

Liahona



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20 Making Time to Be Holy

ON THE COVER

Photograph by Adam C. Olson.

THE FRIEND COVER

Illustration by Brandon Dorman.

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

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

"Making Time to Be Holy,"

p. 20: Teach the idea of
making time for priori-
ties by doing the following activity.
Show your family an empty con-
tainer and some sand, pebbles, and
rocks. Put the sand in the container,
followed by the pebbles and then
rocks. (Determine the amounts
beforehand so all the rocks do not

fit at this point.) Explain that we
must plan time for the most impor-
tant things. Redo the activity, put-
ting in the rocks first and
then adding the pebbles and
sand in the remaining space.

Using the article, dis-
cuss what the "rocks,"
or priorities, are in our lives and
how to make time for them.

"A Call to Grow," p. 28: Read
aloud the section "A Lesson on
Testimony." Discuss how Elder
Soares gained his testimony
and how it helped him live the



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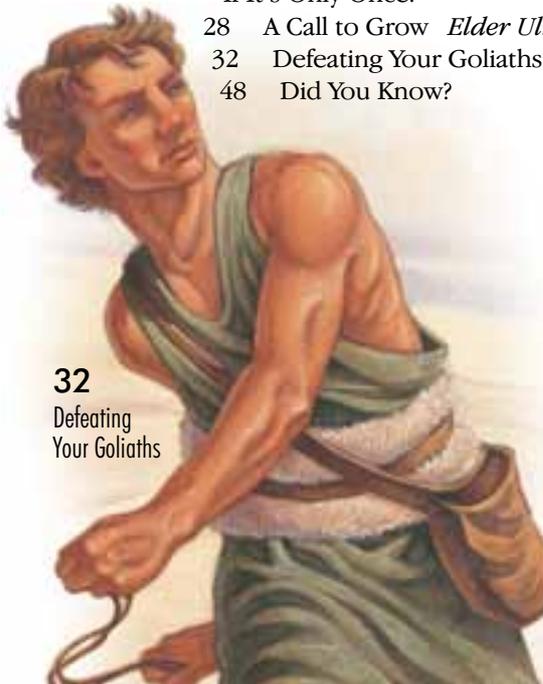


As you look for the Cambodian CTR ring hidden in this issue, think of how choosing the right can help you prepare to go to the temple.



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16 Keys to the Future



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F8 Faith in God

standards of the gospel. List what we can do to strengthen our testimonies. How does a testimony help us live the gospel?

“Experiencing a Change of Heart,” p. 39: On a paper heart, write “faith,” “righteousness,” “love,” and “overcoming the world” (see the section “Blessings of Being Born Again”). Discuss how each of these four principles can help family members experience a change of heart. Illustrate this change by sharing the story about Ivan. On the other side of

the paper heart, list what your family can do to live these principles.

“Faith in God,” p. F8: Invite family members to tie their shoes using only one hand. Discuss why this is difficult. Now have them tie each other's shoes. Discuss how working together made the task easier. Read the article, and discuss how your faith in God will be strengthened as you work together to complete this program. Choose an activity from the *Faith in God* guidebook to work on together this coming week.

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Safety in Counsel

BY PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING

First Counselor in the First Presidency

The Savior has always been the protector of those who would accept His protection. He has said more than once, “How oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not” (3 Nephi 10:5; see also, for example, Matthew 23:37; D&C 29:2).

The Lord expressed the same lament in our own dispensation after describing the many ways in which He calls us to safety: “How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunders, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not!” (D&C 43:25).

There seems to be no end to the Savior’s desire to lead us to safety, and there is constancy in the way He shows us the path. He calls by more than one means so that it will

reach those willing to accept it. Those means always include sending the message by the mouths of His prophets whenever people have qualified to have the prophets of God among them. Those authorized servants are always charged with warning the people, telling them the way to safety.

A Prophet’s Warning

When tensions ran high in northern Missouri in the fall of 1838, the Prophet Joseph Smith called for all the Latter-day Saints to gather to Far West for protection. Many were on isolated farms or in scattered settlements. He specifically counseled Jacob Haun, founder of a small settlement called Haun’s Mill. A record of that time includes this: “Brother Joseph had sent word by Haun, who owned the mill, to inform the brethren who were living there to leave and come to Far West, but Mr. Haun did not deliver the message.”¹ Later, the Prophet Joseph recorded in his history: “Up to this day God had given me wisdom to save the people who took counsel. None had ever been killed who abode by my counsel.”² Then the Prophet recorded the sad truth that innocent lives could have been saved at Haun’s Mill had his counsel been received and followed.



There seems to be no end to the Savior’s desire to lead us to safety, and there is constancy in the way He shows us the path. He calls by more than one means so that it will reach those willing to accept it.

In our own time we have been warned with counsel on where to find safety from sin and from sorrow. One of the keys to recognizing those warnings is that they are repeated. For instance, more than once in general conferences, you have heard our prophet say that he would quote a preceding prophet and would therefore be a second witness and sometimes even a third. Each of us old enough to listen heard President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) give counsel on the importance of a mother in the home and then heard President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) quote him, and we have heard President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) quote them both.³

The Apostle Paul wrote, “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established” (2 Corinthians 13:1). One of the ways we may know that the warning is from the Lord is that the law of witnesses, authorized witnesses, has been invoked. When the words of prophets seem repetitive, that should rivet our attention and fill our hearts with gratitude to live in such a blessed time.

Looking for the path to safety in the counsel of prophets makes sense to those with strong faith. When a prophet speaks, those with little faith may think that they hear only a wise man giving good advice. Then if his counsel seems comfortable and reasonable, squaring with what they want to do, they take it. If it does not, they either consider it faulty advice or they see their circumstances as justifying their being an exception to the counsel. Those without faith may think that they hear only men seeking to exert influence for some selfish motive. They may mock and deride, as did a man named Korihor, with these words recorded in the Book of Mormon: “And thus ye lead away this people after the foolish traditions of your fathers, and according to your own desires; and ye keep them down, even as it were in bondage, that ye may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands, that they durst not look up with boldness, and that they durst not enjoy their rights and privileges” (Alma 30:27).

Korihor was arguing, as men and women have falsely argued from the beginning of time, that to take counsel from the servants of God is to surrender God-given rights

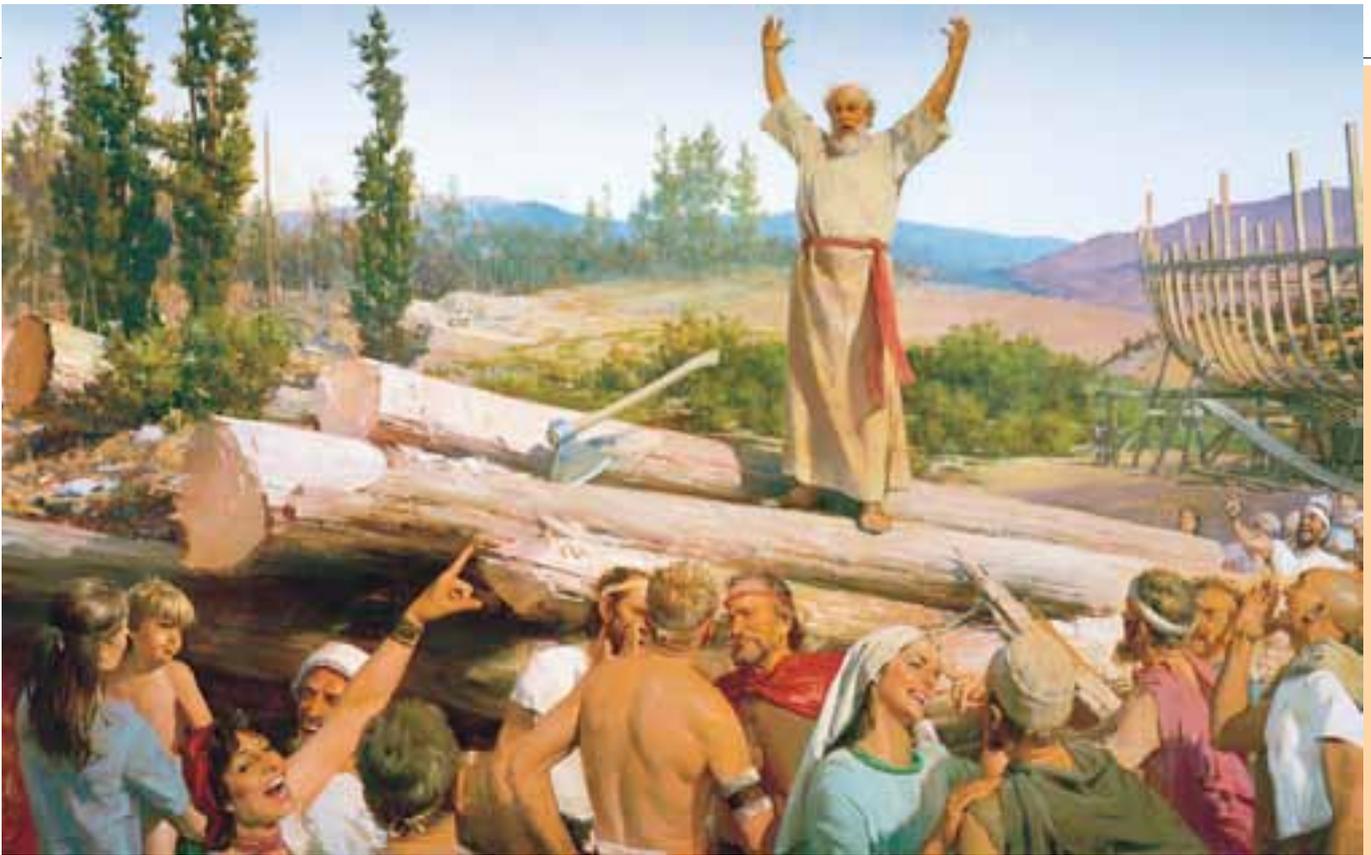
of independence. But the argument is false because it misrepresents reality. When we reject the counsel that comes from God, we do not choose to be independent of outside influence. We choose another influence. We reject the protection of a perfectly loving, all-powerful, all-knowing Father in Heaven, whose whole purpose, as that of His Beloved Son, is to give us eternal life, to give us all that He has, and to bring us home again in families to the arms of His love. In rejecting His counsel, we choose the influence of another power, whose purpose is to make us miserable and whose motive is hatred. We have moral agency as a gift of God. Rather than the right to choose to be free of influence, it is the inalienable right to submit ourselves to whichever of those powers we choose.

Standing on Safe Ground

Another fallacy is to believe that the choice to accept or not accept the counsel of prophets is no more than deciding whether to accept good advice and gain its benefits or to stay where we are. But the choice not to take prophetic counsel changes the very ground upon which we stand. That ground becomes more dangerous. The failure to take prophetic counsel lessens our power to take inspired counsel in the future. The best time to have decided to help Noah build the ark was the first time he asked. Each time he asked after that, each failure to respond would have lessened sensitivity to the Spirit. And so each time his request would have seemed more foolish, until the rain came. And then it was too late.

Every time in my life when I have chosen to delay following inspired counsel or decided that I was an exception, I came to know that I had put myself in harm’s way. Every time that I have listened to the counsel of prophets, felt it confirmed in prayer, and then followed it, I have found that I moved toward safety. Along the path, I have found that the way had been prepared for me and the rough places made smooth. God led me to safety along a path that was prepared with loving care, sometimes prepared long before.

The account at the beginning of the Book of Mormon is of a prophet of God, Lehi. He was also the leader of a



family. He was warned by God to take those he loved to safety. Lehi's experience is a type of what happens as God gives counsel through His servants. Of Lehi's family, only those who had faith and who themselves received confirming revelation saw both the danger and the way to safety. For those without faith, the move into the wilderness seemed not only foolish but dangerous. Like all prophets, Lehi, to his dying day, tried to show his family where safety would lie for them.

He knew that the Savior holds responsible those to whom He delegates priesthood keys. With those keys comes the power to give counsel that will show us the way to safety. Those with keys are responsible to warn even when their counsel might not be followed.

Keys are delegated down a line that passes from the prophet through those responsible for ever-smaller groups of members, closer and closer to families and to individuals. That is one of the ways by which the Lord makes a stake a place of safety. For instance, I have sat with my wife in a meeting of parents called by our bishop so that he could warn us of

spiritual dangers faced by our children. I heard more than the voice of my wise friend. I heard a servant of Jesus Christ, with keys, meeting his responsibility to warn and passing to us, the parents, the responsibility to act. When we honor the keys of that priesthood channel by listening and giving heed, we tie ourselves to a lifeline that will not fail us in any storm.

Our Heavenly Father loves us. He sent His Only Begotten Son to be our Savior. He knew that in mortality we would be in grave danger, the worst of it from the temptations of a terrible adversary. That is one of the reasons the Savior has provided priesthood keys, so that those with ears to hear and faith to obey could go to places of safety.

Having Listening Ears

Having listening ears requires humility. You remember the Lord's warning to Thomas B. Marsh. He was then the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The Lord knew that President Marsh and his Brethren of the Twelve would be tested. He gave counsel about taking counsel. The Lord said, "Be

The best time to have decided to help Noah build the ark was the first time he asked. Each time he asked after that, each failure to respond would have lessened sensitivity to the Spirit.



LEHI PREACHING IN JERUSALEM, BY DEL PARSON, © IRI

Lehi's experience is a type of what happens as God gives counsel through His servants. Of Lehi's family, only those who had faith and who themselves received confirming revelation saw both the danger and the way to safety.

thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers" (D&C 112:10).

The Lord added a warning that is applicable to any who follow a living prophet: "Exalt not yourselves; rebel not against my servant Joseph; for verily I say unto you, I am with him, and my hand shall be over him; and the keys which I have given unto him, and also to youward, shall not be taken from him till I come" (D&C 112:15).

God offers us counsel not just for our own safety but for the safety of His other children, whom we should love. There are few comforts so sweet as to know that we have been an instrument in the hands of God in leading someone else to safety. That blessing generally requires the faith to follow counsel when it is hard to do.

An example from Church history is that of Reddick Newton Allred. He was one of the rescue party sent out by President Brigham Young (1801–77) to bring in the Willie and Martin handcart companies. At the Sweetwater River near South Pass, Captain George Grant asked Reddick Allred to remain there with a few men and wagons and be ready to help

when the rescuers returned with the handcart pioneers.

The rescuers found the Willie company mired in the snow, freezing, starving, and dying. Some of the rescuers continued to search for the Martin company, while the others helped the Willie company make that heartrending pull up and over Rocky Ridge. Soon after they made camp, Reddick Allred and his men came to deliver essential assistance and supplies.

Allred then waited for Captain Grant to return with the Martin company. Week after week passed with no sign of them. As blizzards howled and the weather became life threatening, two of the men decided it was foolish to stay. They thought the Martin company had either wintered over somewhere or perished. They decided to return to the Salt Lake Valley and tried to persuade everyone else to do the same. Allred refused to budge. President Young had sent them out, and Captain Grant, Reddick Allred's priesthood leader, had told him to wait there.

Those who returned took several wagons, filled with needed supplies, and started back to the Salt Lake Valley. Even more tragic, they

turned back 77 wagons that were coming from the valley to help. Some of these wagons returned all the way to Big Mountain before messengers sent by President Young met them and turned them back around.

Finally, more than three weeks after Reddick Allred had assisted the Willie company, Captain Grant arrived with the Martin company. These pioneers were even more destitute and had suffered dozens of deaths. Captain Grant's rescue team was small and low on provisions—and still more than 200 miles (320 km) from the Salt Lake Valley. Once again, because Reddick Allred had stayed true to his assignment, even in the most trying circumstances, he was able to provide life-sustaining assistance and supplies.⁴

Reaching Out to Others

You will hear and read inspired counsel from prophets of God to reach out to new members of the Church. Those with the faith of Reddick Newton Allred will keep offering friendship even when it seems not to be needed or to have no effect. They will persist. When some new member reaches the point of spiritual exhaustion, members of faith will be there offering kind words and fellowship. They will then feel the same divine approval Brother Allred felt when he saw those handcart pioneers struggling toward him, knowing he could offer them safety because he had followed counsel when it was hard to do.

While the record does not prove it, I am confident that Brother Allred prayed while he waited. I am confident that his prayers were answered. He then knew that the counsel to stand fast was from God. We must pray to know that. I promise you such prayers of faith will be answered.

Sometimes we will receive counsel that we cannot understand or that seems not to apply to us, even after careful prayer and thought. Don't discard the counsel, but hold it close. If someone you trusted handed you what appeared to be nothing more than sand with the promise that it contained gold, you might wisely hold it in your hand awhile, shaking it gently. Every time I have done that with counsel from a prophet, after a time the gold flakes have begun to appear, and I have been grateful.

We are blessed to live in a time when the priesthood keys are on the earth. We are blessed to know where to look and how to listen for the voice that will fulfill the promise of the Lord that He will gather us to safety. I pray that we will have humble hearts, that we will listen, that we will pray, and that we will wait for the deliverance of the Lord that is sure to come as we are faithful. ■

NOTES

1. Philo Dibble, in "Early Scenes in Church History," *Four Faith Promoting Classics* (1968), 90.
2. *History of the Church*, 5:137.
3. See, for example, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (1982), 327; "To the Fathers in Israel," *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 49; "Women of the Church," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 69.
4. See Rebecca Bartholomew and Leonard J. Arrington, *Rescue of the 1856 Handcart Companies* (1992), 29, 33–34.

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. Read the account of Reddick Allred's faithfulness. Ask family members what they might have done in that situation. Ask, How does following the prophet keep us safe? How might our own obedience affect the safety of others around us?
2. Ask the family how they can respond to a challenge on which the prophets have given counsel, such as dressing modestly or avoiding questionable material in the media. *For the Strength of Youth* (item no. 36550) offers counsel on many of today's challenges.
3. Read together the second paragraph under the heading "A Prophet's Warning." Ask family members to recall the most recent general conference. Invite them to share gospel principles they remember hearing more than one speaker mention. Bear testimony that we are blessed to live in a time when the Lord provides multiple witnesses for His words.

Fruits of the Book of Mormon

BY ELDER RICHARD G. HINCKLEY

Of the Seventy



Contemplating and applying the doctrines of Christ in the Book of Mormon has produced a “mighty change” in my heart.

When I read the Book of Mormon, something inevitably happens to me. My burdens feel lighter. Faith and hope replace my worries, concerns, and doubts. Life appears brighter.

As a young missionary in Germany, just a month or two in the field, I had two similar experiences that affected my testimony of the Book of Mormon in a profound way.

One morning as we were tracting, my companion and I knocked on the door of a minister of a prominent church. He invited us in, asked us to be seated at his table, and then immediately began to attack the Book of Mormon in a highly agitated and animated way. I understood most of what he was saying, and the contentious spirit in which he was saying it was unmistakable, but my lack of proficiency with the German language made it difficult for me to respond. My senior companion, a strong and outstanding missionary, simply bore a powerful testimony of the book, and we excused ourselves and left. My heart was pounding. I believe I was shaking a bit. I felt troubled.

A week or two later we met a man while street contacting who agreed to an appointment. We set a time, and he gave us his address in Bückeburg, a picturesque little

town several miles from our assigned city of Minden but still in our area.

