

Ensign

A painting of a man and a woman looking down at a baby wrapped in a white blanket. The man is on the right, looking down at the baby with a gentle expression. The woman is on the left, also looking down at the baby. The baby is lying on its back, looking up towards the camera. The background is a soft, painterly landscape with green grass and a blue sky.

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Touched Lives, p. 58**



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Tower of Babel, by Tobias Verhaecht

“And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven. . . . Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth” (Genesis 11:3–4, 9).

Ensign



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The Master's Blueprint

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

First Counselor in the First Presidency

When Jesus ministered among men at a time long ago and a place far away, He often spoke in parables, in language the people best understood. Oftentimes He referred to home building in relationship to the lives of those who listened. Wasn't He frequently known as "the carpenter's son"?¹ He declared, "Every . . . house divided against itself shall not stand."² Later He cautioned, "Behold, mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion."³

In a revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith at Kirtland, Ohio, December 27, 1832, the Master counseled, "Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God."⁴

Where could any of us locate a more suitable blueprint whereby he or she could wisely and properly build a house to personally occupy throughout eternity?

In a very real sense, we are builders of eternal houses. We are apprentices to the trade—not skilled craftsmen. We need divine help if

we are to build successfully. The words of instruction provided by the Apostle Paul give the assurance we need: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"⁵

When we remember that each of us is literally a spirit son or daughter of God, we will not find it difficult to approach our Heavenly Father in prayer. He appreciates the value of this raw material which we call life. "Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God."⁶ His pronouncement inspires purpose in our lives.

There is a teacher who will guide our efforts if we will but place our faith in Him—even the Lord Jesus Christ. He invites us:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."⁷

It was said of Jesus that He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."⁸ Do we have the determination to do likewise? One line of holy writ contains a



In a very real sense, we are builders of eternal houses. We are apprentices to the trade—not skilled craftsmen. We need divine help if we are to build successfully.



tribute to our Lord and Savior, of whom it was said, “[He] went about doing good.”⁹

Examples of the Believers

Paul, in his epistle to his beloved Timothy, outlined a way whereby we could become our better selves and, at the same time, provide assistance to others who ponder or ask the question, “How can I [find my way], except some man should guide me?”¹⁰

The answer, given by Paul to Timothy, provides an inspired charge to each of us. Let us take heed of his wise counsel: “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”¹¹

Let us examine this solemn instruction which, in a very real sense, is given to us.

First, be an example in word. “Let your words tend to edifying one another,”¹² said the Lord.

Do we remember the counsel of a favorite Sunday School hymn?

*Oh, the kind words we give shall in memory live
And sunshine forever impart.*

*Let us oft speak kind words to each other;
Kind words are sweet tones of the heart.*¹³

Consider the observation of Mary Boyson Wall, who married Don Harvey Wall in the Salt Lake Temple in 1913. They celebrated their 81st wedding anniversary shortly before Don died at age 103, preceding her in death. In a *Church News* article she attributed longevity in life and in their marriage to speaking kind words. She said, “I think that helped us through because we [tried] to help each other and not say unkind words to each other.”¹⁴

Second, be an example in conversation. In a general conference in October 1987, President Gordon B. Hinckley declared: “Foul talk defiles the man who speaks it. If you have the habit, how do you break it? You begin by making a decision to change. The next time you are prone to use words you know to be wrong, simply stop. Keep quiet or say what you have to say in a different way.”¹⁵

François de la Rochefoucauld observed, “One of the

reasons why so few people are to be found who seem sensible and pleasant in conversation is that almost everybody is thinking about what he wants to say himself rather than about answering clearly what is said to him.”¹⁶

Third, be an example in charity. From Corinthians comes the beautiful truth, “Charity never faileth.”¹⁷

Satisfying to the soul is the ready response the Church has made to disasters of nature in so many locations. Frequently we have arrived first on the scene following such disasters and with the most help. There are other organizations which likewise respond in a generous fashion.

What is charity? Moroni, in writing a few of the words of his father, Mormon, recorded, “Charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever.”¹⁸

One who exemplified charity in his life was President George Albert Smith (1870–1951). Immediately following World War II, the Church had a drive to amass warm clothing to ship to suffering Saints in Europe. Elder Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Elder Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), an Assistant to the Twelve, took President George Albert Smith to Welfare Square in Salt Lake City to view the results. They were impressed by the generous response of the membership of the Church. They watched President Smith observing the workers as they packaged this great volume of donated clothing and shoes. They saw tears running down his face. After a few moments, President Smith removed his own new overcoat and said, “Please ship this also.”

The Brethren said to him, “No, President, no; don’t send that; it’s cold and you need your coat.”

But President Smith would not take it back; and so his coat, with all the others, was sent to Europe, where the nights were long and dark and food and clothing were scarce. Then the shipments arrived. Joy and thanksgiving were expressed aloud, as well as in secret prayer.

Fourth, be an example in spirit. The Psalmist wrote, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”¹⁹

As a 17-year-old, I enlisted in the United States Navy



and attended boot camp in San Diego, California. For the first three weeks, one felt as though the navy were trying to kill rather than train him on how to stay alive.

I shall ever remember the first Sunday at San Diego. The chief petty officer said to us, “Today everybody goes to church.” We then lined up in formation on the drill ground. The petty officer shouted, “All of you who are Catholics—you meet in Camp Decatur. Forward, march! And don’t come back until three!” A large number marched out. He then said, “All of you who are of the Jewish faith—you meet in Camp Henry. Forward, march! And don’t come back until three!” A smaller contingent moved out. Then he said, “The rest of you Protestants meet in the theaters in Camp Farragut. Forward, march! And don’t come back until three o’clock!”

There flashed through my mind the thought, “Monson, you’re not Catholic. You’re not Jewish. You’re not a Protestant.”

I elected to stand fast. It seemed as though hundreds of men marched by me. Then I heard the sweetest words which the petty officer ever uttered in my presence. He said, “And what do you men call yourselves?” He used the plural—men. This was the first time I knew that anyone else was standing behind me on that drill ground. In unison we said, “We’re Mormons.” He scratched his head, an expression of puzzlement on his face, and said, “Well, go and find somewhere to meet—and don’t come back until three o’clock.” We marched away. One could almost count cadence to the rhyme learned in Primary:

*Dare to be a Mormon;
Dare to stand alone.
Dare to have a purpose firm,
And dare to make it known.*

Fifth, be an example in faith. President Stephen L Richards (1879–1959), First Counselor in the First Presidency, speaking

Elder Harold B. Lee, President George Albert Smith, and Elder Marion G. Romney observed workers as they packaged a great volume of donated clothing and shoes. After a few moments, President Smith removed his own new overcoat and said, “Please ship this also.”





Many years ago I attended a stake conference in Star Valley, Wyoming. I asked all those persons whom the stake president had blessed as children, confirmed, ordained, set apart, personally counseled, or otherwise blessed to please stand. The outcome was electrifying.

of faith, declared: “The recognition of power higher than man himself does not in any sense debase him. If in his faith he ascribes beneficence and high purpose to the power which is superior to himself, he envisions a higher destiny and nobler attributes for his kind and is stimulated and encouraged in the struggle of existence. . . . He must seek believing, praying, and hoping that he will find. No such sincere, prayerful effort will go unrequited—that is the very constitution of the philosophy of faith.”²⁰ Divine favor will attend those who humbly seek it.

Minnie Louise Haskins set forth this principle in a lovely poem:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

“Give me a light, that I may tread safely into the unknown!”

And he replied:

“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”²¹

Finally, be an example in purity. “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

“He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

“He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.”²²

As President David O. McKay (1873–1970) observed: “The safety of our nation depends upon the purity and strength of the home; and I thank God for the teachings of the . . . Church in relation to home building, and the impression that kind parents have made, that the home must be the most sacred place in the world. Our people are home-builders, and they are taught everywhere, from childhood to old age, that the home should be kept pure and safe from the evils of the world.”²³

Our Father's Gratitude

Many years ago I attended a stake conference in Star Valley, Wyoming, where the stake presidency was re-organized. The stake president who was being released, E. Francis Winters, had served faithfully for the lengthy term of 23 years. Though modest by nature and circumstance, he had been a perpetual pillar of strength to everyone in the valley. On the day of the stake conference, the building was filled to overflowing. Each heart seemed to be saying a silent thank-you to this noble leader who had given so unselfishly of his life for the benefit of others.

As I stood to speak, I was prompted to do something I had not done before, nor have I done so since. I stated how long Francis Winters had presided in the stake; then I asked all whom he had blessed or confirmed as children to stand and remain standing. Then I asked all those persons whom President Winters had ordained, set apart, personally counseled, or blessed to please stand. The outcome was electrifying. Every person in the audience rose to his or her feet. Tears flowed freely—tears which communicated better than could words the gratitude of tender hearts. I turned to President and Sister Winters and said, “We are witnesses today of the prompting of the Spirit. This vast throng reflects not only individual feelings but also the gratitude of God for a life well lived.” No person who was in the congregation that day will forget how he or she felt when we witnessed the language of the Spirit of the Lord.

Here, in Francis Winters, was “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”²⁴

*True to the faith that our parents have cherished,
True to the truth for which martyrs have perished,
To God's command,
Soul, heart, and hand,
Faithful and true we will ever stand.*²⁵

That each of us may do so is my humble prayer. ■

NOTES

1. Matthew 13:55.
2. Matthew 12:25.
3. D&C 132:8.
4. D&C 88:119.
5. 1 Corinthians 3:16.
6. D&C 18:10.
7. Matthew 11:28–30.
8. Luke 2:52.
9. Acts 10:38.
10. Acts 8:31.
11. 1 Timothy 4:12.
12. D&C 136:24.
13. Joseph L. Townsend, “Let Us Oft Speak Kind Words,” *Hymns*, no. 232.
14. Quoted in “Lives of Kindness, Service,” *Church News*, Sept. 21, 1996, 10.
15. “Take Not the Name of God in Vain,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 47.
16. *Maxims* (1959), 54.
17. 1 Corinthians 13:8.
18. Moroni 7:47.
19. Psalm 51:10.
20. In Conference Report, Oct. 1937, 35, 38.
21. From “The Gate of the Year,” in James Dalton Morrison, ed., *Masterpieces of Religious Verse* (1948), 92.
22. Psalm 24:3–5.
23. In Conference Report, Apr. 1909, 66.
24. 1 Timothy 4:12.
25. Evan Stephens, “True to the Faith,” *Hymns*, no. 254.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

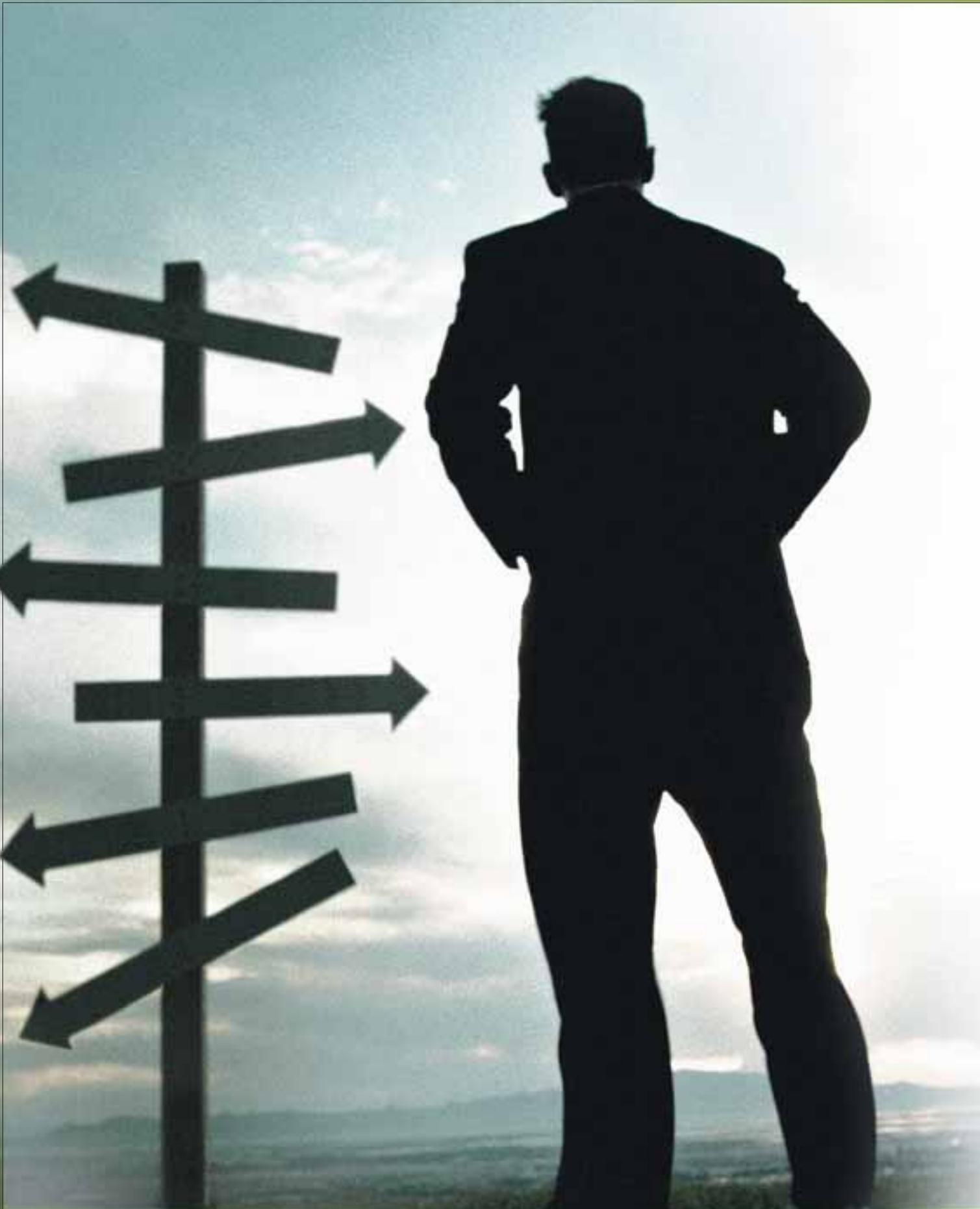
After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples.

1. Discuss with family members the process of building a house. Read aloud the fourth paragraph. Invite them to share examples of divine help they have received as “builders of eternal houses.”

2. Assemble a small “house” with wood, cups, or other building blocks labeled with the six elements mentioned in 1 Timothy 4:12. As each block is put in place, read what President Monson said about that element. Invite family members to share why each piece is important. Have family members think of someone who has been “an example of the believers” to them.

3. Share the account of E. Francis Winters in the article, and bear testimony of the blessings of following the Master's blueprint.





Using Agency Wisely

BY ELDER DONALD L. HALLSTROM

Of the Seventy

Moral agency, the ability to choose for oneself, is fundamental to our Heavenly Father's great plan of happiness. As the Lord told Adam, "It is given unto [thy children] to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves" (Moses 6:56).

Correctly used, moral agency enables us to overcome obstacles, develop the characteristics of godliness, and qualify for eternal life, "the greatest of all the gifts of God" (D&C 14:7). Jacob stated, "Remember that ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life" (2 Nephi 10:23).

It seems so simple. So why do we not make right decisions every time? One reason is that the consequences of our actions are not always immediate, which is especially trying in a world where we have been conditioned to expect quick results. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) stated: "If pain and sorrow and total punishment immediately followed the doing of evil, no soul would repeat a misdeed. If joy and peace and rewards were instantaneously given the doer of good, there could be no evil—all would do good and not because of

the rightness of doing good. There would be no test of strength, no development of character, no growth of powers, no free agency. . . . There would also be an absence of joy, success, resurrection, eternal life, and godhood."¹

Like all of us, Toshio Kawada of the Obihiro Ward, Sapporo Japan Stake, has had to make crucial choices when faced with life's difficulties. He joined the Church in 1972, and he and his wife, Miyuki, were sealed in the Laie Hawaii Temple in 1978. They have two sons. Brother Kawada served as president of the Obihiro Branch, president of the Kushiro Japan District, and counselor in the Japan Sapporo Mission presidency for many years.

More than 20 years ago, when his family was still very young, Brother Kawada was working for his father as a dairy farmer. Tragically, one day the large barn where they kept their milk cows and all their equipment burned down. Financially devastated, his father went to the farmers' union for a loan but was turned down. Subsequently, his father and older brother filed for bankruptcy. Although not legally responsible, Brother Kawada felt obligated to help pay back all the debts.

As Brother Kawada was pondering a solution to his problem, he decided to plant carrots. He had grown potatoes, but he did not



Correctly used, moral agency enables us to overcome obstacles, develop the characteristics of godliness, and qualify for eternal life.

know how to grow carrots. He planted the seeds and prayed earnestly for his carrots to grow.

All this time, Brother Kawada faithfully served in the Church, kept the Sabbath day holy, and paid his tithing. When he and his family dressed in their best clothes and went to their Sunday meetings, many neighbors scoffed at them. It was difficult to lose one day a week in their fields, especially at harvesttime. It was not always easy for them to pay their tithing, but they offered it to the Lord obediently and cheerfully.

Fall came and Brother Kawada's carrots turned out to be unusually sweet and large, with an exceptionally rich color. He had an abundant harvest and went to the farmers' union for help, but they refused to sell his carrots through their distribution system. He fasted and prayed and felt inspired to try to find a produce distributor in Tokyo—something that is very difficult to do without introductions or connections.

Brother Kawada was blessed to find a large distributor in Tokyo. Since then he has been very successful and has repaid all his father's debts. He currently has a large agricultural operation with many employees, and he is teaching young farmers how to effectively organize their businesses.

Even in exceptionally trying circumstances, Brother Kawada chose to be true to the promises he made in his baptismal, priesthood, and temple covenants. Although it would have been easy to rationalize working on the Sabbath, not serving in the Church, and not paying tithing until his problems were resolved, he was resolute in following the directive to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." He then found that, indeed, "all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

I respect Toshio Kawada not simply because he overcame hard times and became a successful farmer. Far more impressive is that he made courageous choices during a difficult period, knowing they would not necessarily bring an immediate reward—or any temporal reward at all. His example of righteously using agency and steadfastly holding to everlasting principles is worthy of emulation. ■

NOTE

1. *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 77.



SABBATH OBSERVANCE

"Sometimes Sabbath observance is characterized as a matter of sacrifice and self-denial, but it is not so.

. . . The Sabbath is a holy day in which to do worthy and holy things. Abstinence from work and recreation is important, but insufficient. The Sabbath calls for constructive thoughts and acts. . . . To observe it, one will be on his knees in prayer, preparing lessons, studying the gospel, meditating, visiting the ill and distressed, writing letters to missionaries, taking a nap, reading wholesome material, and attending all the meetings of that day at which he is expected."

**President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), "The Sabbath—
a Delight," *Tambuli*, July 1978, 4; *Ensign*, Jan. 1978, 4.**



TOSHIO KAWADA'S TESTIMONY

When we got married, my wife and I made a decision to keep the Sabbath day holy even though we were farmers. I remember a 1978 First Presidency Message by President Spencer W. Kimball. He talked of how he rejoiced when he saw machinery sitting idle in the fields on Sunday. He spoke of how keeping the Sabbath day holy was an expression of Latter-day Saints' faith. (See "The Sabbath—a Delight," *Tambuli*, July 1978, 1; *Ensign*, Jan. 1978, 2.)

At the time, we shared machinery with other farmers.

When you are working with others, it's difficult to say you won't work on the Sabbath. So we got out of combined farming and stopped raising potatoes.

On Callings

I was also the branch president. If I didn't go to church on Sunday, I couldn't fulfill my responsibilities. There were times I'd get up at 3:00 in the morning, milk the cows, feed the animals, and then go to church, do interviews, and get home at 5:00 in the evening. Then I would milk the cows again. By the time I finished everything it would be 10:00. I still remember those days when I'd sigh, "Finished at last."



On Sacrifices to Keep the Sabbath

Sometimes we worked until midnight on Saturday to keep from breaking the Sabbath. We went to church the next day, often without much sleep. Once we came home from church, and a cow had gotten caught in the pasture fence and died. There were times when we had millions of yen worth of damage to our cut hay because it had lain in the rain on the Sabbath. We knew accidents didn't happen because it was Sunday. If you worry about that kind of thing, you would never be able to keep the Sabbath. Accidents can happen anytime.

On Faith and Endurance

When the barn burned and we lost our cattle, some said, "I can't believe you were able to get through it." We said we couldn't do it any other way than how we did. We just worried about keeping the Sabbath and getting over the pain. We believed that God was watching over us and blessing us.

On Growing Carrots

We planted carrots with great success. Finally we were getting some kind of order in our lives. With carrots, it didn't matter if it



rained or we took every Sunday off. We could make our own decisions. We could serve more easily in any calling we were called to.

In our business, we use a lot of part-time help. When we are really busy, our employees suggest that we work Sundays. I tell them that we just don't work on Sundays. When our workers know that, they work hard and rarely take days off. On Sundays the younger workers spend the day with their children, and the older workers visit with their grandchildren.

On Gratitude to the Lord

Obedying God's commandments has been important to us. We stood firmly by our decision to keep the Sabbath day holy and wouldn't bend. As we did all that we could do, our children learned that there is a God and He blesses us. Our children really do hear and remember.

When our oldest son was serving in the Japan Fukuoka Mission, the mission president often introduced him by saying, "Elder Kawada's father stopped growing potatoes so he could keep the Sabbath day holy. Elder Kawada was raised in a family like that."

We feel happy when we see our children. They come to church. They have served missions and married in the temple. We are grateful to our Heavenly Father, who knows us and has blessed us. ■

MAKING MAJOR LIFE DECISIONS

*Whom should I marry?
How much education
should I pursue?
Should I serve a
mission? As a young
adult, are you facing
decisions like these?*





Sometimes when we are faced with two or more decisions that could be right, we may need to exercise our judgment to obtain experience.



“Get all the education you can. . . I do not care what you want to be as long as it is honorable. A car mechanic, a brick layer, a plumber, an electrician, a doctor, a lawyer, a merchant, but not a thief. . . If it means sacrifice, then sacrifice. That sacrifice will become the best investment you have ever made.”—President Gordon B. Hinckley

it was career suicide. They said I would never get anywhere in the industry if I was married.

“But I prayed about it, and I knew that no matter what happened with my career, Heavenly Father approved of my marriage. Our sealing in the temple was the most beautiful day of my life. This was the place Heavenly Father wanted me to be,” she said.

Education

In determining what vocation to pursue, young adults must decide what field they will study, how much education or training they will obtain, and where they will seek this education. President Hinckley has encouraged young adults: “Get all the education you can. . . I do not care what you want to be as long as it is honorable. A car mechanic, a brick layer, a plumber, an electrician, a doctor, a lawyer, a merchant, but not a thief. . . If it means sacrifice, then sacrifice. That sacrifice will become the best investment you have ever made, for you will reap returns from it all the days of your lives.”³

Rick Zinke had to make several difficult decisions, including the ones about education and missionary service. Enrolled at the United

States Air Force Academy, he planned on going to medical school after graduation and becoming a heart surgeon. He worked hard, which placed him in the top 5 percent of his class.

Then, through a routine medical examination, he was diagnosed with a relatively mild eye problem that meant he would not be medically qualified to be an Air Force officer. He appealed the ruling. He was told that if he would forego serving a mission, he could have a waiver for his medical problem. Rick chose the mission and left the academy without any guarantee that he could return.

After his mission, he again began the process of reapplication to the academy. However, he kept receiving promptings that he should not return to the academy. He submitted his application again despite those promptings, and he was reappointed to the academy.

“Finally, humbling myself, I united my will with that of the Lord and declined the appointment to return to the academy,” he said. “For the first time in months I felt peace concerning the matter. I did not know why it was so important for me not to return to the academy. I could only trust that the Lord knew more than I did.”



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions, personal reflection, or teaching the gospel in a variety of settings.

1. Ask each family member, “What do you think you’ll be doing when you’re 25?” Identify with family members principles in the article that will help in making important decisions. Share personal examples of how making decisions with the Lord’s guidance has blessed you.

2. Have your younger children dress up in grown-up clothes and pretend they are older. Discuss some of the decisions grown-ups must make. Teach family members that these decisions should involve prayer and inspiration. Find examples in the article to illustrate how to obtain the Lord’s guidance in all of life’s pursuits.



