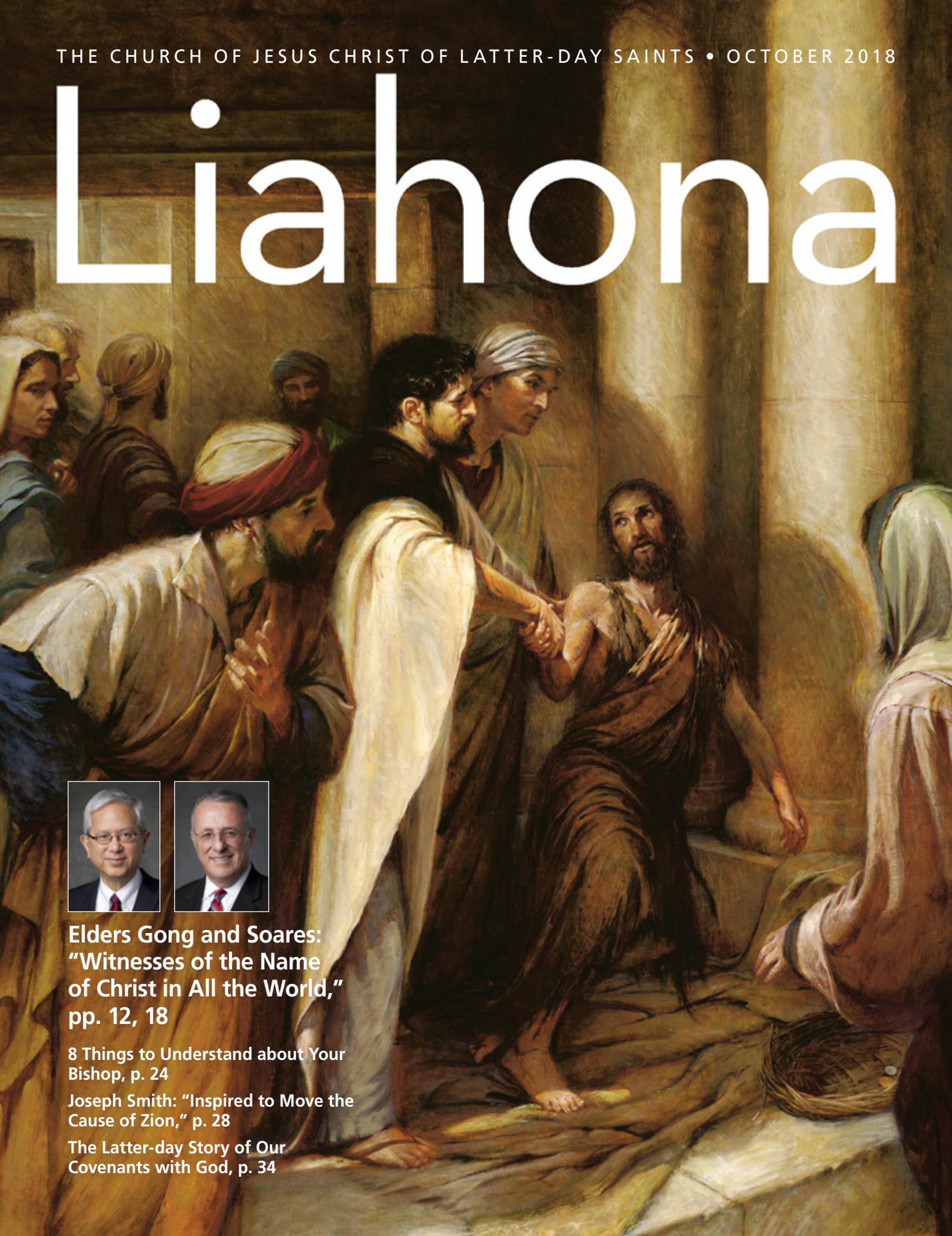


# Liahona



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“KNOWING THAT OUR  
**HEAVENLY PARENTS PLANNED  
FOR OUR ULTIMATE HAPPINESS  
AND EXALTATION**

PROVIDES US WITH PERSPECTIVE,  
GIVES US IDENTITY AS BELOVED  
CHILDREN OF DIVINE PARENTS,  
AND INCREASES OUR  
CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD.”

ELDER QUENTIN L. COOK

*From “How Merciful the Lord Has Been,” page 34.*



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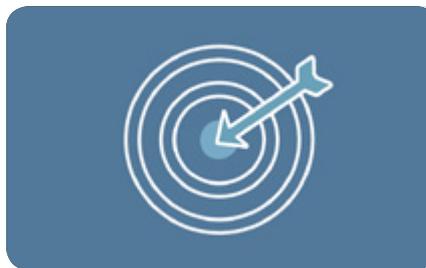
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## PORTRAITS OF FAITH

*“Sickness can do a lot of good things,” says Michael, who is suffering from kidney failure. Because his illness has increased his gratitude for the gospel, he says, “it is a good trial.”*

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

### Michael Isaac

*Bydgoszcz, Poland*

At first I was angry.

“Why me?” I prayed. “I have served you, Lord.” After a while, I understood. The scriptures say, “He that hath faith in me to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed” (D&C 42:48).

Church members keep praying for me, but my health is getting worse. They think their prayers are not heard, but they are heard because they become better people and because I feel the love they show to me.

Even if I was healthy, how much time would be left at my age? Still, a lot is before me.

I have the Church. I have a way of contacting God through prayer, through fasting, through all the things we do. What else do I need?

Sometimes I say to myself, “Maybe that’s why I am sick—so that I could understand what a great thing I am in, what a great cause this is.”

#### FIND MORE

Learn more about facing life’s challenges with the power of hope from President Russell M. Nelson at [lds.org/go/10185](https://lds.org/go/10185).

Find more Portraits of Faith at [lds.org/go/18](https://lds.org/go/18).

# Ministering Principles

## GETTING HELP TO HELP OTHERS

*How do we involve others when we need help in our efforts to minister?*

*Participate in ministering interviews and first-Sunday council meetings.*

**W**hen multiple sclerosis confined Kathy to a wheelchair, she found she needed assistance each night getting from her chair to her bed. The job was too big for any one member. So the elders quorum counseled about her situation and decided to make a schedule to help her each evening.<sup>1</sup>

As we come to know the needs and strengths of those we serve, we may find that we need help to help meet their needs. Ministering interviews and first-Sunday council meetings are two opportunities to discuss how to appropriately involve others.

### **Ministering Interviews**

These quarterly interviews between ministering sisters and the Relief Society presidency or ministering brothers and the elders quorum presidency are the only *formal* report we make regarding

those we minister to. The interview is an opportunity on at least a quarterly basis to (1) counsel about the strengths, needs, and challenges of assigned families and individuals; (2) determine what needs the quorum, Relief Society, or ward council might assist with; and (3) learn from leaders and be encouraged in ministering efforts.

The elders quorum president and the Relief Society president communicate important needs directly to the bishop and will receive counsel and direction from him.

You can find more information about ministering interviews at [ministering.lds.org](http://ministering.lds.org).

### **Making Ministering Interviews Meaningful**

In supporting President Russell M. Nelson's statement that the ministering program will be a hinge point on which the course of the Church will swing, Elder

“Ministering Principles” articles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as messages during visits. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.



## JESUS INVOLVED OTHERS

Jesus fed a multitude of 5,000 people from five barley loaves and two small fishes. Read John 6:5–14 to identify how many times the Savior involved others in this act of ministering.



Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “The realization of his vision . . . might be predicated upon how well ministering brothers and sisters are taught and engaged in the ministering interview.”<sup>2</sup>

Four tips for ministering brothers and sisters:

- Go to the interview seeking counsel. Be ready to learn.
- Be prepared to discuss needs that you may need help meeting.
- Focus on the individual’s strengths and abilities, not just needs.
- Contact the presidency to counsel between quarterly interviews as needed.

Five tips for leaders:

- Interviews don’t need to be long, but schedule enough time to visit in a place that allows for a meaningful conversation.
- Take the opportunity to minister to the ministering brother or sister.
- Don’t ask questions that give the impression you’re simply counting visits or checking off a contact (“Did you get your ministering done?”). Do ask questions that reinforce desired behaviors (“What prompting have you felt as you’re prayed for the

family? What happened when you acted on those promptings?”).

- Sincerely listen and take notes.
- Counsel together. Ministering companionships are entitled to revelation for those they are assigned to minister.<sup>3</sup>

## Questions and Answers about Ministering Interviews

*What is a ministering interview?*

It is a discussion between ministering brothers and a member of the elders quorum presidency or between ministering sisters and a member of the Relief Society presidency in a setting that allows them to seek and receive inspiration from the Holy Ghost. As a result, ministering brothers and sisters can be inspired to watch over, love, teach, and comfort in the Savior’s way.

*Do these quarterly interviews need to be in person?*

Typically they are conducted in person, but they could be held by phone or online when meeting face to face is impractical. Generally, both companions would participate in the interview when appropriate.

*What is the purpose of a ministering interview?*

Ministering interviews are an opportunity for ministering brothers and sisters to review current situations, make future plans, and get needed help to the individuals or families they minister to. It’s a chance to talk about what resources the quorum and Relief Society can provide.

*How do I deal with confidential or sensitive issues?*

Ministering brothers and sisters share confidential information only with the elders quorum or Relief Society president—or directly with the bishop. Confidential or sensitive information should not be shared in first-Sunday council meetings.

You can watch training videos showing ministering interviews at [ministering.lds.org](http://ministering.lds.org).

**Counseling about the needs of others is at the heart of ministering interviews. See the Ministering Principles article, “Counsel about Their Needs,” in the September 2018 issue.**



### First-Sunday Council Meetings

In addition to ministering interviews, first-Sunday council meetings are another way to involve others in ministering. In Relief Society and elders quorum meetings, inspiration can come to those in attendance through the Spirit and from others in the group.

The purpose of a council meeting is to:

- “Counsel together about local responsibilities, opportunities, and challenges;
- “Learn from each other’s insights and experiences; and
- “Plan ways to act on impressions received from the Spirit.”<sup>4</sup>

Council meetings are more than discussions: the meetings lead us to act as individuals or as a group as inspired by the Spirit. Members can feel a desire to accomplish the Lord’s work as a result of these meetings.

### Invitation to Act

“Our prayer today,” said Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “is that every man and woman—and our older young men and young women—will [be] more deeply committed to heartfelt care for one another, motivated only by the pure love of Christ to do so.”<sup>5</sup> ■

#### NOTES

1. See *Mormon Messages* video “Lift,” [lds.org/media-library](https://www.lds.org/media-library).
2. Gary E. Stevenson, in “Ministering Interviews” (video), [ministering.lds.org](https://www.ministering.lds.org).
3. See Russell M. Nelson, “Ministering,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 100.
4. *Come, Follow Me—For Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society*, in *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 140; also available at [comefollowme.lds.org](https://www.comefollowme.lds.org).
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Be With and Strengthen Them,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 103.

# WHERE TITHING MONEY GOES

*What happens to the money you pay for tithing?*



*You earn money.*



*You donate 10 percent of your income for tithing (see D&C 119).*



*You give your tithing to a member of your bishopric or branch presidency or submit it online at [donations.lds.org](https://donations.lds.org).*



*At Church headquarters, the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Presiding Bishopric are the Council on the Disposition of the Tithes (see D&C 120). As directed by the Lord, they make inspired decisions on how these sacred tithing funds will be used.*

## TITHING MAY BE USED FOR:



*Constructing and maintaining temples, churches, and other Church-owned buildings*



*Operating Church-education programs*



*Printing scriptures and other materials*



*Doing family history research*



*Providing welfare and humanitarian efforts*



*Doing missionary work*



*Providing Church activities for fellowship among ward or branch members*

### LEARN MORE

- Elder David A. Bednar, "The Windows of Heaven," October 2013 general conference
- Malachi 3:7-18
- "Tithing," *True to the Faith* (2004), 180-82



By Elder D. Todd Christofferson

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

## ELDER GERRIT W. GONG: **Love the Lord and Trust Him**

**A** newly married graduate student at England's University of Oxford, Gerrit W. Gong learned through personal experience that when we love the Lord and trust Him, He will help us, guide us, and strengthen us.

Gerrit was a Rhodes Scholar working to complete two graduate degrees, one of them a doctorate. At the same time, he was serving in the Oxford Ward bishopric. He and his wife, Susan, remembered advice that Elder David B. Haight (1906–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave when he performed their marriage in the Salt Lake Temple. “He told us always to have a calling,” Elder Gong says. “We knew if we trusted God and did our best, He would help us.”

Gerrit and Susan did receive “divine help and tender mercies,” he says. While continuing in the bishopric, Gerrit finished all the academic requirements for a doctoral degree, except his dissertation. He asked the bishop of the Oxford Ward, Alan Webster, for a priesthood blessing. In the blessing, Gerrit received this promise: “Continue doing all you can, and the Lord will bless you.”

Two ward members who were experienced legal secretaries volunteered to help type his manuscript, and Gerrit was able to finish his dissertation in a few months. In fact, he completed both a masters and a doctoral degree in just

over three years. Upon graduation he also accepted a faculty research position at the university. His experience at Oxford strengthened his trust in the Lord, trust that endures to this day and will continue to bless Gerrit W. Gong as he now serves in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

### **Loaves and Fishes**

“The Lord is kind and gracious and seeks to bless us,” Elder Gong says. “If we do our best, He will enable us to do more than we otherwise could. It’s like the multiplication of loaves and fishes. The Lord takes what is available and magnifies it far beyond what we could do on our own.”

The loaves-and-fishes principle is also true with learning, he says. “Even when formal education is unavailable,





the spirit of learning is what counts, because learning is eternal. We can all seek for light and truth, regardless of our circumstances. When we do, the Lord will help us find it.”

### **Covenant Belonging**

While at Oxford, Elder Gong learned another gospel principle, one he calls “covenant belonging.”

“As we draw closer to the Lord, we also draw closer to each other,” he says. “At Oxford, Susan and I treasured our ward experience just as much as our academic experience. Many of our dearest friends to this day are people from

Elder Gong attributes much of his happiness to his parents, Jean and Walter, and to his wife, Susan. His parents’ home “was filled with a deep reverence for God’s love for each of His children,” he says. When Elder Gong met his wife for the first time, he felt like Susan was someone he had always known.

the Oxford Ward.”

Among those friends are Tim and Katherine Witts, who remember going to the temple with the Gongs. “I remember clearly that Brother Gong removed his watch so he would not be distracted or constrained by time when contemplating the matters of eternity,” Sister Witt says. “That small act has helped me to be more diligent in my own temple worship.”

The Gongs often meet friends they know because of the gospel. “People will say, ‘We worked with you when you were on the high council,’ things like that,” Elder Gong says, “and it goes both ways. I am

grateful for a stake president and a ward council who helped me as a young bishop. We are all indebted to parents, in-laws, neighbors, mission presidents, sisters, and priesthood leaders who are kind to us, guide us, and encourage us to come unto Christ.”

### **Family Heritage**

Elder Gong’s family history traces back 34 generations to First Dragon Gong, born in AD 837. Elder Gong’s grandparents emigrated from China to the United States. His mother, Jean, joined the Church as a teenager in Hawaii, USA, and later attended Brigham

Young University in Provo, Utah, USA, where she stayed with the family of Gerrit de Jong, the first dean of the College of Fine Arts. “The de Jongs helped me understand what a gospel family is like,” she says.

After BYU, Jean attended Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, USA, where she met Walter A. Gong. “He was already a Christian and quickly understood what the restored gospel offers,” Jean says. He joined the Church, and a year later they were married in the Salt Lake Temple. Both became professional educators and collectively spent more than 70 years teaching.

“Dad also became a patriarch,” Elder Gong says, “and because patriarchal blessings were given in our home, our home was filled with a deep reverence for God’s love for each of His children.”

On December 23, 1953, in Redwood City, California, the first of Jean and Walter’s three children was born. “His given name, Gerrit, is Dutch, to honor Gerrit de Jong,” Jean explains. “His middle name is Walter, to honor his father. And our family name is Chinese, which honors his heritage.”