It was winter, and on the Sunday morning of our appointment, we mounted our bicycles and pedaled the entire distance, bucking a strong, cold headwind. Cold and panting, we pressed the doorbell on the man’s apartment building, and he buzzed the door open. We climbed the stairs to his apartment, and he let us in. Immediately we recognized a contentious spirit in the room—the same spirit we had felt a few weeks earlier in the home of the minister.

Our host did not invite us to sit down. Instead, he left the room for a moment. He returned carrying several editions of the Bible, dropped them on the table, and said in a very loud and defiant voice, “So you want to talk [religion], do you?” Then, pointing to the window, he bellowed, “Good, but first throw your Book of Mormon in the Weser [River]!”

A couple of weeks had passed since our experience with the minister, and I was now able to say a sentence or two in German. I attempted to do so. Once again, my senior companion simply bore a strong, quiet testimony of the Book of Mormon and politely thanked the man for his time. Then we excused ourselves and rode back to Minden,

this time with the wind at our backs.

I had a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, or so I thought at the time. But it became painfully clear after those two experiences, so close together in time, that my testimony was neither deep nor strong. I was unsure of myself and of my ability to truthfully bear witness of the Book of Mormon in a powerful and convincing way.

I made up my mind that if I were to have a successful mission, I had better make sure my testimony of the Book of Mormon was true and strong. I went to work on it. I read and prayed and thought and contemplated. Ultimately, the Lord blessed my efforts. A testimony came to me and has never left; rather, it has grown stronger through the years.

I have thought often of those two experiences. I am grateful to a wise and steady companion, and in a way I am thankful for an unwitting minister and a rather fanatical man, who figuratively took hold of my shoulders and shook me. To this day, well beyond 40 years later, I remember their names and the details of our meetings. When I think of them, the great passage from 3 Nephi comes to mind:

“And according as I have commanded you thus shall ye baptize. And there shall be no disputations among you, as

I read and prayed
and thought and
contemplated.

**Ultimately, the Lord
blessed my efforts. A
testimony of the Book
of Mormon came to
me and has never
left; rather, it has
grown stronger
through the years.**

there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been.

“For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

“Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away” (3 Nephi 11:28–30).

I think too of the great words of Paul to the Galatians: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” (Galatians 5:22–23).

These are the fruits I experience when I read the Book of Mormon. Reading its pages, contemplating the transcendent doctrines of Christ it contains, attempting to apply these in my life—all this settles in my mind and in my soul as a “mighty change” (Mosiah 5:2; Alma 5:14) in my heart, one that gives me resolve to do better; to be a little kinder, less critical, more generous; and to share with others the great blessings the Lord has given me.

These are the fruits of the Spirit of God. These are the fruits of the Book of Mormon. ■



Tending the Flock

TEACHING LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO YOUTH



From an interview with President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, and Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

To some youth, adulthood seems a long way off. But before long, the rising generation will be leaders in their homes and in the Church. What can we teach them now?

Preparing the rising generation to build strong families, to lead the Church, and to return to their Heavenly Father is an important responsibility—one that involves leaders, teachers, and, most of all, parents. “The responsibility of building leadership in the Church belongs to the father and the mother,” Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains. “As youth grow and mature through their teenage years and move toward adulthood, the Church picks up an important role in this process of giving youth an opportunity to lead, but it begins in the home.”

Here, Elder Ballard and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, share 10 principles related to teaching leadership skills to youth, distilled from their own observations and experiences.

1. Start at Home

Teaching leadership in the home can be done in even the simplest of circumstances, such as when a parent is preparing a meal or repairing something around the house, Elder Ballard says.

“In my judgment, there is no substitute for fathers or mothers taking a child—even when the child is young—and showing the child what they’re doing and how they’re doing it. The child grows up knowing a lot about life and how to do things just by being at the elbow of his or her father or mother. It also helps the child feel like he or she is part of the family council process.

“There are situations where young people don’t have both a father and a mother in the home. We certainly understand that. But somebody is raising them, and that person is number one in teaching them how to do things and how to lead.”

Gospel learning can happen in the home even when youth are members of the Church but their parents are not, President Uchtdorf says. Ward or branch leaders can invite parents—regardless of



Having the opportunity to teach, even in small settings, is essential for young people. Teaching, says President Uchtdorf, is the essence of leadership.

whether the parents are Latter-day Saints—to be involved in their children’s Church activity. Some of the best methods are through tools that already exist.

“Leaders can take advantage of the established tools the Church has—the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet and the Duty to God and Personal Progress programs. The *Guidebook for Parents and Leaders of Youth* explains how we can help our youth succeed in these programs and develop leadership skills,” President Uchtdorf says. “Take those tools into the homes of the young people. Invite the parents to help their children accomplish the goals and tasks and the other good things that are offered.

“This will take special effort on the part of the leaders, but it will help these parents establish the leadership potential that is based on the family. It will also show them what we are all about. It will show them that the Church unites families and that it presents wonderful values—values that make us more Christlike. It will show these parents that we ‘talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ . . . that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins’ (2 Nephi 25:26). If we use what we have in place, we can help all of our youth become leaders.”

2. Teach in a Council Setting

Elder Ballard notes that it’s not uncommon for adult leaders to assume responsibility that actually belongs to the youth. “Leadership among youth grows when the leaders counsel carefully with their organization,” he says. “For example, let’s say a deacons quorum has five boys who are active and three who are not. Whose responsibility

is it to recover the three who are not active? Far too many leaders would say it’s theirs.”

Instead, a leader should bring the matter into a council setting with the members of the quorum presidency and ask, “What are we going to do, how are we going to do it, and who’s going to do what?” Elder Ballard says.

“If youth see a bishop or another leader who runs everything, who doesn’t involve others, and who doesn’t bring into council all the resources that he has, the youngsters are going to think that’s what a leader does. It’s a great tragedy when a bishop thinks, ‘This is *my* ward, and we’re going to do it *my* way,’ losing sight that it’s the Lord’s ward. We ought to be seeking to know what *He* wants us to do and how *He* wants us to bring resources together to make things happen.”

3. Provide Teaching Opportunities at Home and at Church

Having opportunities to teach—even simple ones such as bearing testimony, giving a thought on a scripture, or standing up for gospel principles in small discussions—are essential for young people, President Uchtdorf says. He adds that teaching is the essence of leadership.

“Often our young people are the only members at their schools, so they need to learn that they are truly valuable and that they know their religion. They need to understand that whatever they’re doing, they’re always teaching. If we provide our young people with teaching opportunities, encouraging them not to be ashamed of the gospel, we will help them greatly.”

The organization of the Church provides opportunities for not only spiritual growth but growth in other areas. President Uchtdorf says of his career in aviation, “Everything that

helped me to accomplish what I did in my professional life, I learned through the Church.”

He says he now sees the same thing happening with members of his family. “My grandsons are known as members of the Church, and they are known as the best presenters in their classes. Why? Because they have learned these skills at home and in the Church setting. They’re not even cognizant of that kind of learning—it just happens.”

4. Help Them Overcome Fear

When Elder Ballard was in his late 20s, he was called to be a bishop. “I faced great anxiety,” he recalls. “I’d never been a bishop before. Both of my counselors were old enough to be my father. I thought about all the bishops I’d ever had and tried to glean from their examples those things that I admired and thought were worthwhile. But ultimately *doing* the assignment, whatever it is, helps you overcome that fear.”

Fear is inherent with a new assignment, Elder Ballard adds. “A 12-year-old who is made the deacons quorum president will have some apprehension. He might wonder, ‘How do I conduct a meeting?’ Well, he’s shown how to do it. He may stumble, and it may be difficult. But after a few times, he knows that he can do it. He has taken a giant step forward. Once you know how to do something, all of a sudden you can lead without fear.”

Confidence also comes in understanding who we are, President Uchtdorf adds. “Take Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. He learns that he is created in the similitude of God and that God has a work for him to do. When you know you’re on the Lord’s errand, it’s different. That’s why our young people need to know who they are and that the Lord will be with them.

“When I was a teenager, a missionary

was teaching our class because we were a small branch. One thing he said hit me hard: ‘When God is with you, who can be against you?’ This kind of confidence gives you the power to do things even if you’re afraid, even if you feel you’re not qualified to do them.”

5. Let Them Learn Their Duty

Leaders may be inclined to conduct, provide the music, or pray at a youth fireside or other meeting, but they should be “shadow leaders,” overseeing the youth who perform these functions, President Uchtdorf says.

“This can be a challenge for parents and leaders because they know that they can probably do it faster or better. It takes patience to let the youth do it. Sometimes that involves letting them stumble. The scripture says, ‘That my people may be taught more perfectly, and *have experience*, and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands’ (D&C 105:10; emphasis added).

“You set the example and let them learn. Consider the Savior. He lets *us* do *His* work here in our different callings. He is patient with us. That is what we need to do with our young people.”



Elder Ballard relates as an example an experience he shared with a returned-missionary grandson who wanted to hang some things on the cinder-block walls of his apartment. Elder Ballard went to his grandson's apartment to show him how to drill holes and put in anchors.

"I did one and then asked him where he wanted to put the next one. He showed me, and I said, 'OK, put it there. You saw me do it. Now you do it. Here's the drill.' So he did it. And he did the rest of them too. He went slowly because he was nervous. I could have done it twice as fast. But now he knows how. It built his confidence. If he wants to hang something else, he'll just come borrow the tool. I hope he brings it back!"

6. Give Them the Big Picture

It's important to explain to youth that one of the reasons they're asked to obey and to serve is that they will lead families and the Church in the future. But their obedience and service will do more than prepare them for their future family and Church responsibilities; they will also prepare them to fulfill their personal missions in life.

Focusing on the big picture blesses not only the youth but also their leaders, President Uchtdorf says. "Sometimes I think we focus too much on details. If our adult leaders bring the big picture of our purpose and potential to the

hearts and minds of the young people, the details will be easily managed."

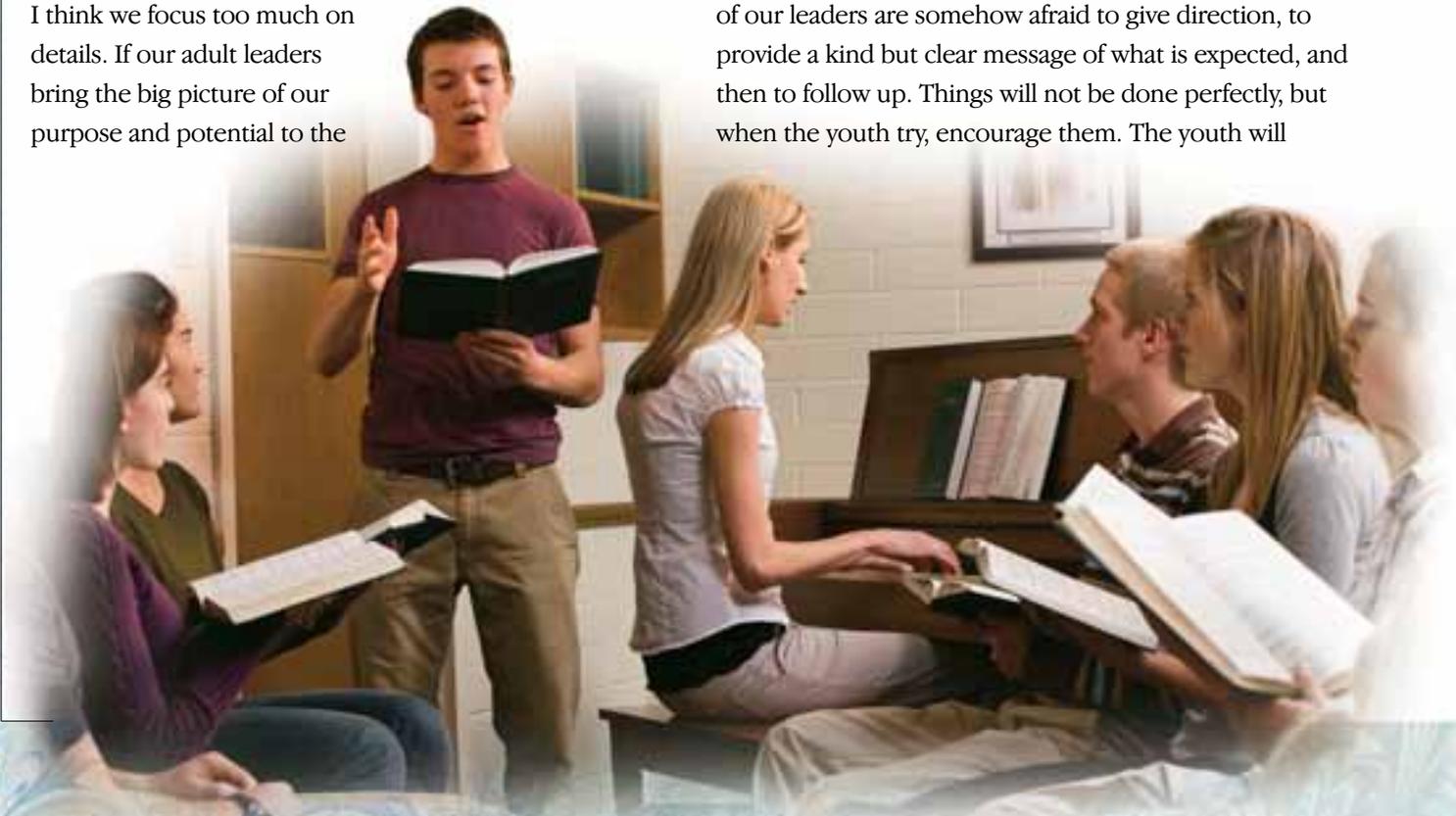
Understanding and communicating clearly and kindly with youth are also critical, he adds. "When I was 13, I was called as the deacons quorum president. Our branch president took a few minutes to find a classroom and meet with me, out of the hallway, and tell me what I needed to do. He gave me wonderful instruction of what was expected of me, both by him and by the Lord.

"Do you know how many deacons we had in our class? Two. But he still took the time to prepare himself and prepare me. That was 50 years ago, and I still remember how it touched my heart. He wanted me to succeed. He gave his personal attention and time. He gave kind but direct instructions, and he followed up."

7. Establish Accountability

The Lord doesn't need admirers; He needs followers, President Uchtdorf says. "You learn to be a leader by first learning to be a follower. The scripture says to 'act,' not to be 'acted upon'" (2 Nephi 2:26).

"The next step is to follow up. That's what we learn in the temple—the return-and-report principle. But some of our leaders are somehow afraid to give direction, to provide a kind but clear message of what is expected, and then to follow up. Things will not be done perfectly, but when the youth try, encourage them. The youth will



remember that. They may not remember the words, but they will remember the feelings.”

8. Know That You’re Entitled to Inspiration

When Elder Ballard was a young bishop, a rowdy nine-year-old boy caused his Primary teacher a lot of angst. After several weeks the teacher escorted the boy into the bishop’s office and said, “Bishop, here’s one of your flock. Tend it.”

Bishop Ballard wasn’t sure what to do. But at that moment an impression came: ask the child to report every week about his behavior in Primary. Bishop Ballard issued that challenge, and it changed the boy’s attitude. The child saw that he could do things differently.

“I didn’t have that idea of accountability in mind before he landed on my doorstep,” Elder Ballard says. “But the Lord, by the power of the Spirit, inspires a worthy and a righteous teacher or leader to know what to do and what to say to bring the best out of anyone, in particular our young people.”

Incidentally, that nine-year-old turned out to be “terrific,” Elder Ballard says. He served a mission, married in the temple, and became a great leader.

The spiritual preparation required for inspiration takes work, President Uchtdorf says, but it is essential. He learned a similar lesson during his career as a pilot. Flying 747 airplanes was fun, he says, but the preparation required to get the 747 off the ground was a lot of work. “For a teacher or leader, the work part is prayer and knowing what the individual young man or woman needs. Leaders also need to ensure that the youth program is not fun and games only but a wonderful, joyful occurrence to help them progress in their young lives and become what they’re meant to become.”

9. Take It Back to the Home

Ultimately, leaders—particularly bishoprics—need to be responsible for appropriately advising and teaching parents about what is going on with the youth of the ward. Bishops and branch presidents should not betray personal, confidential matters, but they *can* teach collectively about general concerns.

“If I were a bishop today,” says Elder Ballard, “I believe I would not hesitate to go to the priesthood and Relief Society discussion on the fifth Sunday and talk to the parents about some of the concerns I had about the youth. I would tell them, ‘What I know about your youngsters as a result of the interviewing I’ve done over the years is between them and me, and they know that. I won’t betray their confidences. But in general we’ve got a problem. You parents need to know about and deal with this. . . .’ Some parents may be afraid to hear the real issues going on. But they need to know.”

10. Realize the Eternal Potential of the Youth

“We have raised the bar,” says Elder Ballard. “But that doesn’t raise it just for the youth. That raises it for the parents, who have the primary responsibility for teaching their children principles. That raises it for the leaders. That raises it for the teachers. We’ve all got to take a step up in a world that is unraveling as fast as this one is.

“We see that they love the Lord,” he continues. “Remember that He loves them. Inside the little body of that young man or young woman you’re teaching is an eternal spirit. These young people belong to our Heavenly Father, and He has great interest in the lives of all His children. We need to keep the fire of that testimony burning in them.” ■

Although fear is inherent with new assignments, Elder Ballard says, doing the assignment helps us overcome that feeling and gives us confidence to continue.

Keys to the

This young man in Italy knows that exercising the priesthood helps build a bridge to his happiness.

BY KIMBERLY REID
Church Magazines

In Florence, Italy, couples used to follow an old tradition: they attached padlocks to the Ponte Vecchio bridge and threw the keys into the Arno River below, signifying that their love was “locked” for eternity.



Today attaching padlocks is discouraged to help protect the historic bridge, which dates back to medieval times. But 16-year-old Cristian Morelli knows there are real keys that existed long before the Ponte Vecchio—powerful priesthood keys that were restored to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1829, when the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods were restored. One of those keys is the sealing power, and Cristian knows a family’s love really can be “locked” eternally. His parents were sealed in the temple by one holding that priesthood authority, and someday he

plans to receive temple blessings too. He prepares by fulfilling his Aaronic Priesthood duties and living worthy of this sacred trust.



Pure Creativity

Florence is known as the birthplace of the Renaissance, a flowering in art, literature, and scientific thought. Like talented Renaissance men before him, Cristian knows there is much good to be found in music and books. He’s been playing the bass for three years, and he enjoys studying English literature and philosophy.

But he knows well that sometimes “creativity” crosses into sin. He knows some teenagers who indulge in bad music or pornographic entertainment. Remembering the priesthood he holds, Cristian knows he must be different.

Purifying Fires

In 1497 a Florentine monk convinced citizens to burn anything they owned that might be considered worldly or crude, including mirrors, expensive clothes, and artwork.

Future

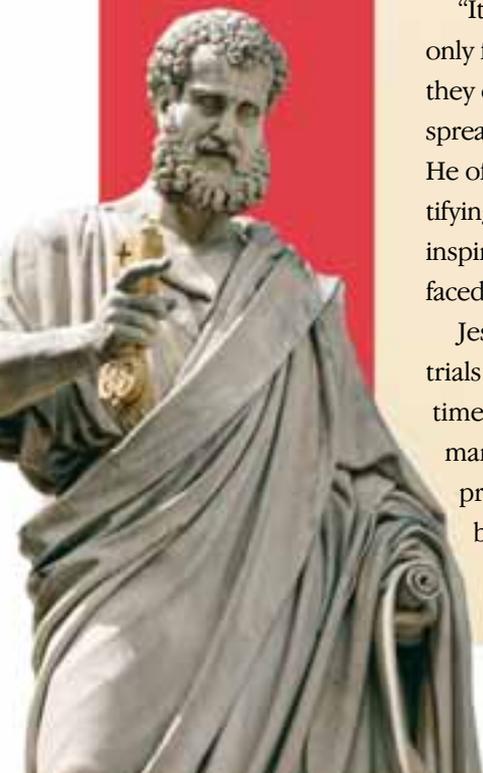


Cristian Morelli lives in a small town outside Florence, Italy, a city well known for its art and architecture. He enjoys nurturing his own talents, such as playing the bass.





