

REACHING OUT TO ANNA

Some years ago, I taught the six-year-olds in Primary. Anna was listed on my roll. I knew the family well enough to know that her parents had separated and she lived with her father. They rarely came to church.

I stopped by the house to meet Anna and her father and to invite Anna to Primary. Anna seemed interested, but she never came. Every Sunday morning for weeks, I called her home to invite her to Primary. No one ever answered the phone, but I always left a message telling Anna how happy I would be to see her in Primary.

One Sunday morning, Anna was there. Her father had helped her get ready for Primary in her best Sunday dress and then he dropped her off at the church. Happy to see her, I welcomed her and helped her get to know the other children in the class.

We had our lesson, sang songs, and had a coloring activity at the end of class. As the children were leaving, Anna came to me and dropped a crumpled piece of paper in my hands. At first, I thought it was trash. I was about to throw it away, but the Spirit prompted me to unfold it. Anna had written me a note on the paper. In a six-year-old's handwriting, it said, "I love you."

Anna didn't know me enough to love me. All she knew of me was a voice on her answering machine inviting her to Primary. But that small

effort to reach out to her helped Anna know that someone cared about her and wanted to help her feel the Savior's love.

I saw Anna in Primary once in a while and her father began coming to church occasionally as well. But when circumstances changed again for their family, we didn't see them as often.

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I have thought about Anna over the years. With all my heart I hope she remembers her time in Primary. She may remember some of what she learned, but I hope far more that she remembers feeling the love of the Lord, the comfort of the Spirit, and the love of a teacher. ■

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