Jean says Gerrit was considerate to his younger siblings, Brian and Marguerite. “He liked to help them,” she says, “even with little things like teaching them to tie their shoes.” She remembers coming home from church one day and overhearing Gerrit and Brian saying they thought a sacrament meeting talk was boring. “So I challenged them: ‘Then you come up with a better talk.’ They took the challenge and started paying more attention to all the talks,” she says.

As a teenager, Gerrit loved to go backpacking and hiking with the other young men in his

From left: Marjorie and Gordon B. Hinckley greeted Gerrit and Susan at the Gongs’ wedding reception. As a missionary in Taiwan, Elder Gong taught a family and years later, as a General Authority, met the grandson of one of the daughters in the family. In Vietnam, Elder and Sister Gong painted a mural as a way to bring joy to children facing challenges. Members of the Gong family gathered with those who assisted in painting the mural in Vietnam.

ward. Wally Salbacka, a lifelong friend, remembers one camping trip in particular. “I was there with Gerrit and his brother, Brian, and a friend who wasn’t a member of our Church. For some reason, we started singing hymns. Gerrit sang melody, Brian sang tenor, and I sang bass. I think we sang 10 or 20 hymns, just for the joy of singing. It was a good experience. Our nonmember friend was impressed.”

Brother Salbacka also remembers that in high school, Gerrit asked the cheerleaders to



lead silent cheers for the chess team. “He convinced them that moral support is good for everybody,” he says, “and they actually came to a match!”

After high school, Elder Gong attended Brigham Young University. From

1973 to 1975, he served in the Taiwan Taipei Mission, then returned to BYU, where in 1977 he received a bachelor’s degree in Asian studies and university studies.

### Courtship and Marriage

After his mission, Elder Gong volunteered to provide Sunday evening firesides at the Provo Missionary Training Center. The firesides helped acquaint missionaries headed to Taiwan with the people, customs, and culture

there. One of the missionaries was Sister Susan Lindsay from Taylorsville, Utah, the daughter of Richard P. and Marian B. Lindsay. Brother Lindsay was a member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy. “I felt Susan was someone I had always known,” Elder Gong says.

Two years later, some months after Susan had returned to BYU following her mission, Gerrit was in Provo with his family. His father was teaching at the university, and Gerrit had planned a two-week visit. The visit was extended to four weeks, as he and Susan dated every day. Then Gerrit left for an internship in Hawaii before returning to Oxford.

“We courted from two different hemispheres,” Elder Gong recalls. “I was trying to study in England while learning everything I could about her from across the Atlantic Ocean.”

“We got engaged over the telephone,” Sister Gong says.



“He came home again at Thanksgiving, and we were married the first day the temple opened in the new year.” Two weeks later, they flew to England to start a new life together.

“When people get married, they talk about two families becoming one,” Elder Gong says. “And that’s what truly happened to me. I feel part of the Lindsay family, just as I am part of the Gong family.”

### **A Stellar Career**

After he spent a brief time on the faculty at Oxford, Gerrit’s career shifted to government service in Washington, D.C., USA. In 1984 he served on the staff of the Reagan-Bush reelection campaign, where he shared office space with Mike Leavitt, who later became governor of Utah. “Gerrit was observant and thoughtful,” Brother Leavitt says, “but he was distinguished by his unrelenting kindness.”

In 1985 Gerrit served as special assistant to the Under Secretary of the State Department. In 1987 he became a special assistant to the U.S. ambassador in Beijing, China. And from 1989 to 2001, he filled several positions at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. He then returned to the academic world when he accepted a position as an assistant to the president for strategic planning at BYU. He spent nine years in that role.

Carri Jenkins, assistant to the president for university communications at BYU, was in the office next door. She remembers Gerrit Gong’s ability to encourage those around him. “If you didn’t have confidence that you could take on a difficult assignment, he had that confidence for you,” she says. “He did everything in his power to counsel you, give you hope, and let you go forward and prove yourself.”



Federal judge Thomas B. Griffith, who knew Elder Gong both in Washington and at BYU, describes interaction with him this way: “At the end of a conversation, you realize the focus has been you. He’s a great listener. And he asks questions that make you think.”

Cecil O. Samuelson, emeritus General Authority Seventy and former president of BYU, says Elder Gong is “generally quiet, but the wheels are always turning.”

### Family Life

Gerrit and Susan Gong became the parents of four sons—Abraham, Samuel, Christopher, and Matthew—who grew up in a variety of settings.

“When we were in Beijing, our children had the blessing of becoming each other’s best friends,” Elder Gong says.

“On the one hand, they had the opportunity to see an expansive view of the world,” Sister Gong adds. “On the other hand, it helped us become tight-knit as a family. Our boys still say the best thing we did as parents was to give them brothers.”

“Once, we cashed in our frequent-flyer miles,” Elder Gong says. “We let each person choose a destination. We started in Washington, D.C., where we were living, then went to England, the Czech Republic, Greece, Turkey, India, China, and Japan.

“We had one firm rule during that trip,” Susan says. “Wherever we went, we ate what local people ate.” Finally, in Japan at the end of the trip, Elder Gong told his sons he was taking them to a restaurant world-famous for beef. At McDonald’s, four hungry sons and two parents consumed 17 hamburgers!

“Both Mom and Dad put a high value on learning by

experience,” Abraham says. “Dad thinks deeply about how experiences shape people, including whole cultures.” Abraham also notes that his father “speaks carefully because he has to mean completely and believe fully what he says.”

Sam remembers that “as busy as he was at the State Department, Dad took time every night to coach and train me for a third-grade math competition that I wanted to be in, called ‘Challenge 24.’ He said if I won, we’d have a party with ice cream sundaes and 24 toppings.” Sam made it to the national finals but didn’t win. The Gong family had sundaes anyway. But it wasn’t easy to come up with 24 toppings—one was beef jerky.

Christopher and Matthew comment on how much they “appreciate the trust, love, and devotion our father and mother share.” It is a love Elder and Sister Gong share with each other as well as with each son and with the extended family.

“As well as a devoted father, Gerrit is a devoted son and brother,” Susan says. “Those roles are important to him. He



helps us understand that family relationships are most important of all.”

### Church Experience

Although busy with career and family, Elder Gong continued willingly to serve in the Church, fulfilling callings as a high counselor, high priests group leader, stake Sunday School president, seminary teacher, bishop, stake mission president, stake president, and Area Seventy.

Whatever he is called to do, and in his family life as well, he consistently demonstrates



certain characteristics. “He sees everyone as a son or daughter of Heavenly Father,” Sister Gong says. “But above all, he loves the Lord. He really desires with all his heart to build the kingdom and bless Heavenly Father’s children.”

And he admires his wife. “Whatever I am asked to do,” he says, “Susan is by my side. She is comfortable with everyone and oriented to other people. She has always been willing to go to new places and try new things, for which I am grateful.”



From left: In Thailand, Elder Gong met with His Eminence Francis Xavier Cardinal Kriengsak Kovithavanij, the Catholic Archbishop of Bangkok. Elder Gong enjoys one-on-one trips with his sons, such as this trip in Canada with his son Sam. Elder Gong shared his thoughts about the Bread of Life with seminary and institute teachers in 2017. Sister Gong exchanges greetings in the home of a Cambodian member.

### Service with the Seventy

On April 3, 2010, Elder Gerrit W. Gong was sustained as a General Authority Seventy. He was assigned to the Asia Area Presidency, headquartered in Hong Kong. He later became the Asia Area President. On October 6, 2015, Elder Gong was sustained to the Presidency of the Seventy, where his international experience continued, including area reviews in various parts of the world such as Africa and Central America.

“You meet and come to love the Saints in all these places,” he says. “You feel blessed to have people tell you about their faith, because their experience of God working in their lives becomes part of understanding who God is and how He loves each of us.”

“When we send Elder Gong into any situation, those involved feel they have found a friend,” says President Russell M. Nelson. “He has a high level of knowledge, but he is humble. He relates with people at all levels and is always well-prepared and persuasive.”

### Calling as an Apostle

When President Nelson extended the calling for Elder Gong to serve as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the prophet “lovingly took my hands in his, [with] my dear Susan at my side, and extended this sacred call from the Lord that took my breath away” (“Christ the Lord Is Risen Today,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 97). Humbled, but certain of his love for and trust in the Lord, Elder Gong accepted the call. He was sustained on March 31, 2018. Carefully prepared by the Lord, he will now minister as a “special [witness] of the name of Christ in all the world” (D&C 107:23). ■



By Elder Neil L. Andersen

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

## ELDER ULISSES SOARES: **A Man without Guile**

In the early days of His ministry, as Jesus was selecting His Apostles, He saw Nathanael coming toward Him. He immediately discerned Nathanael's goodness, declaring, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"<sup>1</sup>

Jesus knew that Nathanael was a man of pureness of heart, honest in his intentions, and without hypocrisy or deceit. The Lord loves this quality of righteous integrity, and He called Nathanael to be an Apostle.<sup>2</sup>

Ulisses Soares is like Nathanael of old, and the Savior has called him as well.

### "The Light of My Parents"

Ulisses, the youngest of four brothers, was born in São Paulo, Brazil, on October 2, 1958. He came from humble beginnings, but his parents, Aparecido and Mercedes Carecho Soares, were honorable, hardworking people who honestly listened to the missionaries. They joined the Church in 1965 when Ulisses was six years old.

"I never saw Brother Aparecido miss a meeting," says Osiris Cabral, who served as stake president when Ulisses was a young man. "Mercedes was also very faithful. Ulisses inherited his parents' dedication."

Ulisses's naturally good heart blossomed as he learned the ways of the Lord. "I grew up in the Church following the light of my parents," Elder Soares says. As he followed

that light, his testimony grew stronger despite opposition.

"I was the only member of the Church in my school, and the other boys were always trying to drag me down and push me to do things that were wrong," he says. "I had to learn to defend myself in these challenges, but I always trusted in the Lord with all my heart to help me succeed. I learned as a young man that if you do your part, the Lord will do His. But you have to hold tight to His hand and to His gospel."

When Ulisses was 15, his bishop asked him to teach a youth Sunday School class. One lesson he taught centered





on gaining a testimony of the gospel. Ulisses had studied the Book of Mormon, always felt that the Church was true, and believed in the Savior Jesus Christ.

As he prepared his lesson, he wanted to strongly testify to his class of the gospel's truthfulness. "I studied and prayed fervently," Elder Soares recalls. "After I knelt down, there came to my heart a very sweet feeling, a small voice that confirmed to me that I was on the right path. It was so strong that I could never say that I didn't know."

As Ulisses matured, he learned that if he would do more than what was expected or

Ulisses Soares "grew up in the Church following the light" of his parents, Aparecido and Mercedes Soares (left). As Ulisses trusted in the Lord despite opposition, he learned as a boy to hold tight to the Savior and His gospel.

small business and armed with the ability to type fast, Ulisses found a day job helping a company prepare its payroll.

After passing a difficult entry exam, he began studying accounting at a technical high school in the evening. Each month, after paying tithing, he would save money for his mission. After a year, he was transferred to his company's accounting department.

"That's how I saved money to pay for my mission," Elder Soares says. "And each month during the three years before I left, I would buy something I needed—a shirt, a pair of pants, a pair of socks, a tie, a suitcase." He also

asked, the Lord would generously bless him. One such lesson came as he prepared for a mission. During interviews with Ulisses, his bishop emphasized the importance of obeying the commandments and living worthily. He also stressed financial preparation.

Today all missionaries from Brazil contribute to their mission costs, with many families contributing all the costs. As Ulisses approached mission age, he determined that he would earn all the money needed for his mission. Taking advantage of the strong work ethic he had learned working in his father's

needed, and received, strong love and support from his parents and local leaders.

Ulisses was called to the Brazil Rio de Janeiro Mission. He served the first part of his mission under President Helio da Rocha Camargo, who would later become the first General Authority called from Brazil. Ulisses began his mission in early 1978. The first temple in Latin America was dedicated later that year in São Paulo by President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985).

In January 1980, Ulisses and his companion, who also had not received his endowment, boarded a bus in Rio de Janeiro for an eight-hour ride to the São Paulo Brazil Temple. Ulisses's parents and siblings met him there, and the Soares family was sealed for time and eternity. Ulisses has never forgotten those five hours together in the São Paulo Temple. Later that day, he and his companion returned to the mission field.

### Putting God First

Ulisses enjoyed a successful mission, which further strengthened his testimony. When he returned home, he found a job and began studying accounting and economics at a local university.

He had been home about seven months when he ran into “Sister Morgado” at a multi-stake dance. Ulisses had served as her zone leader for a time, and the two spent the evening catching up and sharing mission stories. Three weeks later, they began dating.

Rosana Fernandes Morgado was eight when her older sister, Margareth, began taking her to church. Eventually, the two faithful young investigators received permission from their father to be baptized, but each had to wait

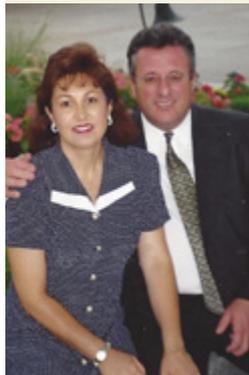
Elder Soares credits his wife, Rosana, with “all the good things in my life.”

The couple married in 1982 (far right), two years after a chance meeting following their service in the Brazil Rio de Janeiro Mission.

until she was 17. Rosana attended church for nine years before receiving permission to be baptized.

Ulisses lived in northern São Paulo, and Rosana lived with her parents in the city's southern sector. Travel across the sprawling city took two to three hours by bus and subway. Fortunately, Margareth and her husband, Claudio, lived near her parents' home.

“When Ulisses came on weekends to date Rosana, it was tough for him to return home so far at night,” recalls Elder Claudio R. M.



Elder Soares with Rosana in 2000 (above); with his family (lower right); and as a full-time missionary in 1979 (above right), with new member Eliezer Wagner de Souza Santos and his then-fiancée (now wife), Regina. Brother Santos currently serves as president of the Vila Velha Brazil Stake, in the state of Espírito Santo. Kim Pickett, Elder Soares's companion, appears in the background.



Costa, General Authority Seventy, of his future brother-in-law. So, he and Margareth invited Ulisses to spend the night at their home after his dates. “We adopted him for a while,” Elder Costa adds.

“He would sleep on the couch in our living room,” says Sister Costa. “We were recently married, so we didn't have extra blankets. But he would cover himself with an old curtain we had. He was happy because he could see Rosana again the next day. He was good to my sister, and my parents liked him very much.”

Ulisses and Rosana were married in the São Paulo Brazil Temple on October 30, 1982.

If you spend a few minutes with Elder and Sister Soares, their love, admiration, and

respect for each other quickly become apparent. For Elder Soares, Rosana “has been an example of goodness, love, and total devotion to the Lord for me and my family.”<sup>3</sup> For Sister Soares, Ulisses is “a gift from heaven.”

Sister Soares adds: “He has always been extremely responsible and righteous, he has always taken good care of our family, and he has always treated me very well. In all of his Church callings, he has done his best. He goes and he does. He always puts the things of God first in his life. I fall in love with him over and over because I know if he puts the things of God first, he will also put me first.”

Of his wife, Elder Soares says: “She is the true hero and

inspiration in our family. She’s loving, kind, and patient with everybody. She unites our family, and she sees good in everyone. She has contributed enormously to what has happened in my life. Of my calling to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, I jokingly told her, ‘I blame you for this because you have magnified so very much the power of the gospel in my life.’”

### A Big Heart

Gustavo, the Soareses’ oldest child, remembers the night when, as a boy, he disobeyed his parents and slipped away to check out an annual celebration in their São Paulo neighborhood known as Festa Junina.

“I was in the middle of a large crowd having a good time when I heard an announcer call me up to the front,” he says. “That’s when I saw my dad.”

His parents had been worried sick, but rather than scold Gustavo, Ulisses hugged him tight.

