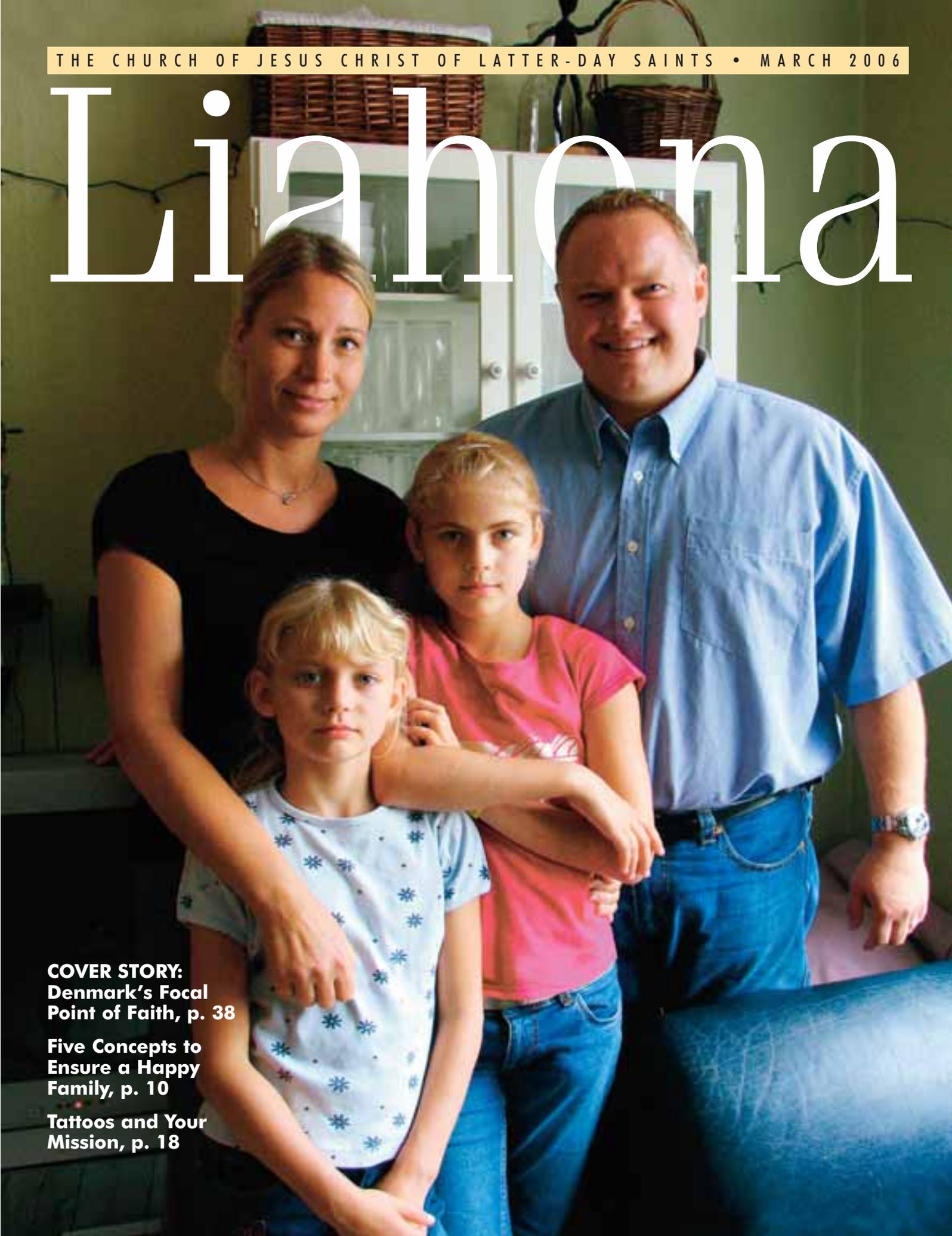


Liahona



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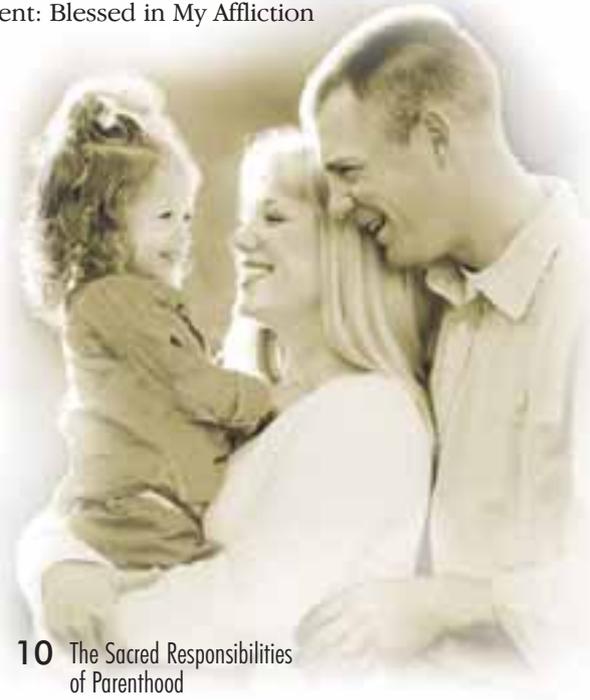
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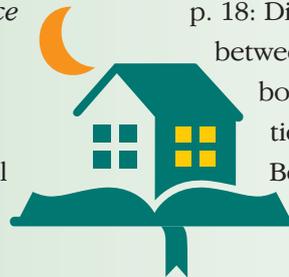
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FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

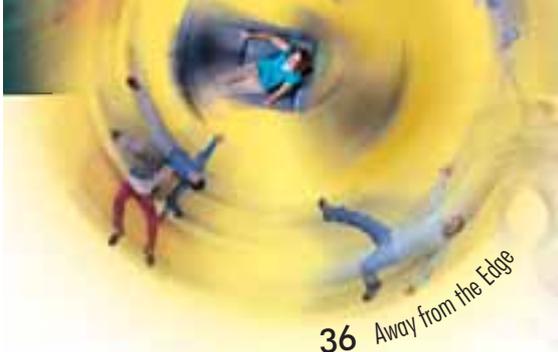
*These ideas can help you use
the Liahona to enhance
your teaching in the
classroom as well as
in the home.*

"Agency," p. 8: Tell
family members that
you have decided to
use your agency to force everyone
to stare at the wall. Discuss how
they would feel about your deci-
sion. Use the article to explain
what agency is, and role-play
the three ways mentioned in
the article that Satan attacks agency.



"Tattoos and Your Mission,"
p. 18: Discuss the similarities
between temples and physical
bodies using the introduc-
tion of the article. Relate
Bobby's story, and focus
on the consequences
he faced because of
his tattoo. Testify of the impor-
tance of treating our bodies as
a temple.

"Blessed in My Affliction,"
p. 26: Create a temporary physical
affliction for each family member
(for example, by blindfolding



36 *Away from the Edge*



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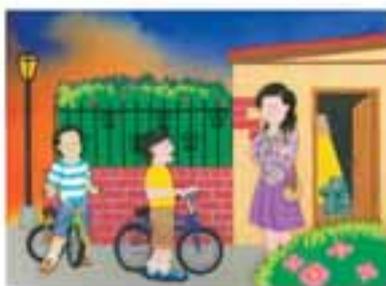
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F8 *More Blessed*



F16 *How Could I Lie?*

ON THE COVER

Photography by Don L. Searle.

THE FRIEND COVER

Photograph by Craig Dimond.

someone, wrapping a leg or hand, muffling hearing, and so on). Let everyone share how he or she felt while impaired. Use the article to find the blessings that come through afflictions, and ask family members to share blessings they have received from enduring trials.

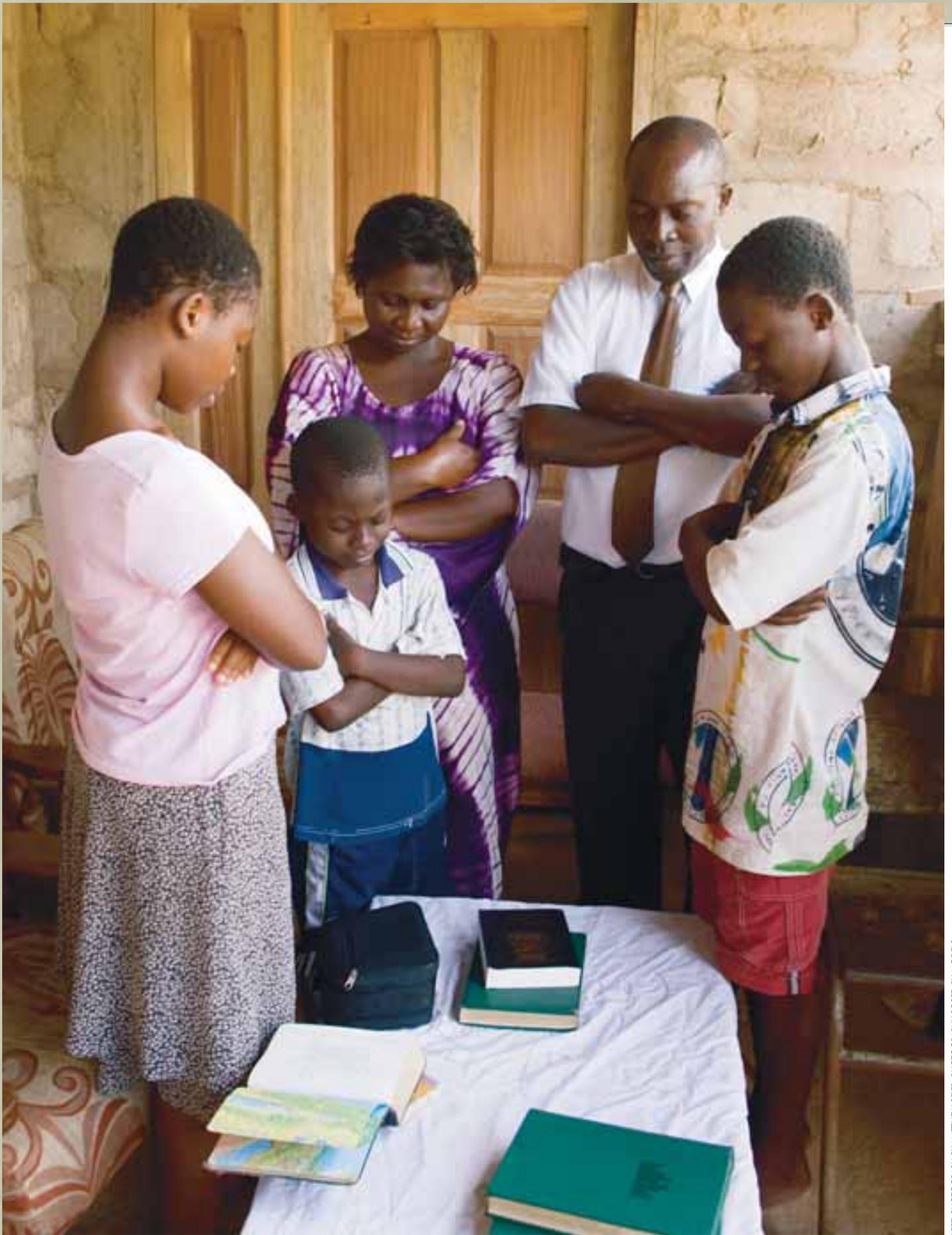
"Coming Out of Darkness," p. F2: Darken the room. Ask family members what could cause darkness in their lives. Instruct them to search the room for items that could help them come out of their "spiritual darkness." These

items could include scriptures, a tithing envelope, and a hymnbook. Lighten the room. Use the article to talk about the objects found and other ways to improve our communication with our Heavenly Father.

"More Blessed," p. F8: Ask family members to share an act of kindness someone did for them. Read Wade's story out loud. Challenge each family member to do an act of kindness this week and to be prepared to report on the results next family home evening.

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LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER; PHOTOGRAPHY POSED BY MODELS

Inspirational Thoughts

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

Believe in God

“Believe in God. Believe in God the Eternal Father. He is the great Governor of the universe, but He is our Father and our God to whom we may go in prayer. We are His sons and daughters. Have you ever really thought that you were a child of God and that you have something of divinity within you?

“Believe in God and be not faithless. Worship Him in spirit and in truth. Believe in Him. Read His word and follow His teachings.

“Believe in Jesus Christ. . . . He is the Son of God, who came to earth, who left the royal courts on high and came and dwelt among men and gave His life for each of us, for you and for me. It is through Him that we approach the Father. Be not faithless, but believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior and the Redeemer of the world” (meeting, Moscow, Russia, Sept. 10, 2002).

An Unquenchable Faith

“May you carry in your hearts an unquenchable faith, a certain knowledge of the great and salient things of the gospel of Jesus Christ of which you are a part—this the Church and kingdom of God—that the God

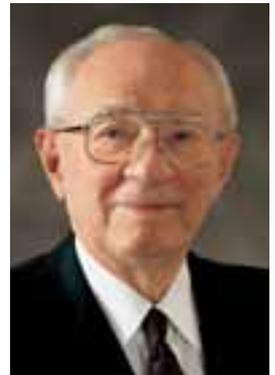
of heaven and His Beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, parted the curtains in this [day] and opened Themselves to the view of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

“Do you have a certain faith in that? That John the Baptist came? That Peter, James, and John; Moses, Elias, and Elijah came and restored the priesthood and its keys in ushering in this great dispensation? And that when all is said and done, this is where the truth lies?

“Do you have in your heart that certain faith? If you do, the load will be light, I promise you. If you do not, . . . there is a way to get it. And the Savior pointed out that way when He said, ‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself’ (John 7:17)” (regional conference, American Fork, Utah, Aug. 24, 2002).

Cultivate Family Relationships

“Let us not live a life . . . that would bring regret. . . . It is not going to matter very much how much money you made, what kind of a house you lived in, what kind of a car you drove, the size of your bank account—any of those things. What is going to matter is that dear woman who has walked with you side by



The only things you will take with you, when all is said and done, are your family relationships.

We now have
retired
men and
women serving
in a meaningful
missionary capacity
for this Church
throughout the world
in a spirit of entire
unselfishness to
teach and do good.



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND, RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID STOKER

side as your companion through all of the years of life and those children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren and their faithfulness and their looking to you . . . with respect and love and deference and kindness. . . .

“The only things you will take with you, when all is said and done, are your family relationships. . . . God bless us to be good fathers, . . . good parents, and good husbands to our good wives” (meeting, Pleasant Grove, Utah, Jan. 18, 2003).

Be Good Women, Be Good Mothers

“You women, be good women, be good mothers. Be kind and gracious and generous. Strengthen your children with your faith and your testimony. Lift them up. Help them to walk through the troubled ways of the world as they grow in this very difficult age. Support, sustain, uphold, and bless your husbands with your love and your encouragement; and the Lord will bless you. Even if they are not members of the Church, bless them with kindness and reach out to them every good way that you can. The chances are that they will become members of the Church before they reach the time they die. It may be a long time and you may have a lot to put up with, but if that happens,

you will think it is all worth it” (meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Oct. 25, 2002).

Honor Your Wives

“You men who hold the priesthood of God, honor your wives. Respect them. They are the mothers of your children. When all is said and done, when you have lived your lives and go on to eternity, you will not take five cents of wealth that you have accumulated, not five cents. There is only one thing that you can take with you, and that is your eternal soul and the love and companionship of your husband or your wife. Live worthy of it” (meeting, Kingston, Jamaica, May 15, 2002).

Greater Love in Our Homes

“I would like to see greater love in our homes. . . . You parents who are fathers and mothers of children, treasure your children. Look to them with love. Lead them . . . with love. . . . They will follow after you if you do that. And I make you a promise that if you do so, the time will come when you will feel so grateful that you have done so, that you will get on your knees and thank

the Lord for the precious children who have come to you and grown up under your direction” (meeting, Port of Spain, Trinidad, May 20, 2002).

A Royal Priesthood

“This is the day which Peter foresaw when there should be a royal priesthood upon the earth available to all men who would accept the gospel.

“My dear brethren, do you realize what you have when you have the priesthood of God? You can serve in the governance of this Church. You can hold office. You can administer its affairs. More important even perhaps than that, it carries with it the power and authority to lay hands upon the heads of your family and bless them. Do you know of any group in the world where a father has the right and privilege and the opportunity to lay his hands upon the head of his wife and his children and bless them in the name of the Lord? What a priceless privilege that is. And I want to say, . . . live worthy of this great blessing” (meeting, Kiev, Ukraine, Sept. 9, 2002).

Be Loyal to the Church

“Be loyal to the Church. I have a testimony of the truth of this Church. So do you. . . . Nearly everyone here can stand upon his feet and say, ‘I know that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ and that this is Their work.’ . . . Never do anything which would speak of disloyalty in any sense. Uphold [the Church], sustain her, pray for her, work for her, move her forward. . . . The future of the work . . . lies with you. We need loyal and faithful Latter-day Saints. . . .

“Be loyal to the faith. Be loyal to God. Be loyal to Jesus Christ. Be loyal to the Church of Jesus Christ, and in so doing, you will be loyal to yourselves” (meeting, Kingston, Jamaica, May 15, 2002).

“Be loyal to this Church, my brothers and sisters. . . . I want to give you my testimony that the General Authorities

of this Church will never lead you in paths that will take you down. They will lead you in a trail that leads upward if you will follow in faith and faithfulness” (regional conference, Salt Lake City, Utah, May 5, 2002).

Be Faithful and True

“To every member of the Church, wherever you may be, I wish to say, be good people. Be good citizens of your communities. Be faithful and true. Be true to the wonderful Church of which you are a part. Every one of you is important. Every one of you is a member in a great fellowship of Latter-day Saints. Every one of you is a son or daughter of our Heavenly Father. Put your confidence in the Lord” (Japan stake conference satellite broadcast, Nov. 6, 2004).



Do you know of any group in the world where a father has the right to lay his hands upon the head of his wife and his children and bless them in the name of the Lord? What a priceless privilege.

Couple Missionaries

“We now have altogether some 5,300 [now 5,800] retired men and women serving in a meaningful missionary capacity for this Church throughout the world. The number is growing. They go where they are called. They serve where they are needed. Friendships are established; skills are shared; opportunities are opened for those who will never forget the men and women who have come among them in a spirit of entire unselfishness to teach and do good. They receive no money.

They go at their own expense. The measure of their devotion is unlimited. The fruits of their efforts are beyond calculation. . . .

“The great genius of this Church is work. Everybody works. You do not grow unless you work. Faith, testimony of the truth, is just like the muscle of my arm. If you use it, it grows strong. If you put it in a sling, it grows weak and flabby. We put people to work. We expect great things of them, and the marvelous and wonderful thing is they come through. They produce” (World Affairs Council, Los Angeles, California, June 12, 2002).



