

THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • AUGUST 2010

# Ensign



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Lehi's Dream, p. 20**

**Fancy Footwork and Other  
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**A Call for Unity for All Ages,  
pp. 16, 44, 48, 52**



COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM

*For Such a Time as This*, by Elspeth Young

*Esther was raised by her cousin Mordecai. When the king sought to find a queen, maidens were gathered together. Esther was brought to the king's palace, and he eventually chose her to be his queen.*

*But Mordecai, a Jew, became an enemy of Haman, a prince. So Haman plotted to kill all the Jews in the kingdom. The Jews mourned and fasted because of this decree. Mordecai sent a message to Esther saying, "If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then . . . thou and*

*thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).*

*Esther replied: "Gather together all the Jews . . . and fast ye for me . . . ; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16). She revealed the plot to the king and also that she was a Jew. As a result of Esther's courage, the Jews were allowed to defend themselves.*

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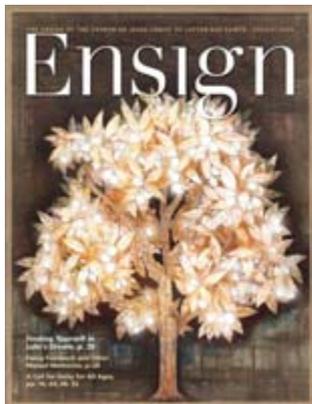
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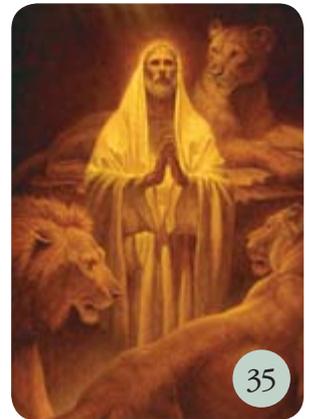
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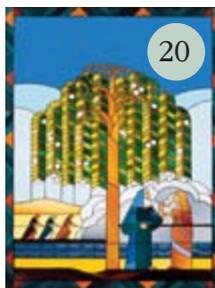
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**ENSIGN ONLINE**

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**PREPARING A TALK**

On page 42, author Marcus Sheridan shares ideas for delivering an inspiring and effective talk. Did you know that **LDS.org** includes pages to help you research your topic for your talk or lesson? The right navigation bar on the home pages features links labeled "Prepare a Lesson" and "Prepare a Talk," which will connect you with scriptures, manuals, Church magazines, and other useful resources.



**BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES**

Next month will mark 15 years since the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles issued "The Family: A Proclamation to the World." This month's issue features several articles about strengthening families. (See, for example, pages 12, 16, and 30.) In what ways have the principles taught in this inspired document strengthened your family? How can you use the proclamation in your next family home evening? To find a copy, go to **LDS.org** and select "Strong Families" from the left navigation bar.



**REACHING OUT TO THOSE WITH DISABILITIES**

**Disabilities.lds.org** is an online resource created to help members of the Church more fully understand the challenges of people who have mental or physical disabilities. Learn about various disabilities and find information for those with disabilities and their Church leaders, teachers, and families.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA SMITH

**DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?**

In the April 2010 general conference, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, "Imagine . . . a family home evening in which children are invited and expected to come prepared to ask questions about what they are reading and learning in the Book of Mormon—or about an issue that recently was emphasized in a gospel discussion or spontaneous testimony in the home." How has your family implemented these ideas in your family home evenings? Please tell us about your successes or challenges, labeled "FHE," and submit by September 17, 2010.

We also welcome submissions on other topics showing the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. On each submission, please include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and the name of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

Please submit articles through **ensign.lds.org**, or send them to Ensign Editorial, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT, 84150-0024, USA. We regret that we cannot acknowledge receipt of or return manuscripts. Authors whose work is selected for publication will be notified.

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By President  
Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Second Counselor in  
the First Presidency



# Temple Blessings

I can still remember when my parents took our family to the newly erected Swiss Temple, the first in Europe, to become a forever family. I was 16 then and the youngest of four children. We knelt together at the altar to be sealed on earth by the power of the priesthood, with a wonderful promise that we could be sealed for eternity. I will never forget this magnificent moment.

As a boy I was quite impressed that we crossed country borders to be sealed as a family. To me it symbolizes the way temple work crosses worldly boundaries to bring eternal blessings to all the inhabitants of the earth. The temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are truly built for the benefit of all

the world, irrespective of nationality, culture, or political orientation.

Temples are an unyielding witness that goodness will prevail. President George Q. Cannon (1827–1901), First Counselor in the First Presidency, once said, “Every foundation stone that is laid for a Temple, and every Temple completed . . . lessens the power of Satan on the earth, and increases the power of God and Godliness.”<sup>1</sup>

While each temple increases the influence of righteousness in the earth, the greatest blessings, of course, come to those who actually attend the temple. There we receive further light and knowledge and make solemn covenants that, if followed, help us walk in the path of discipleship. In short, the temple teaches us about the sacred

purpose of life and helps us get our true physical and spiritual bearings.

We do not attend the temple for ourselves only, however. Each time we enter these sacred edifices, we play a role in the hallowed, redemptive work of salvation made available to all of God’s children as a result of the Atonement of the Only Begotten of the Father. This is a selfless and holy service and one that allows us as mortals to participate in the glorious work of becoming saviors on Mount Zion.

For those who cannot attend the temple now for whatever reason, I encourage you to do everything in your power to hold a current temple recommend. The temple recommend is a symbol of our faithfulness and determination to serve the Lord. It is



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHS OF BERN SWITZERLAND TEMPLE BY CHRIS MILLS, HONG KONG CHINA TEMPLE BY CRAIG DIMOND, COPENHAGEN DENMARK TEMPLE BY CRAIG DIMOND, AND ACCRA GHANA TEMPLE BY MATTHEW REIER; RIGHT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY J. SCOTT KNUDSEN, A COMPOSITE OF PHOTOGRAPHS BY CRAIG DIMOND AND CHARLES W. CARTER



a symbol of our love for the Lord, for as Jesus taught, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him” (John 14:21).

As the landscape of the world continues to become beautified with these sacred buildings consecrated to the Lord, it is my prayer that we will do our part in bringing heaven closer to earth by being worthy to hold a temple recommend and using it. As we do so, righteousness will surely increase not only in our lives and homes but in our communities and throughout the world. ■

**NOTE**

1. George Q. Cannon, in “The Logan Temple,” *Millennial Star*, Nov. 12, 1877, 743.

**TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE**

Most people learn better and remember longer when you present ideas using visual aids rather than merely speaking (see *Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 182). During the lesson, consider displaying a picture of a temple. After reading the article, discuss why the temple is important to President Uchtdorf. Invite young children in the family to draw a picture of their family at the temple.

*Teaching, No Greater Call* states, “Encourage those you teach to set one or more goals that can help them live the principle you have taught” (159). Consider reading President Uchtdorf’s message with the family and inviting family members to write down a personal goal that will help them remain worthy to hold and use a temple recommend.

# YOUTH

## A View from Higher Ground

By Mindy Raye Holmes

As a youth I had many opportunities to perform baptisms for the dead in the San Diego California Temple. Though I always had a good experience, one trip in particular stands out in my mind.

I was 16, and my little sister had just turned 12 and was making her first trip to do baptisms for the dead. Since it was her first time, we decided to walk around the outside of the temple after we finished.

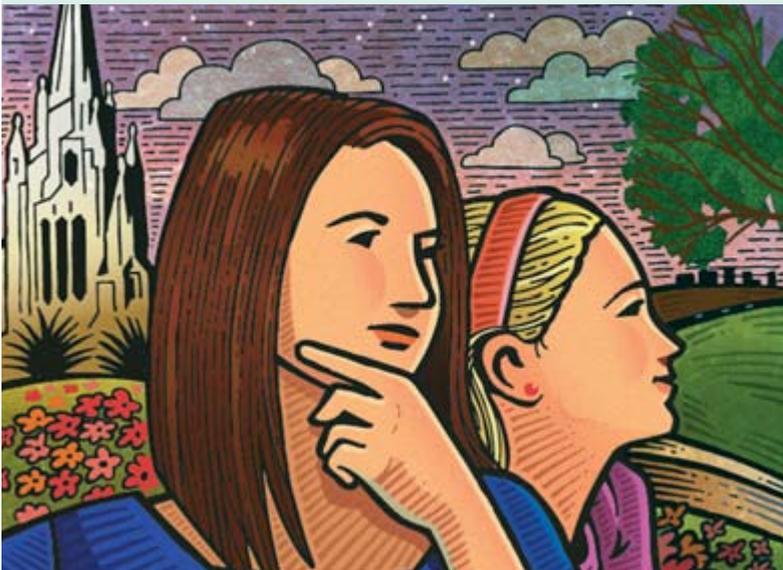
The temple grounds have a couple of lookout points on one side, so we walked over there. Because the San Diego Temple is situated next to a busy highway, when you stand at a lookout point, you actually look down at the freeway.

Standing on the temple's higher ground that day gave me a new perspective on life. I was looking down at the world with its whizzing cars, crowded shopping centers, and graffiti-covered road signs.

It was then that the thought came to my mind: "You don't want to be a part of that; it's not what life is about." I had always been taught that the purpose of life is to return to live with our Heavenly Father and become like Him. I knew I didn't need the things of the world to accomplish that purpose.

I turned around and looked at the beautiful temple, and I was grateful for the knowledge of the gospel and the perspective it gave me. I knew that in the midst of the chaotic and treacherous world, I had found higher ground to stand on.

That day at the temple I promised my Heavenly Father that I would always stand on His side and not the world's. No matter what the world throws at us, we can overcome it by keeping the covenants we have made and by standing in holy places (see D&C 87:8).



# CHILDREN

## Making the World More Beautiful

President Uchtdorf said that when a temple is built, it increases God's power on the earth and makes the world a more beautiful place. Color the picture below. The foundation stones under the temple describe some of the beautiful blessings the temple gives people. As you live worthy to go to the temple someday, each of these blessings can be yours!



- A place of love and beauty
- Baptism for people who weren't baptized while they were alive
- A marriage that can last forever
- Children sealed to parents forever
- A place to learn about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ
- A worthy, obedient life



Faith • Family • Relief

## Our Responsibility to Be Worthy of Temple Worship

*Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.*

“The covenants we make with the associated ordinances we receive in the temple become our credentials for admission into God’s presence. These covenants elevate us beyond the limits of our own power and perspective. We make covenants to show our devotion to build up the kingdom. We become covenant people as we are placed under covenant to God. All the promised blessings are ours through our faithfulness to these covenants. . . .

“What can the women of the Church do to claim the blessings of the temple?

“Through His prophets, the Lord invites those who have not yet received the blessings of the temple to do whatever may be necessary to qualify to receive them. He invites those who have already received these blessings to return as often as possible to enjoy again the experience, to increase their vision and understanding of His eternal plan.

“Let us be worthy to have a current temple recommend. Let us go to the temple to seal our families eternally. Let us return to the temple as often as our circumstances will permit. Let us give our kindred dead the opportunity to receive the ordinances of exaltation. Let us enjoy the spiritual strength and the revelation we receive as we attend the temple regularly. Let us be faithful and make and keep temple covenants to receive the full blessings of the Atonement.”<sup>1</sup>

**Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.**

### From the Scriptures

Isaiah 2:2–3; D&C 109:22–23; 110:8–10

### What Can I Do?

1. What support can I offer to help my sisters prepare for and attend the temple?
2. How can I exemplify the heritage of the early sisters who sacrificed to receive temple blessings?
3. How can I claim the blessings of the temple?

For more information, go to [www.relief.society.lds.org](http://www.relief.society.lds.org).

### From Our History

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught that Relief Society grew out of sisters’ desire to worship in temples:

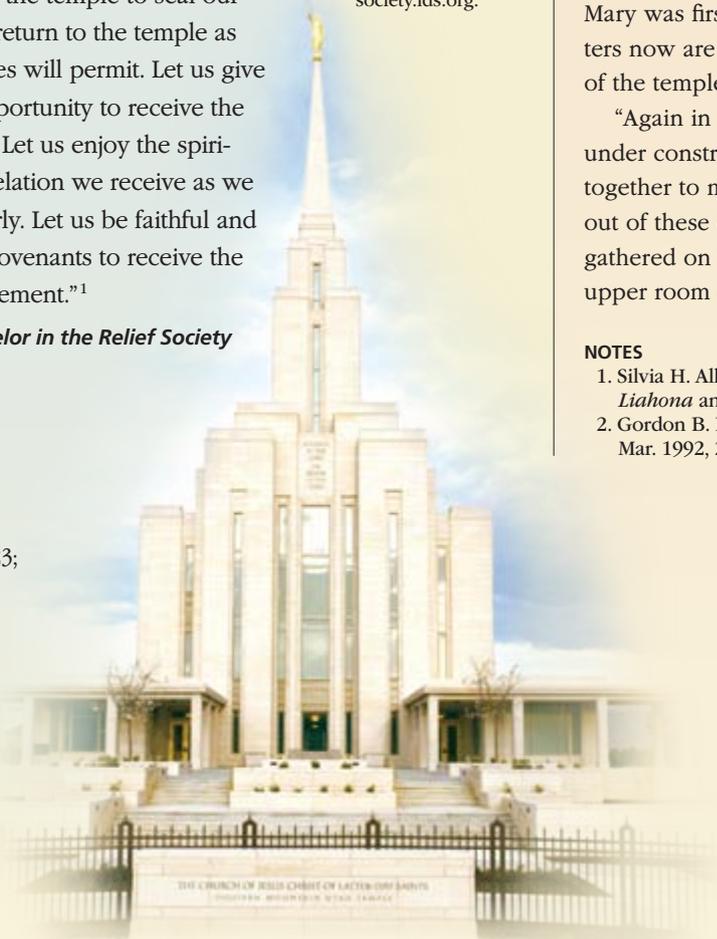
“During the construction of the Kirtland Temple the women were called upon to grind their china into small particles to be mixed with the plaster used on the walls of the temple, which would catch the light of the sun and the moon and reflect that light to beautify the appearance of the building.

“In those times, when there was very little of money but an abundance of faith, the workmen gave of their strength and resources to the construction of the Lord’s house. The women supplied them with food, the best they could prepare. Edward W. Tullidge reported that while the women were sewing the temple veils, Joseph Smith, observing them, said, ‘Well, sisters, you are always on hand. The sisters are always first and foremost in all good works. Mary was first at the resurrection; and the sisters now are the first to work on the inside of the temple.’ . . .

“Again in Nauvoo, when the temple was under construction, a few women joined together to make shirts for the workmen. It was out of these circumstances that twenty of them gathered on Thursday, 17 March 1842, in the upper room of the Prophet’s store.”<sup>2</sup> ■

### NOTES

1. Silvia H. Allred, “Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 113, 114.
2. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Ambitious to Do Good,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1992, 2.



# BEING WORTHY TO ENTER THE TEMPLE

**T**emples are literally houses of the Lord. In the temple we make sacred covenants, or promises, with God that are necessary for us to be with Him in the highest degree of heavenly glory (see D&C 131:1–4). These temple covenants lead to the great blessings available through Jesus Christ.

We are not expected to be perfect to enter the temple. Rather, the purpose of the things we learn and the covenants we make in the temple is to help perfect us. We must, however, be worthy to enter.

A temple recommend signifies that we have been found worthy through an interview with a member of our bishopric or our branch president and also an interview with a member of our stake presidency or mission presidency. Temple recommend interviews are opportunities

for us to examine our worthiness. In each of the interviews, our priesthood leaders will ask us about our personal conduct and faith. Our priesthood leaders keep these interviews private and confidential.

If our priesthood leaders find that we are worthy to enter the temple, we will receive a temple recommend. We sign our recommend to confirm our worthiness to enter the temple. Our priesthood leaders also sign our recommend as additional witnesses of our worthiness. This recommend allows us to enter the temple for the next two years, provided we remain worthy. ■

See *Gospel Principles* (2009), 222–23; and *True to the Faith* (2004), “Temples,” 170–72.

The First Presidency has established the questions asked in the temple recommend interview. The questions are the same for everyone.



The Lord has set the standards of worthiness to enter the temple, as expressed by the Psalmist:

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?”

“He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart”

(Psalm 24:3–4).



The following are some of the topics your priesthood leaders will ask you about:

1. Your testimony of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost.



2. Whether you sustain the President of the Church.



3. Whether you live the law of chastity, pay tithing, are honest with others, and keep the Word of Wisdom.



4. Whether you strive to attend church, keep the covenants you have made, and keep your life in harmony with the commandments of the gospel.

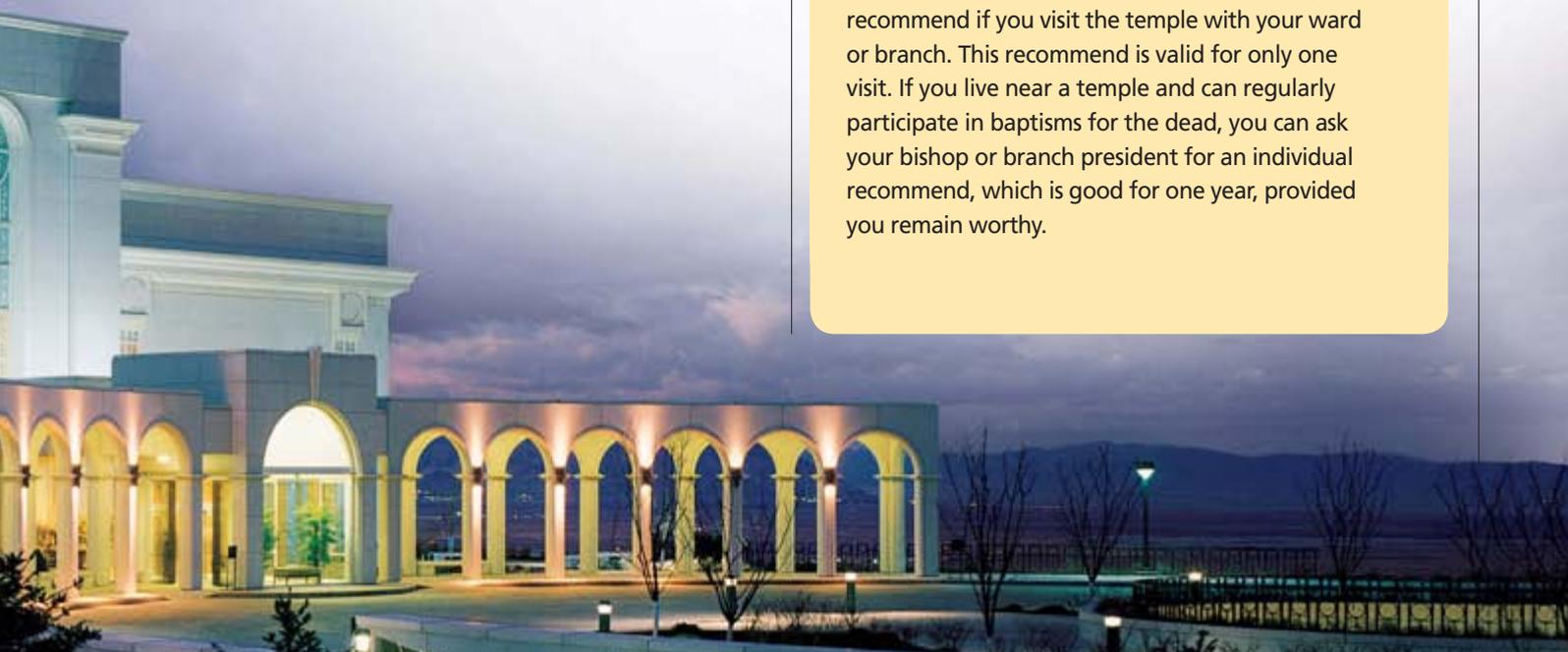


After you turn 12, you can attend the temple to do baptisms for the dead. (Young men need to hold the priesthood.) To get a recommend, schedule an interview with your bishop or branch president.

## YOUTH

### Your Temple Recommend

Recommends for youth are called limited-use recommends, and there are two kinds: group and individual. Your name can be added to a group recommend if you visit the temple with your ward or branch. This recommend is valid for only one visit. If you live near a temple and can regularly participate in baptisms for the dead, you can ask your bishop or branch president for an individual recommend, which is good for one year, provided you remain worthy.



# He Knows My Name

By Sherry Krull

In 2007 the University of Washington invited me to a banquet honoring its female athletes. I had played tennis at the university 44 years earlier, and my tennis partner and I had won the Northwest championship in doubles. At the banquet I would be recognized for my achievement.

On our way to the dinner, my husband and I picked up Lynda, a friend from our days as students. She was also the one who introduced me to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when I was 33. Together we enjoyed seeing our former campus and old friends.

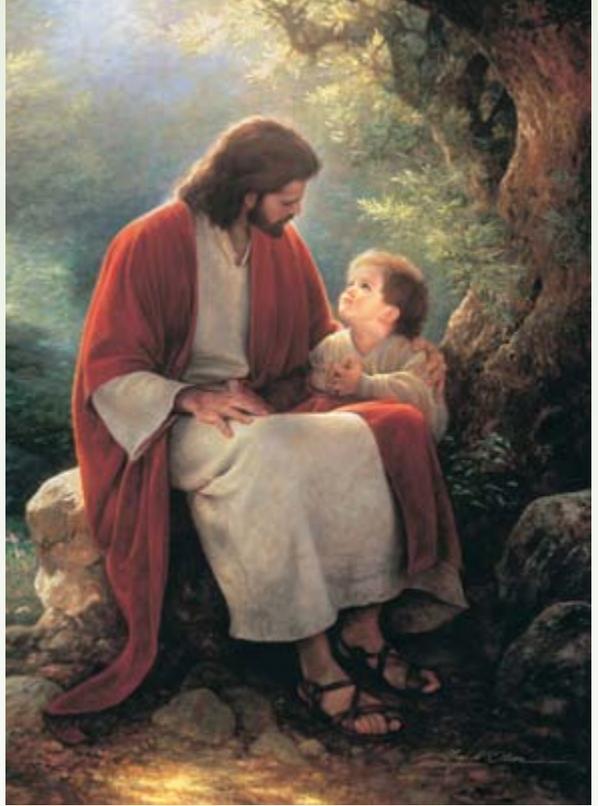
However, when I went to pick up a packet and name tag prior to the banquet, I was disappointed to discover that printed on them was the name “Sharon Krull,” not Sherry Krull. “Oh, well,” I thought, and I crossed out *Sharon* and wrote *Sherry* instead. But the mistake

continued through the night. Later in the evening, when the host introduced me as an award recipient, he called me “Sharon.” The plaque he handed me also included the error.

It wasn’t a huge problem; I was grateful to have been invited to the banquet, and the people in charge of the event promised to replace the plaque with one bearing the correct name.

The next day was Easter Sunday. My husband and I had spent Good Friday at the temple and had spent much time during the week pondering the Savior’s last days on earth. But the most powerful part of Easter that year came during sacrament meeting, when our bishop made this statement: “How grateful I am that the Lord knows my name.”

I felt a great joy come over me. As much as I had enjoyed the previous evening, the happiness I felt at this truth far outweighed anything I felt from



*I am grateful that the Lord knows my name, but more important, I am glad I came to know His.*

receiving “the honors of men.”

I too am grateful that the Lord knows *my* name, but more important, I am glad that at age 33, I came to know *His*. I am eternally grateful that when two missionaries asked Lynda if she knew of anyone they might visit, she wasn’t afraid of offending me by giving them my name.

I came to know the reality of the Savior by reading the Book of Mormon, which testifies of Him. And as I came to know the Savior and joined His Church, I became a new person in Him.

My life changed then, at my baptism and confirmation, and it changed again that powerful Easter morning when I received the witness that Heavenly Father and the Savior really do know our names. I cannot fully express the joy that it is to know Heavenly Father and the Savior—and to know that They know me. ■

# COME HOME

Words by Penelope Moody Allen  
Music by Michael F. Moody

*With conviction* ♩ = 69-80

1. Come home, the Fa-ther calls. Come home, my child, to me. Come  
2. Come home, the Sa-rior calls. Come home all who'll o - bey. Come  
3. Come home, loved voi-ces call. Come home where you be - long. Come

home. The Ho - ly Ghost will lead you to e - ter - ni - ty.  
home. The gos-pel guides a - long the straight and nar - row way. Lest we for-  
home to live in joy for - ev - er in our fam' - ly throng.

get our home's with God, This love - ly earth, its seas, its sky And all things

beau - ti - ful and true of Heav'n-ly Fa-ther tes - ti - fy.

PHOTOGRAPH © PHOTOSPIN

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By Cheryl C. Lant

Served from April 2005 to April 2010 as Primary general president

# TEACHING OUR CHILDREN FROM THE SCRIPTURES

*Children have an amazing capacity to understand the principles of the gospel.*



## COLOR CODING SCRIPTURE STORIES

When I was a ward Primary president, I felt concerned that the children didn't know which book of scripture the stories I retold came from. For instance, they could often recognize a picture depicting Noah, but they didn't know his story is found in the Old Testament. So I started to adhere the pictures to colored poster board. I used yellow for Book of Mormon stories and different colors for the other books. From then on, the children could easily identify the story and the book of scripture.

*Linda Jardine, Utah, USA*

Recently I met with a group of people from another faith who were very impressed with the willingness of Church members to share our time and talents helping others. They wanted to know how we teach our children to become like this.

I explained that the family is central to our Heavenly Father's plan and that parents have the primary responsibility for teaching and training their children. Leaders and teachers simply support the efforts of the parents.

The goal in all our teaching, I told them, is to do what the Prophet Joseph Smith said he did when asked how he led the Church: "I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves."<sup>1</sup>

"And what are those principles?" the group asked. "Where do you find them?"

"In the words of Christ," I responded.

