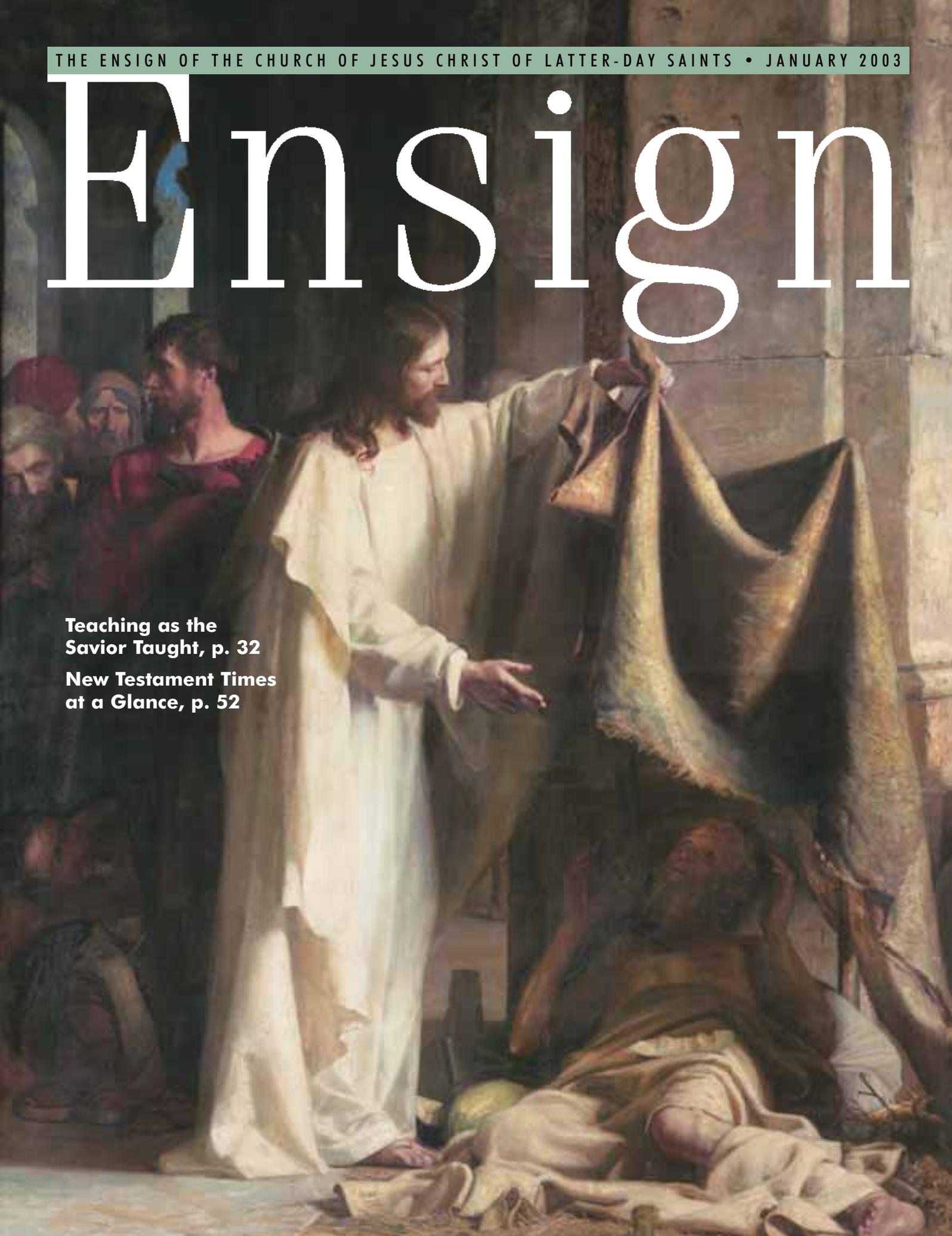
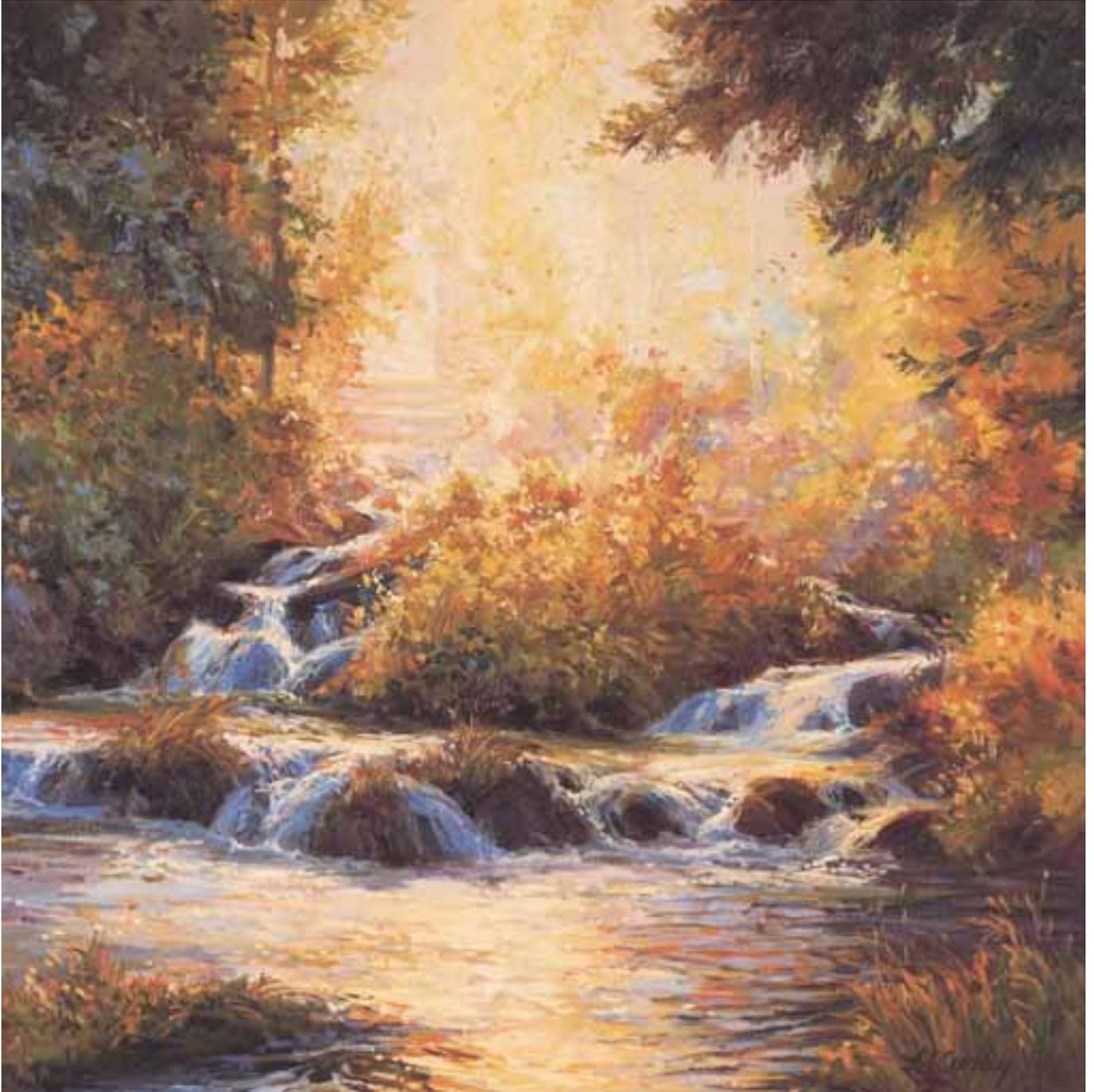


Ensign

**Teaching as the
Savior Taught, p. 32**

**New Testament Times
at a Glance, p. 52**





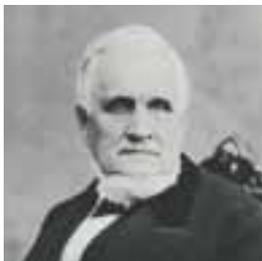
Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear, by Linda Curley Christensen

The glorious light of the sun illuminating our lives is often used as a symbol of our Savior and His love for us, reminding us that “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect. . . . There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear” (1 John 4:16–18).

Ensign



10 *Two People Building for Eternity*



20 *John Taylor: Defender of Truth*



28 *Working through My Grief*



64 *Searching for Garry*

- 2 **FIRST PRESIDENCY MESSAGE**
The Way of the Master
President Thomas S. Monson
- 8 The *Liabona* Was My Guide
Filipe S. Zavale
- 10 Two People Building for Eternity
Don L. Searle
- 17 When Students Are the Teachers
Russell G. Bulloch
- 20 John Taylor: Defender of Truth
Karla C. Erickson
- 28 Working through My Grief
Catbarine Rasband
- 32 Teaching, Preaching, Healing
Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
- 44 Words of Jesus: Chastity *Elder Sheldon F. Child*
- 48 Words of Jesus: Prayer *Bishop Keith B. McMullin*
- 52 New Testament Times at a Glance,
Chart 1: The Life of Jesus Christ
from Birth to the Final Week
- 56 **PARABLES OF JESUS**
The Priceless Parables *Frank F. Judd Jr.*
- 60 **PARABLES OF JESUS**
Prophecy for Our Day *Elder Carl B. Pratt*
- 64 Searching for Garry *Sheila Moore Blight*
- 67 **VISITING TEACHING MESSAGE**
If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear
- 68 **RANDOM SAMPLER**
- 70 **LATTER-DAY SAINT VOICES**
- 74 **NEWS OF THE CHURCH**

56 *The Priceless Parables*

AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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The Way of the Master

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON
First Counselor in the First Presidency

The Divine Commandment to Love

During the later Judean ministry of the Lord, “a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

“He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?”

“And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.”

“And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.”

“But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?”

“And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.”

“And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.”

“And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.”

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

“And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.”

“And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.”

“Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?”

“And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.”¹

Times change, the years roll by, circumstances vary—but the Master’s counsel to the lawyer applies to you and to me just as surely as though we heard His voice speaking directly to us.



The Master’s counsel to the lawyer applies to you and to me just as surely as though we heard His voice speaking directly to us.

How to Fulfill the Commandment

As we study the New Testament this year, we might ask ourselves, “How might we fulfill today the divine commandment to love the Lord our God?”

The Lord declared: “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me”; “Come, follow me”; “I have set an example for you”; “I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do.”² What, indeed, did He do?

Born in a stable, cradled in a manger, He brought to fulfillment the prophecies of the ages. Shepherds came with haste to adore Him. Wise Men from the East came bearing for Him precious gifts; the meridian of time had dawned.

With the birth of the Babe in Bethlehem, there emerged a great endowment, a power stronger than weapons, a wealth more lasting than the coins of Caesar. This child was to be the King of kings and Lord of lords, the promised Messiah—even Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The holy scriptures inform us that “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”³ He was baptized by John.⁴ He “went about doing good.”⁵ At Nain He raised from death to life the widow’s son and presented him to her.⁶ At Bethesda He took compassion on the crippled man who had no hope to get to the pool of promise. He extended His hand; He lifted him up. He healed him from his infirmity.⁷

Then came the Garden of Gethsemane with its exceeding anguish. He wrought the great Atonement as He took upon Himself the sins of all. He did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Then came the cruel cross of Golgotha. In His final hours of mortality, He brought comfort to the malefactor, saying, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”⁸ He

remembered His mother in that eloquent sermon of love personified: “When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.”⁹ He died—the Great Redeemer died!

Becoming like the Savior

Two questions, spoken at an earlier time, roll as thunder to the ears of each of us: “What think ye of Christ?”¹⁰ and “What shall [we] do . . . with Jesus?”¹¹ I proffer these three suggestions:

1. Learn of Him. “Learn of me,” He pleaded, “for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”¹²

2. Believe in Him. The writer of the proverb urged: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”¹³ His is the only name under heaven whereby we might be saved.

3. Follow Him. He brought reality to the word *compassion*. He showed us the way. He marked the path we should follow. Selfless service characterized His life.

By learning of Him, by believing in Him, by following Him, there is the capacity to become like Him. The countenance can change; the heart can be softened; the step can be quickened; the outlook enhanced. Life becomes what it should become. Change is at times imperceptible, but it does take place.

The Savior’s Love of Neighbor

The Savior’s entire ministry exemplified love of neighbor, the second part of that lesson given to the inquiring lawyer—spoken of as the “royal law.”¹⁴

A blind man healed, the daughter of Jairus raised, and the lepers cleansed—all were



But a certain Samaritan . . . had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.”

neighbors of Jesus. Neighbor also was the woman at the well. He, the perfect man, standing before a confessed sinner, extended a hand. She was the traveler; He was the good Samaritan. And so the caravan of His kindness continued.

What about our time and place? Do neighbors await our love, our kindness, our help?

A few years ago I read a Reuters news service account of an Alaska Airlines nonstop flight from Anchorage to Seattle, carrying 150 passengers, which was diverted to a remote town on a mercy mission to rescue a badly injured boy. Two-year-old Elton Williams III had severed an artery in his arm when he fell on a piece of glass while playing near his home in Yakutat, 450 miles (725 kilometers) south of Anchorage. Medics at the scene asked the airline to evacuate the boy. As a result, the Anchorage-to-Seattle flight was diverted to Yakutat.

The medics said the boy was bleeding badly and probably would not live through the flight to Seattle, so the plane flew 200 miles (320 kilometers) to Juneau, the nearest city with a hospital. The flight then went on to Seattle, with the passengers arriving two hours late, most missing their connections. But none complained. In fact, they dug into their pocketbooks and took up a collection for the boy and his family.

Later, as the flight was about to land in Seattle, the passengers broke into a cheer when the pilot said he had received word by radio that Elton was going to be all right. Surely love of neighbor was in evidence.

Lost Opportunities

A man was asked one day, "Who is your next-door neighbor?"

He said, "I don't know his name, but his children run across my lawn and his dog keeps me awake at night!"

Another man, in a different mood, wrote silently one night in his journal: "I thought the house across the street

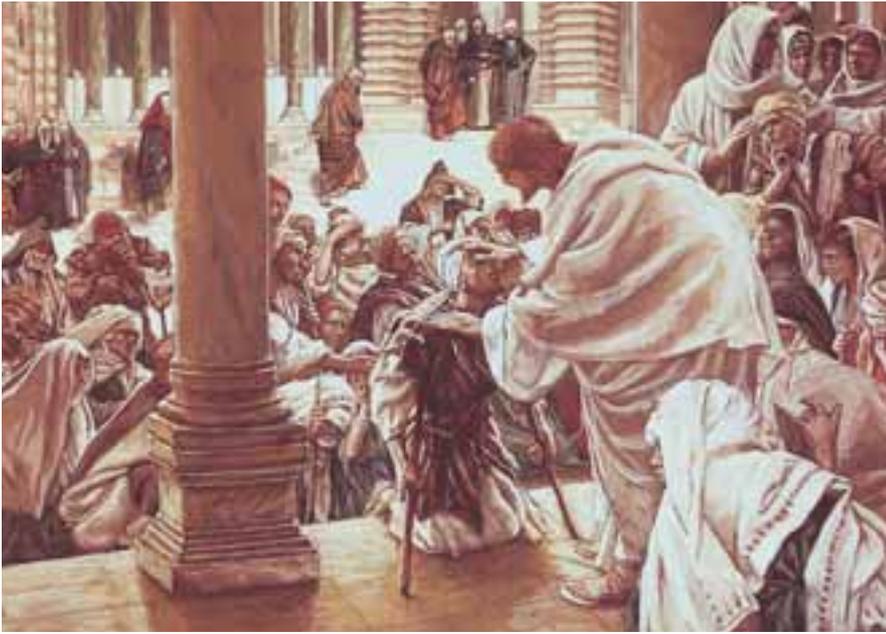


Jesus Christ brought reality to the word compassion. He showed us the way. He marked the path we should follow. Selfless service characterized His life.

was empty until yesterday. Black crepe on the door made me aware that someone had been living there."

A poet set to verse the sorrow of opportunities forever lost:

*Around the corner I have a friend,
In this great city that has no end;
Yet days go by, and weeks rush on,
And before I know it, a year is gone,
And I never see my old friend's face,
For Life is a swift and terrible race.
He knows I like him just as well
As in the days when I rang his bell
And he rang mine.
We were younger then,
And now we are busy, tired men:
Tired with playing a foolish game,
Tired with trying to make a name.
"To-morrow," I say, "I will call on Jim,
Just to show that I'm thinking of him."
But to-morrow comes—and to-morrow goes,
And the distance between us grows and grows.
Around the corner!—yet miles away . . .
"Here's a telegram, sir,"
"Jim died to-day."*



He is the Great Physician—but He is more than a physician. He is the literal Savior of the world, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, the Holy One of Israel, even the risen Lord.

*And that's what we get, and deserve in the end:
Around the corner, a vanished friend.¹⁵*

"Information, Please"

Long years ago I was touched by a story which illustrated love of neighbor between a small boy named Paul and a telephone operator he had never met. These were the days many will remember with nostalgia but which a new generation will never experience.

Paul related the story: "When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember that the shiny receiver hung on the side of the box. I was too little to reach the telephone, but I used to listen with fascination when Mother would talk to it. Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person. Her name was 'Information, Please,' and there was nothing she did not know. 'Information, Please' could supply anybody's number and the correct time.

"I learned that if I stood on a stool, I could reach the telephone. I called 'Information, Please' for all sorts of things. I asked her for help with my geography, and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my arithmetic, too.

"Then there was the time that Petey, our pet canary, died.

I called 'Information, Please' and told her the sad story. She listened and then said the usual things grown-ups say to soothe a child. But I was unconsoled. 'Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers, feet up, on the bottom of the cage?' I asked.

"She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, 'Paul, always remember that there are other worlds in which to sing.' Somehow I felt better.

"All this took place in a small town near Seattle. Then we moved across the country to Boston. I missed my

friend very much. 'Information, Please' belonged to that old wooden box back home, and I somehow never thought of trying to call her. The memories of those childhood conversations never really left me; often in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had then. I appreciated now how patient, understanding, and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy.

"Later, when I went west to college, my plane made a stop in Seattle," Paul continued. "I called 'Information, Please,' and when, miraculously, I heard that familiar voice, I said to her, 'I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time?'

"'I wonder,' she said, 'if you know how much your calls meant to me. I never had any children, and I used to look forward to your calls.' I told her how often I had thought of her over the years, and I asked if I could call her again when I came back west.

"'Please do,' she said. 'Just ask for Sally.'

"Only three months later I was back in Seattle. A different voice answered, 'Information,' and I asked for Sally. 'Are you a friend?' the woman asked.

"'Yes, a very old friend,' I replied.

"'Then I'm sorry to have to tell you. Sally has only been working part-time the last few years because she was ill.

She died five weeks ago.’ But before I could hang up, she said, ‘Wait a minute. Did you say your name was Paul?’

“‘Yes,’ I responded.

“‘Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down. Here it is—I’ll read it. *Tell him I still say there are other worlds in which to sing. He’ll know what I mean.*’

“I thanked her and hung up,” said Paul. “I did know what Sally meant.”¹⁶

Sally, the telephone operator, and Paul, the boy—the man—were in reality good Samaritans to each other.

“Follow Thou Me”

There are indeed other worlds in which to sing. Our Lord and Savior brought to each of us the reality of this truth.

To the grieving Martha He comforted: “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”¹⁷

If we truly seek our Lord and Savior, we shall surely find Him. “He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lake-side, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: ‘Follow thou me!’¹⁸ and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and . . . they shall learn in their own experience Who He is.”¹⁹

The Savior of the World

He who taught us to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our strength, and with all our minds, and our neighbors as ourselves, is a teacher of truth—but He is more than a teacher. He is the Exemplar of the perfect life—but He is more than an exemplar. He is the Great Physician—but He is more than a physician. He is the literal Savior of the world, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, the Holy One of Israel, even the risen Lord, who declared: “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. . . .

I am the light and the life of the world.”²⁰ “I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father.”²¹

As His witness, I testify to you that He lives and that through Him, we too shall live. ■

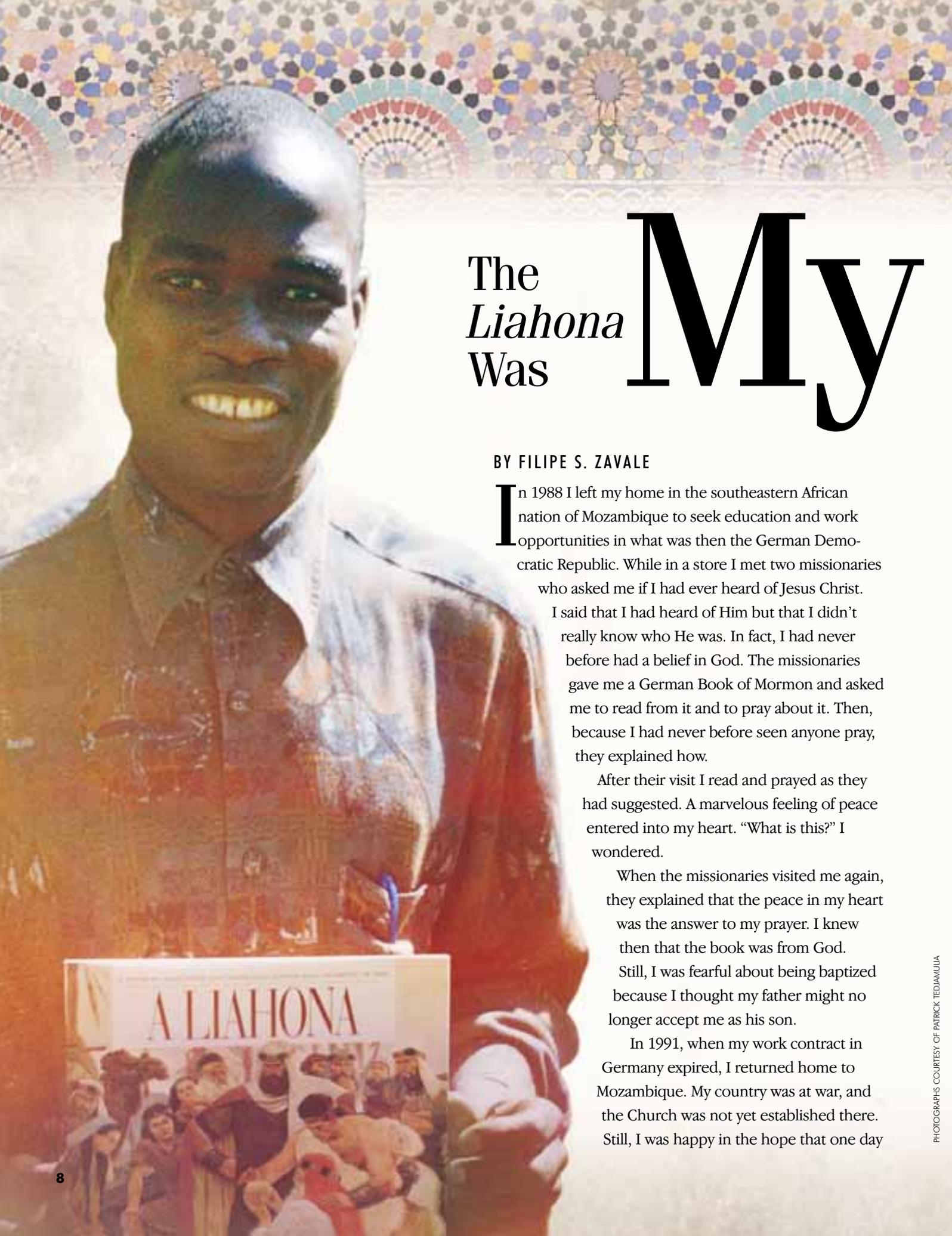
NOTES

1. Luke 10:25–37.
2. John 14:21; Luke 18:22; 3 Nephi 18:16, 24.
3. Luke 2:52.
4. See Matthew 3:13–16.
5. Acts 10:38.
6. See Luke 7:11–15.
7. See John 5:2–9.
8. Luke 23:43.
9. John 19:26–27.
10. Matthew 22:42.
11. Matthew 27:22.
12. Matthew 11:29.
13. Proverbs 3:5–6.
14. James 2:8.
15. Charles Hanson Towne, “Around the Corner,” in *Poems That Live Forever*, sel. Hazel Felleman (1965), 128.
16. Adapted from Paul Villiard, “‘Information Please,’” *Reader’s Digest*, June 1966, 62–65.
17. John 11:25–26.
18. John 21:22.
19. Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1948), 401.
20. 3 Nephi 11:10–11.
21. D&C 110:4.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After you prayerfully prepare, share this message using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. A few examples follow:

1. Invite family members to name people who live nearby. What other people might we consider to be “neighbors”? Do your neighbors receive your love, your kindness, your help? Read one or more of the stories of modern neighborliness in this message. Share an experience of how a neighbor’s selfless service has blessed your life.
2. Write in large letters on a piece of paper: “Learn of Him. Believe in Him. Follow Him.” Show the piece of paper, and invite family members to tell stories about Jesus Christ that have helped them learn, believe, and follow His commandment to love one another.
3. Read together the parable of the good Samaritan (see Luke 10:30–35), and discuss what it teaches about loving others. You may also want to read aloud part of President Monson’s closing testimony as you end the discussion.



The *Liahona* Was **My**

BY FILIPE S. ZAVALE

In 1988 I left my home in the southeastern African nation of Mozambique to seek education and work opportunities in what was then the German Democratic Republic. While in a store I met two missionaries who asked me if I had ever heard of Jesus Christ.

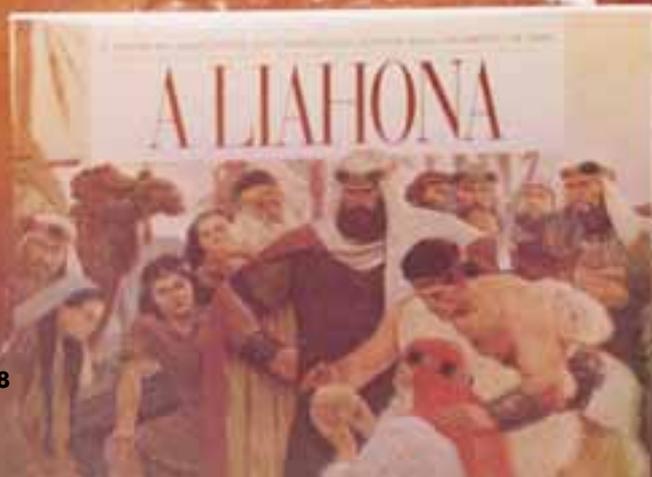
I said that I had heard of Him but that I didn't really know who He was. In fact, I had never before had a belief in God. The missionaries gave me a German Book of Mormon and asked me to read from it and to pray about it. Then, because I had never before seen anyone pray, they explained how.

After their visit I read and prayed as they had suggested. A marvelous feeling of peace entered into my heart. "What is this?" I wondered.

When the missionaries visited me again, they explained that the peace in my heart was the answer to my prayer. I knew then that the book was from God.

Still, I was fearful about being baptized because I thought my father might no longer accept me as his son.

In 1991, when my work contract in Germany expired, I returned home to Mozambique. My country was at war, and the Church was not yet established there. Still, I was happy in the hope that one day



Guide

the Church would come to my homeland and I could be baptized. Whenever anyone would invite me to attend a church, I would tell them I already had one.

“Which one?” they would ask.

“It doesn’t exist here,” I would answer. “But it will come.” Of that I was certain.