Cristian is grateful for spiritual vision. He knows there is a God, that Jesus is the Christ, and that priesthood keys have been restored to earth. Such knowledge shapes the way he lives.



In 2008 Cristian's strategy is a little different. Instead of trying to purge society around him, he seeks the fire of the Holy Ghost to purify his own life.

"It can be hard," Cristian says. There are only four students in his seminary class, and they can't meet every day because they are spread over such a large geographic region. He often feels alone, but he knows that sanctifying power can come through trials. For inspiration, he looks to others who have faced opposition.

Jesus Christ's Apostle Peter experienced trials in Cristian's homeland, spending time in prison in Rome and likely dying a martyr's death there. To this day, Peter's priesthood authority is often illustrated by his holding large keys. Like Peter, Cristian wants to be a true disciple and remain committed to his

priesthood callings, no matter the cost.

Another of Cristian's heroes is Nephi. "Nephi, like Peter, had to undergo several trials," Cristian says. "These trials helped make him what he was."

Prayer, scripture study, and the safe haven he calls home help make Cristian who he is—a Latter-day Saint committed to honoring the priesthood, serving a mission, and becoming a righteous husband and father someday.

Focused on Joy

Such goals set Cristian apart from his friends. "I've wanted to serve a mission since I was in Primary," he says. Unfortunately, his friends don't care to hear about his beliefs or religion of any kind because "they are so focused on studying, playing sports, and having fun."

He remembers having spiritual experiences passing the sacrament as a deacon and fasting for a relative who was sick. He feels great satisfaction in home teaching when he “can tell the difference between before and after the visit,” when the families he and his dad teach “receive comfort and are grateful for the words that have been said.”

These are feelings and experiences many of Cristian’s friends can’t relate to. He might feel misunderstood at times, but spiritual vision is a blessing he never wants to lose. Like the blind man healed by the Savior in one of Cristian’s favorite New Testament stories (see John 9:1–11), Cristian can see clearly while many of his friends are still blind to the joy of the gospel.

Sharing the Vision

That’s one reason he looks forward to serving a mission: to help others see spiritual realities that he has been blessed to understand. Since childhood, he has enjoyed good friendships with missionaries and felt sad whenever one of them was transferred. “As time goes by, I might forget the missionary’s name, but I never forget the experience. Each one has left an impression,” he says. “I want to be like the missionaries I’ve known so far.”

Cristian is especially impressed by the determination he witnesses when he volunteers with missionaries. Even though “many people may say a definite ‘No, I’m not interested’ or slam the door in their face, they keep



LIVE DIFFERENTLY FROM THE WORLD

“As priesthood holders of this Church, part of the price we need to pay is by living differently from the world. We are the possessors and custodians of these commanding powers which can and do roll back the power of Satan on the earth. With all my heart I urge you to please help us push back the world.”

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Devil’s Throat,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2003, 52.

going,” Cristian says. “They keep knocking on the next door and trying to share the knowledge of the gospel with someone else.”

Cristian prepares for his own mission not only by staying pure and studying the gospel but also by dressing appropriately for the occasion—without being showy.

Fashion is a big deal in Florence, but for Cristian, expensive clothes aren’t important. On Sundays, “I wear a white shirt, jacket, and tie to show respect for the Sabbath and the Lord,” Cristian says. He knows this will help him keep the missionary dress code. The rest of the week he wears what he wants. “I have never liked following fashion rules,” he says. “I don’t care what I wear, as long as I dress appropriately”—without paying attention to whose name is on the label.

Keys to Happiness

Cristian looks forward to receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood, the temple endowment, the call to serve as a full-time missionary, and someday the opportunity to “lock his love” to an eternal family of his own.

Ultimately, Cristian looks forward to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. “It comforts me that when He comes,” the sins of the world and all the resulting sadness “will be over.” Until then, Cristian will honor those who hold priesthood keys and keep the covenants that draw him close to the Savior. He knows it’s the only way to be spiritually safe and eternally happy. ■



Making Time to Be Holy

BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

On the streets of Hong Kong, life rushes by at a frenetic pace. Day or night, the throng moves in an orderly but hurried race from place to place. People pour into the subway and spill out the other side on their way to work, the marketplace, or school.

In a culture that prizes hard work and accomplishment, it can seem like there aren't enough hours in the day to do it all.

"I need more time," sighs Ng Kathy Ka-Lai, while taking a break with some of her young single adult friends at the end of a busy Sunday.

The friends are learning from experience that the world can be both insistent and smothering. It can pull a person in a dozen directions at once while worming its way into whatever time he or she has left. The world's demands on us can leave little time for spiritual things. And if we're not careful, before we realize it we are at the mercy of the world rather than in a position to call upon the mercy of God.

The World Rushes On

Kathy and her friends know how easy it is to get caught in the rush of the world.



Chow Shu Wai, 28, a manufacturing supervisor, works 70 hours a week. Yuen Lung Sing, 29, works more than 50 hours a week as a structural engineer. Kathy, 28, also works about 50 hours per week in sales and customer service. Chan Misty Lai Ming, a 27-year-old research assistant, and Tsang Dick Hing Leung, a 28-year-old mechanical engineer, both work about 45 hours.

And then these faithful young adult members accept



Yuen Lung Sing of Hong Kong has found that the rush of the world can keep us from spending time drawing nearer to God.

the added responsibilities that come with Church callings, in which they each spend 5 to 15 hours a week. The group includes a stake Young Women president, a counselor in the stake Young Men presidency, a counselor in the ward Sunday School presidency, a president of the region institute council, and a stake young single adult representative.

To find some time for personal spiritual renewal, the friends say one has to plan for it. That sometimes means

getting creative or sleeping less, including getting up earlier, going to bed later, and making use of commuting time and breaks at work.

“If we have the will to make time for things like scripture study, then it is easy to find time for them,” says Dick. “It’s when we don’t have a plan that we are more likely to waste any free time we find.”



NOT ENOUGH TIME?

“We will have to make some hard choices of how we use our time. But there should never be a conscious choice to let the spiritual become secondary as a pattern in our lives. Never. . . .

“ . . . When we put God’s purposes first, He will give us miracles. . . .

“ . . . Those apparent prison walls of ‘not enough time’ will begin to recede, even as you are called to do more.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Education for Real Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 18, 20, 21.

Beware of Distractions

That’s because when the world isn’t demanding your attention with work and other responsibilities, it is usually trying to win your attention with other ways to fill your time.

“There are a lot of distractions in the world,” says Misty. For example, Misty mentions MP3 players, which allow you to take your favorite music with you wherever you go, but they can keep you from concentrating.

“I gave up my MP3 player almost a year ago,” she says. “It made it too hard to focus. I can’t think or ponder with my MP3 player going.”

Dick talks about TV. “If I have time for TV, I have time for scriptures,” he says. “We need to find a balance and do the right thing at the right time.”

For these young adults, the problem is not watching bad shows or listening to inappropriate music. The problem is letting entertainment take up what little time they have for spiritual things. Or as Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “When things of the world crowd in, all too often the wrong things take highest priority. . . . Satan has a powerful tool to use against good people. It is distraction. He would have good people fill life with ‘good things’ so there is no room for the essential ones.”¹

Sanctify Yourselves

In trying to free themselves from the world, Dick, Kathy, Lung, Misty, and Shu are

learning their responsibility to do as the Lord says, “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy” (Leviticus 20:7). The friends discussed how to seek sanctification.

1. By Faith

“They shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, that they may become sanctified in me” (Ether 4:7).

Faith leads to action, and these young adults believe that faith in Jesus Christ will lead to Christlike actions.



Throughout the day, Dick tries to think about Jesus as often as possible. “He is our example of holiness. What did Jesus do? What did He say?” he says.

He then tries to live that way.

Because of faith, the friends study the scriptures, attend institute, work with

the missionaries, and serve in the temple. They serve others and share their testimonies when possible. They also show that they are willing to sacrifice their desires in order to be obedient to the Lord.

“My mind *and* my actions must be focused on Jesus Christ,” says Kathy. “I can’t say I want to be more patient but then *do* nothing. If I believe Him and have faith in Him, I can become more like Him.”

2. By Study

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17).

“When we apply them, the scriptures



When there doesn't seem to be enough time to do everything, we need to give first priority to God, says Tsang Dick Hing Leung, Ng Kathy Ka-Lai, and Yuen Lung Sing.

become answers to help us face and solve our problems in life,” Dick says of his experience with scripture study.

Each of the friends agrees. And each of them reports trying to make time each day for scripture study, whether it’s a half hour before work or bed or during their commutes.

Study, accompanied by prayerful pondering, opens us to inspiration, says Lung, and can even change our natures.²

“The scriptures deepen my understanding of the gospel,” Lung says. “I can feel the Spirit, and it draws me closer to God.”

3. By Sacrifice

“Sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35).

“The Savior asks us to be willing to sacrifice our own desires in order to follow God,” says Kathy.

“We must be willing to give up worldly things,” Misty agrees.

Lung, for example, talks about the young man in the Gospel of Luke who asked Jesus what he needed to do to inherit eternal life. The man had kept the commandments from a young age, but he was unwilling to give up his

riches when Jesus invited him to sell all that he had to follow the Savior (see Luke 18:18–23).

“He needed to sacrifice things he cared for to follow Christ,”

Lung explains. “We all have those things—not necessarily riches—but things that keep us from following Him.”

An example they discussed is King Lamoni’s father being willing to give up all his sins to know God (see Alma 22:18).

“God wants to find out if we have faith to follow Him. He wants our hearts,” Misty says. “He wants to know what we love more. This is how we become His disciples.”

“To become holy, we must sacrifice our will, our desires,” says Shu.

4. By Obedience

“That which is governed by law is also preserved by law and perfected and sanctified by the same” (D&C 88:34).

Sacrificing our desires is sanctifying when we do it in order to do the Lord’s will, live our covenants, and keep His commandments.

“God has given us laws,” says Dick. “Obedience to them sanctifies us.”



Being willing to sacrifice worldly pursuits in order to make time for God brings great blessings, according to Chow Shu Wai and Chan Misty Lai Ming.

“We would receive more blessings if we were more willing to obey,” says Kathy. “We can be happy keeping His law.”

5. By the Atonement

“We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10).

“To me, being holy means being worthy to be in the presence of God, to be pure,” says Lung. “This is possible only through the Atonement.”

“He has experienced all our difficulties already,” Misty says. “The feelings we have, He’s felt already. There is great power in the Atonement to make us holy as He is holy” (see Moroni 10:32–33).

Kathy says that part of allowing the Atonement to affect our lives is to “remember what the Savior has done” for us.

Dick says He feels the effects of the Atonement when he repents and keeps the commandments on a daily basis, allowing the Lord to make him clean—an example of how we can sanctify ourselves so the Lord can sanctify us (see Leviticus 20:7–8).

In the World, but Not of the World

These young adults are making time to be holy and freeing themselves from worldly things because the Lord has commanded us to “organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves, and sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me . . .”

But why He has commanded us to be holy is as important as understanding how to accomplish it.

“. . . that I may make you clean; that I may testify unto your Father, and your God, and my God, that you are clean from the blood of this wicked generation” (D&C 88:74–75).

“Life can be crazy,” says Dick, looking out over the endless bustle of Hong Kong at night. “When we make time for the Savior in life, we can have His help to overcome our challenges. Nothing in the world is as important to me as being able to return to my Father in Heaven.” ■

NOTES

1. “First Things First,” *Liabona*, July 2001, 7; *Ensign*, May 2001, 7.
2. See Boyd K. Packer, “Do Not Fear,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2004, 77.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ Teaches the Reality of Our Premortal Existence



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

What Are We Taught about the Premortal Existence?

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We lived in the presence of God our Holy Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, in a premortal existence. . . . We were told:

“We will make an earth whereon these may dwell;

“And we will prove them here-with, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

“And they who keep their first estate [that is to be obedient in the premortal existence] shall be added upon; . . . and they who keep their second estate [that is, to be obedient during mortal life] shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever’ [Abraham 3:24–26]. . . .

“ . . . You were taught and prepared for the circumstances you would personally encounter in mortality. . . . Your memory of premortal life would

be kept from you to assure that it would be a valid test, but there would be guidance given to show you how to live. Our Father’s plan for salvation in this life with the opportunity of returning to Him would be called the gospel of Jesus Christ” (“Truth Restored,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 78–79).



Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “In a premortal council at which we were all present, [Jesus Christ] accepted our Father’s great plan of happiness for His children and was chosen by the Father to give effect to that plan. He led the forces of good against those of Satan and his followers in a battle for the souls of men that began before this world was formed. That conflict continues today. We were all on the side of Jesus then. We are on the side of Jesus today” (“Christians in Belief and Action,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 71).

Why Is It Essential to Understand the Premortal Existence?

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president: “Women have distinct assignments given to them from before the foundation of the world. . . . We know that in the great premortal conflict we sided with our Savior, Jesus Christ, to preserve our potential to belong to eternal families. We know we are daughters of God, and we know what we are to do. . . . We believe in the formation of eternal families. . . . We know that the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. . . . We have faith that with the Lord’s help we can be successful in rearing and teaching children. These are vital responsibilities in the plan of happiness, and when women embrace those roles with all their hearts, they are happy!” (“What Latter-day Saint Women Do Best: Stand Strong and Im-movable,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 110).

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985): “If we looked at mortality as the whole of existence, then pain, sorrow, failure, and short life would be calamity. But if we look upon life as an eternal thing stretching far into the premortal past and on into the eternal post-death future, then all happenings may be put in proper perspective” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 15).

For additional study, see *Jeremiah* 1:4–5; *D&C* 138:55–56. ■

“What’s the harm in trying alcohol or tobacco just once?”

The scriptures teach that for us to exercise agency, there must be opposition—good and evil—in the world and that we must be “enticed by the one or the other” (2 Nephi 2:16; emphasis added). You do not need to occasionally give in to the enticement of wrong choices in order for your agency to be genuine. The ability to distinguish right from wrong is what’s important. You do not need to know both good *and* evil; you need to know good *from* evil—and then choose the good.

You may think that trying alcohol or tobacco one time won’t hurt you, but it will. They are harmful substances, and you cannot feel the Spirit if you partake of them. For some, that one time turns into a life-long addiction.



There’s Never “Just Once”

No, you shouldn’t try it; not even once! You may say that you will never do it again, but alcohol and tobacco can be addictive. I have a friend who tried alcohol once. The next time she went out, guess what? She drank again. Everyone knew she had drunk “just once,” so it became “just one more.” We as members are being watched constantly by nonmembers. It doesn’t look good when we don’t obey our own standards—not to mention how disappointed your parents would be.
Kaila W., 17, New South Wales, Australia



Commandments Keep You Safe

Our loving Father in Heaven knows every single thing that goes on in life and its effects. This is why He gave us the Word of Wisdom. He loves you so much and wants to keep you safe from the devil. This is one way He is trying to keep you safe—through commandments. You know it’s a commandment not to take drugs, so stick to the safe side. Pray for His guidance to keep you safe from thoughts of trying things you know are not right.
Asenaca V., 18, Suva, Fiji

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



Keep the Word of Wisdom

Remember that the Word of Wisdom is a commandment from

God, and as such we need to pay strict heed to it. Otherwise we are sinning, and a sin will always be a sin, even if we do it only once. Don't forget that serious sin happens only if we first yield to small temptations, such as trying alcohol or tobacco to find out what it's like.

Ana M., 20, Michoacán, Mexico

Fight the Temptation

All harmful substances deliberately taken into the body are against the Word of Wisdom. Don't experiment with them! Using these substances, even in the smallest of doses, can lead to destructive dependence. In violating the Word of Wisdom, we cut ourselves off from many blessings that we could have received. We stain our spirits. The best weapons for fighting temptation are prayer, fasting, and scripture study.

Oleg P., 16, Crimea, Ukraine

Don't Learn the Hard Way

Our Church leaders don't say "just once." They say no. Just have faith that the Church teaches us so that we don't have to learn it the hard way for ourselves. Also, remember that in the temple recommend interview, priesthood leaders ask if you obey the Word of Wisdom.

Lauren R., 15, Maryland, USA

Rationalizing Can Lead to Addiction

What is wrong with saying "It's only once" is the fact that you did it. If you did it, this will weaken your resistance to doing it again. Rationalizing "it's only once" leads us away from the strait and narrow. Once you go in that direction, it may not be so easy to return, because you will say, "It's only once more, and besides, I can quit any time I want to." It may eventually become, "I must have another," or, "There is no hope left for me."

Adam H., 16, British Columbia, Canada

NEXT QUESTION

"Some of my Church friends argue with nonmember friends over which religion is true. I know contention is wrong, but how do I let my friends know how I feel about the gospel?"