## Feasting on the Words of Christ

Nephi encourages us to "feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do" (2 Nephi 32:3).

The word of God is found in the scriptures. If we would empower our children spiritually, we will teach them from the scriptures and help them learn to feast from those sacred pages themselves.

Children have an amazing capacity to understand the principles of the gospel. Those who read the scriptures in their early years usually make an internal commitment to follow the principles taught in them. This is why children need to have their own set of scriptures. They need to learn directly from the scriptures what their Father in Heaven wants them to know and do.



## Teaching Children from the Scriptures

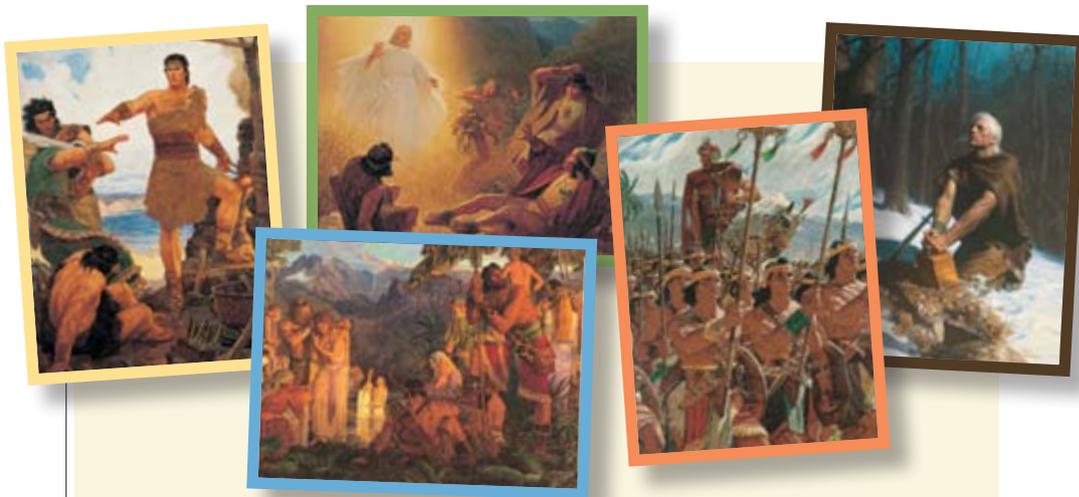
There are a number of good ways to teach children from the scriptures. I've found this pattern to be particularly effective after reading a scripture:

1. Clearly identify the doctrine.
2. Help the children understand the doctrine.
3. Help them apply the doctrine to their lives.
4. Encourage them to pray for a witness of the Spirit that what they are learning is true.

Let's use Moroni 10:4 as an example. Let's say a mother is giving a family home evening lesson. She begins by asking the family members to open



PHOTOGRAPH OF SISTER LANT ©BUSATH.COM; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN LUKE; FROM LEFT: LEHI AND HIS PEOPLE ARRIVE IN THE PROMISED LAND, BY ARNOLD PRIBERG. © 1951. IRI; NOAH AND THE ARK WITH ANIMALS, BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE. COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM; JOSEPH SMITH SEEKS WISDOM FROM THE BIBLE, BY DALE KIBOURN. © 1975. IRI; THE GOOD SAMARITAN, BY WALTER RANE. COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM; AND MY SOUL HUNGERED—ENOS, BY A.L. YOUNG; ELIJAH APPEARING IN THE KIRTLAND TEMPLE, BY DANIEL LEWIS



## SCRIPTURE WALL

ABCs and 1-2-3s. My children have loved to learn since they were very little. Because of this, I've always tried to facilitate their education at home. I have hung posters and sight words, read books galore, and looked for every opportunity to teach. Then one day I realized I wasn't giving the same attention to their gospel instruction.

Since the walls of my home were already put to good use for education, I simply decided to use them more. One wall in the children's play area seemed the perfect spot to display gospel art—their own drawings or Church-approved visuals. I mounted the pictures on colored construction paper before putting them on the wall. Underneath each one, I included a simple, age-appropriate synopsis of the story. Our "scripture wall," as my children call it, quickly became a favorite spot in the house. I chose 14 key stories from the Book of Mormon and displayed them chronologically. This has made it easier for my children to grasp key events and concepts as they ask questions, and we discuss what is taking place in the pictures. I knew our scripture wall had made an impact when I overheard my son accurately explaining one of the pictures to a playmate.

As parents, we spend much time helping our children learn what they need to know to be successful in school. More important, we should remember to help our children learn and grow in the gospel.

Kathleen Parrish Smith, Utah, USA

*To implement this idea, you could remove pictures from Church magazines or print them from [www.gospelart.lds.org](http://www.gospelart.lds.org). You might also consider ordering the new Gospel Art Book (item no. 06048), which contains 137 pictures. The book and other gospel art are available at LDS distribution centers or online at [www.ldscatalog.com](http://www.ldscatalog.com). Residents of the United States and Canada can also call Distribution Services at 1-800-537-5971.*



their copies of the Book of Mormon and read the verse: "And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."

Next she takes the family through the four steps outlined above.

**Identify the Doctrine.** She asks:

"What is Heavenly Father asking us to do in this verse? And what is the blessing He promises us if we do what He asks?" The family discusses the questions and determines that Heavenly Father wants us to read the scriptures and then pray in faith, with a sincere intent to know the truth of what we have read. Heavenly Father promises to answer our prayer by giving us a witness of the truth through the Holy Ghost.

**Understand the Doctrine.** Next the mother shares the story of Joseph Smith, who upon reading in the Bible that he could "ask of God" (James 1:5), prayed about which church to join. He had faith that his prayer would be answered. As he prayed, the Father and the Son appeared to him. She reminds the family that, of

course, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ do not appear to everyone who prays, but Heavenly Father will answer sincere prayers in ways He considers best.

**Apply the Doctrine.** A child asks, “Does this mean Heavenly Father will answer my prayers?” The mother responds, “Yes. Moroni 10:4 indicates that through study and prayer we can know the truth of all things.” The family then decides how to put Moroni’s promise to the test.

**Ask for a Witness.** The mother bears her testimony and shares how she knows this scripture is true. She closes the lesson by assuring the family that as they do what Moroni says—studying a gospel principle with a desire to know if it is true—they will gain a sweet assurance of the truth through the witness of the Spirit.

### Children Taught of the Lord

As we teach our children to love the scriptures and learn from them, we will place in their hearts and hands a wonderful source of strength and guidance for the rest of their lives. We will find fulfilled the promise given in 3 Nephi 22:13: “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” ■

#### NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 284.

## DAILY SCRIPTURE THOUGHTS WITH PRESCHOOLERS

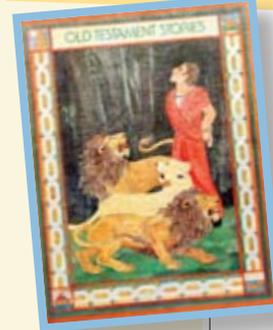
As a mother of young children, I began praying daily to know what my children needed to learn. The answer has frequently been that the most important things to teach are basic gospel truths and the ability to work. Every morning my husband and I share a spiritual thought and our testimonies with our young children. With about 30 minutes of preparation each Sunday, we’re able to gather a week’s worth of materials. Gospel art pictures, Primary songs, *Old Testament Stories*, and ideas from Church magazines are especially helpful.

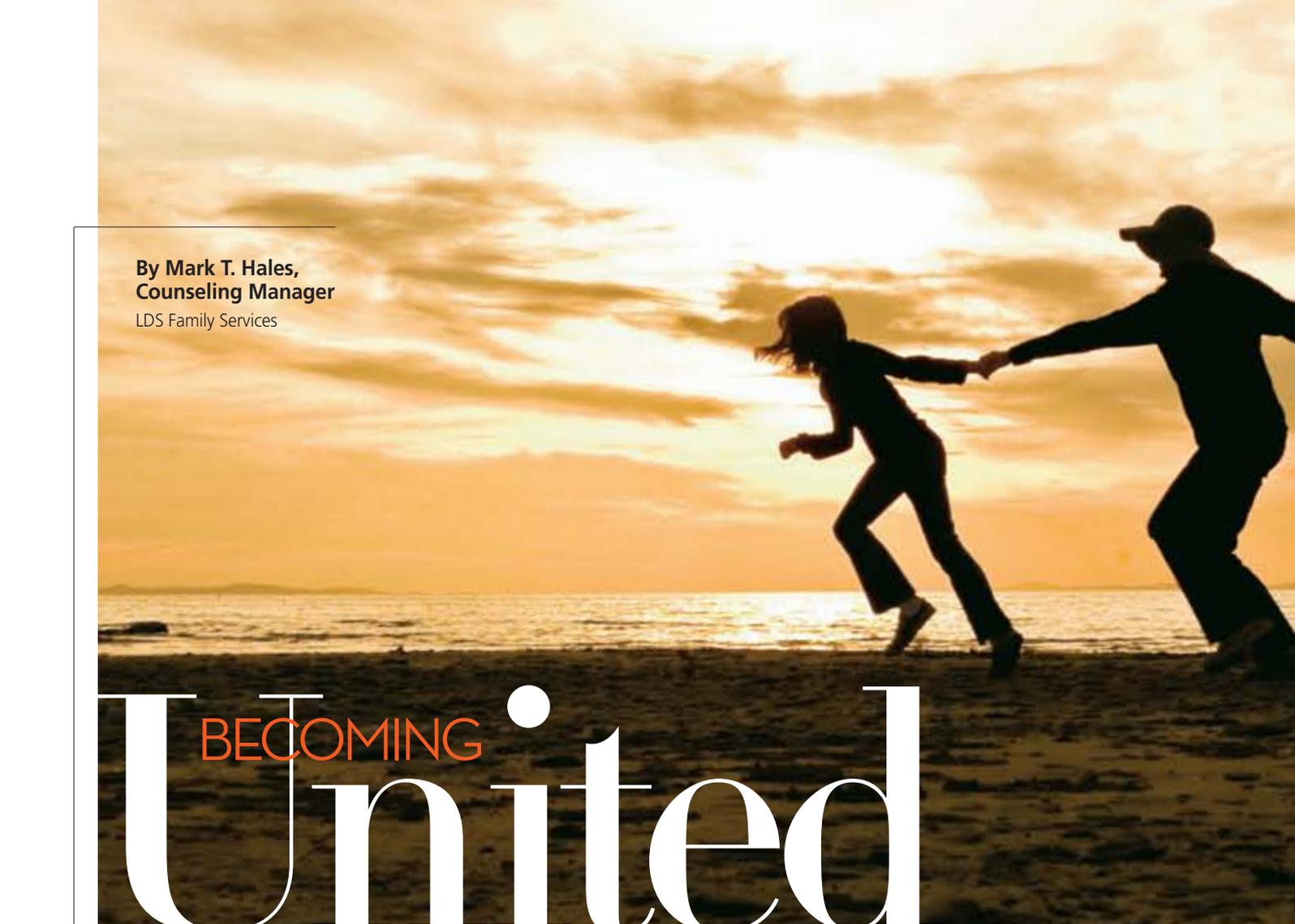
- **Gospel Art.** Since teaching with pictures is so effective, I’ve found it helpful to print copies of them from [gospelart.lds.org](http://gospelart.lds.org). That way we can hand an image to our youngsters, and they can look at it and touch it while we talk about what we see.
- **Primary Songs.** Sometimes we try to learn a new Primary song together, especially the action and wiggle songs.
- **Old Testament Stories.** We read just one page a day. Before reading, we usually have a visual aid or object lesson to reinforce stories we have already discussed. For instance, I added red food coloring to water one day and asked them if they remembered a time in the scriptures when the Lord turned water red.
- **Church Magazines.** Sometimes we share a message through a gospel-related activity. For instance, we once printed some copies of a picture that showed children giving treats to the elderly. Together, we discussed the importance of loving and serving “grandmas and grandpas.” Our then one-year-old scribbled a few marks on the picture while our preschooler looked for the hidden objects it contained.

Sharing a spiritual thought takes only a few moments, but the impact lasts much longer. Our preschooler would sometimes grab the magazine and surprise me with a recap of some of the stories and gospel principles we’d learned. As our children have grown older, we have continued our morning breakfast devotionals—even on busy mornings, when we often share a short message while they finish breakfast.

I am grateful for the many high-quality materials the Church provides to help us keep our children close to the Spirit. As we prepare each week, we welcome the personal revelation received to teach our children. And we draw closer to Heavenly Father as we seek the best ways to draw our children closer to Him.

*Alejandra Adams, Virginia, USA*





By Mark T. Hales,  
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# U BECOMING United

## AS PARENTS

**E**lder Richard G. Scott said, “In the Lord’s plan, it takes two—a man and a woman—to form a whole. . . .

“Marriage allows . . . different characteristics to come together in oneness—in unity—to bless a husband and wife, their children and grandchildren.”<sup>1</sup>

There is no higher calling or opportunity than to be a husband or wife, a father or mother. There is also no greater challenge. Mortals are by their nature imperfect, and family life is a laboratory for trial and error. The unique contributions that men and women bring to a marriage are enhanced when spouses serve each other and work to create unity.

However, the very traits that make individuals unique and that can make marriage fulfilling, such as differences in life experiences, personalities, skills, and talents, can also present challenges to establishing unity. As “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” teaches, “Happiness

in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”<sup>2</sup>

Working at creating unity between spouses can be even more challenging when children come along. Although children are a blessing and “an heritage of the Lord” (Psalm 127:3), raising children can create stresses strong enough to pull husbands and wives apart. Thus, by adding the roles of father and mother to those of husband and wife, individuals will find they need extra diligence in developing unity in the home.

No matter what differences spouses may have or what challenges they may face, when a husband and wife are unified under the basic principles of the gospel their



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*As we develop unity in our marriages, we strengthen relationships that protect our families and bring us joy.*

relationship as husband and wife, as well as their relationships with their children, will be improved.

### **United through Work**

I have a friend whose family lived on an acre of land when he was young. That acre was mostly occupied by a large garden, and each child was responsible for weeding, watering, and caring for the plants in an assigned section of the garden. My friend remembers how his father and mother brought the family together and worked side by side with their children as they cultivated the garden and gathered its crops. Now a grown man with his own family, my friend and his wife are continuing this tradition of working together. Although they don't have a garden, they do have an orderly method of working with their children to maintain their home. Each week family members are assigned different tasks, and they work together—with the

parents as the leaders—to set the house in order. My friend has often commented that he is grateful for the example of unity through work that his parents set. As he carries on this tradition in his own home, his family continues to be blessed with a sense of peace, love, and togetherness.

Balancing the responsibilities of a home is hard work—and not just because the work of building a home is physically demanding. Husbands and wives have different roles to play in the family. The Family Proclamation teaches, “Fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.”<sup>3</sup>

Most couples have to figure out how to implement those roles within their own family units. As the Family



Proclamation explains, “Circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation.”<sup>4</sup> Depending on their needs, husbands and wives may sometimes take on what some might consider nontraditional roles. To establish a successful home, couples need to share their burdens and openly discuss their needs. Rotating tasks may help a husband and wife gain new experience and appreciate each other’s contributions.

Frequently, what is required of spouses to complete all the work necessary to take care of a family in a gospel setting is not adaptation but sacrifice. For example, individuals may need to let go of worldly possessions or sacrifice personal interests for the betterment of the family. This can be difficult, but as spouses build unity through work and share the load of caring for their family, they will find that their love and joy for each other and for their family grow.

### United through Equal Partnership

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) said, “The Lord intended that the wife be a helpmeet for man (*meet* means equal)—that is, a companion equal and necessary in full partnership. Presiding in righteousness necessitates a shared responsibility between husband and wife; together you act with knowledge and participation in all family matters.”<sup>5</sup>

If you have ever watched children playing on a seesaw, think about how the mechanics of this playground device apply to a marriage. When the children adjust their weight and position on opposite sides of the seesaw, one child goes up, and the other child goes down. If they are of equal weight and refrain from kicking off the ground or jostling the seesaw, they will balance, both suspended in midair. If one child suddenly jumps off his or her end of



*Consistent daily family prayer, offered sincerely both morning and night, will bring greater peace, understanding, inspiration, and love to our homes.*

the seesaw, it’s impossible for the other child to stay balanced. The child left on the seesaw then falls to the ground and can be injured.

The same is true of husbands and wives as they work as a united team, balancing on the various seesaws in their own lives and cooperating to maintain stability in the home. Chores, finances, their relationship, and other challenges require give and take, adapting and responding as situations change. Fathers and mothers can achieve this balance by following gospel principles and the guidance of inspired leaders and by regularly consulting with each other to evaluate needs and finding ways to work together better.

### United through Prayer

Couples will find no greater help than seeking Heavenly Father’s guidance in their marriage and as parents. As fathers and mothers kneel each day, offering their gratitude to God and praying for each other and their family, they invite the love of Heavenly Father into their hearts and home. Open, humble prayer unifies hearts and can dispel anger, disharmony, and frustration. Prayer brings unique blessings to each family. And when combined with temple worship and personal scripture study, prayer offers enlightenment into how to deal with challenges that threaten the harmony of a marriage.

*Unity in families grows out of active efforts to create unity. It won't often happen by accident.*



Consistent prayer between a father and mother does not guarantee that trials will cease. The adversary continues his attack on the family, and as he continues his attempts to destroy bonds of spouses, parents, and children, husbands and wives must increase their own righteous efforts.

Several years ago our family decided to make a more focused effort on family prayer because we had been pretty good about holding family prayer in the evening but couldn't seem to make morning prayer happen quite as often. True to our commitment, we knelt in family prayer on that first morning with our hearts ready to reap the blessings. But I felt discouraged when the rest of the day turned out horribly. All I could think was, "Well, morning family prayer didn't work."

The problem was this: I had thought we would be blessed by having fewer trials as we prayed more as a family and that one prayer would fix all our problems. However, my experience revealed that isn't usually the case. When spirituality increases, the adversary often increases his efforts to discourage us from following gospel principles. As my family consistently engaged in morning prayer over the next couple of months and then years, we felt greater peace, understanding, inspiration, and love in our home and were strengthened to meet the ongoing challenges in our lives.

### **United through Expressing Love**

Raising children through life's challenges can put a strain on marriages. Fathers and mothers will need to make a conscious effort to continue cultivating their marriage relationship.

Fostering love requires fathers and mothers to actively express their love for each other every day. Such expressions—honestly given and done in ways that appropriately communicate the message of love that each person needs, whether that be through physical contact, a smile, service, or other means—unify companionships by increasing and sustaining the feelings of mutual affection and appreciation.



PHOTO BY MATT REIER

President Thomas S. Monson has counseled, "Brethren, let's treat our wives with dignity and with respect. They're our eternal companions. Sisters, honor your husbands. They need to hear a good word. They need a friendly smile. They need a warm expression of true love."<sup>6</sup>

That does not mean that disagreements will not crop up, for they inevitably will. But husbands and wives who have expressed love will have a greater capacity to weather the storms successfully and likely will have a greater desire to forgive and move forward.

Parents should also remember that their example influences others in their home. As President Hunter said, "You should express regularly to your wife and children your reverence and respect for her. Indeed, one of the greatest things a father can do for his children is to love their mother."<sup>7</sup> Children take a lot of cues from watching their parents. The more children see their parents express love for each other, the more likely they are to follow that example themselves.

### **United through Faithful Effort**

Building unity between husbands and wives requires effort, but the effort is worth it. There are many things parents can do that will help them become more unified, and I have highlighted just a few. As parents consistently seek to unify their marriages by working together, by establishing and evaluating an equal partnership, by offering regular prayer together to solicit the help of the Lord, and by engaging in frequent expressions of love, they will foster a unity that will bring greater peace and joy into their personal lives, the marriage, and the family. ■

#### **NOTES**

1. Richard G. Scott, "The Joy of Living the Great Plan of Happiness," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 73–74.
2. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
3. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," 102.
4. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," 102.
5. Howard W. Hunter, "Being a Righteous Husband and Father," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 51.
6. Thomas S. Monson, "Abundantly Blessed," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2008, 112.
7. Howard W. Hunter, "Being a Righteous Husband," 50.



By President  
Boyd K. Packer

President of the Quorum of  
the Twelve Apostles



# Finding Ourselves IN LEHI'S DREAM

*Lehi's dream has in it everything a Latter-day Saint  
needs to understand the test of life.*

I asked the Church's records department to tell me how many college-age youth we have in the Church. They responded, "1,974,001."

"Good," I thought. "I will speak to the *one*."

My college life began just after World War II had ended. Most of the men in our class were recently returned from military service. We were, by and large, more mature than college students of today. We had been through the war and carried with us many memories. Some of them we held on to; others we were glad to have fade away. We were more serious and did not enter into fun and games as much as students do today. We wanted to get on with our lives and knew that education was the key.

The whole focus of our lives in the military had been on destruction. That is what war is about. We were inspired by the noble virtue of patriotism. To be devoted to destruction without being destroyed yourself spiritually or morally was the test of life.

You too live in a time of war, the spiritual war that will never end. War itself now dominates the affairs of mankind. Your world at war has lost its innocence. There is nothing, however crude or unworthy, that is not deemed acceptable for movies or plays or music or conversation. The world seems to be turned upside down. (See 2 Peter 2.)

Formality, dignity, nobility, and respect for authority are mocked. Modesty and neatness yield to slouchiness and shabbiness in dress and grooming. The rules of honesty and integrity and basic morality are now ignored. Conversation is laced with profanity. You see that in art and literature, in drama and entertainment. Instead of being refined, they have become coarse. (See 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-9.)

You have decisions almost every day as to whether you will follow those trends. You have many tests ahead.



LEHI'S DREAM, BY GREG OLSEN. MAY NOT BE COPIED. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN LUKE

### Hold to the Rod

In 1 Nephi 8, read about Lehi's dream. He told his family, "Behold, I have dreamed a dream; or, in other words, I have seen a vision" (1 Nephi 8:2).

You may think that Lehi's dream or vision has no special meaning for you, but it does. You are in it; all of us are in it.

Nephi said, "[All scripture is likened] unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning" (1 Nephi 19:23).

Lehi's dream or vision of the iron rod has in it everything a Latter-day Saint needs to understand the test of life.

Lehi saw:

- A great and spacious building (see 1 Nephi 11:35–36; 12:18).
- A path following a river (see 1 Nephi 8:20–22).
- A mist of darkness (see 1 Nephi 12:17).

*If you hold to the rod, you can feel your way forward with the gift of the Holy Ghost. Grasp the iron rod, and do not let go.*



- An iron rod that led through the mist of darkness (see 1 Nephi 11:24–25).
- The tree of life, "whose fruit was desirable to make one happy" (1 Nephi 8:10; see also 1 Nephi 11:8–9, 21–24).

Read the dream or vision carefully; then read it again.

If you hold to the rod, you can *feel* your way forward with the gift of the Holy Ghost, conferred upon you at the time you were confirmed a member of the Church. The Holy Ghost will comfort you. You will be able to feel the influence of angels, as Nephi did, and feel your way through life.

The Book of Mormon has been my iron rod.

Lehi saw great multitudes of people "pressing forward" toward the tree (1 Nephi 8:21).

The great and spacious

building "was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female; and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit" (1 Nephi 8:27).

One word in this dream or vision should have special meaning to young Latter-day Saints. The word is *after*. It was *after* the people had found the tree that they became ashamed, and because of the mockery of the world they fell away.

"And *after* they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost. . . .

"And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And *after* they did enter

into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also.” That was the test; then Lehi said, “But we heeded them not” (1 Nephi 8:28, 33; emphasis added). And that was the answer.

Lehi’s son Nephi wrote:

“I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him. . . .

“For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round” (1 Nephi 10:17, 19).

All of the symbolism in Lehi’s dream was explained to his son Nephi, and Nephi wrote about it.

At your baptism and confirmation, you took hold of the iron rod. But you are never safe. It is *after* you have partaken of that fruit that your test will come.

I think now and then of one of our classmates—very bright, good looking, faithful in the Church, and drenched with talent and ability. He married well and rose quickly to prominence. He began to compromise to please the world and those around him. They flattered him into following after their ways, which were the ways of the world.

Sometimes it is so simple a thing as how you groom yourself or what you wear, such as a young woman teasing her hair endlessly to give the impression that it has not been combed or a young man dressing in slouchy clothes, wanting to be in style.

Somewhere in little things, my classmate’s grasp on the iron rod loosened a bit. His wife held on to the rod with one hand and on to him with the other. Finally, he slipped away from her and let go of the rod. Just as Lehi’s dream or vision predicted, he fell away into forbidden paths and was lost.

Largely because of television, instead of looking over into that spacious building, we are, in effect, living inside of it. That is your fate in this generation. You are living in that great and spacious building.

Who wrote this incredible vision? There is nothing like it in the Bible. Did Joseph Smith compose it? Did he write the Book of Mormon? That is harder to believe than the account of angels and golden plates. Joseph Smith was only 24 years old when the Book of Mormon was published.

You will be safe if you look like and groom like and act like an ordinary Latter-day Saint: dress modestly, attend your meetings, pay tithes, take the sacrament, honor the priesthood, honor your parents, follow your leaders, read the scriptures, study the Book of Mormon, and pray—always pray. An unseen power will hold your hand as you hold to the iron rod.

Will this solve all your problems? Of course not! That would be contrary to the purpose of your coming into mortality. It will, however, give you a solid foundation on which to build your life (see Helaman 5:12).

The mist of darkness will cover you at times so much that you will not be able to see your way even a short distance ahead. You will not be able to see clearly. But with the gift of the Holy Ghost, you can *feel* your way ahead through life. Grasp the iron rod, and do not let go. (See 3 Nephi 18:25; D&C 9:8.)

### **A Time of Spiritual War**

We live in a time of war, that spiritual war that will never end. Moroni warned us that the secret combinations begun by Gadianton “are had among all people. . . .

“Wherefore, O ye Gentiles [and the term *Gentile* in that place in the Book of Mormon refers to us in our generation], it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you. . . .

“Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you” (Ether 8:20, 23–24).

Atheists and agnostics make nonbelief their religion and today organize in unprecedented ways to attack faith and belief. They are now organized, and they pursue political

power. You will be hearing much about them and from them. Much of their attack is indirect in mocking the faithful, in mocking religion.

The types of Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor live among us today (see Jacob 7:1–21; Alma 1:1–15; 30:6–60). Their arguments are not so different from those in the Book of Mormon.

You who are young will see many things that will try your courage and test your faith. All of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. Let me say that again: all of the mocking does not come from outside of the Church. Be careful that you do not fall into the category of mocking.

The Lord promised, “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30).

Even Moroni faced the same challenge. He said, because of his weakness in writing:

“I fear . . . the Gentiles shall mock at our words.

“[And the Lord said to him:] Fools mock, but they shall mourn; and my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness;

“And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them” (Ether 12:25–27).

## We Rejoice in Christ

Embedded in that dream or vision is the “pearl of great price” (Matthew 13:46).

Lehi and Nephi saw:

- A virgin bearing a child in her arms (see 1 Nephi 11:15–20).
- One who should prepare the way—John the Baptist (see 1 Nephi 11:27).
- The ministry of the Son of God (see 1 Nephi 11:28).
- Twelve others following the Messiah (see 1 Nephi 11:29).
- The heavens open and angels ministering to the children of men (see 1 Nephi 11:30).

- The multitudes blessed and healed (see 1 Nephi 11:31).
- The Crucifixion of the Christ (see 1 Nephi 11:32–33).
- The wisdom and pride of the world opposing His work (see 1 Nephi 11:34–36; see also 1 Nephi 1:9–14).

All of this they saw in dream or vision. And that is what we face now.

Now to you, the one of two million, I speak individually. Just as the prophets and apostles in times past did, “we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, . . . that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26).

“Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:3).

And then Nephi added:

“Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark.

“For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:4–5).

## The Promptings of the Holy Ghost

You live in an interesting generation, when trials will be constant in your life. Learn to follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost. It is to be a shield and a protection and a teacher for you. Never be ashamed or embarrassed about the doctrines of the gospel or about the standards that we teach in the Church. You always, if you are faithful in the Church, will be much different from the world at large.

You have the advantage of being assured that you can be inspired in all of your decisions. You have many decisions ahead of you—decisions that have to do with getting through school, finding a life’s companion, finding an



occupation, settling in, raising children in a world that is turned upside down. Your children will be exposed to so much more than we were in our generation.

We notice, as we travel about the Church, that our young people are stronger than heretofore. When I hear them speak in conferences and in sacrament meeting, I hear them quote the scriptures, and I hear them protecting the standards. I do not hear the cynical mocking that is typical of those who are not faithful and not truly converted.

We preside over a church of 13 million-plus members and growing. The Church is out in the world. Much of it is international now. Many members of the Church do not have the opportunity of going to college, but they live the gospel. And it is a wonderful, powerful thing to see them and to be among them.

As we think of you young Latter-day Saints and think of

the Book of Mormon and think of the dream or vision that Lehi had, we see that there are prophecies in there that can be specifically applied to your life. Read it again, beginning with 1 Nephi 8, and read on to the counsel that is given. The Book of Mormon talks about life after death: what happens to the spirit (see Alma 40:11–12) and what happens in the spirit world (see 2 Nephi 2:29; 9:10–13). All of the things that you need to know are there. Read it, and make it a part of your life. Then the criticism or mocking of the world, mocking those in the Church, will be of no concern to you as it is of no concern to us (see 1 Nephi 8:33). We just move forward doing the things that we are called to do and know that the Lord is guiding us.

I pray the blessings of the Lord upon you in your work. I pray the blessings of the Lord

*You may think that Lehi's dream or vision has no special meaning for you, but it does. You are in it; all of us are in it.*



upon you in your life as you move forward from the morning of your life, where you are now, to the late evening of your life, where I am now, that you will know that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true. You will face many great and tumultuous and difficult things in your life, and you will enjoy great inspiration and joy in your life.

You are better than we were. I have the conviction that against what was surely coming and the prophecies that were given, the Lord has reserved special spirits to bring forth at this time to see that His Church and kingdom are protected and moved forward in the world. As a servant of the Lord, I invoke His blessings upon you and bear testimony to you that the gospel is true. ■

*From a devotional address delivered on January 16, 2007, at Brigham Young University. For the full text in English, go to <http://speeches.byu.edu>.*

**W**hat are we doing this week?" may be a question leaders hear often—and perhaps even dread—as we try to help youth plan and carry out effective Mutual activities. And while we often know the answer to that inquiry, a harder question might be "What are we *accomplishing* by doing what we are doing this week?"

*As leaders and youth plan and carry out activities, they can help create memories—and testimonies—that will be carried into eternity.*



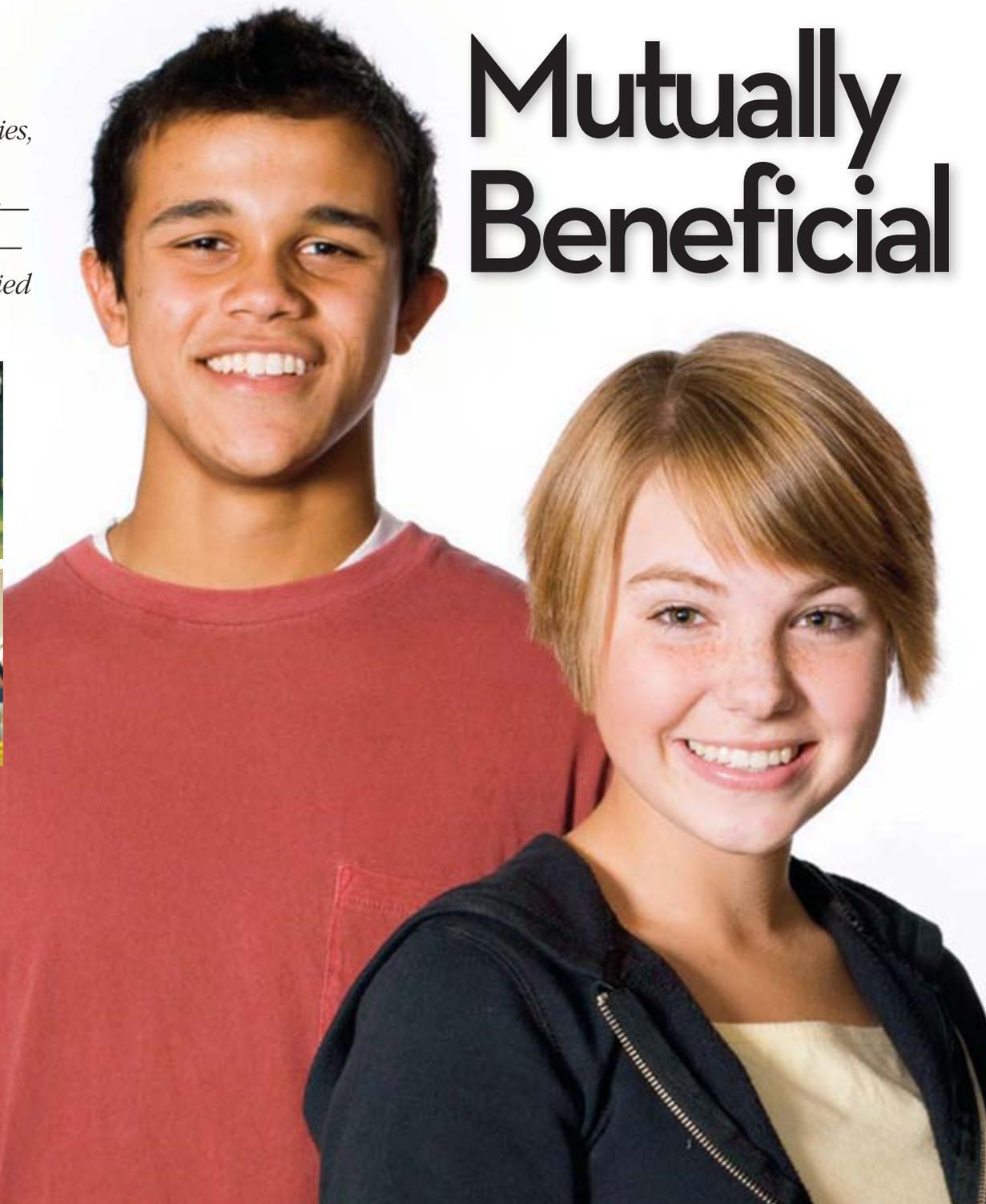
Recently, while speaking to leaders of youth, President Thomas S. Monson counseled that "the basic responsibility of helping youth to choose the right when the choice is placed before them is as cardinal a rule today as it has ever been."

"Give them memories to carry into eternity," he said, "and your name will be called blessed by the Lord." He

reiterated, as he often does, that the Lord inspires those whom He calls.<sup>1</sup>

The *Ensign* invited some Church leaders to recall a pivotal Mutual or other youth activity and share what it accomplished for them. Perhaps today's leaders will find comfort in these experiences, realizing that their dedicated efforts are helping create important memories—and eternal testimonies.

# Mutually Beneficial





# Part of Something Extraordinary

By Elder Neil L. Andersen

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



In the late spring of 1967, our ward was asked to choose 16 youth to dance in the All-Church Dance Festival. For

our little town in rural Idaho, this was an adventure. The festival was to be held in the giant University of Utah stadium with thousands in attendance. I was not a dancer and was reluctant in our initial practices, but I soon came to enjoy being together with good young men and women preparing for the dance festival. The thought of going to the large city of Salt Lake and staying at a hotel with a swimming pool motivated us.

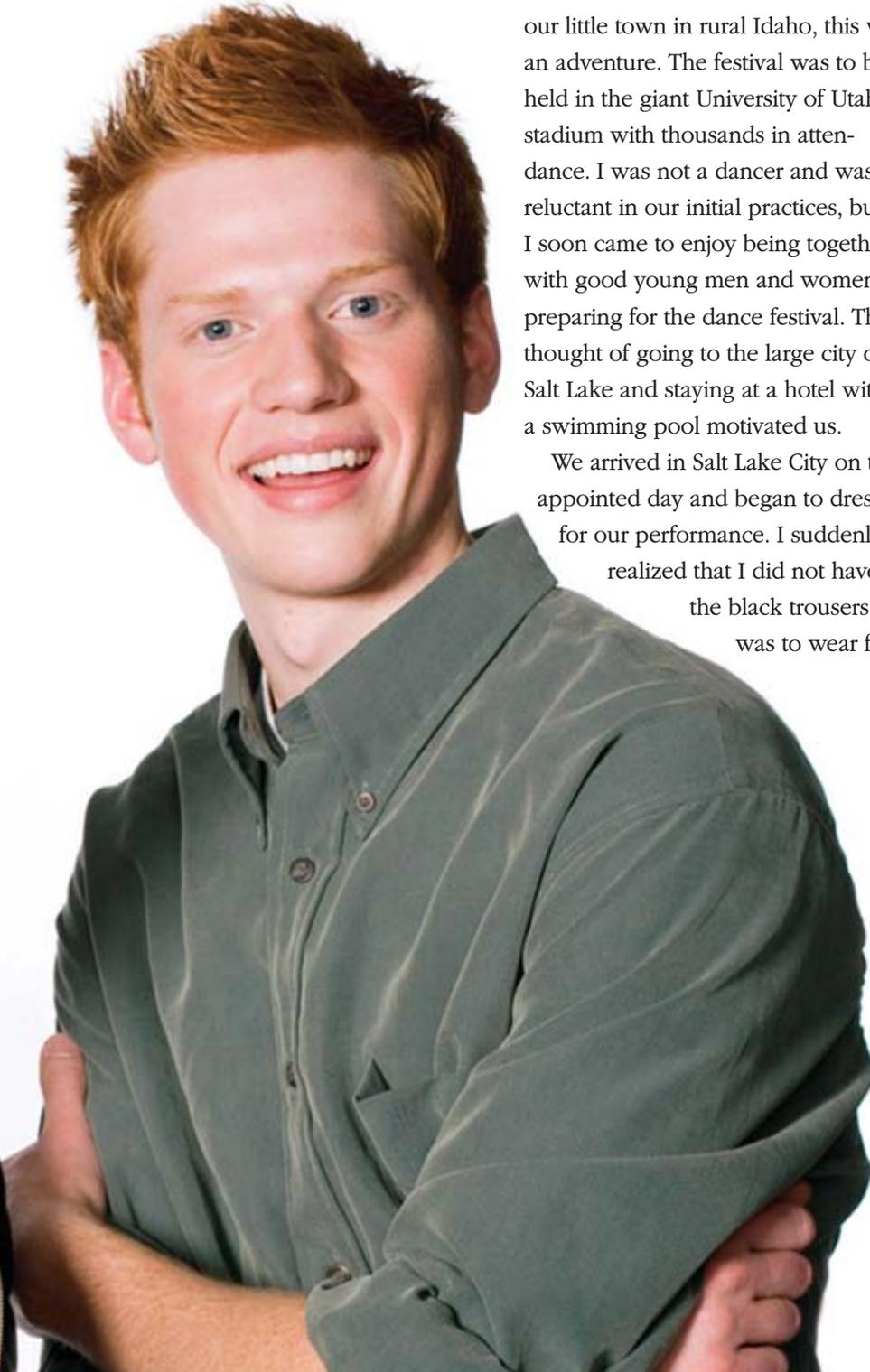
We arrived in Salt Lake City on the appointed day and began to dress for our performance. I suddenly realized that I did not have the black trousers I was to wear for

our ballroom dance. I had left them at home. We did not even consider going to the store to buy a pair of pants, because it would have been too expensive. I did not know what I would do.

The solution came as my Young Men leader, Brother Lowe, offered to let me wear his dark pants. When I put the pants on, I was happy that they were about the right length. However, I quickly realized that I had a problem: the pants were several inches too large in the waist. “What am I going to do?” I thought. I was grateful for the kindness of Brother Lowe but felt very embarrassed to wear the large pants. Brother Lowe and my friends assured me that no one would know because the pants would be mostly covered with my suit coat and I could use a belt to cinch them up tightly.

I still remember the feeling of arriving at the stadium and seeing hundreds of young men and young women from all over the country who shared my beliefs and convictions. It was a great moment for me to realize how important the Church was to so many.

When it was our turn, we moved onto the field. As the dance began, much to my horror, I could feel the big ballooning trousers slipping. There was no time to fix the situation; the music had begun. The dilemma added new steps to my ballroom experience. Not only was it necessary to remember all we had been taught, but I also had to invent some new movements to keep my trousers in place. At times these steps dismayed



my talented partner, but they saved me from a more troubling conclusion.

I have never forgotten my brief precarious moments of ballroom dancing. More important, I have never forgotten the feeling that we were all part of something extraordinary—not simply a dance festival—but the restored Church and gospel of Jesus Christ.

## A Testimony Gained at Sunrise

By Elder Paul B. Pieper

Of the Seventy



I grew up as a member of the Church. I was taught the principles of the gospel by my parents and was baptized and confirmed by and received the priesthood from my worthy father. I felt the influence of the Spirit in my life, but I did not receive a witness of the reality of the Atonement until one Easter in my teen years.

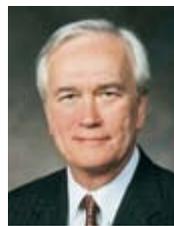
A group of several hundred seminary students gathered for a testimony meeting before dawn. I suppose that I shared my testimony that morning, but I can't be sure. What I know is that during the meeting as the sun rose on a new Easter, the Spirit came into my heart and testified of the reality of Jesus Christ, His life, His teachings, His Atonement, and His Resurrection. I have felt the confirmation of that testimony many times during the more

than 30 years I have testified of Jesus Christ as a missionary, father, friend, and Church leader. But the anchor for me has been the witness I received from the Spirit that Easter morning.

## The Shaping of Future Missionaries

By Elder Keith K. Hilbig

Of the Seventy



As a member of the Milwaukee Wisconsin Ward, I was directed by devoted leaders.

Our activities were a marvelous resource for developing social interaction skills, helping us overcome the awkwardness of teenage years. However, one Mutual experience especially shaped the course of my young life. It occurred in 1956, 54 years ago! Yet even today I remember it clearly.

We young men worked together during Mutual each Wednesday to build a detailed, four-foot-high (1.2 m) replica of the beautiful Salt Lake Temple. We also created a large poster detailing the purpose and story of the Book of Mormon.

Our ward's Boy Scout troop had obtained a prominent booth for the annual display of Scouting skills in our city. Hundreds of visitors walked by our booth and saw our display. Many stopped. They inquired of young Aaronic Priesthood boys in Scout uniforms as to the purpose

of the temple display. Many then inquired about the Book of Mormon. We young Aaronic Priesthood holders explained the best we could and then provided them a paperback copy of the Book of Mormon.

A dear fellow Scout and I (we were in the same teachers quorum) felt like 20-year-old missionaries! We both silently committed to be worthy and to serve as full-time missionaries. Eventually, we both did just that—thanks, in part, to Mutual and to devoted leaders of youth.



## I truly believe

that activities, done on a large or small scale, are key to strengthening not only the youth of the Church but to strengthening families. In these settings, the gospel is taught in informal ways and observed as it is lived in the lives of those who have been called to lead.

Perhaps when we think of activities, we should think of the thirteenth article of faith with a little twist: If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we *provide* these things.

Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president.

## By Small and Simple Means

By Elaine S. Dalton

Young Women General President



When I think about my youth experiences, I think of the accumulation of the many small and simple things

that strengthened my testimony (see Alma 37:6–7). The ward of my youth was like a large family. When we had a ward dinner, everyone came. Whenever the Relief Society had a bazaar or the Primary had a parade, everyone came. Our ward was our social life.

Thinking back to my first ward road show, I distinctly remember the early-morning practices, the prayers, the talking to others as we waited to perform our parts, and the camaraderie we felt as we painted scenery, practiced, and learned together. These were the times when I watched how the gospel worked in the real lives of real people. I saw how my advisers handled problems, how leaders reacted under pressure, how spouses related to each other, and I made silent decisions about living the principles I was being taught on Sunday. I felt the Spirit as we prayed for miracles, such as remembering our parts or the health of one of the youth.

I don't remember my lines from that road show, nor do I remember all the other particulars. But I do

### WHAT IS MUTUAL?

Young men and young women should have regularly scheduled activities called Mutual. The term *Mutual* suggests shared experiences in which there is mutual respect and support for one another. Mutual activities should provide youth with a variety of opportunities to serve others and to develop spiritually, socially, physically, and intellectually.

Mutual is held on a day or an evening other than Sunday or Monday. It is generally held once a week but may be held less frequently if priesthood leaders determine that travel, resources, or other circumstances prevent a weekly meeting.

The ward or branch Young Men and Young Women presidencies, under the direction of the bishopric or branch presidency, oversee Mutual.

For more information, go to [LDS.org](http://LDS.org) and click on "Serving in the Church."

remember how I felt as we performed and as I looked into the faces of my ward members and saw their approval and felt their love.

## Accepting the Invitation

By David L. Beck

Young Men General President



One of the most memorable activities that I participated in as a youth was a large dance festival.

I am quite certain

I never would have volunteered for such an activity. However, with some coaxing, I accepted the invitation to participate, even though at first I wasn't thrilled about the idea.

We practiced a lot, and learning the dances was a slow process. I am grateful for dedicated instructors, for a patient dance partner, and for my mother, who sewed my costume and encouraged me to do my best.

The festival was held at a football

stadium. I had never participated in something so large. Each group entertained the crowd as we performed choreographed dances in colorful costumes. Then the football field literally filled with dancers as all of us performed a closing number together. It turned out to be an impressive show.

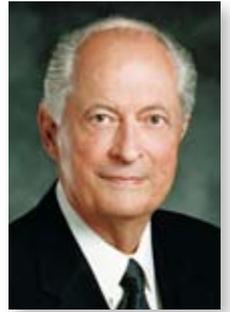
I enjoyed that dance festival a lot more than I thought I would. It allowed me to view the Church in a different way. I saw vast numbers of youth having a great time. I met new friends, I developed new skills, and I played a small part in a big production that entertained thousands.

Because I accepted the invitation to dance in that festival—and other invitations that have come to me in the Church—my life has been blessed, and I have had the chance to bless others. I feel so privileged to have had so many wonderful experiences as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ■

#### NOTE

1. See Sarah Jane Weaver, "Building on a Firm Foundation for Young Women," *Church News*, Nov. 28, 2009, 3.

By Elder  
Robert D. Hales  
Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles



# Our Parental Duty to God and to the Rising Generation

One of a parent's most important responsibilities is to teach. As declared in "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," "parents have a sacred duty . . . to teach [their children—sons and daughters] to love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God, and be law-abiding citizens wherever they live."<sup>1</sup>

I can still remember a powerful teaching moment from my mother in Brooklyn, New York, USA, 70 years ago. After my father had baptized me and while I was still in my wet baptismal clothes, my mother sat me down on a rusted metal folding chair in front of the baptismal font. She reviewed with me the importance of baptism by priesthood authority, the purpose of my baptismal covenant to take upon myself the name of Jesus Christ, and the law of obedience. Then she asked me how I felt. I remember telling her I had a warm feeling all over and that I would like to feel that way for the rest of my life.

My mother looked into my

eyes and taught me that in a few moments my father would lay his hands upon my head and would confirm me a member of The Church of Jesus Christ



of Latter-day Saints. He would confer upon me the gift of the Holy Ghost, she said, and if I remained worthy, true, and faithful to the commandments, the Holy Ghost would be with me to provide guidance and direction throughout my life. Although I had this experience with my mother many years ago, I have never forgotten that important *teaching moment*.

Do we as parents realize the power of teaching moments in the lives of our children? Do we recognize the urgency of our duty to help our children understand and live

*The Lord has given us the charge to “bring up [our] children in light and truth.” May we respond to this charge with faith and determination to fulfill our duty to the rising generation.*

gospel principles? A foundation of faith and testimony will help our children not only endure life’s difficulties but also enjoy the fulness of Heavenly Father’s blessings.

### **Set in Order Your Own House**

The purpose of the Lord’s work is “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). Parents can help accomplish this great work by teaching their children “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” (D&C 68:25).



In a revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord rebuked Frederick G. Williams (1787–1842), a member of the First Presidency, for not teaching his children as he should:

“You have not taught your children light and truth, according to the commandments; and that wicked one hath power, as yet, over you, and this is the cause of your affliction.

“And now a commandment I give unto you—if you will be delivered you shall set in order your own house, for there are many things that are not right in your house” (D&C 93:42–43).

Do we have the courage to teach light and truth in our homes? Or are we experiencing affliction within our families because we are neglecting these duties? As we ponder and pray, we will be given spiritual strength and guidance to help us set our homes in order.

### A House of Learning

The scriptures direct us to “establish . . . a house of learning” (D&C 88:119). Let me suggest several ways we as parents can fulfill this duty to God and to our children.

**Focus the minds and hearts of children on the Savior.** Faith and testimony must be centered in Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice. We should express to our children our own feelings about the Savior and share scriptures or experiences that have strengthened our testimony of Him. We should help them understand the significance of the Atonement and how it



**For more information on changes to Personal Progress, visit [PersonalProgress.lds.org](http://PersonalProgress.lds.org) and see Elaine S. Dalton, “What’s New in Personal Progress?” *New Era*, Jan. 2010, 32–35; and Heather Whittle, “Changing the World One Virtuous Woman at a Time,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Jan. 2010, 74–75.**

can be a daily blessing in their lives.

Enos knew of Jesus Christ and His gospel because he “had often heard [his] father speak concerning eternal life” (Enos 1:3). The stripling warriors “had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them” (Alma 56:47). We take inspiration from these words of the Nephites: “We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, *that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins*” (2 Nephi 25:26; emphasis added).

**Lead and teach by example.** In many ways, our actions speak louder than our words. President Brigham Young (1801–77) taught: “We should set [our children] an example that we wish them to imitate. Do we realize this? How often we see parents demand obedience, good behavior, kind words, pleasant looks, a sweet voice and a bright eye from a child or children when they themselves are full of bitterness and scolding! How inconsistent and unreasonable this is!”<sup>2</sup> Our children will notice such inconsistencies in us and perhaps find justification for acting in similar ways.

We might well ask ourselves such questions as: Do our children see us faithfully fulfilling our Church callings, going to the temple regularly where possible, and serving others with Christlike concern and compassion? Do our actions tell them that gospel living is not a burden but rather a joy? Let us ensure that our examples help our children understand what

it means to build one's life on a foundation of faith and testimony.

**Establish righteous patterns in the home.** We need to take every opportunity to invite the Spirit of the Lord into our homes. One way we do this is by regularly practicing the “small things”—family prayer, family scripture study, and family home evening. As we make these things part of the pattern of our lives, they will make a big difference in the development of our children's testimonies. Let us remember the words of the Lord given through the Prophet Joseph Smith: “Be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great” (D&C 64:33).

Another important pattern to establish in the home is to live the Lord's standards regarding the use of media. With the advent of digital media has come increased access to degrading material, but we also have increased access to that which is beautiful and edifying. Let us encourage our children by precept and by example to seek after that which is “virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy” (Articles of Faith 1:13).

**Encourage meaningful personal prayer and scripture study.** So much of our children's growth in faith and testimony depends on their personal religious practices. We can help them set goals that can make prayer and scripture study a regular habit in their lives.

