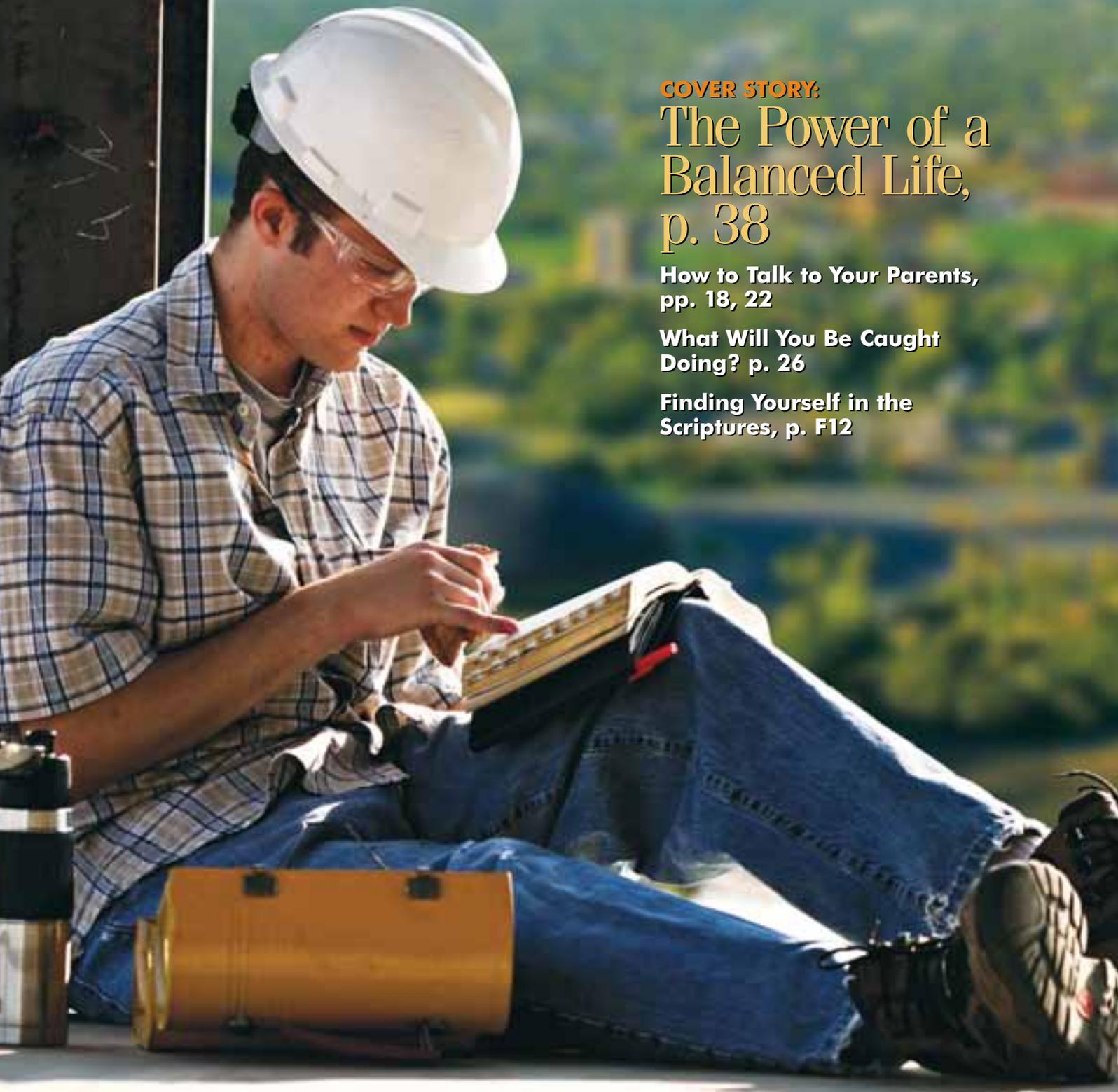


# Liahona



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Balanced Life,  
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Lessons from the  
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## FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

*These teaching suggestions can  
be used in the classroom as  
well as in the home. You  
may tailor these ideas to  
your family or class.*

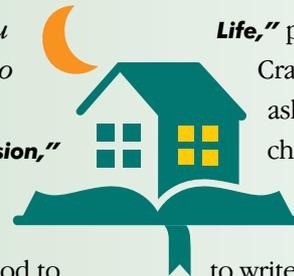
**"A Split-Second Decision,"**

p. 8: Discuss the idea  
that sacrifice can mean  
giving up something good to  
have something even better.  
Explain that "sacrifice brings forth  
the blessings of heaven" (*Hymns*,  
no. 27). Read Hugo's story;  
then discuss the blessings he

received because of his sacrifice.

**"Choosing Liberty and Eternal  
Life,"** p. 26: After relating Elder

Craig A. Cardon's experience,  
ask family members to  
choose a topic (such as edu-  
cation, finance, nutri-  
tion), and invite them  
to write down examples of how  
good choices in that area lead to  
more freedom. Allow them to share  
their examples. Emphasize that we  
are free to choose our behavior but  
not the consequences.



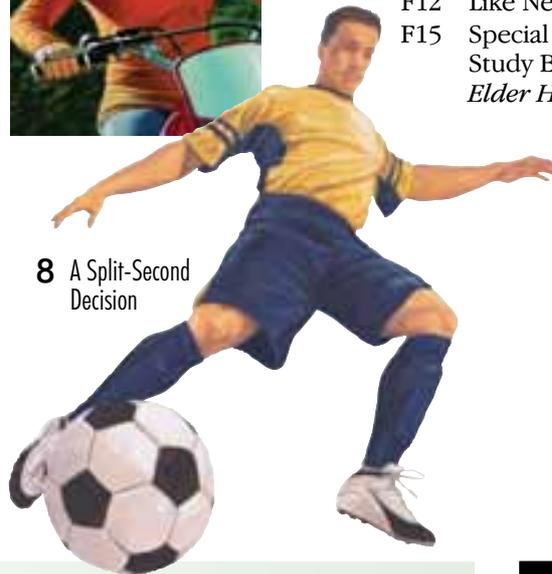
As you look for the French CTR ring hidden in this issue, think about how studying the scriptures can help you choose the right:



## FOR YOUTH

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## 18 Talking with Dad



## 8 A Split-Second Decision

**“Living a Balanced Life,”** p. 38: Give a family member a stack of several large items to hold. After letting the person struggle to balance the items for a moment, give the person a bag or basket to place the items in. Compare the items to our responsibilities and the bag to placing our burdens on the Lord. Share ideas from the section “Guidance of the Spirit,” and discuss how we can find balance if we let the Lord help us.

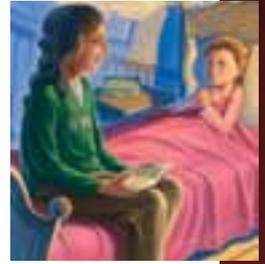
**“My Family History Miracle,”** p. F6: As a family, make a treat (such

as cookies) that takes some time to make. Read aloud this story, emphasizing the part about having to wait to find the ancestors’ names. How is this idea similar to waiting for the treat? Plan a time to visit a family history library to start or continue researching your own family history.

**“Like Nephi,”** p. F12: After retelling Tanya’s story, discuss what Nephi did when his family left their homeland (see 1 Nephi 2:16). What experiences in your life could you apply Nephi’s example to?

## THE FRIEND: FOR CHILDREN

- F2 Come Listen to a Prophet’s Voice: Do Your Duty *President Thomas S. Monson*
- F4 Sharing Time: The Power That I Get Each Time I Read  
*Linda Christensen*
- F6 My Family History Miracle  
*Matthew Mangum*
- F8 For Little Friends: Lehi and Nephi Obey God *Val Chadwick Bagley*
- F10 From the Life of the Prophet Joseph Smith: An Operation on Joseph’s Leg
  - F12 Like Nephi *Sheralee B. Hardy*
  - F15 Special Witness: How Can My Scripture Study Be More Meaningful?  
*Elder Henry B. Eyring*
  - F16 Coloring Page



## F12 Like Nephi

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# Feeding His Lambs



BY PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING  
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

**T**he Savior taught Peter and His other Apostles and disciples why and how they were to nourish others. You remember that in the Bible account He fed them before He taught them. He had been crucified and then resurrected. His servants had gone to Galilee. They had fished through the night, catching nothing. When they drew near to shore in the dawn, they did not at first recognize Him. He called out to them, telling them where to cast their nets, and when they did as He told them, the nets were filled. They rushed to greet Him on the shore.

They found a fire of coals with fish cooking and bread. I have often wondered who laid the fire, caught the fish, and cooked the meal, but it was the Master who prepared

His disciples to be fed more than fish and bread. He let them eat first. And then He taught them of spiritual feeding. And He gave a commandment to them that still stands for each of us.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea,

Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs” (John 21:15).

## Our Covenant to Nourish

The Saints of God have always been under covenant to nourish each other spiritually, especially those tender in the gospel. We are blessed to live in a time when a great increase in that capacity to nourish new members of the Church must and therefore will be poured out upon the faithful Saints. That power has been given before among the Lord’s people. This is the description of how the Lord’s people did it once in a time recounted in the Book of Mormon: “They were numbered . . . that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith” (Moroni 6:4).

All of us have tried at some time to nourish another person’s faith. Most of us have felt the concern of others for our own faith, and with it we have felt their love. More than a few of us have had a child look up to us and say, “Would you like to go to church with

*The Saints of God have always been under covenant to nourish each other spiritually, especially those tender in the gospel.*





**T**he Holy Ghost will be our companion. The fear of not knowing what to say and of being rejected will be taken from us. The newcomer will not appear to be a stranger to us.

me?” or, “Would you pray with me?” And we have had our disappointments. Someone we love may not have accepted our attempts to nourish his or her faith. We know from painful experience that God respects the choice of His children not to be nourished. Yet this is a time to feel renewed optimism and hope



that our power to nourish will be increased.

The Lord through His living prophet has told us that He will preserve the bounteous harvest of new converts entering the waters of baptism. And the Lord will do it through us. So we can have confidence that by doing simple things, things that even a child can do, we will be granted greater power to nourish tender faith.

The place to start is with our own hearts. What we want with all our hearts will determine in large degree whether we can claim our right to the companionship of the Holy Ghost, without which there can be no spiritual nourishing. We can begin today to try to see those we are to nourish as our Heavenly Father sees them and so feel some of what He feels for them.

Those new members of the Church are His children. He has known them and they have known Him in the world before this one. His purpose and that of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is to have them return to Him and to give them eternal life if they will only choose it. He has led and sustained His missionaries by the Holy Spirit to find and teach and baptize them. He allowed His Son to pay the price of their sins. Our Father and the Savior see those converts as tender lambs, purchased with a price we cannot fathom.

A mortal parent may appreciate, in some small way, the feelings of a loving Heavenly Father. When our children come to the age when they must leave our direct care, we feel anxiety for their safety and concern that



those who are to help them will not fail them. We can feel at least some of the Father’s and the Savior’s love for the new members of the Church and the trust They place in us to nourish.

#### **Our Dependence on the Spirit**

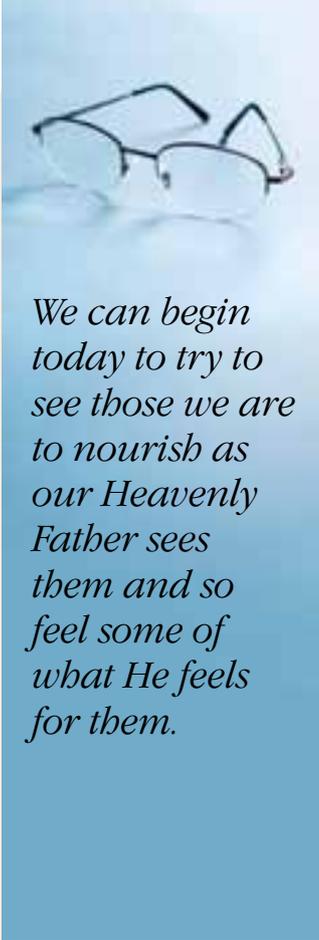
Those feelings in our hearts for the new members will go far to qualify us for the help

of the Spirit and thus overcome the fears that may deter us from our sacred responsibility. It is wise to fear that our own skills are inadequate to meet the charge we have to nourish the faith of others. Our own abilities, however great, will not be enough. But that realistic view of our limitations creates a humility that can lead to dependence on the Spirit and thus to power.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) told us to have courage despite our weaknesses: “In addressing a congregation, though the speaker be unable to say more than half a dozen sentences, and those awkwardly constructed, if his heart is pure before God, those few broken sentences are of more value than the greatest eloquence without the Spirit of the Lord and of more real worth in the sight of God, angels, and all good men. In praying, though a person’s words be few and awkwardly expressed, if the heart is pure before God, that prayer will avail more than the eloquence of a Cicero [a first century B.C. Roman orator]. What does the Lord, the Father of us all, care about our mode of expression? The simple, honest heart is of more avail with the Lord than all the pomp, pride, splendor, and eloquence produced by men. When he looks upon a heart full of sincerity, integrity, and child-like simplicity, he sees a principle that will endure forever—“That is the spirit of my own kingdom—the spirit I have given to my children.”<sup>1</sup>

A child can do the things that will give us power to nourish the faith of others. Children could invite a recent convert to come with them to a meeting. Children could smile and greet a new member coming into a chapel or into a class. So can we. And as surely as we do, the Holy Ghost will be our companion. The fear of not knowing what to say and of being rejected will be taken from us. The newcomer will not appear to be a stranger to us. And the Holy Ghost will begin nourishing him or her even before we have spoken of gospel truths.

It does not require a calling more than being a member



*We can begin today to try to see those we are to nourish as our Heavenly Father sees them and so feel some of what He feels for them.*

to nourish by reaching out in kindness. Those of us who have no calling to teach or to preach can nourish with the good word of God if we prepare for it. We can do it every time we speak with a new member and every time we participate in a class discussion. We need help from the Spirit to speak the words that will nourish and strengthen.

### **Two Keys to Receiving Help**

There are two great keys to inviting the Spirit to guide what words we speak as we feed others. They are the daily study of the scriptures and the prayer of faith.

The Holy Ghost will guide what we say if we study and ponder the scriptures every day. The words of the scriptures invite the Holy Spirit. The Lord said it this way: “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men” (D&C 11:21). With daily study of the scriptures, we can count on this blessing even in casual conversations or in a class when we may be asked by a teacher to respond to a question. We will experience the power the Lord promised: “Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man” (D&C 84:85).

We treasure the word of God not only by reading the words of the scriptures but by studying them. We may be nourished more by pondering a few words, allowing the Holy Ghost to make them treasures to us, than by passing quickly and superficially over whole chapters of scripture.



**H**earfelt,  
constant  
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and serve.



Just as pondering the scriptures invites the Holy Ghost, so does daily pleading in prayer. If we do not ask in prayer, He will rarely come, and without our petition, He is not likely to linger. “And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:14). Heartfelt, constant pleading for the companionship of the Holy Ghost, with the pure intent to nourish our Father’s children, will surely bring blessings to us and to those we love and serve.

The good word of God with which we must nourish is the simple doctrine of the gospel. We need not fear either simplicity or repetition.

The Lord Himself described how that doctrine goes into the hearts of men and women to nourish them:

“This is my doctrine, and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me; and I bear record of the Father, and the Father beareth record of me, and the Holy Ghost

beareth record of the Father and me; and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me.

“And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God.

“And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned.

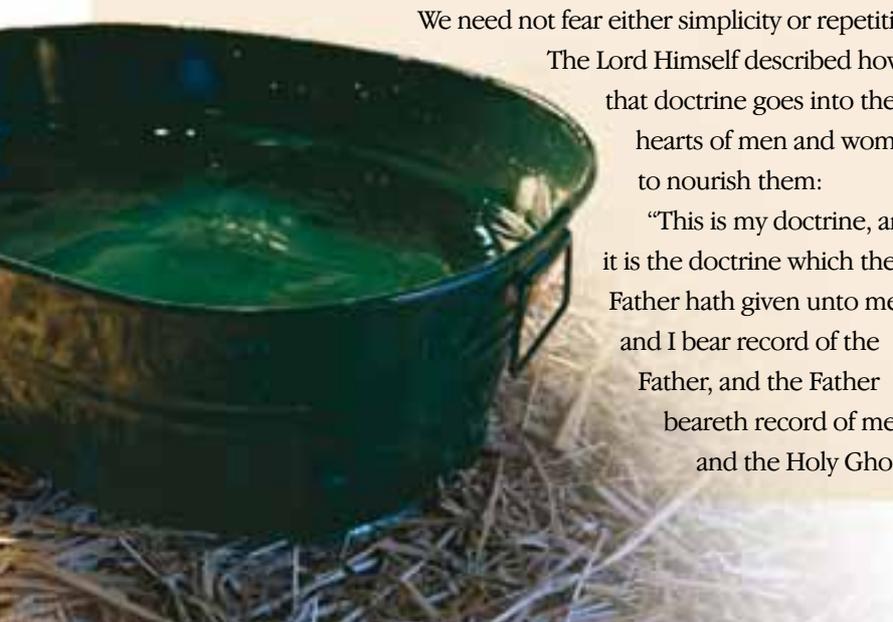
“Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father; and whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear record of me, for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost” (3 Nephi 11:32–35).

The Lord went on to describe those who would be nourished by that simple doctrine and so endure, those who would inherit the celestial kingdom, as those who were childlike. It takes a childlike heart to feel the promptings of the Spirit, to surrender to those commands, and to obey. That is what it takes to be nourished by the good word of God.

### **The Tenderness of Lambs**

And that is why we can be so optimistic in our charge to nourish the new members of the Church. However much or little they knew of the doctrine, they have just submitted humbly to the ordinance of baptism and received the right to the companionship of the Holy Ghost. And so the very tenderness of their faith, which leads the Savior to refer to them as lambs, comes at a time when they have proven themselves willing to do what the Savior asks of them.

If the full requirements of their new membership are explained clearly and with love and if the opportunity to serve in the Church is extended wisely and their performance in that service judged with charity and nurtured



with patient encouragement, they will be strengthened by the companionship of the Holy Ghost, and then they will be nurtured by power beyond our own. As they endure, even the gates of hell will not prevail against them.

President Brigham Young made the promise of how their strength to stand would grow: “Those who humble themselves before the Lord, and wait upon him with a perfect heart and willing mind, will receive little by little, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, ‘now and again,’ as [Brother] John Taylor says, until they receive a certain amount. Then they have to nourish and cherish what they receive, and make it their constant companion, encouraging every good thought, doctrine and principle, and doing every good work they can perform, until by and by the Lord is in them a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.”<sup>2</sup>

That is what it means in Moroni when it says, “Relying

alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith” (Moroni 6:4). It is the Savior who made possible our being purified through His Atonement and our obedience to His commandments. And it is the Savior who will nourish those who go down in faith into the waters of baptism and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. When they always remember Him and when they continue in childlike obedience, it is He who will ensure that they have His Spirit always to be with them.

You and I can and will by small means be part of a great work. We will study and pray and serve to qualify for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. We will then be allowed to see the new members as precious, beloved children of our Heavenly Father, and we will be led to nourish them with love, with opportunity to serve, and with the good word of God. And then we will see in our own time what the great missionary Ammon described to his missionary companions, just as we are now companions to the missionaries laboring across the world:

“Behold, the field was ripe, and blessed are ye, for ye did thrust in the sickle, and did reap with your might, yea, all the day long did ye labor; and behold the number of your sheaves! And they shall be gathered into the garners, that they are not wasted.

“Yea, they shall not be beaten down by the storm at the last day; yea, neither shall they be harrowed up by the whirlwinds; but when the storm cometh they shall be gathered together in their place, that the storm cannot penetrate to them; yea, neither shall they be driven with fierce winds whithersoever the enemy listeth to carry them.

“But behold, they are in the hands of the Lord of the harvest, and they are his; and he will raise them up at the last day” (Alma 26:5–7).

We can by simple obedience help the Lord to take the lambs, His lambs, into His hands and take them in His arms home to their Father and our Father. I know that God will pour out the powers of heaven upon us as we join in preserving that sacred harvest of souls. ■

## IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. After a family member reads the first three paragraphs of the message, ask the family: Why do you think the Lord fed His disciples before teaching them? How can we strengthen new members in our ward (or branch)?
2. Consider with family members some gospel doctrines that, if obeyed, would bless people they know. Discuss ways they could share or reinforce those doctrines with those people.
3. If the family you visit has children, consider showing a picture of a lamb. Ask, Why do lambs need to be watched over and cared for? Explain that people, like lambs, sometimes need help. Sharing the gospel, being a friend, or helping others through difficulties is similar to what a good shepherd does for sheep. Make a plan to help a neighbor, friend, or family member by completing a simple act of service.

### NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 149.
2. “Discourse,” *Deseret News*, Mar. 25, 1857, 21.

# A Split-Second

*Playing football taught me to make split-second decisions. Then in one moment, I had to decide between my dream and the Lord's.*

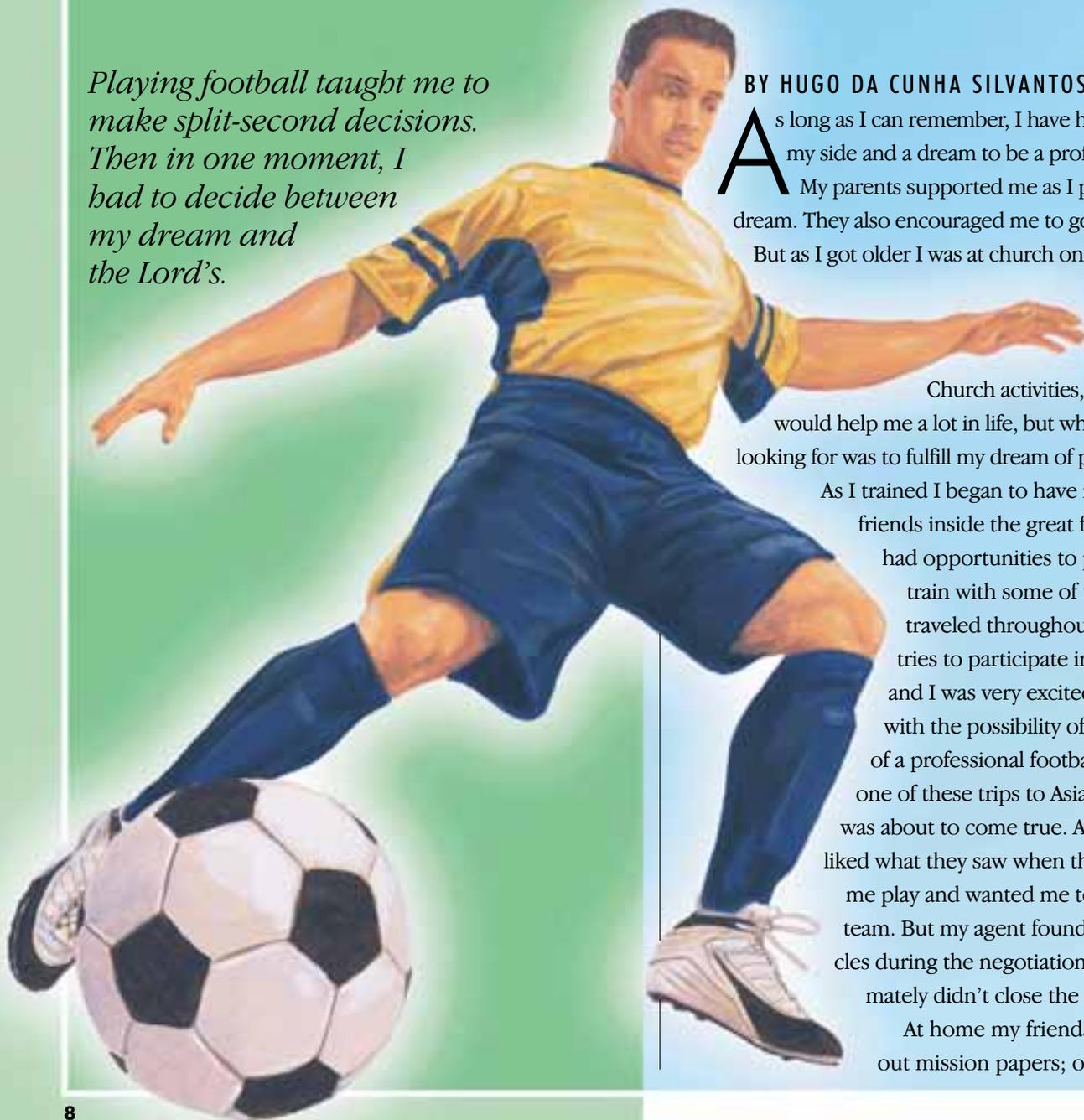
BY HUGO DA CUNHA SILVANTOS RODRIGUES

As long as I can remember, I have had a football at my side and a dream to be a professional player. My parents supported me as I pursued this dream. They also encouraged me to go to church.

But as I got older I was at church only when I didn't have a game. I knew that the gospel, Church activities, and my friends would help me a lot in life, but what I was really looking for was to fulfill my dream of playing football.

As I trained I began to have important friends inside the great football clubs. I had opportunities to play and even train with some of these clubs. I traveled throughout various countries to participate in tournaments, and I was very excited and happy with the possibility of living the life of a professional football player. On one of these trips to Asia, my dream was about to come true. A large club liked what they saw when they watched me play and wanted me to join the team. But my agent found some obstacles during the negotiation, and we ultimately didn't close the contract.

At home my friends were filling out mission papers; others were

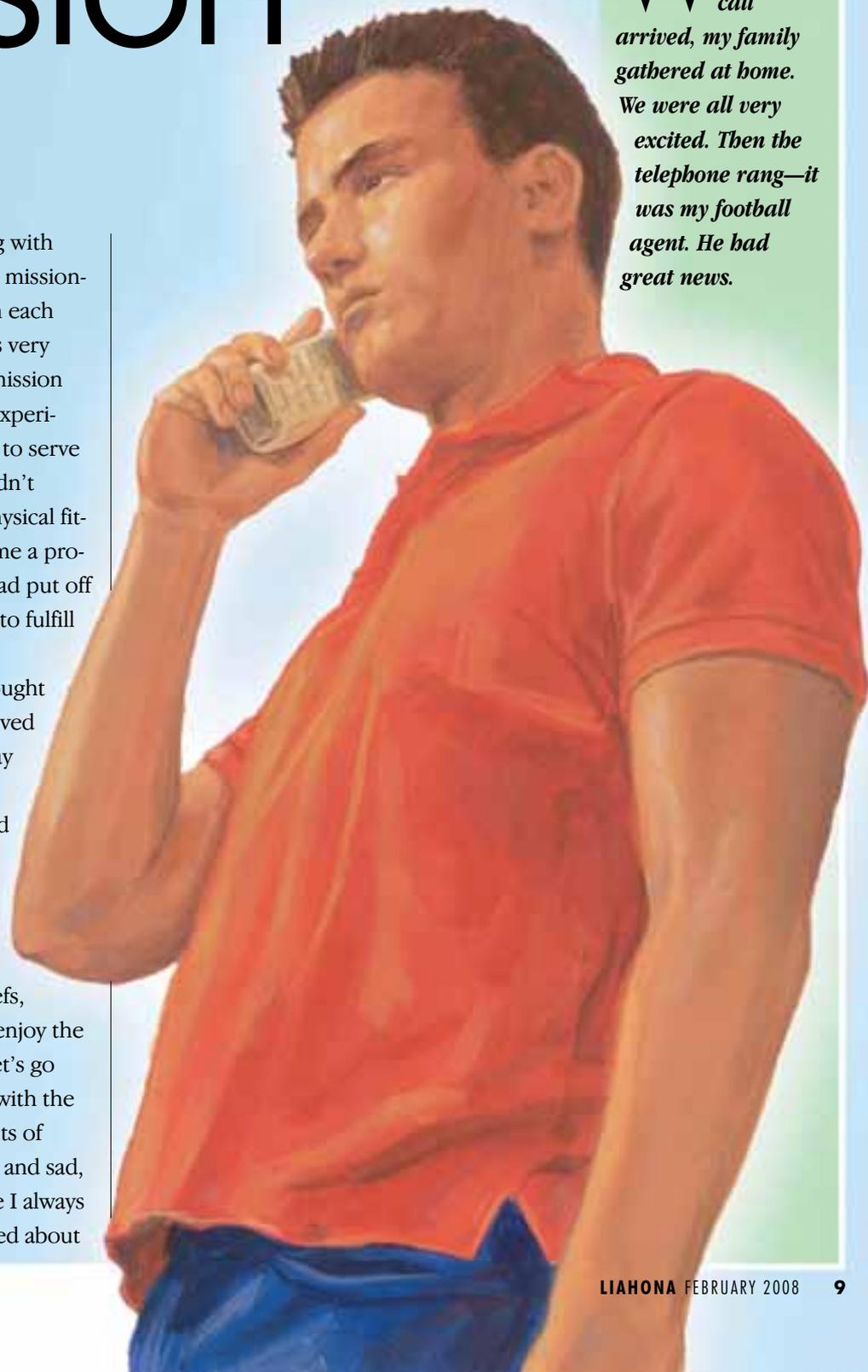


# Decision

returning from missions and telling with enthusiasm what it was like to be a missionary. Their eyes shone with emotion each time they spoke, and the Spirit was very strong. I felt the desire to serve a mission too; I wanted to have these same experiences. But I worried that if I chose to serve a mission, my football dream wouldn't come true because I would lose physical fitness and agility. My desire to become a professional player was enormous; I had put off college and worked and lived only to fulfill this dream.

On my football trips I always brought a copy of the Book of Mormon. I loved the words of the prophets, their way of life, their determination to obey the commandments, and their good example for their people. I felt ashamed of not being an example for the other players and not putting the things of God first. Sometimes I tried to share my beliefs, but what I always heard was "Let's enjoy the trip. Forget about this nonsense. Let's go have fun!" I started to get irritated with the gossip, dishonesty, and other aspects of football life. Many times I felt alone and sad, and I knew there was a place where I always felt happy and had friends who cared about

**W**hen my mission call arrived, my family gathered at home. We were all very excited. Then the telephone rang—it was my football agent. He had great news.



**O**n my mission I learned that the best way to be happy is to do what Heavenly Father wants us to do. My mission was the best choice I have ever made.

me—friends who were together at activities and dances, in seminary and institute classes—celestial friends. I missed these things very much.

One Sunday when I wasn't traveling, I went to church in my home ward in Brazil. At the end of the meetings, the bishop called me into his office to talk. I knew that we were going to talk about a mission because everyone my age was returning home. The bishop challenged me to serve a mission, and I tried to change the subject, saying that I wasn't prepared. I tried to put off the bishop in every possible way, but he persevered and convinced me of the value of a mission. We ended the conversation with a goal for my preparation.

Some months later I turned in my papers, and I also continued with my training. For the moment, I had managed to reconcile football and the Church in my mind. But little did I know that it couldn't last for long. I would have to choose.

When my call arrived, my family gathered at home. We were all very excited. Then the telephone rang.

On the other end of the line, my football agent told me that he had obtained a good contract with a European club. My imagination soared! I could see the stadium full of people coming to watch the games. I thought of the beautiful house and car and salary I could have. My dream was about to be fulfilled. It

was within my grasp—and then I looked at the envelope

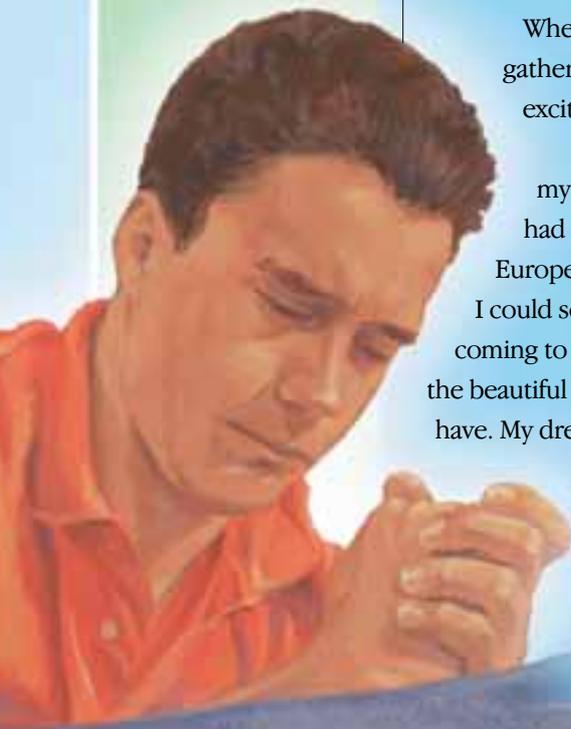
with the call sitting beside the phone.

My eyes began to fill with tears. For a moment my life passed as if it were a movie. On the phone, my agent asked me what I thought of the news. I was silent. I couldn't talk, and my legs were shaking. I didn't want this moment to be real, but it was! I had to make a decision, the most difficult of any decision in my life.

With my voice shaking, I finally told him that I had already obtained a better contract. I would be a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for two years. I thanked the agent for the opportunity and for his work and effort on my behalf. Then I hung up the phone and went to my room, where I cried for a long time. I knew that the opportunity wouldn't wait for two years, and my football dream would not be realized.

I knelt and prayed to Heavenly Father, asking for comfort. I felt a quiet and sweet voice respond, comforting my heart by saying, "My son, you are already part of the best team in the world." I reflected on these words and still reflect on them today.

Today, home from serving in the Brazil Fortaleza Mission, I don't regret my choice in any way. The true Church of Jesus Christ is available to anyone who wants to be happy. And on my mission I learned that the best way to be happy is doing what Heavenly Father wants us to do. My mission was the best choice I have ever made in my life. It taught me that all who seek first the kingdom of God will have a place on the Lord's team (see Matthew 6:33). ■



# STILL CALLED TO SERVE

*Even though I was honorably excused from a full-time mission, I was able to serve in a meaningful way.*

BY PETER JAMES MARRELLI

As a boy and a young man, I prepared to serve a full-time proselytizing mission for the Church. Like Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles counseled us, I wanted to *be* a missionary, not just to *go* on a mission.<sup>1</sup> But because of my medical challenges, the Missionary Department informed me that it was not in my best interest to face the stress of a full-time mission. Although it would have been easy to become bitter, I had prepared to serve my Savior, and I was prepared to accept His will for me.

## **My Opportunity**

What happened to me is called being honorably excused. That means that Church leaders saw my worthiness and my desire to serve but encouraged me to serve in other ways. Like many others who cannot serve a full-time mission, I felt prompted to do more than just “get on with my life.” I wanted to serve, so I did—as a local Church-service missionary. With help from my bishop and stake president, I found a way to serve the Lord while living at home.

There was a need at the Church’s Audiovisual Department, and since

I live near the Church Office Building in Salt Lake City, I could help. My stake president extended a call, set me apart, and developed special rules for me during my year of service. Though the rules seemed strict to me, I learned that I was blessed when I followed them. While other service missionaries with different stake presidents



**W**hether I was winding cable or helping with broadcasts, my Church-service mission helped me build confidence and a sense of respect. I felt the Lord's influence and help in doing difficult and demanding things.

may have different rules, these were the ones I followed:

1. Stick to a daily schedule: arise at 6:30 a.m.; study the scriptures and *Preach My Gospel* for two hours each day; exercise for 30 minutes each day; go to bed at 10:30 p.m.
2. Follow the Church's dress code.
3. Listen to classical or Church music only.
4. Limit computer use to e-mail; limited television viewing; no video games.
5. Participate only in group activities—no dating.
6. Have monthly interviews with my bishop.

Sometimes when I was down in a crawl space under a building in 100-degree heat (38°C) winding up cable all day, I found



when we are in the service of our fellow beings we are in the service of God, but it took me a while to believe that was true.

I learned that just like a proselytizing mission, a service mission isn't about you. It is about learning to do what the Lord needs done. During my service, I helped set up and take down lights, run sound for meetings, and transport equipment. It was hard, dirty work, and I will never take general conference for granted. In fact, now when I watch any broadcast, my whole body aches because I know the intense work involved.

#### **It's about Work**

During my Church-service mission, I learned the importance of punctuality, responsibility, doing the job right, and giving my best effort. While my parents had tried to teach me these things, I didn't understand until I saw how wasting time and effort can directly affect the work of others. Before my mission, it was easy to focus on just having fun. But once you are on your mission, you realize it will not be fun to be the companion who doesn't know how to work. Part of preparing to serve is learning how to work.

#### **What Else I Learned**

I also learned to appreciate those who work behind the scenes. I saw how hard Church leaders work without drawing attention to themselves or expecting special treatment. I saw others serving who had



myself wondering what it had to do with bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man (see Moses 1:39). Was I really part of the team sharing the gospel around the world? I knew that Mosiah 2:17 says that

## OTHER WAYS TO SERVE

Because of health problems or other circumstances, some people cannot serve a full-time proselytizing mission. If you have been excused from full-time missionary service but would like to serve the Lord in some other way, ask your bishop or branch president to discuss the possibilities with you. He and the stake or district president can help you find Church-service mission opportunities in your area. Some places you might serve include:

- **A seminary or institute**, working in an office, at a reception desk, or as computer support.
- **A welfare facility**, such as a cannery, bishops' storehouse, Deseret Industries, employment center, or other welfare facility.
- **A Church-owned farm or ranch**, doing chores or clerical work.
- **A meetinghouse**, helping with building maintenance.

Outside of your Church-service mission hours, you can also serve by performing baptisms for the dead.

By serving in the Church, you show your love for the Lord and your commitment to your baptismal covenant. And service helps build the Lord's kingdom on earth.



greater challenges than I did, teaching me that everyone can serve in some way.

I realized that I have been blessed with strengths and abilities and that through hard work I could do more than I had been doing. I learned that as I respect other people, I like myself better. It's easy to get in the habit of looking down on people in order to try to feel better about ourselves. But respect works both ways, and those who represent Jesus Christ must be respectful.

The most important lesson I learned, however, was that the Lord will help you do difficult things. It was hard

to stay home, hard to do menial chores, hard not to be the center of attention, hard to obey mission rules, and hard to hear people tell me I wasn't on a "real" mission. But the Lord helped me. I know He will help you do the things you need to do to be happy, to feel good about yourself, to grow, and to be a better person. Get down on your knees, bow your head, and be honest with yourself as you pray. Then get ready to serve wherever and whenever you are called. ■

### NOTE

1. See "Becoming a Missionary," *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 44.

# Tempering Our Tempers

*May we rise up and be men and women of God, mastering our tempers so that peace and love may abound in our homes.*

**BY DOUGLAS E. BRINLEY**

Professor of Church History and Doctrine,  
Brigham Young University

As I have taught marriage and family courses and read papers in which students recount their relationships with their parents, it has become obvious over the years that anger, if uncontrolled, can be a great destroyer of marriage and family relationships. The sin of anger (see Joseph Smith Translation, Ephesians 4:26) not only harms relationships but also corrodes character.

I can think of no positive context for displaying anger, though certainly righteous indignation and the righting of wrongs can be justified. The scriptures indicate that *undisciplined* anger is always cankerous and destructive. It is one of Satan's primary tools for destroying marriages and family relations.

The Lord has referred to Satan as "the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another" (3 Nephi 11:29). The Savior declared to the Nephites, "Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things *should be done away*" (3 Nephi 11:30; emphasis added).

## **Replacing Anger with Encouragement**

One class assignment I give to my students is to write a paper on their family background. Specifically, I ask them to describe their parents' strengths, weaknesses, and marriage. Perhaps the most common negative dimension of family life mentioned in student papers is the father's temper, though bad tempers aren't restricted to fathers. Even when fathers are active in Church callings, read scriptures with the family, and give service to others, some still struggle to control their anger.

Of course children see fathers (and mothers) as more temperamental because of the need for parents to discipline children, and few youngsters, at the time, thank their parents for correction. But college-age students look back with more objectivity at their home life and appraise both the good and the bad. Many admit that they wish their parents had been stricter with them! However, many carry scars from events that happened at an early age.

One young woman recalled that her father often yelled, threatened, and severely spanked his children. If one of the children did something wrong during the day, all of them would hide when their father returned from work.

Contrast this with the approach taken by the father of President Gordon B. Hinckley: "I will be forever grateful for a father who never laid a hand in anger upon his children," said President Hinckley. "Somehow he had the wonderful talent to let them know what was expected of them and to give them encouragement in achieving it."<sup>1</sup>

Commenting on the lasting impact fathers have on their children, President Hinckley added: "I am persuaded that



**F**athers have immense influence on their children. How blessed is the son or daughter who has a father who cares, teaches, chastens with love, and influences his children to become better people.

