

Finals Week Inspiration

By Megan Nelson

On a chilly December morning during my second year of law school, I found myself at my university’s law library. I was scrambling to finish a 30-page paper that was due by midnight. This paper was the only obstacle standing between me and Christmas vacation.

My tired eyes stared at my computer as I struggled to translate confusing legal doctrine into coherent sentences. It would undoubtedly take all day—up until my midnight deadline—to complete this daunting task.

That semester had been particularly stressful. Besides the normal challenges of law school, I was a student editor for a legal periodical, and I also served as Relief Society president in my young single adult ward. I loved the sisters in my ward, but I often felt inadequate as I juggled activities at church, at school, and in my social life. I cried to the Lord often, pleading with Him to strengthen me where I felt weak.

I was surprised that I somehow finished the paper by about 4:00 p.m.—several hours earlier than expected. I left the library and drove toward my apartment, thinking about how nice it would be to leave for Christmas vacation the next day. Suddenly I had an impression that I should visit a girl in my ward named Rachel (name has been changed).

I didn’t know Rachel very well, but I had met her a few months earlier. She had never been active in the Church, even as a child. Although she made it clear that she was not interested in attending Church activities, she was always polite whenever I visited.

Since I could not reach her by phone and the feeling to visit her persisted, I decided to take a slight detour to stop by her home. When Rachel answered the door, I immediately sensed from her unusually subdued countenance that something was wrong. Despite

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her apparent sadness, she extended her arms to greet me with a hug and invited me to come inside.

With tears in her eyes, Rachel explained that her father had died exactly five years earlier—to the date. She had been estranged from her mother and sister for many years, but she had always been particularly close to her father. His loss was especially devastating for that reason. She found it particularly challenging to cope with her loneliness on this anniversary of his passing.

As Rachel and I talked, she told me that she often felt her father’s presence and hoped she would see him again

ILLUSTRATION BY ORIOLE VIDAL

someday. I bore testimony of eternal families and the plan of salvation, and I assured her that she would see him again.

Before long I could see Rachel's countenance brightening. When I left, Rachel said she felt that my visit was heaven sent, and she thanked me for the gift of friendship. I hugged her again and thanked her for letting me spend time with her.

As I drove home, I felt deep gratitude and reverence toward my Heavenly Father. In His infinite mercy, He had enabled me, one of His spirit daughters, to finish a daunting school

assignment several hours early, just so I could be available to help answer another daughter's unspoken prayer of loneliness.

Although I often felt inadequate in fulfilling various responsibilities that semester, I now know that Heavenly Father indeed strengthened me and blessed me to apply my feeble efforts when and where they were needed the most. No matter how busy or inadequate we may feel, the Lord will always enable us to do the things that matter most, if we trust in Him and follow His promptings. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



TRUST THE LORD

"All [the Lord] asks is that you give your best effort and your whole heart. Do it cheerfully and with the prayer of faith. The Father and His Beloved Son will send the Holy Ghost as your companion to guide you. Your efforts will be magnified."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Rise to Your Call," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 75–76, 78.

