

THE GOOD PEOPLE OF ST. GEORGE

When I was about 12 years old, I saw a Church movie that showed President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) praying for Latter-day Saints in St. George, Utah, USA, who were suffering from severe drought.

“Lord,” President Snow prayed, “bless the good people of St. George.”

That phrase, “the good people of St. George,” left a lasting impression on my young mind. Since I lived in Chile, I tried to imagine what kind of faithful Saints “the good people of St. George” must be. I wanted to meet them.

More than 30 years later, in 2005, my family and I took our second son to Provo, Utah, to join his brother, who was studying at Brigham Young University. The evening after we arrived, I said, “I want to go see the good people of St. George.”

“But, Papá,” my oldest son protested, “St. George is far away.”

“Look,” I replied, “Papá paid for the plane tickets. Papá is paying for the food. Papá is paying for the gas. Papá wants only one thing for himself. He wants to meet the good people of St. George!”

“OK,” my son said after he realized I was serious.

The next day we made the 260-mile (418 km) drive. After arriving in St. George, we went to the visitors’ center at the temple and toured the winter home of President Brigham Young (1801–77). We also visited the tabernacle, where I was invited to speak to my family for a minute from the same pulpit where President Snow had addressed “the good people of St. George.” We walked around the city, watching and meeting people. They seemed like normal, faithful Latter-day Saints.

I was happy we went. But when

we returned to Chile, I realized something: I had seen “the good people of St. George” before.

Because of my work and my Church callings, I have traveled throughout Chile. In Calama, I have seen young adults who strive to keep the commandments. In La Serena, I have seen dedicated parents who arrive early with their children for Church meetings. In Antofagasta, I have seen Latter-day Saints who fight for what is right every day. In Vallenar, Copiapó, Caldera, Tocopilla, and other cities, I have seen members who get on their knees to pray and then move forward even when things aren’t easy.

When I see faithful Latter-day Saints who obey and endure—no matter where they live or what challenges they confront—I say to myself, “These are the good people of St. George.” ■ Claudio Gonzalez, Antofagasta, Chile

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