

Liahona

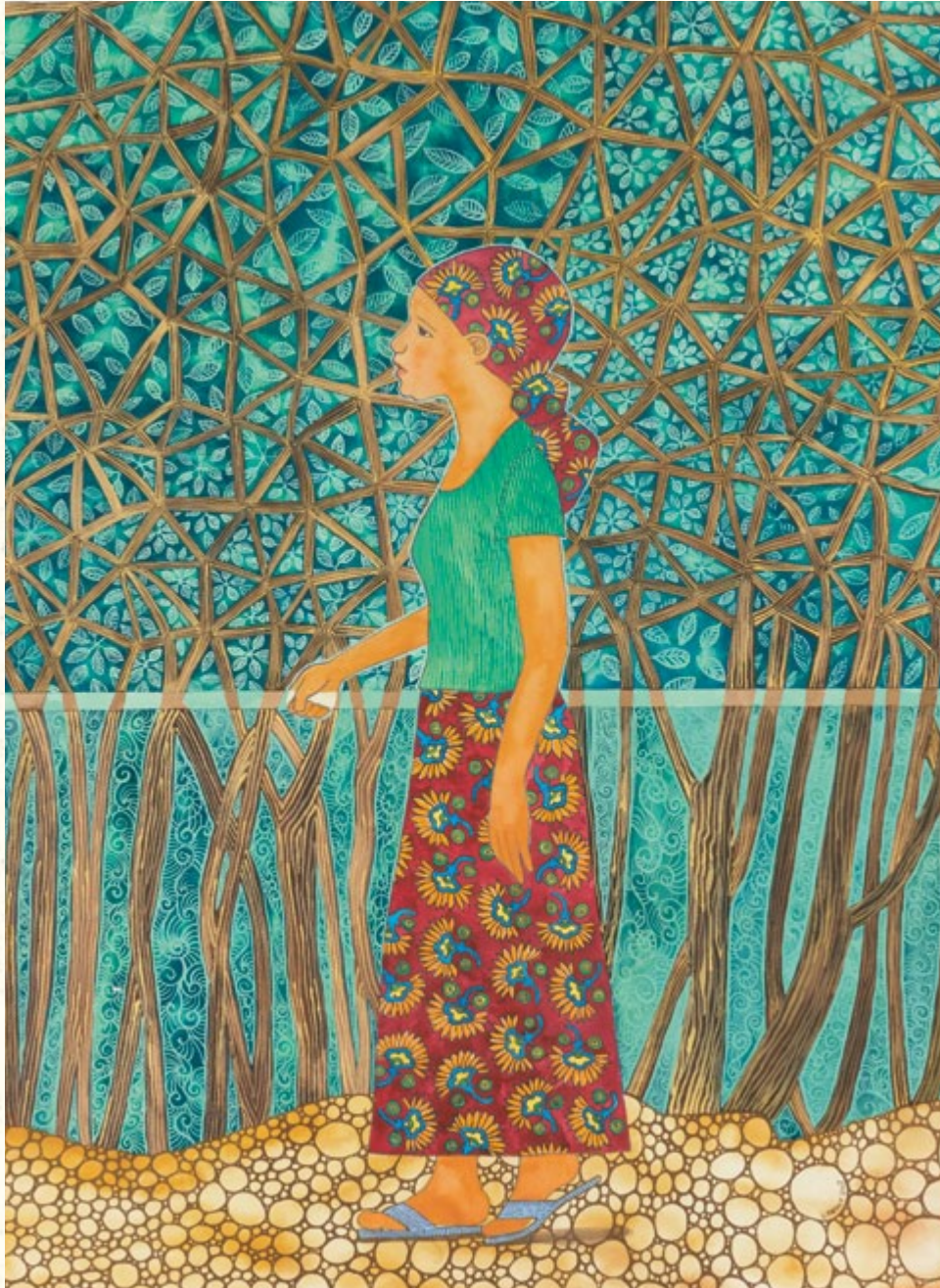


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on Relief Society, p. 28

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Holding to the Iron Rod, by Louise Parker

In her painting of a woman holding fast to the iron rod, this artist from South Africa reminds us that we are part of a worldwide Church linked together by many things, including our belief in the Book of Mormon.

“And I beheld a rod of iron, and it extended along the bank of the river; and led to the tree by which I stood.

“And I also beheld a strait and narrow

path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood; . . .

“And it came to pass that I beheld others pressing forward, and they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press forward through the mist of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree” (1 Nephi 8:19–20, 24).



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Official international magazine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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More Online

Liahona.lds.org

FOR ADULTS



Elder and Sister Holland discuss how **Relief Society can strengthen** individuals, families, and wards and branches (see page 28). To learn more, visit www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

Elder Kikuchi testifies of the Savior's power to heal, even those with long-standing prejudice (see page 18). **To learn more**

about the Savior's mission, visit www.JesusChrist.lds.org.

FOR YOUTH

Find gospel videos, testimonies, articles, and more at www.youth.lds.org.

FOR CHILDREN



Many children's activities can be found at www.liahona.lds.org.

IN YOUR LANGUAGE

The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at www.languages.lds.org.

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**By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf**
Second Counselor in the
First Presidency



Looking FOR THE GOOD

While looking for a new home, a young Latter-day Saint couple talked to potential neighbors about the neighborhood and the schools in the area.

One woman they spoke to said of the school her children were attending: “This is the most incredible place! The principal is a wonderful and good man; the teachers are well qualified, kind, and friendly. I am so pleased that our children can attend this wonderful school. You’ll love it here!”

A different woman said of her children’s school: “It’s a terrible place. The principal is self-absorbed; the teachers are unqualified, rude, and unfriendly. If I could afford to move out of this area, I’d do it in a heartbeat!”

The interesting thing was that both women were speaking about the same principal, the same teachers, and the same school.

Have you ever noticed that people can usually find whatever they are looking for? Look hard enough, and you can discover both good and bad in almost anyone and anything. People have done the same with The

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since its beginning. Those who look for the good will find a kind and compassionate people—a people who love the Lord and desire to serve Him and bless the lives of their fellowman. But it is also true that those who look for the bad will certainly find things that are not so ideal.

Unfortunately, at times this happens even within the Church. There is no end to the creativity, ingenuity, and tenacity of those who look for reasons to criticize. They cannot seem to release their grip on grudges. They gossip and find fault with others. They nurse wounds for decades, taking every opportunity to tear down and demean others. This is not pleasing to the Lord, “for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work” (James 3:16).

President George Q. Cannon (1827–1901) knew President Brigham Young (1801–77) well, working closely with him for many years, both as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and as his counselor in the First Presidency. After the death of President Young, President Cannon wrote in his journal: “I never criticized



or found fault with [Brigham Young's] conduct, his counsel or his teachings at any time in my heart, much less in my words or actions. This is a pleasure to me now. The thought that ever was with me was: If I criticize or find fault with, or judge Brother Brigham, how far shall I go; if I commence, where shall I stop? I dared not to trust myself in such a course. I knew that apostasy frequently resulted from the indulgence of the spirit of criticizing

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

"You may feel that you lack understanding of a certain principle that you are preparing to teach," notes *Teaching, No Greater Call* ([1999], 19). "However, as you prayerfully study it, strive to live it, prepare to teach it, and then share it with others, your own testimony will be strengthened and deepened."

As you look for the good in life and in others this month, you will be more prepared to teach this message and to testify of its truth.

Some look at this glass and see it as half full. Others see it as half empty. How you see it is up to you.

and faultfinding. Others, of greater strength, wisdom and experience than myself, might do many things and escape evil consequences which I dare not do."¹

President Cannon's powerful counsel is something we members of the Church should consider with great care. The word of God admonishes the followers of Christ to be "pure, . . . peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." For those who make peace, "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace" (James 3:17, 18).

We have a choice. We can seek for the bad in others. Or we can make peace and work to extend to others the understanding, fairness, and forgiveness we so desperately desire for ourselves. It is our choice; for whatever we seek, that we will certainly find. ■

NOTE

1. George Q. Cannon, Journal, Jan. 17, 1878; spelling modernized.

The Bright Side of a Dog Bite

By Tara Stringham

In the summer of 2009, I was bitten on my face by my friend's dog. Unfortunately, the bite split my lip open, and I had to get stitches.

Following the injury, I was very downhearted. I allowed adversity to take over my thoughts, and I felt like my whole life had been ruined. I was self-conscious about my lip and didn't want to go out in public at all. In my mind my plans for piano, volleyball, church, swimming, and school were crushed by my injury.

But whenever I prayed, received priesthood blessings, talked with my parents, or had visits by my family and friends, my spirits were lifted and I felt happiness at a time

of sadness. I soon realized that if people were thinking about my injury, they were feeling compassion.

This experience helped build my character, and I learned not to be as worried about what other people thought about me. I was also blessed because my injury helped me realize that I should think less about myself and start caring more for others. My spirit was greatly strengthened during this time.

I learned that adversity is a part of Heavenly Father's plan for us. If we look for the good and not the bad, we can overcome adversity, become a better person, and let the experience strengthen our testimony.

CHILDREN

Look for the Good around You

You can see good all around you if you learn to look for it. One way you can learn to recognize blessings is by making it a habit each night to count the good things you saw that day.

Look at this picture. How many good things can you find?

Take time tonight to tell a family member about some of the good things you saw in your own life today.





Faith • Family • Relief

Under the Priesthood and after the Pattern of the Priesthood

Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

My dear sisters, how blessed we are! Not only are we members of the Church, but we are also members of Relief Society—"the Lord's organization for women."¹ Relief Society is evidence of God's love for His daughters.

Doesn't your heart thrill as you recall the exciting beginnings of this society? On March 17, 1842, the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the sisters "under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood."²

To be organized "*under the priesthood*" gave sisters authority and direction. Eliza R. Snow, second Relief Society general president, taught that Relief Society "cannot exist without the Priesthood, from the fact that it derives all its authority and influence from that source."³ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, "The authority to be exercised by the officers and teachers of the Relief Society . . . was the authority that would flow to them through their organizational connection with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and through their individual setting apart under the hands of the priesthood leaders by whom they were called."⁴

To be organized "*after the pattern of the priesthood*" gave sisters sacred responsibilities. Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president, explained: "We operate in the manner of the priesthood—which means that we seek, receive, and act on revelation; make decisions in councils; and concern ourselves with caring for individuals one by one. Ours is the priesthood purpose to prepare ourselves for the blessings of eternal life by making and keeping covenants. Therefore, like our brethren who hold the priesthood, ours is a work of salvation, service, and becoming a holy people."⁵

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.

What Can I Do?

1. How can I help the sisters I visit enjoy the blessings of Relief Society's sacred work?
2. What will I do this month to increase my ability to receive personal revelation?

From the Scriptures

1 Corinthians 11:11; Doctrine and Covenants 25:3; 121:36–46

From Our History

During the construction of the Nauvoo Temple, a group of sisters desired to organize to support the building effort. Eliza R. Snow drafted bylaws for this new group. When she showed them to the Prophet Joseph, he responded: "Tell the sisters their offering is accepted of the Lord, and he has something better for them. . . . I will organize the women under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood."⁶ A short time later, the Prophet told the newly organized Relief Society: "I now turn the key to you in the name of God, and this Society shall rejoice, and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time."⁷ The sisters were expected to rise to a new level of holiness and to prepare for the priesthood ordinances soon to be administered in the temple.

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, "Relief Society—Its Promise and Potential," *Ensign*, Mar. 1976, 4.
2. Joseph Smith, quoted in Sarah Granger Kimball, "Auto-biography," *Woman's Exponent*, Sept. 1, 1883, 51.
3. Eliza R. Snow, "Female Relief Society," *Deseret News*, Apr. 22, 1868, 81.
4. Dallin H. Oaks, "The Relief Society and the Church," *Ensign*, May 1992, 36.
5. Julie B. Beck, "Relief Society: A Sacred Work," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 111.
6. Joseph Smith, quoted in Kimball, "Auto-biography," 51.
7. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 451.

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.



Small & Simple Things

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD

ON THE CALENDAR

The Netherlands

Fifty years ago this month, the first stake in the Netherlands, the Holland Stake, was organized in The Hague. It was the first non-English-speaking stake in the Church. One hundred years earlier, in August 1861, Paul Augustus Schettler and A. Wiegiers van der Woude were the first missionaries to preach the gospel in Holland. Over the next 100 years, more than 14,000 people in the Netherlands were baptized, many of whom emigrated to the United States. Today nearly 9,000 members live in the Netherlands.

On September 8, 2002, President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) dedicated The Hague Netherlands

Temple, which serves five stakes and one district in the Netherlands, Belgium, and part of France.



The Hague Netherlands Temple

General Young Women Meeting

All young women ages 12 to 18, their mothers, and Young Women leaders are invited to participate in the general Young Women meeting on March 26. The meeting will include addresses by a member of the First Presidency and by the Young Women general presidency. The theme for this year's meeting is “We Believe” (Articles of Faith 1:13).

Where possible, young women, their mothers, and their leaders are encouraged to meet together in chapels to view the broadcast. Check with your priesthood leader or at www.broadcast.lds.org for information about broadcast times and locations.



THE CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS

Membership	8,909
Missions	1, shared with Belgium
Stakes	3
Wards and Branches	33
Temples	1

How Well Do You Know Our Church Leaders?

General conference is next month, and among the many speakers will be members of the First Presidency and

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. See if you can match their names with events or other details from their lives.



- A. As a youth he enjoyed playing vanball, a modified version of volleyball.
- B. This leader shares his name with his father and is known among family and close friends as Hal.
- C. When this Apostle was a deacon, his father, an artist, took him to the Sacred Grove. Upon returning home, his father painted a picture of the Sacred Grove for him. Ever since that time, this Apostle has hung that painting in his office as a reminder of that special visit.

- D. When he was five, his family moved to a dairy farm in Pocatello, Idaho, USA, where he raised rabbits, rode horses, and played in the fields with his siblings.
- E. He is the only member of the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to have been born outside the United States.



- F. As a high school student, he served as senior-class president and participated in debate.
- G. An avid athlete from a young age, he lettered in football, basketball, track, and baseball at his high school and was a member of state-championship football and basketball teams.



- H. He played checkers with his young son nearly every night.

1. President Thomas S. Monson
2. President Henry B. Eyring
3. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf
4. President Boyd K. Packer
5. Elder L. Tom Perry
6. Elder Russell M. Nelson
7. Elder Dallin H. Oaks
8. Elder M. Russell Ballard
9. Elder Richard G. Scott
10. Elder Robert D. Hales
11. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
12. Elder David A. Bednar
13. Elder Quentin L. Cook
14. Elder D. Todd Christofferson
15. Elder Neil L. Andersen

His son remembers, "He'd play three games of checkers. He'd let me win one, then he'd beat me at one, and then we'd play give-away checkers, and either one of us could win that."

- I. He served his country as a World War II pilot in his early 20s.
- J. To earn money for college, he worked on an oyster boat. Other fishermen ridiculed him for refusing to drink alcohol until a man went overboard; this Apostle, because of his commitment to abstain, was sober and was sent to rescue the man who had gone overboard.
- K. As a college student he worked as a radio announcer.
- L. Prior to his call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, he was president of Ricks College and helped the school make its transition to Brigham Young University-Idaho.
- M. He performed open-heart surgery on President Spencer W. Kimball (1895-1985) a short time before President Kimball became President of the Church.
- N. Elder Scott was this Apostle's mission president in Argentina.
- O. Before he was called as a General Authority, he, like his father, worked in the automobile business.



For additional biographical information about leaders of the Church, see www.newsroom.lds.org.

Answers: A. 5; B. 2; C. 10; D. 15;
E. 3; F. 13; G. 11; H. 1; I. 4; J. 9;
K. 7; L. 12; M. 6; N. 14; O. 8

GOD REVEALS TRUTH TO HIS PROPHETS AND TO US

A prophet is a special witness for Jesus Christ and testifies of His divinity. God calls a prophet to be His representative on earth. A prophet teaches truth, interprets the word of God, and otherwise follows God's directions in blessing our lives. When a prophet speaks for God, it is as if God is speaking (see D&C 1:38). Prophets are on the earth today just as they were anciently.

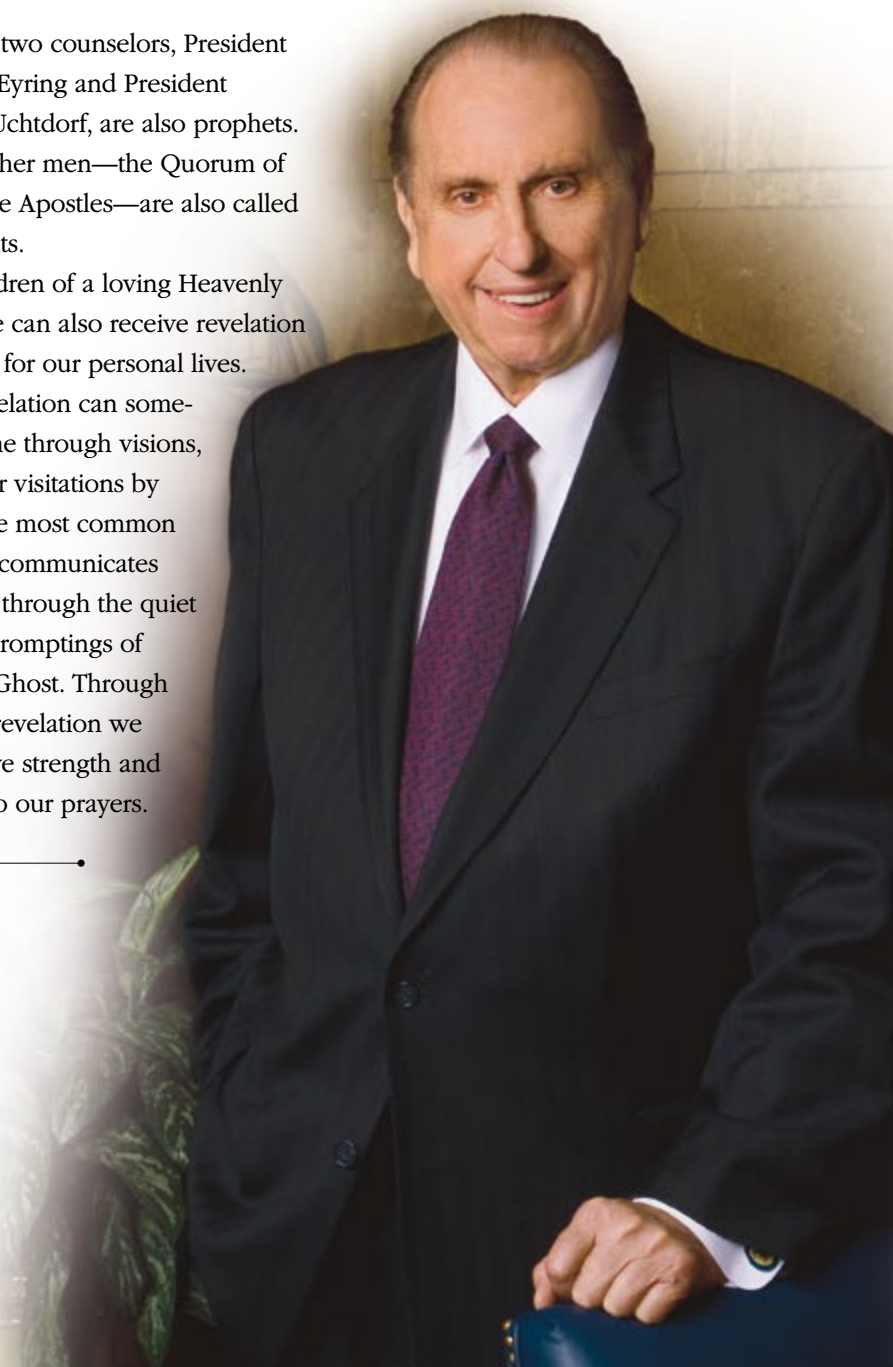
Revelation for the whole Church comes through the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Thomas S. Monson. He is a prophet of God. When members of the Church speak of “the prophet,” they are referring to the President of the Church. However, there are other prophets on the earth today. President

Monson's two counselors, President Henry B. Eyring and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, are also prophets. Twelve other men—the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—are also called as prophets.

As children of a loving Heavenly Father, we can also receive revelation from Him for our personal lives. While revelation can sometimes come through visions, dreams, or visitations by angels, the most common way God communicates with us is through the quiet spiritual promptings of the Holy Ghost. Through personal revelation we can receive strength and answers to our prayers.

How grateful we are that the heavens are indeed open, that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored, and that the Church is founded on the rock of revelation. We are a blessed people, with apostles and prophets upon the earth today.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Closing Remarks,”
Liahona and Ensign, Nov. 2009, 109–10.



**Where can we read
inspired teachings from
modern prophets?**

1. *The Doctrine and Covenants* is a collection of revelations given to modern prophets. It can be found online at www.scriptures.lds.org.



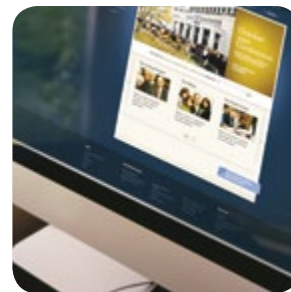
2. A message from the President of the Church or one of his counselors is printed each month in the *Liahona* and *Ensign* magazines (available in some languages at LDS.org).



3. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” and “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles” are prophetic declarations of truths about the family and the Savior. Both are on LDS.org.



4. All members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles speak every six months in the Church’s general conference. Read the text or see videos of their addresses at www.conference.lds.org.



1. Fast, ponder, and pray for guidance.

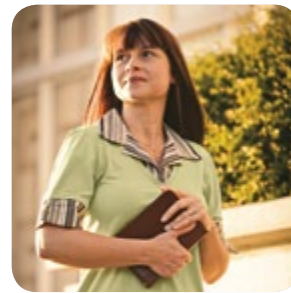
**How can we
receive personal
revelation?**



2. Read the scriptures. They are a means by which Heavenly Father can answer our prayers and give us guidance as the Holy Ghost helps us understand what we read.



3. Attend church each Sunday and, if possible, attend the temple.



4. Keep the commandments so you can be worthy to receive inspiration from the Holy Ghost. ■

“I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.

“Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation” (D&C 8:2–3).

For more information, see Dallin H. Oaks, “Two Lines of Communication,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 83; *Gospel Principles* (2009), “Prophets of God,” 39–43; and *True to the Faith* (2004), “Revelation,” 140–44.

Be Not Deceived



Joseph Fielding Smith, 10th President of the Church, was born on July 19, 1876. He was ordained an Apostle on April 7, 1910, and was sustained as President of the Church on January 23, 1970. In this address, given in 1953, President Smith taught youth how to not be deceived by the world's false theories.

By President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)

As some are modifying their standards to conform to worldly trends, we must stand firm in the scriptures and revealed truths of the gospel.

We are living in a very troubled world, and I am going to talk plainly: we are living in a world that has discarded God or is rapidly doing so. We are living in a world where the Christian ministers of various denominations have been frightened by the philosophies of men and, therefore, because they lack the Spirit of the Lord, have tried to modify the scriptures, or the meaning of the scriptures, so that they can make them harmonize with the false theories so prevalent in the world today, theories which are in absolute conflict with divine revelation; and yet these people, afraid, dominated by the influence of

false philosophy, are modifying the doctrines to make them conform to these theories and ideas which are godless in their foundation. We cannot afford to do that. . . .

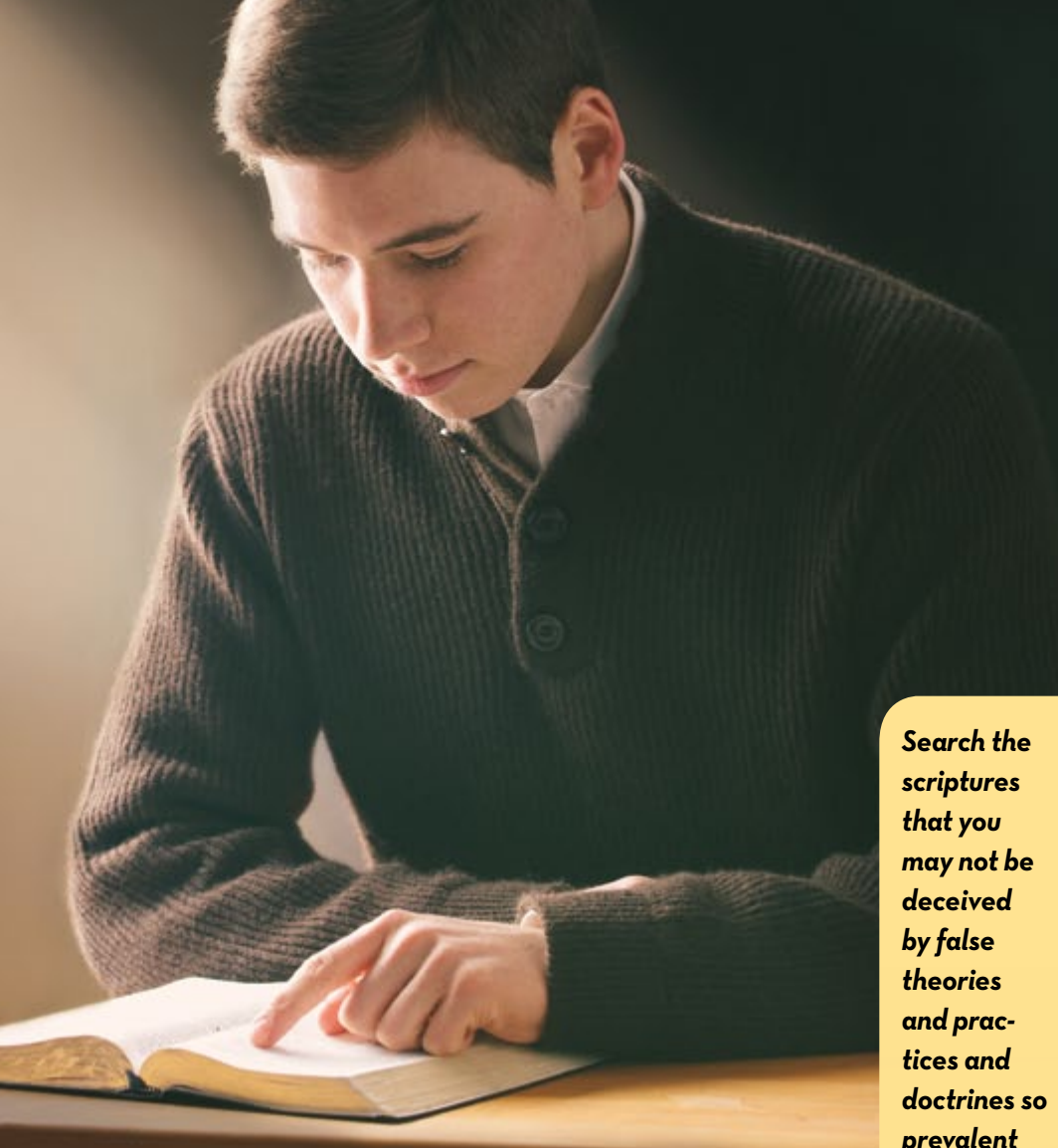
“The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; never-theless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him.

“Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me; otherwise ye could not abound” (D&C 88:49–50).

This is a wonderful revelation. It covers so many things

of vital importance to every member of the Church. I wonder how many of us have read section 88? Do not stop by just reading this one section. Take it as your theme—there is none better—but read the whole revelation. No! Read the whole book. The Lord commanded in the very first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, which is the preface of this book, the Lord’s preface:

“Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in



Search the scriptures that you may not be deceived by false theories and practices and doctrines so prevalent in the world today.

them shall all be fulfilled” (D&C 1:37). “Search these commandments.” How much do we love the Lord? What is the greatest of all the commandments? The Lord has told us here, in section 59 of the Doctrine and Covenants, what it is, as He applies it to the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in this dispensation of the fulness of times:

“Wherefore, I give unto them [the members of the Church] a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy

might, mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him” (D&C 59:5). . . .

So the first of all the commandments is to love God with all our soul and, in the name of Jesus Christ, serve Him, and He has commanded us to make ourselves familiar with these truths which have been revealed to us in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

How many of us have done it? So I say to you, and all the members of the Church for that matter, do not let your understanding rest upon one verse

[D&C 88:86, that year’s Mutual theme], which is a very excellent theme, but search the scriptures that you may not be deceived by false theories and practices and doctrines so prevalent in the world today. If you will do this, if you will have in your hearts the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord which every member of the Church has a right to have, the companionship of the Holy Ghost, you will not be led astray by the theories of men because the Spirit of the Lord will tell you they are false, and you will have the spirit of discernment that you may understand. . . .

Now, if you understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, it will make you free. If your softball, your volleyball, your basketball, your foot racing, your dancing, your other entertainments are devoid of the Spirit of the Lord, they will be of no value to you. Let everything be done in the spirit of prayer and in faith. I think that is the case—maybe it is unnecessary for me to say it—but so let it be. Do everything with an eye single unto the glory of God, and let us teach to build up and strengthen ourselves and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ■

From “Entangle Not Yourselves in Sin,” Improvement Era, Sept. 1953, 646–47, 671–72, 674, 676–78; capitalization and punctuation standardized.

Separated by a Flood, United by Prayer

Trapped in their bedrooms, barricaded by furniture, and clinging to tree branches, the members of the Torres family did the only thing that could save them.

By Melissa Merrill

Church Magazines

September 25, 2005, started out as a calm, peaceful Sunday for Victor Manuel Torres Quiros, his wife, Yamileth Monge Ureña, and their family. They had returned from church and were resting, reading, and enjoying a quiet, rainy afternoon at their home in the mountains of Costa Rica.

It had been raining most of the weekend, nothing unusual for the area or the season. About 5:00 p.m., Brother Torres observed that the river running near their property had risen more than usual and was getting closer to the house. He calmly alerted his family, and as a precaution he and his 11-year-old son, Erick, began placing blankets at the doors to keep water from seeping inside.

Moments later the river swelled to the point that the water was more than a meter-and-a-half (five feet) deep around the house. Within seconds the water crashed through the

windows. (The family learned later that a landslide had caused the sudden surge of water.) Brother Torres shouted to his family to run for the backyard, where there were some trees and higher ground. His three teenage daughters, Sofia, Korina, and Monica, immediately left the house.

But Sister Torres couldn't make it outside. So she ran with Elizabeth, a young child in the family's care that weekend, to a bedroom. They quickly climbed onto the bed, which, amazingly, floated. Neither had any idea where the others were or whether they were OK. Little Elizabeth reminded Sister Torres, "Don't cry. Remember that our God loves us." Then they began to pray.

Brother Torres had been following his daughters outside when he realized he didn't know where Erick was. Fighting the current, he went back into the house. He found Erick standing on a pile of rubble—a displaced wall, some furniture, trash, and several branches

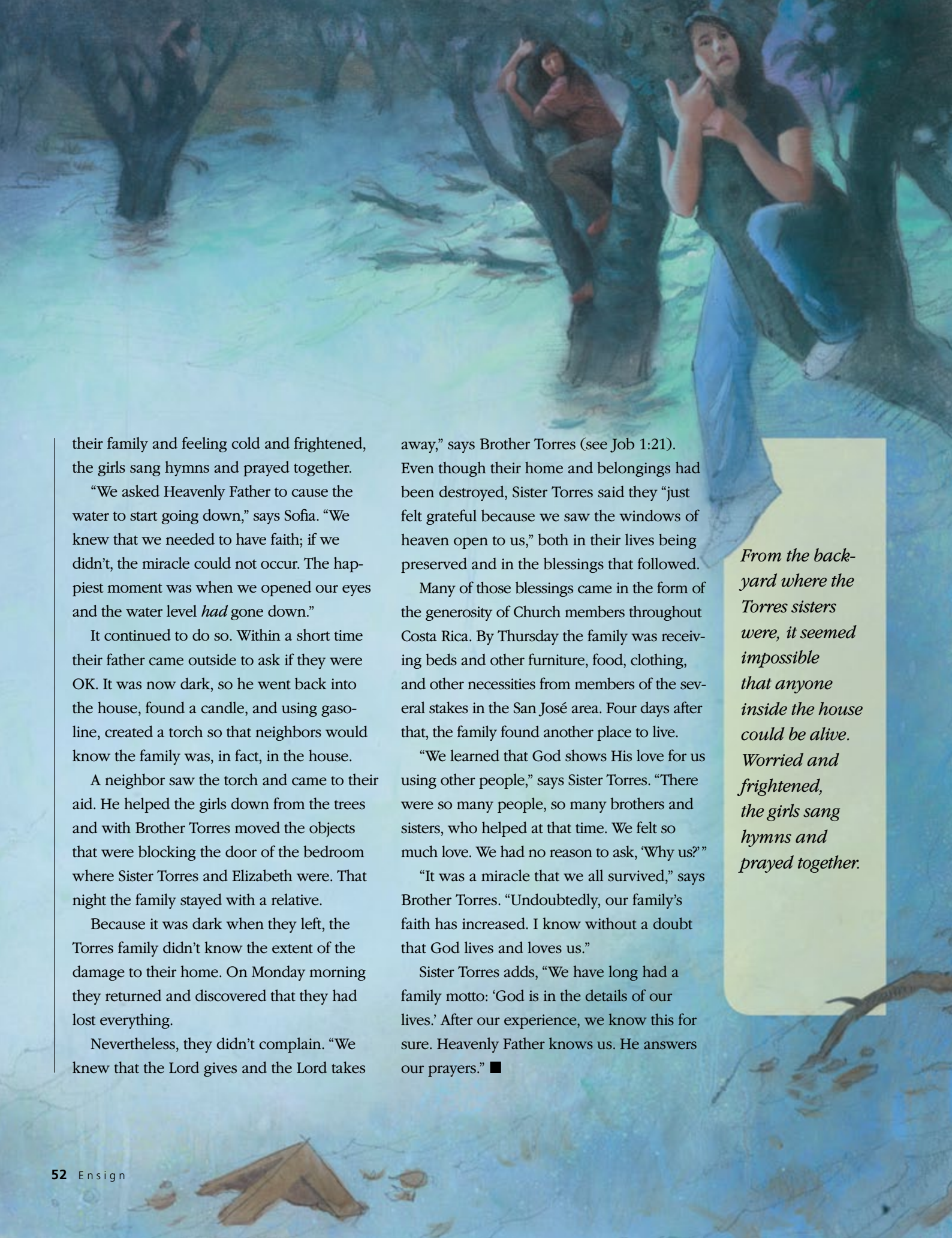
that the water had pushed against a closed door. Together, they moved to the kitchen, where Brother Torres set Erick in a safe, high place. Brother Torres then discovered that the water had wrapped a nylon cord around his legs, making it difficult for him to move. Even so, he managed to push the refrigerator and some furniture away, preventing the door from closing and trapping him and his son.

From the kitchen, Erick and Brother Torres could see the girls in the backyard, but they did not know how Sister Torres and Elizabeth were doing. Brother Torres suggested that together, they ask for Heavenly Father's help.

Meanwhile, outside and up a guava tree, the girls were also praying. Sofia, Korina, and Monica could see water gushing through their home. From all appearances, it seemed impossible that anyone remaining inside could be alive. Worried for

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BJORN THORKELOSON





their family and feeling cold and frightened, the girls sang hymns and prayed together.

“We asked Heavenly Father to cause the water to start going down,” says Sofia. “We knew that we needed to have faith; if we didn’t, the miracle could not occur. The happiest moment was when we opened our eyes and the water level *had* gone down.”

It continued to do so. Within a short time their father came outside to ask if they were OK. It was now dark, so he went back into the house, found a candle, and using gasoline, created a torch so that neighbors would know the family was, in fact, in the house.

A neighbor saw the torch and came to their aid. He helped the girls down from the trees and with Brother Torres moved the objects that were blocking the door of the bedroom where Sister Torres and Elizabeth were. That night the family stayed with a relative.

Because it was dark when they left, the Torres family didn’t know the extent of the damage to their home. On Monday morning they returned and discovered that they had lost everything.

Nevertheless, they didn’t complain. “We knew that the Lord gives and the Lord takes

away,” says Brother Torres (see Job 1:21).

Even though their home and belongings had been destroyed, Sister Torres said they “just felt grateful because we saw the windows of heaven open to us,” both in their lives being preserved and in the blessings that followed.

Many of those blessings came in the form of the generosity of Church members throughout Costa Rica. By Thursday the family was receiving beds and other furniture, food, clothing, and other necessities from members of the several stakes in the San José area. Four days after that, the family found another place to live.

“We learned that God shows His love for us using other people,” says Sister Torres. “There were so many people, so many brothers and sisters, who helped at that time. We felt so much love. We had no reason to ask, ‘Why us?’”

“It was a miracle that we all survived,” says Brother Torres. “Undoubtedly, our family’s faith has increased. I know without a doubt that God lives and loves us.”

Sister Torres adds, “We have long had a family motto: ‘God is in the details of our lives.’ After our experience, we know this for sure. Heavenly Father knows us. He answers our prayers.” ■

From the backyard where the Torres sisters were, it seemed impossible that anyone inside the house could be alive. Worried and frightened, the girls sang hymns and prayed together.

TO BIND UP THE BROKENHEARTED



By Georges A. Bonnet

In the 1990s my employment with the Church took our family to Africa, where I was assigned to help with relief efforts in Burundi, Rwanda, and Somalia. This was during a devastating period of famine, brutality, and war, and the suffering was overwhelming.

Thousands were in refugee camps. Hundreds of orphaned children lived in rudimentary shelters they constructed themselves. Cholera, typhoid, and malnutrition were ever present. The stench of waste and death added to the hopelessness.

I felt driven to offer all the help I could. The Church worked with the International Committee of the Red Cross and other organizations, but I couldn't help wondering sometimes if our efforts were making a difference in the face of such widespread atrocity and tragedy. It was hard to shake feelings of helplessness and discouragement, and often when I retired for the night, I cried.

It was during this discouraging time that a familiar passage took on a deeper dimension for me. Citing Isaiah, it tells us that the Savior was "anointed to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound" (D&C 138:42).

I had seen and spoken with many people who were "brokenhearted" in the most striking ways. They had lost their loved ones, homes, and peaceful way of life.

All of us can have the sure hope that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ our hearts can be bound up and made whole.

And yet many of them showed signs of having been "bound up." For instance, often when we approached a makeshift home, its inhabitants would ask, "Will you pray with us?" The people seemed to find happiness and peace in making supplications to the Lord.

Of course, we cannot look for the impact of the Atonement only in this life. It also comes after. I know there is redemption for the dead and resurrection for all because of the Savior. The pain we experience in this life—however extreme—will be removed and healed through the Atonement.

Mormon and Moroni, who lived in times of great slaughter and death, wrote about having hope anchored in a loving God whose mercy and justice surpass all understanding (see, for instance, Moroni 7:41–42). Studying these prophets' statements bolstered my own faith. When I wondered if our efforts were making a difference, I felt assurance that the Savior's grace is the ultimate redemptive power. Our best efforts may be limited, but His are infinite and eternal.

There's no doubt that the world's conditions create many forms of despair, but none are beyond the reach of the Redeemer to heal. All of us can have the sure hope that through the Atonement of Christ our hearts *can* be bound up and made whole. With this knowledge, I could go on in my work, knowing that His efforts *always* succeed. ■



The

The Savior can heal wounded hearts, misunderstanding, and hatred if we look to His word and His Atonement.

In August 1978 I received an assignment to attend a stake conference in Seoul, South Korea. After priesthood leadership meeting, I was in the hallway when a sister about 60 years old whispered in my ear in Japanese, “I don’t like Japanese people.”

I was shocked and surprised. I turned around and responded in Japanese, “I’m sorry you feel that way.” I wondered what she had experienced in her life that caused her to feel that way. What damage had my people done to her people?

In my talk during the evening session of stake conference, I spoke of the Savior’s Atonement and His great sacrifice. I shared with stake members the story of Nephi and how the Spirit of the Lord took him to a high mountain. There he saw the tree

By Elder
Yoshihiko Kikuchi
Of the Seventy



Healer's Art

of life, which his father, Lehi, had seen, and there he saw the baby Jesus (see 1 Nephi 11:1–20). Then an angel asked him if he knew the meaning of the tree his father had seen in vision.

Nephi answered, “Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things.” The angel added, “Yea, and the most joyous to the soul” (1 Nephi 11:22–23).

The love of God can help us overcome all prejudice and misunderstanding. We are truly God’s children, and we can take His love into our souls if we will.

*Savior, may I learn to love thee,
Walk the path that thou hast shown,
Pause to help and lift another,
Finding strength beyond my own.¹*

Who Am I to Judge Another?

Without planning to, I began to share my connection with the Korean people. I told the congregation that I had grown up with nine Korean cousins. They came to our home, and my siblings and I often went to their homes. I ate Korean food and learned



Korean songs. My aunt married a wonderful Korean man. They raised their children in Japan, in the same town where I grew up.

In the middle of my talk, I asked someone to play the piano as I sang a Korean folk song with President Ho Nam Rhee, the first stake president

in South Korea. Then I asked President Rhee to help me sing the Korean national anthem, though I hadn’t sung it since my boyhood. It had been a long time since I had learned it from my Korean uncle, but the words came back to me. I then asked the congregation to sing it with me. They all stood and sang their beautiful national anthem. Many tears were shed, and it was hard for me to sing. A wonderful and sweet spirit prevailed.

I told the members of the stake that just as I loved my Korean cousins, I also loved them—because we are all God’s children, because we are all brothers and sisters in the gospel, and because of the love of God (see 1 Nephi 11:22, 25). We all felt that eternal love, and almost everyone in the congregation wept. I told them, “I love you as my brothers and sisters in the gospel.”



TO BE TRUE DISCIPLES

"I am told that racial slurs and denigrating remarks are sometimes heard among us. I remind you that no [one] who makes disparaging remarks concerning those of another race can consider himself a true disciple of Christ. Nor can he consider himself to be in harmony with the teachings of the Church of Christ. . . .

"We are members of the Church of our Lord. We have an obligation to Him as well as to ourselves and others."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "The Need for Greater Kindness," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2006, 58, 60.

After the evening session had ended, stake members made a long line to greet me. The last person in line was the 60-year-old Korean sister, who came to me with tears in her eyes and apologized. The Spirit of the Lord was strong. The Savior's healing wings carried all of us, and the spirit of peace spoke to the congregation. I felt as one with them.

