

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • SEPTEMBER 2007

# Ensign



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**View from Parley Street, by Howard E. Post**

*In the autumn of 1845, the original Nauvoo Temple would have looked much like this painting of the new Nauvoo Illinois Temple. But by February 1846, the Latter-day Saint pioneers were walking in the snow and cold down Parley Street as they made their way to the old Nauvoo ferry on the Mississippi River, leaving the City Beautiful and their temple behind.*



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The *Ensign* invites women to share experiences in making the transition—or helping someone else make the transition—from the Young Women program to Relief Society. What have you learned? Please label your submission “Joining Relief Society” and send it by October 19.

We also welcome other submissions that show the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. *Ensign* Magazine Writers’ Guidelines are posted at <http://ensign.lds.org> under **Resources**.

Send submissions to [ensign@ldschurch.org](mailto: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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## USING THIS ISSUE

**Finding humor.** In “The Power of Laughter” (p. 32), Gary K. Palmer points out that humor is “an attitude, not an event.” How are your family relationships different when you use humor in your home? Together, you might want to remember funny moments you’ve shared or discuss ways you can find humor in everyday situations.

**Using agency.** After reading “Priesthood, Agency, and Black Powder” (p. 56), list some of the “black powder” we face today. Share with a friend or family member your thoughts about how the gospel helps you avoid these dangers.

**Managing your resources.** This month’s issue contains several helps for financial management (see pp. 36 and 40 and the insert on family finances). To find additional information and tools to help you better manage your finances, including online financial calculators, visit [www.providentliving.org](http://www.providentliving.org) and click on **Family Finances**.



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# Inspirational Thoughts

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

## The Last Dispensation

“How wonderful it is that [God] has smiled with favor in this, the last dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness of times, when He has restored His work with all of its powers, with all of its glory and all of the truth and all of the authority of all previous dispensations in this great and final period of time. . . .

“I know that God our Eternal Father lives and loves us; that Jesus is His Beloved Son, our Redeemer, our Savior, our Lord, our Friend; that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet; that this Church is true; that it is Their work restored to the earth for our blessing and our happiness” (regional conference, Salt Lake City, Utah, May 4, 2003).

## I Know the Gospel Is True

“Do I know [the gospel is] true? I want everybody in this hall tonight to realize that you each heard me say to you that I know that God our Eternal Father lives. I know that He lives. I know that He is a being of substance. I know that He is the great God of the universe. I know, however, that I am His child and that you are His children and that He will listen to and hear and answer our prayers.

“I know that Jesus is the Christ. He was the great instrument in the hands of God to create the earth. The Gospel of John says that nothing was made that was not made by Him [see John 1:3]. He was the Creator. He was the Jehovah of the Old Testament. He was the Christ child, who came and was born under humble circumstances. He was the Messiah, who walked a lonely road to His foreordained mission, healing the sick and raising the dead. He was the great Redeemer of the world, who died on Calvary’s hill and was resurrected the third day, ‘the firstfruits of them that slept’ (1 Corinthians 15:20). He it was who visited the Nephites on the American continent and taught them as He had taught in the Holy Land. And He it was who, with His Father, visited the boy Joseph and spoke to him concerning the Restoration of this work.

“I know that the priesthood is here upon the earth and is available to every man who lives worthy of it. I know that the ordinances of the temple are upon the earth, the great sealing ordinances under which we may be bound together as families for time and all eternity. I know that God will not forsake this work, but He will see that there is always someone through whom He can communicate



*I know that God our Eternal Father lives and loves us; that Jesus is His Beloved Son, our Redeemer, our Savior, our Lord, our Friend; that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet; that this Church is true; that it is Their work restored to the earth for our blessing and our happiness.*



**L**ive the commandments of God so that you may come to the temple. Do those things which will make you eligible to serve in the house of the Lord. It has been built for you, my brothers and sisters.

His truths to the people” (meeting, Nairobi, Kenya, Aug. 4, 2005).

#### **Modern Revelation**

“How wonderful it is that we believe in modern revelation. I cannot get over the feeling that if revelation were needed anciently, when life was simple, that revelation is also needed today, when life is complex. There never was a time in the history of the earth when men needed revelation more than they need it now.

“I want to testify to you, my brothers and sisters, that the book of revelation is not closed. God directs this day and time and speaks as certainly today as He did in

the days of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob” (meeting, Madrid, Spain, May 29, 2004).

#### **Put It to the Test**

“I plead with you, my brothers and sisters, that if you have any doubt concerning any doctrine of this Church, that you put it to the test. Try it. Live the principle. Get on your knees and pray about it, and God will bless you with a knowledge of the truth of this work” (meeting, Paris, France, May 28, 2004).

#### **Stand above Evil**

“My dear young friends, never let anything stand in the way of your worthiness to enter the house of the Lord and there engage in a



PHOTOGRAPH OF MADRID SPAIN TEMPLE BY MARGARITA DIAZ LARA; HE IS RISEN BY DEL PARSON



great and marvelous service in behalf of those who have gone beyond.

“You face so much of evil. Stand above it. . . . I do not know that there was ever a time in the history of the world when there was greater evil in the world than there is today. I want to salute you, you young men and women of this Church who have stood strong in the face of evil. God bless you and give you strength to resist” (meeting, São Paulo, Brazil, Feb. 21, 2004).

### **The Very Purpose of This Work**

“I urge you, dear sisters, to attend the house of the Lord and to encourage your husbands to go with you. If, perchance, there may be some here who have never been or who have not been for a long time, I suggest with love in my heart that you do all that is necessary to qualify to do so. If you have not done so, you have missed, really, what this Church is all about. The very purpose of this work, as declared by the God of heaven, is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of men and women [see Moses 1:39]. Do you love your husband? Do you love your children and your grandchildren and your great-grandchildren? Then do not miss the opportunity to bind them to you in an eternal compact that time cannot destroy and death cannot break. This can be accomplished in no other way. . . .

“And if these blessings are available to [us] of this generation, would not a just God provide for a way to make them available to your forefathers who did not have such an opportunity?” (stake Relief Society meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah, Mar. 20, 2002).

### **Come to the Temple**

“I wish to say to everyone here, come to the temple. Live worthy to come to the temple. Live the commandments of God so that you may come to the temple. Do those things which will make you eligible to serve in the house of the Lord. It has been built for you, my brothers and sisters, that you might have the opportunity of

coming here and receiving the wonderful blessings that can be had nowhere else in all the world, except in other temples, where you may be sealed together as husband and wife, where your children may be sealed to you, where you may work in behalf of your forebears, who have gone beyond. That great and marvelous and wonderfully unselfish work occurs in the house of the Lord. Come to the temple” (meeting, Aba, Nigeria, Aug. 6, 2005).



### **Live Worthy of the Priesthood**

“God has given you [priesthood holders] something of power and divinity and reality and usefulness. He has blessed you with the very essence of His power, with the authority to speak in His sacred name and bring to pass His work to bless, to teach, to encourage, to help, to govern in the affairs of His kingdom—the power of the royal priesthood. There is nothing simple or nothing to be taken for granted concerning this. This is His divine power.

It is the power by which the earth was created and His work is carried forward. And He has deigned, as it were, to bestow upon you and me, out of His goodness and generosity, that power and authority. Oh, how we ought to strive to live worthy of it, to never do anything which would destroy our effectiveness as His sons in exercising this divine, sacred, and remarkable thing which we call the holy priesthood” (regional conference, Pleasant Grove, Utah, Jan. 19, 2003).

### **Blessings of Church Membership**

“What a wonderful thing it is to belong to this Church. Have you ever stopped to think how empty your lives would be without it? How grateful we ought to be . . . for the tremendous blessings that come through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you . . . for being faithful Latter-day Saints and for seeking to raise your children in light and truth, with a love for the Lord and His great and holy work” (stake conference, West Valley City, Utah, Nov. 10, 2002).

### **Divine Mission of Jesus Christ**

“We are a great family bound together in a unity of love and faith. Our blessing is great, as a people and as individuals. We carry in our hearts a firm and unshakable conviction of the divine mission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“He was the great Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Creator who, under the direction of His Father, made all things and ‘without him was not any thing made that was made’ (John 1:3). He was the promised Messiah, who came with healing in His wings. He was the worker of miracles, the great healer, the Resurrection and the Life. His is the only name under heaven whereby we must be saved [see Acts 4:12]. . . .

“He came as a gift of His Eternal Father. ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life’ (John 3:16).

“He condescended to leave His throne on high and come to earth to be born in a manger, in a conquered nation. He walked the dusty roads of that land, healing the sick, teaching the doctrine, blessing all who would accept Him. . . .

“On Calvary’s hill He gave His life for each of us. That is the greatest gift that any of us can ever receive. It is the gift of the Resurrection and eternal life.

“We honor His birth. But without His death, that birth would have been but one more birth. It was the Redemption which He worked out in the Garden of Gethsemane and upon the cross of Calvary which made His gift immortal, universal, and everlasting. His was a great Atonement for the sins of all mankind. He is the Resurrection and the Life, ‘the firstfruits of them that slept’ (1 Corinthians 15:20). Because of Him all men will be raised from the grave.

“We love Him. We honor Him. We thank Him. We worship Him. He has done for each of us and for all mankind that which none other could have done. God be thanked for the gift of His Beloved Son, our Savior, the Redeemer of the world, the Lamb without blemish, who was offered as a sacrifice for all mankind” (missionary devotional, Dec. 15, 2002).

### **The Blessings of the Atonement**

“[Jesus Christ’s] Atonement is the greatest event in human history. There is nothing to compare with it. It is the most fundamental part of our Father’s plan for the happiness of His children. Without it, mortal life would be a dead-end existence with neither hope nor future. The gift of our divine Redeemer brings an entirely new dimension to our lives. Because of our Savior’s sacrifice, instead of dismal oblivion, death becomes only a passage to a more glorious realm. The Resurrection becomes a reality for all. Eternal life becomes available to those who walk in obedience to His commandments” (Australia stake conference satellite broadcast, Feb. 12, 2005). ■

## **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. Show the article and a picture of President Hinckley. Explain that one of the prophet’s main roles is to teach and testify. Invite family members to take turns reading aloud a section that interests them. Testify of the importance of following the prophet.
2. Invite one family member to stand in a place where he or she can see things that no one else can. Ask that person to describe what he or she sees. Explain the role of a seer (see Mosiah 8:15–17). Read selections from the article. How do these statements from our prophet improve our spiritual vision?
3. Bring objects to represent sections in the article (the scriptures, a picture of a temple or of the Savior, and so on). Read the corresponding sections, and discuss how we can know these concepts came from our Heavenly Father. Testify that we can know the truth through the power of the Holy Ghost.





STRIVING FOR  
**FAMILY  
 UNITY**

**BY ELDER DONALD L. STAHOLI**

Served as a member of the Seventy from 1997 to 2006

**I**t has been said that if you think you know a perfect family, you don't know the family very well!

This suggests that all of us have periodic challenges in establishing and maintaining love and unity within our families. Yet, in large measure, our challenge to teach and nurture our children in a way that will qualify us as eternal families defines our mission here on earth.



*Successful parents know that unity grows when they act as "one" to teach, counsel, and encourage their children.*



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY

In his epistle to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul emphasized the importance of “perfecting . . . the saints” and reaching a “unity of the faith” (Ephesians 4:12–13). With this “unity,” Paul counseled that the Saints would “be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14). What a magnificent promise—especially for parents!

Love of families and fellow men was the keystone of the Savior’s ministry. To His disciples, He said, “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12). Less than a year following the organization of the restored Church, the Lord told the Saints in Fayette, New York, “I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27).

The teachings of living prophets and apostles as summarized in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” make clear our responsibilities to our families:

“Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another. . . . Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”<sup>1</sup>

Amid all the counsel we have been given about nurturing our children in love and unity, as parents we must decide how we can best accomplish this challenging but eternally compelling task. Some of the following principles and ideas may provide help in uniting our families in love and truth.



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



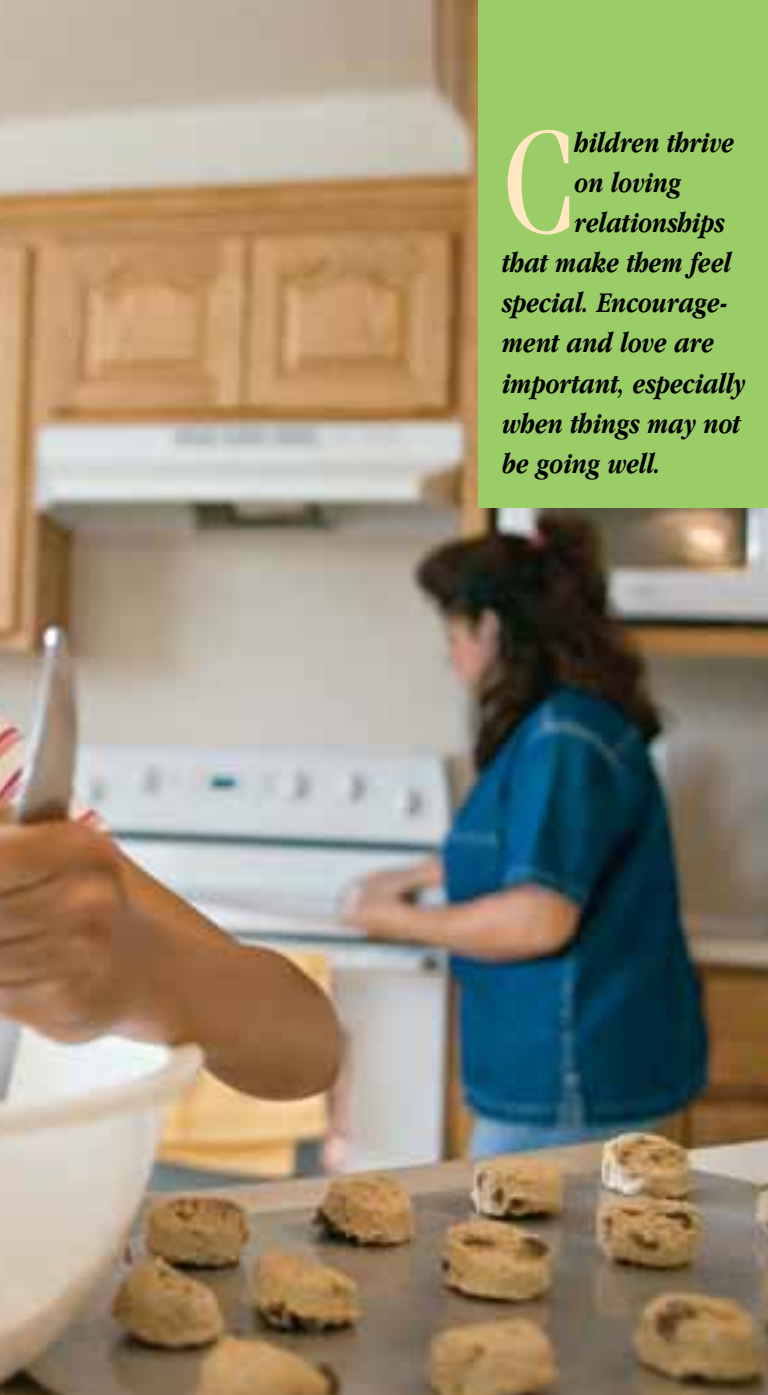
### Unity of Parents

Unity in the family begins with a loving parental relationship that sets an example for the family and extends in a personal way to each child.

President David O. McKay often credited his father and mother for the love and unity experienced in their family. He said: “Most gratefully and humbly I cherish the remembrance that never once as a lad in the home of my youth did I ever see one instance of discord between father and



**C**hildren thrive on loving relationships that make them feel special. Encouragement and love are important, especially when things may not be going well.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY

mother, and that goodwill and mutual understanding has been the uniting bond that has held together a fortunate group of brothers and sisters. Unity, harmony, goodwill are virtues to be fostered and cherished in every home.”<sup>22</sup>

### **Loving, Trusting Relationships**

Studies have shown that in most families, children’s self-confidence and sense of personal worth are directly related to the quality of their relationships with their parents<sup>3</sup> and how parents have taught and lived basic principles of the gospel.

As our children become teenagers, they frequently rely

on things that will endear them to their peers. Unless a strong bond of love and trust has been established between parents and children, supported by a strong spiritual environment in the home, children’s loyalties tend to move to peers as they become teenagers. As children develop confidence in themselves and strong testimonies of the Savior, they add a special spirit of unity and happiness to their families and have strength to resist the pressures of the world.

President Gordon B. Hinckley has counseled: “I would like to see greater love in our homes. . . . You parents who are fathers and mothers of children, treasure your children. Look to them with love. Lead them . . . with love. . . . They will follow after you if you do that. And I make you a promise that if you do so, the time will come when you will feel so grateful that you have done so, that you will get on your knees and thank the Lord for the precious children who have come to you and grown up under your direction.”<sup>4</sup>

Frequent expressions of love are a key to building trusting and loving relationships, but equally important is the consistent demonstration of that love. How we act often speaks louder than what we say and how we say it. It is important that we consistently and genuinely show our children our love for them as well as tell them of that love.

Following his father’s death, one young man felt he could take little comfort from his mother’s assurance that his father loved him and was proud of him.

“While a doctor was verifying death, I was leaning against the wall in the far corner of the room, crying softly. A nurse came over to me and put a comforting arm around me. I couldn’t talk through my tears. I wanted to tell her:

“ ‘I’m not crying because my father is dead. I’m crying because my father never told me that he was proud of me. He never told me that he loved me. Of course, I was expected to know these things. I was expected to know the great part I played in his life and the great part I occupied of his heart, but *he never told me.* ’ ”<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps there was a greater message than most of us realize when God our Father announced His Son by saying, “This is my beloved Son, *in whom I am well pleased*” (Matthew 3:17; emphasis added).

Children thrive on loving relationships that make them feel special. Encouragement and love are important, especially when things may not be going well.

Listening to our children and respecting their views builds trust and opens communication. Understanding and agreeing on expectations with each member of the family adds to the unity and good feelings for each other. Periodic one-on-one time is a superb way to build lasting relationships and trust. In fact, personal time with each child is an essential building block to genuine lasting relationships of love and unity.

As children replace selfishness and envy with kindness and service to each other, unity grows within the family. And as the family serves together to assist others, a bond of unity and love becomes the hallmark of the family. Unity in the family will not always free parents from problems and challenges with their children, but it does enable families to cohesively focus on solutions.

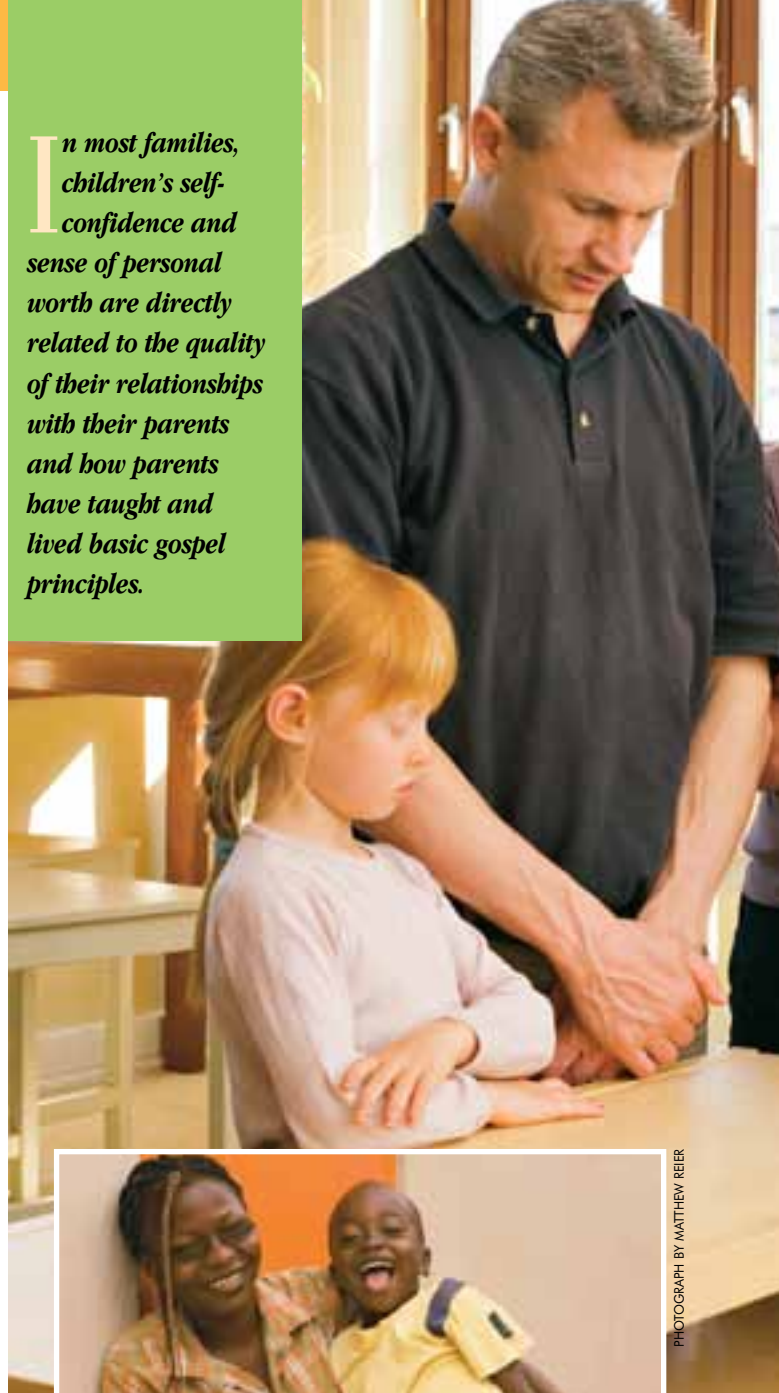
#### **Personal Spiritual Experiences for Children**

Living in accordance with our strong personal testimonies becomes the foundation for unwavering love and unity within a family. Testimonies also provide the bulwark against Satan and the things of the world that he uses to bring contention into families.

One of our key responsibilities as parents is to help our children prepare for and have spiritual experiences in their youth that will develop strong testimonies of Jesus Christ and His restored gospel. These experiences come as a result of prayer, study, and living gospel principles. They come from family home evenings and scripture study. They result from personal experiences and feelings from association with Church leaders and spiritually strong friends. Frequently, they come in a very personal way as the Spirit touches and confirms the truth and testimony of the living Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

I will be forever grateful for my faithful parents who, in their humble way, used the priesthood and the power of prayer to bless their children with the Lord's healing power. On several occasions during my youth, the Lord responded with His tender mercies in a way that was miraculous. For me those experiences formed the basic foundation on which I have developed an undeniable testimony of the Lord and His love for each of us.

***In most families, children's self-confidence and sense of personal worth are directly related to the quality of their relationships with their parents and how parents have taught and lived basic gospel principles.***



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER

#### **Unified Families Minimize Contention**

The Lord's challenge to raise our families in unity and righteousness is not a simple one. Our youth live in exciting yet challenging times. Their lives are filled with responsibilities and activities of various kinds. They have access to many things, including media and music that do not always fit within the standards of the home and the principles of the Church. As a result, almost every family at one time or another experiences disagreements on certain





PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

issues, both large and small. This creates contention.

The Lord made clear His feelings on contention when He said to the Nephites, “He that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil” (3 Nephi 11:29).

Our challenge as parents is to keep misunderstandings and disagreements to a minimum and to resolve differences quickly and amicably. The more we and our children are committed to living gospel principles, the greater the opportunity for the spirit of unity and love to reside in our homes. A clear understanding of gospel-centered guidelines and expectations in the home will significantly reduce periodic issues that precipitate contention.

### Consistent Family and Personal Prayer

Some of the most effective teaching in our homes comes from the family’s kneeling together and feeling the spirit of what is said in daily family prayer. Asking the Lord for forgiveness, while also petitioning His help in unifying the family in love and righteous purposes, can have a lasting influence on our children as they grow together in the family. Sincere prayers soften contentious thoughts.

It is absolutely imperative that we teach and encourage our children to be consistent and sincere in offering their personal prayers. As children pray daily, they will feel the Lord’s personal direction in their lives. As they learn to seek His blessings and guidance, the family will find the joy and happiness that come from striving to be a righteous family.

In His great Intercessory Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Savior pleaded with the Father *five separate times* for unity—“that they may be one, even as we are one” and “that they may be made perfect in one” (see John 17:11, 22–23). Unity is the outcome of a family engaging in righteous principles.

May we as parents pray for and live worthy of the Lord’s blessings so that our families may be one on earth and in the eternities to come. ■

#### NOTES

1. *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. In Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 7.
3. See Brent L. Top and Bruce A. Chadwick, “Helping Children Develop Feelings of Self-Worth,” *Ensign*, Feb. 2006, 35.
4. “Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2006, 4–5.
5. John Powell, *The Secret of Staying in Love* (1974), 68; emphasis added; see also Elder Marvin J. Ashton, “Family Communications,” *Ensign*, May 1976, 53.



### HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. To help family members visualize family unity, consider weaving a placemat from strips of paper. Write the name of a different family member on each strip. As they are woven together, discuss how this process represents the process of creating family unity. Use Elder Staheli’s article to discuss ways the family can build unity.

2. Consider having family members draw a picture of five people holding hands. Label each person with one of the headings from Elder Staheli’s article. Point out strengths that your family has in each of these areas. Using the suggestions in the article, plan an activity that will strengthen your family.



# THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE

BY RICHARD E. TURLEY JR.

Managing Director, Family and Church History Department

**T**his month marks the 150th anniversary of a terrible episode in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On September 11, 1857, some 50 to 60 local militiamen in southern Utah, aided by American Indian allies, massacred about 120 emigrants who were traveling by wagon to California. The horrific crime, which spared only 17 children age six and under, occurred in a highland valley called the Mountain Meadows, roughly 35 miles southwest of Cedar City. The victims, most of them from Arkansas, were on their way to California with dreams of a bright future.

For a century and a half the Mountain Meadows Massacre has shocked and distressed those who have learned of it. The tragedy has deeply grieved the victims' relatives, burdened the perpetrators' descendants and Church members generally with sorrow and feelings of collective guilt, unleashed criticism on the Church, and raised painful, difficult questions. How could this have happened? How could members of the Church have participated in such a crime?

Two facts make the case even more difficult to fathom. First, nothing that any of the emigrants purportedly did or said, even if *all* of it were true, came close to justifying their deaths. Second, the large majority of perpetrators led decent, nonviolent lives before and after the massacre.

As is true with any historical episode, comprehending the events of September 11, 1857, requires understanding the conditions of the time, only a brief summary of which can be shared in the few pages of this magazine article. For a more complete, documented account of the event, readers are referred to the forthcoming book *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*.<sup>1</sup>

## **Historical Background**

In 1857 an army of roughly 1,500 United States troops was marching toward Utah Territory, with more expected to follow. Over the preceding years, disagreements, miscommunication, prejudices, and political wrangling on both sides had created a growing divide between the territory





and the federal government. In retrospect it is easy to see that both groups overreacted—the government sent an army to put down perceived treason in Utah, and the Saints believed the army was coming to oppress, drive, or even destroy them.

In 1858 this conflict—later called the Utah War—was resolved through a peace conference and negotiation. Because Utah’s militiamen and the U.S. troops never engaged each other in pitched battle, the Utah War has been characterized as “bloodless.” But the atrocity at Mountain Meadows made it far from bloodless.

As the troops were making their way west in the summer of 1857, so were thousands of overland emigrants. Some of these emigrants were Latter-day Saint converts en route to Utah, but most westbound emigrants were headed for California, many with large herds of cattle. The emigration season brought many wagon companies to

*Two facts make this event difficult to fathom. First, nothing that any of the emigrants purportedly did or said, even if all of it were true, came close to justifying their deaths. Second, the large majority of perpetrators led decent, non-violent lives before and after the massacre.*

Utah just as Latter-day Saints were preparing for what they believed would be a hostile military invasion. The Saints had been violently driven from Missouri and Illinois in the prior two decades, and they feared history might repeat itself.

Church President and territorial governor Brigham Young and his advisers formed policies based on that perception. They instructed the people to save their grain and prepare to cache it in the mountains in case they needed to flee there when the troops arrived. Not a kernel of grain was to be wasted or sold to merchants or passing emigrants. The people were also to save their ammunition and get their firearms in working order, and the territory’s militiamen were put on alert to defend the territory against the approaching troops if necessary.

These orders and instructions were shared with leaders throughout the territory. Elder George A. Smith of the



*The plan to attack the emigrant company originated with local Church leaders. When Isaac Haight presented the plan to a council of local leaders, they asked if he had consulted with Brigham Young. He agreed to send an express rider with a letter. But before he did, John D. Lee and the Indians made a premature attack.*

**This stone cairn is the centerpiece of the monument updated in 1999 by the Church in cooperation with the Mountain Meadows Association.**

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles carried them to southern Utah. He, Brigham Young, and other leaders preached with fiery rhetoric against the enemy they perceived in the approaching army and sought the alliance of Indians in resisting the troops.

These wartime policies exacerbated tensions and conflict between California-bound emigrants and Latter-day Saint settlers as wagon trains passed through Utah's settlements. Emigrants became frustrated when they were unable to resupply in the territory as they had expected to do. They had a difficult time purchasing grain and ammunition, and their herds, some of which included hundreds of cattle, had to compete with local settlers' cattle for limited feed and water along the trail.

Some traditional Utah histories of what occurred at Mountain Meadows have accepted the claim that poisoning also contributed to conflict—that the Arkansas emigrants deliberately poisoned a spring and an ox carcass near the central Utah town of Fillmore, causing illness and death among local Indians. According to this story, the Indians became enraged and followed the emigrants to the Mountain Meadows, where they either committed the atrocities on their own or forced fearful Latter-day Saint

settlers to join them in the attack. Historical research shows that these stories are not accurate.

While it is true that some of the emigrants' cattle were dying along the trail, including near Fillmore, the deaths appear to be the result of a disease that affected cattle herds on the 1850s overland trails. Humans contracted the disease from infected animals through cuts or sores or through eating the

contaminated meat. Without this modern understanding, people suspected the problem was caused by poisoning.

**Escalating Tensions**

The plan to attack the emigrant company originated with local Church leaders in Cedar City, who had recently been alerted that U.S. troops might enter at any time through southern Utah's passes. Cedar City was the last place on the route to California for grinding grain and buying supplies, but here again the emigrants were stymied. Badly needed goods weren't available in the town store, and the miller charged a whole cow—an exorbitant price—to grind a few dozen bushels of grain. Weeks of frustration



boiled over, and in the rising tension one emigrant man reportedly claimed he had a gun that killed Joseph Smith. Others threatened to join the incoming federal troops against the Saints. Alexander Fancher, captain of the emigrant train, rebuked these men on the spot.

The men's statements were most likely idle threats made in the heat of the moment, but in the charged environment of 1857, Cedar City's leaders took the men at their word. The town marshal tried to arrest some of the emigrants on charges of public intoxication and blasphemy but was forced to back down. The wagon company made its way out of town after only about an hour, but the agitated Cedar City leaders were not willing to let the matter go. Instead they planned to call out the local militia to pursue and arrest the offending men and probably fine them some cattle. Beef and grain were foods the Saints planned to survive on if they had to flee into the mountains when the troops arrived.

Cedar City mayor, militia major, and stake president Isaac Haight described the grievances against the emigrant men and requested permission to call out the militia in an express dispatch to the district militia commander, William Dame, who lived in nearby Parowan. Dame was also the stake president of Parowan. After convening a council to discuss the matter, Dame denied the request. "Do not notice their threats," his dispatch back to Cedar City said. "Words are but wind—they injure no one; but if they (the emigrants) commit acts of violence against citizens inform me by express, and such measures will be adopted as will insure tranquility."<sup>2</sup>



Still intent on chastening the emigrants, Cedar City leaders then formulated a new plan. If they could not use the militia to arrest the offenders, they would persuade local Paiute Indians to give the Arkansas company "a brush," killing some or all of the men and stealing their cattle.<sup>3</sup>

They planned the attack for a portion of the California trail that ran through a narrow stretch of

the Santa Clara River canyon several miles south of the Mountain Meadows. These areas fell under the jurisdiction of Fort Harmony militia major John D. Lee, who was pulled into the planning. Lee was also a federally funded "Indian farmer" to local Paiutes. Lee and Haight had a long, late-night discussion about the emigrants in which Lee told Haight he believed the Paiutes would "kill all the party, women and children, as well as the men" if incited to attack.<sup>4</sup> Haight agreed, and the two planned to lay blame for the killing at the feet of the Indians.

The generally peaceful Paiutes were reluctant when first told of the plan. Although Paiutes occasionally picked off emigrants' stock for food, they did not have a tradition of large-scale attacks. But Cedar City's leaders promised them plunder and convinced them that the emigrants were aligned with "enemy" troops who would kill Indians along with Mormon settlers.

On Sunday, September 6, Haight presented the plan to a council of local leaders who held Church, civic, and military

positions. The plan was met with stunned resistance by those hearing it for the first time, sparking heated debate. Finally, council members asked Haight if he had consulted with President Young about the matter. Saying he hadn't, Haight agreed to send an express rider to Salt Lake City with a letter explaining the situation and asking what should be done.

#### **A Five-Day Siege**

But the next day, shortly before Haight sent the letter to Brigham Young, Lee and the Indians made a premature attack on the emigrant camp at the Mountain Meadows, rather than at the planned location in the Santa Clara canyon. Several of the emigrants were killed, but the remainder fought off their attackers, forcing a retreat. The emigrants quickly pulled their wagons into a tight circle, holing up inside the defensive corral. Two other attacks followed over the next two days of a five-day siege.

After the initial attack, two Cedar City militiamen, thinking it necessary to contain the volatile situation, fired on two emigrant horsemen discovered a few miles outside the corral. They killed one of the riders, but the other escaped to the emigrant camp, bringing with him the news that his companion's killers were white men, not Indians.

The conspirators were now caught in their web of deception. Their attack on the emigrants had faltered. Their military commander would soon know they had blatantly disobeyed his orders. A less-than-forthcoming dispatch to Brigham Young was on its way to Salt Lake City. A witness of white involvement had now shared the news within the emigrant corral. If the surviving emigrants were freed and continued on to California, word would quickly



*Haight later lamented, "I would give a world if I had it, if we had abided by the decision of the council."*

spread that Mormons had been involved in the attack. An army was already approaching the territory, and if news of their role in the attack got out, the conspirators believed, it would result in retaliatory military action that would threaten their lives and the lives of their people. In addition, other California-bound emigrant trains were expected to arrive at Cedar City and then the Mountain Meadows any day.

#### **Ignoring the Council's Decision**

On September 9 Haight traveled to Parowan with Elias Morris, who was one of Haight's two militia captains as well as his counselor in the stake presidency. Again they sought Dame's permission to call out the militia, and again Dame held a Parowan council, which decided that men should be sent to help the beleaguered emigrants continue on their way in peace. Haight later

lamented, "I would give a world if I had it, if we had abided by the deci[s]ion of the council."<sup>5</sup>

Instead, when the meeting ended, Haight and his counselor got Dame alone, sharing with him information they had not shared with the council: the corralled emigrants probably knew that white men had been involved in the initial attacks. They also told Dame that most of the emigrants had already been killed in these attacks. This information caused Dame, now isolated from the tempering consensus of his council, to rethink his earlier decision. Tragically, he gave in, and when the conversation ended, Haight left feeling he had permission to use the militia.

On arriving at Cedar City, Haight immediately called out some two dozen militiamen, most of them officers, to join others already waiting near the emigrant corral at the

# MEMORIALS

1859 The original monument at this site was established by the U.S. Army. It consisted of a granite cairn topped with a cedar cross and a granite marker set against the north side of the cairn and dated 20 May 1859. Military officials marked some other burial sites in the valley with simple stone cairns.

1932 The Utah Trails and Landmarks Association built a protective stone wall around the 1859 grave site in September 1932. The association president was George Albert Smith, a member of the Twelve Apostles and later President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

1955 On 4 September 1955, the Richard Fancher Society of America unveiled a granite memorial to the victims in a park at Harrison, Arkansas.

1990 The State of Utah, families of the victims and local citizens erected the Mountain Meadows Memorial on a nearby hill. The granite marker lists the known victims and surviving children. President Gordon B. Hinckley of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints dedicated the memorial on 14 September 1990 during a meeting in Cedar City.

1999 Under the direction of President Gordon B. Hinckley and with the cooperation of the Mountain Meadows Association and others, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints replaced the 1932 wall and installed the present Grave Site Memorial. President Hinckley dedicated the memorial on 11 September 1999.

**This detail of the plaque at the site of the original stone cairn tells the history of the memorials at the site.**

Mountain Meadows. Those who had deplored vigilante violence against their own people in Missouri and Illinois were now about to follow virtually the same pattern of violence against others, but on a deadlier scale.

## The Massacre

On Friday, September 11, Lee entered the emigrant wagon fort under a white flag and somehow convinced the besieged emigrants to accept desperate terms. He said the militia would safely escort them past the Indians and back to Cedar City, but they must leave their possessions behind and give up their weapons, signaling their peaceful intentions to the Indians. The suspicious emigrants debated what to do but in the end accepted the terms, seeing no better alternative. They had been pinned down for days with little water, the wounded in their midst were dying, and they did not have enough ammunition to fend off even one more attack.

As directed, the youngest children and wounded left the wagon corral first, driven in two wagons, followed by women and children on foot. The men and older boys

***President Young's express message to Haight arrived two days after the massacre: "In regard to emigration trains passing through our settlements, we must not interfere with them." When Haight read it, he sobbed like a child and could manage only the words, "Too late, too late."***

filed out last, each escorted by an armed militiaman. The procession marched for a mile or so until, at a prearranged signal, each militiaman turned and shot the emigrant next to him, while Indians rushed from their hiding place to attack the terrified women and children. Militiamen with the two front-running wagons murdered the wounded. Despite plans to pin the massacre on the Paiutes—and persistent subsequent efforts

to do so—Nephi Johnson later maintained that his fellow militiamen did most of the killing.

## Communication—Too Late

President Young's express message of reply to Haight, dated September 10, arrived in Cedar City two days after the massacre. His letter reported recent news that no U.S. troops would be able to reach the territory before winter. "So you see that the Lord has answered our prayers and again averted the blow designed for our heads," he wrote.

"In regard to emigration trains passing through our settlements," Young continued, "we must not interfere with them until they are first notified to keep away. You must not meddle with them. The Indians we expect will do as they please but you should try and preserve good feelings





***The massacre has continued to cause pain and controversy for 150 years. During the past two decades, descendants of the emigrants and the perpetrators have at times worked together, including on monuments at Mountain Meadows commemorating the Arkansas emigrants.***

***In 1990, on a hill in the Mountain Meadows, the state of Utah erected a memorial honoring the Arkansas emigrants.***

with them. There are no other trains going south that I know of[.] [I]f those who are there will leave let them go in peace. While we should be on the alert, on hand and always ready we should also possess ourselves in patience, preserving ourselves and property ever remembering that God rules.”<sup>6</sup>

When Haight read Young’s words, he sobbed like a child and could manage only the words, “Too late, too late.”<sup>7</sup>

**Aftermath**

The 17 spared children, considered “too young to tell tales,” were adopted by local families.<sup>8</sup> Government officials retrieved the children in 1859 and returned them to family members in Arkansas. The massacre snuffed out some 120 lives and immeasurably affected the lives of the surviving children and other relatives of the victims. A century and a half later, the massacre remains a deeply painful subject for their descendants and other relatives.

Although Brigham Young and other Church leaders in Salt Lake City learned of the massacre soon after it happened, their understanding of the extent of the settlers’ involvement and the terrible details of the crime came

incrementally over time. In 1859 they released from their callings stake president Isaac Haight and other prominent Church leaders in Cedar City who had a role in the massacre. In 1870 they excommunicated Isaac Haight and John D. Lee from the Church.

In 1874 a territorial grand jury indicted nine men for their role in the massacre. Most of them were eventually arrested, though only Lee was tried, convicted, and executed for the crime. Another indicted man turned state’s evidence, and others spent many years running from the law. Other militiamen who carried out the massacre labored the rest of their lives under a horrible sense of guilt and recurring nightmares of what they had done and seen.

Families of the men who masterminded the crime suffered as neighbors ostracized them or claimed curses had fallen upon them. For decades, the Paiutes also suffered unjustly as others blamed them for the crime, calling them and their descendants “wagon burners,” “savages,” and “hostiles.” The massacre became an indelible blot on the history of the region.

Today, some massacre victims' descendants and collateral relatives are Latter-day Saints. These individuals are in an uncommon position because they know how it feels to be both a Church member and a relative of a victim.

James Sanders is the great-grandson of Nancy Saphrona Huff, one of the children who survived the massacre. "I still feel pain; I still feel anger and sadness that the massacre happened," said Brother Sanders.

"But I know that the people who did this will be accountable before the Lord, and that brings me peace." Brother Sanders, who serves as a family history consultant in his Arizona ward, said that learning his ancestor had been killed in the massacre "didn't affect my faith because it's based on Jesus Christ, not on any person in the Church."

Sharon Chambers of Salt Lake City is the great-granddaughter of child survivor Rebecca Dunlap. "The people who did this had lost their way. I don't know what was in their minds or in their hearts," she said. "I feel sorrow that this happened to my ancestors. I also feel sorrow that people have blamed the acts of some on an entire group, or on an entire religion."

The Mountain Meadows Massacre has continued to cause pain and controversy for 150 years. During the

past two decades, descendants and other relatives of the emigrants and the perpetrators have at times worked together to memorialize the victims. These efforts have had the support of President Gordon B. Hinckley, officials of the state of Utah, and other institutions and individuals. Among the products of this cooperation have been the construction of two memorials at the massacre site and the placing of plaques commemorating the Arkansas emigrants. Descendant groups, Church leaders and mem-

bers, and civic officials continue to work toward reconciliation and will participate in various memorial services this month at the Mountain Meadows. ■



**Today, some massacre victims' descendants and other relatives are Latter-day Saints. Sharon Chambers (top, seated) and James Sanders (above, back row, far left) are shown with their families.**

#### NOTES

1. The book, authored by Latter-day Saint historians Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard, will soon be published by Oxford University Press.
2. James H. Martineau, "The Mountain Meadow Catastrophe," July 23, 1907, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
3. John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled: The Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee* (1877), 219.
4. *Mormonism Unveiled*, 220.
5. Andrew Jensen, notes of discussion with William Barton, Jan. 1892, Mountain Meadows file, Jensen Collection, Church Archives.
6. Brigham Young to Isaac C. Haight, Sept. 10, 1857, Letterpress Copybook 3:827-28, Brigham Young Office Files, Church Archives.
7. James H. Haslam, interview by S. A. Kenner, reported by Josiah Rogerson, Dec. 4, 1884, typescript, 11, in Josiah Rogerson, *Transcripts and Notes of John D. Lee Trials*, Church Archives.
8. John D. Lee, "Lee's Last Confession," *San Francisco Daily Bulletin Supplement*, Mar. 24, 1877.

RIGHT TOP: PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE CHAMBERS FAMILY  
RIGHT BOTTOM: PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE SANDERS FAMILY



# Renovating the Tab

**By June 2006 all of the pipes of the organ** except those seen here had been removed for cleaning, and the slope of the floor in the balcony was being increased so all visitors would have a good view of the rostrum. The floor had been covered and the pillars wrapped for protection. The restoration of the ceiling had been finished.



# ernacle



**W**hile the Salt Lake Tabernacle was closed to the public for two years, workers carried out an extensive renovation on the 140-year-old building.

*“I love this building,” said President Gordon B. Hinckley at a press briefing on October 1, 2004. “I don’t want anything done here which will destroy the historical aspect of this rare gem of architecture. . . . I want the old original Tabernacle, its weak joints bound together and . . . strengthened and its natural and wonderful beauty preserved.”*

*Following are photographs of the renovation.*



PHOTOGRAPHS BY A. ANGLE AND ROGER SEARS



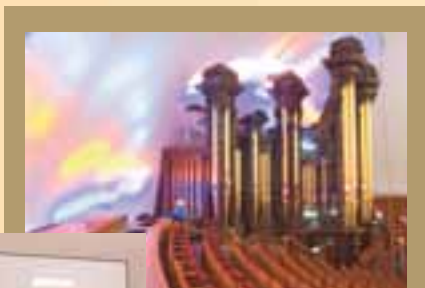


**Above: Workers install solid white oak pews**, which will replace most of the original soft pine ones. The original pews, painted by pioneer artisans to look like oak, were damaged and worn. Some will be permanently displayed.

**Right: The rostrum** has been equipped with a large stage lift in the center. This, in combination with self-contained rostrum wagons, can be configured into general conference mode, fireside mode, or orchestra platform mode. The wagons have audiovisual equipment, wiring, and ventilation built into them. They also have matching carpet, new millwork, and viewing screens on which General Authorities can watch conference proceedings.



**One of two new staircases** added to the balcony makes six exits from the upper floor.



**Audiovisual upgrades** include a

variety of new lighting effects. The inset shows one of two screens mounted on either side of the organ pipes. When not needed, the screens can be retracted behind the choir seats. State-of-the-art audio equipment has been installed, yet the famous acoustical properties of the Tabernacle have been preserved.



**A worker stands atop scaffolding** that is several stories high as he works on the restoration of the ceiling. Fourteen layers of paint were removed to reach the original plaster. After repairs were made, workers applied plaster that matched the properties of the historic plaster in both its content and acoustic properties. Care was taken to preserve the waviness of the original ceiling.



**A skilled artist touches up** the faux finish on the face of the balcony. Most of the faux graining on the walls and pillars of the Tabernacle needed to be repaired or replaced.



**Below: As part of the seismic improvements,** the exterior piers were anchored deeper into the ground and strengthened with new steel and concrete footings. This anchoring is located below sidewalk level.



**The organ pipes** were cleaned, retuned, and reinstalled. The largest pipes (left) are made of wood and were too large to remove. The pipes were regilded.



**Significant space** under the Tabernade has been remodeled. Right top: The administrative offices of the Tabernade Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square now occupy the space previously occupied by the baptistry. Center: The women's changing room provides each choir member with her own cubicle to store her permanent wardrobe. The men have a similar space. Bottom: The music library houses all of the choir's sheet music. It also provides individual lockers for each of the approximately 350 choir members. Librarians compile binders containing the right music in the right part for a given show and place them in the individual lockers.



**The new aluminum roof**, shown here in December 2005. Below: On each end of the Tabernade, a wide steel truss—called a “sister truss”—was attached to the existing wooden truss to strengthen it. Below left: Workers apply plywood prior to adding the new roof. ■



# They Waited 2,000 Years

BY BO S. CHUNG JR.

As a new convert and the only Church member in my family, I felt a great responsibility to find the records of my Chinese ancestors. My patriarchal blessing had promised that I will rejoice with my forefathers as they receive the blessings of the gospel through my family history work and temple service.

But I had no idea how to begin.

A couple of decades passed, and I had exhausted all available resources, including the immigration archives in San Francisco. Discouraged, I wondered if I would ever be able to fulfill my responsibility to my ancestors.

Then one day my father called and told me that a distant relative in California had found a Chinese book in his aunt's attic. I immediately called the relative, and he was excited to know there was a family member interested in the Chung family records. He then explained that in 1930 a family member had gone to China and found the Chung family ancestral temple still intact. He had written down thousands of Chinese names and much family history information contained in the temple. The copied records were then brought

back to America, where the relative had eventually found them in that attic 75 years later. When I asked if I could pay for a copy of the records, the relative said he would mail them to me at no charge.

When the records arrived, I knew I first needed to verify that they in fact related to my family. As I began to search, I immediately found my grandfather's name at the end of the book. I couldn't believe it!

My wife and her older sister spent months translating the Chinese characters into English and arranging the names in their proper order. Hong Kong Temple workers

also assisted and discovered that my oldest known ancestor was born in 474 B.C. The first 1,200 names have been entered into the Church's family history database. Our family is now attending the temple every week to perform ordinances for our ancestors, some of whom have been waiting more than 2,000 years for this time to come.

"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" (Malachi 4:6). The blessing of Malachi's prophecy is a reality for my family. Many of our deceased ancestors have now been given an opportunity to progress in Heavenly Father's kingdom for eternity. ■



**Top:** Chung family history, showing the name of the author's grandfather. **Above:** Chung family temple in Guangdong, China, built in the 1500s.



# My Conversion to Eternal Marriage

*I wanted to be married, but my unrealistic expectations led to a cycle of dating failures.*

BY JAMES WELCH

Several years ago I realized that while I had a testimony of the gospel in general, there were some principles to which I was not yet fully converted. Although I had no problem with tithing or the Word of Wisdom for instance, I did struggle with the principle of eternal marriage—my eternal marriage.

## A Cycle of Failure

It wasn't that I didn't want to be married; on the contrary, I did—desperately, or so I told myself. I dated locally and had some long-distance relationships. I dated constantly, even to the point of exhaustion. But I became an expert at identifying what I considered to be “flaws” in each of the women I dated. I always justified breaking off a relationship but usually not until I had strung her along for a year or two. Over time I worked myself into such a cycle of failure that I was practically paralyzed with regard to courtship.

