

## SHE READ MY TESTIMONY

Answering my phone, I heard the excited voice of one of the local full-time missionaries telling me about a baptism to be held in a few days. Baptisms, of course, are always a reason for excitement among missionaries, but the name of the sister being baptized was unfamiliar to me. Yet the elder insisted that I attend the baptism because a surprise awaited me. He would not tell me more.

On the day of the baptism, I arrived at the church early to find out what the surprise was. But I did not know the young sister—Alice—who was getting baptized, and she gave no indication that she recognized me.

When the business was leaving the kiosk, the boss told Alice to throw the book away. But Alice was curious and asked if she could have it.

After the sweet, Spirit-filled baptism, Alice held a Book of Mormon as she bore testimony of its truthfulness and expressed gratitude for its teachings, especially its witness of the Savior. In her testimony, she told how the book had come to her. She had been working at a kiosk in a local shopping mall. One day a woman came by and gave the book to her boss. The boss was not interested and put it on a shelf.

A short time later, when the business was leaving the kiosk, the boss told Alice to throw the book away. But Alice was curious, briefly looked at the book, and asked if she could have it.

Alice took the Book of Mormon home, read it within a few weeks, and was convinced of its truth. But she didn't know what to do. Some months later she found another job, where she worked with a Latter-day Saint. She asked him about the Book of Mormon and the Church, and he and his wife invited her to meet with the missionaries.

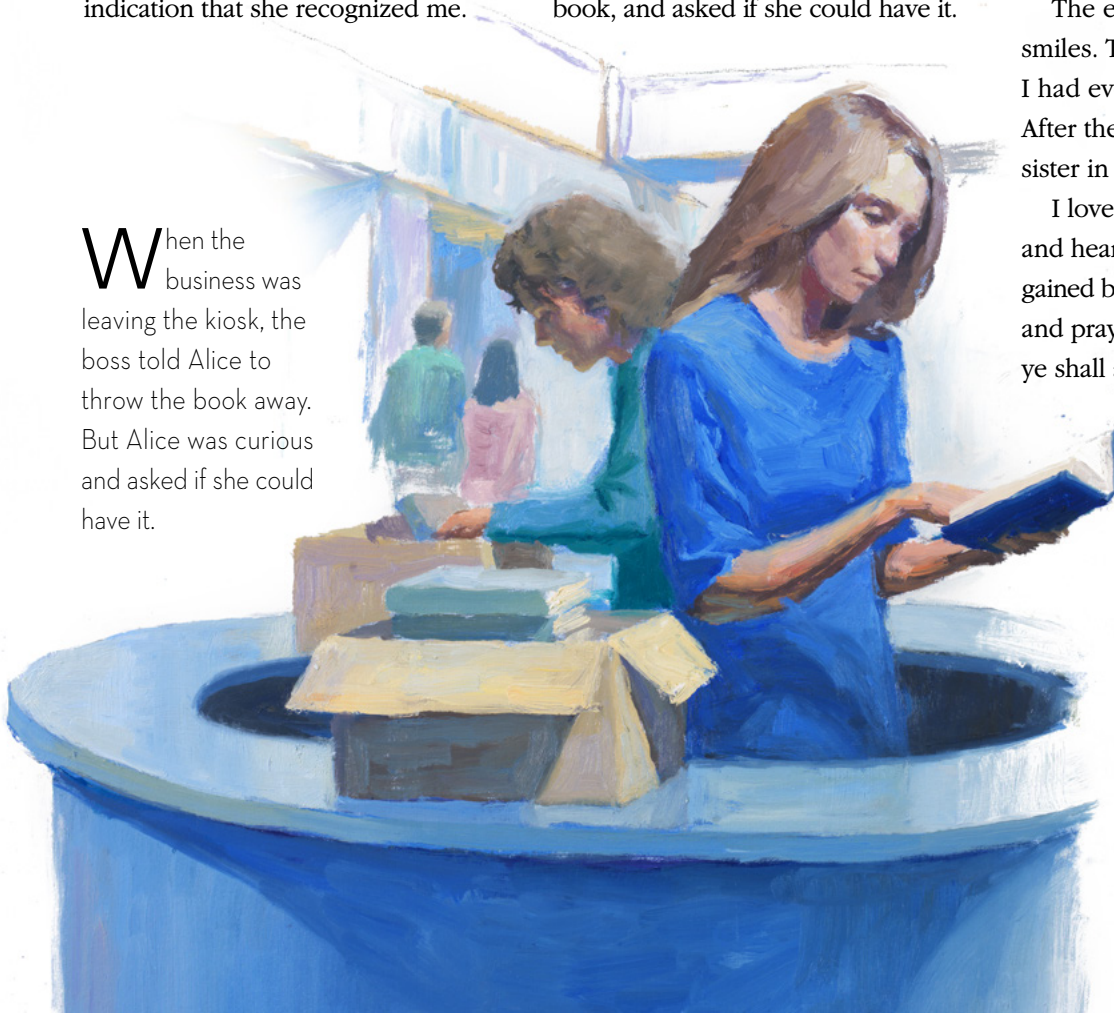
Then this sister said she would like to read the testimony written in the front of her Book of Mormon. The testimony was mine. I had placed it there before giving it to Alice's boss at the kiosk.

