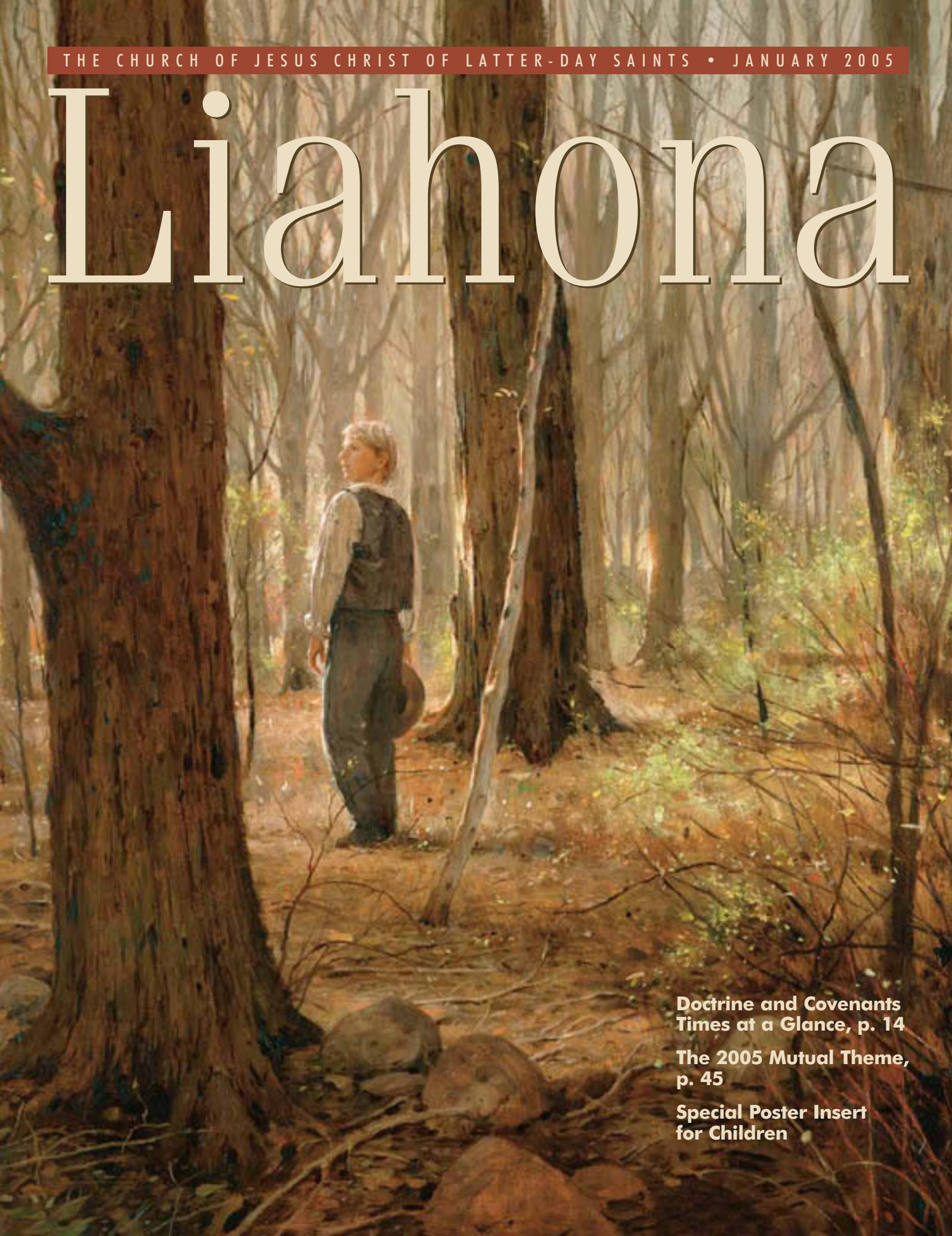


THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • JANUARY 2005

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**Doctrine and Covenants
Times at a Glance, p. 14**

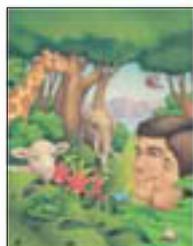
**The 2005 Mutual Theme,
p. 45**

**Special Poster Insert
for Children**

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ON THE COVER
Front: Painting by Walter Rane. Back: Photograph by John Luke.



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Illustrated by Steve Kropp.

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Family Home Evening Ideas



**"The Book of Mormon and
the Doctrine and Covenants,"**

p. 8: Make a list of what
President Ezra Taft Benson said the
Book of Mormon is and a list of what
he said the Doctrine and Covenants
is. Compare the lists. How are these
two books similar or different? Share
experiences of how the promises
mentioned in this article have been
fulfilled in your life.

**"Created in the Image of God,
Male and Female,"** p. 30: Invite fam-
ily members to take turns explaining
what each section of this article
means to them. Search for similarities
between the truths in this article and
the words of hymns such as "I Am a
Child of God" (*Hymns*, no. 301) or
"O My Father" (*Hymns*, no. 292).

"Valiant in Venezuela," p. 32:
What are some challenges facing
youth in Venezuela? You may want
to act out some of the situations they
face. How are their challenges similar
to or different from yours? Discuss
ways we can all stand as witnesses
of Christ.

**"2005 Mutual Theme: 'A Great
and a Marvelous Work,'"** p. 45:
Read the comments of the Young
Men and Young Women general
presidencies on the 2005 Mutual
theme. Ask youth for ideas of what
your family can do throughout the
coming year to support this theme.

**"Born Again through
Baptism,"** p. F2: Assign family

members to act out Atiati's
story. Discuss how Atiati changed and
why. Read the final paragraph aloud,
and bear testimony of the blessings
of baptism.

"The Faith of His Parents," p. F6:
Write the words spoken by the narrator,
Mother, Father, and David on separate
pieces of paper. Assign family members
to act out the story. Show the pictures
on pages F6 and F7. How did President
David O. McKay and his family show
their faith in God? Discuss ways we can
show more faith.

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Pursue the Steady Course

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

The days of which our forebears spoke are upon those of us who live in this, the beginning of the 21st century. These are days of prophecy fulfilled; and I, with you, am grateful to be a part of this vibrant, marvelous work which is affecting for good so many people in so many parts of the world.

This growth is not a victory of men; it is a manifestation of the power of God. I hope we shall never be proud or boastful concerning it. I pray that we shall ever be humble and grateful.

Fruits of the First Vision

This work began with a most remarkable manifestation when the Father and the Son appeared to the boy Joseph Smith on a spring morning in the year 1820. All of the good we see in the Church today is the fruit of that remarkable visitation, a testimony of which has touched the hearts of millions in many lands. I add my own witness, given me by the Spirit, that the Prophet's description of

that marvelous event is true, that God the Eternal Father and the risen Lord Jesus Christ spoke with him on that occasion in a conversation as real and personal and intimate as he described. I raise my voice in testimony that Joseph was a prophet and that the work brought forth through his instrumentality is the work of God.

I have grown to appreciate a summary by one of the Prophet's associates of Joseph Smith's work and a statement of our obligation to advance it. These words, poetic in their beauty, were written by Elder Parley P. Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1845, less than a year following Joseph's death:

"He has organized the kingdom of God.—We will extend its dominion.

"He has restored the fulness of the Gospel.—We will spread it abroad. . . .

"He has kindled up the dawn of a day of glory.—We will bring it to its meridian splendour.

"He was a 'little one,' and became a



Should we be surprised if we are called upon to endure a little criticism, to make some small sacrifice for our faith when our forebears paid so great a price for theirs?



thousand. We are a small one, and will become a strong nation.

“In short, he quarried the stone . . . ; we will cause it to become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.”¹

We are seeing the unfolding of that dream. I hope we shall be true and faithful to the sacred trust given us to build this kingdom. Our effort will not be without sorrow and setbacks. We may expect opposition, both determined and sophisticated.

Our Best Defense

As the work grows, we may expect a strengthening of the efforts of the adversary against it. Our best defense is the quiet offense of allegiance to the teachings which have come to us from those whom we have sustained as prophets of God.

The Prophet Joseph Smith gave us instruction pertinent to the situation in which we find ourselves. Said he: “Go in all meekness, in sobriety, and preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified; not to contend with others on account of their faith, or systems of religion, but pursue a steady course. This I delivered by way of commandment; and all who observe it not, will pull down persecution upon their heads, while those who do, shall always be filled with the Holy Ghost; this I pronounced as a prophecy.”²

I should like to take a few of the words of that statement as a theme for us as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today.

I pray that the Lord will inspire us to understand the wisdom of this counsel from the Prophet: Contend not with others, but pursue a steady course.

Pursuing a Steady Course

We live in a day of shifting values, of changing standards, of will-o'-the-wisp programs that blossom in the morning and die in the evening. We see this in government, we see it in public and private morality, we see it in the homes of the people, we see it in the churches, and we

Writing of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Elder Parley P. Pratt penned: “He has organized the kingdom of God.— We will extend its dominion. He has restored the fulness of the Gospel.— We will spread it abroad.”

even see it among some of our own members who are led away by the sophistry of men.

Men everywhere seem to be groping as in darkness, casting aside the traditions that were the strength of our society yet unable to find a new start to guide them.

I recall the moral strength espoused by a Japanese government official who spoke during the dedication of the Church pavilion at the Expo '70 world's fair in Japan. He warmly complimented the Church on its participation in that exposition and deplored the waning influence of religion in the lives of the people of his own nation, with a consequent deterioration of standards and ideals.

It appears to be so everywhere. Some time ago I read a provocative article by Barbara W. Tuchman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian. Said she: “When it comes to leaders we have, if anything, a superabundance—hundreds of Pied Pipers . . . —ready and anxious to lead the population. They are scurrying around, collecting consensus, gathering as wide an acceptance as possible. But what they are *not* doing, very notably, is standing still and saying, ‘*This* is what I believe. This I will do and that I will not do. This is my code of behavior and that is outside it. This is excellent and that is trash.’ There is an abdication of moral leadership in the sense of a general unwillingness to state standards.”

She continued: “Of all the ills that our poor . . . society is heir to, the focal one, it seems to me, from which so much of our uneasiness and confusion derive, is the absence of standards. We are too unsure of ourselves to assert them, to stick by them, if necessary in the case of persons who occupy positions of authority, to impose them. We seem to be afflicted by a widespread and eroding reluctance to take any stand on any values, moral, behavioral or esthetic.”³

While standards generally may totter, we of the Church are without excuse if we drift in the same manner. We have standards—sure, tested, and effective. To the extent that

we observe them, we shall go forward. To the extent that we neglect them, we shall hinder our own progress and bring embarrassment to the work of the Lord. These standards have come from Him. Some of them may appear a little out-of-date in our society, but this does not detract from their validity nor diminish the virtue of their application. The subtle reasoning of men, no matter how clever, no matter how plausible it may sound, cannot abridge the declared wisdom of God.

I once heard Hans Kindt, the wise stake patriarch of the Milwaukee Wisconsin North Stake, say: "God is not a celestial politician seeking our vote. Rather, God is to be found, and God is to be obeyed."

The satisfying thing is that obedience brings happiness. It brings peace; it brings growth—all of these to the individual—and his or her good example brings respect for the institution of which he or she is a part.

No Need to Contend

Our adherence to these divinely given standards need never be an offensive thing to those about us. We need not contend with them. But if we will pursue a steady course, our very example will become the most effective argument we could ever advance for the virtues of the cause with which we are associated.

The Lord has given us counsel and commandment on so many things that no member of this Church need ever equivocate. He has established our guidelines concerning personal virtue, neighborliness, obedience to law, loyalty to government, observance of the Sabbath day, sobriety and abstinence from liquor and tobacco, the payment of tithes and offerings, the care of the poor, the cultivation of home and family, the sharing of the gospel—to mention only a few.

There need be nothing of argument or contention in any of them. If we will pursue a steady course in the implementation of our religion in our own lives, we shall advance the cause more effectively than by any other means.

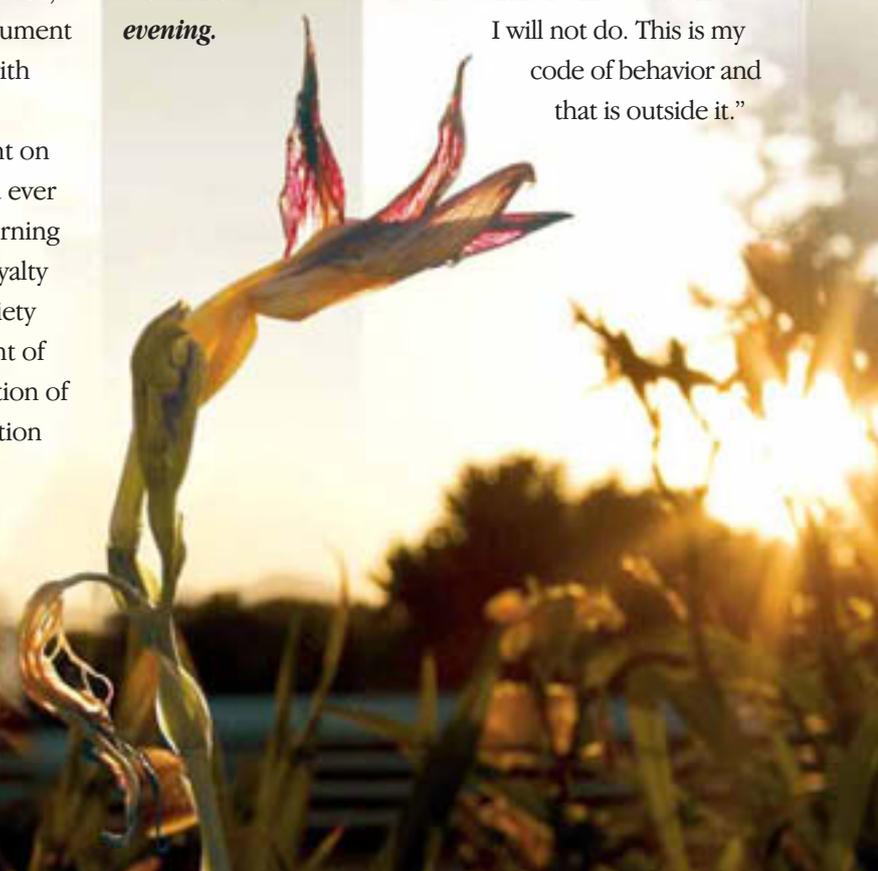
There may be those who will seek to tempt us away. There may be those who will try to bait us. We may be disparaged. We may be belittled. We may be inveighed against. We may be caricatured before the world.

There are those, both in the Church and out, who would compel us to change our position on some matters, as if it were our prerogative to usurp authority which belongs alone to God.

***We live in
a day of
shifting
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programs that
blossom in the
morning and
die in the
evening.***

We have no desire to quarrel with others. We teach the gospel of peace. But we cannot forsake the word of the Lord as it has come to us through men whom we have sustained as prophets. We must stand and say, to quote again the words of affirmation recommended by Barbara Tuchman: "*This is what I believe. This I will do and that*

I will not do. This is my code of behavior and that is outside it."



There may be times of discouragement and deep concern. There certainly will be days of decision in the lives of each of us. It was ever thus.

Pioneer Examples

Every man and woman in this Church knows something of the price paid by our forebears for their faith. I have been reminded of this whenever I read the narrative of Mary Goble Pay, my wife's grandmother. I think I would like to share a few words from that story of a 13-year-old girl. She tells of her childhood in Brighton, that delightful city on the south coast of England, where the soft, green hills of Sussex roll down to the sea.

It was there that her family was baptized. Their conversion came naturally because the Spirit whispered in their hearts that it was true. But there were critical relatives and neighbors and even mobs to deride and inflame others against them. It took courage, that rare quality described as moral courage, to stand up and be counted, to be baptized and recognized as a Mormon.

The family traveled to Liverpool, where with some 900 others they boarded the sailing vessel *Horizon*.

As the wind caught the sails, they sang, "Farewell, My Native Land, Farewell." After six weeks at sea—to cover the distance covered today by a jet plane in six hours—they landed at Boston and then traveled by steam train to Iowa City for fitting out.

There they purchased two yoke of oxen, one yoke of cows, a wagon, and a tent. They

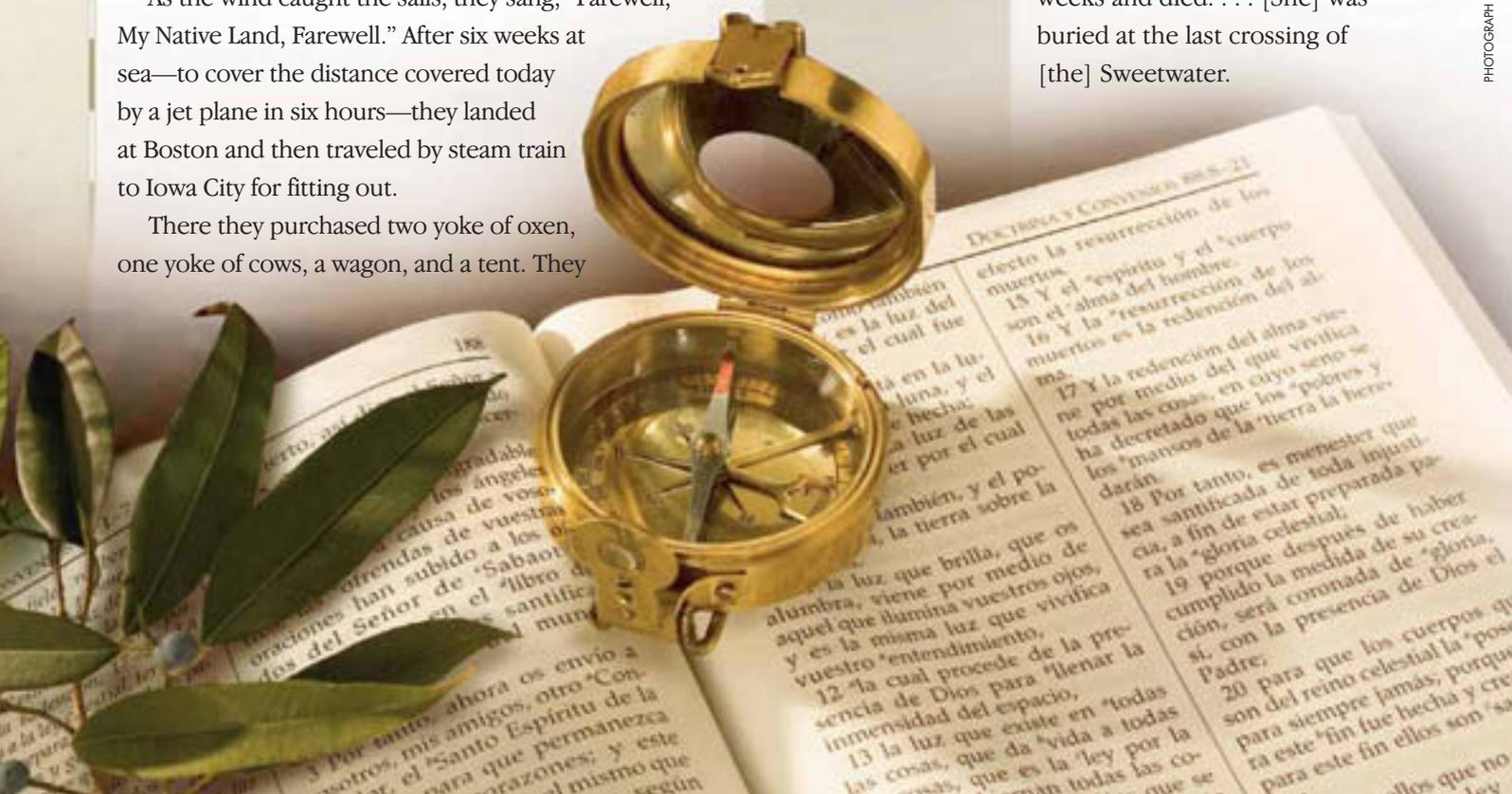
were assigned to travel with and assist one of the handcart companies.

Here in Iowa City also occurred their first tragedy. Their youngest child, less than two years of age, suffering from exposure, died and was buried in a grave never again visited by a member of the family.

Now let me give you the very words of this 13-year-old girl as I share a few lines from her story:

"We traveled from 15 to 25 miles [25 to 40 km] a day . . . until we got to the Platte River. . . . We caught up with the hand cart companies that day. We watched them cross the river. There were great lumps of ice floating down the river. It was bitter cold. . . . We went back to the camp and went to prayers, [and] . . . sang 'Come, Come, Ye Saints No Toil Nor Labor Fear.' I wondered what made my mother cry [that night]. . . . The next morning my little sister was born. It was the 23rd of September. We named her Edith. She lived six weeks and died. . . . [She] was buried at the last crossing of [the] Sweetwater.

I *f we will pursue
a steady course,
our very example
will become the
most effective
argument we could
ever advance.*



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE

“[We ran into heavy snow. I became lost in the snow.] My feet and legs were frozen. [The men] rubbed me with snow. They put my feet in a bucket of water. The pain was terrible. . . .

“When we arrived at Devils Gate it was bitter cold. We left lots of our things there. . . . My brother James . . . was as well as he ever was when he went to bed [that night]. In the morning he was dead. . . .

“My feet were frozen[;] also my brother Edwin and my sister Caroline had their feet frozen. It was nothing but snow [snow everywhere and the bitter Wyoming wind]. We could not drive the pegs in our tents. . . . We did not know what would become of us. [Then] one night a man came to our camp and told us . . . Brigham Young had sent men and teams to help us. . . . We sang songs, some danced and some cried. . . .

“My mother had never got well. . . . She died between the little and big mountains. . . . She was 43 years old. . . .

“We arrived in Salt Lake City nine o’clock at night the 11th of December 1856. Three out of four that were living were frozen. My mother was dead in the wagon. . . .

“Early next morning . . . Brigham Young . . . came. . . . When he saw our condition, our feet frozen and our mother dead, tears rolled down his cheeks. . . .

“The doctor amputated my toes . . . [while] the sisters were dressing my mother for her grave. . . . When my feet were fixed they [carried] . . . us in to see our mother for the last time. Oh how did we stand it. That afternoon she was buried. . . .

“[I have thought often of my mother’s words before we left England.] ‘Polly, I want to go to Zion while my children are small, so they can be raised in the Gospel of Christ for I know this is the true church.’”⁴

I conclude with this question: Should we be surprised if we are called upon to endure a little criticism, to make some small sacrifice for our faith when our forebears paid so great a price for theirs?

Without contention, without argument, without offense, let us pursue a steady course, moving forward to build the kingdom of God. If there

is trouble, let us face it calmly. Let us overcome evil with good. This is God’s work. It will continue to strengthen over the earth, touching for good the lives of countless thousands whose hearts will respond to the message of truth. No power under heaven can stop it.

This is my faith and this is my testimony. ■

NOTES

1. “Proclamation,” *Millennial Star*, Mar. 1845, 151–52.
2. *History of the Church*, 2:431.
3. “The Missing Element—Moral Courage,” *McCall’s*, June 1967, 28.
4. *A Pioneer Story: Mary Goble Pay, 1856*, Family and Church History Department Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2–4, 10.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a teaching method that will encourage participation by family members. Following are some examples.

