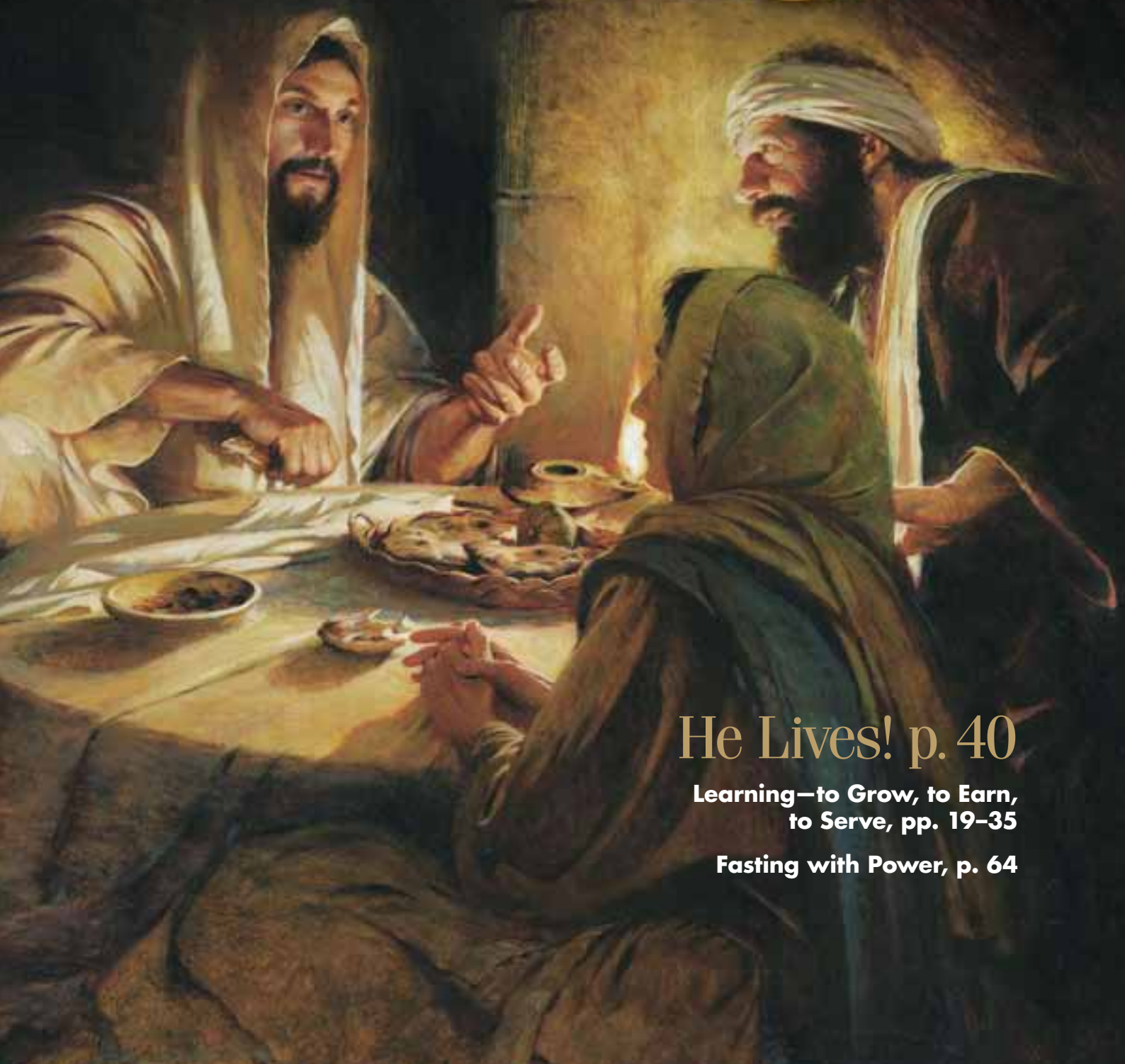


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to Serve, pp. 19–35**

Fasting with Power, p. 64



Entrance to the Holy City, by Garth Robinson Oborn

Artist's depiction, symbolic of Christ's invitation, "Enter ye in at the strait gate . . . because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14).

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How has the Book of Mormon made a difference in your life? We want to hear your personal experiences with reading, sharing, studying, and being changed by this testament of Jesus Christ. Please label your submission "Book of Mormon," and send it by May 15.

We also welcome other submissions that show the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. You can find this and other calls for articles online at <http://ensign.lds.org>.

Ensign Magazine Writers' Guidelines are posted on the same page under "Resources."

Send submissions to ensign@ldschurch.org or *Ensign* Editorial, 50 E. North Temple Street, Room 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA. Include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, ward (or branch), and stake (or district). Because of the volume of submissions we receive, we cannot acknowledge receipt. Authors whose work is selected for publication will be notified. If you would like your manuscript, photos, art, or other material returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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Ensign

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USING THIS ISSUE

Celebrate Easter. President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that “There would be no Christmas if there were no Easter” (see “The Things of Which I Know,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 84). As you review pp. 40–62, think about ways in which the Savior’s Atonement and Resurrection blesses your life.

Teach with the Spirit. The articles on p. 4 and p. 10 both discuss powerful teaching. How can you improve your ability to teach by the power of the Holy Ghost in your home, in callings, and in sharing the gospel? *Teaching: No Greater Call* (available at www.lds.org under Serving in the Church > Sunday School > Teacher Improvement) offers additional helps.

Pursue education. This issue contains several articles on the importance of education (see pp. 14–35). What can you be doing now to pursue additional education, formally or informally? How can you encourage others to take advantage of their opportunities? See besmart.com and the employment section on providentliving.org for ideas and resources.



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COMING IN MAY

Addresses from the
179th Annual General
Conference.



Teaching True Doctrine

BY PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING
First Counselor in the First Presidency

There has been a war between light and darkness, between good and evil, since before the world was created. The battle still rages, and the casualties seem to be increasing. All of us have family members we love who are being buffeted by the forces of the destroyer, who would make all of God's children miserable. For many of us, there have been sleepless nights. We have tried to add every force for good we can to the powers swirling around the people who are at risk. We have loved them. We have set the best example we could. We have pled in prayer for them. A wise prophet long ago gave us counsel about another force which we may at times underestimate and thus use too little.

Alma was the leader of a people faced with destruction by ferocious enemies. In the face of that danger, he could not do everything, so he had to choose. He could have built fortifications or trained armies or created armaments. But his only hope of victory was to get God's help, and for that he knew the people must repent. And so he chose to try one spiritual thing first: "And now, as the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword,

or anything else, which had happened unto them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God" (Alma 31:5).

Opening Minds and Hearts

The word of God is the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ and by His prophets. Alma knew that words of doctrine have great power. They can open the minds of people to see spiritual things not visible to the natural eye. And they can open hearts to feelings of the love of God and a love for truth. The Savior drew on both of those sources of power, to open our eyes and open hearts, in the 18th section of the Doctrine and Covenants as He taught His doctrine to those whom He wanted to serve Him as missionaries. As you listen, think of that young man in your family now wavering in preparing himself for a mission. Here is how the Master taught two of His servants and how you might teach His doctrine to the young man you love:

"And now, Oliver Cowdery, I speak unto you, and also unto David Whitmer, by the way of commandment; for, behold, I command all men everywhere to repent, and I speak unto you, even as unto Paul mine apostle, for you are called even with that same calling with which he was called.

"Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God" (D&C 18:9–10).



In the face of great danger, Alma chose to try one spiritual thing first to strengthen his people: "As the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just— . . . therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God."

He begins by saying how much He trusts them. Then He draws their hearts to Him by saying how much His Father and He love every soul. He next goes to the foundation of His doctrine. He describes how much we have cause to love Him:

“For, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him.

“And he hath risen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him, on conditions of repentance.

“And how great is his joy in the soul that repenteth!” (D&C 18:11–13).

Having given the doctrine of His mission to open their hearts, He gives them His command: “Wherefore, you are called to cry repentance unto this people” (D&C 18:14).

Finally, He opens their eyes to see beyond the veil. He takes them and us to a future existence, described in the great plan of salvation, where we may yet be. He tells us of wonderful associations, worth giving our all to enjoy:

“And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

“And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!” (D&C 18:15–16).

In those few passages, He teaches doctrine to open our hearts to His love. And He teaches doctrine to open our eyes to see spiritual realities, invisible to any mind not illuminated by the Spirit of Truth.

How We Must Teach

The need to open eyes and hearts tells us how we must teach doctrine. Doctrine gains its power as the Holy Ghost confirms that it is true. We prepare those we teach, as best we can, to receive the quiet promptings of the still, small voice. That takes at least some faith in Jesus Christ. It takes at least some humility, some willingness to surrender to the Savior’s will for us. The person you would help may have little of either, but you can urge that he or she desire

to believe. More than that, you can take confidence from another of the powers of doctrine. Truth can prepare its own way. Simply hearing the words of doctrine can plant the seed of faith in the heart. And even a tiny seed of faith in Jesus Christ invites the Spirit.

We have more control over our own preparation. We feast on the word of God in the scriptures and study the words of the living prophets. We fast and pray to invite the Spirit for ourselves and the person we would teach.

Because we need the Holy Ghost, we must be cautious and careful not to go beyond teaching true doctrine. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Truth. His confirmation is invited by our avoiding speculation or personal interpretation. That can be hard to do. You love the person you are trying to influence. He or she may have ignored the doctrine previously heard. It is tempting to try something new or sensational. But we invite the Holy Ghost as our companion when we are careful to teach only true doctrine.

One of the surest ways to avoid even getting near false doctrine is to choose to be simple in our teaching. Safety is gained by that simplicity, and little is lost. We know that because the Savior has told us to teach the most important doctrine to little children. Listen to His command: “And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents” (D&C 68:25).

We can teach even a child to understand the doctrine of Jesus Christ. It is therefore possible, with God’s help, to teach the saving doctrine simply.

Begin Early

We have the greatest opportunity with the young. The best time to teach is early, while children are still immune to the temptations of their mortal enemy and long before the words of truth may be harder for them to hear in the noise of their personal struggles.

A wise parent would never miss a chance to gather children together to learn of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.



Such moments are so rare in comparison with the efforts of the enemy. For every hour the power of doctrine is introduced into a child's life, there may be hundreds of hours of messages and images denying or ignoring the saving truths.

The question should not be whether we are too tired to prepare to teach doctrine or whether it would be better to draw a child closer by just having fun or whether the child is beginning to think that we preach too much. The question must be, "With so little time and so few opportunities, what words of doctrine from me will fortify them against the attacks on their faith which are sure to come?" The words you speak today may be the ones they remember. And today will soon be gone.

The years pass, we teach the doctrine the best we can, and yet some still do not respond. There is sorrow in that. But there is hope in the scriptural record of families. Think of Alma the Younger and Enos. In their moments of crisis, they remembered the words of their fathers, words of the doctrine of

Jesus Christ (see Enos 1:1–4; Alma 36:16–19). It saved them. Your teaching of that sacred doctrine will be remembered.

The Lasting Effects of Teaching

Two doubts may creep into your mind. You may wonder if you know the doctrine well enough to teach it. And if you have already tried to teach it, you may wonder why you can't see much of good effect.

In my own family there is a story of a young woman who had the courage to start to teach doctrine when she was only a new convert with little education. The fact that the effects of her teaching haven't ended gives me patience to wait for the fruits of my own efforts.

Mary Bommeli was my great-grandmother. I never met her. Her granddaughter heard her tell her story and wrote it down.

Mary was born in 1830. The missionaries taught her family in Switzerland when she was 24. She was still living at home, weaving and selling cloth to help support her family on their small farm. When the family heard

The best time to teach is early, while children are still immune to the temptations of their mortal enemy and long before the words of truth may be harder for them to hear in the noise of their personal struggles.

It was against the law then to teach the doctrine of the Church in Berlin. But Mary could not keep the good news to herself.

the doctrine of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, they knew it was true. They were baptized. Mary's brothers were called on missions, going without purse or scrip. The rest of the family sold their possessions to go to America to gather with the Saints.

There was not enough money for all to go. Mary volunteered to stay behind because she felt she could earn enough from her weaving to support herself and save for her passage. She found her way to Berlin and to the home of a woman who hired her to weave cloth for the family's clothing. She lived in a servant's room and set up her loom in the living area of the home.

It was against the law then to teach the doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Berlin. But Mary could not keep the good news to herself. The woman of the house and her friends would gather

around the loom to hear the Swiss girl teach. She talked about the appearance of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ to Joseph Smith, of the visitation of angels, and of the Book of Mormon. When she came to the accounts of Alma, she taught the doctrine of the Resurrection.

That caused some problems with her weaving. In those days many children died very young. The women around the loom had lost children in death, some of them several children. When Mary taught the truth that little children were heirs of the celestial kingdom and that those women might again be with them and with the Savior and our Heavenly Father, tears rolled down the faces of the women. Mary cried too. All those tears falling got the cloth wet that Mary had woven.

Mary's teaching created a more serious problem. Even though Mary begged the women not to talk about what she told them, they did.



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. Read the first paragraph of the article. Explain how an open heart and mind can help people move from the dark to the light. Tell the story of President Eyring's great-grandmother Mary Bommeli. Discuss how she helped people discover the light. Invite family members to express ways they might help teach others true doctrine.

2. Bring an object or visual aid that can help you briefly teach a doctrine that is meaningful to you (for example, bring a mustard seed to talk about faith or a piece of bread to discuss the Bread of Life). Explain how this doctrine has influenced your life. Invite family members to share doctrines that are meaningful to them.

3. Help the family understand the principles of teaching from the section "How We Must Teach." Invite them to apply those principles in a future family home evening.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

They shared the joyous doctrine with their friends. So one night there was a knock at the door. It was the police. They took Mary off to jail. On the way she asked the policeman for the name of the judge she was to appear before the next morning. She asked if he had a family. She asked if he was a good father and a good husband. The policeman smiled as he described the judge as a man of the world.

At the jail Mary asked for a pencil and some paper. She wrote a letter to the judge. She wrote about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as described in the Book of Mormon, about the spirit world, and about how long the judge would have to think and to consider his life before facing the final judgment. She wrote that she knew he had much to repent of which would break his family's heart and bring him great sorrow. She wrote through the night. In the morning she asked the policeman to take her letter to the judge. He did.

Later the policeman was summoned by the judge to his office. The letter Mary had written was irrefutable evidence that she was teaching the gospel and so breaking the law. Nevertheless, it wasn't long until the policeman came back to Mary's cell. He told her that all charges were dismissed

and that she was free to go. Her teaching the doctrine of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ had opened eyes and hearts enough to get her cast into jail. And her declaring the doctrine of repentance to the judge got her cast out of jail.¹

Shaping Your Descendants

The teaching of Mary Bommeli touched more than those women around the loom and the judge. My father, her grandson, talked to me during the nights as he approached death. He spoke of joyous reunions that were coming soon in the spirit world. I could almost see the bright sunlight and the smiles in that place of paradise as he talked about it with such assurance.

At one point I asked him if he had some repenting to do. He smiled. He chuckled softly as he said, "No, Hal, I've been repenting as I went along." The doctrine of paradise that Mary Bommeli taught those women was real to her grandson. And even the doctrine Mary taught the judge had shaped my father's life for good. That will not be the end of Mary Bommeli's teaching. The record of her words will send true doctrine to generations of her family yet unborn. Because she believed that even a new convert knew enough doctrine to teach it, the minds and hearts of her descendants will be opened, and they will be strengthened in the battle.

Your descendants will teach doctrine to each other because you taught it. Doctrine can more than open minds to spiritual things and hearts to the love of God. When that doctrine brings joy and peace, it also has the power to open mouths. Like those women in Berlin, your descendants will not be able to keep the good news to themselves.

I am grateful to live in a time when we and our families have the fulness of the gospel restored. I am grateful for the Savior's mission of love for us and for the words of life which He has given us. I pray that we may share those words with those we love. I testify that God our Father lives and loves all His children. Jesus Christ is His Only Begotten Son in the flesh and our Savior. I know that He is risen, and I know that we can be washed clean through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■

NOTE

1. See Theresa Snow Hill, *Life and Times of Henry Eyring and Mary Bommeli* (1997), 15–22.

The Obligation of



the Church

There is a vast congregation of men and women throughout the world, in every country, of every creed and color, waiting for us and our great message.

BY ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

The world is in a disturbed condition. There is discouragement everywhere. No man seems to see the end from the beginning. I have pondered in my heart for some time what my obligation is in this state of worldly confusion. What is the obligation of my Church, the restored Church of Christ in these latter days? Perhaps all of us have entertained such thoughts in these unhappy days.

There is a world cry for peace; everybody wants peace. In newspapers, magazines, books, [and] from the public platform come cries for peace. As far back as I can remember, there has never been such a worldwide appeal for peace among the children of men. . . .

It is a curious commentary on human nature that men who cry for peace look upon peace as something that may be picked as an apple from a tree, something that lies about within easy reach of humanity. If I pick an apple from a tree, I have first planted the tree, cared for it, watered it, brought it to maturity. Then in due time I may have the fruit.



John A. Widtsoe was born January 31, 1872, on the Isle of Froyen, Norway, to John A. and Anna K. Gaarden Widtsoe. He married Leah E. Dunford in the Salt Lake Temple on June 1, 1898. Before being ordained an Apostle on March 17, 1921, he enjoyed prominence as a scientist, educator, author, and academician, serving as president of Utah Agricultural College and the University of Utah. Elder Widtsoe, a prolific author of books on Church history and doctrine, died in Salt Lake City on November 29, 1952, at age 80. Elder Widtsoe delivered this important address about missionary work during general conference in October 1946; capitalization and punctuation have been modernized.

So with peace. It is not a thing by itself to be picked up casually; but it is the fruit of something precedent. Like the tree, something must be planted and nourished and cared for if we are to obtain peace.

Peace: Result of Obedience to Gospel

It is a marvel to thinking men that those who write on peace fail to understand that it can be obtained only by the use of a body of principles which, if obeyed, in time would give us peace. We cannot begin with peace; we must begin with the philosophy or the system which, if accepted and honored, will lead to peace. Failure to understand that seems to be the error of the nations at this time, of the organizations and conventions of nations, assembled in great meetings on this side and the other side of the Atlantic. They have so far failed to touch upon the foundations of peace, upon the issues which are the aids to peace. They clamor for the peace they want, without yielding obedience to the methods by which that peace may be obtained.

The Latter-day Saints, from the beginning of our history, have taught that the good things of life—above all, peace—can come only through acceptance of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the Prince of Peace. He is the Prince of Peace. It is only as the men and women of the world, all children of God, accept the gospel of the Son of God that peace shall come to rule



Let us look back to the labors of those who have gone before us, our fathers who founded the Church under God's direction, who toiled from city to city, across the plains and the desert to build a commonwealth.

and reign and be established upon earth. That has been our message from the beginning of the restoration of the gospel in this day. We still proclaim without hesitation that there is only one way to peace, one way to the perfect human happiness—the way of the gospel paved with the principles that constitute the gospel.

We make a further claim, brethren and sisters. It is a claim that often makes us hesitant in stating it because it is so vast in its meaning, in its implications. We claim that this people, this Church, organized by God's own voice in this generation, possesses the only system of truth containing all of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, by that token, there can be no full peace, no complete happiness upon earth, until the men and women of the world accept the great latter-day message. We stand humbly before this claim, I know, but it is our claim. The Lord has said so.

He has said further that the time shall come in these latter days when every ear shall hear and every eye shall see and every heart [shall] be penetrated by the eternal message of the gospel, and that this great message shall be delivered "by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days" (D&C 1:4). . . .

Our Obligation to Teach the Truth

Now, then, if all this be true in my thinking about these things, there lies my obligation. It is my divine obligation somehow, through my feeble efforts and through yours, and through all the members of the Church, to teach all the

world the truth of the restored gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I must try to plant this truth in the hearts of men and women. I must contribute every day in my way, as best I can, toward the teaching of the truth which alone can bring peace to our unhappy world. It is a tremendous obligation when we view it as a whole but, with the help of the Lord, easy to meet if we take the tasks one by one, always keeping our obligation in mind as we travel through life.

Missionary work must grow in foreign fields as never before; missionary work at home must increase as never before. We shall employ every modern device—the telephone, telegraph, radio, printing press, the short wave systems . . . , and the other devices that are coming. We shall use them all in our attempt to win men and women from wickedness to righteousness, from untruth or near truth to full and complete truth, which is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This Church is not merely for me and for you who are in the Church. I must begin with myself, undoubtedly. My own salvation comes first; but unless I give of my strength to the winning of other souls for God, my own salvation will be incomplete. That applies to all of us. . . . We have a calling, not merely to build the Church of Christ and to save ourselves therein but also a commission to save the whole world. We are, as it were, set apart, consecrated for that great purpose. All of Israel must remember, every man or woman who enters the waters of baptism must keep in mind, and every child that comes into the Church must be taught that by the ordinance of baptism we accept the great and divine commission to serve the Lord in building His Church. It will then be easy to keep the commandments of God, to lay aside or meet courageously the temptations that face us. To stand alone, saying selfishly, "I have received the gospel; it is good to be a Latter-day Saint" will not be doing our duty; but when we say, "Now, I have received this great blessing. I shall pass it on to others," there comes the flowering in the hearts of men of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Commission to Supplant Evil with Good

We are not as other people; we are different. We are humble acceptors of the truth, yielders to God's will and word, under a commission to change the whole world, from evil to good. It is a great commission. It has been our commission from the beginning.

The great men who led this Church from the beginning have voiced this commission or calling to which we are consecrated. When we talk about this commission, about our duty or obligation, let us not forget the lesson of these mighty men. In the midst of confusion let us look back to the labors of those who have gone before us, our fathers who founded the Church under God's direction, who toiled from city to city, across the plains and the desert to build a commonwealth. They left behind them, not necessarily the heritage of their methods, for the world has changed, but the heritage of their undaunted, unchanging spirit. We must be as eager to fulfill God's word as they were in their day. We must do that, my brethren and sisters, if we are to fulfill and meet our full obligation in this difficult age. To those who catch the spirit of this obligation, of this commission, of this calling to a great people will come strength to resist, as I have said, the temptations of the world. It will be easy to reject the cocktail; the cigar can be laid aside easily; to divide with the Lord in tithing will not seem difficult; to converse with the Lord in prayer will be a joyful experience. Men are changed and transformed who enter into partnership with God in helping to establish His great cause upon the face of the earth.

God's Work Is Eternal

This work is not an ordinary cause. It is God's cause. It is not a cause for a day. It is a cause for the eternities, both gone and coming. We are working out an eternal project, you and I, all of us. We of today must do as well as those who went before us, a bit better perhaps, for new opportunities have come to us in our day. We should do better in this Church in the cause of righteousness than grandfather or great-grandfather. More light has come, more opportunity is given, more means are at our command. We should do better. And we all, especially the youth of the Church, should dream about the future of the Church, and give our own earnest endeavors to the fulfillment of our commissions. . . .



PHOTOGRAPH BY HYUNGYU LEE

By the ordinance of baptism we accept the great and divine commission to serve the Lord in building His Church.

I want to bear this testimony to you that as I have traveled through the world, . . . I have found thousands of people not acquainted with the gospel—good, clean, wholesome people, walking in darkness, who are looking for light, who, misled by untruths, are looking for truth, and unhappy because of the untruths handed to them by tradition. There [is] a vast congregation of men and women throughout the world, in every country, of every creed and color, waiting for us and our great message. The field is ripe unto harvest.

Now I pray, my brethren and sisters, that we may rise in our strength, the strength of Zion, and fill and fulfill our commission. Let us forget at least a part of the time the daily duties that hold us down and give ourselves to thoughts and actions in building actively under our great obligation the great latter-day kingdom of God, the Almighty Father. May it be so, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. ■



Kindling the Light of Hope

For thousands of Latter-day Saints in Brazil, the Perpetual Education Fund is a life-changing blessing.

BY MICHAEL R. MORRIS
Church Magazines

When Dilson Maciel de Castro Jr. lost his job in São Paulo, he and his wife moved to Recife, a major port city in northeast Brazil, so they could live with his parents. Despite Dilson's experience in the telecommunications industry, the only work he could find in Recife was a series of odd jobs.

"Things were very difficult for us at the time," recalls Dilson. Their challenges went from bad to worse when the couple lost everything they owned in a flood.

At that low point, Dilson, who had served in the Brazil São Paulo South Mission, met with Elder Gutenberg Amorim, an Area Seventy and institute of religion director, to talk about career and educational options. As Dilson discussed his interests, he received a spiritual prompting that he should study medicine. Thanks to the Church's then-recently implemented Perpetual Education Fund (PEF), in 2003 Dilson turned that prompting into a profession following an 18-month course in nursing.

"Without the fund, it would have been impossible for me to take the courses I needed," says Dilson, who works for a public hospital in Recife. Likewise, his wife, Alexandra, would not have been able to get a loan to pay for the education she needed to become a schoolteacher.

"Six years ago we were unemployed," Dilson says. "The PEF was essential to all we've been able to accomplish. It has changed our lives."

An Answer from the Lord

When members of the Church in Brazil describe the Perpetual Education Fund, they can't help but use superlatives: *miraculoso*, *inspirado*, *maravilhoso*. That's because the fund is accomplishing what President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) predicted it would: "It will become a blessing to all whose lives it touches—to the young men and women, to their future families, to the Church that will be blessed with their strong local leadership," and it will lift "thousands out of the slough of poverty and into the sunlight of knowledge and prosperity."¹

When President Hinckley announced the program, Church leaders like Paulo R. Grahl, area director of seminaries and institutes of religion in Brazil, were wrestling with concerns about the education and employment of Brazilian Latter-day Saints—especially of young returned missionaries.