The elders broke into delighted smiles. This was the sweetest surprise I had ever experienced in my life! After the baptismal service, my new sister in the gospel rushed to hug me.

I loved witnessing Alice's baptism and hearing her humble testimony, gained by reading the Book of Mormon and praying as Moroni counsels: "If ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you" (Moroni 10:4).

A deep gratitude still fills me that I had been allowed to play a small part in helping one of God's children receive the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■

Faith Watson, Utah, USA





I agonized over how I would ever be able to help my children pay for their missions.

## RAISE WORTHY SONS

Years ago, when I was a single mother, overwhelmed with the care and support of my four children, a generous gift from my mother and brother allowed me to return to college. During my drive to school, I would think about my hopes and dreams for my children. I was a convert to the Church. My fondest desire was that they would have the opportunity to teach the gospel to others and bring them the happiness I felt.

One morning, as I was driving down to school, I thought about my two oldest sons, who were 22 months apart. If they served, the oldest would finish his mission just as his brother started his. I agonized over this and wondered how I would ever be able to help them pay for their missions. I wasn't sure I could find funds to send the first, let alone the second.

This turmoil continued for four days, while I prayed for an answer. On the fifth day the answer came:

“Raise worthy sons. Money is easy to find; worthy sons are not.”

Peace flooded my heart. The answer was so far from my monetary concerns that I was startled. My job was to raise worthy children. I could hold family home evening, attend church, get my children to seminary, and help my sons with Young Men activities. I could make prayer, fasting, and scripture reading part of our family life. I knew that if I did my part, my children might have an opportunity to serve missions.

In addition to our routine, we had an incredible home teacher who loved our family. He and his wife came faithfully each month. He taught my children lessons, gave them blessings, and attended their sports events. Friends took my sons to stake priesthood meetings and overnight campouts. There were stake members who gave them opportunities to work and earn money, neighbors who were

like an extra set of parents, and school teachers who taught them discipline and consistency through academics, music, and sports.

When my oldest son turned 19, the funds were there for his mission. As it turned out, the funds were there for all four children to serve. They served in Mexico and Brazil and in South Carolina and Virginia, USA. The youngest two even served at the same time!

That experience has often made me think of the Lord's words in Isaiah: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways” (Isaiah 55:8).

Prayers are answered when we follow the counsel we receive, and blessings often follow. I know the service my children gave to the Lord changed their lives and the lives of those they taught. Their service has blessed our home and will continue to do so for generations. ■

Janness Johnson, California, USA

## ONLY TWO BAPTISMS?

While I was serving as president of the Guatemala Guatemala City North Mission, we received several new full-time missionaries. As I introduced myself to these missionaries, I told them the story of my conversion and baptism.

I related that Elders David Tree and Wayne Matthews had taught me the gospel when I was nine years old and living in Glendive, Montana, USA. The two missionaries and a member of the Glendive Branch drove me to Williston, North Dakota, USA, on a cold winter day in 1957 so I could

be baptized in the font of a meetinghouse there.

After I had related my story and was interviewing the new missionaries, one of them, Elder Benjamin Pixton, told me that David Tree was his grandfather. What a wonderful surprise! Elder Tree had baptized a nine-year-old boy in Glendive, Montana, and nearly 50 years later that boy was called as his grandson's mission president.

When Elder Pixton's parents and grandparents came to pick him up at the end of his mission, I had the

pleasure of meeting David Tree again. During our visit, I showed him the Book of Mormon—with a message and promise he had written—that he had given to me the day I was baptized.

Elder Pixton's mother told him that her father hadn't talked much about his mission. He felt that he hadn't been very successful because he baptized only two people: a single woman and a nine-year-old boy.

In gratitude I told him that because of his efforts, the rest of my family had eventually joined the Church and that my brother and I, along with our nine