**T**he Lord and the prophets tell us that we already know how to control anger. The problem of anger results from not understanding and applying the doctrines of the gospel.

violent fathers produce violent sons. I am satisfied that such punishment in most instances does more damage than good. Children don't need beating. They need love and encouragement. They need fathers to whom they can look with respect rather than fear. Above all, they need example."<sup>2</sup>

Regarding fathers who set aside self-discipline and become abusive when they lose their tempers, President Hinckley warned: "No man who engages in such evil and unbecoming behavior is worthy of the priesthood of God. No man who so conducts himself is worthy of the privileges of the house of the Lord. I regret that there are some men undeserving of the love of their wives and children. There are children who fear their fathers, and wives who fear their husbands."<sup>3</sup>

President Hinckley has called such fathers to repentance. "Discipline yourselves. Master your temper," he said. "Most of the things that make you angry are of very small consequence. And what a terrible price you are paying for your anger. Ask the Lord to forgive you. Ask your wife to forgive you. Apologize to your children."<sup>4</sup>

#### **The Power of a Righteous Example**

Now consider the kind of exemplary behavior that prompted one young man to write the following about his father:

"I have never ever heard my father curse. To me this is a great source of strength because my father is my greatest living example

of how to live a good Latter-day Saint life. Having had such a good example to follow makes all the little decisions in life all that much easier. When I catch myself doing things that I saw my father do, I am even more thankful for a righteous father who lived the gospel of Jesus Christ every single day. I will forever be in the debt of my dad for showing me the way that Christ would have lived."

Fathers have immense influence on their children. How blessed is the son or daughter who has a father who cares, teaches, chastens with love, and influences his children to become better people, better husbands or wives, better fathers or mothers. Temper does not engender feelings of love and trust in the hearts of the recipients of anger. Instead, it generates heartache and memories of an unpleasant childhood that are too often passed on to the next generation.

#### **Mastery of Temper**

So how does someone who struggles with anger learn self-discipline? The world would try to help people conquer their tempers by setting up some kind of behavior modification program that might take years and yet produce only marginal results. But the Lord and the prophets tell us that we already know how to control anger. The problem of anger results from not understanding and applying the doctrines of the gospel. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said: "True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior. The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior."<sup>5</sup>

The doctrine of repentance specifically applies to the sin of anger; it can bring the





healing power of the Atonement into our lives. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “You can change anything you want to change and you can do it very fast. That’s another Satanic sucker-punch—that it takes years and years and eons of eternity to repent. It takes exactly as long to repent as it takes you to say ‘I’ll change’—and mean it. Of course there will be problems to work out and restitutions to make. You may well spend—indeed you had better spend—the rest of your life proving your repentance by its permanence. But change, growth, renewal, repentance can come for you as instantaneously as it did for Alma and the Sons of Mosiah.”<sup>6</sup>

Speaking about controlling anger, President Hinckley has taught: “Who can calculate the wounds inflicted, their depth and pain, by harsh and mean words spoken in anger? How pitiful a sight is a man who is strong in many ways but who loses all control of himself when some little thing, usually of no significant consequence, disturbs his equanimity. In every marriage there are, of course, occasional differences. But I find no justification for tempers that explode on the slightest provocation. . . .

“A violent temper is such a terrible, corrosive thing. And the tragedy is that it accomplishes no good; it only feeds evil with resentment and rebellion and pain. To any man or boy within the sound of my voice who has trouble controlling his tongue, may I suggest that you plead with the Lord for the strength to overcome your weakness, that you apologize to those you have offended, and that you marshal within yourselves the power to discipline your tongue.”<sup>7</sup>

Young people are perceptive and greatly affected by their parents’ example. May we rise up and be men and women of God, mastering our tempers so that peace and love may abound in our homes. The most important aspect of parenting is for a couple to have a good marriage and to set an example of love and patience for their children. The mastery of temper will pay dividends now and in the years ahead as children make homes and families of their own. ■

#### NOTES

1. “Save the Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 53.
2. *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 53.
3. “Women of the Church,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 68.
4. *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 68.
5. “Do Not Fear,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2004, 79.
6. “For Times of Trouble,” *New Era*, Oct. 1980, 11–12; see *Tambuli*, Jan. 1982, 9.
7. “Our Solemn Responsibilities,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 50–51.



# Talking with Dad

BY KJERSTEN JOHNSON

**W**e had just finished dinner at my grandparents' cabin, and I was outside playing with my five little brothers when my dad walked out and called to me.

Of course when your dad calls you like that, you're afraid you may be in trouble. So I trudged over and mumbled, "Yeah, Dad?"

Surprisingly, he said, "How would you like to go on a motorcycle ride with me?" I'm sure my eyes must have widened to the size of golf balls as I quickly responded, "Yes, of course I want to go."

Soon my dad was leading the way as we each drove a motorcycle down a path that winds through the majestic forest surrounding our cabin and then climbs to the top of a hill. As we rode, I was so excited that I could barely keep the throttle on low. Once or twice my dad had to tell me to slow down.

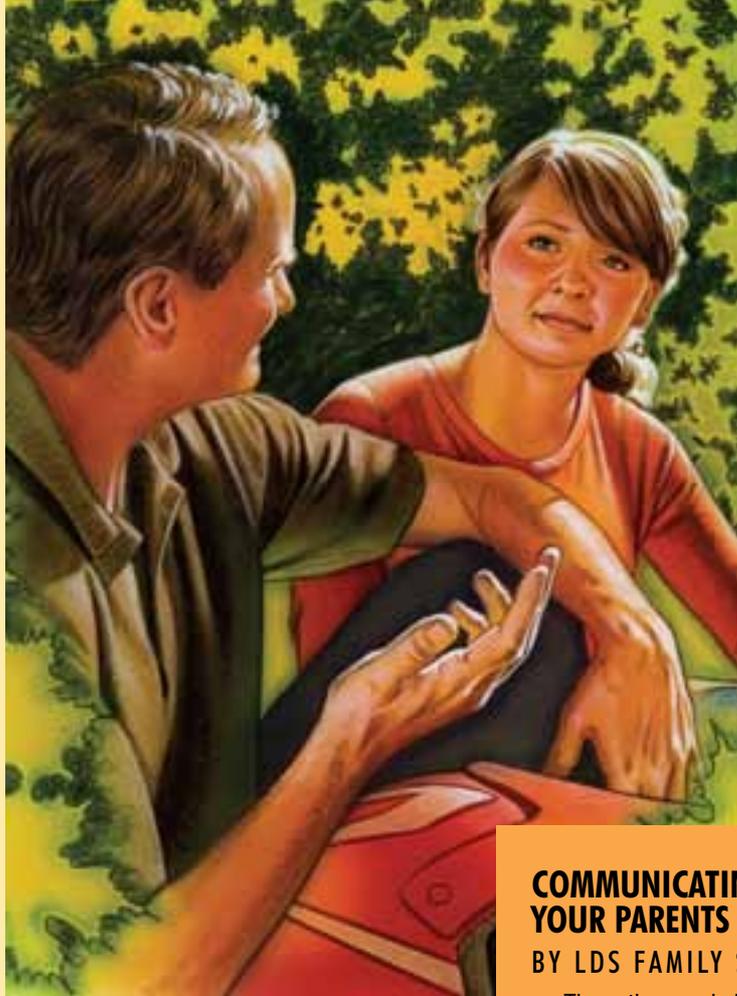
My mind wandered as we rode. I was curious why I had been given this special treat and my brothers hadn't. When we reached the top of the mountain, Dad said, "This looks like a nice place to stop and rest." So we parked our motorcycles and sat down

on some rocks overlooking the forest. We were both quiet for a moment, enjoying the beauty around us. As I glanced over at my dad, I noticed his thoughtful stare and knew something was coming.

He and I had never really talked a lot. I guess it was just too hard for him to express himself to anyone but my mom. Then he interrupted my thoughts and said, "Kjersten, your mother and I have been talking, and we have decided you are now mature enough to know some of the details concerning our marriage and family." I could tell by the words he used and by the way he said them that he had been planning this talk for a while.

His voice was soft as he began. "Your mother and I first met at the fire station where I was a student firefighter, and she worked in the office. We began dating, and I realized she was different from the other young women I had dated before. I was a carefree young man who had been brought up in another church. But I hadn't really paid too much attention to religion.

*I was so excited to go on a ride with just my dad. We ended up talking in a way we never had before.*



“I had very few values or goals at that time,” he continued, “and I really didn’t care.” He leaned forward and intently confided in me. “Kjersten, your mother set the most shining example of righteous living I had ever seen.” As he said this, a warm feeling swept over me.

My dad told me details concerning their marriage, my birth, and our family that I had never before heard. He told me the story of his conversion to the Church and how because they were first married civilly, they had to wait a year before they could be sealed in the temple. He also shared with me some of the adventures he and Mom went through in that first year of marriage. For the first time, pieces to a few little puzzles fell

into place. I finally understood why my parents’ marriage and sealing dates are different and why they say that the first year of their marriage was the hardest they ever had.

As he related these things to me, his eyes would sometimes flicker with sadness and other times crinkle with laughter. I don’t remember exactly how much I understood back then, but I distinctly remember the feelings of surprise, confusion, and love that alternately came over me.

This experience really made an impact on me. I realized

what a miracle families are, and it gave me a greater understanding of God’s plan. I also gained a greater faith in the gospel and an appreciation for the effects it can have on people’s lives. We discussed many things on that mountain, but there is one thing I will not forget. I have never felt so much gratitude and thankfulness in my heart as I did when my father told me of his strong love for God, the gospel, my mother, and our family. I realized the numerous ways the gospel had touched his life, as well as mine.

My father and I became very close that day. For the first time, I saw him as a real person with feelings and emotions and not just some ruling body who had to give me permission to have fun. I also think my dad learned more about me too. I will never forget that special talk with my dad and the feelings of love and understanding we shared. ■

## COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR PARENTS

BY LDS FAMILY SERVICES

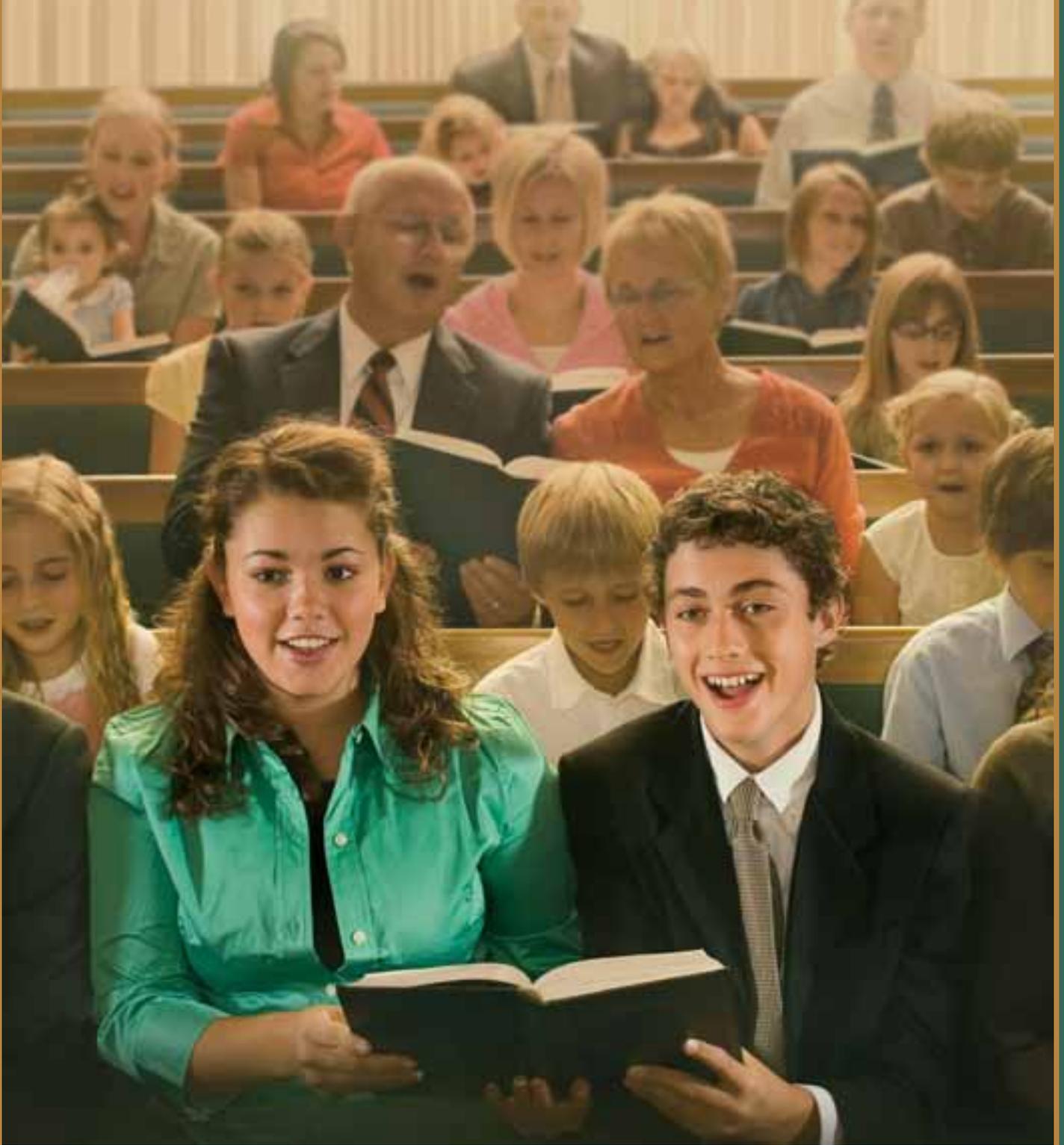
These tips can help you have positive communication with your parents and others.

- **Be open to opportunities for talking.** Sometimes opportunities for good communication arise when you’re least expecting them.
- **Listen with your heart.** Try to understand the motive and intent of what your parent is saying.
- **Show interest.** An attentive listener helps others feel safe enough to share their feelings.
- **Periodically summarize what you hear.** This shows that you’re sincerely listening to what your parent is saying.
- **Ask questions.** Questions can help both of you know that you’re on the right track.
- **Remember that parents are people too.** They have feelings, and they want to be close to you.

As you and your parents practice good communication skills, you can have a closer relationship that blesses you both.

# PRAY ALOUD

"THE SONG OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS A PRAYER UNTO ME" (D&C 25:12).



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER. POSED BY MODELS; IDEA BY MCCALL LITKE, JENNY GALI, AND KATE MILLER

# Questions & Answers

*“Sometimes my mom and I don’t get along. We say things we shouldn’t and end up with hurt feelings. I pray to love her, but the good feelings last only so long. What can I do to improve our relationship?”*

## L I A H O N A

**T**hat’s great that you want to improve your relationship with your mother. A good relationship with her will be a blessing. But a good relationship doesn’t mean you will agree with her on everything. And that’s OK. What isn’t OK is hurting one another as you express your differences of opinion.

As a first step to improve your relationship with your mom, try to understand her. That will be hard to do when you have hurt feelings, so talk when you are both calm. You could start by reading this article together and then talking about the issues you argue about—one issue at a time. When you have understood her, take your turn to share your thoughts and feelings, without accusing her.

You and your mom could even agree on a few basic rules such as speaking kindly, talking about things before they become a huge issue, and taking turns listening to one another. The Lord taught, “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger” (Proverbs 15:1), and, “Let one speak at

***Talk to your mother when you are both calm, and try to understand her.***

***Make sure the Holy Ghost can be with you and your mother as you talk.***

***Think about what you could change in yourself to have a better relationship with her.***

***Pray for humility, charity, and a change of heart.***

The Liahona’s response assumes that you and your mother are not abusive to one another. If abuse is involved, please talk to your bishop or branch president.

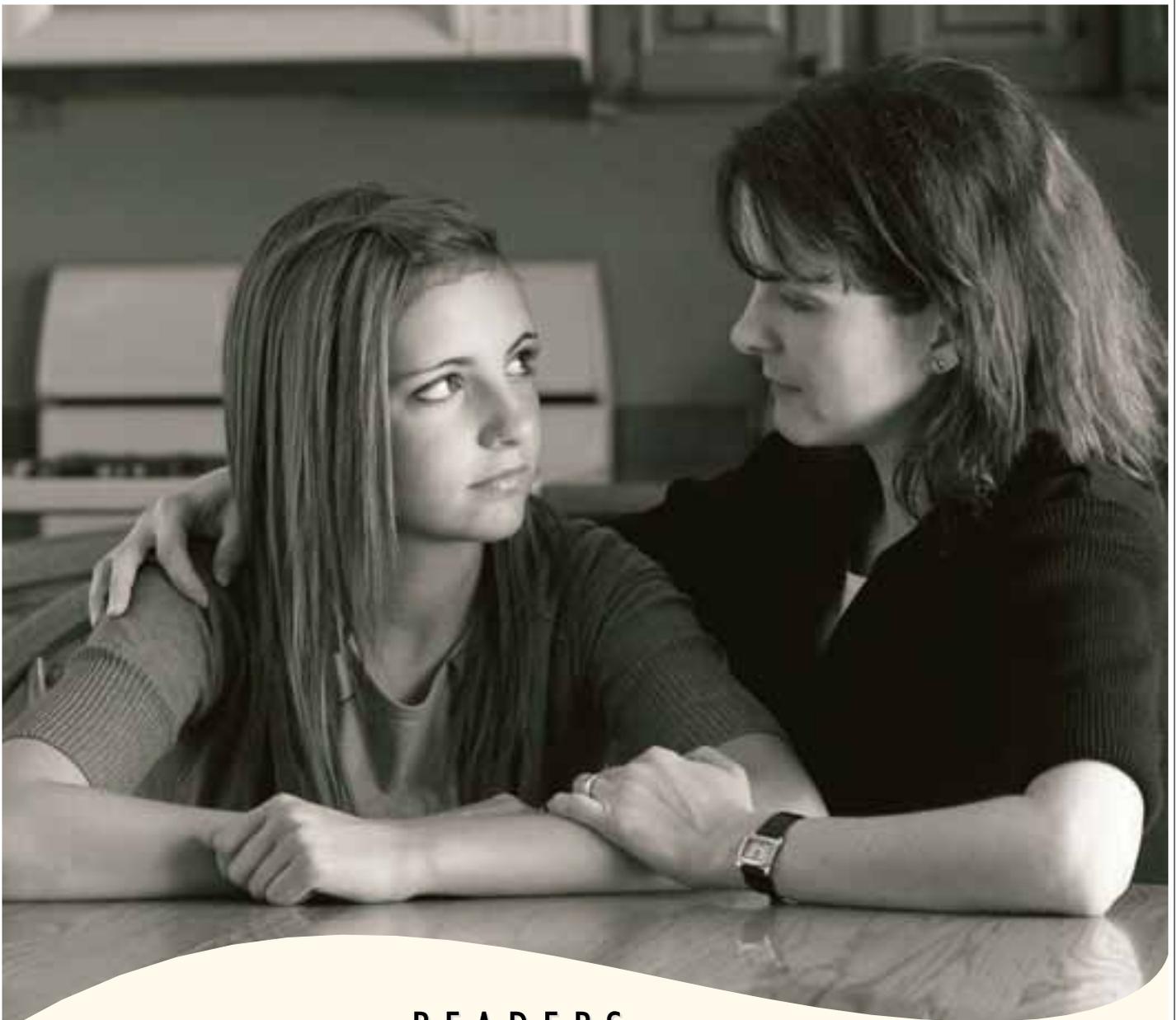
a time and let all listen” (D&C 88:122). The Spirit leaves when there’s contention—doing these things will help keep the Spirit with you.

Also, take an honest look at yourself. What are you doing that is keeping you from having a better relationship with your mother? Are you obeying the family rules? Do you need to open up more? Do you need to be more respectful?

Families are important to Heavenly Father, so prayer will help. You can pray for a change of heart toward your mom. Thankfully, we can become better people with the Lord’s help. With a change of heart, you can talk to your mom with more love and understanding, and then she may be more likely to talk to you that way too.

You can pray to see her good qualities. Compliment her. Tell her you love her. Thank her for the things she has done for you.

You can also pray for humility. Being humble will help you see that your mom really does care about you, that it’s important to listen to her, and that she is saying things that



## READERS

could help you. Being humble will help you see that *what* is right is more important than *who* is right.