We will be more successful in making the scriptures a part of our children's lives if the scriptures are also a part of our lives. As we interact with our children, we can refer to the scriptures often in a variety of settings. Teaching moments can occur just about

## REVISIONS TO *FULFILLING MY DUTY TO GOD:* FOR AARONIC PRIESTHOOD HOLDERS

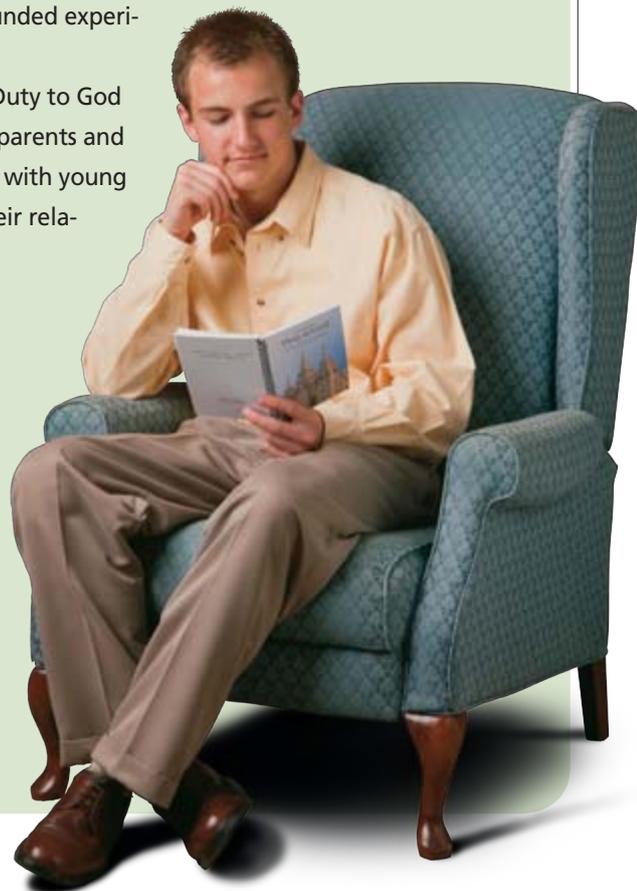
In an ongoing effort to strengthen the young men of the Church, the First Presidency has announced revisions to Duty to God.

For young men, fulfilling their duty to God is a lifelong journey—one that is more about becoming worthy fathers and priesthood holders than being recognized for specific activities and accomplishments. The revised version of Duty to God focuses on helping young men strengthen their testimonies and their relationship with God, learn to fulfill their priesthood duties, and live the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*.

This version of Duty to God is based on Doctrine and Covenants 107:99: “Let every man learn his duty, and . . . act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.” It invites young men to engage in learning activities, make specific plans to act on what they have learned, and share their experiences with parents, other quorum members, and leaders. The revised version of Duty to God also provides activities relating to physical, educational, and social development.

These activities complement rather than compete with Scouting, where Scouting is available. Where Scouting is not available, Duty to God provides a well-rounded experience for young men.

This new version of Duty to God gives opportunities for parents and advisers to work closely with young men and strengthen their relationship with them.



anywhere as long as we are prepared to take advantage of them.

Mealtimes, for example, can provide a wonderful opportunity for parents and children to share thoughts and feelings. We can ask our children what they have been learning from their scripture study. What questions do they have about what they are reading? What are some of their favorite passages? We can share with them some of our favorites and tell them why these passages mean so much to us. We should include in our discussions the words of the living prophets and encourage our children to read these words as found in the Church magazines.

**Use tools the Church provides to parents.** Every good builder knows the value of good tools—they can make a seemingly overwhelming task much more manageable. The Church has provided many useful tools parents can use to help their children build a foundation of faith and testimony.

One recent example is the newly revised version of Duty to God for young men. Personal Progress, also recently revised, is a wonderful and powerful tool intended for young women. The benefits that our youth experience from Duty to God and Personal Progress will be significantly enhanced as parents participate and support them in their efforts.

For example, revisions to Duty to God and Personal Progress encourage youth to share with family members the goals, experiences, and feelings they are having as they make plans



*For more information about Duty to God, see “New Duty to God Program Announced,” Liahona and Ensign, May 2010, 136; and visit [DutyToGod.lds.org](http://DutyToGod.lds.org). This site includes an interactive version of the booklet, with resources to help young men better understand how to fulfill their duty to God.*



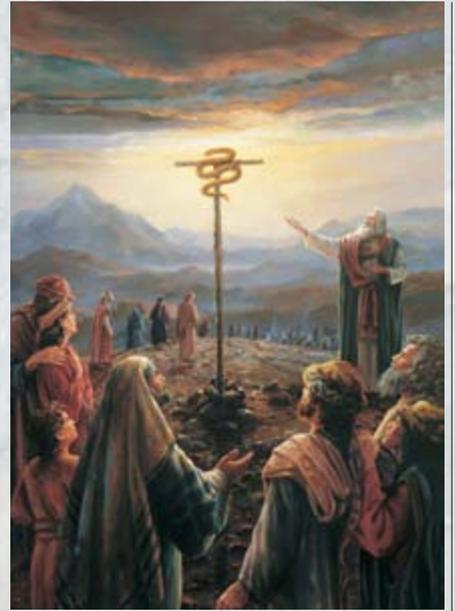
and act on the things they are learning. Parents, this is a golden opportunity to have gospel conversations with your children that can enrich your relationship with them. The setting for such conversations does not need to be formal; some of the best opportunities for strengthening your children can occur during informal “conversations along the way.”<sup>3</sup>

Take time to become familiar with the revisions to Duty to God and Personal Progress and to support your sons and daughters in their goals. As you work alongside your sons and daughters and share with them your experiences, regularly ask them what they are learning and experiencing. Please make good use of these tools to solidify your children’s foundation of faith and testimony.

It is my hope that by following these suggestions, we as parents in the Church will be able to help our children lay a foundation of faith and testimony that will withstand whatever storms lie ahead. In the process, we ourselves will grow spiritually and develop bonds of love with our children that will last into eternity. The Lord has given us the charge to “bring up [our] children in light and truth” (D&C 93:40). May we respond to this charge with faith and determination to fulfill our duty to the rising generation. ■

#### NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 340–41.
3. *Fulfilling My Duty to God: For Aaronic Priesthood Holders* (booklet, 2010), 98.

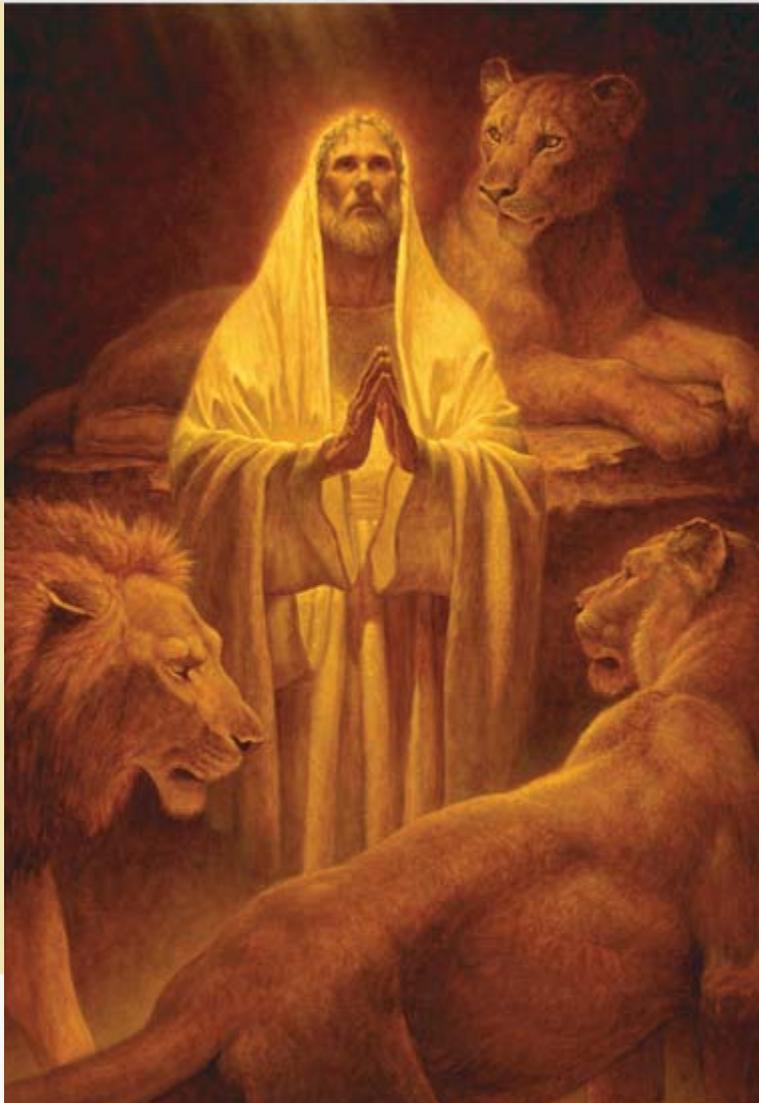


# CHRIST'S MINISTRY Foreshadowed

The Old Testament prophesied of the Savior's birth, His ministry, and His Atonement. The lives of many of those ancient prophets are a type and a shadow of Jesus Christ.

"All things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of [Christ], both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual" (Moses 6:63).

The following art features a few of the Old Testament prophets or events that foreshadowed Christ's ministry.



**Above, left: Detail from Moses Seeing Jehovah, by Joseph Brickey.** *The Lord said of Moses, who was a lawgiver and a deliverer, "Thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior" (Moses 1:6). (See also John 1:14).*

**Above: Moses and The Brass Serpent, by Judith Mehr.** *The Lord sent fiery serpents upon the children of Israel and many died from the serpents' bites. The Lord told Moses to make a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole. He made a serpent of brass and raised up the pole. Those who looked at it lived (see Numbers 21:8–9). This typifies Christ. Those who will look unto Him and believe will "have eternal life" (see John 3:14–15; Alma 33:19–22).*

**Left: Daniel in the Lions' Den, by Scott Gustafson.** *After Daniel was cast into the lions' den, it was sealed with a stone (see Daniel 6:17). Rising early in the morning, the believers came to the place to see Daniel and assumed he was dead (verses 19–20). Being delivered from death, his message to those who seek him is "live for ever" (verse 21). This foreshadows the death, burial, and Resurrection of Christ (see Matthew 27:62–66; John 20).*

**Below: Dove Bearing Olive Leaf Returns to Ark, Artist Unknown.** God established a covenant with Noah. Those who followed Noah onto the ark were saved from the flood (see Genesis 6:18). This story teaches that those who follow the Christ will also be saved through their covenants.



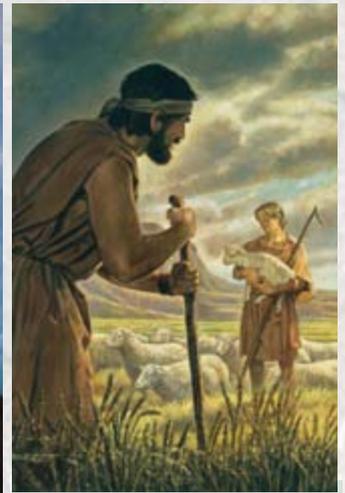
**Right: Ruth, by Henry Ryland.** Ruth, a Moabite, said to her mother-in-law, Naomi, an Israelite, “Thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God” (see Ruth 1:16). Ruth’s life shows obedience to God’s will and following Christ—not bloodline—makes us a part of the kingdom of God (see Ruth 2:12).



**Left: Jonah on the Beach in Nineveh, by Daniel Lewis.** Jonah emerged from the belly of the fish in three days (see Jonah 1–2). This typifies Christ’s Resurrection from the tomb after three days (see Matthew 12:40).

**Above: The Passover, by W.H. Margetson, courtesy Church History Museum.** The Passover foreshadows the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, which delivers us from sin and death (see 1 Corinthians 5:7). The children of Israel sprinkled the blood of a lamb on

their doorposts to save their firstborn from death (see Exodus 12:7, 22–23). This foreshadowed the Savior’s blood, which was shed in Gethsemane and on the cross, and cleanses the faithful and saves them from spiritual death (see Mosiah 4:2).



**Left: Abraham Taking Isaac to be Sacrificed**, by © Del Parson. Abraham was commanded to sacrifice his son Isaac. Both yielded their will to the will of God. In the final seconds, God provided a ram in the thicket and Isaac's life was spared (see Genesis 22:1-13).

This event is a type and shadow of the relationship between our Heavenly Father and His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ (see Jacob 4:5), who yielded His will to the will of His Father (see Matthew 26:39, 42; Luke 23:46). However, Christ did sacrifice His life as part of God's plan for Him to atone for our sins (see Abraham 3:24-27).

**Top: Cain and Abel and the Firstlings of the Flock**, by © Robert T. Barrett. Abel offered the firstlings of his flock as his sacrifice to God in keeping with the law of Moses (see Genesis 4:4). The lamb was "without blemish, a male of the first year" (see Exodus 12:5). This foreshadowed Christ's Crucifixion (see Luke 23) as a "lamb without blemish" (see 1 Peter 1:19).

**Left: Elijah in the Desert**, by Walter Rane. Elijah multiplied the faithful widow's meager ration of meal and oil to feed her and her son (1 Kings 17:9-16). He raised a boy from the dead (verses 17-24). He journeyed for 40 days and nights (1 Kings 19:4-8). These events foreshadow similar events in Christ's life (see John 6:1-14; Luke 7:11-17; and Matthew 4:1-11).



By Elder Walter F.  
González

Of the Presidency  
of the Seventy



# Listening

## As Samuel Listened

*It is a blessing to live in a time when the Lord guides us through prophets and an outpouring of the Spirit.*

When a young man named Samuel uttered the words “Speak; for thy servant heareth” (1 Samuel 3:10), they changed his life. They can change our lives as well.

Samuel, who ministered in the temple, uttered these words thousands of years ago. One night, as he was falling asleep, he heard a voice calling out to him. He thought it was the priest Eli, so Samuel called back, “Here am I” (1 Samuel 3:4).

Eli was asleep, so he did not respond. Samuel then ran to Eli, woke him, and said, “Here am I; for thou calledst me” (1 Samuel 3:5). Eli said he had not called Samuel and sent the young man back to bed. This happened two more times that night.

The third time Samuel went to Eli, the priest perceived that it was God who had called Samuel. So he instructed the young man to return to bed, and if the voice called him again,

he was to say, “Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth” (1 Samuel 3:9). When the voice called to Samuel later that night, he answered, “Speak; for thy servant heareth” (1 Samuel 3:10). Mighty Jehovah then revealed His will to young Samuel (see 1 Samuel 3:11–14).

There is much we can learn from Samuel’s experience. Note that the Lord called three times, and all three times Samuel replied simply, “Here am I.” Only after he showed his willingness to listen—“Speak; for thy servant heareth”—did the Lord reveal His will.<sup>1</sup>

This experience also teaches us something about the way in which the Lord speaks to us. While it is true that occasionally there may be other ways in which He reveals His will to His children, including the ministering of angels and the granting of visions, I would like to focus on two ways: through prophets and through the Spirit. These two ways are as current as they are ancient.



### The Lord Speaks through Prophets

Millennia ago there lived a prophet named Amos. He bore the heavy burden of warning Judah and all of Israel about the devastating consequences of their actions. What Amos is most remembered for, however, is his important declaration: “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

His statement is as true today as it was in ancient times. In fact, the Lord has given a similar message in our own dispensation: “I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments” (D&C 1:17). In the same revelation, the Lord added, “Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled” (D&C 1:37).

We learn three important principles from these passages:

1. The Lord calls prophets to warn us of coming calamities and to give us the commandments we need so that the calamities will not overcome us.
2. Prophets are the conduits through which the Lord gives us revelation and prophecy.
3. Prophets are the messengers who bring us the Lord’s promises. Those promises are often tied to commandments God gives us through His prophets.

Attending general conference is an excellent experience that gives me hope and joy. I pay attention to the prophetic warnings and promises, knowing full well that the promises will be fulfilled.

When my wife and I were newly married, we did not have a lot of money, but we decided that we would pay tithes and offerings no matter what happened. We trusted in the Lord’s promises made through His prophets. We did not always have money, but we never wanted for food or

shelter in any way. Experiences like this have assured us that the will of the Father is made known to us through His Son and through the prophets.

When we obey the commandments given through the prophets, we will be richly blessed with the fulfillment of promises. Such was the case with Enoch and the city that became known as Zion. Such can be the case with us—in our personal lives and in our families—if we will say as did Samuel of old, “Speak; for thy servant heareth.” This is so because our Father loves us and because our Savior will not leave us comfortless (see John 14:15–18). Indeed, He pours His Spirit upon all who receive His teachings.



*Our Father pours His Spirit upon all who receive His teachings through His Son and through His prophets.*

### The Lord Speaks through the Spirit

The ancient prophet Joel spoke of our day when he prophesied: “It shall come to pass afterward, *that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh*; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

“And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids *in those days will I pour out my spirit*” (Joel 2:28–29; emphasis added).

We know for certain that this prophecy applies to our dispensation because Moroni quoted this passage to Joseph Smith in 1823 and then declared that the prophecy would soon be fulfilled (see Joseph Smith—History 1:41). This

current outpouring of the Spirit is seen as many humble servants of Christ say, “Speak; for thy servant heareth” and then receive personal revelation to lead them.

Like the prophets, the Spirit testifies of Christ. In the words of Jesus himself, “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me” (John 15:26). As we live according to the Spirit’s witness, our hearts will undergo a process of change to the point that we will “have no more disposition to do evil, but

to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2).

The Spirit can be poured out upon us in many ways. Sometimes the way will be obvious; other times it will not. We all need to grow in the understanding and implementation of the principle of revelation and learn to recognize the promptings of the Spirit.

After the resurrection of Christ, two disciples heading to a village called Emmaus were joined by Jesus. He walked with them and expounded the scriptures, but because their eyes were veiled, they did not know it was the Savior. Eventually, as He left them, they realized it was He. They also realized that they had felt the Spirit bearing witness to them.

One of them said to the other, “Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?” (Luke 24:32). The Spirit can bear witness to believers and unbelievers alike, but we must listen closely to realize that the witness has come, lest we find ourselves knowing it not (see 3 Nephi 9:20). We all can listen more closely to the promptings of the Spirit and act accordingly.

### Listening As Samuel Listened

Whether the Lord speaks to us through prophets or through the Spirit—and He will do both—we must promptly reply, “Speak; for thy servant heareth.” Many of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants begin with a commandment to hearken. The first verse in the first section of this sacred volume begins with clear-cut counsel: “Hearken, O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high, and whose eyes are upon all men; yea, verily I say: Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together” (D&C 1:1).

Of course, *hearing* the words of the Lord through His prophets is much more than merely listening to a talk. When we *hear* the words of the prophets, we realize that

those words are the will of God and that we must be willing to follow them. Similarly, *hearing* the words of the Lord through the Spirit is more than feeling His promptings. It is acting according to those promptings.

Listening to Him when He speaks is as important in our day as it was when Samuel walked the earth.

In general conference, President Thomas S. Monson said:

“I testify to you that our promised blessings are beyond measure. Though the storm clouds may gather, though the rains may pour down upon us, our knowledge of the gospel and our love of our Heavenly Father and of our Savior will comfort and sustain us and bring joy to our hearts as we walk uprightly and keep the commandments. There will be nothing in this world that can defeat us.”<sup>2</sup>

President Monson reiterated Heavenly Father’s desire for us to “walk uprightly and keep the commandments.” And He promised specific blessings: comfort, joy, and victory.

It is a blessing to live in a time when the Lord guides us through prophets and the outpouring of the Spirit. Let us not be content with simply saying, “Here am I.” Let us obediently say, “Speak; for thy servant heareth.” As we utter Samuel’s words, we will see promises fulfilled and our hearts changed.

I testify that God is a God of truth. He cannot lie, and all of His promises will be fulfilled. This fact fills my soul with gratitude. I know that all of this is possible because of the atoning sacrifice of our Savior. I also know that our Father reveals His will to us through His Son and through His prophets.

If we obey His will, nothing in the world will defeat us. This is truly so, for God has spoken it through His prophets. ■



*Hearing the words of the Lord through the Spirit is more than feeling His promptings. It is acting according to those promptings.*

#### NOTES

1. See “God Will Honor Those Who Honor Him,” *Old Testament: Class Member Study Guide*, 14.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Be of Good Cheer,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 92.

# Delivering an Effective Talk

By Marcus Sheridan

**B**eing a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints means more than sitting in church, listening to others speak. The Savior has organized His Church to give all of us opportunities to grow spiritually. One of those opportunities is speaking in church, which can be an exhilarating and spiritually satisfying experience.

To make the most of their talks, effective speakers show enthusiasm, share stories and personal experiences, use quotes and scriptures, and speak through the power of the Holy Ghost.

## Show Enthusiasm

The more enthusiastic we are about the gospel, the more others will see our fire and have a desire to experience the same feelings. On the

other hand, if our talks—especially at the outset—are filled with apologies or negative statements, we may discredit ourselves, lessen our message, and offend the Spirit. By being excited and eager to share their message—the Lord’s message—confident speakers bless others.

## Share Stories and Personal Experiences

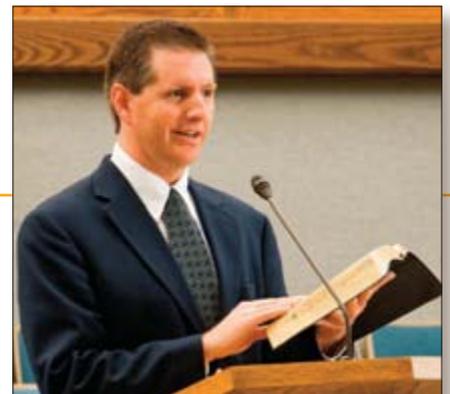
When we share a powerful story or personal experience, our message can have a lasting impact on our listeners. People love to hear stories. That’s why heads pop up and attention increases when we share them.

All of us have experienced memorable events. It just takes creativity and energy to make the telling of a story interesting. If we can’t think of

an appropriate personal story, we can always share a story from the Church magazines.

When sharing personal experiences, effective speakers:

- Practice telling their stories beforehand so they don’t have to read them and can maintain eye contact with the congregation.
- Keep their stories short and interesting.
- Fluctuate their tone of voice and convey feeling.
- Relate descriptive details when appropriate.
- Occasionally show a sense of humor but understand that not all talks require a joke.
- Make their point at the end of each story.



*To enhance the delivery of your talk, show enthusiasm, make eye contact, and smile.*

## Use Quotes and Scriptures

The words of the Lord and His servants teach, inspire, guide, and motivate. If we can bring their words to life in our talks, we can affect others in a positive and profound way.

When citing scriptures and quotes, good speakers:

- Share the background and history of scriptures and quotes to help listeners understand their significance.
- Focus on only a few scriptures and quotes.
- Emphasize important parts.

## Speak through the Power of the Holy Spirit

Speaking through the power of the Holy Ghost is the most important way we can communicate. As Nephi observed, “When a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men” (2 Nephi 33:1).

We qualify for that influence as we fast, pray, and prepare diligently for our talks. If we are properly prepared, we have no need to fear (see D&C 38:30).

By combining the companionship of the Holy Ghost with enthusiasm, storytelling, scriptures and quotes, and then by adding our testimony of the truths we share, we will uplift and inspire. ■



### THE EXAMPLE OF PRESIDENT MONSON

**P**resident Thomas S. Monson is a powerful and moving speaker. An examination of his speaking style and some of his recent general conference talks reveals the abilities of a good speaker.<sup>1</sup>

President Monson often stresses that it is his privilege to speak to Church members, and he expresses gratitude for the opportunity. In addition, he regularly shows that gratitude by demonstrating enthusiasm at the outset of his talks.

After his opening statements, President Monson quotes scriptures to give his talk direction and tell his listeners what his topic is. He also quotes General Authorities and others to add further light to his topic.

President Monson is well-known for sharing personal experiences from his life. He knows that his audience will take interest in and relate to personal stories. He also knows that one of the best ways to teach is by sharing what life has taught him.

In relating stories, President Monson uses powerful details to generate interest. Often, he also uses poetry to punctuate his message.

Finally, President Monson understands the importance of bearing testimony, which he does frequently and powerfully.

#### NOTE

1. See, for example, Thomas S. Monson, “Be Your Best Self,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 67; “Be of Good Cheer,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 89; “May You Have Courage,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 123.



# THOSE WHO ARE DIFFERENT

*May God bless us to realize that an important measure of our progress in coming unto Christ is to be found in how well we treat others, especially those who are different.*



**By Elder Marlin K. Jensen**

Of the Seventy

**T**wo years before I was born in 1942, my mother gave birth to my older brother, Gary. Gary is a very special person. When he was born, his brain was damaged by a lack of oxygen. His mind never grew above the level of a six- or seven-year-old.

For more than 60 years, I watched my parents take care of Gary. They helped brush his teeth, comb his hair, and tie his tie on Sunday. Because he loved horses and cowboys, they took him to rodeos and Western movies. They performed countless acts of love and kindness for him.

Unfortunately, people aren't always so kind to those who are different. I'm sorry to say that some children—even children from active Latter-day Saint families—were unkind to my brother. They shut him out of games, called him ugly names, and teased him unmercifully.

Gary was a childlike person who was always quick to forgive. He loved and accepted everybody. I think that aside from my parents, this special brother did more during my childhood to shape my outlook on life than anyone else. I sometimes think how it will be after the Resurrection, when as Alma describes, “all things shall be restored to their proper and perfect frame” (Alma 40:23). Then

we'll know the real Gary, and I think we'll be very grateful for all the good things we've done for him and very sad about those times when we might have been more loving and understanding of his special circumstances.

## **The Need for Love and Understanding**

There are many other people like Gary in our world. Even within the Church are certain brothers and sisters who might be considered “different” and who especially need our love and understanding. Their need for love and understanding stems in part from a culture that has developed as we have strived to live according to God's plan for us. Like all cultures, the culture arising from our efforts to live according to the gospel of Jesus Christ includes certain expectations and morally binding customs. Marriage and family are highly valued, for instance, and fathers and mothers have divinely appointed roles to fulfill. Children and youth are encouraged to live by certain standards and walk prescribed paths to achieve certain educational and spiritual goals.