1. Help family members memorize the first sentence of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s prophecy (see the second paragraph under the heading “Our Best Defense”). You could praise them or offer some small reward when they can say it from memory. List and discuss ideas mentioned by President Hinckley about what it means to pursue a steady course.

2. What does President Hinckley say about moral strength when quoting Barbara W. Tuchman (see the fourth paragraph under the heading “Pursuing a Steady Course”)? Invite family members to act out a situation that would require having moral strength. You may need to explain to younger children that this means not being afraid to do what we know is right. Discuss ways family members can be meek yet display moral courage.

3. How do you think the promise made to the righteous in the Prophet Joseph’s prophecy was fulfilled in the life of Mary Goble Pay? Discuss President Hinckley’s concluding question. How can we live more faithfully according to the Prophet Joseph’s counsel?

The Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants

BY PRESIDENT EZRA TAFT BENSON (1899–1994)

Thirteenth President of the Church



The Doctrine and Covenants is the binding link between the Book of Mormon and the continuing work of the Restoration through the Prophet Joseph Smith and his successors.

Ezra Taft Benson was born on August 4, 1899, in Whitney, Idaho, to Sarah Dunkley and George Taft Benson Jr. He married Flora Smith Amussen on September 10, 1926. At the age of 44, on October 7, 1943, he was ordained an Apostle by President Heber J. Grant. Elder Benson served as United States secretary of agriculture from 1953 to 1961. On December 30, 1973, he was ordained and set apart as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He became thirteenth President of the Church at age 86 on November 10, 1985, and served in that capacity for more than eight years. President Benson died in Salt Lake City on May 30, 1994. A great proponent of studying the scriptures, he testified of the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants.

I would like to speak about two sacred volumes of modern scripture—the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants.

The Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants are bound together as revelations from Israel’s God to gather and prepare His people for the Second Coming of the Lord.

The bringing forth of these sacred volumes of scripture “for the salvation of a ruined world” cost “the best blood of the nineteenth century”—that of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum (D&C 135:6).

Each divine witness contains a great proclamation to all the world—the title page of the Book of Mormon, and section 1, the

Lord’s preface to the Doctrine and Covenants.

“This generation,” said the Lord to Joseph Smith, “shall have my word through you” (D&C 5:10). And so it has through the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and other modern revelations.

The Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants testify of each other. You cannot believe one and not the other.

The Book of Mormon testifies of modern books of scripture. It refers to them as “other books” and “last records” which “establish the truth” of the Bible and make known the “plain and precious things which have been taken away” from the Bible (1 Nephi 13:39–40).

Excluding the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants is by far the greatest external witness and evidence which we have from the Lord that the Book of Mormon is true. At least 13 sections in the Doctrine and Covenants give us confirming knowledge and divine witness that the Book of Mormon is the word of God (see D&C 1; 3; 5; 8; 10–11; 17–18; 20; 27; 42; 84; 135).

The Doctrine and Covenants is the binding link between the Book of Mormon and the continuing work of the Restoration through the Prophet Joseph Smith and his successors.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we learn of temple work, eternal families, the degrees of glory, Church organization, and many other great truths of the Restoration.

“Search these commandments,” said the Lord of the Doctrine and Covenants, “for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled.

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CRAIG DIMOND, POSED BY MODELS

fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:37–38).

The Book of Mormon brings men to Christ. The Doctrine and Covenants brings men to Christ’s kingdom, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” (v. 30). I know that.

The Book of Mormon is the “keystone” of our religion, and the Doctrine and Covenants is the capstone, with continuing latter-day revelation. The Lord has placed His stamp of approval on both the keystone and the capstone.

The ancient preparation of the Book of Mormon, its preservation, and its publication verify Nephi’s words that “the Lord knoweth all things from the beginning; wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men; for behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words” (1 Nephi 9:6).

We are not required to prove that the Book of Mormon is true or is an authentic record through external evidences—though there are many. It never has been the case, nor is it so now, that the studies of the learned will prove the Book of Mormon true or false. The origin, preparation, translation, and verification of the truth of the Book of Mormon have all been retained in the hands of the Lord, and the Lord makes no mistakes. You can be assured of that.

God has built in His own proof system of the Book of Mormon as found in Moroni, chapter 10, and in the testimonies of the Three and the Eight Witnesses and in various sections of the Doctrine and Covenants.

We each need to get our own testimony of the Book of Mormon through the Holy Ghost. Then our testimony, coupled with the Book of Mormon, should be shared with others so that they, too, can know through the Holy Ghost of its truthfulness.

Nephi testifies that the Book of Mormon contains the “words of Christ” and that if people “believe in Christ,”

they will believe in the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 33:10).

It is important that in our teaching we make use of the language of holy writ. Alma said, “I . . . do command you in the language of him who hath commanded me” (Alma 5:61).

The words and the way they are used in the Book of Mormon by the Lord should become our source of understanding and should be used by us in teaching gospel principles.

God uses the power of the word of the Book of Mormon as an instrument to change people’s lives: “As the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God” (Alma 31:5).

Alma reminded his brethren of the Church how God delivered their fathers’ souls from hell: “Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awakened them out of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God. Behold, they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless, their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word” (Alma 5:7).

We need to use the everlasting word to awaken those in deep sleep so they will awake “unto God.”

I am deeply concerned about what we are doing to teach the Saints at all levels the gospel of Jesus Christ as completely and authoritatively as do the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. By this I mean teaching the “great plan of the Eternal God,” to use the words of Amulek (Alma 34:9).

Are we using the messages and the method of teaching found in the Book of Mormon and other scriptures of the Restoration to teach this great plan of the Eternal God?

There are many examples of teaching this great plan, but I will quote just one. It is Mormon’s summary statement of Aaron’s work as a missionary:

“And it came to pass that when Aaron saw that the king would believe his words, he began from the creation of



Adam, reading the scriptures unto the king—how God created man after his own image, and that God gave him commandments, and that because of transgression, man had fallen.

“And Aaron did expound unto him the scriptures from the creation of Adam, laying the fall of man before him, and their carnal state and also the plan of redemption, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, through Christ, for all whosoever would believe on his name.

“And since man had fallen he could not merit anything of himself; but the sufferings and death of Christ atone for their sins, through faith and repentance” (Alma 22:12–14).

The Book of Mormon Saints knew that the plan of redemption must start with the account of the Fall of Adam. In the words of Moroni: “By Adam came the fall of man. And because of the fall of man came Jesus Christ, . . . and because of Jesus Christ came the redemption of man” (Mormon 9:12).

Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ.

No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind. And no other book in the world explains this vital doctrine nearly as well as the Book of Mormon.

Brethren and sisters, we all need to take a careful inventory of our performance and also the performance of those over whom we preside to be sure that we are teaching the “great plan of the Eternal God” to the Saints.

Are we accepting and teaching what the revelations tell us about the Creation, Adam



and the Fall of man, and redemption from that fall through the Atonement of Christ? Do we frequently review the crucial questions which Alma asks the members of the Church in the fifth chapter of Alma in the Book of Mormon?

Do we understand and are we effective in teaching and preaching the Atonement? What personal meaning does the Lord’s suffering in Gethsemane and on Calvary have for each of us?

What does redemption from the Fall mean to us? In the words of Alma, do we “sing the song of redeeming love”? (Alma 5:26).

Now, what should be the source for teaching the great plan of the Eternal God? The scriptures, of course—particularly the Book of Mormon. This should also include the other modern-day revelations. These should be coupled with the words of the apostles and prophets and the promptings of the Spirit.

Alma “commanded them that they should teach nothing save it were the things which he had taught, and which had been spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets” (Mosiah 18:19).

The Doctrine and Covenants states, “Let them journey from thence preaching the word by the way, saying none other things than that which the prophets and apostles

I am deeply concerned about what we are doing to teach the Saints at all levels the gospel of Jesus Christ as completely and authoritatively as do the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants.

have written, and that which is taught them by the Comforter through the prayer of faith” (D&C 52:9).

Now, after we teach the great plan of the Eternal God, we must personally bear our testimonies of its truthfulness.

Alma, after giving a great message to the Saints about being born again and the need for them to experience a “mighty change” in their hearts, sealed his teaching with his testimony in these words:

“And this is not all. Do ye not suppose that I know of these things myself? Behold, I testify unto you that I do know that these things whereof I have spoken are true. And how do ye suppose that I know of their surety?”

“Behold, I say unto you they are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God. Behold, I have fasted and prayed many days that I might know these things of myself. And now I do know of myself that they are true; for the Lord God hath made them manifest unto me by his Holy Spirit; and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me” (Alma 5:45–46).

Later Amulek joined Alma as his missionary companion. After Alma had delivered to the Zoramites his message concerning faith in Christ, Amulek sealed with his testimony the message of his companion in these words:

“And now, behold, I will testify unto you of myself that these things are true. Behold, I say unto you, that I do know that Christ shall come among the children of men, to take upon him the transgressions of his people, and that he shall atone for the sins of the world; for the Lord God hath spoken it” (Alma 34:8).

In His preface to the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord said that the “voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in



After we teach the great plan of the Eternal God, we must personally bear our testimonies of its truthfulness.

these last days” (D&C 1:4).

The responsibility of the seed of Abraham, which we are, is to be missionaries to “bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations” (Abraham 2:9). Moses bestowed upon Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple the keys to gather Israel (see D&C 110:11).

Now, what is the instrument that God has designed for this gathering? It is the same instrument that is

designed to convince the world that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is His prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. It is that scripture which is the keystone of our religion.

It is that most correct book which, if men will abide by its precepts, will get them closer to God than any other book. It is the Book of Mormon (see Introduction to the Book of Mormon).

God bless us all to use all the scriptures, but in particular the instrument He designed to bring us to Christ—the Book of Mormon, the keystone of our religion—along with its companion volume, the capstone, the Doctrine and Covenants, the instrument to bring us to Christ’s kingdom, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . .

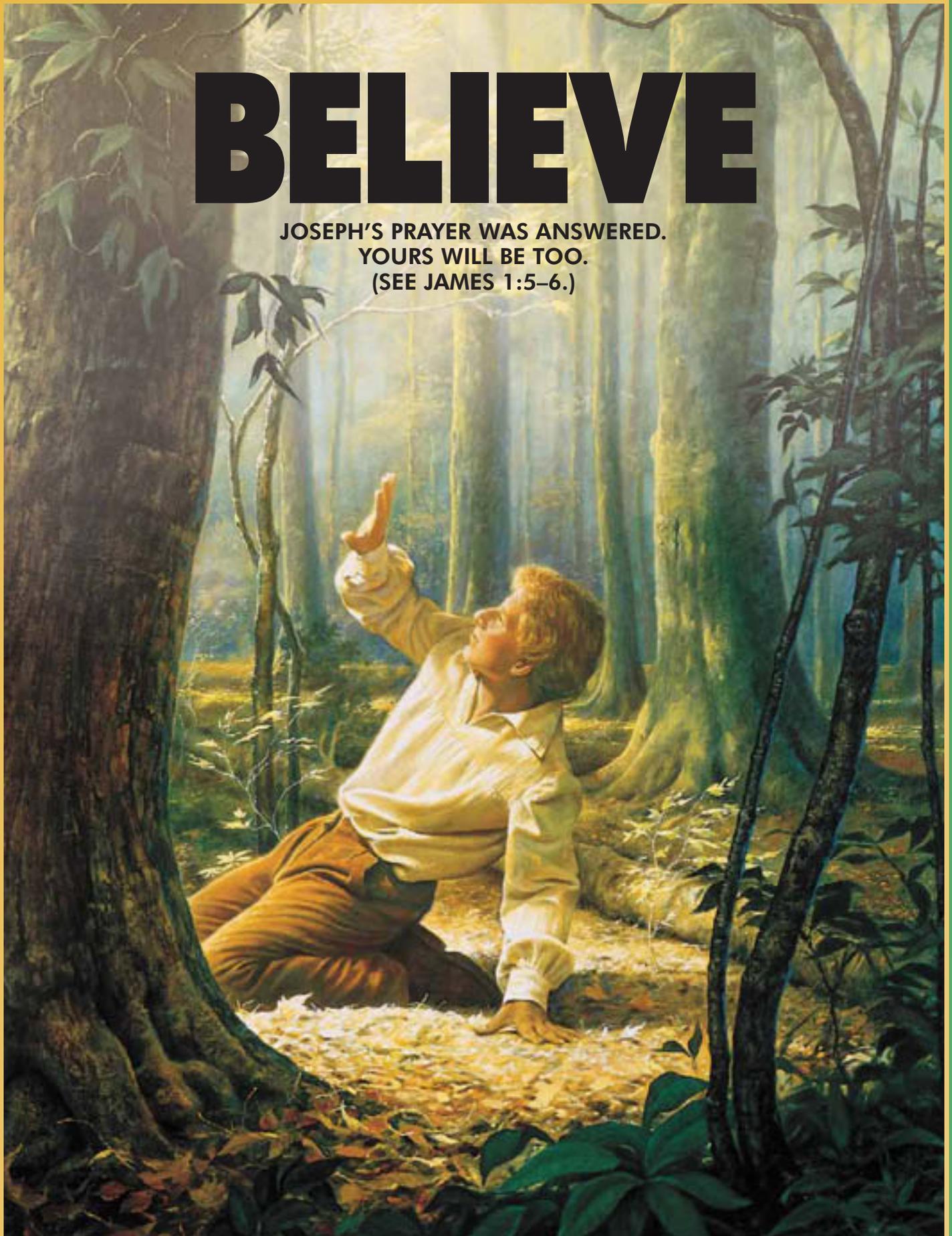
I promise you that as you more diligently study modern revelation on gospel subjects, your power to teach and preach will be magnified and you will so move the cause of Zion that added numbers will enter into the house of the Lord as well as the mission field.

I bless you with increased desire to flood the earth with the Book of Mormon, to gather out from the world the elect of God who are yearning for the truth but know not where to find it. ■

From an April 1987 general conference address; spelling and capitalization modernized.

BELIEVE

JOSEPH'S PRAYER WAS ANSWERED.
YOURS WILL BE TOO.
(SEE JAMES 1:5-6.)



JOSEPH SMITH'S FIRST VISION. © GREG OLSEN. MAY NOT BE COPIED

DATE (A.D.) 1 200 600 1000 1400 1500 1600 1700

34 A.D. After the death of Jesus Christ, the Apostles led the New Testament Church.

100–200 The Great Apostasy. Priesthood authority was taken from the earth (see 1 Nephi 13:1–11).

1620–1750 God led many European Protestants to North America in search of religious freedom (see 1 Nephi 13:13–16).

1450 Gutenberg refined movable type, allowing books to be widely available.

1500–1600 New translations of the Bible in English and other languages became available to large numbers of people (see 1 Nephi 13:20–23).

1492 The Spirit of God led Columbus to America (see 1 Nephi 13:12).

1517 Martin Luther and other reformers in Europe began to rebel against Catholicism.

1775–83 The Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution established a new nation dedicated to freedom and democracy (see 1 Nephi 13:17–19).

1787–91 The Constitution of the United States established religious liberty as a fundamental right.

300–1300 Christianity spread to many parts of the world.

SOME DATES ARE APPROXIMATE.

Doctrine and Covenants

TIMES AT A GLANCE

CHART 1: SECTIONS 1–64

See *Doctrine and Covenants* section headings for historical background and History of the Church references.



PEOPLE IN CHURCH HISTORY

DEC. 1805 Joseph Smith Jr. was born in Sharon, Vermont, to Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:3).



2

1816 The Smith family moved from Vermont to the Palmyra, New York, area.

SPRING 1820 The First Vision. God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, conversed with 14-year-old Joseph Smith in a grove near his father's farm (see Joseph Smith—History 1:5–20).



SEPT. 1823 The angel Moroni first appeared to Joseph Smith and told him of gold plates buried in a nearby hill. Moroni made additional visits (see Joseph Smith—History 1:29–54; see also D&C 2).

PALMYRA/ MANCHESTER New York

OCT. 1825 Joseph Smith began working for Josiah Stowell (or Stool). During his employment, he met Emma Hale (see Joseph Smith—History 1:55–57).

JAN. 1827 Joseph Smith and Emma Hale married in Bainbridge, New York (see Joseph Smith—History 1:57).



SEPT. 1827 Moroni entrusted the sacred plates and the Urim and Thummim to Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:59).

DEC. 1827 Joseph and Emma Smith moved to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to escape persecution (see Joseph Smith—History 1:60–62).

FEB. 1828 Martin Harris took copies of characters from the gold plates and their translation to scholars in New York City (see Joseph Smith—History 1:62–65; see also Isaiah 29:11–12).



APR.–JUNE 1828 Joseph Smith, with Martin Harris as scribe, finished translating the first 116 manuscript pages of the Book of Mormon. After Martin lost the pages, Moroni took the plates from Joseph.

3

10

SUMMER 1828 Joseph Smith repented and regained the plates and the gift to translate (see D&C 3; 10).

HARMONY Pennsylvania

Section number (see also circled numbers above), date the section was given, and situation that brought forth the revelation:

1. Nov. 1, 1831 A committee was appointed to draft a preface for a collection of revelations to be published as the Book of Commandments. When they made their report to the elders who had gathered for a conference, they requested the Prophet Joseph Smith to inquire of the Lord about their work. The Prophet dictated the words of this revelation by the Spirit, and Sidney Rigdon recorded it. (This entry appears on chart 2.)

2. Sept. 21, 1823 Confident of obtaining a divine manifestation, young Joseph Smith prayed for forgiveness of his sins and a knowledge of his standing before God.

3. July 1828 Following the loss by Martin Harris of 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript, Joseph Smith inquired through the Urim and Thummim to know his own standing with the Lord.

4. Feb. 1829 Joseph Smith Sr. asked his son

to inquire of the Lord concerning how Joseph Sr. could help in the Lord's work.

5. Mar. 1829 A repentant Martin Harris asked Joseph Smith if he was still in possession of the plates and wanted him to inquire of the Lord if Martin would be privileged to see them.

6. Apr. 1829 Joseph Smith's new scribe, Oliver Cowdery, desired an additional witness that the translation work was true. The Prophet inquired through the Urim and Thummim.

7. Apr. 1829 While Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were translating the plates, a difference of opinion arose concerning what had happened to John the Beloved. They inquired through the Urim and Thummim.

8. Apr. 1829 Having been promised the gift to translate (see D&C 6:25), Oliver Cowdery desired to assist in translating.

9. Apr. 1829 When Oliver Cowdery failed in his attempt to translate, Joseph Smith inquired of the Lord on Oliver's behalf to understand why.

10. Summer 1828 After Joseph Smith received section 3, Moroni took the plates and the Urim and Thummim. A short time later they were

returned. The Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord how to proceed with translation.

11. May 1829 Hyrum Smith asked Joseph, his brother, to ask the Lord's will for him. Joseph inquired through the Urim and Thummim.

12. May 1829 Joseph Knight Sr. was anxious to know his duty as to the work of the Restoration.

13. May 15, 1829 While translating the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery desired to know more about baptism for the remission of sins. They walked to a nearby river and prayed. John the Baptist appeared.

14, 15, 16. June 1829 David Whitmer, John Whitmer, and Peter Whitmer Jr. were anxious to know their duties concerning the work of the Lord. Joseph Smith inquired through the Urim and Thummim on their behalf.

17. June 1829 Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris wanted to know if they were to be the Three Witnesses spoken of in the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith inquired through the Urim and Thummim.

18. June 1829 Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were anxious to know more about



JOSEPH SMITH SR.
1771–1840



LUCY MACK SMITH
1775–1856



JOSEPH SMITH JR.
1805–44



EMMA HALE SMITH
1804–79



MARTIN HARRIS
1783–1875

CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

Fayette, New York: June 1829–Jan. 1831

4

5

6–9

11–12



13

14–16, 18

17

MAY 1829 John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery ordained and baptized each other (see Joseph Smith—History 1:68–73; see also D&C 13).

MAY–JUNE 1829 Peter, James, and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood and the keys of the apostleship.



JUNE 1829 Joseph Smith completed the translation of the Book of Mormon.

JUNE 1829 The angel Moroni showed the plates to the Three Witnesses and commanded them to testify of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon (see D&C 17).

JUNE 1829 Joseph Smith showed the plates to the Eight Witnesses. They wrote their testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

FAYETTE
New York



APR. 1830 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in Fayette, New York (see D&C 21).



APR.–JULY 1830 Samuel H. Smith and others labored as missionaries—using the Book of Mormon—and baptized many people.

MAR. 1830 Five thousand copies of the Book of Mormon were published in English in Palmyra, New York.

20–21

19

22–23

the priesthood and made it a matter of humble prayer.

19. Mar. 1830 Martin Harris had mortgaged his farm for the printing of the Book of Mormon. He asked Joseph Smith for reassurance and direction from the Lord.

20. Apr. 1830 The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery instructions on Church government and organization, including the precise day upon which they should organize His Church once more upon the earth.

21. Apr. 6, 1830 The Prophet Joseph Smith dictated this revelation by the Spirit during the meeting to organize the Church.

22. Apr. 1830 People who had previously been baptized wanted to know if they needed to be rebaptized in order to join the Church.

23. Apr. 1830 Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith, Joseph Smith Sr., and Joseph Knight Sr. were anxious to know their duties in the Lord's newly organized Church.

24. July 1830 After ministering to the members in New York during a time of intense persecution, the Prophet Joseph and Oliver Cowdery arrived in Pennsylvania in need of encouragement and instruction.

25. July 1830 Emma Hale Smith—along with her husband, the Prophet Joseph—had suffered much persecution. The Prophet received this revelation for her.

26. July 1830 These instructions from the Lord encouraged and instructed the Prophet Joseph, Oliver Cowdery, and the Whitmers, teaching them the importance of doing all things in the Church by common consent.

27. Aug. 1830 The Prophet Joseph and Emma Smith and Newel and Lydia Knight desired to partake of the sacrament. The Prophet went to procure wine for the service, and a heavenly messenger appeared to him.

28. Sept. 1830 The Prophet Joseph was concerned over Hiram Page's use of a seer stone.

29. Sept. 1830 Given in the presence of six elders, this revelation came at a time when many were interested in the doctrine of Zion, or the New Jerusalem.

30. Sept. 1830 The Prophet Joseph received revelations for David Whitmer, Peter Whitmer Jr., and John Whitmer based on their actions during the Hiram Page incident.

31. Sept. 1830 Thomas B. Marsh desired to know the will of the Lord concerning himself.

32. Oct. 1830 Several elders, including Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer Jr., wondered if the number of missionaries assigned to teach the gospel to the Lamanites could be increased.

33. Oct. 1830 Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet, newly ordained elders, desired to know the will of the Lord concerning them.

34. Nov. 4, 1830 Orson Pratt traveled 200 miles (320 km) to see the Prophet Joseph Smith and to learn the Lord's will for himself.

35. Dec. 1830 Sidney Rigdon, who had recently been baptized, asked the Prophet Joseph to reveal the Lord's will concerning him.

36. Dec. 1830 Edward Partridge asked the

Prophet Joseph to inquire of the Lord on his behalf.

37. Dec. 1830 The Church in New York had been under constant harassment, and the lives of Church leaders were in danger. As the Prophet Joseph and Sidney Rigdon worked on an inspired translation of the Bible, the Lord gave this commandment to move to Ohio.