Finally, remember that the Lord has asked parents to guide and teach their children, and He has asked children to honor their parents. Keep this in mind, especially when your mother talks to you about family rules or right and wrong.

In time, if you are prayerful and loving and try to honor your mother, your relationship with her will improve.



***Continue to pray to love your mom, and pray that Heavenly Father will help you keep your thoughts and words positive and uplifting.***

***If you want loving feelings to last, you need to develop “the pure love of Christ” (Moroni 7:47). When I have trouble getting along with a missionary companion, I have found that serving him helps me develop charity toward him and improves our relationship.***

Elder Toby Pontious, 21, California  
Arcadia Mission



***Do things that will let your mother know that you love her and that she is important to you. Help her with chores. Invite her to come with you to***

***a fun activity. Be humble, and always pray to our Heavenly Father for her. The most important thing is to say, “I’m sorry.”***

Gena G., 19, Basilan, Philippines

***I recently learned some things that help me not to fight with my mother. I learned that a hard word arouses anger, but a loving word can resolve the problem or at least***

improve it. I learned that a mother is always "right," for even when she errs, she is trying to do the best for her child. Pray to have the Spirit, and this will become easier.

Fernando V., 18, São Paulo, Brazil



**One day I talked back to my mother. Each of us yelled at the other. Our words were hurtful. Later, I opened my scriptures and read about love. I decided to ask my mother to forgive me. She had left, and when she returned, she put a note on my pillow. She said she was sorry. She just expected me to help her more with household chores. After reading her message, I hurried to tell my mother how sorry I was and how much I loved her, while giving her a big hug. It was a wonderful moment. Since that time, the message of love revealed to me in the scriptures has stayed with me, and I have tried to avoid quarreling by speaking to her with kindness. Tell your mother you love her, and she will do the same. Control yourself when something she does irritates you, and instead think about all of her good qualities. Seek to know what she expects of you. I am certain that by your doing this, the situation will resolve itself.**

Raquel L., 21, Bourgogne, France



**Pick a day to go out for a mother-daughter day. Spend the day together, doing anything that will help you see the good qualities in each other. Tell her how much you love her. Soon you will start to agree more and find things you have in common.**

Lydia H., 14, Iowa, USA

**I didn't want my conversations with my mother to always end with an argument, so I decided to**



**Y**ou are precious to your parents. You may not think that sometimes, when you get a little careless about what you think of your father and your mother. All of their hopes and dreams rest in you. They pray for you. They worry about you. They think of you. They love you. Be good to your parents. Treat them with love and respect and kindness. It won't hurt you once in a while to tell them that you love them."

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Inspirational Thoughts," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Aug. 2000, 4.

**change how I communicated. I tried to say a prayer before we were about to engage in a fight. I also tried to think ahead about what to say or not say. My mother and I have been getting along much better ever since.**

Lin H., 17, Taichung, Taiwan



**Try spending quality time with your mom. Do something you both enjoy, something where you can interact with each other. Or try something new so you can both learn it together. Also, put yourself in her shoes. She might be under stress. Ask her how her day went. Most of all, keep praying.**

Kyelee S., 12, Utah, USA

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

## NEXT QUESTION

**"I'm afraid that someone might offer me alcohol or drugs. I don't like to say no to people or make them mad at me. How can I make sure I won't give in?"**

**Send your answer by March 15, 2008, to:**

**Liahona, Questions & Answers 3/08**

**50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420**

**Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA**

**Or e-mail: [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org)**

**The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter:**

FULL NAME

BIRTH DATE

WARD (or branch)

STAKE (or district)

**I grant permission to print response and photo:**

SIGNATURE

PARENT'S SIGNATURE (if you are under 18)

# The Family Is Central to the Creator's Plan



*Prayerfully study, select, and teach the scriptures and statements that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you teach to share what they have felt and learned.*

## Why Is the Family Central to Heavenly Father's Plan?

**Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** “The doctrine of the family begins with heavenly parents. Our highest aspiration is to be like them. . . .

“From the earliest beginnings, God established the family and made it eternal. Adam and Eve were sealed in marriage for time and all eternity. . . .

“With the restoration of these keys and priesthood authority comes the opportunity for all who are worthy to receive the blessings of eternal families. . . . The Lord outlines the promise and requirements in this sacred verse:

“‘And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto them—Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection;

and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—then shall it be written in the Lamb’s Book of Life . . . and shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever’ (D&C 132:19). . . .

“. . . When families are functioning as designed by God, the relationships found therein are the most valued of mortality. The plan of the Father is that family love and companionship will continue into the eternities” (“The Eternal Family,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 64–65).

## What Can I Do Because I Know That the Family Is Central to the Plan of Salvation?

**Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** “The family unit is fundamental . . . to our hope for eternal life. We begin to practice in the family, the smaller unit, what will spread to the Church and to the society in which we live in this world, which will then be what we practice in families bound together

forever by covenants and by faithfulness. We can start now to ‘promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family.’ I pray that we will. I pray that you will ask, ‘Father, how can I prepare?’ Tell him how much you want what he desires to give you. You will receive impressions, and if you act on them, I promise you the help of the powers of heaven” (“The Family,” *Liabona*, Oct. 1998, 23; *Ensign*, Feb. 1998, 18).

**Margaret S. Lifferth, first counselor in the Primary general presidency:** “In today’s world, children will need not only a devoted mother and father, but they will need each of us to protect, teach, and love them. . . . Personal obedience and example in every part of our lives are the ultimate gospel lessons for children. So study, learn, and apply the gospel” (“Behold Your Little Ones,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 74–75). ■





# Choosing Liberty and Eternal Life



BY ELDER CRAIG A. CARDON

Of the Seventy

I began my college studies at a university about 100 miles (160 km) from home. It was an exciting time for all the freshman students. Many were living away from home for the first time and were eager to express their newfound freedom from parental oversight.

I was on the university basketball team, and it quickly became known that I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. During the first weeks of the semester, one of my teammates invited me to a Saturday night party for new students to be held in the desert outside the city. I asked if the party would include alcohol and was assured that it would not. I felt uncomfortable with this response but decided to attend nonetheless. A blind date was arranged for me with the assurance that she had the same standards I had. My teammate explained that we would use his car.

That Saturday night we drove some distance into the desert and found the party. To my great disappointment, drinking alcohol was the principal activity, notwithstanding the fact that the legal drinking age in the state was three years above the age of most of the

freshman students. My date couldn't wait to begin drinking, along with my teammate and his date. When I voiced disappointment, they said I needed to "grow up and live a little" and that they would help me. I told them that I had never drunk alcohol and that I was not going to start then. They soon left me so they could join the others.

I sat alone, apart from the drinking and boisterous laughter, without transportation to leave, wondering why I had gotten myself into this mess. Later in the night, I saw a line of car headlights coming through the desert toward the party. The cars encircled the group, and then, as if on signal, lights began flashing on the top of what I then recognized as police cars. Many students attempted to run into the desert but were quickly apprehended. I remained where I was, perplexed by the developments.

The police began checking identification to determine the ages of the students, giving breath tests to those below the legal drinking age to determine if they had been drinking. When they came to me, I told an officer that I had not drunk alcohol that night or ever. He laughed at me, but when I firmly stated that he could believe me, his countenance changed. He told me that I did not have to take the test

*I testify that choosing liberty and eternal life brings the greatest happiness we can know.*

and directed me to drive my teammate's car back to the university. Those who were underage and drinking were cited and required to pay fines. Some were taken to jail.

#### **A Personal Message**

I, however, left with no police record and arrived home at about 3:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. Priesthood meeting in my ward began at 7:00 a.m. My alarm sounded at 6:45 a.m. I turned it off and rolled over, thinking for a few moments of all the reasons not to attend that morning. But spiritually, I couldn't rest. I arose, dressed in my Sunday clothes, and walked to the chapel, arriving about 10 minutes after the meeting had begun.

As I walked into the chapel, my heart leaped as I recognized the back of my father's head. He had come to visit me, unannounced. I slipped in beside him and sat down. He

looked at me and smiled. Then, putting his hand firmly on my knee, he leaned over and whispered a message with meaning far beyond words: "I knew I would find you here, Son." Simultaneously, Heavenly Father whispered the same message to my soul. I can't adequately describe the love and joy I felt at that moment.

A few months later I was on my mission. A few months after that, I received word that my father had died unexpectedly. The message I received from him and through him that Sunday, however, has never left me.

#### **Freedom to Choose Liberty or Captivity**

This experience provides an example of the eternal truth Lehi communicated to his sons long ago: "And because [the children

**I** told a police officer that I had not drunk alcohol that night or ever. He laughed at me, but when I firmly stated that he could believe me, his countenance changed.



of men] are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon. . . . And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil” (2 Nephi 2:26–27).

Our Father’s plan of happiness incorporates the exercise of agency, but it also, of necessity, incorporates accountability and judgment. My teammate and others at the party were free to choose their behavior, but they were not free to choose the consequences of their behavior. Some of them spent the night in jail. Others began lives of uncontrolled appetites that continue to enslave them today.

The bondage we bring upon ourselves while seeking freedom through errant choices is a great irony. Cain

thought he was free after murdering his brother, only to find himself cursed and tormented for what he had done (see Moses 5:32–39). Peter spoke of those of evil influence as “wells without water” who promise liberty while they themselves are

the servants of corruption. “For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage” (2 Peter 2:17, 19). However, Peter also identified the true path of freedom, saying, “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations,” for we escape “the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 2:9, 20).

Samuel the Lamanite invited us to remember that we “are permitted to act for [ourselves]; for behold, God hath given unto [us] a knowledge and he hath made [us] free. . . . And he hath given unto [us] that [we] might choose life or death” (Helaman 14:30–31).

When my teammate misrepresented the party’s activities, I felt a spiritual unrest that I did not heed. When confronted with that reality, I was more disappointed with myself than with my teammate. But keeping myself apart from the crowd brought spiritual comfort and later temporal benefit when the police allowed me to return home.

However, the greatest blessing of liberty came when, in the privacy of my dormitory room early Sunday morning, I chose to be where I should be, not knowing beforehand the treasure that awaited me there. Such experiences, accompanied by the ministration of the Spirit, foreshadow the liberty associated with the blessing of eternal life.

I testify that choosing liberty and eternal life brings the greatest happiness we can know. ■



# Life-Changing Leadership

*Latter-day Saints throughout the world share how leadership has blessed their lives, either by serving as a leader or by being served.*

## **A Leader of One**

When I turned 12 years old, I was the only young man attending my ward in Cape Town, South Africa. Even so, my bishop felt inspired to call a Young Men presidency.

My Young Men president could have said to himself, “What am I supposed to do with only one young man? We cannot organize activities for only one.” Instead, he gave of his best and magnified his calling. The presidency organized hikes, camps, Scouting activities, Mutual evenings on Tuesday nights, lessons on Sundays, sand boarding, and activities at the beach. After a while, other young men began coming out—two, then three, and then four.

I am filled with gratitude that these Young Men leaders were faithful in their callings and made an effort for just one young man—me. I am a better person because they didn’t give up and so are the others who participated in the Young Men program in our ward.

**Greg Burgoyne, South Africa**

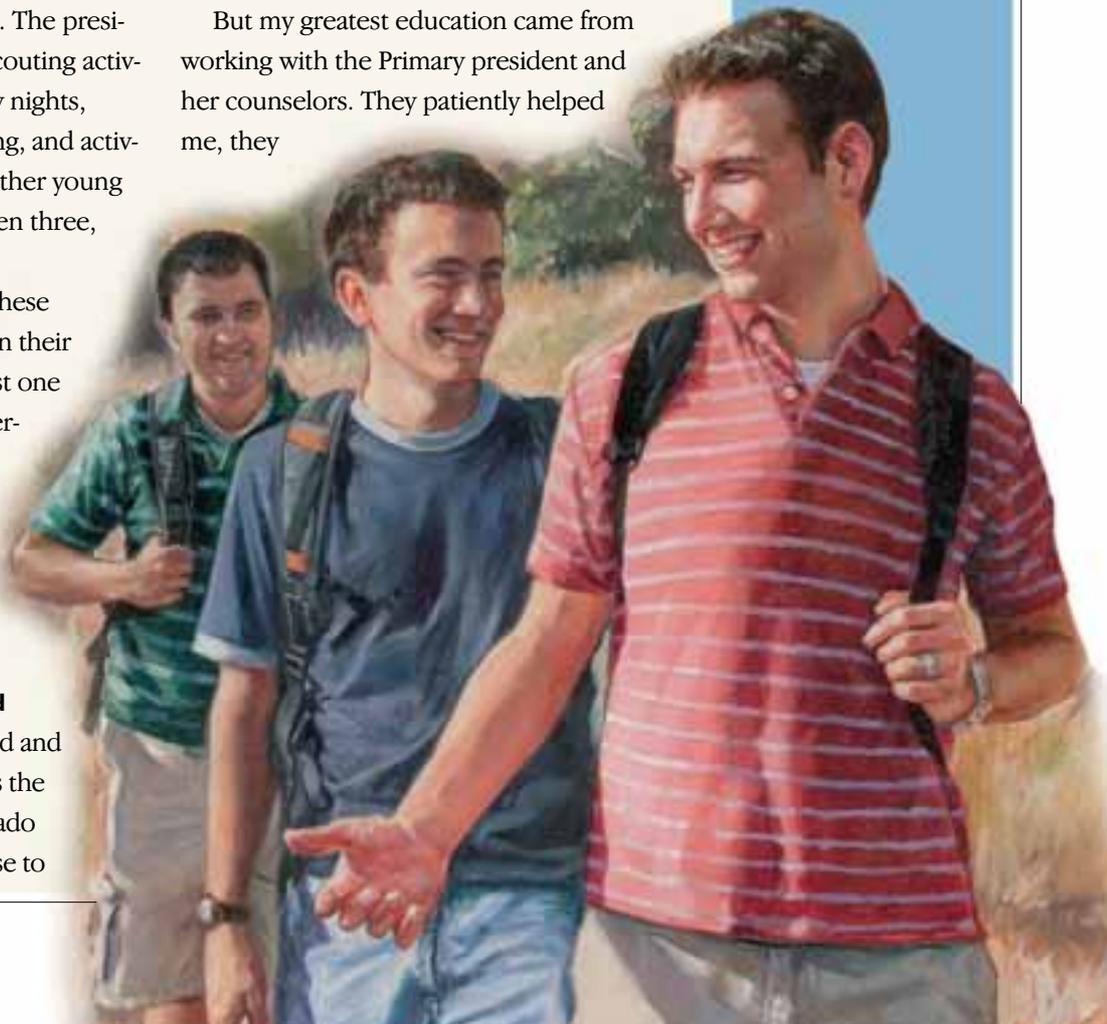
## **Little by Little, I Learned to Lead**

A few weeks after I was baptized and confirmed, I was called to serve as the Primary secretary in the Valle Dorado Ward in Mexico. This was a surprise to

me because I was new in the gospel, but I loved my Savior and wanted to serve.

I told my bishop that many other people could do the job better, but through serving I learned that the calling had been inspired. By being with the children in Primary, I learned the principles of the gospel, beautiful hymns, and the Articles of Faith. I loved the little ones too, and through them I met their parents.

But my greatest education came from working with the Primary president and her counselors. They patiently helped me, they





**M**y greatest education came from working with the Primary president and her counselors. They patiently helped me, they forgave my mistakes, and little by little, I learned how to fulfill my calling.

forgave my mistakes, and little by little, I learned how to fulfill my calling. We worked together in the Primary for three years and became close friends.

When we were released, we were called to serve in Relief Society. As a result of the love we shared, we served together in unity for two more years. These sisters taught me to delegate responsibility and to allow others to learn to become leaders. We shared food storage, fasted for a purpose, and went to the temple together. They helped me become a faithful, dedicated, and loving leader. I feel obligated to share what I learned so other sisters will have the same kind of experience that I had working with the sisters who trained me.

**Laura Viga D'Alva, Mexico**

#### **I'm Simply Not Prepared**

Three weeks after my baptism and confirmation, Bishop Ayala interviewed me and asked how I was progressing. I replied, "Very well. I have finished reading the Book of

Mormon for the second time. I'm also reading the *Gospel Principles* manual so I can learn more and put into practice what I'm reading."

Then he said, "Your Heavenly Father is mindful of you and is calling you to be a Sunday School teacher for the youth ages 14 to 17."

Immediately I realized that several of the youth in the class, who were just a few years younger than I was, had been raised in the Church and knew the gospel better than I did.

I said to him, "I'm not ready for this kind of an assignment."

The bishop replied, speaking very deliberately, "Roberto, Heavenly Father is the one extending this calling to you. He knows your abilities and your faithfulness."

"I'm simply not prepared. I need more time," I persisted.

The bishop looked straight into my eyes and said serenely but in a strong voice, "If you feel you can't accept this calling, you shouldn't tell me. Kneel down and tell your Heavenly

Father. He will answer you, and I will accept your decision.”

A prolonged silence followed. Then, looking at me the way a father looks at his son, he said, “Roberto, this isn’t a church of cowards; it is a church of courageous people.”

My heart was suddenly contrite. With tears in my eyes and a voice filled with emotion, I said, “Bishop, when do I start?”

He embraced me, slapped me on the back, and said, “I’m going to help you prepare your first lesson this week.”

I was filled with joy to know that Heavenly Father had given me such a special leader, a bishop who taught not only by word but by example.

I remembered this experience often during my mission and while serving in other callings. I think of it now and feel grateful to Heavenly Father to be a member of the Lord’s Church.

**Roberto Carlos Pacheco Pretel, Peru**

### **Dedicated Deacons**

One of my sisters-in-law in Guatemala had been going through a stressful time, which triggered some health problems. My wife and I prayed for her, but we didn’t know what else to do. Then I was able to visit my in-laws on a business trip to my homeland of Guatemala, where I learned this beautiful lesson in leadership.

I was talking with my father-in-law on the patio when one of the 12-year-old boys in the ward passed by and said hello. After he passed by, my father-in-law said, “That little fellow and two other boys the same age really surprised me the other day. The three of them came over, all dressed up in their white shirts and ties. After greeting me, to my surprise they headed for the living room to visit with my daughter. They told her that they had come to visit her because they knew of the health challenges she was having. They said that although they were deacons and could not give her a blessing, they could pray for her, and Jesus Christ would bless her.

“Those three young men knelt and offered a wonderful prayer and asked our Heavenly Father to bless my daughter. Then they stood up, and after expressing their love for her, they left.



“You know what?” my father-in-law continued. “I was very impressed by the great example of those young men.”

The next day as I attended sacrament meeting, I saw the three young men dressed up and ready to pass the sacrament. I felt admiration and respect for them. When the meeting was over, I went to shake their hands, which were small in size but powerful in their ability to lift up tired and heavy spirits. May God bless those young men for their example of service, love, and faith.

**Óscar Abad Gutierrez, Utah**

### **He Wanted to Talk to My Mother?**

Since I have been a member of the Church, I have had a sincere desire to keep the commandments. Paying tithing, however, was a challenge because my mother, who was not a Latter-day Saint, would not allow it.

When I got paid, I set aside money for tithing in one of my drawers. But when the day came to return the money to the Lord, it wasn't there. I asked my mother if she had seen it, and she answered that she had spent it because the Lord did not need it. I did not argue with her, for I believed there was another way to resolve this problem.

Because I was not able to pay my tithing, I was sad for a long time. When I went to my bishop's office for tithing settlement, he asked if I was a full-tithe payer, and with tears in my eyes I told him I was not because my mother had taken my tithing money. My bishop comforted me by saying that the Lord knew the desires of my heart. Then he

asked me to bring my mother in for an interview that Wednesday. I agreed.

During that week I asked myself, “How can I take my mother for an interview with the bishop if she is not a Church member? She won't accept the invitation!”

When Wednesday arrived I had not said anything to her, so I simply asked her to come with me to the meeting-house, explaining that I did not want to go alone. Luckily, she said she would go.

Bishop Feitosa received her kindly and led her into his office. I was very anxious while my mother was in there. Finally my mother came out of his office—with a smile.

On the way home, my mother looked at me and said, “From now on you are going to pay your tithing every month.” What joy filled my heart! The Lord had prepared a means for my mother to understand my desire to observe this sacred commandment.

My mother has since joined the Church. She pays her tithing and makes sure I pay mine. We have received marvelous blessings from keeping this commandment because an inspired leader spoke with my mother about sacrifice, dedication, and faithfulness to the Lord.