"But we didn't have an answer until the Lord revealed to President Hinckley that we should establish this wonderful fund," Brother Grahl says. "Before, many of our young people would return from their missions without being able to pursue an education and profession. Now they know that when they return, the fund is there if they need it. It's a great blessing and benefit for the youth. It offers hope."

Approximately 10,000 Latter-day Saints in Brazil currently rely on PEF loans to expand their education and, in

With help from the Perpetual Education Fund, Dilson Maciel de Castro Jr. turned a spiritual prompting into a profession, becoming a nurse in Recife, Brazil. Below: A view of Recife from the colonial city of Olinda.





From top: Storefronts in Largo da Ordem, historical center of Curitiba. The Perpetual Education Fund was key to the educational and professional advancement of Ricardo Aurélio da Silva Fiusa; Mauricio A. Araújo, shown conducting a business meeting with fellow Latter-day Saints Renato A. Romero (left) and João B. Moreira (center); and Sílvia O. H. Parra, pictured with Adan Tallmann, area secretary of seminaries and institutes of religion.



turn, their job prospects. In Brazil, opportunity abounds for the educated—especially when education is coupled with the qualities young people develop in the mission field.

Opening Doors

Elder Pedro Penha, Area Seventy and director of the Recife North Institute of Religion, says returned missionaries have the qualifications that employers want. “Doors open quickly to employment opportunities because of their experience, study habits, appearance, and clean conduct,” he says. “They advance quickly, and their conduct attracts people to the Church.”

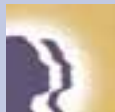
After finishing his service in the Brazil São Paulo North Mission in 2002, Ricardo Aurélio da Silva Fiusa used a PEF loan to earn a four-year degree in business administration.

“The fund has helped me grow up, prepare for work and marriage, and serve better in the Church,” says Ricardo. Like many PEF recipients, he was offered employment before he even finished his degree. “The fund has been a blessing in my life. I’m grateful to make monthly payments on my loan so that other people can use the fund as well.”

On his mission Ricardo learned to talk to people, study hard, and obey—qualities that have made him a good student and employee.

“A lot of my professors said there was something different about me that they couldn’t explain,” says Ricardo, who works in logistics for a company at Port Suape, south of Recife. “I told them it was because of my religious principles.” That answer has led to opportunities for Ricardo to talk with his professors and others about the Church.

Mauricio A. Araújo, one of the first Brazilian returned missionaries blessed by the PEF, adds, “With the growth of my career, I have more opportunities to influence people by my example. Sometimes people say to me, ‘Hey, you’re different. You are faithful to your wife. You walk your talk.’ By taking advantage of the PEF and doing our part, we receive blessings and we bless others.”



HOW THE PERPETUAL EDUCATION FUND BLESSES LIVES

Mauricio, who served in the Brazil Rio de Janeiro Mission in the late 1990s, has received a series of promotions since completing a PEF-funded customer-relations management program—from sales to team leadership to management to the board of directors of an international time-management training company in São Paulo.

“The Perpetual Education Fund is inspired by God,” he says. “The fund was the key I needed to complete my education and move forward in my career.”

A Good Investment

Although Gabriel Salomão Neto is not a Latter-day Saint, he feels blessed by the Perpetual Education Fund just the same. “This is a great thing your church is doing,” he says, speaking for many employers in Brazil.

Mr. Neto, a manager and co-owner of a large vending-machine company in São Paulo, has reason to be grateful. He was so impressed with the qualifications of Church member Silvia O. H. Parra, who earned a degree in business administration with help from a PEF loan, that he hired her as his executive secretary.

“We love the job she does. She is hardworking and efficient. We believe in her, and we trust her,” says Mr. Neto. “The investment your church made in her has paid off—for you, for her, and for us.”

Grateful for the Perpetual Education Fund and for her membership in the Church, Silvia teaches English classes at her São Paulo ward to both members and nonmembers. “As I have received,” she says, “I also want to give.”

As Silvia’s success illustrates, young men aren’t the only ones taking advantage of the Perpetual Education Fund in

The Perpetual Education Fund, in conjunction with Church employment resource centers and institutes of religion in more than two dozen nations, helps returned missionaries and other young Latter-day Saints receive vocational and technical training and advanced education. PEF applicants first enroll in institute and in career and self-employment workshops offered by employment centers. Workshops help members and nonmembers alike to identify talents and skills and to discover new avenues of education and employment. After completing training or education, PEF recipients pay back their loans with affordable monthly payments.

Donations to the Perpetual Education Fund may be made through wards and branches using the Tithing and Other Offerings form.

Brazil. For economic reasons, many Latter-day Saint women in Brazil must also seek employment.

“Most women in Brazil work not because they want a new car or expensive clothes but rather out of necessity,” says Lorival Viana de Aguirra, manager of the Church employment resource center in Curitiba, in southern Brazil. “They want their families to eat better and their children to have adequate clothing and a quality education.”

Greater Happiness, Stronger Testimonies

Keite de Lima A. Ahmed and Viviana Torres Noguera struggled to make ends meet even though their husbands worked hard for their families. For both, the PEF was a great blessing.

Less-active members of Keite’s family expressed doubts, however, when she registered for an 18-month safety-technician program. But she excelled in her studies and was offered a full-time position in her field in 2007.

“The fund did more than just help me receive training and employment; it also helped me feel better about myself and grow more confident in my abilities,” says Keite, one of the first women hired to conduct safety inspections, training, and implementation by a company in São José dos Pinhais, near Curitiba. “This inspired program has brought our family greater happiness and stronger testimonies,” she says.

Keite’s parents and siblings, impressed with her performance and determination and with how the PEF blessed her family, have returned to activity in the Church. “They were reminded that the Church lifts people and helps them grow in many ways—not only spiritually but also in



Above: Keite de Lima A. Ahmed, left, discusses safety issues with Lorival Viana de Aguirra, manager of the Church employment resource center in Curitiba.
Below: Viviana Torres Noguera works from her home in Manaus.
Inset: Viviana with her husband, Rafael, and their children.

all important ways that make for a full life," she says.

Viviana and her husband, Rafael, moved from Colombia to Manaus, an important industrial center in northern Brazil, in 2002 in search of economic opportunity. "Prayer, family councils, guidance from priesthood leaders, and career workshop classes helped us to know what our Father in Heaven wanted for us and to make the right decision at the right time," says Viviana, who felt prompted to use a PEF loan to study international business.

In 2007 Viviana went to work overseeing imports for a supermarket in Manaus. Her family needed the extra income, but with a baby on the way, she had to resign. A few months after that child—the couple's fourth—was born, Viviana was offered a job as director

of international commerce for another company. By this time she had learned to speak Portuguese, and her native Spanish made her invaluable in doing business with Brazil's Spanish-speaking neighbors.

"When I was offered the job, I said, 'I have four children. I can't commit myself to work 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.,'" says Viviana. "My boss told me that he had a lot of confidence in my abilities, saying, 'I need someone I can depend on. Work at home.' That surprised me."

Using the Internet and a computer, Viviana works at home while her older children attend school and her baby naps. Only occasionally does she have to go to the office.

Rafael attributes the family's blessings to more than coincidence. "The blessings we have received have come from a series of prayerful decisions and from actions made possible by the tools the Church has provided," he says.

The Light of Hope

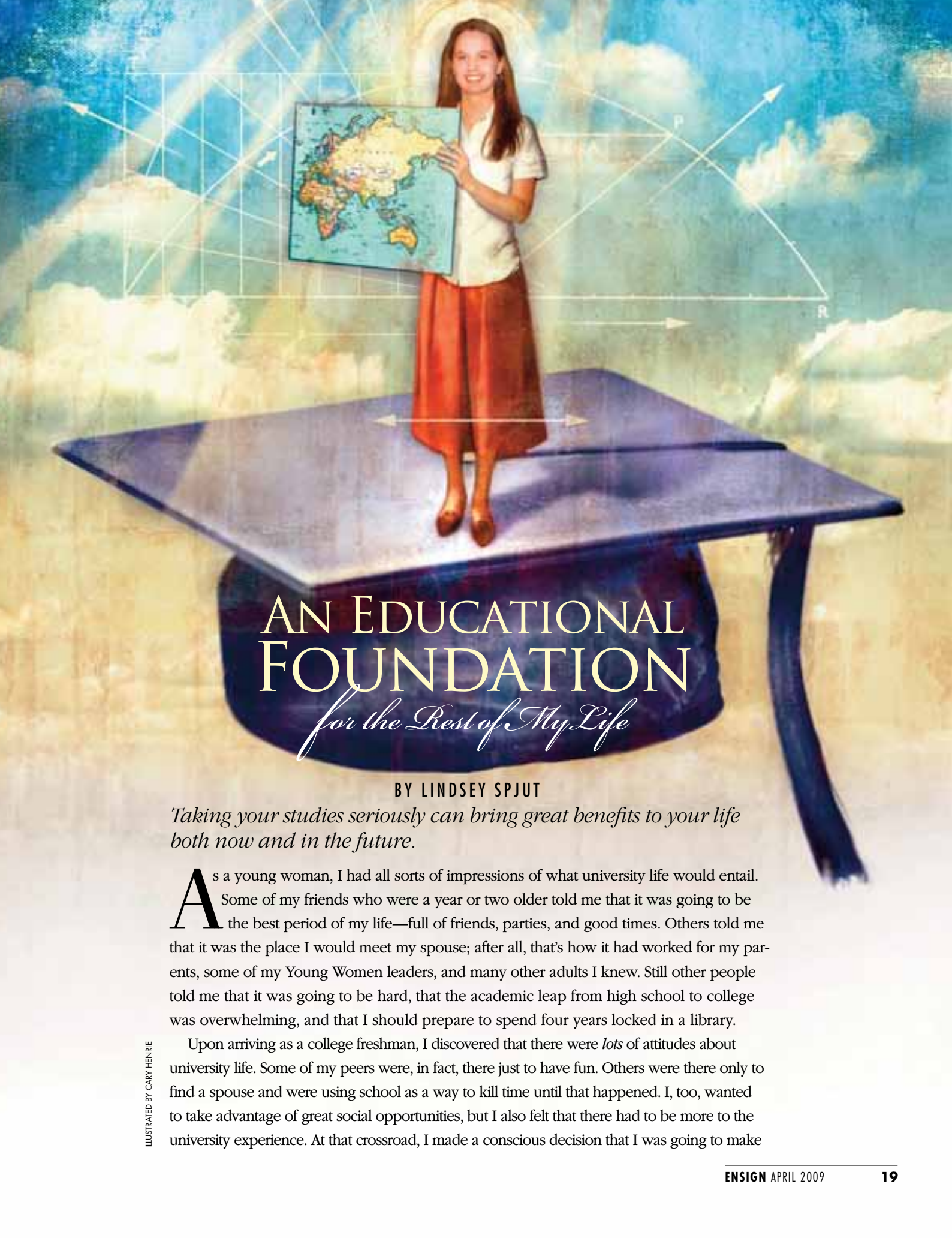
Gilmar Dias da Silva, PEF director in Brazil, says some Brazilian Latter-day Saints face employment challenges after completing their education, "but most of our PEF participants are progressing in their jobs and improving their lives. The fund is a success here."

That success, in the words of President Thomas S. Monson, "has kindled the light of hope in the eyes of those who felt doomed to mediocrity but who now have an opportunity for a brighter future."² ■

NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Perpetual Education Fund," *Liahona*, July 2001, 62; *Ensign*, May 2001, 52; "The Need for Greater Kindness," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 61.
2. Thomas S. Monson, "They Marked the Path to Follow," *Liahona*, Oct. 2007, 6; *Ensign*, Oct. 2007, 8.





AN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

for the Rest of My Life

BY LINDSEY SPJUT

Taking your studies seriously can bring great benefits to your life both now and in the future.

As a young woman, I had all sorts of impressions of what university life would entail. Some of my friends who were a year or two older told me that it was going to be the best period of my life—full of friends, parties, and good times. Others told me that it was the place I would meet my spouse; after all, that's how it had worked for my parents, some of my Young Women leaders, and many other adults I knew. Still other people told me that it was going to be hard, that the academic leap from high school to college was overwhelming, and that I should prepare to spend four years locked in a library.

Upon arriving as a college freshman, I discovered that there were *lots* of attitudes about university life. Some of my peers were, in fact, there just to have fun. Others were there only to find a spouse and were using school as a way to kill time until that happened. I, too, wanted to take advantage of great social opportunities, but I also felt that there had to be more to the university experience. At that crossroad, I made a conscious decision that I was going to make

ILLUSTRATED BY CARY HENRIE

the time, resources, and efforts I would spend during my university years really count. Now, a few years after graduation and into my teaching career, I realize that crucial goals and decisions I made *then* have helped make my life fulfilling *now*.

Have a Plan

As a senior in high school, I took a class geared for students who thought they might want to be teachers someday. I used that class as an exploration tool. Along with my part-time job at a child-care center, that class helped me recognize my love for and talents in this field. When I started college, I was able to determine fairly quickly that I wanted to pursue elementary education as my major.

Classes like the one offered at my high school may not be available to everyone, but most people can, if they spend some time, identify areas of interest and talent. What you love and what you're good at make excellent starting points for determining an area of study and a career path. Prayer was also a crucial part of this process for me. Because I had researched what I wanted to do, I felt confident in going to Heavenly Father and asking Him to confirm my thoughts and decisions. I felt His guiding hand then and at multiple times throughout the rest of my university experience.



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

"Take full advantage of the opportunities that you have. They pass quickly. The time for preparation, though it seems long now,

is really brief. I think back on my grandfather, who was an immigrant from Sweden. When I [was] a freshman, he and my grandmother helped me move my things into the dorm. He . . . mused somewhat, saying, 'Oh, if only I had had this kind of opportunity for education, I would have amounted to something.' He was a great man in many, many ways, but it made me appreciate the unique blessing I had of education, of preparation, of learning, of experiences and associations. . . . Don't let them pass. Be serious enough that you take full advantage of that."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, press conference, April 6, 2008; available at newsroom.lds.org.

Look for Balance

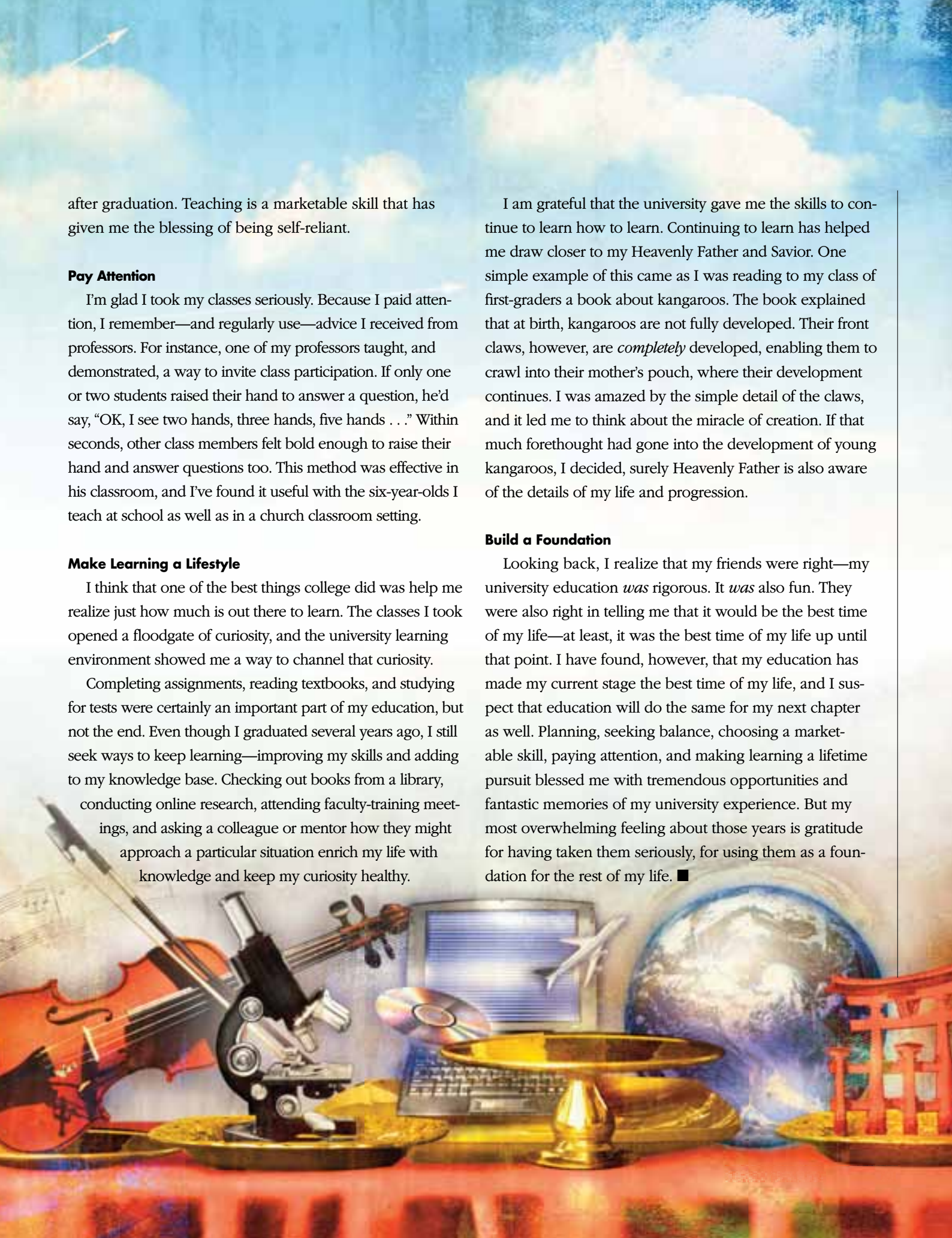
Choosing a major can initially be difficult, but doing so near the beginning of my studies allowed me not only to graduate in a timely way but also to augment my major courses with electives in art and sports. In addition, I took institute classes. These courses didn't always fulfill requirements for graduation, but they played a valuable and important part of my university experience. For instance, throughout my childhood and youth, I had enjoyed drawing, but I had never ventured into painting. During one semester, I took an oil paint-

ing class and discovered that I loved it too! Another semester, I fulfilled a longtime desire to learn the stories of the Saints by signing up for a Church history institute class. Augmenting my elementary education courses with these other areas of study helped me take full advantage of my university years.

Choose a Marketable Skill

My major in education didn't impress my peers, but I enjoyed it. Besides, it was practical. One of the goals related to a college degree should be getting a good job





after graduation. Teaching is a marketable skill that has given me the blessing of being self-reliant.

Pay Attention

I'm glad I took my classes seriously. Because I paid attention, I remember—and regularly use—advice I received from professors. For instance, one of my professors taught, and demonstrated, a way to invite class participation. If only one or two students raised their hand to answer a question, he'd say, "OK, I see two hands, three hands, five hands . . ." Within seconds, other class members felt bold enough to raise their hand and answer questions too. This method was effective in his classroom, and I've found it useful with the six-year-olds I teach at school as well as in a church classroom setting.

Make Learning a Lifestyle

I think that one of the best things college did was help me realize just how much is out there to learn. The classes I took opened a floodgate of curiosity, and the university learning environment showed me a way to channel that curiosity.

Completing assignments, reading textbooks, and studying for tests were certainly an important part of my education, but not the end. Even though I graduated several years ago, I still seek ways to keep learning—improving my skills and adding to my knowledge base. Checking out books from a library, conducting online research, attending faculty-training meetings, and asking a colleague or mentor how they might approach a particular situation enrich my life with knowledge and keep my curiosity healthy.

I am grateful that the university gave me the skills to continue to learn how to learn. Continuing to learn has helped me draw closer to my Heavenly Father and Savior. One simple example of this came as I was reading to my class of first-graders a book about kangaroos. The book explained that at birth, kangaroos are not fully developed. Their front claws, however, are *completely* developed, enabling them to crawl into their mother's pouch, where their development continues. I was amazed by the simple detail of the claws, and it led me to think about the miracle of creation. If that much forethought had gone into the development of young kangaroos, I decided, surely Heavenly Father is also aware of the details of my life and progression.

Build a Foundation

Looking back, I realize that my friends were right—my university education *was* rigorous. It *was* also fun. They were also right in telling me that it would be the best time of my life—at least, it was the best time of my life up until that point. I have found, however, that my education has made my current stage the best time of my life, and I suspect that education will do the same for my next chapter as well. Planning, seeking balance, choosing a marketable skill, paying attention, and making learning a lifetime pursuit blessed me with tremendous opportunities and fantastic memories of my university experience. But my most overwhelming feeling about those years is gratitude for having taken them seriously, for using them as a foundation for the rest of my life. ■

LEARNING AND LATTER-DAY SAINTS



The acquisition of knowledge is a lifelong, sacred activity, pleasing to our Father in Heaven and favored by His servants.

BY ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
AND KRISTEN M. OAKS

He who invades the domain of knowledge must approach it as Moses came to the burning bush; he stands on holy ground; he would acquire things sacred,” said President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), a member of the First Presidency, speaking at the inauguration of a new president of Brigham Young University. “We must come to this quest of truth—in all regions of human knowledge whatsoever, not only in reverence, but with a spirit of worship.”¹

As Latter-day Saints we believe in education, and we have a philosophy about how and why we should pursue it. Our religious faith teaches us that we should seek learning by the Spirit and that we have a stewardship to use our knowledge for the benefit of mankind.

Our Quest for Truth

“[Our] religion . . . prompts [us] to search diligently after knowledge,” taught President Brigham Young (1801–77). “There is no other people in existence more eager to see, hear, learn and understand truth.”²

Our quest for truth should be as broad as our life’s activities and as deep as our circumstances permit. A learned Latter-day Saint should seek to understand the important religious, physical, social, and political problems of the day. The more knowledge we have of heavenly laws and earthly things, the greater influence we can exert for



good on those around us and the safer we will be from scurrilous and evil influences that may confuse and destroy us.

In our quest for truth, we need to seek the help of our loving Heavenly Father. His Spirit can direct and intensify our efforts to learn and magnify our ability to assimilate truth. This learning with the Spirit is not confined to classrooms or preparation for school examinations. It applies to everything we do in life and every place we do it—at home, at work, and at church.

As we seek to receive and apply the guidance of the Spirit in a world driven by the trends and issues of the day, we are confronted by an avalanche of often erroneous and trivial information served up by modern technology. We risk becoming what one observer called “pancake people”—spread wide and thin as we connect with that vast network of information accessed by the mere touch of a button.”³

We are also bombarded by popular talk show hosts, television psychologists, fashion magazines, and media commentators, whose skewed values and questionable practices can drive our opinions and influence our behavior. For example, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said, “There has never been a time in the world when the role of [women and men] has been more confused.”⁴

In this circumstance, confusion, discouragement, or self-doubt may begin to erode our faith and turn us away from the Savior and from building His kingdom on earth. If we focus our decisions on trends and worldly directions, we will be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14).

Not influenced by popular opinion, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches principles. The difference is profound. Trends, fashion, and pop ideology are fleeting and ephemeral. Principles serve as anchors of security,



direction, and truth. If we fix our ideals and direction on doctrine and principles, such as faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and following the prophet, we will have a totally reliable, unchanging guide for our life’s decisions.⁵

We need not fear. President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, taught: “The Lord knows both what He will need you to do and what you will need to

know. He is kind and He is all-knowing. So you can with confidence expect that He has prepared opportunities for you to learn in preparation for the service you will give. You will not recognize those opportunities perfectly. . . . But when you put the spiritual things first in your life, you will be blessed to feel directed toward certain learning, and you will be motivated to work harder.”⁶

Personal Worthiness

Our efforts to learn must be combined with personal worthiness for us to receive the guidance of the Holy Ghost. We must avoid sexual impurity, pornography, and

addictions as well as negative feelings against others or ourselves. Sin drives out the Spirit of the Lord, and when that happens, the special illumination of the Spirit is gone and the lamp of learning flickers.

In modern revelation we have a promise that if our eye be single to the glory of God, which includes personal worthiness, our “whole [body] shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in [us]; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things” (D&C 88:67).

We can verify this eternal principle by immediate personal experience. Recall a time when you were resentful, contentious, or quarrelsome. Could you study effectively? Did you receive any enlightenment during that period?

Sin and anger darken the mind. They produce a condition opposite to the light and truth that characterize intelligence, which is the glory of God (see D&C 93:36). Repentance, which can cleanse us from sin through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, is therefore an essential step along the path of learning for all who seek light and truth through the teaching power of the Holy Ghost.

We are imperfect beings, but each of us can strive to be more worthy of the companionship of the Spirit, which will magnify our personal discernment and prepare us to better defend the truth, to withstand social pressures, and to make positive contributions.

Education

In our educational choices we should prepare to support ourselves and those who may become dependent upon us. It is necessary that we have marketable skills. Education is mandatory to personal security and well-being.

Our Heavenly Father expects us to use our agency and inspiration to examine ourselves and our abilities and decide the educational course we should follow. This is especially important for young people who have finished high school and missionary service and now face decisions about further schooling and employment. Since the choices facing men and women can be quite different,

we begin by drawing on our contrasting experiences, believing them to be typical of many Latter-day Saints.

Elder Oaks: Like those of most young men, my formal educational pursuits were intense, continuous, and motivated by the need to qualify myself to support a family. College was followed by graduate school. This was financed by part-time work and borrowing to be repaid from the increased earning capacity acquired from the education. Along the way I married, and we began to have children. The support of a wife and the responsibility of a growing family enhanced my performance in school and gave me powerful motivation to graduate and go forward with my life's work. With the conclusion of my formal education, I devoted some of my newfound discretionary time to continuing education in my profession and to additional reading in long-desired areas of Church history and general education.



