

Ensign

President James E.
Faust: In Memoriam
Insert

COVER STORY

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the Temple,
p. 18

Strengthening
Our Children, p. 12

Helps for Learning
from Conference,
p. 30





The House of the World, by Minerva Teichert

“And I also cast my eyes round about, and beheld, on the other side of the river of water; a great and spacious building; and it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth” (1 Nephi 8:26).

“And it came to pass that I saw and bear record, that the great and spacious building was the pride of the world” (1 Nephi 11:36).

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OCTOBER 2007
VOLUME 37 • NUMBER 10



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Front: Photograph by Lauren Fochetto, posed by models.
Back (photographs clockwise from left): Seoul Korea Temple by Floyd Holdman, Copenhagen Denmark Temple and angel Moroni by Craig Dimond, Accra Ghana Temple by Norman Childs, Washington D.C. Temple by Christina Smith.



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We also welcome other submissions. See our links **Do You Have a Story to Tell?** and **Ensign Magazine Writers' Guidelines** at <http://ensign.lds.org>.

Send submissions to ensign@ldschurch.org or Ensign Editorial, 50 E. North Temple Street, Room 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA. Include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, ward (or branch), and stake (or district). Because of the volume of submissions, we cannot acknowledge receipt. Authors whose work is selected for publication will be notified. If you would like your manuscript, photos, art, or other material returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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Ensign

AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH
OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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To subscribe: By phone, call 1-800-537-5971 to order using Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, or American Express.

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Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431



USING THIS ISSUE

Preparing for the temple.

Several articles in this issue focus on the blessings of the temple (see pp. 18, 23, 26, and 64). Consider recording your feelings as you have prepared for your own temple experiences.

Continuing conference.

After reading "Learning from Conference" (p. 30), consider how some of these approaches could affect your family home evenings and personal study. What other ways might you effectively bring the spirit of general conference into your life?

Visiting the sites. You might not have known about the Tomlinson Inn in Palmyra, New York (p. 56), and perhaps you'd like to learn about other places of historical significance. To get more information and to find Church history sites near you, visit www.lds.org. Select **About the Church** and then **Places to Visit**.



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They Marked the Path to Follow

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Many years ago I marveled at the cover of one of our Church publications which featured a magnificent reproduction of a Carl Bloch painting. The scene which the artist captured in his mind and then—with a touch of the Master's hand—transferred to canvas depicted Elisabeth, wife of Zacharias, welcoming Mary, the mother of Jesus. Both were to bear sons—miracle births.

The son born of Elisabeth became known as John the Baptist. As with Jesus, son of Mary, so with John—precious little is recorded of their years of youth. A single sentence tells us all that we know of John's life from his birth to his public ministry: "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."¹

John's message was brief. He preached faith, repentance, baptism by immersion, and the bestowal of the Holy Ghost by an authority greater than that possessed by himself. "I am not the Christ," he told his faithful disciples, "but . . . I am sent before him."² "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh . . . : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."³

Then occurred the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist. Later Jesus testified, "Among

them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist."⁴

All of us need points of reference—even models to follow. John the Baptist provides for us a flawless example of unfeigned humility, as he deferred always to the One who was to come—the Savior of mankind.

Models of Faith

Learning of others who trusted God and followed His teachings whispers to our souls, "Be still, and know that I am God."⁵ As they resolutely kept His commandments and trusted in Him, they were blessed. When we follow their examples, we too will be similarly blessed in our day. Each one becomes a model to follow.

All of us love the beautiful account from the Holy Bible of Abraham and Isaac. How exceedingly difficult it must have been for Abraham, in obedience to God's command, to take his beloved Isaac into the land of Moriah, there to present him as a burnt offering. Can you imagine the heaviness of his heart as he gathered the wood for the fire and journeyed to the appointed place? Surely pain must have racked his body and tortured his mind as he "bound Isaac . . . and laid him on the altar upon the wood.



Learning of others who trusted God and followed His teachings whispers to our souls, "Be still, and know that I am God." When we follow their examples, we too will be similarly blessed in our day. Each one becomes a model to follow.

Noah had the unwavering faith to follow God's commandments. May we ever do likewise. The greatest lesson we can learn in mortality is that when God speaks and we obey, we will always be right.

"And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." How glorious was the pronouncement and with what wondered welcome did it come: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."⁶

Abraham qualifies as a model of unquestioning obedience.

If any of us feels our challenges are beyond our capacity to meet them, let us read of Job. By so doing, there comes the feeling, "If Job could endure and overcome, so will I."

Job was a "perfect and upright" man who "feared God, and eschewed evil."⁷ Pious in his conduct, prosperous in his fortune, Job was

heaven, and my record is on high."⁹ "I know that my redeemer liveth."¹⁰

Job became a model of unlimited patience. To this day we refer to those who are long-suffering as having the patience of Job. He provides an example for us to follow.

To Obey and to Live

"A just man and perfect in his generations," one who "walked with God,"¹¹ was the prophet Noah. Ordained to the priesthood at an early age, "he became a preacher of righteousness and declared the gospel of Jesus Christ, . . . teaching faith, repentance, baptism, and the reception of the Holy Ghost."¹² He warned that failure to heed his message would bring floods upon those who heard his voice, and yet they

hearkened not to his words.

Noah heeded God's command to build an ark that he and his family might be spared destruction. He followed God's instructions to gather into the ark two or more of every living creature that they also might be saved from the floodwaters.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught in general conference more than half a century ago: "As yet there was no evidence of rain and flood. . . . [Noah's] warnings were considered irrational. . . . How foolish to build an ark on dry ground with the sun shining and life

moving forward as usual! But time ran out. . . . The floods came. The disobedient . . . were drowned. The miracle of the ark followed the faith manifested in its building."¹³

Noah had the unwavering faith to follow God's commandments. May we ever do likewise. May we remember that the wisdom of



to face a test which could have destroyed anyone. Shorn of his possessions, scorned by his friends, afflicted by his suffering, shattered by the loss of his family, he was urged to "curse God, and die."⁸ He resisted this temptation and declared from the depths of his noble soul, "Behold, my witness is in

God oftentimes appears as foolishness to men; but the greatest lesson we can learn in mortality is that when God speaks and we obey, we will always be right.

A model of ideal womanhood is Ruth. Sensing the grief-stricken heart of her mother-in-law Naomi—who suffered the loss of each of her two fine sons—feeling perhaps the pangs of despair and loneliness that plagued the very soul of Naomi, Ruth uttered what has become that classic statement of loyalty: “Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.”¹⁴ Ruth’s actions demonstrated the sincerity of her words.

Through Ruth’s undeviating loyalty to Naomi, she was to marry Boaz, by which she—the foreigner and Moabite convert—became a great-grandmother of David and, therefore, an ancestor of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Models of Obedience

I now turn to a mighty Book of Mormon prophet—even Nephi, son of Lehi and Sariah. He was faithful and obedient to God, courageous and bold. When given the difficult assignment to obtain the plates of brass from Laban, he did not murmur but declared, “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.”¹⁵ Perhaps this act of courage prompted a verse of counsel for us found in the hymn “The Iron Rod”:



*To Nephi, seer of olden time,
A vision came from God. . . .
Hold to the rod, the iron rod;
'Tis strong, and bright, and true.
The iron rod is the word of God;
'Twill safely guide us through.*¹⁶

Nephi personified unflagging determination.

No description of models for us to follow would be complete without including Joseph Smith, the first prophet of this dispensation. When but 14 years of age, this courageous young man entered a grove of trees, which later would be called sacred, and received an answer to his sincere prayer.

There followed for Joseph unrelenting persecution as he related to others the account of the glorious vision he received in that grove. Although he was ridiculed and scorned, he stood firm. Said he, “I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it.”¹⁷

Step by step, facing opposition at nearly every turn and yet always guided by the hand of the Lord, Joseph organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He proved courageous in all that he did.

Toward the end of his life, as he was led

There stands before us today another prophet of God—even our beloved President Gordon B. Hinckley. He has labored unceasingly to bring sacred blessings to members of the Church worldwide.

away with his brother Hyrum to Carthage Jail, he bravely faced what he undoubtedly knew lay ahead for him, and he sealed his testimony with his blood.

As we face life's tests, may we ever emulate that undaunted courage epitomized by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

A Model of Optimism

There stands before us today another prophet of God—even our beloved President Gordon B. Hinckley. He has presided over the largest expansion of the Church—both numerically and geographically—in our history. He has traversed frontiers not heretofore crossed by a Church President and has visited with government leaders and with members the world over. His love for the people transcends the barriers of language and culture.

With prophetic vision, he has instituted the Perpetual Education Fund, which breaks the cycle of poverty for our members in many areas of the world and provides skills and training which qualify young men and young women for gainful employment. This inspired plan has kindled the light of hope in the eyes of those who felt doomed to mediocrity but who now have an opportunity for a brighter future.

President Hinckley has labored unceasingly to bring sacred blessings to members of the Church worldwide by providing temples that are within the reach of all. He has the capacity to lift to a higher plane those from all walks of life, regardless of the faith to which they ascribe. He is a model of unfailing optimism, and we revere him as prophet, seer, and revelator.

The unique qualities possessed by these men and women whom I have mentioned can be of invaluable assistance to us as we face the problems and the trials which lie ahead. May I illustrate by mentioning the experience of the Pollard family of Oakland, California.

One Family's Faith

A few years ago, as Elder Taavili Joseph Samuel Pollard was traveling to the mission office on the last day of his mission in Zimbabwe, the mission car he was driving somehow spun out of control and hit a tree. A passerby was able to

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. Have family members try to draw something unfamiliar (for example, a map of a faraway country or a unique flower). Then provide a picture of the object, and have them draw it again. How do models help us? Relate President Monson's statements on using prophets as models for life. Share a personal experience illustrating how a prophet's example helped you.

2. Ask, "Whom do people in the world follow today? What qualities do these men and women possess?" Compare the righteous examples mentioned in the article with the world's examples. Challenge the family to choose and emulate a spiritual trait exemplified by these righteous men and women.

3. If the family has young children, have them mimic your actions. Clap your hands, nod your head, and so on. Discuss the meaning of following someone's example. Ask family members to think of righteous examples, and use the article to complement their responses. Conclude with President Monson's testimony of Jesus Christ being the greatest example to follow.

rescue Elder Pollard's companion, but Elder Pollard, who was unconscious, was trapped in the car, which burst into flames. Elder Pollard perished. His mother had passed away eight years earlier; hence, his father was rearing the family alone. A brother was serving in the West Indies Mission.

When the news of Elder Pollard's death reached his father, this humble man—who had already lost his wife—called the son serving in the West Indies to let him know of his brother's death. Over that long-distance telephone line, Brother Pollard and his son, no doubt grief stricken and heartsick, sang together "I Am a Child of God."¹⁸ Before concluding the call, the father offered a prayer to Heavenly Father, thanking Him for His blessings and seeking His divine comfort.

Brother Pollard later commented that he knew his family would be all right, for they have strong testimonies of the gospel and of the plan of salvation.

My brothers and sisters, in this marvelous dispensation of the fulness of times, as we journey through mortality and face the trials and challenges of the future, may we

remember the examples of these models to follow. May we have the unfeigned humility of John the Baptist, the unquestioning obedience of Abraham, the unlimited patience of Job, the unwavering faith of Noah, the undeviating loyalty of Ruth, the unflagging determination of Nephi, the undaunted courage of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the unfailing optimism of President Hinckley. Such will be as a fortress of strength to us throughout our lives.

The Exemplar

May we ever be guided by the supreme Exemplar, even the son of Mary, the Savior Jesus Christ—whose very life provided a perfect model for us to follow.

Born in a stable, cradled in a manger, He came forth from heaven to live on earth as a mortal man and to establish the kingdom of God. During His earthly ministry, He taught men the higher law. His glorious gospel reshaped the thinking of the world. He blessed the sick; He caused the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear. He even raised the dead to life.

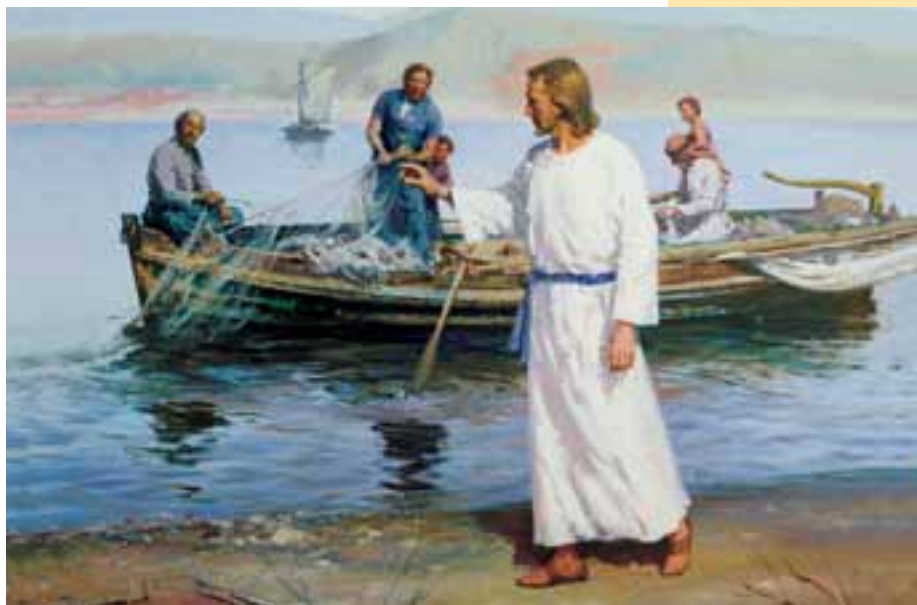
What was the reaction to His message of mercy, His words of wisdom, His lessons of life? There were a precious few who appreciated Him. They bathed His feet. They learned His word. They followed His example.

Then there were those who denied Him. When asked by Pilate, “What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?”¹⁹ they cried, “Crucify him.”²⁰ They mocked Him. They gave Him vinegar to drink. They reviled Him. They smote Him with a reed. They spit upon Him. They crucified Him.

Down through the generations of time, the message from Jesus has been the same. To Peter and Andrew by the shores of the beautiful Sea of Galilee, He said, “Follow me.”²¹ To Philip of old came the call, “Follow me.”²² To the Levite who sat at receipt of customs came the instruction, “Follow me.”²³ And to you and to me, if we but listen, will come that same beckoning invitation, “Follow me.” May we all do so and reap the eternal rewards reserved for those who follow the path that He marked by His exemplary life. ■

NOTES

1. Luke 1:80.
2. John 3:28.
3. Luke 3:16.
4. Matthew 11:11.
5. Psalm 46:10.
14. Ruth 1:16.
15. 1 Nephi 3:7.
16. Joseph L. Townsend (1849–1942), *Hymns*, no. 274.



6. Genesis 22:9–10, 12.
7. Job 1:1.
8. Job 2:9.
9. Job 16:19.
10. Job 19:25.
11. Genesis 6:9.
12. Bible Dictionary, “Noah,” 738–39.
13. In Conference Report, Oct. 1952, 48.
17. Joseph Smith—History 1:25.
18. Naomi W. Randall (1908–2001), *Hymns*, no. 301.
19. Matthew 27:22.
20. Mark 15:13.
21. Matthew 4:19.
22. John 1:43.
23. Luke 5:27.

Down through the generations of time, the message from Jesus has been the same: “Follow me.”

My Unexpected

BY BECKY THOMAS

I never expected to be single at age 40, but the scriptures helped me find strength and draw closer to God.



I recently studied the account of the children of Israel being led to the promised land. I could feel their despair as they approached the borders of the Red Sea, wondering where they could possibly go from there.

Turning 40 and still single, I believed that I too was standing on the shore, determined not to turn back, the path ahead of me uncertain. The feeling was all too familiar. I had felt it when I graduated single from college and again when I was still single at 30. Now at 40, I was still counting.

As I read, I realized we can't always imagine what the Lord can or will do for us. The children of Israel certainly didn't. They "lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore

afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord" (Exodus 14:10).

The Lord heard their pleas. "Lift thou up thy rod," He instructed their prophet and leader, Moses, "and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea" (Exodus 14:16). As the Israelites walked to safety, "the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left" (Exodus 14:22).

This route the children of Israel were asked to take was an unforeseen route. It was a path no one had ever taken before. But through it, the Lord made the seemingly impossible possible.

My life has also taken an unexpected route, as have the lives of many others—perhaps those who are single

BACKGROUND PHOTOGRAPH BY DIGITAL VISION; INSET: MOSES PARTING THE RED SEA, BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; PHOTOGRAPH OF WOMAN BY FRANK HEIMRICH, POSED BY MODEL

Route

parents; those who are divorced, widowed, childless, or disabled; or those who have experienced any of life's other unanticipated scenarios.

I have found that the unexpected route is not a lesser route. The scriptures tell of some of the Lord's most faithful servants making their way through uncommon paths. For example, Zacharias and Elisabeth were both "well stricken in years" (Luke 1:7) when they had their first child. Before Joseph of Egypt became leader to his brothers, as had been prophesied, he was enslaved and sold at their hands (see Genesis 37). Widowed Ruth supported her mother-in-law and

herself, eventually marrying again and becoming a forebearer to Jesus Christ (see Ruth 1–4).

Not all are asked to take an unexpected route, and I don't know all the reasons I have been directed to this particular path. But even though I still have moments of despair when my heart longs for the love of my life to be at my side, I have experienced great joy while pressing forward on this course. I've become acquainted with God as I've turned to Him and found answers and meaning in my day-to-day life. To learn of His love, His life, His care, His concern, and His tender mercies is the greatest life experience I could ask for. ■



SEEING DIVINE PATTERN AND PURPOSE

"Daily hope is vital, since the 'Winter Quarters' of our lives are not immediately adjacent to our promised land. . . . An arduous trek still awaits, but hope spurs weary disciples on. Those with true hope often see their personal circumstances shaken, like kaleidoscopes, again and again. Yet with the 'eye of faith,' they still see divine pattern and purpose."

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004), "Brightness of Hope," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 36.

FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOU

A Conversation with the Young Women General Presidency



The Young Women general presidency—Susan W. Tanner (center), president; Julie B. Beck (left), first counselor; and Elaine S. Dalton (right), second counselor—talk about ways parents and leaders can help youth increase their desire and resolve to live gospel standards. Since the conversation, Sister Beck has been called as the Relief Society general president, and Mary N. Cook has been called to the Young Women general presidency.

What might parents and leaders focus on when talking to youth about standards?

Sister Susan W. Tanner: As a presidency we have a motto: “I can do hard things.” Our priesthood adviser, Elder John B. Dickson, suggested we change it to “When I know who I am, I can do anything He asks me to do.” We feel strongly that if youth understand who they are as children of God, then they will keep standards. The sense of their

identity gives them self-confidence.

Sister Elaine S. Dalton: Talking about standards is not about rules; standards are about qualifying for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. Standards are about standing in holy places so you’re worthy to have the companionship of the third member of the Godhead. He will be your guide along the path you entered at baptism and confirmation—the path that leads to the temple.

Sister Julie B. Beck: I remember a reporter who attacked our standards as restrictive. She had read the *For the Strength of Youth* book, and she felt that it was all about rules. So I talked to her about safety and choices, and I used the words *liberate* and *free* and *protect*. I said, for instance, if a young woman keeps our standard not to drink alcohol or take drugs, she will never be a slave to those habits. She’ll be free, and her ability to make choices will be multiplied because she won’t have the problem of addiction. The reporter started to nod her head when she understood that standards are not a fence to keep us in. Standards are what help us go out and function in a world full of choices. We can contribute in this world and live happy, productive lives because we are protected.

How can parents and leaders get standards into the hearts of youth?

Sister Tanner: Sometimes we look at the difficulties youth face and have an immediate instead of a long-range vision. It’s interesting to read *For the Strength of Youth* looking for



promises; it's interesting to read the scriptures looking for promises. Whenever we're admonished to do anything, generally it's followed by a promise. Parents and leaders who have lived standards are a great example. Youth can see that good things have happened in our lives, that we've been able to establish eternal families. Those are promises being fulfilled in our lives.

Sister Dalton: I have never met anyone who didn't want the promises in *For the Strength of Youth*: "You will be able to do your life's work with greater wisdom and skill," you will be able to "bear trials with greater courage," "you will have the help of the Holy Ghost,"

"you will feel good about yourself," you "will be a positive influence in the lives of others," and "you will be worthy to go to the temple" (pp. 2–3).

Sister Beck: If you're unapologetic about blessings, then you can't be apologetic about what gets you the blessings.

Sister Dalton: Sometimes parents think a standard is a small thing. They say, "I'm not going to fight that battle or die on that hill." But it's not about hills; it's about holiness. A standard is about understanding who you are as a son or daughter of God.

How can parents and leaders overcome the fear of offending or alienating youth?

Sister Beck: I think of some scriptures: "Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee" (Jeremiah 1:8) and "Open thy mouth, and it shall be filled" (Moses 6:32). The Lord expects His leaders—and every parent is a leader—to speak the truth.

Sister Tanner: Doctrine and Covenants section 121 says that when "reproving betimes with sharpness," you show "forth afterwards an increase of love" (v. 43). If youth know first that you love them, they're more willing to listen. And if you also follow up with your love, you can say the hard things.

Sister Beck: I think we underestimate youth. They're in a searching

age—it's the "why" age. There's a reason for that: the Lord wants them to get their own testimonies. It's leaders' and parents' job to give them the doctrinal "whys" and to back up standards by teaching about the reasons for them. I remember some conversations I had with a daughter about Sunday dress. I explained how I felt she should dress to attend sacrament meeting. I also taught her about the sacrament and bore my testimony about why we go to church. It was done with love. She didn't change the way she dressed that Sunday or the week after. But very soon she

adopted a more formal standard of dress for sacrament meeting. I was patient while she got her own confirmation. And she never went back to dressing the way she had before. She had been taught the doctrine, and her "why" question was answered.

How can *For the Strength of Youth* help parents and leaders answer the "why" questions?

Sister Tanner: I love *For the Strength of Youth* because it's based on doctrine. Doctrine is eternal truth, set from before the foundation of the world. And standards are based upon doctrine, so the standards aren't going to change either. They're not

something out-of-touch adults made up just to make life difficult. *For the Strength of Youth* states doctrine and standards probably clearer than any other resource. It also talks about consequences. So you can see what the eternal truth is, what it is we should do or should not do, and why we should or should not do it. This book can be a huge help to parents. Sometimes when I think, "I want to explain this correctly in understandable terms," I go to that book, and the idea I need is encapsulated in a sentence.

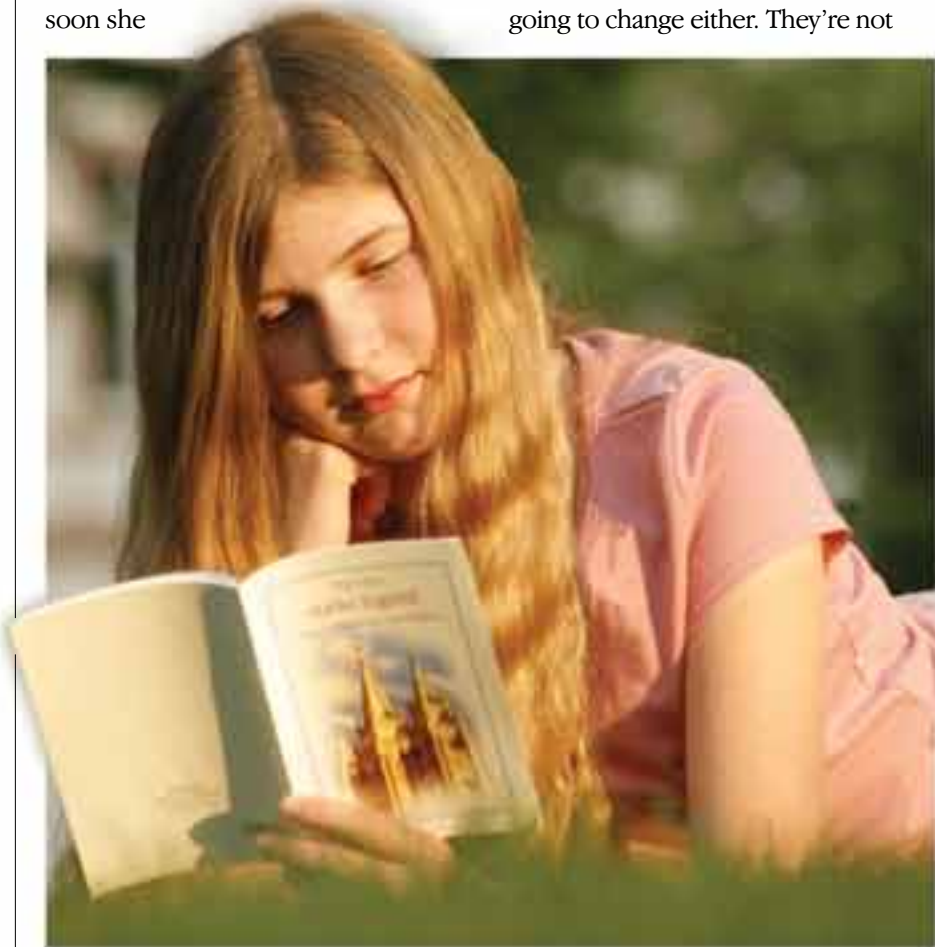
What are other ways parents and leaders can use *For the Strength of Youth*?

Sister Beck: You can discuss it a standard at a time in family home evening and in each section mark the doctrine, the standards, and the consequences. As a Church teacher, you could use it in any lesson. It has helped me to memorize some key phrases that I really want to emphasize, and I find that when I'm talking to youth, those sentences just pop out.

Sister Dalton: For example, one key phrase is "Satan wants you to think that you cannot repent, but . . ."

Sister Dalton and Sister Beck, together: ". . . that is absolutely not true" (p. 30)!

Sister Tanner: Youth are often the best teachers of each other. One of the things we love to do when we speak to youth is hand a *For the Strength of Youth* book to some young people and say, "I'd like you



HELPING YOUTH FIND STRENGTH

One way to begin making the teachings in *For the Strength of Youth* (item no. 36550) part of our lives—and to get them into the hearts of youth—is to identify the doctrines, the standards, and the consequences in each section of this book. For example, consider the “Sexual Purity” section.

