

Was That Really My Answer?

Selecting a counselor to serve with me in the Primary presidency helped me understand that the Lord's ways are not our ways.

By Kandee Baldwin

It was Sunday evening, and once again I needed to choose a new second counselor for our Primary presidency. Because of rapid population growth, our small neighborhood had experienced many ward boundary changes in a short amount of time; in two and a half years I had already worked with several counselors.

Because the Lord had guided my thoughts in the past when someone was needed to fill a calling, I did not doubt His loving hand would be there to guide me again. As I prayed and then reviewed the names on the ward list, I paused at one sister's name but then quickly dismissed the idea. Because we had such a large Primary, I wanted to find a sister who had experience serving in the organization. This sister, however, had joined the Church as an adult and had never attended Primary, and she had never had a Primary calling. I simply didn't think she was the one I was looking for.

I pondered and prayed the rest of the week. By Saturday, I still had no name to give the bishop. I decided to go on a walk, and while I was out I stopped by the home of the second counselor in the bishopric. He asked if I had made a decision about the calling yet. I said I hadn't received any inspiration, aside from the one name that I knew wasn't *really* it. He asked me why I thought this way, and I listed all the reasons I believed that particular sister wouldn't work out.

After I presented my case, this wise leader told me, "Maybe you should go home and try praying again,

because it sounds to me like you've already received your answer."

I did as he advised and prayed again, acknowledging that Heavenly Father knew who should fill the calling and asking Him to help me feel at peace.

The next morning, as I walked into the bishop's office for a meeting, the bishop asked if I would share a spiritual thought. I sat down and opened my scriptures to one of my favorite passages. I had read it many times, but this time I felt the Spirit of the Lord confirming the truthfulness of its words, and I was filled with the peace I had been seeking. I read:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8–9).

In my mind and my heart, I knew that the sister whose name I had been given was who the Lord wanted—for His purposes, not mine.

Once called, this wonderful, qualified sister brought energy and enthusiasm to our Primary. She was eager to learn and willing to serve, and she loved the Primary children. She was a great asset to the Primary presidency for the six months we served together.



Soon after my release as Primary president, the military relocated this sister's husband, and her family moved from our ward.

We lost track of each other for the next seven or eight years. But one day at church I saw her. She and her family had come for a visit, and after happily greeting me, she asked if I was still in the Primary. I told her I was, now as music leader. She then explained that her husband was stationed in Japan, where their family had been living for about three years. They attended a small branch, and she had made many friends.

The words that followed overtook me with a wave of emotion. "I am serving in the Primary presidency in

my branch in Japan," she told me.

"The leaders were very excited when they heard that I had served in a Primary presidency, as they were not really sure how a Primary was supposed to run."

How humbled and grateful I felt at that moment. The words from Isaiah came flooding back to my mind. It was then that I better understood the meaning of the scripture, and of His ways. With my limited vision and selfish desires, I had seen only my ways, but the Lord had a divine purpose for calling this sister. I am grateful that He answers our prayers, though sometimes in unexpected ways, and that He has a plan for each of us. ■

The author lives in Arizona, USA.



CALLED OF GOD

"It's a marvelous thing to be able to go before the Lord, to present a simple question, and to get a direct, positive, unmistakable answer. I'm ever humbled by that. This is a miracle, this process of the call and release of members in the Church."

President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Called of God by Prophecy," *New Era*, Sept. 1978, 34.