

Liahona

**Understanding
Addiction and Its
Impact on Loved
Ones, pages 16, 22**

Our Connection to Heaven, page 12
How Covenants Bind Us to God and
to Each Other, page 26



THE
CHURCH
IS HERE

Sydney Australia





Along the shores of Sydney's beautiful natural harbor stands a chapel where 4 of Australia's 309 Latter-day Saint congregations meet for church: one each in English, Tongan, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. Such diversity is typical of Sydney, an area vibrant with cultural influences from around the world.

The Church was introduced to Australia in 1840 by a 17-year-old from Great Britain, William James Barratt. He baptized the first Australian convert, Robert Beauchamp, who later became a mission president.

Early members in Australia faced harsh attacks from newspapers, and many members emigrated to Utah, USA. However, Australian Latter-day Saints persisted, and over the years the Church began to thrive. Today, Australia is home to more than 151,000 members, and Latter-day Saints have received praise from news services for providing emergency humanitarian relief following natural disasters such as brush fires and cyclones.

- The first mission in Australia opened in 1851, and there are now six missions.
- The first LDS meetinghouse in Australia was constructed in Brisbane in 1904.
- The Sydney Australia Temple was dedicated in 1984, followed by temples in Adelaide (2000), Melbourne (2000), Perth (2001), and Brisbane (2003).



We Need Each Other



Finding Peace in the Storm of Addiction
Chakell Wardleigh

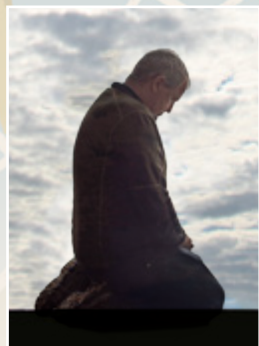
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Have you ever faced a challenge in your life that you were desperate to keep hidden because you feared what others might think? My family and I have. We struggled with this for years as we've watched my brother battle drug addiction.

On page 16, you will find a professional counselor's explanation of addiction, how to understand it, how to recognize it, how it affects families, and how you can help. Following that is my own story of how my brother's addiction has affected and shaped me throughout the past decade.

As much as we want to be able to overcome challenges on our own and to lead perfect lives, the truth of the matter is that we need each other because none of us are exempt from facing challenges. We are meant to "bear one another's burdens" (Mosiah 18:8), and the Savior can show us how to sincerely do so if we allow Him to. It's my hope that we will strive to understand, to empathize, and to love, rather than be quick to judge. By doing so, we will have greater peace and joy in whatever circumstances we find ourselves in.

Chakell Wardleigh
Church Magazines



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Elder Juan A. Uceda

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Our young adult years are **one of the best times to make a difference** in our communities, homes, and the world.



Youth

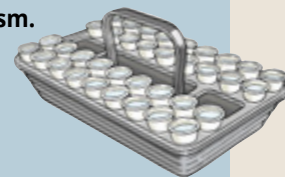
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Trying to decide if you will serve a mission? Find out what the missionary training center experience is like.



The Friend

In this month's *Friend*, you can find articles to help your children **learn about and prepare for baptism.**



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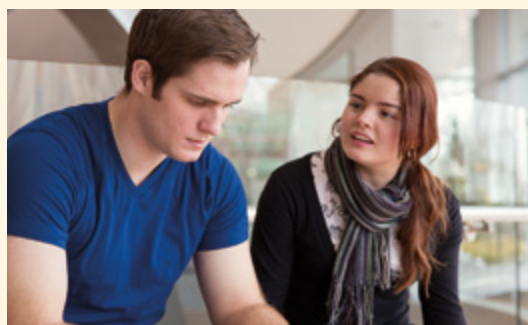
FEATURED DIGITAL-ONLY ARTICLES



Not Enough Hours in the Day? Here's How to Make the Most of Your Time

By Heather J. Johnson

Goal setting can chart a proper course for our lives.



You Don't Know What You Don't Know

By Lori Fuller

If we could just listen without trying to change someone's mind, I think we'd be surprised what we might learn.

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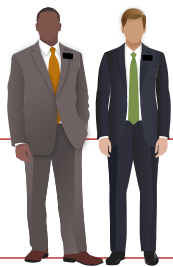
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MISSIONARY TRAINING CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

12
missionary training
centers (MTCs)

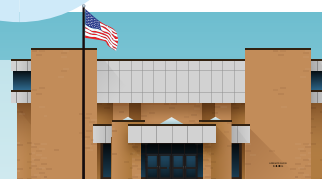
67,007
full-time missionaries
currently serving

399
missions

58
languages

20,515

Number of missionaries trained last year at
the **largest MTC**—in Provo, Utah, USA.
Dominican Republic



376

Number of missionaries
trained last year at the
smallest MTC—
in Johannesburg,
South Africa.



The **largest MTC campus**
—in Mexico City, Mexico—
has **88** buildings on
90 acres.



The
tallest MTC
building—
in São Paulo,
Brazil—is
7 stories.



3 weeks time in the MTC if the missionary is not learning a foreign language.

6–9 weeks time in the MTC if the missionary is learning a foreign language.



*See page 50 to learn how the missionary training
centers help prepare missionaries to serve.*



Shelly Ellegood

Kentucky, USA



Life choices kept Shelly away from the Church for years. With the help of friends at church, Shelly eventually found the strength and faith to move forward and be a good example to her children.

CODY BELL, PHOTOGRAPHER

I know I can't go back and change anything, but my goal now is to do everything I can to give my kids a good example because they didn't have one for many years. I hope they can see I've overcome many challenges.

I want them to know that if they have bad spells, they can move past them as they turn to the Savior for help. It's a matter of having faith and never giving up. The Lord has helped me as I've gone along, and I know He can help them too. The progress has been painful, but the Lord has built me up and made me stronger.

LEARN MORE

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf offers hope and encouragement for those coming back to Church activity at lds.org/go/021902. Learn how you can minister to those who are not attending or just returning to Church activity at lds.org/go/021903. Find more Portraits of Faith at lds.org/go/18.

Ministering Principles

DEVELOPING THE EMPATHY TO MINISTER

Ministering is lifting. We can lift others as we try to understand what they are experiencing and show that we are willing to walk with them.

Because our Heavenly Father wants us to become like Him, the challenges we face in this life can become learning opportunities if we will trust Him and stay on the path. Unfortunately, staying on the path can be particularly hard when we feel like we're facing those trials on our own.

But we were never meant to walk the path alone. The Savior achieved perfect empathy, descending below all things so that He would know how to succor us in our afflictions and infirmities (see Alma 7:11–12; Doctrine and Covenants 122:8). He expects each of us to follow His example and show empathy as well. Every member of the Church has covenanted to “mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:9). In spite of our own challenges, we are taught throughout the scriptures to turn outward and “lift up the hands which hang down, and [strengthen] the feeble knees” and to “make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way” (Hebrews 12:12–13; see also Isaiah 35:3–4; Doctrine and Covenants 81:5–6).

As we take others by the hand, let them lean on us, and walk with them, we help them stay on the path long enough for the Savior not only to convert them—one of the



key purposes of ministering—but also to heal them (see Doctrine and Covenants 112:13).

What Is Empathy?

Empathy is understanding another person's feelings, thoughts, and condition from their perspective, rather than our own.¹ Being empathetic is important in our efforts to minister to others.

Walking in Someone Else's Shoes

The story is told of a shy Latter-day Saint man who often sat on the back row of the chapel alone. When a member of the elder's quorum suddenly passed away, the bishop gave

priesthood blessings to comfort the elder's family members. Relief Society sisters brought in food. Well-meaning friends and neighbors visited with the family and said, "Let us know if there is anything we can do to help."

But when this shy man visited the family later in the day, he rang the doorbell and when the widow answered, he simply said, "I have come to clean your shoes." In a couple of hours, all the family's shoes were cleaned and shined in preparation for the funeral. The following Sunday the family of the deceased elder sat by the shy man on the back row.

Here was a man who was able to fill an unmet need. Both they and he were blessed by his empathy-guided ministering.

JESUS CHRIST MINISTERED WITH EMPATHY

When the Savior appeared to the Nephites, He taught them until He perceived that they could not understand everything He had to teach them. But as He considered them, He knew that they didn't want Him to leave, and He felt compassion for them. (See 3 Nephi 17:5–6.)

He responded by shifting from expounding on the gospel to ministering to their temporal needs, inviting them to bring forward those who were sick, lame, blind, or maimed. He healed them. Then He prayed for them and ministered to their children, spending time with them individually to bless them.

What can we learn from the Savior's example of empathy in ministering to the Nephites?



Can I Develop Empathy?

Some seem to be blessed with the gift to be able to empathize. But for those who struggle, there is good news. Over the past 30 years, a growing number of researchers have studied empathy. While many of them come at the topic with different approaches, most of them agree that empathy is something that can be learned.²

We can pray for the gift of empathy. In order to improve, it is also helpful to have a better understanding of how empathy works. The following suggestions are generally accepted as basic elements of empathy.³ While these often take place without us even being conscious that they are happening, being aware of them gives us a chance to see opportunities to improve.

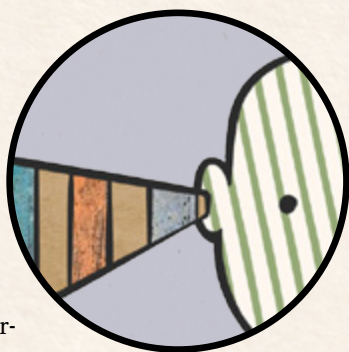
1. Understand

Empathy requires some understanding of another's situation. The better we understand their circumstances, the easier it becomes to understand how they feel about it and what we can do to help.

Actively listening, asking questions, and counseling with them and others are important actions for understanding their situation. Learn more about these concepts in previous Ministering Principles articles:

- “Five Things Good Listeners Do,” *Ensign* and *Liahona*, June 2018, 6.
- “Counsel about Their Needs,” *Ensign* and *Liahona*, Sept. 2018, 6.
- “Involve Others in Ministering—as Needed,” *Ensign* and *Liahona*, Oct. 2018, 6.

As we seek to understand, we must take time to understand their specific situation rather than making assumptions based on another who had a similar experience. Otherwise, we may miss the mark and leave them feeling misunderstood.



2. Imagine

In our efforts to keep our covenant to mourn with those who mourn and comfort those who stand in need of comfort, we can pray for the Holy Ghost to help us understand what someone might be feeling and how we can help.⁴

Once we understand someone's circumstances, each of us—whether it happens naturally or not—can go through the exercise of imagining what we would think or feel in that situation. Understanding those thoughts and emotions, along with the guidance of the Holy Ghost, can help guide our response to their situation.

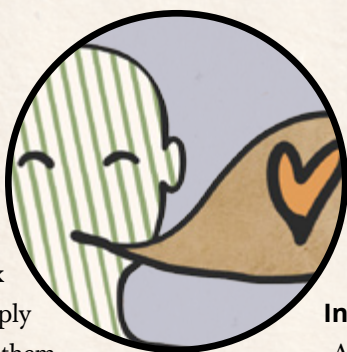
As we come to understand another's circumstances and imagine how they might feel, it is important that we are careful that we don't judge them inappropriately (see Matthew 7:1). Being critical of how someone got into their situation can lead you to discount the pain the situation is causing.



3. Respond

How we respond is important because that is how our empathy shows. There are countless ways to communicate our understanding both verbally and nonverbally. It's important to remember that our goal isn't necessarily to fix the problem. Often the goal is simply to lift and to strengthen by letting them know they're not alone. This might mean saying, "I'm so glad you told me" or "I'm so sorry. That must hurt."

In every case our response must be genuine. And when appropriate, being vulnerable enough to let others see your own weaknesses and insecurities can create a valuable sense of connection.



Invitation to Act

As you consider the circumstances of those you minister to, imagine being in their situation and what you would find most helpful if you were in their shoes. Pray to understand how they feel and follow through. Your response may be simple, but it may be more meaningful. ■

"Ministering Principles" articles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as messages during visits. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.



NOTES

1. See W. Ickes, *Empathic Accuracy* (1997); and M. L. Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development: Implications for Caring and Justice* (2000).
2. See, for example, Emily Tedding van Berkhout and John M. Malouff, "The Efficacy of Empathy Training: A Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* (2016), 63(1), 32–41.
3. See, for example, Brené Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (But It Isn't)* (2008); Theresa Wiseman, "A Concept Analysis of Empathy," *Journal of Advanced Nursing* (1996), 23, 1162–67; and Ed Neukrug and others, "Creative and Novel Approaches to Empathy: a Neo-Rogerian Perspective," *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 35(1) (Jan. 2013), 29–42.
4. See Henry B. Eyring, "The Comforter," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 17–21.



By Elder
Juan A. Uceda
Of the Seventy

A Personal
Relationship with
Our Heavenly
Father through
Prayer



When was the
last time you
felt something
as you were
praying?



When I use a mobile phone to call my mother and father in New Jersey, USA, I can hear their voices clearly. I do not know how it is possible, without any cable or visible connection, that I can talk to them so far away. But I know it works!

Now, please do not ask me how it is possible that millions of people can pray at the same time, and in different languages, and our Father in Heaven is ready to listen and to answer at the same time. I cannot understand how that happens. But I know it works!

Just like a mobile phone, prayer works, even though we may not understand exactly how. But there are some things about prayer that we do understand.

Pray from the Heart

We read in the scriptures, “Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened” (Luke 3:21). Jesus teaches us that a prayer from the heart can open heaven. He said, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7).

Today, we usually use the word *ask* to request something. But in the original Greek, the word is *aiteo*, which means not only to ask but also to beg, crave, or implore. The heavens will not be opened if we just *say* prayers. They will be opened if we *beg*, if we *crave*, if we *implore*, if we pray from the heart.

When you pray, do you feel like the heavens are opened? When was the last time, as you were praying, that you felt something?

Prepare to Pray

To avoid falling into routine prayers using vain repetitions (see Matthew 6:7; 3 Nephi 13:7), we should prepare ourselves to pray. I suggest reading a scripture or briefly pondering our blessings. Each one of us can find ways to prepare for personal prayer.

Pray Even When It's Hard

Every now and then, we rush through prayers or pray out of routine. Sometimes we do not pray with faith in Jesus

Christ, and sometimes we do not pray at all. But it's at those moments when we lack faith or don't feel like praying that we most need to pray.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) said: “When it is dark as midnight darkness, when there is not one particle of feeling in my heart to pray, shall I then say, I will not pray? No, but [I say] . . .

knees, bend yourselves upon the floor, and mouth, open; tongue, speak; and we will see what will come forth, and you shall worship the Lord God of Israel, even when you feel as though you could not say a word in His favor. That is the victory we have to gain. . . . It is between the spirit and the body; they are inseparably connected” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 3:207).

Satan does not want you to pray because he knows that the moment you start praying from the heart, you obtain spiritual power and he loses influence over you. A mighty prayer enables you to face challenges such as anxiety, depression, and doubts about your own faith.

If you do not remember the last time you felt something as you were praying, then do something about it. Through

prayer, you can establish and maintain a personal relationship with your Father in Heaven.

Spend a Moment in Heaven

When you desperately need help from heaven, prayer can give you power to make the right decisions. A prayer from the heart is indeed a moment in heaven, and even though answers may not always be immediate, a moment in heaven can help you to chart your course in mortal life.

In a world where people “call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20), you need to know that the heavens are open to you.

Prayers offered from the heart, mighty prayers, can give you spiritual power to face such things. When the heavens are opened, we can feel peace, comfort, joy, and love, even though we may not immediately gain complete understanding.

Follow the Savior's Example

We can learn a lot by studying how the Savior prayed.

“And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35).

Jesus prayed first thing in the morning and sought a solitary place to pray. Do you pray first thing in the morning? Do you avoid distractions? Do you unplug yourself from the world and strive to establish a connection with the heavens?

Luke also records that Jesus “withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed” (Luke 5:16). Do you have a place of prayer where you go when you wish to petition your Father in Heaven?

Remain Humble

Matthew tells us that the Redeemer, as He prayed, demonstrated humility. “And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39).

What does it mean that he “fell on his face”? The word for “fell” in the original Greek is *pipto*, a verb that means “to descend from an erect to a prostrate position.” When the





Believe that
you can receive
spiritual power
to overcome. . . .
Spend a moment
in the heavens.

moment comes for personal prayer, remember that you are going to address the most intelligent and powerful being in the universe, “the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort” (2 Corinthians 1:3). Before such a being, I cannot be casual. I feel compelled to kneel.

Jesus Christ also set an example when He said to His Father: “Not as I will, but as thou wilt.” When you say, “Not as I will, but as thou wilt,” do you truly mean it? What changes do you need to make in your mind, heart, and actions to truly be sincere?

Seek Earnestly

As you strive to be humble, honest, and sincere in your prayers, you will find it easier to accept Heavenly Father’s will, even when it may not match what you had in mind. Again, we turn to the example of Jesus Christ: “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly” (Luke 22:44).

When facing a difficulty, do you spend time asking yourself, why me? Or do you pray more earnestly? The expression “more earnestly” comes from Greek words meaning “without ceasing, fervent.” So Jesus teaches us that in moments of trial, we have to pray fervently, without ceasing. I invite all those who are going through times of distress to turn to the living God.

Times of distress can provide a great opportunity for our Heavenly Father to teach us. Our hearts soften and our minds wrestle for answers. If we seek Him, He is there.

Believe That He Will Listen

The Savior said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Be not afraid, only believe” (Mark 5:36). Believe that God the Father will listen to you. Believe that He “will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart” (Doctrine and Covenants 8:2). Believe that you—yes, you—can feel peace and comfort. Believe that you can receive spiritual power to overcome.

Mighty prayers *do* reach the heavens. In the book of Psalms, King David says, “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice” (Psalm 55:17). One of the meanings of the word *pray* in Hebrew is “to speak.” And that is what we do when we pray to our Heavenly Father: we speak to Him.