38. Jan. 2, 1831 Many Saints were poor and desired to know more about the move to Ohio.

39. Jan. 5, 1831 James Covill, a Baptist minister for about 40 years, promised to obey any command the Lord gave him through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Prophet inquired of the Lord on his behalf.

40. Jan. 1831 When James Covill rejected the command of the Lord, the Lord gave this revelation to the Prophet Joseph and Sidney Rigdon.

41. Feb. 4, 1831 The Prophet Joseph found numerous problems among the Saints in Ohio. He inquired of the Lord to know how best to govern the Church.

42. Feb. 9, 1831 Elders united in prayer with the desire to receive the law of the Lord, as promised in D&C 38:32; 41:2–3.

43. Feb. 1831 A self-proclaimed prophetess named Mrs. Hubble deceived some Saints with her revelations. The Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord concerning the matter.

44. Feb. 1831 The Prophet Joseph and Sidney Rigdon received instructions from the Lord for the next conference of the Church.

45. Mar. 7, 1831 The Prophet Joseph received this revelation regarding the signs of the times



OLIVER COWDERY
1806–50



HYRUM SMITH
1800–44



JOSEPH KNIGHT SR.
1772–1847



DAVID WHITMER
1805–88



JOHN WHITMER
1802–78

JUNE 1830 The Prophet Joseph Smith began to translate (make inspired changes to) the Bible (see Moses 1–5).

SEPT.–OCT. 1830 Oliver Cowdery and others were called to teach the Lamanites (see D&C 28:8; 32).

OCT.–NOV. 1830 Missionaries visited the northeastern part of Ohio and baptized 127 people.

NOV.–DEC. 1830 The Prophet Joseph Smith received by revelation part of the ancient book of Enoch (see Moses 6–7).

FEB. 1831 The Prophet Joseph Smith and his family arrived in Kirtland, Ohio. Edward Partridge was called as the first bishop of the Church, and the Lord began to reveal the law of consecration (see D&C 41–42).

**KIRTLAND/
THOMPSON
Ohio**



FEB.–MAY 1831 Saints from the various branches in New York made the journey to the Kirtland, Ohio, area. People from towns around Kirtland joined the Church.



JULY–AUG. 1831 The Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon visited Missouri and dedicated the land as a place of gathering and a site for a temple (see D&C 57–59).

AUG. 1831 The Prophet Joseph Smith returned to Kirtland from Missouri. Opposition and apostasy continued.

SEPT. 1831 The Prophet Joseph and Emma Smith moved to Hiram, Ohio.

- 24–26
- 27
- 28–31
- 32–33
- 34
- 35–37
- 38–40



during a period when many false reports were published.

46. Mar. 8, 1831 Following discussions of whether only Church members should be admitted to sacrament and confirmation meetings, the Prophet inquired of the Lord.

47. Mar. 8, 1831 John Whitmer was reluctant to accept the responsibility for a history of the Church but would do it if it was the will of the Lord. The Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord.

48. Mar. 1831 Church leaders were concerned about how to accommodate the New York Saints who were arriving in Ohio. The Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord.

49. Mar. 1831 Because Lemam Copley, a former Shaker, had recently joined the Church, the Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord concerning some of the teachings of this religion.

50. May 1831 Several elders asked the Prophet Joseph to inquire of the Lord concerning strange spiritual manifestations among the Saints. After joining these elders in prayer, the Prophet dictated the Lord's answer.

51. May 1831 Bishop Edward Partridge sought direction on implementing the law of consecration on behalf of Saints arriving in Ohio.

52. June 7, 1831 Following a general conference when the first high priests were ordained, the Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord what the brethren should do until the next conference.

53. June 1831 Sidney Gilbert asked the Prophet Joseph to inquire of the Lord concerning Sidney's calling in the Church.

54. June 1831 When Lemam Copley broke his agreement to consecrate his land in Thompson, Ohio, the Prophet Joseph inquired what to do.

55. June 1831 William W. Phelps, a newspaper editor, asked the Prophet Joseph to inquire of the Lord concerning him.

56. June 1831 When Ezra Thayre was not ready to go to Missouri, Thomas B. Marsh, his traveling companion, asked the Prophet what to do.

57. July 20, 1831 Upon his arrival in Independence, Missouri, the Prophet Joseph sought the Lord for answers concerning the establishment of Zion in the last days and the temple to be built there.

58. Aug. 1, 1831 Many of the Saints arriving in Jackson County, Missouri, were anxious to know the will of the Lord concerning them.

59. Aug. 7, 1831 Following the funeral of Polly Knight, the Prophet Joseph sought assurance from the Lord concerning the Saints in Missouri.

60. Aug. 8, 1831 As missionaries prepared to return home to Ohio, the Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord about the trip.

61. Aug. 12, 1831 A canoe accident on the Missouri River caused the Prophet Joseph and 10 elders to make camp. William W. Phelps saw the destroyer riding in power upon the waters. The Prophet sought the Lord in prayer.

62. Aug. 13, 1831 The Prophet Joseph met four missionaries who were belatedly headed to Missouri and reaffirmed that they should continue their journey.

63. Aug. 1831 The Saints in Ohio desired to know more about the land of Zion. The Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord concerning the purchasing of land and other matters.

64. Sept. 11, 1831 After the Prophet Joseph was criticized by some associates and the press, the Lord warned against faultfinding.



PETER WHITMER JR.
1809–36



SAMUEL H. SMITH
1808–44



NEWEL KNIGHT
1800–47



SIDNEY RIGDON
1793–1876



EDWARD PARTRIDGE
1793–1840

TOP (FROM LEFT): THE RESTORATION OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD, BY KENNETH RILEY; JOHN THE BAPTIST APPEARING TO JOSEPH SMITH AND OLIVER COWDERY, © DEL PARSON, MAY NOT BE COPIED; EIGHT WITNESSES SEE THE GOLD PLATES, BY PAUL MANN, MAY NOT BE COPIED; ILLUSTRATION OF SAMUEL H. SMITH BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH—APRIL 6, 1830, BY DALE KILBOURN; SAINTS MOVE TO KIRTLAND, BY SAM LAWLOR, MAY NOT BE COPIED; DEDICATING THE TEMPLE LOT IN INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI, BY DALE KILBOURN; BOTTOM (FROM LEFT): HYRUM SMITH, BY LEWIS A. RAMSEY; DETAIL FROM JOSEPH SMITH AND JOSEPH KNIGHT AND SONS, BY PAUL MANN, MAY NOT BE COPIED; DAVID WHITMER, BY LEWIS A. RAMSEY; PETER WHITMER, BY WILLIAM WHITAKER; SAMUEL H. SMITH, BY BRAD TEARE; DETAIL FROM JOSEPH SMITH AND JOSEPH KNIGHT AND SONS, BY PAUL MANN, MAY NOT BE COPIED



David O. McKay

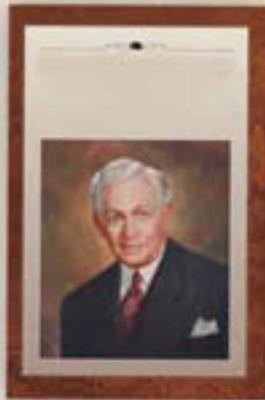
AMBASSADOR OF THE FAITH

President McKay reached out to the world during his 19 years as Church President. During those years Church membership nearly tripled.

BY WADE MURDOCK

On a rainy morning in 1953, 79-year-old President David O. McKay visited Thurso, Scotland, to see the home where his forebears had embraced the restored gospel more than 100 years earlier. President McKay's son Llewelyn, who accompanied him on this visit, recalled: "[As we approached the home], the sun broke through the clouds and smiled at us as though he were reflecting the joy and happiness in father's heart. As we all gathered in front of the home, tears came to father's eyes as he looked through the door. 'If it had not been for two missionaries knocking on this door about 1850, I shouldn't be here today!'" he declared.¹

Even though the home had fallen into disrepair and was by that time used only to store potatoes, President McKay lingered for some time in the doorway, speaking fondly of what had happened there. The gratitude and joy President McKay expressed that day were characteristic of his life and ministry. As a General Authority for almost 64 years, including 19 years as the ninth President of the Church, he served with the energy of one who cared deeply for people and for the gospel and found joy in bringing the two together.



Righteous Parents

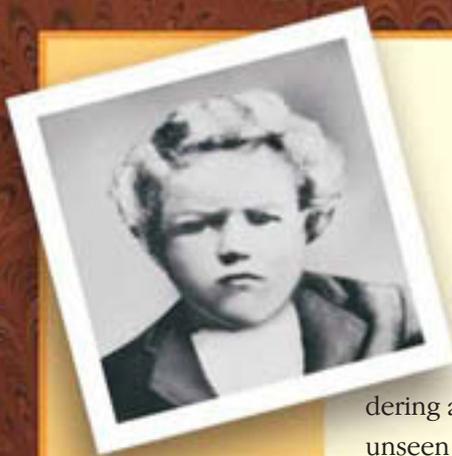
Born on September 8, 1873, in Huntsville, Utah, David Oman McKay was the first son of David McKay and Jennette Evans McKay. When the younger David was just seven years old, his father accepted a mission call to serve in Scotland—even though at the time Sister McKay was expecting a baby and had only her young son to help on the farm. Her encouragement was undoubtedly a key factor. As soon as she read the

missionary call letter, she said: "Of course you must accept; you need not worry about me. David O. and I will manage things nicely."²

Under Jennette's direction the farm did well. Strong spiritual growth paralleled the temporal prosperity the family experienced during David Sr.'s mission. "Family prayer was an established procedure in the McKay home, and when Jennette was left alone with her small family it seemed an ever more important part of the day's events. David [O.] was taught to take his turn at morning and evening prayers and learned the importance of the blessings of heaven in the home."³

In a general conference address many years later, President McKay related the following childhood experience with prayer:

"I remember lying [in bed] one night, trembling with



Above: Young David O. McKay in 1877.

Below: The David Sr. and Jennette McKay family, 1897. David O. is standing, second from left. Right: Elder McKay during his mission to the British Isles, 1898.

fear. As a child I was naturally, or unnaturally afraid of the darkness, and would frequently lie wondering about burglars, ‘bug-a-boos,’ and unseen influences. So I lay this night completely unnerved; but I had been taught that God would answer prayer. Summoning strength I arose from the bed, knelt down in the darkness, and prayed to God to remove that feeling of fear; and I heard as plainly as you hear my voice this afternoon, ‘Don’t be afraid; nothing will hurt you.’ Oh, yes, some may say—‘simply the imagination.’ Say what you will, I know that to my soul came the sweet peace of a child’s prayer answered.”⁴

His father’s teachings and example were as powerful as his mother’s. On one occasion David O. McKay, his brothers, and his father were harvesting hay. When the time arrived to gather the tenth load, which was to be given to the Church as tithing, David McKay Sr. told the boys to move to a better spot than where they had gathered the previous

nine loads. When young David O. questioned this instruction, his father said, “That is the *tenth* load, and the best is none too good for God.” Years later David O. McKay referred to this experience as the “most effective sermon on tithing I have ever heard in my life.”⁵

President McKay’s understanding of his parents’ influence deepened as he grew older. When he taught Church members about the importance of family and home, personal experience framed his teachings:

“[The] realization of mother’s love, with a loyalty to the precepts of an exemplary father, . . . more than once during youth, turned my steps from the precipice of temptation.

“If I were asked to name the world’s greatest need, I should say unhesitatingly *wise mothers*; and the second, *exemplary fathers*.”⁶

Developing a Love for Teaching and Learning

As a youth and young adult, David O. McKay demonstrated tremendous ability in



many areas, including scholarship, athletics, music, public speaking, and leadership. While choosing his greatest talent is arguably an impossible task, teaching ranks near the top.

In 1889, at the age of 15, he was called as the Sunday School secretary in his ward, a position he held for four years until he was called as a Sunday School teacher. Concurrent with his work as a Sunday School teacher, he served as a teacher and principal at the Huntsville grade school—before receiving a university education.

Already having a great deal of practical experience, he attended the University of Utah from 1894 to 1897, graduating as valedictorian with an offer to teach in Salt Lake County. Following graduation, however, he received another opportunity to teach; he was called to serve a mission to the British Isles, a calling he fulfilled from 1897 to 1899.

His proselyting experiences included numerous open-air meetings in which he and other missionaries preached the gospel on street corners or other public places and distributed tracts, or pamphlets, to those who would accept them. As his missionary journal attests, each meeting proved a unique experience. Following one particularly difficult open-air gathering, Elder McKay recorded, “I have heaved a *thousand* sighs!” After a more promising meeting, he wrote: “Had several interesting conversations. Nearly everyone who took a tract last week seemed pleased to accept this one. Several asked when we would hold another meeting.”⁷

In 1898, while supervising missionary work in Scotland, he prepared an article for a local Glasgow newspaper to refute slanderous information the newspaper had published about the Church. In this instance and in similar circumstances he would encounter as a mission president 20 years later, his letters to the editor succeeded because of their mild tone and well-reasoned teachings.⁸

Shortly after he was released from his mission, he began serving as a member of the Weber Stake Sunday School board. He was assigned to reorganize and revitalize



classwork by working with teachers and revising teaching materials. After six years of service in the Weber Stake, he became second assistant to the general superintendent of Sunday Schools, who at that time was President Joseph F. Smith. He became first assistant in 1909 and in 1918 was made superintendent.

During his early efforts with the Sunday School, he worked in the public schools as well. He taught at the Weber Stake Academy in Ogden, Utah, a school now known as Weber State University, and he was later appointed principal of the academy. One of his students, Joseph Anderson—later a member of the Seventy—recalled: “We all fell in love with him. And he became so absorbed in his subject that he wouldn’t even hear the bell ring sometimes.”⁹

He strongly believed that all education should foster Christian character. “True education,” he said, “seeks to make men and women not only good mathematicians, proficient linguists, profound scientists, or brilliant literary lights, but also, honest men, with virtue, temperance, and brotherly love. It seeks to make men and women who prize truth, justice, wisdom, benevolence, and self-control as the choicest acquisitions of a successful life.”¹⁰

His gospel teaching continued throughout his life, but his formal, full-time work with the public schools ended in 1906, when he was called to be an Apostle at age 32.



Above: The McKays while serving in the European Mission, 1922–24. Below: The First Presidency, 1951—President McKay (center); Stephen L Richards, First Counselor (left); and J. Reuben Clark Jr., Second Counselor (right). Right: The McKays in Holland in 1952 with mission president Donovan H. VanDam (right) and his wife, Ada (left).

Husband and Father

David O. McKay’s marriage to Emma Ray Riggs on January 2, 1901, was a source of joy to him. It became an example to everyone. In teaching about success-

ful marriages, President McKay declared:

“I should like to urge *continued courtship*, and apply this to grown people. Too many couples have come to the altar of marriage looking upon the marriage ceremony as the end of courtship instead of the beginning of an eternal courtship. Let us not forget that during the burdens of home life—and they come—that tender words of appreciation, courteous acts are even more appreciated than during those sweet days and months of courtship.”¹¹

President McKay lived this counsel—composing love poems for his wife on her birthday, holding the car door open for her, and greeting and bidding her farewell with an affectionate kiss. Once when President and Sister McKay were traveling through California, a young boy who had been watching them approached her and said, pointing to President McKay, “I guess that man over there loves you.”¹²

The seven McKay children benefited from their parents’ righteousness and love for one another. One of their sons, David Lawrence McKay, recalled: “Our parents’ expectations provided the path for us to follow, and our love for them provided an

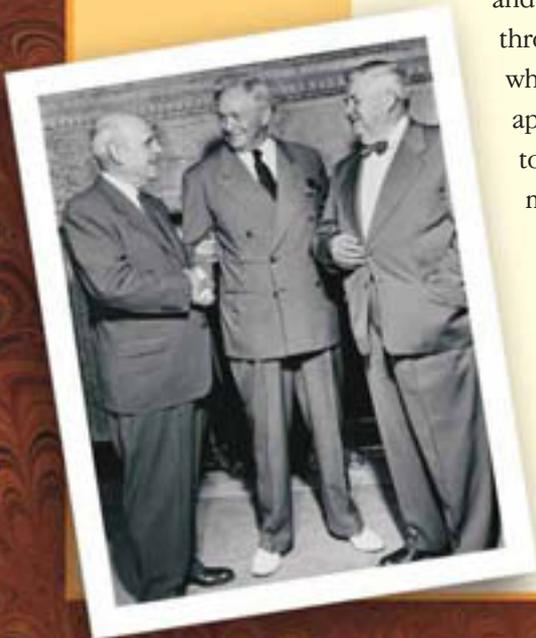
irresistible motivation for us to walk that path. We learned to love them because they first dearly loved each other and us.”¹³

Service in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency

Called as an Apostle in April 1906, Elder McKay gave his first general conference address in the concluding session of October conference that year. In words that reflected his desire to serve, he said, “As members of the Church . . . , I believe that we ought to go home determined to carry out the responsibility that is upon us, not merely because these brethren have urged us to do so, but because we have it in our souls to do it.”¹⁴

In 1920, at the age of 47, Elder McKay was called by the First Presidency to spend one year visiting and strengthening branches and missions of the Church around the world. This journey in many ways foreshadowed the global emphasis of his presidency. He and his companion, Hugh J. Cannon, president of the Liberty Stake in Salt Lake City, traveled approximately 60,000 miles (95,000 km) and gained knowledge that helped prepare the Church for further worldwide growth.

Shortly after returning from his yearlong mission, he was called to take his family to England to preside over the European Mission. In fulfilling this calling, “every member a missionary” became his refrain. He taught: “[Every member] has the responsibility of bringing somebody: a mother, a father, a neighbor, a fellow worker, an associate, somebody in touch with the messengers of the gospel. . . . And personal contact is what will influence those investigators. . . . It’s what you are, not what you pretend to be that will bring people to investigate.”¹⁵



In 1934 he was called to serve in the First Presidency as a counselor to President Heber J. Grant. In 1945 he was called as a counselor to President George Albert Smith. During these years he gained valuable experience and carried a substantial administrative and ecclesiastical load.

In the spring of 1951 President and Sister McKay left Salt Lake City for a much needed vacation. However, on their first night away, President McKay awoke with a distinct impression that they should return to Church headquarters, which they did the next morning. Within a few weeks President Smith suffered a stroke and passed away.¹⁶

Prophet and President of a Worldwide Church

In April 1951, having already served in the First Presidency for 17 years, David O. McKay became the ninth President of the Church. At that time the Church had just over one million members and eight operating temples (all in the United States, Hawaii, and Canada).

President McKay was determined to see the Church continue to grow around the world. Missionary work was key to this effort. In 1952 the First Presidency introduced the first official proselyting outline for full-time missionaries. In 1961

President McKay convened the first worldwide seminar for all mission presidents, who were taught the importance of example and fellowshiping in missionary work. He emphasized the concept of “every member a missionary.”

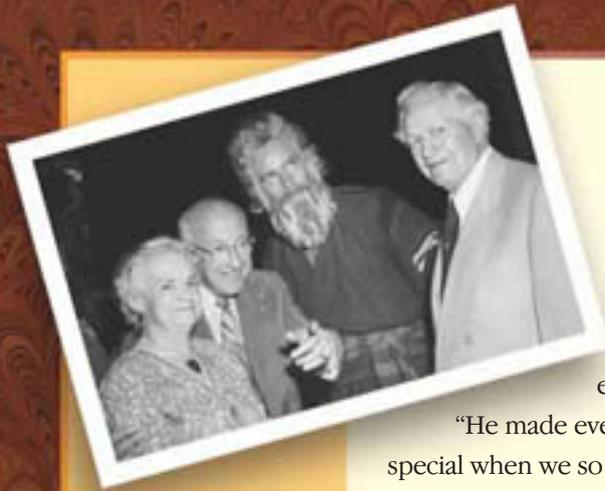
President McKay felt that personally strengthening the Saints around the world was another key to Church growth. In a conference address as President of the Church, he declared: “God bless the Church. It is worldwide. Its influence should be felt by all nations. May his spirit influence men everywhere and incline their hearts toward good will and peace.”¹⁷ Between 1952 and 1963, he visited the Saints in Europe several times and made trips to South Africa, South America, and the South Pacific.

He also desired to make the blessings of the temple available to more members of the Church. During his service as President, he dedicated temples in Bern, Switzerland; Los Angeles, California; Hamilton, New Zealand; London, England; and Oakland, California. He wrote, “I want to bring the temple to the people,” firmly believing that “one of the distinguishing features of the restored Church of Jesus Christ is the eternal nature of its ordinances and ceremonies.”¹⁸

Around the world President McKay was regarded as an important spiritual leader. During a visit with the Queen of the Netherlands in 1952, President and Sister McKay were invited to have tea. When the McKays declined for religious reasons, the queen asked, “Do you mean to tell me you won’t have a little drink of tea, even with the Queen of the Netherlands?” President McKay responded, “Would [you] ask the leader of a million, three hundred thousand people to do something that he teaches his people not to do?” She replied, “You are a great man, President McKay. I wouldn’t ask you to do that.”¹⁹

Church members loved to hear President McKay speak and simply to be in his presence. Despite his many duties, he often remained after meetings until he had shaken each person’s hand. One member who attended the dedication of the London England Temple recalled “standing





Above: President and Sister McKay on the set of the motion picture *The Ten Commandments* with filmmaker Cecil B. DeMille and actor Charlton Heston (in costume as Moses), 1955. Below right: President McKay in his later years. Hugh B. Brown said of him, “President McKay has lived as nearly as it is humanly possible for a man to live a Christ-like life.”

in endless lines” to greet the prophet but eventually having her turn.

“He made every single one of us feel special when we so easily could have been just one of hundreds,” she said.²⁰

President McKay’s health began to decline in the 1960s, and additional counselors were called to the First Presidency to help carry forth the work. However, he continued to strengthen members with his conference talks, sometimes delivered in person and sometimes read by one of his sons.

At the time of his death in January 1970, Church membership had reached almost three million. Of this man who had taught so tirelessly of family, self-mastery, character, missionary work, and faith in Jesus Christ, President Joseph Fielding Smith, who succeeded President McKay as Church President, said: “He was a man of great spiritual strength, a natural-born leader of men, and a man beloved by his people and honored by the world. For all time to come men shall rise up and call his name blessed.”²¹

President Hugh B. Brown, who served as First Counselor to President McKay, summed up his life: “President McKay has lived as nearly as it is humanly possible for a man to live a Christ-like life. He found that the answer to the yearning of the human heart for fullness lies in living outside oneself by love. He proved the truth of Christ’s paradoxical saying, ‘He that will lose his life for My sake shall find it.’ He was a true servant of the Lord. He lived as he taught.”²² ■

Wade Murdock is a member of the South Jordan Third Ward, South Jordan Utah Stake.

NOTES

1. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay* (2003), 49.
2. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, xiv.
3. Jeanette McKay Morrell, quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, xiv.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 29.
5. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, xv.
6. Llewelyn R. McKay, *Home Memories of President David O. McKay* (1956), 4.
7. David Lawrence McKay, *My Father, David O. McKay* (1989), 18, 24.
8. See *My Father, David O. McKay*, 29.
9. See *My Father, David O. McKay*, 36.
10. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, xix–xx.
11. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 149.
12. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 143.
13. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 153.
14. In Conference Report, Oct. 1906, 112.
15. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 53.
16. See Francis M. Gibbons, *David O. McKay: Apostle to the World, Prophet of God* (1986), 272–73.
17. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, xxxvi.
18. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 126.
19. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 103.
20. See *My Father, David O. McKay*, 259–60.
21. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, xxviii.
22. “God Makes a Giant among Men,” *Church News*, Jan. 24, 1970, 13.



