



By Hilary Watkins Lemon

(Based on a true story)

They were desirous to be baptized as a witness and a testimony (Mosiah 21:35).

Mom?" I stood in the doorway of Mom's room. She sat at her desk, typing on her laptop. She ran the dance studio where my best friend, Jessica, and I took lessons.

"Hi, Hailey. What's up?" she asked.

"It's still OK if I go to church tomorrow, right?"

"Of course, Hailey. You know it is." She was right; I knew she didn't mind. I'd been going for three months, ever since Jessica invited me to a Primary activity. Then she invited me to church one Sunday. I'd never missed since.

More than anything I wanted to be baptized. I loved going to church. I'd learned how to pray. When I read my scriptures, my heart felt warm and calm. When I had asked Jessica's mom about getting baptized, she told me to talk to my mom first.

"One more thing," I said.

Mom turned. "Yes?"

"I just want . . . Mom, I want to be baptized."

"Baptized? I'm sure you could get baptized at your dad's church."

I just looked at the scuffed toes of my jazz shoes.

"But that's not the same as getting baptized in the

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church Jessica attends, is it?" Mom said.

"No, Mom. Did you know that men who hold the priesthood can baptize with the same authority as John the Baptist?" I told her everything I'd learned about why it was important to be baptized by the right person.

"I'm impressed, Hailey," Mom said. "It sounds like you've done your research. But are you ready to make such a commitment? If you're baptized into this church, I'll expect you to be faithful to it. Do you even know all the things they believe?"

My mouth went dry. I hadn't gone to church very long, and I definitely didn't know everything yet. But I



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Then I got an idea.

"The Articles of Faith!" I said.

Mom looked confused.

"They're thirteen statements that tell the beliefs of the Church. I could learn those."

Practice, Practice

"Tell you what," Mom said. "When you've memorized all thirteen and can tell me what they mean, I'll give you permission to be baptized."

After dance class the next day I told Jessica the news.

"That's great!" she said. "I learned the Articles of Faith for the Faith in God Award. It'll be easy." But I could tell something was bothering her.

"Are you OK?" I asked.

"I'm just nervous for our dance recital," she said. "I can't get all the steps right."

"Here's an idea," I said. "If you'll help me memorize and understand the Articles of Faith, I'll help you with

those tricky steps."

"Deal!" Jessica said.

We practiced at Jessica's house almost every day for weeks. Soon I was able to recite and explain all the Articles of Faith, and Jessica could dance all the steps with her eyes closed.

Mom noticed Jessica's improvements during class. "All the time you two spend together is really paying off."

"If only she knew what *you've* been practicing!" Jessica whispered.

The night of our performance, Mom gave me two thumbs up from backstage. I grinned back. She was excited for the dance recital, but I was more excited for the curtains to close so we could go home. I couldn't wait to show her what I'd been working on: my memory *and* my testimony. ♦



"What a great blessing it would be if every member of the Church memorized the Articles of Faith and became knowledgeable about the principles contained in each."⁴

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles