



1910-2008

# President Gordon Bitner



*Gordon B. Hinckley, 15th President of the Church, passed away on January 27, 2008. He was 97 years old, the oldest man ever to serve as President. And yet he never forgot what it was like to be a child.*

**P**resident Hinckley was born on June 23, 1910, in Salt Lake City, Utah. As a boy, he prayed next to his bed each night. He later recalled “jumping into my bed after I had said

amen, pulling the covers up around my neck, and thinking of what I had just done in speaking to my Father in Heaven in the name of His Son. I did not have a great knowledge of the gospel. But there was some kind of lingering peace and security in communing with the heavens in and through the Lord Jesus.”<sup>1</sup>

Young Gordon was a good boy, but he wasn’t perfect. Once his mother washed his mouth with soap for using a bad word—a word he never used again.

Gordon suffered from asthma, so his father bought a small farm in the countryside where he could breathe clean air during summer vacation from school. He and his brother Sherm worked hard weeding the garden, picking fruit, and doing other chores. The future prophet learned that hard work must come before the harvest.

# Hinckley

Each afternoon the boys played, jumping off haystacks and playing hide-and-seek. Each night they slept in a wagon box under the stars. Gordon noted that while the other stars appeared to move, the North Star held its position. “The polar star came to mean something to me,” he later reported. “I recognized it as a constant in the midst of change. It was something that could always be counted on.”<sup>2</sup> He determined that he, too, would be trustworthy.

President Hinckley served as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, and a counselor in the First Presidency. He was ordained and set apart as President of the Church on March 12, 1995.

President Hinckley was a happy, optimistic man who believed there was a spark of divinity within all of us. He called on us to be grateful, smart, clean, true, humble, and prayerful. He counseled us to stand a little taller, to be strong, decent, courteous, and above all, more Christlike.

In the midst of his many duties, President Hinckley never forgot the children. He proved that he cared about you through his actions. He traveled almost a million miles to visit your countries. He spoke to you and shook your hands. He invited you to join him as honored guests to help lay temple cornerstones.

We know that you loved President Hinckley, and this good, kind man loved you. His life will always be a shining example for you to follow. ●

1. “My Testimony,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 70.
2. Quoted in Jeffrey R. Holland, “President Gordon B. Hinckley: Stalwart and Brave He Stands,” *Ensign*, June 1995, 5.



Julia L.

## Children’s Thoughts about President Hinckley

I love President Hinckley. My favorite Primary song is “Follow the Prophet.” I know the prophet shows the way. If I follow the prophet, I will be able to choose the right.

Elizabeth J.



Carson P.



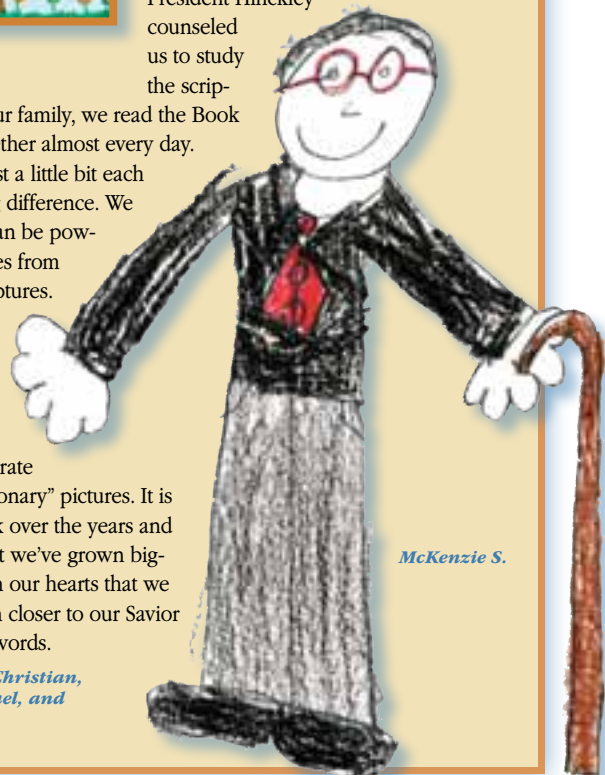
Alyssa D.

Gordon B. Hinckley is our prophet now. He taught us the six “B’s”; now we know how  
To be clean, smart and grateful, humble, prayerful, true.  
We should try to live just like he tells us to.

Mikayla B.

President Hinckley counseled us to study the scriptures daily. In our family, we read the Book of Mormon together almost every day. Even reading just a little bit each day makes a big difference. We know that we can be powerful missionaries from reading the scriptures. Every time we finish reading the Book of Mormon together as a family, we celebrate by taking “missionary” pictures. It is fun to look back over the years and not only see that we’ve grown bigger, but know in our hearts that we have also grown closer to our Savior by reading His words.

Kamberlynn, Christian, Jonah, Nathanael, and Rebekah W.



McKenzie S.