

TOO BUSY

TO SHARE
THE
GOSPEL?

BY DONNA PIKE JONES

I thought we had no time for missionary work, but my husband knew better.

As our young family was preparing our home for sale and a move out of state, our stake presidency issued a request to all members to pray each evening to find families for the missionaries to teach. I dismissed the invitation, thinking that it did not apply to us since we were moving so soon. My husband did not share my doubts. Each evening he gathered us together amid the chaos of moving boxes and wet paint, and we prayed to find a family ready to accept the gospel.

Many times during those prayers I questioned why my husband continued to pray for missionary opportunities. Didn't he understand how busy our life was? We were caring for our four young children and packing for a move that was less than two weeks away. Didn't he realize that we just didn't have time to meet and then fellowship a family during this stressful move?

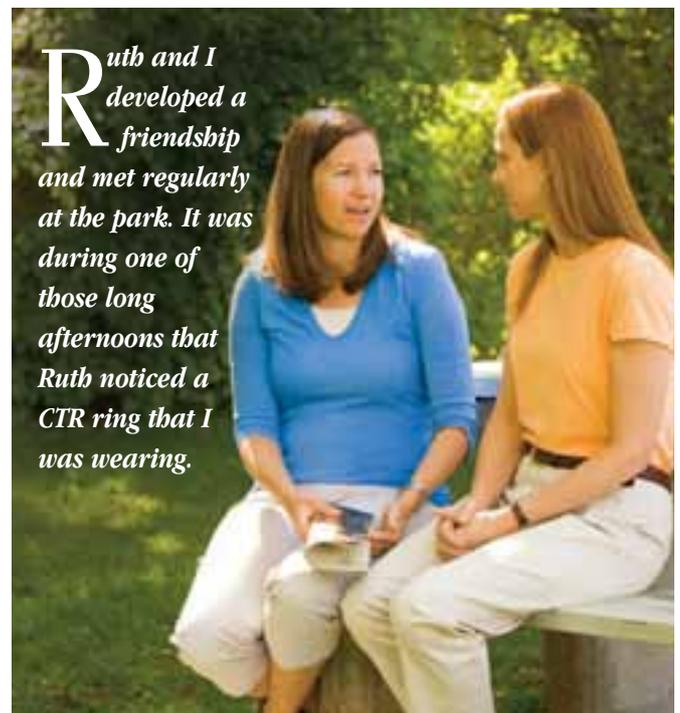
What I did not realize was just how much time Heavenly Father was going to give us. Right on schedule my husband started his new job out of state and 10 hours away, while I was left with the children and a house to sell. Unfortunately, it did not sell according to our schedule, and his temporary apartment was too small for our family.

Days turned into weeks as our family waited in limbo for our house to sell. I began to spend long afternoons at the park with the children to break the monotony of our days. It was there that my children and I met Dale, Ruth, and their daughter, Hannah. Soon Ruth and I developed a friendship and met regularly at the park. It was during one of those long afternoons that Ruth noticed a CTR ring that I was wearing. She told me that she and her family had been investigating the Church but had stopped attending. We talked openly about the gospel that day, and the following day at the park I brought *Ensign* articles and the invitation to come to church again.

I remember feeling bold and directed as I answered her questions and bore testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel. I also remember feeling worried that maybe I was

pushing too much, that maybe I would harm our new friendship if I talked too much about the Church. Then I remembered my husband's prayers and knew they were being answered. This family was so prepared. Many afternoons I would come home from the park feeling as if I had learned much more from Ruth than she could have possibly gained from me.

Dale and Ruth were baptized a few months later as our family continued to wait for our house to sell. During those months I felt privileged to be a witness to this family's conversion. I was able to witness their recognition of the Spirit, the growth of their testimonies, and the love of our ward members as they accepted and nurtured this family. Our family also gained friendships for life. I felt very grateful that Heavenly Father answered our family prayers even though I had doubted. I found new meaning in the Lord's admonition, "Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not" (D&C 6:36). ■



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