

Liahona

COVER STORY:

Nurturing a Growing Testimony, p. 14

**The Devil Can't Make
You Do It, p. 2**

2007 Mutual Theme, p. 8

**Insert: Removable Poster
for Children**



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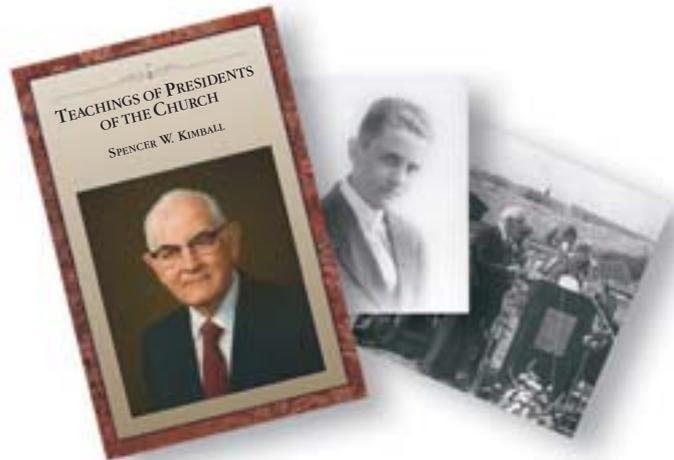
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ON THE COVER

Photograph by Matthew Reier.

THE FRIEND COVER

Photograph by Kimberly Webb.



28 Spencer W. Kimball: Man of Action

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

*These ideas can be used for
classroom teaching as well
as in the home.*

"Good to Know,"

p. 26: Have family members repeat something they have memorized and share how that knowledge has helped them. Discuss how having the Articles of Faith memorized helped Kong Nhean Serey. Select a scripture or hymn that your family can memorize together.

"Spencer W. Kimball: Man of Action," p. 28: Ask your family

which prophet is well known for saying, "Do it," and, "We must lengthen our stride." Display a picture of President Kimball. Take turns reading some stories from the article, inviting family members to identify the main points. After the last story, sing "I Am a Child of God" (*Hymns*, no. 301). Conclude by reading President Kimball's promise in the last paragraph of the article.

"To Be Edified and Rejoice Together," p. 38: Ask family





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Overcoming
Temptation

FOR YOUTH

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I Know Families Can Be Forever
Moisés Nefi Morales Gonzáles
One Special Leader
Sariab de Barros Ferreira da Silva

In each issue this year, we have hidden a picture of a CTR ring. As you look for the ring in this issue, think of how you can build your testimony of the Savior.



members to respond to the following question: "What do you do if you find yourself in what you think is a boring sacrament meeting?" Discuss their different responses. Share President Kimball's answer to the same question. Challenge family members to follow his example of being an active learner and receiving by the Spirit (see D&C 50:13–22) when they attend Church meetings.

"Dad, I'm Proud of You!" p. 46: Play a game in which you see who can be quiet the longest. When the

silence is broken, discuss how hard it was to be quiet. As you read this story to the family, have them listen for why it is important to speak up when prompted. Bear testimony about listening to and following the promptings of the Spirit.

"The Opposite of Fear," p. F14: Read the first four paragraphs of Tricia's story to illustrate why she is afraid. Ask, "What can we do to overcome our fears?" Finish reading Tricia's story, and testify of the power of prayer and hymns in overcoming our fears.

THE FRIEND: FOR CHILDREN

- F2 Come Listen to a Prophet's Voice: Never Give Up *President Thomas S. Monson*
- F4 Sharing Time: Be Not Afraid *Elizabeth Ricks*
- F6 From the Life of President Spencer W. Kimball: Working on a Farm
- F8 The New Testament
- F10 Making Friends: In a Good Place—Naomi Hug of Münchenstein, Switzerland *Kimberly Webb*
- F13 Special Witness: How Can I Have Faith When the World Seems So Scary? *Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin*
- F14 The Opposite of Fear *Patricia R. Jones*
- F16 Coloring Page



F2 Never Give Up

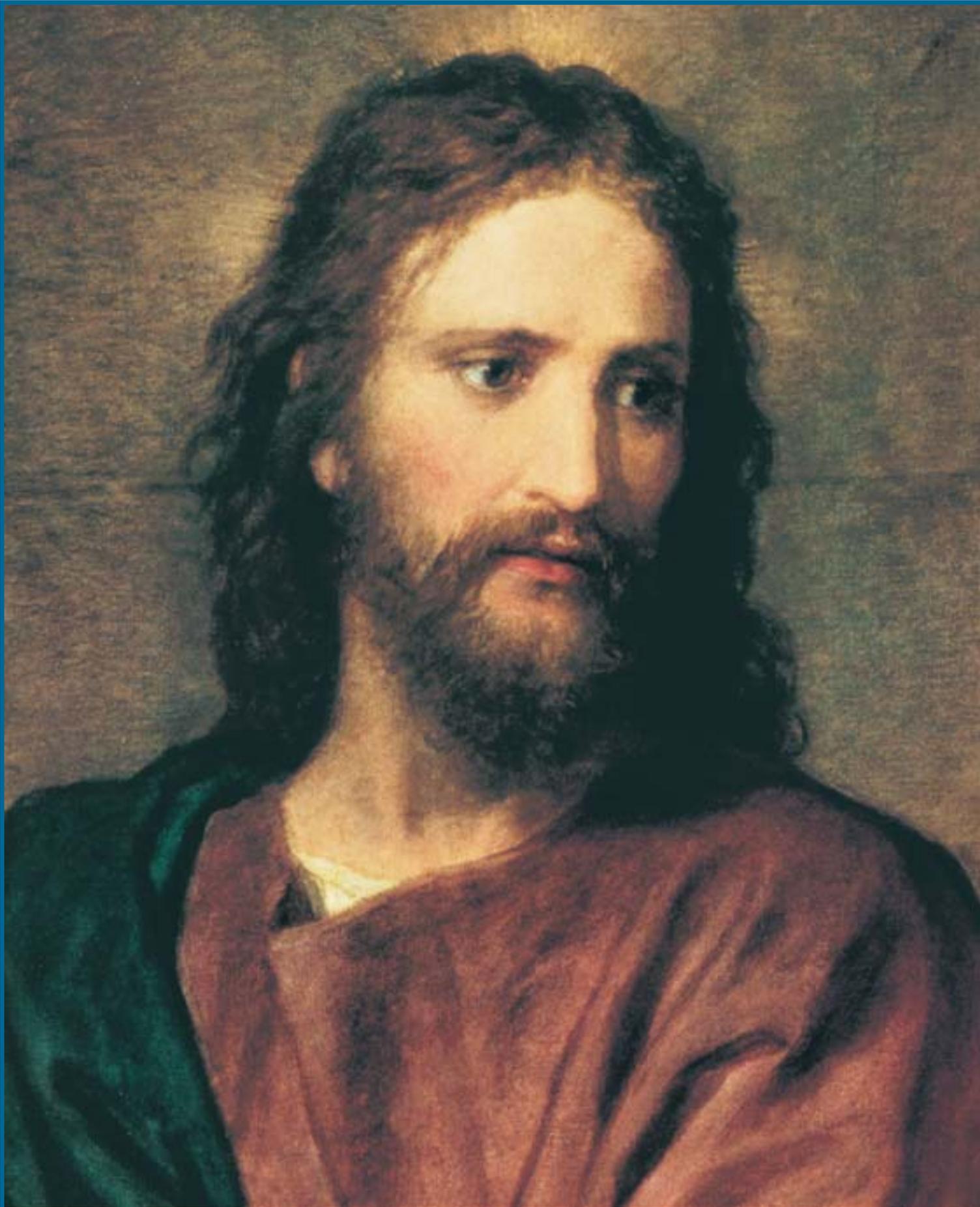


INSERT: FOR CHILDREN

Sharing Time Poster: I'll Follow Him in Faith

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The Forces That Will Save Us

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

I feel impressed to sound a warning voice against the devil and his angels—the source and mainspring of all evil. I approach this prayerfully, because Satan is not an enlightening subject. I consider him to be the great imitator.

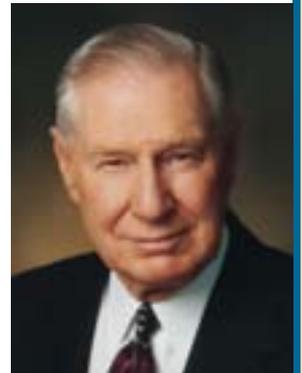
I think we will witness increasing evidence of Satan's power as the kingdom of God grows stronger. I believe Satan's ever-expanding efforts are some proof of the truthfulness of this work. In the future the opposition will be both more subtle and more open. It will be masked in greater sophistication and cunning, but it will also be more blatant. We will need greater spirituality to perceive all of the forms of evil and greater strength to resist it. But the disappointments and setbacks to the work of God will be temporary, for the work will go forward.¹

It is not good practice to become intrigued by Satan and his mysteries. No good can come from getting close to evil. Like playing with fire, it is too easy to get burned: "The knowledge of sin tempteth to its commission."² The only safe course is to keep well distanced from him and any of his wicked activities or

nefarious practices. The mischief of devil worship, sorcery, witchcraft, voodooism, casting spells, black magic, and all other forms of demonism should always be avoided.

However, President Brigham Young (1801–77) said that it is important to "study . . . evil, and its consequences."³ Since Satan is the author of all the evil in the world, it is essential therefore to realize that he is the influence behind the opposition to the work of God. Alma stated the issue succinctly: "Whatsoever is good cometh from God, and whatsoever is evil cometh from the devil."⁴

My principal reason for choosing this subject is to help young people by warning them, as Paul said, "lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."⁵ We hope that young people, unfamiliar with the sophistries of the world, can keep themselves free of Satan's enticements and deceitful ways. I personally claim no special insight into Satan's methods, but I have at times been able to identify his influence and his actions in my life and in the lives of others. When I was on my first mission, Satan sought to divert me from my future path and,



All who come unto Christ by obedience to the covenants and ordinances of the gospel can thwart Satan's efforts.



The Prophet Joseph Smith related from his own experience, “The nearer a person approaches the Lord, a greater power will be manifested by the adversary to prevent the accomplishment of His purposes.”

if possible, to destroy my usefulness in the Lord’s work. That was more than 60 years ago, and I still remember how reasonable his entreaties seemed.

Satan’s Enticing Appeal

Who has not heard and felt the enticing of the devil? His voice often sounds so reasonable and his message so easy to justify. It is an appealing, intriguing voice with dulcet tones. It is neither hard nor discordant. No one would listen to Satan’s voice if it sounded harsh or mean. If the devil’s voice were unpleasant, it would not persuade people to listen to it.

Shakespeare wrote, “The prince of darkness is a gentleman,”⁶ and, “The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.”⁷ As the great imitator, Lucifer has marvelous powers of deception. As Paul said to the Corinthians, “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”⁸

Some of Satan’s most appealing lines are “Everyone does it”; “If it doesn’t hurt anybody else, it’s all right”; “If you feel all right about it, it’s OK”; or “It’s the ‘in’ thing to do.” These subtle entreaties make Satan the great imitator, the master deceiver, the arch counterfeiter, and the great forger.

We all have an inner braking system that will stop us before we follow Satan too far down the wrong road. It is the still, small voice within us. But if we allow ourselves to succumb to Satan’s tempting, the braking system begins to leak brake fluid and our stopping mechanism becomes weak and ineffective.

Nephi has given to us the pattern or formula by which Satan operates:

“And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

“And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance.”⁹

The First Presidency described Satan: “He is working under such perfect disguise that many do not recognize either him or his methods. There is no crime he would not commit, no debauchery he would not set up, no plague he would not send, no heart he would not break, no life he would not take, no soul he would not destroy. He comes as a thief in the night; he is a wolf in sheep’s clothing.”¹⁰ Satan is the world’s master in the use of flattery, and he knows the great power of speech, a power his servants often employ.¹¹ He has always been one of the great forces of the world.

I once heard Ernest LeRoy Hatch, former president of the Guatemala City temple, say, “The devil is not smart because he is the devil; he is smart because he is old.” Indeed, the devil is old, and he was not always the devil. Initially, he was not the perpetrator of evil. He was with the hosts of heaven in the beginning. He was “an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God.”¹² He came before Christ and proposed to God the Father, “Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.”¹³ This he wanted to do by force, destroying the agency of man.

Satan became the devil by seeking glory, power, and dominion by force.¹⁴ In contrast, Jesus, chosen “from the beginning,” said unto God, “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.”¹⁵ What a difference in approaches! Wrong as Satan was, he was persuasive enough to entice one-third of the hosts of heaven to follow him.¹⁶ He practiced a great deception by saying, “I am also a son of God,”¹⁷ persuading others to love him more than God.

Agency—Our Alternative

Our agency, given us through the plan of our Father, is the great alternative to Satan’s plan of force. With this sublime gift, we can grow, improve, progress, and seek perfection.

Without agency, none of us could grow and develop by learning from our mistakes and errors and those of others.

Because of his rebellion, Lucifer was cast out and “became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto [the Lord’s] voice.”¹⁸ And so this personage who was an angel of God and in authority, even in the presence of God, was removed from the presence of God and His Son.¹⁹ This caused great sadness, “for the heavens wept over him—he was Lucifer, a son of the morning.”²⁰ Does this not place some responsibility on the followers of Christ to show concern for loved ones who have lost their way and “are shut out from the presence of God”?²¹ I know of no better way than to show unconditional love and help lost souls seek another path.

Satan does, however, perform an important negative function. In the book of 2 Nephi we are told, “For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things.”²² Indeed, Peter warns, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”²³

C. S. Lewis, a Christian author, gave us a keen insight into devilish tactics. In a fictional letter, the master devil, Screwtape, instructs the apprentice devil Wormwood, who is in training to become a more experienced devil:

“You will say that these are very small sins; and doubtless, like all young tempters, you are anxious to be able to report spectacular wickedness. . . . It does not matter how small the sins are, provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light and out into the Nothing. . . . Indeed, the safest road to Hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”²⁴

C. S. Lewis also wrote: “A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. . . . You find out the strength of a wind by trying to walk against it, not by lying down.”²⁵

The Prophet Joseph Smith related from his own experience, “The nearer a person approaches the Lord,

Protection against the power of Lucifer and his hosts lies in the spirit of discernment through the gift of the Holy Ghost. This gift comes undeviatingly by personal revelation to those who strive to follow the counsel of the living prophets.



a greater power will be manifested by the adversary to prevent the accomplishment of His purposes.”²⁶

Our Defense: Stand Firm

However, we need not become paralyzed with fear of Satan’s power. He can have no power over us unless we permit it. He is really a coward, and if we stand firm, he will retreat. The Apostle James counseled: “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”²⁷ He cannot know our thoughts unless we speak them. And Nephi states that the devil “hath no power over the hearts” of righteous people.²⁸ We have heard comedians and others justify or explain their misdeeds by saying, “The devil made me do it.” I do not really think the devil can make us do anything. Certainly he can tempt and he can deceive, but he has no authority over us that we do not give him.

The power to resist Satan may be stronger than we realize. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “All beings who have bodies have power over those who have not. The devil has no power over us only as we permit him. The moment we revolt at anything which comes from God, the devil takes power.”²⁹

He also stated, “Wicked spirits have their bounds, limits, and laws by which they are governed.”³⁰ So Satan and his angels are not all-powerful. One of Satan’s approaches is to persuade a person who has transgressed that there is no hope of forgiveness. But there is always hope. Most sins, no matter how grievous, may be repented of if the desire is sincere enough.

Discerning Evil

Satan has had great success with this gullible generation. As a consequence, he and his angels have victimized literally

hosts of people. There is, however, an ample shield against the power of Lucifer and his hosts. This protection lies in the spirit of discernment through the gift of the Holy Ghost. This gift comes undeviatingly by personal revelation to those who strive to obey the commandments of the Lord and to follow the counsel of the living prophets.

This personal revelation will surely come to all whose eyes are single to the glory of God, for it is promised that their bodies will be “filled with light, and there shall be no darkness” in them.³¹ All who come unto Christ by obedience to the covenants and ordinances of the gospel can thwart Satan’s efforts. The humble followers of the divine Master need not be deceived by the devil if they will be honest and true to their fellow men and women, go to the house of the Lord, receive the sacrament worthily, observe the Sabbath day, pay their tithes and offerings, offer contrite prayers, engage in the Lord’s work, and follow those who preside over them.

There are forces that will save us from the ever-increasing lying, disorder, violence, chaos, destruction, misery, and deceit that are upon the earth. Those saving forces are the everlasting principles, covenants, and ordinances of the eternal gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. These same principles, covenants, and ordinances are coupled with the rights and powers of the priesthood of Almighty God. We of this Church are the possessors and custodians of these commanding powers that can and do roll back much of the power of Satan on the earth. We believe that we hold these mighty forces in trust for all who have died, for all who are now living, and for the yet unborn.

My prayer is that through the spreading of righteousness, the evil hands of the destroyer can be stayed so that he will not be permitted to curse the whole world. I pray that God will overlook our weaknesses, our frailties, and our many shortcomings and generously forgive us of our misdeeds. May He bring solace to the suffering, comfort to those who grieve, and peace to the brokenhearted. ■

NOTES

1. See D&C 3:1; 65:2.
2. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 373.
3. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1941), 257.
4. Alma 5:40.
5. 2 Corinthians 2:11.
6. *King Lear*, act 3, scene 4, line 148.
7. *The Merchant of Venice*, act 1, scene 3, line 99.
8. 2 Corinthians 11:14; see also 2 Nephi 9:9.
9. 2 Nephi 28:21–22.
10. In James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1965–75), 6:179.
11. See Jacob 7:4.
12. D&C 76:25.
13. Moses 4:1.
14. See Moses 4:3–4.
15. Moses 4:2.
16. See Revelation 12:4; D&C 29:36.
17. Moses 5:13.
18. Moses 4:4.
19. See D&C 76:25.
20. D&C 76:26.
21. See Moses 6:49.
22. 2 Nephi 2:11.
23. 1 Peter 5:8.
24. *The Screwtape Letters* (1961), 56.
25. *Mere Christianity* (1960), 124.
26. In Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* (1945), 132.
27. James 4:7.
28. See 1 Nephi 22:26.
29. *The Words of Joseph Smith*, ed. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook (1980), 60.
30. *History of the Church*, 4:576.
31. D&C 88:67.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

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

1. Ask family members to imagine they are sitting around a fire. Talk about the dangers of playing with fire. How is this like becoming “intrigued by Satan and his mysteries”? Share some of President Faust’s examples of how we can overcome Satan’s deceptions. Challenge the family to be righteous examples in thwarting his plans.
2. Bring a small toy car, a picture of a car, or have the family look at a car nearby. What would happen if someone were driving and the brakes failed? Cite President Faust’s example of our own inner braking system. Testify of the importance of strengthening our sensitivity to the Holy Ghost and heeding the still, small voice to combat the devil.
3. Using the article, write down some of Satan’s devices and some of the spiritual tools we have to combat Satan. Talk with family members about the devil’s tactics, and explain that we have the power to defeat him. Testify that righteous living can thwart Satan.

