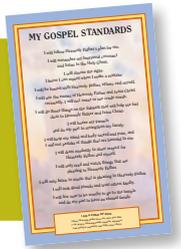




what my
FATHER
gave me

It all started with a question in a room full of people.



"I will honor my parents and do my part to strengthen my family."

My Gospel Standards

By Marissa Widdison

(Based on a true story)

To be baptized . . . by one who holds the priesthood true . . . is just the thing I want to do (Children's Songbook, 104).

I've gotten lots of great birthday presents in my life, but what I got from my dad on my eighth birthday takes the cake. And it all started when he asked me a single question in a room full of people.

That room was in our church building, and the people filling it were my family members. I had never seen so many of them in church at one time! We were all there to see my cousin Bre get baptized.

As I watched Bre's parents take pictures of her in her white dress, I started feeling really excited about my own baptism.

I went over to look at the font, thinking about what my special day would be like. Would the water be warm? Would all my family be there? I hoped I would feel the peaceful, clean feeling that I had heard other people tell about. All of these thoughts were tumbling around in my mind when Dad walked over and asked the question that changed everything.

"Chris, who do you want to baptize you?"

Here's the thing: my dad couldn't baptize me because he wasn't a member of the Church.

My mom is a convert, which means she got baptized later in life. But my dad never seemed to want to be baptized, and that made me sad sometimes. I didn't talk about it very much because I didn't want to make him feel bad. But this time, I decided to tell him.

"I want you to baptize me. You're my dad!"

I still remember the look on his face. First

he was surprised. Then he looked kind of sad. Then his expression turned thoughtful, as if he were thinking about something important.

"C'mon, buddy. We'll talk about it later," he said, wrapping his arm around me as we headed to our seats.

The next day, I stood with my dad again—this time in front of the bishop's office. It was time for me to meet with the bishop for my baptismal interview. I was pretty nervous, and it seemed like Dad was too. He kept pacing back and forth in front of the office door. After I had my interview, Dad walked right up to the bishop.

"What do I have to do to be able to baptize my son?" he asked.

The bishop froze, right in the middle of his handshake. You should've seen the smile that came across his face! He told my dad that he needed to be baptized and receive the Aaronic Priesthood. My dad said that he was finally ready to make these special promises with Heavenly Father.

You can probably guess how this story ends. A month later, I stood in the baptismal font dressed in white. The water was warm. My family was there. Best of all, my dad was standing next to me, ready to baptize me.

I know that lots of kids are still waiting and praying for a family member to get baptized. It's hard to wait, but we can keep being good examples and never give up hope. Knowing this makes me feel even more grateful for the decision my dad finally made—the decision that gave me the best birthday of my life. ♦

