

LESSONS FROM AN AQUARIUM

By Minerva G. Harkness

A member of our bishopric knew that my nine-year-old daughter kept an aquarium and one day asked if she might want some more fish. His family was going on vacation and needed to empty their aquarium. The offer was immediately accepted, and to my daughter's delight, a pregnant female guppy was among the group.

Upon coming home from church one afternoon, my daughter did her routine check on the aquarium to see if each fish was happy and healthy. To her surprise, she saw four tiny, newborn fish. The mother guppy had begun to deliver. Acting quickly, she moved the babies to the safety box that would protect them from the bigger and more aggressive fish. In all of the excitement, however, one baby guppy was lost. Crying with disappointment, my daughter located it lying among the tiny rocks on the bottom of the aquarium. She tried to scoop it into her net to be placed in the safety box, but she couldn't move the tiny guppy without injuring it.

All the other tiny guppies were caught, and although the safety box teemed with dozens of new babies, my daughter's attention was still intently focused on the one fallen among the stones. She sat ready to help it into the box as soon as it could move. She even refused dinner as she sat attentively by her aquarium for about four hours.



My daughter's concern for one tiny lost fish made me think of someone for whom we are never lost and never insignificant.

Watching her struck some familiar and tender chords. I thought of the Good Shepherd, who leaves His ninety and nine to look for the one who is lost (see Luke 15:3–8; John 10:11–14). All of us know how it feels to be lost or afflicted or spiritually sick. Yet our Savior never gives up on us. He is always there with outstretched arms, ready and willing to rescue us, strengthen us, and bless us.

Though we may not always realize it, our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ, tenderly and closely watch over us night and day, deeply concerned about our well-being and the roads we choose to walk. With love unbounded, They give Their angels charge concerning us, waiting for us to gather enough strength and faith to find safety and peace in Their arms.

Later that day my daughter's concern for that guppy paid off. After her long, tedious hours of waiting and hoping, the tiny fish finally wiggled and then slowly swam out of the rocks. Carefully she placed it in the comfort and security of the safety box. That was witness enough for me of the sustaining power of love. ■