Sister Oaks: Women's educational paths and experiences are often very different from men's.

I grew up in a time when women seemed to have only two options to support themselves—teaching and nursing. My “problem” was that I never considered either one of them. Supporting myself financially was something I did not consider possible or necessary. I loved to learn, and I knew how to work; in fact, I loved to work. I had many summer jobs, and I did well in school. When I awoke to the fact that I needed to support myself fully, I was afraid, almost paralyzed, by the unforeseen challenges that seemed to loom ahead for me. I had no real job skills. My studies in liberal arts had fed my soul, but now I needed to feed my pocketbook.

I attended graduate school to learn skills to support myself. I loved every minute of learning and encountered not only new ideas but discovered my own capabilities. Where I had felt shy and somewhat vulnerable, I now felt capable and competent to face life on my own.

Crossroads

We know that nothing is more perplexing than not knowing what to do with your future, but nothing is more personally rewarding than discovering your own abilities. Read your patriarchal blessing, consider your natural aptitudes and talents, and go forward. Take the first step, and doors will open. For example, when Sister Oaks set out in English literature, she never dreamed it would take her to a publishing house in Boston. When Elder Oaks studied accounting, he never supposed it would take him



Learning with the Spirit is not confined to classrooms or preparation for school examinations. It applies to everything we do in life and every place we do it—at home, at work, and at church.



An education is not limited to formal study. Lifelong learning can increase our ability to appreciate and relish the workings and beauty of the world around us.

to legal education, to Brigham Young University, and then to the Utah Supreme Court. With the Lord, “all things work together for [our] good” (Romans 8:28), and the education we receive comes in incremental steps as our lives unfold before us.

We must choose our learning with care because learning has an eternal shelf life, and whatever useful knowledge or wisdom

or “principle of intelligence” we acquire in this life “will rise with us in the resurrection” (D&C 130:18).

It is disturbing that so many, especially women, have self-doubts and question their ability to succeed. Addressing female students studying math, science, and engineering in March 2005, BYU president Elder Cecil O. Samuelson Jr. of the Seventy said: “One of your professors has commented to me . . . that some of you have less confidence in your abilities and prospects than do your male peers, even when the evidence may suggest that this is not justified. You do need to recognize your talents, skills, aptitudes, and strengths and not be confused about the gifts that God has given you.”⁷

Women especially may receive negative feedback when they aspire to professional occupations. A young sister entering her late 20s and faced with supporting herself wrote for advice. She confided that she had

approached an ecclesiastical authority about studying law and he had discouraged her. We do not know her abilities or her limitations; the counsel she received may have been based on them or on inspiration peculiar to her circumstances. But her determination could be felt through the pages of her letter, and it was clear that she should be advised to reach the full level of her potential.

President Thomas S. Monson, as part of his message during the general Relief Society meeting held on September 29, 2007, told women: “Do not pray for tasks equal to your abilities, but pray for abilities equal to your tasks. Then the performance of your tasks will be no miracle, but you will be the miracle.”⁸

We caution that with the need to finish school and establish financial security, men or women might be tempted to assign marriage a low priority. It is eternally shortsighted to pursue a professional course that makes one unavailable for marriage, an eternal value, because it does not fit into professional timing, a worldly value.

A friend accompanied her daughter to look at graduate schools in the eastern United States. Her highly motivated and



talented daughter knew that by attending the number-one school of her choice, she would incur enormous debts for her education. Often the best education is worth paying for, but in this case, her daughter prayed and felt that while a high level of debt might not prevent her from marrying, it might eventually prevent her from stopping work so she could stay home with her children. Be wise. Each of us is different. If you seek His counsel, the Lord will let you know what is best for you.

Hunger to Learn

Elder Jay E. Jensen of the Presidency of the Seventy has taught that we always need “to keep a learning, growing edge.”⁹ That edge must be honed by a desire to learn, directed by eternal priorities.

Beyond increasing our occupational qualifications, we should desire to learn how to become more emotionally fulfilled, more skilled in our personal relationships, and better parents and citizens. There are few things more fulfilling and fun than learning something new. Great happiness, satisfaction, and financial rewards come from this. An education is not limited to formal study. Lifelong learning can increase our ability to appreciate and relish the workings and beauty of the world around us. This kind of learning goes well beyond books and a selective use of new technology, such as the Internet. It includes artistic endeavors. It also includes experiences with people and places: conversations with friends, visits to museums and concerts, and opportunities for service. We should expand ourselves and enjoy the journey.

We may have to struggle to achieve our goals, but our struggles may yield as much growth as our learning. The strengths we develop in overcoming challenges will be with us in the eternities to come. We should not envy those whose financial or intellectual resources make it easy. The stuff of growth was never made of ease, and persons who have it easy will need to experience their growth with other sacrifices or forego the advancement that is the purpose of life.

Most important, we have the obligation to continue our spiritual education by studying the scriptures and Church literature and by attending church and the temple. Feasting on the words of life will enrich us, increase our ability to teach those we love, and prepare us for eternal life.

The ultimate goal of an education is to make us better parents and servants in the kingdom. In the long run it is the growth, knowledge, and wisdom we achieve that



enlarges our souls and prepares us for eternity, not the marks on college transcripts. The things of the Spirit are the things that are eternal, and our family relationships, sealed by the power of the priesthood, are the ultimate fruits of the Spirit. Education is a gift from God; it is a cornerstone of our religion when we use it to benefit others. ■

NOTES

1. J. Reuben Clark Jr., “Charge to President Howard S. McDonald,” *Improvement Era*, Jan. 1946, 15.
2. “Remarks by President Brigham Young,” *Deseret News*, Mar. 14, 1860, 11.
3. Richard Foreman, quoted in Nicholas Carr, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” *Atlantic Monthly*, July/Aug. 2008, 63.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2006), 222.
5. The substance of this paragraph and several other paragraphs later in the article is taken from Kristen M. Oaks, *A Single Voice* (2008).
6. Henry B. Eyring, “Education for Real Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 18–19.
7. Cecil O. Samuelson Jr., “What Will Be Relevant,” unpublished talk.
8. Thomas S. Monson, “Three Goals to Guide You,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 120.
9. Letter from Jay E. Jensen to Dallin H. Oaks, dated Apr. 23, 2008.



EDUCATION WAS OUR ANSWER

BY SHERALYN MITCHELL

My husband's chronic illness was never in our plans. How could I help provide for our family?

Two years after my husband, Ty, and I were married, we learned that he had cystic fibrosis, a genetic disease that affects the respiratory and digestive systems. Ty had exhibited symptoms of cystic fibrosis his entire life but had been misdiagnosed. As we learned what was really behind the problems he had always struggled with, we also found out that many children with cystic fibrosis don't live to adulthood.

However, since Ty was already 22, we hoped for the best.

For approximately the first 10 years of our marriage, the problems Ty faced were minimal. Over time, however, the cystic fibrosis led to decreased lung function and other complications, including diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis.

Then, in 2001, 10 years after Ty's diagnosis, he was laid off at work. About the same time, he caught pneumonia, complicating an already-debilitating disease. He was hospitalized for a week. I had enjoyed being a stay-at-home mom for many years, but those days in the hospital made me realize that my husband's illness would, sooner or later,



prevent him from being able to work. At some point, it would be up to me to provide for our family.

I also realized I was not as prepared for the role of provider as I would have liked to be. As a young adult, I had believed that education was a good thing, but I was mostly looking forward to marrying and having a family. To me, education hadn't seemed an essential part of that plan.

After I met and married Ty, I worked for a couple of years toward a degree in interior design. But when our daughter Savanna was born, I stopped taking classes so

I could care for her. We had another daughter, Victoria, a few years later, and I decided that I'd wait until another season of my life to finish my degree.

But when Ty caught pneumonia and I spent that week in the hospital, I realized that our family faced an uncertain future. I also realized that focusing on education would help me make the most of that future, whatever it held.

When my husband returned home from the hospital, I was shown how to give him antibiotics through an IV. As I cared for him during his recuperation, we counseled together about our future. We discussed my returning to school and possible career paths. Ty was soon able to find another job and return to work, but we continued to talk about educational opportunities for me.

In the course of these discussions, I realized how much I enjoyed caring for Ty—and for people in general. I liked the idea of being able to do that as a job and the possibility of making a difference in people's lives. I felt that nursing would fulfill an important need, that I could find work in that field no matter where we lived, and that nursing skills would always be in demand. With those observations in mind, I decided to enroll in school to become a nurse.

A Season of Challenges

One of the hardest parts of dealing with a chronic illness is that you simply don't know how you're going to feel from day to day, or sometimes even from hour to hour. Ty stays as active as he can, which we believe has prolonged his life, but there's no way to predict his condition. One day he looks great and feels healthy. The next, he's so ill that he's bedridden. Even so, he has persevered in providing for our family.

We decided initially that I would go to school part time in the evenings at a local community college so that I could care for our children during the day and Ty could care for them at night. I took babysitting jobs in our home to bring in some extra income.

This balance of school and jobs worked, but it seemed that it would take forever for me to finish because I was taking only one or two classes per semester. Ty and I considered my enrolling full time, but we weren't sure that was best for our family. He certainly helped with our children and with household chores when he could, but again, we were never sure what he would be able to handle.

Meanwhile, Ty's parents, Bob and Lona, had sold their home in California and were deciding where to live. As we talked to them about our respective situations, Ty and I decided to ask them to come live with us for a while so that I could go to school full time. They agreed.

Blessings of Progress

Having two extra adults in our home helped us tremendously. Bob and Lona were willing to help care for our girls, take them to their activities, prepare meals, and handle other household matters so that I could go to school full time and make steadier, faster progress toward my degree. I knew that even if Ty were having a bad day with his sickness, our girls had two other adults they could go to, and Ty would have someone to help take care of him as well. I will always be grateful for the Christlike service my in-laws offered our family during that period. They lightened many of the burdens we carried.

This new arrangement was a huge blessing, but it took some adjustment on everyone's part. It was particularly hard for me to give up some of the roles and responsibilities I was accustomed to fulfilling as a full-time mom. But I realized that my family needed me to work hard and succeed in school.

Returning to a world of textbooks and tests was more difficult than I had anticipated. I was in my mid-30s when I went back to school, and most of my classmates were in their late teens or early 20s. They seemed to be able to learn things much more quickly than I could, so much so that I was convinced that there were cobwebs in my brain. Sometimes I wondered if I was smart enough to become a nurse.

Ty was my sounding board. He encouraged me and reminded me frequently that he was proud of me. His support helped me move forward and realize that, like my classmates, I had abilities, experiences, and insights to contribute.

I found that it was difficult for me to study at home without getting distracted or interrupted, so my husband, in-laws, and I worked out a schedule that allowed me to study at the library after class. That way, when I was gone, I could concentrate on school; when I was at home, I could focus on my family.

As I moved closer to graduation, Ty and I, along with Bob and Lona, arranged our family's schedule so that I could accept some internships. These gave me valuable experience—and an edge when it came time to apply for jobs.

After five years of school, in December 2006, I graduated with a bachelor's degree in nursing. Graduation gave me a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. I had completed something difficult, and I had set an example for my daughters. Graduation also filled me with immense gratitude for my family members who had supported me and opened the way for me to complete my schooling.

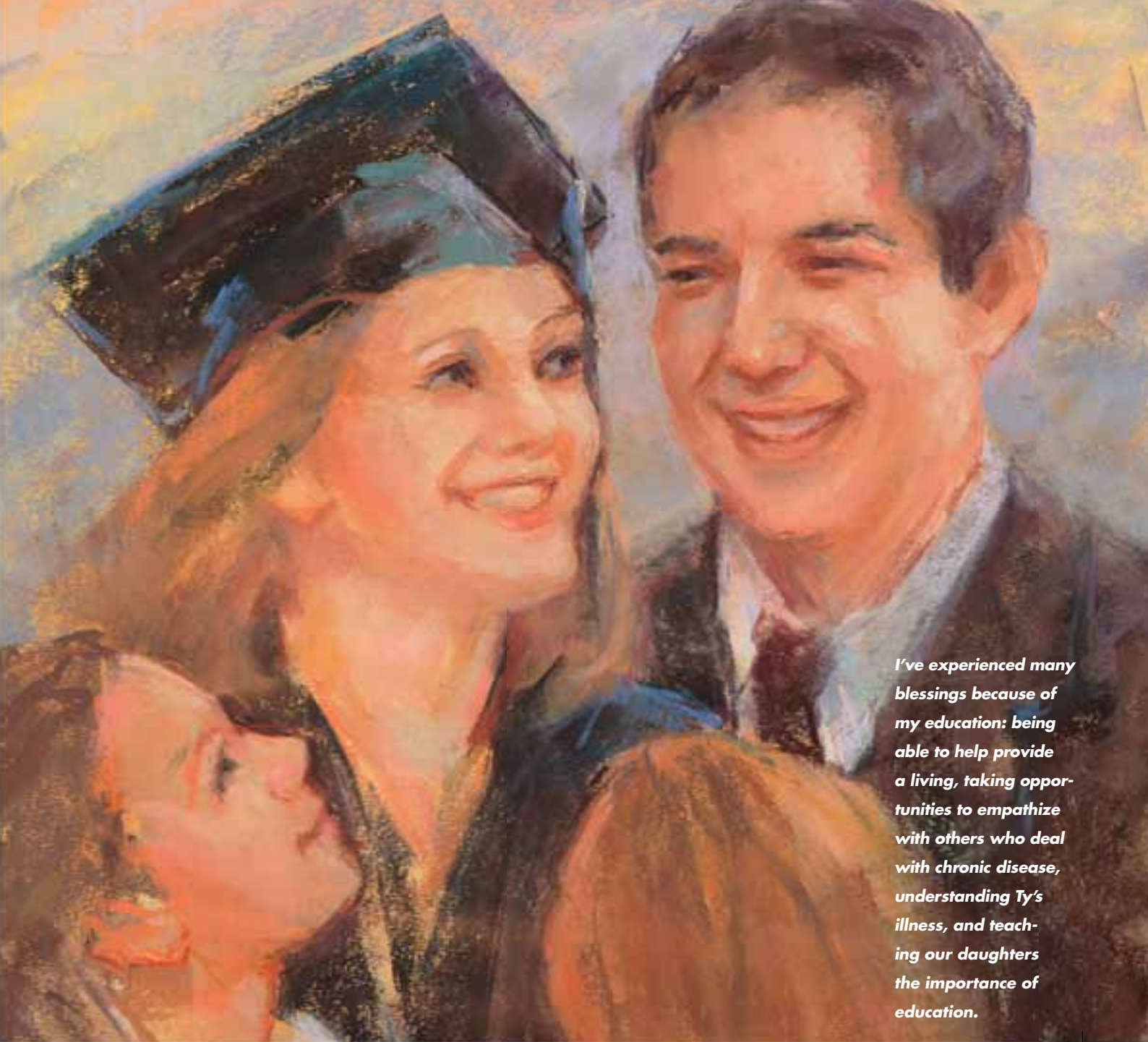
A Rewarding Result

I was hired right away at a children's hospital in Dallas, Texas. It has been a fulfilling place for me to work. I am especially grateful for opportunities I've had to help families who are experiencing the challenges associated with chronic illness like cystic fibrosis and diabetes. I understand the daily challenges they encounter because they are often similar to the ones our family faces.

In addition to being able to empathize with others and help provide for my family, I've received other blessings from my education. For instance, because I work in a healthcare environment, I'm able to easily understand some of the things Ty is going through with his cystic fibrosis. The terminology and treatment options are clearer to me now than they were years ago. Sometimes it's scary to know what I know about this disease, but I realize that my knowledge helps our family make good choices about healthcare and about the time we have together.

Another benefit of our experience is that Ty and I have been able to emphasize to our daughters the importance of education. We are encouraging them to plan for education by considering now what their interests are. Savanna and Victoria have seen up close the sacrifices that so many people made to help me earn my degree. They know—from our own experience and from prophetic counsel—that education is worth difficult sacrifices.

I have told the girls that although I am grateful for the support of a husband and extended family, it would have been better had I taken school seriously when I was younger. We've talked about education being important not only for just-in-case situations but also for *all* situations. Education and family life aren't mutually exclusive. Ty and I are trying to help them understand that the preparation that education provides will help them in *all* aspects of their future lives.



I've experienced many blessings because of my education: being able to help provide a living, taking opportunities to empathize with others who deal with chronic disease, understanding Ty's illness, and teaching our daughters the importance of education.

Peace in the Present and Hope for the Future

When Ty and I got married, we never planned for him to have this chronic disease with its unpredictable symptoms and short life expectancy. We never expected that I would have to someday provide for the family. We didn't anticipate some of the other circumstances that have come into our lives. But they have come anyway.

There are days when we all wish I could be a stay-at-home mom, but that wasn't what was in store for us. Instead of dwelling on what I wish my circumstances were, which only leads to frustration, I try to focus on how blessed I

feel to work in a job that I find rewarding, that offers much variety, that has provided good health insurance for my husband, and that gives our family an element of security. I feel grateful for a husband who has encouraged me in doing something difficult. He, in turn, feels peace in knowing that I'll be able to provide for our girls when he's no longer able to and that we'll be taken care of.

The sense of accomplishment I felt upon graduating has continued in a feeling of perpetual peace and fulfillment. We are grateful that education has prepared us for the future, even when we can't always know what that future holds. ■

COLLEGE TO

COLLEGE COSTS TIME AND MONEY.
THESE TIPS WILL HELP YOU SPEND BOTH WISELY.

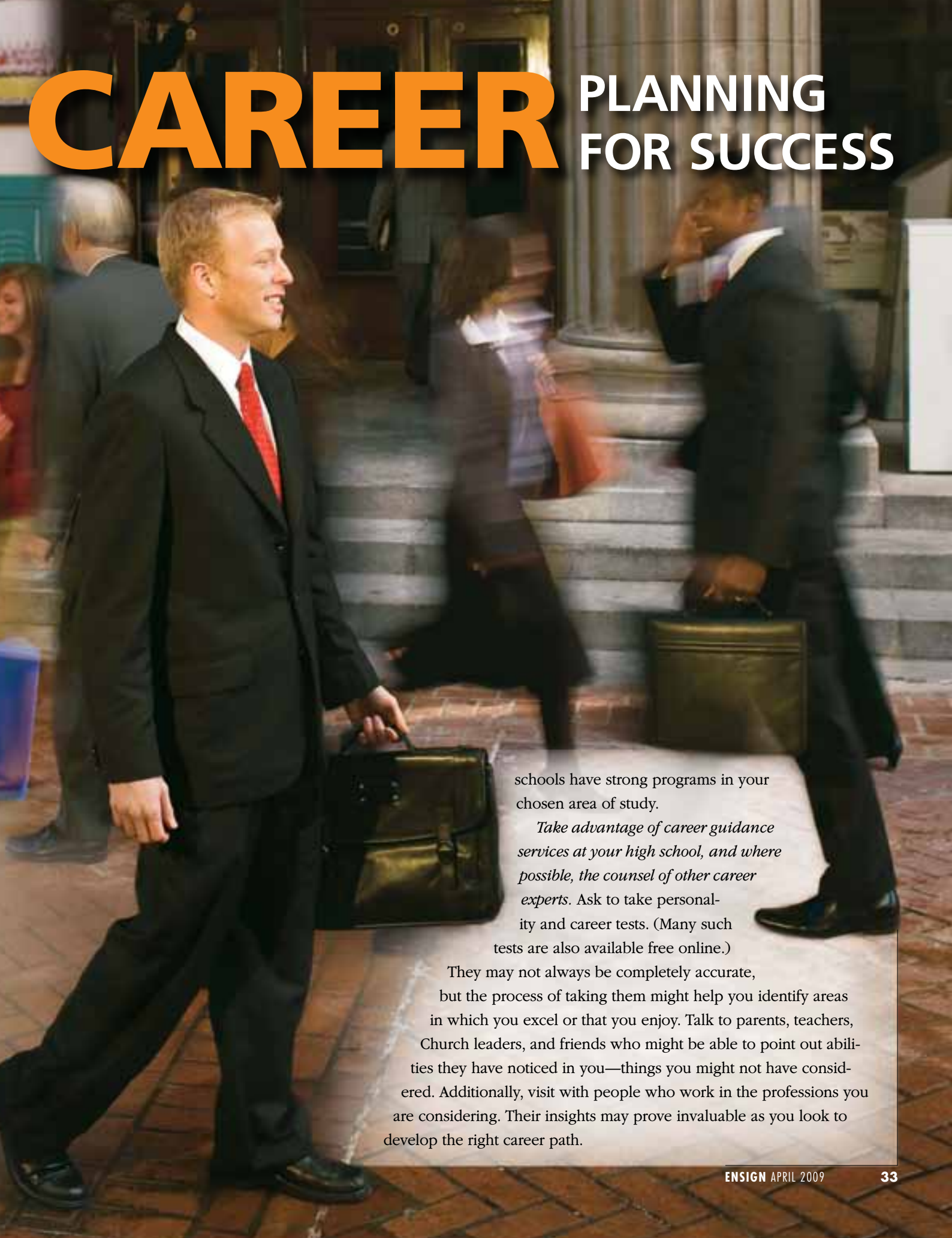
BY GUY M. HOLLINGSWORTH, PH.D.
Director, Office of Internship and Career Services
Brigham Young University—Idaho

My work frequently takes me from a higher-education setting to a corporate setting as I meet with organizations, businesses, and government entities to coordinate internship and entry-level employment opportunities for Brigham Young University—Idaho students and alumni. In the course of my assignments, I have learned many things about education and the subsequent transition to the workplace. The following information may be helpful to new high school graduates, college students, and their parents—as well as those who are looking to return to school to enhance their job skills.

Before You Select a College, University, or Trade School

Try to identify subjects you would be interested in studying. Seriously consider what major you might select. Of course, you're not locked into that decision, but having some idea of your preferences and abilities will ultimately help you select the right major. In some parts of the world, secondary schools are designed to help you choose a career path. Even if this isn't the case in your area, choosing a major ahead of time will in turn help you determine which

CAREER PLANNING FOR SUCCESS



schools have strong programs in your chosen area of study.

Take advantage of career guidance services at your high school, and where possible, the counsel of other career experts. Ask to take personality and career tests. (Many such tests are also available free online.)

They may not always be completely accurate, but the process of taking them might help you identify areas in which you excel or that you enjoy. Talk to parents, teachers, Church leaders, and friends who might be able to point out abilities they have noticed in you—things you might not have considered. Additionally, visit with people who work in the professions you are considering. Their insights may prove invaluable as you look to develop the right career path.

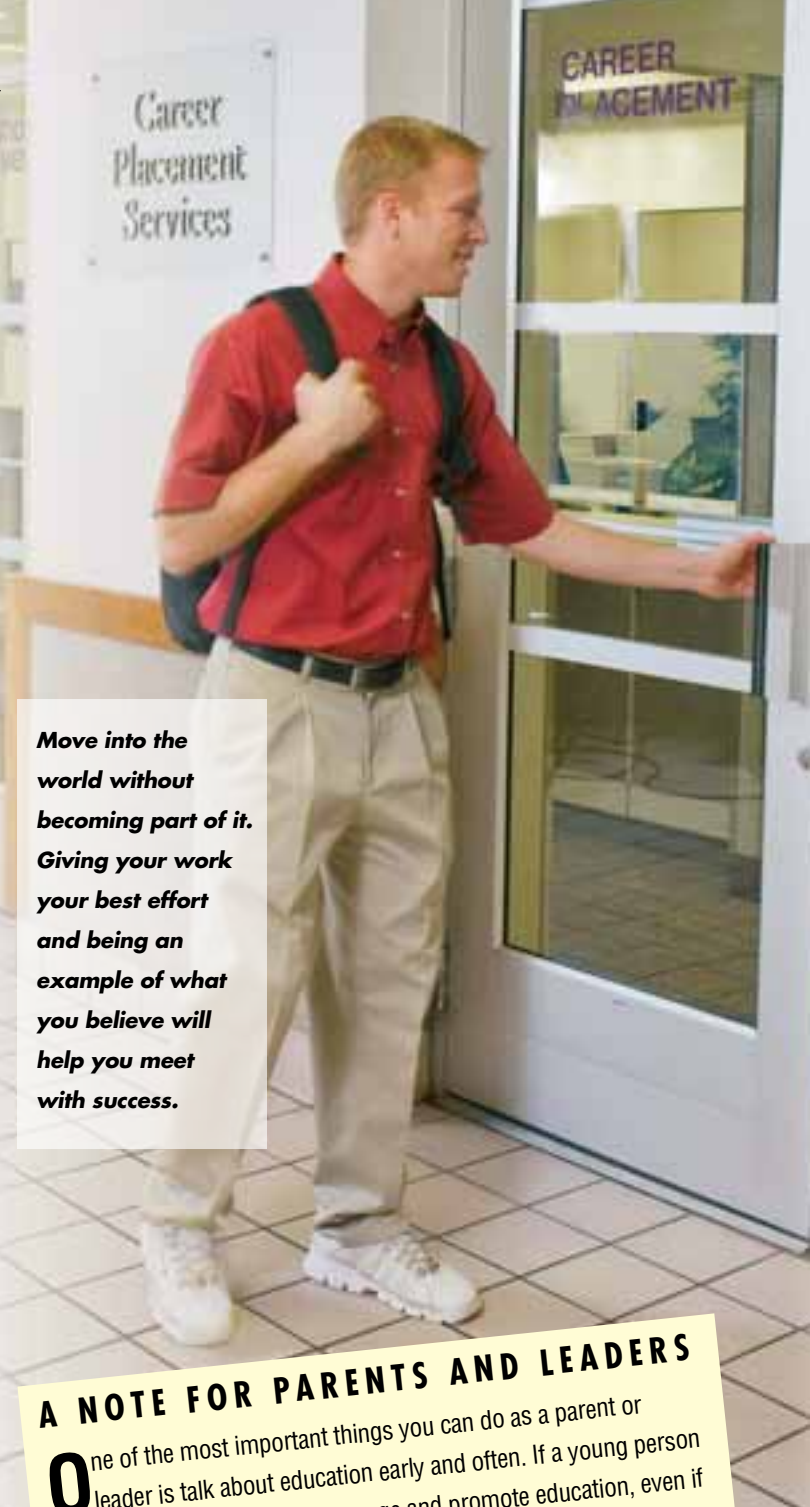
Decide what your priorities are. The field you choose can affect where you live, how long you will be in school, your income, the work schedule you will keep, your ability to serve in Church callings, and many other important aspects of your life. Consider these in light of your values and priorities as you zone in on career possibilities. Think about the future and commit to the necessary education. Be willing to sacrifice early in order to succeed later.