Rejoice in the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Prayerfully select and read from this message the scriptures and teachings that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Share your experiences and testimony. Invite those you teach to do the same.

Joseph Smith—History 1:18–19:

“I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right. . . . I was answered that I must join none of them.”

Why Is the Restoration Such a Glorious Event?

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Following the Crucifixion of Christ an apostasy occurred. Leaders began to ‘teach for doctrines the commandments of men’ [Joseph Smith—History 1:19]. They lost the keys of authority and closed themselves off from the channels of revelation. That lost authority could not just be repossessed. It had to be restored by those who held the keys of authority anciently” (“The Standard of Truth Has Been Erected,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 24).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “After centuries of darkness and pain and struggle, the time was ripe for the restoration of the gospel. . . . That glorious day dawned in the year 1820, when a boy, earnest and with faith, walked into a grove of trees

and lifted his voice in prayer. . . .

“There came in response a glorious manifestation. God the Eternal Father and the risen Lord Jesus Christ appeared and spoke with him. The curtains which had been closed for much of two millennia were parted to usher in the dispensation of the fulness of times. . . .

“. . . Do you recognize our place in the great drama of human history? This is the focal point of all that has gone before. This is the season of restitution. These are the days of restoration” (“At the Summit of the Ages,” *Liabona*, Jan. 2000, 88–89; *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 73–74).

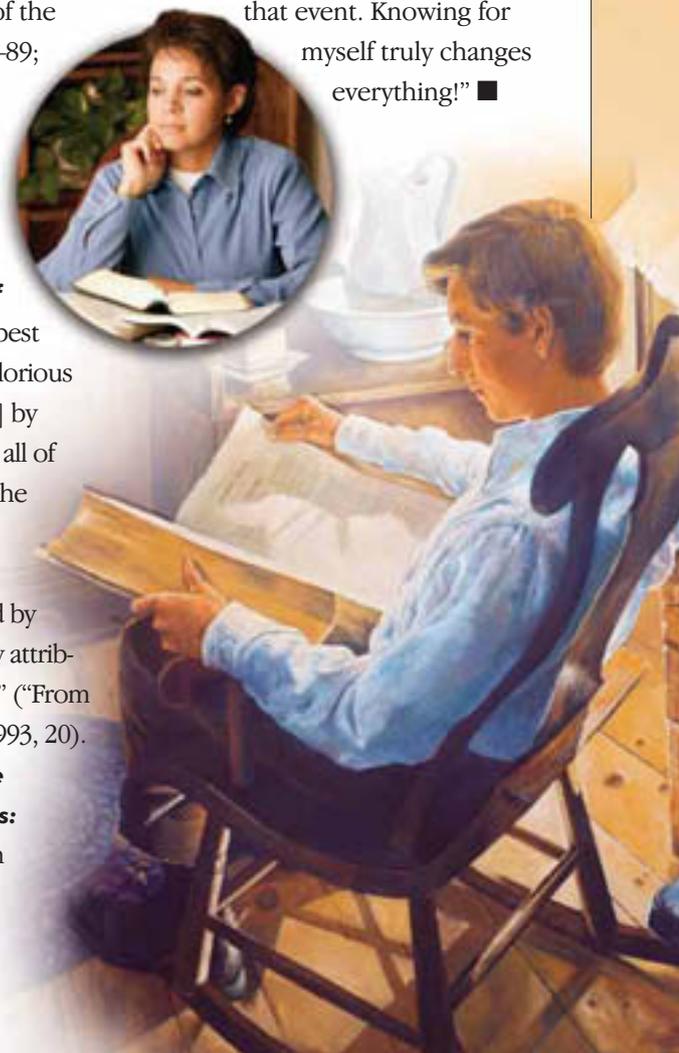
How Can You Rejoice in the Restoration?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We can best express our gratitude for this glorious fulness [of the restored gospel] by developing a more full love for all of humankind. And why not, for the Restoration tells us who our neighbors really are! Let our gratitude likewise be expressed by striving to become, attribute by attribute, more and more as Jesus is” (“From the Beginning,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 20).

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Follow the example of Joseph Smith and the pattern of the

Restoration. Turn to the scriptures. Kneel in prayer. Ask in faith. Listen to the Holy Ghost. Learn that your name and needs are known by our Heavenly Father, just as Joseph’s were. Live the gospel with patience and persistence” (“Receiving a Testimony of the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 31).

Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president: “Few miracles compare with the miracle of the Restoration. In fact, many emanate from the Restoration. I’ve taught discussions with sister missionaries. I’ve heard them tell this simple story of Joseph Smith time and time again. And the Spirit has never failed to bear witness to me of the reality of that event. Knowing for myself truly changes everything!” ■



Falling Out of *Love*... and Climbing Back In

The key to fixing my marriage was to learn to see my husband as the Savior saw him.

NAME WITHHELD

By worldly standards falling in love is an easy thing to do. Unfortunately, falling out of love can be easy as well. But falling back into love after falling out is extremely difficult. People don't *fall* back into love; they *climb* back in. This can be a long, difficult journey, but it is extremely rewarding. I know from experience.

"Heavenly Father, I don't know what to do!" I had stormed out of the house after a particularly nasty argument with my husband. It was November and very cold. I left without shoes or a coat, but I was so upset I hardly noticed. Our marriage wasn't physically abusive, but it seemed we fought all the time—or at least whenever he was home, which wasn't very often. He stayed late at work almost every day and seemed to spend the rest of his time at the golf course. I couldn't blame him. Home was just as miserable for him as it was for me. So there I was in the cold, wearing just a thin T-shirt and jeans, pouring out my misery to Heavenly Father. As I prayed I realized I no longer loved my husband. I didn't particularly like him either.

It seemed I had two options. I could leave and get a divorce, or I could stay and be miserable. Neither option

seemed very inviting. If I left, my marriage would fail and I would have to give up my hope for an eternal family. I would force my children to suffer because of my decision, and they would spend their childhood in a home with only one parent.

On the other hand, if I stayed, I would be ignoring the fact that we were failing anyway. I would not have an eternal family, because we certainly weren't heading toward the celestial kingdom. I would be forcing my children to live in a very unhappy home because Mom and Dad didn't like each other and could barely look at one another without taking offense.

"Heavenly Father," I prayed, "neither choice is good. Please tell me what to do."

That's when a new thought entered my mind. The right choice was one I had ignored. I could stay, love Mark (name has been changed), and be happy. That seemed a much better choice. Although I had no idea how I was to accomplish such a thing, the thought of having my happy family back made me feel I could turn around and go home.

During the next few weeks I tried to *fall* back in love with Mark but found only frustration. My best efforts seemed to fail. I tried to be nicer to him. But when I cooked him a fancy dinner I knew he liked, he showed up late. When I did small things for him that I thought showed love, he didn't notice, which upset me even



ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID W. MEIKLE

more. Despite all my efforts, he didn't experience the miraculous transformation I was hoping for. After three weeks I was closer to giving up than ever before.

I returned to Heavenly Father in prayer. I'm ashamed to say it wasn't the most humble of prayers. "It won't work," I informed Him. "Mark's too much of a jerk. I can't love him if he's not willing to help me out a little. I tried and it didn't work.

"Can't You help me?" I asked. "Can't You make him a little nicer? Could You please just fix him?"

Almost at once came the strong impression: "Fix *yourself*."

"I'm not the problem," I thought. I was

sure of that. I started listing all Mark's terrible traits that just couldn't be overlooked and that were, most definitely, the problem.

Again inside my troubled mind I felt, "Fix yourself."

"OK," I prayed more humbly now, "I will but I don't know how. Please guide me. Please tell me what to do."

Each day I prayed, pleading with the Lord to guide me. I knelt in many lengthy prayers, informing Him how important this was, trying to convince Him to help me, but it seemed nothing came.

Insight finally arrived through our Gospel Doctrine teacher. During class we read Moroni 7:47-48: "But charity is the pure love of Christ.

It seemed I had two options. I could leave and get a divorce, or I could stay and be miserable. Neither option seemed very inviting. Then the Lord provided a third choice.

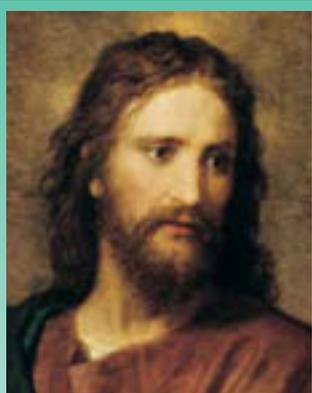
... Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ."

We discussed what charity is. It is love that Jesus Christ has for each of us. I learned that the Savior knows what is good in each of us. He can find something worthy of loving in every person.

The teacher referred us back to the scriptures. "It says in verse 48 that charity is a gift from the Father that is bestowed on you. Charity is not something you can develop on your own. It must be given to you. So there's a neighbor who makes you angry or someone you don't like. What's the problem? The problem is you don't have charity, the pure love of Christ, toward him or her. How do you get it? You need to 'pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart' and ask Him to give you charity toward that person. You need to ask to see that person through the Savior's eyes so you will be able to see him or her as good and lovable."

This was my answer. If I could see Mark from the Savior's perspective, I couldn't help but love him. It seemed such an easy thing to do, much easier than anything I had tried so far. I would just ask for charity, God would give it to me, and that would solve my problem. But I should have known Heavenly Father would require at least a little work from me.

I knelt in prayer that night and asked for charity toward my husband. I asked to feel a portion of the love that Jesus Christ felt for Mark, to see the good things about him that He could see. Then the thought came to me very strongly that I should already know good things about Mark and I should name them. I thought for a long time. I hadn't focused on good things in quite a while. Finally I said, "He looked nice today." I was prompted to say another thing. "He takes out the garbage when I ask." Another. "He works



If I could see Mark from the Savior's perspective, I couldn't help but love him. It seemed such an easy thing to do. But I should have known Heavenly Father would require at least a little work from me. People don't fall back into love; they climb back in.

hard." Another. "He's good with the kids." Another. I couldn't think of anything else.

The next night before bed I asked for charity and was again prompted to say good things about Mark. This was hard work. I wasn't used to focusing on the positive. I was used to cataloging all his faults so I could correct them.

I soon realized I would be saying good things about him each night for a while and decided it would be infinitely easier if I paid attention throughout the day. The next day I watched closely and came up with 10 good things about him—a new record! This became my goal: 10 good things before I went to bed. On good days it was easy. On bad days the last three were along the lines of "His hair looked good" or "I liked the jeans he wore." But I did it every night.

After a while I started making myself name 10 positive things each time I had a negative thought. With those odds, I didn't

let myself dwell on Mark's faults very often.

Slowly something wonderful was happening. First, I began to realize that Mark wasn't the big jerk I thought he was. He had many wonderful traits that I had overlooked or forgotten. Second, in the absence of my nagging, Mark started fixing a lot of the bad habits I had hounded him about for so long. As soon as I stopped feeling I had to be responsible for his actions, he started taking the responsibility upon himself. I was enjoying my time with Mark, and there was more of it because he stopped working so many hours.

We had come so far, but there was still one problem: I felt no love for Mark. It just wasn't there. I longed for that feeling of connection, the feeling that we belonged together. I had been praying every day for five months now, asking to feel the love that Christ felt for him. I pleaded with God even harder to give me love for Mark. "I am happy with our progress," I told Him. "Our family is much stronger than

ever before. If this is the best I can have, I will be satisfied. But if I could just love Mark, even a little, that would be the most cherished blessing I could receive.”

I remember vividly the moment that blessing was bestowed. We were playing games at my parents’ house one evening. I looked across the table at Mark, and suddenly, out of the blue, the strongest, most vibrant, most intense love I had ever felt hit me almost like a physical force. My eyes welled up with tears, and I was awed by the strength of my feelings. There, sitting across from me, was my eternal companion, whom I loved more than words could express. His

infinite worth was so brilliant I couldn’t believe I had ever been able to overlook it. I felt to some degree what the Savior felt for *my* Mark, and it was beautiful.

It has been several years since that special evening, and the memory still brings tears to my eyes. It’s frightening to think I almost gave up, almost missed this experience.

My marriage is very good now—not perfect, but very, very good. I refuse to let my love slip away again. I make a conscious effort each day to nourish the love I have for Mark. And I feel the deepest gratitude to a patient, loving Heavenly Father for helping me fix myself. ■





STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, MALE AND FEMALE

*A continuing series giving insights for your study and use of
“The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”*

“All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.”¹

In the Beginning

“Man was also in the beginning with God,” the Lord declared. “Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be” (D&C 93:29).

Little has been revealed about the process by which we became spirit children of God,



but we understand that heavenly parents organized spirit bodies for us and that these spirit bodies housed intelligence, or light and truth, which “is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself” (D&C 93:30). Thus, agency, the ability and liberty of intelligent beings to choose between one course and another—with the attendant accountability—is an eternal principle.

Offspring of God

Many religions teach that human beings are children of God, but often their conception of Him precludes any kind of bond resembling a parent-child relationship. The

Prophet Joseph Smith taught of a much simpler and more sensible relationship: “God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit . . . was to make himself visible . . . , you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with Him, as one man talks and communes with another.”²

We are of God’s family. We are His sons and daughters, created in the image of heavenly parents. “No greater ideal has been revealed,” taught President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “than the supernal truth that we are the children of God, and we differ, by virtue of our creation, from all other living things. (See Moses 6:8–10, 22, 59.) No idea has been more *destructive* of happiness, no philosophy has produced more sorrow, more heartbreak and mischief; no idea has done more to destroy the family than the idea that we are not the offspring of God, only advanced animals, compelled to yield to every carnal urge.”³

Gender Is Eternal and Essential

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught that our creation as male and female children of God “was done spiritually in your premortal existence when you lived in the presence of your Father in Heaven. Your gender existed before you came to earth.”⁴

Gender is part of our eternal identity and is necessary for our eternal progression. President Packer explained: “The plan of happiness requires the righteous union of male and female, man and woman, husband and wife. . . . A body patterned after the image of God was created for Adam, and he was introduced into the Garden. At first, Adam was alone. . . . But alone, he could not fulfill the purposes of his creation.



N*o idea has done more to destroy the family than the idea that we are not the offspring of God.”*

No other man would do. Neither alone nor with other men could Adam progress. Nor could Eve with another woman. It was so then. It is so today. Eve, an help meet, was created. Marriage was instituted.”⁵

Agency and Same-Gender Attraction

Confusion about gender issues is rampant today. Some men and women experience same-sex attraction—a great trial for those who desire to be obedient to God’s commandments. Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has addressed this issue: “[Satan] seeks to undermine the principle of individual accountability, to persuade us to misuse our sacred powers of procreation, to discourage marriage and childbearing by worthy men and women, and to confuse what it means to be male or female. . . . Some kinds of feelings seem to be inborn. Others are traceable to mortal experiences. Still other feelings seem to be acquired from a complex interaction of ‘nature and nurture.’ All of us have some feelings we did not choose, but the gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us that we still have the power to resist and reform our feelings (as needed) and to assure that they do not lead us to entertain inappropriate thoughts or to engage in sinful behavior.”⁶

The trials of mortality are not easy, nor are they intended to be. But whatever our struggles, we can call upon divine doctrine, the power of the Atonement, and the Holy Spirit for help and comfort.

We can remember that we are God’s sons and daughters, that He created us in His image, and that His plan prepares us for life eternal. If we obey His commandments, He will not withhold from us any of the blessings He has promised. ■

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. *History of the Church*, 6:305.
3. “Our Moral Environment,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 67.
4. “The Joy of Living the Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 73.
5. “For Time and All Eternity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 21.
6. “Same-Gender Attraction,” *Liabona*, Mar. 1996, 15, 17; *Ensign*, Oct. 1995, 8–9.

Valiant in Venezuela

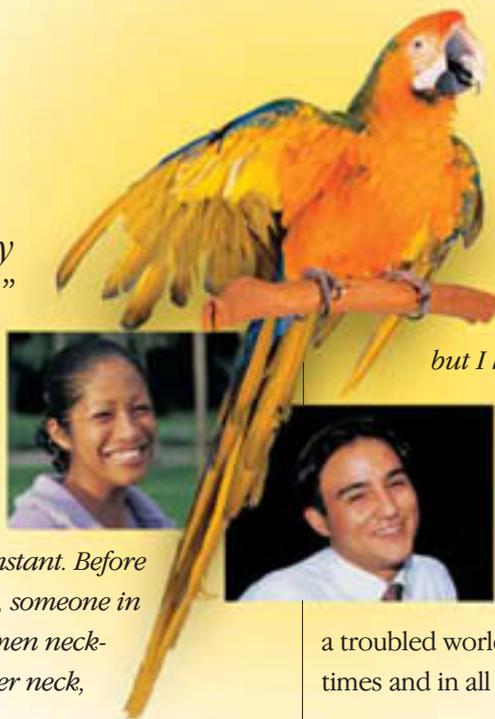
These young men and young women are truly “standing as witnesses.”

BY MARVIN K. GARDNER
Church Magazines

Rubí’s necklace. *It started out as an ordinary day. But the routine of Rubí’s daily trip to high school was shattered in an instant. Before she realized what was happening, someone in the crowd grabbed the Young Women necklace she was wearing, tore it off her neck, and disappeared into the crowd.*

Rubí found herself trembling with fright. How could someone have invaded her privacy and ripped away something so precious? Although the thief had snatched her necklace, he hadn’t taken away what was even more precious—the standards and values the necklace represented. Soon after the incident, Rubí got another Young Women necklace. “I always wear it,” she says. “If someone steals it again . . . I’ll buy another one!”

Jimmy’s refusal. *One evening when Jimmy went with friends to a party, “a girl came up and offered me alcohol,” he says. “I said no and didn’t pay any attention to her, but she kept offering it to me. And it wasn’t just*



alcohol—there were invitations to do other things. I didn’t agree to any of it, and I pulled away from the group. Some of the kids said I was antisocial, but I knew I couldn’t stay there. Every time I have a trial like this and overcome it, I become stronger.”

Rubí Cornejo, 17, and Jimmy Flórez, 17, both of Caracas, are two of many valiant Latter-day Saint youth in Venezuela who are finding ways in

a troubled world “to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9).

Maintaining Standards

“We have pretty tough challenges at school,” says David Javier Franco, 17, of Caracas. “But we have been taught to be like Joseph in Egypt. Joseph stayed away from evil things. When Potiphar’s wife tempted him to do something that wasn’t right, he got out of there! He fled from her! We can have the same strength he had.”

Praying and studying the scriptures aren’t new or original ways to stay strong, but they’re effective. “I live in a part of town where I’m the only member of the Church,” says Fátima Moutinho, 15, of Barcelona, “and every Sunday there are parties and lots of drinking. There are great

temptations to miss church. But the gospel has helped me be faithful and steadfast. When concerns and temptations are having an effect on me, the first thing I do is pray and read the scriptures.”

The Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God and Young Women Personal Progress programs are also essential tools in maintaining standards. “Our leaders have taught us not to just set a goal—but to reach the goal and then keep on going and never be done,” says Fátima. “So we are trying to progress each day.”

It takes courage to stand up for your standards. “Every time I do,” says Norelia Reyes, 17, of Caracas, “I discover something about myself—that I do have courage to say no and reject things that are not right. I think, ‘Wow, I have potential!’ And I feel joy.”

Being an Example

When you’re the only member of the Church in your school, it can be difficult to find friends with your values. But it’s not impossible. And others may choose to follow your lead.

Rubí Cornejo and Jimmy Flórez (far left) join youth in Parque del Este (East Park) in Caracas (below). Standing: Adriana Angulo, Mariela Ruiz, Luciano Fernández, Rubí Cornejo, Enrique López, and Norelia Reyes. Kneeling: Jimmy Flórez, David Javier Franco, and Gerald José López.



At an old fortress overlooking the Caribbean Sea, youth from Barcelona and Puerto La Cruz talk about building their testimonies on a strong foundation. From left: Ebert Sifontes, Ingrid Rodríguez, Fátima Moutinho, Daniela Macadán, Eduarw José Silva, Yosi Contreras, and Xavier Carias.

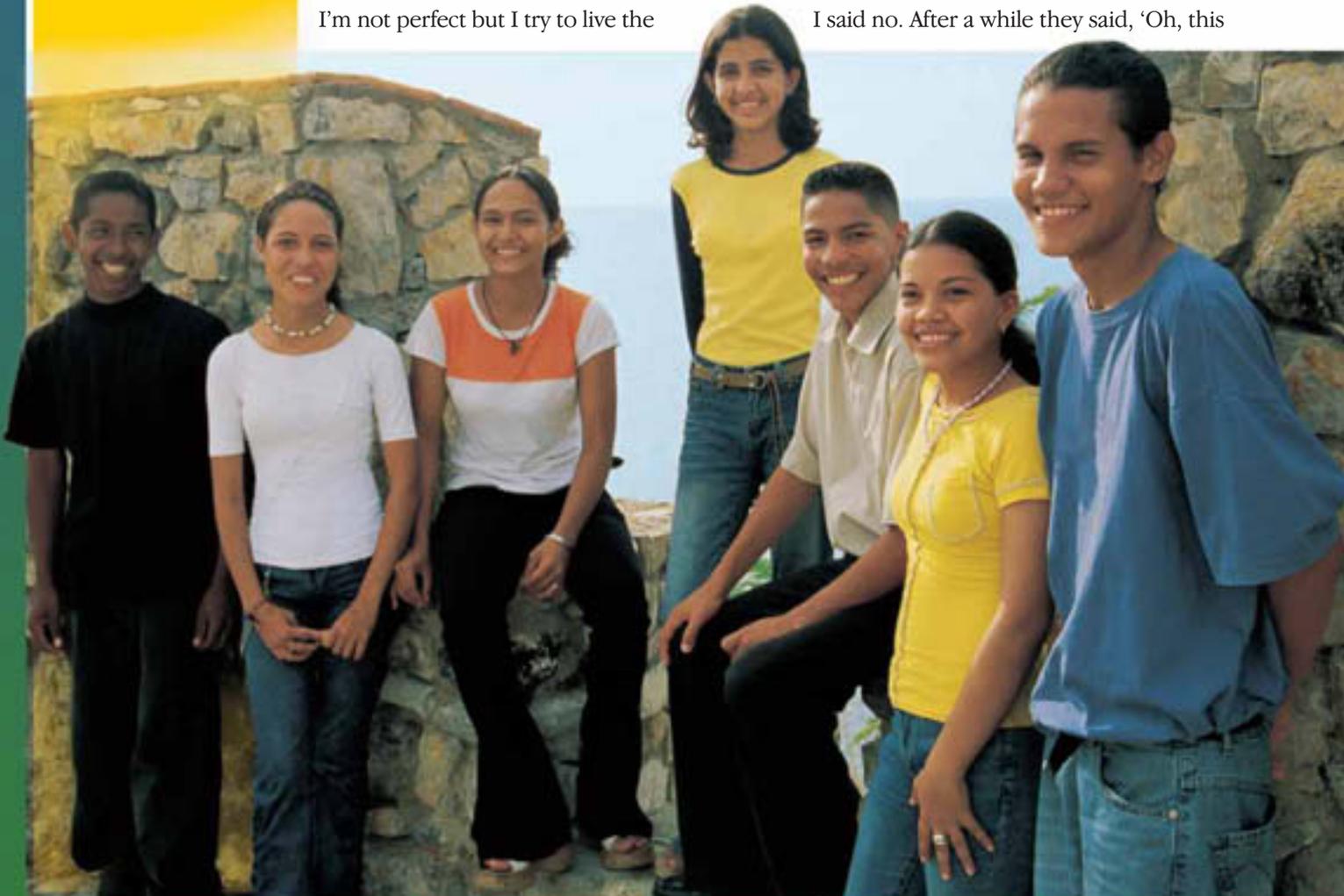
“I’m with my classmates from 7:00 in the morning until 4:00 in the afternoon,” says Luciano Fernández, 16, of Caracas. “Most of them smoke, party, drink, and use vulgar language. I’m the only one they know who can set the right example for them. That’s a lot of responsibility. Many of them see me as a person they can trust.”

