

Once heard a friend say he did not need to go to church to be a good person. He was satisfied that he was living a good life without church. He *was* a good person—as are many others I know who choose not to attend. But his statement festered in my mind for a long time. After all, I knew attending church *did* help me. Only later would I understand more clearly—through one of my hobbies—just how important Sabbath worship really is.

Those who know me know that I sew a lot. But every now and then I make a mistake and need to undo the stitching. To do this, I rely on a seam ripper, a sharp pointed instrument that unpicks stitches. Because I've used this tool many times, I have found faster ways of undoing stitches. Instead of ripping each individual stitch out of a seam, I can unpick one stitch every five to ten stitches. Then when I apply just the right amount of pressure, the whole seam rips apart.

On pondering this method of removing seams, I began to see how this process parallels life. The stitches that hold our lives together are the little things we do each day; they are the commandments we strive to keep all the time, like going to church, paying tithing, and saying family prayers. Satan doesn't have to tempt us to disobey all of the commandments at once. He doesn't need to rip each stitch out; he just has to unpick one of every five to ten stitches and apply the right amount of pressure. With these stitches missing and the strains of life pulling, it's hard to stay connected to the gospel.

# Reinforcing Our Seams

BY JESSICA J. CARRIER

*Every added stitch of obedience makes us stronger in a world that seems to be unraveling.*

Of course we don't have to yield to these pressures. There is hope. When I want to reinforce a seam, I sew over it more than once. This ensures that if pressure is applied, the seam will stay intact.

Likewise, when we keep the commandments over and over again, we are reinforcing our seams. When the inevitable pressures of life pull as hard as they can, we—and our testimonies—remain intact.

It's true that active members of the Church don't have a monopoly on good qualities, but attending church is one of the many commandments

that reinforce us and help us fight the pressures of this world. It strengthens us in righteousness, brings us closer to the Savior, and makes us better prepared to serve Him. ■

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE KROPP