When we offer a mighty prayer, we have the attention of the most powerful, merciful, and loving being in the universe. We spend a moment in the heavens. And we all need a moment in the heavens, especially when we are going through difficult times.

I know beyond any doubt that there is a God in heaven. He is your Father and my Father. He lives. His name is Love. His name is Mercy. In spite of being nothing before Him, I can kneel down before my Maker, and I can speak to Him. And He, in His infinite mercy, answers back, again and again and again. ■

From a Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional address, “A Personal Relationship with Our Heavenly Father as Taught by the Lord Jesus Christ,” given on November 28, 2017.

Overcoming the Plague of ADDICTION

Understanding addiction is a key step in overcoming it. But we must also rely on the Lord and believe that He can heal us.

By Kevin Theriot, PhD
LDS Family Services

When someone struggles with an addiction, it's important to know that there is hope. There are people every single day all around the world who are able to find freedom from the substance or behavior holding them hostage. It will take a concerted personal effort, an understanding of the factors that are unique to them that are holding them in the addictive cycle, along with a belief that God can inspire them in their personal path to freedom.

In my 38 years of helping people overcome addictions, I have seen our understanding and treatment of addiction improve over the years. I strongly suspect that this evolution will continue for years to come. While those in the field of addiction sciences face challenging questions, we continue to make positive strides. So the information being presented here is based on what we know today, with the belief that additional light and knowledge will continue to come forth in the future.

Understanding Addiction

I know what a heart-wrenching struggle it is to wrestle with an addiction, but the first step is understanding addiction yourself. Here are several key ideas to shed some light on the subject:

- Addictions begin with initial exposure and end with dependency. Wherever someone is on this continuum, they can still exercise some degree of agency and find their way out of the addictive behavior.

- Labeling someone as an addict can undermine their long-term progress. This is especially true in the early stages of the behavior. The label “in recovery” appears to be more helpful. It’s like saying, “I am choosing to rely on the Savior and His Atonement in order to become more like Him” rather than, “I am stuck in sin forever.”
- All addictions have several components to them: *biological* (genetics, brain chemistry, etc.), *psychological* (self-worth, personality characteristics, post-traumatic stress, etc.), *social* (parents, friends, culture, etc.), and *spiritual* (personal and family religious practices, etc.). The combination of each of these components, and their relative strengths, are often as unique as the individual. Each component may require specific, individualized attention for the person as a whole to free him or herself from the negative behavior.



Biological



Psychological



Social



Spiritual

Signs on the Path to Addiction

The following are indicators that an individual may be on the path to developing a habit, then a compulsion, then an addiction:



Obsessiveness: They become less interested in healthy activities as the harmful substance or behavior gradually dominates.



Increased craving: They progressively want more.



Secrecy: They are increasingly reluctant to allow others to know of their decisions and behaviors.



Denial: They lie to themselves about their growing dependency and believe their own lies.



Withdrawal: When they are denied access to the harmful substance or behavior, their sense of well-being fades.



Reverting back: In spite of their realization of the negative impact on their life, they return back to the substance or behavior.

Additionally, the individual is typically the worst person to accurately assess where he or she is on the addiction continuum once the habit starts. If you are wondering if a loved one is on the path to addiction, there are many resources available to help, in your community as well as online.



Finding Treatment

- The responsibility for change falls to each individual. While family and friends can be supportive, they cannot interfere with someone else's agency. If the individual has no desire to change, no form of treatment will be successful.
- The path to recovery can be different for each individual. Due to the relative strengths and weaknesses of the four unique factors mentioned previously (biological, psychological, social, and spiritual), there is no single treatment approach that works for everyone. Personal study, consultation with experts, and a commitment to persevere until the solution is found will ultimately lead to success.
- While unresolved addiction can leave the individual's life in ruins, all of their loved ones are also negatively impacted. These loving, supportive people also need support and care.

While it is within God's power to remove this challenge from affected individuals if they allow Him to, He in His infinite wisdom has things for those individuals to learn as they work with Him toward a solution. Virtually everyone who has broken free from their addiction can testify of the learning that came through their personal victory over their vice. ■

FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Addiction should not be viewed only as a moral weakness but as a multifaceted challenge that virtually anyone could face. If you know someone struggling with an addiction, there are any number of things you should consider doing and some you should consider not doing. While the following suggestions are not an exhaustive list and will vary depending on the specific situation, you could prayerfully consider each:

- A little prevention is worth a lot of cure. Forewarned is forearmed! Regardless of the receptiveness of your loved one, speak up. People often ask me what they should say or how they should say it. My response is always, "Anything is preferable to nothing!" Silence is one of worst things you can employ. Pray for courage and insight; then open your mouth and speak up, even if they don't want to listen.
- A good family member or friend encourages and helps those they love to make good choices. They also discourage and do not enable bad choices.
- This scripture gives needed direction to those whose loved one is headed down the path of addiction:

"Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love" (Doctrine and Covenants 121:43).

- Be a good cheerleader. Cheerleaders do not take a win or a loss personally. They understand that their role is to cheer, to encourage, and to be positive. While they do have an emotional investment in the competition, wanting their participant to win, they don't take offense when things aren't going well.
- "Study[ing] it out in your mind" (Doctrine and Covenants 9:8) is an important part of helping yourself and the person you're concerned about. Learn about addiction so you can have a better idea of what it is, how it can be treated, and what you can do to help.



ONLINE RESOURCES

The Church provides the following websites to help you learn about addiction:

- addictionrecovery.lds.org
- overcomingpornography.org

Your country may also have national organizations and websites about overcoming addiction, such as ncadd.org (addressing drug and alcohol addiction) and fightthenewdrug.org (addressing pornography) in the United States.

Church leaders can refer to counselingresources.lds.org for guidance in helping those in recovery and their families.

Finding Peace in the Storm of Addiction

By Chakell Wardleigh

Church Magazines

Addiction is a relentless hurricane that tosses both the addict and his or her loved ones to and fro.

The night my brother overdosed on heroin is one I'll never forget. I can still recall every detail: the thud of his body hitting the floor, my parents' yells, the terror, the confusion, and the hopelessness that sank in when I realized we were back to square one with his seemingly never-ending battle with addiction.

When my brother didn't respond, I actually surprised myself. Despite the chaos around me, an unnatural inner strength came over me that enabled me to help my parents get my brother stable. I held his stiff gray hands and spoke slowly to him as he stared back with dull eyes. Though I couldn't believe what I was seeing, I was surprisingly calm as we waited for him to come to. I realized later that this timely calmness was the Lord's sustaining power.

After he was stabilized and taken to be treated at a hospital, the reality of the situation struck me. My momentary heaven-sent strength ran out, and I collapsed with grief. My heart broke. My chest ached as I lay curled on my bed, and I couldn't catch my breath. I couldn't sob hard enough to keep up with my emotions.



“How is this my life?” I thought. “He’s never going to beat this! I can’t do this anymore!”

In that moment when I collapsed with grief, I felt like I had been lifted into the air by an unseen force—a gale-force wind that slammed me to the cold, dark ground of rock bottom—a place reserved not just for addicts but for those who love them, a place I’m becoming all too familiar with.

A Relentless Hurricane

Watching someone you love struggle with addiction is almost unbearable. Addiction feeds lies, secrecy, deceit, and betrayal, which breeds defensiveness, shame, and distrust—all of which damage relationships with others and cause each of us to question our grasp on reality. I can’t tell you how many times my parents, siblings, and I have each been faced with the crushing weight of “what ifs?” and “if onlys.”

Not every family that is affected by addiction has the same experience, but in my family’s case, my brother’s addiction has caused disagreements about how to handle his situation. There have been passive-aggressive comments about “enabling” and hurt feelings among me and my sisters when my parents’ attention is constantly focused on our brother. Sometimes, we are all forced to walk on eggshells around each other.

Addiction is like a looming thunderstorm—an ever-present cloud of uncertainty and worry hanging above our heads. Though we’re always on edge, waiting for lightning to strike, whenever it does, it still catches us off guard, sending us into absolute panic. Every time. It’s a vicious, never-ending cycle.

When my brother overdosed, he had been clean for two years. We were finally seeing the light after watching him battle the brutal

consequences of addiction for more than a decade. But the moment he was again exposed to his vice, everything he had worked to build in the past two years came crashing down.

After briefly seeing freedom on the horizon, we had been sucked by my brother’s relapse back into the raging, messy, and seemingly inescapable hurricane of addiction, a storm that buffets the addict while also tossing their loved ones to and fro.

President Russell M. Nelson explained addiction as follows: “From an initial experiment thought to be trivial, a vicious cycle may follow. From trial comes a habit. From habit comes dependence. From dependence comes addiction. Its grasp is so gradual. Enslaving shackles of habit are too small to be sensed until they are too strong to be broken.”¹

Feelings of complete and utter betrayal crushed me and my family.

But the thing we often forget about addiction is that when my brother relapses, he’s not choosing his addiction over his family; he is faced daily with an almost unbearable temptation that we can’t fully understand.

The Savior Can Be Found at Rock Bottom

Lying on my bed, I could already feel the familiar turmoil creeping back into my mind. I was hopeless. Defeated. Aching. Although I begged God to take the pain in my heart away and to give my brother the strength to overcome this trial once again, I was certain that I would never be able to pull myself out of the dark pit of despair after seeing my brother so broken.

Yet somehow I did.

Each time I find myself lying in the depths of rock bottom, whether it stems from my brother’s addiction or because of other trials I’m facing, I manage to stand up, steady my ship, and set sail once again. It might seem impossible, but that’s the wonderful thing about the grace and mercy of the Savior: when I put my life in His hands, He makes the impossible, possible. As the Apostle Paul taught, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13).

My moments of despair, my “rock bottom” moments, usually come when life is going well, when I’m feeling on top of the world, and then, out of nowhere, I’m falling—and *smack!* I’m facedown on the merciless ground of rock bottom. The fall is sudden, unexpected, and painful. But surprisingly, after spending a fair amount of time in my life there while I’m in the midst of different trials, I’ve learned that rock bottom can also be a beautiful place. Because when you’re surrounded by complete darkness, the light of the Savior still shines brightly. When you find yourself at rock bottom,

remember the words of Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ’s Atonement shines.”²

My moments at rock bottom have helped me better realize the power of Jesus Christ’s Atonement. When I’m grieving for my brother and I think no one understands what I’m going through, I know that the Savior does. I know that He also understands my brother’s addiction in a way no one else can. As much as I hate that sudden, dreadful fall to rock bottom, I am grateful for the moments the Savior has helped me stand when I don’t have the strength to stand on my own. Regarding my brother’s addiction, He strengthens me to have compassion for my brother instead of judging or blaming him, to empathize with him even though he struggles with something I can’t fully grasp, and to forgive him and to love him despite how many times I’ve been hurt by his choices.

Supporting Those Who Are Facing Addiction

My brother is truly a good person. He’s kind and respectful. He’s humble and gentle. He’s intelligent and downright hilarious. He’s a beloved uncle, a great friend, and a cherished member of my family. He’s not a bad person at all. He’s a child of God with infinite worth who has become trapped by Satan and his own addictions because he made some poor decisions. As President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, taught, “Small acts of disobedience or minor failures to follow righteous practices can draw us down toward an outcome we have been warned to avoid.”³ Despite my brother’s poor choices, he and anyone else who struggles with addiction, as well as their families, need support and strength.

My family suffered in silence regarding my brother’s struggles for a long time. We endured self-imposed shame for years. Addiction was taboo, so we didn’t talk about it. We thought drug addiction wasn’t supposed to affect families who were doing their best to live the gospel and follow Jesus Christ. We were so afraid of what people would think if they found out. My parents constantly blamed themselves for my brother’s decisions, I would hide what was happening from my friends, and we would dodge all questions about my brother. Little did we know that not talking about it made our circumstances more painful than they already were.

Now I face my brother’s addiction differently. And that’s the key word: *face*. For so many years, I turned away from it and hid it from everyone else, but now I face it head-on with my family. We seek support and we try

to support others. As the years have gone by, we’ve discovered that addiction affects many families in many different forms—and there’s no need to feel ashamed or to hide. It needs to be talked about, and those who have been hurt by it, whether they be loved ones or those who struggle themselves, need less judgment and more support, compassion, understanding, and love. No one should have to suffer alone.



Finding Peace in the Tempest

Although I prayed for years for my brother's addiction to be taken away from him, I've learned that his agency can't be tampered with. He still retains some agency and makes his own choices, even in the bonds of addiction. My family and I can be there for him and love him, but we cannot force him to change. He is the deciding factor. So when we find ourselves trapped in the furious hurricane that surrounds my brother, sometimes it feels as if there is no way out. Like many others who face addiction, it feels like we'll never escape. But without fail, the Savior is there to offer us small moments of freedom through feelings of peace, relief, and the knowledge that one day all will be well.

The Savior's way of bringing me peace is not always instantaneous or a jaw-dropping miracle. When I'm facing the hurricane-force winds of addiction, I often think of when the Savior slept through the tempest while sailing on the Sea of Galilee. In that moment, His Apostles were terrified. They chose to focus on the storm instead of focusing on the Savior, yet He was right next to them the whole time. He never left their side and He came to their rescue—even when they doubted Him. (See Mark 4:36–41.)

I've come to learn that the Savior will never leave me to drown either. In my life, it has always been small instances of the Lord's mercy that allow me to keep paddling against the stormy waves life throws at me. He enabled me to remain calm and hold myself together when my brother needed me, He has helped me muster up enough strength to get out of bed on days when I believe I have no strength left, and He continues to offer me peace despite my constant numbing fear of the unknown.

There Is Always Hope

Because we often hear about the tragedies associated with drug overdoses, alcohol poisoning, or the many divorces due to pornography, addiction can seem like a daunting lost cause, but that doesn't always have to be the case. Because of the Savior, there truly is hope to hold onto in any situation.

Although I don't know how my brother's struggles are going to come to a close, I still hold onto hope, even when it seems futile. I fast. I now pray for understanding, empathy, and guidance rather than for his addiction to be instantly taken away. I recognize the personal and spiritual growth in myself that has stemmed from this decade-long trial. I use as many resources as I can to understand the unfathomable. And I reach out to receive wonderful support from friends and Church leaders.

But most of all, I rely on the Savior and His healing and saving power. His Atonement is real. There is no greater comfort than knowing that He understands perfectly what both I and my brother are facing. Psalm 34:18 teaches, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

I know He is close to me in the moments when my heart is broken, and I know He will always be there to help me piece it back together again. He is not only watching the hurricane from the shore, but most often He is on the boat, facing the raging winds and waves with me. He continues to calm the tempestuous seas in my life and allows me to grow and feel true peace. ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, "Addiction or Freedom," *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 6.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, "The Laborers in the Vineyard," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 33.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, "Small and Simple Things," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 91.





By Elder
Gerrit W. Gong
Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

The Miracle of Covenant Belonging

The harmony of our covenants and the Atonement of Jesus Christ is heard in melodies and descants as drawing on our Savior's Atonement helps us fulfill our covenants in a new and holier way.

In the school of mortal life, the Lord invites us to learn and grow in lifelong and eternal ways by loving Him first and by strengthening one another in His love.

Strengthening one another in the Lord and in His love is embodied in the first and second great commandments. As a First Presidency letter recently taught, “The Savior’s ministry exemplifies the two great commandments: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind’ and ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself’ (Matthew 22:37, 39).” The First Presidency letter continued: “In that spirit, Jesus also taught, ‘Ye are they whom I have chosen to minister unto this people’ (3 Nephi 13:25).”¹

The song of our risen Savior’s redeeming love celebrates the harmony of covenants, which connects us to God and to each other; and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which helps us put off the natural man and woman and yield to the sanctifying “enticings of the Holy Spirit” (Mosiah 3:19).

That harmony is expressed in the plan of happiness, where we learn and grow by daily exercise of individual moral agency and where we are not left to wander on our own but are given a covenant path and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Alpha and Omega (see Doctrine and Covenants 61:1), the Lord Jesus Christ, is with us from the beginning. And He is with us to the end, when “God shall wipe away all tears from [our] eyes” (Revelation 7:17), except our tears of joy.



Our covenants connect us to God and to each other. Meant to be eternal, our covenants include God our Eternal Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Eternal covenants can bring the power of God's love—to give hope and increase love; to lift and transform; to edify and sanctify; to redeem and exalt.

In the revelation of our true, divine selves through our covenants with God, we learn to recognize and love our brothers and sisters as He does. This deepening love and knowledge invites, empowers, and sanctifies us to know and, in our own way, to become more like Him.

Covenants and the Lord's Atonement

The harmony of our covenants and the Atonement of Jesus Christ is heard in melodies and descants as drawing on our Savior's Atonement helps us fulfill our covenants in a new and holier way.² Together, our covenants and our Savior's Atonement can shape what we desire, perceive, and experience in daily mortality and prepare us for the sociality of heaven (see Doctrine and Covenants 130:2).

Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we find faith, strength, and trust to come unto Christ, knowing that perfection is in Him. Such knowledge offers an escape from the always-anxious treadmill of perfectionism. There may be some truth in the song "Let It Go"³ if "let it go" means "let go" of self-imposed worldly expectations that can never satisfy and if it also means "hold on" to the God-given heavenly hopes and promises the Lord offers.

Have you noticed that each ordinance calls us by our name and connects us by our name to the name of Jesus Christ?

Ordinances are universal and particular (individual) at the same time. Years ago, as the high

councilor responsible for stake baptisms, I noticed that the baptismal ordinance was outwardly the same for each person but individually distinct in that each person baptized was called, one by one, by their name, and their name was connected by covenant to "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi 11:25).