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Several months later he learned that the Air Force Academy had instituted a new policy stipulating that its graduates must first spend an unspecified period of time in service with the Air Force before pursuing graduate programs. That would have limited his ability to enter medical school upon graduation. He would not have known when or if he could pursue his goal to become a heart surgeon.

“I have learned that the most effective way to make correct decisions is to be living in such a manner that the whisperings of the Spirit are recognizable,” he said. “The Lord will guide those who act in faith, even though they may not know the reason for such action.”

Rick is now attending Brigham Young University and applying to medical school.

Help through Institute

Institute classes can be a tool to help young adults receive inspiration as they make choices in their lives.

Tagen Towsley of Pocatello, Idaho, said: “It seems whenever I am burdened with a huge decision, there’s a talk given in sacrament meeting or a lesson in institute that deals with the decision I’m trying to make.

“Recently I was considering a mission. I had many thoughts and impressions come to me, but I was doubting myself. I decided not to go to institute one morning because I got home from work at 2:00 a.m. and would have had to get up very early, but I changed my mind. When I got there, the Spirit whispered a confirmation of the answer I was

seeking. Tears filled my eyes as I sat there and thought, ‘What if I had slept in? I would have missed that help.’”

Answers to Prayer

At times, however intense the pleading for inspiration, the answers seem not to come. Nonetheless, the Lord is ever mindful of those who petition Him.

“We do not always receive inspiration or revelation when we request it,” said Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Sometimes we are delayed in the receipt of revelation, and sometimes we are left to our own judgment. We cannot force spiritual things. . . . Our life’s purpose to obtain experience and to develop faith would be frustrated if our Heavenly Father directed us in every act, even in every important act. We must make decisions and experience the consequences in order to develop self-reliance and faith.”⁴

Lisa Funk of Laguna Beach, California, has found that making important decisions is sometimes not too complicated.

“If I don’t get a clear push in one direction or another right away, I assume it is one of those ‘it’s up to you’ decisions,” she said. “I study it out in my mind and start to head down the path of my own choosing. If I continue prayerfully, I know the Lord will steer me in another direction if necessary, when the time is right.”

Michael McBride of Irvine, California, felt right about going to graduate school and had narrowed his choice down to two of the schools that had accepted him. Each offered something unique. But he found it difficult to determine which school was the right one to attend.



The Savior asked the rich young ruler to give up his possessions and “come, follow me” (Luke 18:22). Similarly, we all have to choose whether to follow the enticements of the world or to follow Christ.

“I thought it out in my mind over and over, trying to reach a specific conclusion, and asked the Lord in ‘yes or no’ fashion if it was right. But I felt that each choice was the right place to go,” he said.

“It finally hit me that my choice was not between right and wrong but between good and good. I realized it was not up to the Lord to tell me which school to attend. It was my choice, and I was to use my judgment.”

Returning to Activity

At some point, all of us must decide what beliefs and values will guide our lives and what our level of involvement in the Church will be. Will we follow the enticements of the world? Or will we heed the Savior’s call to “come unto me”?

Ellice Broderick of Gwent, Wales, was at a crossroads. “I had spent most of my life with one foot in the gospel and one foot in the world,” she said. “I needed to choose between following the Savior or continuing on the road to spiritual destruction. The decision I was to make was perhaps the biggest decision of my life. With the Lord’s help, I decided I needed to become fully converted to the gospel.”

Choosing to take the right path wasn’t easy, and neither was the repentance process that followed. She met

with her branch president to ask for his counsel, and he was a powerful support.

Ellice prayed. She learned to love the scriptures. At times she was discouraged, but she knew she was going in the right direction.

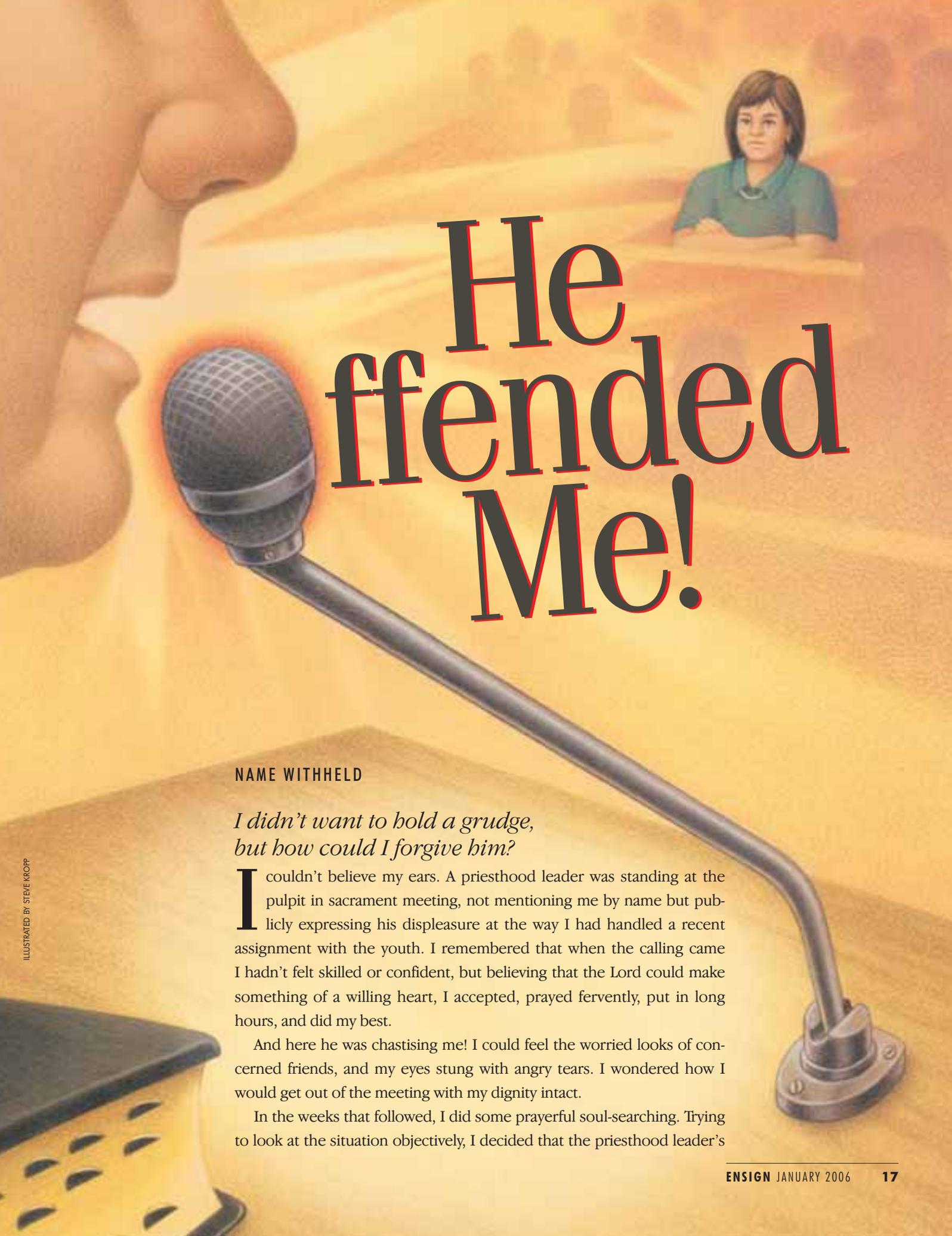
“How did I stay strong and remain able to overcome my challenge? I allowed the Savior to carry me,” she said. “I know that it is through His Atonement that I was able to put my life right. I’m not perfect by any stretch of the imagination, but I’m heading in the right direction and not looking back. I’m pressing ‘forward with a steadfastness in Christ’ ” (2 Nephi 31:20).

At times, making the right choices can be simple. At other times, it is a struggle. But through it all, you can find comfort in knowing that as a member the Lord’s Church, you have spiritual resources to aid you in making your decisions. The Lord is intimately concerned with your welfare, and He seeks to give you blessings overflowing throughout eternity as you draw near to Him. ■

Kathleen Lubeck Peterson is a member of the Foothill Ward, North Salt Lake Utah Stake.

NOTES

1. “Choices,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 53–54.
2. “Life’s Obligations,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 2.
3. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 172–73.
4. “Revelation,” *New Era*, Sept. 1982, 46.

An illustration showing a close-up of a person's profile on the left, with a microphone positioned near their mouth. In the background, a woman is seated at a desk, looking towards the viewer. The scene is set against a warm, golden-yellow background with a grid pattern.

He ffended Me!

NAME WITHHELD

*I didn't want to hold a grudge,
but how could I forgive him?*

I couldn't believe my ears. A priesthood leader was standing at the pulpit in sacrament meeting, not mentioning me by name but publicly expressing his displeasure at the way I had handled a recent assignment with the youth. I remembered that when the calling came I hadn't felt skilled or confident, but believing that the Lord could make something of a willing heart, I accepted, prayed fervently, put in long hours, and did my best.

And here he was chastising me! I could feel the worried looks of concerned friends, and my eyes stung with angry tears. I wondered how I would get out of the meeting with my dignity intact.

In the weeks that followed, I did some prayerful soul-searching. Trying to look at the situation objectively, I decided that the priesthood leader's



comments had some merit. I was hurt and puzzled by his method of delivery, though. I had such a grudge in my heart, and as it festered I became less and less comfortable. I tried hard to forgive and love this brother, but forgiveness just would not stay where I put it.

Who Is Right? Who Is Wrong?

My husband gave me a beautiful priesthood blessing in which he told me that Heavenly Father loved me and was pleased with my efforts. “How can that be?” I wondered. “Am I the good person Heavenly Father thinks I am, or am I the bad person my leader seems to think I am?” My confidence was shaken, but I didn’t want to let such a difficulty drive me out of the Church. I continued to pray, asking in sincerity of heart, “Who is right? Who is wrong?”

Looking back, I realize that I fully expected Heavenly Father to put an arm around my injured pride and tell me, “Of course you are right!” I was, therefore, not prepared for the sweet, simple answer that came. It was a phrase from a poem I had heard long ago that landed softly on my agitated soul: “They are good, they are bad, . . . so am I.”¹ Although I couldn’t remember the rest of the poem or even its title, the message was clear.

I asked again, “Who is right?” This time I knew the answer: I am, and he is. “And who is wrong?” I am, and he is. As I pondered this, the Spirit helped me understand that it didn’t matter who was right and who was wrong in this instance. Being human, we all make mistakes from time to time, despite our best intentions. We’re basically good, but sometimes our behavior isn’t. I realized that I needed to forgive because I had been forgiven many times, and it likely would not be long until I did something that would require forgiveness again. I decided to square my shoulders and support my priesthood leaders. These thoughts made my heart soar free from the burden of the grudge I had carried for weeks.

A Mess and a Message

Not long after this precious answer came, I was cleaning the holiday closet in the attic. I spent several hours taking everything out, sorting, cleaning, and putting things back neatly. By the end of the job I was tired, but suddenly I felt prompted to go to the opposite end of the attic and look inside another closet. When I opened the door, things fell out. It was a bigger mess than the holiday closet had been. My normal inclination after a long day of cleaning would be to slam the door shut and save it for another day. But something told me to dig, so I did.

I was rewarded when I pulled out a beloved old poetry book. I patted it and vowed to read it soon, but the Spirit impressed me, “No. Now.” I thought to myself, “Read poetry in the middle of a mess? A mother of nine doesn’t have time for poetry!” But I obeyed the prompting, smiling guiltily as I thumbed through the worn pages.

And there it was, the poem that had been the answer to my prayer and had given me a spiritually reviving look at forgiveness: “The House by the Side of the Road” by Sam Walter Foss. I found special meaning in the last stanza:

*Let me live in my house by the side of the road—
It's here the race of men go by.
They are good, they are bad, they are weak,
they are strong,
Wise, foolish—so am I;
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban?
Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.*

What Is It to Me?

When Moroni was struggling with the worry that the Gentiles would mock him for his perceived “weakness in writing” (Ether 12:23), he prayed that the Lord would



give the Gentiles charity concerning his record-keeping efforts (see v. 36). A patient Savior taught him, “If they have not charity it mattereth not unto thee, thou hast been faithful” (v. 37).

Likewise, the book of John tells us that Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him, and three times Peter assured the Savior he did. Peter was then told, “Feed my sheep” (see John 21:15–17). I was familiar with that part of the story, but one day I read beyond it to the end of the chapter and learned what happened just after those famous words were spoken. The Savior told Peter that he would die the death of a martyr. Looking at John the Beloved, Peter then asked, “Lord, and what shall this man do?” Jesus answered him, “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me” (see John 21:18–22).

Now when I begin to be offended by one of my brothers or sisters, I think of the Savior reminding Moroni that he need only be concerned about the level of charity in himself. I can hear the Lord kindly warning Peter concerning his worry about John’s assignment rather than his own. I remember what the Spirit taught me: “They are good, they

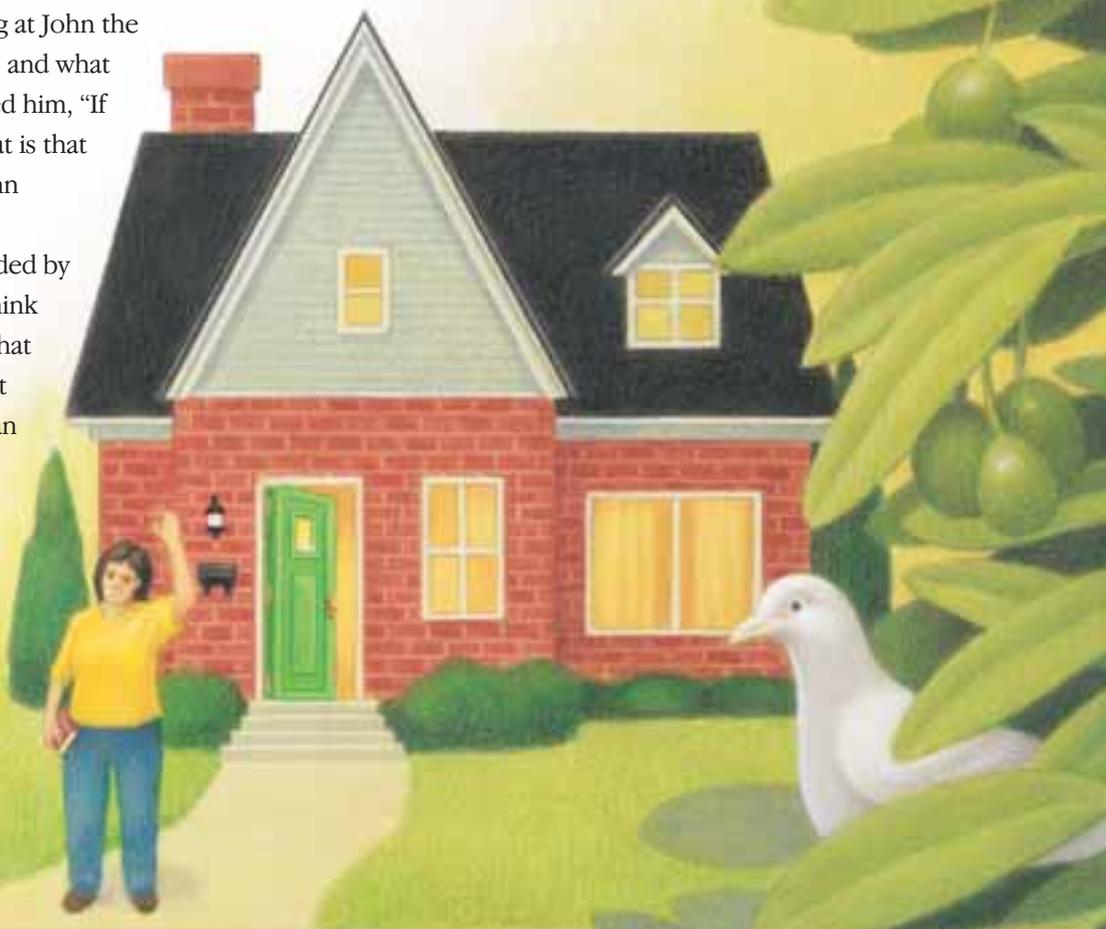
are bad, . . . so am I.” And I am reminded where my focus needs to be. Rather than dwell on the faults of others, I need to focus on my own efforts to be Christlike.

I have learned that my house by the side of the road is my own heart, in which the Savior invites me to live with gentle, hope-filled judgment; He wants me to be a friend to man. The Savior asks me to leave grudges at the doorstep and invite *everyone* in, as He does. I am grateful for that answer and for the help. ■

NOTE

1. Sam Walter Foss, “The House by the Side of the Road,” in *One Hundred and One Famous Poems*, comp. Roy J. Cook (1958), 9–10.

I found special meaning in the words of poet Sam Walter Foss: “Let me live in my house by the side of the road / And be a friend to man.”



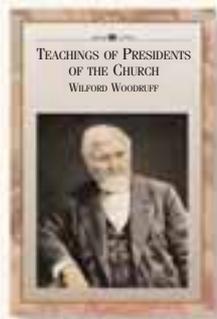
Wilford Woodruff

Contending for the Faith

While contending for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, President Woodruff taught principles relevant for our lives today.

BY AARON L. WEST

President Gordon B. Hinckley has counseled us to “cultivate in [our] hearts a living and vibrant testimony of the restoration of the gospel.”¹ As we strive to follow this counsel, we can learn much if we view the Restoration through the eyes of one of President Hinckley’s predecessors—Wilford Woodruff (1807–98), the fourth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



Searching for the True Church

In the 1820s, Joseph Smith experienced the First Vision, conversed with angels, translated the gold plates by the power of God, and received priesthood authority. In a neighboring state, a young man named Wilford Woodruff was searching for the true Church. He said, “I believed . . . that the Church of God would be reestablished upon the earth, and that I should live to see it.”²

Yearning to find the truth, Wilford Woodruff attended many religious meetings in the area around his home. At one such gathering, permission was given for anyone in the congregation to speak. Young Wilford stood, knowing that 40 or more ministers of various churches were in attendance. He stepped into the aisle and said:

“My friends, will you tell me why you don’t contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints? Will you tell me why

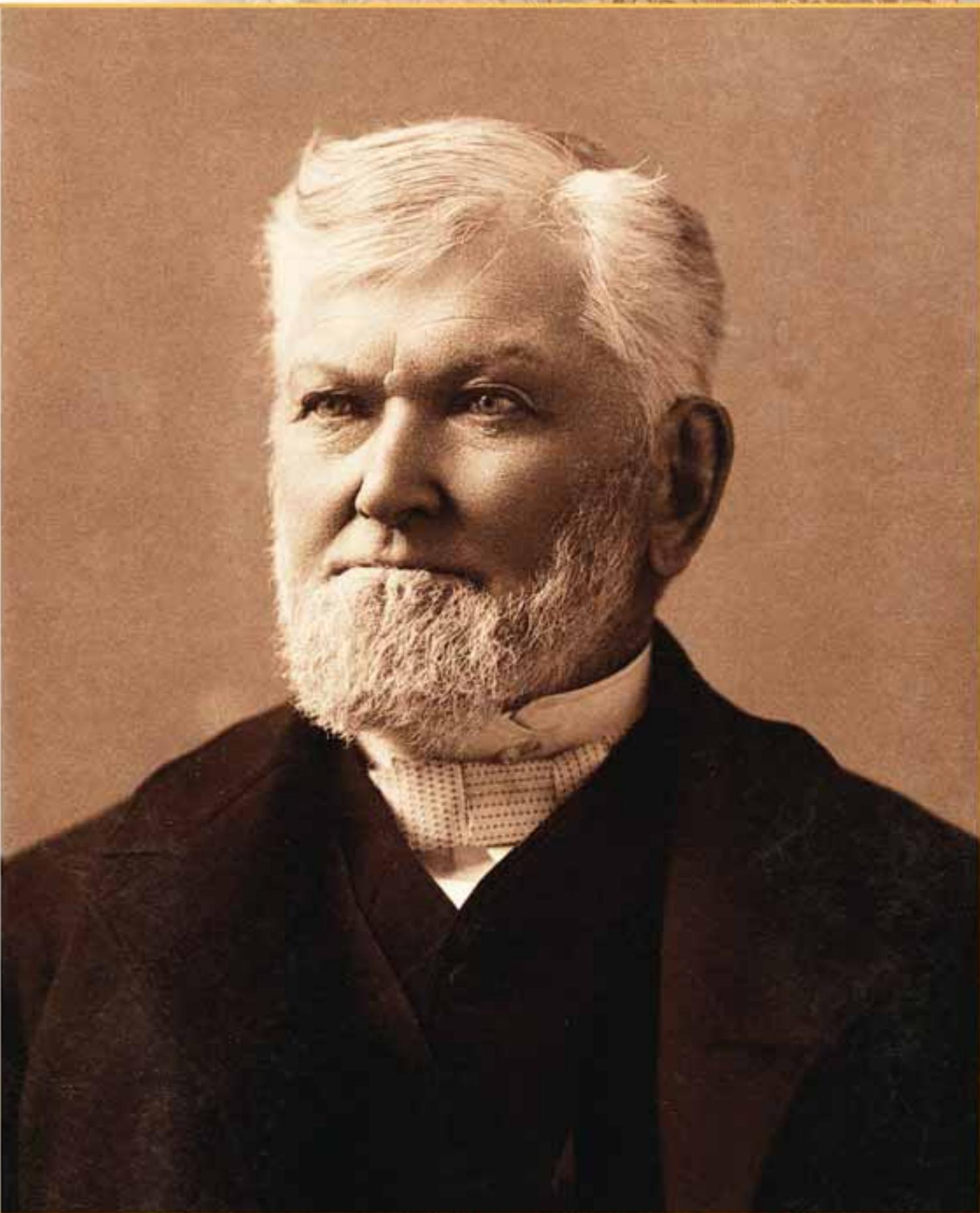
you don’t contend for that Gospel that Jesus Christ taught, and that His Apostles taught? Why do you not contend for that religion that gives unto you power before God, power to heal the sick, to make the blind to see, the lame to walk, and that gives you the Holy Ghost and those gifts and graces that have been manifest from the creation of the world? Why do you not teach

the people those principles that the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets taught while they were clothed with the revelations of God? They had the administrations of angels; they had dreams and visions, and constant revelation to guide and direct them in the path in which they should walk.”

The people at the meeting must have been surprised to hear such bold language from such a young man. Immediately, the presiding minister tried to discount the ideas Wilford Woodruff had shared. “My dear young man,” he said, “you would be a very smart man, and a very useful man in the earth, if you did not believe all those foolish things. These things were given to the children of men in the dark ages of the world. . . . Today we live in the blaze of the glorious gospel light, and we do not need those things.”

Unconvinced by this minister’s comments, Wilford replied, “Then give me the dark ages of the world; give me those ages when men received these principles.”³

Some time later, in a small schoolhouse, 26-year-old Wilford Woodruff stood to speak in another meeting. This



time he spoke in response to the testimonies of Elders Zera Pulsipher and Elijah Cheney, missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He later recounted: “[Elder Pulsipher] opened the door for any remarks to be made. The house was crowded. The first thing I knew I stood on top of a bench before the people, not knowing what I got up for. But I said to my neighbors and friends, ‘I want you to be careful what you say as touching these men . . . and their testimony, for they are servants of God, and they have testified unto us the truth—principles that I have been looking for from my childhood.’”⁴ Wilford Woodruff was baptized and confirmed two days later, on December 31, 1833.

Contending for the Faith

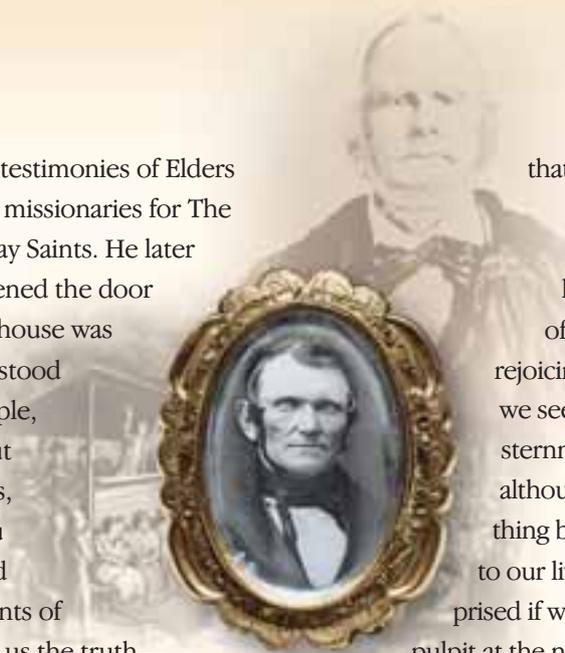
When Wilford Woodruff stood and spoke to the ministers in his area, he referred to an excerpt from near the end of the New Testament. He repeated Jude’s plea to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3).