REAL CONFIDENCE

*Want to feel better about yourself?
Want to gain confidence? Then this
year's Mutual theme is for you.*

BY THE YOUNG WOMEN AND YOUNG MEN
GENERAL PRESIDENCIES

At times, we all wrestle with thoughts of insecurity. Have you ever asked yourself: “What can I do to feel more confident?” or “How can I feel better about myself?”

There's a great answer in the scriptures. It says that if you have charity and “let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God” (D&C 121:45). That kind of confidence is true confidence. If you are confident in God's presence, you can feel confident around anyone else.

“So,” you might ask, “what does *virtue* mean?” President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, says that *virtue* has many definitions—moral excellence, right action and thinking, goodness of character, and chastity.¹

And then you might ask: “How can I do this? Is there something to guide me?” Yes, there is. The principles and doctrines in *For the Strength of Youth* will guide you to make decisions that will qualify you for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. And if you have the Holy Ghost with you, you are, in a sense, living in the presence of God. Think of the confidence Heavenly Father has in you to send you His Spirit.

As you live the standards described in *For the Strength of Youth*, you are promised that the Lord “will increase your opportunities, expand your

2007
MUTUAL THEME

“Let virtue garnish thy thoughts
unceasingly; then shall thy confidence
wax strong in the presence of God”
(D&C 121:45).

vision, and strengthen you.”² You will become more and more virtuous, more and more confident.

But be careful. This is not the way the world tells you to have confidence. The world tells you that to be confident you have to be better than others in some way—that you need to have more things, more talent, more intelligence, more popularity. This simply is not true. That is counterfeit confidence.

The Lord’s standards are different from the world’s standards. While the world focuses on outward appearance, “the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). You are a child of God, and your divine nature is not inferior or superior to anyone. In fact, everyone—including you—has different talents and abilities. These are gifts of the Spirit given to you so you can perform your divine mission on the earth. Heavenly Father wants you to be happy, growing and becoming all that He intends for you to become.

When you experience opposition in your life, think of scriptural heroes. Like Moses, you can gain strength by praying and remembering that you are a child of God (see Moses 1:13,

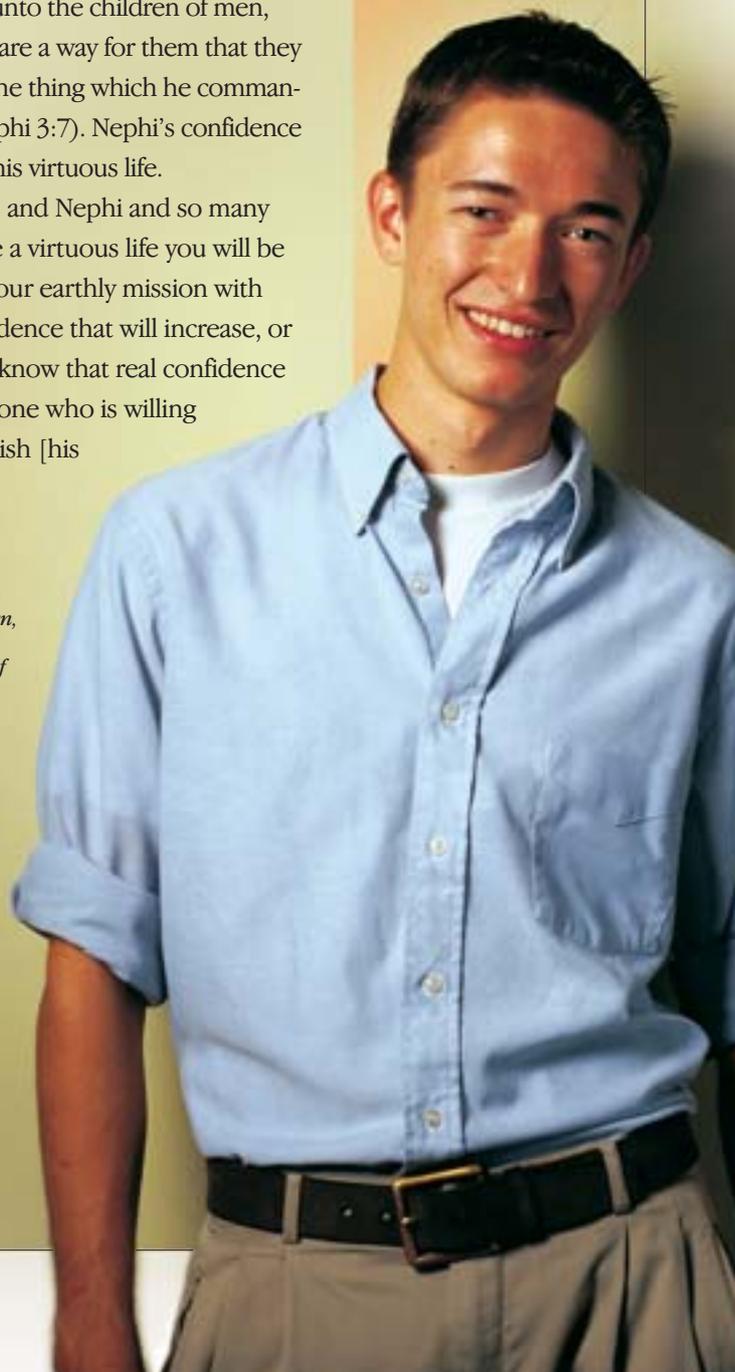
20–22). Nephi is another good example of one who had confidence in the Lord. When he and his brothers were asked to

obtain the brass plates, he confidently knew he could do it with the Lord’s help. He said, “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them” (1 Nephi 3:7). Nephi’s confidence came because of his virtuous life.

Just like Moses and Nephi and so many others, as you live a virtuous life you will be free to perform your earthly mission with confidence, confidence that will increase, or “wax strong.” We know that real confidence is available to anyone who is willing to “let virtue garnish [his or her] thoughts unceasingly.” ■

NOTES

1. See “How Near to the Angels,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 95.
2. *For the Strength of Youth* (2001), 42.



The Young Women general presidency: Susan W. Tanner (center), Julie B. Beck (left), Elaine S. Dalton (right). The Young Men general presidency: Charles W. Dahlquist II (center), Dean R. Burgess (left), Michael A. Neider (right).

Nephi's response to being asked to obtain the brass plates sets an example for us all: "I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them."

I CAN DO IT! CONFIDENCE BUILDERS

If you want to grow more and more confident, here are some things you can do:

- Pray, as Moses did, that the Lord will help you remember that you are His child and that you have an important work to do.
- Make a list of your strengths and good qualities.
- Read and ponder your patriarchal blessing, or prepare to receive one.
- Serve others, and write in your journal how service makes you feel.
- Eat well and exercise. Your body is a gift from God, and good nutrition and physical activity will lift your mood and help you feel better about yourself.
- Offer prayers of gratitude, and record your gratitude in a journal.
- Develop your talents.
- Keep the commandments.

Remember that confidence does not come by being better than someone else. It comes from knowing you are a child of God and doing what He would have you do.

HOW TO HAVE GOOD THOUGHTS UNCEASINGLY

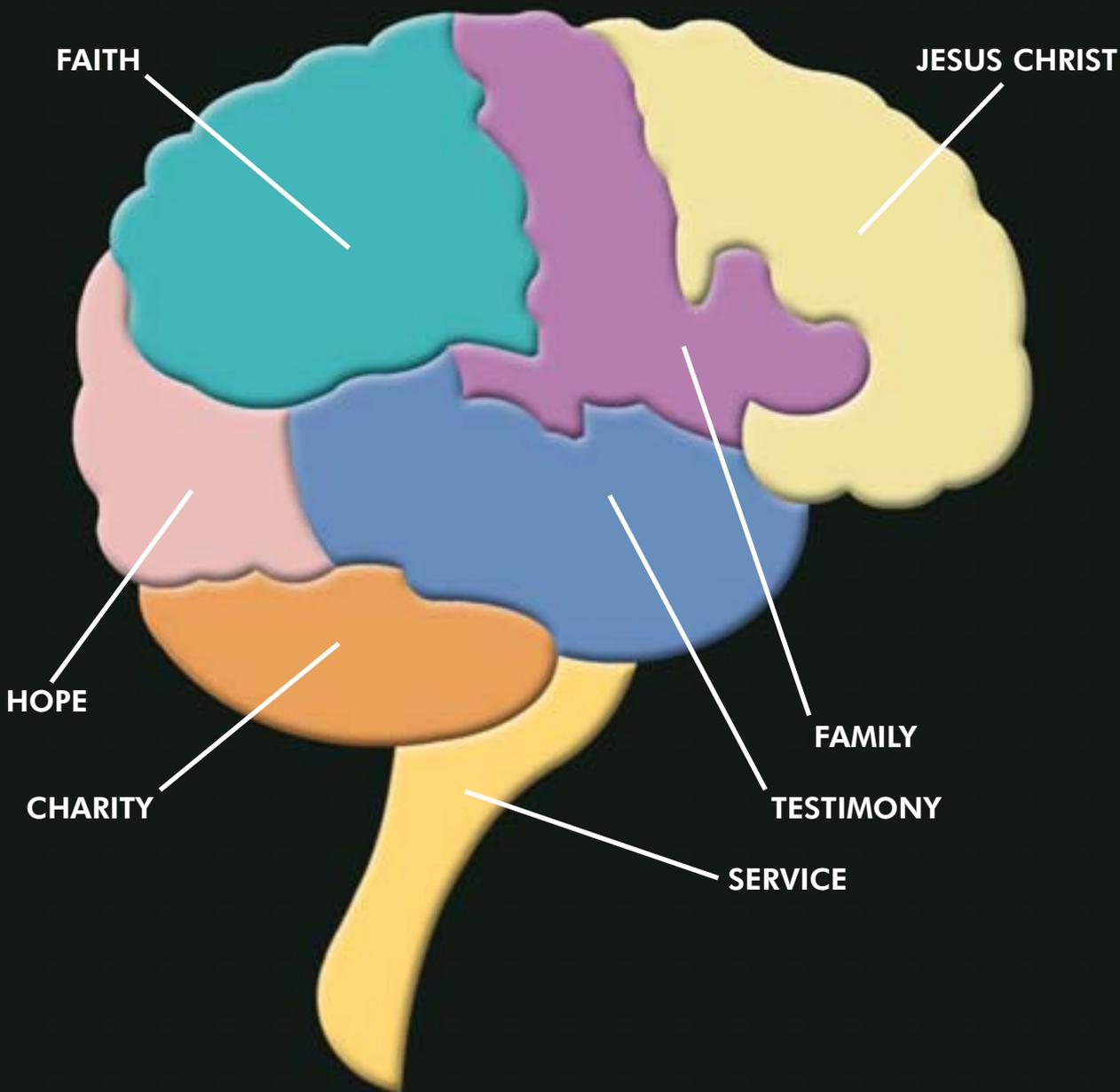
Here are some Mutual activities and family home evening ideas that can help you let virtue garnish your thoughts:

- Read the scriptures listed in Guide to the Scriptures under "Thoughts" and "Virtue."
- Memorize or review the thirteenth article of faith. What does it mean to you? List ways you can "seek after these things."
- List synonyms for the words *virtue* and *virtuous*. How can you apply these words in your life?
- What does *pure* mean? Why does water need to be pure before we drink it? Why should our thoughts be pure?

- Read the account of Joseph fleeing Potiphar's wife in Genesis 39. When should you flee and get yourself out? How can you be in the world but not of the world?
- Make a booklet with a favorite scripture or thought from each young man and young woman in your ward.
- Choose a "scripture of the week," and post it someplace where you can read it every day. See if you can memorize 52 scriptures this year—one every week. If you memorize scripture mastery scriptures, you're halfway there!
- Make a commitment not to use any profanity.
- With your quorum or class, make a commitment to avoid any form of pornography. How will you help each other?
- As a family, decide on ways you can show your love and support to each other through positive words and actions.
- Read and study the sections "Entertainment and the Media" and "Language" in *For the Strength of Youth*. Highlight the word *Spirit* in those sections. List ways the Spirit will bless your life as you live these standards.
- Discuss Internet and media safety as a class or quorum and as a family.
- "Holiness to the Lord" is inscribed on our temples. Discuss how virtuous thoughts help prepare you to attend the temple. If possible, attend the temple to perform baptisms for the dead.
- Memorize two favorite hymns you can hum or sing to replace bad thoughts with inspired words.
- Work on Duty to God or Personal Progress. The spiritual development section of Duty to God or the integrity value in Personal Progress will especially help you understand more about purity and the blessings of letting "virtue garnish [your] thoughts unceasingly."



WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?



**"LET VIRTUE GARNISH THY THOUGHTS UNCEASINGLY; THEN SHALL THY
CONFIDENCE WAX STRONG IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD"
(D&C 121:45).**

The Earrings

The day after my wife lost her gold earring, I realized we had lost something so much more important.

BY VIKTOR MAKAROV

Once, for my wife's birthday, I gave her a pair of wonderful gold earrings. They suited her very well since she has a long, graceful neck, and the earrings were made in the shape of concentric circles bound together so they could move and play in the sunlight. My wife, Yelena, looked stunning whenever she wore them. She loved these earrings.

Then came the day of that best of all holiday celebrations, our branch Christmas party. I was in charge of this activity for our branch in Penza, Russia, so I was hurrying, wanting to get there as quickly as possible to make sure everything was ready for the activity. Yelena did not hurry but continued carefully getting ready. When my patience gave out, I told her to stop with her makeup, insisting that she looks great even without it. That was my mistake. She told me that she wasn't going anywhere, and I would have to go to the party alone.

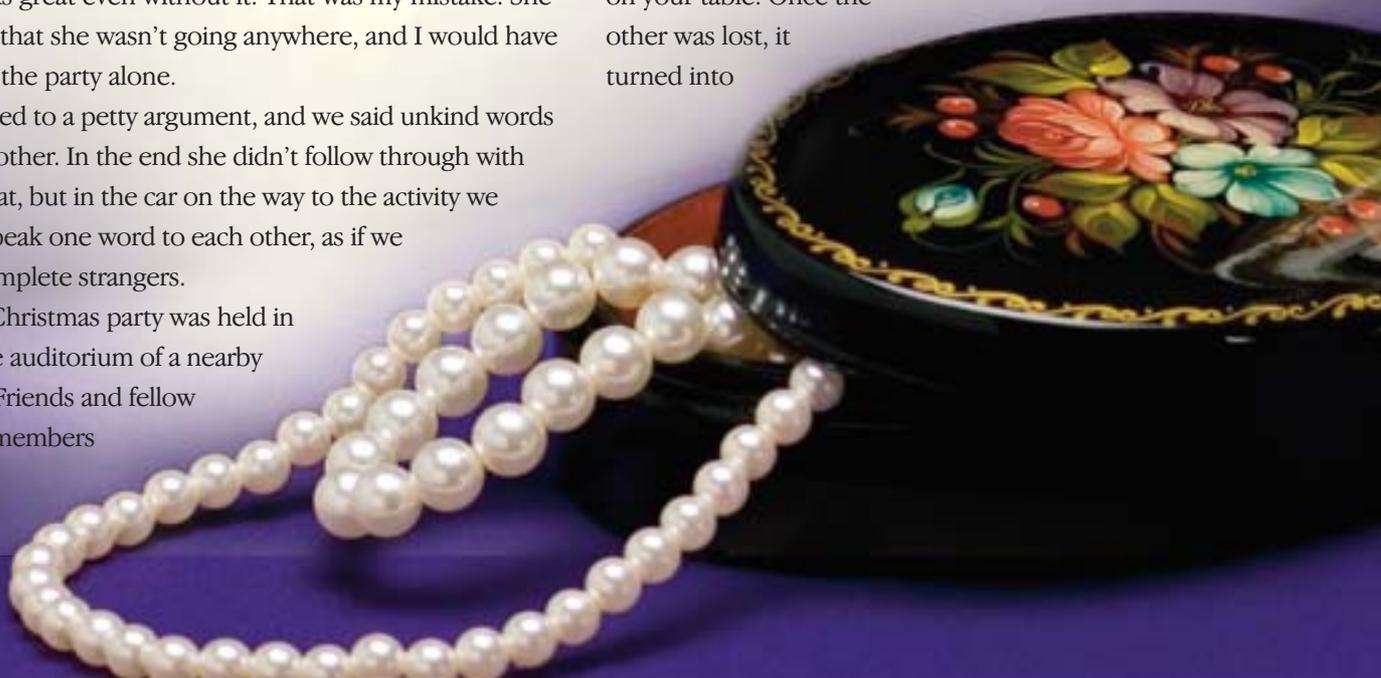
This led to a petty argument, and we said unkind words to each other. In the end she didn't follow through with her threat, but in the car on the way to the activity we didn't speak one word to each other, as if we were complete strangers.

Our Christmas party was held in the large auditorium of a nearby school. Friends and fellow branch members

had helped us decorate the room with flowers and pictures of our Lord's life and death. When we arrived we sat down in our seats, and my wife discovered that she was wearing only one earring. This was an unpleasant surprise, and we completely forgot about our argument. We looked all around us, but in vain—the earring was nowhere to be found. We decided it would be best to forget about it for the moment and watch the wonderful concert our friends had prepared.

Although the concert really was fabulous, my wife and I weren't able to fully enjoy it. Our day was spoiled, and we returned home in low spirits. We were sad to lose the earring, not only because it was expensive and beautiful, but more important because it was a gift of love for my wife.

When I woke up the next day, I realized we had lost something else much more important than a gold earring: the unity between us. Turning to Yelena, I said, "Look at this other earring. See how beautiful it is and how the light plays on it. Think about how much gold and effort were required to make it, and see how it's just lying there alone on your table. Once the other was lost, it turned into



PHOTOGRAPH BY EMILY LESHMAN, POSED BY MODELS



something far less than when it was part of a pair.

We are like this also. When we are united, we can be a beautiful, powerful, and creative force for good. But when we are not united, we don't have the same strength, power, or beauty."

Tears appeared on my wife's face. She came over and embraced me. Her voice shook as she spoke, but her words touched me from head to toe: "We should never argue. We should be like Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. We love each other, and we had our marriage sealed for eternity in the holy temple. The devil wants to destroy all families on earth, but he can't do it if we are united. I love you even more after this incident. God has shown us what a family really is."

I held her in my arms, tears streaming down my cheeks. Now I knew that I held in my arms my greatest blessing. ■



The Quest for Spiritual Knowledge



BY PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

There is a God! He does live! Even if it is difficult to explain in words alone how I know that, I know through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I will tell you of an experience I had before I was a General Authority that affected me profoundly. I sat on a plane next to a professed atheist who pressed his disbelief in God so urgently that I bore my testimony to him. “You are wrong,” I said. “There is a God. I *know* He lives!”

He protested, “You don’t *know*. Nobody knows that! You can’t *know* it!” When I would not yield, the atheist, who was an attorney, asked perhaps the ultimate question on the subject of testimony. “All right,” he said in a sneering, condescending way, “you say you know. Tell me *how* you know.”

When I attempted to answer, even though I held advanced academic degrees, I was helpless to communicate.

When I used the words *Spirit* and *witness*, the atheist responded, “I don’t know what you are talking about.” The words *prayer*, *discernment*, and *faith* were equally meaningless to him. “You see,” he said, “you don’t really know. If you did, you would be able to tell me *how* you know.”