Every man or woman who goes into the house of the Lord leaves there a better man or woman.

Go to the House of the Lord

“Attend the temple. You will be blessed for so doing. Every man or woman who goes into the house of the Lord leaves there a better man or woman than he or she was when he or she entered the house of the Lord. The house of the Lord will have a refining effect upon you. It will cultivate unselfishness within your lives. It will build righteousness. It will impress upon you the importance of doing what you ought to do. Go to the house of the Lord” (stake conference, Provo, Utah, Sept. 22, 2002).

A Dedicated House of God

“With us, there is no building as sacred as a dedicated house of God. Only in Latter-day Saint temples are preserved in an indissoluble union for all eternity the precious associations of mortality. Among many things of a doctrinal nature that distinguish this Church from all others is the work that occurs in the house of the Lord under divine priesthood authority.

“Every temple throughout the world stands as a visible monument to the faith of this people in the certainty of immortality and the continuation of sacred bonds in that immortal realm” (temple groundbreaking, Sacramento, California, Aug. 22, 2004).

Great Strength of the Church

“What is the great strength of [this] Church? . . . It is the emphasis which we place on families. We live in a world where the family is falling apart. We put great emphasis on the family. Keep your families close together, and love and honor your children. Raise them in truth and faith to love the Lord” (meeting, Reykjavík, Iceland, Sept. 11, 2002).

An Absolute Miracle

“I have seen what I regard as a miracle as I have seen this great work move forward. . . . You may think it a very commonplace thing. I regard it as an absolute miracle, my brothers and sisters, this little stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands and which is destined to roll forth and fill the whole earth. We have seen only the beginning. . . . I am satisfied that this work will go on and touch the lives of millions upon millions of people across the world. And the God of heaven, whose Church this is, will open the way to make all of that possible if you and I and the members of this Church, wherever they may be, will do our part in assisting with that process” (regional conference, Salt Lake City, Utah, May 5, 2002). ■

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. Explain that you are going to read some statements from a respected world leader. Testify to family members that President Gordon B. Hinckley is a prophet to the world. Select and read various sections of the message, and invite the family to heed President Hinckley’s counsel.

2. If possible, bring a world map or globe, and have a family member point to a place on it. (Or have a family member name a country anywhere in the world.) Read from the message what President Hinckley said to the Saints in the closest area. Repeat as time permits. Explain that President Hinckley’s messages are for Church members everywhere.

3. Write the headings found throughout the message on slips of paper. Ask family members to take turns picking a slip and reading aloud the heading. Share President Hinckley’s comments about the chosen topic, and discuss how the family can apply them. Invite family members to share experiences they have had with these principles.



LISTEN, LEARN, LIVE IT

The students in the early-morning seminary classes of the Capotillo and Simon Bolivar Wards in the Santo Domingo Dominican Republic Stake enjoy watching and learning from general conference. Here are some of their ideas on how to use what you learn during general conference.

- ✿ Come to general conference prepared to learn and listen carefully to the talks. Fasting and prayer can help you be prepared.
- ✿ Write down what you learn so you can think more about it later.
- ✿ Talk about general conference with your family. Share with them what you have learned, and listen to and learn from their experiences.
- ✿ Listen carefully to President Gordon B. Hinckley's talks, and write down at least three things he asks you to do or to become. Pray about these things, and see how you can make them happen in your life.
- ✿ If the Spirit prompts you to do something while you are listening to or pondering general conference, do it.
- ✿ Set goals on how and when to apply the counsel you receive during general conference. Write your goals and deadlines in your journal, and refer to them often.
- ✿ Be with people who make it easy to do what the prophets say. Then, when you try to apply the speakers' counsel, you will have support.
- ✿ Share what you have learned with a friend who could also benefit.
- ✿ Live worthy of the Holy Spirit, and pray for guidance on how to live what you have learned during conference.
- ✿ Listen carefully to what the Church leaders encourage you to do, and work on becoming better. Remember to "be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (see James 1:22–25).
- ✿ Look up and mark in your own scriptures the references quoted in the talks.
- ✿ Read the conference talks when the *Liabona* and *Ensign* come out so you can gain new insights and renew your enthusiasm. ■

Agency



A continuing series examining basic beliefs of the restored gospel, doctrines unique to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

A basic tenet of Christianity is that God has given His children free will, the ability and privilege to choose. But the concept of agency, taught in the Book of Mormon and by latter-day prophets and apostles in concert with other gospel truths, is a doctrine rich in power and eternal in its implications.

An Eternal Principle

Agency is essential to Heavenly Father’s plan for His children, for without it we cannot become as He is. Agency is an eternal attribute of all intelligent beings. It did not begin with mortal birth. We possessed agency in our premortal existence. As the Lord revealed:

“Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

“All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence.

“Behold, here is the agency of man” (D&C 93:29–31).

We do not believe in a deterministic God—that is, one who determines in advance the eventual fate of His children. Rather, we believe in a God who has perfect foreknowledge of the choices His children will make. He may use this foreknowledge to guide us or even to warn us, but He does not use it to preempt our agency. He *allows* us to become what we truly desire to become. As Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote: “[God] knows what each will do under given conditions, and sees the end from the beginning. His foreknowledge is based on intelligence and reason. He foresees the

future as a state which naturally and surely will be; not as one which must be because He has arbitrarily willed that it shall be.”¹

Most Christian churches believe God created His children *ex nihilo*—out of nothing. If this were true, then God might be held accountable for any evil we would do because He created us with flaws and weaknesses. But we know our Heavenly Father did not create us out of nothing, and He is not responsible for our weaknesses or sins. He merely places us, His spirit children, in spheres where we can learn and grow by exercising our agency, if we employ it correctly.

Conditions Required for Agency

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that agency requires four conditions:

1. Laws ordained by an omnipotent power must exist, laws we can either obey or disobey.
2. There must be opposites—good and evil, right and wrong.
3. We must have knowledge of good and evil; we must know the difference between the opposites.
4. We must possess an unfettered power of choice.²

We must also be accountable for our choices if we are to enjoy agency fully. The laws that exist must bring consequences—and not just the natural consequences resulting from our actions, such as losing people’s respect if we lie and cheat. The laws must also bring blessings from God if we obey them and punishments if we do not.

Satan’s Attack on Agency

Of the premortal existence, the Lord says, “Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man” (Moses 4:3). For his rebellion Lucifer was cast out of heaven, but here on earth he continues to undermine our agency. He does this in many ways, two of which are:



If we use our agency wisely, the possibilities for doing good and blessing others become infinite.

Disobedience. “Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light. . . . And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men” (D&C 93:31, 39). Disobedience damages our agency in two ways. First, when we lose light and truth, we become blind to many opportunities to do good; and second, some forms of disobedience are addictive—we become entrapped

in behaviors that are extremely difficult to forsake. We may even hurt others and damage their agency.

No accountability. Satan whispers in our ears, telling us, “Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; . . . and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God” (2 Nephi 28:8). Some mistakenly believe that once we have “confessed Christ” and have been “saved by grace,” it doesn’t matter what we do—we are saved. This doctrine is a subtle manifestation of Satan’s ongoing deception that we are not accountable for our sins and that there are no consequences for them.

Blessings of Agency

When we use our agency to choose righteousness, God not only blesses us, but our agency is strengthened and enhanced. When our Heavenly Father sees that He can trust us to make correct decisions, He does as any loving parent would do: He blesses us with new opportunities and more responsibility. Thus, if we use our agency wisely, the possibilities for doing good and blessing others become infinite. Obedience always leads to greater agency and increasing possibilities. It is sin that shrinks our options. ■

NOTES

1. *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 29.
2. See *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (1966), 26; see also 2 Nephi 2:10–29.

The Sacred RESPONSIBILITIES of PARENTHOOD



What we do and teach in our homes matters. With the family proclamation as the primary text, let me share with you five concepts that will help ensure happy and secure families.

BY ELDER M. RUSSELL BALLARD
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

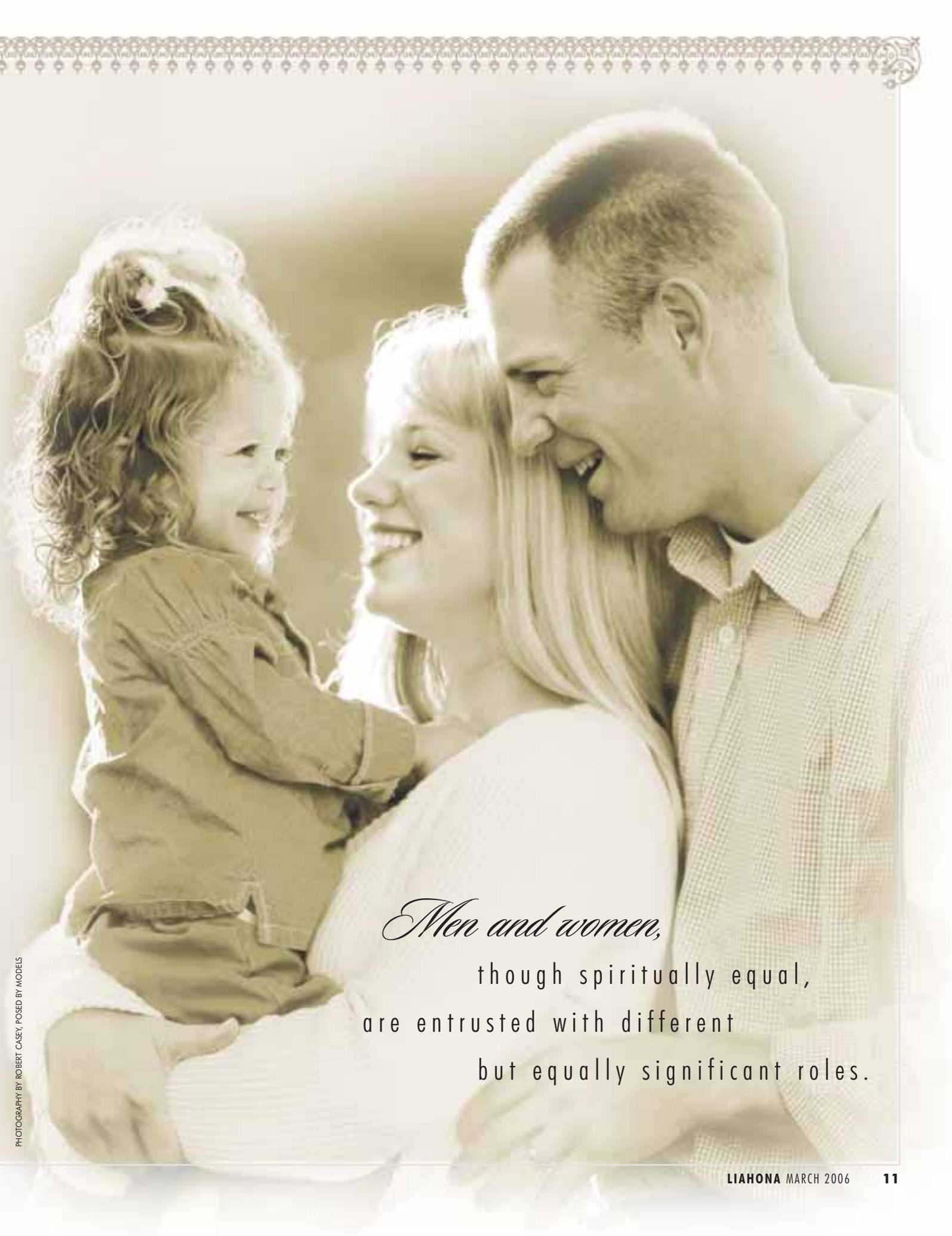
As a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, I participated in the process of drafting “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” It was a remarkable experience for all of us. As Church leaders travel the world, we see things—both within the Church and outside the Church. We were troubled by much of what we were seeing. We could see the people of the world wanting to define the family in ways contrary to God’s eternal plan for the happiness of His children.

In the midst of all that was stirring on this subject in the world, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles could see the importance of declaring to the world the

revealed, true role of the family in the eternal plan of God. We worked together, through the divinely inspired council system that operates even at the highest levels of the Church, to craft a proclamation that would make the Lord’s position on the family so clear that it could not be misunderstood.

Since the proclamation came out almost 10 years ago, time has overwhelmingly proven its prophetic insight. As a church we are more focused than ever in supporting and strengthening the family. Sadly, the family continues to be assaulted relentlessly throughout the world. You need only to read a newspaper or turn on the television to see how openly and viciously the war against the family is being waged. Gender is being confused, and gender roles are being repudiated. Same-gender marriage is being promoted in direct opposition to one of God’s primary purposes—for His children to experience mortality.

The family is not just the basic unit of society; it is the basic unit of eternity. We lived as Heavenly Father’s spirit sons and daughters before this mortal existence. In that grand



Men and women,
though spiritually equal,
are entrusted with different
but equally significant roles.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT CASEY, POSED BY MODELS

premortals family council, our Heavenly Father's plan for the eternal happiness and peace of His children was presented. We understood that we would come to this earth to live as families, and through the sealing authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, we could live throughout the rest of eternity as families.

It is alarming to see how intensely and openly the family is under attack in contemporary society. The proclamation is very clear:

"We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred

that between 1950 and 1997, some 46 industrialized countries and 9 developing nations legalized or removed most restrictions on abortion. Each year an estimated 46 million abortions take place worldwide. Indeed, some estimate induced abortions end one-fourth of all pregnancies.

Far too many people view marriage as a "couples relationship," designed to fulfill the emotional needs of adults rather than an institution for rearing children. Children are considered a choice rather than a blessing. About one million children per year experience parental divorce and its aftermath, and about one-third of all children in America are born out of wedlock. Almost every trend indicates that

Fathers should seek constantly for guidance
from the Holy Ghost so they will know
what to do, what to say, and also know
what not to do and what not to say.

powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife. . . .

". . . Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ."¹

We must stand firm, brothers and sisters, at this time when the adversary is using differing lifestyles in an attempt to replace the marriage of one man to one woman. It would be well for all people of the world to read the full text of the proclamation.

The Adversary's Attacks on the Family

The attacks on the family also undermine the value of life—particularly the life of the unborn. Life is being trivialized and subjected to the vacillating whims of convenience and political correctness. You will find it troubling, as I do,

we are on a slippery slope downward from God's plan for His children. The family, once universally hailed as the cornerstone of society, is losing its essential role.

When you stop and think about it from a diabolically tactical point of view, fighting the family makes sense. When Satan wants to disrupt the work of the Lord, he doesn't poison the world's peanut butter supply, thus bringing the Church's missionary system to its collective knees. He doesn't send a plague of laryngitis to afflict the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. He doesn't legislate against green Jell-O or casseroles. When Satan truly wants to disrupt the work of the Lord, he attempts to confuse gender and he attacks God's plan for His children. He works to drive a wedge of disharmony between a father and a mother. He entices children to be disobedient to their parents. He makes family home evening and family prayer inconvenient. He suggests family scripture study is impractical. That's all it takes, because Satan knows that the

surest and most effective way to disrupt the Lord's work is to diminish the effectiveness of the family and the sanctity of the home.

Look at what he accomplishes when he does that. Couples unhappy in their marriages tend *not* to give appropriate gospel instruction in the home. They are less likely to be committed to gospel principles in their own lives.

proclamation as the primary text, let me share with you five concepts that will help ensure happy and secure families.

1. Full and equal partnerships. Men and women joined together in marriage need to work together as a full partnership. However, a full and equal partnership between men and women does not imply the roles played



Some drift from the Church. Apathy can overcome even active members, keeping them away from the temple and weakening their capacity to be effective leaders and teachers—thus leaving countless lives untouched and slowing the Lord's work. And the Internet when not properly used is a vicious influence in the home. So we know, without question, Lucifer is the enemy of the family!

Ensuring Happy and Secure Families

What we do and what we teach in our homes and in our families matters. With the

by the two sexes are the same in God's grand design for His children. As the proclamation clearly states, men and women, though spiritually equal, are entrusted with different but equally significant roles. These roles complement each other. Men are given stewardship over the sacred ordinances of the priesthood. To women, God gives stewardship over bestowing and nurturing mortal life, including providing physical bodies for God's spirit children and guiding those children toward a knowledge of gospel truths. These stewardships, equally sacred and important, do not



involve any false ideas about domination or subordination. Each stewardship is essential for the spiritual progression of all family members, parents and children alike.

Family stewardships thus must be understood in terms of obligations and responsibilities—and in terms of love, service, and interdependence. Men who attempt to dominate their wives, who seek



to exercise unrighteous dominion without regard to spousal counsel and sensitivities, simply don't understand that such actions are contrary to God's will.

2. Fathers. The proclamation states, "Fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection

for their families." They teach their families the gospel and lead in kindness, following the counsel found in section 121 of the Doctrine and Covenants (see vv. 34–36).

Fathers perform priesthood ordinances and give priesthood blessings, including father's blessings to their children. They pray for and with family members, collectively and individually. They set an example of respect and love for their eternal companion and mother of their children. In all things they follow the example of the Savior and strive to be worthy of His name and His blessing. Fathers should seek constantly for guidance from the Holy Ghost so they will know what to do, what to say, and also know what *not* to do and what *not* to say. They serve the family and the Church in the spirit of love and enthusiasm, by example preparing family members to serve—especially preparing sons to serve as worthy missionaries.

Fathers are expected by God and His prophets not only to provide for their families but also to protect them. Dangers of all sorts abound in the world in which we live. Physical protection against natural or man-made hazards is important. Moral dangers are also all around us, confronting our children from their early years. Fathers play a vital role in protecting children against such snares.

We know that a father's role does not end with presiding, providing, and protecting family members. On a day-to-day basis, fathers can and should help with the essential nurturing and bonding associated with feeding, playing, storytelling, loving, and all the rest of the activities that make up family life.

3. Mothers. The proclamation teaches that "mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children." Nurturing refers to parenting behaviors such as warmth, support,

bonding, attachment, recognizing each child's unique abilities, and attending to children's needs. Nurturing in and of itself is more important in the development of a child than is any particular method or technique of child rearing. It hardly needs saying that nurturing is best carried out in a stable, safe, family context.

A mother's nurturing love arouses in children, from their earliest days on earth, an awakening of the memories of love and goodness they experienced in their premortal existence. Because our mothers love us, we learn, or more accurately remember, that God also loves us.

Today there is significant pressure in our materialistic world to have and spend more money. Unfortunately, this

and rearing her children in righteousness and truth. None other can adequately take her place.