Wilford Woodruff’s use of this seldom-quoted passage showed his keen biblical knowledge, which he had acquired as he “learned verse after verse and chapter after chapter.”⁵ But his emphasizing of the verse revealed more than his careful study—it revealed his determination to search for the truth. He knew that “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” had been lost, and he contended earnestly to find it. Once he did find it, he embraced it without hesitation.

Having experienced the confusion brought about by the Great Apostasy, Wilford Woodruff rejoiced to learn what it truly meant to “live in the blaze of the glorious gospel light.” That light grew brighter and brighter for him as he cultivated and shared his testimony of the Restoration throughout his life.

Teachings of President Wilford Woodruff

When we see pictures of President Wilford Woodruff with his prominent forehead and piercing eyes, we might assume



that he was a stern, distant man. But through a study of his life and teachings, we can come to know him as a lively, compassionate, humble servant of God—a man who went on his way rejoicing, even in times of trial.⁶ In his face we see nobility and strength rather than sternness. And we find that his words, although more than a century old, are anything but distant. In fact, they are so relevant to our lives today that we would not be surprised if we heard similar statements from the pulpit at the next general conference.

The following quotations highlight President Woodruff’s testimony of the restored gospel. They are taken from *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff*, which is the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society curriculum for 2006 in 24 languages.

Restoration of the Gospel. “I thank God that I live in this day and age of the world, when my ears have heard the sound of the fulness of the gospel of Christ.”⁷

“We have the privilege of walking in the light, we have the privilege of comprehending and knowing the truth, of knowing the way to be saved and exalted in the presence of our Father and God. We are in a position to know his mind and will, through his servants the prophets. The Lord has given unto us teachers and inspired men, men who are inspired by the Spirit and power of God; clothed them with truth and endowed them with wisdom to teach us at all times the path we should walk in. This is a great blessing.”⁸

Atonement of Jesus Christ. “It [has] been fully established beyond all controversy, from the flood of testimony . . . from the revelations of God, given in various dispensations and ages of the world, and in different parts of the globe, that the object of Christ’s mission to the earth was to offer himself as a sacrifice to redeem mankind from eternal death, and that it was perfectly in accordance with the will of the Father that such a sacrifice should be made. He acted strictly in obedience to his Father’s will in all things from the beginning, and drank of the bitter cup given him. Herein is brought to light,

glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, with that charity which is greater than faith or hope, for the Lamb of God has thereby performed that for man which [man] could not accomplish for himself.”⁹

“There is no being that has power to save the souls of men and give them eternal life, except the Lord Jesus Christ, under the command of His Father.”¹⁰

The Prophet Joseph Smith. “I have felt to rejoice exceedingly in what I saw of brother Joseph, for in his public and private career he carried with him the Spirit of the Almighty, and he manifested a greatness of soul which I had never seen in any other man.”¹¹

“I will say myself that I do not believe there ever was a man . . . that was more closely united and associated with God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, than the Prophet Joseph Smith. The power of revelation was with him from the day that he was called to receive the Priesthood up to the time when he was martyred. The power of inspiration was with him day by day.”¹²

Priesthood. “When an apostle or president, bishop or any man holding the priesthood officiates, he administers by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ; then that priesthood has effect, and all the blessings that a servant of God bestows upon the children of men, will take effect both in this life and in that which is to come. If I have a blessing given to me by the holy priesthood, or if I receive a blessing from a patriarch, those gifts and blessings will reach into the other world; and if I am true to my covenants through this life, I can claim every blessing that has been conferred upon me, because that authority by which they were conferred is ordained of

God, and it is that by which the sons of the Most High administer unto the children of men the ordinances of life and salvation, and those official acts will have their effect upon those persons beyond the grave as well as in this life. These are the true riches; they are riches that will last to all eternity, and we have power through these blessings, conferred by the gospel, to receive our bodies again and to preserve our identity in eternity. Yes, we can claim this by virtue of the holy priesthood.”¹³

Keeping the Commandments. “There is no man or woman who has ever lived on the earth and kept the commandments of God



Far left: Behind Wilford Woodruff are influences in his conversion—a religious meeting and Zera Pulsipher, who baptized him. Left: Wilford Woodruff’s wife Phoebe. Below: The First Presidency in 1894—President Woodruff (center), President George Q. Cannon (left), and President Joseph F. Smith (right).



who will be ashamed of, or sorry for it, when they go into the presence of God.”¹⁴

Gift of the Holy Ghost. “Now, if you have the Holy Ghost with you—and every one ought to have—I can say unto you that there is no greater gift, there is no greater blessing, there is no greater testimony given to any man on earth. You may have the administration of angels; you may see many miracles; you may see many wonders in the earth; but I claim that the gift of the Holy Ghost is the greatest gift that can be bestowed upon man. It is by this power that we have performed that which we have. It is this that sustains us through all the persecutions, trials and tribulations that come upon us.”¹⁵

“Through all my life and labors, whenever I have been told to do anything by the Spirit of the Lord, I have always found it good to do it. I have been preserved by that power. . . . Get the spirit of revelation with you. And when you get that you are safe, and you will do exactly what the Lord wants you to do.”¹⁶

Family Life. “We are all expecting to live together forever after death. I think we all as parents and children ought to take all the pains we can to make each other happy as long as we live that we may have nothing to regret.”¹⁷

“It is a great thing to know how to act so as to gain the feelings and affections of our families, that will lead them in the path wherein they may be saved. This is a study and a work that should not be laid aside by parents. . . . Many times we may consider business so urgent that it must crowd these things out of our minds, but this should not be. Any man’s mind that is open, and who looks forward to the

work that lies before us, will see and feel that the responsibility that rests upon him concerning his own family, and especially in the rearing up of his children, is very great.

“We want to save our children, and to have them partake of all the blessings that encircle the sanctified, to have them receive the blessings of their parents who have been faithful to the fulness of the gospel.”¹⁸

Missionary Work. “Mankind in all ages search for happiness; they desire social and domestic peace; and when they think of the vast future, they desire to participate in the blessings that are spoken of as pertaining to that state of existence; but they know not how to obtain them, except a servant of God comes along and points out the way of life.”¹⁹

“My whole life almost has been spent in this Church; and from the time I came into the Church I went on missions and have never ceased altogether from that day to this. I have always rejoiced in this, and do to-day. When I die and lay down my body, I do not want anybody to rise up and say that I have neglected my duty in trying to give him salvation as far as I could. I have always rejoiced in preaching the Gospel; I have rejoiced in administering the ordinances of life and salvation at home and abroad, because I have known that this was the work of God, and I know it is to-day.”²⁰

Temple and Family History Work. “What is gold and silver; what are the riches of this world? They all perish with the using. We pass away and leave them. But if we have eternal life, if we keep the faith and overcome, we shall rejoice when we go upon the other side of the veil. I rejoice in all these things. There is hardly any principle the Lord has revealed that I have rejoiced more in than in the redemption of our dead; that we will have our fathers, our mothers, our wives and our children with us in the family organization, in the morning of the first resurrection and in the Celestial Kingdom. These are grand principles. They are worth every sacrifice.”²¹

“We want the Latter-day Saints from this time to trace their genealogies as far as they can, and to be sealed to their fathers and mothers. Have children sealed to their parents, and run this chain through as far as you can get it.”²²

“No right feeling Latter-day Saint can think upon this subject without being thrilled with heavenly joy.”²³

Words of Warning and Encouragement

Looking back on the Church's history and reaching forward to the Church's destiny, President Gordon B. Hinckley exhorts us: "We are the beneficiaries of [the] great Restoration. . . . We can't afford to be tawdry people. We ought to stand a little taller, be a little better for the great inheritance which we have."²⁴ More than 120 years ago, President Wilford Woodruff gave a similar challenge to the Latter-day Saints. His words, both in warning and encouragement, are just as true for us today:

"What manner of men and women ought we to be, who are called to take part in the great latter-day work? We should be men and women of faith, valiant for the truth as it has been revealed and committed into our hand. We should be men and women of integrity to God and to His holy Priesthood, true to Him and true to one another. We should not permit houses and lands, gold and silver, nor any of this world's goods to draw us aside from pursuing the great object which God has sent us to perform. Our aim is high, our destiny is high and we should never disappoint our Father, nor the heavenly hosts who are watching over us. We should not disappoint the millions in the spirit world, who too are watching over us with an interest and anxiety that have hardly entered into our hearts to conceive of. These are great and mighty things which God requires of us. We would not be worthy of salvation, we would not be worthy of eternal lives in the kingdom of our God, if anything could turn us away from the truth or from the love of it."²⁵ ■

Aaron L. West is a member of the Kaysville Second Ward, Kaysville Utah Central Stake.

NOTES

1. "Recurring Themes of President Hinckley," *Ensign*, June 2000, 21.
2. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* (2004), xix.
3. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 36–37; see also 35.
4. *Millennial Star*, Oct. 5, 1891, 627; see also *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, xix–xx, 37–38.
5. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 35.
6. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 109, 153, 162, 218.
7. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 10.
8. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 8–9.
9. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 69–70.
10. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 74.
11. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 14.
12. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 16.
13. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 42–43.
14. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 214.
15. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 49.
16. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 52.
17. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 163.
18. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 167–68.
19. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 92.
20. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 95.
21. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 192–93.
22. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 177.
23. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 176.
24. "Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley," *Ensign*, Mar. 1999, 72.
25. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 43–44.

President Wilford Woodruff (left) directed the laying of the capstone of the Salt Lake Temple during April 1892 general conference (below). One year later, in April 1893, President Woodruff dedicated the Salt Lake Temple.



God Moves in a Mysterious Way

With dignity ♩ = 58-69

Descant Ah, _____ ah. _____

1. God moves in a mysterious way His
 2. Ye fear - ful Saints, fresh cour - age take; The
 3. His pur - pos - es will rip - en fast, Un -
 4. Blind un - be - lief is sure to err And

_____ Ah, _____

won - ders to per - form; He plants His foot - steps in the
 clouds ye so much dread Are big with mer - cy and shall
 fold - ing ev - 'ry hour; The bud may have a bit - ter
 scan His works in vain; God is His own in - ter - pret -

_____ ah. _____

sea And rides up - on the storm.
 break In bless - ings on your head.
 taste, But sweet will be the flower.
 er, And He will make it plain.

Text: William Cowper, 1731-1800

Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816-68

Descant: Ralph B. Woodward, b. 1944

This hymn may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use.

Psalm 107:23-31

Romans 8:28

A favorite hymn of President Wilford Woodruff



For Newlyweds and Their Parents

When children marry, a fundamental shift should occur in their relationship with their parents.

BY RICHARD B. MILLER

Professor of Family Life,
Brigham Young
University

I know a couple who recently had a significant disagreement. Things said during the argument hurt both partners. But the problem was compounded when the wife called her parents and told them about the incident. She disclosed details of the argument, as well as some of her husband's faults. The parents, feeling protective of their daughter, reacted negatively toward their son-in-law. While the wife received comfort and support from her parents, she unwittingly created a larger problem.

Shortly afterward, the husband and wife cooled down, took shared responsibility for the argument, and apologized to each other. They forgave each other and became close again. The negative actions of the day would have been forgotten except for the continued negative feelings of the wife's parents. Not being part of the "making-up" process between the couple, the parents were still upset with their son-in-law. Their negative feelings toward him continued to

be a distress in the marriage long after the couple had resolved the argument.

Establishing Marital Boundaries

It is important that newly married couples learn to develop appropriate relationships with their parents. Appropriate, in this sense, involves establishing definite marital boundaries. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught that couples should protect their marriage relationship by not disclosing private marital issues to their parents—or anyone else. He said: "Being human, you may someday have differences of opinion resulting even in little quarrels. Neither of you will be so unfaithful to the other as to go back to your parents or friends and discuss with them your little differences. That would be gross disloyalty. Your intimate life is your own and must not be shared with or confided in others. You



will not go back to your people for sympathy, but will thresh out your own difficulties.”¹

Sometimes, one spouse may confide in his or her parents even when there hasn’t been an argument. When making decisions, a husband or wife may confide in parents and rely more upon their advice than upon the spouse’s. Again, President Kimball taught that husbands and wives need to maintain appropriate boundaries around the marriage. He said: “Your married life should become independent of her folks and his folks. You love them more than ever; you cherish their counsel; you appreciate their association; but you live your own lives, being governed by your decisions.”²

One couple struggled in their relationship because the husband valued his father’s opinions more than he did his wife’s. When the couple was in the process of making a decision, such as buying a new car, they would discuss it together, but then the husband would

talk to his father and invariably follow whatever counsel his father gave, regardless of his wife’s opinion. This created tension in their marriage because she resented him for caring more about his father’s opinion than about hers.

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that we need to “be fiercely loyal to one another” in marriage.³ Over the years I have found it helpful to ask myself the question, “Deep down inside, am I more concerned about my parents’ feelings about this issue than my spouse’s feelings?” In a united marriage the husband and wife are always most concerned about each other’s feelings. As we prayerfully seek help from our Father in Heaven, problems can often be resolved without hurting anyone’s feelings. However, if a choice must be made, the spouse must take priority. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said: “Nothing except God Himself takes priority over your [spouse] in your life.”⁴

Latter-day prophets have taught that couples need to maintain appropriate boundaries around their marriage and be fiercely loyal to one another.

Financial Independence

Another aspect of creating a strong marriage is becoming financially independent from both sets of parents. Although parents may choose to assist their newly married children in becoming established, perhaps by helping finance a college education or contributing to a down payment on their first home, married children should strive to become financially independent as soon as possible.

There are times when married couples may need financial assistance. It is important, though, not to provide too much aid and overindulge adult children. Church welfare principles enunciated nearly 70 years ago provide important guidance to help parents who are wrestling with the issue of providing financial assistance to their married children. President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) taught that the welfare program was designed so that “independence, industry, thrift and self respect be once more established amongst our people.”⁵

When parents give assistance to married children, the primary objective should be to encourage and facilitate independence. Providing long-term financial assistance that creates dependence is not consistent with Church welfare principles. On the other hand, short-term assistance providing a bridge to adult children’s independence is consistent with these principles.

One couple, married 15 years, enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle until the husband was laid off from his job. Hoping that it was just a temporary setback, they relied on their savings and food storage for a few months. When he was unable to find employment, though, their situation became dire. Faced with losing their home, taking their children out of school, and moving to another location, they reluctantly asked their parents for help. Their parents,

after prayerfully considering the situation, paid part of the mortgage, covered the utility expenses, and shared generously from their gardens. Consistent with welfare principles, during this time of unemployment the husband repainted the inside of his in-laws’ house. After several months he was able to find stable employment, and the couple reestablished their independence, grateful for loving parents who helped them through a difficult period.

Adult-to-Adult Relationships

Marrying and leaving the parents’ home requires a fundamental shift in the relationship between children and parents. While parents of young children have a divine mandate to supervise and discipline their children, it is not appropriate for parents to control their adult children. Instead, the hierarchy of supervision and control dissolves so that parents and their adult children are on equal footing. This shift allows parents and adult children to develop relationships that are built on mutual respect and friendship.

How do adult children and their parents create this fundamental shift in their relationship? I learned a key principle

in this process several years ago when I was teaching a workshop for married couples in our stake. I taught the workshop three consecutive times as participants rotated among various classes. The first two times I taught the workshop, the primary audience was young couples in their 20s and early 30s. When I taught the principle that relationships between adult children and parents should be nonhierarchical, with parents no longer controlling their children, the members of the class became very enthusiastic. A number of them raised their hand and said, “I want my parents to treat me like an adult, but they won’t.”



Although parents may choose to assist their newly married children in becoming established, any assistance should be a short-term bridge to the children’s financial independence.

The third workshop included a different group of participants. Instead of people in their 20s, the class consisted almost exclusively of middle-aged adults who had adult children of their own. Being in my late 20s myself, I was worried about how the middle-aged parents would respond to the principle that parents should allow their adult children to make their own decisions, become independent, and be treated like adults.

Sure enough, as soon as I started teaching this principle, several hands shot up—just as I had feared. As I called on them, I was somewhat surprised by the first person's comment. She said, "We would love to treat our married children like adults, but they send us very mixed messages." She continued: "Just a couple weeks ago, for example, one of our married children said that we needed to treat her and her husband more like adults. She accused us of still treating them like children. My husband and I agreed to treat them more like adults, but the next day they called up and said that they were out of gas and wanted to borrow \$20 from us. A few days later they again told us to treat them like adults, but they called that very evening saying that they were hungry and wanted to come over for dinner. We would *love* to treat our married children like adults, but they won't act like adults." After she finished her comments, several other people in the audience expressed similar feelings.

Reciprocity

This story reinforces the principle that relationships between adult children and parents don't really change until there is reciprocity in the relationship. Relationships develop an equal footing when both people give to each other, but when only one party gives and the other takes, an unequal relationship develops.

An adult-to-adult relationship can be established only upon the principle of reciprocity.

When children are young, parents sacrifice considerably by giving to their children. Young children and adolescents, of course, should be appreciative and express love and gratitude to their parents, but most of the nurturing and acts of service flow toward the children. The relationship between adult children and their parents, though, needs to shift toward an adult-to-adult relationship in which children can give back.

One couple was fortunate to have the wife's parents come to their home for the weekend to help paint the outside of the house. As a sign of appreciation, the young couple took the parents out to dinner. In another family, the



adult children got together and planned a surprise birthday party for one of their parents. In both cases, the married children acted like adults by treating their parents like adults, thereby fostering adult-to-adult relationships. These relationships are based on friendship and mutual respect, with each being concerned about the happiness and well-being of the other. Most important,

these relationships are satisfying for both the parents and the adult children.

Some married children struggle with the "Santa Claus syndrome," viewing Mom and Dad as Santa Claus figures who are to shower love and gifts on their children with little expectation of reciprocity. These children are often unable to develop mutually satisfying relationships with their parents.

Of course, most young married couples are unable to match the financial resources of their parents, making them unable to reciprocate on a dollar-to-dollar basis. But the principle of reciprocity isn't necessarily about the amount of money exchanged, because

N*ewlyweds and their parents can establish an adult-to-adult relationship only upon the principle of reciprocity.*



continued emotional dependence on parents can be just as damaging to a marriage as financial dependence. Rather, reciprocity is based more on mutual acts of service and caring. For example, as adult children have conversations with their parents, they can express interest, ask questions, listen empathetically, and offer encouragement, praise, and support. As adult children nurture friendships with their parents, there comes an emotional reciprocity in the relationship that is largely independent of financial reciprocity.

Becoming Independent

Unfortunately, some parents have a hard time letting their children grow up and become independent. President Kimball said: “Well meaning relatives have broken up many a home. Numerous divorces are attributable to the interference of parents who thought they were only protecting their loved

Wise parents honor their children’s adulthood, foster their independence, and respect marital boundaries, thereby giving their children the opportunity to establish strong marriages.

children.”⁶ He also observed that sometimes parents “will not relinquish the hold they have had upon their children.”⁷ Wise parents will honor their children’s adulthood, foster their independence, and respect their marital boundaries, thereby giving their children the opportunity to establish strong marriages.

As married children shift their primary loyalty and strive for independence, they will be able to enjoy satisfying adult relationships with their parents and, having truly left home, experience the joy of being one in marriage. ■

Richard B. Miller is a member of the Grove Creek Eighth Ward, Pleasant Grove Utah Grove Creek Stake.

NOTES

1. *Marriage* (1978), 25.
2. “Oneness in Marriage,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 45.
3. “Life’s Obligations,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 2, 4.
4. “To the Fathers in Israel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 50.
5. In Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 3.
6. *Marriage*, 17.
7. *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 45.

THE Restoration AND Faith



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

My father was a faithful member of the Church. He influenced for good many people who were not members of our Church. One of them was Frank J. Lucas. Mr. Lucas made the statement that “many doctrines of your Church I can accept, but not the story of the vision of Joseph Smith.”

I will always remember my father’s response: “Mr. Lucas, if you can’t accept Joseph Smith’s story of the Father and the Son’s appearance to him, you will never be able to accept the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.”

I have given much thought to this statement over the years. My father was right. Without believing Joseph Smith’s story of the Restoration, investigators will never join the true Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That the heavens opened, that Joseph Smith saw and talked with our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, is central to our faith.

Reasons for the Restoration

The Lord, in the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants, stated the reasons for the Restoration of the gospel in its fulness:

“Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

“And also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world; and all this that it might be fulfilled, which was written by the prophets—

“The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh—

“But that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world;

“That faith also might increase in the earth;

“That mine everlasting covenant might be established;

“That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers” (D&C 1:17–23).

Before we can understand the importance of the Restoration, however, we must have a knowledge and understanding of what happened to the primitive Church after the death

In all our efforts to proclaim the good news of the gospel, let us not forget the wonder and purposes of the Restoration.



of our Savior. Both sacred and secular writ attest to the fact that there was a dissolution of the church that Jesus Christ had established. We speak of the Apostasy not as an attack on any church. We have no interest in tearing down or belittling any religious organization, but we must recognize and acknowledge the Apostasy because it leads irrevocably to the necessity of that which followed—the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The early Apostles knew that the Church of Jesus Christ, established and conferred into their hands, would one day languish and disappear from the face of the earth. To the Thessalonians Paul wrote:

“Now we beseech you, brethren, . . .

“That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, . . . as that the day of Christ is at hand.

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:1–3).

Paul also wrote to Timothy that “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

“And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:3–4).

The great ecclesiastical historian Dr. J. L. von Mosheim, in his outlines of ecclesiastical history, wrote: “It will easily be imagined, that unity and peace could not reign long in the church, since it was composed of Jews and Gentiles, who regarded each other with the bitterest aversion. . . . Thus the seeds of discord and controversy were early sown, and could not fail to spring up soon into animosities and dissensions, which accordingly broke out, and divided the church.”¹

In a surprisingly short time, the Church disassembled.

Without Apostles, the Church lost its anchor and began to drift on every wind of doctrine. Spiritual gifts disappeared, revelations ceased, the keys to the priesthood were lost, ordinances changed. Ultimately, the purity of our Lord’s gospel began to meld with other doctrines, beliefs, and practices. Philosophies and political influences began to infiltrate and transform the Church.

During the centuries that followed, the light dimmed even further. President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, explained: “The dark ages of history seemed never to end. Was there to be no termination to this blasphemous night? Had a loving Father forgotten mankind? Would he send forth no heavenly messengers as in former days?”²

The church that once had been persecuted for its beliefs now began to persecute others for theirs. At first a few

great reformers began to speak out. When John Wycliffe completed the first English translation of the entire Bible, those in authority did all they could to destroy it. Many of Wycliffe’s followers were severely punished.

Jan Hus, another fearless reformer who spoke against corruption in the church, was chained by the neck to a stake and burned.

Thousands of others heroically searched for the truth and risked their all as they sought to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences.

President Monson said further of these great reformers, “Their contributions [were] many, their sacrifices great—but *they did not restore the gospel of Jesus Christ.*”³ In the final analysis it was simply beyond the power

of man to restore heavenly authority to the earth. Without heavenly approbation, no amount of prayer, no amount of study, no amount of piety could compel it.

Humble Beginnings

When the time came for the gospel to be restored, whom did the Lord choose as His instrument on earth?



During the days of Joseph’s youth, the region around Palmyra became embroiled in religious fervor. Joseph sought to find the truth.



He chose Joseph Smith, a young boy, one of nine living children in a family that continually waged a struggle to make ends meet. Elder George A. Smith (1817–75) described his cousin Joseph as a plowboy, one who cultivated the earth and had scarcely education enough to read his Bible.

