

Ensign

A young man wearing a white hard hat and safety glasses, sitting outdoors and reading a book.

COVER STORY

The Power of a
Balanced Life,
p. 64

Life-Changing Leadership, p. 23
**Dating and the Eternal
Perspective, p. 60**



Mansion House, by Al Rounds

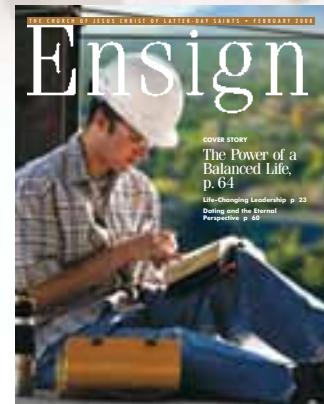
The Mansion House (right) in Nauvoo, Illinois, was home to the Prophet Joseph Smith and his family beginning in August 1843. Here Joseph and Emma hosted important visitors and provided temporary housing for incoming Saints. In June 1844 the Saints came here to view the bodies of Joseph and his brother Hyrum, who had been martyred by a mob.

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Photographs by Robert Casey



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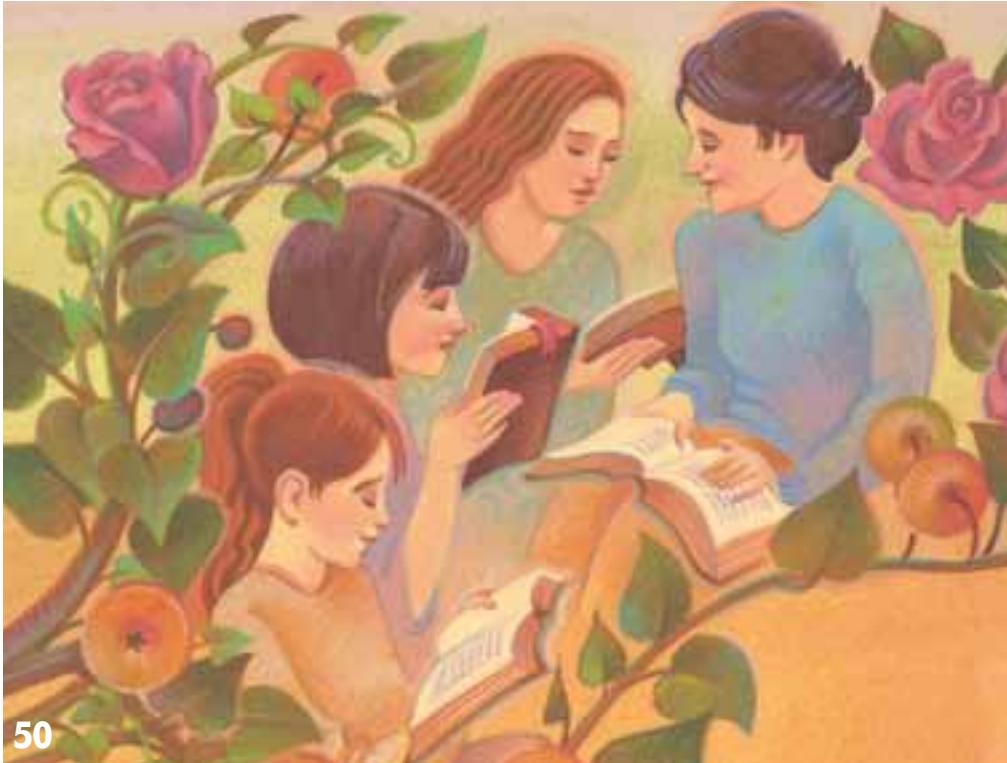
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Parents, teachers, and leaders: How have the Church magazines helped you in your responsibilities? Do you use articles and other resources in the magazines as you carry out your duties? How have they affected you or those with whom you work? Tell us about your experiences—the more specific, the better. Please label your submission "Using Church Magazines" and send it by March 31.

We also welcome other submissions that show the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. **Ensign Magazine Writers' Guidelines** are posted at <http://ensign.lds.org> under "Resources."

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Ensign

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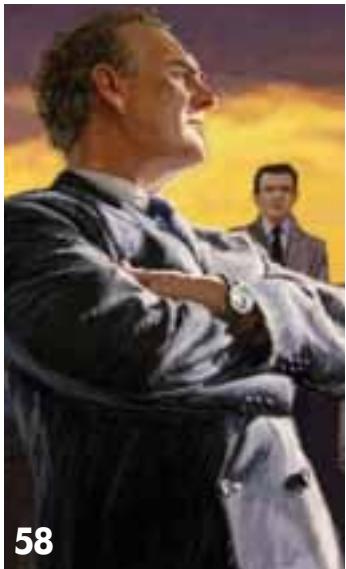
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USING THIS ISSUE

Effectively leading. Do you remember an influential leader in your life? After reading "Life-Changing Leadership" (p. 23) and "Band of Brothers" (p. 28), think about what made the leader you remember an effective one. For tips on leadership in your own responsibilities, visit the "Serving in the Church" link on LDS.org.

Choosing happiness. Both Elder John B. Dickson and Elder Craig A. Cardon of the Seventy testify of the happiness that comes from obeying the commandments (see pp. 14 and 20). As you study the Book of Mormon in Sunday School, look for patterns that reflect this. Consider discussing in your next family home evening the correlation between obedience and happiness, citing examples from the Book of Mormon.

Finding answers. Several articles in this issue focus on the answers members found when they turned to the scriptures (see pp. 50, 53, and 58). How do you feel when you find specific answers to your challenges in the scriptures?

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COMING IN MARCH

An issue exclusively about the Savior Jesus Christ: apostolic and scriptural witnesses, personal testimony, artwork, and more.

Feeding His Lambs



The Saints of God have always been under covenant to nourish each other spiritually, especially those tender in the gospel.



BY PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

The Savior taught Peter and His other Apostles and disciples why and how they were to nourish others. You remember that in the Bible account He fed them before He taught them. He had been crucified and then resurrected. His servants had gone to Galilee. They had fished through the night, catching nothing. When they drew near to shore in the dawn, they did not at first recognize Him. He called out to them, telling them where to cast their nets, and when they did as He told them, the nets were filled. They rushed to greet Him on the shore.

They found a fire of coals with fish cooking and bread. I have often wondered who laid the fire, caught the fish, and cooked the meal, but it was the Master who prepared

His disciples to be fed more than fish and bread. He let them eat first. And then He taught them of spiritual feeding. And He gave a commandment to them that still stands for each of us.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea,

Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs” (John 21:15).

Our Covenant to Nourish

The Saints of God have always been under covenant to nourish each other spiritually, especially those tender in the gospel. We are blessed to live in a time when a great increase in that capacity to nourish new members of the Church must and therefore will be poured out upon the faithful Saints. That power has been given before among the Lord’s people. This is the description of how the Lord’s people did it once in a time recounted in the Book of Mormon: “They were numbered . . . that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith” (Moroni 6:4).

All of us have tried at some time to nourish another person’s faith. Most of us have felt the concern of others for our own faith, and with it we have felt their love. More than a few of us have had a child look up to us and say, “Would you like to go to church with



Te Holy Ghost will be our companion. The fear of not knowing what to say and of being rejected will be taken from us. The newcomer will not appear to be a stranger to us.

me?" or, "Would you pray with me?" And we have had our disappointments. Someone we love may not have accepted our attempts to nourish his or her faith. We know from painful experience that God respects the choice of His children not to be nourished. Yet this is a time to feel renewed optimism and hope



that our power to nourish will be increased.

The Lord through His living prophet has told us that He will preserve the bounteous harvest of new converts entering the waters of baptism. And the Lord will do it through us. So we can have confidence that by doing simple things, things that even a child can do, we will be granted greater power to nourish tender faith.

The place to start is with our own hearts. What we want with all our hearts will determine in large degree whether we can claim our right to the companionship of the Holy Ghost, without which there can be no spiritual nourishing. We can begin today to try to see those we are to nourish as our Heavenly Father sees them and so feel some of what He feels for them.

Those new members of the Church are His children. He has known them and they have known Him in the world before this one. His purpose and that of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is to have them return to Him and to give them eternal life if they will only choose it. He has led and sustained His missionaries by the Holy Spirit to find and teach and baptize them. He allowed His Son to pay the price of their sins. Our Father and the Savior see those converts as tender lambs, purchased with a price we cannot fathom.

A mortal parent may appreciate, in some small way, the feelings of a loving Heavenly Father. When our children come to the age when they must leave our direct care, we feel anxiety for their safety and concern that



those who are to help them will not fail them. We can feel at least some of the Father's and the Savior's love for the new members of the Church and the trust They place in us to nourish.

Our Dependence on the Spirit

Those feelings in our hearts for the new members will go far to qualify us for the help

of the Spirit and thus overcome the fears that may deter us from our sacred responsibility. It is wise to fear that our own skills are inadequate to meet the charge we have to nourish the faith of others. Our own abilities, however great, will not be enough. But that realistic view of our limitations creates a humility that can lead to dependence on the Spirit and thus to power.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) told us to have courage despite our weaknesses: “In addressing a congregation, though the speaker be unable to say more than half a dozen sentences, and those awkwardly constructed, if his heart is pure before God, those few broken sentences are of more value than the greatest eloquence without the Spirit of the Lord and of more real worth in the sight of God, angels, and all good men. In praying, though a person’s words be few and awkwardly expressed, if the heart is pure before God, that prayer will avail more than the eloquence of a Cicero [a first century B.C. Roman orator]. What does the Lord, the Father of us all, care about our mode of expression? The simple, honest heart is of more avail with the Lord than all the pomp, pride, splendor, and eloquence produced by men. When he looks upon a heart full of sincerity, integrity, and child-like simplicity, he sees a principle that will endure forever—‘That is the spirit of my own kingdom—the spirit I have given to my children.’”¹

A child can do the things that will give us power to nourish the faith of others. Children could invite a recent convert to come with them to a meeting. Children could smile and greet a new member coming into a chapel or into a class. So can we. And as surely as we do, the Holy Ghost will be our companion. The fear of not knowing what to say and of being rejected will be taken from us. The newcomer will not appear to be a stranger to us. And the Holy Ghost will begin nourishing him or her even before we have spoken of gospel truths.

It does not require a calling more than being a member



We can begin today to try to see those we are to nourish as our Heavenly Father sees them and so feel some of what He feels for them.

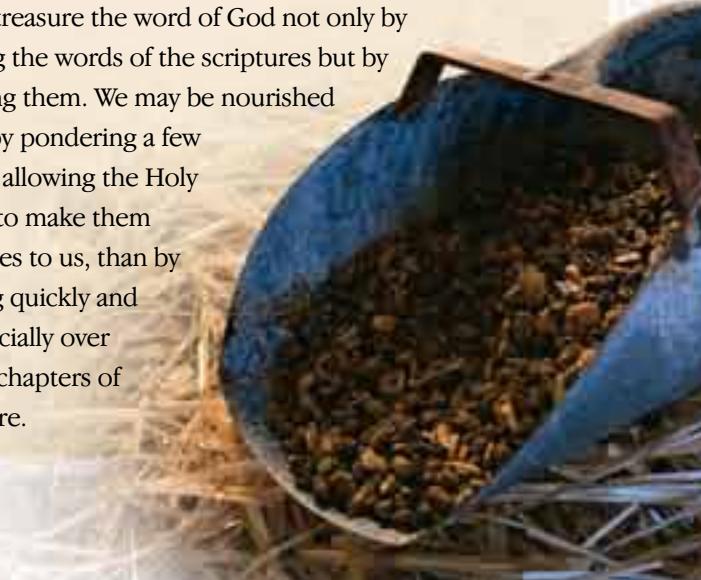
to nourish by reaching out in kindness. Those of us who have no calling to teach or to preach can nourish with the good word of God if we prepare for it. We can do it every time we speak with a new member and every time we participate in a class discussion. We need help from the Spirit to speak the words that will nourish and strengthen.

Two Keys to Receiving Help

There are two great keys to inviting the Spirit to guide what words we speak as we feed others. They are the daily study of the scriptures and the prayer of faith.

The Holy Ghost will guide what we say if we study and ponder the scriptures every day. The words of the scriptures invite the Holy Spirit. The Lord said it this way: “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men” (D&C 11:21). With daily study of the scriptures, we can count on this blessing even in casual conversations or in a class when we may be asked by a teacher to respond to a question. We will experience the power the Lord promised: “Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man” (D&C 84:85).

We treasure the word of God not only by reading the words of the scriptures but by studying them. We may be nourished more by pondering a few words, allowing the Holy Ghost to make them treasures to us, than by passing quickly and superficially over whole chapters of scripture.



Hearthfelt,
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the companionship
of the Holy Ghost,
with the pure intent
to nourish our
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will surely bring
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to those we love
and serve.



Just as pondering the scriptures invites the Holy Ghost, so does daily pleading in prayer. If we do not ask in prayer, He will rarely come, and without our petition, He is not likely to linger. "And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach" (D&C 42:14). Heartfelt, constant pleading for the companionship of the Holy Ghost, with the pure intent to nourish our Father's children, will surely bring blessings to us and to those we love and serve.

The good word of God with which we must nourish is the simple doctrine of the gospel. We need not fear either simplicity or repetition.

The Lord Himself described how that doctrine goes into the hearts of men and women to nourish them:

"This is my doctrine, and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me; and I bear record of the Father, and the Father beareth record of me, and the Holy Ghost

beareth record of the Father and me; and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me.

"And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God.

"And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned.

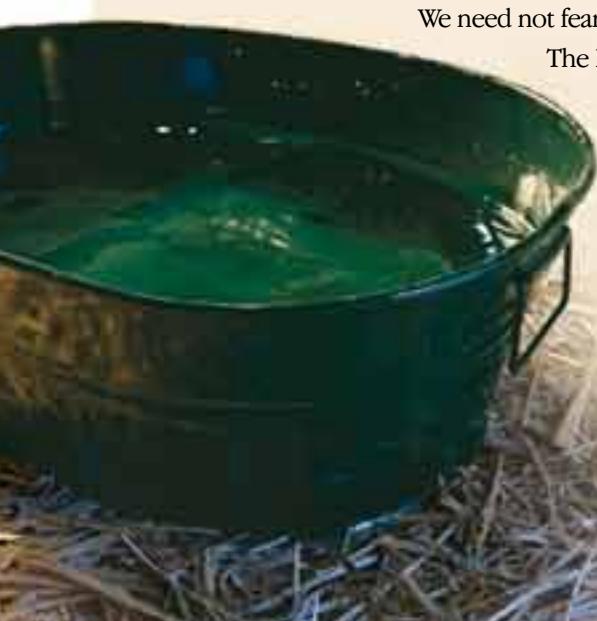
"Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father; and whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear record of me, for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi 11:32–35).

The Lord went on to describe those who would be nourished by that simple doctrine and so endure, those who would inherit the celestial kingdom, as those who were childlike. It takes a childlike heart to feel the promptings of the Spirit, to surrender to those commands, and to obey. That is what it takes to be nourished by the good word of God.

The Tenderness of Lambs

And that is why we can be so optimistic in our charge to nourish the new members of the Church. However much or little they knew of the doctrine, they have just submitted humbly to the ordinance of baptism and received the right to the companionship of the Holy Ghost. And so the very tenderness of their faith, which leads the Savior to refer to them as lambs, comes at a time when they have proven themselves willing to do what the Savior asks of them.

If the full requirements of their new membership are explained clearly and with love and if the opportunity to serve in the Church is extended wisely and their performance in that service judged with charity and nurtured



with patient encouragement, they will be strengthened by the companionship of the Holy Ghost, and then they will be nurtured by power beyond our own. As they endure, even the gates of hell will not prevail against them.

President Brigham Young made the promise of how their strength to stand would grow: "Those who humble themselves before the Lord, and wait upon him with a perfect heart and willing mind, will receive little by little, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, 'now and again,' as [Brother] John Taylor says, until they receive a certain amount. Then they have to nourish and cherish what they receive, and make it their constant companion, encouraging every good thought, doctrine and principle, and doing every good work they can perform, until by and bye the Lord is in them a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."²

That is what it means in Moroni when it says, "Relying

alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith" (Moroni 6:4). It is the Savior who made possible our being purified through His Atonement and our obedience to His commandments. And it is the Savior who will nourish those who go down in faith into the waters of baptism and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. When they always remember Him and when they continue in childlike obedience, it is He who will ensure that they have His Spirit always to be with them.

You and I can and will by small means be part of a great work. We will study and pray and serve to qualify for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. We will then be allowed to see the new members as precious, beloved children of our Heavenly Father, and we will be led to nourish them with love, with opportunity to serve, and with the good word of God. And then we will see in our own time what the great missionary Ammon described to his missionary companions, just as we are now companions to the missionaries laboring across the world:

"Behold, the field was ripe, and blessed are ye, for ye did thrust in the sickle, and did reap with your might, yea, all the day long did ye labor; and behold the number of your sheaves! And they shall be gathered into the garners, that they are not wasted.

"Yea, they shall not be beaten down by the storm at the last day; yea, neither shall they be harrowed up by the whirlwinds; but when the storm cometh they shall be gathered together in their place, that the storm cannot penetrate to them; yea, neither shall they be driven with fierce winds whithersoever the enemy listeth to carry them.

"But behold, they are in the hands of the Lord of the harvest, and they are his; and he will raise them up at the last day" (Alma 26:5–7).

We can by simple obedience help the Lord to take the lambs, His lambs, into His hands and take them in His arms home to their Father and our Father. I know that God will pour out the powers of heaven upon us as we join in preserving that sacred harvest of souls. ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 149.
2. "Discourse," *Deseret News*, Mar. 25, 1857, 21.

In Bethlehem

BY SHARON PRICE
ANDERSON



*Not far from Mount Moriah
where the Father of the Faithful
built an altar of native stone,
and binding Isaac, laid him
on the fire-ready wood
of sacrifice, before he saw
the thicket-caught ram,*

*Mary lays her firstborn son,
wrapped in swaddling bands,
on tinder-dry hay
in limestone
manger
of a stable-cave.*

*Fulfilled again are words
of Abraham—
God will provide Himself a lamb.*



After years of watching him stray from gospel standards, we wondered what else we could possibly do.

Our son was a very active child, and my wife and I spent a great deal of time with him as he grew, trying to satisfy his seemingly endless need for attention. It was difficult not to neglect his five younger siblings as we tried to create an environment in which he could be happy. Although we took him to several family counselors, by the time he reached 16 years of age, he was well on his way to failure in school and was spending his time with other troubled youth, none of whom lived gospel standards.

We were devastated. We had begun our married life with goals consistent with the gospel—regular church and temple attendance, family prayer and scripture study, and family home evening. We were not perfect, but at least we were consistent.

When our son dropped out of high school, we tried hard to find something for him to do that would meet his financial needs and give him some self-respect. His aunt and uncle were running

their own business, and they took a chance and gave him a job, which worked out for him. He was bright and a good worker, but the job was only temporary, so after a while we found ourselves looking for something else for him to do. Finally, a kind home teacher found him a job as a welder. He excelled at the job and soon moved up to a position as a traveling technician. But he was still not living gospel standards, and we struggled with his personal and social problems almost daily. Many nights passed without our knowing where he was or what he was doing.

As our son turned 19, it became agonizingly difficult for us to hear departing missionaries speak in church.

We questioned ourselves over and over again, wondering where we had gone wrong.

I have heard it said that the death of a loved one is the most difficult challenge one has to face, but I believe the spiritual death of a loved one can be even more difficult to accept. In *Faith*

NAME
WITHHELD

A kind home teacher found our son a job as a welder, but our son was still not living gospel standards. We struggled with his personal and social problems almost daily.

Our Son's Choices

Our son found himself with a stalled car in a cold and rainy Oregon town. He was discouraged and at a dead end. As he sat in the car, his thoughts turned to the possibility of a mission, and a special, warm feeling came over him.

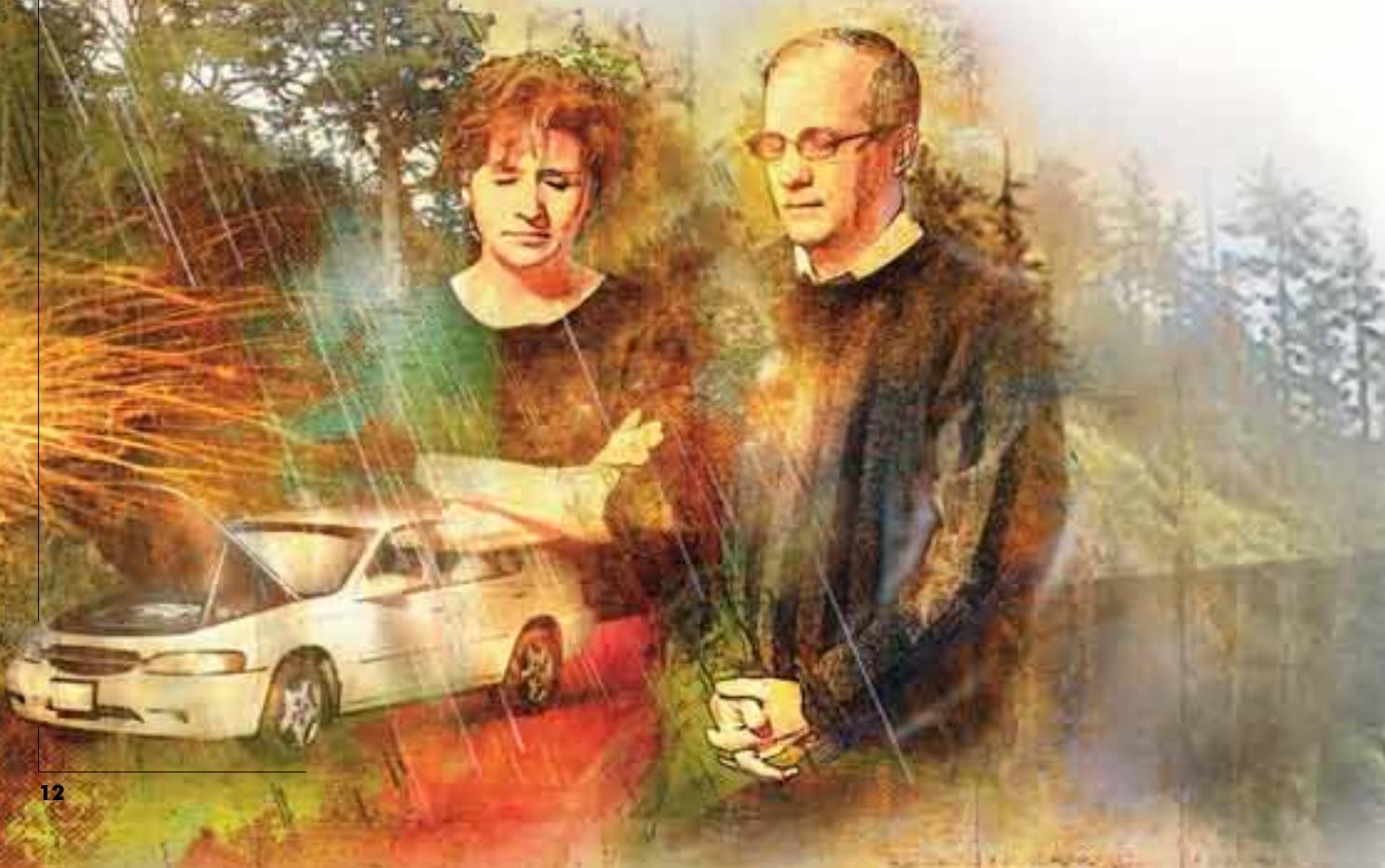
Precedes the Miracle, President Spencer W. Kimball states that “there is no tragedy in death, but only in sin.”¹ While those who unexpectedly lose loved ones in death may understandably feel it is a tragedy, President Kimball’s statement is true in the ultimate sense. Children who die young are lost to us in this life but not in eternity. Children who stray and never come back may be lost eternally. That thought weighed heavily upon us as we continued our struggle with our son’s choices.