"It is well-nigh impossible to be a full-time homemaker and a full-time employee. I know how some of you struggle with decisions concerning this matter. I repeat, do the very best you can."²

Taking care of small, dependent, and demanding children is never ending and often nerve-racking. Mothers must not fall into the trap of believing that "quality" time can replace "quantity" time. Quality is a direct function of quantity—and mothers, to nurture their children properly, must provide both. To do so requires constant vigilance and a constant juggling of competing demands. It is hard

work, no doubt about it.

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has given very wise counsel:

"Women today are being encouraged by some to have it all—generally, all simultaneously: money, travel, marriage, mother-

hood, separate careers in the world. . . .

"Doing things sequentially—filling roles one at a time at different times—is not always possible, as we know, but it gives a woman the opportunity to do each thing well in its time and to fill a variety of roles in her life. A woman . . . may fit more than one career into the various seasons of life. She need not try to sing all of the verses of her song at the same time."³

4. *Principles for marriage and families.* From the proclamation we learn that "successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities." Parents should work to create loving, eternal connections with their children. Reproof or correction will sometimes be required. But it must be done sensitively, persuasively, with an increase of love thereafter lest the child esteem the parent to be an enemy (see D&C 121:43).⁴

A mother's nurturing love arouses in children
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draws married mothers to work outside the home in order to provide a second income. As husbands, wives, and children recognize the difference between basic necessities and material wants, they lessen family financial burdens and contribute to helping mothers be at home. Decisions about working outside the home are difficult ones and need to be made prayerfully, keeping ever in mind the counsel of the living prophets on this complex issue.

President Gordon B. Hinckley, with his usual sensitive, loving spirit, gives us this wise perspective:

"I recognize . . . that there are some women (it has become very many in fact) who have to work to provide for the needs of their families. To you I say, do the very best you can. I hope that if you are employed full-time you are doing it to ensure that basic needs are met and not simply to indulge a taste for an elaborate home, fancy cars, and other luxuries. The greatest job that any mother will ever do will be in nurturing, teaching, lifting, encouraging,

It can be equally destructive when parents are too permissive and overindulge their children, allowing children to do as they please. Parents need to set limits in accordance with the importance of the matter involved and the child's disposition and maturity. Help children understand the reasons for rules, and always follow through with appropriate discipline when rules are broken. It is important as well to praise appropriate behavior. It will challenge all of your creativity and patience to maintain this balance, but the rewards will be great. Children who understand their boundaries through the consistent application of important rules are more likely to do well at school, to be

to discuss the situation. The father and then the mother explained to their children what they had observed and asked how each felt about it. The mother and father learned that since their two oldest children had left home, one to be married and one to go to college, an unfair burden of responsibility had been unwittingly shifted to the two oldest children remaining at home, and they were becoming resentful. By counseling together and listening to what their children were feeling, the family made a more equitable distribution of responsibility among the children, resolving much of the frustration and tension in the home.⁷

Parents should work to create loving,
eternal connections with their children.

more self-controlled, and to be more willing to abide by the laws of the land.⁵

Parents need to give children choices and should be prepared to appropriately adjust some rules, thus preparing children for real-world situations.⁶ To do this, parents must listen—really listen—to what their children are saying. They must know what is important to each child. I learned this lesson years ago from one of our daughters. She was only four or five at the time. She came into the room, all excited. I was reading the newspaper, and she had something very much on her mind that was important to her. And I was responding, “Yes, uh-huh, uh-huh.” All of a sudden the newspaper came crashing down with her two little hands. She grabbed my face between her hands so that she could look me right in the eye. This was a little four- or five-year-old teaching her father a great lesson. “Daddy, you’re not listening to me.” And she was right.

5. Family councils. As you would expect to hear from me, one of the best tools we have as parents is the family council. I cannot emphasize enough its importance in helping to understand and address challenges in the family. When members of one family began to feel unusual contention invading their home, they called a family council

I recognize that there are as many kinds of family councils as there are different kinds of families. Family councils can consist of one parent and one child, of two parents and several children, of just two parents, or of just siblings, and so on. Regardless of the size or makeup of the family council, what really matters are loving motivation, an atmosphere that encourages free and open discussion, and a willingness to listen to the honest input of all council members—as well as to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit.⁸

Overcoming Contention

If any of you are struggling with contention in your homes, you can change this. Talk with your family. Ask for their help. Tell them you don't want a contentious spirit in the home anymore and discuss what each family member can do to prevent it. President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency, taught:

“I feel certain that if, in our homes, parents will read from the Book of Mormon prayerfully and regularly, both by themselves and with their children, the spirit of that great book will come to permeate our homes and all who dwell therein. The spirit of reverence will increase; mutual respect and consideration for each other will

grow. The spirit of contention will depart.”⁹

Remember, also, there is great power in prayer. I strongly encourage personal and family prayer, which are important in building strong families. But I want to emphasize something else as well. I’m wondering if

mortal responsibility He gives to His children. Listen to the voice of the Spirit and the counsel of the living prophets. Be of good cheer. God did not place you on earth to fail, and your efforts as parents will not be counted as failure unless you give up.



many of you parents, you couples, have lost that essential moment of kneeling together at the end of the day, just the two of you, holding hands and saying your prayers. If that has slipped away from your daily routine, may I suggest you put it back—beginning tonight!

To parents everywhere, my counsel is simple: Get a copy of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” Read it and strive to align your marriage and your family to its inspired, revealed direction from the Lord. Then be the very best and act the very best you can. God will give you strength beyond your own as you strive daily to fulfill the most sacred

May our Heavenly Father bless each and every one of you. God lives. We are His children. Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior. They love us and want us to be faithful and happy. ■

From an Education Week devotional address given on August 19, 2003, at Brigham Young University.

NOTES

1. *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. “Women of the Church,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 69.
3. “A Message to My Granddaughters: Becoming ‘Great Women,’” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 18–19.
4. See Craig H. Hart, “Three Essential Parenting Principles,” *BYU Magazine*, spring 2003, 58.
5. See “Three Essential Parenting Principles,” 59.
6. See “Three Essential Parenting Principles,” 59.
7. See M. Russell Ballard, *Counseling with Our Councils* (1997), 154.
8. See *Counseling with Our Councils*, 157.
9. “The Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, May 1980, 67.



TATTOOS

AND YOUR MISSION

BY SHANNA BUTLER
Church Magazines

Imagine you are standing outside a beautiful white temple. Its walls and grounds are immaculate. On the lawn near the front door is a painter. He has displays of his art for all to see.

A few minutes later, you see this painter turn around, pull out cans of paint, and start to paint on the walls of the temple. His painting isn't ugly, but it just doesn't belong there. Do you say anything to him? Do you ask him to make his picture bigger and more colorful and offer to pay him for his work? Or do you say, "You can't do that! This is a holy temple!"?

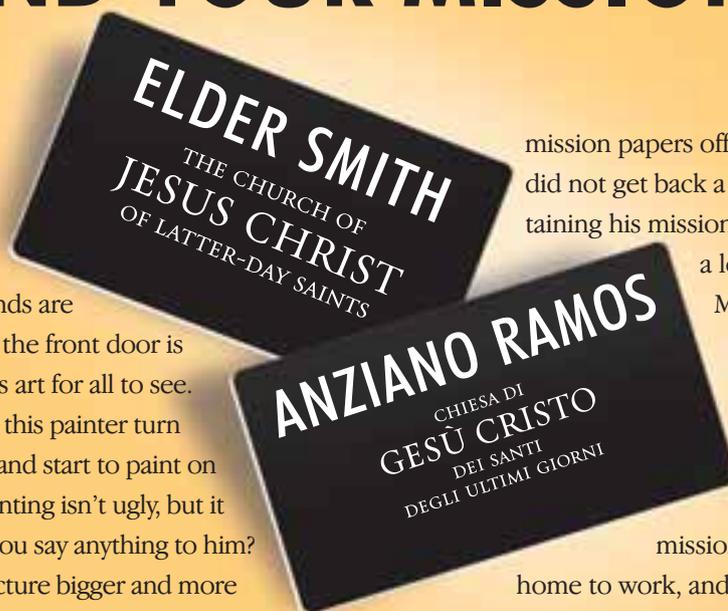
What would you do if it were *your* temple? The Apostle Paul said, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? . . . For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

"A tattoo is graffiti on the temple of the body," said President Gordon B. Hinckley.¹

Tattoos are permanent. They are not only physically damaging, but through disobedience to the voice of the prophets, choosing to get one causes spiritual damage also. On top of that, something you might not have thought about before is that having a tattoo will affect your application to be a missionary.

Bobby's Mistake

When Bobby Collins (name has been changed) sent his



mission papers off, he was surprised that he did not get back a large white envelope containing his mission call. Instead, he received

a letter from the Church's Missionary Department asking about his tattoo.

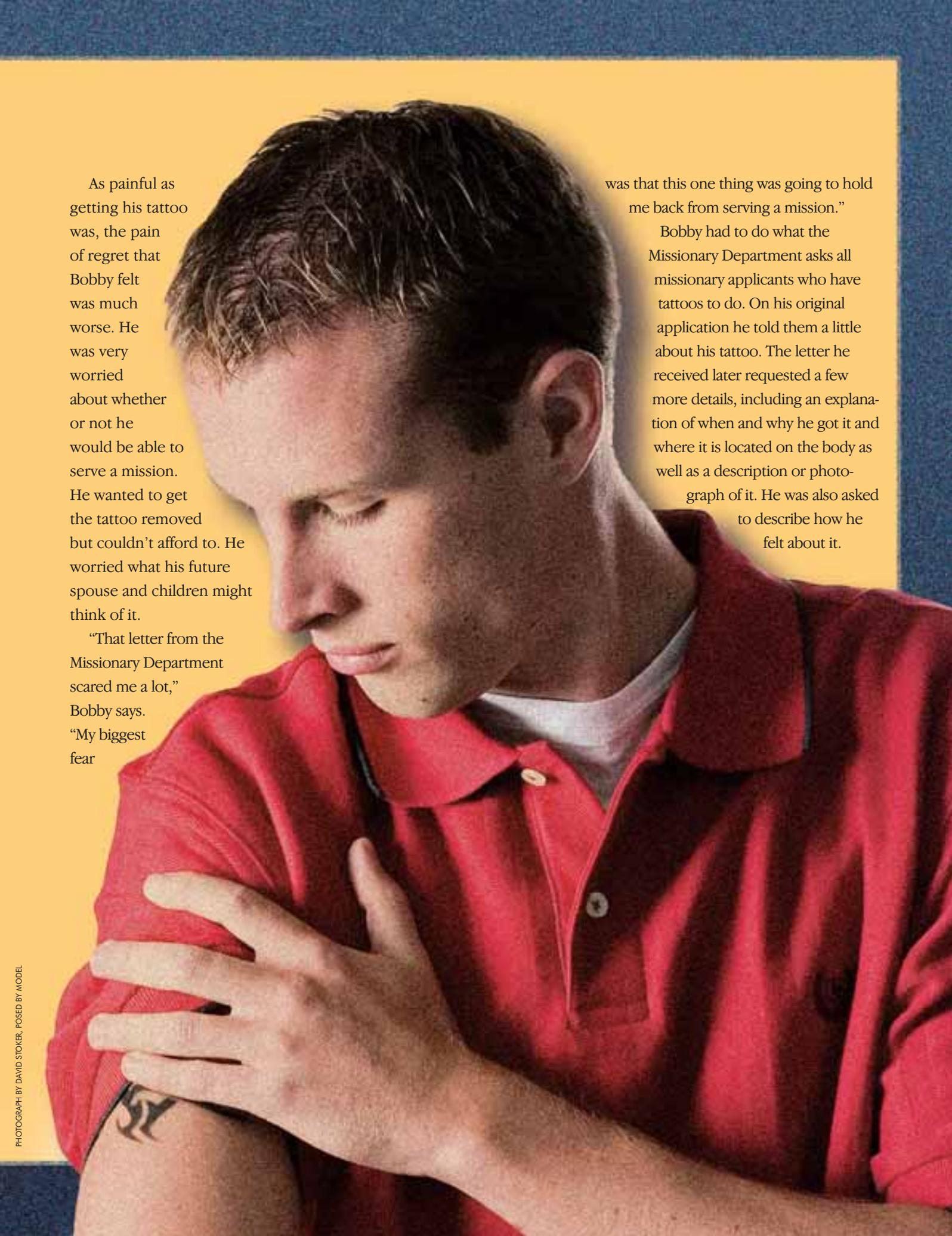
When Bobby graduated from high school, he wasn't sure if he wanted to go on a

mission. He moved away from

home to work, and he liked the independence of not having his parents around all the time. At about the same time, his best friend and his cousin both got tattoos. "That kind of lowered my guard," he says.

Bobby had always been good at art, so he designed his own tattoo. He knew tattoos were discouraged by the Church and that his mother wouldn't like it, and before he went to get it, he asked his brother what he thought about it. His brother had some good advice. He said, "Life already gives us so many scars. Why would you want another one?"

But Bobby had already made up his mind. Six weeks and 700 hard-earned dollars later, he had a huge tattoo all the way up one leg. "It was really painful. It was bloody," he remembers. And "getting one made it easier to think about getting more." He didn't get any more, but after strengthening his testimony of the gospel, he did decide he wanted to serve a mission.



As painful as getting his tattoo was, the pain of regret that Bobby felt was much worse. He was very worried about whether or not he would be able to serve a mission. He wanted to get the tattoo removed but couldn't afford to. He worried what his future spouse and children might think of it.

"That letter from the Missionary Department scared me a lot," Bobby says. "My biggest fear

was that this one thing was going to hold me back from serving a mission."

Bobby had to do what the Missionary Department asks all missionary applicants who have tattoos to do. On his original application he told them a little about his tattoo. The letter he received later requested a few more details, including an explanation of when and why he got it and where it is located on the body as well as a description or photograph of it. He was also asked to describe how he felt about it.

When a missionary candidate with a tattoo applies, General Authorities review each case and decide whether that candidate will be allowed to serve a mission. Some cannot.

Bobby did receive his mission call. He is grateful to be a missionary and sorry that, now a representative of the Lord's Church, he once decided to get a tattoo.

For some missionaries, having a tattoo means being assigned to serve in a place where their tattoo is either culturally accepted or to a colder climate where long sleeves, and tights for women, will cover their tattoos. A tattoo can limit not only where you can serve, but, depending on its content and your feelings



YOU ARE HIS CREATION

"You are a child of God. Your body is His creation. Would you

disfigure that creation with portrayals of people, animals, and words painted into your skin?

"I promise you that the time will come, if you have tattoos, that you will regret your actions. They cannot be washed off. They are permanent. Only by an expensive and painful process can they be removed. If you are tattooed, then probably for the remainder of your life you will carry it with you. I believe the time will come when it will be an embarrassment to you. Avoid it. We, as your Brethren who love you, plead with you not to become so disrespectful of the body which the Lord has given you."

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth," *Liabona*, Apr. 2001, 37; *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 8.

about it, it could also determine whether you can serve at all.

Advice for Future Missionaries

"I just hope people will follow President Hinckley's counsel," Bobby says. "I know that he is a prophet of God. If he says it's important, then it's important."

Bobby has some counsel of his own too, the same counsel his brother gave him: "Even though we can be forgiven through the Atonement, why do something else that's going to leave us scarred?" ■

NOTE

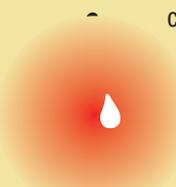
1. "Great Shall Be the Peace of Thy Children," *Liabona*, Jan. 2001, 67; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 52.

FROM A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

Inna Prokopenko is a registered nurse and licensed master aesthetician in Salt Lake City, Utah. She has attempted to remove many tattoos in her years of work. Here is some of what Inna has to say about tattoos:

PHYSICAL RISKS

- One big physical risk of getting a tattoo is ink allergies. They can develop right away or in six months to a year after someone is tattooed. Ink allergies make the tattooed part of your body swell up and get red and itchy. If you are allergic and ink gets into your bloodstream, you could become very ill.
- Blood-borne illnesses are another risk. If needles and other equipment are not properly sterilized, it is possible to get HIV or other illnesses.



can remove some tattoos—at least partially—but removal is much more painful than getting tattooed in the first place.

- Laser treatments don't usually cause scarring, but there is a possibility.
- Yellow tattoos or tattoos using yellow inks cannot be removed without surgery.
- Removal treatments take a long time and are very expensive—much more expensive than getting the tattoo.



REMOVALS

- Regret for being tattooed is more than a risk—it is a certainty for all of Inna's patients. Many people try to get tattoos removed so they can look more professional at their jobs or to show a good example to their children.
- Laser tattoo removal

YOU'RE NEVER BIG ENOUGH

AND YOU'RE NEVER STRONG ENOUGH TO TOY
WITH SIN. (SEE D&C 88:86.)



On the Lord's Team

BY R. VAL JOHNSON
Church Magazines

Raphael Queiroz eyes the volleyball net, tosses his ball high, then runs a few steps forward and leaps. For a moment he hovers above the floor, seeming to defy gravity. A split second later he meets the volleyball and drives his hand into it. The ball flashes over the net at a terrifying speed.

Anyone watching might wonder how an opponent could return the missiles Raphael launches. “Wow!” is the only response one stunned observer can make.

Raphael just shrugs—but with a hint of satisfaction in his serve. “Actually,” the unassuming Brazilian says, “I prefer soccer. But since I’m not agile enough to play the game well, I play volleyball.”

Perhaps it’s his size. At 6 feet 5 inches (196 cm) and 205 pounds (94 kg), he may not be as quick as smaller, lighter players. But he certainly has the height and weight to put a volleyball only fractions of an inch over a net with such power that only the brave would want to intercept it.

Soccer may be Raphael’s sport of choice, but volleyball is most definitely his game. And he is really good at it. He is so good, in fact, that he played in the final game of the high school volleyball nationals. “That,” Raphael says, “was one of the three happiest days of my life.”

And the other two? “The day I was baptized a member of the Church and the day I received my patriarchal blessing.”

At 19, Raphael de Moraes Queiroz of the Jardim Massangana Ward, Recife Brazil Boa Viagem Stake, has learned a couple of important lessons some people never learn. He knows that when you place the Lord first in your life, good things happen. He also knows that sometimes you have to adjust your dreams to take advantage of the talents and opportunities the Lord gives you.

Strength Training

Raphael’s parents joined the Church before he was born, so he grew up in a gospel-oriented home.

“Growing up in the Church, you’re taught from a very young age the principles of the gospel and the importance of keeping the commandments,” he says. “But you still need to get your own testimony.”

Raphael remembers one day in seminary when the class was watching a video about the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. “I started crying. ‘Why?’ I asked myself. As I concentrated on what I was feeling, the answer came: I was receiving a witness from the Holy Ghost that Joseph Smith is a prophet and that the Church is true.”