“One time my friends were going somewhere to smoke,” says Norelia, “and I said, ‘Remember what my religion is? I don’t do those things.’ Some of them have come to understand that smoking is a dirty habit and have tried to stop. They call me ‘the perfect one’ and always ask me for advice. I tell them I’m not perfect but I try to live the

standards of my church. They respect my beliefs, and I think I have sown a few seeds that may be a source of strength to them someday.”

Once when Enrique López, 16, of Caracas, and four of his friends had a free period during school, they went to a friend’s house. “Someone took out some beer. I didn’t think they would try to get me to drink, because they all know about my religion—but they did. I said, ‘No, I don’t drink that stuff.’ They started criticizing me and saying there was nothing wrong with drinking and a little bit wouldn’t hurt. But even a little bit does hurt you in the end.

I said no. After a while they said, ‘Oh, this



is a waste of time.' So they stopped, and we went back to class. I think they respected me."

Some of the youth find that being an example is especially important in their own homes. "Although my dad is not yet a member of the Church," says Jackelin García, 17, of Maracaibo, "I haven't lost hope that he will be and then we can be sealed in the temple as a family. I always pray and fast for this. I hope that my faith, patience, and example can help my dad."

Choosing Friends Wisely

These Venezuelan young men and young women are learning something about friends. "People who try to get us to do wrong things are not really friends," says David. "Usually they try to get us to think that bad things aren't that bad, but they really are. The scriptures say we need to be steadfast in our faith in Christ so the Lord can guide us and teach us what to do" (see 2 Nephi 31:20).

Most are finding that their best friends are active members of the Church. In many wards and branches, seminary is held three evenings each week—from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday. Mutual is sometimes on Friday and may include combined Young Men and Young Women activities, such as dances or parties. Saturdays often include recreational activities or service projects. On Sundays there are, of course, Church meetings. Some of the youth spend time each week working with the full-time missionaries or helping teach discussions to new members. And there are occasional temple trips, youth conferences, and Sunday evening devotionals.

"Church is where my friends are," says Jimmy. "In addition to learning about doctrine, I'm with my



BRINGING MOM BACK

Is it true that "with God nothing shall be impossible"? (Luke 1:37). José Javier Alarcón, 16, of Maracaibo, has tested this scriptural promise.

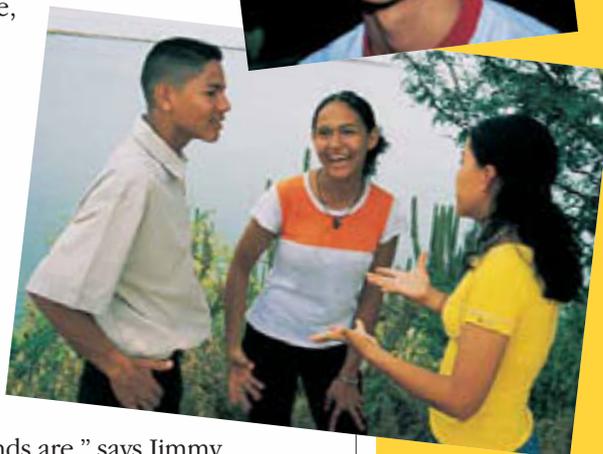
"When I was eight or nine years old, my parents divorced. Later a friend invited me to church, and eventually I wanted to be baptized. But my mother, who had been baptized but hadn't been active for many years, wouldn't let me. When I was 12, she finally allowed me to be baptized. As I grew in the gospel, I started to pray that my mom would come back to the Church. A couple of years later, she did!"

José Javier's mother, Miriam, admits that she had been apart from the Church for eight years and "didn't ever intend to come back. But when my son began praying with great faith for me . . .

something started to happen inside me. I began to feel a strong desire to pray and read the scriptures. One night the Lord changed my heart, and from that night I changed completely. So I owe it to my son. I thank the Father for giving me such a wonderful son!"

"It's a gift from God," says José Javier. "I had to do part of it. But it was actually God who did all of these things."

Now José Javier, his mother, and his younger brother, Jesús David, 10, have visited the temple. José Javier has been baptized for the dead, and their mother has received her endowment.





IN FRONT OF 500 CLASSMATES

Gladys Guerrero, 16, was the only Latter-day Saint attending a military high school in Maracaibo. During the first week of school, she was forced to stand in front of all 500 students and explain

why she wouldn't drink coffee. Although many students ridiculed Gladys for her lifestyle, others started watching her closely. "When they saw that I didn't do certain things, such as drink alcohol or go to some parties, some of them became interested in the gospel," she says. "The missionaries passed by the school one day, and I called to them. I introduced them to some of the students, and they got many referrals." Ten of Gladys's classmates were baptized during the next several months.

friends, and I meet new friends. They believe the same principles I do."

Fellowshipping Others

Some of these new friends are actually old friends who have returned to Church activity. "We often visit less-active youth," says Anángelys Golindano, 15, of Maracaibo. "We divide into districts, three or four people to a district, and then we visit and tell less-active members that we miss them. Some have accepted our invitation to return. There used to be 14 of us in our ward's seminary class, and now there are 20."

Josué Díaz, 15, of Maracaibo, saw similar results in his ward. "Last year there were only 9 of us in seminary with two wards combined. We fasted and visited people, and our class had to be divided. Now one ward has 16 and the other has 15!"

Another successful project has been to take a family home evening to the home of less-active youth on Wednesday evenings. "Some of the parents aren't members," says Jackelin. "In fact, many of these youth are the only Church members in their families. But usually their parents let us come in. When the kids see us, they're surprised. But they can see the interest we have in them. One of us gives the lesson, and we encourage questions and comments. You can really feel the Spirit. Usually the things of the world are what keep them from returning to church. Many of them say they're happy we've come and that they still have testimonies."

But expressions of friendship must be genuine, Jackelin says. "Sometimes when they see us, youth who are not active try to hide because they think we're always going to talk to them about the Church. But we try to be aware of their lives and talk to them about other things too. We want them to see we're interested in them and happy to be their friends."

David saw a miracle in the life of a good friend. "A friend who was the most help to me when I was new in the Church became less active," he says. "The Lord blessed me to have a chance to see and talk to him again. I told him all the things he had done to help me—and that I wanted to pay him back. I tried to be his friend. Now he's an active member of our priests quorum."

Attending the Temple

Many Venezuelan teens traveled long distances to attend a temple before the Caracas Venezuela Temple was built. And some still have to travel long distances to get to Caracas. For example, bus trips from Barcelona and Puerto La Cruz take about 6 hours, and trips from Maracaibo can take up to 10 hours. Sometimes the youth and their leaders leave at night and arrive at the temple early the next morning. Then after serving in the temple, they get back on the bus and arrive home late that evening.

Many of the youth have been baptized for their own ancestors. "The last time I went to the temple," says Gustavo Medina, 14, of Maracaibo, "I was baptized for both my grandfathers, for my great-grandfather, and for other people!"

Although the family circumstances of some do not allow them to be sealed as a family, they do all they can to enjoy temple blessings. "My mom, my brothers, and I haven't been able to be sealed in the temple," says Anángelys, "because my mom and dad are divorced. But two years ago I was baptized for eight of the women in my family. And I'm looking forward to being sealed to my future husband."

Ingrids Rodríguez, 15, of Puerto La Cruz, remembers how it felt to be sealed to her parents. “I cried so much,” she says. “I could not hold it in. I told myself, ‘From now on I’m going to support my parents because we’re sealed for eternity.’”

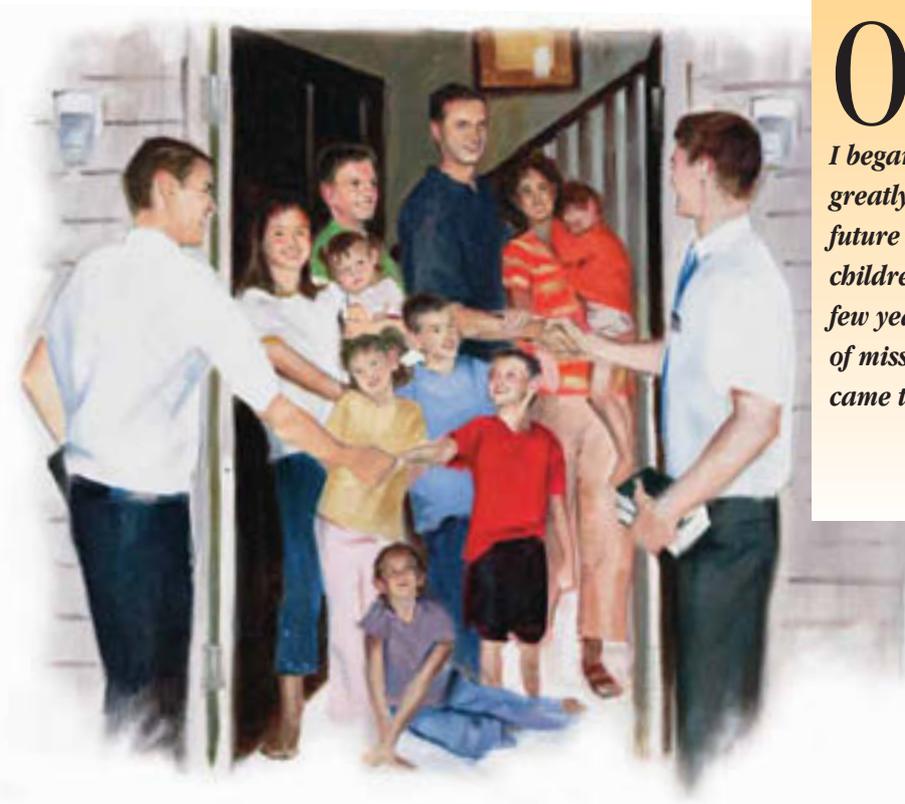
Likewise after the Moutinhos were sealed, Fátima and her family also savored the moment. “We looked at ourselves in the temple mirrors,” she says, “and promised that we would be together like this forever. Whatever happens, we support each other.”

Bearing Testimony

“I’m grateful to be a member of the Church,” says Rubí, who proudly wears her replacement Young Women necklace. “As young people, we have a lot of temptations. If I weren’t a member of the Church, maybe I would be making a lot of the mistakes we see some of our friends making. None of us is perfect, but because Jesus Christ took our sins upon Him, we can repent. That’s a gift we really have to be grateful for.” ■

Standing as witnesses in Maracaibo. From left: Gustavo Medina, José Javier Alarcón, Gladys Guerrero, Jackelin García, Anángelys Golindano, and Josué Díaz.





One day about 22 years ago I began to fear greatly for the future of my children. After a few years, a pair of missionaries came to our home.

lived with their mother), I began to hear the discussions, attend church, and get acquainted with the members and their beliefs. After several months we made the wise decision to join the Church, and 17 years have now gone by.

I understood that I had to make changes in my

life if I wanted to teach my children the right way. For example, I could not teach them to keep the Word of Wisdom and live a chaste life if I was not living these commandments. By striving to live the teachings of the gospel, I was able to change my life and teach my children. I was also able to baptize my three children from my first marriage and get them back from the world. All eight children belong to the Church now. Four have served missions. One was too old to go on a mission, but he served as a stake mission president. Six are married, all in the temple.

At the beginning of 1999, we had a regional conference in southern Florida. After fulfilling an assignment to deliver earphones for the conference translation, I went into a hall where thousands of Church members were seated. I remained standing at the back of the hall, and I was able to observe one of my sons with his baby. I looked in another direction and saw another son with his wife and children.

A wonderful feeling of joy came

I Worried about Their Future

By Adalberto S. Sánchez

I grew up in an environment where many men smoked, drank, and lived unchaste lives. I saw this kind of example in my own family and in most of the men in the vicinity, so I came to believe it was normal. At the early age of 20, I got married. Four years later, after we had three children, we divorced. But I later met a wonderful woman, who not only accepted me with three children but gave us five more. We have been married for more than 30 years.

One day about 22 years ago I began to fear greatly for the future of my eight children. I didn't want them to go through the same dangerous

situations I had, and I was afraid they would be lost in the wickedness of the world. I didn't know what to do to help them, but I became very receptive to the things of God. Whenever someone knocked on the door with a religious message, I opened my door and my heart. I listened attentively, accepted their pamphlets, and went with them to their houses of worship. Still, I wasn't at peace; I couldn't find what I was looking for.

A few years passed, and a pair of young missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came to our home. With my wife and our five children (the other three

over me at that moment, and I could not keep tears from my eyes. I remembered those terrible days when I was so worried about my children's future. Now I was weeping for joy because I no longer had those worries.

The gospel and true Church of Jesus Christ made it possible for us to find the right way to help our children and to have joy and happiness. Christ is the light guiding our lives. His teachings persuade us to do good. ■

Adalberto S. Sánchez is a member of the Miami Lakes (Spanish) Ward, Hiialeah Gardens Florida Stake.

A Small Thing

By Shannon Vanderspool Watson

I joined the Church when I was in high school and was the only member in my family. I had a difficult time making the transition to life in the Church, finding many of the

activities and callings unfamiliar. So when I was asked to be a visiting teacher for the first time during my second year in college, I struggled to understand exactly what that meant. My companion was a faithful young mother, Sister Bray (names have been changed), and it was easy for me to let her set the appointments, direct our visits, and care for our sisters. One sister, in particular, proved more challenging than the rest. Cassie was less active, living with her boyfriend, and expecting their first child. She always seemed sad or troubled.

One Sunday the branch presidency asked us to make sure we invited everyone on our visiting teaching routes to a missionary fireside that evening. "No problem," I thought. "Sister Bray will call Cassie." I scanned the chapel. Sister Bray was out of town that Sunday and would not be making any calls.

Finally the Spirit was impossible to ignore, and I grudgingly made the call—only to get an answering machine.

When I reached my apartment after church, I felt the tugging of the Spirit: "Call Cassie." I stoutly refused. Surely she wouldn't come even if I did call. A second time the Spirit prompted strongly: "Call Cassie!" Again I refused. Finally the Spirit was impossible to ignore, and I grudgingly made the call—only to reach Cassie's answering machine. "See," I thought, "I knew it wouldn't do any good." I left a message telling Cassie and her boyfriend, Will, that there would be a fireside that evening and we'd love to see them there.

At the fireside I noticed that although many were in attendance, Cassie and Will were not among them. "I knew they wouldn't come," I thought, somewhat smugly. With 10 minutes left in the fireside, I was quite surprised to see Cassie and Will enter the chapel. The missionaries stood up quietly and left with them. "How about that!" I said to myself.

Christmas break came soon after that, and I attended my home ward for the holidays. A month later when I returned to my college ward, one of the members excitedly approached me and asked if I would be at the baptism that evening. "Of course," I said, "but who is getting baptized?" The sister answered, "Will, Cassie's husband." Husband? I went to look for Cassie as quickly as I could.

When I found Cassie and Will, I congratulated them on their marriage and Will's baptism and asked how it had all come about. "Remember that



fireside you invited us to attend?”

Cassie answered. “We got there late, so the elders took us into another room and showed us a video. Will liked it so much he asked to hear the discussions. We were married, and today Will is getting baptized.” I was humbled and ashamed of myself and yet in total awe of Heavenly Father’s love for each of His children.

But this isn’t the end of the story. Not long ago I had the opportunity to return to my college ward after being away for six years. I was thrilled to see many familiar faces and to introduce my old friends to my husband and two children.

As I passed through the foyer, I saw someone I thought I knew but who looked different somehow. “Don’t I know you?” I said. “Yes, I’m Cassie. You were my visiting teacher. You remember Will, don’t you?” She pointed to the man standing to her left, then called to two children in the hallway. “And these are our two children.” She looked happy, peaceful, and sure of herself. She said she was serving in the Primary presidency. “Have you had a chance to go to the temple?” I inquired. “Which one?” she asked with a smile. “Chicago? Detroit? Nauvoo? We’ve been to all of them.”

This encounter once again reminded me “that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6)—even a small thing like a phone call. ■

Shannon Vanderspool Watson is a member of the Lake Villa Second Ward, Buffalo Grove Illinois Stake.

Home Teaching with Brother Skinner

By Kevin Probasco

I was baptized into the Church as a teenager but stopped attending not long afterward. Three years in the army did nothing to restore my spiritual health. Yet soon after I was discharged, the gentle but insistent urging of the Spirit of the Lord directed me to return to activity in my home ward. I dutifully obeyed.

Although I was rough around the edges, the elders quorum welcomed me without question and put me to work as a home teaching companion to Burniss Skinner, second counselor in the bishopric. Under Brother Skinner’s loving tutelage, I felt my testimony begin to take root.

Some of our assigned families struggled with tight finances, young children, chronic illness, loneliness, and Church activity. Others exemplified the peace of gospel living. Among these families, Hazel and John Peterson were particularly special. Their son Mike had been a high school friend and one of the young men most instrumental in my conversion. As a young investigator, I had taken the missionary discussions in their home; now I was returning as their home teacher.

In each home we visited, Brother Skinner pleasantly and patiently ministered from the abundance of his heart.

His words and gestures of comfort, blessing, care, and counsel have remained in my heart as lessons of the Savior’s love. Home teaching with Brother Skinner was not a burden but the greatest privilege and honor.

Within a year I had advanced in the priesthood, was sealed in the temple to my dear wife, and moved away from Brother Skinner and our home teaching families. After finishing college and law school, I spent 20 years in the military, moving my family to live in four countries on three continents. But I never forgot Brother Skinner, and while serving in various wards and branches, I tried to emulate his compassion and commitment.

After retiring from the air force, I moved back to my hometown to continue practicing law. The intervening 20 years had reordered the wards along entirely different boundaries, but I felt that I should visit Sister Hazel Peterson, who had lived alone since her husband died of cancer.

Six months later, however, I still hadn’t visited her. One winter morning I was driving to my law practice when the image of Sister Peterson unexpectedly came into my mind. Passing by the freeway exit closest to her home, I discounted the feeling and continued driving. But by the time I reached the

next exit, I found myself leaving the freeway and backtracking to Sister Peterson's home. Just as the Spirit had gently compelled me to return to activity almost 25 years earlier, it now gently whispered that I should visit my old home teaching sister.

I knocked on Sister Peterson's door and waited. After several minutes, I wondered sheepishly if she was out. Another knock, another few minutes. Finally the window above the door rattled and slid along its track. Sister Peterson peered down at me. The years had whitened her hair to the purest wool, and she looked tiny and thin. Her face was contorted in pain. Despite her labored breathing, she began weeping as she recognized me. "Oh, Kevin," she said, "I'm

so glad you're here. I'm in such terrible pain from my arthritis, and I need a priesthood blessing. Thank you for waiting—please come in." Before turning away from the window, she added, "I thought you were Burniss."

I was startled to hear the name Burniss. "Do you mean Brother Skinner?" I asked her. "Does he still live around here?"

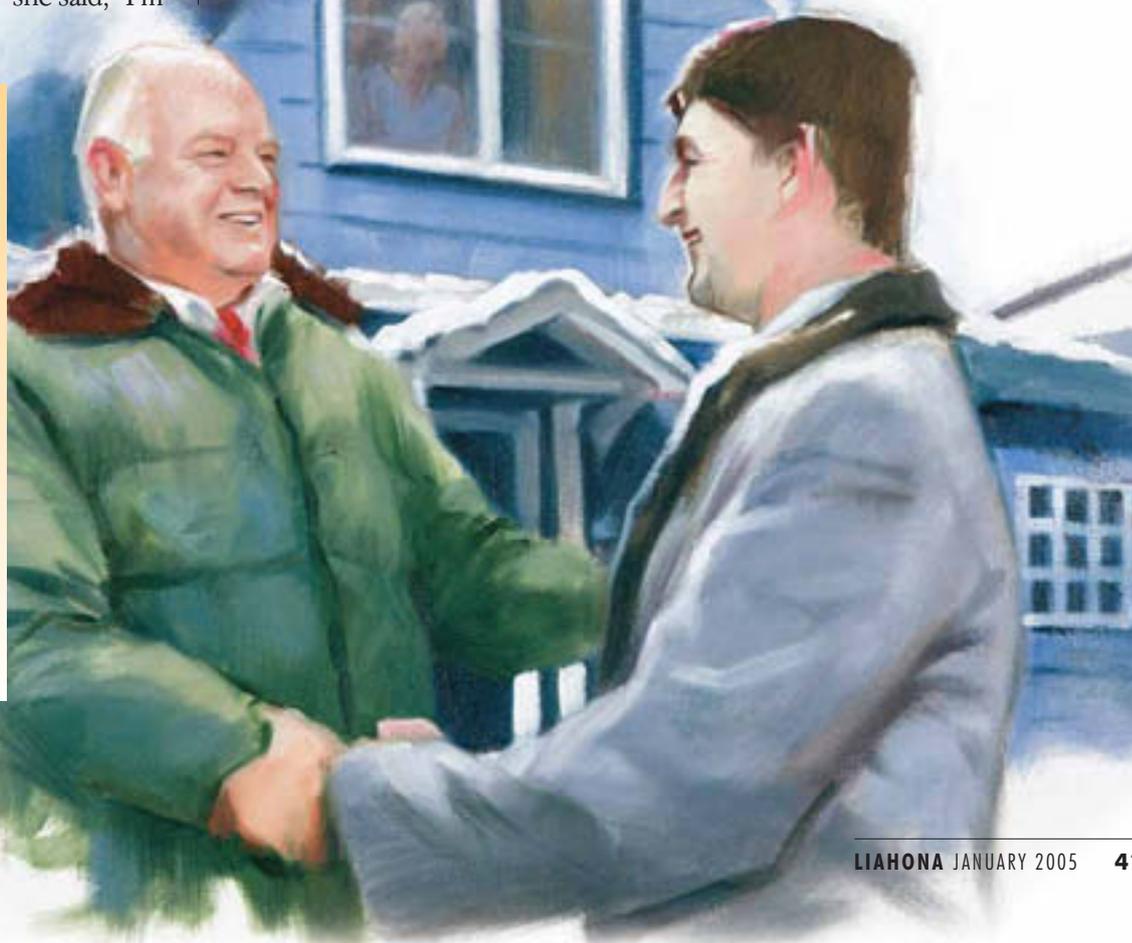
"No," she said. "He lives another 40 miles [65 km] north. But he still works near here, and I have his work number. I called about 20 minutes ago and asked him to come give

me a blessing. He should be here any minute."