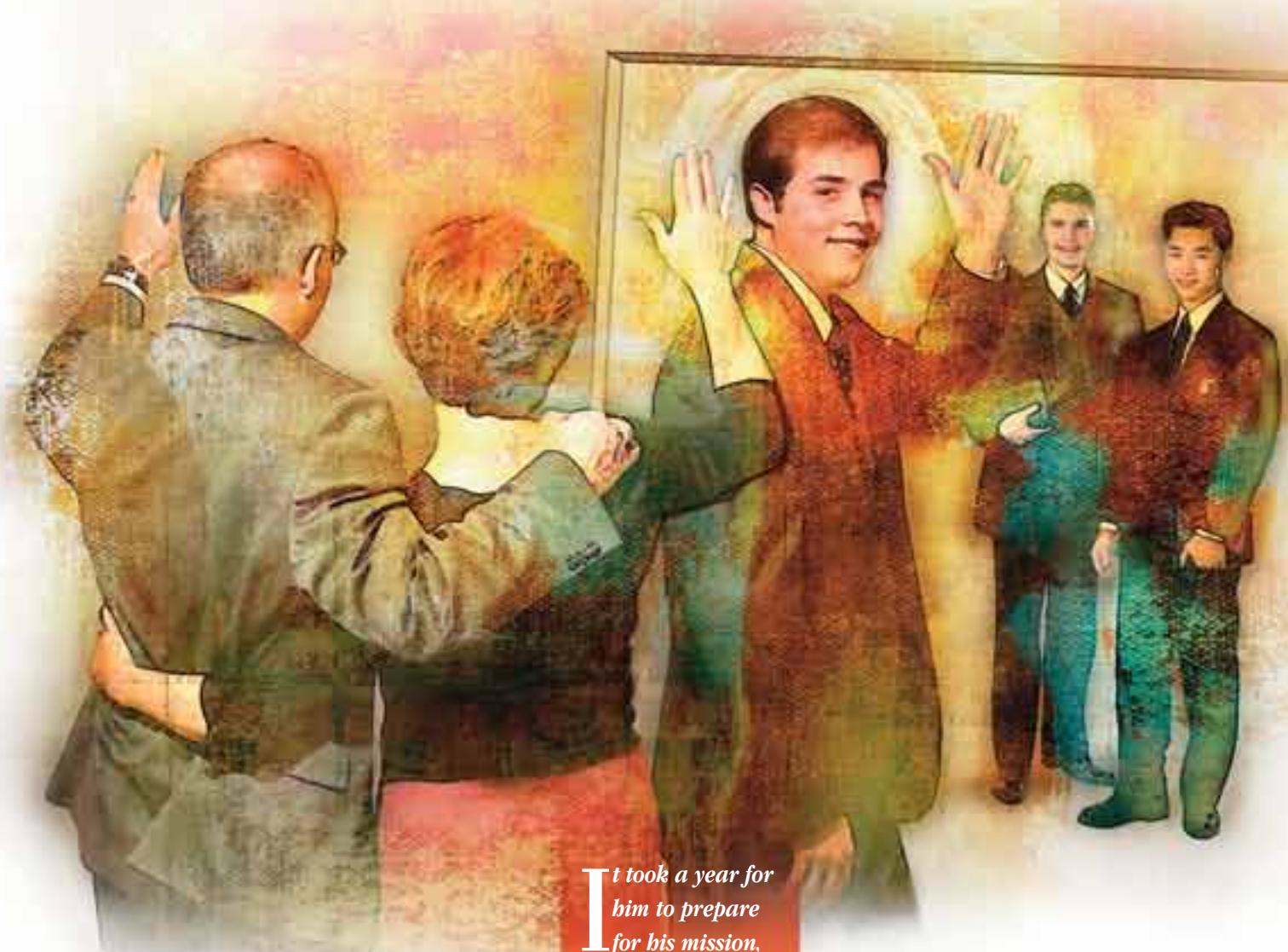
Then one evening as I lay in bed pondering the situation for what seemed like the 10,000th time, I heard a voice say simply, “Don’t worry. All will be well.” What did that mean? I wondered if all would be well with us as his parents so long as we remained faithful, no matter what happened to our son, or if it meant that eventually all would be well with him.

After eight years of prayer

and regular fasting, my wife and I felt we had done just about all we could. Then, finding inspiration in the Book of Mormon account of Alma praying with faith for his wayward son (see Mosiah 27:14), we decided to show our determination to do our part by fasting more often and with increased sincerity. We told the Lord that we didn’t know what He could do but that we needed serious help. We felt we had exhausted our own options with our son, and we needed the Lord to do something—anything. Our prayers were soon answered in a marvelous way.

Our son was 24. He had quit his job as a technician and had begun traveling by car up the California and Oregon coast, hoping to find a job with one of the companies for which he had performed his services. He was unsuccessful; it was winter, and he soon found himself with a stalled car in a cold and rainy Oregon town. He was discouraged and at





a dead end. As he sat in the car, his thoughts turned to the possibility of a mission, and a special, warm feeling came over him, starting at the top of his head and traveling down through his body. He later said he wished he could have kept the feeling with him forever.

My wife and I were very surprised one evening to see him walk in the front door. He came into the living room, sat down on the couch, and said, "Mom and Dad, I want to go on a mission." We could hardly believe our ears.

The next day he went to the barber and had his hair cut, made an appointment with our bishop to begin his spiritual recovery process, and began reading the scriptures on a regular basis. His actions were as astonishing to us as his conduct had been years earlier. When we walked into sacrament meeting with him the following Sunday, he looked neat and trim in his new, dark suit, with scriptures in hand.

It took a year for him to prepare for his mission, but the time finally came. The three of us drove to the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah. We sat in a large room and

*I t took a year for
him to prepare
for his mission,
but the time finally
came.*

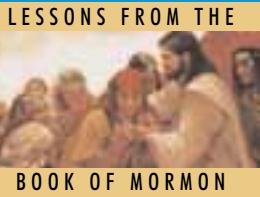
listened to a member of the MTC mission presidency describe what was going to happen. He told us as parents that we would have a few minutes to say good-bye to our missionaries, after which we would not see them for the duration of their service. We stood and gave our son a last hug and said good-bye. Then as he turned and walked away from us toward that door, I heard a voice say, "All is well. All is well." I was overcome with emotion and could not speak.

Our son served a faithful mission, returned home, met a fine young woman, and was married in the temple. He entered a junior college, where he finished his high school training and two years of college. He then entered Brigham Young University and graduated with honors. Today he has a good job and serves on his stake high council.

I am grateful to a Father in Heaven who knew how and when to reach our son. I know that if we put our trust in Him, He will open the way. ■

NOTE

1. *Faith Precedes the Miracle* (1972), 101.



After the Manner of



Great solace and satisfaction should come to us in knowing that our happiness and progress are basic to our Father's purposes.

ELDER JOHN B. DICKSON
Of the Seventy

As Latter-day Saints, we have been blessed with revelations that greatly expand our understanding of pre-mortal life, our purpose in mortality, and our future opportunities and destiny. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth, pertaining to the plan of salvation, before it rolled into existence . . . ; the past, the present, and the future were and are, with Him, one eternal ‘now.’ ”¹

Knowing that the plan of happiness was based on His knowledge of all things, we realize that the closer we come to living in accordance with the patterns and principles He has set, the happier and more complete we will be.

The Commandments—

a Treasure and Blessing

The prophets and the Holy Ghost will always invite us to keep the commandments of God, leading us to enjoy a life of righteousness. The commandments, which glorify us in truth and knowledge (see D&C 93:28), should never be regarded as bothersome or annoying but rather as great assets in our personal preparation for eternal

happiness and success. King Benjamin taught that “never-ending happiness” comes from keeping the commandments of God (Mosiah 2:41), while Alma taught that “wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10).

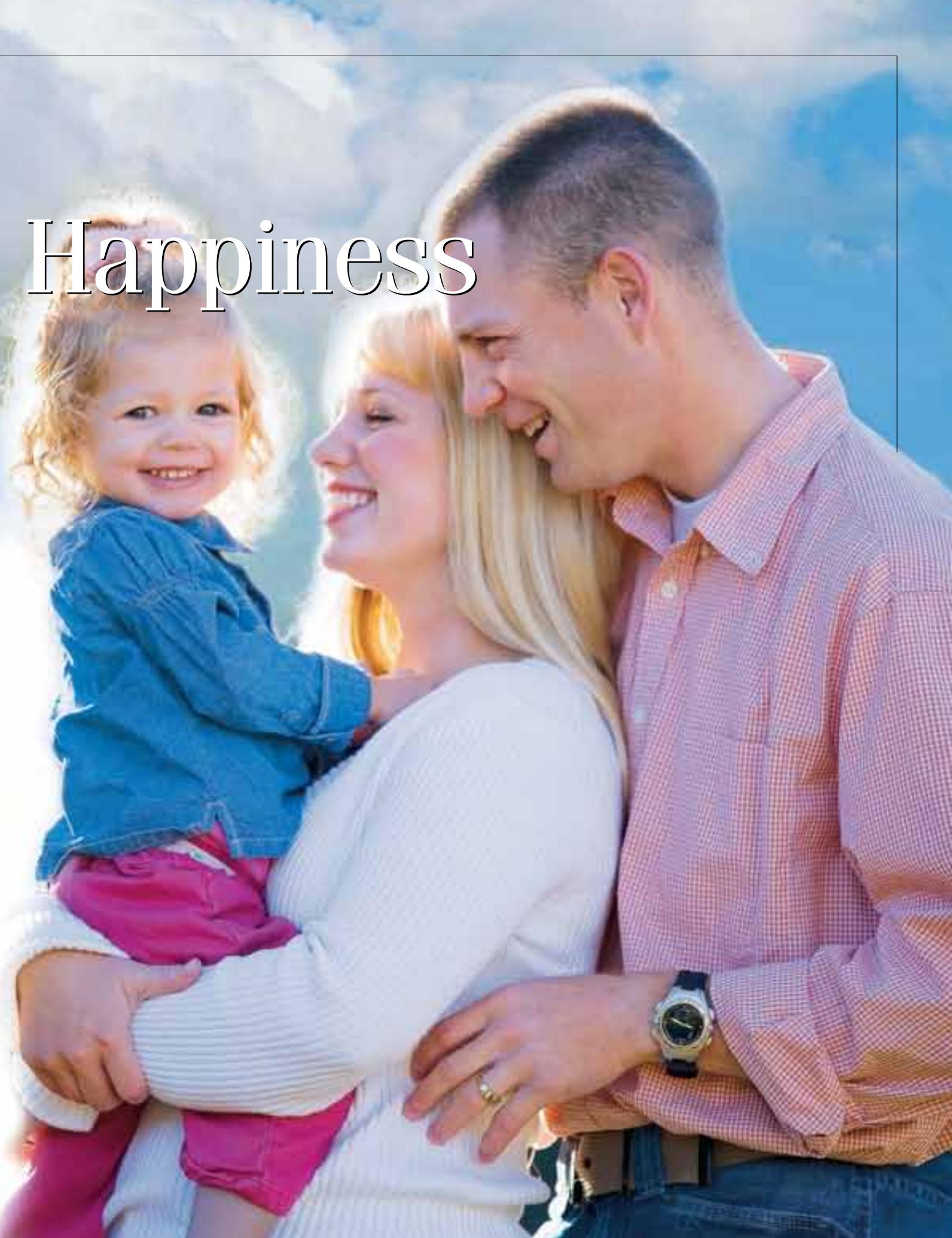
Great solace and satisfaction should come to us in knowing that our happiness and progress are basic to our Father’s purposes. Moses 1:39 teaches us that His greatest interest is our attainment of complete happiness in accord with the plan He has established: “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”

The first principle in this scripture deals with the eternal nature of our lives and our resurrection because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. We cannot receive a fulness of joy while the body and the spirit are separate (see D&C 93:33–34). The second principle, also a blessing of the Atonement, deals with the fulness we may obtain by living the Lord’s commandments, being obedient to an inspired pattern of living, and returning to God’s presence:

“And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

“He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in

Happiness



Happiness came to the Nephites as they worked hard to sustain themselves, learned from the holy scriptures, reared their families, and built a temple to the Lord.



THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE, BY C. C. A. CHRISTENSEN, COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF CHURCH HISTORY AND ART

truth and knoweth all things" (D&C 93:27–28).

God's desire to help us receive these abundant blessings and to share all that He has with His righteous children (see D&C 84:38) is quite different from the desire of the adversary, who would tempt us, overpower us, and reward us with "no good thing" (Alma 34:39).

The Commandments and Our Children

We might ask, "What of our children who are being raised in a world that lacks a moral conscience and that is not anchored in true and righteous principles?" Alma mentions an important sequence that can help us with the rising generation: "God gave unto them commandments, after having made known unto them the plan of redemption" (Alma 12:32). First came the grandeur of the plan, and then came the commandments that opened the door to its enjoyment.

If we understand this sequence, we will make sure that our children know that they are children of God. As they grow up knowing of premortal life, the purpose of earth life, and the need for the Savior and His

Atonement—and having a glimpse of what they can enjoy eternally—the commandments will naturally make sense to them. If we fail to teach our children who they are, both by example and by exposure to truth and light (see D&C 93:40), we should not be surprised by their lack of obedience. The closer our children come to understanding the things of God, the happier and more complete they will be. Parents cannot pass this responsibility on to any other person or organization.

After the Manner of Happiness

After a period of separation from Laman and Lemuel, the Nephites "lived after the manner of happiness" (2 Nephi 5:27). This resulted from their faith in Jesus Christ, even 600 years before His mortal ministry. They happily followed the prophets of their day and understood the plan of salvation. Happiness came as they worked hard to sustain themselves, learned from the holy scriptures, reared their families, and built a temple to the Lord (see 2 Nephi 5:11–13, 16).

Keeping the commandments was an essential condition to their happy way of life: "And we did observe to keep the judgments, and the statutes, and the commandments of the Lord in all things" (2 Nephi 5:10). They were not selective in the commandments they kept, but "in all things" they sought to be obedient. They knew that their temporal well-being, as well as their spiritual growth, depended upon their keeping the commandments of God.

When We Make Mistakes

While learning these lessons, the Nephites, like us, were not perfect people. Even Nephi, one of the greatest prophets of

all time, exclaimed: “O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities” (2 Nephi 4:17). Undoubtedly his sins were not grievous, but it is clear that he was not satisfied with himself. Later verses indicate that, rather than despair and succumb to his imperfections, Nephi simply remembered who he was and that the Lord had consistently guided him. He then invoked the powers of heaven to redeem his soul, deliver him out of the hands of his enemies, help him shake at the very appearance of sin, shut the gates of hell before him, help him be strict with himself, and encircle him about in the Lord’s robe of righteousness (see 2 Nephi 4:31–34).

Peter, who denied that he knew the Savior; Paul, who persecuted the Saints; and Alma the Younger, who, with the sons of Mosiah, tried to destroy the Church—all likewise forsook their sins and followed the Master for the rest of their lives. What greater examples could we have of overcoming mistakes?

Trappings of the Modern World

In our age many people find themselves caught up in the enticements of modern culture. In the beginning these enticements may seem inconsequential or harmless, but failure to abandon them may lead to addictive behavior that offends the Spirit, leaving God’s children spiritually paralyzed and lacking confidence (see D&C 121:45). The following points may help us avoid inappropriate behavior that causes personal embarrassment, anguish of soul, and unhappiness.

1. Have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire to enjoy the blessings of celestial life. Moroni exhorted us to “come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing” (Moroni 10:30). The scriptures teach that “he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory” (D&C 88:22). By disciplining ourselves in righteous living, we become the people the Lord wants us to be.

ALMA ARSE. BY WALTER RANE, COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF CHURCH HISTORY AND ART



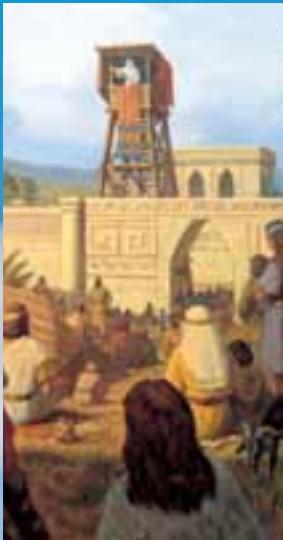
Alma the Younger, with the sons of Mosiah, tried to destroy the Church, but after being rebuked by an angel, all forsook their sins and followed the Master.

2. Recognize mistakes and correct them through repentance.

The words of Amulek to the poor Zoramites are a good reminder that “this life is the time for [us] to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors. . . .

“I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance . . . ; behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed” (Alma 34:32–33). Simply feeling remorseful is not repentance. True repentance leads to a new and righteous pattern of life.

3. Know that the Lord invites us to enjoy eternal happiness but will never force us. Alma’s words to his son Corianton remind us that the choice to repent is ours:



King Benjamin taught that “never-ending happiness” comes from keeping the commandments of God.

“Therefore, O my son, whosoever will come may come and partake of the waters of life freely; and whosoever will not come the same is not compelled to come; but in the last day it shall be restored unto him according to his deeds” (Alma 42:27).

4. Believe that the Savior can truly help us be clean and happy. In Gethsemane, Jesus took upon himself not only the sins of the world but also the pain, afflictions, temptations, sorrow, and sadness of all God’s children. Jesus felt everything as we feel it in the flesh, including the temptations we endure (see Alma 7:11–12). As we confess and forsake our sins, He can, through the power of the Atonement, help us and heal us. These changes in our lives lift us to newfound joy and profound happiness.

5. Have faith that forgiveness comes to those who truly repent. “Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more.

“By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:42–43).

Through total repentance, the victory each person wins in his own heart will determine his present and eternal happiness. With determination, we might say to ourselves, “I may not be perfect in all things at this time, but in this one area that has caused me such heartache and pain, I will be perfect.”

Let us remember that we are sons and daughters of a Heavenly Father who knows us and seeks our exaltation and eternal happiness. A plan of happiness has been prepared for that purpose. It includes

commandments that are helpful stepping-stones in our progress as we overcome the world and become more like our Father.

Those who have gone before have shown us how to forsake our sins and endure to the end. Each of us deals with challenges in this life that we must overcome. Great joy and happiness will come as we are successful in this process. With faith in Jesus Christ and a determination to do our best to follow Him, we can overcome all things and eventually enjoy eternal, never-ending happiness. By so doing, we may exclaim with Nephi that we also have “lived after the manner of happiness.” ■

NOTE

1. *History of the Church*, 4:597.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Summarize the five suggestions in the section “Trappings of the Modern World.” Select an area of behavior where the family needs to improve. As an activity, sit in a circle and take turns tossing a ball to one another. Each time a person catches the ball, have that family member share an idea on how to improve in this area. Make a goal to use these ideas during the coming week. Conclude with the last paragraph of the article. Testify that obedience to the commandments brings happiness.

2. Read the last two paragraphs of the article. Prepare pieces of paper to be used as “stepping-stones” labeled with commandments. Have family members take turns stepping from one stone to the next as they explain how each commandment helps them to “overcome the world and become more like our Father.” Consider having a “treasure” at the end of the path.

SPIDERS AND SPIRITUAL HELP

"**G**randma,
*G*there are huge
spiders in here!"

BY DON L. SEARLE

Church Magazines

Our six-year-old grandson, Hunter, called out from the living room, where he and his younger brother Marcus lay in sleeping bags on the floor. The boys were having a sleep-over at Grandma and Grandpa's house.

Grandma hurried to his side and whispered words of comfort to calm his fears. In the dim predawn light coming through the front window, Hunter saw what he was sure was a spider lurking near the wall. My wife, Marie, helped him see that it was only the shadow of a toy abandoned there. Her soothing words helped Hunter settle securely into his sleeping bag, and he was soon asleep again.

As I listened to the whispered conversation from the living room that early morning, I lay in bed thinking how often we may see fearsome things in the shadows of our own lives. How often our Father rushes to our sides, whispering calming words to us through His Comforter! How kind He is to help us see that those fearsome things are not so terrible as they seem, because He has provided the way through His Son for us to overcome them.

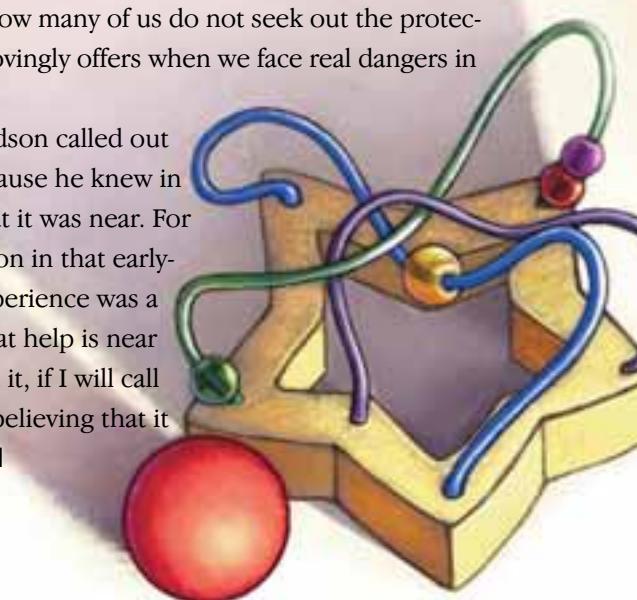
I wondered, too, how often I do not call out for His help with real spiders in my life—spiritually venomous

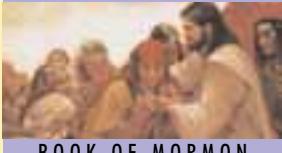
things of which I ought to be afraid—because I tell myself that I can handle them. And how often do I unknowingly need His help with spiritual spiders that I cannot see because they are too well hidden?

Like the rest of us, little Hunter will grow up to learn that real, living spiders are not always the terrible creatures they may seem to be.

But how many of us let imaginary spiders make us shrink from them day after day when there really is no need? And how many of us do not seek out the protection He so lovingly offers when we face real dangers in our lives?

Our grandson called out for help because he knew in his heart that it was near. For me, the lesson in that early-morning experience was a reminder that help is near when I need it, if I will call out in faith believing that it will come. ■





Choosing Liberty and Eternal Life



I testify that choosing liberty and eternal life brings the greatest happiness we can know.

BY ELDER CRAIG A. CARDON

Of the Seventy

I began my college studies at a university about 100 miles (160 km) from home. It was an exciting time for all the freshman students. Many were living away from home for the first time and were eager to express their newfound freedom from parental oversight.

I was on the university basketball team, and it quickly became known that I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. During the first weeks of the semester, one of my teammates invited me to a Saturday night party for new students to be held in the desert outside the city. I asked if the party would include alcohol and was assured that it would not. I felt uncomfortable with this response but decided to attend nonetheless. A blind date was arranged for me with the assurance that she had the same standards I had. My teammate explained that we would use his car.

That Saturday night we drove some distance into the desert and found the party. To my great disappointment, drinking alcohol was the principal activity, notwithstanding the fact that the legal drinking age in the state was three years above the age of most of the

freshman students. My date couldn't wait to begin drinking, along with my teammate and his date. When I voiced disappointment, they said I needed to "grow up and live a little" and that they would help me. I told them that I had never drunk alcohol and that I was not going to start then. They soon left me so they could join the others.

I sat alone, apart from the drinking and boisterous laughter, without transportation to leave, wondering why I had gotten myself into this mess. Later in the night, I saw a line of car headlights coming through the desert toward the party. The cars encircled the group, and then, as if on signal, lights began flashing on the top of what I then recognized as police cars. Many students attempted to run into the desert but were quickly apprehended. I remained where I was, perplexed by the developments.

The police began checking identification to determine the ages of the students, giving breath tests to those below the legal drinking age to determine if they had been drinking. When they came to me, I told an officer that I had not drunk alcohol that night or ever. He laughed at me, but when I firmly stated that he could believe me, his countenance changed. He told me that I did not have to take the test

and directed me to drive my teammate's car back to the university. Those who were underage and drinking were cited and required to pay fines. Some were taken to jail.

