

Ensign



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**Gospel Growth in
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The Gathering, by Joshua Wallace Jensen

In 1997, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the pioneers on July 24, 1847, modern-day Latter-day Saint “pioneers” reenacted the trek from Winter Quarters, Nebraska, to the Salt Lake Valley. This image is based on that reenactment. The hymn “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” written by William Clayton in 1846, applies to both groups of pioneers:

Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear;
But with joy wend your way.
Though hard to you this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
'Tis better far for us to strive
Our useless cares from us to drive;
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—All is well! All is well!
(*Hymns*, no. 30)

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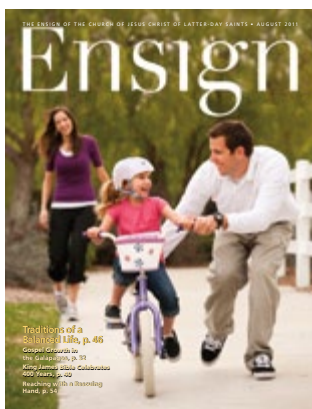
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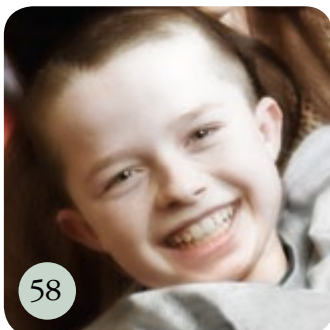
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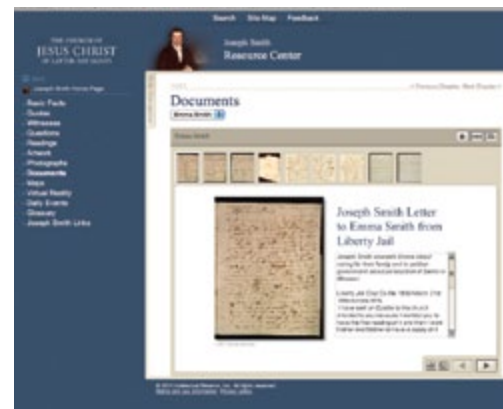
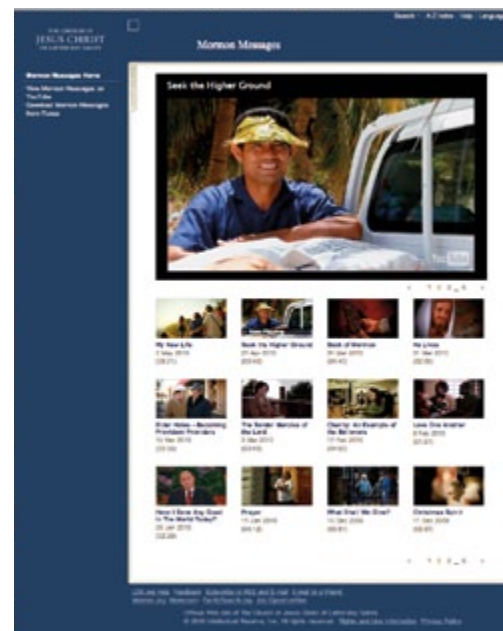
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By President
Thomas S. Monson



Love at Home

COUNSEL FROM OUR PROPHET

Blessed Family Life

“When we have sampled much and have wandered far and have seen how fleeting and sometimes superficial a lot of the world is, our gratitude grows for the privilege of being part of something we can count on—home and family and the loyalty of loved ones. We come to know what it means to be bound together by duty, by respect, by belonging. We learn that nothing can fully take the place of the blessed relationship of family life.”¹

Sharing Our Love

“Give your child a compliment and a hug; say, ‘I love you’ more; always express your thanks. Never let a problem to be solved become more important than a person to be loved. Friends move away, children grow up, loved ones pass on. It’s so easy to take others for granted, until that day when they’re gone from our lives and we are left with feelings of ‘what if’ and ‘if only.’ . . .

“Let us relish life as we live it, find joy in the journey and share our love with friends and family. One day, each of us will run out of tomorrows. Let us not put off what is most important.”²

Showing Our Love

“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. . . .

“To you who are parents, I say, show love to your children. You know you love them, but make certain they know it as well. They are so precious. Let them know. Call upon our Heavenly Father for help as you care for their needs each day and as you deal with the challenges which inevitably come with parenthood. You need more than your own wisdom in rearing them.”³

Expressing Our Love

“To you parents, express your love to your children. Pray for them that they may be able to withstand the evils of the world. Pray that they may grow in faith and testimony. Pray that they may pursue lives of goodness and of service to others.

“Children, let your parents know you love them. Let them know how much you appreciate all they have done and continue to do for you.”⁴

What Is Most Important

“What is most important almost always involves the people around us. Often we assume that they *must* know how much we love them. But we should never assume; we should let them know. Wrote William Shakespeare, ‘They do not love that do not show their love.’ We will never regret the kind words spoken or the affection shown. Rather, our regrets will come if such things are omitted from our relationships with those who mean the most to us.”⁵

Bringing Heaven Closer

“May our families and homes be filled with love: love of each other, love of the gospel, love of our fellowman, and love of our Savior. As a result, heaven will be a little closer here on earth.

“May we make of our homes sanctuaries to which our family members will ever want to return.”⁶

A Prayer for Families

“Inasmuch as the family unit is under attack in the world today, and many things long held sacred are ridiculed, we ask Thee, our Father, to make us equal to the challenges we face, that we may stand strong for truth and righteousness. May our homes be havens of peace, of love and of spirituality.”⁷ ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

In one type of learning activity, “the teacher presents a question or situation and gives learners a short amount of time to freely suggest solutions or ideas” (*Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 160). As you read this article with the family, ask them to listen for counsel or ideas that impress them. Family members could then suggest ways to increase love in their home. Consider inviting the family to review these ideas in an upcoming family home evening.

NOTES

1. “A Sanctuary from the World,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Feb. 9, 2008, 29.
2. “Joy in the Journey” (Brigham Young University Women’s Conference, May 2, 2008), <http://ce.byu.edu/cw/womensconference/archive/transcripts.cfm>.
3. “Abundantly Blessed,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2008, 112.
4. “Until We Meet Again,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 113.
5. “Finding Joy in the Journey,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 86.
6. “A Sanctuary from the World,” 30–31.
7. Dedicatory prayer for The Gila Valley Arizona Temple, May 23, 2010; in “The Gila Valley Arizona Temple: ‘Wilt Thou Hallow This House,’” *Church News*, May 29, 2010, 5.



YOUTH

Mother Rescued Us

By Patricia Auxier

When I was six, my little sister and I were watching our older sister's basketball game. My dad left, and then we decided that we wanted to go home with him, so we ran after him in the rain. When we couldn't find him, we went back to the gym to go home with our mom, but by the time we entered the gym, everyone in the building was gone.

I remember huddling in a

doorframe, trying to get my little sister and me out of the rain, praying that someone would come. Then I remember hearing the door to our red van slam shut, and we went running toward the sound. Then came one of the most vivid childhood memories I have: our mother enfolding us in her arms "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings" (3 Nephi 10:4). My mother had rescued us, and I

I never felt more secure than I did at the moment my mother enfolded us in her arms.

never felt more secure than I did at that moment.

As I think of her influence on me, I see that my mother's life has pointed me toward the Savior and has shown me what it means to "lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees" (D&C 81:5). She relied on Jesus Christ, who gave her strength "beyond [her] own" ("Lord, I Would Follow Thee," *Hymns*, no. 220).

CHILDREN

Building a Happy Home

President Monson suggests ways we can build a happy home. Look through the article to find things you and your family can do to make a happy home.

Each time you find something you can do, write it in

one of the spaces provided. After you have found your first item, draw the part of the home listed next to the line. Find at least five ways you can build a happy home and draw the whole house and your family in it.

1. Walls _____
2. Roof _____
3. Door _____
4. Windows _____
5. Family _____



Faith • Family • Relief

A Society of Holy Women

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.

Eliza R. Snow, second Relief Society general president, taught: “Paul the Apostle anciently spoke of holy women. It is the duty of each one of us to be a holy woman. We shall have elevated aims, if we are holy women. We shall feel that we are called to perform important duties. No one is exempt from them. There is no sister so isolated, and her sphere so narrow but what she can do a great deal towards establishing the Kingdom of God upon the earth.”¹

Sisters, we are not isolated nor is our sphere narrow. By accepting the gift of activity in Relief Society, we become part of what the Prophet Joseph described as a society “separate from all the evils of the world—choice, virtuous, and holy.”²

This society helps us strengthen our faith and grow spiritually by giving us leadership, service, and teaching opportunities. In our service a new dimension is added to our lives. We progress spiritually, and our sense of belonging, identity, and self-worth increases. We realize that the whole intent of the gospel plan is to provide an opportunity for us to reach our fullest potential.

Relief Society helps prepare us to receive the blessings of the temple, to honor the covenants we make, and to be engaged in the cause of Zion. Relief Society helps us increase our faith and personal righteousness, strengthen families, and seek out and help those in need.

The work of Relief Society is holy, and doing holy work creates holiness in us.

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

From the Scriptures

Exodus 19:5; Psalm 24:3–4; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Titus 2:3–4; Doctrine and Covenants 38:24; 46:33; 82:14; 87:8; Moses 7:18

What Can I Do?

1. How am I helping the sisters I watch over to cultivate and achieve “elevated aims”?
2. What am I doing to make my life “choice, virtuous, and holy”?

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

NOTES

1. Eliza R. Snow, “An Address,” *Woman’s Exponent*, Sept. 15, 1873, 62.
2. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:570.
3. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:605, 606.
4. Lucy Mack Smith, in Relief Society, Minute Book Mar. 1842–Mar. 1844, entry for Mar. 24, 1842, Church History Library, 18–19.

From Our History

Speaking to the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, the Prophet Joseph emphasized holiness, explaining that as sisters became pure and holy, they would have a marked influence upon the world. He explained: “Meekness, love, purity—these are the things that should magnify you. . . . This Society . . . shall have power to command queens in their midst. . . . The kings and queens of the earth will come unto Zion, and pay their respects.” Relief Society sisters living their covenants command the respect not only of noble people, but “if you live up to your privileges,” Joseph promised the sisters, “the angels cannot be restrained from being your associates.”³

As the sisters participated in the work of serving and saving others, they became personally sanctified. Lucy Mack Smith, the Prophet’s mother, shared the good Relief Society could accomplish: “We must cherish one another, watch over one another, comfort one another and gain instruction, that we may all sit down in heaven together.”⁴



Taking His Name UPON ME

By Jacob F. Frandsen

“There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ” (Mosiah 5:8).

PUTTING THE LORD FIRST

As we take the sacrament, we promise to take the Savior’s name upon us (see D&C 20:77). President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, explains: “That means we must see ourselves as His. We will put Him first in our lives. We will want what He wants rather than what we want or what the world teaches us to want” (“Be One,” *Liahona*, Sept. 2008, 5; *Ensign*, Sept. 2008, 7).

A few weeks into my mission, I began to feel lonely and a bit homesick. I loved being a missionary, but the work was much harder than I had anticipated. I missed my friends, my family, and all the familiar things I’d left back home. During my personal study one morning, I sat quietly, turning my missionary name tag over and over in my hands, thinking about how I longed for familiarity. I wished I could just hear somebody call me by my first name.

As I looked at my name tag, I noticed that although my first name was absent from the tag, I saw my family name, the name of the Church, and the name of the Savior printed on it. Suddenly I recognized something that changed both my outlook and my attitude. I realized that as a missionary I wasn’t there to represent myself. Instead I was serving to represent my family back home and, most

important, I was representing my Savior and His Church. I put the name tag on my shirt pocket, right over my heart. As I did so, I promised my Savior that I would more fully give Him a place in my heart and mind.

I didn’t miss hearing my first name after that morning. From then on I worked and served the best I could, proudly wearing my name tag every day. During the times I began to feel discouraged, I looked at my name tag, and it reminded me of my responsibility to follow Jesus Christ’s example.

I made an effort to take His name upon myself more fully and to become more like Him. As I did, I felt more love for my companions and those I served, my testimony was strengthened, and I found joy in missionary work. I began to forget myself and to focus on serving the Lord.

I’ve been home from my mission for several years now, but I still have the



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TAKE UPON US THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles helps answer this question in his general conference talk “Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ” (*Ensign*, May 1985, 80).

1. As we take the sacrament, we can willingly renew the covenant we made at baptism—to remember the Lord and keep His commandments.
2. We can proclaim our belief in Him to others (see D&C 18:21).
3. We can serve Him by doing the work of His kingdom (see Hebrews 6:10).

Consider sharing your testimony of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in family home evening, in testimony meeting, or with someone of another faith.

opportunity to take the Savior’s name upon myself. In fact, as members of the Church, all of us commit to take upon ourselves the name of Christ each Sabbath day when we take the sacrament. As we do so, we promise to represent our Savior the best we can and to strive to become more like Him. As King Benjamin taught: “I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ. . . . Whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ” (Mosiah 5:8–9). By taking His name upon us, we can each find more purpose and joy in our earthly missions. ■

The Savior instituted the sacrament with His Apostles. He broke bread and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:19–20).

We welcome your personal gospel experiences relating to the Savior’s ministry and mission. Please limit submissions to 500 words, label them *We Talk of Christ*, and e-mail them to ensign@ldschurch.org.

GOD SENDS US
TO EARTH AS A
MEMBER OF A

Family

Our Father in Heaven has a plan for us, and sending us to earth as members of a family is part of that plan. Adam and Eve were the first family on earth; our Heavenly Father brought them together in marriage and commanded them to have children (see Genesis 1:28). God wants His spirit children to receive a physical body. When parents bring children into this world, they are helping our Heavenly Father carry out His plan of salvation. They welcome into their family each new child as a child of God.

Our Heavenly Father knew that being a member of a family provides each of us the best opportunity to be loved and cared for while on earth. Families work together to learn self-control, sacrifice, loyalty, and the value of work. They also strive to learn to love, to share, and to serve one another (see Mosiah 4:14–15). Children learn to show love for their parents, to be obedient, and to try to live the kind of life that will bring honor to their family name.

As family members give encouragement and praise to one another, feelings of confidence and love grow. Successful families show hope and persistence in sustaining each family member in individual needs and in helping each other learn and work together in love. Their goal is to become a joyful, eternal family unit. ■

For more information, see *Gospel Principles* (2009), 207–11; and M. Russell Ballard, “What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 41–44.

“Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God. . . . The family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” Liahona and Ensign, Nov. 2010, 129).



These are some activities that will help us have happy, successful families:

Pray together as husband and wife.



Have family prayer every morning and night (see 3 Nephi 18:21).



Attend Church meetings each Sunday (see D&C 59:9–10).



Teach children the gospel in weekly family home evenings.



Study the scriptures regularly as a family.



Learn to be kind, patient, and charitable (see Moroni 7:45–48).



Do things together as a family, such as eating dinner, working together, going on outings, and participating in decision making.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID STOKER, CRAIG DIMOND, JOHN LUKE, MATTHEW REIER, ROBERT CASEY, AND FRANK HELMIRICH



ONE STALWART PIONEER, MANY GENERATIONS BLESSED

Since the early days of the Church, members have been persecuted and ridiculed for their beliefs. One young woman who faced such persecution was Sara Elvira Eriksen. She was born in Drammen, Norway, in 1895. After gaining a testimony, she was dedicated to the gospel—a dedication that had more far-reaching effects than she could have imagined in her lifetime. Because of her courage and faith, her posterity now has the blessings of the gospel in their lives.

Like Sara, we may face obstacles in our lives that require us to take a stand for our testimony of Jesus Christ and His restored Church. Our choice to stand firmly by our beliefs can influence the lives of others, just as Sara's did. This is her story.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JANET BYLUND

When I was 15, my father and I took a walk one Sunday evening. Suddenly, my father stopped and suggested that we go to the Mormon Church. I was surprised, but out of curiosity I went with him. The choir was singing a beautiful hymn. I had never heard anything so touching.

After the song, a missionary stood up and gave a talk about the Godhead. He later talked to my father and me for a few minutes.

I didn't go back to church until one year later when I went to learn English from the missionaries. When each English class ended, we drifted into religious discussions. The missionaries taught me about the gospel and how to pray to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. They told me about the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and many other gospel principles.

All this was so new to me, yet it had a familiar sound. I studied the scriptures intently and prayed sincerely for enlightenment, which was given to me.

My father noticed a change in me. But when he realized that I was getting serious about the Church, he became angry and forbade me to go to church. I went anyway. Frequently he sent my brother to bring me home in the middle of Church meetings.

When I turned 17, my father asked me what I wanted for my birthday. I told him I wanted his approval to be baptized. He pounded his fist on the table and shouted, "Never!"

By this time my parents had joined a different church. My father sent the church's minister and others to talk to me, but I was firm in my testimony of the gospel. Father told me I was a disgrace to the family, and I was forced to leave home. I stayed at the home of a Relief Society sister for about a week. During that time my father's heart was softened, and he allowed me to come home.

Within several months my father realized that nothing could take away the testimony I had of the gospel, so he gave his consent for me to be baptized. My joy and happiness were so great that they made a deep impression on my father. He even wanted to go with me to Oslo to attend my baptism.

All through this time, my mother didn't say very much, but I could tell that she believed the gospel was true. We spent many hours talking about the gospel together.

However, the struggle was not over at home. My father wouldn't listen to me. I put pamphlets on his nightstand, as he always read long into the night. I invited the missionaries to our home often, and they talked to my father, but nothing seemed to help.

One day my father asked me, "Do you ever pray?" I told him that I prayed every day that his eyes would be opened to the truthfulness of the gospel. He responded that it was all from the devil but then said, "Let's pray together."

I said, "All right, you pray to your God, and I will pray to my God, and we will see which answers first." So we did.

Soon after that I started noticing that he was reading the pamphlets and the Book of Mormon. He went to church several times with me but would never talk about it or show me any change in his beliefs. Still, there was rarely a day when we didn't discuss different principles of the gospel.

One day, after three years of this, he told me he was going to Oslo and wanted me to go with him. When we arrived at the station, one of the local elders was there. I asked him where he was going.

The elder said, "Don't you know? I'm going to baptize your father."

I cried and laughed! One month later my mother and youngest brother were also baptized. My sister and her husband joined the Church a short time later, as did three of my brothers. ■

Sara Elvira Eriksen's faithful posterity in the Church now numbers in the hundreds. This account from her personal history was submitted by her children, Rose Anderson, Betty Farley, Aksel Tanner, and Janet Bylund.

Dear Mom & Dad

Letters from young adults to their parents

Parenting is a wonderful but challenging job, and many parents sigh with relief when their children finally become adults. However, for many young adults, this next step in their progression can still be a bit overwhelming. In fact, just because children grow up doesn't mean they stop looking to their fathers and mothers for counsel or example. Here four young adults share how their parents have made and continue to make a difference in their lives.

Dear Mom,

I have been thinking about you lately, remembering how much fun we had when I was a child. You read my favorite stories to me and let me pour the chocolate chips into the bowl when we made cookies. I was so little then and so dependent on you. Now I am older—a lot older. I graduated from college and have a job. I pay my own bills and live in an apartment in the city, far from where you are. But as independent as I try to be, I still need you.

When I was a teenager, we often stayed up at night and talked. I told you about my life, and you listened as I rambled on about classes and boys and homework. You let me cry to you when life became more than I could handle. Even though I am no longer a teenager, I still turn to you for advice and help.

I know you are praying for me. I remember our family prayers when I was little: you prayed for us by name, thanking God for each child, and then asking a specific blessing for each. I





know that you still do that. I still need your prayers as I struggle to have courage to face daily trials and overcome temptations.

Mom, I am still learning from you. You recognized God's presence in your life. You saw His hand in helping you find a job after Dad left. You saw how He helped you comfort and guide us through the confusion and pain that followed. You saw how Heavenly Father healed and blessed us despite the difficulties.