Amazing grace is as universal and unique as our Savior Himself. A Lamb without blemish, He set the pattern by being baptized to fulfill all righteousness (see 2 Nephi 31:6). The scriptures call it, and our missionaries teach it as, "the doctrine of Christ" (2 Nephi 31:21; see also 3 Nephi 11:38–40). The doctrine of Christ includes "follow[ing] the example of Jesus Christ by being baptized by someone holding the priesthood authority of God."⁴

We enter through the gate of repentance and baptism by water, "and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost" (2 Nephi 31:17). The strait and narrow path—the covenant path—leads to eternal life (see 2 Nephi 31:18). It is part of how we are each strengthened in His love.

Our covenants and the Atonement of Jesus Christ connect us in other ways as well.

Covenant Belonging

By divine covenant, we belong to God and to each other. Covenant belonging is a miracle. It is not possessive. Like charity, it "suffereth long, and is kind," and it "envieth not; . . . vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" (1 Corinthians 13:4; see also Moroni 7:45). Covenant belonging gives roots and wings. It liberates through commitment. It enlarges through love.

In covenant belonging, we strengthen each other in the Savior's love, thereby coming more to love God and each other. This happens in part because covenant belonging "seeketh not



To belong to God and to each other in covenant belonging is to smile in unexpected places as we see with eyes to see and hear with ears to hear. He changes us and our relationships—including our covenant marriage—to become more sanctified and divine.

In one marriage relations class, a married student raised her hand and said to the teacher, “Pardon me, you keep saying marriage is hard. It is not marriage that is hard but *life* that is hard, and marriage, with its ups and

Covenant belonging gives roots and wings.

It liberates through commitment.

It enlarges through love.

her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil” (1 Corinthians 13:5). Covenant belonging “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth” (1 Corinthians 13:6). Covenant belonging is to come and see face to face, knowing even as we are known (see 1 Corinthians 13:12). Our covenant faithfulness is steadfast and immovable (see Mosiah 5:15; Alma 1:25).

Covenant belonging is to hope all things, endure many things, and “hope to be able to endure all things” (see Articles of Faith 1:13; see also 1 Corinthians 13:7; Moroni 7:45). Covenant belonging is to keep the faith. It is not to give up on ourselves, on each other, or on God.

Covenant belonging is to delight with those who delight and to rejoice with those who have cause to rejoice, and to stand as witnesses of God’s tender mercies and daily miracles “at all times and in all things, and in all places” (see Mosiah 18:8–9).

downs, can be a blessing where we get to face the joys and challenges of life together.”

While eternal marriage is our ideal, infidelities, abuse of any kind, and unsurmountable incompatibilities may necessitate immediate protective action or separation and possibly divorce. We know that covenants are binding and eternal only by mutual consent of the parties affected and when confirmed by a merciful heaven’s manifestation of the Holy Ghost, which the scriptures describe as “the Holy Spirit of promise” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:3).

There is comfort, peace, and hope in the Lord’s assurance that worthy individuals will receive all promised blessings.⁵ It is part of His promise to strengthen each of us in His love, in His way, and in His time (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:68).

“The Way Service Works”

When I was a young bishop, an experience in our ward taught me about covenant belonging as manifested in the strengthening of one another in the Savior’s love. Ward families Hans and Fay Ritter and Larry and Tina O’Connor, along with other wonderful families, were constantly ministering to others and were beloved by all.



One day our stake president asked if I would check on the Ritters. When I arrived at their home, I noticed some sagging in the floor and a well-used kettle.

“Bishop, it’s like this,” Brother Ritter said. “Our water heater leaked, and warm water seeped through the floor. Termites came. That’s why the floor sags a little. We had to shut off the water heater, and that’s why we heat water in a kettle.”

The Ritters agreed to let me discuss their situation with our ward council. Our ward council was amazing. Members knew someone who could help with floors or walls or carpets or appliances or paint. Volunteers came and helped in countless generous ways. Among them was Larry O’Connor, a skilled builder who was frequently at the Ritters’ house.

Larry’s wife, Tina, recalled that Larry and other quorum members would sometimes go to the Ritters on Friday and stay all night. “One Saturday morning, I took them breakfast,” she said. “There was Larry coming out of a bathroom holding plumbing tools.”

Tina added that it was from men like Hans Ritter and others “that my husband learned to become a man—kind, thoughtful, tender. As my Larry served together with such good men, including in the nursery, he became an even more wonderful husband and father.”

When the house was finished, we all rejoiced.

Hans and Fay Ritter have been gone for some time, but I spoke recently with two of their sons, Ben and Stephen. They remember that the quiet service of others maintained the dignity of their father, who worked tirelessly to take care of his family.

While at a ward activity not long after the Ritters’ home was completed, Larry and Tina O’Connor received emergency word that their

home was on fire. They rushed to their home and everywhere saw broken windows (to vent smoke) and punctured walls (to check for hidden flames).

“We were devastated,” Tina said. But then the ward came.

“Everyone helped,” Tina and Larry said. “The whole ward came together in love. We were there as a family.”

And who were among the first to come and the last to leave as the O’Connor home was being rebuilt? Yes, the Hans and Fay Ritter family.

Ben and Stephen are modest but remember their family coming to help the O’Connors. “We were all there together,” they said. “That’s the way service works. We all take care of each other, sometimes by helping others and sometimes by allowing others to help us.”

To me, there can be a wondrous, virtuous, harmonious circle as we strengthen each other in the Savior’s love. The O’Connors help the Ritters, the Ritters help the O’Connors, and all the while a community of Latter-day Saints is being established. Each day in myriad ways, we each need, and can offer, ministering love and support in small, simple, powerful, life-changing ways.

And thus, we experience a double loaves-and-fishes miracle: first, a community of Saints can rally in magnificent selfless unity to address a dramatic need; and second, simultaneously, a fellowship of Saints can be knit together in love through daily, loving ministering in many quiet circumstances—as in a family, branch, ward, or community over many years—independent of any dramatic need.

Strengthened in the Savior’s Love

All of this brings us back to where we began—the first and second great commandments and the invitation to be strengthened and to

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strengthen each other in the Lord's love.

President Russell M. Nelson has powerfully said, "Our message to the world is simple and sincere: we invite all of God's children on both sides of the veil to come unto their Savior, receive the blessings of the holy temple, have enduring joy, and qualify for eternal life."⁶

As we feast upon the words of Christ (see 2 Nephi 32:3) and put God first (see Matthew 6:33), the Lord strengthens and blesses every aspect of our lives. There is divine harmony and resonance in covenant belonging as we are strengthened in the Lord's love and as we strengthen each other in Him.

The words of the Apostle Paul echo the harmony of our covenants and the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . .

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,

nor things present, nor things to come,

"Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35, 38–39).

Such is also my solemn testimony.

I testify of God our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. They know us better and love us more than we know or love ourselves. We can trust in the Lord with all our heart and need not lean unto our own understanding (see Proverbs 3:5).

In 159 houses of the Lord in 43 countries, we can be strengthened in the Lord through our covenants and the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

We are blessed by priesthood authority and continuing prophetic revelation from the Prophet Joseph Smith to our dear President Nelson today. Events of recent days have made me even more certain of, and humbled by, the reality of restored doctrine, keys, ordinances, and covenants in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as "the Lord's kingdom once again established on the earth, preparatory to the Second Coming of the Messiah."⁷

The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ and all of the holy scriptures are the word of God.

May we each come to know our Savior better and become more like Him as we are strengthened in the Lord and as we strengthen each other in Him and His love. ■

From a Brigham Young University Women's Conference address, "Strengthen One Another in the Lord," delivered on May 4, 2018.

NOTES

1. First Presidency letter, Apr. 2, 2018.
2. See Russell M. Nelson, "Ministering," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 100.
3. "Let It Go," *Frozen* (2013).
4. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 40.
5. See *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 1.3.3.
6. Russell M. Nelson, "Let Us All Press On," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 118–19.
7. Introduction to the Book of Mormon.



A Prayer to Get Us to the Temple

Several days before our ward was scheduled to travel to the Aba Nigeria Temple, the bishop called and asked me to lead our group. I agreed, and on the morning of our trip, we offered a prayer and boarded a bus to begin our journey.

On our way, we sang hymns. Joy beyond measure filled the air. We were making good time on our 10-hour journey, but just before noon, our bus developed a problem none of us could fix.

I ran to a nearby petrol station and found an attendant. I asked if she could direct me to a mechanic.

Without delay, she called two mechanics. They soon arrived and got to work. They discovered that the fan belt was defective. They worked for hours until they had exhausted all their knowledge. Then they called another mechanic.

He appeared confident when he arrived and said sarcastically, “What’s wrong with the fan belt that you could not fix?”

He worked for a while and then said, “What has happened here is beyond ordinary.” He picked up his tools and left. The other mechanics continued to search for a solution, but our situation seemed hopeless.

I turned to my fellow Saints and saw sadness on almost every face. As I thought about what to do next, a thought came to me: “Have you prayed over the problem?”

Immediately, I called the group together. We stood in a circle and prayed to our Heavenly Father to give the mechanics the knowledge they lacked. In less than five minutes, one of the mechanics came to see me.

“We have done it!” he said, beaming.

We rejoiced and thanked the Lord. I soon noticed that the other mechanic looked discouraged. I tried to congratulate him, but he said, “Are you congratulating me for taking six hours to fix one fan belt? I fixed two fan belts

before I came here. What happened here is beyond explanation.”

I told him God had intervened following our prayer.

“You prayed over it?” he asked.

“Yes, about five minutes ago.”

“Oh, that is wonderful of you!” he said. I paid the mechanics and they left. We all entered the bus and continued our journey. We finally reached the temple several hours later, grateful that Heavenly Father hears and answers our prayers. ■

Isaac Ututu, Lagos, Nigeria



On our 10-hour journey to the temple, our bus developed a problem none of us could fix.

I felt I could not partake of the sacrament with such resentful feelings in my heart. I prayed for the darkness to be removed.



Heavenly Father Sent a Memo

After an 11-year struggle with dementia, my husband passed away. For me, his passing was bittersweet. I had been his caregiver, friend, and sweetheart, and though I was happy he no longer had to suffer, I missed him terribly. I thought I knew about grief, but the sadness and feelings of loss set me on a path I did not anticipate going down.

Much to my dismay and astonishment, negativity crept into my life. I felt ignored, useless, and invisible to family, friends, and ward members. I indulged in self-pity and felt resentful toward others.

One Sunday, I sat in the back of the chapel. I watched a friendly and outgoing sister meet with other ward members. She was kind and generous to everyone.

“But,” I thought, “she has *never* asked how I am doing, she has *never* offered her condolences, she has *never* validated how hard my husband’s passing has been for me!”

These negative thoughts continued as the sacrament hymn began. I felt I could not partake of the sacrament with such resentful feelings in my heart.

“You must ask for help to get rid these feelings *now!*” I thought.

I prayed for the darkness to be removed. This sister did not deserve my resentment in the slightest. I prayed for forgiveness and for help to let go of my resentment. By the time a deacon stood in front of me with the sacrament tray, I felt I could partake of the sacrament. Throughout the next week, I continued to pray for guidance.

The next Sunday, I walked into the foyer and saw the woman I had focused on the week before.

“Oh, Carol!” she said. “I have been thinking so much about you! I can only imagine how difficult things have been for you. You were your husband’s caregiver for *so* long. This must be a difficult adjustment for you. How are you doing?”

We talked for a few minutes, and she gave me a wonderful hug. I was speechless! I sat down on my usual bench in the chapel with a big smile. Immediately I thanked my Father in Heaven. He had sent this good sister a memo to say the words I needed to hear. From that point on, I have felt that Heavenly Father is mindful of me. He has given me the strength to face the “new normal” that has begun in my life. ■

Carol Whitaker, Oregon, USA



I'm Glad I Listened

During the middle of a busy day in my neurology clinic, I was running behind schedule. Fortunately, one visit went quickly. I felt a sense of relief as I stood up to leave, but my patient began to tell me something unrelated to our visit. Despite my impatience, I felt that I should sit back down and listen.

He told me that recently his wife had started feeling ill. "She knew what was happening," he said, "but she didn't tell me because she was scared to go to the hospital."

Within several days, she was spending all of her time in bed. She became

confused and didn't make sense when she talked. My patient had serious health problems himself, and soon their conditions both deteriorated. They could no longer care for each other. When my patient's sister-in-law visited them, she was alarmed. She called for two ambulances to take them to the hospital. Doctors soon discovered that his wife had advanced breast cancer.

"I never spoke with my wife again," the man said.

His wife suffered a heart attack and was put on life support. My patient described being wheeled from his own

hospital room to the intensive care unit to see his wife one last time. Then he told the doctors to withdraw life support.

The man stopped speaking. Apparently he had said all that he wanted to say. I told him how sorry I felt. He shook my hand and left. I'm glad I sat back down to listen. I'm glad I didn't leave when I intended to! How would he have felt if I had rushed out of the room right when he was about to share his burden?

I don't know why my patient shared his story with me that day, but I know why I listened. Alma taught that those who desire to be baptized and to follow Jesus Christ should be "willing to bear one another's burdens, . . . mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort" (Mosiah 18:8–9).

My patient was bearing a burden, and in a small way, I could help him bear it. He was mourning, and I mourned with him. He stood in need of comfort, so I comforted him. In this simple way, I tried to honor my promise to be more like my Savior. ■

Alan B. Sanderson, Utah, USA

My patient began to tell me something unrelated to our visit. Despite my impatience, I felt that I should sit back down and listen.



A Letter from the Prophet

I was hesitant about joining the Church when my husband introduced it to me. He gave me a Book of Mormon, and after many lessons and nearly two years working with the missionaries, I was baptized in 2007. I struggled for a while after I became a member of the Church. I did not understand the importance of modern-day prophets. In my mind, a prophet had to be someone like Moses with his staff.

“Does the prophet speak to God?” I asked my husband.

“Yes,” he said.

“Are you sure?”

“Yes, the prophet speaks to God.”

“Then I am going to ask the Lord to tell the prophet to send me a letter saying this is Jesus Christ’s Church.”

“Oh no!” my husband said. “It doesn’t happen like that!”

I was determined.

“If the prophet speaks to the Lord, then the Lord will speak with the prophet, and he will send me a letter.”

At church one Sunday, a missionary handed me a DVD and asked me to watch it with my family. It contained the testimonies of the prophet and apostles. The first person to speak was President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008). I was impressed. He seemed sincere, and I felt he was telling the truth.

“See, this is your testimony of the prophet,” my husband said.

“No, I still want a letter from him,” I replied.

One night, the missionaries arrived at our home and handed me a magazine.

“We don’t know why, but we felt we should bring this to you,” they said. It was a copy of the October 2006 *Liahona*, still wrapped in plastic.

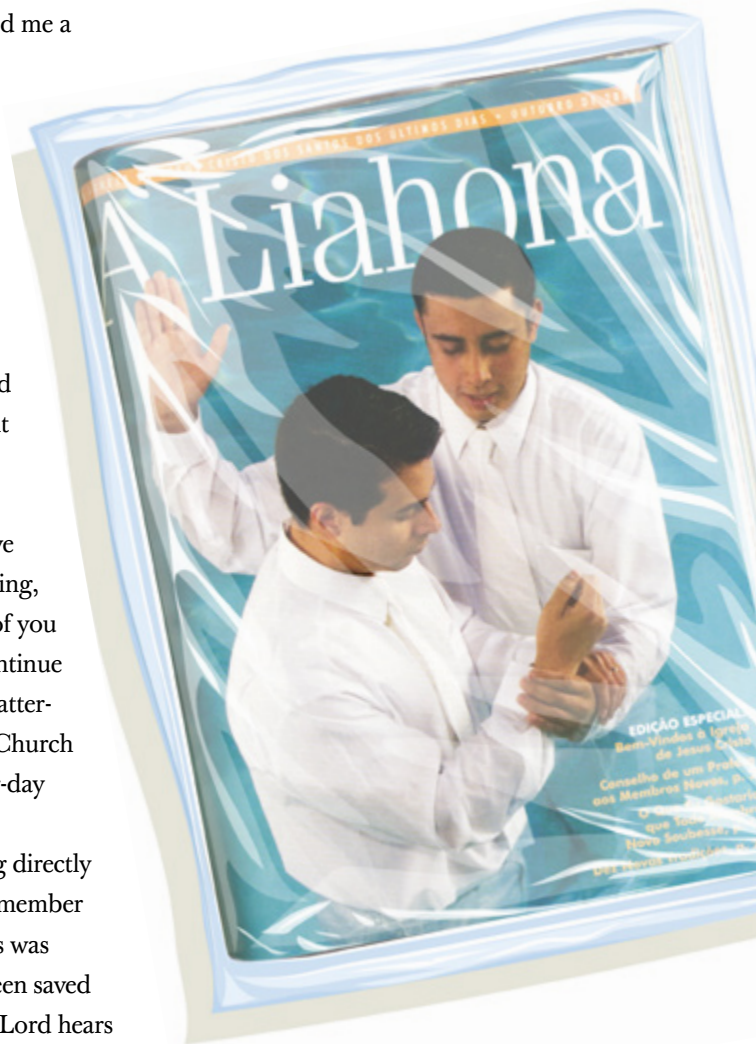
I opened it and found an article from President Hinckley addressed to new members of the Church. He said, “I leave this testimony, my blessing, and my love with each of you and my invitation to continue to be part of this great latter-day miracle that is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”¹

I felt he was speaking directly to me. I was not even a member of the Church when this was published, but it had been saved for me. I know that the Lord hears our prayers and that He speaks to a living prophet today. ■

Kelly Santos Figueiredo Ribeiro,
Goiás, Brazil

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Perfect Brightness of Hope—to New Members of the Church,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Oct. 2006, 5.



The missionaries handed me a copy of the October 2006 *Liahona*. “We don’t know why, but we felt we should bring this to you,” they said.