During College

Select a major. If you're still uncertain about potential areas of study, consider enrolling in a career-exploration class early in your college experience. These courses orient you with a variety of possibilities. Most universities have an advising office for students looking for career guidance. Take advantage of this free advice, and don't wait until you are about to graduate.

Meet with your faculty adviser. Most colleges, universities, and trade schools assign students to a faculty adviser or mentor, and some schools require that students meet with this person on a regular basis. These meetings provide students with a great opportunity to discuss their major, ask questions, and receive feedback about their plans. They can also help you avoid losing time in taking classes that you don't need. Some faculty members may have worked in the very industry that interests you. Faculty members are some of the most influential and knowledgeable people to counsel with on these matters.

Consider additional skills outside of your major. Even if choosing a minor is not required for graduation, think seriously about taking classes concentrated in another discipline. This may be essential once you begin working in your field. For instance, I know of students who majored in construction management and entered the workforce as residential building was booming. But when that industry slowed a few years later, they were able to easily transition into commercial building, in part because they had minors in business management that proved to be an applicable and valuable skill set in their new work opportunities. The nature of your work will likely change—several times—over the course of your career. Having additional skills helps you be flexible and qualifies you to meet new and unexpected challenges.



Move into the world without becoming part of it. Giving your work your best effort and being an example of what you believe will help you meet with success.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS AND LEADERS

One of the most important things you can do as a parent or leader is talk about education early and often. If a young person is exposed to people who encourage and promote education, even if those people did not have the opportunity for education themselves, that exposure often translates into the student seeking educational opportunities. Create that expectation as early as you can. Leaders of youth might consider asking ward and stake members who work in different fields to give presentations, perhaps at Mutual or other Church and social settings, about what they do for a living and what has helped them be successful in their chosen fields. You might also ask people who work in higher education to speak to the youth about the value of education. Even when parents are already encouraging college, it helps youth to hear it from others as well.

Complete an internship in your field of study or obtain other work-related opportunities. Nothing compares to experience. An internship is beneficial because it lets you find out what you really want to do. For most students, an internship confirms that the field they've been studying is, in fact, one in which they would like to work. It can also tell them specifics about what kind of organization they'd like to work for. An accounting major, for example, may realize that she likes accounting, but after interning at a large public firm, she may discover that she prefers to use her accounting skills working for a small, private business instead. Internships can also be a beneficial experience because in many cases, new graduates are offered full-time, permanent positions with the company with which they interned.

Approaching Graduation

Become familiar with standard business etiquette. Many colleges and universities offer services that allow you to participate in a mock interview or get feedback on a cover letter or résumé. Take advantage of these. If your school doesn't offer such services, have a parent or friend who has been through the interviewing process in a field similar to yours conduct a mock interview. The Internet is also a great resource for career-etiquette information. Knowing how to dress appropriately, what to say, and even little things like how to properly eat a meal in a business setting can bring you confidence and reflect well on you and your alma mater.

Prepare thoroughly for interviews. Do your homework before going to an interview. One of the worst things you can say at an interview is, "So, tell me a little bit about your company." It's much better to go into an interview already knowing about the organization—its industry, its mission, its size, its locations, its opportunities, and so forth. In this electronic age, there is no reason for not obtaining extensive background information,

which can often make a huge difference in the interviewing process.

It is also likely that the person conducting the interview will ask if you have any questions. It is unwise to respond, "No, I don't think so," or "No, you answered all of my questions." The research you did before your interview will help you frame thoughtful, informed, challenging questions. Not only will this provide you with answers in determining whether the company is a good fit, but it is also likely to impress your interviewer. There is always room for a carefully crafted, well-structured question.

Adhere to your values. The nature of my work requires that I spend time with different corporations in a variety of settings, usually with the intent to establish internship and career opportunities. Whether the person I'm meeting with represents a government entity, a multinational business, or a homegrown local enterprise, one of the things I frequently hear is the importance of personal character. Hiring directors are intently interested in finding someone who is honest, someone who is dependable, and someone who will demonstrate a consistent

work ethic. Companies can often teach particular skill sets much more easily than they can wholesome, innate character traits.

Move into the world without becoming part of it. Not everyone in the workplace will share your standards. Of course, you don't need to buckle to peer pressure, but you also don't need—and cannot afford—to be self-righteous. Be warm and friendly, professional and productive, understanding yet unwavering. Giving your work your best effort and being an example of what you believe without seeming self-righteous or condescending will help you meet with success in more than one way. Living gospel principles and adhering to your beliefs will help you recognize your professional niche in the workforce early in your career. ■

OTHER RESOURCES

Many career-preparation and career opportunities are available through LDS Employment Resource Services. Nearly 300 LDS employment resource centers are found in more than 50 countries throughout the world. Employment Resource Services' Career Workshop can be helpful whether you're unemployed, wanting to upgrade from one job level to another, seeking education or training opportunities, wanting to start your own business, or simply looking to refine your skills. Staff members and volunteers can teach you to

- "sell yourself" in 30 seconds;
- network;
- create a powerful résumé and cover letter;
- negotiate and interview;
- search for a better position;
- discover other helpful resources.

For more information about LDS Employment Resource Services or to find a center near you, please visit LDSJobs.org.

Lessons Learned from Fathers

Fathers play an invaluable role in rearing their children and teaching them gospel principles. Here, some members share how fathers and father figures have made a difference in their lives through selfless acts of love and kindness.



Milkshakes and the Priesthood

When I turned 12 my dad ordained me to the office of a deacon in the Aaronic Priesthood. Four months later we entered the chapel for my first priesthood session of general conference. In those days our stake watched conference on videotapes a few weeks after the sessions took place, so Dad and I sat together in front, close to the television. I had the conference edition of the *Ensign* sitting on my lap, and I tried following the speakers' words as they spoke, listening as intently as a 12-year-old boy can.

After the priesthood session Dad and I went out for milkshakes. While he drove, we talked about things we had heard and learned, and in the quiet restaurant, he taught me about the priesthood. He taught me my personal responsibilities as an Aaronic Priesthood holder and helped prepare me to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. He also helped me see the importance of attending my priesthood meetings. I was encouraged to listen to the leaders who guide the Church. Dad and I followed this pattern each time we attended the priesthood session together.

Over the years, as my younger brothers turned 12 and were ordained deacons, they joined my dad and me in our tradition of attending conference and going out for milkshakes afterward. It became a special time for the priesthood holders in our family to gain strength from each other and from leaders of the Church.

Greg Burgoyne, Maryland

Nature's Testament

My earliest childhood memory is of my father exploring bluebells on a peaceful hillside with me. Father loved to share the beauty of his surroundings, so he and I often enjoyed the outdoors together when I was young and eager to discover what the Lord had created.

One day while exploring, my father showed me where a blackbird had nested. I remember his gentle reverence as, in breathless silence, he lifted the green branches of the tree so that we could peer in awe at the perfect blue eggs. The sense of wonder at Heavenly Father's creation filled my soul

as my father gently replaced the protective layer of leaves over the little nest.

Other days held more discoveries. The delicate primroses, the ripe and juicy blackberries, the silver-spined pike, and the magically transforming seasons all brought me an incredible sense of wonder and amazement at God's creations.

On these walks I developed a sense of humility, reverence, and respect for the Lord's handiwork, and I gained spiritual strength from learning about His creations. I also learned to recognize beauty in the people with whom I associate. I have become a more understanding wife,

mother, friend, daughter, and teacher because I can see each person individually as a cherished son or daughter of God.

Jacqueline Kirbyson, England



Grandpa's Help

When my young children needed a father's love in their life, my dad was there. I had just gone through a painful divorce. Dad did the best he could to help heal their broken hearts. Often he took my son, Devin, to Scouting and other activities to provide opportunities for him to have good experiences. Dad picked up the girls from school and helped them get to their activities. Dad helped get my oldest daughter to her piano lessons and took all of the children swimming and sledding. My children's smiles during that time often resulted from the love he showed them.

Dad showed me what it means to have a father's love by the way he treated my children. I know I can ask my Father in Heaven for help and that He will be there when I need Him—just as Dad was there for my children.

Shelly Dawn Alford, Colorado

Personal Development

Dad encouraged me in my youth to develop my talents and skills, including my abilities in sports and other physical activities. I remember playing basketball with him in the driveway, with him teaching me how to dribble, pass, and shoot. We would play catch in the backyard, and he taught me how to hit a baseball.



FATHER'S LOVING ROLE

"What a beautiful place this world will be when every father and mother see the importance of teaching their children the principles that will help them be happy and successful. Parents teach best when they lead by good example; govern their little ones with patience, kindness, and love unfeigned; and have the same spirit of love for children that Jesus exemplified."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Teach the Children," Ensign, May 1991, 80.

When I was old enough, my parents signed me up for Little League, and my dad was often there to cheer me on. He supported me when I wrestled and played tennis, and though he was never much of a Scouter himself, he always encouraged me to be involved and go on bike rides, hikes, and camping trips. Additionally, we often worked in the yard as a family and always had our individual inside chores.

Though I may have not always appreciated it, I am grateful for Dad's example, direction, teaching, and overall encouragement during those important early years. These things have helped me become who I am today.

Jonathan H. Westover, Utah

Dad's Work Ethic

There was probably only one thing my dad loved more than work, and that was getting me and the other kids to work alongside him. The excitement of building, cleaning, or painting would have long since faded away, and our minds would have become dull and our muscles sore, when we would hear Dad say, "Stick with me just a little longer, partner."

On the dairy farm we had to get up at 5:30 a.m. to do our chores. I could always count on Dad's cheery voice pulling me out of sleep, happily reporting a long list of

assignments to be completed that day. He would whistle through the foggy air as he walked to the milking parlor.

Dad's cheerfulness helped me learn not to dread work, but to see it as satisfying and rewarding. Most important, Dad taught me that work for the Lord deserves and requires enthusiasm, energy, creativity, dedication, and quality. He inspired me to be dedicated

to working for the Lord and His family.

Norwin D. Burbidge, Washington



Meaning in Home and Visiting Teaching

My father was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer when he

was only 44. Our family was

devastated. The tumor in his brain made simple tasks and abilities, like using silverware and buttoning up his shirts, very difficult for him. I remember trying to hold back the tears one morning as I watched him struggle to spoon cereal into his mouth.

One rainy weekday afternoon I discovered Dad having difficulty dressing himself in his Sunday suit. He couldn't communicate very well, but I could see he was agitated. Finally I realized he was preparing to go home teaching. I worried that Dad would lose his balance and fall while out in such a condition, so I tried to discourage him from going. The family he was supposed to visit would surely understand, I told him. But he was determined, and go he did.



When Dad returned, his smile was radiant. His arms were full of fresh, homegrown plums—a gift from the family he had visited.

My father died soon after he made that visit. Whenever I don't feel like going visiting teaching, I think of my dad—in pain and unable to even speak coherently—still trying hard to fulfill his calling and show others how much he cared about them. That reminds me of the real purpose of visiting teaching. And I think to myself, “If Dad could do it, so can I.”

Karina Fox Landward, Utah

The Kindness of an Uncle

The family I grew up in was not like some other families I knew. My dad wasn't really a good father figure for me, so I looked up to my uncle instead. Uncle Fred (name has been changed) was a wonderful example because he was tender and loving with his family. I was eager to follow his example of kindness.

When I was in Primary, my Uncle Fred took me on a special daddy-daughter date hosted by the ward. We danced, laughed, and had a wonderful time. Uncle Fred listened to me pass off all 13 Articles of Faith and was so proud of me! He was always kind and complimentary to me and showed an interest in how I was doing by making it a point to come talk to me often. He was my hero and my example in those years, and I looked up to him. I have always noticed, too, how well he treats his wife, my mother's sister. They have been a cherished example to me of a devoted married couple.

I am dearly grateful for the loving example of a good husband and father that I found in my uncle. He helped me see how happy family life can be. His loving compassion also told me I was worthy of time, respect, and patience from others and helped me recognize my eternal worth.

Name Withheld

From Humble Beginnings

My grandfather was Faaolatane Sosaiete Siaunuu. Although he has long since passed away, the spiritual



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Consider beginning the lesson by singing a song about fathers or a favorite hymn of your father or father figure. Read and discuss stories from the article.
2. Invite family members to share experiences of fathers or father figures that have made a difference in their lives through acts of love and kindness.
3. Consider writing a note or drawing a picture for your father or father figure. Express your gratitude and appreciation to him when you give him the note or picture.

traditions he practiced and taught me established my beliefs in God and built my faith.

My testimony and love of the scriptures took root in his small home in the little village of Sili in Western Samoa. In order to attend priests' morning prayer in the sanctuary, Grandpa had to cross a big river on foot, feeling his way around rocks and mosses. Gathering his family for evening prayer and Bible study was his way of showing devotion to God. At the end of his prayers he'd say, “Thy will be done, not our will.”

Grandpa knew who gave him strength, food, clothes, and his home, and he thanked God for them. Watching Grandpa lead family prayer, attend his prayer meetings, and read the Bible with his family planted a seed of faith in God in my heart as a young girl. It was from doing those things with him that I began to develop an understanding of God as someone to be worshipped and revered.

Although we weren't members of the Church then, Grandpa prepared my mind and heart for the blessings of the restored gospel. I'm forever grateful for Grandpa's influence, for I know it will continue to influence many more generations to come.

Saofai Lowe, Hawaii

The Power of Prayer

No matter where we were or what we were doing, my dad found ways to teach his children the gospel. Some of my most vivid memories are of waking up in the middle of the night to find my dad kneeling in prayer. He knew where he could receive answers to questions he had or where to receive strength when he needed it. He taught his children how to pray and have faith to receive answers to their prayers. Because of his example, I know the awesome power of prayer to bless, heal, and strengthen. Now that my dad has passed from this life, I more fully appreciate that my Heavenly Father is there and that I was shown how to trust in the power to communicate with Him as His daughter.

Emily Tree, Texas ■

He Is Risen



After His Resurrection, the Lord ministered unto many in the Holy Land and in the Americas. Many in ancient times bore testimony of the living Christ as did the Prophet Joseph Smith in modern times: “And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!” (D&C 76:22).



Above: He Is Risen, by Del Parson

The chief priests and scribes “shall deliver [Christ] to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again” (Matthew 20:19).

Right: He Is Not Here, by Walter Rane

“He is not here: for he is risen” (Matthew 28:6).



Above: As It Began to Dawn, by Elspeth Young

“In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre” (Matthew 28:1).



Below: The Three Marys at the Tomb, by William-Adolphe Bouguereau

"They saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted" (Mark 16:5).



Above: Easter Morning, by William F. Whitaker Jr.

"Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master" (John 20:16).



Above: The Garden Tomb, by Linda Curley Christensen

"The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door" (Matthew 28:2).

Right: The Disciples Peter and John Running to the Sepulchre, by Dan Burr

"Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple. . . ."

"So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre" (John 20:3-4).



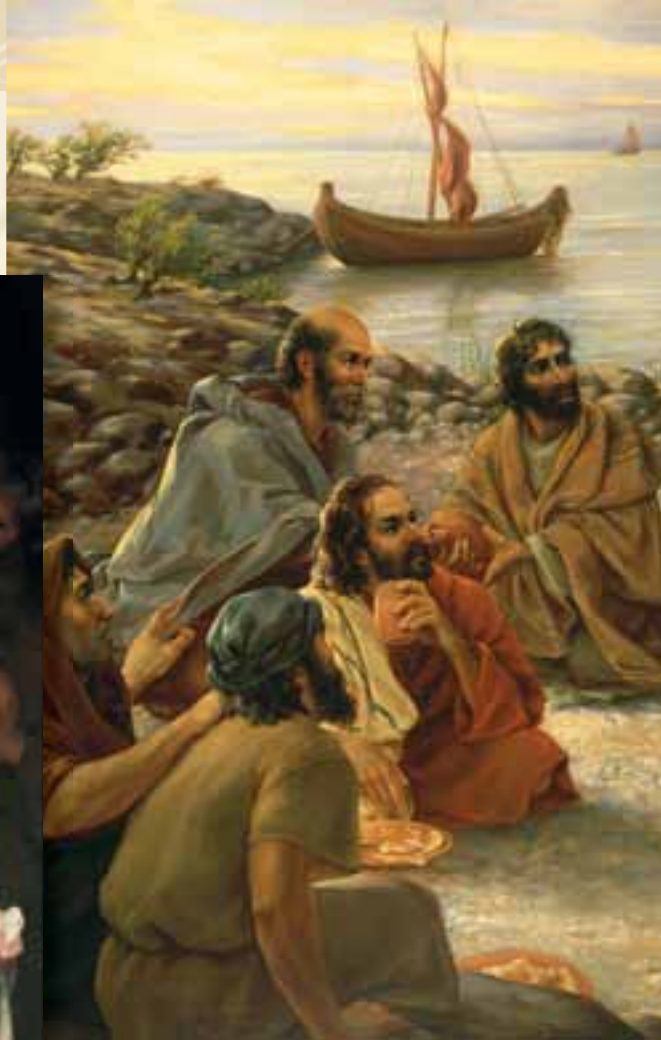


Above: The Doubtful Thomas, by Carl Heinrich Bloch

Christ said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; . . . and be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:27).

Right: The Resurrected Christ in Galilee, by Gary Smith

*"And Jesus came and spake unto [the eleven disciples], saying, . . .
"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:18-19).*



Above: Feed My Sheep, by Kamille Corry

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (John 21:16).



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Below: Christ on the Road to Emmaus, by Greg Olsen

"But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them" (Luke 24:29).



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Right: The Ascension of Jesus, by Harry Anderson

"And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:51).

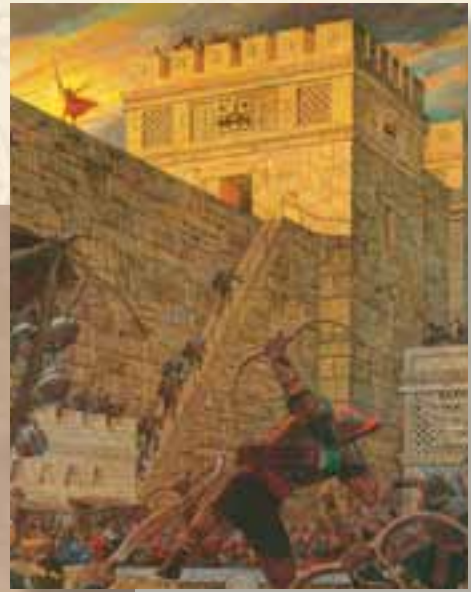


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Below: Christ Appearing in the Western Hemisphere, by Arnold Friberg

“And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw [Christ] descending out of heaven” (3 Nephi 11:8).

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Above: Samuel the Lamanite Prophesies, by Arnold Friberg

Those Nephites who did not believe “cast stones at him upon the wall, and also many shot arrows at him” (Helaman 16:2).



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Right: Christ in the Land Bountiful, by Simon Dewey

“The multitude went forth, . . . and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands . . . and did bear record, that it was [Christ]” (3 Nephi 11:15).



Left: Bring Forth the Record, by Robert T. Barrett

"Yea, Lord, Samuel [the Lamanite] did prophesy according to thy words, and they were all fulfilled.

"And Jesus said unto them: How be it that ye have not written this thing?" (3 Nephi 23:10–11).

Below: Christ and the Book of Mormon Children, by Del Parson

"[Christ] wept, and the multitude bare record of it, and he took their little children, one by one, and blessed them" (3 Nephi 17:21).

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Left: Christ Praying with the Nephites, by Ted Heninger

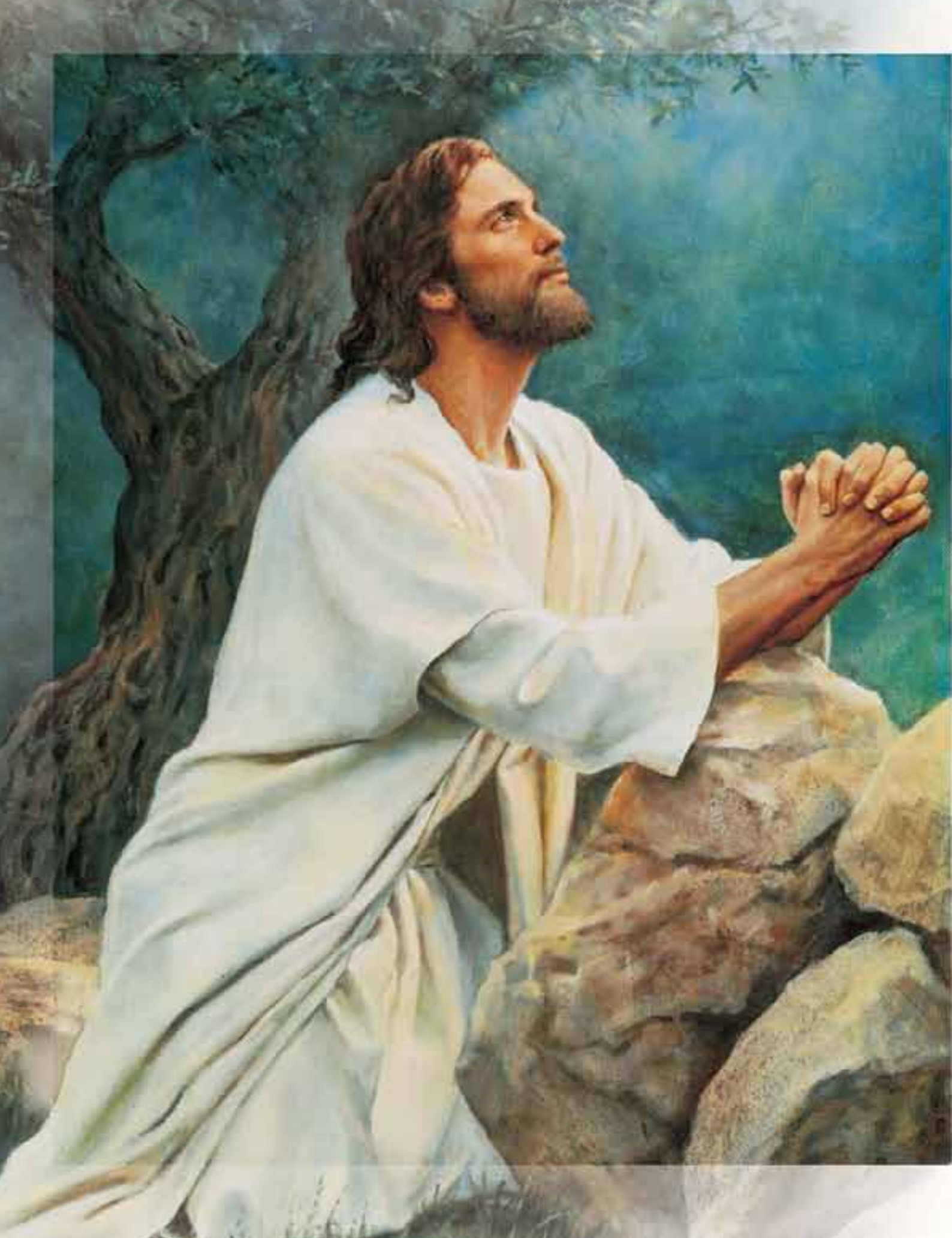
"And no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard [Christ] pray for us unto the Father" (3 Nephi 17:17).

Below: Jesus Christ Visits the Americas, by John Scott

"And [the Nephites] did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him" (3 Nephi 11:17).

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What Does the Atonement Mean to You?

BY ELDER CECIL O. SAMUELSON JR.
Of the Seventy

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it.”¹

These fundamental principles are grounded in the Atonement of Jesus Christ. The word *Atonement* “describes the setting ‘at one’ of those who have been estranged, and denotes the reconciliation of man to God. Sin is the cause of the estrangement, and therefore the purpose of atonement is to correct or overcome the consequences of sin.”² I believe it is also possible to become estranged from God for many reasons other than overt sin.

The risks of our becoming distant from our Father in Heaven and the Savior are significant and constantly around us. Happily, the Atonement was meant for all of these situations as well. That is why Jacob, the brother of Nephi, described the Atonement as “infinite” (2 Nephi 9:7), meaning without limitations or externally imposed constraints. That is why the Atonement is so remarkable and so necessary. Little wonder, then, that we

not only need to appreciate this incomparable gift but also to understand it clearly.

Jesus Christ was the only one capable of performing the magnificent Atonement because He was the only perfect man and the Only Begotten Son of God the Father. He received His commission for this essential work from His Father before the world was established. His perfect mortal life devoid of sin, the shedding of His blood, His suffering in the garden and upon the cross, His voluntary death, and the Resurrection of His body from the tomb made possible a full Atonement for people of every generation and time.

