

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • AUGUST 2002

LIAHONA



LIAHONA



ON THE COVER

Photograph of the baptismal font in the Vernal Utah Temple by Tamra H. Ratieta. Insets: Photograph of President Hinckley by Jed A. Clark; photograph of the Apia Samoa Temple by William Holdman.



THE FRIEND COVER

Photo illustration by Craig Dimond.

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PRESSING ON WITHOUT GIVING UP

The June 2000 *Liahona* (English) con-
 tinues to be a very important issue for
 me, particularly the powerful article “‘Cast
 Not Away Therefore Your Confidence’ ”
 by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland. I continue
 studying this issue of the magazine when I
 especially need the gospel’s strength and
 comfort. When I meditate on Elder
 Holland’s message, I realize that we can
 press on in our struggles without giving up.

*Ekpo Akiba,
 Okokomaiko Branch,
 Lagos Nigeria Stake*

PREPARING FOR TEMPLE BLESSINGS

I live in the Philippines, and general
 conference takes place very far from my
 home. But with the help of the *Liahona*
 (English), I can read all the messages given
 by our General Authorities. I love all the
 conference messages.

Elder Russell M. Nelson’s talk, “Personal
 Preparation for Temple Blessings,” in the
 July 2001 issue was especially helpful to
 me. I love to go to the Manila Philippines
 Temple, and I am preparing to receive my
 endowment. I know that if we receive all
 the temple ordinances and keep our
 covenants, we can live with Heavenly
 Father and Jesus Christ.

*John Mark A. Cabrera,
 Liozon Branch,
 Iba Philippines District*



STRIVING TO DO GOOD CONTINUALLY

I am truly grateful to have the *Liahona*
 (Spanish). It is a source of inspiration and
 strength. I am grateful to all our leaders
 who have made it possible for us to have
 this compass in our own language. The
 article “A Disposición to Do Good Con-
 tinually” by Elder Spencer J. Condie in the
 June 2001 issue has inspired me to keep
 pressing forward.

*José Luis Gullo Prieto,
 Upata Branch,
 Guayana Venezuela Stake*

**GRATEFUL FOR PRESIDENT HINCKLEY’S
 MESSAGES**

I would like to thank you for the beau-
 tiful conference talks in the July 2001 issue
 of the *Liahona* (Spanish). They really help
 me feel the Spirit, and the Spirit testifies
 to me of the truthfulness of the Church. I
 am very grateful for President Gordon B.
 Hinckley’s messages in which he asks us to
 be better members.

*Martín Valiente Nieves,
 Talara Branch,
 Talara Perú District*



WHAT THIS WORK IS ALL ABOUT



By President Gordon B. Hinckley



I should like to share portions of a letter that came to my desk several years ago. I have changed the names to preserve anonymity and have somewhat abbreviated it, paraphrasing a few words in the process. The letter reads:

“Dear President Hinckley,

“When I met you in the elevator at the hospital I had the urge to write you and tell you of some of the things that have happened to me.

“When I was 16 or 17 I cared nothing for the Church and would not have anything to do with it. But a bishop who was concerned about me came over to see me and asked me to help build some scenery for a road show production, and of course I told him no.

“Well, about 10 days went by, and the bishop came back to ask me to build the scenery, and again I told him no. But then he went on to explain that he had asked others, and they had told him that they didn’t know how. He indicated that I was needed. I finally gave in and proceeded to build the scenery.

“When I got it done, I said, ‘There is your scenery,’ and decided I had done my part. But the bishop insisted that they needed me on the stage to move the scenery and make sure it got put up right and that it got moved

carefully as the road show moved from ward to ward. So I finally gave in again.

“That bishop kept me busy for quite a while, and pretty soon I was involved and enjoying it. He then moved from our area, and we got a new bishop, and he picked up the challenge and kept after me.

“Bishop Smith had asked me to go on a mission, but I was undecided on that, and when Bishop Sorensen was put in, he asked me also, and I finally decided that I would go.

“Well, the bishop and I went to tell Mom and Dad about my decision. They told the bishop they couldn’t pay for it. Dad told the bishop that if I was really sincere about going that I should work and save and pay for the mission myself.

“My eyesight was not the greatest, as you know, and when I went places I had to be taken. When I became 16, I wanted to drive a car more than anything, and Dad took me to several eye doctors, all with the same result. The vision in my right eye was 20/800, and the vision in my left eye was 20/50, and I had astigmatism. So earning enough money to go on a mission was not an easy task. I worked in the sign shop at a department store for six to eight months to save some money. The bishop finally felt it was time for me to go, and we went to talk to my parents again. I had a

thousand dollars saved, and the bishop told my dad that the elders quorum would support me for the rest. Dad sat there for a while and said if anybody was going to support his son, he would. I filled out my papers and got my call.

“I went to Japan, where I loved the people and the missionary experiences that I had there. My companions and I baptized several people into the Church. After I came home, I went to work again in the sign shop. During the time I worked there, whenever I went to lunch, I would see a young lady walking up the street, who evidently worked in the same general area. I knew I had met her somewhere before but could not place her.

“Well, one of my missionary companions came home, and after some time we ran around together. Of course, he did all the chauffeuring because of my eyesight. One night he called and wanted to go out on a double date, and so I frantically called around to find a date. Well, we went to a party, and guess who he took out. Right, he took out Sister Marilyn Jones, who also had been in Japan and whom I now remembered meeting briefly there on one occasion. She was the girl I had been passing on the street for several months and had not recognized.

“After this party, I went to California with my family for two weeks, and when I got home I found that my missionary friend had been dating the girl I had taken to the party. I thought I’d fix him, so I called Marilyn to go out on a date. You have to realize that it’s not easy to do that when you don’t drive, so my younger sister drove, and we had eight other youngsters accompany us to a ball game. That should have been enough to discourage any young lady from ever dating me again, but I tried again when my family went to the canyon to pick chokecherries.

“Finally came our date alone, and Dad had to drive me to pick up Marilyn, and then we drove him home and went out on our date and then back to our house to pick up Dad, who drove us back to her house, and then we went home. On the next date I asked her to marry me, and she told me no. Well, I went out with her some more and asked her to

marry me a couple more times, and I finally got a maybe. I thought that was a step in the right direction and persisted. Six months after we started going together, we were married in the Salt Lake Temple.

“President Hinckley, I thought that I loved this young lady at that time, but 17 years later I find that I love her more than I could ever imagine. We now have five wonderful children.

“I have held many positions in the Church: music leader, everything in the elders quorum, assistant ward clerk, ward mission leader, executive secretary, and now I am a counselor in the bishopric.

“I am still working in the sign shop at the department store. I bought a small house about 13 years ago, and as my family got larger my house got smaller. I had to do something, so I added on to my house and made it twice the size. I started this a little over three years ago and have been working on it ever since. It is coming along really well.

“Now for the most amazing piece of news ever. Two years ago in June, I went to a new eye doctor who examined my eyes and asked me what restrictions I had on my driver’s license. I told him that I didn’t have a license. He said that my eyesight was probably acceptable.

“I sat there in shock, and my wife said, ‘Does this mean he could get a driver’s license?’ The doctor said, ‘I don’t see why not.’ The next day my wife had me signed up for a driver education course, and after I finished it I went to get my license and they checked my eyes. The doctor had written a note explaining my eye problem and that maybe I should not drive at night. The examiner put the letters up, and I read them right off. He went to talk to his supervisor and came back and approved my license with only a minor restriction.

“President Hinckley, the Lord has blessed me more than I can ever deserve. People say how lucky I am that my eyes have improved so much, but I know that it is the Lord’s doing. I feel it is because I have tried to serve the Lord and

do what I can to build up His kingdom here on the earth. I am sure there are times He is disappointed in me, and I'm sure He should be. But I will try to do my best and be worthy of His blessings upon me and my family.”

He concludes with appreciation and testimony and signs his name. I have shared this somewhat lengthy letter because I feel it tells so simply and yet so eloquently what this work is all about.

Ours is the responsibility of building self-reliance, of encouraging and cultivating happy homes where fathers and mothers love and respect one another and children grow in an atmosphere of peace and affection and appreciation.



OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Under the sacred and compelling trust we have as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, ours is a work of redemption, of lifting and saving those who need help. Ours is a task of raising the sights of those of our people who fail to realize the great potential that lies within them. Ours is the responsibility of building self-reliance, of encouraging and cultivating happy homes where fathers and mothers love and respect one another and children grow in an atmosphere of peace and affection and appreciation.

If you will recall what I have just shared, this man, when he was a boy of 16 or 17, was drifting aimlessly and dangerously as so many young men do at that age. He was walking the broad way which leads to destruction. Noting the course he was taking, his bishop, a prayerful and dedicated man, recognized his creative talent as an artist and found a way to challenge him to use that talent in the service of the Church. That bishop was wise enough to know that most young men will respond to a challenge when they know they are needed. No one else in the ward was quite capable of building the kind of scenery the bishop wanted. This less-active boy was capable of this, and the bishop complimented and challenged him with a request that his service was needed.

Here is a great key to activation of many of those who have fallen by the wayside. Each has a talent that can be employed. It is the task of leaders to match those talents with needs and then to offer a challenge. The boy of this letter, whom I shall call Jack, responded, and he soon found himself moving in the direction of the Church rather than away from it.

Then came the challenge to go on a mission. Jack, who was now accustomed to saying yes rather than no, responded affirmatively. The father was not fully converted and responded that his son would have to earn his own funds. That was not all bad. There was something of good in the requirement that he develop self-reliance.

He went to work, he provided much of what he needed, he saved his money, and when he had a thousand dollars, the bishop, again under inspiration, felt the time had come when he should go. Jack's brethren in the elders quorum would assist, and that is proper. But the father, with an awakened sense of pride and of responsibility toward his own son, rose to the occasion, as men usually do when properly confronted.

THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL

I first met Jack in Japan when he was serving as a missionary there. I interviewed him on two or three occasions. That was before we had the Missionary Training Centers. Young men and women were then sent with no language training and simply plunged in to work at the task when they arrived there. I marveled that this young man, with serious eyesight deficiencies, was able to grasp that difficult language and speak it with power. Behind that was a great effort and a great sense of devotion, and above all, a certain humility and reliance on the Lord with anxious, prayerful pleadings for help.

I can tell you, for I witnessed it, that it was a miracle in his case as it was in the case of many others.

I also first met in Japan and interviewed on a number of occasions the young lady he was later to marry. She had a wonderful spirit, a deep faith, and a moving sense of duty. Their acquaintance in the field was nothing more than having seen one another on one occasion. They worked in widely separated areas. But out of their experiences had come a common touchstone—a new language in which each had learned to share testimony with others while laboring in the great and selfless cause of service to our Father's children.

As he indicated in his letter, their marriage was performed in the Salt Lake Temple. Each knew that only in the Lord's house under the authority of the holy priesthood could they be joined in marriage for time and for all eternity under a covenant which death could not

break and time could not destroy. They wanted the very best for themselves; they would not be satisfied with anything else. Be it said to their credit that each has remained true to the sacred covenants they made in the house of the Lord.

Five beautiful and handsome children have graced that marriage. They are a family with love and appreciation and respect one for another. They have lived in a spirit of self-reliance. A small home which has been enlarged is a home in which father and mother and children gather together and counsel and learn one from another. It is a home in which there is a reading of the scriptures. It is a home in which there is prayer: family prayer and individual prayer. It is a home in which service is taught and exemplified. It is a simple home; it is an unostentatious family. There is not much of wealth, but there is much of peace and goodness and love. The children who grew up there grew "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). The father is faithful in his service to the Church. For these many years he has responded to every call made upon him; the mother, likewise. They are good citizens of the community and the nation. They are at peace with their neighbors. They love the Lord. They love life. They love one another.

They have witnessed a miracle in the improvement of his eyesight. To a kind and gracious God goes the credit. This too is of the essence of the gospel, the power of healing and restoration, followed by acknowledgment and thanksgiving.

INCREASED RETENTION NEEDED

Is not this what the work is all about? Said the Savior, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Without great abundance of the things of the world, these, my friends, live abundantly. People such as they are the strength of the Church. In their hearts is a quiet and solid conviction that God lives and that we are accountable to Him; that Jesus



This work of ours is a great work of redemption. All of us must do more because the consequences can be so remarkable and everlasting.

is the Christ, the Way, the Truth, the Life (see John 14:6); that this work is Their work; that it is true; and that gladness and peace and healing come in walking in obedience to the commandments of God (see D&C 89:18), as set forth in the teachings of the Church.

I do not know whether the two men who served as Jack's bishops know what has become of him. If they know where he is, there must be sweet satisfaction in their hearts. There are thousands of bishops like them, who serve night and day in this great work of activation. And there are tens of thousands of Jacks in this Church whose hearts are touched and who are brought back into activity by a great sense of concern, a quiet expression of love, and a challenge to serve from bishops and others. But there are many, many more who need similar attention.

This work of ours is a great work of redemption. All of us must do more because the consequences can be so

remarkable and everlasting. This is our Father's work, and He has laid upon us a divine injunction to seek out and strengthen those in need and those who are weak. As we do so, the homes of our people will be filled with an increased measure of love; the nation, whatever nation it be, will be strengthened by reason of the virtue of such people; and the Church and kingdom of God will roll forward in majesty and power on its divinely appointed mission. □

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

1. Ours is a work of redemption, of lifting and saving those who need help. Ours is a task of raising the sights of those of our people who fail to realize the great potential that lies within them.

2. There are tens of thousands in this Church whose hearts have been touched and who have been brought back into activity by a great sense of concern, a quiet expression of love, and a challenge to serve.

3. All of us must do more to assist those who need our attention.

FRIEND POWER

in New Zealand

Being a good friend sometimes means being a good missionary.

By Shanna Ghaznavi
PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR

Jaslyn Simpson took a leap of faith in a Beehive class of only two young women. The Beehive adviser in the Crofton Downs Ward, Wellington New Zealand Stake, challenged the Beehives, as part of a lesson on missionary work, to invite a friend to church. And Jaslyn decided she would do it.

“I knew there was something missing in Amy’s life,” Jaslyn says, “so I knew I should introduce her to the gospel.” Jaslyn’s small act of love triggered a major change in the life of her best friend, Amy Valentine. Amy came to church with Jaslyn at the first invitation. She kept coming to Sunday meetings and weeknight activities for the next two months, until Jaslyn and her family moved to Sydney, Australia.

“I had never really had a

Christian background. I had no idea how to pray or anything,” Amy says. “But before Jaslyn and her family moved, I decided I was going to keep going to church without them. By then, I knew some other people at church.”

One of those people was Michelle Broczek, the other Beehive in the Crofton Downs Ward. Michelle invited Amy to take the missionary discussions in her home and, with her parents’ approval, Amy was baptized when she was 13. That was five years ago.

But Amy’s transition into the Church wasn’t easy. “Even when I was leading up to it and for a while after my baptism, it was hard to adjust,” she says. Michelle’s friendship and love helped Amy stay close to the gospel, even though her family and her other friends were not members. “Michelle is an amazing example,” Amy explains. “That was one of the biggest differences for me.”

“I’ve always done those things,” Michelle says. “I didn’t change just because Amy was joining the Church.”

Michelle knows it is important to be an example, especially to strengthen investigators and new members in the Church. “Keep on working on your testimony and yourself, and be aware of the little things you do,” she counsels.

Amy and Michelle gain a lot of strength from each other, and they have strong individual testimonies too. They both frequently give away copies of the Book of Mormon with their testimonies written inside.

LOVE AT HOME

Even with a strong testimony of the gospel, Amy finds that being the only member in the family is not easy. Although she has been able to share the gospel with her friends at school, it is more difficult with her family. “I look to my parents as an example,” she says.



After a friend introduced Amy Valentine (right) to the Church, Michelle Broczek (left) helped provide support and friendship.

“So it is kind of a switch when I try to teach them more about the gospel.”

Not having other members of the Church in her family makes the goal of a temple marriage very important to Amy. She wants to have a family that is strong in the gospel and to do all the things she doesn't get a chance to do now, like having family scripture study and family home evening.

CHRISTLIKE LOVE

Amy keeps trying to share the gospel with her family, and she hopes her example and activity in the Church will eventually have an effect on them. She stays active by praying a lot and drawing strength from the Young Women program.

Now that she is a Laurel, Amy has also chosen a value project that is helping her come closer to Christ. “This year I'm really concentrating on

getting to know Jesus Christ better,” she says. Realizing that the way to know Him better is to be more like Him, Amy made a list of all the attributes of Christ she could think of, with help from the scriptures. She came up with attributes like faith, charity, and generosity, and she tries to develop each of the qualities on her list one at a time.

To others in her situation, Amy has some words of advice. “Really, really



study,” she emphasizes. “Gain a testimony and an understanding of the gospel for yourself. Don’t rely on others, because it is up to *you*. Always rely on Heavenly Father. He will give you the understanding and the blessings you need.”

LABOR OF LOVE

The young women in her ward all agree: Amy’s life is a labor of love.

Now Amy (second from left), Michelle (center), and other young women in the stake share the gospel and their testimonies.

“Everyone should want to have a friend who is as dedicated to the gospel as Amy is. She loves the gospel,” says Kelly Butters, who just moved from the Young Women program into Relief Society.

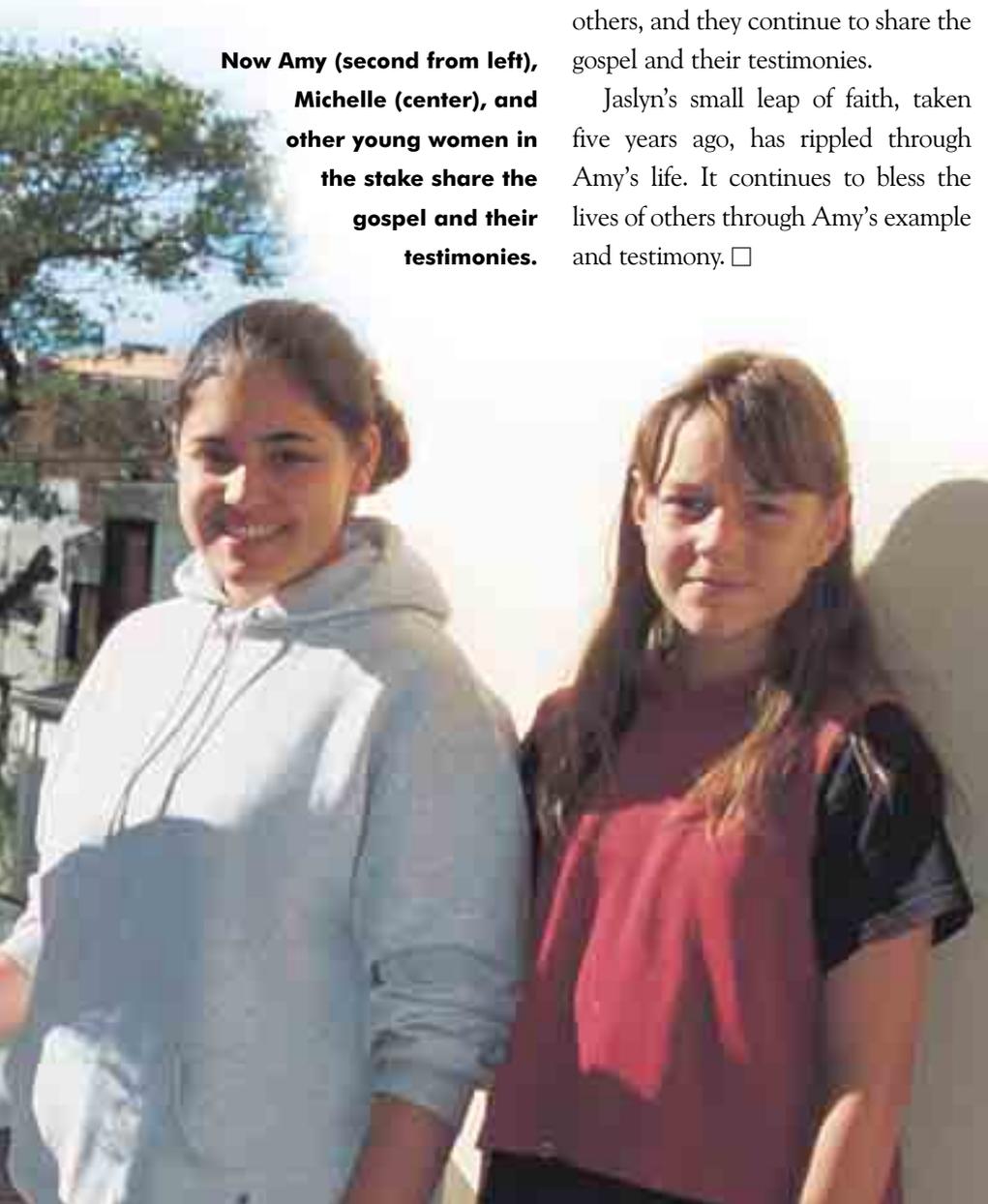
Since the gift of the gospel was shared with her, Amy feels she needs to share it with others too. She and Michelle and the other young women in their stake have fellowshipped others, and they continue to share the gospel and their testimonies.

