“I still do a day’s work, and half a night’s as well”—President Monson said, “I know that He will direct our efforts as we serve Him with faith and diligence. . . . You can rest assured we’ll be giving due attention to the present and the future but not forgetting the past. For the past is prelude to the future.” ■

PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING

First Counselor in the First Presidency



Through his service as Second Counselor to President Gordon B. Hinckley lasted just less than four months, President Henry Bennion Eyring, recently sustained as First Counselor in the First Presidency, is well seasoned among General Authorities in the Church.

As the only man to date to have served in the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Quorum of the Seventy, and Presiding Bishopric, President Eyring brings broad experience to his new calling.

During his years of service, he has had ample opportunity to work closely with President Monson.

“I am humbled and honored to have been invited to serve as a counselor to President Monson,” said President Eyring at a media conference announcing the new First Presidency.

“For many years in the Presiding Bishopric and in the Quorum of the Twelve and in the wonderful experience that I’ve had in the First Presidency with President Monson, I have had the chance to come to know him, his goodness, his great capacities, his love of the people,” President Eyring said.

“I pledge my whole heart to serve with him, knowing

as I do his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his power to receive revelation and to know what it is we should do.”

President Eyring was born on May 31, 1933, in Princeton, New Jersey, the second of three sons born to world-renowned chemist Henry Eyring and his wife, Mildred. After serving two years in the U.S. Air Force, he enrolled in the Harvard Graduate School of Business, where he earned

advanced degrees in business administration. In July 1962, President Eyring became an assistant professor at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, where he taught from 1962 to 1971.

In 1971, President Eyring became president of Ricks College, now BYU–Idaho. He became deputy commissioner of the Church Educational System six years later and CES commissioner three years after that, serving until his call in April 1985 as First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric. In September 1992 he was renamed CES commissioner, simultaneously serving in that position and as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, to which he was called a month later. He was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on April 1, 1995, and as Second Counselor in the First Presidency on October 6, 2007. ■

PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF

Second Counselor in the First Presidency



“Joyfully overwhelmed” is how President Dieter Friedrich Uchtdorf described his feelings upon being called as Second Counselor in the First Presidency.

“I am very humbled by the call to serve as one of the counselors of President Monson,” he said. “I know this call must have come from God, because human beings might have had a difficult time to do the same.”

President Uchtdorf comes to his new calling after having served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles since October 2, 2004. But his association with President Monson began years before, first as a stake president in Germany and later as a member of the Quorums of the Seventy.

Speaking of President Monson, President Uchtdorf said: “I know of his heart, his soul, his commitment, his wonderful love for the people, his capacity. I have seen him focusing on the one *and* bridging nations. . . . He is a wonderful leader.”

President Uchtdorf—born in Mährisch-Ostrau, Czechoslovakia, on November 6, 1940, and raised in Germany—is the first person born outside of North America to be sustained to the First Presidency since

President Charles W. Nibley of Scotland was sustained in 1925. But he points out that “we are not representing a nation or a country or an ethnic group.”

He explained, “Especially in the callings of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, . . . we are representing the Church of Jesus Christ. We are representatives of Him.”

President Uchtdorf praised President Monson as an example of bridging countries, cultures, and languages by reaching

out to others around the world regardless of nationality or ethnic group. “There are no more foreigners; we are all citizens in the kingdom of God,” he said (see Ephesians 2:19).

“Church membership is going all across the world,” President Uchtdorf said. “Recently I was asked whether it is a global church. No, it’s a universal church. It is a message of universal power. It is the message that will connect and combine and unite and bless all the countries, all the nations, all the ethnic groups.”

President Uchtdorf was sustained to the Second Quorum of the Seventy on April 2, 1994; sustained to the First Quorum of the Seventy on April 6, 1996; and called to the Presidency of the Seventy on August 15, 2002. ■

PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

WHEN THE PROPHET DIES

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is led by 15 men in two bodies: the First Presidency, consisting of the President of the Church and his two counselors, and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who are called by and serve under the direction of the First Presidency. The members of the Church sustain each of these men as prophets, seers, and revelators.

When a prophet dies, a new prophet and President of the Church is chosen in an orderly manner by a process put in place through revelation and used throughout the history of the Church.

- Upon the death of the President, the First Presidency is dissolved, and the counselors revert to their places of seniority in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, determined by the date they were ordained to the Quorum.
- The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles becomes the leading body of the Church with the senior Apostle, or President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, at its head.
- The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles meets to decide whether the First Presidency should be reorganized or whether the Quorum should preside over the Church.
- If a motion to reorganize the First Presidency is passed, the members of the Quorum unanimously select the new President of the Church. The senior Apostle has always become the new President. The President then chooses two counselors to form the new First Presidency.
- Following the reorganization of the First Presidency, the Apostle who has served the second longest is sustained as the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. If he has been called as a counselor in the First Presidency, the Apostle next to him in seniority serves as the Acting President of the Quorum.
- The new President of the Quorum of the Twelve and the other Apostles set apart the new President of the Church. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY JED CLARK

On February 3, 2008, President Boyd Kenneth Packer was set apart as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Though the title is new to President Packer, the responsibilities are not.

President Packer has served as Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles twice for a little more than a combined 13 years and 7 months. Only three men in the history of the modern Church have served as President of the Quorum for longer than President Packer served as Acting President—Orson Hyde (1805–78) from 1847 to 1875, Ruder Clawson (1857–1943) from 1921 to 1943, and Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) from 1951 to 1970.

President Packer is the only man to have served as Acting President twice. He was first set apart on June 5, 1994, when President Gordon B. Hinckley was the senior member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles but served as First Counselor in the First Presidency to President Howard W. Hunter. The next senior Apostle, President Thomas S. Monson, was also serving in the First Presidency as Second Counselor.

President Packer's first tenure ended upon the death of President Hunter. He was set apart as Acting President the second time on March 12, 1995, when President Hinckley became President of the Church and President Monson, the senior member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and President of the Quorum, accepted the call to serve as First Counselor to President Hinckley.

President Packer was sustained as an Assistant to the Twelve on September 30, 1961. He was sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on April 6, 1970, and ordained three days later. ■

Elder Quentin L. Cook

A Willing Heart and Mind

BY ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

It was fire drill day at a Logan, Utah, elementary school, and fire drill captain Joe Cook, a stalwart sixth-grade student leader, was determined to post a good time. He was pleased when, at the ringing of the alarm, students began to evacuate the building rapidly. “This will be record-setting time,” young Joe thought. “We’re going to go down in history.” Then just as fame seemed within his grasp, Joe heard the announcement: “Someone is still in the building. The building *is not* clear.”

As record-breaking time ebbed away, Joe Cook finally saw one lone first-grader emerge from the building. It was his little brother, Quentin! Joe had been denied his rightful place in Cache Valley history by his own flesh and blood!

Fuming, Joe barked, “What on earth were you doing?”

Quentin held up a pair of large, worn boots and said, “Joe, you know that [and he mentioned a friend’s name] sometimes has to wear hand-me-down shoes that are too big for him.



When the fire drill rang, he took off running and ran right out of these. He didn’t want to ruin the drill, so he left them and ran outside barefoot. I went back to get his boots for him because I didn’t want his feet to be cold in the snow.”

Such a tender story reveals how committed Elder Quentin La Mar Cook has been from his youth onward to matters of the heart and to the principles taught by the Savior. “I have known Quentin all my life,” says childhood friend and future missionary companion



Lee Burke, “and he has never done anything that would dishonor himself, his family, or his Church.” That the Lord knew the destiny of this young man was obvious to his beloved mother, Bernice, when her patriarchal blessing revealed that her sons “would bring

honor” to the family and “be mighty in forwarding the work of the Lord.” So those sons have done, and so Elder Quentin L. Cook will continue to do in his call as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.





Right: With Elder Jeffrey R. Holland and Elder Marion D. Hanks, their former mission president and former member of the Seventy. Opposite page, from top: Eight-year-old Quentin Cook (at left with his family) and at ages 19 and 3.

Learning from Others

Born on September 8, 1940, in Logan, Utah, to J. Vernon and Bernice Kimball Cook, Quentin learned from his father at a young age the importance of setting goals and working toward them.

“My father had three rules,” Elder Cook says. “First, we had to have worthwhile goals. Second, we could change our goals at any time. But third, *whatever* goal we chose, we had to work diligently toward it.”

His frequent talks with his father taught him to observe

those around him and apply the best in them to himself. “People have so much to offer us if we are willing to learn from them,” Elder Cook says. “That is why it is important to surround yourself with good people.”

Growing up in Logan, he had that opportunity. For example, he recalls listening intently as Elder L. Tom Perry, now of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, then a young man recently returned from World War II, spoke in sacrament meeting about his experiences. That inspiring moment remains one of his earliest and strongest childhood memories.

As a young man, Elder Cook loved sports, helping his high school teams win statewide recognition in basketball and football. His interests also included debate and politics. As a 16-year-old, he was one of two young men elected to represent the state at a national event. There he had the opportunity to meet current and future U.S. presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, and Gerald R. Ford. Seeing them at work in the law-making process impressed him deeply and helped influence his decision to study law.

Before his mission Elder Cook attended Utah State University, where he was elected to a student-body office with his friend W. Rolfe Kerr, who would later be called to the First Quorum of the Seventy and now serves as Commissioner of the Church Educational System.

From 1960 to 1962 Elder Cook served in the British Mission, the same mission to which I would be called.

We were profoundly affected by our mission president, Elder Marion D. Hanks, then of the

First Council of the Seventy. To all of his missionaries, he emphasized discipleship and determination. He taught us to love the Savior, to cherish the Book of Mormon, to be true to the Church and the gospel for the rest of our lives.





Now, more than 45 years later, it is a rare occasion to have two former missionary companions serving together in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

The list of good men and women from whom he had the opportunity to learn goes on, but Elder Cook points out that many of them didn't hold lofty positions at the time. They were just good people.

"We can learn from doctrine, and we can learn from good examples," Elder Cook says. "But when you find people who have put those two together, whose lives are consistent with what they have learned in the gospel of Jesus Christ, that is a wonderful combination. And these people don't have to be General Authorities or have some high occupation. All walks of life produce that kind of people."

The Influence of Family

Though Elder Cook has been blessed to find good associations throughout his life, those with the greatest influence have been members of his own family.

He is grateful for a loving, involved father and a mother who "loved the Savior. They did everything they could to raise us the right way." He appreciates the love and support of his brother, Joe, and sister, Susan.

One of the pivotal experiences of his life happened when he was 15 years old. His brother, Joe, wanted to serve a mission, but his father—a good man who had lost interest in Church activity—felt Joe should instead attend medical school. Joe and Quentin respected their father highly, so they sequestered themselves to consider his counsel.

They talked well into the night, balancing



the pros and cons of each option. The bottom line, they decided, was this: If the Church is just another good institution, Joe could help people better by going to medical school. However, if the Savior truly lived, if Joseph Smith truly was a prophet, if the Church he organized under God's direction truly is the Church of Jesus

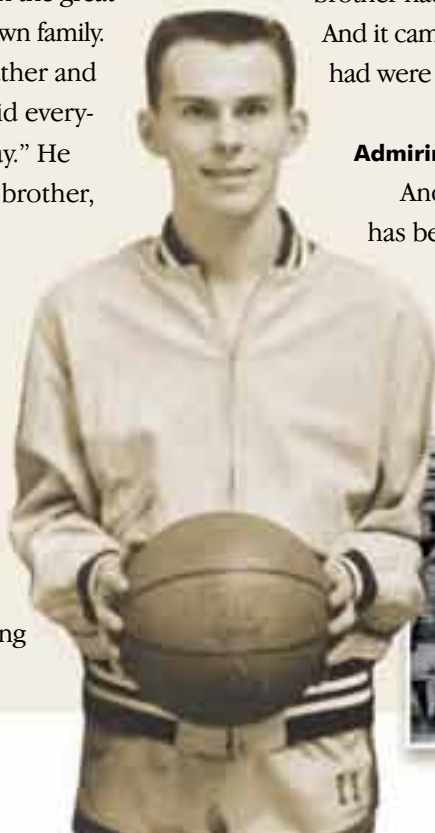
Christ, if the Book of Mormon is true, then Joe's obligation was clear. The next morning Joe approached his father with that reasoning and bore his testimony. He left for his mission soon after, with his father's support and his mother's joyful blessing.

That conversation profoundly affected young Quentin. He had always had a testimony of the Savior. However, Joseph Smith, the Church, the Book of Mormon—these were another matter to a 15-year-old. He believed, but he had yet to receive a spiritual witness that confirmed their certain reality.

After he and Joe parted that night, Quentin went to his room, knelt in prayer, and asked for the same witness his brother had, a witness he desired with all his heart. And it came in a way so powerful that any doubts he had were swept away forever.

Admiring Mary

Another of the great influences in his life has been his wife, Mary. "It would be hard to find anybody in the whole world who is as good and righteous and bright as she is," her husband says. "She has a wonderful sense of humor."



The Cooks' daughter, Kathryn Cook Knight, reinforces that assessment. "Dad was a perfect father," she says. "I adore everything about him. But my mother is a saint."



Sister Cook is very gifted musically, having taught music and filling her home with music. In fact, Elder Cook first became acquainted with Mary at a seventh-grade talent assembly. He remembers, "This little towheaded girl gets up and sings 'On the Sunny Side of the Street.' Even in junior high school she had a remarkably mature, deep voice. I was absolutely amazed. And that song could have been the theme for the rest of her life. She has a wonderfully bright, sunny disposition."

During their schooling, the two had numerous opportunities to work together. In junior high he was elected student-body president, and she was elected student-body vice president. They were in debate together. And as senior-class president in high school, he worked with her as a student-body officer.

"We were friends long before we were anything else," Elder Cook recalls. "I admired her before I fell in love with her, and marrying her was the best decision I have ever made."

Elder and Sister Cook were married in the Logan Utah Temple on November 30, 1962.

Loving People from All Walks of Life

After he graduated from Utah State University in 1963 with a degree in political science, Quentin and Mary moved to California, where he earned his Juris Doctor degree from Stanford University in 1966. Elder Cook then joined the San Francisco Bay Area law firm of Carr, McClellan, Ingersoll, Thompson and Horn.

It was there that he decided that "what I believed and who I was had to be visible." In his work in business law and health care, Elder Cook associated with well-educated and affluent people. The Cooks' son Larry remembers being touched that his father was so deeply respected among his business and civic associates. "I attended the retirement dinners honoring Dad when he left his law firm and later when he stepped down from the leadership of a health-care system," Larry recalls. "I was in awe that colleague after colleague, none of whom were members of the Church, spoke—often with tears—about what Dad meant to them, how he had mentored and nurtured them, how he had selflessly fostered their careers without any sense that it was taking time or energy away from his own."

Elder and Sister Cook raised their family (left and below) in California, where he worked in business law and health care. Above: With Sutter Health business associate Van Johnson. Opposite page: In high school Elder Cook was elected to Boys Nation, where he helped place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He also starred on his school's basketball and football teams.



At the same time, his Church service led to treasured associations with members whose cultural backgrounds were diverse and whose economic status stretched between broad extremes. Through both professional and Church experience, he developed the ability to understand and relate to people from all walks of life, and his love grew for all people.

He was called to serve as a bishop, then as a counselor in the stake presidency (to his beloved older brother, Joe!), and later as stake president. During that time he worked with not only English-speaking wards but congregations that spoke Spanish, Tongan, Samoan, Tagalog, Mandarin, and Cantonese.

Some of the members had little education and less money. But they had much to give. He remembers fondly “one of the great men I knew” who delivered bread for a living and was called into a bishopric. The man had seen ward leaders taking briefcases to their meetings, and so he decided to take one too. But since he had nothing to put in it yet, he filled it with sourdough bread to share. This humble man’s willingness to serve was surpassed only by love for others.

“Specific occupations or levels of education aren’t what I’m talking about when I say learn from good people,” Elder Cook says. “You can find good people everywhere and learn from them all.”

Being Prepared at Home

Raising their three children in the San Francisco area with his wife, Elder Cook was careful to develop a close relationship with each of his children in

spite of the demands of work and Church callings.

“It is important,” he says, “particularly for those who have leadership positions in the Church, that they have a relationship with their children where the children

can see the virtues they have being applied in an entirely different setting than church—whether it’s working in the yard or playing sports or doing something together outdoors.”

Remembering an example of love demonstrated, the Cooks’ second son, Joe, recalls that his father was uneasy about Joe’s driving back to San Francisco after finishing his first-semester exams at Brigham Young University. It would be late December, the roads might be snowbound, and he would be tired. At the end of the semester Joe answered a knock on the door of his dormitory to see his father standing there, having flown up from the Bay Area to be his son’s driving companion for the trip home. Joe says that was not only a powerful manifestation of his dad’s love for him but the talk time they had on the trip home—filled with discussions of various gospel principles and repeated testimonies of the Savior—became one of the truly formative moments in young Joe’s

vision of what he wanted by way of testimony and for his own future fatherhood.

As his father had done, Elder Cook taught his children to set goals and evaluate how their actions and activities affected reaching those goals. The Cooks also set goals as a family that were focused first on the gospel. Elder Cook believes that if a family observes appropriate



religious practices, such as family prayer, family scripture study, and regular family home evenings, children can be raised righteously anywhere.

The key, Elder Cook says, is private, individual religious observance. “Walking by my children’s doors and seeing them studying the scriptures or on their knees praying was the single most important thing to me as a father,” he says.

But individual religious observance is more likely to develop “when your family religious observance makes it clear to your children that all other life goals, such as occupation and education, are secondary to having a testimony of the Savior and living righteously.”

Preparing to Serve

During three decades in California, Elder Cook moved from one responsible position to another, both in his career and in the Church. He moved from associate to partner to managing partner in his law firm and then was hired as president and CEO of California Healthcare System, which subsequently merged with Sutter Health, where he became vice chairman.