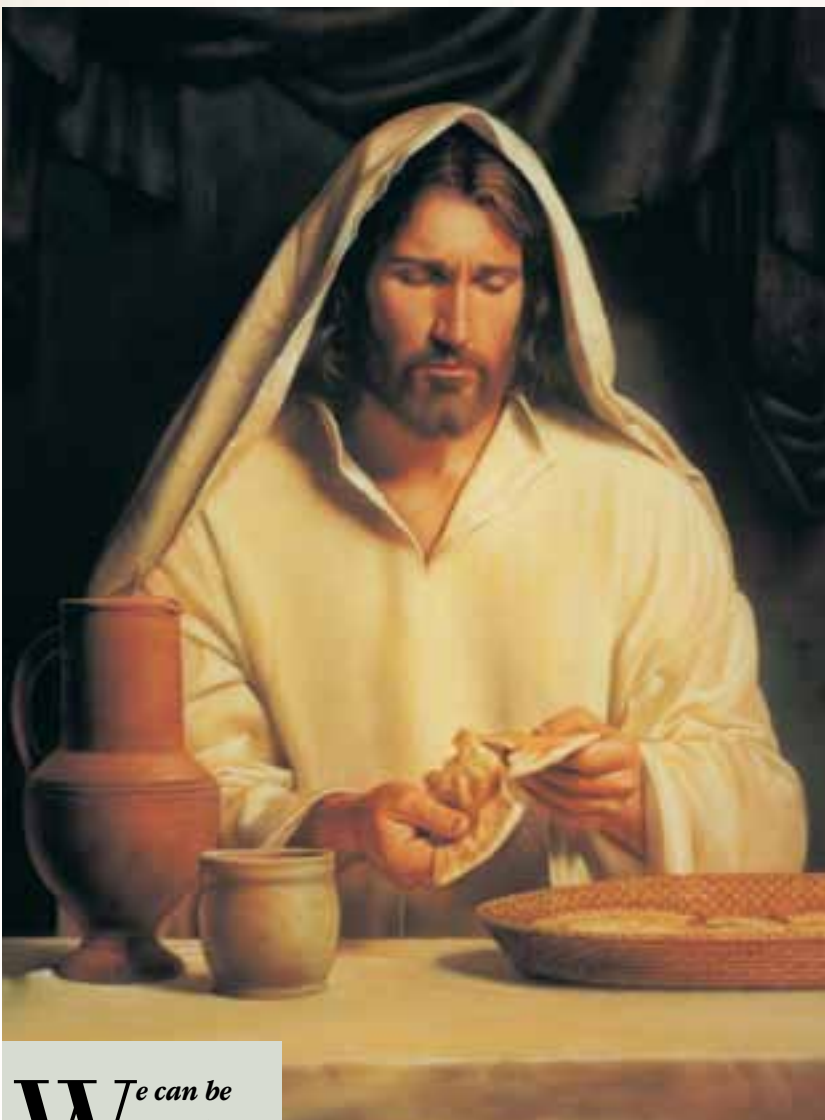
The Atonement makes the Resurrection a reality for everyone. However, with respect to our individual transgressions and sins, conditional aspects of the Atonement require our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, our repentance, and our compliance with the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

Immortality and Eternal Life

Perhaps the most oft-quoted verse in our meetings and writings is this wonderful clarifying and summarizing verse from the book of Moses: “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).



The Atonement is intensely personal and uniquely crafted for our own individual circumstances and situations.



We can be grateful that the Savior, understanding us better than we understand ourselves, instituted the sacrament that we might regularly renew our covenants by partaking of the sacred emblems.

Because of the Resurrection, all of us will have immortality. Because of the Atonement, those who have sufficient faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to take upon themselves His name, who repent and live in accordance with His gospel, who keep covenants with Him and His Father, and who participate in the saving ordinances made available in sacred ways and places will experience and enjoy eternal life.

I cannot recall ever encountering a person who professed strong faith in Jesus Christ and who was very worried about the Resurrection. Yes, all of us may have questions about the details, but we understand that the fundamental promise is all-inclusive and sure.

Because eternal life is conditional and requires our effort and compliance, most of us struggle from time to time, perhaps

regularly—even constantly—with questions related to living the way we know we should. As Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has asked, “[Do] we mistakenly believe we must make the journey from good to better and become a saint all by ourselves through sheer grit, willpower, and discipline”?³

If our salvation were only a matter of our own effort, we would be in serious trouble because we are all imperfect and unable to comply fully in every way all of the time. How, then, do we achieve the help and assistance we require? Nephi clarified the dilemma of the relationship between grace and works when he testified, “For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23).

The Bible Dictionary reminds us that *grace* means a divine mechanism or device that brings strength or help through the mercy and love of Jesus Christ made available by His Atonement.⁴ Thus, it is through the grace of Christ that we are resurrected, and it is His grace, love, and Atonement that help us accomplish the good works and make the necessary progress that otherwise would be impossible if we were left solely to our own capacities and resources.

Happiness through the Atonement

Among the many things I admire about Nephi was his attitude. His life was not easy, particularly when compared with the comfort most of us take for granted today. Nephi and his family lived for years in the wilderness before arriving in the promised land. They suffered periods of hunger, thirst, and danger. Nephi had to deal with serious family problems exacerbated by Laman and Lemuel,

finally separating himself, with his followers, from those who sided with Laman and Lemuel.

In the face of all these privations and difficulties, Nephi was able to say, “It came to pass that we lived after the manner of happiness” (2 Nephi 5:27).

He understood that there is a pattern for living that results in happiness, independent of the difficulties, challenges, and disappointments that come into all of our lives. He was able to focus on the big picture of God’s plan for him and his people and was thus able to avoid being brought down by his frustrations or by the accurate observation that life is not fair. It isn’t fair, but he and his people were happy nevertheless. They understood that an Atonement would take place, and they had confidence that it would include them.

Nephi asked himself important questions that we might ask ourselves as we consider the place of Christ’s Atonement in our own lives:

“O then, if I have seen so great things, if the Lord in his condescension unto the children of men hath visited men in so much mercy, why should my heart weep and my soul linger in the valley of sorrow, and my flesh waste away, and my strength slacken, because of mine afflictions?

“And why should I yield to sin, because of my flesh? Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy?” (2 Nephi 4:26–27).

After his lament he answered his own questions, knowing the approach to his problems that he must take: “Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul. . . . O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever” (2 Nephi 4:28, 34).

Does this mean that Nephi no longer had problems? Does it mean that he fully understood all that was happening to him? Remember the answer he gave to an angel several years before when he was asked an important question related to the Atonement of Christ, which was to occur in the future:

“I know that [God] loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things” (1 Nephi 11:17).

We also can’t and won’t know the meaning of all things, but we can and must know that the Lord loves His children and that we can be the beneficiaries of a full measure of Christ’s grace and Atonement in our lives and in our struggles. Likewise, we know and must remember the foolishness and danger of giving the evil one place in our hearts.

Even when we fully understand and commit to excluding evil and the evil one from our hearts and from our lives, we fall short because too often we are “natural” men and women (see Mosiah 3:19). Thus, we must be grateful for and be practitioners of the principle of repentance. While we often speak of our repentance as an event, which it sometimes is, for most of us it is a constant, lifelong process.

Of course, there are sins of both omission and commission for which we can immediately begin the repentance process. There are particular kinds of iniquity and mistakes that we can forsake now and never revisit. We can, for example, be full-tithe payers for the rest of our days, even if that has not always been the case. But other dimensions of our lives require our continual improvement and constant attention, such as our spirituality, charity, sensitivity to others, consideration for family members, concern for neighbors, understanding of the scriptures, temple participation, and the quality of our personal prayers.

We can be grateful that the Savior, understanding us better than we understand ourselves, instituted the sacrament that we might regularly renew our covenants by partaking of the sacred emblems with the commitment to take upon ourselves His holy name, to always remember Him, and to keep His commandments. As we follow the pattern that allows us to “live after the manner of happiness,” our repentance and our performance assume a higher quality, and our ability to understand and appreciate the Atonement increases.

Repentance and Obedience

In the weeks prior to the organization of the Church in 1830, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a remarkable



If we feel to honor and love the Savior in return, we must never forget that He did what He did for us that we might not suffer to the same degree what justice alone would require of us.

revelation that adds to our understanding of the Atonement because it was the Savior Himself who was speaking and teaching. He described Himself as “the Redeemer of the world” (D&C 19:1), acknowledged that He was following the will of the Father, and said, “I command you to repent, and keep the commandments which you have received” (D&C 19:13).

This simple pattern of repentance and obedience really is the basis for “living after the manner of happiness.” We know this is what we need to do, though sometimes we may forget why. The Lord reminds us why in the following words from the same revelation:

“For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

“But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I;

“Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both

body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

“Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men” (D&C 19:16–19).

What a remarkable lesson. I am sure that none of us can imagine the significance and intensity of the Lord’s pain as He accomplished the great Atonement. I doubt that Joseph Smith at that time had a complete sense of the suffering of the Savior, though the Prophet gained greater appreciation and understanding from his own trials and torture in later years. Think of the corrective instruction given by Jesus Himself as He counseled and comforted Joseph in the dark hours of his Liberty Jail incarceration. The Lord then simply said: “The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?” (D&C 122:8).

This question to Joseph is also a question to each of us in our personal and unique struggles and challenges. None of us should ever doubt the correct answer.

That Jesus experienced what He experienced, not because He couldn't avoid it but because He loves us, is sobering indeed. Jesus also loves and honors His Father with a depth and loyalty that we can only imagine. If we feel to honor and love the Savior in return, we must never forget that He did what He did for us that we might not suffer to the same degree what justice alone would require of us.

Scourging, privations, abuse, nails, and inconceivable stress and suffering all led to His experiencing excruciating agony that could not be tolerated by anyone without His powers and without His determination to stay the course and endure all that could be meted out.

The Comprehensiveness of the Atonement

As we consider the comprehensiveness of the Atonement and the Redeemer's willingness to suffer for all of our sins, we should gratefully acknowledge that the atoning sacrifice also covers so much more! Consider these words of Alma to the faithful people of Gideon almost a century before the Atonement was actualized:

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

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

"Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions according to the power of his deliverance; and now behold, this is the testimony which is in me" (Alma 7:11–13).

Think of a full and comprehensive remedy for our pains, afflictions, temptations, sicknesses, sins, disappointments, and transgressions. Can you imagine any alternative

to Jesus's Atonement? Then add to that the incomparable Resurrection, and we begin to understand just enough to sing, "I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me."⁵

What does the Atonement mean to you and to me? It means everything. As Jacob explained, we can "be reconciled unto [the Father] through the atonement of Christ, his Only Begotten Son" (Jacob 4:11). This means that we can repent, come into full harmony and complete acceptance with Him, and avoid the mistakes or misunderstandings that "denieth the mercies of Christ, and setteth at naught the atonement of him and the power of his redemption" (Moroni 8:20).

We avoid dishonoring and disrespecting the Savior's Atonement by heeding the counsel of Helaman, which is as pertinent today as it was in the years immediately preceding the Lord's earthly advent: "O remember, remember, my sons . . . that there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh to redeem the world" (Helaman 5:9).

His Atonement does indeed cover the world and all people from the beginning to the end. Let us not forget, however, that in its comprehensiveness and completeness it is also intensely personal and uniquely crafted to fit perfectly and address perfectly each of our own individual circumstances. The Father and the Son know each of us better than we know ourselves and have prepared an Atonement for us that is fully congruent with our needs, challenges, and possibilities.

Thanks be to God for the gift of His Son, and thanks be to the Savior for His Atonement. It is true and is in effect and will lead us where we need and want to be. ■

From an address given at Brigham Young University Women's Conference on May 5, 2006.

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2007), 49.
2. Bible Dictionary, "Atonement," 617; see also Guide to the Scriptures, "Atone, Atonement," 22.
3. David A. Bednar, "In the Strength of the Lord," in *Brigham Young University 2001–2002 Speeches* (2002), 123.
4. See Bible Dictionary, "Grace," 697; see also Guide to the Scriptures, "Grace," 103.
5. "I Stand All Amazed," *Hymns*, no. 193.

Reflections on the Savior's Last Week

BY ERIC D. HUNTSMAN

Associate Professor of Ancient Scripture, Brigham Young University

A study of the events leading up to the Resurrection can draw us closer to the Savior and foster a deeper understanding of the Atonement.

The triumphal entry, remembered today on Palm Sunday, provides a joyful prelude to the many sad events that would intervene between this point and the miracle of the empty tomb. It represents one of the few times during His mortal ministry when Jesus was recognized as the king He is.

As we approach the Easter season, Christians worldwide prepare to commemorate the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ by reading and reflecting upon the scriptural accounts of the last days of His mortal ministry. The most important parts of this story—the Savior's atoning work, consisting of His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, His crucifixion, and His triumphant rising from the tomb—are well known to Latter-day Saints. We are grateful for Restoration scripture that gives us added insights and understanding of their significance.

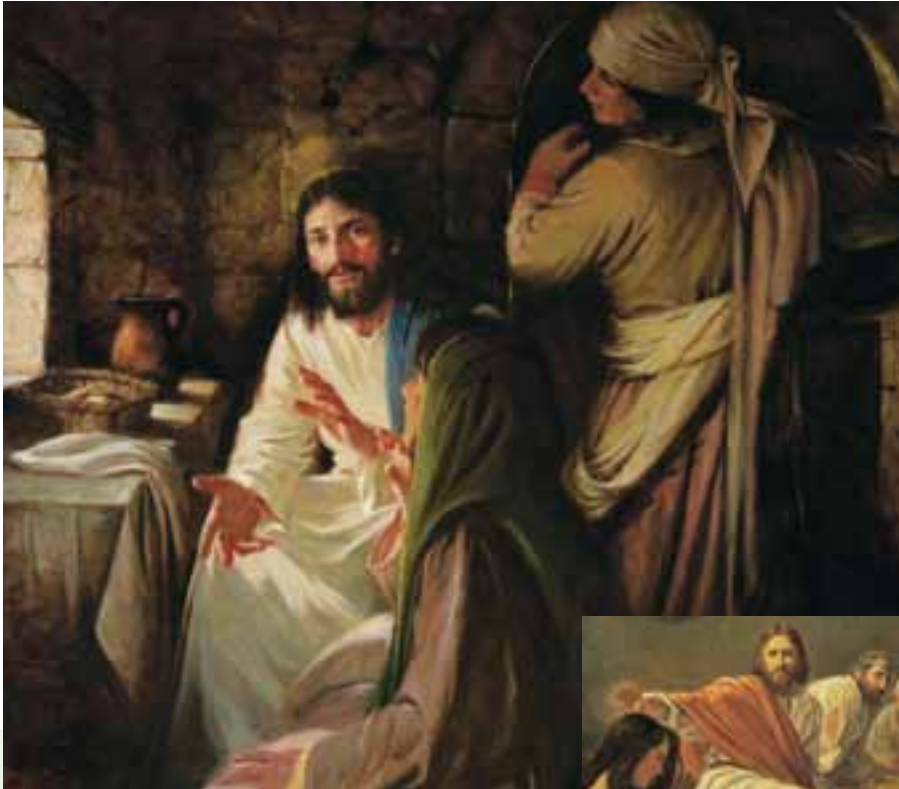
However, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John include additional events that prepare Christians to understand the symbolism of the Atonement and why Jesus was uniquely qualified to work “an infinite and eternal sacrifice” (Alma 34:10). Occasionally the four Gospel authors differ in their emphasis of certain aspects of these events, but these differences do not detract from the historical truth of the

Savior's actions and teachings. Indeed, they give readers added insights and perspectives into “four mosaics”¹ that function together like different facets of the same diamond.

Chronology

For many Christians, “Holy Week” describes a season of observance that begins with Palm Sunday and ends on Easter morning. The Gospels include many events, teachings, and parables from this week. The traditionally accepted sequence of events for this week largely follows the Gospel of Mark, though each of the Gospels provides relative time indicators for each day of Holy Week. However, the four Gospels are actually sparing in chronological detail, so the dating of some events, such as the timing of Passover, is more complicated than it might seem.² The only day of the week clearly identified is the Sunday on which Mary Magdalene and the other





Before the Master entered Jerusalem for His final week, He had dinner with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. During the dinner Mary anointed his feet. The Lord commended her effort, connecting this anointing with His coming death and burial.



Judas agreed with the Jewish leadership to betray the Savior.

In ancient Israel it was common to anoint bodies as part of burial rituals. The Hebrew word *Messiah* and the Greek word *Christ* both mean “the anointed one,” reflecting Jesus’s position through these titles. In earlier periods the Israelites also anointed living people to serve either as righteous kings or as high priests.

We, like the disciples, must come to know that Jesus is the Son of God and gain a testimony of what He did for us. As we reflect on the roles He played during the last week of His mortal life, we need to remember that as our Savior He is both a king and a priest.

The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

John notes, “On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

“Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: *Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

“And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

“Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, *thy King cometh, sitting on an ass’s colt*” (John 12:12–15; emphasis added).

While a donkey does not seem to be a regal mode of transportation to modern readers, Old Testament kings, especially David, commonly rode donkeys. Furthermore, the prophet Zechariah had specifically foretold that the messianic king would come in this fashion (see Zechariah 9:9). The waving of tree branches is often associated with *Sukkot*, the autumn Festival of Tabernacles that commemorates the wandering of the children of Israel in the

women found the empty tomb (see Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1–2; John 20:1).

Rather than trying to cover all the events and parables of Holy Week, let us try to understand Jesus Christ and His mission by approaching the week broadly, pausing at selected points to reflect on symbolism.

The Anointing at Bethany

John 12:1–9 recounts that Martha served a special dinner to Jesus, some of His disciples, and her brother, Lazarus, who had recently been raised from the dead, before the Master entered Jerusalem for His final week. During the course of the meal, Lazarus’s other sister, Mary, anointed Jesus’s feet. Judas Iscariot rebuked her for wasting the precious ointment in this way, but the Lord commended Mary, connecting this anointing with His coming death and burial. Matthew 26:6–13 and Mark 14:3–9 preserve a similar incident, which they place later in the week at the time

wilderness. Once they were in the promised land, however, this festival emphasized the harvest but was also associated with the coronation of Israelite kings. Furthermore, in the period between the Old and New Testaments, the Festival of Tabernacles developed millennial associations, based largely upon the prophecy that in the last days people of all nations would come to Jerusalem “to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16).

The triumphal entry, remembered today on Palm Sunday, provides a joyful prelude to the many sad events that would intervene between this point and the miracle of the empty tomb. It represents one of the few times during His mortal ministry when Jesus was recognized as the king He is. However, the triumphal entry also serves as a symbol of Jesus’s Second Coming, allowing us to look forward to the day when He will return in glory and all will accept Him as king.

The Cleansing of the Temple and the Cursing of the Fig Tree

In one of the more dramatic events early in the week, Jesus proceeded to the courtyards around the temple, overthrew the tables of the money changers, and then drove out those involved in the buying and selling of sacrificial animals. Although modern readers may interpret the cleansing as necessary because these activities were immoral, particularly because they occurred on temple grounds, this business did serve a purpose. Pilgrims traveling from great distances often would not have been able to bring their own animals for sacrifice and would have needed to exchange foreign currency for coins acceptable for temple offerings.

However, Jesus rebuked the money changers and other businessmen, stating that they had made His Father’s house “a den of thieves” (Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke



When Jesus rebuked the money changers, stating that they had made His Father’s house “a den of thieves,” He may also have been rebuking the corrupt leadership at the temple. As the rightful king and the actual Son of God, He had the right to enter and cleanse the temple as well as to retake authority from those who had usurped it.

19:46). The term “thieves” as used here comes from the Greek *lēistai*, which not only means “robber” or “bandit” but also “revolutionary” or “insurgent.” Because the temple leadership in this period was notoriously corrupt, the Savior’s rebuke may have been directed in part at them for allowing, and likely profiting from, these activities. For more than two centuries the high priests had been political appointees rather than members of an appropriate priestly family. Jesus’s condemnation of the leadership might suggest that He was unmasking them as false authorities who had usurped power over the sanctuary and were misusing their assumed positions.

With this in mind, a royal interpretation of the triumphal entry suggests an interesting historical connection between Jesus as king and the temple. From the time of Solomon until the destruction of the first temple by the Babylonians, the temple had been, in effect, a royal chapel adjacent to the king’s palace. Ancient kings were *adopted*



The cursing of the fig tree may symbolize a demonstration of the Lord's power over things on earth. In addition, the house of Israel, like the fig tree, had been called upon to produce good fruit by observing and keeping all the commandments of the Lord. But it was largely barren.

at their coronations at the temple as sons of the Lord (see Psalm 2:7), a foreshadowing of how Christ was not only the rightful king but also the actual Son of God. He had the right to enter the temple, to cleanse it of activities that distracted from proper worship, and to retake authority from those who had usurped it.

About this same time, Jesus cursed a fruitless fig tree just outside of Jerusalem. The tree withered away soon thereafter (see Mark 11:12–14, 20–21). When the disciples asked about this, Jesus explained that if they had faith and did not doubt, they would be able to do even greater things. There may be layers of symbolism in the event, such as a demonstration of the Lord's power over things on earth. In addition, the house of Israel, like the fig tree, had been called upon to produce good fruit by observing and keeping all the commandments of the Lord. But as a group, they were barren. Particularly in Mark's account, where the story of the fig tree brackets the cleansing of the

temple, this incident suggests that the house of Israel, like the fig tree, had not lived up to its potential.³ The cursing of the fig tree and the overturning of the money changers' tables, taken together, may foreshadow the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple some 40 years later.

Teachings in the Temple

During the first part of this week Jesus spent the nights in Bethany but came to the temple each day to teach. The Lord delivered some of His most profound lessons at this time. However, He was not without His detractors. These included the chief priests and elders, who repeatedly questioned Him regarding His authority. Jesus deftly thwarted their attempts to discredit Him; at the same time He denounced their hypocrisy.

The verbal sparring over authority elicits another connection to the triumphal entry: Jesus was the rightful leader in Israel, while the chief priests and elders were usurpers who had set themselves up in Jerusalem and in the temple as leaders of Israel. They were, in fact, the wicked tenants who were falsely exploiting the Lord's vineyard, had rejected the prophets sent to them, and would soon beat and kill the Son (see Matthew 21:33–46).

Interestingly, the chief priests questioned Jesus in an attempt to find fault with Him at the same time that the Passover lambs for the year were being checked for faults. Thus, symbolically the Savior had already begun acting in His role of the lamb for the Atonement's great and infinite sacrifice.

The Olivet Discourse

Leaving the temple, Jesus took His disciples to the Mount of Olives. There He gave them a prophetic discourse that dealt with the imminent destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and also focused on the destruction of the world at the Second Coming (see Matthew 24:1–46; Mark 13:1–37; Luke 21:5–36; see also Joseph Smith—Matthew). This prophecy once again reminds us of the triumphal entry. Jesus had entered Jerusalem seemingly as a recognized Messiah, and many



Above: On the evening before He was crucified, Jesus partook of the Last Supper with His disciples. This meal references the Passover meal, in which ancient Israel celebrated deliverance from the angel of death.

Right: While teaching in the temple, Jesus deftly thwarted the chief priests' attempts to discredit Him. At the same time he denounced their hypocrisy.



priests sacrificed the paschal lamb in remembrance of the unblemished animal whose blood saved the children of Israel and whose flesh was

seemed to have expected Him to ascend the throne as king and political leader at that time. Although that was not His immediate purpose, the Savior explained that He would, in fact, return in glory as king of all the earth. He then taught the people through parables—such as the parable of the ten virgins and the parable of the talents—what they and we must do to prepare for His return.

