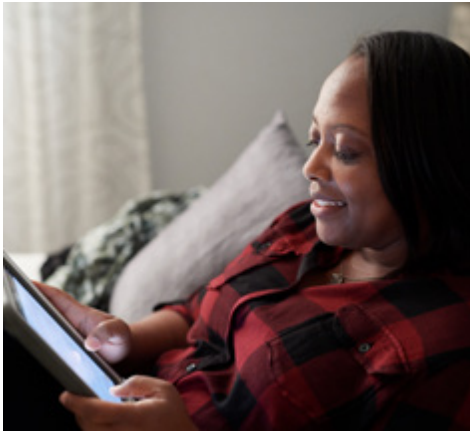


Tomicka Barnes

Alabama, USA



It wasn't learning about the priesthood ban that shook Tomicka's faith; it was the speculation behind that restriction put forward by some Latter-day Saints. Tomicka faced a choice: walk away from the Church or hold to the rod. Thanks to the Book of Mormon, she held tight.

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

Some people said things like, "You weren't as valiant in the War in Heaven" or, "You're not as intelligent or as faithful." Those things didn't mesh with what I knew to be true from my mom, from other black members of the Church who are really good examples of faith, and even from faithful black people outside the Church.

I had a moment, a crisis of faith, when I thought that I could just walk away from it all. But at that moment, I thought, "Is the Book of Mormon true? Do you believe it to be true?"

I could answer, "Yes, without a shadow of a doubt, I believe it to be true." Then the Spirit told me, "Well, if the Book of Mormon is true, then everything else is."

That was the reason I could stay.

DISCOVER MORE

See more about Tomicka's journey of faith, including additional photos, in the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

Read about how Elder Edward Dube of the Seventy held on to his faith after learning of the pre-1978 priesthood restriction at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/8196](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/8196).