“We had a serious conversation about me getting lost, but my parents treated me with respect,” Gustavo recalls. “I felt protected, and I knew that they really loved me.”

Ulisses is devoted to his family. Despite his busy work and travel schedule over the years, he made time to build relationships with his children.

When Elder Soares was sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on March 31, 2018, perhaps no one was more surprised than Gustavo and his two sisters, Lethicia Caravello and Nathalia Soares Avila. But if love, hard work, empathy, and humility qualify a person for the apostleship, they say, they can understand why the Lord called their father.

“When Jesus called His Apostles, He didn’t pick the most knowledgeable Pharisees, He picked fishermen,” says Lethicia. “My father and mother are like that. They totally trust the Lord, and He uses them to fulfill His works because He knows they are selfless, willing to work hard, and humble enough to accept correction.”

Their father’s “big heart” will help him as he goes forward as one of the Savior’s special witnesses, adds Nathalia. “He





has the heart for it,” she says. “He feels heaven’s influence, and he loves everybody and wants to do what’s right.”

### “Everything Will Work Out”

When Elder Soares served as president of the Portugal Porto Mission from 2000 to 2003, he became well known for using the Portuguese phrase “Tudo vai dar certo”— everything will work out.

“He taught it to us,” recalls Ty Bennett, one of his missionaries. “He lives his life with faith and optimism that if we do what the Lord wants us to do, everything will work out.”

He also taught his missionaries not to use the words *difficult* or *impossible*, says Richard Shields, another of his missionaries. “We referred to things as ‘challenges.’ That advice helped shape my life as I have looked at things as ‘challenges’ to be overcome rather than as ‘difficult’ or ‘impossible.’”

Such faith and optimism haven’t come from an easy life. Elder and Sister Soares know well the disappointment of going without, the weariness of long days of work and study, the challenges of ill health, and the heartache of miscarriage, stillbirth, and loss of siblings and parents.

But through life’s journey, they have put their faith in the words of Elder Soares’s favorite scripture: “Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers.”<sup>4</sup>

“Challenges are part of our progress,” Elder Soares says. “But when we are patient in suffering, when we learn to survive life’s challenges, when we remain faithful, the Lord keeps us in high regard and blesses us with the blessings He has promised.”

And when we hold tight to the iron rod, he adds, the Lord will not leave us alone.

“Consistency in holding tight to the commandments, to the gospel, to the scriptures, and to the Lord Jesus Christ helps us overcome life’s challenges,” Elder Soares testifies. “When we kneel down to pray, He will be with us and He will guide us. He will inspire us where to go and what to do. When we are obedient and humble ourselves, the Lord answers our prayers.”

### Devoted Disciple

Ulisses Soares is a man of ability and preparation. His education, including a masters of business administration degree, prepared him to work as an accountant and auditor for multinational corporations in Brazil. That experience prepared him to work in the Church’s finance department, which in turn prepared him at age 31 to become one of the Church’s youngest directors of temporal affairs. That preparation served him well as a mission president and in his calling as a General Authority Seventy on April 2, 2005.

Before being called to the Presidency of the Seventy on January 6, 2013, Elder Soares served as a counselor in and then as President of the Brazil Area Presidency and as a counselor in the Africa Southeast Area. There, he served as a counselor to Elder Dale G. Renlund, then a General



Authority Seventy. Elder Renlund, now a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, relishes their time together.

“Elder Soares is an exuberant, committed, devoted disciple of Jesus Christ,” says Elder Renlund. “I don’t know anyone who feels more keenly that he’s on the Lord’s errand. If he’s asked to do something, he does it with all his might.”

He said Elder Soares quickly “fell in love” with the Saints in Africa. One of his first assignments in the area was to preside over a stake

Whether among the Saints of Peru (left), Ghana (below), or other nations where he has served and ministered, Elder Soares “easily loves people,” says Elder Claudio R. M. Costa.



conference in Kananga, Democratic Republic of Congo. “When he returned, he couldn’t stop talking about the goodness and devotion of the people he met,” Elder Renlund says.

Elder L. Whitney Clayton, who served with Elder Soares for five and a half years in the Presidency of the Seventy, calls Elder Soares a consensus builder. “He listens and measures his thoughts. He is careful in the way he conducts himself in meetings so that our voices form a chorus, rather than that of competing soloists.”

Elder Soares is modest about his ability to

Despite his busy work and travel schedule over the years, Elder Soares has always put his wife, children, and grandchildren (lower left) first in his life. He has also made time, with his wife, to become an accomplished chef (far left).

communicate in Portuguese, English, Spanish, and French. But that gift, which requires constant attention, is a blessing to the Church, says Elder Clayton. Elder Soares can speak to the vast majority of Church members in their own language.

“Ulisses has been a leader since he was a boy,” observes Elder Claudio Costa of his brother-in-law. “He is very intelligent and very capable, and he feels the responsibility to always give his best. He easily loves those around him. He has the heart of a true disciple of the Savior, and he has the sure witness that Jesus is the Christ. I love him and am grateful to sustain him as an Apostle of the Lord.”

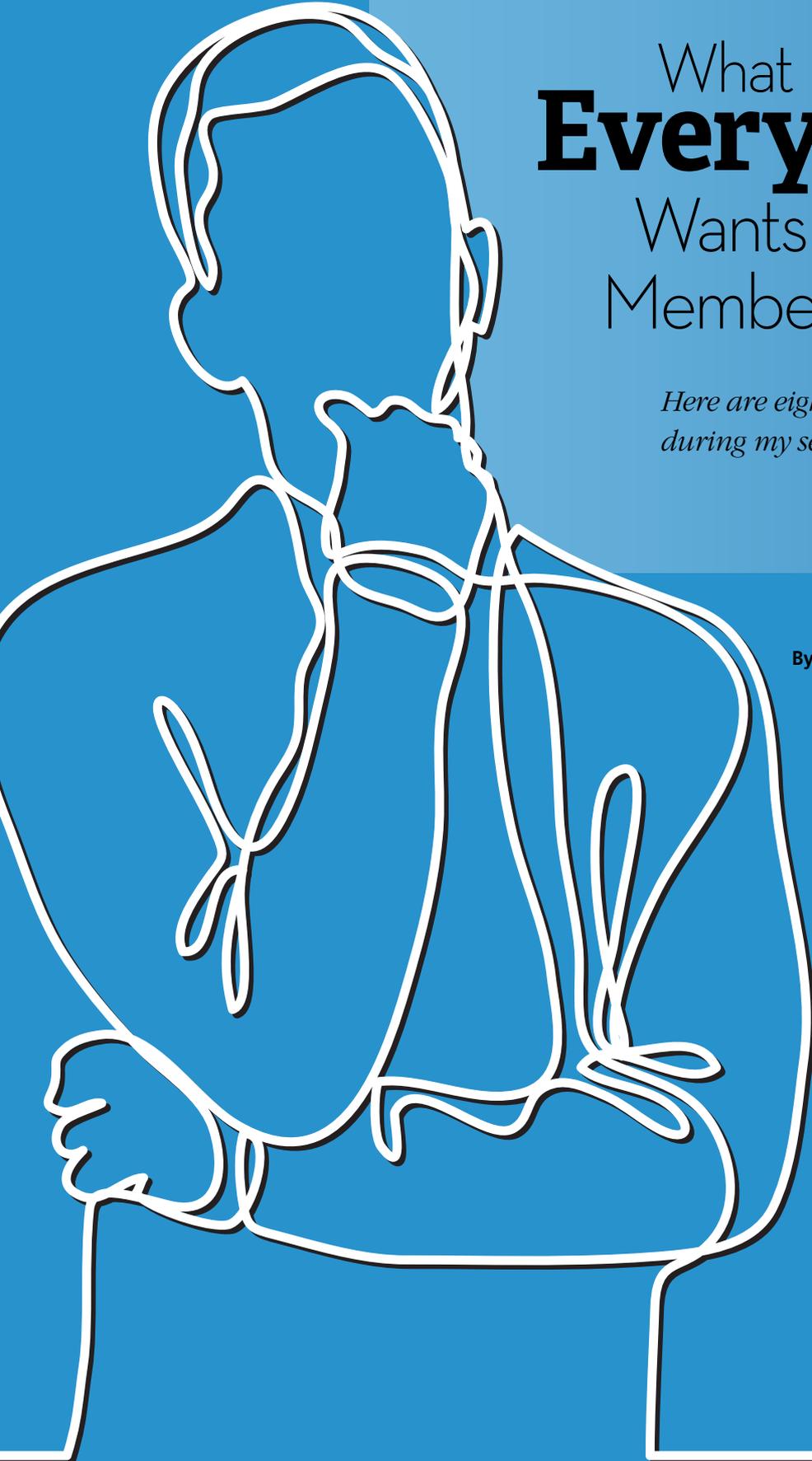
And Elder David A. Bednar, speaking for the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, adds: “Elder Soares is a pure, guileless, and innocent disciple of the Savior. Through the light in his countenance, his warm smile, and his gracious manner, countless individuals and families have been, are, and will be inspired with a greater desire to follow the Savior and live the precepts of His gospel.”

In our dispensation, the Lord said of Edward Partridge, “His heart is pure before me, for he is like unto Nathanael of old, in whom there is no guile.”<sup>5</sup> Of Hyrum Smith, the Lord said, “I, the Lord, love him because of the integrity of his heart, and because he loveth that which is right before me.”<sup>6</sup>

Of Ulisses Soares, the Lord would say the same. ■

#### NOTES

1. John 1:47.
2. See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (1916), 217–18, 222.
3. “Prophets Speak by the Power of the Holy Spirit,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 98.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 112:10.
5. Doctrine and Covenants 41:11.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 124:15.



# What **Every Bishop** Wants His Ward Members to Know

*Here are eight truths I learned  
during my service as a bishop.*

By Michael Meyers

**I** had the wonderful opportunity to serve as a bishop. During those years, I learned more lessons than can be enumerated. But I did learn eight truths that I believe are universal. While this list is not all-inclusive, it is my attempt at sharing what every bishop hopes his ward members know.

### 1. The bishop loves every member of his ward in a very real way.

The love a bishop has for his ward is connected to the love that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have for each of us. When a bishop looks out at the members in a sacrament meeting, compassion and empathy rest upon him in a way unlike anything he has experienced. When a bishop stands up and shares how much he loves his ward members, his feelings are heartfelt and real. Know that your bishop loves you, is concerned about you, and cares about you more than you know.



### 2. The bishop is physically, emotionally, and spiritually sustained by the faith and prayers of the members.

A bishop spends countless hours serving. He will often spend many hours at church on Sunday and additional weeknights after work visiting, interviewing, and caring for the members of his ward.

The bishop is able to do this week after week because of the faith and prayers of the ward members. As a newly called bishop, tears involuntarily flowed every time I heard a member pray to “bless the bishop.” Your prayers of faith truly are answered, and the bishop receives and feels the sustaining influence of those prayers. The Lord answers those faith-filled prayers upon the heads of the bishops of the Church.



### 3. The bishop often feels incredibly inadequate for the calling (even after three or four years).

I have known very few bishops who felt they were truly “prepared” for the calling. I do know, however, that “whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies.”<sup>1</sup>

While a bishop knows he is becoming qualified, he also struggles with feeling like he is never going to do the calling well. He will do his best to give wise counsel when needed, to not offend people, and to be in tune with the Spirit, but he will still wonder at times if he is fulfilling his calling acceptably.

#### 4. The Spirit of God can work through the bishop when he is counseling with ward members.

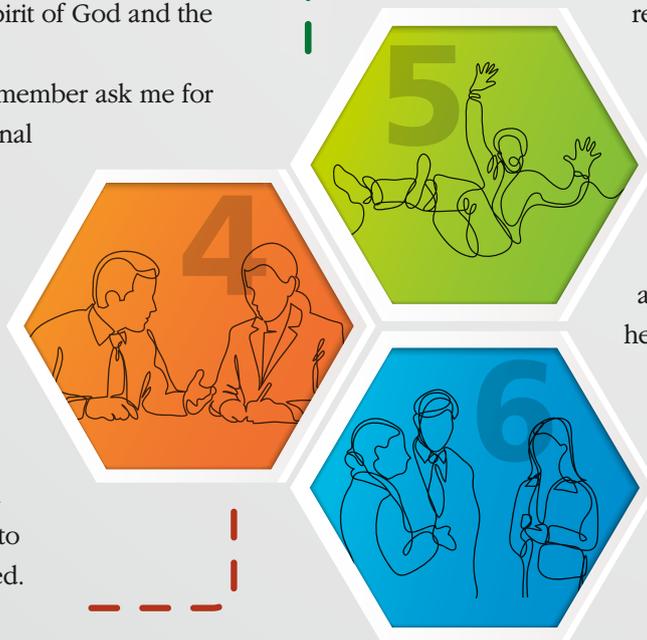
When asked what I miss most about serving as a bishop, I tell people that I miss the strong influence of the Spirit that accompanies the mantle of a bishop. Whether consoling those who had lost loved ones, speaking with those struggling with unfaithful spouses, or calling people to repentance, the Spirit that is available to a faithful bishop is the Spirit of God and the spirit of revelation.

I recently had a former ward member ask me for help in dealing with some personal issues. She had moved to a new ward and was not sure if she wanted to go to her new bishop for guidance. I shared with her what I have shared many times since being released, which was that while I was happy to assist, I no longer held the keys that a bishop holds and that those keys could be crucial to providing the support she needed. I suggested that she speak with her bishop. I visited with her two weeks later, and she said that she had met with her bishop and it was as if he already knew what her issues were and how to best help her. While the bishop is certainly fallible, the Lord inspires him, guides him, and blesses lives through his words.

#### 5. The bishop is human; sometimes he makes mistakes and sometimes he does things wrong.

Bishops, after all, are mortal men. They have imperfections, weaknesses, biases, and their own personal issues. The Spirit qualifies the man who holds the office of bishop, but the bishop is still a man subject to the same issues and weaknesses that we all face.

This realization should not reduce the honor we show to his calling or the heed we give to his counsel. A bishop is well aware of his weaknesses and strives to overcome them or at least keep them out of his service as a bishop. As hard as he tries, he will always be imperfect.



#### 6. The bishop feels that he can never see ward members enough or do enough good.

Every day a bishop wonders whom else he could or should have helped that day. I would have loved to visit with every member regularly, but I had a full-time job, my family, the youth program, and certain ward members with great needs. There was just not enough time to see every member on a regular basis.

Nevertheless, as a bishop, the Spirit sometimes prompted me to visit a certain member who was struggling. Many times, those visits started with them saying, “I knew you would come.” The Spirit we felt was often overwhelming as we both realized that the visit was proof that God answers prayers.

I also always enjoyed the reception I received at the doors of those active, “non-struggling” members. These good people go to church each week, serve faithfully in callings, have no tremendous outward challenges, and generally do not regularly receive visits from priesthood leaders. They were grateful to have some one-on-one time with their bishop. To all of you may I say, “Thank you! Carry on! Know that your bishop loves you and would visit more if he could.”

## 7. Your bishop really, truly, honestly needs you to minister to each other.

As a bishop, whenever I was told a ward member was struggling, I would always ask, “Who are the home and visiting teachers?” This was one way of assessing that the member’s needs would be met both short and long term. The bishop, acting without help from other members of the ward and stake, has limited resources. He certainly can—and will—go visit people in a crisis. But with the priesthood and Relief Society resources available to him, his reach can be extended.

This is what ministering is about. There are times when some of us forget why we minister to each other: The Lord has commanded us to “love one another” (John 13:34). Know that your bishop uses ministering as an inspired way to be “more present” in the lives of the ward members.