During that time he served as a regional representative and Area Authority before being called as a member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy in 1996. He was called to the First Quorum in 1998.

As a General Authority, Elder Cook served in the Philippines/Micronesia Area Presidency and as President of the Pacific Islands and the North America Northwest Areas of the Church. His love for the faithful Saints around the world continued to grow.

As Executive Director of the Church’s Missionary Department, he played an important



role in developing the new missionary guide, *Preach My Gospel*. But Elder Cook takes no credit for it. “The hand of the Lord was in it right from day one,” he says. “Every single member of the First Presidency and the Twelve made incredible contributions.”

Ready and Willing

Elder Cook is well prepared to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. His willingness to learn from others and his lifetime of selfless service enable him to offer the Lord his heart and willing mind.

“I have revered, sustained, and honored all of those who have been Apostles,” he says. “Their influence on me has been profound. I don’t know what my contribution will be, but I do know that Jesus Christ is the Savior, that God is our Father in Heaven, that Joseph Smith is the prophet of this dispensation, and that we have a prophet today. That knowledge is the center of my life.”

We can be certain that knowledge will continue as the center of Elder Quentin L. Cook’s apostolic ministry. ■

For more information about Elder Cook, see www.quentinlcook.lds.org.

Of his wife, Mary, Elder Cook says, “Marrying her was the best decision I have ever made.” Below: After the October 2007 general conference session when he was sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Opposite page: Elder and Sister Cook’s children and grandchildren.



Implementing the counsel we receive from the leaders of the Church at general conference— even in small, simple ways—can guide our big decisions as well as our everyday lives.





PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY

Finding Answers from Conference

Sometimes the answers we seek come as the result of careful preparation, while at other times they come unexpectedly in response to an immediate need. Here members share how they found answers to personal challenges and questions through experiences with general conference.

Receiving Answers

Several weeks prior to the April 2007 general conference, my wife and I were facing several important decisions regarding employment. These decisions involved internships that could take me to Turkey while my family remained home in the United States. We had tentatively decided that if I were accepted to the program abroad, I would go. Otherwise, we would accept a more costly alternative by moving, together, to Washington, D.C.

As conference approached, I recalled the advice of a ward member: "Pray that one of the messages at conference will give you the personal revelation you need." I knew that prayers could be answered through conference, but it never occurred to me to pray for the speakers in advance. Deciding to follow that advice, my wife and I specifically asked the Lord to direct our path through the conference speakers. We prayed for weeks as we eagerly awaited conference.

When the Saturday session began, I knew that I had all that day and Sunday to receive an answer. To my

FILLING THE HUNGRY



"I have wondered if any have joined our conference hoping to find the answer to a deeply personal problem or to have

some light cast on the most serious questions of their heart. . . . It is to those who so hunger that I wish to speak. . . . In spite of life's tribulations and as fearful as some of our prospects are, I testify that there is help for the journey. There is the Bread of Eternal Life and the Well of Living Water. Christ has overcome the world—our world—and His gift to us is peace now and exaltation in the world to come. (See D&C 59:23.)"

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "He Hath Filled the Hungry with Good Things," *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 65, 66.

amazement, the very first conference talk, Elder Richard G. Scott's "Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,"¹ gave me the answer I so desperately sought. During his talk I recalled several impressions I had felt to accept the internship in D.C. I knew that even though it was the more expensive route, it was the Lord's will for us.

Although we had to sacrifice much, we received many blessings for following those promptings. I was able to spend time with my family, and I also gained a deeper understanding of and appreciation for my wife and what she does to care for our family.

That experience really solidified my testimony of conference and prayer.

The talks we hear during conference truly are the words of the Lord, and if we put our trust in Him and earnestly seek Him in fervent prayer, He will guide us in our decisions.

Aaron Cengiz, Wisconsin

Implementing Their Counsel

After watching the Saturday sessions of April 2007 general conference, I began preparing for Sunday by implementing what the Brethren encouraged us to do. I especially appreciated Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's counsel for us to watch our words² and Elder Jay E. Jensen's reminder to be nourished by the hymns.³ I had tried all morning to speak positively to my two young preschoolers while listening to a Mormon Tabernacle Choir CD playing in the background.

Somewhere amid the clamor of breakfast, my two-year-old daughter smeared diaper ointment all over our new couch. Although discouraged, I tried to remember Elder Holland's counsel for us to fill our words with faith, hope, and charity.

As I cleaned the mess off the couch, I recognized the uplifting nature of the song that was then playing on the CD. The lyrics reiterated the importance of treasuring

children now since they wouldn't be young forever. I smiled to myself as I realized how quickly my daughter would grow up.

These were such simple ways of following the words of the General Authorities, yet they filled me with gratitude. Implementing their counsel truly can help us in our everyday routine.

Shannon Helm, Washington

Serving Again

My husband, Richard, and I served three missions in six years. We even sold our country home and moved into a condo in 2004 so we would have less maintenance to be

concerned about while we were gone.

After returning from the last of these missions in November 2006, we thought we would stay home for a couple of years before serving again. We felt that we had earned a rest, and we wanted to spend time getting to know our grandchildren better. We had become involved in several volunteer activities and were enjoying our time at home. We definitely wanted to serve again and to continue serving as long as we were physically able, but for now, we were going to rest.

When the May 2007 *Ensign* arrived, we each delved into our own copies. As I read Elder David A. Bednar's talk, the Spirit whispered, "It is time to go again," but I didn't say anything to my husband. A few minutes later Richard asked me to listen as he read aloud from Elder Henry B. Eyring's talk, "This Day": "Complacency can affect even the seasoned adult. The better and the longer you serve, the more likely that the tempter can place this lie in your mind: 'You have earned a rest.' . . . The temptation will be to believe that you will return to serve again, someday."⁴

Richard paused and looked up at me as the Spirit whispered to him, "It is time to go again."

PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

Studying general conference talks after conference can help remind us of things we learned and felt and can give us the opportunity to be taught anew.

Acting on those promptings, we are now happily serving once again. Even though it was difficult to leave our family, we feel that in our situation it was the right decision. We have seen temporal and spiritual blessings that have come from serving the Lord.

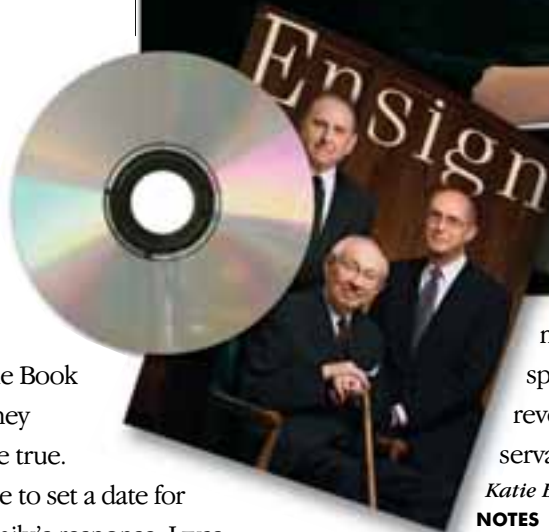
LeeAnne Whitaker, Utab

Learning His Will

In September 1994, after attending Church meetings for nearly six months, I began taking the missionary discussions. The sister missionaries taught me about Joseph Smith and the First Vision while I continued reading the Book of Mormon. I prayed about the things they were teaching me and learned they were true. Consequently, the missionaries asked me to set a date for baptism, but I was worried about my family's response. I was away from home for my first semester of college, and my parents were concerned that I was making a hasty decision.

During this time, the missionaries invited me to attend October general conference. What stood out most from the messages was not the content but my feelings. When President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) spoke, I felt in both my mind and heart that I was listening to a prophet of God. I felt inspired and strengthened in my convictions; I also felt peace. When I talked with the missionaries about my feelings, they shared two scriptures with me: Amos 3:7 and Doctrine and Covenants 1:38. When I read that the Lord reveals his secrets to the prophets, who speak for the Lord, I realized why I had felt so wonderful. I had heard the voice of the Lord giving guidance and direction through His servants! Those feelings increased my desire to be baptized, but they also helped me wait a few more months so that my family could accept my decision.

Since that time I have felt those same feelings of peace and inspiration at every session of general conference. The Holy Ghost confirms that the prophets are servants of the living God. As a result, I have learned the importance of



making the necessary physical and spiritual preparations so the Lord can reveal his secrets to me through his servants, the prophets (see Amos 3:7).

Katie Beck, Ohio

NOTES

1. *Ensign*, May 2007, 8.
2. "The Tongue of Angels," *Ensign*, May 2007, 16.
3. "The Nourishing Power of Hymns," *Ensign*, May 2007, 11.
4. *Ensign*, May 2007, 90. ■



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. After reading this article, have family members share a time they received answers, implemented counsel, served others, or learned Heavenly Father's will through watching general conference. Challenge your family to use one of the suggestions from the article during the next conference. Bear testimony of the importance of preparing to receive answers from conference talks.

2. Have your family discuss the different ways that people find answers from conference. Notice how many different ideas Church members submitted to the *Ensign*. Ask your family what ideas they would have contributed. Look in the contents pages to see if there is a request for ideas on another topic. Write down your ideas and submit them.



Help and Hope in



BY MICHAEL R. MORRIS
Church Magazines

Thanks to a ward program that matches young single adult tutors with inner-city youth, students in Washington, D.C., are raising their grades and striving to reach their academic potential.



Ward members and tutors gather on the steps of the Washington D.C. Third Ward meetinghouse. Top: Elder Ray Mecham serves dinner to hungry youth. Above: Diehl Mutamba, a hard-working athlete and student, hopes to become a lawyer.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL R. MORRIS, EXCEPT AS NOTED

It's 6:30 p.m. on a Wednesday in the Washington D.C. Third Ward meetinghouse. The multipurpose room is filling up with excited youth. Tutoring doesn't begin for half an hour, but it's hard to study on an empty stomach.

A young man offers a blessing on the all-you-can-eat hot dogs, gives thanks for the tutors, and prays for the academic success of the youth and adults who have gathered for the ward's weekly tutoring session. The ketchup and mustard flow freely, as does the friendly banter. Half an hour later, every classroom is buzzing with questions and answers, encouragement and mentoring.

In this crowded inner-city meetinghouse two miles north of the U.S. Capitol, hot dog consumption is up. More important, so are test scores, grades, motivation, and hope.

"Our Youth Were Failing"

When Tenisha Barnett received her report card at the end of her junior year, she knew that her chances for higher education were waning. If she hoped to get back on track for graduation and college, she needed help in a hurry—especially with math and English.

Tenisha wasn't the only student in her ward struggling with school.

"At the end of the 2006 school year, a lot of our youth were failing," says ward member Bethany Spalding. "Because intellectual development is a key to spiritual development, our bishop felt that if we lose them in school, we could lose them in church."

That summer Bishop Richard McKeown called Sister Spalding and her husband, Andy, as ward education and literacy specialists. The Spaldings, with help from the bishopric and ward Young Men and Young Women leaders, and with advice from other urban wards, developed a tutoring program designed to meet the difficult challenges that face many of the ward's youth. Those challenges include single-parent homes, lack of motivation and parental support, assimilation following immigration, and inner-city attitudes that often hinder education and promote a cycle of dependency.

Washington, D.C.



Shalley Lynch (left) shares a light moment with her tutor, Andrada Tomoia-Cotisel. Shalley credits Andrada for giving her inspiration, hope, and encouragement.

A Remarkable Response

One of the greatest challenges was finding tutors for approximately 20 young people.

“Everyone fundamentally believed that one-on-one tutoring was preferable,” says Bishop McKeown. “Yet the person power needed to do that is a little staggering when you have 15–20 youth that you’re trying to serve.”

To meet the need, Bishop McKeown approached Bishop Brad Bryan of the Washington D.C. Second Ward to see if any members of his young single adult ward would be willing to serve as tutors.

Bishop Bryan hoped for at least a dozen volunteers. To his surprise, 60 ward members signed up.

“Our ward members accepted the assignment not as a Church calling but as volunteer work in addition to their Church callings, schoolwork, and jobs,” he says. “That’s what is remarkable.”

Bishop McKeown was gratified by the overwhelming response. “It just points out the goodness of people who are willing to give to a cause when they believe they can help and be effective.”

As the program blossomed, the youth began inviting their parents and friends, missionaries began bringing investigators, and students from the Spanish-speaking Washington D.C. First Ward, which meets in the same chapel, began coming. During tutoring, youth receive help with reading, school assignments, study skills, and personal responsibility, while adults receive training in the use of personal computers and help preparing for examinations,

including the General Education Development (GED) test.

The program complements the Washington D.C. Third Ward’s efforts to encourage higher education, help unemployed members find jobs, and assist underemployed members in finding better jobs. It also generates confidence, self-worth, and retention.

In matching tutors with students, ward leaders seek spiritual guidance. Often the result has been what Sister Spalding describes as “a perfect, inspired fit.”

“I’m Accomplishing Something”

Many of the youth receiving help know the blessing of having the right tutor. Diehl Mutamba, a hard-working athlete and high school senior with hopes of becoming a lawyer, needed help preparing for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

“We were trying to find Diehl a well-matched tutor when we received a call from Rob Roe, a single adult in our ward who wanted to become involved,” says Sister Spalding. Robert happened to be a lawyer with a background in preparing people to take the SAT. He praises the tutoring program for giving him an opportunity to get to know the youth in his ward and to become involved in their lives. Diehl, who recently retook the SAT, is grateful that Robert helped him prepare.

LaMar (“Twin”) Tyndle, on the other hand, was performing significantly below grade level. When Bishop McKeown, who describes Twin as “both a smart guy and a very capable worker,” asked him why, Twin admitted, “I can’t read.”

The ward matched Twin, who was baptized soon after becoming involved in the tutoring program, with Regan Brough of the Washington D.C. Second Ward and Elder Ray Mecham, a retired elementary school principal who at the time was serving a full-time mission with his wife, Charlotte, in the Washington D.C. North Mission.

“The other evening I walked out of my office during tutoring and there’s Elder Mecham, perhaps sent here by virtue of the fact that he has an elementary school pedigree, reading with Twin,” says Bishop McKeown. Shortly afterward, Twin had enough confidence to read a scriptural verse aloud for the first time in priesthood meeting.

“It’s been amazing to see his progress,” says Regan. Twin’s mother, in fact, was so impressed with his improvement that she requested tutoring for Twin’s two brothers, LaMain and LaVontay.

"I feel like I'm accomplishing something," says Twin, whose grades have improved dramatically. His favorite book? An illustrated Book of Mormon given to him by Elder Mecham.

"You Can Do It"

With a daughter suffering from asthma, JalShalley ("Shalley") Lynch developed a personal interest in pharmaceuticals. She worked for a while stocking shelves in a pharmacy but later decided to become a pharmacy technician. Achieving her goal, however, turned out to be harder than she anticipated.

Shalley failed the technician exam her first try and fell five points short her second try, which cost her her job. But thanks to her tutors, she is pressing forward and has since found another job.

"As much as I'd like to give up, the tutors keep encouraging me, telling me, 'You can do it,'" Shalley said. "The tutors give me the inspiration, hope, and encouragement

I need. This program is the best thing that could have happened in this area."

Shalley's tutor, Andrada Tomoia-Cotisel, also feels blessed by the program. "Tutoring brings me a sense of happiness and peace, especially when Shalley calls to share her success stories and happy moments," says Andrada, who works for a health center that serves the less fortunate. "Tutoring is a way I can invest in other people and help them succeed, which makes me happy."

"It's Good to Help Others"

High school junior Jeffrey Akame had never heard the term *valedictorian* until learning that his tutor, Michel Call, had earned top honors in high school. "I think I could do that," Jeffrey said at the time. He admitted later, however, that his grades "were not so good—C's and below."

Michel, an engineer with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, helped Jeffrey tap



Jeffrey Akame (left) reviews homework with his tutor, Michel Call.



PHOTOGRAPH BY BETHANY SPAIDING

Above: Elder and Sister Mecham and tutor Regan Brough take a break after tutoring (left to right) brothers LaVontay, LaMain, and Twin, pictured with their mother, Tracy Tyndle (top right). Left: "It's never too late to go back to school and get your education," says Naya Lantion (left), arriving for church with her tutor, Olivia Trusty.



his academic potential by tutoring him in chemistry, math, and entrepreneurship. Jeffrey's grades soon rose, as did his motivation. With help from Brother Spalding, ward education specialist, he transferred to Bell Multicultural High School, an academically challenging institution with limited enrollment and high demand. Jeffrey now receives straight A's, even in concurrent-enrollment classes that earn college credit.

"What I'm trying to do now is at least give myself the opportunity to be what I choose to be—either an architect or an engineer," Jeffrey says. He thanks Michel not only for his help but also for the sacrifice he makes in time and travel to tutor students.

"It's good to help others," says Michel. "Tutoring gives me a chance to help them get to where they want to go."

Olivia Trusty, a member of the Colonial First Ward who is helping Nnennaya ("Naya") Lantion earn her GED, agrees. "Being with Naya, watching her progress, and helping her earn her GED has been a great blessing," says Olivia, who recently finished a master's degree at Georgetown University. "It's great to see Heavenly Father's children working on their education, wanting to learn, and wanting to be better. I've been so blessed with my own educational opportunities; why not share what I know with others?"

Naya, a single mother who emigrated from Nigeria in 1990, learned of the tutoring program from her son, C. J. His progress in the program piqued her curiosity. For years she had wanted to earn her GED, but the demands of work and family had prevented her from preparing for it. The ward's tutoring program fit perfectly with her schedule.

"I always wanted to do this—not just for myself but to set an example for my children," she says. "It's never too late to go back to school and get your education."

A Blessing to Serve

Janna Blais had been faithfully attending her Sunday meetings and fulfilling her Church callings, but she was looking for an additional way to increase her spirituality, especially in preparing to receive her temple endowment.

As soon as she began tutoring Tenisha Barnett, she experienced the spiritual lift she had been seeking.