A Personal Message

I, however, left with no police record and arrived home at about 3:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. Priesthood meeting in my ward began at 7:00 a.m. My alarm sounded at 6:45 a.m. I turned it off and rolled over, thinking for a few moments of all the reasons not to attend that morning. But spiritually, I couldn't rest. I arose, dressed in my Sunday clothes, and walked to the chapel, arriving about 10 minutes after the meeting had begun.

As I walked into the chapel, my heart leaped as I recognized the back of my father's head. He had come to visit me, unannounced. I slipped in beside him and sat down. He

looked at me and smiled. Then, putting his hand firmly on my knee, he leaned over and whispered a message with meaning far beyond words: "I knew I would find you here, Son." Simultaneously, Heavenly Father whispered the same message to my soul. I can't adequately describe the love and joy I felt at that moment.

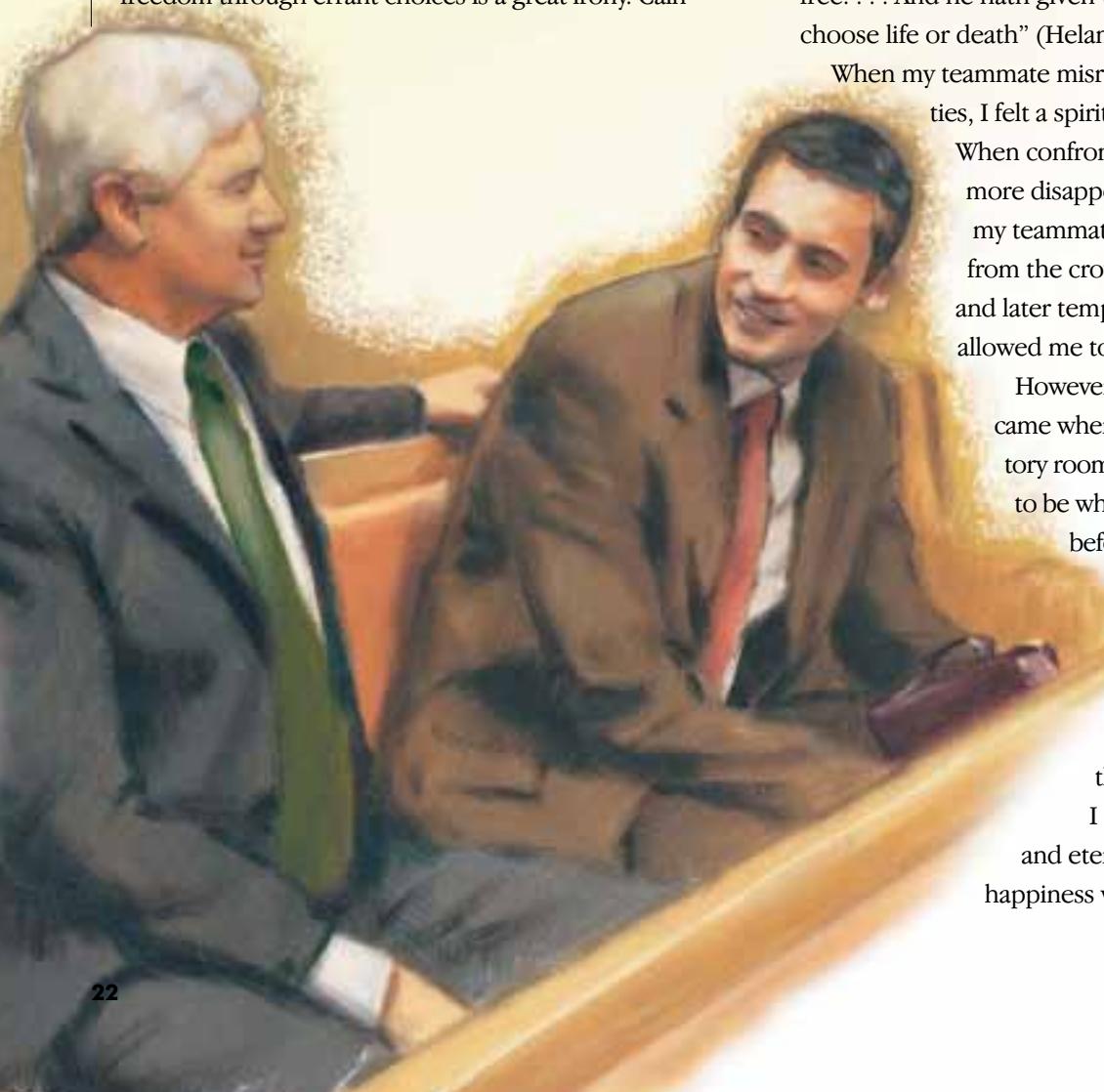
A few months later I was on my mission. A few months after that, I received word that my father had died unexpectedly. The message I received from him and through him that Sunday, however, has never left me.

Freedom to Choose Liberty or Captivity

This experience provides an example of the eternal truth Lehi communicated to his sons long ago: "And because [the children

I told a police officer that I bad not drunk alcohol that night or ever. He laughed at me, but when I firmly stated that he could believe me, his countenance changed.





of men] are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon. . . . And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil" (2 Nephi 2:26–27).

Our Father's plan of happiness incorporates the exercise of agency, but it also, of necessity, incorporates accountability and judgment. My teammate and others at the party were free to choose their behavior, but they were not free to choose the consequences of their behavior. Some of them spent the night in jail. Others began lives of uncontrolled appetites that continue to enslave them today.

The bondage we bring upon ourselves while seeking freedom through errant choices is a great irony. Cain

thought he was free after murdering his brother, only to find himself cursed and tormented for what he had done (see Moses 5:32–39). Peter spoke of those of evil influence as "wells without water" who promise liberty while they themselves are the servants of corruption. "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (2 Peter 2:17, 19). However, Peter also identified the true path of freedom, saying, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations," for we escape "the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 2:9, 20).

Samuel the Lamanite invited us to remember that we "are permitted to act for [ourselves]; for behold, God hath given unto [us] a knowledge and he hath made [us] free. . . . And he hath given unto [us] that [we] might choose life or death" (Helaman 14:30–31).

When my teammate misrepresented the party's activities, I felt a spiritual unrest that I did not heed.

When confronted with that reality, I was more disappointed with myself than with my teammate. But keeping myself apart from the crowd brought spiritual comfort and later temporal benefit when the police allowed me to return home.

However, the greatest blessing of liberty came when, in the privacy of my dormitory room early Sunday morning, I chose to be where I should be, not knowing beforehand the treasure that awaited me there. Such experiences, accompanied

by the ministration of the Spirit, foreshadow the liberty associated with the blessing of eternal life.

I testify that choosing liberty and eternal life brings the greatest happiness we can know. ■

Life-Changing Leadership

A Leader of One

When I turned 12 years old, I was the only young man attending my ward in Cape Town, South Africa. Even so, my bishop felt inspired to call a Young Men presidency.

My Young Men president could have said to himself, "What am I supposed to do with only one young man? We cannot organize activities for only one." Instead, he gave of his best and magnified his calling. The presidency organized hikes, camps, Scouting activities, Mutual evenings on Tuesday nights, lessons on Sundays, sand boarding, and activities at the beach. After a while, other young men began coming out—two, then three, and then four.

I am filled with gratitude that these Young Men leaders were faithful in their callings and made an effort for just one young man—me. I am a better person because they didn't give up and so are the others who participated in the Young Men program in our ward.

Greg Burgoyne, South Africa

Little by Little, I Learned to Lead

A few weeks after I was baptized and confirmed, I was called to serve as the Primary secretary in the Valle Dorado Ward in Mexico. This was a surprise to

me because I was new in the gospel, but I loved my Savior and wanted to serve.

I told my bishop that many other people could do the job better, but through serving I learned that the calling had been inspired. By being with the children in Primary, I learned the principles of the gospel, beautiful hymns, and the Articles of Faith. I loved the little ones too, and through them I met their parents.

But my greatest education came from working with the Primary president and her counselors. They patiently helped me, they

Latter-day Saints throughout the world share how leadership has blessed their lives, either by serving as a leader or by being served.





My greatest education came from working with the Primary president and her counselors. They patiently helped me, they forgave my mistakes, and little by little, I learned how to fulfill my calling.

forgave my mistakes, and little by little, I learned how to fulfill my calling. We worked together in the Primary for three years and became close friends.

When we were released, we were called to serve in Relief Society. As a result of the love we shared, we served together in unity for two more years. These sisters taught me to delegate responsibility and to allow others to learn to become leaders. We shared food storage, fasted for a purpose, and went to the temple together. They helped me become a faithful, dedicated, and loving leader. I feel obligated to share what I learned so other sisters will have the same kind of experience that I had working with the sisters who trained me.

Laura Viga D'Alva, Mexico

I'm Simply Not Prepared

Three weeks after my baptism and confirmation, Bishop Ayala interviewed me and asked how I was progressing. I replied, "Very well. I have finished reading the Book of

Mormon for the second time. I'm also reading the *Gospel Principles* manual so I can learn more and put into practice what I'm reading."

Then he said, "Your Heavenly Father is mindful of you and is calling you to be a Sunday School teacher for the youth ages 14 to 17."

Immediately I realized that several of the youth in the class, who were just a few years younger than I was, had been raised in the Church and knew the gospel better than I did.

I said to him, "I'm not ready for this kind of an assignment."

The bishop replied, speaking very deliberately, "Roberto, Heavenly Father is the one extending this calling to you. He knows your abilities and your faithfulness."

"I'm simply not prepared. I need more time," I persisted.

The bishop looked straight into my eyes and said serenely but in a strong voice, "If you feel you can't accept this calling, you shouldn't tell me. Kneel down and tell your Heavenly

Father. He will answer you, and I will accept your decision."

A prolonged silence followed. Then, looking at me the way a father looks at his son, he said, "Roberto, this isn't a church of cowards; it is a church of courageous people."

My heart was suddenly contrite. With tears in my eyes and a voice filled with emotion, I said, "Bishop, when do I start?"

He embraced me, slapped me on the back, and said, "I'm going to help you prepare your first lesson this week."

I was filled with joy to know that Heavenly Father had given me such a special leader, a bishop who taught not only by word but by example.

I remembered this experience often during my mission and while serving in other callings. I think of it now and feel grateful to Heavenly Father to be a member of the Lord's Church.

Roberto Carlos Pacheco Pretel, Peru

Dedicated Deacons

One of my sisters-in-law in Guatemala had been going through a stressful time, which triggered some health problems. My wife and I prayed for her, but we didn't know what else to do. Then I was able to visit my in-laws on a business trip to my homeland of Guatemala, where I learned this beautiful lesson in leadership.

I was talking with my father-in-law on the patio when one of the 12-year-old boys in the ward passed by and said hello. After he passed by, my father-in-law said, "That little fellow and two other boys the same age really surprised me the other day. The three of them came over, all dressed up in their white shirts and ties. After greeting me, to my surprise they headed for the living room to visit with my daughter. They told her that they had come to visit her because they knew of the health challenges she was having. They said that although they were deacons and could not give her a blessing, they could pray for her, and Jesus Christ would bless her.

"Those three young men knelt and offered a wonderful prayer and asked our Heavenly Father to bless my daughter. Then they stood up, and after expressing their love for her, they left.



"You know what?" my father-in-law continued. "I was very impressed by the great example of those young men."

The next day as I attended sacrament meeting, I saw the three young men dressed up and ready to pass the sacrament. I felt admiration and respect for them. When the meeting was over, I went to shake their hands, which were small in size but powerful in their ability to lift up tired and heavy spirits. May God bless those young men for their example of service, love, and faith.

Oscar Abad Gutierrez, Utah

He Wanted to Talk to My Mother?

Since I have been a member of the Church, I have had a sincere desire to keep the commandments. Paying tithing, however, was a challenge because my mother, who was not a Latter-day Saint, would not allow it.

When I got paid, I set aside money for tithing in one of my drawers. But when the day came to return the money to the Lord, it wasn't there. I asked my mother if she had seen it, and she answered that she had spent it because the Lord did not need it. I did not argue with her, for I believed there was another way to resolve this problem.

Because I was not able to pay my tithing, I was sad for a long time. When I went to my bishop's office for tithing settlement, he asked if I was a full-tithe payer, and with tears in my eyes I told him I was not because my mother had taken my tithing money. My bishop comforted me by saying that the Lord knew the desires of my heart. Then he

asked me to bring my mother in for an interview that Wednesday. I agreed.

During that week I asked myself, "How can I take my mother for an interview with the bishop if she is not a Church member? She won't accept the invitation!"

When Wednesday arrived I had not said anything to her, so I simply asked her to come with me to the meeting-house, explaining that I did not want to go alone. Luckily, she said she would go.

Bishop Feitosa received her kindly and led her into his office. I was very anxious while my mother was in there. Finally my mother came out of his office—with a smile.

On the way home, my mother looked at me and said, "From now on you are going to pay your tithing every month." What joy filled my heart! The Lord had prepared a means for my mother to understand my desire to observe this sacred commandment.

My mother has since joined the Church. She pays her tithing and makes sure I pay mine. We have received marvelous blessings from keeping this commandment because an inspired leader spoke with my mother about sacrifice, dedication, and faithfulness to the Lord.

Evanilda Gomes do Nascimento, Brazil

Go Talk to Him

In 1998, when I was Young Men president in my ward, I participated in a stake youth camp. As I was resting after a game, I saw a young man I didn't know. He was sitting

INSTRUMENTS IN HIS HANDS



"A leader must cause things to happen and lives to be affected. Something should move and change. He must see that those under him do not fail. But it should be done in the Lord's way. He should be the

instrument in the hands of the Almighty for changing lives. He needs to know where he is now, where he is going, and how he is going to get there."

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "These I Will Make My Leaders," *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 35.



alone on a little mound away from the camp. He had an unpleasant expression on his face. I felt I needed to go over and talk to him.

I introduced myself and asked his name. I don't remember all that we talked about, but I do remember that I shed a few tears. It was a special conversation that lasted until they called us to the next activity. I rarely saw the young man after that and never had another chance to talk to him.

In August 2005 we had a meeting at our stake center. This same young man came up to me and gave me a letter. It read:

I started thinking today about our conversation in San Martin Park in about 1998. Just to remind you, I was sitting by myself and feeling a bit sad. You came up to me and said you felt you needed to talk to me. You said . . . the time had come to choose—either to stay with the Church and follow Jesus Christ or leave it and not enjoy the blessings that come from activity in the

Church. The one thing that really stayed with me was when you said that if I fell, my whole family would fall with me, but if I would keep moving forward, they would come too.

. . . A great desire arose in me to help them. . . . So from the day we had that talk, I made the decision to be faithful to the Lord, and even now, after seven years, I am still faithful, and my family is firm in the gospel and faithful to the Lord. . . . Thank you so much for being so straightforward and truthful with me. You'll never know how much good it did.

This young man is now a returned missionary who has been married in the temple. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me the opportunity to serve as a leader. I am grateful to come to understand the importance of putting myself in others' shoes so I can try to understand what they are going through. ■

Alejandro Humberto Villarreal, Argentina

When I told my bishop that my mother would not let me pay tithing, he asked me to bring her in for an interview.

BY ELDER JOSEPH B. WIRTHLIN
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Some of the choicest blessings of my life have been the close friendships I have experienced over the years. Often, these friendships have been forged in the fires of shared experience. I think back with fondness on the football teams I played on, the missionaries with whom I served in Austria and Switzerland, the bishoprics and stake presidencies with whom I served. I think about my family—the happiness and grief we have shared and how those moments of tenderness have amplified the love we have for each other. Most recently, I think about the indescribable bond of brotherhood I have felt within the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Though each of these groups was very different, each had common characteristics. Perhaps this is because we struggled so much together, or perhaps because we linked arms together in a common journey where we had to depend so completely on each other. These relationships are the foundation of many of the most precious and rewarding moments of my life.

It is my desire to discuss establishing a bond of brotherhood in your assignments. Please understand that when I speak of "brotherhood," I include our wonderful and indispensable sisters in that definition.

Establishing a bond of brotherhood is critical. If those who serve with you feel this mutual love and trust, the work of the Lord will thrive and heaven will aid you in your efforts. Fail to establish this bond, however, and you may find your work tedious, toilsome, and unproductive.



Establishing a bond of brotherhood is critical. If those who serve with you feel mutual love and trust, the work of the Lord will thrive and heaven will aid you in your efforts.

BAND OF

The background of the title graphic features a painting of a soldier in a helmet looking out over a landscape. In the sky, several aircraft are flying, some trailing smoke or fire. The overall scene conveys a sense of conflict and brotherhood.

A Lesson from World War II

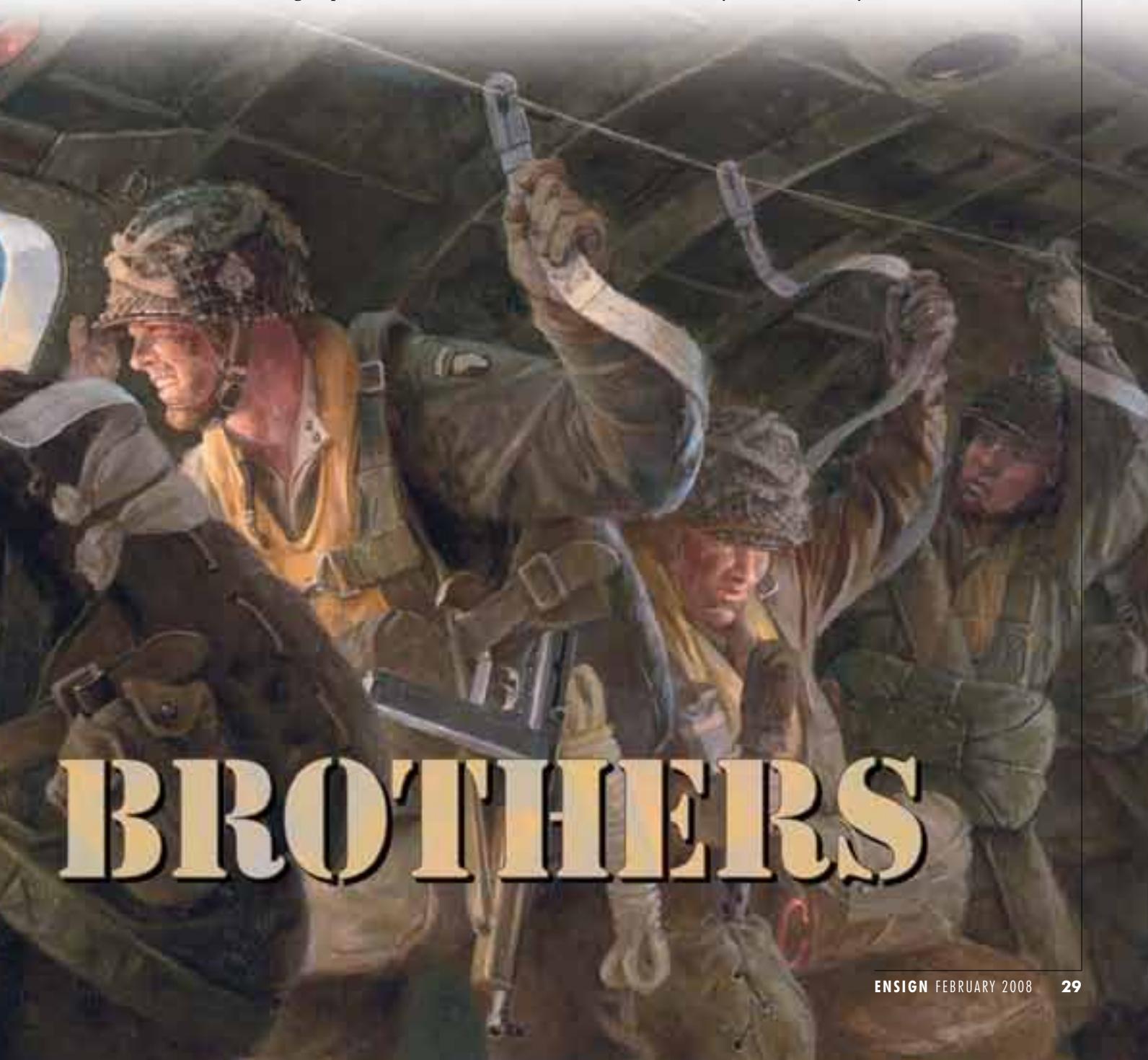
Some years ago, Stephen Ambrose wrote a book describing the experience of a company of paratroopers during World War II.¹ The army was developing a new kind of warfare the world had not seen before. They were training men to parachute out of planes—often behind enemy lines and at immense personal peril—to attack, and to meet strategic objectives critical to the overall success of the war effort.

Easy Company of the 506th regiment, 101st Airborne Division, was one of those groups. Formed from volunteers,

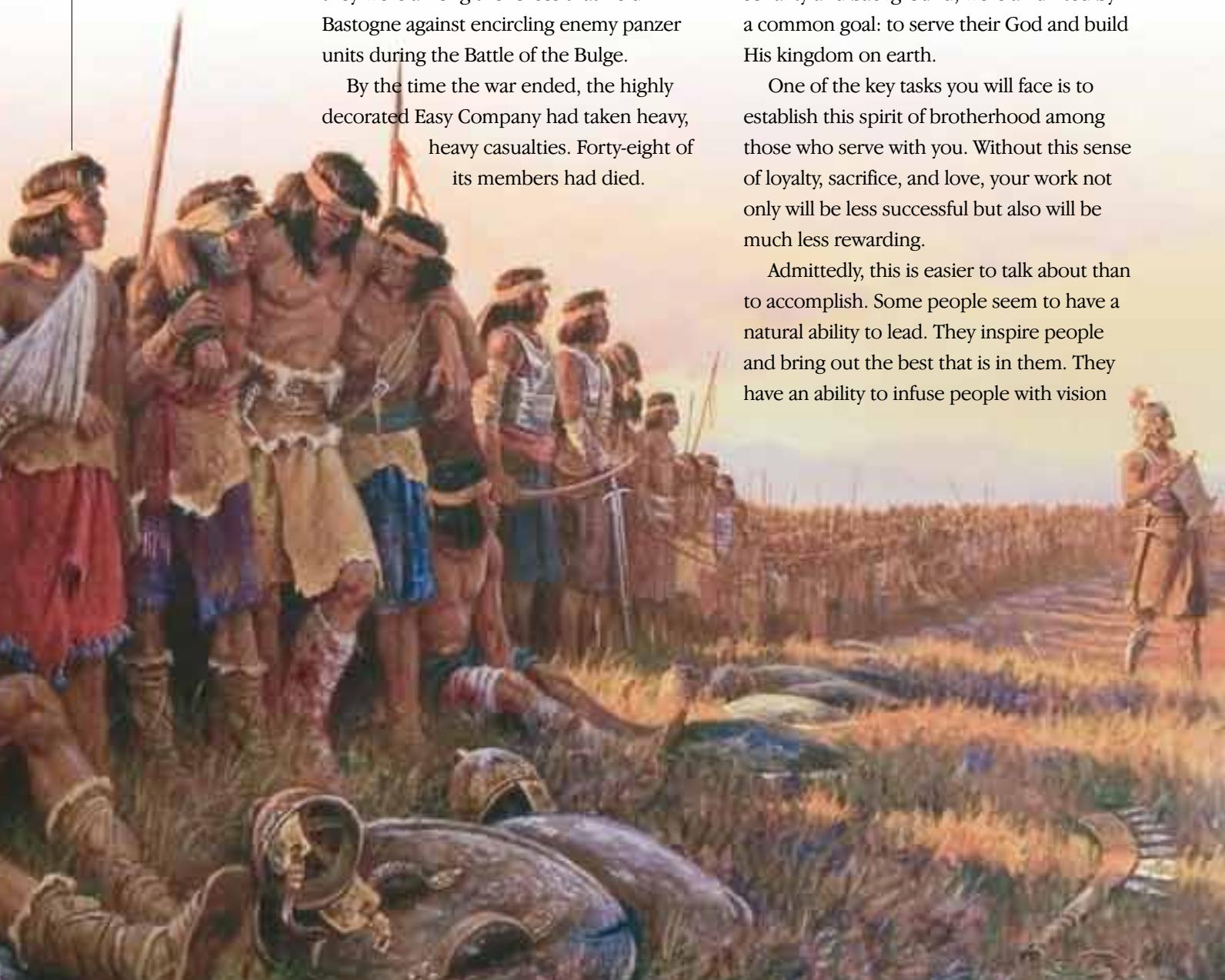
the 140 men began their training in 1942. They had been told that their training would be harder than any other in the military. In fact, it was so challenging that two out of three men couldn't make it and either dropped out or were assigned to a regular army unit.