He smiles at the memory. “Good things happen in seminary,” he says.

Good things happen at church too. During one priests quorum lesson, he felt impressed to get a patriarchal blessing. “In preparing for it, I did some studying, then went to the bishop, and he sent me to the patriarch. I was overwhelmed by what I heard. The Lord entrusted me with a lot. I love my blessing.”

Since those experiences, he has found his testimony strengthened in other ways. Scripture study is one of them. He especially likes the Book of Mormon. “I admire Nephi,” Raphael says.

Assists from Family

Like Nephi, Raphael was born of goodly parents. Family is important to him. He feels particularly close to his only sibling, 18-year-old Gabriela.

“To me, Gabriela is an example of



Raphael Queiroz of Brazil is a terrific volleyball player—he's a star on his state team. His sister, Gabriela (below), thinks he's also a pretty terrific brother.





Having a solid relationship with your teammates is vital to the success of any team. Raphael followed the lead of his stake president, President Mozart Soares (above), to get ready for his mission. Now serving in the Brazil Belo Horizonte Mission, Raphael says, "There's no better place to learn to live the gospel than in the Church."

righteousness," Raphael says. "She always follows Church standards." He points out that she attends seminary twice a day—once early in the morning and again in the evening.

When asked why, she says, "I love learning the gospel. I get a different perspective in the different classes. Then, too, I have friends in the evening class I like being with. Mostly, though, I love feeling the Spirit. I feel it often

in seminary."

For Raphael, his sister illustrates how placing the gospel first in your life can give you strength to resist worldly pressures. "Having a gospel perspective helps us meet our challenges," he says. "It teaches us to stay away from temptations. Although I'm not free from temptations, I always try to avoid them. Youth need to learn how to avoid temptations by deciding ahead of time how they will handle them."

He knows well the temptations athletes face. "As an athlete, I always do what athletes do, but not the bad things—I don't break the Word of Wisdom or do the other things young men sometimes do. I try to set an example as a Latter-day Saint."

"At first," he says, "my friends thought my choices were funny. But later they respected me for my standards."

Joining the Lord's Team

It was a friend who introduced Raphael to volleyball. In 2001 a teammate on his soccer team in Recife pointed out that some private high schools offer volleyball scholarships. At the time, Raphael was trying for a soccer

scholarship but found his physical skills kept him from playing at the level the coaches wanted. But he seemed to have an unexplored talent for volleyball. "So I played volleyball until I got good at it," he says. He became so good that he was able to secure a full scholarship to a private high school.

At school, he played in the Recife city championships, then in the regionals in northeast Brazil, one of the most important tournaments in the country. But his success didn't end there. Not long afterward, he was asked to join the Pernambuco State team to prepare for the national high school tournament. His team won almost all of its games, losing only in the final match. He has the medals to show for it.

"As a volleyball player," he says, "I've learned to play as a member of a team. One person can't win alone. You have to look out for one another and help one another."

In the same way, the Church has taught him to play as a member of the Lord's team. "The Church has taught me to teach and care for others, to always watch for when people need help. There's no better place to learn to live the gospel than in the Church. The Lord wants all of us to practice the gospel. That's why I'm going on a mission."

Raphael will be giving up a college athletic scholarship to do so. Recruited by several schools, he was tempted to accept a scholarship from one of them. But at this point in his life, he would rather serve on a mission than serve on a volleyball court. He knows he is making the right choice.

"As much success as I have had in sports," he says, "I want to do better as a missionary. I feel that no matter where I go, I can do well—if I let the Lord coach me." ■

Teaching the Doctrines of the Kingdom of God



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

Blessings of Belonging to Relief Society: Relief Society helps sisters learn the doctrines of the gospel through studying the scriptures and teachings of latter-day prophets.

How Do We Learn the Doctrines of the Kingdom?

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “It is incumbent upon each of us to do everything we can to increase our spiritual knowledge and understanding by

studying the scriptures and the words of the living prophets. When we read and study the revelations, the Spirit can confirm in our hearts the truth of what we are learning; in this way, the voice of the Lord speaks to each one of us. As we ponder the teachings of the gospel and apply them in daily living, we become better prepared to receive additional light and truth” (“Marvelous Are the Revelations of the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 32).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “I hope that [scripture study] will become something far more enjoyable than a duty; that, rather, it will become a love affair with the word of God. I promise you that as you read, your minds will be enlightened and your spirits will be lifted. At first it may seem tedious, but that will change into a wondrous experience with thoughts and words of things divine” (“The Light within You,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 99).

What Are Our Teaching Responsibilities as Members of Relief Society?

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985): “Intelligence, light and knowledge . . . are part of the promise given to the sisters by the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . . Relief Society sisters

see the fulfillment of that promise daily as they teach children at home, in Sunday School, and in Primary, in Relief Societies, in sacrament meetings, and in daily conversation. . . . We encourage all our sisters to take advantage of their opportunities to receive light and knowledge in school, in personal study, and in Relief Society” (“Relief Society—Its Promise and Potential,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1976, 4).

D&C 88:77–78, 118: “Teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom. Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you. . . . Seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.”

Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president: “The home is the central place where we teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom, but the home is supported by the teaching and the learning that takes place at church. As Relief Society leaders and teachers, we can help accomplish this mission through effective gospel teaching. In Relief Society we teach the teachers—we teach mothers, future mothers and nurturers of God’s children. . . . When effective teaching occurs in Relief Society, sisters will be spiritually uplifted and better able to apply gospel principles in their lives. I believe effective teaching includes knowing your sisters, relying on the Spirit, and allowing the sisters to feel the love of the Lord in their lives” (“Teaching: An Entrance to the Heart” [address delivered at Relief Society open house, fall 2004]). ■





Blessed in My Affliction

BY BONNIE D. PARKIN
Relief Society General President

If my siblings had sold me into slavery, I'm absolutely certain I would feel more than a little angry and a lot betrayed! Yet this didn't seem to be the case with Joseph of old, whose brothers *did* sell him into slavery. Much later, when Joseph's opportunity for revenge arrived, those years of affliction had given him perspective on what mattered most. After Joseph identified himself to his brothers, his sensitivity to their concerns revealed his understanding of the purpose of his affliction: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life" (Genesis 45:5).

Joseph was a great man partly because he could recognize opportunity in affliction. Few of us have been sold into slavery, but all of us have experienced affliction. Do we recognize opportunities in our affliction?

In 1997 my husband was called to preside over the England London South Mission; we began our missionary service in July. Many things were new to me. Embarking on our first round of zone conferences, I hoped to get to know our missionaries, and I hoped they would get to know me. July 11 found

us on the stand in the Maidstone stake center chapel for a conference with 75 missionaries.

As we sang the opening hymn, I was suddenly overcome with nausea and dizziness. I turned to my husband and told him I was sick. My husband, an ear doctor, noticed an abnormal jerking in my eyes. He quickly summoned two missionaries to help me out of the meeting and into a classroom. What an awful introduction! Becoming sicker by the minute, I received a priesthood blessing from my husband and a faithful missionary and was then taken to the mission home. Every bump in the road and motion of the car worsened the queasiness and vertigo I felt. Soon I had completely lost my sense of balance and could no longer hear in one ear. Medical tests indicated a probable inner ear blood clot and the possibility of never regaining my balance or the hearing in my right ear.

I was scared, worried, and angry. While I believed my husband and I had been called of God, I wondered, "How can I assist the Lord in this great work if I cannot hear or even walk?" With no other family members or close friends to turn to for help, I felt completely alone. I needed a miracle. Believing I had done God's will in accepting callings and trying to do what was right, I pleaded with



While afflictions are never easy, all of them can give us experience and can be for our good. To grasp those blessings, we might need to turn our heads, lean a little closer, or listen a little better.

Two missionaries helped me out of the meeting and into a classroom. What an awful introduction!

Him to make me well. I was sure I had sufficient faith for a miracle.

With treatment, my balance gradually improved. But the hearing in my right ear did not return, leaving me deaf in that ear. This made me feel more discouraged. Why me? I was serving a mission for three years! Did I deserve this? Unlike Joseph, I did not view this affliction as an opportunity for good. I was more like Joseph's brothers who, upon finding their money in their grain sacks and fearing an evil stratagem, wondered, "What is this that God hath done unto us?" (Genesis 42:28).

I had forgotten that the same Lord who can turn water into wine can make our weak things strong (see Ether 12:27), that "all things wherewith you have been afflicted shall work together for your good, and to my name's glory" (D&C 98:3).

Nine years later, with my own deeper perspective, I realize that countless blessings

have come from those afflictions in England. For example, like Joseph of old, I was imprisoned—not by bars but by vertigo—in a land far from the help of my extended family. But just as Joseph found support from friends, I found support from my fellow missionaries. Senior couples whom we had barely met came to the mission home and assisted me with my responsibilities to greet arriving missionaries and bid farewell to those departing.

When you hear with only one ear, understanding

others when they speak can be extremely difficult, especially if they are on your bad-ear side. By necessity I have become a better listener as I focus more directly on those speaking to me. Looking directly at them helps me better grasp what they are saying and sense what they are feeling.

Partially losing my hearing has helped me develop patience for others, especially those with disabilities. It has helped me find faith to accept affliction. It has given me clarity to realize that instant, miraculous cures are not always the Lord's will. In fact, sometimes just the opposite is true.

Would I want to go through this experience again? No. Yet has my soul been stretched and expanded from this and other challenges like it? Absolutely. Of course, while the growth has come, my hearing has not; the residue of affliction often remains. What then?

In February 2002 I was sitting across the desk from President Gordon B. Hinckley. He asked, "Bonnie, how is your health?" I answered that my health was fine, although I could not hear in my right ear because I had lost that hearing in the mission field. He then asked, "How is the hearing in your other ear?" "Fine," I said. "Well, then," he replied, "just turn your head." He then proceeded to issue my current call. President Hinckley understands the principle of doing the best with what we have and making adjustments when we need to compensate.

While afflictions are never easy, all of them can give us experience and can be for our good (see D&C 122:7). To grasp those blessings, we might need to turn our heads, lean a little closer, or listen a little better. Yet in those small, humble efforts, we will find that His grace is sufficient (see Ether 12:27). ■



The Sound of Relief Society

BY KIM WOODBURY

PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND

The smell of freshly cooked bacon filled the cabin where the sisters of our young single adult ward had gathered for a Relief Society overnighter. As I lay in bed trying to wake up from a short night's sleep, I heard the sisters begin to gather in the kitchen for breakfast. I heard their familiar voices laughing, talking, and then laughing some more. As I listened to the happy noise, I felt a surge of love for these amazing women. I smiled as I thought to myself, "This is the sound of Relief Society."

I then reflected on all the other wonderful sounds that remind me of Relief Society: a sister sharing her heartfelt testimony of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, the voices of many sisters blending as we sing hymns together, a tender visiting teaching lesson, the hum of a sewing machine as we participate together in a service



project, and the tears we shed as we share one another's sorrows. These are just some of the many wonderful sounds that remind me of the Lord's organization for women.

But that morning in the cabin, as I lay there listening to my sisters laughing and talking, I realized what was my favorite sound of all: the sound of righteous women rejoicing together, loving each other, and celebrating our common sisterhood as daughters of a loving Heavenly Father. To me, that is truly the sound of Relief Society. ■

Kim Woodbury is a member of the Bountiful 55th Ward, Bountiful Utah East Stake.

SISTERS THREE

BY JESSIE NOEMI P. PATRIA

A year after I was baptized, I received my mission call and entered the Missionary Training Center in Manila, Philippines. It was there that I made some treasured friends. The first was my companion, Sister Loh, a convert from Singapore. Since

I couldn't speak her language and she didn't know any Filipino dialects, our only option was to communicate in English.

The 16 days I spent in the MTC were the most spiritual of my life. Although we were far from our families, we still felt loved thanks to a special person—Sister Luda Lee Cottrell, the wife of the MTC president. She was always smiling and happy. She gave us comfort and love and taught me about charity in words and in deed.

On our last night in the MTC, Sister Loh and I wanted to give something to Sister Cottrell as a remembrance and to thank her for all the love she gave us. We didn't have anything nice to give, so my companion suggested that we sing a song for Sister Cottrell. I immediately agreed. Because we were new in

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

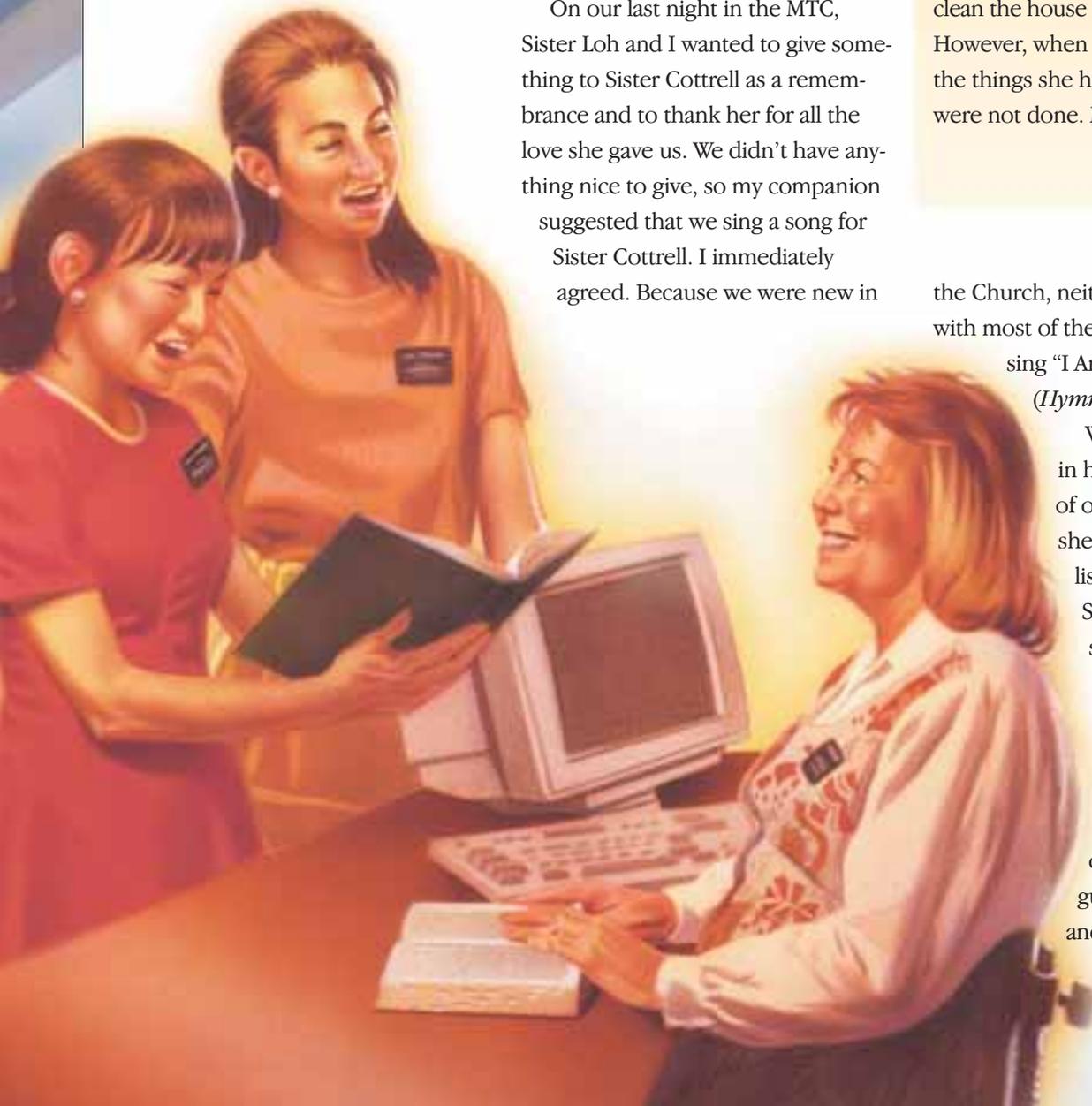
BY FAAPISA M. TUPE

As I got closer to completing my years in Young Women, I was struggling to know whether the Church was really true. I went through a difficult time, which challenged me but also answered my question whether or not The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true Church on the earth.

One day I was alone at home, and I had been instructed by my mother to clean the house and wash the windows. However, when my mother returned, the things she had asked me to do were not done. My mother started

the Church, neither of us was familiar with most of the hymns. We chose to sing "I Am a Child of God" (*Hymns*, no. 301).

We found Sister Cottrell in her office. We told her of our simple present, and she gladly and patiently listened to us. While Sister Loh and I were singing, a memorable spiritual experience happened. I realized that we were three people of three different races, cultures, and languages. My companion and I were singing in



to scold me, and the more I was scolded the more stubborn I became. Some of the words she said were said in anger. Some bad thoughts came to me, and the adversary's influence became very strong. I then wrote a letter to my family and made plans to leave the following day.

After I had hurriedly packed my stuff, I suddenly remembered a talk by Elder Kenneth Johnson of the Seventy. We had read it in our seminary class, taught by our cheerful teacher, Sister Leone A. Aiono. I picked up the seminary book that lay next to me and read the words I had written: "There's no place like home."

I took the letter I had written and threw it in the trash. Although at that time of spiritual immaturity I was not



fond of praying, the temptations that I faced urged me to pray often. I became convinced that the lessons I received in seminary are true and honest. I am grateful for my parents, for raising me in the gospel filled with good lessons that slowly change my life. The Church is true. ■

Faapisa M. Tupe is a member of the Fasitoo Uta Ward, Upolu Samoa Faleasi'u Stake.

English so that our beloved Sister Cottrell could understand what we were singing.

At that moment I forgot all our differences. The Spirit was telling me that what we are here doesn't really matter, because the three of us are literally daughters of Heavenly Father. The Spirit taught me why and what brought the three of us there. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the gospel that brought Sister Loh and me to the MTC. It is the gospel that made Sister Cottrell such a wonderful, loving person. It is the gospel that gave the three of us the knowledge that we are all children of God. ■

Jessie Noemi P. Patria is a member of the Bacolod Fifth Ward, Bacolod Philippines North Stake.

THE PROPHET'S INFLUENCE

BY ATTAH Y. FRED OMOKHUDU

Since I joined the Church in 1994, many Church members have had an impact for good in my life. However, the positive influence of the prophet, President Gordon Bitner Hinckley, cannot be overemphasized.

I may not have met him physically, but spiritually I feel I have. Whenever I read his inspired messages, I imagine him talking to me one-to-one with his hand on my shoulder. A First

Presidency Message entitled "Life's Obligations" (see *Liabona*, May 1999, 2) helped me understand that although income is important, I do not need to be a multimillionaire to be happy. This message has brought me inner peace and satisfaction.