The longer I am away from home, the more I realize how much I still need your support, your prayers, and your example of faith. No matter how old I get or how independent I become, I will never stop depending on your love.

Love,

Becky

Dear Dad,

My entire life you have been there directing me to the paths I should choose. For you, the world is black and white. There are no gray areas in righteousness for you, Dad. That is what I admire most. You have taught me that when I make the right choice and seek for spiritual growth I will be blessed.

Because of you I know no wrong can be justified; there is

never an excuse good enough. My desires to do good, to love the Lord, and to help others come from your wonderful example. I only hope that I can pass these things on to my own children someday. Thank you for being there for me and showing me the importance of hard work. Thank you for persisting not only in teaching me the gospel, but also in helping me have a desire to know the gospel (even when I acted "put out" to hear it!). Most of all, thank you for showing me what it means to have courage to share the Lord's work and to stand up for His teachings.

I love you,

Debbie

Dear Mom and Dad,

Even though life can be busy at times, I wanted to take time to thank you for being the parents you are.

First of all, thank you for giving me life and a chance to fulfill Heavenly Father's plan. Second, thank you for raising me as you did. While growing

up I didn't have to worry about what I was going to eat or what I was going to wear. But more important than being physically cared for, I was spiritually nurtured too. Thank you for making sure that we regularly attended church. Thank you for having family home evening. Even more, thank you for setting an outstanding example of how a mother and a father should treat each other and their children. I am so thankful that I grew up with the gospel.

Thank you so much for not turning your back on me during those terrible times when I strayed from the gospel. It was because of your love, prayers, and faith that I was able to find my way back. Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and

Thank you



because of your love, I have another chance.

Dad, thank you for being worthy to ordain me an elder. Mom, thank you for showing me the true meaning of love. I am so blessed to have you as parents. I can only hope that I will be the same good example to my own children you have been to me. My children will have you to thank for having the gospel in their lives.



REAR YOUR CHILDREN WITH CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD

“What a glorious and beautiful thing it is to see the child of your dreams walk with head up, standing tall, unafraid,

and with confidence, taking advantage of the tremendous opportunities that open around him or her. Isaiah said, ‘All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children’ (Isaiah 54:13).”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “Great Shall Be the Peace of Thy Children,” *Ensign*, November 2000, 52.

There is no way that a few simple words could express how much I love you and how much I appreciate all you have ever done—and continue to do—for me. Thank you for being my parents.

Love, your son,

Nathan

Dear Mom and Dad,

Looking back, I am beginning to realize that the good things I have accomplished have been a result of your love, your support, and the way you raised me. If I wanted to try something, you helped create a way for me to do it. And you showed me that the gospel is fundamental—that whatever else happens, it is what leads to happiness.

I particularly appreciate what you taught me about loving other people. I learned to be accepting of other people regardless of their circumstances. Your Christlike love for and example to people regardless of their faith helped me understand that if I wanted to be respected for my standards and beliefs, I needed to be respectful of the beliefs of others. This lesson has been a tremendous blessing to me. It is one I plan to teach to the children I’ll have someday.

Dad, you didn’t put limitations on me because I was a girl. If I wanted to ride a steer just like the boys, you let me try. Whether it was hunting, fishing, or driving a manual transmission, you gave me the confidence to try. Thank you for not holding me back.

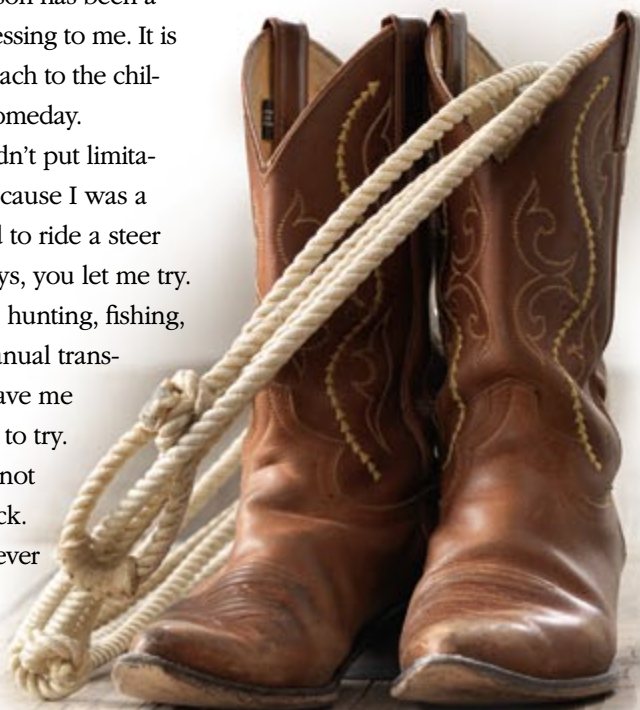
Mom, whenever I attempted to let the “real

world” alter my plans, you made sure I followed my dreams. I want to be like you. You have shown me that raising children is the greatest adventure of all. You make motherhood look fun, and you help me look forward to the time when motherhood can be my role too.

You both have raised me to be independent, confident, and self-reliant. However, that does not mean I do not sometimes feel alone and unsure of my future. I still need you to support and encourage me. I know that with you two backing me, I can accomplish anything.

I love you and thank you from the bottom of my heart. ■

Bridget



NO BETTER TIME TO Serve

By Allie Schulte

Whether at employment centers in Canada or orphanages in Vietnam, Welfare Services missionaries are making a huge difference and finding unexpected blessings.





NOW IS THE TIME

“Now is the time to prepare; now is the time to be called, the time to sacrifice. Now is the time to share your gifts and talents, and now is the time to receive God’s blessings for you and your family. . . . Let us, in our richest years of experience, maturity, wisdom, and most of all, our faith, rise to meet that need as only we can.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Couple Missionaries: Blessings from Sacrifice and Service,” *Ensign*, May 2005, 42.

Many couples wonder if the time is right for them to serve. The couples in this article received their answers and then moved forward with faith.

Heeding the Savior’s call to “succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees” (D&C 81:5), Welfare Services missionaries foster self-reliance through humanitarian projects, employment workshops, addiction recovery programs, and more. In the following vignettes, Welfare Services missionaries share the challenges they faced in heeding the call to serve and testify of the blessings that they witnessed in their lives and the lives of others as they served with faith.

Trusting in the Lord’s Timing

Terri Whitesides sat alone in the chapel that Sunday. Although her husband, Grant, was attending to his leadership responsibilities in another ward, she could not stop thinking about him as she listened in sacrament meeting. The couple speaking had recently returned from serving a full-time mission, and as she listened to their experiences, Terri wondered if the time had come for her and her husband to serve as well.

Logically the timing was less than convenient. For nearly a year, the couple had been trying to sell their home, but with little success. Grant was still employed and would need to retire early. And most important, Grant’s father’s health was declining, and the couple felt responsible to help care for him. Even so, Terri mentioned her thoughts to her husband later that day.

“We decided to give it the temple test,” Grant says. “After asking the Lord to know His will, we both left the temple with a firm prompting that the time to serve was not in the future—the time to serve was now.” The Whitesides knew leaving right away would come as a shock to their family and to Grant’s employer, but to them, it felt right. “We felt that

somewhere there were people waiting for us.”

The Whitesides moved forward with faith and soon received their mission call to serve as humanitarian country directors in Cambodia. Grant retired a month before they were scheduled to enter the missionary training center (MTC). They never did sell their home, and three of their children lived in it during their mission. Although their children volunteered to help Grant’s family take care of Grandpa, less than a week before Grant and Terri entered the MTC, Grant’s father passed away. Grant and Terri were able to attend his funeral, and their trust in the Lord’s timing increased.

Following the Spirit

Aldon Nance always wanted to serve a mission, but after being drafted to serve in the Vietnam War, was unable to do so. Upon returning home, he met Connie Camper, a young woman who also dreamed of sharing the gospel as a full-time missionary. But before she had the chance, the two fell in love and were married in the Salt Lake Temple. The day of their wedding, they committed to each other that they would one day serve a mission together. Forty years later, the Nances were called to manage the employment resource center in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

“We were willing to serve wherever the Lord wanted us, but when we got our call,





we wondered ‘why employment?’” Connie says. “Neither one of us had experience in that field.”

The Nances quickly recognized how the Lord had been preparing them for their mission throughout their lives as they daily used the skills they had acquired through their own employment, Church service, and life experience. Most of all, years of daily scripture study and prayer, hundreds of family home evenings, and steadfast obedience to the counsel of the prophet helped the Nances be guided by the Spirit. “We did nothing without asking our Heavenly Father what He would want us to say and do that day,” says Connie.

One day, an immigrant from Colombia visited the employment resource center needing help finding a job. Although Connie knew little about this woman’s past employment experience, she was suddenly prompted to tell her about an opening for a mortuary receptionist. The woman’s face suddenly lit up as she explained that her last job in her home country had been working in a similar capacity. Connie helped her to apply for the

position, and the woman was later hired.

“People with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and languages would come in to the center, and because we rarely knew anything about the discipline in which they had worked or understood their language, it was often difficult to know how to help them,” Aldon says. “But we would say a quick prayer and open our mouths, and the Lord always took over.”

Working with Local Leaders

When Grant and Sherrie Atkinson began their mission for LDS Family Services in the Europe Area, addiction recovery resources of any sort were practically nonexistent in the region. And with members spread across such a large geographical area, it was nearly impossible to provide widespread services through Church-operated agencies.

“It was decided that we would introduce the Church’s Addiction Recovery Program to the stake presidents, who hold the keys to the temporal and spiritual salvation of all souls residing within their stake boundaries, and let them determine if the members in their stakes had a need for the program,” Grant says.

Over the course of a year, the Atkinsons visited more than 40 stakes in nearly 20 countries across the Europe Area. As leaders implemented the Addiction Recovery Program, the Atkinsons witnessed members make great sacrifices to attend and receive the help they needed. One young man, a returned missionary who was struggling to overcome an

THEY STRAIGHTWAY FOLLOWED HIM

“**A**nd Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

“And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

“And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

“And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

“And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.” Matthew 4:18–22



Children in Turkey (above) and Vietnam (right) are among those whose lives are blessed as couples participate in the humanitarian work of the church.



addition, rode a train for an hour and a half each way to attend a pilot program. He made the trip every week for six months.

During those six months, the Atkinsons worked with this young man's stake president to establish an Addiction Recovery Program group locally. The stake president had been trying to determine who to call as the group facilitator and soon extended the calling to this young man, who went on to aid other members in his stake in overcoming their own addictions.

"It's amazing the love that the Savior has for us and the programs that are available through priesthood leaders that teach us about the Atonement and the power it has to make people whole again," Sherrie says. "When people heal, they have a great desire to serve others and help them to do the same. The program is self-perpetuating and will continue to grow as more people become self-reliant."

Learning a Language

When Paul and Lois Fifield filled out their mission papers, they indicated they would prefer to serve an English-speaking mission. So when they received their call to serve as humanitarian specialists in Izmir, Turkey, they were stunned. But with the branch president acting as an interpreter, the Fifields coordinated various humanitarian projects, from planting pomegranate trees to donating computers to local schools and charities.

The Fifields didn't need an interpreter to understand the smiles on the faces of the people they served. The little gifts they gave the Fifields in return, such as freshly harvested pine nuts or sweet cherries, said it all. Lois still remembers the look of appreciation in the eyes of people receiving their first wheelchair or computer.

"I learned that people are the same wherever you go," Lois says. "They have the same hopes and dreams and fears and joys. So in that way, we could relate to them even though we could not speak their language."

In a country where the Church is not officially recognized, the Fifields were unable to wear their name tags or proselytize. Church members in Turkey, however, are not restricted from sharing the gospel with their family, friends, and neighbors, and whenever people expressed interest, the Fifields were able to talk to them about the gospel.

One family that expressed interest included a father who had a smoking problem. He was touched that the Fifields would fast and pray for him to be able to quit smoking. He and his family absorbed the message of the Restoration and the plan of salvation, eager to learn everything they could. The seven-year-old son read the illustrated Turkish Book of Mormon several times and

wanted to know more. After a few months of meeting with the Fifields and studying, the family was baptized.

The Fifields felt blessed to be able to share the gospel. “We learned the lessons from *Preach My Gospel* in the MTC,” says Lois, “but we never dreamed we would be using them, since we were sent primarily to do humanitarian work. We were so humbled to be able to teach the gospel. What a blessing it was for us.”

Making New Friends

After completing proselytizing missions in both Europe and South America, Lawrence and Noma Bowman were accustomed to serving around several other couples. So when they received their third mission call to work as humanitarian specialists in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, they were startled when they discovered that there was only one other couple serving in the entire country.

“We were about 1,000 miles away from the other missionary couple in Vietnam, and the mission home, located in Cambodia, was a six-hour bus ride away,” Lawrence explains. “The isolation was a challenge. There was no one to talk to or turn to for support but the Lord.”

Yet as the Bowmans began various humanitarian projects, they quickly made hundreds of new friends. At a local orphanage for youth with disabilities, they worked to install a water filtration system so that clean drinking water would be available on the property. For years, the only source of water had been a well that produced water that was only suitable for washing.

At the ceremony where the missionaries presented the system to the facility, the orphanage displayed artwork some of the students had created. As Lawrence and Noma

wandered through the halls, they noticed a few paintings that were particularly beautiful and asked to meet the artist. That was when the Bowmans first met Sam, a girl who had limited mobility in her arms and legs.

“Despite her disability, she had learned to paint with her toes,” Noma says. “We were so touched that she could express herself so beautifully despite the limitations of her body.”

Before returning home, the Bowmans purchased two of Sam’s paintings, which remind them of connections they made in Vietnam.

Leaving the Family

About 10 years before Doug and Carolyn Thurman’s mission, their son married a woman who was not a member of the Church. Their son was not active at the time.

When the Thurmans received a call to serve in the employment resource center in Independence, Missouri, USA, they began to see small changes in their daughter-in-law.

“She decided to quit smoking, so when we would call them every few weeks, she would give us an update and remind us to pray for her,” Carolyn says. “But we still had no indication that she would be receptive to the missionaries.”

Shortly before the Thurmans returned home, their son started going to church, and his wife and their three children agreed to attend as well. Soon, the entire family began meeting with the missionaries, and less than a month after the Thurmans returned home, their daughter-in-law and three grandchildren decided to be baptized.

“I was able to baptize all four of them,” says Doug. “We had been praying for a long time for a miracle, and I think it was another blessing from the Lord for our serving a mission.” ■

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

There are a variety of assignments available for Welfare Services missionaries that allow senior couples and single senior sisters to serve others and build the kingdom of God. Missionaries are called to fulfill these assignments throughout the world.

To see a list of the current needs for Welfare Services missions and other mission opportunities, visit: lds.org/service/missionary-service.



TWO PIONEERS ACROSS TWO CENTURIES

By Allison Ji-Jen Merrill

Dear Ebenezer, you do not know me; we have never met. On November 17, 1830, you were born in Dunblane, Perthshire, Scotland, to Andrew Bryce and Janet Adams Bryce. They named you Ebenezer.

One hundred forty-three years later, I was born in Hualien, Taiwan. They named me Ji-Jen Hung.

You started to work in shipyards at age 10. Later you became an apprentice and were very skillful in your trade.

At age four I started to memorize times tables and the Chinese phonetic symbols. It was not easy, but I managed.

In the spring of 1848, you developed an interest in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, although your father, family, and friends did not share your enthusiasm. They did everything possible to persuade you to denounce the Church. Your father even locked up your clothes to keep you from attending Sunday meetings. But your faith was steadfast. In spite of persecution you struggled on.

On December 4, 1986, two American missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints knocked on the door of my father's house. Although Father let the missionaries visit regularly, he was never interested in the message. A few months later

he divorced Mother and remarried.

When Father informed the missionaries of the sad news of our broken family, he also told them not to come back.



The missionaries left a copy of the Book of Mormon with the address of the nearest church written on the inside cover and said, "We will always be your friends. If there is anything we can do for your family, come to this address, and you will find us there."

Saying good-bye to the missionaries that evening was difficult, for I had felt something precious in their message.

Stepmother moved in. She and Father became cruel, life became hard, and I became a cynical teenager.

One night, when I could take their horrible treatment no longer, I dashed

out the door in fear and hid in the rice fields, lonely, depressed, and hopeless. I wanted to run away, but I had nowhere to go.

Suddenly I remembered what the elders had said during their last visit. "First thing tomorrow, I am going back to find my friends!" I told myself, feeling a sense of inner peace for the first time in years.

Early the next morning I hopped on my bike and went downtown to the church, but the elders who had visited my family a couple of years before had returned home. Just when I was about to give up, two friendly ladies with the familiar black name tags on their coats approached me and introduced themselves.

Dear Ebenezer, despite your father's opposition, you were baptized in April 1848, the only convert in your family.

A month after I met the sister missionaries, I was baptized, in November 1988, the first convert in my family.

But Father and Stepmother made it difficult for me to attend church.

One day after I came home from a Young Women activity, Father stomped into the den, swore at me, grabbed my scriptures, and tore them into pieces. Flakes of white paper floated and drifted in the air, gracefully and gently landing on the floor, where my teardrops also fell.

*A Scottish boy. A Taiwanese girl.
A century and a half apart but bonded by faith.*

It was like a nightmare I could not wake up from.

When I turned 21, I expressed a strong desire to serve a full-time mission. Father responded by disowning me. On Chinese New Year's Eve, when most people went home to be with their loved ones, I was expelled from home.

Dear Ebenezer, when the persecution from your family and friends became unbearable, you decided to emigrate from Scotland to America to join the Latter-day Saints and cross the plains to Utah. Your father was furious. He commanded you to stay, but you were a deter-

mined young man. The day you boarded the ship was the last time you saw him.

Life as a 17-year-old immigrant was not easy for you, Ebenezer, but you managed.

Ebenezer Bryce helped build the Pine Valley chapel (below), completed in 1868. He also discovered the canyon that now bears his name, Bryce Canyon National Park (right), in southern Utah.



Your carpentry, millwright, and shipbuilding skills were immediately put to use. You were called to build a chapel in Pine Valley, Utah. Though you had never built a chapel before, you did not hesitate to accept the calling.

Today that building is the oldest Latter-day Saint chapel still in use.

Later you discovered the majestic natural amphitheater that now bears your name, Bryce Canyon National Park.

On June 4, 1994, I reported to the Taiwan Taichung Mission as a full-time missionary. I pinned a black name tag on my coat, just like the elders who had

come to visit my family years before. I was humbled. I was honored. I was blessed.

After my mission I emigrated to Utah, where I met my husband. We were married in the temple for time and all eternity. Through my husband's lineage, I became connected to you.

Dear Ebenezer, you don't know me. We have never met. But I have heard stories about you. Your feet never stopped traveling. Your hands never stopped working. Your heart never stopped believing. You never stopped serving. After all these years, your faithful example lifts me still. Thank you, dear Ebenezer. Thank you! ■



Did He Really Ask Me *That?*

By Joelyn Hansen

I sat and stared in disbelief as Brother Jarman, a member of the branch presidency, waited for my answer.

Maybe he had meant to say *teacher* or *counselor*. But he hadn't. What I heard was correct; he had called me as the Relief Society president in our small branch.

I sat still for some time reflecting on my situation. I was just 27 years old and had never been married. I had recently moved to the area and was beginning a new job as a journalist. My leadership experience was limited. I had served in several callings over the years but never one like this.

Silently I asked myself if I was old enough or experienced enough or if I even had the ability to serve. What could I possibly offer the women of the branch?



I went home that night, knelt in prayer, and asked Heavenly Father for direction. After I finished my prayer, I was instantly drawn to look at my patriarchal blessing. I read this sentence: “You are to be about that work which you were assigned to do now, even while you are young.”

As I read those words, I realized that this was not about my marital status, my age, or what I could do. It was about what the Lord *needed* me to do. I accepted the calling.