I felt, perhaps, that I had borne my testimony to him unwisely and was at a loss as to what to do. Then came the experience! Something came into my mind. And I mention here a statement of the Prophet Joseph Smith: “A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas . . . and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.”¹

Such an idea came into my mind, and I said to the atheist, “Let me ask if you know what salt tastes like.”

“Of course I do,” was his reply.

“Then,” I said, “assuming that I have never tasted salt, explain to me just what it tastes like.”

After some thought, he said, “Well, I, uh, it is not sweet and it is not sour.”

“You’ve told me what it isn’t, not what it is.”

After several attempts, of course, he could



**You Cannot Force Spiritual Things
Use All Your Resources
Your Testimony Could Be Stronger
Than You Know
Find Your Testimony by Bearing It
You Can Do the Lord's Work
Learn by the Spirit**

not do it. He could not convey, in words alone, so ordinary an experience as tasting salt. I bore testimony to him once again and said, "I know there is a God. You ridiculed that testimony and said that if I *did* know, I would be able to tell you exactly *how* I know. My friend, spiritually speaking, I have tasted salt. I am no more able to convey to you in words how this knowledge has come than you are to tell me what salt tastes like. But I say to you again, there is a God! He does live! And just because you don't know, don't try to tell me that I don't know, for I do!"

As we parted, I heard him mutter, "I don't need your religion for a crutch! I don't need it."

From that experience forward, I have never been



We should not expect revelation to replace the spiritual or temporal intelligence that we have already received. Nor should we expect that the Spirit will get our attention by shouting or shaking us. Rather it whispers, as it did with the prophet Samuel.

The Still, Small Voice

The voice of the Spirit is described in the scriptures as being neither “loud” nor “harsh” (3 Nephi 11:3). It is “not a voice of thunder, neither . . . a voice of a great tumultuous noise,” but rather, “a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper,” and it can “pierce even to the very soul” (Helaman 5:30) and “cause [the heart] to burn” (3 Nephi 11:3). Remember, Elijah found the voice of the Lord was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but was a “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:12).

The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all.

embarrassed or ashamed that I could not explain in words alone everything I know spiritually. The Apostle Paul said it this way:

“We speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:13–14).

You Cannot Force Spiritual Things

There is something else to learn. A testimony is not thrust upon you; a testimony grows. We become taller in testimony like we grow taller in physical stature; we hardly know it happens because it comes by growth.

You cannot force spiritual things. Such words as *compel*, *coerce*, *constrain*, *pressure*, and *demand* do not describe our privileges with the Spirit. You can no more force the Spirit to respond than you can force a bean to sprout or an egg to hatch before its time. You can create a climate to foster growth, nourish, and protect; but you cannot force or compel: you must await the growth.

Do not be impatient to gain great spiritual knowledge. Let it grow, help it grow, but do not force it or you will open the way to be misled.

Use All Your Resources

We are expected to use the light and knowledge we already possess to work out our lives. We should not need a revelation to instruct us to be up and about our duty, for we have been told to do that already in the scriptures; nor should we expect revelation to replace the spiritual or temporal intelligence that we have already received—only to extend it. We must go about our life in an ordinary, workaday way, following the routines and rules and regulations that govern life.

Rules and regulations and commandments are valuable protection. If we need revealed instruction to alter our course, it will be waiting along the way as we arrive at the point of need. The counsel to be “anxiously engaged” is wise counsel indeed (see D&C 58:27).

Occasionally, it will press just firmly enough for us to pay heed. But most of the time, if we do not heed the gentle feeling, the Spirit will withdraw and wait until we come seeking and listening and say in our manner and expression, like Samuel of ancient times, “Speak [Lord], for thy servant heareth” (1 Samuel 3:10).

Your Testimony Could Be Stronger Than You Know

Now, do not feel hesitant or ashamed if you do not know everything. Nephi said, “I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things” (1 Nephi 11:17).

There may be more power in your testimony than even you realize. The Lord said to the Nephites:

“Whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were

baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, *and they knew it not*” (3 Nephi 9:20; emphasis added).

Several years ago I met one of our sons in the mission field in a distant part of the world. He had been there for a year. His first question was this: “Dad, what can I do to grow spiritually? I have tried so hard to grow spiritually, and I just haven’t made any progress.”

That was his perception: to me it was otherwise. I could hardly believe the maturity, the spiritual growth that he had gained in just one year. He “knew it not,” for it had come as growth, not as a startling spiritual experience.

Y*ou can no more force the Spirit to respond than you can force a bean to sprout or an egg to hatch before its time. You can create a climate to foster growth, nourish, and protect; but you cannot force or compel: you must await the growth.*



To speak out
is the test of
your faith.

*Bear testimony of the
things that you hope
are true, as an act
of faith.*

Find Your Testimony by Bearing It

It is not unusual to have a missionary say, “How can I bear testimony until I get one? How can I testify that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and that the gospel is true? If I do not have such a testimony, would that not be dishonest?”

Oh, if I could teach you this one principle:

*a testimony is to be found in the
bearing of it!* Somewhere in

your quest for spiritual knowledge, there is that “leap of faith,” as the philosophers call it. It is the moment when you have gone to the edge of the light and stepped into the darkness to discover that the way is lighted ahead for just a footstep or two. “The

FIRE IN MY HEART

BY TYLER ANDRUS

It took me until I was 15 to publicly bear my testimony. I had never doubted the truthfulness of the gospel, but my first year of seminary gave me the beginnings of my own testimony of the Church and the Book of Mormon.

During the summer after that first year of seminary, our stake held a youth conference at a campsite. The conference concluded with a testimony meeting in which I had no intention of bearing my testimony. Soon the Spirit began to whisper that I needed to get up and bear my testimony. I suppressed it, but I had a continued feeling that I should get up. I finally decided that I would bear my testimony, and as I did a warm feeling came over me so much so that I felt a burning in my bosom. I had a fire inside my heart.

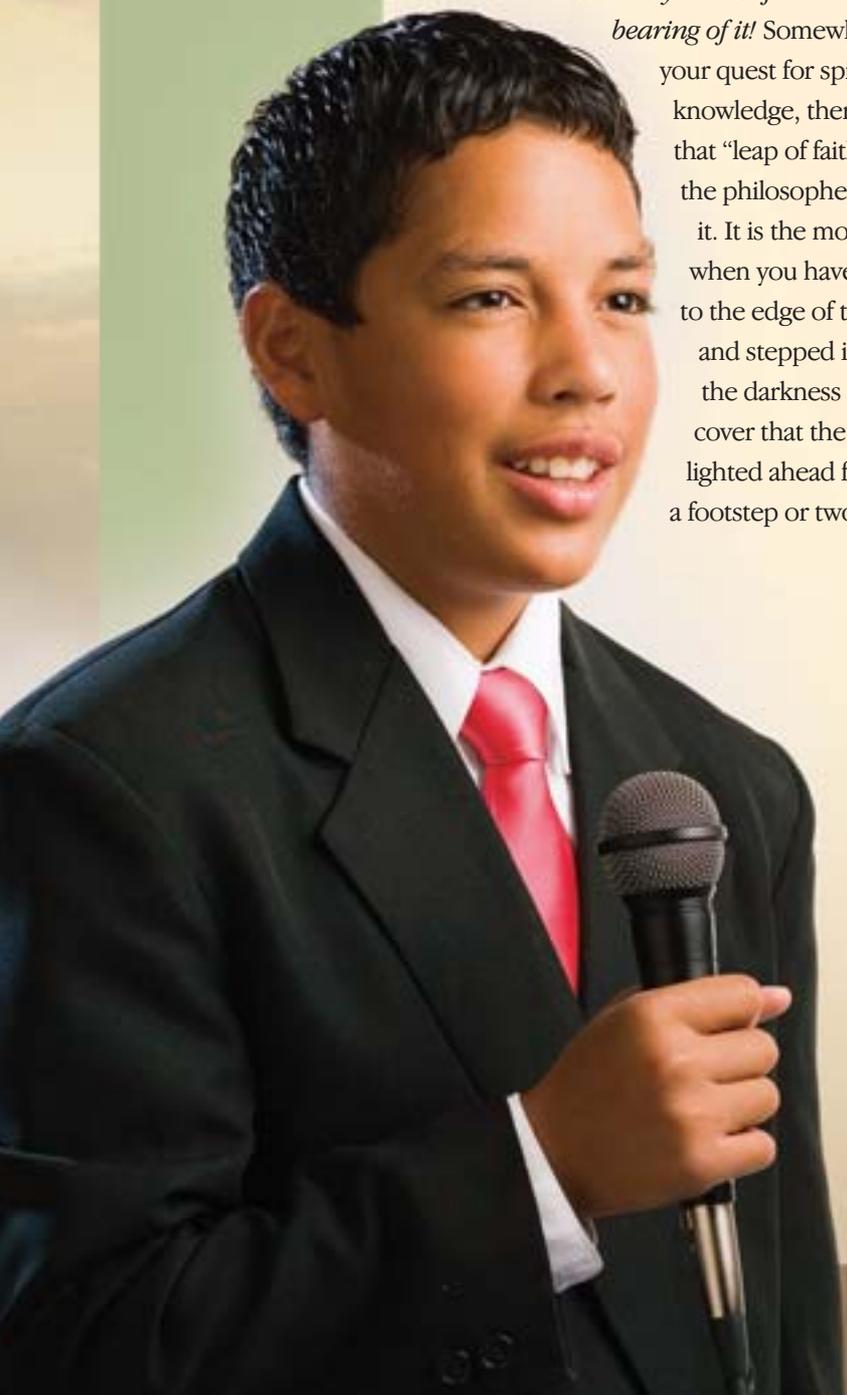
I have since learned the importance of bearing my testimony, as every time I do my testimony grows. I will continue to make bearing my testimony a lifelong practice. ■

spirit of man is,” as the scripture says, indeed “the candle of the Lord” (Proverbs 20:27).

It is one thing to receive a witness from what you have read or what another has said; and that is a necessary beginning. It is quite another to have the Spirit confirm to you in your bosom that what you have testified is true. Can you not see that it will be supplied as you share it? As you give that which you have, there is a replacement, with increase!

To speak out is the test of your faith.

Bear testimony of the things that you hope are true, as an act of faith. It is something of an experiment, like the experiment that the prophet Alma proposed to his followers. We begin with faith—not with a perfect knowledge



of things. That sermon in the 32nd chapter of Alma is one of the greatest messages in holy writ, for it is addressed to the beginner, to the humble seeker. And it holds a key to a witness of the truth.

The Spirit and testimony of Christ will come to you for the most part when, and remain with you only if, you share it. In that process is the very essence of the gospel.

Is not this a perfect demonstration of Christianity? You cannot find it, nor keep it, nor enlarge it unless and until you are willing to share it. It is by giving it away freely that it becomes yours.

You Can Do the Lord's Work

There is great power in this work, spiritual power. The ordinary member of the Church, like you, having received the gift of the Holy Ghost by confirmation, can do the work of the Lord.

Years ago a friend told this experience. He was 17 years old and with his companion stopped at a cottage in the southern states. It was his first day in the mission field and was his first door. A gray-haired woman stood inside the screen and asked what they wanted. His companion nudged him to proceed. Frightened and somewhat tongue-tied, he finally blurted out, "As man is God once was, and as God is man may become."

Strangely enough, she was interested and asked where he got that. He answered, "It's in the Bible." She left the door for a moment, returned with her Bible. Commenting that she was a minister of a congregation, she handed it to him and said, "Here, show me."

He took the Bible and nervously thumbed back and forth through it. Finally he handed it back saying, "Here, I can't find it. I'm not even sure that it's in there, and even if it is, I couldn't find it. I'm just a poor farm boy from out in Cache Valley in Utah. I haven't had much training. But I come from a family where we live the gospel of Jesus Christ. And it's done so much for our family that I've accepted a call to



The day of miracles has not ceased. The spiritual gifts are with the Church. Choice among them is the gift of the Holy Ghost!

come on a mission for two years, at my own expense, to tell people how I feel about it."

After half a century, he could not hold back the tears as he told me how she pushed open the door and said, "Come in, my boy. I'd like to hear what you have to say."

Learn by the Spirit

There is so much more to say. I could speak of prayer, of fasting, of priesthood and authority, of worthiness—all essential to revelation. When they are understood, it all fits together—perfectly. But some things one must learn individually, and alone, taught by the Spirit.

I know by experience too sacred to touch upon that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that the gift of the Holy Ghost conferred upon us at our confirmation is a divine gift. The Book of Mormon is true! This is the Lord's Church! Jesus is the Christ! There presides over us a prophet of God! The day of miracles has not ceased, neither have angels ceased to appear and minister unto man! The spiritual gifts are with the Church. Choice among them is the gift of the Holy Ghost! ■

From a talk given at a seminar for new mission presidents on June 25, 1982.

NOTE

1. *History of the Church*, 3:381.

All Things Bear Record of Him

BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

He is the Way, the Light, the Bread of Life, the Living Water, the Chief Cornerstone. Throughout His New Testament ministry, the Savior related His divine role and teachings to concepts the people could understand.

These young adults in Germany have also learned that “all things bear record of [Jesus Christ]” (Moses 6:63). Here they share their witness of Him.

The Way

“Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?”

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:5–6).

René Cyron:

“I grew up in a part-member family. I had to make up my mind early which way I would follow. I was impressed by the Bible stories my mother told me. I saw how my mom lived. I saw how my father’s family lived. I saw how people I admired at church lived. I knew

that they followed the Savior’s way, and I decided to be baptized.

“Now when I make choices, I think of what I have learned of Him, and I try to emulate Him. He has shown me a more perfect way. He can help us develop and express the qualities within us. I would be miserable if I couldn’t change, but I know that through Him, change is possible.”

“I Stand at the Door, and Knock”

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man bear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

René Cyron:

“The Savior is knocking because He loves us. He has much to offer, but He has given me the freedom to choose to open the door to Him or not. He would teach me, help me with my strengths and weaknesses.

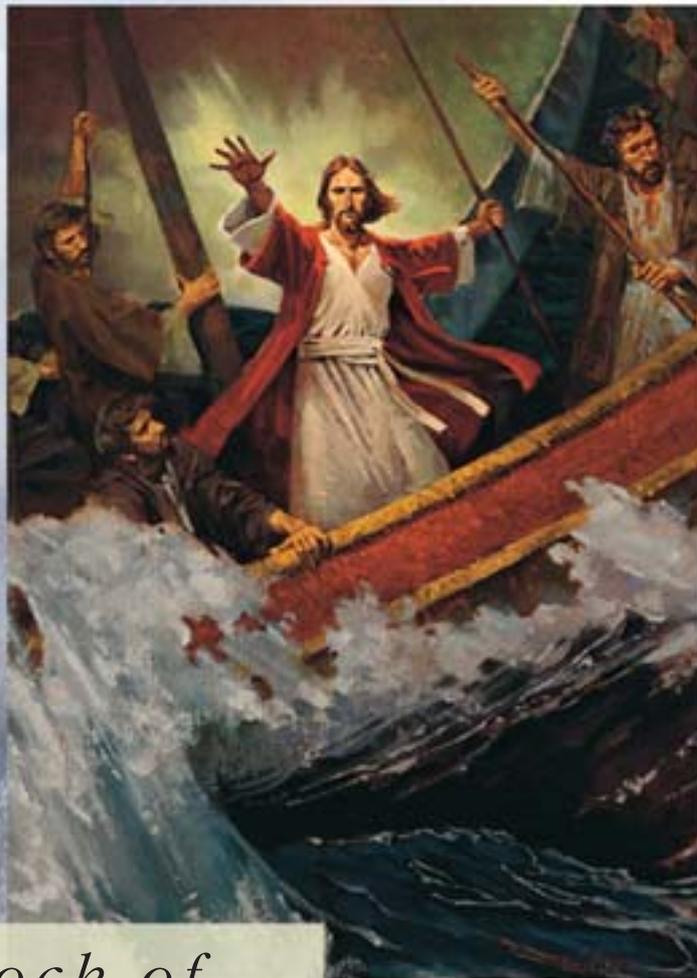
“I can open the door by being meek and accepting that He can teach me. I can open the door by accepting what is taught, recognizing I have things to change.



René Cyron



He Is the Way



The Rock of

Our Redeemer

“I hope I will always recognize Him at the door, because others are knocking too. And I am asked to do the same, to find others and invite them to come unto Him. Through us, they should be able to get a glimpse of Him.”

The Rock of Our Redeemer

“Therefore whosoever beareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon

that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock” (Matthew 7:24–25).

“Remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; . . . which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall” (Helaman 5:12).

Maike Adler:

“I grew up as a member, but about the time I was 14, I had to decide how committed I was—which way my life would go. Would I go with my friends to the parties they kept inviting me to, or would I go to seminary? I talked to my parents, and I

prayed. I gained a testimony, and I knew I had to go to seminary.

“Without the Savior, my whole life would be totally different—my friends, my values. I wouldn’t know why I’m here. There are a lot of people with advice, but the values and morals of the world change and shift. If I’m built on something that’s not firm and it shifts, I have to rebuild every time. You have to have something unchanging to build on. Christ never changes. His right is always right. You can lean on Him. He never lets you fall.”

The Light of the World

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).



Maike Adler

Jan-David Wohlleben:

“His gospel is a light that gives clear direction in life, a direction I can cling to. Through His teachings, we gain understanding of why we’re on earth. Through His Atonement, we can return to God through repentance. I’m more thoughtful now of the things I do, more careful with the words I say.

“As a member of Christ’s Church, you never have to be alone. There is always help

available. He gives me comfort; He helps me with my challenges; He helps me with decisions when I ask with a sincere heart in prayer. Following Him has changed my life.”

Living Water

“Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. . . .

“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:10, 14).

Jasmin Zanardo:

“I am grateful for the gift of the gospel. I have many friends outside of the Church. They say: ‘I don’t know all the things about God, but I see the way you live, and I admire you.’ It makes me feel so grateful that I have something to hold to, because they don’t; they’re still thirsty.



Jan-David Wohlleben



The Light of the World

The Bread of Life

“We should be witnesses of Christ to others so they know Him, so they can come and drink of the water of everlasting life.”

The Chief Cornerstone

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. . . .