Doctrine answers the question “Why do we live these standards?”: “Physical intimacy between husband and wife is beautiful and sacred. It is ordained of God for the creation of children and for the expression of love between husband and wife. God has commanded that sexual intimacy be reserved for marriage” (p. 26).

Standards teach us what we should and should not do: “Do not have any sexual relations before marriage, and be completely faithful to your spouse after marriage” (p. 26).

Consequences are the positive and negative results of living standards: “When you obey God’s commandment to be sexually pure, you prepare yourself to make and keep sacred covenants in the temple. You prepare yourself to build a strong marriage and to bring children into the world as part of a loving family. You protect yourself from the emotional damage that always comes from sharing physical intimacies with someone outside of marriage” (p. 26).

to choose any one of these standards and in a few minutes give a little talk on it.” I’ve had so many spontaneous talks fill the room with the Spirit. When youth share their experiences and bear their testimonies, *they* feel the Spirit and start learning the power of the book.

Sister Beck: Having a standards night once a year isn’t enough. We can use *For the Strength of Youth* at camp; we can use it at youth conference and in formal and informal situations. It’s a resource that has to be always in front of our youth. And parents and leaders have to live it. You can’t be the leader who tells youth what movies to avoid, and then you go to those movies. You can’t be the mother who says, “Don’t wear that immodest dress,” and then you’re wearing one. You can’t be the father who says, “Pay your tithing,” but you don’t.

Then does *For the Strength of Youth* have a role for people who aren’t youth?

Sister Dalton: I call it *For the Strength of “You.”* It applies to all of us.



Sister Beck: My copy has my name on it, and it's marked for me. The standards are not gender or age specific; they're for children of God.

What are some immediate blessings we receive by living the Lord's standards as taught in For the Strength of Youth?

Sister Dalton: Peace of mind.

Sister Beck: The companionship of the Holy Ghost.

Sister Dalton: And self-confidence. It ties with the 2007 Mutual theme: "Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God" (D&C 121:45). Those immediate

blessings are important because sometimes youth think, "If I choose this, I won't have any friends." Unfortunately, that could be true.

Sister Tanner: It was true for me in seventh grade. I was honest, going against what a popular group of girls wanted me to do. Because of that, I didn't have friends and I was sad, but I had confidence that what I had done was right. And I'm sure that's what sustained me through a period of time. I knew I could face whom I really needed to face—my Heavenly Father and my family. But even that knowledge doesn't mean it doesn't hurt.

Sister Dalton: *For the Strength of*

Youth doesn't promise you a life free of problems if you live standards, but it does say that "you will . . . bear trials with greater courage" (p. 2). Although I didn't realize it the night I walked out of a party and closed the door on my whole social future—the popular kids shunned me from that time on—I know now that living standards enables you to be a leader. *One* young woman or *one* young man with the courage to live these standards and walk out of an inappropriate situation gives others the courage to follow.

What are the long-term blessings of living the standards in For the Strength of Youth?

Sister Beck: Last week I was shopping with my granddaughters. I noticed a sales clerk watching our fun. Later I gave her a pass-along card. She told me, "I'm at a point in my life where I'm trying to take charge, and I don't know how." So we talked. My closing comment to her was, "If you want this when you're my age"—and I pointed to my little granddaughters—"you have to be really careful what you're choosing now. The choices I made at your age determined who I am now."

Sister Dalton: Long-term blessings ripple through generations, and one small thing you're doing right now can make a lot of difference in where you end up and where the generations that follow you end up. And we can't forget that generations before us sacrificed for us to have the gospel and to know about standards.





SHARING STANDARDS



A young woman I know was a little frustrated with friends questioning her standards: “Why can’t you date before 16?” “Why don’t you drink?” When she prayed about how to handle this situation, this idea came to her mind: “I’m going to put a *For the Strength of Youth* booklet in my jeans pocket. When people question me about, for example, dating, I’ll give them the book and tell them to read the section on dating.”

It turned out to be a great idea! In three months she gave out 52 copies of *For the Strength of Youth*. And three new friends started attending church with her.

This young woman was bold in a friendly way and didn’t apologize for her standards. When youth live standards clearly and without apology, others will respect them and look to their example.

Mary N. Cook, second counselor in the Young Women general presidency

How can youth handle temptation and receive those immediate and long-term blessings?

Sister Dalton: When I ask youth, “What’s the hardest thing you do?” many say, “It’s going to parties and being offered a drink and not drinking it.” So I ask, “Why are you at the party?” And they say, “I go to be a good example to others.” Then I always

respond, “You bring your friends to places where they can feel the Spirit. Don’t ever walk into places where the Spirit won’t go. Avoid them!”

Sister Beck: Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Seventy has an analogy. He says that if you’re on a non-chocolate-chip-cookie diet, yet you go into the kitchen just after the cookies have been baked—it smells delicious and

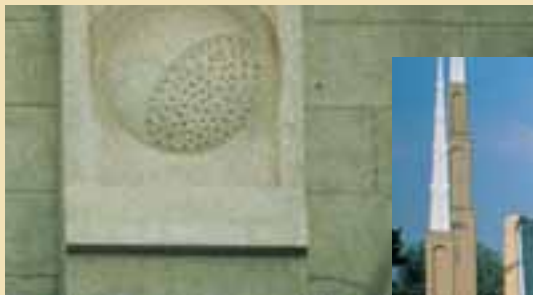
you can picture the chocolate chips melting as you pull the cookie apart—how long is it going to be before you sample one? How strong are you really? That’s *resisting*—or trying to resist. But if you’re on a non-chocolate-chip-cookie diet and you don’t go into the kitchen where they’re baked and you don’t bake them yourself, then you are *avoiding* temptation. That’s easier!

What can youth who live these righteous standards accomplish?

Sister Beck: Satan is coming at our youth from all sides. But we have a defense, so we don’t need to be afraid. We can trust in the Lord’s promises. He says young men and women will dream dreams and see visions, that He will pour out His Spirit upon them in the last days and He will flood the earth with righteousness and truth (see Joel 2:28–32; Moses 7:62). There’s nothing righteous youth can’t do!

Sister Dalton: Our youth are major players in the winding-up scenes on the earth. We read about the calamities and things that will happen, but living the standards in *For the Strength of Youth* will preserve and protect and strengthen our youth in such a way that they’ll be able to serve and do what nobody else will be able to do.

Sister Tanner: Today’s youth are like the army of Helaman! Those youth were raised up to save the Nephite generation, and our youth are being raised up to save this generation. ■



Come to the

The doctrine that underlies the work in the holy temple, more than any other thing, sets The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints apart from and transcendent above every other religious organization on the face of the earth.

BY PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Around the turn of the twentieth century two missionaries were laboring in the mountain region of the southern part of the United States. One day as they were walking along a ridge in the hill country, they saw people gathering in a clearing near a cabin some distance down the hillside.

They discovered that there was to be a funeral. A little boy had drowned. His parents had sent for the minister to “say words” at the burial of the little fellow. The elders stayed in the background to watch the proceedings. The little fellow was to be buried in the grave already opened near the cabin. The minister stood before the grieving father and

mother and the others gathered and began his funeral sermon. If the parents expected to receive consolation from this man of the cloth, they would be disappointed.

He scolded them severely for not having had the little boy baptized. They had put it off because of one thing or another, and now it was too late. He told them very bluntly that their little boy had gone to hell. He told them that it was their fault, that they were to blame—they had caused their son endless torment.

After the sermon was over and the grave was covered, the friends, neighbors, and relatives left the scene. The elders approached the grieving parents. “We are servants of the Lord,” they told the sobbing mother, “and we have come with a message for you.”

FROM LEFT: DETAIL PHOTOGRAPH OF SALT LAKE TEMPLE BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF JOHANNESBURG SOUTH AFRICA TEMPLE BY TREVOR SIMON; INTERIOR OF HELSINKI FINLAND TEMPLE © JRI; MAY NOT BE COPIED; PHOTOGRAPH AT SACRAMENTO CALIFORNIA TEMPLE BY JOHN LUKE, POSED BY MODELS; LINE ART OF PAPETE TAHITI TEMPLE



Temple

As the grief-stricken parents listened, the two young elders unfolded to their view something of a vision of the eternities. They read from the revelations, and they bore to these humble, grief-stricken parents their testimony of the restoration of the keys for the redemption of both the living and the dead.

I do not berate the itinerant preacher. Indeed, I have some sympathy for him, for he was doing the best he knew how to do with such light and knowledge as he had received. But there is more than he had to give. There is the fulness of the gospel.

The path the missionaries pointed out to those humble folk was more than conversion and repentance and baptism; for, to those who will follow, in due time that path leads to the sacred rooms of the holy temple. There members of the Church who make themselves eligible can participate in the most exalted and sacred of the redeeming ordinances that have been revealed to mankind. There we

may be washed and anointed and instructed and endowed and sealed. And when we have received these blessings for ourselves, we may officiate for those who have died without having had the same opportunity.

It is my hope to enlarge your understanding as to why we build temples and why ordinances and ceremonies are performed there.

Privilege of Temple Attendance

It is a privilege to enter the holy temple. If you are eligible by the standards that are set, by all means you should come to receive your own blessings; and thereafter you should return again and again and again to make those same blessings available to others who have died without the opportunity to receive them in mortality.

You should *not* come to the temple until you are eligible, until you meet the requirements that the Lord has set. But you should come, if not now, as soon as you can qualify.

The doctrine that underlies the work in the holy temple, more than any other thing, sets The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints apart from and transcendent above every other religious organization on the face of the earth. We have something that no other religious denomination has. We can give something they cannot extend.

The anguish in the hearts of those grieving parents can be satisfied only in the doctrines of this Church. These doctrines center on the ordinances of the holy temple.

Order in All Things

To explain something of the significance of the ordinances, I begin with the third article of faith: “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.”

The word *ordinance* means “a religious or ceremonial observance,” “an established rite.”¹ Now, what about the ordinances of the gospel? How important are they to us as members of the Church? Can you be happy, can you be redeemed, can you be exalted without them? Answer: They are more than advisable or desirable, or even than necessary. More even than essential or vital, they are *crucial* to each of us.

Each Latter-day Saint needs to ask himself or herself the questions: Is my life in order? Do I have all of the ordinances of the gospel that I should possess by this time in my life? Are they valid?

If you can answer these questions affirmatively, and if the ordinances come under the influence of the sealing power and authority, they will remain intact eternally. In that case your life, to this point, is in proper order. You then would do well to think of your family, living and dead, with the same questions in mind.

The Temple Ordinances

The ordinances we perform in the temples include washings, anointings, the endowment, and the sealing ordinance—both the sealing of children to parents, and the sealing of couples, spoken of generally as temple marriage.

Here is a brief summary of the information that is available in print with reference to the temple ordinances.

The ordinances of washing and anointing are referred to often in the temple as initiatory ordinances. It will be

sufficient for our purposes to say only the following: Associated with the endowment are washings and anointings—mostly symbolic in nature, but promising definite, immediate blessings as well as future blessings. Concerning these ordinances the Lord has said, “I say unto you, how shall your washings be acceptable unto me, except ye perform them in a house which you have built to my name?” (D&C 124:37).

In connection with these ordinances, in the temple you will be officially clothed in the garment and promised marvelous blessings in connection with it. It is important that you listen carefully as these ordinances are administered and that you try to remember the blessings promised and the conditions upon which they will be realized.

To endow is to enrich, to give to another something long lasting and of much worth. In the temple endowment ordinances, “recipients are endowed with power from on high,” and “they receive an education relative to the Lord’s purposes and plans.”²

President Brigham Young (1801–77) said of the endowment: “Let me give you a definition in brief. Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the

Each Latter-day Saint needs to ask himself or herself the questions: Is my life in order? Do I have all of the ordinances of the gospel that I should possess by this time in my life? Are they valid?



Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell.”³

The blessing of the endowment is required for full exaltation. Every Latter-day Saint should seek to be worthy of this blessing and to obtain it.

The sealing ordinance is that ordinance which binds families eternally. Temple marriage is a sealing ordinance. Children born to couples sealed in the temple are born in the covenant. When a couple has been married in a civil ceremony and then sealed in the temple a year or more later, children not born in the covenant are sealed to the couple in a brief and sacred ordinance.

I have always been impressed that the ordinances of the temple are reverently and carefully administered. They are not complicated or extravagant but are typical of the simplicity of the principles of the gospel.

In the Church we hold sufficient authority to perform

all of the ordinances necessary to redeem and to exalt the whole human family. And because we have the keys to the sealing power, what we bind in proper order here will be bound in heaven. Those keys—the keys to seal and bind on earth and have it bound in heaven—represent the consummate gift from our God. With that authority we can baptize and bless, we can endow and seal, and the Lord will honor our commitments.

Ordinances Must Be Offered to the Dead

The itinerant preacher spoken of earlier had no answer to the question of what happens to those who died without baptism. What about them? If there is none other name given under heaven whereby man must be saved (and that is true), and they have lived and died without even hearing that name, and if baptism is essential (and it is), and they died without even the invitation to accept it, where are they now?

That question is hard to fathom, but it describes most of the human family. In other words, ask what power would establish one Lord and one baptism and then allow it to happen that most of the human family never comes within the influence of its doctrines? With that question unanswered, the vast majority of the human family must



What happens to those who died without baptism? If a church has no answer to this dilemma, how can it lay claim to be the Lord's Church?



This work came as a great reaffirmation of something very basic—that there is life after death. Mortal death is no more an ending than birth was the beginning. The great work of redemption goes on beyond the veil as well as here in mortality.

We have been authorized to perform baptisms and other temple ordinances vicariously for the dead so that when they hear the gospel preached and desire to accept it, those essential ordinances will have been performed.

be admitted to be lost, including the little boy who drowned—and against any reasonable application of the law of justice or of mercy, either.

If a church has no answer to this dilemma, how can it lay claim to be the Lord's Church? Surely He is not willing to write off the majority of the human family because they were never baptized while on earth.

In all reason those who admit in puzzled frustration that they have no answer to this question cannot lay claim to authority to administer the affairs of the Lord on the earth or to oversee the work by which all mankind must be saved.

One of the characteristics that sets us apart from the rest of the world and identifies us as the Lord's Church is that we provide baptism and other ordinances for our deceased ancestors.

Whenever I address myself to the question of those who died without baptism, I do so with the deepest reverence, for it touches on a sacred work. Little known to the world, this work is marvelous in its prospects, transcendent above what man might have dreamed of, supernal, inspired, and true. It is the answer.

With proper authority a mortal person could be baptized for and in behalf of someone who had not had that opportunity before passing on. That individual would then accept or reject the baptism in the spirit world, according to his own desire.

Come to the Temple

Every Latter-day Saint is responsible for this work. Probably no point of doctrine sets this Church apart from the other claimants as this one does. We have the revelations. We have those sacred ordinances.

To all of you I say, "Come to the temple." It may be that you look forward to the once-in-a-lifetime privilege of going there to receive your own endowment, to receive your own blessings, and to enter into your own covenants with the Lord. It may be that you have been there once or twice already. It may be that you go frequently. It may even be that you are an officiator. Whatever the circumstances may be, come to the temple.

If needed, set your lives in order; pray fervently. Start now that very difficult and sometimes very discouraging journey of repentance. Firmly resolve that you will do everything you can to aid temple work and the family history work that supports it and to assist every living soul and every soul beyond the veil in every way you can with every resource at your disposal.

Come to the temple! ■

Adapted from The Holy Temple (1980).

NOTES

1. *Oxford English Dictionary* (1971), "ordinance," 2006.
2. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (1966), 227.
3. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1941), 416.

Worthy to Enter

BY ELDER DARYL H. GARN
Of the Seventy

How blessed we are to have temples! The holy temple is “the place of [the Lord’s] throne” on the earth (Ezekiel 43:7). President Gordon B. Hinckley has told Church members: “Until you have received the sacred [temple] ordinances of the gospel, you have not received all of the wonderful blessings which this Church has to offer. The great and crowning blessings of membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are those blessings which come to us in the house of the Lord.”¹

Even though temples are located throughout the world, many of our members do not live near one of these holy buildings and therefore may not be able to attend



It is my hope and prayer that we all can declare we are worthy to enter the temple of our God, that we may enjoy eternal promised blessings.

the temple in the near future. It is important, however, that all Latter-day Saints live worthy to attend the temple so they will be ready when the opportunity comes.

Building the Lord’s House

A few years ago I had an experience in the Houston Texas Temple that gave me greater insight into the importance of the temple and the way I live my life.

The Houston temple was nearing completion when I had the opportunity to walk through the building with Leon Rowley, the supervisor of the temple construction.

Brother Rowley reviewed with me some of the special considerations that contractors who wish to bid on the temple must know. They are told that building a temple will be



different from any other construction project in which they have participated. They are told that we believe the temple is the house of the Lord and that it requires the finest workmanship. They are then given a list of requirements they need to consider in their bid.

First, they are told that the construction site must not be cluttered and must stay clean and organized. As Brother Rowley and I walked through the Houston temple, we saw very little clutter, and we did not need to walk around piles of construction debris, even though it was a busy day for the workers. When the workers finished a project, they cleaned up after themselves and disposed of the trash.

Second, contractors are told that *all* the rooms in the temple will be finished and painted. That day in the temple, every room was painted white. Even the storage rooms and mechanical rooms were white. There were no dark places in the temple.

Third, contractors are told that there is to be no graffiti on the walls of the temple. Often, workers at construction sites will write inappropriate things on the walls. Brother Rowley shared an incident he had experienced a few days previously. He had noticed some inappropriate words written on a wall of the temple and reminded the contractor of their agreement. The following day, he noticed that the words had been painted over. He went to the contractor

again and told him that the offensive words were still on the wall of the temple and needed to be removed. The next morning, the paint and the words were sanded off the temple wall.

Fourth, the contractors are told that initially one room will be finished to temple quality so that workers will know how to finish all the rooms in the temple. The large sealing room of the Houston temple was chosen to be finished first. As we walked into that sealing room, I noticed some little red dots on the door casings and on the moldings. Brother Rowley said that at the end of each day he inspects the workmanship to see if there are any imperfections. If additional work is needed to make it perfect, he places a little red dot to indicate the area to be refinished. The following day, the workers will putty, sand, and repaint until it is acceptable.

“Ye Are the Temple of God”

As I walked through the temple that day, the words from 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 came to my mind: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”

I reflected on the great lengths the Church goes to in constructing our beautiful temples. Indeed, we are taught in the

scriptures that even the temple grounds “shall be most holy” (Ezekiel 43:12). As I pondered all of this, I was reminded that we must do all we can to keep our minds and our bodies—our personal “temples of God”—clean and pure.

First, we must not allow the ways of the world to clutter our lives. The Savior said, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). Too often, worldly things keep us from our prayers, scripture reading, and Church duties. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has said: “Sometimes our minds are so beset with problems, and there are so many things clamoring for attention at once that we just cannot think clearly and see clearly. At the temple the dust of distraction seems to settle out, the fog and the haze seem to lift, and we can ‘see’ things that we were not able to see before and find a way through our troubles that we had not previously known.”²

Second, we must see that there are no dark places in our lives. The Savior has invited all to come unto Him through repentance. “Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more. By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:42–43). If our sins are serious, our bishop or branch president can help us with the repentance process. They are men of experience

and understanding. They will listen with confidentiality, and they will help us to repent and be forgiven.

Third, we must be aware of the graffiti that can come into our lives through inappropriate books, music, movies, television, or language. Repentance qualifies as the putty, sandpaper, and paint that will rid us of our spiritual graffiti. President Hinckley has also cautioned us against obtaining tattoos and body piercings.

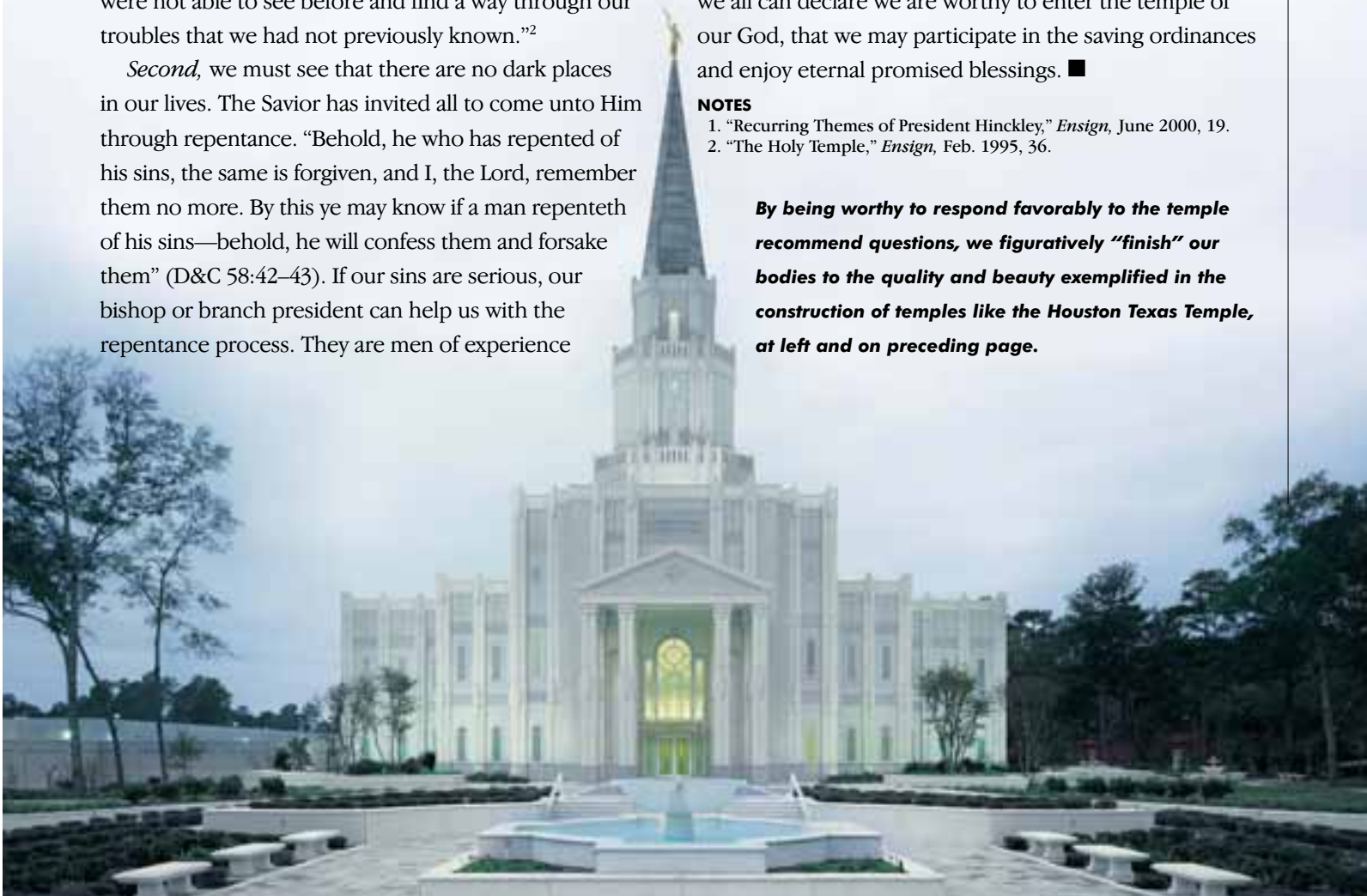
Fourth, we “finish” our bodies to temple quality as we understand the temple recommend interview questions and are worthy to respond favorably to each one.

One of my greatest joys has been to interview members of the Church for temple recommends, to hear them respond positively and with great faith, and to rejoice as they declare themselves worthy to partake of sacred temple ordinances. It is my hope and prayer that we all can declare we are worthy to enter the temple of our God, that we may participate in the saving ordinances and enjoy eternal promised blessings. ■

NOTES

1. “Recurring Themes of President Hinckley,” *Ensign*, June 2000, 19.
2. “The Holy Temple,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 36.

By being worthy to respond favorably to the temple recommend questions, we figuratively “finish” our bodies to the quality and beauty exemplified in the construction of temples like the Houston Texas Temple, at left and on preceding page.



Our Long Road to the Temple Together



NAME WITHHELD

I wanted desperately for our family to be sealed in the temple. Why couldn't my husband share that goal?

When I joined the Church, the gospel filled a huge void. Where I once felt painful emptiness, I now felt a wave of peace, joy, and purpose. Each time the missionaries taught us, they presented both my husband, who was a member but not active for most of his life, and me with a challenge corresponding to the discussion they presented. As we accepted each one, my hopes and expectations for us grew. While I wasn't naive in thinking that it would be



My husband had followed the ambulance to the hospital, full of love and concern for me. Could that love also help him follow the path that would take our family to the temple?

pure
eternal bliss from
that point on or that my
life would suddenly be free of
obstacles and disappointments, I did
think that our home would become more of a
sanctuary. I wasn't exactly prepared for the challenges
that lay ahead—or for the fact that we would encounter
them at home.

The first indication of a problem came shortly after
I started meeting with the missionaries. I woke up one
Sunday morning and started getting our three children
ready so that we could be on time to the first meeting at
church. My husband looked at me and said, "I thought we
were just going to go to sacrament meeting." That attitude
was reflected in the weeks and months that followed.
Although my husband occasionally attended sacrament
meeting, I usually found myself taking the children to
church on my own.

Still, I found blessings in my own gospel progression.
I went to the temple to do baptisms for the dead not long
after I joined the Church. After changing into white clothing,

I glanced at
myself in the mirror
just before exiting the dressing
room. In the past I had struggled with
feelings of self-doubt, questioning my worth,
my appearance, and everything I did. But in that moment
at the temple and for the first time in my life, I liked what I
saw. I believe that I caught just a tiny glimpse of what my
Heavenly Father sees in me. It was then that I made my
Father in Heaven and myself a promise: I would do every-
thing within my power to get my family to the temple.

Several months later I shared this experience with my
stake president. I told him, "I have to go to the temple.
I have to keep moving; otherwise, I will go backwards."
When I did go to the temple, my husband supported me
but made it clear that he was not ready to do the same.

