



# SHE TAUGHT ME TO SEE

By Evelyn Jeffries

*Though blind, my visiting teacher still had the vision of her calling and of what I could become.*

Although born into the Church, I had been less active for several years. Nevertheless, I had continued to allow contact from home and visiting teachers, somehow not wanting to sever all ties. One evening I received a call from an elderly woman who identified herself as Jeanette, my new visiting teacher in my ward in Phoenix, Arizona, USA. Jeanette told me she was blind, and therefore would not be able to visit me personally; but if I would permit, she would contact me monthly to give me the message and visit with me.

For many months Jeanette faithfully “visited” me by telephone. I grew very fond of her and looked forward to her calls, although I still didn’t attend church. On one occasion Jeanette helped find someone who could drive my daughter to Utah to visit her father, from whom I was divorced. On other occasions she helped locate babysitters. If she could not contact me by telephone, she would dictate sweet cards with the visiting teaching message or personal “thinking of you” or holiday messages. At one point, Jeanette told me they were revising assignments and asked me if I wanted a “real” visiting teacher. I emphatically told her I wouldn’t trade her for anything, and please not to have her assignment to me changed.

I know Jeanette must have been very discouraged by my failure to attend church, and she can’t have

thought she was a successful visiting teacher as she patiently listened to my self-pitying stories. Finally, after years of inactivity, I showed up at church. As I was sitting in Relief Society the roll was passed to me. I saw Jeanette’s name and leaned over to count down the row to identify her. After class, I went and knelt down in front of that lovely woman and took her hands in mine. I said, “Jeanette, I’m Evelyn.” Her face lit up with a great smile, and she placed her hands on my cheeks and said, “Oh, Evelyn, I’m so glad to see you here.”

Jeanette was truly a faithful visiting teacher. She never judged me, never criticized. She only encouraged, helped, and loved. She was not the only reason I returned to the Church, but she was a golden strand in the cord that brought me back where I belonged.

As a Gospel Doctrine teacher, as a Relief Society counselor, and as a ward missionary, I have shared this story with many others as my testimony of the importance of our roles as visiting teachers. We can never know when a word or an action on our part might be the catalyst that would bring another sister back from the depths of sorrow, despair, or trouble. We can only know that if, like Jeanette, we are faithful and persistent in showing our love and concern, we might be the means by which the Lord touches the heart of another to bring or return that person to His fold. ■