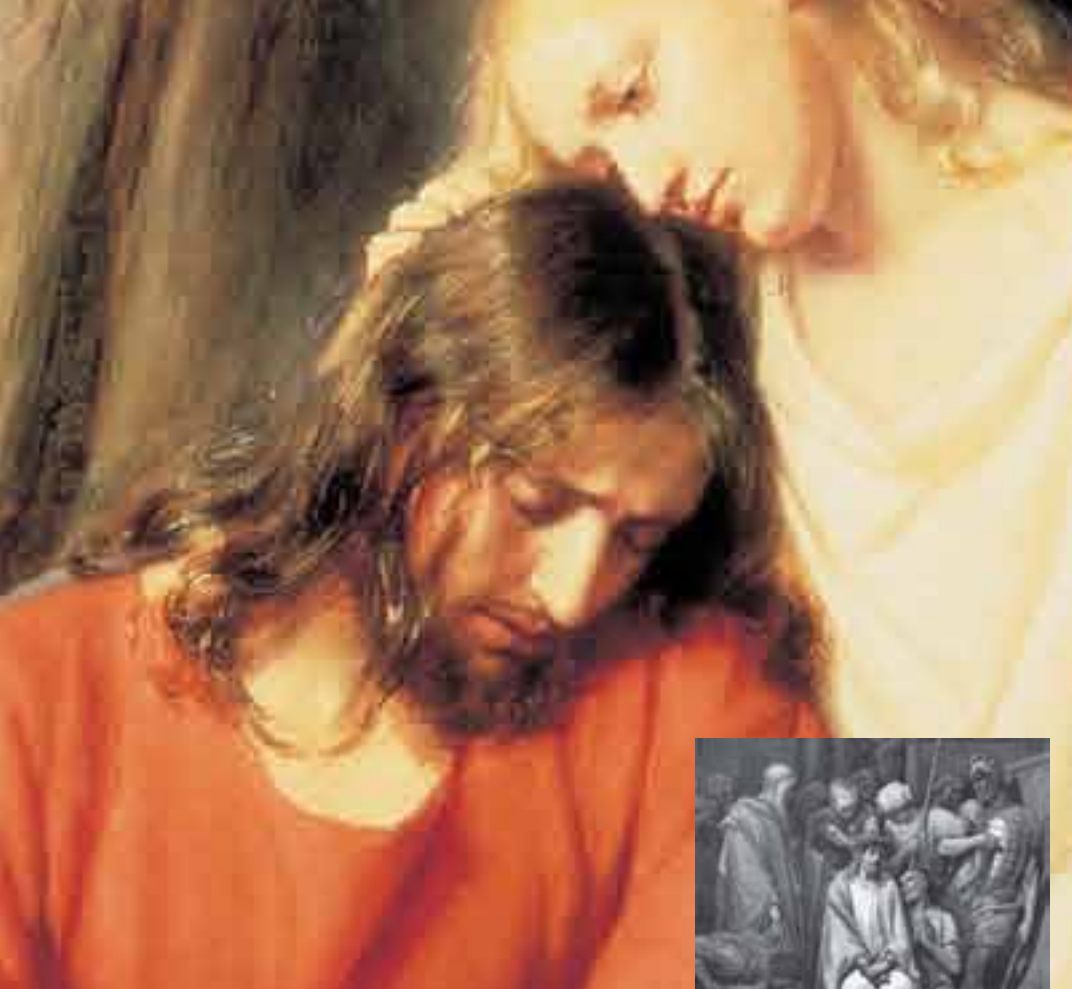
The Last Supper

After describing these events, all four Gospels shift their emphasis from Jesus's authority as rightful leader and teacher to His priestly role as the one who would perform a sacrifice and His role as the sacrificial lamb who would suffer and die for all mankind. The Jewish Passover plays a significant symbolic role here. In recalling the ancient Israelites' deliverance from bondage in Egypt, the Passover festival focused in particular on Israel's deliverance from the angel of death. During the yearly celebration the

now eaten as part of a festive meal.

On the evening before He was crucified, Jesus held the Last Supper with His disciples. The first three Gospels explicitly identify this meal as a Passover meal, and Passover imagery is replete throughout the meal (see Matthew 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–39). During the meal, Jesus instituted the ordinance of the sacrament using bread and wine as symbols of His own body and blood. As Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said:

“This ordinance commemorating our escape from the angel of darkness should be taken more seriously than it sometimes is. It should be a powerful, reverent, reflective moment. It should encourage spiritual feelings and impressions. As such it should not be rushed. It is not something to ‘get over’ so that the real purpose of a sacrament meeting can be pursued. This *is* the real purpose of the meeting. And everything that is said or sung or prayed



Above: In Gethsemane, the Lord took upon Himself the weight of our sins and sorrows.

Right: Jesus was symbolically led to the altar of sacrifice as He carried our burdens, was betrayed by a friend, and subsequently suffered great indignities and death.



answered. There, in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord offered another prayer, during which He suffered such agony that He sweat great drops of blood (see Luke 22:44). Somehow Jesus took upon Himself the weight of our sins and sorrows (see Mosiah 3:7; D&C 19:16–19). As Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–1985) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles testified:

“We do not know, we cannot tell, no mortal mind can conceive, the full import of what Christ did in Gethsemane. . . .

“We know that in some way, incomprehensible to us, his suffering satisfied the demands of justice, ransomed penitent souls from the pains and penalties of sin, and made mercy available

in those services should be consistent with the grandeur of this sacred ordinance.”⁴

The Gospel of John preserves a series of farewell remarks that began at the Last Supper and continued through Jesus’s experience in Gethsemane (see John 13:31–17:26). Focusing on Jesus’s relationship with the Father, His love for us, and His injunction that we likewise love and serve one another, these moving words provide us further models for our weekly worship services.

Gethsemane

The Savior’s farewell words end with the beautiful Intercessory Prayer, sometimes called the great high priestly prayer, wherein Jesus prayed that His disciples “be one” as He and the Father are one (see John 17). Following this prayer, Jesus retired to a garden on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, where He began the process of Atonement by which this prayer could be

to those who believe in his holy name.”⁵

Reflecting upon what Jesus did in Gethsemane deepens our love for Him. In making us “one” with God, Jesus not only saves us from sin and death but also heals us.

Betrayal, Judgment, and Abuse

In an ancient Israelite sacrifice, the penitent worshiper laid his hands upon the sacrificial animal, symbolically transferring his guilt before the priest led the animal away to be slaughtered and offered on the altar (see Leviticus 1:3–5). Likewise, Jesus was symbolically led to the altar as He carried our burdens, as He suffered betrayal by His friend and apostle Judas, and as He endured the subsequent indignities at the hands of both Roman and Jewish leaders through His arrest and trial (see Matthew 26:45–27:26; Mark 14:41–15:15; Luke 22:47–23:25; John 18:2–19:16). These experiences were part of His descending “below all things” (D&C 88:6).

ABOVE LEFT: DETAIL FROM, IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERÖD, DENMARK, MAY NOT BE COPIED. LEFT INSET: THE CROWN OF THORNS, BY PAUL GUSTAVE DORE. ABOVE RIGHT: THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST, ARTIST UNKNOWN, COURTESY OF THE CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM.

Whereas the charge against Jesus before the Jewish authorities was one of breaking religious law by blasphemy, the one laid against Him in the Roman trial was political: the argument that Jesus claimed to be a king was an offense against the Roman order. After both the Jewish hearing and the Roman trial, Jesus was subjected to abuse: mocking, scourging, spitting. This abuse had been prophesied in both the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. As Isaiah prophesied, “With his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). Jesus willingly suffered our pains, afflictions, and infirmities that He might “take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people” and that He might “know . . . how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:11–12).

The Death of the Lamb of God

It is popular in many religious traditions to focus on the extreme suffering of Jesus’s scourging and crucifixion, but the Gospels themselves are sparing of such brutal details. Instead, they emphasize the words and symbolic acts that fulfill prophecy. These include His crucifixion between two bandits or criminals; the division of His garments; the offering of cheap wine, or “vinegar” (Psalm 69:21) to assuage His thirst; the fact that His legs were not broken; and the piercing of His side. Significantly, the greatest suffering that our Lord experienced on the cross does not seem to be anything that man inflicted upon him. Jesus’s cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34) may reflect, as in Gethsemane, that His carrying the weight of our sins necessarily separated Him from His Father in a way that He had never experienced before.⁶

Jesus died as a ransom for all. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught:

“No member of this Church must ever forget the terrible price paid by our Redeemer, who gave His life that all men might live. . . .

“This was the cross, the instrument of His torture, the terrible device designed to destroy the Man of Peace, the evil recompense for His miraculous work of healing the sick, of causing the blind to see, of raising the dead. This was the cross on which He hung and died on Golgotha’s lonely summit.

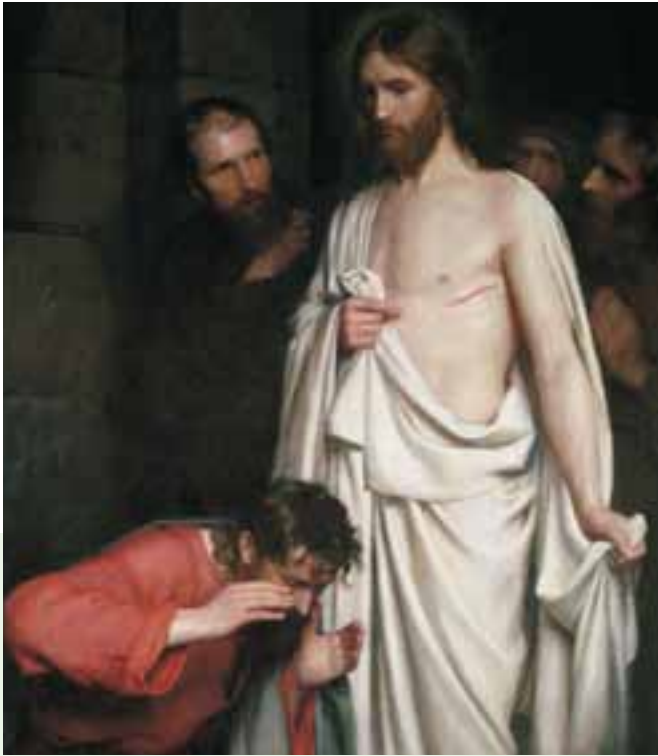


Jesus promised the Nephites that even as He was lifted up on the cross by men, so all men will “be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me” (3 Nephi 27:14–15).

“We cannot forget that. We must never forget it, for here our Savior, our Redeemer, the Son of God, gave Himself, a vicarious sacrifice for each of us.”⁷

Jesus’s being lifted up upon the cross is a fundamental component of the gospel message as later defined by Jesus Himself to the Nephites when He promised that even as He was lifted up by men, so all men will “be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me” (3 Nephi 27:14–15). Foreshadowed by the brazen serpent that Moses raised in the wilderness, Jesus was lifted up that all might be saved if they would but look to Him (see Numbers 21:6–9; 1 Nephi 17:41; Alma 33:19–22).

The Gospel of John, which explicitly describes Jesus as “the Lamb of God” (John 1:29, 36), also connects the death of the Savior directly with the Passover. Jesus, as the unblemished or sinless lamb whose bones could not be broken (see Exodus 12:3, 5, 46), died so that spiritual death might “pass over” those who come unto Him. As



The most powerful witnesses of Jesus's living reality were reserved for the Apostles, who, "by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3), gained a special witness of the risen Lord.

the blood of the first Passover sacrifice was spread on the doors of each Israelite home, so too did the blood of Christ flow upon the wood of the cross.⁸ According to one approach to the chronology of the last week suggested by the Gospel of John, Passover actually began at sunset the day Jesus was crucified. In this scenario the paschal lambs, which were sacrificed before the beginning of Passover so that they would be ready in time for the Passover meal, would have been sacrificed in the temple at the very time that Jesus was dying on the cross.⁹

The Empty Tomb and the Risen Lord

All four Gospels begin the account of the Resurrection with the empty tomb. The angels' query to the women, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (Luke 24:5) continues to be a question that confronts us today, for we must find the living Christ not just in the pages of history or even the scriptures but also through the Holy Spirit in our own lives.

Among the first people to enter the tomb were the Apostles Peter and John (see Luke 24:12; John 20:3–10). However, the first person to see the risen Lord was Mary Magdalene (see Mark 16:9; John 20:11–16). Soon other women saw Him, followed by the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (see Matthew 28:9–10; Mark 16:12–13; Luke 24:13–32). Their experiences suggest that all people, not just the Apostles, have the ability to gain a testimony that Jesus was resurrected and lives today. The most powerful witnesses of Jesus's living reality were reserved for the Apostles (see Matthew 28:16–20; Mark 16:14–18; Luke 24:33–51; John 20:19–30; Acts 1:2–9), who, "by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3), gained a special witness of the risen Lord and received a commission to take this news to all the earth.

The miracle of the empty tomb and the subsequent appearances of the risen Lord stand as powerful reminders that the atoning mission of Jesus Christ was not limited to His suffering and death for our sins. As expressed by the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob, the goodness of God is manifest in His preparing a way to overcome the awful monsters of death and hell, which are physical and spiritual death (see 2 Nephi 9:10). Only by overcoming both of these obstacles through the Redemption and the Resurrection can God's children truly become "one" with Him again. ■

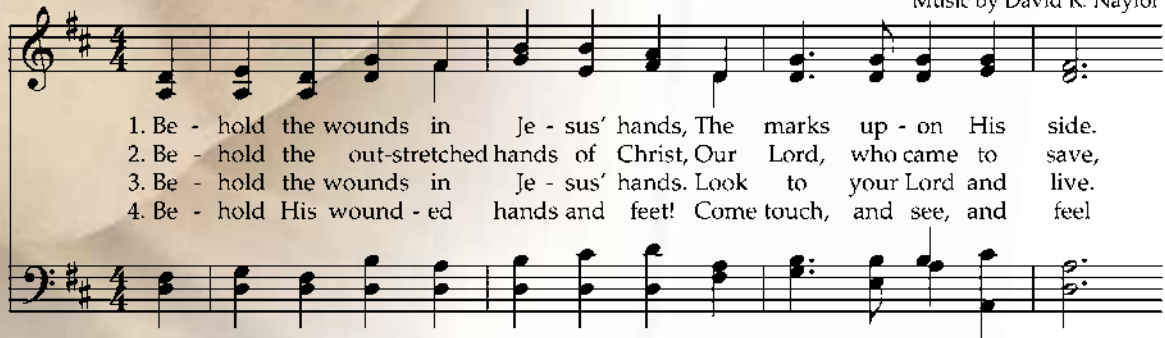
NOTES

1. Richard Neitzel Holzzapfel, *A Lively Hope: The Suffering, Death, Resurrection, and Exaltation of Jesus Christ*, 1999, 7.
2. Many LDS outlines of Easter Week follow President J. Reuben Clark Jr.'s *Our Lord of the Gospels: A Harmony of the Gospels*, 1957. He in turn based his chronology on late nineteenth-century Protestant studies.
3. *The Life and Teachings of Jesus and His Apostles*, 2nd ed. (1979), 142.
4. Jeffrey R. Holland, "This Do in Remembrance of Me," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 68.
5. Bruce R. McConkie, "The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," *Ensign*, May 1985, 9.
6. Andrew C. Skinner, *Gethsemane* (2002), 72–73; see also Bruce R. McConkie, "The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," *Ensign*, May 1985, 9; Jeffrey R. Holland, "The Hands of the Fathers," *Ensign*, May 1999, 14.
7. Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Symbol of Our Faith," *Liahona and Ensign*, April 2005, 4.
8. Eric D. Huntsman, "The Lamb of God: Unique Aspects of the Passion Narrative in John," in *Behold the Lamb of God: An Easter Celebration*, ed. Richard Neitzel Holzzapfel, Frank F. Judd Jr., and Thomas A. Wayment (2008), 54–55, 62.
9. See Josephus, *The New Complete Works of Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (1999), 906.

BEHOLD THE WOUNDS IN JESUS' HANDS

Reverently ♩ = 88-100

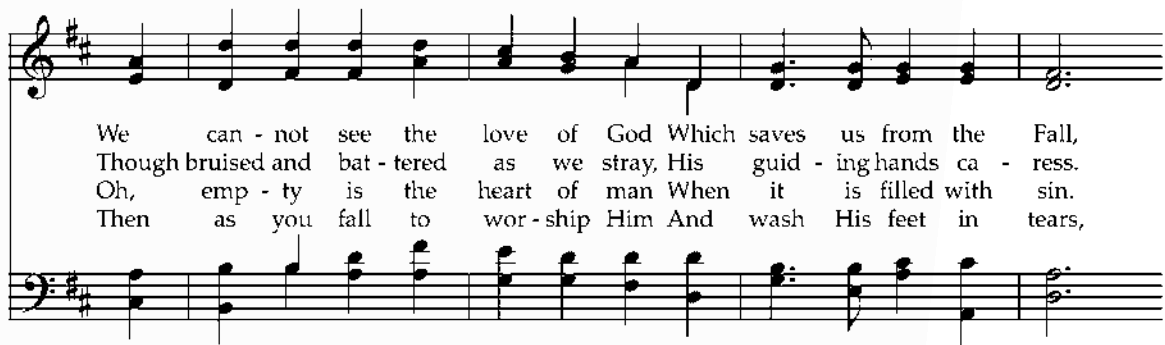
Words by John V. Pearson
Music by David R. Naylor



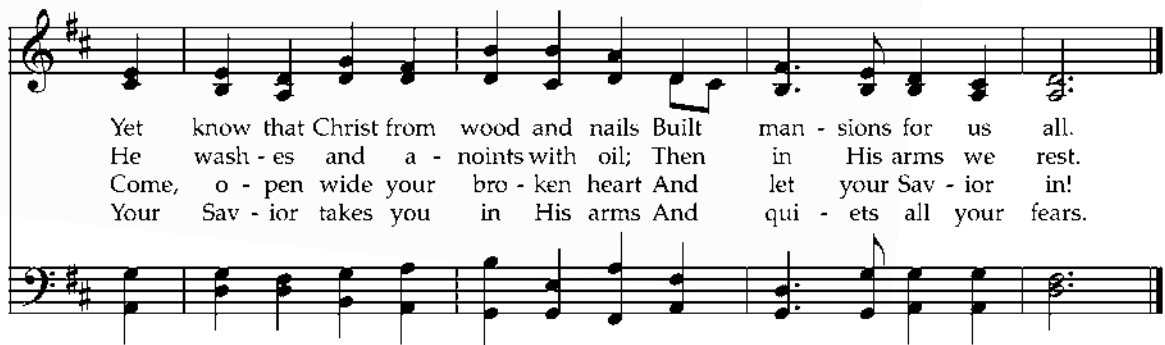
1. Be - hold the wounds in Je - sus' hands, The marks up - on His side.
2. Be - hold the out-stretched hands of Christ, Our Lord, who came to save,
3. Be - hold the wounds in Je - sus' hands. Look to your Lord and live.
4. Be - hold His wound - ed hands and feet! Come touch, and see, and feel



Then pon - der whom He meant to save When on the cross He died.
Whose love and grace re - deem our souls And lift us from the grave.
He yearns to bless you with His love And all your sins for - give.
The wounds and marks that you may know His love for you is real.



We can - not see the love of God Which saves us from the Fall,
Though bruised and bat - tered as we stray, His guid - ing hands ca - ress.
Oh, emp - ty is the heart of man When it is filled with sin.
Then as you fall to wor - ship Him And wash His feet in tears,



Yet know that Christ from wood and nails Built man - sions for us all.
He wash - es and a - noints with oil; Then in His arms we rest.
Come, o - pen wide your bro - ken heart And let your Sav - ior in!
Your Sav - ior takes you in His arms And qui - ets all your fears.

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The Voice of the Good Shepherd

BY SHERRY CARTWRIGHT ZIPPERIAN

As a Montana rancher for most of my 70 years, I treasure the parable of the good shepherd, found in John 10:1–18, for I have lived it. The following experiences were particularly powerful in bringing this parable to life.

In biblical times each shepherd vocally summoned his personal flock from the many herds pooled together into a nighttime sheepfold (see vv. 3–4). Likewise, whenever I move my sheep, I simply call, and they follow.

Years ago my spry 96-year-old neighbor, Alice, who also raised sheep, became ill during lambing season, so I offered to do her night lambing. When I entered her lambing shed my first night “on duty,” Alice’s nearly 100 ewes were peacefully bedded down for the night. Yet when I appeared, they immediately sensed a stranger in their midst. Terrified, they instantly sought safety by huddling together in a far corner (see v. 5).

This continued for several nights. No matter how quietly I entered, the sheep panicked and fled. I spoke soothingly to the newborn lambs and ewes as I tended them. By the fifth night they no longer stirred as I worked among them. They had come to recognize my voice and trust me.

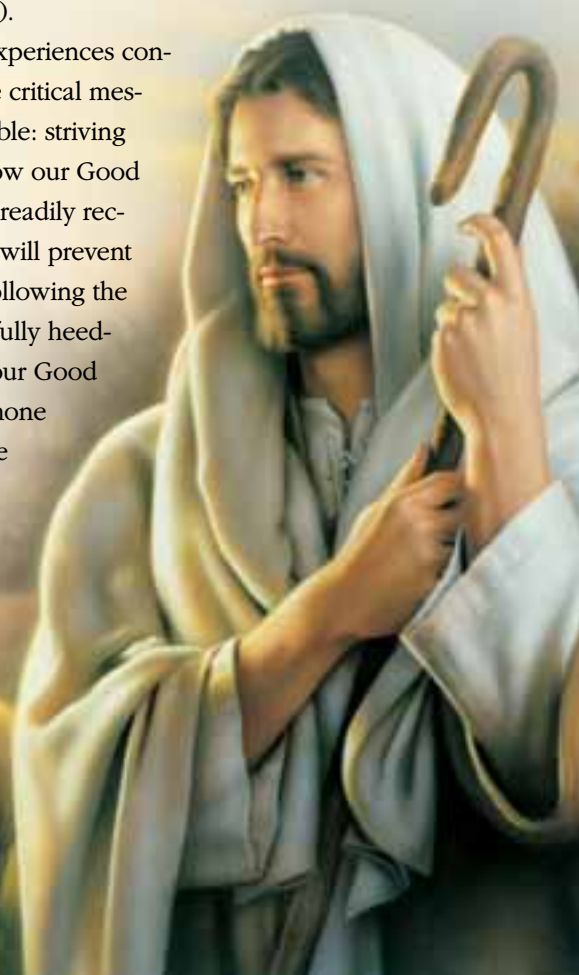
Sometime later I told Alice I would feed her dozen or so bum lambs their bottles. (A bum lamb is one whose mother has died or cannot produce enough milk.) Imitating Alice, I called to her lambs, “Come, BaBa! Come, BaBa!” I expected the lambs to hungrily stampede me as they did her. But not a single lamb even glanced up. Alice then stepped out her kitchen door and called. Hearing *her* voice, they eagerly rushed toward her, clamoring for their milk.

Intrigued, Alice and I conducted an experiment. Standing in my corral, Alice mimicked *my* call: “Here,

lamby, lamby! Here, lamby, lamby!” and received no response whatsoever. But when *I* called with the exact same words, my sheep quickly surrounded me. Even though the *words* we used to summon the sheep were identical, our unfamiliar *voices* went unheeded. The sheep loyally heard only their true shepherd (see v. 4).

John 10 distinguishes a *shepherd* from a *shepherd*. A shepherd, whose sheep are his own, has loving concern for their safety. In contrast, a *shepherd* is merely the “hireling” and “careth not” (v. 13). The parable also teaches that while the hireling flees and deserts his sheep (see v. 12), the shepherd willingly lays down his life for his sheep (see v. 11). This is certainly true of our Good Shepherd—our Savior, Jesus Christ—who lovingly gave His life for us (see vv. 15, 17–18).

To me these experiences confirmed one of the critical messages of the parable: striving to personally know our Good Shepherd and to readily recognize His voice will prevent our mistakenly following the hireling. By faithfully heeding the voice of our Good Shepherd—and none other—we will be guided to eternal safety. ■



Search the Scriptures Diligently



Teach the scriptures and quotations that will help the sisters you visit understand these principles. Invite those you visit to share what they have felt and learned.

principles. Invite those you visit to share what they have felt and learned.

Why Search the Scriptures?

President Howard W. Hunter

(1907–95): “I commend to you the revelations of God as the standard by which we must live our lives and by which we must measure every decision and every deed. Accordingly, when you have worries and challenges, face them by turning to the scriptures and the prophets” (“Fear Not, Little Flock,” in *1988–89 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* [1989], 112).

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–

1994): “Success in righteousness, the power to avoid deception and resist temptation, guidance in our daily lives, healing of the soul—these are but a few of the promises the Lord has given to those who will come to His word. . . . Certain blessings are to be found only in the scriptures, only in coming to the word of the Lord and holding fast to it. . . .

“ . . . Recommit yourselves to a study of the scriptures. Immerse yourselves in them daily so you will have the power of the Spirit to attend you in your callings. Read them in your families and



teach your children to love and treasure them” (“The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 82).

President Spencer W. Kimball

(1895–1985): “As you become more and more familiar with the truths of the scriptures, you will be more and more effective in keeping the second great commandment, to love your neighbor as yourself. Become scholars of the scriptures—not to put others down, but to lift them up! After all, who has any greater need to ‘treasure up’ the truths of the gospel (on which they may call in their moments of need) than do women and mothers who do so much nurturing and teaching?” (“The Role of Righteous Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 102).

How Can I Treasure the Scriptures?

2 Nephi 4:15: “For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth

them for the learning and the profit of my children.”

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general

president: “One good way to start studying the scriptures is to ‘liken’ them to ourselves (see 1 Nephi 19:23). Some people start by choosing a subject in the Topical Guide that they need to know more about. Or they start at the beginning of a book of scripture and look for specific teachings. . . .

“Whichever way a person starts studying the scriptures, the key to unlocking important knowledge is to keep studying. I never tire of discovering the rich treasures of truth in the scriptures because they teach with ‘plainness, even as plain as word can be’ (2 Nephi 32:7). The scriptures testify of Christ (see John 5:39). They tell us all things we should do (see 2 Nephi 32:3). They ‘make [us] wise unto salvation’ (2 Timothy 3:15).

“Through my scripture reading and the prayers that accompany my study, I have gained knowledge which brings me peace and helps me keep my energies focused on eternal priorities. Because I started reading the scriptures daily, I have learned about my Heavenly Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and what I need to do to be like Them” (“My Soul Delighteth in the Scriptures,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2004, 108–9).

President Thomas S. Monson: “The holy scriptures adorn our bookshelves. Make certain they provide nourishment to our minds and guidance for our lives” (“The Mighty Strength of the Relief Society,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 95). ■

Fasting with POWER



Fasting is a principle of power. It changes lives.

BY ELDER SHAYNE M. BOWEN
Of the Seventy

What if there were a way to overcome our habits, addictions, and burdens? What if there were a way to gain sufficient confidence in the Lord that you could call down the powers of heaven? What if there were principles you could teach your loved ones that, if applied, would allow them to overcome personal weaknesses and draw closer to God?

As we properly understand and live the law of the fast, these desired blessings can be ours.

“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” (Isaiah 58:6).

Our Father will free us from the bands of wickedness, He will lift our heavy burdens, and He will let the oppressed go free. In fact He promises to empower us to break every yoke. What an enabling promise, to have the power to break every yoke!