**Evanilda Gomes do Nascimento, Brazil**

### **Go Talk to Him**

In 1998, when I was Young Men president in my ward, I participated in a stake youth camp. As I was resting after a game, I saw a young man I didn't know. He was sitting

## **INSTRUMENTS IN HIS HANDS**



*“A leader must cause things to happen and lives to be affected. Something should move and change. He must see that those under him do not fail. But it should be done in the Lord's way. He should be the*

*instrument in the hands of the Almighty for changing lives. He needs to know where he is now, where he is going, and how he is going to get there.”*

**President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “These I Will Make My Leaders,” Ensign, Nov. 1980, 35.**



alone on a little mound away from the camp. He had an unpleasant expression on his face. I felt I needed to go over and talk to him.

I introduced myself and asked his name. I don't remember all that we talked about, but I do remember that I shed a few tears. It was a special conversation that lasted until they called us to the next activity. I rarely saw the young man after that and never had another chance to talk to him.

In August 2005 we had a meeting at our stake center. This same young man came up to me and gave me a letter. It read:

*I started thinking today about our conversation in San Martin Park in about 1998. Just to remind you, I was sitting by myself and feeling a bit sad. You came up to me and said you felt you needed to talk to me. You said . . . the time had come to choose—either to stay with the Church and follow Jesus Christ or leave it and not enjoy the blessings that come from activity in the*

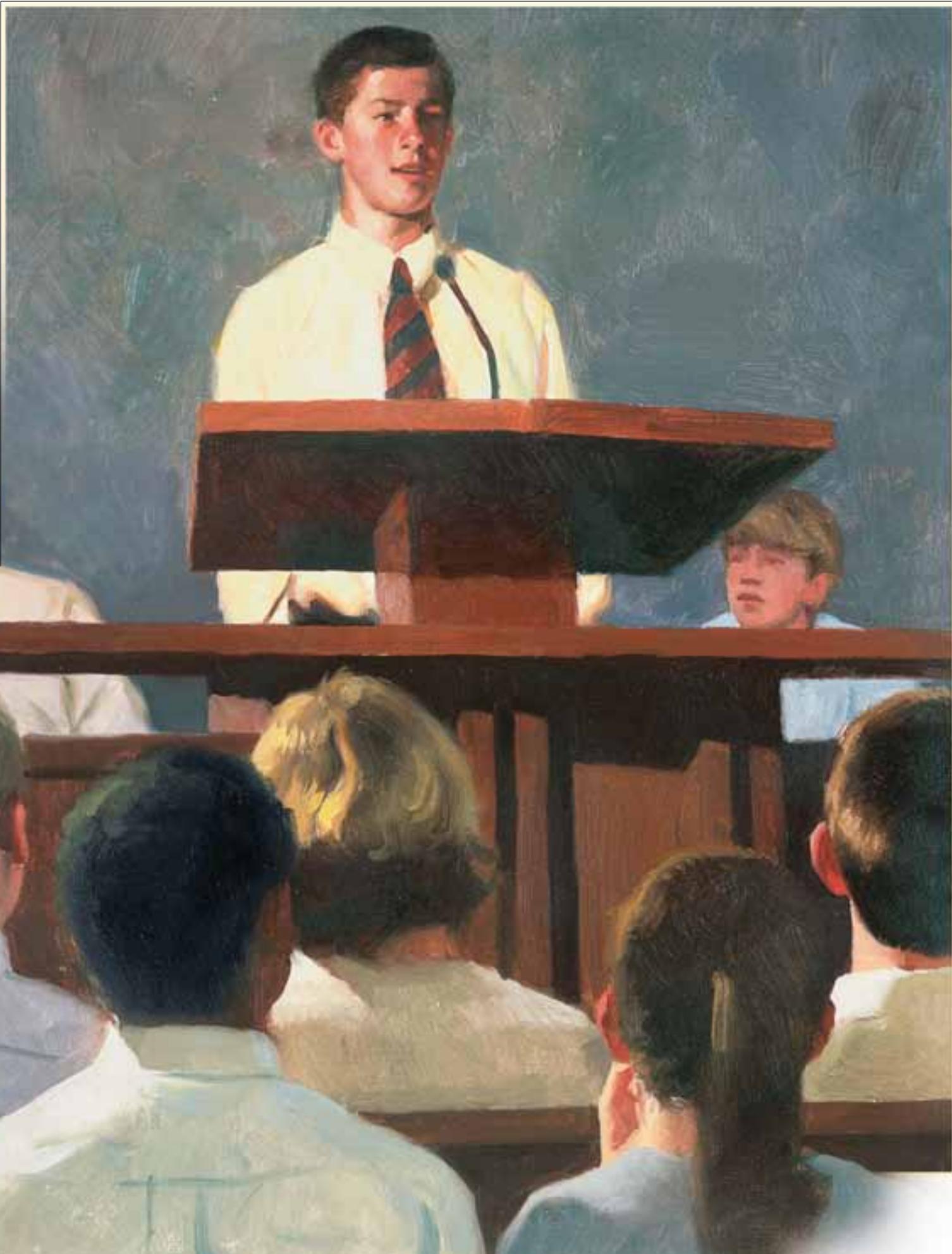
*Church. The one thing that really stayed with me was when you said that if I fell, my whole family would fall with me, but if I would keep moving forward, they would come too.*

*. . . A great desire arose in me to help them. . . . So from the day we had that talk, I made the decision to be faithful to the Lord, and even now, after seven years, I am still faithful, and my family is firm in the gospel and faithful to the Lord. . . . Thank you so much for being so straightforward and truthful with me. You'll never know how much good it did.*

This young man is now a returned missionary who has been married in the temple. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me the opportunity to serve as a leader. I am grateful to come to understand the importance of putting myself in others' shoes so I can try to understand what they are going through. ■

**Alejandro Humberto Villarreal, Argentina**

**W**hen I told my bishop that my mother would not let me pay tithing, he asked me to bring her in for an interview.



# Gaining a TESTIMONY

BY ELDER PAUL K. SYBROWSKY

Of the Seventy

I was raised in a wonderful but less-active family. I wasn't accustomed to hearing testimonies borne of the truthfulness of the gospel within my home. So even though I grew up in Salt Lake City, Utah, in a predominantly Latter-day Saint environment, I didn't grow up in a typical Latter-day Saint family. We didn't hold family home evening or gather for family prayer. Many of the Church practices that my friends were used to were a little foreign to me.

By virtue of this home environment, I was probably one of the least likely to stand and bear my testimony in front of a large seminary gathering. I was also a rather shy 15-year-old, so I was quite surprised when I found myself standing at a microphone in front of 300 seminary students. But I was comfortable because of what I felt deep inside. Even today, I still remember the overwhelming prompting by the Spirit to stand and bear my testimony in that seminary meeting.

I don't remember the exact words I spoke, but I will never forget the burning in my heart, the sure witness I received that the Church is true. I remember well the feeling of the Spirit of the Holy Ghost that

descended upon me as I bore witness to the truthfulness of this Church.

## I Knew

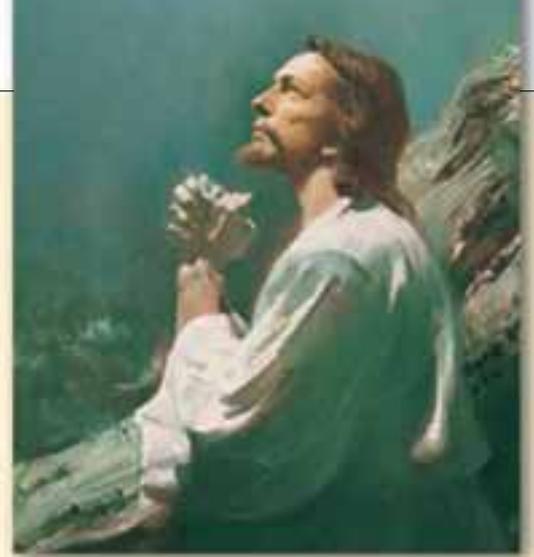
Before that day I *believed* the Church was true. I liked the Church. I thought it was good, and I participated in it. But at that defining moment in my life, I *knew* the Church was true. I couldn't deny it, and no one could take that testimony away from me.

Since that day in seminary, I have shared my testimony thousands of times. I remember some of these other occasions, but none have been quite so dramatic for me or have been so influential in shaping my future as that first instance when I was a teenager. One of the reasons this event made such a lasting impression on me is because I was about the same age as the Prophet Joseph Smith when he saw Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and learned that he would be instrumental in restoring the true Church to the earth.

The experience of bearing my testimony and gaining a sure witness was a turning point in my life in many ways. When instruction comes from the Lord to you, it is the greatest thing you will ever learn. Because of this testimony, I wanted to serve, to become



*I can remember many instances of bearing my testimony but none more vividly than the time I stood as a shy teenager in front of 300 classmates.*



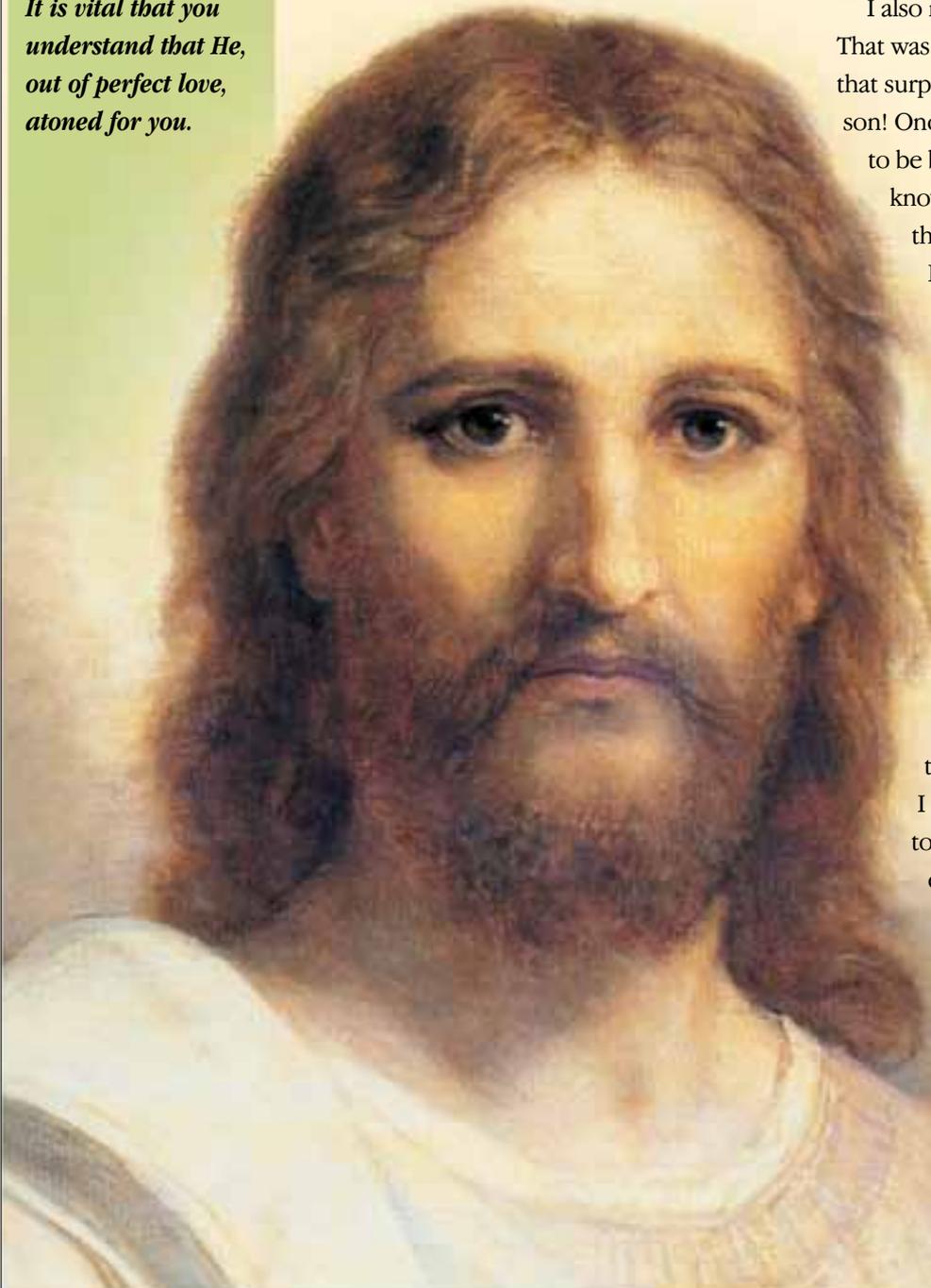
I also realized that God knew who I was. That was one of the really important things that surprised me and changed me. I was His son! Once you know who you are, you want to be better. There comes a power in that knowledge—a power you can get only through the inspiration of our Heavenly Father.

As I look back on this experience, I believe that Heavenly Father wanted to give me an opportunity to develop some attributes and skills so He could work with me a little easier. I think He also wanted to get me thinking about serving a mission, which was not something that was encouraged in my home. As a young teen, I hadn't thought much about a mission. But through my testimony experience, I knew for the first time that I wanted to serve a mission. Many other experiences reinforced that desire, but that was the first instance that I knew I wanted to go. I knew my Father in Heaven wanted me to serve a full-time mission to share what I now knew with His children.

***It is vital that you build a testimony and have faith that Jesus Christ is your Savior and your Redeemer.***

***It is vital that you understand that He, out of perfect love, atoned for you.***

a better student, and to develop better social and personal skills. My desire to learn more about the scriptures was greatly increased. I had more purpose in life. I knew that as I kept myself worthy, I would be permitted to preach the gospel.



## Open Your Heart

Gaining a testimony is like what the Nephites went through when the Savior came to visit them. At first they did not understand God's voice because they were hearing with their ears only. But when they opened their hearts, then they understood His voice.

"And again the third time they did hear the voice, and did open their ears to hear it; and their eyes were towards the sound thereof; and they did look steadfastly towards heaven, from whence the sound came.

"And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard" (3 Nephi 11:5–6).

Opening your heart to the inspiration of our Father in Heaven is a crucial element in life. You will need His inspiration.

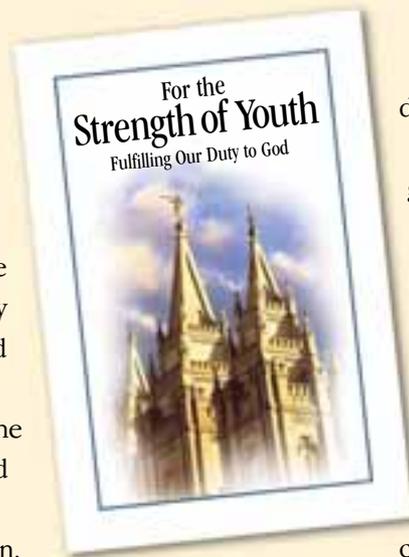
You face some unique challenges, and the way to overcome these challenges is to allow the Holy Ghost to distill upon you. Let Him guide you. Strength from our Heavenly Father comes to us spirit to spirit and heart to heart. And it is in the strength of the Lord that we can move forward. The Lord will provide that strength in our individual testimonies.

## Enjoy Being a Teen

Strengthening your testimony will help you enjoy your teenage years, which can be one of the most exciting times of your life. That doesn't diminish anything in terms of serving a mission or getting married in the temple or any of the wonderful experiences you will have later in your life, but I encourage you to enjoy life as a teenager. So how do you do that? By keeping all the Lord's commandments; they are not multiple choice! Each is given for a wise purpose—to keep you safe.

Part of the First Presidency's message in *For the Strength of Youth* reads:

"Your Heavenly Father wants your life to be joyful and to lead you back into His presence. The decisions you make now will determine much of what will follow



during your life and throughout eternity.

"Because the Lord loves you, He has given you commandments and the words of prophets to guide you on your journey."<sup>1</sup>

President Gordon B. Hinckley, our prophet and President, has said: "Let us be a happy people. The Lord's plan is a plan of happiness."<sup>2</sup> Let us follow the prophet, and let us have happy lives. This time of your life is exciting—it should be fun. Activity in the Church can help you truly enjoy your youth.

Have the courage to follow what you feel in your heart. Hold on to those feelings and enlarge them. It is vital that you build a testimony and have faith that Jesus Christ is your Savior and your Redeemer. It is vital that you understand that He, out of perfect love, atoned for you.

With that knowledge, you have the wonderful privilege of combining your faith in Jesus Christ with repentance to ensure that your covenants are in effect. Then you can receive direction and guidance from a member of the Godhead, even the Holy Ghost. What a gift that is! That great gift comes as a result of having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and enjoying the fruits of repentance.

When I was a teenager, I received another gift: a living, growing witness, a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As I nourished that testimony, it continued to grow. I began to understand the Lord's pattern—His plan to lead me back to my Father in Heaven. "That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day" (D&C 50:24).

I bear my solemn witness that God is our Father and that His Son, Jesus Christ, is the Savior of all mankind. You too can have that witness. You too can have that testimony. You can have it even now as a teenager, just as I did. You don't have to wait. ■

## NOTES

1. *For the Strength of Youth* (2001), 2.
2. "Each a Better Person," *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 99.

# LIVING A Balanced Life



**BY ELDER ROBERT F. ORTON**

Served as a member of the Seventy from 2001 to 2007

*We face many challenges, but we need not abandon pursuing a higher education, marriage and family, and service in the Church.*

I suspect that most everyone wants the kind of life that will bring lasting happiness. This, I believe, will come through charting a course leading to eternal life. It will be hastened and facilitated by heeding the promptings of the Spirit and by achieving proper balance.

When I speak of balance, I refer to spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and economic factors. *Balance* is defined as mental and emotional steadiness; it is to bring into harmony or proportion.

#### **The Challenge of Achieving Balance**

As you know, coping with the challenges of everyday life can upset the balance and harmony we seek. Many of us are

overwhelmed as we seek to obtain and maintain balance in our lives. I provide the following illustrations, adapted from a talk by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.<sup>1</sup>

A single student said, “I know that the scriptures and today’s Church leaders say we should not unnecessarily delay marriage and family. But I’m 26. I haven’t completed my education, and I don’t have a job that will enable me to support a family. Can I be excused from marrying, at least for now?”

Another said, “I am a woman, and no one has asked me to marry him. How can I keep the commandment to marry?”

A young mother said, “I am consumed with completing my education and caring for my children. I hardly have time to think of





anything else. Sometimes I think the world and the Church expect too much of me. Regardless of how hard I work, I will never live up to everyone's expectations. I struggle between having confidence and feeling guilt, depression, and discouragement for not doing everything I am told we must do to attain the celestial kingdom."

Another single student said, "I have to work to put myself through school. I don't have enough time for homework and Church service. How can I be expected to live a balanced life?"

I've heard many say, "No one knows better than I do how important exercise is, but I have no time for it."

A sister was heard to say, "How, in today's world, can a husband and wife provide for their family if the wife doesn't work outside the home? There just isn't enough money to cover all the expenses if she doesn't work."

A young father added, "My new business requires all my time. I realize that I am neglecting my wife, children, and Church callings, but if I can just get through this year, I will make enough money, and then things will settle down."

Oh, what a dreamer he was. Life doesn't get easier; it gets more complicated. Don't dream about tomorrow bringing more time and less responsibility. Prepare to face what is coming by practicing today, under your current circumstances, what you'll need to do then.

Should we abandon pursuit of a higher education and otherwise developing and strengthening ourselves? Should we abandon pursuit of marriage and family? Should we cease preparing to provide for our families and ourselves? Should we forget Church service?

The answer to each question is, of course, no. Although it is impossible to respond here to all of the frustrations I've noted, please consider the following ideas.

#### **A Need for Balance**

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "One of the grand fundamental principles of 'Mormonism' is to receive truth, let it

***If an airplane cabin loses pressure, passengers should put on their own oxygen masks before helping others. Service works the same way. If we don't strengthen ourselves, we will never be in a position to strengthen others.***

come from whence it may."<sup>2</sup> He also revealed that "the glory of God is intelligence" (D&C 93:36) and that "whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection" (D&C 130:18).

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: "I want to plead with you to keep balance in your lives. Do not become obsessed with what may be called 'a gospel hobby.' A good meal always includes more than one course. You ought to have great strength in your chosen . . . field of expertise. But I warn you against making that your only interest. . . ."