Encouraged also by the prophet's counsel in that same message not to waste the great days of preparation for my future work, I decided to enroll in a computer engineering training college for one year. I was undertaking my one year of National Youth Service and resolved to use my time judiciously. At the end of the program, I knew how to repair and install computer systems. Now my first successful appointment after my year of National Youth Service is based on my added knowledge of computer systems.

I am closer to my friends and relatives than ever before. They understand and respect my standards now—simply because I've been living the counsel of the prophet. What a positive influence he has on me! How grateful I am to be under the guidance of a living prophet. ■

Attab Y. Fred Omokbudu is a member of the Bauchi Branch, Jos Nigeria District.



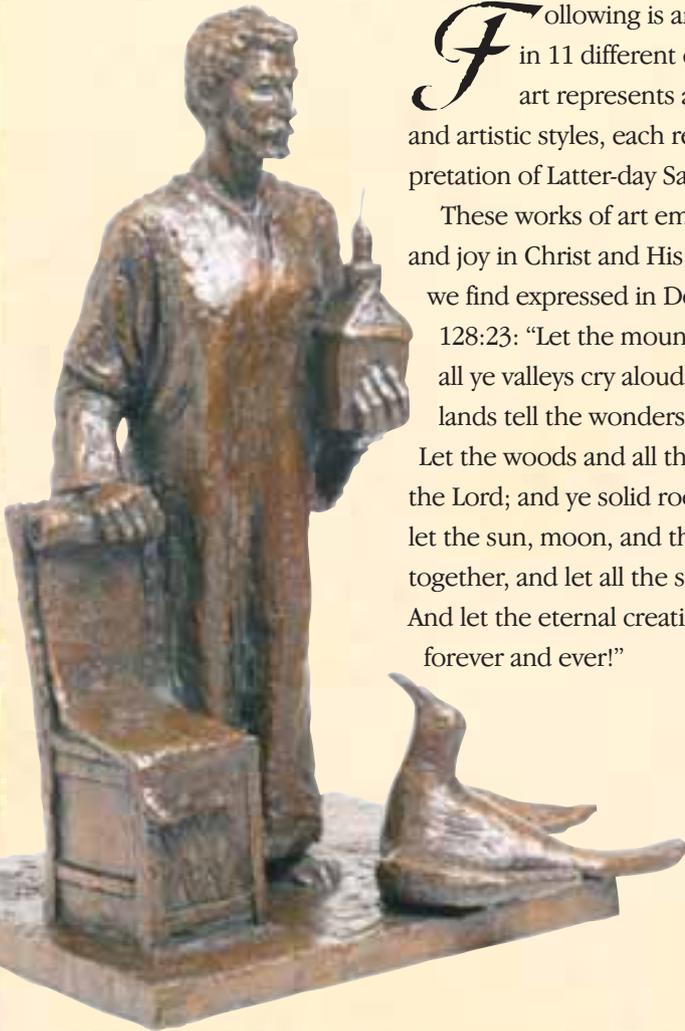
LET THE MOUNTAINS

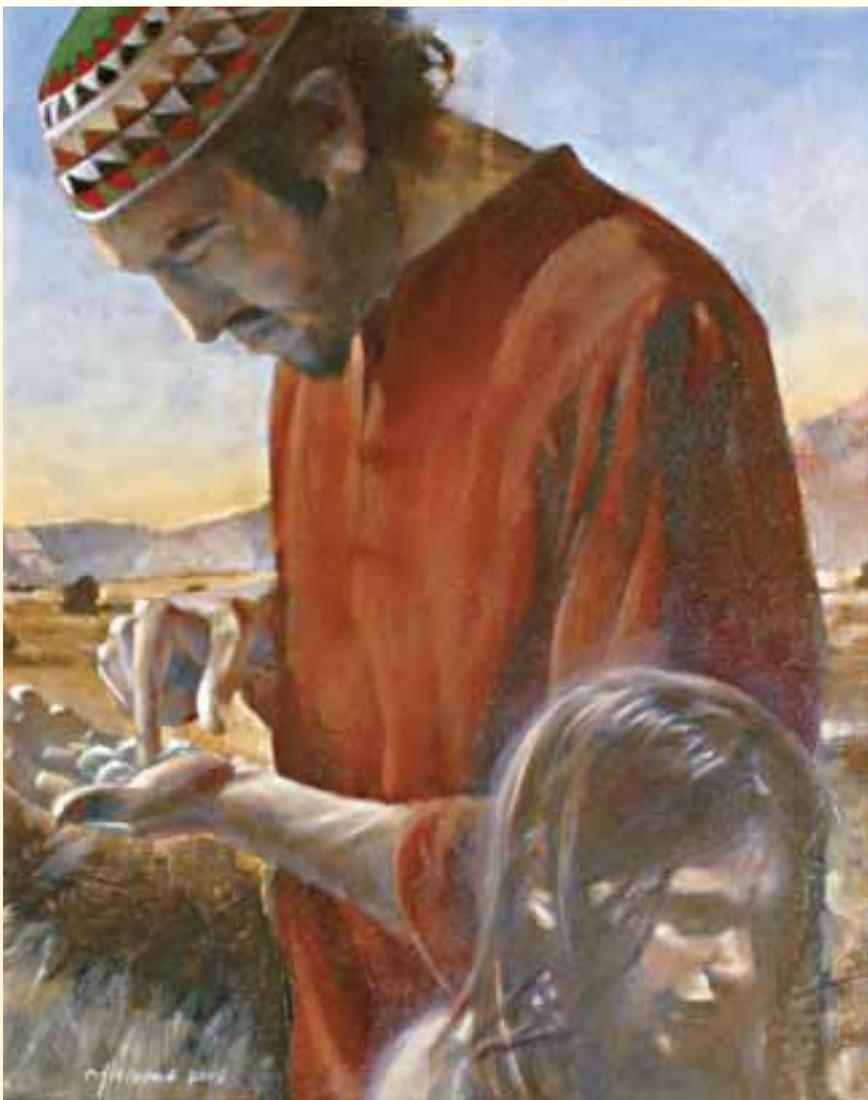
Shout for Joy!

*Selections from the Sixth
International Art Competition*

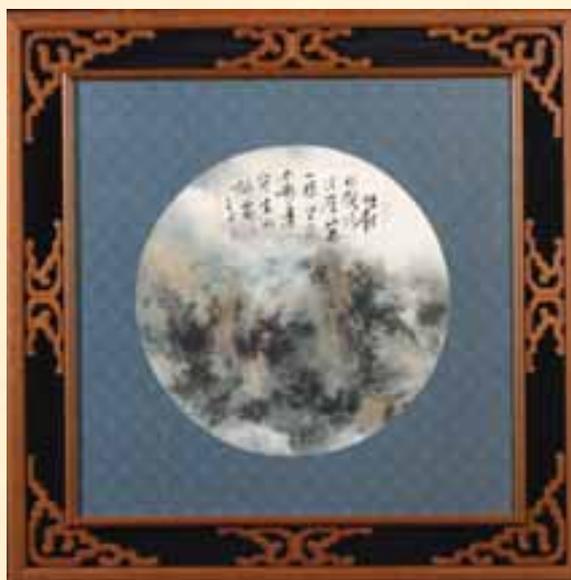
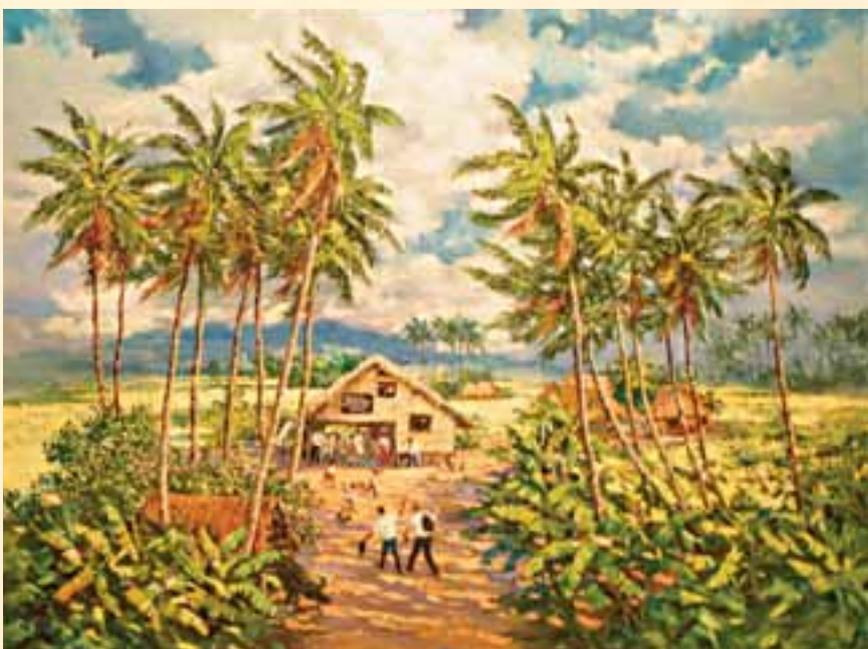
Following is art from Latter-day Saints in 11 different countries. Though the art represents a wide range of media and artistic styles, each reflects the artist's interpretation of Latter-day Saint beliefs, history, or life.

These works of art embody the same energy and joy in Christ and His eternal creations that we find expressed in Doctrine and Covenants 128:23: "Let the mountains shout for joy, and all ye valleys cry aloud; and all ye seas and dry lands tell the wonders of your Eternal King! . . . Let the woods and all the trees of the field praise the Lord; and ye solid rocks weep for joy! And let the sun, moon, and the morning stars sing together, and let all the sons of God shout for joy! And let the eternal creations declare his name forever and ever!"



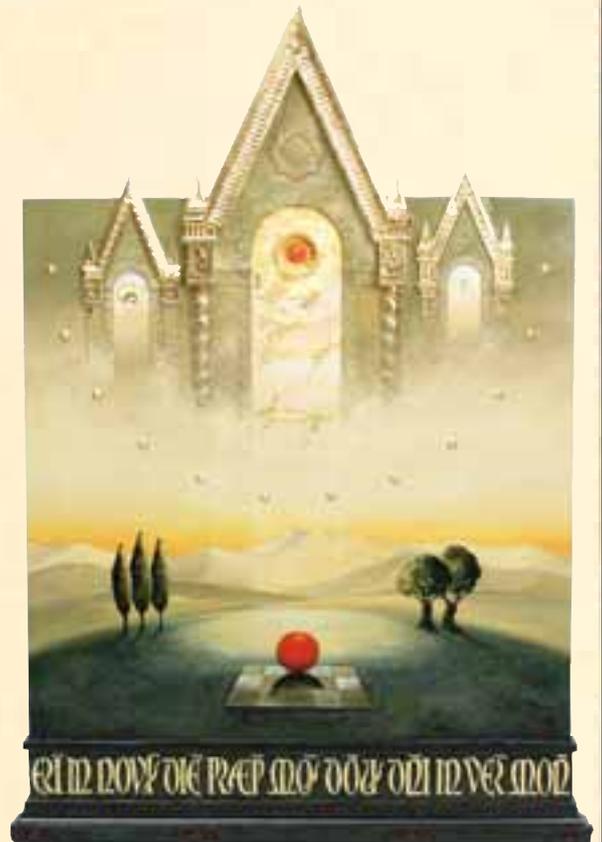


Opposite page, left: *Elijah, Come*, by Lyuba Prusak (Czech Republic); opposite page, right: *Ordination*, by Lawrence O. Ehigiator (Nigeria); far left: *Selecting Stone: The Brother of Jared*, by Nathan Florence (Utah); left: *Tree of Life*, by Mabel "Belle" Lara (Chile); below left: *A Promise Fulfilled*, by Teodorico P. Cumagun Jr. (Philippines); below: *Steadfast in Keeping the Commandments*, by Chin-Tai Cheng (Taiwan).



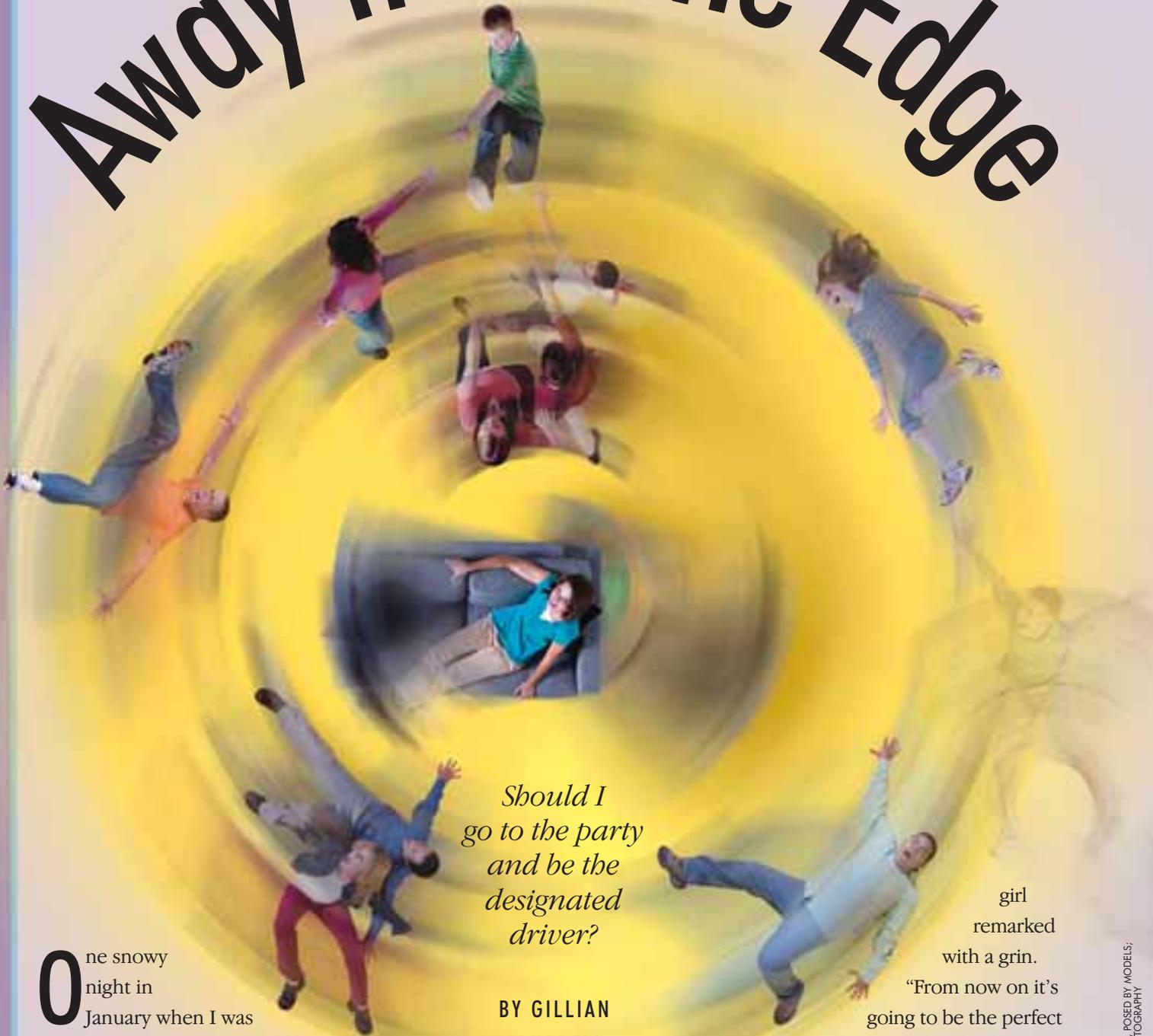
Right: *Other Sheep I Have Not of This Fold*, by José Riveros (Chile);
below: *Lehi's Dream*, by Damaris Puga de Garcia (Guatemala);
far right: *Our Divine Heritage*, by Maria Makarova (Russia).





Far left: *The Ascension of Isaiah*, by Wulf Barsch (Czech Republic); top: Armenian needle lace, by Melva Hindoian Emrazian (Armenia); left: *Sing with Me*, by Rei-Ying Chen (Taiwan); bottom left: *Let the Mountains Shout for Joy!* by Brent Laycock (Canada); below: *Vision*, by Ugolini Valeriano (Italy).

Away from the Edge



One snowy night in January when I was in high school, I was at a friend's birthday party. Giggling girls were sprawled all over the living room, chatting and eating cake. I sat in the middle of the group with my back against the couch.

"My sister moved out of the side house this week," one

Should I go to the party and be the designated driver?

BY GILLIAN CAMPBELL

girl remarked with a grin. "From now on it's going to be the perfect spot for the weekend! I think our class would become so much closer if we all partied together. Like Jeremy Roberts. He is so much fun to be around when he's drunk."

I stared at the girl, shocked to hear those words come out of her mouth. To my great surprise, everyone else



SAFER IN THE CENTER

“Part of the spirit of the Word of Wisdom is moderation in all things, except

those things specifically forbidden by the Lord. . . .

“When I was a young man, my friends and I went to an amusement park, where we rode the flying saucer. It was shaped something like an upside-down plate that went round and round. Most of us tried to get to the middle so we wouldn’t be thrown off by the centrifugal force as the saucer picked up speed. Sometimes those on the edge would grab a friend who was closer to the middle, but that would pull them both completely off the saucer. I soon recognized that the centrifugal force was far less powerful in the middle. I was quite safe in the center even though the saucer was still spinning. But it was risky when someone on the fringe latched on to me. I learned that safety comes from staying close to the center.”

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Virtues of Righteous Daughters of God,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 109–10.

joined in, offering names of other people it would be fun to party with. I looked around in disbelief. An icy feeling crept into my heart. Already? My friends? Drinking? I had known that some in my group of friends drank, but all of a sudden everyone seemed to be in on it. I lowered my head, feeling isolated among my best friends.

“Of course I’ll be there,” said a friend between bites of cake. “But I think I’ll just be the designated driver. I don’t really want to drink.” She smiled at me. “Gillian, you can come too. We’ll keep each other company!”

I relaxed a little. That sounded OK. “I could go,” I thought. “I could make sure all of my friends got home safely. I could just be there and not drink or do anything wrong. I could still be included.”

“Sounds great!” I heard myself say. “Sure! I’ll be there. We’ll get everyone home safe and sound.”

Everyone nodded enthusiastically,

and the conversation shifted to other subjects.

The next evening I attended a stake youth fireside.

The stake president spoke. “My young brothers and sisters,” he began, “you are at a stage in your life where you are under tremendous pressure to succumb to temptation. My best advice to you is this: Don’t even come close to the edge. Don’t go to the party and say you won’t drink. Don’t go to the party as a designated driver. Don’t even put yourself in that situation. Once you walk in the door, you are vulnerable. I have never counseled with someone who suddenly became an alcoholic or suddenly had a huge morality problem. It comes bit by bit, step by step. Don’t take the first step. I guarantee that you will never have a problem with the Word of Wisdom if you never put yourself in a situation where you might be tempted to take your first drink.”