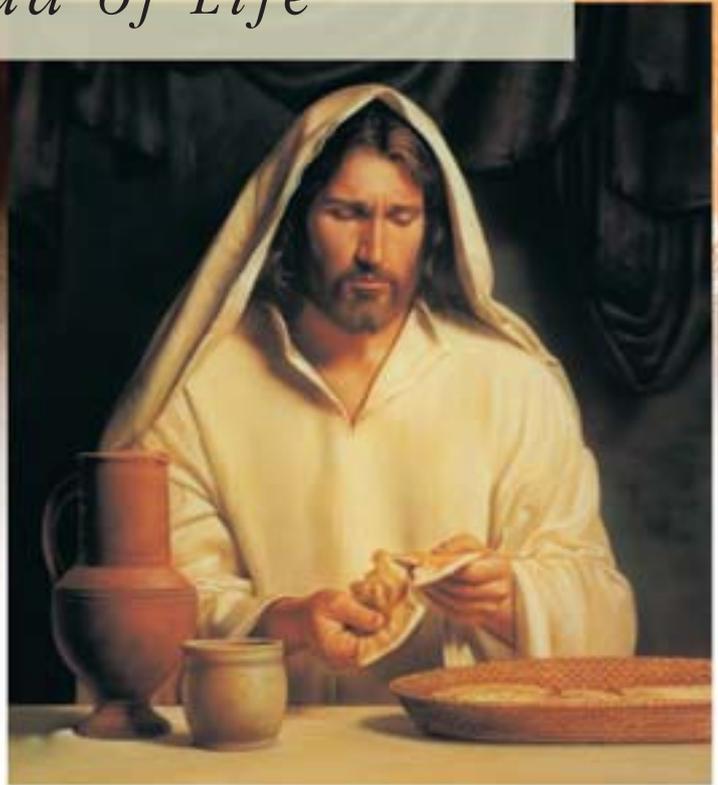
“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

“In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:13, 19–21).

Jasmin Zanardo:

“The world is confused because what the world offers isn’t enough. There are many religions with truth. But the gospel we have is complete. The foundation we have is firm.”



The Bread of Life

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (John 6:35).

Jasmin Zanardo:

“I was born in the gospel, but everyone has to find out for himself or herself at some point if the Church is true. I was 12 when I wanted to know, and I found out. Through the Atonement of Jesus, I came alive. Through some difficult trials, I have been comforted to know who the Savior is and what He has done for us. His love for us is so great. He sacrificed Himself for us. He is my life.” ■



Jasmin Zanardo

Become an Instrument in the Hands of God



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.

What Does It Mean to Be an Instrument in the Hands of God?

Alma 26:3: “This is the blessing which hath been bestowed upon us, that we have been made instruments in the hands of God to bring about this great work.”

Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president: “What does it mean to be an instrument in everyday terms? I think it means to nurture others. Joseph Smith called it acting ‘according to those sympathies’ in our hearts. . . . There are countless ways to be instruments in God’s hands. For example, be the kind of visiting teacher you’ve always wanted; ask a young single adult about what she likes to do rather than why she’s not married; share instead of accumulate; carefully choose your dress, speech, and choice of entertainment; smile at your husband or child who knows they’ve caused frustration and heartache; put your

arm around a young woman; teach in nursery with a happy heart; show by your attitude that you are finding joy in the journey” (“Sweet Moments,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 107, 109).

Kathleen H. Hughes, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency: “The Lord has touched my spirit time and again, and more often than not, His touch has reached me through the hand of a friend. . . . Perhaps [we] would feel more of His love if [we] looked for His hand in the actions of those who care for [us]. . . . God knows the needs of His children, and He often works through us, prompting us to help one another. When we act on such promptings, we tread on holy ground, for we are allowed the opportunity to serve as an agent of God in answering a prayer” (“What Greater Goodness Can We Know: Christlike Friends,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2005, 74–76).

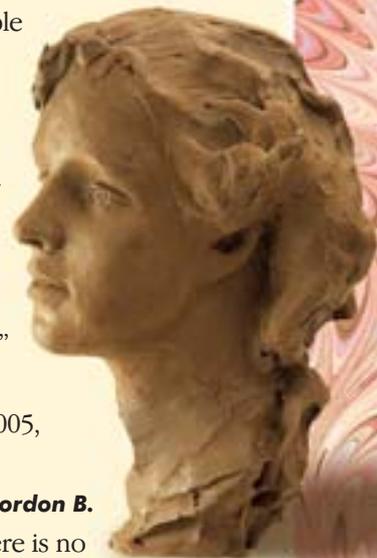
What Can I Do as an Instrument in the Hands of God?

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency:

“You can be powerful instruments in the hands of God to help bring about

this great work. . . . You can do something for another person that no one else ever born can do. . . . Blessings and a comforting peace will come to you if you can love God ‘with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself’ [Luke 10:27]. . . . If you have done your best, which you usually do, your humble offering, whatever it may be, will be acceptable and pleasing to the Lord” (“Instruments in the Hands of God,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 115–16).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “There is no end to the good we can do, to the influence we can have with others. Let us not dwell on the critical or the negative. Let us pray for strength; let us pray for capacity and desire to assist others. Let us radiate the light of the gospel at all times and all places, that the Spirit of the Redeemer may radiate from us. In the words of the Lord to Joshua . . . , ‘be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God [will be] with thee whithersoever thou goest’ (Joshua 1:9)” (“The Need for Greater Kindness,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 61). ■



Good to Know

BY KONG NHEAN SEREY,
AS TOLD TO PHYLLIS GUNDERSON

When I was 19, I left my small village in central Cambodia to live with my older brother in the capital city of Phnom Penh. Several years earlier my brother had met two young men wearing white shirts, ties, and name tags. Now my brother introduced me to the gospel and baptized me into the Church.

When I was baptized, my district president, President Pen Vibol, told me, “Memorize the Articles of Faith. They explain everything that is good in the Church, things you should always remember.” I thought this was wise advice, so I memorized all 13 and reviewed them regularly. After all, if someone asked me about Christianity, I wanted to be able to explain my faith. But I never imagined how important President Vibol’s advice would turn out to be.

My brother always encouraged me to improve myself and get an education. A few years after I was baptized, I was able to pass the English university entrance test, and I received a four-year scholarship to study international marketing at Brigham Young University–Hawaii.

But as difficult as the entrance test was, the hardest part was still ahead—getting an American visa. Permission to enter the United States is difficult and expensive. Sometimes permission is denied even for students who have scholarships to attend American universities. I filled out the proper forms, made an appointment for an interview at the U.S. Embassy, and soon found myself sitting across the desk from a young man with blue eyes.

“There are a lot of American universities,” the interviewer said. “Why do you want to go to BYU–Hawaii?”

“Because I’m a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and it’s a Church-owned university,” I replied.

The interviewer shuffled his papers. “I see your brother is already there,” he said. I knew that the embassy didn’t like more than one member of a family to leave the country at the same time.

“Yes,” I admitted. “My older brother is attending BYU–Hawaii.” The interview wasn’t looking good.

“Can your parents support you?” was the next question. “My father is a farmer, and my mother is a seller,” I said. I told him they didn’t make much money.

“Then how can you afford to study in the United States?” asked the interviewer.

I pulled out my acceptance letter and explained that I had a scholarship to attend the university.

After looking at the letter, the interviewer reached into his desk drawer and pulled out a small card. “Recite four of these Articles of Faith,” he said.

I knew them as well as I knew my own name. “We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost,” I began. After I had finished the third, the interviewer stopped me.

“OK, great!” he said, putting the card back in his desk. “You can pick up your visa tomorrow.”

I don’t know why the interviewer had an Articles of Faith card in his desk, but I was grateful I didn’t have to think twice when he asked me to recite them. Knowing the Articles of Faith may not always bring such dramatic results, but they’ll always be good to know. ■



The Benefits of Bats

1. Bats are the only mammals that can fly. They have wings made of skin stretched over their elongated forelimbs.

2. Bats are highly intelligent and have large brains relative to their body size. They are capable of complex social interactions and have been observed using tools.

3. Bats are important pollinators and seed dispersers. They play a crucial role in the reproduction of many plants and trees.

4. Bats are natural pest controllers. They consume large quantities of insects, including mosquitoes and agricultural pests, helping to reduce the need for pesticides.

5. Bats are a source of food for many other animals, including birds, snakes, and mammals. They are an important part of the food chain.

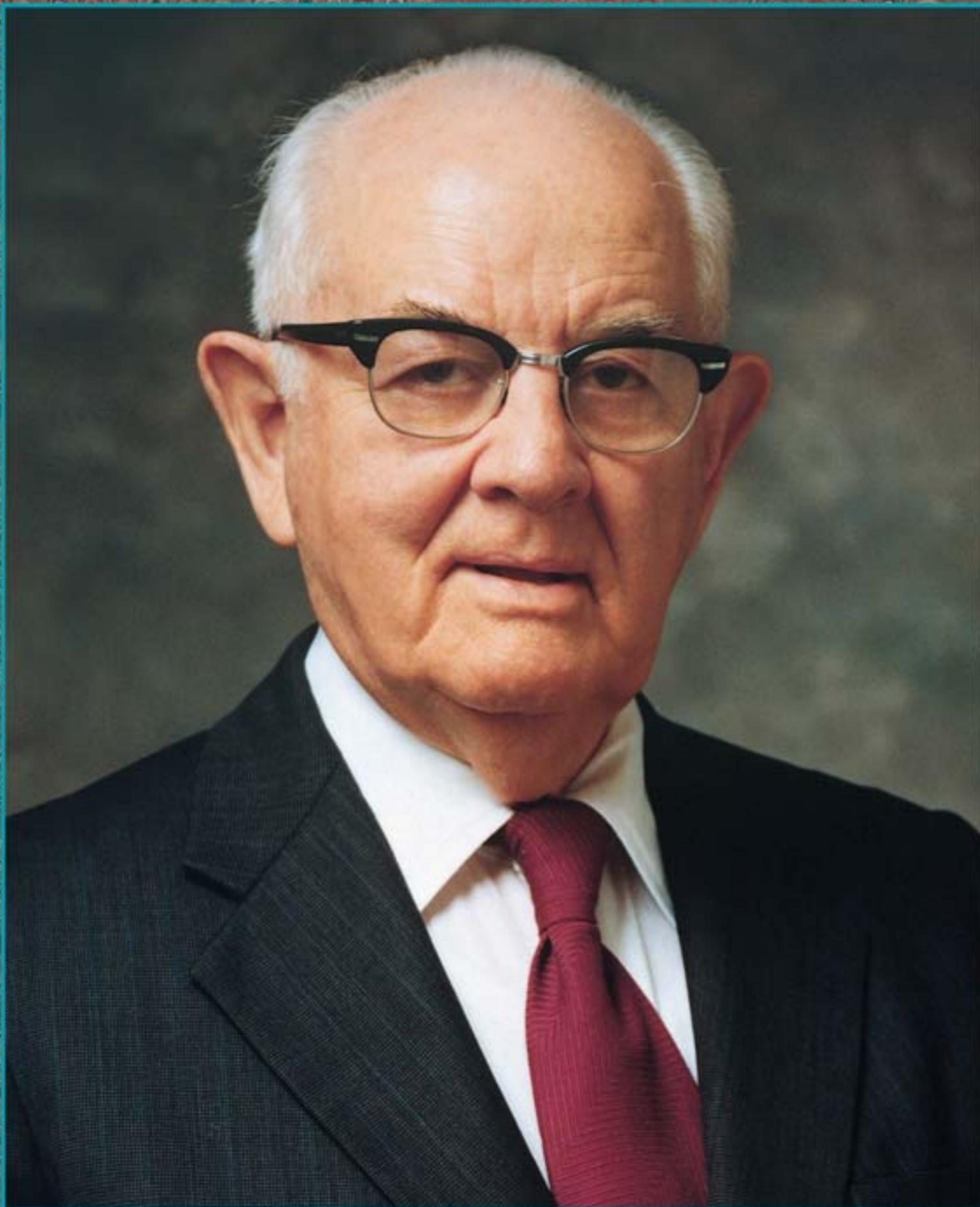
6. Bats are highly adaptable and can survive in a wide range of environments, from deserts to rainforests.

7. Bats are long-lived and have a low reproductive rate. They can live for up to 20 years in the wild.

8. Bats are highly resilient and can recover from population declines more quickly than many other species.

9. Bats are a source of traditional medicine in many cultures. They are believed to have various health benefits.

10. Bats are a source of inspiration for scientists and engineers. Their unique adaptations, such as echolocation and flight, have inspired the development of new technologies.



Spencer W. Kimball

Man of Action

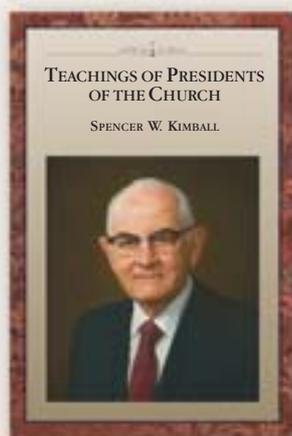
*President Kimball lived what he taught:
“It is not so much what we know that is important,
as what we do and what we are.”*

BY GARRETT H. GARFF
Curriculum Department

In 1981 Elder Robert D. Hales, then a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, said of President Spencer W. Kimball, “He is a man of action, demonstrated by the simple sign on his desk that says, ‘Do It.’”¹

As twelfth President of the Church, from December 1973 to November 1985, this “man of action” encouraged Latter-day Saints to avoid complacency and to reach for ever-greater levels of gospel performance. “We must lengthen our stride,” he said.² He further counseled: “Let us remember that it is not so much what we know that is important, as what we do and what we are. The Master’s plan is a program of doing, of living, not merely knowing. Knowledge itself is not the end. It is how we righteously live and apply that knowledge in our own lives and how we apply it to help others that describes our character.”³

Throughout his life, President Kimball showed his commitment to living the gospel. His teachings, in turn, offer practical as well as inspiring counsel that can help each of us live the gospel more fully. The following examples are taken from *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball*, which is the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society curriculum for 2007 in 26 languages, including English Braille.



Prayer

One of the most trying experiences in Spencer W. Kimball’s life was losing his mother, who died when he was 11 years old. He recalled that the news “came as a thunderbolt. I ran from the house out in the backyard to be alone in my deluge of tears. Out of sight and sound, away from everybody, I sobbed and sobbed. . . . My eleven-year-old heart seemed to burst.”

Even at this young age, however, Spencer knew of the comfort and peace that prayer could bring. During this time of sorrow, a family friend wrote, “My children wept with [my wife and me] as we heard of the prayers of little Spencer and how the loss of his mother weighed so heavily upon his little heart and yet how bravely he battled with his grief and sought comfort from the only source.”⁴

Of prayer, President Kimball taught: “Prayer is such a privilege—not only to speak to our Father in Heaven, but also to receive love and inspiration from him. At the end of our prayers, we need to do some intense listening—even for several minutes. We have prayed for counsel and help. Now we must ‘be still, and know that [he is] God.’ (Ps. 46:10.)”⁵

“Learning the language of prayer is a joyous, lifetime



Above: President Kimball had a lifelong love of scripture study.

Below: The Andrew and Olive Kimball family, 1897. Two-year-old Spencer is on his father's lap.

Opposite page: Young Spencer around the time of his marriage to Camilla Eyring (lower photograph).

experience. Sometimes ideas flood our mind as we listen after our prayers. Sometimes feelings press upon us. A spirit of calmness assures us that all will be well. But always, if we have been honest and earnest, we will experience a good feeling—a feeling of warmth for our Father in Heaven and a sense of his love for us. It has sorrowed me that some of us have not learned the meaning of that calm, spiritual warmth, for it is a witness to us that our prayers have been heard. And since our Father in Heaven loves us with more love than we have even for ourselves, it means that we can trust in his goodness, we can trust in him; it means that if we continue praying and living as we should, our Father's hand will guide and bless us.”⁶

Scripture Study

As a boy of 14, Spencer Kimball heard a sermon in which the speaker asked who in the congregation had read the entire Bible. Only a few raised their hands. Not being one of those few, Spencer keenly felt the need to read the sacred book from cover to cover,

which he began doing that very night by the light of a coal-oil lamp. In about a year he completed his goal of reading all of the Bible, an accomplishment that contributed to his lifelong love of scripture study.⁷

President Kimball often taught of scripture study. “I ask us all to honestly evaluate our performance in scripture study. It is a common thing to have a few passages of scripture at our disposal, floating in our minds, as it were, and thus to have the illusion that we know a great deal about the gospel. In this sense, having a little knowledge can be a problem indeed. I am convinced that each of us, at some time in our lives, must discover the scriptures for ourselves—and not just discover them once, but rediscover them again and again.”⁸

“I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that no divine ear is listening and no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns. I find myself loving more intensely those whom I



must love with all my heart and mind and strength, and loving them more, I find it easier to abide their counsel.”⁹

Reverence

During a visit to a Church meetinghouse, President Kimball noticed some paper towels on a restroom floor. He threw them away and then cleaned the sink. A local leader was so impressed by this example of care and respect that he subsequently taught others to show more reverence for Church buildings and other sacred things.¹⁰

President Kimball taught:

“Often, before and after meetings, members of the Church cluster in the chapel to exchange greetings. Some seeming irreverence is due innocently to the fact that we are a friendly people and that the Sabbath is a convenient time to visit, to fellowship, and to meet new people. Parents should set an example for their families by doing their visiting in the foyers or other areas outside of the chapel before or after meetings. After a meeting, parents can help to carry the spirit of the service into the home by discussing at home a thought, a musical number, or some other positive aspect of the meeting with their children.”¹¹

“We must remember that reverence is not a somber, temporary behavior that we adopt on Sunday. True reverence involves happiness, as well as love, respect, gratitude, and godly fear. It is a virtue that should be part of our way of life. In fact, Latter-day Saints should be the most reverent people in all the earth.”¹²

Devotion to the Savior

In the late 1940s, Elder Spencer W. Kimball, an Apostle since 1943, suffered a series of heart attacks. During the convalescence that followed, he stayed with friends in New Mexico. A Church magazine article later recounted an incident that occurred while he was there:

“One morning during this recuperative period, Elder Kimball’s bed was discovered empty. Thinking that he had taken a morning stroll and would be back in time for breakfast, his attendants went about their duties. But when he hadn’t returned by 10:00 A.M., they began to

worry. A search began.

“He was finally discovered several miles away under a pine tree. His Bible lay next to him, opened to the last chapter of St. John. His eyes were closed, and when the search party came up to him he remained as still as when they first caught sight of him.