I had served a mission. I attended the temple regularly, fasted and

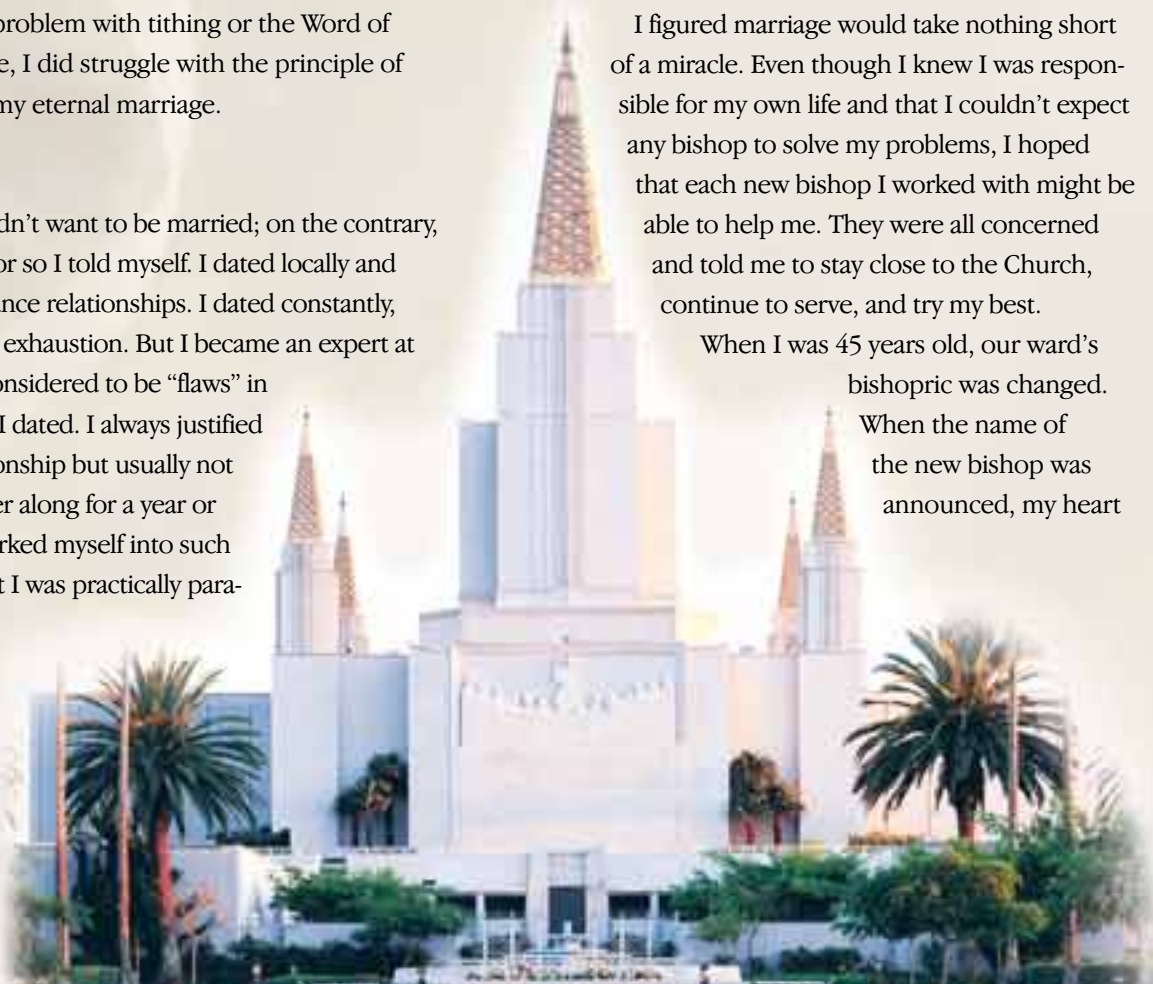
prayed for the Lord's guidance, and served faithfully in ward callings. I had strong family support. I counseled regularly with my bishops. I even spent a season working with an excellent Latter-day Saint psychologist. But I was miserable. I couldn't figure out how to get married.

People sympathetic to my plight told me that I just hadn't met “the right one” yet. Others told me, “You just have to take the plunge.” But I had too many doubts and irrational fears to allow me to do so.

I figured marriage would take nothing short of a miracle. Even though I knew I was responsible for my own life and that I couldn't expect any bishop to solve my problems, I hoped that each new bishop I worked with might be able to help me. They were all concerned and told me to stay close to the Church, continue to serve, and try my best.

When I was 45 years old, our ward's bishopric was changed.

When the name of the new bishop was announced, my heart





sank. The man who had been called was someone with whom I had nothing in common. I foolishly determined that I would have to wait for the next new bishop.

#### **A Direct Conversation**

One Sunday not long after, I was on my way to priesthood meeting when this bishop asked if I would come into his office right then for a temple recommend interview. In his office I began my well-rehearsed tale of woe: Nothing was going right for me. Every woman I had dated had some intolerable failing. And maybe I wasn't really cut out for marriage in this life anyway.

The bishop dismissed my complaints, looked me in the eye, and asked, "Do you want to be married or not?" I had to answer that I thought so but that I wasn't really sure anymore. He continued, "I want you to go home and decide if you really want to be

married. If the answer is no, then I'll feel sorry for you, but you can stop dating and quit beating yourself up over it. If the answer is yes, then come back, and we'll work on it."

At that moment, I received the undeniable impression that his counsel would help me.

I walked out of his office sobered. After church I went home, and with a brief but intense wrestle, I decided that the answer had to be yes. I did desire marriage, and I was willing to submit to the counsel of this bishop, whatever it was.

Making this decision was the turning point in my quest to be married. For decades I had been halfhearted in my efforts. Marriage had not really been a high priority for me, even if I had pretended it was. Only when it was convenient did I give marriage serious attention, but other things, such as my professional pursuits as a concert musician and a university professor, usually took precedence. What I

**I** have had a mighty change of heart regarding marriage, and it has made all the difference in my life. I married my wife, Deanne, in the Oakland California Temple on May 22, 1997.





**James and Deanne Welch with their sons, Jameson and Nicholas. Brother Welch says of his family and marriage, “Ten years ago, I could not have imagined such fulfillment.”**

needed to learn was how to approach the goal of marriage with the same commitment.

#### **Instructions from My Bishop**

When I returned to counsel with my bishop, he spoke as plainly as anyone had ever done. He was not interested in my litany of excuses. He simply said, “Let’s find the glitch—the place where relationships always fall apart for you—and then fix it.” At first I was taken aback, but then I found his directness refreshing. I knew I could trust him. It took some energy and courage to get out of the deep rut I was in, but I began to gain more confidence that I could do it.

His first direction to me was to start looking anew for a companion who had, in his words, faith, integrity, and goodwill—enduring qualities that really mattered—instead of merely some surface qualities I considered essential. (In my mind, she needed to be a blonde, a soprano, and a gourmet cook.) My charge was to cherish her with the same kind of love, to the degree that I could, that our Heavenly Father has for each of us.

My bishop also helped me discover the flaws in my quest for marriage. I conceded that they were not in the women I had dated, as I had maintained for so long. Rather, they were in my own erroneous thinking and unrealistic expectations. He laid out some new rules by which I was to date.

First of all, I had to prepare for change. I was very comfortable in my way of living, and even though I desired marriage in an abstract way, I felt it would upset my routine. I would have to start doing some things differently. I’d been doing it my way for more than 25 years, repeating the same mistakes, and obviously it hadn’t worked. Because I was 45, I had to understand that I didn’t have an unlimited amount of time to date.

Second, dating was not to be about entertainment but rather about identifying a companion who was also seriously interested in and prepared for marriage. This was to be a time for becoming acquainted not just with someone’s personality but also, more important, with her spirit.

My bishop also taught me I would be able to tell within a few dates whether a woman had the essential qualities I was looking for. If they weren’t present, it was time to move along. To break my pattern of unproductive

long-term dating, the bishop gave me a startling ultimatum: I was to follow any serious dating relationship through to marriage or rejection. After a reasonable period of time, I could not turn back unless the woman I was dating turned me down. Previously, my habit had been to walk away rather than commit. This time I would not be allowed to retreat as I had done so often before. In an uncharacteristically bold move, I agreed to the terms.

### What I Learned

I started to recognize a few things. For one, I realized that what some call “chemistry” comes after honest and mature conversation, not before. This is one of the most common mistakes people make—they pursue a relationship only if they feel an immediate physical attraction. Some single people also prefer superficial topics to serious discussions and hard questions, avoiding the latter in the vain hope that once “true love” sets in, somehow all the real-life problems will disappear. Actually, it’s the other way around. If at the outset you practice honest communication and learn to answer the hard questions, then trust develops. This trust erases fear, which is usually the cause of cold feet, lack of commitment, and ultimately a shaky relationship.

Most important, I learned that love is not about just me. It is primarily about caring for the other person. I had to work on humbling myself and relinquishing the arrogant attitude that maybe no woman was good enough for me.

### My Real Conversion

It would be nice if I could say I married the very next woman I met. I dated a few women very briefly and had

one longer dating relationship in which I was ultimately turned down. But I exercised faith and followed my bishop’s instructions, even though I didn’t get immediate results.

The year after I adopted these changes in attitude and perspective, I took a second look at a woman I had known for years. We had actually dated before, but this time I saw her in a different light—as a prospective eternal companion who is delightful and beautiful in every way because she has the qualities that are enduring (and many bonus qualities as well). She was generous enough to give me another chance, and now she is my wife and the mother of our precious children. I love her deeply. Ten years ago, I could not have imagined such fulfillment.



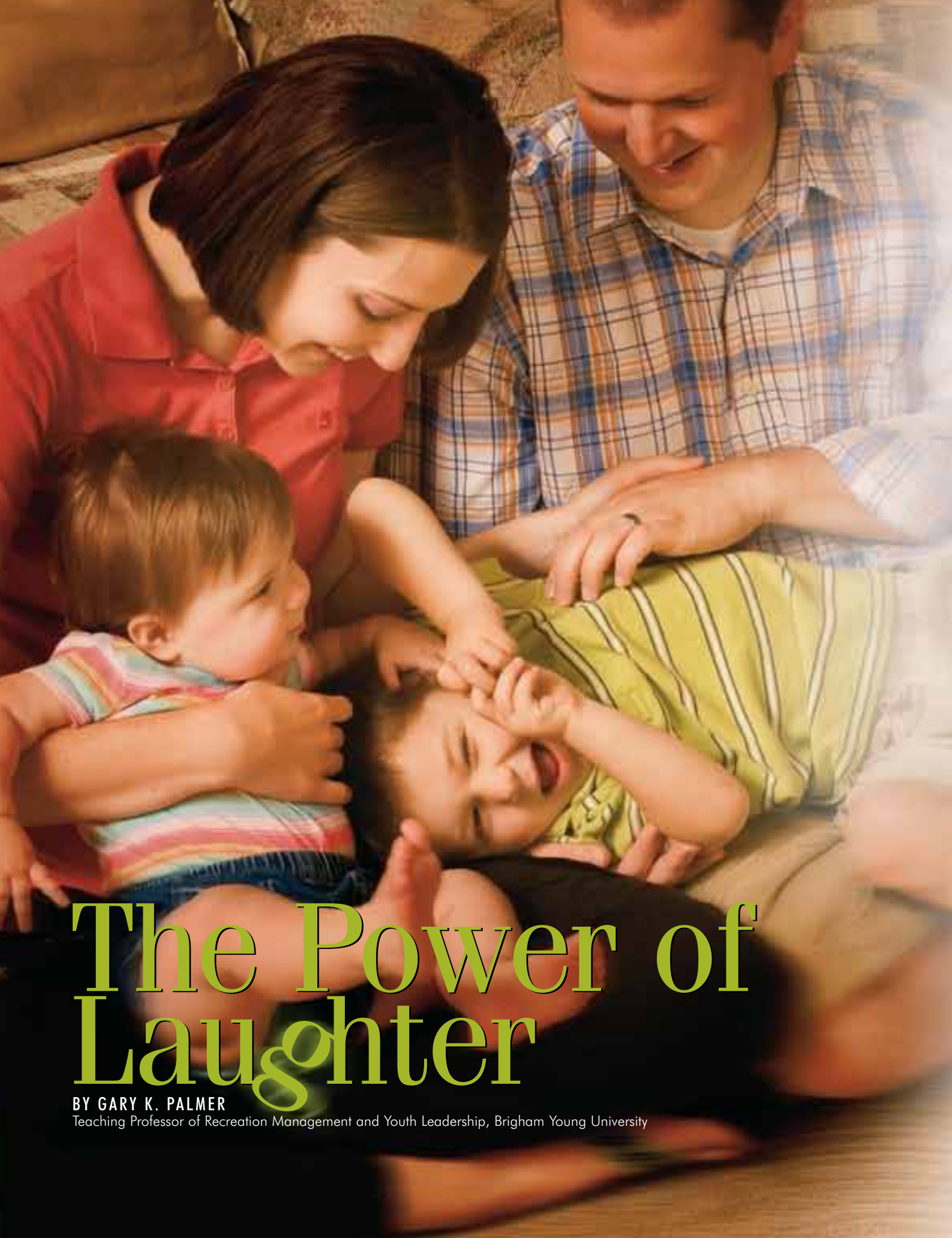
What brought about this conversion? (And it was a real conversion—a turning in a different direction.) I believe the change came about because a bishop taught me how deeply Heavenly Father loves me and wants me to be happy and

have all the blessings He has already promised me. My bishop helped me rearrange the priorities in my life, which had become distorted. He spoke plainly and did not allow me to be distracted by the excuses I had given for so long.

Now I know what conversion feels like. I have had that mighty change of heart regarding this principle, and it has made all the difference in my life. I can trace the moment of my conversion to that day in my bishop’s office when it was revealed to me that if I would follow his counsel, I would be blessed.

Indeed I am. ■





# The Power of Laughter

BY GARY K. PALMER

Teaching Professor of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership, Brigham Young University

## *Humor helps keep life in perspective.*

One Sunday in sacrament meeting, my four-year-old son was making a major disturbance. After several minutes of trying to calm him down, I picked him up, tucked him under my arm like a sack of potatoes, and headed for the nearest exit. Shocked by the sudden departure, my son looked up at me and said, “Hey, Dad, where we goin’?” His innocent comment caught me by surprise and defused my anger instantly. He had no idea he was in trouble. He thought we were going out to play.

I have learned that the ability to laugh at everyday family difficulties helps keep life in perspective. If we will learn to laugh and play more with our families, not only will we feel better but so will they. “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine,” says Proverbs 17:22. Studies show that humor and laughter help people live longer, happier lives; be more creative and productive; and have more energy with less physical discomfort.<sup>1</sup> Humor reduces stress, fear, intimidation, embarrassment, and anger.<sup>2</sup> Laughter also has extraordinary healing power.<sup>3</sup> When a person laughs, blood pressure decreases, heart rate and respiration increase, the body releases endorphins, and depression declines.<sup>4</sup> After the laughter subsides and you relax again, that good feeling has a lasting effect, even until the next day.<sup>5</sup> Not many medicines will do that.

### **Becoming More Childlike**

On average, children laugh 400 times a day, while adults laugh about 15 times.<sup>6</sup> Why the gap? Did we lose something? Have we forgotten the way we used to be? Why is it that children seem to cope with life’s oddities better than adults? Perhaps it’s because they do not fully understand. But I think it’s simpler than that—they laugh. As we grow older, we get far too serious. Watch children play. They don’t need expensive toys to entertain them. Everything is fun. They are spontaneous. Only when we become adults do we start to get boring. Do we need to cultivate a different attitude? Humor is in the way we see things, the way we think. It’s an attitude, not an event. Perhaps the key lies in becoming more childlike.

Years ago I saw through my kitchen window a grown



**Someone once said, “A little craziness once in a while perpetuates sanity.”**

man playing with his children in a sandpile at a small neighborhood park. He was right down there on his hands and knees in the sand, building an imaginary town with streets, cars, trucks, trees, houses, stores, and schools. I could see the father pushing a wooden block bulldozer through the sand, pretending to build a road. He even made the sound effects of the bulldozer engine. I remember thinking, “Now there is an example of a great dad who knows how to play with his children.” He was in plain view to every passing car. Was he embarrassed or ruffled? Not at all. He seemed oblivious to the people passing by. Does this mean we should play in the sandpile with our children? Absolutely. Laugh more, play more, swing out of familiar places, be more the way you were when you were a child.

Laughter and play are closely related. Play puts everyone on an equal footing, first by the nature of play itself, and second because you can change the rules to fit the situation. Play brings families together. It is a subtle tool for interaction and talk. It builds confidence because you can modify the rules to bring about success or any outcome you desire. Our inhibitions are minimized, and our real personalities emerge. Through play we develop relationships naturally. We tend to like people we have fun with. Play allows us to use our minds and break out of familiar molds. It allows us to explore more.

### **Creating Fun Family Relationships**

Someone once said, “A little craziness once in a while perpetuates sanity.” When I return home from work each day, I consciously think about what I’m going to say the moment I enter the house. I actually practice my entrance





**Laughter makes us approachable. It removes barriers. If you want to talk to your children about a serious matter, try a lighter approach.**

a few seconds before I open the door. I usually shout some outlandish remark to get my family's attention. A typical loud verbal entrance for me is "Hello, all you

lucky people. I'm home." Such greetings usually raise an eyebrow with anyone visiting our home, but for the rest of the family, they know that it's just Dad. This may sound somewhat strange, but I find that it helps set the tone for a fun home and instantly puts everyone at ease. I'm sure that it occasionally embarrasses my children, but the good outweighs the bad. It also helps me to make the change mentally from work to home. I do not want to come home tired, ornery, or dull. Most of us try to be our best selves at work. Doesn't our family deserve at least the same effort?

I think laughter is more important than a family vacation because it's always available and it's free. Vacations are not. Big family events and vacations are wonderful, but these will not replace the daily humor and laughter in a home. Laughter is like getting away without going away. It gives you a break.

Laughter improves communication and builds relationships because everyone laughs in the same language. Your children will remember your humor much longer than they will the things you buy them. Children are more receptive when they are having fun. Laughter helps us remember. And we remember what we feel.

One must guard against building a showcase home rather than a fun home. Early in our marriage, my wife said, "Let's make our home more fun for our kids than

any other place they could be." Laughter and play are the best ingredients for that. We cannot duplicate Disneyland or any other amusement park, nor should we. A family firmly rooted in love and wholesome recreation is far better than that. In other words, home should be a fun place to hang out with family and friends.

Laughter makes us approachable. It removes barriers. If you want to talk to your children about a serious matter, try a lighter approach. Parent and child talks could often be more effective if play, laughter, and refreshments were added.

### **Humor in the Home**

Humor, used with sensitivity, can unite spouses. While I was serving as bishop of a singles ward, an engaged couple asked me if they could have their wedding reception at our house. I quickly replied, "Of course you can." I forgot to tell my wife. When she received their wedding invitation a few days before the big event, she happened to notice the address of the reception. When I got home from work she asked me if I had forgotten to tell her something important. After considerable thought I said, "No, not that I can think of."

"Are we having a wedding reception at our house?" she asked. From the expression on her face, I could tell I was in trouble.

"Ooooooh, you mean that reception," I replied. At such times you hope your wife has a good sense of humor. I



**Laugh more, play more, swing out of familiar places, be more the way you were when you were a child.**



**Early in our marriage, my wife said, “Let’s make our home more fun for our kids than any other place they could be.”**

When using humor, however, we must be careful not to offend, intimidate, or embarrass. We should

quickly helped her prepare the home for the wedding reception—under her able direction, of course.

Humor disarms most family tension. Once when I was talking to my children about some family issues, one of our teenagers crouched over, wrinkled up his nose, and with a tone of disapproval, blurted out some outlandish comment about what I had said. I was taken aback by his behavior. But suddenly I crouched over, wrinkled up my nose, and with a tone of disapproval, blurted out some outlandish reply, perfectly mimicking his behavior. The entire family burst into laughter, and the tension vanished.

Humor can be an effective tool when dealing with delicate matters. It allows you to walk among the sacred cows without disturbing the herd. For example, one year when Brigham Young University President Rex E. Lee was reviewing the BYU dress and grooming standards with the university community, he began by announcing that he wanted to show some examples of inappropriate dress and grooming standards on the huge screen in the Marriott Center. He caught us completely off guard. The slides were of him dressed in a variety of humorous, inappropriate outfits. He took a sensitive subject and presented it in a humorous way. We got the message. We never forgot it. You can do the same with your family.

laugh together rather than at someone. No one likes to be teased. No one likes to be the brunt of a joke. By learning to laugh at ourselves, we usually become safe from offending. Marjorie Hinckley appreciated this quality in her husband, President Gordon B. Hinckley. “He didn’t take himself very seriously and was often the first to poke fun at his own quirks.”<sup>7</sup> We should also be careful not to use humor in settings where it could be disruptive to the Spirit or where it would make light of sacred things.

Many family difficulties, however, given enough time, can be a source of humor. The trick is finding humor in the event now. Does this mean we go around laughing all the time? Of course not. But we certainly could all laugh more than we do. ■

#### NOTES

1. See R. Robinson, D. N. Khansari, A. J. Murgo, and R. E. Faith, “How Laughter Affects Your Health: Effects of Stress on the Immune System,” *Immunology Today* 11, no. 5 (1990), 170–75.
2. See W. S. Hamerslough, “Laughter and Wellness” (paper presented to the Southwest District of AAHPERD, June 22, 1995, Kahuku, Hawaii).
3. See N. Cousins, *Anatomy of an Illness* (1979).
4. See L. S. Berk, “Neuroendocrine and Stress Hormone Changes during Mirthful Laughter,” *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* 296, no. 7 (1989), 390–96.
5. See K. S. Peterson, “A Chuckle a Day Does Indeed Help Keep Ills at Bay,” *USA Today*, Oct. 31, 1996, p. 10D; see also Berk, *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* 296, no. 7, 390–96.
6. See Robinson, “How Laughter Affects Your Health.”
7. Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1996), 106.



# ONE *for the* MONEY



*Whether we are anticipating marriage or are well into it, today is the time for all of us to review and repent as necessary to improve our money-management skills and live within our means.*



*Marvin J. Ashton was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on May 6, 1915. He served two years as an Assistant to the Twelve before being called as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on December 2, 1971. He died on February 25, 1994. This article, from an address given at a Welfare Services meeting in April 1975, appeared in the Ensign in July 1975. In 1992 it was published as a pamphlet. Punctuation and capitalization have been standardized.*

BY ELDER MARVIN J. ASHTON (1915–94)

Recently I had the opportunity to visit with a choice young couple. They were to be married within the week. Their eyes sparkled in anticipation of the important event and their continuing love for one another. Both had the advantages of a college education, good homes, and cultural experiences. It was delightful to share their personalities, plans, and potentials. Their courtship already seemed appropriately launched on an eternal basis.

During our interview, their response to only one question gave me concern. I hope my anxieties and suggestions caused them to reassess their pending partnership's future.

To the question "Who is going to manage the money in your marriage?" she said, "He is, I guess," while he responded, "We haven't talked about that yet." These comments surprised and shocked me.

How important are money management and finances in marriage and family affairs? Tremendously. The American Bar Association recently indicated that 89 percent of all divorces could be traced to quarrels and accusations over money.<sup>1</sup> Others have estimated that 75 percent of all divorces result from clashes over finances. Some professional counselors indicated that four out of five families are strapped with serious money problems.

May I at this time hasten to emphasize the fact that these marriage tragedies are not caused simply by lack of money but rather by the mismanagement of personal finances. A prospective wife could well concern herself not with the amount her husband-to-be can earn in a month but rather how will he manage the money that comes into his hands.

Money management should take precedence over money productivity. A prospective husband who is engaged to a sweetheart who has everything would do well to take yet another look and see if she has money-management sense.

In the home, money management between husband and wife should be on a partnership basis, with both parties having a voice in decision and policy making. When children come along and reach the age of accountability, they, too, should be involved in money concerns on a limited-partnership basis. Peace, contentment, love, and security in the home are not possible when financial anxieties and bickerings prevail. Whether we are anticipating marriage or are well into it, today is the time for all of us to review and repent as necessary to improve our money-management skills and live within our means.

May I make some recommendations for improved personal and family financial management, since proper money management and living within one's means are essential in today's world if we are to live abundantly and happily. I believe the following 12 points will help each of us achieve this goal.

**1. Teach family members early the importance of working and earning.** "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Genesis 3:19) is not outdated counsel. It is basic to personal welfare.

One of the greatest favors parents can do for their children is to teach them to work. Much has been said over the years about children and monthly allowances, and opinions and recommendations vary greatly. I'm from the "old school." I believe that children should earn their money needs through service and appropriate chores. I think it is unfortunate for a child to grow up in a home where the seed is planted in the child's mind that there is a family money tree that automatically drops "green stuff" once a week or once a month.

**2. Teach children to make money decisions in keeping with their capacities to comprehend.** "Save your money" is a hollow pronouncement from a parent to a child. "Save your money for a mission, a bicycle, a doll house, a trousseau, or a car" makes understandable sense.

Family unity comes from saving together for a common,



jointly approved purpose. In our home we found it unifying to have a child save for a major project and then, when the amount was achieved, we matched it with a predetermined percentage. . . .

**3. Teach each family member to contribute to the total family welfare.** Encourage fun projects, understandable to the children, that contribute to a family goal or joy. Some families miss a tremendous financial and spiritual experience when they fail to sit together, preferably during family home evening, and each put in his share of the monthly amount going to the son or daughter, brother or sister who is serving in the mission field. When this monthly activity is engaged in all at once, he or she becomes “our” missionary and pride becomes a two-way street.

**4. Teach family members that paying financial obligations promptly is part of integrity and honesty development.**

Paying tithing promptly to Him who does not come to check up each month will teach us to be more honest with those physically closer at hand.

**5. Learn to manage money before it manages you.** A bride-to-be would do well to ask herself, “Can my sweetheart manage money? Does he know how to live within his means?” These are more important questions than “Can he earn a lot of money?” New attitudes and relationships toward money should be developed constantly by all couples. After all, the partnership should be full and eternal.

**6. Learn self-discipline and self-restraint in money matters.** Such conduct can be more important than courses in accounting. Married couples show genuine maturity when they think of their partners and their families ahead of their own spending impulses.

Money-management skills should be learned together in a spirit of cooperation and love on a continuing basis. A disgusted husband once said, “I know that in life money talks, but when my wife gets hold of it, all it ever says is

‘good-bye.’” To the husband who says his wife is the poorest money manager in the world, I would say, “Look in the mirror and meet the world’s poorest teacher-trainer.”