It was eight years before I found the Church again, but during all those years, I had a guide. When I left Germany, the branch president there subscribed to *A Liabona* (Portuguese) for me. Each month for eight years, *A Liabona* came to me. And each month for eight years, it encouraged me and gave me hope. Whenever I read it, I felt as if I were with other Latter-day Saints. The magazine oriented me, filled me with great emotion, brought humble words to me, and fed my spirit. Often in the Questions and Answers section, I found answers to my own questions. For eight years, *A Liabona* guided me.

Then one day in 1999, full-time missionaries walked into the post office where my brother works—the same post office where my copy of *A Liabona* always arrives. When my brother saw Elder Patrick Tedjamulia’s name tag, he recognized the name of the Church from my magazines and asked the elder who he was. My brother explained that he had a family member in the same church, and Elder Tedjamulia asked to meet me.

When my brother told me about meeting the missionaries, I was amazed. Could it really be that the Church was here in Mozambique?

I soon learned that it was true. Our government had recognized the Church in 1996.

It was marvelous to meet with the elders again. I remembered the things the missionaries had taught me in Germany, and I felt that same peace come into my heart.

In January 2000 I was finally baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It has been a great blessing to me. I feel the Lord’s Spirit in all the work of the Church.

How grateful I am for *A Liabona*. I am thankful that Heavenly Father provided a guide for me, so I could continue to believe and to have hope until I could find His Church again. ■

Filipe S. Zavale is a member of the Maputo Branch, South Africa Johannesburg Mission.



Members and missionaries gather for Filipe’s baptism in January 2000.

Two People Building For Eternity

BY DON L. SEARLE

Like other young couples, Dennis and Claudia Hiatt looked forward to a bright, untroubled future when they married in 1968. That's what you do when you're young and healthy.

And for a while that's the way it was. Dennis had a good job and strong prospects with an engineering company. The Hiatts were living in Whittier, California, when Claudia gave birth to their first child, Heather. But shortly after Heather's birth, Claudia began to have difficulty with the muscles in her legs. They would give way unexpectedly, and she would fall.

For Claudia, the problem went from alarming to terrifying. What if she fell and hurt herself while Dennis was not available to help? Worse, perhaps, what if she hurt her baby? At 24, she had to wonder if she would even be around to raise her daughter. Could this problem, whatever it was, take her life? Worry brought her close to despair at times.

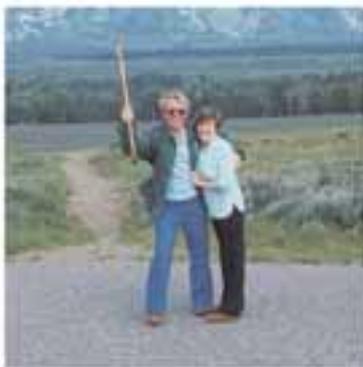
And there was the pain, often a constant companion. She felt it intensely in her muscles. "It was pain that went

right to the bone!" There were excruciating cramps and spasms of virtually all the muscles of her body. Sometimes Claudia's only method of dealing with it was to rock back

and forth in bed or on a chair singing softly to herself, "I Need Thee Every Hour." Simple tasks such as buttoning her children's clothing would be nearly impossible. Through the years, her medical condition has also affected her body in ways requiring surgery or other treatment to correct damage that was done.

It took years, and a number of visits to different doctors as the Hiatt family changed locations, before the problem was properly diagnosed—spinal muscular atrophy.

It is a disease for which there is no cure. Major symptoms include a gradual but progressive weakening in the large motor muscles of the body, with weakness in the legs generally greater than weakness in the arms. Claudia's case may not be completely typical. For her, the disease has not been disfiguring as it is for some people, but it has forced her through the years to adapt to gradual loss of strength



As a joke, Dennis waves Claudia's cane during a visit to the Grand Tetons in 1972.

Dennis and Claudia Hiatt demonstrate that when disease or disability strikes a spouse, “happily ever after” isn’t necessarily lost. Marriage is still what you make it.

The Hiatts enjoy a carefree moment during a 1969 vacation in California before the onset of Claudia’s disability.



FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE HIATTS, EXCEPT AS NOTED; BACKGROUND PHOTOGRAPH ©DIGITAL STOCK

and mobility. When Heather was small, Claudia simply could not carry her around as readily as other mothers might have. The difficulty became progressively worse as her other children—Michele, Brittany, David, and Spencer—came along. When Spencer was a baby, she had to use a stroller to move him around in the house, or sometimes she would drag him on a towel or blanket. In time she had to recognize the need for her to use a wheelchair.

Accepting Help

Not all of her pain has been physical. Some has been emotional—the pain of not being able to serve her husband and family as she has wanted, of trying to help her children deal with insensitivity and even ridicule from their peers because of their mother’s disability. Additional burdens have fallen on Dennis, both in caring for his family at home and in limitations on his career. The Hiatt children have had to help at home in addition to dealing with limitations on their own activities. But Claudia and Dennis as a couple, and the family as a group, have met their physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges with faith and perseverance and often with generous, deliberate doses of the good humor that is a family strength.

Claudia has not conceded easily to limitations. Her approach from the beginning has been that when something needed doing and the disease made it difficult, she would simply find a way.

“I’m a very independent person,” she says. “I had to learn to accept people’s help and be gracious about it.” A wise member of her stake presidency once taught her, Claudia recalls, that she needed to allow others to serve her so that they could fulfill the Lord’s commandments and follow His spiritual direction.

The majority of her help, of course, has come from those closest to her—Dennis and their children. Her husband has taken on tasks that many men do not expect to have to shoulder in marriage. “I have been blessed with

the most wonderful husband,” Claudia says. “This man has stuck by me through thick and thin, and we’ve had to go through some very hard times in dealing with this illness.” There have been surgeries, broken bones, and lingering sickness, but Claudia chooses not to dwell on them; she simply handles them and moves on. Dennis has not hesi-

tated to take on any of the work in the home as needed—washing the clothes, cleaning the house, bathing and dressing the children. It was not something that began only when her illness was diagnosed, Claudia says, but an attitude he brought to their marriage in the beginning. “The bond of love between Denny and me has grown stronger over the years. He has always been there for me, to hold me in his arms, to comfort me, to give me a blessing, to encourage me.” With

him, it was safe to cry when she needed to.

Over time, as Claudia’s disease has progressed, they have adapted as necessary, Dennis says. “I’ve held back, letting her do as much as she can. But when a thing becomes a ‘no-doer,’ I pick it up. There are things that have to be done, and if one person can’t do them, then the other one does.”

“She’s My Hero”

Their children were also enlisted to help, beginning at very young ages.

“I’ve never had a mother without a disability,” says Heather Meier, their oldest. While there were difficulties in dealing with her mother’s disability when Heather was young, she eventually overcame them. Learning to deal with them “elevated where I was. It enhanced my ability to have compassion.” Because of Heather’s experiences with her mother, she has found it easy to reach out to others with disabilities or special needs. “She’s my hero,” Heather says. “There hasn’t been anything thrown at her that she hasn’t dealt with positively.”



The Hiatts love outdoor activities such as camping and snow skiing.

Though details of life have changed for the Hiatts, their master plan has remained the same. There have been surgeries, broken bones, and lingering sickness, but their love has grown stronger over the years.



Claudia and Brittany

The Hiatts' second child, daughter Michele Collins, echoes that sentiment. Michele herself has had to deal with diabetes and the birth of a son who was deaf. (Now a toddler, he has had a successful cochlear implant.) "I don't know if I could have dealt with what I have without my mother's example," Michele says.

Claudia's tenacity in doing everything she could for herself meant that for a number of years Michele did not realize it was out of the ordinary to have a mother with a disability. All of the Hiatt children seem to have accepted it as a matter of course. An experience with Spencer when he was a young boy illustrates. Claudia fell in the grocery store while shopping and could not get up by herself. She told Spencer, who was riding in the grocery cart, what to do. At her direction, he climbed down, scooted a chair from the nearby pharmacy waiting area to her so she could use it to stand, scooted the chair back to its place, then climbed back into the grocery cart.

Loving and Serving

Spencer, like the other Hiatt children, recalls times when he was not free to do all of the things his friends could do because he was helping his mother. Some friends were not understanding about that. Others were understanding enough to help him with his chores. But as a result of service together in the home, his best friends were his siblings, especially his older brother, David.

David says now that he is married, he is trying to apply lessons learned from his parents' example to his own relationship. "I think the major thing my wife and I are trying to implement is to love each other for who we really are and not what we might appear to be on the outside."

While some young people do not fully appreciate the contributions of their mothers in their lives, David says, "not a day goes by that I take my mother for granted." He points out that the love he and his siblings learned through service in the family has helped all of them deal with difficulties they have faced.

So, too, has their ability to meet challenges in life with good humor.

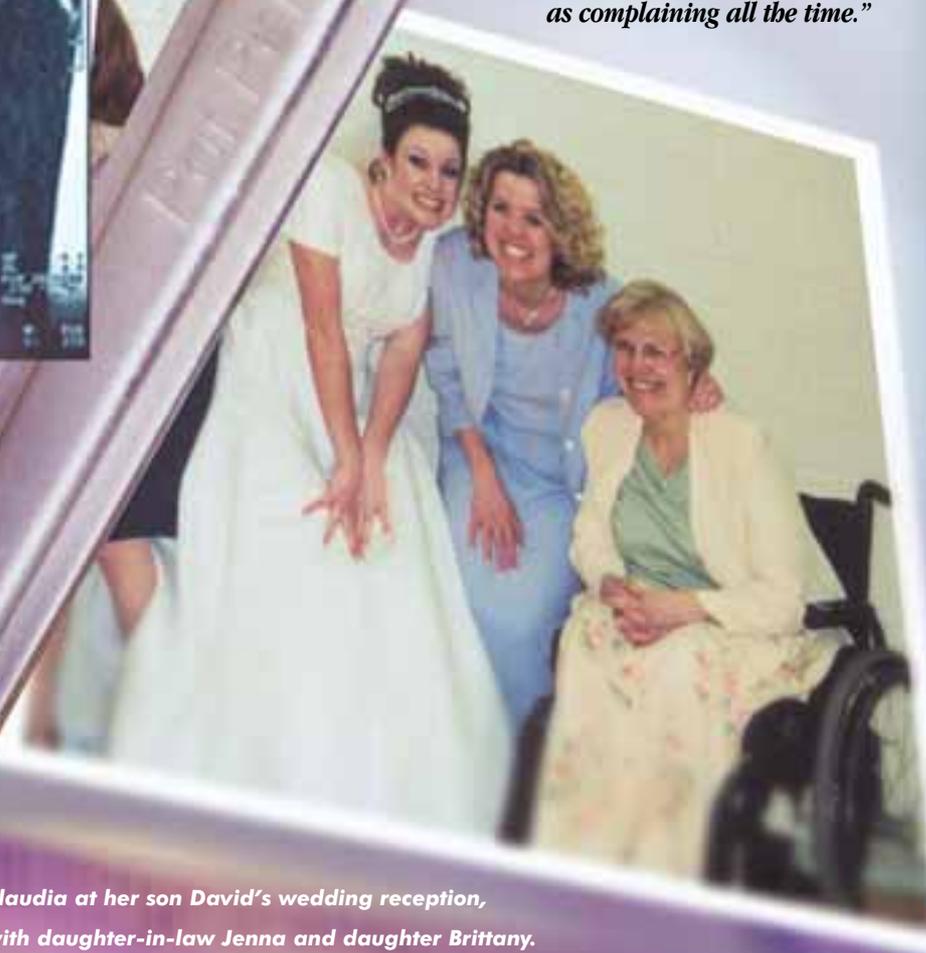
Laughing Often

"We are a family of 'EAs,'" Dennis says, smiling. He translates the term: "Easily amused." Family members find things to laugh about and ways to keep each other's spirits up when they are together. "We can laugh and have a good time over some of the most foolish things," Dennis says. "But we just laugh and have a good time." This good humor is a trait shared by Claudia's sisters and her extended family, who have offered great support through her difficulties.

Claudia says it is more than simply useful; it is necessary to develop a sense of humor about some of life's little difficulties in order to combat gloom. She laughs at the memory, for example, of being accidentally and ingloriously dumped on a neighborhood street when the wheel of her wheelchair caught on an uneven section of curbing, and of having to be gathered up by her child who was pushing the chair. Laughter is a better choice than tears. Since it became apparent that she had no choice but to deal with disability, she has tried "to be on the up side, to be bubbly, because I didn't want people to remember me as complaining all the time," Claudia says. "If you're bitter, if you have a bad attitude, you're going to be miserable. The people around you are going to be miserable."

Another man might have resented the fact that his wife's situation has affected his lifestyle and his career. Dennis doesn't look at things that way. While the family, including Claudia, was often involved in outdoor activities when the children were young, Dennis was not able to do the skiing he enjoyed with his wife. But he has found opportunities to enjoy it alone or with his children. And he has never resented the impact of Claudia's health on his employment. "Maybe if I'd been driven by a hard-core career orientation, it might not have worked so well for us. I don't know," Dennis reflects. But "the job and the career are secondary to each of us and to the family." Switching from a management position back into a sales job, for example, not only resolved a difficult situation at work

Laughter is a better choice than tears," says Claudia, realizing that she has no choice but to deal with her disability. "I try to be on the up side because I don't want people to remember me as complaining all the time."



Claudia at her son David's wedding reception, with daughter-in-law Jenna and daughter Brittany.

but also proved to be a blessing to the family, leaving Dennis freer to meet their needs. In part, that allowed him to support Claudia as she has served in Church callings. Through the years he, too, has been able to serve in a variety of priesthood leadership callings.

Comfort in the Gospel

Dennis's attitude has helped sustain her, Claudia says. If ever she has asked, "Why me?" he has gently reminded her that she may not be the focus of the situation, that perhaps someone is supposed to learn through her or be blessed by serving her.

What has been their best weapon in meeting the challenges of life? "In a broad sense," Dennis says, "just the fact that the gospel is active in our lives."

Participation in the Church has been a priority in their marriage since the beginning.

Knowledge of the scriptures has been a strong source of comfort for both of them as well. Dennis particularly appreciates a Book of Mormon scripture that tells of the blessing given to missionaries who served under Alma in ministering among the Zoramites: "And [the Lord] also gave them strength, that they should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ" (Alma 31:38). It has been comforting, he says, to know that he and Claudia did not have to bear their problems alone and to try to make the joy that is possible through the Atonement a real influence in their lives. "The operative word is *joy*," Dennis says, and not necessarily what the world thinks of as happiness.

Claudia, too, draws strength from the scriptures. Several point the way for her: "Be patient in long-suffering and afflictions" (Alma 17:11); "Endure in faith on his name to the end" (D&C 20:29); "Serve him with all diligence of mind, [and] if ye do this, he will, according to his own will and pleasure, deliver you out of bondage" (Mosiah 7:33); and "The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint

shall be restored to its proper frame" (Alma 11:43). Someday, Claudia says, she hopes to be able to do the things she has not been able to do with her husband and children in this life and to enjoy dancing and other physical activities as she did when she was a young woman.

The power of prayer is a constant sustaining influence for her. The power of the priesthood exercised in her behalf through her husband and others has provided strength and comfort in times of need. Not long ago, Claudia felt the need for a priesthood blessing because of pain from an illness brought on by her disability. Not wanting to trouble her husband yet again, she put off asking him. But a few nights later, she could no longer endure the pain, so she asked her husband and son to give her a blessing. She recalls not only the com-



**Today, Dennis and Claudia
continue to build for the future.**

fort she felt as they pronounced the blessing but the lingering warmth of hands on her head even after they took theirs away. Her pain was relieved. "I've had blessings and comfort, and I know that's why I get through this illness and disability. I know that *He's* there."

Working Together

The Hiatt children remark on how well their parents work together as a team. "They are committed to each other—completely," their daughter Brittany emphasizes. "They are the most important thing to each other." They share all the little details of their days, and there is nothing they would rather do than spend time with each other. Despite her mother's periodic physical setbacks, her father is always there to support the woman he loves. "No matter what comes to them," Brittany adds, "they will make it through somehow—and they will do it together."

Or as David explains: "They're building for eternity. They were married in the temple, and they're building something to last forever." ■

Don L. Searle is a member of the Church magazines staff.

BY RUSSELL G. BULLOCH

Want to encourage everyone to participate in your lessons? Try using small group assignments at home or at church.

I noticed her lingering in the back of the room after one of my classes, waiting for the others to finish talking to me. Finally, when everyone was gone, she approached.

“I am so discouraged!” she said with tears in her eyes. After composing herself she continued: “About a month ago I was called to teach a Sunday School class in my ward. One of the goals I set for myself was to get class members to participate, but most of the time they just sit there and don’t say much. I’m trying really hard, but nothing seems to work and I can tell they are bored. What can I do?”

After discussing the needs of her class, I suggested she try using small group assignments, not only because this method gets more people involved in the lesson but also because it can help prepare the class for a great discussion.¹

Caution: When you divide a class into small groups, you should expect more noise, commotion, and less teacher-centered control. At first these changes may make you feel uneasy. Be patient, for improving one’s teaching requires courage, help from the Lord, creativity, and a willingness to learn from one’s mistakes.

Following are a few suggestions to help you get started.



WHEN Students ARE THE Teachers

Prepare the Assignments

- Each person should have a significant role in completing the group assignment. For example, if the group assignment is to make a list of ways to apply a scripture passage, you could have everyone do the assignment individually first; then in groups, each person can share his or her personal list as a part of fulfilling the group assignment. Or you could give a specific responsibility to each person, such as being the group leader, scribe, or reporter.
- You could assign class members to look for words, phrases, or ideas as they study an assigned scripture reference or other reading material.
- Assignments could include a question to be discussed and answered, a problem to solve, a picture to draw, or a few sentences to write.
- Gather whatever materials students will need to complete their assignments, such as paper and pencils.
- The Church lesson manual you are using will also have suggestions for assignments you could give.

Explain the Assignments

- Help students understand their assignments before dividing into groups. Once in groups, some students may have their backs to you, and it will be more difficult to get their attention.
- Assignments should be simple and easy to follow. If you sense that some students need more help, walk them through an example of their assignment, allowing time for questions.
 - Give a time limit for completing the task. Assignments that can be completed in 10 minutes or less work best.

Divide into Groups

- Keeping the groups at two to four people each will enhance participation.
- You can form groups by having students work with those closest to them or by asking them to work together in groups that you organize.
- Choose a leader for each group who will encourage all in the group to be involved and see that the assignment is done on time.

Monitor the Groups

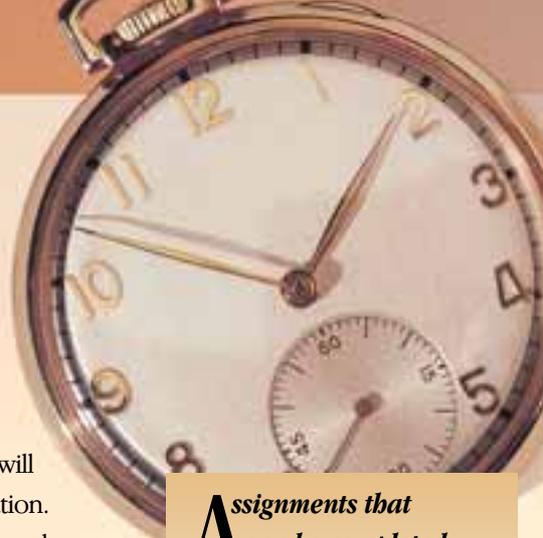
- Move from group to group as they work, monitoring participation and helping as needed. “Group work . . . can easily become a time when students visit on personal matters or joke around with one another. The presence of the teacher and his or her active involvement in monitoring the learning activity will do much to prevent such problems.”²
- When it is time to end, ask for class members’ attention, and wait until you have it before proceeding.

Have Each Group Report on Their Assignments

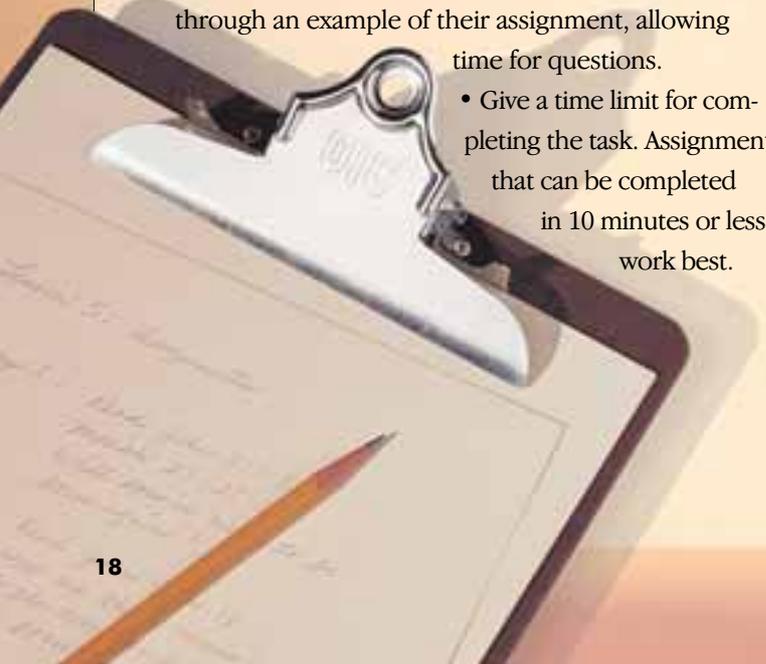
- Invite students to return to the seating arrangement they had before.
- Usually each group appoints one person to give the report. Reports that can be completed in one or two minutes work best.
- You may want to invite students to ask questions of the group making a report.
- It is often helpful to conclude by summarizing the main points of the reports, helping students review and apply what they have learned.

Note the Benefits of Class Participation

Not long ago I taught a class in my stake on using small group assignments. I encouraged the participants to give



Assignments that can be completed in 10 minutes or less work best.



this method a try and tell me about their experiences. A sister who teaches on the fourth Sunday in Relief Society excitedly reported: "The sisters all participated! And it helped me cover more material in a shorter period of time. It took attention away from me and gave it to the sisters in the class. They were teaching each other." Another teacher said: "I noticed the energy level in the class increase because everyone was participating at the same time. It has really helped the shy students because the small groups are less intimidating." Another explained, "It is exciting to see my students sharing with and teaching each other rather than having me do it all."

A teacher once reported to me that he felt he was in a teaching rut. "Each Sunday I did pretty much the same thing: I stood in front of the class and talked at them. One Sunday I decided to try small group assignments during my lesson. I am glad I did. I was pleased with how many participated. The thoughtful insights shared in each of the groups were excellent. It was a refreshing change that added variety to my teaching."

Use Small Groups to Teach at Home

Small-group assignments can be just as effective in teaching the gospel at home as they are in the classroom.

During a home evening lesson, my family was talking about being clean, one of President Hinckley's six B's.³ We carefully read together the page and a half of counsel and made a list of the principles and ideas mentioned in the talk. We then did a small group assignment.

I explained that I wanted each group to choose three principles from the list and describe the problems a person could avoid by following President Hinckley's counsel. We paired up, allowing 10 minutes to prepare a report. I watched as my children discussed and wrote down their thoughts. As each pair gave a report, the thoughts and feelings we shared led us to discuss in greater depth the personal application of the teachings. Everyone participated,

we felt the Spirit of God, and our testimonies were strengthened. Later that evening my children commented about how much they enjoyed the lesson. My wife said that it was one of the best family home evenings we had had in several months.

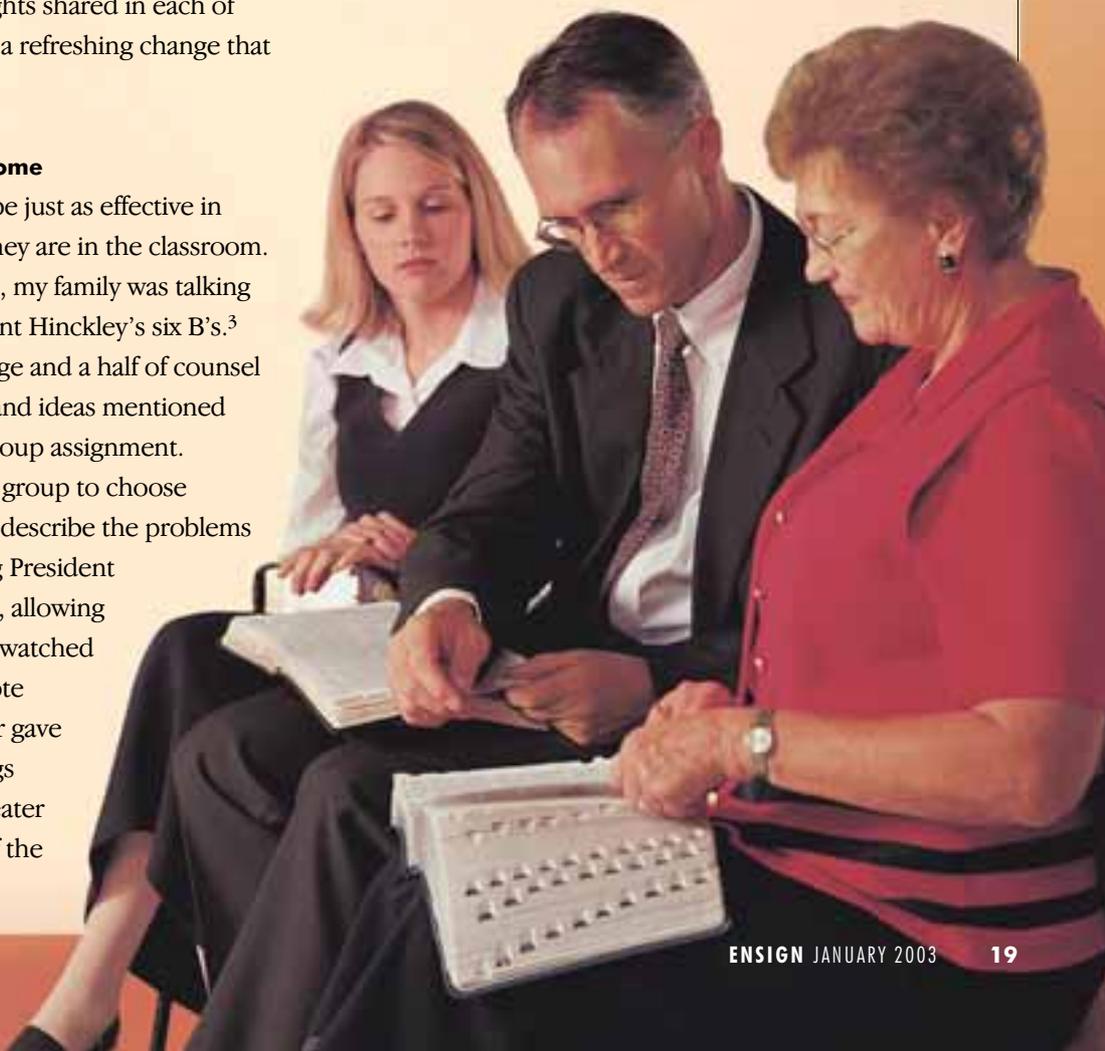
If you are looking for a way to increase participation in your lessons at home or at church, give this method a try and see if it doesn't enhance your classroom and family experiences. ■

NOTES

1. See "Buzz Sessions," *Teaching, No Greater Call* (1999), 161.
2. *Teaching the Gospel: A Handbook for CES Teachers and Leaders* (1994), 43.
3. See "A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth," *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 2–11.

Russell G. Bulloch is a member of the Copper Hills 12th Ward, Copper Hills Utah Stake.