Through my calling I was able to help

While we may question our abilities to serve in a Church calling, the Lord knows us. If we are willing to serve, He can qualify us for His work.

people despite our different backgrounds. One woman in particular whom God led me to serve was a woman in her late 20s, a single mother of two children. It didn't take me long to realize that she and I had different lifestyles. I wasn't sure how to be her friend, but in time we did develop a friendship.

On another occasion I met with a less-active woman. I recall entering her home for the first time along with the missionaries and knowing that she had a testimony; she just needed a little bit of "kindling" to help it burn brighter. As we sat in her living room and listened to her, the Spirit was strong and prompted us to bear testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

In the following months she came to church sporadically. But I was continually led by the Spirit and bore my testimony to her. Today she is active and serving in the branch.

Those were some of the highlights of the calling, but the challenges were numerous. It was a struggle to feel like I was doing enough, to find balance between church and work, and to overcome feelings of inadequacy.

In the end I realized that much of what I was able to do was through the Spirit. I have since been released from the calling and have moved away from that city. But I have often reflected how that calling influenced the sisters—and me. Through it I came to the knowledge that I, as a young single sister, had something to offer others as we grew together in the gospel. Though I felt unqualified for the position, I worked hard to fulfill my calling. And as I did, I felt God's hand guiding me and qualifying me for His work. ■

Sustained by His Love

When I received the calling to serve as the student activities leader, I felt completely overwhelmed. I was shy and knew it would be difficult for me to plan activities. Feelings of inadequacy, nervousness, and depression consumed me.

In desperation I turned to Heavenly Father. "How can I do this?" I prayed. "I am small and weak."

Right then, a peaceful, small whisper entered my heart: "Go, my daughter. I love you."

That response from a loving Father strengthened me. Empowered by that prompting, I felt I could do anything. Knowing that He is aware of me, that He loves me, and that He will sustain me was all I needed to fulfill my calling effectively.

I know that whatever our struggles, Heavenly Father loves us and hears our prayers. As we go to Him, we can receive direction and encouragement as we strive to fulfill our callings.

Ye Kyung Koo, Korea

Fulfillment through My Calling

As a single adult, I have found I am able to contribute to my ward and find fulfillment as I serve in different Church callings.

I currently serve as the second counselor in the Young Men presidency.



SEEKING HELP FROM HEAVENLY FATHER

"I would urge all of us to pray concerning our assignments and to seek divine help, that we might be successful in accomplishing that which we are called to do. Someone has said that 'the recognition of power higher than man himself does not in any sense debase him.' He must seek, believe in, pray, and hope that he will find. No such sincere, prayerful effort will go unanswered: that is the very constitution of the philosophy of faith. Divine favor will attend those who humbly seek it."

President Thomas S. Monson, "To Learn, to Do, to Be," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 67.

Being in the Young Men organization has given me the opportunity to go with the deacons to collect fast offerings, meet with less-active members of the ward, and attend youth conferences and Mutual activities. I have also enjoyed going to the temple with the youth to perform baptisms for the dead. While serving in this calling, I have worked hard to help the young men grow into men by showing that I love and appreciate them. These experiences have helped me progress spiritually and have been a blessing in my life.

Mat Carter, Utah, USA

Called to Influence

When I was called to serve as the Mia Maid adviser in the Young Women organization, I doubted that I could fill the calling. I didn't think the girls would like me or learn anything from me, especially when I realized how different things are for them than they were when I was their age.

That feeling changed a few weeks into my calling when I attended a Young Woman event. At the event a mother expressed how grateful she was for the Young Women program because it strengthened her daughter against temptation. Her words helped me understand just how important my role really is.

I realized that my calling was about more than teaching lessons on Sundays and helping plan activities. It was a calling to help these young women prepare for the future—to go to the temple, serve in the Church, and be



As we accept opportunities to serve, we will find, as President Monson promised, that "divine favor will attend those who humbly seek it."

good mothers. I needed to help them prepare for life.

Callings in the Church come from our loving Heavenly Father. He knows our needs and the needs of those we serve. Knowing that can help us have faith in Him and confidence in ourselves, even if we don't understand why we're given a particular assignment or when we don't feel sure about our ability to fulfill a calling. We can be grateful for our opportunities to serve and that we are worthy to have

a calling, and we can take the opportunity to learn as much as we can while we progress in the gospel.

Georgina Tilialo, New Zealand

Sharing My Testimony through Music

Although I was raised in the Church, I became less active when I was 18. Later, when I moved from eastern Germany to Frankfurt, I was invited to live with a member family. I knew this could be an opportunity for me to have a new start and become active in the Church again.

Soon after moving to Frankfurt, I was called as a presidency member of our area's center for young adults. The calling involved coordinating institute classes, family home evenings, and other activities. It required a lot of work, but it was worth it because the center is a great blessing to young adults in the area.

Because of this calling, I learned about and joined a young single adult choir. The choir went on a concert tour to Poland and the Czech Republic. It was a great experience, and I loved having the opportunity to share my testimony through music. I was even happier when I received an e-mail several weeks later telling me that someone had joined the Church as a result of one of our concerts.

As I worked to fulfill my calling, I was able to help strengthen the testimonies of others, and my own testimony of the gospel was strengthened as well. ■

Felix Seidl, Germany

RECEIVING HELP FROM OTHER SOURCES

A new calling can be overwhelming as you strive to learn your responsibilities. However, there are many resources you can turn to for help. These resources, along with praying for guidance and direction from Heavenly Father, will help you know how to fulfill your calling and bless the lives of others as you serve.



- **Handbooks.** Handbooks help explain responsibilities. When you receive your calling, begin by studying the handbook information for your specific responsibility.



- **The bishopric, branch presidency, or other leaders.** Don't be afraid to approach leaders to ask for help. This is a good way to learn what needs to be done.



- **Someone who has previously served in that calling.** These people may have experience or advice that will be useful to you. But remember that the calling is now yours and you can seek inspiration to help you serve effectively.



- **Church websites.** LDS.org includes a lot of information and resources. One place to start might be to select "Serving in the Church," then click on "Handbook 2."



By Elder
Allan F. Packer
Of the Seventy

Solidly Anchored

IN OUR TESTIMONIES

Early in my college days, my father counseled me to take a few practical classes that would help me maintain a home. As a result, I signed up for house wiring and plumbing classes. The courses included both class work and practical in-field experience. We studied methods and materials, national and local codes, design, and installation. We learned how to talk the language of the trades as well as how to use the tools. I learned how to read the manuals and schematic diagrams, how things worked, and how they are put together.

The classes have proved to be of great worth. I've been able to do a lot of repairs and maintenance myself. I have been able to see problems early and fix things before they became major disasters. When I couldn't, I knew who to call and how to communicate with professionals. Knowledge of the plumbing and electrical skills, processes, tools, and standards and the confidence to do the work have been valuable and saved me time and money.

To gain courage for what lies ahead, we need to be connected to the gospel of Jesus Christ and overcome the tendency to look to the wisdom of the world for help.





Connected to the Gospel

Spiritually speaking, we each need practical gospel knowledge and skills to help us return to our Father in Heaven. We need to be connected to the power of the gospel in our homes to teach and bless each other. We can do this by looking to the gospel of Jesus Christ and our Father in Heaven. Just as my father gave me counsel to take some practical classes, our Father in Heaven, through the Holy Ghost, will tell us all things we need to know and do (see 2 Nephi 32:3). Having the skills to receive inspiration is becoming increasingly important in today's world.

On January 30, 2010, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke to the students at Brigham Young University–Idaho about the last days. He talked about the fulfillment of prophecies and the fallibility of the philosophies of men. A common thread was the admonition for students to strengthen their testimonies in preparation for that which is to come. He said, “I [do not] want . . . to frighten you but to wake you

up.” He continued, “We’re in the last days—you can quote me on that. And it is moving more rapidly.”¹

Speaking in the priesthood session of the April 2009 general conference, President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “Your generation is filled with uncertainties. A life of fun and games and expensive toys has come to an abrupt end. We move from a generation of ease and entertainment to a generation of hard work and responsibility. We do not know how long that will last. . . .

“It may seem that the world is in commotion; and it is! It may seem that there are wars and rumors of wars; and there are! It may seem that the future will hold trials and difficulties for you; and it will! However, fear is the opposite of faith. Do not be afraid! I do not fear.”²

To gain courage for what lies ahead, we need to be connected to the gospel of Jesus Christ and overcome the tendency to look to the wisdom of the world for help. Looking to the world rather

We need to be connected to the power of the gospel in our homes, so we can teach and bless each other.

than the gospel would be like calling a plumber to solve an electrical problem.

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . .

“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness” (1 Corinthians 2:14; 3:19).

This is not a time to be naive, unprepared, or unaware.

Our Heavenly Father is the Father of our spirits, and Jesus Christ is the Creator of this world. They know and understand us and the world around us better than anyone else. Looking to a higher source

covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

“Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

“Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

“For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lust” (2 Timothy 3:1–6).

The Importance of Testimony

Elder Ballard said, “We’ve got to be so solidly anchored in our testimonies of the gospel of Jesus Christ that, regardless of what may come next, we will not waffle; we will stand firm in our belief; we won’t question the doctrines that are part of our belief.”³

We can find wisdom just as Joseph Smith did:

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

In my class on house wiring, I learned the importance of having a good connection to the power lines of the community. If I tried to connect to my neighbor’s house, I would only get limited power. I also learned that if there was any corrosion on the connections or impurities in the wire, the power would be restricted.

Our spiritual connections need to be made directly to the power source and be corrosion free. We need to live worthy to have the power flow to and through us. We need to be spiritually connected to the right source and have the knowledge and ability to use the power we receive. We can develop our knowledge and ability as we study the scriptures, follow our priesthood leaders, and become anchored in our testimonies of the gospel. If we do so, we will not be led astray. ■

NOTES

1. See M. Russell Ballard in “Treasure Truth and Prepare for the Future,” *Church News*, Feb. 13, 2010, 3.
2. Boyd K. Packer, “Counsel to Young Men,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 52.
3. Ballard, “Treasure Truth,” 3.



We need to have the Spirit and look to the prophets and our priesthood leaders for guidance.

for knowledge and power can help us far more than relying on the wisdom of the world. We need to have the Spirit and look to the prophets and our priesthood leaders. We also need to look to the scriptures, which contain God’s words to holy men.

New Testament Warnings

This year the course of study is the New Testament. It contains 27 books and just more than 400 pages, which we can read in a reasonably short time. From the New Testament we learn that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

“That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

We also learn about the conditions of our day:

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

“For men shall be lovers of their own selves,

CAN YOU GIVE ME A BLESSING?

By Jennifer Rose Maddy

Church Magazines



ACCORDING TO THEIR FAITH

“Only Melchizedek Priesthood holders may administer to the sick or afflicted. Normally two or more priesthood holders administer to the sick, but one may perform both the anointing and the sealing alone if necessary. . . .

“Brethren should administer to the sick at the request of the sick person or of those who are vitally concerned so the blessing will be according to their faith.”

Handbook 2: Administering the Church (2010), 20.6.1.

The snow was falling hard as I slowly drove up the hill. If I could just get to the top, I thought, I could make it home safely. But as I negotiated a curve, I saw a downhill car swerving out of control and coming straight at me. I had time only to scream before the impact, and then I blacked out.

I had no sense of how much time had passed when I tried to open my eyes. The snow bit at my face as it blew in through a shattered side window. I struggled to remember basic information, like where I had been going before the accident. Alone and frightened, I cried out from the throbbing pain in my shoulder and chest. I pleaded with Heavenly Father that my injuries wouldn't be too extensive and that I would be all right.

A few moments later I felt a hand holding mine. Instinctively, I grasped it. I opened my eyes and saw a man in a black coat and hat standing outside my crushed car. He said his wife had seen the crash from their

home, and he came to see if he could help. He held my hand and told me I would be OK.

I tried to ask the man if he was a Latter-day Saint, but all I could whisper was, “Can you give me a blessing?”

He said yes and then reached through the broken window and placed his hands on my head.

I don't remember what he said. But I remember thinking that I would be all right because I had received a blessing. I felt peace and comfort.

When the ambulance arrived, I lost track of the man. A few hours later I left the hospital with a broken rib and many bumps and bruises but no serious injuries.

That morning I had prayed that I would travel in safety, and at first I thought Heavenly Father hadn't answered my prayer. But I soon realized that He had and that He had not left me alone. My prayer was answered through a willing priesthood holder who lived just a

few steps away from the site of my accident, an accident which could have left me in a much more serious condition.

I wouldn't recognize the man's face if I passed him on the street. I wouldn't remember his voice if I heard him say hello. But I am grateful for this stranger who was worthy and willing to administer a priesthood blessing when I needed one. ■



ISLANDS OF FIRE AND FAITH: The Galápagos

By Joshua J. Perkey

Church Magazines

Out beyond the broken field of blackened lava rock rises a great pillar of a boulder, a bastion against the ocean's cold saltwater spray. Looking closely, one realizes that the jagged edges are actually the heads of a dozen marine iguanas, huddling together like dragons to await the energy-imbuing heat of the morning sun. Some straggling iguanas await alone here and there near the rock's base, their great talons, sharp as knives and nearly as long as a woman's fingers, holding the rock with vise-grip efficiency.

But most gather in groups for warmth and safety, their leathery bodies instinctively supporting each other against the cold and the dark, helping one another in their common need. Here, on the Galápagos, islands born of fire, life takes on precious meaning. It is a land where science and faith intermingle, where we come to understand that we are all part of a common humanity. And here, members of the Church, like these marine iguanas, understand that strength comes from holding tight to their covenants as they forge a united course toward the Lord through faith, service, and sacrifice.

There is much more to the Galápagos Islands than lava rock, finches, tortoises, and tourism. It is an epicenter of faith, where service and sacrifice have resulted in extraordinary unity and strength of conviction.

How the Gathering Began

Early one morning while visiting Quito, Ecuador, tour guide and naturalist André Degel was taking a Sunday walk by a Latter-day Saint meetinghouse. The year was 1997, and though he was a member of the Church, he had been less active for years after moving to the Galápagos Islands. André remembered the comforting feelings of being in church and would often intentionally walk by a meetinghouse when he was in Ecuador. He didn't usually go inside. He just wanted to be near the building. "It made me feel better," he says, "like I was home."



Left: The islands of Santa Cruz (left) and Baltra (right) in the Galápagos. Above: Marine iguanas hold fast to a rock in Tortuga Bay, Santa Cruz.



Above: The bay and town of Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz. Below, from left: Sandra and André Degel with their niece Claudine; Mariana Becerra; the Palacios family; Oswaldo and Rosario Villón.

On this day sacrament meeting was just beginning. After a moment's hesitation, André decided to enter. It was a decision that ultimately would alter the destiny of hundreds of lives.

After the meeting the missionaries and members greeted André. He remembers the conversation fondly, especially about how surprised—and excited—they were to discover he was from the Galápagos.

At the time, there was no formal Church organization on the islands. In fact, priesthood leaders in Ecuador weren't even aware members lived there.

The missionaries didn't waste any time. They introduced André to the Quito Ecuador Mission president and made sure they had

André's contact information.

Shortly thereafter André returned home to Puerto Ayora, the largest town in the Galápagos, on the island of Santa Cruz. Soon the mission sent him two boxes of Church materials, including manuals for study. But perhaps most important, the mission president had acquired a list of members living on the islands, which André could use to help gather the Saints.

A quick review of the list surprised André.

"There were people on the list I knew, but I didn't know they were members of the Church," he explains.

At the same time, other members in Santa Cruz felt pricked in the heart to establish the Church there. All had moved to the Galápagos Islands looking for work. Now they were searching for each other.

The Call to Gather

For Mariana Becerra, life was hard before the Church was established there. She had been a member of the Church for only a couple of years when she came to the islands in 1990.



TOP LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF FLOYD AND SUSAN BAUM



“There was no Church when I came,” Mariana says. “It was just my son and me. We held family home evening and tried to live the gospel. But the few other members I knew didn’t live according to gospel standards.”

David and Jeanneth Palacios had a similar experience. David had joined the Church as a teenager, and Jeanneth was baptized in 1993, just a year before the couple moved to the Galápagos.

“When we moved here, we didn’t know any other members. I thought we were the only ones. It was very difficult to live without the Church,” Jeanneth says.

“Then one day in 1997 André came to where I worked and said, ‘I’m looking for Jeanneth de Palacios. Are you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormon Church?’

“I felt as though the Lord had extended His hand and was gathering His sheep,” Jeanneth remembers. “And I said, ‘Yes, yes!’ I felt such happiness because we are not alone. We are more!”

Mariana adds, “It felt so good when André gathered us. We had something profound—something greater than friendship—as members of the Church.”

The Unity Within

Once André had gathered a core group, they began meeting together regularly. At first, there were only four families and friends.

“We would meet often, sometimes daily, mostly at my house,” André says. “We studied the books the mission had sent us and the Bible and the Book of Mormon.”

“It was a beautiful time,” says Araceli Duran. “We were very united. We would gather each week to study.”

“It is something that I will never forget,” says Jeanneth, “because there was such a sense of unity, such a feeling that our Heavenly Father loved us and knew that it was now that we needed to get together.”

They depended on each other, taught each other, and built their faith together. Soon their efforts were recognized, and an official branch was organized in early 1998.

Over time the branch grew, and the members needed more space. They rented a small house and then moved to a larger building that had been a hotel. In this larger building they grew to nearly



Below: Daniel and Angela Calapucha; Araceli Duran with her children; members of the Galápagos branch who helped build Elena Cedeño's house; the Galápagos Islands Branch meetinghouse.

100 members attending. Although the branch grew through activation efforts and people moving in, much of its strength came through converts.

Oswaldo Villón and his wife, Rosario, are such an example. Rosario was baptized in 2000 and has served as Relief Society president, Primary president, and Young Women president. Oswaldo, baptized just a year later, serves as elders quorum president. For both of them, the Church

brought a complete change of life.

"The Church saved me," explains Oswaldo. "Before, I lived in the world. I wasn't an alcoholic, but I drank like I was. When I joined the Church, these 25 people were my family. We were as united as could be. And we worked hard to help the branch grow."

Through the tireless efforts of Galápagos members, sacrament attendance often hovers between 100 and 120 members. In September 2009 they were rewarded with the dedication of a chapel.

The Power of Service

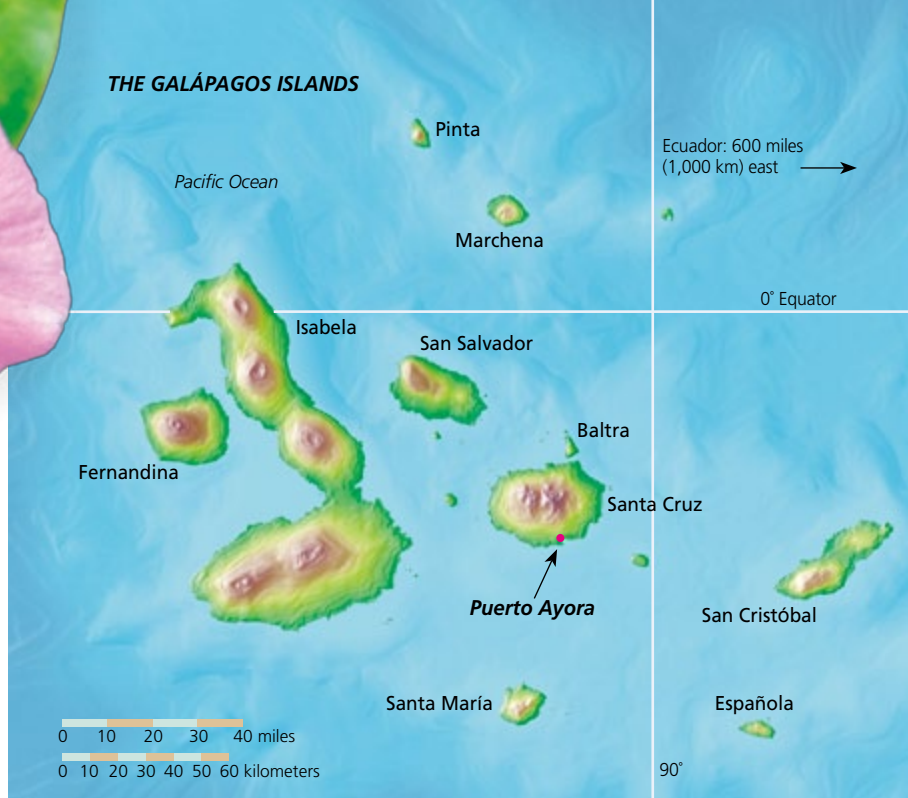
Some branch members and their families live in the lush highlands of Santa Cruz. It is here that the branch leaders decided to host a service project on September 4, 2010.