**7. Use a budget.** Avoid finance charges except for homes, education, and other vital investments. Buy consumer durables with cash. Avoid installment credit and be careful with your use of credit cards. They are principally for convenience and should not be used carelessly or recklessly. Buy used items until you have saved sufficient money to purchase quality new items. Save and invest a specific percent of your income. Learn the principle of obedience as you make your Church contributions, and meet your financial obligations promptly.

Please listen carefully to this—and if it makes some of you feel uncomfortable, it is on purpose: Latter-day Saints who ignore or avoid their creditors are entitled to feel the inner frustrations that such conduct merits, and they are not living as Latter-day Saints should!

**8. Make education a continuing process.** Complete as much formal, full-time education as possible. This includes the trade schools. This is money well invested. Use night school and correspondence classes to further prepare. Acquire some special skill or ability that could be used to avoid prolonged unemployment. In these days of worldwide heavy unemployment, we should not allow ourselves, when we are out of work, to sit back and wait for “our type of job” if other



*It is a happy day financially when time and interest are working for you and not against you.*

honorable interim employment becomes available.

**9. Work toward home ownership.** This qualifies as an investment, not consumption. Buy the type of home your income will support. Improve the home and beautify the landscape all the time you occupy the premises so that if you do sell it, you can use the capital gain to get a better home.

**10. Appropriately involve yourself in an insurance program.** It is most important to have sufficient medical and adequate life insurance.

**11. Strive to understand and cope with existing inflation.** Learn to see through the money illusion and recognize the real value of money. Most wage earners today have less purchasing power than they did [a few years ago]. To some degree inflation is probably going to be with us for a long time. Realize that you are living in a new era of higher prices and less abundant energy.

**12. Appropriately involve yourself in a food storage program.** Accumulate your basic supplies in a systematic and an orderly way. Avoid going into debt for these purposes. Beware of unwise promotional schemes.

These few points and suggestions are not intended to be all-inclusive nor exhaustive. Rather, it is hoped that a need has been brought to the surface for our serious consideration.

We need to recognize and be aware of these basic guidelines for wise money management.

God help us to realize that money management is an

important ingredient in proper personal welfare. Learning to live within our means should be a continuing process. We need to work constantly toward keeping ourselves free of financial difficulties. It is a happy day financially when time and interest are working for you and not against you.

Money in the lives of Latter-day Saints should be used as a means of achieving eternal happiness. Careless and selfish uses cause us to live in financial bondage. We can't afford to neglect personal and family involvement in our money management. God will open the windows of heaven to us in these matters if we will but live close to Him and keep His commandments. ■

**NOTE**

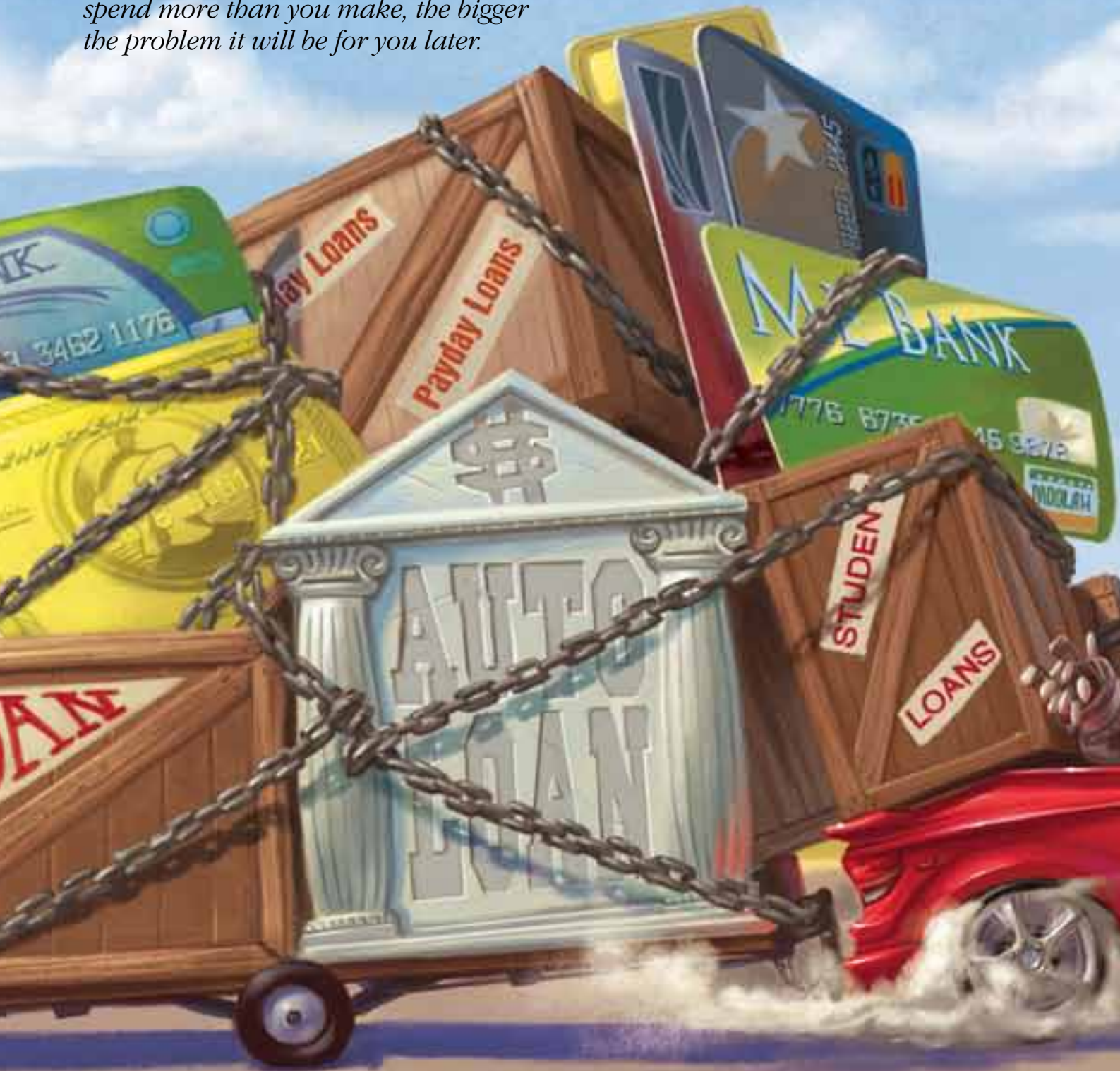
1. Subsequent American Bar Association surveys have shown similar results.





# FINANCES AND

*Debt may not seem like a big deal to you right now, but the longer you spend more than you make, the bigger the problem it will be for you later.*



# YOUR FUTURE

BY DONALD N. HESTER

Certified Public Accountant and Retired Professor of Accounting, University of Alaska

Did you know that on the whole Americans spend more money than they earn each year, and the average household carries about \$8,000 in credit card debt?<sup>1</sup> To a young single adult, debt may not seem like a big deal right now. But the longer you spend more than you make, the bigger the problem will be for you—and your future family—later. Even if millions of people believe in a bad idea—it’s still a bad idea!

So what can a young person do to stay out of debt? The key is knowledge, along with self-restraint. You need to understand the different kinds of debt and how creditors try to trap you. Without sufficient knowledge and self-restraint, a person of any age can become enslaved by debt. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said in a recent commencement address at Brigham Young University:

## Tips for Young Single Adults

“Brothers and sisters, we live in a world being destroyed by debt. When we are in debt, we not only lose our agency to act, we also lose our opportunities to give both temporal and spiritual service. If you have had to go into debt to obtain your education, I encourage you to repay your debts as soon as possible. Then go forward with commitment not to finance on credit any item of any kind, except perhaps a house and vehicle that are well within your means.”<sup>2</sup>

So why are so many young people in debt? Often it is because they have been enticed by “buy now, pay later” lures, and they do not understand how creditors operate. Creditors exist to make money, and many have devised cunning schemes to draw you in. If you don’t understand some basics, you may become trapped and end up spending years paying back loans with costly interest.

The following basic information can help you avoid excessive debt.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRANDON DORWAN





### Credit Cards

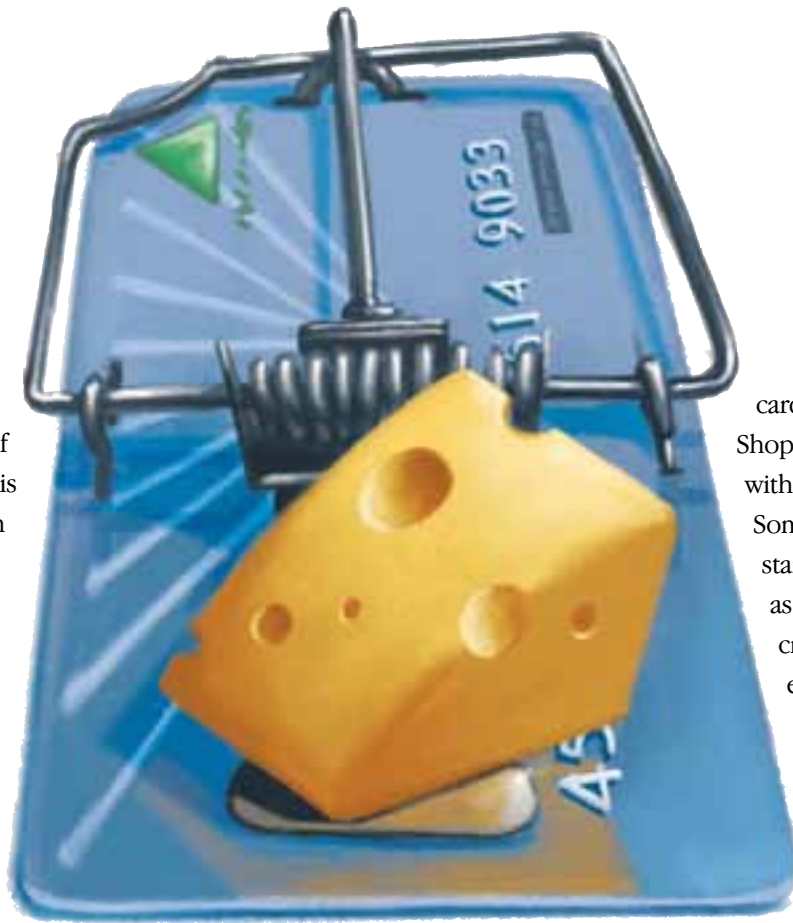
A credit card can be a helpful financial tool if the total amount owed is paid in full every month before any interest is charged. Otherwise, the credit card could become a trap.

Credit card companies like to provide low monthly payments so they can extend the debt out indefinitely. The creditor hopes the debtor will never be able to pay off the principal. If the debtor becomes financially

stressed, the creditor will likely show little mercy and will sometimes even increase the interest rate, which may result in the balance going up every month instead of down. The debtor is then caught in a trap and can't get out.

When choosing a credit card:

- Read the fine print. Make sure you understand the terms offered.
- Do not ask for higher credit limits. If you get excessive available credit, you may be tempted to use it and become overwhelmed by the monthly payment. As a rule, you should be able to pay back at least 10 percent of your total balance every month. So if your total credit card balance is \$5,000, you should be able to pay at least \$500 the first month. Don't get more credit than you can handle. You may find yourself using it, even if you don't think you will.



***Unless a credit card is paid in full every month, it could turn from a helpful financial tool into a dangerous trap.***

- Don't just take the first card that comes your way. Shop around to find the card with the lowest interest rate. Some companies charge starting interest rates as high as 29.99 percent. Many credit companies also offer enticing promotions such as zero percent interest for a specified period of time—but don't be fooled. The offer lasts only a few months, so be sure you know what the interest rate is after the campaign ends. Also, if a payment is late, interest rates may jump anywhere from 18 to more than 35 percent. What sounds like a good deal may be a trap in disguise.

- Understand the 2 x 24 rule. The 2 stands for 2 percent, which most credit card companies use to calculate your minimum monthly payment. A lower monthly payment is the hook, the enticement. This lures the debtor into a false sense of security, causing him to think, "I can do this." For example, if you have a debt of \$5,000, you would multiply the unpaid balance of \$5,000 by 2 percent, giving you a monthly payment of \$100. Each month the minimum monthly payment will go down as the balance goes down. The 24 stands for a 24 percent annual percentage rate (APR) of interest. Here's the catch: If a creditor requires only a 2 percent minimum monthly payment and charges 24 percent interest, it is impossible to ever

**Most of your financial concerns will be under control once you master the skill of budgeting. It will help you be on your way to financial success.**



pay off a single penny of the principal balance. And if this same card were to have an interest rate *higher* than 24 percent, the debt would actually *increase* every month, even if no more purchases were made. With a relatively low interest rate of 12 percent, it will still take more than 19 years to pay off a \$5,000 debt and cost \$4,393 in interest, almost doubling the original balance.

If you already have several credit cards with regular payments, pay off quickly the smallest balances first, thus freeing up funds to pay off the larger ones in turn.

### **Student Loans**

Although interest rates and terms for student loans are often very good, they still have to be paid back. What can you do to keep your future payments reasonable? Don't borrow more than you need. Many students are offered loans for thousands more dollars than they need, but they are not required to take the entire amount. Borrow only what you need. Don't create unnecessary debt that may have to be partially paid back by a future spouse.

Also, understand the difference between subsidized and unsubsidized student loans. The interest on a subsidized loan is paid by the federal government as long as a student is enrolled at least half time during each regular semester of school. But with an unsubsidized loan the interest accumulates from the date the loan begins, and the student must make payments while still in school.

### **Payday Loans**

Another debt trap for young people to avoid is the payday loan. A payday loan can be obtained quickly with little or no collateral. It is easy, convenient, and enticing, but the payback is always painful and costly. Such a loan may carry an interest rate from 100 to 1,800 percent! The demand to

pay such a high rate of interest may lead a person to obtain another payday loan to pay off the interest on the loan. This can snowball out of control until the debt and interest owed require a person's entire wages—and then some. There is no debt more devastating. Do not be tempted; it is the guaranteed fast track to financial ruin.

### **Automobiles**

Sometimes young people believe their car is an extension of their personality, so they may spend too much money in order to have the "hottest" ride around. But don't buy a car, new or used, that will paralyze your budget. Shop around for good deals, and try to buy used. You can often buy a fairly new car with low miles and a good warranty for thousands less than the same car new. Also try to limit the length of a car loan to three years. If the loan is longer than that, you may be paying too much. Shop around and find one that will fit within your budget.

### **Budgeting**

Probably the most effective way to stay out of debt is to budget your money. Most financial concerns will be under control once you master this skill. Invest the time and effort to learn how to budget today, and you will save an untold amount of time and money in the future.

Become a master of your financial future. By acquiring the right knowledge and making educated financial decisions, you can avoid the pitfalls generated by creditors who would trap you in debt. ■

### **NOTES**

1. See Martin Crutsinger, "Few Pennies Saved: Americans Spending More Than They Earn," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Feb. 2, 2007, [http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/business/302138\\_low savings02.html](http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/business/302138_low savings02.html); PBS, "Secret History of the Credit Card," *Frontline*, Nov. 23, 2004, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/credit/view/>.
2. "Go Forth to Serve" (Brigham Young University Speeches, Apr. 27, 2006), PDF, 4, <http://speeches.byu.edu>.



# That Their BURDENS

*We show love to those with physical disabilities  
when we serve them as the Savior did.*



# May Be LIGHT



**F**or those with physical disabilities, elements of Church service—such as getting around in the meetinghouse, seeing the blackboard, or participating in callings or activities—may present challenges. Members can follow the Savior’s example by showing an extra measure of love to people with disabilities to ease their burdens. In this article members share ways leaders, teachers, and friends have adapted Church programs and activities to accommodate disabled members’ needs.

## Leading with Love

As an individual who has lived all my life with a visual impairment, I have appreciated teachers and leaders who took the time to find out about me and my needs. The following suggestions may be helpful for those teaching and planning activities involving people with disabilities:

### **1. Don’t let others’ disabilities make you uncomfortable.**

Get to know people who have disabilities just as you would those without limitations. Do not avoid them. Talk to them about their likes and dislikes. If you don’t know how to act around them, let them teach you.

**2. If you don’t know what to do, ask.** Ask how you can help them get the most out of lessons or activities, as they can tell you best what they need. For example, when teaching those who don’t see well, a teacher may want to ask if they need materials in large or dark print. The teacher may also describe visual aids and read aloud what is written on the board. Do not shy away from asking questions like, “How can we best adapt this activity to help meet your needs?” and “How can I be the most help to you?” If the individual with a disability is a child, you may want to speak to his or her parents for ideas.

**3. Plan together.** When planning activities, invite participants with disabilities to give their input whenever possible. Most of the time, an activity can be adapted to meet any special needs.

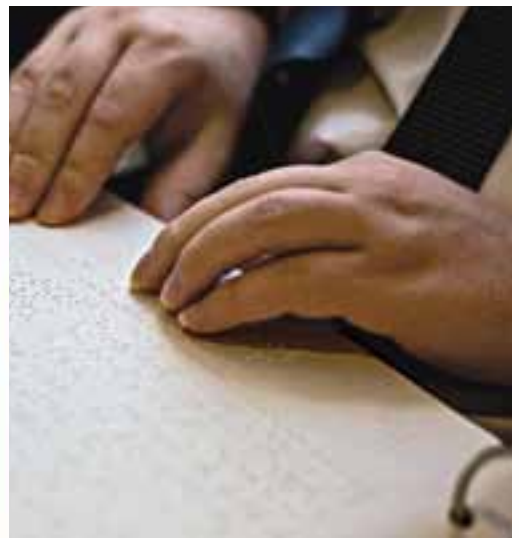
**4. Show others how to lead with love.** Others will follow your lead as you interact in love and kindness with those with disabilities.

I will always be grateful to a sweet Young Women leader who never treated me as “different” but as an important member of the group. She encouraged me to share my testimony of how Christ had helped me through my trials.

By following these simple suggestions, along with the guidance of the Spirit, teachers and leaders will be effective instruments in bringing God’s children— with and without disabilities—nearer to Him.

*Kristin W. Belcher, Utah*





***Get to know people who have disabilities just as you would those without limitations. If you don't know how to act around them, let them teach you.***

#### **Senior Sacrament**

When my dad was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, he experienced a steady, relentless physical decline. While he once bicycled 25 miles a day, played tirelessly with his grandchildren, and tended the yard, it soon became a struggle for him to put one foot in front of the other.

With Dad's increasingly limited mobility, he and Mom decided to move to a senior retirement residence to be closer to my family. When I contacted the Relief Society president in their new ward to acquaint her with their needs, she was eager to tell me about a program the ward had recently initiated: monthly sacrament meetings held at the retirement complex with the help of the youth. When I told my parents, they were excited not only about the meetings but also about the prospect of living in a ward so willing to reach out to its eldest members.

For the remainder of

Dad's life, he and Mom never missed a "Senior Sacrament Meeting." On appointed Sundays, Dad, with Mom close at his side, rolled his walker down the hallway to gather with youth and leaders from their ward. The young men and women served enthusiastically every month, administering the sacrament, leading music, and offering talks.

I saw the impact of this service when Dad and Mom came with my family to watch a dance festival. During the finale, a group of Beehives from my parents' ward danced in the aisle near our seats. When the program ended, one of those young women approached Dad, a beaming smile on her face. She knelt down to greet him face to face and spoke with him a few moments before she hurried on her way. Later, when I asked Mom about the smiling girl, she looked at Dad softly and replied, "That was one of the young women who helped at our sacrament meeting the other day."

The radiant look on my mother's face said it all. I felt the Spirit speak to my heart, and I thanked my Heavenly Father for helping my parents again feel the warm reassurance of being a valued part of a ward family.

*Renee Hancock Huskey, Oregon*

### **The Day Joie Crawled**

In 1979 our family hoped to enroll our daughter Joie, who suffered from multiple disabilities—including a hearing impairment—in a school for the deaf. But even though Joie was three and a half years old, she was barely able to roll over, and her application was turned down.

I was disheartened at being turned away. But when I learned of exercise therapy, I felt it could help Joie. The therapy required three people at a time to help Joie perform exercises and had to be done each morning,

afternoon, and evening. I wondered how we could possibly pull it off.

One Sunday I explained Joie's situation to a fellow ward member. She told me she wanted to help. She scheduled more than 40 ward members to come to our home for one hour at a time throughout the week. With the help of these wonderful brothers and sisters, Joie underwent her

therapy eight hours per day, seven days per week, for ten months. Six months into the program, Joie learned to crawl. Other advances soon followed.

Initially, I was overwhelmed by my ward members' service. As I prayed to the Lord for direction, I felt strongly we were to continue because Joie was not the only one being blessed. I saw this manifest the Sunday after she learned to crawl. We were sitting in the back of the chapel with Joie when she began crawling up the aisle. Normally I would have retrieved her, but I felt impressed to let her go. Most of her volunteers had not yet seen her crawl. As people turned to watch Joie, many had tears flowing.

Our bishop later told us that Joie made his job much easier. He had never experienced more love and

unity in a ward than during the time the members were serving one precious daughter of God.

*Lily Kolditz, Washington*

### **The Worth of Souls**

I am both a Church leader and a member with a disability. I was born with spina bifida, a neural tube defect that leaves many paralyzed and many more with walking difficulties.

While I was growing up, my parents did all they could to support me in the youth programs of the Church. I



**When planning activities, invite participants with disabilities to give their input. Often the activity can be adapted to meet special needs.**



earned my Eagle Scout rank and served a mission. When my bishop submitted my mission paperwork, he indicated that I would function best serving somewhere flat, where walking and bicycling would not be so labored. Consequently, I was called to the Fresno California Mission. I am grateful my bishop recognized that even though I had a disability, with a slight adjustment, I could still serve a regular full-time mission.

I now serve as a high priests group leader, and I recognize that my disability does not allow me to do everything I would like. For example, I cannot help members move in or out of their homes, nor can I easily stand to greet others as they enter the chapel for Sunday services. But I can organize a move. I can provide use of my truck. I can visit members in their homes, particularly the aged and infirm. When I see an elderly sister whose legs pain her, I can look her in the eyes and tell her I know how she feels. I can remind her that Jesus Christ overcame physical pain and death so that one day we will too and that all of us are sons and daughters of the Most High with infinite worth and potential.

*David M. Rushton, Texas*

### **Blessings of the Scriptures in Braille**

While serving as president of the Mexico Monterrey East Mission, I attended the dedication of a chapel in the Reynosa East Stake in northern Mexico with my wife. At the service, two excited missionaries introduced us to a recently baptized family. As I shook the hand of one of the teenage daughters, Ilse, I noticed that her



***Disabilities may not allow members to do everything they would like, but there are many ways they can serve.***

vision was severely limited. I placed my hand in hers and told her how pleased I was that she had been baptized and that it was an honor to meet her. A sweet smile came to her face.

When I asked if Ilse had a copy of the audiotapes of the Book of Mormon to listen to, her mother informed me that Ilse could read braille. I knew the Church offered

some braille materials, but I didn't know if they were available in Spanish. Although Ilse spoke some English, I felt I needed to find some materials in her native language.

Upon returning to Monterrey, we inquired with the distribution center and were surprised at the number of resources available to those with visual impairments. We found that a neighboring mission had a Spanish copy of

the Book of Mormon in braille (item no. 34584004), which they generously shared with us.

The next week we were scheduled to travel again to Reynosa. We asked Ilse's family if they could meet us at the church. When they arrived, we unpacked the seven volumes of the Book of Mormon in braille for Ilse. I opened the first volume and placed Ilse's hand on the cover sheet. She moved her hand across the page, and with a huge smile said, "El Libro de Mormón."

Later, we provided Ilse Spanish copies in braille of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, *True to the Faith*, and the pamphlet *Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Through her fingers, Ilse is now blessed with the joy of studying the gospel in Spanish. ■

*John Taylor, president of the Mexico Monterrey East Mission*

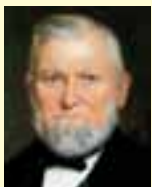
# Service



**Joseph Smith**  
(1805–44)

**First President  
of the Church**

**L**ove is one of the chief characteristics of Deity, and ought to be manifested by those who aspire to be the sons of God. A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race” (*History of the Church*, 4:227).



**Wilford Woodruff**  
(1807–98)

**Fourth President  
of the Church**

**T**he community whose hearts are open to the cries of distress, who are ready to administer of the substance which the Lord gives them to relieve their fellow creatures, may always depend upon the favor of the Lord, for He loves those who are kind to their fellow-men, and who administer to their necessities, whose hearts are tender, and who readily respond to applications of this character which are made upon them, or who anticipate them by giving freely to the destitute” (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965-75], 3:141).



**Lorenzo Snow**  
(1814–1901)

**Fifth President  
of the Church**

**W**e should renew our covenants before God and the holy angels, that we will, God being our helper, serve him more faithfully during the ensuing year than we have in the past, that our public and private life, our actions and the spirit and influence we wield may be in keeping with the motto, ‘The Kingdom of God or nothing’ ” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1880, 81).



**David O. McKay**  
(1873–1970)

**Ninth President  
of the Church**

**A** single, struggling individual may be stalled with his heavy load even as he begins to climb the hill before him. To reach the top unaided is an impossibility. With a little help from fellow travelers he makes the grade and goes on his way in gratitude and rejoicing” (*Pathways to Happiness*, comp. Llewelyn R. McKay [1957], 131).