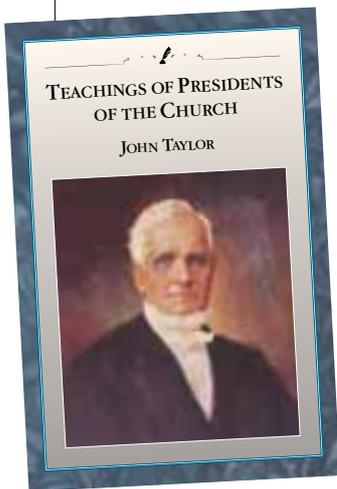
More on this topic: Richard Nash, "Telling Personal Stories," Ensign, Sept. 2002, 48–51; Robert G. Jones, "Asking Questions First," Ensign, Jan. 2002, 23–25; Jonn D. Claybaugh and Amber Barlow Dabl, "Increasing Participation in Lessons," Ensign, Mar. 2001, 32–36.



John Taylor

DEFENDER OF TRUTH

BY KARLA C. ERICKSON



As third President of the Church, John Taylor stood unshakable in his testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, leading the Church through some of its most trying times.

John Taylor was born on 1 November 1808 in Milnthorpe, a small town in the county of Westmorland, England. His parents, James and Agnes Taylor, had 10 children, John being the second son. They reared their large family on Bible study and prayer. “Young Taylor possessed a portion of the spirit of God. . . . Manifestations of its presence were frequent, not only in the expansion of his mind to understand doctrines and principles, but also in dreams and visions. . . . When but a small boy he saw, in vision, an angel in the heavens, holding a trumpet to his mouth, sounding a message to the nations. The import of this vision he did not understand until later in life.”¹

At the age of 16, he left the Church of England and later became a lay preacher for the Methodist Church. On one occasion when he was with one of his parish members on the way to an appointment, he stopped in the road and said, “I have a strong impression on my mind, that I have to go to America to preach the gospel!”² This impression remained with him.

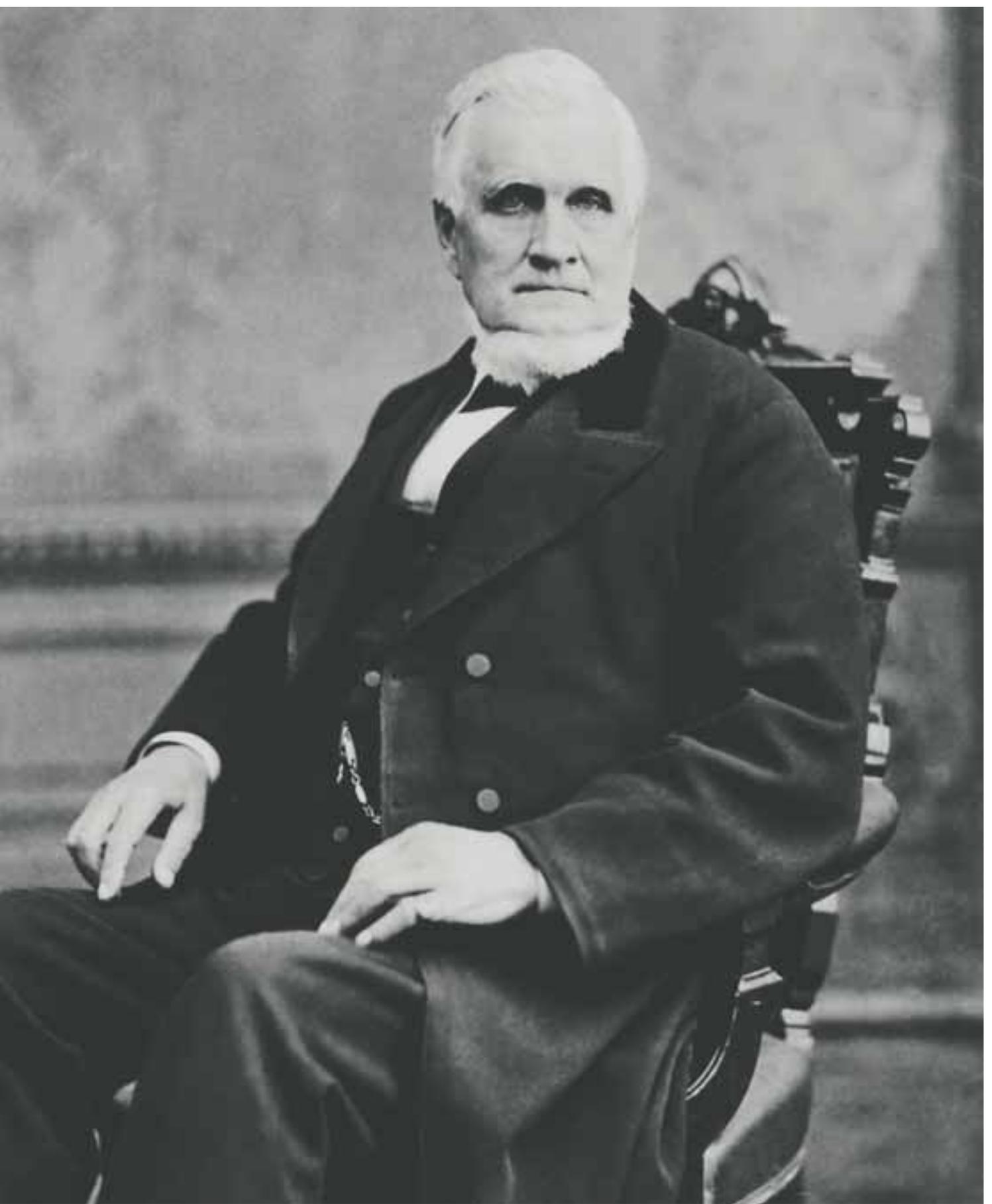
When John Taylor did leave England in 1832, he traveled to Canada, following his

family, who had emigrated in 1830. There he met and married Leonora Cannon. Canada was also where he encountered a missionary named Parley P. Pratt, an Apostle of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Many in the Methodist congregation where Elder Pratt preached were thrilled with his message until he told them of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the gold plates. Several of the men refused to listen further. John Taylor reminded them: “We are here, ostensibly in search of truth. Hitherto we have fully investigated other creeds and doctrines and proven them false. Why should we fear to investigate Mormonism? This gentleman, Mr. Pratt, has brought to us many doctrines that correspond with our own views. . . . We have prayed to God to send us a messenger, if He has a true Church on earth. . . . If I find his religion true, I shall accept it, no matter what the consequences may be.”³

John Taylor continued investigating the

The teachings of John Taylor are the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society curriculum for 2003, the fourth in the series of Teachings of Presidents of the Church.



gospel, and on 9 May 1836 he and Leonora were baptized. In his later years, President Taylor remarked, “When I had investigated the subject, and became convinced that it was true, I said, ‘I am in for it; I must embrace it; I cannot reject the principles of eternal truth.’”⁴

Defender of Truth

*Truth, eternal truth, is the groundwork of the Christian’s hope.*⁵

John Taylor served as the Church’s presiding officer in Canada for two years. In March 1837, he went to Kirtland in the United States to meet with the Prophet Joseph Smith. At the time, the Church was suffering heavy persecution, and even some of the Apostles were leaning toward apostasy. Elder Pratt approached John Taylor and

expressed some disapproval concerning the Prophet Joseph, to which Elder Taylor replied: “I am surprised to hear you speak so, Brother Parley. Before you left Canada you bore a strong testimony to Joseph Smith being a Prophet of God. . . . Now Brother Parley, it is not man that I am following, but the Lord. The principles you taught me led me to Him, and I now have the same testimony that you then rejoiced in. If the work was true six months ago, it is true today; if Joseph Smith was then a prophet, he is now a prophet.”⁶

On 19 December 1838, 30-year-old John Taylor was ordained an Apostle at Far West, Missouri. Elder Brigham Young and Elder Heber C. Kimball performed the ordination under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who was in Liberty Jail.

Elder Taylor was appointed associate editor, then editor, of the Times and Seasons, the Church’s main publication at that time. John Taylor’s home in Nauvoo was adjacent to the printing office.



Facing an angry group opposed to the Church, Elder Taylor disarmed them with his words and boldly said, “Gentlemen come on with your tar and feathers, your victim is ready.”



Champion of Liberty

*We have a right to liberty—that was a right that God gave to all men.*⁷

On one occasion, arrangements had been made for Elder Taylor to speak to a large group near Columbus, Ohio. Shortly before the meeting, some of the brethren overheard that several men were planning to tar and feather Elder Taylor.

Undaunted, Elder Taylor stood before the congregation and began his remarks by stating:

“I see around me the sons of . . . noble sires, who, rather than bow to the behests of a tyrant, pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honors to burst those fetters, enjoy freedom themselves, bequeath it to their posterity, or die in the attempt. . . .

“. . . I have been informed that you purpose to tar and feather me, for my religious opinions. Is this the boon you have inherited from your fathers? Is this the blessing they purchased with their dearest hearts’ blood—this your liberty?”

Then, tearing open his vest, he said, “Gentlemen come on with your tar and feathers, your victim is ready.”⁸

The audience was silent, and no one moved. Elder Taylor paused for some moments, and then he continued to preach with power for nearly three hours.

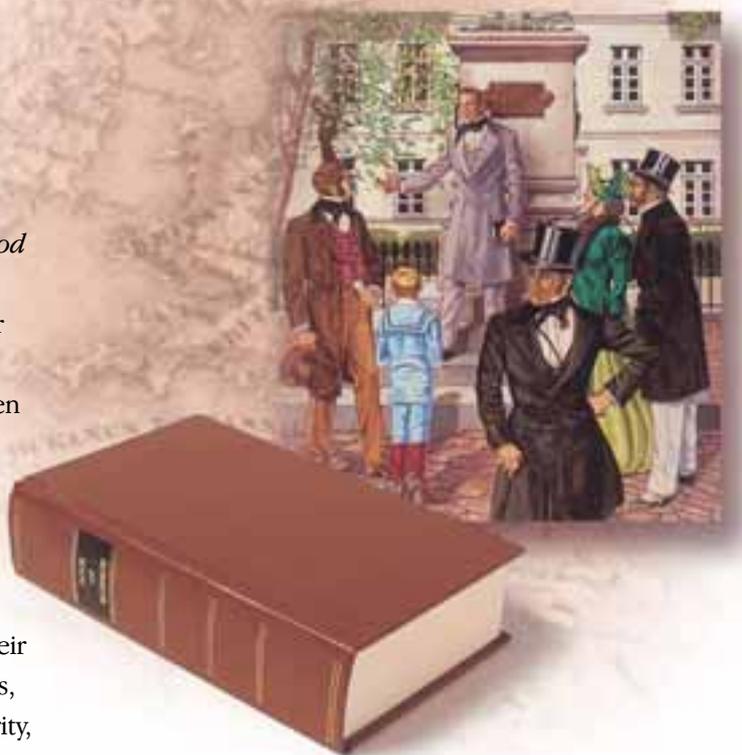
Missionary Experiences

*[Missionaries] go forth as the angels of mercy bearing the precious seeds of the gospel.*⁹

Once Elder Taylor accepted the restored gospel, he was eager to share it with others. He served many missions, totaling 87 months from 1839 to 1857, trusting in the Lord to care for his family since he often had to leave them in difficult circumstances.

At age 31, Elder Taylor embarked on his first mission to the British Isles, where he was the first missionary to preach the gospel in Ireland and on the Isle of Man. He also helped prepare the first edition of the Book of Mormon published outside the United States.

Upon returning home from his first mission to



While on his first mission to the British Isles, John Taylor helped prepare the first edition of the Book of Mormon published outside the United States.

England, he found his wife, Leonora, gravely ill. Elder Taylor called in the elders and anointed Leonora and blessed her. Through their faith and prayers, she was restored to health.

The suffering of his family weighed heavily on Elder Taylor’s shoulders. However, it seemed that the more challenging the task, the more steadfast Elder Taylor became in spreading the gospel. He remarked: “I, myself, have traveled hundreds of thousands of miles preaching the gospel; and without purse or scrip, trusting in the Lord. Did he ever forsake me? Never, no never. I always was provided for, for which I feel to praise God my Heavenly Father.”¹⁰

Between missions, Elder Taylor was appointed associate editor of the *Times and Seasons*, the Church’s main publication at that time. After a year, he was appointed editor and remained so until 1846, when the Saints were driven out of Nauvoo. His writing skills were a blessing to the Saints. He also became editor of another paper, the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, which contained information about the arts, science, religion, and general news of the day in Nauvoo.

Several days after the Martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum, John Taylor discovered that one ball of shot, aimed at his heart, had smashed into the crystal of his pocket watch, preserving his life.

Not all was well in Nauvoo, even though the Saints were prospering. Persecution was increasing, and the Prophet Joseph had been accused of being an accessory in the attempted assassination of Lilburn W. Boggs, the former governor of Missouri. Elder Taylor's allegiance to the Prophet never wavered; he showed his support through editorials in the newspapers he edited. However, mobs and apostates stirred anger into the hearts of the Missourians.

The Martyrdom

*The Seer, the Seer, Joseph the Seer!
I'll sing of the Prophet ever dear.*¹¹

On 27 June 1844 Elder Taylor, Elder Willard Richards, also of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Prophet's brother Hyrum were in Carthage Jail awaiting word from the governor. While the four friends waited in prison, Elder Taylor sang the hymn "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief." The mood was somber and melancholy. "Shortly Hyrum asked him to sing the song again, to which he replied:

"Brother Hyrum, I do not feel like singing."

"Oh, never mind; commence singing and you will get the spirit of it."

"Soon after finishing the song the second time, as he was sitting at one of the front windows of the jail, he saw a number of men, with painted faces. . . . The mob reaching the landing in front of the door, and thinking it was locked, fired a shot through the key hole. Hyrum and Doctor Richards sprang back, when instantly another ball crashed through the panel of the door and struck Hyrum



in the face; at the same instant a ball . . . entered his back, and he fell exclaiming, 'I am a dead man!'. . .

" . . . Elder Taylor took his place next [to] the door, and with a heavy walking stick . . . parried the guns as they were thrust through the doorway and discharged. . . .

" . . . Streams of fire as thick as a man's arm belched forth from the ever increasing number of guns in the door-way, yet calm, energetic and determined, Elder Taylor beat down the muzzles of those murderous guns.

"That's right, Brother Taylor, parry them off as well as you can,' said Joseph, as he stood behind him."

But as the gunfire continued and more mobbers pushed their way up the stairs, Elder Taylor sprang for the open window.

"As [Elder Taylor] was in the act of leaping from the window, a ball fired from the door-way struck him about midway of his left thigh. He fell helpless on the window sill and would have dropped on the outside of the jail—when another shot from the outside, striking the watch in his vest pocket, threw him back into the room. . . . He drew himself as rapidly as possible in his crippled condition under the bedstead that stood near the window.

"While on his way three other bullets struck him; one a little below the left knee—it was never extracted; another tore away the flesh to the size of a man's hand from his

left hip and spattered the wall with blood and the mangled fragments; another entered the forepart of his left arm, a little above the wrist, and, passing down by the joint, lodged in the palm of his left hand.”

While he lay in pain, he heard the mob shout that the Prophet had leaped from the window.

“Dr. Richards . . . confirmed his worst fears—the Prophet was dead!

“‘I felt,’ says Elder Taylor, ‘a dull, lonely, sickening sensation at the news.’”¹²

Several days later, Elder Taylor discovered that one ball of shot, aimed at his heart, had smashed into the crystal of his pocket watch, preventing him from falling from the jail window. He said, “I felt that the Lord had preserved me by a special act of mercy; that my time had not yet come, and that I had still a work to perform upon the earth.”¹³

As a witness to the Martyrdom, Elder Taylor wrote the powerful and eloquent words that are now section 135 of the Doctrine and Covenants: “Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it” (v. 3).

Trials and Afflictions

*We have learned many things through suffering. We call it suffering. I call it a school of experience.*¹⁴

The Saints were soon forced to leave Nauvoo. Elder Taylor and his family and their group of pioneers arrived in Salt Lake City on 5 October 1847. The following August the Saints enjoyed a bounteous harvest after a serious infestation of black crickets. Amid all the worries of planting and harvesting and building homes, “many leaned on [John Taylor’s] strength in those days. When despair settled over the colony he infused it with hope; when the weak faltered, he strengthened them; when the fearful trembled, he encouraged them; those cast down with sorrow, he comforted and cheered.”¹⁵ His strength was always there to help buoy up the Saints.

At age 71, John Taylor became President of the Church.

On the day he was sustained, 10 October 1880, he shared his philosophy concerning trials:

“So far as I am concerned, I say, let everything come as God has ordained it. . . .

“I used to think, if I were the Lord, I would not suffer people to be tried as they are. But I have changed my mind on that subject. Now I think . . . it purges out the meanness and corruption that stick around the Saints, like flies around molasses.”¹⁶

Integrity and Character

*I love you for your integrity to the cause of Zion.*¹⁷

One issue on which President Taylor remained steadfast was that of being honest. He was someone in whom the Saints could trust.

President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945), seventh President of the Church, told of how President Taylor resolved a quarrel between two friends:

“These men had quarreled over some business affairs, and finally concluded that they would try to get President John Taylor to help them adjust their difficulties. . . .

“ . . . They . . . asked [President Taylor] if he would listen to their story and render his decision. President Taylor willingly consented. But he said: ‘Brethren, before I hear your case, I would like very much to sing one of the songs of Zion for you.’

“Now President Taylor was a very capable singer, and interpreted sweetly and with spirit, our sacred hymns. He sang one of our hymns to the two brethren. Seeing its effect, he remarked that he never heard one of the songs of Zion but that he wanted to listen to one more, and so asked them to listen while he sang another. Of course, they consented. They both seemed to enjoy it; and, having sung the second song, he remarked that he had heard there is luck in odd numbers and so with their consent he would sing still another, which he did. Then, in his jocular way, he remarked: ‘Now brethren, I do not want to wear you out, but if you will forgive me, and listen to one more hymn, I promise to stop singing, and will hear your case.’

“The story goes that when President Taylor had finished the fourth song, the brethren were melted to tears, got up, shook hands, and asked President Taylor to excuse them for having called upon him, and for taking up his time. They then departed without his even knowing what their difficulties were.”¹⁸

Role of a Father

*Let us as parents train up our children in the fear of God and teach them the laws of life.*¹⁹

One of President Taylor’s sons, Moses W., described his father’s character through sharing family memories. He wrote:

The First Presidency in 1880: President George Q. Cannon, First Counselor; President John Taylor; and President Joseph F. Smith, Second Counselor. Background: President Taylor used his writing skills to spread the message of the Restoration.

“When gathering the fruit in the fall, father would come and inspect the baskets and selecting the largest and best fruit would say:

“‘Take the tithing out of this and be sure and pay it in full.’

“When planting trees, he was very careful to make the rows straight, each tree had to be plumb. When filling the dirt around the roots we were required to take great care of the little fibres and carefully lay each one in its place. He would remark:

“‘Take care of the little roots and the large ones will take care of themselves.’

“The first time I left home, father called me in and gave me the following counsel:

“‘Do what is right. Live your religion and the bad men will honor you for it as well as the good.’



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LDS CHURCH ARCHIVES; BACKGROUND: PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH OF LOGAN UTAH TEMPLE COURTESY OF LDS CHURCH ARCHIVES; PHOTOGRAPH OF DOORKNOB BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

President Taylor dedicated the Logan Utah Temple in 1884.

Inset: A doorknob from the temple interior is an example of pioneer builders' attention to detail.



“That is all he said, but it made such a strong impression on me, that it has saved me many a time from falling into temptation. At other times, he would say:

“‘Take the high stand and always live so that others can see that you are on a high plane.’

“He had a strong desire to keep his children under the family influence and provided play grounds for us. Even when he was past seventy years of age he would join us in our games. . . .

“. . . He was held in such high esteem by his children that to please him seemed to be their greatest desire.”²⁰

Prophet, Seer, and Revelator

*When men go forth in the name of Israel's God, there is no power on earth that can overturn the truths they advocate.*²¹

When President Brigham Young died in 1877, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles led the Church until President Taylor was sustained as Church President in 1880. During this year, the Pearl of Great Price became part of the standard works, and a new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was published, including 27 new sections.

President Taylor continued to use his writing skills and authored *The Mediation and Atonement* in 1882.

Referring to the importance of his subject, he wrote, “Having noticed the great blessings, privileges, powers and exaltations that are placed within the reach of man, through the atonement of Jesus Christ, it next becomes our duty to enquire what is required of man to place him in possession of them.”²²

In 1885 President Taylor preached his last public sermon. Because of the repercussions of the antipolygamy Edmunds Act, President Taylor was forced into exile. He

died on 25 July 1887 in Kaysville, Utah.

When the sad news of President Taylor's death was announced to the public, his counselors stated in the *Deseret News*:

“Steadfast to and immovable in the truth, few men have ever

lived who have manifested such integrity and such unflinching moral and physical courage as our beloved President who has just gone from us. He never knew the feeling of fear connected with the work of God. . . . He met every issue squarely, boldly and in a way to call forth the admiration of all who saw and heard him. Undaunted courage, unyielding firmness were among his most prominent characteristics, giving him distinction among men. . . .

“And though we have lost his presence here, his influence will still be felt. Such men may pass from this life to another, but the love which beats in their hearts for righteousness and for truth cannot die.”²³ ■

Karla C. Erickson is a member of the Mueller Park Eighth Ward, Bountiful Utah Mueller Park Stake.

NOTES

1. B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor* (1963), 27–28.
2. *Life of John Taylor*, 28.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* (2001), 209–10.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 215.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 213.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 77. Elder Pratt resolved his feelings and remained faithful.
7. *Deseret News*, 26 April 1882.
8. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 221.
9. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 74.
10. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 74.
11. John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom*, sel. G. Homer Durham (1943), 386.
12. *Life of John Taylor*, 137–40.
13. *Life of John Taylor*, 150.
14. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 203.
15. *Life of John Taylor*, 199.
16. *Gospel Kingdom*, 332–33.
17. In Conference Report, Apr. 1906, 7.
18. “Songs of the Heart,” *Improvement Era*, Sept. 1940, 522.
19. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 196.
20. “Stories and Counsel of President Taylor,” *Young Woman's Journal*, May 1905, 218–19.
21. *Gospel Kingdom*, 242.
22. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 53.
23. *Life of John Taylor*, 410–11, 415–16.

Working through My Grief

When an accidental fire took the life of our two-year-old son, I wondered if I could ever find peace again.

BY CATHARINE RASBAND

In April 1993 our water heater pilot light came into contact with gasoline fumes and exploded into flames. Our two-year-old son, Thomas, was in the middle of it. The fire department put out the fire with minimum damage to our home or possessions, but our son was severely burned. Though I longed for him to live, I could see he probably wouldn't. Within six hours of the accident, he died.

Pain and Grieving

How can I describe the horror of losing our son in this way? I have never felt greater pain; it was actually physical—my whole body ached. And at 33 years of age, after 13 years of marriage and six children, I suddenly felt vulnerable. My mind was numb and life seemed fuzzy. I functioned, but only because I had to. I missed my boy and wished I could trade places with him.

Losing my child in this way put my body and mind into total and complete shock—not only because of the horror of the accident but also because up to this point life had been pleasant with only a few difficult twists and turns. As children, my sister, my brother, and I had all survived serious illnesses. Growing up we had all been eyewitnesses to the power of the priesthood. My expectation was that everything would be fixed. Sins could be repented of, sicknesses would be overcome, and injuries would be healed.

However, with the death of our son, I learned that some things are final—at least as far as this life is concerned. I could not go back and change anything. I could not ask the Lord to give this son another chance.

Insight and Agency

During the first few days following the accident, all I could feel was acute pain, though now I realize that the Spirit of the Lord was constantly with me. Through the Spirit it became clear to me that how I acted was my choice. I couldn't change the facts. I couldn't stop the pain and the hurt, but I could choose my reactions. I looked to the scriptures for everything



With the death of our son, I learned that some things are final—at least as far as this life is concerned. I could not go back and change anything.

I could find about death and the Lord's healing balm. I couldn't sleep at night, so I searched my mind for any hymns or scriptures that I could call to my memory to find even a moment of relief.

I knew I had to accept my son's death and work through my grief. Though Thomas was gone, I knew I had the gospel of Jesus Christ and the hope of the Resurrection to help me. The strength of my testimony was of vital importance. I did a lot of soul-searching and determined that everything I had professed to believe throughout my life was indeed true.

I began to find comfort in small, simple things, such as the weather on the day of the funeral. Normally the weather in Atlanta in April is warm and beautiful, but on the day of the funeral it was unusually cold and rainy, matching the feelings in my heart. We traveled in a procession toward the cemetery, which happens to be near the Atlanta Georgia Temple. Just as we neared the temple, the sun began to shine and lifted my spirits as I was reminded that we are an eternal family. Coincidentally, about 20 smiling Primary children were standing outside the temple gates. My heart was touched.

Once at the cemetery, however, the rain began again and continued throughout the ceremony until the dedicatory prayer was finished, adding solemnity to the occasion. Then, once again, the sun came out and warmed us; I felt hope in the future.

After the funeral, I began to allow the Spirit into my heart and to feel of the love of my Savior. I consciously began to let go of some of the pain. Slowly I began to look at things in a different light. Some of the most important blessings came from the faith and prayers of our family and ward members. We actually felt physically sustained by these prayers that surrounded us. Most of our family lived 2,000 miles away, so the interaction with them was limited.

LEARNING FROM SUFFERING



"Suffering is universal; how we react to suffering is individual.

Suffering can take us one of two ways. It can be a strengthening and purifying experience combined with faith, or it can be a destructive force in our lives if we do not have the faith in the Lord's atoning sacrifice. The purpose of suffering, however, is to build and strengthen us. We learn obedience by the things we suffer."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Your Sorrow Shall Be Turned to Joy," *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 66.

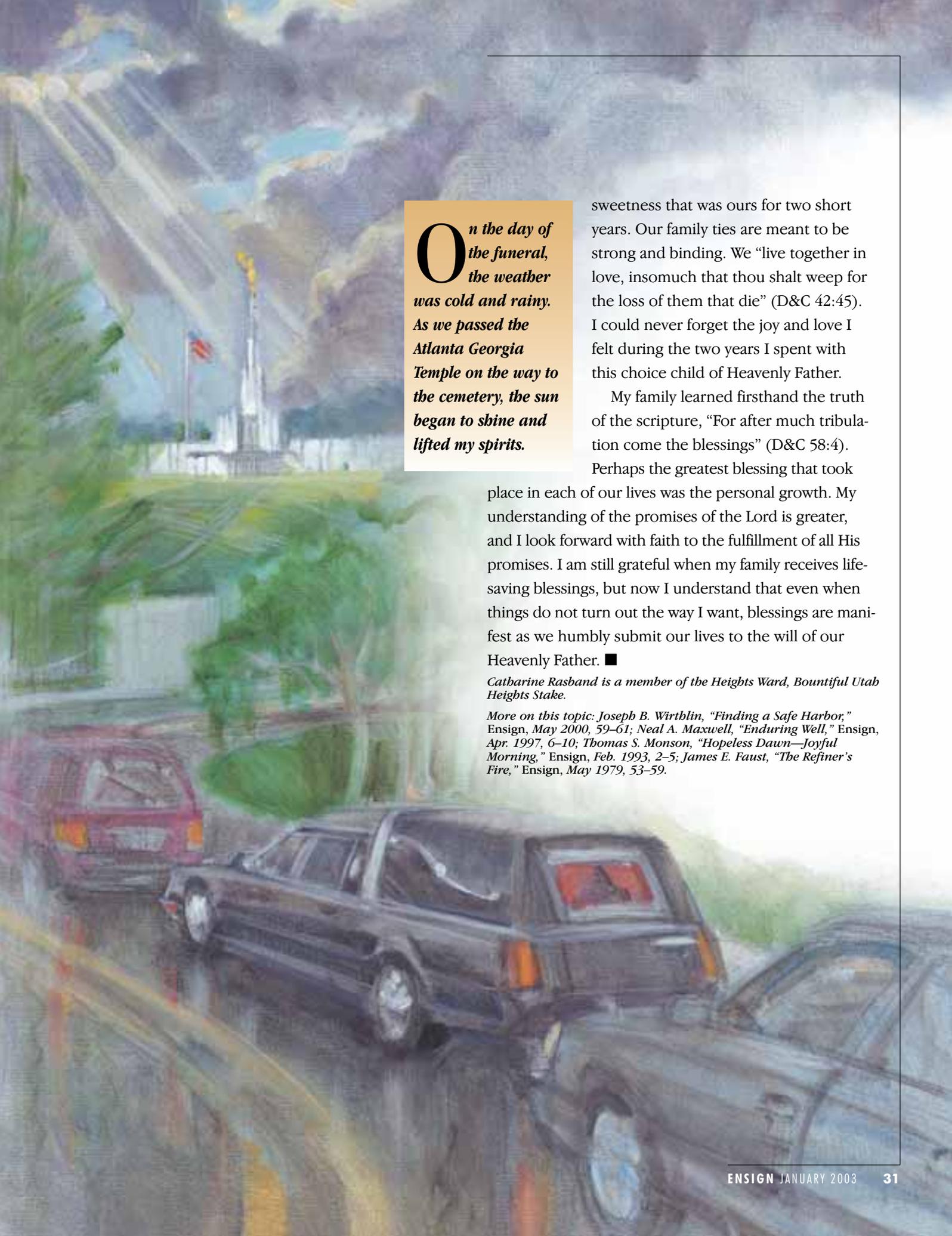
But our ward family more than made up for this lack. My two wonderful visiting teachers came faithfully, stayed long, and listened to me talk. Friends took me to lunch, called, and also listened. One of our friends put the names of each of our family members on the prayer roll at the temple. We were not left alone. The Spirit of the Lord was very strong, and I had no doubts that the Lord loved me and was aware of my pain and struggling.