"As an elders quorum, each month we try to host one or two *mingas*," or service projects, says Oswaldo. "We hold them for the person who most needs the service. This time we are going to build a house for a sister."

Half of a house, actually. A week or so before, members had built the first half. This day over 20 of them spent six hours or more building the other half, including a kitchen, a water-collection system, and a walkway around the house. The modest home provides a place to live for Elena Cedeño and her children, who were not members of the Church at the time. All were extremely gratified by the time and effort the members gave. (Sister Cedeño and her son Sebastián were baptized in January 2011.)

"There is nothing better than serving the people who need it," Oswaldo says. And the look in his eyes, as well as that of the other branch members and the sister they served, testify of the unity such service yields.





What Really Matters

The service and interdependence among members in the Galápagos Islands that have created such unity led to rich blessings in 2007. That year David and Jeanneth Palacios escorted five branch families, nearly 25 people in all, to the Guayaquil Ecuador Temple.

“To see those families sealed, I felt as though we had been transported to the heavens,” says Jeanneth. “We felt the presence of the Lord so profoundly. All five of those families are very active today.”

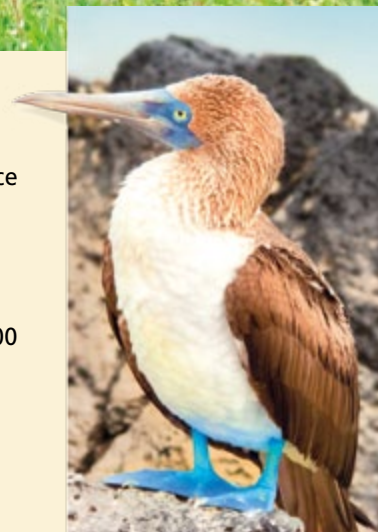
On this visit to the temple, branch president Daniel Calapucha and his wife, Angela, were sealed, and their three children were sealed to them as well. “The temple totally transforms you,” President Calapucha says. “Truly, it is the house of the Lord. To be together as a family in the gospel of the Lord changes lives. That’s why I stay in this church. Having been sealed as a family, I no longer fear death. I no longer fear that I’m going to lose my family when I die.

“The temple has become the foundation for feeling and knowing that our Heavenly Father exists—and His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. It is a testimony that no one can take from me.”



THE PROVINCE OF THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

The islands constitute a province of Ecuador. Although roughly 97 percent of the land has been claimed as a national park, that leaves plenty of land for the 25,000 or so inhabitants to work in business, tourism, and agriculture.





Below: The Fuertes family joined the Church in Otavalo, Ecuador, and later moved to the Galápagos Islands in search of work. Below right: Elena Cedeño (left) with her sister, Maria; with Maria's help, Elena joined the Church earlier this year.

What the Galápagos Teach Us

Every member of the Church in the Galápagos Islands is a modern pioneer. Almost all of the adult members are converts, many having joined within the past few years. And each is helping build the kingdom of God in a remote island where resources are scarce. Much of the food and all of the gasoline and industrial and technological products have to be imported. The local economy, though relatively productive, depends on that fickle merchant of fortune known as tourism.

Perhaps the most stable thing on the islands is the members' dedication to each other and to building the kingdom. That dedication is as remarkable as the ecological interdependence of the islands on which they live. The ecosystem in the Galápagos Islands depends on the health of living creatures—both as individuals and as a

species—interacting successfully with their natural environment.

As a tour guide and naturalist, André explains, “The Galápagos teach us that an ecosystem is like a living being. It’s like a body. It has pressure, fluids, and organs. If one of those things goes wrong, then everything suffers.”

The Galápagos Islands also teach us about the vast grandeur of God’s creations. Nothing is indigenous to the Galápagos. All life, plants, animals, and people are imports.

“If you think about it,” André explains, “the chances of life beginning here on the Galápagos are incredible. First, the lava rock had to decompose to the point where it would support life. Then freshwater sources had to develop. Then seeds had to arrive in a condition that would allow them to germinate. And they had to be able to pollinate each other.

“Then creatures had to arrive, whether floating on the water or flying or whatever. And members of each sex had to arrive at the same time and place and condition so that they could reproduce and find food and water. There are thousands of



species of animals in the Galápagos.

“Remember, the nearest land mass is 600 miles [1,000 km] away. For all of these conditions to be met is something of a miracle.”

And yet that is exactly what the Lord, in His infinite wisdom, caused to happen.

Just as an ecosystem thrives when all its members work in harmony, members of the Church form a kind of social and spiritual ecosystem. The members are individuals who are also part of ecosystems called families and wards and branches of the Church. Each member plays an integral role,

contributing to the salvation and exaltation of themselves, their families, and other members of the branch.

Individual decisions, like the one André made to attend church that day in 1997, can have a lasting impact. The combined decisions of the members to build the kingdom through selfless service may seem like nothing more than an old adage to some. But for the members in the Galápagos Islands, such decisions make all the difference in the strength of their convictions, the power of their unity, and their faith in their covenants. ■



THE RICHNESS OF THE LAND

Much of the land in the Galápagos Islands consists of hard, broken cobblestone of rough-hewn lava rock, split and made uneven by the passage of wind and water. Other areas are covered with pear cactus, palo santo trees, and brown and gray vegetation. On the younger islands, such as the mammoth Isabela, there is a feeling that you’ve walked back to the dawn of time.

But there is much vibrant life too, especially on the island of Santa Cruz. There, vast areas of mangrove trees grow along the shoreline. As the elevation rises inland to the north, the climate zone changes to a lush, verdant temperate zone, where abundant farming takes place, including the cultivation of tropical fruits and other crops.

“People think the Galápagos are just a land of rock, lava, and birds,” says branch president Daniel Calapucha. But, as he explains, they are blessed with ranches, cattle, and fruit trees.



400 YEARS

By Richard N. W. Lambert and Kenneth R. Mays*



In England when the King James Bible was translated, there was a flowering of great scholars and linguists that has not been duplicated since. Among the translators were several who were associated with Trinity College, Cambridge, as students or professors.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

382



SAINT JEROME, ISTOCK

ST. JEROME

translated the ancient texts into a Latin Bible, known as the Vulgate. This was the official Bible of the Catholic Church for more than 1,000 years; however, the common people could not read or understand Latin.



JOHN WYCLIFFE, GETTY IMAGES

JOHN WYCLIFFE

translated the Vulgate into English. His was the first handwritten copy of the complete Bible in English.

1382

1455



JOHANNES GUTENBERG, GETTY IMAGES

JOHANNES GUTENBERG

published a version of the Vulgate on his printing press, making it available to more people. It was known as the Gutenberg Bible.

1526



WILLIAM TYNDALE, GETTY IMAGES

OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

BACKGROUND: PHOTO BY KENNETH MAYS, ART TREATMENT BY MARGARET DIANE HAYDEN; RIGHT: KING JAMES, GETTY IMAGES; FAR RIGHT: PHOTO BY KENNETH MAYS



King James



Hampton Court Palace



It is not by chance or coincidence that we have the Bible today," said Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Men like John Wycliffe, the courageous William Tyndale, and Johannes Gutenberg were prompted against much opposition to translate the Bible into language people could understand and to publish it in books people could read. I believe even the scholars of King James had spiritual promptings in their translation work."¹

WILLIAM TYNDALE (originally spelled "Tindale") translated the New Testament, rendering an English version (published 1526 and revised 1534) from Greek. He translated part of the Old Testament from Hebrew before he was imprisoned for heresy in 1535 and executed a year and a half later. Much of the wording we read today in the King James Bible comes from Tyndale's translation.

1535-68

SCHOLARS relied on Tyndale's work to produce these new English versions of the Bible: the Coverdale Bible (published 1535), the Matthew Bible (1537), and the Great Bible (1539). Translators of the Geneva Bible (1560) and the Bishops' Bible (1568) used other sources as well as Tyndale's work.

1604



JOHN RAINOLDS, GETTY IMAGES

KING JAMES held a conference at Hampton Court Palace. John Rainolds, a prominent Puritan at the conference, moved that the king commission a new translation of the Bible. King James set forth a resolution to do so.



FIRST EDITION

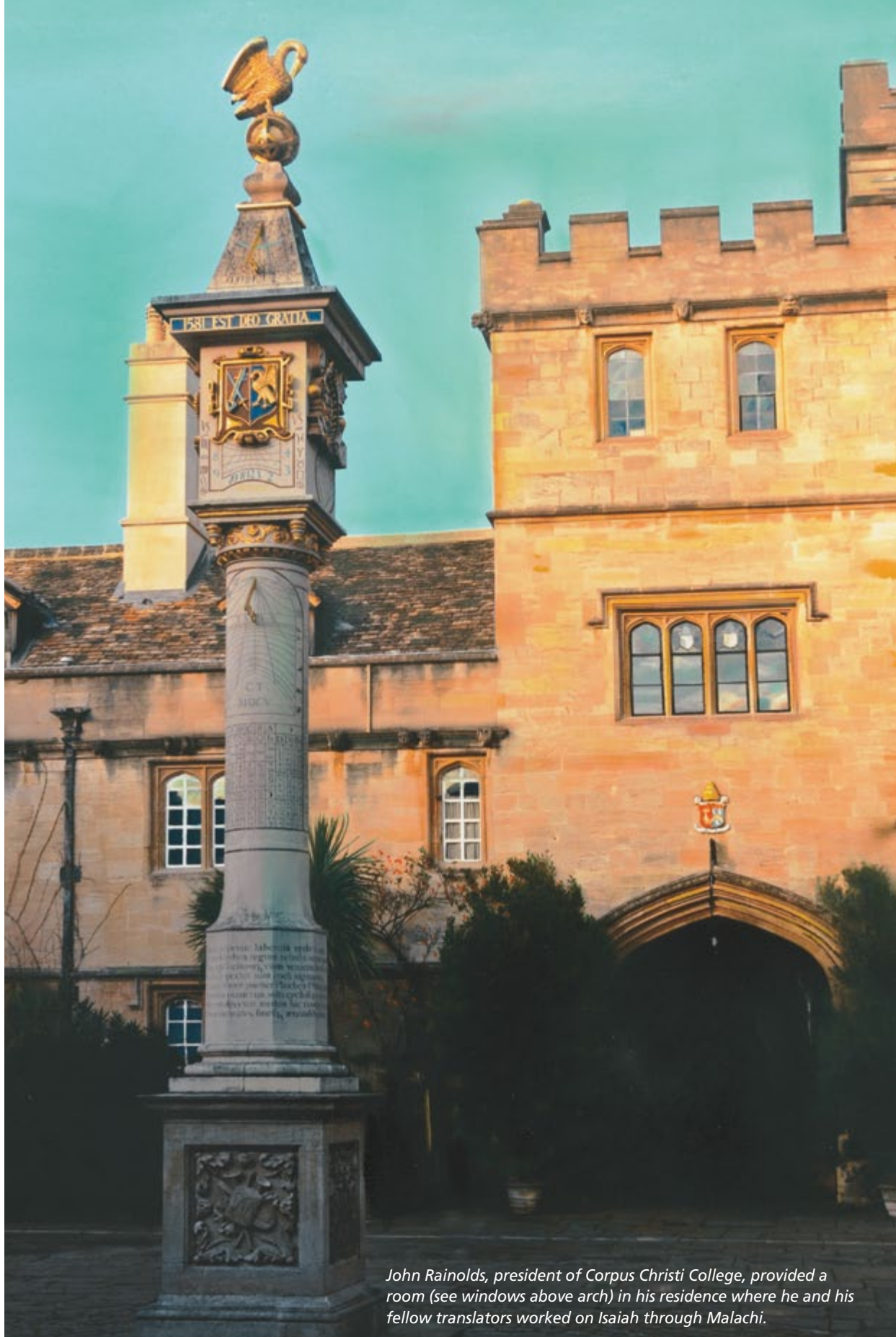
1611

**The authors did field research in England supported by the Mormon Historic Sites Foundation. Lambert's biographical sketches of the translators and Mays's photographs will soon appear on KingJamesBibleTrust.org.*

The unique skills possessed by those who translated the King James Bible were at their apex during this time. The translators were all learned biblical scholars and linguists. It would be difficult today to gather 50 scholars with the knowledge of ancient languages possessed by these men.

Lancelot Andrewes was typical of those selected. He had command of 15 languages. Considered one of the most learned men in England, he was also a spiritual leader. He was royal chaplain to Queen Elizabeth and to King James. His sermons left listeners wanting more. In fact, King James slept with Andrewes's sermons under his pillow.

A few translators were atypical because they were not associated with a university. Richard Brett was one such translator. Though he attended Oxford and mastered such languages as Syriac, Coptic, and Ethiopic, he spent most of his life as a rector, husband, and father in the small English village of Quainton—except for the few years he worked on the King James translation.

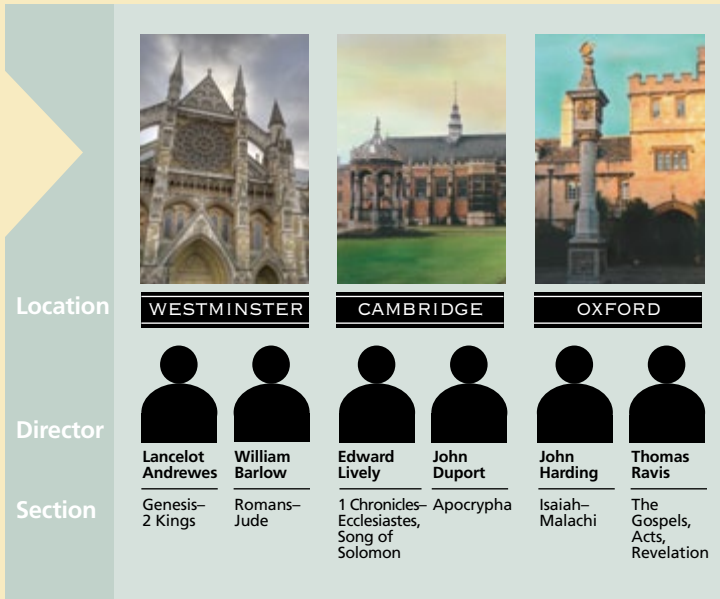


John Rainolds, president of Corpus Christi College, provided a room (see windows above arch) in his residence where he and his fellow translators worked on Isaiah through Malachi.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD



King James asked Bishop Richard Bancroft (above) to oversee six companies of translators at three locations. They worked on unbound pages from the 1602 revision of the Bishops' Bible. Bancroft wrote 15 general rules to guide them. After translators of each company completed their assignment, they passed it on to the next company, so that all companies reviewed the entire Bible. This process took four years.



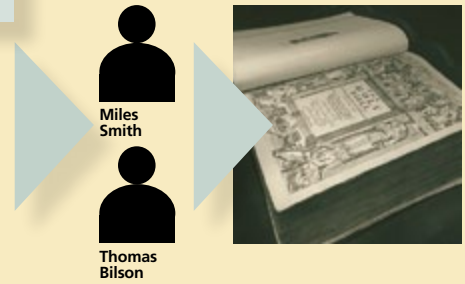
TRANSLATORS OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

Miles Smith and Thomas Bilson oversaw the final revision of the King James Bible. Richard Bancroft reviewed the final revision and made only 14 changes.

The original copies of the King James Bible were 16" x 11" (40.6 cm x 28 cm) and weighed 30 pounds (13.6 kg).



Following this initial translation work, two translators from each of the six companies spent nine months at Stationers' Hall in London reviewing the work. Only three of these twelve translators have been identified.



Above: Map showing the locations of the three translation sites.

Right: Ely, England, where Lancelot Andrewes served as bishop. Far right, top and bottom: The parish church in Quinton, England, where Richard Brett served for over 40 years as the rector.



THE POETIC LANGUAGE OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE

The King James Bible is regarded by many to be the most beautiful English language version because of its lyrical quality, which seems to speak to the heart and spirit.

THE KING JAMES BIBLE

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light” (Genesis 1:1–3).

THE KING JAMES BIBLE

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death . . .” (Psalm 23:4).

THE KING JAMES BIBLE

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:1–3).

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL READER'S VERSION OF THE BIBLE

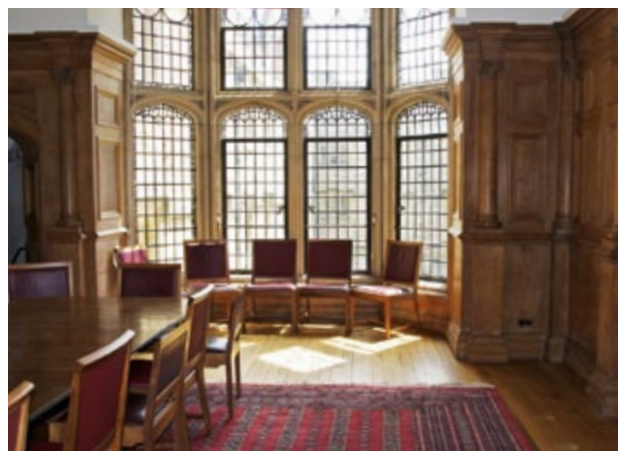
“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth didn't have any shape. And it was empty. Darkness was over the surface of the ocean. At that time, the ocean covered the earth. The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light” (Genesis 1:1–3).

THE NEW LIVING TRANSLATION BIBLE

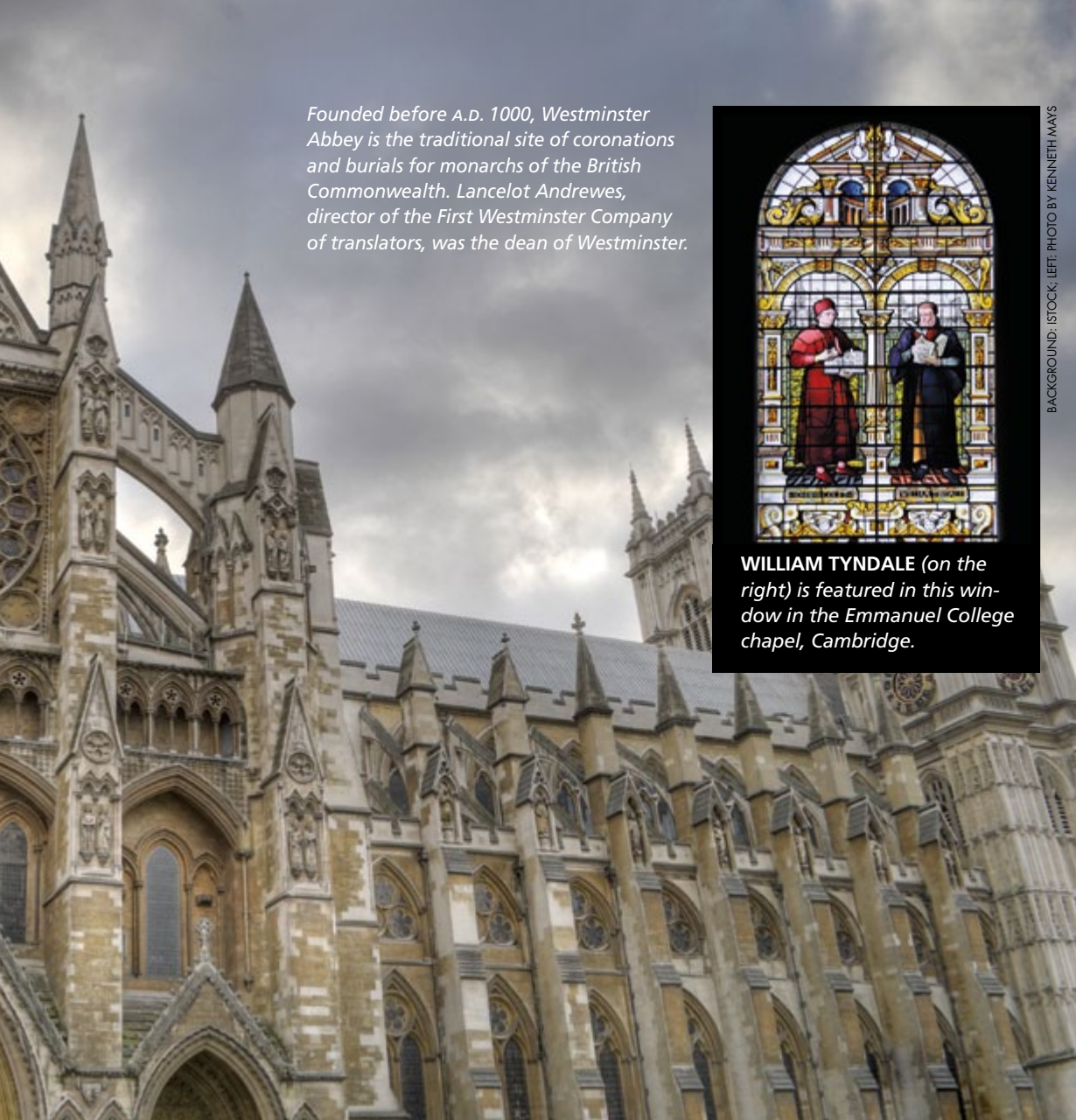
“Even when I walk through the darkest valley . . .” (Psalm 23:4).