**Harold B. Lee**  
(1899–1973)

**Eleventh President  
of the Church**

**I**f you want to love God, you have to learn to love and serve the people. That is the way you show your love for God” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1973, 180).



**Spencer W. Kimball**  
(1895–1985)

**Twelfth President  
of the Church**

**M**y life is like my shoes—to be worn out in service” (as quoted in Gordon B. Hinckley, “He Is at Peace,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 41).

“None of us should become so busy in our formal Church assignments that there is no room left for quiet Christian service to our neighbors” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 256).



**Gordon B. Hinckley**  
(1910–)

**Fifteenth President  
of the Church**

**N**o man can be a true Latter-day Saint who is unneighborly, who does not reach out to assist and help others. It is inherent in the very nature of the gospel that we do so. My brothers and sisters, we cannot live unto ourselves” (meeting, Columbus, Ohio, Apr. 25, 1998).

“Carry on! We’ve got a lot of work to do, a tremendous responsibility. We’ve barely scratched the surface, when all is said and done. . . . I hope we can be increasingly recognized as men and women of goodwill who want to make of the world a better place” (interview with *Deseret News*, Feb. 25, 2000). ■



A photograph of a winding road shrouded in thick fog. In the lower right foreground, a dark car's side mirror is visible, reflecting the road. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**TROUBLED  
ON EVERY SIDE, YET NOT**



## BY ELDER ULISSES SOARES

Of the Seventy

A few years ago I presided over the Portugal Porto Mission. One day as I drove to a city in northern Portugal to interview some missionaries, I came to a heavy mist on the road. Fog, common in that region during winter, was so dense that I

must be willing to submit to, and bear with patience, “all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon [us]” (Mosiah 3:19). Opposition in all things is part of the eternal plan of happiness (see 2 Nephi 2:11). But when we accept trials with humility, pleading to be comforted by the Lord through His Atonement, we have more confidence that we

# DISTRESSED

could barely see the white lines dividing the lanes of the road. I feared that I might lose control of the car and cause an accident. I drove slowly, and by focusing my eyes on those faint white lines, I safely reached the town of Vila Real.

As I compared that simple experience to our mortal life, I realized that we all go through heavy mists of adversity throughout our earthly existence. But if we hold fast to the gospel of Jesus Christ and stay within its boundaries, there is no doubt that we will reach our final destination.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord made a special invitation:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13–14).

To enter the strait gate of the gospel, we

can overcome our current challenges and we are better prepared to face future challenges.

In his second epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul declared:

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

“Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

“For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (2 Corinthians 4:8–11).

According to the Apostle Paul, even though we may be troubled in times of adversity, we will not be alone, for the Lord Himself will take us by the hand. He will be at our side if we remain faithful and acknowledge His hand in all things (see D&C 112:10).

I have learned from my own experience that this principle is true. One of the missionaries



*When we accept trials with humility, pleading to be comforted by the Lord through His Atonement, we have more confidence that we can overcome our current challenges and we are better prepared to face future challenges.*



servicing in Portugal fell down and broke a vertebra. He was servicing in a small town close to Portugal's border with Spain. The local hospital did not have the means to operate on him, so he was transferred to a hospital in Porto, where the mission headquarters was located.

I was worried as I drove to the hospital early that winter day. I had a plea in my heart that I might receive assurance that the missionary would not feel that he was alone. I asked God to comfort him, his family, and me. I asked the Lord to guide the hands of the surgeons who were to treat him so that they could alleviate his suffering.

At the hospital I reviewed the elder's medical report, done shortly after he arrived in the emergency room, and I explained to him what his surgery would entail. At exactly that moment, I felt in my heart the comfort that comes only from the Lord, and I told the missionary that we were not alone. Looking at him lying in that hospital bed, I realized that his countenance reflected peace and trust in the Lord.

He turned to me and said, "President, everything will be fine. I just need you to give me a blessing."

His great faith and the certainty he felt when asking for a blessing banished the anguish from my heart and gave me the courage I needed. I had repeated that same sentence—"everything will be fine"—over and over to our missionaries, and it was being put to a test right at that instant. As I saw that elder holding fast to the Lord during what was likely the most difficult challenge he had ever faced, I was confident that the life of Jesus was about to be manifested in the mortal flesh, as Paul declared to the Corinthians.

The missionary was operated on the next morning, and after his release from the hospital, he returned home to continue his treatment. The Lord not only brought comfort to our hearts while we were facing tribulation, but He

also blessed that young man, who is now married, studying, and working.

Overcoming challenges in this life is part of our Heavenly Father's plan. But He has not left us alone. He has given us prophets, revelations, scriptures, and all the help we need to follow the right path and not lose our way amid the fog of tribulation.

Facing adversity is not easy, but the knowledge we have of the blessings promised to those who face and overcome tribulation brings to our hearts the courage we need to press forward. In a revelation given to the Saints, the Lord taught the importance of facing challenges:

"For verily I say unto you, blessed is he that keepeth my commandments, whether in life or in death; and he that is faithful in tribulation, the reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven.

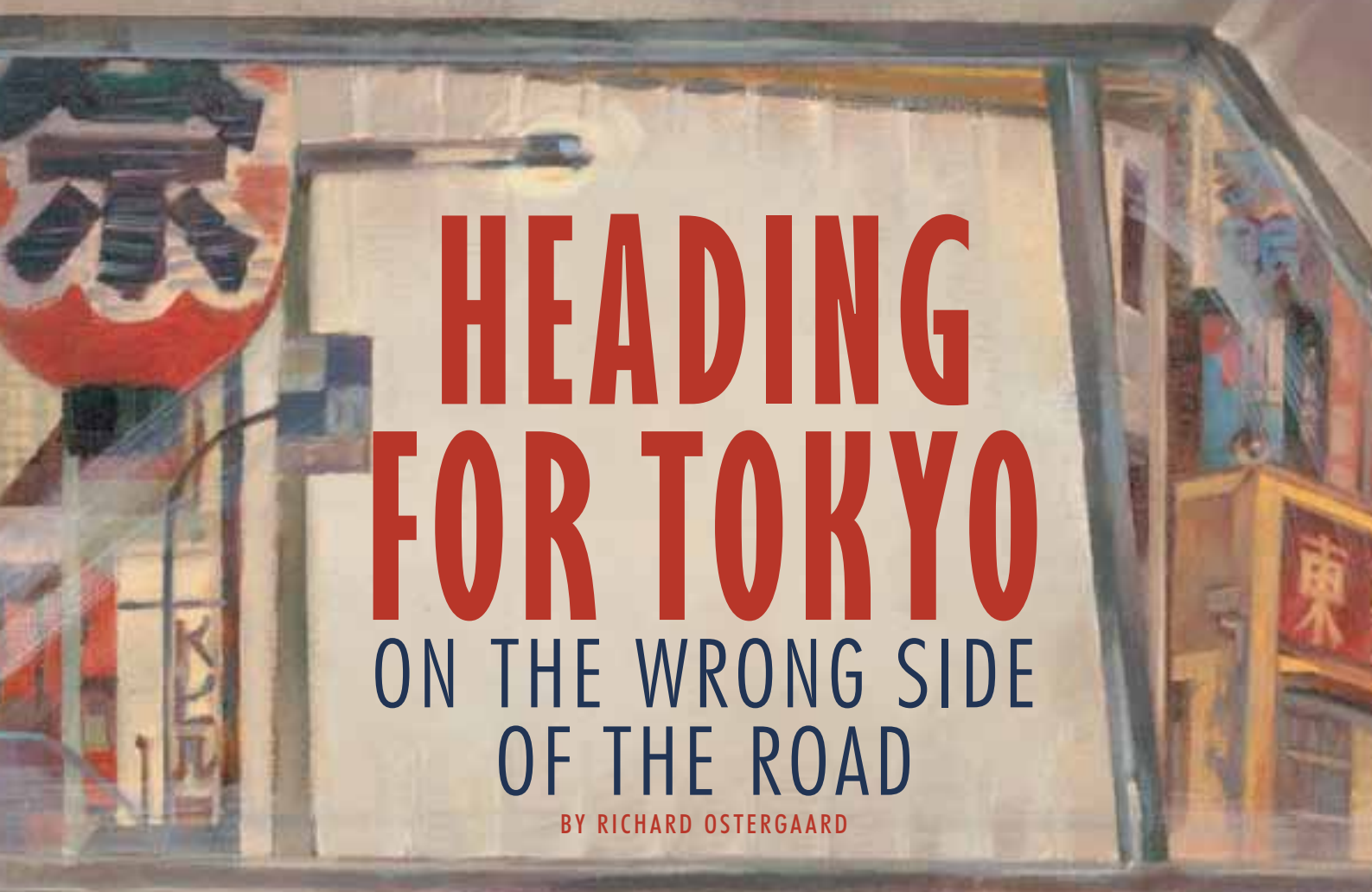
"Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation.

"For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand" (D&C 58:2-4).

The Savior set the perfect example of how to endure tribulation, even when His suffering was at its greatest. He did the will of the Father, not turning aside from His divine mission. He fulfilled His responsibility amid much trial and tribulation. He sacrificed His life because of His love for each one of us, giving us the wondrous opportunity to repent and change our ways. This is the greatest comfort we can receive as we go through heavy mists in the course of our lives. As we hold fast to Christ, we will eventually reach our final destination and live with Him and our Heavenly Father, who love us so much. ■



***The Savior set the perfect example of how to endure tribulation, even when His suffering was at its greatest.***



# HEADING FOR TOKYO

## ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD

BY RICHARD OSTERGAARD

*My expectations of myself as a missionary were shattered in a matter of minutes.*

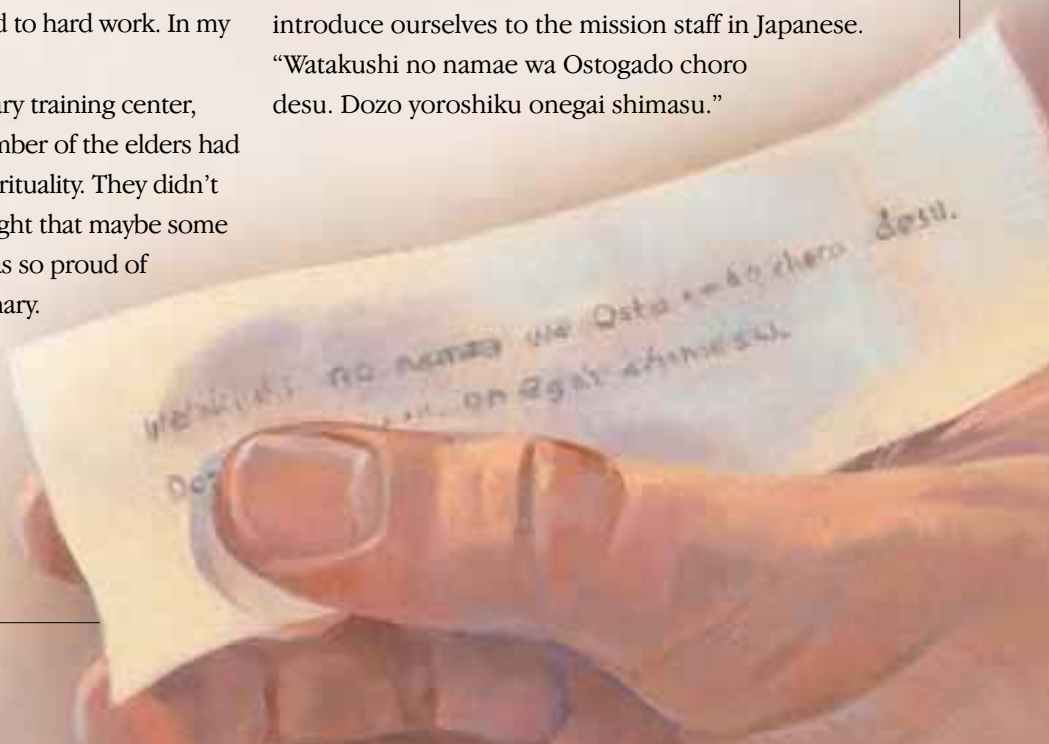
**A**s I was preparing for a mission, I was confident that I was highly qualified. I was two years older than the rest of the elders and had been active in collegiate sports. Raised in a rural area, I was used to hard work. In my mind, I was a real “macho man.”

Time passed quickly at the missionary training center, but at times I felt slightly uneasy. A number of the elders had quiet self-confidence, maturity, and spirituality. They didn’t engage in idle talk or horseplay. I thought that maybe some of the attributes and qualifications I was so proud of might not serve a purpose as a missionary.

We arrived in Japan in overcast weather. In the main concourse we met President and Sister Komatsu. Outside, we climbed into two automobiles and headed toward Tokyo—driving on what seemed to me the wrong side of the road.

It felt strange and in some ways became a metaphor for the next two years.

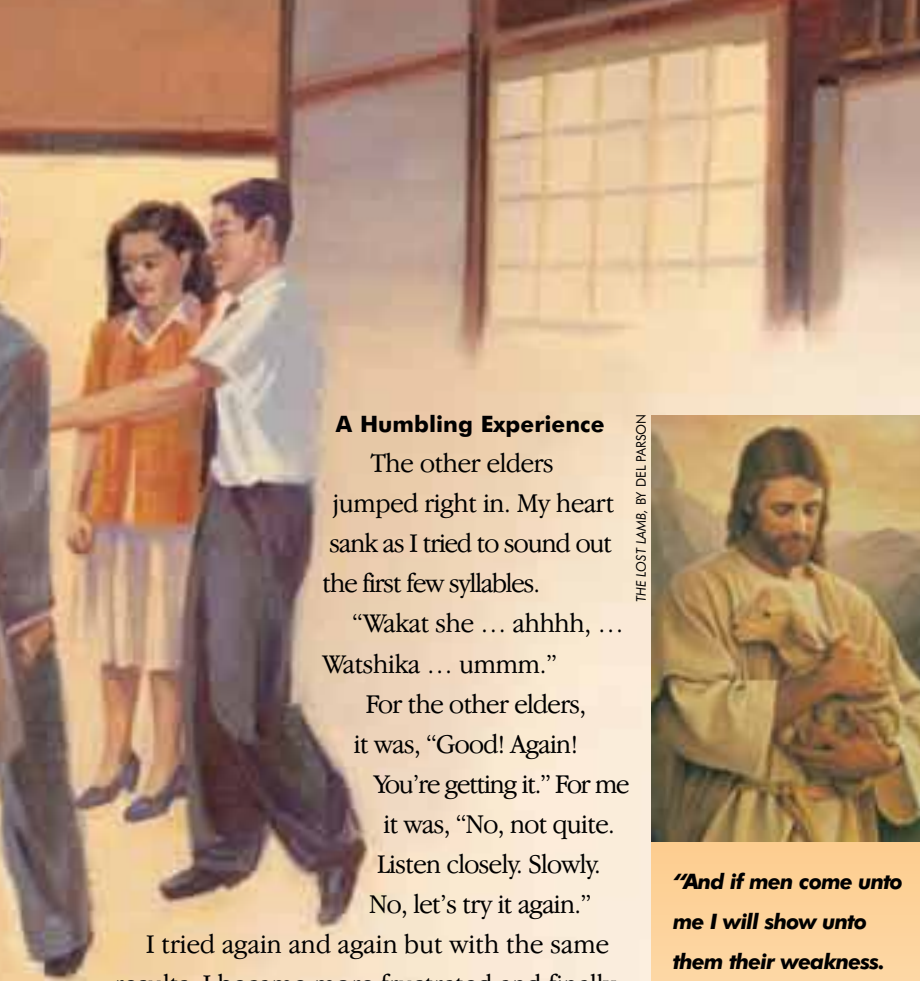
Immediately, Sister Komatsu turned around and gave each of us a strip of paper with a short typed message. She said that it was a “self-introduction” in Japanese, and she wanted us to memorize the sentences so we could introduce ourselves to the mission staff in Japanese. “Watakushi no namae wa Ostogado choro desu. Dozo yoroshiku onegai shimasu.”







Wa sakushi no yume ni wa  
Dozo yoroshiku onegaishimasu  
Otago de shiro 2854



### A Humbling Experience

The other elders jumped right in. My heart sank as I tried to sound out the first few syllables.

“Wakat she ... ahhhh, ... Watshika ... ummm.”

For the other elders, it was, “Good! Again! You’re getting it.” For me it was, “No, not quite. Listen closely. Slowly. No, let’s try it again.”

I tried again and again but with the same results. I became more frustrated and finally wadded up the slip of paper and put it into my pocket. Where was the macho man of but an hour before?

We were shown our sleeping quarters at the mission home and told to return in a few minutes to introduce ourselves to the Komatsu family and mission staff. This wasn’t a fair game. I tried to justify my feelings, thinking, “Let any one of these missionaries walk on a football field in a face-off—there would be no contest. Could any or them handle months of hard labor, working 12-hour days on a jackhammer, shoveling trenches, or throwing bales of hay?”

This seemed to be a new game where they had the skills that I lacked. I had wrongly assumed that physical stature and life experience would be all I needed.

We went downstairs to introduce ourselves. By the time I reached President and Sister Komatsu, I had bumbled every attempt and tears were welling in my eyes. I was unable to repeat the two simple sentences, even using the wadded up slip of paper. It was the most humbling experience of my life.

THE LOST LAMB, BY DEL PARSON



***“And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.”***

**T**ears were welling up in my eyes by the time I reached President and Sister Komatsu. I was unable to repeat the two simple sentences, even using the wadded up slip of paper.

### Insistent on Success

This was the beginning of a long and challenging experience, but I had a testimony of the gospel and knew I could never quit trying. My progress was slow, and I seemed to be hindering my companions, which only amplified my mental anguish.

I came to understand many gospel principles through this trial; humility was chief among them. I had to be teachable and willing to seek the Lord’s help. I needed to learn how to pray, concentrate, study, apply self-discipline, and love the Japanese people and the missionaries with whom I served.

I came to understand the power of the scriptures. Through them, I realized that my challenges were nothing compared to those of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who, in peril for his life at Liberty Jail, was told by the Lord that “all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good” (D&C 122:7).

Two other scriptures helped me understand why I needed to be changed and start anew. Doctrine and Covenants 12:8 reads: “No one can assist in this work except he shall be humble and full of love.” Ether 12:27 teaches: “And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weak-

ness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.”

While I never became completely fluent in Japanese, I was able to teach the gospel in my own simple way, and we were blessed to see a number of conversions. The Lord is always there if we seek Him through service, prayer, and faith—even when we feel like we’re heading to Tokyo, or anywhere, on the wrong side of the road. ■



# PRIESTHOOD, AGENCY, AND BLACK POWDER

BY ELDER DAVID E. SORENSEN

Served as a member of the Seventy from 1992 to 2005



*What seems  
barmless,  
manageable,  
and acceptable  
can quickly burst  
out of control,  
leaving destruction  
and heartache in  
its wake.*

Leslie James Anderson, the father of my wife, Verla, grew up in the small town of Manti, Utah. In 1919, when Les was only 14 years old, Sanpete County built a road up Manti Canyon using what was then a common method—detonating black blasting powder to remove difficult rocks and sharp canyon walls. Late that summer, Les; his cousin and best friend, Lyle Anderson; and two other friends decided to go up that new canyon road to fish and camp overnight at the Corduroy Reservoir. They loaded their camping gear into a one-horse buggy and started up the canyon as a foursome without any adult supervision. These boys were about as happy as Tom Sawyer to be on an overnigher on their own. I can imagine them making their way up the canyon road, cheerfully anticipating all the fun and adventure that awaited them.

On the way, the boys found by the side of the road a supply of explosive black powder that had been left behind by the road builders. Les and Lyle were intrigued by the discovery and instantly imagined the fun they could have with the powder that night around the campfire. Eagerly they filled their pockets and a hat with as much black powder as these could hold.





Later that afternoon when they arrived at camp, they turned their horse loose to return home to Manti, knowing the horse was needed at home and that they could pull the little buggy back down the hill themselves. At about 9:00 that evening, after the boys had pitched their tent and built a campfire, Les and Lyle thought they'd have some fun. They started throwing black powder into the fire and watching it explode with a bang. But with one of these explosions, a spark landed in the hat filled with powder and ignited it. It exploded, igniting the powder in the boys' pockets. In an instant, the air was filled with piercing screams, and the boys' clothing was a mass of flames. The two boys in the tent rushed out to help Les and Lyle, but they couldn't put out the flames until the clothing was almost entirely burned off and Les and Lyle were covered with deep burns. The boys wrapped quilts around Les and Lyle and placed them as gently as possible in the buggy and started pulling the buggy down the canyon in the dark.

All the way down the canyon, the two burned boys kept calling for water. At one point Les could hear water running in the creek close to the road. The buggy was going quite slowly at that moment, so Les rolled himself out of the

buggy and into the creek. The cool water eased the pain of his burns, which Les later felt saved his life.

Lyle was not as fortunate.

He stayed in the buggy near death. The boys finally arrived home at about 11:00 p.m. Despite a constant vigil of medical attention throughout the night, Lyle died the next morning.

It took Les two years to recuperate, including one full year of missed school. I met him when he was 53 years old. Although his face was scar free, he still had deep scars from his feet all the way up his back and along his arms. Thanks to the fasting and prayers of the good people of Manti and his own faith and sheer will, he healed well enough to live a full life.

### **Avoiding Danger**

In important ways, you young adults are in a situation similar to what Les faced as he ventured up the canyon nearly 90 years ago. Many of you have left the nest of your parents' homes and are discovering how to be your own boss and live life on your own. You have more opportunity than ever before in your lives to exercise your agency.

Sooner or later each of you will happen upon your own black powder. At first you may feel curious about it; it may even seem to hold great promise of fun. But I hope you won't risk playing with it. What seems harmless, manageable, and acceptable can quickly burst out of control, leaving destruction and heartache in its wake. Your own black powder might be inappropriate movies, late nights alone with your girlfriend or boyfriend, drugs, or cheating on an exam. But whatever it is, you will be warned by the Holy Spirit. And when that warning comes, please, please obey. You cannot venture, even once, to risk your spiritual well-being. The stakes are high; your eternal soul is in the balance.

The gospel was restored in these last days to help us refrain from acts that will put us in danger and to help us instead do righteous acts that will bless our lives and the lives of others. Your young adult years are a critical time for making choices that will affect the rest of your life. The decisions you make at this stage of your life will not necessarily have immediate consequences. In fact, the consequences may take a lifetime and longer to come about. But "be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).



The decisions you face—how you will live your life, how you will address your studies, whether you go on a mission, to whom and where you will be married, how you will raise your children, and how you pursue your career—are of great interest not only to Heavenly Father but also to Satan.

### **Remaining Faithful**

Fortunately, you are not alone in your quest for righteousness. The Lord has restored the priesthood so that there is accessible to every member a spiritual and temporal counselor who knows you and who, because of his priesthood ordination, is entitled to receive the necessary discernment and inspiration to give advice you may need. Our leaders are the Lord's anointed. They had hands laid on their heads and have received priesthood keys appointed to their calling.

Some years ago I served with my wife as president of the Canada Halifax Mission. Two of our elders were serving in an area that was a cold place, both in terms of the weather and of the people's reception of the missionaries. After a particularly long stretch of rejection, they called me, feeling discouraged. I suggested they consider proselyting in the countryside nearby, where I hoped the people would be a little friendlier.

The next day the elders drove out into the country, parked their car, and spent the day going door to door without any success. When they came back just after dark to their car, they discovered that it had been vandalized. Someone had smeared manure across their car's windshield, doors, and windows. The afternoon sun had caused it to melt

through the cracks of the doors, where it had then frozen in place.

That night I received another phone call from these elders, who were even more discouraged than before. The senior companion felt the full brunt of rejection. Over the phone he wondered out loud whether he was worthy to be a zone leader, whether they should be transferred, or whether he should just give up and go home. He just couldn't see that he and his companion were accomplishing anything. I suggested that he and his companion call another set of elders across town and ask for priesthood blessings and then recommit themselves to the work. We talked about how difficult things had been but how important it was that they carry on.

These elders did not know it at the time, but this was a pivotal point in their missions. Although nothing changed in the next few weeks, they chose to carry on, remaining faithful to the commitments they had made when they became full-time missionaries. They moved ahead, staying focused on preaching the gospel with love. They were obedient and faithful and continued to work hard. Later in their lives this strength of character and commitment led to successes in their careers and families. They now serve with distinction in their families, wards, and communities. Their success then and their success now have come from following their priesthood leaders.

At the press conference when she received the Nobel Peace Prize, Mother Teresa was reportedly asked, "So, how

do you feel now that you have been working to feed the poor and ease their misery for decades, and things are still just as bad—or worse—in Calcutta as when you started?" Her profound response is an example to us all. She said that we have not been called to be successful but to be faithful.

### **The Only Safety**

In the Book of Mormon, Jacob taught, "Ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life" (2 Nephi 10:23). He also taught

**Y**our own  
black powder  
might be  
inappropriate  
movies, late nights  
alone with your  
girlfriend or  
boyfriend, drugs,  
or cheating on  
an exam.



his brethren to remember “the awfulness of yielding to the enticings of that cunning one” (2 Nephi 9:39).