*Who am I to judge another
When I walk imperfectly?
In the quiet heart is hidden
Sorrow that the eye can't see.*

Your Message Changed My Thinking

I was called as a member of the Seventy in 1977. Since then I have had the privilege of visiting hundreds of stakes. After one priesthood leadership meeting in Taylorsville, Utah, a large man approached me and whispered that his brother had been killed during World War II and that he hated Japanese people. Following the stake conference, however, this same man approached me with tears in his eyes. Crying for joy, he gave me a hug because I had shared my conversion story and my love for Americans and it had touched him.

On another occasion a sister approached me at a stake conference in Georgia, USA, and said she had lost her father in World War II. But after the meeting she said to me, "I have to apologize to you. Because my father was killed by Japanese people, I have harbored hatred in my heart." Then she said, "You told us that your father was also killed during the war, but later you accepted the gospel, which

changed your life. And now you are telling us that you love us. I am ashamed of myself. Though I was born in the Church, I have felt hatred toward your people even to this day. But your message has changed my thinking."

I have had so many similar experiences. I have been able to meet many people, and because of the gospel, we are able to love and understand each other.

All of My Guilt Has Been Taken Away

A few years later at a devotional held following a visit to Adam-ondi-Ahman, the supervisor of service missionaries in the area asked me to share the story of my conversion. I did so and then thanked the couples attending the devotional for preparing their children to serve missions and for figuratively sending them to my door.

As I shook hands and prepared to leave, the supervisor spoke up. "Before we dismiss this meeting," he said, "I have a personal confession to make." I don't remember his exact words, but in essence he said:

"As you know, I served my country as a U.S. Marine while I was a young man. While serving, I killed many Japanese soldiers. I thought I had served my country faithfully, but for many years, whenever I saw Orientals, particularly Japanese people, I experienced great depression. Sometimes



I could not even function. I visited with Church authorities and discussed my feelings with professional counselors.

"Today, when I faced Elder and Sister Kikuchi and their son, a flash of memory returned. But then I listened to Elder Kikuchi share his testimony and conversion story, his love for the Lord and the gospel, and his love for each of us. He said he had hated Americans and American soldiers but that the gospel had changed his life through the Lord's healing power. When I heard this, I also seemed to hear a voice from the Lord saying, 'It is finished. It is OK.'"

He put his hands outward, raised them, and said, with tears in his eyes, "All of my guilt has been taken away. My burden is lifted!"

He came to me and hugged me. Then our wives approached, and we all hugged each other and wept.

I have learned that the Savior can heal wounded hearts, misunderstanding, and hatred if we look to His word and His Atonement. He heals us the same way He healed the Israelites of serpent bites (see Numbers 21:8–9; 1 Nephi 17:41; Alma 33:19–21). It is "the pleasing word of God . . .

which healeth the wounded soul" (Jacob 2:8), and it is "with his stripes [that] we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5; Mosiah 14:5).

*I would be my brother's keeper;
I would learn the healer's art.
To the wounded and the weary
I would show a gentle heart.*



He heals us the same way He healed the Israelites of serpent bites. It is "the pleasing word of God . . . which healeth the wounded soul," and it is "with his stripes [that] we are healed."



LOVE ONE ANOTHER

"Mother Teresa, a Catholic nun who worked among the poor in India most of her life, spoke this profound truth: 'If you judge people, you have no time to love them.' The Savior has admonished, 'This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.' I ask: *can we love one another, as the Savior commanded, if we judge each other?* And I answer—with Mother Teresa: no, we cannot."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Charity Never Faileth," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 124.

I'll Give You 10 Minutes

I was born in a small community on the northern island of Hokkaido, Japan. When I was five years old, my father was killed by an attack from an American submarine. As a little boy I became bitter toward Americans. I grew up that way, not really knowing what had happened to cause the war.

When I graduated from junior high school, we were so poor. My mother could not afford to send me to senior high school, so I decided to go to work in order to fund my continued education. There was no work in our small village, but I found a job producing tofu (bean curd) nine hours away from home in Muroran, where my mother was raised.

Every day in Muroran I got up by 4:30 a.m., made tofu until noon, and then delivered it to various stores until 6:00 p.m. After work I washed, changed, ate, and ran to night school. I returned home about 10:30 p.m. and jumped into bed at 11:00 p.m. Because of my exhausting schedule, I soon lost all of my energy and became ill.

I was staying in the tofu shop owner's home, but I quit my job and asked my uncle to take me in so I could finish my first year of high school. Despite medication, I remained sick. I didn't know what to do, and I became desperate and felt that I might be dying. I prayed hard, saying, "If there is a God, wilt Thou bless me that I might be able to get well." Then I prayed something somewhat presumptuous: "If I am cured, I want to repay Thee."

While I was at my uncle's home, two

foreigners knocked at the door early one evening. They were missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. One, Elder Law—the senior companion—had been a farmer in St. Anthony, Idaho, USA; the other, Elder Porter—a new elder—was from Salt Lake City. It was cold, rainy, and nearly dark, and they were ready to go home. But for some reason they persisted in knocking on doors.

When they knocked on my door, I was alone. I answered the door and said, "No, thank you."

These young men were humble and persistent, but I said again, "No, thank you." Then I added, "You folks killed my father." I was still bitter.

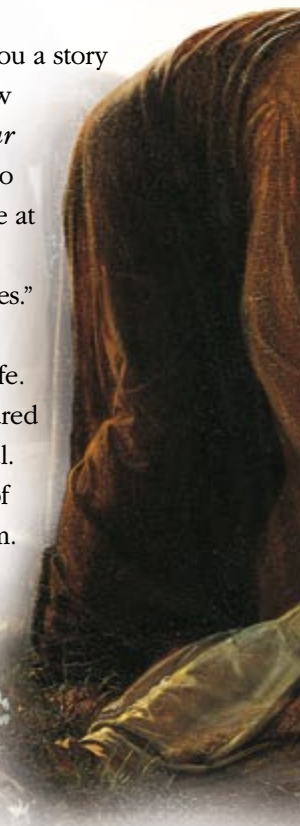
Undeterred, the elder from Idaho asked my age. I said, "What does my age matter? Please go."

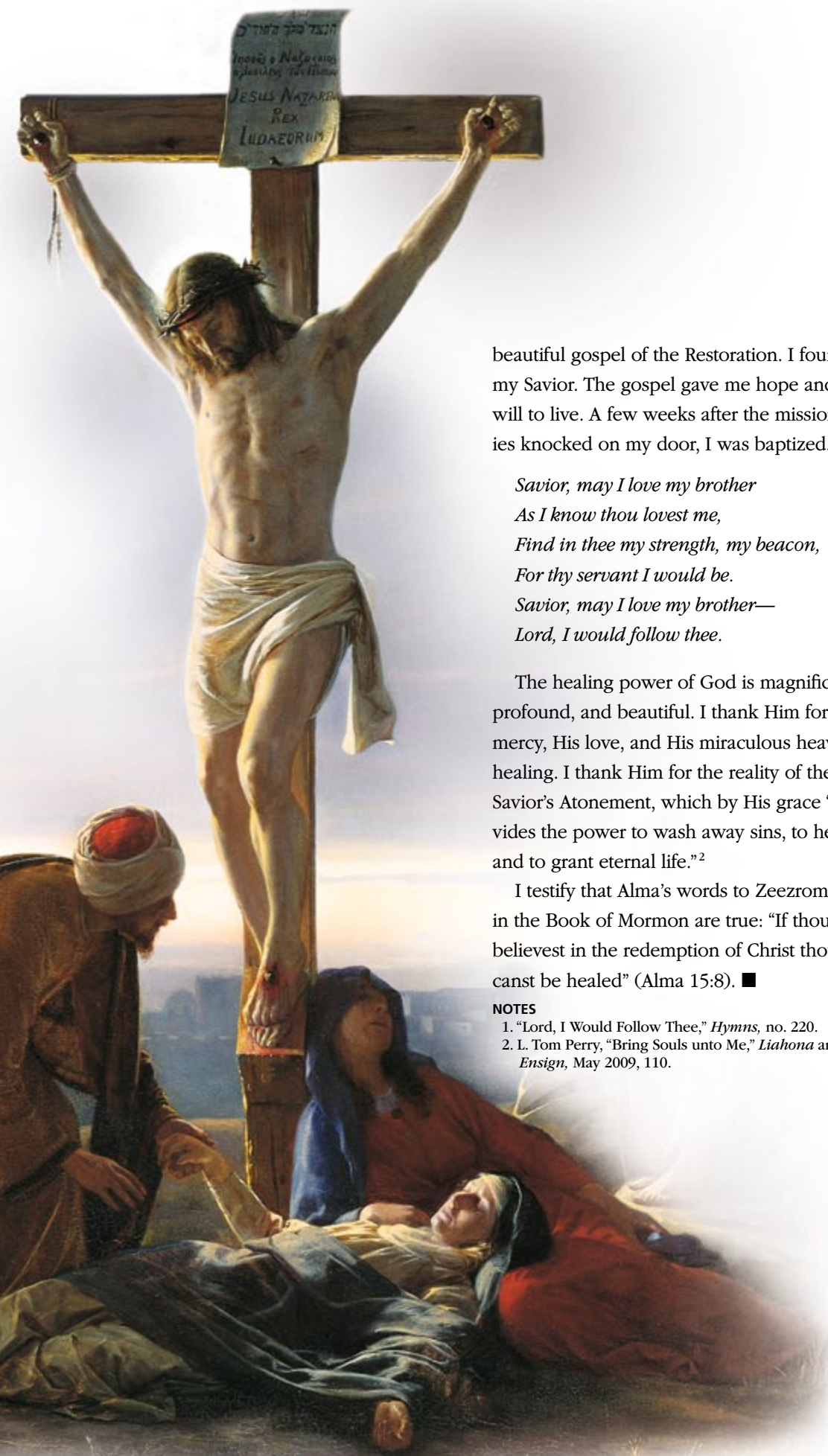
He replied, "I want to tell you a story about a boy your age who saw *your* Heavenly Father and *your* Savior, Jesus Christ. We want to share that story." I almost froze at the door.

I said, "I'll give you 10 minutes."

Those 10 minutes touched me deeply and changed my life. The story the missionaries shared was so profound and beautiful. I found out that I am a child of God and that I came from Him.

The elders came every day because I was sick. During their discussions with me, the missionaries taught me the





beautiful gospel of the Restoration. I found my Savior. The gospel gave me hope and the will to live. A few weeks after the missionaries knocked on my door, I was baptized.

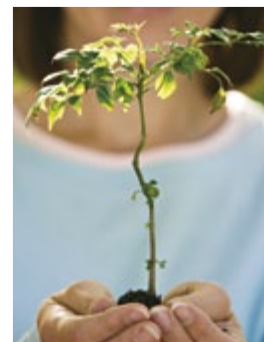
*Savior, may I love my brother
As I know thou lovest me,
Find in thee my strength, my beacon,
For thy servant I would be.
Savior, may I love my brother—
Lord, I would follow thee.*

The healing power of God is magnificent, profound, and beautiful. I thank Him for His mercy, His love, and His miraculous heavenly healing. I thank Him for the reality of the Savior's Atonement, which by His grace "provides the power to wash away sins, to heal, and to grant eternal life."²

I testify that Alma's words to Zeezrom in the Book of Mormon are true: "If thou believest in the redemption of Christ thou canst be healed" (Alma 15:8). ■

NOTES

1. "Lord, I Would Follow Thee," *Hymns*, no. 220.
2. L. Tom Perry, "Bring Souls unto Me," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 110.



***The healing power
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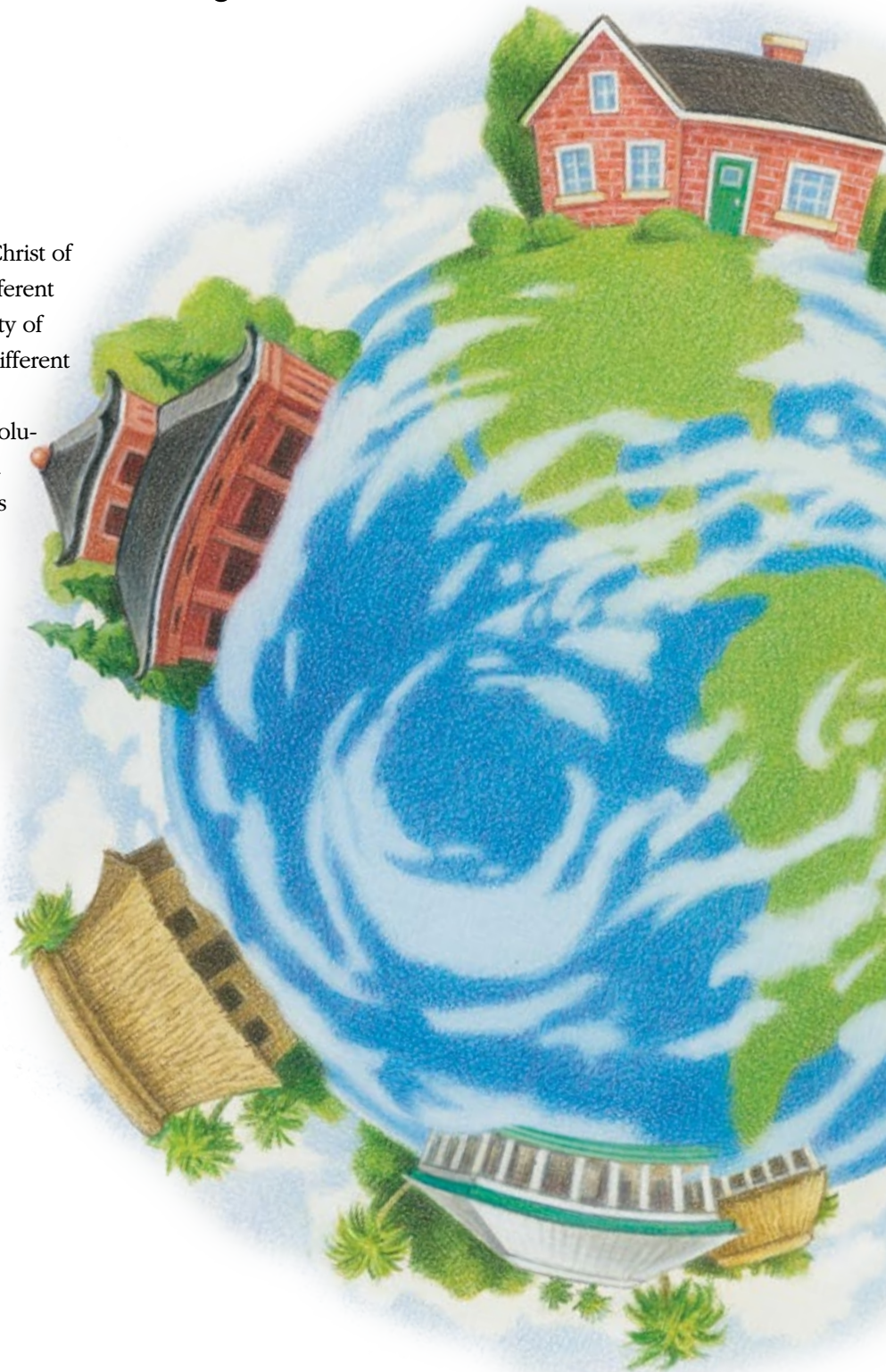
A GREAT Community of Saints

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are found in different countries, are engaged in a variety of occupations and callings, and face many different challenges.

But the Savior and His gospel provide solutions to our problems, unite us in love and common purpose, and bring us together as a worldwide community.

Whether you meet with 13 others in a small branch in Ukraine or with 200 in a ward in Mexico, you belong to something much grander. Our shared faith in the Savior makes us literally “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19).

As you get to know some of your neighbors from around the world in this article (and through each issue of the Church magazines), we hope you find assurance that the gospel of Jesus Christ offers what you need to face your own challenges.





Vi'iga Faatoia of Samoa

Age 60
Mayor
First counselor
in bishopric

The tsunami that struck Samoa in September 2009 took my grandson. It took my sister's son. I lost my home, two cars, and almost everything I owned. Nearly our entire village is moving into the hills so that this doesn't happen again.

I know God loves those who survived because, through the Church, He has given us new homes, food, and water. I know He loves those who did not survive because, through His power, we can be together again. We have been blessed.



Lucia Leonardo of Guatemala

Age 23
Student
Second counselor in stake
Young Women presidency

The problems I face are the same that everyone my age has. What should I do with my life? What should I study? Whom should I marry? How do I deal with pressure from nonmember friends to lower my standards? Sometimes it is easy to get down or feel sad or nervous.

The gospel has directed my life in every way. Even though I still have to work out some of the details, I know what I want, and I know where I'm going because of the gospel. I'm grateful for that. It really makes me happy. It helps me stay strong and help others, because I know that when I need help, I can pray to my Heavenly Father.



Valerina M. of Utah, USA

Age 10

Being an older sister isn't always easy. Sometimes I get frustrated. But I've learned to be a good friend to my little sister and brother by watching my mom and the relationship she has with her sisters. She teaches me to set a Christlike example for those around us. I can do these things to show how much I appreciate the love of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, as well as the love of my mom and dad.





**Elizabeth Kangethe
of Kenya**
Age 27
Freelance journalist
Ward Relief Society president

Before I received the gospel, my world was a dark place. I was slow to forgive and harbored ill feelings against anyone I felt had wronged me. I was disillusioned with marriage, seeing all around me husbands who were drunk and women who were battered.

Embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ changed me. It was wonderful to go to church and find families sitting together, to be taught about love, mutual respect, and understanding. I found myself abandoning traditions not in harmony with the gospel.

I felt compelled to make peace with a perceived enemy. We now keep in touch often. I met a wonderful returned missionary and will be married in the temple soon.

I am convinced that I am in the right place. The love and concern the members have for each other gives me a sense of belonging. My life has become more meaningful. I know it is absolutely essential that I remain faithful to the end by avoiding backward glances toward the darkness and remorse of the past.

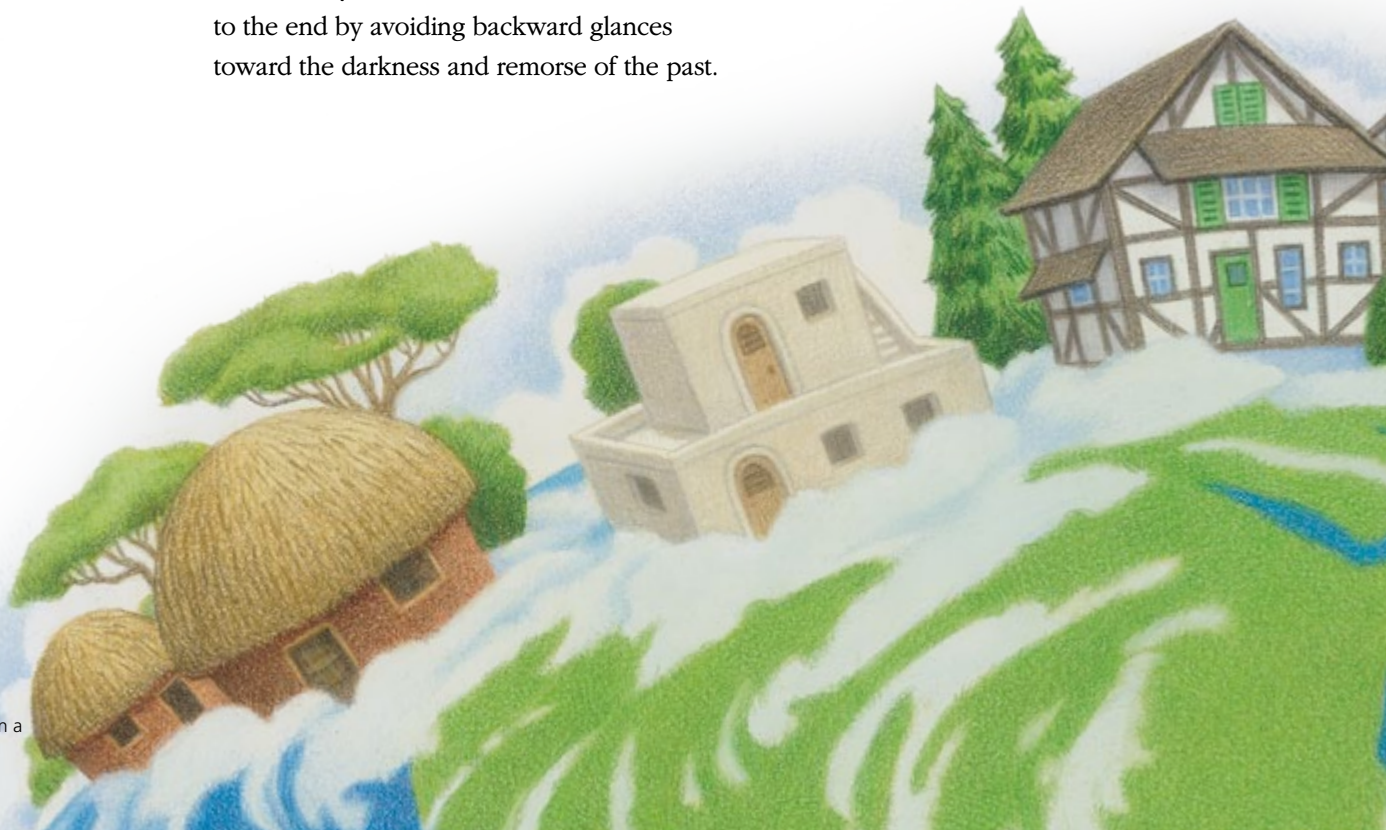


**Harrison Lumbama
of Zambia**
Age 46
Officer in a charitable non-
governmental organization
District president

Just making ends meet has been one of the greatest trials of my life. The cost of living is high compared to my earnings. Each day my mind is busy thinking about how the rent is due, food is running out, the children have school fees, and so on.