I sat stunned by his words. He had spoken directly to my problem. Then I knew that it was not enough to go to a party and say I wouldn’t drink. That evening I decided I would never set foot in a party where alcohol was being served.

Through this experience, I learned that the Lord understands our problems and that one of the ways He guides us is through our leaders. Perhaps if I had gone to parties without partaking of alcohol, I still would have made it through high school OK. But I know the Lord blesses us when we keep His commandments, and I was able to follow His guidelines by staying away from the edge. ■

Gillian Campbell is a member of the BYU 43rd Ward, Brigham Young University 16th Stake.

In Denmark, a Vibrant Faith

The Church has a long history here, but the new temple in Copenhagen offers a focal point for the faith of individuals and families seeking to come unto Christ.

BY DON L. SEARLE
Church Magazines

When Ole Ravn-Petersen was 16, he obtained his father's permission to be baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The baptism took place in a neoclassical-style building in a quiet residential area of Copenhagen, a meetinghouse that had been dedicated in 1931 by Elder John A. Widtsoe (1872–1952) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Later, after serving a mission, young Ole would come back to this same building to baptize his father. For him and for many other Danish members, fond memories of the building became only sweeter when it was renovated and dedicated as the Copenhagen Denmark Temple in May 2004.

Many passersby seem to sense something of the majesty of the building, but Church members understand why it is a holy place. A member passing by might step into the small courtyard next to the temple and simply sit gazing at its tall windows and spire, thinking about the things of eternity.

Ole Ravn-Petersen now serves as bishop of the Århus Ward, Århus Denmark Stake, on the Jutland Peninsula, three hours away from Copenhagen by train. He visited his nation's capital city recently and found himself thinking that the pace of life there was a bit hectic. And then he thought of the temple: "We have a place here in Copenhagen where we can get closer to our Heavenly Father."

Moving Closer

Danish members have found many reasons to rejoice in the nearness of a temple, but invariably their reasons come back to moving closer to Heavenly Father.

Tine Andersen of the Roskilde Ward, Copenhagen Denmark Stake, says, "You don't have that closeness anywhere else. The Spirit is very strong." A returned missionary, Tine is the daughter of two temple workers. Her father, Niels, speaks with reverence of opportunities he had while serving as a guide during the open house before the temple's dedication. "It was a fantastic experience to see people's reactions," he says, and emotion overtakes him as he recalls the stream of visitors. "I have done missionary work for many years, and for the first time, I saw them come on their own. We did not have to knock on doors to find them."

Some 25,000 people toured the temple during the open house. Brother Andersen remembers one of those people, an architect who had been involved in building many fine churches throughout Europe. But what the



Quiet,

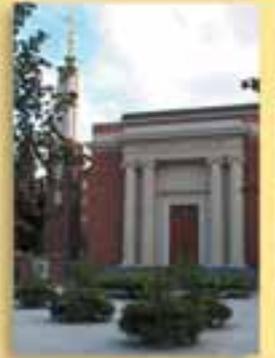
man felt in the temple touched him in ways he could not explain; he could only try to describe it in terms of the beauty and quality of the building.

This struggle to describe spiritual things is not unusual. Danish members

will tell you that because their country is prosperous and its people content, most seem not to realize how much they need God.

Tine Andersen speaks of a friend, a young woman who lives with her boyfriend—a practice common in Denmark. The friend talks to Tine about problems in the relationship, but she clings to it because it is all she has.

The gospel “gives you another perspective,” Tine explains. “Others might be happy in a certain respect because they have what they need for daily life. But they don’t know what they did before they came to this life or where they are going.”



Opposite page:
Bishop Ole Ravn-
Petersen, Århus
Ward, Århus
Denmark Stake.
Above: Copenhagen
Denmark Temple.
Left: Marianne, Niels,
and Tine Andersen,
Copenhagen
Denmark Stake.





Above: Thomas Ringheim (left), wife, Heidi (center), and children, Copenhagen Denmark Stake. Right: Orla Rode Nielsen (top) and Kirsten Bokhonko, Århus Denmark Stake.



sacred.” Bishop Jensen adds that youth need not only to know the law of chastity, but to understand the reasons for it. Where gospel doctrines differ from common practice, he says, children need to understand “that they don’t have to do the things the world around them does.”

Thomas Ringheim is a former bishop of the Allerød Ward, Copenhagen stake, and his wife, Heidi, serves in the ward

Relief Society presidency. They have eight children, ranging in age from 4 to 24, so they know something of the challenges faced by young people. Parents must take advantage of every teaching moment, Sister Ringheim says, because all of those little moments help build testimonies. To help fortify her own testimony, she has set herself the goal of attending the temple weekly. “I can feel a difference in myself in everyday life, just in coping with people.”

“I think it’s a challenge for Church members to be so few” in Danish society, Brother Ringheim says. “But on the other hand, I think it’s a great blessing. We have to learn to stand up for something.” Latter-day Saints need not be fearful about expressing their faith. “Actually, most people respect us when we are outspoken about what we believe.”

Deep Roots

The Church has a long history in Denmark. Missionaries first arrived in 1850. Danish was the second language, after English, in which the Book of Mormon was published (1851). But in the early days and again in the years after World War II, many converts emigrated to Utah. Denmark is a small country whose history, geography, and commerce all give it strong ties to other nations, and Danes may easily be drawn to other countries for employment or schooling. These factors, along with a tendency to keep religion a private matter, may account for the slow growth of Church membership over the past several decades. There are now about 4,500 Latter-day Saints in a nation of 5.5 million.

But the spiritual and leadership experience of longtime

“It’s OK to Be Different”

It is important as a parent to use every opportunity that comes to teach your children, says Tim Jensen, bishop of the Frederiksberg Ward, Copenhagen stake. He and his wife, Karen, are the parents of two preteen girls, Pernilla and Mie. Bishop Jensen explains that if you pay attention to promptings of the Holy Ghost when you are with your children, “you will find a lot of great moments when you can bear your testimony in an informal way.” Sister Jensen explains that she often turns to the Lord for guidance. She recalls one day when she found herself praying to help her older daughter overcome a reluctance to go to church. Pernilla felt the effect; she later bore testimony of the loving promptings that came into her own heart.

Because of the challenges young people face, Bishop Jensen says, parents have to teach them “it’s OK to be different.” His wife underscores the point: “You have to teach children to stick by what they believe.”

Some social conditions can pose challenges. One example: a legal drinking age—16—was established only recently in Denmark. Still, some parents introduce their children to alcoholic beverages early, on the theory that they can teach youngsters to drink responsibly. It is a theory that does not work well in practice. Another example: pornography has been legal and widely available since 1970. A generation has grown up with it, many believing it is harmless.

Karen Jensen says, “It is really important that you teach your daughters to respect their bodies, that the body is

members is a valuable resource to the Church in Denmark.

Orla Rode Nielsen, baptized in 1956, served as branch president twice in Århus before that unit became a ward. Kirsten Bokhonko, another longtime member, says that Brother Nielsen and his wife, Esther (now deceased), are the kind of people who made it a habit to do good for others quietly, in the background. When the Niensens discovered a love of family history, they devoted much of their own free time to helping more than 30 other members compile their family history. Brother Nielsen still goes to the city archives almost every day to gather information. "I love it. When you get started, you can't stop." From the time he joined the Church, he has felt that way about the gospel. On the day he was baptized, he sang all the way home for happiness. "Since my baptism I have never doubted."

Sister Bokhonko, baptized in 1952, is another who has helped anchor the Church in her area. She has served in leadership positions in all the auxiliaries and also as a translator for Church materials. She knows from her own childhood experience that it may be difficult for the 25 children in the Århus Ward Primary to find friends who share their moral and ethical standards. But she also knows

they need not give up their beliefs. When she was growing up, people always knew what her standards were, and those standards were respected.

The way members live their beliefs can bring blessings into their own lives as well as into the lives of others. Karin Messell of Århus, who grew up in the Church, met her husband, Jesper, at work. When they were married in 2001, he was not a member. Jesper now counts his wife's example as a great blessing in his life. Partly because of it, he was baptized in 2003, and they were sealed in the Copenhagen temple a little more than two months after its dedication in 2004.

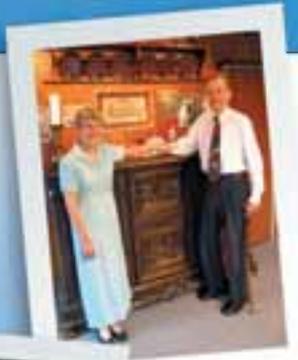
Jesper has embraced the standards and values of the gospel, including the importance of the family. As a couple, the Messells have chosen to sacrifice material things so Karin can be at home when they have children. Jesper says, "We can choose: do we want a big house, or do we want Karin at home?"

Johan and Lisa Koch of Copenhagen could tell them about the long-term rewards of



Above: Side view of the Copenhagen temple. Below: Bishop Tim Jensen, wife, Karen, daughters, Pernilla (left) and Mie, Frederiksberg Ward, Copenhagen stake.





Above: Jesper and Karin Messell and Anne Christina Larsen (right), Århus Denmark Stake. Top right: Britta (left) and Kjeld Rasmussen, Copenhagen stake, with a chest whose carvings tell a story from Danish history.

setting the right priorities. The Kochs joined the Church as a young married couple in 1968 and reared their seven children in the Church. In 2004 when they served as guides during the open house for the Copenhagen temple, a man who had gone to school with one of their sons came on a tour. “I had to come,” the man explained, “because I know Kristian, and I know what it would mean to him.”

The Kochs first went to the temple in Switzerland many years ago, and they set an example for their family by serving as temple workers when that meant an eight-hour trip to Stockholm. They kept a picture of the temple on a wall in their home. They used every resource to help their children grow strong in the gospel, including family prayer, home evening, and home-study seminary.

After years of having to travel outside their country, “to have a temple so close is a special blessing,” Sister Koch says. Her husband, who was released as president of the Copenhagen stake in 2001, sees the coming of the temple as a sign of growing maturity among members. But the Kochs are also impressed by its effect on those who are not members. When they talked of sealing during the open house tours, Brother Koch says, “you could tell which couples had a good marriage by the way they looked at each other. They would ask, ‘Could we do that?’”

Life in the Single Lane

Temple marriage is a goal, of course, for single members in Denmark, but socialization with other Latter-day

Saint singles can be difficult because they are so scattered and so busy.

A young adult dance or party in Copenhagen usually draws 20 to 30 people, Tine Andersen says, unless the invitation is extended to include members from the Århus stake and from Sweden. Malmö, Sweden, is close; from the top of a tall building in Copenhagen you can easily see the bridge that crosses the narrow

stretch of Baltic Sea between the two countries. While the languages of the two nations are similar, conversation at one of these dances is likely to be conducted in English, a language that many Europeans have in common.

Anne Christina Larsen of Århus could easily fit in whatever the language. In addition to her native Danish, she is fluent in German, English, and Spanish. Baptized while studying in Austria, she worked for a time in Guatemala and served a mission in the Washington, D.C., area. Currently studying psychology at a university, Anne attends institute classes. Regular attendance at the classes is no more than two or three.

But Anne has not put life on hold while waiting for marriage. She is continuing to fulfill personal spiritual goals—especially now that the temple is close. Going there “gives you new strength and peace—and perspective. You’re reminded of who you are.” She bases decisions about her life on gospel principles. “In everything we do, the gospel is the foundation.”

Building the Foundation

Britta Rasmussen, baptized with her husband in 1975, says she gained her testimony of the gospel by living it. When she first began attending Relief Society, she thought, “These ladies are *doing* what they believe.” She has always tried to follow that example.

For 45 years, she has been socializing with a group of friends she first met as a schoolgirl. She invited them to attend the open house at the temple while she and her

husband were serving as guides, and she had the opportunity to bear her testimony to them. "All those people felt something," Sister Rasmussen recalls, expressing the hope that what she said may someday touch their lives.

Her husband, Kjeld, first became acquainted with the gospel through a friend. Though Kjeld was more accustomed to the philosophical examination of religion, he developed a strong testimony through the witness of the Holy Ghost. He says, "Our challenge is to tell people, 'This is *not* a man-made religion. We have authority from God.'"

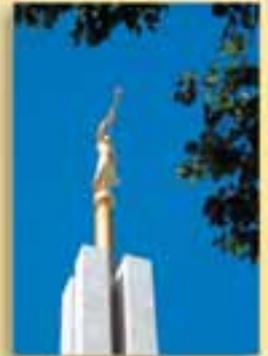
Elisabeth Andersen, in her late teens and the only Church member in her school, is not sure yet whether she has a testimony. "Sometimes I feel like I do, and sometimes I don't." But she is in the right place and doing the right things to find one. Her father, Jens Andersen, is president of the Copenhagen Denmark Stake. In her home, there are family prayers and family home evenings. Her father and mother set examples of faithfulness, and Elisabeth is doing the spiritual things she has been taught to strengthen her testimony. She is quite willing to share gospel truths with friends who ask about her beliefs or the way she lives.

The living of basic gospel principles, such as faith, prayer, repentance, and obedience, brings a new perspective on life, President Andersen says. "The joys of life become more abundant. The joy I feel for my wife and children is clothed in an eternal perspective," he explains. "Those families in the Church who are really

enjoying the blessings of the gospel are those who are practicing these basic principles."

The temple in Copenhagen has helped strengthen that eternal perspective, he adds. Members of every age can feel its influence. When his daughter Elisabeth has visited the temple, she too has felt it: "A peace. You can find it almost nowhere else."

President Andersen says stake and ward leaders teach that temple service is the goal for every member. He explains that the growth in spirituality resulting from the making and keeping of temple covenants could be the key to helping the Church grow in numbers in Denmark. "I think that missionary work is a natural result of conversion in your own life." When members are converted, he says, then they are able and eager to reach out to others. ■



Above: Spire of the Copenhagen temple.

Below: Johan and Lisa Koch, temple workers, Copenhagen stake. He is a former stake president.



Kirsten's Challenge

By Angela Diener

Kirsten, our second child, was born about 30 years ago after a difficult pregnancy. Immediately after her birth the doctors discovered a serious cardiac defect. Kirsten was quickly transferred to the intensive care unit of the

children's hospital. Laying his hands on her tiny body in the incubator, my husband gave her the first priesthood blessing of her life—a welcome gift for her arrival on this earth.

During the following days I often stood in front of the glass window looking into intensive

care and watched as this little girl struggled for her life. We were not even allowed to touch her, and we did not know what to wish for her.

When I was discharged from the hospital without my baby, my husband and I had the desire to go to the temple. We could do nothing

physically for our little Kirsten. We had to trust the Lord and the physicians. At that time the nearest temple was in Switzerland, far from our home in Hamburg, but

Because of her cardiac defect, Kirsten was in intensive care after her birth. We could only watch her as she struggled for life.



we felt we had to gather strength there for the unknown future. We applied all of our faith in behalf of our daughter.

In the meantime the doctors diagnosed a rare cardiac defect they were not able to operate on at that time. The life expectancy of patients with this condition was very limited. But five weeks later we were able to take our little Kirsten home. While her body may have been suffering, her spirit was cheerful and willing to learn, and we could tell that she enjoyed living in our family and loved her older brother very much.

When Kirsten was four her condition deteriorated, and she became weaker and weaker. After praying, fasting, and visiting the temple, we decided upon surgery in a cardiac center in Munich, where doctors had recently repaired a complicated condition like Kirsten's. Doctors actually had to change everything in the heart—make the ventricles smaller, close holes, and repair both valves. It was a genuine work of art. We were very worried about Kirsten, and our whole ward joined us in praying for her.

The doctors operated on Kirsten on May 21, 1980, and when she had gotten over the worst and was transferred from intensive care to another unit, we were full of confidence. Then a terrible thing happened. A tiny blood clot loosened from a repaired heart valve, settled in the brain, and within a few minutes caused a complete paralysis of

her right side and a loss of speech. Kirsten's eyes were full of fear and sadness. This was very difficult for us. I still see my husband and me standing in a phone booth in Munich, desperately calling our bishop. Within the next few days we received comforting letters from many ward members. Fasting also gave us renewed strength to encourage Kirsten and accept this affliction.

The following years were filled with therapies, and we rejoiced in every little bit of progress. When it was time for Kirsten to start school, her health was sufficient for her to attend a regular elementary school. She developed fabulous coping strategies with her left, usable hand. Her right leg became stronger, and she learned how to swim, bike, and ride horses. She rejoiced in her life. If a child laughed at her somewhat peculiar walk, I simply showed him or her pictures of Kirsten's life, and the laughter turned into admiration.

Kirsten received much love from her grandparents and other relatives, and the ward fellowshipped her. In turn, she showed her joy in the gospel to everyone she met and has been the one in our family who has brought the most friends into the Church.

After graduating from high school Kirsten diligently completed training to be an industry saleswoman and also obtained her driver's license. With her slightly converted car she

could be more self-reliant, and she was able to participate in young single adult conferences and fulfill stake callings. In 1999 she took a year off to serve a Church-service mission in the Frankfurt temple.

Kirsten loves children and finds a special closeness to them. Her niece, nephew, and Primary children love her very much. She is an example for us, showing that one does not have to become bitter because of severe adversity, but that one can radiate cheerfulness.

In 2003 a very loving young man came into Kirsten's life and became more and more important to her. He is a returned missionary who grew up in a faithful Latter-day Saint family. In August 2004 he and Kirsten were sealed in the Frankfurt temple. They are now mastering life's challenges together.

Two of our children have physical impairments. You do not wish it, but if it happens, you have to accept it wholeheartedly, learn, and fight through the difficulties. You develop a keen ear for the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Our Father in Heaven knows which afflictions we need here on earth if we are to grow. I have often comforted my children with the words, "You will have these physical impairments only while you live on this earth, and mortality is very short compared to eternity." ■

Angela Diener is a member of the Langenborn Ward, Neumünster Germany Stake.



Move!

By Deborah Shatto

My brother and I were driving home from work on a long, dark stretch of highway. We hadn't passed a car for miles. I was exhausted, and in an attempt to stay awake, I began looking at the layout of the road. We were in a hilly area, and there were two lanes going up the side of the hill we were climbing. Only one lane came down in the other direction. The extra lane in our direction was a passing lane because of the steep grade.

I began wondering about the downhill side. Sometimes on a steep incline, I knew, large trucks lose their brakes. I wondered what would happen, with only one lane, if a truck lost its brakes and a car was in front of it. It could be a serious situation. I was glad there was no other traffic on the road that night.