Lucifer is determined to fight a war against good. He is seeking to surround us with every conceivable form of temptation, hatred, bigotry, and corruption. So where is there safety? Where but in the Church, under the protection of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the priesthood of the Most High? Is not today much like Noah’s day, when the population of the earth was wiped out in the Flood and but eight souls were saved? (see Genesis 7; 1 Peter 3:20). Do we respond to our own seers and revelators more than the people of Noah did, or are we so foolish that we will not learn from the mistakes of Noah’s contemporaries?

We have a singular protection not enjoyed by the world in general. The prophet will never lead us astray. President Wilford Woodruff wrote: “The Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as president of this Church to lead you astray. It is not in the program. It is not in the mind of God. If I were to attempt that the Lord would remove me out of my place, and so he will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God and from their duty.”<sup>1</sup>

Keep your eyes on the prophet!

### Healing from Black Powder Burns

In closing, I return to my father-in-law, Les Anderson. If you have already happened upon some black powder and have been badly burned, do not despair. You have access, even today, to be completely (and I underscore *completely*) healed. You must repent. The process is not easy. You must confess, you must forsake, and you must replace bad with good. “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21). But if you will turn to your Father in Heaven and, when necessary, enlist the aid of His agent, your bishop, I promise you that in the Lord’s time you will be 100 percent healed. Determine today to repent and be healed. Please rely upon the power of the priesthood and its ordinances. That power is Christ’s Atonement, which overcomes the effects of sin on condition of complete repentance. Seek counsel from

**W**e have a singular protection not enjoyed by the world in general. The prophet will never lead us astray. Keep your eyes on the prophet!



your parents. Supplicate the Almighty on your behalf.

May you always love the Lord and keep His commandments. May He protect you both physically and spiritually. And may you listen to the Holy Ghost. Beware of Satan and his temptations of black powder. ■

*From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University–Idaho, January 13, 2004.*

#### NOTE

1. *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham (1946), 212–13.



### HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Consider reading the first story in the article and list some of the dangers or “black powders” in our world today. As a family, list the ways to avoid these dangers. Role-play how to respond to situations that you might encounter. Conclude by reading the last section of the article.
2. Point out that Elder Sorensen testifies, “We have a singular protection not enjoyed by the world in general.” Ask what this protection is and then read the section entitled “The Only Safety” for the answer. Take turns sharing personal examples of how following the prophet has blessed your life.





# Seek Learning by Faith

BY ELDER DAVID A. BEDNAR  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**W**e are admonished repeatedly in the scriptures to preach the truths of the gospel by the power of the Spirit (see D&C 50:14). I believe most parents and teachers in the Church are aware of this principle and generally strive appropriately to apply it. As important as this principle is, however, it is only one element of a much larger spiritual pattern. We are also frequently taught to seek learning by faith (see D&C 88:118). *Preaching by the Spirit* and *learning by faith* are companion principles that we should strive to understand and apply concurrently and consistently.

I suspect we emphasize and know much more about a teacher teaching by the Spirit than we do about a learner learning by faith. Clearly, the principles and processes of both teaching and learning are spiritually essential. However, as we look to the future and anticipate the ever more confused and turbulent world in which we will live, I believe it will be essential for all of us to increase our capacity to seek learning by faith. In our personal lives, in our families, and in the Church, we can and will receive the blessings of spiritual strength,

direction, and protection as we seek by faith to obtain and apply spiritual knowledge.

Nephi teaches us, “When a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth [the message] unto the hearts of the children of men” (2 Nephi 33:1). Please notice how the power of the Spirit carries the message *unto* but not necessarily *into* the heart. A teacher can explain, demonstrate, persuade, and testify, and do so with great spiritual power and effectiveness. Ultimately, however, the content of a message and the witness of the Holy Ghost penetrate into the heart only if a receiver allows them to enter. Learning by faith opens the pathway *into* the heart.

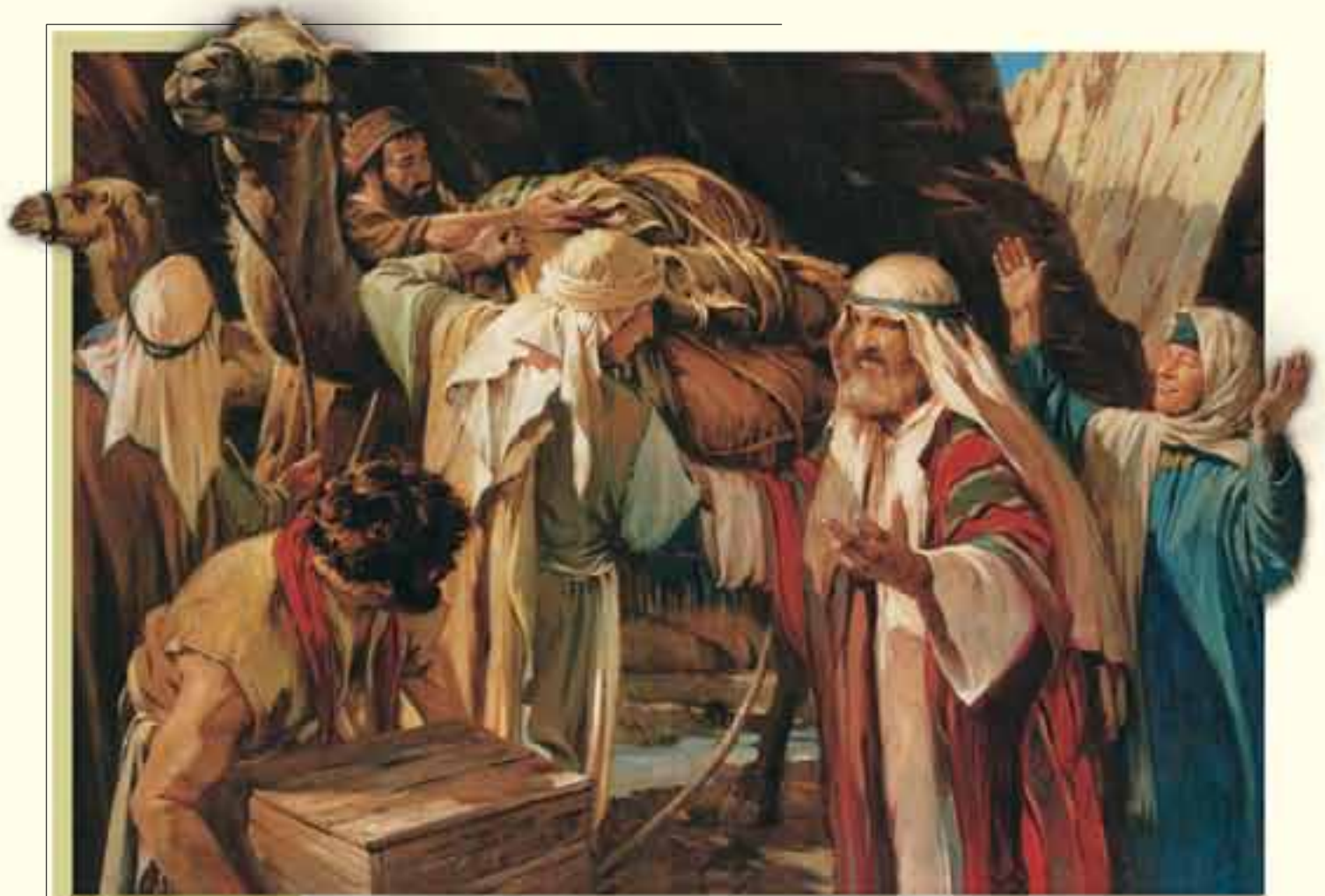
## **The Principle of Action: Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ**

The Apostle Paul defined *faith* as “the substance of things hoped for [and] the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Alma declared that faith is not a perfect knowledge; rather, if we have faith, we “hope for things which are not seen [but] are true” (Alma 32:21). Additionally, we learn in the *Lectures on Faith* that faith is “the first principle in revealed religion, and the foundation of all



*As we look to the future and anticipate the ever more confused and turbulent world in which we will live, I believe it will be essential for all of us to increase our capacity to seek learning by faith.*





**N**ephi relied upon future-facing spiritual assurance as he returned to Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass—“not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do. Nevertheless [he] went forth.”

righteousness” and that it is also “the principle of action in all intelligent beings.”<sup>1</sup>

These teachings highlight three basic elements of faith: (1) faith as the *assurance* of things hoped for that are true, (2) faith as the *evidence* of things not seen, and (3) faith as the principle of *action* in all intelligent beings. I describe these three components of faith in the Savior as simultaneously facing the future, looking to the past, and initiating action in the present.

Faith as the assurance of things hoped for looks to the future. This assurance is founded upon a correct understanding about, and trust in, God and enables us to “press forward” (2 Nephi 31:20) into uncertain and often challenging situations in the service of the Savior.

For example, Nephi relied upon precisely this type of future-facing spiritual assurance

as he returned to Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass—“not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do. Nevertheless [he] went forth” (1 Nephi 4:6–7).

Faith in Christ is inextricably tied to, and results in, hope in Christ for our redemption and exaltation. And assurance and hope make it possible for us to walk to the edge of the light and take a few steps into the darkness—expecting and trusting the light to move and illuminate the way.<sup>2</sup> The combination of assurance and hope initiates action in the present.

Faith as the evidence of things not seen looks to the past and confirms our trust in God and our confidence in the truthfulness of things not seen. We stepped into the darkness with assurance and hope, and we received evidence and confirmation as the light in fact moved and provided the illumination we

needed. The witness we obtained after the trial of our faith (see Ether 12:6) is evidence that enlarges and strengthens our assurance.

Assurance, action, and evidence influence each other in an ongoing process. This helix is like a coil, and as it spirals upward it expands and widens. These three elements of faith—assurance, action, and evidence—are not separate and discrete; rather, they are interrelated and continuous and cycle upward. And the faith that fuels this ongoing process develops, evolves, and changes. As we again turn and face forward toward an uncertain future, assurance leads to action and produces evidence, which further increases assurance. Our confidence waxes stronger, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

We find a powerful example of the interaction among assurance, action, and evidence as the children of Israel transported the ark of the covenant under the leadership of Joshua (see Joshua 3:7–17). Recall how the Israelites came to the river Jordan and were promised the waters would part, and they would be able to cross over on dry ground. Interestingly, the waters did not part as the children of Israel stood on the banks of the river waiting for something to happen; rather, the soles of their feet were wet before the water parted. The faith of the Israelites was manifested in the fact that they walked into the water *before* it parted. They walked into the river Jordan with a future-facing assurance of things hoped for. As the Israelites moved forward, the water parted, and as they crossed over on dry land, they looked back and beheld the evidence of things not seen. In this episode, faith as assurance led to action and produced the evidence of things not seen that were true.

True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to action. Faith as the principle of action is highlighted in many scriptures with which we are all familiar:

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so *faith without works is dead* also” (James 2:26; emphasis added).

“But be ye *doers of the word*, and not hearers only” (James 1:22; emphasis added).

“Awake and arouse your faculties, even to an *experiment*

*upon my words*, and exercise a particle of faith” (Alma 32:27; emphasis added).

And it is faith as the principle of action that is so central to the process of learning and applying spiritual truth.

### **Learning by Faith: To Act and Not to Be Acted Upon**

How is faith as the principle of action in all intelligent beings related to gospel learning? And what does it mean to seek learning by faith?

In the grand division of all of God’s creations, there are things to act and things to be acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:13–14). As sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father, we have been blessed with the gift of agency—the capacity and power of independent action. Endowed with agency, we are agents, and we primarily are to act and not only to be acted upon—especially as we seek to obtain and apply spiritual knowledge.

Learning by faith and from experience are two of the central features of the Father’s plan of happiness. The Savior preserved moral agency through the Atonement and made it possible for us to act and to learn by faith. Lucifer’s rebellion against the plan sought to destroy the agency of man, and his intent was that we as learners would only be acted upon.

Consider the question posed by Heavenly Father to Adam in the Garden of Eden: “Where art thou?” (Genesis 3:9). The Father knew where Adam was hiding, but He nonetheless asked the question. Why? A wise and loving Father enabled His child to act in the learning process and not merely be acted upon. There was no one-way lecture to a disobedient child, as perhaps many of us might be inclined to deliver. Rather, the Father helped Adam as a learner to act as an agent and appropriately exercise his agency.

Recall how Nephi desired to know about the things his father, Lehi, had seen in the vision of the tree of life. Interestingly, the Spirit of the Lord begins the tutorial with Nephi by asking the following question: “Behold, what desirest thou?” (1 Nephi 11:2). Clearly the Spirit knew what Nephi desired. So why ask the question? The Holy Ghost was helping Nephi to act in the learning



process and not simply be acted upon. Notice in 1 Nephi 11–14 how the Spirit both asked questions and encouraged Nephi to “look” as active elements in the learning process.

From these examples we recognize that as learners, you and I are to act and be doers of the word and not simply hearers who are only acted upon. Are you and I agents who act and seek learning by faith, or are we waiting to be taught and acted upon? Are the children, youth, and adults we serve acting and seeking to learn by faith, or are they waiting to be taught and acted upon? Are you and I encouraging and helping those we serve to seek learning by faith? We are all to be anxiously engaged in asking, seeking, and knocking (see 3 Nephi 14:7).

A learner exercising agency by acting in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost and invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. It is in the sincerity and consistency of our faith-inspired action that we indicate to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our willingness to learn and receive instruction from the Holy Ghost. Thus, learning by faith involves the exercise of moral agency to act upon the assurance of things hoped for and invites the evidence of things not seen from the only true teacher, the Spirit of the Lord.

Consider how missionaries help investigators to learn by faith. Making and keeping spiritual commitments, such as studying and praying about the Book of Mormon, attending Church meetings, and keeping the commandments, require an investigator to exercise faith and to act. One of the fundamental roles of a missionary is to help an investigator make and honor commitments—to act and learn by faith. Teaching, exhorting, and explaining, as important as they are, can never convey to an investigator a witness of the truthfulness of the restored gospel. Only as an investigator’s faith initiates action and opens the pathway to the heart can the Holy Ghost deliver a confirming witness. Missionaries obviously must learn to teach by the power of the Spirit. Of equal importance, however, is the responsibility

missionaries have to help investigators learn by faith.

The learning I am describing reaches far beyond mere cognitive comprehension and the retaining and recalling of information. The type of learning to which I am referring causes us to put off the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19), to change our hearts (see Mosiah 5:2), to be converted unto the Lord, and to never fall away (see Alma 23:6). Learning by faith requires both “the heart and a willing mind” (D&C 64:34). Learning by faith is the result of the Holy Ghost carrying the power of the word of God both unto and into the heart. Learning by faith cannot be transferred from an instructor to a student through a lecture, a demonstration, or an experiential exercise; rather, a student must exercise faith and act in order to obtain the knowledge for himself or herself.

The young boy Joseph Smith instinctively understood what it meant to seek learning by faith. One of the most well-known episodes in the life of Joseph Smith was his reading of verses about prayer and faith in the book of James in the New Testament (see James 1:5–6). This text inspired Joseph to retire to a grove of trees near his home to pray and to seek for spiritual knowledge. Note the questions Joseph had formulated in his mind and felt in his heart—and which he took into the grove. He clearly had prepared himself to “ask in faith” (James 1:6) and to act.

“In the midst of this war of words and tumult of opinions, I often said to myself: What is to be done? Who of all these parties are right; or, are they all wrong together? If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it? . . .

“My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right . . . and which I should join” (Joseph Smith—History 1:10, 18).

Notice that Joseph’s questions focused not just on what he needed to know but also on what he needed to do. And his very first question centered on action and what was to be *done!* His prayer was not simply which church is right.

His question was which church should he join. Joseph went to the grove to learn by faith. He was determined to act.

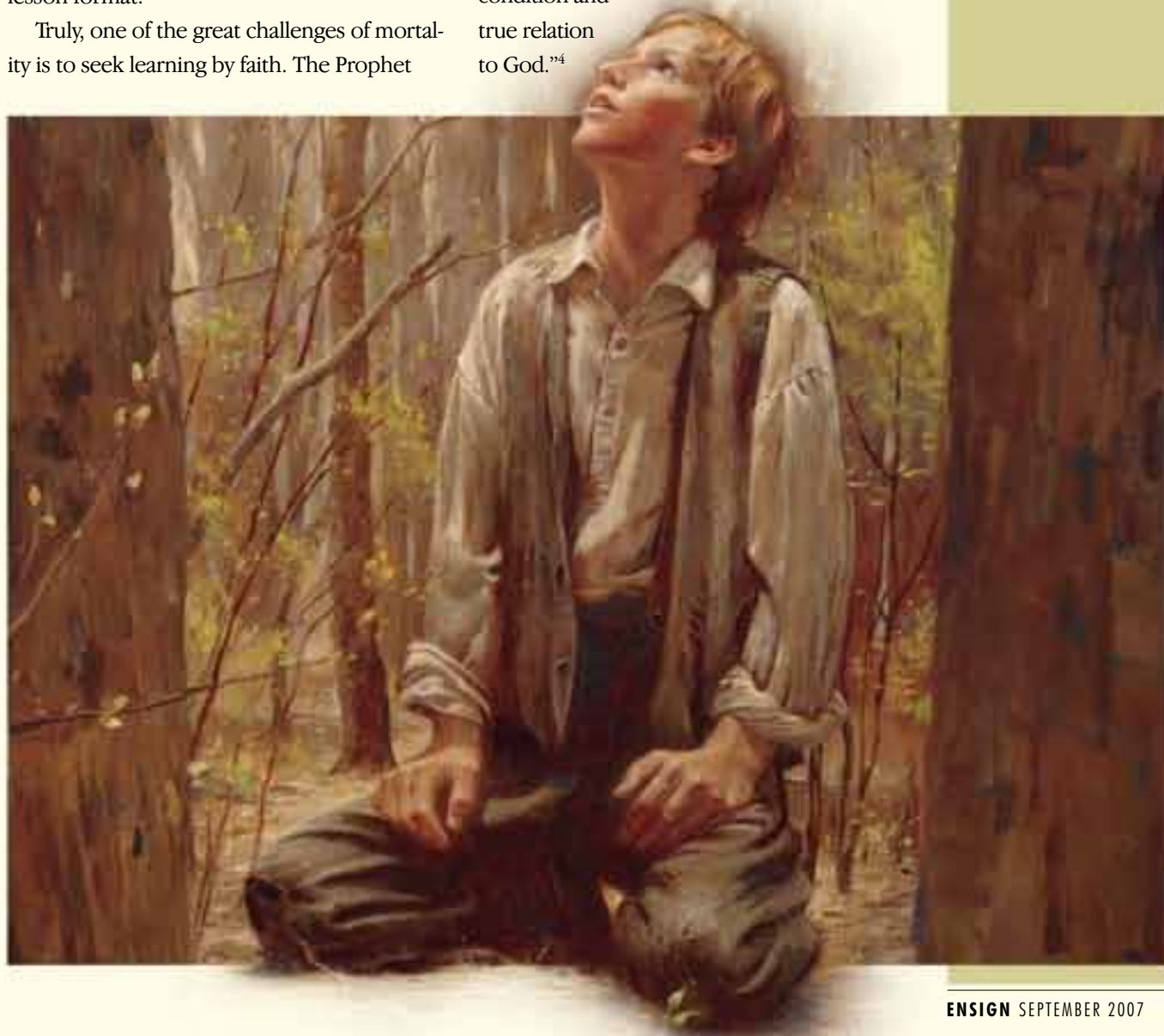
Ultimately, the responsibility to learn by faith and apply spiritual truth rests upon each of us individually. This is an increasingly serious and important responsibility in the world in which we do now and will yet live. What, how, and when we learn is supported by—but is not dependent upon—an instructor, a method of presentation, or a specific topic or lesson format.

Truly, one of the great challenges of mortality is to seek learning by faith. The Prophet

Joseph Smith best summarizes the learning process and outcomes I am attempting to describe. In response to a request by the Twelve Apostles for instruction, Joseph taught, “The best way to obtain truth and wisdom is not to ask it from books, but to go to God in prayer, and obtain divine teaching.”<sup>3</sup>

And on another occasion, the Prophet Joseph explained that “reading the experience of others, or the revelation given to *them*, can never give *us* a comprehensive view of our condition and true relation to God.”<sup>4</sup>

**N**ote the questions Joseph had formulated in his mind and felt in his heart—and which he took into the grove. He clearly had prepared himself to “ask in faith” and to act.



THE DESIRES OF MY HEART, BY WALTER BANE, COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF CHURCH HISTORY AND ART





**P**resident  
Boyd K.  
Packer

*taught: "A testimony is to be found in the bearing of it! . . . As you give that which you have, there is a replacement, with increase!"*

#### **Implications for Teachers**

The truths about learning by faith have profound implications for parents and teachers. Let us consider three of these implications.

#### **Implication 1. The Holy Ghost is a teacher from the Father.**

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead, and He is *the* teacher and witness of all truth. Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: "The office of the Holy Ghost in His ministrations among men is described in scripture. He is a teacher sent from the Father; and unto those who are entitled to His tuition He will reveal all things necessary for the soul's advancement."<sup>5</sup>

We should always remember that the Holy Ghost is the teacher who, through proper invitation, can enter into a learner's heart. Indeed, you and I have the responsibility to preach the

gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter, as a prerequisite for the learning by faith that can be achieved only by and through the Holy Ghost (see D&C 50:14). In this regard, you and I are much like the long, thin strands of glass used to create the fiber-optic cables through which light signals are transmitted over long distances. Just as the glass in these cables must be pure to conduct the light efficiently and effectively, so we should become and remain worthy conduits through whom the Spirit of the Lord can operate.

But we must be careful to remember in our service that we are conduits and channels; we are not the light. "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matthew 10:20). It is never about me, and it is never about you. In fact, anything you or I do as instructors that knowingly and intentionally draws attention to self—in the

messages we present, in the methods we use, or in our personal demeanor—is a form of priestcraft that inhibits the teaching effectiveness of the Holy Ghost. “Doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth or some other way? And if it be by some other way it is not of God” (D&C 50:17–18).

**Implication 2. We are most effective as instructors when we encourage and facilitate learning by faith.**

We are all familiar with the adage that giving a man a fish feeds him for one meal. Teaching the man to fish, on the other hand, feeds him for a lifetime. As parents and gospel instructors, you and I are not in the business of distributing fish; rather, our work is to help individuals learn to “fish” and to become spiritually self-reliant. This important objective is best accomplished as we encourage and facilitate learners acting in accordance with correct principles—as we help them to learn by doing. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God” (John 7:17).

Notice this implication in practice in the counsel given to Junius F. Wells by President Brigham Young (1801–77) as Brother Wells was called in 1875 to organize the young men of the Church:

“At your meetings you should begin at the top of the roll and call upon as many members as there is time for to bear their testimonies and at the next meeting begin where you left off and call upon others, so that all shall take part and get into the practice of standing up and saying something. Many may think they haven’t any testimony to bear, but get them to stand up and they will find the Lord will give them utterance to many truths they had not thought of before. More people have obtained a testimony while standing up trying to bear it than down on their knees praying for it.”<sup>6</sup>

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has given similar counsel in our day:

“Oh, if I could teach you this one principle. *A testimony is to be found in the bearing of it!* Somewhere in your quest for spiritual knowledge, there is that ‘leap of faith,’ as the philosophers call it. It is the moment when you have gone to the edge of the light and stepped into the darkness to discover that the way is lighted ahead for just a

footstep or two. ‘The spirit of man,’ as the scripture says, indeed ‘is the candle of the Lord’ (Proverbs 20:27).

“It is one thing to receive a witness from what you have read or what another has said; and that is a necessary beginning. It is quite another to have the Spirit confirm to you in your bosom that what you have testified is true. Can you not see that it will be supplied as you share it? As you give that which you have, there is a replacement, with increase!”<sup>7</sup>

I have observed a common characteristic among the instructors who have had the greatest influence in my life. They have helped me to seek learning by faith. They refused to give me easy answers to hard questions. In fact, they did not give me any answers at all. Rather, they pointed the way and helped me take the steps to find my own answers. I certainly did not always appreciate this approach, but experience has enabled me to understand that an answer given by another person usually is not remembered for very long, if remembered at all. But an answer we discover or obtain through the exercise of faith, typically, is retained for a lifetime. The most important learnings of life are caught—not taught.

The spiritual understanding you and I have been blessed to receive, and which has been confirmed as true in our hearts, simply cannot be given to another person. The tuition of diligence and learning by faith must be paid to obtain and personally “own” such knowledge. Only in this way can what is known in the mind be transformed into what is felt in the heart. Only in this way can a person move beyond relying upon the spiritual knowledge and experience of others and claim those blessings for himself or herself. Only in this way can we be spiritually prepared for what is coming. We are to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118).

**Implication 3. Our faith is strengthened as we help others seek learning by faith.**

The Holy Ghost, who can “teach [us] all things, and bring all things to [our] remembrance” (John 14:26), is eager to help us learn as we act and exercise faith in Jesus Christ. Interestingly, this divine learning assistance is perhaps never more apparent than when we are teaching,



either at home or in Church assignments. As Paul made clear to the Romans, “Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?” (Romans 2:21).

Notice in the following verses from the Doctrine and Covenants how teaching diligently invites heavenly grace and instruction:

“And I give unto *you* a commandment that *you* shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

“Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend *you*, that *you* may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for *you* to understand” (D&C 88:77–78; emphasis added).