Turning Point

As I turned to the scriptures, I read in 2 Nephi 9:20 that God knows "all things, and there is not anything save he knows it." If the Lord knew beforehand what would happen to our son, then the word *accident* takes on a greater meaning. Yes, it was an accident, but the fact that the Lord knew that such a thing could happen in mortality made it easier for me to accept and bear. I felt trust and faith in Him. I knew I could cast my burdens on the Lord and He would sustain me (see Psalm 55:22). I realized that simply because God knows all things does not imply that He is responsible for what happens. I am grateful for the Atonement that can compensate for whatever happens and can heal all my wounds.

I don't think I could ever have coped without the hope given us throughout the scriptures and the writings of the prophets. I love and accept the Prophet Joseph Smith's teachings on the innocence of children and their right to inherit the celestial kingdom (see D&C 137:7). These truths are also profoundly expressed in Mosiah 3 and in Moroni 8. We find peace in the knowledge that we shall have our son again.

I have learned that time helps, but even after eight years I seem to think about my son every day. Sometimes I still feel a pang of hurt in my heart, but with the memory of my son I also remember the



On the day of the funeral, the weather was cold and rainy. As we passed the Atlanta Georgia Temple on the way to the cemetery, the sun began to shine and lifted my spirits.

sweetness that was ours for two short years. Our family ties are meant to be strong and binding. We “live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die” (D&C 42:45). I could never forget the joy and love I felt during the two years I spent with this choice child of Heavenly Father.

My family learned firsthand the truth of the scripture, “For after much tribulation come the blessings” (D&C 58:4).

Perhaps the greatest blessing that took place in each of our lives was the personal growth. My understanding of the promises of the Lord is greater, and I look forward with faith to the fulfillment of all His promises. I am still grateful when my family receives life-saving blessings, but now I understand that even when things do not turn out the way I want, blessings are manifest as we humbly submit our lives to the will of our Heavenly Father. ■

Catharine Rasband is a member of the Heights Ward, Bountiful Utah Heights Stake.

More on this topic: Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Finding a Safe Harbor,” Ensign, May 2000, 59–61; Neal A. Maxwell, “Enduring Well,” Ensign, Apr. 1997, 6–10; Thomas S. Monson, “Hopeless Dawn—Joyful Morning,” Ensign, Feb. 1993, 2–5; James E. Faust, “The Refiner’s Fire,” Ensign, May 1979, 53–59.



Teaching, Preaching, Healing

BY ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

We quickly and rightfully think of Christ as a teacher—the greatest teacher who ever lived or ever will live. The New Testament is full of His teachings, His sayings, His sermons, His parables. One way or another, He is a teacher on every page of that book. But even as He taught, He was consciously doing something in addition to that, something that put His teaching in perspective.

Following the Savior's initial call to those first disciples (not yet Apostles), the work began. This is what Matthew says: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, *teaching* in their synagogues, and *preaching* the gospel of the kingdom, and *healing* all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:23; emphasis added).

Now, the teaching and the preaching we know and would expect. But we may not be quite as prepared to see healing in the same way. Yet from this earliest beginning, from the first hour, healing is mentioned almost as if it were a synonym for teaching and preaching. At least there is a clear relationship among the three. In fact, the passage that follows says more about the healing than the teaching or the preaching.

Matthew continues: "And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were



I believe Christ wants our teaching to lead to healing of the spiritual kind.



POOL OF BETHESDA. BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH. © COURTESY OF BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them” (v. 24).

What then follows is the masterful Sermon on the Mount, six and a half pages that would take six and a half years to teach properly, I suppose. But the moment that sermon was over, the Savior came down from the mountain and was healing again. In rapid succession He healed a leper, the centurion’s servant, Peter’s mother-in-law, then a group described only as “many that were possessed with devils” (Matthew 8:16). In short, it says, He “healed all that were sick” (v. 16).

Driven to cross the Sea of Galilee by the crowds that swarmed around Him, He subsequently cast devils out of two who were dwelling in the Gadarene tombs and then sailed back to “his own city” (Matthew 9:1), where He healed a man confined to bed with palsy, healed a woman with a 12-year issue of blood (in what I think is one of the sweetest and most remarkable moments in all of the New Testament), and raised the ruler’s daughter from the dead.

Then He restored the sight of two blind men, followed by the casting out of a devil which had robbed a man of the ability to speak. That is a quick summary of the first six chapters in the New Testament devoted to Christ’s ministry. Then this verse. See if it has an echo for you: “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, *teaching* in their synagogues, and *preaching* the gospel of the kingdom, and *healing* every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matthew 9:35; emphasis added).



That is, of course, except for a few words, exactly the verse we read five chapters earlier. Then this:

“But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

“Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (vv. 36–38).

With that He called the Twelve and charged them with this directive. “Go,” He said, “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

“*Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils:* freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:6–8; emphasis added).

We know the Savior to be the Master Teacher. He is that and more. And when He says the bulk of the harvest yet lies before us and that there are far too few laborers, we immediately think of the missionaries and others who need to teach. *But the call is for a certain kind of teacher, a teacher who heals in the process.*

Now, let me make myself absolutely clear. By “healing,” as I have been speaking of it, I am *not* talking about formal use of the priesthood or administration to the sick or any such thing as that. That is *not* the role of those called as teachers in our Church organizations.

But I believe our teaching can lead to healing of the spiritual kind. I cannot believe that so much of what Matthew wrote could be focused on the context of the Savior’s ministry to distressed, troubled, distraught people if it were for no purpose. As with the Master, wouldn’t it be wonderful to measure the success of our teaching by the healing that takes place in the lives of others?

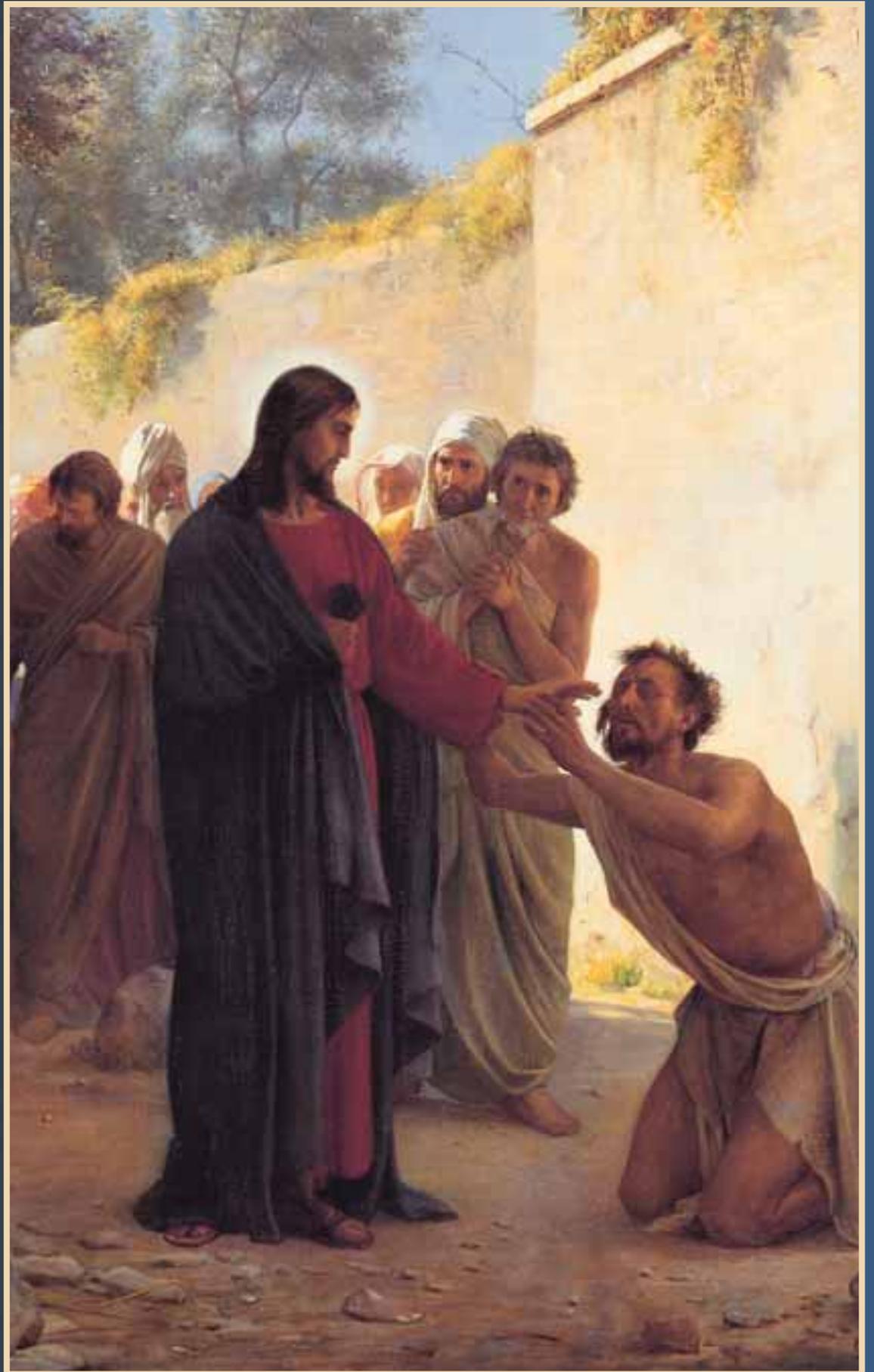
Let me be a little more specific. As you teach, rather than just giving a lesson, please try a little harder to help that spiritually blind basketball star really see, or that spiritually deaf homecoming queen really hear, or the spiritually lame student body president really walk. Could we



FAR LEFT, ARISE AND WALK, BY SIMON DEWEY, COURTESY OF ALTUS FINE ART, AMERICAN FORK, UTAH; LEFT, CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER, BY HEINRICH HOFMANN

We know the Savior to be the Master Teacher. He is that and more. His call is for a certain kind of teacher, a teacher who heals in the process.

*As with the Master,
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try a little harder to fortify others so powerfully that whatever temptations the devil throws at them, they will be able to withstand and thus truly in that moment be free from evil? Could we try a little harder to teach so powerfully and so spiritually that we really help that individual who walks alone, who lives alone, who weeps in the dark of the night?

“Therefore, What?”

Perhaps a lesson from life in the Quorum of the Twelve will help me say what I want to say on this point and avoid any confusion on your part.

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and himself a master teacher, has a question he often asks when we have made a presentation or given some sort of exhortation to one another in the Twelve. He looks up as if to say, “Are you through?” and then says to the speaker (and, by implication, to the rest of the group), “Therefore, what?”

“Therefore, what?” I think that is what the Savior answered day in and day out as an inseparable element of His teaching and preaching. His sermons and exhortations were to no avail if the actual lives of His disciples did not change.

“Therefore, what?” You and I know that too many people have not made the connection between what they say they believe and how they actually live their lives.

Pray that your teaching will bring change. Pray that, like the lyrics of a now-forgotten song, your lessons will literally cause someone to “straighten up and fly right” (Nat King Cole, “Straighten Up and Fly Right” [1943]). We want them straight, and we want them right. We want them blessed, happy in this life, and saved in the world to come.

God Is in Charge

The book of Acts, which introduces the post-Resurrection portion of the New Testament, is technically called “The Acts of the Apostles.” That is an important ecclesiastical idea in the book, namely that the Apostles were ordained representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ



and were thus authorized to continue to lead the Church in His name.

But consider what they faced. Consider the plight, the fear, the confusion, the devastation facing the members of the new little Christian Church after Christ was crucified. They may have understood something of what was happening, but they couldn’t have understood all of it. The people must have been very fearful and very confused, and the Brethren had their hands full trying to provide leadership.

Not surprisingly, from the outset (at least from the first verse of the book of Acts) the declaration was that the Church would continue to be *divinely* led, not mortally led. And that was important for the people to hear in that terrible hour of confusion and fear. Indeed, a more complete title for the book of Acts could appropriately be something like “The Acts of the Resurrected Christ Working through the Holy Spirit in the Lives and Ministries of His Ordained Apostles.” Now, having said that, you can see why someone voted for the shorter title—but my suggested title is more accurate! Listen to Luke’s opening lines:

“The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

“Until the day in which he was taken up, *after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen*” (Acts 1:1–2; emphasis added).

The direction of the Church was the same. The location of the Savior had been altered, but the direction and leadership of the Church were exactly the same. Then, having made that introductory point, we get manifestations of the Lord’s power through the Holy Ghost at every turn. The first teaching of the resurrected Christ to the Twelve in the book of Acts is that they “shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:5) and that “ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (v. 8).



After He ascended to heaven before their very eyes, Peter got the remaining members of the Church together—all 120 of them. (Can you see what an impact these troubles and opposition had had on their numbers?) One hundred and twenty people gathered, and Peter said, “Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the *Holy Ghost* by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas” (v. 16; emphasis added). In filling Judas’s vacancy in the Twelve, they prayed exactly the way the Quorum of the Twelve and First Presidency pray today: “*Thou, Lord*, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these . . . *thou* hast chosen” (v. 24; emphasis added). And Matthias was called.

But that first chapter which turns everyone heavenward, so clearly dramatizing the divine guidance that would continue to direct the Church, is only preparation for chapter 2. In those passages, the very name *Pentecost* comes into the Christian vocabulary as synonymous with singular spiritual manifestations and a divine outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the people. Revelation came from heaven with the sound “as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house” (Acts 2:2), and it filled the brethren. “There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak . . . as the Spirit gave them utterance” (vv. 3–4).

Peter, as chief Apostle and President of the Church, stood and acknowledged this outpouring. He quoted Joel, saying that God would in the last days “pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

“And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy” (vv. 17–18).

Peter continued: “Ye men of Israel [he’s speaking to the larger congregation], hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you . . . this Jesus hath God raised up . . . by the right hand of God exalted, and *having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost*, he

hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (vv. 22, 32–33; emphasis added).

It is a magnificent passage. Those not yet baptized, moved by this Spirit, asked what they should do. Peter told them to be baptized for the remission of sins and to

“receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (v. 38), and 3,000 of them did so. Later, when the lame man was raised to health on the steps of the temple and the crowd thought Peter and John had done something wonderful, Peter chastised them, said it was not mortal power or any holiness from the disciples that made the man to walk, but rather that of Jesus, whom these people of Jerusalem had “delivered up” and “killed” (Acts 3:13, 15). He then testified that Jesus was still leading the Church through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit and would continue to do so until He came again in “the times of restitution of all things” (v. 21).

When 5,000 more people joined the Church, the local Pharisees and Sadducees were stunned. They demanded to know how all of this was being done. Peter gave the classic answer you must always give others. “*Filled with the Holy Ghost*,” he declared that it was done in and “by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth” (Acts 4:8, 10; emphasis added). Christ was not only directing the actions of His Apostles through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit; He was also speaking through them by the same Spirit. This is a lesson about the governance of the Church of Jesus Christ, both ancient and modern.

The Father and the Son direct this work still, having Their impact upon Church leaders, teachers, and individuals through the means of the Holy Ghost. And it is through that same instrumentality that we must have our impact upon those we teach.

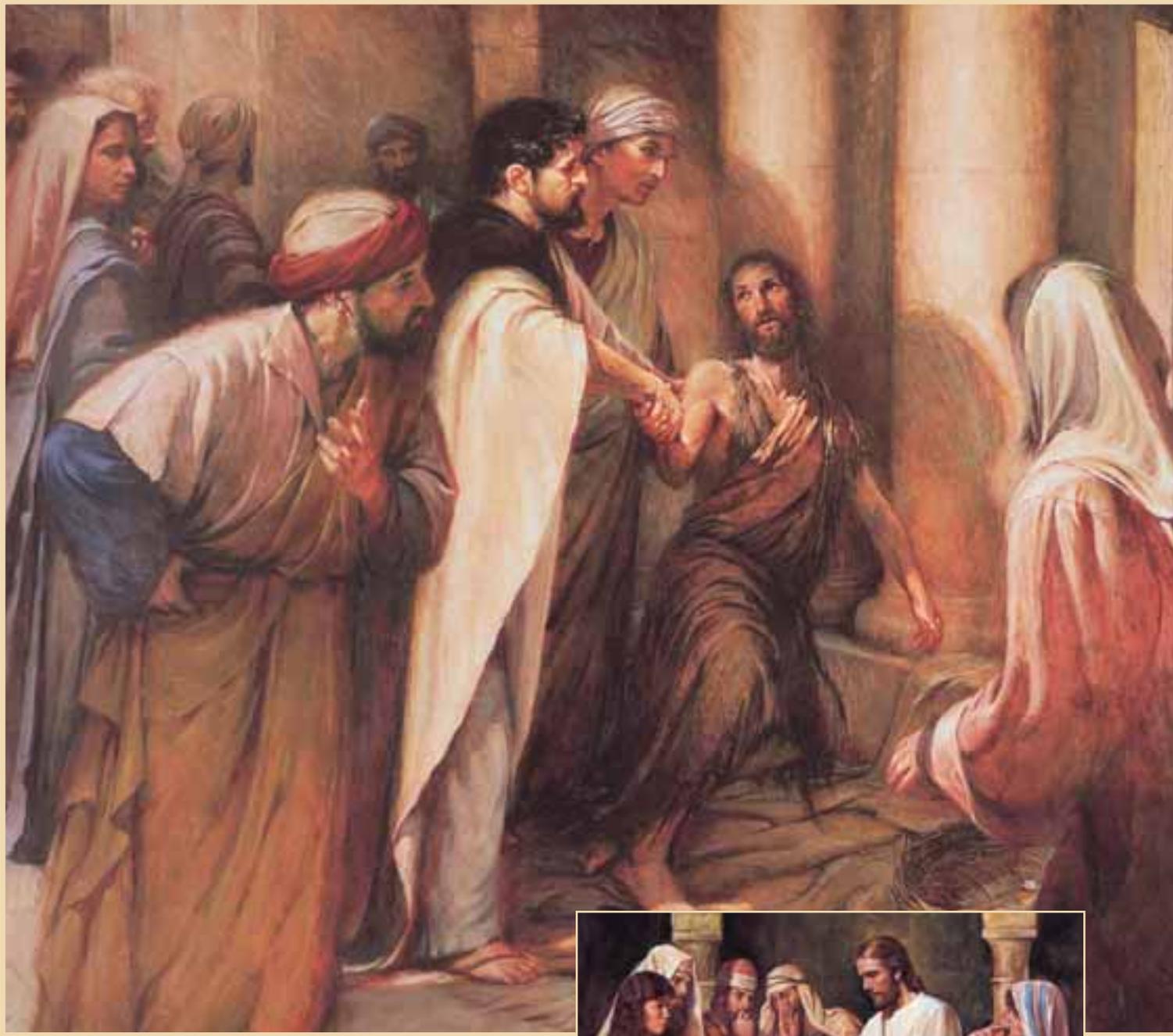
Teach by the Spirit

Please teach by the Holy Spirit. If we do not teach that way, then by scriptural definition we are teaching “some other way” (D&C 50:17). And any other way “is not of God” (v. 20). Give your students the opportunity for a spiritual experience in every way you can. That is what the New

Could we try a little harder to teach so powerfully and so spiritually that we really help that individual who walks alone, who lives alone, who weeps in the dark of the night?



FAR LEFT: JARUS'S DAUGHTER, BY DEL PARSON; LEFT: CHRIST AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLEROD, DENMARK



When the lame man was raised to health on the steps of the temple and the crowd thought Peter and John had done something wonderful, Peter chastised them, said it was not mortal power or any holiness from the disciples that made the man to walk, but rather that of Jesus.



Testament is trying to do for you. That is the message of the Gospels. It is the message of the book of Acts. It is the message of all scripture. Those spiritual experiences recorded in those sacred writings will help keep others on track and in the Church in our day, just as such experiences did for those members in New Testament times.

The scriptures say, “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). This teaches not just that you won’t teach or that you can’t teach or that it will be pretty shoddy teaching. No, it is stronger than that. It is the imperative form of the verb. “Ye *shall not* teach.” Put a *thou* in there for *ye* and you have Mount Sinai language. This is a commandment. These are God’s students, not yours, just like it is Christ’s Church, not Peter’s or Paul’s or Joseph’s or Brigham’s.

Take heart. Let the Spirit work in you in ways that you may not be privileged to see or even recognize. More will go on than you think if you are honest in your heart and trying to live as purely as you can. And when you get to those supreme and nearly impossible-to-teach moments of Gethsemane and Calvary and the Ascension, I would ask that you remember, among many things, the following two applications you could make.

Christ Remained True

First, in His unspeakably wrenching and nature-shattering pain, *Christ remained true*.

Matthew said He was “sorrowful and very heavy . . . exceeding sorrowful, even unto death” (Matthew 26:37–38). He went alone into the garden, intentionally left the Brethren outside to wait. He had to do this alone. He dropped to His knees and then, the Apostle says, He “fell on his face” (v. 39). Luke says He was “in an agony” and prayed so earnestly His sweat became “great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44). Mark says He fell and cried, “Abba, Father.” This is not abstract theology now. This is a Son pleading with His Father, “All things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me” (Mark 14:36).

Who could resist that from any child, especially the perfect Child? “You can do anything. I know You can do anything. Please take this cup from me.”

That whole prayer, Mark noted, was asking that if it were possible, this hour would be stricken from the plan. The Lord said, in effect, “If there is another path, I would rather walk it. If there is any other way—any other way—I will gladly embrace it.” “Let this cup pass from me,” Matthew records (Matthew 26:39). “Remove this cup from me,” records Luke (Luke 22:42). But in the end, the cup did not pass.

In the end, He yielded His will to the will of His Father and said, “Not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). That is, for all intents and purposes, the last moment in the divine conversation between Father and Son in Jesus’ mortal ministry. From there on the die had been cast. He would see it through no matter what.

And from that last declaration in the Old World we get this first declaration in the New. To the Nephites gathered at the temple, He would say, “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, . . . the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and . . . I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning” (3 Nephi 11:10–11). That is His own introduction of Himself, the declaration He feels will best tell these people who He is.

If you can leave your students with one principal commitment in response to the Savior’s incomparable sacrifice for them, His payment for their transgressions, His sorrow for their sins, leave with them the necessity to obey—to yield in their own difficult domain and hours of decision to “the will of the Father” (v. 11), whatever the cost. They won’t always do that, any better than you and I have been able to do it, but that ought to be their goal; that ought to be their aim. The thing Christ seems most anxious to stress about His mission—beyond the personal virtues, beyond the magnificent sermons, and even beyond the healing—is that He submitted His will to the will of the Father.

We are all willful people too much of the time. Therefore, the message the Savior has for every one of us is

that our offering, in similitude of His offering, is a broken heart and a contrite spirit (see 3 Nephi 9:20; D&C 59:8). We must break out of our petty selves and weep for our sins and for the sins of the world. We must plead with others to yield to the Father, to yield to the Son, to yield to the Holy Spirit. There is no other way. Without likening ourselves to Him too much, because it would be sacrilegious to do, please know that the cup that cannot pass is a cup that comes in our life as well as in His. It comes in a much lesser way and to a much lesser degree, but it comes often enough to teach us that we have to obey no matter what.

Christ Knows the Way

The second lesson of the Atonement that I would ask you to remember is related to the first. If those you teach feel that they have somehow made too many mistakes already, if they feel that they live and labor lower than the light of Christ can shine, teach them that God has “a forgiving disposition,” that Christ is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, long-suffering and full of goodness” (*Lectures on Faith* [1985], 42). Mercy, with its sister virtues of repentance and forgiveness, is at the very heart of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Everything in the gospel teaches us that we can change if we really want to, that we can be helped if we truly ask for it, that we can be made whole, whatever the problems of the past.

In spite of life’s tribulations, there is help for all of us on this journey. When Christ bids us to yield, to submit, to obey the Father, He knows how to help us do that. He has walked that way, asking us to do what He has done, but He has made it very much easier for our travel. He knows where the sharp stones and the stumbling blocks lie and where the thorns and the thistles are the most severe. He knows where the path is perilous, and He knows which way to go when the road forks and nightfall comes. He knows that because He has suffered “pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind . . . that he

may know . . . how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (*Alma* 7:11–12). *To succor* means “to run to.” I testify that Christ will run to us, and is running even now, if we will but receive the extended arm of His mercy.

When we stagger or stumble, He is there to steady and strengthen us. In the end He is there to save us, and for all this He gave His life. However dim our days may seem, they have been a lot darker for the Savior of the world. As a reminder of those days, Jesus has chosen, even in a resurrected, otherwise perfected body, to retain for the benefit of His disciples the wounds in His hands and in His feet and in His side—signs, if you will, that painful things happen even to the pure and the perfect; signs, if you will, that pain in this world is *not* evidence that God doesn’t love you; signs, if you will, that problems pass and happiness can be ours. Remind others that it is the wounded Christ who is the Captain of our souls, He who yet bears the scars of our forgiveness, the lesions of His love and humility, the torn flesh of obedience and sacrifice.

These wounds are the principal way we are to recognize Him when He comes. He may invite us forward, as He has invited others, to see and to feel those marks. If not before, then surely at that time, we will remember with Isaiah that it was for us that a God was “despised and rejected . . . ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,” that “he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (*Isaiah* 53:3, 5).

I love this work. Cherish your opportunity to immerse yourselves this year in the majestic New Testament and in the life of Him of whom it testifies. This is His Church, and we are engaged in a great work with a magnificent privilege to love the scriptures and learn from them and to bear witness to one another that they are true. ■

Adapted from an address given at a Church Educational System religious educators conference at Brigham Young University on 8 August 2000.