## 8. The bishop wishes he could do everything for his flock.

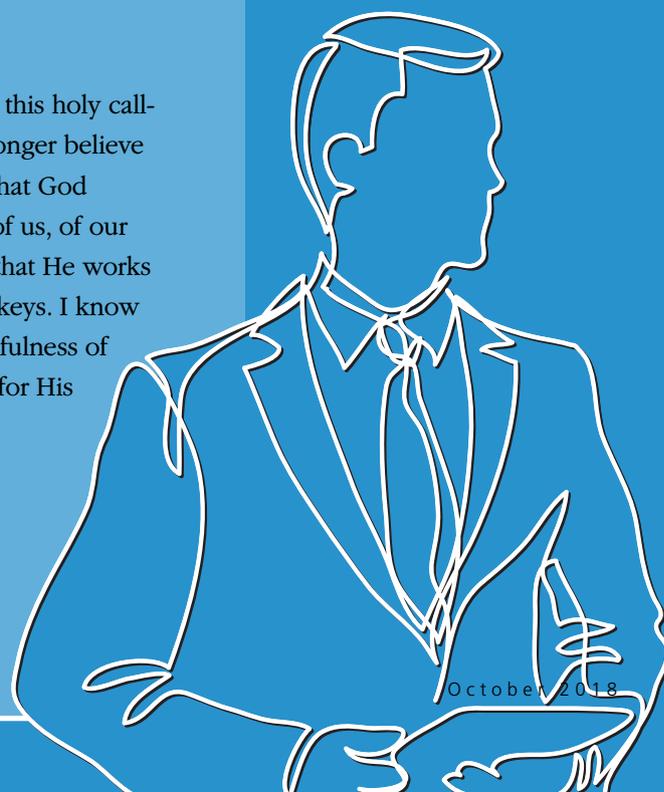
Anytime, day or night, whether it is a priesthood blessing, counseling a wayward child, or rushing to an accident scene, he would like to do whatever a member needs. He can’t always do it all, and he might not be the right person in every situation, but don’t be afraid to ask for help when you need it. Know that the bishop is there to serve in those times and that you are both richly blessed for working together.

I am humbled by the sacred opportunity I had to serve in this holy calling. In my service, I went from a belief to knowledge. I no longer believe that the gospel is true; I know it is true. I no longer believe that God knows me; I know that God is infinitely aware of each one of us, of our daily lives and our personal struggles. Furthermore, I know that He works through His servants, especially those who hold priesthood keys. I know that I could not have served as a bishop without God’s mindfulness of this work. It is the truthfulness of the gospel and God’s love for His children that enables every bishop to serve. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

### NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Duty Calls,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 44.







## CHAPTER 8

# The Rise of the Church of Christ

*This is chapter 8 of the new four-volume narrative history of the Church titled Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days. The book is available in 14 languages in print, in the Church History section of the Gospel Library app, and at [saints.lds.org](https://saints.lds.org). The previous chapters were published in past issues and are available in 47 languages in the Gospel Library app and at [saints.lds.org](https://saints.lds.org).*

In early July 1828, with manuscript in hand, Joseph knew the Lord wanted him to publish the Book of Mormon and spread its message far and wide. But the publishing business was unfamiliar to him and his family. He had to keep the manuscript safe, find a printer, and somehow get the book in the hands of people willing to consider the possibility of new scripture.

Publishing a book as long as the Book of Mormon would also not be cheap. Joseph's finances had not improved since he started the translation, and all the money he made went toward providing for his family. The same was true for his parents, who were still poor farmers working land they did not own. Joseph's only friend who could finance the project was Martin Harris.

Joseph set to work quickly. Before he completed the translation, he had filed for the book's copyright to protect the text from anyone who might steal or plagiarize it.<sup>1</sup> With Martin's assistance, Joseph also started looking for a printer who would agree to publish the book.

They went first to Egbert Grandin, a printer in Palmyra who was the same age as Joseph. Grandin declined the proposal at once, believing the book was a fraud. Undeterred, Joseph and Martin kept searching and found a willing printer in a nearby city. But before accepting his offer, they returned to Palmyra and asked Grandin once more if he wanted to publish the book.<sup>2</sup>

This time, Grandin seemed more willing to take the project, but he wanted to be paid \$3,000 to print and bind 5,000 copies before he even started work. Martin had already promised to help pay for the printing, but to come up with that kind of



which was not yet bound or ready for sale.

Abner soon began poking fun at the “Gold Bible” in his newspaper, and during the winter he printed excerpts from the book alongside sarcastic commentary.<sup>11</sup>

When Hyrum and Oliver learned what Abner was doing, they confronted him. “What right have you to print the Book of Mormon in this way?” Hyrum demanded. “Do you not know that we have received a copyright?”

“It is none of your business,” Abner said. “I have hired the press and I will print what I please.”

“I forbid you to print any more of that book in your paper,” Hyrum said.

“I don’t care,” Abner said.

Unsure what to do, Hyrum and Oliver sent word to Joseph in Harmony, who returned to Palmyra at once. He found Abner at the printing office, casually reading his own newspaper.

“You seem hard at work,” Joseph said.

“How do you do, Mr. Smith,” Abner replied dryly.

“Mr. Cole,” Joseph said, “the Book of Mormon and the right of publishing it belong to me, and I forbid you meddling with it.”

Abner threw off his coat and pushed up his sleeves. “Do you want to fight, sir?” he barked, pounding his fists together. “If you want to fight, just come on.”

Joseph smiled. “You had better keep your coat on,” he said. “It’s cold, and I am not going to fight you.” He calmly continued, “But you have got to stop printing my book.”

“If you think you are the best man,” Abner said, “just pull off your coat and try it.”

“There is law,” Joseph responded, “and you will find that out if you did not know it before. But I shall not fight you, for that will do no good.”

Abner knew he was on the wrong side of the law. He calmed down and stopped printing excerpts from the Book of Mormon in his newspaper.<sup>12</sup>

Solomon Chamberlin, a preacher on his way to Canada, first heard about the “Gold Bible” from a family he lodged

with near Palmyra. Like Thomas Marsh, he had moved from church to church throughout his life but felt dissatisfied with what he saw. Some churches preached gospel principles and believed in spiritual gifts, but they did not have God’s prophets or His priesthood. Solomon felt the time was coming when the Lord would bring forth His church.

As Solomon listened to the family talk about Joseph Smith and the gold plates, he felt electrified from head to toe, and he determined to find the Smiths and learn more about the book.

He set out for the Smith house and met Hyrum at the door. “Peace be to this house,” Solomon said.

“I hope it will be peace,” Hyrum replied.

“Is there anyone here,” asked Solomon, “that believes in visions or revelations?”

“Yes,” Hyrum said, “we are a visionary house.”

Solomon told Hyrum about a vision he had seen years before. In it, an angel had said that God had no church on the earth but would soon raise one up that had power like the Apostles’ church of old. Hyrum and the others in the house understood what Solomon said and told him they shared his belief.

“I wish you would make known some of your discoveries,” Solomon said. “I think I can bear them.”

Hyrum invited him to stay at the Smith farm as a guest and showed him the Book of Mormon manuscript. Solomon studied it for two days and went with Hyrum to Grandin’s printing office, where a printer gave him 64 printed pages. With the unbound pages in hand, Solomon continued on to Canada, preaching everything he knew about the new faith along the way.<sup>13</sup>

By March 26, 1830, the first copies of the Book of Mormon had been bound and were available for sale on the ground floor of Grandin’s printing office. They were tightly bound in brown calfskin and smelled of leather and glue, paper and ink. The words *Book of Mormon* appeared on the spines in gold letters.<sup>14</sup>

Lucy Smith treasured the new scripture and saw it as a



and faith. For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.”<sup>23</sup>

Later, Joseph stood beside a stream and witnessed the baptisms of his mother and father into the Church. After years of taking different paths in their search for truth, they were finally united in faith. As his father came out of the water, Joseph took him by the hand, helped him onto the bank, and embraced him.

“My God,” he cried, burying his face in his father’s chest, “I have lived to see my father baptized into the true church of Jesus Christ!”<sup>24</sup>

That evening, Joseph slipped away into some nearby woods, his heart bursting with emotion. He wanted to be alone, out of sight of friends and family. In the 10 years since his First Vision, he had seen the heavens open, felt the Spirit of God, and been tutored by angels. He had also sinned and lost his gift, only to repent, receive God’s mercy, and translate the Book of Mormon by His power and grace.

Now Jesus Christ had restored His Church and authorized Joseph with the same priesthood that Apostles had held anciently when they carried the gospel to the world.<sup>25</sup> The happiness he felt was too much for him to hold in, and when Joseph Knight and Oliver found him later that night, he was weeping.

His joy was full. The work had begun.<sup>26</sup> ■

A complete list of works cited is available in English at [saints.lds.org](http://saints.lds.org).

The word *Topic* in the notes indicates additional information online at [saints.lds.org](http://saints.lds.org).

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By Elder  
Quentin L. Cook

Of the Quorum  
of the Twelve  
Apostles

# How Merciful the Lord Has Been

*The new multivolume history of the Church will help us keep our covenants by enlarging our memory of what the Savior has done for us.*

For the first time in nearly a hundred years, a new multivolume history of the Church is being published under the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Titled *Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days*, this narrative history tells the true story of ordinary people who became Saints through the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Mosiah 3:19). The first volume, *The Standard of Truth, 1815–1846*, is now complete and has been translated into 14 languages for distribution to many areas of the world.

*Saints* is the story of how God restored His everlasting covenant because of His love for His children. It shows how the Lord restored His gospel to provide hope and peace in times of tumult, trial, and suffering. It also shows how restored covenants lead to exaltation through Jesus Christ.

You might expect the story to begin with Joseph Smith, but *Saints* begins in 1815 with the explosion of a volcano in Indonesia, which caused widespread death,



SANTOS

1815-1846

EL  
ESTANDARTE  
DE LA VERDAD

***Through His prophet, God renewed covenants that do not eliminate evil, sorrow, suffering, and separation at death but do promise healing through the Savior's Atonement and assure us that relationships can endure in eternity.***

disease, and disruption. This beginning point was chosen in light of what the Lord revealed about how He restored covenants that bind us to the Savior and enable us to overcome all of life's problems:

"I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments; . . .

"That mine everlasting covenant might be established"  
(D&C 1:17, 22).

From its opening scene to its worldwide distribution, *Saints* signals to God's children everywhere that it is the story of their covenant with God, who knows their hardships. Through His prophet, God renewed covenants that do not eliminate evil, sorrow, suffering, and separation at death but do promise healing through the Savior's Atonement, sanctify and endow our lives with transcendent meaning, and assure us that relationships we cherish here on earth can endure in eternity, "coupled with eternal glory" (see D&C 130:2).

The first eight chapters of *The Standard of Truth* have been published in issues of this magazine throughout the



year. This month's issue concludes the serialized chapters from *Saints*, but the story continues at [saints.lds.org](https://saints.lds.org), in the Gospel Library app, and in print (order at [store.lds.org](https://store.lds.org)). I invite you to continue reading it in any of these channels.

### **A Divine Pattern and Plan**

*Saints* continues a divine pattern in which prophets, as part of their ministry, use the past to help us learn who we are and see God's purposes in our lives. In the scriptures, many prophets begin their teaching by recounting

stories of the Lord's mercy to their forefathers.<sup>1</sup> Moroni exhorted readers of the Book of Mormon to "remember how merciful the Lord hath been" throughout history "and ponder it in your hearts" (Moroni 10:3). Reflecting on God's goodness prepares us to receive the witness of the Spirit, which teaches us "of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be" (Jacob 4:13; see also Moroni 10:4–5).

Knowing that our Heavenly Parents planned for our ultimate happiness and exaltation provides us with perspective, gives us identity as beloved children of divine parents, and increases our confidence in the Lord, even in times of adversity. Remembering the Lord's goodness can also protect us against pride and the perils of prosperity. Mormon wrote about a time when the Nephites "began to grow exceedingly rich." But unlike other periods in the Book of Mormon when the people allowed pride and riches to bring their downfall, they followed a different path this time: "But notwithstanding their riches, or their strength, or their prosperity, they were not lifted up in the pride of their eyes; neither were they slow to remember the Lord their God; but they did humble themselves exceedingly before him." They kept their covenants and remained righteous because "they did remember how great things the Lord had done for them" (see Alma 62:48–50).

*Saints* teaches lessons like these and many more. It will help you see the Lord's hand in your life as you vicariously experience the trials of faith, the heartaches and joys, the revelations and resolve of imperfect people who loved the Lord and who felt His love.

As you read, you will discover new insight and meaning even in stories you have heard before. No scene in Church history is better known than Joseph Smith's First Vision, but *Saints* helps us better understand how Joseph struggled to reconcile what he felt in his heart with what he thought in his mind.

Joseph's heartfelt desire to feel the Savior's forgiveness had gone unfulfilled because he observed that none of the existing churches taught "the gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the New Testament."<sup>2</sup> In his mind Joseph pondered which church was right or if they were all wrong. In his heart he desperately hoped that one of them was right so he could find the peace he sought. With his head and his heart at odds, Joseph discovered that he could ask of God. He went to the woods to pray. There he saw the Father and the Son, who forgave him and resolved his dilemma in a way he had never imagined.<sup>3</sup>



***Saints shows that knowing the dealings of the Lord gives us eternal perspective, helps us see things as they really are and will be, and helps us exercise faith that the Lord will see us through hard times.***

Joseph, his family, and the many other people who embraced the Lord's restored covenant wanted to feel God's love for them, learn how they could draw closer to Him, and heal relationships with loved ones. *Saints* tells their stories.

### **Trusting the Lord during Trials**

Volume 1 of *Saints* includes the heart-wrenching story of Amanda Barnes Smith and her family, who obeyed the Lord's commandments and were doing His will.<sup>4</sup> Amanda's husband and one of her sons were brutally killed along with 15 other Latter-day Saints camped at a small settlement on Shoal Creek in Missouri. The Lord sustained Amanda through the awful experience, answered her prayers, gave her courage, and enabled her to heal her severely wounded son.<sup>5</sup>

*Saints* shows how Amanda learned to trust in the Lord through extreme adversity. It also tells what Joseph Smith learned about God's goodness even in times of suffering. It shows that knowing the dealings of the Lord gives us eternal perspective, helps us see things as they really are and will be, and helps us exercise faith that the Lord will see us through hard times.

When the Prophet Joseph learned what had happened to Amanda's family and others on Shoal Creek, he felt he



would rather go to prison or be killed than let the Saints be slaughtered. The next day he attempted to negotiate a peaceful solution with the Missouri militia, which was poised to attack the Saints' main settlement of Far West. Instead, Joseph was captured and held as a prisoner.

Nearly five months later, Joseph remained in custody, confined in a cold, cramped underground cell in Liberty, Missouri. He wondered where God was hiding and how long He could stand to listen to the cries of widows and orphans. He prayed, "O Lord, how long shall they suffer

these wrongs and unlawful oppressions, before thine heart shall be softened toward them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion?" (D&C 121:3).

*Saints* teaches us that adversity is not evidence of the Lord's disfavor, nor a withdrawal of His blessings. Opposition is part of God's plan to refine us and prepare us for an eternal, celestial destiny (see 2 Nephi 2:11). Joseph learned that the Savior's infinite suffering enables Him to succor us when we suffer and eventually to exalt us (see Alma 7:11–13). In answer to Joseph's anguished cry, the Lord listed all kinds of challenges before concluding:

"If the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.

"The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?" (D&C 122:7–8).

Experiencing *these things* ourselves can endow us with Christlike empathy for those who are afflicted. "My heart will always be more tender after this than ever it was before," Joseph realized while in jail. He wished he could be with the Saints to comfort and console them. "I never could have felt as I now do," he explained, "if I had not suffered the wrongs that I have suffered."<sup>6</sup>

One reason the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles commissioned and approved *Saints* is that it can help each of us experience *these things* through the stories of others. We can learn from Amanda that even when God sees fit in His infinite wisdom not to prevent evil or suffering, He loves us and He is mindful of us. He hears our prayers and is merciful and kind.