During the days of Joseph’s youth, the region around Palmyra became embroiled in religious fervor. Preachers and ministers of every sect fervently cried, “Lo, here!” and others, “Lo, there!” Some were contending for the Methodist faith, some for the Presbyterian, and some for the Baptist. “In the midst of this war of words and tumult of opinions,” Joseph Smith wrote: “I often said to myself: What is to be done? Who of all these parties are right; or, are they all wrong together? If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it?” (Joseph Smith—History 1:10; see also v. 5).

This is a universal question that seekers of religious truth ask. This is the question investigators will ask of themselves and of our missionaries. In the heart of one who is sincerely seeking the truth, this question is the



“How shall I know which church is true?” is the universal question that seekers of religious truth ask of themselves and of the missionaries. This question is the beginning of spiritual knowledge.

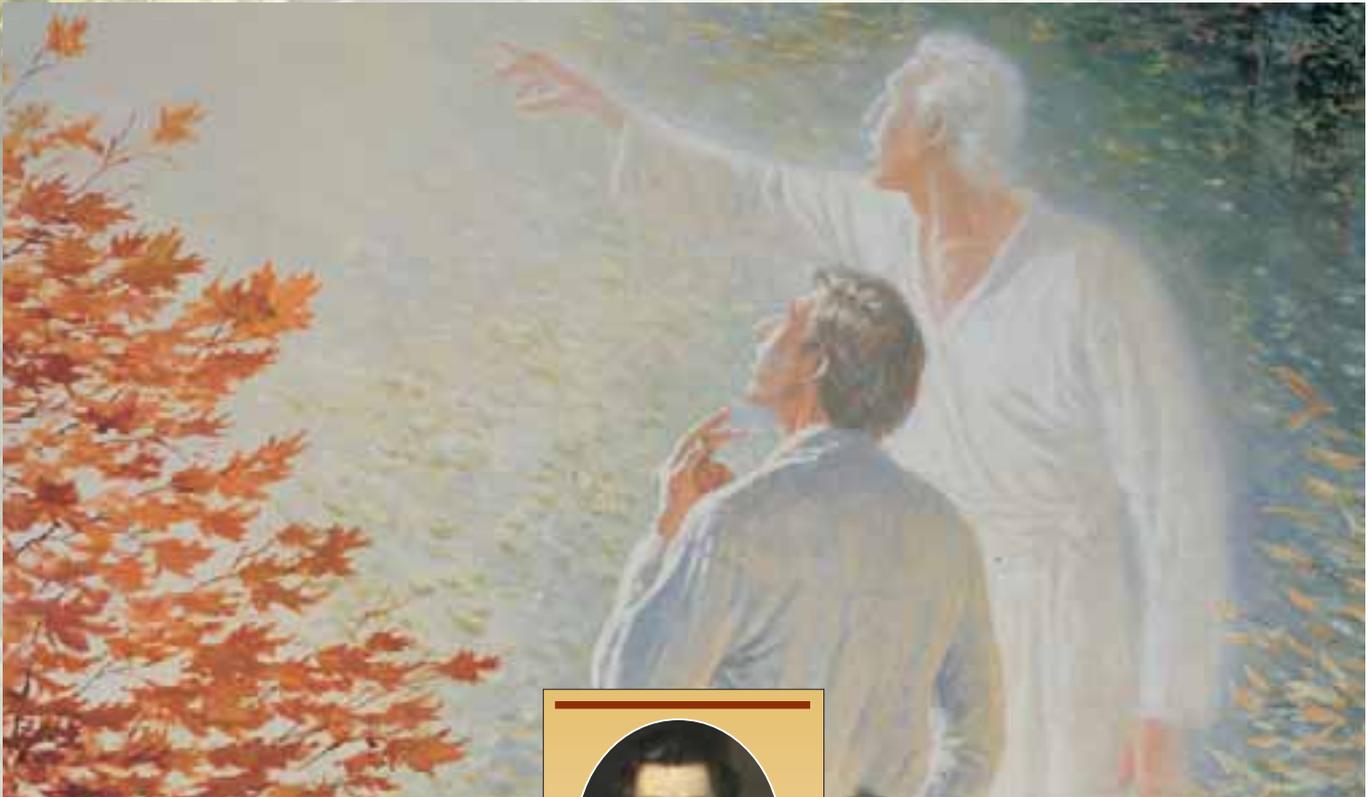
beginning of spiritual knowledge.

After Joseph offered a humble prayer for guidance in the woods near his home, he said: “I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

“. . . When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17).

From that day forward, Joseph Smith learned line upon line. He turned himself to diligent study of God’s word, but he did

more than that; he sought knowledge and inspiration from God Himself. Joseph communed with angels. He spoke with the great and righteous personalities of ancient times. President John Taylor (1808–87) said that Joseph Smith seemed to be as familiar with these ancient prophets and patriarchs as we are with one another. Abraham, John, Adam, Peter—Joseph knew them as you know your good friends.⁴



Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon. Through him the Church of Jesus Christ once again was established on the earth. Keys of the priesthood were conferred upon his head. The ordinances of everlasting life and the mysteries of the kingdom of God were given to man.

The story of great trial and great triumph of the restored Church is simply a story of great faith. Faith brought about the Restoration, and the same faith sustains the Restoration in our day until the Lord comes again and proclaims the work is finished.

In December 2005 we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Prophet's birth. More than 12 million people are members of the Church he organized in 1830. More than 12 million people alive today have entered the waters of baptism and, through the authority of the priesthood that was conferred upon the head of Joseph Smith by heavenly messengers, received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

My dear brothers and sisters, in all of our efforts to proclaim the good news of the gospel, to bring souls unto Christ, and to testify of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose mission and atoning sacrifice is the sum



Joseph Smith learned line upon line. He sought knowledge and inspiration. He communed with angels, including righteous personalities of ancient times such as the angel Moroni.

and substance of our faith and the restored gospel, let us not forget and neglect the wonder and purposes of the Restoration. Let us not be ashamed of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Let us teach with great faith and power the reality of the Apostasy and of the need for the Restoration. Let us not shy away from teaching the simple truth of the reality of the First Vision and of all that the Lord did by and through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) declared: “It was decreed in the councils of eternity, long before the foundations of the

earth were laid, that [Joseph Smith] should be the man, in the last dispensation of this world, to bring forth the word of God to the people and receive the fullness of the keys and power of the Priesthood of the Son of God. The Lord had his eye upon him, and upon his father, and upon his father's father, and upon their progenitors clear back to Abraham, and from Abraham to the flood, from the flood to Enoch and from Enoch to Adam. He has watched that family and that blood as it has circulated from its fountain to the birth of that man. [Joseph Smith] was foreordained in eternity to preside over this last dispensation.”⁵

A Man of Faith

Joseph Smith was a man of great faith, even as a youth. Yet he was persecuted. “I soon found,” Joseph Smith related in his history, “. . . that my telling the story [of the First Vision] had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion, and was the cause of great persecution, which continued to increase; and though I was an obscure boy, only between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world, yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and create a bitter persecution; and this was common among all the sects—all united to persecute me” (Joseph Smith—History 1:22).

He was shot at, beaten, tarred and feathered, threatened with death, ravaged by sickness, beset by legal entanglements, imprisoned and chained, forced to listen to the taunts of the most vile and evil of men, and yet he only spoke with greater conviction of the truth of what he had seen and heard. Toward the end of his life, the Prophet Joseph wrote: “Deep water is what I am wont to swim in. It all has become a second nature to me” (D&C 127:2).

Brothers and sisters, we must gain faith like that of the founders of this great work. This is the work of the Lord. He will strengthen and guide us. And with the Lord behind us, how can we fail?

Those who sincerely seek to know the truth of the Restoration, the truth of the Book of Mormon, and whether Joseph Smith was a prophet have many witnesses to rely on.

Oliver Cowdery began work as Joseph’s scribe on 7 April 1829. He was 22 years of age. The Prophet was about one year older. These young men were the age of many of our missionaries. They began the work of translation in

earnest. Oliver later said: “These were days that were never to be forgotten. . . . Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated, with the Urim and Thummin, . . . the history, or record, called ‘The Book of Mormon.’”⁶

Oliver was with Joseph when John the Baptist appeared to restore the Aaronic Priesthood. He was with Joseph when the Lord Himself appeared in the Kirtland Temple.



He was with Joseph when Peter, James, and John conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood. He was with Joseph when Moses, Elijah, and Elias conferred upon them many of the keys of the Restoration.

Of the eleven men who were witnesses to the Book of Mormon, nine apostatized.

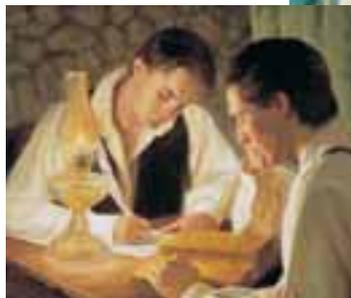
None of them, however, ever denied their testimony that they had seen the plates. Since the days of Joseph and Hyrum, millions have raised their voices to the growing chorus proclaiming that the gospel has been restored to earth again.

Brothers and sisters, we must testify that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God, lest we fail in our stewardships as heralds of the Restoration of the kingdom of God. We read in

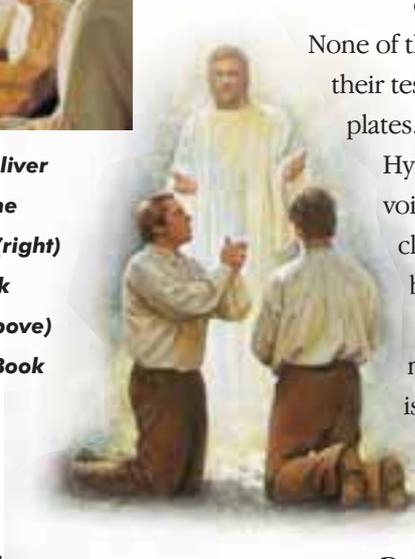
Doctrine and Covenants 135:3:

“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. . . . He lived great, and he died great in the eyes of God and his people; and like most of the Lord’s anointed in ancient times, has sealed his mission and his works with his own blood.”

Brigham Young said, “I feel like shouting Hallelujah, all the time, when I think that I ever knew Joseph Smith, the Prophet.”⁷



Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the Aaronic Priesthood (right) and the Melchizedek Priesthood (right, above) and translated the Book of Mormon (above).



In 1844 Josiah Quincy Jr., son of the president of Harvard University and himself later the mayor of Boston, visited Nauvoo. Later he wrote a book entitled *Figures of the Past*. In it he commented about the Prophet. He said: “It is by no means improbable that some future textbook, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogatory may be thus written: *Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet*. And the reply, absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants. . . . The man who established a religion in this age of free debate, who was and is to-day accepted by hundreds of thousands as a direct emissary from the Most High,—such a rare human being is not to be disposed of by pelting his memory with unsavory epithets.”⁸

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16). So too must we be bold in declaring that the God of heaven and earth once again speaks to man in our day. What more welcome message can we impart than that a loving Heavenly Father has revealed Himself to us in our day, that He has imparted words of counsel and encouragement to us, that He has restored the priesthood, that many of the precious mysteries of the kingdom of God have been unveiled? We bring to the world good news—a message of rejoicing, a message of hope.

This Is Our Day

I bear you my testimony and witness that indeed Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, that he is working mightily in heaven today to further the kingdom of God. He, along with Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Parley P. Pratt, Hyrum Smith, and hundreds of other great people and righteous souls, is counting on us to do this work and to emphasize the fact that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God

and restored the gospel. Zion will not arise simply because we wish it to. It will arise because we will it to—because we apply our minds, our muscle, and our hearts in bringing it to pass. The work of creation requires all the best within us, but what a great and noble goal to seek for Zion.

In an editorial for the *Times and Seasons* in May 1842, Joseph Smith said: “The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and



prophesied of this our day; . . . we are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to see, participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day glory. . . . [This is] a work that God and angels have contemplated with delight for generations past; that fired the souls of the ancient patriarchs and prophets; a work that is destined to bring about the destruction of the powers of darkness, the renovation of the earth, the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family.”⁹

My brothers and sisters, the work that began with a humble plowboy in 1820 is not yet finished. This is our day, it is our time, it is our turn to put our shoulders to the grand wheel that was set in motion nearly 200 years ago. That you may go forth throughout the world and proclaim the testimony of Joseph Smith and the restored gospel is my humble prayer. ■

NOTES

1. *An Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern*, 2 vols. (n.d.), 1:34.
2. “The Way Home,” *Ensign*, May 1975, 15.
3. *Ensign*, May 1975, 16.
4. See *Deseret News*, June 9, 1880, 280.
5. *Deseret News*, Oct. 26, 1859, 266.
6. *Times and Seasons*, Nov. 1, 1840, 201.
7. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1954), 458.
8. (1926), 317.
9. *History of the Church*, 4:609–10.

Adapted from an address to new mission presidents, *Provo Missionary Training Center*, June 26, 2001.

Thanks for Finding Me

BY NANCY M. HOPKINS

I remembered my cousin Edward (name has been changed). His father had died in World War II when Edward was only two years old. Eventually his mother remarried, and her new husband adopted my young cousin. Edward's surname was changed, and because his stepfather was in the military, the family moved from base to base until we all lost track of Edward.

Fifty-nine years later I was strongly impressed to try to find my cousin. I contacted several other cousins, but no one knew where to find Edward. Searching the phone book of our Ohio hometown, I found one surname similar to Edward's. I sent a letter and received a response from this man saying he had an e-mail that included the name of a corporation in the East where Edward may have worked.

I went to the Internet and searched for the company's Web site. Sure enough, there were Edward's name and e-mail address! I was filled with excitement as I sent him an e-mail asking if he was my lost cousin. Finally a reply came: "Yes, I'm your cousin. I'll call you later today." As I read that short message, tears filled my eyes, and joy flowed from the bottom of my soul. After 59 years I had reached out and found my cousin. Maybe I could renew a family relationship that had been lost.

When Edward called, he told me he had really only known one father—his stepfather. His mother had spoken very little about his biological father, and the only

remembrance he had of his father was his Purple Heart.

I gave Edward some information about his ancestry and told him that he was named, in part, for his paternal grandfather. He vaguely remembered his grandmother, his aunts, cousins, and me.

I sent Edward his family history. Some stories and photographs were familiar to him, but others were new—flat-boat captains who plied the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans, early settlers in the Western Reserve of Ohio, Indian scouts, and a great-grandfather who emigrated from Ireland with his large family.

Last year I received a Christmas card from Edward, and following his signature he wrote, "Again, many thanks for finding me." As I read that sentiment, I wondered how many of my deceased ancestors have felt the same way when I have taken their names to the temple and performed their ordinance work. When we "find" our ancestors and learn about their lives and their stories, it is as if we come to know them in a very real way. Giving them the opportunity to accept the ordinances of the gospel creates an eternal bond between us. I don't believe I'll ever perform another vicarious temple ordinance without thinking of Edward's words: "Thanks for finding me." ■

Nancy M. Hopkins is a member of the Doylestown Ward, Philadelphia Pennsylvania Stake.

In the Beginning...

“AND GOD SAID, LET
THERE BE LIGHT:
AND THERE WAS LIGHT”
(GENESIS 1:3).

THUS BEGIN THE
WRITINGS OF MOSES IN
THE OLD TESTAMENT.
LATTER-DAY SAINTS ALSO
FIND SELECTIONS FROM
MOSES’S WRITINGS IN THE
PEARL OF GREAT PRICE,
WHERE THERE IS OFTEN
MORE DETAIL THAN IN
THE GENESIS ACCOUNT.

FOLLOWING ARE VISUAL
INTERPRETATIONS OF THE
WELL-KNOWN BIBLE STORIES
OF THE CREATION, ADAM AND
EVE, CAIN AND ABEL, ENOCH,
NOAH AND THE FLOOD, AND
THE TOWER OF BABEL .



Division of the Firmament and Water, by Stanley Galli

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven” (Genesis 1:6–8; compare Moses 2:6–8).



The Garden of Eden, by Stanley Galli

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden” (Genesis 2:8–10; compare Moses 3:8–10).



Leaving the Garden of Eden, by Joseph Brickey

“And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, . . . and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword” (Genesis 3:22–24; compare Moses 4:28–31).



The Lord Fulfilleth All His Words, by Clark Kelley Price

“And the Lord said unto Noah . . . I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded. . . . There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and female” (Genesis 7:1, 4–5, 9; compare Moses 8:16–30).

City of Zion Translated, by Del Parson

“And the Lord called [Enoch’s] people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; . . . And it came to pass in [Enoch’s] days, that he built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even Zion. . . . And it came to pass that the Lord showed unto Enoch all the inhabitants of the earth; and he beheld, and lo, Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven” (Moses 7:18–19, 21; compare Hebrews 11:5 and Genesis 5:24).



COURTESY OF SOTHEBY'S, MAY NOT BE COPIED

Building the Tower of Babel, by Pieter Brueghel, the Elder

“And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men built. . . . So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city” (Genesis 11:5, 8).



Cain and Abel, by Robert T. Barrett

“And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him” (Genesis 4:8; compare Moses 5:16–33).

BLESSED BY MY CALLINGS

BY SHEILA KINDRED

When my children were young, I didn't think I had enough time for Church callings—especially in the Primary. Because I spent all day every day dealing with children, I longed for a break on Sundays. I was sure what I needed most was the company of other adults and adult ideas to stimulate a brain I feared was deteriorating with overexposure to children's prattle.

However, when I was called to serve in the nursery, it seemed right, so I took a deep breath and plunged in. I thoroughly cleaned and organized the meetinghouse toy closet. I was more organized than I'd ever been, and it carried over into our home. The quality of my own children's lives escalated, and I appreciated them more. Our whole family was blessed.

Then I was called to serve as Primary president. I took another deep breath and plunged in. The nature of this calling was different from my nursery service, yet the blessings still came. My own children became more involved with Primary as they helped me create visual aids and bulletin board displays. Sharing times were often recycled to become favorite family home evening lessons. As I struggled and prayed for ideas of how to teach children, stories came to mind, which I began to write down. To my amazement, many of these stories have since been published. I may never have discovered that talent if I hadn't accepted that calling.

One day the bishop came by and extended a new calling to me. He apologized and confessed that this calling didn't seem reasonable to extend to me at that time, but

Willing service opens doors to blessings we may not otherwise receive.



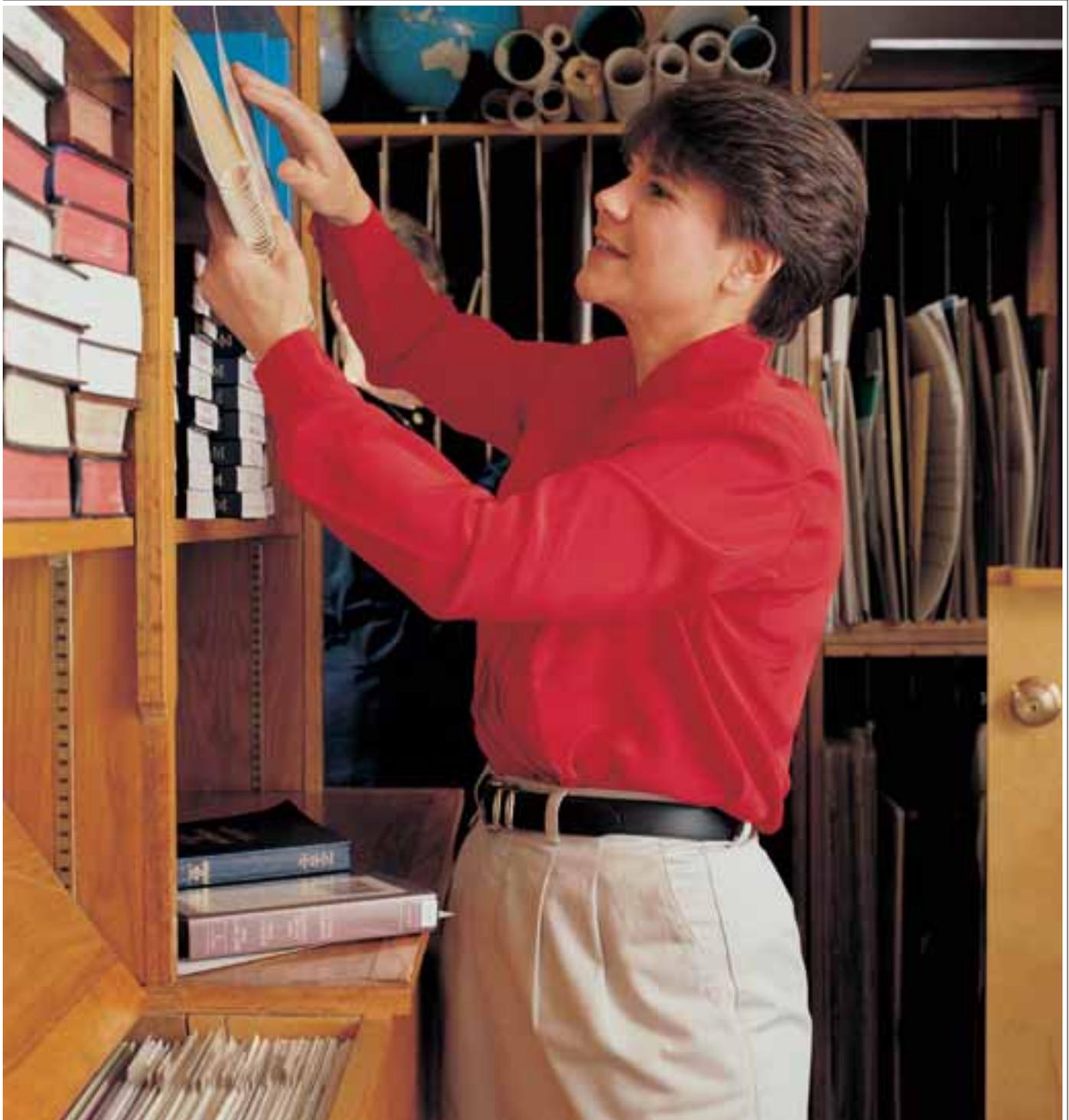
he had felt impressed to do so and would leave the decision to me. It was a particularly challenging responsibility, and I didn't see how I could do it on top of many other pressures in my life. I turned it down. It wasn't until some time later that it became apparent why the bishop had felt inspired to extend such a call to me. That calling would have given me the opportunity to draw close to a daughter who was about to face a difficult time in her life. Father in Heaven knew this. I did not. In my blind logic I did not accept a call that

would have prepared our family for future events.

I came to realize that callings are needed blessings. I determined to accept all callings, no matter how challenging they seem or how incapable I feel. In recent years that resolve has been severely tested.

My children are older now. Because they have at times struggled with their testimonies, I have sometimes felt like a failure as a parent and unworthy to serve in Church callings. So when I was extended a call to serve as a stake missionary, I was surprised and grateful. As I taught in my new calling, I often felt like a hypocrite for inviting people to attend a church that one of my own children would not attend. At those times I'd try to remember that Heavenly Father knew about my family situation and called me to do missionary work anyway.

The blessings of missionary work have been amazing. As a result of having the full-time missionaries over for frequent meals and meetings, my children have developed friendships that have extended beyond the missionaries'



release dates. These fine returned missionaries are corresponding with my children and encouraging them to keep the faith. A vibrant young lady who was baptized following my initial contact with her has become another friend and example to my children. She seems able to reach my children in ways that I cannot. Who could have imagined that such longed-for blessings would result because I accepted a call in faith?

It is true that when we are in the service of our fellow beings we are only in the service of our God (see Mosiah 2:17). And I have learned that when we are in the service of our God, He blesses our lives in a personal way. Heavenly Father knows our needs even better than we do, and it is often through a calling that He meets those needs. ■

Sheila Kindred is a member of the Ames Ward, Ames Iowa Stake.