The desired outcomes of a gospel-centered life are held up as ideals for which we are all encouraged to strive. Although such ideals

are doctrinally based and represent desirable objectives in our quest for eternal life, they can sometimes become sources of disappointment and pain for those whose lives may vary from the ideal.

Discomfort and unfulfilled expectations may exist, for example, for a divorced Church member, for a person still single though of marriageable age, for a person struggling with bouts of depression or an eating disorder, or for the parents of a wayward child. Other Church members who may feel culturally conspicuous are those in a racial minority, those struggling with feelings of same-gender attraction, or young men who, for whatever reason, choose not to serve a mission at the usual age. Members who repent and whose transgressions require formal and thus more public Church discipline also often find their social interaction in the Church to be quite awkward.

Even when they are worthy, members whose lives don't fit the ideal and thus are considered different often feel inferior and guilty. These feelings are heightened when we as their brothers and sisters fail to be as thoughtful and sensitive toward them as we ought to be. Consider, for instance, the unintended impact on a childless married couple when a member of the ward asks them when they are going to have children, not realizing that they have wanted to have children for a long time but have been unable to do so.

As we work to resolve these challenging situations, it is important to recognize that the solution isn't to eliminate or even lower the level of the ideal. Prophets and apostles have always had the duty to teach and encourage us to strive for the ideal. It was what the Savior did. His injunction was "Be ye therefore perfect" (Matthew 5:48), not just "Have a good day."



***In some way or another we are all that one lost sheep. We all have our failings, and our lives vary in some ways from the ideal. We are all different!***

### **We Are All Different**

A helpful insight came to me several years ago when I was reading the Savior's teachings about the man who had one sheep go astray. The Savior asks, "Doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Matthew 18:12).

As a priesthood leader, I had always thought of myself for many years as the shepherd—the one out searching for the lost sheep. But in a moment of reflection, it came to me that in some way or another we are all that one lost sheep. We all have our failings, and our lives vary in some ways from the ideal. We are all different! This is a humbling but helpful recognition.

It is also helpful to remember that in teaching the ideal, the Savior recognized that the ideal isn't always immediately attainable. In speaking of spiritual gifts—those wonderful endowments of the Holy Ghost—the Savior said, "They are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments." Having to keep all the commandments in order to enjoy spiritual gifts seems an impossibly high standard, but thankfully the



Savior adds that spiritual gifts are also given for the benefit of “him that *seeketh* so to do” (D&C 46:9; emphasis added). Seeking to keep all the commandments—even if we sometimes fall short of the ideal—is something within the power of each of us and is acceptable to our Heavenly Father.

Since at baptism we all covenanted “to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:9), being compassionate and sensitive to those in special circumstances—those who are different—is an important aspect of our efforts to be Christ’s disciples. Of Jesus, Nephi wrote, “He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world” (2 Nephi 26:24). It is inconceivable that the Savior would do or say anything that would intensify the pains of or injure any of God’s children. In fact, Alma taught that as a part of the Atonement, Christ voluntarily experienced our pains, sicknesses, and infirmities so “that he [might] know according to the flesh how to succor his people” (Alma 7:12).

We can take great comfort in Christ’s ability to relate to our own experiences—a trait known as empathy. The record of Christ’s

**Being compassionate and sensitive to those in special circumstances—those who are different—is an important aspect of our efforts to be Christ’s disciples.**

ministry is replete with displays of His empathy and kindness to those who were different.

When the current *Primary Children’s Songbook* was compiled in 1989, a song was needed to speak to children—and thus to all of us—about those who, because they are different, have special need of our love and understanding. That simple song, “I’ll Walk with You,” beautifully summarizes how we can show our love and understanding:

*If you don’t walk as most people do,  
Some people walk away from you,  
But I won’t! I won’t!*

*If you don’t talk as most people do,  
Some people talk and laugh at you,  
But I won’t! I won’t!*

*I’ll walk with you. I’ll talk with you.  
That’s how I’ll show my love for you.*

*Jesus walked away from none.  
He gave his love to ev’ryone.  
So I will! I will!*

*Jesus blessed all he could see,  
Then turned and said, “Come, follow me.”  
And I will! I will!  
I will! I will!*

*I’ll walk with you. I’ll talk with you.  
That’s how I’ll show my love for you.<sup>1</sup>*

May God bless us to realize that an important measure of our progress in coming unto Christ is to be found in how well we treat others, especially those who are different. And may we remember that we are all different in some way. ■

*From an address delivered during a stake conference broadcast in Utah County, Utah, on September 7, 2008.*

**NOTE**

1. “I’ll Walk with You,” *Children’s Songbook*, 141.

# ONE OF THE FAMILY

By Rachel Neal

As I interact with other young single adults, I've noticed that sometimes it can be easy to be so focused on our marital status that we don't pay attention to those around us. For example, when I first started attending a family ward rather than a young adult ward, I believed I deserved extra attention, pity, and looking after because I was single. I have yet to find an instance when having such an attitude ever did me any good.

During the first year in my ward, I was surprised that many of my other ideas turned out to be myths. I learned that married people can be friends with single people and that I could make a difference in people's lives. Some mothers are overjoyed to have a friend come over for a visit when their husbands are gone for work or Church callings. Parents are often grateful when an adult can provide some individual attention to their children, and most are quite willing to "lend out" their children for movies or other activities.

I also learned that I was not the only person who was single. Other ward members are empty nesters, divorced, or widowed and also struggle to deal with life's issues on their own. And despite my belief that married people are happier, I met some who dealt with depression, job loss, or disabled or wayward children. Those with such struggles always appreciate a listening ear.

But these realizations and friendships did not happen instantly. They took time and effort as I consistently attended my Church meetings, served in callings, and looked for opportunities to help. When my bishop asked me to teach the six-year-olds, I felt inadequate. However, after my first month, several parents thanked me, saying how much their children enjoyed coming to class. To this day some of my closest friends in the ward are family members of those children.

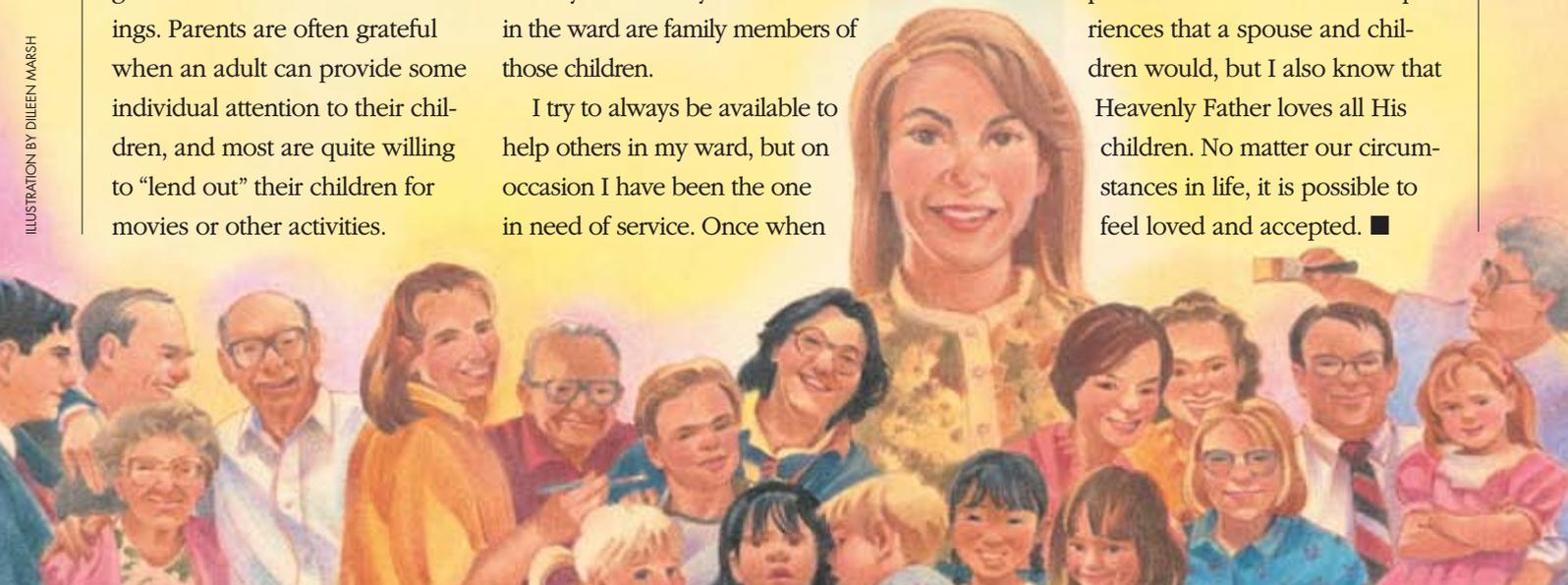
I try to always be available to help others in my ward, but on occasion I have been the one in need of service. Once when

*I thought I might never feel accepted by members of my ward—but I found out I was wrong.*

I needed to paint a room in my home before moving, I was in the middle of final exams and also had to leave town for a wedding. When I mentioned these circumstances to a sister in my ward, she told me she would get some other sisters together to paint the room. Their service saved me lots of time and money.

The members of my ward seem not to define me by my marital status because I don't define myself by it. In conversation I don't bring up my lack of a spouse; instead, I talk about my job, studies, hobbies, and immediate family. By my focusing on these topics, people often see that there is more to me than what is lacking.

A wise friend once told me that friendship is a two-way road; you can't give some without receiving some in return. I realize that all my friendships will never provide me with the same experiences that a spouse and children would, but I also know that Heavenly Father loves all His children. No matter our circumstances in life, it is possible to feel loved and accepted. ■



# Questions and Answers

*Sometimes I feel that ward members associate mainly with friends in their own social groups. I want to feel that I belong to the ward family. How can I have the courage to keep reaching out?*



**W**hen I attended Relief Society for the first time after I was baptized, I noticed the other women chatting with friends and enjoying each other's company. I sat quietly, afraid to say much more than my name when the sister who was conducting the meeting asked me to introduce myself. Several of the sisters introduced themselves to me after the meeting, which made me feel welcome, but I still wasn't sure how I was going to fit into the already-established friendships I had observed.

When I received a calendar that listed a monthly Relief Society potluck dinner, I decided to attend. I thought it would be a good way for me to meet sisters in the ward.

I was so nervous on the way to that first potluck that I prayed for help in saying the right things and making friends. When I arrived I sat with a few of the sisters, hoping that they would talk to me. I asked them questions about different ward activities. Some of them were eager to share their knowledge; others were not as open.

Regardless of how others responded, I persevered in going to the dinners. Each month I sat with different sisters and got to know them. I enjoyed those monthly get-togethers, and they gave me the courage I needed to go to other church activities. I began to feel comfortable in knowing that I would not be left out if I was willing to reach out. I have been a member of the Church for nearly four years now, and I have discovered four basic things that help me get to know others:

- Attending Church regularly and going to as many ward activities as possible.
- Being supportive of other members' callings and offering them appreciation and encouragement.
- Magnifying callings. I find that when I magnify my calling by doing my best and being dependable, others often offer their appreciation.
- Being willing to introduce myself. I cannot always expect other people to come to me.

These things have helped reduce my apprehension and have helped me get to know others in my ward. As we demonstrate sincerity and commitment to the gospel, ward unity can be increased.

**Lisa Black, Texas, USA**

**T**he Lord's standard for His people is clear: "I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine" (D&C 38:27). This doctrinal foundation empowers each of us to reach out to other ward members in specific ways.

One way we can meet others is by arriving at church early, introducing ourselves, and shaking hands. Another

way to strengthen ward ties is by doing our home teaching and visiting teaching, which gives us a chance to visit and share a gospel message with people in their homes. Ward socials help to unify members in a casual setting. We can take advantage of these opportunities to get to know fellow ward members.

**Kendal Brian Hunter, Utah, USA**

**E**very time our family has moved into a new ward, my closest friendships begin naturally as I fulfill my callings. The calling of visiting teacher or home teacher offers exceptional opportunities for us to build close, caring friendships. As I pray for the welfare of those I teach, my heart fills with love for them. When my motives are pure, my courage seems to grow because my focus is on the reality of the Lord's love for all of us rather than on my own fearful "vain imaginations" (1 Nephi 12:18) of what people might think of me.

**Leigh Shahan Wing, Arkansas, USA**

**W**hen I returned from my mission, I attended a young single adult ward with a good friend. Even though we tried to get to know people, we felt we were treated like outsiders. After church my friend and I talked about our experience and our options: we could attend our home ward, or we could return to the singles ward and do all in our power to love others as the Savior does and then rely on Him to help us. After some discussion, we decided to go back and try our best.

As we went to ward activities, we made a concerted effort to get to know people from different social groups. We discovered that people weren't trying to exclude others; in most cases, they had good reasons for being close, such as a common upbringing, mutual interests, or similar jobs.

At first, getting outside ourselves and meeting people wasn't easy for my friend and me. But as we tried to follow the Savior's loving example, we developed friendships. Some of the barriers we had encountered started to come down. We learned that we can strive to reach out and make friends.

**Laighton Jones, Florida, USA**

**SHARE YOUR IDEAS**

**A**n upcoming Q&A feature will focus on the following topic:

*When I think about the things that have happened in my life, it's hard to love myself. I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love me; how can I more readily feel Their love in my life?*

If you would like to share your ideas, please label your submission "Feeling Their Love" and follow the guidelines under "Do You Have a Story to Tell?" in the contents pages at the beginning of the magazine. Please limit responses to 500 words and submit them by September 20, 2011.

**I** felt that I was on the outside of a social group in my ward. It bothered me because I felt that the group was taking away from the spirit of unity that should exist among ward members, so I started to silently criticize and resent them. But I realized that what I was doing also detracted from the spirit of unity in the ward. I decided to try to love these people as the Savior does. This has brought me peace and happiness.

I learned that I can't change the actions of others, but I can change my own. Ward unity is built by individuals. Our personal examples can be far reaching.

**Name Withheld**

**D**on't jump to conclusions. Few people would describe themselves as unfriendly; rather, they might be shy or insecure around people outside of their immediate group of friends. They might not even realize what impression they are giving. Giving them the benefit of the doubt will likely open doors of friendship in the long run.

Instead of worrying about not belonging to a particular group, try focusing your energy elsewhere. Don't let frustrating experiences damage your confidence and sense of self-worth. Chances are that many people in your ward need your friendship. We can all prayerfully consider whom we might contact, even if doing so is as simple as letting someone know that we missed them at church. The Lord can use us better if we are already in motion.

I believe that the law of the harvest applies to relationships: you reap what you sow. I know from experience that planting lots of seeds of friendship will produce fruit when we most need it.

**Kristin Smith, New Jersey, USA**

**W**hen our children were small we moved into a new neighborhood. We were excited to belong to our

new ward, but breaking in can be difficult and lonely, especially if you wait for an invitation. We decided that inviting families to our home to share a meal or a family home evening would be a great way to get to know our new brothers and sisters. We tried to be especially mindful of families who were new in our ward because we knew how they felt. We have enjoyed this practice for many years and have found that those whom we have wel-

comed into our home are still some of our dearest friends.

**Milton and Elaine Fort, Arizona, USA**

**W**hen I went to a young single adult branch about a year after I joined the Church, I felt overwhelmed. It was the largest branch I had ever attended! It seemed that the members had all known each other for years. How was I ever going to fit in? Feelings of insecurity consumed me.

During the sacrament one Sunday, I closed my eyes and asked Heavenly Father what I could do to stop feeling so out of place. A thought came to me: "You need to put in some effort, and it will all work out."

I followed that thought. I began greeting people, starting conversations, asking others how they were doing, and listening carefully to their responses. As a result, I felt part of the whole—I felt I belonged. I learned that if we put some effort into getting to know others, things will get better.

**Claudia Sacasa Castellanos, Ontario, Canada**

**F**eeling that you are on the outside of a circle or clique can be hurtful. On one occasion I nearly let it affect my attendance at church. Fortunately I decided that being active in the gospel was more important than any hurt—real or perceived—that I had received from a particular group.

The good thing about this experience, though, is that it made me want to make sure that others are included. I



have often prayed to know if there is anyone in particular I should befriend. In addition, I have asked Heavenly Father to send me friends when I have needed them.

Though there may seem to be an inner circle in your ward, there are usually members who are not part of that circle. I have gotten to know some wonderful people in my ward of all different ages and backgrounds.

**Charlotte Goodman McEwan, Florida, USA ■**



### **THE UNITY OF THE SAINTS**

“Understanding that the Church is a learning laboratory helps us to prepare for an inevitable reality. In

some way and at some time, someone in this Church will do or say something that could be considered offensive. Such an event will surely happen to each and every one of us—and it certainly will occur more than once. Though people may not intend to injure or offend us, they nonetheless can be inconsiderate and tactless.

“You and I cannot control the intentions or behavior of other people. However, we do determine how we will act. Please remember that you and I are agents endowed with moral agency, and we can choose not to be offended.”

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “And Nothing Shall Offend Them,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 91.**

# Unity

**By President  
Marion G. Romney  
(1897–1988)**

First Counselor in the  
First Presidency



*Marion G. Romney was ordained an Apostle on October 11, 1951. He served as a member of the First Presidency from 1972 to 1985 and became President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

*on November 10, 1985. President Romney died on May 20, 1988, at the age of 90. The following talk was given in the April 1983 general conference.*

.....

**O**ne of the central themes of the gospel of Jesus Christ is unity. The scriptures teach that equality and oneness should prevail among members of the Church.

You will recall that on the night of the Last Supper, as the Savior met with His Apostles, He prayed that they might be one with Him, as He was one with the Father. He prayed not for them alone, “but for them also which [should] believe on [Him] through their word;

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20–21).

Always the aim has been unity, oneness, and equality among the members of the

Church of Christ. As an example, I call your attention to the record of Enoch, how he and his people reached a state of unity when the rest of the world was at war.

“And there went forth a curse upon all people that fought against God;

“And from that time forth there were wars and bloodshed among them; but the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness.

“The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land. . . .

“And the Lord called his people Zion.” Why? *“Because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them”* (Moses 7:15–18; italics added).

During His mortal ministry Jesus taught His disciples the same doctrine. After His Ascension, “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common” (Acts 4:31–32).

After the resurrected Savior’s ministry among the Nephites, they “were all



converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another.

*“And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift”* (4 Nephi 1:2–3; italics added).

Today we are the Church of Christ, and the Lord expects us to come to this same unity. He has said to us: “Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27).

Some members assume that one can be in full harmony with the spirit of the gospel, enjoy full fellowship in the Church, and at the same time be out of harmony with the leaders of the Church and the counsel and direction

**There is but one way that we can be united, and that way is to seek the Lord and His righteousness. Unity comes by following the light from above.**

they give. Such a position is wholly inconsistent, because the guidance of this Church comes not alone from the written word but also from continuous revelation, and the Lord gives that revelation to the Church through His chosen prophet. It follows, therefore, that those who profess to accept the gospel and who at the same time criticize and refuse to follow the counsel of the prophet are assuming an indefensible position. Such a spirit leads to apostasy. It is not new. It was prevalent in the days of Jesus and in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

It is good to remember the great lesson the Savior taught the Nephites on this subject as He began His ministry among them. Said He:

“There shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been.

“For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another” (3 Nephi 11:28–29).

There is but one way that we can be united, and that way is to seek the Lord and His righteousness (see 3 Nephi 13:33). Unity comes by following the light from above. It does not come out of the confusions below. While men depend upon their own wisdom and walk in their own way, without the guidance of the Lord they cannot live in unity. Neither can they come to unity by following uninspired men.

The way to unity is for us to learn the will of the Lord and then to do it. Until this basic principle is understood and observed, there will be



no unity and peace on the earth. The power of the Church for good in the world depends upon the extent to which we, the members thereof, observe this principle.

The major reason for the world's troubles today is that men are not seeking to know the will of the Lord and then to do it. Rather do they seek to solve their problems in their own wisdom and in their own way. The Lord, in the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, which He revealed as the preface to the book of His commandments, pointed this out and marked it as one of the causes of the calamities which He foresaw coming upon the inhabitants of the earth. Listen to this ringing declaration:

“They have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

“They seek not the Lord to establish his

**The way to unity is for us to learn the will of the Lord and then to do it. The power of the Church for good in the world depends upon the extent to which we, the members thereof, observe this principle.**

righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way” (D&C 1:15–16).

Brethren and sisters, do not rely upon the counsel of men nor trust in the arm of flesh (see D&C 1:19), but seek the Lord to establish His righteousness (see D&C 1:16).

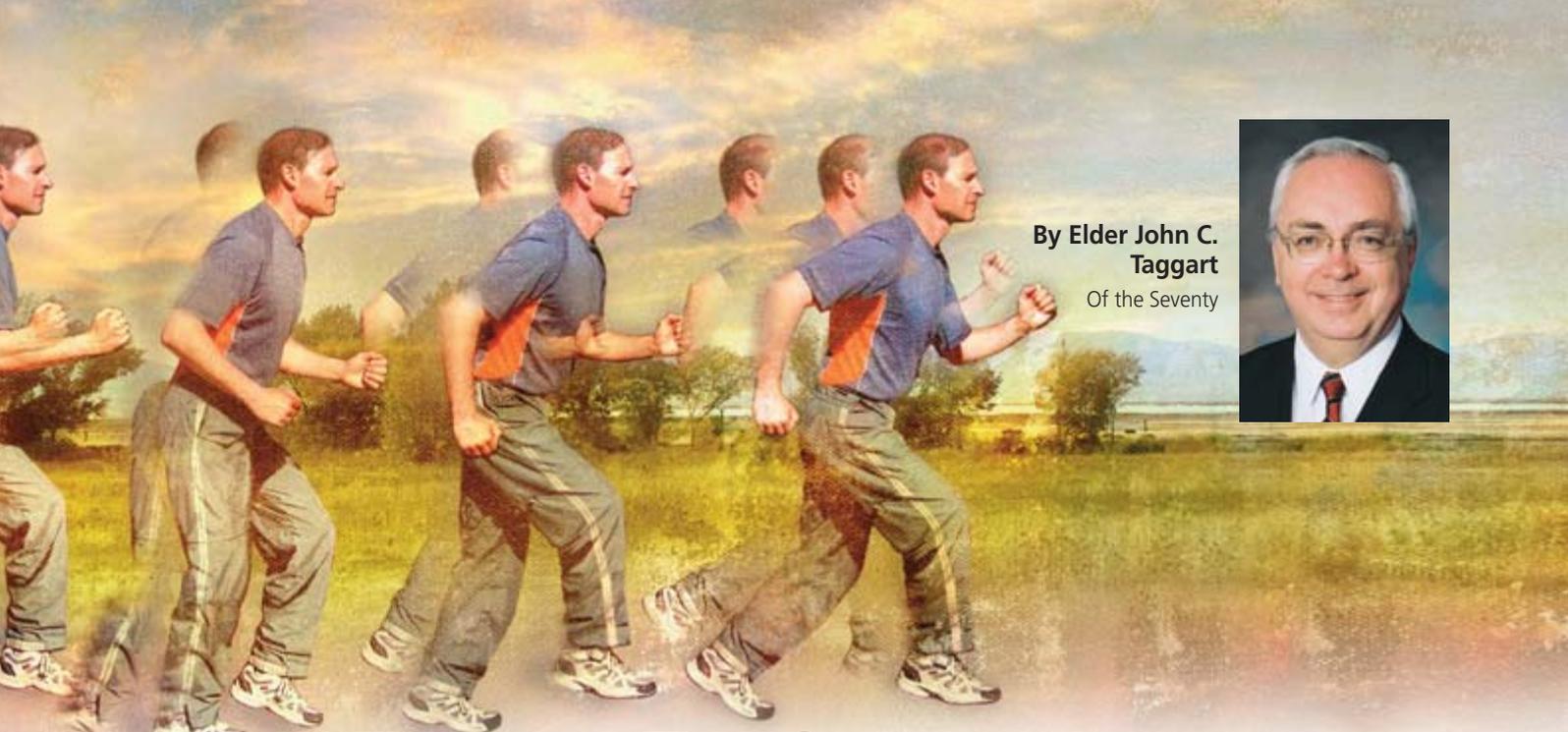
We of this Church can come to a unity and a oneness which will give us strength beyond anything we have yet enjoyed if we will obtain a sounder understanding of the principles of the gospel and come to a unity in our interpretations of present world conditions and trends. This we can do by prayerful study of the Lord's word, including that given to us through the living prophet.

This is the way to come to a unity. If we will study the word of the Lord as it comes to us through the standard works and through the instructions of the living prophet and not harden our hearts, but humble ourselves and develop a real desire to understand its application to us in our own peculiar circumstances, and then ask the Lord in faith, believing that we shall receive (see D&C 18:18), all the while being diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord, surely the path we should follow will be made known unto us, and we will be able to face the world as a solid unit.

Surely we need this unity and this strength in this day in which we live. We have a great opportunity, the opportunity to rise heavenward, to gain the spirit of the gospel as we have never enjoyed it before. This we can do by developing among us that unity required by the laws of the celestial kingdom. . . .

It is my conviction that, since we are engaged in the Lord's work, we can accomplish everything He requires us to do if we will but be united. ■

*Punctuation and capitalization standardized.*



By Elder John C. Taggart  
Of the Seventy



# All Things in Wisdom and Order

*The prize is not won by running fast but by moving forward in wisdom.*

**A**s a young man growing up in Idaho trying to find my place in the world, I arrived at the following temporary conclusion: I was a better French horn player than Wilt Chamberlain, the best player in the National Basketball Association, and I played basketball better than Dennis Brain, then the world’s premier French horn player. I felt I was unique and, by implication, uniquely good.