Jaslyn’s small leap of faith, taken five years ago, has rippled through Amy’s life. It continues to bless the lives of others through Amy’s example and testimony. □



You’re INVITED!

Will you reach out and bring one other young woman into full activity in the Church this coming year? Surely each one of you knows of a girl who is less active or a recent convert or who is not a member. We are asking you to reach out and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with one other young woman, so that she can also enjoy the sweet blessings of heaven. . . . Just think, if each one of you will accept this invitation to reach out and bring in just one, next year there will be twice as many active young women! Let the Holy Spirit guide you in your effort. Your parents and your leaders will also help you know what to do and how to do it.”
—Margaret D. Nadauld, Young Women general president (“A Comforter, a Guide, a Testifier,” *Liahona*, July 2001, 111) □



TO ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE AND THE STRENGTH TO USE IT WISELY



We can learn vitally important things by what we *hear* and see and especially by what we *feel*, as prompted by the Holy Ghost.

By Elder Richard G. Scott

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



My intent is to help you, while your life unfolds in productive ways, to obtain profound joy and happiness. If such joy is the nature of your life, my message will be a confirmation of what you already have been privileged to learn and apply. If that is not the pattern of your life, I will suggest truths that can help you find consistent, enduring happiness.

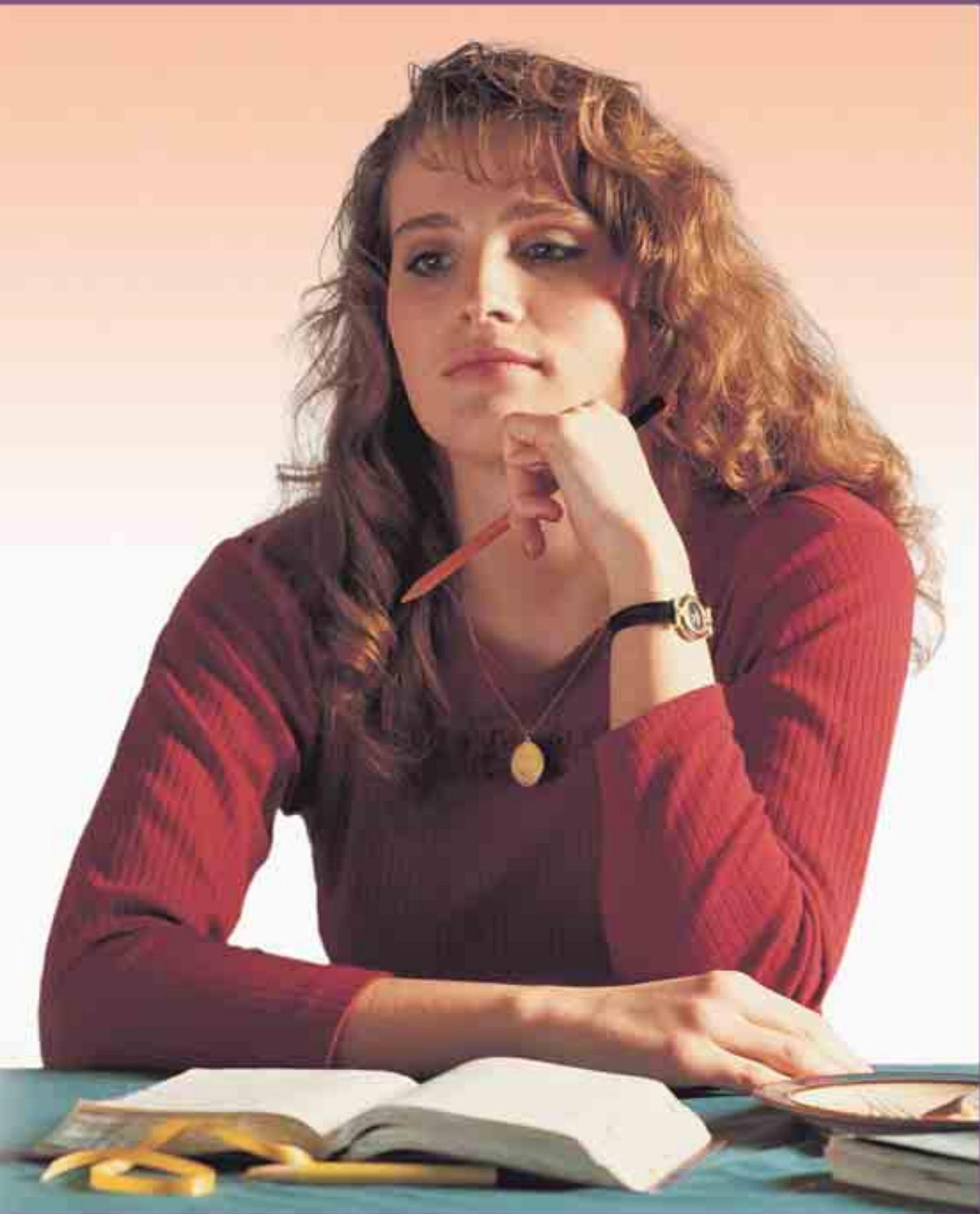
First, I will share a principle that, if understood and consistently applied, will bring enormous blessings throughout your life. It is not difficult for me to explain, nor for you to understand. However, it will require of you significant, determined effort to yield its full potential.

With it, you can learn vital truths that will bring you greater, enduring happiness and make your life more productive and meaningful:

I will consistently strive to learn by what I hear, see, and feel.

I will write down the important things I learn, and I will do them.

You can learn vitally important things by what you *hear* and *see* and especially by what you *feel*, as prompted by the Holy Ghost. Most individuals limit their learning primarily to what they hear or what they read. Be wise. Develop the skill of learning by what you see and particularly by what the Holy Ghost prompts you to feel. Consciously seek to learn by what you see and feel, and your capacity to do so will expand through consistent practice. Ask in faith for such help. Live to be worthy of it. Seek to recognize it. Write down in a secure place the important things you learn from the Spirit. You will find that as you write down precious impressions, often more will come. Also,





the knowledge you gain will be available throughout your life. Always, day or night, wherever you are, whatever you are doing, seek to recognize and respond to the direction of the Spirit. Express gratitude for the help received and obey it. This practice will reinforce your capacity to learn by the Spirit. It will permit the Lord to guide your life and to enrich the use of every other capacity latent in your being.

If I had the power to communicate the importance of the principle just shared, I could end this message now, and you would have received the major benefit from these words. It requires effort and practice to consistently learn by what you see and feel. I suggest that you practice this principle now. As I ask a few basic questions that only you can answer for yourself, will you think of your responses? Perhaps you can jot them down. Then consciously ask the Lord to help you recognize any

Write down in a secure place the important things you learn from the Spirit. You will find that as you write down precious impressions, often more will come.

guidance He wants to give you. Since the Lord will not force you to learn, you must exercise your agency to authorize the Spirit to teach you. Continue to seek this guidance while I suggest some ways to realize your aspirations. I will also suggest what can motivate you powerfully to higher achievement. What you write down from the impressions you feel will be the most valuable help you can receive.

Let us begin. Here are the questions:

What are some of the most fundamental priorities of your life?

What challenges do you face in realizing your dreams and aspirations?

What are some of the obstacles that impede your progress?

What motivates you to overcome temptation and live righteously so that the Lord can guide and strengthen you?

As you consider the remainder of my counsel, try to recognize any spiritual promptings that will communicate a personalized message from the Lord. I will now speak to each of you as though we were in a private conversation where we share our purest feelings—as two can do where there is mutual trust and common beliefs.

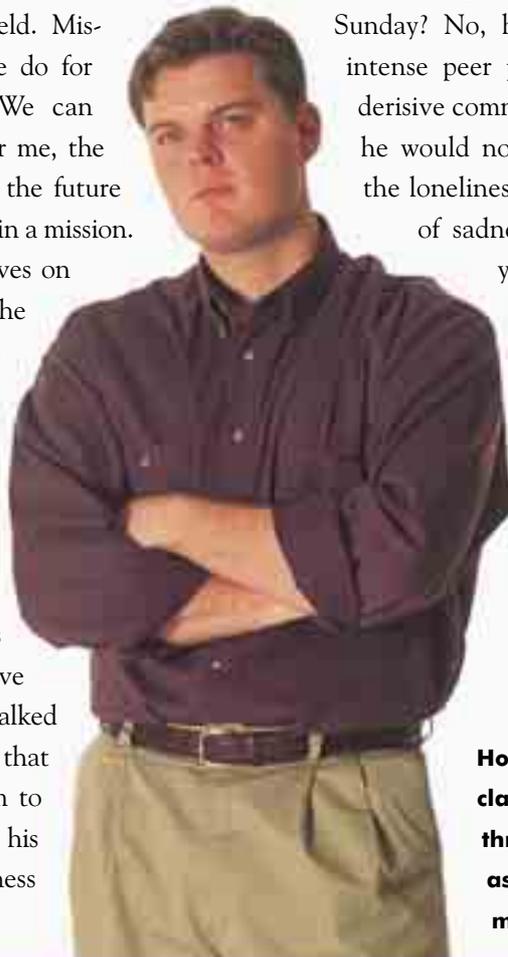
The fundamental motivation in some lives is to be popular by doing what is popular. Others, more wise, are motivated by love of the Savior and His truth. They are willing to stand for correct principles despite peer pressure. I will illustrate the consequences of each of these patterns.

Recently I met an intelligent young man with outstanding parents. There are exceptional material and spiritual resources available to him. He is undecided about a mission. He attends a community college because it is easier than going to a university. In his free time he does only those things that he likes to do. He doesn't work because he doesn't need to, and it would take time away from his pleasures. He took seminary classes to pass them, without much thought of how he should

personally apply the knowledge gained. Finally I asked:

“Can I speak to you from my heart? I don’t want to offend but rather to point out something. You are making choices today that seem very reasonable to you. They seem to give you what you want: an easy life with abundant enjoyment and not much sacrifice on your part. You can do that for a while, but what you don’t realize is that every decision you make is narrowing your future. You are eliminating possibilities and options. There will come a time, and it won’t be too distant, where you are going to spend the rest of your life doing things you don’t want to do, in places you don’t want to be, because you have not prepared yourself. You are not taking advantage of your opportunities.”

I mentioned how everything I treasure today began to mature in the mission field. Missionary service is not something we do for ourselves. We have our agency. We can choose what we want to do. Yet, for me, the greatest growth and preparation for the future that most youth have today is gained in a mission. There they focus outside of themselves on other people. They draw close to the Lord and really learn His teachings. They find individuals interested in the message but not sure of its worth. They try with every capacity—prayer, fasting, and testifying—to help that person change his life. That’s what a mission does when it is done selflessly, as many can testify. I felt impressed to give this young man a blessing. As he walked out of the room, I prayed earnestly that somehow the Lord would touch him to choose the right priorities. Otherwise his progress will be limited and his happiness short-circuited.



In stark contrast, I share the example of another young man. Through the years I have watched how his parents have taught him from infancy to unwaveringly live the commandments of God. By example and precept, they nurtured him and their other children in truth. They encouraged the development of discipline and sacrifice to obtain worthy goals. This young man chose swimming as an activity that could instill in his character these qualities. The early-morning practice sessions required discipline and sacrifice. Over time he excelled in that sport.

Then came the challenges—for example, a championship swim meet on Sunday. Would he participate? To help his team win the championship, would he rationalize an exception to his rule of not swimming on Sunday? No, he would not yield, even under intense peer pressure. He was peppered with derisive comments, even physically abused. But he would not yield. The rejection of friends, the loneliness, and the pressure brought times of sadness and tears. But he would not yield. He was learning firsthand what each of us must come to know, the reality of Paul’s counsel to Timothy: “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). I have observed how over the years this consistent pattern of righteous living—woven from hundreds of correct decisions, some in the

How can you see with greater clarity and receive more help through the veil to accomplish your aspirations? Here are eight of the many sources of help.

face of great challenge—has developed a character of strength and capacity. Now, as a missionary, he is respected by his peers for his capacity to work, his knowledge of truth, his unwavering devotion, and his determination to share the gospel. One who earlier was rejected by his peers now has become a leader of his peers.

Is there a message for you in these examples? How can you see with greater clarity and receive more help through the veil to accomplish your aspirations? I would remind you of eight of the many sources of help.

FIRST: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

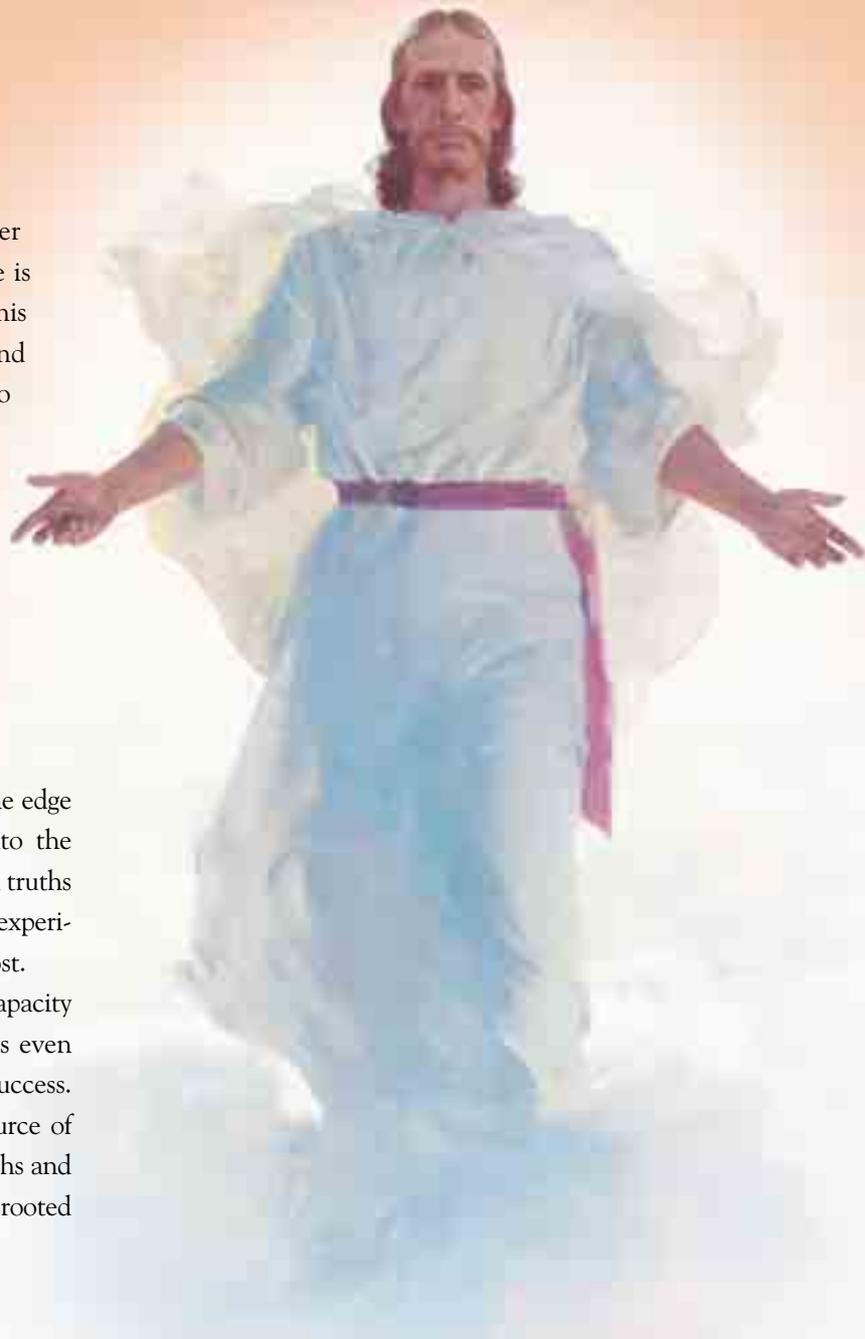
There will always be a need for you to walk to the edge of the light of your knowledge and testimony into the twilight of faith. You will be asked to exercise faith in truths you have not yet come to prove through your own experience or through the sacred witness of the Holy Ghost.

Exercise faith in Jesus Christ and in His infinite capacity to bless. Faith leads one to action, to achieve goals even when there is little visible evidence to give hope of success. Faith is abiding trust in truth. Therefore it is a source of power to know simple yet profoundly important truths and to have the faith to live them. Enduring happiness is rooted in unchangeable truth lived in faith.

SECOND: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

You have likely established a set of guiding principles for your life. If not, do so now. With such standards you will not make the wrong decisions on the basis of the circumstances or the pressures of the day. Principles that you are determined to live by will keep you on track. Base them on the teachings of Jesus Christ. As you use your guiding principles, be honest with yourself. Tragedy, disappointment, and lack of attainment in life come when one is dishonest with self or with the Lord.

Never compromise your principles. Strength and safety



Exercise faith in Jesus Christ and in His infinite capacity to bless. Faith leads one to action, to achieve goals even when there is little visible evidence to give hope of success.

come from making no exceptions to them. No matter how it seems that conditions would justify some departure from them, do not do it. Rationalization leads one to take something that is true and twist it to justify invalid exceptions. Rationalization is Satan's tool to lead one from truth.

Difficulties in life start when small deviations from standards are justified on the basis of circumstance. Individuals who live for the moment make decisions based on circumstance or what someone else tempts them to do. Such are doomed eventually to violate eternal law and to undermine the great opportunities of life. They may seem to gain an advantage, but that is temporary. They lose those things that bring eternal happiness. As you center your life in truth, you are assured success and happiness.

THIRD: PRAYER

You have found that prayer can be a source of great comfort, direction, and sustaining power. Too often in the routine of daily life you may be tempted to offer hurried, mechanical prayers of no value. Prayers that bring comfort, solace, direction, and great inner strength are like those offered by Enos. He taught the importance of praying with “faith in Christ” and being diligent “in keeping [His] commandments” (Enos 1:8, 10). These words of Enos show how to pray for something vital:

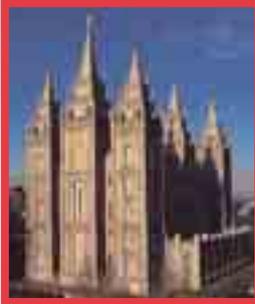
“My *faith* began to be *unshaken in the Lord*; and I *prayed* unto him with *many long strugglings*. . . .

“And it came to pass that after I had *prayed and labored with all diligence*, the Lord said unto me: I will grant unto thee according to thy desires, *because of thy faith*” (Enos 1:11–12; emphasis added).

When you are prompted to ask the Lord for something that way, you will often receive far more understanding and help than expected.

FOURTH: SCRIPTURES

The scriptures are an excellent source of understanding and strength when pondered with faith in the



Savior. They bolster faith in truth. When the truths revealed are applied diligently, they become a vital source of worthy motivation. You will increase your courage to do what is right. Your discipline to adhere to the most important priorities of life will be fortified.