The night before D day, Easy Company parachuted behind enemy lines. Their assignment was to take out a battery of artillery guns. But in the chaos of the drop, only 12 of the 140 men were in position to carry out the mission. Nevertheless, they knew that if they didn't take out those

BROTHERS

A detailed painting depicting several paratroopers in a C-47 transport plane. One soldier in the foreground is looking down, while others are visible in the background. The scene is set against a backdrop of a green landscape and a cloudy sky. The word "BROTHERS" is overlaid in large, bold, gold letters across the bottom of the image.

The stripling warriors knew why they were fighting. They understood the nature of their sacrifice. Their leader, Helaman, wrote that "they did think more upon the liberty of their fathers than they did upon their lives." They knew the value of a great cause.



guns, the Allied soldiers storming Utah Beach would suffer heavy casualties from the artillery.

To make matters worse, the guns were manned and defended by more than 50 elite enemy paratroopers who had dug a series of trenches about the battery, heavily fortifying it against any kind of assault.

In one of the most well-executed and heroic operations of the war, 12 men of Easy Company assaulted the position, routed the enemy, and destroyed the artillery guns.

In later action, Easy Company took part in the ill-fated Operation Market Garden, facing enemy forces in Holland and Belgium. Later they were among the forces that held Bastogne against encircling enemy panzer units during the Battle of the Bulge.

By the time the war ended, the highly decorated Easy Company had taken heavy, heavy casualties. Forty-eight of its members had died.

In the scriptures we learn of other groups with similar bonds. King Mosiah's sons were heirs to the throne. They could have led lives of comfort and ease. But they abandoned their lives of privilege, walked into enemy territory, and preached the gospel to thousands of Lamanites, baptizing many. (See Alma 17–26.)

Think of the great souls who ushered in this last dispensation: Joseph, Hyrum, and Samuel Smith; Parley and Orson Pratt; Brigham Young; Heber C. Kimball; Wilford Woodruff. They also formed a great band of brothers who, though very different in personality and background, were all united by a common goal: to serve their God and build His kingdom on earth.

One of the key tasks you will face is to establish this spirit of brotherhood among those who serve with you. Without this sense of loyalty, sacrifice, and love, your work not only will be less successful but also will be much less rewarding.

Admittedly, this is easier to talk about than to accomplish. Some people seem to have a natural ability to lead. They inspire people and bring out the best that is in them. They have an ability to infuse people with vision



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. To teach the principle of teamwork, pass out pieces of a picture cut into a puzzle. Ask everyone to assemble the picture alone, using only the pieces they have. Read the section "Never Forget the Value of a Great Cause." Why was it necessary for Captain Moroni to have his people work together to fulfill their goal? Work together as a family to put the puzzle together. Discuss the need for teamwork to accomplish goals.

2. Tell the story of Easy Company. Discuss how we create bonds of brotherhood within our associations inside and outside the Church. Review how priorities, courage, and perseverance help the bond of brotherhood to grow stronger. Have family members identify groups to which they belong. Challenge them to help strengthen those groups.

that transcends their own lives and inspire greatness within them.

I'm not sure there is a recipe that can turn an ordinary administrator into a great leader. But I am certain that there are things these great leaders have in common. The following principles may assist you in creating a band of brothers.

Never Forget the Value of a Great Cause

Captain Moroni lived during a time when evil men were conspiring to destroy the liberty and lives of his countrymen. How did he rally the people of his day? He rent his coat and wrote upon it, "In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children" (Alma 46:12). Moroni knew the power of a great cause.

Helaman, the oldest son of the prophet Alma, led the stripling warriors. As you remember, Helaman was the

one Alma entrusted with the sacred records. I suppose Helaman was more of a scholar than a warrior. But he lived in a time of conflict and war, and when the 2,000 sons of converted Lamanites took up their weapons of war, they asked that Helaman be their leader. Every student of the Book of Mormon knows their story. These young men had great faith. They were obedient. "They never had fought, yet they did not fear death" (Alma 56:47). Their confidence in the Lord was unshakeable:

"Behold our God is with us," they said, "and he will not suffer that we should fall" (Alma 56:46).

After many battles, although every one of them had received wounds, not one soul of them perished (see Alma 57:21, 25).

These young men knew why they were fighting. They understood the nature of their sacrifice. Helaman wrote that "they did think more upon the liberty of their fathers than they did upon their lives" (Alma 56:47). They knew the value of a great cause.

Average leaders used the carrot and the stick to motivate those around them. Great leaders communicate a vision that captures the imagination and fires the hearts and minds of those around them. Average leaders inspire people to punch a time clock. Great leaders inspire industry and passion.

You can get people to work by using threats or by promising rewards. But if you want to create a band of brothers, you must inspire those who work with you and encourage them to give their all in a great cause.

Understand Your Priorities

If someone were to ask you who we are as a people, what would you say? Who are we as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?

The answer, I believe, is a simple one given to us by the Savior Himself. We are a people who love the Lord with all our hearts, souls, and minds. And we are a people who love our neighbor as ourselves. (See Matthew 22:37–39.)

This answer satisfies many of the questions asked about why we do what we do. Why does the Church ask so much of its members? Because we love the Lord, and we love our neighbor. Why do we do temple work? Missionary work? Welfare work? Because we love the Lord, and we love our neighbor.

These are the roots of all that we do. We do not send our missionaries out into the world to collect statistics. We send them into the world because we love our Heavenly Father, and we love our fellowmen.

That is who we are as a people. That is why we do what we do.

Settle into the Harness

No great cause ever succeeded without great effort.

One of the reasons the men of Easy Company volunteered for hazardous duty was that when they went into combat, they wanted to be next to someone they could trust—someone who wouldn’t do something foolish that could get them killed. They didn’t want to be next to someone who was lazy or who hadn’t paid attention during training or who wasn’t physically capable of what was required. These men had worked to the limits of human capacity.

From the days of Adam and Eve until now, our Heavenly Father has commanded that we work. Work is the foundation of success and creation. It is the secret of every successful enterprise.

Even so, there are some who go to great lengths to avoid work. In fact, a few people I have known have worked exceptionally hard to get out of work. This is something I have never understood. My father was a hard worker, and he taught me to be the same. Some of the most fulfilling moments of our lives are when we establish worthwhile goals and work to achieve them.

I know that some stop listening when they hear about goal setting. I have found it exhilarating. Each night, I think about my goals and what I want to accomplish the next day. And then I write on a small card the key things I can do to bring me closer to my goals.

Give your best effort. Settle into the harness and work with all your might. As you do so, you will find joy in your service.

“Fear Not”

Fear can make us run away from things—things like setting and achieving goals, developing relationships, or becoming the people we know we should become. Sometimes fear can even paralyze us to the point that we don’t even try.

Fear can be a thick fog that smothers our dreams. It can be a cage that restrains us from reaching our destiny. It can be a weight that restrains our every step.

Time after time, the men of Easy Company knew fear. A few days after D day, they were walking down a road toward



a French village when an enemy machine gun opened fire on them. In spite of their training, the men ducked for cover and froze. The company commander, Lieutenant Dick Winters, knew if they stayed there, his men would be cut down. So he stood in the middle of the road, away from cover, bullets whistling all around him, and ordered his

men to move out.

His men stared at him, not believing what they were seeing—but only for an instant. The courage of their commanding officer inspired them. Then they moved out. Because of Lieutenant Winters’s bravery, the men survived.

We may not be immune to being afraid, but we do not have to succumb to it. My friend Harold Brown once said, “It is better to face fear once than to live in its shadow.” I believe he is right.

We are surrounded and uplifted by the faith of our members and by the hand of heaven. If only we could see that, our fears would have far less influence over us. Move forward with faith, believing you will succeed! Don’t let fear of failure stop you from greatness. Let your example of courage inspire those around you to “fear not” (D&C 6:34).

Press on in Faith

Louis Pasteur, the famous microbiologist and chemist, once said, “Let me tell you the secret that has led me to my goal: my strength lies solely in my tenacity.”² May we understand the wisdom of his words.

Joseph Smith has always been a great example of perseverance to me. From the time he was a young man, he was persecuted, mocked, and reviled. And yet he pressed on. He watched as loved ones died. He was cursed and threatened by enemies. He was betrayed by friends. In spite of innumerable hardships, he pressed on.

One night a mob of 40 men stormed the Prophet’s house and pulled him and Sidney Rigdon outside. Emma, Joseph’s wife, screamed and pleaded with the men to stop, but they did not listen. The mob tried to force nitric acid down the Prophet’s throat. They stripped him and covered his body with tar and feathers.

He survived and managed to stumble back to his house, where a terrified Emma was waiting. It took his friends the

When we work together in a bond of brotherhood, when we love each other and are loyal and faithful to the great cause to which we have been called, the impossible becomes possible. It is our opportunity to foster this brotherhood.

entire night to scrape the tar from his skin.

The following day this heroic prophet rose and spoke to those who had assembled for the Sunday meeting. Among those present in the congregation were members of the mob who had assaulted him the night before.³

Joseph never looked back. From the day he was called of the Father, he pressed on. Through sickness, suffering, ridicule, and betrayal, he pressed on. He pressed on until the day he gave his life as a testimony of the restored gospel.

A Band of Brothers

Stephen Ambrose titled his history of Easy Company *Band of Brothers* because of the bond of fellowship these men felt for each other. This sort of brotherhood happens when people give their hearts, might, minds, and strength to a cause greater than themselves. When we work together in a bond of brotherhood, when we love each other and are loyal and faithful to the great cause to which we have been called, the impossible becomes possible.

It is our opportunity to foster this brotherhood. Teach those who serve with you that we

are not competing with one another. The men of Easy Company weren't great because they were trying to stand out as individuals. They were great because they worked together.

One of the men of Easy Company remembered a conversation he had with his grandson.

"Grandpa," the little boy asked, "were you a hero in the war?"

The old soldier thought about the question for a moment and then replied, "No, but I served in a company of heroes."⁴

Those who will work with you all have within them the potential to be heroes. As you inspire those who serve with you and give them a vision of the great cause, help them set their priorities, and encourage them to settle into the harness, overcome their fears, and press on in faith, you may create your own company of heroes. ■

From an address given at a seminar for new mission presidents on June 26, 2006.

NOTES

1. See *Band of Brothers* (1992).
2. Quoted in Kerry Gleeson, *The Personal Efficiency Program: How to Get Organized to Do More Work in Less Time*, 3rd ed. (2004), 125.
3. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2007), 227–29.
4. *Band of Brothers*, 316.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



JESUS CHRIST VISITS THE AMERICAS BY JOHN SCOTT

How can I make Easter more Christ centered for my family and me?

Since I joined the Church in 2005, Easter has become more meaningful to me. Watching films such as *The Lamb of God* (item no. 53586 VHS; 54586090 DVD) and *Finding Faith in Christ* (53668 VHS; 54041092 DVD) has helped me gain new insight into the Atonement of Jesus Christ. I am grateful to build on what I was taught as a child and to understand, for instance, the meaning of what happened during Passover. Celebrating

Easter helps me remember to

live in a way my Heavenly Father would want me to live and to remember what Jesus Christ did for the world—and for me.

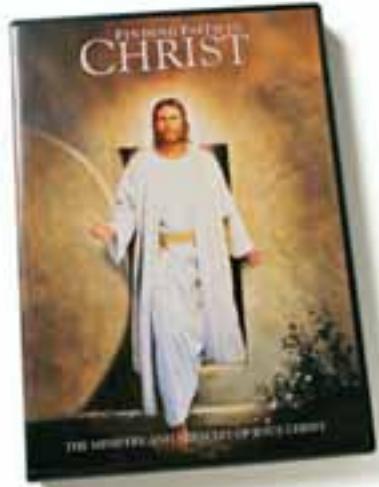
Tammy Jean Easton, California

When I was little, my mother asked my brothers and me which holiday was our favorite. We all chimed in, "Christmas!" When asked why, we responded that the gifts made the holiday special. She then asked which was our least favorite holiday. Mom was shocked when I responded, "Easter." I explained that to me, Easter was a grim holiday. I didn't understand why we celebrated the

day Jesus died. Mom sweetly explained that Easter was not a celebration of the Savior's death but of His Resurrection.

Because of His triumph over death, she said, we too would be resurrected. That day, for the first time, I saw the joy in Easter.

Today I still find joy in Easter. I spend the day with family and reflect



Watching films such as The Lamb of God and Finding Faith in Christ has helped me gain new insight into the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

on our Savior, His Resurrection, and the glory of the Atonement—all of which are true causes to celebrate. John 3:16 states: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This scripture reminds me that in this case, His gifts are what make the holiday special.

Amanda Jayne Dibb, California

Several years ago my husband and I decided we wanted our children to associate Easter with the Savior and His love for them and not necessarily with bunnies, chickens, or Easter eggs.

On Easter Sunday, during a special family home evening, we taught our children about Jesus Christ and His

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID STOKER

love for them. To aid in telling the story of Jesus's last few days, we used several beautiful pictures found in the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* (31106). As our children grew older, we discussed the miracle of the Atonement in greater detail. We looked forward to this special opportunity to share our testimonies with them.

We chose to reserve other activities for a celebration we called Spring Day, a weekend or Monday evening close to the beginning of spring. Our Spring Day celebration included a penny hunt, jelly beans, and sometimes gardening tools or seeds to use in the family garden.

Even though it took awhile for our children to get used to the idea of Easter being strictly a holy day, for me it was a tremendous relief to not be distracted by the secularization I

often saw in stores. After several years of our family's tradition, our children looked forward to our Spring Day celebration as a separate event. It helped them to observe Easter Sunday more fully as a time to reflect upon our Savior's love because the day was free from worldly distractions.

Marilyn Wood, Louisiana

During the week leading up to Easter, our family reads from the scriptures and the words of the apostles and prophets about what occurred on that day in Jesus's life.

We also focus on the rebirth of nature all around us. Where we live, the world is just coming to life with blossoms on the trees and bushes and blooming bulb plants all over our yard. This helps us remember that all things are made new by the Atonement and Resurrection.

During the week leading up to Easter, our family reads from the scriptures about what occurred on that day in Jesus's life.

On Sunday we attend church together. Sometimes we bring friends with us to enjoy the special spirit in our meetings. We enjoy the choir and speakers, and during the sacrament we focus on the great gift of the Atonement with reverence and gratitude. I am grateful that we have this opportunity to remember our Savior, not just at Easter time but every week.

Michele Richardson Harper, Virginia

With five children ranging in age from 3 to 11, we have tried to be creative in how we approach the Easter season. We want to instill in them a reverence for it, along with the excitement they already feel.

In our annual family Easter egg hunt, we include not only candy in the plastic eggs but also small pictures that we have clipped from the *Friend* and *Ensign* magazines. These pictures are mostly of the Savior, but we also include pictures of our prophet, temples, Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, and other things that will remind our children of the sacred nature of Easter. As they open their eggs to see what is inside, they take a minute to look at the picture. As parents, we ask them what is in their picture, what it represents, or why it is important.

There is also one special egg

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

hidden every year, and each child is eager to find it. This egg contains no candy. It is special because it is empty. After all of the eggs have been opened, we talk about the empty egg and compare it to the empty tomb that held Christ's body for three days. We emphasize the importance of the Resurrection and of what the empty tomb means for each of us today.

While our children still get excited about the commercial side of Easter, we hope that through our family Easter egg hunt they are also learning the sacred and special reason for the holiday.

Stephanie Nixon, Florida

When we remember that we are celebrating the reality of Christ's Resurrection, we can begin to incorporate new family traditions that reflect a meaningful religious observance of the holiday. One idea might include watching one of the many

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?



"Every day of our lives and in every season of the year (not just at Easter time), Jesus asks each of us, as he did following his triumphant entry into Jerusalem those many years ago, 'What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?' (Matt. 22:42).

"We declare that he is the Son of God, and the reality of that fact should stir our souls more frequently. I pray that it will, this Easter season and always."

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee," *Ensign*, May 1993, 64.

Church-produced videos focusing on the Crucifixion and Resurrection and then holding a family testimony

meeting to provide everyone the opportunity to express feelings of love and gratitude for the Savior and share what the Resurrection means specifically to them in their lives.

Regardless of the specific Easter traditions we establish, focusing on the Resurrection and the love that Christ has for each of us will help our Easter observances be more powerful and meaningful.

Jonathan H. Westover, Utah

When our oldest children were very young, we made the decision that bunnies and baskets weren't necessary to our family's Easter celebration. Instead, we wanted to focus on Jesus Christ, our Savior. To accomplish this, we began the tradition of having a sunrise devotional on Easter morning.

Our devotional consists of hymns, prayers, and scripture reading. In addition, we write or draw our thoughts on the

Every year during our Easter egg hunt, there is one special egg that is empty—it represents the empty tomb and Christ's Resurrection.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



PHOTOGRAPH BY JERRY GARN

Atonement, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we watch the sun come up, we reflect on that early Easter morning when the followers of Jesus Christ received the glorious news, “He is risen” (Mark 16:6).

It has been an inspiring way for our family to begin Easter. It focuses our thoughts on Jesus Christ, and we go to sacrament meeting spiritually prepared to continue our worship of Him.

We have been holding our devotionals for 18 years now, and we can see the fruits of it in our family. Our children look at Easter as a celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is the center of the day, not an afterthought.

Charlotte Goodman McEwan, Florida

During the Easter season our family displays pictures from the Gospel Art Picture Kit (34735) that portray scenes from Gethsemane, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. This gives us opportunities to talk to our children about these subjects and keeps the true meaning of Easter in the forefront of our minds.

Another tradition, one we just started, also makes Easter more meaningful. For Easter dinner, we eat fish and honeycomb. Before eating, we read Luke 24:38–44, which describes what Jesus said and did after He was resurrected. We then sing the song “Did Jesus Really Live Again?” (*Children’s Songbook*, 64):

Our family holds a sunrise devotional on Easter morning. As we watch the sun come up, our thoughts focus on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

*Did Jesus really live again?
Yes, when the third day came,
He wakened and he left the tomb;
He called Mary’s name.*

*Did Jesus come to those he loved?
Yes, people touched his feet,
And of the fish and honeycomb
He did truly eat.*

*And there were nail-prints in his hands
And a spear wound in his side.
Did Jesus really live again
After he had died?
Oh yes! And so shall I!
Verena Poole, Oregon ■*

SHARE YOUR IDEAS

An upcoming Q&A feature will focus on the following question:

Sometimes I feel that ward members are a bit cliquish. I want to feel that I belong to the ward family, but how can I have courage to keep reaching out when I feel like I might never fit in?

If you’d like to contribute your ideas and experiences, please label them “Ward Unity” and follow the submission guidelines under “Do You Have a Story to Tell?” in the contents pages at the beginning of the magazine. Please limit responses to 500 words and submit them by March 21.

JOSEPH & EMMA'S FAMILY

Joseph Smith Jr. was born on December 23, 1805, in Sharon, Vermont.

Emma Hale was born on July 10, 1804, in Harmony, Pennsylvania. They married January 18, 1827, in South Bainbridge, New York. They were the parents of 11 children, listed here in order of birth. Joseph was martyred on June 27, 1844, in Carthage, Illinois. Emma died on April 30, 1879, in Nauvoo, Illinois.

Alvin Smith was born and died on June 15, 1828, in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

Twins **Thadeus** and **Louisa Smith** were born and died on April 30, 1831, in Kirtland, Ohio.

Adopted twins **Joseph** and **Julia Murdock** were born to John and Julia Murdock, on May 1, 1831, in Kirtland, Ohio. When mother Julia



died in childbirth, John Murdock allowed friends Joseph and Emma Smith to adopt the twins.

Joseph Murdock Smith, adopted son, died on March 30, 1832, in Hiram, Ohio, from exposure caused when a mob attacked the Prophet.

LEFT: ILLUSTRATION OF JOSEPH AND EMMA BY PAUL MANN.
ABOVE: A FATHER'S GIFT, BY LILY LEMON SWINLER,
FORMATION ARTS,
MAY NOT BE COPIED



Julia Murdock Smith,
adopted daughter, married
Elisah Dixon in 1848 in
Nauvoo, Illinois. They had no
children. After Elisah died in
1850 in Galveston, Texas, Julia
married John J. Middleton

in 1852 in Nauvoo, Illinois.
He died about 1869 in St.
Louis, Missouri. They had
no children. Julia died on
September 10, 1880, in
Nauvoo, Illinois, at the age
of 49. Julia has no known
descendants.*



Joseph Smith III was born
on November 6, 1832, in
Kirtland, Ohio. He married
Emmeline Griswold on
October 22, 1856, in Nauvoo,
Illinois. They had five chil-
dren. After Emmeline's death
on March 25, 1869, in Plano,
Illinois, he married Bertha
Madison on November 12,
1869, in Sandwich, Illinois.
They had nine children. After
Bertha's death on October 19,
1896, in Lamoni, Iowa, he
married Ada Rachel Clark
on January 12, 1898, in
Waldemar, Dufferin, Ontario,
Canada. They had three
children. Joseph III died
December 10, 1914, in
Independence, Missouri, at
the age of 82. He has 352
known descendants.*



**Frederick Granger Williams Smith**

Smith was born on June 20, 1836, in Kirtland, Ohio. He married Anna Marie Jones on September 13, 1857, in Steubenville, Ohio. They had one child. Frederick died April 13, 1862, in Nauvoo, Illinois, at the age of 25. He has no known living descendants.*

**Don Carlos Smith**

was born on June 13, 1840, in Nauvoo, Illinois. He died on August 15, 1841, in Nauvoo, Illinois.

(Scene of Emma with baby from the film *Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration*)

Thomas Smith was born and died on February 6, 1842, in Nauvoo, Illinois.



Alexander Hale Smith was born on June 2, 1838, in Far West, Missouri. He married Elizabeth Agnes Kendall on May 23, 1861, in Nauvoo, Illinois. They had nine children. He died August 12, 1909, in Nauvoo, Illinois, at the age of 71. He has 1,569 known descendants.*

David Hyrum Smith was born on November 17, 1844, in Nauvoo, Illinois. He married Clara Charlotte Hartshorn on May 10, 1870, in Sandwich, Illinois. They had one child. David died August 29, 1904, in Elgin, Illinois, at the age of 59. He has 27 known descendants.* ■

*Descendants identified as of November 19, 2007. Source: Michael Kennedy, president of the Joseph Smith Jr. Family Organization, a part of the Joseph Smith Sr.–Lucy Mack Smith Foundation.





Starting from Scratch

BY CONSTANCE PALMER LEWIS

No one in my family had done any family history. How should I begin?

I am a first-generation member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My younger sister Betsy and I were baptized years ago, when I was 18. Before my baptism our family had never discussed our family's history. Three of our grandparents had died before I was born, and our one living grandmother had never spoken much about her family.

After a sacrament meeting talk about family history, I decided to record what I knew about my family. At that point I was just following instructions. I thought only people who wanted to prove they had distinguished ancestors would research their family history.

I Began by Asking My Parents

When I asked my mom about her family, she immediately referred me to her mother. My grandmother—we called her Gran—was born in Chicago in 1893. Both of her parents had come from Poland, but Gran had no interest in what she called “the old country,” and she didn’t even know her grandparents’ names. Her husband had been an immigrant, and Gran could tell me nothing about his family.

When I spoke with my dad, I had more success. He knew the full names of each of his grandparents and a little bit about each of their families. He said that one of his grandmothers “had Indian blood,” and one of his great-grandfathers had fought in the Civil War. One of his ancestors long ago had been murdered during an insurrection in Northern Ireland. One branch of Dad’s family, the Whites, held annual family reunions with several hundred



PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND; FAMILY PHOTOS AND ARTIFACTS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR'S FAMILY

people attending. Dad gave me a booklet prepared by the White family reunion committee that listed living descendants of I. K. White, and I found my name listed in it! The booklet also included a brief history of the White family and some related families.