Consider that the blessings described in these scriptures are intended specifically for the teacher: “Teach . . . diligently and my grace shall attend you”—that you, the teacher, may be instructed!

The same principle is evident in verse 122 from the same section:

“Appoint among yourselves a teacher, and let not *all* be spokesmen at once; but let one speak at a time and let *all* listen unto his sayings, that when *all* have spoken that *all* may be edified of *all*, and that every man may have an equal privilege” (D&C 88:122; emphasis added).

As all speak and as all listen in a dignified and orderly way, all are edified. The individual and collective exercise of faith in the Savior invites instruction and strength from the Spirit of the Lord.

### Seek Learning by Faith: A Recent Example

All of us were blessed by the challenge from President Gordon B. Hinckley in August 2005 to read the Book of Mormon by the end of that year. In extending the challenge, President Hinckley promised that faithfully observing this simple reading program would bring into our lives and into our homes “an added measure of the Spirit of the Lord, a strengthened resolution to walk in obedience to His commandments, and a

stronger testimony of the living reality of the Son of God.”<sup>8</sup>

Please note how this inspired challenge is a classic example of learning by faith. First, you and I were not commanded, coerced, or required to read. Rather, we were invited to exercise our agency as agents and act in accordance with correct principles. President Hinckley, as an inspired teacher, encouraged us to act and not just be acted upon. Each of us, ultimately, had to decide if and how we would respond to the challenge—and if we would endure to the end of the task.

Second, in proffering the invitation to read and to act, President Hinckley was encouraging each of us to seek learning by faith. No new study materials were distributed to members of the Church, and no additional lessons, classes, or programs were created by the Church. Each of us had our copy of the Book of Mormon, and a pathway into our heart opened wider through the exercise of our faith in the Savior as we responded to the First Presidency challenge.

Thus, we were prepared to receive instruction from the only true teacher, the Holy Ghost.

The responsibility to seek learning by faith rests upon each of us individually, and this obligation will become increasingly important as the world in which we live grows more confused and troubled. Learning by faith is essential to our personal spiritual development and for the growth of the Church in these latter days. May each of us truly hunger and thirst after righteousness and be filled with the Holy Ghost (see 3 Nephi 12:6)—that we might seek learning by faith. ■

*From a satellite broadcast address to Church Educational System educators given on February 3, 2006.*

### NOTES

1. *Lectures on Faith* (1985), 1.
2. See Boyd K. Packer, “The Candle of the Lord,” *Tambuli*, July 1983, 27; *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 54.
3. *History of the Church*, 4:425.
4. *History of the Church*, 6:50.
5. *The Articles of Faith* (1924), 162.
6. In Junius F. Wells, “Historic Sketch of the YMMIA,” *Improvement Era*, June 1925, 715.
7. *Tambuli*, July 1983, 34; *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 54–55.
8. “A Testimony Vibrant and True,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Aug. 2005, 6.



## Become an Instrument in the Hands of God by Being of One Heart and One Mind



*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.*

### What Does It Mean to Be of One Heart and One Mind?

**1 Corinthians 12:20, 27:** “Now are they many members, yet but one body. . . . Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

**President Gordon B. Hinckley:** “The Lord said that except ye are one, ye are not mine. (See D&C 38:27.) This great unity is the hallmark of the true church of Christ. It is felt among our people throughout the world. As we are one, we are his. . . . We pray for one another that we may go on in unity and strength. If we do so, no power beneath the heavens can stop the onward progress of this great kingdom” (“Except Ye Are One,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 5).

**President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency:** “It is the mission of the Church of this last dispensation to develop another people

who shall live the gospel in its fullness. This people are to become ‘pure in heart,’ and they shall . . . be the Lord’s people. They shall walk with God because they shall be of one heart and one mind, and they shall dwell in righteousness, and there shall be no poor among them” (“Living Welfare Principles,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 93).

### How Will Striving to Be of One Heart and One Mind Help Me Be a Better Instrument in the Hands of God?

**Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Presidency of the Seventy:** “We must begin by becoming one within ourselves. We are dual beings of flesh and spirit, and we sometimes feel out of harmony or in conflict. . . . As we endeavor day by day and week by week to follow the path of Christ, our spirit asserts its pre-eminence, the battle within subsides, and temptations cease to trouble.

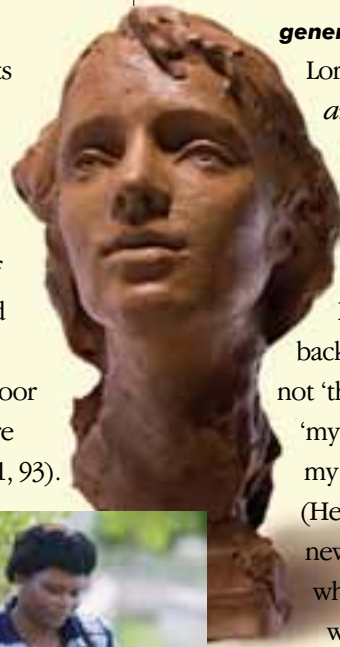
There is greater and greater harmony between the spiritual and the physical until our physical bodies are transformed . . .

to ‘instruments of righteousness unto God’ (see Romans 6:13)” (“That They May Be One in Us,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 71–72).

### Kathleen H. Hughes, former first counselor in the Relief Society

**general presidency:** “[The Lord] requires ‘*the heart and a willing mind*’ (D&C 64:34; emphasis added). . . . The Lord asks us to open ourselves to Him, holding nothing back. He says to us, seek not ‘thine own life’; seek ‘my will, and to keep my commandments’ (Helaman 10:4). The newness of heart comes when we do and give all we can, then offer our heart and will to the Father” (“Out of Small Things,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 111).

**Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** “Spiritual submissiveness means . . . community and communion as the mind and the heart become settled. We then spend much less time deciding, and much more time serving. . . . Yielding one’s heart to God signals the last stage in our spiritual development. Only then are we beginning to be fully useful to God! How can we sincerely pray to be an instrument in His hands if the instrument seeks to do the instructing?” (“Willing to Submit,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 71). ■







## Brother John's Fast Offering

By Greg Burgoyne

I couldn't believe my eyes. There he was, standing at the pulpit. I had never seen Brother John at church before, let alone heard him bear his testimony. A month later he came to church and bore his testimony again.

It all started one Sunday morning in priesthood executive committee meeting. I was serving as Young Men president. We had just read from the *Church Handbook of Instructions*, and the bishop was sitting quietly, pondering. Then he looked up and said, "I want our Aaronic Priesthood brethren to begin collecting fast offerings from less-active members." He asked us to involve the teachers and priests.

I was surprised. In Cape Town, South Africa, most members live far from each other. It takes about 35

minutes to drive from one side of our ward to the other. The young men had never collected fast offerings before because they couldn't walk to members' homes—the distance was too great, and we were concerned about their safety.

As a committee we came up with a plan as we discussed how we might overcome these obstacles. The elders quorum agreed to assign brethren to take the young men to several homes on the Saturday before each fast Sunday. We split the ward into areas and assigned each companionship to visit a few active families and a few less-active families. We realized that our plan would be a good opportunity for the brethren to get to know the youth and for the youth to receive counsel from the elders.

When we presented the plan to the young men, they were eager to try it. We reminded them to wear Sunday clothes and that this was part of their sacred responsibility to watch over the ward.

I was assigned to take my younger brother, Andrew. The following Saturday we visited everyone on our list, but most people weren't home. The last member we visited was Brother John, whom we didn't know well.

Andrew got out of the car, knocked on the door, and waited. He was just about to return to the car when the door opened. Andrew shook Brother John's hand and said, "Hello, my name is Andrew, and I'm from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Tomorrow is fast Sunday, and the bishop has asked us to visit members to receive any fast-offering donations they wish to make."

He handed Brother John an envelope. Brother John was surprised, but he walked inside with the envelope.

After a few minutes he emerged from the house with a smile. He politely thanked Andrew and handed the envelope to him. I got out of the car, and we three chatted for a while. As we were leaving, Brother John waved good-bye and said, "Make sure you come next month." Andrew was excited all the way back to the chapel, where we turned in our envelopes to a member of the bishopric.

The next month we made sure to visit Brother John. Again he was friendly. After a few months he began attending church on fast Sunday. Our Saturday visits reminded him of his Sunday meetings, and he would come the next day.

We were excited when Brother John became active in the Church. We felt a special bond with him. Words cannot express the joy that came to us because one soul had returned to the fold. Within a few months, he was attending regularly, and soon he was called to serve in the elders quorum presidency.

For us, the highlight of this experience came when Brother John was asked to speak in sacrament meeting about tithes and offerings. At the end of his talk he spoke about Andrew's first visit.

With moistened eyes he said: "Andrew, you will never know the impact you had on my life that Saturday morning when you came to my door with that blue envelope. You may have thought it was a waste of time, but blessings came into my

life because you provided me with an opportunity to pay my fast offering. Your service is one reason I am here today." ■

## Lemonade and a Loaf of Bread

By Anabela De León

When I was six years old, my family moved to a new house in our hometown of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. On the day we moved in, we were tired and thirsty. My older brother took me into the kitchen to get me a glass of water, but the utilities had not been turned on yet.

We didn't know what to do. It was late, and we didn't know anyone. Just then, someone knocked on the door. It turned out to be a pleasant and smiling woman. "Welcome to the neighborhood," she said. "I'm your neighbor, Tenchita. I thought you probably didn't have any water, so I brought you some lemonade and bread."

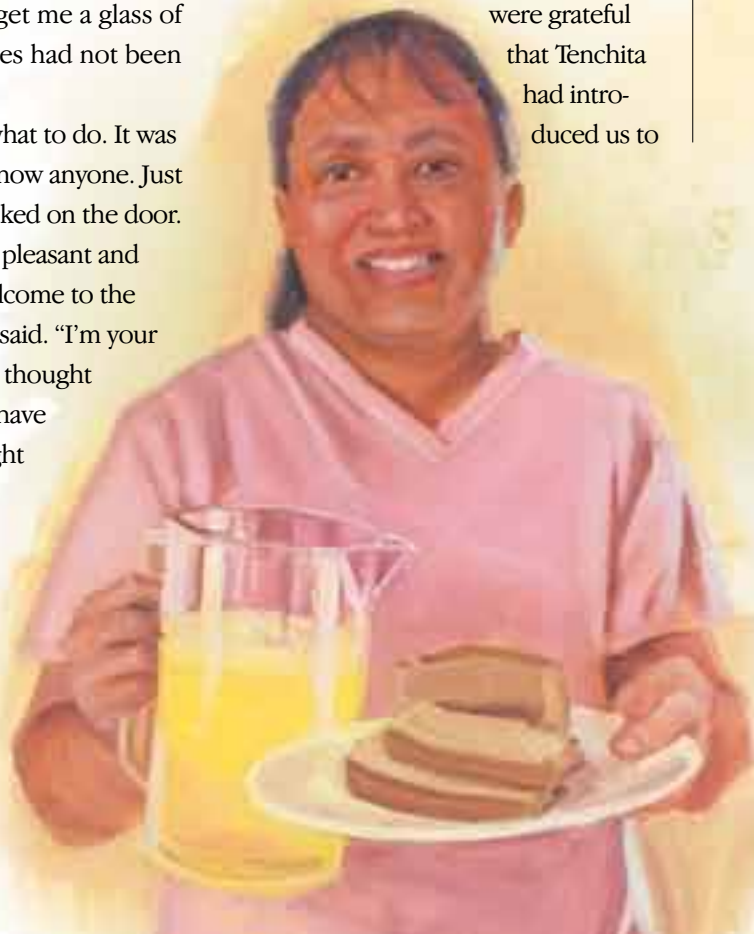
I was so happy to see the lemonade that I smiled a huge smile. A few days later, Tenchita invited us

to attend The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and gave us a copy of the Book of Mormon.

We soon took the missionary discussions, and three months later the elders challenged us to be baptized. My five older siblings accepted the challenge, but my parents didn't feel ready. They continued to attend church, however, and they and I were baptized and confirmed two years later, when I was eight.

I was young, but I could see the changes the gospel of Jesus Christ made in our family. Like all families, we had our problems, but communication and harmony increased in our home, and we trusted that solutions would come because of the teachings we received in the true Church. We

were grateful that Tenchita had introduced us to





the gospel, but she soon moved, and we didn't hear from her again.

Thirteen years later, my family was sealed in the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple, and I decided to serve a mission. In my first area in the Guatemala Guatemala City South Mission, we often visited members who were ill or less active. One day the bishop asked us to visit an elderly sister who was sick and couldn't leave her home. He told us that this sister's favorite drink was lemonade.

When my companion and I arrived at the house, the sister was ill in bed, but I recognized her immediately and gave her a big hug. Sister Tenchita didn't know me at first, but after we had talked for a while, her eyes shone in recognition. She smiled and said, "I brought you lemonade and bread."

I thanked her for also bringing me the gospel and making it possible for me to serve a mission.

Giving a glass of lemonade and a loaf of bread is easy and inexpensive, but giving them the way Sister Tenchita did—with affection and concern for our eternal welfare—truly made them valuable. She changed my life and the lives of members of my family. Likewise, we can all change people's lives by helping them find their way to the "living water" and the "bread of life" (John 4:10; 6:48).

Today my family and I don't share just lemonade and bread with our neighbors; we also share the true gospel of Jesus Christ. ■

## *You'll Take Good Care of Me*

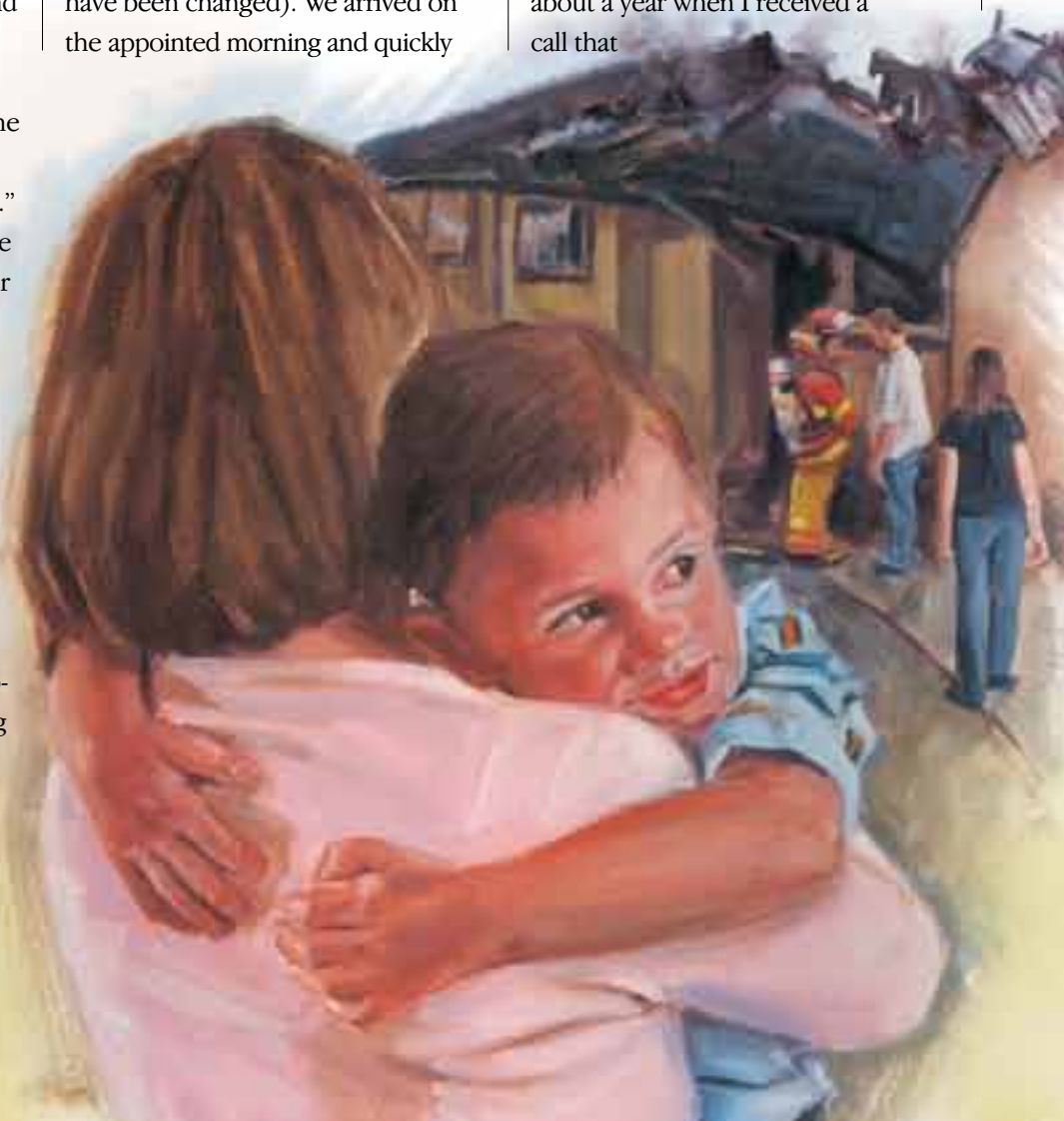
By Elaine Pearson

**A**s I looked over my new visiting teaching assignment, I saw the name of a new member of our ward. I felt apprehensive about calling someone I didn't know, but my companion and I made an appointment to visit Jane (names have been changed). We arrived on the appointed morning and quickly

said a prayer before approaching the door. We found Jane and her three young sons waiting for us.

As we grew closer to Jane through our monthly visits, we also tried to get to know her sons. The two youngest would sit next to my companion and me, and we would read them books and play with them. But four-year-old Alex, the oldest of the three, was not so eager to warm up to his mother's frequent visitors. He was independent and hesitated to become friends with us.

I had been Jane's visiting teacher about a year when I received a call that



Jane's house was on fire! My husband and I felt prompted to grab crackers, bottled water, and toy cars and to hurry over to see if we could help. We found Jane standing on the sidewalk across from her smoldering home. Jane's husband had joined the firefighters to take stock of the damage while Jane comforted their three crying children, who were clinging to her knees.

When we spoke to her, she told us she was eager to join her husband. We took her two youngest children to our car. They were hungry and thirsty, and I was grateful for the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to bring food and water. They were soon content. But Alex, still sobbing, held tightly to his mother. Jane could not take him with her, and she felt torn between going to her husband and comforting her son.

I encouraged her to go and then leaned over and asked Alex if I could hold him while his mom went to find his dad. To my surprise, he agreed. When I scooped Alex into my arms, he rested his head on my shoulder, and I rubbed his back. While Jane went to find her husband, I whispered comforting words into Alex's ear. I could feel his sobs slow and his breathing relax.

As we stood on the sidewalk, Alex said softly to me, "You'll take good care of me 'cause you're my mom's teacher."

I quietly shed tears as I realized that Alex knew we were important in

his mother's life. He recognized that he could trust and rely on me to take care of him too because I was his mom's teacher. ■

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## *The Gift I Can't Remember*

By Gary R. Wangsgard

**O**ne of the greatest gifts I ever received from my father is one I don't even remember.

He never talked about it. That was Dad's way. I learned about it many years later from my mother.

Both my mother and father had been raised as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but Dad's habit of smoking had kept them from being married in the temple. The loving bishop who performed my parents' civil ceremony encouraged them to set a goal to marry in the temple before their children came. They were still working on that goal when I joined the family.

By the time my second birthday was approaching, my parents still had not been to the temple. Mom really wanted to be sealed as a family before a second child came, but Dad was still using tobacco.

Sometimes I wish I could remember what happened on my second

birthday, because that's when I received the gift. My father came home from work that night in early November, and after setting aside his lunch bucket and taking off his coat, he picked me up. "Gary," he said, "I have a special birthday present for you." Mom said she was surprised because she knew Dad didn't have extra money to purchase a gift for me.

Reaching into his shirt pocket, Dad took out a partially used packet of cigarettes and handed them to me. Mom started to object, but Dad held up his hand as if to say, "This is between my son and me."

Quietly, he then said to me, "I have thought about this for several days. I have decided I don't want you, my son, to ever remember your father smoking. My gift to you today is that I am giving up my cigarettes, and I will never smoke again."

And that was the end of his tobacco habit. He must have struggled to quit smoking so abruptly. Although I don't remember it, that was his special gift to me. But it was more than that.

A few months later, with my mother pregnant with my brother, we made our way to the Logan Utah Temple, where we were sealed together as a forever family.

I am truly grateful for that gift given many years ago from my loving and caring father. ■





## Who Does What?

To avoid roommate conflicts down the road, begin your experience together by deciding how you will coordinate various aspects of the household. I have found that most roommate conflicts are simply due to lack of communication. Following are some helpful items

to discuss together to have a smooth-running apartment:

### Food

- Will we rotate turns cooking dinner or other meals? If so, who will cook when, and who will be responsible for cleanup? What if someone cannot take their turn?
- Will any or all food be community property? Should we initial or mark food items?

### Cleaning

- Who will do the dishes, vacuum, sweep and mop, wash windows and mirrors, clean the bathroom(s), take out the trash, and do other necessary tasks on a regular basis? You may want to post a cleaning rotation schedule.

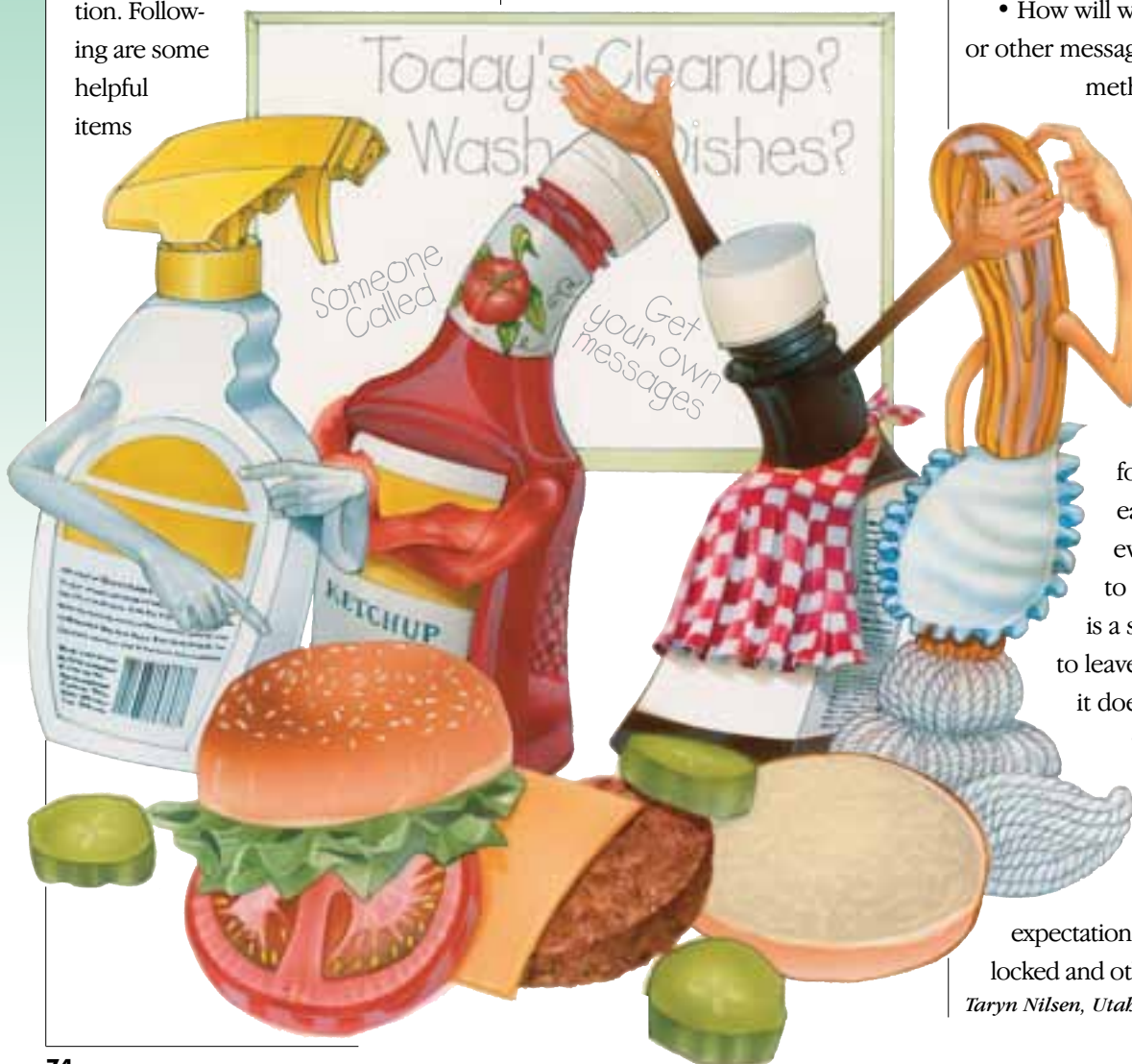
### Bathroom Use

- Should we organize a shower schedule to avoid conflicts?

### Other

- How will we keep track of phone or other messages? Using a consistent method, such as a white board with a section for each roommate, can be helpful. (If you have cell phones, this may not be much of an issue.)
- Will one person be responsible for checking the mail each day, or should everyone have access to the mail key? Where is a safe, consistent place to leave each other's mail so it doesn't get misplaced?
- What will be our guidelines for visitors of the opposite sex?
- What are the expectations for keeping the doors locked and other security measures?