Please send your answer by July 15, 2008, to:

**Liahona, Questions & Answers 7/08
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA
Or e-mail: liahona@ldschurch.org**

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

FULL NAME

BIRTH DATE

WARD (or branch)

STAKE (or district)

I grant permission to print response and photo:

SIGNATURE

PARENT'S SIGNATURE (if you are under 18)

There Is Harm in Just Once



"Some years ago, one of our sons asked me why it wasn't a good idea to try alcohol or tobacco to see what they were like. He knew

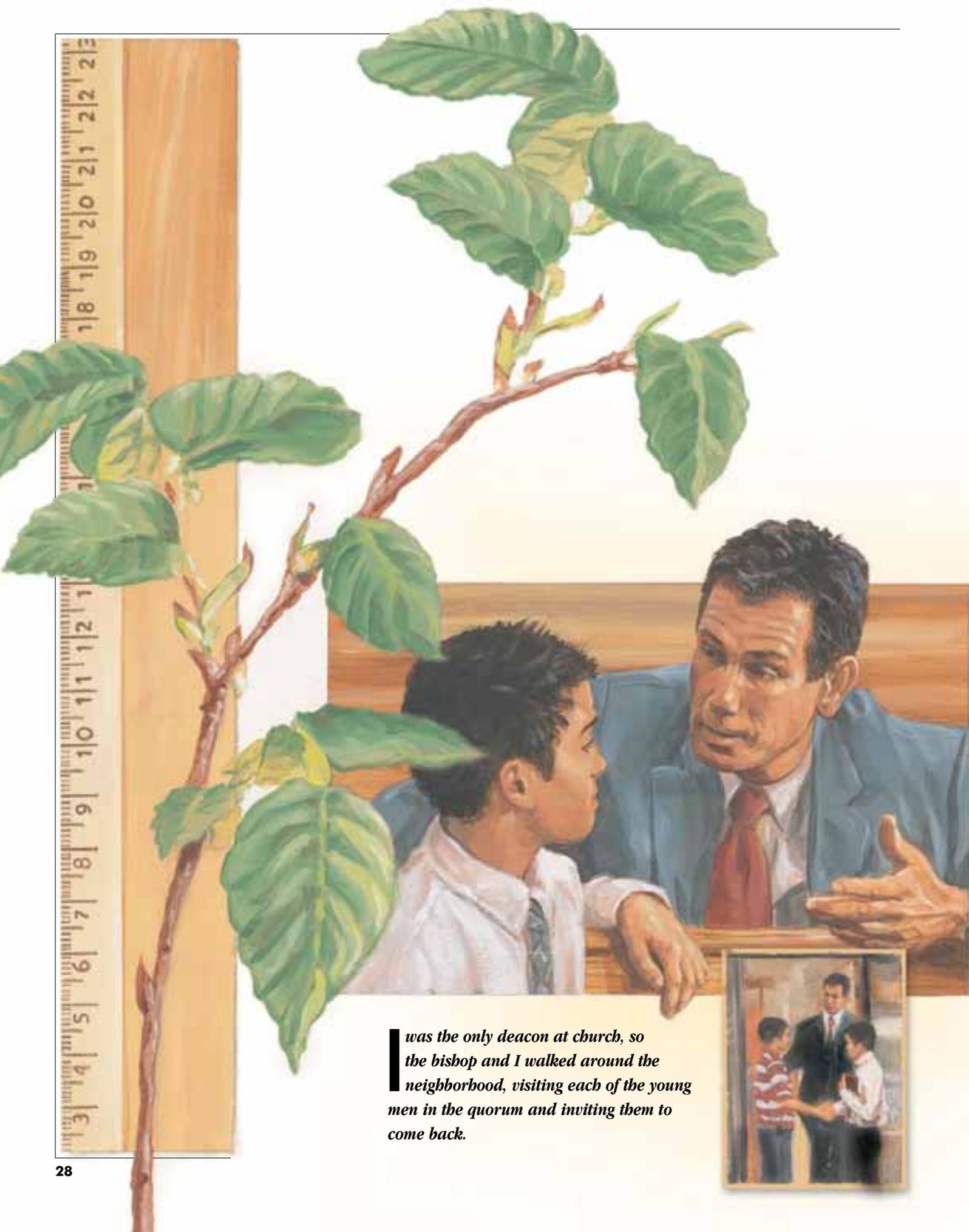
about the Word of Wisdom, and he also knew the health effects of these

substances, but he was questioning why he shouldn't just try them out for himself. I replied that if he wanted to try something out, he ought to go to a barnyard and eat a little manure. He recoiled in horror. 'Ooh, that's gross,' he reacted.

"I'm glad you think so," I said, 'but why don't you just try it out so you will know for yourself? While

you're proposing to try one thing that you know is not good for you, why don't you apply that principle to some others?' That illustration of the silliness of 'trying it out for yourself' proved persuasive for one sixteen-year-old." ■

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Sin and Suffering," *Tambuli*, Apr. 1994, 32; *Ensign*, July 1992, 73-74.



I was the only deacon at church, so the bishop and I walked around the neighborhood, visiting each of the young men in the quorum and inviting them to come back.

A CALL TO GROW

BY ELDER ULISSES SOARES

Of the Seventy

I was born in Brazil to a good family with four boys and a good mother and father.

When I was born, my parents were not members of the Church. They joined the Church when I was a little boy, and I was baptized and confirmed when I turned eight years old.

When I turned 12, my bishop invited me in for an interview. In that interview he explained to me what the Aaronic Priesthood is. He explained to me my responsibilities in holding the priesthood. I was set apart as deacons quorum president, but I was the only member of that quorum who was active. At that time my great bishop taught me an important lesson on Church service.

A Simple Invitation

One Sunday we were in the chapel for priesthood meeting, and he turned to me and asked, “Where are the other boys?”

“Where are the deacons in your quorum?”

I said, “I’m it. I’m the only one I know of.”

“What are you doing to get to know the members of your quorum?” he said.

I said, “I don’t know what to do.”

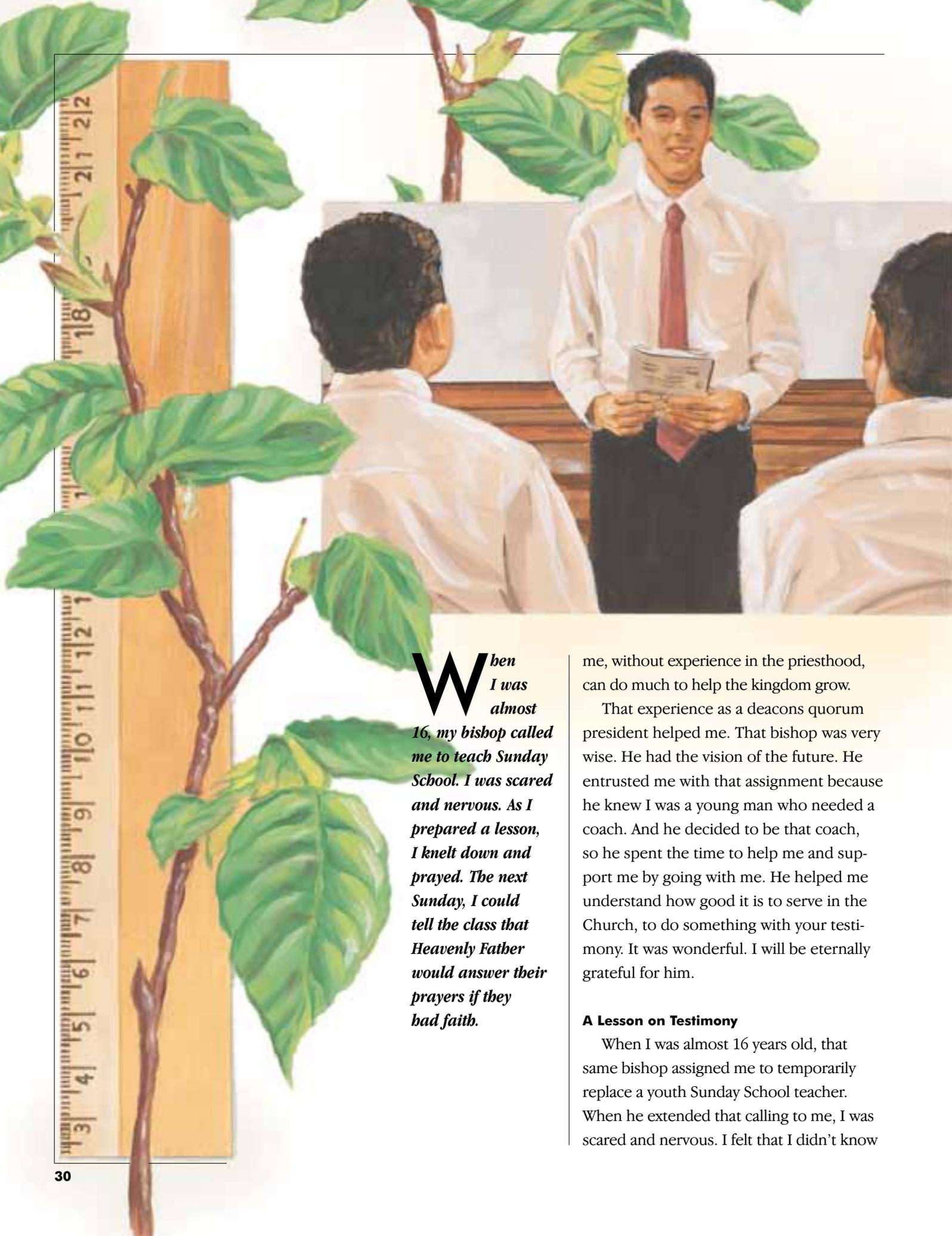
And then he sweetly said, “I’ll tell you what to do.”

He then took me with him right after the meeting, and we walked around the neighborhood, visiting each of the young men on the quorum list and inviting them to come back. And several of them did come back after a few visits. Some went on to serve missions, have great families, and become bishops and stake presidents. And it all started with that simple visit from my bishop and me. He paid attention to that special need in our little ward, and I’m really grateful because I learned a lesson that has remained with me.

Through my life I have learned that people are ready to be invited to come back. You have to go and invite them. Even a boy like



My bishop entrusted me with an assignment and helped me understand how good it is to serve in the Church, to do something with your testimony.



When I was almost 16, my bishop called me to teach Sunday School. I was scared and nervous. As I prepared a lesson, I knelt down and prayed. The next Sunday, I could tell the class that Heavenly Father would answer their prayers if they had faith.

me, without experience in the priesthood, can do much to help the kingdom grow.

That experience as a deacons quorum president helped me. That bishop was very wise. He had the vision of the future. He entrusted me with that assignment because he knew I was a young man who needed a coach. And he decided to be that coach, so he spent the time to help me and support me by going with me. He helped me understand how good it is to serve in the Church, to do something with your testimony. It was wonderful. I will be eternally grateful for him.

A Lesson on Testimony

When I was almost 16 years old, that same bishop assigned me to temporarily replace a youth Sunday School teacher. When he extended that calling to me, I was scared and nervous. I felt that I didn't know

enough to teach. I thought, “How can I be a teacher in that class? It’s like the blind leading the blind.”

I remember that in one specific lesson I had to talk about the testimony of Jesus Christ. We were studying in the Book of Mormon about how we could have a testimony of the gospel. I felt in my heart that I knew this Church is true, that Jesus is the Christ. But I had never prayed about those things. I thought, “How in the world can I teach these youth that they have to pray and receive an answer when I’ve never prayed for an answer?”

Ever since I was born, I had been taught about faith in Jesus Christ. And when I became a member of the Church, I always had that warm feeling in my heart about Jesus Christ, about my Heavenly Father, and about the Church. I had never had any concerns about whether this was the true Church of Jesus Christ; I had never prayed about it because those feelings were so strong. But in preparation for that class that week, I decided that I should pray to receive a confirmation that the gospel is true.

I knelt down in my room, and I decided to pray with all my might to confirm in my heart that this is the true Church of Jesus Christ. I was not expecting a great manifestation or an angel or something. I didn’t know what to expect as an answer.

When I knelt down and asked the Lord if the gospel is true, there came to my heart a very sweet feeling, a small voice that confirmed to me the gospel is true and that I should continue in it. It was so strong that I could never say that I didn’t know. I could never disregard that answer. Even though it was a small voice, it was a very strong feeling in my heart.

I spent that whole day feeling so happy that I couldn’t think about anything bad. When kids at school would say bad things, I wouldn’t listen to them. It was like I was in heaven, contemplating that beautiful feeling in my heart.

The next Sunday, when I stood up in front of the class of young people, I could share my testimony and tell them that Heavenly Father would answer their prayers if they

had faith. I read James 1:5, which is the same scripture Joseph Smith read regarding asking God for wisdom. But the next verse says that you have to ask in faith, “for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed” (James 1:6). It also says that a person cannot expect to receive an answer if he or she has a heart that doesn’t trust when praying. And then I said to myself and to my little class that we should ask with real faith, looking for an answer, and then the Lord will answer.

From that time on my testimony gave me the conviction I needed to make good decisions, especially in moments when I faced challenges. All of us faced challenges in keeping the standards of the gospel, especially those, like me, who were the only Church members at their schools. But my testimony helped me to remember that even though I was pressured by my friends to do wrong things, I knew in my heart that I was following the true gospel of Jesus Christ. After that experience I could never reject that testimony.

That day made a big difference in my life. Afterward I continued preparing myself for a mission with the help of my wonderful bishop and my family. I served a mission, and when I came back, I went to school to get my degree. I married and started a family. And everything happened because of that prayer when I was only about 16 years old.

A Lifetime of Growth

As I said, I always knew the gospel was true, but I had to ask and then share my own experience with other people. That helped me on my mission too, because when I invited people to pray, I could tell them my own experience, letting them know that I had done that before. I testified that they could get an answer if they would pray with faith.

Great blessings came to me because I was given the opportunity to learn and serve and grow through callings and assignments in the Church. I pray that as such opportunities come to you, you will take advantage of them. They can make all the difference in your life. ■

A slinger put both ends of the sling in his throwing hand, sometimes tying one end of the sling around his fingers and holding the other end between his thumb and forefinger. A slinger would not normally twirl the sling above his head but would simply spin it once and then, with a hard throwing motion (either overhand or underhand), let go of the end between his thumb and forefinger to release the stone.



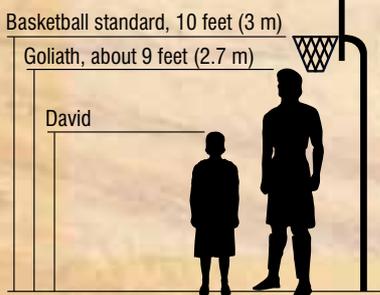
Ancient slings were usually made of one long strip of braided wool or flax with a pouch in the middle to hold the stone. The longer a sling, the greater its range. The longest slings can cast a stone well over 800 feet (about 250 m) at a speed of between 60 and 100 miles (100–160 km) per hour.

Stones that were round and somewhat heavy were preferred by slingers because they are more likely to fly true. Stones used for slinging were usually about two inches (5 cm) in diameter (around the size of a golf ball).

David was probably no more than 16 years old when he fought Goliath and is described in the scriptures as “ruddy,” meaning red-haired or rosy-cheeked (youthful).

DEFEATING YOUR GOLIATHS

“This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand . . . that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel” (1 Samuel 17:46).



A lion and a bear attacked David’s father’s flocks, and David fought them off, giving him confidence against Goliath.

We all have to face Goliaths in our lives: trials, challenges, temptations that seem too large to overcome. But, like David, we can overcome them if we trust in God and do our part. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught, “When temptation comes your way, name that boastful, deceitful giant ‘Goliath!’ and do with it as David did to the Philistine of Gath” (“Overpowering the Goliaths in Our Lives,” *Liahona*, Feb. 2002, 5).

As you read 1 Samuel 17, what can you learn from the battle of David and Goliath? How did David’s trust in God help him? How was he prepared for this battle? What impact can one teenager have in building the Lord’s kingdom?

Here are some details to supplement your study of this remarkable story.

Goliath’s coat of mail weighed “five thousand shekels,” which could weigh 125–200 pounds (57–90 kg).

The staff of Goliath’s spear was “like a weaver’s beam”—probably weighing over 20 pounds (9 kg); its head weighed “six hundred shekels of iron”—15–25 pounds (7–11 kg).



The Philistines were probably originally from the region around the Aegean Sea. Goliath may have descended from a race of people said to be very tall, even “giants.” (See Deuteronomy 2:10–11; Joshua 11:22.)



Goliath’s helmet of brass was probably made of bronze, copper, or iron. It may have been attached to a **target**, which is thought to have shielded the back and neck.





The Spiritual Component of Healing

BY ELDER ALEXANDER B. MORRISON

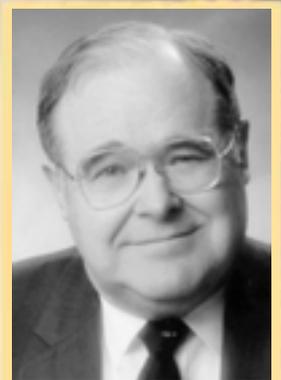
Served as a member of the Seventy from 1987 to 2000

The scriptural accounts of Jesus's life and teachings are replete with references to His unparalleled power to heal all manner of afflictions. The Gospels record more than 20 occasions when Jesus healed the sick: from healing the nobleman's son at Capernaum (see

John 4:46–53) to restoring the severed ear of Malchus, servant of the high priest (see Luke 22:50–51; John 18:10).

Christ's curative powers extended beyond the healing of those with physical ailments to include “*all* manner of disease among the people” (Matthew 4:23; emphasis added; see also Mosiah 3:5; 3 Nephi 17:5–10). Jesus, in His infinite compassion, healed not only those with physical ailments but also others whose illnesses were mental or emotional.

These healings are an integral component of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. It is so powerful—so all encompassing in its scope and reach—that it not only pays the price for sin but also can heal every mortal affliction. He who went forth suffering pains and afflictions of every kind that He might know perfectly how to succor His people (see Alma 7:11–12), who bore the incomprehensible burden of the sins of all who belong to the family of Adam (see 2 Nephi 9:21), in like manner extends His healing power to all, regardless of the cause of their affliction. “With his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).



The divine gift of healing is tailored to the needs of its recipients by Him who knows them best because He loves them most.

POOL OF BETHSADA,
BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH,
COURTESY OF THE BRIGHAM YOUNG
UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART

Faith on the part of the recipient is the great prerequisite of healing. Without faith, the miracle of healing cannot occur.

The Role of the Priesthood

The Savior, through His divine power, could heal all, but mortal men who exercise the authority of the holy Melchizedek Priesthood are subject to His will. Sometimes, because God's will is otherwise, they are not able to heal those to whom they minister. For example, the Apostle Paul "besought the Lord thrice" to remove the unidentified "thorn in the flesh" that tormented him (2 Corinthians 12:7–8). But the Lord declined to do so, explaining, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Paul understood better than many that tribulation and suffering are both necessary and inevitable parts of life.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) understood the wisdom in the limitations

placed on the healing power of priesthood holders. He noted: "The power of the priesthood is limitless but God has wisely placed upon each of us certain limitations. . . .

I am grateful that even through the priesthood I cannot heal all the sick. I might heal people who should die. . . . I fear I would frustrate the purposes of God."¹

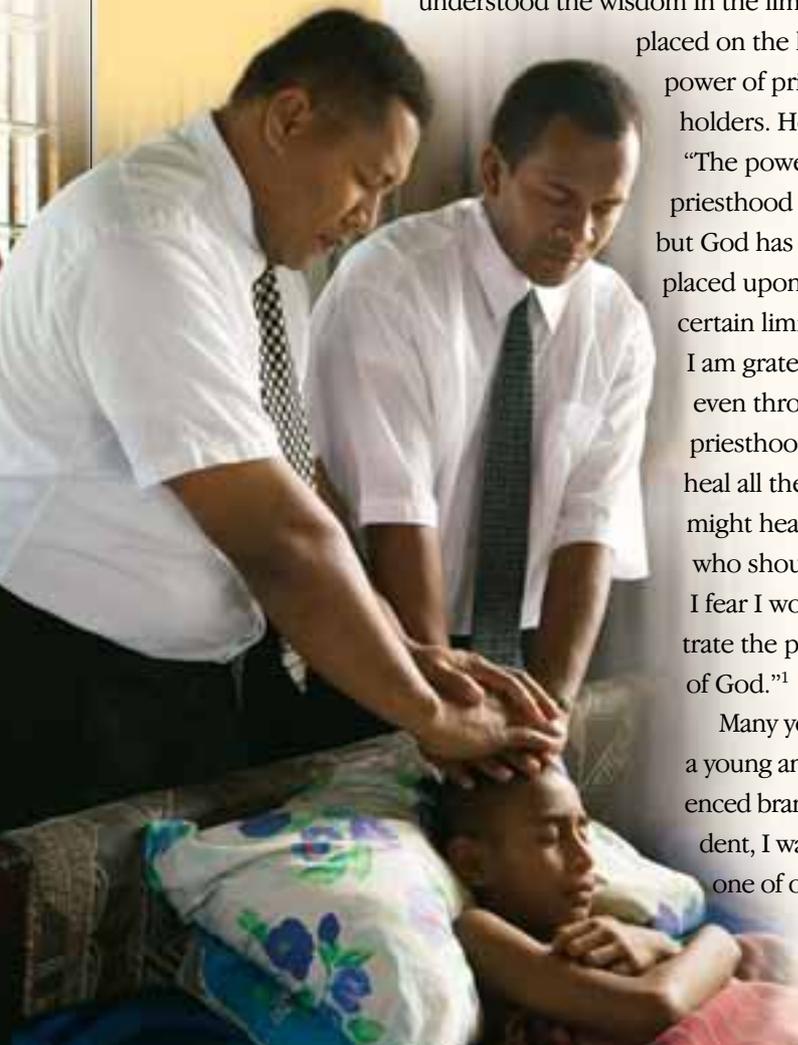
Many years ago, as a young and inexperienced branch president, I was asked by one of our branch

members to participate in the blessing of his grievously ill wife. The man obviously wanted me to bless her with complete recovery from her illness. That indeed was my intention; both the husband and wife were much-needed pillars in our struggling branch.