That frustrated me. Didn't he want an eternal family?
Some days I questioned whether I had the strength to go
on conducting every family home evening and leading every
family prayer. I often let him know I was disappointed. After
a while tension started to creep into our family life.

My closest friends and Church leaders counseled me to
be loving and patient. I wanted to believe that those things
would get my family to the temple, but I was afraid that it
might never happen. I was also afraid for our children;
I wanted them to have the example of a father who was
valiant in the gospel. I found hope through prayer, my
patriarchal blessing, and scripture study, but I would
become fearful again when I looked at friends and family

members who had waited years—even decades—for their spouses to commit to baptism. I realized that I couldn't control what happened long-term, but I could focus on being a good example. I shifted my focus from changing my husband to being the best person I could be.

As for the tension, I realized—long after I should have—that the adversary had more control over my family when I allowed anger, resentment, and fear into our home. My husband was still the person I had fallen in love with and married, and I needed to stop punishing him. So I relaxed a little, rarely showing my disappointment, and when the hurt inside seemed unbearable, I became familiar with the distance from my pain to my knees.

During this time, my cousin, his wife, and their daughter relocated to our area. My cousin's wife and I became very close. At one point she shared intimate feelings with me about their experience losing a baby girl at an almost full-term pregnancy. While I couldn't say, "I know how you feel," I could tell her what I knew about the plan of happiness. I hoped that she would feel that what I was saying was true. She did. She joined the Church, and her husband, who was already a member, became active again. They were sealed a year following her baptism. I sobbed through the entire ceremony.

I felt as if my body were split in two. One half of me was doing backflips for them—I was so happy! But the other half was full of confusion: How was this happening so quickly for them? Had I not been working hard enough? Was this ever going to happen for my family?

We wanted to have another child, and I became pregnant—but then I miscarried. The pain in my heart seemed almost impossible to bear. Meanwhile (and unbeknownst to me), my husband's interest in the Church was growing. He had begun studying various events in Church history and was listening to recordings about the lives of modern-day prophets. Things were changing, little by little.

But I was too consumed in the pain of my loss to notice. Even though my pregnancy wasn't very far along when I miscarried, the experience was difficult emotionally and physically and left me feeling weak, tired, and numb. I distanced myself from my husband. I heard a continuing dialogue in my mind of what I would say to him if he asked me about my feelings, but I couldn't bring myself to talk

about my desire for an eternal family only to be disappointed again. I needed spiritual support that I feared he was not ready to offer.

He knew something was very wrong and asked me one day to share my feelings. The tears flowed freely as I poured out the desires of my heart. I said to him, "I want you to go to the temple when you're ready, but I need to know if you are with me on this or not, because I don't know if I can do this much longer."

The hurt on his face pierced me. He said, "When I followed the ambulance to the hospital when we lost the baby, I prayed more than I ever have in my whole life. And I've thought more about going to the temple in the last few months than I ever have. But sometimes I just don't know if I can make you happy because your expectations are so high." And then he left the room.

I suddenly felt the weight of what I had imposed on him. I reflected on the previous years that I held him to my standards instead of being satisfied with the pace that he was capable of maintaining. I thought about how many times I had silently punished him when I should have put my arms around him lovingly.

He came to me later and told me how much he loved me and that all he could promise was that he'd do his best. From then on I happily let him do just that. Before I knew it, we were sitting in the bishop's office sharing our goals.

We were sealed in the temple on November 26, 2005, and it was beautiful. Our sons were reverent yet bubbling over with excitement. Even our two-year-old radiated the knowledge that something really special was happening. Seeing them joined with us in the sealing brought tears to everyone in the room.

In retrospect, I realize that the timing was just what our family needed it to be. My husband was thinking about spiritual things a lot sooner—and a lot more—than I thought he was. We both wanted the same good things for our family.

My testimony of the Lord's temples and the ordinances performed there is stronger than ever. I am grateful that our family now has eternal opportunities. What I feel after our experience exceeds all the joy I ever imagined for us. ■

***My husband
was still
the person
I had fallen in love
with and married,
and I realized I
needed to stop
punishing him.***



Standing before
Carl Bloch's Painting
*Christ Healing the Sick
at the Pool of Bethesda*

BY
SHARON
PRICE
ANDERSON

*In the house of mercy,
Compassion, larger than life,
more powerful than
angel-troubled waters,
lifts the veil of illness,
impotence, strengthens
heart and legs, and
after thirty-eight infirm years,
makes them whole.*

*In Sabbath grace
Thou callest me
from my multitude of fears
to come from beneath
the cover of disbelief
into Thy healing light.
Heeding Thy command,
Rise, take up thy bed,
I will walk.*

Learning from Conference

Do you want to make the messages and spirit of general conference a regular part of your life? Read how these members are doing it.

In his closing remarks at the 177th Annual General Conference in April 2007, President Gordon B. Hinckley told members of the Church: “We hope that you will use the May edition of the Church magazines as a text for your family home evenings, to review that which has been spoken in this conference. What has been said by each of the speakers represents his or her prayerful attempt to impart knowledge that will inspire and cause all who have heard it to stand a little taller and be a little better” (*Ensign*, May 2007, 105). Here, members share how they have implemented that counsel and found additional ways to learn from general conference.

Putting the Lessons to Use Immediately

Our 10-year-old daughter, Rachel, was in charge of the family home evening lesson the Monday following the April 2007 general conference. She asked me what she should teach the family, and I suggested she choose something we learned over the week-end. She said she remembered Elder David A. Bednar’s talk about making pickles (“Ye Must Be Born Again,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 19), and although the

text of the conference talk was not yet available online, we brainstormed together to remember the message of the “Parable of the Pickle.”

That night Rachel taught a great lesson about being truly converted. Using Elder Bednar’s analogy, we discussed what happens to a cucumber that is merely dunked—not immersed—and how that relates to our lives and relationship with the Savior. Even our youngest daughter, who is three, paid attention because she loves pickles.

My wife and I were excited to see that our children did pay attention while watching conference and that we had found a way to put it to use in our lives the next day. We are thankful for living apostles and prophets who teach in ways that help all of us learn and understand.

Trevor Hansen, Arizona

Studying and Discussing

With our busy lives and schedules, preparing a lesson for family home evening every week is sometimes challenging. When our two youngest children were still at home—both of them teenagers—we started using the general conference talks for our weekly family home evening lessons. I order enough copies of the May and November *Ensign*



Using Elder Bednar’s pickle analogy, our daughter taught about how we become truly converted.

magazine for each family member to have a personal copy. We take turns choosing the talk to focus on, independently read the talk we've selected for the week, highlight the parts that impress us, and then discuss the talk as our lesson. The person who chose the talk leads the discussion and closes with his or her testimony. We then choose the talk for the following week.

This approach has completely taken away the last-minute panic of deciding what to do for family home evening and has led to many tender moments for us. It has truly been a blessing to our family and a way to help us remember and apply the messages of general conference.

Christy White, Utah

Note: A 14-issue subscription to the Ensign is available at www.ldscatalog.com. This subscription includes 12 monthly issues of the Ensign plus one extra copy of the May and November issues (which include the talks delivered at general conference), for a total of 14 issues. You can also purchase single copies of the Ensign at this site.

Hearing the Voice of the Messenger

I have had the privilege of sharing family home evening for the past two years with two other single sisters in my ward. We use both the conference DVD and the conference edition of the *Ensign* as the basis for our lessons. Each Monday we watch one talk from the DVD and then discuss the message. (We take turns from week to week in leading the discussion.)

In doing this, we are able to concentrate on one message at a time. Because we are not only discussing the message but also listening to the voice of the messenger and to the music of that conference session, we get so much more out of our family home evenings than we previously have!

Although I listen carefully when I attend conference, I find it difficult to assimilate all of the information, gospel principles, and life lessons at once. Our family home evening format helps us learn the things our General Authorities are teaching "line upon line, precept upon precept" (2 Nephi 28:30) during the six months that follow each conference.

Julie Junod, Arizona

Helping Children Learn from Conference

Our family enjoyed experiencing general conference together this year. On Saturday we attended both sessions

at our branch meetinghouse. On Sunday we watched the sessions at home via the Web site LDS.org.

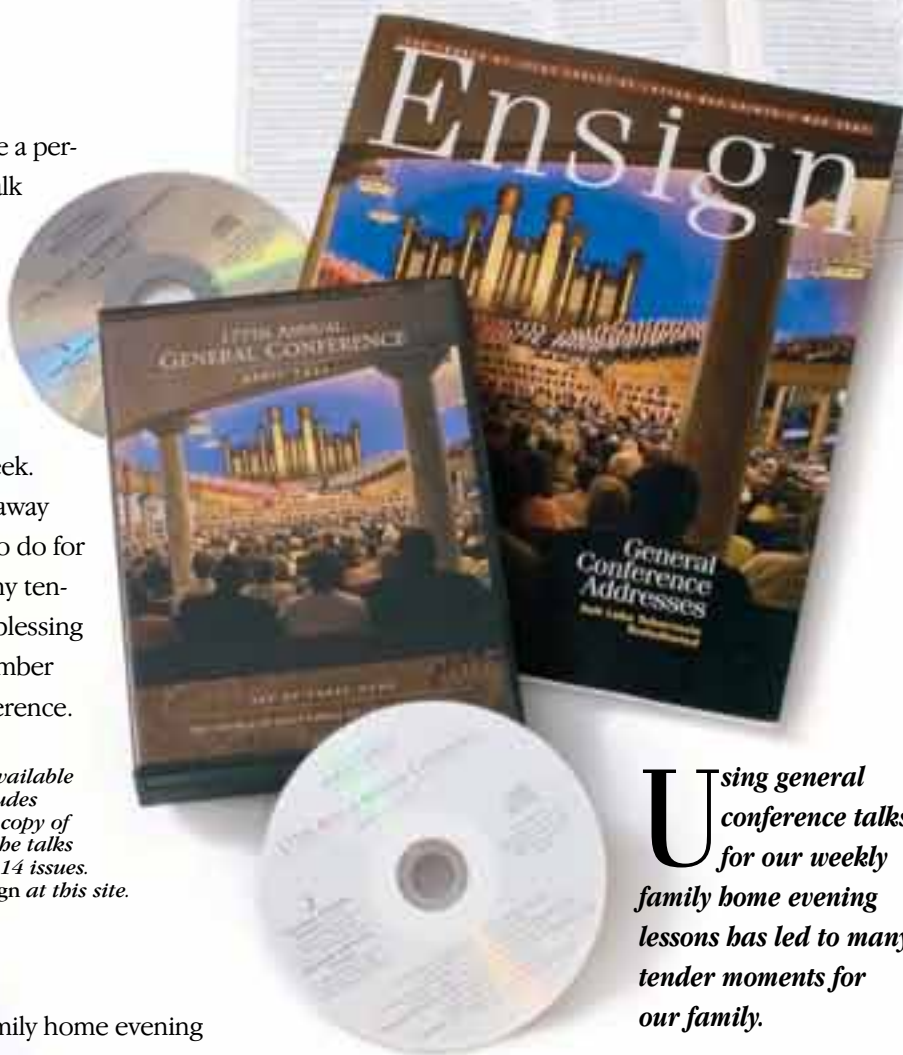
I wanted to find something that would help our children, ages six and four, pay attention to what the speakers were saying. With a little online searching in the Gospel Library, I found a conference word sheet activity (see Hilary Hendricks and Kathy Chatfield, "Listen to Our Leaders," *Friend*, Apr. 2002, 24). The children and I listened carefully for the words on our lists, making a check mark each time we heard a particular word. Our children enjoyed the game and were excited every time they heard a familiar word. I was amazed at how much they enjoyed paying attention and listening to our leaders. As I helped them listen for words and noticed which ones received the most check marks, I also understood better the basic message of each talk.


Jenifer Fugal, Michigan

Using Talks in Family Home Evening

In the April 2007 conference, Elder Richard G. Scott gave a talk about prayer ("Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer," *Ensign*, May 2007, 8). He spoke in simple terms that even

Using general conference talks for our weekly family home evening lessons has led to many tender moments for our family.





our young children understood. Elder Scott's talk was particularly meaningful to us since we had a chance to meet him a few years ago at our stake conference.

Following general conference, we had a family home evening with our extended family, including a less-active family member. The lesson focused on Elder Scott's talk, and it was a wonderful, engaging experience for us. We look forward to using more conference talks as topical discussions in both our individual and extended family home evenings.

Jim Worden, California

Writing Down Key Words

Chinese is my native language, but I watched conference in English this year. I tried my best to write down key words that would remind me of what I had heard and, more important, what I had felt. These phrases have served as a helpful reminder in the weeks following general conference.

Even after conference is over, I love listening to conference addresses again and again. In the past I've purchased the DVDs, sometimes in Chinese, sometimes in English. Regardless of which language I'm listening in, my heart is always touched. Each time, my faith improves, and my testimony grows.

Pei Yi (Belinda) Norberg, Utah

Acting Out the Story

With two toddler children, my husband and I often find that family home evening can be challenging. The children have a difficult time sitting quietly to hear scriptures or stories for very long. As we attempted to read the story of Joseph F. Smith's dream from President Hinckley's priesthood talk (see "I Am Clean," *Ensign*, May 2007, 60–62), things seemed to be as chaotic as ever.

Then we decided to have the children act out the story as my husband read it. We went into the bathroom and showed them the bathtub and talked about how Joseph F.

Smith washed himself clean. They liked uncovering the "bundle" I had made and finding the white shirt I had placed inside. We talked about how repentance makes our spirits clean like the white shirt. Our daughter enjoyed putting on the shirt and knocking at the front door to find "Joseph Smith" (me) there. She was happy to report that she was "clean."

It was a lot of fun to participate together, and my husband and I enjoyed teaching the children. We were able to focus less on trying to keep the children quiet and more on teaching gospel principles.

Rebekah Jakeman, Utah

Creating Reminder Notes

I used to take extensive notes during conference, but I decided this wasn't effective since the talks are printed in the *Ensign*. Instead of concentrating on writing down every point that is made, I now use a couple of note cards to jot down the promptings I feel while I am listening to the counsel of the General Authorities. I keep the cards in small page holders near my computer monitor. That way, I see them daily and am reminded that it's not just what we know or how we feel during conference but what we do to apply it that matters. Keeping these reminder notes has helped me form better habits based on the promptings I feel.

Karen Tibbitts, California

Listening Frequently

I love general conference! Yet with two young children, concentrating during 10 hours over a weekend can be a challenge for my wife and me, although we try. One thing that helps me internalize the messages is downloading the talks to my digital music player and listening to them as I commute to work, exercise, or do tasks around the house. Many moments of inspiration have come in those ordinary contexts. Recently I was doing the dishes as I listened to Elder Henry B.

Eyring's talk "This Day" (*Ensign*, May 2007, 89), and I felt impressed that I needed to stop complaining about a certain trial I had been facing. I've sought to heed that impression. Another time, following the October 2006 general conference, I was jogging through the park listening to Elder Robert D. Hales's talk "Holy Scriptures: The Power of God unto Our Salvation." One of Elder Hales's comments particularly stood out to me: "When we want to speak to God, we pray. And when we want Him to speak to us, we search the scriptures" (*Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 26–27). This has stayed with me and affected the way I think about my scripture study.

General conference talks are a source of inspiration to me and invite the Spirit into my life—even long after the closing session's benediction.

David Evans, California

Uniting Extended Family

While two of my five siblings are still at home and still participate in weekly family home evenings with Mom and Dad, the rest of us are now married and living throughout the United States, and we conduct our own family home evenings. But twice a year, to reinforce the important lessons of general conference and to unite the members of our family, even in spite of distance, my parents hold "Conference Review."



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Consider having a family member walk blindfolded across the room trying to avoid certain objects. Then repeat the same activity but have another family member tell the one blindfolded how to get around the objects. Explain how heeding the words of the prophet and apostles can guide us through our lives.

2. Using the examples from the article, list ways that your family can apply the lessons they learn from general conference in their daily lives.

The text for each of these meetings is the most recent general conference edition of the *Ensign*. Each household chooses a talk to study, apply, and teach to the rest of the family. To present our lessons to one another, we get together via speaker phone, e-mail, or video conference, depending on what circumstances allow. If we are really lucky, we sit down together in Mom and Dad's living room.

Each presentation is unique to the family giving it. We have told

stories, solved puzzles, played games, and studied scriptures as part of Conference Review.

During our most recent review, my seven-year-old sister held up pictures of cucumbers and pickles as she taught us about pickling. Then my fourteen-year-old sister explained how each of those steps applies to the conversion process. Through this, we learned more about the doctrine that Elder David A.

Bednar taught (see "Ye Must Be Born Again," *Ensign*, May 2007, 19).

At the same review, my sister and brother-in-law used "The Tongue of Angels," given by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, to remind us of the power of our words (see *Ensign*, May 2007, 16). They then provided each of us with envelopes addressed to other members of our family and challenged us to write notes of gratitude and kind words to one another. These are just two examples of how the tradition of Conference Review helps our family review, remember, and apply the teachings of general conference.

Through this tradition we have grown closer as a family, shared our testimonies with one another, challenged each other to live the counsel given at each general conference, and increased our love for the Savior and His gospel. ■

Tiffany Jean Costley Moore, Arizona

Note: Many of the general conference resources mentioned in this article—and others—are available for purchase online at www.ldscatalog.com. You can also find free text, audio, and video files of conference proceedings online at www.lds.org.

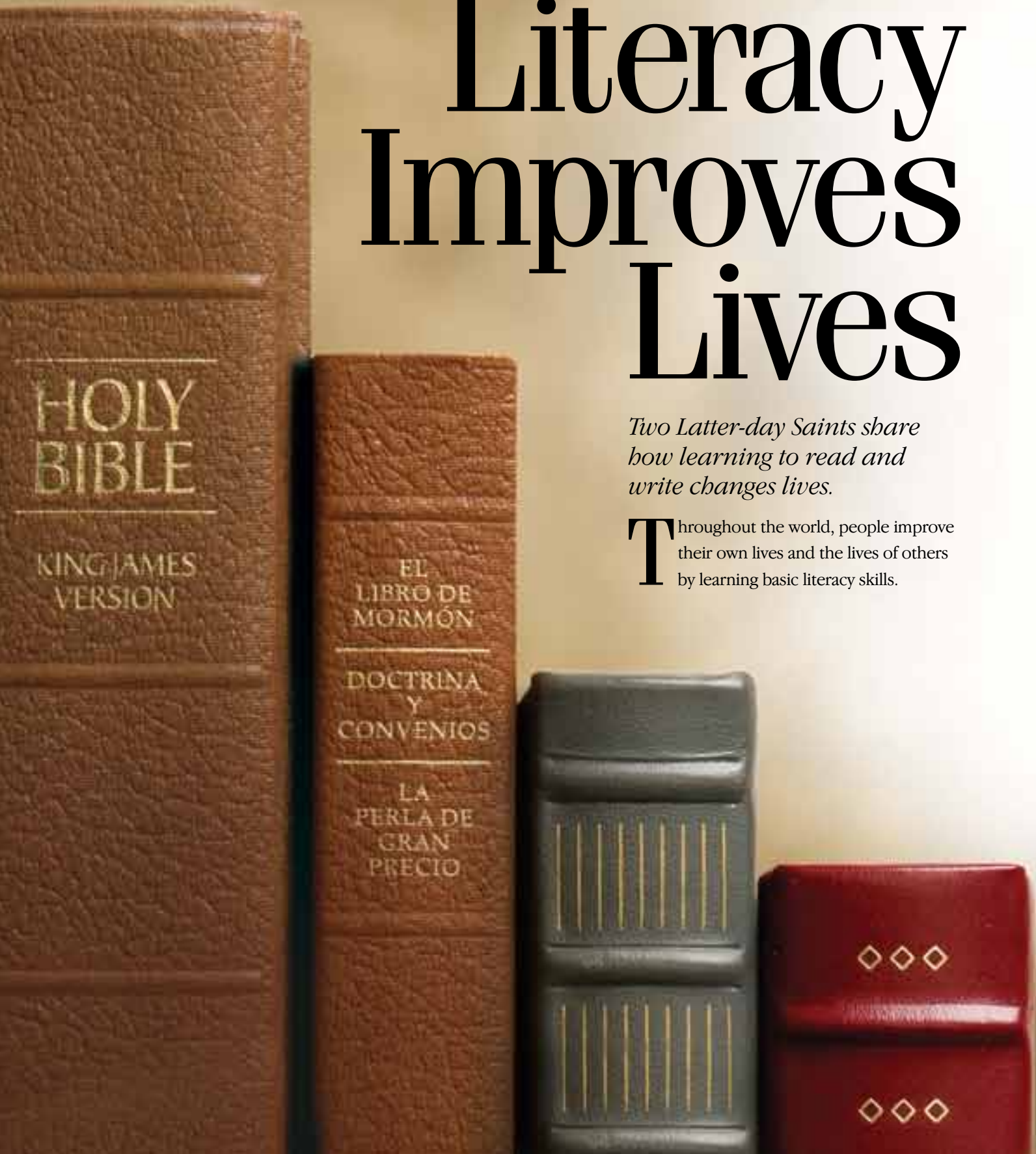
Listening to conference talks as I exercise, commute, or do tasks around the house has brought moments of inspiration during otherwise ordinary routines.



Literacy Improves Lives

*Two Latter-day Saints share
how learning to read and
write changes lives.*

Throughout the world, people improve their own lives and the lives of others by learning basic literacy skills.



A Love of Learning

Shirley Florence Sainz, who was born in Mexico, tells the story of how her mother's struggle to become literate became a blessing to others:

"When my mother, Anita Valenzuela Mendoza, was two years old, my grandfather died in a mining accident, leaving my grandmother with their eight children and little means to care for them. My grandmother could not read, write, or understand numbers.

"When my mother was six years old, she had the privilege of attending school, though she did not have pencils, paper, or books. Nevertheless, she loved learning, so she embroidered napkins, swept the classroom, and brought in firewood as a way to earn paper. At home, my grandmother stitched the sheets of precious newsprint paper together into a notebook for my mother.

"The teachers appreciated my mother's eagerness. Overlooking her worn-out clothes

and unruly hair, they nourished her hunger for knowledge. At the end of her elementary school years, the family of one of her schoolteachers offered my mother an opportunity for more schooling. However, she was unable to go, and her formal education ended.

"Years later, when my mother was 27, her education blossomed when she met my father and he introduced her to the gospel. She loved learning through reading the scriptures. Relief Society also provided many opportunities for her to increase her knowledge.

"My mother instilled a love for learning in me, and I have graduated from college and am an elementary schoolteacher myself. In two generations, our family has been greatly blessed because, as a young girl, my mother learned to read and write. Her literacy skills opened the door for her to understand and embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ. As a result, all of my mother's posterity has been blessed."

A Gospel Literacy Class

Sister Sainz's story is not unique. When people learn to read and write, they can grow in understanding of the gospel and bless the lives of others. Learning basic literacy skills helped Paul Imiethehe of Nigeria, a convert to the Church, to better understand and share the gospel. He recalls:

"I joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Warri, Nigeria. My membership in the Church made me realize the need to learn to read and write. When my priesthood leaders extended assignments to me to give talks and say prayers, I would stay away from church. It was such a source of shame for me.



WE CAN HELP

"I have done a little study on literacy in the world. A billion of the [six] billion people on earth cannot read or write. . . . What a

tragedy—what a stark, miserable, and dark tragedy. To not be able to read, to understand, to write—what a tragedy. We can help to lift this curse. Things can be brought to pass to change this intolerable condition."

President Gordon B. Hinckley, *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 314.



My grandmother
Carmen

Mendoza could not read or write," says Shirley Sainz, who has a college degree. "In two generations, our family has been greatly blessed because, as a young girl in Mexico, my mother learned to read and write."

Above, standing: Shirley's mother, Anita; Uncle Anselmo. Seated: Shirley's grandmother Carmen Mendoza; Anselmo's wife, Delfina, and their two children.



Paul Imietehe, a Nigerian sculptor, says, *"Gospel literacy has built in me a strong desire to improve my formal education. It has also helped me understand the gospel better and made me better able to serve others."*

"When I moved to Abuja, I saw Church books and magazines, and I felt a strong need to know how to read and write. I desired to read these publications that other members were reading and were happy about. Most of the Church members there gladly expressed themselves, sharing their testimonies of the gospel, and I wanted to be able to express the strong feelings I have of the truthfulness of the gospel. I knew then that I had to learn to read and write.

"One Sunday I decided to attend the Sunday School gospel literacy class. On my first day in class, I saw that the other students were mainly sisters and younger boys. I was the only adult man in the class. I was tempted to leave, but my strong desire to learn kept me there. Our teacher encouraged each of us to participate in reading from the gospel literacy manual and from the scriptures.

"I put much effort into learning to read. I read the scriptures and Church magazines. My understanding improved when I was called as second counselor in the Idu Branch Sunday School presidency. Initially, I was doubtful about my abilities. But as I was set apart, the branch president pronounced a blessing that I would have the ability to magnify the calling. During the setting apart, I had a feeling of confidence.

"Two weeks later, I was given the assignment to teach adult Sunday School. Although I worried about my abilities, I prepared all week long when I returned home from work and even during my break at work. When Sunday came and it was time to teach, I said a short silent prayer and asked Heavenly Father to lead me. When I opened my mouth to speak, I was surprised that the words just flowed. I thought I would stammer but did not.

"Most of the class members are more educated than I am, but their responses and the expressions on their faces encouraged me. I felt at peace throughout the class.

"Gospel literacy has built in me a strong desire to improve my formal education. It has also helped me understand the gospel better and made me better able to serve others.

"I am a sculptor by vocation and am working with a construction company, where I use my woodworking skills. In Nigeria, we have a proverb that says, 'The axe we use in tearing wood is so important we carry it with two hands and rest it on our shoulder.' The axe is too important to set down. That's how I feel about the Church and gospel literacy. I carry them with my two hands and my shoulder and cannot put them down.

"I am thankful for my branch leaders who encouraged me to learn, especially Brother Lawrence Monyei, my gospel literacy teacher."