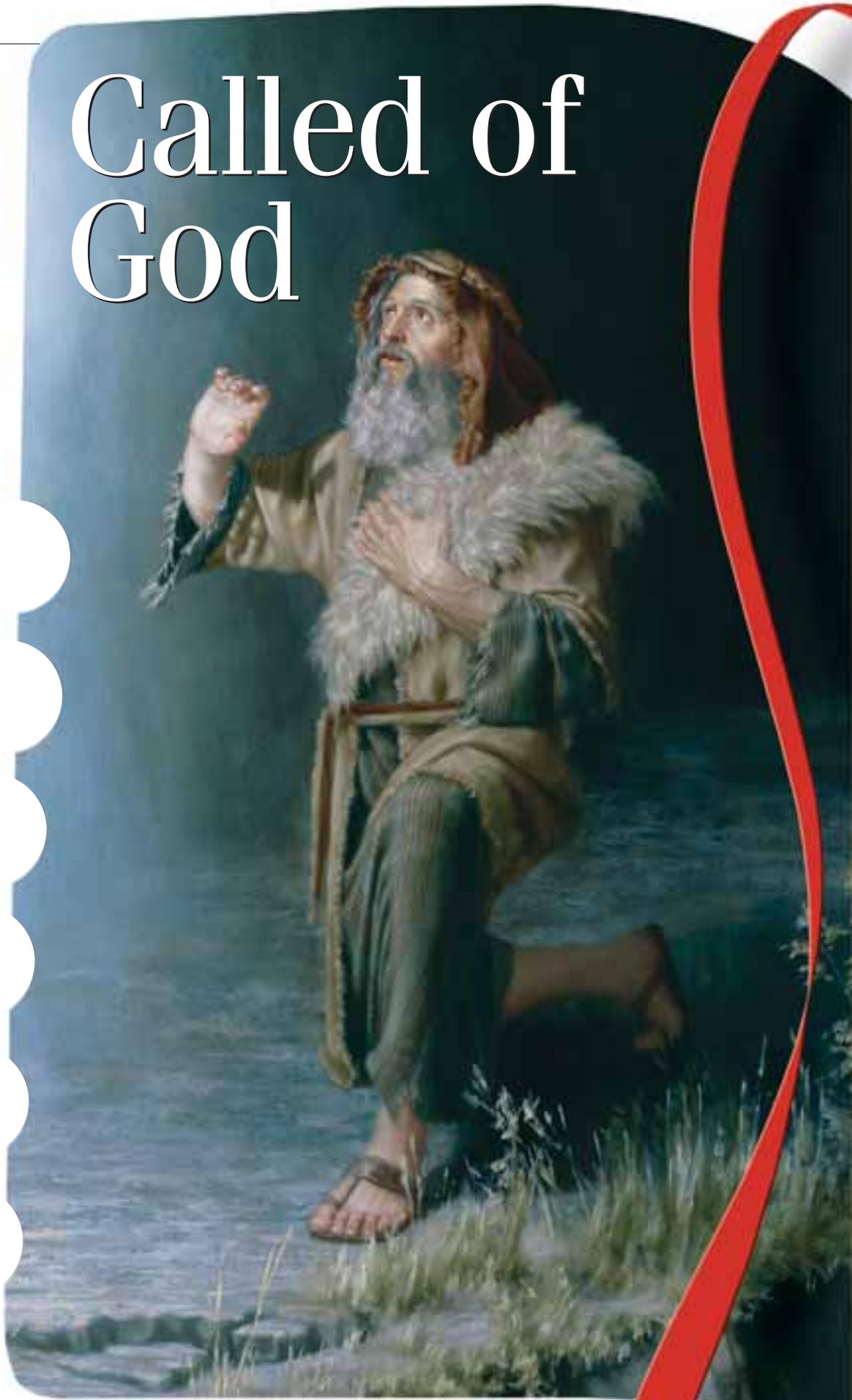
Called of God

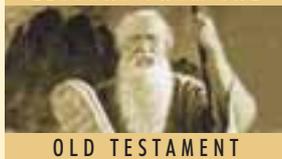
BY BISHOP RICHARD C. EDGLEY

First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric



Receiving a calling often leaves us feeling inadequate. Like Moses, we will probably ask ourselves, “Who am I that I should do this?”





The early prophets took great measures to record important history, revelation, prophecy, and spiritual events. Five thousand, two thousand, or even two hundred years ago, recording events was no small task. Computers, word processing, and typewriters were not even dreamed of at the time.

Consider the laborious work of pounding out gold plates that could be inscribed upon, bound, and then preserved for future generations. Consider the time-consuming work of meticulously engraving upon the plates. Consider the creation of the papyri and then their careful preservation so that they could be passed down from generation to generation, codified, and bound as holy scripture—the word of God. All this was done that we may know God, that we may understand who we are and what our relationship with Him is, and that we may know the commandments and sacred ordinances that bring us joy and happiness in this life and the life hereafter.

From the Book of Mormon we learn that we are to “liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23). This counsel applies to our study of the Old Testament, which we will be focusing on in our Gospel Doctrine classes this year. The Savior Himself frequently used passages now found in the Old Testament to witness of Himself, confound His enemies, and establish His doctrine.

To illustrate how we may liken the Old Testament to ourselves, let us consider an important concept that is taught in this book of scripture. It concerns how we are to accept callings.

“Thou Art My Son”

We will set the stage by first going to chapter 1 in the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. Before Moses received the assignment to lead the children of Israel out of captivity, the Lord prepared him. We read that Moses was “caught up into an exceedingly high mountain, And he saw God face to face” (vv. 1–2). Through this experi-

ence Moses learned of his relationship to God and heard the words “Behold, thou art my son” (v. 4). Imagine the shock and amazement that Moses, this man raised in the pagan environment of Pharaoh’s court, must have experienced when he learned from God Himself that he was a son of God.

God then explained that Moses was “in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth” (v. 6). And then the Lord showed Moses the majesty of His works. Armed with this knowledge and understanding, Moses was prepared for his assignment. He was also prepared for temptation. When

Satan approached him, Moses was able to reject him, saying: “I am a son of God, in the similitude of his Only Begotten. . . . Get thee hence, Satan” (vv. 13, 16).

Moses knew who he was, he knew who Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were, and he knew the source of his strength.

“Who Am I, That I Should Go unto Pharaoh?”

Now let’s read about Moses’s call as recorded in Exodus of the Old Testament. Although Moses was raised in Pharaoh’s court, apparently his mother tutored him and taught him about his Hebrew lineage. He knew the ill-treated



When we question our ability to effectively serve in a calling, we can be comforted by the knowledge that the Lord will help us.



MOSES OVERCOMES SATAN, BY JOSEPH BRICKEY, MAY NOT BE COPIED

Moses was prepared for temptation. When Satan appeared to him, Moses was able to say, “Get thee hence.”

Hebrew slaves were his brothers. After Moses slew an Egyptian for “smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren” (Exodus 2:11), he fled to the land of Midian.

Some time thereafter, the Lord appeared to Moses “in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush” (Exodus 3:2; see also footnote *a*). The Lord said, “Moses, Moses . . . draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Exodus 3:4–5). At this point the Lord identified himself, saying, “I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:6). The Lord then issued a call to Moses with these words: “I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt” (Exodus 3:10).

Moses responded, “Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?” (Exodus 3:11).

One cannot fault Moses for this reaction to this call.

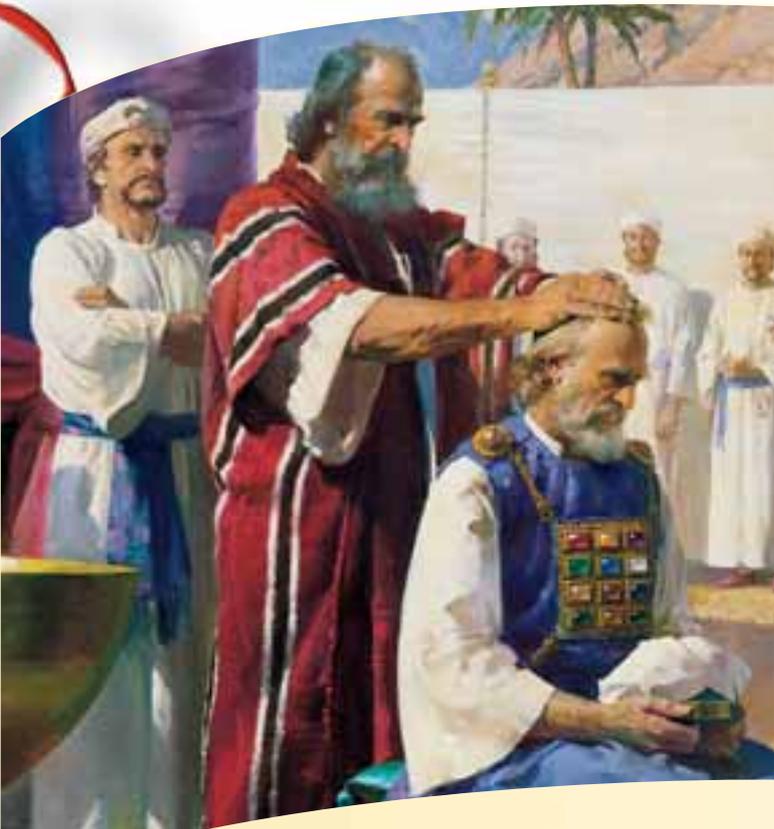
After all, the Hebrews did not see him as their brother but rather as an oppressor aligned with Pharaoh, and Pharaoh saw Moses as a traitor whose life he sought. To give Moses assurance about what seemed an almost insurmountable task, the Lord told Moses to cast his staff upon the ground. The staff immediately turned into a serpent. The Lord then gave other signs to demonstrate His power and assure Moses that with the Lord’s help he was equal to the task (see Exodus 4:2–9).

Moses made another attempt to express his feelings of inadequacy. He explained that he was “slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.” In response, the Lord said, “Who hath made man’s mouth?” He explained that He would “be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.” When Moses still expressed his uncertainty, the Lord assigned Aaron, Moses’s brother, to be Moses’s mouthpiece (see Exodus 4:10–16).

Undoubtedly Moses was comforted. He understood that the Lord was on his side and that he would be able to perform the task.

We Can Receive Divine Help

Now, what is the application for us today? Most of us have been or will be called to positions in the Church. Some of us will be called to positions that seem far above our abilities. Like Moses, we may see a flood of personal inadequacies or obstacles that could prevent our accomplishing what we have been asked to do. Like Moses, we will probably ask ourselves, “Who am I that I should do this?” Some of us may even feel “slow of speech.” We may think there are others more qualified, more worthy, or even more available. But the difference between us and others who may be more qualified is that we are the ones who were called. And so to the question of “Who am I that I should do this?” the answer is simply, “You are the one who was called.”



Because of Moses's uncertainty, the Lord assigned Aaron to be his mouthpiece. In this illustration, Moses is shown ordaining Aaron to the Aaronic Priesthood.

In Doctrine and Covenants 121 the Lord explains: "Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?"

"Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men" (vv. 34–35).

I believe the Lord is saying here that He calls, but we decide if we are chosen.

Every member of the Church has been baptized, and thus, in a very real sense, we have all been called. As explained in the sacramental prayer on the bread, we have been called to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ and to keep His commandments (see Moroni 4:3). We have been called to stand for righteousness and decency in a wicked and degenerate world. We have been called to make and keep covenants. We have been called to be children of righteousness. But we ourselves determine if we will be one of the chosen. We choose.

Whether receiving a formal call to serve in the Church or whether receiving the above-mentioned calls at baptism, we should know that we can receive divine help to accomplish our tasks, just as Moses did. When we ask ourselves, "Who am I that I should do this?" we can

answer with assurance: "I am a child of God, created in the similitude of the Only Begotten. Like Moses, I can do this with the Lord's help." President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has a favorite saying, which he has attributed to President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973): "Whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies."¹ The Apostle Paul gave further assurance, declaring, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

This is just one example of how we can liken the events in the Old Testament to ourselves in our day. As we study the Old Testament this year—and as we serve in our callings—let us remember the great love the Lord has for us. If we will turn to Him, He will help us in our callings, and He will also enlighten our minds that we may know how to liken the principles of the Old Testament to ourselves in our day. ■

NOTE

1. "Who Honors God, God Honors," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 50.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions, personal reflection, or teaching the gospel in a variety of settings.

1. Ask family members to share an experience when they were asked to do something and felt overwhelmed. Teach family members about Moses's call, his feelings of inadequacy, and how he overcame them with the Lord's reassurance. Use the teachings from the article to discuss how we will be made equal to our tasks as we faithfully serve.

2. Use the article to recount the events associated with the call of Moses. Invite family members to each choose one of these events and draw a picture of it. Have them explain their pictures and share what they learned from the experience Moses had. Bear testimony that we will receive divine help as we answer the call to serve.

The Nature of the Godhead

The first in a series of articles explaining basic beliefs of the restored gospel, doctrines unique to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has many beliefs in common with other Christian churches,” said Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “But we have differences, and those differences explain why we send missionaries to other Christians, why we build temples in addition to churches, and why our beliefs bring us such happiness and strength to deal with the challenges of life and death.”¹

Three Separate Beings

“In common with the rest of Christianity,” Elder Oaks continued, “we believe in a Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. However, we testify that these three members



of the Godhead are three separate and distinct beings. We also testify that God the Father is not just a spirit but is a glorified person with a tangible body, as is his resurrected Son, Jesus Christ. . . . In contrast, many Christians reject the idea of a tangible, personal God and a Godhead of three separate beings.

They believe that God is a spirit and that the Godhead is only one God. In our view, these concepts are evidence of the falling away we call the Great Apostasy.”²

Not long after the deaths of the Savior’s New Testament Apostles, ideas from Greek philosophy began transforming plain and precious gospel truths. Conflicting doctrines regarding the nature of deity led Emperor Constantine to convene a churchwide council in Nicaea in A.D. 325. The resulting Nicene Creed eliminated the concept of deity as separate beings by declaring Jesus Christ to be “one substance with the Father.”

“Other councils followed,” Elder Oaks explained, “and from their decisions and the writings of churchmen and philosophers there came a synthesis of Greek philosophy and Christian doctrine. . . . The consequences persist in the various creeds of Christianity, which declare a Godhead of only one being.”³

Divine Truth Restored

The truth concerning the nature of the Godhead was restored in the spring of 1820 when Joseph Smith entered the Sacred Grove. As he prayed, a pillar of light appeared, which he described as being “above the brightness of the sun. . . . When the light rested upon me,” he recorded, “I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17). Joseph learned during this vision, among other truths, that God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, are separate, glorified individuals and that we, as the Bible teaches, are created “in the image of God” (Genesis 1:27).

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said, “The experience of Joseph Smith in a few moments in the grove on a spring day in 1820, brought more light and knowledge and understanding of the personality and reality and substance of God and his Beloved Son than men had arrived at during centuries of speculation.”⁴

In 1843 Joseph Smith summarized what he had learned through direct revelation about the Godhead: “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us” (D&C 130:22).

The Nature of Man

Not only do we know that God possesses a glorified body of flesh and bones, but from this restored understanding



As the Bible teaches, we, like Adam, are created “in the image of God.”

of the nature of God flows the Latter-day Saint belief regarding our nature and potential. The Prophet Joseph Smith once taught: “It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, . . . and that He was once a man

like us. . . . When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them.”⁵

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) taught: “God the Eternal Father . . . is the literal Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and of the spirits of the human race. . . . We are God’s children.”⁶

The belief that we are created in the image of our Eternal Father “does not mean that we claim sufficient spiritual maturity to comprehend God,” observed Elder Oaks. “Nor do we equate our imperfect mortal bodies to his immortal, glorified being. But we can comprehend the fundamentals he has revealed about himself and the other members of the Godhead. And that knowledge is essential to our understanding of the purpose of mortal life and of our eternal destiny as resurrected beings after mortal life.

“In the theology of the restored church of Jesus Christ, the purpose of mortal life is to prepare us to realize our destiny as sons and daughters of God—to become like Him.”⁷ ■

NOTES

1. “Apostasy and Restoration,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 84.
2. *Ensign*, May 1995, 84.
3. *Ensign*, May 1995, 85.
4. In Conference Report, Apr. 1960, 82.
5. *History of the Church*, 6:305–7.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 354.
7. *Ensign*, May 1995, 85–86.



Adam's Role in Bringing Us Mortality



Joseph Fielding Smith was long noted for the depth of his knowledge of the gospel and the scriptures. He served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for more than 55 years before he was sustained as a counselor in the First Presidency in October 1965 and then as Church President in 1970. In October 1967, he spoke of the blessing for mankind that is known as the Fall of Adam.

BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH
(1876–1972)
Tenth President of the Church

When Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, he was in the presence of God our Eternal Father. He talked with the Father and the Father with him. But something happened, and it had to happen: Adam partook of certain fruit. My Bible, the King James Version, [speaks in a commentator's note] of Adam's Fall [as] "man's shameful fall." Well, it wasn't a shameful fall at all.

Adam came here to bring mortality upon the earth, and that resulted in the shutting out from the presence of the Eternal Father of both Adam and Eve and their posterity. The Son of God comes upon the scene from that time henceforth as our Redeemer. . . . It is the Savior who stands between mankind and our Heavenly Father. . . . The Son is the mediator between mankind and the Eternal Father. You seldom hear a prayer that isn't offered to our Heavenly Father in the name of His Beloved Son, and that's right. Christ came into this world to represent His Father. He came into this world to teach mankind who His Father is, why we should worship Him, how we should worship Him. He performed the greatest work that was ever performed in this mortal world by the shedding of His blood, which paid a debt that mankind owes to the Eternal Father, and which debt we inherited after the Fall of Adam.

They Opened the Door

Adam did only what he had to do. He partook of that fruit for one good reason, and that was to open the door to bring you and me and everyone else into this world, for Adam and Eve could have remained in the Garden of Eden; they could have been there to this day, if Eve hadn't done something.

One of these days, if I ever get to where I can speak to Mother Eve, I want to thank her for tempting Adam to partake of the fruit. He accepted the temptation, with the result that children came into this world. . . . If she hadn't had that influence over Adam, and if Adam had done according to the commandment first given to him, they would still be in the Garden of Eden and we would not be here at all. We wouldn't have come into this world. So the commentators made a great mistake when they put in the Bible . . . "man's shameful fall."

Well, that was what the Lord expected Adam to do, because that opened the door to mortality; and we came here into this mortal world to receive a training in mortality that we could not get anywhere else or in any other way. We came here into this world to partake of all the vicissitudes, to receive the lessons that we receive in mortality from or in a mortal world. And so we become subject to pain, to sickness. We are blessed for keeping the commandments of the Lord with all that He has given us, which, if we will follow and be true and faithful, will bring us back again

into the presence of God our Eternal Father, as sons and daughters of God, entitled to the fulness of celestial glory.

Privileged to Be Mortal

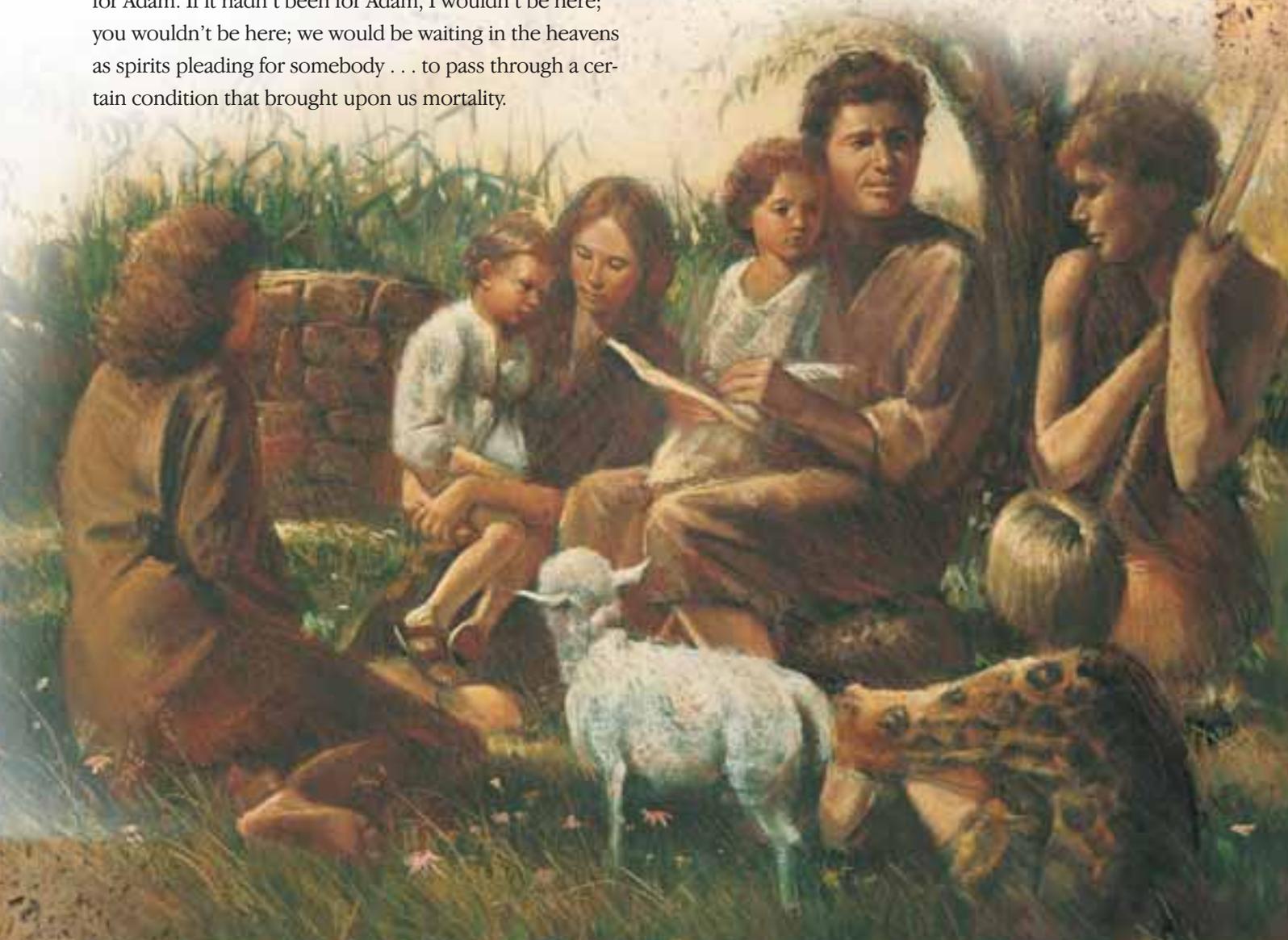
That great blessing of celestial glory could never have come to us without a period of time in mortality, and so we came here in this mortal world. We are in school, the mortal school, to gain the experiences, the training, the joys, and the sufferings that we partake of, that we might be educated in all these things and be prepared, if we are faithful and true to the commandments of the Lord, to become sons and daughters of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ; and in His presence to go on to a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever, and perhaps through our faithfulness to have the opportunity of building worlds and peopling them.

Brethren and sisters, let's thank the Lord, when we pray, for Adam. If it hadn't been for Adam, I wouldn't be here; you wouldn't be here; we would be waiting in the heavens as spirits pleading for somebody . . . to pass through a certain condition that brought upon us mortality.

We are in the mortal life to get an experience, a training, that we couldn't get any other way. And in order [for us] to become gods, it is necessary for us to know something about pain, about sickness, and about the other things that we partake of in this school of mortality.

So don't let us, brethren and sisters, complain about Adam and wish he hadn't done something that he did. I want to thank him. I am glad to have the privilege of being here and going through mortality, and if I will be true and faithful to the covenants and obligations that are upon me as a member of the Church and in the kingdom of God, I may have the privilege of coming back into the presence of the Eternal Father; and that will come to you as it will to me, sons and daughters of God entitled to the fulness of celestial glory. ■

An October 1967 general conference address; subheads added; punctuation, capitalization, and spelling modernized.



The

Joyful Surprise of Motherhood

BY JEAN KNIGHT PACE

When our first son, Mark, was born, I was quite shocked to discover that motherhood was the most satisfying and fulfilling thing I had ever experienced. Now that I have a few years of mothering under my belt, I have become troubled that it was such a shock—that I hadn't expected it to be wonderful. Somehow I had received the impression that motherhood would only be time-consuming, underappreciated, dull, nonstimulating, and simply not enough to make one fully happy.

The scriptures tell us that “children are an heritage of the Lord” (Psalm 127:3). I wonder if many in my generation know this—not just in their minds because it is part of Latter-day Saint doctrine, but in their hearts as well.

I know that not everyone will have the chance to marry and have children in this life. For this reason and others, it is not appropriate for women to set their sights only on marriage and motherhood. Nevertheless, I'm alarmed at the growing tendency of some women—even

As a newlywed, I had bought into the idea that motherhood would be dull, stifling, and all-consuming. How wrong I was!



in the Church—to show more interest in their careers than in motherhood, or to fear motherhood so much that they do not look forward to taking this step with gladness.