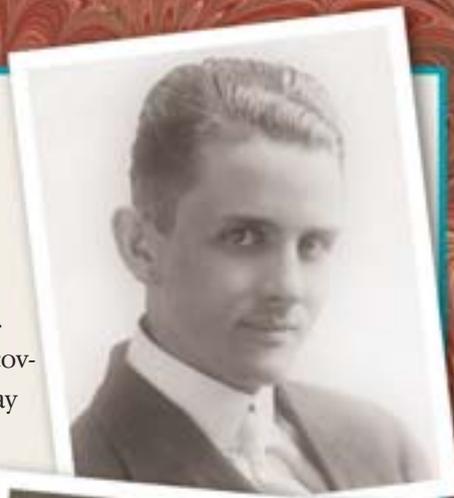
“Their frightened voices aroused him, however, and when he lifted his head they could see traces of tears on his cheeks. To their questions, he answered, ‘[Five] years ago today I was called to be an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I just wanted to spend the day with Him whose witness I am.’”¹³

As a special witness of Christ, President Kimball bore testimony as he taught of the Savior:

“Oh, I love the Lord Jesus Christ,” he said. “I hope that I can show to him and manifest my sincerity and devotion. I want to live close to him. I want to be like him, and I pray that the Lord will help all of us that we may so be as he said to his Nephite disciples, ‘Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be?’ and he answered his own question by saying, ‘Even as I am.’ (3 Nephi 27:27.)”¹⁴

“When we think of the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ and the sufferings he endured for us, we would be ingrates if we did not appreciate it so far as our power made it possible. He suffered and died for us, yet if we do not repent, all his anguish and pain on our account are futile.”¹⁵

“The more we understand what really happened in the life of Jesus of Nazareth in Gethsemane and on Calvary, the better able we will be to understand the importance of sacrifice and selflessness in our lives.”¹⁶



Serving Others

Stranded in an airport because of bad weather, a young mother and her two-year-old daughter had been waiting in long lines for hours trying to get a flight home. The child was tired and fussy, but the mother, who was pregnant and at risk of miscarriage, did not pick her up. A doctor had advised the mother to avoid lifting the two-year-old unless absolutely necessary. The woman overheard disapproving comments from people around her as she used her foot to slide her crying daughter along in the line. Nobody offered to help. But then, the woman later recalled, “someone came towards us and with a kindly smile said, ‘Is there something I could do to help you?’ With a grateful sigh I accepted his offer. He lifted my sobbing little daughter from the cold floor and lovingly held her to him while he patted her gently on the back. He asked if she could chew a piece of gum. When she was settled down, he carried her with him and said something kindly to the others in the line ahead of me, about how I needed their help. They seemed to agree and then he went up to the ticket counter [at the front of the line] and made arrangements with the clerk for me to be put on a flight leaving shortly. He walked with us to a bench, where we chatted a moment, until he was assured that I would be fine. He went on his way. About a

week later I saw a picture of Apostle Spencer W. Kimball and recognized him as the stranger in the airport.”¹⁷

With his many examples of service to others demonstrating commitment to this principle, President Kimball taught:

“God does notice us, and he watches over us. But it is usually through

another person that he meets our needs. Therefore, it is vital that we serve each other in the kingdom. The people of the Church need each other’s strength, support, and leadership in a community of believers as an enclave of disciples. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read about how important it is to ‘. . . succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.’ (D&C 81:5.) So often, our acts of service consist of simple encouragement or of giving mundane help with mundane tasks, but what glorious consequences can flow from mundane acts and from small but deliberate deeds!”¹⁸

“Service to others deepens and sweetens this life while we are preparing to live in a better world. It is by serving that we learn how to serve. When we are engaged in the service of our fellowmen, not only do our deeds assist them, but we put our own problems in a fresher perspective. When we concern ourselves more with others, there is less time to be concerned with ourselves! In the midst of the miracle of serving, there is the promise of Jesus that by losing ourselves, we find ourselves! [See Matthew 10:39.]

“Not only do we ‘find’ ourselves in terms of acknowledging divine guidance in our lives, but the more we serve our fellowmen in appropriate ways, the more substance there is to our souls. We become more significant individuals as we serve others. We become more substantive as we serve others—indeed, it is easier to ‘find’ ourselves because there is so much more of us to find!”¹⁹

Sharing the Gospel

At a hotel restaurant in Quito, Ecuador, Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was sitting with a group that included four missionaries. After ordering bread and milk, Elder Kimball asked the waiter if he had children. The waiter replied that he had a son. Elder Kimball then said, “Bread and milk will make him healthy, but he will be even healthier if you will feed him the food these young men have to give.” The waiter appeared unsure what to make of this statement. Then Elder Kimball indicated that the young men he referred to were missionaries and that





Left: President Kimball received the Medal of the City of Jerusalem from Mayor Teddy Kollek in 1979. Below: President Kimball with Carole Koizumi in the Japan Sapporo Mission Home. Opposite page, top: Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (seated left), President George Albert Smith (center), and others with members of the Navajo tribal council. Opposite page, bottom: President Kimball (second from left) and his wife (second from right) at the Church's Deseret Ranch in Florida.

they taught the gospel of Jesus Christ. The waiter said he would be interested in listening to their teaching.²⁰

Truly a man of action when it came to missionary work, President Kimball said:

“I feel the Lord has placed, in a very natural way within our circles of friends and acquaintances, many persons who are ready to enter into his Church. We ask that you prayerfully identify those persons and then ask the Lord’s assistance in helping you introduce them to the gospel.”²¹

“There is a spiritual adventure in doing missionary work, in giving referrals, in accompanying the missionaries as they give the discussions. It is exciting and rewarding. The hours, the effort, the wondering, all are worth it when even one soul expresses repentance and faith and a desire to be baptized.”²²

“Brethren and sisters, I wonder if we are doing all we can. Are we complacent in our assignment to teach the gospel to others? Are we prepared to lengthen our stride? To enlarge our vision?”²³

Love and Spirituality in the Family

President Kimball was a loving parent. His son Edward said: “My father was always very affectionate. I knew he loved me.” Edward remembered an occasion when both he and his father were in attendance at a solemn assembly in the Salt Lake Temple: “There were thousands of men there. As the meeting ended, [my father] spotted me where I was singing in a chorus. On his way out, he came over, embraced and kissed me.”²⁴

In testimony borne from the depth of his heart, President Kimball taught:

“How long has it been since you took your children, whatever their size, in your arms and told them that you love them and are glad that they can be yours forever?”²⁵

“God is our Father. He loves us. He spends much energy trying to train us, and we should follow His example and love intensely our own children and rear them in righteousness.”²⁶

“A true Latter-day Saint home is a haven against the storms and struggles of life. Spirituality is born and nurtured by daily





Above: President and Sister Kimball. Below: President Kimball with Ezra Taft Benson, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (top photograph), and with Gordon B. Hinckley, then counselor in the First Presidency (bottom photograph). Right: The Kimbells with five grandchildren, Christmas 1974.

prayer, scripture study, home gospel discussions and related activities, home evenings, family councils, working and playing together, serving each other, and sharing the gospel with those

around us. Spirituality is also nurtured in our actions of patience, kindness, and forgiveness toward each other and in our applying gospel principles in the family circle. Home is where we become experts and scholars in gospel righteousness, learning and living gospel truths together.”²⁷

“All That I Must Do”

President Kimball’s life and teachings remind us of the need to put gospel knowledge into action, and we find a further reminder of this emphasis in a small but significant change made to the beloved Primary song “I Am a Child of God” (*Hymns*, no. 301). As originally written in 1957, the song ended with these words:

“Teach me all that I must know to live with him someday.” Sometime later, Elder Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, suggested that one word be changed in that final line. Now the song ends, “Teach me all that I must *do* to live with him someday.”²⁸

These lyrics are a beautifully succinct summary of President Kimball’s life and teachings. By word and by example, he taught the things we must do to live with our Father in Heaven someday. If we will



follow such a course of gospel living—of doing all that we must do—we have this prophetic promise from President Kimball: “The treasure house of happiness is unlocked to those who live the gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity and simplicity. . . . The assurance of supreme happiness, the certainty of a successful life here and of exaltation and eternal life hereafter, come to those who plan to live their lives in complete harmony with the gospel of Jesus Christ—and then consistently follow the course they have set.”²⁹ ■

NOTES

1. Quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), xxxv.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 262.
3. “Seek Learning, Even by Study and Also by Faith,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1983, 6.
4. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 11–13; see also Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball* (1977), 46.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 53.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 56–57.
7. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 59–60.
8. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 62.
9. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 67.
10. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 155.
11. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 162.
12. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 156.
13. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 23.
14. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 31.
15. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 29.
16. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 81.
17. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 79–80.
18. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 82.
19. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 85–86.
20. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 258.
21. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 262.
22. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 259.
23. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 261.
24. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 203.
25. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 212.
26. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 212.
27. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 210.
28. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 1.
29. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*, 6–7.



OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

A sure way to overcome temptation is to avoid it in the first place. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, tells of visiting a wild-animal park in Africa where he was warned to stay away from even the smallest puddle. Any place with water—even the water-filled footprints of elephants—could easily have a crocodile lurking nearby. (See “Spiritual Crocodiles,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2002, 8; *New Era*, Oct. 2001, 8.)

The following ideas will help you avoid those dangerous “puddles”:

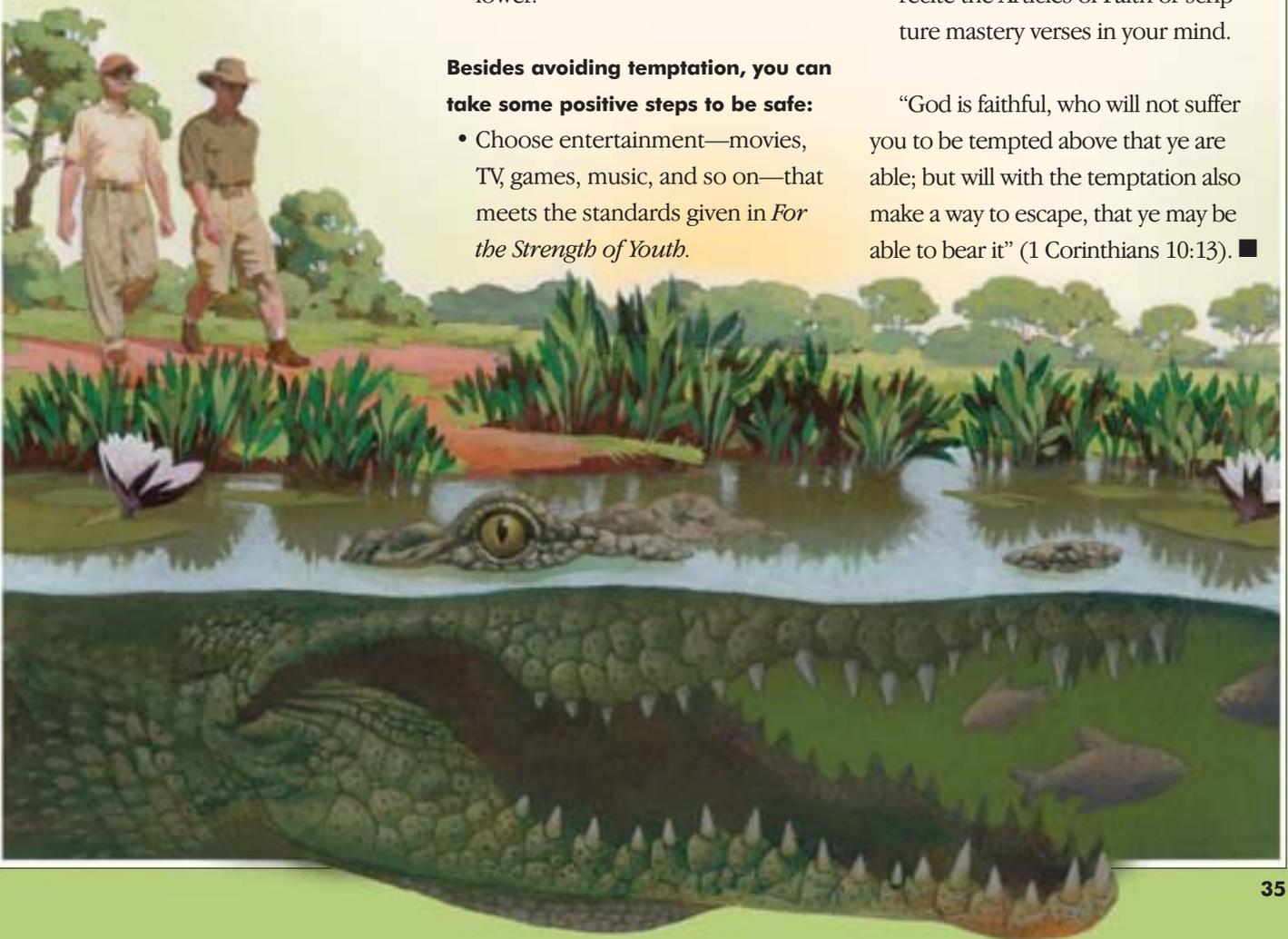
- Avoid places and situations where you know temptation might be lurking. Otherwise, it’s like hanging around the bakery while you are dieting.
- Be careful of people who don’t have your standards and who don’t respect them. It’s OK to be friendly; you can invite them to your good activities. But avoid their territory.
- Watch the clock. When it’s late and you are tired, your resistance is lower.

Besides avoiding temptation, you can take some positive steps to be safe:

- Choose entertainment—movies, TV, games, music, and so on—that meets the standards given in *For the Strength of Youth*.

- Spend your time in places and activities that are good for you, with people who have high standards.
- Keep up your spiritual strength with daily prayer and scripture study and weekly Church attendance.
- Improve your memory. Remember your baptismal covenant. Remember that you want to be worthy to take the sacrament. Remember the Savior and what He did for you.
- Memorize the words to a favorite hymn. Sing it or think about it when unwelcome thoughts come. Or recite the Articles of Faith or scripture mastery verses in your mind.

“God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). ■



I KNOW FAMILIES CAN BE FOREVER

BY MOISÉS NEFI
MORALES GONZÁLES

I still remember that day. It could have been the most terrible day of my life if I hadn't had the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was July 12, 2001, when my mother died of an illness that had struck on Sunday night and took her life the following Thursday morning. I was 16 years old. I had to miss exams in school to be with my family and attend my mother's funeral services.

I went home from the funeral feeling completely undone. I had a great hole in my heart, a hole so huge I

thought it would never heal. I lay down on the bed, broke into sobs, and asked myself, "Why did she have to go so soon? Why did she have to leave me?"

My 10-year-old brother and I decided to listen to some quiet Church hymns. I had that lonely, sad, comfortless feeling, and then a warm sensation came over me. I felt great peace and tranquillity. My sad expression vanished, as did the empty feeling in my chest.

I was still feeling this comforting spirit when I went with my family to the church where my relatives were mourning. All of my relatives were

very sad, with some breaking into heartrending sobs. Deep pain was reflected in their faces. They looked at my family strangely, as if they wondered why we didn't seem to feel as bad as they did. But my heart was beating calmly, and my whole body was filled with peace. I knew that the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, was calming our pain. He was also testifying that Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father live and that this is the true Church, with eternal covenants.

Afterward, I wrote in my journal: "Our mother didn't want us to cry very much. I do feel sad, but still I have a great peace inside. I just have to be strong and live a good life so I can see her again. My faith and testimony have grown, and so have my desires to serve my God and my fellow man on a full-time mission. She will always be there, helping me stay on the right path. I know that families can be forever. On a day like today 15 years ago, my family and I were sealed as an eternal family in the Lima Peru Temple, and this is what comforts me."

My family and I continue to experience many difficulties. But each time my testimony falters, I remember the time when the Holy Ghost comforted me and testified to me of the eternal truths of the gospel. ■



ONE SPECIAL LEADER

BY SARIAH DE BARROS
FERREIRA DA SILVA

I will always remember with gratitude one special leader who changed my life for the better.

When I met her, I didn't have many friends. I was not very talkative and would not smile at people. I didn't participate in seminary or other activities. In fact, I went to church only on Sundays. And even then my thoughts wandered in Young Women class. Some of the girls tried to include me, but I closed myself off from them.

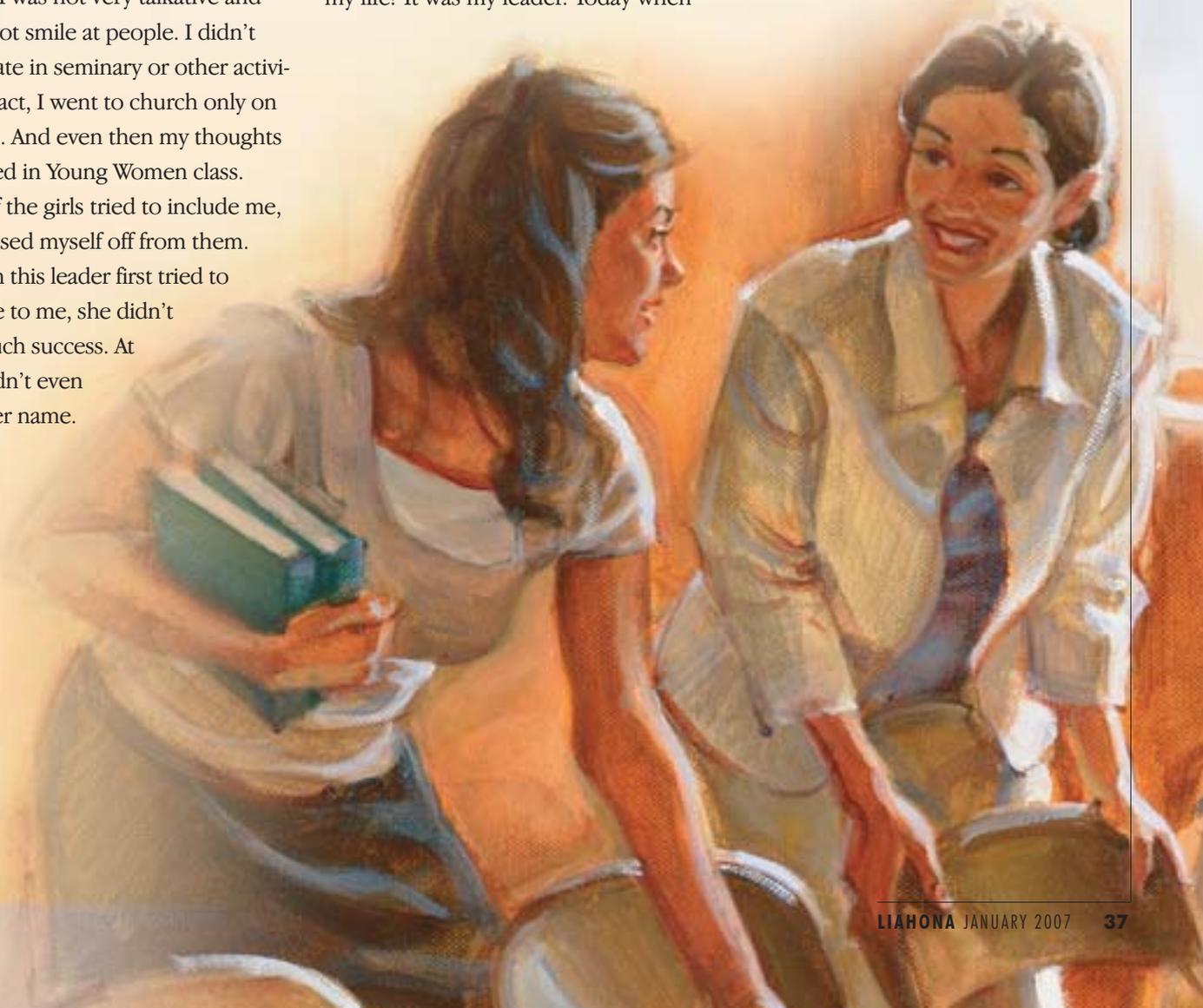
When this leader first tried to get close to me, she didn't have much success. At first I didn't even know her name.

Then she gave me a job to do and began to depend on me. I accepted the responsibility only because I didn't know how to tell her no. Then, before I even realized it, she started to become my friend. I began trying harder and harder to fulfill my calling, and I began paying attention in class. I even started attending seminary and other Church activities. I also made friends with the young people in my ward. Soon the gospel was the most important thing in my life.