Brother Imietehe learned to read and write in his gospel literacy class, and as a result his confidence grew and his testimony of the gospel became stronger. He has since blessed the lives of many members of his branch.

Can You Help?

The gospel literacy student manual, *Ye Shall Have My Words* (item no. 34476), is available in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. Those who could benefit most from it cannot read these words. Can you help them? ■



ABOVE: PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANCIS ONYEBUEZE NMERIBE

HOLIDAY TIPS FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

When Elizabeth Lewis was serving in the U.S. military in Alaska during Christmas, she turned to her Alaskan ward for support. “Participating in the Relief Society’s Christmas activity deepened the holiday spirit in my heart,” she says. “I spent Christmas Eve with one family and Christmas Day with another. The ward members were truly like my family. E-mailing the pictures of the celebrations to my husband back home in Nebraska lessened the distance that separated us. When I returned home, my husband and I celebrated as if it were Christmas Day. That year I received the gift of two Christmases.”

Sister Lewis is one of many women and men in the military who find themselves temporally separated from their families. The following are suggestions from her and others that can help bring joy and peace during the holiday season to military personnel and their families.

1. Strive to draw closer to the Savior. This increases your spirituality and results in positive experiences for the entire family.

2. Consider using telephone calls, e-mail, and other forms of Internet and Web cam communication so that the family member who has been deployed can participate in scripture study, family prayers, and family home evening.

3. Display pictures of the loved one who is away. This can help young children stay connected to their parent.

4. Families at home can build friendships with ward members throughout the year, especially if they have

children of similar ages. These friendships can provide support beyond the holidays.

5. Continue to observe family traditions or create new ones that involve the family member who is away.

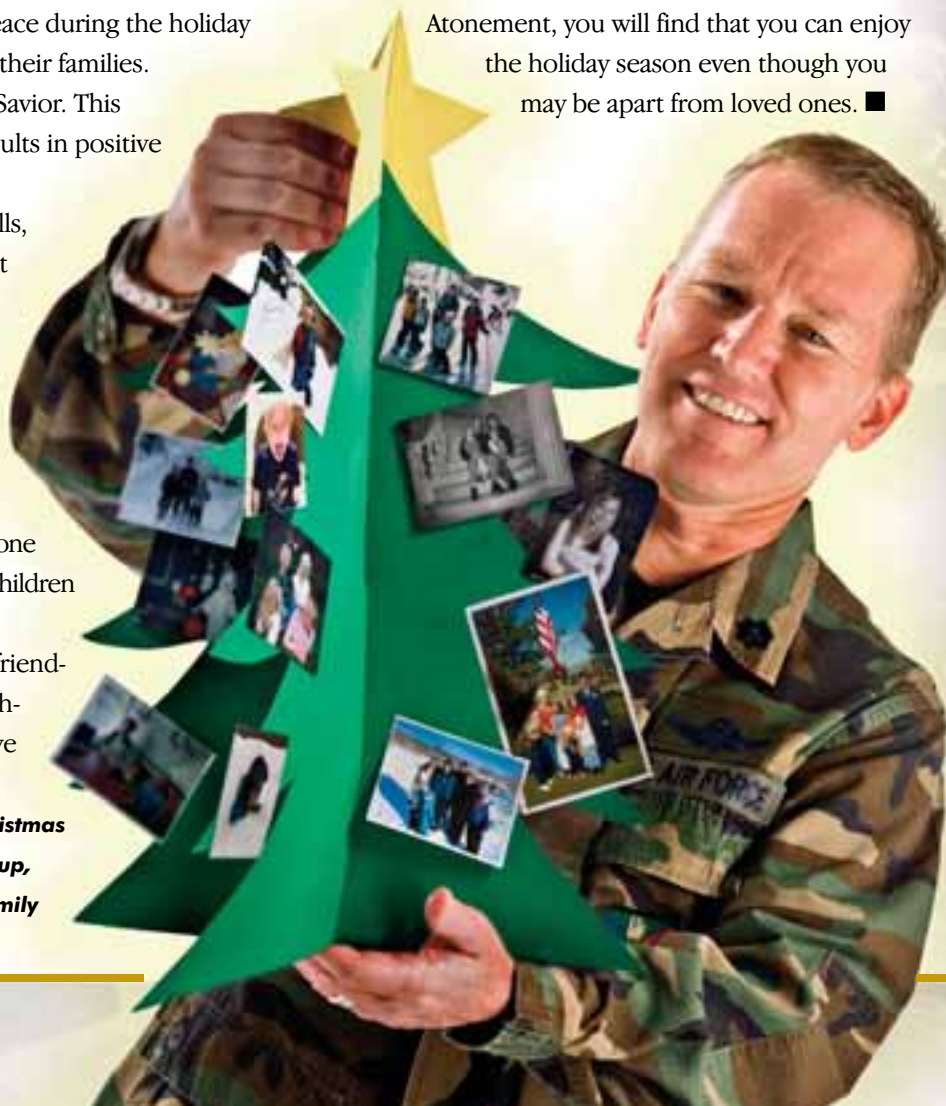
6. Lose yourself in service. This is a great way to dispel the blues during the holidays or any time.

7. If you are the deployed parent, communicate frequently with each of your children one-on-one.

8. Set up decorations while deployed. They foster the Christmas spirit and will remind you of Christ’s love and the joy He wants you to feel during this season.

Remember the true reason we celebrate Christmas—the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. As you rejoice at His birth and ponder the significance of His Atonement, you will find that you can enjoy the holiday season even though you may be apart from loved ones. ■

One family sent their soldier a Christmas tree made from paper. He hung it up, and everyone decorated it with family pictures.



🎨 **Touch Me Not, 1939, oil on canvas, 76½ x 59¾ inches**

"Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20:17).

🎨 **Handcart Pioneers at the Waterfall, circa 1940, oil on canvas, 77 x 49 inches**

Between 1856 and 1860, 10 handcart companies crossed the American plains from Iowa to the Salt Lake Valley. Handcarts were a less expensive and faster mode of travel than covered wagons and were used to help the increasing number of emigrants from England and Scandinavia travel to Zion.

M. Teichert

ARTIST OF DRAMATIC VISION

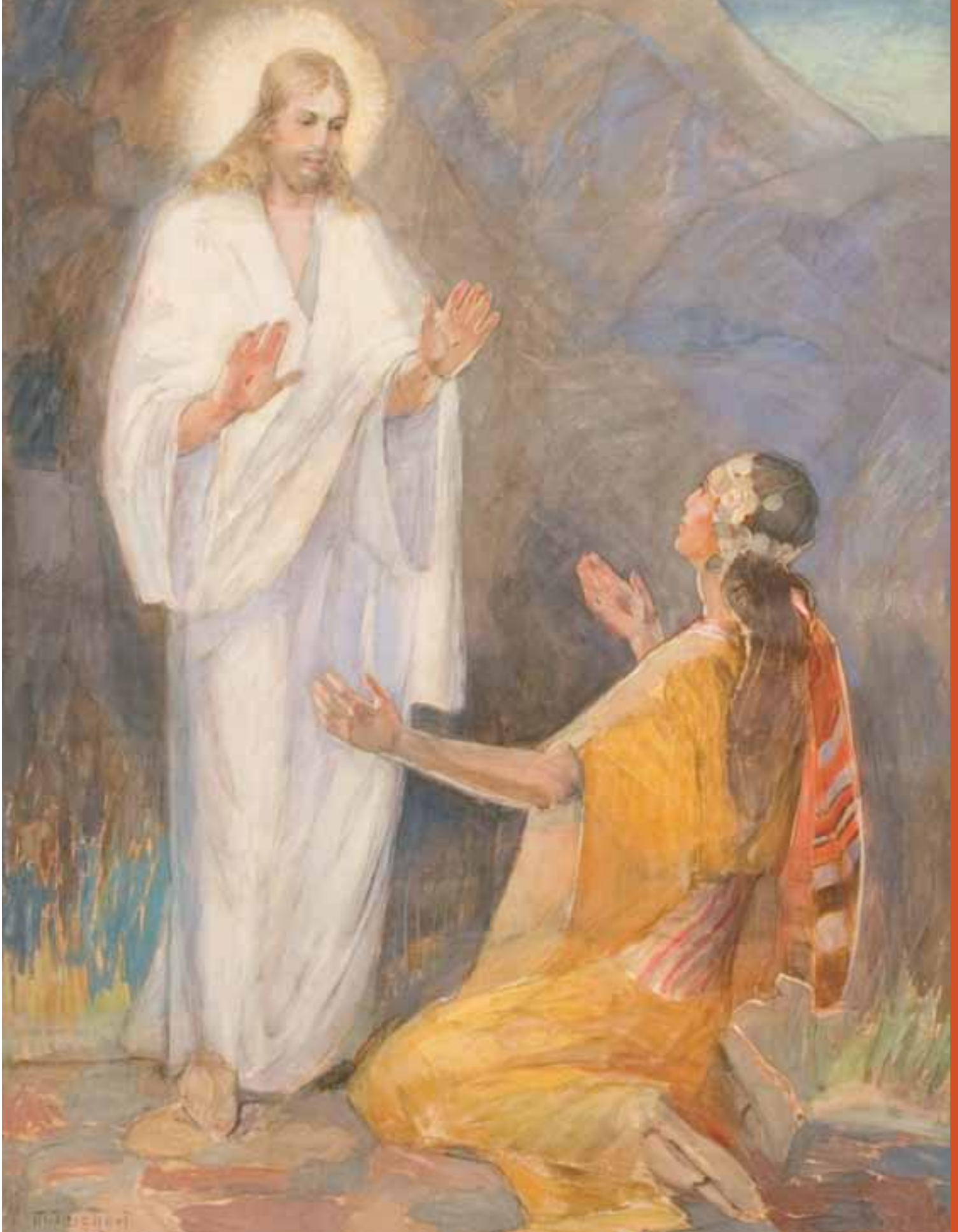
When Latter-day Saint artist Minerva Teichert attended the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League of New York in the early 1900s, mural paintings and theatrical pageants were dynamic components of American popular culture. Young Minerva embraced these popular art forms and used their dramatic style to tell the stories of her religious heritage and the American West.

Though Minerva had grown up in rural Cokeville, Wyoming, drama, theater, and cinema had played a significant role in her life. Her love of these art forms continued after she left home. In Chicago she studied drama and dance along with her visual art studies. In New York she helped earn her tuition by performing rope tricks and Native American dances.

Minerva became captivated by the educational potential of large murals in public buildings and their capacity to be seen by great numbers of people from a distance. During Minerva's studies in New York, noted American realist painter Robert Henri challenged her to paint the "great Mormon story." With that goal she painted many theatrical depictions of Mormon pioneers, the West, and Book of Mormon scenes.

Forty-seven of Minerva Teichert's large-scale narrative murals are on display at the Brigham Young University Museum of Art in Provo, Utah, from July 27, 2007, through May 26, 2008. Copies of some of these murals and large-scale paintings follow.







Love Story, 1950–51,
oil on masonite, 36 x 48 inches

“And it came to pass that I, Nephi, took one of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also, my brethren took of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also Zoram took the eldest daughter of Ishmael to wife” (1 Nephi 16:7).

Return of Captive Israel, 1945,
oil on canvas, 53 ½ x 90 inches

After the Jews had been held in captivity for 70 years in Babylon, “the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia,” and the king allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.

King Cyrus said: “Let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold,



● An Angel Appears to Alma and the Sons of Mosiah, 1950–51, oil on masonite, 36 x 48 inches

"Now the sons of Mosiah were numbered among the unbelievers; and also one of the sons of Alma. . . .

"... Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto them; and he descended as it were in a cloud; and he spake as it were with a voice of thunder; which caused the earth to shake upon which they stood;

"And so great was their astonishment, that they fell to the earth" (Mosiah 27:8, 11–12).

● Get Ye Up into the High Mountain, O Zion, 1949, oil on canvas, 42 x 60 inches

Music has always been an important part of the Latter-day Saint experience. The Lord said, "My soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads" (D&C 25:12). ■

COURTESY OF THE BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



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and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. . . .

"All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. And these did Sheshbazzar [the prince of Judah] bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:1, 4, 11).

Helping Those Who Struggle with Same-Gender Attraction



You have a loved one or friend who struggles with same-gender attraction and asks for your help. What do you say? What can you do?

BY ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

A pleasant young man in his early 20s sat across from me. He had an engaging smile, although he didn't smile often during our talk. What drew me in was the pain in his eyes.

"I don't know if I should remain a member of the Church," he said. "I don't think I'm worthy."

"Why wouldn't you be worthy?" I asked.

"I'm gay."

I suppose he thought I would be startled. I wasn't. "And . . . ?" I inquired.

A flicker of relief crossed his face as he sensed my continued interest. "I'm not attracted to women. I'm attracted to men. I've tried to ignore these feelings or change them, but . . ."

He sighed. "Why am I this way? The feelings are very real."

I paused, then said, "I need a little more information before advising you. You see, same-gender attraction is not a sin, but acting on those feelings is—just as it would be with heterosexual feelings. Do you violate the law of chastity?"

He shook his head. "No, I don't."

This time I was relieved. "Thank you for wanting to deal with this," I said. "It takes

courage to talk about it, and I honor you for keeping yourself clean.

"As for why you feel as you do, I can't answer that question. A number of factors may be involved, and they can be as different as people are different. Some things, including the cause of your feelings, we may never know in this life. But knowing why you feel as you do isn't as important as knowing you have not transgressed. If your life is in harmony with the commandments, then you are worthy to serve in the Church, enjoy full fellowship with the members, attend the temple, and receive all the blessings of the Savior's Atonement."

He sat up a little straighter. I continued, "You serve yourself poorly when you identify yourself primarily by your sexual feelings. That isn't your only characteristic, so don't give it disproportionate attention. You are first and foremost a son of God, and He loves you.

"What's more, I love you. My Brethren among the General Authorities love you. I'm reminded of a comment President Boyd K. Packer made in speaking to those with same-gender attraction. 'We *do not* reject you,' he said. 'We *cannot* reject you, for you are the sons and daughters of God. We *will not* reject you, because we love you.'"¹

We talked for another 30 minutes or so. Knowing I could not be a personal counselor

to him, I directed him to his local priesthood leaders. Then we parted. I thought I detected a look of hope in his eyes that had not been there before. Although he yet faced challenges to work through—or simply endure—I had a feeling he would handle them well.

God Loveth His Children

When an angel asked Nephi a question about God, Nephi answered, “I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things” (1 Nephi 11:17). I too affirm that God loves *all* His children and acknowledge that many questions, including some related to same-gender attraction, must await a future answer, perhaps in the next life.

Unfortunately, some people believe they have all the answers now and declare their opinions far and wide. Fortunately, such people do not speak for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Although I believe members are eager to extend compassion to those different from themselves, it is human

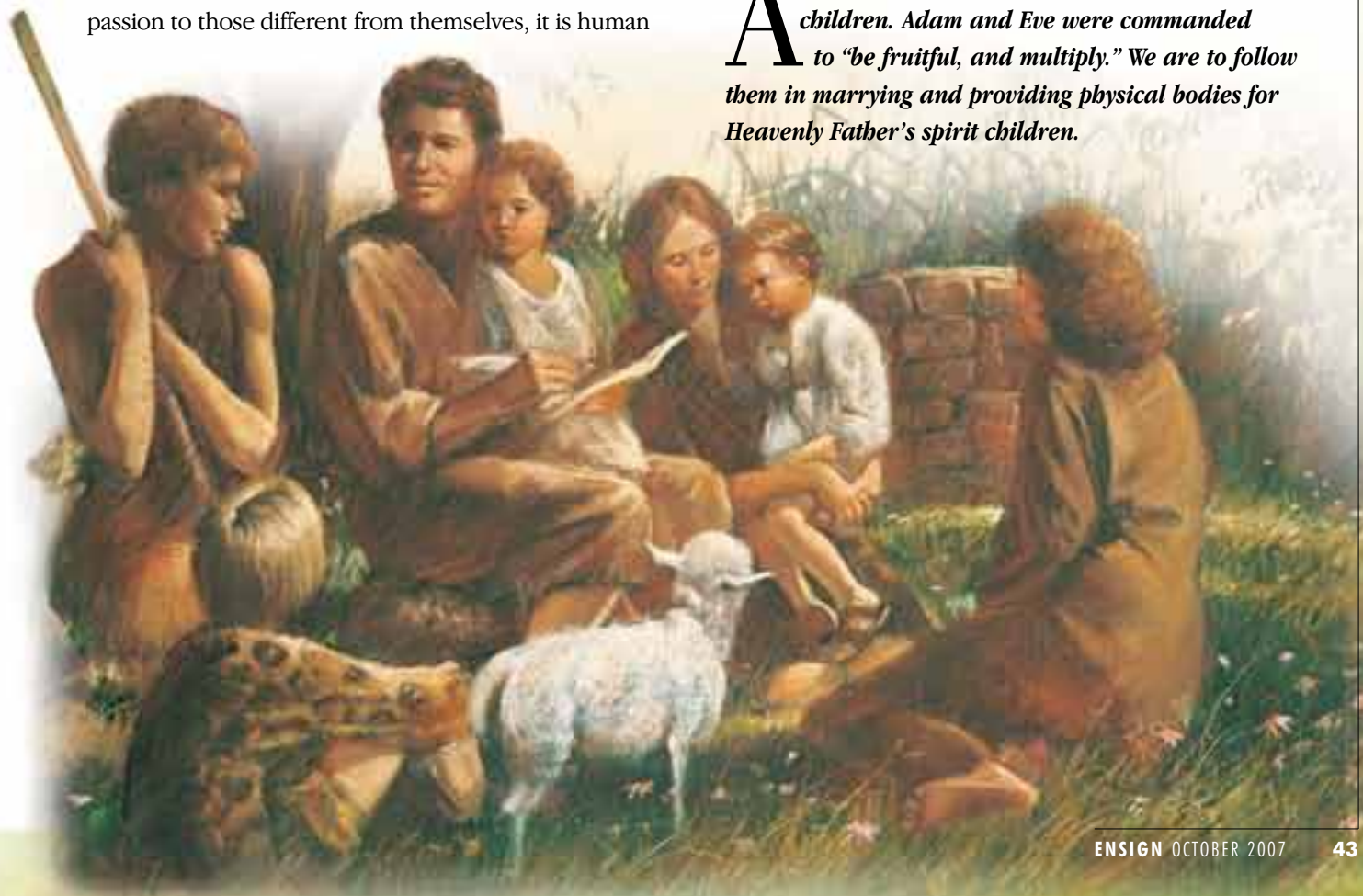
nature that when confronted with a situation we don’t understand, we tend to withdraw. This is particularly true of same-gender attraction. We have so little reliable information about it that those wanting to help are left feeling a bit unsteady. Admitting my own inadequacy in this regard but wanting to assist, let me offer some suggestions to help those who have loved ones or friends who are attracted to the same gender.

Our Father’s Plan of Happiness

First, let’s be absolutely clear on what God wants for each of us. He wants us to have all of the blessings of eternal life. He wants us to become like Him. To help us do that, He has given us a plan. This plan is based on eternal truths and is not altered according to the social trends of the day.

At the heart of this plan is the begetting of children, one

A *t the heart of God’s plan is the begetting of children. Adam and Eve were commanded to “be fruitful, and multiply.” We are to follow them in marrying and providing physical bodies for Heavenly Father’s spirit children.*



of the crucial reasons Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden (see 2 Nephi 2:19–25; Moses 5:10–12). They were commanded to “be fruitful, and multiply” (Moses 2:28), and they chose to keep that commandment. We are to follow them in marrying and providing physical bodies for Heavenly Father’s spirit children. Obviously, a same-gender relationship is inconsistent with this plan.

For various reasons, marriage and children are not immediately available to all. Perhaps no offer of marriage is forthcoming. Perhaps even after marriage there is an inability to have children. Or perhaps there is no present attraction to the opposite gender. Whatever the reason, God’s richest blessings will eventually be available to all of His children if they are clean and faithful.

Through the exercise of faith, individual effort, and reliance upon the power of the Atonement, some may resolve same-gender attraction in mortality and marry. Others, however, may never be free of same-gender attraction in this life.

As fellow Church members, families, and friends, we need to recognize that those attracted to the same gender face some unique restrictions regarding expression of their feelings. While same-gender attraction is real, there must be no physical expression of this attraction. The desire for physical gratification does not authorize immorality by anyone. Such feelings can be powerful, but they are never so strong as to deprive anyone of the freedom to choose worthy conduct.

In saying this, let me make it clear that attractions alone, troublesome as they may be, do not make one unworthy. The First Presidency has stated, “There is a distinction between immoral thoughts and feelings and participating in either immoral heterosexual or any homosexual behavior.”² If you do not act on temptations, you have not transgressed.

The failure to see that distinction sometimes leads to despair. I ache for those who do not understand that every

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Some of the ideas and language in this article come from a booklet prepared by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for those attracted to the same gender. It is titled *God Loveth His Children* (item no. 04824). If the booklet is available in your language, you can obtain a copy from your local distribution center or download it from www.lds.org/same-gender-attraction.

blessing offered by God is available to anyone who obeys the laws upon which those blessings are predicated (see D&C 130:20–21). No one who lives the gospel should despair. Hope and peace come from the Comforter, and the answer to despair is to invite the Holy Ghost into our lives.

Ways to Help

Let’s assume you are the family member or friend of someone with same-gender attraction who comes to you for help. What do you say? What do you do?

I’d begin by recognizing the courage that brought your son, daughter, sibling, or friend to you. I’d recognize the trust that person has extended. Discussing the issue with someone of trust is a healthy first step to dealing with confusing feelings, and it is imperative that these first steps be met with compassion.

Next, if you are a parent of one with same-gender attraction, don’t assume you are the reason for those feelings. No one, including the one struggling, should try to shoulder blame. Nor should anyone place blame on another—including God. Walk by faith, and help your loved one deal the best he or she can with this challenge.

In doing so, recognize that marriage is not an all-purpose solution. Same-gender attractions run deep, and trying to force a heterosexual relationship is not likely to change them. We are all thrilled when some who struggle with these feelings are able to marry, raise children, and achieve family happiness. But other attempts have resulted in broken hearts and broken homes.

Above all, keep your lines of communication open. Open communication between parents and children is a clear expression of love, and pure love, generously expressed, can transform family ties. But love for a family member does not extend to condoning unrighteous behavior. Your children are welcome to stay in your home, of course, but you have every right to exclude from your dwelling any behavior that offends the Spirit of the Lord.

The Garden Principle

Next, consider a principle learned in gardening. Someone said that if we plant a garden with good seed, there will not be so much need of the hoe. Likewise, if we fill our lives with spiritual nourishment, we can more easily gain control over inclinations. This means creating a positive environment in our homes in which the Spirit is abundantly evident. A positive environment includes consistent private and public worship, prayer, fasting, scripture reading, service, and exposure to uplifting conversation, music, literature, and other media.

This same environment extends to experiences at church. Some with same-gender attractions have unresolved fears and are offended at church when no offense is intended. On the other hand, some members exclude from their circle of fellowship those who are different. When our actions or words discourage someone from taking full advantage of Church membership, we fail them—and the Lord. The Church is made stronger as we include

Planting a garden with strong, healthy plants will help keep weeds under control. Likewise, if we fill our lives with the spiritual nourishment God has provided, we can more easily gain control over our inclinations.

every member and strengthen one another in service and love (see D&C 84:110).

You may feel prompted to encourage the one you are trying to help to visit with a priesthood leader who holds the keys of inspired counsel. Please do so, knowing that the First Presidency has asked Church leaders to discuss these matters confidentially and in a spirit of Christlike love.³

In the Lord's Hands

Not long ago I received a letter from a man in his early 30s who struggles with same-gender attraction. His struggle has not been easy, and he has not yet married. But, he wrote, "the Lord has helped me face my current circumstances, and I am content to do my best and leave my life in His hands."

I weep with admiration and respect at the faith and courage of such a man who is living with a challenge I have never faced. I love him and the thousands like him, male or female, who "fight the good fight" (1 Timothy 6:12). I commend his attitude to all who struggle with—or who are helping others who struggle with—same-gender attraction. ■

NOTES

1. "Ye Are the Temple of God," *Liabona*, Jan. 2001, 87; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 74.
2. First Presidency letter, Nov. 14, 1991.
3. See First Presidency letter, Nov. 14, 1991.



“I Will Not Leave You Comfortless”



The Lord's promise that we can be truly comforted is more significant than we know.

BY ELDER CECIL O. SAMUELSON JR.
Of the Seventy

All of us who believe in Jesus Christ take some consolation in the assurances of the Savior that He will assist us in times of need—that He will bring us comfort. While we accept this basic assertion, we may also be a little like His initial Apostles who, while believing in Him, were confused or unsure about what some of His teachings really meant in their everyday lives. Stated another way, even the Apostles were uncomfortable sometimes.

As Jesus began to teach His followers about the necessity of His leaving them for a time, their discomfort increased. Sensing this, He made specific promises to them that He would eventually return and also that He would provide them with a “Comforter” in His absence (see John 14:16–18).

Members of the Church in our day receive a similar promise as we partake of the sacrament weekly. We reverently partake of the bread in remembrance of the body of the Son and witness to Heavenly Father that we are willing to take upon us the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, with the promise we make to always remember Him and keep His

commandments. If we do so, then we have the promise in return that we “may always have his Spirit to be with [us]” (D&C 20:77). In my judgment, this is real comfort!

Most of us don’t dispute the principle or even its promise. Rather, we accept it but also may worry about how to really and reliably cause it to happen in our lives. We can narrow the gap between our doctrinal understandings and our personal applications of the doctrine. What I suggest will likely be helpful with any number of these kinds of issues, but I want to discuss what we can do to realize the Savior’s promise “I will not leave you comfortless” (John 14:18).

Qualifying for Spiritual Comfort

In recent training meetings with General Authorities, President James E. Faust talked about the necessity of our leaders having the Spirit to guide them. What he said also should apply to each of us. He made some suggestions about how we can more surely qualify to receive the blessings of the Spirit or to be spiritually comforted.

First, we need to live so that we can merit the guidance of the Spirit. This means that we



need to repent regularly of the mistakes we make and the sins we commit so that we are not living with unresolved issues that impede spiritual promptings.