This bit of vanity seems harmless, but it hints at a trap into which many of us fall—judging our individual worth by comparing ourselves to others. This view of self-worth results in one of two serious mistakes: either we imagine ourselves better than we are because we think we excel where others fail; or we are too hard on ourselves, thinking we do not measure up to others. Faced with these misperceptions, we may settle into a false sense of self-satisfaction, strain to match the accomplishments of those we believe are ahead of us, or give up altogether. Our vision is clouded when we forget we are not in competition. As children of our Father in Heaven, we are already unique and valuable, beyond anything we can achieve in this world.

## Wise Counsel from a King

How can we avoid this trap? King Benjamin offered wise counsel. In his final discourse, this Nephite king told his people what his years as head of state and as a prophet had taught him. First, he accounted for his ministry and admonished his people to do their duty toward their Heavenly Father and others (see Mosiah 2). Then he prophesied of the mortal ministry of the Savior (see Mosiah 3), spoke of Christ’s Atonement as “the means whereby salvation cometh” (Mosiah 4:8), and explained how to obtain this gift from God. He also spoke at length of the people’s duty to the poor (see Mosiah 4).

Then the aged king offered this counsel: “And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order” (Mosiah 4:27).

With these simple words King Benjamin explained how to be faithful and act correctly in the face of competing demands. To “win the prize” we must be diligent, while acting



within the limits of our capacity and circumstances. There are at least five guiding principles contained in this counsel from King Benjamin: duty, persistence, capacity, balance, and priority and seasonality.

### Duty

*“All things must be done”*: Those who accept the blessings of the gospel are bound by covenants to act in certain ways. We have general duties—nurturing our children, serving others, keeping the commandments—and we have specific duties that arise out of our own choices, the Church callings we receive, the promises we make, and the obligations we freely accept. The counsel to not “run faster than [we have] strength” does not excuse us from these things.

### Persistence

*“Be diligent”*: The Lord said, “He that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matthew 10:22). We sometimes mistakenly think the word *endure* means grim plodding in the face of adversity. Not so. While mortality was not meant to be free of challenges, the Lord has promised both peace and happiness in this life and unimaginable blessings in the life to come for “them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). But these blessings come to those who truly take upon themselves the name of Christ, remaining true to Him and following after Him. To



### BE WISE

**B**rothers and sisters, be wise with your families. Be wise in fulfilling your

Church callings. Be wise with your time. Be wise in balancing all of your responsibilities. O be wise, my beloved brothers and sisters. What can I say more?

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “O Be Wise,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 20.

persist or persevere means to remain on the path. Those who do so find, to their delight, that the journey brings moments of surprising joy and great blessings, even as the way grows rocky or steep.

### Capacity

*“A man should [not] run faster than he has strength”*: We are all bound to honor our covenants, but all are not asked to carry the same load. The parable of the talents and the story of the widow’s mite teach that we will not be judged by our output (see Mark 12:41–44; see also

Matthew 25:14–30). Our charge is to magnify what we are given by the Lord, however large or small it may be. We each possess different gifts, abilities, and capacities. That we are to use them in the service of others is King Benjamin’s main message, and it is a persistent theme throughout the scriptures. There is nothing, however, in the revelations to suggest that modest results from heartfelt effort are less valued in the economy of heaven than greater or more impressive results. We are to thrust in *our* sickle with *our* might, thereby bringing salvation to *our* souls (see D&C 4:4; 6:3; 11:3; 12:3; 14:3).

### Balance

*“Done in wisdom”*: Hardest of all is achieving the right mix or balance between competing good things. No secret



formula will achieve this for us. We must avoid the “false balance” (Proverbs 20:23) that becomes a mere excuse for avoiding difficult choices. Self-awareness—an honest assessment of our strengths and weaknesses—is critical. Then righteous living, thoughtful meditation, and heartfelt prayer place us in the path of heavenly inspiration as we make daily decisions. The counsel of those who love us helps us find our way in a world increasingly filled with enticements, distractions, false promises of pleasure, and empty rewards of worldly achievement at the expense of heavenly blessings. The right balance is probably different for each person and also changes for each person over time. Above all, a person grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ and enjoying the sweet companionship of the Holy Ghost will find balance, even—or especially—in the face of overwhelming, unavoidable burdens.

### Priority or Seasonality

“*All things . . . in order*”: The writer of Ecclesiastes taught, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). While we should not “procrastinate the day of [our] repentance” (Alma 13:27), we can safely organize our lives so that, instead of trying to do everything at once, we do many things over time. An extraordinary mother of 12 children wrote: “We cannot do everything, all the time, all at once. We can, through the years, do many things, at different times, one at a time. It is important

to see choices as opportunities, not as frustrations.”<sup>1</sup>

How can Church members help one another in this effort? A wise bishop will take into account a family’s circumstances before calling the able sister to serve as Relief Society president at a time of great, if temporary, stress. And the wise young mother or her husband will not withhold from the priesthood leader circumstances that might diminish her ability to serve or that would interfere with other, more important obligations. To ask the leader to take such things into account is not the same as declining to serve. Even those who earnestly seek the inspiration of heaven in extending callings need to know what is happening in your life to “study it out in [their] mind[s]” (D&C 9:8). The calling to preside, whether in a Church calling or in the home, carries with it the responsibility to preside in wisdom.

Our “seasons” may include discovery, training, starting and raising a family, caring for parents, and helping with grandchildren. Each has its own demands. We may at various times be called upon to lead and to follow, to bear great burdens and to sustain others who carry burdens. Inappropriate or irrational concern for how our efforts compare to the accomplishments of others will result in unnecessary frustration and spiritual decline. Diligent attention to *our* duties, *our* inspired choices, and recognition of *our* limits will enable us to “win the prize.” ■

#### NOTE

1. Jaroldeen Edwards, *Things I Wish I'd Known Sooner . . .* (1991), 19–20.

# Remembering



**T**he Savior spent His life ministering to the poor in spirit and downtrodden. He taught: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40, see also verse 35). Today He still calls to us to follow Him in serving those who suffer. We are to feed the poor, clothe the naked, and visit those who are in prison.

It is in this spirit that the Church has made efforts to reach out to those incarcerated in jails and prisons. The purpose of such

efforts is to care for the spiritual well-being of inmates and help bring them to the Savior. *All* can repent and come unto Christ. President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “Save for the exception of the very few who defect to perdition, there is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no apostasy, no crime exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness. That is the promise of the atonement of Christ.”<sup>1</sup> (See Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:28–29.) This belief in each

# Those in Prison

By Becky Young  
Church Magazines

person's capacity to change drives members to reach out to those who are incarcerated.

## The Efforts at Church Headquarters

Elder Ron and Sister Luann Stephens have been working as Church service missionaries in the Correctional Services segment of Welfare Services for nearly 10 years. They help people find the hope of repentance in their lives. Elder and Sister Stephens, along with seven other couples, spend time each week in an office lined with shelves of scriptures, Church manuals, and other gospel literature.

When Correctional Services receives a letter from an inmate or a phone call from an inmate's relative, Elder and Sister Stephens determine which resources might help the individual the most. Then, praying for the Spirit to guide them, they write personalized letters of encouragement to the inmate, bearing testimony of the power of the Atonement to change lives, and send the letters with the appropriate Church materials.

The Stephenses have not grown tired of their service, even after sending thousands of letters each year. "We believe in this work," says Elder Stephens. "We are part of the missionary effort, and we are doing what needs to be done to support people."

Like other missionaries, they don't always see the direct results of their work, but they know that their efforts are helping inmates develop a love for God and the Savior. They receive letters and phone calls thanking them. "We have been converted to the idea that people can change—even in prison," says Elder Stephens.

President James E. Faust (1920–2007) taught this principle when he wrote: "Transgression brings pain and sorrow. But there is a way out of 'the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity' (Mosiah 27:29). If we will turn to the Lord and believe on His name, we can change. He will give us the power to

change our lives, the power to put away bad thoughts and feelings from our hearts. We can be taken from 'the darkest abyss' to 'behold the marvelous light of God' (Mosiah 27:29). We can be forgiven. We can find peace."<sup>2</sup>

## The Efforts of Local Church Units

The help and resources offered through Correctional Services are available to members and leaders throughout the world. In addition, prisons and jails in some areas of the United States facilitate Church-organized programs for

inmates. These may include worship services (including prayers, hymns, and talks), Sunday School classes, and priesthood and Relief Society lessons.

Darwin Packard of Boise, Idaho, USA, has served as the bishop of the Pleasant Valley [Correctional Facility] Branch since 2005. (Prison branches are usually led by branch presidents, but in some cases, they are led by bishops.) Inmates, both Latter-

day Saints and those of other faiths, attend the services. While not everyone chooses to embrace the gospel, in the time Bishop Packard has served in his calling, he has worked with many who have. "We see the way the gospel works with those who have lost their way," he says. "They come to church and feel the Spirit and want to repent."

Bishop Packard spends his Sundays presiding over meetings in correctional institutions. He meets with inmates one-on-one, presides over disciplinary councils, gives priesthood blessings, and fulfills other responsibilities that accompany his calling. Through his service, Bishop Packard has seen the influence of the gospel in the lives of the inmates. "They are grateful that they can become clean. They are coming to understand their mistakes and know that they have to change," he says. "And they are glad they are changing."

This element of change is a common thread in the gospel. Speaking about repentance, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf has





**Richard Lines, who serves at the Federal Correctional Institution in Safford, Arizona, USA, says he has seen people change after years of sin and inactivity. “Church services in the facilities really help [inmates] find the iron rod that they lost sometime in the past,” he says.**

taught, “We acknowledge that ‘all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God’ (Romans 3:23), but we also declare with firmness that repentance and forgiveness can be as real as sin.”<sup>3</sup>

In Utah, USA, sisters living in wards near the Salt Lake County Jail have been called to serve in a Relief Society presidency in the Metropolitan Second Branch, which ministers to women incarcerated at this facility. Under the direction of the branch presidency, this Relief Society presidency tailors lessons for the sisters they serve, focusing on principles such as welfare, self-reliance, and self-worth. Their goal is to help the women understand that they are daughters of God and that the worth of their souls is great. “You can see a change in their countenance. You can see emerging in them a belief that they can have a good life regardless of their past,” says Sister Barbara Lockhart, first counselor in the branch Relief Society presidency. “Once they start to realize that their worth is great, they just blossom.”

Likewise, Brother Richard Lines, called to serve at the Federal Correctional Institution in Safford, Arizona, USA, says he has seen lives change after years of sin and inactivity. The program at the Safford institution is set up so that the inmates have an opportunity to participate in gospel discussions every Sunday. On two Sundays per month, inmates can volunteer to lead the lessons, giving them the chance to develop teaching skills and spend extra time studying gospel principles. (For many, leading a gospel discussion is a first-time experience, Brother Lines explains.) The group also meets formally in the chapel on Monday evenings for additional gospel instruction.



**Inmates at the Utah State Prison participate in Sunday School.**

## In God’s Service

Name Withheld

I was born into an LDS family and was raised knowing right from wrong. I did not stay active in the Church, and I made some poor choices. Herein lies the reason for my present situation. I am in prison.

But that’s not the story I want to share. Rather, I want to share the story of the many Latter-day Saint volunteers who come to the prisons to minister to, teach, listen to, and pray with those of us who are members of the Church or former members of the Church who have followed paths of alcohol, drugs, pornography, gambling, or crime.

They come to us for the first time with trepidation. They are not sure what to expect. They are even a little frightened. What they find when they arrive, for the most part, are people who are also frightened. Most inmates, if not all, want to learn how not to hurt others anymore. We wish we could have another chance.

That’s why we attend services with the volunteers. From them we learn the true meaning of service and brotherly love. They teach us about repentance and the Savior’s Atonement for our sins. We learn that all is not lost.



They teach us other things too. Some play the piano, some teach choir, some come out twice a month to share family home evening. The volunteers help us learn how to teach Sunday School and priesthood preparation classes. They give us blessings when we are ill or when we are having difficulty dealing with our environment. They are dedicated to their task, and we love them for it.

With the support of these volunteers, I read the Book of Mormon for the first time. (I've read it several times since.) I have learned how I can return to the Church after I have finished my sentence. My wife, who

was not a member of the Church, saw the sincerity of the volunteers and the testimony they helped instill in me. She decided to learn more about the Church, and with the help of the brothers and sisters in my home ward, she has been baptized and received a temple recommend.

Because of the volunteers' teachings, support, and love, I have come to know our Savior, Jesus Christ. I know that the Church is true. I also know that these volunteers are special people, blessed by the Lord and called to minister to us. May God continue to bless them for their generosity and unselfishness. ■



Elder Ron and Sister Luann Stephens are among the many couples who serve as Church service missionaries in Welfare Services at Church headquarters. Their assignment involves writing letters to inmates to accompany the gospel literature they send.

“It is sweet to see these men grow in this capacity,” says Brother Lines. “It is the only chance for many of them to really get back into the gospel. The Church services in the facilities really help them find the iron rod that they lost sometime in the past” (see 1 Nephi 8:19).

### The Efforts of Home Wards and Leaders

Members of the Church need not have access to formal programs or be given official callings to bless the lives of their brothers and sisters. Inmates' home ward bishops and ward members can also be instrumental in helping those who have been incarcerated find the courage they need to change. Members can follow the Savior by helping inmates transition back to life outside of prison walls.

One brother feared how he would be received when he was released from prison because ward members knew what he had done and where he had been. But when he was released from prison, he found himself encompassed by Christlike love from the bishop and ward members. This acceptance gave him the hope he needed to stay on track and eventually make temple covenants.

Many inmates find that when they return home they may be surrounded by old friends and old temptations. Sometimes it is difficult for them to hold on to the positive changes they made in prison. Michael (name has been changed) feared this may happen to him. He decided that upon his release, he couldn't return to his home and family because of the negative influence they would have on him. He was afraid he would lose what he had worked so hard to develop if he did. He

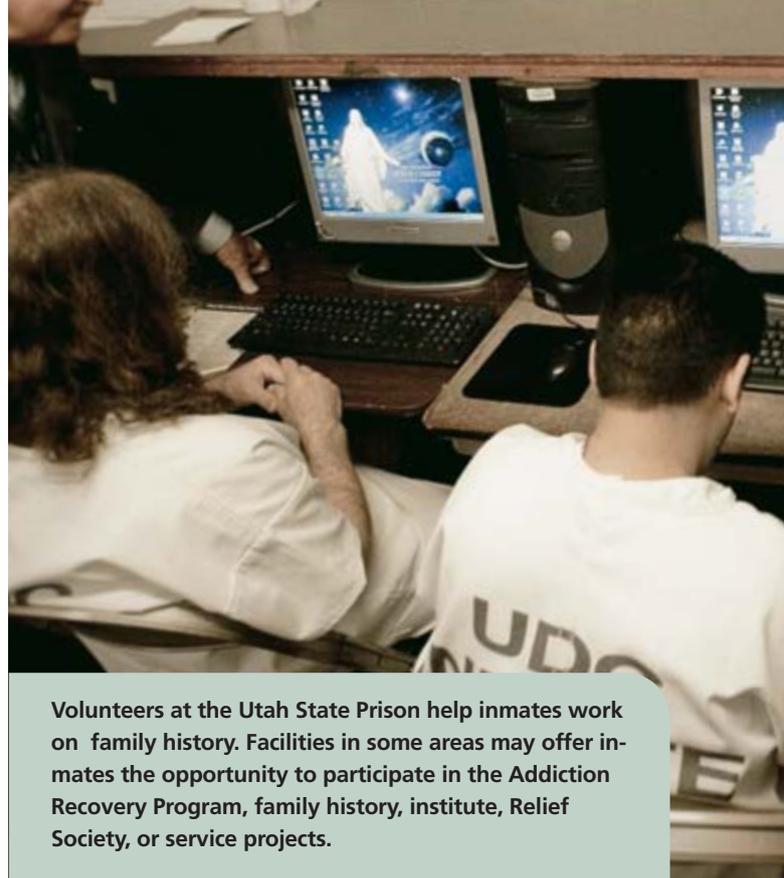


**Bishop Darwin Packard, who presides over a correctional-services branch, has seen the influence of the gospel in the lives of many he has worked with. He says, "They are coming to understand their mistakes and know that they have to change."**

moved to a new place and turned to his ward there for help. The ward took Michael in and helped him know that he belonged. The ward family became his family.

"They want to know that they are still loved," says one bishop who has worked with several former inmates. He points to what President Uchtdorf has taught: "There is *always* a point of safe return [in the gospel]; there is always hope."<sup>4</sup>

This bishop adds: "People who have been incarcerated are children of Heavenly Father too. They have the ability and the right and opportunity to change."



**Volunteers at the Utah State Prison help inmates work on family history. Facilities in some areas may offer inmates the opportunity to participate in the Addiction Recovery Program, family history institute, Relief Society, or service projects.**

## Reaching out to Families Affected by Incarceration

**By Mark Duke**

LDS Family Services

**W**e are given a scriptural mandate to minister to people who are in prison. (See Matthew 25:34–45.)

Following are some ideas of what you can do for those who are imprisoned and for their families.

### For the Person in Prison

- Be aware of—and sensitive to—what the person might be feeling. It's common for incarcerated people to feel fear about their new surroundings, how they'll relate to fellow inmates, potential violence,
- their legal future, and how they'll be able to relate to friends or family members upon their release. Many also experience anger, loneliness, and depression. They worry about being forgotten or the well-being of their families while they are in prison. Acknowledging the inmate's feelings can be helpful to him or her.
- When appropriate, visit or write letters to the inmate. (Be cautious about sharing your contact information, especially in cases where you do not already know the person.) When a member of one ward

went to prison, his bishop and home teacher made regular visits. On a regular basis, the home teacher would report on how the man was doing. The home teacher encouraged others to write to this brother, and occasionally, he would read letters from him. The man wrote touching messages about how he appreciated letters from priesthood quorum members and what their fellowship meant to him. He said he no longer took for granted the brotherhood the quorum offered.

- Give encouragement. In writing a letter, for instance, don't avoid the reality that the person is in prison, but don't dwell

on it either. Instead, share news of your family or the ward as appropriate. Acknowledge that the person's situation is difficult and then give sincere encouragement. Let the person know that you are staying aware of his or her family and their needs. Most people who are in prison will welcome anything you might write.

### Ministering to the Family

- Be accepting. Don't make assumptions about or judge the family based on the actions of one member.
- Recognize that the family member's incarceration may be causing



Volunteers at the Utah State Prison meet to partake of the sacrament and for a brief devotional prior to attending worship services with inmates.

hardship. In some cases, an incarceration might affect a family's income. In other instances, one parent's being in jail will create additional responsibilities for the remaining parent or for another guardian. Being aware of a family's needs can help you know when and how to offer encouragement and resources.

- Graciously ask the family how you can help. They may have unmet needs that aren't obvious to even sensitive observers. Maybe they'll ask for your prayers. Perhaps they could benefit from inclusion in some of your family's activities.
- Don't ignore them. Some members may feel

uncomfortable approaching the family of a prisoner because they're not sure what to say or how to help, so they don't say anything at all. Don't pretend that the family members aren't there. Talk with them. Find out how they're doing. It may be appropriate to ask about the well-being of the person in prison, but focus your efforts on family members and how you might support them. The situation of the person in prison will generally remain the same, but the family will be the ones "plugging away" on a daily basis, facing various challenges that need your sensitive support. ■

### "Follow Thou Me"

Church service missionaries, leaders, and other members throughout the Church are following the example of Jesus Christ by reaching out to those who are incarcerated and seeking spiritual help. Through following the teachings of the Savior, both inmates and the Church members who serve them see how the Atonement of Jesus Christ brings hope and light to the lives of God's children. As healing and change take place in the lives of inmates, the lives of those who serve them also change. "I feel like I have done something significant for my Heavenly Father," says Brother Lines. ■

#### NOTES

1. Boyd K. Packer, "The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 20.
2. James E. Faust, "The Power to Change," *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 123.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Point of Safe Return," *Ensign*, May 2007, p. 100, 101.
4. Uchtdorf, "Point of Safe Return," 101.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

In collaboration with Welfare Services at Church headquarters, LDS Family Services is responsible for materials and professional resources to assist those in correctional institutions and their families. For assistance, contact LDS Correctional Services at 1-800-453-3860, ext. 2-2644, or [correctionalservices@ldschurch.org](mailto:correctionalservices@ldschurch.org).

Priesthood leaders can also find information at [LDS.org](http://LDS.org), clicking on Serving in the Church, and choosing Melchizedek Priesthood. Select "Support for Those in Correctional Facilities" on the right side of the page. Additionally, information on the Correctional Services helpline is available in the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1*.

See companion article written by a former prison bishop at [ensign.lds.org](http://ensign.lds.org).



# Faith

## IN THE

*I may have been unemployed, but the Lord still had work for me to do.*

**By A. Brent Hammond**

It was the week before the Thanksgiving holiday in 2003. Things were going well. My wife and I had a daughter on a mission, and her weekly letters home were among the many blessings we enjoyed. Our testimonies grew as each week she shared her experiences with us. Indeed, the Lord was truly blessing us.

Then came that terrible day when I went to work as usual, only to be told my position had been eliminated after nearly 10 years of continuous employment. As I drove home I was filled with anguish and uncertainty. Breaking the news to my wife was also difficult, but as I did so, she gave me a hug and assured me that things would work out. Now we were faced with the uncertainty of how to keep a roof over our head, pay the bills, and keep our daughter funded as she served her mission. I would be receiving severance pay for a short time, but it wouldn't last long.

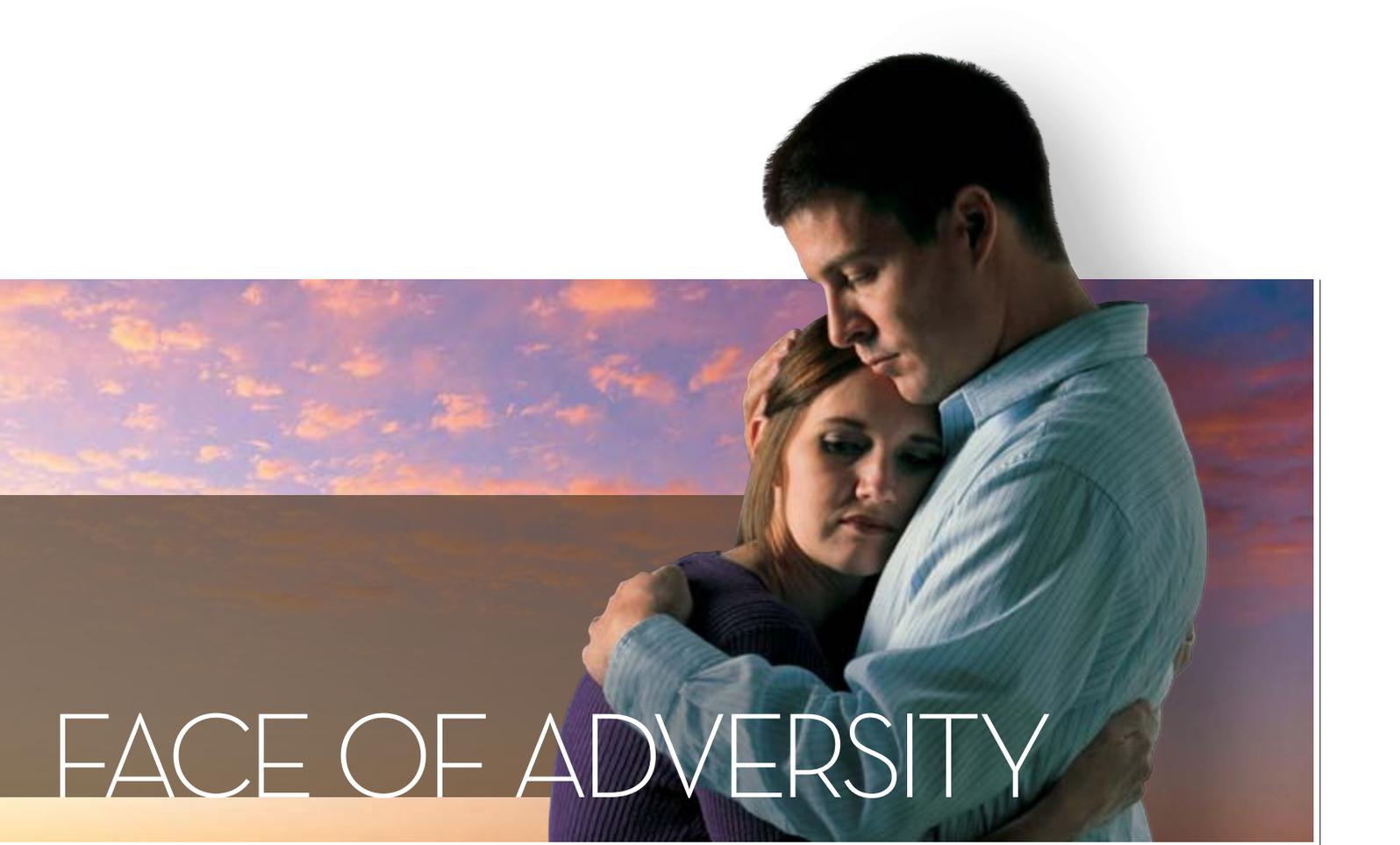
As my wife and I discussed these problems, we prayed. Afterward I felt impressed that as we dealt with this, it was more important than ever to put the Lord

first. Our tithing should always be the first thing we paid, followed by funding our daughter's mission. After that, we would pay our other bills.

We also agreed that we should continue to put the Lord first in other ways, diligently serving in our Church callings and serving others around us. In addition, I promised to do my part by searching diligently for a new job. I was confident that if we did these things, the Lord would bless us.

And so my wife put even greater effort into her calling as ward Relief Society secretary. She organized attendance and visiting teaching records, made phone calls, taught lessons, and helped fill the gap when members of the presidency were ill. The two of us also began singing in the ward choir.