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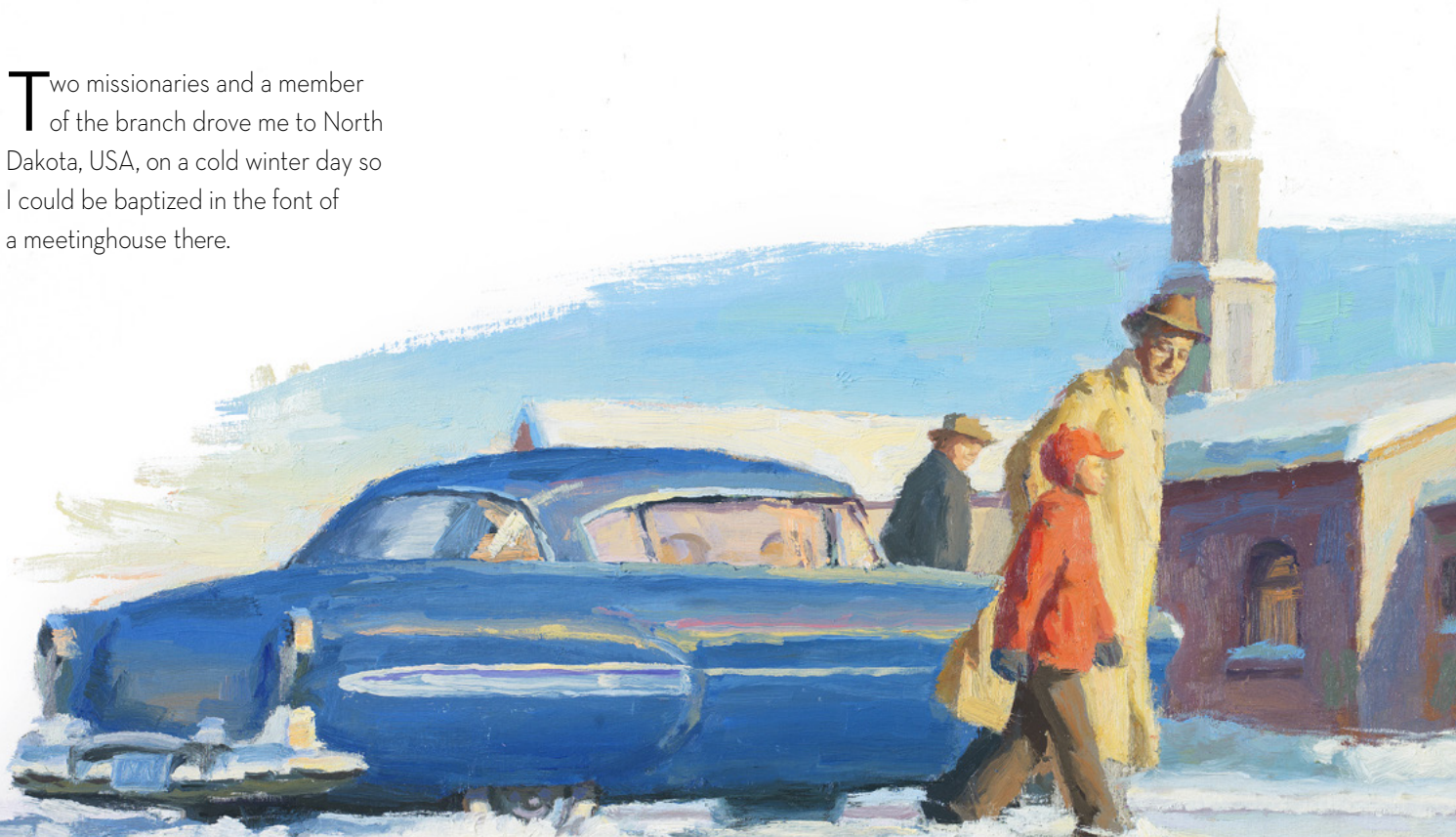


ILLUSTRATION BY ALLEN GARRISS

## PRAYING WITH REAL INTENT

sons, had served full-time missions. Because of his missionary service, I said, countless people had been taught the gospel and had joined the Church.

Many good, worthy, dedicated priesthood holders looked after me during the years of my childhood and adolescence, starting with Elder Tree and his companion, Elder Matthews. I will always be grateful that they taught me the gospel of Jesus Christ and brought me into the Lord's kingdom, where He has blessed me beyond measure. ■

Thomas R. Coleman, Kansas, USA



In 1960 I met a young man at a party who told me that Jesus Christ had visited the Americas after His Resurrection. I found the idea fascinating and wanted to know more, so I began searching in libraries and inquiring at the various religious denominations in my hometown of San Miguel, El Salvador.

I searched for almost three years but found nothing. When I mentioned to religious leaders that I had heard of Christ coming to the Americas, they told me I had been deceived. Because my search turned up no information, I eventually came to believe they were right.

One day, two missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came to my home and said they had an important message for my family. I immediately asked them, "Do you know if Jesus Christ came to the Americas?"

One of them said, "We bear witness of that."

At that moment I felt a great excitement in my mind and heart and asked, "How do you know that?"

He took a book out of his bag and said, "We know Christ came here because of this book, the Book of Mormon."

What the missionaries taught me during the first discussion troubled me, and I doubted the account of the Prophet Joseph's vision of the Father and the Son.

However, the Book of Mormon intrigued me, and the missionaries kept teaching me. One afternoon they asked me, "Have you prayed to find out if what we are teaching you is true?"

I told them I had but had not obtained any answer.

"You must pray with real intent," they said.

I had been reading the Book of Mormon for several nights. I had read about and believed in Christ's appearance to the Nephites. But I still could not accept Joseph Smith's vision. My internal struggle was terrible.

One night I knelt alone and opened my heart to God. I told Him I needed to know if He had really manifested Himself to Joseph Smith. If He had, I promised Him I would be baptized into the Church and serve Him all my life.

When I got up early the next morning, the answer came to me through the Holy Ghost. My mind cleared and my heart filled with peace. From that moment to this, I have had no doubts whatsoever that Joseph Smith truly was a prophet of God, that the Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer. I know Christ came to the Americas after His Resurrection. My soul delights in this marvelous knowledge that was taught to me by the power of the Holy Ghost. ■

Carlos Rene Romero, El Salvador