" . . . Beware of obsession. Beware of narrowness. Let your interests range over many good fields while working with growing strength in the field of your own profession."<sup>3</sup>

President Hinckley has also taught that we have a fourfold responsibility—to our families, to our employers, to the Lord, and to ourselves. He has counseled us to "take some time to do a little meditating, to do a little exercise."<sup>4</sup>

As I've flown, I've noted as we commence to take off from the airport, a flight attendant will arise and among other things will say, "Now, if we lose air pressure in the cabin, an oxygen mask will descend from overhead. If you're caring for young children or someone with a disability, make sure you put on your own oxygen mask before you try to help others." Why would the flight attendant say that? Obviously, if you're unconscious, you can't help anyone else. So it is with our service to humankind and our service in the Church and in our professions. If we don't strengthen ourselves, we will never be in a position to strengthen others.

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has also remarked that "it is much easier for those who have a righteous balance to yield 'to the enticings of the Holy Spirit' (Mosiah 3:19). Then we can leave behind the attributes of the natural man or woman. . . ."

"Balance in large measure is knowing the things that can be changed, putting them in proper perspective,



and recognizing the things that will not change.”<sup>5</sup>

### Three Personal Experiences

I grew up in Panguitch, Utah, a small town of 1,500 people. I was a big fish in a little pond. When I graduated from high school, I received a scholarship to attend Brigham Young University. When I got there, I quickly discovered that I was a little fish in a huge pond, and I became discouraged. I thought, “I want to get out of here.” I started to go home on weekends. I attended church at home—not on campus. I didn’t keep my grades at a level at which I ought to have kept them. I didn’t get acquainted with people. By the end of the year, I said, “I’m not going to return. This is not for me.”

I went home that summer. About mid-August I discovered that I wanted to return to school. So I did. This time I immediately joined a social fraternity and a service organization. I moved into the dormitory. I started attending church on campus rather than going home on weekends. My grades improved. I began to realize that life on campus was a

good life and that I was happy to be there.

Later I attended law school. My first year was difficult because I was studying a different discipline than what I had studied as an undergraduate, and my grades, again, were not as good as they should have been. The second year, I got a part-time job in a law firm while I was going to school. My grades went up. At the end of my second year, I married my wife, Joy. Even with my additional responsibilities, everything was going well. My grades became better than they had ever been.

The last experience I’d like to share came when I passed the bar exam. A salty old trial lawyer approached me and said, “Bob, you can’t be a successful, effective trial lawyer and an active member of the LDS Church at the same time.” I considered others who were successful in their law practices and active in the Church, and I determined to be active in the Church. My decision didn’t affect my success as a trial lawyer. In fact, it enhanced it because I had balance in my life. I was trying to do what the Lord had asked me to do, and He gave me additional strength, understanding, and help.

**B**alance among the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and economic factors in our lives will help chart a course leading to eternal life and lasting happiness.



**A**s we attend sacrament every week and partake of the sacrament, we can always have the Spirit with us. The Holy Ghost will help us answer the vital questions we face.

### Guidance of the Spirit

Answers to our major life decisions will be more likely to produce balance and happiness if they come through the promptings of the Spirit. How do we obtain the Spirit and the answers we seek?

First, let me suggest that we need to attend sacrament meeting every week, and we need to partake of the sacrament. As we do so, we remember Christ and His suffering for us. We covenant, as we did at baptism, that we will take upon us His name. And we renew our covenant to keep the commandments. Why do we do all this? The last clause in the sacrament prayer answers that question: “That they may always have his Spirit to be with them” (D&C 20:77).

Therein lies the key to having the companionship of the Holy Ghost, which will help us answer the vital questions we face. In addition, we should kneel and pray regularly. We should be willing to serve our fellow men. We should reach out in love and fear not (see 1 John 4:18).

If we ask the Lord for the Spirit and do what is necessary to have His influence with us, the Spirit will teach us all things. He will help us in our studies. He will help us make decisions about life pursuits. And He will give us peace and a feeling of calmness.

### A Parable about Prayer

I conclude with a passage from Luke 18:1–8: “And [the Lord] spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

“Saying, There was in a city a judge, which

feared not God, neither regarded man:

“And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

“And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

“Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

“And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

“And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

“I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.”

The Lord hears and answers prayers. Sometimes we tend to give up too soon when we pray to Him. We need to persist.

As an especial witness of Jesus Christ, called to bear testimony to the nations of the world (see D&C 107:25), I testify that He lives. He is our Savior. He knows you, and He knows me. He knows what is on our minds and in our hearts. He will be our advocate with the Father if we keep the covenants we make as we partake of the sacrament each week.

We can overcome the world if we aim to have balance in our lives. If we seek to have the Spirit with us at all times and be faithful in responding to His promptings, we will be blessed. ■

*From a devotional address given at LDS Business College on March 1, 2006.*

### NOTES

1. See “Keeping Life’s Demands in Balance,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 13.
2. *History of the Church*, 5:499.
3. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 31–32.
4. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 33.
5. “The Need for Balance in Our Lives,” *Liabona*, Mar. 2000, 4, 7; *Ensign*, Mar. 2000, 2, 4, 5.

# Did You Know?

## Queen's Gold Medal

Christopher Vingoe of the Kings Lynn Ward, Norwich England Stake, overcame severe brain injuries in his childhood to achieve six grade A's at A-level last year. That's like doing well on the college entrance exams and placement tests in six different subjects. This incredible feat earned Christopher the Queen's Gold Medal for Academic Achievement.

Queen Elizabeth II presented Christopher with the award. "She was lovely and very easy to chat to,"

says Christopher, who is now serving a mission in Leeds, England. He even told her a little about missionary service for the Church.

When he was six, Christopher was hit by a car while crossing the street. He spent five days in a coma and had a blood clot on his brain. His recovery has amazed doctors. When Queen Elizabeth was told about Christopher's accident and how he has recovered, she joked, "Perhaps it knocked some sense into him."



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE VINGOE FAMILY

## In a Word

**Zion:** The Lord commands us to "establish the cause of Zion" (D&C 6:6). What is Zion? One definition is "the pure in heart" (D&C 97:21). The word *Zion* is often used in this way to refer to the Lord's people or to the Church and its stakes (see D&C 82:14). We are encouraged to build up Zion wherever we live.

Zion can also refer to specific locations:

- The city of Enoch (see Moses 7:18–21).
- The ancient city of Jerusalem (see 1 Kings 8:1).
- The New Jerusalem, which will be built in Jackson County, Missouri (see D&C 57:1–3).

## Leadership Tip

President N. Eldon Tanner (1898–1982), a counselor in the First Presidency for many years, taught that to be a successful leader, we must follow the example of Christ. He gave nine suggestions to help us be great leaders:

1. Look to our Savior as the perfect leadership example.
2. Accept the role of teacher and servant.
3. Search the scriptures for correct principles.
4. Pray for guidance, listen, and respond.
5. Help the individual to develop self-government.
6. Hold individuals accountable for their work.
7. Express adequate appreciation.
8. Set a personal example consistent with that which we teach.
9. Listen to the voice of the President of the Church, who is a prophet of God, and follow his counsel and example.

*From "Leading As the Savior Led," New Era, June 1977, 7.*



"Somehow forgiveness, with love and tolerance, accomplishes miracles that can happen in no other way."

**President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Forgiveness," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 84.**

## Courage to Ask a Question

By Lai Chang Hui-ling

**I**n the summer of 1994 I took a break from school in Taipei, Taiwan, to return to my hometown of Miao-li to spend my vacation. While home I took a job at a floral shop. My heart is full of gratitude when I recall what followed.

As I was watering plants one day, a man in a motorized wheelchair

stopped by to look at the flowers. He bashfully declined my invitation to come inside the store, but something about him left a deep impression on my mind. Afterward I ran into him several times on the street, and we would exchange a nod and a friendly smile.

One hot day as I was sitting in a restaurant enjoying a bowl of shaved ice, someone patted me on the shoulder. It was the man in the wheelchair. He was dressed up nicely and had a big smile on his face. He bravely asked for my name and phone number and left.

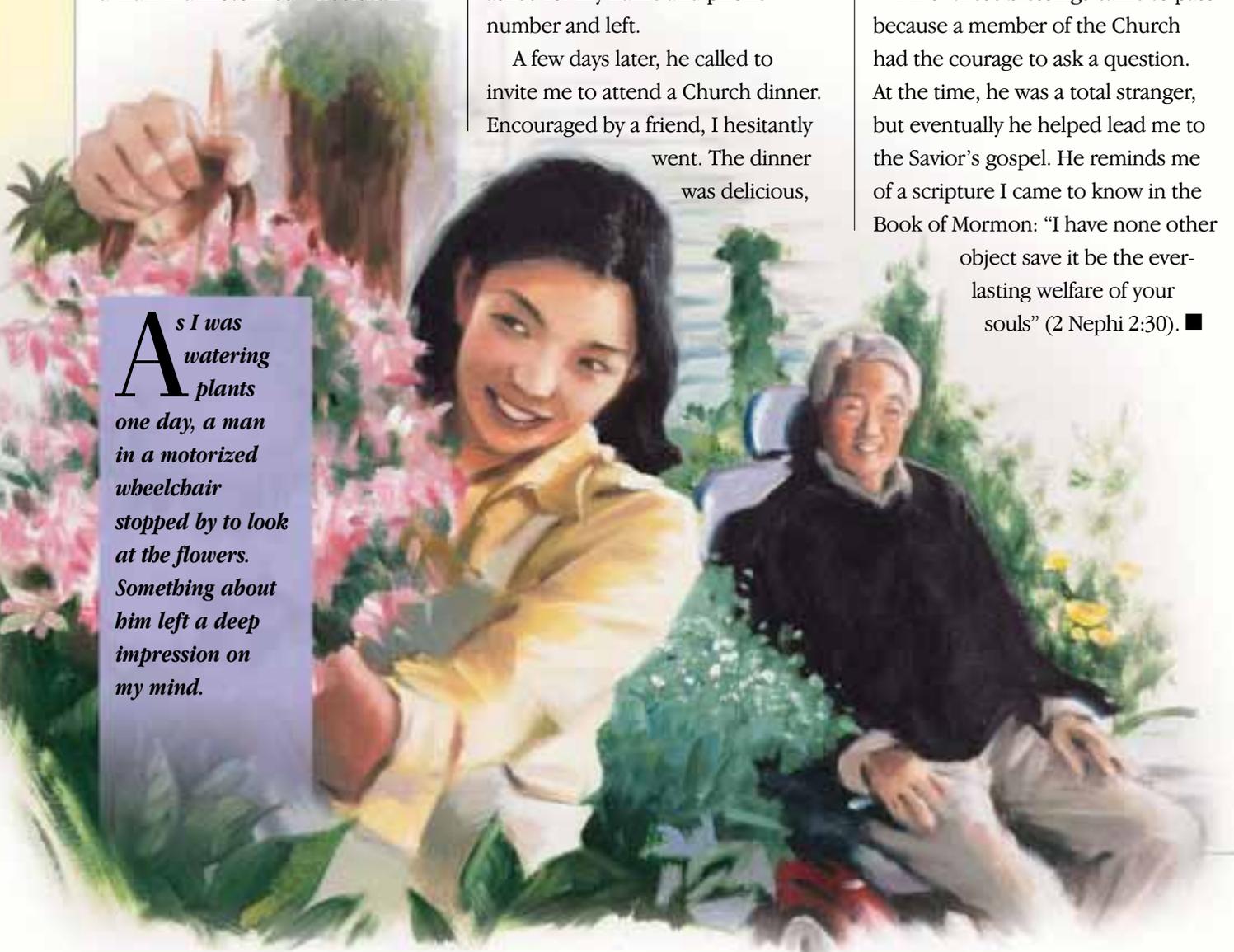
A few days later, he called to invite me to attend a Church dinner. Encouraged by a friend, I hesitantly went. The dinner was delicious,

and the reception the members gave me made me feel welcome from the moment I entered. Later that evening another Church member asked for my address and phone number in Taipei and sent my information to the missionaries there. Thus began my eternal tie with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I was baptized and confirmed in the fall of 1994 and served a full-time mission in 1997. Two years after I returned home, I married a returned missionary, and we began our family.

All of these blessings came to pass because a member of the Church had the courage to ask a question. At the time, he was a total stranger, but eventually he helped lead me to the Savior's gospel. He reminds me of a scripture I came to know in the Book of Mormon: "I have none other object save it be the everlasting welfare of your souls" (2 Nephi 2:30). ■

**A**s I was watering plants one day, a man in a motorized wheelchair stopped by to look at the flowers. Something about him left a deep impression on my mind.





## A Warning Voice

By Sandra Gates

I had been staying with my parents for a few days, taking a break because I had been ill. But it was now time to return home, so I said my farewells and caught a bus into Leicester, in central England. I watched houses pass by and people busily going about their daily lives. It was a bright, sunny day in the summer of 1976, and I was feeling happy,

ready to tackle anything that came my way. I alighted the bus and walked a mile to the railway station.

Passengers jostled on the station platform as they waited for trains to take them to their various destinations. Every now and then a voice would come over the loudspeaker announcing the trains.

Soon the train I was waiting for arrived. But as I stepped aboard, a distinct impression came over me. I stepped back, feeling strongly that I

should not take the train but that I should return home via the bus. I had purchased a return train ticket, and I couldn't really afford to pay for a bus ticket as well. My impression was so strong, however, that I could not ignore it.

I was fairly new in the Church, but I had felt the Spirit when I was baptized and confirmed. As I was about to board the train, I heard a quiet voice say, "No!" I stood still for a while to see if I would hear it again, and again the voice said, "No!"

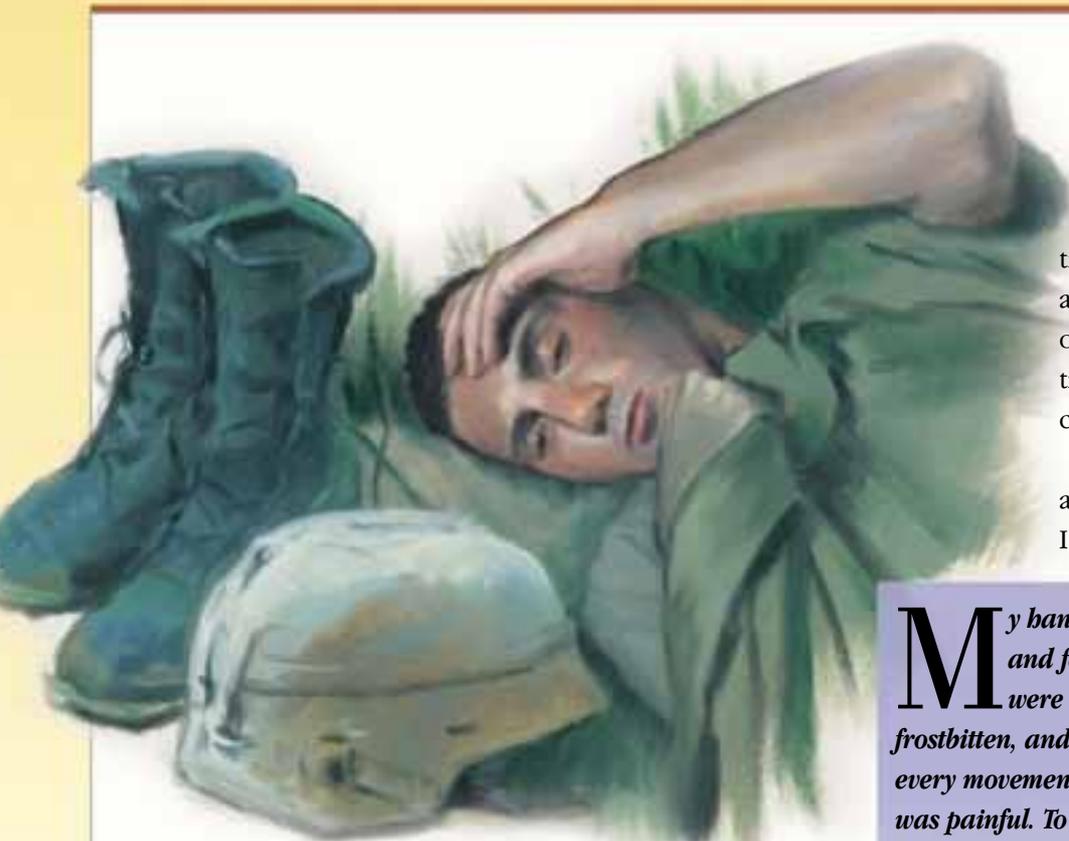
As soon as I had left the railway station, I felt a warmth that confirmed the correctness of my decision. After I arrived at the bus station, I had to wait more than an hour for a bus to take me home to Coventry. Had I taken the train, I would have already arrived—or so I thought. But on the bus, I didn't get home until early evening.

Turning on the television news, I was shocked by what I saw. The train I was scheduled to take had crashed just outside of

Nuneaton! Many people had been injured, and there had been several fatalities.

I always traveled in the front coach, just behind the train engine—an area that was severely damaged. I couldn't help but think what would have happened to me had I not listened to the still, small voice. I also couldn't help but think about all the family history and temple work I

**W**hen I was about to board the train, I heard a quiet voice say, "No!"



would have been unable to complete for my deceased ancestors had I been seriously injured or killed.

I am grateful for the warning, confirming voice of the Holy Ghost. I know that if we heed the voice of the Spirit, we cannot go wrong. ■

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## *I Needed a Blessing*

By Yves Raelina

**I**n February 2005 I was going through the final phase of my army officer candidate school in the wintry woods of Alabama. We spent days and nights perfecting small-infantry tactics in freezing temperatures. One particular evening a hard, freezing rain poured incessantly on us as my fellow officer candidates and I struggled to set up

camp to bunk down for the night.

I felt miserable. My hands and feet were frostbitten, and every movement was painful. I was soaked from head

to toe. Every part of my body was shaking. To make matters worse, I feared that I was developing pneumonia, which I had had several times in the past.

The thought of quitting crossed my mind, but I then recalled the example of the handcart pioneers who never gave up despite seemingly insurmountable odds. I resolved that I would finish my training. My family and I had sacrificed too much for me to give up on my goal of becoming an officer. I prayed to Heavenly Father for strength to keep going.

I did not sleep at all that night, and the next day found me in worse shape. I was exhausted. Hours of

training in the cold did nothing to alleviate my pain and coughing. One of the instructors noticed my condition and ordered me to spend a couple of hours in the warm-up tent.

While standing barefoot in the mud and hanging up my soaked clothes, I yearned for a priesthood blessing.

One of the tent flaps suddenly opened, and in walked two officer candidates. I began chatting with one of them, Scott Lundell. Somehow the conversation steered toward international travel. Scott told me he had spent a couple years in the Philippines before joining the service. The Spirit immediately told me that Scott was a returned missionary.

“What did you do over there?” I asked.

“Oh, just a church thing,” he replied.

“Are you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?” I asked.

“Yes, I am,” he said.

“I am too,” I added.

As we shook hands, I asked Scott if he would give me a blessing. He unhesitatingly said yes, and I knelt in the mud. He pronounced the blessing, and I was healed immediately! Strength returned to me, and I stopped coughing. My illness was gone. I finished my training, and a month later I was commissioned an officer.

***M***y hands and feet were frostbitten, and every movement was painful. To make matters worse, I feared that I was developing pneumonia.

Heavenly Father truly is mindful of each of us and in His own way will bless us as we exercise faith in Him. In our most difficult moments, He will bear us up.

Scott Lundell was killed in action in Afghanistan on November 25, 2006. I didn't know him well, yet his death deeply affected me. Heavenly Father sent him to me at a critical point in my life. I will never forget him, and I will always remember that special blessing given to me by a worthy priesthood holder. ■

## *The Power of Two Testimonies*

By Kathy Truman

One day as I was looking through books in the Deseret Industries thrift store near my home, I decided to buy a copy of the Book of Mormon to give to a friend on Easter morning. I found a nice used copy, put it into my cart, and continued to browse. I soon came upon another copy that looked even nicer, so I exchanged it for the one in my cart and headed to the cashier.

Upon arriving home, I slipped the Book of Mormon into my desk to save it for Easter. When Easter arrived, I pulled it out and decided to write my testimony inside.

**A**s I was looking through books at Deseret Industries, I decided to buy a copy of the Book of Mormon to give to a friend on Easter morning.

Imagine my surprise when, as I opened the book, I saw a picture of my family taken 25 years before. Beneath the picture was a testimony written by my father. He had recently passed away, and tears sprang to my eyes as I read his testimony and felt his presence.