The gospel that I now know has really helped to keep me sane in spite of the challenges. By my keeping the commandments and my covenants, somehow things seem to be bearable. By our keeping the law of tithing, Heavenly Father has blessed us that we never go hungry, and by His grace we manage to hurdle the obstacles of life. The gospel has become a soothing remedy for life's perils. It has given us hope for a better future if we are obedient and faithful.

Whatever trial I've faced, the gospel has had an answer for me. Without it, my life would simply have been without direction or purpose.





**Varvara Bak
of Russia**
Age 25
Student
Seminary teacher



**Chhoeun Monirac
of Cambodia**
Age 18
First counselor in Young Men
presidency, seminary teacher

I want to be more Christlike—not that I expect perfection, but I want to remember who I am and be better today than I was yesterday. That can be difficult when the standards of the world around us are so low. It would be easy to let my standards slip.

But in a way, it's not that hard to keep the Church's standards. I think people appreciate those with high standards. I have always liked people who don't smoke or drink and who have good morals. So when I investigated the Church, I was already living many gospel standards, and because I was keeping those commandments, I gained a testimony of them quickly.

We all face unanticipated problems in life. After my family returned from being sealed in the Hong Kong China Temple and just before one of my sisters was to leave on a full-time mission, my older brother and sister lost their jobs and my father's salary was cut in half. It was a difficult time for the 11 of us in our small home, but we held to the promises made in the temple.

In that time the Holy Ghost reminded me of a scripture: "But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God" (Jacob 2:18). It brought me hope. I trusted that God would bless me and my family.

My brother and sister have now found jobs that allow our family to eat, and I've had several promising interviews. It's a miracle that has increased our faith in Christ. I know the Lord loves us and knows us. He knows our needs. If we'll keep His commandments, we'll prosper in the land (see Mosiah 2:22). ■



“CHARITY NEVER FAILETH”: A DISCUSSION ON Relief Society



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and his wife, Patricia T. Holland, share insights into the role of Relief Society.

I can't imagine living life without Relief Society," says Patricia T. Holland in an interview with Church magazines staff about the importance of Relief Society. "That is because I can't imagine living life without the gospel, and Relief Society has been one place where I have personally learned so much about the gospel."

Sister Holland and her husband, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, both acknowledge the power of the gospel in their lives. They also appreciate the influence of Relief Society in building a strong home. "Relief Society has always been a strength to the Church," says Elder Holland. "It has always helped provide what was needed in each stage of the Church's development. Today its contribution becomes more poignant because of the difficult times in which we live. It's not a program per se. It is the gospel—the gospel in action in the lives of our remarkable women. In difficult times we realize it offers its members, and by extension the whole Church, just what we need to help us right now."

Here Elder and Sister Holland share their thoughts about Relief Society and the strength that comes to families

and to wards and branches when priesthood and Relief Society leaders work together.

What is the role of Relief Society in strengthening faith and families?

Sister Holland: Relief Society is needed now more than ever before because of the challenges we face in the world today. The women of the Church have a greater need to be righteous, to live close to the Spirit, and to be faithful. And women need each other too, in order to keep and sustain their faith.

Elder Holland: What the Relief Society is doing is helping teach the gospel in a uniquely powerful way, with a special women's voice. Relief Society is one of the vehicles for bringing gospel doctrines and values into the lives of women. Remember, however, that gospel principles are not restricted to gender. Love, charity, and compassion as well as strength, leadership, and decisiveness are all gospel virtues. We should all be embracing as many of these virtues as we can, men and women alike.

Each one of us who makes the journey down the gospel path is an individual—a daughter or a son of God. As individual members, we must be absolutely rock solid. No organization is going to be any stronger than its people, no home any stronger than its foundation.

Sister Holland: When I think of all the blessings we as Latter-day Saints share in our temples, our wards and branches, our marriages, and our families, I realize it all comes back to how the priesthood and Relief Society—men and women—



“Given the challenges facing women and families, no other organization in the world is going to be more helpful in the future than Relief Society.”

Patricia T. Holland

work together in a home as well as in the Church.

Elder Holland: Women go home from Relief Society each week and share with the men in their lives what they have learned. Likewise, my wife and daughters have been blessed over the years by priesthood instruction our sons and I have received and shared.

Sister Holland: I think it could be said that, given the challenges facing women and families, no other organization in the world is going to be more helpful in the future than Relief Society. We need to rally the women of the Church to their calling as leaders and as “captains” of the welfare of children, especially now as we see families crumbling. We have to march together, hand in hand, to be able to get the work done.

How has Relief Society strengthened you and your family?

Sister Holland: The influence of Relief Society on me began even before I was born because both my mother

and grandmother served in Relief Society. When I was a child, I learned from them. I wanted to be like them. They told me stories of my great-grandmother Elizabeth Schmutz Barlocker, who served as a Relief Society president for 40 years. She gave everything she had, including her own food and clothing, for her sisters in the gospel. She had the faith that God would protect and bless her in this service, and He did. The example of these three women and their service in Relief Society still inspire me today.

Elder Holland: I haven’t attended



Relief Society, but I grew up with it shaping my life. My mother served in

our ward Relief Society presidency for most of my teenage years. It was a great thing for a young boy to watch. Certainly those blessings can come from our ancestors to us and bless our children and our grandchildren.

But my testimony of Relief Society has also come through my wife. I’m proud to be married to a former Relief Society president. I’ve been blessed directly because of her devotion. I knew when I married Patricia Terry what kind of a woman she was because I had seen her in the service of the Lord. She had stepped up and shouldered the responsibility of the kingdom. To me she was larger than life. Now those values and virtues bless our marriage and our children. So, has Relief Society blessed me? Absolutely!

How can priesthood and auxiliary leaders work together to strengthen a ward or branch?

Sister Holland: Relief Society was organized after the pattern of the priesthood. This shows a lovely parallel

between the priesthood and Relief Society and reinforces the idea that men and women energize the righteousness within both. Men need the blessings of women, and women need the blessings of men. We learn that powerfully in the temple. Wards and branches will be stronger the more priesthood and auxiliary leaders work together. We have seen the power of ward council meetings in every place we have lived.

Men and women are all members of the body of Christ, and what a great



“The same skills and ideas for which Relief Society has always stood hold many of the answers to the challenges we are facing worldwide. ‘Charity Never Faileth’ is a flag under which the whole human family can unite.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

membership that is! We learn in the scriptures that “if ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27) and “the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee” (1 Corinthians 12:21).

Elder Holland: With the complex issues of the day, ward or branch leaders need to work together. The bishop is the one who has the priesthood keys to lead the ward. The ward or branch council meeting is the place where the necessary coordination takes place. The better the council works, the better the Church works. This is true in every ward or branch.

The bishop can use ward council meeting as a time when he and other ward leaders analyze the needs of the ward. Are there members in need of temporal welfare? Is a young man getting ready to go on a mission? Are couples preparing to go to the temple? What can we do as a ward council to help?

Remember that the concerns of a mother cannot be separated from the needs of her children and her husband. Through visiting teachers, the Relief Society president sees the needs of the whole family as well as those

of individual members. That’s a powerful resource that can be drawn upon in ward council.

How can Relief Society help the Church meet the challenges of the 21st century?

Elder Holland: The present economic malaise covering the whole globe has reshaped the face of the earth financially. Yet teaching the principles of relief and provident living has always been a part of Relief Society. The world may think it



old-fashioned to bottle fruit or make quilts in the 21st century. Yet right now

there are people who are hungry and cold. To them, some bottled fruit and a warm quilt are literally god-sends. Provident living will never be out of fashion. This is not a retreat back to the 19th century but the direction we need to go as we move headlong into the 21st. The same skills and ideas for which Relief Society has always stood hold many of the answers to the challenges we are facing worldwide.

“Charity Never Faileth” is a flag under which the whole human family can unite. It is not a program—it is a clarion call of the gospel (see 1 Corinthians 14:8–10). The gospel will never fail, so it is appropriate that “Charity Never Faileth” is the Relief Society motto (1 Corinthians 13:8). It reinforces the fact that Latter-day Saint men and women are working toward the same goal—striving to become disciples of Christ.

And if the winds blow, the winds blow. If the storms come, the storms come. The gospel is always the answer,



whatever the question. It will always prevail. We are built on the rock that is Jesus Christ, and it is His solid rock-ribbed gospel that will get us through tough times.

Sister Holland: I think in the hearts of women is the desire to serve others in need. It doesn't matter if a woman is young or old, married or single. Relief Society provides the perfect opportunity for her to serve because there are always others in need. Likewise, every woman at some time or other will need to be served. Truly "Charity Never Faileth" is an eternal principle with a powerful message by which anyone can live.

Elder Holland: Remember that Relief Society service is not limited to serving members of the Church. We all try to take care of our own, but the great sisterhood of Relief Society—and specifically compassionate service—knows no borders. That helps us engage with the family next door who are not of our faith or join in an activity to help an inner-city school or assist in maintaining the clean, safe environment of our neighborhoods and communities.

What role will Relief Society play in the future?

Sister Holland: Obviously, Relief Society will play an essential role in the future. The darker the world gets, the brighter the gospel light will shine. Relief Society is key in teaching the doctrines of the gospel to our sisters. Most important among those teachings is that God, our Heavenly Father, sent His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth. His Atonement, Resurrection, and example teach us to have faith in Him, repent, make covenants, and

WARD COUNCILS: WHERE LEADERS WORK TOGETHER

The ward council includes the bishopric, ward clerk, ward executive secretary, high priests group leader, elders quorum president, ward mission leader, and presidents of the Relief Society, Young Men, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School. . . .

"Council members are encouraged to speak honestly. . . . Both men and women should feel that their comments are valued as full participants. . . . The viewpoint of women is sometimes different from that of men, and it adds essential perspective. . . .

"Ward council meetings should focus on matters that will strengthen individuals and families" (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 4.4; 4.6.1).

love one another. Jesus Christ is the light that never faileth—the bright light that will pierce the darkness.

Elder Holland: Matthew 7:16 says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." For example, even when our children were very young, they could recognize their mother's devotion to the gospel and the role that a woman plays in it. They were often with her as she served her Relief Society sisters. Sometimes they had to pray that our old car would start. They saw her in an old coat trudging through the snow to care for Relief Society sisters in New England. They were only little, but they've never forgotten that. They saw their mother's sacrifice and faithfulness, and as a result our daughter is a Latter-day Saint woman deeply committed to service, and our sons have deep respect and admiration for the commitment and devotion of our daughters-in-law. It is clear from their mother's example that our children know the crucial, exalted place of women in their lives and in the kingdom of God.

Likewise, others are going to look to the example of the "fruits" of Latter-day Saint lives—the fruits that come as

we work to become disciples of the living God. This is the brightness that can never be darkened. The future of Relief Society is bright because the gospel is bright. The light of the kingdom of God will never go out. And as human need increases, the clarion call of the gospel will ring true. In the forefront of those bearing that message and providing their charitable contribution will be righteous priesthood men and Relief Society women of the Church. ■

This interview was conducted by LaRene Gaunt and Joshua Perkey of Church magazines.

By Julie B. Beck
Relief Society General
President



TEACHING THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAMILY

As I meet with young single adults around the world, I ask them, “Why does the First Presidency care so much about you and provide so many resources for you?” These are some of the answers I get: “We are future Church leaders.” “We need training so we can stay strong.” “Our testimonies are strengthened in our seminary and institute classes.” “We need to meet other great Latter-day Saint youth.” “We are the hope of the future.” I have rarely heard, “So I will someday be a better father or a better mother.” Their responses are generally about self, because this is the time of life they are in.

Nevertheless, parents, teachers, and leaders of youth need to teach the rising generation the doctrine of the family. It is essential to help them achieve eternal life (see Moses 1:39). They need to know that the theology of the family is based on the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. They need to understand the threats to the family so they will know what they are fighting against and can prepare. They need to understand clearly that the fulness of the gospel is realized in temple ordinances and covenants.

The Theology of the Family

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have a theology of the family that is based on the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. The Creation of the earth provided a place where families could live. God created a man and a woman who were the two essential halves of a family. It was part of Heavenly Father’s plan that Adam and Eve be sealed and form an eternal family.

The Fall provided a way for the family to grow. Adam and Eve were family leaders who chose to have a mortal experience. The Fall made it possible for them to have sons and daughters.

The Atonement allows for the family to be sealed together eternally. It allows for families to have eternal growth and perfection. The plan of happiness, also called the plan of salvation, was a plan created for families. The rising generation need to understand that the main pillars of our theology are centered in the family.

When we speak of qualifying for the blessings of eternal life, we mean qualifying for the blessings of eternal families. This was Christ’s doctrine, and it was

This generation will be called upon to defend the doctrine of the family as never before. If they don’t know the doctrine, they can’t defend it.



*We have a theology
of the family that
is based on
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Atonement.*



LEFT: DETAIL FROM UNIVERSE, BY SIDNEY KING; DETAIL FROM LEAVING THE GARDEN OF EDEN, BY JOSEPH BRICKEY; DETAIL FROM NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE, BY HARRY ANDERSON, COURTESY OF PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION, INC.; PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY WESTON C. COLTON AND CRAIG DIMOND

restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 2:1–3:

“Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

“And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

“If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.”

This scripture is talking about temple blessings—ordinances and covenants without which “the whole earth [is] utterly wasted.”

“The Family: A Proclamation to the World” was written to reinforce that the family is central to the Creator’s plan.¹ Without the family, there is no plan; there is no reason for mortal life.

Threats to the Family

In addition to understanding the theology of the family, we all need to understand the threats to the family. If we don’t, we can’t prepare for the battle. Evidence is all around us that the family is becoming less important. Marriage rates are declining, the age of marriage is rising, and divorce rates are rising. Out-of-wedlock births

are growing. Abortion is rising and becoming increasingly legal. We see lower birth rates. We see unequal relationships between men and women, and we see cultures that still practice abuse within family relationships. Many times a career gains importance over the family.

Many of our youth are losing confidence in the institution of families. They’re placing more and more value on education and less and less importance on forming an eternal family. Many don’t see forming families as a faith-based work. For them, it’s a selection process much like shopping. Many also distrust their own moral strength and the moral strength of their peers. Because temptations are

Among the threats to the family is divorce, which is on the rise.



so fierce, many are not sure they can be successful in keeping covenants.

Many youth also have insufficient and underdeveloped social skills, which are an impediment to forming eternal families. They are increasingly adept at talking to someone 50 miles (80 km) away and less able to carry on conversations with people in the same room. That makes it difficult for them to socialize with each other.

We also face the problem that we read about in Ephesians 6:12: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Public policies are being made every day that are antifamily, and the definition of family is changing legally around the world. Pornography is rampant. For those who create pornography, their new target audience is young women. Parents are being portrayed as inept and out of touch. Antifamily media messages are everywhere. Youth are being desensitized about the need to form eternal families.

We see how this can happen when we read the words of Korihor, an anti-Christ: “Thus he did preach unto them,

leading away the hearts of many, causing them to lift up their heads in their wickedness, yea, leading away many women, and also men, to commit whoredoms” (Alma 30:18). Satan knows that he will never have a body; he will never have a family. So he targets young women, who will create the bodies for the future generations.

Korihor was an anti-Christ. Anti-Christ is antifamily. Any doctrine or principle our youth hear from the world that is antifamily is also anti-Christ. It’s that clear. If our youth cease to believe in the righteous traditions of their fathers as did the people described in Mosiah 26, if our youth don’t understand their part in the plan, they could be led away.

Teaching the Rising Generation

What is it we hope this rising generation will understand and do because of what we teach them? The answers to that question as well as the key elements of the doctrine of the family are found in the family proclamation. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said that the proclamation was “a declaration and reaffirmation of standards, doctrines, and practices” that this Church has always had.²

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said, “This order . . . of family government where a man and woman

Parents, as well as leaders and teachers of youth, should teach the doctrine of the family to the rising generation as found in the scriptures and the family proclamation.



THE FAMILY IS ETERNAL

“The family is not an accident of mortality. It existed as an organizational unit in the heavens before the world was formed; historically, it started on earth with Adam and Eve, as recorded in Genesis. Adam and Eve were married and sealed for time and all eternity by the Lord, and as a result their family will exist eternally.”

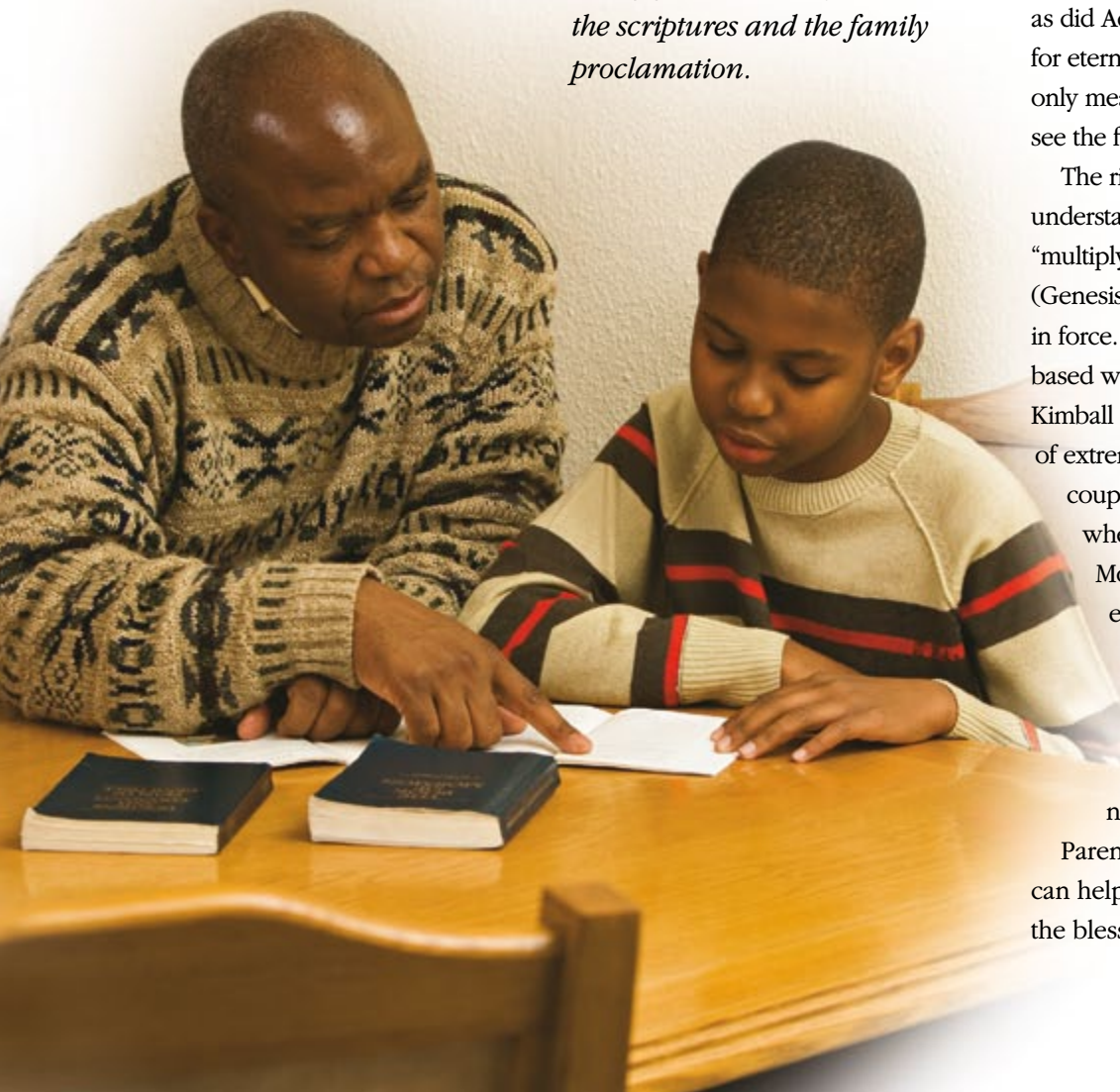
Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” in Dawn Hall Anderson, ed., *Clothed with Charity: Talks from the 1996 Women’s Conference* (1997), 134.

enter into a covenant with God—just as did Adam and Eve—to be sealed for eternity, to have posterity . . . is the only means by which we can one day see the face of God and live.”³

The rising generation need to understand that the command to “multiply, and replenish the earth” (Genesis 1:28; Moses 2:28) remains in force. Bearing children is a faith-based work. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said, “It is an act of extreme selfishness for a married couple to refuse to have children when they are able to do so.”⁴

Motherhood and fatherhood are eternal roles. Each carries the responsibility for either the male or the female half of the plan. Youth is the time to prepare for those eternal roles and responsibilities.

Parents, teachers, and leaders can help young people prepare for the blessings of Abraham. What are





TO TEACHERS

"Your chief interest, your essential and all but sole duty, is to teach the gospel of the Lord Jesus

Christ as that has been revealed in these latter days. You are to teach this gospel using as your sources and authorities the standard works of the Church and the words of those whom God has called to lead His people in these last days."