For my part, I spent additional hours each week preparing the Gospel Doctrine lessons I taught. I also tried to help others around me when there were opportunities to do so. One day I prayed for the opportunity to serve



# FACE OF ADVERSITY

someone in need, only to receive a call a few minutes later from my brother who lived out of state. He told me that the wife of his close friend was in a hospital not far from my home, and the husband did not know whom to call to help him administer a priesthood blessing. Within a few minutes I was there to assist him.

Such were our days and weeks. Each day, I applied for several jobs, some online and some in person. Occasionally I was interviewed, but there was nothing that seemed solid or promising. I felt a sense of urgency as our money began to run out. My desperation began to reflect itself in the types of jobs I applied for, especially where my skills and abilities were well beyond those required.

My heart was heavy as I got down on my knees one day and prayed for a miracle, explaining that we had done all we could and that we

***As we sought to put the Lord first, we felt confident in calling on Him for blessings.***

just did not know what else to do. That very afternoon, I received a phone call from a lady who filled positions for several different client companies. She had acquired my resume and application and told me that I was even better qualified for a different position she was trying to fill—one that paid much more. In fact, the pay was almost equal to that of my previous job. The day after I met with her for a preliminary interview, I was interviewed by the client company, and shortly thereafter was offered the job.

I don't know why our solution came relatively soon compared to others who have been without work for much longer. I do know that as we sought to put the Lord first, we felt confident in calling on Him for blessings. I also know that whatever the adversity and however long it may last, He does not forget us. He knows our true needs and He blesses us according to His infinite wisdom. ■

## DADDY, BAPTIZE ME!

**W**hen I walked in the door one evening, Jessie, my six-year-old daughter, was sitting on a stool in our kitchen. Her countenance worried me. I asked her what had happened.

“Daddy, is it true that I’m a child of the devil?” she asked with deep concern.

Her question hit me like a bucket of cold water. Jessie said her friend’s three-month-old sister had already been baptized. Jessie was surprised and asked her friend why her little sister had been baptized at such a young age. Her friend replied that all babies had to be baptized.

“You haven’t been baptized?” her friend then asked. When Jessie said no, her friend insisted that she was a child of the devil.

“Daddy, baptize me!” Jessie implored. “I don’t want to be a child of the devil!”

I realized that this challenge needed to be resolved immediately. I explained the importance of baptism and how children need no baptism until they are eight years old (see Moroni 8:11–23). Because she was only six years old, I told Jessie she would have to wait a little longer before her baptism. I assured her that she was a child of

God and that He loved her. Her question led us to Moroni 10:4–5, where Moroni tells us how we can determine “the truth of all things.”

After reading these verses, I asked if she wanted to pray to Heavenly Father and ask Him if the things we had talked about were true. She said yes.

We knelt together, and Jessie bowed her head and prayed, “Heavenly Father, I want to know if the things my daddy has told me are true. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”

I realized I had led my daughter to say one of the most important prayers of her life. I began pleading in my

heart as I had never done before, asking Heavenly Father to answer her prayer.

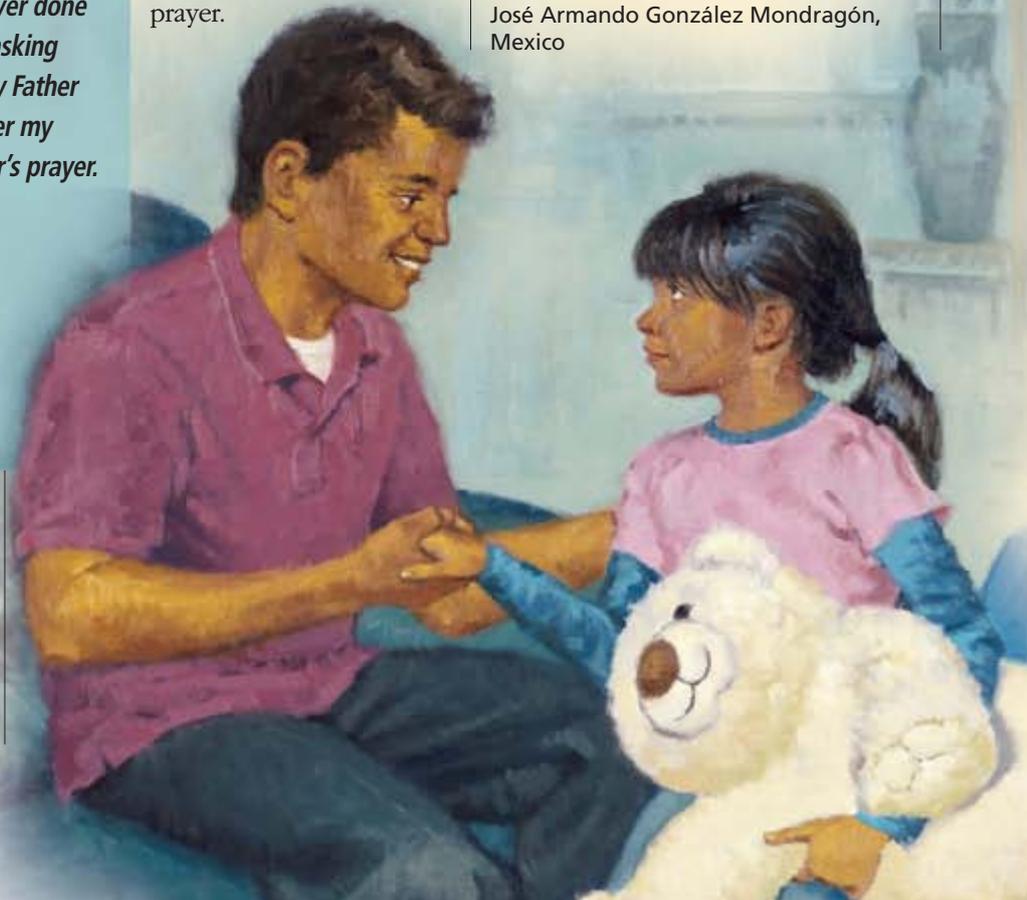
*I began pleading in my heart as I had never done before, asking Heavenly Father to answer my daughter’s prayer.*

After a few minutes, she said, “I didn’t hear anything.” I took her in my arms and said, “Heavenly Father gave us the Comforter, who answers us with . . .” I put my hand on my heart. She interrupted me and said, “With a warm feeling in my chest! I feel it, Daddy!”

I hugged her tightly and thanked Heavenly Father for answering her prayer. I also felt a burning in my bosom. I told Jessie that what she had felt was an answer to her prayer and that now she knew she was a daughter of God and that she should be baptized when she was eight. She told me she would wait.

Many years have passed since that experience, but it still reminds me that Heavenly Father keeps His promises. ■

José Armando González Mondragón,  
Mexico





## TRADING MY FEAR FOR LOVE

I saw him riding the bus every day on my way home from the university. He always wore the same baggy T-shirt, worn-out tennis shoes, and big smile. And he always sat by himself. He was a special passenger, though, because he was mentally challenged.

Every day the Spirit prompted me to say hello to him. Every day, however, my pride stopped me. I was afraid that someone might see me associating with someone different from everyone else. After all, I had a reputation to keep.

One winter afternoon, when the Spirit was especially strong and my courage was a little greater, I got on the bus, saw him in his usual spot, and sat down next to him—not too close in case I chickened out. When I was almost to my stop, I closed my eyes, said a silent prayer, and turned to him.

“Hi,” I said in an insecure but friendly voice, “I’m Ashley.”

When he smiled at me, my fear and pride immediately melted away. “I’m Lenny,” he shyly replied.

With those few words, we began a bond of friendship.

The next day I sat next to Lenny again, but it was easier—we were friends. As I sat down, he reached into his backpack and pulled out a handmade Valentine’s Day card. It was addressed to “The pretty girl I see on the bus every day.”

Valentine’s Day was long passed, but Lenny had made this special card for me and had been patiently waiting for the opportunity to give it to me. I couldn’t keep the tears from trickling down my cheeks. How grateful I was that the Spirit hadn’t given up on me and that I had finally put aside my

pride and faced my fear of talking to Lenny.

Now he comes to Sunday dinner every week and has become like another member of my family. Every day Lenny helps me remember the blessings that come from forgetting pride and having courage to do what is right. Seeing him every day reminds me of 1 John 4:18:

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear.” ■

Ashley Johnson Evanson, Utah, USA

## MY BROTHER’S FRENCH HORN

I grew up to the sound of my older brother practicing his French horn. Day after day, year after year, the sound of his horn emanated from our house. I could even hear it blocks away when I walked home from elementary school.

If challenged, I would surely have contended that my brother was the best French horn player there ever was. Nevertheless, his constant playing embarrassed me sometimes, and once I asked my mother to make him stop. He would even bring his French horn on vacation!

Years later my brother and I found ourselves at a music competition in northern California on the campus of a big university I’d never been to

before. While there, my high school madrigal group earned a top ranking, which meant we got to do an encore performance later that day. We were given directions as to where and when to meet, and we all went on our way. Soon I found myself alone, standing in the middle of the campus looking at all the tall buildings. I couldn't see anyone I knew, but I remembered what my mother had told me to do if I ever got lost: "Stay where you are."

I stayed but was too shy to ask for directions; besides, I didn't know where I was going. I couldn't remember anything we'd been told about where or when to meet. But suddenly the thought occurred to me to ask Heavenly Father for help. I was not a member of the Church at the time, but I had attended church regularly with my Latter-day Saint friends and had been taught that Heavenly Father answers prayers.

So I stood there and silently prayed in my heart. Before I had even said amen, my ears perked up. Far off in the distance, ever so quietly, I heard a familiar sound—a sound I had heard most of my life. As I started walking in the direction of the music, it grew louder. Could it be my brother's French horn? I was sure of it.

But then other French horns started playing. I hesitated. Did I really think I could tell which of all those horns was my brother's? Every time I doubted, however, I heard his horn, as if beckoning to me. As I entered a building, climbed the stairs, and got closer to the

music, I grew scared. The thought of opening the wrong door to find someone I didn't know made my face turn red. When I reached the third floor, I listened one more time, made my decision, took a deep breath, and opened the door. There he was!

Heavenly Father gives us His Spirit to teach us, testify to us, protect us, and guide us to safety when we feel alone and abandoned. We learn His voice by hearing it often and becoming so familiar with it that we can recognize it in the midst of many other voices that would lead us astray.

We should not be embarrassed by His voice or hesitate to follow it. If we ask Heavenly Father for His help and then listen, ready to obey, I know we will hear Him. ■

Sandy Lauderdale Cane, Missouri, USA

## LEAVE THE PARTY!

**A** number of years ago I had a chance to represent the state of Utah at a nationwide convention in Ohio attended by high school swimmers.

Our stay included parties for the athletes. When I went to a party the first night, I thought it was going to be like the fun parties we held back home—drinking root beer and playing games. But as soon as I walked into the room, I got a reality check.

Immediately, I understood what the articles in the Church magazines

were talking about when they said, "You will stand out when you are the only member of the Church." Somehow my fellow athletes had already figured out that I was a Latter-day Saint. The room grew quiet, and everyone seemed to be staring at me as I dug into the chip bowl.

"Hey," someone said, "you're a Mormon, aren't you?"

I smiled proudly and said, "I sure am, and I'm happy to be one."

The party then resumed, but I felt

**W**hen I grabbed my swim bag and headed for the door, one of the boys yelled, "Hey, are you wimping out on us?"



many eyes on me, watching my every move. After a while, the party began to get wild. I wasn't sure how wild it would become, but I didn't want to be part of it. If I stayed, I feared I would give people the wrong impression about my standards. Besides, the Spirit prompted me to leave. When I grabbed my swim bag and headed for the door, one of the boys yelled, "Hey, are you wimping out on us?"

I just smiled and said, "See you guys tomorrow." I then walked out, feeling good that I had made my presence known while

defending the Lord's standards.

The next day during a house of delegates meeting, one of the delegates rose and sternly said, "Something happened last night that I don't ever want to happen again. You're here to represent your state, so do it well and act appropriately!"

Then he added, "Some of you left and didn't take part in what happened. Thank you."

For the rest of the week, I received more respect and friendly expressions than I had ever received before. Many coaches from across the United States urged me to run for an athlete-representative position for the western states because I had represented Utah well.

I never found out what happened at the party, but I'm grateful that the Spirit prompted me to leave. ■

Sonrisa Oles Hasselbach, California, USA

## I AM PROUD OF YOU

**A**s missionaries in Ghana, we washed our clothes by hand on preparation day. Elder Moss, my companion who had recently arrived from the United States, had not experienced this way of doing laundry. But being a native of Ghana, I was used to it.

Every Monday Elder Moss set out to scrub his clothes, but about halfway through the job, his hands and knuckles would start

bleeding. I would then need to take over his work, in addition to finishing my own.

One Monday when washing time came around, Elder Moss seemed a bit worried. I had injured my hand the previous day, and he knew that I was not going to be able to help him with his laundry. I wouldn't even be able to do my own. He started his washing, but as usual, he needed help halfway through.

Since I couldn't help my companion with the actual washing, I encouraged him to endure—to let his hands rest and then keep trying. He stopped for a time and then continued. I told him he could find a way to finish. His hands and knuckles were still sore, but he pushed on. When the washing was completed, he said, "I am proud of myself. Elder Asante, are you proud of me?"

"Yes, of course I am proud of you," I answered.

As I have thought about this incident, I realized that Heavenly Father knows our potential, but He tests us so we can develop diligence, patience, and faithfulness. He is pleased with us when we make righteous choices and prove that we can bear our afflictions.

When we work hard and endure the trials placed before us, we can say, "Heavenly Father, art Thou proud of me?" I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are pleased when we endure and that They will tell us so one day when They welcome us home. ■

Richard Domeng Asante, Ghana





By Adam Kirkpatrick

**J**oy, anticipation, and anxiety engulfed my wife, Arlene, and me as we prepared for the arrival of our third child. But one day it appeared that our dreams might be dashed.

We were at our home in Georgia, USA, when we realized that Arlene's heart was beating more than 250 beats per minute. This continued for an hour. Knowing that a normal heart rate ranges between 70 and 150 beats per minute, I made an emergency call, and medical help soon arrived. After examining Arlene, the paramedics explained that they would need to inject her with a medication that would stop her heart temporarily. The medication would wear off quickly, allowing her heart to restart, hopefully at a normal rate. This procedure was fairly common in the medical field, but the paramedics were a bit concerned about the unborn baby.

I held Arlene's hand while the medical personnel injected her with the solution. She grimaced with pain, and I felt a terrible fear for her and our baby. But then

# WOULD SHE LIVE?

Arlene looked at me with tears in her eyes and said, "It's okay, Adam. I know that my Redeemer lives."

The Spirit filled the room, and I could not restrain my tears—not because of fear or sorrow, but because of my great joy and comfort in the living God. It struck me that

Arlene could have said many things about the Savior. She could have testified of Him by saying, "I know that Christ died for me." But she knew an even greater truth, and that knowledge gave us peace.

A few seconds later, Arlene's heart resumed its regular rhythm. She was taken to the hospital's emergency room and examined to ensure that her health—and the baby's—were intact. All was well, and a few weeks later our daughter, Rebecca Grace, was born.

Arlene later told me that she had been singing the lyrics of the hymn "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" (*Hymns*, no. 136) in her mind while the medicine was affecting her heart. I am so grateful for Arlene and for the beautiful way she expressed her testimony at a crisis point in our lives. ■



## FHE for Young Single Adults

As part of my calling in a student ward in Lincoln, Nebraska, USA, I help plan and coordinate weekly family home evenings for the entire ward. Here are examples of some of our more successful ideas:

- **General Conference**

**Testimonies:** After general conference, we have an informal testimony meeting of what we learned or impressions we had during general conference, then play “General Conference Jeopardy.”

- **Skit Night:** We bring a variety of random props and divide members into different groups. We give them a theme, and then they act out an improvised skit using the props

they have been given.

- **Lesson on the Iron Rod:**

After discussing the need to hold to the word of God, each of us goes through the “iron rod” obstacle course. We are blindfolded and follow a string line (the iron rod) around various physical obstacles in order to safely reach the finish.

- **Service Auction:**

Members donate “services” they are willing to offer that can be auctioned off. The currency with which they bid is “earned” through things they’ve done in the preceding week: reading the scriptures, writing in journals, and other tasks all earn “money” that can be used in the auction.

- **Sports:** We enjoy popular sports like soccer or basketball, but variations on these games, such as “chair soccer,” are also fun. We try to maintain a balance of activities that include service, physical activity, arts and culture, and spiritual instruction. And of course, we always include a hymn, opening and closing prayers, a spiritual thought, and ward announcements at each activity.

I am convinced that family home evening is an essential part of the Lord’s work in our day, even in a young single adult setting. It strengthens the valiant, encourages the apathetic, develops positive friendships, and attracts the pure in heart to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Gavin Parker, Nebraska, USA

For more ideas, see [ensign.lds.org/FHE](http://ensign.lds.org/FHE)



ILLUSTRATION BY BETH WHITTAKER

### HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

**“All Things in Wisdom and Order,” on page 55:** As you teach the lesson, invite family members to listen for ways to do things “in wisdom and order” as taught by King Benjamin. Consider discussing how following the five principles can help us avoid the trap of comparing ourselves with others.

**Q&A: Ward Unity, on page 48:** After reading some of the experiences from the article, consider having family members role-play different ways to reach out to others in your ward. You could role-play how to take the initiative to get to know those around you. This is a good opportunity to reinforce positive social skills.

**“Being Worthy to Enter the Temple,” on page 12:** As part of the lesson, you could discuss the temple recommend topics listed in the article. Invite family members to ponder these topics as you read the article. Encourage everyone to be worthy of worshipping in the temple.

**“Finding Ourselves in Lehi’s Dream,” on page 26:** Review the article with your family. At the conclusion, President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, asks us to reread 1 Nephi 8 and other verses in the Book of Mormon that teach the plan of salvation. Consider reading these scriptures and reflecting on the promise given by President Packer.

# Small & Simple Things

*“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).*

## GREAT LIVES REMEMBERED

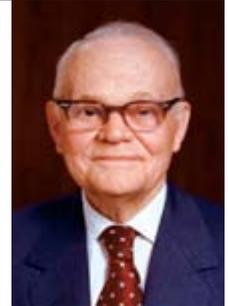
### President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988)

Marion G. Romney was born in the Latter-day Saint community of Colonia Juárez in Mexico and lived there until he was about 15 years old. A political revolution that began in 1910 forced the Romneys and others to leave everything behind and flee to the United States. “We had a difficult time making a living,” President Romney recalled. “We had to root hog or die.”<sup>1</sup> (“Root hog or die” is an American saying that means one must take care of oneself.)

During those difficult years, while living in Oakley, Idaho, Marion’s father and uncle pooled their families’ resources. One month they had just 80 dollars to pay for the needs of 17 people in the two families. Would the Lord understand if they didn’t pay tithing right now? They answered the question by sending young Marion on a cold winter day to deliver the tithing to the bishop. After that, he said, it would never be that hard again to pay tithing.

Marion G. Romney knew both poverty and hard work. He graduated from high school in 1918, attended Ricks College for

*See President Romney’s Gospel Classics address, “Unity,” on page 52.*



two years, and then served a mission in Australia. After his mission he married Ida Jensen in the Salt Lake Temple in 1924. While working, he attended Brigham Young University and later passed the bar exam in 1929 in order to practice law.

As a bishop in Salt Lake City during the depths of the Great Depression, he became heavily involved in the development of the Church’s welfare system. Later, as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and then as an Apostle, he continued to help refine and oversee that program.

From 1972 to 1985 he served in the First Presidency as a counselor to President Harold B. Lee and then to President Spencer W. Kimball. President Romney was President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles when he passed away at age 90.

#### NOTE

1. Marion G. Romney, address given at the Salt Lake Institute of Religion, Oct. 18, 1974.

#### IDEAS FOR SUCCESSFUL MUTUAL ACTIVITIES

- Always have an opening prayer, regardless of what the activity is.
- Help the youth in leadership positions plan and carry out the activities.
- Help make sure that every person in attendance participates.
- Strive to relate Mutual activities to gospel principles.
- Invite everyone to help clean up after the activity.



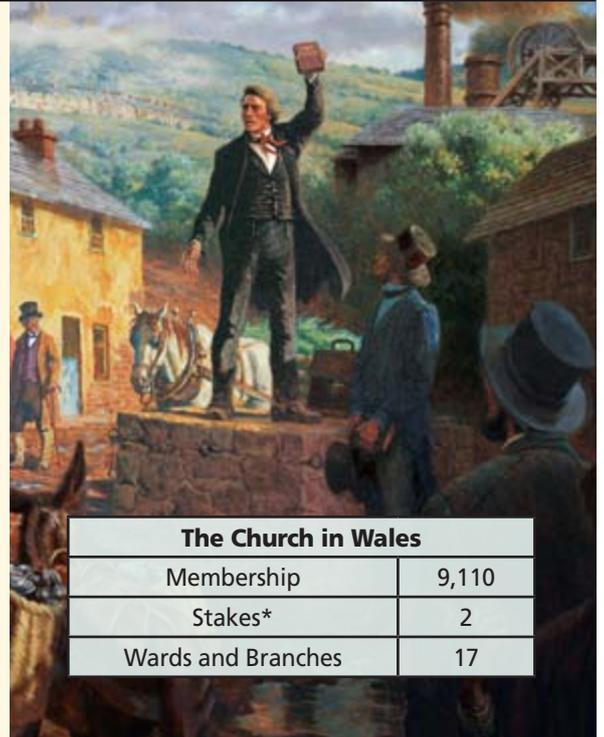
# Wales

Missionaries first arrived in Wales in 1840 and within four months established a congregation of 150 in North Wales. In South Wales, missionaries struggled to find people to teach at first, but within 15 years, 80 percent of Welsh converts were from southern Wales.

In January 1845 Dan Jones, a Welshman who joined the Church in the United States, returned to Wales as a missionary. He began several Church publications and helped strengthen the Church. In 1846 the Welsh hymnbook became the first non-English LDS hymnal. The first LDS meeting-house in Wales was built in 1849. At the time, there were just over 3,600 converts in Wales.

Many of the early Welsh converts immigrated to Utah. Among them was John Parry, who established the choral group that became the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The first stake in Wales, the Merthyr Tydfil stake, was created in 1975.

*\*The Chester England Stake also includes five wards and branches in Wales.*



The Church in Wales	
Membership	9,110
Stakes*	2
Wards and Branches	17

## THE KEY TO JOY

Service is the real key to joy. When one is giving service for the advancement of humanity, when one is working without money and without price, with no hope of earthly reward, there comes a real, genuine joy into the human heart."

**President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945),**  
*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant (2002), 86.*

## Blessings Follow Obedience

After I had investigated the Church for two months, the missionaries taught me about the law of tithing and invited me to pay tithing after I joined the Church. It seemed impossible with my limited income, but before I could tell them how I felt, we ended the discussion.

That Sunday at church, the branch president greeted me. I asked him about tithing, and he promised to meet with me privately after the meeting block.

When we met, I explained, "The missionaries told me that I need to pay one-tenth of my income to the Church when I become a member. I don't know if I can do it."

After listening to my concern, the president opened the Book of Mormon, turned to 3 Nephi 24:10, and read, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Then he said, "Brother Ko, look carefully where the Lord said, 'Prove me now herewith.' That is His invitation to you. Why don't you try Him by paying tithing first thing next month and see if He will not bless you."

Shortly thereafter I began my experiment with tithing and joined the Church. Since that time I have developed a new concept of money management. Most of all, I have learned for myself that God has poured out a blessing, and there has not been room to receive it. I learned that we must keep God's commandments before we can expect His blessings.

