

HOORAY!

By G. Craig Kiser

A four-year-old helped me appreciate the sacrament in a new way.

My mind was focused on the Savior as the congregation finished singing the sacrament hymn, but as I started to close the hymnbook, the music continued. A large congregation that day made it necessary for the organist to play two more verses while the priests finished breaking the bread. I was grateful for the extra time. It allowed me an additional moment of reverent meditation before the sacramental prayers.

During the prayers, I followed carefully the words the priests spoke as they blessed the emblems of Christ's sacrifice for us. Just as the final prayer concluded and at the moment when the congregation voiced their assent, a four-year-old boy's voice from two rows behind me sprang from the midst of the "amens."

"Hooray!" he exclaimed.

His spontaneous expression was loud enough to cause several children

nearby to giggle. I confess that it brought a quizzical smile to my lips.

"Hooray?" I thought. That's an odd response to the sacrament prayers. It was certainly a response I'd never heard before and likely will never hear again. After all, we end our prayers with "amen."

Perhaps that young child had sensed more of the truth than I had.

Hooray communicates excitement. It is an exclamation of joy, usually for a victory. Sometimes it's shouted to

show approval for someone who has finished a difficult task well.¹

Instantly, my mind caught hold of the idea. Yes, I thought, hooray that Jesus Christ overcame death so we can all be resurrected! Hooray that because of His Atonement, He can forgive our sins! More to the point, He can forgive me of *my* sins! Hooray that through His grace I may return to my Heavenly Father and enjoy the hope of eternal life! Yes! Hooray!

As I silently shouted these praises of thanks to my Heavenly Father, the Holy Ghost flooded my heart with a joy that nearly brought me to tears. I had been led that day by a little child (see Isaiah 11:6), and I rejoiced with fresh vision for the blessings of the Savior's Atonement in my life. ■

The author lives in Oregon, USA.

NOTE

1. See *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition (2003), "hooray"; see also en.wiktionary.org/wiki/hooray.