"When you spend your time the way the Savior would spend His time, you become closer to Him," says Janna, who is majoring in marriage, family, and human development. "When I do things like this, I feel a sense of purpose regarding who I am and why I'm here on earth. That's been the greatest blessing for me—that regular reminder of why I'm here."

It has also been a blessing to serve those who have less,

she adds. "Many of our students haven't been given what we tutors have been given. It's good for us to be a little bit uncomfortable, to see the reality of their challenges, and to be able to help out."

With help from Janna and tutor Eric Cragun, Tenisha raised her grades to a B average before graduating from high school. In the process she gained a testimony that education can help her achieve her goals—both intellectual and spiritual.

"I wasn't very active in the Church before coming to tutoring," says Tenisha. The program, she testified during a recent sacrament meeting, has brought her closer to the Lord and His Church.

"The Door of Opportunity"

"This program is not a miracle cure," says Bishop McKeown. "It is hard work, diligence, and a lot of patience on the part of tutors, some of whom are disappointed that their student didn't show up on a particular night. But over the long haul, benefits are occurring."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) has counseled the youth of the Church to get all the education they can. "Education," he said, "is the key which will unlock the door of opportunity, and the Lord has laid upon you the responsibility to secure an education."¹

With help from dedicated tutors and leaders, youth in the Washington D.C. Third Ward are striving to accept that responsibility—with a hope in the opportunities that will follow. ■

NOTE

1. "Inspirational Thoughts," *Ensign*, July 1998, 4.



With help from tutors like Janna Blais (left), Tenisha Barnett has gained a testimony of the important role education plays in helping her achieve intellectual and spiritual goals.

BY DAMIAN IDIART

Is it Daddy Sunday?"

I hear this question from my five children practically every Sunday as we arrive home from Church meetings. Daddy Sunday is the day I hold personal interviews with each of my children. These interviews, held every fast Sunday, have been a great source of joy and inspiration.

A little more than four years ago, I was sitting in a leadership meeting when a wise member of the stake presidency invited fathers to begin a tradition of regularly interviewing their children. His instruction was to do so at an early age—even if our children might not be able to communicate in full sentences. Doing so, he said, would engender in fathers and children a desire and ability to speak openly. He suggested that the interviews become part of our Sabbath worship on fast Sunday.

I recall the Spirit whispering to my soul that this counsel was heaven-sent. My children were all very young, but I was able to envision my future relationship with each of them as they grew older. How I would need to be able to speak to them without fear or discomfort!

I have held these interviews almost without exception each month since then. Every fast Sunday I kneel and begin my fast by including a plea for the inspiration I need to conduct productive interviews. I pray that Heavenly Father will soften the hearts of my children. I also pray that He will let them know how much I love them, thus

allowing them to feel free to discuss their concerns, accomplishments, and feelings. Fasting makes these prayers more poignant and heartfelt.

My children are growing up quicker than I ever imagined. We are now working on requirements for the Faith in God Award with my nine-year-old, baptismal interview questions with my seven-year-old, and curiosity about preschool with my four-year-old. I appreciate the openness we enjoy and the chance I have to teach my children. During our interviews, I pray with them and express my love for them.

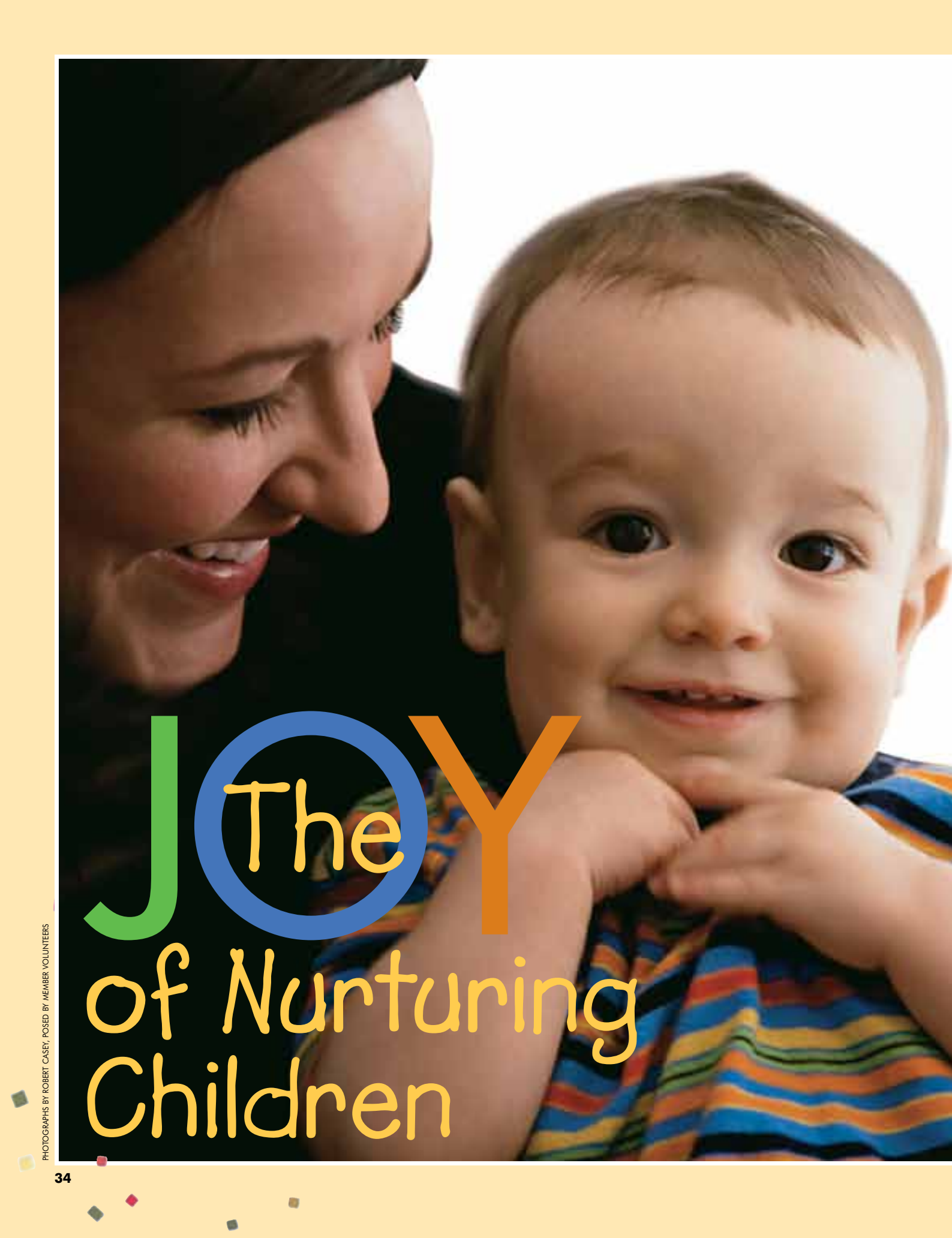
Occasionally the interviews with my youngest children may amount to no more than playing with dolls, but they look forward to personal time with me each month. As they approach their teenage years, I hope they remember that they can always talk to me.

I am thankful for a wise leader, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the principle of fasting, a loving Heavenly Father, and my wonderful children, who make my experiences with fatherhood some of my most cherished blessings and memories—especially on Daddy Sunday. ■

Daddy Sunday

Personal interviews with my children have been a great source of joy and inspiration.





J The Y
of Nurturing
Children

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT CASEY, POSED BY MEMBER VOLUNTEERS

No matter what your situation, you can find joy in nurturing children.

Following are the testimonies of three women who show that the spiritual rewards of motherhood are for everyone.

The Gift of Memories

love camping,” six-year-old Sara said as we returned home from a one-night camping trip. “When can we go again?”

I didn’t love camping. By the time my husband and I had prepared for every conceivable camping emergency, I was exhausted before we’d even left the house. Add to that the discomfort of sleeping bags, air mattresses, insects, and dirt—not to mention the hassle of keeping cold food cold and hot food hot, then another day of unpacking and washing when we got home—and I wondered, “Is one night away from home worth all this hassle?”

“Camping is no vacation for moms,” commiserated a friend. “I didn’t enjoy it at first. But my husband has so many wonderful memories of camping as a child that he really wanted our family to have that experience.”

One phrase from that conversation opened up my mind to the bright light of personal inspiration:

“He has so many wonderful memories of his childhood.” I wasn’t just rearing children; I was preparing a future generation of parents—a generation that would need all the positive experiences I could give them to cope with an



increasingly challenging world. Was it possible that children who have a happy childhood will be better parents?

The parenting puzzle of thousands of pieces came together into a whole picture for a moment. I couldn’t live my children’s lives for them, but I could

give them a well of joyful memories from which they could draw throughout their lives.

Family home evening didn’t suddenly become a miracle of light every week, but even when the children were uncooperative and unruly, I tried harder to be consistent and to remember that teaching moments can become memories at unexpected times. I knew we were making progress when our young son asked, “Is it family home evening tonight?”

“That was last night,” I replied, “but we can still do something fun tonight.”

Helping my children feel and recognize the Spirit became another priority. When our children saw their grandmother receive a priesthood blessing prior to surgery, the presence of the Spirit was especially strong. Sara didn’t understand why she felt the way she did, and for nearly an hour I talked with her and explained that Heavenly Father often talks to us through feelings. I told her to remember those feelings so that she would know to listen when Heavenly Father was talking to her.

I started noticing other parents building memories for their children too. One time my husband had emergency surgery, and several days later a neighbor showed up with his four-year-old son at his side. “We’ve come to mow your lawn,” said the father. From my own experience, I knew that a four-year-old couldn’t help much, but I see that boy, now a deacon, often helping neighbors. The lessons and memories of his childhood are a natural part of him. I think he will be a great dad someday.

Seeing the value of memories has changed my perspective on being a parent. We no longer make messes; we make memories. One crisp autumn day I took my children and



two of their friends to the park. As they ran from swing to slide and then rolled in the damp sand, I was filled with gratitude for this time they had to be kids. “Oh, remember this day,” I told them in my mind. “Remember the joy of autumn, of family, of friends, of God’s wonderful earth.” On the way home my son discovered enough sand in the car to make a handful and affectionately tossed it at me. We laughed together. We’d made a memory—we could clean the car any day.

I recall what Alma the Younger said about his conversion: that he remembered all his sins and iniquities (see Alma 36:12). But he also remembered the words of his father “concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world” (Alma 36:17). The angel opened Alma’s eyes to his past sins, but the memory of his father’s words brought him to his knees to ask for forgiveness.



I believe I understand better what is expected of me as a parent. I work harder at creating moments that matter. The demands of parenthood haven’t changed. Perhaps the pressure has even increased, but the blessings have also. I hope to pass on these insights to my children in memory after memory. Perhaps each precious memory I give my children will become another link in a chain of righteous parenthood as they help their own children make

joyful memories. Eternal bonds, eternal memories.

And what about camping? It’s worth all the time we take and every memory we make. So we continue to make camping memories in our own way—by packing everything into the car and roughing it as painlessly as possible.

Ann S. Huefner, Utah



Fourteen Months with Tommy

My husband and I had been on our mission in Germany just three weeks when a bishopric member of the ward we attended, which was full of servicemen and servicewomen, asked me to accept a special calling. For the two hours of Primary each week, he wanted me to be a one-on-one “teacher” to a nine-year-old boy with a learning disability.

“Tommy [name has been changed] is disruptive in class,” he told me. “He has difficulty learning and doesn’t communicate well, so your job will be ‘custodial.’” We could join the other Primary children for singing and sharing time so long as I kept him under control.

My heart sank. I wanted with all my being to say no. I wanted to attend Relief Society. I hadn’t had time yet to get acquainted with my Relief Society sisters or many of the other ward members. How could I spend two hours every Sunday shut in a room with a child I couldn’t even have a conversation with?

AVAILABLE TO ALL WOMEN



“The spiritual rewards of motherhood are available to all women. Nurturing the

young, comforting the frightened, protecting the vulnerable, teaching and giving encouragement need not—and should not—be limited to our own children.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Lessons from Eve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 87–88.

Then I remembered our favorite family hymn, “A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief” (*Hymns*, no. 29). I knew well the message of the song: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). And I also knew that I must accept this call.

When I met Tommy, I was in awe. He was an absolutely beautiful little boy. That first Sunday, we gathered up some trucks and other toys and went to our room. It didn’t take me long to realize that this young man with bright eyes also had a brilliant mind, and when I

took time to listen, I found that he communicated well. I made up my mind I was not going to waste my precious time or his playing with toys. I was going to teach him.

For 14 months, until his father returned from the Gulf War and was transferred back to the States, Tommy and I met together every Sunday morning. Tommy’s eyes and



face lit up when he saw me, and he smothered me with hugs and kisses. His attention span was such that it was hard for him to listen to a lesson as normally given, so I cut out little cardboard figures and used them to act out the lessons from the manual.

He knew the point of each story. He also loved to role-play lessons. His favorite story was of Jesus telling His disciples to allow the little children to “come unto me” (see Luke 18:15–16). He liked to play the part of the disciples, gruffly telling the children to go away. Then his face would light up when he said words similar to what Jesus said: “Let the little children come. Don’t stop them. Come, children.” He felt joy in the Savior’s love for him as a little child.

One day the Primary president asked him to give a talk. We each took turns acting the parts of the Primary president introducing Tommy, the Primary children in their seats listening to Tommy, and Tommy standing at the pulpit giving his talk. On the day of his talk, he was well prepared. He loved giving it. He even wanted to do it again.

The 14 months whizzed by. I was still able to get acquainted with the Relief Society sisters in other ways. Tommy’s mother was able to attend Relief Society, and I realized that this was more important than being there myself—after all, I had attended and served in Relief Society for many years prior to this.

I was rewarded beyond measure by seeing this beautiful child grow in spite of the challenges life had dealt him. Had I not been prompted by that scripture in Matthew, I would have missed one of the warmest, most fulfilling experiences of my life. For 14 months, I knew that I was making a difference in the life of this special child, whom I grew to love dearly. And he made a difference in mine.

Wanda West Badger, Utah

The Plan I Didn’t Understand

Do you want to hold her?” my friend asked me, her face beaming with pride. The soft scent of baby powder floated up to me as I reached for the small bundle. I held her carefully, but the warmth in my arms only increased the pain in my heart. Would I ever hold a baby of my own?

My husband and I had been raised in large Latter-day Saint families, and we had looked forward to having a large family of our own. But when I did not become pregnant, our concern began to grow. I went to the doctor, and he told me I had a medical condition that often produced infertility in women. He said the probability of my getting pregnant would likely decrease further over the years. I went home in tears but clung desperately to a hope—a special promise given in my patriarchal blessing that I would give birth to and raise children. I remained optimistic.

A short time later my husband suggested adoption. We prayed for a confirmation of our decision, filled out numerous documents, went through many procedures, and then waited. In a few months a beautiful baby boy was placed in my arms, and he brought sunshine, love, and laughter into our home.

In the years that followed, we adopted seven more beautiful, energetic children. My life was full, but the promise in my patriarchal blessing nagged at the back of my mind. There came a point in my life when I realized it was threatening my testimony of the gospel. I wondered: “If I never have a biological child, will I still believe the Church is true? Does my entire testimony hang on the fulfillment of this one blessing?”



I struggled with these questions until I grew strong enough to say in my heart, “Even if the promise is never fulfilled in this life, the Church is still true. There are too many evidences of its truthfulness to deny it based on this one point.”

When I finally came to grips with this issue, my faith blossomed, and I was no longer nagged by the problem. It just didn’t matter.

When our youngest child was five, I went to the doctor for what I thought was a reaction to a hay fever shot. He said I was pregnant. As I left the office, I asked one more time, “Are you sure?” He nodded and smiled.

When I told my husband, he grinned and said, “If you’re pregnant, I’m Zacharias, and we’ll name him John.” We both laughed. Seven months later “John” was born. A little more than a year later he was joined by a brother.

Did the fulfillment of the blessing strengthen my

testimony? It was certainly a confirmation of the Lord’s promise, but the real test of faith had come before my son was born. My greatest test was when I had to look at the foundation of my testimony and decide if it rested solely on the fulfillment of a single promise.

On my wall hang ten pictures—beautiful Asian, Hispanic, and Caucasian faces—our ten children, eight adopted, two borne by me. Looking back I wonder how many children I would have had if our prayers had been answered immediately. Would I have valued the children as much if we hadn’t struggled to get them? If all my children had been born to me, would I ever have learned to appreciate the diversity of personalities, talents, cultures, and races that the Lord has created? Now as I see the Lord’s plan, I realize that it was perfect for me. But my test and spiritual growth came when I didn’t understand that plan and had to walk by faith.