I remembered that when I was a youth, President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) had challenged families to personalize copies of the Book of Mormon with their pictures and testimonies and then send them to Church headquarters to be distributed to missions throughout the world.<sup>1</sup> When I found this copy of the Book of Mormon, I lived several hundred miles away from where my family had lived when we first had the book.

After adding my testimony to my father's testimony, I gave the Book of Mormon to my friend. I then thanked my Heavenly Father for the blessing that the former Book of Mormon project had given to both my friend and me. My friend felt especially touched by my father's testimony and the special "coincidence" that had occurred. She eventually gained her own testimony of the Book of Mormon and entered the waters of baptism.

My testimony was strengthened as I was touched by President Benson's inspiration and by the blessing of that Book of Mormon finding its way back into my hands after 25 years. ■

### NOTE

1. See "Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon," *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 4–5.



### Sharing the *Liahona*

I always read the *Liahona* because I learn about so many things, such as temple work, Church callings, and how to love God. My heart is softened by the things I read. I learn a lot, and my thoughts become clearer. I have been touched by the messages from President Gordon B. Hinckley. I shared the magazine with new and less-active members. It strengthened them, and now they have ordered copies for themselves.

*Josephine A. Manzon, Philippines*

### The Best Gift a Friend Can Give

I love the magazine. I am so eager for it to come because I share the Visiting Teaching Message with the sisters who don't get the magazine. To me it's the best gift a friend can give.

*Isabel Medina Méndez, Puerto Rico*

### Articles for Members and Nonmembers

The material in the *Liahona* really is simple and highly interesting to read. My favorite section is the messages from the First Presidency; I always benefit from them. They are always full of spiritual counsel for all of Heavenly Father's children—an

ever-flowing fountain of heavenly information for all who may read it.

*Ana Encarnación, Dominican Republic*

### Rereading the *Liahona*

The *Liahona* is a blessing and a companion. I've reread the September 2003 issue, and "Coming Up Short" once again enlightened me. I read it when I prepared for my mission and again as a returned missionary. It truly had a different and wonderful impact on me.

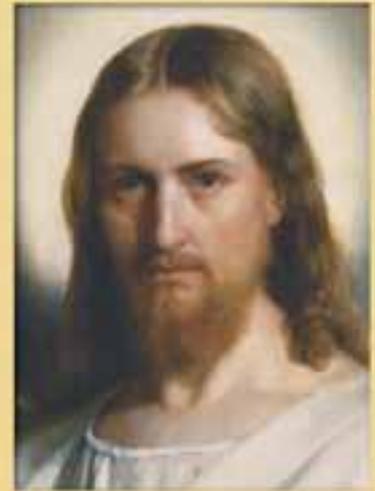
There are times when I feel that many demands are made of me. When I read the article again, it reminded me to continue to be Christlike. Life may not always be fair, but I am now more determined to give my best.

*Georgia Pabulaya, Philippines*

### Watching General Conference

The first time I saw general conference via satellite, it impressed me exceedingly. I feel much gratitude for a living prophet and other General Authorities. As we listen to their testimonies of the Savior and our Heavenly Father and hear them speak with inspiration and power from on high, we are all renewed spiritually. After seeing conference via satellite, I have more strength to keep pressing forward and am eagerly awaiting the next one. Conference in the magazine is also a great comfort, especially to those who don't have the chance to see it.

*Felipe Urbina, Costa Rica*



DETAIL FROM CHRIST WITH BOY, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH

## IN NEXT MONTH'S MAGAZINE

Are Mormons Christian?" is a question people often ask of Church members. Next month's issue will answer that question—every article will focus on our beliefs about the Savior Jesus Christ. Some articles in the issue include the following:

- President Gordon B. Hinckley testifies of the Savior, including His roles as God of the Old Testament and as resurrected Lord, the focus of our faith.
- Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains what it means to have a dynamic faith in Jesus Christ.
- Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Presidency of the Seventy teaches us how to become witnesses of the Lord.

For ideas on how to share the March 2008 issue with members of other faiths, see the related article in the news pages of this issue.



# the Friend



# Do Your Duty

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON  
First Counselor in the First Presidency

**F**ifty-one years ago I heard William J. Critchlow Jr., then president of the South Ogden Stake, retell a story concerning trust, honor, and duty.

“[Young] Rupert stood by the side of the road watching an unusual number of people hurry past. At length he recognized a friend. ‘Where are all of you going in such a hurry?’ he asked.

“The friend paused. . . . ‘The King has lost his royal emerald! . . . Everyone is searching, for the King has offered a reward . . . to the one who finds it. Come, we must hurry.’

“‘But I cannot go without asking Grandmother,’ faltered Rupert.

“‘Then I cannot wait. I want to find the emerald,’ replied his friend.

“Rupert hurried back to the cabin at the edge of the woods to seek his grandmother’s permission. . . .

“But his grandmother shook her head. ‘What would the sheep do?’ she asked. ‘Already they are restless in the pen, waiting to be taken to the pasture, and please do not forget to take them to water when the sun shines high in the heavens.’

“Sorrowfully, Rupert took the sheep to the pasture, and at noon he led them to the brook in the woods. There he sat on a large stone by the stream. ‘If I could only have had a chance to look for the King’s emerald!’ he thought. Turning his head to gaze down at the sandy bottom of the brook, suddenly he stared into the water. What was it? It could not be! He leaped into the water. . . . ‘The King’s emerald!’ he shouted.



**President Monson reminds us to follow the Lord by doing our duty.**

“With shining eyes Rupert ran to his grandmother’s hut to tell her of his great find. ‘Bless you, my boy,’ she said, ‘but you never would have found it if you had not been doing your duty, herding the sheep.’ And Rupert knew that this was the truth.”<sup>1</sup>

The lesson to be learned from this story is found in the familiar couplet: “Do [your] duty; that is best; Leave unto [the] Lord the rest!”<sup>2</sup>

Let us learn our duties. Let us ever be worthy to perform those duties and, in so doing, follow in the footsteps of the Master. When to Him came the call of duty, He answered, “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). May we do likewise. ●  
*From an October 2006 general conference address.*

## NOTES

1. In Conference Report, Oct. 1955, 86; paragraphing, capitalization, and punctuation standardized.
2. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Legend Beautiful,” in *The Complete Poetical Works of Longfellow* (1893), 258.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

**1. Why do you think Rupert’s grandmother asked him to stay home and take care of the sheep? What would have happened if he hadn’t obeyed?**

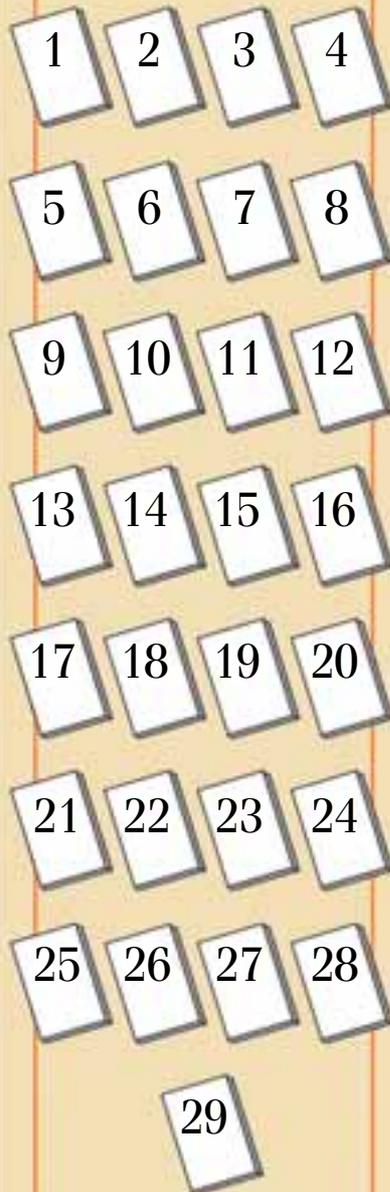
**2. What if Rupert had not found the emerald? Why do we do our duty even if we don’t expect a reward?**

**3. What are some of our duties as members of the Church? What kinds of rewards will we receive for doing those duties?**

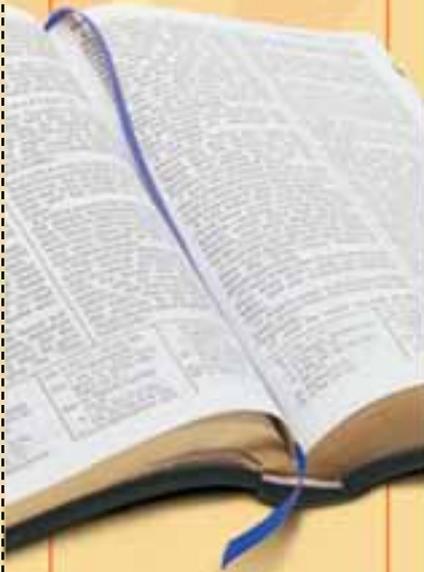


# SCRIPTURE POWER

## FEBRUARY



## SCRIPTURE POWER



*Scripture power keeps me  
safe from sin.*

*Scripture power is the  
power to win.*

*Scripture power! Ev'ry day  
I need*

*The power that I get each  
time I read.*

*Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org). For English, click on "Gospel Library." For other languages, click on "Languages."*

# The Power That I Get Each Time I Read

**“For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children” (2 Nephi 4:15).**

BY LINDA CHRISTENSEN



Nephi, a Book of Mormon prophet, loved the scriptures. He spent time reading them, thinking about them, and teaching them.

Nephi knew that the scriptures would bring happiness.

Alma, another Book of Mormon prophet, learned that the Zoramites were not keeping the commandments. This made Alma sad. He wanted to help. He went on a mission and taught them the gospel. Because of the power of the word of God, many Zoramites repented and began to live the commandments.

Just like Nephi and Alma, you can have the power of the word of God each day by reading the scriptures.

*Scripture power keeps me safe from sin.*

*Scripture power is the power to win.*

*Scripture power! Ev'ry day I need*

*The power that I get each time I read.*

*(“Scripture Power,” 2006 Outline for Sharing Time and the Children’s Sacrament Meeting Presentation, 10–11)*

You are blessed to have the scriptures. As you read them, you will learn what the commandments are and how to keep them. You will be reminded that you are a child of God and He loves you.

## Activity

Remove page F4, and mount it on heavy paper. Cut out the bookmark on the solid black lines. Fold on the dotted line, and glue the back sides of the bookmark together. Use the bookmark to help you keep your place as you read the scriptures. Mark the chart each day when you read the scriptures.

## Sharing Time Ideas

1. Show a journal, and ask the children what it is. A journal is a record of the thoughts, feelings, and events we want to remember. Show Gospel Art Picture Kit 122 (Jacob Blessing His Sons), and briefly tell the story of Jacob, including the names of his 12 sons. Ask the children to listen for two of those names as you read Ezekiel 37:16. Explain to the children that Judah and Joseph and their descendants were told to keep records of important events that occurred. Read Ezekiel 37:15–17. Show Gospel Art Picture Kit 326 (The Bible and Book of Mormon: Two Witnesses), and explain that the Bible is the stick of Judah and the Book of Mormon is the stick of Joseph. Help the children memorize Ezekiel 37:17. Ask them to think of ways to become more familiar with the scriptures (marking the scriptures, memorizing scriptures, having personal and family scripture study, and so on). Testify of the blessing of having the Bible and the Book of Mormon “become one” as they testify of Christ (see also 2 Nephi 3:12).

2. Prepare a matching activity using My Gospel Standards and scriptures from the Doctrine and Covenants. (Examples: “I will honor my parents and do my part to strengthen my family” and D&C 88:123; “I will seek good friends and treat others kindly” and D&C 4:6.) Write the words Doctrine and Covenant on the chalkboard, and discuss the meaning of both words. Turn to the Explanatory Introduction of the Doctrine and Covenants, and read the first sentence together. Talk about the unique characteristics of the Doctrine and Covenants (for example, it is divided into sections, not chapters, and it consists of revelations given in this dispensation). Write the scripture references for the activity on the chalkboard, and display My Gospel Standards. Assign children to look up the scriptures and match them to one of the standards. Invite several children to read a scripture and standard of their choice and share an example of how they can live that standard. ●

# My Family History Miracle

*“Now this prophecy Adam spake, as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and a genealogy was kept of the children of God” (Moses 6:8).*

BY MATTHEW MANGUM

Based on a true story

**M**y dad had been doing a lot of family history work. I loved hearing about my ancestors who were pioneers, ancestors who fought in the American Revolutionary War, and ancestors who had been kings and knights in Europe.

“How would you like to come to the Family History Library with me on Saturday?” Dad asked one day.

“Sure!” I couldn’t wait to see for myself the royal names on our pedigree chart.

We arrived in Salt Lake City and enjoyed the summer morning sunshine as we walked to the library. I became more and more excited the closer we got. There inside that big building were the names and stories of my own family—pioneers, soldiers, knights, and all.

Once inside, Dad pulled up a couple of chairs in front of a computer. We sat down, and he began navigating through databases to show me where our family tied into a royal line.

“Hmmm.” His forehead furrowed. “I can’t seem to find it today,” he finally said.

I was very disappointed. We spent the rest of the morning looking through books that held stories of my pioneer ancestors. I enjoyed that too, but I still wanted to learn about my other ancestors.

“Don’t worry,” Dad said. “We’ll come back next weekend.”

The week flew by, and soon Dad and I were sitting in front of a computer in the Family History Library again. This time, Dad said, “Aha! Found it.”

He scrolled through names of kings and queens from all over Europe recorded there in my family history! There were so many names and dates that it would take many days to get them all into our family history software. “We’ll have to come back a lot to get all the information we need,” I said.

A woman working on the computer next to us glanced over and saw what we were doing. “I’m related to that line too,” she said. “I’ve been working here every day to get information about those ancestors.” Within minutes, she copied all of her information onto a disk and handed it to Dad.

As we walked back to the car, I thought hard. “Heavenly Father must really want us to find our ancestors, don’t you think, Dad?”

He smiled. “I think you’re right. If we had found the ancestors we were looking for last week, we may not have met our new friend here today. And had we not met her, we would not have been able to find so many of our ancestors so quickly.”

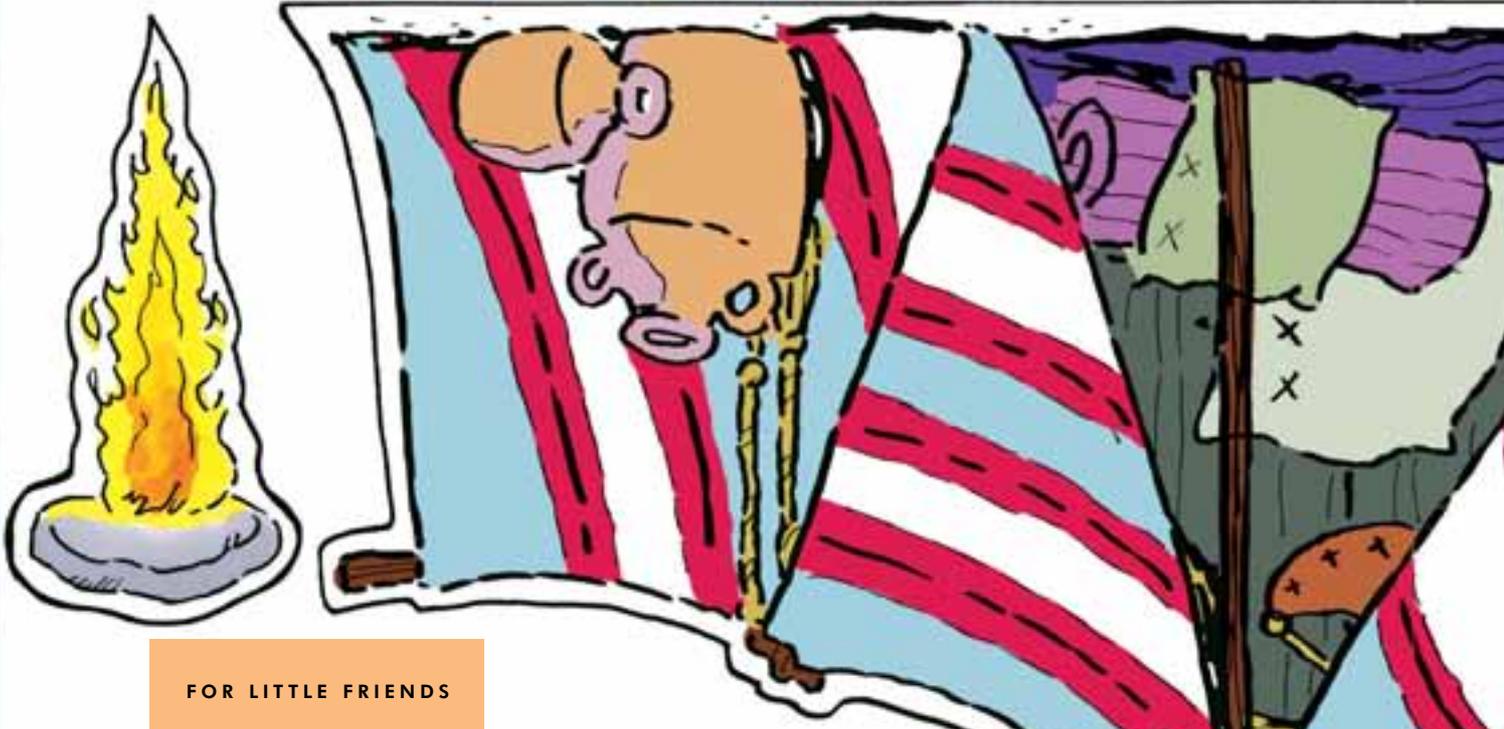
I knew that Heavenly Father had helped us discover almost 1,000 years’ worth of family history in one morning. He loves our ancestors as much as He loves us. We needed to help them just as He had helped us—by finding their names, learning about their lives, and making sure their temple work was done. Someday I will meet them, and we can be an eternal family. ●



"I admonish all families: search out your heritage. It is important

to know . . . those who came before us. We discover something about ourselves when we learn about our ancestors."

**President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Constant Truths for Changing Times," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2005, 21.**



FOR LITTLE FRIENDS

# Lehi and Nephi Obey God

BY VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

**Instructions:** The figures can be mounted on heavy paper, cut out, and then made into stick puppets, flannel board figures, or a shadow box (add tabs to the bottom of each figure), as illustrated. Use them to tell the story of Lehi obeying God (see 1 Nephi 1:4–6, 18–20; 2:1–7). You can also use some of the figures to tell how Nephi obeyed God by obtaining the brass plates (see 1 Nephi 3; 4:1–13, 20, 24, 26).

**Note:** If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org). For English, click on "Gospel Library." For other languages, click on "Languages."



ILLUSTRATIONS BY VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY



Stick puppets



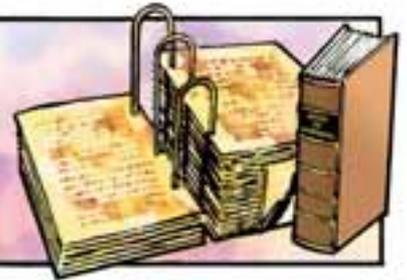
Shadow box





FROM THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

# An Operation on Joseph's Leg



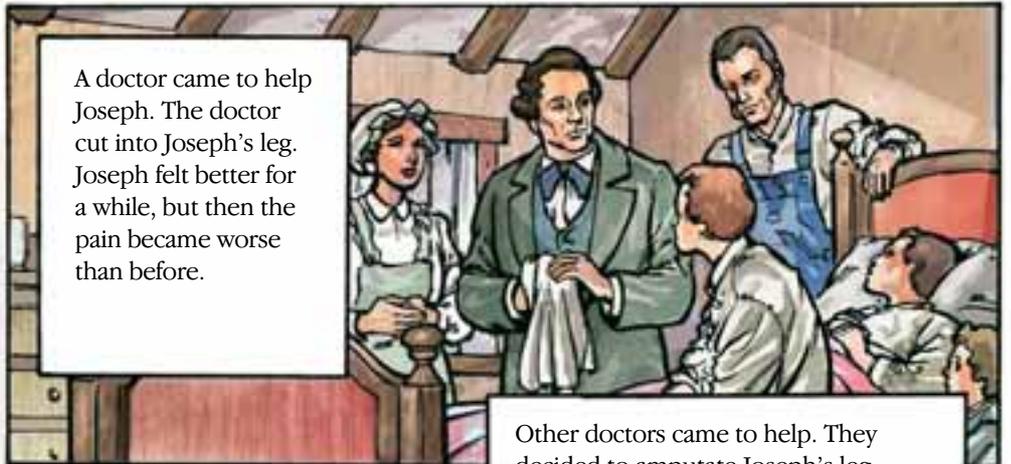
When Joseph Smith was seven years old, he became very sick. He had a fever, and a sore formed on his shoulder. Then he felt a terrible pain in his leg. Soon his leg began to swell.