For many of our missteps, our repentance can be private or limited to those we have injured. For particularly serious offenses, it is necessary that we confess to our bishop and seek his assistance in the necessary repentance process. The inspired order of the first principles and ordinances of the gospel found in the fourth article of faith reminds us that faith and repentance not only precede the ordinances of baptism and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost but also must come before the remission of sins is possible and before constant ministrations of the Spirit in our daily lives can occur.

I*f we reverently partake of the sacrament with the promise to always remember Him and keep His commandments, then we have the promise in return that we “may always have his Spirit to be with [us].”*

Second, we must never be complacent but must always try harder. I am not suggesting that we should become victims of perfectionism, which can by itself be debilitating. I *am* suggesting that each of us really can do better in most areas of our lives as we attempt to keep our thoughts and actions more consistent with the Savior's example and direction for us.

Third, we need to exercise more faith. President Faust used the example of the children of Israel led by Joshua who were required to carry the Ark of the Covenant across the Jordan River. The miracle of holding back the water so that they could pass on dry ground with the Ark of the Covenant did not occur until the soles of their feet actually touched the water (see Joshua 3:13). Exercising faith is not easy work, and we are prone to forget that achieving the benefits of faith actually requires that we exercise faith.

Fourth, we need to purge ourselves of personal aggrandizement. In other words, we need to do what is right because it is right and not to bring attention or undue credit to ourselves. Remember the Savior's counsel on giving alms: "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know

If you do not pay fast offerings regularly, resolve to do so even if you can afford to give only the cost of an apple or an egg.

what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:3–4). We need to do the right things for the right reasons.

Fifth, we must beware of pride and flattery. Satan knows that most are not likely to commit major crimes or even the most serious sins. But he also knows that most of us are easily tempted by pride or addicted to flattery. We must be careful to keep both feet on the ground.

Sixth, we should be humble and submissive. This does not mean to be passive or "wobbly," but it does mean that we should always remember this counsel: "Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answers to thy prayers" (D&C 112:10).

Seventh, we should always try to do that which is good for others, including praying for and serving them. Remember that the Golden Rule is old but not outdated!

Eighth, we need to learn to enjoy the fruits of the Spirit. I believe you know how you feel when you have really prayed but then also have really listened and pondered. You know how you have felt when you have borne testimony and it has touched another life as well as your own. You know how good you feel when you are able to go to the temple with your life right and your heart turned to the Lord and the Spirit. If you carefully evaluate your life and your experience, you will be surprised to recognize how often and how significantly you have been blessed by the interventions of the Holy Ghost.

Ninth, we should do works of righteousness. I could give you examples or applications, but you already know what they are. Begin modestly with more regular scripture study, even if for only a few minutes a day. If you do not pay fast offerings regularly, resolve to do so even if you can afford to give only the cost of an apple or an egg. When you begin to think a little, your list of righteous works that you can really accomplish now will grow in an amazing fashion.

I would caution us all to avoid making this too complicated. It really is not! You usually know what it is you need to do when you carefully and prayerfully think through the process of obtaining the direction of the Spirit.



Y*ou can enjoy
the fruits of
the Spirit
when you go to
the temple with
your life right and
your heart turned
to the Lord.*

Discerning Promptings

The question that we might often have, which I believe is not only understandable but also honorable, is “How can I really know when I am being directed or led by the Spirit?” You will know as you become more closely familiar with the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. It is possible, however, to be confused on occasion, even with the best of intentions. I invite your careful consideration of the suggestions President Faust made. If your life and your heart are right, you can be more comfortable that you are on the right track.

Let me also offer a test you might apply as you seek guidance on a particular matter or as you feel impressions coming, even when you did not consciously seek them. While you may still have questions after you apply these four criteria, you will be able to know when feelings have not come from the proper source. If the answer to the four questions that I suggest you apply to your promptings is always yes, then you can continue to pray, ponder, and seek confirmation until you are finally sure. If the answer to any of the four questions is no, then you can have confidence that the feeling you have had is not from the Holy Ghost.

1. Is the feeling or impression you have consistent with the pronouncements of the Lord found in the scriptures? The Lord has given us wonderful and extensive guidance in the scriptures. Because the focus of these inspired writings is on doctrine and principle, the specific application

is usually left with us. For example, we know that keeping the Sabbath Day holy is a commandment, but how we do it, in part—and even in some places in the world, when we do it—is left to our best judgment. We need to know the doctrines well and be exposed to them regularly so that we are not misled. Most individuals who believe that they have doctrinal issues with the Church do not really know the doctrine!

2. Is your inspiration consistent with the statements and counsel of the living prophets? It is a serious mistake to take the counsel of living prophets lightly or to disregard it. We need to know what they have said and thus we have the responsibility to listen to general conference, read their words in the Church magazines, and pay attention to their statements and pronouncements. A rather common error made even by some who consider themselves faithful members is to say that “the Brethren really do not understand my circumstances and therefore their directions do not apply to me.” A much better approach is to have the attitude, “given the experience and closeness to the Lord of His servants, I will try to understand and apply to my own situation their counsel and direction.” When we take that approach, we will almost always understand and appreciate the wisdom of their direction in helping us avoid serious error.



A father and mother are entitled to divine direction related to their own family, but the neighbors are not instructed through them.

3. Is the prompting you feel consistent with your own area of responsibility?

It is a too common misjudgment to develop feelings or express opinions that are outside the scope of our own stewardship. A bishop receives revelation only for his ward, not another. Only the President of the Church receives the Lord's direction for the entire Church. A father and mother are entitled to divine direction related to their own family, but the neighbors are not instructed through them. We will frequently see others' mistakes and achievements—as they will see ours—but revelation is always restricted to our own proper sphere.

4. Have you respected the agency of others? On occasion we may receive promptings that affect us and may also involve others. This opens the potential for confusion unless we clearly understand the doctrines and principles of agency and revelation. As missionaries, many of us have felt prompted that certain investigators know what we have taught is true and that they should accept baptism and confirmation. This is a sweet experience that often inspires us to work and pray harder to assist the investigators with their challenges. Ultimately, however, the investigator must also receive the impression and act on it. However impressive the spiritual feelings of the missionary, the investigator must experience the “mighty change of heart” for the conversion

to really occur. Missionaries are required to provide the environment in part and share their testimonies, but they are not authorized to dictate individual decisions or impose their own impressions that would violate the agency of another.

Patience in Progress

A few passages of scripture may help us in our thinking. The Lord has said, “I will hasten my work in its time” (D&C 88:73). He has also said, “But all things must come to pass in their time” (D&C 64:32). We need to hasten when we can but must also recognize the need for patience in our progress. Likewise, we need to prioritize and appropriately stretch ourselves as we strive to improve but also remember the Lord's counsel that you “do not run faster or labor more than you have strength and means provided” (D&C 10:4).

The Lord's promise that we can be truly comforted is more significant than we know. The gift of the Holy Ghost is one of the fruits of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ that can make a reality of our plea:

Lead me, guide me, walk beside me,

Help me find the way.

Teach me all that I must do

To live with him someday.

(“I Am a Child of God,” *Hymns*, no. 301) ■



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Display a bowl of sugar and a bowl of salt. As a family, list ways to determine which is which. Compare this list with the four questions in the section “Discerning Promptings.” Have family members share how they can know when the Spirit is influencing them.

2. Have family members draw or share examples of times when they have felt the influence of the Spirit. Invite all to share their experiences. Bear your testimony of the importance of expressing gratitude for spiritual experiences.

Become an Instrument in the Hands of God by Preparing for the Second Coming of Our Lord



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.

How Can I Prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?

D&C 38:30: “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve

Apostles: “Four matters are indisputable to Latter-day Saints: (1) The Savior will return to the earth in power and great glory to reign personally during a millennium of righteousness and peace. (2) At the time of His coming there will be a destruction of the wicked and a resurrection of the righteous. (3) No one knows the time of His coming, but (4) the faithful are taught to study the signs of it and to be prepared for it. . . . We need to make both temporal and spiritual preparation for the events prophesied at the time of the Second Coming” (“Preparation for the Second Coming,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2004, 7, 9).

Kathleen H. Hughes, former first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency: “Ye are laying the foundation of a great work. *And out of small things proceedeth*

that which is great” (D&C 64:[33]; emphasis added).

. . . The great work we wish to do will proceed from ‘small things.’ One of those small things, I have learned, is that I must find the time to fill my own spiritual reservoir each day” (“Out of Small Things,”

Liabona and *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 109).

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve

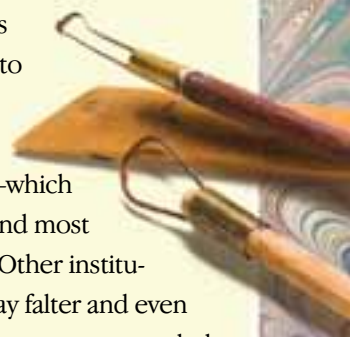
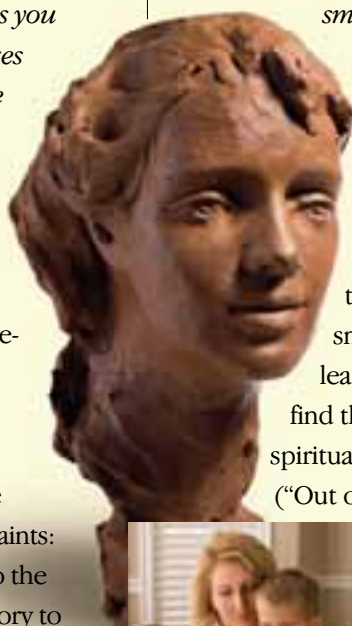
Apostles: “The Lord expects us to be as faithful, as devoted, as courageous as those who went before us. They were called to *give* their lives for the gospel. We are called to *live* our lives for the same purpose. . . . All dispensations prepared the way for the first coming of the Lord and His Atonement. Similarly, history and

prophecy laid the groundwork for the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Do we have eyes to see that the events and prophecies of *our* time are preparing us for the Savior’s *Second Coming*?” (“Preparations for the Restoration and the Second Coming: ‘My Hand Shall Be over Thee,’” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 91–92).

How Can I Be an Instrument in the Hands of God in Helping Others Prepare?

D&C 34:6: “Lift up your voice . . . and cry repentance . . . , preparing the way of the Lord for his second coming.”

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985): “To be a righteous woman during the winding up scenes on this earth, before the second coming of our Savior, is an especially noble calling. The righteous woman’s strength and influence today can be tenfold what it might be in more tranquil times. She has been placed here to help to enrich, to protect, and to guard the home—which is society’s basic and most noble institution. Other institutions in society may falter and even fail, but the righteous woman can help to save the home, which may be the last and only sanctuary some mortals know in the midst of storm and strife” (“Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 103). ■



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

I recently married, and I don't relate to my in-laws very well. How can I develop better relationships with them?

There is no guarantee that your compatibility with your spouse will automatically transfer to his or her family. But over the last 35 years I have used some common-sense strategies that have helped me bridge that compatibility gap:

- **Spend equal time and make equal efforts with both sides of the family.** Nothing creates hard feelings faster than favoritism towards one side of the family. Discuss in advance how you will manage the holidays. During these times expectations are high and feelings can be sensitive.

- **Don't be easily offended; better yet, don't be offended at all.** We all make mistakes, and within the family circle, these mistakes can be scrutinized and analyzed. Instead, give everyone the benefit of the doubt. Accept the fact that some relatives may always be late, some may never RSVP, and some may be tactless. It is better to accept them than to criticize. Give everyone the benefit of the doubt.

- **Withhold harsh judgments.**

We cannot always know the burdens that others carry. I have found it beneficial to replace judgment with kindness and acceptance.

It is best to minimize small differences; in the eternal scheme, relationships are more important than traditions. My in-laws love my husband, and so do I. That is the great commonality that brings us together.

Cathy Brundage, Arizona

If you have a Church calling similar to that of one of your in-laws, ask for their advice with a struggle you may be having in that calling. This kind of invitation can demonstrate humility on your part and can help your in-laws feel needed and respected. My in-laws can offer advice where my own parents cannot because of differences in their talents and varying life experiences. Seeking the advice of my



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DILEEN MARSH



in-laws has helped me grow closer to them and realize that they are in my life not only as the parents of my husband but also as friends.

Kaija Mortensen, California

Like most newlyweds, we had some adjustments to make, but in addressing these, we made it a point to never speak ill of each other to either of our families; we knew that we would always forgive and love each other, but if we shared faults or disagreements with family members, they might not be so quick to forgive. Focusing on each other's positive traits and attributes with our families instilled love in their hearts too.

Michael C. and Susan J. McGhee, Maryland

Realize that you are the new person trying to fit into a group that has known each other for years and that it may take a while. You will have to build trust with each other. Attend family events. When possible, invite others to come over for your special occasions, such as birthdays and holidays. Learn everyone's names and who goes with whom. Be willing to listen to the stories others have to tell, and laugh with them. Never feel you have to top their tales.

Terrance D. Leder, Oregon

One of the best things for developing my relationship with my in-laws was preparing for my wedding. My mother lived far away, so my future mother-in-law became my greatest help and support. While we didn't always agree, we found a balance as we worked and spent time together. It's a lot like getting to know new friends. Spend one-on-one time with them. Find out their interests, and you might find you have a lot in common. If you find you still don't get along, focus on being kind and on loving and serving them.

Sarah Lee, Utah

In my experience, most friction with in-laws occurs because a marriage is a merging of two different family



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

such as weddings, graduations, and birthdays. In learning about my in-laws, I have found we have more in common than I initially thought.

Jeni Gates, Washington

Look through family photo albums together and ask your in-laws questions. How did they meet? What was your spouse like as a child? What are some of their favorite holiday traditions? This will show your in-laws that you are interested in them and want to be included in their family. It's a great way to learn about your spouse too!

Tara Johnson, Alberta, Canada

I married a man from Central America who was studying in the United States. Even though I understood there would be some cultural differences, I felt we could overcome them as we worked together. My mother-in-law was very kind, but

there were times I felt that I would not measure up to what she wanted me to be. As I got discouraged, I turned to my husband to share my feelings. I felt he would be the best person to help me understand her. The more I understood the cultural aspects of his life, the more I realized the humility and love that was being shown to me. I have learned to incorporate the things that I love about their culture into our home and to blend while we make our own traditions.

Amy Cabrera, Washington

Through my first year of marriage, I never gave much attention to stereotypical in-law jokes. I loved everything about my husband, including his family. Things went smoothly until our first baby came. Suddenly there seemed to be advice flying at me from all directions: "You're feeding him too much!"

cultures, backgrounds, attitudes, and atmospheres. Try to see these things for what they are: something developed over decades that cannot be easily changed when one person marries into a family. While you may not agree with the way your in-laws do things, it is helpful to be optimistic. Like it or not, your in-laws had some influence on your spouse. Since you love your spouse, you must also love some of what his or her family instilled. Seek out and focus on those things.

Deanne Winterton Chaston, Utah

A fun project that has brought me closer to my in-laws is a memory book I started. Every month I e-mail or mail four questions to our grandparents, parents, siblings, nieces, and nephews and encourage them to send their responses to everyone else in the family. At the end of the year, I compile these questions and answers in a book with individual photos, brief biographies, pedigree charts, children's drawings, and material on important family events



“He’s not eating enough!” “Let him cry a little.” “Rock him—don’t make him cry!” I felt that as a new mother, I couldn’t do anything right. Although I listened as suggestions were given, inside I struggled. I refused to learn anything about motherhood from anyone besides my own mother.

More children came. I quickly learned that each of my children had unique personalities and that the “tricks of the trade” from my mother didn’t always work. Advice from my mother-in-law might be just what I needed. After all, my children possessed some of the personality traits of their father, and she had raised him. I found myself asking her for more advice after her initial counsel proved valuable. From that time forward, our relationship became stronger. I found that I was more adaptable to the needs of my children as I drew wisdom from both my mother and my mother-in-law.

Emily Willoughby, Arizona

Just three months after my husband and I were married, my mother-in-law asked us to move in with her to help out due to health problems she was facing. She has admitted being a bit hard to get along with. My husband is a man of compassion and tender feelings. In spite of the difficult circumstances, he works hard to keep her happy. His motto is “I try to do what my Savior would do.” Through his example, I too have learned to look at my mother-in-law as a child of God and to see her heart and concerns.

A MISSION STATEMENT FOR MORTALITY



“I believe the mission statement for mortality might be ‘to build an eternal family.’

Here on this earth we strive to become part of extended families with the ability to create and form our own part of those families. That is one of the reasons our Heavenly Father sent us here. . . . Indeed, nothing is more critically connected to happiness—both our own and that of our children—than how well we love and support one another within the family.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard, “What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 41, 42.

Serving her has become an easy task, and we have been blessed.

Name Withheld

When my husband and I got married, it was hard on both of our families. We’re both converts, and it was difficult for our families to understand why we were getting married at an age they considered young and before first completing college. Although I thought the initial stress we experienced at the wedding was resolved, there was still a lot of tension with my mother-in-law when we visited six months later. That’s when I became truly committed to trying to build a

relationship with her. It started out small: I’d call to ask how she made stuffed peppers. She loves to cook, so this was comfortable ground. I’d ask about her job, how her other two children were doing, anything I could think of. I’d tell her a little bit about the classes I was taking or the children at the daycare center where I worked. While we’re still not as close as I would like, we’re on the way there. I think it’s important to give it time. Marriage is a big transition, not only for the bride and groom, but for their families as well. Don’t feel as if it has to happen all at once.

Olivia Anne Gbafierkhan, Florida ■

SHARE YOUR IDEAS

An upcoming Questions and Answers feature will focus on the following question:

I work in a secular environment. How can I stand up for what I believe without seeming self-righteous or judgmental?

If you’d like to contribute your ideas and experiences, please label them “secular environment” and follow the submission guidelines under “Do You Have a Story to Tell?” in the contents pages at the beginning of the magazine. Please limit responses to 500 words and submit them by October 19.

LIVING IN A CHAPTER OF HISTORY

BY MARJORIE H. RICE

While my husband and I were serving in the presidency of the Palmyra New York Temple, we lived in the historic Tomlinson Inn, where we learned much about the conversion of Brigham Young.

When we told our friends that we would be living in the Tomlinson Inn, most of them hadn't heard of it. Yet there were plenty of visitors to Mendon, New York, who knew the history of our 185-year-old home. Sometimes as we ate our Sunday meal we'd look out through the dining room window to see people taking pictures of the building.



Cars would often pull into the driveway, and people would wander over the grounds. The bolder ones knocked on the door and asked if this was the place they thought it was.

Why all the interest? Because of a meeting that took place in April 1830 in this old home. Following is the story of the inn's Latter-day Saint history.

A Meeting at the Tomlinson Inn

One of the Prophet Joseph Smith's first actions after The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized was to call his trusted younger brother Samuel to go forth and preach the restored gospel. Samuel's attempts to sell copies of the newly published Book of Mormon, with its seemingly incredible story of angels and visions, had met with little success until he arrived at the Tomlinson Inn in April 1830.

ENGRAVING OF BRIGHAM YOUNG BY W. H. GIBBS; PHOTOGRAPHS: LEAVES AND BOOK, COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES; TOMLINSON INN AND MENDON, NEW YORK, AREA, BY KENNETH R. MAY; EYEGLASSES, BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



Above: The original portion of the Tomlinson Inn where Samuel Smith gave a Book of Mormon to Phineas Young. This inn also served as the Mendon Branch meetinghouse. **Background:** Mendon, New York, area. **Opposite page:** Brigham Young as a young man.

Samuel Smith gathered his courage, strode boldly into the inn, and walked across the room directly to Phineas Young. Holding out a Book of Mormon to him, Samuel said simply, "There is a book, sir, I wish you to read."

Surprised by the young man's direct approach, Phineas hesitated a moment, then asked, "Pray, sir, what book have you?"

"The Book of Mormon," said Samuel, "or, as it is called by some, the Golden Bible." Samuel then testified that the book was a revelation from God and added, "If you will read this book with a prayerful heart, and ask God to give you a witness, you will know the truth of this work." He requested that Phineas look at the testimony of the witnesses in the front of the book. After doing so and asking the young man his name, Phineas remarked that Samuel was one of those witnesses who testified of seeing and handling the gold plates from which the book was translated.

"Yes," said Samuel, "I know the book to be a revelation from God, translated by the gift and power of the Holy

Ghost, and that my brother Joseph Smith, jun., is a Prophet, Seer and Revelator."¹

Phineas was intrigued. He bought the book and took it home.

Neither Phineas nor Samuel realized that their short meeting at the Tomlinson Inn would later bring about the conversion of a man who would become a mighty prophet of the Lord.

A Vision in the Night Sky

About two and a half years earlier, on September 22, 1827, two young men living miles apart—who would later become neighbors and best friends—each saw an astonishing vision in the night sky. Their names were Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball. Heber was living in Mendon, New York, near the Tomlinson Inn, and Brigham was 45 miles to the east in Port Byron.

It began, Heber said, in the eastern horizon—a white smoke rising toward the heavens with the sound of a mighty wind. The smoke moved across the sky, in the



Left: Phineas Young lived in this home in Fishers, New York.

Below: The Young brothers in 1866 (from left to right), Lorenzo, Brigham, Phineas, Joseph, and John.



shape of a rainbow toward the western horizon. It grew wide, then bluish in color, and became completely transparent. As Heber watched with his family and several neighbors, a large, commanding army appeared, marching in platoons across the sky from east to west. “We could distinctly see the muskets, bayonets and knapsacks of the men,” Heber recorded, “and also saw their officers with their swords and equipage, and [heard] the clashing and jingling of their implements of war, and could discover the forms and features of the men. The most profound order existed throughout the entire army; when the foremost man stepped, every man stepped at the same time; I could hear the steps. When the front rank reached the western horizon a battle ensued, as we could distinctly hear the report of arms and the rush.

“No man could judge of my feelings when I beheld that army of men, as plainly as ever I saw armies of men in the flesh; it seemed as though every hair of my head was alive. This scenery we gazed upon for hours, until it began to disappear.”²

Brigham Young, who at that time was not acquainted with Heber, described what he had seen the same evening: “There was a great light in the East and it went to the West and it was very bright although [there was] no moon at that time.” As he gazed at it with his wife, Miriam, they saw “great armies” marching across the night sky. The vision was “perfectly clear,” and it remained for several hours.³

Heber and Brigham and their family members who witnessed the amazing scene felt it must have been a sign from God, but they did not know its meaning. Neither Heber nor Brigham knew the Prophet Joseph Smith or that he had received the gold plates containing the Book of Mormon that same day at the Hill Cumorah, just 20 miles to the east.

The following year, Brigham Young and Miriam moved to Mendon, New York, where Brigham’s father, stepmother, and several of his siblings were already living. Brigham built a home and mill shop on his father’s farm, less than a half mile northeast of where Heber Kimball and his wife, Vilate, lived. Brigham and Heber, just 13 days apart in age, and their wives, just 6 days apart, soon became close friends.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT) PHINEAS YOUNG’S HOME, BY LONGIN LONCZYNA JR.; BRIGHAM YOUNG AND HIS BROTHERS, COURTESY OF LDS CHURCH ARCHIVES; (RIGHT) HEBER C. KIMBALL, BRIGHAM YOUNG, AND PHINEAS YOUNG, COURTESY OF LDS CHURCH ARCHIVES; POCKET WATCH, BY WILDEY C. ANDERSEN; (BACKGROUND) WHITINGHAM, VERMONT, AREA, BY DON O. THORPE, COURTESY OF CHURCH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM



Left to right: Heber C. Kimball, Brigham Young, and Phineas Young.

Background: Whitingham, Vermont, area, birthplace of Brigham Young.

Seeking the True Church of Jesus Christ

Brigham Young was given to deep religious longings and had spent several years investigating each of the major religious denominations in western New York. He wanted a church that did more than just preach of general Christian morals; he wanted a church with the authority of Jesus Christ, “a system of ordinances, of laws and regulations to be obeyed.” Brigham’s brothers, Joseph, Phineas, and Lorenzo, and his good friend, Heber C. Kimball, had also longed for such a church. But after years of fruitless searching, Brigham finally concluded, “I knew that Jesus Christ had no true Church upon the earth.”⁴ Phineas said that both he and Brigham were so disheartened by the fall of 1829 they couldn’t even pray with any enthusiasm.⁵

Yet Phineas, a lay preacher, encouraged Brigham, “Hang on, for I know the Lord is going to do something for us.”⁶ These were prophetic words from Phineas, for it was he who would soon encounter the missionary Samuel Smith in a meeting that would change the lives of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball and their families.

Phineas Young Reads the Book of Mormon

After purchasing the Book of Mormon from Samuel Smith at the Tomlinson Inn, Phineas began to feel that Samuel had been deceived. He told his wife, “I have got a book here, called the Book of Mormon, and it is said to be a revelation, and I wish to read it and make myself acquainted with its errors, so that I can expose them to the world.”⁷ He set aside all other business and read the book within a week; then he read it again the following week. He didn’t find the anticipated errors but instead felt a conviction the book was true doctrine. The following Sunday, before his congregation, he found himself quoting scripture from the Book of Mormon and, under inspiration of the Spirit, he bore a powerful testimony of its truth.

Phineas, believing this book to be an answer to his family’s searching and prayers, passed the book on to his father. John Young read it and declared that it was “the greatest work and the clearest of error of anything he had ever seen, the Bible not excepted.”⁸ Phineas then passed the book on to his sister, Fanny, who also declared it a revelation. Fanny passed it on to Brigham, and the book



was later given to Heber Kimball.⁹

But Brigham had become so disillusioned with organized religion that he was very cautious. He studied and pondered the book for many months. By May 1831 the branches of the Church in New York had gathered to Kirtland, Ohio, without the Young family ever meeting another member of the Church.



Inset: Home of John, father of Brigham Young. Background: Brigham Young's homesite in the Mendon, New York, area.

Longing to mingle with the Saints, Heber C. Kimball hitched his horses to his sleigh in the bitter cold of January 1832, and he, Brigham and Miriam Young, and Phineas and Clarissa Young took a freezing, 125-mile sleigh ride to visit the branch in Columbia, Pennsylvania. Apparently, Vilate Kimball stayed at home and cared for all the children so the other wives could go.