Lorraine Jeffery, Ohio ■

By Divine Design

ASIA

Japan

South Korea

Taiwan

We believe the family is ordained of God. Our understanding of the family is declared in the prophetic guide “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”

With so much of sophistry that is passed off as truth, with so much of deception concerning standards and values, with so much of allurements and enticement to take on the slow stain of the world, we have felt to warn and forewarn. In furtherance of this we of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles now issue a proclamation to the Church and to the world as a declaration and reaffirmation of the standards, doctrines, and practices relative to the family which the prophets, seers, and revelators of this church have repeatedly stated throughout its history.”¹

With these words, President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) introduced “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”² at the general Relief Society meeting held on September 23, 1995, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

“We commend to all a careful, thoughtful, and prayerful reading of this proclamation,” he urged. “The strength of any nation is rooted within the walls of its homes. We urge our people everywhere to strengthen their families in conformity with these time-honored values.”³



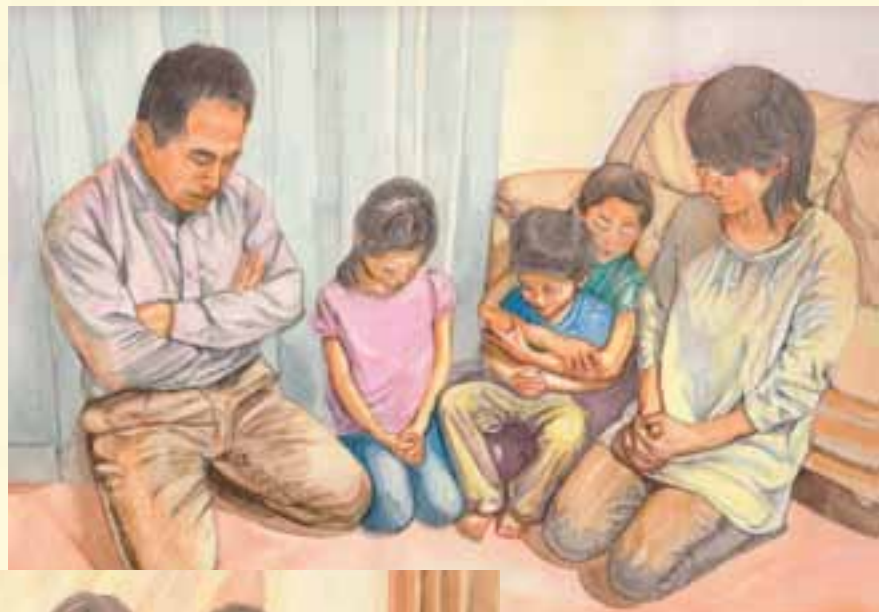
“Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Following are images of Asian people, whose culture is known for their “intense and devoted family relationships,” which include “respect for elders and high standards for children.”⁴ These images are representative of Latter-day Saints worldwide and depict important teachings found in the family proclamation.



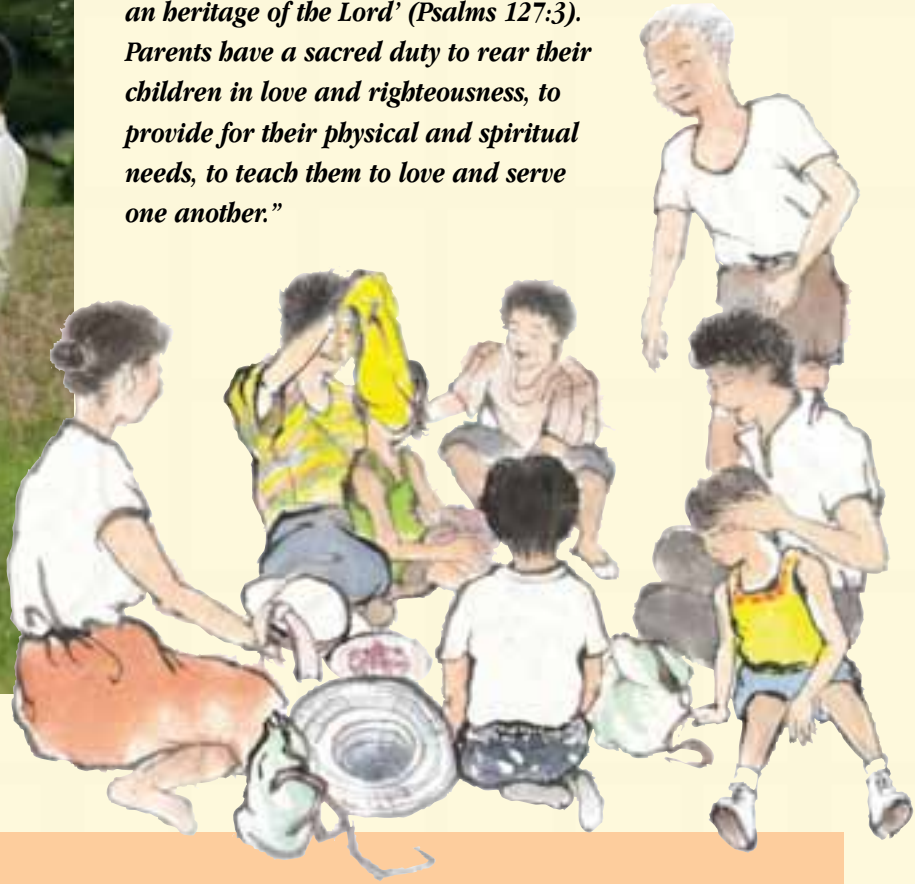
“The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity.”

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





“Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. ‘Children are an heritage of the Lord’ (Psalms 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another.”



FAMILY BLESSINGS FROM FAMILY HOME EVENING

“Six years ago I moved to Tokyo as a young single Latter-day Saint woman. Family home evenings have helped me feel a part of my gospel family. At first I held family home evening with my two roommates. Then, when I began living alone, I held family home evening every Monday by myself. I read the scriptures, prepared my Sunday lesson, or watched a Church video.

“Now our ward holds a monthly family home evening group for single members after our Sunday meetings, and I really look forward to it. I am able to spend time talking to brothers and sisters who, because of their Church callings, I would otherwise

not have the opportunity to get to know.

“Within our stake, another ward holds a family home evening group every week for single members. I have recently started attending it. Sometimes the missionaries and their investigators attend. The lessons each week are well-prepared, spiritual, and I learn a lot. Often I think of something I learned and say, ‘OK! I’ll give it a try!’ While refreshments are being served, it’s fun to talk with everyone.

“Spending time with friends who share the same faith is important to me. Just as it says in Moses 7:18, ‘And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in

righteousness; and there was no poor among them.’ When our hearts and minds are one, many blessings are poured out upon us. And through that, the faith and testimonies of each person in attendance are strengthened.

“I know the Lord loves us. I am grateful for our prophets and continuing revelation. I am thankful that the Lord has given us family home evening through His prophets. The experiences I am having and the things I am learning through family home evening as a single Latter-day Saint will also be a blessing to me when I have my own family.”

Mieko Takahashi, Tokyo, Japan



“By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.”

NOTES

1. “Stand Strong against the Wiles of the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 100.
2. *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
3. *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 101.
4. “The Asians at Berkeley,” *Wall Street Journal*, May 30, 1995, p. A14, quoted in *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 99.

Remember who you are

At no other time had I felt so alone. I didn't even know myself. At that moment, my mother's words came to my mind.

NAME WITHHELD

It was around my 14th birthday when my mother started talking in code. Just as I would be running out the door for some new adventure with my friends, she would call out, "Remember who you are!"

I wasn't quite sure what she meant by that, but I would feign understanding and yell over my shoulder, "OK, Mom. Bye!" At times I would mull over her coded message. What was she trying to say? I knew who I was: Traci, sixth child in my family; big deal.

I decided my mother's message was the result of her occupation. She had been a registered nurse for about 25 years, so maybe she had seen children who had been left with amnesia after some horrible accident. Yes, I decided, she wants to make sure that if I am ever hurt, I will remember my name and other vital information. That must be the reason for her emphatic message.

As I was growing up, life with my family was not always pleasant, despite the fact that we were members of the Church. After one particularly bad night, I remember staring at myself in the mirror, hardly recognizing the reflection staring back at me because my face was red from my father's repeated slaps. I started crying, not knowing what to do or think. Thoughts of running away crossed my mind. Even worse, ideas of ending my unhappy life wormed their way into my confused thought process.

At no other time before or since have I felt so alone. I felt worn out, almost willing to let the surrounding



darkness take over. I looked into the mirror once more. The words “I don’t even know myself” tumbled from my lips. That was when I heard my mother’s phrase repeated clearly and distinctly in my mind: “Remember who you are! Remember who you are!”

I can describe that moment only as enlightening. For the first time, I realized what my mother’s message meant: it was her plea for me to remember my divine heritage. A phrase from the Primary song echoed in my mind: “I am a child of God” (*Hymns*, no. 301). That sudden reminder helped me fight Satan’s temptation to take drastic action. The knowledge that my nature was divine would help me endure to the end; my mother understood that, and I know she hoped that someday I would as well.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the perfect example of one who understood His divine heritage. The scriptures tell us that in His youth He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52). The more His understanding grew, the better prepared He was to fulfill His role as the Savior of the world.

We will not be called upon to suffer as Christ did, but to help us combat our trials, Heavenly Father has given us tools for increasing our understanding of our divine heritage. We have the scriptures, which show us how others have recognized their roles as sons and daughters of God and have acted accordingly. We have the prophets, who teach us about our divine nature and potential. We have the priesthood, which enables us to receive inspired blessings that affirm our relationship to Heavenly Father. We have temples, where we may participate in instructive and sacred ordinances. We also have the means for direct communication with Heavenly Father—prayer—which can help us during those times when we forget who we are.

The years following the night I figured out my mother’s code were still difficult. But my insight into my divine nature helped me come to view my challenges with an eternal perspective. My knowledge of my divine heritage has influenced the path I have chosen, leading me to marry in the temple and, with my husband, work to rear a family firmly grounded in the gospel.

I still think often about my mother’s words. At times I have imagined a final interaction with Heavenly Father before I departed for earth, and I like to picture Him embracing me and urging me on with one last morsel of advice: “Remember who you are!” ■

Your Divine Heritage



We were fore-ordained to come to earth at a particular time into particular circumstances to fulfill a foreordained purpose.


BY ELDER ROBERT C. OAKS
Of the Seventy

During my assignment in the Africa Southeast Area Presidency, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles came to conduct an area training session. During that session Elder Nelson made a statement that resonated in my heart then and continues to do so today. He said, “Understand who you are in God’s plan.” This powerful concept should be a major objective of our lives here in mortality.

What a sweet blessing it is to come to know—to gain a testimony by the power of the Holy Ghost—that there is a God and that He has a plan with an exalted purpose for each of His children. It is also a very powerful, personal driving factor to be able to accept that we each can have a particular role to play in this plan. You owe it to yourself to make an extra effort to discover, in every detail possible, who you really are—to discover your eternal potential in God’s plan.

You know you are a child of God, a son or a daughter of a loving Father who has structured a glorious plan for the salvation and happiness of each of His children. You understand that you were in the presence of our Father in Heaven in premortal councils, where His plan was presented to all of His children. We accepted His plan. Jesus Christ was there, and He became the leading advocate for the plan—the objective of which is to provide all of God’s children the opportunity to come to earth; obtain a body; and, during our period of mortal probation, prove ourselves in faith, repentance, obedience, and enduring to the end. We accepted that we would one day stand before the Lord Jesus Christ and be judged. Those found worthy would be exalted and would dwell eternally in the presence of the Father and the Son, with eternal family relationships prevailing. All others would be assigned to kingdoms of lesser glory.

You also know that in order to give life and vitality to His plan—and because of His perfect



love for each of His children—this loving Father offered up His Only Begotten Son, that through His atoning sacrifice in Gethsemane and on the cross at Calvary, He would become the Savior of all humankind, the eternal hope of the world. Through His sacrifice He would ensure resurrection from the grave for all, as well as provide the opportunity for forgiveness for every repentant soul. You know that without a Savior there is no plan of salvation and happiness.

The Importance of Understanding

What a blessing it is to have this revealed doctrine as a foundation upon which to build our lives and for our trust and hope in eternal happiness. But are these glorious, majestic understandings enough? They are certainly critical underpinnings for our eternal progression, but to reach our divine, eternal potential, they are only the beginning.

We are each individuals with singular talents, strengths, opportunities, and challenges. We believe we were foreordained to come to earth at a particular time into particular circumstances and that our particular set of gifts, attitudes, and talents—if properly developed and employed—will enable us to fulfill a foreordained purpose.

Elder Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, tells a tender personal story that makes this point in a penetrating way. When he was a teenager, his family moved from a very comfortable environment for young

Henry to a location that was not to his liking. He sulked for a bit until the Spirit spoke directly to him about who he was in God's plan and how he ought to proceed. One day the Spirit instructed, "When you find who you are, you will be sorry you didn't try harder." I suspect this spiritual admonition for more diligent effort is probably appropriate for most of us. The Lord will lead us in our particular role if we will seek and follow His guidance.

Jesus Christ is the greatest example of one who understood who He was. His success during His mortal probation is, in part, a reflection of this understanding. Christ's ministry is filled with statements highlighting His complete understanding of His mortal and His eternal destiny. For instance, in John 18:37 we read the interchange between Pilate and Christ: "Pilate . . . said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

In fact, everything we know about Christ suggests that He understood exactly who He was and exactly what He was expected to do in His life.

Talents and Gifts

For us to move in the desired direction for our own lives, we must come to know ourselves. We must study, stretch, and test ourselves and ponder the results. This



Because of His perfect love for you, this loving Father offered up His Only Begotten Son, that through His atoning sacrifice in Gethsemane and on the cross at Calvary, He would become the Savior of all humankind, the eternal hope of the world.

getting-to-know-yourself process is important because it enables you to do more with your life. It permits you to come closer to realizing your full potential. It lets you build on and use your strengths, your gifts, and your talents to carry out your purpose in God's plan. It helps you overcome your weaknesses and avoid your vulnerabilities.

In a world so filled with despairing souls lacking a sense of personal worth, it is most uplifting to know that each one of us is endowed from on high with at least one spiritual gift (see D&C 46:11–12). When we know our gifts, we can polish them, hone them, and use them to bless the lives of those about us.

Let me give you a couple of examples from the life that I know best: my own. In high school I thought I was a pretty good athlete, and I wanted to play college ball. I tried out for football at Brigham Young University and was promptly cut. Then I tried out for basketball and was promptly cut. I didn't bother with baseball and tennis.

But I wasn't convinced of my limitations, even though everyone else seemed to be fully aware of them. I went to the Air Force Academy, where I wanted to try out again for collegiate athletics. With only 300 cadets on campus at that time, the odds were much better. I played football, basketball, and baseball my first year at the academy. But my maturing capacity for introspection, as well as knee surgery, made me realize that I was quite mediocre even on my better days. So I made some adjustments to my life goals. I have enjoyed a lifetime of participating in sports, but I have measured success and happiness in terms of participation rather than in excellence in performance.

When I was a freshman, Janie Thompson—a BYU legend in finding and developing talent—asked me if I would participate in a song and dance number she was producing for a conference. I agreed. But after a few practices, Janie said, "Bob, I like your enthusiasm, but you are not much of a



singer.” Since then I have not sought opportunities to sing in front of audiences. But I have found numerous rewards for enthusiasm.

Your successes highlight your gifts; your disappointments help you learn your limitations and identify areas to work on. These important lessons directly affect who you are in God’s plan and play a major role in helping you determine your true identity.

Spiritual Identity Theft

One of the great blessings of understanding our true eternal identity as a child of God is that our personal sense of self-worth can only be high. He loves each one of His children. We are each His son or daughter, with the potential to become like Him. In the gospel plan based on moral agency, we fail only if we make choices that lead to failure. But in that same light, we can make choices that will lead to our marvelous success. One of the great beauties of the gospel is that critical decisions are ours for the making.

Let us briefly discuss a significant threat to achieving our divine potential. Today we receive many warnings about identity theft. Some of you may have experienced the trauma resulting from this fraud. In our cybernetic

world of trust and rapid transmission of medical, financial, and other personal data, we are vulnerable to exploitation of our identifying details. Theft of our numerical mortal identity can be costly and cause us a great deal of misery. But the theft of our eternal identity has much longer effects and more dire consequences. I am not talking about addresses, credit cards, or any other identifying numbers. I am talking about something much more basic and more important than who the world thinks you are. I am talking about who *you* think you are.

We know we are sons and daughters of God, with the potential to become like Him as described in His plan of happiness. We know this potential is achieved through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and through obedience to the eternal laws and principles embedded in His gospel. We also know that Satan is totally dedicated to thwarting and derailing this marvelous plan-of-happiness knowledge and process. We know that one of his primary tools is to entice us to forget who we really are—to fail to realize or to forget our divine potential. This is the cruelest form of identity theft.

How does Satan do it? He is quite straightforward and predictable. First, he attempts to prompt doubts in our



Remembering helps us keep in mind our true identity. This is why we partake of the sacrament each week: to renew our covenants—and this is why we go back to the temple.

minds about our divine potential. He even cultivates doctrine in the world implying we are much less than we really are. He undermines our faith—and thus our confidence—in our ability to achieve our potential. He strives to bring us to a mind-set in which we believe that we, individually, are not good enough to ever achieve our celestial goals.

In this same vein Satan seeks to convince us that we are so bad that even the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ is not sufficient to reach down to our lowly depths and draw us up unto our Savior. He tempts us into paths that seem to verify his cynicism about our grand and glorious potential.

He then hedges his bets by surrounding us with the gaudy, glitzy filth of pornography and other forms of immorality and thus precludes our being led by the Holy Spirit. He is a clever fellow with many tricks to make us forget who we really are: sons and daughters of God with divine potential.

Remembering Who We Are

Satan does not want us to understand our divine potential, but the Lord certainly does. He has provided us with countless scriptures and prophetic promptings to help us counter and resist these satanic pulls. One of the most powerful of these promptings is found when Helaman, under the Lord's direction, counseled his sons, Nephi and Lehi. He repeatedly admonished them to remember who they were and whence their marvelous spiritual heritage

came: "And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall" (Helaman 5:12).

"Remembering" is a very important principle to help us keep in mind our true identity. This is why we partake of the sacrament each week: to renew our covenants we have made with the Lord in the waters of baptism, to remember Him and to keep His commandments, to refresh in our minds who we are and what our role is in God's plan.

This is why we go back to the temple: to renew our covenants that we have made in those sacred halls and to remind ourselves of these covenants and obligations. When we thus remember these sacred obligations, Satan's storms and attacks will not turn us from our quest—from pursuing our divine potential.

I pray that we may ever remember who we are: sons and daughters of a loving Father, who have the potential to return to His side and dwell with Him as celestial beings. ■

From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University on March 21, 2006. For the full text in English, please visit <http://speeches.byu.edu>.



My Journal, My Testimony

BY SALLI HOLLENZER

Since the early 1980s I have filled more than 38 journals. Here's how my life has been blessed.

I began keeping a daily journal when my children were young and the clamor and concerns of parenting filled my days.