Oh, Father!  
My leg hurts. How can I bear it!



Joseph's mother, Lucy, and brother Hyrum cared for Joseph. They carried him around the house, sat beside his bed, and held his sore leg to lessen the pain.

A doctor came to help Joseph. The doctor cut into Joseph's leg. Joseph felt better for a while, but then the pain became worse than before.



Other doctors came to help. They decided to amputate Joseph's leg.

Gentlemen, what can you do to save my boy's leg?

We can do nothing. We must amputate to save his life.

You will not take off his leg until you try once more.





The doctors decided to do a different operation. They wanted to tie Joseph to his bed and give him strong drinks to lessen the pain.

No, Doctor, I will not be bound.

Then will you drink some wine?

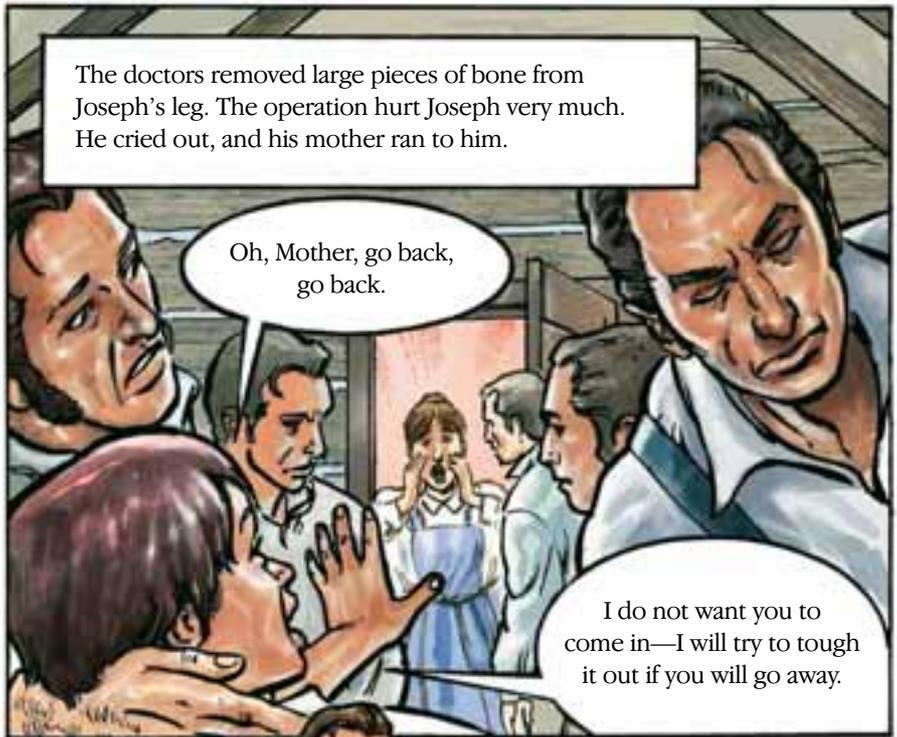
You must take something, or you can never endure the pain.

No. I will not touch one drop of liquor.



Joseph asked his father to sit on the bed and hold him in his arms. He asked his mother to leave the room so she wouldn't see him suffer.

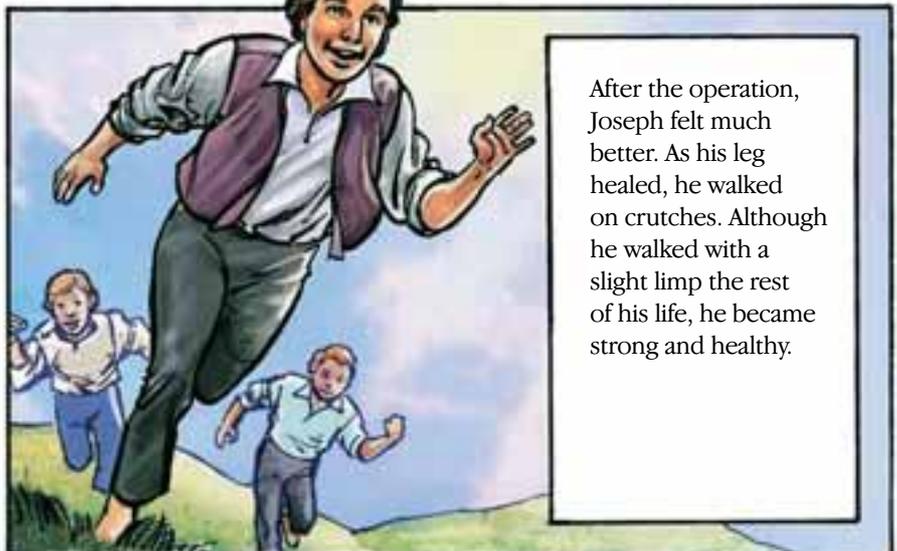
The Lord will help me, and I'll get through it.



The doctors removed large pieces of bone from Joseph's leg. The operation hurt Joseph very much. He cried out, and his mother ran to him.

Oh, Mother, go back, go back.

I do not want you to come in—I will try to tough it out if you will go away.



After the operation, Joseph felt much better. As his leg healed, he walked on crutches. Although he walked with a slight limp the rest of his life, he became strong and healthy.

*“Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good” (Alma 37:37).*

# Like Nephi

BY SHERALEE B. HARDY

Based on a true story

I stared out my bedroom window and saw a creepy spiderweb outside. Well, that was one thing I wouldn't miss about this house: the spiders. Maybe our new house wouldn't have spiders. Maybe I wouldn't miss this run-down place after all.

“Yeah, right,” I grumbled to myself, lying down and pulling the covers over my head. Not miss this house, this neighborhood, my school class, my best friend? I'd face a whole house full of spiders before I'd willingly move.

“Tanya?” called Aunt Carrie from outside my bedroom door. She was tending my brothers and me.

I poked my head out of the covers. “What?”

“Can I come in and say good night?” she asked.

“I guess so,” I mumbled. If it had been anybody else, I might have said no. But Aunt Carrie was my favorite aunt. She let me try on her eye shadow, she gave us hot chocolate before bed, and she read me stories from the journal she wrote when she was 11, like me.

She came in the room and sat at the foot of my bed. “You've sure been quiet tonight, Tanya. Are you worried about the move?”

I groaned. “All my friends live here. Who am I going to walk to school with? Who will I sit by at lunch? I was going to start Young Women here and go to camp next summer—and now I won't know anybody. I'll have to start all over again.”

My voice trailed off as big tears filled my eyes. Aunt Carrie gave me a tissue. “It can't be easy, leaving everyone you love and starting over someplace where you don't know anybody,” she said.

I shook my head. It wasn't easy at all.

Aunt Carrie continued. “You know, Tanya, when I think about moving, I think about Nephi.”

“Why Nephi?” I asked.

“Well, he probably wasn't much older than you when his dad announced that his family was moving.”

I'd always pictured Nephi as an adult. “When was Nephi my age?” I asked.

Aunt Carrie picked up my Book of Mormon from my bedside table. She opened to 1 Nephi and started to explain. “You remember the story about Lehi, don't you?”

I nodded. I knew how Lehi's family obeyed the Lord and left their home.

Aunt Carrie read from the open book on her lap. “This is 1 Nephi 2:4: ‘And it came to pass that [Lehi] departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness.’”

“Did you say Nephi was my age?” I interrupted.

Aunt Carrie smiled. “I don't know what his age was exactly, but he tells us in verse 16 that he was ‘exceedingly young.’ Even if he was older than you, I don't think it was easy for him to leave his home. I bet he didn't know a soul in the wilderness. There probably wasn't a soul *to* know!”

I grinned. At least when we moved we would have neighbors. “So what did Nephi do?” I asked. “He never complained. Laman and Lemuel said, ‘Why do we have to leave Jerusalem? Why do we have to leave our riches



and our house and our friends?’ But Nephi never complained. Why not?”

Aunt Carrie’s eyes twinkled, as though she had been hoping I would ask. “I don’t know all the answers, but Nephi gives us a clue in verse 16: ‘I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me, and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father; wherefore, I did not rebel against him like unto my brothers.’”

She looked at me, searching my eyes to see if I understood.

“So, he prayed,” I said.

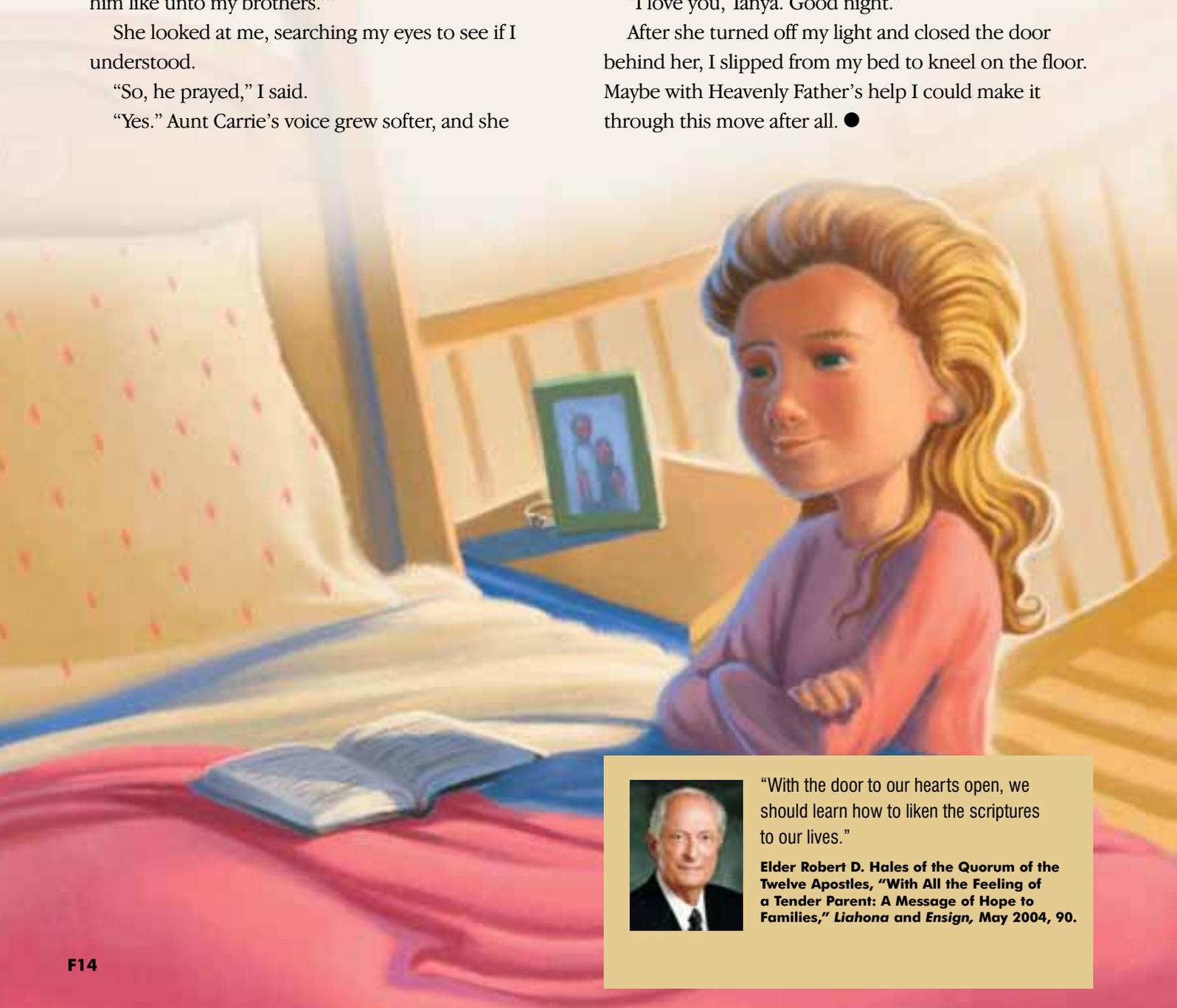
“Yes.” Aunt Carrie’s voice grew softer, and she

squeezed my hand. “Tanya,” she said, “you have a choice. You can complain about your move, like Laman and Lemuel, or you can take your difficulties to Heavenly Father in prayer. If you ask Him to, He will strengthen you as He strengthened Nephi.”

I looked at Aunt Carrie and felt warm all over. I sat up and gave her a big hug. “Thanks, Aunt Carrie,” I whispered.

“I love you, Tanya. Good night.”

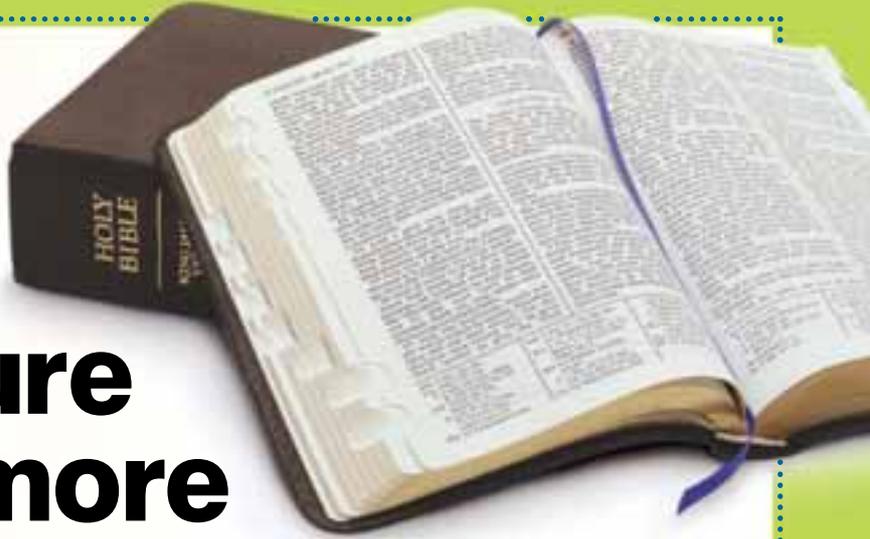
After she turned off my light and closed the door behind her, I slipped from my bed to kneel on the floor. Maybe with Heavenly Father’s help I could make it through this move after all. ●



“With the door to our hearts open, we should learn how to liken the scriptures to our lives.”

**Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “With All the Feeling of a Tender Parent: A Message of Hope to Families,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2004, 90.**

# How can my scripture study be more meaningful?



**When we come to a crisis in our life, we should go looking in the scriptures for specific help. We will find answers in the scriptures.**

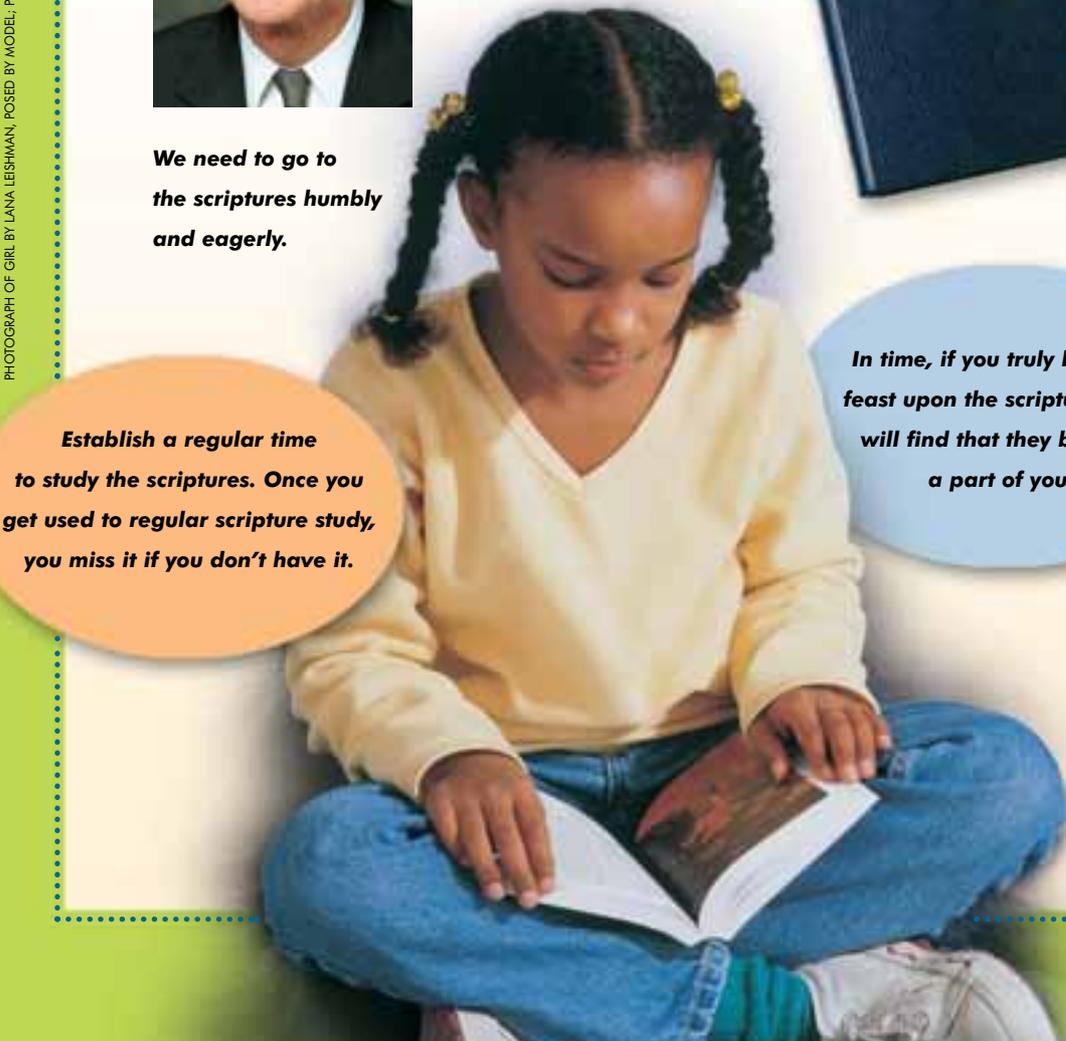


*Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares some of his thoughts on this subject.*



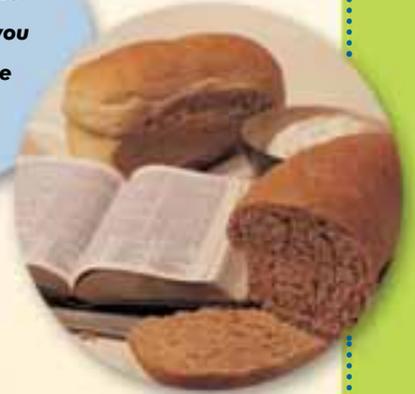
**If you read the Book of Mormon with an open heart, you will know that it is the word of God and that it is true.**

**We need to go to the scriptures humbly and eagerly.**



**Establish a regular time to study the scriptures. Once you get used to regular scripture study, you miss it if you don't have it.**

**In time, if you truly begin to feast upon the scriptures, you will find that they become a part of you.**



*From "A Discussion on Scripture Study," Liahona, July 2005, 8–12; Ensign, July 2005, 22–26.*

PHOTOGRAPH OF GIRL BY LANA LESHMAN, POSED BY MODEL; PHOTOGRAPH OF SCRIPTURES AND BREAD BY TAMARA H. RATIETA; PHOTOGRAPH OF PORTUGUESE BOOK OF MORMON BY NATHAN CAMPBELL



**THE SCRIPTURES TEACH ME ABOUT HEAVENLY FATHER AND JESUS CHRIST AND HOW TO RETURN TO THEM**  
“And upon these I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children” (2 Nephi 4:15).



**The Five Wise Virgins, by Louise Parker**

*In his short tenure as Church President, President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) asked all worthy members to have a current temple recommend even if they did not live near a temple. This painting is based on the true story of two Nigerian women who walked 18 miles (29 km) round trip to get their temple recommends even though, at the time, there was no temple close enough for them to attend.*



**W**e have a fourfold responsibility: to our families, to our employers, to the Lord, and to ourselves. The kind of life that will bring lasting happiness comes—not through neglecting these responsibilities or through being overwhelmed by them—but through finding a proper balance. See “Living a Balanced Life,” p. 38.