That is how I was. I planned to have children someday, because I knew that is what Latter-day Saints were supposed to do, but I wasn't excited about the prospect at all. In fact, when my husband and I were engaged and newly married, I had such a negative idea of what motherhood was going to be that I secretly hoped I wouldn't be able to have children—at least for a few years. When I unexpectedly became pregnant with my son just two months after I'd been married, I felt angry and depressed.

I think it was difficult for me to look forward to mothering because of some common myths and misconceptions perpetrated by magazines, the media, ideas of social “freedom” for women, and even some of the negative jokes, anecdotes, and warnings passed on by mothers themselves. Perhaps many young women feel as I felt, so I would like

to dismiss some of the common myths about motherhood that we may be tricked into swallowing.



Myth number one: Before you have children, you need to do everything else in life that is important to you, because after you become a mother, you'll never be able to do that again.

This is the most common thing I heard in the later stages of my pregnancy. What a terrifying phrase—“never be able to do that again”—as if I were going to have a terrible and disabling accident instead of becoming responsible for one of Heavenly Father's spirit children.

Truth: Even with a child, a mother can make time for herself and some goals outside of her children. It isn't the will of the Lord that all of the individual parts of our lives end with children. It is true that I can't do as much as fast as I did without children, and I imagine that this will increasingly be the case as I have more children. But it is also true that having children has helped me develop in other ways. I like to think of it as getting a second degree, a new job, or a promotion—because really, that's what it is.



Myth

Myth number two: When you have children, you won't be able to progress intellectually.

Truth: As a mother, you will read books, learn to build things, and learn more about nutrition and health, budgeting, taxes, cooking, and running a home. You will learn to teach. Some women even learn to quilt, sew, crochet, do artwork, and do many other things. I have also learned some even more important lessons—one of which has been to relax and enjoy quiet times with my son.

Myth

Myth number three: You will lose yourself to your children.

Truth: You will lose yourself to love. Not having a baby for fear of losing yourself would be like saying, "Don't ever make any friends, and certainly never, ever fall in love, because both of these things will take time and will change your life." I did not resist falling in love, but I did mentally resist parenthood. I was convinced that having this baby so early on was going to ruin my carefully plotted life. He did not ruin my life—in fact, in many ways he

THE VITAL ROLE OF WIFE AND MOTHER



"Beware of the subtle ways Satan employs to take you from the plan of God and true happiness. One of Satan's most effective approaches is to demean the role of wife and mother in the home. This is an attack at the very heart of God's plan to foster love between husband and wife and to nurture children in an atmosphere of understanding, peace, appreciation, and support. Much of the violence that is rampant in the world today is the harvest of weakened homes. Government and social plans will not effectively correct that, nor can the best efforts of schools and churches fully compensate for the absence of the tender care of a compassionate mother and wife in the home."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Joy of Living the Great Plan of Happiness," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 74.

saved it. What I mean is this: We are going to lose our lives to something. I had lost mine to school goals, career dreams, plans, and other people's demands and expectations for what my life should be. I had listened to the world and its requirements for me as a modern woman. Mark brought me back to myself and to God. He brought me back to the saving fundamentals of faith, hope, and charity. First Corinthians 13:13 does not say, "And now abideth enough money to travel, a great body, and a successful career, these three; but the greatest of these is a successful career." It doesn't even say this for men, because even though the proclamation on the family designates fathers as the main providers, their primary and most important job is also in the home and with the family.

I have learned more about the gospel and about myself from getting married and having a child than I learned from four years of seminary, seven years of undergraduate and graduate work, and from my mission. These other steps were important for my growth, maturity, and knowledge. They were important so that when I did have children, there would be certain things I could teach them. But I have come to realize they were *steps* leading me on to bigger and better things, and one of those bigger and better things is having a righteous family.

Myth **Myth number four:** Having children will stunt your relationship with your spouse.
Truth: It will add another dimension to it.

I won't say there aren't times when I wish for a little more time with my husband and a little more money to use when we do have time together, or that it's always easy to agree on how to be a parent. But Mark has had a wonderful binding effect on us. He has given us a common goal. Many couples take a class or start a hobby together to improve their relationship. A baby is like the ultimate class and the ultimate hobby. A class will not last so long, will not be so funny, will not be so beautiful, so challenging, so living. It will not be something you have created together. It will not look like you. It will not love you. And in my



experience, the strength children provide makes it easier (and more fun) for a marriage to endure as well.

I hope that my generation and those who are younger are not afraid to learn that marriage and parenthood are the most beautiful things—that they are the buds of that charity which “never faileth” (see 1 Corinthians 13:8). I hope that mothers, fathers, grandmothers, and grandfathers let their children and grandchildren hear about the beauties of their responsibilities, not just the tasks and the pressures and the sacrifices. The Lord promises the faithful the chance to be with a family through eternity, working with them and loving them. To my knowledge He does not bind us to anything else so completely. “But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away” (1 Corinthians 13:8). Our jobs will not be eternal; much of our formal education will be forgotten; our Church callings will come to an end. Only our eternally linked families, the knowledge we have gained, and the Christlike love we have developed will never fail. ■

Jean Knight Pace is a member of the Sierra Ward, Lancaster California Stake.

A Lesson That **CHANGED MY LIFE**

Members around the world responded to a call for stories about lessons that blessed lives. These are just a few of the many responses we received. We hope these experiences will inspire you, remind you of lessons you have learned, and help you in your responsibilities as a teacher.

Bricks

Early in our marriage my husband and I relocated for his schooling. In our new ward I worked closely with a woman whose manner I found brusque and insensitive. Looking for sympathy, I complained to my husband, lamenting that such a woman would be in a leadership position in the ward. Rather than offering the sympathy I expected, my husband presented an informal but valuable lesson on the importance of love and tolerance.

In the Church, he said, we are all working together to build the kingdom of God. He suggested that individual members are like bricks. None of us “bricks,” however, is perfectly sound. Under close scrutiny each is flawed—a gouge here, a bump there. When we are placed side by side with other bricks, there is seldom a perfect fit. Invariably there are gaps or wobbles where others’ imperfections come into contact with our own. Without the “mortar” of love, tolerance, patience, and forgiveness, our efforts to build the kingdom would come to naught.

As our family has grown and my experiences in helping to build the kingdom have broadened, I have often reflected on this simple lesson. I am reminded of my

own responsibility to be more charitable in my interactions with others. And where my own shortcomings are concerned, I am more appreciative of those who are liberal with “mortar” in their dealings with me.

*Lee Ann Fairbanks, Moses Lake 10th Ward,
Moses Lake Washington Stake*

I Knew That He Knew

My first Sunday in church was in early 1995. All my life I had spent weekends in stadiums and gymnasiums. I love sports! I was even studying sports. But in January 1995 I came in contact with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The sister missionaries invited me to attend church, and I went.

It was a fast and testimony meeting. I sat on a massive wooden pew, one sister missionary to my right, the other to my left. But I encountered only unfamiliar faces, unfamiliar music, unfamiliar proceedings, and unfamiliar words. I had never partaken of the sacrament before and was preoccupied with finding out the appropriate conduct. I felt very uncomfortable. I said to myself, “It will be over at some point, and then I will get out of here and

never come back.” But the meeting concluded with the announcement that all should remain in the chapel for a lesson by the mission president, President Charles W. Dahlquist II, who now serves as Young Men general president. So most people, including the sister missionaries, remained seated, and I could not simply sneak out inconspicuously, as I had planned. Since I did not have the courage to tell the missionaries how awful I was feeling, I decided to endure.

President Dahlquist stood in front. He began by asking what we would do with a good book we had just read. My answer was, “Read it again, recommend it to others, or give it as a gift.”

He spoke about the Book of Mormon, then about a few

other subjects. But something peculiar happened. I suddenly knew that everything he said was true. I knew that he knew more things that were true as well. I knew that I wanted to know what he knew. I knew that I wanted to have in my life what he had as an anchor in his life. It is hard to find words to describe this experience. I simply knew that he knew.

I looked around stealthily to see if anybody had noticed anything unusual, for I had the impression that something wonderful had happened.

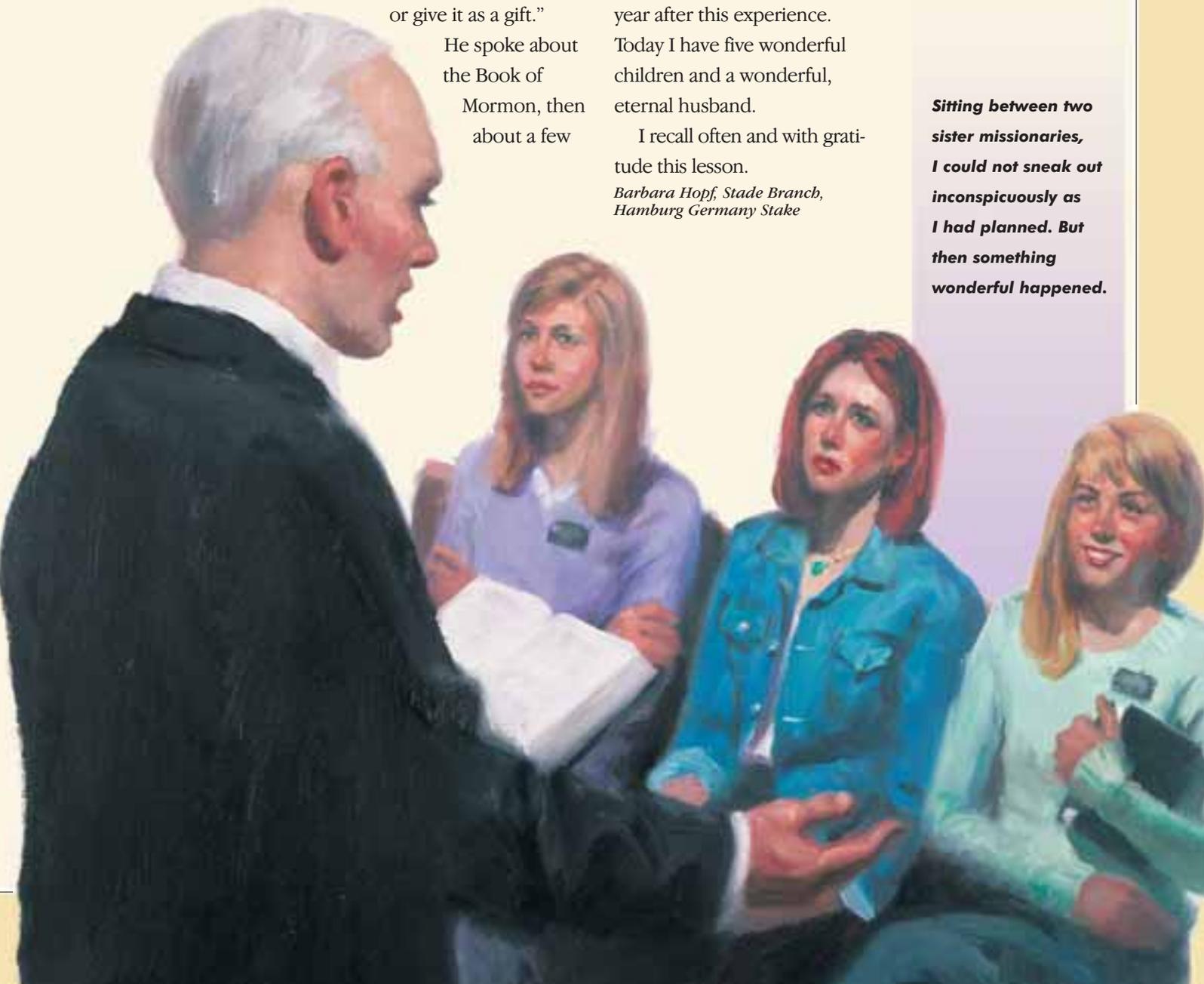
Because of his lesson I attended church again—and again. My baptism was on March 2, 1996, approximately one year after this experience.

Today I have five wonderful children and a wonderful, eternal husband.

I recall often and with gratitude this lesson.

*Barbara Hopf, Stade Branch,
Hamburg Germany Stake*

Sitting between two sister missionaries, I could not sneak out inconspicuously as I had planned. But then something wonderful happened.





When I was five years old a Primary teacher taught me that God was my Heavenly Father and that Jesus Christ was my Savior and Redeemer.

A Testimony of the Godhead

The lesson that most affected my life was a Primary lesson. It was so long ago that I don't remember the teacher's name, but the lesson penetrated my soul so deeply that I have never forgotten it.

When I was five years old I learned that God was my Heavenly

Father and that Jesus Christ was my Savior and Redeemer. I learned that They love all people and that I could speak with God whenever I needed to because He always listens to my prayers. My faith increased, something within my heart grew, and little by little I gained a testimony of the Godhead.

With the pure intent of a small child, I started praying with greater fervor, and I had many wonderful experiences with prayer.

I attended church for more than a year. Then other events made my going to church difficult. But I never stopped praying.

I was finally able to join the Church when I turned 20 years old. I was baptized with the sincere feelings of a child who says to her Father, "I'm coming back home."

The seed was planted when I was a child and then germinated when I became an adult. I don't know whether that teacher knows how much she helped me. But her lesson transformed my soul and kept my feet on the sure path, even while I had no contact with the Church for 14 years.

*Estela Santana Leitão Cavalcante,
Praia Grande Ward, Praia Grande Brazil Stake*

The Stains of Sin

When I was a Laurel more than 15 years ago, our stake Young Women president was a real heroine to me and many other girls. Her beautiful, curly brown hair impressed me, but she was also smart and articulate, a spiritual woman, a returned missionary, and a newlywed. She wore nice modest clothes, showing us how attractive we could be without compromising our standards. I remember her personifying every dream I had ever dreamed for my own future.

Once she was the speaker at a fireside for the Young Women. When we entered the chapel, we saw her gorgeous white wedding gown displayed in a prominent place. What can be more exciting than a wedding dress when you're a dreaming 16-year-old? I imagined a fireside about boys and our bright futures.

But when our Young Women president started speaking, it became clear that this was not her plan. She started talking about chastity and how important it was to keep ourselves morally clean. She stood at the pulpit with notes and a pen and talked emphatically about these crucial matters.

All of a sudden the unthinkable happened. She gestured as she spoke and somehow flipped ink from her fountain pen across the wedding dress. The ink made a big stain on the white fabric. We were devastated.

I don't remember exactly what she said next. It was something about our being as clean and pure as her white dress and that sexual transgressions, however small they might seem, would stain us just as the ink had stained the dress. I recall never *ever* wanting to be anything but clean and pure. It was a decision I had already made subconsciously, but now it was unforgettably engraved upon my heart.

After she had made her point about remaining clean or becoming clean, she informed us that the ink was invisible ink from a prank store and that it would disappear in a couple of minutes. She hadn't tried it before, so we all sat there hoping it would work. It did.

Since that day this object lesson has had a special place in my mind. I want to appear before my Heavenly Father as pure as that white dress.

Anja Klarin, Borås Ward, Göteborg Sweden Stake

The Power and Spirit of the Atonement

I always believed in God the Eternal Father and in His Son, Jesus Christ. Ever since I was young I felt the desire to be closer to Them, but I didn't know how.

In May 2000 I had my first contact with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I had just turned 17 when I met the missionaries. They knocked on my friend's door, and she invited me to hear them. After listening to the discussions and attending sacrament meeting, my friend and I, as well as my father, mother, and younger brother, were baptized.

We were well received into the ward organizations. I was in Young Women. I was very happy and loved our Young Women president, Maria José, who always helped me grow spiritually. At about the time I finished the Young Women program, Maria José became my Sunday School teacher.

One Sunday she notified us that the following week we would be studying the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and invited each of us to bring a copy of *Jesus the Christ* by James E. Talmage.

The next Sunday we all sat in the room with our books. Each of us had been assigned to study part of the book and explain it to the class. Our teacher orchestrated the reading of scriptures and our explanations. The Spirit influenced us in a magnificent way. Everyone was crying when we talked about Gethsemane and Calvary. It was the most amazing thing I have ever seen in a gospel class. I had never before understood with such profound feeling the power and spirit of the Atonement.

Our teacher orchestrated the reading of scriptures and our explanations. The Spirit influenced us in a magnificent way.

At the end of class we sang a hymn and had a simple prayer. We were very moved. I am grateful for the Atonement and for the plan of salvation. I am especially grateful for the love and concern of our teacher, who wanted us to feel the Holy Ghost bear witness of the gospel and the Atonement. ■

*Elaine Cristina Farias de Oliveira,
Panatis Ward, Natal Brazil Potengi
Stake*



A Happy Gathering of Sisters

Relief Society home, family, and personal enrichment meetings help sisters worldwide fill their hearts and homes with love and charity.

BY LILIAN DELONG
Relief Society General Board

In Lutsk, Ukraine, an oven warms the tiny kitchen where 16 sisters have gathered to make cookies and cakes. The oven sits on the floor and the sisters sit nearby, sharing not only the warmth of the oven but also the warmth of being together. This is what they call “sisters night,” a happy gathering you might know better as home, family, and personal enrichment meeting.

In this setting, there is a lot of laughter, hugging, and even dancing. Always, these sisters sing hymns together, demonstrating their love for the hymns of the Church. The singing continues as those who live far away board the bus for the three-hour ride home.

What a wonderful example of how enrichment meeting reinforces what President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught when he said Relief Society is a place of learning, serving, and socializing.¹

It seems to fit the picture that Sister Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president, describes of home, family, and personal enrichment meeting as a place “where hearts and hands are joined together in a safe, relaxed, and enjoyable environment.”

Sister Parkin explains: “Women of all ages and stages of life can feel a sense of belonging as they participate in activities that build spiritual strength, develop personal skills, strengthen home and family, and exercise charity through service. In these meetings bonds of sisterhood are strengthened, new and less-active members are fellowshiped, and missionary opportunities abound.”

Learning

Through the flexibility of home, family, and personal enrichment meeting, sisters can share and learn





together no matter what their situation or age.

In the rain forest of southeastern Nigeria, young women and Relief Society sisters dressed in brightly colored clothing and head ties gather outside the simple Church meetinghouse to learn how to make patterns for blouses and dresses. Using empty cement bags as drafting paper, the Relief Society sisters gather around the table, listening attentively to the young women who are teaching this new skill. After drafting their patterns, then cutting the material, they take turns using a treadle sewing machine to complete their outfits.

Serving

In the Juneau Second Ward, Juneau Alaska Stake, the sisters feel a sense of community even though they are separated by distance. On the first Sunday of the month, Relief Society presidency member Sandy Perkins asks, "How can we take the light of the gospel to the community?" She answers her own question by describing the upcoming enrichment meeting. The Relief Society presidency has invited a panel of local leaders, representing a handful of the services and charitable programs in the area, to share their needs with the

sisters. "Our hope," Sister Perkins explains, "is that we will increase our influence here, in our own town, as we reach out to share our light."

Socializing

Home, family, and personal enrichment meeting is a wonderful place to socialize and establish the sisterhood necessary to create a sense of belonging among members of Relief Society and visitors. This is exemplified in an enrichment meeting held in Benidorm, Spain—a resort town where travelers are constantly coming and going. One evening sisters from Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, England, Scotland, and Spain meet together for an enrichment meeting. On this particular night the sisters from Switzerland teach the others how to make greeting cards that can be used for various occasions. It is a simple design, easily mastered while the sisters visit and strengthen friendships.

As the sisters work together, their friendliness and sincerity soon overcome

Left: Sisters in Lutsk, Ukraine, share the warmth of being together in home, family, and personal enrichment meeting. Above: In Nigeria, sisters gather to learn to make patterns for blouses and dresses.



language barriers. The sister missionaries have brought some investigators who are chatting happily with the others. When these investigators visit the little branch again on Sunday, they already feel they belong to the group.

It is a simple activity, but this enrichment meeting accomplishes the goals of learning, serving, and socializing. Some of the sisters might have thought, "I don't need to go. I have plenty of greeting cards." But the greeting cards are only a small part of the benefit of attending enrichment meeting this night. Sometimes we attend to get something out of it. Other times we're there to give to others, if only a listening ear, a word of encouragement, or a welcoming hand of friendship.

Come to Relief Society

In today's world, increasing numbers of women are employed. Other members of Relief Society face challenges that include the time commitment of single parenting, the necessity of traveling long distances to meet with the Saints, and the economic implications of traveling and participating. For some, attending enrichment meeting may be a difficult choice. When asked what would inspire her to attend enrichment meeting, a busy full-time student and single mother of seven replied, "I would have to be promised that my family would be blessed."

Maria Jasmine Juan (center) as a missionary.



Such a promise has been made. Sister Parkin said: "Come to Relief Society! It will fill your homes with love and charity; it will nurture and strengthen you and your families."²

An invitation is open to you, as it is to all women.

Maria Jasmine Juan, living in Manila, Philippines, away from her family, is among those who choose to come to Relief Society. "I was very lonely and missed my mother," she says. "I knew that if I would go to Relief Society, I would be all right. As the sisters welcomed me to enrichment meeting, I



ENDURING CONCEPTS

"I believe the four great enduring concepts of [Relief Society] are: First, it is a divinely established sisterhood. Second, it is a place of learning. Third, it is an organization whose basic charter is to serve others. Its motto is 'Charity never faileth.' Fourth, it is a place where women can socialize and establish eternal friendships."

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "You Are All Heaven Sent," *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 111.

realized there was a whole room full of 'mothers.'

In Relief Society you'll find a safe place where joys and sorrows can be shared, a place where visiting and laughing strengthen bonds of friendship, and a cordial place where visitors are welcome. Come and be a part of the Lord's organization for women. Like the oven in that tiny kitchen in Ukraine, home, family, and personal enrichment meeting will warm your heart and then your home. ■

Lilian DeLong is a member of the South Weber First Ward, South Weber Utah Stake.

NOTES

1. See "You Are All Heaven Sent," *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 111.
2. "How Has Relief Society Blessed Your Life?" *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 35.



The Purpose of Relief Society



Prayerfully 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.

Why Relief Society?

Blessings of Belonging to Relief Society: The Relief Society serves under the guidance of the priesthood as the Lord's organization for sisters in the Church. *The purpose of Relief Society is to assist priesthood leaders in carrying out the mission of the Church by helping sisters and families come unto Christ.* The Relief Society helps sisters and their families receive all essential priesthood ordinances, keep the associated covenants, and qualify for exaltation and eternal life.

The following objectives support the purpose of the Relief Society:

1. Build faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and teach the doctrines of the kingdom of God.
2. Emphasize the divine worth of each sister.
3. Exercise charity and nurture those in need.
4. Strengthen and protect families.
5. Serve and support each sister.
6. Help sisters become full participants in the blessings of the priesthood.

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918): “This organization is divinely

made, divinely authorized, divinely instituted, divinely ordained of God to minister for the salvation of the souls of women and of men. . . . Make [Relief Society] first, make it foremost, make it the highest, the best and the deepest of any organization in existence in the world. You are called by the voice of the Prophet of God to do it, to be uppermost, to be the greatest and the best, the purest and the most devoted to the right” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* [1998], 184).

Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president: “We have been given an organization to build our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to feel his love, and to extend that love to all. The Relief Society is that organization” (“Transforming Transitions,” in *The Rock of Our Redeemer: Talks from the 2002 BYU Women’s Conference* [2003], 45).

Eliza R. Snow (1804–87), former Relief Society general president: “What is the object of the Female Relief Society? I would reply—to do good—to bring into requisition every capacity we possess for doing good, not only in relieving the poor but in saving souls. United effort will accomplish incalculably more than can be accomplished

by the most effective individual energies” (“Female Relief Society,” *Deseret Evening News*, Apr. 18, 1868, 2).

How Can You Enjoy the Blessings of Belonging to Relief Society?

Anne C. Pingree, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency: “When the sisters of Relief Society look ‘with an eye single to the glory of God’ (D&C 4:5), they can experience rich spiritual insights and share deep spiritual strength together. . . . Connections forged among covenant women in Relief Society can indeed *enlighten, enliven, and enrich* the journey of life because we can help each other learn how to put the Lord *first* in our *hearts* and in our *lives*” (“Walking towards the Light of His Love,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 112–13).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “My dear friends of the Relief Society, whatever your circumstances, wherever you may live, may the windows of heaven be opened and blessings come down upon you. May you live with love for one another. May you reach down to lift up those whose burdens are heavy. May you bring light and beauty to the world” (“To the Women of the Church,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 115). ■



Nowhere to Land

By Kenneth B. Smith

In January 1951 we lived in Fairbanks, Alaska, just 100 miles (160 km) south of the Arctic Circle. I was a United States Air Force pilot and had been ordered to Nome, Alaska, for two weeks to ferry freight to various sites.