This habit began when I found myself wishing I could read my grandmother's journal. She raised six children, and I wondered how she had managed the challenges of motherhood. Unfortunately, such a record does not exist, but I still longed to know how my grandmother ministered to the needs of her family while maintaining her individuality and spiritual strength.

Also pressing on my mind was President Spencer W. Kimball's admonition to "begin today and write . . . your goings and your

Since I began keeping a journal in 1981, I have filled 38 volumes. When I return to any of them to reflect on former thoughts, I am filled with the Spirit.

comings, your deeper thoughts, your achievements, and your failures, your associations and your triumphs, your impressions and your testimonies. We hope you will do this, . . . for this is what the Lord has commanded, and those who keep a personal journal are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives.”¹

I desired these blessings and also wanted to leave a written legacy for my posterity. At that time I committed to the practice of daily journal writing. Since I began in 1981, I have filled 38 journal volumes.

In more than 25 years of journal writing, I have learned far more than I ever imagined about the blessings

President Kimball spoke of. Following are some of the things I have gained through journal writing.

I acquired a written family record of details that are a practical source of information. I appreciate searching through my records and finding answers to family history questions such as “What month did Grandpa retire from

RECORD THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE



“Your journal is your autobiography, so it should be kept carefully. You are unique, and there may be incidents in your experience that are more noble and praiseworthy in their way than those recorded in any other life. . . .

“What could you do better for your children and your children’s children than to record the story of your life, your triumphs over adversity, your recovery after a fall, your progress when all seemed black, your rejoicing when you had finally achieved?”

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), “The Angels May Quote from It,” *New Era*, Oct. 1975, 5.

the Air Force?” It is satisfying to know that family history details are readily accessible in my journal.

I have a clearer, richer memory of the past. It is wonderful to review the thoughts and feelings I felt at my daughter’s baptism or on the day my son entered the missionary training center. I recall the emotions I felt at those events, and a flood of memories returns as I review moments of days gone by.

I found a practical method of setting goals, tracking my progress, and following through on commitments. The pages of my journal are filled with my personal ambitions.

I am reminded of my goals, and because of this I feel I have accomplished much more in my life than I might have otherwise.

I discovered a therapeutic means to resolve emotional, social, and spiritual issues I face. As I record thoughts on the pages of my journal, I have learned to quickly get to the heart of the matter when something disturbs me. I am also able to retain the lessons of life easier without having



to repeat mistakes of the past.

I have improved my writing skills. I have never taken a writing course, but I have become a better writer simply because I practice writing each day. Recently I have drawn on past experiences to create stories and articles that have been published. A satisfying venue has opened to me because I obeyed the counsel of the prophet.

I have discovered that many of my righteous desires are eventually fulfilled. Many times I have recorded righteous aspirations, and years later I have found that those desires have been granted. This form of importuning the Lord has been so dramatic to me that now, much of what I write is simply an expression of the righteous desires I have for my life and my family. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened” (Matthew 7:7). This scripture brings new understanding to me as I humbly ask the Lord for my wants and needs on the pages of my journal.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Invite family members to share their version of a special family event. Have each add some detail no one else has mentioned. Discuss how recording the event would have helped them remember it and how these memories create a family legacy. Have each family member record an event by writing or drawing a picture of it.

2. Discuss the different ways to keep a journal—for example, diaries, letters, scrapbooking, picture albums, drawings, and blogging. Ask family members what their favorite method is. Read the blessings (*italic headings*) Sister Hollenzer gained as a result of her journal writing. Discuss the blessings your family has received.

I have created a form of personal scripture by recording the inspiration and revelations I have received. I’ve come to realize the truth in the words of Elder John H. Groberg, a former member of the Quorum of the Seventy: “There is something eternal in the very nature of writing, as is so graphically illustrated by the scriptures themselves. In a very real sense, our properly written histories are a very important part of our family scripture and become a great source of spiritual strength to us and to our posterity.”² Occasionally I return to my journal to reflect on former thoughts and am filled with the Spirit as I read previous spiritual promptings.

For me, journal writing is another way I can beseech the Lord. Often my thoughts are drawn to Him as I write, and I feel enveloped by His love. ■

NOTES

1. *President Kimball Speaks Out* (1981), 59.
2. “Writing Your Personal and Family History,” *Ensign*, May 1980, 48.



IN THE PATH OF THE TORNADO

BY KAREN STOTTS MYATT

I knew a tornado had destroyed part of the burned ruins of the original Nauvoo Temple. At the dedication of the new Nauvoo temple, I reflected on how a tornado had nearly destroyed me.

In 2002 our family decided to take a big vacation before we sent two of our children off on full-time missions. And it didn't take much thinking for us to decide where we wanted to go—the open house and dedication of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple. As I sat with my family in the temple, my mind wandered back 28 years to April 3, 1974—the last time I was in Nauvoo.



We turned onto the bridge crossing the Tippecanoe River, and suddenly we were hit by a powerful tornado. Large hail pelted the van. The next thing I knew the van began spinning around and around.

A Feeling of Foreboding

A convert of eight months, I was on a spring field trip in Nauvoo with my seminary teacher and four other members of our class from Fort Wayne, Indiana. We had a wonderful tour of the city, including the site of the original Nauvoo Temple. Little was left of it. Mobs had ravaged and burned the temple after the Saints left. The exterior walls had remained until a tornado destroyed the north wall on May 27, 1850. The south and east walls were so badly damaged that they were torn down the following day.

Many experiences in Nauvoo helped solidify my young and growing testimony, but one experience left me feeling unsettled. During our visit I met someone who strongly challenged the truthfulness of the Church. I had not encountered that type of opposition to the Church since my baptism. On the morning of the day we were to go home, April 3, 1974, I awoke at 5:00 a.m. and lay in bed wondering if I had made a mistake by being baptized into the Church. Had I really felt sweet, burning answers to my prayers eight months earlier when I asked my Father in Heaven about the truthfulness of the Restoration?

I got up, dressed, and left the fold-up trailer where we were sleeping. I started walking, not really even certain where I was going. I was just trying to walk away from the

dark and awful feelings that were encompassing me. I felt as if I were suffocating and wondered what had come over me. At the same time, the feeling carried with it a sense of extreme fear and warning. I could not explain it. It was too big for me to comprehend with my 17 years of knowledge.

Eventually, I found myself in a beautiful place, right in front of a sunstone from the Nauvoo Temple. I cried and cried over several things, including the once beautiful and exquisite temple that had been destroyed by hate and malice and complicated misunderstandings.

Soon I began to do the one thing I knew would bring me comfort. I prayed. After some time of sitting there crying and praying for answers, I felt the Holy Ghost. It reiterated to me what I had learned during my conversion to the Church—that Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were prophets of God. I knew without doubt that I had made the right choice in being baptized.

As that sweet communion with the Spirit continued, I asked Heavenly Father what He wanted of me and why I felt this huge sense of foreboding. Gradually, a sweet, calm peacefulness came upon me, and I felt I would be all right. I felt I knew what Heavenly Father wanted of me. I promised Him I would spend my life teaching and testifying of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I returned to our fold-up trailer and slipped back into my sleeping bag until it was time to get up and leave for home.

Hit by a Tornado

All day on the drive home, black clouds and thunderstorms seemed to follow us through every town and down every road. Around 4:00 p.m. we stopped and ate. When we got back on the road, I fell asleep. At 5:15 p.m. I woke up and discovered we were in Monticello, Indiana, about 100 miles from home.

We turned onto the bridge crossing the Tippecanoe River, and suddenly we were hit by a powerful tornado. Large hail pelted the van. The next thing I knew the van began spinning around and around as it was lifted about 20 feet in the air. I remember well the fearful feeling of complete helplessness. The van, now filled with our screams, kept twisting and turning. I put my arms over my head. Soon the van plunged 70 feet into the Tippecanoe River, and we were in water, a lot of water. The rear window of the van had been blown out, so I swam up and out of the back of the van. Everything had happened so quickly that I couldn't fully comprehend what was going on.

I climbed on top of the van and looked around. In the minutes that followed, I saw our teacher and one of my friends struggling in the raging water. They were weak and incoherent—and then they disappeared from view. Soon the van sank into the dark, cold water with a loud noise.

I had difficulty swimming and staying afloat in the turbulent waters. At first, I begged Heavenly Father to let me live. I gave Him many reasons why I should—a mission, marriage, children. But then I felt guilty and in a lot of pain. I knew in my heart that no one else had survived the accident, and suddenly I couldn't think of a reason why I should.

I was being tossed around and felt as though I were being ripped in half by the churning water. In my confusion, I began to beg Heavenly Father to let me die. I put my face in the water and let it pull me down deep under the water. I was trying to let Heavenly Father take me home.

As I went down into the dark and turbulent water, I began to think clearly, "No, as long as you have a fighting chance, fight!" I did fight and soon felt as if I had been catapulted up to the surface. The tornado passed, and the rain, thunder, lightning, and waves suddenly stopped. In the beauty of the

As I went down into the dark and turbulent water, I realized that as long as I had a chance I should fight. I did and was catapulted to the surface. The tornado had passed, and in the beauty of the light, I knew I would not die.



light, I knew I would not die. I received a strong impression that I still had a mission to fulfill on earth.

I was able to swim on my back until I saw a concrete pier, but I was too weak to lift myself out of the water. I continued to float on my back. Then I felt a tree branch gently bump the back of my head. Once again, I felt Heavenly Father had provided a way for me. I used it to pull myself up and out of the water.

A woman who lived nearby found me and took me into her home to rest until help arrived. I had a concussion, my back was injured, and my forearms were torn and bloody. The doctors said if my head had taken what my arms took, I likely would not have survived.

Coming Full Circle

Twenty-eight years later as I sat in the Nauvoo Illinois Temple waiting for the dedication to begin, I felt I had come full circle. Once the remnants of the Nauvoo Temple had been destroyed by a tornado. Now a beautiful new temple had risen in place of the first one. I too had been battered by a tornado, and I had been given a chance to make something new and beautiful of my life. I remembered the pain, the fear of being in those waters, and the guilt of survival;

but then I remembered the light and hope that filled the air after the tornado had passed. Over the years, the gospel had filled me with light and hope that had helped me heal after the tornado had nearly taken my life. My testimony was strong; nevertheless, I had carried an unnecessary burden of guilt for many years because I was spared from death while four talented and lovely young women and our seminary teacher were not. Now I felt healed. I knew I had been meant to remain on earth to finish my course.

Sitting in the new temple that had been built on the site of the destroyed Nauvoo Temple, I was filled with light and hope, and I too felt restored. I am most grateful for my Savior and His Atonement, which allows me to continue working on this unfinished project—building my life according to His plan for me. ■

The Lord's Pattern for



For the righteous, the pursuit of happiness will culminate in “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come.”

BY ELDER CHRISTOFFEL GOLDEN JR.
Of the Seventy

Some years ago I was privileged to know a brother who reflected the change that only the Lord can effect in the heart and behavior of a man. Before this change he was not at ease or at peace with himself. In fact, it would not be exaggerating to say that he was the proverbial diamond in the rough.

His appearance was rough, as was his language. Yet over the decades I was able to detect small, almost imperceptible changes in him. Many of his other associates also witnessed a remarkable transformation and peace that “distill[ed] upon [his] soul as the dew from heaven” (D&C 121:45) as he willingly submitted to the Lord in all things (see Mosiah 3:19).

This experience and others like it provide us with confidence in the Lord’s pattern for peace. In its essence, this pattern is simple and remarkably effective.

Few accounts in holy writ convey this pattern more vividly than Mosiah, chapters 26–28, and Alma, chapter 36, which demonstrate the effects of true repentance and a resulting spiritual rebirth and conversion. In this account we also witness the natural desire of the repentant, even at great personal sacrifice, to proclaim the glorious message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which brings a peace that “passeth all understanding” (Philippians 4:7).

The Quest for Peace

The pursuit of happiness has been a quest of God’s children throughout the

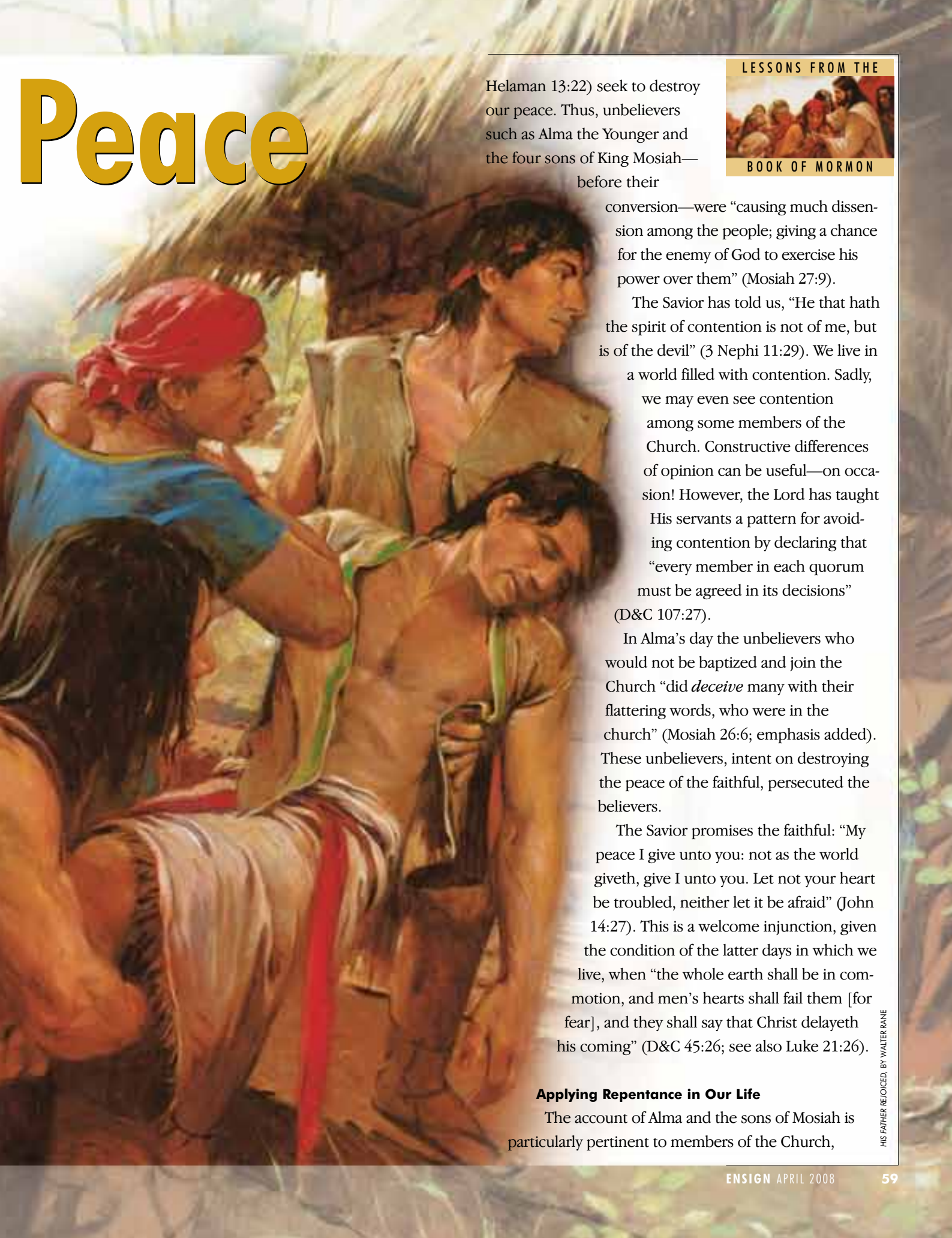
ages. But confusion and differences arise as to what peace actually is and how it can be acquired. For the righteous, the pursuit of happiness will culminate in “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

Peace may be considered an outward, physical calmness, such as that found among nations that live peaceably with each other. Or it can be thought of as an inner, spiritual tranquility that is independent of outside physical forces—a condition in which we are free from anxiety and distress.

Peace is the antithesis of fear. Unsurprisingly, the forces of fear and its bedfellows pride and sin (see

Alma and his brethren experienced a complete change after the visitation of the angel of the Lord. But we should remember what Alma said on a later occasion: “I have fasted and prayed many days that I might know these things of myself.”

Peace



Helaman 13:22) seek to destroy our peace. Thus, unbelievers such as Alma the Younger and the four sons of King Mosiah—before their



conversion—were “causing much dissension among the people; giving a chance for the enemy of God to exercise his power over them” (Mosiah 27:9).

The Savior has told us, “He that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil” (3 Nephi 11:29). We live in a world filled with contention. Sadly, we may even see contention among some members of the Church. Constructive differences of opinion can be useful—on occasion! However, the Lord has taught His servants a pattern for avoiding contention by declaring that “every member in each quorum must be agreed in its decisions” (D&C 107:27).

In Alma’s day the unbelievers who would not be baptized and join the Church “did *deceive* many with their flattering words, who were in the church” (Mosiah 26:6; emphasis added). These unbelievers, intent on destroying the peace of the faithful, persecuted the believers.

The Savior promises the faithful: “My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). This is a welcome injunction, given the condition of the latter days in which we live, when “the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men’s hearts shall fail them [for fear], and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming” (D&C 45:26; see also Luke 21:26).

Applying Repentance in Our Life

The account of Alma and the sons of Mosiah is particularly pertinent to members of the Church,

HIS FATHER REJOICED, BY WALTER RANE



TRIUMPHAL ENTRY, BY HARRY ANDERSON

In the depths of anguish, Alma recognized his wickedness and “remembered . . . concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ . . . to atone for the sins of the world. . . . I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me. . . . “And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more.”

especially those with loved ones who are in need of repentance because they have apostatized or drifted from the truth. In recounting his conversion, Alma recalled for his son Helaman how he had been “tormented with the pains of hell” and remembered “all my sins and iniquities,” which “did rack my soul with inexpressible horror. Oh, thought I, that I could be banished and become extinct” (Alma 36:13–15).