After a few moments I again thought about the situation. I was driving in the passing lane and figured a truck without brakes would have to veer into my lane to pass a slower vehicle. A thought came into my mind that the right lane would be safer, just in case something like that happened. But I rationalized that it was late and there was no traffic, so it didn't really matter where I drove. The thought came again as I approached the top of the hill. I

realized that I couldn't see the oncoming traffic, and it couldn't see me either.

Suddenly a sharp voice shouted, "Move!" I was so startled that I jerked the steering wheel abruptly and veered into the right lane. In that instant lights came over the hill and a horn blared. My brother woke up just in time to see the truck pass us in the middle lane. A moment later a station wagon came over the hill in the far lane. I was so shaken I pulled over on the shoulder of the road to steady my nerves. The realization that my brother and I could have been killed was very frightening.

I was amazed; I had heard that the Holy Ghost speaks with a still, small voice, but this voice had shouted. It was several years later when I realized that the Holy Ghost had indeed spoken in a still, small voice. He had spoken to me as He brought to my mind the possibilities of where a large truck might go, and He had spoken again when He suggested I move to the far right lane. I was dismayed when I realized I had not recognized the still, small voice. Finally there was no time left, and the Spirit had to shout.

After that experience I vowed to always live my life so that I am in tune with the Spirit. I decided I would never again question a prompting but would follow the still, small voice immediately. ■

Deborah Shatto is a member of the Harmony Park Ward, Salt Lake Granite Park Stake.

My Personal Hero

By Jorge Detlefsen

On that November day in 1972 when I got on the bus to go to school, I had no idea this day was going to be one of the most important in my life.

I was 13 and an ordinary student. I mainly tried to have a good time at school, and I had many friends who were like I was. Óscar Italia was not like the other boys. He really did study and, as a result, was on the honor roll. But I didn't know him well. He was a quiet fellow.

When I entered the classroom that day, he was wearing a button on his lapel that read, "I Care. What about You?" At that time the Church in our area had a program to help members share the gospel. They wore this button so when people asked about it, they could explain about family home evening and the family.

I asked Óscar, "What's that?" He explained that he had been baptized three months before and was the only Latter-day Saint in his family.

During the breaks that day he noticed my interest and explained the plan of salvation, and he gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon. He read me the promise in Moroni 10:3-5 and told me that if I prayed, I would feel a burning in my heart that would confirm to me that the Book

of Mormon was true. Óscar was a great member missionary, and I believed him.

The next morning, while my mother was doing her shopping at the neighborhood market, I decided to read the Book of Mormon. When I was almost finished with the first page, I had a desire to pray. I went to my room and knelt beside my bed. I had never prayed before, but I remembered I had to ask God in the name of Christ. I asked if the Book of Mormon was true, and I asked God to tell me if He existed. I expected to feel what my classmate had testified I would feel. After some minutes I heard my mother coming home and was afraid she would find me praying, so I stood up and got ready for school.

As I rode to school a real battle of ideas was going on in my head. "Is it true or not? Nothing happened," I thought. I had a lot of doubts.

I can't explain why, but no sooner had I stepped from the bus onto the sidewalk at school than the doubts disappeared, and I knew it was true. It was extremely simple.

Óscar came up to speak with me at the classroom door. I said, "I will be a member of your church." He couldn't believe it. A friend of mine was listening, and he told my other friends what was happening. Soon they were all around me, asking me why I was going to change

religions. They told me I was crazy. I couldn't answer their questions and started to cry. They finally went away, and I was left alone with Óscar. Suddenly I had an overwhelming feeling of joy. I had never felt anything like it before. It was the burning my friend had said I would feel, and it came as a confirmation of the decision I had made.

The next day Óscar brought me a button, and we wore them proudly.

Thirty years later I returned to my hometown to speak at a youth fire-side. I had titled my remarks "How to Be a Hero"

and had intended to analyze how Nephi, Abinadi, and Alma can become our heroes. While waiting to speak, however, I saw my friend Óscar and his mother among those in attendance. I remembered that wonderful day 30 years before and instead told the youth about my personal hero, Óscar Italia, a brave young man who had a determination to share the gospel, a young man who changed the course of my life. ■

Jorge Detlefsen is a member of the Villa Belgrano Ward, Córdoba Argentina Sierras Stake.

When I came to class that day, Óscar was wearing a button on his lapel that read, "I Care. What about You?"



Inspired Reading

I had a special experience after reading a quote from an Apostle about simple but effective ways to gain a testimony. When I finished reading it, I immediately remembered a friend whose testimony was wavering. I quickly wrote her a letter and included the quotation.

I took the letter to her home, and I read it to her. At the end I bore my testimony. I can't describe the powerful spirit that was present. My friend was surprised and thanked me for sharing the quote with her.

From that moment my friend started to change. She began to read the scriptures, pray more often, and attend church. Whenever we visited each other, we shared a spiritual thought and our testimonies. Today she is very active in the ward and serves as my counselor in the Laurel class presidency.

*Yésica Florencia Martín,
Santos Lugares Ward,
Argentina Buenos Aires West Stake*

Written with Love

An article in the March 2005 edition—"The Saints of Colombia: An Example of Strength"—was very exciting to me. It was written with great love! It was written with great faith in the people who were spoken of in the article and with such strong faith in a wonderful future not only for the Saints in Colombia but for the entire country.

My country has similar problems to solve, and our people have much in



common. This article offers advice that can be applied in nearly any field of endeavor. For example, it simply and clearly explains how to plant small gardens and raise vegetables, become responsible for one's own family, and increase self-reliance. This, undoubtedly, is also spiritual nourishment. Such practical advice, if applied, will enable every person to obtain food and also to have enough food to store for times of need. What a wise, useful, and timely article!

*Olga Kbripko,
Zaporozhe Khortitsky Branch,
Dnipropetrovsk Ukraine District*

The Savior's Love

The first time I read the *Liabona*, I felt the Spirit, and it filled me with so much joy that I could not contain my tears. Like the scriptures, the *Liabona* strengthens and guides us. It

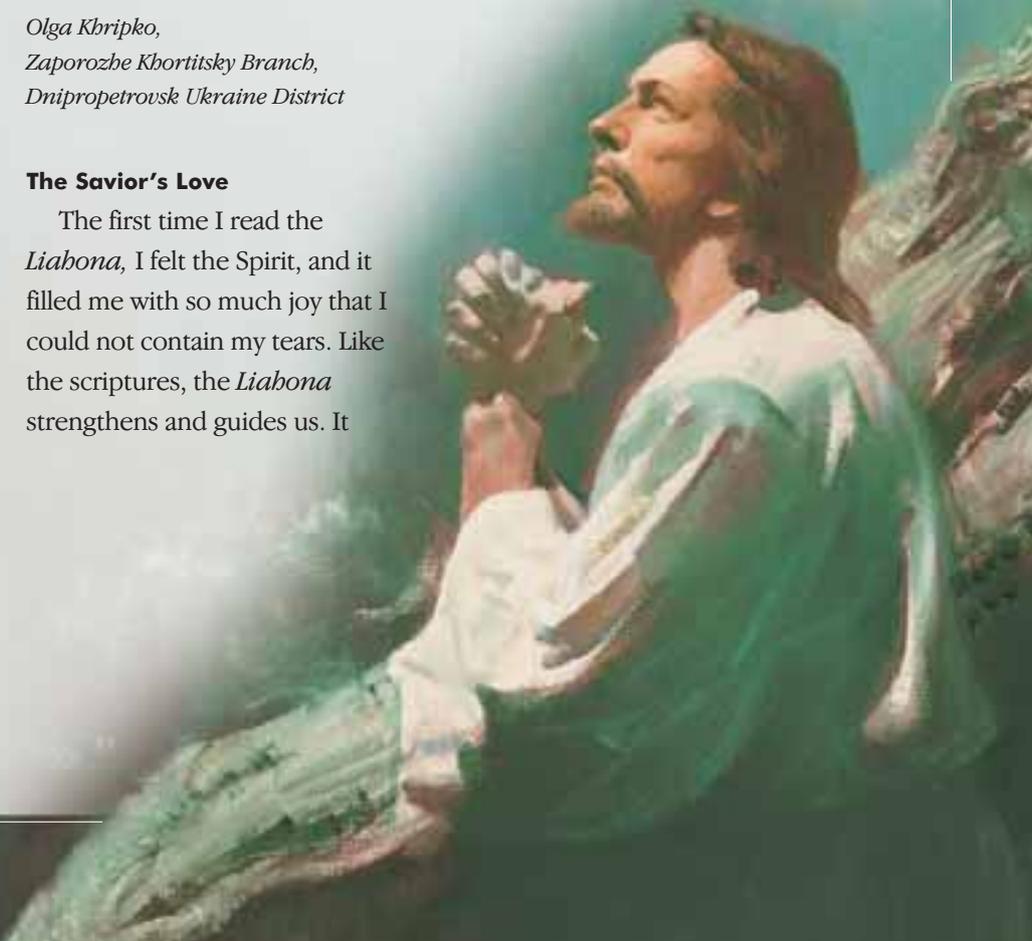
helps us to endure and grow in our testimony that our Savior Jesus Christ really does love us.

*Idalia Martínez de Morales,
Volcán Branch,
Concepción Panamá District*

Improved Family Home Evening

Our family home evenings have become more interesting and fun as we have used the *Liabona* as a compass to guide us in teaching our children. Sharing the prophets' teachings and members' faith-promoting experiences during family home evening has helped us become more united as a family.

*Ileana Morbioni de Pluas,
Guayacanes Ward,
Guayaquil Ecuador East Stake*



the Friend



Coming Out of Darkness



President Faust teaches that faith brings us out of darkness.

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

My dear young friends, some of you may wonder what the future holds for you. Not only may some of you be unsure about where you are going, you may also be questioning your real worth. Let me assure you, I believe with all my heart that you are a chosen generation.

Micah said, “When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me” (Micah 7:8). We receive light from the Lord. This can happen to us when we study the scriptures, attend sacrament meeting, pay our tithing, sing the hymns, and pray.

Part of our coming into the light depends upon the focus of our faith. Our faith is not a bundle of beliefs and practices that are too heavy to bear. Those who have come out of the darkness find that their faith carries them. Faith is not heavy; faith lifts and gives us wings to carry us over hard places. As Isaiah promised, “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;

they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

Coming out of the darkness into the light frees us from the dark side of our souls, which comes from fear, discouragement, and sin. When we come out of the darkness, the bright sunshine of the Savior comes bursting through.

The most sure way to come out of darkness and into the light is through communication with our Heavenly Father by the process known as divine revelation. If we do not follow the living prophet, whoever he may be, we are in danger of dying spiritually.

I testify to you young people that the gospel contains the answers to life’s challenges and problems. It is the sure way to happiness and the fulfillment of the Savior’s promise, which is “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23). ●

From a Church Educational System fireside address given on September 8, 2002.





Adam



Enoch



Noah



Abraham



Moses



Samuel



Jonah



Daniel

FOLLOW THE PROPHET

“Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

BY LINDA MAGLEBY



When George Albert Smith (1870–1951) was the President of the Church, he taught Church members to donate work, food, and clothing to help feed and clothe others. After World War II left many people starving in Europe, President Smith went to the president of the United States and asked for help to send food and clothing to these people. Because members of the Church had produced food and donated clothing under a welfare program, the Church had enough to help those in need. The United States government agreed to send the food and clothing, which helped many people in Europe.

The members of the Church followed the prophet and willingly donated work, food, and clothing. When a time of terrible need came, the Church was prepared to help. Many people in Europe were blessed because members of the Church followed the prophet.

We are blessed to have a living prophet. Our prophet teaches us to dress modestly and to read, watch, and listen only to things that are pleasing to Heavenly Father. When we do these things, we are protected from many of the harmful things of the world. Our prophet teaches us to be friendly and kind to everyone. Jesus tells us that when we are kind and serve others, we are serving Him. The prophet encourages us to read the scriptures. In the scriptures we learn about Heavenly Father and Jesus. We learn that when we keep the commandments, we will be blessed. The prophet teaches us what Heavenly Father wants us to do. When we follow the prophet, Heavenly Father will bless us.



Prophet Figures

To make prophet figures, paste page F4 onto heavy paper. Cut out the figures, and glue each to a stick. Use the figures to tell stories about each prophet or to sing “Follow the Prophet” (*Children’s Songbook*, pp. 110–11).

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

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Invite three or four ward members to participate in a panel discussion (see Teaching, No Greater Call [1999], 175–76) about the prophets who have influenced them. Give them samples of the questions you will ask ahead of time, such as: Which prophet from the scriptures inspires you? What does this prophet teach you? Who were some of the latter-day prophets during your lifetime? Share an experience of listening to one of these prophets and knowing what Heavenly Father wanted you to do. Share something from this past general conference that the prophet has asked us to do. Allow time at the end of the discussion for the children to ask questions or share any feelings or experiences they have had in their families with following the prophet. Testify that you know that the prophet speaks for the Lord.

2. Post the My Gospel Standards poster on the board. From the last general conference issue of the Liahona or Ensign (Nov. 2005), choose four talks given by the prophet or apostles. Tell the name of the speaker, display his picture, and teach principles from those talks. Invite the children to match the principle to one of My Gospel Standards, if possible. Have the children pass a beanbag as they sing a song or hymn about prophets. Stop the music occasionally, and invite the child with the beanbag to share one thing he or she can do to live the principles taught in the conference talks. Encourage the children to listen to general conference. ●



FROM THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF

Becoming a Bible Scholar



When Wilford was 17 years old, his father arranged for him to continue going to school.

But Father, I can't afford to attend school in West Hartford!

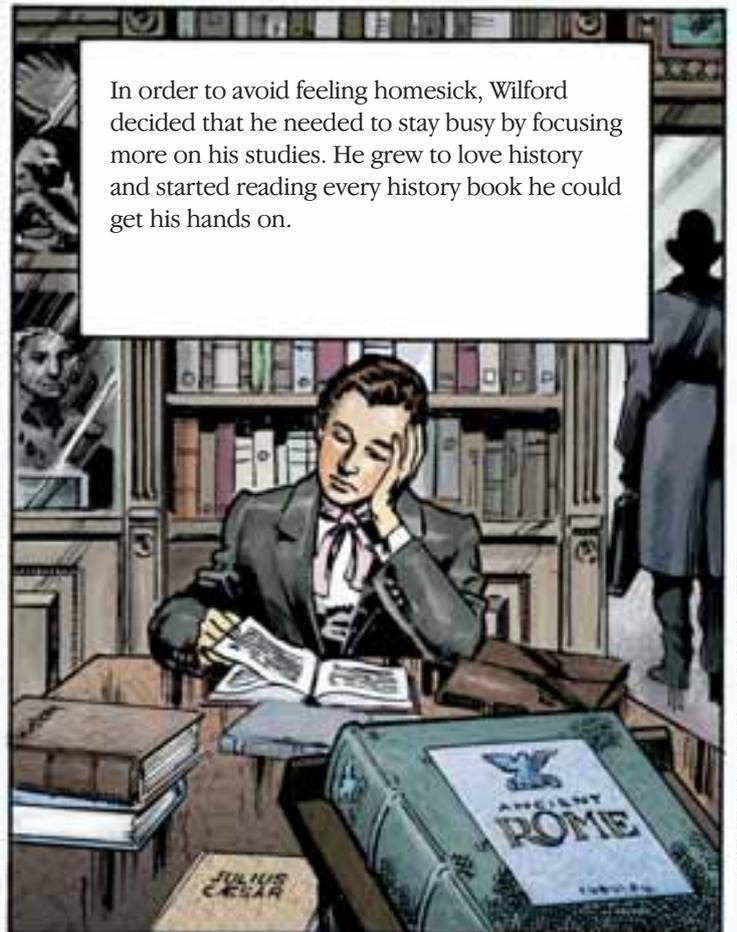
If you do chores for my friend, he will pay your room and board.



Wilford went to school but became terribly homesick.

I miss my family, and I want to return home!

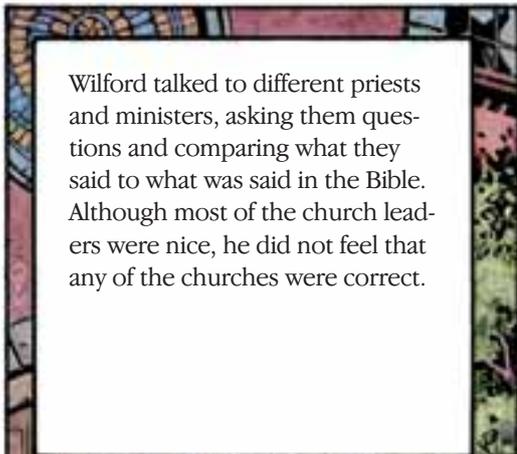
In order to avoid feeling homesick, Wilford decided that he needed to stay busy by focusing more on his studies. He grew to love history and started reading every history book he could get his hands on.



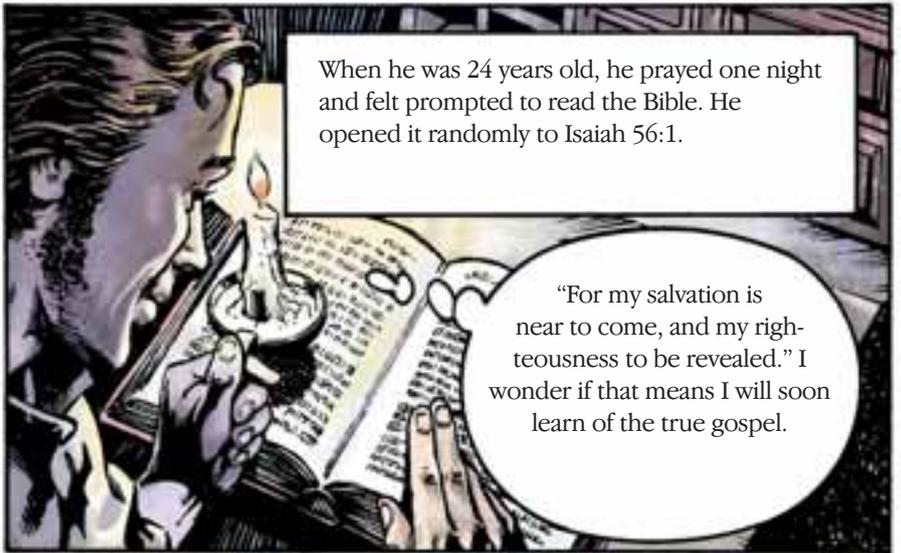


One day Wilford picked up the Bible and started to read it. Although he began reading it to learn about Christian history, he gained a testimony that the Bible was the word of God.

I resolve to diligently seek the Lord, follow the Holy Spirit, and do the will of God as far as I can learn it!