During the Alaskan winters the daylight hours are very short, so operations requiring daylight had to be conducted in a narrow window when the sun was above the horizon. In January there was just less than one hour of daylight at midday. I was delivering cargo to a small outpost at Gambell, a native village on St. Lawrence Island, just a few miles off the Chukchi Peninsula of Siberia and about 200 miles (320 km) across the Bering Sea from Nome.

St. Lawrence Island had no airfield at that time, so we used a frozen lake near the coast. With 19 inches (48 cm) of ice on the lake it was safe to land a loaded C47 transport. But there was no lighting available, so we had to plan our arrival for sunrise, about 11:30 a.m., and our departure before sunset at 12:30 p.m., one hour later.

The weather reporter had assured me the weather would be fine all day, so I elected to take less than a full load of fuel in order to carry another 1,000 pounds (450 kg) of cargo to the men at Gambell. Our fuel was

sufficient to take us to Gambell and back to Nome with enough to fly 30 extra minutes.

We took off at 10:00 a.m. A few stars were visible through the scattered clouds. We arrived at Gambell on schedule—just as the Arctic sun was peeping over the horizon—landed, and started unloading cargo to the delight of the troops.

By the time we were ready to take off again, it was getting dark. And just after takeoff we received an urgent call from the weather station at Gambell telling us we should check the weather at Nome. As we flew we radioed Nome and learned that an Arctic blizzard was moving in. They were expecting clouds at ground level with visibility of less than one mile (1.6 km) within an hour. The Nome airport had no radar instrument landing system. Under those conditions the airport was closed for landing. With only a half hour of extra fuel, we would be unable to reach an alternate airport. And with a massive storm bearing down, there would be no airports in northern Alaska where we could land anyway.

Needless to say, our situation was precarious. Because the outside temperature was -40° F (-40° C) with wind gusting to 35 mph (55 km/h), any attempt to bail out with parachutes would have meant nearly instant death.

I had been taught to pray as a child and had always said my daily prayers, but never had I needed the Lord's help more than on that day. I asked Heavenly Father to tell me what to do. I had a wife and three children back in Fairbanks, and my copilot and crew chief also had families. We knew we would never see our families again unless Heavenly Father helped us. After praying and flying for nearly an hour, I had the feeling that I must land somewhere in the vicinity of the Nome airport so that maybe someone could find us if we survived a crash landing.

Nome radio had notified the Alaskan Air Command of our predicament and received an urgent inquiry about my intentions. When I advised Nome that I would land there, they quickly responded that it would be impossible with the existing weather conditions. But they offered no alternative.

As we neared Nome, I told the radio operator we would attempt as many low approaches as fuel would allow to see if we could find an opening in the clouds. We made three such approaches and saw nothing but blinding snow. On our fourth approach I saw a red light for a fraction of a second. Then as we reached our minimum altitude I saw a white light in front of me for a fraction of a second, just long enough for me to line up where I had seen it. I was pretty sure I was

over the airfield but had no idea exactly where.

I knew it was now or never. I was expecting a crash and possibly an explosion. Instead, the airplane landed in the middle of the runway and came to a stop without any problem.

The odds against such a landing were astronomical. There was no way I could have put that airplane down like that without the Lord's help. How did He help me?

First, He told me where to attempt to land despite all protests from the ground. Second, by some process

unknown to me, He guided me onto that runway.

I have a testimony of the power of prayer. Nothing is impossible for the Lord. I know He will help us if we earnestly seek Him and strive to be obedient to His teachings. ■

Kenneth B. Smith is a member of the Morningside Fifth Ward, St. George Utah Morningside Stake.

We made
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blinding snow.*



A Gift for My Father

By Silvia Girard

When I was a little girl just two years of age, my father died in a tragic accident. I had a sister who was seven and a brother who was six. Life became very hard for my mother, who had to face life alone with her three little children. For some reason she decided to tell me that my daddy had gone away on a trip. Maybe she was so sad that she didn't have the courage to tell me the truth.

So I kept waiting to see him and hear his sweet voice and be wrapped in his arms. My birthday would come, and I would wait. Christmas would come, and I would wait.

Then one day I learned the truth from a neighbor girl who was my age. It was devastating; I cried so hard. I started noticing other children with their fathers even more than before. It seemed so cruel.

The years went by, and I was baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I married a good man who wasn't a member of the Church. But he gained a testimony and decided to be baptized.

Through our membership in the Church, a most wonderful blessing

came into our lives. We learned that families can be forever, that a link in our family chain that had been left hanging by itself could be joined to the rest of the family.

Through temple ordinances, my father could be baptized by proxy and sealed to his parents and I could eventually be sealed to him.

My husband was baptized for my father, and we had all the necessary temple ordinances performed. The Spirit of the Lord brought great joy to us. The anguish I had gone through as a child didn't seem to matter when I compared it with this great joy and blessing. Knowing that families can be eternal was better than all the Christmases or birthdays my father and I could have spent together.

Today my father is sealed to his parents, and they, in turn, are sealed to their parents. As a result of the happiness I have experienced, I dedicate a great part of my time to doing family history so I can help families be joined together. Temple work brings the most wonderful blessings into our lives. ■

Silvia Girard is a member of the Spencer Fifth Ward, Magna Utah Central Stake.



Don't Open the Door!

By Janet Dunne

The night was freezing, with snow coming thick and fast. I was warm and safe in our home, and our three children were sleeping soundly. My husband was attending a bishopric meeting at the chapel some five miles (8 km) away. At about 8:30 there was an unexpected knock at the door. Immediately I felt strongly impressed that I was not to open the door. This certainty—this warning of danger—had never before come to me so strongly.

I was therefore quite stunned to hear my husband's brother answer my query as to who was there. My husband's only brother, Michael, a member of the Church, lived 70 miles (110 km) away. We had a very good relationship with him, and it was not surprising that he would visit, possibly expecting to stay a few days, as he had done many times before. It wasn't even surprising that he hadn't called, since the phone lines were down because of the weather. I should have felt safe and relieved, and it would have been normal for me to welcome him into our home on this cold winter night.

I could not understand the strong feelings I had or why I heard myself asking him to travel to the chapel to meet my husband. After a stunned silence my brother-in-law explained in

a rather strange manner that he had traveled by train, then had caught the bus to our home, and now the snow was getting quite deep.

A powerful prompting continued to impress upon me that I must not, for any reason, open the door. I calmly explained that I was sorry and repeated my request for him to travel to the chapel to meet my husband.

For the remainder of the evening I reflected on my actions. Poor Michael had traveled several hours by train and bus, and on a cold winter evening I had turned him away. How could anyone be so uncaring? Yet at the same time I was unable to deny the strong witness that I was in danger and must not open my door.

It was late and I was almost asleep when my husband returned home. We discussed the situation very briefly, my husband confirming that his brother had met him and was now sleeping downstairs. I no longer felt any fear and slept very soundly.

The next morning I puzzled over how I could explain my actions to Michael. Would he be angry with me? I took a deep breath and walked into the kitchen to prepare breakfast. "Michael, about last night . . ." I began but stopped when

I saw that, far from being angry, he was actually smiling.

"I'm so glad you did not let us in last night," he said. I had no idea until then that he had not been alone. He proceeded to tell me how he had met Steve, an old school friend, on the train, and it had taken him some time to realize that Steve was high on drugs. By then Michael had already told him where he was going. Steve became more and more aggressive during the journey. He explained he urgently needed money and a place to sleep. He forcibly accompanied Michael to our home with what my brother-in-law could describe only as "the most evil of intentions."

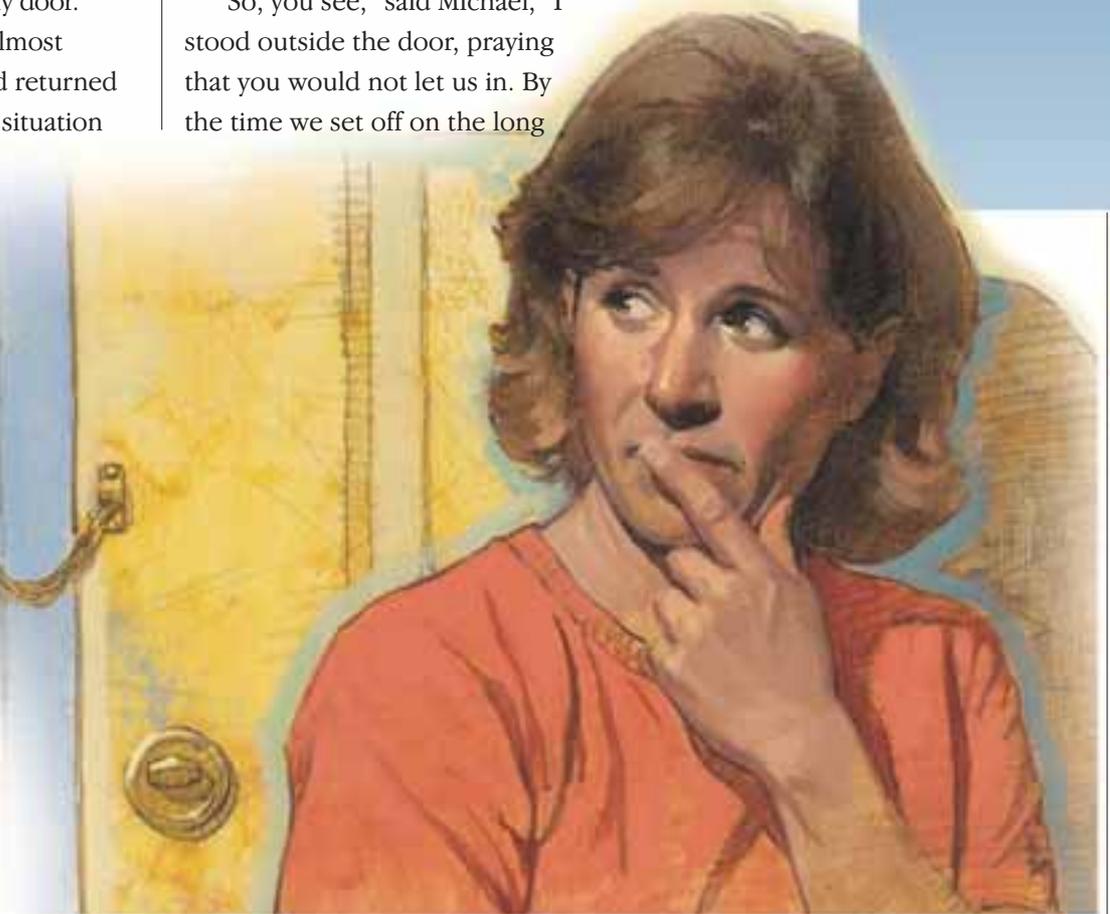
"So, you see," said Michael, "I stood outside the door, praying that you would not let us in. By the time we set off on the long

trip to the chapel, Steve lost interest and said he would go and find some 'action' somewhere else."

I will never know what might have befallen our family or me that winter night. I will just be eternally grateful to have learned one of the most valuable lessons here on earth—to obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Even when there appears to be no logical reason, we will be kept safe by relying on that still, small voice. ■

Janet Dunne is a member of the Leeds Fourth Ward, Leeds England Stake.

When I heard the knock, immediately I felt strongly impressed that I was not to open the door.



Protecting Your Food Storage

Whether you are just starting your food storage or have your year's supply, the following tips from the Church's welfare Web site—providentliving.org—will help you protect your supplies:



• **Avoid heat and sunlight.**

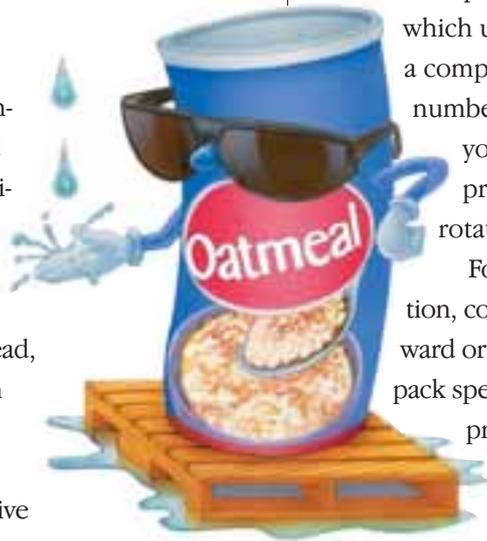
Optimum temperatures are 70 degrees or cooler.

Freezing should be

avoided for wet-pack items. Storage at temperatures below freezing may be detrimental to the germination quality of some seeds.

• **Protect against moisture.**

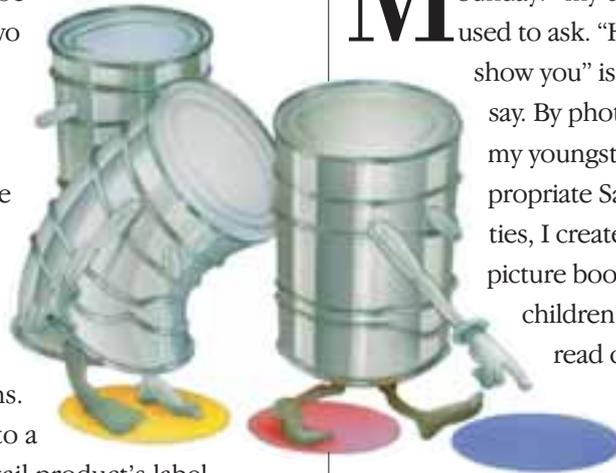
Food containers should not come in direct contact with concrete floors or walls. Instead, place them on shelves or raised platforms. If you live



in a particularly humid climate, consider providing ventilation to avoid moisture buildup.

• **Keep rodents and insects out.** Instead of leaving dry goods in the original packaging, consider storing them in number 10 cans, foil pouches, glass canning jars, PETE (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic bottles, and plastic buckets.

• **Rotate.** Generally, wet-pack items can be kept for two to three years. Dry-pack goods have varying "best if used by" recommendations. Referring to



retail product's label, which usually includes a company's toll-free number, can also help you decide how soon products should be rotated.

For more information, consult your ward or branch dry-pack specialist or visit providentliving.org.



Our Sabbath Picture Book

Mommy, what can we do on Sunday?" my daughters used to ask. "Here, let me show you" is what I now say. By photographing my youngsters doing appropriate Sabbath activities, I created a simple picture book. Even my children who can't yet read can see that participating in family home

evening, reading scriptures (with help from Mom), and making crafts are some of the many appropriate Sunday pleasures. To help us keep our focus on the Savior, we placed a picture of Him on the first page of our book. Sunday is also special for our family because the children can choose our activities. They have my undivided attention, and we truly enjoy our time together on the Sabbath.

Cheryl Winward Panoussi, Granger West Third Ward, Salt Lake Granger West Stake

Bridging Language Gaps

B*ienvenidos. Willkommen.*
Welcome. No matter what language we speak, it is essential to our Church's worldwide unity that we welcome our brothers and sisters from other countries. At my bishop's request, I tried to help the sisters in my ward who were learning English as a second language. Some of the insights I gained from this experience might help others better include everyone when there are language and cultural differences in a ward or branch.

- **Increase awareness of other cultures.** Our Relief Society planned a special lesson entitled "No More Strangers and Foreigners." The international sisters were invited to share their testimonies and personal experiences in that meeting, as well as in the ward newsletter and at sacrament meeting. A ward activity also encouraged members to share their heritage through food, song, dance, or display.

- **Visit the new international members.** Learn of their conversion, their testimony, and their hopes for the future. Help orient them to the ward and community. Through these home visits you can informally assess their language ability and offer to find translators, if needed, for occasional clarification. Sometimes the new member may want help in locating community courses for language instruction.



FAMILY HOME EVENING HELPS

Family Scripture Time

A couple of years ago, my husband and I wanted to help our children increase their appreciation for the scriptures. We had been reading the Book of Mormon as a family and were slowly making progress, but my husband and I agreed that the children needed to read more than just

a few verses at a time. So we had them bring a blanket, pillow, and their own set of scriptures to the living room. With snacks nearby, we made ourselves comfortable on the floor and spent an hour taking turns reading from the Book of Mormon. Our children are young, and I was surprised that even our toddler enjoyed the activity. Depending on your children's ages, you could easily incorporate family discussions as topics or

questions arise from the reading, and you could use selections from *Book of Mormon Stories* (item no. 35666000; U.S. \$6.00) or other illustrated scripture readers to help young learners.

Our scripture activity helped us to progress with our family goal of reading the Book of Mormon together. But the best part was feeling the Spirit in our home and helping our children recognize that special feeling.

*Jennifer Dale, Riverview Ward, Mesa Arizona
 Maricopa North Stake*



- **Invite them to your home.** We organized a weekly, informal gathering in a member's home to practice conversational English, introduce our country's culture, and establish friendships. The activities varied, based on the sisters who attended. Some of the topics included learning gospel vocabulary, going to the doctor, grocery shopping, cooking, and explaining weights and measures.

- **Provide lesson materials in their native language and second language.** When possible, our ward offered Church materials to adults and youth in both their native language and English.

- **Involve them.** Though one Portuguese-speaking sister was apprehensive about her ability to communicate in English on the telephone, she accepted a calling to be a visiting teaching supervisor. We helped her prepare a simple dialogue and also suggested ways for her visiting teaching leader to use clear questions and comments, thus helping the new sister to report back easily and accurately.

There are many ways to serve our brothers and sisters. Above all, serving with love and an attitude of acceptance will lift both the giver and the receiver.

Florence E. G. Hawkinson, Provo Fifth Ward, Provo Utah East Stake

First Presidency Announces New Guidelines for Enrichment Meetings and Activities

Beginning January 1, 2006, new guidelines from the First Presidency take effect for Relief Society home, family, and personal enrichment meetings. The guidelines indicate that enrichment meetings take place quarterly and that enrichment activities should be scheduled according to the needs or interests of the sisters. The changes are intended to provide greater flexibility for individual units and also to place a greater emphasis on the home and family.

“The purposes of home, family, and personal enrichment are to strengthen faith in Jesus Christ and to teach parenting and home-making skills,” said the First Presidency statement outlining the guidelines. “Enrichment is a time for sisters to socialize, learn, and be uplifted.”

The First Presidency lists three parameters to consider when planning any enrichment gathering: know the needs and interests of Relief Society members, consult with priesthood leaders, and be prayerful and purposeful in planning activities. Also, all sisters ought to feel appropriately included and welcome.

Home, Family, and Personal Enrichment Meetings

Home, family, and personal enrichment meetings are for all sisters to meet together. The statement from the First Presidency directed that each ward or branch Relief Society presidency should carry out four enrichment meetings per year. Enrichment meetings are to take place during the week, at times other than on Sunday or on Monday evening. One of the four meetings ought to center on the commemoration of the March 17, 1842, organization of the Relief Society. The stake or district Relief Society presidency is responsible for one to

two additional meetings per year. One of these meetings should be in conjunction with the annual broadcast of the general Relief Society meeting.

Home, Family, and Personal Enrichment Activities

Home, family, and personal enrichment activities are for sisters with similar situations, needs, or interests. Enrichment activities are less structured than enrichment meet-

ings and serve as a means of friendship and support. “The activities

should offer a safe, relaxed, and engaging environment where sisters learn and share ways to strengthen homes, families, and individuals,” the First Presidency directed. Relief Society leaders are encouraged to keep the activities flexible in order to help the sisters meet their home, family, and other obligations. More information regarding home, family and personal enrichment meetings and activities is available in the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* (1998), pages 204–5. ■



Guideline changes for enrichment meetings and activities take effect this month.

New Joseph Smith Film Portrays Prophet as Exemplar

By Nicole Seymour, Church Magazines

First Presidency input, historically accurate script and sets, vivid cinematography, and a spiritually minded cast and crew all played a role in the creation of the new feature film on the Prophet Joseph Smith now playing at the Legacy Theater at Temple Square. The new film, which succeeds *The Testaments of One Fold and One Shepherd* and *Legacy*, also began showing at some visitors' centers at Church historical and temple sites in December.

Under the direction of the First Presidency, *Joseph Smith The Prophet of the Restoration* was released December 17, 2005, in time for the 200th anniversary of the Prophet's birthday.

A Prophet's Life

The 65-minute film depicts events from Joseph Smith's life, beginning with his youth in Vermont and ending with his Martyrdom in Illinois at age 38. It helps members and others to become acquainted with Joseph Smith as a man of character, said Ron Munns, the film's producer.

Elder Ronald T. Halverson of the Quorum of the Seventy, an assistant executive director in the Audiovisual Department, said the film's portrayal of the Prophet Joseph's character, difficulties, and accomplishments will encourage viewers to

learn "more in-depth of the Prophet so that their testimony is not shallow, but very solid." He feels that everyone who views the film will be affected. "There is a spiritual impact to the film. You can't know of the Prophet Joseph and not be changed."

"We're trying to really give a feeling for the Prophet Joseph Smith in perhaps a different way than he's been viewed in the past—not only his prophetic persona, but his personal life and the trials he had to endure," said Lyle Shamo, managing director of the Audiovisual Department.

There are several life lessons that can be learned from Joseph Smith's example, Brother Munns said. For instance, the way Joseph handled adversity and the way he fulfilled his life's mission

are applicable for all lives and circumstances.

"Joseph was totally dedicated, and he didn't always get a fair shake with things," Brother Munns said. "In his life came a lot of adversity, right from the beginning. And yet Joseph was not deterred in his quest for truth and for his desire to do what Heavenly Father wanted him to do."

Playing the Prophet

After an extensive nationwide search for a temple-worthy member to represent the Prophet, Nathan Mitchell, who previously played the adult Joseph in the recent Church film *The Restoration*, was again chosen to play the role of the Prophet. Two other actors played the role of Joseph at age seven and as a teenager.

After receiving the role, Brother Mitchell was struck by a line from the hymn "Praise to the Man" (*Hymns*, no. 27): "Millions shall know 'Brother Joseph' again."

"I realized that if this film is to be one of the means by which millions come to know the Prophet, then first I had to know him," Brother Mitchell said.

He began extensive research of Joseph Smith's character by reading books and Joseph's journals and papers and by speaking with Church history professors and others.

"My feelings about the Prophet Joseph are so special to me that I wanted to do him justice," he said. "I just hope that the audience can have some of those same realizations and that they can



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE

Nathan Mitchell portrays Joseph Smith in the recently released movie about the Prophet.

start to understand Joseph. Then they will begin to understand his love of the Savior, and they will really feel his testimony.”

Making the Movie

The Lord was mindful of the production of this film, Brother Munns said, citing instances when snow seemed to come on cue or when rain may not have been planned for a particular scene but made it better.

Throughout the filming process, the Spirit was present, said Brother Munns. He said it was often obvious that the Lord enhanced the talents of the cast and crew.

Brother Munns said the consecrated efforts of hundreds went into the production. The movie’s director, Gary Cook, was also the principal screenwriter. T. C. Christensen was the codirector and director of photography. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the Orchestra at Temple Square, and Church composers Merrill Jensen and Arlen Card also combined their talents in a powerful way for the film’s soundtrack, Brother Munns said.

The movie was filmed at the LDS Motion Picture Studio in Provo, Utah; on location at Church history sites in New York and in Nauvoo, Illinois; in a historical village in Canada; and along the Mississippi River in Michigan.

Initially, the film will be offered in five languages in addition to English.

Admission to the movie is free, but advance reservations will be required. Online reservations will be accepted at

www.lds.org/events. Telephone reservation requests will be taken at 1-866-LDS-TIKS (1-866-537-8457, toll-free in the U.S.) or at 570-0080 (local calls in the greater Salt Lake City area). ■

Atmit to the Rescue

When the Church received a request from Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in August 2005 to help send aid to Niger, an African nation facing major food shortages because of crop-devastating locust attacks and severe drought, the Church responded immediately with its largest ever air shipment of Atmit. The Church provided 80,000 pounds (36 tonnes) of the specialized porridge made for those suffering from severe malnourishment. Since then, subsequent shipments have been made and will continue according to need.