A car pulled into the driveway, and Brother Skinner stepped out—much grayer but with the same pleasant spring in his step and kind smile on his face. We shook hands, and 20 years of distance melted away. We entered Sister Peterson's familiar home, the site of my spiritual apprenticeship to Brother Skinner so many years before. I anointed Sister Peterson's head with consecrated oil, and Brother Skinner pronounced the blessing. We were together again, companions in an impromptu call to service from the Lord Himself. ■

Kevin Probasco is a member of the Glen Eagle Ward, Syracuse Utah West Stake.

Brother Skinner and I shook hands, and 20 years melted away. We were together again, companions in an impromptu call to service.



THE DEACONS QUORUM

The first in a series of articles about priesthood quorums and their purposes. Here members of the Presiding Bishopric share some thoughts about deacons quorums.

Why does the Church organize 12- and 13-year-old young men into deacons quorums?

Bishop H. David Burton,

Presiding Bishop (above center): One

very important reason is the effective use of priesthood keys. Priesthood keys grant authority to those who preside to give direction and bless lives. The president of a quorum uses those keys to bless the lives of quorum members and those who are recipients of the quorum members' service.

Bishop Richard C. Edgley, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric (above left): Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said in the June 2003 worldwide leadership training meeting that a quorum is three things. It's a class, it's a brotherhood, and it's a service organization



(see "Stake Administration," 6; see also Stephen L Richards, in Conference Report, Oct. 1938, 118). Quorums bring young men

together to fulfill those three purposes. I

think much of our leadership emphasis in quorums is on the classroom and not as much on the brotherhood and service aspects. Those other aspects are important.

Bishop Burton: The classroom, while extremely important, is where the "theory" is learned. The "laboratory" where we apply that theory is service to others outside of the classroom. The main emphasis should be on how the young men carry out their duties (see D&C 20:57, 59, 60).

What should be the role of the deacons quorum adviser?

Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric (above right): One way we could broaden the brotherhood and service aspects of the quorum is to put the quorum president in his proper role. We tend to empower the adviser in a deacons quorum with more authority than we do the quorum president.

Bishop Burton: The adviser needs to develop the ability to be the "shadow leader" and somehow prompt the young men to perform their duties without the adviser becoming the effectual president of the quorum. Too often the quorum is a direct reflection of the current adviser.

Bishop McMullin: In my judgment, our deacons quorums are often simply doing what is





expected of them by their advisers. When advisers understand what it means to lift and bless the young men in their priesthood office, we will see greater power. But as long as we view the deacons as youngsters who need to be entertained through some kind of activity incidental to their priesthood, then that is where our young men will tend to remain.

Bishop Edgley: Think of what would happen in a deacons quorum if there were enough chairs in the classroom for every member of the quorum, not just those who regularly attend, and if on the back of each chair was the name of one quorum member. The empty chairs would be very apparent to the quorum presidency. That's one example of what could be done to enliven the quorum presidency and the quorum's sense of the need to reach out to others.

How can adult leaders and advisers help deacons have spiritual experiences when many of a deacon's duties may seem rather routine?

Bishop Edgley: Young people have to be led to spiritual experiences at that age. The experiences are not just going to happen on their own. I remember my father taking me to witness a priesthood blessing of a less-active member. I couldn't participate other than being there and feeling the Spirit, but my dad explained the ordinance and led me to that spiritual experience.

Bishop McMullin: There is nothing routine about passing the sacrament—when one is spiritually enlightened. If a deacon is taught in an inspiring way about the emblems of the bread and water and what they mean to him personally and to every person who presses those emblems to his or her lips, then the sacrament becomes a sacred experience every Sabbath day (see 3 Nephi 18:5–6; D&C 20:77, 79). But typically what I see with our Aaronic Priesthood holders is that they are more worried about which rows they are passing the sacrament to or whom

A quorum is a class, a brotherhood, and a service organization. Quorums bring young men together to fulfill those three purposes.

they should pass to first on the stand. In this way, it can become routine to the point that it has lost its special character. If advisers will teach the administrative details well ahead of time, the details won't become distractions.

What are the biggest challenges deacons face today, and what can a quorum do to help?

Bishop Edgley: The biggest challenge for a deacon is feeling that he belongs, finding himself, feeling that he is important. We start losing young men at deacon age. They go where they feel accepted, and when you look at the drug culture, for example, it always accepts them. We've got to have them feel accepted in the right environment, with the right friends—and that's in the quorum. They need to feel that they belong, that they're safe, that they're important. That is the brotherhood side of the quorum.

Bishop Burton: We've got to keep in mind that the Aaronic Priesthood is a preparatory priesthood in very real terms. Too often it becomes an end in itself. If our advisers and bishops will remember that this is the preparation for life and for the Melchizedek Priesthood, perhaps we could focus on preparing young men for the saving ordinances of the higher priesthood. ■



BECOMING A DEACON



BY LAURY LIVSEY

George Bond was so excited to receive the Aaronic Priesthood that he counted down the days until he turned 12. “I was really excited to become a deacon so I could pass the sacrament,” George says.

At last the Sunday arrived. He awoke early and got ready for the 9:00 a.m. sacrament meeting of the Arlington Ward, Jacksonville Florida East Stake.

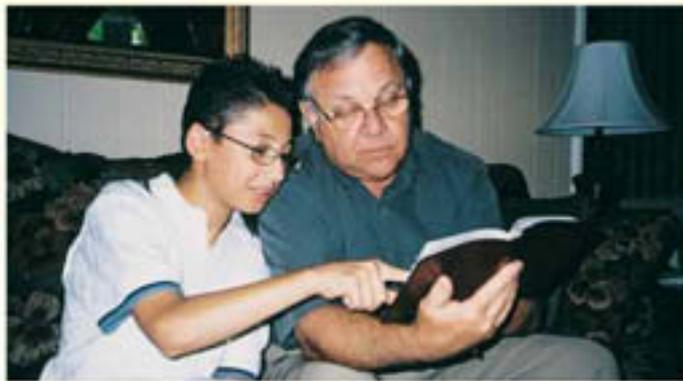
“George was ready at 8:00. He had his white shirt and tie on. He was set to go well before any of us were,” his dad, Bill, remembers. “At sacrament meeting that day, I didn’t hold the tears back when I saw him up there passing the sacrament for the first time. When I thought that he was a part of our family and now also a holder of the priesthood, it was wonderful.” George, who is from Russia, was adopted by the Bonds on April 29, 2002.

Because Brother Bond joined the Church as an adult in 1991, he is watching his son have experiences as a young man that Brother Bond never experienced. “I wish I had grown up in the Church,” Brother Bond says. “I wish I could have grown up with the knowledge that George is getting now as an Aaronic Priesthood holder. Many times I’ve wished that.”



“Bill has really helped George understand certain things, such as the way he needs to dress when he goes to church,” says George’s mom, Fran. “I’ve noticed in the time that George has been in our family how much he is drawn to follow in his dad’s footsteps. He really wants to be like his dad.”

George, the first counselor in his ward’s deacons



quorum presidency, continues to grow in both the gospel and the priesthood. He took the initiative to find out exactly what fast offerings are and what the donations are used for. “I was reading in a book about fast offerings,” he says. “That’s how I know why people donate the money and why I collect fast offerings each month.”

“It’s been a learning experience for him, but I’m impressed by how he pays such close attention to what has to be done,” Brother Bond adds. “We’re very fortunate to have him as a son.” ■

Laury Livsey is a member of the Mandarin First Ward, Jacksonville Florida East Stake.

2005 MUTUAL THEME: “A GREAT AND A MARVELOUS WORK”

(1 Nephi 14:7)

The Young Men and Young Women general presidencies discuss the 2005 Mutual theme.

In the spring of 1820, the sincere prayer of a 14-year-old young man opened the door to “a great and a marvelous work” (1 Nephi 14:7). It is through the Prophet Joseph Smith that the Restoration of the gospel occurred. It is because of this restoration that you can receive all the blessings that were absent from the earth for almost 2,000 years. It is because of this restoration that we have the Book of Mormon and the privilege of being guided by living prophets. The priesthood power is again on the earth. It is through the priesthood that ordinances can be performed in holy temples to bind families together for eternity.

The Lord loves and trusts the youth. You are privileged to have the opportunity to live on the earth at this time, when the fulness of His gospel has been restored. Each of you can and should have your own testimony of this great and marvelous work. President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: “It is this conviction, this quiet inward certainty of the reality of the living God, of the divinity of His Beloved Son, of the restoration of Their work in this time, and of the glorious manifestations which have followed which become for each of us the foundation of our faith. This becomes our testimony” (“Testimony,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 71). As you follow the Savior’s example of selfless service and make

righteous choices, your testimony will be strengthened, you’ll be blessed to do your part, and you will be protected from worldly influences. As a result, you will feel a sense of belonging and great joy. What a blessing it is to be involved in many aspects of this work!

We testify that the Savior directs His work today through His prophets and the leaders of the Church. We also testify that the Lord loves you, trusts you, and has revealed the plan of salvation and happiness to guide you in your life. In addition, we love you, we trust you, and we feel blessed to be a part of this great and marvelous work with each of you. ■

YOUNG MEN GENERAL PRESIDENCY

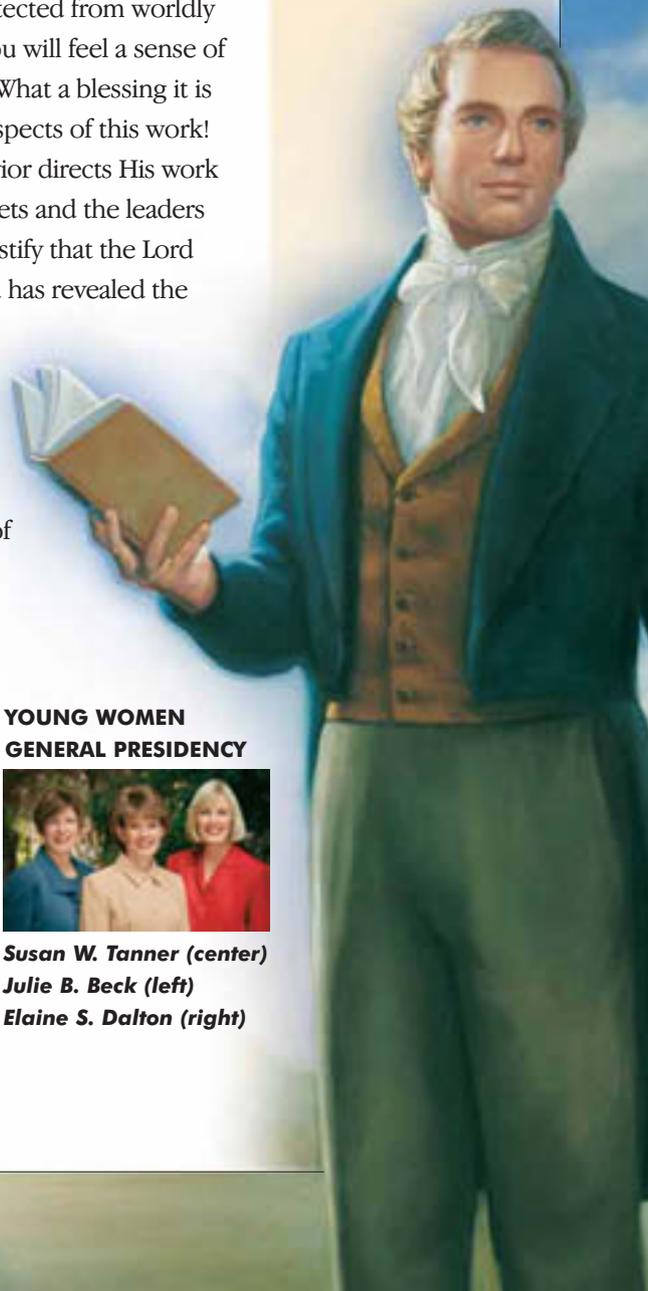


Charles W. Dahlquist II (center)
Dean R. Burgess (left)
Michael A. Neider (right)

YOUNG WOMEN GENERAL PRESIDENCY



Susan W. Tanner (center)
Julie B. Beck (left)
Elaine S. Dalton (right)



ME? GIVE A BLESSING?

“What would I say?” I wondered.

BY BRAD LARSEN

Will you give the blessing if she wants you to?” asked Jacob on the other end of the phone line. Jacob, my home teaching companion, explained that one of the people we home taught wanted a blessing.

“What would I say in a blessing?” I wondered. I was only 18, and I’d just become an elder and moved away to college. I had prepared my whole life to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, but I had never thought about the day when I would really need to use it.

I hesitated, swallowed hard, and then heard myself say reluctantly, “Yes.” As soon as I realized what I had said, I cut the word so short that it was hardly audible. I hadn’t meant to say it, but somehow it had popped out of my mouth.

“Great!” cheered the enthusiastic voice. “I’ll be over in a couple of minutes.”

I stood by the phone in my basement apartment, considering calling Jacob back to tell him I couldn’t do it. Then I remembered my dad. Whenever he had to give a blessing, he went quietly into another room and prayed first. He would always say, “Just a second,” and then go say a prayer without anyone noticing. I had noticed though.

Alone in my apartment, I knelt down next to the couch. I bowed my head and started to pray: “Heavenly Father, I might be giving a blessing in a few minutes, and I’ve never done it before. If it be Thy will, help me to have my mind clear of my own thoughts and help me to know by the Spirit what I should say.”

As I stood up, I had a peaceful feeling that I was worthy and that the Spirit would tell me what I needed to say when I needed to say it. I didn’t know what I was going to say, but it didn’t seem to matter.

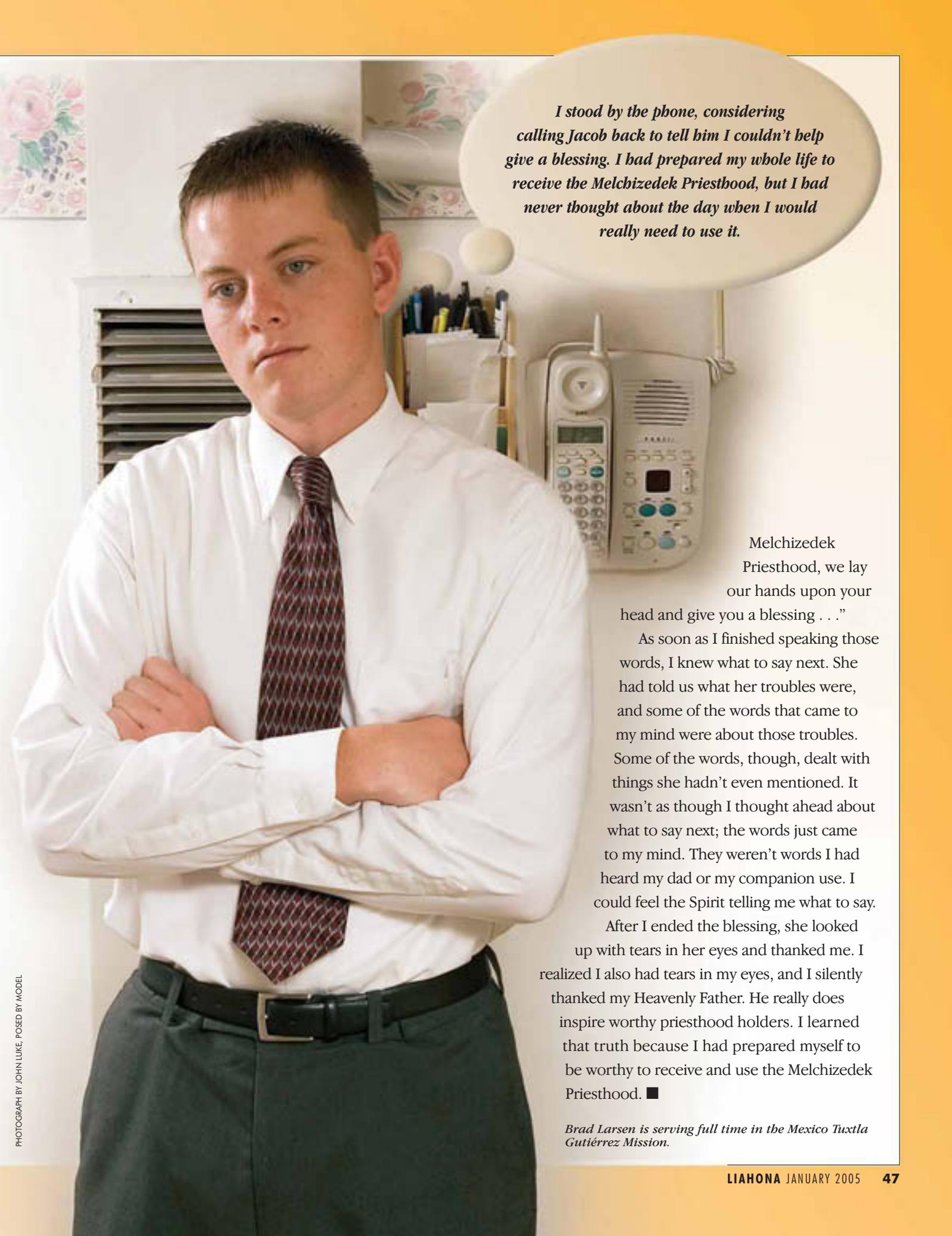
Several minutes later Jacob and I were in our suits and ties, sitting in the home of the young lady we home taught. The three of us talked for a few minutes about how her life was going. She was having a difficult time and hoped a priesthood blessing would help.

“Who would you like to give the blessing?” Jacob inquired.

She turned to me. “Will you give the blessing?” she asked.

“Yes,” I answered, this time without cutting the word short.

We pulled a white metal chair from the kitchen table into the middle of the room. As I laid my hands on her head, I silently repeated my prayer that I would know what to say. Jacob placed his hands on top of mine, and I began speaking: “By the authority of the holy



I stood by the phone, considering calling Jacob back to tell him I couldn't help give a blessing. I had prepared my whole life to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, but I had never thought about the day when I would really need to use it.

Melchizedek Priesthood, we lay our hands upon your head and give you a blessing . . .”

As soon as I finished speaking those words, I knew what to say next. She had told us what her troubles were, and some of the words that came to my mind were about those troubles. Some of the words, though, dealt with things she hadn't even mentioned. It wasn't as though I thought ahead about what to say next; the words just came to my mind. They weren't words I had heard my dad or my companion use. I could feel the Spirit telling me what to say.

After I ended the blessing, she looked up with tears in her eyes and thanked me. I realized I also had tears in my eyes, and I silently thanked my Heavenly Father. He really does inspire worthy priesthood holders. I learned that truth because I had prepared myself to be worthy to receive and use the Melchizedek Priesthood. ■

Brad Larsen is serving full time in the Mexico Tuxtla Gutiérrez Mission.



Helping Children to Be Happy

I very much like to read the *Liabona*, especially *The Friend*. I think it has good messages and helps children to be happy.

*Sarah Fernandes Araújo de Souza, 10,
Tambaú Ward,
João Pessoa Brazil Stake*

Greater Faith through Visiting Teaching

I am grateful for a living prophet who receives continuing revelation from Heavenly Father. I am also grateful for the *Liabona*, which brings us instructions from the prophet and the General Authorities and helps us gain gospel knowledge.

I am grateful for the Visiting Teaching Message each month. When we present the message and ask the sisters to share their thoughts with us, their testimonies increase my faith. These inspired messages can strengthen the faith of all sisters.

*Wong Keung Chi Fong,
Kwun Tong Ward,
Hong Kong Kowloon East Stake*

Mirrors in Our Lives

I very much appreciate the messages from the First Presidency, which we share as home teachers. I know each message is inspired of God. We can learn from them and use them as mirrors in our lives. We can see ourselves reflected in them and find positive things we can learn and apply.

*Paúl Quezada Rivas,
Calicuchima Ward,
Guayaquil Ecuador Garcia Moreno Stake*

The Lord's Timing

Planning is very important. I never want to change my plans. But the article "Timing," by Elder Dallin H. Oaks in the October 2003 *Liabona*, helped me to understand that next to my calendar is the Lord's calendar, which is more important than mine. I know that in subscribing to the *Liabona*, I will have more chances to learn about the plan and will of the Lord.

*François Ngindu Ngindu,
Kananga First Branch,
Democratic Republic of Congo
Kinsbasa Mission*



Call for Leadership Articles

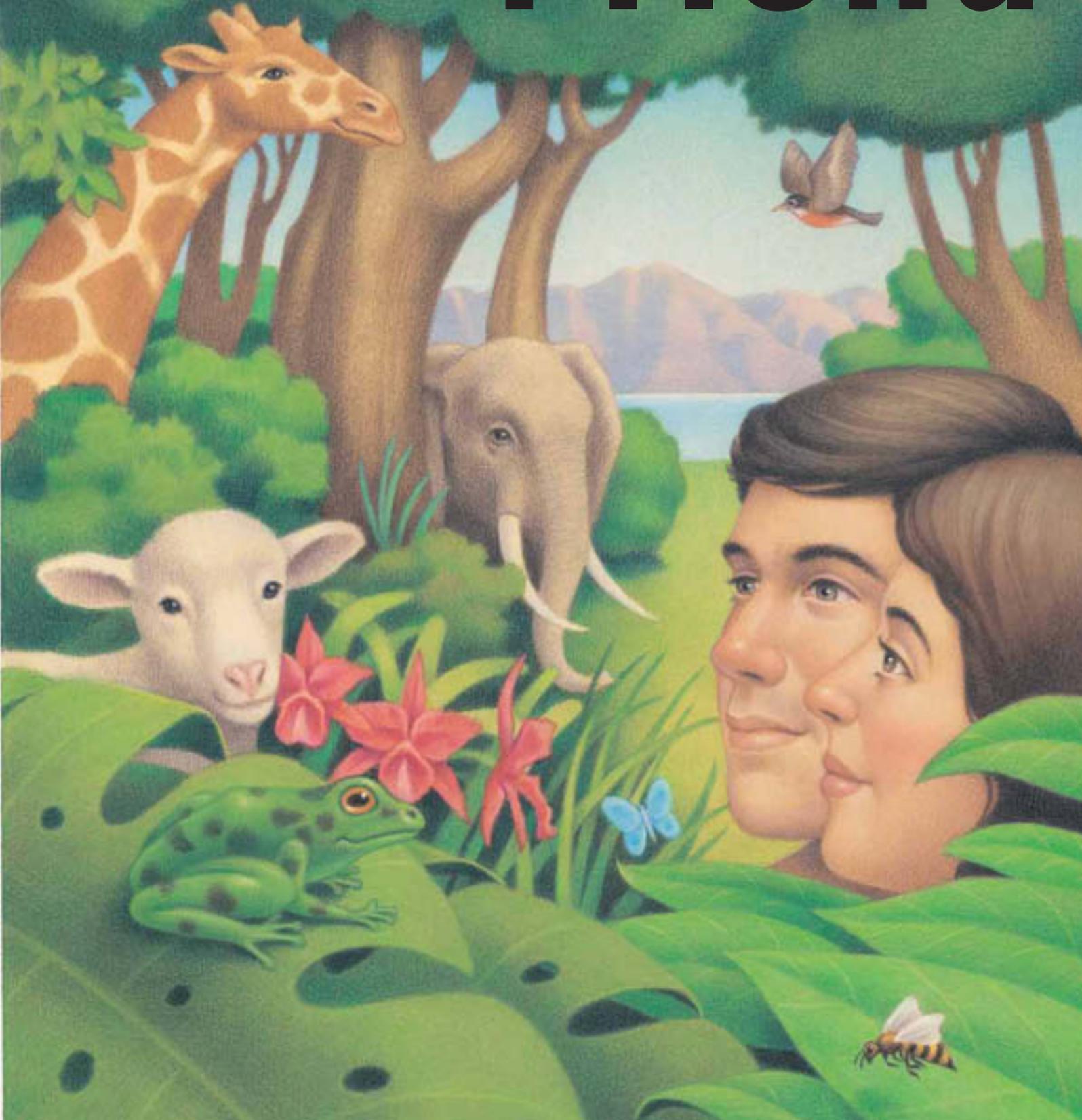
Good leadership is taught best through stories and examples. Have you tried something as a leader that has blessed the lives of those you serve? Or has your life been blessed by an inspired leader? Please share your experience with other *Liabona* readers. Send it to

**cur-liabona-imag@
ldschurch.org**

or to Leadership Experiences, *Liabona*, 50 East North Temple Street, Floor 24, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA. Please include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and ward and stake (or branch and district).



the Friend



Born Again through Baptism

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

Second Counselor in the First Presidency



President Faust explains the importance of the first ordinance of the gospel.