12 New Temples Announced

President Russell M. Nelson announced plans to build 12 new temples, the largest number of temples ever announced on the same day. The new temples will be built in:

Auckland, New Zealand
 Davao, Philippines
 Lagos, Nigeria
 Mendoza, Argentina
 Phnom Penh, Cambodia
 Praia, Cape Verde
 Puebla, Mexico
 Salvador, Brazil
 San Juan, Puerto Rico
 Washington County, Utah, USA
 Yigo, Guam
 Yuba City, California, USA

"THE BEST THINGS
 IN THIS LIFE ARE
**CENTERED ON
 JESUS CHRIST**
 AND
 UNDERSTANDING
 THE ETERNAL TRUTHS
 OF WHO HE IS AND
 WHO WE ARE IN
 OUR RELATIONSHIP
 WITH HIM."

Elder Jack N. Gerard of the
 Seventy, "Now Is The Time,"
Ensign or Liahona,
 Nov. 2018, 109.



PONDER THIS . . .

"Are we giving our all to the Lord without reservation?"

Cristina B. Franco, Second
 Counselor in the Primary General
 Presidency, "The Joy of Unselfish
 Service," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov.
 2018, 56.

Share your thoughts on the
Liahona Facebook page or record
 them in your journal!

DIVING DEEPER

Taking His Name

President
 Russell M.
 Nelson
 reminded us of
 the importance
 of taking the
 Savior's name upon
 ourselves—both as
 disciples of Christ and as
 members of His Church.
 "When we omit His name
 from His Church, we are
 inadvertently removing
Him as the central focus
 of our lives," he said.

"Taking the Savior's
 name upon us includes
 declaring and witnessing

to others—through our actions and our words—that Jesus
 is the Christ" ("The Correct Name of the Church," *Ensign or
 Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 88). Many other leaders also invited us to
 ponder how we might better take His name upon ourselves.

- President Henry B. Eyring invited us to ask ourselves two questions: "What must I be doing to take His name upon me?" and "How will I know when I am making progress?" ("Try, Try, Try," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 91).
- Elder Robert C. Gay offered three ways we can take the Savior's name upon ourselves (see "Taking upon Ourselves the Name of Jesus Christ," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 97–99).
- Elder Paul B. Pieper taught what it means to truly take the name of Jesus Christ (see "All Must Take upon Them the Name Given of the Father," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 43–45).

Consider recording in your journal your thoughts and feelings while studying what it means to take the Lord's name upon you.

TRY IT!

Here are a few invitations we heard from general conference. Consider reviewing the talks to add to this list of invitations.

- “Consider what we can do to be more embracing, accepting, and helpful to [new friends], starting this very next Sunday” (Ulisses Soares, “One in Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 39).
- “Thoroughly and thoughtfully read this revelation [of the vision of the redemption of the dead, found in Doctrine and Covenants 138]” (M. Russell Ballard, “The Vision of the Redemption of the Dead,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 73).
- “Return to the Lord’s house with your wounded heart and your family names as frequently as possible” (Neil L. Andersen, “Wounded,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 85).

What are you doing differently because of what you learned at general conference? Submit your story at liahona.lds.org or share it on facebook.com/liahona.

My Conference To-Dos

“A friend told me that while reading the general conference messages, he makes a list of what our Church leaders have asked us to do. Then he uses the list to set goals that will help him follow their counsel. I decided to start my own list. It has made a difference for me as I ponder the messages and consider what action I need to take. It really helps me focus on what’s most important.”

—Edna Washburn, Utah, USA



ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

I used to have a testimony, but lately it has been harder to believe God is there. Can my faith ever be as strong as it once was?

“For some, the act of believing is difficult. Sometimes our pride gets in the way. Perhaps we think that because we are intelligent, educated, or experienced, we simply cannot believe in God. And we begin to look at religion as foolish tradition.

“In my experience, belief is not so much like a painting we look at and admire and about which we discuss and theorize. It is more like a plow that we take into the fields and, by the sweat of our brow, create furrows in the earth that accept seeds and bear fruit that shall remain.

“Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. This is the promise to all who seek to believe.”

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Believe, Love, Do,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 47.

What questions did you have that were answered at conference? Share your experience on facebook.com/liahona.

From a Testimony of Tithing to Temple Covenants

By Michael R. Morris
Church Magazines

For Ted and Carol Hyatt, the spiritual aspects of the Church's self-reliance initiative have made an eternal difference in their lives.

Carol Hyatt will never forget the day her bishop asked her to facilitate a self-reliance class on personal finances. She and her husband, Ted, had only recently returned to activity in the Church after a 42-year absence, and she was naturally shy.

Carol had known her bishop, Todd A. Josi, since he was a boy. Decades earlier, he had attended her Sunday School class.

"Now, Bishop," she frankly told him after she and Ted had begun attending church again, "I don't want to give a talk. I don't want to do a calling. I just want to come to church."

But two years later, Bishop Josi was sitting in the Hyatt home talking about the Church's Self-Reliance Services initiative—something Sister Hyatt had never heard of. After introducing it, the bishop asked her to facilitate a 12-week class on principles of successful financial stewardship. Then he gave her a copy of the *Personal Finances for Self-Reliance* manual.



"I don't know why I said yes," Sister Hyatt recalls. "It's frightening for me to be around people I don't know—and to think I had to be there one night a week

for 12 weeks with Church members who were certainly more ingrained in the gospel than I was. I didn't know if I'd even be able to help them."

“It Hit Me So Hard”

Bishop Josi wasn’t surprised that Sister Hyatt accepted the assignment despite her hesitation. He says that during a stake self-reliance committee meeting in Forest Grove, Oregon, USA, a short time before, “It came to my mind that Sister Hyatt needed the blessing of facilitating the personal finances group. It just hit me so hard.”

Bishop Josi hoped that by facilitating the class, Sister Hyatt would overcome a major stumbling block to her spiritual progress: paying tithing. “As I drove home that evening,” he says, “I had a strong spiritual impression that as Sister Hyatt went through this class, she would come to understand the importance of paying tithing.”

Feeling nervous and ill-prepared, Sister Hyatt began facilitating her class in October 2017. As she led class discussions on managing finances, creating and sticking to a budget, preparing for hardship, getting out of debt, managing financial crises, and investing in the future, Sister Hyatt became comfortable as a facilitator but uncomfortable with her personal example.

When she read the manual in preparation for her third class, she learned that the “self-reliant approach to financial stewardship” includes paying tithes

and offerings.¹ She also learned that the foundation principle of that approach is repentance and obedience.²

“During one of the later lessons, I admitted to everybody that I was probably the only one in the whole group who wasn’t paying tithing,” she recalls. That admission prompted support from her 13 class members and discussions and testimonies about the blessings of the law of tithing.

“I don’t know why I was so troubled before about tithing, but I realized that I needed to get serious about getting a testimony of it,” says Sister Hyatt. “As I listened to encouragement from my group and from my husband, the Spirit said, ‘You can do this!’ I gained that little extra faith I needed, and I realized that I would be a better facilitator if I was doing what I was asking my class to do.”

The Windows of Heaven

A few days after her 11th class, Sister Hyatt approached Bishop Josi at church, took his hand, and told him she was ready to live the law of tithing. “He was so excited,” she says.

Brother Hyatt, who was attending his wife’s class, was also excited. As he paid his own tithing during the previous year, he often encouraged Sister

Hyatt by reminding her of a blessing she longed for. “We won’t get to the temple unless you pay your tithing,” he would say.

On May 26, 2018, the windows of heaven opened and poured out a blessing on Ted and Carol Hyatt that they had not imagined possible months before when Sister Hyatt began facilitating her class. On that day, the day before their 58th anniversary, they made covenants and were sealed in the Portland Oregon Temple.

The Hyatts describe that experience as “a beautiful day and a marvelous blessing” for which they will always be grateful. Sister Hyatt adds that she will also always be grateful for an encouraging husband, an inspired bishop, and a class of students who, she feels, helped her more than she helped them. To show their love and support, nearly every member of her class attended the Hyatts’ sealing.

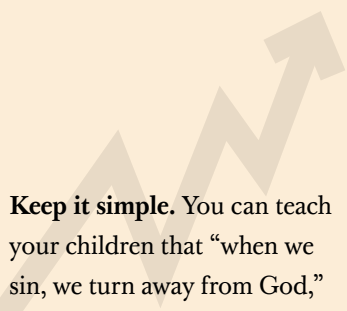
“People can gain so much from the Church’s self-reliance initiative, especially the spiritual part of it,” says Sister Hyatt. “It’s the spiritual part that makes it so valuable. For my husband and me, it has made an eternal difference.” ■

NOTES

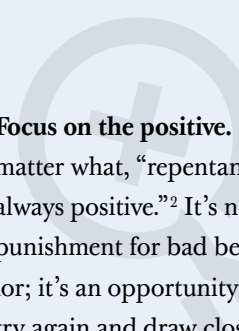
1. *Personal Finances for Self-Reliance* (2016), 42.
2. See *Personal Finances for Self-Reliance*, 36–37.

10 Tips for Teaching Repentance

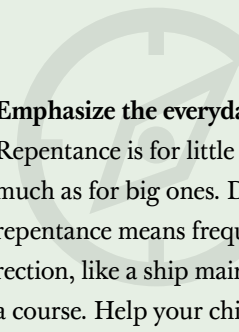
Repentance sometimes sounds scary or confusing to children and teens. Here are some tips for teaching repentance in a loving, empowering way.



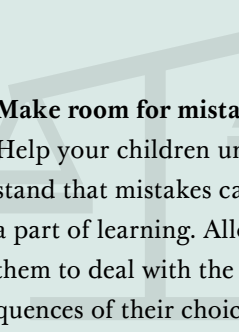
Keep it simple. You can teach your children that “when we sin, we turn away from God,” but “when we repent, we turn back toward God.”¹ We can turn back toward God by recognizing our wrongs, making things right, and trying hard to do better.



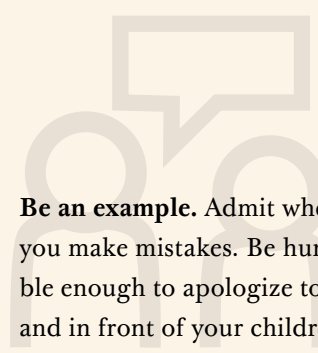
Focus on the positive. No matter what, “repentance is always positive.”² It’s not a punishment for bad behavior; it’s an opportunity to try again and draw closer to God. Encourage your children to think about what they’re doing right and how they can do more of that.



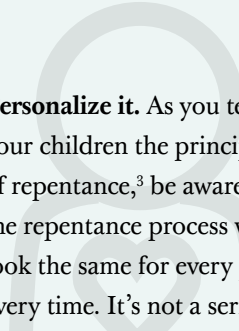
Emphasize the everyday. Repentance is for little sins as much as for big ones. Daily repentance means frequent correction, like a ship maintaining a course. Help your children recognize the small ways they can improve each day.



Make room for mistakes. Help your children understand that mistakes can be a part of learning. Allow them to deal with the consequences of their choices and help them figure out how to make things right again. Teach them to turn to God for help.



Be an example. Admit when you make mistakes. Be humble enough to apologize to and in front of your children. Let them see how you are striving to make things better, and share your testimony of how the Savior has helped you change.



Personalize it. As you teach your children the principles of repentance,³ be aware that the repentance process will not look the same for every person every time. It’s not a series of boxes to be checked off; it’s an ongoing process of growth. It’s about the desires of our hearts and how we strive to align ourselves with the Savior. We can know we have fully repented when we feel peace, joy, and forgiveness.

Take the long view. It's easy to get discouraged when you make the same poor choices multiple times. Teach your children that as long as they keep repenting, God will keep forgiving them (see Moroni 6:8). Explain that trying is what really matters. It's through our striving and putting off the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19) that we become more like God.

Distinguish between guilt and shame. "Godly sorrow" is a requirement for repentance (see 2 Corinthians 7:9–10). But if your child feels unworthy or hopeless even after repenting, shame may be the culprit.⁴ Remind them that Heavenly Father always loves them and that "if we sin, we are less worthy, but we are never worth less!"⁵ If necessary, consider meeting with your bishop or a professional counselor.

NOTES

1. Neil L. Andersen, "Repent . . . That I May Heal You," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 40.
2. Stephen W. Owen, "Repentance Is Always Positive," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 48.

Understand the Savior's

Atonement. Teach your children that Jesus Christ atoned not only for our sins but for all of our suffering (see Alma 7:11–12). Assure your children that they "are not to blame for the harmful behavior of others."⁶ Victims of abuse are completely innocent; help them turn to the Savior for peace and healing.

Continually point to the Savior.

Teach your children that the Savior understands what they are struggling with and can help them overcome it. Testify of Him frequently in your home. Encourage your children to pray, serve, study the scriptures, and do other things that will help them know Him better so they will naturally seek His help in overcoming their weaknesses. ■

3. See "Chapter 19: Repentance," *Gospel Principles* (2009), 107–13.
4. See Wendy Ulrich, "It Isn't a Sin to Be Weak," *Ensign*, Apr. 2015, 30–35; *Liahona*, Apr. 2015, 20–25.
5. Joy D. Jones, "Value beyond Measure," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 14.
6. *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 7.

FOR CHILDREN

In this month's *Friend*:

- "A Promise to Try" (page F4)
- "A Little Better Every Day" (page F6)
- "Bright Idea" (page F7)
- "The Yo-Yo Decision" (page F16)

For other resources, visit [lessonhelps.lds.org](https://www.lessonhelps.lds.org) and click "Lesson Helps by Topic."

FOR TEENS

In this issue:

- Questions and Answers: "I keep giving in to the same temptations. How can I move past those sins?" (page 62)
- "I still remember sins I've repented of, and I feel guilty. Why can I not forget my sins?" (page 63)

For other resources, visit [youth.lds.org](https://www.youth.lds.org).

The Most Influential People

Have you ever read articles with titles like “30 Influential People Who Are under 30” and thought, “How do I get on that list?” I’ve certainly wondered **how I can be more involved**, more helpful, and yes, more important (which probably means I also need to be more humble). While our contributions might be something the world recognizes, sometimes they’re a more private fulfillment of our covenants with God.

Our influence does not require traveling abroad to help someone far away. **It begins right in our own homes**, with our family or roommates, and with our neighbors. It begins in our communities. As we start to change and become, “Time to Serve” (page 44) offers some practical steps to serving in our community.

Setting aside time to help others might mean we need to make changes—possibly a change of heart or a change in where our time and energy are spent.

In “A Mighty Force for Good” (page 46), several young adults share their experience of developing Christlike love for others. These stories show how **inspiration and faith can lead young adults to be an influence for good**.

Elder Gavarret reminds us that we are already heroes and heroines (see page 49). In the premortal life, we chose to come to earth, and now **we get to choose what kind of difference we want to make**. Finding our personal mission will guide us in serving our Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

In my experience, there are far more than “30 influential people under 30” among the young adults of the Church. The most influential people I find are those who are “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). They are those who are covenant keepers. They can be all of you.

Looking forward to seeing the difference you’ll make.

Elizabeth Stitt

SHARE YOUR STORY

Do you have an amazing story to share? Or do you want to see articles about certain topics? If so, we want to hear from you! You can submit your articles or your feedback at liahona.lds.org.



YOUNG ADULTS

BEST ADVICE . . .

Young adults share the best advice they've ever received about making a difference:

"Be yourself! We each have a light to share that only we can. When we are willing to lift, encourage, and brighten the lives of others in our own unique way, our light shines and leads others to glorify God. Don't be afraid to shine!"

—**Whitney Henderson, Colorado, USA**

"Live the gospel of Jesus Christ so people ask you why you are different."

—**Pamela Castillo, San Marcos, Guatemala**

"If we could love ourselves and our neighbors even just a sliver of how much God loves us, then we would have the confidence and faith to actually do whatever is needed of us."

—**Samuel Ward, Idaho, USA**

"Instead of focusing on changing the entire world, focus on changing your little corner of it."

—**Quincy Haisley, Utah, USA**

What's the best advice you've ever received about dating someone who once struggled with pornography? Submit your response at liahona.lds.org by February 28, 2019.

ABOUT THE YA AUTHORS

Liz Stitt graduated from Brigham Young University with a bachelor's degree in communications and from the University of Utah with an MBA. She works in product management, but her favorite job is being a professional aunt.



Mindy Selu is an editor for the *Liahona* magazine. She's also a wife, a cat lover, and the mother of twin girls. Her hobbies include taking pictures, watching movies, and making endless to-do lists.



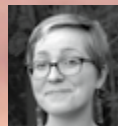
Heather J. Johnson is a writer and editor. She loves water skiing and going on winter adventures in the mountains. Her reading list favors British literature, and she recommends the use of "y'all" in everyday conversation.



Katie Sue Embley thinks the world is full of beautiful people whose stories should be shared. She studies journalism and Spanish, with the goal to #sharegoodness.



Lori Fuller Sosa is an editor for the *Friend* magazine. She loves finding new bands, listening to news on the radio, and cooking food from around the world. Sometimes she writes stuff.



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By Elder Eduardo Gavarret



DIGITAL ONLY

Not Enough Hours in the Day? Here's How to Make the Most of Your Time

By Heather J. Johnson

Ministering in Mini Ways

By Katie Embley

You Don't Know What You Don't Know

By Lori Fuller Sosa



Find these articles and more:

- At liahona.lds.org
- In **YA Weekly** (under "Young Adults" in the Gospel Library)
- At facebook.com/liahona

As young adults, we probably have more “extra” time than we care to admit. Here are six suggestions for how you can extend your circle of influence through service.



Time to Serve

By Liz Stitt

A few years ago, I was working full-time and finishing an evening program to earn my Master of Business Administration degree. When I finished my MBA, I wanted to use that “extra” time for something meaningful.

The advice from a trusted professor was simple and clear—I needed to find opportunities to serve. While he knew of my Church responsibilities, he suggested I look beyond my regular circle of influence.