THE NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION OF THE BIBLE

“If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:1–3).



Above: In this room at Merton College, Oxford, translators led by Thomas Ravis worked on the Gospels, Acts, and Revelation.



Founded before A.D. 1000, Westminster Abbey is the traditional site of coronations and burials for monarchs of the British Commonwealth. Lancelot Andrewes, director of the First Westminster Company of translators, was the dean of Westminster.



WILLIAM TYNDALE (on the right) is featured in this window in the Emmanuel College chapel, Cambridge.

BACKGROUND: ISTOCK; LEFT: PHOTO BY KENNETH MAYS

William Tyndale desired to put the Bible in the hands of the common people. Speaking to the clergy of his day, he said, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough, shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost!"² Tyndale achieved his goal, but in 1536 he was strangled, then burned at the stake as a heretic.

Nevertheless, much of Tyndale's translation survived in the King James Bible, and his hope that the common people could study the Bible in English came to pass, as seen in the life of Joseph Smith, a young farm boy. ■

NOTES

1. M. Russell Ballard, "The Miracle of the Holy Bible," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 80.
2. William Tyndale, quoted in D. Todd Christofferson, "The Blessing of Scripture," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 32.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY, LONDON

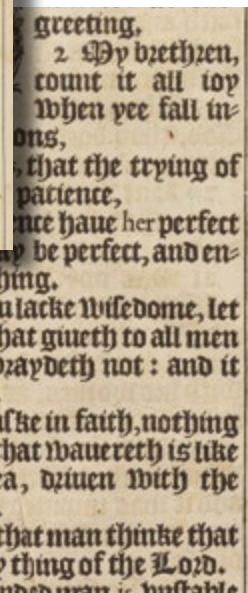
JOSEPH SMITH AND THE KING JAMES BIBLE



Young Joseph Smith sought guidance in his King James Bible and found it in James 1:5, which says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him." He believed. As he prayed in a grove of trees, God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to him. (See JS—H 1:1–20.)

Today, English-speaking Church members use the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. Based on the doctrinal clarity of latter-day revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Church has held to the King James Version as being doctrinally more accurate than recent versions.

In 2010 the Church published 364,000 copies of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible.



LEFT: PHOTO BY KENNETH MAYS; RIGHT: JOSEPH SMITH SEEKS WISDOM FROM THE BIBLE, BY DALE KILBOURN



By Elder L. Tom Perry
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



THE TRADITION OF A Balanced, Righteous Life

God bless you with the will and desire to be an example to the world and to live the balanced, righteous life He expects His children to live during their mortal probation.

At the beginning of the memorable musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye, the protagonist, introduces his story by saying:

“In our little village of Anatevka, you might say every one of us is a fiddler on the roof, trying to scratch out a pleasant, simple tune without breaking his neck. It isn’t easy. You may ask, why do we stay up here if it’s so dangerous? We stay because Anatevka is our home. And how do we keep our balance? That I can tell you in one word—tradition!

“Because of our traditions, we’ve kept our balance for many, many years. . . . Because of our traditions, everyone knows who he is and what God expects him to do.”¹

I and other older members of the Church have been privileged to live in a special time in Church history. The pioneer era has given us



great traditions. Because the very survival of the pioneers depended upon it, they developed a great spirit of togetherness. I am a third-generation descendant of a noble Mormon pioneer family,

but I have been able to enjoy the blessings of a modern home, automobile transportation, and a college education. My life was not so far removed from the life of the pioneer, however, and pioneer traditions continued to be practiced in our family, ward, and community.

In my boyhood home it was evident that Father and Mother loved each other and loved each of their children. They were unselfish in devoting the best part of their lives to the family. As a family we always had three meals a day together. The traditional-type home that I knew is less and less common today. We sometimes long for the “good old days.”

Our social activities centered on the ward or our local grade school. The ward turned out to watch our participation in athletic events. Ward

dances involved the entire family. Celebrations such as Christmas, Independence Day, Pioneer Day, and the county fair were community events that the entire family attended.

We also had family traditions. The experiences gained from these family traditions taught us basic principles. One fun tradition we practiced in our family had a lasting impression on us. When the children in the family reached the age of one, they were placed at one end of a room and the family at the other end. Where the family was gathered, four objects were placed on the floor: a baby's milk bottle, a toy, a small savings bank, and the scriptures. The child was then encouraged to crawl to the objects and select one of them.

I selected the bank and turned out to be a financial executive. My brother Ted selected the scriptures, was a great lover of books all his life, and became a lawyer. My brother Bob was the well-rounded member of the family. He crawled up and sat on the scriptures, picked up the bank and placed it right at his feet, and put the bottle in his mouth with one hand and held the toy in the other hand. He became an accountant. He lived a well-balanced life.

Using these four items as examples, I would like to discuss living a balanced life.

Our Body Is a Temple

The bottle of milk represents our physical health. The scriptures testify as to how important our physical bodies are to our eternal progress.

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

The Lord sets a high standard for us in

telling us to consider our bodies a temple. I have had the privilege of accompanying the President of the Church to many temple dedications. Before a dedicatory service the President always wants to inspect the workmanship of the new temple, which is of the highest quality and beautiful in its design. The grounds around our temples are always the most attractive place in the communities in which they are constructed.

Go and stand in front of a temple. Study carefully the house of the Lord and see if it does not inspire you to make some improvements in the physical temple the Lord has given to you to house your eternal spirit. The Lord has established some basic standards for the governance of our physical bodies. Obedience to these standards remains as a requirement for ordination to the priesthood, for a temple recommend, and for holding a calling in the Church.

Sometimes we may feel that people will not be as accepting of us because of the high standards we have set for ourselves. Still, there are things we just don't do. We have the Word of Wisdom, which helps us to live a healthier life, a type of life that is conducive to our growth and well-being. We have standards, ideals, and a way of living that are the envy of much of the world. I have found that if you live the way you should live, people notice and are impressed with your beliefs and you have an influence on the lives of others.

I spent my career in the department store business. Because I was part of a management team, it was important for me to interact socially with local business organizations. The meetings with most of these organizations always started with a cocktail hour. It was a time to mix and get acquainted with





We have the Word of Wisdom, which helps us to live a healthier life, a type of life that is conducive to our growth and well-being.

the men who belonged to the organization. I have always felt uncomfortable in these social hours. At first I started asking for a lemon-lime soda. I soon discovered that lemon-lime soda looks like many of the other drinks. I could not build the impression I was a nondrinker with a clear soda in my hands. I tried root beer. It had the same problem.

Finally I decided I had to have a drink that would clearly mark me as a nondrinker. I went to the bartender and requested a glass of milk. The bartender had never had such a request. He went into the kitchen and found a glass of milk for me. Now I had a drink that looked very different from the alcoholic beverages the others were drinking. Suddenly I was the center of attention. There were a lot of jokes made of my drink. My milk was a conversation piece. I met more business leaders that evening than I ever had before at a cocktail hour.

Milk became my drink of choice at the cocktail hours. It soon became common knowledge I was a Mormon. The respect I received really surprised me, as did an interesting event that started to occur. Others soon joined me in a pure milk cocktail!

Dare to be different. Live up to the standards we are taught in the gospel.

“Good physical and spiritual health can help us to stay on the straight and narrow way,” said Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “The Lord gave his code of health in the Word of Wisdom, ‘a principle with promise’ that modern medical science continues to substantiate. (D&C 89:3.) All of God’s commandments, including the Word of Wisdom, are spiritual. (See D&C 29:34–35.) We need to nourish ourselves spiritually, even more than physically.”²

How grateful we should be for gospel teachings on the importance of keeping our physical bodies pure and worthy of housing our eternal spirits.

Toys of the World

We live in an interesting world. The desire for worldly toys seems to be overpowering. Developed nations are becoming so secular in their beliefs and actions that they reason a human being has total autonomy. They believe we do not have to give an account to anyone or anything except to ourselves and, to a limited extent, to the society in which we live.

The scriptures warn us, “They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall

perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall” (D&C 1:16).

Societies in which this secular lifestyle takes root have a deep spiritual and moral price to pay. The pursuit of so-called individual freedoms without regard to laws the Lord has established to govern His children on earth will result in the curse of extreme worldliness and selfishness, the decline of public and private morality, and the defiance of authority. Amidst the bustle of the secular world, with its certain uncertainty, there must be places that offer spiritual refuge, renewal, hope, and peace.

In contrast to this secular lifestyle, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught us the importance of seeking knowledge from God:

Mortality is the time to learn first of God and the gospel and to perform the ordinances.





With that noble quality of trust comes the reputation of one who is honest and possesses integrity. These are character traits that will ensure a long and successful career.

“In proper sequence, first comes the knowledge of God and his program, which is the way to eternal life, and then comes the knowledge of the secular things, which is also very important. . . .

“Peter and John had little secular learning, being termed ignorant. But they knew the vital things of life, that God lives and that the crucified, resurrected Lord is the Son of God. They knew the path to eternal life. This they learned in a few decades of their mortal life. Their righteous lives opened the door to godhood for them and creation of worlds with eternal increase. For this they would probably need, eventually, a total knowledge of the sciences. But whereas Peter and John had only decades to learn and do the spiritual, they have already had nineteen centuries in which to learn the secular or the geology of the earth, the zoology and physiology and

psychology of the creatures of the earth. Mortality is the time to learn first of God and the gospel and to perform the ordinances. After our feet are set firmly on the path to eternal life we can amass more knowledge of the secular things. . . .

“Secular knowledge, important as it may be, can never save a soul nor open the celestial kingdom nor create a world nor make a man a god, but it can be most helpful to that man who, placing first things first, has found the way to eternal life and who can now bring into play all knowledge to be his tool and servant.”³

Seek after the things of God, where eternal rewards await you.

Banking on Good Character

The Savior, as recorded in Luke 14, taught us this lesson:

Personal, sincere involvement in the scriptures produces faith, hope, and solutions to our daily challenges.



“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

“Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

“Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish” (Luke 14:28–30).

As you prepare for the future, you must be certain that what you are putting into this mortal experience will enable you to finish strong and gain your eternal reward.

Our world today is increasingly fast moving and complex. There are always opportunities for individuals to play fast and loose. Many people like to play to activities that produce quick windfalls and often take advantage of others who try to play according to the rules established by good practices. This fast-moving world has heightened the temptation

for people to play the game with their own set of rules.

However, we must always answer to the law of the harvest. “For whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap; therefore, if ye sow good ye shall also reap good for your reward” (D&C 6:33). This is a law that will never be repealed.

“A man’s character is the reality of himself.—His reputation is the opinion others have formed of him.—Character is in him;—reputation is from other people—[character] is the substance, [reputation] is the shadow.”⁴

A good character is something you must make for yourself. It cannot be inherited from parents. It cannot be created by having extraordinary advantages. It isn’t a gift of birth, wealth, talent, or station. It is the result of your own endeavor. It is the reward that comes from living good principles and manifesting a virtuous and honorable life.

With that noble quality of trust comes the reputation of one who is honest and possesses integrity. These are character traits that will ensure a long and successful career. The greatest asset you can put into your bank is the reputation of being a person of trust.

Daily Scripture Study

In his writings concerning how he felt about the scriptures, Nephi said: “Upon these I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children” (2 Nephi 4:15).

We find a wealth of conviction and knowledge from our scriptures: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. We can find inspirational threads running through each of them. In our study we will easily recognize them.

The scriptures teach that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He lives and is our Redeemer and Savior. We should follow Him and show our love for Him by remembering Him and humbly keeping His commandments.

Through His Atonement we are able to repent and be cleansed. We are His covenant people and should always keep the covenants we have made.

We should have faith, repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, and endure to the end.

Personal, sincere involvement in the scriptures produces faith, hope, and solutions to our daily challenges. Frequently reading, pondering, and applying the lessons of the scriptures, combined with prayer, become an irreplaceable part of gaining and sustaining a strong, vibrant testimony.

President Kimball reminded us of the importance of consistent scripture reading when he said: “I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that . . . no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns.”⁵

Make a daily practice of studying the scriptures.

An Example to the World

My generation is dying off at a rapid rate. We are willing to pass the torch to a new and better-prepared generation of Latter-day Saints. We expect that they will:

1. Keep their wonderful physical bodies pure and holy as temples of God.
2. Place preeminence on spiritual learning and knowledge from God.
3. Be a trusted generation and use the foundation of eternal gospel truths to establish standards and values.
4. Seek learning from the eternal truths contained in the holy scriptures.

God bless you with the will and desire to be an example to the world and to live the balanced, righteous life He expects His children to live during their mortal probation. ■

From an address delivered on January 15, 2010, at Utah Valley University.

NOTES

1. Joseph Stein, Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick, *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964), 2–3.
2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “The Straight and Narrow Way,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 65.
3. Spencer W. Kimball, *President Kimball Speaks Out* (1981), 90, 91, 92.
4. Henry Ward Beecher, in Tryon Edwards, comp., *The New Dictionary of Thoughts* (1944), 67.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 67.



REACH WITH A Rescuing Hand



By President
Gordon B. Hinckley
(1910–2008)

Gordon B. Hinckley was set apart as the 15th President of the Church on March 12, 1995. He pioneered the building of small temples, announcing 79 new temples during his presidency. President Hinckley is also remembered for traveling to visit Latter-day Saints in over 60 nations. The following article is excerpted from a general conference address he delivered on October 6, 1996. For the full address, go to conference.lds.org.

All of us need to be reminded of the past. It is from history that we gain knowledge which can save us from repeating mistakes and on which we can build for the future. . . .

I take you back to the general conference of October 1856. On Saturday of that conference Franklin D. Richards and a handful of associates arrived in the [Salt Lake Valley]. They had traveled from Winter Quarters with strong teams and light wagons and had been able to make good time. Brother Richards immediately sought out President Young. He reported that there were hundreds of men, women, and children scattered over the long trail from

Scottsbluff to this valley. Most of them were pulling handcarts. They were accompanied by two wagon trains which had been assigned to assist them. They had reached the area of the last crossing of the North Platte River. Ahead of them lay a trail that was uphill all the way to the Continental Divide with many, many miles beyond that. . . .

The next morning [President Young] came to the old Tabernacle which stood on [Temple Square]. He said to the people:

“. . . Many of our brethren and sisters are on the plains with handcarts, and probably many are now seven hundred miles from this place, and they must be brought here, we must send assistance to them. . . .

“That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess. It is to save the people.

“I shall call upon the Bishops this day. I shall not wait until tomorrow, nor until the next day, for 60 good mule teams and 12 or 15 wagons. I do not want to send oxen. I want good horses and mules. They are in this Territory, and we must have them. Also 12 tons of flour and 40 good teamsters, besides those that drive the teams.

“I will tell you all that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the Celestial Kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. *Go and bring in those people now on the plains.*”¹

That afternoon, food, bedding, and clothing in great quantities were assembled by the women.

The next morning, horses were shod and wagons were repaired and loaded.



Stories of their rescue speak of the very essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The following morning, Tuesday, 16 mule teams pulled out and headed eastward. By the end of October, there were 250 teams on the road to give relief.

Wonderful sermons have been preached from this pulpit, my brethren and sisters. But none has been more eloquent than that spoken by President Young in those circumstances.

. . . Stories of their rescue need to be repeated again and again. They speak of the very essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ. . .

. . . We have some of our own who cry out in pain and suffering and loneliness and fear. Ours is a great and solemn duty to reach out and help them, to lift them, to feed them if they are hungry, to nurture their

spirits if they thirst for truth and righteousness.

There are so many young people who wander aimlessly and walk the tragic trail of drugs, gangs, immorality, and the whole brood of ills that accompany these things. There are widows who long for friendly voices and that spirit of anxious concern which speaks of love. There are those who were once warm in the faith but whose faith has grown cold. Many of them wish to come back but do not know quite how to do it. They need friendly hands reaching out to them. With a little effort, many of them can be brought back to feast again at the table of the Lord.

My brethren and sisters, I would hope, I would pray, that each of us . . . would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives.

I leave with you my beloved friends, my co-workers in this wonderful cause, my testimony of the truth of this work, the work of the Almighty, the work of the Redeemer of mankind. ■

Punctuation and spelling standardized.

NOTE

1. Brigham Young, quoted in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarters to Zion* (1960), 120–21.

“Though Hard to You . . .”

*When the doctor said the words
“Down syndrome,” my world came to a
crashing halt.*

By Holly Scott Gamangasso

I remember being pushed down the hall to the operating room for an emergency cesarean section because our baby was in a dangerous breech position. They got us inside the operating room, but the baby came too fast—feet first—with no doctor in sight. I was relieved to hear the sound of his cry, but he was quickly taken to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) because of some breathing problems.

A few hours later I had recovered enough to go down to the NICU to see our new baby boy. My husband and I were so excited to see the child we had eagerly awaited for months. As I looked at this tiny infant hooked up to tubes and breathing mechanisms, an overwhelming concern came over me as I studied his features. Something about his appearance did not seem normal, but I couldn't decide what was different. The nurse wasn't allowed to answer our questions until the pediatrician had a chance to examine the baby. We went back to our hospital room with an uneasy sense of anticipation.

Minutes later the doctor entered our room with a serious expression that made my heart sink. When she said the words *Down syndrome*, I was shocked. None of the prenatal testing or blood work throughout my pregnancy had indicated any problems. This was not supposed to happen to us. I felt as though someone had punched me in the stomach and I couldn't catch my breath. I felt that the Lord had grossly overestimated my ability to accept and love this baby.

We put on brave faces as our family and friends poured in throughout the day to show their love and support. I didn't want anyone to see the fear and disappointment on my face. I was ashamed of myself for the way I was feeling. I was his mother—if *I* would not love this child, who would?

My husband went home that night to be with our three-year-old daughter, and I was left alone with my thoughts for the first time. The room was dark and quiet, and I finally broke down and began sobbing. I was exhausted in every sense of the word, but I could not sleep. I felt as though I was watching as our son's possibilities—serving a mission, graduating from college, getting married, and having children—melted away. Panic for the future absorbed my every thought.