President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), First Counselor in the First Presidency, *The Charted Course of the Church in Education*, rev. ed. (1994), 10; see also *Teaching the Gospel: A Handbook for CES Teachers and Leaders* (2001), 4.

those blessings? Abraham tells us in Abraham 1:2. He says he wanted "the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer; . . . to be one who possessed great knowledge, . . . to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers."

Where are these blessings Abraham received? They come only to those who have a temple sealing and marriage. A man cannot become a "father of many nations" without being sealed to his wife. Likewise, Abraham could not hold the right belonging to the fathers without a wife who had the right belonging to the mothers.

The stories of Abraham and Sarah and of Isaac and Rebekah are found in Genesis. Abraham and Sarah

had only one son, Isaac. If Abraham was to be the "father of many nations," how important was Isaac's wife, Rebekah? She was so important that he sent his servant hundreds of miles to find the right young woman—one who would keep her covenants, one who understood what it meant to form an eternal family.

In Genesis 24:60, Rebekah is blessed to be "the mother of thousands of millions." Where do we find those kinds of blessings? They are received in the temple.

The story of Isaac and Rebekah is an example of the man, who has the keys, and the woman, who has the influence,

working together to ensure the fulfillment of their blessings. Their story is pivotal. The blessings of the house of Israel depended on a man and a woman who understood their place in the plan and their responsibilities to form an eternal family, to bear children, and to teach them.

In our day we have the responsibility to send "Isaac" and "Rebekah" forth from our homes and classrooms. Every young man and young woman should understand his or her role in this great partnership—that they are each an "Isaac" or a "Rebekah." Then they will know with clarity what they have to do.

We are preparing our youth for the temple and for eternal families.





USING "THE FAMILY: A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD"

- Hang a copy of the proclamation in your home or classroom.
- Encourage youth to keep a copy of the proclamation in their scriptures.
- Link key statements in the proclamation to lessons taught from the scriptures.
- Study and refer to the proclamation in family home evening.

Live the Hope of Eternal Life

Parents, teachers, and leaders: live in your homes, in your families, in your marriages so that youth will develop hope for eternal life from watching you. Live and teach with so much clarity that what you teach will cut through all the noise youth are hearing and so that it will pierce their hearts and touch them.

Live in your home so that you're brilliant in the basics, so that you're intentional about your roles and responsibilities in the family. Think in terms of precision not perfection. If you have your goals and you are precise in how you go about them in your homes, youth will learn from you. They will learn that you pray, study the scriptures together, have family home evening, make a priority of mealtimes, and speak respectfully of your marriage partner. Then from your example the rising generation will gain great hope.

This I Know

We are preparing our youth for the temple and for eternal families. Many threats are coming to them that can discourage them from forming an eternal family. Our role in this is to teach them so they don't

misunderstand. We must be very clear on key points of doctrine, which we find in "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."

This generation will be called upon to defend the doctrine of the family as never before. If they don't know it, they can't defend it. They need to understand temples and priesthood.

President Kimball said:

"Many of the social restraints which in the past have helped to reinforce and to shore up the family are dissolving and disappearing. The time will come when only those who believe deeply and actively in the family will be able to preserve their families in the midst of the gathering evil around us. . . .

" . . . There are those who would define the family in such a nontraditional way that they would define it out of existence. . . .

"We of all people, brothers and sisters, should not be taken in by the specious arguments that the family unit is somehow tied to a particular phase of development a moral society is going through. We are free to resist those moves which downplay the significance of the family and which play up the significance of selfish individualism.

We know the family to be eternal."⁵

The gospel of Jesus Christ is true. It was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. We have the fulness of the gospel this day. We are sons and daughters of heavenly parents, who sent us forth to have this earthly experience to prepare us for the blessing of eternal families. I bear you my testimony of our Savior, Jesus Christ, that through His Atonement we can become perfect and equal to our responsibilities in our earthly families and that through His Atonement we have the promise of eternal life in families. ■

From a broadcast address given to seminary and institute of religion teachers on August 4, 2009.

NOTES

1. See "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
2. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Stand Strong against the Wiles of the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 100.
3. Ezra Taft Benson, "What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple," *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, 6.
4. Spencer W. Kimball, "Fortify Your Homes against Evil," *Ensign*, May 1979, 6.
5. Spencer W. Kimball, "Families Can Be Eternal," *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 4.

I FINALLY FOUND A CHURCH

For most of my life I felt an emptiness and longed for something solid to cling to. I suspected that what I was looking for might be found in a church, so from the time I was very young, I investigated a number of religions and philosophies. Many of them were good and filled with good people. Some of them were strange and offered nothing like what I was seeking.

After many years of searching, I became bored and discouraged, so I gave up. I determined to build a relationship with God on my own and stay away from organized religion.

Some time after I had come to this decision, I was watching a television program that focused on spirituality. The program's host was interviewing a Latter-day Saint family. As I listened to this family, I felt the love and solid faith that I had long been looking for. I was also impressed to learn that Latter-day Saints highly emphasize the family. Maybe I would investigate just one more church.

On the bottom

of the television screen was a phone number for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Milan area. I called it and spoke with some members at the stake center, who arranged for the missionaries to call me.



I determined to stay away from organized religion. But some time after I had come to this decision, I saw a Latter-day Saint family interviewed on television.

This was a particularly busy time for me, so when the missionaries called to set up an appointment, I asked if I could call them back in a few weeks after things had settled down. They agreed and gave me the phone number of the local Relief Society president, who called and invited me to attend church on Sunday. I went, and I loved everything there: the lessons, the people, and the spirit. I left feeling very happy.

I went to church every Sunday for the next two months. Then, in October 2008, I was baptized. My search had not just ended; it had been completed. I no longer felt the thirst and the longing I once did.

I am immensely grateful to have found the truth, but in some ways I am sad that it took me so long to find the gospel of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, I am grateful for the experiences I had during my search. Because I looked in so many other places, I feel extra content knowing that I've found the right place—the place where I belong. ■

Barbara De Giglio,
Lombardy, Italy

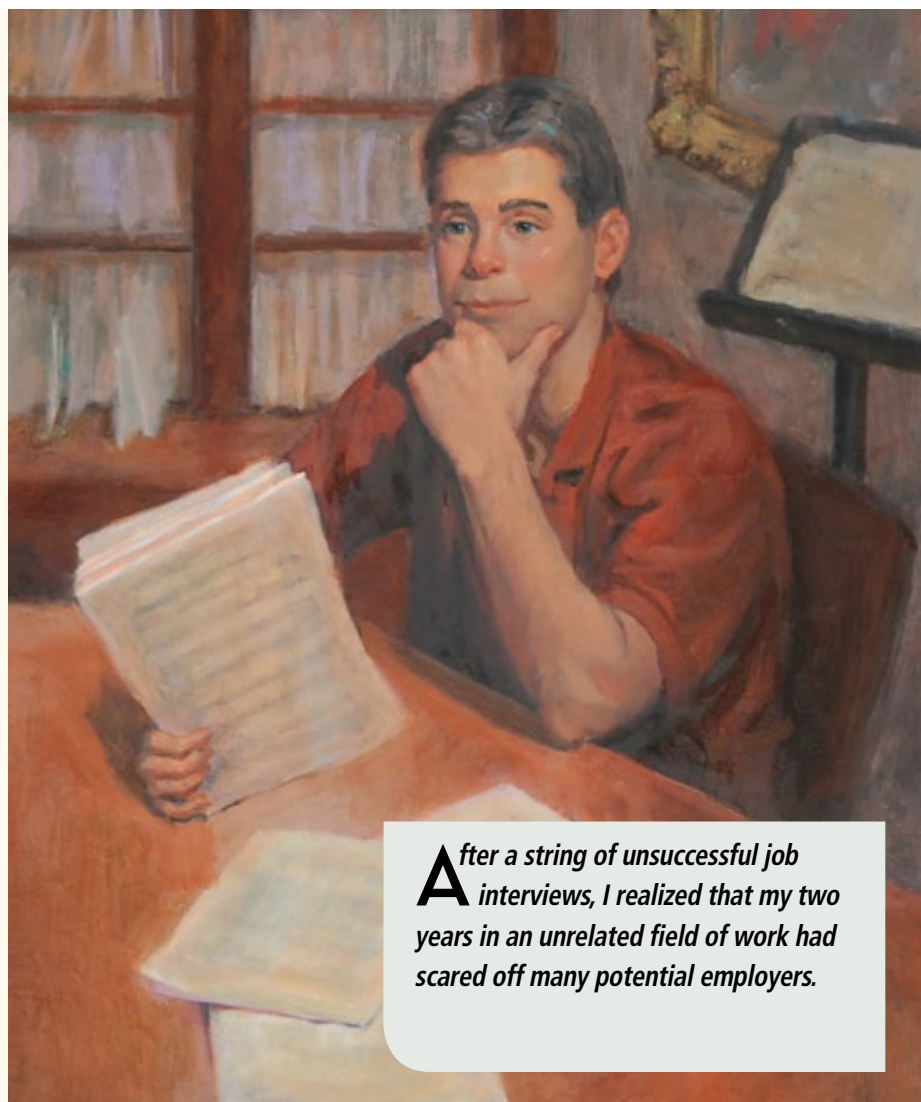
WHAT ABOUT MY CAREER?

Everything was starting to work out perfectly. I had graduated from Oxford University with a degree in music and had started working for a professional orchestra in Edinburgh, Scotland. My career was progressing, and I was making lots of friends.

While studying, I had decided to delay full-time missionary service. Now the idea of serving was far from my mind. Fear of many things, especially the fear of stifling my career plans, made me think that I was an exception and that I didn't need to serve. The sacrifices involved seemed too great.

Good friends and sweet experiences with the Spirit, however, began to change my heart. The love of a caring, watchful bishop helped me gain a stronger, deeper testimony of the restored gospel. Soon I knew that I needed to accept a call to serve. I had no idea how I would pick up my career in a competitive environment after a two-year break, but I trusted that the Lord would bless me for my decision. I left my job not knowing how things would work out.

I was called to serve in the West Indies Mission, speaking French. The challenges were hard, but I loved serving the people and seeing their lives change. During those two years I focused solely on seeking the will of my Father in Heaven. Serving others



After a string of unsuccessful job interviews, I realized that my two years in an unrelated field of work had scared off many potential employers.

selflessly brought me more joy than I had ever experienced.

After returning home, I saw the world from the perspective of new priorities and values, and I sought to keep my life centered on the gospel of Jesus Christ. I immediately sought employment, but opportunities were few. After a string of unsuccessful job interviews, I realized that my two years in an unrelated field of work had scared off many potential employers. Would my mission really cost me my career?

I'm thankful that the answer was no. Almost three months later I spotted a vacancy that was perfect for me. I had just the right set of skills for

the type of work involved. Not only that, but job candidates were required to speak fluent French! My mission opened the door for this opportunity. Three interviews later I was offered the job. My career was even further ahead than it would have been had I not served. I felt the Lord's mercy and love. I know that He prepares blessings for us when we do our part.

What the Prophet Joseph Smith taught is true: "Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed" (D&C 123:17). ■

David Hooson, London, England

I STOOD UP TO MY CO-WORKERS

One morning at work the factory bosses told all employees that in addition to our hourly wage, we would begin receiving piecework incentive pay. The more we produced, the more we would earn. This happened four months before I left on my mission, so now I could make more money to help pay for it.

Production went up significantly, and so did our pay. I worked on a three-man rubber-curing press, and every time I saw a mold come out of the incubator and trip the automatic counter, I imagined my bank account balance increasing.

The new pay incentive, however, created an incentive to cheat. A co-worker would often sneak beside the automatic counter, give its trip lever a few extra yanks, and return to his workstation. I grinned when I saw this happen, shook my head, and continued my work. I felt that as long as I wasn't messing with the counter myself, then my integrity was still intact.

But before long I realized that because I got paid the same amount as the other men on my team, then it didn't really matter who pulled on the counter. I was just as guilty of stealing from the company as the others were. Was I going to fund my mission with stolen money?



I agonized over what to do. The extra money in our paychecks wasn't much. A lot of people would say it wasn't worth troubling over, but I was troubled. I knew I had

to confront my co-workers.

"Are you kidding me?" asked Bob (names have been changed), the senior team member. "Everybody cheats. Even the management. They expect it."



The new pay incentive created an incentive to cheat. A co-worker would often sneak beside the automatic counter and give its trip lever a few extra yanks.

He saw no need to change. What else could I do? Even without inflating our production numbers, our press was the most productive on our shift. I often heard workers on other

presses say they wished they worked on our team.

"I could trade places with Jack at the other press," I suggested to Bob.

"I think you're being stupid," he told me, "but I can work with Jack."

After Jack and I switched teams, Bob often reminded me how much more money he was making than I was. Lyrics from "How Firm a Foundation" came to mind: "Fear not, I am with thee; oh, be not dismayed." Those words helped me shrug off Bob's taunts.

Not long afterward, Bob approached me. He said Jack was not working

out, and my team wanted me back. I was surprised. I told Bob that I would return but there couldn't be any cheating. He agreed. My old team welcomed me back warmly, and the cheating stopped.

I expected to be tested before going on my mission, but I had no idea that my honesty and courage would be tried. I am grateful that when I needed strength to do what was right, the Lord upheld me with His "righteous, omnipotent hand."¹ ■
Kenneth Hurst, Alabama, USA

NOTE

1. "How Firm a Foundation," *Hymns*, no. 85.

WE TURNED TO PRAYER

One Sunday our stake received the wonderful news that Elder Carlos H. Amado of the Seventy would be coming to speak to our stake on Tuesday evening. My family and I were thrilled, but I worried about how we would make it to the meeting.

As a high school teacher, I had to teach a class Tuesday evening. Unfortunately, I was rarely granted time off. Not sure what to do but determined to hear Elder Amado speak, my family and I turned to prayer, hoping the Lord would provide a way.

The day before the conference, I felt prompted to talk with the principal about leaving 20 minutes early so my family and I could make it to the

meeting. I arrived in her office, and before I could say a word, she asked me if I would mind changing my Tuesday class starting time to two hours earlier than normal. This meant that my class would get out two hours early.

What a blessing this was to us. We arrived at the meeting in plenty of time and felt the Spirit in the presence of one of the Lord's disciples. Our five-year-old son even had the wonderful privilege of sharing a hug and small conversation with Elder Amado before the meeting began. Together with the rest of the congregation, we enjoyed an outpouring of the Spirit. In addition, we gained a testimony as a family that Heavenly Father knows our desires and hears our prayers. ■
Miguel Troncoso, Santa Cruz, Argentina



HOME TEACHING AND VISITING TEACHING: A WORK OF Ministering

: *New to home or
: visiting teaching?
: Consider these
: nine suggestions.*

I know it's the end of the month, and I'm so sorry we haven't had a chance to discuss the Visiting Teaching Message," said Sister Julie B. Beck's visiting teacher. But even as she made this statement, she was leaving the home of the general Relief Society president with a basket of ironing to complete and return to Sister Beck. "Do you think we could count this?" she asked Sister Beck hesitantly.

When Sister Beck recounts this incident, tears come to her eyes as she asks, "How could this dear friend and dedicated visiting teacher ever feel that I had *not* been visit taught and watched over? This wasn't the first time she'd stopped in to meet a need that month. How could she not realize that she was constantly ministering to me and blessing my family? Her care and concern for me are the epitome of visiting teaching. Of course, she could report that I had been visit taught!"

As Sister Beck's experience illustrates, inspired visiting and home teaching are more than a formal visit and aren't ever complete. Home and visiting teaching are about taking care of people more than completing processes, and when done correctly, they represent caring and not counting. These assignments are to provide watchcare and to minister to each other as the Savior ministered. Here are some ideas that may help you:

- **Know whom you are assigned to visit and who your companion is.** The priesthood or Relief Society leaders in your ward or branch should provide you with the name and contact information of each family or individual you are assigned to visit. Introduce yourself to your companion and to the people you visit and start building a relationship.
- **Visit.** Meet in the person's home when possible. If that's not feasible, you might consider meeting near the person's workplace, taking a walk together, or gathering before or after Sunday meetings. Teach and inspire each other—perhaps by starting with the First Presidency or Visiting Teaching Message. Share your testimony. Share what's going on in your lives. Develop love by being friendly and caring. Listen sincerely. Keep the confidences others entrust to you. Continue to be a friend, as time often leads to greater trust.
- **Pray with and for those you teach.** It might be appropriate to ask at the end of your visit, "Can we pray with you?" The head of the household should choose someone to say the prayer. In the days and weeks between visits, continue to pray for those you home or visit teach. Ask Heavenly Father for help to know how to watch over and love them.



YOUR FAITH WILL GROW



"I received a phone call from a distraught mother in a state far away from where I was. She told me that her unmarried daughter had moved to another city far from her home. She sensed from the little contact she had with her daughter that something was terribly wrong. The mother feared for the moral safety of her daughter. She pleaded with me to help her daughter.

"I found out who the daughter's home teacher was. I called him. He was young. And yet he and his companion both had been awakened in the night with not only concern for the girl but with inspiration that she was about to make choices that would bring sadness and misery. With only the inspiration of the Spirit, they went to see her. She did not at first want to tell them anything about her

situation. They pleaded with her to repent and to choose to follow the path the Lord had set out for her and that her mother and father had taught her to follow. She realized as she listened that the only way they could have known what they knew about her life was from God. A mother's prayer had gone to Heavenly Father, and the Holy Ghost had been sent to home teachers with an errand.

"... Your faith will grow as you serve the Lord in caring for Heavenly Father's children as the Lord's teacher to their home. You will have your prayers answered. You will come to know for yourself that He lives, that He loves us, and that He sends inspiration to those with even the beginnings of faith in Him and with the desire to serve Him in His Church."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Gifts of the Spirit for Hard Times" (Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Sept. 10, 2006), lds.org/broadcast.



Blessings of Visiting Teaching

By Silvia H. Allred

First Counselor in the
General Relief Society Presidency

As an adult sister in the Church, you are given the opportunity and responsibility to serve as a visiting teacher. In this capacity you have the potential to do much good. As you visit your assigned sisters, you will:

- Know and love the sisters you visit teach and make new friends.
- Have the opportunity to share and testify of gospel doctrines.

- Be an influence for good and strength to the sisters.
- Have the opportunity to offer and give assistance when needed.
- Feel the Spirit guide your work.
- Experience joy through your service.
- Grow spiritually as a covenant daughter of God.



- **Minister.** Observe and anticipate needs. For instance, if a sister you visit has an upcoming test at school, perhaps you could make her dinner sometime during the week so she can have more study time. If the brother you home teach is looking for a job, introduce him to people who might be able to help.
- **Ask helpful questions.** Questions can lead to opportunities to give comfort, share relevant gospel principles, and provide meaningful service. You might ask: “What worries or concerns you?” “What questions do you have about the gospel?” Or you could be specific: “Could we help you with a household task?” “Would you like a ride to the store or a doctor’s appointment?” Questions will often bring better results than simply saying, “Call us if you need anything.”
- **Seek inspiration.** The Spirit can help you know how to help those you are assigned to teach. You might be prompted about topics to discuss or assistance to offer. As you get to know them better, you may even be prompted to encourage those you visit to receive further ordinances and covenants of the gospel or to further participate in all the blessings the gospel offers.
- **Report the right information.** Report on the temporal and spiritual well-being of those you visit, any service you have given, and any needs. Report confidential concerns directly to the Relief Society or quorum president.
- **Coordinate with your partner.** With your partner, divide assignments as necessary to make contact and to provide watchcare. You might need to take turns visiting, providing service, and reporting the well-being of those you teach.
- **Remember.** Keep track of important events in the lives of those you teach, such as birthdays and even day-to-day happenings that might be important to them. ■

The Fire of Teaching the Gospel

My home teaching companion and I visited an elderly couple. I had been home from my mission only a matter of weeks, but I was already starting to forget the feeling of teaching the gospel. But that visit and the

lesson we taught rekindled the fire. The Spirit burned strong in my heart, and all I could do was smile and try to hold back my tears.

Home teaching is important for young adults because all of us, whatever

our circumstances, need to be strengthened by the Spirit. The pull of the world is strong, and teaching the restored gospel is one of the best ways to avoid straying onto dangerous paths.

Ramon Kaspers, Netherlands



The Joy of the Lord

I face challenges, and when things don't go my way, it is easy to complain. But my perspective changed when my companion and I were assigned to home teach a family who had not attended church in a long time.

During one visit, I realized that this family's challenges made my problems seem like a raindrop in the ocean. Their attending church seemed unlikely, but my companion and I continued to work with them.

One Sunday morning before sacrament meeting, I felt impressed to stand at the door. To my great astonishment, I saw this family entering the chapel! Words cannot explain the joy I felt. My own challenges were swallowed up in the joy of the Lord (see Alma 31:38).

Rati Mogotsi, South Africa

Tomorrow's Friends

After I left home to study abroad in France, visiting teaching took on new meaning. The sisters I was assigned did not remain simply names to which I could vaguely associate a face; they became friends close to my heart. Several times I was touched by the Holy Ghost at specific moments

to pray and sometimes fast for them or to call, console, listen, write, go see, or just put my arm around them. These small gestures made a difference in their lives, but they also made a difference in mine.