The scriptures give eloquent confirmation of how truth consistently lived opens the door to inspiration to know what to do and, where needed, the divine power to do it. As you reflect upon how others’ capacities to conquer difficulty, doubt, and overwhelming challenges were strengthened by the Lord, the Holy Spirit will confirm that their experiences are true. You will know that

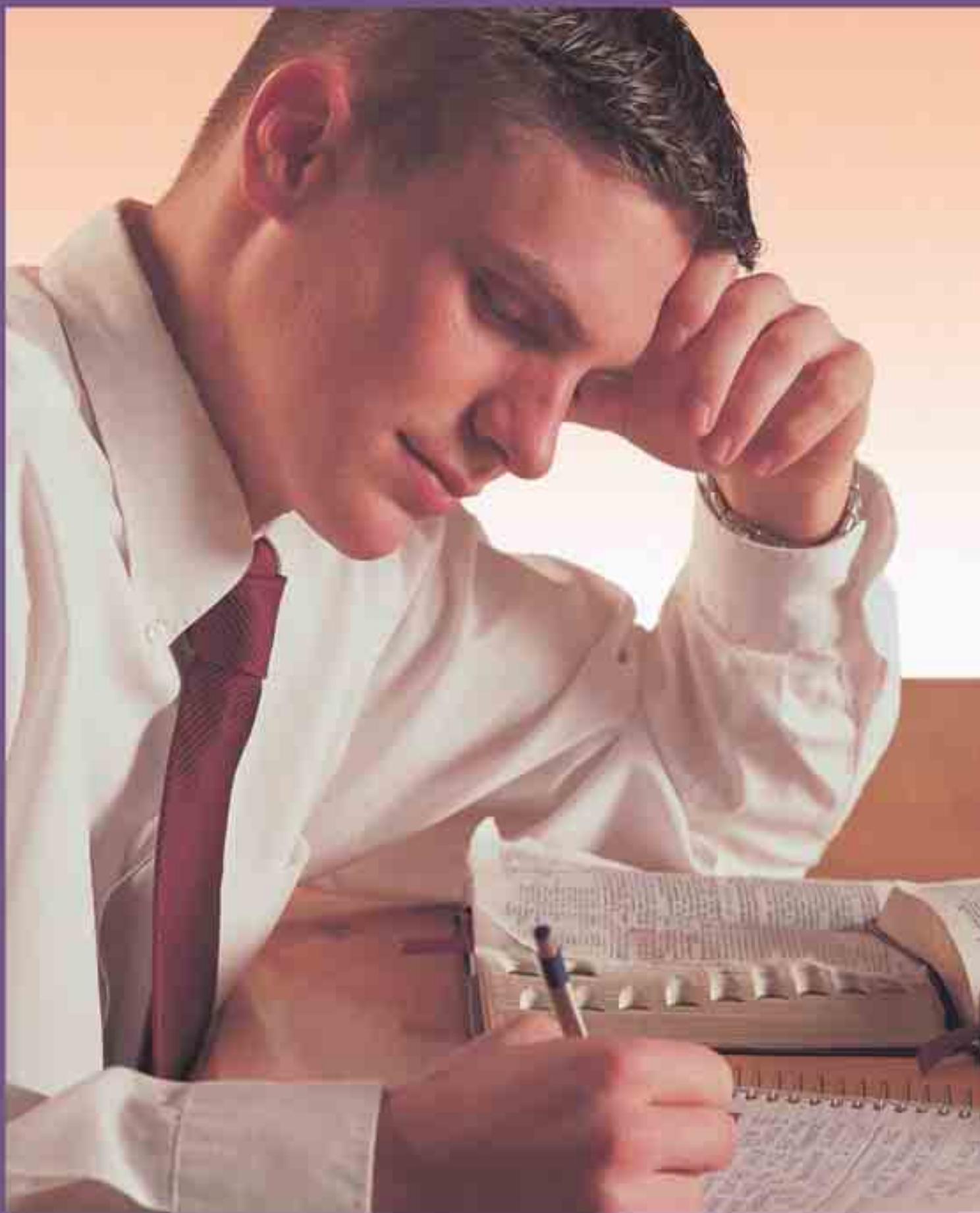
similar help is available to you.

FIFTH: TEMPLE WORSHIP

Another most significant way to enhance your capacity to understand and live eternal truths is through temple worship. Only by receiving the fulness of temple ordinances and living the covenants made there can you enter into the highest degree of glory and receive the greatest measure of eternal happiness. Temple attendance has a calming, settling, consoling influence that distills peace and contentment. It provides an environment for inspiration in answer to prayers. The accompanying family history work yields similar blessings.

SIXTH: MORAL CLEANLINESS

Your goal to be morally clean is central to your enduring happiness. You decide by your daily choices whether it will be realized. Garner strength by remembering that you can do anything the Lord asks you to do. When strength is needed, and asked for, He will help you keep this vital commandment. As you do all you





You need a retreat of peace and quiet where periodically you can ponder and let the Lord establish the direction of your life. Each of us needs to periodically check our bearings and confirm that we are on course.

are capable of doing, your trust in Him will give you capacity to overcome all obstacles.

SEVENTH: CONSISTENT HARD WORK

It is a principle of happiness to work hard and to willingly obey the principles of truth, confident that the Lord will open doors of help when needed. We all need to learn the valuable lesson that significant attainment requires significant effort. Our Father will not violate His plan. He will not give eternal blessings to those who want them but who are not willing to pay the price.

EIGHTH: GOOD MUSIC

Good music, especially sacred music, makes spiritual things more understandable. It is edifying and conducive to willing obedience. It prepares emotions for response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Stay away from the poison of evil music.

I am afraid it may seem like I've been lecturing to you in our private interview. Forgive me. I don't mean to do that. I just want to share what has brought me immeasurable happiness along with a meaningful life.

There is one additional suggestion before I end. Some places are sacred and holy, where it seems easier to discern the direction of the Holy Spirit. The temple is such a place. You can make other places that way by the way you respect them and behave while there. You need a retreat



of peace and quiet where periodically you can ponder and let the Lord establish the direction of your life. It may seem difficult to find time to meditate with the daily pressures of life. Yet a moment of thought will confirm that no matter how fast you move forward, if you are on the wrong path, it will avail you nothing. Each of us needs to periodically check our bearings and confirm that we are on course. Sometime soon you may benefit from taking this personal inventory:

What are my highest priorities for life?

How do I use my discretionary time? Is some of it consistently used for my highest priorities?

Is there anything I know I should not be doing? If so, I will stop it now.

I sincerely thank you for giving thought to this message and for writing the impressions you have felt. Your righteous lives will bless many others wherever you go. I feel that you either have been or will be doing the things we've discussed. I have left the most important thing I can do for you for last.

I solemnly testify that God our Father lives, that His plan is perfect. I bear testimony that as you raise your voice in prayer, those prayers are heard. They are best answered when offered from a broken heart and a contrite spirit. I know that someday I will be judged for how well I testify of my certain knowledge of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I solemnly witness that because of His Atonement, our Father's plan of happiness will succeed. Satan's plan is doomed to failure. I know that Jesus Christ lives. I solemnly witness with every capacity I possess that He lives and that He loves you. Through your obedience He will help you find happiness. □

From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University on 23 January 2001.

Elder, They Will Love You

By Elder LeGrand Richards (1886–1983)

When I was a young man, before I was even ordained a deacon, I went to one of our ward meetings, and two missionaries reported their missions in the Southern States. When I left that meeting, I felt like I could have walked to any mission field in the world, if I just had a call.

And I went home, went into my bedroom, and got down on my knees, and I asked the Lord to help me to live worthy so that when I was old enough I could go on a mission. And when the train finally left the station in Salt Lake and I was headed for the land of Holland, the last thing I said to my loved ones was, “This is the happiest day of my life.”

LOVE FOR MISSIONARIES

Before I left on that mission, President Anthon H. Lund (1844–1921), who was then a counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, talked to us missionaries, and he said, “The people will love you. . . . They will love you because of what you bring to them.” I did not understand that then, but before I left Holland, I went around saying good-bye to the Saints and the converts whom I had brought into the Church, and I shed a thousand tears, as compared to what I shed when I told my loved ones at home good-bye.

For instance, in Amsterdam I went into a home where I had been the first missionary there, and the mother, looking up into my face with tears rolling down her cheeks, said, “Brother Richards, it was hard to see my daughter leave for Zion a few months ago, but it’s much

harder to see *you* go.” Then I thought I could understand what President Lund meant when he said, “They will love you.”

I went to tell a man good-bye. He stood erect in the uniform of his country. He got down on his knees and took my hand in his and hugged it and kissed it and bathed it with his tears. And then I thought I could understand what President Lund meant.



Elder LeGrand Richards served as Presiding Bishop and then as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The author of *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, he was known throughout the Church for his love of missionary work.

JOY OF SERVING A MISSION

Now I have labored much with the missionaries. I have been on four missions and presided over two, and I have toured many missions. I love to hear those young missionaries bear their testimonies. For instance, a young man in Oregon in our testimony meeting said there wasn’t a company in this world that could pay him a large enough salary to get him to leave his missionary work.

I received a letter here from a missionary from Idaho. He wrote this:

“There is no greater work than that of missionary work. . . . My life is dedicated to serving the Lord. My heart is overflowing as are the tears of joy that are now coming from my eyes. There is nothing so wonderful—nothing—as tasting the joy and success of missionary labors.”

After all the missionary service I have had, I wouldn’t want to raise a boy and not have him go on a mission, for *his* good and because I think we owe it to the world to share with them the truths of the gospel. □

From an October 1978 general conference address.



Questions & Answers

How Can I Help My Friends Understand I Am a Christian?

Some of my friends say I don't believe in the real Jesus Christ because I am a member of the Church. Nothing I say makes a difference. What can I do?

Answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

LIAHONA'S ANSWER

If your friends insist you don't believe in the real Jesus Christ because you are a member of the Church, they may be repeating what they have heard from people who don't understand what we believe or whose views have been clouded by prejudice. As members of the Church, we may encounter both misunderstanding and prejudice.

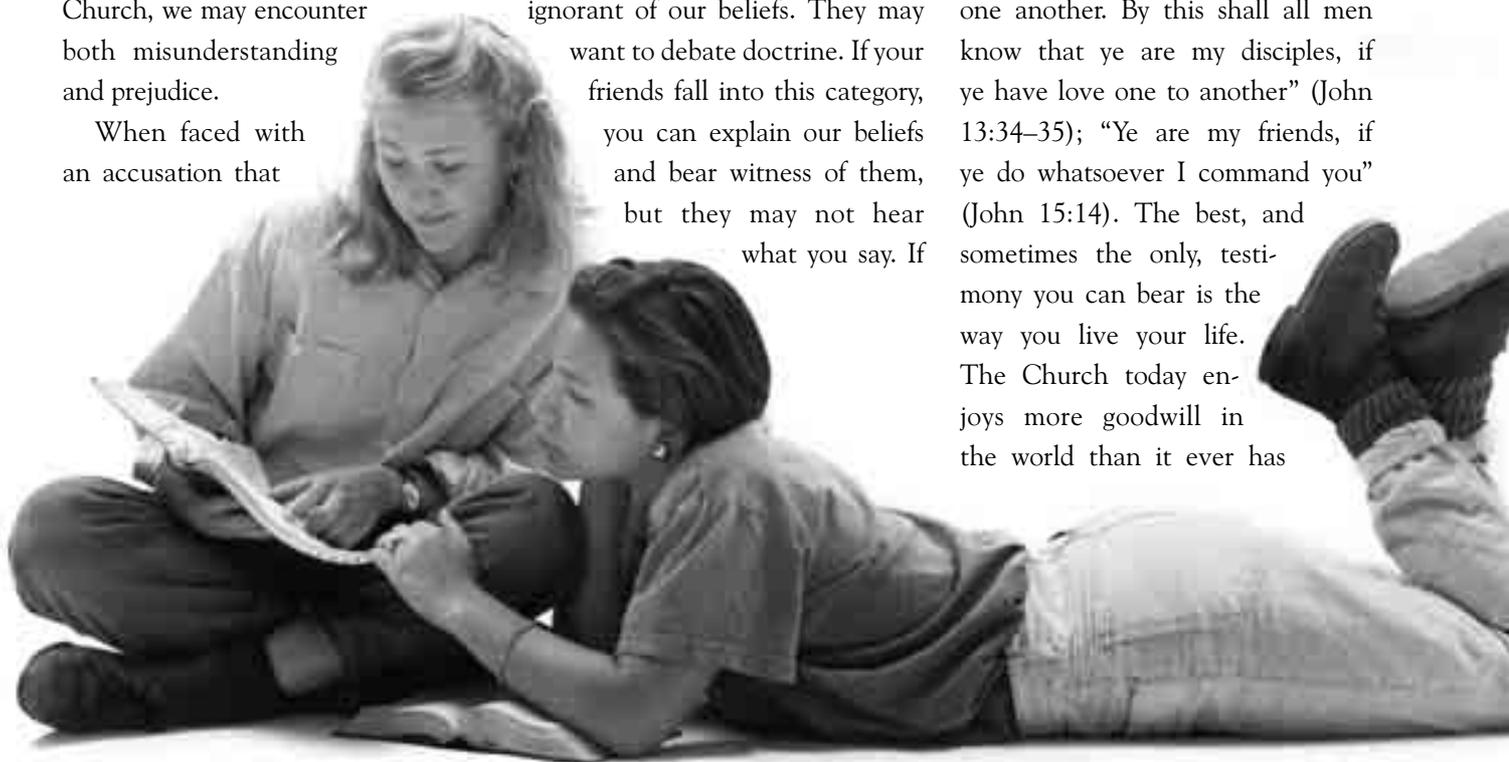
When faced with an accusation that

you are not a Christian because you are a Latter-day Saint, you can explain your belief in the Savior and bear your testimony of Him. Your friends may recognize the depth of your devotion.

Some people who make this accusation, however, are not merely ignorant of our beliefs. They may want to debate doctrine. If your friends fall into this category, you can explain our beliefs and bear witness of them, but they may not hear what you say. If

this is the case, you can show them by your actions that you are indeed a follower of Jesus Christ.

The Savior said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15); "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35); "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). The best, and sometimes the only, testimony you can bear is the way you live your life. The Church today enjoys more goodwill in the world than it ever has



before—because of the good lives of its members.

READERS' ANSWERS

Actions speak louder than words. If we follow Jesus Christ with faith, a sincere heart, and a humble attitude; if we live the gospel and lead a Christlike life; if we try to be like Him and set a good example, people will understand that our church is the Church of Jesus Christ.



*Shu Yang Wen,
Chia Yi First Ward,
Tainan Taiwan Stake*

Follow the counsel in D&C 11:21, and seek to obtain the word of the Lord. If you do so, you will receive “the power of God unto the convincing of men.” Through this process you will surely obtain comfort and guidance.



*Masaki Keikyu,
Gokiso Ward,
Nagoya Japan Stake*

No matter what our friends say, the most important thing we can do is remain steadfast and immovable in our testimony that we belong to the true Church and that we are serving the true and living God and His Son, Jesus Christ. I believe that “to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven”

(Ecclesiastes 3:1). The time will come when our friends will learn more about the Church. Our example, testimony, and steadfastness make a difference.



*Jeffrey N. Nool,
Paniqui First Branch,
Paniqui Philippines District*

I am serving a full-time mission and am striving to be a living witness that Jesus is the Christ—that He is real and that He lives. In bearing such testimony, we are promised that “the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever [we] shall say” (D&C 100:8).



*Sister Loravella Abelo Ranque,
Philippines Olongapo Mission*

In order to convince my friends that I am a Christian, I can show them by example my love for God and Jesus Christ. I can pray, and I can ask my friends to pray to know the truth. I know that by my example, faith, love, and obedience, my friends will come to know that I am a Christian.



*Maya Saparbekovna
Bisembina,
Nakhodka Branch,
Russia Vladivostok Mission*

If we strive to love everyone, to bless our enemies, and to visit the



Latter-day Saints Are Christians

The biggest misconception is that we are not followers of Jesus Christ. That is the constant allegation that is lodged against us. There is not a bit of substance to it. If there is any people in this world who believe in Jesus Christ, it is the people of this Church. The Church carries His name. He is the central figure in all of our worship. [The idea that we are not Christians] is a misconception that has been fostered and re-fostered and broadcast, but it is gradually breaking down. Things are changing; we are more accepted than we once were. I think this is the great era of goodwill in terms of the Church.”

—President Gordon B. Hinckley
 (“Inspirational Thoughts,”
 Liahona, June 1999, 3–4) □

afflicted—as the Savior did—then we will be known as true believers in Jesus Christ.



*Kelepi To'a Fameitau,
East Lakes (Tongan) Ward,
Sydney Australia Hyde
Park Stake*

What we do is more important than what we say. There were many people who did not believe Jesus Christ was the Messiah, but He showed them the truth through His perfect example, love, service, kindness, humility, and charity. We can do the same by being a light to others at all times and in all places (see Mosiah 18:9).



*Elder Melvin Dorian
Rodas López,
Honduras San Pedro
Sula Mission*

The best thing I can do for my friends is invite them to church. I can also fast and pray for them and bear my testimony. I know God will help my friends understand what Jesus Christ means in our lives and what His plan for us is.



*Richelle M. Miguel,
Echague First Branch,
Alicia Philippines District*

I tell my friends that if I did not believe in Jesus Christ, I would not have listened to the missionaries

when God sent them to teach me His gospel. I would not have felt the Holy Ghost, and I would not have joined the Church.



*Marina Vladimirovna
Khlapova,
Nakhodka Branch,
Russia Vladivostok Mission*

If my friends questioned my belief in my Savior, I would invite them to an activity that centers on Jesus Christ, such as a baptism. I would also borrow some literature from the Church library for them to read. But before doing anything, I would pray for the Spirit to touch their hearts.



*Esther N. Ninedeys,
Calabar First Branch,
Calabar Nigeria District*

In this situation, I would tell my friends that prayer is the best way to find out if what I believe is true. I would suggest we pray together and ask Heavenly Father to make it known to us if my beliefs are correct. Through prayer He manifests the truth of all things.



*Reyna Guadalupe Orozco
Portillo,
Las Huertas Ward,
Culiacán México
Tamazula Stake*

We need to do everything in our power to make sure our testimonies

touch others' hearts. We need to be examples in the words we say, the way we live, the clothes we wear, and the entertainment we choose. Our friends may not believe us now, but someday they may remember the legacy of faith we gave them through our example.



*Lucía Cecilia Pérez,
Unión Second Ward,
Trelew Argentina North Stake*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS is a youth feature, and we hope to print a wide selection of youth answers from a variety of countries. Please mail your answer to arrive no later than 1 September 2002. Send it to **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 09/02**, Liahona, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3223, USA; or e-mail to cur-liahona-imag@ldschurch.org. Your answer may be typed or clearly written in your own language. For your answer to be considered, it must include your complete name, age, home address, and ward and stake (or branch and district). Please include a photograph of yourself; this photograph will not be returned.

QUESTION: Sometimes it seems so hard to decide what's right and what's wrong. Why doesn't the Church just make a list telling me exactly what I can and can't do? □

DELIGHT IN SERVICE AND GOOD WORKS

Read the following with the sisters you visit, and discuss the questions, the scriptures, and the teachings from our Church leaders. Share your experiences and testimony, and invite those you teach to do the same.

Mosiah 2:17: “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.”

Alma 37:34: “Teach [the people] to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls.”

D&C 58:27–28: “Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness; for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward.”