Taryn Nilsen, Utah





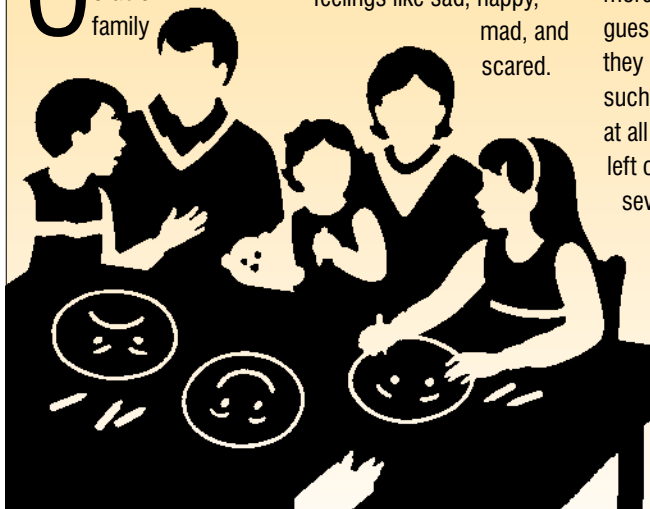
**Butcher Paper and Funny Faces**

One of our most memorable family

nights occurred when our then six-year-old gave the lesson. We helped her cover the table with butcher paper, tape it in place, and set crayons out. Our daughter started the lesson by drawing simple facial expressions to indicate various feelings like sad, happy, mad, and scared.

Then she encouraged us to talk about how we should handle these feelings: by talking nicely and using our words to explain our feelings instead of hitting, for instance. She next asked us to use our imaginations and take turns drawing more faces while the rest guessed what emotions they expressed. We had such a good time laughing at all the funny faces! We left our table art out for several days to encourage more creativity and smiles each time we admired our hands-on lesson.

*Lea Taylor, Utah*



## Using Church Magazines

When I was called to teach the Sunbeams, I decided to collect stories, illustrations, and other items found in Church magazines. From the issues, I created a resource file arranged by topic. To protect the collection, I laminated many of the items. You could also use contact paper or archival sheet protectors, or you could adhere them to cardstock. My ever-expanding file has become a treasure trove in helping me enhance my lessons. Young learners (and even the not-so-young) tend to be more attentive when they can both see and hear gospel stories.

*Dedelyn Hamilton, Colorado*

*Note: With the magazines available online in PDF format, many illustrations can be printed from the Gospel Library on the Church Web site LDS.org. This way, your magazines can be left intact.*

## Acid-Free Archiving

Using three-ring binders is a common, inexpensive way to store paper materials. Unfortunately, the oft-used vinyl ones can, over time, damage the contents. Covering the binder with cloth, for example, offers little protection, but you can minimize the damage by using archival sheet protectors. You

might also insert archival safe barriers between the documents and vinyl. Or you could use the more flexible binders that are made of polyethylene plastic, which is much safer than vinyl for archival purposes. As an alternative to using binders, you might also store items the way an archivist does: in archival folders within archival boxes.

*Chris McAfee, senior conservator, LDS Church Archives*

## Meals and Memorization

If you haven't studied your teenager's seminary scripture mastery cards yet, you're missing

out! They can be a wonderful resource for younger children and adults too. We keep ours on the kitchen table and read them aloud at dinnertime. In doing so, we have challenged our family to memorize a scripture a week. While memorizing Moses 7:18, our two-year-old softly echoed "of one heart and one mind." We were so surprised! After hearing it only a few times, he had that portion memorized. From this experience, we learned that our children are always listening and learning—even when we don't think they are.

*Chantelle Adams, British Columbia, Canada*

*Note: Scripture mastery cards are available in a variety of languages at LDS Distribution Centers or online at [www.ldscatalog.com](http://www.ldscatalog.com). U.S. and Canadian residents may also call the Salt Lake Distribution Center at 1-800-537-5971.*



## Shinto Priests Greet Elder Eyring at Historic Meiji Shrine in Japan

**K**atsushi Toyama, chief priest at Tokyo's historic Meiji Shrine, met with Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles during Elder Eyring's recent tour of Church areas in Asia and the Pacific islands.

Elder Eyring, along with Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Presidency of the Seventy and Elder David F. Evans, President of the Asia North Area, was invited to meet with Mr. Toyama to build bridges of understanding and goodwill.

Mr. Toyama told the visitors that there was no written book of Shinto doctrine similar to the Bible or other scriptures, but that followers manifest their relationship to God by striving for purity and righteousness in their lives.

Elder Eyring said members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints similarly strive for personal purity and righteousness in their lives. "Our prophet, Gordon B. Hinckley, regularly admonishes members of our Church to make their beliefs an integral part of their daily lives," he said.

Mr. Toyama first became familiar with the Church when he was hosted in Salt Lake City in the 1970s. More recently, this relationship has been nurtured as other priests from the shrine have visited Salt

Lake City and Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. In 2005, the BYU-Hawaii Concert Choir became the first Christian group to perform at the Meiji Shrine.

The meeting with Mr. Toyama took place in a small room at the shrine generally reserved for conversations with heads of state and their emissaries.

Emperor Meiji, for whom the shrine is named, ruled Japan from 1867 to 1912. He balanced a desire to retain the uniqueness of Japanese culture with a strong thrust to bring his



**Elder Henry B. Eyring and his wife, Kathleen, tour the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo, Japan.**

country into the industrialized world.

The first baptisms in Japan took place in 1902. Today there are more than 120,000 members of the Church in Japan. The Church also has two temples there, one in Tokyo and one in Fukuoka. ■

## Temple Construction Continues Worldwide

**T**he Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple is set to reopen following renovations, ground has been broken for the Kyiv Ukraine, Tegucigalpa Honduras, and Vancouver British Columbia Temples, and a new temple has been announced in Manaus, Brazil. There are now 124 operating temples in the world, with 12 under construction or announced.

### **Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple**

The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has announced the public open

house for the newly renovated Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple.

The open house begins on Saturday, September 29, 2007, and continues through October 20, excluding Sundays.

Following the open house, two rededicatory sessions will be held on November 4, 2007, to accommodate Latter-day Saints in the area who will be served by the temple.

A cultural celebration will be held on Saturday, November 3, 2007.

The Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple, first dedicated in

August 1983 by President Gordon B. Hinckley, will serve Latter-day Saints throughout Tonga and the Line Islands of the Pacific Ocean. Tonga now has some 52,400 members.

### **Kyiv Ukraine Temple**

Groundbreaking services for the Kyiv Ukraine Temple took place on Saturday, June 23, 2007.

Presiding over the service was Elder Paul B. Pieper, President of the Europe East Area. Elder Alexander N. Manzhos, Europe East Area Seventy, conducted the ceremony.

The temple, the first to be built in Ukraine, was first announced in July of 1998. Since 2002, Latter-day Saints in Ukraine have had to travel 30 hours one way to attend the nearest temple. Ukraine now has more than 9,900 members in one stake and five districts.

### **Tegucigalpa Honduras Temple**

Elder Spencer V. Jones, then President of the Central



**Ground was broken for the Vancouver British Columbia Temple on August 4, 2007.**

America Area, presided as Church leaders broke ground for the Tegucigalpa Honduras Temple on June 9, 2007.

Currently, members in Honduras must travel some 12 hours to attend the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple. Honduras now has more than 116,400 members.

The temple is the first in Honduras and will be the fourth operating temple in Central America after the Guatemala City Guatemala, Panama City Panama, and San Jose Costa Rica Temples. The Panama City temple is nearing completion. A temple has also been announced in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala.

#### **Vancouver British Columbia Temple**

The Church held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Vancouver British Columbia Temple on Saturday, August 4, 2007. Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Presidency of the Seventy presided at the services.

Announced on June 2, 2006, the temple will be the first in British Columbia. British Columbia has more than 28,400 members in 8 stakes and 1 district. Altogether, Canada has more than 166,000 members and 6 temples—the Cardston Alberta, Edmonton Alberta, Halifax Nova Scotia, Montreal Quebec, Regina Saskatchewan, and Toronto Ontario Temples.

#### **Manaus Brazil Temple**

On June 7, 2007, the First Presidency announced the construction of a temple in Manaus, Brazil. Once

completed, the Manaus temple will be the sixth temple in Brazil.

With temples constructed near the southern and eastern coasts of Brazil, some members living in the central and northern areas of Brazil must travel more than a thousand miles (1,600 km) to

attend the nearest temple.

Currently, Brazil is home to about 929,000 members and four operational temples—in Campinas, Porto Alegre, Recife, and São Paulo. The Curitiba temple, which began construction in 2005, is expected to be complete by next year. ■



*Dr. Steven C. Wheelwright, the new president of BYU-Hawaii, greets the university faculty and staff during a live broadcast from Salt Lake City to Laie, Hawaii.*

## **Wheelwright Appointed President of BYU-Hawaii**

President Gordon B. Hinckley announced the appointment of Steven C. Wheelwright, respected Harvard Business School professor and administrator, as president of Brigham Young University-Hawaii on June 5, 2007.

“I know President Wheelwright will take BYU-Hawaii to new heights,” President Hinckley said from the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. “Through his expertise and many associations I’m confident he will expand the influence of

BYU-Hawaii and bless the lives of all who come to this illustrious school.”

Following the announcement, President Wheelwright greeted BYU-Hawaii students participating by satellite with an enthusiastic “Aloha” and said it was a great honor to receive such an appointment.

“I believe in BYU-Hawaii and its mission because it combines spiritual with secular learning and focuses on the development of character and understanding in these wonderful young people,” President Wheelwright said.

President Hinckley said that since BYU-Hawaii first opened as a college in 1955, it has become one of the most international universities in the country, with a student body of 2,400 from 70 countries.

President Wheelwright has had extensive experience working with students from many different cultures, including the Asia areas. As the former dean of Harvard Business School’s MBA program, he worked with students from all over the world and helped place many in business positions. Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said this network would benefit BYU-Hawaii students as they return to their native countries after graduation.

After graduating from Stanford with an MBA and Ph.D., President Wheelwright spent a year on the faculty of INSEAD, an international business school in Fontainebleau, France, then spent the remainder of his academic career at Harvard and Stanford.

“He knows heaven and will inspire tremendous trust because of faith,” President Clark said.

Prior to President Wheelwright’s retirement from Harvard in the fall of 2006, he was the Edsel Bryant Ford Professor of Business Administration, a Baker Foundation professor, a senior associate dean, and the director of Harvard Business School Publication Activities. He was also the Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield and Byers



Professor of Management at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

As a young man, President Wheelwright served the Church as a missionary in Scotland. He also served as president of the England London Mission from 2000 to 2003. He has served as counselor in a stake presidency, high counselor, and bishop. Since leaving Harvard, he and his wife have been service

missionaries at BYU–Idaho.

President Wheelwright grew up in Salt Lake City and owned a cattle ranch in Star Valley, Wyoming. He and his wife are the parents of 5 children and have 15 grandchildren.

President Wheelwright succeeds Eric B. Shumway, who is retiring from BYU–Hawaii after having served in several capacities since 1966 and as president since 1994. ■

## First Ladies See Humanitarian Efforts

During a visit to Salt Lake City, the first ladies of Peru and Paraguay saw firsthand how the Church's humanitarian and welfare programs work.

Pilar Nores de García, first lady of Peru, and Maria Gloria Penayo de Duarte, first lady of Paraguay, visited Welfare Square and the Humanitarian Center in April to observe and to explain to Church

officials their own efforts to help people in their respective countries.

The Peruvian first lady outlined to Church leaders and to faculty and students at Brigham Young University her humanitarian program, Sembrando, which assists the poor in Peru's higher-elevation areas. While Mrs. García was in Utah, she learned that the Church would



**Maria Gloria Penayo de Duarte, first lady of Paraguay, meets Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.**



**Pilar Nores de García, first lady of Peru (seated at computer) and her daughter, Josefina García Nores (left of first lady), discover information about their ancestors at the Church's Family History Library.**

provide her country with 1,000 wheelchairs and 50 tons (45 tonnes) of Atmit—a food supplement that combats malnutrition and starvation.

Mrs. Duarte and representatives from Paraguay personally assembled 48 cases of hygiene kits. These kits are sent to disaster areas and contain items such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, and a

washcloth. Arrangements were also made for the Church to continue providing assistance and outreach through REPADEH (Paraguayan Network for Human Development), Mrs. Duarte's foundation in Paraguay. Last year, in cooperation with the Church, this foundation distributed approximately 2,000 wheelchairs. ■

## Church Offers Disaster Aid to Victims Worldwide

### Church Responds to Quake, Typhoon in Japan

Japan was reeling after being struck by Typhoon Man-Yi from the south and shaken by a 6.8 earthquake in the north.

At least 9 people were killed and more than 800 were injured on July 16, 2007, when the reported 6.8 magnitude quake struck the west coast of Japan near Kashiwazaki, where 300 of the estimated 800 damaged or destroyed homes were located.

About 9,000 people spent

time at makeshift evacuation centers, and tens of thousands were left without power, gas, or running water for days.

The home of one member family was destroyed by the quake. An elderly member was inside when it collapsed, but was rescued with only minor scratches. All other missionaries and members were reported safe.

The quake could be felt in Tokyo, more than 125 miles to the south of the epicenter.

Man-Yi, a typhoon with

sustained winds of 100 mph, swept the southern islands of Kyushu and Shikoku on July 15, 2007, killing three people and injuring 70 more. About 30,000 people were evacuated from their homes. Reports list 15 homes destroyed and another 1,500 flooded. One member home was damaged earlier as the typhoon passed over Okinawa, but no members or missionaries were reported injured, and no Church property was damaged.

Following both disasters, local priesthood leaders worked with government officials to determine how the Church could be of assistance.

#### **Church Provides Relief to Community Affected by Wildfire**

The Church sent donations from the Humanitarian Aid Fund to the local Red Cross chapter on June 26, 2007, in response to a blaze that forced hundreds of residents from their homes in Meyers, California, near Lake Tahoe.

As part of their emergency response plan, Fallon Nevada Stake leaders made emergency supplies available to evacuees and those in need. Items included hygiene kits and blankets prepared by members. While most evacuees stayed in hotels, the Church offered the local meetinghouse as a shelter if needed.

The fire destroyed 276 buildings and homes, randomly skipping some homes and demolishing others. The neighborhoods affected are made up of cabins, modest

homes, and million-dollar vacation retreats.

More than 1,800 firefighters, aided by seven helicopters, were involved in trying to suppress the fire that threatened another 500 homes.

One member family is among those who lost their homes and most of their possessions. They are currently living with relatives. At least 17 other member homes in the Meyers area were threatened and the families were evacuated.

#### **Church Sends Aid to Flooded Areas of United States**

The Church provided more than 12,000 cleaning kits and 18,000 hygiene kits to those in need in 14 separate locations in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas after storms pounded the area with heavy rain for two weeks.

Hundreds of members in many communities helped affected families clean out flooded homes. The kits provided by the Church included liquid bleach, dish soap, rubber gloves, safety goggles, sponges, dust masks, and

trash bags.

Local Church leaders and members distributed most of the items to the flood victims. Recipients of the kits have expressed great appreciation for the manpower and in-kind assistance provided by the Church.

At least 1,000 people were forced out of their homes in southeastern Kansas. In North Texas heavy rains dumped up to an inch (2.5 cm) of water every 15 minutes at one point, killing 11 people in the resulting floods and sweeping homes from foundations.

In Gainesville, Texas, some 500 homes were flooded. In Sherman, at least 300 people in apartments and nursing homes were evacuated, and waters flooded about 100 mobile homes in Haltom City, a suburb of Fort Worth.

All members and missionaries were safe and accounted for. However, at least three member families are among those whose homes were affected, with one of those families experiencing waist-deep water flooding their home. A Church building in Seminole, Texas, also received

significant wind and rain damage, and a meetinghouse in Gainesville received some minor water damage and is being evaluated.

#### **Earthquake Shakes Guatemala, El Salvador**

A powerful 6.8 earthquake rattled Guatemala and El Salvador, swaying buildings for 30 seconds but causing no deaths, on June 13, 2007.

The quake struck in the Pacific Ocean, 70 miles from Guatemala City at a depth of about 40 miles. There was no threat of a tsunami.

Despite the magnitude of the earthquake, the countries escaped virtually unscathed—unlike when two earthquakes struck El Salvador in 2001 and killed more than 1,150 people, most of them in mudslides near San Salvador, the capital.

Reports from the Central America Area Office indicated there were no deaths or injuries to members or missionaries as a result of this quake. Local priesthood leaders helped assess potential needs.

#### **Church Helps Fund Relief to Colombia Flood Victims**

The Church sent emergency funds to several regions of Colombia where more than 50 people died and thousands were left homeless after severe flooding took place in the early weeks of June.

Heavy rains have affected large parts of the country, with the north particularly badly hit. The rain has triggered mudslides and damaged or destroyed 270,000 homes and



**Firefighters watch over a prescribed burn meant to help fight a wildfire in California that destroyed more than 200 homes.**



businesses since the rainy season began in March 2007.

### Members Pitch In after Australia Flooding

Members and missionaries left church after sacrament meetings on Sunday, June 10, 2007, to join sandbagging and cleanup efforts as flooding in New South Wales, Australia, caused nine deaths and left insurance companies

bracing for a bill that could exceed AUS \$300 million.

The floodwaters forced an estimated 1,700 families from their homes. State Emergency Services logged a total of 13,830 calls for help over the weekend of flooding,

Some businesses in the retail area of Wallsend and industrial precinct of Cardiff might never recover, said Hunter Business Chamber

chief Doug Parish to *The Australian*.

On Tuesday, June 12, 2007, more than 30,000 homes were still without power, down from the 130,000 homes that were without power over the weekend.

Floodwaters at Chittaway Bay, near Tuggerah Lake, eventually receded allowing more than 400 residents to return to their homes. ■

for the first and only time, as she died soon thereafter. One week later, I held my grandson, also to say goodbye. Amid my grief, on both occasions I was keenly aware of the little hand-knitted caps that had been tenderly placed on their heads, as well as the beautiful little items of clothing some strangers had prepared. I thanked God for those strangers, and how He teaches us to help each other. "I was a stranger . . . and ye clothed me." These quiet acts of service and kindness brought a moment of sweetness to my aching heart and provided much needed evidence of God's care, even in the deepest trials.

Jean Strickland, Nevada

### Integrity in Reporting

I just read the article on the Mountain Meadows Massacre in the September *Ensign*. I just wanted to let you know that I was very impressed with your ability to compress an account of the events into such a short space, as well as provide a fair-minded narrative. Kudos. Kudos also to all involved for addressing the issue forthrightly in a Church magazine. Thank you.

Nathan Oman, Virginia

*The "Mountain Meadows Massacre" article printed in this month's Ensign was posted on www.lds.org in June 2007.*

## Comment

### Mormon Battalion Cover—July 2007

Several readers have pointed out discrepancies in the image of the Mormon Battalion on the cover of the July 2007 *Ensign*. Some noted that the weapons appear to be bolt action rifles not in use until about 50 years after the Battalion disbanded. Also, historical accounts indicate that the clothing and hair does not accurately represent what Battalion members would have worn upon reaching San Diego.

Battalion members were issued money to buy uniforms. However, most chose to give this money to the Church to aid the Saints who were crossing the plains. The majority of Battalion members would have worn clothing they already owned at the time they fled Nauvoo. This would have varied from person to person. Most of the

*men would have worn broad-rimmed felt hats, wool shirts, vests, and trousers with either a fall or fly closure. Accounts indicate that for the most part their clothing was in tatters and shoes or boots had been worn to bare feet by the time they arrived in San Diego.*

*The military equipment issued to each Battalion member included a model 1816 musket, a bayonet with sheath and shoulder strap, a cartridge box with ammunition and shoulder strap, a waist belt, a canteen with strap, a haversack for carrying personal effects, a knapsack, and a bedroll. The musket pictured (see accompanying photo) is a model 1816 made at the Harper's Ferry arsenal in 1827 and was carried by Battalion member James T. S. Allred.*

### Friends Helping Friends

The article in the June

issue, "New Religion, New Life," is a great story. I see it as two friends strengthening each other along the way. I have had a similar experience with a friend, whom I have been helping in the Church. She has helped deepen my understanding and happiness through letting me teach her the gospel.

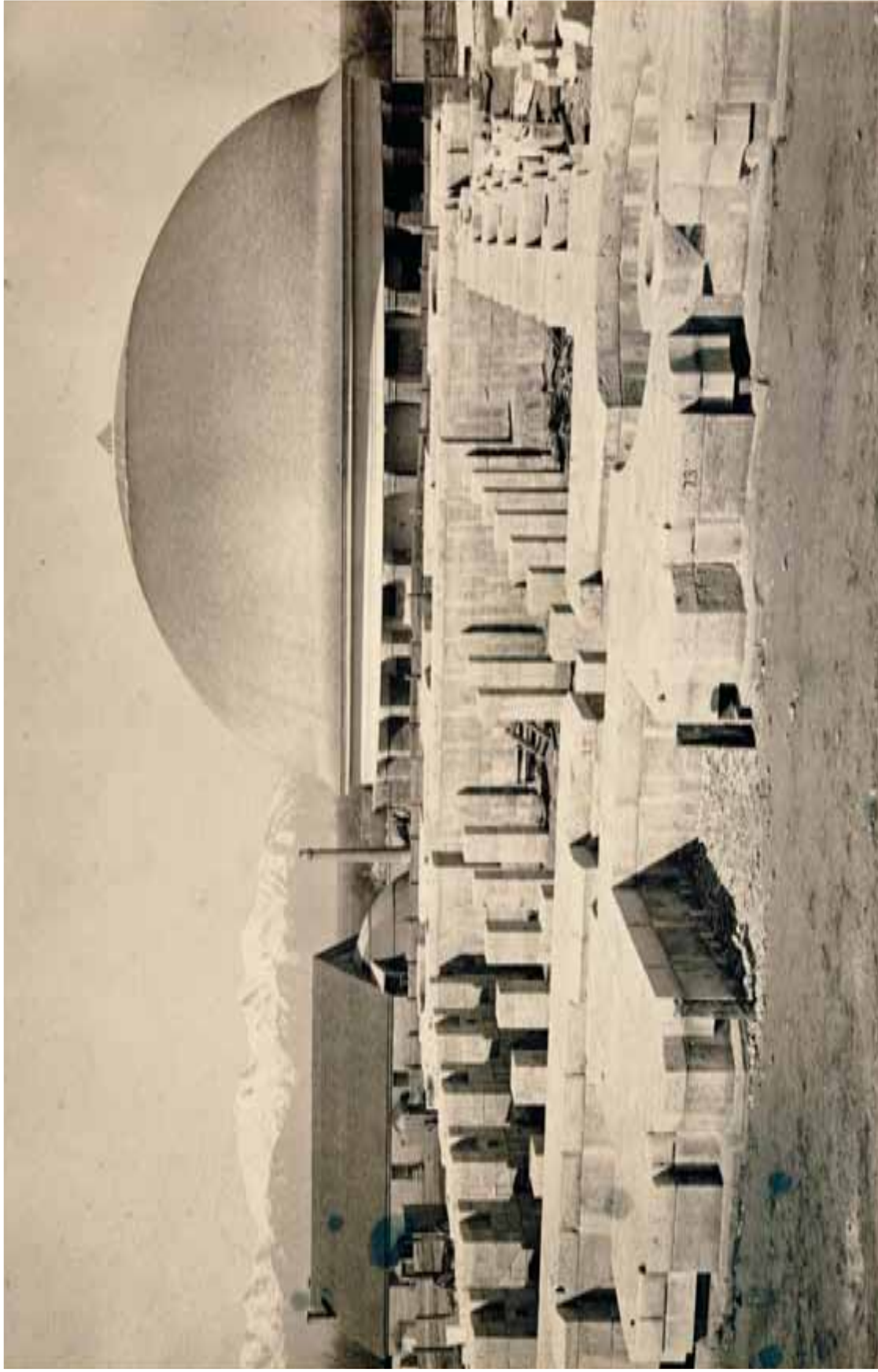
Stephanie Matthews, Utah

### Tender Service

In the June 2007 *Ensign*, page 72, there is a picture of a newborn baby with a suggestion that one way to provide community service for those with limited time might be to knit newborn hats. This sweet baby picture brought a rush of tears to my eyes. Last November my first grandchildren were born, a little girl and boy, twins. Because they were born several months premature they each weighed barely one pound. On the day of her birth, I held my tiny granddaughter's body in my arms



Original Mormon Battalion musket.



**Photograph of Temple Square, about 1870, by C. R. Savage**

*The Tabernacle with its domed roof overlooks the foundation of the Salt Lake Temple. Still under construction in this photograph, the Tabernacle was one of the largest buildings of its kind in the world—150 feet (46 m) wide, 250 feet (76 m) long, and 80 feet (24 m) high. On the left stands the old adobe tabernacle, which had been in use since its dedication on May 21, 1851.*





**T**hese two great buildings here on Temple Square—the temple and the Tabernacle,” said President Gordon B. Hinckley at the press briefing beginning the renovation of the Salt Lake Tabernacle, “remind me of two venerable old parents—the temple, the father; the Tabernacle, the mother—parents of generations that have followed, still standing and shedding light and understanding and knowledge and love.” See “Renovating the Tabernacle,” p. 22.