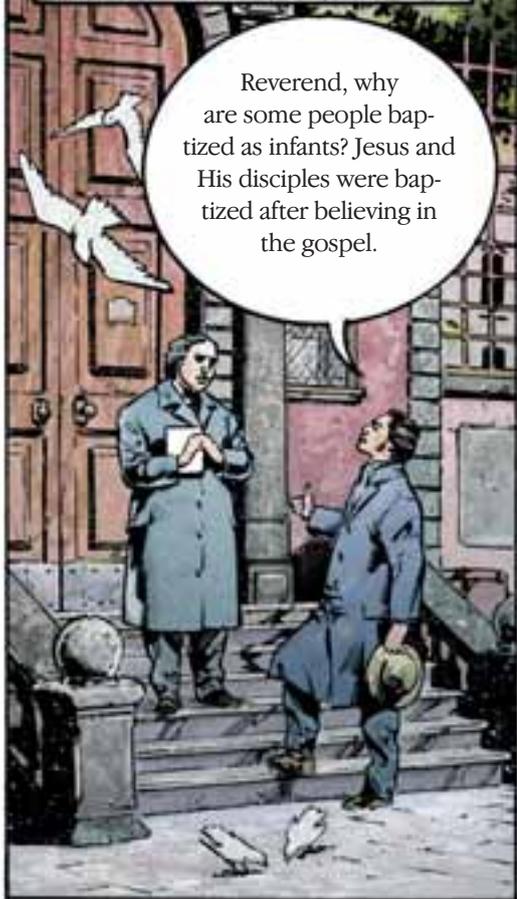


Wilford talked to different priests and ministers, asking them questions and comparing what they said to what was said in the Bible. Although most of the church leaders were nice, he did not feel that any of the churches were correct.

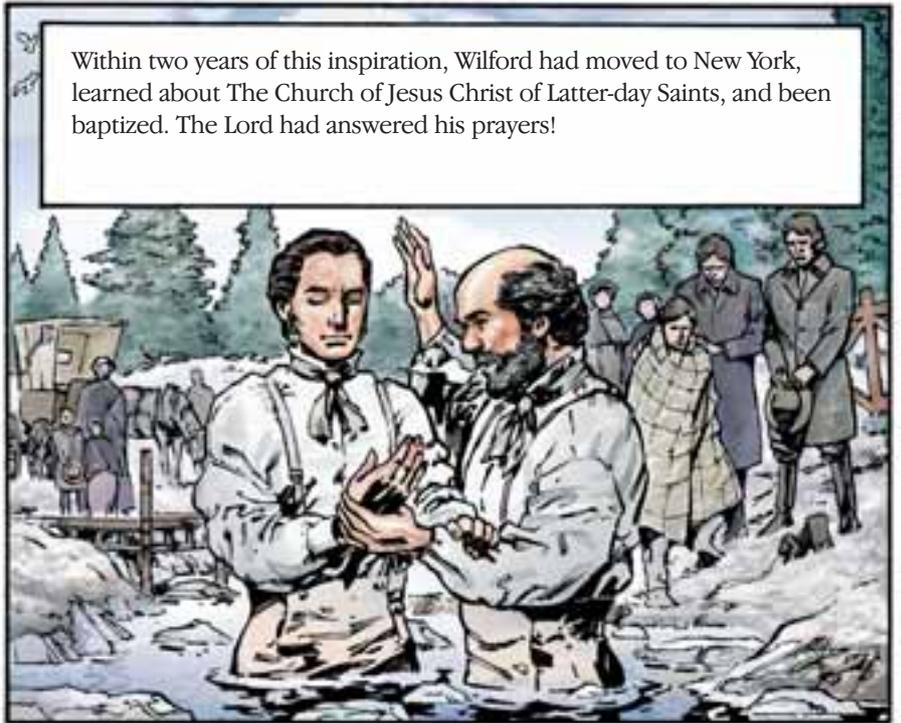


When he was 24 years old, he prayed one night and felt prompted to read the Bible. He opened it randomly to Isaiah 56:1.

“For my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.” I wonder if that means I will soon learn of the true gospel.



Reverend, why are some people baptized as infants? Jesus and His disciples were baptized after believing in the gospel.



Within two years of this inspiration, Wilford had moved to New York, learned about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and been baptized. The Lord had answered his prayers!

Adapted from Leonard J. Arrington, ed., *The Presidents of the Church* (1986), 118–25.

MORE BLESSED

“It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

BY RACHEL C. MURDOCK

Based on an experience of the author’s son

Mom! Mom! They’re selling ice cream after school this week!” Wade jumped into the car with excitement in his voice. “Could I take a dollar from my bank and buy one tomorrow? Please?”

Mom laughed as Wade bounced on the backseat of the minivan. “You decide how to use the money in your spending bank,” she said. “If you want to use it for ice cream, you go right ahead.”

“All right!” Wade cried. As soon as they arrived home, he ran to his room, removed a dollar from his spending bank, and carefully zipped it into his backpack pocket.

After school the next day, Wade went to the front hall where the student council helpers sat at a table. Pictures of each kind of ice-cream bar were taped to the table. What to choose? It was hard to decide between the chocolate bar, the orange bar, the nutty cone, the red rocket, and the vanilla ice cream covered with bits of candy bar. He finally chose the nutty cone and opened it up.

On his way out to the car, he went to the music room to pick up his instrument so he could practice at home. His music teacher, Mr. Nolan, was straightening chairs and music stands.

“Wade, how nice of you to get me ice cream!” he joked, reaching toward the cone. “Just what I could use after a long day.”



Wade laughed. “I bought this one for me,” he said.

Mr. Nolan made a silly sad face. “Oh, too bad,” he sighed. Then he laughed. “Enjoy your ice cream!”

Wade waved good-bye to him and skipped out to the car. “I got ice cream, Mom!”

He told her about Mr. Nolan and his silly face. “Maybe he really would like some ice cream,” Wade thought. “Mom,” he said, “could I use another dollar to buy Mr. Nolan ice cream tomorrow?”

“It’s your money, Wade,” said Mom with a smile.

As soon as he got home, Wade ran to his room again. He pulled another dollar from his bank and again put it into his backpack pocket. “What kind of face will Mr. Nolan make when I hand him the ice cream?” Wade wondered. He could hardly wait to see.

As soon as class ended the next day, Wade quickly gathered his books and walked down the hall to the ice-cream table. Today he didn’t stop to think about which flavor to buy. Mr. Nolan had seemed to think the nutty cone looked good. “I’ll take one cone,” Wade said.

He didn’t open it this time but zipped down the hall toward the music room. Sure enough, Mr. Nolan was there straightening chairs again. “Oh, you brought me more ice cream!” he said.

This time Wade walked right up to Mr. Nolan. “Yep, I did!” he announced and handed Mr. Nolan the cone.

Mr. Nolan didn’t make a silly face at all. Instead, he looked very surprised.

“Is this really for me?” he asked.

“Yep,” Wade said.

“How much do I owe you?” Mr. Nolan asked.

“Oh, nothing,” Wade said. “I got it for you.”

“Why, thank you very much,” Mr. Nolan said with a smile.

Wade felt wonderful from the tips of his sneakers to the top of his head. He couldn’t contain the grin on his face.

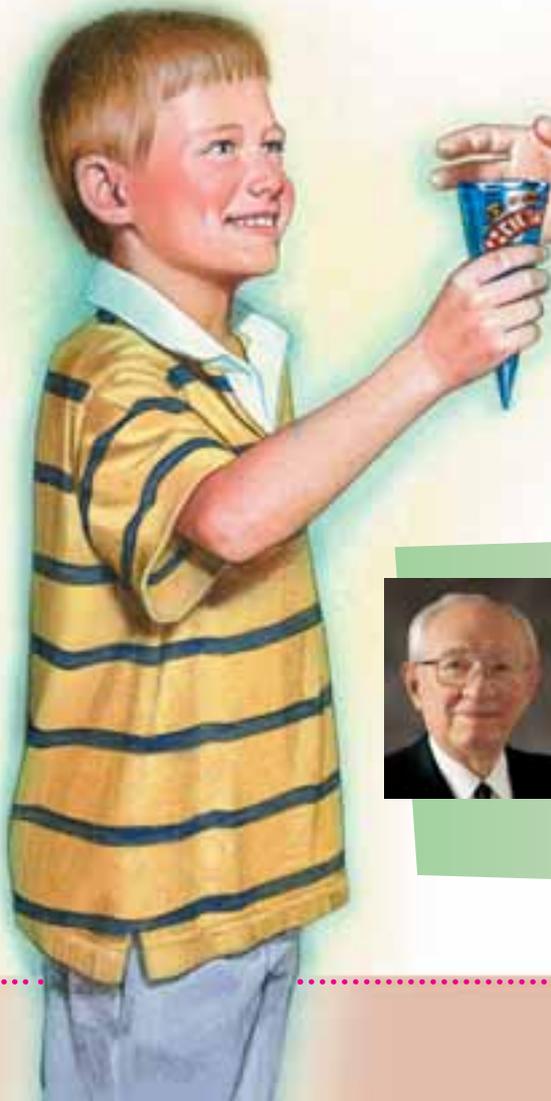
“You’re welcome,” he called as he grabbed his instrument and trotted out to the car where his mother was waiting. He was still smiling as he opened the door.

“How did it go?” Mom asked.

“Great!” Wade said. Then he thought for a second.

“You know what, Mom? I think getting ice cream for Mr. Nolan was even better than getting it for myself!” ●

Rachel C. Murdock is a member of the Eastgate Ward, Cincinnati Ohio East Stake.



“How great a thing is charity, whether it be expressed through the giving of one’s substance . . . or as an expression of kindness and appreciation.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Mormon Should Mean ‘More Good,’” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 54.

Scripture Figure



As you retell scripture stories, this figure can represent any boy in the scriptures, such as Isaac, Samuel, David, or a shepherd. The figure can be mounted on heavy paper, colored, cut out, then made into a stick puppet, flannel board figure, or paper sack puppet, as illustrated. Make several and color the hair and clothing differently for each one. ●



Stick Puppet

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

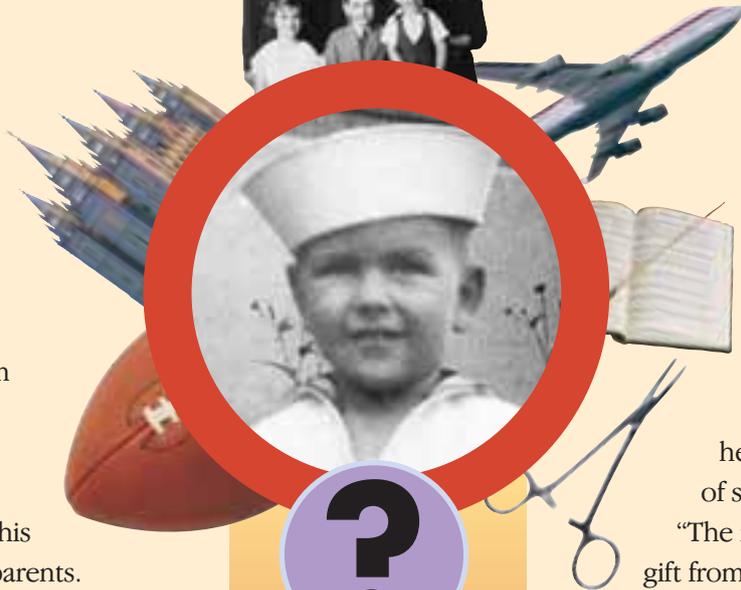


Flannel Board Figure



Paper Sack Puppet

GUESS WHO



1 His parents taught him that family should always come first. In the evenings he would play games, read, or sing with his two sisters, brother, and parents.

2 When he was 22 years old, he graduated from medical school with highest honors. He went on to become an accomplished heart surgeon.

3 He is third in seniority in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

4 He performed heart surgery on many civic and Church leaders, including Elder Spencer W. Kimball, who later became President of the Church.

5 Music is an important part of his life. Growing up, he sang in choirs, performed in musicals, and played the piano. Now he often plays the organ at meetings with the other General Authorities.

6 He participated in many activities in school, including football. Years later he operated on his former football coach.

7 With his years of medical training, he has helped thousands of sick people. But he says, "The real power to heal is a gift from God."

8 He traveled a lot in his medical career and would often take a family member with him on his trips.

9 He met his wife, Dantzel, while performing in a university play. She was the lead soprano singer, and he thought she was beautiful. They were married in the Salt Lake Temple in 1945.

Read the clues about this member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Then find the answer below. The members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are prophets, seers, and revelators and stand as special witnesses of Jesus Christ.

They have the responsibility to testify of Him to the whole world.

Words of Wisdom

"Reach and teach widely without fear. Enjoy opportunities to learn more from others. Share your testimony often, and be a good friend to all you know."
 ("Standards of the Lord's Standard-Bearers," Ensign, Aug. 1991, 10).

His Burden Was

BY SANDRA DAWN BRIMHALL

Based on a true story

“The Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease” (Mosiab 24:15).

When Horst Scharffs was 14 years old, his mother gave him money for a railroad ticket and sent him into the country to try to buy food. The Scharffs lived in Hamburg, Germany, during World War I, and food was scarce and had to be rationed. Townspeople often tried to purchase food from farmers who sometimes had a little extra.

After a two-hour train ride, Horst arrived at a village where he began walking door-to-door. Though he visited more than 40 houses, no one would sell him anything.

Horst was determined not to return home empty-handed, so he decided to walk 4 ½ kilometers (2.8 miles) to the next village. After walking about 45 minutes and stopping at all of the houses along the way, he met a farmer who sold him 100 pounds (45 kg) of potatoes. Horst couldn't believe his luck! The most he had hoped for was a pound of butter or a few pounds of bacon.

The farmer lifted the sack of potatoes across Horst's shoulders, and Horst started back the way he had come. It wasn't long before he realized the difficulty of his task. The potatoes, which weighed at least as much as



ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL MANN

“Our faith is acquired through prayer with a sincere desire to draw close to God and trust in Him to bear our burdens.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 73.



Made Light

he did, were almost too great a burden for an undernourished boy. If he dropped the load onto the roadside to rest, he might not be able to lift it back onto his shoulders.

As Horst wrestled with this problem, he suddenly thought of his mother, who had taught him from the scriptures about the power of prayer. He remembered a story in the Book of Mormon about the people of Alma in the land of Helam. These Nephites, who were in bondage to the Lamanites, asked the Lord to help them bear their burdens. The Lord answered their prayers by making their burdens seem light. It occurred to Horst that the Lord might also lighten the weight of *his* burden.

Horst began to pray. Instantly, he felt as if the load had been taken off his shoulders. He was able to walk with ease all the way to the train station without resting.

At the station, another miracle occurred. Village police had the authority to take away any food they found on passengers. Many people tried to hide their food, but there was no way Horst could hide 100 pounds of potatoes. To his surprise, nothing was said when he boarded the train, and he was allowed to take the potatoes home to his mother.

Those potatoes not only fed Horst's family during a difficult time, but they also fed his spirit—he developed an unshakable testimony that the Lord hears and answers prayers. ●

Sandra Dawn Brimball is a member of the Welby Fourth Ward, West Jordan Utah Welby Stake.



The Savior's Love

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

From an interview with Sister Cheryl C. Lant, Primary General President; by Kimberly Webb, Church Magazines

One of my favorite Primary songs is "I Feel My Savior's Love" (*Children's Songbook*, 74–75). The first line says, "I feel my Savior's love in all the world around me." As I visit Primary children all around the world, I see that love shining from their beautiful faces.

I especially feel the Savior's love as I read the scriptures. They teach us the things Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ want us to know and do, and they help us gain a testimony.

I gained my own testimony when I was about 12 or 13. I knew I needed to find out for myself if the Church was true. I started thinking about how Joseph Smith had been close to my age when he prayed in the grove. I had just been reading in the Book of Mormon where Moroni tells us to pray to receive a witness of the truth (see Moroni 10:3–5), so I did. I really prayed. And I felt the witness that Moroni promises each of us. From then on I knew I had my own testimony.

One of my favorite scriptures is John 13:34: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I

have loved you, that ye also love one another.” We show our love by being kind.

When I was young, I always wanted everyone to feel included. If children on the playground were being picked on, I wanted to be their friend. I remember befriending one girl other children were mean to. Years later, after I was married, she was my neighbor. When I saw her, we happily greeted one another. I thought, “Look at her now. She’s a wonderful mother who serves well and works hard to teach her children.” I am so glad that when I was little I was nice to her. Then when I saw her again, I didn’t have any regrets. We were still friends.

We should always think about how others feel. We should be kind to everyone, as Jesus was. He loves all of us. It doesn’t matter how we look—if our clothes are different, if our hair is different, if there is something different about the way we walk or the way we do things. It doesn’t matter if we come from another country or speak a different language. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love every single one of us. They love me and They love you.

When we read the scriptures and try to follow them, we are “anchoring” our lives to the scriptures. When we are “anchored” in the scriptures, we show our love to the Savior, and He will bless us.

*He knows I will follow him,
Give all my life to him.
I feel my Savior’s love,
The love he freely gives me.
(Children’s Songbook, 74–75)*

I know Jesus Christ lives. He loves me. This is His true Church. The scriptures are true. ●

With her husband, John.



Sister Lant at age three.



HOW COULD I LIE?

“He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

BY ERICA SILVINA KLEVEZTAIN DE ROLDÁN

Before I left to run some errands one evening, I asked my children to do their homework and told them I would correct it when I returned home. Upon my return, I was surprised to find my seven-year-old son, Mayco, riding his bike with a friend. I asked him if he had done what he was supposed to do, and he answered with a resounding yes. I then asked if he was telling the truth, and he said, “Mama, I can’t lie to you.”

This caught his friend’s attention, and he asked Mayco why he couldn’t lie. Mayco replied with total certainty, “How could I lie when I’m a Mormon?”

I went into the house to look over his homework, and not only was it done, but there were no mistakes. I am grateful for the gospel principles that my son is learning and for his example of becoming more like Jesus. ●

Erica Silvina Kleveztain de Roldán is a member of the Roque Sáenz Peña Ward, Río Cuarto Argentina Stake.

ILLUSTRATED BY DANIELLA HARO AGUAYO





MAY NOT BE COPIED

Why Seek Ye the Living among the Dead? by Jan Astle

“Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they [Mary Magdalene was among them] came unto the sepulchre, . . . and they found the stone rolled away. . . . Behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. . . . They said, . . . Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen” (Luke 24:1-2, 4-6).



The Copenhagen Denmark Temple has become a focal point of faith in the lives of Danish members like Bishop Tim Jensen and his family of the Frederiksberg Ward (front cover) and young members like David Jansen and Camilla Hornslet (above) of the Søborg Ward.