FAR LEFT: THE CRUCIFIXION, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERØD, DENMARK; LEFT: CHRIST IN GETHSEMANE, BY HEINRICH HOFMANN

The thing Christ seems most anxious to stress about His mission—beyond the personal virtues, beyond the magnificent sermons, and even beyond the healing—is that He submitted His will to the will of the Father.



WORDS
OF
JESUS

Chastity

*“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God”
(Matthew 5:8).*

BY ELDER SHELDON F. CHILD

Of the Seventy



Immoral images from movies, television, magazines, and the Internet can put thoughts into our minds that compromise our happiness today and, if not repented of, for eternity.

Everything, even our eternal destiny, begins with a thought. Pure thoughts lead to pure acts, pure acts lead to pure habits, pure habits lead to pure character, and pure character leads to eternal life.¹ Thoughts may seem like little things, but in reality they are crucial to our eternal salvation. Lofty thoughts lead us into light and to the Savior. Evil thoughts lead us into darkness, along the path that Satan would have us go.

These truths form the central theme of the Savior’s teachings on chastity and moral cleanliness. He said, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). The pure in heart are those who love the Lord, who seek to follow Him and keep His commandments, who are striving to live virtuous lives and endure faithfully to the end. The pure in heart are those who control their thoughts to keep themselves free from immoral fantasies and deeds.

Pure Thoughts

Jesus was clearly concerned that His disciples learn to deny themselves of all unholy sexual desires. In His Sermon on the Mount

the Lord made His law of morality clear:

“Behold, it is written by them of old time, that thou shalt not commit adultery.

“But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

“Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 5:29–31).

Then, to make His point even more forcefully to His disciples, the Savior used a parable concerning the sin of lust: “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell” (Matthew 5:29).

It is significant that the Lord chose the symbolism of casting out an eye, for it is often through our sense of vision that Satan seeks to take control of our thoughts. Jesus said, “The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single to the glory of God, thy whole body shall be full of light” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:22). Immoral

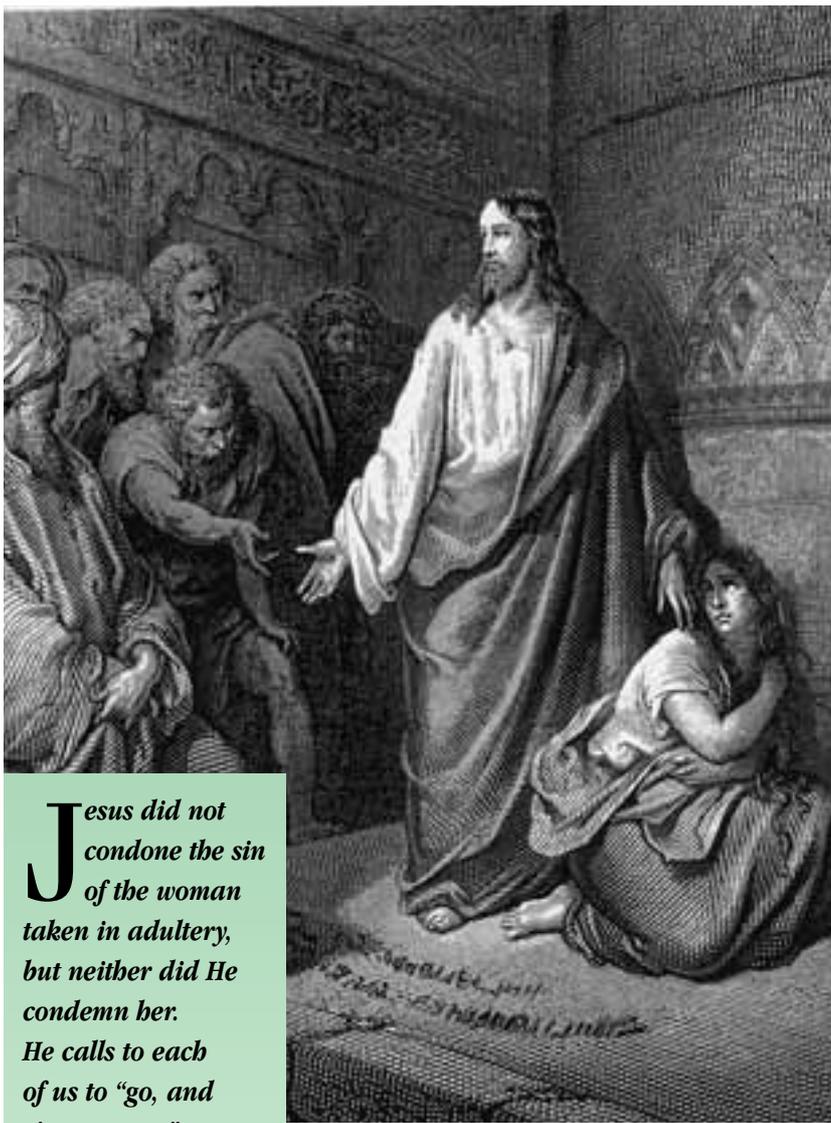


images from movies, television, magazines, and the Internet can put thoughts into our minds that compromise our happiness today and, if not repented of, for eternity.

A young man recently visited me asking for advice on finding employment. He had lost his job and was desperately seeking work. When I asked why he had lost his job, he reluctantly told me that at work he had begun viewing pornographic photographs on the Internet. It had seemed like such a harmless thing at the time. Gradually he had become addicted, and it had devastated his life. Tears came to his eyes when he told me that he had lost not only his job but his family, his self-respect, and his standing in the Church—everything that was important to him. My heart went out to him.

I am not a computer expert, but I am familiar with the term *GIGO*. It means that if I put “Garbage In,” I will get “Garbage Out.” When we take impure thoughts

It is so very important to keep our hearts sweet and pure—to treasure up in our minds those things that will lead us to Christ.



JESUS AND THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY BY, GUSTAVE DORE

Jesus did not condone the sin of the woman taken in adultery, but neither did He condemn her. He calls to each of us to “go, and sin no more.”

(garbage) into our hearts and minds, unholy actions will be the result.

“For from within, out of the heart of men,” Jesus taught, “proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21–23).

Satan is out to destroy us, and he knows that it can all begin with a simple thought. He will use every method and medium to rob us of that greatest of all gifts—eternal life. It is so very important to keep our minds sweet and pure—to read books that edify, listen to music that uplifts, and treasure up in our minds those things that will lead us to Christ. As the

Savior explained, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21). By treasuring that which is pure and uplifting, our thoughts and our hearts become pure.

Pure Deeds

Living the law of chastity also means that we refrain from sexual sin. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments, there was no misunderstanding the Lord’s standard regarding moral purity: “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14). So serious was the Lord on this matter that adultery was punishable by death under the Mosaic law (see Bible Dictionary, “Adultery,” 604). Jesus reemphasized the divine sanction against adultery when a certain ruler asked what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus answered, “Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother” (Luke 18:20). In this reply the Savior also stressed the seriousness of sexual sin by mentioning adultery first.

Many in society today treat lightly the commandment to be sexually pure. Pre-marital sex and extramarital relationships are far too commonplace. Promiscuity threatens homes and destroys families. The Master invites us to leave worldliness behind and become His disciples:

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.

“And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments.

“Therefore, forsake the world, and save your souls” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:25–26, 29).

The Woman Taken in Adultery

The story of the Savior's brief encounter with a woman taken in adultery gives us valuable insights regarding moral purity (see John 8:1–11).

Early one morning as Jesus came into the temple courtyard, a group of scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman who had been caught in the act of sexual transgression. They asked Jesus if she should be stoned to death for her sin.

Jesus stooped and with His finger wrote something on the ground. When they pressed Him for an answer, He said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7). One by one her accusers left, "being convicted by their own conscience" (John 8:9), until Jesus was alone with the woman. Jesus stood, looked around, and turned to the woman. "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

"She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. And the woman glorified God from that hour, and believed on his name" (Joseph Smith Translation, John 8:10–11).

From this story we are reminded:

1. Sexual transgression is sin. Jesus clearly identified that what this woman had done was wrong: "Go, and sin no more." Sexual contact outside the bonds of marriage is not acceptable, even if "everyone is doing it." President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: "Happiness lies not in immorality, but rather in abstinence. The voice of the Church to which you belong is a voice pleading for virtue. . . . It is a voice declaring that sexual transgression is sin. It is contrary to the will of the Lord. . . . It is contrary to the happiness and well-being of those who indulge in it.

"You should recognize, you *must* recognize, that both experience and divine wisdom dictate virtue and moral cleanliness as the way that leads to strength of character, peace in the heart, and happiness in life."²

2. We must have compassion for those who sin. Jesus did not condone the woman's sin, but neither did He condemn her. He did not judge her to be an evil person, nor

did He wish to impose a sentence upon her. He gave us the pattern to follow when He said, "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Luke 6:37). Christ's teachings are of love, compassion, and understanding. We must not turn our backs on one who has sinned or point an accusing finger or gossip about another's transgression. Christ reached out in love to the woman, as we should reach out to others.

3. The repentant sinner believes in Christ and forsakes sin. The Master calls to each of us to "go, and sin no more." With these simple words, Christ's benevolence and mercy stand revealed. How grateful we should be for the law of repentance! How grateful we should be for the atoning sacrifice of the Savior, which makes forgiveness of sins possible! In modern scripture the Lord has said, "Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more" (D&C 58:42). Well might we follow the example of the woman taken in her sins, for she "glorified God *from that hour*, and believed on his name" (Joseph Smith Translation, John 8:11; emphasis added).

The Blessings of Purity

Purity in thought and deed safeguards us against the temptations that would lead us along the path of sexual transgression. The Lord has promised peace, joy, and happiness in this life and in the world to come to those who are pure in heart.

In his letter to Titus, Paul states, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Titus 1:15). If we take control of our thoughts and keep them pure from the corrupting influences around us, the magnificent promise of the Lord is sure: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). ■

NOTES

1. See E. D. Boardman, "Sow a Thought," quoted by David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1962, 7.
2. "Reverence and Morality," *Ensign*, May 1987, 47–48.

WORDS OF JESUS

Prayer

“Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24).

BY BISHOP KEITH B. McMULLIN

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric



Our desire to draw closer to God prompts us to ask ourselves how we can make our prayers more meaningful. The answer to this and many other questions can be found in the words of Jesus.

Jesus prayed as no other person His disciples had ever known. During His mortal ministry, He gave no teaching more persistently, He urged no practice more prominently than prayer. “Ask, and it shall be given you,” Jesus said; “seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7).

Prayer is the first and vital link between God and man. Little wonder that millions of people the world over give themselves to daily prayer. Tragically, millions have forsaken it, and the world suffers terribly because of such neglect.

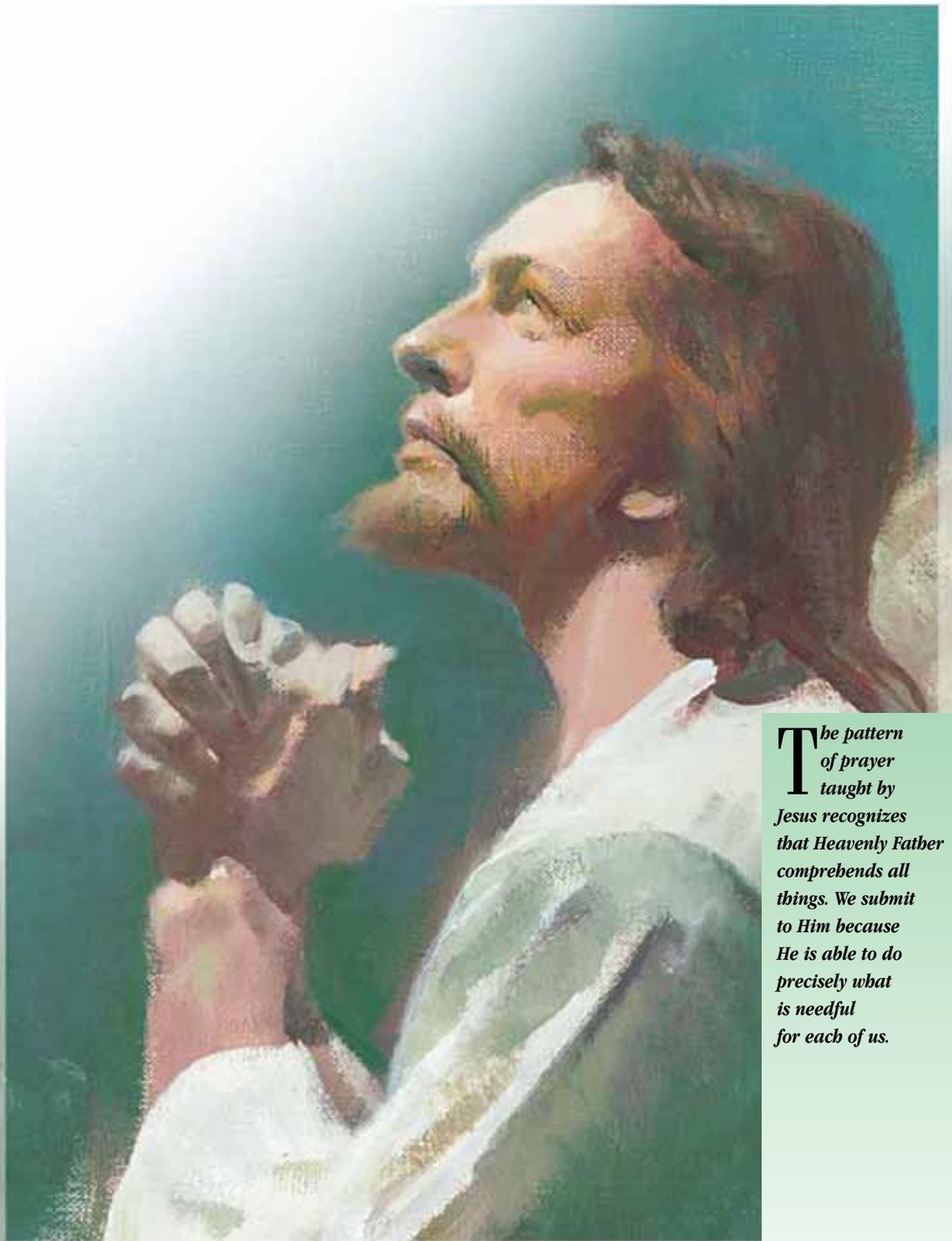
Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are under strict command to pray. We know that regular, humble communication with Heavenly Father is as essential to our well-being as breathing. Our desire to draw closer to God prompts us to ask ourselves: Am I praying correctly? Does God hear me when I pray? Will He answer me? How can I make my prayers more meaningful?

The answers to these and many other questions can be found in the words of Jesus. One day “as [Jesus] was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray”

(Luke 11:1). As we study and put the following teachings into practice, our prayers will become more effective.

Jesus taught us to pray with complete faith and trust in God. To His disciple’s request that Jesus teach them to pray, the Savior responded: “When ye pray, say, . . . Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth” (Luke 11:2). As mortals, it is our nature to be concerned about our immediate physical needs. We often skip over this instruction regarding Heavenly Father’s omniscience; rather, we express our gratitude and go directly to our requests. The phrases “We ask thee . . .” or “Bless us that . . .” seem to fall effortlessly from our lips. “Thy will be done” is frequently more of an afterthought, if mentioned at all. This should not be so.

The pattern of prayer taught by Jesus recognizes that Heavenly Father comprehends all things. He is all-knowing and all-powerful. We submit to Him because He is able to do precisely what is needful for each of us. He is filled with infinite love and the eternal perspective essential to resolving our needs in the proper way. “Thy will be done” should be



The pattern of prayer taught by Jesus recognizes that Heavenly Father comprehends all things. We submit to Him because He is able to do precisely what is needed for each of us.

the crux of our petitions, for it is a foundation stone upon which effectual prayer rests. Jesus exemplified this teaching in Gethsemane when He prayed, “Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

Jesus taught us to watch and pray always. The influences that draw us away from God most often begin subtly, almost imperceptibly. In a fast-paced world, our minds can become occupied with constant pressures, leaving us with seemingly little time to pray. And while the world grapples for more efficient ways to manage time, Satan is convincing many that they are too busy to pray. Mortal life, however, is not a struggle with time but a struggle between good and evil.

Although not always apparent, evil lurks in the shadows around us. To overcome evil in the last days, the Savior taught, “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, and keep my commandments, that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man when he shall come clothed in the glory of his Father” (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 21:36; see also Alma 34:39).

Our natural inclination is to pray only at particular times or on special occasions. By admonishing us to “watch . . . and pray always,” the Lord warns us to be ever vigilant and spiritually alert to the evil around us.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) said: “I do not know any other way for the Latter-day Saints than for every breath to be virtually a prayer for God to guide and direct his people. . . . If you are making a bargain, if you are talking in the house, visiting in the social party, going forth in the dance, every breath should virtually be a prayer that God will preserve us from sin and from the effects of sin.”¹ As we apply this principle, the powers of darkness yield, the Holy Spirit illuminates our way in all things, and peace settles upon our hearts and lives.

Jesus taught us to be divinely guided or inspired as we pray. Our prayers tend to reflect the limited way in which we perceive our needs. But Jesus said, “Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him” (Matthew 6:8).

The spirit of revelation should guide us in the things we pray about as well as in the answers we receive. Obtaining revelation requires faith and pondering. When the mind and heart are humbly open to the promptings of the Holy Ghost, the substance of one’s prayers often changes. The words spring from inspired thoughts, and our petition harmonizes with the divine will. Asking amiss² is no longer a concern. This is when answers come.³ As Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) taught: “Perfect prayers are always answered; proper petitions are always granted. The Lord never rejects a prayer uttered by the power of the Spirit, or denies a petition sought in the name of Christ, that accords with the divine will.”⁴

Jesus taught us to pray with sincerity of heart. Our prayers should not be superficial or offered solely out of habit or duty. Approaching Deity is a serious matter requiring earnestness and attentiveness. While some repetition may be appropriate, vain repetition is not. Praying to be admired by others, using prayers to sermonize, recounting endlessly the details of our lives, or overusing the names of Deity are not in keeping with the pattern of prayer taught by the Master. He said: “When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites . . . [for they pray] that they may be seen of men. . . . When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking” (Matthew 6:5, 7; see also Ecclesiastes 5:2).

Public prayers should be simple, concise, and appropriate to the occasion in which they are offered. The person voicing a prayer bears a sacred duty to express the feelings of those present so that they can affirm the prayer with their personal “amen.”

Private prayers are usually more beneficial when spoken aloud. Hearing oneself often sharpens the spiritual faculties and helps prevent mental wandering. We become more completely and sincerely engaged in prayer. To pray in this manner, a quiet, undisturbed place should be sought. If circumstances require that a private prayer be offered silently, it should still command our undivided attention. Prayers said with a sincere heart, with real

intent, nothing wavering, are powerful and productive.

Jesus taught us to attend to all things in prayer. Jesus' instruction and example bear witness that we are to remember God and pray over all that we do.⁵ Consider this sampling from His New Testament words about what we should pray for:

“Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44).

“Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11).

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).

“Suffer us not to be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:14).

“Men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).

“I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:32).

Some feel that praying over all we do is impractical, unnecessary, even burdensome. They feel that we should only trouble God with the “big things” and work through the “little things” on our own. What a colossal mistake! For it is the little things that make up the fabric of our lives.

The Savior made this point in a parable about the friend who comes knocking at the door at midnight, asking for three loaves of bread. The friend is in desperate need, but because of the hour, the man of the house says to his friend, “Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.” Jesus then said, “Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet *because of his importunity [persistence]* he will rise and give him as many as he needeth”



(Luke 11:7–8; emphasis added).

Prayer offers each of us the privilege of divine guidance in a troubled world. God, our Heavenly Father, desires that His children speak with Him. Take time to pray. Go to Him in humility, in faith, and in the sacred name of Jesus Christ.⁶ He hears. He knows. He answers. “For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened” (Matthew 7:8). God be thanked for the precious and wondrous gift of prayer. ■

NOTES

1. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1954), 43–44.
2. See James 4:3; D&C 88:64–65.
3. See D&C 46:28, 30; 3 Nephi 19:24.
4. *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (1985), 384; see also D&C 50:29–30.
5. See 2 Nephi 32:9; Alma 34:17–28; 3 Nephi 18:21.
6. See John 14:13–14; see also D&C 18:18, 23; Moses 5:8.

Pprivate prayers are usually more beneficial when spoken aloud. Prayers said with a sincere heart, with real intent, nothing wavering, are powerful and productive.

New Testament Times at a Glance
THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST
From Birth to the Final Week

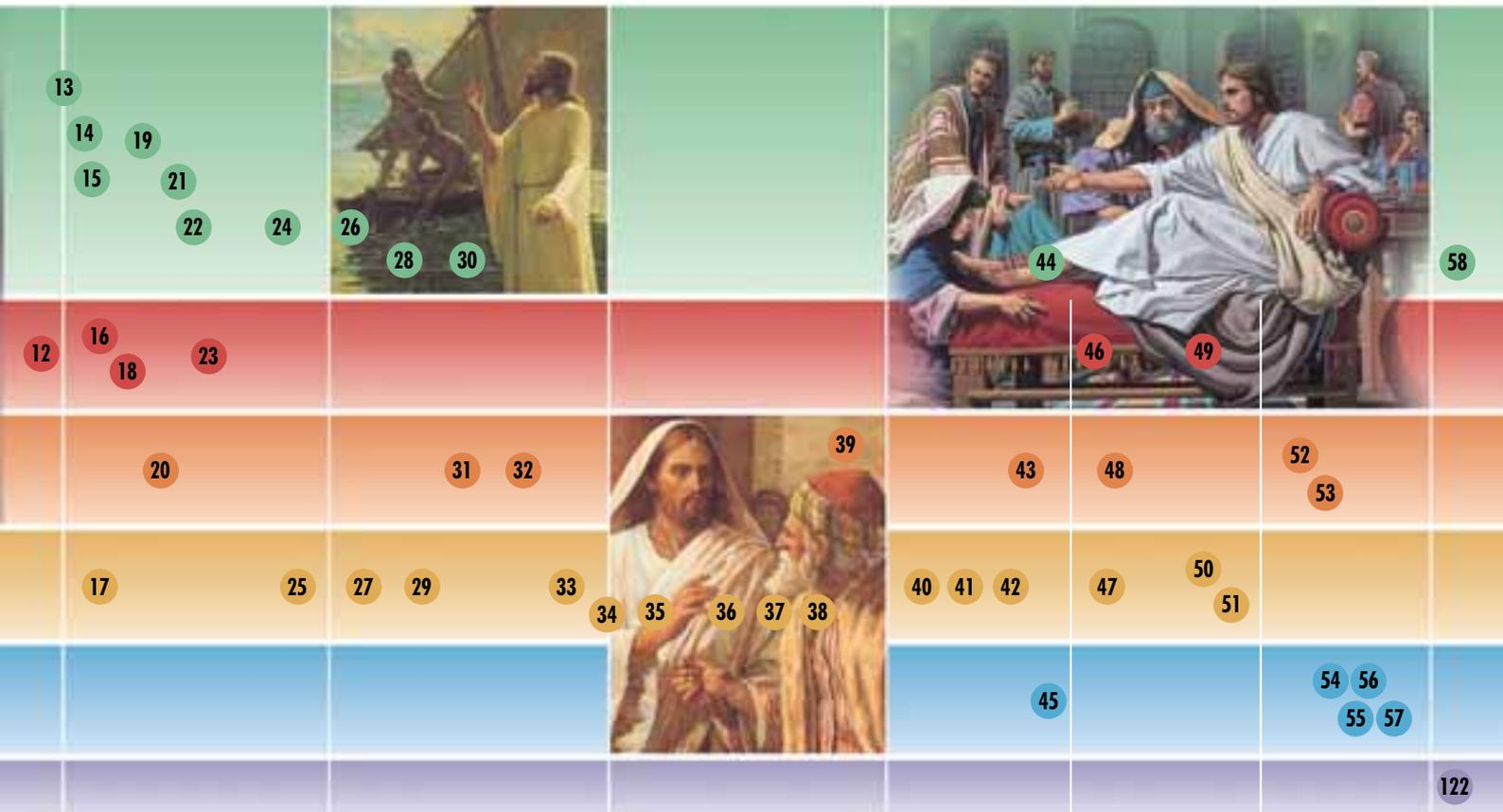


B.C.	A.D.	11	21	31 WINTER
EVENTS				
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		4		
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TRAVELS				
		8		
		9		
SERMONS				
MIRACLES				
PARABLES				
117	118	119	120	121
BOOK OF MORMON				

(Dates are approximate.)

- 1 **Luke 1:5–38** In Jerusalem an angel told Zacharias that his wife, Elisabeth, would have a son named John. In Nazareth an angel told Mary that she would be the mother of the Son of God.
- 2 **Luke 1:39–80** Mary visited the home of Zacharias and Elisabeth. John the Baptist was born and named (see Bible Dictionary [BD], “John the Baptist,” 714–15).
- 3 **Matthew 1:18–25** Mary returned to Nazareth. Joseph, Mary’s espoused husband, learned that she was expecting a child. An angel told Joseph to marry her and name her son Jesus (see BD, “Joseph,” 717).
- 4 **Luke 2:1–20; Matthew 2:2** Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a new star appeared, and angels announced His birth to shepherds, who went to worship Him.
- 5 **Luke 2:21** Eight days after His birth, Jesus was circumcised at Bethlehem and given His name.
- 6 **Luke 2:22–38** Joseph and Mary presented Jesus in the temple. Simeon and Anna testified that Jesus is the Christ.
- 7 **Matthew 2:1–12** Wise Men from the East worshiped Jesus and brought Him precious gifts (see BD, “Magi,” 727–28).
- 8 **Matthew 2:13–18** Joseph and Mary were told by an angel to take Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod’s order to kill the young children.
- 9 **Matthew 2:19–23** Joseph and Mary took Jesus to Nazareth after Herod died.
- 10 **Luke 2:41–52** Jesus taught religious teachers in the temple at Jerusalem.
- 11 **Luke 3:1–18** John the Baptist preached in Judea and baptized in the Jordan River (see Bible Map 11 [1999 ed.]).
- 12 **Matthew 3:13** Jesus journeyed to Bethabara.
- 13 **Matthew 3:13–17** Jesus was baptized by John (see BD, “Dove, Sign of,” 658).
- 14 **Matthew 4:1–11** Jesus went into the wilderness to be with God. He fasted for 40 days and was tempted by Satan.
- 15 **John 1:35–51** Some of John the Baptist’s disciples began to follow Jesus.
- 16 **John 2:1** Jesus returned to Galilee.
- 17 **John 2:1–11** Jesus changed water to wine at a wedding in Cana (see BD, “Miracles,” 732–33).
- 18 **John 2:13** Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover.
- 19 **John 2:13–17** Jesus drove the money changers from the temple courtyard.
- 20 **John 3:1–21** Jesus taught a Pharisee named Nicodemus about being born again.
- 21 **John 3:22–36** Jesus preached and baptized in Judea. John bore testimony of Jesus.

FROM LEFT: A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES. © GREG OLSEN. FROM THE VISIONS OF FAITH COLLECTION BY WILL POND PRESS, INC., VENICE, FLORIDA; DETAIL FROM CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE. BY HEINRICH HOFMANN; CHRIST CALLING PETER AND ANDREW. BY JAMES TAYLOR HARWOOD; DETAIL FROM CHRIST HEALING THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND. BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; WHOM HE FORGAVE MOST. BY ROGER LOVELESS.