## Restored Temple Blessings

Nowhere is that mercy and kindness shown to us better than in the temple. At its heart, *Saints* is the story of restored temple blessings. The first volume ends as thousands of Latter-day Saints receive sacred ordinances in the Nauvoo Temple in 1846. The second volume will culminate in the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple and the Saints beginning to receive ordinances there in 1893. The third volume will

conclude with European Saints beginning to gather to the temple in Switzerland in 1955. The fourth volume will bring the story up to the present, when temples dot the earth and Saints all around the globe receive the ordinances of exaltation, as the prophets envisioned long ago.

In the Lord's house we make covenants and are endowed with the power to overcome the effects of the Fall, including evil and suffering in this world. We receive protection and ultimately power to come forth in the Resurrection, sealed to loved ones forever.

*Saints* will help us keep covenants by enlarging our memories in sacramental ways. It will help us to always remember what the Savior has done for us. Without records of God's dealings in the past, we could not "remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men" (Moroni 10:3). For these reasons we are indebted to the Lord and to the Saints who recorded their experiences of His love for them. The Lord commanded Joseph Smith to record his experiences (see D&C 21:1). He commanded a Church historian working under Joseph's direction to "keep the church record and history continually" (D&C 47:3). He commanded that the history include "all things which shall be for the good of the church, and for the rising generations" (D&C 69:8).

With these revelations and the covenant promise to always remember the Savior in mind, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles began planning *Saints* 10 years ago. Now we encourage you to read it, trusting that it will assist you in understanding God's plan, seeing how merciful the Lord has been, enduring faithfully in good times and bad, gaining Christlike empathy for others, and keeping the covenants leading you to exaltation. ■

## NOTES

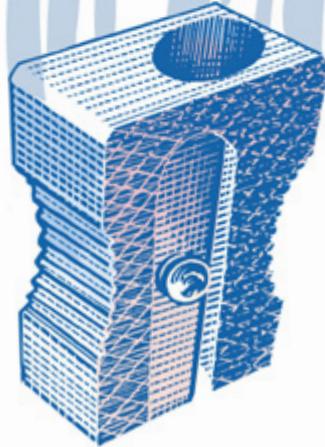
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## EGGS, FUSES, AND FAITH

One of our goals as a family is to save enough money to make a down payment on our own home. Without that goal, I might waste my weekends watching television, waiting for financial opportunities to come to me.

As a driver for a mining company in northern Chile, I work four days away from home at the mines and then have three days off—Saturday through Monday. To supplement our income and savings toward a home, we decided to start selling eggs. Our plan was to take orders from friends, neighbors, and Church members; buy about 1,000 eggs each week from a wholesaler; and then pick up and deliver the eggs on Saturdays and Mondays.

My wife, Laura, and I decided we would bring our two children with us on deliveries and enjoy the time together. As we were on our way to buy our first batch of eggs, however, disaster struck. One of our children, playing with a small metal pencil sharpener, tossed the sharpener and it landed squarely in the empty cigarette lighter receptacle. Sparks flew, and our van lost all electrical power, coming to



When a small metal pencil sharpener landed in the empty cigarette lighter receptacle, our van came to a sudden stop. We had blown a fuse.

a sudden stop right in the middle of a highway. We had blown a fuse.

As we sat there holding up traffic and wondering what to do, we became so frustrated that we felt like crying. But at that moment, I remembered that the Lord has promised to lift us and help us if we put our trust in Him. A calmness came over me. I realized I

couldn't just sit there complaining. We had a problem, and with God's help, we would solve it.

Laura and I turned to each other and said, "We have to show faith." We said a prayer and dried our tears. Then, with Laura steering, I got out to push the car. Several people jumped out of their cars and helped me.

We pushed the car about 200 meters before finding a safe place off the highway to park. As the car rolled to a stop, I noticed that we had parked right in front of a car stereo shop.

I located the blown fuse, walked inside the shop, and asked, "Do you have one of these?"

The clerk replied, "Of course."

I bought a fuse and put it in place, the car started right up, and off we went. The egg wholesaler was just about to close when we pulled up. We bought our eggs and made our deliveries.

When we have challenges, we need to remember to ask our Heavenly Father for help. I know He will answer us as we move forward and show our faith in Him. ■

Alvaro Alcaino, Antofagasta, Chile

# A BLESSING IN MY MOTHER'S HANDWRITING

One evening I was pondering what message to give at an upcoming ward conference. I had been studying the scriptures throughout the week, and although I had received great instruction and insights, I still had no clear direction of what the Lord wanted me, as stake president, to share with members of the ward.

In heartfelt prayer, I asked for guidance from the Spirit to direct my thoughts. Then I opened the scriptures and began reading again. My mind immediately turned to the ward's goals that the bishop and I had recently discussed. One of those goals was to utilize *Preach My Gospel* in sharing the gospel with friends and neighbors.

I felt impressed to include *Preach My Gospel* in my own study that evening. I pulled out a copy and opened it to no page in particular. On that page, I found two handwritten scripture references—1 Nephi 8:8–11 and 1 Nephi 11:21–22. As I looked closer, I realized those references were written in my mother's handwriting. My sweet mother had passed away several years earlier, two months after her 80th birthday. She was an

example of courage and selflessness, who always saw the good in people. And she loved the scriptures.

I opened the scriptures to those verses to see what prompted her to write them down. As I read them, my mind immediately opened to the message that I should give. It was a simple message that members of the Church who have tasted the delicious fruit of the gospel may sometimes forget that many others are seeking that same fruit. We need to reach out and tell them where to find it.

I thought of my sweet mother as

I looked through the rest of *Preach My Gospel*. There was no name, no other notes, or anything to indicate that the book had ever belonged to her. I sat in awe as I reflected on the chain of spiritual promptings that led to this moment. The Spirit confirmed to me that I had been directed in my thoughts, just as I had been praying for. Little did my mother know, however many years ago she wrote those references, that the Lord would use them to be the answer to her son's humble prayer. ■

Douglas Hedger, Nevada, USA

While preparing for ward conference, I opened *Preach My Gospel* to a page with scripture references written in my mother's handwriting.



## A MIRACLE IN THE LORD'S HOUSE IN KYIV

**M**y family and I were excited to be traveling by car from Romania to Kyiv, Ukraine, for the dedication of the temple in August 2010. Knowing that this would be the temple for the Saints in the Romania/Moldova Mission, we traveled for about 14 hours just to be there. When we arrived, we met another group who had also traveled from Romania. We were all happy to be in Kyiv for this sacred event.

On the day of the dedication, our group from Romania was assigned to watch the dedication via broadcast in a room on the ground floor of the temple. Some began to express their disappointment. They had hoped to participate in the dedication with the prophet in the celestial room. Some even said that they could have just stayed at home and watched the broadcast from their chapel in Romania.

I began to pray in my heart, “Heavenly Father, how can we help these members from Romania have an unforgettable experience in Thy house?”

I still hadn't received an answer when the dedicatory session began. Soon we learned that the prophet, President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018), was going to come down and put the cornerstone into place. Perhaps this could be our answer!



I prayed for a way for the prophet to come and greet the Romanian Saints.

“I don’t ask for this for myself,” I prayed, “but for my brothers and sisters.”

After the cornerstone ceremony, President Monson walked by our room on his way back to the celestial room. Suddenly, I felt in my heart that I should stand and invite him to come in our room.

I stood and said, “Our prophet! Come and see us. We are from Romania.”

He didn’t seem to hear me. Then, a moment later, he came back. “Romania!” he said and entered the room.

He greeted all of us and said he loved us very much. My heart was full as I watched the joyful faces of our dear members. “Thank you, dear

I prayed in my heart, “Heavenly Father, how can we help these members from Romania have an unforgettable experience in Thy house?”

Father,” I prayed, “for this miracle in Thy house.”

When the prophet left the room, no one was sad anymore. I felt that we were in the most blessed room in the temple. It was an experience I will never forget. ■

Doru Vasile, Bucharest, Romania

## A SMILE OF ACCEPTANCE

One night our ward held an activity that we had spent hours preparing for. After the activity a young investigator said goodbye to me but a few minutes later returned and asked, “Bishop, when do I need to come back?” I told him Sunday, and the boy quickly said, “No, isn’t there another activity?” He had had such a good time with the youth of our ward that he wanted to come back.

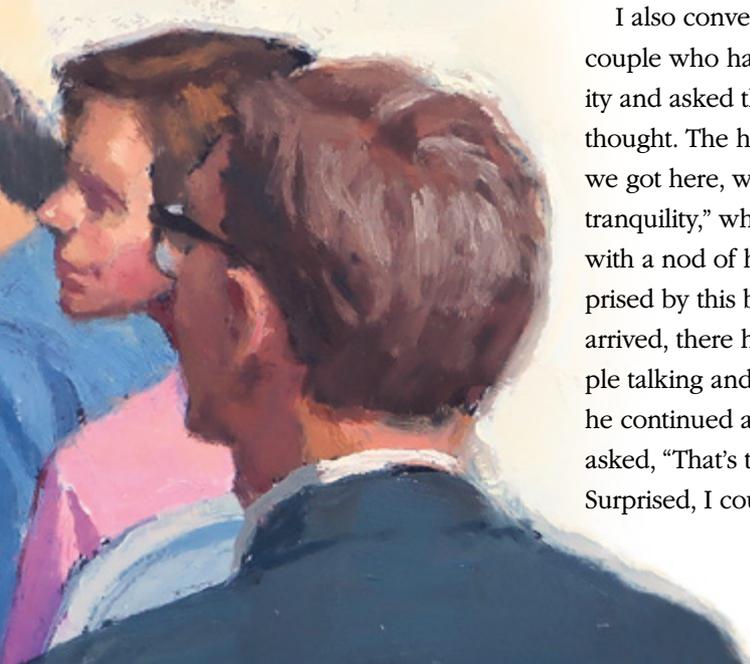
I also conversed with a visiting couple who had attended the activity and asked them what they had thought. The husband said, “Since we got here, we have felt peace and tranquility,” which his wife affirmed with a nod of her head. I was surprised by this because when they first arrived, there had been a lot of people talking and making a racket. But he continued and looked at me and asked, “That’s the Holy Ghost, right?” Surprised, I could only say yes.

There had been a lot to do to get ready for this activity, so that night when everything ended, the only thing I had wanted to do was go home and go to bed. Because of how tired I was, I had not been able to think over my conversations with the investigators. When I got home, I said my prayers and got into bed, but I couldn’t sleep; in my mind I pictured the Lord smiling. It was a smile of acceptance. At that moment I began to remember the wonderful things that had happened at the activity.

I understood that the diligence and love of the ward members had made it possible for the hearts of those three investigators to be touched. I understood that the smile of acceptance was for what we were doing. I couldn’t avoid crying, and I felt so grateful for the gift that the Lord gave us. He had given us a smile of acceptance. I testify that the Lord’s words are true; that when we bring but one soul to Him, great will be our joy in the kingdom of the Father (see D&C 18:15). ■  
Franklin Romero, Manabí, Ecuador

### SHARE YOUR STORY

Latter-day Saint Voices publishes true accounts on any gospel topic, but we are particularly looking for your experiences in ministering to others and in showing courage in living the gospel. Submit your article online at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org) (click “Submit an Article or Feedback”).



**There will always be “hard sayings.” But there will always be the option to choose faith over any doubt or uncertainty.**

# OUR **Motivation** TO **Live the Gospel**

**By Mindy Selu**  
Church Magazines

**T**he path of discipleship is filled with blessings—those both “seen and unseen.”<sup>1</sup> But there are times when that path, despite its blessings, isn’t easy or convenient. Becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ requires work and sacrifice, and sometimes it’s difficult to find the motivation to live the commandments and make those sacrifices.

As a young adult, you’re probably also busy trying to juggle new responsibilities, make life-altering decisions, and figure out what your own path of discipleship is going to look like for the rest of your life. On top of that, there may be things in the Church’s policies or history or in gospel doctrine that you don’t quite understand and temptations you struggle with, as well as blessings you’re still waiting on and questions about God’s plan for you.

Some of us may wonder at times if living the gospel is worth the blessings we’ve been promised. We might argue that we don’t fit in, that it’s too much work, or that the questions seem to outweigh the answers. But what it really comes down to is motivation. Why do you do what you do and live the way you do? Why do you continue keeping the commandments, even when no one’s around to notice if you do?

Regardless of who you are and what stage of life you’re in, the choice to find your motivation by cultivating your faith in the Savior and His gospel is up to you.



### **To Whom Shall We Go?**

Finding and keeping up the motivation to live the gospel is hardly a challenge unique to our day. Even when the Savior was on the earth, people still had a hard time understanding and thus obeying the principles He taught. Several of His disciples were listening as He explained a concept that seemed to offend them—His role as the “bread of life” (see John 6:35–58). They responded skeptically, saying, “This is an hard saying; who can hear it?” (John 6:60).

Christ, seeing that they were having a hard time believing or accepting this doctrine, asked, “Doth this offend you?” (John 6:61). Instead of putting their faith ahead of their doubts, many of His disciples “went back, and walked no more with him” (John 6:66).

But when Christ asked the rest of His disciples if they too would “go away,” Peter gave the only answer there really is to give: “To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:67–68).

### **The Source of Our Motivation**

Peter knew the source of his motivation.

It came down to the heart of why we do  
what we do in the gospel:

our testimony of and faith in Jesus Christ. “We believe and *are sure*,” Peter declared, “that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:69; emphasis added). By gaining that same strong conviction of Jesus Christ, His divinity, and His work, we too can find the motivation to continue living the gospel—even when it seems hard, even when nobody else will notice, and even when we’re not sure we want to.

There will always be “hard sayings.” But there will always be the option to choose faith over any doubt or uncertainty. As Elder L. Whitney Clayton of the Presidency of the Seventy said, “The decision to believe is the most important choice we ever make.”<sup>2</sup>

So what do we do if we find ourselves on the other side of one of those “hard sayings”?

1. Follow the example of Peter and the other disciples who remained faithful even when it would’ve been easy to “go away.” Listen to the counsel of prophets, apostles, and other leaders:

“In moments of fear or doubt or troubling times, hold the ground you have already won. . . . *Hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes.*”<sup>3</sup>

“Take one simple step forward in faith—and then another. . . . Focus on the truths [you do] believe and let those truths fill [your] mind and heart. . . .



“ . . . Start with basic gospel truths.”<sup>4</sup>

2. Stay close to the scriptures and follow their teachings:

“Prayerfully study and ponder the Book of Mormon each day.”<sup>5</sup>

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:17).

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22).

3. Continue keeping the commandments.

“Answers to our sincere questions come when we earnestly seek and when we live the commandments. . . . Our faith can reach beyond the limits of current reason.”<sup>6</sup>

“As you continue to be obedient, . . . you will be given the knowledge and understanding you seek.”<sup>7</sup>

In the end, our motivation simply comes down to what Peter said. Do we believe that Jesus is the Christ, that He runs His Church and has the words of eternal life? Does our faith in Him take precedence over the “hard sayings” we might not understand at the moment?

### **The Rewards of Living the Gospel**

When we do decide to love and follow God and Jesus Christ and to keep the commandments even when we don’t fully understand them, the rewards are immeasurable. The natural man asks, “What’s in it for me?” The teachings of the gospel respond: “Peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come”; a place prepared for you in the

mansions of God; all that Heavenly Father has; “never-ending happiness” (see D&C 59:23; Ether 12:34; D&C 84:38; Mosiah 2:41); and, as Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stated: “Here [in the Church] you will find what is precious beyond price. . . . Here you will find the words of eternal life, the promise of blessed redemption, and the pathway to peace and happiness.”<sup>8</sup> Just to name a few.

When we devote ourselves to following Christ and obeying His commandments, we are promised all of these things and more. That doesn’t mean the path will always be easy or understandable, but the blessings we’re promised from staying strong will continue to unfold throughout our lives and even after.

However, as incredible as these blessings are, they shouldn’t be our primary motivation for living the gospel. No matter what questions you have, no matter which doctrine you don’t understand, your faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement will be the key to your motivation to live His gospel, just as it was for Peter and others.