The Savior taught us that all men and women must be born again. Our first birth takes place when we are born into mortality. Our second birth begins when we are baptized by water by one holding the priesthood of God and is completed when we are confirmed.

Some years ago Albert Peters told of the experience he and his companion had of a man being born again. One day they went to the hut of Atiati in the village of Sasina in Samoa. There they found an unshaven, misshapen man lying on a bed. He wanted to hear their message. They presented the first discussion, bore witness to him, and then left. As they walked away, they discussed Atiati's condition; he had had polio 22 years before that had left him without the use of his arms or legs, so how could he ever be baptized, being so completely disabled?

When they visited their new friend the next day, he was bright and clean-shaven;

even his bedding had been changed. "Today," he said, "I begin to live again, because yesterday my prayers were answered. . . . I have waited for more than 20 years for someone to come and tell me that they have the true gospel of Christ."

For several weeks the two missionaries taught this sincere, intelligent man. He asked them to fast with him so that he would have the strength to go down into the water and be baptized. The nearest baptismal font was eight miles (13 km) away. So they carried him to their car and drove him to the chapel. Then Elder Peters and his companion picked up Atiati and carried him to the font. Atiati said, "Please, put me down. This is the most important event in my life. I know without a doubt in my mind that this is the only way to eternal salvation. *I will not be carried to my salvation!*" So they lowered Atiati to the ground. After a huge effort, he managed to pull himself up. The man who had lain 20 years

without moving was now standing. Slowly, one shaky step at a time, Atiati went down the steps and into the water, where the astonished missionary took him by the hand and baptized him.

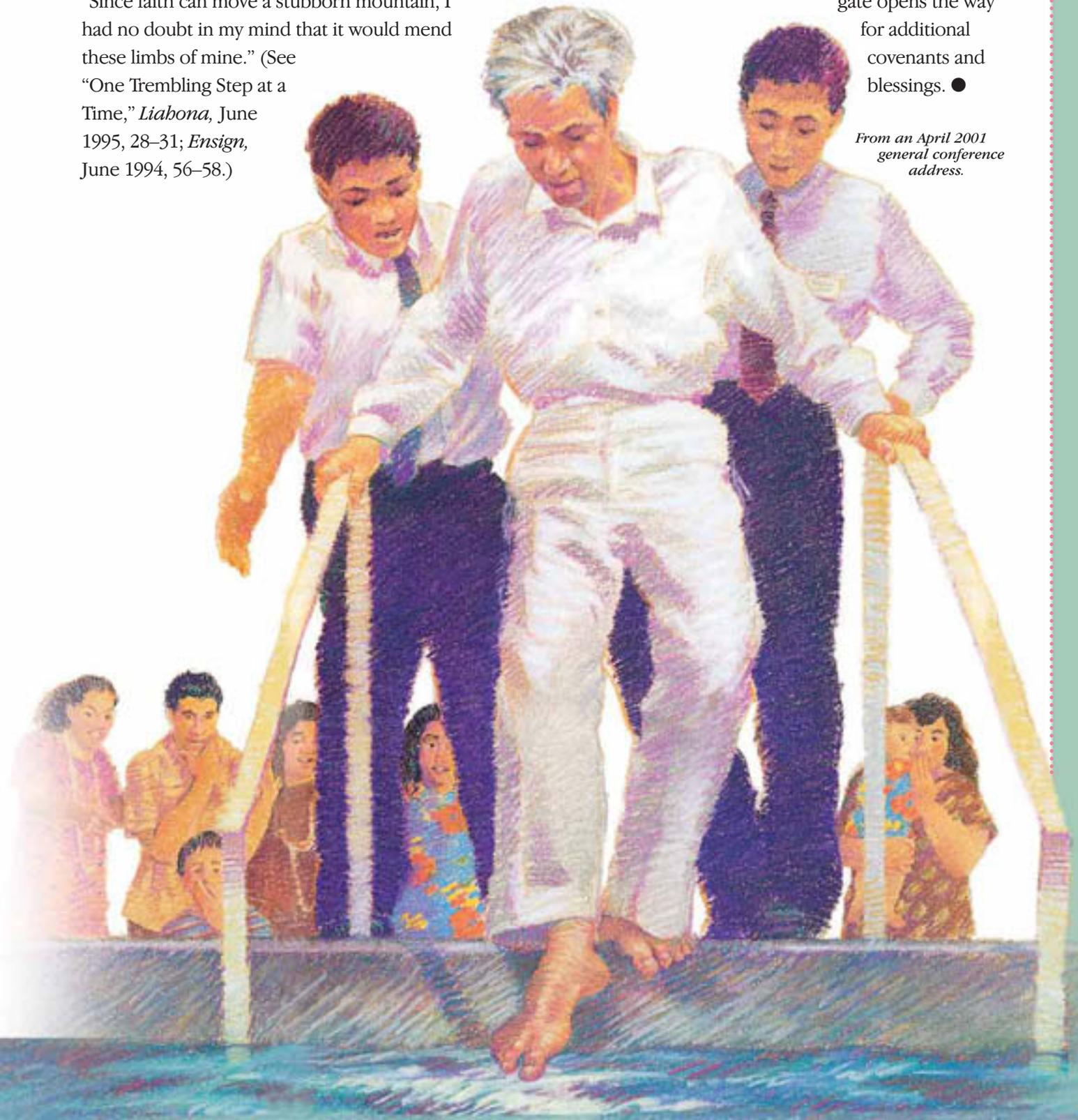
He told Elder Peters that he knew that he would be able to walk on the morning of his baptism. He said, "Since faith can move a stubborn mountain, I had no doubt in my mind that it would mend these limbs of mine." (See "One Trembling Step at a Time," *Liabona*, June 1995, 28–31; *Ensign*, June 1994, 56–58.)

I believe we can say that Atiati was truly born again!

Like Atiati, when we are baptized, we are spiritually born of God and are entitled to receive His image in our countenances. As Nephi said, baptism is the gate, "and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost" (2 Nephi 31:17). The baptismal

gate opens the way for additional covenants and blessings. ●

From an April 2001 general conference address.

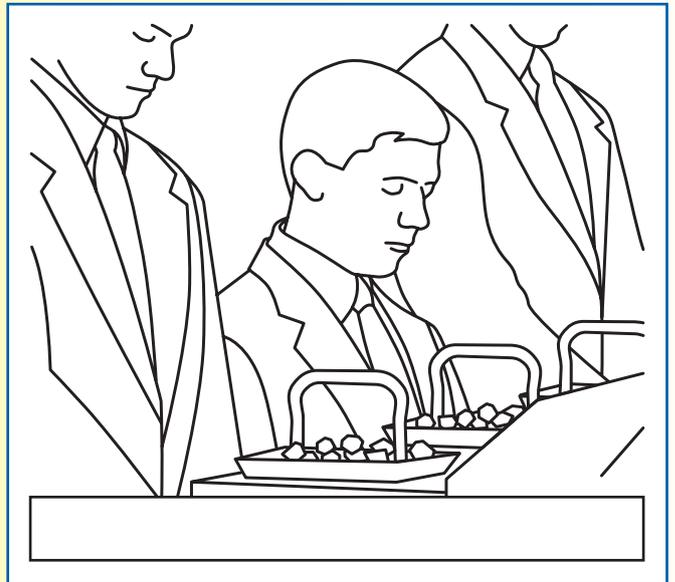


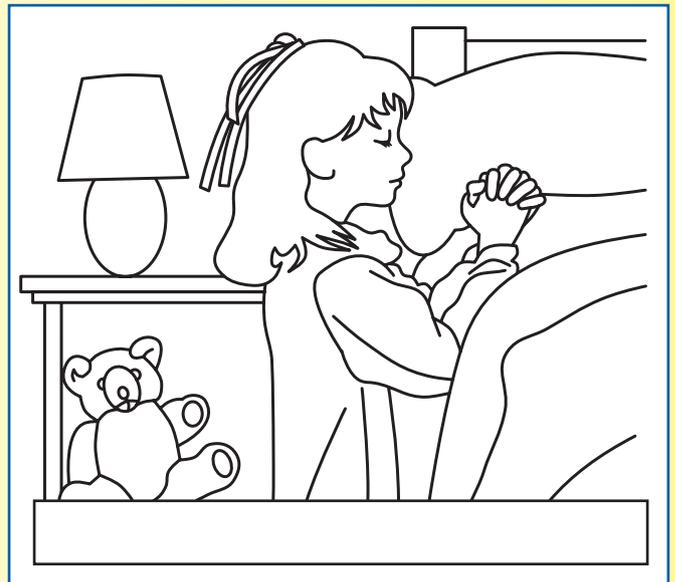
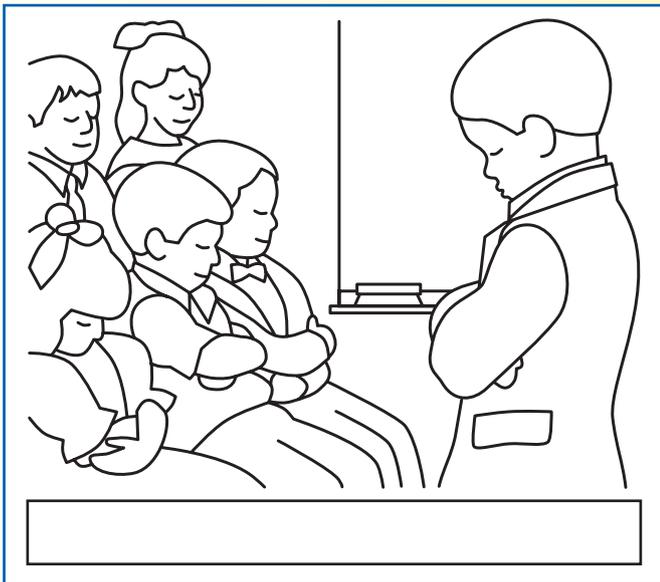
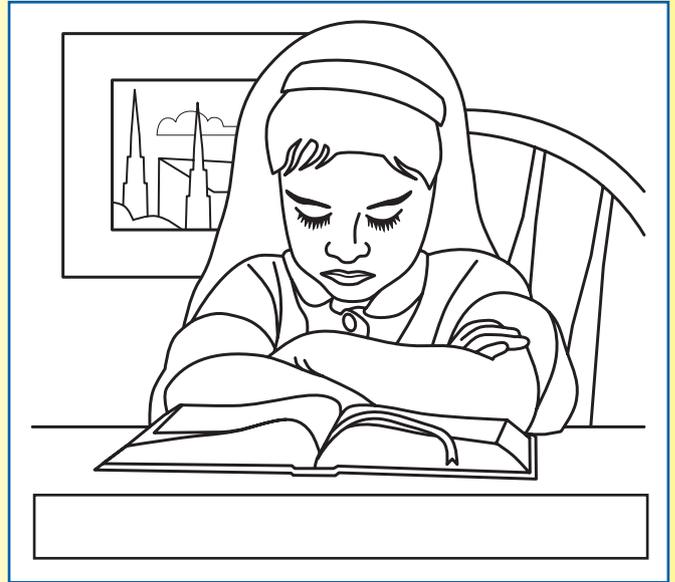
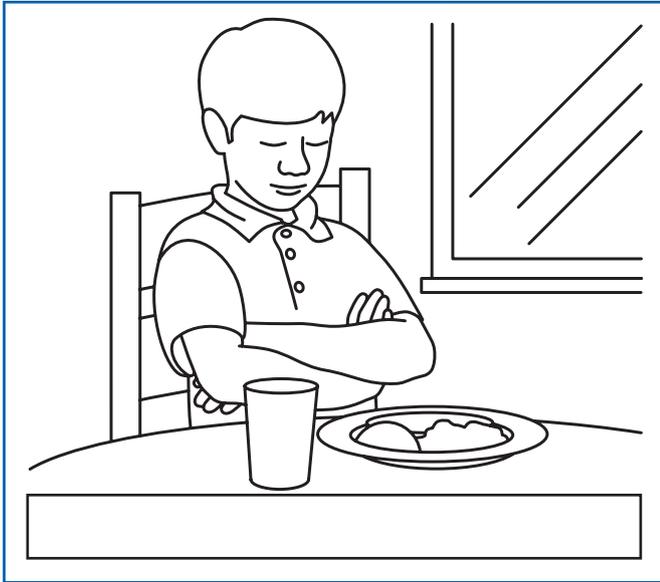
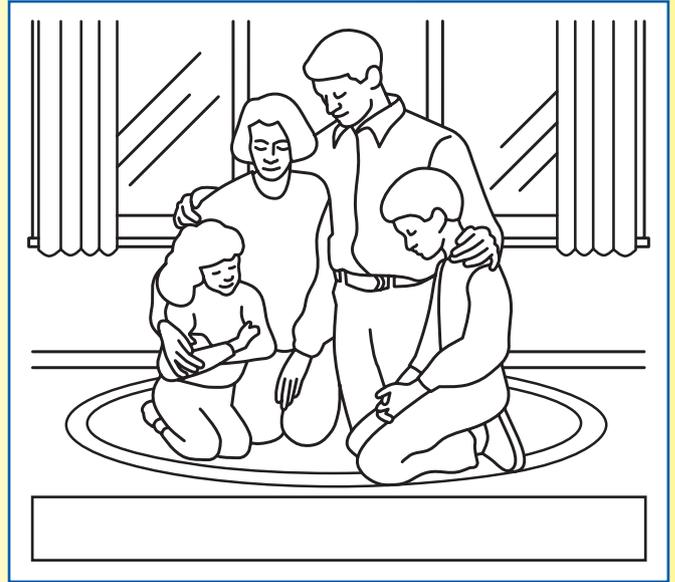
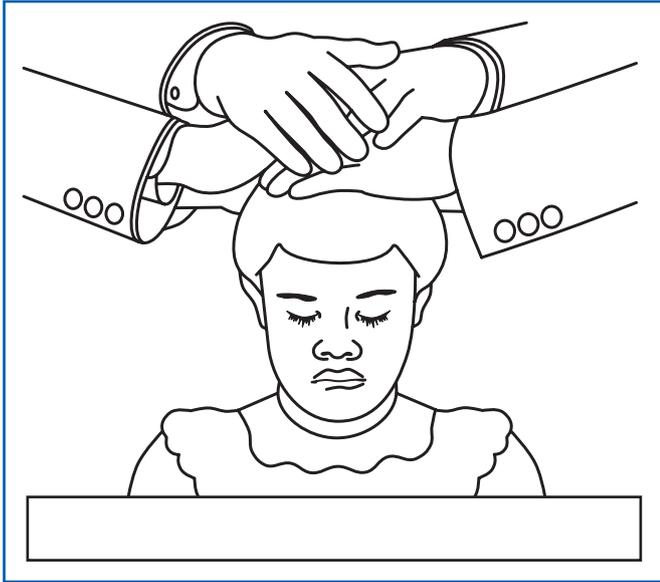
Prayer

Prayer is one of Heavenly Father's great blessings to us. We are able to speak directly to Him—the great God of Heaven—anytime, anywhere.

There are many different kinds of prayer and many different times when people often say a prayer. Pictured here are some of them for you to color. As you color each picture, write underneath it what kind of prayer it is. For example, the first picture represents blessing the sacrament. Then talk with your family about who may offer each kind of prayer, what the person offering it might pray about, and when the prayer is offered.

Hang the colored pictures where you will see them often to remind you of the marvelous blessing of prayer. ●







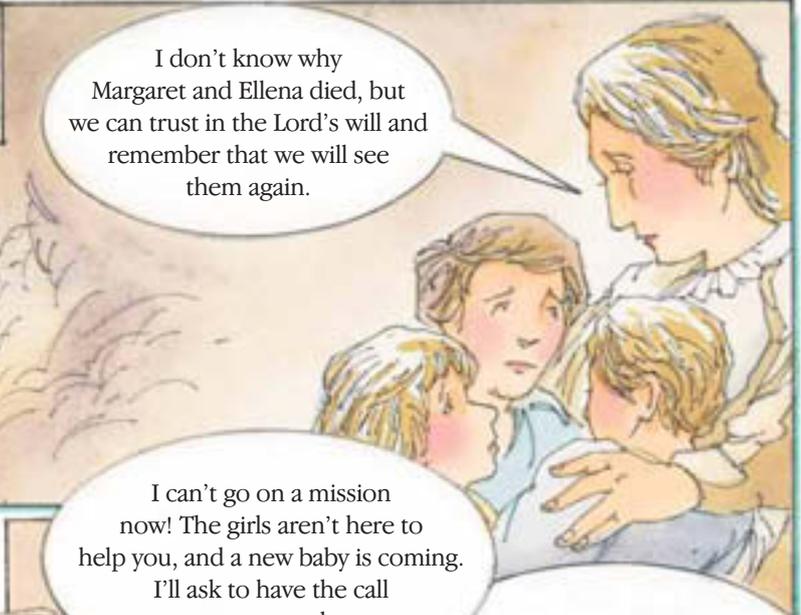
FROM THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

The Faith of His Parents

When David O. McKay was a young boy, his two older sisters died of illnesses within a week of each other.



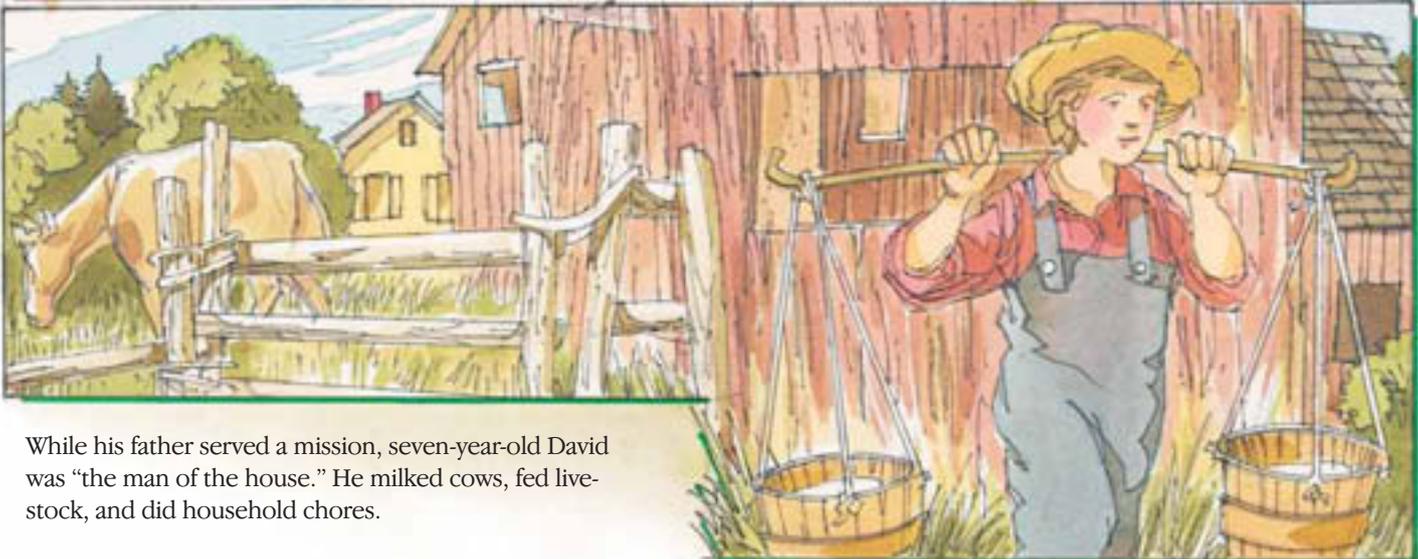
I don't know why Margaret and Ellena died, but we can trust in the Lord's will and remember that we will see them again.



Not long after this trial of their faith, David's father was called on a mission to Scotland, the land where he was born.

I can't go on a mission now! The girls aren't here to help you, and a new baby is coming. I'll ask to have the call postponed.

It is the Lord's will for you to go on a mission right now, and I trust Him. David and I will manage just fine.



While his father served a mission, seven-year-old David was "the man of the house." He milked cows, fed livestock, and did household chores.

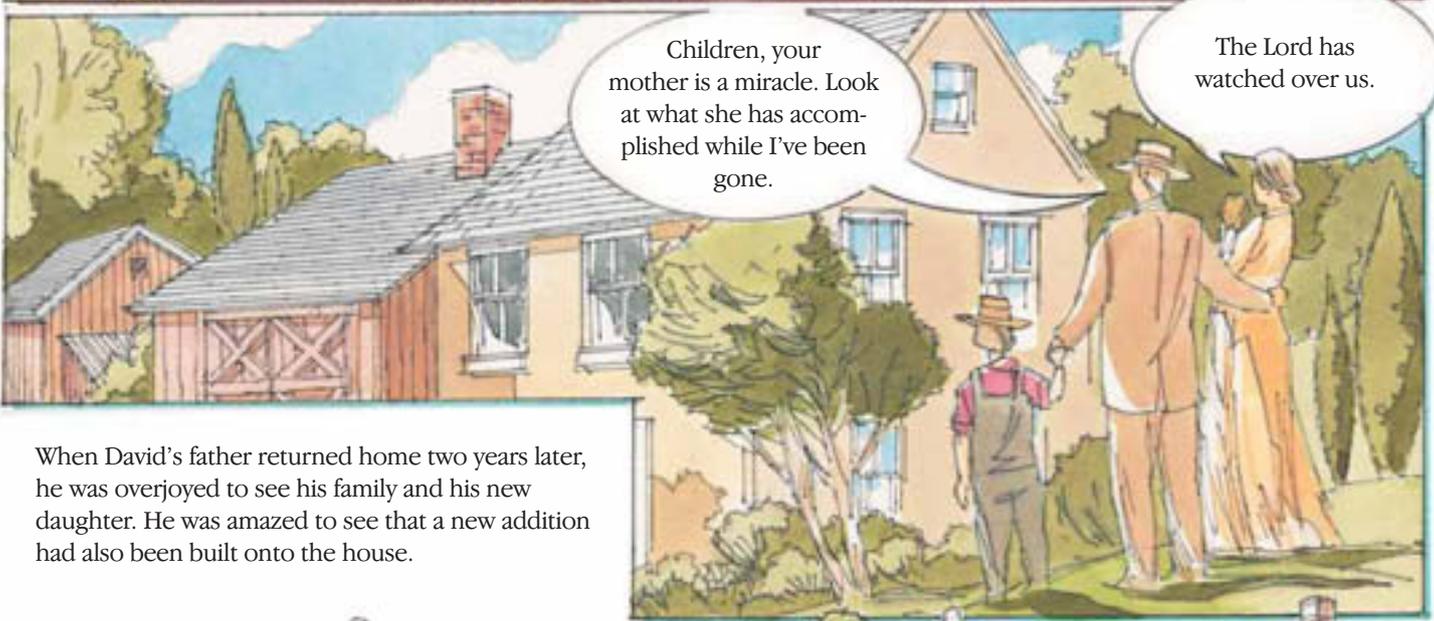
When David's younger sister Annie was born, she brought joy to the whole family.