- 22** **Luke 3:19–20** John the Baptist was imprisoned by Herod.
- 23** **John 4:1–3** Jesus left the Jerusalem area to return to Galilee.
- 24** **John 4:4–42** In Samaria Jesus taught a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well.
- 25** **John 4:46–54** In Galilee Jesus healed the son of a nobleman.
- 26** **Luke 4:16–30** Jesus was rejected at Nazareth (see BD, “Messiah,” 731).
- 27** **Mark 1:21–28** At Capernaum Jesus healed a man with an unclean spirit.
- 28** **Matthew 4:18–22** Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him.
- 29** **Mark 1:40–45** Jesus healed a leper.
- 30** **Matthew 10:1–4** Jesus called and ordained His Twelve Apostles (see BD, “Apostle,” 612).
- 31** **Matthew 10:5–42** Jesus taught His Twelve Apostles about their duties.
- 32** **Matthew 5–7** Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount (see BD, “Beatitudes,” 620).
- 33** **Matthew 8:5–13** At Capernaum Jesus healed a centurion’s servant.
- 34** **Luke 7:11–17** At Nain Jesus raised a widow’s son from the dead.
- 35** **Matthew 8:14–17** At Capernaum Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law and others.
- 36** **Matthew 8:23–27** Jesus calmed the storm at the Sea of Galilee (see BD, “Galilee, Sea of,” 677).
- 37** **Matthew 8:28–34** Jesus commanded a legion of devils to depart; they entered into swine.
- 38** **Matthew 9:1–8** Jesus healed a man who was paralyzed.
- 39** **Matthew 9:10–17** Jesus preached of new wine and old bottles.
- 40** **Matthew 9:18–26** A woman was healed when she touched Jesus’ clothing; He also raised Jairus’s daughter.
- 41** **Matthew 9:27–31** Jesus healed two blind men (see BD, “Blindness,” 626).
- 42** **Matthew 9:32–34** Jesus healed a dumb man possessed with a devil.
- 43** **Matthew 11:7–19** Jesus testified of the greatness of John the Baptist.
- 44** **Luke 7:36–50** A woman washed Jesus’ feet with her tears at the home of Simon the Pharisee (see BD, “Anoint,” 609).
- 45** **Luke 7:41–42** The parable of the two debtors (see BD, “Parables,” 740–41).
- 46** **John 5:1** Jesus went to Jerusalem for the second Passover (see BD, “Feasts,” 672–74).
- 47** **John 5:2–16** Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath by the pool of Bethesda (see BD, “Sabbath,” 764–65).
- 48** **John 5:17–47** In the temple Jesus taught about His relationship with the Father.
- 49** **Matthew 9:35–38** Jesus returned to Galilee, where he preached and healed.
- 50** **Matthew 12:1–21** Pharisees accused Jesus’ disciples of breaking the Sabbath; Jesus healed a man with a withered hand.
- 51** **Matthew 12:22–23** Jesus healed a man possessed with a devil.
- 52** **Matthew 12:24–45** Jesus taught the Pharisees about Satan, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and seeking signs (see BD, “Blasphemy,” 625–26).
- 53** **Matthew 13:1–53** Jesus used parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven.
- 54** **Matthew 13:3–23; Mark 4:21–22** Parables of the sower and of the candle.
- 55** **Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43; Mark 4:26–29** Parables of the wheat and tares and of the seed growing secretly.
- 56** **Matthew 13:31–35** Parables of the mustard seed and of the leaven (see BD, “Leaven,” 723).
- 57** **Matthew 13:44–52** Parables of the hidden treasure, the pearl of great price, the gospel net, and the householder.
- 58** **Matthew 13:54–58** The people of Nazareth rejected Jesus a second time.

EVENTS

58



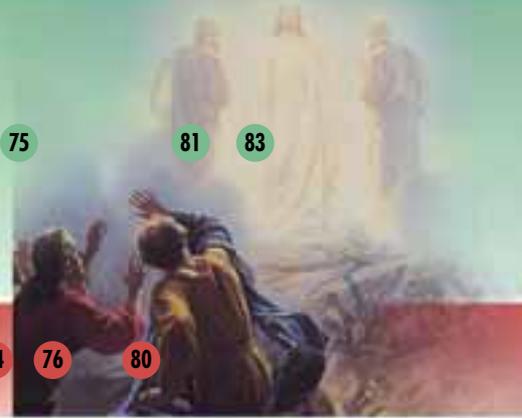
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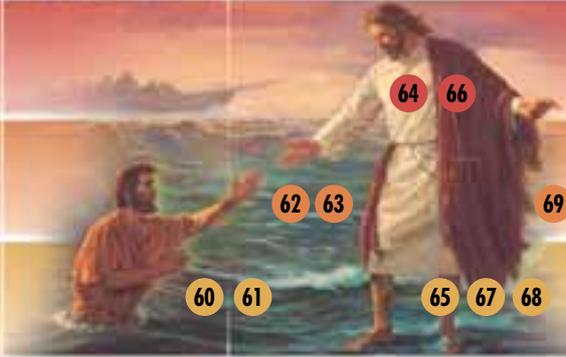
TRAVELS

71

74

76

80



64

66

SERMONS

73

78

84

86

88

91

MIRACLES

60

61

62

63

69

65

67

68

70

77

90

92

PARABLES

79

82

85

87

89

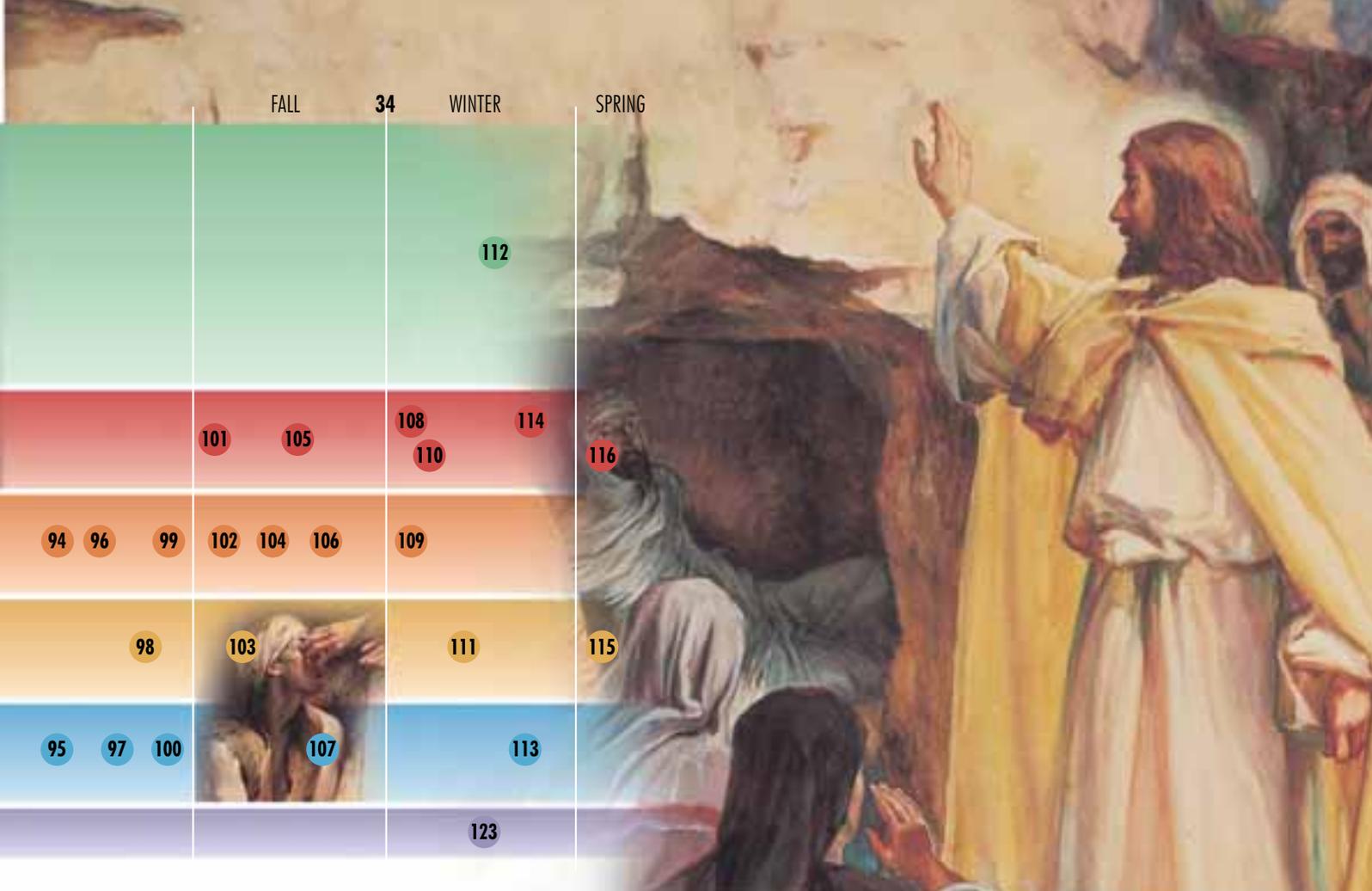
93

122 BOOK OF MORMON

- 59** **Matthew 14:1–12** Herod feared that Jesus was the beheaded John the Baptist returned from the dead.
- 60** **John 6:1–15** Shortly before Passover, Jesus fed 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes.
- 61** **John 6:16–21; Matthew 14:22–33** Jesus walked on the water; Peter followed, then wavered.
- 62** **John 6:22–66** Jesus declared that He is the Bread of Life. Many disciples rejected Him.
- 63** **Mark 7:1–23** When His disciples ate with unwashed hands, Jesus taught the Pharisees about true cleanliness (see BD, “Clean and Unclean,” 646–47).
- 64** **Mark 7:24** Jesus went north to Tyre and Sidon (see Bible Map 11).
- 65** **Mark 7:24–30** Jesus healed a Canaanite woman’s daughter (see BD, “Gentile,” 679–80).
- 66** **Mark 7:31** Jesus returned to Galilee.
- 67** **Mark 7:32–37** Jesus healed a deaf man who had a speech impediment.
- 68** **Mark 8:1–9** Jesus fed 4,000.
- 69** **Mark 8:10–21** At Magdala Jesus taught about seeking for signs; He warned His disciples about the “leaven” of the Pharisees.
- 70** **Mark 8:22–26** At Bethsaida Jesus healed a blind man.

- 71** **Matthew 16:13** Jesus went with His disciples to Caesarea Philippi.
- 72** **Matthew 16:13–20** Peter testified that Jesus is the Christ.
- 73** **Matthew 16:21–28** Jesus taught His disciples about His death, His Second Coming, and discipleship.
- 74** **Matthew 17:1** Jesus took Peter, James, and John up into a high mountain (see BD, “Hermon,” 700).
- 75** **Matthew 17:2–13** Jesus was transfigured. Peter, James, and John received priesthood keys (see BD, “Transfiguration, Mount of,” 786).
- 76** **Matthew 17:14, 22** Jesus and His disciples returned to Galilee.
- 77** **Matthew 17:14–21** Jesus healed a “lunatic” boy.
- 78** **Matthew 17:22–18:35** Jesus taught His disciples about His death, tribute money, and the principles of humility, service, and forgiveness.
- 79** **Matthew 18:23–35** The parable of the unmerciful servant.
- 80** **Luke 9:51–56** Jesus traveled through Samaria, Judea, and Perea on His way to Jerusalem (see Bible Map 11).
- 81** **Luke 10:1–24** Jesus appointed the Seventy and sent them out to preach. They returned and reported.

- 82** **Luke 10:25–37** The parable of the good Samaritan.
- 83** **Luke 10:38–42** Jesus rested at the home of Martha and Mary and taught them.
- 84** **Luke 11:1–13** Jesus taught His disciples about prayer (see BD, “Prayer,” 752–53).
- 85** **Luke 11:5–8** The parable of the friend at midnight.
- 86** **Luke 11:14–12:12** Jesus again rebuked the Pharisees for seeking a sign and for hypocrisy.
- 87** **Luke 12:13–21** The parable of the rich fool.
- 88** **Luke 12:22–13:9** Jesus taught His disciples about seeking the kingdom of God first and about His Second Coming.
- 89** **Luke 12:35–48; 13:6–9** Parables of the watchful servants and of the barren fig tree.
- 90** **Luke 13:10–17** Jesus healed a woman on the Sabbath.
- 91** **Luke 13:22–35** Jesus taught about the “strait gate” and about who may enter His kingdom. He lamented over Jerusalem.
- 92** **Luke 14:1–6** Jesus healed a man with dropsy on the Sabbath day.
- 93** **Luke 14:7–24** Parables of the wedding feast and the great supper (see BD, “Marriage,” 728–29).



FALL

34

WINTER

SPRING

112

101

105

108

114

110

116

94

96

99

102

104

106

109

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103

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107

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123

- 94 **Luke 14:25–35** Jesus taught the multitude about discipleship.
- 95 **Luke 14:28–33** Parables of the tower and of the rash king.
- 96 **Luke 15:1–16:31** Jesus taught and condemned the Pharisees for hypocrisy.
- 97 **Luke 15:1–17:10** Parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. Parables of the unjust steward, the rich man and Lazarus, and the unprofitable servant.
- 98 **Luke 17:11–19** Jesus healed ten lepers; only one returned to give thanks.
- 99 **Luke 17:20–18:14** Jesus taught the Pharisees about His Second Coming.
- 100 **Luke 18:1–14** Parables of the unjust judge and of the Pharisee and the publican (see BD, “Publicans,” 755).
- 101 **John 7:2–13** Jesus arrived in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (see BD, “Feasts,” 672–74).
- 102 **John 7:14–8:59** Jesus taught in the temple. A woman taken in adultery was brought to Him. He testified that He is the Messiah.
- 103 **John 9:1–41** Jesus healed a man who was blind since birth and testified that He is the Light of the World.
- 104 **John 10:1–21** Jesus taught that He is the Good Shepherd.

- 105 **Mark 10:1** Jesus left Jerusalem to preach in Perea (see Bible Map 11).
- 106 **Mark 10:2–31** Jesus discussed divorce with the Pharisees. He blessed the little children, answered the question of a rich young ruler, and taught His disciples.
- 107 **Matthew 20:1–16** The parable of the laborers in the vineyard (see BD, “Vine,” 787).
- 108 **John 10:22** Jesus returned to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Dedication.
- 109 **John 10:23–39** Jesus taught in the temple, “I and my Father are one.”
- 110 **John 10:40–42** Jesus departed for Perea.
- 111 **Mark 10:32–52** Jesus taught His disciples and healed a blind man named Bartimaeus.
- 112 **Luke 19:1–10** Zacchaeus the publican hosted Jesus in his home.
- 113 **Luke 19:11–27** The parable of the pounds (see BD, “Pound,” 752).
- 114 **John 11:7** Jesus returned to the Jerusalem area for the final time.
- 115 **John 11:1–46** Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.
- 116 **John 11:54** Jesus went to the city of Ephraim.

BOOK OF MORMON

- 117 **Helaman 14–15** In America Samuel the Lamanite prophesied of the signs of Jesus’ birth and death.
 - 118 **Helaman 16:13–14** Great signs and wonders appeared, thus beginning the fulfillment of prophecies.
 - 119 **3 Nephi 1:15–26** With the sign of Jesus’ birth (no darkness for one night), many repented and believed in Him.
 - 120 **3 Nephi 3–4** Nephite armies defeated the Gadianton robbers.
 - 121 **3 Nephi 6** Nephites prospered, then became prideful and killed the prophets.
 - 122 **3 Nephi 7:15–26** Nephi preached and many repented.
 - 123 **3 Nephi 8:3** The righteous Nephites began to look with great earnestness for the sign of Jesus’ death.
- “New Testament Times at a Glance, Chart 2: The Savior’s Final Week” will be published in April 2003.



The Priceless Parables

BY FRANK F. JUDD JR.

So simple a child can understand yet profound enough for the sage, the parables of Jesus are a priceless source of gospel principles.

Jesus Christ was the greatest teacher who ever taught," declared President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985).¹ One of the Savior's most striking teaching methods was His use of parables. Concerning the parables of Jesus, President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) said: "They are so simple a child can understand, yet profound enough for the sage and philosopher. . . .

"Each of the parables spoken by the Savior seems to teach a principle or give an admonition regarding the attributes necessary to qualify for exaltation."²

Two Kinds of Parables

The word *parable* comes from the Greek *paraballō*, which means "to set beside" or "to compare."³ A parable, therefore, is a simple story in which the narrator compares the common experiences of his listeners to some divine truth (see Bible Dictionary, "Parables," 740–41).

Jesus primarily employed two types of parables, depending upon His audience. The first is what we might call "parables of instruction," which the Savior used to teach

His disciples and curious seekers about basic gospel principles. These parables included such commonplace people and objects as a sower, an empty house, a great supper, a lost coin, a steward, a servant, laborers in a field, sheep and goats, as well as vines and branches. The principles taught include "faith, repentance, baptism, development of talents, forgiveness, perseverance in doing good, being a profitable steward, charity, mercy, and obedience."⁴ Other parables might be described as "parables of rebuke" which the Savior directed toward those who had ill will for Him. The parables of the two sons, the wicked husband-men, and the marriage of the king's son (see Matthew 21–22), which specifically condemn those who were conspiring against Him, are examples of this type of parable.



THE GOOD SAMARITAN, BY WALTER RANE

The Savior sometimes used a single parable to both instruct and rebuke. For example, the parable of the lost sheep teaches on one occasion about Heavenly Father's genuine concern for our welfare (see Matthew 18:12–14), while on another occasion, it delivers a rebuke to a group of Pharisees and scribes for their self-righteousness (see Luke 15:1–7).

Why the Savior Used Parables

One day when a great multitude was gathered to hear His teachings, the Savior taught in parables. Soon thereafter the disciples asked Him, “Why speakest thou unto them in parables?” He responded, “Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given” (Matthew 13:10–11). Alma taught Zeezrom the same principle: “It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God . . . *according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him*. And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the *lesser* portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the *greater* portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full” (Alma 12:9–10; emphasis added).

Those who heard the Savior's parables of instruction, therefore, were able to understand those principles they were prepared to receive. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “As the Master Teacher, Christ tailored His tutoring, depending upon the spiritual readiness of His pupils.”⁵ In this way the parables both reveal and conceal at the same time. The Savior was not so concerned with concealing when He used parables of rebuke. To His enemies, He said, “Unto you that believe not, I speak in parables; *that your unrighteousness may be rewarded unto you*” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 21:34; emphasis added).

The Master Teacher's parables show both the justice and mercy of God at work among those who hear them. “Two men may hear the same words,” wrote Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933). “One of them listens in indolence and indifference, the other with active mind intent on learning all that the words can possibly convey; and,

having heard, the diligent man goes straightway to do the things commended to him, while the careless one neglects and forgets. The one is wise, the other foolish; the one has heard to his eternal profit, the other to his everlasting condemnation.”⁶

Interpretation and Application

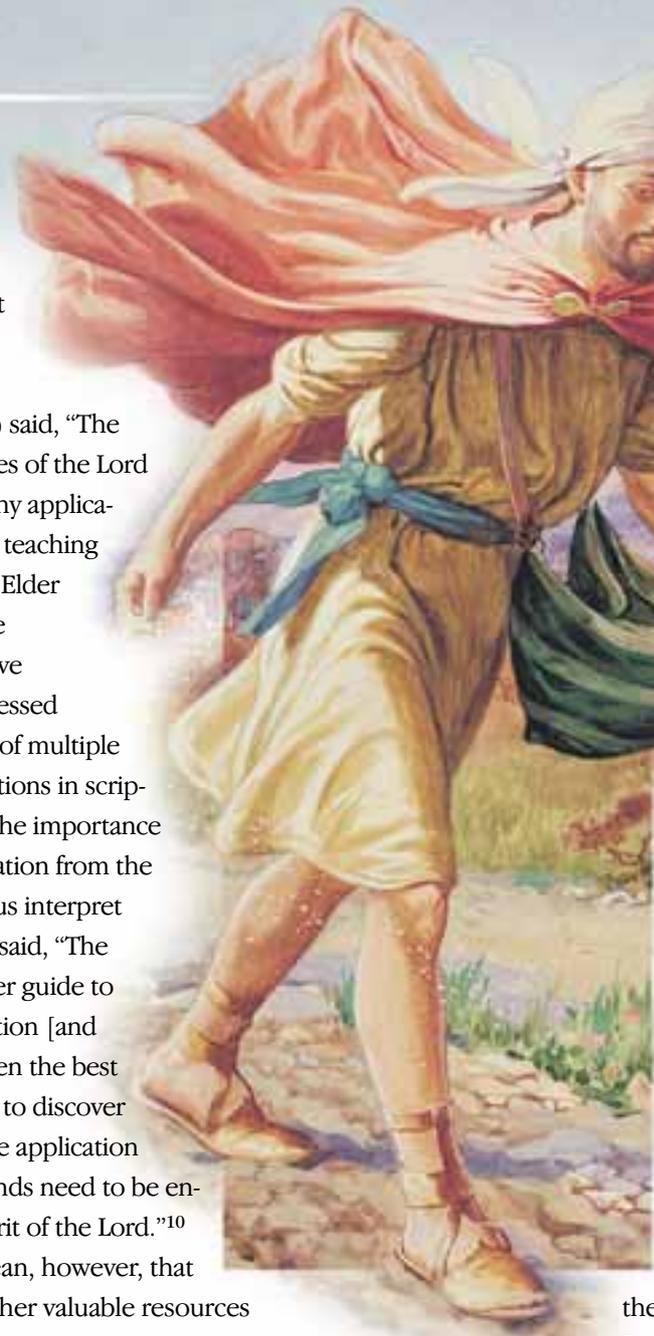
Discovering how to interpret and apply the parables of Jesus is essential to getting the most from them. To interpret a parable, one must study what it meant to *them, there, then*. To apply a parable, one must ponder what it means to *me, here, now*. “The only true interpretation is the meaning the parable conveyed, or was meant to convey, when first spoken. The application of a parable may vary in every age and circumstance” (Bible Dictionary, “Parables,” 741).

The most important helps in making a proper interpretation are the explanations given by the Savior Himself. They are usually given in the same chapter as the parable, just before or after the parable. For example, after the Savior gave the parable of the sower and the parable of the wheat and tares, He explained each of them to His disciples (see Matthew 13:3–8, 18–30, 36–43). It is also helpful to learn the background and setting of each parable. We can do this by finding answers to such questions as: To whom was Jesus talking? Why did He address this parable to this particular audience? What was the concern or question that caused Jesus to give this parable? How did this parable answer that question or situation?

Be cautious in identifying the symbols and their meanings, asking the Lord in prayer to help you understand. Guard against overinterpretation—trying to press every little detail of the parable for a precise meaning. Jesus' parables were intended to be understood by the Spirit, in a straightforward and simple manner. Concerning the parable of the prodigal son, the Prophet Joseph Smith said: “What is the rule of interpretation? . . . Understand it precisely as it reads.”⁷

Many Applications

Although there is normally one original interpretation of the elements in a parable, there may be many principles



and applications that can be drawn from it. Elder Merlin R. Lybbert (1926–2001) said, “The beauty of the parables of the Lord is that they have many applications, and thus their teaching value is unending.”⁸ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has also stressed that the occurrence of multiple meanings or applications in scriptures “underscores the importance of our seeking revelation from the Holy Ghost to help us interpret them.”⁹ He has also said, “The Holy Ghost is a better guide to scriptural interpretation [and application] than even the best commentary.” Thus, to discover the most appropriate application of a parable “our minds need to be enlightened by the Spirit of the Lord.”¹⁰

This does not mean, however, that we should ignore other valuable resources to guide our study of the parables of Jesus. Modern scripture, particularly the Doctrine and Covenants, elucidates the parables of the Savior. For example, the Lord has given an interpretation and application of the parable of the wheat and tares in Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–11 and 101:63–68. The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, found in the Bible footnotes and appendix, also provides additional details concerning the setting, content, and interpretation of many parables. The inspired teachings of latter-day prophets and apostles are important resources to guide us.¹¹ And the Prophet Joseph Smith commented extensively on several parables.¹²

The Parables and You

Your diligent study and application of the parables of Jesus will bring you closer to the central purpose of life: to come unto Christ and live His gospel. Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) said: “Parables are a call to investigate the truth; to learn more; to inquire into the spiritual realities, which, through them, are but dimly viewed. Parables start truth seekers out in the direction of further light and knowledge and understanding; they invite men to ponder such truths as they are able to bear in the hope of learning more. Parables are a call to come unto Christ, to believe his doctrines, to live his laws, and to be saved in his kingdom.”¹³

The Savior will bless you in your efforts as you qualify for the promise of this declaration, given by Him to His ancient disciples: “Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear” (Matthew 13:16). ■

Frank F. Judd Jr. is a member of the Orem Park Third Ward, Orem Park Utah Stake.

The Savior’s parables used such commonplace people as a sower, a steward, and laborers in a field to teach basic gospel principles about being prepared for exaltation.

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 11.
2. “The Pharisee and the Publican,” *Ensign*, May 1984, 64.
3. See Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick William Danker, 3rd ed. (2000), 758.
4. “The Pharisee and the Publican,” *Ensign*, May 1984, 64.
5. “Irony: The Crust on the Bread of Adversity,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 63.
6. *Jesus the Christ* (1982), 276–77.
7. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 276.
8. “A Latter-day Saint Samaritan,” *Ensign*, May 1990, 82.
9. “Scripture Reading and Revelation,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1995, 8.
10. *Ensign*, Jan. 1995, 9.
11. One way to study the teachings of Church leaders is to visit the Gospel Library on the Church’s Web site (www.lds.org) and search various keywords from the parables.
12. See *Teachings*, 94–102, 159.
13. *The Mortal Messiah* (1980), 2:245.



Prophecy for Our Day

BY ELDER CARL B. PRATT *Of the Seventy*

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith help us understand that we are living in the time when several of Jesus' parables are being fulfilled.



The parables of the Savior have more meaning to us if we have “lived” them or seen them lived or fulfilled by others close to us. When this happens, they become more than just a beautiful and simple instructive device; they become real to us. For example, the parable of the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11–32) will ever have special meaning to the parent of a wayward son or daughter who has returned to the fold of Christ. And the parable of the sower (see Luke 8:4–15) will mean more to a young person who becomes a missionary and experiences the sorrow of watching the gospel seed sprout in the heart of an investigator, only to soon wither away.

There is a series of short parables given by the Savior that I feel I have “lived” in some small way. Perhaps you have lived them too. They are parables about the establishment of the kingdom of God in the latter days and feature a mustard seed, leaven, hidden treasure, a pearl of great price, and a fishing net.

We are indebted to the Prophet Joseph Smith for the inspired light that illuminates our

understanding of these parables. His comments help us clearly see how they apply in our day.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

“The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

“Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof” (Matthew 13:31–32).

Concerning this parable the Prophet said, “Now we can discover plainly that this figure [parable] is given to represent the Church as it shall come forth in the last days.” The Prophet then made a particular application of the parable. Not only did the mustard seed represent the kingdom of heaven; the Prophet also compared the mustard seed to the Book of Mormon: “Let us take the Book of Mormon, which a man took and hid in his field, securing it by his faith, to spring up in the last days, or in due time; let us behold it coming forth out of the ground,



The Savior's parables about the establishment of the kingdom of God teach us about our role as missionaries in the latter days.

BACKGROUND: PHOTOGRAPH BY DIGITAL STOCK; PHOTOGRAPH OF MISSIONARIES BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; FAR RIGHT: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH; COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLEROD, DENMARK

which is indeed accounted the least of all seeds, but behold it branching forth, yea, even towering, with lofty branches, and God-like majesty, until it, like the mustard seed, becomes the greatest of all herbs. . . . It has sprouted and come forth out of the earth, and righteousness begins to look down from heaven, and God is sending down His powers, gifts and angels, to lodge in the branches thereof.”¹

My “living” of this parable began some 40 years ago with my service as a full-time missionary in Argentina. In the course of traveling home to Arizona, I passed through several South American countries. In many of those countries I found no missionaries, no members, not even the slightest trace of the presence of the restored Church of Jesus Christ. Even though missionary work in South America had begun in 1925, 37 years later the Church existed in only a few of the countries there, with just seven missions. There were no high priests or patriarchs because there were no stakes, and the nearest temple was thousands of miles away in Mesa, Arizona. I came away from my mission with an abiding love for the people and cultures of South America but with a special interest in the spreading of the gospel on that continent.