“Our motives and thoughts ultimately influence our actions,” said Elder Uchtdorf. “The testimony of the truthfulness of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is the most powerful motivating force in our lives. Jesus repeatedly emphasized the power of

good thoughts and proper motives: ‘Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not’ (D&C 6:36).

“The testimony of Jesus Christ and the restored gospel will help us in our lives to learn of God’s specific plan for us and then to act accordingly. It gives us assurance of the reality, truth, and goodness of God, of the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, and of the divine calling of latter-day prophets.”<sup>9</sup>

As for me, I’m going to keep trying, even when it feels hard. I’m going to keep saying my prayers and studying my scriptures. I’m going to make an effort to strengthen my testimony of the Savior every day. And I’m going to keep trying to live as He would have me live and depend on His words and His living prophets and apostles to teach me how, relying on the motivation that stems not only from my faith in and love for Him but also from His eternal sacrifice and love for me. ■

#### NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Way of the Disciple,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 76.
2. L. Whitney Clayton, “Choose to Believe,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 38.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Lord, I Believe,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2013, 93–94; emphasis in original.
4. Rosemary M. Wixom, “Returning to Faith,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 94.
5. Thomas S. Monson, “The Power of the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2017, 87.
6. Rosemary M. Wixom, “Returning to Faith,” 95.
7. Russell M. Nelson, “Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018, 95–96.
8. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Come, Join with Us,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 24.
9. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Power of a Personal Testimony,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 37.



#### TWO CHOICES

“The Lord’s way is not hard. Life is hard, not the gospel. . . . Life is hard for all of us, but life is also simple. We have only two choices. We can either follow the Lord and be endowed with His power and have peace, light, strength, knowledge, confidence, love, and joy, or we can go some other way, any other way, whatever other way, and go it alone—without His support, without His power, without guidance, in darkness, turmoil, doubt, grief, and despair. And I ask, which way is easier?”

Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge of the Seventy, “The Way,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 36.

**I felt a darkness settle over my life. And then I realized I needed to talk with my bishop.**

# The **First Step** **Toward** Repentance

By Aurilas Peterson

**I** remember setting my baptism date with the missionaries. They asked me if I was ready to make this covenant with our Heavenly Father. Without even thinking about it and with a heart full of joy, I said, “Yes!” I wanted to accept the special gift my loving Father had given me, and I knew that I wouldn’t be as happy without the Savior in my life. But I really wasn’t sure what the future held for me.

Finally, the big day came. It was unforgettable, and I was so happy.

## **Dark Days**

After my baptism and confirmation, days suddenly seemed dark. I was dealing with family issues, and I was struggling to obey all of God’s laws. I didn’t know what to do, and I wanted to give up on everything. It seemed like nobody understood me.

I had always loved reading the Book of Mormon, but during that time I set it aside. One day, as I was home alone, I felt the sweetness of

the Spirit prompting me to read the Book of Mormon. I prayed beforehand, wanting to find an answer that could bring solace to my suffering. I opened directly to Alma chapter 5. Verse 27 reads: “Have ye walked, keeping yourselves blameless before God? Could ye say, if ye were called to die at this time, within yourselves, that ye have been sufficiently humble? That your garments have been cleansed and made white through the blood of Christ, who will come to redeem his people from their sins?”

Finally, I felt touched by these words. I knew that I needed to repent, so I made an appointment to see my bishop. I was undeniably scared, but I forced myself to go and visit with him.

## **Understanding God’s Promise**

When I arrived at the bishop’s office, I felt so guilty that I wanted to just turn back around. But I prayed to have the courage to say everything I needed to. The bishop welcomed me into his office, and then he said

a prayer to receive God's help. He spoke to me as if I were his son and showed his love for me through his words. He gave me advice and asked me to do certain things in order to receive God's forgiveness and then to come back to meet with him.

I was so glad for this opportunity. I followed his advice and eventually came to understand God's promise of forgiveness to Alma: "If he confess his sins before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of

his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive him also" (Mosiah 26:29). After sincerely repenting, I knew that God had forgiven me. I finally was able to feel Heavenly Father's love in my heart, and the darkness lifted. I was happy and proud of myself.

### **The Bishop Is There to Help**

The bishop is the Lord's representative for the ward. Know that he is there to help you find the true happiness that God has in store for you.

Trust him. If you have problems or need to repent, go and find him. He will help you.

I know it is not an easy thing to go see him sometimes. But as President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) explained about our Heavenly Father's eternal plan: "I daresay that in the [premortal] spirit world, when it was proposed to us to . . . pass through the experience that we are now receiving, it was not altogether pleasant and agreeable. . . . Yet there is no doubt that we saw and understood clearly there that, in order to accomplish our exaltation and glory, this was a necessary experience." He went on to say, "We were willing to conform to the will of God, and consequently we are here" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* [2012], 110).

Repentance is part of conforming to God's will. So rather than being scared of the bishop, make him your friend. He was chosen by God, and he can help you repent and heal your soul through coming unto Jesus Christ. The Lord wants to help us, but we need to take that first step toward repentance. That way we can see the promise in Isaiah 1:18 fulfilled: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." And for that, the bishop is there to help.

I testify that God lives and that Jesus Christ is our Savior. They both love us very much! ■

*The author lives in Ovest, Haiti.*



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# LEARNING IN THE LORD'S WAY

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**By Elder  
David A. Bednar**  
Of the Quorum of  
the Twelve Apostles

**T**he Lord's hastening of His work requires us continuously to learn, to change, and to press forward with faith in the Savior.

### **A Pattern in All Things**

In a revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith in June of 1831, the Lord declared: "I will give unto you a pattern in all things, that ye may not be deceived; for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations" (D&C 52:14).

Interestingly, the Lord gave us "a" and not "the" pattern for all things. I do not believe the Lord is suggesting with the language "a pattern in all things" that He has only one pattern to be used in every situation. Rather, the Lord's way includes a variety of patterns

that can be employed to achieve different spiritual objectives.

Our ultimate goal in any learning and teaching experience should be to determine and use the pattern or patterns that best meet our needs and achieve the desired learning results.

### **The Holy Ghost Is the Teacher**

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead and a Revelator, a Teacher, a Comforter, a Sanctifier, and He brings all things to our remembrance (see John 14:16–17, 26; 3 Nephi 27:20). Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, "The Office of the Holy Ghost in His ministrations among men is described in scripture. He is a teacher

*Inviting the Holy Ghost to be the teacher is a central purpose in all of the Lord's patterns for learning.*



# LEARNING BY FAITH REQUIRES BOTH THE HEART AND A WILLING MIND.



sent from the Father; and unto those who are entitled to His tuition He will reveal all things necessary for the soul's advancement."<sup>1</sup> Inviting the Holy Ghost to be *the* teacher is a central purpose in all of the Lord's patterns for learning and teaching.

A learner who exercises moral agency and acts in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost—and thereby invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning with and by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. In the sincerity and consistency of our faith-inspired action, we indicate to our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ our willingness to learn and receive instruction from the Holy Ghost.

Consider how missionaries help investigators to learn by faith. Making and keeping spiritual commitments, such as studying and praying about the Book of Mormon, keeping the commandments, and attending Church meetings require an investigator to

exercise faith and to act. This principle also applies to all members, including parents, teachers, and leaders.

Teaching, exhorting, and explaining—as important as they are—can never convey to an investigator, a child, a student, or a member a witness of the truthfulness of the restored gospel. Only as their faith initiates action and opens the pathway to the heart can the Holy Ghost deliver confirming witnesses. Missionaries, parents, teachers, and leaders obviously must learn to teach by the power of the Spirit. Of equal importance, however, is the responsibility they have to help others learn for themselves by faith.

The learning I am describing reaches far beyond mere cognitive comprehension and the retaining and recalling of information. The type of learning about which I am speaking causes us to awaken unto God (see Alma 5:7), to put off the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19), to change our hearts (see Mosiah 5:2), and to be converted unto the Lord and to never fall away (see Alma 23:6). Learning by

faith requires both the heart and a willing mind (see D&C 64:34) and is the result of the Holy Ghost carrying the power of the word of God both unto and into the heart. Learning by faith cannot be transferred from an instructor to a student, from a missionary to an investigator, through a lecture, a demonstration, or an experiential exercise; rather, a student must exercise faith and act in order to obtain the knowledge for himself or herself.

## A Pattern for Learning and Teaching

**1. Prepare to learn.** If you attend your Sunday School class and listen to your teacher present a topic, that is good. But if you have worked and prepared, if you are thinking about things your teacher has invited you to read, ponder, and pray about before class, there can be a powerful outpouring of the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost becomes your teacher. Preparation invites revelation.

**2. Interact to edify.** I want to draw your attention to this verse.

“Appoint among yourselves a teacher, and let not all be spokesman at once; but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege” (D&C 88:122).

This is one of the Lord’s powerful patterns for learning and teaching. May I suggest another way of looking at this verse: “Appoint among yourselves a teacher.” Who is the teacher? The Holy Ghost. Could it be that if you want the Holy Ghost to be the teacher, then “let not all [speak] at once, but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken, that all may be edified of all”? The only one that can produce that edification is the Holy Ghost.

Interacting to edify invites revelation. Presently in the Church, we are learning and applying ever more spiritually sensitive, rigorous, and demanding patterns of learning and teaching. Will we always do what we have always done and get the same results that we have always gotten, or will we repent and learn and change and teach increasingly the Lord’s way?

**3. Invite to act.** Just one simple question helps to achieve this goal. What will you do with what you have learned? Acting upon revelation invites more revelation.

I pray we will keep pace with the Lord’s hastening, that we will not just simply do what we have always done the way we have always done it.

I declare my witness of the living reality of the Lord Jesus Christ. I witness that He lives. He is resurrected. He stands at the head of this Church and He directs its affairs. He is petitioning all of us to keep pace with His hastening and follow the patterns He has set forth for our growth and learning. ■

*From an address given at the seminar for new mission presidents on June 25, 2014.*

**NOTE**

1. James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 12th ed. (1924), 162.



## PREPARATION INVITES REVELATION.

# 5

## WAYS TO LEARN FROM GENERAL CONFERENCE

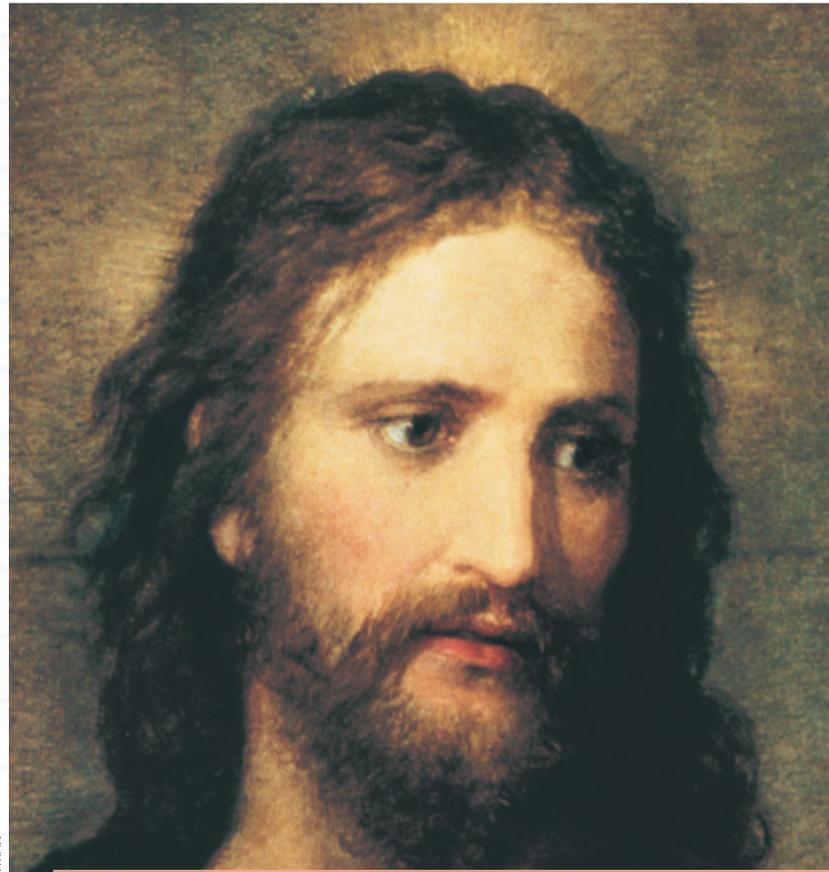
**GENERAL CONFERENCE IS AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY TO** join with members of the Church worldwide to listen to Church leaders and receive direction from the Lord. Watching, listening to, and studying the general conference messages will bring the Spirit into your life and help build your testimony. It's an opportunity for you to receive and act upon personal revelation.

Here are five ways you can learn from general conference.

DETAIL FROM CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER, BY HEINRICH HOFFMANN

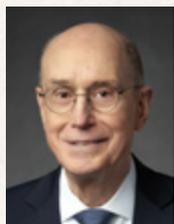
## 1 WRITE DOWN YOUR QUESTIONS BEFORE GENERAL CONFERENCE STARTS

Take the time to write down your questions before conference starts, and then pay attention to answers that come to you during conference. Your prayers and questions can be answered as you participate and listen to the Spirit.



## 2 SEEK TO LEARN OF CHRIST

Prophets testify and teach about the Savior (see Acts 10:43). As you listen to the conference messages, you could think about what the speakers are teaching you about Jesus Christ. You could even make a list in your notes.



*You have the capacity to receive revelation and to act on it fearlessly.*

President Henry B. Eyring, "The Lord Leads His Church," Oct. 2017 general conference

# 5

## BE MOTIVATED AND INSPIRED TO ACT

Write down messages and quotes that inspire you or invite you to take action. This can help you apply what you learn—and help you remember what your thoughts were later when you need the reminder! ■

# 3

## WATCH FOR THEMES

After watching some of general conference, you might notice that you've heard a topic or theme mentioned more than once. The patterns you notice may be one way the Spirit helps you recognize something you need to learn.



# 4

## TAKE NOTE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

You can learn a lot by paying attention to the scriptures Church leaders refer to, especially the Book of Mormon, which is "the keystone of our religion" (introduction to the Book of Mormon). See if you can keep track of each time it's mentioned in general conference. You'll be amazed at what you find!

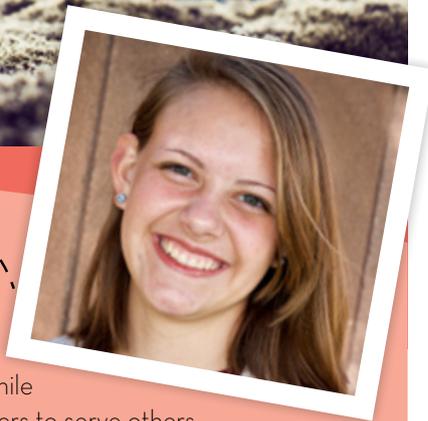


Learning with and by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception.

Elder David A. Bednar, "Learning in the Lord's Way," page 50 of this issue

# TAUGHT BY THE HOLY GHOST

*These youth prepared* to be taught by the Spirit before general conference. Here's what they learned from a previous conference and what they're doing differently because of it.



## Inspired Instruction

I was inspired by general conference. While listening to the instruction from our leaders to serve others, trust Christ, and hold steadfastly to the iron rod, I felt the Holy Ghost testify to me that this gospel is true and that we can obtain eternal life by keeping the commandments and following the word of God. I have set goals to be of more service in my community and to strengthen my testimony through daily prayer and scripture study. I know that I am a daughter of Heavenly Father. He lives and loves me forever and always.