Elder Robert J. Whetten of the Seventy: “Jesus’ . . . love for us motivated His atoning sacrifice for our sins. Without His love, we would be unable to return to our Heavenly Father. How He lived His life is the example we should follow. His way should be our way. ‘Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am’ [3 Nephi 27:27]. He showed us that we must go about doing

good, that the spiritual and physical welfare of our fellowmen is as important as our own, and that we should show genuine concern and compassion for all of our Heavenly Father’s children. Moroni defines Christlike love as charity. . . . It’s not enough to say we believe and that we love Him; we must be found possessed with His kind of love for others at that last day. It is not necessary for us to lay down our life for others as He did, but like the Savior, we should bless the lives of others by giving of what our life is made up of—our time, our talents, our means, and ourselves” (“True Followers,” *Liahona*, July 1999, 34).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We are challenged to move through a process of conversion toward that status and condition called eternal life. This is achieved not just by doing what is right, but by doing it for the right reason—for the pure love of Christ. The Apostle Paul illustrated this in his famous teaching about the

importance of charity (see 1 Cor. 13). The reason charity never fails and the reason charity is greater than even the most significant acts of goodness he cited is that charity, ‘the pure love of Christ’ (Moro. 7:47), is not an *act* but a *condition* or state of being. Charity is attained through a succession of acts that result in a conversion. Charity is something one becomes. Thus, as Moroni declared, ‘except men shall *have* charity they cannot inherit’ the place prepared for them in the mansions of the Father (Ether 12:34; emphasis added)” (“The Challenge to Become,” *Liahona*, January 2001, 42).

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency: “God knows you and what you can become because He has known you from the beginning when you were His spirit sons and daughters. What you become will depend in large measure upon how you follow righteous principles and do good works” (“Who Do You Think You Are?” *Liahona*, June 2001, 4).

■ How is rendering service related to the Atonement of Jesus Christ?

■ How does service affect the receiver? How does it affect the giver?

■ How can we find more “delight” in service? □





Loving My

Name Withheld

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KEITH LARSON; DETAIL FROM *CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER*, BY HEINRICH HOFMANN

Through the Spirit of the Lord, I realized the best way to help my daughter was to make changes in my own life.

Years ago when I was a young mother, my heart was broken when my husband left the Church, then left me. I pulled my two little girls close to me and centered our lives in the gospel.

I prayed for my children daily and involved them in wholesome activities. Home teachers and bishops assured me that these little ones would be mine in the eternities and would appreciate my sacrifices for them. I took comfort in the fact that because my children were born in the covenant, they would be heirs to promised blessings. Three years after the divorce, I married a faithful Latter-day Saint, and I felt sure all would be well.

But soon we began having severe problems with my younger daughter. She had been happy and full of energy as a young child, but as an adolescent she became demanding, defiant, and belligerent. She began smoking, drinking, experimenting with drugs, and shoplifting. She used vulgar language and became sexually active. She challenged all authority and eventually dropped out of high school.

DESPERATE TIMES

This was as difficult a challenge as any I had faced. My husband and I desired for her to repent, gain a testimony, and feel peace in her life. I



Wayward Child



became despondent and inconsolable—I couldn't bear the thought of “losing” another loved one.

We fasted and prayed, pleading with Father in Heaven not to allow this child to be lost. My husband and I counseled together and sought advice from our bishop. We put her name on temple prayer rolls. Although my patient husband was a great help to me, he was largely ineffective with my daughter because she refused to accept him as an authority figure.

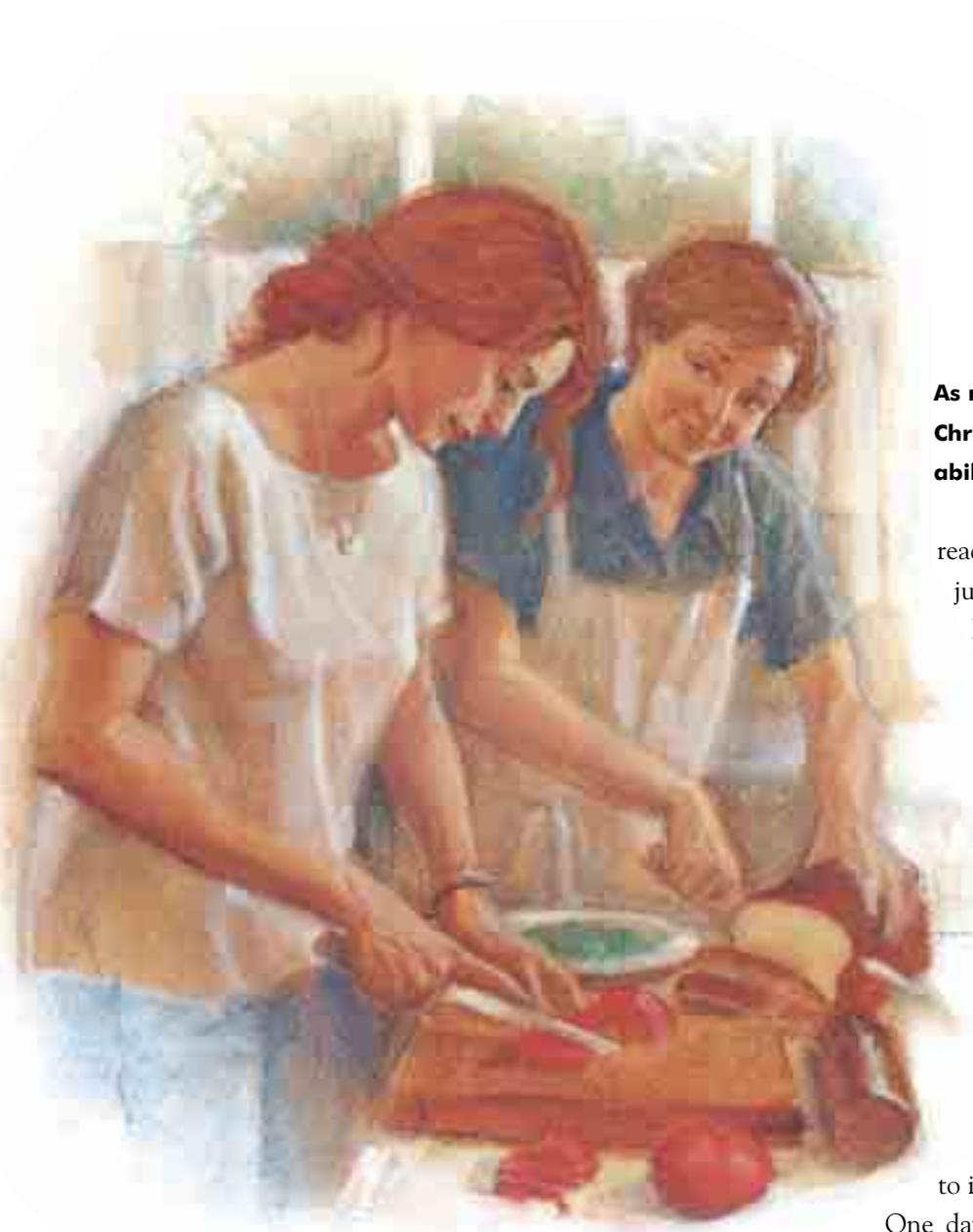
During this time I received numerous priesthood blessings. I spent hours attempting to talk with my daughter. I read the scriptures and books on dealing with difficult children. I asked for advice, consulted with friends and family, and pled with youth leaders for help and influence.

I wondered, “Where is the joy in family life? When will these problems cease?” We feared almost every contemporary nightmare: teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, drug addiction, death in a drunk-driving accident. Finding no resolution to the problem, I lost all confidence in my ability to be a good parent. I felt desperate, sorrowful, frantic, angry, and helpless.

MAKING MY OWN CHANGES

Then, after several years of frustration, I began to realize that I needed to make changes in my *own* life. I began to see that in my efforts to help my daughter, I was acting out of terror, not out of faith. The way of the Lord is not frightened frenzy. Jesus Christ brings hope, not despair. Satan is the author of discouragement and unhappiness. I had been listening to the wrong voice.

I decided to go back to the basics of the gospel and build a stronger, more solid spirituality. I wondered when, for instance, I had last offered prayers of gratitude. Had I completely forgotten my many blessings? Had I actively



As my gratitude for the Atonement of Jesus Christ increased, so did my faith in His ability to touch my daughter's life.

reading the scriptures early. Sometimes I read just a few verses, other times a few chapters. In my car, I turned off the radio and pondered what I had read that morning. The spiritual experiences I had right there in my car more than made up for the news and traffic reports I missed.

RECEIVING PERSONAL REVELATION

Amazing things began to happen. Impressions began to pop into my mind: I received ideas about how to handle day-to-day obligations and how to prepare for Church assignments. And I received inspiration about how to interact with my precious daughter.

One day I felt that my conversations with my daughter should turn to the positive things we had in common. Sure enough, our shared interests in music, art, and old movies provided us with nonthreatening topics of conversation. This change was a helpful first step in repairing our damaged relationship.

Another morning I felt a strong impression that continued over the next few months: Force is not the answer. I tearfully asked Heavenly Father to forgive me for forgetting that agency is a basic part of His plan. I realized that it is not appropriate to attempt to make someone do something, even if that thing is righteous. That was Satan's design.

Change didn't happen overnight. It was difficult, and I had to do a lot of it. I had setbacks, but I kept trying. As parents, we still had to set standards for what was acceptable in our home, but our daughter began to respond

looked for the good qualities of my struggling daughter? Did I appreciate the obedient members of my family? Did I acknowledge the joyful moments in my day? Did I enjoy a beautiful sunset or a soft rain?

I was ashamed. I had become so negative and unhappy that my thoughts and actions did not reflect my testimony of Jesus Christ. My countenance didn't show my love for and hope in the Savior.

I chose to change. I concentrated on filling my soul with positive thoughts and feelings. I read uplifting books and stopped watching content-empty television programs. I became diligent in a personal exercise program, which relieved stress and lifted my spirits.

But most important, I changed my scripture study routine. My mind is most alert in the morning, so I began

more positively because I was now more confident and less emotional.

The continuing spiritual impressions we received were a great blessing. Line upon line, the Spirit taught us what to do and when to do it. When we obeyed, we were blessed. When we struggled, we were gently reminded.

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

On one occasion, the Spirit reminded me that true conversion comes through the Lord. So instead of merely praying for my daughter to do what I told her, I began asking that she would be blessed with a change of heart. And I looked for moments to talk with her about the Savior. She agreed, for instance, that a violent world needs more of His gentle ways.

As the Spirit taught me, I began to recognize more of Christ's great mercy in my own behalf. One day I thought, "Perhaps my experiences with straying family members can help me realize that I, too, stray when I don't put my whole faith and trust in Him. Maybe our family's struggles with this prodigal child can ultimately be for our benefit. Perhaps our weaknesses, though not as visible as hers, also need refining."

As I began to think such thoughts, I became more

grateful than ever for Christ's Atonement. And as my gratitude increased, so did my faith in His ability to touch my daughter's life. I developed a firm conviction that He will keep entreating her and trying to bring her back, for He loves her even more than I do! My role now is to be close to her and to strive to become the best example of the Savior I can be.

BRIGHT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Today this daughter is still not active in the Church, but she has a good life. Recently she married a good man, and she is a responsible and capable worker in a good career. She and I have a great relationship, and I have a bright hope that she will someday return to the teachings of her childhood.

Through these difficult times I have learned that we have the right to inspiration in our own lives. I firmly believe the Holy Ghost can help us as we prepare ourselves to hear His promptings and act on them.

The experiences I have had with this daughter have also brought me closer to the Savior. They have taught me to search my own soul, to seek the Holy Ghost for guidance, to rely on the Atonement, to be grateful for what I have, and to hope for the future. □



"Draw Them to You"

"My heart reaches out to our youth, who in many cases must walk a very lonely road. They find themselves in the midst of . . . evils. I hope they can share their burden with you, their fathers and mothers. I hope that you will listen, that you will be patient and understanding, that you will draw them to you and comfort and sustain them in their loneliness. Pray for direction. Pray for patience. Pray for the strength to love even though the offense may have been serious. Pray for understanding and kindness and, above all, for wisdom and inspiration."—President Gordon B. Hinckley ("Great Shall Be the Peace of Thy Children," *Liahona*, January 2001, 67) □



By Elder David E. Sorensen
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

The Doctrine of *Temple Work*

The temple is a place of revelation, of inspiration, meditation, and peace—a place to restore ourselves, to clear our minds, to find answers to our prayers, and to enjoy the satisfaction of worship and service.

After I finished my military service as a young man, I returned to my parents' home in central Utah, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) from the town of Manti. Not long before, plans had been announced for a small addition to the temple in Manti, and Church leaders were asking for volunteers to come help with that project. I signed up for a two-week shift, and soon I found myself swinging a pickaxe, breaking up boulders, and clearing rocks outside of the temple. The hot summer sun shone down on us all day long, and the work was physically harsh and mentally boring. A few times as I struggled to remove another rock, I wondered if perhaps I had been a little too hasty in responding to the call for volunteers.

As the days went by, though, I had a remarkable spiritual experience. Several times in the midst of that back-breaking labor, I heard and felt the Holy Ghost tell me that sometime in the future I would be involved in building other temples also. It was a very quiet but very clear feeling. At the time I was preparing to return to work on a cattle ranch, so it was not at all obvious to me how I might be involved in building temples, but I accepted that feeling as inspiration. Over the years I



occasionally wondered about it, still uncertain about how it might come to pass, but very certain that the still, small voice had spoken those words to me.

For the past several years I have had the privilege of seeing that promise fulfilled in ways I never imagined as I have had the opportunity to work in the Temple Department during this exciting period of growth. I have seen firsthand President Gordon B. Hinckley's



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commitment to bringing temples closer to more of the people of the world, and I share in his enthusiasm for the blessings that can come from the temple ordinances. President Hinckley said, “I urge our people everywhere, with all of the persuasiveness of which I am capable, to live worthy to hold a temple recommend, to secure one and regard it as a precious asset, and to make a greater effort to go to the house of the Lord and partake of the spirit and the blessings to be had therein.”¹ In this, President Hinckley is echoing prophets before him. For example, the Prophet Joseph Smith warned of the consequences when we fail to use the temples available to us: “Those Saints who neglect [temple work] in behalf of their deceased relatives, do it at the peril of their own salvation.”²

Clearly the ordinances of the temple are of eternal significance, but they can also be challenging. I hope to offer some insights that may help members of the Church better understand the nature of temples and also to offer some reminders and practical advice on ways to prepare for temple worship.

THE “WORK” IN “TEMPLE WORK”

Temple work is an act of service. The temple is a place where we have an opportunity to do something for others. In recent temple dedications President Hinckley has suggested we not focus so much on the personal benefits of attending the temple but rather focus on temple work as “work.” While the personal blessings resulting from temple attendance are numerous, we must not lose sight of the fact that it is work and requires commitment and duty.

Temple work is not unlike other types of service given in the Church, such as going on missions or home and

visiting teachers providing emergency help for someone. Such acts of service typically cost us something and often require some sacrifice. Our prophet is inviting us to consider that same mode or attitude when we attend the temple. Our attendance should be for the giving of service rather than a selfish or self-centered act. The Savior said, “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”³

If we go to the temple solely for ourselves, we may actually be short-circuiting access to maximum spiritual benefits. Think about the things we do when we attend the temple. Are they similar to or different from activities we typically call “work”? Often, work is difficult, challenging, and sometimes tedious; otherwise we might think of it as play. Work requires us to be engaged in the process. Perhaps, along these lines, if we are finding our temple attendance mainly a passive activity, we may not be gaining all we could.

An obvious example might be the difference between attending the temple as an ordinance worker versus as a patron. When working in the temple, an ordinance worker finds it really is work; from memorization to procedure, there is much to do. The result of this effort is that ordinance workers gain familiarity with the ordinances and have an opportunity to learn and grow even more. And as I discovered during my physical labors on the Manti temple as a young man, a willingness to work and serve can prepare our hearts to receive spiritual insights.

While the temple is certainly a place of refuge, a retreat to learn and understand ourselves, there may be even more benefit in going to the temple to actually do exacting, weighty, rigorous, demanding work. One of the



I urge our people everywhere . . . to live worthy to hold a temple recommend, to secure one and regard it as a precious asset, and to make a greater effort to go to the house of the Lord.”

—President Gordon B. Hinckley



Like the parables the Savior taught, the temple ordinances can have parts that seem simple, but for those with advanced spiritual eyes, deep insights are there for the taking.

benefits of having numerous temples is not only that more members can attend but that more members can serve as ordinance workers.

Furthermore, an attitude of service may help us see old things in a new light. Consider the parallels between the teaching patterns in the temple ordinances and the scripture parables. Both have multiple levels of meaning. Many of the parables the Savior taught were difficult to understand for most listeners. To some, they sounded trite and simple. For example, in the parables of the ten virgins, of the talents, of the lost sheep, of the widow and the unjust judge, or of the prodigal son, there is a story, a message that even a casual observer would perceive. But in plain sight, right there in the same stories, are tremendous truths that explain some of the central, fundamental principles of the kingdom. Similarly, the temple ordinances can have parts that seem simple, but for those with advanced spiritual eyes, deep insights are there for the taking.

BASIC DOCTRINE FOR THE DEAD

A key function of temples is to perform ordinance work for our deceased ancestors. When we think of temple ordinances and the necessity to do them perfectly, without error, we think of this powerful scripture:

“You may think this order of things to be very particular; but let me tell you that it is only to answer the will of God, by conforming to the ordinance and preparation

that the Lord ordained and prepared before the foundation of the world, for the salvation of the dead who should die without a knowledge of the gospel. . . .

“. . . For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, as Paul says concerning the fathers—that they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect.”⁴

Consider the powerful and revealing vision of President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918):

“Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth, or in transgression, having rejected the prophets.

“These were taught faith in God, repentance from sin, vicarious baptism for the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands,

“And all other principles of the gospel that were necessary for them to know in order to qualify themselves that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”⁵

BASIC DOCTRINE FOR THE LIVING

The temple is a place of revelation, of inspiration, meditation, and peace—a place to restore ourselves, to clear our minds, to find answers to our prayers, and to enjoy the satisfaction of worship and service.

The Lord revealed through the Prophet Joseph: “All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows,

performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, . . . through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power . . . are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead.”⁶

Let us teach one another the supreme value of “the new and everlasting covenant of marriage”⁷ in our talks and lessons and by example. When a couple is sealed in the temple by the priesthood, a new family is organized. We rejoice when a new branch, ward, or stake is organized. How much more should we rejoice when we organize the basic unit of the Church: a new eternal family! There is only one way for the priesthood to properly set up this new unit, and that is in the house of the Lord. We shall all eventually be released from our callings in the Church but not from our eternal roles in the organization of the family.

As explained in the Doctrine and Covenants: “It may seem to some to be a very bold doctrine that we talk of—a power which records or binds on earth and binds in heaven. Nevertheless, in all ages of the world, whenever the Lord has given a dispensation of the priesthood to any man by actual revelation, or any set of men, this power has always been given. Hence, whatsoever those men did in authority, in the name of the Lord, and did it truly and faithfully, and kept a proper and faithful record of the same, it became a law on earth and in heaven, and could not be annulled, according to the decrees of the great Jehovah.”⁸

THE ENDOWMENT

What is the meaning and nature of the endowment? President Brigham Young (1801–77) gave us these words: “Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after

you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, . . . and gain your eternal exaltation.”⁹

The word *endowment* suggests receiving a gift, something of value for our eternal journey, as President Young described. The Lord is giving a blessing of spiritual power and protection to us so that we may enjoy life more fully, more abundantly.

The highest blessings in the kingdom of God come to us through the grace of Jesus Christ, by obedience to His word. Latter-day revelation clarifies that the fulness of Christ’s grace is bestowed on those who keep the commandments, including making and keeping covenants: “For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace.”¹⁰ The Doctrine and Covenants further explains, “Blessed are they who have kept the covenant and observed the commandment, for they shall obtain mercy.”¹¹

One reason for the power of covenants may be due to the capability they have for effecting changes in our lives, especially sacred covenants. This capacity comes in part because when we make a covenant with God, we are making a promise to our Heavenly Father who knows us best, who knows exactly what we feel and think and intend in our heart of hearts—and this provides unique motivation to keep our promises. Additionally, sacred covenants are even more powerful than regular covenants or promises because by entering a covenant that is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise (the Holy Ghost), we gain special access to the grace of God to help us keep the promises we have made.