Since my mission I have had the privilege of living and working in South America for 19 years. With amazement and fascination I have watched and had a small part in the astounding growth of the Church there. It has been particularly impressive to me to watch the crucial role of the Book of Mormon in this growth. Today the Church is firmly established in every nation on that continent. There are more than 550 stakes, 13 temples, 69 missions, and millions of Latter-day Saints. Truly the “least of all seeds” has become the “greatest among herbs” and is a tree into which God is sending down His powers, gifts, and angels. And the strength of the Church in South America is but a part of what is happening throughout the world as the kingdom rolls forth in “God-like majesty.”

The Parable of the Leaven

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened” (Matthew 13:33).

The Prophet Joseph Smith saw a special meaning in the

Savior’s mention of three measures of meal: “It may be understood that the Church of the Latter-day Saints has taken its rise from a little leaven that was put into three witnesses. Behold, how much this is like the parable! It is fast leavening the lump, and will soon leaven the whole.”²

As those who bake know, the leaven, or yeast, is a very small part of the recipe to make bread. However, that tiny bit of ingredient is what makes the dough rise so that when it comes out of the oven it is several times its original size and is light and enjoyable to eat.

What a blessing the Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon must have been to the Prophet and other converts in those early days of the Church! They were men who had heard the voice of God, who had seen the angel Moroni, and who knew beyond doubt the divinity of the Book of Mormon and the call of Joseph Smith as a prophet.

In my years of working and serving in Latin America, I have watched the Lord raise up a few very special men and women from a small body of members and make of them great leaders. Over the years they have truly served as “leaven” for the growth and strength of the Church. I have come to love and appreciate these people who have generally been eager to share the gospel and bear testimony of this work. Likewise, if we will freely and frequently share our testimonies with others, we can serve as leaven to build and strengthen the Church wherever we are, contributing to the leavening of the whole.



The gospel net brings into the Church people of all races, cultures, educational levels, and economic circumstances.

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

“Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it” (Matthew 13: 44–46).

These two parables differ in that the man who found the treasure seems to have done so quite by accident, whereas the merchant man found the pearl after diligent searching. In both cases the price of acquisition was exactly the same—all that each man had.

Concerning the interpretation of these parables, the Prophet said: “See the Church of the Latter-day Saints, selling all that they have, and gathering themselves together unto a place that they may purchase for an inheritance, and that they may be together and bear each other’s afflictions. . . . See men traveling to find places for Zion and her stakes or remnants, who, when they find the place for Zion, or the pearl of great price, straightway sell that they have, and buy it.”³

In the countries of Latin America, it is not unusual for a member of a family to be disowned or ostracized after leaving the traditional church to join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I have seen people lose their friends, be excluded and persecuted by neighbors, and lose employment because they have embraced the restored gospel, their treasure and pearl. They have had to pay the price in full measure.

When we lived in Peru, the nearest temple was a continent away in São Paulo, Brazil. I know Saints who literally sold all they had in order to take their families to the temple. I once dined in the home of such a family. The cleanly swept floor was of hard-packed dirt. A simple meal of chicken soup was to me a true banquet. The walls of the home were of rough-hewn boards, but adorning those

walls were a photograph of the temple and the certificate attesting the family’s temple sealing. I marveled at their willingness to sacrifice.

The Parable of the Gospel Net

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

“Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

“So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

“And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 13:47–50).

Concerning the fishermen in this scene, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Behold the seed of Joseph, spreading forth the Gospel net upon the face of the earth, gathering of every kind, that the good may be saved in vessels prepared for that purpose, and the angels will take care of the bad.”⁴

I have seen all kinds of people brought into the Church by the gospel net—men, women, and children of all races, cultures, education levels, and economic circumstances. My experience has taught me that while nearly all new converts join the Church with good intentions, they, like the rest of us, are not perfect. It is not enough to be baptized into the true Church. Baptism is merely the gate to the “strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life” (2 Nephi 31:18). Striving to stay on the path, never giving up, pressing “forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope” (2 Nephi 31:20) are what enable us to be among the good who will be gathered into vessels.

What a marvelous wealth of understanding and perspective comes to us from the parables of the Savior. How blessed we are to have modern prophetic assistance as we search the scriptures. These parables have rich, personal meaning for me because I, and those I love so dearly in South America, have “lived” them. Perhaps you have lived them too. ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 98.

2. *Teachings*, 100.

3. *Teachings*, 101–2.

4. *Teachings*, 102.

Searching *for Garry*

BY SHEILA MOORE BLIGHT

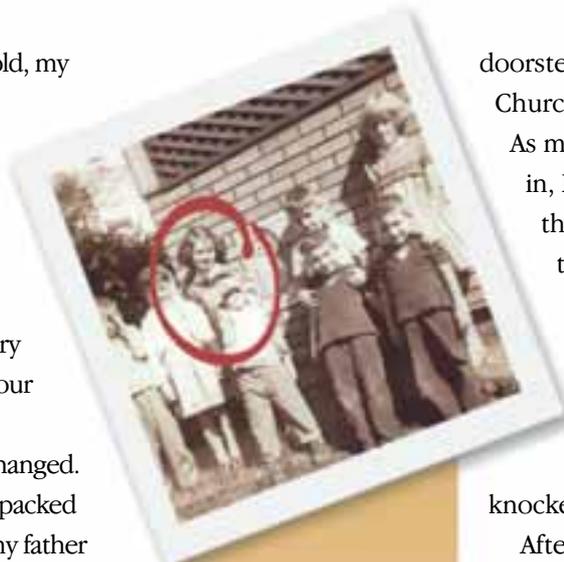
When I was seven years old, my parents divorced. My father moved out, and my two-year-old brother, Garry, and I remained with our mother. She struggled to raise us on her salary as a waitress. She worked long hours, and often Garry and I spent our time playing with our neighbors' children.

At age nine, my whole world changed. In five short minutes, my mother packed my bag and sent me to live with my father and his new wife. No one ever explained to me why I had to move. I was very confused and sad. For whatever reason, Garry stayed with our mother. The change was a very difficult time for me, and I greatly missed my old life.

My mother eventually remarried, and Garry's stepfather adopted him. They moved out of state and started a new family. I saw Garry only once after that. I tried to contact him but with no results. Over the years, in my mind's eye, Garry remained that little boy who rode his toy car on the sidewalk, the rascal who took my goldfish out of the tank and forgot to put it back in the water, and that toddler for whom I felt so protective. But he was gone.

Being Baptized

When I was 11, two young men wearing dark suits and name tags appeared on our

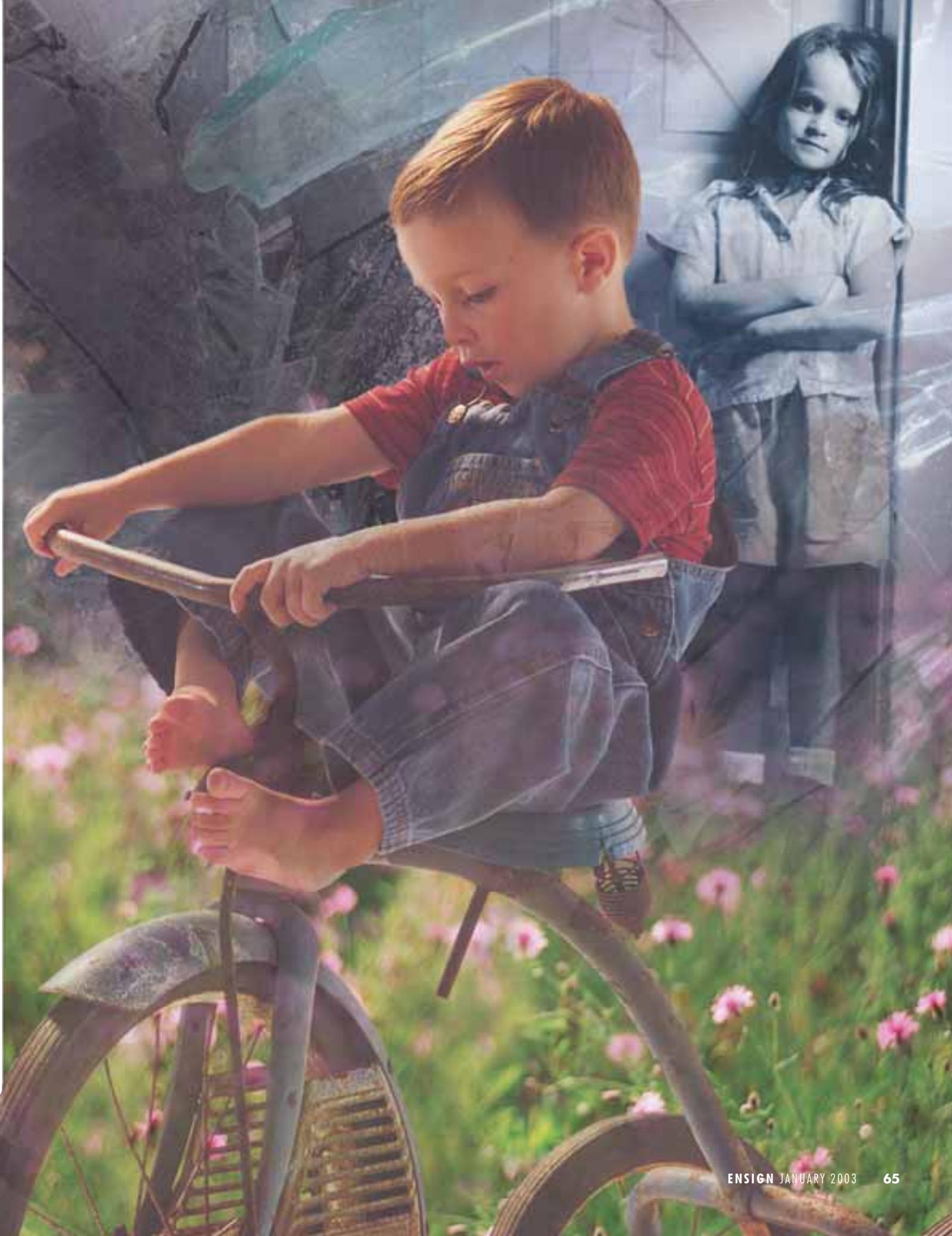


My younger brother and I were separated as children, and for 14 years I wondered what had happened to him.

doorstep. They were missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As my father and stepmother invited them in, I looked at the young men and thought, "This is right, this is good, and this was meant to be." I believed them immediately and never forgot the warm feeling I felt inside as they taught us the gospel of Jesus Christ. All three of us were baptized a few months after they knocked on our door.

After our baptism, however, it was difficult for us to attend church. Our family struggled financially, so transportation was a problem. Even though we had faith enough to be baptized, we simply never got into the habit of regular church attendance. And when my father and stepmother's first child died of leukemia, it was especially difficult for my father to understand why this happened. He lost his interest in organized religion.

Over time I grew up, moved to the city, found a job, and married. In those post-high school years, the Church was not part of my life. Whenever I met someone who discovered I was a Latter-day Saint, I always told them not to judge the Church by me. I knew I wasn't the best example, but in my heart my testimony never completely faded.



A New Year's Resolution

Several years after I married, my maternal grandmother visited me. Grandma and I were close, even though, for reasons unknown to me, my mother had had nothing to do with me over the years. During Grandma's stay, she casually mentioned, "Garry's gone and joined that Mormon Church." I was so surprised! "Grandma," I exclaimed, "I did too! That is so exciting!" I just couldn't believe it. I decided then and there to celebrate this news by giving up coffee.

Eventually my husband and I moved to Seattle, Washington. This move proved to be a good one for me. It was a new beginning of sorts. By this time we had our first child, and I decided to start attending church. I wanted our child to have a religious upbringing, and besides, I had already started to make changes by giving up coffee. Even though my husband wasn't too happy with this new Sunday arrangement, I felt so much joy and peace at being in the Church again that there was no turning back for me.

In January 1972 I made a New Year's resolution: I would live my life the way I knew I should. I started fully obeying the Word of Wisdom, I paid tithing, I attended church every week, and I accepted my first calling. My parched soul soaked up the talks and the lessons given at church. Every time I learned a new gospel principle I diligently tried to apply it in my life. I rejoiced and wept as I once again sang the hymns. Being with other Latter-day Saints was wonderful, and they were patient and kind with me as I learned.

I also counseled with our bishop about my years of inactivity, and we set things straight. I rejoiced at the words of Doctrine and Covenants 58:42: "Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more." I truly stood "amazed at the love Jesus offer[ed] me" ("I Stand All Amazed," *Hymns*, no. 193).

Finding Garry

Shortly after returning to activity in the Church, I started to wonder about my brother Garry. Where

JOY IN THE GOSPEL



"When you trust in the Lord, when you are willing to let your heart and your mind be centered in His will, when you ask to be led by the Spirit to do His will, you are assured of the greatest happiness along the way and the most fulfilling attainment from this mortal experience."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Finding Joy in Life," *Ensign*, May 1996, 25.

was he? What was he doing? Was he OK? Was he still attending church? The questions tumbled around in my mind. And then a thought came to me clearly, "Write to Garry. He needs you now."

I had no doubt about the prompting of the Holy Ghost. With my mind racing and hands trembling, I wrote a letter to my long-lost brother. I'll always be grateful to the Lord that my mother forwarded it to Garry, who was finishing his first year at Ricks

College (now BYU—Idaho). The Lord's timing was important. Garry had joined the Church and been disowned. He had nowhere to stay when school ended in three weeks, so we invited him to stay with us.

Needless to say, there was tremendous joy in finding each other again. I soon learned that Garry had first come in contact with the gospel when he met a returned missionary in a bowling alley in Mississippi.

A few months after we met, Garry left on a mission to Central America. I wrote to him. When he returned home and eventually married, I was the only member of his family able to attend his temple wedding.

It's now been almost 30 years since our reunion, and we still marvel at the Lord's hand in leading us both to the gospel and back to each other. It was extraordinary, and still the wonders continue. Both of my sons served missions. All three of my children married in the temple, and we are now blessed with six grandchildren. Garry and his wife are raising two children in the gospel. All but one of my five half brothers and sisters have served missions, married in the temple, and are now raising families of their own. I marvel at what has happened. I know that without the Lord, my life and the lives of my loved ones would be vastly different. Generations will now have the opportunity to be blessed by the gospel. I know that families are meant to be forever and that if we will give our best effort in trying to live the commandments, the Lord will help us. ■

Sheila Moore Blight is a member of the Chancellor Ward, Fredericksburg Virginia Stake.

If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear

Payerfully select and read from this message the scriptures and teachings that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Share your experiences and testimony. Invite those you teach to do the same.

D&C 38:30: “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We have been instructed for years to follow at least four requirements in preparing for that which is to come. First, gain an adequate education. . . . Second, live strictly within your income and save something for a rainy day. . . . Third, avoid excessive debt. . . . Fourth, acquire and store a reserve of food and supplies that will sustain life” (“If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 36).

The First Presidency: “Members can begin their home storage by storing the basic foods that would be required to keep them alive. . . .

“Some members do not have the money or space for such storage, and some are prohibited by law from storing a year’s supply of food. These members should store as much as their circumstances allow. Families who do not have the resources to acquire a year’s supply can begin

their storage by obtaining supplies to last for a few months. Members should be prudent and not panic or go to extremes in this effort. Through careful planning, most Church members can, over time, establish both a financial reserve and a year’s supply of essentials” (First Presidency letter, 20 Jan. 2002).

President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency: “It is my opinion that we Latter-day Saints, because of the knowledge we have received in the revelations, are better prepared to meet the perplexities of our times than are any other people. . . .

“For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken

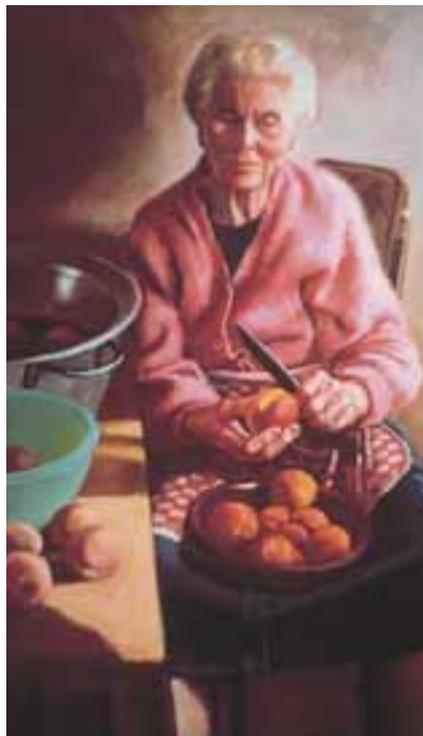
the Holy Spirit for their guide . . . shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.” [D&C 45:57]. . . .

“ . . . Each one of us who is a member of the Church has had hands laid upon his head and has been given, as far as an ordinance can give it, the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . If I receive the Holy Ghost and follow his guidance, I will be among those who are protected and carried through these troubled times. And so will you, and so will every other soul who lives under his direction” (“If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear,” *Ensign*, July 1981, 3, 5).

President Brigham Young (1801–77): “Let our anxiety be centered upon this one thing, the sanctification of our own hearts, the purifying of our own affections, the preparing of ourselves for the approach of the events that are hastening upon us. . . . Seek to have the spirit of Christ, that we may wait patiently the time of the Lord, and prepare ourselves for the times that are coming” (*Deseret News*, 1 May 1861, 65).

D&C 6:34, 36: “Fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail. . . . Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.”

- *What can we do to look to the future with faith and anticipation?*
- *What might keep us from doing all we can to prepare temporally and spiritually?* ■



Tips for Women Who Must Enter the Workforce

Latter-day prophets have counseled mothers to remain at home to care for and nurture their children. “We realize also,” said President Ezra Taft Benson, “that some of our choice sisters are widowed and divorced and that others find themselves in unusual circumstances where, out of necessity, they are required to work for a period of time” (*To the Mothers in Zion* [pamphlet, 1987], 5–6).

When I became a single mother, I quickly realized that I was unprepared to enter the workforce. Fortunately, I was able to find work where I could learn and update my skills. Later, as a member of our stake welfare resources committee, I saw others in similar situations struggle with the panic and doubt that I had faced. Had we all been better prepared, perhaps we would

not have feared our predicaments (see D&C 38:30). We can prepare in the following ways:

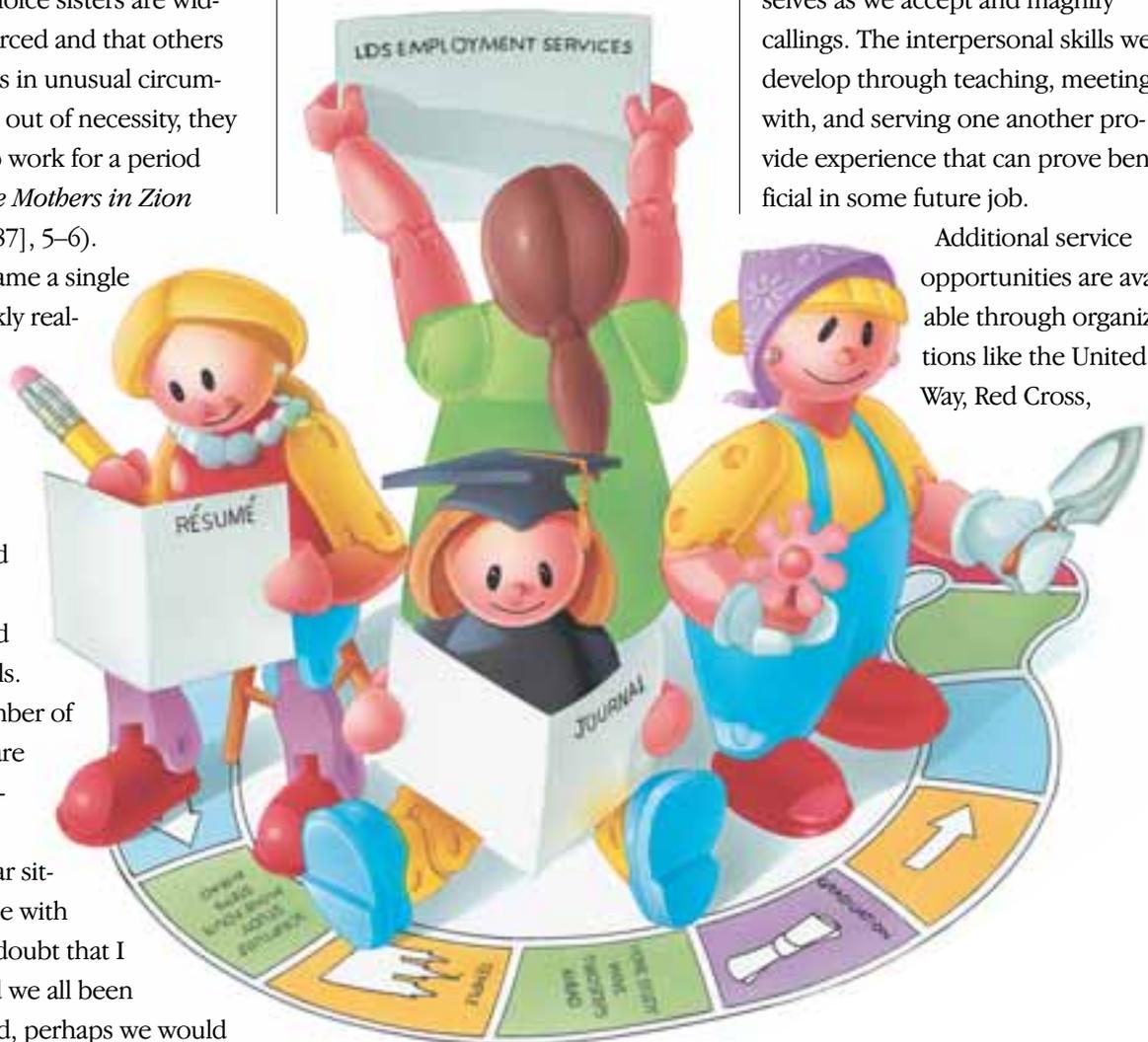
Education. We develop our talents by taking advantage of appropriate opportunities to further our education. Like an insurance policy, such education may someday prove essential, though the skills and knowledge it represents may not be fully utilized while we raise our families.

In addition to full-time day classes,

opportunities to increase our education and marketable skills include home-study courses, seminars, workshops, and evening classes. Daily activities like studying the scriptures and writing in our journals also add to our education by keeping our minds alert and receptive to inspiration, as well as by helping us hone our abilities to express ourselves.

Service. Church membership offers us many opportunities to bless others and to improve ourselves as we accept and magnify callings. The interpersonal skills we develop through teaching, meeting with, and serving one another provide experience that can prove beneficial in some future job.

Additional service opportunities are available through organizations like the United Way, Red Cross,



schools and parent-teacher associations, libraries, and youth groups.

LDS Employment Services.

Latter-day Saints who obtain authorization from their bishops can register with LDS Employment Services in nearly 100 cities in the United States and Canada. LDS Employment Services helps job seekers generate individual plans to develop their marketable skills, identifies job opportunities through contact with potential employers, and works with community agencies to identify local career planning, counseling, and educational opportunities. Be sure to work closely with your ward employment specialist, who has access to a wide range of helpful resources (see “The Job-Search Network,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1993, 24–28).

Résumé. Ask professional acquaintances for suggestions, and ask close friends and relatives for help in identifying strengths and talents to be included on the résumé. Develop a list of potential jobs that fit the qualifications, training, and interests outlined on your résumé.

We have the Lord’s promise that “all things shall work together for good to them that walk uprightly” (D&C 100:15). As we remain faithful, trust in the Lord, and take advantage of opportunities to serve others and to prepare ourselves, we will be blessed in our righteous endeavors to provide for our own welfare.

—Winnie Gardner, Cordova Ward, Sacramento California Cordova Stake

Many families have discovered how useful the resources in their meetinghouse library can be in teaching gospel basics in the home. They check out materials from the library to enhance family scripture study and family home evening lessons. Following are some items to enhance gospel instruction.

Videocassettes. One videocassette available in the meetinghouse library is *Book of Mormon Stories*. It is a companion to the *Book of Mormon Stories* reader and teaches children about Book of Mormon prophets and events. For example, parents might show the segment on “Abinadi and King Noah” as part of family scripture study. They could then talk with their children about Abinadi’s great faith and courage and ask how we can show this kind of faith and courage today. Finally, they could read from the Book of Mormon and testify how the story of Abinadi can open our hearts to the Holy Spirit as Alma’s heart was opened by Abinadi’s teachings.

Pictures. Many families also use gospel-oriented pictures available in the meetinghouse library. For example, a lesson on the Book of Mormon could be enhanced by showing the

pictures “Moroni Hides the Plates in the Hill Cumorah” and “Joseph Receives the Gold Plates,” then discussing Moroni’s role in bringing forth this sacred record. Both of these pictures are part of the Gospel Art Picture Kit.

In preparation for general conference, one family checked out pictures of the General Authorities. The family then learned about these leaders during several family home evenings.

Books. The meetinghouse library has a variety of books on topics such as the priesthood, temple and family history work, Church history, and teaching.

Church leaders have repeatedly emphasized that the home is the most



important place to teach gospel principles. In a letter to members, the First Presidency said: “We call upon parents to devote their best efforts to the teaching and rearing of their children in gospel principles. . . . The home is the basis of a righteous life, and no other instrumentality can take its place . . . in carrying forward this God-given responsibility” (11 Feb. 1999). The materials available in meetinghouse libraries can help families live the gospel more fully.

—Jeff Orr, Lakeridge 14th Ward, Orem Utah Lakeridge North Stake



LEFT: ILLUSTRATION BY JOE FLORES; RIGHT: ILLUSTRATION BY BETH WHITTAKER

When the Walls Came Down

By Diane Robinson Haines

In November 1989 the Berlin Wall fell, leading to the reunification of Germany. Our family had just returned to the United States after living in Germany when this historic event occurred. The fall of the Berlin Wall caused me to reflect upon how the walls that had once stood between our family and our German neighbors had also come down.

“The landlady says your family may not rent the house.” I still remember the stunning and upsetting words of the housing referral officer. After searching for months, we had finally found the perfect house for our large family to rent during my husband’s three-year military tour in Bamberg, Germany. Finding housing for a family with six young children is never easy

and is especially difficult in Germany.

The six-bedroom house in Poedeldorf, a small town near Bamberg, was ideal for us. We left the housing referral office in bewilderment. Yet we felt impressed to keep trying to rent the house. We fasted and prayed and continued to express our interest. We were overjoyed when several weeks later we received a call informing us that the landlady had changed her mind.

Our arrival in town was noted with interest. It was a spectacle to behold, our family driving down Poedeldorf’s

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GREGG THORKELOSON



As we drove through town in a van bursting with children, we waved at everyone we passed.

narrow lanes in a large van bursting with children. Everywhere we drove, we waved at everyone we passed. Most residents, surprised, waved back. And while the German people are generally reserved in manner, especially toward strangers, some of them even started waving first.

Gradually we became acquainted with our neighbors. The Dworazik family had two boys and lived next door. The children played together, sometimes in the Dworaziks' sandbox and sometimes on our trampoline.