In the depths of anguish, Alma recognized his wickedness and “remembered . . . concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ . . . to atone for the sins of the world. . . . I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me. . . .

“And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more.

“And oh, what joy, . . . yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain” (Alma 36:17–20).

Alma’s painful experience was not unique—all men have to confess and forsake their sins (see D&C 58:43). In addition to confessing and acknowledging his sins to the Lord, Alma, with the sons of Mosiah,

“traveled throughout all the land . . . zealously striving to repair all the injuries which they had done to the church [and] confessing all their sins” (Mosiah 27:35). During their ministry, which lasted a lifetime, they were “greatly persecuted,” “smitten,” “driven,” and “cast into prison,” suffering “all kinds of afflictions” (Mosiah 27:32; Alma 20:29–30). Their lives and ministry provide a breathtaking example of their repentance.

Mormon sums up Alma’s repentant, service-filled life in these words: “This we know, that he was a righteous man; and the saying went abroad in the church that he was taken up by the Spirit, or buried by the hand of the Lord, even as Moses” (Alma 45:19).

Spiritual Rebirth and Conversion

The Savior taught, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). Peace comes from doing the will of the Father by complying with His doctrine, which is also the doctrine of Christ, who declared that “all men [who] repent and believe in me . . . and [are] baptized, . . . shall be saved” (3 Nephi 11:32–33). Those who do this are also assured of being “sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost” (3 Nephi 27:20).

The full consequences of the Atonement of Jesus Christ are to change, or convert, the cleansed former sinner into a new creature in Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). King Benjamin said, “The natural man is an enemy to God . . . unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit . . . and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ” (Mosiah 3:19). Alma expresses this change of heart as

being “spiritually . . . born of God,” to the extent that we receive the Lord’s “image in [our] countenances” (Alma 5:14).

When we consider the life of Alma and his brethren, we are astounded at the complete change they experienced after the visitation of the angel of the Lord. But while that change was almost immediate, we should remember what Alma said on a later occasion: “I have fasted and prayed *many days* that I might know these things of myself” (Alma 5:46; emphasis added).

There are no shortcuts to being born again. As Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “Being born again is a gradual thing, except in a few isolated instances that are so miraculous they get written up in the scriptures. As far as the generality of the members of the Church are concerned, we are born again by degrees, and we are born again to added light and added knowledge and added desires for righteousness as we keep the commandments.”¹

The Lord promises that all those who “[come] unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit . . . will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, *and they knew it not*” (3 Nephi 9:20; emphasis added).

Sharing the Gospel

It is natural for the truly converted to feel a deep sense of responsibility for the eternal welfare of their brothers and sisters. Alma provides the reason for this compelling desire to share the gospel:

“Yea, and from that time even until now, I

have labored without ceasing, that I might bring souls unto repentance; that I might bring them to taste of the exceeding joy of which I did taste; that they might also be born of God, and be filled with the Holy Ghost” (Alma 36:24). The sons of Mosiah expressed the same feelings: “They could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble. And thus did the *Spirit of the Lord* work upon them” (Mosiah 28:3–4; emphasis added).

In conclusion, let’s return to the brother referred to in the introduction. A few days before he passed from this mortal life to the spirit world, I was able to be at his bedside. Surely, I felt, his passing would be tempered by the many awaiting his arrival with anticipation and joy on the other side of the veil.

We shared a few quiet words. Then, as I looked at his almost transparent countenance, I recalled many of the small and great deeds he had done. It was in the small deeds that I discovered the greater joy. Through his renewed life of submission and service, this noble servant of the Lord had received the approval of heaven. He was no longer a rough diamond but rather a refined, polished shaft. Here he lay, a man whose language now was the language of scripture, a man who had quietly become the master of his appetites. Above all, as a son of God, he had become, almost imperceptibly, a disciple and friend of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

He was at peace. ■

NOTE

1. “Jesus Christ and Him Crucified,” in *1976 Devotional Speeches of the Year* (1977), 399.



PAINTING BY GARY L. KAPP

Alma and the sons of Mosiah “could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble. And thus did the Spirit of the Lord work upon them.”



Sacred Words

BY EDWIN F. SMITH

There are times when human words fail in the presence of spiritual clarity. This was one.

The telephone rang late, waking my wife and me from a sound sleep. Funny how such calls never seem to bring good news. But we had come to expect such calls since the birth of our newest grandchildren.

Annie Mae Hixson had fought her way into mortality four months early in the summer of 2000, weighing in at one pound, three ounces and measuring just ten and one-half inches long. Annie's twin, Abigail Rose, had returned to her Heavenly Father before we knew her. Each day since had been a balancing act between fear and faith. Each night came with gratitude for life preserved and the hope that tomorrow's crises could be endured with grace and courage.

Annie faced all the typical challenges of an extremely premature baby. Sometimes her progress was so slow that her quality of life was measured only on the monitors recording her bodily functions. Her newborn cries were silenced by the tubes in her windpipe, and intravenous lines entered her chest and hands.

In spite of painful daily challenges, we gratefully saw the Lord's hand in Annie's life. We came to understand that the improbable happened almost daily, and the impossible just took a little longer.



Above: Annie, born four months early, holds her father's finger.
Left: Annie turns eight later this year.

The late-night phone call that woke us was one of many during Annie's nearly six-month stay in the newborn intensive care unit and long after she came home that Christmas. Her father, Kevin, was calling to request my help in giving Annie a priesthood blessing, and the urgency in his voice was evident. Annie had begun having seizures. Her vital functions would not stabilize, and the monitors were screaming her distress. Each tremor in her fragile body was potentially fatal. Kevin, her father, needed assistance as soon as possible.

It had always been my practice to say a prayer before assisting in priesthood blessings. In spite of the urgency, I felt prompted to kneel and take what time was needed. I found myself expressing gratitude for the Lord's intervention so many times before throughout this struggle. I realized Annie's life had been a gift, almost a window to heaven. Even if the Lord chose to take her now, my cup was already overflowing. As I prayed, I came to understand that, with all the potency of medical science, the life of this sweet child was cradled in the hands of her Heavenly Father. Instead of simply asking for guidance, I found myself pleading for His permission to heal my granddaughter, to speak the words of life. With passing minutes pressing me to leave, still I waited and then closed my prayer.

I hurried to the hospital. There were no open parking places when I arrived, but after I made two passes, a spot opened up and I took it. When I entered the newborn intensive care unit, I met Kevin at Annie's incubator. A waiting nurse

pulled the curtain around us for a little privacy, and without delay Kevin anointed Annie with a drop of consecrated oil. Her fevered head was so small that we each placed a finger on the crown. Holding her convulsing hand with another, I sealed the anointing. In that moment I recognized the answer to my patient prayer and remembered the power in acting with God's authority and permission.

As sacred words were spoken, Annie's trembling and fragile body relaxed, and Annie fell asleep beneath our hands. For the first time in what seemed an eternity, her frantic monitors fell silent. The startled nurse pulled back the curtain, tears spilling down her cheeks. There are times when human words fail in the presence of spiritual clarity. This was one.

Annie Mae celebrates her eighth birthday this August. Her challenges continue, but her presence is a healthy, smiling testimony to us of the power of the priesthood and the sure promises and tender mercies of a loving Heavenly Father. ■

Marriage between a Man and a Woman Is Ordained of God



Teach the scriptures and statements that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you teach to share what they have felt and learned.

Why Is Marriage between a Man and a Woman Ordained of God?

D&C 49:16–17: “They twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation; and that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made.”

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president: “We believe in the formation of eternal families. That means we believe in getting married. . . . We know that in the great premortal conflict we sided with our Savior, Jesus Christ, to preserve our potential to belong to eternal families” (“What Latter-day Saint Women Do Best: Stand Strong and Immovable,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 110).

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Two compelling doctrinal reasons help us to understand why eternal marriage is essential to the Father’s plan.

“Reason 1: *The natures of male and female spirits complete and perfect each other, and therefore men*

and women are intended to progress together toward exaltation. . . .

“Reason 2: *By divine design, both a man and a woman are needed to bring children into mortality and to provide the best setting for the rearing and nurturing of children. . . .*

“As men and women, as husbands and wives, and as Church leaders, one of our paramount responsibilities is to help young men and women learn about and prepare for righteous marriage through our personal example. As young women and men observe worthiness, loyalty, sacrifice, and the honoring of covenants in our marriages, then those youth will seek to emulate the same principles. . . . As we consider the importance of our personal example, do you and I discern areas where we need to improve?” (“Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan,” *Liabona*, June 2006, 51–52, 54; *Ensign*, June 2006, 83–84, 86).

What Is My Responsibility Because I Know That Marriage Is Ordained of God?

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Let us consider . . . actions that would strengthen a marriage. . . .

“To *appreciate*. . . . Look for the good in each other and sincerely pay compliments to one another. . . .



“Suggestion number two—to *communicate*. . . . Couples need private time to observe, to talk, and really listen to each other. They need to cooperate—helping each other as equal partners. . . .

“My third suggestion is to *contemplate*. . . . Frequent participation in temple service and regular family scripture study nourish a marriage and strengthen faith within a family” (“Nurturing Marriage,” *Liabona and Ensign*, May 2006, 37–38).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Through your obedience and continuing faith in Jesus Christ and your understanding of the whole plan of happiness, even if important parts of it aren’t fulfilled in your life now, they will be yours in the Lord’s due time. I also promise you that you can have significant growth and happiness now in your present circumstances. As a daughter or son of God, live whatever portion of the plan you can to the best of your ability” (“The Joy of Living the Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 75). ■



Ethel and Edna

BY KARIE LYNE JACKSON

When I was a young woman, newly married and pregnant with my first child, I did not attend church regularly. My parents had taught me the gospel, but I was struggling with my testimony. My husband and I felt unsure what direction we wanted our lives to go. I went to church when it was convenient for me, but I certainly did not want a calling or to have anything to do with Relief Society. In my mind Relief Society was for my grandmothers—not for me.

Then along came my first visiting teachers, Ethel Hiatt and Edna Nickels. They were in their 80s, and I wondered why they had been assigned to me. Our lives were so different, and I was sure that these sisters couldn't possibly understand me. It wasn't until later that I realized these women had brought blessings into my life.

Neither of these sisters had a vehicle or a telephone, so they walked each month, regardless of the weather, to visit me in my home. When they came, they brought a calm spirit of long lives of gospel service. Both had endured many trials. Both knew pain and suffering. But more important, they knew the art of cheerfulness and the gift of loving others.

When my child was born, they rejoiced in the newness of life. They didn't bring meals and gifts, just a simple card telling me how happy they were for me. Their messages were never long, nor did they make me feel guilty or misunderstood. Sister Hiatt and Sister Nickels loved me and inspired me by their examples. Through their simple kindness, my heart was touched and I began to look forward to their visits.

As I matured, I realized that these sisters had weathered the storms of life and yet were still faithful in the gospel. My desire to follow their example grew, and before long, I found myself attending all of my Church meetings. My visiting teachers did not directly invite me to go, but I felt comfort knowing that they would be there to support me when I arrived.

Sister Hiatt and Sister Nickels have long since left this world, but their examples will remain with me always. They opened the door not only for me but also for my husband and our children. Were it not for them, we might have missed out on the blessings of eternity. I think of them often and wonder what my life would be like had they given up on me. I've learned that there truly is simpleness and sweetness in the tender mercies of the Lord. ■

The Healing Power of Hymns

Church members share ways the hymns of Zion have blessed their lives.

I Understood His Love

There was a time in my life when I strayed far from the principles I knew to be true. Because of this, I felt terribly unhappy. Although I believed that the Atonement worked for other people, in my mind I was too far gone for it to apply to me. I thought I wasn't worth saving.

One Sunday morning I heard the bells of a nearby Christian church sounding the hymn "Did You Think to Pray?" (*Hymns*, no. 140). The music struck me, and for the first time in many months, I felt the Spirit. I cried as I realized Heavenly Father was using this hymn to let me feel His love and know that He would help me.

The repentance process was not easy, and many times I felt discouraged. But the feelings I felt that Sunday morning stayed with me, and after a time I returned to full activity and received my endowment in the Dallas Texas Temple.

Now when I hear that hymn, I am reminded of that tender moment when the One I thought had forgotten

me showed His love in a way He knew I would receive it.

Jessica Blakely, New Mexico

We Invited the Spirit

My husband and I wanted to help our family feel the Spirit more in our family scripture study. We had heard Elder Gene R. Cook, then of the Seventy, suggest singing a hymn before family scripture study, so we decided to implement this counsel. Although our teenage sons were somewhat resistant to the idea, they agreed to give it a try.

The following day I played hymns on our stereo about 30 minutes before our scheduled reading time. What happened next changed everything for us. This music had touched our then 13-year-old son (who had been the most resistant to our initial proposal) to the extent that he wanted to sing all the verses of the hymn, and he even wanted to sing more than one hymn! This same son now relies on the hymns when he is discouraged or tempted.

We use the hymns not only for

family scripture study but also at family home evening and on Sundays.

Marci Owen, Utah

Losing Mother

My 86-year-old mother's health had been declining for several months, and I feared that she would not be with us much longer. My husband and I had planned to travel to Lille, which was 80 miles (130 km) away, for stake conference, but I worried about leaving my sister alone to care for our mother.

I pleaded to Heavenly Father that all would be well while we were gone. Immediately the lyrics "Peace, be still" ("Master, the Tempest Is Raging," *Hymns*, no. 105) came to mind, and my fears diminished. We left for the conference feeling calm and reassured that the Lord had heard my prayer and was watching over my mother.

Everything did go well while we were gone.

Some time later, my sister called to ask if my husband, Yves, could come help lift my mother into bed. Shortly after he arrived at my sister's home, my mother passed away.

Not wanting to relay this news over the phone, Yves called me and said only that my sister was panicked. He suggested I gather some personal belongings because he would be home soon to pick me up.

I began packing my suitcase expecting that I might stay with my sister for a while to help care for our mother. As I began, I felt guided by the Spirit that packing was no longer necessary. I knew that my mother had died. But I also





**NOURISHING
HYMNS**

“Hymns play an essential role in spirituality, revelation,

and conversion. . . .

Nourishing hymns create an atmosphere that invites the Spirit, which leads us to conversion.”

Elder Jay E. Jensen of the Seventy, “The Nourishing Power of Hymns,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 11, 12.

felt peace, just like I had before leaving for stake conference.

Yves arrived home, and he struggled to explain what had happened. To ease his burden, I told him I already knew that Mother was gone.

Knowledge of the gospel continued to support me, and I was able to comfort my sister as we grieved for our mother. Many times I prayed for peace, and each time I felt reassured that Heavenly Father and my Savior Jesus Christ were helping me through my sorrow and pain. Through our faith and prayers we found what the sacred hymn invokes: “Peace, be still.”

Nicole Germe, Pas-de-Calais, France

Singing Soothed Our Hearts

Many years ago I was planning to spend Christmas Eve with my family, and I was apprehensive about it. I had recently joined

the Church, and my family was critical of my new religion. The situation worsened when I gave my mother a ride to my grandmother’s house. My mother had been drinking heavily, and I felt tempted to snap at her. The excitement I usually felt during the holiday season was replaced with despair. Silently, I prayed for help.

I tuned the car radio to the popular music station I usually listened to, hoping that would lift my spirits. But then I felt impressed to turn off the radio and sing Christmas hymns. I did so, and my mother—though surprised—seemed calmer. She even

O My Father

Each Life That Touches Ours for Good 20

joined in singing some of the carols.

My mood changed immediately, and I was reminded of the true meaning of Christmas. When I thought of how the Savior unselfishly gave His life for us, my own problems seemed small and manageable. I realized that I had many blessings in my life and many reasons to rejoice. I felt assured that the Holy Ghost was with me, and I was confident that I could respond peacefully to any criticism I received about the Church.

Singing didn't take away my problems, but it enabled me to approach my troubles with a positive attitude—and that made all the difference.

Kimberley Hirschi, California

My Burden Was Lifted

In 1988 I was struggling in my business. After I consulted with my stake president, my wife and I decided to sell the business and find other work. I followed numerous leads in pursuit of employment, but each one left my wife and me frustrated, heartbroken, and without a steady income.

After a year our funds were running low, and I felt weighed down by a burden that seemed unbearable. We had a son on a mission and six more children at home, and I felt that I was failing them.

One day while feeling this burden, I realized that I had been repeating a tune in my mind for several days. I soon realized that it was a hymn, and the Spirit comforted me as I recalled the lyrics:

*Be thou humble in thy weakness,
and the Lord thy God shall lead
thee,
Shall lead thee by the hand and
give thee answer to thy prayers.*
("Be Thou Humble," *Hymns*,
no. 130)

Instantly my burden seemed lifted, and I realized that Heavenly Father knew my situation. Although we struggled financially for several years, I felt comfort knowing that He would guide our decisions if we sought to do His will.

We moved to a new town and eventually acquired a new business. With the help of others, our family was able to buy a home and make the business successful.

Even though that financial challenge is now gone, I continue trying to listen when hymns come to mind. I have learned that Heavenly Father often answers my prayers through sacred music.

Warren C. Wassom, Idaho

How Could I Sing?

Years ago my mother was killed in a car accident involving a drunk driver. In shock I flew to my parents' home and helped plan the funeral with my siblings and injured father.

Soon after returning home I was called to serve as the Primary music leader. While I prepared, my emotions seemed blocked, and I began to doubt my abilities. "A Primary music leader needs to be enthusiastic and

cheerful," I thought to myself. I felt only sorrow. I wanted to encourage the children, but I felt I would let them down. My heart ached with grief. I wondered if I would ever be happy again—let alone want to sing.