The purpose of temple work is to make more effective the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and since covenants can be such an effective tool for change, covenants feature prominently in the temple and particularly are a key component of the endowment. Consider how the covenants of baptism, the sacrament, and the laying on of

hands are all centered upon the Savior and His atoning sacrifice and how they lead us to change our lives. In a similar way, the covenants we make when we receive the endowment can propel us to even greater changes and greater Christlike behavior. Put another way, we might ask, How do we gain access to the fulness of the Atonement, this additional dispensation of grace? Only by covenants, which are entered into only through ordinances, which can be performed only through priesthood keys.¹² The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Being born again, comes by the Spirit of God through ordinances.”¹³

These truths help us understand the spiritual power of temple work and how that power can come into a person’s life by covenant. Then, keeping the covenant brings the promised blessing in time and in eternity.

Let us review some practical matters that can enhance the temple experience.

STANDARDS

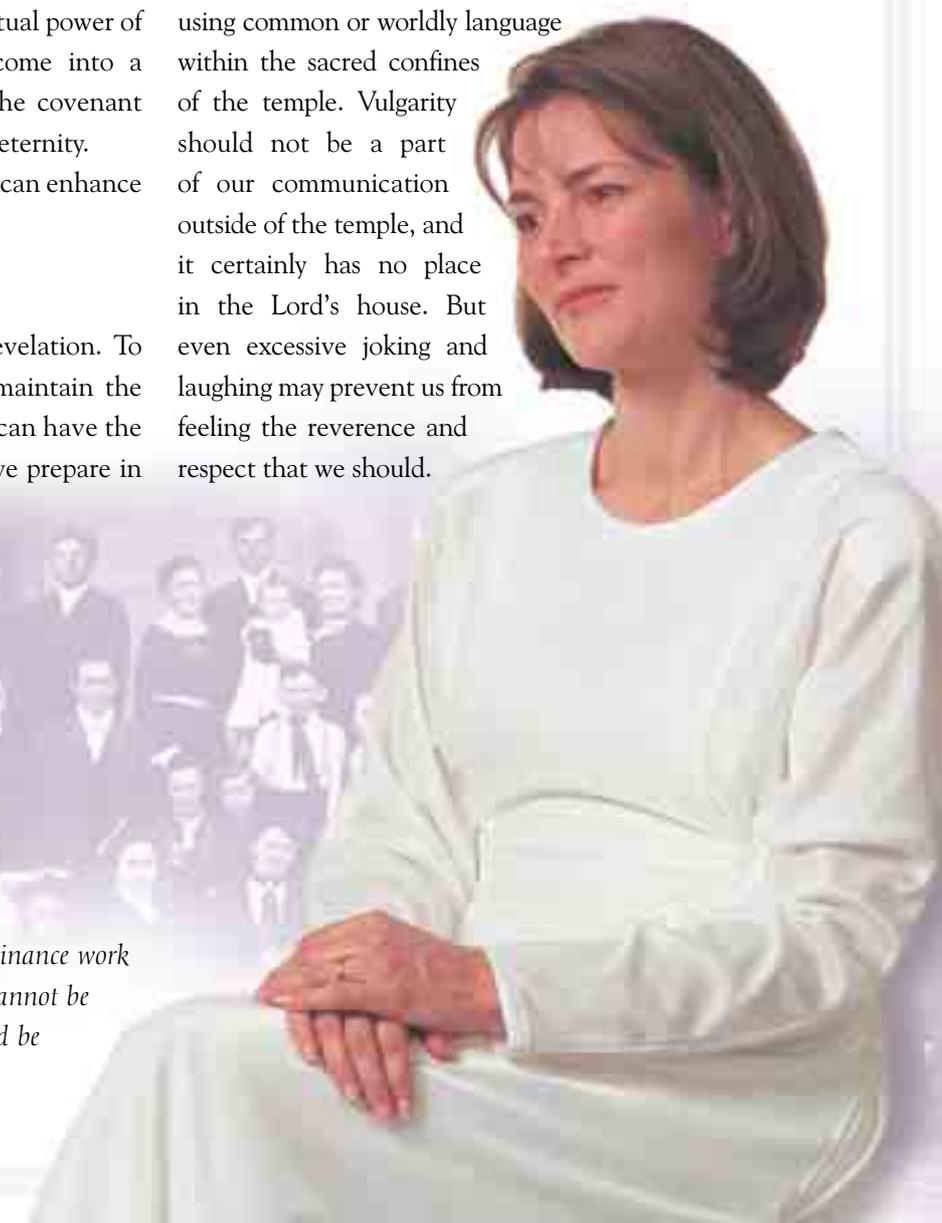
Reverence is an indispensable key to revelation. To receive the promised revelation we must maintain the sacred nature of the house of the Lord. We can have the temple as a significant part of our lives as we prepare in

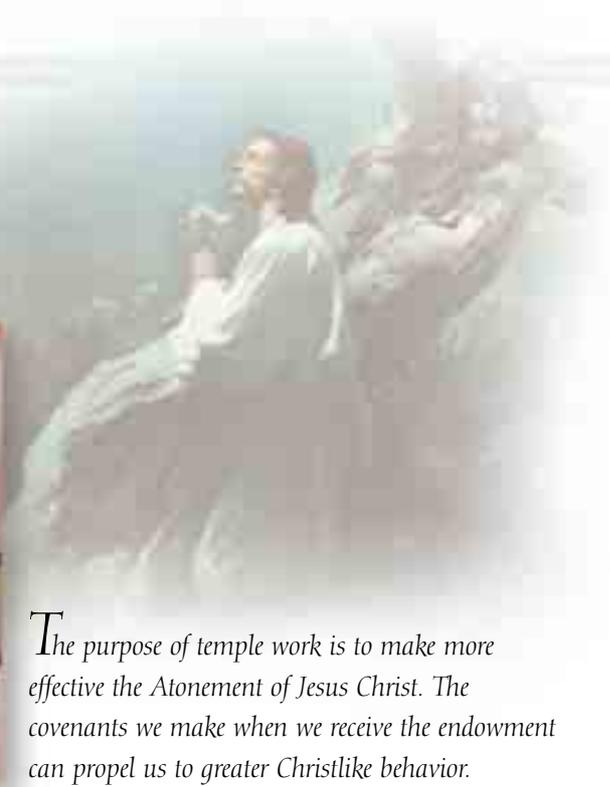
reverence to enter and as we stay true to the beauty, dignity, and solemnity of the temple when we leave. Part of that reverence is maintaining an attitude of great respect for Deity in our hearts. Our words and some of our practical actions can affect the reverence we feel and thus the spiritual manifestations we experience.

When it comes to sacred things, there is “a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.”¹⁴ We have the responsibility to maintain the sacredness of the temple endowment. We ought not use temple language when outside the temple. We should also be cautious about using common or worldly language within the sacred confines of the temple. Vulgarity should not be a part of our communication outside of the temple, and it certainly has no place in the Lord’s house. But even excessive joking and laughing may prevent us from feeling the reverence and respect that we should.



A key function of temples is to perform ordinance work for our deceased ancestors. “They without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect.”





The purpose of temple work is to make more effective the Atonement of Jesus Christ. The covenants we make when we receive the endowment can propel us to greater Christlike behavior.

WORTHINESS

Some members who are anxious to receive the blessings of the temple may push to receive a recommend before they are fully ready. However, becoming temple worthy is in fact preparing us to understand the “spiritual things” of the temple.¹⁵ Our prophet has counseled: “I know it is difficult for a bishop to deny a recommend to someone who is in his ward and who may be on the borderline with reference to personal behavior. Such denial may be offensive to the applicant. But he or she should know that unless there is true worthiness, there will be no blessing gained, and condemnation will fall upon the head of him or her who unworthily crosses the threshold of the House of God.”¹⁶

THE GARMENT

Those endowed should wear the garment appropriately. One of the great privileges we have is the wearing of the garment. It is appropriate to think of the garment as part of the temple, as a reminder of the covenants made in the house of the Lord. In this sense, as we wear the garment properly we take the temple with us in our daily walk in life.

We should adhere to the instruction of the First Presidency regarding the wearing of the garment:

“Wearing the garment is the sacred privilege of those who have taken upon themselves the covenants of the

temple. The garment, . . . when properly worn, will serve as a protection against temptation and evil.

“It is expected that members will wear the garment both night and day, according to instructions given in the temple. Members should not adjust the garment or wear it contrary to instructions in order to accommodate different styles of clothing, even when such clothing may be generally accepted. The garment should not be removed for activities which might reasonably be done with the garment worn beneath the clothing.

“Members should be guided by the Holy Spirit to answer for themselves personal questions about wearing the garment. This sacred covenant is between the member and the Lord and is an outward expression of an inner commitment to follow the Savior Jesus Christ.”¹⁷

APPROPRIATE DRESS

Dressing appropriately to enter the temple will help us to leave behind our worldly concerns and prepare to participate in the ordinances of the house of the Lord. Consider this counsel from President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, on preparing to enter the temple: “It is pleasing to the Lord when we bathe our bodies and put on clean clothing, however inexpensive the clothing may be. We should dress in such a way that we might comfortably

attend a sacrament meeting or a gathering that is proper and dignified.”¹⁸

When we enter the temple, we all change into modest white clothing. For men, this is long-sleeved white shirts and white slacks. For women, this is a long-sleeved, floor-length white dress or a white blouse and long white skirt. The white clothing in the temple symbolizes purity and being clean from our sins—the state in which we hope to return to our Father in Heaven. The change into white clothing also serves as a reminder that we are all the same before God, that He is looking upon our hearts and souls and not on our status in this world.

Brides-to-be should note that wedding dresses should be as modest as standard temple dresses. “All dresses worn in the temple should be white, have long sleeves, be modest in design and fabric, and be free of elaborate ornamentation. Sheer fabric should be lined. Women’s pants are not permitted in the temple. The dress should not have a train unless it is removable so that it will not be encumbering during the temple ceremonies.”¹⁹

SEALING ORDINANCES

Finally, consider again the power of the temple, particularly as it pertains to our deceased relatives. Who among us has not wept in the night for a brother or sister or some other departed relative who did not fully accept the gospel in this life for one reason or another? The sealings performed in the temple offer us great hope for the possibility of reunification with *all* our loved ones. The sealing ordinance confers a powerful blessing upon Latter-day Saints who remain true and faithful to their covenants. I have always received great strength, encouragement, and comfort from President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) when he described this profound promise:

“God has fulfilled His promises to us, and our prospects are grand and glorious. Yes, in the next life we will have . . . our sons and daughters. If we do not get them all at once, we will have them some time. . . . You

that are mourning about your children straying away will have your sons and your daughters. If you succeed in passing through these trials and afflictions and receive a resurrection, you will, by the power of the Priesthood, work and labor, as the Son of God has, until you get all your sons and daughters in the path of exaltation and glory. This is just as sure as that the sun rose this morning over yonder mountains. Therefore, mourn not because all your sons and daughters do not follow in the path that you have marked out to them, or give heed to your counsels. Inasmuch as we succeed in securing eternal glory, and stand as saviors, and as kings and priests to our God, we will save our posterity.”²⁰

There is great power in the sealing ties of the covenant. I bear my witness and testimony that these eternal truths and covenants were given before the foundation of the world and will bless our lives if we will prepare our hearts and minds to receive them. □

NOTES

1. “Of Missions, Temples, and Stewardship,” *Ensign*, November 1995, 53.
2. *History of the Church*, 4:426.
3. Luke 9:24.
4. D&C 128:5, 15; see also Hebrews 11:40.
5. D&C 138:32–34; see also 1 Peter 4:6.
6. D&C 132:7.
7. D&C 131:2.
8. D&C 128:9.
9. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, selected by John A. Widtsoe (1941), 416.
10. D&C 93:20.
11. D&C 54:6; see also Moroni 10:33.
12. See Articles of Faith 1:3–5.
13. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected by Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 162.
14. Ecclesiastes 3:7.
15. See 1 Corinthians 2:11–16.
16. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Keeping the Temple Holy,” *Ensign*, May 1990, 52.
17. First Presidency letter, 5 November 1996.
18. *The Holy Temple* (1980), 73.
19. *Bulletin*, 1992, number 1, page 2.
20. In *Millennial Star*, 22 January 1894, 51–52; see also Boyd K. Packer, “Our Moral Environment,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 68.

The Choice That Began Mortality

The Fall was a glorious necessity to open the doorway toward eternal life.



By Elder Jess L. Christensen
Area Authority Seventy

I am truly amazed at the great love and courage my wonderful companion has shown during the birth of our children.

I am in awe that the pain and sickness accompanying their birth was soon forgotten, making way for the joy and happiness of having a baby in our home. I have wondered how much Adam and Eve knew about such things as they made the choice to partake of the forbidden fruit, the choice that began what has been called act 2 in the “grand three-act play”¹ we call the great plan of happiness. God the Father, Jehovah, Adam, Eve, and Lucifer were the players. The Garden of Eden was the scene of this interlude between act 1, the premortal life, and act 2, mortality.

SETTING THE STAGE

Act 1 included a council, at which Lucifer promised the impossible, to “redeem all mankind,” and demanded the Father’s “honor” (see Moses 4:1). Jesus Christ was the Father’s “Beloved and Chosen from the beginning” and promised to enact the Father’s plan (see Moses 4:2). We exercised our agency and chose to follow the Savior.



Then there was “war in heaven” (see Revelation 12:7–9), and Lucifer “was cast down, with all who put up their heads for him.”²

God the Father was the mastermind and primary character in this interlude scene. Through His Son, He created the earth and the Garden of Eden.

Adam was the first man, the premortal Michael (see D&C 27:11), “who helped create the earth—a glorious, superb individual. Eve was his equal—a full, powerfully contributing partner.”³ Adam and Eve were placed in a garden, Adam being “formed . . . from the dust of the ground” and Eve being created from his side, and they became husband and wife (see Moses 3:7, 21–24).



Under the direction of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ taught Adam and Eve concerning the plan of God, gave them commandments, and provided them with “coats of skins” before sending them from the Garden of Eden.

The Father commanded them to multiply and replenish the earth and not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but He added, “Nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee; but, remember that I forbid it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Moses 3:17). Thus the stage was set for the exercise of agency and the possibility of mortality.

CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES

Lucifer was also in the beginning. He “sought to destroy the agency of man, . . . [and being] the father of all lies” (Moses 4:3–4) entered the garden to deceive our

first parents. He first talked with Adam, but Adam did not yield. Lucifer then tried “also to beguile Eve” (Moses 4:6). He questioned her: “Yea, hath God said—Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Moses 4:7). Challenging someone’s recollection of a past event can often create doubt. But Eve stood firm. Lucifer’s first stratagem failed.

“Ye shall not surely die,” protested Lucifer, directly contradicting the word of the Lord (see Moses 4:10; see also D&C 29:41–42). “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Moses 4:11). Lucifer spoke a partial truth mixed with a falsehood. If Eve were to partake of the fruit, her eyes would indeed be opened and she would begin to know good and evil; yet the notion that eating the fruit could immediately make Eve as the gods was a clever deception. The purpose of life can be fulfilled only when we have time to prepare to meet God and learn good and evil by our own experience (see Alma 12:22–26; D&C 29:39).

At Lucifer’s suggestion, Eve began to notice that the forbidden fruit was good for food, or delicious, and pleasant to the eyes. Lucifer “knows well how to catch the eye and arouse the desire of his customers.”⁴ Eve then chose to partake of the forbidden fruit. She subsequently encouraged Adam to partake (see Moses 4:12). Adam concluded that God’s command to remain with his wife (see Moses 4:18) was more important than His command to abstain from the fruit. Thus in the face of this enticement, “Adam fell that men might be” (2 Nephi 2:25).

Adam and Eve’s choices, like ours, were not without consequences. Lucifer’s power to “bruise [the] heel” of Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, would be fleeting, for the Savior would have power to “bruise [his] head” (see Moses 4:21).⁵ Just as light banishes darkness, the Savior will overcome Lucifer, and by His power we may also overcome. For Eve, the Lord would “greatly multiply

[her] sorrow and [her] conception. In sorrow [meaning ‘labor’ or ‘pain,’ she would] bring forth children” (Moses 4:22). “By divine design,” she would be a mother and would be “primarily responsible for the nurture of their children.”⁶ For Adam, the ground would be “cursed . . . for [his] sake.” It would bring forth “thorns also, and thistles,” and “by the sweat of [his] face [he would] eat bread” (see Moses 4:23–25). “By divine design, fathers . . . are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. . . . Fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.”⁷ Adam and Eve were then banished from this most beautiful of gardens, and mortality, or act 2, began. However, they were taught concerning the plan of God and given commandments. They did not leave without protection and promises, for God provided them with “coats of skins” (see Moses 4:27) to cover their nakedness. These coverings represent the protection—both spiritual and physical—that we can enjoy as we follow our Father’s teachings.

When Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden and found themselves outside of God’s presence, they were anxious to return. They used their agency to call upon the name of the Lord, to worship the Lord their God by offering sacrifices, and to bless His name (see Moses 5:4–5, 12).

THE FALL AND THE ATONEMENT

Three of the most essential events in the history of mankind are the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. “The enabling essence of the plan [of salvation] is the atonement of Jesus Christ . . .,” said Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “We should try to comprehend the meaning of the Atonement. Before we can comprehend it, though, we must



“We should try to comprehend the meaning of the Atonement. Before we can comprehend it, though, we must understand the fall of Adam.”

understand the fall of Adam.”⁸ As Latter-day Saints, we believe that Adam and Eve’s choice to partake of the forbidden fruit was ultimately a good thing—an essential act for our growth.

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) taught: “When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, they did not have to die. They could have been there to this day. They could have continued on for countless ages.

There was no death then. But it would have been a terrific calamity if they had refrained from taking the fruit of that tree, for they would have stayed in the Garden of Eden and we would not be here; nobody would be here except Adam and Eve. So Adam and Eve partook.”⁹

Many questions have been asked: How much did Adam and Eve really understand about the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit? Why was the message of Satan so tempting to Eve but not to Adam? Was there no other way? These are perplexing questions because we know so little about Adam and Eve’s thoughts and feelings in the garden. Therefore, we should not worry about what the scriptures and living prophets have chosen not to explain. The important thing is to know that the Lord’s will was accomplished. Adam and Eve kept the first commandment to multiply and replenish the earth. Their bodies were changed, and mortality, parenthood, and eventual death came upon them. Eternal family relationships became possible. The Fall was “a glorious necessity to open the doorway toward eternal life,” said Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.¹⁰ As a result, we have been blessed with the opportunity to come to this earth.

Other blessings have come to us through the Fall. Elder Nelson has said: “It activated two closely coupled additional gifts from God, nearly as precious as life itself—agency and accountability. We became ‘free to choose liberty and eternal life . . . or to choose captivity and death’ (2 Ne. 2:27). Freedom of choice cannot be exercised without accountability for choices made [see D&C 101:78; 134:1].”¹¹

We have been placed here by a Heavenly Father who loves and trusts us. He wants us to use our agency to grow and progress in this laboratory we call earth.

THE FALL AND JOY

As my wife and I have watched our children grow and develop, we have been thrilled with so many of their

choices. We have been amazed at the love and courage of our daughters and daughters-in-law as they have given birth to precious little spirits who have come from the presence of our Heavenly Father. With each birth I have been reminded that without the Fall, we would not experience birth, pain, sorrow, sickness, health, joy, love, and death—in other words, we could never find eternal happiness. And without the great atoning sacrifice of our Savior, we would never be able to overcome death or have the privilege of repenting for the remission of our sins. Jesus Christ makes it possible for us to return to the Father and find exaltation with our families. He is our Savior, our friend, our Spiritual Father through the Atonement, our Redeemer from the Fall, our very life and light, and the living Son of our living Father in Heaven.

An understanding of the choice that began mortality is crucial to understanding the Father’s glorious plan. We who have chosen to follow the Savior in act 1 will be greatly blessed if we desire to do what is right and wisely use the agency we have been given in act 2. □

Elder Jess L. Christensen was released in October 2001 as an Area Authority Seventy serving in the Utah North Area.