Brigham later recalled,

"We arrived at the place where there was a small Branch of the Church; we conversed with them, attended their meetings and heard them preach, and after staying about one week we returned home, being still more convinced of the truth of the work."¹²

Brigham and Heber now understood the vision of the mighty army they had witnessed in the night sky four and a half years earlier. They realized it had appeared to them the very day the Prophet Joseph had received the gold plates from the angel named Moroni—September 22, 1827. Heber felt that it was a "foreshadowing . . . of the warfare to be waged between the powers of good and evil, from the time Truth sprang from earth and Righteousness looked down from heaven upon the boy Joseph, predestined to bring to light the buried records of the past."¹³

Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball Are Baptized

On April 15, 1832,¹⁴ a cold and snowy day, Eleazar Miller, one of those five elders from Pennsylvania,

From Seekers to Believers

In the autumn of 1831, five missionaries from the branch in Columbia, Pennsylvania, knocked at the door of Phineas Young's home and asked if they could hold a meeting there to preach the restored gospel. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball attended the gathering, and they were touched by the Spirit. They "received the word gladly," and testified of its divinity.¹⁰

Shortly afterward, Brigham, with his father, John, his brother Joseph, and Heber Kimball, witnessed a second vision, this time in a grove of trees while gathering wood for Phineas. "We were pondering upon those things which had been told us by the Elders," Heber recorded, "and upon the saints gathering to Zion, when the glory of God shone upon us, and we *saw* the gathering of the saints to Zion, and the glory that would rest upon them; and many more things connected with that great event. . . . These things caused such great joy to spring up in our bosoms that we were hardly able to contain ourselves, and we did shout aloud 'Hosannah to God and the Lamb.'"¹¹

baptized Brigham Young in his own mill stream and ordained him an elder, according to Brigham, “before my clothes were dry on my back.”¹⁵ His friend Heber C. Kimball was baptized the following day, and their wives, Miriam and Vilate, were baptized within a few weeks.

Before Brigham joined the Church, he described himself as rather slow of speech. But with his acceptance of the restored gospel the Lord made “weak things become strong unto [him]” (see Ether 12:27). Just one week after his baptism, Brigham preached his first sermon and spoke for more than an hour. He later said, “I wanted to thunder, and roar out the gospel to the nations. It burned in my bones like fire pent up. . . . Nothing would satisfy me but to cry abroad in the world what the Lord is doing in the latter days.”¹⁶

The Mendon Branch of the Church was organized in the spring of 1832 and soon numbered 30 members; 11 of them were Youngs.¹⁷ Nathan Tomlinson and his wife also joined the Church, and the Tomlinson Inn became the meetinghouse for the Mendon Branch.

By September 1833 the Tomlinson Inn’s role in Church history had ended. Most of the members of the branch left Mendon to gather with the Saints in Kirtland, Ohio. Brigham’s beloved wife, Miriam, who had died of tuberculosis a year earlier, was left resting in the little Tomlinson Corners graveyard just up the road from the inn.

A Mighty Prophet of God

Brigham Young never looked back, following the Prophet Joseph Smith until the day Joseph was martyred. And then Brigham, the humble carpenter and glazier who had yearned for true religion, became the Lord’s chosen prophet to lead the Saints. He led them first to the Nauvoo Temple to receive ordinances and blessings restored through the Prophet Joseph. He led them across more than a thousand miles of hardship to a new home in the Salt Lake Valley. And there, with his long-time friend and counselor Heber C. Kimball at his side, President Brigham Young led a tried and proven people in building up the kingdom of God.

Living in the Tomlinson Inn

The Tomlinson Inn, where we lived from 1999 to 2003, felt good to us. The rippled glass windows reflect the rich patina of old floors that creak gently from the press of a thousand footsteps. With each click of a latch, the hand-carved panel doors with their antique knobs speak softly of that long-ago time.

An old, makeshift staircase in the back of the inn leads to the upper room where the Mendon Branch worshipped. The room still looks as it did in 1832. The exposed roof trusses are made of small tree trunks, and almost as much daylight comes up between the old floor boards as from the one small window. In this humble setting, Brigham shared with his fellow converts his testimony and gratitude

for the long-awaited restored gospel—and that copy of the Book of Mormon that introduced him to it.

History seems to settle over the Tomlinson Inn gently, like a warm cloak in a cold world. But the best part of living there was sharing its story with visitors who left misty eyed at the thought of a young missionary; a young, soon-to-be prophet; and a young Church that would roll forth to fill the whole earth. ■



Modern-day Tomlinson Inn.

NOTES

1. “History of Brigham Young,” *Millennial Star*, June 6, 1863, 360–61.
2. Orson F. Whitney, *The Life of Heber C. Kimball* (1945), 16.
3. General Church Minutes 1839–1877, Jan. 8, 1845, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
4. Brigham Young, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, July 19, 1866, 2.
5. See Ronald K. Esplin, “Conversion and Transformation: Brigham Young’s New York Roots and the Search for Bible Religion,” in *Lion of the Lord: Essays on the Life and Service of Brigham Young*, ed. Susan Easton Black and Larry C. Porter (1995), 32.
6. Phineas Young to Brigham Young, Aug. 11, 1845, Brigham Young Office Files, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
7. *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801–1844*, comp. Elden Jay Watson (1968), xix.
8. *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, xix.
9. Some writers point out that the copy of the Book of Mormon read by Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball could have been one Samuel Smith had placed in June 1830 with Mrs. John P. Greene, Brigham Young’s sister Rhoda, who also lived in Mendon.
10. *The Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 19.
11. *The Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 19; emphasis added.
12. *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, 2.
13. *The Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 17.
14. Brigham Young, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, Apr. 2, 1862, 1.
15. *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, 3.
16. Brigham Young, *Deseret News Weekly*, Aug. 24, 1854, 1.
17. See “History of Brigham Young,” *Millennial Star*, Aug. 13, 1864, 519.

The Football Game That

BY ALEXANDER M. SOLORZANO

I wondered, “Who are these guys, and what am I feeling?”

Growing up in California, I had some Latter-day Saint friends but knew little about the Church. In those days my devotion was reserved for the local professional sports teams. All I really knew about the religion of my LDS friends was that these otherwise normal teenagers engaged in one extraordinarily abnormal behavior: rising early each weekday morning to attend some type of church meeting.

A few years after graduating from high school, I received a telephone call one Thanksgiving morning from a former high school football teammate. He invited me to play in a game of football later that morning with some friends. Anxious to prove that my athletic prowess had not diminished, I eagerly accepted the invitation.

When I arrived at the field where the game would be played, I was dismayed to see that rain the day before had left the field a muddy quagmire. In addition, I recognized only a handful of the two dozen young men on the field. I was chagrined that I would not be able to impress as many of my former teammates as I had hoped.

Throughout the course of the game, I noticed several things about the other guys. They were all pretty good football players. They could block, pass, catch, and run with the best of them. It was a hard-fought game. But I also noticed a far more interesting fact, a characteristic that shone brightly through the mud despite the spirited competition. There was no cursing, no fighting, no angry exchanges. When a player tackled

someone, he would always lend a hand to help his opponent up off the ground. Whenever a player made a good play, compliments of “nice block,” “good hit,” or “nice tackle” were given, even from the opposing team.

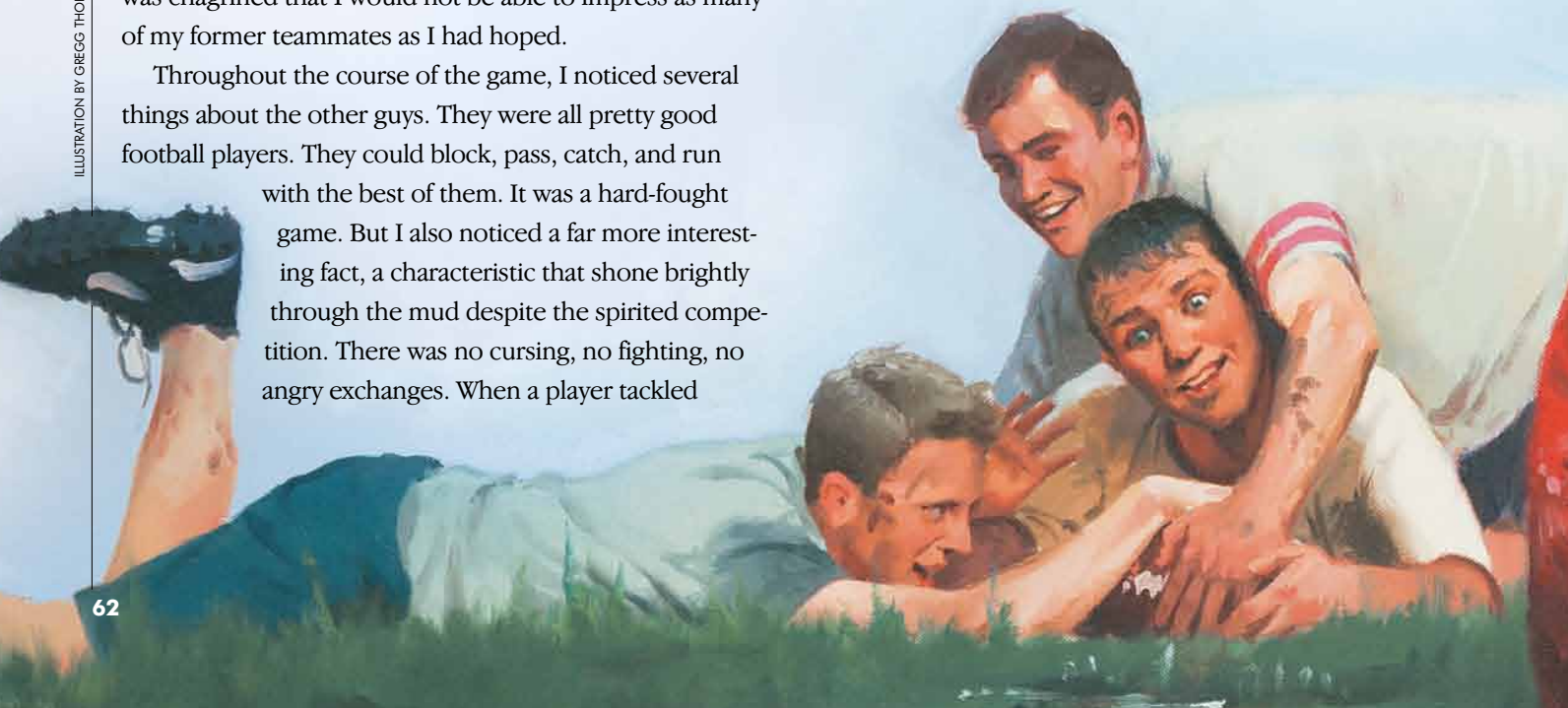
I had never been with a group of football players who seemed to respect and enjoy each other as much as they did the game. Before long, I began to feel something very special about this game and the people participating in it.

When the game ended, after scraping the mud from my hair and shaking muddy hands with my new friends, I pulled my old teammate to the side.

“Who are these guys?” I asked. “What am I feeling?”

I learned that all the young men in the game were members of the Church. I gathered my courage and timidly asked my new friends if they could tell me more about their church. I had no idea how happy these returned missionaries would be to oblige. They shared their testimonies with me and later set up meetings with the missionaries. Those meetings were the beginning of a conversion process that included sleepless nights, numerous discussions, and a great many good influences in my life. I joined the Church a few years later.

In the years since that Thanksgiving football game,



Changed My Life

many spiritual blessings have affected me deeply. But few have affected me more than that football game 20 years ago. Every year at Thanksgiving I remember the football game that changed my life forever, and I remember those first whisperings of the Spirit I felt. Those memories are part of my personal Thanksgiving celebration. I continue to appreciate the power of friendship and example in carrying out the Lord's work among His children.

Several years ago, when our ward elders quorum president mentioned that the quorum was going to schedule a ward football game, I know he did not fully understand the smile that crossed my face. ■



Turning Hearts in a Land of Temples

BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

As members or missionaries talked about their baptisms with Li Chiun-tsan in preparation for his own in 1971, they described a powerful, invigorating experience. So the overwhelming weakness that Brother Li felt after emerging from the waters of baptism was not what he was expecting and was certainly out of the ordinary.

Baptized and confirmed in Taipei, Taiwan, at the age of 17, Brother Li had accepted Christianity several years earlier, but he didn't find the peace he was looking for until the Book of Mormon touched his heart.

"I felt the Spirit very strongly," he says. "The Holy Ghost told me this was the true Church."

So he couldn't understand why he felt so weak now that he was a member, and he prayed to find out why he suddenly lacked strength. The unexpected answer set his life's course.

"I would find strength as I searched out my ancestors to do their temple work," he remembers the Spirit whispering.

Over the past 35-plus years, Brother Li, a member of the Hu Wei Ward, Chung Hsing Taiwan Stake, has dedicated himself to family history and temple work. He and his wife,



The Taipei Taiwan Temple (above and opposite page inset) offers members like the Li family (opposite page inset) a place where honoring one's ancestors takes on eternal significance. They live in a land where honoring one's ancestors has long been an important part of life, as shown by Taiwan's many traditional temples (right).

Li-hsueh, have traced his family line back nearly 5,000 years to the Yellow Emperor, said to be the ancestor of all Han Chinese. They have submitted more than 100,000 names to the temple.

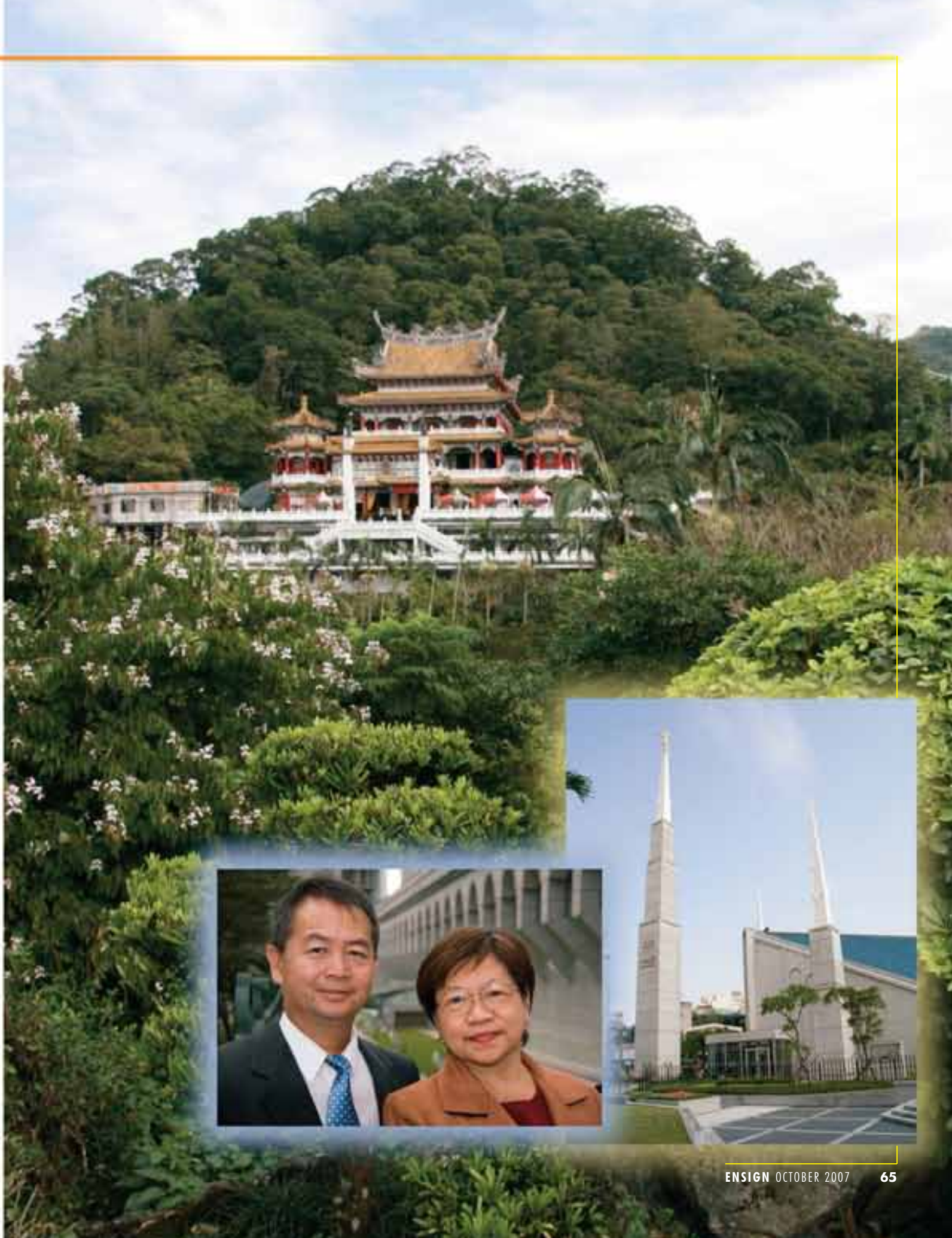
"Family history work can seem overwhelming sometimes," Brother Li says. "But the desire to bless one's ancestors is richly rewarded."

The experiences of Latter-day Saints in Taiwan bear testimony to the blessings of participating in the tightly intertwined responsibilities of family history and temple work.

A Land of Temples

Taiwan is a land of many different temples, a land where honoring one's ancestors is part of a long, rich history. Many families keep records that trace their patriarchal line back many generations. Countless traditional temples and shrines provide places where people believe they can connect with their ancestors. These carefully crafted, sometimes centuries-old buildings peek from around almost every corner in bustling Taipei and seem to spring from the lush vegetation that covers the quiet countryside.

"Our people's traditional beliefs put much emphasis on ancestors," Brother Li says. "Turning our hearts to our fathers is a part of our culture."





While most people use these traditional temples to seek blessings *from* their ancestors, there is a different temple in Taiwan in which people bring about blessings *for* their ancestors through the ordinances of the restored gospel.

Since the Taipei Taiwan Temple was dedicated in 1984, it has provided Church members the opportunity to obtain blessings for themselves, and by providing the opportunity to bless their kindred dead, it has also given eternal significance to their family history records.

A Special Connection

Like the Li family, the Wu family has also traced their family line back to the emperor. In doing so, they discovered that the Wu children were part of the 150th generation since the emperor. The story caught the attention of the media, and in 2005, Wilford Wu, then 19, was selected to represent the young people of Taiwan during an annual ceremony at the traditional tomb of the Yellow Emperor.

For the Wu family, members of the Ching Hsin Ward, Taipei Taiwan West Stake, family history has been a family effort. Brother Wu Chi-Li and his wife, Shirley, did much of the research, and Wilford and his older sister, Camilla, have helped organize it and participate in temple ordinances for more than 3,000 of their ancestors.

Working together has helped bring the Wu family closer



together. They say it has also helped them feel a special connection with their ancestors.

“Doing the work for my parents brought a happiness from heaven I had never felt before,” says Sister Wu. “I have a great desire to be eternally united with my ancestors. I pray that they will be prepared.”

A Lot of Help

Connecting 150 generations was not easy. Like many others who are involved in searching out their ancestors, the Wu family acknowledges that they had help.

After going back 26 generations, they got stuck.

“About all we had was a nickname,” Sister Wu says.

On the final day of the Chinese New Year, Sister Wu had plans to attend a holiday celebration after serving in the temple. But when a friend on the shift mentioned she was going to stop by the family history center located on the temple grounds, Sister Wu felt impressed to go with her.

She went to a book containing information on people with the surname of the ancestor the family couldn’t find. When she opened the book, it fell open to a page that listed information on this particular ancestor. With that information, they were able to connect to other lines that led back many generations.

“It was a very special experience for me,” Sister Wu says. “I can feel that our ancestors are very anxious to have their ordinances done.”

A Blessing to Posterity

The desire to participate in the blessings of the temple has led Chiang Jung-feng

and his wife, Chun-mei, of the Chi An Branch, Hua Lien Taiwan District, to experience another aspect of Malachi’s promise (see Malachi 4:6). Along with having their hearts turned to their fathers, as parents their hearts have been turned to their children.

Brother and Sister Chiang belong to a growing number of Church members in Taiwan who head three-generation families who have all been sealed together.

“It’s our pleasure to see our grandchildren come to church,” says Brother Chiang, who was recently released as first counselor in the Taiwan Taipei Temple presidency. “It is our great duty to help them come unto Christ through the ordinances of the gospel. We cannot break the chain.”

The Li family believes the effects of temple ordinances begin with a couple.

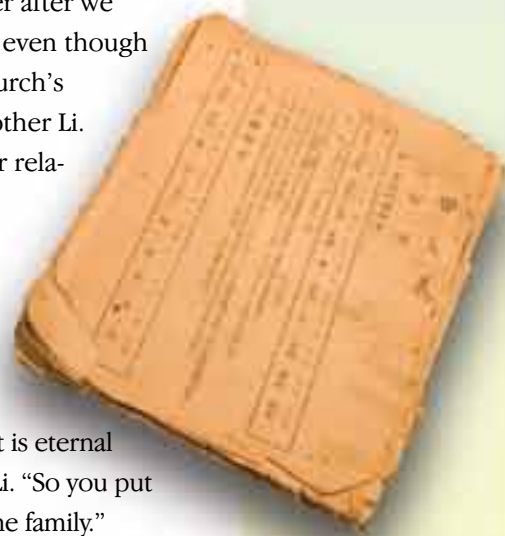
“Our marriage was better after we were sealed in the temple, even though we already lived by the Church’s standards before,” says Brother Li. “Being sealed changes your relationship. When your life is over, you lose everything you’ve worked for in life—your car, job, house, money. But you don’t have to lose your family.”

“It helps you realize what is eternal and what isn’t,” says Sister Li. “So you put your effort and focus into the family.”

From there the effects spread.

“When you know you’re an eternal family, you love your spouse more and you love your children more,” Brother Li says. “As a result our home is warmer. It is more comfortable there. The Spirit is there.”

Opposite page: The Wu family has gained some local media attention for tracing their family back 150 generations to the Yellow Emperor using historical records (below).



A Crowning Blessing

These Taiwanese families say family history and temple work have blessed their families in this life, and they find comfort in the promised blessings in eternity.

"As we have worked in the temple, we have experienced a gradual change in our lives," says Brother Chiang, who has done the work for 16 generations of his family line with his wife. "We have experienced a rejuvenation in the gospel."

Brother Chiang also believes that Satan's influence is lessened in the lives of those who participate in temple work. "Attending the temple brings reverence to our



Doing temple work for more than 16 generations has not only blessed the Chiang family's ancestors; it has also helped strengthen their posterity.

hearts," says Brother Chiang. "We forget worldly things."

Brother Wu agrees: "If we can learn to take the spirituality and happiness we find there back home with us, it will help our families overcome the pull of worldly things and be nearer to God."

These families believe that receiving temple ordinances and providing them for those who did not receive them in this life are essential to reaching their eternal goals.

President Gordon B. Hinckley has taught, "The temple ordinances become the crowning blessings the Church has to offer."¹

"The ultimate goal of our membership is to return to our Heavenly Father as eternal families," says Brother Chiang. "For that we must receive *all* of the essential ordinances found in the temple."

A Manifestation of Love

On her mission, Camilla Wu learned just how important each soul is to God. Camilla felt a great outpouring of the Savior's love for each of the many people she was able to teach.

"When I came home and got involved with our family history," she says, "I realized that I could maybe have just as great an influence on the salvation of souls by doing family history and temple work."

The Wu family feels that the temple is one of the greatest manifestations of Heavenly Father's love for His children for all that it offers.

"The meaning I find in the temple," says Camilla's brother, Wilford, "is God's love for His children." ■

NOTE

1. "New Temples to Provide 'Crowning Blessings' of the Gospel," *Ensign*, May 1998, 87.



To Chen Yang Su-yuan, family history and temple work are inseparable.

SEEING A CONNECTION

Chen Yang Su-yuan has been blind since 1981, when she developed complications after cataract surgery. But losing her eyesight helped her find the gospel and ultimately helped her see the importance of temple and family history work.

Having recently gone blind, Sister Chen didn't realize that the two young ladies at her door asking for a glass of water were missionaries. Inviting them in made all the difference in her life.

"Most people considered me useless because I was blind," Sister Chen says. "But that's not what God wanted to tell me. He sent me missionaries after I lost my sight to teach me that we are all the children of God and that He ransomed us at a great price. I learned my worth because of the ransom Jesus paid. I am priceless."

Since then, Sister Chen has served in many callings in the Chung Li First Ward, Tao Yuan Taiwan Stake, as well as serving in the temple since 1992.

But losing her sight wouldn't be the only trial Sister Chen would have to face. In 1987 she almost died after developing a large cyst that required the removal of a rib. She survived, but the medical bills wiped out her life savings. She wondered why God hadn't just taken her.

She said His response was, "You have many things left to do."

Not long after, she felt the call of family history.

"I wondered, how am I going to do genealogy if I can't see?" she says. "But the feeling didn't go away."

With the help of a dear friend, she has researched 22 generations of her main family line and done all of the ordinances for the women herself. She is now working on related branches. Along the way, she has come to appreciate the inseparable connection between temple work and family history.

"There are many ordinances we receive in the temple, and they are all important," Sister Chen says. "But we must do our family

history. We can't give these ordinances to our ancestors without doing our genealogy."

"Family history and temple work are one work," said Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander of the Seventy.

"Family history research should be the primary source

of names for temple ordinances, and temple ordinances are the primary reason for family history research."¹

Sister Chen is now battling a new disease and the aftereffects of a minor heart attack. Twenty years after first asking God why He had left her, she found herself asking the same question—and receiving the same answer. "Haven't I already told you?" she felt Him say. "You still have temple work to do."

So Sister Chen continues to spend one week per month at the temple.

"These are things we have to do for our ancestors that they cannot do for themselves," she says. "With my situation, I don't have the time commitments that others have with work and such. I need to work

hard now while I can." ■

NOTE

1. "Bridges and Eternal Keepsakes," *Liabona*, July 1999, 100; *Ensign*, May 1999, 83.