All of the sisters were different. Some were my age; others were older. Some were young, married

Perfect at Any Age

When I was assigned to visit teach an elderly woman, I wondered whether we would have anything in common because of our age difference. I came to realize, however, that the Lord knew my companion and I were uniquely suited to visit this sister, who needed someone to talk with and to listen.

I came to find that I could be an instrument in the Lord's hands in serving this sister. I also discovered that I had a lot to learn from her. Spending time together brought happiness to *both* of our lives.

Teboho Ndaba, South Africa

mothers; others were single. Our visits allowed us to see beyond our differences.

Recently I moved to a new town. My heart rejoiced when I received an assignment to visit teach some sisters. Today they are just names. Tomorrow they will be friends.

Nirina J-Randriamiharisoa, Madagascar

To the Point

My nonmember friends have talked to me about things that go on in the temple.

How do they know about them, and what should I say about them?

First of all, don't let your friends' questions bother you. Temple symbols and ordinances have reached the public in various ways over the years, primarily by people who have left the Church. But just because these things are known to people outside the Church does not mean that they are any less sacred. What's important is that we

continue to hold them sacred and show our commitment to the Lord.

Second, if people ask you about temple ceremonies, you can truthfully say that you don't know much about them because you haven't experienced them yet. However, to clear up misunderstandings, you could explain that we go to the temple to make covenants with Heavenly Father and that it "helps us focus on the Savior, His role in our Heavenly Father's plan, and our commitment to follow Him" (*True to the Faith* [2004], 171). Temple symbols and ceremonies are sacred and should not be discussed publicly, nor can they be properly understood or appreciated outside the context of the temple.

To learn more, you can read the following resources, both of which are available in some

languages on LDS.org:

- The booklet *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (2004).
- The "Temples" entry in *True to the Faith*, pages 170–74. ■



It is important to be respectful to our Church leaders and remember that although they are our friends, in a Church setting we should honor their callings and show respect by referring to them as “Brother” or “Sister.” ■

Is it all right to call Church by their first names?

Sometimes we get so close to our leaders that we are tempted to become casual in our relationships with them. While it is good to be friendly, it is also important to show proper respect for them and their callings. In the Church it is customary to refer to adults as “Brother” or “Sister,” a greeting that both shows respect and reminds us that we are children of Heavenly Father. Other more formal titles, such as *elder*, *bishop*, or *president*, are also used as signs of respect. Full-time missionaries set a good example of this by referring to each other as “Elder” or “Sister.”

President Monson said that serving a full-time mission is a priesthood responsibility. What does that mean?

Last general conference President Thomas S. Monson said: “To young men of the Aaronic Priesthood and to you young men who are becoming elders: I repeat what prophets have long taught—that every

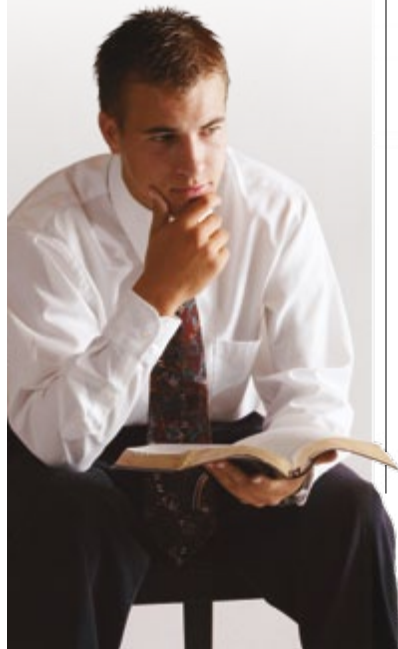
worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. *Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much.*”¹

Part of receiving the priesthood is agreeing to take upon yourself the responsibilities and duties that come with it. As with any gift that Heavenly Father gives, He expects you to use the priesthood to bless others. “For of him unto whom much is given much is required” (D&C 82:3).

Holders of the Aaronic Priesthood are “to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59). As President Monson stated, serving a full-time mission is a duty of priesthood holders. On a mission you will devote all of your energy, time, and focus to fulfilling that duty: serving, preaching the gospel, and inviting all to come unto Christ. Of course, fulfilling your duty always comes with blessings. Your mission will be a time of great joy and spiritual growth. ■

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “As We Meet Together Again,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 5–6; emphasis added.



SUPER!

**CHOOSE
TO BE A
HERO.**

Follow the prophet.
Prepare to serve
a mission.

(See D&C 15:6.)



SHOULD I LEAVE OR STAY?



Days before I was to leave on my mission, my parents were hospitalized. I didn't know if I could leave them.

By Rodolfo Giannini

I had the good fortune to be introduced to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints through a friend. I was taught by missionaries who were called by God to bring the light of the gospel to the world. Two years after my baptism I was called to serve in the Italy Milan Mission. Before I left, I had a profound spiritual experience.

My parents, who were not members of the Church, didn't share my joy in this missionary opportunity. We had terrible arguments that caused me much suffering.

Two days before I left on my mission, both my parents suddenly became seriously ill. My mother had a health crisis for which she was hospitalized. Nothing the doctors tried

seemed to help. My father had cirrhosis of the liver, from which the doctors said it would be difficult to recover.

That evening I knelt and prayed to my Heavenly Father, saying, "Father, help me. My family is sick, and I can't leave them in these circumstances. I pray, Father, help me know whether it's right to leave or stay."

I meditated on my situation for a few minutes. Then I felt a subtle but penetrating voice that said, "Have faith, and everything will work out for the best."

Notwithstanding the sorrow I felt in seeing my family in poor health, I decided to get on the airplane that would take me to Rome and then to the United States, where I attended the missionary training center. My

nights at the MTC were not happy. I thought over and over again about my parents. Finally, with the approval of the MTC president, I was able to call them to see how they were doing.

On the phone, my mother told me with great joy that she and my father had had a miracle from the Lord—words I never would have expected to hear from a woman without a lot of faith. She told me that after I left, their health had improved, and the doctors couldn't explain it. My parents were healthy and happy. My joy was full.

Through this experience, my testimony of the power of faith, prayer, and obedience grew. I am grateful that the Lord took care of my family during my mission. ■



DEFENDER OF THE FAITH

Kubangila Kasanza Celva of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, is a great player on many teams.

By Richard M. Romney

Church Magazines

The attacker from the other team is dribbling toward the goal, fast. He seems certain to score.

But then Celva catches up to him, matches him stride for stride, kicks the ball away, and races in the opposite direction.

"I'm a defender," 12-year-old Celva explains. "It's my job to stop the other team from scoring."

Celva's the kind of player you love to have on your side. He's quiet but assertive, he's ready to work hard, and he loves to see everyone on the team succeed. These are qualities that also make him a great part of some other teams—his church and his family. And so does his willingness to defend the truth.

Celva and Nephi

Celva's favorite scripture is 1 Nephi 3:7: "I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded." As Nephi

did, Celva trusts in the Lord. "He will not ask me to do something without preparing a way for me to do it. He will strengthen me and send others to help me."

Go and Do

"Listening to what we are taught about the gospel is important," Celva says. "But it's also important to *do* what we are taught." He remembers his baptism and tries each day to use the gift of the Holy Ghost to make wise choices. He has just received the Aaronic Priesthood, looks forward to going to the temple someday to make additional covenants with the Lord, and plans to serve a full-time mission. He wants to set a good example for his brothers and be of service to his mother and father.

"I honor my mother and father by doing what they ask me to do and by keeping the commandments of our Heavenly Father," he says. "As the

oldest child, I know it is important that I set a good example for my brothers, because what I do they are also likely to do."

Staying Strong

Celva knows it's important to work hard, both in sports and in the gospel. Family and personal prayer, family



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Celva is a name with significance. It combines the names of Celva's father, Celestin, and his

mother, Valerie. "It reminds me of how much they wanted to be together, to create a happy family," Celva says.

His brothers names are also significant. Nathan, age 7, is named for a wise man in the Bible. Beni, age 4, means "blessed." And although the two-year-old's name is Celestin Jr., after his father, for now everyone calls him Le Petit ("the little one").

MORE ONLINE

To see a map of Kinshasa and to watch a video of Celva singing a hymn and bearing his testimony, go to www.liahona.lds.org.

and personal scripture study, family home evening—all are part of his regular routine. He has a testimony of the Word of Wisdom and knows that some things are good to eat while others are bad. “Athletes shouldn’t drink beer,” he says emphatically.

A True Defender

As the Church moves into the future, it is good to know there are strong young men like Celva who are eager to do what is right. “I know my Heavenly Father lives, that Jesus Christ is real, and that Joseph Smith was the prophet who restored the gospel to the earth,” Celva says. “I have that testimony and will always defend the Church in every way.” ■



The Savior taught us that we need not tolerate evil. “Jesus went into the temple of God, . . . and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers.”

Tolerance is a virtue much needed in our turbulent world. But we must recognize that there is a difference between *tolerance* and *tolerate*. Your gracious tolerance for an individual does not grant him or her license to do wrong, nor does your tolerance obligate you to tolerate his or her misdeed. That distinction is fundamental to an understanding of this vital virtue.

Two Great Commandments

Our highest priorities in life are to love God and to love our neighbors.¹ That broadly includes neighbors in our own family, our community, our nation, and our world. Obedience to the second commandment facilitates obedience to the first commandment. “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17).

Baptism Transcends Background

On every continent and across isles of the sea, the faithful are being gathered into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Differences in cultural background, language, gender, and facial features fade into insignificance as members lose themselves in service to their beloved Savior.

Only the comprehension of the true



Tolerance?

fatherhood of God can bring full appreciation of the true brotherhood of man. That understanding inspires desire to build bridges of cooperation instead of walls of segregation.

Intolerance seeds contention; tolerance supercedes contention. Tolerance is the key that opens the door to mutual understanding and love.

Risks of Boundless Tolerance

Now may I offer an important note of caution. An erroneous assumption could be made that if a little of something is good, a lot must be better. Not so! Overdoses of needed medication can be toxic. Boundless mercy could oppose justice. So tolerance, without limit, could lead to spineless permissiveness.

The Lord drew boundary lines to define acceptable limits of tolerance. Danger rises when those divine limits are disobeyed. Just as parents teach little children not to run and play in the street, the Savior taught us that we need not tolerate evil. “Jesus went into the temple of God, . . . and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers” (Matthew 21:12; see also Mark 11:15). Though He loves the sinner, the Lord said that He “cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance” (D&C 1:31).

Real love for the sinner may compel courageous confrontation—not acquiescence! Real love does not support self-destructing behavior.

Tolerance and Mutual Respect

Our commitment to the Savior causes us to scorn sin yet heed His commandment to love

our neighbors. Together we live on this earth, which is to be tended, subdued, and shared with gratitude.² Each of us can help to make life in this world a more pleasant experience.

The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles issued a public statement from which I quote:

“It is morally wrong for any person or group to deny anyone his or her inalienable dignity on the tragic and abhorrent theory of racial or cultural superiority.

“We call upon all people everywhere to recommit themselves to the time-honored ideals of tolerance and mutual respect. We sincerely believe that as we acknowledge one another with consideration and compassion we will discover that we can all peacefully coexist despite our deepest differences.”³

Together we may stand intolerant of transgression but tolerant of neighbors with differences they hold sacred. Our beloved brothers and sisters throughout the world are *all* children of God. He is our Father. His Son, Jesus, is the Christ. His Church has been restored to the earth in these latter days to bless all of God’s children. ■

From an April 1994 general conference address.

NOTES

1. See Matthew 22:36–40; John 13:34–35; 15:12, 17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11–12; 2 John 1:5.
2. See Genesis 1:28; D&C 59:15–21; Moses 2:28; Abraham 4:28.
3. Statement of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 18, 1992; as quoted in “Church Exhorts Ethnic, Religious Tolerance,” *Church News*, Oct. 24, 1992, 4.



By Elder Russell M. Nelson

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



**By Elder
Koichi Aoyagi**
Of the Seventy

As a teenager in Matsumoto, Japan, I was very interested in learning English. At age 17 I joined the English club at my high school. At the start of the school year, the club decided to find a native English speaker to teach us English conversation. We searched and searched, but the English instructors we spoke to charged a fee, and the club couldn't afford to pay. Discouraged, we almost gave up.

Then one day, as I rode my bicycle to school, I saw some young American men in suits handing out flyers. I took one and put it in my pocket. After school I examined the paper and found that it was an invitation to attend a free English conversation class. On the flyer was the name "The Church of Jesus

After several weeks I began asking the missionaries about their church, and they invited me to learn more. I accepted, and they taught me the missionary lessons. At the time I did not fully understand or appreciate the importance of what I was learning, but I felt the Spirit, and I understood that the principles the missionaries were teaching me were good. When they invited me to be baptized, I accepted.

Before I could join the Church, however, I had to receive my parents' consent. At first they were very much against it—the teachings of Christianity were foreign and strange to them. But I was not yet ready to give up. I asked the missionaries to come to my home

THE PATH OF

Christ of Latter-day Saints." I had never heard of such a church, but I was excited; I had solved the English club's problem!

On the day of the next class, about 30 club members attended with me. The missionaries taught the class, which we all enjoyed very much. From the very first day of class, I noticed that there was something different about the missionaries. Their warmth, love, positive attitudes, and cheerfulness deeply impressed me. There seemed to be a light around them—I had never before met any one quite like them.

and explain to my parents about the Church, what they had been teaching me, and what would be expected of me. The Spirit softened my parents' hearts, and this time they gave me permission to be baptized.

Drifting Away

After I was baptized and confirmed, I attended the little Matsumoto Branch of 12 to 15 active members. I made friends, and it was fun to attend every week. About a year later I graduated from high school and moved to Yokohama to attend the university. The nearest branch was the Tokyo Central Branch, which had more than 150 active members.

When I attended this new branch, I felt like a country boy in the big city. I had a hard time making friends. One Sunday I stayed home from church. Soon I stopped attending altogether. I began making friends with my non-member classmates, and the Church drifted further and further from my mind.

This continued for several months. Then one day I received a letter from a sister in the Matsumoto Branch. “I heard you have stopped attending church,” she said. I was surprised. Apparently someone from my new branch had told her I was not attending church anymore! The sister continued her letter by quoting Doctrine and Covenants 121:34: “Behold, there are many called, but

myself. I decided that I must pray. If I felt nothing, I could completely forget about the Church and the commandments, and I would never go again. However, if I did receive an answer, as Moroni promised, I would have to repent, embrace the gospel with all my heart, go back to church, and do all I could to follow the commandments.

THE CHOSEN

few are chosen.” Then she wrote, “Koichi, you have been baptized a member of the Church. You have been called, but you are no longer among the chosen.”

As I read these words, I was filled with regret. I knew I needed to change somehow. I realized that I did not have a strong testimony. I wasn’t sure if God lived, and I didn’t know if Jesus Christ was my Savior. For several days I grew anxious as I thought about the message in the letter. I didn’t know what to do. Then one morning I remembered something the missionaries had taught me. They had asked me to read Moroni 10:3–5, promising that I could know the truth for

As I knelt and prayed that morning, I pleaded with Heavenly Father to answer me. “If Thou live—if Thou are real,” I prayed, “please let me know.” I prayed to know if Jesus Christ was my Savior and if the Church was true. As I finished, I suddenly felt something. I was surrounded by a warm feeling, and my heart was filled with joy. I understood the truth: God *does* live, and Jesus *is* my Savior. The Lord’s Church was truly restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon is the word of God.

Needless to say, I prayed for forgiveness that very day and resolved to follow the commandments. I returned to church and promised the Lord that I would do whatever it took to remain faithful.

It’s one thing to be baptized. It’s another to endure to the end.



FOUR GOALS

1. Receive as much higher education as possible.

2. Serve a full-time mission.

3. Marry in the temple.

4. Gain skills to support a family.

A short time later the Church began making plans to build a chapel in Yokohama. At that time members of the branch were expected to contribute money and provide labor for the building's construction. When the mission president challenged the branch members to contribute all they could, I remembered my commitment to do whatever the Lord asked of me. So every day for nearly a year, I helped with the construction after my university classes were over.

Achieving Four Goals

About this same time, Elder Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, visited Japan and encouraged the youth of the Church to achieve four goals: (1) receive as much higher education as possible, (2) serve a full-time mission, especially the young men, (3) marry in the temple, and (4) gain skills to support a family. Until that point I had never planned to accomplish these four things. But I later knelt and prayed: “Heavenly Father, I want to accomplish those four goals. Please help me.”

I knew that in order to stay on the path of the chosen, I needed to follow the counsel of the Lord's servants. I committed to do all I could to follow Elder Kimball's advice and to work hard to build up the Church.

For the next several years I continued to work toward my four goals. I served as a construction missionary for two years, helping build two chapels in my home country. Then I was called to serve a full-time proselytizing mission. Soon after returning home, I married in the temple the woman from the Matsumoto Branch who wrote me the letter. Later I landed my dream job in a foreign trading company.



As I followed the word of the Lord and the counsel of the prophets, I felt that again I was on the path of the chosen. And I am striving to stay on that path today.

Hearing His Voice

My young brothers and sisters, the Savior calls continually to all of us, bidding us to follow Him. The Lord taught, “My sheep hear my voice, . . . and they follow me” (John 10:27). You have heard the Lord’s voice; you have followed Him by being baptized into His Church. Indeed, you have been called. However, to be chosen is a very different matter.

Decide now that you will do whatever it takes to remain faithful. Decide to endure to the end by following all of God’s commandments. Set righteous and worthy goals for yourself. Gain an education, serve a mission, marry in the temple, and support your family both spiritually and temporally. If you have not yet gained a testimony, please get on your knees and ask Heavenly Father to help you gain a knowledge of the truth. Then, when the answer comes, commit yourself wholeheartedly to the work of the Lord. Do whatever it takes to get on the path of the chosen. ■



The Girl with the Beautiful Smile

I was scared, but I found a secret weapon to overcome my fear.

By Michelle Glauser

For months I had prepared with my piano teacher for this day. I was participating in Achievement in Music, an annual competition that rates music students on all sorts of things—from knowledge of theory to the dynamics in a memorized piece. Finally the day had come and along with it my nervousness.

The scariest part of the competition involved performing pieces for judges. I knew my pieces, but my hands shook as I played.

The dreaded performance was over. I could relax because I just had to give my report on a composer. I found the correct area and waited in a line before two doors. Curiously, I looked in the door on the left. A friendly teacher encouraged students as they nervously entered and

became acquainted. She obviously wanted to put them at ease.

Then I looked in the room on the right. There was another piano teacher, an older one, but she had a stern look that made my hands turn cold. The more I saw her interact with the students, the more scared I felt. All I could think was, “I hope I get the first judge.”

I read my report over and over. When I got to the front of the line, I hoped the person on the left would finish first. To my dismay, the student on the right started walking to the door. There was no way I could go in there. Then the thought came to me, “Just put on your biggest smile.”

I walked in with a bounce in my step and the biggest smile I’d ever shown. Like they say, by acting happy, you feel happy. I beamed as I shook the judge’s hand. Then I read

my report in a clear voice, pausing now and then to smile at her. At the end of my report, I thanked her for her time. She did not seem scary anymore. As I walked out of the room, I felt relieved and happy.

A few months later I listened as my piano teacher read the comments from the judges. On the last comment she said, “Wow, you really impressed this judge. She wrote, ‘Michelle, the girl with the beautiful smile.’” I didn’t have to ask her who wrote that.

Changing my attitude helped me do my best. Whenever I have something difficult to do, instead of showing myself to be unwilling, I decide to make it fulfilling and enjoyable. I know that my attitude affects my experiences. By persevering with a good attitude, I have learned to enjoy my challenges. ■

Special Witness



Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares some thoughts on this subject.

HOW CAN THE GOSPEL HELP ME BE HAPPY?

From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on August 23, 2002.

Heavenly Father's plan of happiness is designed to provide direction for His children, to help them become happy, and to bring them safely home to Him.

Obedience to the principles of the gospel invites the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost helps us to know, to understand, and to live the teachings of Jesus Christ.

In this life we experience tenderness, love, kindness, happiness, sorrow, disappointment, pain, and even physical limitations in ways that prepare us to live again with our Father in Heaven. There are lessons we must learn and experiences we must have on earth.

The source and cause of true happiness are gospel truth and obedience to eternal law.

For your happiness and protection, I invite you to study and live more diligently the Savior's gospel. We should not only live the gospel, but we should love living the gospel. As we do so, we will receive countless blessings, greater strength, and true happiness.

You know what is right and what is wrong, and you have the responsibility to learn for yourself "by study and also by faith" (D&C 88:118) the things you should and should not do.





Eli's Operation

"All they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord" (D&C 84:35).

By Jane McBride Choate

Based on a true story

Eli looked at the pile of homework his friend had dropped off after school. Eli had missed another week of school because of an ear infection.

That evening Eli's parents came into his room. His mom sat on the side of Eli's bed and took his hand. "Eli, the doctor thinks you need an operation," she said.

"What kind of operation?"

"He wants to put tubes in your ears to keep you from getting more infections," Mom said. "It won't hurt, and you'll be out of the hospital in a day." She squeezed his hand.

Eli trusted his parents. But the idea of having an operation scared him. He thought about the story he had heard in Primary about Joseph

Smith. When Joseph was seven years old, the bone in his leg became infected. The infection got worse until the doctor decided that he must remove part of the bone or Joseph might lose his leg or even die.