Te Kuang Ko, Taiwan



# New Area Leadership Assignments

The First Presidency has announced changes in area leadership assignments effective on August 1, 2010. All members of Area Presidencies are members of the First or Second Quorums of the Seventy except as noted. ■

## Presidency of the Seventy



Ronald A. Rasband  
Assists in All Areas



Claudio R. M. Costa  
1. North America Southwest



Steven E. Snow  
2. Utah North  
3. Utah Salt Lake City  
4. Utah South



Walter F. González  
5. North America Southeast



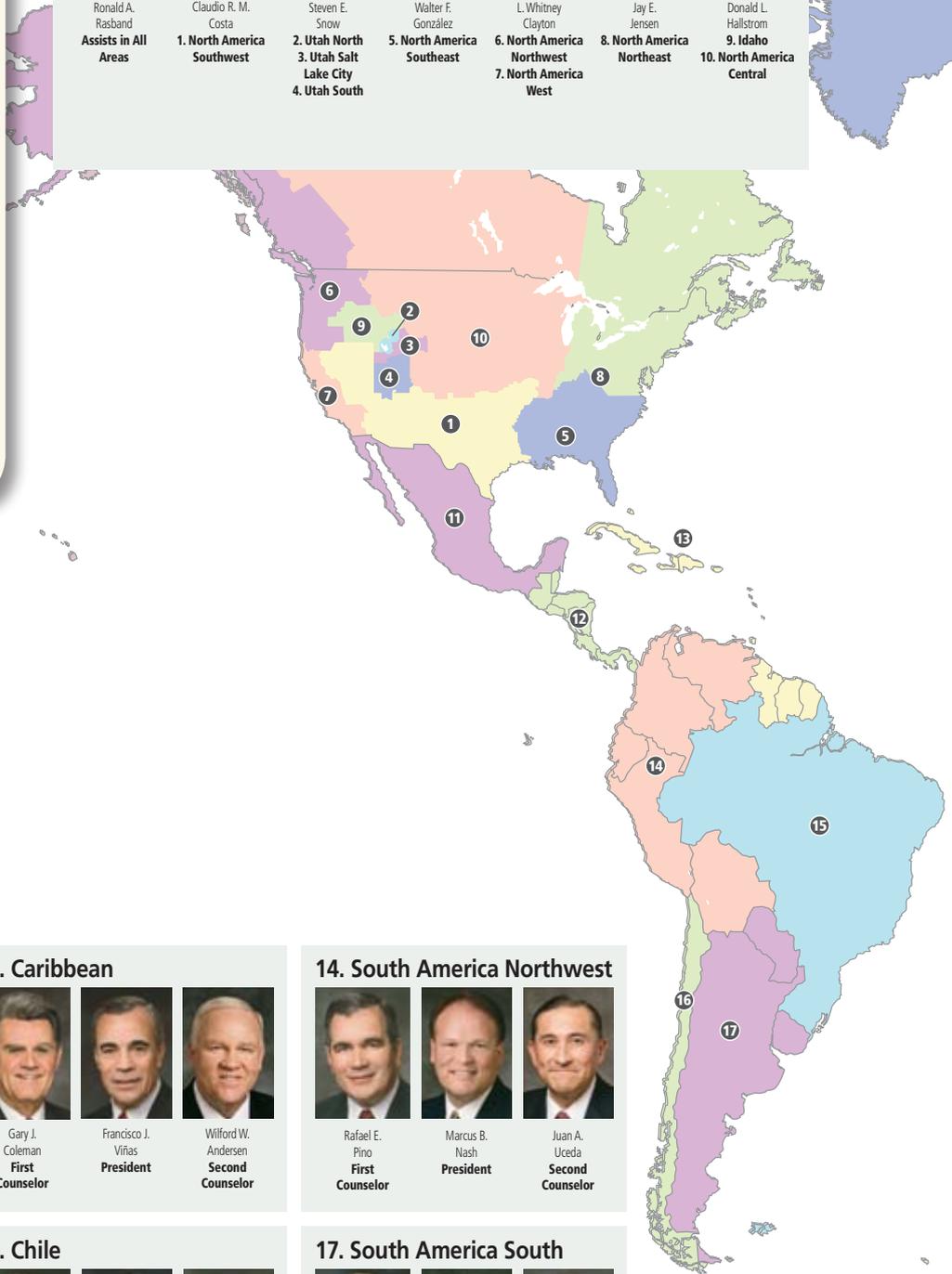
L. Whitney Clayton  
6. North America Northwest  
7. North America West



Jay E. Jensen  
8. North America Northeast



Donald L. Hallstrom  
9. Idaho  
10. North America Central



### 11. Mexico



Benjamin De Hoyos  
First Counselor



Daniel L. Johnson  
President



Octaviano Tenorio  
Second Counselor

### 12. Central America



Enrique R. Falabella  
First Counselor



Don R. Clarke  
President



James B. Martino  
Second Counselor

### 13. Caribbean



Gary J. Coleman  
First Counselor



Francisco J. Viñas  
President



Wilford W. Andersen  
Second Counselor

### 14. South America Northwest



Rafael E. Pino  
First Counselor



Marcus B. Nash  
President



Juan A. Uceda  
Second Counselor

### 15. Brazil



Carlos A. Godoy  
First Counselor



Ulisses Soares  
President



Jairo Mazzagardi  
Second Counselor

### 16. Chile



Lawrence E. Corbridge  
First Counselor



Carlos H. Amado  
President



Jorge F. Zeballos  
Second Counselor

### 17. South America South



Marcos A. Aidukaitis  
First Counselor



Mervyn B. Arnold  
President



Bradley D. Foster  
Second Counselor

\*Area Seventy

### 18. Europe



Gérald Causse  
**First Counselor**

Erich W. Kopischke  
**President**

José A. Teixeira  
**Second Counselor**

### 19. Europe East



Larry R. Lawrence  
**First Counselor**

Gregory A. Schwitzer  
**President**

Aleksandr N. Manzhos\*  
**Second Counselor**

### 20. Middle East/Africa North



Bruce D. Porter  
**Administered From Headquarters**

Paul B. Pieper

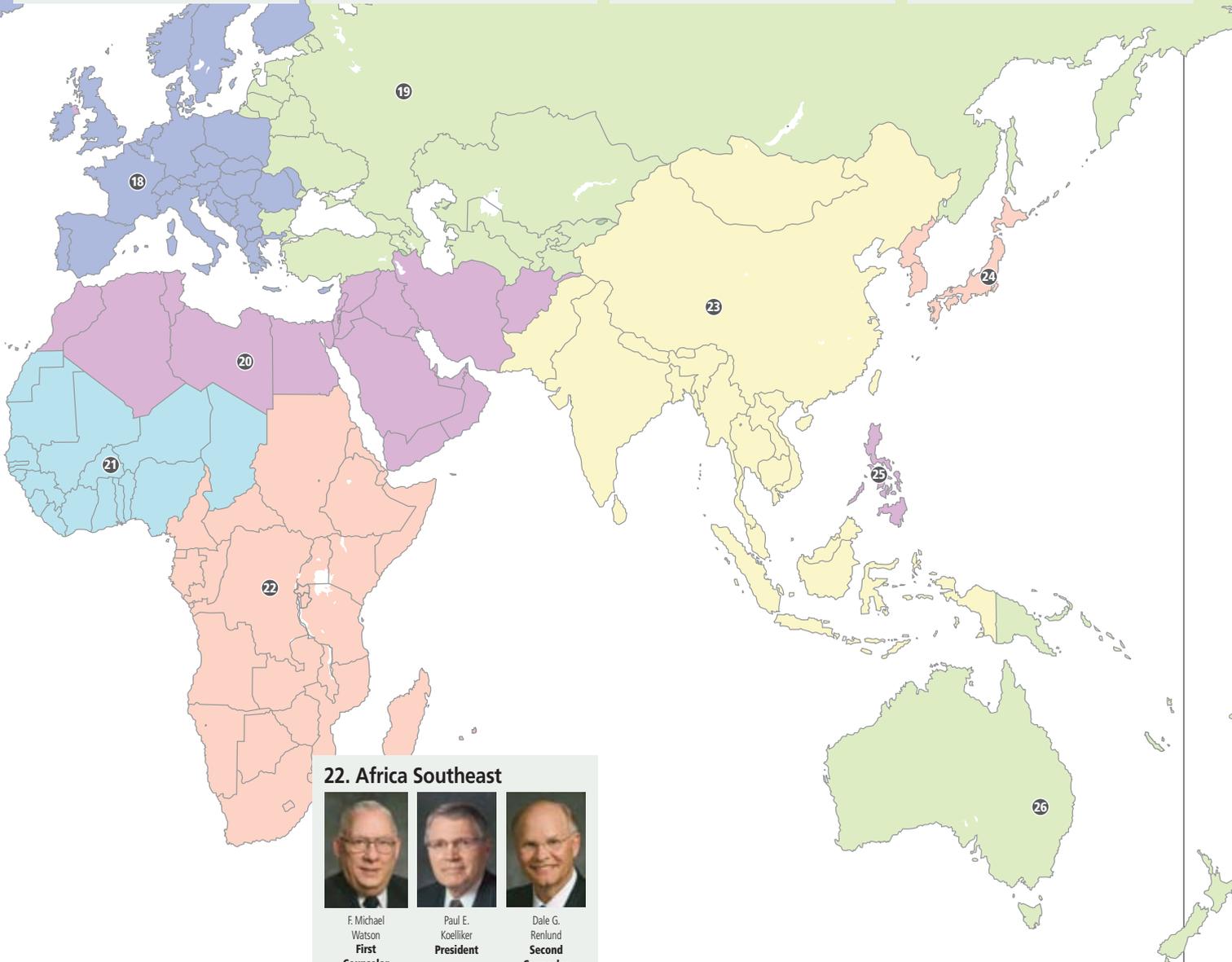
### 21. Africa West



John B. Dickson  
**First Counselor**

Craig A. Cardon  
**President**

Joseph W. Sitati  
**Second Counselor**



### 22. Africa Southeast



F. Michael Watson  
**First Counselor**

Paul E. Koelliker  
**President**

Dale G. Renlund  
**Second Counselor**

### 23. Asia



Kent D. Watson  
**First Counselor**

Anthony D. Perkins  
**President**

Carl B. Pratt  
**Second Counselor**

### 24. Asia North



Yoon Hwan Choi  
**First Counselor**

Gary E. Stevenson  
**President**

Koichi Aoyagi  
**Second Counselor**

### 25. Philippines



Won Yong Ko  
**First Counselor**

Keith R. Edwards  
**President**

Michael John U. Teh  
**Second Counselor**

### 26. Pacific



James J. Hamula  
**First Counselor**

Tad R. Callister  
**President**

Brent H. Nielson  
**Second Counselor**

# New Orleans Members Exemplify the Rescue

By Lauren Allen

Church Magazines

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina left the New Orleans area of the United States under as much as 15 feet (4.6 m) of water; homes were destroyed and many lives left in shambles.

Five years later, the recovery of the New Orleans First Ward is evidence of how, through the members of the Church, the Savior provides both physical and spiritual rescue to those in need.

## A Time of Need

The physical damage Hurricane Katrina spread across the southeastern United States was worse than anticipated; its economic damages were unprecedented. The city of New Orleans, in particular, and its people were devastated.

Many lives were lost (more than 1,400). Many others watched their lives seem to disappear before their eyes as the storm washed away their homes and livelihoods. Thousands were left homeless.

Temporary shelters, including the Louisiana Superdome, housed approximately 26,000 people, including many who no longer had a home. LDS

meetinghouses provided refuge for 4,000 people, in some cases for several weeks. Crime rates soared; so did hopelessness.

Four months after Katrina, sacrament meetings were again organized within the city of New Orleans in the only meetinghouse still usable of the three in the New Orleans stake. With many members having been forced to move away and some having drifted away spiritually, an average of 15 to 20 people attended the meetings. Consequently, the New Orleans First Ward, the Chalmette Ward, and the Uptown Branch were reorganized as the New Orleans First Branch.

## Spiritual and Physical Rescue

As with the people of Limhi in the Book of Mormon, often temporal and spiritual rescue go hand in hand (see Mosiah 21:22–36). During this time of need in the Gulf Coast, the Lord's Church offered both immediate and long-term temporal and spiritual support to many who felt defeated and lost.

*Members came from hundreds of miles away to help clean up after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast of the United States in 2005.*



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

Temporally, with thousands of refugees throughout the area in need of assistance immediately following the hurricane, the Church responded with shipments of food, water, tarps, and other emergency supplies. Bishops' storehouses throughout the region provided everyday commodities free of charge. Members from hundreds of miles away traveled to the area to help with clean-up efforts.

For months teams from LDS Family Services assisted anyone who needed trauma and grief counseling, and as time wore on, Church employment resource services specialists played a major role in assisting people who had lost their jobs.

With regard to the spiritual rescue, the Lord sent rescuers both from among members in the area as well as from the outside.

One of those who felt led to the area was Terry Seamons, who was prompted to come out of retirement to take a job in New Orleans only a few months after the hurricane. Within three months he was called as president of the New Orleans First Branch.

He said there were many who responded to the promptings of the Spirit to move back to New Orleans to help rebuild the Lord's Church and rescue His people. They, along with many members who had endured the heartbreaking disaster, resolved to reach out.

Members who had the means to get to Church meetings took time to pick up those who did not. Home teachers kept careful watch over their families. One home teacher spent time each day with a less-active brother, teaching him how to read so he could study the scriptures. Their love and examples influenced missionary efforts in the New Orleans area.

"People took care of each other and strengthened each other," then President Seamons said. "We have had amazing stories of people wanting to find out more about the Savior."

### **A People Restored**

Five years have passed since the hurricane hit New Orleans. The downtown area has recovered



PHOTOGRAPH BY GLORIA SEAMONS

*Five years after Hurricane Katrina, Bishop Terry Seamons (second from right), his counselors, and many other faithful members have helped rebuild the Church in New Orleans.*

greatly from the hurricane, and the city is growing quickly.

President Scott Conlin of the New Orleans Louisiana Stake said the stake has also grown since Katrina. He attributes some of this growth to members' rescue efforts within the stake. The influence of the members brought inactive families back to church. "We see the arm of fellowship reaching out all the time," President Conlin said. "People are reaching out to those who are less fortunate."

Evidence of this spiritual rescue came when the New Orleans First Branch grew to average more than 125 members attending each week and was reorganized at the end of 2009 into a ward again, with President Seamons as bishop.

However, according to Bishop Seamons, the real evidence of the rescue can be seen "in the lives of those who have accepted the invitation to follow the Lord."

President Conlin agrees. "We see evidence of the rescue in measures of Church growth, including convert baptisms, sacrament meeting attendance, and becoming worthy for and renewing temple recommends," he said.

Natural catastrophes become a catalyst in people's lives, President Conlin believes. "It either brings out the best in them, and they become more humble and teachable, or it brings out the negative in them."

Members of the New Orleans First Ward and across the Gulf Coast have exemplified the best, living in gratitude for the blessings they've received and seeking to bless others. ■

## IN THE NEWS

### Elder Donald L. Staheli Passes Away

Elder Donald L. Staheli, a former member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy, passed away on May 29, 2010, due to cancer. He was 78 years old and was serving as president of the Draper Utah Temple at his death.

Elder Staheli was born on October 19, 1931, to Lafayette and Grace Sullivan Staheli. He married Afton Stratton on September 24, 1952, in the St. George Utah Temple. They



*Elder Donald L. Staheli*

have three daughters and a son.

As a Seventy, Elder Staheli served in the presidencies of the North America Northeast and North America Central Areas. He was released in 2006. He and his wife were called as the first president and matron of the Draper Utah Temple in March 2009.

### Updated Temple Booklet Coming in October

Subscribers to the *Liahona* and *Ensign* magazines will receive the revised booklet, *Temples of The Church of Jesus*

*Christ of Latter-day Saints*, in place of the October 2010 issue.

New articles include “Blessings of the Temple,” by President Thomas S. Monson, and “Prepare for the Blessings of the Temple,” by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The booklet contains answers to commonly asked questions and photo essays highlighting temples throughout the world.

The booklet will be available in 45 languages through Church distribution centers and LDScatalog.com. ■

## TEMPLE BRIEFS

### Vancouver Temple Dedicated

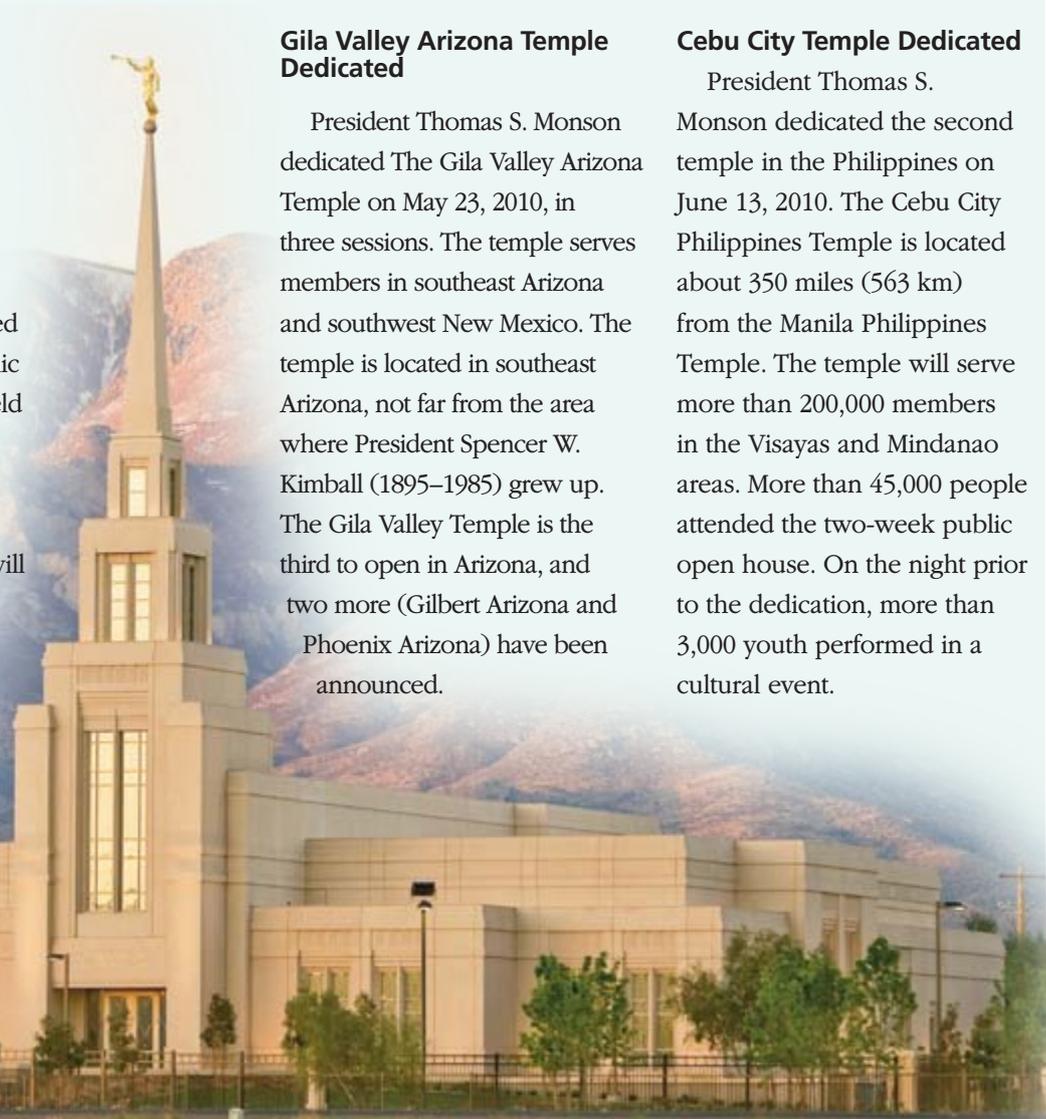
President Thomas S. Monson dedicated the Church’s 131st temple just outside Vancouver, British Columbia, on May 2, 2010. Nearly 40,000 people toured the temple during the public open house, which was held two months after the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver. The Vancouver British Columbia Temple will serve members in British Columbia and northern Washington, USA. The Church now has seven planned or operating temples in Canada.

### Gila Valley Arizona Temple Dedicated

President Thomas S. Monson dedicated The Gila Valley Arizona Temple on May 23, 2010, in three sessions. The temple serves members in southeast Arizona and southwest New Mexico. The temple is located in southeast Arizona, not far from the area where President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) grew up. The Gila Valley Temple is the third to open in Arizona, and two more (Gilbert Arizona and Phoenix Arizona) have been announced.

### Cebu City Temple Dedicated

President Thomas S. Monson dedicated the second temple in the Philippines on June 13, 2010. The Cebu City Philippines Temple is located about 350 miles (563 km) from the Manila Philippines Temple. The temple will serve more than 200,000 members in the Visayas and Mindanao areas. More than 45,000 people attended the two-week public open house. On the night prior to the dedication, more than 3,000 youth performed in a cultural event.



# In Other Church Magazines

## THE NEW ERA



### Duty to God

An important message from David L. Beck, Young Men General President, announcing the new Duty to God program for Aaronic priesthood holders. See “The Lesser Priesthood—Greater than You Might Think,” on page 6.



### Sharing the Gospel

A young missionary loses his father and meets the challenge of teaching the plan of salvation to others when the plan is now so precious to his own family. See “Losing My Father” by Chris Deaver, on page 42.

## THE FRIEND



### Learn to Play

The August 2010 *Friend* includes a feature on pages 24 and 25 that gives you and your children ideas about how you can put on a play in your home. You’ll get a chance to test your newfound knowledge by performing the play included on pages 26–27, “Naaman Learns to Obey.”

### Faith in God

The *Friend* includes a “Faith in God Challenge” on page 23 that invites children to use their scriptures to learn more about King Benjamin’s address in Mosiah 2:1–6:2. Completing the activity will help children move closer to completing their Faith in God requirements.



## COMMENTS

### INSPIRING ARTICLE

I just wanted to thank the author of “Nephi’s Story, My Story” (*Ensign*, Apr. 2010, 26–28). I read that article very early in the morning while struggling with some challenges of my own, and it helped to melt my heart and inspire me in answer to my prayers. Thank you so much.

**John Michaelson  
Nevada, USA**

### CORRECTIONS IN MAY 2010

On page 134 a sentence about the Conference Center should have said that the trusses “would be capable of supporting loads between 250 and 525 pounds per square foot (1,221 to 2,563 kilograms per square meter).

The third sentence in the caption on the inside front cover should have read: “Here the Prophet Joseph translated much of the Book of Mormon.”

# TIE A KNOT AND HANG ON

By Karen Paul

I grew up in a small town in Canada. When I was 13, my father lost his job and our family relocated to Edmonton in order to survive. A few months after we moved to the city, my mother and father had a violent argument, resulting in my mother being hospitalized for six months. After a time, she allowed my father back into our household. This devastated me, and I turned to alcohol and drugs to escape the anger welling up inside.

At precisely this time, the missionaries found me. As I met families in the local ward, I was impressed with the respect the spouses had for one another and the affection parents showed their children. At age 16 I was baptized.

My first year of membership demonstrated that I would have to endure some growing pains. I had left behind the friendships and lifestyle that had served as my escape from the violence in my home. Unfortunately, my ward did not seem to offer the comfort of new friendships to fill in the gaps. I didn't feel accepted and was ready to return to my old way of life when a missionary challenged me to stay true to my baptismal covenants. I reluctantly recommitted myself, but I felt as though I was hanging on to a rope that was slipping through my fingers.

Soon afterward I was called to be Laurel class president. I felt very inadequate; there were several Laurels in the ward who were far more qualified. When my new calling was announced, one of the girls in the ward expressed her dissatisfaction. "How could they call you?" she said. "You hardly attend church. What do you know?"

She was right; I didn't know anything. I felt sure my calling would drive many of the Laurels to inactivity—including me. The whole situation seemed too much to bear. If anyone was at the end of her rope, I was.

When I met with my class adviser, Marlene Evans, I told her that someone had made a huge error. However, she assured me that I had been called for a reason. She began to work tirelessly with me, and I went to her home on a regular basis to learn my responsibilities. With her encouragement, I could eventually conduct a meeting without my knees knocking together.

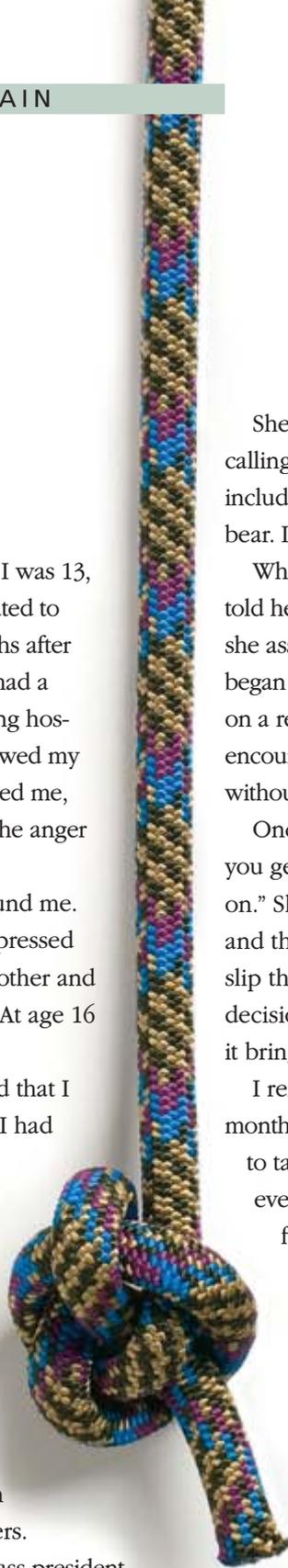
Once Sister Evans gave me a card that read, "When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on." She indicated that the rope represented life, and that by not taking righteous actions, we let life slip through our fingers. The knot represented the decision to hang on to the gospel and the security it brings.

I remembered that lesson throughout the coming months. I was attending high school full-time in addition to taking correspondence courses. I was working evenings and Saturdays. I paid for my own tuition, fees, books, clothes, and room and board. There were many times I felt I was at the end of my rope. Was I a super kid, doing it all and by myself? No, but I tied a knot and held on.

Today, I am a university graduate, working as a social worker. I married in the temple and have four children. They have been to the temple and have served missions. And I have served in leadership positions in the Young Women organization. Each time I do, I take every opportunity I can to share Sister

Evans's message with the youth. Her caring and her message changed my life.

I wouldn't have the abundant blessings I enjoy today if I hadn't learned to tie a knot and hang on. ■





## WORDS OF CHRIST

*The Lost Lamb*, by N. C. Wyeth

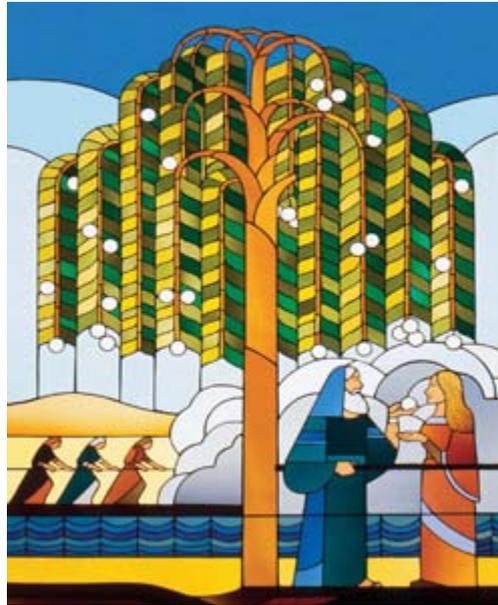
*“What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?*

*“And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.*

*“And when he cometh home, he calleth together*

*his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.*

*“I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Luke 15:4–7).*



You may think that Lehi's dream or vision has no special meaning for you, but it does," writes President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "You are in it; all of us are in it." See "Finding Ourselves in Lehi's Dream," page 20.