The husband anointed his wife's head with consecrated oil in the prescribed manner, and I proceeded to seal the anointing (see James 5:14). To my amazement, I found myself saying words I had not intended: the woman was "appointed unto death" (D&C 42:48). She would not recover from her illness but would slip away from us peacefully, cradled in the Savior's loving arms.

The woman died the next day, and I presided at her funeral, a sadder but wiser man. I had learned a great lesson: when we administer to the sick, our maxim must be "not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

The divine gift of healing is, therefore, manifested in different ways, tailored to the individual needs of those who are its recipients by Him who knows them best because He loves them most. Christ's healing power may provide permanent relief in the sense that abnormal functioning of one or more parts of the body is corrected and the heavy burden of suffering lifted from weary hearts. But the peace, rest, and relief of suffering so devoutly wished for by those whose burdens seem oftentimes unbearable may come not from healing in a medical sense but from the gift of added strength, understanding, patience, and compassion, which enable sufferers to carry their burdens. Like Alma and his brethren, they may then "bear up their burdens with ease" and "submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord" (Mosiah 24:15).





The Role of Medicine

We should not believe that all who suffer from illness, whatever the cause, need only receive a priesthood blessing to have their burdens lifted, perhaps permanently. I am a great advocate and supporter of priesthood blessings. I know from *many* personal experiences that Jesus Christ, and He alone, has ownership of the precious “balm in Gilead” (Jeremiah 8:22) needed for final and complete healing. But I know also that God has given us wonderful knowledge that can be of inestimable assistance in dealing with suffering. We must, I believe, take every advantage of such God-given information.

Some persons who are ill, who have received a priesthood blessing and have prayed fervently that their burdens might be lightened, may feel that they suffer from a lamentable lack of faith if they seek professional help for their affliction. They may even stop taking prescribed medication, thinking erroneously that their faith will replace the need for it. Such thinking is quite simply wrong. Receiving and acting upon professional advice and the concomitant exercise of faith are *not* in conflict. In fact, exercising faith may *require* following the advice of experienced health professionals.

Wise health professionals—whatever their academic training or orientation, be it primarily medical or psychological—increasingly are aware that spirituality is a significant component of their therapeutic resources. As recently as a decade ago only a handful of medical schools in the United States offered courses in spirituality and healing, but now more than half do. Particularly with religiously devout patients, evidence is beginning to show that spiritual

approaches to the psychotherapy of depression, for example, are at least as effective as those that are purely secular. A growing number of physicians and psychotherapists now use spiritually oriented approaches and interventions in treating patients with both physical and mental illnesses.

The Role of Faith

Faith on the part of the recipient is the great prerequisite of healing (see 2 Nephi 26:13; Mosiah 8:18; D&C 35:9). Faith—“the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1)—is a gift of the Spirit, bestowed as a reward for personal righteousness (see 1 Corinthians 12:9; D&C 46:19–20). Without faith, the miracle of healing cannot occur. “For if there be no faith among the children of men God can do no miracle among them; wherefore, he showed not himself until after their faith” (Ether 12:12).

Complete healing, which takes into account its spiritual component, also requires an understanding of our nature as God’s children and of our relationship to Him. The scriptures teach and modern prophets confirm that mortals are both body and spirit—the former corruptible, the latter eternal—and the two combined



The wondrous manifestations of Christ's love for all bring hope and encouragement to those who suffer from ailments of all sorts. His love is ever present and never failing.

are a living soul. The Father's great plan of happiness teaches us that body and spirit separated by the death that comes to all mortals will, in God's good time, be reunited, "and all men [will] become incorruptible, and immortal, and they [will become] living souls, having a perfect knowledge" (2 Nephi 9:13; see also Alma 11:42–45).

Faith in a loving Heavenly Father and in His Son, our Savior—coupled with the understanding that we are literally God's children, with a divine opportunity to strive to become as He is, and a realization that His love for us is eternal and unchangeable—brings peace to our lives. That peace persists even if the medical, psychological, or social dimensions of illness—be they physical or mental in origin—remain as "a thorn in the flesh."

The Role of Suffering

I believe our spiritual strength is directly related to the extent to which our souls are stretched. But we should neither seek for

suffering nor glory in tribulation. There is no intrinsic value in suffering in and of itself. Suffering can wound and embitter the soul as surely as it can strengthen and purify. Some souls become stronger in response to suffering, but others bend and break. As author Anne Morrow Lindbergh wisely noted, "If suffering alone taught, all the world would be wise, since everyone suffers."² If we are to partake of "the fellowship of [Christ's] sufferings" (Philippians 3:10), we must pay the price of striving with all our hearts to know and emulate Him. That price may indeed involve suffering, but to suffering we must add compassion, empathy, patience, humility, and a willingness to submit our will to that of God.

The wondrous manifestations of Christ's love for all bring hope and encouragement to those who suffer from ailments of all sorts. His love is ever present and never failing. As Paul testified:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . .

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35, 38–39).

Jesus, in His infinite love and compassion, knows of our trials and sorrows, for He "is mindful of every people, whatsoever land they may be in; yea, he numbereth his people, and his bowels of mercy are over all the earth" (Alma 26:37). ■

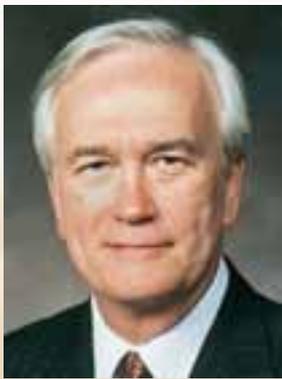
NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 16.
2. "Lindbergh Nightmare," *Time*, Feb. 5, 1973, 35.





Experiencing a CHANGE OF HEART



You and I can become beneficiaries of a mighty change of heart and a spiritual rebirth, thereby reaping the promised blessings of peace, love, true joy, and a disposition to do good continually.

BY ELDER KEITH K. HILBIG
Of the Seventy

Some years ago in Eastern Europe, I listened as a young elder stood before his fellow missionaries in zone conference to share an experience that shaped his life. He and his companion had found and taught a middle-aged man named Ivan (name has been changed) in a distant city. Their investigator came from a difficult background, as was reflected in his well-used clothing, ragged beard, and hesitant demeanor.

Life had been harsh and unkind to him.

Without any prior religious training, Ivan had much to overcome. Practices not in harmony with the restored gospel had to be set aside. New principles needed to be accepted and then incorporated. Ivan wanted to learn, and he prepared himself diligently for his baptism and confirmation. His clothing remained threadbare and his beard ragged, but he had taken the first steps. Shortly after Ivan's baptism, the missionary was transferred. He hoped that he might again cross paths with Ivan.



Alma the Younger personally experienced the transformation from being an enemy to God to becoming a new creature, a being who was converted and, therefore, committed to building the kingdom.

Six months later the mission president reassigned the young elder to his former branch. Surprised but eager to return, the elder, with a new companion, came early to sacrament meeting his first Sunday back in the branch. The members were pleased to see the missionary in their midst again. They rushed forward with broad smiles and warm greetings.

The elder recognized nearly everyone in the small congregation. However, he searched in vain among the faces for the man he and his companion had taught and baptized six months earlier. There arose within the elder a sense of disappointment and sadness. Had Ivan returned to his harmful habits? Had he failed to honor his covenant

of baptism? Had he lost the blessings promised by his repentance?

The elder's fears and reflections were interrupted by the approach of an unfamiliar man who was rushing forward to embrace the missionary. The clean-shaven man had a confident smile and an obvious goodness radiating from his countenance. Wearing a white shirt and a carefully knotted tie, he was on his way to prepare the sacrament for the small gathering that Sabbath morning. Only when the man began to speak did the elder recognize him. It was the new Ivan, not the former Ivan they had taught and baptized! The elder saw embodied in his friend the miracle of faith, repentance, and forgiveness; he saw the reality of the Atonement.



President Brigham Young taught that “a new birth” describes those who are “fully and solely devoted to the Spirit of truth and to God.”

The missionary told his peers attending the zone conference that Ivan had changed and grown by every measure during the months the elder had been away from the branch. Ivan had embraced the gospel, and it radiated from him. He had experienced a “change of heart” (Alma 5:26) sufficient both to be baptized and to press forward in the continuing process of conversion. He was preparing for the higher priesthood and the ordinances of the temple. Ivan had indeed been “born again” (Alma 7:14).

As the missionary concluded his remarks, he asked himself aloud, “How much of a ‘change of heart’ have *I* experienced in the past six months?” He continued his self-examination, asking aloud, “Have *I* been ‘born again?’” These are two profound questions that each of us should privately pose on a continuing basis.

In the intervening years I have reflected upon the words of the young missionary and the actions of Ivan. I have pondered the role that a “mighty change” (Alma 5:12) in our hearts and being “spiritually . . . born of God” (Alma 5:14) play in the process of embracing the restored gospel. I have concluded that they are clearly an important part of the Lord’s doctrine, not just one-time experiences in mortality. They are ongoing opportunities, intended to deepen the process of conversion and individual personal refinement. They prepare us more fully for eternal life.

Challenges of Spiritual Rebirth

The challenges of being born again and experiencing a mighty change of heart are challenges we all must face. Some in the Christian community believe they can be born again merely by acknowledging Christ as the Savior of the world, independent of any previous or subsequent personal behavior. Some assert that the *simple recognition* of Christ’s role, combined with the *single expression of belief* in Christ, will suffice to bring us ultimately back into the presence of the Father and the Son. As well-intentioned

as this position may be, it is not accurate.

The New Testament provides numerous references to the concept of being born again but, as it is translated, does not always explain exactly *how* it is achieved. For example, the Savior (see John 3:5–7), John the Baptist (see Matthew 3:11), and Paul (see Romans 6:2–6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 4:29; Ephesians 4:24) proclaim the principle, but they do not clarify its meaning.

By contrast, the Book of Mormon is a wonderful resource to better understand the process of experiencing a mighty change of heart and of being born again. Its prophets provide a fuller doctrinal declaration of the process. Both phrases are explored more fully by Alma the Younger, who posed three questions to members of the Church: “I ask of you, my brethren of the church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?” (Alma 5:14).

We know from the standard works that baptism by immersion allows us to become a member of the Church, but that ordinance alone does *not* constitute the spiritual rebirth that allows us to return to the presence of Heavenly Father. Similarly, as we are confirmed following baptism, we have the *right* to the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. However, only when we have truly repented—and thus actually *receive* the Holy Ghost—can we be sanctified and thus be born again spiritually. Hence, Alma’s piercing inquiries are valid for each of us repeatedly throughout life.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) preached of the “new birth” as follows: “There is such a thing as the birth of the Spirit while we live in the flesh.—And when we understand more perfectly our own independent organization, which God has given us, and the spirit world, and the principles and powers that act on this organism, we will learn that a person can be so fully and solely devoted to the Spirit of truth and to God, and be so wrapped up in

that Spirit that it may be called, with propriety, a new birth.”¹

King Benjamin, in a stirring address to his people, counseled them concerning how they should live gospel principles (see Mosiah 2–4). He then boldly asked if they believed his words. Their poignant response provides a powerful example: “And they all cried with one voice, saying: Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2).

They also said, “We are willing to enter into a covenant with our God to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in *all* things that he shall command us, all the remainder of our days” (Mosiah 5:5; emphasis added).

King Benjamin then explained to them what had happened and with what result, providing an excellent definition of being born again:

“Ye have spoken the words that I desired; and the covenant which ye have made is a righteous covenant.

“And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters” (Mosiah 5:6–7).

These followers of King Benjamin clearly had experienced such an exceeding change of heart that they had no more disposition to do evil; further, they were clearly spiritually begotten, or born again.

Remember that being born again does not eliminate our memory of past sins, but it will provide peace of conscience and relieve the pain of transgression (see Mosiah 27:29; Alma 36:19).



“Members of the Church who have actually been born again,” said Elder Bruce R. McConkie, “have attained their position, not merely by joining the Church, but through faith, righteousness, love, and overcoming the world.”

Blessings of Being Born Again

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reminds us that “those members of the Church who have actually been born again are in a blessed and favored state. They have attained their position, not merely by joining the Church, but through faith (1 John 5:1), righteousness (1 John 2:29), love (1 John 4:7), and overcoming the world. (1 John 5:4.)”²

Alma the Younger personally experienced the transformation from being an enemy to God to becoming a new creature, a being who was converted and, therefore, committed to building the kingdom:

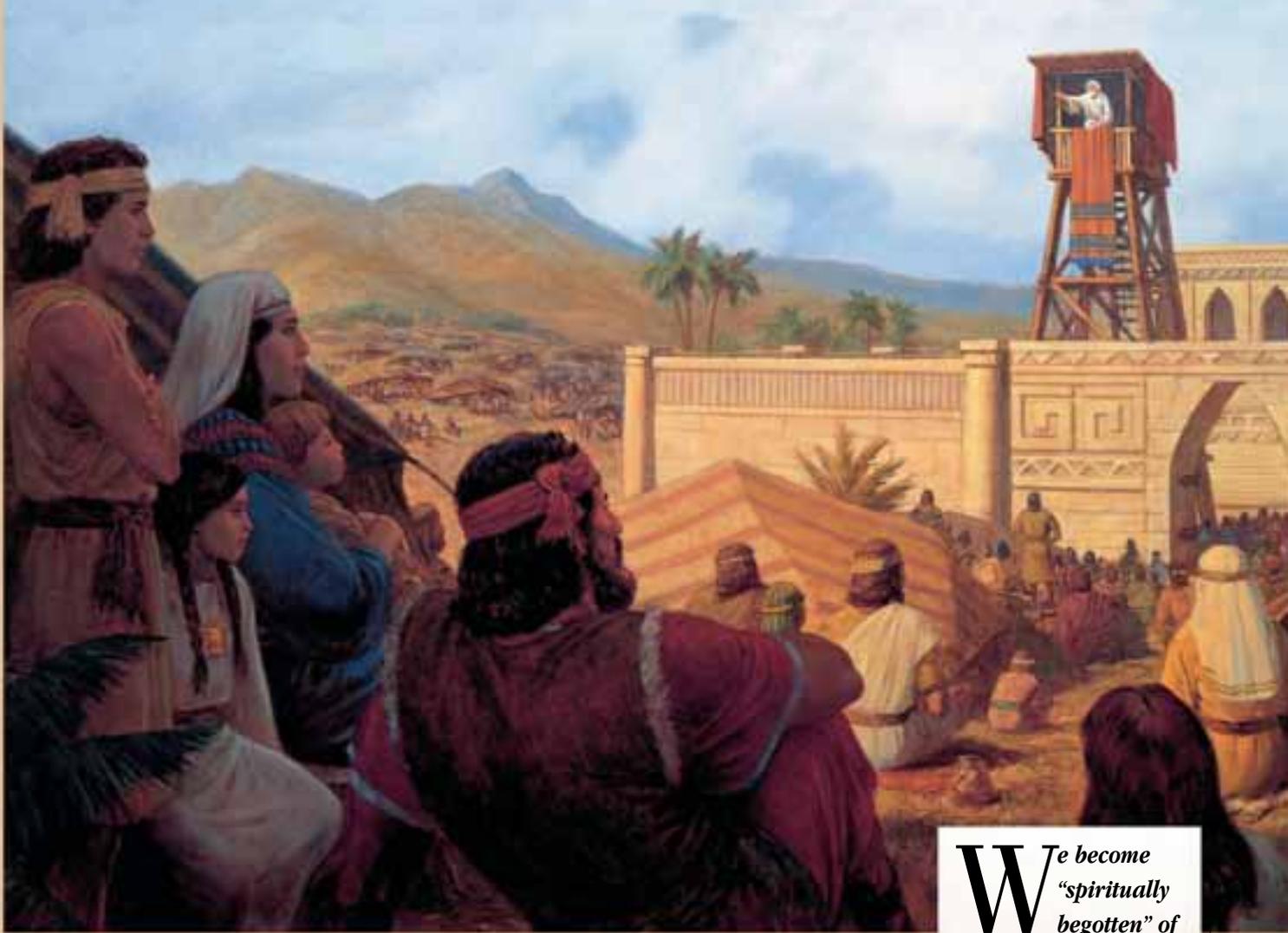
“For, said he, I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold I am born of the Spirit.

“And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, *all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again*; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters;

“And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God” (Mosiah 27:24–26; emphasis added).

If *all* people must be born again and have a change of heart, it matters not if we were born into the Church or were converted later as youth or adults. We all must at some point experience that change of heart and that rebirth of the Spirit as we continue in the process of conversion. The process of rebirth and change of heart is intended to be comprehensive, available to *all* nations, and, hence, each individual.

The scriptures offer accounts of people who were born again in a remarkable manner, such as Paul (see Acts 9:1–20) and Alma the Younger (see Mosiah 27:8–37). However, for most people in biblical and Book of Mormon times, as well as today, this change of heart is not a singular event



but rather a private and gradual process.

Elder McConkie, speaking at a Brigham Young University First Stake conference, offered these comforting and encouraging words: “With most people, conversion [spiritual rebirth and accompanying remission of sins] is a process; and it goes step by step, degree by degree, level by level, from a lower state to a higher, from grace to grace, until the time that the individual is wholly turned to the cause of righteousness. Now, this means that an individual overcomes one sin today and another sin tomorrow. He perfects his life in one field now, and in another field later on. And the conversion process goes on until it is completed, until we become, literally, as the Book of Mormon says, saints of God instead of natural men.”³

It matters not whether our spiritual rebirth is sudden or, as is more common,

gradual. While the process may be different, the results will be similar. There is no difference in the quality of the conversion. For each individual, experiencing a mighty change of heart is manifested by feelings of joy and love, both of which eliminate the prior pain of disobedience (see Alma 36:20–21). How kind is our Heavenly Father! How encompassing is His Son’s Atonement!

With adherence to these true doctrines, like the missionary in Eastern Europe and his investigator, you and I may become beneficiaries of a mighty change of heart and a spiritual rebirth, thereby reaping the promised blessings of peace, love, true joy, and a disposition to do good continually. ■

NOTES

1. *Deseret News*, May 2, 1860, 68.
2. *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (1966), 101; see also Joseph Smith Translation, 1 John 3:9.
3. *Be Ye Converted*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year (Feb. 11, 1968), 12.

We become “spiritually begotten” of Christ, King Benjamin taught, when our “hearts are changed through faith on his name.”

What I Like Best about Church

By Isabelle Alpert

Recently my husband and I had dinner with some friends. The conversation turned to religion, and one friend, a less-active member of the Church, began telling me why the Church was not true.

In the course of his explanation, he became adamant, hostile, and angry. The entire time I sat and listened. At first I felt like crying, but then I became angry and wanted to tell him off. The still, small voice, however, told me to be quiet.

Our friend didn't finish his tirade until we had finished our dinner and paid the bill.