Proper and consistent fasting can help us overcome sins, bad habits, and addictions. Is there any of us who would not want to be



freed from the personal burdens we carry? Fasting allows us to avail ourselves of this cleansing and purifying power.

The key is to develop the faith and spiritual strength necessary to receive the blessings of fasting. How do we do that?

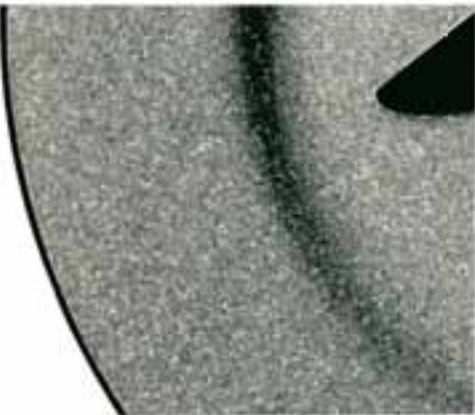
Developing Spiritual Strength

To develop spiritual strength, we need to do our part. If we are not willing to work and be obedient, we should not expect the miracle. In my experience, miracles are always found through obedience and hard work.

A person who can discipline himself to fast on a regular basis in the way God has designed can resist every temptation, overcome any burden, and become free from any yoke.

Paul said, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

An omniscient Father in Heaven has provided “every needful thing” (D&C 88:119) so that His children can call upon Him with



confidence and feel His love. He provides tools to allow us to overcome the temptations that beset “the natural man” (Mosiah 3:19). One of the most powerful and often-neglected tools that God has given us is the law of the fast.

As we better understand and use this tool as Father in Heaven intended, it will change our lives. We will then be able to go to the Lord in confidence and call down the powers of heaven.

My desire is to help each of us understand and receive the blessings and power that

God intends to give us through the exercise of this powerful tool. A true fast, however, requires more than just going without food, as the following principles illustrate.

Principle 1: A generous fast offering blesses others.

When we bless others, God blesses us. Isaiah teaches the principle of fast offerings. He teaches us that to receive promised power and blessings, we must not only fast but also care for the poor and needy.

We qualify for God’s promised blessings

Isaiah teaches us that to receive promised power and blessings, we must not only fast but also help care for the poor and needy by donating a generous fast offering.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JERRY GARNIS

will hear our prayers. We can approach Him with complete faith and confidence. Our hunger will be satisfied with the bread of life; our thirst will be quenched with the living water that never fails.

“Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the

finger, and speaking vanity; . . .

“And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not” (Isaiah 58:9, 11).

and power as we care for all of His children in accordance with the fast He has chosen. “Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” (Isaiah 58:7).

Isaiah 58:10 teaches the same fast offering principle: “And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday.”

Principle 2: Fasting invites enlightenment and the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

The Lord promises not only the power to overcome all of our sins but also light, health, and righteousness in our lives. And, just as with the children of Israel, He promises that His glory will surround and protect us.

“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward” (Isaiah 58:8).

In the following verses we receive the promise that He

Principle 3: Fasting helps us subdue the natural man.

Fasting requires discipline. Fasting helps us accomplish one of the vital purposes of life: developing self-mastery.

King Benjamin referred to this self-mastery as overcoming the natural man. He taught that the natural man is an enemy to God, always has been, and ever will be. If we don’t overcome the natural man in this life and become “a saint through the atonement of Christ” (Mosiah 3:19), we will never live with our Father in Heaven again. Our physical bodies are created in such a way that we can have a spiritual victory over the natural man each time we properly fast.

“When a person starts a fast, biochemical adjustments begin in the bloodstream to compensate for the lack of food. A carbohydrate substance known as glycogen is released from storage areas in the liver and the muscles. The body uses glycogen as food to keep cells supplied with energy. After 24 hours this food source is used up, and another source of energy is needed.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Invite your family to come to the dinner table. Before you eat, ask the following question: What is the difference between fasting and going hungry? Consider sharing Dr. Heyden's comments on physical changes that come after fasting for 24 hours.

2. During dinner review the five principles of fasting. Consider choosing one of the suggestions in "Principles of the Fast" and implementing it into your next fast.

3. Discuss with family members what can make fasting difficult and share ideas of how to make it a positive experience. Conclude by listing the blessings that come from fasting.

Principles of the Fast.

How do we incorporate these principles into our fast? Consider the following suggestions, which could help us put off the natural man and claim the promised blessings and miracles from our Father in Heaven:

- As a fast day approaches, think about a purpose for your fast. That purpose could be as simple as expressing thanks.
- Begin your fast by praying. Talk with Heavenly Father and share with Him the purpose of

"Dr. Siegfried Heyden of Duke University's Department of Community and Family Medicine says when this happens, the body starts looking for other energy sources. 'The first thing happening after a 24-hour fast is the breakdown of fat cells. And these fat cells, when they break down, produce ketone bodies, as they are called. And these ketone bodies seem to have an effect on our psyche in that they make us no longer hungry.'"¹

After 24 hours without food or drink, the body (the natural man) submits to the spirit (the spiritual man). When the spiritual man is victorious, we experience greater sensitivity to the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Principle 4: Fasting intensifies prayer.

In the scriptures I have found at least 49 references to fasting—25 of those link fasting to prayer. Proper fasting magnifies our ability to pray, study, and teach.

Principle 5: Fasting prepares us to bear testimony.

President Henry B. Eyring has taught:

"The fast also helps us to feel humble and meek so that the Holy Ghost may more easily be our companion. By our fast, we both keep our covenant to care for others and we prepare to keep our covenant to bear testimony.

"Those who have prepared carefully for the fast and testimony meeting won't need to be reminded how to bear testimony should they feel impressed to do it in the meeting. They won't give sermons nor exhortations nor travel reports nor try to entertain as they bear witness. Because they will have already expressed appreciation to people privately, they will have less need to do it publicly. Neither will they feel a need to use eloquent language or to go on at length."²

your fast (see D&C 59:14).

- Fast for two meals, or about 24 hours. (Those with medical concerns should follow doctors' orders). Whenever hunger pains come, use them as a reminder to pray again about the purpose of your fast.
- Give a generous fast offering.
- If you feel impressed to do so, bear your testimony in fast and testimony meeting.
- During the time you would have spent preparing food and eating, engage in worthy pursuits such as studying the scriptures, writing in your journal, or serving others.
- After Sunday meetings, end your fast by praying.
- Commit to being a better person, and make plans with God on how you will improve.

Fasting is a principle of power. It changes lives. I testify that God is mindful of the fasting and prayers of all of His children, young and old. He loves us. He wants us to return to His presence. He is our father, Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer, and His Atonement is real. They have provided "every needful thing" (D&C 88:119) to allow us to "break every yoke" (Isaiah 58.6) and return home. ■

NOTES

1. In "Fasting," from *Times and Seasons*, cassette tape series (1991).
2. Henry B. Eyring, "Witnesses for God," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 32.

BY BRUCE K. FORDHAM
LDS Family Services

Perhaps it's a familiar scenario: a child repeatedly opens a cupboard door even though you have told her—several times—to stop. A field goal kicker misses the goal even when he has thought to himself, “Don't miss it. Don't miss it. Don't miss it.” Or perhaps you eat a piece of chocolate cake even though in passing through the kitchen, you tell yourself, “Don't eat that.”

Why does this happen?

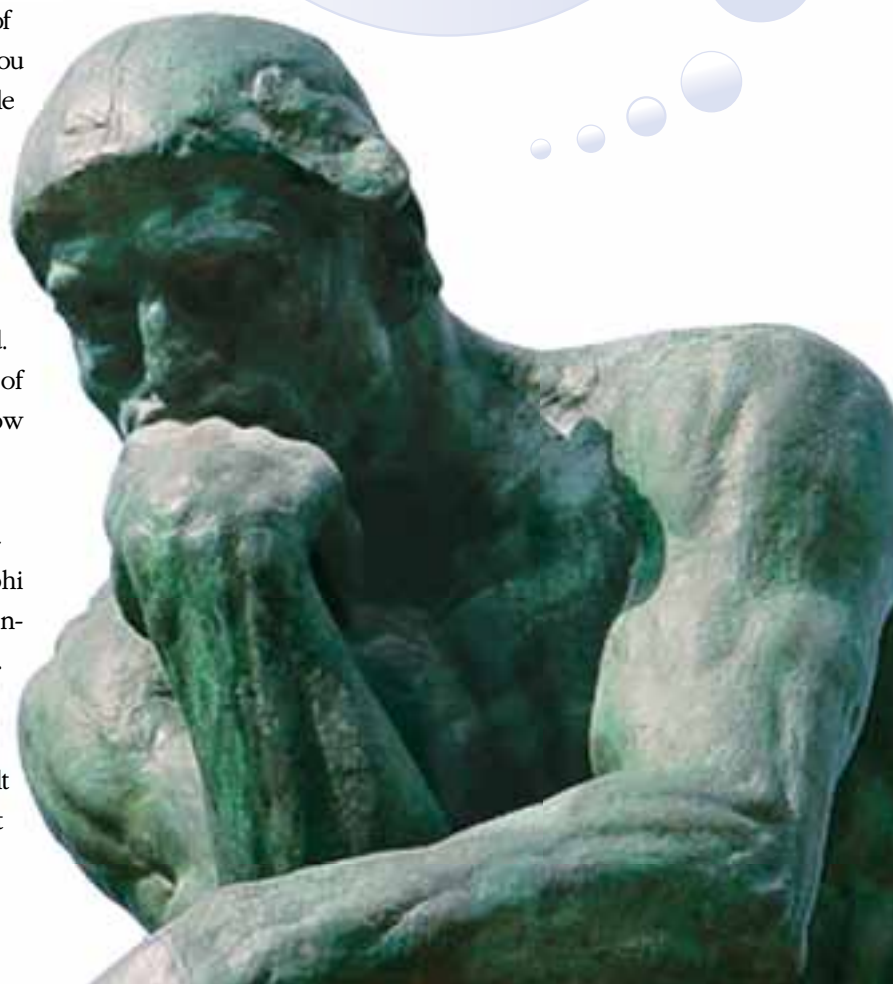
Think about how *you* respond to a negative or inappropriate thought that comes into your mind, either as a result of unhealthy thought patterns or simply because you are a natural man or woman (see Mosiah 3:19; D&C 67:12). Perhaps you reprimand yourself. Or maybe you repeatedly tell yourself to stop thinking about that subject. In the case of the first response, you unwittingly weaken your resistance to such thoughts and lower your sense of self-worth and confidence. With the second response, you unknowingly give energy and strength to the undesirable thought by repeating its image. This occurs because our brains are unable to replace something with nothing. When there is not another thought or activity to replace a negative one, the thought to open the cupboard or miss the field goal or eat the cake takes root because of the image's repetition in the vulnerable mind.

Of course, missing a field goal or having a piece of chocolate cake aren't evil, but these examples of how our minds work hold true in cases where thoughts *are* inappropriate. We know that one of the ways Satan influences us to work against ourselves, seeking to make us “miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:27), is by promoting the idea that our thoughts control us rather than that we can control our thoughts. This, of course, is a great deception.

So how can we overpower undesirable thoughts? In the Book of Mormon, we read that Captain Moroni built fortifications ahead of time to defend his people against

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT

Do you ever feel as though your thoughts control you—not the other way around? It doesn't have to be that way.



their enemies (see Alma 50:1–6, 10). We can follow his example by also preparing ahead of time to protect our minds from the influence of evil thoughts. The following two techniques have worked for clients counseled by experienced therapists.

First, we can treat the thought with indifference, preventing it from developing or becoming engaging to our minds.¹

Second, we can replace the negative idea with a wholesome thought or activity. For example, President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has suggested memorizing a favorite hymn as an “emergency channel,” a place for thoughts to go when inappropriate subjects come to mind.² Keeping handy a list of possible replacement activities may also be useful.

When the human brain is introduced to any new activity, it begins to build a new pathway. The more often the activity is repeated, the more solid and automatic that pathway becomes. An analogy might further explain this concept:

You are standing at the edge of the jungle and know that you must find a way through it. You notice that a path, well worn and easy to travel, has already been cut through the undergrowth for you. But then you notice signs warning of dangers lurking at the end of the path, and even though it appears to be the easiest route, you determine that it might be best to forge your own path. You pull out a machete and start hacking through the thick growth and underbrush. It's tough work! When you glance up and again notice the path that has already been cut, you become discouraged. But you persevere, eventually carving out your own path. You use it frequently as you traverse the jungle, and in time it becomes the obvious, preferred path. Meanwhile, the original well-worn path—the one with danger at the end—deteriorates from lack of use.

The jungle, of course, represents our brains; the initial well-worn path is the route of our undesirable thoughts. The new path represents our efforts to forge new and righteous thoughts, habits, and behaviors.

Granted, these techniques for managing thoughts may not stop undesirable ideas from coming into our minds; dealing with such thoughts is one of the consequences of living in a fallen world. However, when the thoughts do come, these two

methods can help us more quickly and decisively dismiss them.

In our world of ever-increasing evil and more sophisticated assaults on our thoughts, this practice can be useful in providing additional strength against self-defeating thought patterns and habits. With diligent effort, managing our thoughts can become natural. We'll be able to fortify ourselves against attacks of the adversary, just as Captain Moroni did, and we will be able to come off conquerors (see D&C 10:5). ■

NOTES

1. The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Grant Gudmundson, whose ideas helped shape this concept.
2. Boyd K. Packer, “Inspiring Music—Worthy Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 28.



THE STAGE OF OUR MINDS

“The mind is like a stage. During every waking moment the curtain is up. There is always some act being performed on that stage. It may be a comedy, a tragedy, interesting or dull, good or bad; but always there is some act playing on the stage of your mind.

“Have you noticed that shady little thoughts may creep in from the wings and attract your attention in the middle of almost any performance and without any real intent on your part? These delinquent thoughts will try to upstage everybody. If you permit them to go on, all thoughts of any virtue will leave the stage. You will be left, because you consented to it, to the influence of unrighteous thoughts. . . . When they have the stage, if you let them, they will devise the most clever persuasions to hold your attention. They can make it interesting all right, even convince you that they are innocent, for they are but thoughts. What do you do at a time like that, when the stage of your mind is commandeered by the imps of unclean thinking, whether they be the gray ones that seem almost clean or the filthy ones that leave no room for doubt? If you can fill your mind with clean and constructive thoughts, then there will be no room for these persistent imps, and they will leave.”

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Worthy Music, Worthy Thoughts,” *New Era*, Apr. 2008, 8.

EASTER BASKETS WITH BLESSINGS

With a little thought, you can prepare Easter baskets for your children that focus on the gospel.

Many materials at Church distribution centers make ideal gifts. One year we purchased several sets of New Era poster cards and some red scripture-marking pencils. We divided up some of the

cards and put them and a pencil in each basket. The rest we gave to neighborhood children. Another year we included pocket-sized hymnbooks among the Easter treats. Many options are available to help your family focus on the true purpose of celebrating Easter.

Julie Eichler, Utah

Note: If you do not live near an LDS distribution center, you may place orders online at www.ldscatalog.com. U.S. and Canadian residents may also call the Salt Lake Distribution Center at 1-800-537-5971.



MOVING OUT, JUMPING IN

During my first year of college it really helped me to remember that none of us is ever truly alone. Whenever I felt homesick or was having a hard time with school, I tried to remember that I could always reach out to Heavenly Father and the new friends He had blessed me with. Fortunately, as members of the Church, we also have many ways we can become involved.

Attend your Church meetings.

Though it may seem daunting to attend a new ward or branch at first, make sure you go and participate. You will be blessed as you do so.

Get to know your bishopric.

Take the initiative to meet them at the first opportunity instead of assuming they'll reach out to you. They do their best to meet everyone, but you can also make the effort. Let them know you would welcome a calling.

Be involved. Take time from your studies to attend family home evening, baptisms, ward prayer, firesides, activities, and institute classes. Most of my friends that first year were in my ward, and they became my biggest support system.

Give referrals to the local missionaries. I have found that

college life provides many opportunities for sharing the gospel. Have the courage and make the time to do so.

Keep in touch with your parents.

Discuss what you're doing, learning, and experiencing. Call, write, e-mail, or send text messages often. They love you and can offer much-needed support—even by long-distance.

Remember and live by Church teachings. Pray, read the scriptures, write in your journal, do your home or visiting teaching. While you might think your time is too limited to do such things, you'll find that putting the gospel first will help you to more effectively manage your study time and do better in school overall. Associate with others who have goals and values similar to yours. Let them know by your example—modest appearance, clean language, choice of activities, and high standards—that you live a gospel-centered life.

Aimee Sauvageau, Utah

PREACHING HIS GOSPEL

You don't have to be a full-time missionary to enjoy the blessings of studying the *Preach My Gospel* manual (item no. 36617000). Our family unity has been strengthened as we've studied it together. We firmly believe in the promise from the First Presidency that "more happiness awaits you than you have ever experienced as you labor among His children" (*Preach My Gospel*, 2004, v).

FAMILY HOME EVENING HELPS



Family Stories

When our children were at home, we made history every week—our own family's history. It was

a tradition my parents started when I was young. We simply set aside 10 minutes together to write on an assigned topic. When finished, we shared what we had written down. Some of the entries included telling about a Fourth of July (or a Christmas, Halloween, or Easter) we remembered, describing a grandparent,

telling about an accident or illness, or recalling a vacation or fun birthday tradition.

When we were done, each of us had a binder to store our growing collection of journal entries. We enjoyed sharing each other's experiences in this way and are grateful that we preserved special memories.

Connie Pope, Utah



We often refer to the "What Do I Study and Teach?" chapter, which helps us learn more about the message of the Restoration. Each heading within the section covers a topic that we read and then discuss together. Study begins with "God Is Our Loving Heavenly Father" and concludes with "Endure to the End." Throughout the manual, scripture-study references are easily identified in blue.

My husband and I also study the manual together to gain parenting insights. We like to refer to the orange-colored activity suggestions throughout the book. Some are for personal study, and others indicate companionship study as well. When reading the text, we replace the word "missionary" with "parent." The same activities suggested for missionaries

have helped us to more effectively teach our children the gospel. And just as companion study can unify a missionary companionship, we feel it is ever more worthwhile to strengthen the unity of our eternal companionship.

Kelley Estrada, Arizona

Do you have ideas for Random Sampler? We invite you to send short (less than 500-word) articles on any of these topics related to practical gospel living:

- Teaching ideas for home or church, especially for family home evening
- Personal or family financial management tips
- General health and physical fitness tips
- Home production and storage ideas
- Gospel-related holiday traditions that build testimony.

Please see the "Do You Have a Story to Tell?" box on p. 2 for submission instructions.

Singing and Storytelling

By Stephen T. Case

When my wife, Sandra, and I were called to serve in the South Africa Durban Mission, we began looking for a community service project. I had been a member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir for over 20 years, and my wife, a library aide, had conducted story time in an elementary school. When our mission president decided to open missionary work in a nearby township, we knew this was our chance.

We visited the township and discovered that there were no libraries in

the schools, just a small community library in the town. The young elders introduced us to the library director. We explained to her that we would like to hold a weekly story time for children. She was skeptical, but after some thought she agreed to get the word out and we could try.

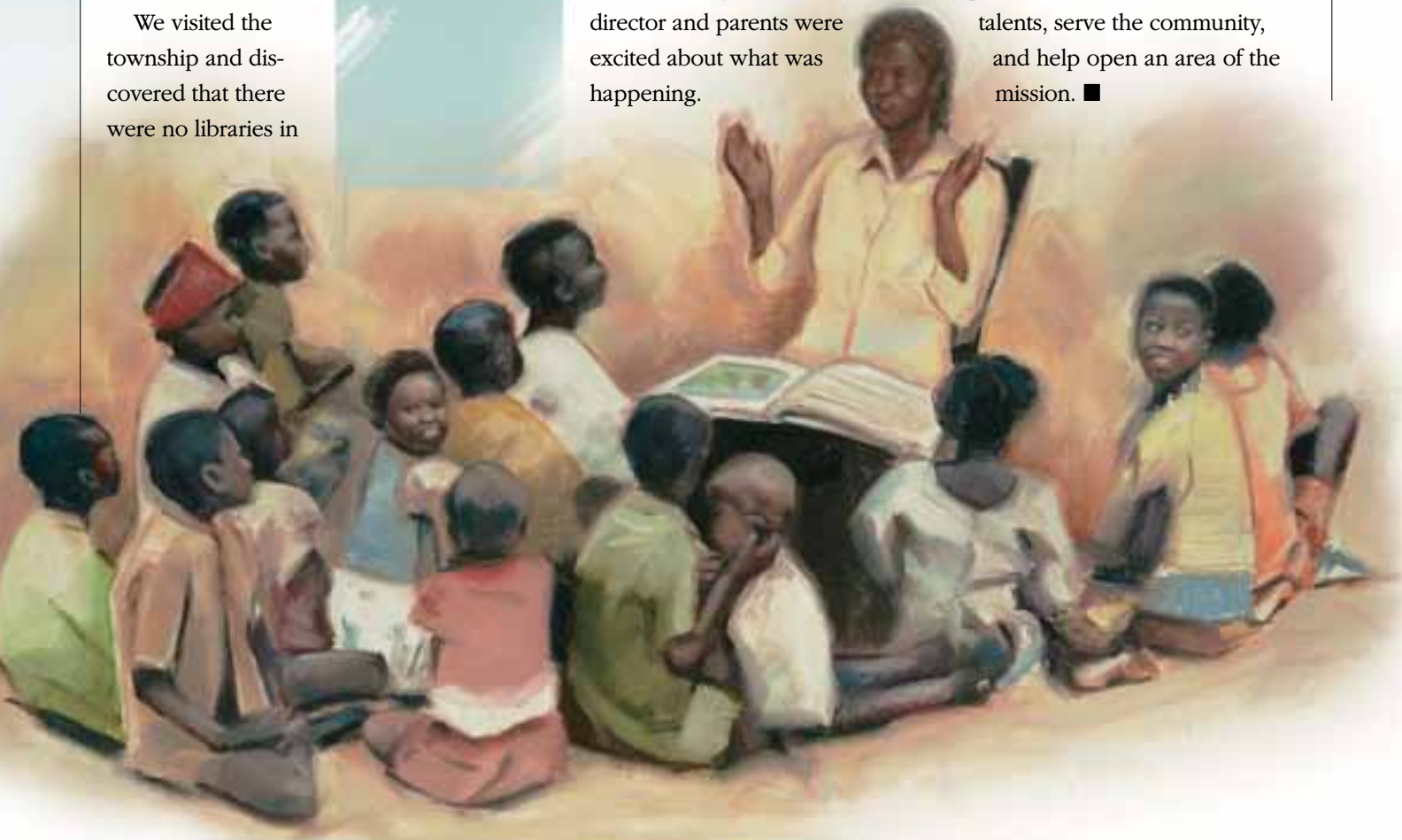
After we enlisted the help of a recent convert who spoke English and Zulu, attendance at story time grew.

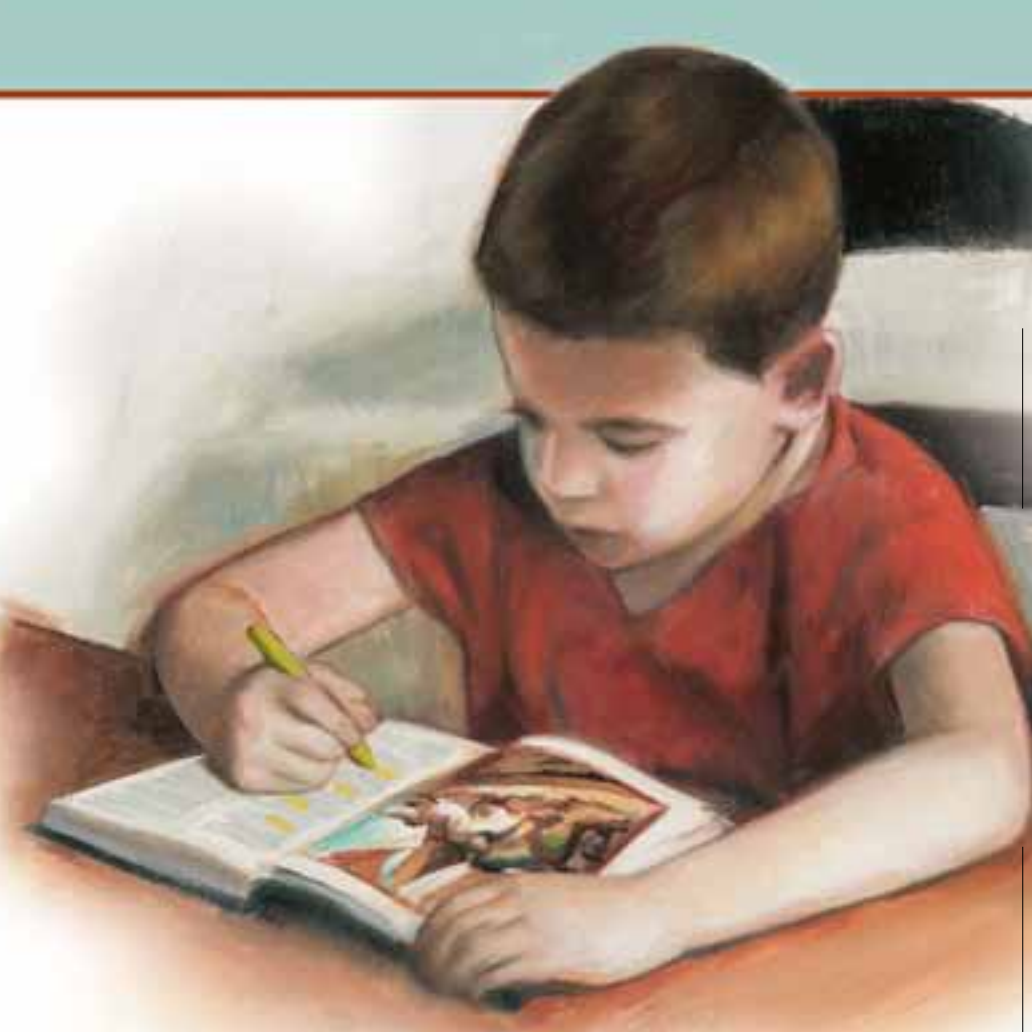
On the first day five children attended. Gradually more came. After several months we enlisted the help of a young lady, a recent convert, who spoke beautiful English and Zulu. Attendance at story time grew, and the director and parents were excited about what was happening.