In Joseph Smith's day, doctors gave people liquor to help numb the pain during an operation, but Joseph refused the liquor the doctor suggested he drink. And he refused to be tied to the bed. He said that if his father held him, he wouldn't move. Joseph's father held him tightly in his arms throughout the painful surgery. The operation was successful, and Joseph recovered.

Eli thought about Joseph's courage and faith in his father. "Can I have a blessing, Dad?" he asked. Eli knew a priesthood blessing could help him. At the beginning of the school year,

Eli's father had given him a blessing.

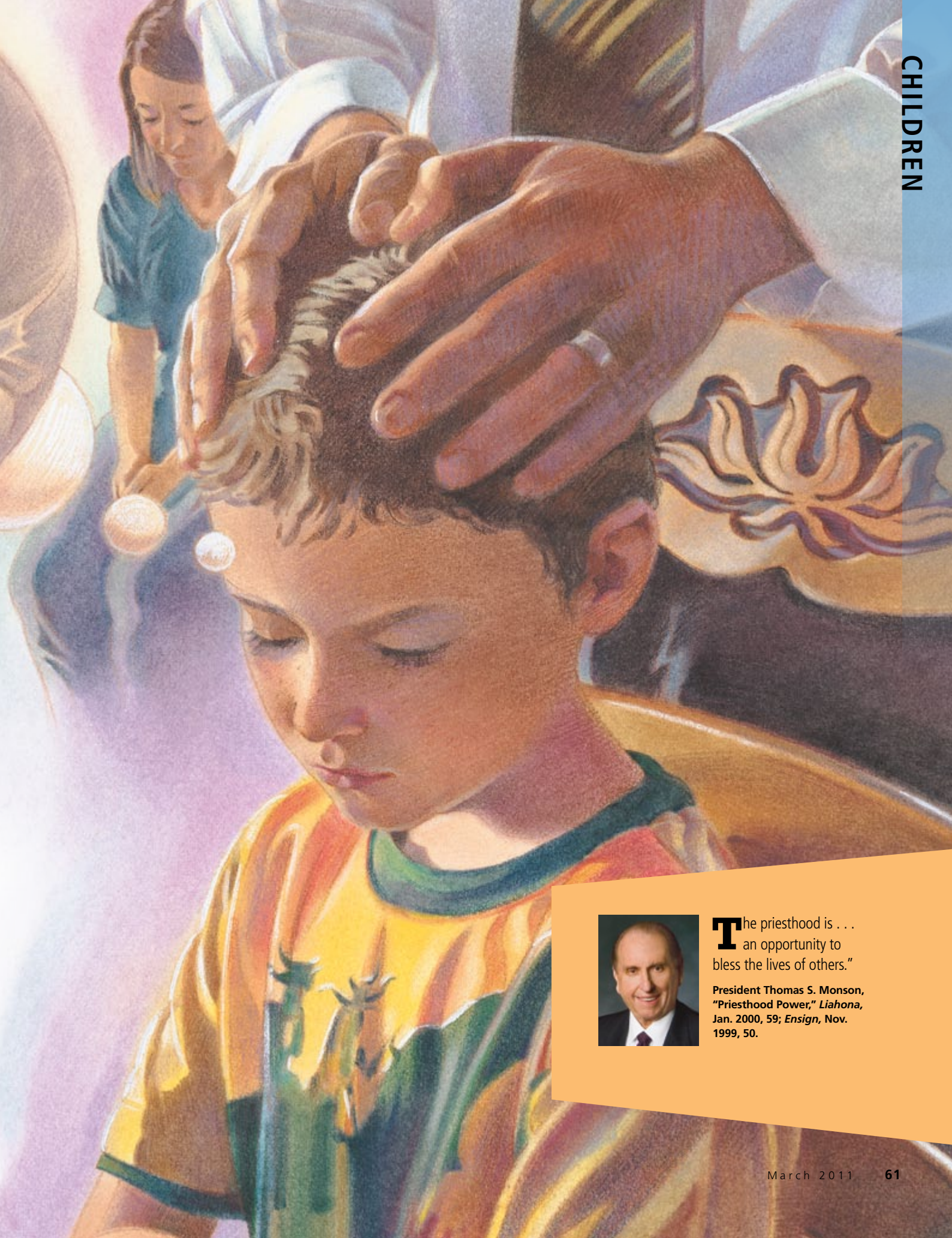
"That's a great idea," his father said.

Eli's mother folded her arms and bowed her head. Eli felt his father's hands on his head. His father's voice grew in confidence as he blessed Eli that he would not be scared and that he would recover completely.

When the blessing was over, Eli was no longer afraid. "I can have the operation now," he said.

Three days later he went to the hospital and returned home the next day. The ear infections soon stopped, and Eli quickly made up the schoolwork he had missed.

Eli was grateful that he was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that he could be blessed through the priesthood. ■



The priesthood is . . .
an opportunity to
bless the lives of others."

President Thomas S. Monson,
"Priesthood Power," *Liahona*,
Jan. 2000, 59; *Ensign*, Nov.
1999, 50.

By President
Henry B. Eyring
First Counselor in the
First Presidency



Count Your Blessings

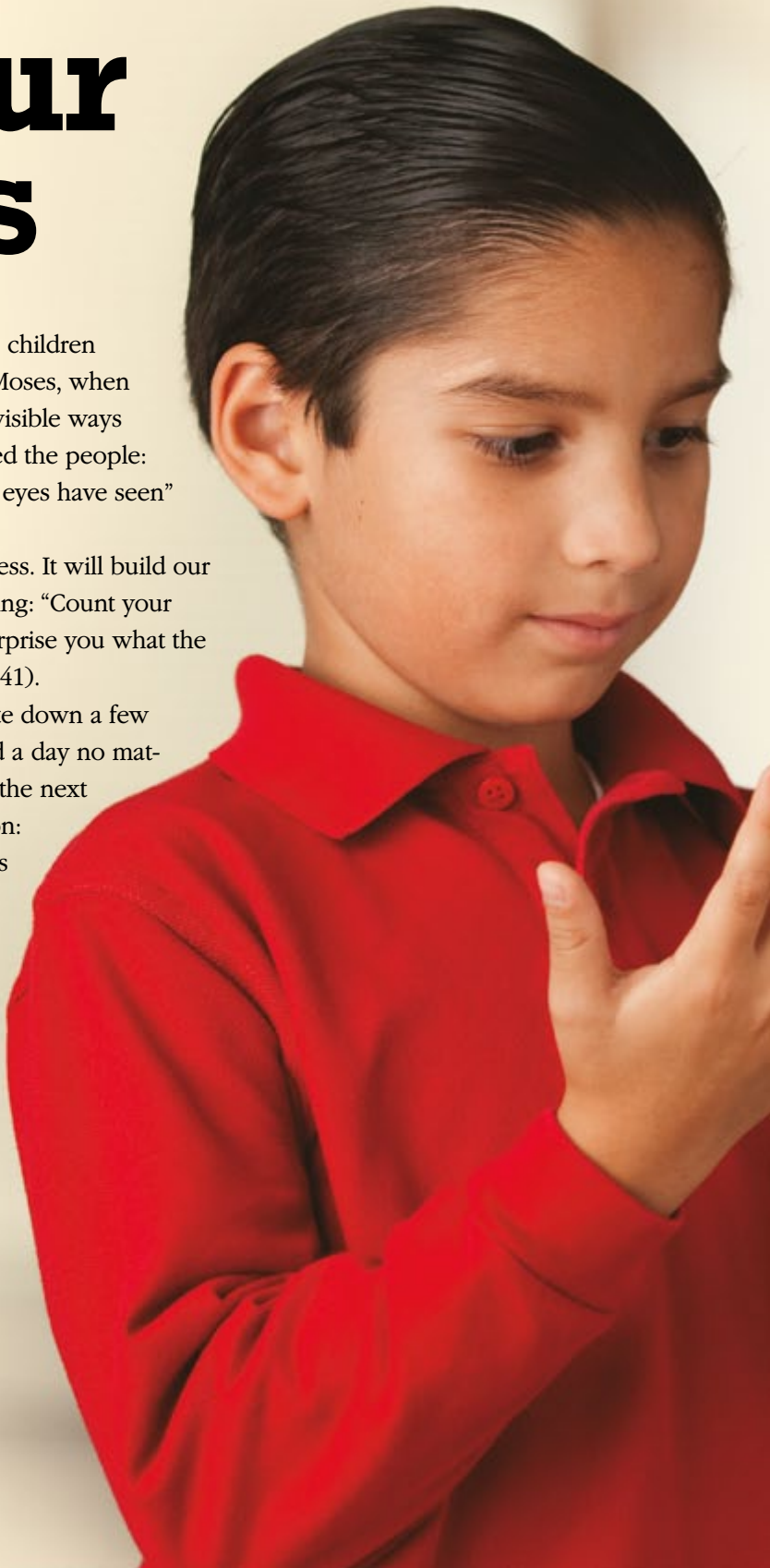
Forgetting God has been a problem among His children since the world began. Think of the times of Moses, when God provided manna and in miraculous and visible ways led and protected His children. Still the prophet warned the people: “Take heed . . . lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen” (Deuteronomy 4:9).

Find ways to recognize and remember God’s kindness. It will build our testimonies. You remember that song we sometimes sing: “Count your many blessings; name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done” (“Count Your Blessings,” *Hymns*, no. 241).

When our children were very small, I started to write down a few things about what happened every day. I never missed a day no matter how tired I was or how early I would have to start the next day. Before I would write, I would ponder this question: “Have I seen the hand of God reaching out to touch us or our children or our family today?” As I would cast my mind over the day, I would see evidence of what God had done for one of us that I had not recognized in the busy moments of the day. I realized that trying to remember had allowed God to show me what He had done.

The Holy Ghost helps us see what God has done for us. I testify that God loves us and blesses us more than most of us have yet recognized. I know that is true, and it brings me joy to remember Him. ■

From an October 2007 general conference address.



AND IT WILL SURPRISE YOU!

You can learn to notice the blessings that Heavenly Father gives you the same way President Eyring did—by writing them down.

1 Place a notebook or journal and a pen or pencil by your bed.

2 Each night before you pray and go to bed, write down:

- The date.
- Two or three good things that happened that day.
- How you think these good things are blessings from Heavenly Father.

3 When you pray, be sure to thank Heavenly Father for the good things you remembered. You can also tell your family members about the blessings you found!

HOW THE LORD BLESSED THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

The book of Exodus in the Old Testament tells about how the Lord helped His chosen people when they had problems. Match each problem with a blessing that the Lord sent to help His people.

PROBLEMS

1. The Lord's chosen people were slaves in Egypt.

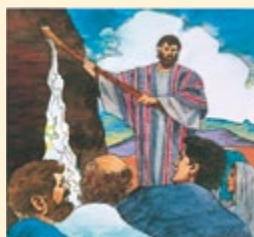
2. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, wouldn't let them leave.

3. Pharaoh let the people go, but then his army chased them to try to bring them back.

4. The people were thirsty in the wilderness.

5. The people ran out of food, and they were hungry.

6. The people needed help in following the Lord.



BLESSINGS

A. The Lord sent many plagues to Egypt, and Pharaoh finally released the people.

B. The Lord gave Moses the Ten Commandments. He let all the people hear His voice and showed Himself to some of them.

C. The Lord told Moses to hit a rock with his staff, and water came out.

D. The Lord told Moses to lead the people out of Egypt to the promised land.

E. The Lord parted the Red Sea so the people could escape.

F. The Lord sent the people a food that tasted like bread and honey. It was called *manna*, and they found it on the ground each morning.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY
WESTON COLTON; ILLUSTRATIONS
BY KEITH CHRISTENSEN

Answers: 1. D; 2. A; 3. E; 4. C; 5. F; 6. B.

Heavenly Father Speaks to Us through His Prophets

By JoAnn Child and Cristina Franco

"What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same" (D&C 1:38).

If you needed to ask someone to give an important message to people you love, what kind of person would you ask? You would probably choose someone who is honest, responsible, and trustworthy.

Heavenly Father gives His message to His children on the earth through prophets. He knows His prophets are honest, responsible, trustworthy, and righteous.

In the scriptures we read the writings of many prophets who wrote the inspired messages given by Heavenly Father to His children. Let's learn about some of the prophets' writings in the scriptures.

Malachi delivered to the people the Lord's message of paying tithes and offerings (see Malachi 3:8–10).

Alma the Younger left his position as chief judge to be a missionary throughout the land (see Alma 4:15–20). He shared God's message with many people.

Moroni gave Heavenly Father's



message to all of us when he gave us this promise about reading the Book of Mormon: "When ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moroni 10:4).

Joseph Smith was given a special message from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ (see Joseph Smith—History 1:11–20). Joseph Smith spent his life declaring that message to all people.

We are blessed to have a prophet today. We can hear messages from Heavenly Father as we listen to the prophet.

Activity

Cut out the strips of paper with the pictures of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Glue the ends of the strips to the beginning of the next one. Fold the paper back and forth on the lines to make a booklet.

Using the list below, write the name of each General Authority under his picture. Listen to their talks at general conference and use the booklet to take notes. Share your thoughts about general conference during a family meal or family home evening. ■

Thomas S. Monson
Henry B. Eyring
Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Boyd K. Packer
L. Tom Perry
Russell M. Nelson
Dallin H. Oaks
M. Russell Ballard
Richard G. Scott
Robert D. Hales
Jeffrey R. Holland
David A. Bednar
Quentin L. Cook
D. Todd Christofferson
Neil L. Andersen





General Conference Notes

The Activity Day Answer

*“Ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith”
(Ether 12:6).*



What an awful day! Today at school I didn't talk to anyone, I didn't play with anyone at recess, and I didn't sit with anyone at lunch. My family has been living in this new town for two weeks, and I still don't have any friends!

As I walked up to my new house, I saw my younger sister playing with the girl from across the street. She waved. “Hi, Rosa!”

I turned my head and didn't say anything back. Three girls on our street are the same age as my younger sister. How many girls on our street are my age? None. Not one!

I pushed through the front door and dropped my backpack on the floor.

“Sister Garcia called from the Primary to remind you about activity day today,” Mom said.

“I don't want to go to activity day,” I grumbled. “I just spent all day with kids I don't know. I don't want to spend another hour with girls I don't know!” Talking to people you don't know might be easy for some people but not for me.

“I know it's been hard moving here and leaving all your old friends,” Mom said. “I've been praying that we will make some new friends soon.”

“Me too,” I said. “I pray for that every night, but so

far Heavenly Father hasn't answered my prayers. It's like He isn't listening.”

Mom squeezed my hand. **“Maybe the call from Sister Garcia is your answer,”** she said.

“How can that be the answer to my prayers?” I asked.

“Sometimes when we pray, Heavenly Father expects us to do something to help answer our prayers,” Mom said. “It's called acting in faith. We have to do more than just pray. Sometimes we have to act in faith before we get the blessing.”

“Could it be possible?” I thought. “Could going to activity day really be the answer to my prayers?”

Later, Mom asked me if I wanted a ride to the activity. I took a deep breath and nodded. Even though I was afraid, it felt like the right thing to do.

My heart was beating fast as we arrived at the



God will not always reward you immediately according to your desires. Rather, God will respond with what in His eternal plan is best for you."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Sustaining Power of Faith in Times of Uncertainty and Testing," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 77.



church. Sister Garcia welcomed me and led me to a chair at the table. Her kind voice and warm smile helped me feel better.

A girl across the table looked at me. "Hi, I'm Teresa," she said. "Are you new?"

There was a lump in my throat, so I just nodded.

"I think I've seen you at school," Teresa said. "What class are you in?"

I swallowed nervously. "Mrs. Lee's class," I told her.

"I'm in the class right next door!" she said.

We talked about our classes and our favorite subjects. As we talked, I was surprised at how much we

had in common. We even both liked roller-skating!

When Mom picked me up after the activity, I jumped into the car.

"Mom, can I play with my new friend Teresa?" I waved at Teresa, and she waved back.

Mom thought it was a great idea, and for the rest of the evening, my new friend and I roller-skated up and down my street.

That night as I knelt by my bed, I thanked Heavenly Father for answering my prayers. At first I was scared to go to activity day, but I'm glad I did. I'm glad I was brave enough to act in faith. ■

Our Page



Sonya K., age 5, Russia

THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY OF MY LIFE

This picture is of my father and me on my baptism day, two years ago. I will always remember that day, because it was the most important day of my life. That was the day I made a covenant with Heavenly Father. I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ live and that They love me very much.

I really like going to the temple. Even though I can't go in yet, I still enjoy going there, and I always remind my parents to go to the temple.

Milton Aarón V., age 10, Ecuador



"Our President Thomas S. Monson," by Tyla J., age 7, Utah, USA

Send your drawing, photo, experience, or testimony for Our Page to liahona@ldschurch.org, with "Our Page" in the subject line.

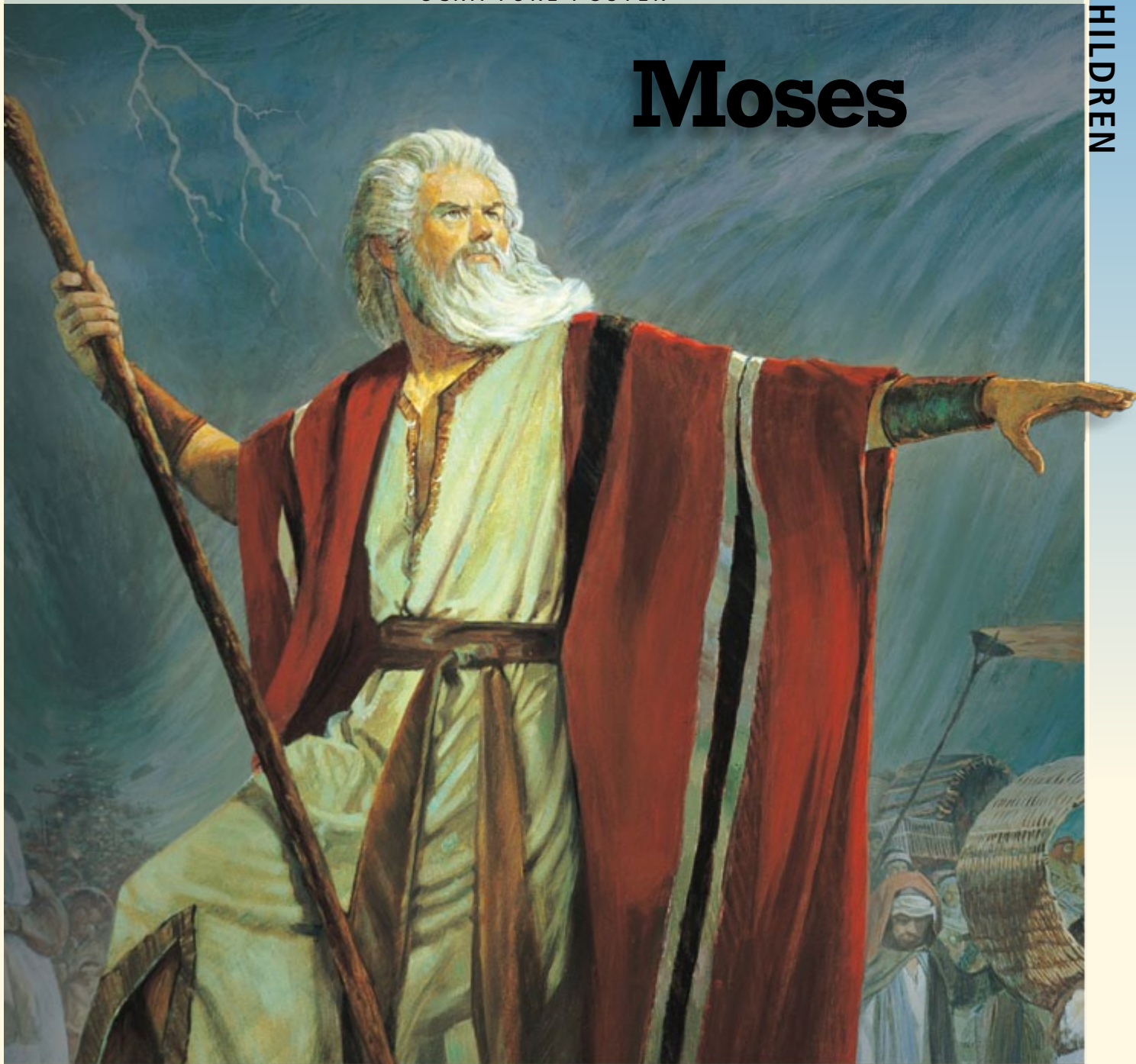
Each submission must include the child's full name, gender, and age (must be ages 3 to 12) plus the parent's name, ward or branch, stake or district, and the parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable). Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.



Celeste and Guiliana C., ages 7 and 6, from Argentina, like to help their mother by

tidying up their room and putting away their toys and shoes. They also take care of their little brother and play with him when their mother is busy. The family loves visiting the temple grounds together. Celeste and Guiliana say it makes them more united as a family.

Moses



About Moses

The Lord gave Moses power to perform miracles. He parted the Red Sea so the Israelites could escape Egypt. Later he received the Ten Commandments.

You may not always understand why the Lord wants you to do certain things in your life, but if you are obedient and have faith as Moses did, the Lord will bless you.

Where to Find More

Exodus 3–14 Moses performs miracles and leads the Israelites from Egypt.