One morning we awoke to find that a section of fence had been removed from our adjoining backyards. Astonished, we asked Herr Dworazik about it. "*Es ist besser*," he explained. "This is better." It seemed an unspoken invitation to become better acquainted with their family.

With the opening in the fence, we enjoyed a deepening friendship with the Dworaziks. They helped us in many ways as we encountered questions while living in a foreign land. The open fence between us became symbolic of the shared cultures, joint activities, and rewarding relationship between our families.

One Monday we invited the Dworaziks over for family home evening. After games and refreshments, we showed them our copy of the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* (item no. 31106; U.S. \$5.00). We explained the family home evening program and presented them with a German copy of the book. They

seemed pleased to accept it.

Several days later Claudia Dworazik rushed over. "Can we have another book?" she asked. "I showed it to some friends, and one of them was so excited about it she took it with her." I assured her we would get more manuals. Then her husband called from the window, "Get one for the priest, too." Now Claudia's friends, as well as the priest of the area, have home evening resource books.

On another occasion, the landlord of a nearby apartment building asked us, "Do you have any more friends from your church who need a place to live? We have a vacancy and would like to have Mormon families in our building. They are clean and don't smoke or play loud music."

As time went on, members of the Bamberg Servicemen's Branch jokingly suggested we rename it the Poedeldorf Branch, since half the small apartment building was then filled with Church members and other Latter-day Saint servicemen had found housing in the same town.

Just before we left Poedeldorf, Claudia Dworazik told me many of our neighbors had mentioned they were sad to see "the Mormon family" leave. "Such happy children; such a friendly family." We believe it was the gospel's influence they saw and would miss.

We, too, were reluctant to leave. It seems the Lord allowed us to live in Poedeldorf for a purpose. It was there that we were ambassadors, in a small way, for the Church. We felt we,

together with the other Latter-day Saint servicemen and their families living there, were able to plant many seeds of goodwill and friendship. I know no matter where we are, it is possible to bring down barriers that separate us from others as we strive to be good examples and true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. ■

Diane Robinson Haines is a member of the Crescent Park Ward, Sandy Utah Crescent Park Stake.

Promise Me You Will Read

By Lory M. Free

As a 16-year-old boy living in Pioche, Nevada, I was not active in the Church. Though my family had Latter-day Saint roots, we didn't know much about the gospel. It was during the era of the Great Depression, and my father and brothers and I were out of work.

About this time, Brother John Kroenke was assigned to be my senior home teaching companion. He and his wife had joined the Church in Germany and immigrated to the United States. He was fortunate enough to have a job as a night watchman at one of the mines. Brother Kroenke invited me to go home teaching with him, but I avoided it whenever possible.

One Wednesday, Brother Kroenke met me as I got off the school bus. When the other boys realized he was there to see me, they teased me.

Brother Kroenke said to me: “I would like you to come up to my home. My wife has a chocolate cake. I think you would like it. And I would like to talk to you.” We seldom had sugar in our home, let alone cake. I agreed to go.

When I arrived at the Kroenkes’ home, the smell of freshly baked chocolate cake drew me in. But before any cake was served, Brother Kroenke opened a Book of Mormon, explained its origins, and began to read to me. After a short while he bore his testimony of its truthfulness.

Sister Kroenke then cut a piece of cake for her husband and a great big chunk for me. Brother Kroenke handed me a Book of Mormon and said, “Lory, I want you to promise me you will read this book.” I agreed to read.

I read in the Book of Mormon during the week, and then on Wednesday when I got off the bus, Brother Kroenke caught up with me and said: “We’ve got chocolate cake again. We want you to come up to our place.”

This time Brother Kroenke and I talked for two hours over cake and milk. We talked about how the Book of Mormon testified of Jesus Christ and how it taught the same gospel that was taught in the New Testament. I became more and more interested. As I was about to leave, he asked, “How much have you read?”

“Maybe one-fourth,” I answered.

“Read it, read it!” he said.

So I went home determined to read. I stayed up nights and finished the book.

The next time we met, after cake and milk and more gospel discussion, we knelt to pray together. Then he asked me, “Is the Book of Mormon true?”

“Well,” I said, “I don’t know.”

“Why don’t you know? You’ve read it. Talk to the Lord about it.”

I had never really prayed. I didn’t know how. But I told him I would. Almost every night I asked Heavenly Father to let me know if the Book of Mormon was true. As I prayed and thought about the book, I had many questions, which I wrote down.

Shortly after this, the stake president from Moapa came to speak to our branch, and I attended. When he stood to speak, he hesitated, then said he felt impressed not to give the talk he had prepared. Instead, he proceeded to give a talk in which each one of my questions about the Book of Mormon was answered.

A warm, sweet feeling came over me. The Holy Ghost testified to me that the Book of Mormon was true, and therefore I knew that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the Lord. I knew the Church was true. That knowledge was so strongly implanted in me that I have never doubted it from that day.

How grateful I am to my wonderful home teaching companion, Brother Kroenke! He has since departed this life, but his influence lives on through the blessings of Church activity that my family and I have known over many years. ■

Lory M. Free is a member of the Pleasant View First Ward, Provo Utah Sharon East Stake.

At the Bus Stop

By Karen R. Merkley

I have often wondered if the anxiety many of us feel about sharing the gospel stems from a tendency to rely more on ourselves than on the Lord. When we realize that it is His work and that He is willing to lead us in it, we can be prompted to talk to those who are prepared to embrace His doctrines.

Such was my experience one winter day when I missed a bus. I had a job interview to get to and had been waiting for over half an hour at the bus stop. Then, before I realized what was happening, the very bus I had been waiting for pulled away from the curb. Frustrated, I wondered, “How could I have missed this bus? Now there’s no way I can make it to the interview on time.” But I soon received a distinct impression: there was someone I needed to meet.

I accepted the message and decided to walk to the next bus stop, where I sat down on a bench. I looked around casually but inquisitively at the other people, trying to discern what to do next.

The person who caught my attention frightened me a little. He was tall and slender, a young man with a formidable hairdo, deep eyes, and a nervous expression. He paced back and forth and seemed to be muttering under his breath. I prayed silently to know if this was the person I needed to meet. I felt it was.

I reached in my purse and pulled out one of the two *Ensign* magazines I had bought and began to glance

through it—partly to distract me from my fears and partly to bide time as I considered my next move.

At third glance, I thought the young man might be on drugs. A few seconds later he sat down on the bench next to me. I felt too scared to say anything, so I silently prayed that he would break the ice.

Just then the young man gently asked me, “What time is it?”

I told him, and then I knew I needed to carry the conversation further. His name was Eric, and our exchange went something like this:

“It looks like you’re in pain of some kind. Are you?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said, “I have a migraine. I’ve been trying to quit smoking. I get headaches when I try to quit. I’ve been off cigarettes for 10 days.”

“I’m sorry you’re in pain, but I admire you for trying to overcome your habit. I’ve had some hard ones

to break myself. Actually, I couldn’t have done it myself. Do you have any other source of help beyond yourself?”

“Yes, I believe in God.”

“Well, that certainly makes a difference. Do you attend any particular denomination?”

Noticing the *Ensign* on my lap, he said, “Actually, I’m interested in your church. I’ve tried to find out about it, but there are some things I don’t understand.”

Our conversation continued as I answered his questions. Then his bus pulled up. He wanted to hear more. I handed him an *Ensign* magazine. I didn’t have the missionaries’ telephone number, so I gave him mine. He called me about a week later, wanting to know more about the gospel. About five weeks later, Eric was baptized.

We later joked about how afraid we had been of each other. I was “dressed up”; he was “dressed down.” I thought he was on drugs; he thought I was rich. We likely would not have met if it were not for the promptings of the Spirit. For those promptings I am thankful to the Lord, who knew our hearts and that our common love of truth would unite us in the gospel. ■

Karen R. Merkle is a member of the Oviedo Ward, Lake Mary Florida Stake.

I felt there was someone I needed to meet, but the person who caught my attention frightened me a little.



Members and missionaries unload supplies sent from a stake in Villahermosa, Mexico, to aid victims of Hurricane Isidore.

Storms Cause Tragedy, Extensive Damage

Members of the Church were affected by storms around the world in recent months. They were also affected by the response of their fellow Church and community members as they served side by side in the aftermaths.

Hurricanes

Hurricane Isidore tore across Mexico in September 2002, affecting members and leaving a temple and several meetinghouses damaged.

Elder Gregory Scott Johnson of Fountain Green, Utah, was killed near Mérida, Mexico, in an incident related to Hurricane Isidore. He came in contact with a live electrical wire downed during the storm. Elder Johnson was serving in the México

Mérida Mission at the time.

The Mérida México Temple sustained substantial damage to the roof and exterior walls during the storm, causing water damage to the interior of the temple. Several meetinghouses in the area were also damaged by the storm. Continued heavy rains and flooding after the hurricane slowed repair efforts, but all buildings were repaired and the temple was soon functioning. An estimated 800 Latter-day Saint families had to leave their homes due to the storm.

The Church's first humanitarian response came the day after the hurricane. Working with the administration office in Mexico City, Luis Felipe Cejín, president of the Mérida México Stake and chair of the regional welfare committee,

arranged for the immediate purchase and distribution of 430 food boxes to members.

In the ensuing days, additional food, building supplies, and tools were sent to the region. Members from throughout Mexico joined in the relief effort. People gathered at the Villahermosa México Stake Center to package food, medication, and construction materials and load them for shipment. Stakes in Tula, Anáhuac, and Puebla responded with similar contributions.

Terry J. Spallino, director for temporal affairs in Mexico, recalls the reaction of one brother, baptized two years ago, when he received building supplies to replace the roof blown off his business during the storm.

"He told us he could hardly believe what had happened," says Brother Spallino. "Then he bore his testimony of how blessed he and his family had been since joining the Church."

Church Humanitarian Services in Salt Lake City responded with a cargo jet filled with food, hygiene kits, blankets, and other emergency supplies. The government of Mexico asked that the Church care for its own members first and then assist others as possible. The 128,000 pounds (60,000 kg) of supplies, equivalent to six semitrailers full of goods, aided more than 20,000 people in the Yucatán Peninsula.

"We want to take care of our members, of course," says Garry R. Flake, director of Humanitarian Services, "and we're working with local authorities to see that the aid reaches as many additional people as possible."

As supplies flooded in from around Mexico and from Church headquarters, members and missionaries were on hand to unload and distribute materials to those in need.

The response was wonderful to observe, says Brother Spallino. "While many continue to suffer from lack of electricity and loss of employment, at least there were roofs overhead and food on the tables during this difficult time," he said.

Tropical Storm Lili swiped the island of Jamaica on its way to becoming a hurricane, leaving several member homes damaged. When the storm reached Louisiana in



Volunteers from the Freiberg Ward, Dresden Germany Stake, clean a neighbor's yard after severe flooding.

the United States, it was a category two hurricane. Reports indicate one member home was severely damaged from the winds and several others were damaged from flooding. Members and missionaries contributed to community cleanup efforts in this area.

Floods

What experts called the worst flooding in 200 years left several countries in central Europe with considerable damage and ruin in August. Bridges, homes, and freeways were swept away in many parts of Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, and southern Russia. At the height of the flooding, some areas were submerged under as much as 12 feet (3.5 m) of water.

As the cleanup began, the Church donated U.S. \$635,000 and worked with local governments and relief groups to provide food, pumps, drying equipment, and other emergency supplies.

"These supplies augmented the enormous contribution of labor from our members and missionaries in Europe," says Garry R. Flake, director of Church

Humanitarian Services. Members and missionaries throughout central Europe were on hand to assist in cleanup efforts in their local communities.

The meetinghouse of the Döbeln Branch, Dresden Germany Stake, was flooded with water and mud. No members or missionaries were reported injured.

The Church has an established tradition of humanitarian service throughout Europe. It sponsored 203 projects among 18 European nations during 2001. ■

Young Women Are Models of Modesty

By Naomi Frandsen

On Saturday, 12 October 2002, 33 young women from 14 stakes in southern California fixed their hair, put on makeup, and stepped into formal gowns. But they didn't have dates waiting to take them to dances—they were getting ready to model their dresses for more than 900 people gathered for a special fashion show. The theme? Modesty.

"I think modesty strikes a sympathetic chord across religious lines," observes Karen Baker, an organizer of the event and a member of the Mission Lake Ward, Santa Margarita California Stake. "All the seats were filled, we had people standing in the back, and there were requests for twice as many tickets as were available."

In recent years, Latter-day

Saints in several states have met with clothing retailers about expanding their line of modest clothes. Sister Baker, who serves as assistant director of public affairs for her stake, had attended a "modest" fashion show organized by Latter-day Saints and retailer Nordstrom in Upland, California, early last year. In May 2002 when she and her 17-year-old daughter couldn't find any modest formal dresses for a school dance, she decided it was time to talk to the fashion industry. By June, she and the Nordstrom store in her area had a date set for "A Class Act"—a fashion show of modest formal gowns.

"Generally our events are organized at least a year and a half in advance, but we were fortunate to have the budget, time, and resources to make

Satellite Broadcast for Children

The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles invite children of the Church to attend a special satellite broadcast on 8 February 2003 at 2:00 P.M. mountain standard time. A member of the First Presidency and members of the Primary general presidency will address the children.

"We hope children will

remember this all their lives," says Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, first counselor in the Primary general presidency, noting that broadcasts especially for children are rare.

The theme of the broadcast is "I'll Follow Him in Faith." "We want to help parents strengthen their children's faith in the Savior, because He is ultimately the

source of comfort, peace, and direction," Sister Reynolds says.

Primary children ages 7–11, their parents, and Primary leaders are invited to attend the broadcast. The occasion takes place during the 125th anniversary year of the Primary organization and is the first broadcast for children to take place in the Conference Center. It will be broadcast in many languages, with rebroadcasts scheduled to accommodate time zones throughout the world. ■



Young Women from several stakes in California model formal gowns in a fashion show dedicated to modesty.

it happen,” says Kim Cimino, store manager for the South Coast Plaza Nordstrom. “This is truly a rare occurrence.”

Sister Baker concurs. “How could I just go into one of the biggest retailers in one of the biggest malls in the United States and have them put up thousands of dollars for a fashion show? I can’t say enough how the Lord’s hand has been in this whole thing.”

From June to October, a “fashion board” composed of Sister Baker; Carol Starr, also an organizer of the fashion show and a public affairs specialist in the Santa Margarita stake; stake Young Women leaders; and young women selected because of their modest dress standards worked together with Nordstrom to find appropriate dresses for the show.

“They were very passionate about finding a solution for their daughters,” remembers Ms. Cimino. “They went so far as to bring us framed photos from the walls of their homes showing how they had modified their daughters’ previous formal dresses to be more modest.”

But the “Mormon moms,” as they became known, found they weren’t the only ones passionate about modesty. Another large Christian church in the area sent an e-mail to its members, encouraging them to call Nordstrom and voice their support. The *Los Angeles Times* ran a front-page article about the show and the modesty-conscious Latter-day Saints who made it happen. And a local paper ran a poll about the fashion show and

discovered that 96 percent of their readers were in favor of more modest dress standards.

“Ninety-six percent!” effuses Sister Baker. “In southern California! We were



Shoppers snatch up modest fashions. Organizers of a fashion show discovered that many people, not just Latter-day Saints, want more modest clothing options.

astounded. Who would have thought fashion would show us how many common values we hold with our neighbors?"

Steven Bangerter, first counselor in the Santa Margarita stake presidency, is equally enthusiastic. "What a remarkable accomplishment in this culture where modesty is ridiculed as a thing of the past," he says. "There is a silent majority thirsting for someone to boldly step forward toward a reasonable level of self-respect and higher ideals."

These ideals are also on the minds of Church leaders. In September, just two weeks before the show, Sister Kathleen H. Hughes, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, made a call for modesty during the general Relief Society meeting.

"Modesty is a battle worth fighting because it so often affects more serious moral issues," Sister Hughes said. "Now, this doesn't mean that we have to demand that our daughters and sons are covered from neck to ankle, but it does mean that we help them dress in a way that shows they are children of God" ("Blessing Our Families through Our Covenants," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 106-7).

After the flurry and excitement of the fashion show, one of the models-for-a-day reflects on the broader impact of the event. "A lot of girls had been struggling with standards," says Mandi Young of the Los Alamitos Ward, Long Beach California East Stake. "It was an awesome way to get girls to say, 'Wow, I can be modest and look cute!' I think they

saw that they're not alone."

Now that the fashion show is over, the "Mormon moms" are considering what to do next in the cause of modesty. They have met with their stake presidency, suggesting ideas about videos, Web sites, and television shows. Their advice to others is to simply do something.

"I would encourage people everywhere—across the country, internationally—to

go to stores and promote the sale of modest clothes," says Sister Baker. "I've been remembering President Spencer W. Kimball's motto: Do it! If something occurs to you, if you feel directed by the Spirit, even if it seems impossible, take little steps and the Lord will show you the way." ■

Naomi Frandsen is a member of the BYU 154th Ward, Brigham Young University Second Stake.

Volunteers Brighten the Face of a Nation

By Fernando Assis

On Brazil's independence day last year, 7 September, an estimated 30,000 Church members and their friends held a massive service event, refurbishing more than 120 city, state, and national schools across Brazil. The project was held in more than 100 cities in 12 states.

Throughout the cities, people in pullover vests

labeled SUD (LDS in Portuguese) swarmed school buildings and grounds, carrying paintbrushes and scrapers. In addition, many of the schools' directors, teachers, and students joined the massive effort. When they finished hours later, the face of the nation was a little brighter.

The project was held under the auspices of a Church program in Brazil called "Hands That Help."



Clothed in vests identifying them as Latter-day Saints, volunteers work to refurbish a school in Brazil.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BRAZIL PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Volunteers of all ages pitch in to paint, clean, and repair schools across Brazil.

This program organizes volunteers to provide community service.

The event in September included maintaining electrical and hydraulic systems in the schools, as well as pruning trees and cleaning, painting, and repairing whatever needed sprucing up. Materials and paint were donated by private businesses or provided by community resources.

In Manaus, a large city at the headwaters of the Amazon River, more than 1,500 volunteers worked at 12 day-care centers and elementary schools.

"The work was very useful," says community volunteer Sonia Lafayette, expressing her happiness at helping repair the school she attended as a child. "I was able to repay a little to the school that gave me so much."

Another volunteer in Manaus, Valdemar Siquiera da Costa, operator of a small boat that transports people

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BRAZIL PUBLIC AFFAIRS

across the rivers around Manaus, observes: "On this day, no one refused to work, and all refused to be paid. My wife, our two children, and I were very happy as we worked alongside others."

In Rio de Janeiro, after a cold and windy night, Renata Silva, a 15-year-old who had been baptized just a month earlier, put on her SUD jacket and reported to a school for her task. A coordinator asked her to go outside and direct those arriving at the school. Despite the fact that she was expecting to paint and clean, she remained in her assignment until she was no longer needed there.

"Renata realized that it is not where you serve but how you serve," says Nei Garcia of Church public affairs in Brazil. "She was a great example of humility and the desire to make things better."

Artur Segurando, director of the state school in Campinas, was surprised by the enthusiasm with which the members worked. "We received a multitude of people—men, women, youth, and children, all members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—imbued with a great spirit of unity," he said. "They cleaned the school, painted the patio, washed the windows, and cleaned the gardens. Certainly, our school gained greatly in this spirited service."

Heloisa Helena Linhares of the Maraponga Ward, Fortaleza Brazil Montese Stake, and a teacher at one of the schools, says, "I feel great joy to be able to tell my

fellow teachers and the officials and students that this work was done by the church of which I am a member." ■

Fernando Assis is a member of the São Paulo Fifth Ward, São Paulo Brazil Stake.

In the News

Census Information Now Available through FamilySearch™

On 23 October 2002 President Gordon B. Hinckley announced that data from the 1880 United States Census, the 1881 British Census, and the 1881 Canadian Census are now available at www.familysearch.org. The announcement, broadcast across the United States and Canada, brought record numbers of visitors to the site, with new visitor traffic surging 500 percent immediately following the announcement and leveling off to between 6 and 10 percent

above normal the following week.

"This signifies another leap forward in family history research," President Hinckley said.

The census data represent more than 17 years of effort from the Church and partner organizations, the Minnesota Population Center at the University of Minnesota and the Institute of Canadian Studies at the University of Ottawa, in extracting information from census records. All three censuses have been available on CD, but the announcement marks the first time this information is accessible via the Internet.

The censuses include a combined total of 85 million names, including significant listings for diverse groups such as Asian, Black, Caucasian, Hispanic, and Native American. Each name includes all census data gathered about that individual, such as profession, members

of household, birth date and place, and parents' names. Individual records are linked to other individual records (such as parents, children, and siblings), and neighboring households are also linked together.

"An amazing thing happens when people trace their roots," President Hinckley said. "They discover they are not alone in the world."

Church Made Part of BBC's Web Site

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has made the history and teachings of the Latter-day Saints a permanent part of its religion and ethics Web site. The on-line section www.bbc.co.uk/religion includes news and background of the world's major religions, including Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. "The LDS Church is growing strongly and has had a presence in the UK almost from the very beginning, so it was entirely appropriate to include it," says David Kremer, executive producer for the BBC's religion and ethics section.

Monument Honors African-American Pioneer

Baptized in 1832, Elijah Abel was one of the earliest members of the Church. He was also a former slave and one of the few African-Americans to join the Church in his day. Brother Abel and his family traveled west with the Saints, and he lived in Salt Lake City until his death in



COURTESY OF CANADIAN PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES, ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

The 1881 Canadian census paints a portrait of life in Canada when the young nation was carving out a national identity.

1884. He was characterized as a true, pure, and spiritual man, and his memory was recently honored with the dedication of a monument at his grave site in a Salt Lake City cemetery.

The monument was created through private efforts, and Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles offered the dedicatory prayer. "It's a wonderful thing you've done here today," Elder Ballard told about 200 people gathered for the ceremony. "The Church is pleased."

Australian Stake Hosts Prime Minister

In support of a community antidrug campaign, the Ipswich Australia Stake hosted John Howard, the prime minister of Australia, in a speaking engagement on 5 September 2002. During the meeting, the prime minister announced funding to expand a community partnership to fight illegal drug use.

Grant A. Pitman, president of the Ipswich stake, offered opening remarks for the gathering, which included speakers from various community and religious organizations.

The prime minister updated audience members on the Tough on Drugs initiative and thanked Church members for their warm welcome. He also praised the music provided by a neighboring Seventh-Day Adventist school and a Samoan choir from the Ipswich stake.

"That beautiful singing . . .



Elder M. Russell Ballard (left) stands with Hugh J. Barlow, program master of ceremonies, at a marker honoring early Church member Elijah Abel.

is really a reminder better than anything I could say about what this campaign is all about," he said. "It's making sure that those young children go through their lives free of the scourge of drugs."

After the meeting, Mr. Howard was presented with a Mormon Tabernacle Choir CD, a Brigham Young University

choir CD, and an interactive DVD introducing the Church.

BYU Ranked Most "Stone-Cold Sober"

For the fifth year in a row, Brigham Young University—Provo has been named the most "stone-cold sober school" in the United States by the *Princeton Review*.



A Samoan choir from the Ipswich Australia Stake provides music for a community gathering featuring John Howard, Australia's prime minister.

BYU also ranked first in the category of most religious and fifth for quality of life.

"I think it says something that we are the most sober school and we are also ranked number five in the quality of life category. I think the two are correlated," says Carrie Jenkins, spokesperson for BYU.

The *Princeton Review* polled 65,000 students at the top 345 colleges in the United States to formulate its rankings. ■

Call for Articles

If you have had experience pertaining to the following, we invite you to share your suggestions: "Sometimes general conference seems to come and go without making any real difference in my life. What are some ways anyone—adults, youth, and small children—can get more from the spiritual feast available during conference?" Ideas could include personal, family, or group activities you do before, during, or after conference.

Send responses by 15 February to *Ensign* Editorial, 24th Floor, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3224, USA, or via e-mail to **cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org**. At the top of your submission, write "Questions and Answers," along with your name, address, telephone number, and ward and stake (or branch and district).

While we cannot acknowledge receipt of individual responses, authors whose submissions are selected for publication will be notified. ■



MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

J A N U A R Y 2 0 0 3

Teaching the Atonement

“The thing Christ seems most anxious to stress about His mission—beyond the personal virtues, beyond the magnificent sermons, and even beyond the healing—is that He submitted His will to the will of the Father,” writes Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He offers valuable ideas on teaching the Atonement in a way that will bring spiritual healing to those who hear. See page 32.

Understanding the Master’s Words

- “To interpret a parable, one must study what it meant to *them, there, then*. To apply a parable, one must ponder what it means to *me, here, now*,” Frank F. Judd Jr. explains. See “The Priceless Parables,” page 56.

- “Jesus was clearly concerned that His disciples learn to deny themselves of all unholy sexual desires,” writes Elder Sheldon F. Child of the Seventy. To learn more about what the Savior taught on this topic, see page 44.

- A series of short parables about the establishment of the kingdom of God in the latter days can have personal meaning to us because in our own ways many of us have “lived” them or seen them fulfilled. See “Prophecy for Our Day,” by Elder Carl B. Pratt of the Seventy, page 60.

- To help you put the Savior’s teachings and the significant events in His life into a historical context, see “New Testament Times at a Glance,” page 52.

Happily Ever After

Is your marriage challenged by disease or disability? Read how one couple finds happiness in marriage despite coping with debilitating illness. See “Two People Building for Eternity,” page 10.

Sharing the Gospel

There are many ways to share the gospel—being a good example for your neighbors, teaching Primary, strengthening a home teaching companion, or

even talking with strangers at a bus stop. The stories in Latter-day Saint Voices, page 70, may give you a few ideas.

New Priesthood and Relief Society Manual

The Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study for 2003 focuses on the teachings of President John Taylor. Read about his early life in England, his conversion, and his life of faithful service in “John Taylor: Defender of Truth,” page 20.

Be a Better Teacher

Learn how small group assignments can draw out more participation in your

lessons. See “When Students Are the Teachers,” page 17.

Women in the Workforce

For a variety of reasons, women sometimes enter the workforce suddenly and without feeling very prepared. If you find yourself in this situation, the tips on page 68 might help you make this difficult transition.

Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 67.

Did You Know?

Because this year’s course of study in Sunday School is the New Testament, each issue of the *Ensign* will contain articles about specific principles the Savior or His Apostles taught. These articles can add depth to your gospel study and can also be adapted for family home evening lessons. In addition to articles in this issue (see pages 44, 48, 56, and 60), look for articles on New Testament teachings in issues throughout 2003.

GOSPEL TOPICS

Book of Mormon, 71	Love, 10
Chastity, 44	Marriage, 10
Church magazines, 8	Martyrdom, 20
Compassion, 2	Missionary work, 72
Conversion, 8, 64, 71	New Testament, 44,
Death, 28	48, 52, 56, 60
Employment, 68	Parables, 56, 60
Example, 2	Plan of salvation, 28
Faith, 48	Prayer, 48
Family home evening, 17	Preparedness, 67, 68
Family unity, 64	Purity, 44
Friendship, 70	Restoration, 60
Grieving, 28	Scripture study, 52
Healing, 32	Service, 10
Hope, 28	Student participation, 17
Inspiration, 72	Submission, 32
Integrity, 20	Teaching, 17, 69
Jesus Christ, 2, 44, 48, 56	





On Zion's Mount, by Jodi G. Warner

The design and details of this hand-quilted wall hanging reflect words from the prophet Isaiah: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it" (Isaiah 2:2).



At Jacob's well, Jesus said unto a woman of Samaria,
"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whoso-
ever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst;
but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water
springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13-14).