I obtained some forms to record my family history, and I filled out a family group record for my own family. I knew birth dates for each of my parents and for my brothers and sisters, although I had to ask my dad where in Iowa he was born. A “pedigree chart” sounded to me like something for purebred dogs; it hadn’t occurred to me that it could be used for people. As I filled out my own family tree on the pedigree chart, lots of blank spaces remained. I knew my grandparents’ names, with varying amounts of information for each of them. I even had names for five of my great-grandparents and two great-great-grandparents. But there was so much I didn’t know.

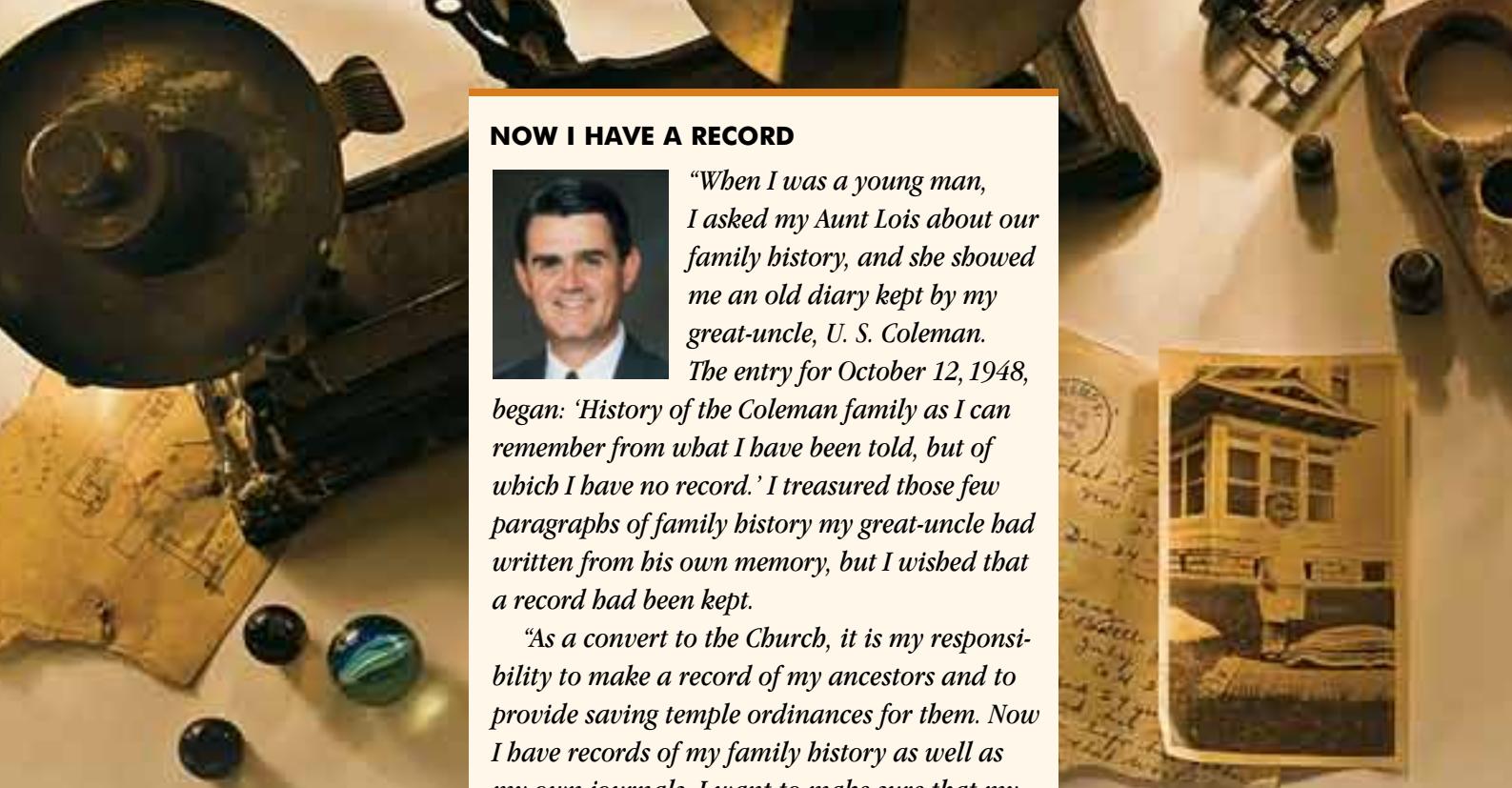
I Wanted to Learn More

I felt the responsibility to provide temple ordinances for these ancestors, so I began doing some research.

First, I sent for death certificates and marriage certificates for each of my deceased grandparents. Each of the certificates included a birth date, and three of them included parents’ names. I had extended my knowledge by a generation! I was disappointed that my maternal grandfather’s birthplace was listed only as “Poland,” but at least it was a start.

I spent a couple of hours every Sunday working on family history. This was 30 years ago, before computers made finding family history information much easier. I filled out forms by hand and began corresponding with relatives, some of whom I had never met. It was fun receiving letters and documents with new information. I felt like a detective.

I encouraged my dad to tell me about his parents. At first he said he couldn’t remember much about his



NOW I HAVE A RECORD



"When I was a young man, I asked my Aunt Lois about our family history, and she showed me an old diary kept by my great-uncle, U. S. Coleman.

The entry for October 12, 1948, began: 'History of the Coleman family as I can remember from what I have been told, but of which I have no record.' I treasured those few paragraphs of family history my great-uncle had written from his own memory, but I wished that a record had been kept.

"As a convert to the Church, it is my responsibility to make a record of my ancestors and to provide saving temple ordinances for them. Now I have records of my family history as well as my own journals. I want to make sure that my children and grandchildren will have a record of their ancestors."

Elder Gary J. Coleman of the Seventy, Keynote Address, Brigham Young University Family History and Genealogy Conference, July 31, 2007.

mother, who had died when he was 12. But as he wrote down what he could remember, more memories came to him. The more he wrote, the more he could remember. As Dad told me about his parents, I realized that, unlike my dad, I was very much like them. I felt a sense of roots and belonging that I hadn't experienced before.

I organized what I learned by recording it on family group sheets, and each piece of information I found made me curious to know more. How could I find out where in Poland my grandfather was born? If my great-grandfather was a minister, where was his church? My great-grandmother lived in Illinois and was buried in Iowa. Why didn't either of those states have a record of her death?

The teacher of my Sunday School family history class was making a trip to Salt Lake City, and she offered to look up ancestors for us. Although we can find this information easily online at FamilySearch.org now, at that time it required a personal visit to the Family History Library. I was surprised when she returned with several family group records for my Kendall ancestors, who were from New England. I had found their names in my dad's family reunion booklet. Some of their temple ordinances had been performed, and I rejoiced that I had cousins, albeit distant cousins, who were members of the Church.



I found several generations of the Kendall family recorded in books at the university library, and I carefully prepared many new family

group records. Later I found out that some of the information in the family reunion booklet was in error. I had spent hours learning about someone else's family! As a result, I learned to research only one generation at a time, verifying as I proceeded.

The Schwanz Family

My elderly Aunt Harriet had some interest in family history. Her father was Herman Schwanz, son of Lewis Schwanz, who had fought in the American Civil War. I decided to learn more about Lewis and his family.

Aunt Harriet said that Lewis and his wife, Hannah, had come to the United States from Germany, and she showed me some old tintype photographs of them. When I checked passenger lists, I learned that Lewis was his American name; in Germany he had been Carl Ludwig Schwanz.

I sent for his military records. His enlistment record told me that he was five feet six inches tall, with dark hair and blue eyes, and it even included his own signature. He had enlisted in August 1862 in the Iowa 29th Infantry unit, but his company did not begin active duty until December. Each month's muster roll described where he had served.

GETTING STARTED

Are you ready to learn about your own family history? While each person's situation is unique, here are some guidelines that everyone can follow:

- A family history consultant in your ward can help you get started. Arrange to have him or her visit you to help you organize your information and determine what to do next.
- Get to know older family members. Ask them about their parents and grandparents.
- Use the FamilySearch.org Web site. It is frequently updated with information that will make it easier than ever to identify your ancestors. It can also tell you whether your ancestor has received temple ordinances.
- Your family history consultant can help you submit names of your deceased family members for temple ordinances.



In July 1863, just seven months after he began active duty, Lewis Schwanz was killed at the Battle of Helena.

Aunt Harriet had his son Herman's original christening certificate from 1859. She told me that Lewis and Hannah had two other children, Mary Louise, born in 1860, and a boy who died in infancy. Searching cemetery records told me more about this little family.

On November 12, 1862, Lewis's wife, Hannah, gave birth to a baby boy, George W. Schwanz. I wonder if the "W" was for Washington—I like to think it was, because that would tell me that Lewis loved his new country. Shortly after George's birth, Hannah died, leaving Lewis with three young children. A few weeks later, when Lewis was called to active duty, he left his children with his brother, Frederick, who also had immigrated to Iowa. The day before Christmas, baby George died. When Lewis was killed the following summer, only little Herman and Mary Louise remained.

By putting small pieces of their story together from several different sources, I learned to love this family. I ached for this young father who lost his wife and then had to leave his children to fight for his newly adopted country. I wanted to comfort those little children who were orphaned at such a young age.

For me, this was what Malachi had prophesied—that the prophet Elijah would come to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers (see Malachi 4:5–6).



Loving My Ancestors

As I become better acquainted with my ancestors, I love them more.

I see myself as part of an eternal family that includes not only my parents and my children but generations of grandparents and grandchildren. My husband and I have had the sacred experience of going to the temple to perform saving ordinances on behalf of many of my ancestors, sealing us together as an eternal family.

During my mortal life, I have had the privilege of knowing only a few of these family members. By doing my family history, I become acquainted with many more of them.

Family History Today

Doing family history is easier now than it was when I began in the 1970s. The microfilm collection of the Church has more than doubled in size and now includes more than 2.5 million rolls of film. It is available through the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and at more than 4,500 family history centers throughout the world. Microfiche, computers, and the Internet have made it much easier to find information about our ancestors. Family history consultants in each ward are there to help those who are starting their family history.

With the resources available in the 1970s, it took me years to learn about my family history. Today, if you are starting from scratch with your family history, you already have a head start. ■

HELPING CHILDREN COPE

WITH
**TRAUMATIC
SITUATIONS**

BY JANELE WILLIAMS

A family crisis took its toll on my husband and me. What I didn't expect was for it to affect our toddler.

Dealing with a traumatic situation—whether it's an illness, the loss of a loved one, a move, a divorce, a natural disaster, or some other distressing experience—can be complicated. The effects of these circumstances can ripple and sometimes crash through lives in unforeseen ways. Sometimes they can even affect individuals you wouldn't expect to feel the consequences.





Several years ago our newborn daughter was transported by emergency medical helicopter to a children's hospital for open-heart surgery. Our son bounced among the homes of his grandparents, aunts, and uncles and only occasionally saw my husband and me at night.

Doctors gave us no assurances that our little girl would live, so everyone around our son was distraught. Only two years old, our son had never seen that kind of sorrow before. He reacted with bewilderment and anger. He began hitting me when he saw me. We explained things as best we could, and that would calm him momentarily. But he kicked and screamed each time I left for the hospital.

After we brought our daughter home (a month after her birth), our son's behavior actually worsened. He became demanding and forceful, changing what he wanted after he got his way. He was out of control. This behavior continued for months.

At first, I thought he needed more structure or firmer discipline. But neither helped much. I prayed for guidance, and through the Spirit I learned that my son needed extra love and compassion. I learned that his behavior was a reaction to the situation he was in, a situation he did not create and to which he did not know how to react. I began to respond to his belligerence by simply saying, "I love you" and walking away. When he threw a temper tantrum, I held him tenderly and told him I loved him and that Heavenly Father loved him and that we were sad to see him behave in such an unruly way. Then I told him all the things he did that were right. In doing so, I was teaching him appropriate ways to act and appropriate words to use when he was feeling angry, lonely, or frustrated. Most important, I continued to reassure him that he was loved. After a month, his outbursts became less frequent and less aggressive.

Many people think that when the urgency of a situation has passed (such as when our daughter was released from the hospital), the problems are over and life returns to normal. But it can take a long time to find a new "normal." Even though I noticed the effects of showing my son extra



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND; INSET: COURTESY OF THE WILLIAMS FAMILY

When our son's negative behavior escalated, I felt prompted to show him extra love and compassion.

love and compassion after a few weeks, it took nearly two years before my behavior and my son's behavior returned to normal. (Of course, this length of time can vary from family to family and person to person.) There were many days when I sat on the floor holding both of my crying children while I was crying too. I was frequently frustrated and exhausted.

Here are a few tips that helped our family cope:

- Remaining constant in personal and family scripture study and prayer. The Spirit guided and comforted our family in a way nothing else could.
- Being patient. We were dealing with a difficult situation. I needed to be patient with my children, my husband, and myself. I also learned to let go of unimportant things.
- Explaining what is happening to children using simple language. I shared with my son my feelings and how I



Author Janele Williams with her then-toddler son and newborn daughter.

responded to and acted on those feelings. In other situations, especially with older children, it might be appropriate to encourage them to talk about their thoughts and feelings with a parent or other trusted adult.

- Focusing on encouraging good behavior rather than constantly discouraging bad behavior. (At the same time, I could not always ignore bad behavior and looked for a balance between justice and mercy.)
- Reaffirming love often. Telling my son that I appreciated him and the things he was doing right helped tremendously.

Because these ideas are built “on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, [and] compassion,”¹ they were effective for us. Our family relationships became stronger, even through a difficult time. ■

NOTE

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.



ABOUT TRAUMA

BY CLAIGH H. JENSEN
LDS FAMILY SERVICES

People may experience circumstances so distressing that normal coping skills are not adequate. Such incidents might include abandonment, abuse, war, environmental disaster, an untimely death, severe illness, and many others. Research suggests that:

- An estimated 70 percent of adults in the United States have experienced a traumatic event at least once in their lives, and up to 20 percent of these people later develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).¹

An estimated 5 percent of Americans—more than 13 million people—have PTSD at any given time.²

While no one is excluded from the trials and sufferings of this life, people may believe if they are strong enough or faithful enough, they should be able to move on with their lives after a traumatic event. Most people who experience trauma are able to return to leading a normal life, but they typically go through an adjustment period first.

Symptoms of Trauma

The stress caused by trauma can affect all aspects of a person's life, including mental, emotional, and physical well-being.³ It is important to tell your doctor of any traumatic events you or your loved ones may have experienced. The following may be symptoms of trauma:⁴

Mental/Emotional

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Flashbacks
- Nightmares or frightening thoughts, especially during exposure to events or objects reminiscent of the trauma
- Emotional numbness
- Sleep disturbances
- Irritability or outbursts of anger
- Intense guilt
- Hypervigilance—being too watchful or unnecessarily fearful
- Clinginess
- Withdrawal
- Avoidance of reminders of the ordeal

Physical

- Headaches
- Gastrointestinal distress
- Immune system problems
- Dizziness
- Chest pain
- Discomfort in other parts of the body

Helps

Family members are often the first to notice these indicators. Here are some ways they can help:

Spend extra time together. Gathering as a family away from the demands of work, school, and other responsibilities communicates love, commitment, and priority. Simple things such as smiles and hugs give assurance and are helpful when breaking through a sense of isolation.

Strengthen and renew spiritual foundations.

Encourage personal prayer, and gather in family prayer often. Priesthood blessings can also be tremendously beneficial; during high stress times it is often easier to "hear" than to "feel" the word of the Lord. Keep a journal. Listen to music that invites the Spirit. Attend church and the temple.

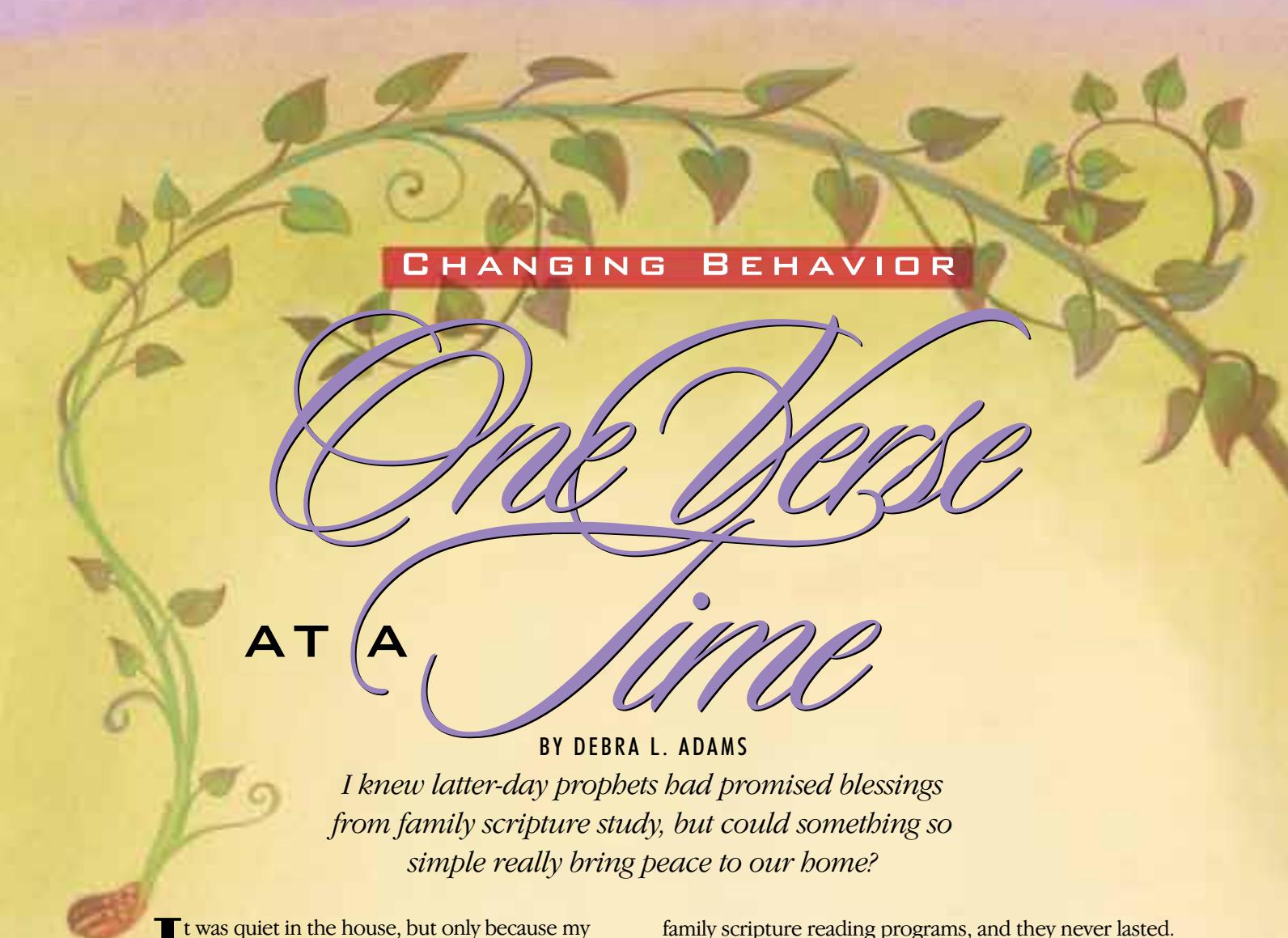
Reframe the experience. In other words, approach the situation from a different angle and gain a new perspective (see Isaiah 61:1–3; D&C 98:1–3).

Be patient and gentle. Encourage, but do not rush, the healing process.

Use good judgment when seeking professional help. LDS Family Services and other professional resources may help you or your loved one successfully work through the experience to a higher level of functioning. Turning the traumatic experience into a growth experience could be a primary goal of professional intervention. ■

NOTES

- Posttraumatic stress disorder is a professional diagnosis identifying both physical and emotional symptoms that occur in response to a traumatic event.
- See PTSD Alliance, "Hope for Recovery: Understanding Posttraumatic Stress Disorder" (2001) 5, available at www.sidran.org/pdf/Hope_for_Recovery.pdf. The PTSD Alliance is made up of the Sidran Institute, the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, the Anxiety Disorders Association of America, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.
- See PTSD Alliance, "Hope for Recovery," 5.
- See National Institute of Mental Health, "Reliving Trauma, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," Oct. 2001, 1 (NIH publication no. 01-4597), available at www.anxietyzone.com/NIMHreliving.pdf.



CHANGING BEHAVIOR

One Peace At a Time

BY DEBRA L. ADAMS

I knew latter-day prophets had promised blessings from family scripture study, but could something so simple really bring peace to our home?

It was quiet in the house, but only because my three daughters were asleep. My mind kept replaying the events of the day—temper tantrums, quarreling, yelling, teasing, crying. Unfortunately, this behavior was not unusual, and I was as much a part of the problem as my children were. I felt like I was losing control of my family.

I attributed some of the problems to our adjusting to life without my husband, who had died from cancer six months earlier. However, I knew we could not use this as an excuse for the atmosphere in our home. We had to continue to progress so that we would be able to enjoy the blessings of being an eternal family. But what could we do? Changing our attitudes and behaviors seemed an impossible task.

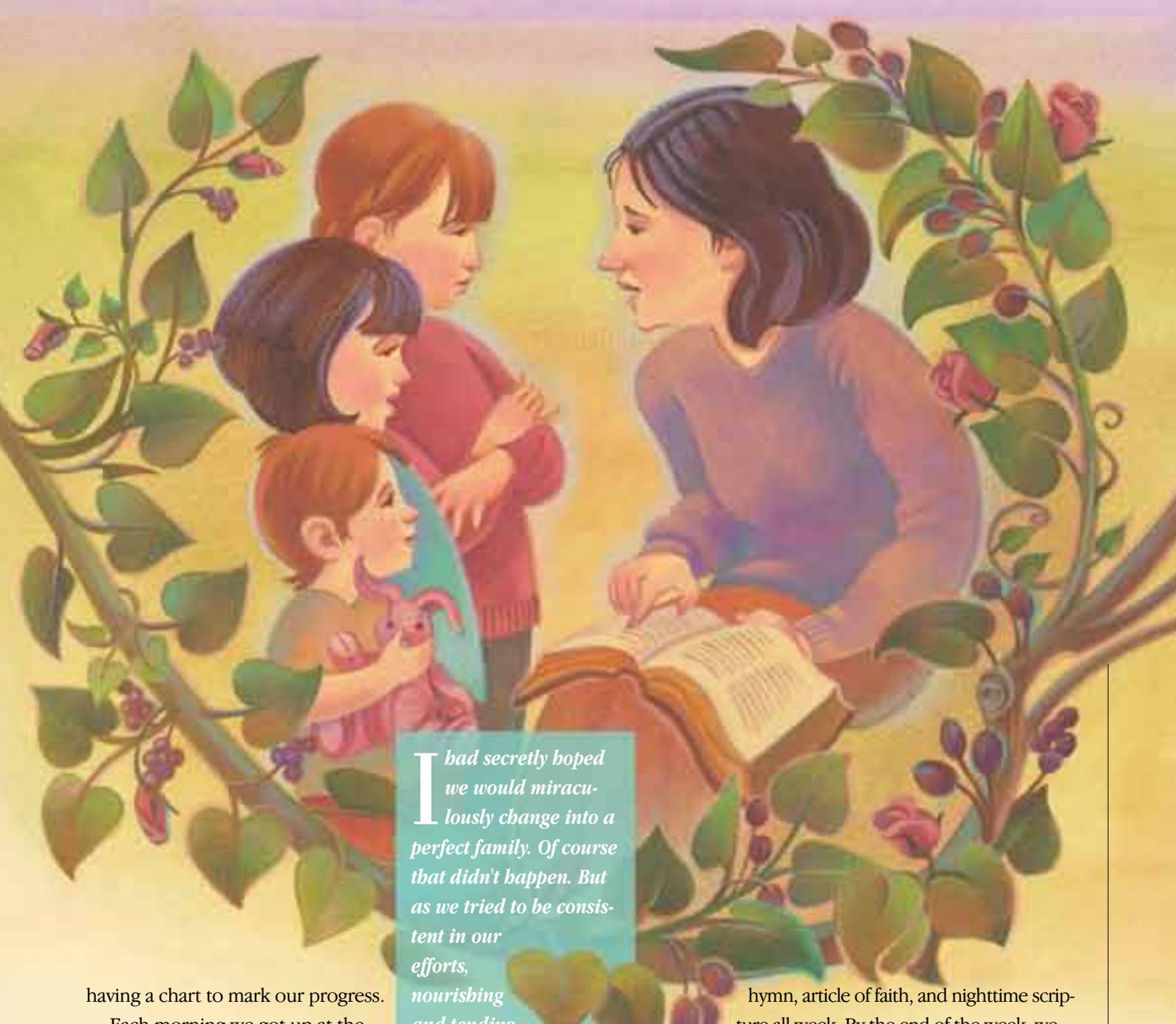
As I tried to formulate a plan, I remembered the words of our latter-day prophets. They had promised blessings from family scripture study. Though I felt this was good advice, I was not convinced that it was an answer to my prayers. How could something so simple help our situation? Besides, my husband and I had previously attempted

family scripture reading programs, and they never lasted.