NOTES

1. See Boyd K. Packer, *The Play and the Plan*, Church Educational System Fireside for College-Age Young Adults, 7 May 1995, 2.
2. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected by Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 357.
3. Richard G. Scott, “The Joy of Living the Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, November 1996, 74.
4. James E. Talmage, “A Greeting to the Missionaries,” *Improvement Era*, December 1913, 173.
5. See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd edition (1916), 43.
6. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, October 1998, 24.
7. *Liahona*, October 1998, 24.
8. “Constancy amid Change,” *Ensign*, November 1993, 33.
9. In Conference Report, April 1967, 122.
10. “The Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, November 1993, 73.
11. *Ensign*, November 1993, 34.

“THE STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH”

Commenting on a young man who repented and became a faithful and good member of the Church, President Gordon B. Hinckley says: “Is not this what the work is all about? Said the Savior, ‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly’ (John 10:10). Without great abundance of the things of the world, these, my friends, live abundantly. People such as they are the strength of the Church. In their hearts is a quiet and solid conviction that God lives and that we are accountable to Him; that Jesus is the Christ, the Way, the Truth,



the Life (see John 14:6); that this work is Their work; that it is true; and that gladness and peace and healing come in walking in obedience to the commandments of God (see D&C 89:18), as set forth in the teachings of the Church” (see this issue, pages 6–7).

As the following stories illustrate, the strength of the Church is indeed the faithful members who strive to become more like the Savior. This great work moves forward because of members who live the gospel, showing good examples of Christian living to their friends and neighbors.

.....

The Lord’s Prophet

By Maria Sonia P. Antiqueña

It was 3:00 P.M. on 30 May 1996 when my friend Lorna and I began our journey to Cebu—an island in the Philippines. President Gordon B. Hinckley would be speaking at a fireside there the next evening. A tricycle—a motorcycle with an attached sidecar—took us to the port where we and many other members of the Iloilo Philippines Stake would board a vessel bound for Cebu. My friend and I both knew that seeing the prophet would be

worth any difficulties we might encounter on our trip.

As we reached the port, heavy rains began to fall. Would a typhoon spoil our voyage and ruin our opportunity to see the prophet? “First trial,” Lorna whispered to me. But later that day we forgot the cloudy skies. The other members’ excitement was contagious, and it seemed almost unbelievable that we would soon hear the mouthpiece of the Lord.

But our journey was not without

inconvenience. Lorna and I were dismayed to discover there was no water for bathing aboard the ship. “Second trial,” I thought. Later we received more bad news: Because of the crowded conditions, our luggage

At last I saw President and Sister Hinckley and Elder and Sister Wirthlin walking into the hall. Tears rolled down my cheeks. As I looked around I could tell that everyone was touched by the same spirit.



would have to be left piled in the hall. Still, we remained positive.

After our boat came into dock the next day, we got in line to board one of the buses that was to take us to the coliseum where President Hinckley would speak. We watched in disbelief as we saw that the last bus was completely full. Lorna looked at me with a look that said, “Another trial?” But we did not give up. We hailed a taxi and were soon on our way.

By the time we arrived at the coliseum, its entrance was overflowing with people. “Will we ever get in?” I wondered. Discouragement set in. “Maybe we should just go back to the ship and wait for the others,” Lorna suggested.

Despite my doubts, I answered her in a determined voice: “Unless we get in now, we may never see the prophet.” With that, we moved resolutely through the crowd. The air in the large hall was so hot and oppressive I felt I would choke. But finally we found two seats together in the upper box of the coliseum, and we sat down to wait in the terrible heat.

Then at last I saw President and Sister Hinckley walking into the hall with Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and his wife, Elisa. Suddenly, my worries and frustrations—even my awareness of the heat—vanished. The entire congregation stood and began to

sing, “We thank thee, O God, for a prophet to guide us in these latter days” (*Hymns*, number 19). Tears rolled down my cheeks. Until this moment I had only read the prophet’s words in Church magazines and books. Now I was seeing him with my own eyes.

As I looked around I could tell that everyone was touched by the same spirit. All around me, men and women were wiping tear-filled eyes.

As I heard President Hinckley speak, a warm assurance touched my whole being that he is indeed the Lord’s prophet today. A scripture came into my mind: “What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

At that moment my testimony of the Church, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of His prophet was strengthened by the Spirit. I am grateful I was given the chance to see the Lord’s prophet and to feel the power of his testimony. Indeed, it was the greatest opportunity and the most priceless experience of my life.

Maria Sonia P. Antiquena is a member of the Iloilo City First Ward, Iloilo Philippines Stake.

“Just Call Me Brother”

By José Bataller Sala

The April morning sun colored each detail of the spacious, modern, cream-colored building. The building was surrounded by green grass, and it looked like it might be a school. We walked through the door carrying carpet-cleaning catalogs under our arms.

Erika, my fiancée, was helping me make sales calls; we were trying to find new clients for the company I represented. The heels of our shoes, worn down from walking, clicked on the red-brick floor. As we continued down the hall we both realized that this building was a church. We proceeded cautiously because we did not know what customs and rules might apply here.

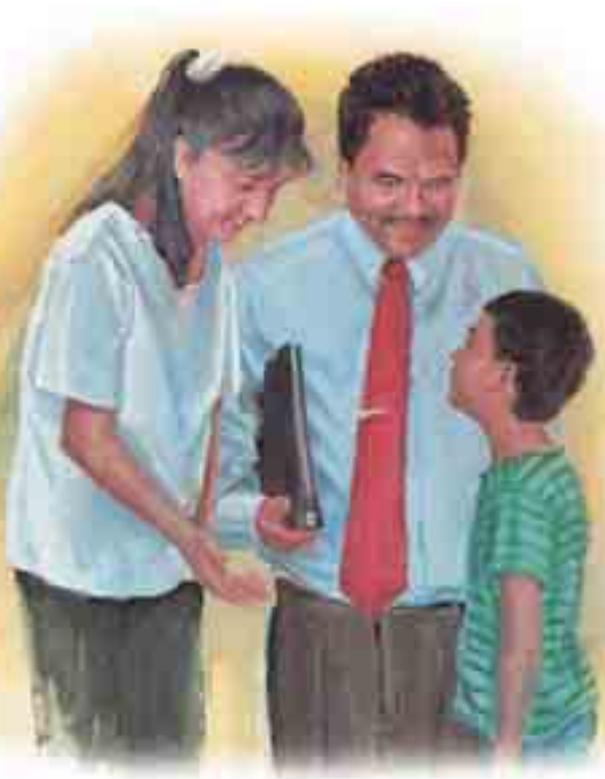
I wondered if this church might have red carpets like the ones I had sometimes seen used for weddings. But everything in this building was simple, yet elegant.

A group of friendly children and young people greeted us, and Erika asked them who we should see.

“Robert Vázquez,” replied a small boy. “I’ll get him for you.”

I glanced at Erika and quietly told her that if they tried to convert us, we would say we had another appointment and escape to her house.

I was completely satisfied with the



Realizing we were in a church, we were proceeding with caution when a group of friendly children and young people greeted us.

religion of my parents. Although I was not completely devout, neither was I a black sheep. I was one of those irregular little lambs who attended church according to the season. But through sermons, Bible study, and moral lessons, I had become convinced of the existence of a loving Heavenly Father; of His Son, Jesus Christ, who atoned for our sins; and of the Holy Ghost. I had been taught about commandments and ordinances. I also knew of our undeniable imperfection as mortal beings.

I considered myself against money offerings, idol worship, and every other superstition or precept not founded on divine love and justice. I had been taught to pray and worship

God without the intervention of saints. I believed in love, humility, service, the dangers of judging others, and the balm of forgiveness. I knew many members of my church who were virtuous, righteous, and exemplary. It seemed just short of impossible to consider another religion.

Holding Erika's hand, I arrived at a room that seemed to be a classroom. There I met Mr. Vázquez.

"What shall I call you? Father? Reverend? Pastor?" I asked.

"Just call me Brother," he replied. He invited us to go with him to services on the following day, and I was surprised to find myself accepting his invitation.

The next day Erika and I went to a Sunday School class. We were introduced to names like Nephi, Moroni, and Helaman. I felt as if I were in a foreign land without an interpreter. Nevertheless, both Erika and I felt there was something familiar about the ideas we were hearing. They sounded similar to those in the Bible. And so I dared to raise my hand, and I stood and affirmed that Jesus Christ was our greatest example of humility because He always subjected Himself to the will of the Father. Brother Jorge Montoya, our teacher, agreed with

what I said. That surprised me. What kind of church was this where even a heretic, which is what I thought I must be to members of the Church, could speak and have the teacher agree?

So we continued attending. I received a Book of Mormon and read it in a single week. I gained a testimony, took the missionary discussions, and was baptized and confirmed on 3 May 1996.

The next day I felt as if I were walking around with a 100-watt lightbulb over my head. I was so happy I went out of my way to help strangers.

The following month Erika and I were married. And on 29 September I had the privilege of baptizing her. A year later we were sealed in the México City México Temple.

Best of all, I never felt that I had to leave the road I had been traveling in my former religion. My former knowledge was embraced and perfected by the true Church of Jesus Christ. My conversion was like passing from the light of a cloudy day into the greater light of a sunny day—like rowing a boat and someone starts the motor.

I realize there are many righteous, good, and holy people in other religions. Although they do not have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, they are illuminated by the Light of Christ. Still I wonder

how we can help these good people see that the exceedingly bright light of Jesus Christ makes the lanterns, streetlights, and candles of other beliefs inadequate. There is no greater truth than pure truth, and pure truth encompasses and perfects the true beliefs of all good people throughout the world.

I know now that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only church that contains the fulness of truth. And I know that Jesus Christ has opened His arms and the doors of His house to all who wish to follow Him.

I did not sell any carpet-cleaning services that morning in April. In fact I have never sold a single square meter of carpet cleaning to any member of the Church. Nevertheless, I am sure that in that single day I gained more—a thousand times more—than anyone could have imagined.

José Bataller Sala is a member of the Ermita Ward, México City México Ermita Stake.

A Gift of Eggs— and Love

By **Claudia Waite Richards**

I had been living for a few months in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, when the branch Relief Society president asked if she could come

visiting teaching. I realize now that she waited so long to visit so I could have time to learn a little French. At that time our family was the only North American family in the branch. Some of the women spoke French, but the majority spoke Lingala, a tribal language. Although I tried not to feel alienated, I felt very different from the sisters in my branch.

The Relief Society president was a widow with two sons. She was always smiling a beautiful, big smile. When she arrived to visit me, she came accompanied by the Spirit of the Lord.

After greeting me, she asked me to get my English Bible. She spoke very slowly so I would understand her message. We read in her French Bible, and then in my English one, Ephesians 2:19: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”



I felt guilty accepting the eggs and tried to decline the gift. But her eyes told me they were given in love.

I smiled as I read the verse she had chosen. My Relief Society president understood the struggles I was experiencing.

As she prepared to leave, this sweet sister presented me with a gift of 10 eggs. I knew it was a sacrifice for her. I felt guilty accepting the eggs and tried to decline the gift. But her eyes told me they were given in love.

I accepted the eggs, and we basked in the love that she had brought. It filled the house and made everything seem brighter. After a prayer with her, I watched her leave the yard, her petite and gracious form wrapped in African cloth. I no longer felt a stranger, but at home with the Saints of God. □

Claudia Waite Richards is a member of the Kuala Lumpur Branch, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia District.

Did You Know?



I WILL GO

In 1837, two years after being ordained an Apostle, Elder Heber C. Kimball was sitting in the Kirtland Temple when the Prophet Joseph Smith whispered to him that the Lord wanted him to go on a mission to England. He would be the first

missionary sent outside North America.

“The idea of such a mission was almost more than I could bear up under. I was almost ready to sink under the burden which was placed upon me,” Elder Kimball said. But he accepted the call and went to England—even leaping from the boat upon his arrival in Liverpool. “The moment I understood the will of my heavenly Father, I felt a determination to go at all hazards, believing that He would support me by His almighty power,

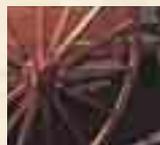
and endow me with every qualification that I needed” (see *History of the Church*, 2:489–90).

Elder Kimball’s mission opened the door to much success in England over the next several years, as thousands of people accepted the gospel and became a great strength to the Church.



LEADERSHIP TIP

No matter what your Church calling may be, the Lord has promised to help you. President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said: “The greatest force in this world today is the power of God as it works through man.’ If we are on the Lord’s errand, we are entitled to the Lord’s help. That divine help, however, is predicated upon our worthiness. . . . Through humble prayer, diligent preparation, and faithful service, we can succeed in our sacred callings” (“Your Eternal Voyage,” *Liahona*, July 2000, 56, 59). □



IT HAPPENED IN JULY AND AUGUST

Following are a few significant events that happened in Church history during the months of July and August.

3 July 1835: Michael H. Chandler arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, to exhibit some Egyptian mummies and scrolls of papyrus. The Prophet Joseph Smith translated the scrolls; his translation became the book of Abraham, now included in the Pearl of Great Price.

30 July 1837: Nine people were baptized in Preston, England—the

first converts to the Church in Great Britain.

6 August 1842: The Prophet Joseph Smith prophesied that the Saints would settle in the Rocky Mountains.

22–24 July 1847: The first pioneers completed the 1,000 mile (1,600 kilometer) trek to the Salt Lake Valley.

29 August 1877: President Brigham Young died at his home in Salt Lake City at age 76. He had served as Church President for nearly 30 years.

Using the August 2002 *Liahona*

DISCUSSION IDEAS

■ “What This Work Is All About,” page 2: President Gordon B. Hinckley shares the story of a young man who was activated because his bishop found an opportunity for him to use his talents. Do you know a Church member whose talents could help him or her become more involved in the ward or branch? How could you reach out through your calling to involve this person?

■ “To Acquire Knowledge and the Strength to Use It Wisely,” page 12: Elder Richard G. Scott counsels us to “develop the skill of learning by what you see and particularly by what the Holy Ghost prompts you to feel.” Write down any spiritual impressions you have had recently.

What might the Lord want you to learn from these feelings?

■ “Thirst,” page F14: How can you develop more earnestness and faith when you pray?



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TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE by matching these members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles with the places they served full-time missions:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. President Gordon B. Hinckley | a. Canada |
| 2. President James E. Faust | b. British Isles |
| 3. Elder L. Tom Perry | c. Brazil |
| 4. Elder Neal A. Maxwell | d. England |
| 5. Elder M. Russell Ballard and
Elder Jeffrey R. Holland | e. Northern States (U.S.) |
| 6. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin | f. Germany, Austria, and
Switzerland |
| 7. Elder Richard G. Scott | g. Uruguay |

The Friend

FOR CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS ■ AUGUST 2002



COME LISTEN TO A PROPHET'S VOICE

Influence of the Temple

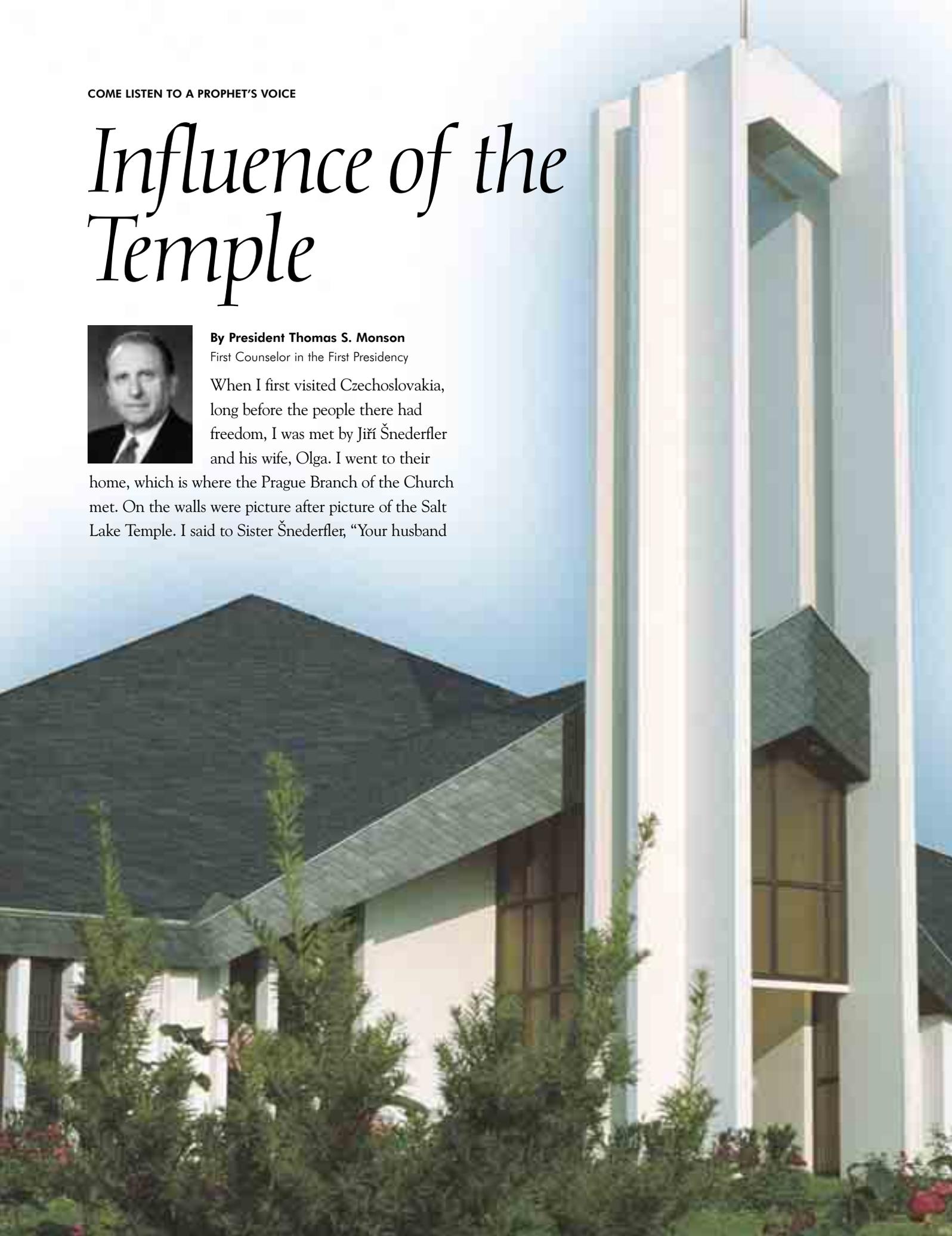


By President Thomas S. Monson

First Counselor in the First Presidency

When I first visited Czechoslovakia, long before the people there had freedom, I was met by Jiří Šnederfler and his wife, Olga. I went to their

home, which is where the Prague Branch of the Church met. On the walls were picture after picture of the Salt Lake Temple. I said to Sister Šnederfler, “Your husband





The Šnederflers (second couple from left) with a group of Czech Saints at the Freiberg Germany Temple.

must truly love the temple,” and she said, “I, too; I, too.”

She brought out an album of pictures of the missionaries who were serving there in 1950, when their government required the closure of the mission. As she held up each photograph, she said, “Wonderful boy, wonderful boy!”

Brother Šnederfler has always been willing to stand up for the gospel. When the Church desired the Czechoslovakian government to again recognize it officially, the Communist leaders told us, “Don’t send an American or any other foreigner. Send a citizen of Czechoslovakia.” That was frightening because to admit then that you were a leader of any church meant that you might be in danger.

Brother Šnederfler was the one chosen to go to his

government. He later told me that he had asked for the prayers of the branch members. Then he went to Olga and said, “I love you. I don’t know when—or if—I’ll be back. But I love the gospel, and I must follow my Savior.” With that spirit of faith and devotion, he went to his government leaders and told them that he was the leader of the Church there and that he wanted them to again recognize it officially.

Meanwhile, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles had been working very hard to get the needed approval. It came: “Your church is again recognized in Czechoslovakia.”