Then he paused,

as if waiting for my rebuttal. I sat there for a moment in silent prayer. Then, in a soft voice, I calmly said, "Do you know what I like best about going to church on Sunday? The sacrament. It allows me the opportunity to quietly bow my head and pray to Heavenly Father. I tell Him all the ways in which I could have done things differently during the past week, and I seek for ways to improve."

Then I added, "I think of all the people I tried to be a blessing to during the past week, and I ask Heavenly Father to help me find more people to bless during the coming week. I am thankful that I have time during the sacrament each week to do this and to become the best I can be."

Our friend looked at me and said nothing. We left the restaurant and walked to the car. I then asked him if he remembered all of the self-help books I had on my bookshelf at home. He did. I told him that since I had joined the Church, I had never read another self-help book. I said the only book I get my answers from anymore is the Book of Mormon.

A few days later he called to apologize.

"Come unto Christ . . . and love God with all your might,

I told our angry, less-active friend that what I like best about going to church is taking the sacrament.

mind and strength” (Moroni 10:32), Moroni counsels us. As I have tried to follow that counsel, my love for God’s children has increased—even for those who try to be my enemy. ■

A Week to Go until Payday

By Julie C. Donaldson

With some difficulty, my husband and I, carrying our two young children, found an empty table in the college’s large dining room. Pulling out the sandwiches we had made at home, we discussed our bleak financial situation.

We had no money and a week to go until our next paycheck. Neither of us wanted to ask our parents for help. We had credit cards, but if we started using them, how would we stop? We had been paying our tithing faithfully, and we hoped Heavenly Father would bless us.

As we considered our options, I noticed a man smiling at us from several tables away. With our noisy, active children, I was used to people staring at us. I gave his notice no thought until he walked toward us. Placing a folded piece of paper on the table, he patted my husband on the back and said with a smile, “It looks like you’ve got your hands full.”

Then he walked away and quickly

disappeared into the crowd. Unfolding the paper, we read, “Good luck! It looks like you’re doing a good job so far.” Tucked into the fold was enough money to get us through the next week and then some.

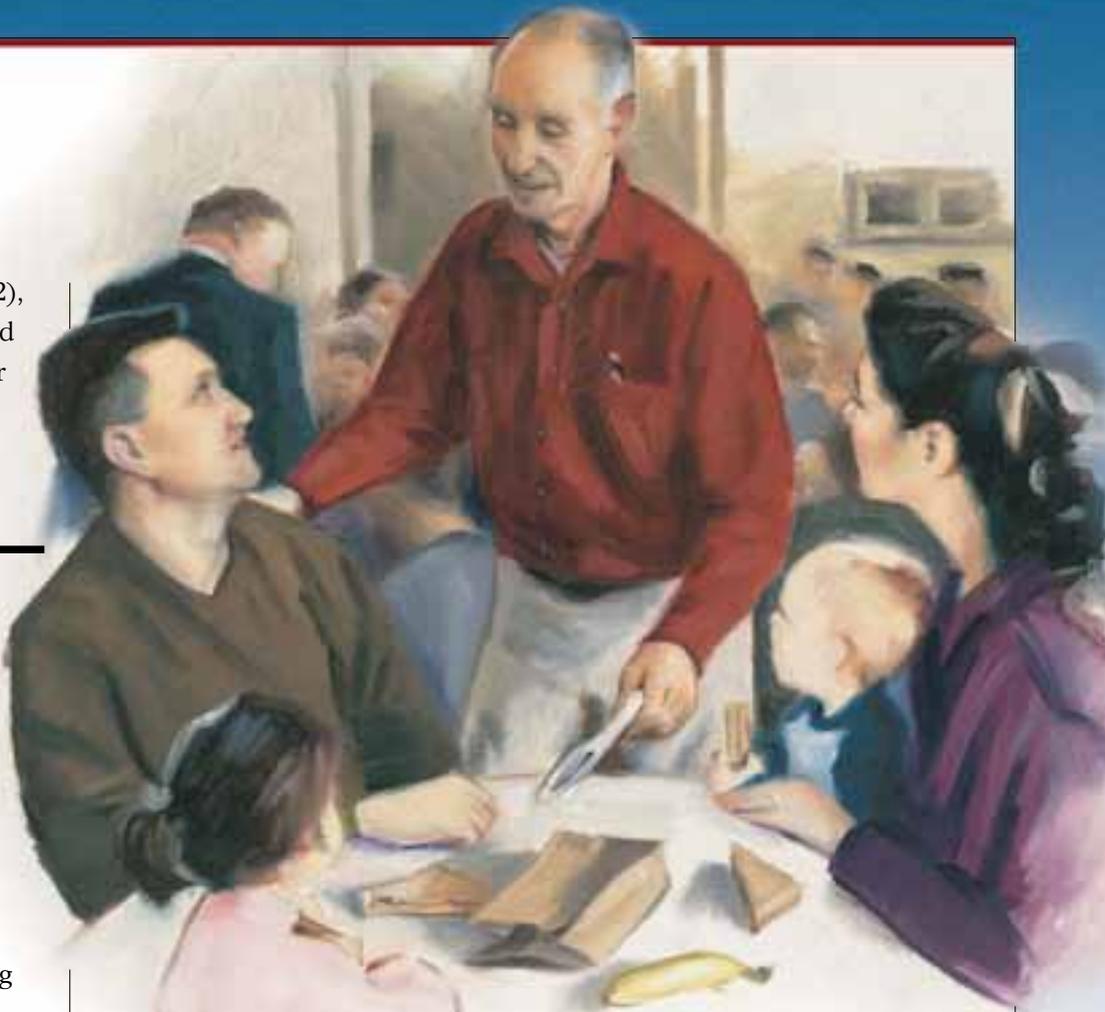
With tears in my eyes, I felt the Spirit’s peaceful assurance that this was an answer to our prayers and a blessing from paying our tithing. I knew at that moment that Heavenly Father was intimately aware of our little family and that He would not forsake us.

The stranger walked toward us, placed a folded piece of paper on the table, and patted my husband on the back.

I kept the note and have read it many times over the past few years. I am sure that the generous stranger did not fully comprehend the impact his action would have. But for

our family, this experience was a turning point—a turning toward greater obedience, faith, and gratitude.

A spiritual prompting, a generous stranger willing to act, and a helpful note have blessed my family eternally. ■





As Favio approached the book lying on the sidewalk, he recognized the golden letters. It was Heavenly Father's answer.

Where Would I Find Another Book of Mormon?

By Curtis Kleinman

My companion and I had just ended a long, unsuccessful day of knocking on doors in Buenos Aires, Argentina. As we sat waiting for the bus, I began to sink into a daze of self-pity. I'd served in the area for three months with no success. I felt that I had let the Lord down.

Just then I noticed a man in the distance hurrying toward us on a bicycle. He was yelling and waving. Hoping to avoid the seemingly angry man, we walked quickly toward our approaching bus. It was getting dark, and we were in a dangerous part of our area. We hoped to reach the bus before the frightening man reached us.

"I have a question for you," yelled the man. The bus arrived just before

he did, and we scrambled aboard. Then I heard the man's question: "What happened to the gold plates after Joseph Smith translated them?" My mouth fell open. I wanted to jump from the bus as it drove away. Instead I yelled, "Where do you live?" and hurriedly scribbled his address.

We stopped by the man's house the next day. His name was Favio. A month before, he told us, his friend had loaned him a copy of the Book of Mormon.

"I have always been interested in Jesus Christ, but I had never heard of another testament of His life," Favio said. "I knew only about the Bible and

Christ's ministry in the East. No one ever told me that Christ came to America! I was excited to learn more."

A few weeks later Favio had to return the book. "I didn't know where I would get another copy," he said. "I wanted more than anything to know if the book was true. I got down on my knees and asked for Heavenly Father's help. I said, 'Father, if the Book of Mormon is true, please let another copy fall into my hands so I can continue to study it.'"

One day Favio was at a train station. Out of the corner of his eye he saw what looked like a blue book lying on the sidewalk. As he approached it he recognized the golden letters. It was Heavenly Father's answer.

Weeks after he had found the Book of Mormon, Favio saw us at the bus stop. By then he knew the book was true. Over the next few weeks we taught Favio the basic principles of the

gospel and encouraged him to continue reading. Every time we asked him if he would commit to living a new gospel principle, he would answer, "I'm afraid not to." Shortly thereafter, he entered the waters of baptism.

Now every time I have a difficult day, instead of sinking into self-pity, I remember Favio—his question for two discouraged missionaries and his commitment to the Lord after he received an answer. ■

taught at home and in Primary. They were only six and seven, but they had faith in the power of prayer. They knew that Heavenly Father was able to help their little sister.

I thought about their faith all afternoon. Then a question came to mind: when did I start to feel peaceful? After figuring out how long it took to reach the hospital, I realized that my peaceful feeling came at about the same time that Vanessa and Vasco had prayed.

I know that Heavenly Father heard those sweet voices and not only blessed my daughter with health but also blessed me with peace. I will never forget what I learned that day from my children: we have a loving Father who hears our prayers and wants to bless us "with a sweet and calm assurance that he cares" ("Be Thou Humble," *Hymns*, no. 130). ■

My Children's Prayer

By Virgínia Augusta de Pádua Lima Pereira

As I answered the phone at our chapel in Viseu, Portugal, I wondered who was calling. I was surprised to hear the trembling voice of my eight-year-old son on the line.

"Mom, Viviana was hit by a car," he said. "She is alive, but her head is bleeding! She is going to the hospital."

I almost fainted. What was I going to do? Fortunately, I had family nearby—two of my sisters were with me. One of them accompanied me to the hospital, while the other one went to watch and comfort my three distressed children at home.

In the middle of so much anguish, I wanted to pray but could only weep.

On the way to the hospital, however, I was suddenly overcome by a feeling of peace and assurance. I felt that I didn't need to worry; everything would be all right.

My sister noticed the change and asked, "Are you OK?" I nodded. Skeptical, she asked again, "Really? Are you OK?"

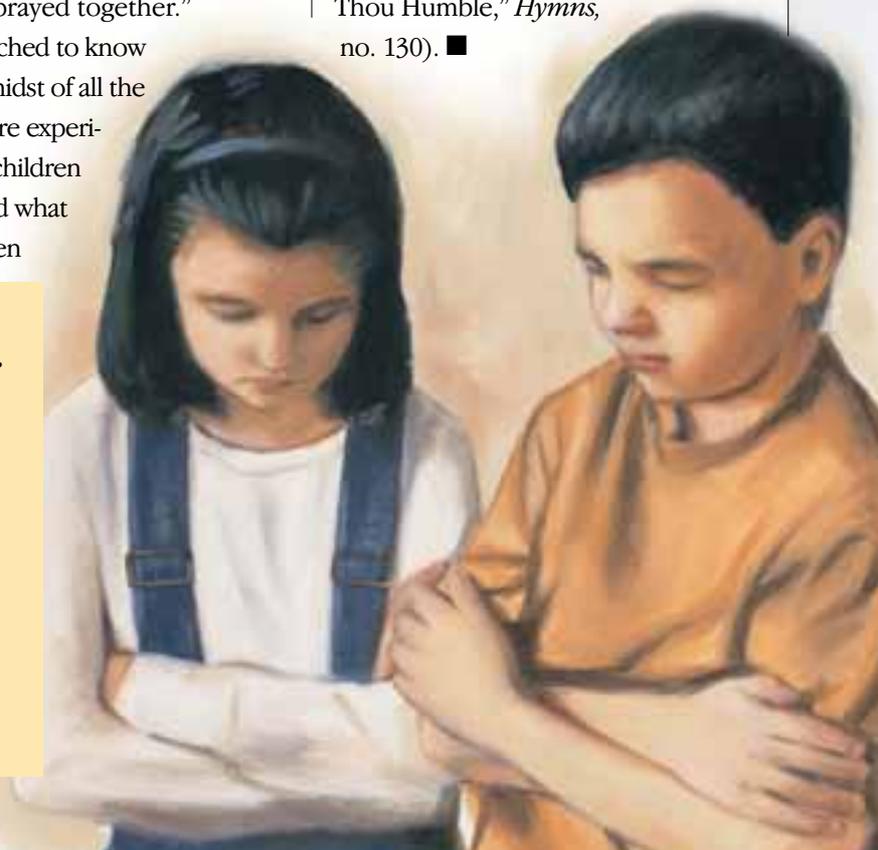
"Yes," I replied, remaining silent for the rest of the journey.

When we arrived at the hospital, I found my four-year-old daughter conscious and only slightly hurt. After comforting her, I couldn't stop thinking about the peace I had felt.

Viviana returned home after one day in the hospital. In talking about the accident, my sister who had stayed with the children said, "Yesterday, after the ambulance left, Vanessa and Vasco went into the house and prayed together."

I was touched to know that in the midst of all the fear they were experiencing, my children remembered what they had been

In the midst of all the fear they were experiencing, my children remembered what they had been taught.



Did You Know?



My Favorite Scripture

“Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am” (D&C 93:1).



This verse tells about all the things you have to do to be able to see the Savior. I want to work at these things in my life to achieve that goal.

Ole I., 16, Buskerud, Norway

Tell us what your favorite scripture is and why. E-mail us at liabona@ldschurch.org. Please write “Favorite Scripture” in the subject line.



Talk Tip

If you’ve been asked to give a talk in church, don’t worry—prepare. Remember, the Lord has promised, “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30). As you prepare and organize your talk, think about including a positive personal experience of how the gospel topic works in your life and brings you closer to Jesus Christ.



Leaders for Righteousness

“President Gordon B. Hinckley has said of you, ‘You are . . . the finest [and strongest] generation of young people ever in the history of this Church.’ I believe you have been prepared and reserved to be on the earth at this time when the challenges and opportunities are the greatest. I believe that the Lord is counting on you to be a leader for righteousness and to stand as a witness ‘at all times and in all things, and in all places’ (Mosiah 18:9). Indeed, it can be said of you that you are the ‘bright shining hope’ of the future.”

Elaine S. Dalton, First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency, “It Shows in Your Face,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 109.



By the Numbers

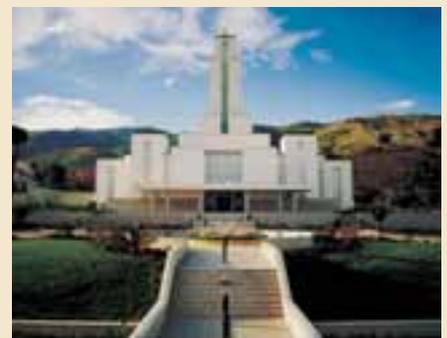
3,500,000: Copies of the Book of Mormon printed in 2006

The Church in . . . Bolivia

Missionaries called to the Andes Mission arrived in Bolivia in November 1964. They baptized and confirmed their first convert that December.

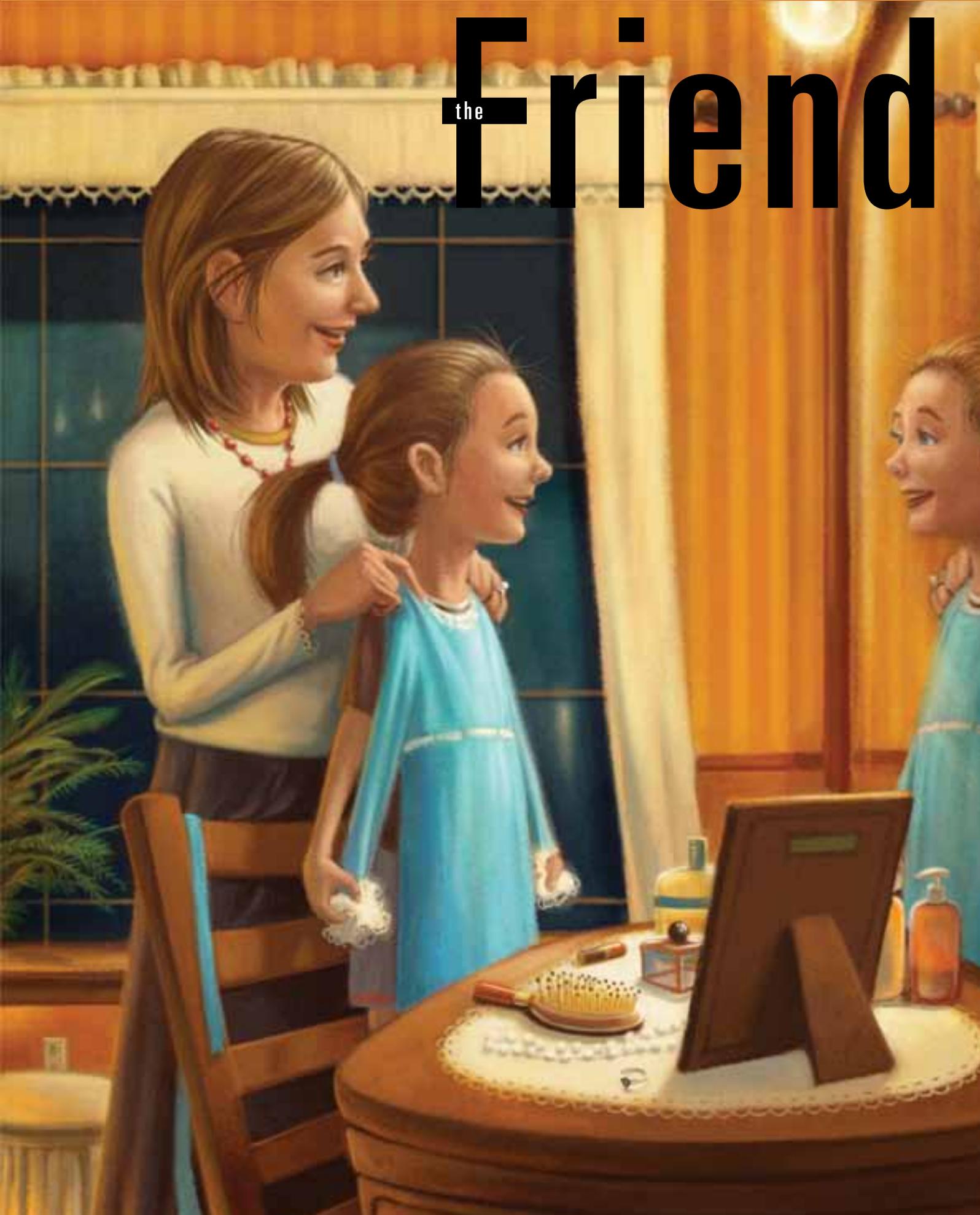
The first Bolivian to serve a mission for the Church was Desiderio Arce Cano in 1967. He left a singing career in Argentina to serve in his native land. He later became a stake president and a mission president.

Membership in Bolivia has more than doubled in the past 10 years.



MEMBERSHIP	153,674
STAKES AND DISTRICTS	34
MISSIONS	3
TEMPLES	1
FAMILY HISTORY CENTERS	31

the Friend



The First Vision

BY PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

In my growing-up years in Germany, I attended church in many different locations and circumstances: in humble back rooms, in impressive villas, and in very functional modern chapels. All of these buildings had one important factor in common: the Spirit of God was present—the love of the Savior could be felt as we assembled as a branch or ward family.

The chapel in Zwickau had an old air-driven organ. Every Sunday a young man was assigned to push up and down the sturdy lever operating the bellows to make the organ work. I sometimes had the great privilege to assist in this important task.