More unpleasant days passed, and I grew increasingly discouraged and desperately wanted change for my daughters and me. As I pondered the idea of scripture study, I recalled that the prophet Alma had once challenged the people he was teaching to “an experiment upon [his] words” (Alma 32:27). I realized I had nothing to lose by accepting this challenge and decided that I would again try to implement family scripture study.

Over the next several days, I thought about what might work for us. I wanted something that would involve every member of our family from the oldest child, who was six years old, to the youngest, who was not quite two. I wanted something we could be successful at doing. After praying for help and guidance, I determined that our study would combine music, the Articles of Faith, scriptures, and prayer.

I presented the plan at our next family home evening. I tried to be enthusiastic so my daughters would want to participate. I enlisted their help in making sure we followed our routines. They were particularly excited about



having a chart to mark our progress.

Each morning we got up at the same time so that we could have a morning devotional before any other activities—before eating breakfast or watching television programs or getting ready for school.

This prevented distraction. We started by singing a hymn. Next we recited one of the Articles of Faith. Then I read a few verses from the Book of Mormon. We closed our morning routine by having family prayer. Every evening after family prayer, I helped the girls each read or recite a preselected scripture before they said personal prayers.

Because my daughters were young and either lacked reading skills or were just developing them, we used the same

I had secretly hoped we would miraculously change into a perfect family. Of course that didn't happen. But as we tried to be consistent in our efforts, nourishing and tending the experiment like a newly planted seed, our scripture-study habit developed.

hymn, article of faith, and nighttime scripture all week. By the end of the week, we were familiar with the melody and the words of the hymn and, in many cases, had memorized the words of the article of faith and the scripture verse.

Admittedly, at first I felt disappointed by what I perceived as a lack of effectiveness of our plan. I had secretly hoped that, as a result of our study, we would miraculously change into a perfect family. Of course, that didn't happen. It was discouraging to realize that, even after studying together for several weeks, many of our challenges still existed.

Sometimes I was tempted to skip all or part of the routine. Then I would remember Alma's counsel to nourish and tend the experiment like a newly planted seed (see Alma 32:28–43). I knew I had to be consistent in my efforts.



When one of the girls did not want to participate, I would insist that everyone be present at the family gathering. Little by little, week by week, a new scripture-study habit developed. And gradually our family began to change.

Several months after we began regular scripture study, I noticed that my children got excited when we sang a song at church that we had practiced. (Occasionally, I checked with the music director so that I could choose a hymn that our congregation would be singing in an upcoming sacrament meeting.) My children's interest in the scriptures also grew. I was able to increase the number of verses we read aloud in the morning. The charts became less important as we developed our habit, and before long, we realized we no longer needed them to motivate us. Sometimes, as the girls played, I'd overhear snatches of hymns and the Articles of Faith. Though they still quarreled and teased each other, these incidents became less frequent. I also found that I was

Little by little, a new habit developed, and gradually our family began to change. Our family continues to experience life's usual challenges, but family scripture study helps us want to do better each day.

PUT IT TO THE TEST



“Never let a day go by without holding family prayer and family scripture study. Put this, the Lord’s program, to the test; and see if it does not bless your home with greater peace, hope, love, and faith.”

“I promise you that daily family prayer and scripture study will build within the walls of your home a security and bonding that will enrich your lives and prepare your families to meet the challenges of today and the eternities to come.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “*Back to Gospel Basics*,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 92.

responding better to the conflicts that did arise.

These positive experiences encouraged me to continue. As my girls learned to read, we took turns reading the scripture verses each morning. We continued this same routine for several years until early-morning seminary and work were added to our family's life. Then we streamlined the morning routine to focus on scripture reading and family prayer. The evening routine still included prayers, but reciting the scripture verse was replaced with personal scripture study.

Our family continues to experience the usual challenges of life. Family scripture study reminds us of who we are eternally and helps us want to do better each day. The best benefit to our scripture study program, however, has been that my own testimony has grown and become stronger because I was willing to experiment on the words of a prophet and found them to be true. ■

Beetle Traps and Scripture Study

BY JANA TROSETH

One day while I was mowing the lawn, I admired the flowering shrubs and trees that were in full bloom in my yard. The thought occurred to me that the plants would not be nearly as beautiful had I not set out the Japanese beetle traps last year. In guarding my plants from leaf-munching menaces, I had positioned several traps to lure beetles into bags. I sometimes had to empty the overflowing bags two or three times a day and felt that I was guarding my beautiful plants from an evil threat. Had I not set out the traps, I thought, my plants would not be as beautiful. In fact, I might have lost some plants to those pesky insects.

As I pondered the traps, I thought of how my scripture study had lagged since I completed a reading of the Book of Mormon the previous year. Once I finished, I had not set another goal to fill its place. I was no longer getting up early for personal scripture study. I

Watching my traps overflowing with beetles reminded me of something I had been neglecting.

realized that over the past few months, my life had lost some of its direction and focus. Challenges seemed harder to tackle, my children seemed more needy, and I was always in a state of anxiety.

I realized that by not reading my scriptures daily, I was not setting out my traps to protect my spirituality from the adversary's attacks. I decided to change my habits. As soon as I picked up the scriptures again and started reading on a regular schedule, I began to experience positive changes in my life. My family noticed them too. I found myself starting the day calmly and finishing it in the same manner. I found the peace I had lost.

Just as Japanese beetle traps are reliable in protecting plants from the destructive elements of life, daily scripture study protects me from the adversary and gives me the direction I need to stay on the strait and narrow path. ■

Tempering Our Tempers

May we rise up and be men and women of God, mastering our tempers so that peace and love may abound in our homes.

BY DOUGLAS E. BRINLEY

Professor of Church History and Doctrine,
Brigham Young University

As I have taught marriage and family courses and read papers in which students recount their relationships with their parents, it has become obvious over the years that anger, if uncontrolled, can be a great destroyer of marriage and family relationships. The sin of anger (see Joseph Smith Translation, Ephesians 4:26) not only harms relationships but also corrodes character.

I can think of no positive context for displaying anger, though certainly righteous indignation and the righting of wrongs can be justified. The scriptures indicate that *undisciplined* anger is always cancerous and destructive. It is one of Satan's primary tools for destroying marriages and family relations.

The Lord has referred to Satan as "the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another" (3 Nephi 11:29). The Savior declared to the Nephites, "Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things *should be done away*" (3 Nephi 11:30; emphasis added).

Replacing Anger with Encouragement

One class assignment I give to my students is to write a paper on their family background. Specifically, I ask them to describe their parents' strengths, weaknesses, and marriage. Perhaps the most common negative dimension of family life mentioned in student papers is the father's temper, though bad tempers aren't restricted to fathers. Even when fathers are active in Church callings, read scriptures with the family, and give service to others, some still struggle to control their anger.

Of course children see fathers (and mothers) as more temperamental because of the need for parents to discipline children, and few youngsters, at the time, thank their parents for correction. But college-age students look back with more objectivity at their home life and appraise both the good and the bad. Many admit that they wish their parents had been stricter with them! However, many carry scars from events that happened at an early age.

One young woman recalled that her father often yelled, threatened, and severely spanked his children. If one of the children did something wrong during the day, all of them would hide when their father returned from work.

Contrast this with the approach taken by the father of President Gordon B. Hinckley: "I will be forever grateful for a father who never laid a hand in anger upon his children," said President Hinckley. "Somehow he had the wonderful talent to let them know what was expected of them and to give them encouragement in achieving it."¹

Commenting on the lasting impact fathers have on their children, President Hinckley added: "I am persuaded that



Fathers have immense influence on their children. How blessed is the son or daughter who has a father who cares, teaches, chastens with love, and influences his children to become better people.



The Lord and the prophets tell us that we already know how to control anger. The problem of anger results from not understanding and applying the doctrines of the gospel.

violent fathers produce violent sons. I am satisfied that such punishment in most instances does more damage than good. Children don't need beating. They need love and encouragement. They need fathers to whom they can look with respect rather than fear. Above all, they need example.”²

Regarding fathers who set aside self-discipline and become abusive when they lose their tempers, President Hinckley warned: “No man who engages in such evil and unbecoming behavior is worthy of the priesthood of God. No man who so conducts himself is worthy of the privileges of the house of the Lord. I regret that there are some men undeserving of the love of their wives and children. There are children who fear their fathers, and wives who fear their husbands.”³

President Hinckley has called such fathers to repentance. “Discipline yourselves. Master your temper,” he said. “Most of the things that make you angry are of very small consequence. And what a terrible price you are paying for your anger. Ask the Lord to forgive you. Ask your wife to forgive you. Apologize to your children.”⁴

The Power of a Righteous Example

Now consider the kind of exemplary behavior that prompted one young man to write the following about his father:

“I have never ever heard my father curse. To me this is a great source of strength because my father is my greatest living example

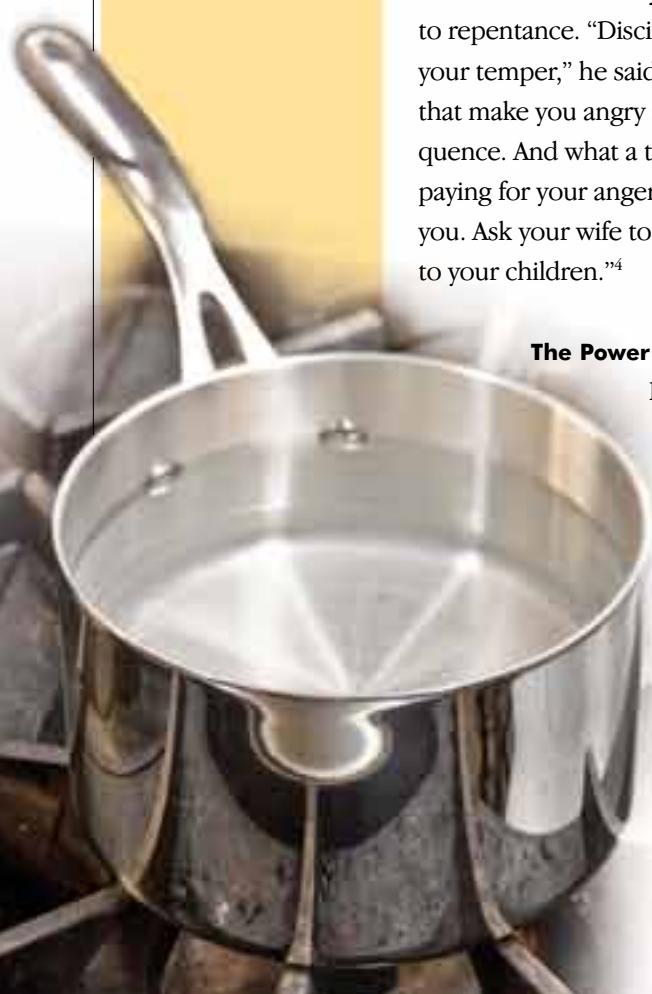
of how to live a good Latter-day Saint life. Having had such a good example to follow makes all the little decisions in life all that much easier. When I catch myself doing things that I saw my father do, I am even more thankful for a righteous father who lived the gospel of Jesus Christ every single day. I will forever be in the debt of my dad for showing me the way that Christ would have lived.”

Fathers have immense influence on their children. How blessed is the son or daughter who has a father who cares, teaches, chastens with love, and influences his children to become better people, better husbands or wives, better fathers or mothers. Temper does not engender feelings of love and trust in the hearts of the recipients of anger. Instead, it generates heartache and memories of an unpleasant childhood that are too often passed on to the next generation.

Mastery of Temper

So how does someone who struggles with anger learn self-discipline? The world would try to help people conquer their tempers by setting up some kind of behavior modification program that might take years and yet produce only marginal results. But the Lord and the prophets tell us that we already know how to control anger. The problem of anger results from not understanding and applying the doctrines of the gospel. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said: “True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior. The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior.”⁵

The doctrine of repentance specifically applies to the sin of anger; it can bring the





healing power of the Atonement

into our lives. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: "You can change anything you want to change and you can do it very fast. That's another Satanic sucker-punch—that it takes years and years and eons of eternity to repent. It takes exactly as long to repent as it takes you to say 'I'll change'—and mean it. Of course there will be problems to work out and restitutions to make. You may well spend—indeed you had better spend—the rest of your life proving your repentance by its permanence. But change, growth, renewal, repentance can come for you as instantaneously as it did for Alma and the Sons of Mosiah."⁶

Speaking about controlling anger, President Hinckley has taught: "Who can calculate the wounds inflicted, their depth and pain, by harsh and mean words spoken in anger? How pitiful a sight is a man who is strong in many ways but who loses all control of himself when some little thing, usually of no significant consequence, disturbs his equanimity. In every marriage there are, of course, occasional differences. But I find no justification for tempers that explode on the slightest provocation. . . .

"A violent temper is such a terrible, corrosive thing. And the tragedy is that it accomplishes no good; it only feeds evil with resentment and rebellion and pain. To any man or boy within the sound of my voice who has trouble controlling his tongue, may I suggest that you plead with the Lord for the strength to overcome your weakness, that you apologize to those you have offended, and that you marshal within yourselves the power to discipline your tongue."⁷

Young people are perceptive and greatly affected by their parents' example. May we rise up and be men and women of God, mastering our tempers so that peace and love may abound in our homes. The most important aspect of parenting is for a couple to have a good marriage and to set an example of love and patience for their children. The mastery of temper will pay dividends now and in the years ahead as children make homes and families of their own. ■

NOTES

1. "Save the Children," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 53.
2. *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 53.
3. "Women of the Church," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 68.
4. *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 68.
5. "Do Not Fear," *Liabona and Ensign*, May 2004, 79.
6. "For Times of Trouble," *New Era*, Oct. 1980, 11–12; see *Tambuli*, Jan. 1982, 9.
7. "Our Solemn Responsibilities," *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 50–51.



A Battle of

BY DALE SMITH

As the scriptures fell open and I read their words, I knew what I needed to do.

My decision to quit a good job as an engineer to start my own company selling computer test equipment had not come easily. Although I had some success designing and selling simple analyzers to friends in the data-storage industry, it was mostly a hobby providing some extra spending money.

It took more than a year of hard work and pinching pennies before the first product was done, but I finally had fulfilled my dream. The orders began to come in, and our company grew. We expanded with new products, hired more engineers, and moved to successively larger buildings at the end of each lease. The initial risk had turned into a great reward and an accomplishment I was proud of.

The Challenge

Then, unexpectedly, a delivery came that changed our lives. My family had just arrived in Alaska for a two-week

vacation when a competitor served us with a lawsuit for patent infringement. It demanded that we immediately remove a significant feature from our primary product line or risk paying a fine on every unit shipped. I hopped on an early flight home and began working with attorneys in order to prove that the patent claims were too broad and shouldn't be interpreted to cover our product line.

Negotiations with the competitor were frustrating and time-consuming. Our legal expenses were rising, employee morale was sinking, and every attempt to reach a fair settlement had failed. As the timeline for going to court kept extending, it became apparent that we couldn't afford to see the lawsuit to completion before going bankrupt.

I knew I needed inspiration. My own efforts had failed, so I decided to take a day off work and go to the temple in fasting. I felt calm as I sat in the temple's chapel and silently offered a prayer and meditated. I noticed a Book of Mormon in the pew in front of me, and though I knew it contained little in the way of advice on legal or technical problems, I decided to open it and see if there might be a message I could apply to my situation.

Pride

Surrendering My Will

The book fell open to Ether 15. As I began reading of the battle between Coriantumr and Shiz, I was overcome by the Spirit, recognizing that the story was about proud men sacrificing everything in a battle of cunning and power. I read how millions had been slain in the battle and how Coriantumr, in remorse, sent an epistle to Shiz offering to give him the kingdom so that his people might be spared. But Shiz, in his pride, refused the offer unless Coriantumr would allow himself to be slain. I recognized the similar impact of pride and emotion in my own conflict as I read how the people of Coriantumr were angered by the counter-offer and how the battle continued. After more battles, Coriantumr again tried to surrender the kingdom in exchange for the lives of the people, but the fighting continued until both armies were dead. Coriantumr finally beheaded Shiz and almost died himself.

Years before, I had wondered why the gruesome battles between Coriantumr and Shiz were included in the

RIGHTEOUS MOTIVES



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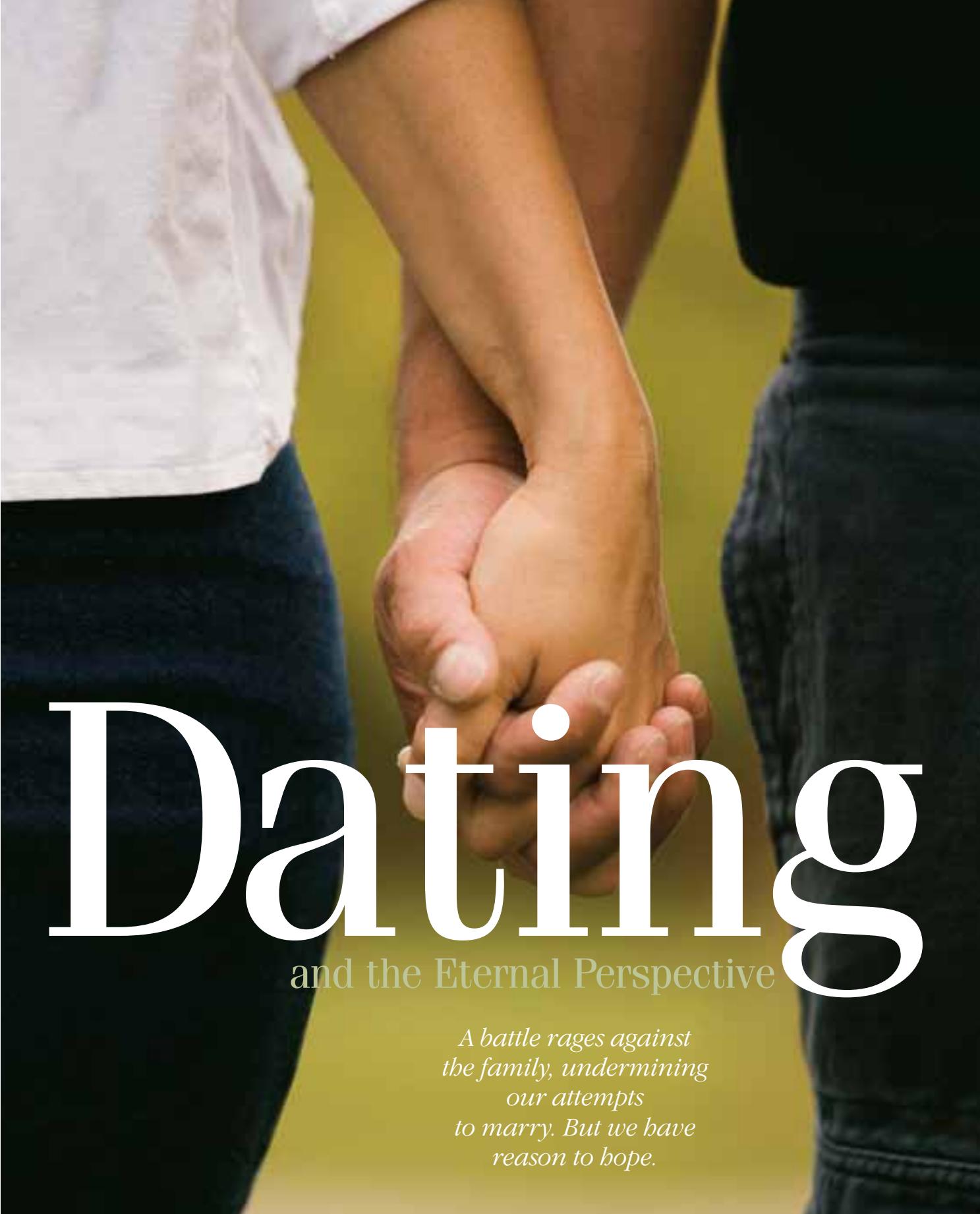
"Our motives for the things we do are where the sin is manifest. Jesus said He did 'always those things' that pleased God. (John 8:29.) Would we not do well to have the pleasing of God as our motive rather than to try to elevate ourselves above our brother and outdo another?"

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), "Beware of Pride," *Ensign*, May 1989, 5.

scriptures. Now I understood that, among other things, this story could teach me important lessons about conflict and priorities. Through them, I realized that my own pride was clouding my ability to weigh the

costs of fighting this legal battle. I learned that sometimes settling a conflict can be more important than winning it.

Through the influence of the Holy Spirit and my experience with the scriptures that day, I was able to learn the principles of conflict resolution that applied to my specific problem. The settlement was expensive and required us to work around our competitor's broad claims; however, by putting it behind us, we were able to get back to business, and the company once again entered a period of profit and growth. My biggest regret was that I had not been ready to receive this answer sooner. ■



Dating

and the Eternal Perspective

*A battle rages against
the family, undermining
our attempts
to marry. But we have
reason to hope.*

BY KIMBERLY REID
Church Magazines

Susan and Jim hated the disco craze sweeping young adult dances in 1978. One night they both ended up at a dance anyway. At six and a half feet (2 m) tall, Jim scanned the room for a tall dancing partner and spotted Susan's red hair above the crowd.

"Would you like to dance?" he asked, flashing a gallant smile.

"Sure."

"Great. I'll see if I can find you a partner." My dad pretended to walk away while my mom laughed at his joke. They danced, exchanged phone numbers, and, nine months later, married in the Salt Lake Temple.

We've all heard stories of how couples met. Now it may be our chance to live such a story. But we face a different atmosphere than our parents did, and not just because disco has gone out of style. The adversary's battle rages against the family, undermining our attempts to marry. Obstacles like rejection, pressure, and distraction threaten to overwhelm us. Satan wants us to lose hope—but we don't have to. With the Lord's help, we can reject worldly attitudes and adopt eternal perspectives. Here are five examples.

THE WORLD'S WAY *Marry according to my timetable.*

THE LORD'S WAY *Learn patience for His timetable.*

As a graduate student, Angie worried that marriage was forever out of reach. "Almost all of my friends were married and raising families," she says. "I wondered if any guy was right for me." When Carl came along, Angie realized that she "was so happy to have waited for the right person." Angie is also grateful for the time she spent waiting. Her experiences strengthened and prepared her for marriage and motherhood.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has advised us to avoid fretting or forcing decisions too early. Instead, he counsels, we should "hold ourselves in readiness to act on the Lord's timing. He will tell us when the time is right to take the next step. For now, we simply concentrate on . . . what we have been asked to do today."¹

Sometimes we must cope with rejection, wait to meet a suitable marriage partner, or accept that the Lord presently

needs our talents applied in other areas. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1926–2004) said, "Patience . . . helps us to realize that while we may be ready to move on, having had enough of a particular learning experience, our continuing presence is often a needed part of the learning environment of others."²

Humility will help us accept the Lord's timetable when the opportunity for marriage comes sooner, as well as later, than anticipated. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: "By divine design, men and women are intended to progress together toward perfection and a fulness of glory. . . . The man completes and perfects the woman and the woman completes and perfects the man as they learn from and mutually strengthen and bless each other."³ When the choice is within our control, unduly delaying temple marriage can hinder us from receiving these blessings.