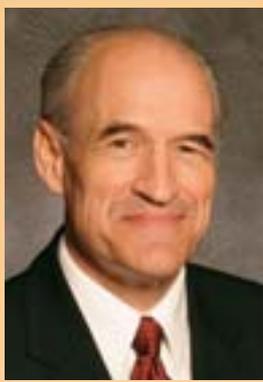
Who started all these changes in my life? It was my leader. Today when

I look into her eyes, I feel an immense love and gratitude. I am grateful to Heavenly Father for the opportunity of having such a special leader. I am grateful to her for preparing me and being with me on the day I received my endowment in the São Paulo Brazil Temple. I am grateful for her example of love, a love I try to apply in my own life.

Now that I am a Young Women leader in my ward, I hope I can do for my young women at least a part of what she did for me. ■



To Be Edified AND Rejoice Together



BY A. ROGER MERRILL
Sunday School General President

Please consider the following questions and scriptural answers:

What destroyed the Gadianton robbers?

“And it came to pass that the Lamanites did hunt the band of robbers of Gadianton; and they did preach the word of God among the more wicked part of them, insomuch that this band of robbers was utterly destroyed from among the Lamanites” (Helaman 6:37).

What can protect us from temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary?

“Whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they

would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction” (1 Nephi 15:24).

What influences our minds more powerfully than threats of death or war?

“And now, 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

We access the power of the word of God in overcoming our challenges by learning how to receive and teach by the Spirit.



powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened to them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God” (Alma 31:5).

What will cause us to rejoice together?

“Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:22).

Interestingly, the answer to all of these questions is the same: it is the power of the word of God. This is what will enable us to protect our children and to overcome the great challenges of the last days—in our personal lives, in our families, and in the world.

So how do we obtain the blessings that are available to us through the power of the word of God? Certainly personal study is

fundamental. But great power also comes to us as we learn to teach and receive the word by the Spirit. This is how we “are edified and rejoice together.”

Receiving by the Spirit

While much focus is appropriately placed on the role of the teacher in a gospel setting, we need to look carefully also at our own role as learners.

One Sunday a few years ago, when I was serving as an Area Seventy, the local mission president and I traveled together to conduct meetings with several different groups. As we approached the final meeting, we were both tired. We had already driven more than 300 miles (480 km) and had spoken several times. We began the meeting and started down the same list we had covered in the other meetings.





We cannot
treat
gospel
learning casually
and expect to receive
the power of the
word in our lives.

But as we spoke, something wonderful happened. The Spirit intensified, and the teaching and learning moved to a new level that continued through the entire meeting. We later remarked to each other, “That was wonderful. That was the best meeting of the day!”

What made the difference? It wasn’t anything we did. We hadn’t suddenly become more brilliant or eloquent or spiritual. In fact, if anything, we were somewhat worn by the activities of the day. The topics we covered were the same topics covered in the other meetings.

As we talked about it, we came to realize that the people who attended that last meeting were more humble and spiritually prepared. As a result, they were more open

and hungry for the word, and the Lord was able to use us more effectively as a conduit to bless their lives. The success of that meeting was much more about them than about us.

Since then, I have found numerous examples of this principle in action. Nowhere is it more dramatically taught than in the mortal ministry of the Lord Himself. In the book of Matthew, we read that when the Savior “was come into his own country . . . he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief” (Matthew 13:54, 58). We can almost hear Moroni in the background declaring, “I would exhort you that ye deny not the power of God; for he worketh by power, *according to the faith of the children of men*, the same today and tomorrow, and forever” (Moroni 10:7; emphasis added).

Now I would ask you to think about the implications of this principle in terms of your own ability to have great spiritual experiences as you attend a class or a sacrament meeting on Sunday. What is your role in creating the environment in which the Spirit can teach you the things you need to know? If you find a Church class or a sacrament meeting boring, does that say more about the teacher—or about you?

Consider the response of President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) when someone once asked him, “What do you do if you find yourself caught in a boring sacrament meeting?” President Kimball thought a moment, then replied, “I don’t know; I’ve never been in one.”¹ With his long years of Church experience, President Kimball had undoubtedly been to many meetings where people had read their talks, spoken in a monotone, or given travelogues instead of teaching doctrine. But most likely, President

Kimball was teaching that he did not go to sacrament meeting to be entertained; he went to worship the Lord, renew his covenants, and be taught from on high. If he attended with an open heart, a desire to be “nourished by the good word of God” (Moroni 6:4), and a prayer—rather than judgment—for the speakers, the Spirit would teach him what he needed to do to be a more effective and faithful disciple. President Kimball was teaching the principle of learning by the Spirit.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord teaches us about both teaching and learning by the Spirit:

“Verily I say unto you, he that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth by the Comforter, in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

“And if it be by some other way it is not of God.

“And again, he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

“If it be some other way it is not of God.

“Therefore, why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth?

“Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:17–22).

Notice He says that if we teach or receive in any way other than by the Spirit, it is not of God. Only the Spirit knows our every thought, our every feeling, our every need. Only He can communicate specifically and individually to each of us what we need to know, based on God’s perfect wisdom.

As learners, we should not expect to be constantly entertained, emotionally stimulated, or spoon-fed; we



President Kimball was asked, “What do you do if you find yourself caught in a boring sacrament meeting?” He replied, “I don’t know; I’ve never been in one.”

should actively, prayerfully prepare for and seek specific inspiration from the Spirit to help us face the unique challenges in our own lives. Whether a class instructor is a 20-year veteran institute teacher or a new convert plumber who has never taught a class before should make little difference in the quality of our learning. Peter was a fisherman; Joseph Smith had no more than a third-grade education. But the Spirit spoke powerfully through them to those who had “ears to hear” (Matthew 11:15).

Seeking and Asking

So how do we go about receiving by the Spirit? I would suggest two ideas: accept responsibility for our learning and ask faithful questions.

The first idea comes from Alma: “If ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words” (Alma 32:27).

We cannot treat gospel learning casually and expect to receive the power of the word in our lives. We must “awake and arouse [our] faculties.” We must “experiment upon [His] words.” We must exercise faith. We must desire to believe. We must “let this desire work in [us]” and “give place for a portion of [His] words.” Notice that Alma is not describing a show-up-on-Sunday-and-expect-a-teacher-to-entertain-you attitude. He is teaching us that we must accept the responsibility for our own learning and reach out in faith if we expect to receive the power of the word in our lives.

The second idea comes from James—from the sacred words that inspired Joseph Smith to go into the Sacred Grove:

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed” (James 1:5–6).

The Lord constantly instructs us to *ask, seek, and knock* with the divine promise that we will *receive, find,* and have doors of revelation *opened unto* us. Asking faithful questions is the pattern established by the Lord for us to invite the guidance of the Spirit in our lives. Consider some of the many questions Joseph had on his mind when he read the words of James:

“In the midst of this war of words and tumult of opinions, I often said to myself: What is to be done? Who of all these parties are right; or, are they all wrong together? If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it?” (Joseph Smith—History 1:10).

The words of James came with “power to [Joseph’s] heart” (Joseph Smith—History 1:12) *because* he had questions in his mind.

So what kinds of questions might we appropriately ask? Suppose you are to attend a Sunday School lesson on these verses from James. As you prepare for the class—or even think about these verses during the class—you might ponder questions such as the following:

- Who was James? What questions or circumstances elicited this particular passage?
- What is wisdom?
- What does it mean to “ask in faith”?
- Is it possible to ask about things I don’t understand and still ask, “nothing wavering”? What does it mean to “waver”? When and why do I waver? What choices can I make to ensure that I don’t waver?
- In what circumstances have I felt “driven” and “tossed”? What insight can I gain from those times to help me ask in faith?
- What doctrines or principles are taught in these verses? Where else in the scriptures are these principles taught?
- How do these principles tie into the life and mission of the Savior? How can they help me draw closer to Him?
- How can these principles help me or my loved ones deal with our specific challenges and opportunities?

As we do our part to ask inspired questions and earnestly seek guidance in our lives, we invite the Spirit to teach us through the power of the word.

Teaching by the Spirit

The Lord has said that as well as receiving by the Spirit, we are also to teach by the Spirit. What does that mean?

Perhaps you have seen (or even been) someone walking down the hall to teach a class, glancing at the manual, and saying, “Oh well, I haven’t had time to prepare; I’ll just have to teach by the Spirit.” Or perhaps you have seen (or been) someone who has spent weeks preparing a lesson, complete with elaborate handouts, multiple visual aids, and a word-for-word written script from which he or she plans to “teach by the Spirit.”

I suggest that neither of these approaches is what the Lord intends.

The standard for teaching throughout the Church has been set forth in the scriptures and reinforced in the *Preach My Gospel* manual. We are instructed to “seek first to obtain [the Lord’s] word” (D&C 11:21)—in other words, to thoroughly prepare by studying, asking and seeking answers to faithful questions, and creating teaching outlines. We are then instructed to be completely open to the guidance of the Spirit in the actual teaching moment concerning what we should say and do.

In a recent worldwide leadership training broadcast, President Gordon B. Hinckley quoted the following verse from the Doctrine and Covenants:

“Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man” (D&C 84:85).

He then observed, “This is the counsel of the Lord. It cannot be set aside with impunity.”²

We need to “treasure up in [our] minds continually the words of life”—that is, to read, study, inquire of the Lord, and prepare—and to trust the Spirit to give us “in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man.” This is true whether we are teaching a class or giving a talk in sacrament meeting or stake conference. But there is one



principal difference: a teacher would rarely give a sermon in a classroom, and a speaker would not lead a discussion in sacrament meeting or in the Sunday session of stake or district conference.

In the classroom, teaching by the Spirit is essentially creating the environment in which the Spirit can dwell and asking inspired questions so that we can “teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom” (D&C 88:77).

As Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said concerning classroom instruction: “Never, and I mean never, give a lecture where there is no student participation. A ‘talking head’ is the weakest form of class instruction. . . . Assure that there is abundant participation because that use of agency by a student authorizes the Holy Ghost to instruct. It also helps the student retain your message. As students verbalize truths, they are confirmed in their souls

and strengthen their personal testimonies.”³

Teaching in the home should likewise be by the Spirit. Although we have some regular structured teaching times, such as family scripture study and family home evening, most teaching takes place in unanticipated teaching moments and by example. Here too the principle applies: parents should “treasure up . . . continually the words of life” so they are prepared and open to the Spirit in teaching moments.

As we follow the Lord’s plan for us to teach and to receive by the Spirit, we truly “are edified and rejoice together”—in our individual families and also as the greater family of God. ■

NOTES

1. From a Church Educational System meeting, June 30, 1989; quoted in Gene R. Cook, *Teaching by the Spirit* (2000), 140.
2. “Missionary Service,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 11, 2003, 20.
3. “To Understand and Live Truth,” Church Educational System satellite broadcast, Feb. 4, 2005.

Parents should “treasure up . . . continually the words of life” so they are prepared and open to the Spirit in teaching moments.

A Robbery, a Book, and a Testimony

By Mailin Espinoza Mira

I live in Chile and have been a member of the Church since I was eight. I have always known that I was in the true Church, and I felt I had a testimony of the Book of Mormon, but it was a borrowed testimony. Although I wanted to, I had never read the Book of Mormon all the way through. I had never read further than 1 Nephi.

On the night of July 4, 2002, my friend and I attended our Book of Mormon institute class. We stayed after class talking until we noticed that it had gotten late. We began walking home around 10:15, and when we got to the place where we were to split up, we stopped and continued to talk.

Two men passed by and asked us what time it was, but we were so involved in our conversation that we barely heard them. Suddenly they came back. One of them threw his arms around me, putting a knife to my neck. Then he let me go and threatened my friend. The other man asked us for money, and when we said we didn't have any, they were furious. They demanded our jackets and backpacks.

I had wanted this jacket for a long

time and had finally been able to buy it a month before. And I loved my backpack, which my older brother had given me. My friend had homework assignments in her backpack that she needed to turn in. I was really scared—almost frozen in place. It was the first time I had ever been robbed.

Without hesitation we gave them our things. But suddenly I said, “Wait! Please let me take out my Book of Mormon! It’s the only thing of value I have.” The thief gave me a strange look and let me take it out. Then they fled.

I hugged the book and didn’t care about anything else. I felt peace because I had rescued this precious book from two criminals.

That night I decided to show greater appreciation for this treasure of mine and for all the sacrifices made by the people who had brought it to light. I started to read it, and I began to feel an indescribable peace and a spectacular joy. All of a sudden it was worth so much more to me. I finished it two months later, and I finally gained a testimony of the book for myself.



We gave
the
robbers
our belongings. But
then I remembered
the Book of
Mormon inside
my backpack and
asked if I could
remove it.

I still don't know where I got the courage to ask for my book back, but I'll never be sorry that I did. I don't harbor any ill feelings toward the men because through that experience I gained the testimony I desired.

That testimony helped motivate me to serve a mission. I am now home from serving in Argentina, where I was able to tell people about the Book of Mormon and share with them how marvelous this work truly is. ■

The Suit

By Lori Ries

It was just before Christmas, and I knew I had things others could use. Room by room I went through the house, finding items we could donate to Deseret Industries. When it was finally time to go through our bedroom, my husband and I headed for our closet. We looked through our clothing.

"I don't have anything this time," I told him. "Do you?"

David put a number of shirts in a pile and found some shoes he no longer wore.

"What about this suit?" he asked. I had helped him pick it out years ago for a job interview. It still looked brand new.

"Honey, what do you think? It doesn't fit anymore."

"But it's still like new," I said.

"I really feel this suit needs to go,"

With the missionaries at my door, a sudden knowledge came to me, and I knew what to do with the suit.

David said. He took it from the closet.

As much as I liked the suit on him, he did have another, and after he tried this one on, I could see that it barely fit him now. I carefully laid it across the donation pile, but I didn't feel right. Something was nagging at me. The suit didn't belong there, and I knew it.

David went to his ties. He was ruthless in his weeding. He pulled out several and laid them with the suit, but that didn't feel right to me either.

The suit in the pile interrupted my sleep. I wondered what was wrong with me to worry so much about a suit that didn't fit and a bunch of old ties.

The following morning I looked at the pile of clothes. Again so strongly came the feeling that the suit didn't belong. I took it off the

pile and laid it on the bed along with some ties. After putting everything else into bags, I again looked at the suit. "Whom is it for?" I didn't know.

I knelt beside the bed and prayed. I went to my desk and tried to think. My husband and I were the young adult leaders in the ward, so we knew who the next missionary was. It would be a while before he left. He also had a steady job, so getting a new suit wouldn't be a problem. I called my bishop but got the answering machine.

Then there was a knock at the door. Opening the door, I was startled.

"Hi, Sister Ries," the missionaries serving in our ward smiled.

A chill of sudden knowledge ran through me. "I don't believe this" was all I could say. "Please stay here. I'll be right back."



Excitedly, I raced up the stairs while the elders laughed at my strange greeting. Such joy filled me as I brought down the suit.

“It’s a size 40 jacket,” I said, “and the pants are 33–32.” I looked at one elder, hoping.

The missionary’s face lit up. “I’m a size 40 and a 33–30 in slacks.” His face softened. “My parents and I had been praying that I’d find a

suit to finish out my mission. I’ve got a little time left, and I’ve nearly worn this one clear through.”

The faithful elder accepted Heavenly Father’s gift of the suit and ties gratefully, and after I closed my door, I again went to my bedroom to kneel and thank Heavenly Father for the love He has for His children. He always listens to prayers. ■

of the universities where he had obtained his degrees, both academic and ecclesiastical. The speaker began his talk by briefly summarizing the history of Christianity from the time of Jesus Christ and His Apostles until the year 1830, when the world first began to hear of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, organized in America.

The speaker was not too severe in his appraisal of our faith. It was obvious he had read many of our books because he frequently quoted verses from the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. He also read extensively from the Prophet Joseph Smith’s account of the First Vision. It appeared he intended to lead his listeners to the conclusion that if Mormonism were indeed a sect, as he believed, it was not one of the more dangerous ones.

I took notes of all the things I thought to be in error, such as when he said that Mormons were not Christians and that Joseph Smith had copied the Book of Mormon from an old American novel. The lecture was quite detailed and ended after more than 90 minutes, at which time the hall erupted into resounding applause.

When the applause was over and the discussion began, the first person to get to his feet was Brother Quirce, who introduced himself as a member of the Church. He explained how Joseph Smith had obtained the golden plates and what his

“Dad, I’m Proud of You!”

By Marcelino Fernández-Rebollos Suárez

Because my wife and I knew of no schools in Madrid, Spain, that were run by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and because we wanted our children to receive a religious education, we registered them in a school sponsored by another religion. Because our children were the only members of our Church attending this school, we hoped they wouldn’t become targets of religious discrimination.

One day in October 1999, our son Pablo, 16 at the time, brought us an invitation from school to attend a lecture and discussion titled “Religious Sects: Mormonism.” The lecture was to be given by a prestigious authority known for having devoted a good part of his life to the study of religions, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in particular.

Fearing that an inaccurate impression of our beliefs might be given, I got in touch with our stake president and informed him of the meeting. He took note of the date and place and asked me to speak with the Church’s Public Affairs Department to see if a representative could attend and answer any questions that might arise.

When the date arrived, my wife, my son, and I went to the school. The hall where the lecture was held seated 500. Once we had taken our seats, our eyes sought any other Church members who might be in the large crowd that was filling the room. Soon we discovered Brother Quirce of Public Affairs. He gave us a friendly wave from the other side of the room.

The meeting started, and the director of instruction introduced the speaker, heaping praise upon him and giving a detailed accounting

contribution had been as the Prophet of the Restoration.

As I listened to Brother Quirce, I suddenly felt the need to get up also and clarify certain concepts so that everyone present might know the truth about our doctrine and our beliefs.

When I told my family I wanted to speak, Pablo was frightened and said, “No, Dad, please. Don’t say anything, because everybody here knows me, and I could have problems with my teachers.” I thought it cowardly for me to let Brother

Following the lecture, I felt the Spirit direct me to stand up and clarify what had been said about our beliefs.

Quirce be the only one to speak, but I didn’t want my son to

have problems, so for the moment I remained silent. As time passed, however, I could feel the increasing insistence of the Spirit.

I again told my family what I was feeling, and my son continued to express his opposition to my getting up. Finally, no longer able to resist the influence of the Spirit, I slowly got up and made my way around the rear of the auditorium to join Brother Quirce. A murmur of surprise arose from the crowd: “It’s another Mormon.”

As Brother Quirce concluded his remarks, I put my hand in my pocket to draw out the notes I had taken, but to my surprise my pockets were empty. I had left the notes at my seat. At just that moment it was my turn to take the floor.

I didn’t know where to begin. Everything I had intended to say disappeared from my mind. I began by saying that I had been a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for 26 years and that I knew it is the only true Church on the earth, that Jesus Christ had restored it through the Prophet Joseph Smith, that Jesus is the Son of God—our Savior and Redeemer.

I don’t remember how long I talked or all the words I said. I just remember that the silence was overwhelming and that I could feel the gaze of 500 pairs of eyes upon me. When I was finished, I thanked those present for giving me an opportunity to express my beliefs and turned and left the hall. I was at peace, but my legs were shaking.

When the meeting was over and I was able to rejoin my family, my son came up to me and said, “Dad, you did the right thing. You bore a beautiful testimony, and you spoke

with power and authority. Dad, I’m proud of you!”