I needed help, so I began praying earnestly for the Lord's comforting Spirit. I didn't ask Him to change the circumstances—only to bless me with the strength to face my fears, overcome my initial heartache, and be at peace with the situation. I continued praying throughout the night until the words of a hymn came to my mind:

*Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear;
But with joy wend your way.
Though hard to you this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
'Tis better far for us to strive
Our useless cares from us to drive;
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—*

I went directly to the NICU, picked up our precious son, and put his soft cheek to mine. I could feel the strength of his spirit. Fear faded into understanding, and from that moment on I have loved him with all my heart.



All is well! All is well!

*Why should we mourn or think our lot
is hard?*

'Tis not so; all is right.

*Why should we think to earn a great
reward*

If we now shun the fight?

Gird up your loins; fresh courage take.

Our God will never us forsake;

And soon we'll have this tale to tell—

All is well! All is well!¹

As the sunshine began to peek through the window that morning, the Lord sent with it His warm, peaceful Spirit. I felt His love and concern for me. I decided to “gird up [my] loins” and “fresh courage take.” The Lord had not left me to deal with this alone. I began to understand how much faith He had in me as a mother. He had trusted me with this special spirit, our son—His son. I felt that this child would humble me, help me learn compassion, and thus help me become more like my Heavenly Father.

I went directly to the NICU, picked up our precious son, and put his soft cheek to mine. I could feel the strength of his spirit. Fear faded into understanding, and from that moment on I have loved him with all my heart.

Our son Carter has sharpened our perspective about what is important in life. He reminds us each day of the true reason we have come to earth. Things are not always easy, but the words of that hymn continue to inspire me. Now I truly know that “all is well.” ■

NOTE

1. “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” *Hymns*, no. 30.



GARRETT WAS
**God's
Child
First**

When our son was diagnosed with autism, I prayed to know how to “fix” him. But I soon learned that he was not broken.

By April T. Giauque

Garrett, an 11-year-old boy with autism, experiences the world with a mixture of pain and agitation every morning, every afternoon, every waking hour. He is hypersensitive to many of the sounds, textures, and sights to which all of us are exposed daily, but for him, such exposure leaves him anxious. Wouldn't *you* seek to shut off the pain and the agitation? It makes sense that Garrett is trying to do just that—stop the sound, sensation, sight, and nausea that interrupt his daily life. I've worked with Garrett since he was a day old. Garrett is my son.

Of course, not all people with autism experience or react to it the same way Garrett has. The manifestations of autism are different for each person. But because Heavenly Father knows all of us, He will guide us as parents, leaders, teachers, and physicians to know how to best reach His children, including those with disabilities. He has done that for me. Here, I wish to tell a little bit about Garrett's experience with autism and how Heavenly Father has helped us better understand our son—who was first His son.

Garrett is one of five children born to my first husband and me. The first three of our children, including Garrett, have autism spectrum disorders. My first instinct as a mother is to hold and wrap a child in warmth, in touch, with life. Mothers want to protect their children, teach them, and interact with them in the form of cooing, smiles, hugs, tears, and kisses. And it's natural to expect some type of response to all that you are giving your child. But from the very beginning, Garrett has been hypersensitive to sound, touch, smells, and food textures. As a toddler and young

child, he recoiled at touch, vomited most foods, and buried his head, face, and body into stuffed animals, pillows, and blankets.

Relying on Prayer and Inspiration

At first I would pray and pray to find out what to do to “fix” our child. But through the gentle workings of the Spirit I learned that Garrett was not broken—I just needed to learn to see him through all of the challenges. I came to know that he is special and was sent to us and that I could learn from him. I needed to exercise my faith in Heavenly Father and His plan of happiness in order to see Garrett, his gifts, and his potential, not just his external behaviors.

Such faith was crucial in seeking to understand Garrett. In his early years, until he was about four years old, Garrett knew how to communicate in only one way: crying. Was he in pain? Was he trying to tell me something? “Maybe this is just how it's going to be,” I thought. Disheartened and not knowing what to do, I continued to pray. Eventually the challenges associated with our children's autism contributed to the end of our marriage. I began raising our children by myself, until I married a man who has been a great help in dealing with these challenges. We have had two more children.

The answer came to enroll Garrett in a local school program for children with autism, a process in which I saw the hand of the Lord. With Garrett's participation in the program, I learned how to recognize Garrett's talents. I was taught more constructive methods of communicating with my son and understanding what he was experiencing daily. Through these things, my

FROM DISABILITIES.LDS.ORG

"Autism is a disability with characteristics that vary across a wide spectrum. While persons with autism can't be identified by their physical appearance, they have similar attributes that can be observed. They usually have difficulties with language or communication, social skills and behavior, often due to sensory difficulties. Children with severe autism may be nonverbal and seem unaware of other people. Those with mild autism can appear to be incredibly smart, but may seem very odd in social interactions. Most people with autism are somewhere in the middle. Even though they have difficulty expressing their feelings and relating to others, people with autism still sense how others feel about them.

"Whether a person's autism is mild, moderate, or severe, it is commonly accepted to be a lifelong developmental disability. The exact causes of autism are unknown; however, it is a brain-based disorder. It is clear that individuals with autism are born with the disorder or born with the potential to develop it. Autism is not caused by bad parenting."



As difficult as it was to switch from my own logic to listening to the Lord and following promptings from the Spirit, our family is better off for my having done so.

children and I started to see our Garrett! With faith and in time, I also developed perspective to be able to anticipate his needs.

For a long time, I sought to constantly monitor situations to prepare myself to handle Garrett's reaction to unexpected sounds or smells, or, when possible, intervene to prevent the long tantrum that could ensue. If Garrett were my only child, this model of protection and building a bubble around everything might have made sense. But over the years, I have amended my initial response of "sheltering" and creating controlled environments because in the end, they were creating more of a disability for Garrett and our other children than I first thought.

Since relying solely on my own knowledge clearly wasn't working, I once again leaned on Heavenly Father for direction. I stopped building the "perfect bubble" for Garrett to always live in and instead felt guided to build a "safety bubble" for him—a place to go when

he has been pushed to his breaking point and needs a place to calm down. For instance, if things at school have been noisy and loud and a lot has been expected of him, I provide a place for him to decompress when he comes home, perhaps allowing him to sit in a quiet place and draw. Garrett's meltdowns have been greatly reduced through strategies and accommodations like this one, all based on the guidance of a loving Heavenly Father.

What I Have Learned

What I have learned from Garrett and our other children who fall within the autism spectrum is that they are children first and people with autism second. I imagine that it is much the same way that our Heavenly Father sees all of us: we are His children first, and we have trials and experiences second. Our children want love, attention, help, success, and praise. They want their pain to be eased, and they want to feel hope. They enjoy life differently than many people do, yet their needs and wants are similar to those of most everyone.

What I have learned from my Heavenly Father is to be more like Him as a parent. I've learned to stop, to think, to listen. I've learned to keep my communication with Him open. And I've learned to have what our family calls "a bendy brain"—to be flexible—when looking at the situations life throws at us. This means exposing all of our children to life experiences instead of isolating ourselves.

Finally, I've learned how rewarding all the effort, the sleepless nights, and the hard work really are. Yes, raising children with special needs takes faith and patience, but they give me back more love than I could ever imagine. And I've learned that however unknown the path may seem, the Lord will always guide us. ■

MY BROTHER AND AUTISM

One day when I was seven years old, my family and I went to the park. My mother pulled me aside and told me she needed to tell me something important. She told me that my brother Pedro had autism. She explained that it was a condition that would affect his thinking and his ability to communicate. She asked if I understood. I nodded, but really I didn't know what she meant. Then she asked me to help watch over him as his older sister. That of course, I *did* understand. I had been doing it all along.

Being Pedro's sister has been a blessing for me. He helps all of us be better. He wakes up our family in the morning and gathers us for family prayer and reminds us about family home evening. He is a great example of keeping the Sabbath, and it always makes me smile to hear him encourage us not to do certain things by saying, "No, today is Sunday." If only we all understood the important things as well as Pedro does.

I remember when he was ordained a deacon. It was a very spiritual experience for our whole family; we felt the Spirit so strongly.

I know that even though my brother has autism, he is very special. I know that Heavenly Father loves Pedro and sees him in ways that others don't. Sometimes people call Pedro *retarded* as an insult, but perhaps they don't understand what they're doing. They don't understand how frustrated he gets when he does not comprehend something. They don't see how much he understands with his heart. They aren't there to observe him offering hugs to friends and family or greeting people he does not know. They don't see his ability to notice nearly everything or his capacity to make our family laugh.

I know the Lord put him in our family for a reason. Pedro reminds us of the powerful admonition in Matthew 18:3: "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Catherine Aviles, Utah, USA



MORE ON THIS TOPIC

For more on autism, please see these articles at LDS.org:

- Chad E. Phares, "A Good Example," *Friend*, Oct. 2009, 18–19.
- Sandy Tanner, "Hayden's Friends," *Friend*, May 2009, 42.
- Kathleen L. Peterson, "The New Disabilities Web Site," *Ensign*, Mar. 2009, 40–45.
- Sally Johnson Odekirk, "We Know Jeffery," *New Era*, Mar. 2009, 10–12.
- Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Come What May, and Love It," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 26–28.
- Andrea Worthington Snarr, "Cultivating Sensitivity to Others," *Ensign*, June 2008, 59–63.
- Annie and David Braithwaite, "A Letter to Tommy," *Ensign*, Aug. 2007, 9.
- Cindy Gritton, "Joshua's Walls," *Ensign*, Mar. 2007, 26–29.
- Richard M. Romney, "Jason Alford of Huntsville, Alabama," *Friend*, Mar. 2007, 18–20.
- Anne Collinson, "Sowing Seeds of Love," *Ensign*, Jan. 2007, 62.
- Kelly M. Smurthwaite, "Unexpected Hero," *New Era*, May 2006, 36–37.
- "Embracing Members with Special Needs," *Ensign*, Aug. 2005, 12–15.
- Gayle M. Clegg, "Teaching Our Children to Accept Differences," *Ensign*, June 2004, 40–44.
- Donna Alldaffer and Richard M. Romney, "Cameron Blackwell of Jeffersonville, Indiana," *Friend*, Aug. 2002, 20–22.
- Karen T. Sheets, "'Sing More!,'" *Ensign*, July 2001, 23.

You can also find more information about autism—including ways to help, teaching tips, and additional resources—at disabilities.lds.org.



The Lord

WAS ALWAYS THERE

As a young German soldier during World War II, I learned that the gospel has the power to bring us peace and hope even in the most difficult situations.

By John L. Flade

My parents joined the Church in former East Germany in 1925, one year before I was born, so my sister and I grew up in the Church. The doctrines of the gospel became the focus of what our parents taught us and the foundation on which we built our lives.

As a young man I was drafted into the German military in 1943, during World War II. The day I left, my father gave me a priesthood blessing promising me that if I kept the standards of the Church, I would come home again. I clung to that promise. If ever I needed assurance of the Lord's mindfulness of me, and an ability to trust in Him, it was then.

Our unit was transferred to France, where I spent most of my service as a forward observer. Basically that meant I camped between our front line and that of the enemy and, using a large periscope, watched enemy troop movements. I then reported what I observed to my superiors at headquarters. It was an officer's position and I wasn't an officer, but so many of our



unit had been killed in Russia that I was made a sergeant and inherited the job. I was 18 years old.

At one point, I was camping out just outside a small forest near what became known as Utah Beach. About this time—it was July of 1944—my captain assigned me to oversee two other soldiers at my post: one was a fellow sergeant who had just been released from a punishment battalion for cowardice and was being given another chance to prove himself. The other was a brand-new soldier, just 16 years old. The three of us lived in a trench we had dug.

One night, the 16-year-old woke me up and said, “I hear something.” Sure enough, enemy troops were advancing toward us. I didn’t know whether they were American, British, or Canadian, but I could tell that they were speaking English. (I had taken English classes for many years in school.) Before we could hear voices, we received an artillery barrage that slowly moved over us and toward the German lines.

At this point, the other sergeant got up and ran away. I reached for the telephone to contact headquarters, but one of the grenades must have hit the wire because there was no answer. We weren’t about to move. If we did, we’d be shot. If my commander found me away from my post, he’d shoot me himself. It seemed best to wait it out and then work our way back to our battalion’s headquarters.

Before long, the troops were right over us. One of the soldiers fired rounds of a submachine gun, killing the other young soldier instantly. Another threw a small hand grenade into our hole, rendering me unconscious and wounded. Miraculously, through the kindness of the Lord, I survived.

When I awoke, I was in pain—especially my leg and my head—but I could stand and walk, so I started back for

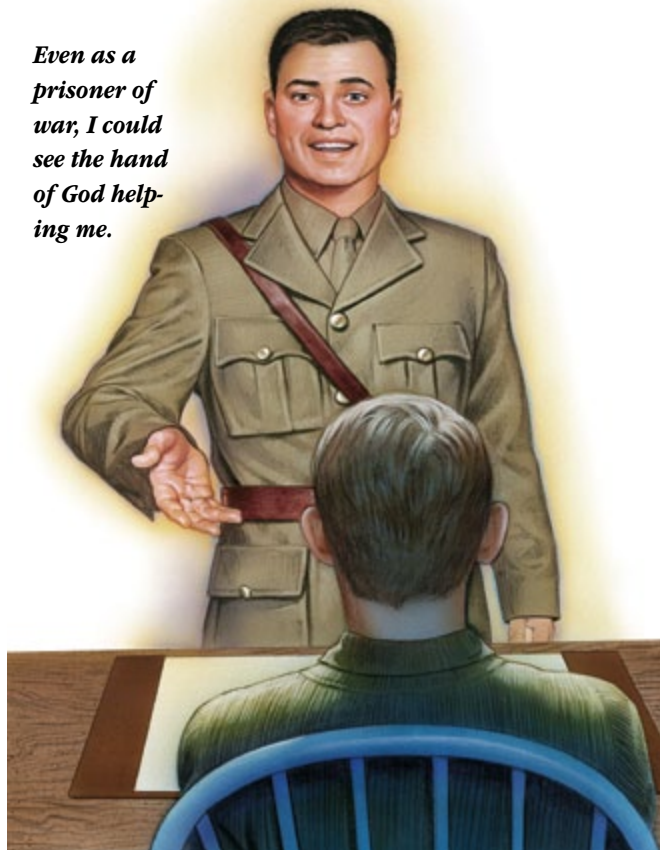
headquarters. However, I was still disoriented, and instead of walking straight through the forest, I veered left into a small opening. I pushed through some bushes and found myself looking directly down the barrels of three rifles. The Canadian soldiers holding the rifles looked at me and I at them. Gratefully—and this was just one of many places where I saw the hand of the Lord intervene in my behalf—they didn’t shoot.

I said something humorous in English, which made them laugh. They offered me a cigarette, which I didn’t accept because of my commitment to the Word of Wisdom, and they started walking me back to their first-aid station. I was a prisoner of war, but I was being treated kindly.

From there I was taken to England with other prisoners. On the ship, I heard a request for a prisoner who spoke English over the loudspeaker. Before I left home, my father had warned me: “Never volunteer in the army.” That seemed especially good advice now that I was in enemy hands. But a feeling urged me to offer my services anyway, which I did. I was offered good food, the likes of which I hadn’t eaten in some time. When we arrived in London, they took me to meet with military intelligence personnel. They thought I might have information about the area where I was captured, but I didn’t know anything about what they were asking me. After being in England for a week, I was taken to meet with another man, a Jew from England. This did not bode well for me as a German soldier.

His first words surprised me: “Is your father’s name *Hans*?” I assumed it was a trick, that I shouldn’t trust him. So I responded with *my* name and my prisoner number. He responded, “Son, I think I can help you if you are who I think you are.” When he said that, I suddenly felt

***Even as a
prisoner of
war, I could
see the hand
of God help-
ing me.***



different. A feeling of discernment told me I could trust this man. He continued, “Is your mother Hilda, and your sister Susan? And do you live on such-and-such a street?”

I was astonished. “How do you know my family?” I asked.

“I owe your father my life.” He told me that while he was on a work trip in Germany, the Gestapo was hunting him. My father, I learned, had helped this man escape to Switzerland and subsequently return home to England. When the gentleman saw my name, he wondered if I were Hans’s son. “If you are half the man your father is,” he concluded, “I owe it to him to help you.”

This man coordinated with a friend of his, a colonel in the United States Army who oversaw thousands of POWs, so that I would be sent to the United States on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*. This 36,000-ton ship (one of the fastest of the time) was transporting wounded American soldiers back to their home country. There were also a handful of us prisoners on board. I could see that Heavenly Father was inspiring ideas in me and in others and putting kind people in my path. That is one of the lessons I learned as a young man during the war: even in horrible situations, you can always see the hand of God. That helped me maintain hope and strength.

I thought it strange that the first time I saw the Statue of Liberty was as a prisoner. When we disembarked, we were taken to a train. Nobody slept because the train itself and the cities we were passing through were lit up. In Germany we hadn’t seen lights in ages. The war had turned everything back home pitch black. Blackout drapes hung in every home to block light; this prevented airplanes overhead from seeing our cities and towns. In other places, the cities were bombed out and there simply was no electricity. So this

light—a sign of freedom even though we were prisoners—was quite significant to us.

We arrived in Texas at a POW camp during autumn. Fields of cotton and onions were waiting to be harvested as far as we could see.

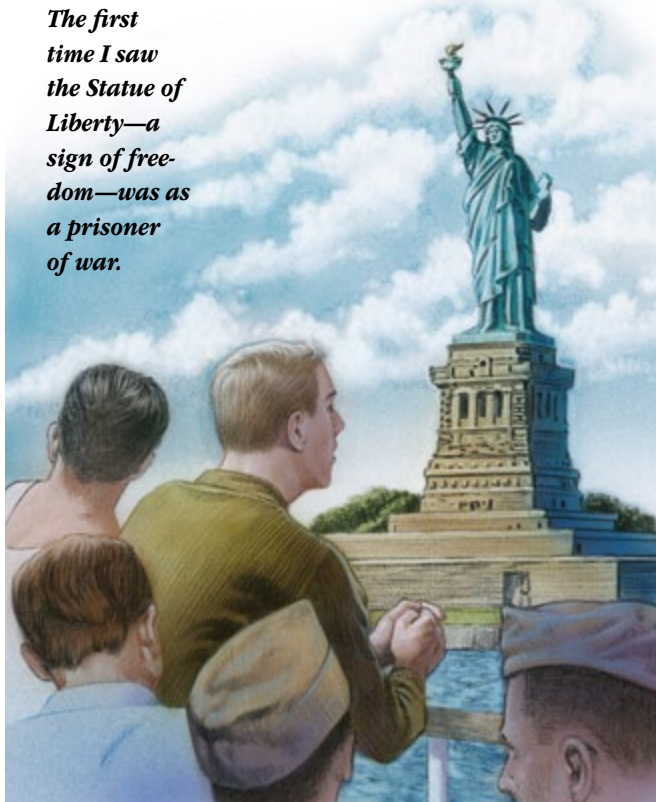
I discovered that my father’s friend had been very kind to me in making arrangements for where I was to go. Life at this prison camp was good. We didn’t have extensive comforts, but the

other noncommissioned officers and I had plenty of good food and decent living conditions. Although the harvesting work was hard, it wasn’t unpleasant. At one point, I was even given a jeep to drive because I worked as a translator.

Back home, my family had received notification that I was missing in action. I was later told that even in the face of that kind of uncertainty and many tears, my family had great faith in the Lord. My father told my mother and sister, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21). That kind of response takes more than a strong belief. It takes knowledge. Growing up in that kind of family, with parents who exhibited that kind of trust in the Lord and faith in the plan of salvation, helped fortify me in my own challenges.