Marriage is one of the first priorities in life, but not everyone can make it happen first in the sequence of important life goals. No matter when the blessing comes, whether on earth or in eternity, we can patiently discover the Lord's plan for us and feel peace in His care.

THE WORLD'S WAY *Focus on physical attraction.*

THE LORD'S WAY *Discern lasting qualities.*

"Looks are less important than a person's faith, testimony, and desire to serve," says Joseph as he considers the qualities of young women he has known. "Those are things that will keep a relationship strong and healthy, and those are the things that have an eternal impact." They are also the qualities that drew him to Aileen when they worked together as youth counselors.

We will date those to whom we are attracted in several different ways, and physical attraction is part of a healthy relationship. However, we live in a society that emphasizes the body and limits the definition of beauty. If we are not careful, we may adopt unrealistic standards. More than 65 years ago, writer C. S. Lewis observed that the adversary uses distorted body images in the media to direct "the desires of men to something which does not exist."⁴ That trend increases today.



PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK HELMICH

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles addressed this issue when he said, “In too many cases too much is being done to the human body to meet . . . a fictional (to say nothing of superficial) standard.

... This is more than social insanity; it is spiritually destructive, and it accounts for much . . . unhappiness.”⁵

As we seek an attractive companion, the Holy Ghost can help us discern lasting qualities like faith, character, and personality. Such qualities will keep the relationship strong when age and the tests of mortality change our appearance. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has taught that amid “all of the deception” that may initially occur in dating—including always looking our best—we should remember that appearance and style “are essentially unessential.” We must ask ourselves, Would I want this person to be the parent of my children?⁶ Such priorities reflect an eternal perspective.

THE WORLD'S WAY **Find someone who fills my needs.**

THE LORD'S WAY **Become selfless and service-oriented.**

Years ago one of my friends wrote on an index card all the qualities she hoped to find in her future husband. If we’re not careful, mental “index cards” can turn into a hardbound volume. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles humorously reminds us, “You will likely not find [a] perfect person, and if you did, there

The Holy Ghost can help us discern lasting qualities like faith, character, and personality in a prospective companion.

would certainly be no interest in you.”⁷ President Packer says, “How wise is the [person] who does not expect perfection, but looks for potential.”⁸

Sara learned to recognize potential when she met Ben. “Seeking perfection in a spouse sets you up for failure,” she says. She resisted dating Ben seriously at first because he didn’t meet all of her imagined “future husband requirements.” But after several months of dating, she realized that he met the most important ones: He was a worthy priesthood holder, and she loved him. “We’re all flawed,” Sara says. She admires Ben for “striving to be the best he can be. I married someone imperfect, and I couldn’t be happier.”

Instead of contemplating what qualities others have that might fill our needs, we can turn to the true source of fulfillment—the Savior. As we serve Him, our desire to serve others will increase, we’ll build genuine friendships, and we’ll experience the love often described by President Gordon B. Hinckley: “True love is not so much a matter of romance as it is a matter of anxious concern for the well being of one’s companion.”⁹

Brick learned to focus on Bree’s happiness by listening to her and finding small ways to brighten her day. As he did, his love for her grew. Service doesn’t have to be difficult, he says. “Cook dinner. Send a random love note in the mail. Everyday romance is more meaningful,” and it helps you develop a habit of being selfless.

THE WORLD'S WAY **Avoid commitment.**

THE LORD'S WAY **Make sacrifices and covenants.**

Some of us, fearing heartache or sacrifice, would like to find a spouse without taking any risks. But without effort, loving ties can’t grow. Elder W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy counseled young adults to take a risk in order to “invest in eternal happiness.” He emphasized, “The risk is necessary.”¹⁰ This could mean facing the possibility of rejection or of sacrificing some independence. Taking action demonstrates faith in the Savior—faith in His power to heal us from disappointments and to create a more selfless disposition in our hearts.

Mike was afraid to commit to Kristen, wondering if their love could last eternally. He worried that his fears were warnings from the Holy Ghost. "But we're scared of speaking in sacrament meeting, and that doesn't mean we shouldn't do it," he says. Finally he realized, "No fear I had was completely outside of my control. It was in my hands to bring those fears to reality or make them disappear." He chose to make them disappear by committing to work diligently to build the relationship.

"Marriage requires effort," he says, "but so does being single. There is nothing more fulfilling than a successful relationship."

Similarly, Hillary hesitated to date her long-time friend Ron seriously. "I was always impressed by Ron's character," she says, "but we also knew each other's weaknesses, and I was tempted to keep looking." After struggling for months, she counseled with her dad. "He told me that I needed to 'jump in with both feet, or walk away and never look back.' That was the turning point, she says. "I realized that I couldn't walk away and not look back. I was happy with Ron. So I jumped in with both feet, and we got married."

Elder Holland states: "No serious courtship or engagement or marriage is worth the name if we do not fully invest all that we have in it and in so doing trust ourselves totally to the one we love. You cannot succeed in love if you keep one foot out on the bank for safety's sake. The very nature of the endeavor requires that you hold on to each other as tightly as you can and jump in the pool together."¹¹

THE WORLD'S WAY Make decisions based on emotions or intellect.

THE LORD'S WAY Rely on the Spirit as impressed upon both the mind and heart.

Evan is thankful for spiritual guidance but also for the opportunity to choose. He says, "I used my agency to decide to marry Malinda, and then I needed extra help from the Holy Ghost to make sure the choice was right. There is definitely inspiration happening throughout the dating process, but without our agency involved, I don't

think we would ever feel truly satisfied in our choice."

His experience parallels principles taught by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1915–85): "There's a fine balance between agency and inspiration. We're expected to do everything in our power and then to seek an answer from the Lord," evidenced by "the calm, sweet surety that comes only from the Holy

Marriage is one of the first priorities in life, but not everyone can make it happen first in the sequence of important life goals.

Spirit." On the other hand, "If there's anxiety and uncertainty in your heart, then you'd better start over, because . . . you're not getting the ratifying seal that, as a member of the Church who has the gift of the Holy Ghost, you are entitled to receive.¹²

This entitlement comes as we live worthy of the Spirit. Elder Scott cautions that trying to discern the Spirit while living unorthodoxly "is like trying to savor the delicate flavor of a raspberry while chewing on a red hot jalapeño pepper."¹³ As we live righteously and seek answers, we can rest assured that guidance will come.

In the Meantime

It doesn't matter if we meet someone special at work, church, school, or a disco dance, as long as we strive to build relationships the Lord's way. In the meantime, we can prepare for our own eternal love story. We can drown out worldly voices, adopt more spiritual perspectives, and draw closer to the sources of all love, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. They will guide us to be worthy and assured of the blessings They have in store. ■

NOTES

1. "Timing," *Ensign*, Oct. 2003, 12.
2. "Patience," *Ensign*, Oct. 1980, 29.
3. "Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan," *Ensign*, June 2006, 83–84.
4. *The Screwtape Letters*, (1942, 1996), 107.
5. "To Young Women," *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 30.
6. See *Eternal Love* (1973), 11–12.
7. "Receive the Temple Blessings," *Ensign*, May 1999, 26.
8. *Eternal Love*, 12.
9. "Except the Lord Build the House . . .," *Ensign*, June 1971, 71.
10. From a young single adult fireside, Sept. 16, 2004, Fiesch, Switzerland.
11. "How Do I Love Thee?" Brigham Young University devotional, Feb. 15, 2000, speeches.byu.edu.
12. "Agency or Inspiration?" *New Era*, Jan. 1975, 41, 42.
13. "Making the Right Choices," CES fireside for young adults, Jan. 13, 2002, www.lds.org/broadcast.

LIVING A Balanced Life



We face many challenges, but we need not abandon pursuing a higher education, marriage and family, and service in the Church.

BY ELDER ROBERT F. ORTON

Served as a member of the Seventy from 2001 to 2007

Is suspect that most everyone wants the kind of life that will bring lasting happiness. This, I believe, will come through charting a course leading to eternal life. It will be hastened and facilitated by heeding the promptings of the Spirit and by achieving proper balance.

When I speak of balance, I refer to spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and economic factors. *Balance* is defined as mental and emotional steadiness; it is to bring into harmony or proportion.

The Challenge of Achieving Balance

As you know, coping with the challenges of everyday life can upset the balance and harmony we seek. Many of us are

overwhelmed as we seek to obtain and maintain balance in our lives. I provide the following illustrations, adapted from a talk by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.¹

A single student said, “I know that the scriptures and today’s Church leaders say we should not unnecessarily delay marriage and family. But I’m 26. I haven’t completed my education, and I don’t have a job that will enable me to support a family. Can I be excused from marrying, at least for now?”

Another said, “I am a woman, and no one has asked me to marry him. How can I keep the commandment to marry?”

A young mother said, “I am consumed with completing my education and caring for my children. I hardly have time to think of



anything else. Sometimes I think the world and the Church expect too much of me. Regardless of how hard I work, I will never live up to everyone's expectations. I struggle between having confidence and feeling guilt, depression, and discouragement for not doing everything I am told we must do to attain the celestial kingdom."

Another single student said, "I have to work to put myself through school. I don't have enough time for homework and Church service. How can I be expected to live a balanced life?"

I've heard many say, "No one knows better than I do how important exercise is, but I have no time for it."

A sister was heard to say, "How, in today's world, can a husband and wife provide for their family if the wife doesn't work outside the home? There just isn't enough money to cover all the expenses if she doesn't work."

A young father added, "My new business requires all my time. I realize that I am neglecting my wife, children, and Church callings, but if I can just get through this year, I will make enough money, and then things will settle down."

Oh, what a dreamer he was. Life doesn't get easier; it gets more complicated. Don't dream about tomorrow bringing more time and less responsibility. Prepare to face what is coming by practicing today, under your current circumstances, what you'll need to do then.

Should we abandon pursuit of a higher education and otherwise developing and strengthening ourselves? Should we abandon pursuit of marriage and family? Should we cease preparing to provide for our families and ourselves? Should we forget Church service?

The answer to each question is, of course, no. Although it is impossible to respond here to all of the frustrations I've noted, please consider the following ideas.

A Need for Balance

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "One of the grand fundamental principles of 'Mormonism' is to receive truth,



let it come from whence it may."² He also revealed that "the glory of God is intelligence" (D&C 93:36) and that "whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection" (D&C 130:18).

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: "I want to plead with you to keep balance in your lives. Do not become obsessed with what may be called 'a gospel hobby.' A good meal always includes more than one course. You ought to have great strength in your chosen . . . field of expertise. But I warn you against making that your only interest. . . .

" . . . Beware of obsession. Beware of narrowness. Let your interests range over many good fields while working with growing strength in the field of your own profession."³

President Hinckley has also taught that we have a fourfold responsibility—to our families, to our employers, to the Lord, and to ourselves. He has counseled us to "take some time to do a little meditating, to do a little exercise."⁴

As I've flown, I've noted as we commence to take off from the airport, a flight attendant will arise and among other things will say, "Now, if we lose air pressure in the cabin, an oxygen mask will descend from overhead. If you're caring for young children or someone with a disability, make sure you put on your own oxygen mask before you try to help others." Why would the flight attendant say that? Obviously, if you're unconscious, you can't help anyone else. So it is with our service to humankind and our service in the Church and in our professions. If we don't strengthen ourselves, we will never be in a position to strengthen others.

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has also remarked that "it is much easier for those who have a righteous balance to yield 'to the enticings of the Holy Spirit' (Mosiah 3:19). Then we can leave behind the attributes of the natural man or woman. . . .

"Balance in large measure is knowing the things that can be changed, putting them in proper perspective,



and recognizing the things that will not change.”⁵

Three Personal Experiences

I grew up in Panguitch, Utah, a small town of 1,500 people. I was a big fish in a little pond. When I graduated from high school, I received a scholarship to attend Brigham Young University. When I got there, I quickly discovered that I was a little fish in a huge pond, and I became discouraged. I thought, “I want to get out of here.” I started to go home on weekends. I attended church at home—not on campus. I didn’t keep my grades at a level at which I ought to have kept them. I didn’t get acquainted with people. By the end of the year, I said, “I’m not going to return. This is not for me.”

I went home that summer. About mid-August I discovered that I wanted to return to school. So I did. This time I immediately joined a social fraternity and a service organization. I moved into the dormitory. I started attending church on campus rather than going home on weekends. My grades improved. I began to realize that life on campus was a

good life and that I was happy to be there.

Later I attended law school. My first year was difficult because I was studying a different discipline than what I had studied as an undergraduate, and my grades, again, were not as good as they should have been. The second year, I got a part-time job in a law firm while I was going to school. My grades went up. At the end of my second year, I married my wife, Joy. Even with my additional responsibilities, everything was going well. My grades became better than they had ever been.

The last experience I’d like to share came when I passed the bar exam. A salty old trial lawyer approached me and said, “Bob, you can’t be a successful, effective trial lawyer and an active member of the LDS Church at the same time.” I considered others who were successful in their law practices and active in the Church, and I determined to be active in the Church. My decision didn’t affect my success as a trial lawyer. In fact, it enhanced it because I had balance in my life. I was trying to do what the Lord had asked me to do, and He gave me additional strength, understanding, and help.

Balance among the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and economic factors in our lives will help chart a course leading to eternal life and lasting happiness.



A s we attend sacrament meeting every week and partake of the sacrament, we can always have the Spirit with us. The Holy Ghost will help us answer the vital questions we face.

Guidance of the Spirit

Answers to our major life decisions will be more likely to produce balance and happiness if they come through the promptings of the Spirit. How do we obtain the Spirit and the answers we seek?

First, let me suggest that we need to attend sacrament meeting every week, and we

need to partake of the sacrament. As we do so, we remember Christ and His suffering for us. We covenant, as we did at baptism, that we will take upon us His name. And we renew our covenant to keep the commandments. Why do we do all this? The last clause in the sacrament prayer answers that question: "That they may always have his Spirit to be with them" (D&C 20:77).

Therein lies the key to having the companionship of the Holy Ghost, which will help us answer the vital questions we face. In addition, we should kneel and pray regularly. We should be willing to serve our fellowmen. We should reach out in love, and fear not (see 1 John 4:18).

If we ask the Lord for the Spirit and do what is necessary to have His influence with us, the Spirit will teach us all things. He will help us in our studies. He will help us make decisions about life pursuits. And He will give us peace and a feeling of calmness.

A Parable about Prayer

I conclude with a passage from Luke 18:1–8:

"And [the Lord] spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

"Saying, There was in a city a judge, which

feared not God, neither regarded man:

"And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

"And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

"Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

"And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

"And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

"I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."

The Lord hears and answers prayers. Sometimes we tend to give up too soon when we pray to Him. We need to persist.

As an especial witness of Jesus Christ, called to bear testimony to the nations of the world (see D&C 107:25), I testify that He lives. He is our Savior. He knows you, and He knows me. He knows what is on our minds and in our hearts. He will be our advocate with the Father if we keep the covenants we make as we partake of the sacrament each week.

We can overcome the world if we aim to have balance in our lives. If we seek to have the Spirit with us at all times and be faithful in responding to His promptings, we will be blessed. ■

From a devotional address given at LDS Business College on March 1, 2006.

NOTES

1. See "Keeping Life's Demands in Balance," *Ensign*, May 1987, 13.
2. *History of the Church*, 5:499.
3. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 31–32.
4. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 33.
5. "The Need for Balance in Our Lives," *Liahona*, Mar. 2000, 4, 7; *Ensign*, Mar. 2000, 2, 4, 5.

The Family Is Central to the Creator's Plan



Prayerfully study, select, and teach the scriptures and statements that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you teach to share what they have felt and learned.

Why Is the Family Central to Heavenly Father's Plan?

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"The doctrine of the family begins with heavenly parents. Our highest aspiration is to be like them. . . .

"From the earliest beginnings, God established the family and made it eternal. Adam and Eve were sealed in marriage for time and all eternity. . . .

"With the restoration of these keys and priesthood authority comes the opportunity for all who are worthy to receive the blessings of eternal families. . . . The Lord outlines the promise and requirements in this sacred verse:

"And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto them—Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection;

and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life . . . and shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever" (D&C 132:19). . . .

". . . When families are functioning as designed by God, the relationships found therein are the most valued of mortality. The plan of the Father is that family love and companionship will continue into the eternities" ("The Eternal Family," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 64–65).

What Can I Do Because I Know That the Family Is Central to the Plan of Salvation?

President Henry B. Eyring, Second Counselor in the First Presidency:

"The family unit is fundamental . . . to our hope for eternal life. We begin to practice in the family, the smaller unit, what will spread to the Church and to the society in which we live in this world, which will then be what we practice in families bound together

forever by covenants and by faithfulness. We can start now to 'promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family.' I pray that we will. I pray that you will ask, 'Father, how can I prepare?' Tell him how much you want what he desires to give you. You will receive impressions, and if you act on them, I promise you the help of the powers of heaven" ("The Family," *Liahona*, Oct. 1998, 23; *Ensign*, Feb. 1998, 18).

Margaret S. Lifferth, first counselor

in the Primary general presidency: "In today's world, children will need not only a devoted mother and father, but they will need each of us to protect, teach, and love them. . . . Personal obedience and example in every part of our lives are the ultimate gospel lessons for children. So study, learn, and apply the gospel" ("Behold Your Little Ones," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 74–75). ■



Courage to Ask a Question

By Lai Chang Hui-ling

In the summer of 1994 I took a break from school in Taipei, Taiwan, to return to my hometown of Miao-li to spend my vacation. While home I took a job at a floral shop. My heart is full of gratitude when I recall what followed.

As I was watering plants one day, a man in a motorized wheelchair

stopped by to look at the flowers. He bashfully declined my invitation to come inside the store, but something about him left a deep impression on my mind. Afterward I ran into him several times on the street, and we would exchange a nod and a friendly smile.

One hot day as I was sitting in a restaurant enjoying a bowl of shaved ice, someone patted me on the shoulder. It was the man in the wheelchair. He was dressed up nicely and had a big smile on his face. He bravely asked for my name and phone number and left.

A few days later, he called to invite me to attend a Church dinner. Encouraged by a friend, I hesitantly went. The dinner was delicious,

and the reception the members gave me made me feel welcome from the moment I entered. Later that evening another Church member asked for my address and phone number in Taipei and sent my information to the missionaries there. Thus began my eternal tie with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I was baptized and confirmed in the fall of 1994 and served a full-time mission in 1997. Two years after I returned home, I married a returned missionary, and we began our family.

All of these blessings came to pass because a member of the Church had the courage to ask a question. At the time, he was a total stranger, but eventually he helped lead me to the Savior's gospel. He reminds me of a scripture I came to know in the Book of Mormon: "I have none other object save it be the everlasting welfare of your souls" (2 Nephi 2:30). ■

As I was watering plants one day, a man in a motorized wheelchair stopped by to look at the flowers. Something about him left a deep impression on my mind.





A Warning Voice

By Sandra Gates

I had been staying with my parents for a few days, taking a break because I had been ill. But it was now time to return home, so I said my farewells and caught a bus into Leicester, in central England. I watched houses pass by and people busily going about their daily lives. It was a bright, sunny day in the summer of 1976, and I was feeling happy,

ready to tackle anything that came my way. I alighted the bus and walked a mile to the railway station.

Passengers jostled on the station platform as they waited for trains to take them to their various destinations. Every now and then a voice would come over the loudspeaker announcing the trains.

Soon the train I was waiting for arrived. But as I stepped aboard, a distinct impression came over me. I stepped back, feeling strongly that I

When I was about to board the train, I heard a quiet voice say, "No!"

should not take the train but that I should return home via the bus. I had purchased a return train ticket, and I couldn't really afford to pay for a bus ticket as well. My impression was so strong, however, that I could not ignore it.

I was fairly new in the Church, but I had felt the Spirit when I was baptized and confirmed. As I was about to board the train, I heard a quiet voice say, "No!" I stood still for a while to see if I would hear it again, and again the voice said, "No!"

As soon as I had left the railway station, I felt a warmth that confirmed the correctness of my decision. After I arrived at the bus station, I had to wait more than an hour for a bus to take me home to Coventry. Had I taken the train, I would have already arrived—or so I thought. But on the bus, I didn't get home until early evening.

Turning on the television news, I was shocked by what I saw. The train I was scheduled to take had crashed just outside of

Nuneaton! Many people had been injured, and there had been several fatalities.

I always traveled in the front coach, just behind the train engine—an area that was severely damaged. I couldn't help but think what would have happened to me had I not listened to the still, small voice. I also couldn't help but think about all the family history and temple work I



would have been unable to complete for my deceased ancestors had I been seriously injured or killed.

I am grateful for the warning, confirming voice of the Holy Ghost. I know that if we heed the voice of the Spirit, we cannot go wrong. ■

I Needed a Blessing

By Yves Raoelina

In February 2005 I was going through the final phase of my army officer candidate school in the wintry woods of Alabama. We spent days and nights perfecting small-infantry tactics in freezing temperatures. One particular evening a hard, freezing rain poured incessantly on us as my fellow officer candidates and I struggled to set up

camp to bunk down for the night.

I felt miserable. My hands and feet were frostbitten, and every movement was painful. I was soaked from head to toe. Every part of my body was shaking. To make matters worse, I feared that I was developing pneumonia, which I had had several times in the past.

The thought of quitting crossed my mind, but I then recalled the example of the handcart pioneers who never gave up despite seemingly insurmountable odds. I resolved that I would finish my training. My family and I had sacrificed too much for me to give up on my goal of becoming an officer. I prayed to Heavenly Father for strength to keep going.

I did not sleep at all that night, and the next day found me in worse shape. I was exhausted. Hours of

My hands and feet were frostbitten, and every movement was painful. To make matters worse, I feared that I was developing pneumonia.

training in the cold did nothing to alleviate my pain and coughing. One of the instructors noticed my condition and ordered me to spend a couple of hours in the warm-up tent.

While standing barefoot in the mud and hanging up my soaked clothes, I yearned for a priesthood blessing.

One of the tent flaps suddenly opened, and in walked two officer candidates. I began chatting with one of them, Scott Lundell. Somehow the conversation steered toward international travel. Scott told me he had spent a couple years in the Philippines before joining the service. The Spirit immediately told me that Scott was a returned missionary.

"What did you do over there?" I asked.

"Oh, just a church thing," he replied.

"Are you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?" I asked.

"Yes, I am," he said.

"I am too," I added.

As we shook hands, I asked Scott if he would give me a blessing. He unhesitatingly said yes, and I knelt in the mud. He pronounced the blessing, and I was healed immediately! Strength returned to me, and I stopped coughing. My illness was gone. I finished my training, and a month later I was commissioned an officer.

Heavenly Father truly is mindful of each of us and in His own way will bless us as we exercise faith in Him. In our most difficult moments, He will bear us up.

Scott Lundell was killed in action in Afghanistan on November 25, 2006. I didn't know him well, yet his death deeply affected me. Heavenly Father sent him to me at a critical point in my life. I will never forget him, and I will always remember that special blessing given to me by a worthy priesthood holder. ■

The Power of Two Testimonies

By Kathy Truman

One day as I was looking through books in the Deseret Industries thrift store near my home, I decided to buy a copy of the Book of Mormon to give to a friend on Easter morning. I found a nice used copy, put it into my cart, and continued to browse. I soon came upon another copy that looked even nicer, so I exchanged it for the one in my cart and headed to the cashier.

Upon arriving home, I slipped the Book of Mormon into my desk to save it for Easter. When Easter arrived, I pulled it out and decided to write my testimony inside.

As I was looking through books at Deseret Industries, I decided to buy a copy of the Book of Mormon to give to a friend on Easter morning.

Imagine my surprise when, as I opened the book, I saw a picture of my family taken 25 years before. Beneath the picture was a testimony written by my father. He had recently passed away, and tears sprang to my eyes as I read his testimony and felt his presence.