**Madelyn B., age 16, Delaware, USA**

**About:** Oldest of three siblings; runs cross-country; enjoys reading and singing; loves the Spanish language and hopes to teach English as a second language



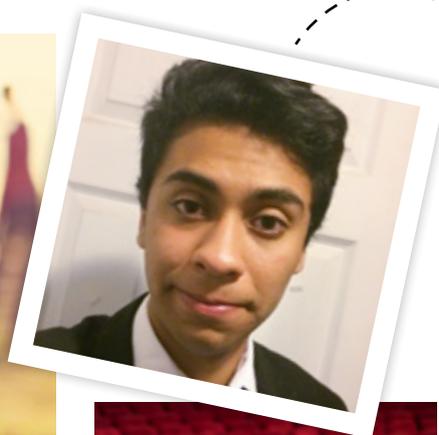
## Answers to Questions

Before general conference I had two questions: (1) How can I keep a good attitude and help my friends when they make bad decisions? and (2) How can I testify of the Church without them making fun of me? During conference, the Spirit testified to me that I am not alone. Now I know that by studying the scriptures with all my heart, I will receive answers to my questions about my friends. I know that my Father listens to my prayers, and I will strive to be better each day.

**Isaak R., age 13, Pichincha, Ecuador**

**About:** Only child; likes to play piano, skate, play football, do judo, swim, sing, and make candies; wants to be a doctor; favorite color is green





### Invited to Grow

General conference strengthened me with a desire to follow the gospel path of Jesus Christ. It helped me know and understand that this is the true Church, which brings us light and happiness. I felt the Spirit invite me to grow each day and to read the Book of Mormon to gain a strong testimony of the gospel. I believe that my Heavenly Father wanted me to listen to these inspired messages.

**Vicente A., age 16, Metropolitan Region, Chile**



*About:* Oldest of four siblings; likes playing video games, listening to music, and playing football; participates in theater; wants to serve a mission

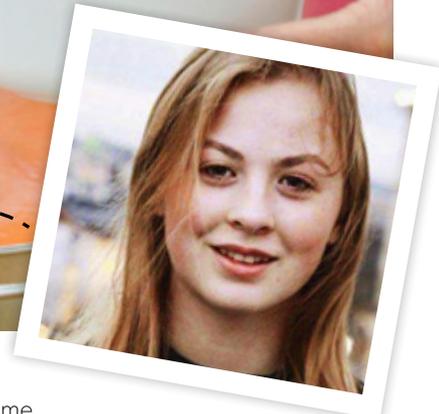


### Prepared to Learn

I feel the Spirit so strongly at general conference. Since I've started preparing questions and preparing myself spiritually for conference, it's taken a whole different meaning in my life, and I've been able to learn so much more through each talk. I am so grateful for the prophet and apostles, and I know that they are sent from Heavenly Father to lead us and guide us in our lives!

**Ben H., age 17, Kentucky, USA**

*About:* Loves sports; plays basketball and tennis at school; enjoys skiing, snowboarding, traveling, and hiking



### Seeking the Light

The year before last was challenging for me. My dad was battling cancer, and there were terrorist attacks in my city. I struggled with anxiety, wondering how I could feel peace when I feared for my spiritual and physical safety. From general conference I learned that we can find peace as we live virtuously, fill our hearts with faith, and keep an eternal perspective. I was inspired to turn to Christ in times of difficulty instead of depending on my own understanding. I know that I can overcome the influences of darkness by seeking the brightness of Christ's light.

**Olivia H., age 17, Belgium**

*About:* Swimmer; enjoys service, including volunteering at a soup kitchen, a foster home, and her school's special-education program



“TO THE YOUNG  
MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH,  
I PROMISE  
THAT IF YOU WILL  
LISTEN

[TO GENERAL CONFERENCE],  
YOU WILL FEEL THE SPIRIT  
WELL UP WITHIN YOU.  
THE LORD WILL TELL YOU  
WHAT HE WANTS YOU TO DO  
WITH YOUR LIFE.”

Elder Robert D. Hales (1932-2017)  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,  
“General Conference: Strengthening Faith and Testimony,”  
Oct. 2013 general conference

# Facts about GENERAL CONFERENCE

The Conference Center organ has **7,667** pipes—but only about 170 pipes can be seen by the audience

President Russell M. Nelson has given **84** general conference talks in his 34 years as a General Authority

People in **221** countries and territories watch general conference

The talks are translated into **94** languages

The wood for the Conference Center's pulpit came from **PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY'S** (1910–2008) old walnut tree

Over **100,000** people attend the five sessions at the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

**A BOEING 747 PLANE**—which is about 230 feet (70.5 m) long—could fit inside the Conference Center auditorium

About **35** talks are given each conference

## NOTABLE ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE DURING GENERAL CONFERENCES:

- SEPT. 1995:**  
“The Family: A Proclamation to the World”
- APR. 1998:**  
Construction of smaller temples
- APR. 2001:**  
Perpetual Education Fund started
- OCT. 2012:**  
Missionary age lowered
- APR. 2018:**  
Ministering replaces home and visiting teaching

IMAGES FROM GETTY IMAGES

# “How can I invite the Spirit into my home when people are fighting or arguing?”



## BE A PEACEMAKER

*“When we are unable to change the conduct of others, we will go about the task of properly governing ourselves. . . .*

*“In place of arguments and friction between family members, ours is to build, listen, and reason together.”*

Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1915-94), “No Time for Contention,” Apr. 1978 general conference.



## Say You’re Sorry

When I’ve had an argument, I have found that saying you are sorry and admitting that you are

wrong, even if you think or know that you’re right, helps bring peace back in the room. Then walk away, stay silent, change the topic, or find something to agree about. It doesn’t take long for the Spirit to come back.

*Dylan M., age 15, California, USA*

## Just Love

I’ve found that showing pure love to my family invites the Spirit to reside in our home. The prophet spoke of love as the catalyst that causes change and the balm that brings healing to the soul. A spirit of love brings safety and peace in the home.

*Joseph C., age 18, Arizona, USA*

## Talk to Your Family

If your family are not members of the Church, tell them how bad you feel when they argue and ask them to improve. If that does not work, pray and try again. If they are members, remind them that they are children of God and that they should avoid quarrels.

*Carolina S., age 19, Goiás, Brazil*



### Pray for the Spirit

Whenever family around are arguing, it's difficult to feel the Spirit's presence, but that doesn't

mean you won't be able to feel it if you're worthy. Say a prayer in your heart for an added measure of the Lord's Spirit and pay extra attention to the promptings sent. Heavenly Father can help you feel peace and know how best to help bring that peace into your home.

*Katie G., age 17, Utah, USA*

### Try to Compromise

Talk with your family to solve the problem in a way that everyone benefits, or share a scripture or sing a hymn. You can also ask Heavenly Father for help to solve the problem. In this way, everyone will calm down and be able to solve the problem without the need for shouting or violence. Surely the Holy Spirit will fill you all with peace and give everyone the desire not to fight again.

*Luis F., age 14, Playa del Carmen, Mexico*

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



## Is a testimony more than just feelings?

A testimony is what the Savior was talking about when He told Peter, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17). It is knowledge from God revealed through the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost speaks in a voice we feel more than we hear, but it comes both "in your mind *and* in your heart" (D&C 8:2; emphasis added)—our thoughts as well as our feelings.

The Prophet Joseph Smith described the spirit of revelation as a feeling of "pure intelligence flowing into you, [giving] you sudden strokes of ideas" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 132).

When we turn our minds and hearts—our thoughts, feelings, and desires—to God, He can speak to our minds and hearts with the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost. As He engages our spirits, certain feelings and thoughts seem to flow to us. This is the testimony He gives us.

### What Do You Think?

"How do I find friends with good standards?"

Submit your answer and, if desired, a high-resolution photograph by November 15, 2018, at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org) (click "Submit an Article").

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

# Paths That Prepare You for Your Future

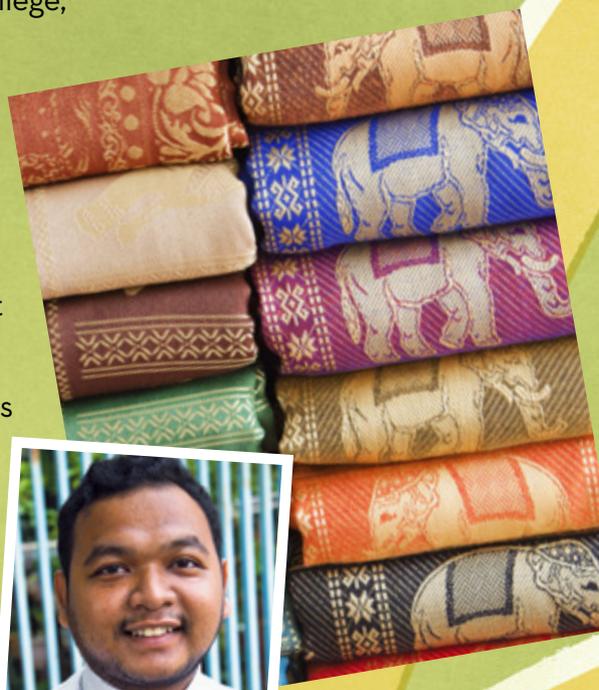
By Leah Barton  
Church Magazines

I don't think it's any 14-year-old girl's dream to find herself in a dusty barn, hoisting a rusty shovel, cleaning out a smelly horse stall. But there I was after school every day until I was old enough to get a different job.

It definitely wasn't my ideal situation to work during high school, but I understood then that if I ever wanted a job I actually liked—one that didn't involve cleaning up after animals—I needed college, and to go to college, I needed money. I knew that for me, education was the right step toward a (hopefully) fulfilling career.

The nice thing is that the path I chose is just one of several that can help you learn to work and provide for your own needs. This is called becoming temporally and spiritually self-reliant. As you consider your options, try to choose the path that you feel will best prepare you.

These stories are from people who were your age just a few years ago. By following the examples of these young adults, you can find your own path toward successful self-reliance.



## CONSIDER THE NEEDS AROUND YOU

By Oudom Piseth, Cambodia

In order to achieve my goals, I always tell myself that working hard is very important, but another way to excel is by working smart. After my mission in England, I returned to Cambodia and looked at the job market. I looked at things like the length of training to get each job and the cost of training.

I found that the training program to be a clothing merchandiser is short but challenging, and not many people were doing it. I saw it was a good opportunity and decided to take it. I have now finished the program and am working as a merchandiser for a clothing company.

Finding the right career can be very hard, but I have the Savior to help me and lift me up.

Whether you go to college, seek employment, or learn a trade, you are developing an attribute that is essential for building the kingdom of God.

## USE EDUCATION TO OPEN DOORS

By *Iolanda Teixeira, Cape Verde, Africa*

**M**y mom always encouraged me with the phrase, “Education is the key to success.” I wanted a better future for myself and especially for my family, and to do this, I needed to continue my education. Without the money to go to college at the time, I applied for a scholarship to attend a vocational school to study computer systems and maintenance.

Throughout my studies I faced various challenges, but this did not stop me from moving forward with eyes fixed on better days. Prayer helped me a lot; I always seek counsel from the Lord. I have always been committed to my studies, and today I remain committed to my work, giving my best as a computer technician and a marketing assistant.



BACKGROUND IMAGES BY JOSH TALBOT; INSETS BY GETTY IMAGES

## WORK NOW TOWARD THE FUTURE YOU WANT

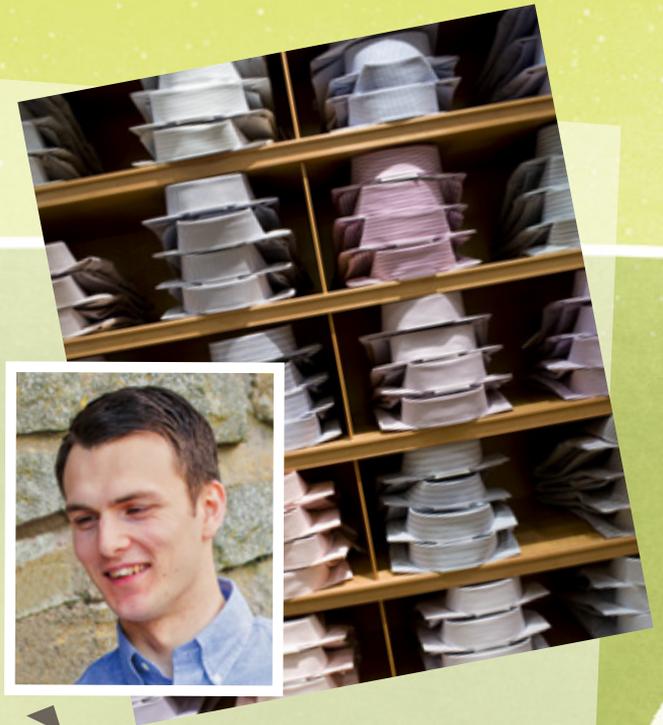
*By Ann-Sophie and Laurence Cavin, Scotland, UK*

**A**nn-Sophie: I always wanted to study at a university, but my plans about what to study changed a lot during my teenage years. After finishing high school, I volunteered in a hospital for six months. Since then I loved the idea of being a nurse, but I didn't think I would be able to do it.

In my ward's self-reliance class, we were asked to pick a job we would like to have even though we might not have the qualifications.

I prayed about what to do, and nursing kept coming into my mind. I decided to follow the promptings of the Lord.

Pursuing this path hasn't been easy. To get started, I researched the nursing program and what it would take for me to study. I talked to people who went through a similar process. The first time I applied to the nursing program, I was put on the waiting list. But I didn't give up; I applied again and eventually got in. Sometimes you have to be patient and trust in the Lord as He has His own plan for you.



**Laurence:** When I was younger, I set a goal to be the best I could be no matter what subject I studied or what job I had. I always tried to learn and improve to give myself the best chance for success.

I currently work as a manager for a clothing company, but I want to join the police force. In Scotland, you have to live in the country for three consecutive years before applying for the police. Since I was outside the country for two years serving a mission, I have to wait a few more months before joining.

Although this has been a big roadblock, I haven't given up. I have a good job to provide for my family, and I have worked hard to make sure I get a good reference for future jobs.



Like these young adults, you will find that various paths can prepare you to take care of yourself and your future family. With that goal in mind, you can plan for success. Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “Let us do the best we can and cultivate a reputation for excellence in all that we do. Let us set our minds and bodies to the glorious opportunity for work that each new day presents” (“Two Principles for Any Economy,” Oct. 2009 general conference). As you focus now on learning and working, you will create habits that will help you feel more confident about the future. ■

*Editors' note: Consider asking your bishop to introduce you to the self-reliance specialists in your stake. They can help you discover possibilities for your future education and work.*

## DISCOVERING YOUR PATH

1.

### KNOW YOURSELF

What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing? Answering these questions can help you identify a potential career that fits any skills, interests, and talents you already have.

**HINT:** Consider asking your parents, teachers, and friends what talents they see in you. You might be surprised at what they say!

2.

### KNOW THE WORLD AROUND YOU

What jobs are in demand where you live? Which companies are hiring? It's wise to pick a career path in an area that is growing and will likely have opportunities in the future.

**HINT:** Colleges, universities, or trade schools often know what skills are in demand and what industries are growing.

3.

### KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NEXT

What preparation is required for the job you want? Where will you get the training and education you need? How will you pay for it? In order to achieve a long-term career goal, you'll need to know how to get there.

**HINT:** Consider talking to someone who is already doing what you want to do. Ask them questions. Most people enjoy giving advice and offering suggestions.

# Passing along God's Love



By Allie B., age 12, Kentucky, USA

A little while ago my family and I moved to Kentucky. I was really upset because I was leaving all my friends and extended family behind. Kentucky was very different from what I was used to. The first time we went to church, I saw that there weren't very many people there. When I realized how small my branch was, I decided that instead of thinking bad about it, I would do something about it.

The next day, my mom and I went to the store. Before we left the house, I grabbed a stack of pass-along cards. When we got to the store, I got a candy bar and went to check out. The cashier scanned the candy, then handed it to me. I handed it back. She looked confused and said, "You just paid for this, ma'am."

I said, "I know, but I'm giving this to you as a gift." Then I put a pass-along card with the candy. She smiled and thanked me. She looked at the back of the pass-along card, where I had written, "Everyone is a child of God." I walked away with happiness, knowing that even if she didn't join the Church, I still did something good.