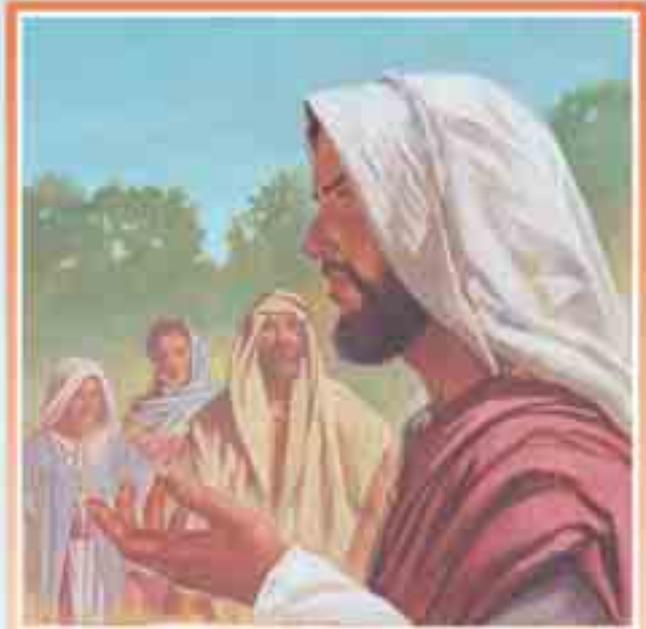
Brother Šnederfler eagerly went to tell Olga and the other stalwart members of the Church there that once again missionaries could come to their country and that they could again worship Heavenly Father in freedom. It was a happy day.

Jiří and Olga Šnederfler later served as president and matron of the Freiberg Germany Temple, where faithful members of the Church in Germany, the Czech Republic, and nearby countries attend. They were happy to find themselves each day in the Lord’s house, which they so dearly loved. □

From an October 1991 general conference address.



THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT T. BARRETT

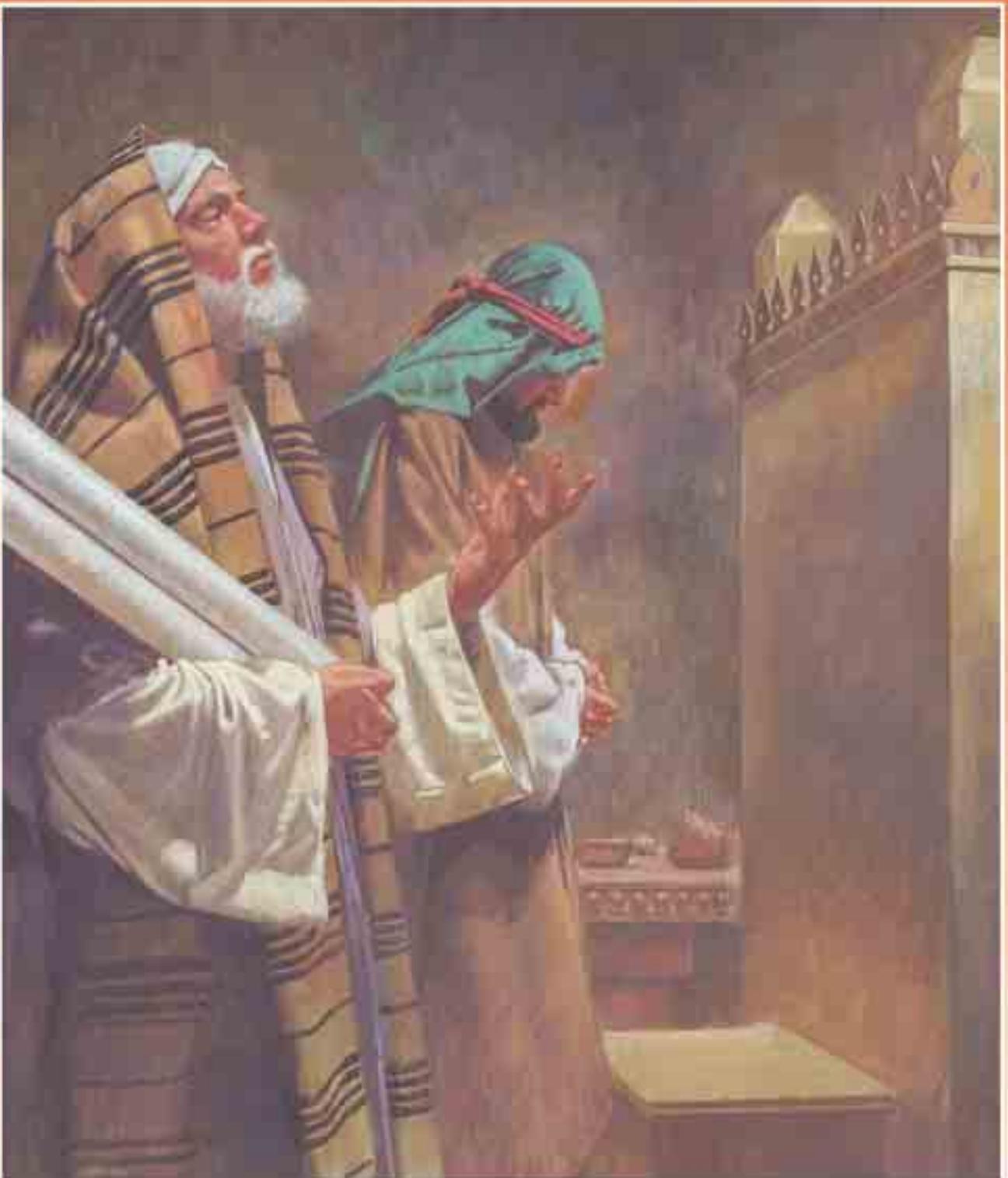
One day the Savior talked to some people who thought they were better and more righteous than other people. Jesus did not want them to think they were better than other people, so He told them a story.

Luke 18:9



Two men went to the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee (a religious leader). The other was a publican. People had to pay tax money to the publicans, and sometimes the publicans took too much money. The people did not like them.

Luke 18:10



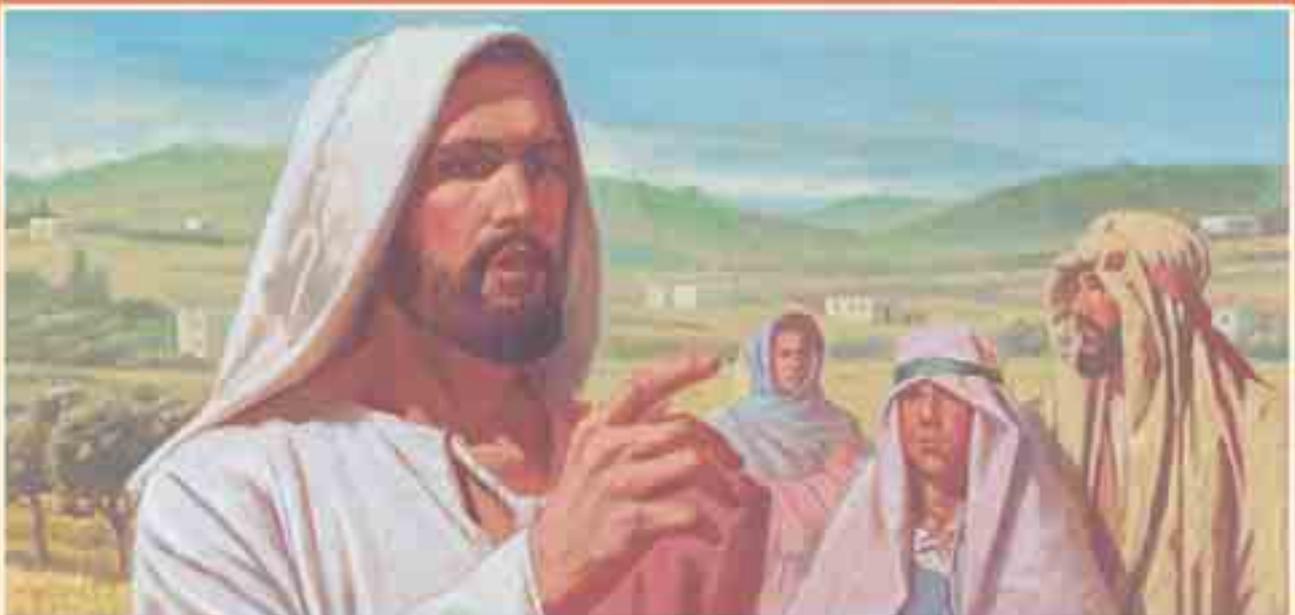
The Pharisee stood up in front of others to pray. He thanked God that he was better than other men because he fasted two times each week and paid more tithing than other people. The publican stood by himself and bowed his head to pray. He was sorry for his sins and asked God to forgive him.

Luke 18:11-13



Jesus said the Pharisee thought that he was better than other people, that he did not sin, and that he did not need help from God. Jesus said the publican knew he had sinned but wanted to repent. The publican had asked God to forgive him, and he tried to be more righteous.

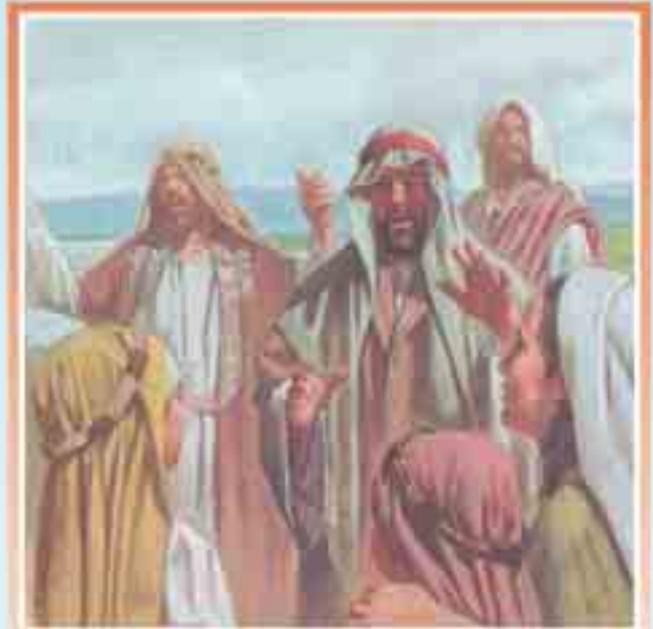
Luke 18:14



Jesus said that the publican, not the Pharisee, would be forgiven and that people should be like the publican. They should not think they are better than other people. They should repent of their sins and ask God to forgive them. They should try to be more righteous.

Luke 18:14

JESUS BLESSES THE CHILDREN



While the Savior was with His disciples, some people wanted Him to bless their children. The disciples told the people not to bring their children to Jesus.

Mark 10:13



Jesus Christ loves children, and He scolded the disciples for trying to send them away. He told the disciples to let the children come to Him. He also told the disciples they should be like little children. Then they could live with God in heaven.

Mark 10:14–15

My Book of **REMEMBRANCE**

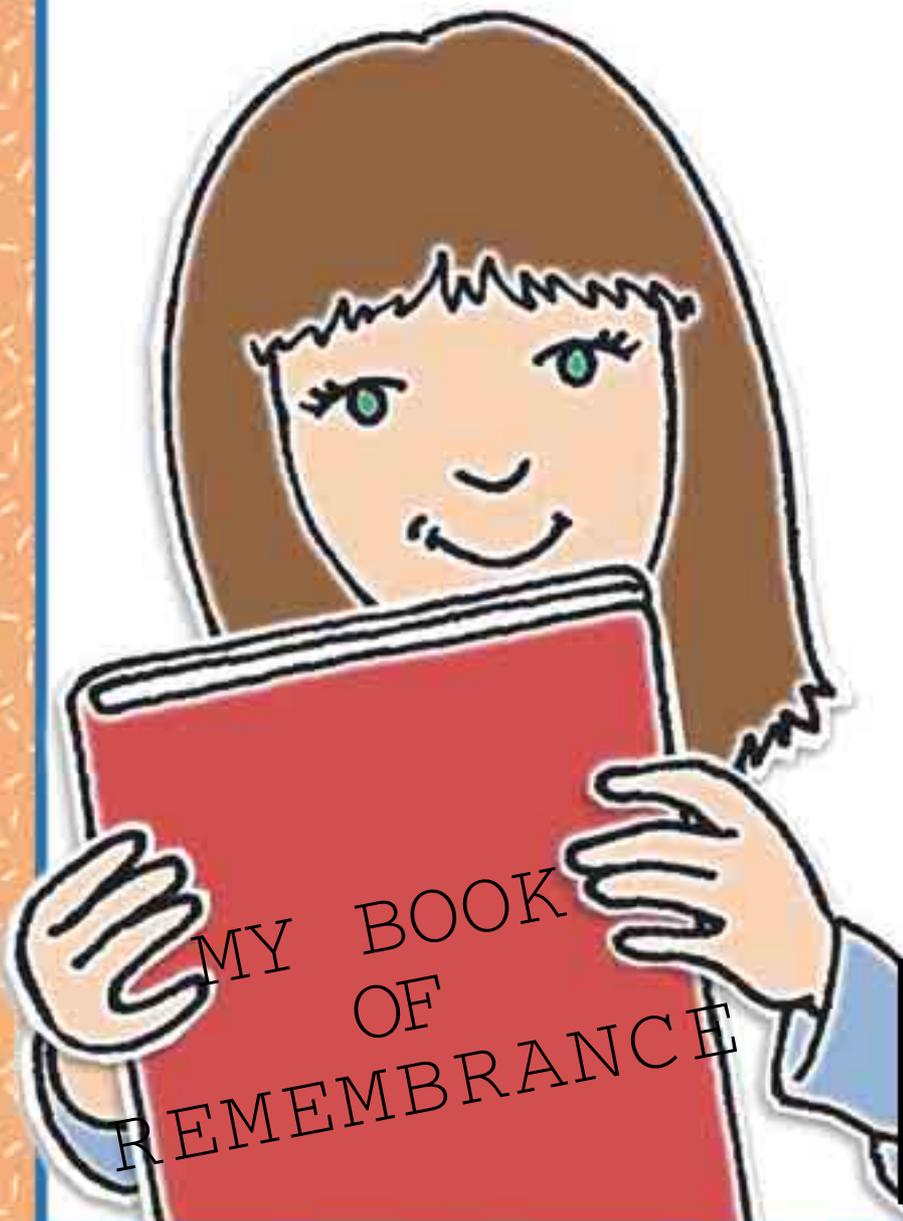
By Lori Stevens

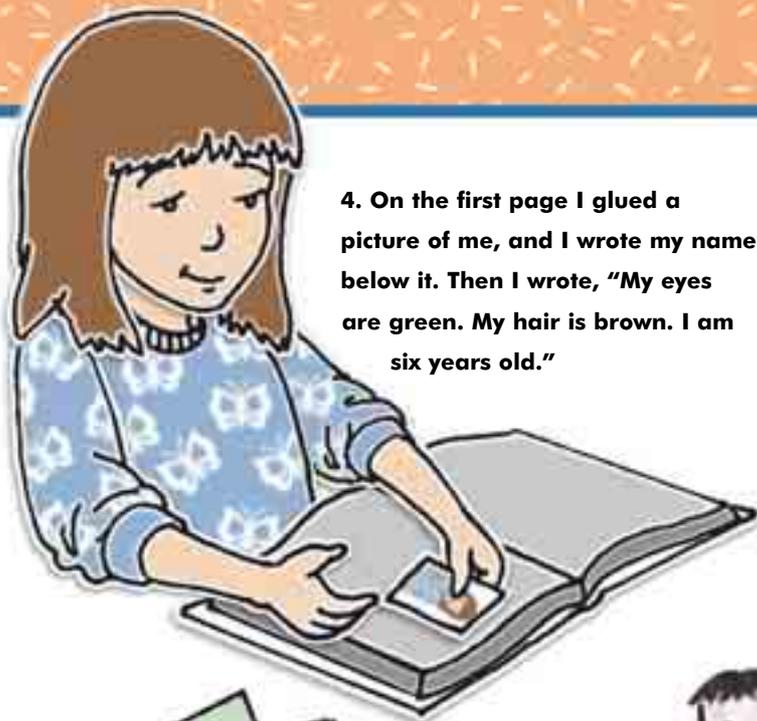
1. Aunt Jennie gave me a scrapbook for my birthday. The cover is red with "My Book of Remembrance" written on the front. The pages inside are thick and gray.

2. I decided to put the supplies I need to work on my scrapbook in a box. I put in markers, scissors, glue, and tape.



3. Mom is helping me fill my book with things about me.





4. On the first page I glued a picture of me, and I wrote my name below it. Then I wrote, "My eyes are green. My hair is brown. I am six years old."



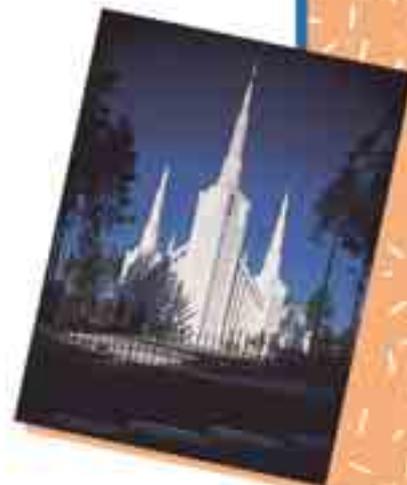
5. On the next page I glued a special letter Grandma sent me. It is the first letter I ever received.



6. Last month I made a card for my dad. I colored purple flowers all around it. Dad said I could glue it in my book.



7. On another page I drew a picture of my mom, dad, brother, our pet cat, and me. I added a photo of the whole family and wrote, "We are a family."



8. Mom helped me find a picture of the temple to glue in my book. I want to remember that we can be together forever.



9. I drew a picture of my house and the tree I like to climb. I also wrote my address and phone number.



10. If you read my book of remembrance, you will learn lots of things about me. You can fill a book with things about you too. When people read it, they will learn about your history!

Red Sea Action Scene

BOTTOM OF THE RED SEA

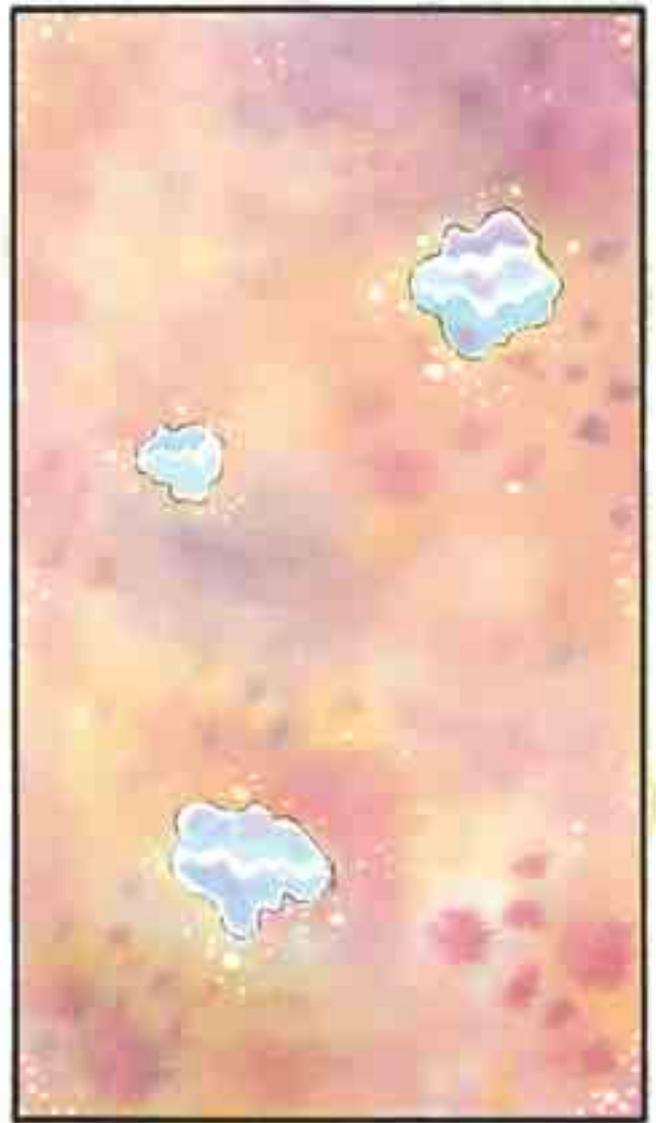
When Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, said the children of Israel could leave Egypt, Moses led the people away. Then Pharaoh changed his mind. He and his army chased Moses and his people to the Red Sea.