I started a prayerful search to know where my skills and talents were needed and where I could do the most good. I was soon led to a community center that needed mentors for their teen program.

I began mentoring a teenage girl whose family had left Somalia as refugees. Each week we practiced reading, writing, and

math skills. But beyond that, we developed a friendship and learned about each other’s cultures and dreams for the future. When she moved, I was assigned another girl. Her family had fled Myanmar, and she had been raised in a refugee camp in Thailand. Along with studying, we also discussed the challenges of life and how to respond to them.

I’ve found many other opportunities to use my skills in different ways and serve in the community.

Many of us single adults find ourselves with shifting demands on our time due to a move, graduation, or job change, among others. Often, we get a nudge from the Spirit that our single years are not just a “waiting game.” We feel a need to develop more purpose and meaning.

We probably have more “extra” time than we care to admit, so taking a minute to see how we can use that time to lift others will be a blessing to others as well as ourselves. After all, serving others is how we can show our love for God and keep our covenants to give our all to Him. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

BELOW ARE A FEW TIPS TO EXTEND YOUR

CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE:

Evaluate your time.



Use a notebook or planner to track how you spend your time. Do you have a few extra hours

of unplanned or wasted time? Or are you overburdening yourself? It's just as essential to understand where you have extra time as it is to understand where you may need to cut back. Prioritize what is most important and plan time to serve.

Evaluate your skills.



Think about what you like to do or what you feel compelled to do. Consider ways you can use your

talents and skills to bless others.

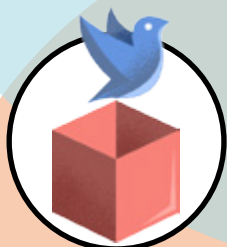
Pray.



Ask for heavenly guidance to be led where you're needed. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum

of the Twelve Apostles said, "I know that God . . . will help you and guide you in compassionate acts of discipleship if you are conscientiously wanting and praying and looking for ways to keep a commandment He has given us again and again" ("Are We Not All Beggars?" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 41).

Get out of your comfort zone.



With mentoring, at first I wasn't comfortable working with teenagers or with tutoring in all

subjects. But sometimes my main job was to provide motivation and encouragement. We don't have to be the perfect fit to make a difference. Most of the time, our main impact could be being there, listening, and building a long-term relationship of trust and stability.

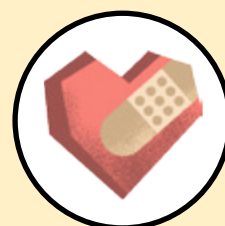
Make a consistent effort.



Many organizations or people need consistent and regular volunteer efforts—something that is

more than a project or a drop-in.

Be patient.



Sometimes I think, "I don't know if I can keep doing this. It's so tiring. Am I doing any good?" But once

I start helping, my heart changes. I have rarely left a service opportunity without feeling better and motivated to come back. However, if the opportunity is too taxing, consider other opportunities or ask for some time "off" of volunteering so you can give what is needed.

We can all be a force for good in the world, however big or small our sphere of influence.

By Mindy Selu
Church Magazines

It was a mid-April snowstorm that started it all. Not necessarily an unusual occurrence for Utah, but still, I thought the snow-drenched tulips on Temple Square needed to be documented. So I created an Instagram account—one that featured not photos of my cats (as adorable as they are) but rather photos of the temple.

Thus began a year of daily posting (and a few more years of not-so-daily posting). Taking photos of the temple and posting them with temple-related quotes from Church leaders became a fun way to develop talents and deepen my appreciation for the temple.

But the more people I reached, the more I recognized my opportunity to be an influence for good. I'm no social media "influencer," but I like to think that my efforts make a difference for someone somewhere.

Despite our busy, fast-paced lives, we can all use our talents to bless others and be a force for good. After all, "we

believe . . . in doing good" (Articles of Faith 1:13).

I tracked down some other young adults who are striving to be a force for good. Here's how they are making a difference.

A Mighty Force for Good





Pray for Charity

Kaveria ei jätetä. In Finnish, it means “no one gets left behind,” an expression with roots in wartime but something that Finns still take to heart today. For Rolle Rantaniemi, 23, of Uusimaa, Finland, it inspires him to do good.

“I have a rule for myself: if I ever see someone alone, I always go to them, no matter the situation. No one should ever be alone. When I was young, I was really alone in school and at church—I didn’t have any friends, and I know how bad it feels to be lonely. That’s something I’ve taken from the Finnish mentality that no one gets left behind.”

One of his driving forces is knowing that relationships can continue beyond this life. “That’s why I think the most important thing for us to focus on is to improve ourselves. Be a good example, be a good person, become diligent and all of those Christlike attributes. The other thing is to build relationships, to become friends with people, have charity and love and serve other people.”

Rolle believes that developing Christlike charity is our biggest tool in doing good. “It says in Moroni 7:48 that we should pray for charity. And I’ve seen as I do that every day, and I ask Heavenly Father to give me situations where I can serve, I’m more aware of them. If we really open our eyes, there are opportunities to serve that we never thought of.”

“Even small things matter,” says Rolle. “If you just look for those small things and do them, you can still make a big difference.”

Inspire Others to Aim High

Daniel Godoy, 23, radiates light and goodness, and his choices have a lot to do with that. He’s an influence for good just by his example.

As an only child from a small town outside of Santiago, Chile, he grew up seeing his parents’ dedication to service and to the gospel. Daniel was the first in his home stake to serve a mission at 18 after the mission age was lowered, inspiring many young men to prepare to serve earlier too. After his mission in Colombia, he was also the first in his hometown to leave the country to pursue higher education. His drive inspired others to get an education. “In some way I inspired them to aim high,” he says. “It was awesome to know that little step that I did helped to inspire other people.”

Getting an education in the United States is also the key for Daniel’s plans to help others and do good in the future. “My long-term goal is to go back to Chile and help people there—serve them. I came here because I know that I can have opportunities that will lead me to help people in Chile as well.”

Still, Daniel admits: “I’m not perfect. But I’m trying to do my best, and I feel like that will be inspiring for others and give them the motivation to keep going as well.”





Share God's Love

After earning a degree in social work, Katelyn Rae, 27, from California, USA, couldn't settle on a career path but felt drawn to humanitarian aid. She has seen God's hand guiding her "every step of the way," leading her to now be the program director for a non-profit organization dedicated to fighting global poverty.

Katelyn has worked with refugees in Greece and victims of abuse in Nepal, who, she explains, are "going through the worst moments of their life. Just being there with them, there's not a lot I can do. I can't change the governments or the policies, but the one thing I can do is to love them." And no matter who she's with, she sees how important it is for others to feel God's love. "If I can be a vehicle for that, I'll feel like I've done a pretty good job, that God's happy with me."

Her experiences help her see other people's problems with a broader perspective. "As young adults, it's easy to get caught up in our own issues," she says. "We're so focused on, 'What's my career?' and 'What am I doing for school?' and 'How am I going to find my eternal companion?' Those are all good things, but if we could somehow look outside of ourselves, I think we'll find what we really are searching for."

"If we just remain close to the Spirit, God is going to guide and direct us, and then we'll be able to do all the good we want to do," Katelyn says. "I think everyone wants to do good, even if that's just in your community or within your family. Every little thing, whether it's uplifting a friend or being there for a family member, just having those small moments of knowing you did what God wanted you to do in that moment will make a powerful impact on your life and others."

Your Influence

You don't need to go out and start building orphanages to do good in the world. You don't need to start an Instagram account of temple photos or become the director of a non-profit. But you can think of some way to use *your* unique talents to be an influence for good.

I really believe that these words from President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018), addressed to women of the Church, also apply perfectly to young adults: "You are a mighty force for good, one of the most powerful in the entire world. Your influence ranges far beyond yourself and your home and touches others all around the globe" ("Three Goals to Guide You," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 120). So keep doing good—all the good you can. Your influence will spread farther than you know. And together we will be that mighty force for good. ■

Read about three more inspiring young adults who are a force for good in the full version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at liahona.lds.org.





By Elder Eduardo Gavarret
Of the Seventy

YOU REALLY CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

I would like to tell you that the heroes and heroines of the present are here. And they are you. I am sure that the fiber, the drive needed to make a difference and generate what is called the power of one, the power to act, the power to speak up, based on the knowledge of the gospel, and thus generate a change, is here; it is within you.

Are not we all heroes of our premortal life? We all opposed Lucifer and his plan. We were born winners, and we are on the team that will win the battle. Now, with the knowledge we have, we must make the decision to rise above our own weaknesses and move forward with our eyes on the One who saves us.

Do not choose the path of mediocrity, which comes with complacency and apathy. Be determined to be different; exercise the power that is in you, and make a difference.

There are many noble causes to fight for. Be one of those who paves the road and makes a difference. Remember, you are a winner, born a winner. You really can make a big difference.

Choose a noble cause for the Lord for which to fight, and apply your energy. There are people to help, hands to lift, weakened knees to strengthen, prisoners to visit and rescue, hungry to feed, naked to clothe, and sick to heal. Raise your voice. Be true to yourselves and loyal to your mission.



“Ye are the ‘hope of Israel.’ The heavens are watching you, and the earth is waiting for you.”¹

Establish your personal covenant with Him, our Savior, and say, “For me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). And doing so, others also will be blessed. ■

From a devotional address, “. . . But As for Me and My House, We Will Serve the Lord,” given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on May 16, 2017.

NOTE

1. Orson F. Whitney, *Contributor*, July 1888, 301.

YOUR MTC EXPERIENCE

*Want to have an amazing mission?
The missionary training center
will teach you how.*

By Joshua J. Perkey
Church Magazines

Imagine that today you finally received your mission call. Your assignment will include a specific place, mission language, and starting date. And on that date, you will likely report to one of 13 missionary training centers (MTCs) around the world.

What will your experience at the MTC be like?
Let's find out.

YOUR FIRST DAY

Unless you live close enough to the MTC to drive there, the Church will arrange for your travel.

At the MTC in Provo, Utah, USA, missionaries and staff direct you to a line in the parking area where you say goodbye to family, meet your host missionaries, and then check in. The host missionaries—missionaries who have been at the MTC for a few weeks—become your guides as you arrive. They make sure your bags get to your residence while you receive your name tag and find your classroom.

YOUTH

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By Elder Dale G. Renlund



PERU MTC

PROVO MTC



GUATEMALA MTC



PROVO MTC

“Everyone is so nice. No matter if they’re in your district or a random missionary you meet, everyone is willing to help you,” says Sister Hanks, one of nine missionaries we interviewed at the Provo MTC who are learning Mandarin Chinese. Missionaries from her district will be serving in Taiwan, Canada, and California, USA.

Sister Prestwich says, “That was the coolest thing ever, knowing that you’re finally here and you finally get to do this wonderful thing that you know you’ve been asked to do.”

YOUR FIRST CLASS

When you enter the MTC, learning begins quickly. On your first day, you’ll enter your classroom and begin learning and practicing how to teach the gospel.

Sister Singleton says, “We walked into our classroom and all the older people in our zone were speaking Chinese and our teachers were speaking in Chinese.”

Elder Adams says, “It took some time, but once you start picking it up, learning how to study effectively, your learning grows exponentially. It was just a positive growth cycle as you learn.”

The training curriculum is exactly the same at all MTCs. At smaller MTCs, you will be interviewed by, taught by, and interact a lot with the MTC president and his wife. When members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles give a devotional talk at the Provo MTC, it is broadcast to the other MTCs.





FUN FACTS

- ▶ Approximately 40,000 missionaries pass through the MTCs each year.
- ▶ In smaller MTCs, as few as 35 to 150 missionaries may be there at one time.
- ▶ At the Provo MTC, there may be as many as 2,000 missionaries at one time.
- ▶ The Mexico MTC usually has several hundred missionaries but has the capacity for as many as 1,200.
- ▶ A total of 58 languages are taught at the various MTCs.
- ▶ Missionaries not learning a new language spend three weeks at the MTC.
- ▶ Missionaries learning a new language spend six to nine weeks at the MTC.



BRAZIL MTC



ENGLAND MTC



PHILIPPINES MTC



GHANA MTC



COLOMBIA MTC



BRAZIL MTC



PROVO MTC

YOUR NEW BRANCH

At larger MTCs, the missionaries are assigned to a branch with a branch presidency (local Melchizedek Priesthood holders called to serve at the MTC). They meet with their branch for sacrament meeting on Sundays. At smaller MTCs, missionaries meet together under the direction of the MTC presidency.

At larger MTCs, each missionary is assigned to a zone made up of several districts. This is the same organization the missionaries will experience in the mission field. In the MTC, districts may have only a couple of companionships, or they may have five or six. Zones may be made up of a couple of districts or a half dozen. The organization helps with training and learning. MTC presidencies and branch presidencies and their wives also provide counseling and support for missionaries as they adjust to missionary life.

YOUR WEEKLY ROUTINE

Missionaries sleep in rooms they share with their companions and other missionaries—usually four to a room. Each day, they have exercise time (except for Sundays), planning time, and time for meals. The bulk of their time is spent in a classroom, where they receive training on gospel doctrine, language (if needed), and how to find people to teach, how to teach by the Spirit, and how to plan their time. This training is the primary purpose of the MTC—to hone your understanding of the gospel and learn how to effectively share the message of the gospel with others. Your teachers will be returned missionaries who know how to help you develop the missionary skills you need. The daily schedule is demanding but also rewarding.

Elder Jackson says, “Before I got here, I thought maybe this was going to be hard, almost a little miserable. But it’s just a fun experience. It’s a blast. We’re having fun and working hard.”

Missionaries also have service opportunities and a preparation day. This day gives them time to do laundry, clean their rooms, and write home. This is also a time when missionaries can visit the temple.

On Sundays missionaries attend church with their fellow missionaries. They may be invited to speak in sacrament meeting and teach priesthood or Relief Society meetings. Elders

participate in the blessing and passing of the sacrament.

Outside of the regular Church meetings, missionaries also participate in district meetings, have interviews with their branch or MTC presidency, watch Church media, have companionship conversations, and do personal study. Missionaries assigned to serve as zone leaders, district leaders, and sister training leaders have leadership training on Sundays as well.

While most of the daily schedule for missionaries is outlined, they do have some unstructured time. Sister Hanks says she feels responsible to spend her time well: “You choose how you spend your time. It’s up to you how you use God’s time.”

YOUR FIRST COMPANION

Adjusting to missionary life can be challenging—feeling homesick, eating different food, having a demanding learning experience. An excellent resource is the Church publication *Adjusting to Missionary Life*, available in print, online at LDS.org, and in the Gospel Library app.

One of the biggest adjustments to life as a missionary is having a companion with you all the time. He or she may come from a different country, speak a different language, or have a different perspective on doing missionary work together. Missionaries have to learn to be comfortable spending so much time with someone else. And they have to learn how to teach together. Elder Juilfs recalls, “We had one lesson that was really rough. We had different ideas and were going against each other. But we learned how important it is to teach as a companionship and let ideas flow.”

How do you make that kind of adjustment? With love, humility, and communication. As Elder Lee explains, “There are companionship inventories where you take some time to review the day or week to understand your companion, how he would do things, and set yourself up so you can help the other person and you guys can grow together.”

As you strive to serve and show kindness to your companion, you also learn the power of unity. Elder Shaw says, “You have to forget about yourself a little bit, focus on your companionship as a team. Once you’re able to get that unity, it’s so powerful, and it’s so incredible.”

YOU MIGHT FEEL HOMESICK

As a new missionary at the MTC, you might find the stress of the work and being away from home challenging. Sister Saliva says, “It’s normal to be homesick in the first few days. But then it gets better because we find comfort with each other, and our leaders comfort us. Focusing on studying helps me. I still miss my family, but my focus is on doing the work.”

It’s normal to feel stress, and it’s normal to feel some ups and downs. Elder Juilfs says, “You’re going to have some really good highs, and for some reason, sometimes you’ll just feel a little bit down. But you just have to step back and remember: ‘I’m not learning this for me; I’m learning it for those I will teach. As long as I’m trying my best, it’ll come.’”

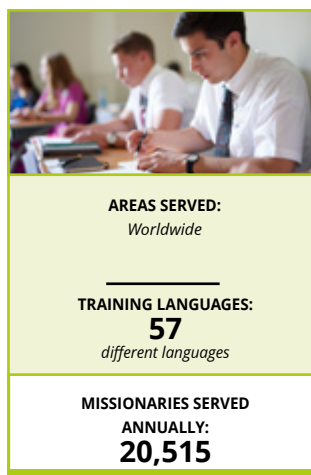
But there is a great support system, including trainers, leaders, and your companion. Sister Singleton says, “One time I was really discouraged from a lesson, and things kind of piled up. But I talked to my companion, and we went on a little walk. That’s what helped me—to talk about it, cry a little bit. Focusing on the work and having a positive attitude—that helps so much.”

