



SUNDAY LESSONS

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This month's topic:

The Plan of Salvation

By Sara N. Hall

When I was 17 my mother found out she had breast cancer. The shock overwhelmed my family and brought me to my knees in deep prayer. I cried for almost an hour, asking God why He would let this happen and if He would heal my mom. Relief began to come a few days later when our ward members, extended family, friends, and neighbors learned of the news. They rushed to our aid. Meals were brought in, kind words and deeds were exchanged, concern and sympathy given. The love we felt from them was deep.

But even though we received so much help, I fell into a deep depression. I didn't care what happened to me. I stopped doing things I loved. I became lazy and careless with chores, schoolwork, and my Church calling. I saw my situation and the extra responsibility placed upon me as a great burden. I felt I could do everything myself and did not need anyone's help.

MY RECOVERY ROOM

My mom was the one who was sick, but I needed to heal too.

Satan worked especially hard on me, telling me that I should feel burdened, that God wanted me to be unhappy, and that I wasn't anything special. Sadly, for a while I believed it. I couldn't see the bright side of anything. I did not see myself as a daughter of God. Confusion blinded me, and I couldn't see my many blessings. I couldn't even look in the mirror. I felt pain and heartache.

Thankfully, a close friend spent a lot of time helping me, and my siblings supported me as well. I became more open with my parents, who in turn became more open with me. But still I struggled.

My mom would often comfort me when I felt down. When I felt like all hope was gone, it was nice to have someone to talk to and help me out. She would come home in between treatments and iron our clothing, prepare meals, and offer us comfort and counsel. It amazed me how she could endure such trials and yet be so selfless.

When I discussed my depression with her one day, she told me that just because I cried and admitted I needed help, it did not make me weak. She was taking care of me when I should have taken care of her.

After one of her many surgeries, my mom was in the recovery room. At the time, I couldn't help but think I needed my own recovery room. I had no idea where to start the healing process, but I had to do something.

So I started renewing my talents and abilities as well as developing new ones. I cooked and did the laundry. I took more walks to think. I sang solos. I played the clarinet and piano more and began playing better. I read more books.

I started to listen to more uplifting music. I surrounded myself with advice from Church leaders and other valuable sources. I became closer to God and my Savior through personal prayer, fasting, and scripture study.

Still I felt like my peace was fleeting. It was hard when I wanted to be at peace on some days, and instead I would feel the sadness. The mood swings became even more difficult. It seemed my journey for peace had only begun.

Then I went to the temple to do baptisms for the dead with my Young Women class. I thought about my problems while in the temple and while flipping through the pages of my scriptures. I found myself reading about the Savior in Isaiah 53:4, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

A few minutes later, the confusion that had blinded me and caused me so much pain completely vanished. The Lord broke through the darkness and the despair of my heart and left the peace of the Spirit instead. I had a sense of clarity and happiness that I hadn't felt for a long time. I saw how many blessings I had received and how much everyone had done for me and my family. I saw how close my family, friends, and I had become. I saw myself as a truly beautiful daughter of God.

There in the temple I found my recovery room.

Looking back on this experience, I realize that I now have more empathy and compassion for those less fortunate than I am. I know where to recover. The hardest year of my life became the best year of my life. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.