God parted the water so Moses and his people could get to the other side of the sea. When Pharaoh and his army followed them, God made the water come together again. (See Exodus 14.)

Make the action scene on page 11, and teach your family the story of Moses and the parting of the Red Sea.

Instructions

1. Glue pages 10 and 11 onto lightweight cardboard.
2. Cut out the five pieces. Cut the waves pieces only on the ends and along the waves. Do not cut the solid lines between the dotted lines.
3. Fold each waves piece on the solid line between the dotted lines, with the water on the outside, and glue the backs of each piece together (see illustration #1).
4. Fold the waves pieces along the broken lines, and glue the tabs you have just folded under the long sides of the bottom of the Red Sea piece (see illustration #2). Then fold the waves toward each other so they cover the sea bottom.
5. Fold the people pieces along the dotted lines so they will stand. Now show Moses and his people running away from Pharaoh. When they get to the Red Sea, open the waves for them.
6. When Pharaoh and his army get to the middle of the Red Sea, fold the waves over them. □



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KAREN FOSTER

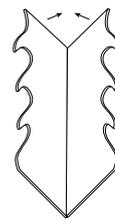


ILLUSTRATION #1

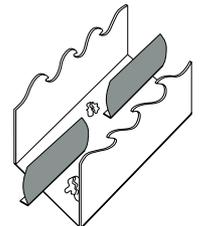
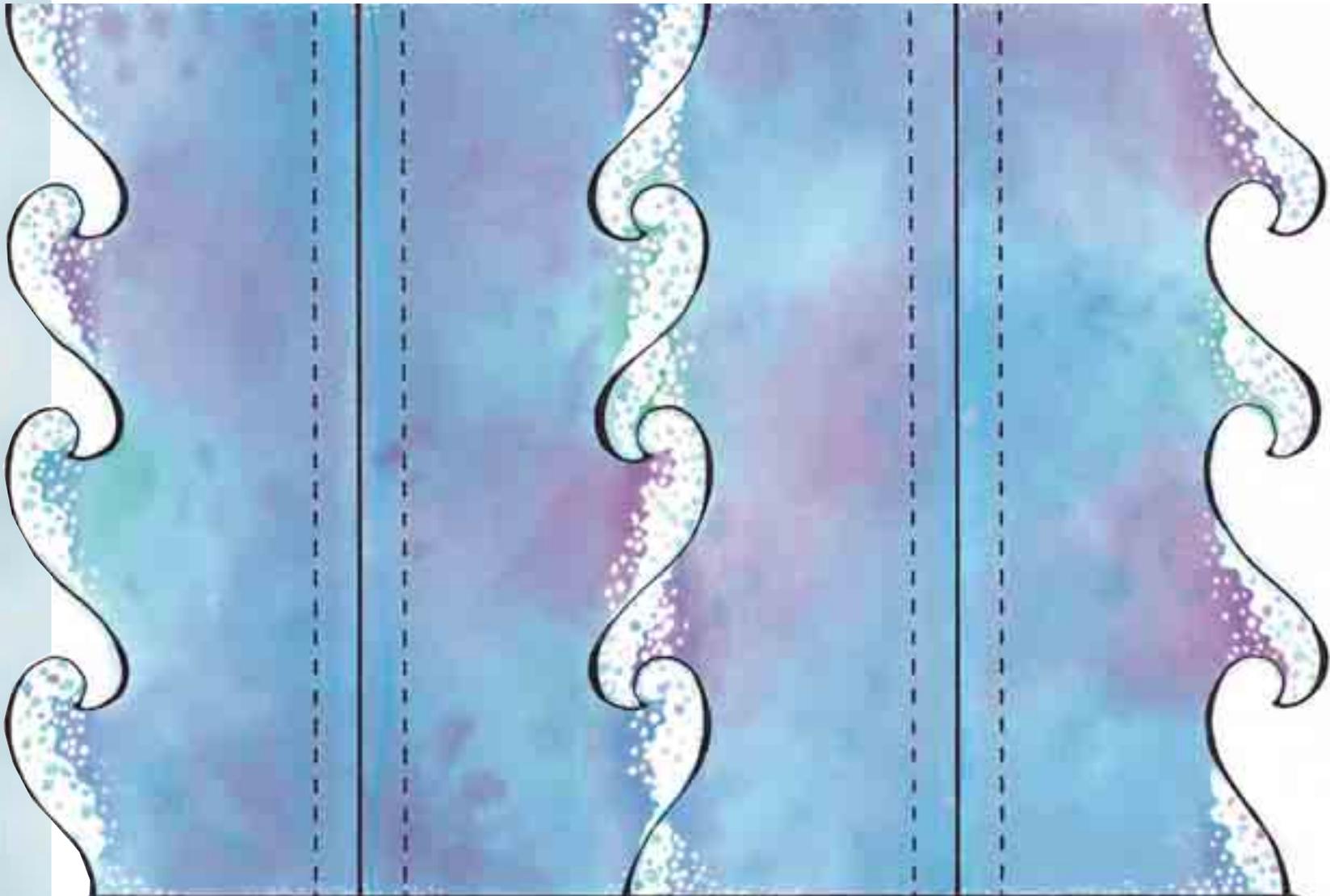


ILLUSTRATION #2



WAVES PIECES



MOSES AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL



PHARAOH AND HIS ARMIES

“THE HEART OF THE CHILDREN”

By Vicki F. Matsumori

“And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Malachi 4:6).



Have you ever wished you were older? You must be 12 years old to be baptized for the dead in the temple. You must be an adult to receive your own endowments or be married there. It can seem like a long time before you will be the right age to help with temple work.

But there are things you can do right now. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said: “I urge all of the people of this church to give serious attention to their family histories. . . . I urge every person to start the children out writing a personal history and journal” (“The True Way of Life and Salvation,” *Ensign*, May 1978, 4).

Why is it important to keep a journal and do family history work? President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “All of our vast family history endeavor [effort] is directed to temple work. There is no other purpose for it. The temple ordinances become the crowning blessings the Church has to offer” (“New Temples to Provide ‘Crowning Blessings’ of the Gospel,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 88).

Family history work and journals help to “turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Malachi 4:6). As you learn stories about your ancestors, you see into their hearts and you appreciate them. As you write in your journal, you remember the Lord’s blessings and you help your future children see into your heart.

You can also choose the right so that when you are older you can go to the temple. And you can be worthy to return to the temple to help your ancestors receive “the crowning blessings the Church has to offer.”

Instructions

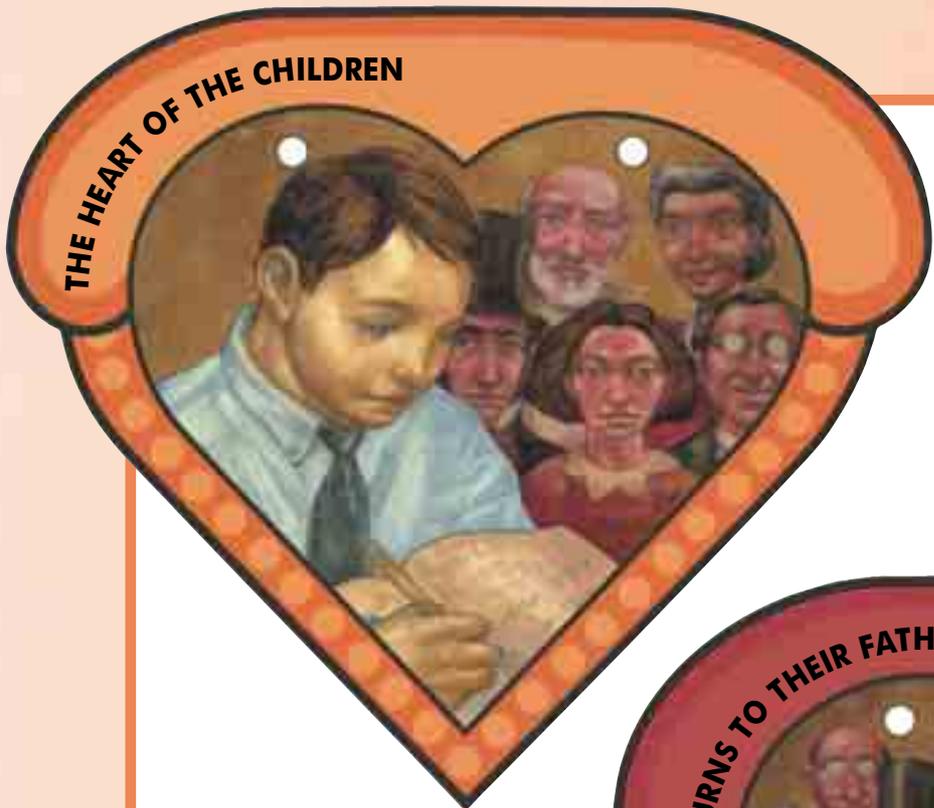
Mount page 13 on heavy paper; cut out the three hearts. Fold the hearts in half, and glue each half to half of a different heart (see illustration). Punch holes where indicated. Attach a string to each hole, and tie the strings together. Hang the heart where it can remind you to write in your journal.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Have the children dramatize the story of Nephi returning to get the brass plates (see 1 Nephi 3–4). Use name tags or simple costumes to identify each part. Then divide the children into seven groups. Give each group one of the following scriptures: Jeremiah 30:1–2; 1 Nephi 19:1; Jacob 4:1–4; Enos 1:1–2, 13, 16; Alma 37:1–3; 3 Nephi 5:14–15, 20; Abraham 1:31. Have each group read their scripture and report on who kept the record, what was written, and why that person wrote it. Read Omni 1:17 and explain what happens when records are not kept. Explain that one of the most important reasons for keeping records in the Book of Mormon was to testify of Jesus Christ (see 1 Nephi 13:40).

2. Invite ward or branch members to share an excerpt from their journals. Have them express their feelings about the value of keeping a journal for themselves as well as for their posterity. Work with the music leader to sing songs that help the children recall events in their lives. Have them draw a time line and write simple statements of what occurred at different times. Begin by singing “I Am a Child of God” (Children’s Songbook, 2–3) and having them write the date of their birth. Sing songs that represent different ages and different times of the year, such as a Christmas song and a birthday song. □

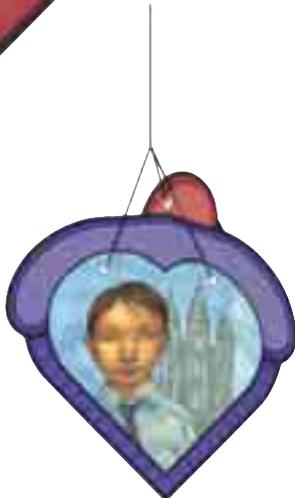
THE HEART OF THE CHILDREN



URNS TO THEIR FATHERS.



SEE MALACHI 4:6.



ILLUSTRATION

THIRST

By Ruthanne G. Bridges

A true story



The summer of 1870 was a good time to live in the valley of the Great Salt Lake and to be 16 years old! The pioneers' original settlement was becoming a bustling city, and there was work for anyone willing and able.

That is just what young Robert Hemphill Gillespie was. Bob had gained a reputation for being good with horses and cattle and for being a hard worker.

Bob already had a fine horse and the necessary gear for it—a big accomplishment for such a young man, especially one who had been on his own with no home or parents since he was nine. He had proven himself to be trustworthy and dependable, and people liked to hire him.

One fine June day, Bob accepted a job that required him to cross 100 miles (160 kilometers) of the Great Salt Lake desert. Today people can cross this desert in a car in less than two hours. But on that day more than 130 years ago, it took many hours on a horse. Friends told Bob to be sure and take along some water, so he filled a canteen and set off.

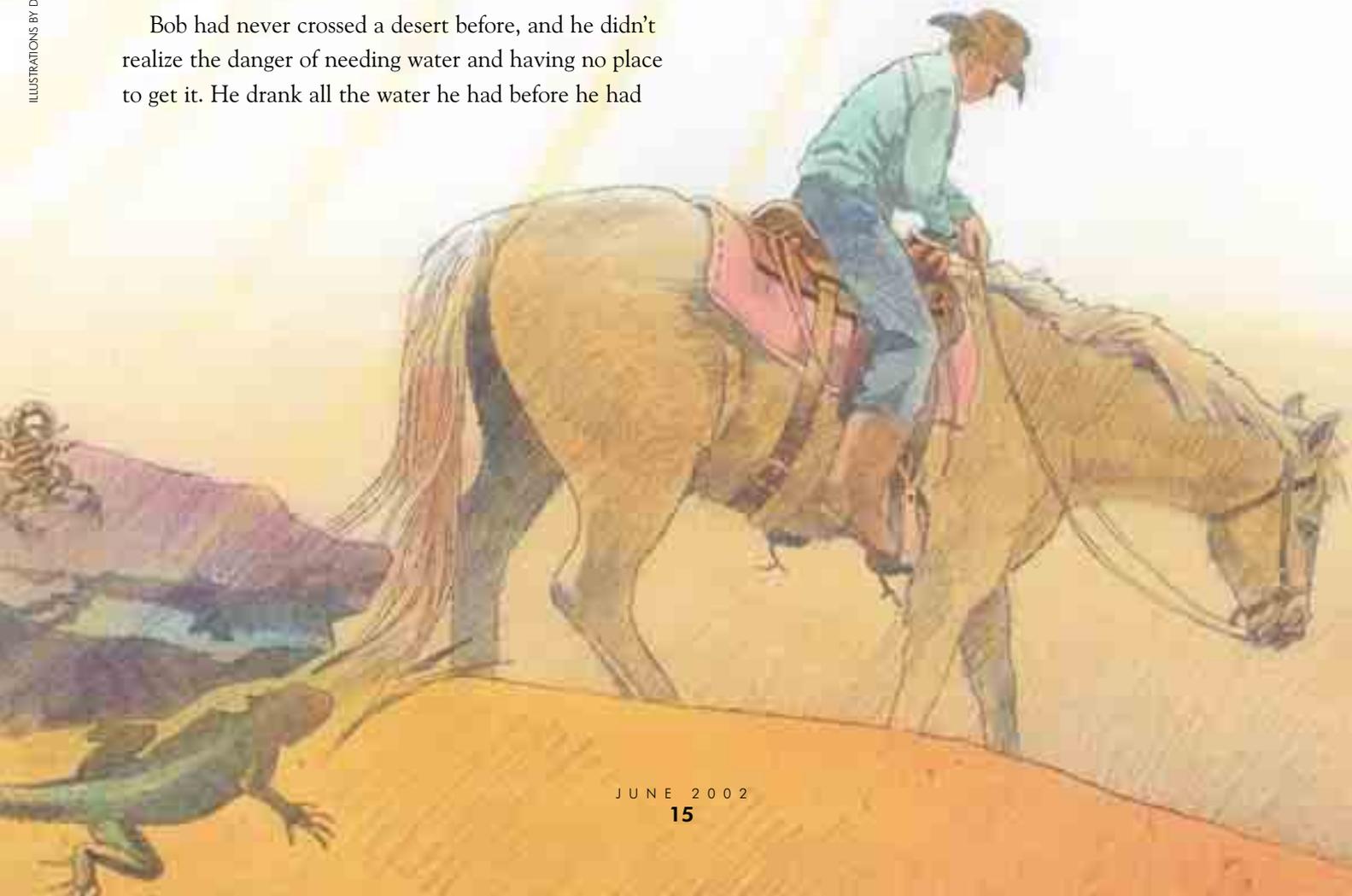
Bob had never crossed a desert before, and he didn't realize the danger of needing water and having no place to get it. He drank all the water he had before he had

covered even half the distance. When he and his horse really began to suffer, Bob figured they still had about 60 miles (98 kilometers) to go.

He thought, "Oh, if I had only saved some of the water! It was warm, but it was wet! If I hadn't hung the canteen on my shoulder where it was so handy, I might have a little left now!"

He thought of all those swallows of water he had taken when he was not in real need as he was now! In desperate hope, he turned the canteen upside down above his mouth once more. The water really was gone! Fear made him urge his horse to go faster—for a while. Then he noticed that his horse was sweating, and he slowed down.

Soon Bob's tongue was so swollen he couldn't close his mouth. His horse was suffering too. "We have to have water!" Bob said to himself.



Just then he saw a small cabin a short distance off the trail. A cabin meant there would be water! He immediately turned in that direction. When he reached the cabin, he found it deserted. There was a deep hole in the ground nearby, and there appeared to be water at the bottom. Bob climbed inside. There was a little water! But there were also dead birds, a dead rabbit, and maggots! The water was bad. Sorrowing, Bob climbed out, mounted his horse, and returned to the trail.

Then he remembered his mother teaching him to pray when he was a small child. He had not prayed in a long time, but he decided to try. Looking around for a suitable place, he left the trail again. He found a large, low place, dismounted, knelt, and began to pray, pleading for water: "Please send me a drink, Lord. Yes, and a drink for my poor horse too! My fine, good horse! Please, Lord!"

Bob thought of rain. "God, canst Thou send rain,

please?" he prayed. "Please forgive me, Lord, but we need a drink. Please make it rain. I thank Thee, Lord. Amen."

After his prayer Bob felt a little better. He climbed back on his horse and rode on, still filled with thoughts of the heat, his thirst, and his horse's thirst.

Recalling that he had asked for rain, Bob began to scan the sky for clouds. All he could see was one tiny cloud, far to the southwest. He watched that cloud closely, wondering and thinking. After a while he noticed a little wind coming toward him from the direction of that little cloud. Could it be drifting his way? It seemed larger now too. "Yes, Lord," he said aloud, "I prayed for rain."

Soon a drop of rain hit his hand. Another hit his saddle, another hit the horse, and then one hit his hand again. Suddenly there came a rain shower from that one little cloud! Within a few minutes, water was rushing down the trail and into a little ravine beside the trail, reaching almost to the horse's knees! The horse bowed his head and drank. Bob dismounted, got down on his belly, and gratefully drank his fill of the muddy water. Then he refilled his canteen. Refreshed, he and his horse continued on their way.

After riding just a short distance, Bob found that the trail and the ground all around him were hot, dry, and dusty once again. It was then that Bob fully realized what had happened. Halting his horse, he again dismounted and knelt on the dusty trail. Again he prayed with a full heart: "I thank Thee, Lord, for making rain come from a small cloud in the desert so my horse and I could have a drink."

From that day until Bob died at the age of 86, he told this experience many times to his children and grandchildren. They never tired of hearing it, and they have passed it on to their children and grandchildren.

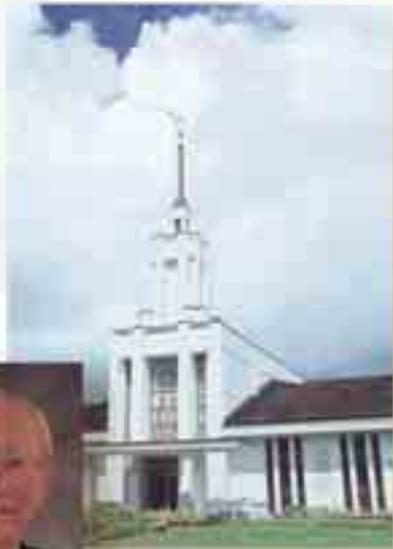
The most thrilling moment every time Bob told the story was when he bore his testimony: "Now, children, don't ever let anyone convince you that the Lord can't answer your prayer, for I know that He can!" □





Ruth and Naomi, by Judith Mehr

“And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace.” Boaz, who owned the field, said to Ruth, “The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust” (Ruth 2:2, 12).



I urge our people everywhere, with all of the persuasiveness of which I am capable, to live worthy to hold a temple recommend, to secure one and regard it as a precious asset, and to make a greater effort to go to the house of the Lord and partake of the spirit and the blessings to be had therein.”—President Gordon B. Hinckley
(See Elder David E. Sorensen, “The Doctrine of Temple Work,” page 30.)

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