Pablo knew he might have problems at school because of what I had done, but it was more important to him to know his father has a testimony he is willing to stand up for. ■



Answers to Questions

While I was serving in Venezuela, we taught a man who had investigated many churches but still had not found what he was looking for. He loved everything we taught him about the Church, but he did not feel he had received an answer through prayer. He began to have a lot of doubts. Then his doubts disappeared. He told us that he had been jogging in the park when he found a *Liabona* on an empty bench. He sat down and read it, and it answered his questions. He then was able to set a baptism date. Thank you for the *Liabona*!

Elder Jordan Eves, Chile Viña del Mar Mission

A Visit to the Temple

I went to the temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day

Saints in São Paulo, Brazil, when it was open for the public to visit, and I had to write and say how wonderful it was! Every detail was really magnificent. We were treated with great care and respect. I felt that Jesus Christ was present.

The rooms were so beautiful! And in every room I felt an indescribable peace. The celestial room was almost heaven—I could not contain my emotions because of the pure love I felt. Thank you for giving us this opportunity. I am of another religion, but through this visit I felt renewed in the faith and in the peace of the Lord.

Marisa Pretti Ferreira, Brazil

Window on the World

We send our greetings and our thanks for the extraordinary work of your staff. The *Liabona* is a window on the world capable of reaching the

ends of the planet, which is where our country is. It is also wonderful to be able to find Church publications in Spanish on the Internet.

Juan C. Giménez and family, Paraguay

A Continual Reader

As a continual reader of your wonderful magazine, I impatiently wait for the new issue of the magazine every month. The materials you print on the pages of the *Liabona*—writings of the leaders of the Church, their talks at general conference, articles, letters from readers, and other materials—always uplift and supply inspiration for me. They nourish my spirit, heart, and mind. They help me find answers to life's most pressing questions and for all of life's varied situations. Practically every page brings such a powerful, living testimony. It's hardly possible for anyone, even the most skeptical reader, to remain untouched by its spirit.

Vyacheslav Gureev, Russia



COMING NEXT MONTH

If you wanted to deliver a message to people in all ages of the world and in all lands, how would you do it? You could use symbolism. The February issue will feature two articles about symbolism. One consists

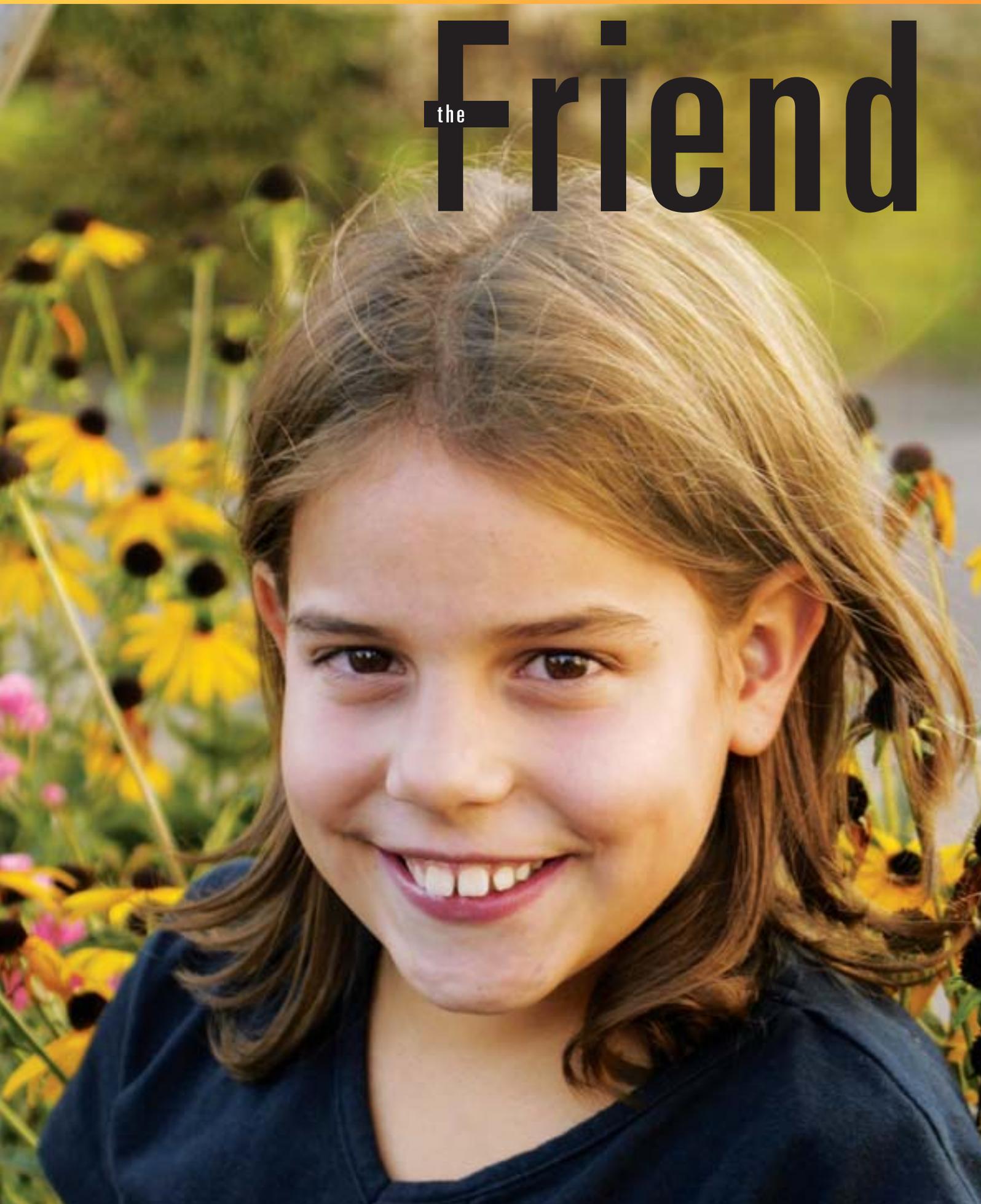
of quotations from General Authorities and Latter-day Saint scholars on why and how the Lord uses symbols to teach us, particularly in the temple. It will be accompanied by stories of members' experiences with temple worship.

The second article will discuss the

parable of the good Samaritan. The author, a professor from Brigham Young University, shares some early Christian interpretations that view the parable as symbolic of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the role His Church plays in our lives.



the Friend



Never Give Up



President Monson shares a childhood experience that began with humiliation but ended in a great lesson.

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

Like some of you, I know what it is to face disappointment and youthful humiliation. As a boy, I played team softball in elementary and junior high school. Two captains were chosen, and then they, in turn, selected the players they desired on their teams. Of course, the best players were chosen first, then second, and third. To be selected fourth or fifth was not too bad, but to be chosen last and sent to a remote position in the outfield was downright awful. I know; I was there.

How I hoped the ball would never be hit in my direction, for surely I would drop it, runners would score, and teammates would laugh.

As though it were just yesterday, I remember the very moment when all that changed in my life. The game started out as I have described: I was chosen last. I made my sorrowful way to the deep pocket of right field and watched as the other team filled the bases with runners. Two batters then went down on strikes. Suddenly, the next batter hit a mighty drive. I even heard him say, "This will be a home run." That was humiliating, since the ball was coming in my direction. Was it beyond my reach? I raced for the spot where I

thought the ball would drop, uttered a prayer while running, and stretched forth my cupped hands. I surprised myself. I caught the ball! My team won the game.

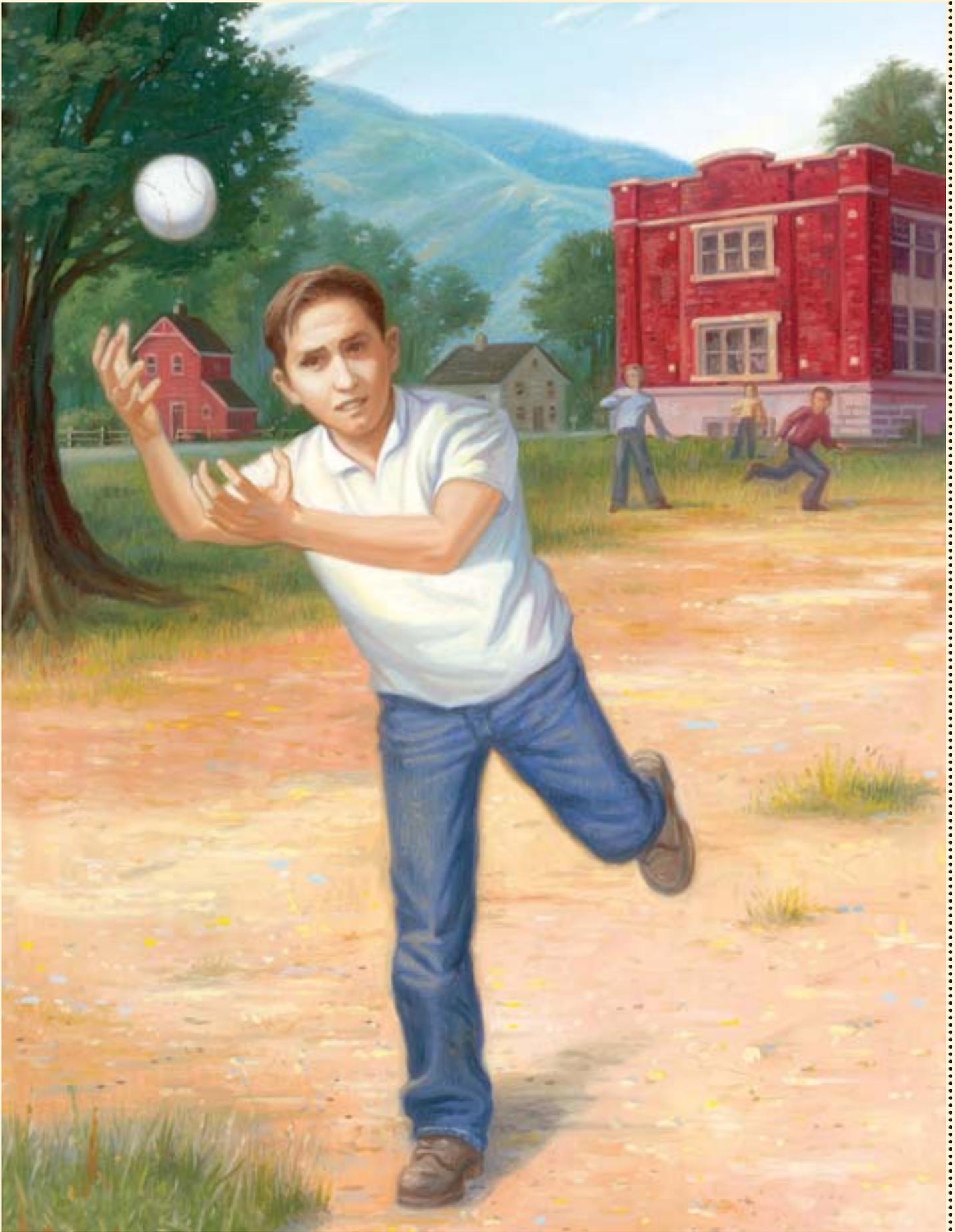
This one experience strengthened my confidence, inspired my desire to practice, and led me from that last-to-be-chosen place to become a real contributor to the team.

We can experience that burst of confidence. We can feel that pride of performance. A three-word formula will help us: *Never give up.* ●

From an October 2005 general conference address.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did President Monson play better after catching the ball? Was he suddenly more talented? Is there any way he might have had that same feeling without making a great catch?
2. What if you don't make a big catch when you are chosen last, or what if you finish last in a race? How can you know that you are a wonderful, worthwhile person?
3. What are the really important things in life that you should never give up on?
4. How will this story make a difference in what you do when it's your turn to choose a team?



Glue

Glue



Glue

Glue

Be Not Afraid

“If ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true” (Alma 32:21).

BY ELIZABETH RICKS



Look at the picture on the left. Imagine that you are one of the children. Would you be afraid to cross a rushing stream? Would you be afraid if the Savior were holding on to you?

This beautiful picture is titled *Be Not Afraid*. The children in the picture do not need to be afraid because the Savior is helping them to the other side.

Brother Greg Olsen, the artist who painted this picture, explained that the children represent each of us. “The stream represents the difficult, trying times that we all go through,” he says. “We need to do our part, reach as high as we can, and the Savior will lead us safely across to the other side.”

When we have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we understand that we are not alone on our journey through life. When we are humble and have faith, we can know that the Lord will lead us by the hand and give us answers to our prayers (see D&C 112:10). When we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we will not be afraid.

Activity

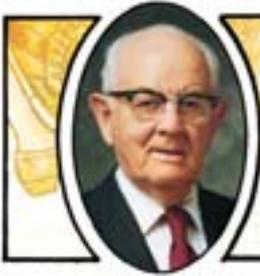
Glue the picture and the frame pieces on page F4 to heavier paper. Cut out the picture and frame pieces, and carefully glue or tape the corners together to form the frame. Put the frame around the picture, and secure it with tape or glue. Display the picture *Be Not Afraid* where it will remind you to have faith in Jesus Christ. Imagine that you are the child reaching up to grasp His hand or that you are being held safely in His arm.

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

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Explain that when we have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we allow Him to lead us, even though we can’t necessarily see or understand where we are going. Use chairs, tables, and other items to create a path. Select one child to walk the path. Next ask for a volunteer to be blindfolded. Let him or her go through the path. Ask for a volunteer to be blindfolded, but explain that you are going to rearrange the path. Ask him or her to choose a friend who will not be blindfolded to be a guide. Have the two children leave the room. Rearrange the path. Let the friend guide the blindfolded child through the course. The guide can use verbal instructions and gently hold the child’s arm. Repeat, changing the course each time, as time allows. Explain that as we journey through life, we need a guide to help us. We need to choose a guide we know we can trust. Bear testimony that the best guide is Jesus Christ.

2. Ask the children, “What would happen if you put on your shoes before you put on your socks?” “What would happen if you went to college when you were five years old?” Discuss the importance of doing things in the right order. Ask the children what the first principle of the gospel is. Have them look up the answer in the Articles of Faith. Explain that the first principle of the gospel is not just “faith”; it is “faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Ask the children why they think faith in Jesus Christ is the first principle rather than some other important principle like repentance, priesthood, or tithing. Display the following pictures: Gospel Art Picture Kit 100 (Creation—Living Creatures), 243 (Christ Walking on the Water), 318 (The Brother of Jared Sees the Finger of the Lord), 412 (Mary Fielding and Joseph F. Smith Crossing the Plains). Briefly review each story. After the story ask the children a question such as “What did Peter need before he could walk on water?” Have the children respond by saying, “First, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Repeat for each story. ●



FROM THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Working on a Farm



One day a man in the ward stopped by to sell Spencer's father a load of pumpkins for pig feed.



Do I hear Spencer singing? Your boy must be happy.

Yes, he is happy, clean, and obedient. He will become a mighty man in the Church.



Spencer liked to learn hymns and memorize scriptures as he milked the cows each day.

Young Spencer worked hard on the farm, but he knew when to stop. In his youth Primary was held on a weekday.

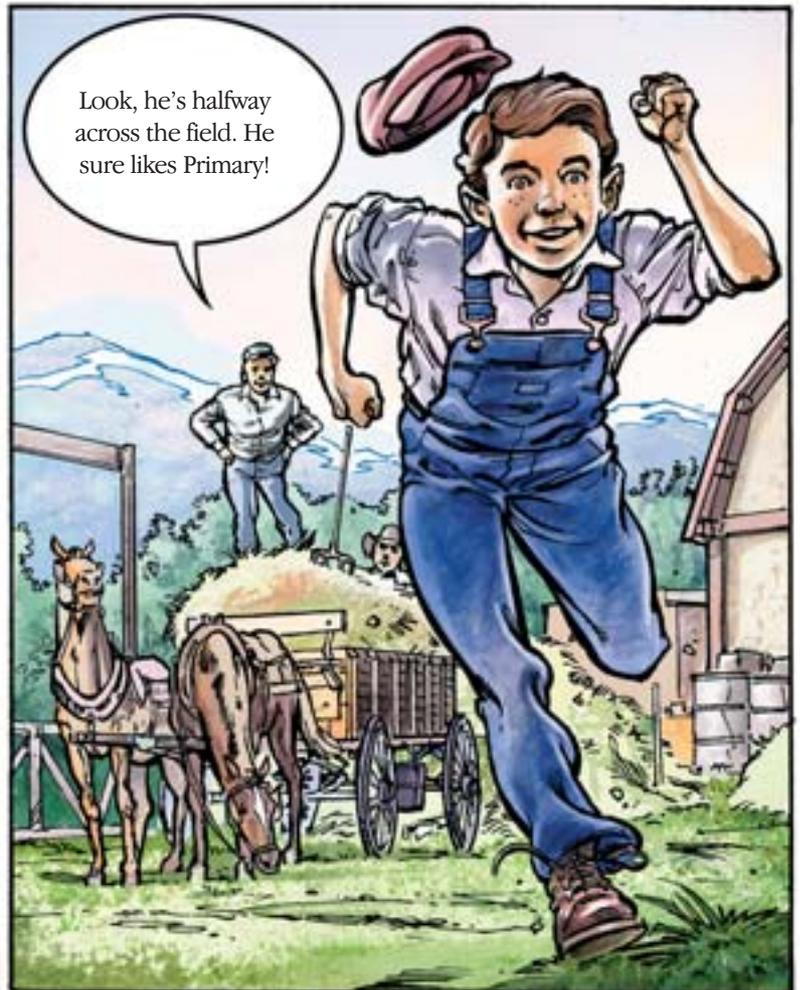
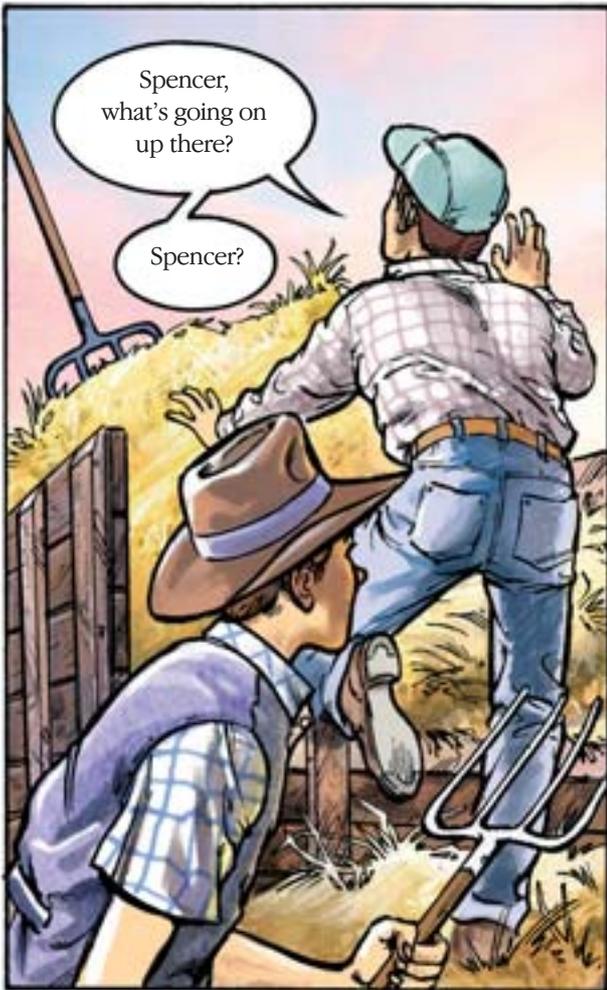
I hear the Primary bell ringing. That means it's time for Primary.



