

## WOULD MATTHEW RETURN?

We had a strong group of young men in our ward, but our son Matthew gravitated to a nonmember who shared his love for cars and anything mechanical. Unfortunately, this young man came from a family that did not value religion. His parents allowed drinking and smoking in their home and didn't believe that being morally clean was important.

Matthew had earned the top rank in Scouting, but he did not participate in the awards meeting because he had stopped living Scouting standards. I gathered all his Scouting awards and made a display case. Then I put it away, hoping that one day it would be of value to him. By the time he was 16, Matthew was smoking, drinking, and doing drugs. He dropped out of school and moved in with his girlfriend. For a couple of years, we rarely saw him.

We were devastated. We didn't know if he would ever return to his family and faith, but we decided to follow Alma's example in dealing with his wayward son. Alma continued to love his son and prayed with faith that he would "be brought to the knowledge of the truth" (Mosiah 27:14).

We prayed constantly that the Lord would intervene in Matthew's life, and we took every opportunity to express by word and action how much we loved him. When he would come home, we did not say anything he might interpret as criticism or judgment. We simply expressed our joy at seeing him.

One day Matthew came home and said he wanted to talk. He said he had met a girl at a party who had questions about the Church. Before he could tell her that he no longer knew

the answers, words started coming out of his mouth. He found himself answering her questions as fast as she asked them. Matthew said he did not remember having learned the things he spoke, but he knew his words were true. He wondered why he was living as he was when he still believed the gospel.

After three days of soul-searching, he decided to leave behind the life he had been leading. He had come home to ask for help in starting over.

Matthew called a cousin in another state who had overcome similar difficulties and asked if he could stay with him. His cousin agreed, and Matthew began attending Church meetings with him and met with the bishop to get help with the repentance process. He felt love and support and became active in the Church.

In time he met a lovely, righteous young woman. They fell in love and were married in the temple.

When their first child was born, I came for a visit and brought the display case I had made of his Scouting awards. He was thrilled and proudly hung it in a prominent place in his home.

An angel did not appear to our son, as had happened to Alma the Younger. But Matthew's return to the truth was just as miraculous. ■

Name withheld



I gathered all of Matthew's Scouting awards and made a display case. Then I put it away, hoping that one day it would be of value to him.