Uncle Gilberto's Memory

By Esther Labibe de Beruben

When I began learning about ordinance work for the dead, I was inspired by the great love my husband showed for his grandmother in seeing that her temple ordinances were performed. This motivated me to learn more about my own ancestors. In the years since then, many brothers and sisters, including those at the family history center near my home in Guadalajara, Mexico, have helped me learn to do the work for my ancestors.

In 1991 I received my patriarchal blessing and was instructed that I should be concerned about my deceased relatives and dedicate myself to them. I set a goal to do this, which led to daily discussions with my parents, who were not members of the Church. I often asked questions about my family, but my mother could tell me only about my grandparents.

One day my mother told me that Uncle Gilberto, my father's brother, had suffered a heart attack. "I know he would love to talk

with you," my mother said. "He has a great memory, and he could give you a great deal of information about the family."

When I called him at the nursing home where he was staying, his wife answered and told me that my uncle was doing poorly and couldn't talk. I gave her my best wishes and told her that I would pray for them and their family.

The next day I called the nursing home again. To my surprise, my uncle answered the telephone.

"Uncle Gilberto!" I said. "I called to tell you that I have prayed fervently for your recovery and that I love you."

"Thank you very much, Bibi," he

replied. "I woke up this morning feeling much better. Tell me what's going on with you."

I told him of my eagerness to know the names of

family members who were from Arabia and Lebanon. My mother was right about my uncle's memory. He knew names, dates, and places for four generations on my father's side of the family.

When I hung up the phone, I felt that our conversation would be the last one we would share in this life. I was right. But the Lord had blessed us both so that I could obtain information I needed to unite our family—both now and in the eternities. ■

My mother was right about my uncle's memory. He knew names, dates, and places for four generations on my father's side of the family.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KRISTIN YEE

A Ride to Church

By Stephen Baer

When I was seven years old, my mom and dad befriended a less-active family in our ward that consisted of a single mother and her two sons. My older brother, John, and I were the same ages as the two boys, Robin and Shannon, so it seemed appropriate that we extend a hand of fellowship.

The family didn't own a car, so my father offered to pick them up at their home in a nearby city and give them rides to and from church. I remember the days Dad summoned my brother and me to accompany him to pick them up. I begrudged it at the time, but despite my groaning, Dad continued to give them rides until they were actively attending church and had their own car. Robin and Shannon were soon baptized and confirmed, and their mom began participating in Relief Society. I didn't realize at the time the positive repercussions that would come from this act of service.

A few months before I began eighth grade, my dad passed away. To compound my grief, I was insecure about my physical appearance and

I didn't realize at the time the positive repercussions that would come from my father's offering to give two brothers rides to and from church.

lack of friends. I began to succumb to feelings of despair, and I spent my lunch hours walking to my house and back because I couldn't bear sitting alone.

That same year, the family we had befriended moved into our school district, and Shannon began attending my school. We became immediate friends. I felt accepted, and I was no longer so sad. Knowing that someone enjoyed being my friend boosted my confidence and self-worth. I no longer had to spend my lunch hour by myself.

Our friendship deepened during high school. When our older brothers left for college and missions, Shannon and I became surrogate brothers. We received our Eagle Scout Awards at the same court of honor, went to the same university, left on missions during the same summer, and became

roommates afterward. We were both married in the Salt Lake Temple to wonderful women, and our first children were born within three months of each other.

One evening shortly before Shannon's wedding, we began talking about our childhood. I told him how he had helped me overcome my insecurities and cope with the death of my father. It was his friendship, I added, that had helped me turn my life around. Shannon then told me that if my dad had not given his family rides to church, he would not have attended church, served a mission, and been sealed in the temple.

The Spirit touched me strongly during that conversation as I realized the blessings that a simple ride to church had on our lives. As I reflected on Shannon's friendship, I realized that my father not only helped save Shannon's family, but he also prepared a friend who helped save his own son. ■



Who Turned My Head?

By Hildo Rosillo Flores

During a sacrament meeting in Piura, Peru, in 1972, a speaker who was discussing the importance of family history work kept looking at me. At the end of his talk, he surprised me when he announced, “I know that Brother Rosillo is going to do this work.”

I had been a member of the Church for less than a year, but I set a goal to get started on my family history—not because of what he said but because I felt a desire to do so. I obtained a four-generation pedigree chart and started by interviewing my parents and relatives to find out what they knew. Each time I worked on my family history, I prayed and asked the Lord for help.

To find the death dates of my maternal great-grandparents, I traveled to the town of Zorritos, in northern Peru, where they had been buried. The cemetery was on the outskirts of town, and most of the dead had been laid to rest in vaulted compartments.

I entered the cemetery and started looking, but I didn’t find anything. I then decided to go to town to ask a cousin if she was sure that our

great-grandparents had been buried there. When she said yes, I told her, “Then I’m not leaving until I have those dates.”

I returned to the cemetery and began a methodical search, walking down every vault aisle and reading every inscription. I still couldn’t find their vaults, so I knelt and asked the Lord to help me. Then I searched again—but with the same results. I was tired, it was getting late, and I needed to leave so I could do other research I had planned.

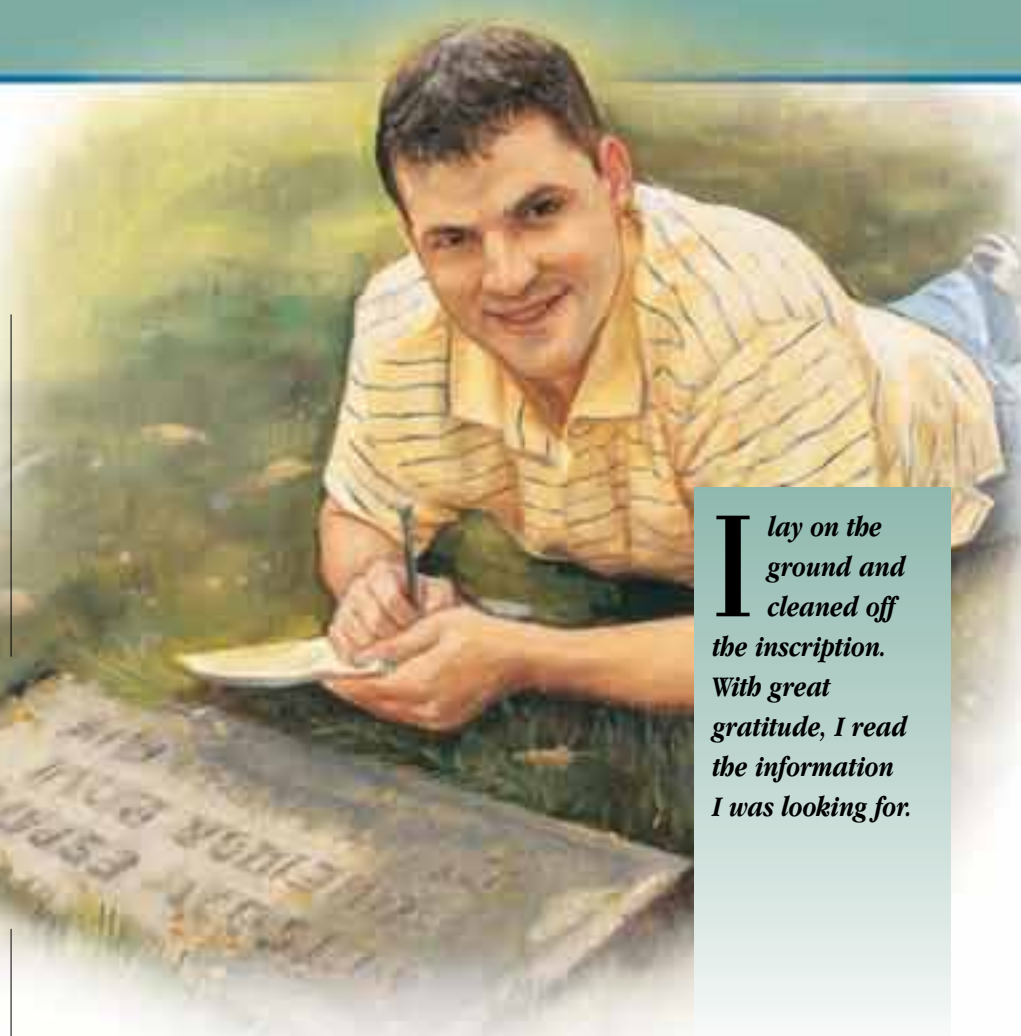
“Well, I did my part,” I thought to myself. I would have to leave without accomplishing my goal.

Ready to leave, I turned toward the front gate. But just as I took my first step, I felt two hands take hold

of my head from behind and turn it toward a certain spot. My eyes rested on a small, dirty headstone that was level with the ground. I looked behind me to see who had grabbed my head, but no one was there.

I walked to the headstone, lay on the ground, and cleaned off the inscription. With great gratitude, I read the information I was looking for: *Isidro Garcia Rosillo, died August 1, 1934. Francisca Espinoza Berrú, died January 31, 1954.*

My ancestors’ long wait to receive their saving ordinances ended in 1980. That was when my wife and I went to the São Paulo Brazil Temple to receive our endowments. At the temple I was sealed to my wife and baptized for my deceased loved ones.



I lay on the ground and cleaned off the inscription. With great gratitude, I read the information I was looking for.

As I entered the baptismal font, I remembered the small headstone at the cemetery. I went down into the calm waters knowing the Lord had guided my steps as I searched for my ancestors. ■

A Prayer with My Home Teacher

By Judy Stone

I am embarrassed to admit it, but there was a time when I thought home teachers were more of a nuisance than a blessing. At such times I would find ways to absent myself from their visits so I could get my work done.

That's why when Lincoln became our home teacher, I was especially annoyed. He never missed a visit. He always had a lesson prepared, and he faithfully carried out his home teaching duties. I appreciated his efforts but not enough to give him and his companion my undivided attention when they came for their monthly visit. Lincoln was always cordial; I was always a little rude.

One year during the early spring, I was out working in the yard. The day was clear and warm. Usually I find gardening therapeutic, but on this day I was distraught. My husband had just undergone debilitating back

surgery, and as a family we faced some tough decisions.

Needing answers, I found myself kneeling in the garden. Tears flowed as I prayed fervently for direction from the Lord. If I could only feel some peace. If I could only have some assurance that our future would not be as dismal as it seemed at the moment. I prayed earnestly, speaking aloud at times, begging the Lord for hope but most of all for peace.

When I returned to the house after pleading with the Lord, I was

spent. I was glad no one was home so I could get myself together. But no sooner had I taken off my work shoes when the doorbell rang. Lincoln was the last person on my mind, but when I opened the door, there he stood with his wife, minus lesson materials.

For the first time, I actually found myself happy to see him. I invited them in. We chatted, and Lincoln asked about my husband's work, our five daughters, and other family matters. They didn't stay long, but as they got up to go, Lincoln asked if

he could leave a blessing on our home. I was grateful, wondering how he knew a prayer would be so welcome. We knelt, and as I listened to his words of comfort, he specifically asked for a blessing of peace on our home.

During that moment I felt a wave of comfort fill my soul. I knew then that the Lord was in charge and that everything was going to work out.

My prayers had been answered with clarity and assurance through Lincoln, our faithful home teacher. In honoring his stewardship and following the promptings of the Holy Ghost, he left me with a testimony of his sacred calling. ■



Don't Just Store Your Food . . .

For more than 15 years, I have worked as an extension educator for a university's agricultural county extension office in the United States. From questions and comments I often hear, I know a lot of food storage is ultimately wasted.

That's a shame since food-storage staples are so healthy for us and are often more cost-effective than processed items. To better use the food, I recommend the following basics.

1. Rotate. Remember the first-in, first-out rule, and try to use your food storage regularly. Though some items can be stored for years, keep in mind that their nutritional

value diminishes over time. For instance, dry beans used within a year or two cause less gastrointestinal distress than old beans. Eating them several times a week also helps your body adjust to them.

2. Whole grains. The highly processed foods we tend to eat often contain a lot of sweeteners, salt, and unhealthy fats. And much of the product's cost can be for packaging. It's healthier and less expensive to use oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat, and other grains for nutritious meals, especially breakfast cereals.

3. Dried milk. You can improve the taste and consistency by using 1/3 cup of dried milk to 2/3 cup of water. Add a little vanilla, and pour it on cereal. Or use it in your recipes as a cost-effective substitute for regular milk.

4. Healthy oils. Olive and canola oils are examples of healthy options. Shortening and hydrogenated vegetable oils, on the other hand, are especially unhealthy as they raise the bad fats in our blood and lower the good fats. Keep in mind that oils need to be used within six to nine months, or they will go rancid.



5. Cool, dark, and dry.

Remember to store your food in good conditions to ensure optimal storage life.

Audrey Liddil, Idabo

Note: More information on food storage can be found at www.providentliving.org.

New Era Posters at Work

When I started a new job, one of the first things I did in my cubicle was hang a changeable frame, into which I inserted a different *New Era* poster each week. Not only did I enjoy looking at them, but they provided a simple way for me to share uplifting gospel messages with my coworkers.

Dave Proulx, Kansas

Note: *New Era* posters and other Church visuals, along with changeable frames in a variety of sizes, are available at LDS distribution centers or online at www.ldscatalog.com. Click on "Pictures and Visual Aids."

The Good Book

Searching for an effective way to influence your children? A solution could be right in your pocket. When my children were younger, I purchased pocket-sized note pads and wrote each child's name on an individual pad. Dubbed "The Good Book," each handy little notebook made it easy for my wife and me to jot down any good deeds we saw our



Cookies and a Gospel Message

A few years ago I decided to give our friends and neighbors something extra for Halloween: a message from us—and the Church. To a plate of festive sugar cookies I attached the conference talk "Let Our Voices Be Heard," by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. During family

home evening that week, we had read it and discussed how we could improve our choice of media at home. We also focused on Elder Ballard's reminder that "there are many like-minded men and women of all cultures and faiths" who oppose offensive media influence (*Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 17). So we decided to make a list of all our friends and associates of other faiths who might feel as we do on this topic.

We then compiled small folders of materials, including copies of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102)

and Elder Ballard's talk. We then shared the information and

Halloween cookies with those on our list.

And how was our gift received? I was surprised at how "like-minded" our friends turned out to be. They seemed just as concerned about these issues as we are, which led to some productive discussions about how we might support sponsors of more family-oriented programs on television. We also enjoyed some friendly discussions about the Church. Even our mailman asked questions after receiving his gift.

We had such a positive response that we'd like to continue giving such gifts for other holidays and occasions too. With all the Church materials available, there are many effective ways to share the gospel if we will just "let our voices be heard."

Kathleen Woffinden, Kansas

Note: Copies of the family proclamation are available at LDS distribution centers or online at www.ldscatalog.com. U.S. and Canadian residents may call the Salt Lake Distribution Center at 1-800-537-5971. Church magazine articles can be accessed at www.lds.org. For an idea to help you share the gospel during the Christmas season, see "Joy to the World" (*Ensign*, Oct. 2003, 6).



children doing throughout the day. Since they already had regular responsibilities, we recorded only the extra things that were beyond their normal duties. For instance, we tried to notice if they cleaned up a mess they didn't make, said a prayer for someone who was ill, or helped each other with a chore. Later, we could review with each

child his or her good deeds for the day. This simple family tradition not only reminded our children to serve others but also helped them drift to sleep with positive thoughts about themselves. Nothing else we did as parents seemed to motivate our children more than this simple acknowledgement of kindness.

Perry Gravelle, Washington



Elder Saldanha (left) from Brazil put a promising soccer career on hold to serve a mission.

One Million Missionaries, Thirteen Million Members

They are as much a symbol of the Church as the Salt Lake Temple and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir—clean-cut, well-dressed young men and women on bikes or on foot going door-to-door with a gospel message. Mormon missionaries have fanned across the globe since the earliest days of the Church and in the process have reached a major milestone.

“We have made great progress in our missionary work in recent years,” said President Gordon B. Hinckley at the Missionary Training Center in Provo during the most recent New Mission Presidents’ Training Seminar. “We have more missionaries—and more effective missionaries. It is reliably estimated that a million missionaries have served since the

organization of the Church.”

“It is not possible to pinpoint exactly who the millionth missionary is,” said Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles during a news conference while at the orientation sessions with 118 new mission presidents. “We do know that young men and women, senior sisters, and couples have volunteered to serve at their own or family expense in spreading this message to 145 nations and territories.”

Emphasizing the importance of understanding the mosaic of missionaries this milestone represents, Elder Ballard spoke of the unique traits that make each of these million missionaries special.

“A young Peruvian sister grilled hamburgers at a street cart to finance her mission in her home country,” he said. “A

young elder from India served in Toronto, Canada, and a retired couple left children and grandchildren to help dig clean water wells in West Africa. Missionaries serve where they are assigned, not knowing beforehand where in the world that may be.”

In fact, the work these volunteer missionaries perform is as diverse as the missionaries themselves. On any given day missionaries are working on everything from assisting with humanitarian projects and helping others trace their family history to helping with public affairs efforts and teaching the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

“From personal experience I can tell you that they study, they pray, they worry intensely about each child of God and especially the souls of those they are able to teach,” said Elder Ballard. “They face rejection and sometimes verbal abuse. But they soldier on. They serve,

they help others, and they go the extra mile to lift and bless people in all walks of life and in all human conditions.”

At the press conference, Elder Ballard stood among missionaries he said exemplified the missionary spirit. They included a native African couple from Kenya called to preside over a mission in Nigeria; a pair of young sister missionaries, one from South Korea and one from Mexico, serving on Temple Square in downtown Salt Lake City; a senior couple from Utah serving a humanitarian mission that takes them all over the world helping to provide clean water to many communities; and a pair of young men, one from Brazil and one from Idaho, who just entered the Missionary Training Center in preparation to serve in Japan.

The young men, Samuel Pelaquim and Brandon Soelberg, are both postponing college to spend the next two years of their lives without television, dating, and other teenage activities to preach the gospel. “Some people think I’m giving up a lot to serve a mission,” said Elder Soelberg. “But the reality is I feel I have a lot to give. I have always known I wanted to serve a mission, so it doesn’t really feel like a sacrifice to me. I need to do this; I want to do this.”

Elder Pelaquim agreed. “It is a wonderful opportunity to serve,” he said. “Since I was very young I have noticed a difference between my other friends and me. They had problems that I did not have to worry about, and I

have always known that it was the gospel that made that difference.”

It’s that difference that brought Unbyul Cho’s parents into the Church, according to the 22-year-old from Seoul, South Korea. “I’ve always wondered what would have happened to my family and me if the missionaries hadn’t served in Korea,” she said. “I wanted to serve a mission to help others have the same blessings my family enjoys.”

Likewise, Gazelem Munoz saw several family members join the Church in her native Mexico. “It changed my family. It changed my life, and hopefully it will help to change for good other people’s lives as I [teach] them as a missionary.”

The news conference was held next to a life-size bronze statue of Samuel Smith, the Church’s first missionary. In 1830, the year the Lord restored the Church through the Prophet Joseph Smith, there were only 16 missionaries called. Now, 177 years later, some 53,000 missionaries— young men, young women, senior sisters, and senior couples—currently serve in nearly 350 missions throughout the world.

And their work is striking a chord with many. President Hinckley also announced that Church membership has now reached 13 million, spread all across the world. There continue to be more members outside of the United States than inside, reflecting the global depth and diversity of Church membership. ■

God Loveth His Children Booklet Released

The First Presidency has released a new booklet, titled *God Loveth His Children*, aimed at helping both those who struggle with same-gender attraction and members of their families.

“We encourage all leaders to reach out with love and understanding to those affected by same-gender attraction,” the First Presidency said. “As you do so, please remember to teach true doctrine, as explained in the . . . booklet, and to counsel in a spirit of warmth and love.”

The booklet discusses the nature of individual identity

and potential, the plan of happiness, self-mastery, filling a life with goodness, and going forward in life.

The booklet will be available in 27 languages and will be distributed through stake, branch, and mission leaders. The languages include: ASL, Cebuano, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, English, English Braille, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Tahitian, Thai, Tongan, and Ukrainian.

Additional copies of the

booklet are available through distribution centers. The booklet will also be available on the Church’s Web site in these languages. ■



God Loveth His Children is a booklet aimed at helping those who struggle with same-gender attraction.

Historic Church Property Spared During Fire

On July 7, 2007, the Milford Flat fire, the largest blaze ever seen in the state of Utah, burned dangerously close to but miraculously spared the

Church’s historic Cove Fort, which originally served as a home and shelter for early pioneers.

The fort was evacuated as high winds

drove the flames toward the property at between 40 and 60 miles per hour (65 to 95 km per hour). But despite the absence of firefighters or physical barriers, the fort, an outlying barn, and the eight



Flames from the Milford Flat Fire in Utah soar into the sky just off I-15 near Cove Fort.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT WINTER/TON/DESBET MORNING NEWS

trailers that house most of the couple missionaries serving at the fort were spared.

"There was no damage whatsoever to the fort," said Elder Kent Jones, director of the historic site. "There's no question in our minds that the trailer park and fort were protected."

When he returned to the site following the evacuation, Elder Jones says it appeared that the fire had burned to within 150 feet (46 m) of a barn located about 200 feet (61 m) from the fort, but had stopped in knee-high field grass and turned in a different direction. The fire had also burned right up to the trailer park property line but didn't jump the road that circles the trailers.

The fort, located some 200 miles (322 km) south of Salt Lake City, was built of volcanic rock and limestone. President Brigham Young called Ira Hinckley, grandfather of President Gordon B. Hinckley, to direct the building of the fort in 1867. The purpose of the fort at that time was to offer protection and refreshment to people traveling between Idaho and California.

Now, 140 years later, the fort has been restored and is a historical site where 32 couple missionaries give tours to visitors, explaining what life was like for the early pioneers.

The fire, which was started by lightning on July 6, 2007, burned more than 363,000 acres (172,000 ha)—some 567 square miles (1,470 square km)—over a period of 10 days. ■

Church Reacts Quickly to Major Peru Earthquake

The Church worked closely with government leaders and other emergency response organizations to identify and meet urgent needs in Peru after a devastating 8.0 magnitude earthquake struck just off the coast on the evening of Wednesday, August 15, 2007, killing hundreds and leaving more than 1,500 people injured.

Early reports confirmed seven Church members were dead and more were injured. More than 70 member homes were among the thousands of homes destroyed by the earthquake. No Church buildings were destroyed, but many received damage.

Under the direction of the

South America West Area Presidency, Church members immediately responded to those in need. Limited food was provided to four meetinghouses that temporarily housed more than 600 Church members, relatives, and neighbors. The Area Presidency members visited the affected areas to provide support.

Small truckloads of food were sent to each meetinghouse early the following morning. Within 36 hours the Church was loading a 747 cargo plane at the Salt Lake International Airport with urgently needed items, including medical supplies, surgical instruments, family food boxes, hygiene kits, and tarps.

The hardest hit areas were the cities of Ica and Pisco. Authorities in Pisco estimated that more than 70 percent of the city had been destroyed.

Rescue teams trying to get to Ica, Pisco, and other rural towns southwest of Lima, the capital, found roads broken up and power knocked out. Hospitals reported the number of injured was overwhelming.

The earthquake was centered 25 miles west-northwest of Chincha Alta, 90 miles south-southeast of Lima, and about 25 miles below the earth's surface. The major quake prompted a tsunami warning, but this was later canceled.

The earthquake was felt nearly 100 miles from its epicenter. Dozens of severe aftershocks continued into Thursday. Most of these measured well above 5.0, and the strongest registered 6.3. ■



Residents of Pisco, Peru, wait outside their homes, which were ruined by a magnitude 8.0 earthquake on August 16.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROLLY REYNA/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Members Respond to England Flooding

After massive flooding throughout parts of central and western England left more than 15,000 homes in Gloucestershire without power and up to 350,000 people without running water in July, Elder Kenneth Johnson of the Seventy, Europe West Area President, made a £25,000 donation to the Red Cross's relief efforts in Gloucestershire on behalf of the Church.

Church leaders near Sheffield also worked with civil authorities to distribute cleaning and other emergency

relief supplies to those affected. Members helped each other and their neighbors clean up in the aftermath of the worst flooding in recorded UK history.

The areas of greatest concern were along the Severn, Avon, and Thames Rivers. Royal Navy helicopters and personnel rescued residents in areas covered by six feet (1.8 m) of water and more.

It took at least a week for officials to reconnect 80 percent of the homes cut off from running water, although the water remained unsafe to drink for some time, even

after boiling, because of the failure of a water treatment plant.

A number of member families were affected by the flooding, but all members and missionaries were accounted for. The Hull England Stake center suffered a significant amount of water damage.

Environment Agency spokesman Anthony Perry told the BBC that flooding of this magnitude has never been seen before in this region. In March of 1947 rivers in the south of England, Midlands, East Anglia, and North Yorkshire burst their banks, causing extensive damage, but this flooding exceeded that, Mr. Perry said. ■

Center," Sister Condie said.

In the 1994 October general conference, President Hunter admonished members to be a temple-attending and temple-loving people and to always hold a current temple recommend, even if attending the temple was difficult (see "A Temple-Motivated People," *Liabona*, Mar. 2004, 40; *Ensign*, Mar. 2004, 38).

President Hunter's display includes a temple recommend book and a copy of the *Church News* describing his dedication of the Orlando Florida Temple in October 1994. President Hunter also dedicated the Bountiful Utah Temple, in January 1995.

A large model of the Brigham Young University Center for Near Eastern Studies in Jerusalem, which President Hunter dedicated in 1989, shows what an enormous undertaking the project was. Items from his office, including a bowl given to him for his work with the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii, surround his portrait and pictures.

President Gordon B. Hinckley is the 15th President of the Church. His display is evidence of the development of a worldwide Church and the use of technological advances that have facilitated that growth.

In 1953, under the direction of President David O. McKay (1873–1970), Gordon B. Hinckley, who at that time was not yet a General Authority, was asked to create the Church's first film presentation for use in the temples. An exact model of the

Hall of Church Presidents Brought Up to Date

For years the Hall of Church Presidents, located on the top floor of the Museum of Church History and Art, has featured unique displays from the lives of the Church Presidents from the Prophet Joseph Smith to President Spencer W. Kimball, who died in 1985.