I remembered that when I was a youth, President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) had challenged families to personalize copies of the Book of Mormon with their pictures and testimonies and then send them to Church headquarters to be distributed to missions throughout the world.¹ When I found this copy of the Book of Mormon, I lived several hundred miles away from where my family had lived when we first had the book.

After adding my testimony to my father's testimony, I gave the Book of Mormon to my friend. I then thanked my Heavenly Father for the blessing that the former Book of Mormon project had given to both my friend and me. My friend felt especially touched by my father's testimony and the special "coincidence" that had occurred. She eventually gained her own testimony of the Book of Mormon and entered the waters of baptism.

My testimony was strengthened as I was touched by President Benson's inspiration and by the blessing of that Book of Mormon finding its way back into my hands after 25 years. ■

NOTE

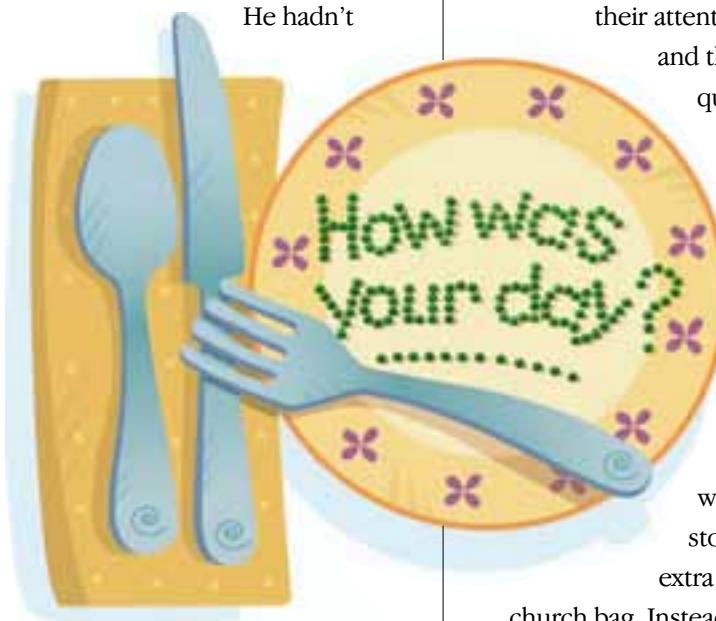
1. See "Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon," *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 4–5.



Dinnertime Discussions

Dinnertime is a great time to learn about your children's day. In our home we go around the table, one person at a time, and share what made us happy and sad that day. One time I learned that our young son had been hurt on the playground.

He hadn't



mentioned the incident when he came home from school, and I might not have known at all if we hadn't talked at dinner. Another time my daughter said eating the dinner made her really happy. I hadn't realized she loved the meal, and it made me feel good to know that at least someone liked my cooking!

Our dinner table tradition has

sparked some great conversations, allowing us as parents to gain greater insight into our children's lives.

Stephanie Nixon, Florida

Just the Friend

My children love going to church, but they struggle to sit still in sacrament meeting. Quiet books, coloring books, snacks, and toys never held their attention for long, and they often quarreled over them. I even tried practicing a "reverence time" with them during the week. Nothing seemed to work. Finally, I stopped bringing extra activities in my

church bag. Instead, I gathered a collection of past *Friend* magazines for them to look at after the sacrament. They can each have a pen to write in the magazines. They can also look through the hymnbook or sit quietly. Those are their options. For us, this change simplifies our sacrament meeting experience each week and helps us to focus more on the Savior.

Jenny Hartzog, Alabama

Keyboard Course Kit

Musically challenged? You don't have to be. In my calling as stake music chairman, I have taught classes in conducting music and in playing the keyboard, using materials the Church provides. The Keyboard Course Kit (item no. 33620; U.S. \$19) is a great resource that includes a manual, an audiocassette, music note cards, a cardboard keyboard, and *Hymns Made Easy* (also available separately; item no. 31249).

I also teach private piano lessons and have encouraged my LDS students to become competent accompanists for Church meetings. My beginning students have benefited greatly from using the materials in the kit. Even before they learn music notation, they can match their hands to the pictures showing positions on the keyboard and follow the finger numbers.

Some of my students have progressed to the *Hymns Made Easy* version and are accompanists for Young Women and priesthood meetings. Teaching people to play the piano is now one of my main assignments as a senior sister missionary serving in Texas. The goal is to help my students serve in music callings, and the Keyboard Course Kit has been a valuable resource.

Sylvia Salisbury, Texas McAllen Mission

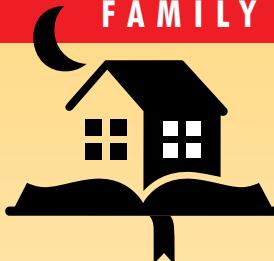
Ready Letters

When missionaries leave home, everyone promises to write. But this enthusiasm frequently wanes in the coming months, especially if there are several missionaries in the ward. To make it a little easier to correspond, each missionary's family might provide a supply of prepaid, addressed airmail letters. Obviously, postal needs will vary in each country, but the idea is to get everything ready to send. All the ward members have to do is write a note and mail it. In our meetinghouse these "ready letters" are available on the announcement board so everyone can help themselves.

Moira Dodkins, England



FAMILY HOME EVENING HELPS



From the Heart

Do you ever wonder if your children *like* each other, much less *love* each other? When



our children were young, I had days when I wondered. One year, shortly before Valentine's Day, I encouraged everyone to make a card for each member of the family. My husband and I participated too. Using various craft items, we made our cards during the week. Then on the Monday night before Valentine's Day, we each took turns giving our

cards one at a time and telling the recipients one reason we loved them. At first my request brought a few moans and groans, but then everyone's hearts softened with warm, positive feelings.

Years later the tradition continues in my children's families. For us, Valentine's Day is another reminder to express our love for one another.

*Gail
Porter,
Utah*

Study Tips from Sharing Time

Our family enjoys studying the gospel each morning, and we've found a method that works well for us. We simply refer to the outline for sharing time and the children's sacrament meeting presentation. A new outline is available each year at Church distribution centers, or you can simply duplicate a Primary leader's copy. The material suggested in the outline is easy to follow. Monthly themes are listed,

followed by weekly gospel principles. Each week we study one of these principles. Using the suggested themes, I find corresponding stories, talks, and activities from the *Friend*. Usually it's easiest to access them online at www.lds.org. With a week's worth of study material in hand, we're ready for our simple morning routine. Together we review the theme, practice saying the listed scripture, sing any recommended songs, and enjoy a simple lesson focusing on the topic.

Our children are better prepared for what they'll learn on Sunday, and our growing testimonies are nurtured by the simple truths taught in Primary.

Maralee Turner, Idaho



Art submitted to the international artists and photographers database represents the talents of artists from throughout the world, such as this painting depicting Christ's millennial reign by John Zamudio of Peru, entitled Dejadlos.

Member Artists Giving Church Publications a More International Look

By Bonnie Boyd, Church Magazines

A growing number of artists and photographers from around the world are being used to give the Church magazines and other official Church publications a more international look.

The Curriculum Department of the Church first issued a call for professional artists and photographers in the October 2005 issue of the *Liabona*. Since that time, the group of talented Church members from many countries has grown steadily, and a database of these contributors

has been created. A later request for professional artists from around the world

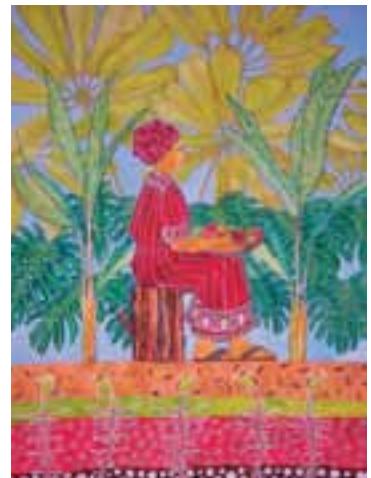
to illustrate religious scenes, in particular New Testament stories, added to the database.

"The objective of [creating and using] the database is to increase the cultural accuracy of art and to accurately reflect the international Church in Church publications," said Tadd Peterson, who oversees the project as a lead designer in the Graphics Division of the Curriculum

Department. "We also are striving to feature the artistic talents of members of the Church worldwide."



A pastel work by Stephanie Offermann of Germany depicts Christ kneeling in prayer.



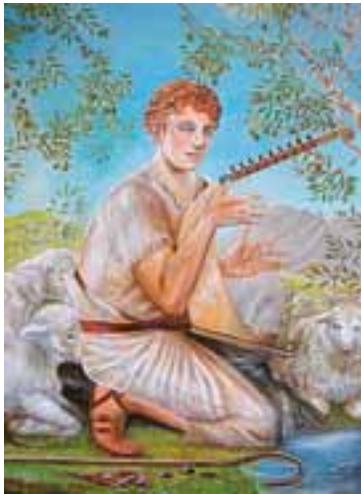
From South Africa, Louise Parker's piece beautifully depicts a scripture from Proverbs in the Old Testament.

As part of the New Testament project, the *Liabona* staff sent out a call for contributors to create and submit paintings and illustrations that could potentially be used in Church publications to support the New Testament theme for 2007. Art was used from artists in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Finland, Germany, Peru, and South Africa.

Currently there are more than 200 photographers, artists, and designers from 31 countries included in the database.

Contributors have provided photographs for a number of Church magazine articles as well as for several localized missionary publications that accompany *Preach My Gospel*, a manual used by missionaries throughout the world.

The use of international art helps produce a sense of unity among members around the world, said



Jefferson Cabral of Brazil's painting is of David of the Old Testament.

Brother Peterson. The art depicts cultural diversity and various styles, yet there is a unified respect and love for the teachings of the gospel as well as reverence for the sacred subjects.

"These pieces of art have great value to all members in that they truly represent a worldwide church," Brother Peterson said.

The most effective method for submitting a request to be included in the database is to send contact information and samples of artwork or photography for review by e-mail to cur-artist-photographer@ldschurch.org. It is also possible to send copies (please do not send originals) of art or photography, contact information, and a short work history by mail to:

Artists and Photographers Database
50 E. North Temple St.,
Rm. 2474
Salt Lake City, UT
84150-3220, USA
Freelance assignments
are based on location,

experience, style, and the resources available to the artists or photographers. ■

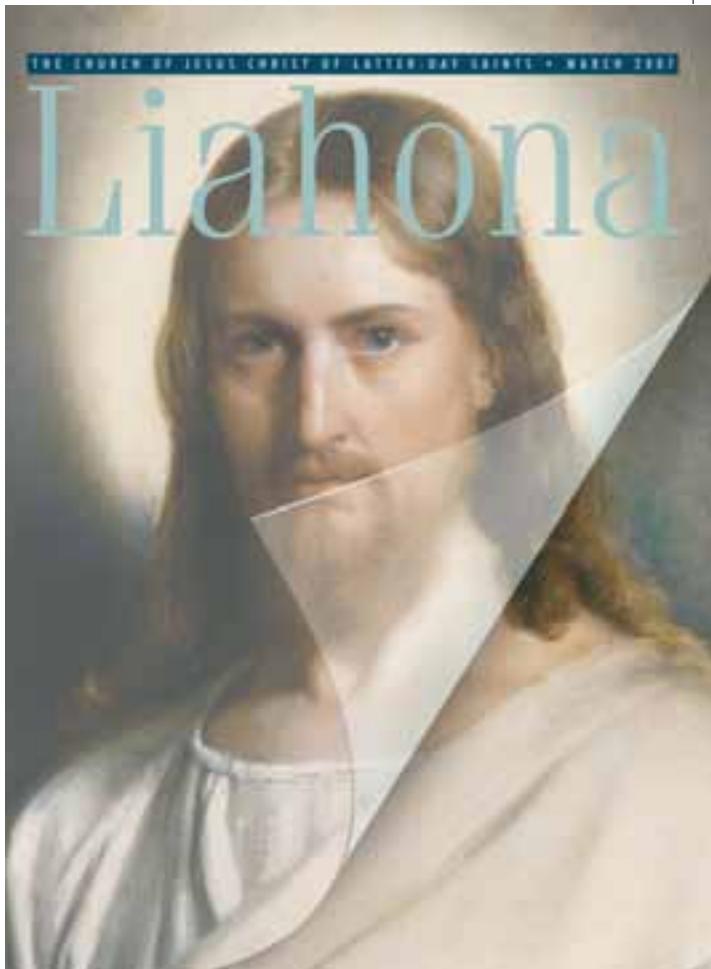
March Issue on Savior Testifies to All

The March 2008 issue of the *Liahona* and *Ensign* will focus entirely on the Lord Jesus Christ. The issue is meant to help members better understand the Savior, receive or strengthen a witness of His divinity, and desire to follow and serve Him. It will also help members share their knowledge and witness of the Savior with others.

"We are confident that by reading this issue of the Church magazines, many people, both members and those not of our faith, will draw closer to our Savior and receive in greater abundance the blessings of His Atonement," said Elder Jay E. Jensen, editor of the Church magazines.

The issue contains such features as:

- An overview of Church teachings about the Savior by President Gordon B. Hinckley.
- Articles for adults, youth, and children by President Henry B. Eyring, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Elder Russell M. Nelson and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the
- A collection of art illustrating "The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles."
- Testimonies and experiences of developing faith in the Lord and receiving the power of His Atonement.



The March issue of the Ensign and Liahona will feature a transparent vellum cover over striking art of the Savior.

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Presidency of the Seventy; and others on who Jesus Christ is, why faith in Him is necessary, how His Atonement blesses lives, how to come unto Him, and what standing as a witness of the Savior means.

The issue can be used by home and visiting teachers, ward missionaries, priesthood and auxiliary leaders, and others as a way to help share their testimonies with neighbors and friends.

Each unit will receive a number of extra copies. Members who are aware of people who might benefit from a copy of the issue should talk with a member of their bishopric or branch presidency about obtaining additional copies of the magazine. Copies will also be available through distribution centers. ■



Elder Marcus B. Nash



Elder Alexander A. Nuñez



Elder César H. Hooker

Area Presidency Reorganized in South America West Area

The First Presidency has announced that Elder Marcus B. Nash will serve as president of the South America West Area, succeeding Elder Walter F. González effective December 20, 2007. Elder González was sustained as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy at the October 2007 general conference.

Elder Nash was called to serve as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy on April 1, 2006. He was an Area Seventy in the North America Northwest Area when he was called to be a General Authority.

Two Area Seventies will serve as counselors in the Area Presidency. Elder Alexander A. Nuñez,

currently serving as Second Counselor in the Area Presidency, will serve as First Counselor. Elder Nuñez was named a member of the Fourth Quorum of the Seventy on April 3, 2004.

Elder César H. Hooker, an Area Seventy since April 1, 2006, will serve as Second Counselor. ■

Church Music and Cultural Arts Submissions Deadlines Approaching

This year's deadline for members of the Church to submit original music and theatrical works is only a few weeks away. Both submissions are due by March 31, 2008.

The purpose of the submission program is three-fold: to encourage members to bless their families and others by developing their talents, to encourage members to use their talents to teach and testify of the gospel, and to recognize members' ability to create

music and scripts that are wholesome and uplifting. For many years members have shared virtuous, lovely, and praiseworthy works through submission programs.

Each year in February a showcase of recognized works has been presented on Temple Square as part of the Temple Square Performances series. Music is presented in the Church Music Festival, and scripts and poetry are shared in the Cultural Arts Submission

Presentation. Occasionally works are selected for future inclusion on the Church Web site.

Guidelines for music submission can be found at LDS.org/churchmusic. Click on **Music**, then **Other Music**, then **Church Music Submissions**, or call 801-240-6439.

Cultural arts submissions in the past have been theatrical scripts including dramas, comedies, musicals, and readers' theater. Poetry and oratorios with

performance value have also been accepted. The works submitted should be suitable for ward/branch or stake/district use, be a minimum of one act long, teach gospel principles in uplifting ways, be doctrinally correct, and be Church-oriented and accurate if historically based. Submissions are welcome in all languages.

Cultural arts submissions should include:

1. Two copies of the script and any applicable music on 8 1/2 x 11 inch (22 x 28 cm) paper.
2. A statement signed by all contributors that says, "The work submitted, entitled ‘_____,’ is my original work, is owned by me, and conforms to the submission rules."
3. A cover letter with the piece's title; author's name, address, phone number, and e-mail address; central theme; synopsis; and cast requirements.

The names of all contributors should appear on the cover letter, script, and signed statement. Authors of productions accepted by the committee may be asked to grant the Church a nonexclusive, perpetual license for unlimited use.

Send submissions to:
**Church Theatrical Script Submission,
50 E. North Temple
St. Rm. 2082,
Salt Lake City, Utah,
84150-6070, USA.**
For more information, call 801-240-6492. ■

TEMPLE NEWS

Open House in Tonga Attracts 40,000 Visitors

The renovated Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple was dedicated on November 4, 2007, by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The dedication was held following a month-long open house attended by 40,000 visitors.

The number of visitors is equal to nearly 40 percent of the total population of the island nation, though it includes visitors from other islands as well. Special guests included Her Royal Highness Princess Pilolevu and Mrs. Ainise Sevele, wife of Tongan Prime Minister Feleti Sevele.

New Temple Announced for El Salvador Saints

By Chris Morales, Church News

On November 18, 2007, the First Presidency announced plans to construct a temple in the Central American country of El Salvador.

The announcement is welcome news for members in El Salvador, who not only cope with long-distance travel to the Guatemala City

"My visit to the temple was a personal journey into the realm of all that is holy, which is peace, serenity, hope, happiness, and joy," Mrs. Sevele explained.

The Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple was first dedicated in 1983. In 2006 it was closed for a significant expansion, which has added more than 5,000 square feet (465 square meters) to the structure.

With some 50,000 members, Church membership in this nation of 110,000 ranks as the highest per capita (roughly 46 percent) of any country in the world.

Guatemala Temple, but also have had to deal with a recent rise in highway robberies.

For many members in El Salvador, the typical 32-hour round-trip temple excursion will be reduced to a more manageable 6 or 7 hours.

The announcement of the San Salvador El Salvador Temple brings to six the

number of temples either operating, announced or under construction in the Central America Area.

Currently operating temples in the area are the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple, dedicated in December 1984, and the San Jose Costa Rica Temple, dedicated in June 2000. Work on the Panama City Panama Temple began in October 2005.

Two other temples,

the Quetzaltenango Guatemala Temple, the second temple in that country, and the Tegucigalpa Honduras Temple have been announced and are awaiting groundbreaking.

When completed, the six Central American temples will serve nearly 600,000 members residing in some 100 stakes in 12 missions.

Adapted from Church News, November 24, 2007.

New Rexburg Idaho Temple Opens Doors to Public

After a month-long open house, the Rexburg Idaho Temple is set to be dedicated on February 3, 2008.

Tens of thousands of tickets to the open house were requested on the first day they were available. Organizers were preparing to accommodate some 150,000 visitors from late December 2007 through January 2008.

The Rexburg Idaho Temple is the third temple to be built in Idaho, along with the Idaho Falls Temple, dedicated on September 23, 1945; and the Boise Idaho Temple, first dedicated on May 25, 1984. The fourth temple in Idaho, the Twin Falls Idaho Temple, was announced in October 2004. Ground was broken on April 15, 2006.

Groundbreaking Held for Cebu Temple Complex

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles broke ground for the Cebu Philippines Temple complex in Lahug, Cebu City, on November 14, 2007.

During the ceremony, Elder Oaks said they were there not only "to dedicate the land to the Lord," but also "to pray . . . that we may prepare ourselves for the blessings of the temple."

Elder Quentin L. Cook of

the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Elder Keith R. Edwards, Philippines Area President; and his counselors, Elder Won Yong Ko and Elder Michael J. Teh of the Seventy, were also in attendance.

Now 23 years after the first temple in the Philippines was built, President Anthony John Ballejos of the Cebu City Philippines Stake expressed in his prayer how grateful members are that the



MAP BY THOMAS S. CHILD

second temple in the Philippines will serve members in the central and southern parts of the country.

The Cebu Philippines Temple complex, having an area of 4.7 hectares, will include patron housing, a meetinghouse, homes for the

temple and mission presidents, and a mission office. The temple itself will have an area of 2,391 square meters.

The Cebu Philippines Temple is the 132nd temple of the Church that is announced, operating, or under construction. ■

General Young Women Broadcast Set for March

On Saturday, March 29, 2007, thousands of young women around the world will come together to gain strength and hope by listening to a member of the First Presidency and the members of the Young Women general presidency. The theme matches this year's Mutual theme: "Be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works" (Mosiah 5:15).

All young women ages 12 to 18 are invited to attend with their mothers and Young Women leaders.

The meeting will be broadcast live on March 29 at 6 p.m. MDT on the Church satellite system, BYU TV and BYU TV International, KBYU TV, and online at BYU TV. Audio will be available live at LDS.org/broadcast in many languages and on BYU Radio and KBYU Radio.

The meeting will be rebroadcast that evening at 8 p.m. MDT on the Church satellite system and KBYU TV. BYU TV will rebroadcast the meeting on April 4 at 11 p.m., April 5 at 8 a.m., and April 6 at 8 p.m. ■

FamilySearch to Put Part of National Archives Online

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) of the United States and FamilySearch announced a major program that will digitize, index, and place major segments of NARA's vast records collection online in the coming years.

FamilySearch will photograph records with specialized digital cameras five days a week at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and will expand to additional regional centers.

facilities at a later date.

The records will include court, military, land, and other government documents that date from as early as 1754 to as late as the 1990s. FamilySearch intends to do all 1.28 million files during the coming years and will make the indexes available without charge on the FamilySearch Web site or at the National Archives and its regional centers.

COMMENT

Branching Out

Thank you for George D. Durrant's article, "Branching Out on Your Family Tree" (Apr. 2007 *Ensign*) on descendants research. After reading the article, I chose two early-1800s couples at the end of my paternal lines in North Carolina and began researching their descendants. We recently completed the temple work for over 100 of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I am very grateful for this nudge in the right direction in our family history research.

Wendi Wilcken, Utah

Hymns on LDS.org

I enjoy singing harmony with the hymns on Sunday. However, unless I get a chance to practice in advance I am not able to sing the parts for some of the more difficult hymns.

The music, lyrics, and harmony parts for almost all of the hymns in the hymnbook can be heard separately on the Interactive Church Music Player. A great feature of the music player is that you can have your harmony part played louder than the other parts. I find this to be a very valuable tool.

Ernie Baty, Canada

Note: The Interactive Church Music Player can be found under the **Music** link at www.lds.org/churchmusic/.

Reminding Me of the Temple

After reading the October 2007 *Ensign*, I realized how much I had taken for granted

the opportunities for temple attendance I had prior to entering the mission field.

While I have been serving here in Spain, the ordinances of the temple have taken on greater meaning for me as I work with recent converts and other members in encouraging them to take this necessary step in their exaltation.

I have also come to understand the significance of these ordinances more as I see how the doctrine of redemption brings hope and faith to those with loved ones on the other side of the veil.

Elder Fletcher Reed Carpenter, Spain

Joy of the Temple

I just had the pleasure of reading the October 2007 issue of the *Ensign* and was especially touched by your articles on temples. My greatest joy is going to the temple and fulfilling what the Lord wants me to do. I feel such peace when I am there.

There is no greater joy than being at the temple. Not a day goes by that I don't thank the Lord that I am able to go.

Diane Jones, Utah

Clarification

Richard Lenz, an event coordinator in the Physical Facilities Department quoted in "Christmas Lights, Efforts Help Testify of Christ" (December 2007), is responsible for overseeing the preparation of Temple Square facilities for musical and theatrical programs organized by Marilyn Lorenzen of the Music Division.



The Five Wise Virgins, by Louise Parker

In his short tenure as Church President, President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) asked all worthy members to have a current temple recommend even if they did not live near a temple. This painting is based on the true story of two Nigerian women who walked 18 miles (29 km) round-trip to get their temple recommends, even though at the time there was no temple close enough for them to attend.



We have a fourfold responsibility:
to our families,
to our employers, to the
Lord, and to ourselves. The
kind of life that will bring
lasting happiness comes not
through neglecting these
responsibilities or through
being overwhelmed by them
but through finding a proper
balance. See "Living a
Balanced Life," p. 64.