

FEELING HIS LOVE THROUGH SERVICE

By Mishelle Wasden



ETERNALLY IMPORTANT SERVICE

“Perhaps the most familiar and most important examples of unselfish service and sacrifice are performed in our families. Mothers devote themselves to the bearing and nurturing of their children. Husbands give themselves to supporting their wives and children. The sacrifices involved in the eternally important service to our families are too numerous to mention and too familiar to need mention.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Sacrifice,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2012, 22.

It was two weeks before Christmas, and the familiar stress of the season was upon me. I had presents to buy, a tree to decorate, and gifts to deliver.

For several months I had felt overwhelmed by the daily tasks that face a mother of five young children. I had even felt mechanical in my Church attendance as I wrestled with my little ones on the bench. I longed for an increase of the Spirit and of spiritual experiences in my life.

About this time my sister purchased a new home in a neighboring state and was trying to get things settled before Christmas. That would be a lot of work for any family, but for hers it would be even more difficult. My sister was eight months pregnant, a mother of two small children, and the caregiver of her quadriplegic husband.

Realizing the struggle she faced, I called her to see how things were progressing. She was optimistic about the move and hopeful that members of her new ward would be supportive. After our conversation I hung up the phone, wishing her good luck and wondering how I could help

from 400 miles (650 km) away.

That evening the thought kept coming to my mind that I needed to be there to help. But as I looked at my schedule, I dismissed the thought and went to bed.

The next morning I awoke with the same prompting. The feeling was so strong this time that I could not deny it. I called my husband and said, “I need to go help my sister.” Without hesitation, he responded, “I’ve been thinking the same thing.”

I called my sister, told her my plans, and booked a flight for that afternoon. I quickly packed my suitcase, kissed my children good-bye, and headed to the airport.

Over the next three days I unpacked boxes, organized rooms, and helped decorate a Christmas tree. After most of the boxes were unpacked, I sat with my sister and her family, admiring their pretty tree. My five-year-old niece, pleased that her family was ready for Christmas, exclaimed, “This is going to be a great Christmas!”

As I flew home, I knew that by giving part of myself to this sweet family,

I had felt the Spirit, which I had been yearning to feel. It came because I had served others.

It is easy to talk about giving service at Christmastime, as long as giving that service fits into our schedules and doesn’t cost much or take us out of our comfort zone. But to really feel the true spirit of Christmas, we need to reach beyond ourselves. Doing so helps us comprehend the love our Savior has for each of us. ■