A few weeks later, my family in Germany received the news that I was alive and was living as a POW in the United States. About that time, members of the Church in my hometown gathered for district conference. After the closing prayer, the mission president, who was presiding at the meeting, instructed the congregation to sing “God Be with You Till We Meet Again.”¹ Most of the congregation was in tears—during that bad time, the congregation knew there would be some they’d never see again in this life. Even though they had hope in the promise of eternal life, it was still an emotional time.

The first time I saw the Statue of Liberty—a sign of freedom—was as a prisoner of war.



Before leaving the conference, my father approached a young woman I was fond of, Alice Wagner. “Sister Wagner, I’ve got to talk to you,” he said. “John is alive. I need to tell you that he asked me to watch out for you because when he comes home, he’d like to marry you. You should wait for him.” She agreed to consider it.

Within a few weeks, Dad was drafted to Berlin.

For three years I continued to write home, both to my family and to Alice’s family, but I thought for sure they were all dead because I was not getting any mail in return. (I later found that the outgoing mail system was working quite well but the incoming system was not.) I eventually stopped going outside the barracks at mail-call time. But one day while I was still sitting in the barracks, I heard my name.

“Did I hear that right?” I wondered. I ran outside: “I’m here! That’s me!” I had not one but two letters. One was from Alice. The other was from my sister. When I saw my sister’s handwriting on the envelope, I instantly knew that Dad was dead. He had died two years earlier, but her letter hadn’t gotten through until now.

Dad was killed on the last day of the war in Berlin, May 8, 1945. The letter my mother received said that he died 15 minutes before the cessation of fire. We think he was on his way to the mission home to exchange his uniform for a suit before returning to civilian life.

The news was devastating, of course. But even with that terrible news, I knew I needed to maintain faith. I had seen the hand of the Lord in my life too many times to not trust in Him now. I knew that He would continue to take care of my family and me.

I returned home to Germany in November 1947. Alice and I married five months later. Our country had been

ravaged by war, and things were not easy for us starting out. But the faith and hope we had been developing our entire lives, and especially during the war, continued to fortify us.

We continued to grow in the gospel and participate in church. On Sunday mornings, we walked an hour to Sunday School and back, and the same distance in the evenings for sacrament meeting. We went to priest-

hood and Relief Society on Mondays, mutual and choir on Wednesdays, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays, I often held cottage meetings in small, outlying villages by assignment. We were happy to spend this time and travel long distances to participate in these things. We couldn’t wait to get together with our brothers and sisters, strengthen each other, and share in the Lord’s blessings together. In what were the worst times, we developed the strongest faith.

Five years later, my wife and I took our young daughter and emigrated to Canada. It was a risky, dangerous venture, but one in which we saw the hand of the Lord opening the way. We were sealed in the Cardston Alberta Temple in 1952. Seven years later, we moved to the United States, where we raised our four children. We taught them the gospel and the important lesson we had learned of trusting in the Lord. We know from personal experience that when we keep His commandments, He will bless us and take care of us.

I know that the gospel has the power to bring us peace and hope even in the most difficult and horrible situations. We can look to Him for strength and count on the power of the priesthood in our lives. We can feel fortified by our testimonies and share our faith to bolster others. And we can be assured, as I have been, that the Lord will not forsake us. ■

NOTE

1. *Hymns*, no. 152.

MAKE OUR HOUSE INVISIBLE

At the end of World War II, when I was 19 years old, enemy troops came to occupy my hometown in Europe. One evening my parents and I were sitting at our table when we heard a loud noise. We looked out through the blackout curtains, hung so that bombers couldn't detect our



house at night, to see enemy troops—along with their motorcycles, trucks, and tanks—coming into our village from two different directions. I was very frightened.

My father, always a faithful man, said simply, “Don’t be scared.” In the face of what was just outside our house, that was an extraordinary statement. We all knew that the soldiers would likely invade the neighborhood to pillage people’s homes. Father suggested that we kneel next to the couch and pray for Heavenly Father’s protection. He prayed, “Father in Heaven, please blind those soldiers. Make our house invisible so they won’t see it.”

After he prayed, my mother prayed. Then I prayed. Afterward, we returned to the table and cautiously looked out the window. We watched soldiers storm into every house on our street. Ours was the last one on the street. They approached our house but then passed our front gate and went to the next street. We watched them enter every house that we could see from our window.

After an invasion of about two hours, someone blew a loud whistle, and the soldiers returned to their vehicles. As they slowly left, we were tremendously relieved and knelt again, thanking Heavenly Father for His kindness and protection.

We looked out through the blackout curtains to see enemy troops coming into our village from two different directions. I was very frightened.

The next day I learned from a distraught friend that the soldiers had done terrible things in every house she knew of. When I told her that they had not come to our house, she was shocked. She said she had watched them go in our direction and that she knew of no homes in our sector that they had not entered. Our house was the only one the soldiers had left alone.

I know that Heavenly Father hears our pleas and answers them. Sometimes it seems that we might not ever receive an answer, and we wish that He would answer sooner. But I know that in our home 65 years ago, He answered right away. ■

Alice W. Flade, Utah, USA

I MISSED FEELING THE SPIRIT

When I was 16, I participated in a student foreign-exchange program for a year. I went from my home in Ukraine to a small town in Arizona, USA, where I stayed with a Latter-day Saint family. I had never heard of Latter-day Saints before.

The exchange program didn’t allow the family to preach to me, and I wasn’t allowed to meet with the missionaries. But I chose to attend church with my host family and participate in all Church activities.

I felt the Spirit with that family, and I felt much love at church. At that time I didn’t know that what I was feeling was

the Spirit, but my heart was touched.

When I returned to Ukraine, I missed that feeling very much. I remembered how my life was when I went to church and lived gospel teachings. I realized what was missing, but there was no church and no missionaries where I lived, so I thought I would never have that feeling again.

About four years later, however, some missionaries knocked on my door. I was so happy to see them. While they were out working, they had listened to the Spirit, which led them to my house. I’m so grateful they were obedient. I was baptized and confirmed soon afterward.

Since then I have been sealed in the Stockholm Sweden Temple to my husband, a returned missionary who is from Russia. And now there’s a temple in Kyiv. We plan to attend regularly.

The temple is the most amazing place on earth. It is a place where you can be close to Heavenly Father. I feel so grateful that in the temple we can receive one of the greatest gifts given to us by Heavenly Father: to be sealed as families for eternity.

I am grateful to the members of that Latter-day Saint family who helped me feel the Spirit, starting me on a journey that would lead me to a family of my own that is sealed together forever. ■

Victoria Mikulina, Russia

Note: To see an inspiring video about the youth cultural celebration for the Kyiv Ukraine Temple, visit LDS.org and search for “Kyiv Ukraine Temple video.”



GO TO CHURCH!

During my junior year of high school, I met a Latter-day Saint girl in my art class. She had a great influence on my life, and I was baptized a member of the Church.

After I graduated from high school, Mom and Dad decided to move from our home in California to Idaho, USA. We hooked our trailer to our truck and headed north. We had just passed through Lovelock, Nevada, when I started driving too fast down a small hill. Because there were no stabilizing bars to keep the trailer in place, it started whipping from side to side. I slammed on the brakes, and the trailer jackknifed, sending us through a borrow pit and leaving the truck tipped over one way and the trailer tipped over the other way.

Fortunately nobody was hurt. But

the outside and the inside of the trailer were a complete disaster. The trailer hitch was bent like a pretzel, the windows were all broken, and our belongings were scattered everywhere.

The highway patrol arrived and called a tow truck. Mom and Dad didn't know what to do. The little money they had went to the towing company. At this moment I felt the overwhelming impression that I should go to church the following day, Sunday. Dad, who was not a member of the Church, thought I was crazy. We had to gather our belongings and fix the trailer, and since he was crippled and in poor health, I was the main worker. But the impression to attend church persisted. I asked Mom to talk to Dad for me. She did, and surprisingly he consented.

Fortunately nobody was hurt in the accident. But the trailer hitch was bent like a pretzel, the windows were all broken, and our belongings were scattered everywhere.

On Sunday morning I found the local meetinghouse and sat down on the back row of the chapel just as sacrament meeting was starting. I prayed for the Spirit to be with my family at this difficult time.

At the conclusion of the meeting, one or two people introduced themselves to me, and I briefly explained what had happened. I then returned to where we were camped and spent the rest of the day helping clean things up.

On Monday morning we had started to clean again when all at once members of the ward I had attended started arriving, offering help. The owner of a local window store said he would replace all of the trailer windows at no charge, and a welder offered to straighten the hitch for free.

My father said little but was obviously amazed, Mom shed tears of gratitude, and my sister and I were thankful for the help. By the end of the day, we were ready to continue our trip to Idaho.

As a result of this experience, I learned that the promptings of the Spirit are real. I also know that our prayers are frequently answered by other people and that trusting the Lord will bring peace and joy to our hearts. ■

Dwight LeRoy Dennis, Utah, USA

SHOULD WE SELL OUR DREAM HOME?

In 1998 the Spirit was nudging me to sell our dream home, which we had completed and moved into just four years earlier. As our older children were beginning to graduate from high school and leave home, it became apparent that our house was larger and more costly than we needed. I had just gone through a job change that showed me how vulnerable my income was to possible disruption.

When I attended the priesthood session of general conference that October, I was struck by the words of President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008). Speaking of our finances, he told priesthood holders, “The time has come to get our houses in order.” Then he warned, “There is a portent of stormy weather ahead to which we had better give heed.”

Later in the talk he said: “It may be necessary to borrow to get a home, of course. But let us buy a home that we can afford and thus ease the payments which will constantly hang over our heads without mercy or respite for as long as 30 years.”¹

I told my wife about President Hinckley’s counsel, adding that I felt we should sell our house. To my surprise, she agreed.

Over the ensuing months, we prepared to sell our house and buy another one. It was a long, drawn-out process that involved much prayer and a family fast. Finally, a year later

we moved into our new home, which had a much lower monthly payment.

President Hinckley’s words did indeed prove prophetic. The following year the U.S. stock market peaked as the dot-com bubble burst. Several years of low interest rates then followed, which we used to our advantage to pay down our mortgage debt.

Now a new economic crisis is upon many countries throughout the world. President Hinckley’s words are just as

When I attended the priesthood session of general conference, I was struck by President Gordon B. Hinckley’s counsel, which I shared with my wife.

true today as they were in 1998.

How happy we are that we followed the counsel of the prophet and the promptings of the Spirit. We no longer have any mortgage debt, and we are happy to see our children living within their means.

We look forward each general conference to the counsel of our Church leaders. We know that we will be blessed if we heed their direction. ■

Sullivan Richardson, Nevada, USA

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “To the Boys and to the Men,” *Liahona*, Jan. 1999, 65; *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 53.



Small & Simple Things

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

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD



Left: Kim Ho Jik (right) with Elder Harold B. Lee (center) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who was visiting Korea. Above: The Seoul Korea Temple, dedicated in 1985.

South Korea

The first missionary work in Korea began during the Korean War in the early 1950s, but Kim Ho Jik, one of the first Korean converts, was baptized in the United States. Kim was earning his doctorate degree when he joined the Church in Pennsylvania in 1951. Two of his children were among the first four people to be baptized in Korea, on August 3, 1952. Brother Kim later became a leader in the Korean government and was influential in helping missionaries enter South Korea.

In 1962 the Korean Mission was created, and the Book of Mormon was printed in Korean in 1967. South Korea’s first stake, also the first stake in mainland Asia, was organized in Seoul on March 8, 1973. The Seoul Korea Temple, the first temple in mainland Asia, was dedicated in 1985.

In 2001 Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles presented a copy of “The Family: A Proclamation to the Word” to South Korea’s prime minister, Lee Han-Dong.



THE CHURCH IN SOUTH KOREA	
Membership	81,251
Missions	3
Stakes	17
Wards and branches	142
Temples	1

Quiz

Wives of the Prophets

From Emma Smith to Frances Monson, the wives of Presidents of the Church have stood by their husbands as faithful helpmeets. Of these and other faithful women, Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “The Lord never sends apostles and prophets and righteous men to minister to his people without placing women of like spiritual stature at their sides.”¹ This quiz will help you learn some interesting details about the stalwart wives of eight latter-day prophets.

Answers on the next page.

1. This woman was baptized in 1834 and later traveled 1,000 miles (1,600 km) by herself to join the Latter-day Saints in Kirtland, Ohio, USA. She promised her mother that she would return if she found the Church to be false, but she remained with the Latter-day Saints for the rest of her life.

2. This young woman’s future husband sought to impress her when they were teenagers by fixing up his parents’ yard in order to host a yard party equal in prestige to those of other, more wealthy neighborhood boys.

3. This woman loved reading from the time she was a young girl, often reading when she was thought to be sleeping, making up beds, or practicing the organ.

4. As an eight-year-old, this young girl went to the woods to pray. She prayed for her father, who didn’t have a firm faith in Christ. When her father came into the woods to hunt, he overheard her prayer. It softened his heart, and he became more faithful.

5. On this woman’s first date with her future husband, her father and mother both kissed her date’s cheek. When the young man looked

around for his date, she said only, “I’ll go get my coat.”²

6. This woman received training at the University of Utah and the Cincinnati College of Music, where she learned homemaking skills. She learned to love literature, drama, and the arts and became a fine musician.

7. As a college student, this young woman played the lead role of Viola in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* and was chair of the junior prom committee, president of the Girls’ Athletic Club, and student body vice-president.

8. This woman gave eloquent readings in Primary, complete with elocution and movements. Her husband later said of one of her readings, “I don’t know what it did to me, but I never forgot it. Then she grew older into a beautiful young woman, and I had the good sense to marry her.”³

NOTES

1. Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1966–73), 3:302.
2. See Thomas S. Monson, “Abundantly Blessed,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 111.
3. See Jeffrey R. Holland, “President Gordon B. Hinckley: Stalwart and Brave He Stands,” *Liahona*, June 1995, 17; *Ensign*, June 1995, 10–11.



Emma Hale Smith



Flora Amussen Benson



Marjorie Pay Hinckley



Phoebe W. Carter Woodruff



Lucy Woodruff Smith



Frances Johnson Monson



Camilla Eyring Kimball

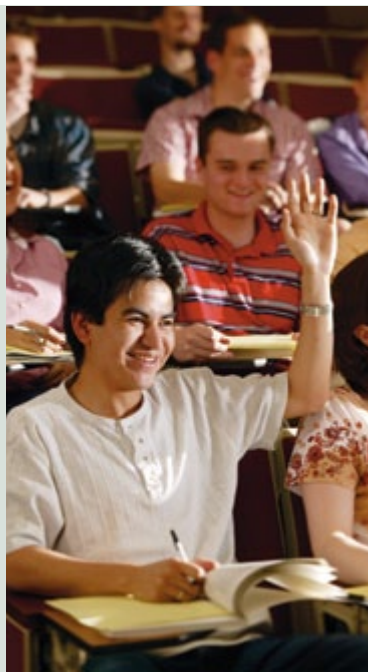


Emma Ray McKay

Education: Increase Our Ability to Serve

The Lord and His Church have always encouraged education to increase our ability to serve Him and our Heavenly Father's children. For each of us, whatever our talents, He has service for us to give. And to do it well always involves learning, not once or for a limited time, but continually."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Education for Real Life," *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 17.



Suggestions for Lifelong Learning

- Read a good book.
- Take up a hobby you've always wanted to try.
- Attend wholesome cultural events.
- Study the assigned general conference talk or chapter in the *Gospel Principles* manual for Sunday lessons.
- Visit museums and historic sites.
- Observe the world around you: walk around your neighborhood, stargaze, watch animals in your area.
- Do family history work.
- Learn a new skill or sport.
- Visit the library to research a topic of interest.

For more on this topic, see True to the Faith (2004), "Education," 50–51.

QUIZ ANSWERS

WIVES OF THE PROPHETS

1. Phoebe W. Carter Woodruff, married to Wilford Woodruff
2. Lucy Woodruff Smith, married to George Albert Smith
3. Camilla Eyring Kimball, married to Spencer W. Kimball
4. Emma Hale Smith, married to Joseph Smith
5. Frances Johnson Monson, married to Thomas S. Monson
6. Emma Ray McKay, married to David O. McKay
7. Flora Amussen Benson, married to Ezra Taft Benson
8. Marjorie Pay Hinckley, married to Gordon B. Hinckley

PREPARE TO SHARE

Be ready to share the gospel. Have materials on hand when missionary opportunities occur." These were the goals of a Prepare to Share program implemented in the Westland Michigan Stake when my husband and I served as ward missionaries.

To make these goals practical and doable, the ward budgeted for each family to have a box kit containing basic Church materials. As a start we included copies of the Book of Mormon, pass-along cards, pamphlets, and Church DVDs, to name a few items. We put them in small cardboard boxes or storage bags to allow for easy-access storage in a car, family room, or office. Members were encouraged to purchase additional kits, materials, or refills as needed.

My car kit came in handy later when I worked with the full-time missionaries. They were delighted to see that I had gospel materials on hand and gave me some additional items. The missionaries even said my kit was like having a mobile distribution center at their disposal. I was pleased that I was prepared to share.

Eugenia Hancock, Arizona, USA





Remember When?

Although our children are grown and have families of their own, my wife and I still look for ways to have meaningful family home evenings with them. One way we have found to do this is by holding a special family home evening once a year in which we invite all of the family members to share their memories.

Before they come to this special family home evening, we ask them to write down three stories from their lives. We call these “I

remember when” stories. During family home evening, each family member takes a turn telling or reading their stories.

We laugh and cry for

hours about the experiences. When we are done, we collect the written stories and compile them in our family history book. It is a good way for us to

continue building our relationship as a family while creating a family history at the same time.

Douglas Andrew, Utah, USA



ILLUSTRATION BY BETH WHITTAKER

HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

“Taking His Name upon Me,” page 8: Read the story by Brother Frandsen and discuss the three ways he took the Savior’s name upon him. Consider asking family members how they can take the Savior’s name upon them in their everyday lives. Set a goal to implement one of these suggestions, and share your experiences with each other in an upcoming family home evening.

“One Stalwart Pioneer, Many Generations Blessed,” page 12: As you share this article with your family, consider discussing how Sara’s example influenced her father. Discuss how your example can influence those around you, for good or for bad. Set a goal to be a “stalwart pioneer” every day.

“Did He Really Ask Me That?” page 24: While reviewing the article, identify and compare the concerns felt by the Church members regarding their callings. Read

President Monson’s quote and then discuss ways to invite Heavenly Father’s help in fulfilling your stewardships. Consider reviewing the resources listed under “Receiving Help from Other Sources.”

Did He Really Ask Me That?

By Judy Hansen

I sat and smiled as I listened to Brother Jensen, president of the Church, speak. He was reading from an article in the *Ensign* magazine. I was so proud of my son.

He had been called to be the first young man to be called to the position of president of our ward branch.

I had called to come home and help on my husband's farm. I was just 27 years old and had never before married. I had recently moved to the area and was looking for a job as a paralegal. My husband's experience was limited. I had needed to accept a college course over the years that never one like this.

He had a great strength of 27 years old enough to represent strength of 27 years old. He had the ability to serve. What could it possibly offer the members of the branch?

I was better that night, both in prayer and when I returned home for the evening. When I finished my prayer, I was naturally drawn to look at my spiritual calling. I thought the answer: “You are to be about that work which you were assigned to do, even when you are young.”

I had those words, I realized that this was not about my mental state, my age, or what I could do. It was about what the Lord would do for me. I accepted the calling. Through my calling I was able to help

With my many questions and doubts to receive a Church calling, the Lord has answered my prayers. I am calling on you to accept a calling on your own quality for the work.

people despite our different backgrounds. One woman in particular whom God led me to serve was a woman I met in the 10th ward of my children. I didn't take the time to make the call and had different thoughts. I wasn't sure how to be her friend. But in time we did develop a friendship.

On another occasion I met with a female member. I was calling her home for the first time along with the missionaries and knowing that she had a testimony, she just needed a little bit of “helping” to help a little higher. As we sat in her living room and listened to the Spirit was strong and prepared us to have testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

In the following months she came to church sporadically. But I was not ready to let the Spirit and have my testimony to her. I had the challenge to serve in the branch.