While the congregation sang our beloved hymns of the Restoration, I pumped with all my strength so the organ would not run out of wind. The bellows operator sat in a seat that offered a great view of a stained-glass window that beautified the front part of the chapel. The stained glass portrayed the First Vision, with Joseph Smith kneeling in the Sacred Grove, looking up toward heaven and into a pillar of light.

During the hymns of the congregation and even during talks and testimonies given by our members, I often looked at this depiction of a most sacred moment in world history. In my mind's eye I saw Joseph receiving knowledge, witness, and divine instructions as he became a blessed instrument in the hand of our Heavenly Father.



President Uchtdorf shares his testimony of Joseph Smith's First Vision.

I felt a special spirit while looking at the beautiful scene in this window. I saw a picture of a believing young boy in a sacred grove who made a courageous decision to earnestly pray to our Heavenly Father, who listened and responded lovingly to him.

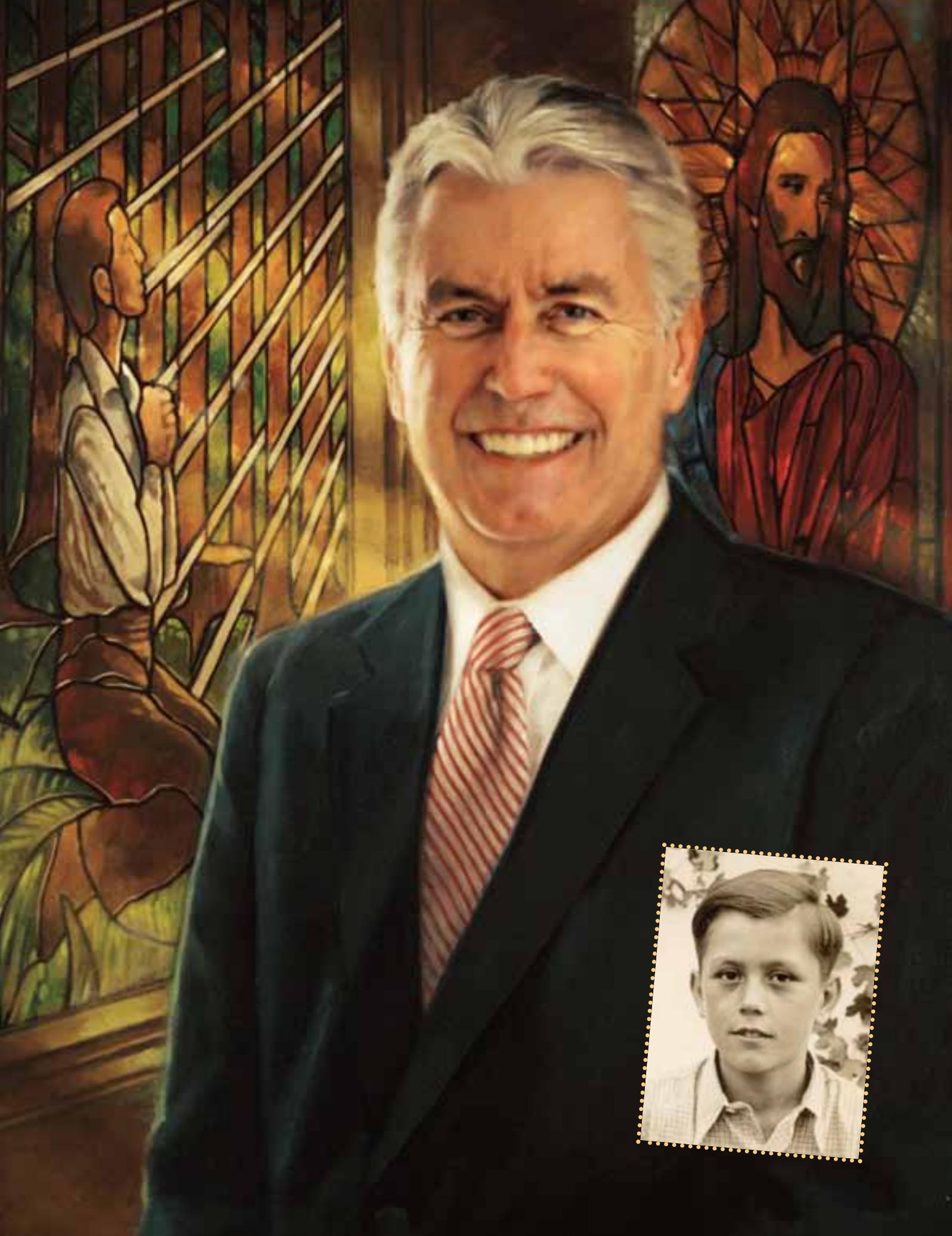
Here I was, a young boy in post-World War II Germany, living in a city in ruins, thousands of miles away from Palmyra in North America and more than a hundred years after the event actually took place. By the universal power of the Holy Ghost, I felt in my heart and in my mind that it was true, that Joseph Smith saw God and Jesus Christ and heard Their voices.

The Spirit of God comforted my soul at this young age with an assurance of the reality of this sacred moment that resulted in the beginning of a worldwide movement destined to “roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth” (D&C 65:2). I believed Joseph Smith’s testimony of that glorious experience in the Sacred Grove then, and I know it now. God has spoken to mankind again! ●

From an April 2005 general conference address.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- 1. Does it matter what kind of building you go to church in? What does matter?**
- 2. What do you think “the universal power of the Holy Ghost” means? What might this have to do with the many people who are joining the Church across the world?**
- 3. Do you have a testimony of Joseph Smith’s First Vision? What can you do to gain one?**



I will follow Heavenly Father's plan for me.

I will remember my baptismal covenant and listen to the Holy Ghost.

I will choose the right. I know I can repent when I make a mistake.

I will be honest with Heavenly Father, others, and myself.

I will use the names of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ reverently. I will not swear or use crude words.

I will do those things on the Sabbath that will help me feel close to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

I will honor my parents and do my part to strengthen my family.

I will keep my mind and body sacred and pure, and I will not partake of things that are harmful to me.

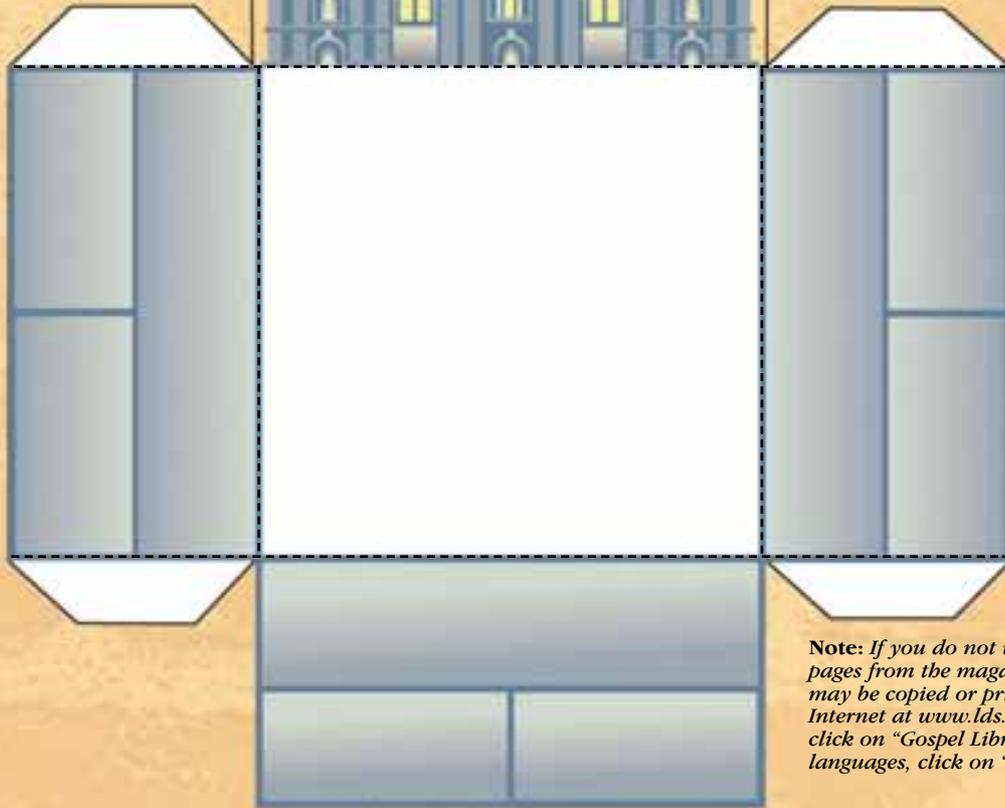
I will dress modestly to show respect for Heavenly Father and myself.

I will only read and watch things that are pleasing to Heavenly Father.

I will only listen to music that is pleasing to Heavenly Father.

I will seek good friends and treat others kindly.

I will live now to be worthy to go to the temple and do my part to have an eternal family.



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

I'll Prepare Myself While I Am Young

“Let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people”

(D&C 124:40).

BY LINDA CHRISTENSEN



Temples are a blessing to you and to your family. There are more than 120 temples all over the world. Do you know the name of the temple closest to you? Is there a picture of a temple in your home? Has someone in your family been to the temple to make sacred covenants?

The Primary song “I Love to See the Temple” (*Children’s Songbook*, 95) teaches that a temple is “a house of God, a place of love and beauty.” It also teaches that a temple is “a holy place where we are sealed together.” The next time you sing this song, listen for the words “I’m going there someday.” This is a promise you are making to yourself and to Heavenly Father that you will be worthy to enter His holy house.

Activity

Remove page F4, and glue it to heavier paper. Cut out the temple on the solid lines, fold on the dotted lines, and glue the tabs to the inside of the walls to form a box. Cut out the My Gospel Standards cards (p. F4), and place them inside the temple box. Choose a gospel standard from the box, read it, and decide what you can do to live the standard. In family home evening, share how living this standard can prepare you to enter the temple someday.

Place the temple box and the My Gospel Standards cards in a special place to remind you to make good choices. As you read a gospel standard and decide how to live it, remember these words from “I Love to See the Temple”: “I’ll prepare myself while I am young; this is my sacred duty.”

Sharing Time Ideas

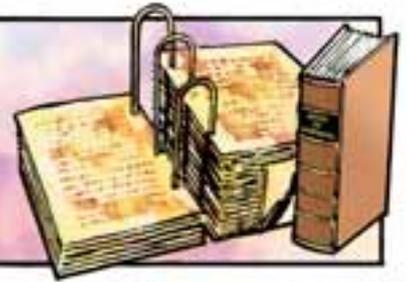
1. Draw a simple picture of a temple. Cut the picture into 12 rectangles to represent building blocks. Number the pieces from 1 to 12. Cut a piece of paper into 12 sections, and write one action word from 12 of My Gospel Standards on each piece of paper. (Action words: follow, remember, choose, be, use, do, honor, keep, dress, read *and* watch, listen, seek, live.) Fold the papers so the action word is hidden. Provide copies of the Faith in God guidebook. Play the temple-building game. Begin by reading D&C 124:40. Write the phrase “let this house be built” on the chalkboard. Invite a child to choose a paper and read the action word. Have the children look in My Gospel Standards for the word. When it is found, read the standard together. Invite the child or class to think of a way to live that standard. Then invite the child or class to find building block 1 and put it on the chalkboard. Continue until the temple is complete. Emphasize that all the gospel standards are things that children can do to have an eternal family.

2. Hold up a sack that has scriptures inside. Give several clues to help the children guess what is in the sack. When they have guessed, open the scriptures to Malachi 3:10, and read the phrase “bring ye all the tithes.” Ask the children to guess what commandment this scripture describes. Read the verse together, listening for the promise: “pour you out a blessing.” Invite the children to name some blessings Heavenly Father has given them, and make a list on the chalkboard. Give each child a sheet of paper. Ask them to draw or write one blessing on the paper. When the children are finished, ask them to quietly roll their papers into a ball. Place the balls in the sack. Ask a priesthood leader to hold out his hands to catch the balls. Pour the balls into his hands, and watch them overflow. Read the promise: “pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Help the children understand that when we obey the law of tithing, Heavenly Father blesses us with so many blessings that there is not room enough to receive them. Explain that tithing money helps build temples. ●



FROM THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

Receiving the Gold Plates



One night, Joseph prayed to know what Heavenly Father wanted him to do. As he prayed, a light filled the room, and a personage named Moroni appeared. He was an angel sent by Heavenly Father. He told Joseph about an ancient record engraved on gold plates. The vision lasted all night.

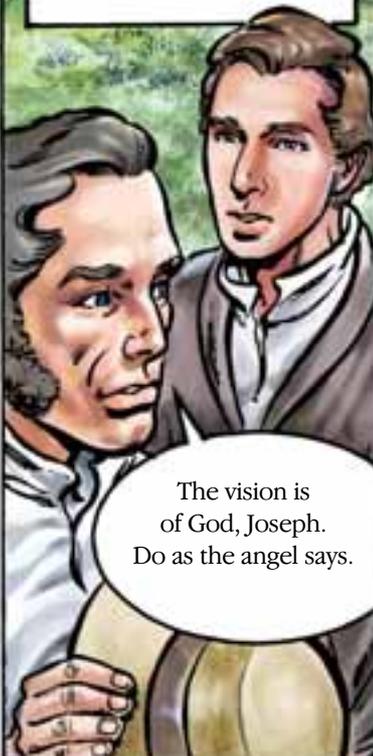


The next day, Joseph couldn't work because he was so tired.

You better go back to the house and rest, Son.

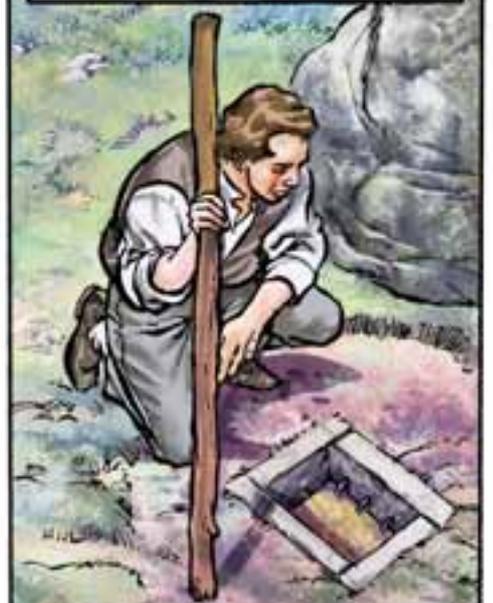


On Joseph's way back, Moroni appeared to Joseph and repeated what he'd said the night before. Then he told Joseph to tell his father about the visions.



The vision is of God, Joseph. Do as the angel says.

Joseph went to the Hill Cumorah.



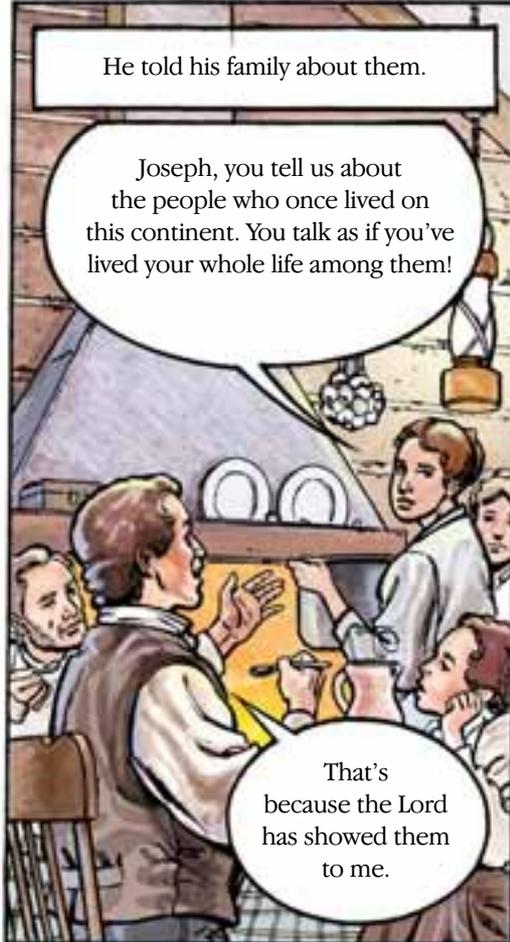
When he pried up a large rock, he saw the gold plates, the Urim and Thummim, and a breastplate buried in a stone box.

Moroni told him to come back every year for four years. During that time, Joseph received many revelations.



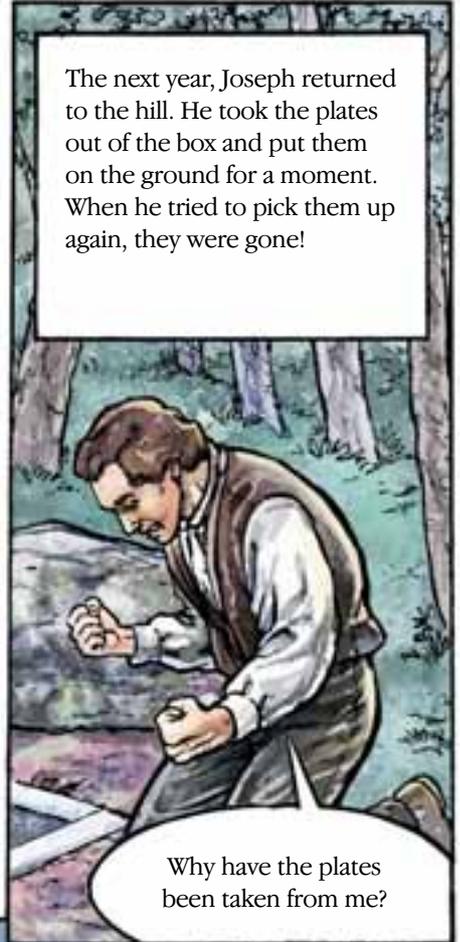
He told his family about them.

Joseph, you tell us about the people who once lived on this continent. You talk as if you've lived your whole life among them!



That's because the Lord has showed them to me.

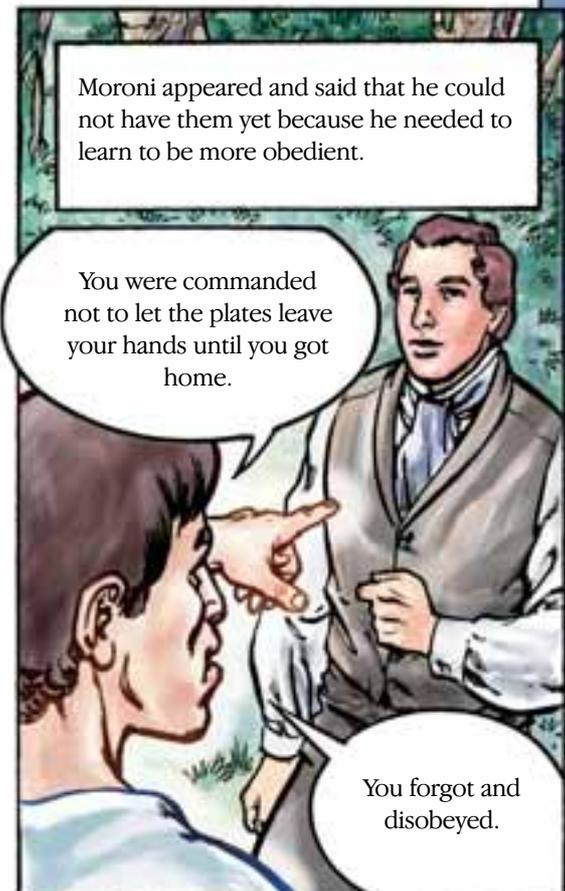
The next year, Joseph returned to the hill. He took the plates out of the box and put them on the ground for a moment. When he tried to pick them up again, they were gone!



Why have the plates been taken from me?

Moroni appeared and said that he could not have them yet because he needed to learn to be more obedient.

You were commanded not to let the plates leave your hands until you got home.



You forgot and disobeyed.

Joseph learned to be more obedient and careful. On September 22, 1827, Joseph and his wife, Emma, rode to the Hill Cumorah at midnight. Emma waited in the carriage while Joseph climbed the hill.



When they returned the next morning, Joseph's mother rejoiced.

I finally have the plates!

Thanks be to God! I have been praying all night.





Faith in God



our desire that boys and girls will develop greater faith and courage by learning and living the gospel, serving others, and developing their talents” (First Presidency letter, Apr. 2, 2003).

In today’s world you will need great faith and courage. You can develop these qualities by praying every day, reading your scriptures regularly, and keeping the

Above (from left): Margaret S. Liffert, first counselor; Cheryl C. Lant, president; and Vicki F. Matsumori, second counselor.

BY THE PRIMARY GENERAL PRESIDENCY

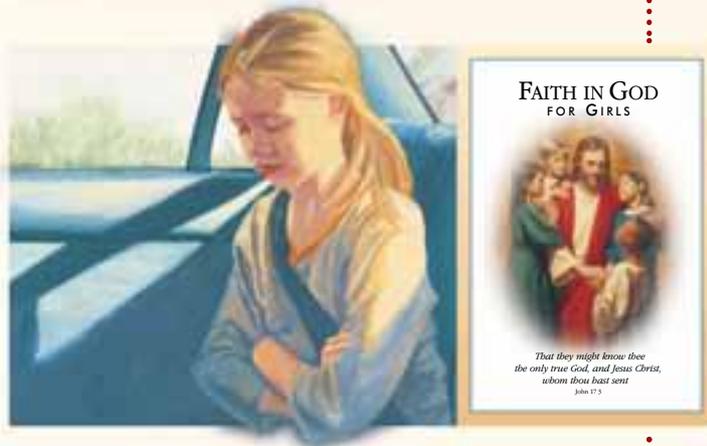
Nine-year-old Shelby gave the opening prayer in family home evening. “Shelby,” Mother said, “I think you are almost done with one of the Faith in God activities. You said the closing prayer for family home evening just a few weeks ago. Now you need to share your feelings about how prayer protects us and helps us stay close to Heavenly Father and the Savior.”

Shelby left the room and returned with her journal. She read how a few days earlier she had prayed in the

backseat of the family car for help when the car would not start. Almost immediately a neighbor had arrived to help fix the problem. Shelby remembered to pray because she had been thinking about the Faith in God activity.

Like children all over the world, Shelby found that Faith in God is more than a program. It is a way to build faith as you practice living the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When the Faith in God program was introduced in 2003, President Gordon B. Hinckley, President Thomas S. Monson, and President James E. Faust said in a letter, “It is



commandments. These and other ways of living the gospel are part of the basic requirements listed in the guidebook. When you turn eight, you will receive the *Faith in God* guidebook.

In some areas of the world, children gather together twice a month with an activity-day leader to build friendships, practice living the

gospel, and have fun. In other parts of the world where there are few members of the Church or large distances between members, children work on Faith in God with their family or by themselves. Whatever your situation, the most important thing is that you find a way to practice living the gospel of Jesus Christ.

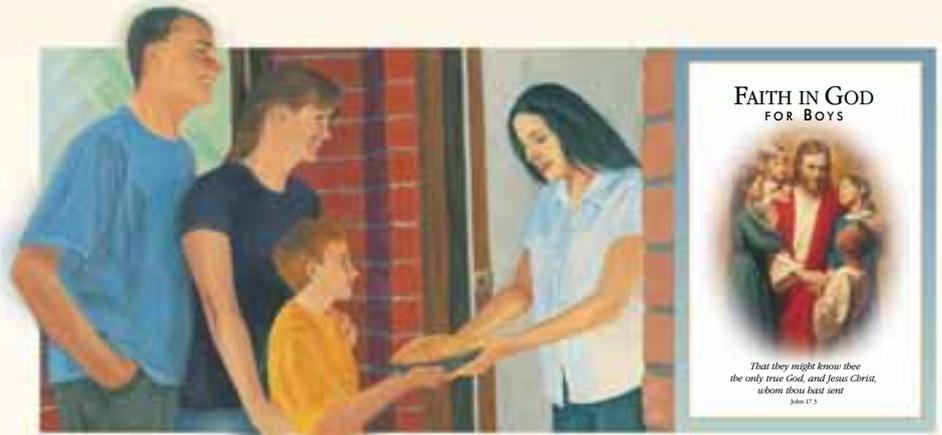
Primary leaders can help you. Primary presidency members can encourage you and give you a chance to report on completed activities. Teachers can help you memorize the Articles of Faith. For boys living in the United States and Canada, den leaders can coordinate Scouting activities with Faith in God goals.

Faith in God is also a way to strengthen your family. Lindsey had just turned eight and received her copy of the *Faith in God* guidebook. Her parents reviewed the guidebook with her. Lindsey volunteered to give the lesson for family home evening. She chose one of the topics in her *Faith in God* guidebook. With the help of her family, Lindsey presented family home evening and also completed an activity.

Other families have also used Faith in God to help them with family home evening. One family chose a different article of faith to study and memorize each week. Another family let their children choose an activity from the guidebook when it was the child's turn to give the lesson.

For a parent-child service project (see guidebook, p. 9), Michael's family decided to make apple pies that each family member could take to someone. Michael asked if he could take his pie to a family who had been unfriendly. Although his mother was concerned, Michael persisted. Michael's family delivered the pie. They discovered that the

be better prepared to receive the Aaronic Priesthood or to become a righteous young woman. You will have established patterns for righteous living and will have had opportunities to live the gospel, serve others, and develop your talents. Best of all, you will have strengthened your testimony of Jesus Christ. ●



family was having hard times and that the unfriendliness was not directed at them. The two families became great friends because Michael wanted to live the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When you complete the requirements, you will receive the certificate at the back of the guidebook. Your Primary president and the bishop or branch president will sign it. But the greatest blessing is that you will have practiced doing the things that can help you live the gospel and be strong and courageous.

When you complete the requirements for Faith in God, you will also



My Gospel Standards Matching Game

Draw a line to connect the halves that go together. Use the back of your *Faith in God* guidebook for help.

I will follow

not swear or use crude words.

I will remember my baptismal covenant and

do my part to strengthen my family.

I will choose the right. I know

I will not partake of things that are harmful to me.

I will be honest with

are pleasing to Heavenly Father.

I will use the names of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ reverently. I will

treat others kindly.

I will do those things on the Sabbath that will

Heavenly Father's plan for me.

I will honor my parents and

help me feel close to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

I will keep my mind and body sacred and pure, and

is pleasing to Heavenly Father.

I will dress modestly to

do my part to have an eternal family.

I will only read and watch things that

listen to the Holy Ghost.

I will only listen to music that

show respect for Heavenly Father and myself.

I will seek good friends and

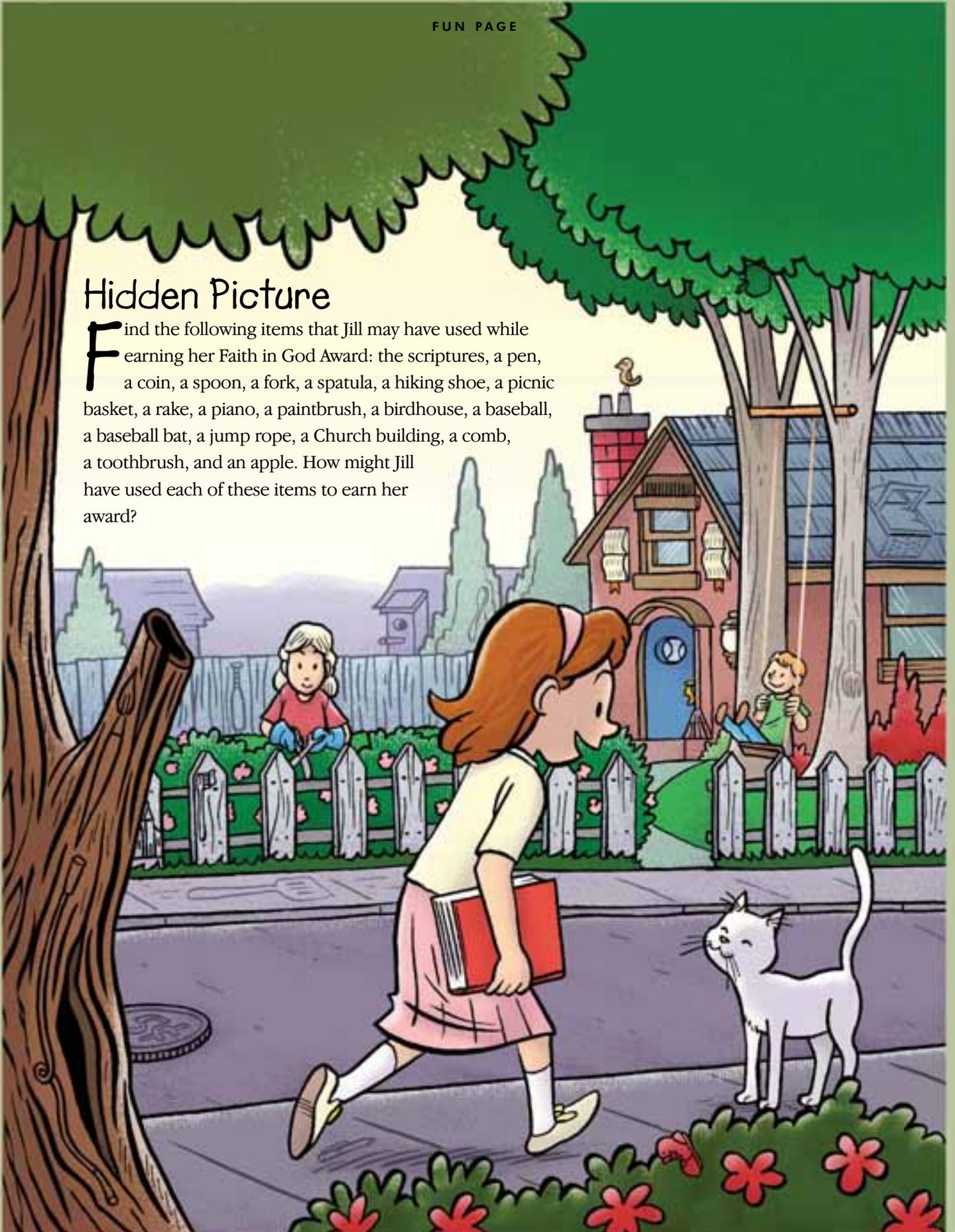
Heavenly Father, others, and myself.

I will live now to be worthy to go to the temple and

I can repent when I make a mistake.

Hidden Picture

Find the following items that Jill may have used while earning her Faith in God Award: the scriptures, a pen, a coin, a spoon, a fork, a spatula, a hiking shoe, a picnic basket, a rake, a piano, a paintbrush, a birdhouse, a baseball, a baseball bat, a jump rope, a Church building, a comb, a toothbrush, and an apple. How might Jill have used each of these items to earn her award?



Sunday Best in Brazil

“Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it” (Deuteronomy 5:12).

BY NATHAN N. WAITE

In Minas Gerais, Brazil, it's never winter. The only seasons are a dry season and a wet season. It can be a hot and humid place! The Primary children in the Conselheiro Lafaiete Branch have learned the blessings that come from wearing their Sunday best, even when it's very hot.

Sister Patrícia da Costa was serving as Primary president when she began to worry about the dress standards in her Primary. “It's hard for the children to wear Sunday best because of how hot it is,” she says. “Also, no one had given it much importance before.” Although dressing up for church may seem like a small matter, Sister da Costa knew it would help the Primary

children show respect for Heavenly Father. The children would be establishing good habits for the future.

The Primary set goals. Families got Sunday clothes for the children who didn't have them. They even held a “parade” in Primary to show proper Sunday clothing.

It wasn't easy, but they reached their goal. “On the day of the Primary presentation in sacrament meeting, everyone was dressed appropriately,” says Sister da Costa. “It was wonderful!”

Many members of the branch have noticed the difference. The children are more reverent, and now they decide to dress up on Sunday without their parents' telling them. And there has been one more unexpected blessing: less-active parents have started coming to church again, thanks to the examples of their children. ●



Not Just for a

BY WENDY ELLISON

Based on a true story

“That thereby they might gather themselves together, to go up to the temple” (Mosiab 1:18).

Saturday started just like any other day. The sun rose over the mountains next to Kolin’s home, and the light trickled in through his bedroom window. On another day he might have tried to hide under his covers and stay in bed. But Kolin yawned and stretched and crawled out of bed because something special was going to happen, and he needed to get ready.

Usually Saturday was a day to play with friends or help in the yard or stop in to visit Grandma and Grandpa after errands. He often wore comfortable clothes that were good for getting dirty. Instead, he dressed in his Sunday best that Mom had cleaned and pressed for him. He buttoned his white shirt and carefully tucked it in. He put on his socks and shoes and slipped his tie around his neck—Dad would help him tie it. When Mom called, “It’s time to go,” he was ready.

With everyone buckled safely in the van, Dad drove down the street and around the curve in the road. Kolin smiled when they got to the temple. He saw its smooth surface glistening in the sunlight and the colorful stained-glass windows that stretched toward the spire and the angel Moroni.

Kolin had seen the temple many times. He had been inside a temple before too: once when he was sealed to his parents when he was six months old and again after his parents adopted his younger brother, Kaden. Kolin was too young to remember either of those times, but as he grew he learned that what had happened there was

important. And Kolin understood that after this special Saturday visit, his adopted baby sister, Shayla, would be part of the family forever, just like her big brothers.

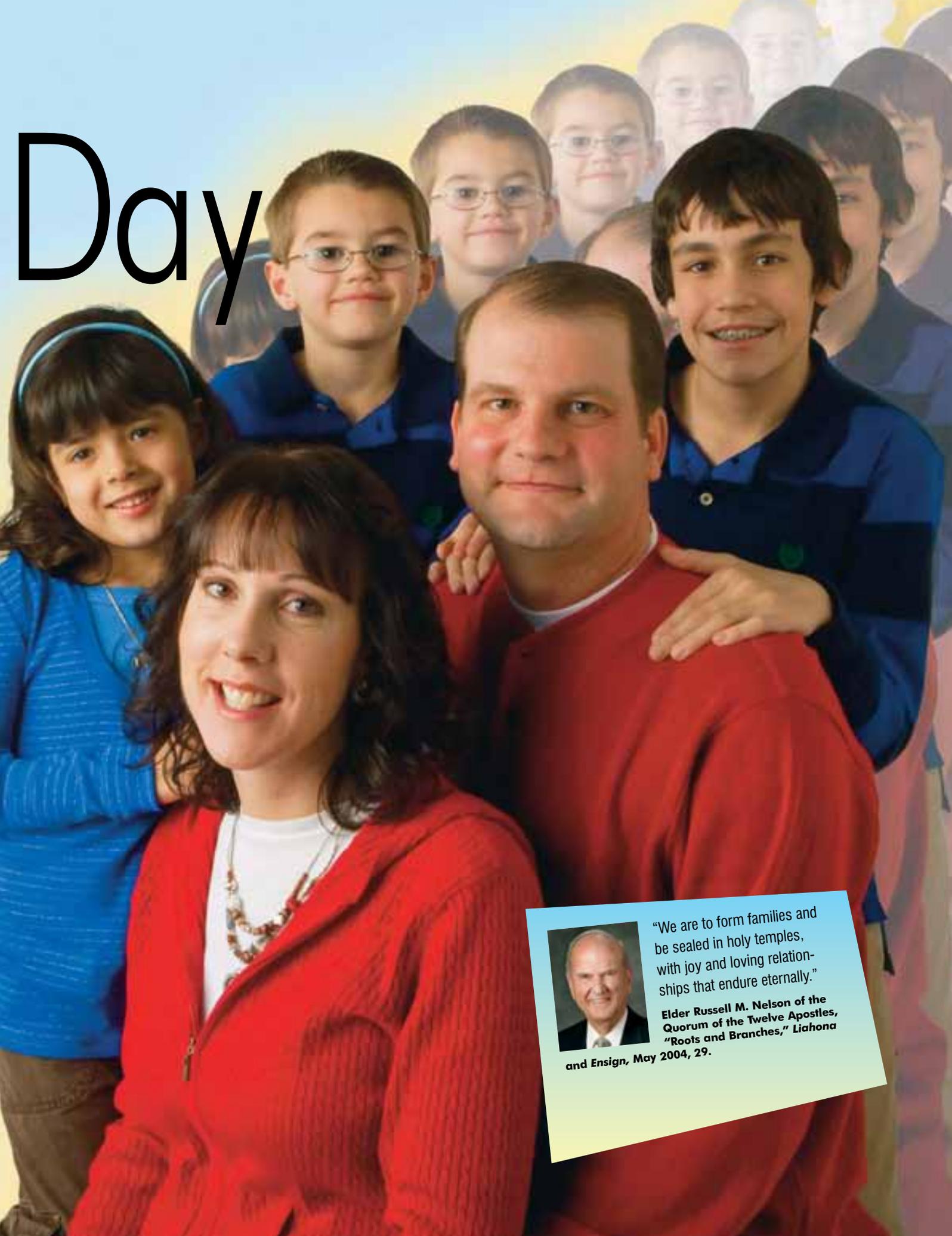
On any other day Kolin liked laughing and talking. But when he entered the big temple doors with his family, he tried to leave all his wiggles and giggles outside. He knew it was a sacred place.

Friendly temple workers took Kolin, Kaden, and Shayla to a room especially for children, where they dressed in white and stayed until it was time to go to the sealing room where Mom and Dad were waiting. In the sealing room, Kolin saw his grandpa and grandma, aunts and uncles, family friends, and some members of his ward. It was a happy day, even though some people wiped away tears.

The temple sealer greeted the boys with a firm handshake and a smile. He said they looked nice in their white clothing. He encouraged them to always make good choices so they could prepare for missions and come back to the temple. And then he reminded them of the importance of what was about to happen. After that he began the sealing ordinance.

When the sealing was over, Kolin and his family stood and looked into the mirrors across the room. He saw himself with his dad, mom, brother, and baby sister. The reflection didn’t end, just like his eternal family. Kolin knew that because of the temple, his family could be together not just for that day, but forever. ●

Day



“We are to form families and be sealed in holy temples, with joy and loving relationships that endure eternally.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Roots and Branches,” Liahona and Ensign, May 2004, 29.



Draw a picture of yourself in front of a temple.



THE TEMPLE IS A BLESSING FOR ME AND MY FAMILY

“And verily I say unto you, let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people” (D&C 124:40).



The Allegory of the Olive Tree, by Brad Teare

This woodcut illustrates a scene from Jacob 5, in the Book of Mormon. Herein Jacob quotes the prophet Zenos's allegory of the tame and wild olive trees, representing the history and destiny of the house of Israel. Jacob said, "This is my prophecy—that the things which this prophet Zenos spake, concerning the house of Israel, . . . must surely come to pass" (Jacob 6:1).



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