

THE POWER OF HOME TEACHING

By Jeff B. Marler

How could we home teach a family who wouldn't even let us in the door?

I was assigned to home teach with Brother Erickson, an older member of my ward who was a dedicated home teacher. He had me do the scheduling, which I didn't mind.

One of our families, the Wrights (name has been changed), was not actively involved with the Church. When I called the home, Brother Wright said, "Don't ever call my home again."

I told Brother Erickson what had happened. The following month, when he asked me to call the Wrights again, I reminded him that Brother Wright didn't want us to call. Brother Erickson insisted that I call anyway, so I did. When Brother Wright answered the phone, I asked him not to hang up on me and told him that my home teaching companion had insisted I call. I asked if we could home teach him just by calling each month. He agreed.

From that point on, I called the Wrights each month. Every time I called, Brother Wright would say, "You've made your call." Then he would hang up. I didn't have a problem with that, and Brother Erickson didn't ask for more.

But after several months had passed, Brother Erickson suggested that we

fast for the Wrights. I agreed, so one Sunday we prayed and fasted to find a way to reach Brother Wright. The next morning as I passed the Wright home on my way to work, Brother Wright was coming out of the house. I could see a toy truck under one of the rear tires of his car, so I stopped and pointed it out. He thanked me.

"By the way," I said, "I'm your home teacher."

He thanked me again as I headed off to work.

I called Brother Erickson to tell him what had happened. He asked me to call Brother Wright to set up a home teaching appointment for the next

evening, which I did. Brother Wright was both congenial and accepting. We had a great visit with the family and set up another appointment. I left their home with a greater testimony of fasting and prayer and of the importance of being a home teacher.

Later that week we learned that Brother Wright had allowed the full-time missionaries to start teaching his 15-year-old daughter. She had been praying for months that her father would soften his heart and let her be baptized. Over time the family began attending church, and Brother Wright eventually consented to his daughter's baptism. In fact, he was the one who baptized her.

I'm grateful that Brother Erickson was in tune with the Spirit. His insights during this experience helped me gain a greater testimony of the power and potential of dedicated home teaching. ■

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