The day before I began serving in my new calling, my husband and I attended a temple session with friends who were being sealed. Before the session began, we were invited to the temple's chapel for an opening hymn, prayer, and remarks by a temple official. As we sang "How Gentle God's Commands" (*Hymns*, no. 125), I couldn't help noticing the hymn's lyrics:

*Why should this anxious load
Press down your weary mind?
Haste to your Heav'nly Father's
throne
And sweet refreshment find.*

I felt that I had an "anxious load" and realized that there, in His holy temple, I was finding "sweet refreshment." In the fourth verse I heard a direct message for me:

*His goodness stands approved,
Unchanged from day to day;
I'll drop my burden at his feet
And bear a song away.*

At that moment I knew that I could fulfill any calling and that I could feel joy, even though I missed my mother. And because I knew that my Savior carried my burden, I could sing!

Sberi Stratford Erickson, Idaho ■

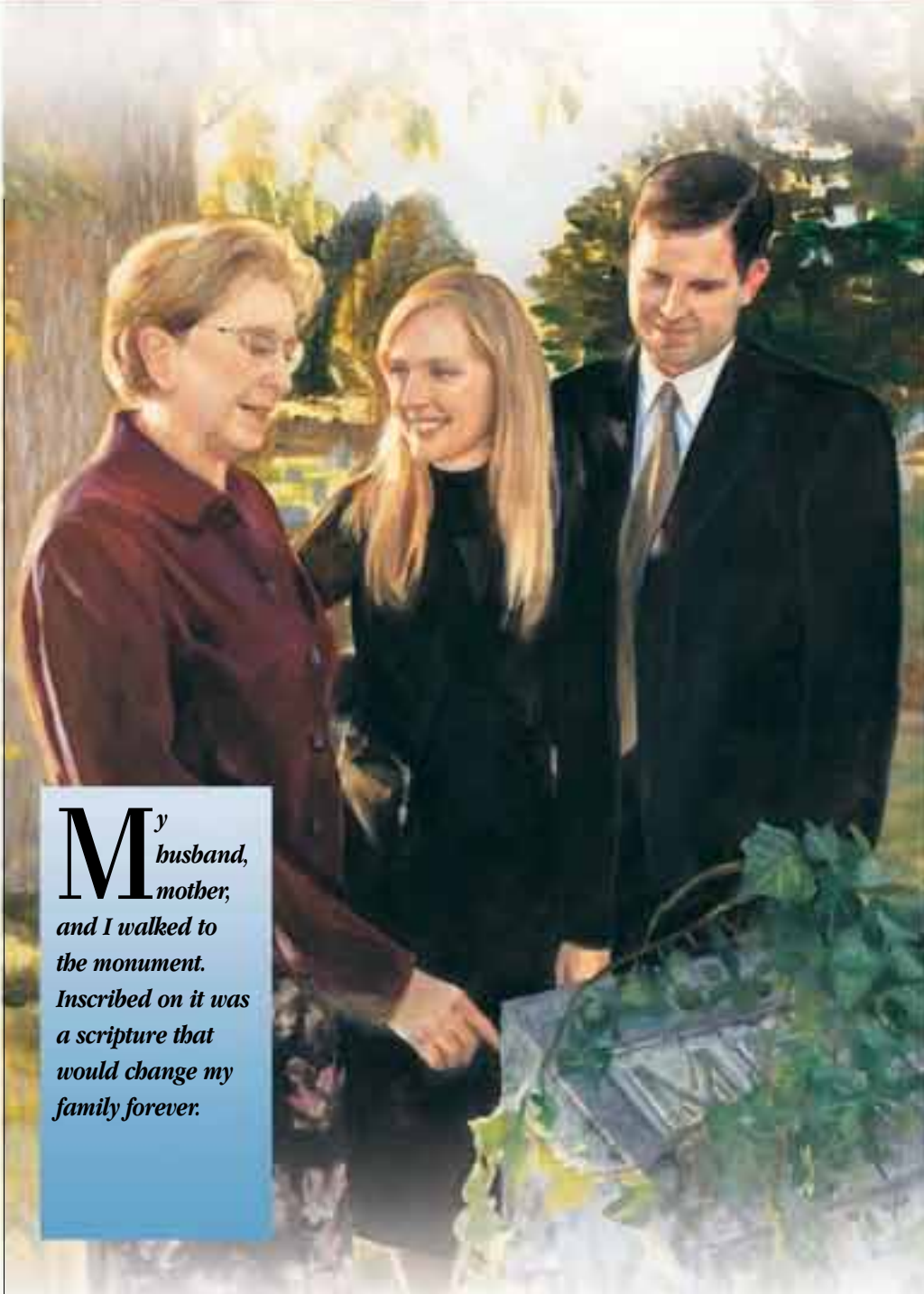
Finally My Mother Wanted to Know

By Treasure Elder Barfuss

As the funeral procession of cars turned onto the small road leading to the cemetery, memories ran through my mind. In my sadness over the untimely death of my father, I sought comfort in the gospel and the scriptures. Ecclesiastes 3:1 came to mind: “To every thing there is a season.”

My family did not attend a church regularly when I was young, but my parents manifested their faith in the Christlike way they helped those in need and in the way they let each of us children know we were loved. My parents had been a part of every season of my life except one, and that season brought great sorrow to them because they did not understand and would not listen to my testimony of what I had found.

When I was 17, some good friends introduced me to the Church. The restored gospel answered questions I had had for years, but my parents would have nothing to do with it. When I joined the Church at 18, only my grandmother attended my baptism. She was not a Latter-day Saint, but she seemed to understand my spiritual need, and she assured me



My husband, mother, and I walked to the monument. Inscribed on it was a scripture that would change my family forever.

that someday my parents would accept my decision.

I married shortly after my baptism and moved away with my husband. I shared news of my temple sealing a few years later in a letter to my parents, telling them of my joy and newfound faith. But I was unable to interest them in the gospel. Now my

father was gone, and my mother and little sister were left alone.

My thoughts were interrupted as the cars came to a stop. Immediately to our left I noticed a monument covered with foliage. An engraving on the stone seemed to beckon us, but we went to the graveside service without inspecting it.

After the service had ended, we expressed our gratitude to friends and relatives and said our good-byes. My husband, mother, and I then walked to the monument. Inscribed on it was a scripture that would change my family forever: “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

For the first time, 14 years after my baptism and confirmation, my mother asked questions. Because of the restored gospel, I could provide answers. She and my sister were baptized and confirmed shortly thereafter. A little more than a year later, my father’s temple work was completed.

More than 30 years have passed since that day at the cemetery. During that time, members of our extended family have been sealed together in the temple. My mother became a Relief Society president and gave several years of devoted service. My sister married, had children, and served many years as a Laurel leader, president of the Young Women, and worker for LDS Family Services.

To everything there is a season—including a time of joy and a time of sorrow. I am thankful for the knowledge that prayers are answered in God’s own season and that the scriptures offer us words of life as we search, ponder, and share them with one another. ■

How Could She Forgive Him?

By Thomas E. Horlacher

One day in 1961 while Elder Roger Slagowski and I were knocking on doors in Wilhelmshaven, West Germany, an elderly widow graciously welcomed us into her humble apartment. I was so surprised that I asked if she really understood who we were. She assured us that she did and that she had been waiting for us.

She told us that two Latter-day Saint elders had knocked on her door decades before, when she was a young mother. Because she was busy at the time, she had turned them away. Afterward she felt terrible about it and vowed that if Latter-day Saint missionaries ever knocked again, she would invite them in.

Emma Henke had a keen mind, and she listened to our message intently, but she often seemed to have a distant, far-off look. She was kind to us and was always eager to share her meager fare, but we wondered if she truly comprehended the importance

Emma Henke listened to our message intently, but she often seemed to have a distant, far-off look.



of our message. Finally we decided to put her on our callback list and just drop by from time to time when we were in the neighborhood.

A few weeks later we stopped in again. As we visited, Emma suddenly announced, to our surprise, her determination to be baptized!

It was only then that she began sharing details from her difficult life. During the last days of World War I, her infant daughter had died. In 1924 a nine-year-old daughter had succumbed to diphtheria. During the winter of 1941–42 she had received her last letter from her 21-year-old son, who was fighting on the Russian front during World War II. She learned of his death a short time later.

Emma's husband, Hugo, had despised the policies of the Nazi government. She often pleaded with him to be more cautious. Early one day in 1944, after a government radio-beam locator tracked a British Broadcasting Corporation signal to the Henkes' home, the Gestapo broke down the door and arrested him. He was sent to a concentration camp near Hamburg, and Emma and their last surviving child, a young son, were left to fend for themselves.

Emma went to the local Nazi official responsible for her husband's imprisonment and pleaded on her knees for his life but to no avail. She learned of Hugo's death in March 1945. The official himself was subsequently sentenced to life in prison but had been released shortly before we knocked on Emma's door. She said she often saw him speeding along the streets of the city in an expensive new car. On the day she requested baptism, Emma said she had finally found the strength to forgive him for taking away her husband and rejecting her pleas for mercy. She had resolved to leave judgment in the hands of the Lord.

Emma became a faithful member of the Church and found great joy and comfort in discovering the truths of the restored gospel. In November 1966, while hurrying across a public square in Wilhelmshaven on her way to a Relief Society meeting, she collapsed and died of a heart attack.

Sister Henke refused to become embittered by the trials of her life, and she died free of the rancor of revenge. Surely this dear sister enjoyed a marvelous reunion with those she had loved and lost. ■

How I Found Christ in Capernaum

By Jason Jones

Following years of planning and preparation, I finally made my way to the Holy Land with family and close friends. As we approached the Sea of Galilee, we looked forward to seeing Capernaum.

The book of Matthew tells us that after the people had rejected Christ in His hometown of Nazareth, the Savior made Capernaum "his own city" (Matthew 9:1). It was in Capernaum and on the shores of the Sea of Galilee that Christ called Peter, James, John, Andrew, and later Matthew as disciples (see Matthew 4:18–22; 9:9).

Capernaum means "village of Nahum," or village of comfort or consolation. Christ indeed had compassion on the people of this city and comforted them by casting out devils, healing "all that were sick," and even raising the dead (see Matthew 8:16; Mark 5:35–42). Although He later rebuked the people of Capernaum for rejecting Him, Christ probably performed more miracles here than anywhere else.

In Capernaum we explored ruins and wandered down old city roads in awe of what this little village had witnessed (see Matthew 11:23). Later, I stopped and sat under a tree,

pondering and gazing out on the Sea of Galilee. My great expectations to feel the events of the scriptures come to life, however, remained unfulfilled. Despite my preparation for the trip, sincerity in seeking Christ, and determination that had brought us here at last, I felt an emptiness that weighed on my heart.

Why wouldn't this place where Christ blessed so many people also bless our lives? As I grappled with my feelings, I longed to read the scriptures. I checked with each member of our group, but sadly, no one had brought a Bible.

Fortunately, one member of our group had a personal digital assistant with an electronic version of the scriptures on it. We soon gathered around, listening as someone read verses in Matthew 4 and Mark 5 about the Savior in Capernaum.

As soon as our focus shifted to the scriptures, the emptiness that I had been feeling was replaced with a comforting witness of the love of the Savior and of the reality of the events of which the scriptures testify. We had come to Capernaum searching for Christ, but we didn't find Him until we searched the scriptures. It was not the physical

surroundings that bore witness to us but the Holy Ghost.

Scripture study can be supplemented by history, commentaries, linguistic insights, and occasional travel, but there is no substitute for learning directly from the Spirit as we immerse ourselves in the scriptures. The sons of Mosiah, who "had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God" (Alma 17:2), exemplified this principle.

May daily scripture study be central to our search for Christ, for the scriptures truly are the best place to find Him. ■

W^e gathered around, listening as a member of our group read verses about the Savior in Capernaum.



Sharing Cultures

When I attended BYU–Hawaii, I lived with roommates from various parts of the world. In some ways it was a challenge because of cultural differences. But we learned how to work together.

If you're in a similar situation, I recommend getting to know your roommates as soon as you can.

Ask questions about them and their families. Discover what you have in common, and learn to appreciate one another's cultures or backgrounds. Maybe you could share a favorite dish from home or do activities together.

Since you share living space, you'll want to build a friendship on honesty and trust. So that you understand one another's expectations, it's good to establish apartment rules up front. Be respectful of each other's property and space, especially shared space.

As you set a good example for one another, you could be establishing a long-lasting friendship. I'll never

forget a nonmember roommate from Brazil who always helped me remember to choose the right. Years later we are still friends, sharing the good things about each other's religions.

Leonard Heo-Moun, Tabiti

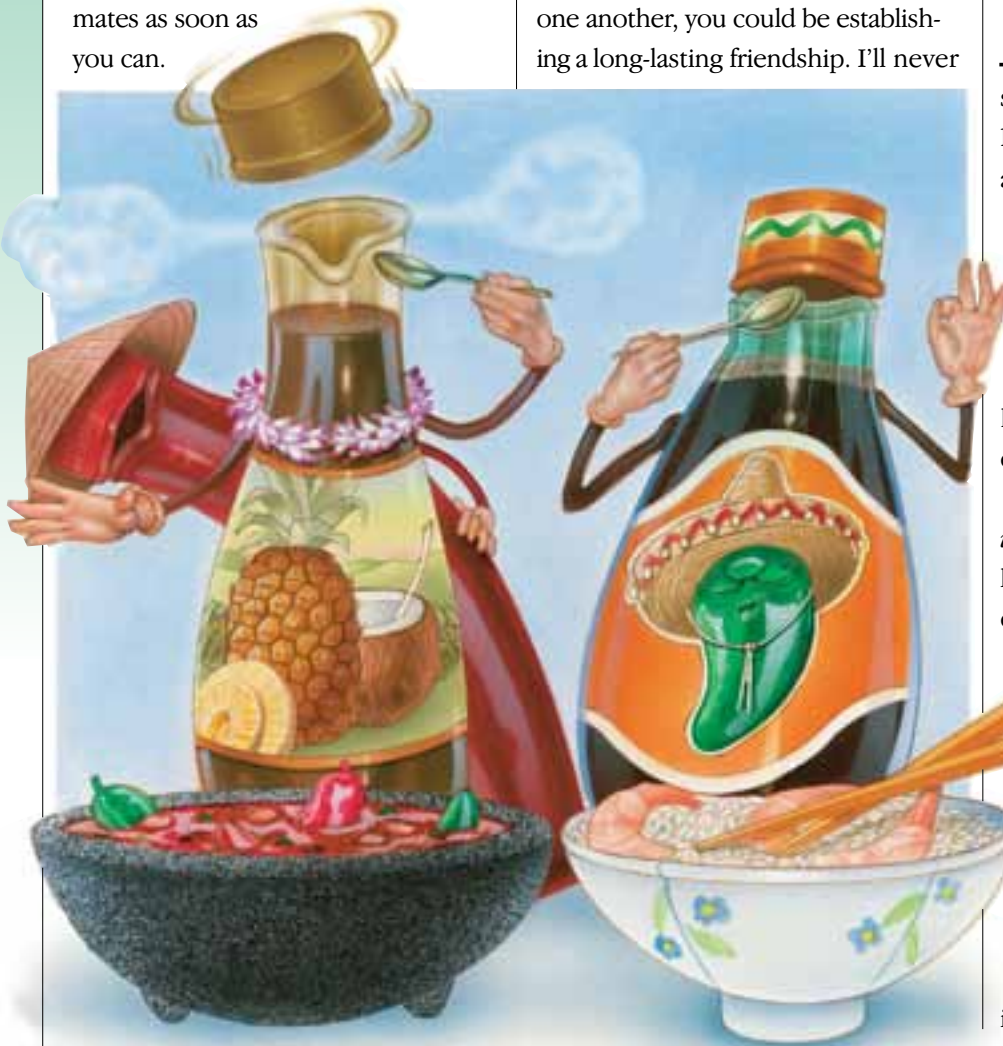
Budgeting for Unexpected Expenses

As I counsel and educate individuals about using a budget, I find they often struggle with three stumbling blocks. But I quickly reassure them that there are solutions.

◦ **Irregular expenses.** Car registration, insurance, birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, and school expenses are all examples of irregular expenses—something that you know about but that don't occur every month.

Solution: Establish a revolving savings account. Start by listing all irregular expenses. Add them up for the entire year and divide the total by 12.

This will give you a set dollar amount to include in your monthly budget. A good place to keep this money is in a basic savings account. You can even create an automatic withdrawal from your checking account to be deposited into your savings account. This process transforms irregular expenses into one regular expense.





Conference Family Home Evening Idea

After two days of sessions, general conference is finished for six months, right? Not at our house. My husband and I decided to incorporate topics learned at conference into our family home evenings. After the last session of conference, we pick six topics from conference for our family to

discuss, one each month until the next general conference. Along with this simple schedule, we choose either a supporting scripture, an article of faith, or a related quotation from a General Authority.

Some of the topics we have discussed include the Atonement, the importance of our bodies, Joseph Smith, pioneers, reverence,

scripture study, and temples. We post our topic list in the kitchen. We also keep our monthly scripture or article of faith handy at the dinner table so we can memorize as we eat.

We take turns preparing and sharing our conference-themed lessons. Our family is strengthened as we study and do what our leaders have taught us.

Natalie Greaves, Arizona



• **Large, unexpected expenses.** A car repair, an extra medical bill, or a broken appliance are some of the many possible budget wreckers.

Solution: Create an emergency fund. This will also help if you experience an unexpected drop in income. Though the potential unexpected expenses can seem overwhelming, try to decide how much you can realistically save each month. Even if it's a small amount, commit to that goal. It will eventually add up.

• **Small, unexpected expenses.** These might include children's school expenses, a donation to a fund-raiser, or a wedding gift.

Solution: Create a miscellaneous category in your budget to fund such expenses.

When we do our part, budgeting stumbling blocks, such as these, don't have to be permanent. Though we cannot foresee all possible financial obligations, we can show the Lord we are wisely using the resources He has given us.

Alena Johnson, Utah

Family Story Ideas

Does it seem like an overwhelming task to record your personal and family histories? Actually, it may be more doable and enjoyable than you think. I've discovered some fun ways to broaden how we might preserve our precious history.