YOU’LL LEAVE PREPARED

No matter your personal circumstances, if you come to the MTC with an open heart and a willingness to learn, trusting in the Lord to sustain you, the MTC will be a powerful training ground for your missionary service. Your testimony will be strengthened, you’ll learn to connect with and love the people you teach and those you serve with, and you’ll learn the language of the Spirit. You’ll also deepen your understanding of the gospel and learn how to teach it more effectively and how to adjust to different circumstances and challenges. When the time comes for you to depart for your mission, you’ll have greater confidence in yourself and in the Lord. ■



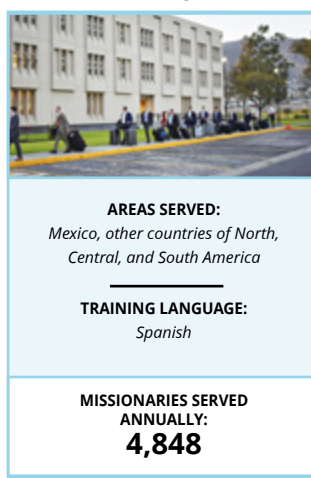
Provo UTAH



Buenos Aires ARGENTINA



Mexico City MEXICO



Preston ENGLAND





MEXICO MTC

**São Paulo
BRAZIL**

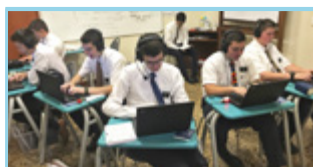


AREAS SERVED:
*Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde,
Mozambique*

TRAINING LANGUAGES:
Portuguese, Spanish

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
3,285

**Bogotá
COLOMBIA**



AREAS SERVED:
Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela

TRAINING LANGUAGE:
Spanish

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
3,434

**Lima
PERU**



AREAS SERVED:
Bolivia, Peru

TRAINING LANGUAGE:
Spanish

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
1,634

**Guatemala City
GUATEMALA**



AREAS SERVED:
*Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala,
Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama*

TRAINING LANGUAGES:
K'ekchi, Spanish

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
1,599

**Accra
GHANA**



AREAS SERVED:
DR Congo, Madagascar, West Africa

TRAINING LANGUAGES:
English, French

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
1,740

**Johannesburg
SOUTH AFRICA**



AREAS SERVED:
*Kenya, Madagascar, South Africa,
Zimbabwe*

TRAINING LANGUAGE:
English

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
376

**Auckland
NEW ZEALAND**



AREAS SERVED:
*Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New
Guinea, Samoa, Tahiti, Tonga*

TRAINING LANGUAGES:
English, French, Samoan, Tongan

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
2,302

**Manila
PHILIPPINES**



AREAS SERVED:
Asia

TRAINING LANGUAGES:
*Cambodian, Cebuano, English, Indonesian,
Mandarin, Mongolian, Tagalog, Thai,
Urdu, Vietnamese*

**MISSIONARIES SERVED
ANNUALLY:**
2,343

By Elder
David F. Evans
Of the Seventy



Will

My years in high school and my first year of college occurred during the Vietnam War. By the time I started college, the Church had entered into an agreement with the U.S. government concerning how many missionaries could serve. The agreement was that each ward could send out only two missionaries per year, and the rest of the young men would not be called and perhaps be drafted into the military. Despite my wanting to serve a mission all my life, it seemed very unlikely that I would be able to go.

I enrolled at the University of Utah in the fall of 1969. By the end of January 1970, I met and started dating my future wife, and by that spring we had fallen in love.

The Bishop Called

One hot afternoon in July, I came home and my mother

said to me, “David, the bishop called. He wants to meet with you.”

I responded, “I’m busy.”

My mother looked at me and said, “If you are too busy to go meet with the bishop, you pick up the phone and you call him and tell him that.”

I knew that I wasn’t *that* busy, so I went to meet with my bishop in his office. He was sitting at his desk, which was unusually cleared off. I could quickly tell that this interview was not at all what I thought it was going to be.

“David,” he said, “there is another ward that can’t use one of their missionary spots. We’ve been given the opportunity to send one more missionary. As a bishopric, we felt impressed to ask Heavenly Father if there was someone who ought to go right now. What I can tell you is this: now is the time the Lord would have you serve your mission.”

*If the Lord asks you
to go, will you serve
a mission?*



You Go?

I was stunned by what he said. I had thought that because of the war and the quota, I would never be able to go on a mission. I asked if I could take some time to think about it. He asked how much time I would need, and I told him that I would like a week.

We then ended the interview, and I walked out—still stunned—to my car. I started driving around Salt Lake City, letting the afternoon's events sink in.

Deciding to Serve

Within a few minutes, I drove back to the church, parked the car, and walked back into the bishop's office. He was still sitting there with absolutely nothing on his desk.

I looked at him and asked, "Bishop, what are you doing?"

He kindly responded, "I'm waiting for you."

I then stated, "Well, Bishop,

if now is the time that the Lord would have me serve, of course I'll serve."

When I got home, my mother was in the kitchen. I was afraid if I told her everything I felt, then I would start to cry. So instead I said, "Mom, I can't talk about it right now, but you should know that I'm going on a mission, and I'm going soon."

Later that afternoon, I talked with my father about my decision. He gave me the sweetest, most encouraging counsel. Then I found my girlfriend (who is now my wife) and told her about my decision. We walked and talked and cried and talked some more. But there was no hesitation for either of us. If I could go, I should go, and I would go.

I received my call to serve in Japan in August, and on October 10, 1970, I left on my mission.

ILLUSTRATION BY BEN SIMONSEN

When the Lord Calls, Will You Go?

In chapter 24 of Alma, the recently converted Anti-Nephi-Lehies make a promise to never shed blood again. When their enemies come to attack them, they are willing to die rather than violate that promise. Then in chapter 27, Ammon suggests to the king that they leave their lands and join the Nephites, but the king declines, believing that the Nephites will also not accept them (see Alma 27:3–6). Ammon asks the king, “I will go and inquire of the Lord, and if he says unto us, go . . . , will ye go?” (Alma 27:7). The king of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies responds, “Inquire of the Lord, and if he saith unto us go, we will go; otherwise we will perish in the land” (Alma 27:10). Ammon asks, and the Lord commands them to leave. Without hesitation, the Anti-Nephi-Lehies leave.

Throughout your life, the Lord will ask you to “go.” When He does, will you go? Will you do it when He asks you to do it? I know from my own experience that much of the spiritual growth and blessings we experience in our lives are ultimately tied back to our decision to respond when the Lord calls. President Russell M. Nelson has said, “Each day is a day of decision, and our decisions determine our destiny” (“Decisions for Eternity,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 108).

During my mission in Japan, I had the opportunity to teach the gospel to people I came to love. In 1998, 26 years after my mission concluded, I was called

**Counsel with
your parents,
counsel with
your bishop,
and counsel
with the Lord
through prayer.**

**When you know it is
the right time to go,
then you should go.**



as a mission president in Japan. I was in a different area this time, but I was back with the people I loved and who have loved me.

My entire family was able to partake of this remarkable experience building up the Lord’s Church in Japan.

A few years after my wife and I returned home from our mission, President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) asked us to meet with him. During that meeting, he extended a call to me to serve as a General Authority. He reflected on my experiences as a young missionary and as a mission president and told us that although there were many people who were qualified to be General Authorities, the Lord would use me because of my previous experiences and decisions.

Since President Thomas S. Monson announced the change in the missionary age, young people have been asked to counsel with their parents, counsel with their bishops, and counsel with the Lord through prayer. When you know it is the right time to go, then you should go. As you have patience and exercise faith, I know that the Lord will make His will known unto you.

I testify that as you are obedient to the will of the Lord, you will be blessed beyond measure. ■

REACHING KEN OUT TO



By Ephraim Ong

When I was 16, I moved into a Taiwanese ward. Ken, a 13-year-old, had recently been baptized. But shortly after his baptism, Ken almost never attended church. I had a great desire to help Ken come back to church. I invited him to come to several Church activities. Ken played basketball at Mutual and joined the youth choir. He and his sister, Linda, also began to attend the free English classes taught by my family and the missionaries. Soon Linda began to attend youth activities as well. I could see God's hand helping us.

Ken's family wondered why my family tried to help Ken and Linda. We told them that the gospel had brought us great joy, and we really wanted others to find the same joy and peace from the Savior.

*The Lord's
hand guided
my ministering
efforts.*

Later, Linda and Ken accepted our invitation to go to church. Linda came and had an awesome experience. However, Ken was ill, and when I prayed about what I could do to help him, I felt impressed that we should bring him the sacrament. With the bishop's permission, our family went over to his house, and my brother and I helped administer the sacrament to him. We also visited with his family. I felt peaceful.

Our family has prayed for Ken, and all of us feel love for Ken and his family. The youth and adults in the ward and stake continue to fellowship Ken and Linda. The members' combined efforts to minister are helping Ken and Linda feel the love of the Savior. This experience of trying to minister like the Savior has brought great joy to my life. Ministering is the Lord's work, and because it is His work, His hand will guide our ministering efforts. ■

The author lives in Taiwan.



"I keep giving in to the same temptations. How can I move past those sins?"

"Even if we've been a conscious, deliberate sinner or have repeatedly faced failure and disappointment, the moment we decide to try again, the Atonement of Christ can help us. . . .

" . . . As we try, persevere, and help others to do the same, we are true Latter-day Saints. As we change, we will find that God indeed cares a lot more about who we are and about who we are becoming than about who we once were."

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Latter-day Saints Keep on Trying," April 2015 general conference.



Get Away from the Source of the Temptations

If it's your phone that you're addicted to, try to

get rid of that or get your parents to put restrictions on it. Or if your friends are the ones who are tempting you, find good friends and try to be surrounded by good people who help you feel the Spirit always. If you have the Spirit with you and you're surrounded by good friends, then it's easier to be able to resist the temptations. Temptations come to everyone, but as long as we resist them, then we'll be good.

Kolten B., age 17, Alberta, Canada



Pray Often

I'm a convert, and the temptations were strong for me because I had different customs from those of the

Church. Little by little, I began to understand that the communication I had with my Heavenly Father strengthened me and made it easier for me to overcome everything.

Pamela S., age 19, Llanquihue Province, Chile

Control Your Thoughts

Our thoughts are a gateway to our actions. Temptations, just like the melody of a song you remember, can penetrate our minds. When they come to your mind, try moving away from these thoughts by teaching yourself how to act and think. You have the power to do it!

Taynara S., age 19, São Paulo, Brazil



Get Support from Others

Always stay with someone you love, like your family and close friends, who

have the same standards as you. This might help you in staying away from the temptation. Involve yourself in family and Church activities, especially missionary and family history work. Don't be frustrated; the Lord's hand is always extended to those who have a desire to repent.

Elder Tucay, age 20, Ghana Cape Coast Mission

Find Comfort through Prayer

Something I would recommend doing is praying about it. I know that answers don't come immediately, but comfort always can. You can also find comfort by taking your mind off the thing that's bothering you and thinking of something that makes you happy. Whatever way you find comfort, I know you can find it through Jesus Christ.

Anna P., age 12, Utah, USA



I still remember sins I've repented of, and I feel guilty. Why can I not forget my sins?

Jesus Christ's Atonement makes forgiveness possible if we repent. True repentance includes humility, confession, forsaking of sins, and a commitment to keep the commandments.

The Lord has said, "He who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more" (Doctrine and Covenants 58:42). But what if *our* memory of our sins still haunts us? Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: "God did not promise that *we* would not remember our sins. Remembering will help us avoid making the same mistakes again. But if we stay true and faithful, the memory of our sins will be softened over time. This will be part of the needed healing and sanctification process" ("Point of Safe Return," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 101).

As we truly repent and focus on following the Savior, the Holy Ghost will be our companion and we will be moved to love and serve others. The sting of shame will be replaced by gratitude and hope. And we will glorify God for His kindness, love, and mercy.

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

What Do You Think?

"How can I enjoy church when I'm having issues with people there?"

Submit your answer and, if desired, a high-resolution photograph by March 15, 2019, at liahona.lds.org (click "Submit an Article or Feedback").

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

A Latter-day Saint Keeps on Trying

By Elder Dale G. Renlund
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In His mercy, God promises forgiveness when we repent and turn from wickedness—so much so that our sins will not even be mentioned to us. For us, because of the Atonement of Christ and our repentance, we can look at our past deeds and say, “That’s who I was. But that past wicked self is no longer who I am.”

President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) has taught, “One of God’s greatest gifts to us is the joy of trying again, for no failure ever need be final.”¹ Even if we’ve been a conscious, deliberate sinner or have repeatedly faced failure and disappointment, the moment we decide to try again, the Atonement of Christ can help us. And we need to remember that it is not the Holy Ghost that tells us we’re so far gone that we might as well give up.

God’s desire that Latter-day Saints keep on trying also extends beyond overcoming sin. Whether we suffer because of troubled relationships, economic challenges, or illnesses or as a consequence of someone else’s sins, the Savior’s infinite Atonement can heal even—and perhaps especially—those who have innocently suffered. He understands perfectly what it is like to suffer innocently as a consequence of another’s transgression. As prophesied, the Savior will “bind up the brokenhearted, . . . give . . . beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, [and] the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness” (Isaiah 61:1–3; see also Luke 4:16–21). No matter what, with His help, God expects Latter-day Saints to keep on trying.

My invitation to all of us is to evaluate our lives, repent, and keep on trying. If we don’t try, we’re just latter-day sinners; if we don’t persevere, we’re latter-day quitters; and if we don’t allow others to try, we’re just latter-day hypocrites. As we try, persevere, and help others to do the same, we are true Latter-day Saints. As we change, we will find that God indeed cares a lot more about who we are and about who we are becoming than about who we once were. ■

From an April 2015 general conference address.

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “The Will Within,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 68.



Born on
November 13, 1952,
in **Salt Lake
City, Utah.**



Married
**Ruth
Lybbert**
in the Salt Lake
Temple in 1977.



Spent his career as a
cardiologist
specializing in heart
failure and heart
transplantation.

Elder **DALE G. RENLUND**



About his call to be an
Apostle, he said, "I think
President Monson sensed that
**my bones had
dissolved.**"

Sustained to the
**Quorum
of the
Twelve
Apostles**
on October 3, 2015.



Became the
100th person
called to the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles in
the latter days.

Has one
daughter,
Ashley.



Received
**BA and MD
degrees**
from the
University of Utah.



Was a
**professor
of medicine**
at the University
of Utah.

At age 12,
while attending
church in a remodeled
home, he and a friend
lit a firecracker
in the chapel's adjacent
overflow area.

His first
language was
Swedish.

Served a
full-time mission
in **Sweden.**



Reading the Christmas story in Luke 2 was a family
Christmas tradition.



Was called to
**serve as
bishop**
in his third year
of medical res-
idency at Johns
Hopkins Hospital
in Maryland, USA.



As a doctor, he learned
from his patients that
**heartache can
become joy**
through the gospel.



Received a
**witness of the
truthfulness**
of the Book of Mormon
when he was 11.



PARENTS

TIPS FOR TEACHING REPENTANCE

*Here are some tips for
teaching repentance in a loving,
empowering way.*

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YOUNG ADULTS
YOUR INFLUENCE
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FUTURE MISSIONARIES
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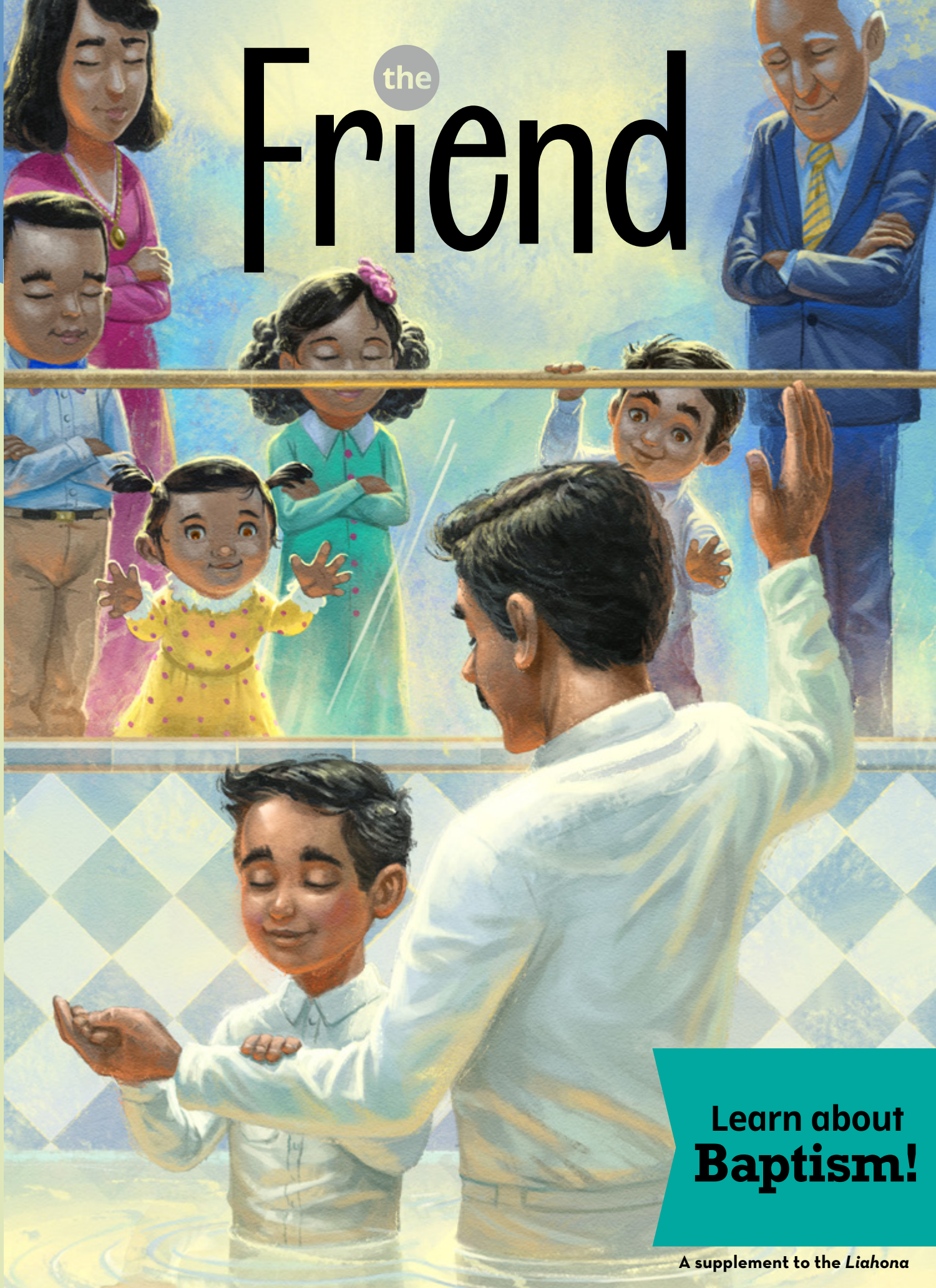
THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



February 2019

The children's section of the *Liahona*, published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

the Friend



Learn about
Baptism!