In Ethiopian, *atmit* means “thin, nourishing porridge.” The Church began using Atmit as a life-saving food supplement during the Ethiopian famine of 2003. It is an easily assimilated food made especially for children and the elderly—and it has saved tens of thousands of lives. It contains 50 percent fine oatmeal flour, 25 percent nonfat milk, 20 percent sugar, and 5 percent vitamins and minerals. After Church representatives received the formula in Ethiopia, they took it to nutritionists at Brigham Young University to optimize

the nutritional value. The Church began manufacturing Atmit in 2003 and since then has produced almost 1,500 tons (1350 tonnes) at the Church’s Welfare Services dairy processing facility in Salt Lake City.

During that time, Atmit has been distributed to Uganda, Sudan, South Africa, Haiti, Gaza, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka.

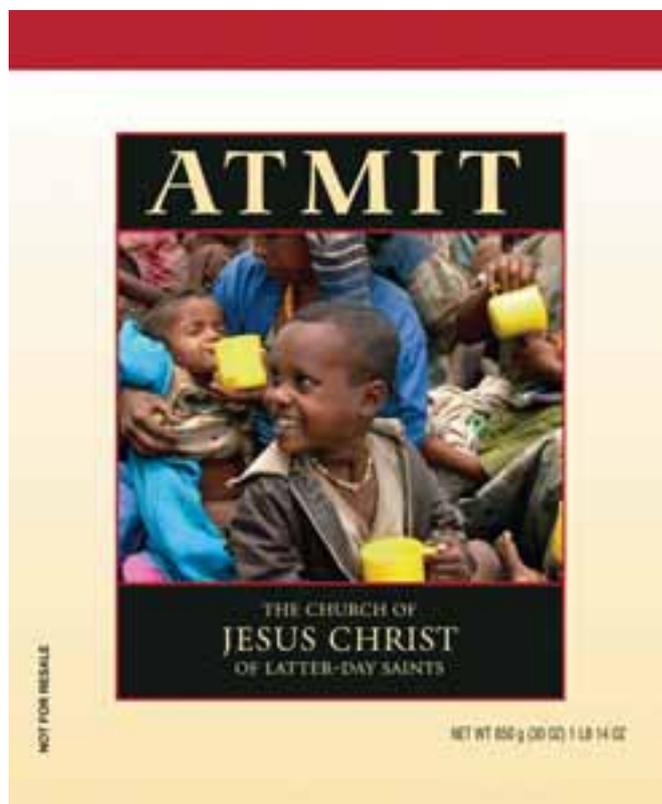
Children are particularly susceptible to malnourishment, as their young bodies have not yet been able to store a reserve of nutrients. For that reason, Atmit is given specifically to children age five and younger.

Mothers bring children in to be measured and weighed to determine whether they are malnourished enough to

benefit from the product. The mother is taught how to prepare the porridge and how to administer it periodically throughout the day. After a week, the child is brought in again and assessed.

“We find that within three to four weeks some children really respond,” said the director of Humanitarian Emergency Response for the Church, Garry Flake, who visited hard-hit areas of Niger in late August 2005. “For others it takes longer. Our goal is to feed them just long enough with this supplement that they can then get back to the type of food the rest of the family is eating.”

As part of a scheduled trip to Africa, Brother Flake made a stop in Niger to witness the distribution of the Atmit. “It



Atmit is a nutritional supplement produced by the Church to save the lives of the severely malnourished.

was a very sobering experience to see malnourished children, but an uplifting feeling to realize the Church is there so quickly with such an effective product that has now been proven to make a difference for so many children," he said.

Brother Flake said: "This

intervention with the Atmit nutritional supplement has to be one of the finest humanitarian interventions that we do in the world. I think it is really what the Savior would have done—to help these children who are so malnourished to live a happy, normal life." ■

New DVD Reaches Out to Members in the Military

A new DVD, *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled: A Message of Peace for Latter-day Saints in Military Service*, has recently been released for members of the Church serving in their countries' armed forces. The DVD addresses the spiritual and emotional difficulties that confront military personnel, including the difficult separation from family, the challenging atmosphere of military life, and the emotional burden that accompanies combat.

The DVD, released in September 2005 and distributed to priesthood leaders and chaplains in English-speaking areas, contains remarks by President Gordon B. Hinckley and President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. It also includes messages given during a fireside for members of the military by Elder Robert C. Oaks of the Presidency of the Seventy and Elder Lance B. Wickman of the Seventy. Both men drew on their own military experiences.

"We are all indebted to those of you who serve,"



President Hinckley said on the DVD. "You have taken upon yourselves an obligation that frequently requires great sacrifice. Whether you serve in combat or in a support role, your life is not your own. You have given your allegiance to the nation of which you are citizens. We commend you for your willingness to do so."

Elder Oaks quoted President Hinckley, who remarked about some individuals' quest for peace but also their obligation to fight for their governments. "I believe that God will not hold men and women in uniform responsible as agents of their government in carrying forward that which they are legally obligated to do," President Hinckley said.

Elder Oaks warned: "Never become too comfortable in

this role of warrior, even though the war must indeed be fought. War has a frightening ability to numb our Christian sensitivities."

The messages on the DVD help to assure servicemen and women that the gospel will bring them the peace sufficient for them to handle their burdens.

Elder Wickman said the Book of Mormon is a source of perspective and spiritual strength and pointed out how in the Book of Mormon some of the most righteous, noble figures are soldiers who serve as role models for the latter days.

He pointed out that with a righteous foundation, the honorable warriors in the Book of Mormon had enhanced strength and insight. "[The Book of Mormon] tells us that service on the battlefield in time of war does not by itself remove one from the ranks of the righteous," Elder Wickman said. "Mormon and Moroni saw and participated in a carnage so widespread and terrible that the experiences you and I have had pale in comparison. . . . They were soldiers because they had to be, because their people needed them, because it was the right thing to do. Is not that also the case with you, my beloved friends?"

Elder Wickman advised those who are in the armed forces not to get caught up in the politics of war. "Do not despair because there are some who question the righteousness of the cause in which you are enlisted to fight and for which you may sacrifice so much," he said. "The Lord

will find a way eventually to turn the course of political events to his purposes."

Although young men and women involved in military service are in a challenging position, President Hinckley said they are also in a position of influence and honor. "Your effort to live the gospel can do wonders," he said. "You can influence others to change their ways and improve their lives, and you will be blessed in the process."

The speakers encouraged members to stay worthy and keep the Spirit by clinging to their scriptures, by attending church services regularly, by praying frequently, and by attending the temple whenever possible.

"Even in seasons of conflict, the gospel is a message of peace and love," President Hinckley said. "It is a comfort and a strength, even in circumstances where man's inhumanity to man is plainly evident."

"[War] is dreadful," Frank Clawson, director of Military Relations for the Church, told the Church magazines while explaining the reasons for creating the DVD. "Anyone who has a sensitive heart and knowledge of God and Christ wants to know how war and their participation in it affects their status with God."

Brother Clawson said he thinks the DVD brings a great deal of comfort for those involved with the armed forces. "I think that often our emotional and spiritual sensitivities are harmed during war, and I think this video will help [those so affected] to reconnect with God." ■

Cultural Arts and Music Submissions Deadlines Approaching

The deadline for members of the Church to submit uplifting musical and theatrical works is only a few months away. Music submissions are due on March 31, 2006, and cultural arts submissions are due on April 1, 2006.

Accordinging to the Music and Cultural Arts Division of the Priesthood Department, the purpose of the submission program is threefold: to encourage members to develop their talents, to recognize the ability of members to seek and create music and scripts that are wholesome and uplifting, and to encourage members to express

themselves in a manner that conveys their gratitude for and testimonies of the gospel.

Music Submissions

The submission system provides a way for musical works to be evaluated regularly. Each year, about 50 musical works are recognized through this evaluation process. Of those, some are recognized on the Church music Web site, and others are sent on to the Church magazines for possible publication. Each author retains the copyright to the musical piece and is sent a letter regarding the status of his or her work.

Selected musical works are presented during one of two events. The Relief Society entries are presented in the Relief Society Music Festival, held in the Assembly Hall on Temple Square each October. All remaining selected entries are presented in the Church Music Festival each February.

Music submission guidelines can be found by visiting www.lds.org/churchmusic and clicking on "Share your musical talents."

Cultural Arts Submissions

In November 2005 the Cultural Arts Submission Presentation took place for the first time at the Assembly Hall on Temple Square. A cast of actors representing members of any ward or branch showcased excerpts from selected scripts. The presentation will continue as an

annual event. Some scripts may be selected for distribution through the Church's distribution centers.

Scripts may be dramas, comedies, musicals, readers' theaters, oratorios, or even poetry. The scripts should be suitable for ward/branch or stake/district use, be a minimum of one act long, teach gospel principles in uplifting ways, be doctrinally correct, and be Church-oriented and accurate if historically based. Submissions are welcome in all languages.

Submissions should include:

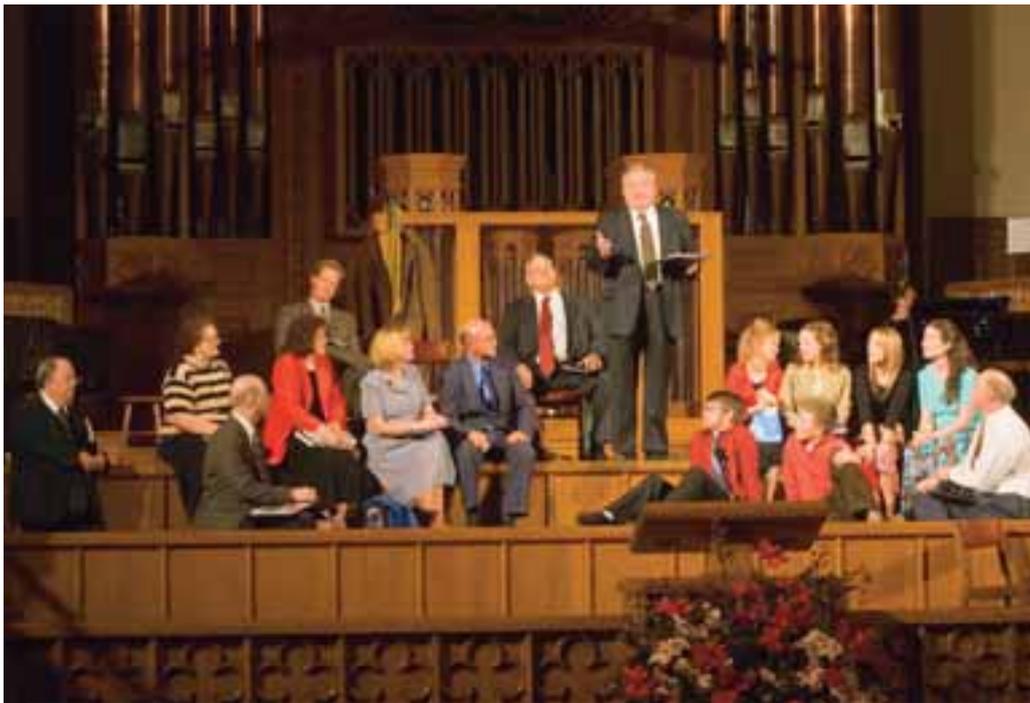
1. Two copies of the script and any applicable music on 8 1/2 x 11 inch (22 x 28 cm) paper.

2. A statement signed by all contributors that says, "The work submitted, entitled _____, is my original work, is owned by me, and conforms to the submission rules."

3. A cover letter with the piece's title; author's name, address, phone number, and e-mail address; central theme; synopsis; and cast requirements.

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

Send submissions to: Church Theatrical Script Submission, 50 East North Temple Street, Room 2082, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84150-6070, USA. For more information, call 1-801-240-6492. ■



Actors representing members of a typical ward perform one of several theatrical works presented at the Assembly Hall on Temple Square.



The temple Web site has information in four languages on each temple's history and schedule.

Church Offers Temple Information Online

By Chad Phares, Church Magazines

Along with the world-wide boom in temple construction that the Church has seen in the last decade, a surge has also occurred in the use of technology. The growth of temples and technology together has allowed the Church to fill a need through the creation of a section of the Church's Web site devoted to temples.

By visiting www.lds.org/temples or clicking on the "Temples" link on www.lds.org, visitors may access resources that explain the importance of temples, list schedules for each temple, and give locations and directions.

The "Temples" link was created in the beginning of 2002 to better fulfill three purposes. First, the Web site allows Church members to access an official source of temple information. Second,

the site emphasizes the importance of temples within the Church as well as in the lives of its members. Third, it assists in encouraging temple ordinance participation by providing information that is easy to access.

The site can be useful for people who want to learn more about temples or simply check the schedule of a temple they want to visit.

In addition to allowing visitors to find general information about the temples, the site offers users an opportunity to read brief background information on each temple, view photos of completed temples, and even review the progress made on temples under construction by seeing photos throughout the construction process.

Visitors to the site may view a chronological list of all completed temples along

with dates when the temples were dedicated. A world map allows users to click on an area of the world to see which temples have been announced or completed.

In addition to English, the site is available in Spanish, German, and Portuguese. The site is updated when new information is announced or becomes available. A feedback link is also available to visitors.

In addition to addressing the needs of members, the site also caters to members of other faiths who may have questions about the temple. The Frequently Asked Questions page answers questions concerning the functions of temples, what temples are like inside, the differences between temples and meetinghouses, and other questions that may be helpful to members of other faiths. ■

Digitizing Church History

By Walter Cooley,
Church Magazines

While Church historians, archivists, and librarians plan for a new Church History Library in Salt Lake City, they also face another task—transitioning into a digital age in which information from libraries and archives is stored and accessed without physical walls.

In 1995, as users began to use the Internet more widely, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described the future of storing information online: "This is an age of digital information. Our computers have become windows through which we can gaze upon a world that is virtually without horizons or boundaries. Literally at the click of a button, we can browse through the digitized libraries of universities, museums, government agencies, and research institutions located throughout the world" ("Windows of Light and Truth," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 75).

The Church has already begun to use the Internet to increase access to its library, museum, and archives for people all over the world. Information previously available only in Salt Lake City can now be found online through interpreted and database Web sites.

Interpreted Sites

While many historians and archivists digitize millions of pages of documents, the Church's digitizing efforts are more targeted. Steven Olsen, associate managing director of Church history in the Family and Church History Department, said the Church digitizes documents and information to be packaged around a theme and posted online in what are called interpreted sites.

Brother Olsen said interpreted sites help members find useful information by the way the sites are organized. "For someone who is not versed in historical research, an interpreted site helps him or her get information much quicker," he explains.

Two recent examples of interpreted sites are www.josephsmith.net, a new Web site about Joseph Smith, and "Rembrandt: The Biblical Etchings," an online exhibit from the Museum of Church History and Art.

Brother Olsen said [josephsmith.net](http://www.josephsmith.net) includes the most reliable information about the Prophet's life and ministry. Visitors can view information by theme or go to the resource center to find a specific fact, quotation, painting, photograph, or virtual tour listed under one of 26 topics.

The site was launched in mid-July 2005 with more than 10,000 visitors viewing its pages on the first day. The site currently averages almost 2,500 visitors per day.

"Rembrandt: The Biblical Etchings" is the 10th online exhibit created by the Museum of Church History

and Art. Robert Davis, senior museum curator, said online exhibits increase the number of visitors who can view the museum's collections beyond the almost 400,000 museum visitors in Salt Lake City each year. He said online exhibits are of most benefit to members living outside the United States, who may never have the opportunity to visit.

"The farther away you get from Utah, the harder it is to come to the museum," said Brother Davis. "But you can see what the Church is about through these sites."

Database Sites

Interpreted sites are only the beginning of attempts to use the Internet to increase access, Brother Olsen said. The Church also uses database sites to display historical records online.

An online index from the Church History Library shows the differences between a database site and interpreted site.

The *Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, 1847-1868 Index* contains the names of individuals and companies that crossed the plains between 1847 and 1868. Unlike an interpreted site, the index displays a catalog of information. The index includes a search engine and displays information contained within the collection. Unlike an interpreted site, an index is not typically designed to preselect information around a theme.

Online database sites are tools that can be used for a variety of reasons, including research and family history. Familysearch.org is a database

Web site that includes a search engine for census, vital records, and international genealogical indexes.

Preserving History

Interpreted sites and database sites help librarians and historians increase access for patrons. They also help archivists preserve original documents. When these documents are digitized and made available online, they are handled less frequently, extending the life of the original document.

Creating digital documents isn't without challenges. Every

10 years, advancing technology dictates that digitized documents be moved to a more current electronic medium. However, archivists and librarians agree that increasing access to members throughout the world is worth the trade-off.

"Clearly we recognize that the Church's library, archives, and museum have extraordinary resources that can bless the lives of members and others around the world," said Brother Olsen. "We recognize the Internet is going to be the means to accomplish wider access for members." ■

Hispanic Saints Gather at Family History Conference

By Adam C. Olson, Church Magazines

Close to 200 Hispanic Latter-day Saints gathered at the Church's Family History Library on October 15, 2005, for the eighth annual Hispanic Family History Conference.

The conference, cohosted by the BYU Center for Family History and Genealogy and Legado Latino, is held each year to help Hispanic members learn what resources the Church has made available to them and help them conquer any fears that keep them from doing their family history.

"The Church has put a lot of effort into providing family history resources," said Carlos Alvarez, president of Legado Latino. "But many people don't

know anything about what's available to them at the library, Family History Centers, or on the Internet. We try to



José Sanchez teaches Hispanic members how to prepare names using TempleReady.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM C. OLSON

be a bridge to show them what's available."

Brother Alvarez said it is important for members to understand that they don't have to live in Salt Lake City to have access to Church family history resources.

"Family History Centers are critical to the Church's family history program. If I can get to a Family History Center, I'll find missionaries or members trained to be consultants, printers, and film readers. They help with the equipment, Internet access, and the Church's FamilySearch™ and TempleReady programs, and they have the ability to request microfilm from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City that I can keep for up to three months."

Members who attended the conference could find classes on how to prepare names for TempleReady, how to use a census, how to use Personal Ancestral File, what is available on the Internet, how to interest youth in family history, how to use civil records, and how to breathe life into family histories.

The Family History Library maintains the world's largest repository of genealogical resources with vital records from more than 110 countries. There are more than 4,000 branches of the library, called Family History Centers, in more than 70 countries.

"I really believe that by knowing where we came from, we gain a sense of who we are. And that means something," said Brother Alvarez. ■

Call for Articles

Are you living away from home for the first time? Or have you lived with roommates for several years as a student or young professional? Random Sampler would like to hear your best tips for living with roommates, as well as other ideas that have helped you successfully branch out on your own.

Please send your submission (300 words or less) by March 15, 2006, to ensign@ldschurch.org or to Ensign

Editorial, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84150-3220, USA. Clearly mark your submission "Living Away from Home," and at the top of your submission, write your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, 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. If you would like your manuscript returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and allow up to a year. ■

Comment

Only the Lord Knows

The article "Not Enough for Tithing" in the October 2005 *Ensign* touched my heart and caused me to remember an experience I had several years ago when I served as bishop in our ward. A family came in to see me. They placed on my desk a sheet of paper showing their total income and their total expenses. These totaled themselves out. But their list of expenses did not include tithing. So I challenged them to pay tithing.

Much later they returned to my office. There had not been an increase in their income. Their total bills were still the same. Added to their list, however, was tithing. To this day, neither they nor I can tell how they managed it. Only the Lord knows.

George H. London
California

False Beliefs about Mental Illness

Thank you so much for your article "Myths about Mental Illness" by Elder Alexander B. Morrison in the October issue. As one who has experienced bouts of depression over the years, I am grateful for this clear explanation of false beliefs about mental illness among members of the Church and the offering of helpful, correct information. Some of my family members have harbored similarly incomplete understandings, which have created complications during my times of distress. I appreciate that this difficult topic was addressed in such a compassionate manner.
Name Withheld

Sticking with the New Era

I was reading through the *Ensign* one day when I came across "A Look at the *New*

Era" (October 2005). It was of the story of a girl who wanted to buy a teen magazine that all the girls in school were reading, but she decided not to because she realized that her joy and happiness came from the *New Era*. Earlier that week my sister and I had thought about buying a teen magazine because we thought it would be fun to see all the stars and the styles, but as I read the article I knew this was my answer. I shouldn't buy the magazine and waste my money. Instead, I should read the *New Era* more often and be filled with its joy and happiness. I would like to thank the girl who sent you her story and tell her that she made a big impact on my life. Thank you so much. I always look forward to getting the *Ensign* and the *New Era* every month.

Sami S.
Arizona

Teaching with the Spirit

Thank you for the September 2005 article "Teaching the Gospel with Power." The principles of teaching with the Spirit outlined by Brother Roylance were explained so beautifully, and as I have enjoyed being a teacher in various Church positions over the years, I identified with many of them. On a personal note, I had the privilege to attend several classes taught by Brother Roylance at the San Diego State College Institute, and they changed my life. It was wonderful to have those familiar feelings again as I read this article.
Bonnie Northcutt
Utah



MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

J A N U A R Y 2 0 0 6

What We Owe Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve faced a most important decision: to partake or not to partake. One choice would have thwarted God's plan for His children. The other opened "the door to bring you and me and everyone else into this world." To read more about "Adam's Role in Bringing Us Mortality," see this month's Gospel Classic by President Joseph Fielding Smith, page 52.

For Newlyweds and Future Mothers

How can newlyweds develop appropriate relationships with their parents and yet establish their own independent family? For counsel that can help in forging strong relationships, see "For Newlyweds and Their Parents," page 27.

Some newly married women may be wary about having children because of common myths and misconceptions perpetrated in the media and in society in general. "The Joyful Surprise of Motherhood" dispels several of these myths. See page 54.

Choices, Choices

One of the greatest gifts Heavenly Father has given us is the gift of agency. "Correctly used," writes Elder Donald L. Hallstrom of the Seventy, "moral agency enables us to overcome obstacles, develop the characteristics of godliness, and qualify for eternal life." See page 8.

Young adults face many important decisions—whom to marry, what career to pursue, how much education to obtain, whether or not to serve a mission. How do you make sure you're making the right decision? See page 12 for some ideas to help.

Feeling Inadequate in Your Calling?

Have you ever received a calling and felt like Moses? "Who am I, that

I should go unto Pharaoh?" he asked the Lord. Bishop Richard C. Edgley teaches us that we can receive divine help in our callings, even as Moses did. See page 46.

Sheila Kindred learned through accepting callings—and turning one down—that the Lord gives us callings not just so we can serve but also so He can bless us in specific ways. See her story, "Blessed by My Callings," on page 44.

"This Is Our Day"

"The work that began with a humble plowboy in 1820 is not yet finished," says Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "This is our day, it is our time, it is our turn to put our shoulders to the grand wheel that was set in motion nearly 200 years ago." To read more about the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith, see page 32.

Improve Your Teaching

In "A Lesson That Changed My Life," members from around the world tell how teachers touched their lives. See page 58.

see "Wilford Woodruff: Contending for the Faith," page 20.

The Nature of the Godhead

The first in a series of short articles about basic doctrines of the restored gospel



The Nature of the Godhead, p. 50

examines the nature of the Godhead and our relationship to Them. See page 50.

Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 65.

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Wilford Woodruff

The course of study this year for Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society focuses on the teachings of one of this dispensation's greatest missionaries. To read about President Wilford Woodruff's life and teachings,



Elder Wilford Woodruff, by Filippo Pistrucci

While a missionary in London, 33-year-old Wilford Woodruff responded to his wife Phoebe's request to get his "portrait taken." He wrote, "I took my last Sitting for my Portrait with Mr Pistrucci. He says it is an exact likeness." Recently restored, it is the earliest known image of Wilford Woodruff.



Adam did only what he had to do. He partook of that fruit for one good reason, and that was to open the door to bring you and me and everyone else into this world. . . . I want to thank him. I am glad to have the privilege of being here and going through mortality, and if I will be true and faithful to the covenants and obligations that are upon me as a member of the Church and in the kingdom of God, I may have the privilege of coming back into the presence of the Eternal Father.” See President Joseph Fielding Smith, “Adam’s Role in Bringing Us Mortality,” p. 52.