She's so pretty, Mother!
Father will be proud.

Children, your mother is a miracle. Look at what she has accomplished while I've been gone.

The Lord has watched over us.



When David's father returned home two years later, he was overjoyed to see his family and his new daughter. He was amazed to see that a new addition had also been built onto the house.

As a young man, David also received a mission call to the British Isles. Remembering the faith of his parents, he accepted the call. He walked some of the same paths as his father and met some of the same people his father had served years before.

Adapted from Susan Arrington Madsen, The Lord Needed a Prophet (1990), 140, 143; and Joy N. Hulme, The Illustrated Story of President David O. McKay (1982), 8-9, 12-16, 29.



THE PLAN OF HAPPINESS

“For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

BY MARGARET LIFFERTH



Many people want to know where they came from, why they are here, and where they are going. Heavenly Father's plan of happiness answers these questions.

Before we were born, we all lived together in heaven with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. We learned and grew as much as we could. But eventually Heavenly Father gathered all His children in a council and told us that to become like Him, we must leave heaven for a time. He would create an earth for us, He would give us the freedom to choose between good and evil, and He would show us the way to know what is good. He would provide a Savior so that when we sinned, we could repent and still return to Him.

We came to earth to gain a body and walk by faith. We can't remember our home in heaven, but we can choose the right by following the example of Jesus, obeying our parents, and living My Gospel Standards.

After we die, we will all live again because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He overcame death through the Resurrection, and everyone will be resurrected. He also overcame sin, and those who have faith, repent, are baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, and keep the commandments will return to live with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. They will have the gift of eternal life, which is what the plan of happiness is all about.

Plan of Salvation Booklet

Remove page F9 from the magazine, and mount it on heavy paper. Cut along the solid lines. Glue the second

strip to the tab on the first strip. Fold back and forth on the dotted lines.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Divide the Primary into seven groups, and give each group a scripture passage recounting one of the seven days of the Creation (see Genesis 1:3–2:3; Moses 2:3–3:3). Have each group draw pictures of that part of the Creation. Then have them hold up their drawings and recite their scripture. Move from day one to day seven. Have the children attach their pictures to a large circle representing the earth. Point out that Heavenly Father created the world for us because He loves us. We show our love for Heavenly Father by treating His creations with reverence.

2. Write the words to the third article of faith on the chalkboard with many other words interspersed. As you repeat the article of faith, have children erase the extra words. Repeat the article of faith together several times; then erase the words of the article of faith one at a time until the children can repeat it by themselves. Teach that there are two parts to the Atonement: (1) Jesus Christ overcame the Fall and physical death through the Resurrection. Everyone who has ever lived will be resurrected. (2) Jesus Christ also overcame spiritual death for us by taking our sins upon Himself. To be saved from our sins, we must be obedient to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. Make a representation of the celestial kingdom, such as a sun. Cut it into puzzle pieces. On each piece write a scripture that teaches about laws (for example, tithing, Word of Wisdom, forgiveness) and ordinances (baptism, sacrament). Pass out as many pieces as you have to an equal number of groups of children. Have the groups locate the scripture, explain the law or ordinance, and add their piece to the puzzle. ●



Heavenly Father's Plan of Happiness for Me

(See Moses 1:39.)



We lived in heaven with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ before we were born.
(See Abraham 3:22–26.)



An earth was created.
(See Moses 2:1–3:3.)



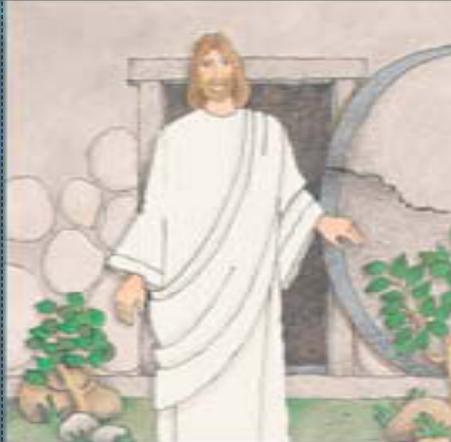
Adam and Eve and the Fall were a part of Heavenly Father's plan.
(See Moses 4:6–5:12.)



Jesus Christ came to earth. He is our Savior; He overcame the Fall. Because of Him, we can live again.
(See Abraham 3:27–28.)



Coming to a family is part of Heavenly Father's plan. (See paragraphs 1–4 of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.)



We will all die, and because of Jesus Christ, we will all be resurrected.
(See Alma 11:42–45.)



When we follow the example of Jesus Christ, we can inherit the celestial kingdom.
(See D&C 76:50–70.)

Glue

Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied, traced, or printed out from the Internet at www.lds.org. For English, click on "Gospel Library." For other languages, click on the world map.



The Light

“For I am God, . . . and I will show miracles, signs, and wonders, unto all those who believe on my name” (D&C 35:8).

BY BO PEDERSEN

Based on a true story

“Is Dad coming home tonight?” Benjamin asked. Dad worked as a sailor off the coast near their home in Denmark.

“No,” Mom said, “he will be home in four days.”

Dad had promised Benjamin that they could play football when he returned. Benjamin missed Dad.

“Before I go to bed tonight, I’ll pray that he will come home safely,” Benjamin thought.

Benjamin’s dad stood on the ship in the freezing rain, hurrying to finish his work before the evening meal. Feeling tired and cold, he thought of his family back at home.

Suddenly, an enormous wave rocked the ship. Supplies clattered to the floor as sailors shouted in confusion. The captain peered out into the darkness and couldn’t

see Benjamin’s dad on the deck anymore.

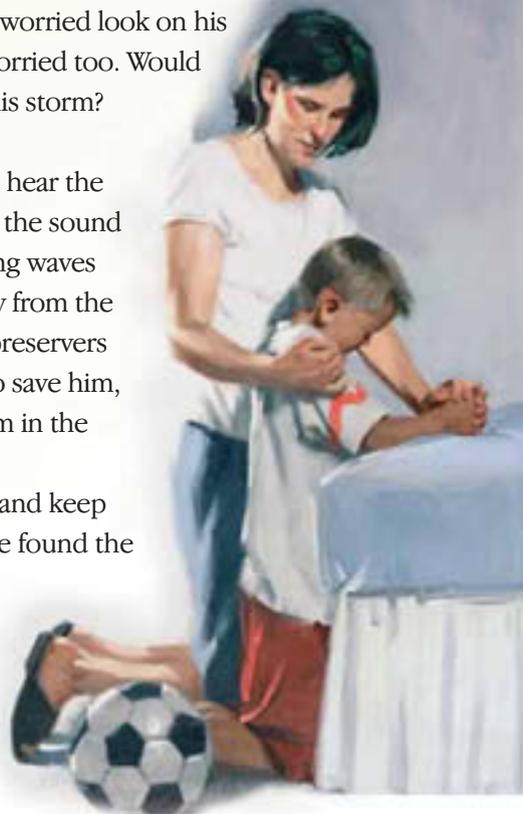
“Man overboard!” he shouted.

Later that evening Benjamin watched Mom pile the dinner dishes in the sink. As she scrubbed she looked out the window into the garden. Trees swayed in the fierce wind. Benjamin saw the worried look on his mother’s face and felt worried too. Would Dad be all right out in this storm?

Benjamin’s dad could hear the ship’s alarm ringing, but the sound grew quieter as the strong waves pushed him farther away from the ship. Sailors tossed life preservers into the water, hoping to save him, but they couldn’t see him in the stormy darkness.

He tried to stay calm and keep his head above water. He found the flashlight clipped to his life jacket and pointed it toward the ship so the sailors could see where he was—but the light didn’t work.

“Please protect Dad and bring him home safely to Mom and me,” Benjamin prayed.



On board the ship, the captain radioed for help. Soon a helicopter hovered over the ocean, shining a spotlight down onto the huge waves.

“We can’t find him,” the helicopter pilot radioed to the captain. The captain fought back tears, fearing the worst for his friend. “But we’ll try again,” the pilot decided. He was afraid the helicopter would run out of fuel, but he knew he was the lost sailor’s last hope.

Benjamin’s dad was getting colder and colder. His teeth rattled as he clutched the broken flashlight in his numb fingers.

* * *

Back home it was Benjamin’s bedtime. Mom listened as, kneeling by his bed, he prayed, “Dear Heavenly Father, please protect Dad and bring him home safely to Mom and me.”

* * *

Benjamin’s dad saw a helicopter flying low. He tried to wave his arm, but he was so tired and cold he could hardly move it.

Then a voice in his mind said, “Turn on the light.”

“But it doesn’t work,” he thought.

“Turn on the light,” the voice said again.

“Why should I?” he mumbled as his stiff fingers fumbled with the switch. “Either the lightbulb is burned out or the batteries are dead.”

The helicopter came closer and closer. When it was almost directly overhead, Benjamin’s dad pointed the flashlight toward the sky and flipped the switch.

Just then the pilot saw a flicker of light in the water below. “We’ve found him!” he cried into the radio. The sailors aboard the ship cheered. Within minutes Benjamin’s dad was hoisted up into the warmth and safety of the helicopter. Wrapped in a blanket, he listened to the engine vibrate, imagining it singing, “Home to Benjamin, home to Benjamin!”

After the helicopter landed and an ambulance took Benjamin’s dad to the hospital, the helicopter pilot walked back to where Benjamin’s dad had been resting. There on the floor lay the flashlight. Curious, he picked it up and opened it. Two very old, rusty batteries fell out.

“These batteries can’t work,” he thought. “But if I didn’t see this light out on the ocean, what did I see?”

“God must have watched over this sailor,” he said out loud to his copilot, who was standing beside him. They both nodded in silence.



“Miracles—impossible to explain by rational means—occur as a result of obedience to the commandments of God.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Miracles,” *Ensign*, June 2001, 9.

* * *

Benjamin’s mom suddenly felt happy. The worried feeling went away.

Opening Benjamin’s door a crack, she peeked into his room and saw that he was sleeping soundly.

Benjamin lay dreaming about the football game Dad had promised him. A warm feeling had assured him that Heavenly Father would answer his prayer and that Dad would be home soon. ●

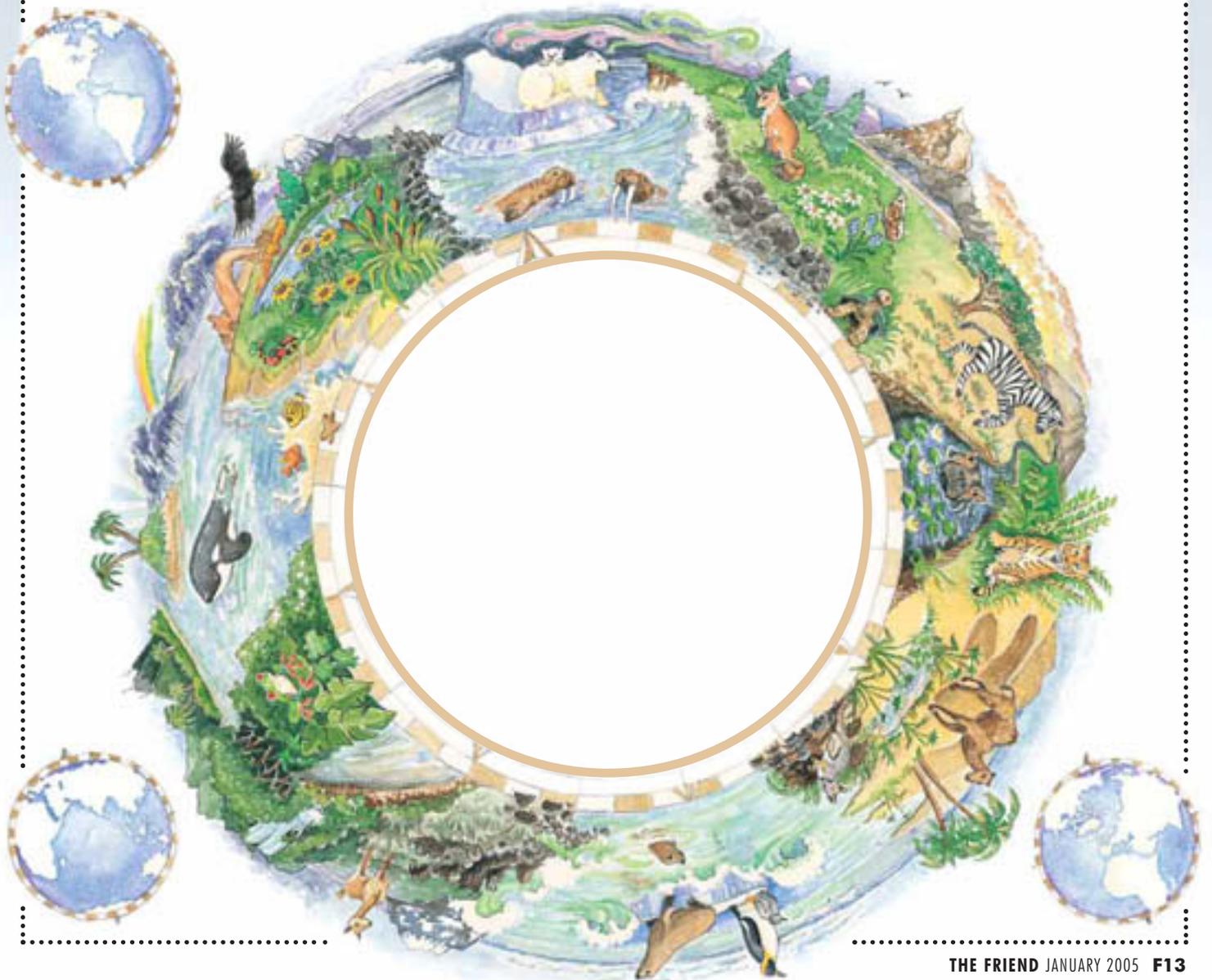
Bo Pedersen is a member of the Allerød Ward, Copenhagen Denmark Stake.

Our Beautiful WORLD

PART OF THE PLAN

As part of His wonderful plan for us, Heavenly Father created a beautiful world where we could receive a body and prove ourselves worthy to return to Him. Look at the smaller circles that show different parts of the world. Find the one that shows

where you live, and mark the spot where you live with a star. Then, in the large circle, draw a picture of yourself enjoying our beautiful world. Remember to thank Heavenly Father every day for our beautiful world. ●



Jairo Eli Xocop

OF COMALAPA, GUATEMALA



BY DALILA XOCOP
AND VIRNA RODRÍGUEZ

Lush green shrubs and pine forests surround the ancient Mayan ruins of Iximché. Eleven-year-old Jairo Eli Xocop of Comalapa, Guatemala, likes to visit the ruins and talk with his family about their family history and ancestors. Long ago, skilled Cakchiquel stonemasons built these vast fortified cities. Today Jairo is working just as hard to build a foundation of faith and good works in the gospel as he prepares to be ordained a deacon.





Jairo likes to visit the ancient ruins of Iximché (above) to talk about family history. And since he was small, he has liked to read and learn from the Book of Mormon (left).

A member of the Comalapa Branch in the Chimaltenango Guatemala Stake, Jairo lives in a small town in the mountains where the Cakchiquel language is spoken.

Jairo often has his mind on the calendar. He will be 12 soon and is eager to receive the priesthood and become a member of the deacons quorum. Jairo's good friend and cousin, César Samuel, 16, goes with him and his family to church every Sunday. Jairo is eager to learn from

the full-time missionaries who teach the Aaronic Priesthood class in his branch.

An active and fun-loving boy, Jairo likes to participate with the 30 other children in his branch in Primary. Jairo's favorite part of Primary is sharing time, but he also likes to sing hymns and listen to his teachers talk about the prophets' lives.

A sixth-grader, Jairo loves sports, especially the long jump, which he has been practicing for three years. At a school

Jairo has a lot of fun with his sisters, Mildred, Melissa, and Daly (right), and with his friends in Primary (below).

competition, he won second place in both speed-walking and the long jump. He also likes to play soccer.

Jairo is preparing to serve a mission by reading the Book of Mormon and other Church books. He attends all his Church meetings and is saving money in a savings account for his mission.

“Jairo is a smart boy, and he tries very hard to be obedient. If he continues, he will become a faithful man and a strong missionary,” says Jairo’s mom.

Jairo’s sister, Melissa, 20, says she admires the way he gets up every Sunday morning and gets ready quickly so he can walk to church with his cousin César. They arrive on time and sit in one of the front rows.



Jairo is growing day by day. His experiences are laying a foundation for a lifetime of working hard in the service of others. ●

Dalila Xocop is a member of the Comalapa Branch, Chimaltenango Guatemala Stake. Virna Rodriguez is a member of the Panorama Ward, Guatemala City Guatemala Mariscal Stake.





Windows of Heaven, by David Lindsley

Portrayed in a scene likely in fall 1835, the Prophet Joseph Smith (center) assists Joseph and Brigham Young (top) with window installation in the Kirtland Temple, the first of the latter-day temples. Oliver Cowdery (left) and Sidney Rigdon (right) assisted in the temple's preparations.



This work began with a most remarkable manifestation when the Father and the Son appeared to the boy Joseph Smith on a spring morning in the year 1820. All of the good we see in the Church today is the fruit of that remarkable visitation, a testimony of which has touched the hearts of millions in many lands.” See President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Pursue the Steady Course,” p. 2.

I Will Follow God's Plan for Me



Before we were born, we lived in heaven with our heavenly parents. Heavenly Father wanted us to become more like Him, so He presented a plan. We learned that a new home called earth would be created for us where we could receive a physical body, be tested, and learn to choose the right and do good. Jesus Christ said He would be our Savior so we could repent of our sins and return to our heavenly home. If we placed our faith in Jesus Christ, obeyed His commandments, and followed His example, we would be happy. We joyfully chose to follow Heavenly Father's plan of happiness.

Reading the themes and scriptures on this year's poster and setting and working on a goal each month will help you learn more about Heavenly Father's plan of happiness and how to follow it.

Instructions

1. Turn the page, open the staples, remove the poster, and reclose the staples.
2. Cut out the pictures/goals and the "My Plans to Follow THE PLAN" pocket from the right side of the poster. Place the pictures/goals in an envelope. Cut slits along the two broken lines on the pocket. Fold the tabs to the back of the pocket along the solid lines. Leaving the top open, glue the side and bottom tabs of the pocket to the left side of the poster where indicated. Hang up the poster.
3. At the beginning of each month, read the theme and scripture listed for that month. Then find the appropriate picture/goal. Cut off the goal strip. Glue the picture in place on the poster. Now decide what you will do that month to follow God's plan, and write your goal on the strip. For example, the theme for February is "I am a child of God." For your goal you may decide to write, "In February, I will remember that Heavenly Father loves me and I will pray to Him morning and night." Place the ends of the strip into the slits on the "My Plans to Follow THE PLAN" pocket; then do what you have written. When you are ready to place your goal for the next month on the pocket, remove the previous month's goal and place it inside the pocket. At the end of the year, the pocket will be filled with the goals you have accomplished while trying to follow Heavenly Father's plan for you.

Additional copies of the poster (item no. 25959) are available from Church distribution centers.

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I Will Follow God's Plan for Me

"For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39).



GLUE HERE

January
Heavenly Father presented a plan for us to become like Him.
Read Moses 1:39

GLUE HERE

February
I am a child of God.
Read Romans 8:16

GLUE HERE

December
Heavenly Father's plan brings us many blessings.
Read D&C 14:7

GLUE POCKET HERE

GLUE HERE

November
I can share the gospel so that others can follow Heavenly Father's plan.
Read Matthew 5:16

GLUE HERE

March
Jesus Christ came to earth and is our Savior.
Read John 3:16

GLUE HERE

October
I follow Heavenly Father's plan when I choose the right.
Read Joshua 24:15

GLUE HERE

September
I follow Heavenly Father's plan when I choose the right.
Read Articles of Faith 1:13

GLUE HERE

April
I will follow Heavenly Father's plan for me and do my part to have an eternal family.
Read paragraph 3 of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," Liahona, Oct. 2004, 49; Ensign, Nov. 1995, 102

GLUE HERE

June
I will follow Heavenly Father's plan for me in faith.
Read Articles of Faith 1:4

GLUE HERE

August
The Holy Ghost is a gift from Heavenly Father.
Read Moroni 10:5

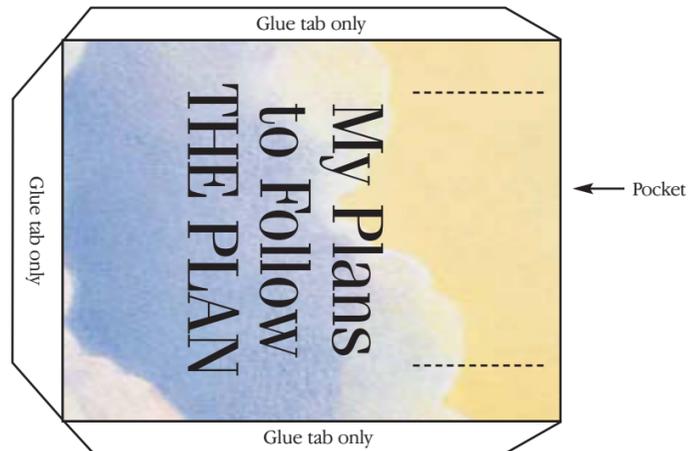
GLUE HERE

May
Jesus Christ restored His Church in the latter days.
Read D&C 35:17

GLUE HERE

July
I follow Heavenly Father's plan by repenting and being baptized.
Read 2 Nephi 9:23

	Glue a photo or drawing of yourself here	
In January, I will _____ _____	In February, I will _____ _____	In March, I will _____ _____
In April, I will _____ _____	In May, I will _____ _____	In June, I will _____ _____
	HOLY GHOST	
In July, I will _____ _____	In August, I will _____ _____	In September, I will _____ _____
In October, I will _____ _____	In November, I will _____ _____	In December, I will _____ _____



ILLUSTRATED BY BETH M. WHITTAKER