Visitors sometimes ask where the displays are for the three most recent Presidents of the Church, exhibit curator Marjorie Conder said. It was something that was just put off for various reasons—until now.

Guests can now enjoy a complete exhibit featuring all Church Presidents from the Prophet Joseph Smith to the current prophet, President

Gordon B. Hinckley.

Each President's display features a portrait, a quote, an example of his signature, and artifacts that represent his life. The displays help convey the role each President played in building the Church.

"We try to focus on the stories and events that are most familiar to members," Sister Conder said.

President Ezra Taft Benson's display has a large bookshelf with 87 copies of the Book of Mormon—one of each of the languages the book was published in while he was President of the Church, from 1985 to 1994. A glass case is lined with pamphlets featuring speeches he

gave to various groups in the Church.

President Benson was well known for his service as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture during the Eisenhower administration. The chair from his cabinet office—which he commonly referred to as "the hot seat"—is part of his display. A display case holds political cartoons depicting President Benson's good character while he served in the cabinet and a medal of distinguished service awarded to him by the state of New Jersey.

Following President Benson, Howard W. Hunter served as President of the Church for nine months, from 1994 to 1995.

"Because he was President for so short a time, we focused on the talk he gave at a general conference and his work with the Jerusalem

camera and the actual microphone used by President Hinckley for this project are on display.

In the center of the display, a small sampling of the many gifts given to President Hinckley by members all over the world surrounds a large globe. Pictures, President Hinckley's concept sketch of

a small temple, and books he has written are also on display.

A model of the Conference Center shows the magnitude of the building, and an exact replica of the Conference Center's walnut pulpit, which was built from a tree grown in the yard of President Hinckley's Salt

Lake home, is placed so visitors can stand at the pulpit as a speaker would.

Overhead, a model of a satellite hangs from the ceiling, representing how technology has been used to broadcast general conference, firesides, meetings, and even the dedications of the Palmyra New York, Winter Quarters

Nebraska, and Nauvoo Illinois Temples.

The Museum of Church History and Art is located at 45 North West Temple, just west of Temple Square in Salt Lake City. It is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays and from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Admission is free. ■

Comment

It Hasn't All Been Done

I want to thank Loretta Evans for her "It's All Been Done" article (July 2007 *Ensign*; see also



"FamilySearch Indexing," August 2007 *Ensign*). Thank you for informing me of the opportunity to help in the process of digitizing for the Family and Church History Department. I've always wanted to do genealogy work and have felt frustrated with the lack of progress in doing my own family's work. But now I have another way I can feel helpful. I'm a whiz at the computer and typing, and I've always wondered how I could make use of this talent for good. Now I can go on the Internet and do batches of work for others. This is such an easy and accessible way to serve! I hope the Church continues to advertise this volunteer opportunity. Kealoha Kagawa, Oregon

FamilySearch Indexing

I too have found indexing a profound experience. I get tears in my eyes when I find mothers who have had several children and most of them have died. I feel the pain and realize these are not just names; these are real people. I soon discovered I had indexed 18,000 names—and the effort was well worth the time.

Shirley M. Mackley, Washington

Contemplating the Atonement

Thank you for publishing Thomas B. Griffith's article, "The Root of Christian Doctrine" (August 2007 *Ensign*), which advocates studying in detail the events that make up the Atonement



of Jesus Christ. Brother Griffith's quote from President Hinckley that "no member of this Church must ever forget the terrible price

paid by our Redeemer" emphasizes an obligation we sometimes shirk: contemplating the full and arduous scope of the atoning sacrifice.

I frankly find it painful to learn about and contemplate all the Savior suffered for my redemption, but such studying brings me strength, comfort, grace, and the courage to face my challenges. Truly, as Brother Griffith points out, our sacrament hymns remind us of all Jesus Christ underwent from Gethsemane to Calvary, and "we should not avoid thinking about the price He paid to win our souls."

Betsy VanDenBerghe, Utah

The Success of Temple Square Missionaries

I read with great interest the article about the sister

missionaries on Temple Square, (July 2007 *Ensign*) and the fact that they never know whether the information they have given to the tourists ever ends up with someone becoming a member of the Church.

In August 1948, I was a tourist in Salt Lake City. I had purchased a bus tour package

to visit the parks out West. During the time I was in Salt Lake City, I visited Welfare Square, Memory Grove, the Great Salt Lake, and Temple Square.

I picked up one each of all the leaflets at Temple Square. When I went to the drugstore I found a booklet entitled *These Amazing Mormons*. I purchased this booklet too. I returned home to Chicago and systematically read the literature and the booklet. The booklet mentioned the nearby mission home. One Sunday I got up enough courage to locate the mission home to find out more about this religion. I feel I was led from above. After investigating the Church for about a year, I was baptized in 1950.

Yes, there are people who take the Temple Square tour who are touched by the messages!

Dorothy J. Kirton, Utah

Crediting the Sculptors

The *Ensign's* June 2007 inside back cover features a photograph of the statues of Joseph and Hyrum Smith on horseback. These statues were sculpted by Stanley J. Watts and Kimberly Corpany. ■



Jordan River Temple, 1995, by Larry Winborg

The following words from the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in 1836 can apply to all of the Lord's temples.
The Prophet Joseph Smith asked the Lord "that all people who shall enter upon the threshold of the Lord's house may feel thy power; and feel constrained to acknowledge that thou hast sanctified it, and that it is thy house, a place of thy holiness" (D&C 109:13).



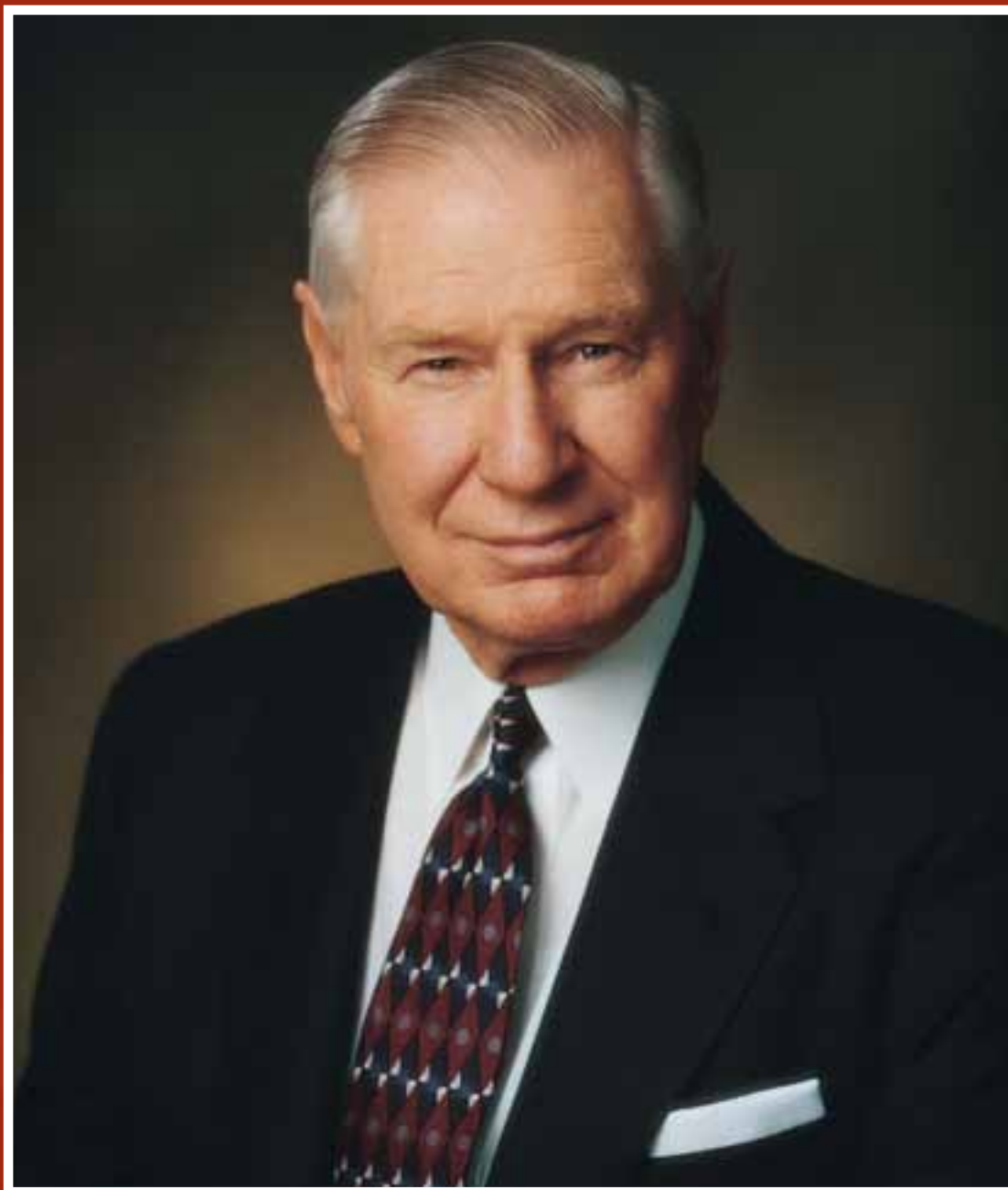
To all of you I say,
'Come to the temple.'

It may be that you look forward to the once-in-a-lifetime privilege of going there to receive your own endowment, to receive your own blessings, and to enter into your own covenants with the Lord. It may be that you have been there once or twice already.

It may be that you go frequently. It may even be that you are an officiator. Whatever the circumstances may be, come to the temple."

See President Boyd K. Packer, "Come to the Temple," p. 18.





PHOTOGRAPH BY BUSATH PHOTOGRAPHY

PRESIDENT
JAMES E. FAUST
Beloved Shepherd

JULY 31, 1920–AUGUST 10, 2007



Above: Young James Faust (right) with his brothers Rex (left) and Dan. Right: James E. Faust as a missionary.



James E. Faust always remembered the bleating of his frightened lamb. As a small boy he forgot to put his pet in the barn one night when a storm arose.

"I knew that I should help my pet, but I wanted to stay safe, warm, and dry in my bed. I didn't get up as I should have done," he recalled during a priesthood session of general conference. "The next morning I went out to find my lamb dead. A dog had also heard its bleating cry and killed it."

"My heart was broken," he said. He realized that he had not been a good shepherd. His father's loving rebuke hurt him even more: "Son, couldn't I trust you to take care of just one lamb?"¹

That day James resolved that he would try his best to never neglect his stewardship should he have the opportunity again to be a shepherd. As a full-time missionary in Brazil, devoted husband and father, successful lawyer, political leader, member of the

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Second Counselor in the First Presidency, he remembered his resolution. To the end of his ministry, which closed on August 10, 2007, when he died of causes incident to age, President Faust remained devoted to the Lord's admonition: "Feed my lambs" (John 21:15).

Family and Faith

James Esdras Faust was born in Delta, Utah, on July 31, 1920, one of five sons of George A. and Amy Finlinson Faust. The family later moved to Salt Lake City, where George worked as an attorney and district court judge. At home and on the farms of his grandparents in central Utah, young James enjoyed the love and support of a Christ-centered family and honed the virtues of honesty, hard work, and service.

"No man ever had a better father than did I,"² he said. Of his mother he recalled, "She was a deeply spiritual, saintly woman who fully exemplified Christlike living."³

As an adult President Faust strove to honor and emulate his parents, always giving priority to family and Church. "There is no greater responsibility than that of being a husband and a father,"⁴ he taught. Of the Church and its mission, he declared, "Nothing in the world is equal to this work."⁵

After high school, where he excelled in football and track, he was called to serve in the Brazil Mission from 1939 to 1942. While he was in Brazil, his love for God's children and their welfare blossomed. "I was born with partial color-blindness," he said. "I have learned to love all of the people in the countries where I have been as a missionary, soldier, or General Authority, regardless of the color of their skins. I hope to be a disciple . . . especially for the



Above: James Faust (fourth from left) running track as a student. Right: With his parents, Amy and George Faust, and his son James.

humble, the downtrodden, the poor, the afflicted, the needy, and the poor in spirit. I am mindful that if we forget these, we can in no way be [the Lord's] disciples."⁶

Six weeks after returning from his mission, President Faust joined the U.S. Army Air Corps. While on leave in 1943 he married Ruth Wright, whom he had known since high school, in the Salt Lake Temple. While away during World War II, he wrote her a letter every day.⁷ Of the Fausts' relationship, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, "Theirs is an absolute model of a beautiful marriage."⁸

His deep devotion to Ruth and their 5 children, 25 grandchildren, and 27 great-grandchildren and her unfailing support for him were apparent to all who knew them.

"With all my heart I want my children to know that I cannot succeed in this calling unless I also succeed as their father, and that they will always be paramount in my life,"⁹ he said after being called as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1972.

After he was sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles six years later, his first thought was to find Ruth,¹⁰ who he said was "as much a part of me as my heart and soul."¹¹

A Moral Compass

Shortly after applying to officers' candidate school in 1942, President Faust was summoned before a board of inquiry. Nearly all of the questions the board asked him centered on his standards and beliefs. Did he smoke? Did he drink? Did he pray? Though fearful of giving offense, President Faust answered each question without equivocation. Then he was asked whether the moral code should be relaxed during times of war.

"I recognized that here was a chance perhaps to make some points and look broad-minded," he said. "I suspected that the men who were asking me this question did not live by the standards that I had been taught. The thought flashed through my mind that perhaps I could say that I had my own beliefs,

MILESTONES IN THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

July 31, 1920

Born in Delta, Utah, to George A. and Amy Finlinson Faust

1937–39

Attended the University of Utah in Salt Lake City

1939–42

Served a mission in Brazil

Apr. 21, 1943

Married Ruth Wright in the Salt Lake Temple

1942–45

Served during World War II in the U.S. Army Air Corps, honorably discharged as a first lieutenant

1948

Graduated from the University of Utah with bachelor's and Juris Doctor degrees; began practicing law in Salt Lake City



May 8, 1949

Sustained as bishop of the Big Cottonwood Ward

1949–51

Served in the Utah House of Representatives

Mar. 18, 1956

Sustained as Cottonwood Stake president

May 31, 1962

Elected president of the Utah State Bar

1962

Appointed by U.S. president John F. Kennedy to the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Racial Unrest

Dec. 14, 1968

Called as a regional representative

Jan. 1970

Appointed to the *Deseret News* board of directors

Oct. 6, 1972

Sustained as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Oct. 1, 1976

Sustained to the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy



Top left: Ruth Wright Faust. Above: Elder and Sister Faust, about 1980. Right: A wedding photo, 1943.



but I did not wish to impose them on others. But there seemed to flash before my mind the faces of the many people to whom I had taught the law of chastity as a missionary. In the end I simply said, 'I do not believe there is a double standard of morality.' ”¹²

To his surprise, he passed the inquiry and was selected for officers' candidate school.

“In all my long years of life I have tried not to hide who I am and what I believe,” he said at the last general conference he attended. “I cannot recall a single instance when it hurt my career or I lost valued friends by humbly

acknowledging that I was a member of this Church.”¹³

Honesty, which President Faust called “a moral compass,” served him well during his 24-year practice as an attorney. His integrity—coupled with a reputation for being fair, making wise decisions, and showing compassion and concern for others—distinguished him among his colleagues and led to opportunities for professional, civic, and community



PHOTOGRAPH BY NEWMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

service. He served in the Utah legislature from 1949 to 1951, as president of the Utah Bar Association from 1962 to 1963, on U.S. president John F. Kennedy’s Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Racial Unrest, and as a member of the Utah Constitutional Revision Commission.

President Faust’s unique blend of empathy and ability also helped him to serve effectively as a bishop, high councilor, stake president, regional representative, Assistant to the Twelve, Seventy, and Apostle. “In each of these callings,” observed Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “he demonstrated that a good leader is always a good listener.”¹⁴

Building Bridges

Though unassuming and quick to deflect credit, President Faust made many significant



PHOTOGRAPH BY ELDON K. LINSCHOTEN

contributions to the Church throughout decades of service. As a member of the Church’s Public Affairs Committee, he brought his legal expertise to play on several political issues that had moral implications, including proposed pari-mutuel betting in Utah. He also advocated changing the Church’s logo to emphasize Jesus Christ. In addition, he helped shepherd the Church’s decision to retain the services of a worldwide public relations firm that has helped the Church spread its message, correct misconceptions, and improve media relations.

He also worked to build bridges with members and leaders of other faiths. In those efforts he was slow to be offended but quick to show patience, kindness, and understanding.

At one community event he and Sister Faust attended, a leader of another faith criticized the Church. Sister Faust recalled, “I became steamier and steamier as he went on, but Jim just listened patiently. Afterwards, he went up to this man and said, ‘Now, Reverend, if you feel that way, we must be doing something wrong. I’d like for us to have lunch together so that you can let me know what your concerns are.’ They did, and

Above: Elder Faust (far left) as a new member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, about 1979. Left: President and Sister Faust with their children.



Left: At a 1995 press conference the new Church leadership is introduced: President Thomas S. Monson (left), First Counselor in the First Presidency; President Gordon B. Hinckley; President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; and President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Below: The First Presidency at the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple.

June 1977

Called to preside over the International Mission

Sept. 30, 1978

Sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Mar. 12, 1995

Set apart as Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Apr. 27, 1998

Received a Brazilian national citizenship award—an honor given to only a few world leaders

2000

Dedicated seven temples: Oaxaca Mexico, Tuxtla Gutiérrez Mexico, Medford Oregon, Memphis Tennessee, Nashville Tennessee, San José Costa Rica, and Oklahoma City Oklahoma

Aug. 10, 2007

Died in Salt Lake City, Utah, at age 87

the two have been good friends ever since.”¹⁵

In the 1980s President Faust worked closely with President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, then president of Brigham Young University, to turn their vision of BYU’s Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies into reality. President Faust and President Hunter waded through intense negotiations and prolonged opposition in leasing land and overseeing construction of the center.

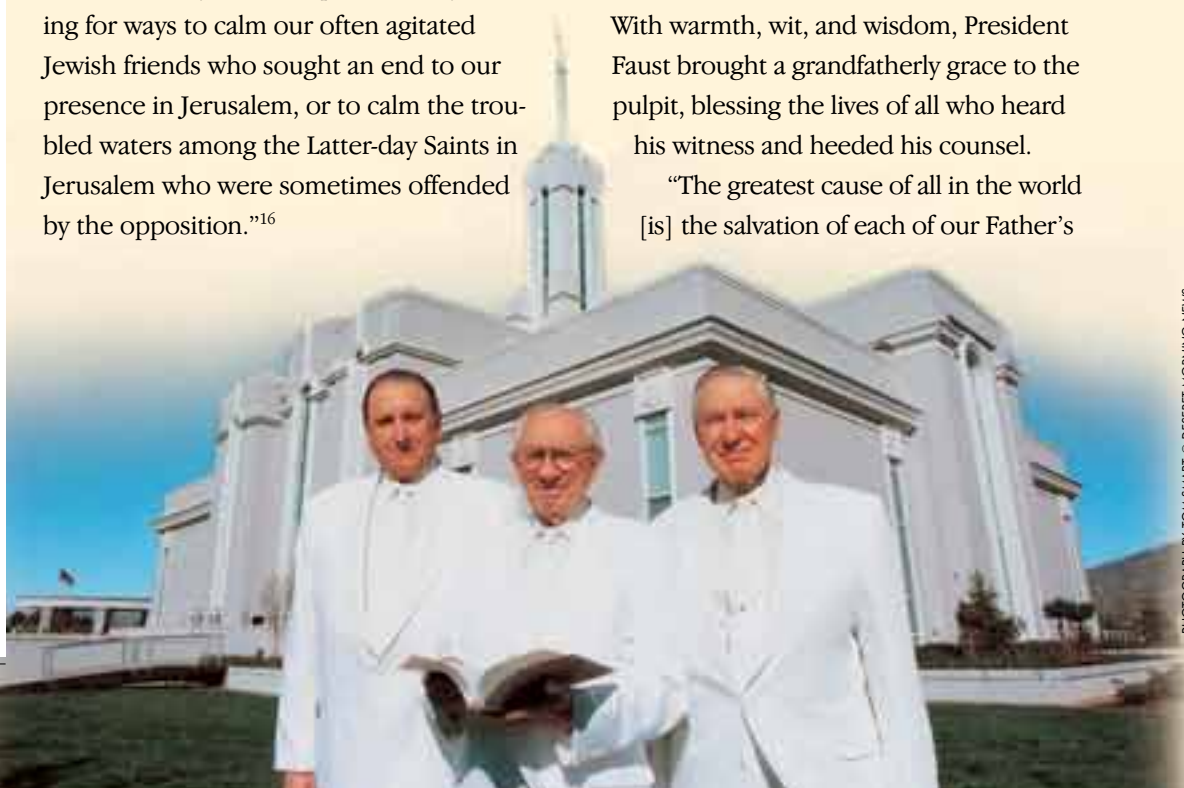
One eyewitness to the process said, “Elder Faust was truly a man of peace, always looking for ways to calm our often agitated Jewish friends who sought an end to our presence in Jerusalem, or to calm the troubled waters among the Latter-day Saints in Jerusalem who were sometimes offended by the opposition.”¹⁶

Reaching Out

Whether laboring in Brazil as the Area Supervisor for South America from 1975 to 1977, presiding over the International Mission in 1977 as a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, ministering to Church members as an Apostle since 1978, or serving as Second Counselor to President Gordon B. Hinckley since 1995, President Faust always strove to reach out in a spirit of kindness and brotherhood.

His conference addresses often reflected the Savior’s two great injunctions: to love and serve God and to love and serve His children. With warmth, wit, and wisdom, President Faust brought a grandfatherly grace to the pulpit, blessing the lives of all who heard his witness and heeded his counsel.

“The greatest cause of all in the world [is] the salvation of each of our Father’s



children,”¹⁷ he said. “The greatest fulfillment in life comes by rendering service to others.”¹⁸

In his August 2007 First Presidency Message, President Faust said he hoped “to offer opportunities for development and happiness for all members, whether married or single.” Recalling the parable of the good shepherd, he added, “Seeking out the one who needs our help involves reaching out in many ways.”¹⁹

In his last general conference address, he testified of the healing power of forgiveness. “For all of us who forgive ‘those who trespass against us’ [Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:13], even those who have committed serious crimes, the Atonement brings a measure of peace and comfort,” he said. “Let us remember that we need to forgive to be forgiven. . . . With all my heart and soul, I believe in the healing power that can come to us as we follow the counsel of the Savior to ‘forgive all men’ [D&C 64:10].”²⁰

Testimony

During his ministry President Faust often bore testimony of the Book of Mormon, the Restoration, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the keys and authority held by Presidents of the Church. “It is President Hinckley’s voice we need to hear today, his counsel we need to follow,” he declared, “so that the best things can happen to us.”²¹

President Faust also bore a fervent testimony of the Savior, writing the words to the song “This Is the Christ” and testifying: “Those of us who hold the holy apostleship always wish to fulfill our responsibility by testifying of the divinity of the Savior. I feel compelled to do so. I have had a testimony all of my life. Recently, however, there has come



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER

FUNERAL TRIBUTES FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

“His wisdom was deep and profound. It came of long experience in many fields. He brought with him the mind of a lawyer and the compassion of a Church leader. . . . His faith in the truth of the restored gospel was unflagging. There was no doubt in his mind concerning the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith. He had no doubt about the validity of the Book of Mormon. . . .

“His passing has been one of peace and love and light. Peace be to his memory. All of us are the richer for our association with him.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley

“He was a man of experience, a man of wisdom, a man of love. He was a man of faith, a man of prayer, but most of all he was a man of God. There was no chink in his armor; there was no guile in his soul; there was no flaw in his character.

“President Faust loved the Lord with all his heart and soul and served Him with all his might to the very end of his mortal life. . . . He was a teacher of truth. He left behind a heritage of honor and a legacy of love. God bless his memory.”

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency



Above: A younger James Faust speaks in the Tabernacle, about 1970. Right: President Faust addresses general conference, April 2007.



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

into my soul an overpowering witness of the divinity of this holy work. This sure witness is more certain than ever before in my life.”²²

President Faust never forgot the frightened lamb of his boyhood. And he never forgot his resolve as a steward to the fold. By endeavoring to emulate the Good Shepherd, of whom he had an “unshakable”²³ testimony, he led a life that became his best sermon—the sermon of a beloved shepherd. ■

NOTES

1. “Responsibilities of Shepherds,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 46.
2. “To Become One of the Fishers,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 81.
3. In Wm. Grant Bangerter, “Elder James E. Faust,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1986, 7.
4. *Ensign*, May 1995, 46.
5. “Finding the Abundant Life,” *Liabona*, Nov. 2000, 5; *Ensign*, July 2000, 4.
6. “Response to the Call,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 20.
7. See Neal A. Maxwell, “President James E. Faust: ‘Pure Gold,’” *Liabona*, Oct. 1995, 21; *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 16.
8. In James P. Bell, *In the Strength of the Lord: The Life and Teachings of James E. Faust* (1999), 229.
9. *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 81.
10. See “Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 95.
11. *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 20.
12. “Honesty—a Moral Compass,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 42; see also “Stand up and Be Counted,” *Tambuli*, Oct. 1982, 22–23.
13. “Message to My Grandsons,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 56.
14. *Liabona*, Oct. 1995, 21; *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 15.
15. *In the Strength of the Lord*, 178.
16. David Galbraith, in *In the Strength of the Lord*, 207.
17. “Go Bring Them in from the Plains,” *Liabona*, Nov. 1997, 7; *Ensign*, July 1997, 7.
18. “What’s in It for Me?” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 22.
19. “Welcoming Every Single One,” *Liabona*, Aug. 2007, 3, 5; *Ensign*, Aug. 2007, 5, 7.
20. “The Healing Power of Forgiveness,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 69.
21. “It Can’t Happen to Me,” *Liabona*, July 2002, 54; *Ensign*, May 2002, 48.
22. “The Weightier Matters of the Law: Judgment, Mercy, and Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 59.
23. Thomas S. Monson, in *Liabona*, Oct. 1995, 19; *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 14.