Exodus 19–20 The Lord reveals to Moses the Ten Commandments.

Daniel's Example of Prayer

By Laurie Williams Sowby

Based on a true story

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers"
(1 Timothy 4:12).

1. Daniel was excited. He was flying on an airplane to visit his grandparents in Peru. They weren't members of the Church, but he loved them and they loved him.



2. When Daniel got to Peru, he was happy to see his grandparents. He also was a little homesick. Things were different in Peru than at home in Spain. But he knew one thing could be the same.



4.

Because Jesus told us to.

Why do you want to pray?

3.

Can we have prayer before bedtime?



OK. How do you pray?

5.

We need to kneel down, bow our heads, and close our eyes.



6.

We can thank Heavenly Father for our blessings and ask Him to help us.



7. Daniel's grandparents were so impressed that they prayed every morning and night during Daniel's visit.



8. Daniel felt happy when he prayed with his grandparents. He knew Heavenly Father was happy too.



BEING A **GOOD EXAMPLE**

Daniel is learning to show a good example. Draw a happy face in the circles next to the pictures of Daniel showing a good example. Draw a sad face in the circles next to the pictures of Daniel showing a bad example.

HELPS FOR PARENTS

- Read the story "Daniel's Example of Prayer" with your child. Share an experience when someone's good example helped you.
- Share the story of Abinadi from the Book of Mormon (see Mosiah 11–17). Explain that Abinadi's strong example and teachings helped convert Alma to the truth.



Scripture Matching

The scriptures include stories about prophets and other people who are examples of how to be obedient to Heavenly Father. Follow the lines to find which book of scripture the account of each prophet is found in.

Book of Mormon



New Testament



Old Testament



Pearl of Great Price



Daniel



Joseph Smith



John the Baptist



Nephi

SAFE IN MY WARD FAMILY

By Caroline Kingsley

One of my fondest childhood memories is the clicking of my mother's high heels on the hardwood kitchen floor as she prepared our family for church. She was heavily involved in our ward and served for years as Relief Society president. I never dreamed anything would change.

When I was around 12 and she and I lived alone, she left the Church for reasons I didn't understand. Although my mom—my role model—had decided to take a different path, I knew the gospel was true, and I continued to attend church. Even though she disagreed with my decision, Mom did drive me to and from church every week.

It was often emotionally difficult to attend church, especially sacrament meeting where, sitting alone near the back, I had a clear view of all the mothers, fathers, and children sitting together. Many times I sat with a friend's family. I'll always be grateful for my "Mormon family" and others in my ward who took extra care to include me during this difficult time.

My home teachers, for example, were faithful even though it was only me they came to teach and I lived farther away than most ward members. I looked forward to the opportunity to discuss the gospel and to feel the strength of the priesthood and the Spirit in my home.

Many ward members were people I had known all my life. With their familiar faces,



When I began attending church alone at age 12, I found that Heavenly Father had blessed me with a ready-made safety net.

welcoming smiles, and friendly conversation, they became my ward mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters. Feeling a sense of belonging and love eased the heartache of attending church without my family.

I know I am not alone in experiencing this circumstance. Many youth attend church without one or both parents. But through example, friendship, and callings, we all can reach out to these sons and daughters of Heavenly Father and help them feel welcome, teach them gospel principles, and encourage them to be an active part of meetings and activities.

"Heavenly Father planned for us to be born into a family—the most basic, most hallowed, and most powerful group on earth," said Virginia H. Pearce, former counselor in the Young Women general presidency. "And it is within the family that some of the most important learning we'll ever gain takes place. In addition to that family group, the Lord also provided the ward or branch family. . . . Wards are not designed to replace the family unit, but to support the family and its righteous teachings. A ward is another place where there is enough commitment and energy to form a sort of 'safety net' family for each of us when our families cannot or do not provide all of the teaching and growing experiences we need to return to Heavenly Father. We need to expand our appreciation of the power of the ward family and renew our commitment to participate positively in that community of Saints."¹

How grateful I am for those who became my safety net, instilling in me a desire to do the same for others. ■

NOTE

1. Virginia H. Pearce, "The Rewards of a Ward," *New Era*, Mar. 1995, 41.

Applying Conference Changes Lives

By Melissa Merrill

Church Magazines

Shortly after the October 2010 general conference, Jared and Kathleen Smith of Utah, USA, decided to take a drive around the neighborhood with their three children to enjoy the colorful autumn leaves. Before leaving, Brother Smith put a vial of consecrated oil in his pocket. The words of President Henry B. Eyring's priesthood address to be ready for priesthood service at all times had been on his mind (see "Serve with the Spirit," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 59).

On their way home, the Smiths happened upon a crowd gathering around a little girl lying on the ground, apparently suffering from some kind of head trauma. They heard a woman shout, "Please, does anyone have consecrated oil? Please!" Brother Smith quickly pulled over and handed his oil to the girl's father. After a priesthood blessing, the girl regained consciousness and began talking to her parents. Moments later, paramedics arrived and took her to the hospital.

"We felt a warmth and a peace in our hearts for having been in the right place at the right time, for having brought oil, and as President Eyring spoke of, having been ready," says Brother Smith. "Our children saw the blessing of priesthood power, and we left feeling Heavenly Father's love for both us and this young girl and her family."

Like the Smiths, many families have been blessed for following counsel received during general conference. As members prepare for another general conference, here three families share their stories of heeding the prophetic voice.

For more stories (in English) or to share your own experience (in any language), read the full

version of this article on the Church News and Events section of LDS.org at lds.org/church/news/how-general-conference-changed-my-life.



A conference message by Elder James B. Martino provided Anne Te Kawa of New Zealand with the confidence to pray for the guidance she needed.

Anne Te Kawa, Tararua, New Zealand

Early in 2010, I had been dealing with some serious personal challenges. My bishop suggested that I might benefit from meeting with a professional counselor. The idea shocked me. I work and am training in the field of drug and alcohol addiction treatment, so I thought, "I am practically a counselor myself! I don't need outside help."

I was still wrestling with some of my challenges—and my own pride—when April general conference came around. Elder James B. Martino of the Seventy gave a talk titled, "All Things Work Together for Good" (see *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 101), centered on dealing with affliction.

His message touched me, and I determined to pray for direction about what I should do. I left conference wanting to seek faith and to trust the Savior to guide me through the Holy Ghost.

For two weeks I pondered and prayed and contemplated and ultimately decided I would try counseling. It has been a helpful, successful experience. In addition, rereading Elder Martino's talk, being buoyed by prayer to Heavenly Father, and relying on the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ, have given me enduring security. I testify

that humbly seeking the Lord is always the way to overcome trials. He will guide us to know what specific things we need to do.

Andrea Roueche, Texas, USA

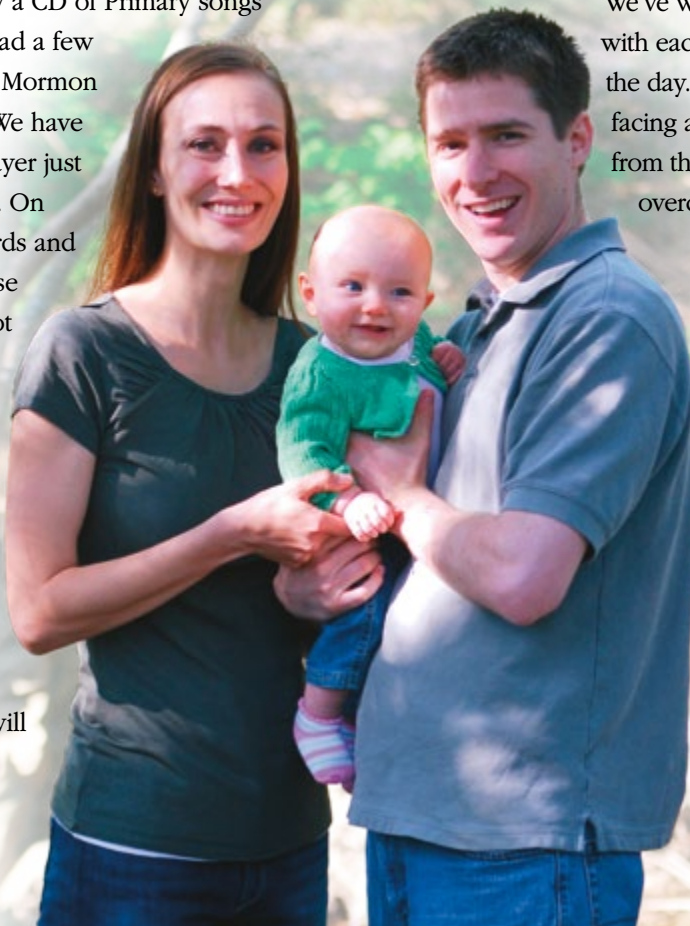
My husband, Collin, and I became parents in October 2009. By the time our daughter, Eliza, was five months old, we started talking about when we would start including her in family home evening and scripture study. Was it worthwhile to hold family home evening when she was awake? Could she really get anything out of our reading the Book of Mormon out loud?

During the April 2010 general conference, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “Youth of all ages, even infants, can and do respond to the distinctive spirit of the Book of Mormon” (“Watching with All Perseverance,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 40).

The changes we have made have been simple and gradual. We play a CD of Primary songs for Eliza regularly. We read a few verses from the Book of Mormon with her at dinnertime. We have started having family prayer just before Eliza goes to bed. On walks, I point out the birds and tell her, “Jesus made those birds for us.” She may not understand right now, but she will.

I’ve found that these things have lifted much of my anxiety for the future. I feel that if I do my part by teaching Eliza what she needs to know and by following prophetic counsel, she will be blessed in the future.

Collin and Andrea Roueche found the answers they were seeking in a conference message by Elder David A. Bednar.



Sela Fakatou, West Midlands, England

In our family, everyone is busy. Sometimes we don’t take time to listen carefully to each other or to practice kindness or politeness. So in preparation for an upcoming general conference, we prayed to know how we could grow closer as a family.

Elder Robert D. Hales’s talk, “Our Duty to God: The Mission of Parents and Leaders to the Rising Generation” (see *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 95), answered our prayers and our questions.

I was especially touched by the story about Elder Hales’s grandson asking, “Grandpa! Are you in there?” Elder Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, “Being *there* means understanding the hearts of our youth and connecting with them. And connecting with them means not just conversing with them but doing things with them too.”

We’ve worked to improve our interaction with each other. At dinner, we talk about the day. We talk about challenges we’re facing and how the things we’re learning from the scriptures help us confront and overcome those challenges.

Making time for these exchanges has taken effort. But as these good habits have become part of family life, I have felt a special love for my family. As I have followed the prophetic counsel I received at conference, answers to other questions have filled my mind, and I have seen ways I can be more like the Savior Jesus Christ. More than ever before, I feel a sense of peace instead of worry. ■

Sowing Seeds of Self-Reliance in Small Spaces

By Allie Schulte
Welfare Department

Many Church members live in apartments or small homes with no yard space for a garden plot. Others live in dry regions where the soil is barren. Some feel that they do not have the time or financial means to grow their own food. Yet with faith, diligence, patience, and a little creativity, anyone can succeed in gardening.

As members prayerfully consider the counsel to plant gardens and search for ways to be obedient to this principle, they will be amazed at the solutions they find. Here are some experiences and advice from members who have followed the counsel to plant a garden.

Gardening on a Budget

While living in a small townhouse apartment, Noelle Campbell, of Houston, Texas, USA, discovered that most of the materials she needed to plant a garden were right in her own home. On her patio, she began planting vegetables in used containers—anything from laundry soap containers to kitty litter buckets.

She was amazed at the amount of food she could produce in the small containers. She then expanded her garden, still using materials collected from her home. Old bookshelves and bins became a vertical garden. The frame of an old personal-sized trampoline is now used to support beans, peas and other climbing plants. She even uses old grills from barbecues to keep her tomatoes from leaning.

“I love the challenge of container gardening, of seeing my patio transformed from a tiny 8-foot by



PHOTOGRAPH BY NOELLE CAMPBELL

Boxes, buckets, bottles, and other containers can be used to turn small spaces into productive gardens.

8-foot (2.5 m by 2.5 m) concrete slab into a green, living, producing garden,” Noelle says.

Using Containers

In Alberta, Canada, Shirley Martin knows from experience that you can grow just about any kind of plant in a container as simple as reused soda or juice bottles.

She says the key to a successful container garden is adequate lighting, even if it is only a window or a lamp designed to promote plant growth, and watering more often, as containers dry out much more quickly than a garden does.

“This year,” Shirley says, “I am growing a kitchen garden in a few pots on my deck complete with some herbs, lettuce, tomatoes, onion, chives, and a pepper. Your imagination is the limit.”

Learning by Doing

Kwan Wah Kam of Hong Kong first decided to plant a garden to supplement her home storage. She had never attempted to grow her own food but assumed she could learn all she needed to know by reading books.

Although the information she found was helpful, Kwan soon discovered that the greatest lessons she learned came through the process of actually planting the garden. With each additional year of experience, she has learned more about the best soil to use for different seeds, how to distinguish between good seeds and bad seeds, different ways to water and fertilize plants, and the best seasons to grow various vegetables.

The lessons Kwan learned were not limited to gardening alone, however. One evening, a terrible storm threatened to destroy her garden. In the morning, she was surprised to discover that the plants were not damaged, but instead, grew stronger from the additional water.

“From that experience, I learned that with faith in God, we can become stronger as we face our trials and difficulties with courage,” Kwan says. “The blessings I have received from gardening are both temporal and spiritual.” ■

“There have been very few years in my life when I have not been responsible for a garden. Even now as a city condominium dweller, I still plant and harvest a garden each year. . . . Each spring as I look over an insignificant, small seed and place it in a well-prepared seed bed, I marvel at how much it will produce.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Law of the Harvest,” *New Era*, Oct. 1980, 4.

President Monson Breaks Ground in Rome

President Thomas S. Monson broke ground for the Rome Italy Temple on October 23, 2010. Announced two years earlier, the three-story, 40,000-square-foot



President Thomas S. Monson broke ground for the Rome Italy Temple on October 23, 2010.

(3,700 square meter) temple will be the twelfth in Europe and the first in Italy. When completed, it will serve members in Italy and neighboring countries. The 15-acre (6 ha) site will become a religious and cultural center that includes a multifunctional meetinghouse, a visitors’

center, a family history center, and patron housing.

Temple Underway in Argentina

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles broke ground for a temple in Córdoba, Argentina, on October 30, 2010. The site was home to one of the Church’s earliest chapels in Argentina. “How wonderful that its final purpose will be to embrace the house of the Lord,” said Elder Andersen. The temple will be the second in Argentina. There is also a temple in Buenos Aires.

Ground Broken in Gilbert, Arizona

Elder Claudio R. M. Costa of the Presidency of the Seventy broke ground for the Gilbert Arizona Temple on November 13, 2010. The Gila Valley Arizona and Gilbert Arizona Temples, announced on April 26, 2008, were the first temples announced by President Thomas S. Monson after he became president of the Church. The Gilbert Arizona Temple will be Arizona’s fourth temple. A fifth, the Phoenix Arizona Temple, is still in the planning stages. ■

COMMENT

Loves the Posters

The *Liahona* is always so interesting! Because it invites us to contribute in so many ways, I identify more with it and feel more a part of it. I love the posters. I frame them and hang them in my office. Thank you for all your efforts.

Bertha Viola Retiz Espino, Mexico

Members Keep Increasing

We, the members of the Abuakwa Branch in Ghana, recently celebrated our one-year anniversary as a branch. We started with 50 in attendance at sacrament meeting, and now we have 128 attending. We love our leaders. We read and study the *Liahona*, we buy extra copies for converts and others who do not have them, and our membership keeps increasing every day. We know the Book of Mormon is true.

Christopher Pidoal, Ghana

An Anchor in a Stormy Sea

How thankful I am to have the *Liahona* in my home! It is a source of power. One day when my mind was bombarded with unclean thoughts, I immersed myself in the *Liahona*, and those thoughts departed from me. The *Liahona* helped me clean my thoughts and served as an anchor for safety in a stormy sea.

Victorino F. Dela Cruz Jr., Philippines

Please send your feedback or suggestions to liahona@ldschurch.org. Submissions may be edited for length or clarity. ■

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are a few examples.

“Separated by a Flood, United by

Prayer,” page 14: After reading the article, you may wish to emphasize the principles of prayer by reading together

Alma 34:18–27. Invite family members to share experiences when their prayers have been answered.

“The Healer’s Art,” page 18: After reading and discussing sections of the article, you could invite your family to sing “Lord, I Would Follow Thee” (*Hymns*, no. 220). As a family, talk about positive ways you could react if someone were to offend you. Discuss how understanding and applying the Atonement in your life can “heal wounded hearts, misunderstandings, and hatred.”

“Teaching the Doctrine of the

Family,” page 32: While sharing Julie B. Beck’s message, invite family members to discuss the importance of the doctrine of the family. Discuss the threats to the family and how these can be overcome through faith. Help resolve any concerns or hesitancy your children may have about starting their own families at the appropriate time.

“Count Your Blessings,” page 62:

Before reading this article as a family, place objects around the room that remind you

of your blessings. These might include clothing, food, scriptures, art of the Savior, photos of your family, and so on. Invite your family to look for these “blessings” and share why they are thankful for them. You might invite family members to list things they are grateful for and suggest they review the list occasionally.

Family Home Evening Away from Home

Three of my children are studying away from home right now, so we share family home evening through the Internet. I send them e-mails telling them about the spiritual experiences we have at home and the lessons we share from the *Liahona* or the scriptures—especially the Book of Mormon. If a week goes by and I forget to write, they all say, “Mom! Please! We miss family home evening.” By sharing with us in this way, they have been able to strengthen us even though they’re not here physically.

I believe that family home evening is an inspired program because it helps us build a foundation on the solid rock of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Family home evening also helps us achieve what the Lord wants for us—that we can be a family that is together forever. ■

Norma Leticia Treviño de Taylor, Nuevo León, Mexico



Why Handbooks?

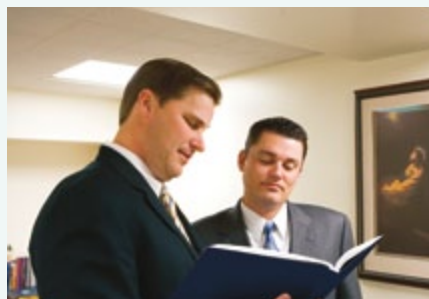
As Church leaders introduced two new handbooks and helped explain how to implement the policies therein during two recent worldwide leadership training meetings, they have also answered the question: why are handbooks important?

Among the many ways the Church's handbooks may be a blessing are: (1) maintaining procedural integrity during rapid growth, (2) reducing the burden on the First Presidency, and (3) facilitating revelation in local administration.

Integrity and Growth

The handbooks help maintain the integrity of policies, procedures, and programs of a church that is experiencing rapid growth around the world.

"Our membership has been increasing since the Church was organized in 1830. And it will continue to grow with thousands of units throughout the world," said President Thomas S. Monson during the November 2010 worldwide leadership training meeting. "It would be nearly impossible to maintain the integrity of the policies, procedures, and programs of the Church without these handbooks."



PHOTOGRAPH BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN

Church leaders who are familiar with and follow the handbooks invite the guidance of the Holy Ghost to inspire them.

The First Presidency's Burden

The handbooks help reduce the First Presidency's time-consuming burden of answering procedural questions and correcting procedural errors.

"As we of the First Presidency meet together in our regular sessions each week day, we must, of necessity, deal with and correct errors," said President Monson. "Most of these errors could be avoided if . . . leaders were familiar with the handbooks and followed the policies and procedures outlined therein."

President Monson said that occasionally well-meaning leaders who are unfamiliar with the policies and procedures of the Church make decisions that lead to potentially harmful aberrations in Church programs.

"Whether you've been a lifelong member of the Church or are a relatively new member, consult the handbook when you are uncertain about a

policy or procedure," President Monson said. "There's safety in the handbooks."

Facilitating Revelation

The handbooks help facilitate revelation as local leaders seek the guidance of the Spirit in administering Church affairs.

"When leaders of the Church know their duties and follow established procedures, they invite the Holy Ghost to inspire them and the people they are serving," said Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the November 2010 meeting.

Brother David M. McConkie, first counselor in the Sunday School general presidency, illustrated the importance of the handbooks in the October 2010 general conference.

While being trained as a new stake president by an Area Seventy, Brother McConkie asked a series of questions that, to his chagrin, were all answered in the handbooks.

"I did not venture to ask any more questions. I thought it best to read the handbook," Brother McConkie said. "It is contrary to the economy of heaven for the Lord to repeat to each of us individually what He has already revealed to us collectively" ("Gospel Learning and Teaching," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 13).

To find video, text, and audio of the November 2010 and February 2011 worldwide leadership training meetings in 40 languages, visit the **Serving in the Church** section of LDS.org. ■



WORDS OF CHRIST

"I Shall Be Whole," by Al Young

"And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:

"For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

"But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour" (Matthew 9:20–22).



The healing power of God is magnificent, profound, and beautiful,” writes Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi of the Seventy. “I thank Him for His mercy, His love, and His miraculous heavenly healing. I thank Him for the reality of the Savior’s Atonement, which by His grace ‘provides the power to wash away sins, to heal, and to grant eternal life.’” See “The Healer’s Art,” page 18.