• **Ancestral safari.** Organize an outing where family members retell old stories at the sites where they occurred. This is a great opportunity for grandchildren to learn about their ancestors. Don't forget an audio tape recorder and camera to preserve everyone's recollections. Perhaps make it an annual tradition.

• **Family recipe book.** Collect favorite family recipes and any memories or stories associated with them. You will probably find that reminiscing about the aromas, textures, and tastes of favorite foods will bring back a flood of memories. You can work solo on the project or make it a cooperative effort.

• **Memory books.** Compile a book of recollections focusing on a particular person, such as a child. You might include handwriting samples, news

clippings, schoolwork, and photos. Be sure to include your own memories or journal entries about the person.

• **Heirloom stories.** Any heirloom becomes more meaningful if it's presented with a simple written history about its original owner. You could include how the individual acquired it, how it was used, original cost (if known), and any family stories associated with it.

• **Quilts.** Create a stitched family history using such materials as favorite pieces of clothing, blankets, or curtains. Perhaps the quilt could be put together over the years as a child grows up. When it is finished, include an heirloom story, sharing the memories associated with the various fabric pieces.

Sbarman Tullis Gill, Washington

One Mission Enough to Change Lives, But Not to Satisfy Desire to Serve

By Molly Farmer, Church Magazines

When Rose and Ron Harvey got married in 1950, they didn't anticipate they would go on to spend 16 years of their marriage in full-time missionary service.

"I never dreamed of that," Sister Harvey said.

Since 1992, the Canadian couple has served nine missions for the Church, preaching across the United States, Canada, and into the Pacific Islands.

Their experiences have been uplifting. "You come back on a spiritual high," Sister Harvey said. But the change of heart they have received isn't reserved only for those who serve 16 years. "You don't have to serve nine missions. After our first mission, we came home changed people."

Brother and Sister Harvey have had success, grown in the gospel, weathered trials, and overcome feelings of inadequacy. Today, their relationship is closer than ever, and they are quick to tell of the strength they have received and the blessings the Lord has given them and their family.

Called to Serve—Again and Again

Brother and Sister Harvey's first mission, to the Minnesota Minneapolis Mission in 1992, was a wonderful experience, especially for Sister Harvey, who had



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RON AND ROSE HARVEY

Rose and Ron Harvey, pictured here on their mission to American Samoa, have learned many things from serving multiple missions.

wanted to serve a full-time mission since the time her children had prepared to go on their own missions. She and her husband found joy in reactivating members and seeing a branch organized. Later the couple served another proselytizing mission in the South Dakota Rapid City Mission, followed by family history missions at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and at the Utah Correctional Institute. The latter brought unique challenges, and Brother and Sister Harvey felt great sympathy for their incarcerated brothers and sisters.

They served another proselytizing mission in the Canada Vancouver Mission,

then two humanitarian service missions in American Samoa and Sacramento, California, USA. They were called soon after that to serve another family history mission, this time in the Canada Calgary Mission.

After a year and a half in Calgary, they are now serving another family history mission within the Calgary mission to Golden, British Columbia, and Cardston, Alberta.

Facing Common Challenges

Brother and Sister Harvey's years of service haven't come without challenges. They had to overcome some of the same obstacles that face all soon-to-be missionaries such as financial considerations, fear, finding the right opportunities, and family concerns.

Finances: Living simply and frugally made it possible for Brother and Sister Harvey to serve. They simplified their finances by getting rid of unnecessary expenses and bills and had their retirement and government pensions automatically deposited into an account. Though not excessive, their funds were always enough. "We never had a lot of money; we just had a lot of faith," Sister

Harvey said.

Fear: In his journals (they have both kept journals since their first mission to Minneapolis) Brother Harvey wrote that he felt inadequate to preach the word, and Sister Harvey at times shared that sentiment. Their concern was, "Do I know enough?" she said. "We weren't educated . . . and yet here we were stepping out in the world, trying to convert people. . . . It's a big responsibility to represent the Lord." Through their experiences, they have found that the Lord takes care of those who serve Him.

Finding the right opportunities: There are service opportunities to match almost any skill or talent a couple has. Couples are counseled to consider their unique talents and abilities as well as their health and financial situations when approaching the bishop or branch president. The capacities in which Brother and Sister Harvey have served are as varied as the places they have lived. They were pleased to serve wherever the Lord



Whether sunny or snowy, each mission experience was unique for Brother and Sister Harvey.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RON AND ROSE HARVEY

called them, whether as humanitarian services missionaries, family history missionaries, or proselytizing missionaries.

Family: One of the greatest concerns shared by senior missionaries is being away from their families. For Brother and Sister Harvey that includes 7 children, 39 grandchildren, and 25 great-grandchildren. Leaving them for years at a time has been difficult, but they now feel closer to their posterity than they did before they left. “I can hardly express the love that grew between us. . . . If you think you can’t go because of your children, you’ve got it all backward,” Sister Harvey said.

Through it all, Brother and Sister Harvey have remembered that they are on the Lord’s errand. “It’s His work and His glory. You have to have faith that that’s true,” she said.

Establishing a Heritage of Faith

The service Brother and Sister Harvey have contributed extends far beyond their mission boundaries. It has blessed their posterity in ways they never could have imagined. “We are just in awe of what it has done for our children,” Sister Harvey said.

Their descendants all agree that Brother and Sister Harvey’s example has had a great effect on their lives. “When the grandsons and granddaughters go out to serve in the mission field, they think of grandma and grandpa applying their heart,

might, mind, and strength at their mature age and are inspired to do their best as well,” said Teri Kearl, one of Brother and Sister Harvey’s daughters.

Seeing the positive influence they had on their family after their first and second missions inspired Brother and Sister Harvey to keep serving.

“In a sense, as you go out and serve as grandparents, you are serving your family in many ways as well,” said Sister Harvey.

Their granddaughter Nicole Kearl, who is serving in the Idaho Pocatello Mission, recently wrote this about her grandparents: “Seeing their devotion to the Lord has given me a greater desire to serve the Lord. I’m sure that my desire to serve a mission was partly influenced by their great example.”

Drawing Closer to Each Other and the Lord

Brother and Sister Harvey feel closer to their children and grandchildren because of their service, but they’ve also grown closer as a couple. Sister Harvey described their daily scripture study regimen as “the greatest blessing ever.”

Brother Harvey added that he feels much closer to his wife through their continued service. “Her feelings are my feelings. When she cries I cry. When she laughs, I laugh,” he said.

Their relationship with the Lord has also grown as they rely on Him for comfort and guidance. “You get out on a mission and you’re all by yourself,” Sister Harvey said.

“You rely on the Savior like you’ve never relied on Him before.”

Brother and Sister Harvey found they were cared for as long as they were willing to listen to the promptings

of the Spirit.

“It’s like the Lord keeps opening the doors . . . faster than you can walk through them,” said Sister Harvey. “A desire and a willing heart—it’s all you need.” ■

Missionary Service Has Lifelong Impact

While much attention is given to serving and preparing to serve a mission, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles recently noted for the media the impact a mission has on the rest of a missionary’s life.

For returning missionaries, coming home involves more than just picking up where they left off. Circumstances and relationships at home may have changed—and the missionary comes home a different person than the one who left two years earlier.

“Generally, young people who come back from their missions have changed in many significant ways,” said Elder Ballard. “They have spent up to two years helping others, thinking outside of themselves, studying scripture, learning a new language in many cases, finding out about new cultures, and having experiences that make them more responsible, more caring and thoughtful human beings.”

He also believes that the missionary experience focuses and enhances the way a person approaches life’s challenges and

opportunities.

“Perhaps the most important education young people can get is in the mission field,” he said. “They learn to present themselves and to speak and relate to others. When they go home they take these and other skills and attributes with them which help them move forward in their careers, in their personal and family relationships, and in their service to the Church and the community.”

There are currently some 53,000 full-time missionaries serving in more than 150 countries. That means that around 25,000 missionaries return to their homes each year, where they learn to serve in various positions in their wards and branches, often becoming teachers and leaders.

“Missionary service across our Church leads to a highly religiously educated membership and forms the backbone of future volunteer Church leadership and service at every level,” Elder Ballard said. ■

Adapted from “Missions Have Lifelong Impact,” at newsroom.lds.org.



James E. Faust and Ruth Wright on their wedding day, April 21, 1943.

Sister Ruth Faust Dies

Sister Ruth Wright Faust, 86, passed away surrounded by family on February 10, 2008, from causes incident to age, six months after the death of her

husband, President James E. Faust, formerly of the First Presidency.

Sister Faust was born on April 11, 1921, to Elmer Wright and Elizabeth

Hamilton Wright. President and Sister Faust married in the Salt Lake Temple on April 21, 1943, and raised 5 children. They have 25 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren.

She served in many callings, including ward and stake Relief Society president, and accompanied her husband around the world, coming to love members from many cultures.

President and Sister Faust were among the first official Church representatives in China when they accompanied the Brigham Young University Young Ambassadors there in 1979. They also came to love the people in Brazil, where they lived while President Faust presided over the Church in South America. ■

themselves, working together, and making use of available resources," said Brett Bass, project manager of Church Humanitarian Services. "They are truly helping themselves and offering a great example of what the welfare program can be."

Reconstructing homes is the first of the long-term plans that have been developed to help quake victims. Others include instituting health education and providing employment assistance to those who have lost jobs. ■

Church Increasing Self-Reliance in Cambodia

By Lynda Hansen,
Church Magazines

Partnering with the Center for Study and Development of Cambodian Agriculture (CEDAC), a local nongovernmental agency in Cambodia, the Church is working to improve the lives of 7,000 families and help them rise out of poverty.

Small farmers are learning a new method of cultivating rice—the system of rice intensification (SRI) that increases production more than 200 percent. The Benson Institute Family Food Program, under the umbrella of Humanitarian Services, is responsible for the three-year Cambodia project.

Currently more than 2,000 farmers in 100 villages have learned the new method of

HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

Earthquake Response Continues as Members Rebuild Homes in Peru

By Karianne Salisbury, Church Magazines

Hope spreads quickly as members join together in building homes and reestablishing livelihoods after the magnitude-8 earthquake that devastated southern Peru on August 15, 2007.

Shortly after the quake, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles visited Peru and said long-term aid would continue even after immediate needs were met. "We will be there," he said. "The members want to help."

The transition to

long-term aid includes plans to rebuild approximately 400 homes. The homeowners will provide much of the labor by clearing debris from their land and working on their own homes while offering service on others' homes as well. The Church will provide the construction materials and offer building expertise.

The earthquake left entire communities in southwest Peru, including Pisco, Ica, and Chincha, in ruins. The Church's immediate response provided 10,000 blankets and other emergency supplies.

Continued efforts offered more than 40,000 pounds (18,000 kg) of supplies, surgical instruments, food, and hygiene kits. Additionally, four Church meetinghouses in Pisco were opened as shelters for displaced people.

While the Church's quick response to provide for immediate needs relieved suffering, the members' efforts to join together to rebuild homes now reflect an application of welfare principles.

"Under the direction of the Area Presidency, the people are organizing

planting rice. None of the families in the food production program are members of the Church.

For hundreds of years these small farmers have raised rice the same way, by planting and flooding their small plots of land. Now they are learning how to grow the rice in a dry field. This method has more than doubled the farmers' yields, giving them a much larger harvest to sell at market. Production costs have been reduced as well.

The Church is also helping to improve the people's nutrition. Families in these villages usually survive on rice and any fish they can catch. They are now learning how to plant personal vegetable gardens and how to raise chickens. The villagers, who sometimes catch eels and frogs to eat, are now also learning how to breed these animals for a consistent supply of protein.

Another aspect of this program is the education of families in modern hygiene and health practices. ■

Church Aid Programs Saving Lives Worldwide

One of the central pillars of the humanitarian aid program of the Church—training medical staff and birth attendants how to resuscitate oxygen-deprived babies at birth—has saved the lives of more than 400,000 infants in developing countries.

Neonatal resuscitation training is just one of the major initiatives on which Church Humanitarian Services focuses. Others are water projects, wheelchair distribution, and vision treatment training.

According to Humanitarian Services, courses designed to instruct medical professionals and birth attendants how to reduce infant deaths caused by birth asphyxia (lack of oxygen) were taught in 23 countries in 2007.

In a six-month time period last year, 176 neonatal resuscitation medical personnel

were trained in Ukraine alone.

“When just one physician is trained, he or she will go on to train others, which in the long run turns into thousands of lives being saved,” Dean Walker, manager of major initiatives for Humanitarian Services, said.

The humanitarian initiative program is carried out largely by volunteers. In the case of neonatal resuscitation,



An Egyptian doctor trains local nurses on neonatal resuscitation techniques.

doctors, nurses, therapists, and other specialized medical professionals take time out of their regular schedules to train those in other countries.

With the close of 2007, year-end figures for Humanitarian Services show major activity in several areas of emphasis in addition to the work of saving babies at birth.

Some 950,000 people benefited from clean water projects, 60,537 wheelchairs were distributed, and 9,100 people received vision treatment.

A 2007 year-end review by Humanitarian Services also shows that the Church's relief efforts for those areas affected by the 2004 tsunami were continuing three years later. The Church has assisted in building 16 schools, 902 homes, and 3 community centers. Victims were given new equipment, such as sewing machines and fishing boats, to provide jobs for local people. Hospitals were given vital medical equipment, and schools received computers. ■

Comments

Joy and Pain of Adoption

I want to thank you from the depths of my heart for the article on adoption in the January 2008 *Ensign*. My wife and I have applied with two adoption



agencies and have since experienced the joys and pains and heartache that are all involved with adoption. One of the hurdles we never expected was the lack of education of family and friends regarding adoption. Some have been very supportive, while others we expected to be supportive have not been.

The article on adoption was extremely well-written and expressed many of the feelings and desires we have had along the way, including our thoughts and feelings as we have come to understand what a spiritual journey this is. Thank you for spreading the word on what a beautiful blessing adoption is.
Name Withheld

Conference Photographs

Thank you for the beautiful photographs included in the conference issue. The pictures of Saints from around the world attending general conference are very uplifting.
Alicia Richards, WA

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IN THE NEWS

Worldwide Leadership Training Materials Available

The text of the February 9, 2008, Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting for all adult members of the Church on raising a righteous posterity will be published as a self-contained booklet and shipped with the June 2008 *Ensign* and *Liabona* magazines. The booklet will be available in 23 languages.

Text in 77 languages is also available on LDS.org. The broadcast will be made available on DVD in 16 languages through distribution centers.

March Special Issue Cover Art Available

The art used on the cover of the March 2008 *Liabona* and *Ensign* special issue on the Savior is available in three sizes through distribution centers worldwide and on LDScatalog.com.

The depiction of Jesus Christ by Carl Heinrich Bloch (detail from *Christ with Boy*) will be available as a 5"x7" print (13x18 cm, item no. 06642-000), an 8"x10" print (20x25 cm, item no. 06643-000); and an 11"x17" print (28x43 cm, item no. 06641-000).

Danish Painter Carl Bloch (1834–1890) was commissioned in 1866 to create 23 new paintings for the restored Frederiksborg Castle chapel. The assignment to illustrate the life

of Christ took nearly 14 years.

Portuguese Triple Available Online

Portuguese-speaking members of the Church can now study the LDS triple combination on the Internet. The Portuguese version of the LDS Scriptures Internet Edition with footnotes, study helps, maps, photographs, and the ability to mark scriptures was released in February 2008 at scriptures.lds.org/pt.

Downloadable compressed audio files of the scriptures in Portuguese were placed online in 2007. English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish text versions of the triple are also online.

Disabilities Web Site Offers Resources

A new section of LDS.org, disability.lds.org, has been created to offer orientation, support, comfort, and an increased level of acceptance toward those with disabilities.

Individuals with a disability and their caregivers, leaders, teachers, and members of their ward or branch may find greater understanding of specific disabilities and some of the difficulties faced by those involved. The site also answers frequently asked questions, lists available materials, and provides links to other helpful sites. ■

The Prompting I Needed

Seeking guidance about the topic of revelation recently, I felt inspired to read the October 2007 *Ensign*. The article "I Will Not Leave You Comfortless" was an answer to my prayers. That article was very specific about discerning promptings and was exactly what I needed. I felt as if God put His arm around me and

from reading the words of the prophet and other General Authorities, and I have been better able to keep the Spirit with me. I have also witnessed other people changing as I have improved my teaching because of these articles we get every month.

Elder Kakeeto Robert Namugera,
Kenya Nairobi Mission



told me personally, "I will not leave you comfortless." I am thankful that Heavenly Father loves me so much that He sent the Holy Ghost to prompt me to read that article. Name Withheld

Helping Me Serve

Thanks very much for the articles you are issuing to us. I have loved reading the *Ensign* ever since I came on my mission. I wasn't well equipped with the doctrine of the Church when I began serving because I had only been a member of the Church for a year and a few months. I have since learned a lot, especially by reading the *Ensign*.

My life has changed as I have read this magazine. I have received many blessings

Clarification

In the February 2008 *Ensign*, on page 41 of the article titled "Joseph and Emma's Family," the next to the last child born to the Prophet Joseph Smith and his wife, Emma, should have been listed as "the 7th son" [infant] instead of Thomas Smith.

Update

The new FamilySearch.org Web site will allow members to print a bar-coded form at home that they can take with them to the temple to create temple ordinance cards. The January 2008 *Ensign* news article "New Opportunity Allows More Members to Serve," on page 79, states the site allows members to print temple ordinance cards from home. ■



Certain Women, by Walter Rane

The artist commemorates the faithfulness of “certain women,” named and unnamed, who followed Jesus Christ: “Certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chbuzza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto [Jesus Christ] of their substance” (Luke 8:2-3).



Front cover: The new First Presidency was introduced at a press conference in the Church Office Building on February 4: President Thomas S. Monson, center; President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor, left; and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor. Above: Members of the First Presidency (center) and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles seated in front of a mural in the lobby of the Church Office Building.