A supplement to the *Liahona*



**By President
Dallin H. Oaks**

First Counselor in the
First Presidency

Getting to Know Your Family

Family history starts when you learn about your ancestors. They are real people who lived before you and were part of a family. We need to be sealed to our ancestors so that we can live with them in the next life.

When you learn about your ancestors, you will:

- Feel more happy and confident.
- Not feel so alone.
- Know that each person is precious in Heavenly Father's eyes.

Here are three ways you can have these blessings:

1. Discover who your ancestors are.
2. Gather stories about them and share them again and again!
3. Connect them to your family by sending their names to the temple. They can be baptized and have other ordinances done for them, like being sealed to your family forever.

My mother, Stella Oaks, died before any of our grandchildren were born. So Sister Oaks and I had a “Stella party” to help them learn about her. Family members wrote a book about her and about my father. You can learn more about your ancestors too. This will give you strength and direction for your life. ●

Adapted from a talk given at RootsTech 2018 Family Discovery Day.



The Baptism Covenant

*Cut out and mix up these cards. Then take turns matching cards that go together.
With each match, talk about that part of the baptism covenant.*

"Take upon them
the name of thy Son"
(Doctrine and
Covenants 20:77).

"Bear one
another's burdens"
(Mosiah 18:8).

"Always remember
him and keep his
commandments"
(Doctrine and
Covenants 20:77).

"Always have his
Spirit to be with them"
(Doctrine and
Covenants 20:77).



I will follow Jesus Christ.



I will help others.



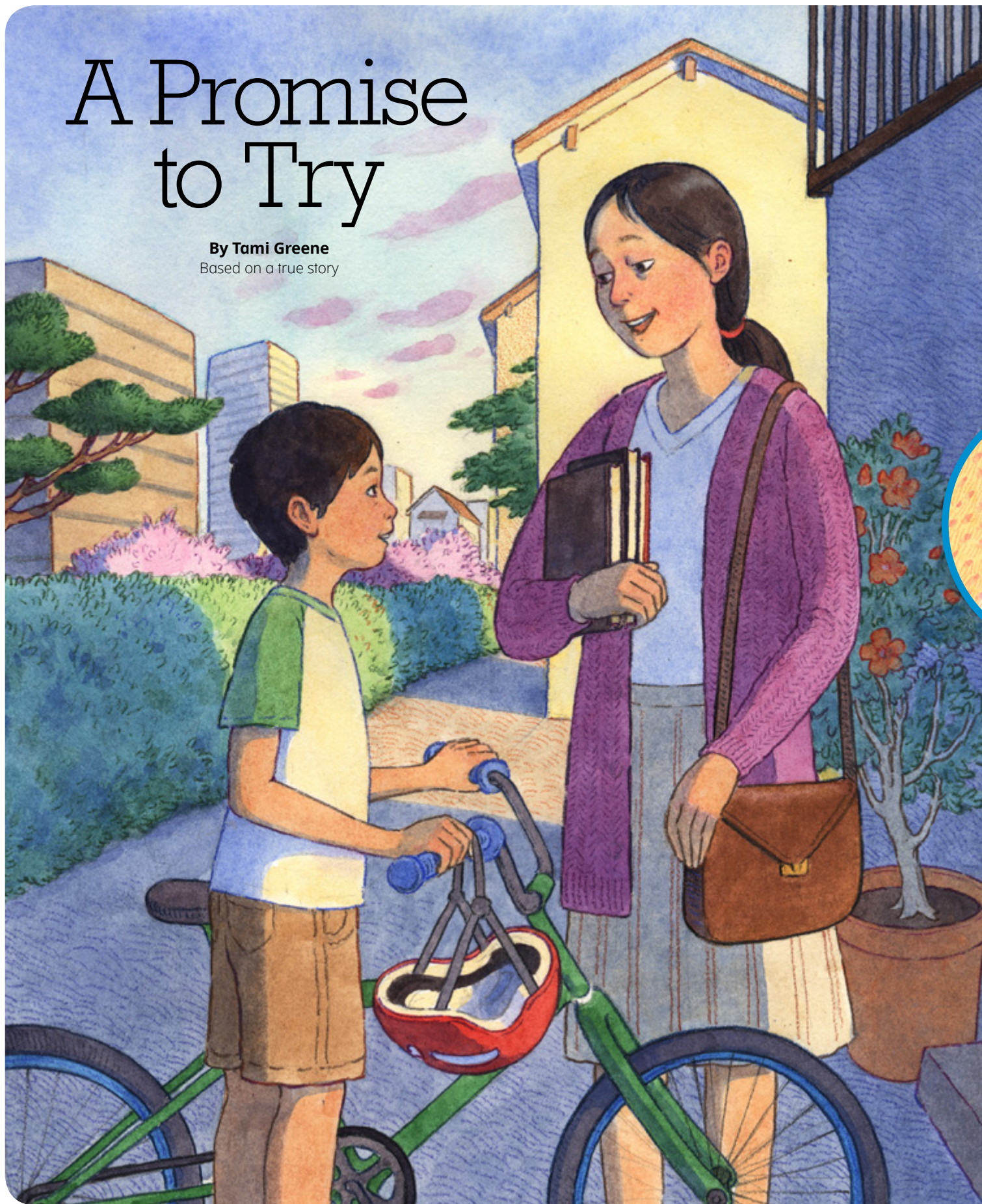
Each day, I will try to keep
the commandments.



Heavenly Father can bless
me with the Holy Ghost.

A Promise to Try

By Tami Greene
Based on a true story



"To be baptized as Jesus was . . . is just the thing I want to do" (Children's Songbook, 104).

The sun was going down as Tatsuki rode his bike home. He loved zooming down the small hill by his home, but he needed to be back before it was dark.

When Tatsuki rolled his bike to a stop, he saw his Primary teacher, Sister Yamada, walking up to his apartment building.

"Hi, Tatsuki," Sister Yamada said with a smile. "I'm here to talk about your baptism."

Tatsuki's family had just started going to church again. He liked being with his friends in Primary, and he was especially excited to be baptized! Sister Yamada and Tatsuki rode the elevator together and joined Mom in the apartment.

"Tatsuki, I'm so glad you've chosen to follow Jesus Christ by being baptized,"

Sister Yamada said. "When we are baptized, we make covenants with Heavenly Father. Do you know what a covenant is?"

Tatsuki didn't know Sister Yamada was going to ask him questions. He started to feel a little nervous. But Mom smiled encouragingly.

"Promises?" he asked shyly.

"That's right!" Sister Yamada said. "Heavenly Father promises us we can always have the Holy Ghost with us. Do you know what we promise Heavenly Father?"

Tatsuki shook his head. "I don't know."

"I'll give you a hint—the promises are in the prayers we hear before we take the sacrament," Sister Yamada said. "We promise Heavenly Father that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, to always remember Him, and to keep His commandments. Do you know what it means to take Jesus's name upon us?"

Tatsuki shook his head again. Mom helped him. "It means we are happy to say we are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," she said. "It

means we will do what Jesus would do if He were here."

"What kinds of things would Jesus do?" Tatsuki asked.

"Jesus would be kind to people. He would help people who are sad or sick," Sister Yamada said. "And He would teach people how to follow the commandments."

Tatsuki had a sinking feeling in his stomach. He started to frown and said, "I don't think I can be baptized."

"Why?" Mom asked.

"There are so many promises! I don't think I can be like Jesus every day!"

Mom gave Tatsuki a hug. "Remember when you helped Yuna when she was crying yesterday?"

Tatsuki nodded. His sister had been sad, so he had made funny faces and played with her until she was happy again.

"And remember how you helped your cousins share and be nice to each other last week? When you did that, you were following Jesus."

Tatsuki didn't know that's what it meant to follow Jesus. He started to feel a little bit better. He could do those things!

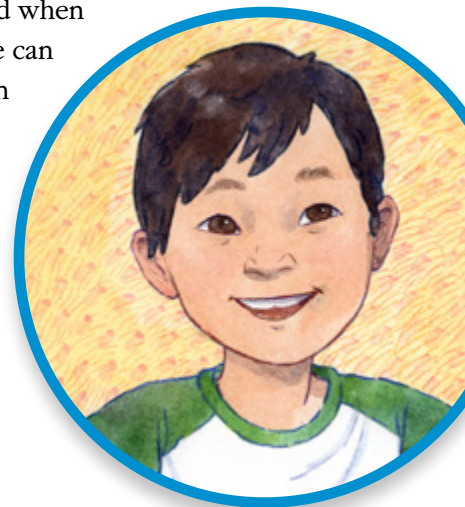
Sister Yamada said, "And when we do make a mistake, we can repent. That means we can say we're sorry and try to do better. When we repent, Heavenly Father forgives us. We can always keep trying!"

Tatsuki didn't feel so worried anymore. He felt happy.

"I want to be baptized!" he said.

Mom and Sister Yamada smiled. Sister Yamada gave Tatsuki a Book of Mormon with his name written on it. Tatsuki felt happy that he could try each day to be like Jesus. Now he couldn't wait to be baptized! ●

The author lives in Utah, USA.



A Little Better Every Day

Heavenly Father can help us make better choices every day. That's part of what it means to repent!

Match the choices from yesterday with the better choices from today.

YESTERDAY'S CHOICES



1. I teased my little sister, even after she said stop.



2. I got mad and yelled when we lost our football match.



3. I woke up too late and didn't say my morning prayers.



4. I said something mean to a kid when he laughed at me.



5. I lied to my mom about spilling a pot of water when she asked.



TODAY'S CHOICES

A. I told Mama I was sorry and told her the truth. Then I helped get more water.

B. On the way to school, I thought about ways to not get so upset at other people.

C. I apologized to my coach for getting so mad.

D. I said sorry to my sister and drew her a funny cat picture.

E. I went to bed early and woke up with plenty of time to pray.

Answers: 1-D, 2-C, 3-E, 4-B, 5-A

Everyone makes mistakes.

**Heavenly Father will
help me learn and
grow and try again.**





Hello from Mexico!



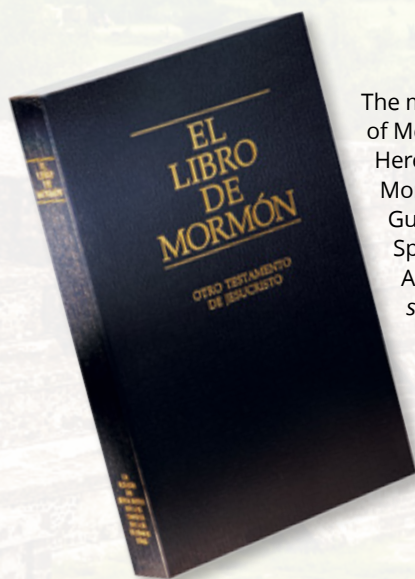
I'm Margo.



And I'm Paolo.

Mexico is in North America. It has more than 120 million people. About 1.5 million of them are members of the Church.

We're traveling to a different country each month to learn about children of God around the world. Join us as we visit Mexico!

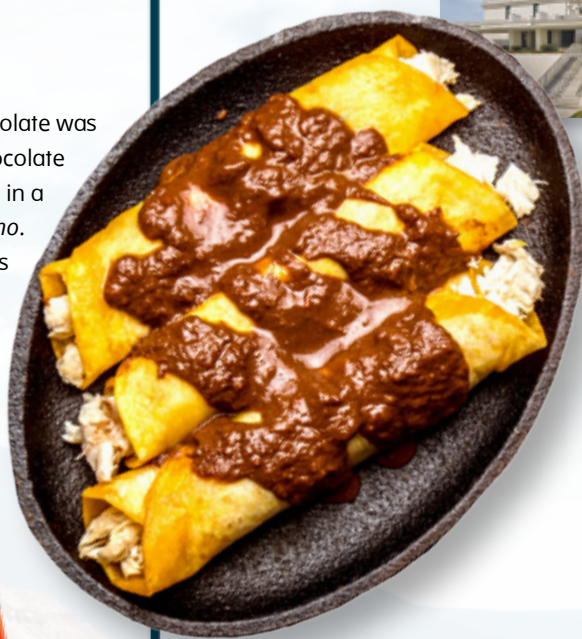


The main language of Mexico is Spanish. Here's a Book of Mormon in Spanish. Guess what? In Spanish, the prophet Alma's name means *soul*.



BACKGROUND PHOTO BY ADOBE STOCK; FLAG AND FOOD PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATIONS BY KATIE MCDEE

Did you know that chocolate was invented in Mexico? Chocolate is one of the ingredients in a dish called *mole poblano*. This sauce also includes chilies, nuts, fruits, and spices.



There are 13 temples in Mexico. Here are photos of the beautiful temples in Mexico City and Tijuana.

Meet some of our friends from Mexico!



Family is very important to people in Mexico. Families often gather for holidays and to have fun. These children are hitting a *piñata* filled with fruits and candy!



“One day I had a big problem, and I felt really sad. I went to church and listened to the testimonies about Jesus. I felt the Holy Ghost, and it made me happy. I know Heavenly Father helped me feel happy.”
Abby D., age 7, Puebla, Mexico



“I know that in these days Heavenly Father speaks to the prophet just like He did in the past. If I listen to and follow the prophet, I will be blessed, and it will help me to be more like Jesus Christ.”
Benjamin D., age 9, Puebla, Mexico



Do you like *fútbol*? It's the most popular sport in Mexico!

Thanks for exploring Mexico with us. See you next time!



Ingrid's Birthday Surprise

By Maryssa Dennis

Church Magazines

Based on a true story

*"Come unto Christ, and lay
hold upon every good gift"
(Moroni 10:30).*

Estas son las
mañanitas . . ."

The sound of Mamá's singing woke Ingrid up. She opened her eyes and saw Mamá coming into her room. Mamá always sang her a special birthday song on her birthday.

"Happy birthday!" Mamá said.

"Let's get ready for your party."

Ingrid could smell a chocolate cake baking in the oven.

"I wonder what presents I'll get!" she thought. She climbed out of bed and

looked out the window. The jacaranda tree outside was full of purple flowers.

Ingrid helped push the sofa into Mamá's room so there was lots of space in the living room. She helped frost the cake and stuck seven candles on top. Soon it was time for the party!

Ingrid's friends from school and



Primary came. They played games and ate cake. Then it was Ingrid's favorite part—presents! She got a new book, a stuffed tiger, and a charm bracelet.

After everyone left, Ingrid gave Mamá a hug. "Thank you, Mamá. That was the best birthday ever!"

"It's not over yet," Mamá said. "I have a special surprise for you." She handed Ingrid a slip of paper. It said, "Time for bed!"

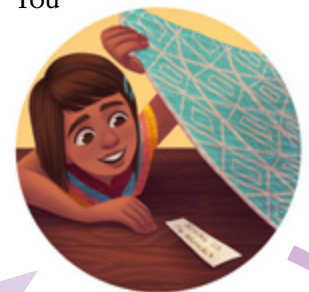
"It's a clue," Mamá explained. "You have to find the next one."

Ingrid hurried to her bedroom. She found another slip of paper under her pillow. It said, "Laundry day."

Ingrid ran to the kitchen and opened the washing machine. Another clue!

Ingrid found more clues behind the TV, inside her favorite book, and under the bathroom rug. The last clue led to her closet. Up on the shelf was a wrapped box. Ingrid wasn't tall enough, so Mamá got it down for her.

Ingrid tore off the paper and lifted the lid. Inside the box was some folded



white fabric and a big copy of the Book of Mormon.

“Next year, you can be baptized,” Mamá said. “This is a special gift to help you get ready.” Mamá touched the white fabric. “This is what I’ll use to make your baptism dress. And this”—she picked up the Book of Mormon—“is for you to read.”

Ingrid looked up at Mamá. “I’ve never read the Book of Mormon.”

“I know you can do it.” Mamá flipped the book open. “Look. The letters are extra big. I thought that might make it easier.”



Mamá closed the book again and handed it to Ingrid. Ingrid ran her fingers over the smooth cover.

“It’s important that you find out for yourself if the Book of Mormon is true,” Mamá said.

“I promise that if you read and pray with all your heart, Heavenly

Father will help you know.”

That night Ingrid read the first chapter of the Book of Mormon. It wasn’t as hard as she thought it would be. She liked reading the scriptures.

She read her Book of Mormon again the next day. And the next. She read it every day. After a few weeks, she decided she didn’t want to wait till the end of the book to pray about it.

Ingrid knelt by her bed. She prayed with all her heart and asked Heavenly Father to help her know that the Book of Mormon is true. Then she waited. She thought she might hear a voice, but she didn’t. Instead, a happy feeling grew in her heart. She knew Heavenly Father was answering her prayer.

Almost a year later, Ingrid finished reading the Book of Mormon. She knew that no matter what she got for her eighth birthday, the Book of Mormon would always be the best gift ever! ●

This story takes place in Mexico. Turn to page F8 to learn more about that country!



Find It!

Camila and Carlos are excited that all their cousins are visiting for Camila's baptism tomorrow. Today they're busy playing the best game of *las escondidas* (hide and seek) ever!

Can you find all 10 geckos? Then find Camila, Carlos, and their 10 cousins, all in red shirts.



He Calmed the Waters



By Daniel M., age 8, Vanuatu

I live in Vanuatu, a group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean. I was so excited to turn eight so that I could be baptized and confirmed.

But I was worried about getting baptized in the ocean in front of my house because the waves can get pretty big there. Those waves are fun to play in, but I wasn't sure about being baptized in them. My mom and I went in the ocean by our house to see what it would be like, and I knew it would be OK.

We chose the day when I was to be baptized, and I was so excited. But then a cyclone came close to our island. We had to call the branch president and cancel my baptism.