There were some of the highlights of the calling that she serves and serving in the branch. It was a struggle to let her I was doing enough to let her know that much of what she was doing and involvement as we were to fulfill our callings.

In the end I realized that much of what I was able to do was through the Spirit. I have never been called from the calling, and have never any other that city. I have often reflected from that calling, and have been very often that city. I have been able to do that through the Spirit. I have been able to do that through the Spirit. I have been able to do that through the Spirit. I have been able to do that through the Spirit.

Sustained by His Love

When I received the calling to serve as the ward activities leader, I felt the need to be sustained by Heavenly Father. I felt the need to be sustained by Heavenly Father. I felt the need to be sustained by Heavenly Father. I felt the need to be sustained by Heavenly Father.

Fulfillment through My Calling

I have been able to do that through the Spirit. I have been able to do that through the Spirit. I have been able to do that through the Spirit. I have been able to do that through the Spirit.

RECEIVING HELP FROM OTHER SOURCES

I would urge all of us to be prepared for our assignments and to be sustained by the Spirit. We will be sustained by the Spirit. We will be sustained by the Spirit. We will be sustained by the Spirit.

RECEIVING HELP FROM OTHER SOURCES

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News of the Church

Visit news.lds.org for more Church news and events.

Called to Serve: **You**

By Heather Whittle Wrigley

Church Magazines

The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has asked all Church units to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Church welfare plan by organizing their own day of service during 2011.

“The service may be undertaken at any time during the remainder of this year, and its length may be flexible depending on the service rendered,” a letter from the First Presidency read.

The call to serve comes on the heels of President Henry B. Eyring’s conference talk during the Saturday morning session of April general conference.

“The feelings of unity will multiply the good effects of the service you give,” President Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said. “And those feelings of unity in families, in the Church, and in communities will grow and become a lasting legacy long after the project ends” (“Opportunities to Do Good,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2011, 25).

The First Presidency offered guidelines for members planning service projects, including inviting community members and full-time missionaries to become involved and designing projects so that families and individuals can participate. Publicizing the projects to raise awareness and interest was also encouraged.

Many wards, branches, districts, and stakes have already answered the call. Some service crews donned yellow Mormon Helping Hands shirts while others just rolled up their sleeves, but from donating blood to sprucing up community buildings, the response by members has been overwhelming.

Elder Walter F. González of the Presidency of the Seventy presides over Church affairs in the North America Southeast Area. He first challenged every congregation in his area to give a day of service in 2009.

Every year since then members in the southern United States have organized annual days of service. Elder González said he is happy to see that congregations

throughout the Church will have that opportunity this year.

“We serve because it’s a Christlike attribute, and it’s an opportunity to become a little like Him, to cultivate an *attitude* of service—a habit of serving by nature,” he said. “As we serve without consideration for religion or denomination or race, our helping hands will become linking hands, cultivating relationships with the community.”

In Jacksonville, Florida, USA, 11 congregations answered the call by donating food and giving blood on April 16. Several LDS meetinghouses were used as drop-off locations for food donations, while others were staging places for blood donations.

Chainsaw-wielding members of the Jonesboro Ward in Georgia, USA, gathered at the Stately Oaks Plantation, legendary site where the movie *Gone with the Wind* was filmed, on May 14 to haul broken branches.

The last week of April, Saints in California and Hawaii, USA, joined with community volunteers for the annual Mormon Helping Hands Day.

In San Diego, California, USA, 150 volunteers helped clean 3,000 headstones at the Fort Rosecrans Memorial Park, a veterans’ cemetery.

Latter-day Saints in Palos Verdes, California, USA, partnered with a nonprofit organization called Clean San Pedro to sweep and clean the streets and sidewalks in the central area of San Pedro, collecting more than one ton (900 kg) of refuse and litter.

The head of Clean San Pedro, Steve Kleinjan, said, “We love to work with this church. They always have such a good turnout of volunteers.”

Members of the Charlotte North Carolina (USA) South Stake answered the First Presidency’s call by partnering with a local charity to put on a welcome basket item drive.

More than 2,000 paper bags with a list of much-needed items were placed throughout the community. A week later, nearly 130 volunteers spent 150 hours collecting the



Read about various units' days of service—and share your own experience with Welfare Services—at news.lds.org. Search “Day of Service” to find this article online and submission details.

Members in California, USA, clean up their city.

bags and donating the items to families transitioning from homelessness to new housing.

Primary children from the ward made “Welcome Home” signs for the families in need.

In Georgia, USA, the Griffin Ward came together on Saturday, May 21, to scour the inside and outside of a local homeless shelter, the House of Hope.

In Clinton, Missouri, USA, Latter-day Saints met to spruce up the Jackson Zoo, mulching flowerbeds, painting, and repairing equipment.

Elder González emphasized that members' service will bless both those within the Church and those who are not members.

“There are so many different ways to serve and create links with the community,” he said. “And as we serve others, we will also see the hand of the Lord in the lives of our members.” ■

SPEAKING TODAY

President Uchtdorf Addresses Leaders

At the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, emphasized to community, business, and religious leaders the world's need for builders, not destroyers. Learn more at news.lds.org. Search keyword “Uchtdorf.”

Elder Holland Visits Saints in Asia, Middle East

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles extended the love of the Brethren to Church members in Asia and eight Middle Eastern countries and spoke on foundational gospel topics such as revelation, the family, and the Atonement in each area. Learn more at news.lds.org. Search keyword “Holland.”

Elder Costa Tours Japan, Brings Aid

In Japan, Elder Claudio R. M. Costa of the Presidency of the Seventy toured some of the more devastated areas from March's earthquake and tsunami and offered direction and relief to many still recovering. Learn more at news.lds.org. Search keyword “Costa.” ■

New Area Leadership Assignments

The First Presidency has announced changes in area leadership assignments effective on August 1, 2011. As part of the changes, Elder Tad R. Callister was called to the Presidency of the Seventy. All members of Area Presidencies are members of the First or Second Quorums of the Seventy. ■

Presidency of the Seventy



Ronald A. Rasband
Assists in All Areas



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



Walter F. González
4. North America Southeast



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



Jay E. Jensen
7. North America Northeast



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



Tad R. Callister
10. North America Southwest



11. Mexico

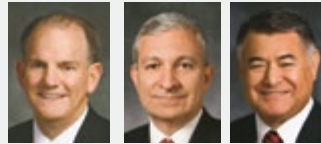


Benjamin De Hoyos
First Counselor

Daniel L. Johnson
President

Octaviano Tenorio
Second Counselor

12. Central America



James B. Martino
First Counselor

Enrique R. Falabella
President

Carlos H. Amado
Second Counselor

13. Caribbean

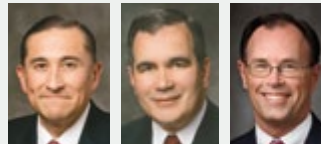


Wilford W. Andersen
First Counselor

Francisco J. Viñas
President

J. Devn Cornish
Second Counselor

14. South America Northwest

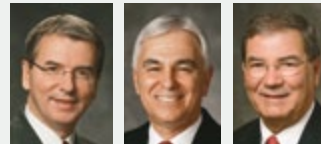


Juan A. Uceda
First Counselor

Rafael E. Pino
President

W. Christopher Waddell
Second Counselor

15. Brazil

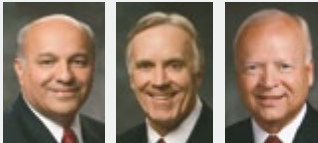


Carlos A. Godoy
First Counselor

Claudio R. M. Costa
President

Jairo Mazzagardi
Second Counselor

16. Chile



Jorge F. Zeballos
First Counselor

Lawrence E. Corbridge
President

Kent F. Richards
Second Counselor

17. South America South



Marcos A. Aidukaitis
First Counselor

Mervyn B. Arnold
President

Bradley D. Foster
Second Counselor

18. Middle East/Africa North



Bruce D. Porter

Paul B. Pieper

Administered from Headquarters

19. Europe



Gérald Causé
First Counselor

Erich W. Kopschke
President

José A. Teixeira
Second Counselor

20. Europe East



Larry R. Lawrence
First Counselor

Gregory A. Schwitzer
President

Randall K. Bennett
Second Counselor

21. Asia



Kent D. Watson
First Counselor

Anthony D. Perkins
President

Gerrit W. Gong
Second Counselor

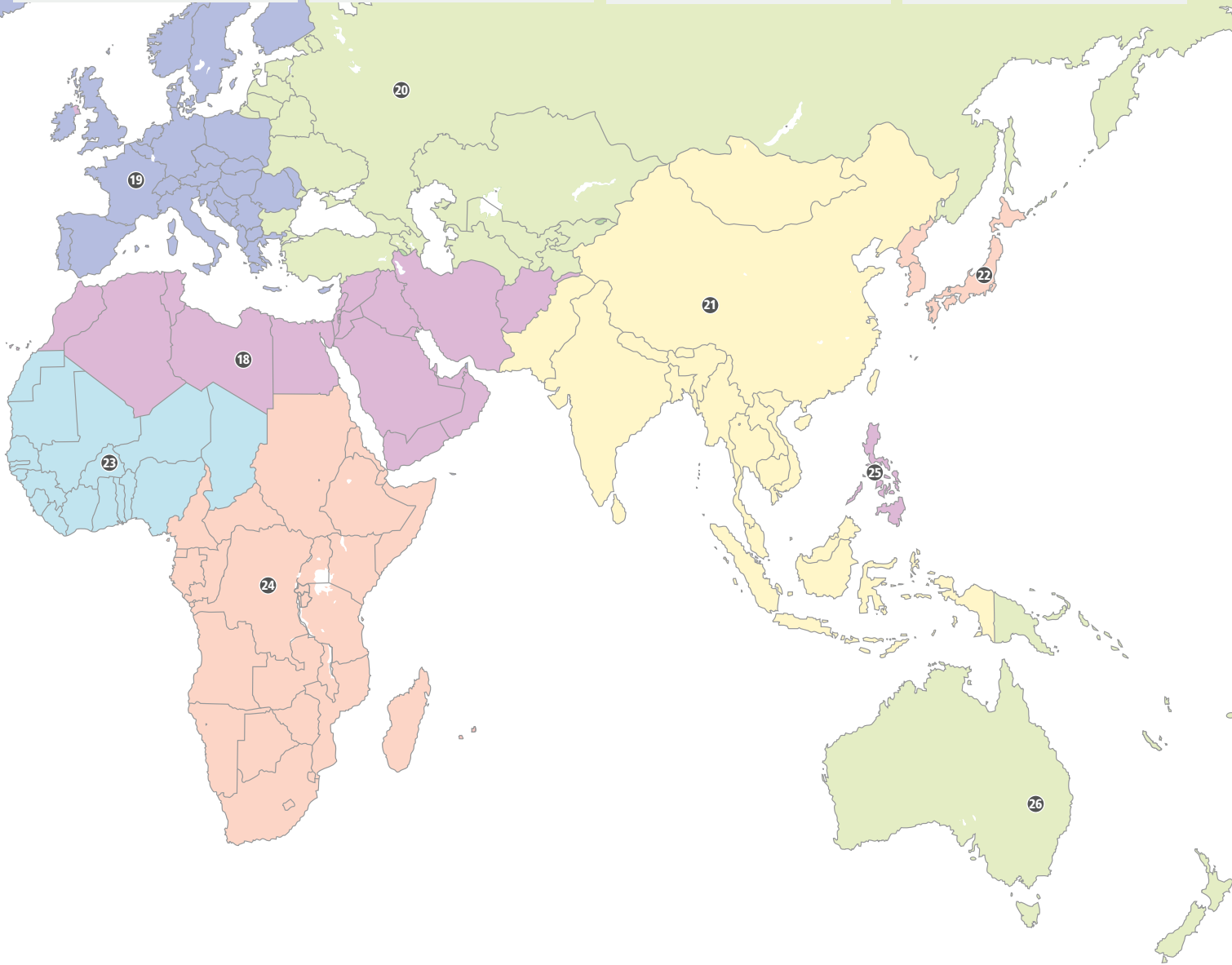
22. Asia North



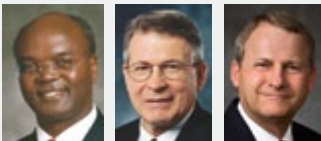
Michael T. Ringwood
First Counselor

Gary E. Stevenson
President

Koichi Aoyagi
Second Counselor



23. Africa West



Joseph W. Sitati
First Counselor

John B. Dickson
President

LeGrand R. Curtis Jr.
Second Counselor

24. Africa Southeast

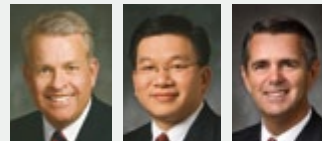


Ulisses Soares
First Counselor

Dale G. Renlund
President

Carl B. Cook
Second Counselor

25. Philippines

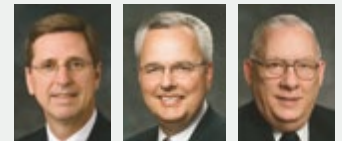


Brent H. Nielson
First Counselor

Michael John U. Teh
President

Ian S. Ardem
Second Counselor

26. Pacific



Kevin W. Pearson
First Counselor

James J. Hamula
President

F. Michael Watson
Second Counselor

Volunteers Can Build LDS Media Library Online

LDS Media Library's theme—"Learn, Share, Create"—accurately describes what members can do using the resources the website provides, especially the "share" part.

The new section of LDS.org is designed to help members access gospel-oriented media such as videos, audio files, and still images in one trusted location, and members can help achieve that goal by submitting their own work.

As opposed to a general web search, the Media Library is "a safe place to go and find good content to help members share the gospel," said Marianne Jennings, associate producer in the Media Services Department.

Church members can submit their own work—such as photos and video—at create.lds.org. Those materials go through an acceptance, editing, and tagging process and are then placed in the LDS Media Library for general Church membership to use in teaching in the home and performing their callings.

Media Library materials may also be used for personal blogs, websites, and other places where members would like to share gospel messages. Content could also be used in official Church publications and materials.

The resource is designed to help individuals, families, and organizations come unto Christ through the use of wholesome media.

"We hope people will be able to learn through the media and share with their friends something that touches them," product manager Vicki Bird said.

Media on the site can be accessed with many common mobile devices, including e-books, as well as with Internet TV. It can be shared through podcasts and RSS feeds, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and online broadcasts.

LDS.org/media-library also offers suggestions for using the media resources, information on how the Church is using the material, and instructions for members who wish to contribute additional media to the site. ■

Joseph Smith Papers Going Online

Selections from the Joseph Smith Papers are now available online at josephsmithpapers.org and are accessible free of charge. The goal is to eventually publish all of the Church History Department's 7,000 Joseph Smith-related documents online.

Gospel Materials Available for Electronic Readers

Users of electronic reading devices such as Nook, iBook, and Sony Reader can now access Church manuals, scriptures, study helps, and general conference talks in EPUB format.

Go to **LDS.org/manual** and click on **New EPUB format for scriptures, general conference, and many manuals** under "Additional Resources."

Church Announces BeSmart Firesides for 2011

Sixteen days of BeSmart firesides kick off on August 23, 2011, in Wyoming, USA. Other firesides will follow in various areas of the United States and will offer youth advice about higher education preparation, institute, and Church schools. Learn more at BeSmart.com.

Free Genealogy Classes from FamilySearch

FamilySearch.org now offers more than 140 classes online free of charge to help people with family history. Courses ranging from beginning to expert skill level include half-hour filmed sessions taught by experts as well as electronic handouts. ■



In Other Church Magazines

THE NEW ERA

The True Church

Elder Dallin H. Oaks explains why we call our Church “the only true and living church.” Read his comments on page 2.

Friendship Despite Rivalry

Two young men who have been friends since childhood are both quarterbacks—on opposing teams in a bitterly contested rivalry game. But the next day, one baptizes the other. Read the whole story about Brandon and Teren in “Everyone Wins” on page 24.

Good Manners

Why do adults make such a fuss about manners? Find out why good manners make sense on page 30.



CORRECTION

On page 38 of the April *Ensign*, a sentence indicates that Rebecca Swain Williams crossed Lake Ontario to visit her sister in Detroit. In this sentence “Lake Ontario” should read “Lake Erie.”

THE FRIEND

Bringing Primary Home

Have you wondered about how you can help your children learn more about the topics they are discussing in sharing time? In “Bringing Primary Home,” (pages 40–41) you and your children are able to participate in an activity at home that builds on the lessons they are learning in sharing time that month. This month’s “Bringing Primary Home” activity discusses the sharing time theme “My Body Is a Temple of God.” Your children can read and complete the activity in the *Friend* to supplement what they are learning in Primary. Each month, “Bringing Primary Home” will continue to reinforce sharing time ideas.



Photos of Friend Readers

Last summer, the *Friend* asked children to send in pictures of them reading the *Friend* in interesting places. Photos were submitted of children reading the *Friend* at football games, with farm animals, at the pool, on temple grounds, and many other places. Take a look at “Summer with the *Friend*” (pages 24–25) to see some of the interesting photos we received.



THE PARABLE OF THE BANANA TREE

By Anton T. Kumarasamy

As told to Linda J. Later

Banana trees are common where I live in Sri Lanka. They have soft trunks, which are easy to cut with a knife, but no one hurts the banana tree because it gives fine fruit.

Many years ago when I was small, there was a terrible storm. When it finally ended, I went outside and saw that one of our banana trees had blown over; it was uprooted and stripped of leaves. I thought cutting the trunk of the ruined tree would be fun, so I went to the house and found a knife. But just as I was about to strike, my grandfather stopped me.

“You mustn’t hurt the banana tree,” he said.

“But why?” I asked. “It’s not good anymore, and it would be fun.”

My grandfather said nothing but beckoned for me to follow him. He told me to cut a big stick. Then he brought me back to the yard where the banana tree lay. Though it appeared useless, we went to work pulling it upright. Once the trunk was straight, we braced the frail tree with the stick.

“Anton,” my grandfather said, “I want you to watch this banana tree every day and make sure it stays straight. Every day you will need to water it and give it nourishment.”

So every morning I checked the banana tree to make sure the trunk was straight.



The storm-damaged banana tree appeared to be dying. But with some love, care, and daily nourishment, it not only recovered but also bore fruit.

Every day I filled a water bucket and carefully poured it around the roots. I was diligent in giving the tree the nourishment it needed.

Soon there were blossoms and, shortly after that, bananas. When the fruit was ripe, Grandfather handed a banana to each member

of the family. I watched with pleasure as they peeled and ate them. No bananas ever tasted as good as those, and it brought me joy to see my family enjoying them.

That was many years ago, long before I found The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But the lessons I learned as I cared for the banana tree apply to my life today. In my Church callings as well as my medical practice, I often find people in difficult predicaments. Like that banana tree, these people are forsaken, stripped of beauty, and finished—even in their own eyes. When I think of giving up on them, I remember the sweetness of the fruit of that banana tree and find the courage to help lift them upright, brace them, nourish them, and care for them daily as the Savior would.

The bananas my family enjoyed were sweet, but the Book of Mormon tells of another kind of fruit—one that is “most sweet” and “desirable above all other fruit” (see 1 Nephi 8:11–12). We can find joy as we help those who are struggling to find their way through the mists of darkness and guide them to partake of the fruit that is sweet above all—the fruit of eternal life. ■



First Blossom, by Annie Henrie

“Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh

in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

“While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (John 12:35–36).

What keeps life in balance?

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggests four ways Latter-day Saints can create balanced, righteous lives:

1. Keep their wonderful physical bodies pure and holy as temples of God.
2. Place preeminence on spiritual learning and knowledge from God.
3. Be a trusted generation and use the foundation of eternal gospel truths to establish standards and values.
4. Seek learning from the eternal truths contained in the holy scriptures.

See “The Tradition of a Balanced, Righteous Life,” page 46.