The Zulu people love to sing, so we added simple songs and rhymes to our story time. By the end of our mission, we were holding two or three sessions of song and story time a week to accommodate the more than 100 children who attended. What a blessing it was when we would see the children elsewhere and they would start singing our songs and reciting our rhymes to us.

Another blessing came out of our service in this area. As the local Church membership grew and we needed a place to start holding our Sunday meetings, the library director insisted that we use the library at no charge.

We are so grateful that the Lord helped us find a way to use our talents, serve the community, and help open an area of the mission. ■





My husband and I challenged our son to read on his own from the Book of Mormon every day.

Soon he moved on to *Jesus*. After that he would pick out words he had seen and ask what they were. He was diligent in his daily reading, and by the end of the year his reading level had surpassed our expectations.

Now our son is in the sixth grade. He is an exceptional reader and helps teach his five younger siblings about the gift he received through reading the Book of Mormon. Each of our children has developed strong reading skills and a habit of reading the Book of Mormon. They are beginning to feel its powerful spirit of truth as their testimonies grow. ■

The Gift of Literacy

By Lynnette McConkie

Our oldest son loved kindergarten and seemed to do well in school. In first grade, however, it became apparent to us that he was not reading. He could read a few words here and there but struggled with even beginning reading assignments. Months passed, and our son's reading skills scarcely progressed. My husband and I became increasingly concerned.

One day I remembered something my mission president had taught years earlier. I had been called to a foreign-language mission. Learning the Russian language was a challenge of varying degrees for each missionary, and our mission president counseled us to read

the Book of Mormon in Russian every day. He promised us that the power of the Book of Mormon would aid us in our ability to communicate in Russian. He was right. Over time I became better at both speaking and understanding the language, and my testimony grew.

Years after my mission, I found myself thinking, "If it worked for me in Russian, why wouldn't it work for my son in English?" After telling our son about my struggle to learn Russian and my mission president's advice, my husband and I challenged him to read on his own from the Book of Mormon every day. He would spend time highlighting the words *God* and *Lord* as he found them on the pages.

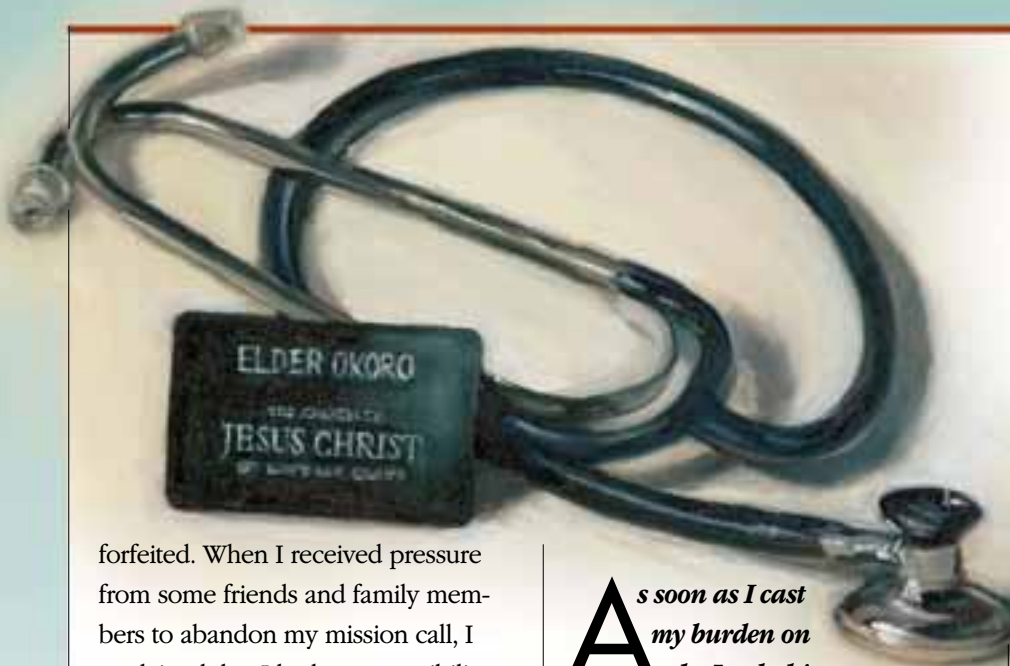
Should I Give Up School for a Mission?

By Onyebuchi Okoro

I graduated from high school in 1992 and immediately turned in my papers to serve a full-time mission. At the time my call came, I had just been admitted to one of the best universities in Nigeria to study medicine.

In Nigeria admission into medical school is competitive and not to be

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DANIEL LEWIS



forfeited. When I received pressure from some friends and family members to abandon my mission call, I explained that I had a responsibility to serve and had looked forward to doing so since I joined the Church six years before. I was sure I could get readmitted to medical school after my mission, but many thought I would regret my decision.

I am grateful to the home teachers, family members, and Church friends who supported my decision to serve. Attending seminary, studying the scriptures, and living the gospel enabled me to stand by my convictions.

As a missionary I set personal goals and worked hard. Twenty-four months later I received an honorable release. The Lord blesses returned missionaries but has not promised that they will be immune to trials. For the Nigerian returned missionary, those trials include unemployment and lack of funds for education.

During the first three years after my mission, I took and passed three entrance examinations, but I wasn't readmitted to medical school. During those same three years, I couldn't find a job. I was tempted to believe that some of my friends and family members might have been right and that

As soon as I cast my burden on the Lord, things started working out for me—but not as I had planned.

it was a mistake to have forfeited my admission to medical school.

On my mission I learned to cast my burden on the Lord, so I let Him direct my life according to His will. As soon as I did, things started working out for me—but not as I had planned.

One fast Sunday I decided to fast and intently pray for the Lord's help. That evening a knock came at the door. When I opened the door, I was astonished to see an acquaintance I had met during security training I had attended six months before. He told me that an opportunity for a security operative had opened in a company his elder brother worked for and that the company urgently needed to fill the position. I was the only person who came to his mind.

The next day the company hired me. That singular experience confirmed to me that Heavenly Father had not abandoned me and that I needed to trust in Him. The job proved to be a springboard to other jobs.

Divine blessings are not measured by temporal achievements alone. I struggled for years after my mission to find temporal stability, but the Lord blessed me spiritually. My patriarchal blessing directed me to get married and told me that the opportunity of higher education would come. It did.

Though I never went to medical school, I have earned the equivalent of degrees in accounting and mathematics. The Lord eventually blessed me with sufficient material stability that I was able to marry.

If we serve an honorable mission, the Lord is bound to bless us as we seek opportunities for higher education afterward. Nothing in the life of a young man or young woman can surpass the experiences, learning, and blessings of full-time missionary service. ■

Please Save My Father

By Bernadette Garcia Sto. Domingo

It was my father who searched for the truth and found the missionaries. They taught us the gospel, and not long afterward, we—my parents and five brothers and sisters—were baptized. Our testimonies grew stronger. We learned so many things, especially about the Savior and about families.

In 1992, while serving as bishop of our ward in the Philippines, my father

had a heart attack. He was rushed to the hospital from his office. When news came that he was in intensive care, my family was in great shock. Fear gripped our hearts. My father's chances of survival were only marginal. My mother wept and asked all of us to pray.

I lost track of time after that—so many memories came flashing back. With tears on my face, I knelt to pray. My heart was so heavy, and my chest was ready to burst. I wanted to shout to ease the pain and remove the fear gripping me that day. Instead I simply prayed, "Please save my father." It was a sincere prayer, meant to be heard.

That night I was allowed into the intensive-care unit. My father had slipped into a coma, and my mother and my siblings and I had to brace ourselves for the worst. It was a painful experience for our family. The future looked bleak and uncertain. As I silently bade him goodbye, I remembered our first family home evening. We had watched a Church film, *Families Are Forever*.

Before I went to bed that night, my earthly father silently returned to his Heavenly Father.

My father's death, when I was 22, marked the beginning of hundreds of changes in my life. In his absence I learned that I had strengths I was unaware of. I've done more with my life than I otherwise might have because change and growth were thrust upon me.

When Heavenly Father didn't grant

my prayer, it never occurred to me that He hadn't heard me. I know He was listening. He knew exactly what I was going through. He knew exactly what our family needed at the time, and that was what He gave us—strength to overcome the challenges of life, strength to face reality. He taught us how to face our trials with faith.

More than 15 years have passed since that painful day. I am still learning, and I am still growing in the gospel. I now have my own family, and I am so happy that we are sealed in the temple.

I never take my eyes off the road my father marked for us.

Through the

Heavenly
Father
knew
*exactly what our
family needed.
He taught us how
to face our trials
with faith.*

Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, I know that someday our family will be together again. I still have a long journey to go, but I'm happy to think that I will see my father at the end of that journey. ■



Gift of Music Blesses Many

By Laurie Williams Sowby, Church Magazines

In many small congregations around the world, Latter-day Saints are singing hymns to simple accompaniments played on basic keyboards.

Although the music is simple, teaching members to play the piano rather than relying on recorded accompaniments brings blessings to the individual, his or her family, and his or her congregation as a whole.

The growing number of members blessed by learning to play the piano is the result of a partnership between the Church and one couple's desire to leave a legacy of music that would live on after them.

The Basic Music Course

In 1992, the Church created the Basic Music Course with the intent to teach

members basic piano skills and how to lead music. During the previous 15 years, Church membership had more than doubled from 3.7 to 8.1 million; however, the number of members with music skills who could accompany singing during worship services had not kept pace, particularly in areas where resources for music lessons were scarce.

The Basic Music Course includes the *Conducting Course* manual, the *Keyboard Course* manual, a *Hymns Made Easy* simplified hymnbook, a CD of examples, music flashcards, and a cardboard keyboard for practice at home.

While anyone can purchase the course through distribution centers, it is usually taught by senior missionary couples under priesthood

leader direction in locations as diverse as Brazil, Cambodia, Europe, Jordan, India, South Africa, the South Pacific, Ukraine, and more.

"Because the conducting course and keyboard course teach music skills using the hymns, members focus their learning on preparing to serve in the Church," said Diane Bastian of the Music and Cultural Arts Division. "These members are blessed by developing their own talents and being able to serve. In addition, their dedication and participation in Church meetings blesses and inspires others in their families and congregations."

The Harman Music Fund

In 1998, Jack and Wauna Harman, a philanthropic couple in the state of Washington, USA, set up the Jack and Wauna Harman Music Fund to work in harmony with the Church's Basic Music Course.

The fund pays for the

Music and Cultural Arts Division of the Church to purchase four-octave electronic keyboards and ship them with the Basic Music Course when requested.

The fact that the Church had already published the Basic Music Course and had missionaries in place around the world as potential teachers "helped seal the deal" for the Harmans as they were searching for the right place for their endowment fund, Sister Bastian said.

The availability of the electronic keyboards has made a difference for those participating in the Basic Music Course.

"Having the keyboard has made a world of difference in students' interest in learning and how quickly they progress," said Sister Bastian.

Sister Bastian now sends about 1,000 four-octave keyboards each year to areas where the Church is relatively new or music instruction is scarce or unaffordable. The keyboards are loaned to students during the course, but at the completion of the course, budding musicians without the resources to purchase their own keyboards can apply for help from the Harman Music Fund.

"The Harman Music Fund has blessed a lot of people," said Sister Bastian.



Sister LaVonne Riggs, a missionary in the Chile Santiago West Mission, teaches Magdalena Palma, right, and Zamara Herrera.

Blessing Church and Family

The goal of the program is for the students to learn basic skills well enough to provide keyboard accompaniment for hymns in their meetings. But the benefits extend far beyond keyboard ability. Learning to play increases self-confidence, invites the Spirit into homes and Church meetings, and blesses individuals and families.

Sister Susan Nye, a missionary serving in the Uganda Kampala Mission with her husband, teaches the keyboard course in three branches. She told of a young convert of 10 months, a keyboard student for less than a year, who was called upon at the last minute to accompany four young men in a talent show.

“Although he played only the melody,” she wrote, “it gave the group the confidence to sing.” Previously, the young man would not play in sacrament meetings because he felt he wasn’t accomplished enough. “After the talent show, he realized that even if only the melody is played on a keyboard, it helps promote reverence and invites the Spirit in sacrament meetings,” Sister Nye continued.

Sister Shona Kasper, living in Hyderabad, India, and serving in the India Bangalore Mission, reported there were no experienced pianists in one branch, but “through the music training program, one young man, Rama, has become very capable, playing the melody line of most hymns and even a few hymns with both hands.” She added that Rama is the only

member of the Church in his family, “and they are very proud of what he is doing.”

In another branch, a young mother named Siritha was allowed to take a keyboard home to practice because coming to the

meetinghouse every day was a hardship. Sister Kasper said Siritha made quick progress and surprised herself as she learned to put two hands together and play a hymn in a very short time.

“Siritha tells of how music

has brightened the spirit of their home,” wrote Sister Kasper. “These people are so thrilled with what they are doing and learning. This would never have happened without the wonderful keyboard program.” ■

“Every Member a Missionary” for 50 Years

By Marianne Holman, Church Magazines

Fifty years ago this month, in the spring of 1959, President David O. McKay (1873–1970) addressed members gathered in the Salt Lake Tabernacle for the 129th Annual General Conference of the Church. As President McKay closed the meeting, he shared his testimony of the restored gospel and left the members a charge that remains in effect today.

President McKay related how in 1923, in response to negative public opinion in the British Mission, the Brethren sent instructions to the members stating: “Throw the responsibility upon every member of the Church that in the coming year of 1923 every member will be a missionary. Every member a missionary! . . . Somebody will hear the good message of the truth through you.”

“And that is the message today,” President McKay said, extending the challenge to that 1959 audience. “Every member—a million and a half—a missionary!”



Fifty years ago this month, President David O. McKay encouraged every member to be a missionary.

He then quoted Doctrine and Covenants 107:99:

“Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.”

“That is the responsibility of every man and woman and child who has listened to this great and wonderful conference,” President McKay said. “God help us to be true to our responsibility and to our callings.” (See Conference Report, Apr. 1959, 122.)

With the Church growing from 1.5 million member missionaries to more than 13 million, Church leaders have

continued to echo the call.

“For years we have remembered the words of President David O. McKay: ‘Every member a missionary,’” said President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, during the April 2008 general conference. “I am confident that the day is coming that through the faith of the members we will see increasing numbers of people invited to hear the word of God who will then come into the true and living Church” (“The True and Living Church,” *Liabona*, May 2008, 20). ■

Church Adds to Personal Progress Program

By Kimberly Bowen, Church Magazines

The Church released information on LDS.org in February with additional instructions on how to incorporate virtue as a value in the Young Women Personal Progress program. The First Presidency announced the addition of the new value in a letter dated November 28, 2008.

An eight-page insert for young women to add to their Personal Progress books contains a scripture, motto, value experiences and value project instructions, the color of the value, and more.

The scripture chosen to represent virtue is “Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies” (Proverbs 31:10). The chosen motto is “I will prepare to enter the temple and remain pure and worthy. My thoughts and actions will be based on high moral standards.” The color that represents virtue is gold.

Four value experiences are outlined that help young women to understand the meaning and importance of chastity and virtue and the blessings that come from being virtuous. They also help young women, their mothers, and their leaders understand how the quality of virtue enables a young woman to enjoy the constant companionship and guidance of the Holy Ghost and prepares her to worthily enter the temple to make and keep sacred covenants.

The value experiences

encourage young women to study the selected doctrines in the scriptures and then write in a journal about the things they learn and the commitments they will make to live a virtuous life. The importance of repentance and the sacrament are also emphasized as a means to be virtuous and pure. The Young Women general presidency said, “These experiences are an important foundation for a young woman’s understanding of the meaning of virtue and its application in her life.”¹

After the young women complete the four virtue value experiences, they complete a virtue value project. The project is to read the entire Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ and apply its teachings to their lives and circumstances. The project includes the young women recording their thoughts regularly in a journal. Upon completing the reading, the young women write their testimonies on the pages provided in the insert.

“We desire that all young women will make the reading of the Book of Mormon a daily habit,” says a statement by the Young Women general presidency on the Web site. “Her testimony of our Savior, Jesus Christ, will be strengthened as she reads. Developing this testimony is vital to a young woman’s ability to face the challenges of life and to prepare for her future.”

The insert is currently available only in English, but

translation has begun in additional languages and other inserts will be released as soon as their translations are completed. It will be incorporated into the *Personal Progress* booklet in a new edition soon.

In a letter dated March 6, 2009, the Young Women general presidency invited young women who have not completed Personal Progress to add the experiences and project for virtue to the other requirements for earning the Young Womanhood Recognition award and certificate.

On the Young Women Web site, the Young Women general presidency states that through 2009, a young woman may choose to earn her recognition under the old requirements or with the new virtue experiences and project. It is hoped that all will want to complete the new requirements, but leaders are encouraged to make the program work for each young woman.

In the letter, young women who have already earned their Young Womanhood Recognition are invited to complete the requirements for virtue if they choose. Leaders and mothers are also invited to participate.

Download the insert as a printable pdf document by visiting YoungWomen.lds.org and selecting the feature **Personal Progress Content for Young Women Value of Virtue**. Implementation



The Church has released information on changes to the Personal Progress program in order to incorporate the value of virtue.

instructions, frequently asked questions, a revised Personal Progress record sheet, and an achievement certificate are also available at the site. ■

NOTE

1. Go to youngwomen.lds.org, select **implementation instructions** under “Personal Progress Content for Young Women Value of Virtue” and see “Frequently Asked Questions.”

DISASTER RELIEF

Deadly Fires Prompt Aid in Australia

Roaring wildfires, fed by fierce winds and lingering drought, spread across southern Australia in January and February, killing at least 200 people, destroying more than 800 homes, and consuming thousands of acres of vegetation. Three member families are among those whose homes were destroyed.

The wildfires are being called the worst natural disaster in Australia’s history; however, police believe some of the wildfires may have been intentionally started.

The fires razed entire rural towns. In Victoria, several communities were still at risk

at the end of February, with 30 fires still burning. As disaster crews made their way deeper into disaster zones, they anticipated the death toll would rise.

Australia had fire safety plans in force. However, scorching temperatures,

drought, tinder-dry bush, and fast-moving winds that constantly changed directions increased the ferocity of the wildfires and seemed to catch many residents by surprise.

All members and missionaries were accounted for. One member, whose home was

destroyed, was hospitalized because of heart complications. The fires did not damage any Church buildings.

The Church made a monetary donation to the Australian Red Cross disaster fund, and many members volunteered to help in

emergency shelters and in the cleanup process.

Australia experiences wildfires every year. The previous most deadly bushfire in Australia was in February 1983 on what is now called Ash Wednesday, when 75 people died. ■

Church Responds to Costly Ice Storm

A deadly ice storm killed at least 42 people across the United States, 30 of those in the state of Kentucky, as it swept from the southern plains to the East Coast. Many members' homes were affected, but no members or missionaries in the storm's path were killed.

Kentucky declared 101 counties and 75 cities to be

in states of emergency. In Kentucky alone, the expected cleanup costs exceeded U.S. \$45 million.

The ice storm, which started on January 27, 2009, cut off power to 1.3 million people and forced more than 6,500 people from their homes. Two weeks later, 35,000 customers across Kentucky continued to

experience power outages.

Local priesthood leaders worked with community and state officials to assess the needs of the people in the areas and to administer Church assistance. Bishops' storehouses in Carrollton, Texas; Indianapolis, Indiana; Slidell, Louisiana; and Tucker, Georgia, sent several truckloads of relief supplies to the people in need.

The Church provided blankets, hygiene kits, cots,

water, food, and other supplies to several Red Cross shelters in Kentucky. Members and others who had critical and special needs received generators. The Church also sent chain saws and other supplies to support the volunteer cleanup efforts.

More than 1,350 Church members worked the weekend after the storm to clean up the damage. Their efforts totaled more than 16,000 hours of service. ■

WORLD BRIEFS



Oquirrh Mountain Temple Prepares to Open

The Oquirrh Mountain Utah Temple is scheduled to open its doors to the public on June 1, 2009. The free open house requires reservations and will run through August 1, 2009. Twelve dedicatory sessions are planned from August 14 to 16, 2009; local priesthood leaders will distribute tickets for the dedication. The temple will open for ordinances on August 17,

2009. The temple is the 130th operating temple in the world and the 13th in Utah.

Conference to Be Available on CD, DVD in Spanish

General conference is being made available in Spanish on CD and DVD. Both formats will contain the full proceedings and will be available within eight weeks after conference. Subscriptions to these products will be available in some areas. Contact local distribution centers for more information.

Audio of conference is available in more than 70 languages at General Conference.LDS.org, along with text in 30 languages and video streams in American

Sign Language, English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Church Shares Gospel on YouTube Channels

The Church has established official Church channels on YouTube to share the gospel message. The YouTube channels Mormon Messages, MormonNewEra Messages, and LDS Public Affairs feature short videos that teach gospel principles or report on newsworthy Church events.

Videos on Mormon Messages include excerpts from messages from Elder L. Tom Perry, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, and Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. MormonNewEra

Messages includes messages based on *New Era* MormonAds, such as "Wish You Were Here."

Three New Triples Now Online

LDS.org now includes the triple combination of the scriptures in Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish. The Church has published the triple combination in 38 languages. Twelve of those translations are now online: Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish. To access the scriptures online, go to scriptures.lds.org and select your language from the upper right corner. ■

New Era Publishes Issue on Education and Careers

The April 2009 *New Era* is devoted to the topic of education and careers. In this issue teens can find counsel, guidance, and encouragement for their current and future studies, both spiritual and secular. This issue contains such features as:

- A message from President Henry B. Eyring on what true education means (“Real-Life Education”).
- A discussion with

Elder Paul V. Johnson, Commissioner of Church Education, on the seminary and institute programs (“A Higher Education”).

- An article by Mary N. Cook of the Young Women general presidency on how education helps us serve in the Church (“More Fit for the Kingdom”).

- Articles offering practical advice on school, careers, and becoming independent (“High School Chemistry,”

“10 Steps to Finding a Great Job,” and “Practically Out the Door”).

Parents, teachers, and leaders can use this issue as a resource for lessons and discussions. Additional copies of the April 2009 *New Era* (item no. 04244) may be ordered from Distribution Services.

For more information, including an online video series on education, go to newera.lds.org. ■



The April 2009 issue of the New Era is dedicated to helping youth explore the importance of education.

Comments

Bittersweet Miracle

Thanks for the article in the February 2009 *Ensign* about adoption (“The Gift of Adoption,” 36). My life changed forever on April 19, 2007, when my son was born and his sweet birth mother placed him in my arms. Adoption is a bitter-sweet miracle for everyone involved in the process. Thank you for sharing the stories of these courageous birth families who were strengthened by the Lord’s love during a difficult time.

Alison Carlson
Utah, USA

Adopting Joy

This morning I read and cried over the adoption stories in the February 2009

Ensign (“The Gift of Adoption,” 36). One thing that attracted my husband and me to each other was that he wanted 14 children and I wanted 12. What a shock to us when, after five years of marriage, we were still childless. We went to LDS Social Services, completed all the paperwork, and waited. After six months, our social worker



called to tell us we had a baby girl waiting for us. I still cry just thinking about it. Her middle name is Joy, for all the joy she brought into our lives.

We never met the birth mother or father and we know very little about them

because of closed records. We never got to thank them for blessing our lives with Joy. Thank you.

Dale and Mary-Jo Christensen
Missouri, USA

An Answer to Prayer

Thank you so much for the January 2009 article “Bipolar Disorder: My Lessons in Love, Hope, and Peace” (p. 62).

When I came to that article I cried as I witnessed a tender mercy from the Lord. I was officially diagnosed as having the disorder a little over a year ago and have been struggling to become well.

That day I had pleaded in my morning prayer that Heavenly Father would help me know what I need to do to help me on my journey to health. Just a couple of hours later my prayer was answered

through this article.

It wasn’t a solution to all of my problems but it testified to me that the Lord loves me, that He knows my struggles and pain, and that He wants to help me and wants me to have true and everlasting happiness.

Name Withheld

Corrections

In “Doctrine and Covenants Revealed,” in the January 2009 *Ensign*, the caption on the top of page 45 under the heading “Missouri,” should have read: “given in Jackson County, Caldwell County, Daviess County, and Clay County, Missouri.”

In News of the Church in the January 2009 issue, page 74, the credit for the photograph in the article “Mormon Helping Hands Completes First Decade of Service” should have read “Photograph by Norman Burningham.” ■



Mary and the Resurrected Lord, by Harry Anderson

“Jesus saith unto [Mary], Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

“Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master” (John 20:15–16).



*Appearing to His Apostles following His Resurrection,
the Savior asked:*

*“Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts
arise in your hearts?”*

*“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself:
handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones,
as ye see me have. . . .”*

*“And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish,
and of an honeycomb” (Luke 24:38–39, 42).*

See “He Is Risen,” page 40.