Even though there was a little flooding from the cyclone, we were able to go to church that Sunday. The

branch president announced that I would be baptized on Saturday.

On Saturday morning, the waves were really big, so I was kind of scared. We had a meeting at my house, and then we all walked down to the beach. I had asked my cousin Josh to baptize me.

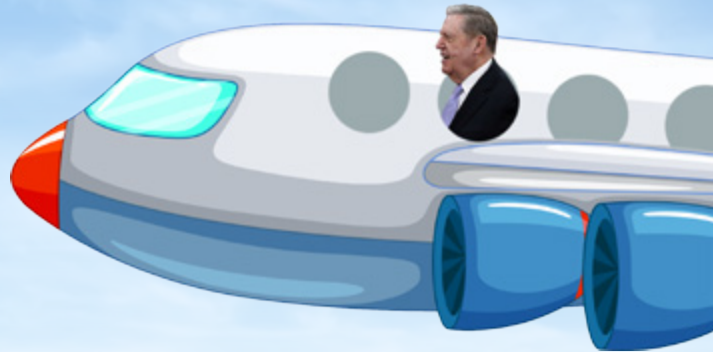
Josh lifted me over the waves as we walked in, but as I was getting baptized, the waves were calm. I think that while Josh said the baptism prayer, Jesus calmed the water for me.

As we walked out of the ocean, the waters got rough again, but I didn't mind because I was already soaked completely. I'm so glad that I turned eight and that I could follow Jesus's example by being baptized. I know that Heavenly Father hears my prayers. ●

Elder Holland's Long Trip

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland and Sister Patricia Holland went with President and Sister Nelson on their trip to visit Church members around the world. They visited eight countries. At each stop they met thousands of people who were so happy to see a prophet and an apostle!

Almost all the places they stopped in either already have a temple or will have one soon! ●



1



Their first stop was Jerusalem, **Israel**. They saw the Mount of Olives, a place where Jesus taught His disciples, and the Old City of Jerusalem, where Jesus walked.

2



Next they visited **Kenya**, a country in Africa where a temple is going to be built. Elder Holland encouraged people to gather their family history and come to the temple when it is finished. "Nothing will bless you more," he said.

3



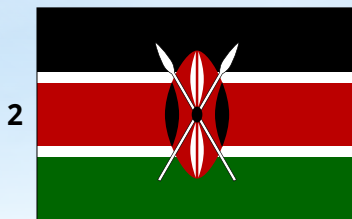
President Nelson and Elder Holland were excited to visit Church members in **India**. They looked for a place to build a temple there. It will be the first temple in that country, which has more than a billion people!



*The Apostles
travel around the
world to minister to
people and teach
them about
Jesus Christ.*

**Elder Holland visited
all of these places.
Match the country or
state with its flag.**

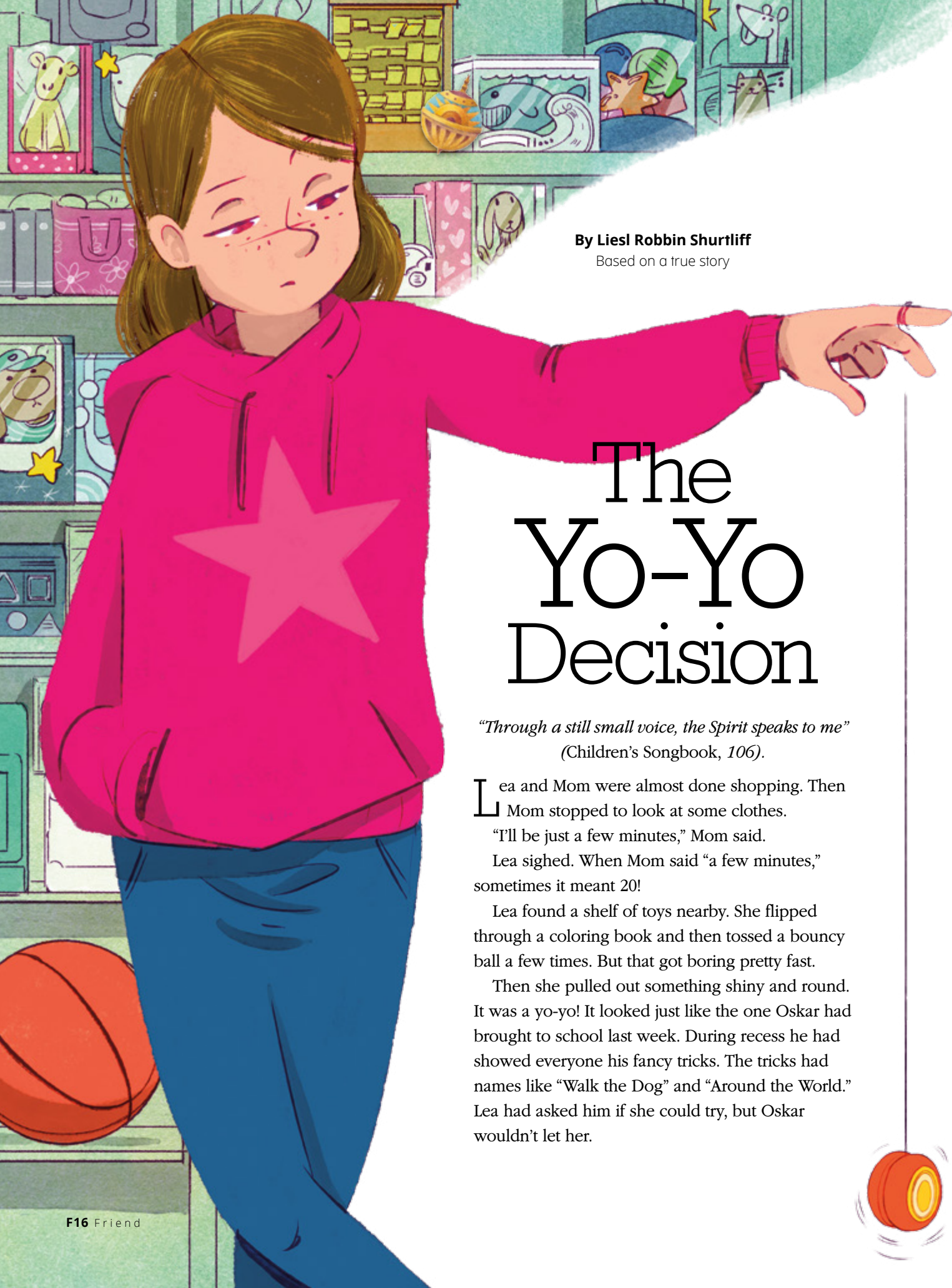
- Israel ☐
- Kenya ☐
- Zimbabwe ☐
- India ☐
- Thailand ☐
- China ☐
- United Kingdom ☐
- Hawaii ☐



Answers: Israel-6, Kenya-2, Zimbabwe-7, India-4, Thailand-1, China-3, United Kingdom-5, Hawaii-8

"I have a testimony that God will always be with us. He has given us a prophet to guide us. He will never abandon us. We will never, ever be left alone."





By Liesl Robbin Shurtliff

Based on a true story

The Yo-Yo Decision

"Through a still small voice, the Spirit speaks to me"
(Children's Songbook, 106).

Lea and Mom were almost done shopping. Then Mom stopped to look at some clothes.

"I'll be just a few minutes," Mom said.

Lea sighed. When Mom said "a few minutes," sometimes it meant 20!

Lea found a shelf of toys nearby. She flipped through a coloring book and then tossed a bouncy ball a few times. But that got boring pretty fast.

Then she pulled out something shiny and round. It was a yo-yo! It looked just like the one Oskar had brought to school last week. During recess he had showed everyone his fancy tricks. The tricks had names like "Walk the Dog" and "Around the World." Lea had asked him if she could try, but Oskar wouldn't let her.



Lea slipped the loop of the string over her finger. She let the yo-yo drop and then tugged on the string like she had seen Oskar do. The yo-yo hit the floor with a *chunk*. She tried again. After a few tries, she was able to bring the yo-yo back to her hand! If she could figure that out so quickly, she could probably learn to do all the tricks Oskar had done.

That's when Lea looked at the price tag. She frowned. She didn't have nearly that much in her money jar at home!

"I'm almost done, Lea," Mom called.

Lea sighed. She was about to put the yo-yo back when an idea popped into her head. The yo-yo wasn't very big. She could slip it into her pocket and keep it! The store owner wasn't looking. No one would ever know. She could keep it forever and learn to do new tricks. And kids at school would think she was cool.

As Lea looked down at the yo-yo in her hand, she felt prickly and nervous. Her hands felt sweaty. She gripped the yo-yo tighter. What was this bad feeling? She wanted it to go away.

Then she remembered something Dad had told her before she got baptized.

"After you're baptized, you'll receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," Dad had said. "The Holy Ghost helps us make good choices. He speaks to us in a still, small voice."

"He'll talk to me?" Lea asked.

"Not exactly," Dad said. "It may be like a thought

coming into your mind. Or a feeling coming into your heart."

"What kind of feeling?"

"It's different for each person," Dad said.

"But usually, when you do something good, the Holy Ghost will help you feel calm and peaceful. When there's something

dangerous, He will warn you. And when you want to do something wrong, the Holy Ghost will leave, and you'll feel confused or unhappy."

Lea looked down at the yo-yo. She *really* wanted it. But she knew the Holy Ghost was telling her that stealing was wrong.

Lea put the yo-yo back on the shelf. As soon as she did, she felt peaceful and warm. She walked back to Mom.

"I'm done," Mom said. "Are you ready to go?"

Lea smiled. "Yes."

As they left the store, Lea felt as light and happy as sunshine. The yo-yo might have been fun for a while. But following the Holy Ghost was something she wanted to do *always*. ●

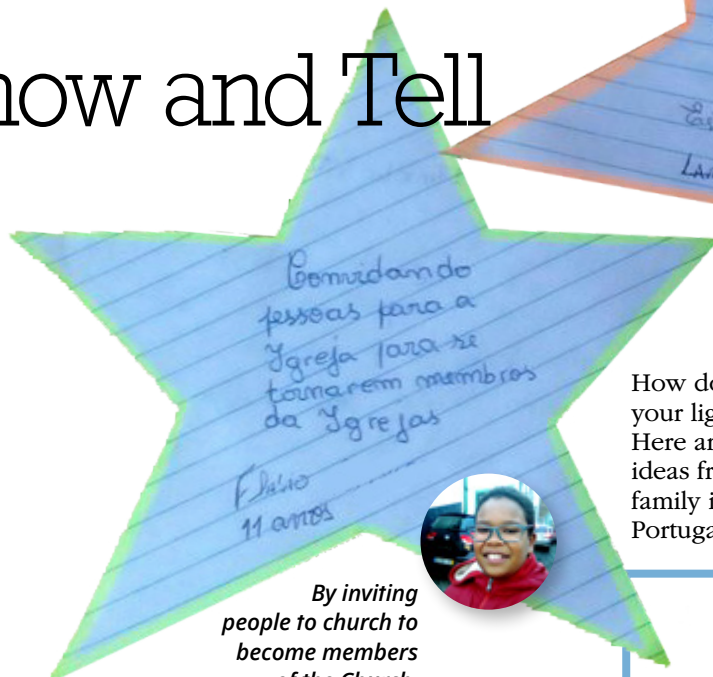
The author lives in Illinois, USA.



One day at school I was taking a spelling test, and my teacher called out a word I had no idea how to spell. I was panicking! And I looked at someone's paper. After the test my stomach wasn't feeling good. I told my mom about how I looked at someone else's paper. I knew that the feeling I got was from the Holy Ghost. I know I should always listen to the Holy Ghost.

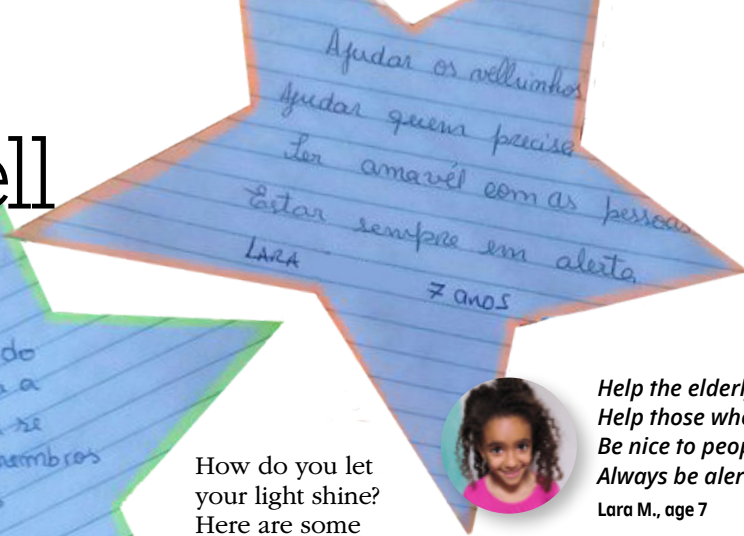
Jonah J., age 8, Idaho, USA

Show and Tell

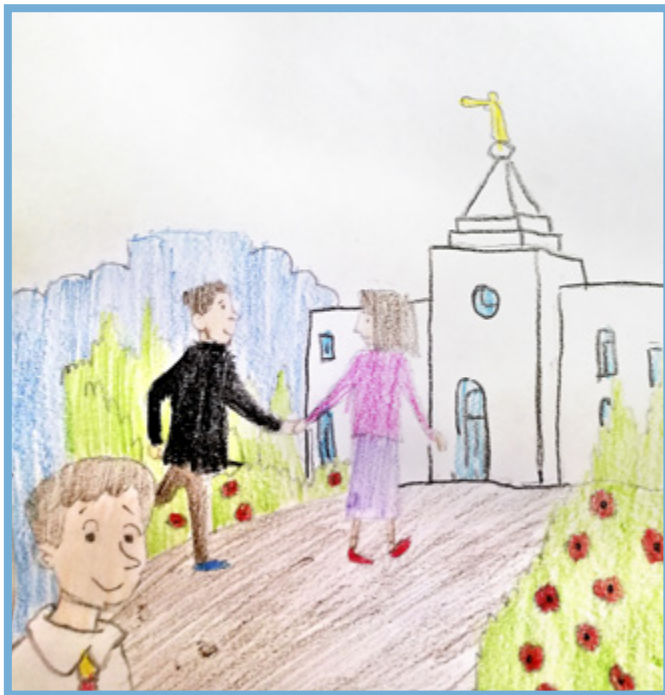


By inviting people to church to become members of the Church.
Flavio M., age 11

How do you let your light shine? Here are some ideas from a family in Azores, Portugal.



*Help the elderly.
Help those who need help.
Be nice to people.
Always be alert.*
Lara M., age 7



I went to the Trujillo Peru Temple with my parents and brothers. Even though I couldn't enter, I felt at peace in that beautiful environment.

Daniel S., age 11, La Libertad, Peru



Salomé W., age 6, Quebec, Canada



A CTR 3 class in São Paulo, Brazil, learned about baptismal covenants as they found messages, quotes, and scriptures in the fishes' mouths.



By Elder
Hugo E.
Martinez

Of the Seventy

He Wants the Best for Me



"I know Heav'nly Father loves me"

(Children's Songbook, 228).

When I was a child, I liked doing things my dad did. He worked as a doctor. I often went with him to the hospital, where I saw him help patients. Watching my dad made me want to be a doctor too.

One day I was walking into the hospital with my dad. Another doctor walked out. He saw me and asked my dad, "Is this your son?" My dad said yes. The doctor knelt to look at me. He asked, "What will you be when you grow up?"

I said, "I want to be a doctor, like my dad." Then he replied, "Well, I hope you're as good a doctor as he is." But my dad said, "No, I want him to be better than me."

That helped me realize that my dad really loved me. He wanted the best for me.

Years later I thought of that moment again. My wife and I were being taught by the missionaries. The missionaries asked me, "Do you believe that you can become like God?" I had never thought about it. But I thought, "If Heavenly Father is actually my Father, He would want the best for me, like my dad did. He would want me to be able to become like Him." So I said to the missionaries, "Yes, I believe I can be like my Heavenly Father."

The moment I answered, I knew what I said was true.

I want you to know that your Heavenly Parents love you very much. They want the best for you. You can become like Them. ●

Jesus Was Baptized



Have you ever seen someone get baptized? When we get baptized, we're following Jesus's example.



Jesus asked His cousin John to baptize Him. John had the priesthood authority to baptize people.



John asked Jesus why He wanted to get baptized. Jesus said He wanted to obey Heavenly Father's commandments.

John baptized Jesus.
They felt the Holy Ghost.
They heard Heavenly
Father's voice say,
"This is my beloved
Son, in whom I am
well pleased."





One day I can choose to be baptized, as Jesus was. I can get ready for baptism by trying to be like Jesus every day. ●

Jesus Chose to Be Baptized



Dear Parents

This year families are all learning the same lessons at church. Adults and youth are studying the New Testament in Sunday School. And children are learning about those same chapters.

Each month in the *Friend*, you'll find stories and activities about what you'll be learning on Sundays. Try using them for family home evening or just for reading with your child.

- "The Baptism Covenant" (page F3)
- "A Promise to Try" (page F4)
- "A Little Better Every Day" (page F6)
- "Ingrid's Birthday Surprise" (page F10)
- "The Yo-Yo Decision" (page F16)
- "Jesus Was Baptized" (page F20)

We'd love to hear your thoughts about using these stories and activities with your family.

New Friend

**50 E. North Temple St., Room 2393
Salt Lake City, UT 84150
liahona@ldschurch.org**

With love,
The *Friend*

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- F16** The Yo-Yo Decision
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- F20** Following Jesus: Jesus Was Baptized
- F23** Coloring Page: Jesus Chose to Be Baptized



Find the Liahona hidden inside!

ON THE FRIEND COVER
Illustration by Brandon Dorman