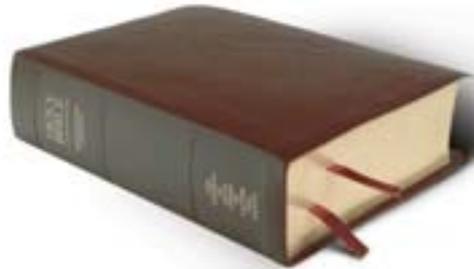
He also liked to practice aiming streams of milk into the barn cats' mouths.

No, you don't, little brother. We need you to finish tromping down the hay.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SAL VELLUTO AND EUGENIO MATTOZZI



The New Testament



There are 27 books in the New Testament. They can be divided into four main parts. To make a small book that will explain the contents of the New Testament, cut out the squares along the solid lines. Punch holes through the dots in the upper-left corners of the squares. Arrange the squares in

numerical order. Attach them to each other by stringing a piece of yarn, string, or narrow ribbon through the holes and then tying a bow.

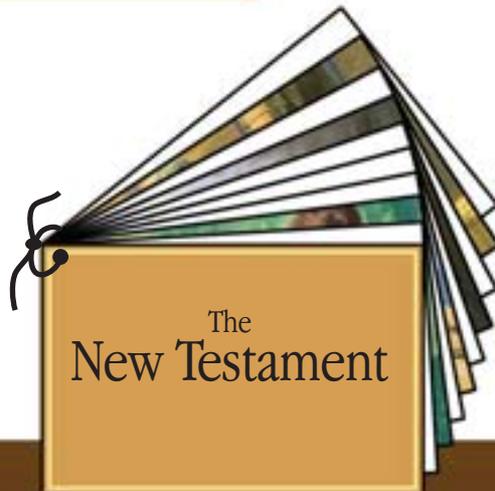
Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied, traced, or printed from www.lds.org. For English, click on "Gospel Library." For other languages, click on the world map.

The New Testament

1.

The Gospels, or the Testimonies

The first part of the New Testament includes the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. This part is called the Gospels, or the Testimonies, because these four books tell about Jesus Christ—His birth, His life and teachings, His Crucifixion, and His Resurrection.

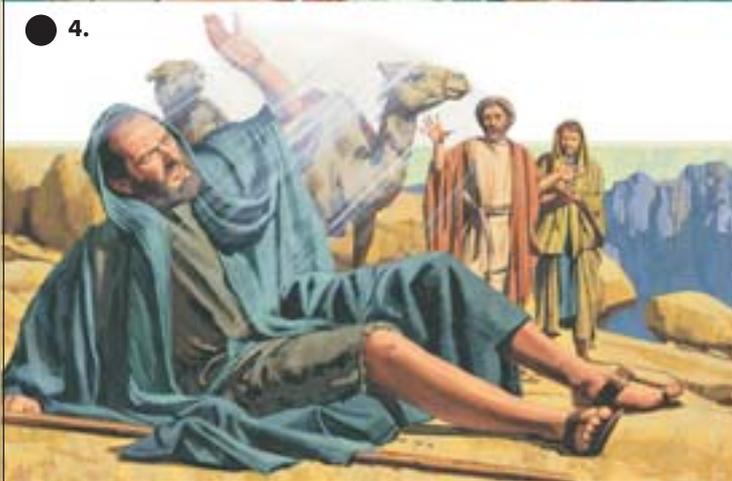




● 3.

The Acts of the Apostles

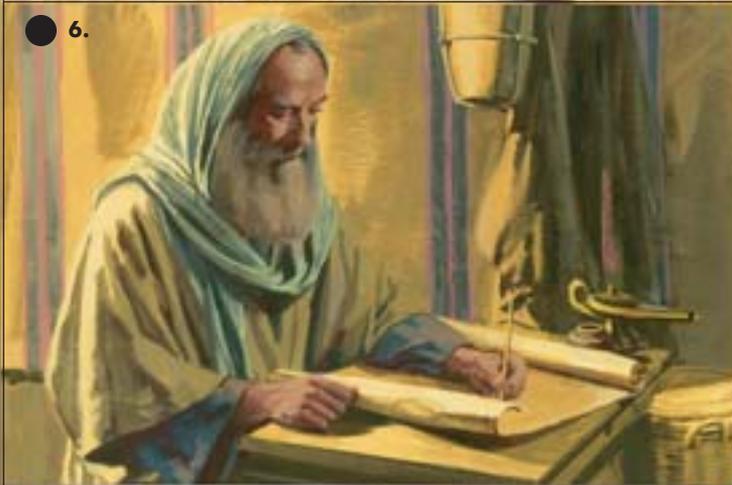
The second part of the New Testament includes only one book, the Acts of the Apostles. It tells how the Twelve Apostles continued to teach the gospel and build up the Church after the death of Jesus Christ.



● 5.

The Epistles, or the Letters

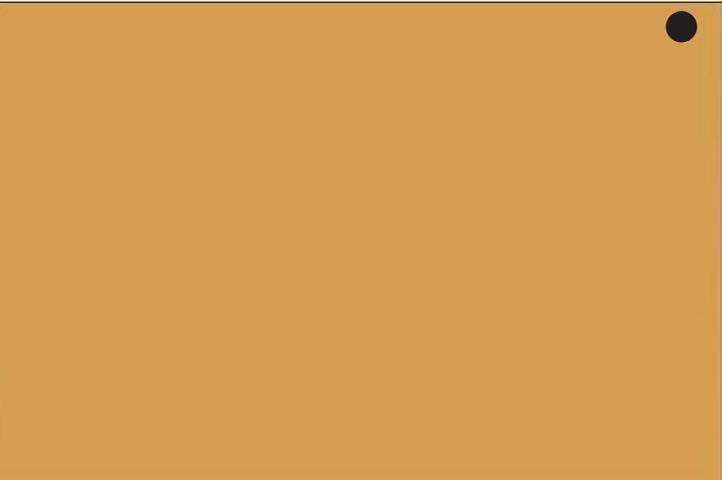
The third part of the New Testament is called the Epistles, or the Letters. It contains some of the letters written by early Church leaders to different branches of the Church, teaching them principles of the gospel and how to live them. Some of these letters are named after the cities where believers lived, and some are named after the author who wrote them.



● 7.

The Revelation of St. John the Divine

The last part of the New Testament contains one book, the Revelation of St. John the Divine. Using symbols and images, it tells of the dealings of the Savior Jesus Christ with people through all the ages of the earth's history. It also tells of the Second Coming of Jesus, the Millennium, and the time when the earth will become celestial.



MAKING FRIENDS

In a Good Place

NAOMI HUG OF MÜNCHENSTEIN, SWITZERLAND

BY KIMBERLY WEBB

Church Magazines





Naomi Hug, 10, is the same age as her ward. On her ward's 10th anniversary, she gave her first talk in sacrament meeting. She was surprised that she felt like crying! "The Spirit was so strong, I couldn't say how much I felt it," she wrote in her journal. She told ward members, "I'm thankful to have been born in the Church. I feel like I'm in a good place."

Naomi makes her Swiss village even better by sharing her talents, testimony, and smile with the people who live there.

Naomi's favorite hobby is picking and arranging flowers. Her grandmother, who owns a flower shop, lets her help. When asked if she has a favorite flower, she smiles and wrinkles her forehead. "Yes, but I don't know what it's called!"

Her other set of grandparents live in Zollikofen, about an hour's drive from Münchenstein. Her grandfather is the president of the Bern Switzerland Temple, located in Zollikofen. The whole family goes there for a Christmas visit, so Naomi gets to see her relatives and the temple too.

She has four sisters: Natascha, 9; Marica, 5; Sinja, 4; and Piera, 2. What's the best

thing about sisters? Naomi says, "When you want to play games, you cannot play alone."

Naomi and Natascha like playing marbles in their backyard. But it's disappointing, Natascha says, when your sister wins your favorite marble!

They also enjoy playing music together. Naomi plays the drums, and Natascha plays the fife. They practice playing musical instruments with bands of children, or *cliquen*, all year long and then perform in February.

That's when Swiss people celebrate carnival for three days, symbolically scaring away winter and welcoming spring. Natascha and Naomi wear costumes and parade through the streets of Basel playing their music.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIMBERLY WEBB

The Bern Switzerland Temple, which Naomi likes to visit with her family. Below: The Hugs on their family home evening bench.

Basel, just across the border from France and Germany, is the city closest to Naomi's village. There you can wander the nearly 1,000-year-old streets and watch boats float down the Rhine River.

Switzerland has four national languages—
German, Italian, French,

and Romansh—but most schoolchildren learn to speak English too.

Naomi speaks German and English, but she keeps her many journals in German. They help her remember important events like her Primary talk and baptism. Right now she's learning French and is excited about it—soon her parents won't be able to speak French in front of her when they want to tell secrets!

The Hugs speak English during family home evening, as they always do at home, because it helps the children learn to speak it more fluently. Often for family home evening they walk to a bench in the woods by their house. They call it the "family home evening bench." This walk is a favorite family tradition passed on from when Naomi's mother was a little girl.

Whatever the language, Naomi and her family try always to speak words of love and kindness. Love is what makes good places feel like home. ●



How can I have faith when the world seems so scary?

✦ Always have faith, first of all, in our Heavenly Father and in His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

✦ Just move forward regardless of the world. As you read the scriptures, you will know what you should do.

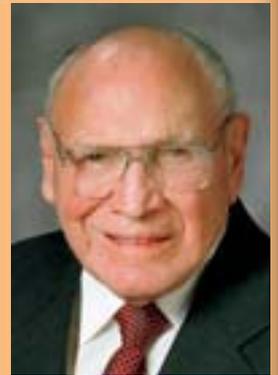
✦ In every age we are faced with a choice. We can trust in our own strength, or we can journey to higher ground and come unto Christ.

✦ Keep busy in doing the right things. Peace and hope come from knowing the Lord and our Heavenly Father and following Their way of living.

✦ Sometimes the world appears dark. Sometimes our faith is tried. Yet we should not despair. We should never abandon our faith. We should not lose hope.

✦ Be of good cheer. Have faith and confidence. The Lord will not forsake you. ●

From "Hope and Faith," Ensign, Feb. 2005, 20; "Shall He Find Faith on the Earth?" Liahona and Ensign, Nov. 2002, 82; "Journey to Higher Ground," Liahona and Ensign, Nov. 2005, 16.



Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares some of his thoughts on this subject.



SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERØD, DENMARK

“Do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you” (D&C 68:6).

THE **Opposite** OF **Fear**

BY PATRICIA R. JONES

Based on a true story

Tricia stared with wide, watery eyes at her bedroom closet. The door was broken and wouldn't shut all the way. In the dark the clothes looked like huddled monsters waiting to jump from their hangers and rush at her. To make things worse, she could hear loud breathing that seemed to come from the closet.

She knew that there were bad people who sometimes hurt children. One of them could be hiding in the closet! She also remembered the story a boy in her kindergarten class had told about a nightmare. He had been chased by a snake with a very long tail. The snake caught him and tied him up with its tail!

Tricia's sisters, MaryAnn and Rebecca, were sleeping in the bedroom too, but she didn't call out to them. Whatever was hiding in the closet might attack. She heard the TV fall silent. That meant her parents had finished watching the news and were going to bed. But she couldn't run to them—she couldn't even move.

Tricia was so scared that she wanted to cry, but she didn't dare make a sound. All she could do was stare at the dark, creepy closet, hoping that whatever lurked there wouldn't get her.

As Tricia stared, a thought came quietly into her mind: “Why don't you pray?” Immediately she felt a little better. Her mom had told her that she could pray anytime,

anywhere. She didn't even have to close her eyes! Tricia prayed silently. As soon as she said, “In the name of Jesus Christ,” a calm feeling came over her. She knew that Heavenly Father had heard her prayer.

With every breath she became calmer. The scary breathing wasn't as loud anymore either. In fact, as her own breathing grew quieter and quieter, so did the breathing from the closet. Tricia held her breath. The breathing stopped entirely. Finally she understood—she had been afraid of her own breathing!

She felt a little foolish, but mostly she felt grateful. As soon as she had thought about Jesus, her scary thoughts had stopped being scary, and she could see how silly they really were. She remembered her father telling her that the opposite of fear was faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. “No wonder Satan likes people to be scared,” she thought. “They're not thinking about Jesus when they're afraid.”

Tricia snuggled into her covers and prayed again. This time she thanked her Heavenly Father for hearing her prayer and helping her overcome her fears. When she finished praying, she silently sang “Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam.” Now she wasn't afraid to close her eyes and let the music and words warm her. Before long, she was fast asleep. ●



“Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the source of spiritual power that will give you and me the assurance that we have nothing to fear.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Our Lord and Savior,” *Liahona*, Dec. 1997, 14; “You Have Nothing to Fear from the Journey,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 61.



I have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
“If ye have faith ye hope for things which are not
seen, which are true” (Alma 32:21).



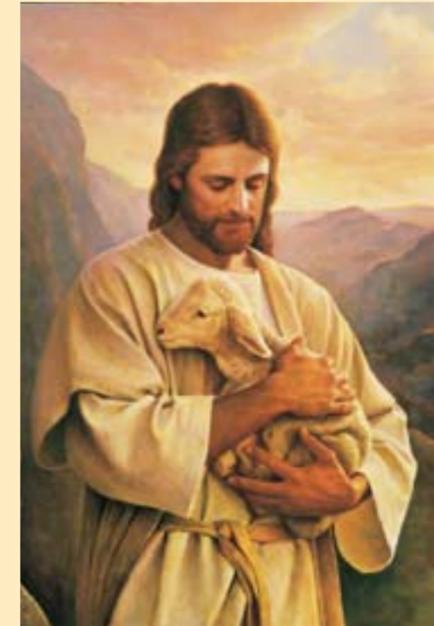
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Raising of Lazarus, by Jeffrey Hein

Jesus “cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin” (John 11:43-44).



“You can no more force the Spirit to respond than you can force a bean to sprout or an egg to hatch before its time. You can create a climate to foster growth, nourish, and protect; but you cannot force or compel: you must await the growth.” See President Boyd K. Packer, “The Quest for Spiritual Knowledge,” p. 14.



THE LOST LAMB, BY DEL PARSON, MAY NOT BE COPIED

I'll Follow Him in Faith

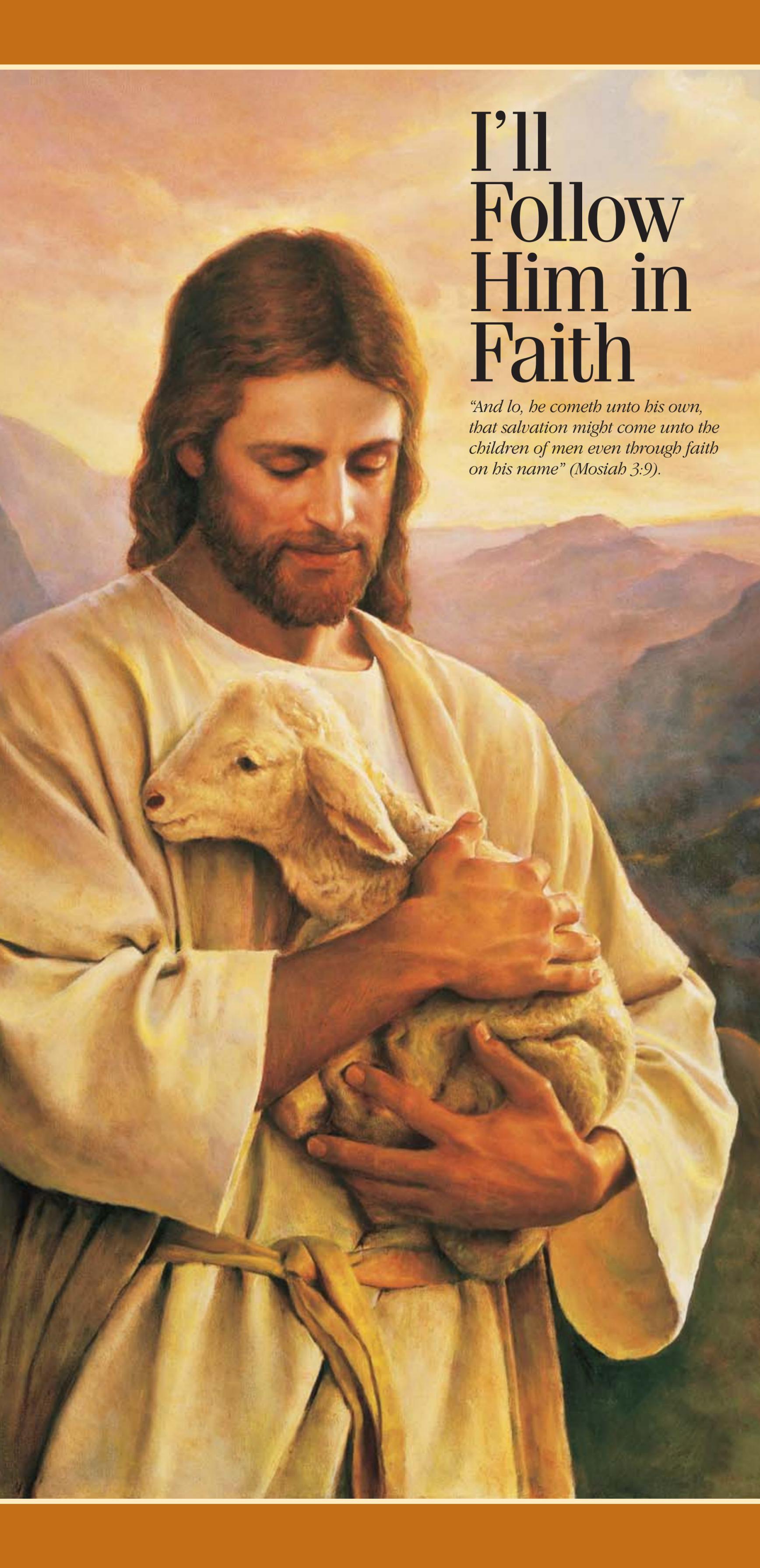
"And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men even through faith on his name" (Mosiah 3:9).

Jesus Christ is our Savior. He loves us. He wants us to have faith in Him and follow the example He set for us when He lived on the earth. Remove this year's poster from the magazine, and hang it in your room, where it can remind you to think about the Savior. In each issue this year, you will find a coloring page with a theme and a scripture. Color the picture, and hang it near the poster. As you look at the pictures, strive to develop your faith and testimony, follow the Savior, and live His gospel.

Additional copies of the poster (item no. 02659) are available from Church distribution centers.

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I'll Follow Him in Faith

*"And lo, he cometh unto his own,
that salvation might come unto the
children of men even through faith
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