Later that day, I remembered that I left the rest of the pass-along cards by the cash register! The next time we went to the store, I went to ask if they were still there. Then I saw something, and I stopped in my steps. About five of the cash registers had pass-along cards that said, "Everyone is a child of God." The cashier had passed them out! I felt so happy because of what I did. ■



ILLUSTRATION BY EMIMA GILLETTE

# Canyon Prayer



By Carsen K., age 11, Utah, USA

Last year I went on a hike with my dad and brother. We hiked deep into the canyon. We soon started exploring a side trail. We found large caves and great lookout points. We climbed higher and higher over loose rocks and steep hills.

After a while we were completely lost. We didn't know which way to go to get to the bottom of the canyon. We got stuck in thick brush, losing sight of both the top and bottom of the canyon. I started to get really frustrated. I did not know where to go, and neither did my dad!

It was getting dark and cold, and we were far from

getting out of the canyon. I knew that Heavenly Father knew which way to go.

I said, "If we want to get out of here, we need to pray!" So the three of us knelt down in prayer, asking Heavenly Father to lead us out of the canyon.

As we started to walk, a feeling told me that when I saw a straight tall tree, I should turn left. After I turned left, I saw our car. I knew that Heavenly Father helped us get out of the canyon. Heavenly Father answered our prayer, and we made it out safely—just as the sun was setting.

I am so thankful for the power of prayer and for Heavenly Father's listening ear. ■

# Shining Bright in the Czech Republic

Compiled by Sharon Goodrich, *Church Magazines*

We are Primary children in the Czech Republic. Here's how we shine bright in our country.

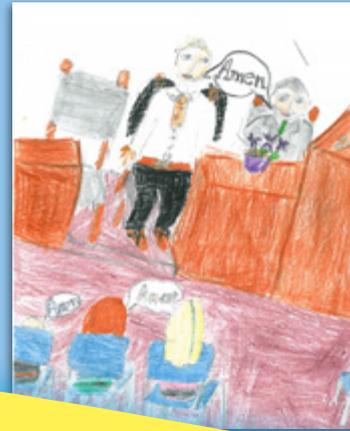
Once I lost my favorite glove. I was very sad. My mother and I prayed, but we didn't find it. I tried to have faith. A week later, my little brother found my glove in the street! God answers our prayers. I love Him, and I know He lives.

**Andre W., age 9**



I have friends at school who are not members of the Church but who still respect my standards. Once I said we should pray, and they agreed! I was very happy.

**Ivana A., age 11**



My friends and I were going downstairs. When we got to the elevator, I had an uncomfortable feeling and asked my friends not to use it. They decided to do it anyway. I took the stairs. When I got downstairs, my friends



weren't there. The elevator had gotten stuck! It was a while before they got out. I was happy that nothing serious happened. I also felt good that I followed the Holy Ghost.

**Amalie N., age 10**

At the beach, the sky started getting dark. The wind blew and made giant waves! There was thunder, lightning, and hail. Everyone ran for shelter. We weren't hurt by the storm. On the way home, we saw three rainbows. We know that God helped and protected us.

**Jakub B., age 10**



At school I have a friend who nobody else wants to be friends with. Other kids began to say mean things to her that made her feel ugly. I told my teacher and invited my friend to play with me. It made my friend happy!

**Ludmila V., age 8**



I was angry with my mother because I didn't want to bathe and go to bed. The next day I was sad because of my bad choice. Mom said that we can pray and ask Heavenly Father to forgive us. We knelt and prayed. I felt better. I learned that we can repent, and because of Jesus Christ, be forgiven.

**Samuel H., age 5**



I bore my testimony in church. It took courage! Since then, I have felt the Spirit.

**Eliska K., age 11**

When my pet guinea pig was sick, I prayed for her. I am grateful to Heavenly Father for helping us.

**Aneta P., age 10**



**SEND US A STAR!**



We're almost done collecting stars! If you haven't sent one yet, hurry and email us a photo of your star with your story, photo, and parent's permission at [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org).



“I testify of Him, the Redeemer of the world and Master of us all. He is the Only Begotten Son of the living God.”

**By Elder Jeffrey R. Holland**  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles  
*“Miracles of the Restoration,” Ensign, Nov. 1994, 34.*

# Our Page



When I go to church, I feel the Spirit of God and the love I have for Him and for my Savior, Jesus Christ. I love my Redeemer.

**Ayana B., age 7, France**



I love being at the temple with my family. It is a beautiful place where I will be able to go when I am 12. It is the house of the Lord.

**Aldo C., age 10, Mexico**



**"President Monson and his counselors"**

**Omar A., age 9, Peru**



I enjoy sharing the gospel at school with my friends, especially with a boy who has difficulty speaking, writing, and reading. One way to share the gospel as Jesus Christ taught is by helping and serving others. Whenever the teacher gives us an assignment in the homework book, I am always willing to help this boy. I love serving others because it helps me feel my Heavenly Father's love.

**Allison M., age 10, El Salvador**

# Hope in Holland

By Megan Armknecht

Based on a true story

*Grace is a 15-year-old girl living in Holland during World War II. The war has gone on for a long time. The people in Holland are starving, and they hope the war will soon be over.*

The last year of World War II was the very worst for Holland. The Nazis took absolutely everything. Grace couldn't go to school. There was no coal to heat their house. Grace and her family had to eat tulip bulbs to keep from starving. They tasted *horrible!* Worst of all, Dad was still a prisoner of war.

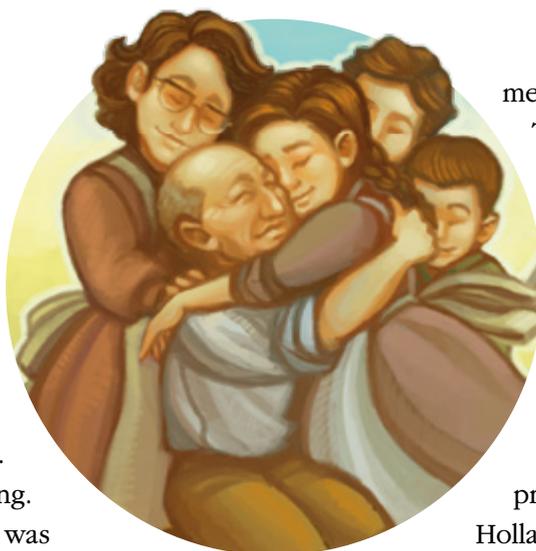
But hope was in the air. People said the Nazis were losing the war. And in May of 1945, the Nazis surrendered. Holland was finally free again! People celebrated in the streets. Now Grace could go back to school. There were no soldiers to be afraid of.

Best of all, one day when Grace and her brothers were walking back from school, they saw that the flag of Holland was flying in front of their home. They knew that could mean only one thing.

"Dad's home!" shouted Heber.

Grace and her brothers ran inside. Grace threw her arms around Dad and gave him a big hug. He hugged her back tightly. It was so wonderful to have Dad home.

Soon after that, packages of food, clothes, and



medicine began arriving in Holland.

The Church leaders in Salt Lake City sent a lot of supplies to help people after the war. Grace even got a new dress! She had worn the same dress for five years, so she was very happy to have a new one.

For the first time in years, Grace had enough to eat. The mission presidency and the government in Holland decided to start a potato project to grow more food. Church members planted lots of potatoes in nearby fields. By fall they would have thousands of potatoes to eat.

"Look!" Grace told Dad, pointing to a sprouting potato plant. "We'll never go hungry again!"

Dad nodded but didn't smile. He said, "I was talking to President Zappey. He told me that the Latter-day Saints in Germany are still starving, just like we were. They are not getting help from the government like us." Dad put his arm around Grace's shoulders. "President Zappey has asked if we would give our potatoes to the German Saints."

"Give up our potatoes!" Grace cried. But the *Nazis* were from Germany! "They might be Latter-day Saints, Dad, but they're still Germans."

"I know it's not easy," Dad said. "But they are also children of God. He loves them too. I forgave them for making me a prisoner. The Lord can help us all forgive."



Grace looked up at Dad. He was the bravest person she knew, but she didn't know if she had the courage to forgive like him. Then she remembered one of her teachers in school during the war. Her teacher had said that not all Germans were Nazis, and not all Nazi soldiers were bad. And now the girls and boys in Germany were starving, just like Grace had been.

Grace took a deep breath. "I understand," she said. "Let's give them our potatoes."

Dad hugged her and smiled. "You are such a brave girl. This is a hard thing to do. But we are disciples of Jesus Christ, and so are our German brothers and sisters."

Grace smiled. The angry feelings in her heart melted, and she felt calm and warm. She could forgive the Germans. And Jesus could help her love them too. ■

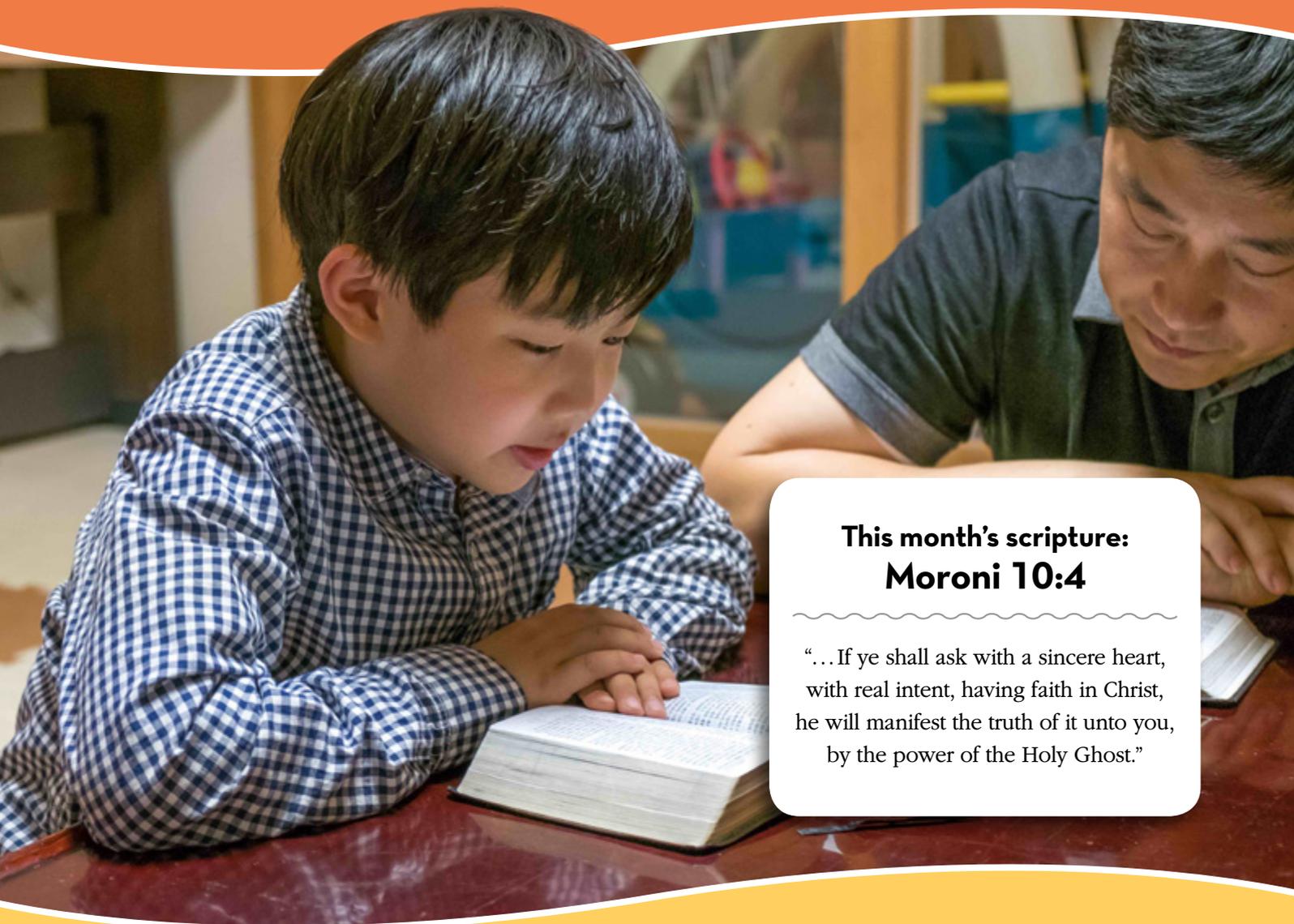
*The author lives in New Jersey, USA.*

Latter-day Saints in Holland gave 140,000 pounds (70 tons) of potatoes and 180,000 pounds (90 tons) of herring to the German Latter-day Saints. Later, in 1953, the German Saints sent supplies to Church members in Holland after a huge flood.

# Book of Mormon Reading Club

## JOIN IN BY READING THE BOOK OF MORMON!

You can read on your own, with your family, or with a friend. Then send us a photo of you reading the Book of Mormon and tell us about something you've learned or your favorite story from the Book of Mormon. Submit it through [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org) (click "Submit an Article").



### This month's scripture: **Moroni 10:4**

“...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.”



My favorite story from the Book of Mormon is found in 3 Nephi 17, and it is about Jesus blessing the children. I like the story because it tells us how

much Jesus and Heavenly Father love us. I can identify with the children, and I imagine myself standing there.

**Barbora J., age 11, Czech Republic**



I love the Book of Mormon because it is a true book. It is written by prophets. It helps me choose the right, and when I have problems, it helps me. I believe it.

**Jason S., age 10, Maharashtra, India**

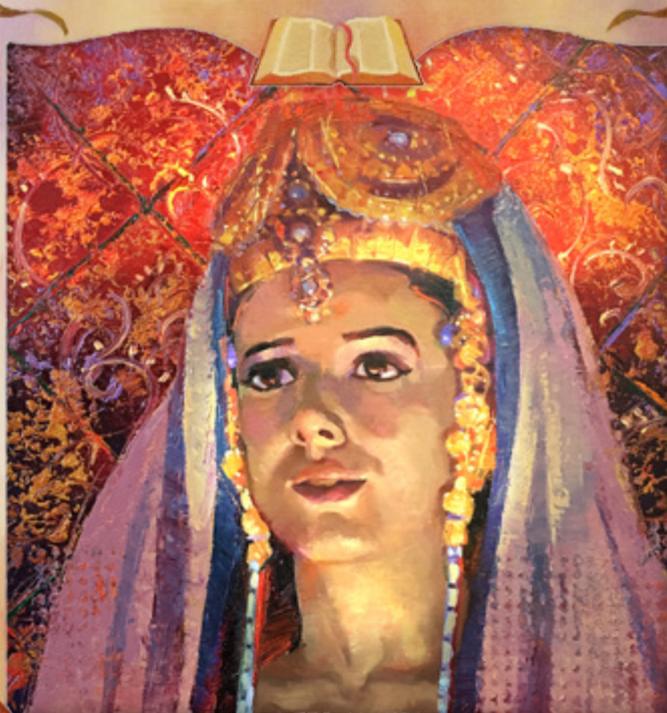
# Esther Was Courageous

**E**sther was queen of Persia. The king did not know that Esther was a Jew. The king had an evil friend who hated the Jews. He tricked the king into saying that all the Jews in the land must be killed. Esther decided to ask the king to save her people. But she could be killed for going to the king's throne. Esther asked the Jews to fast for her. When Esther went to her husband's throne, he welcomed her. She invited him and his friend to dinner. There, she told them that she was a Jew. The king could not change the law, but he allowed the Jews to protect themselves. With God's help, Esther had saved her people!



"Queen Esther," Rebecca C., age 8, Aragua, Venezuela

Read about Esther in Esther 2–8.



**ESTHER**

**Esther was brave and believed in God.  
I can be courageous and stand up for what's right!**

- Memorize the last part of Esther 4:14.
- Watch chapter 45 of the Old Testament stories at [scripturestories.lds.org](http://scripturestories.lds.org).
- If your parents say you are old enough, fast for someone you care about.
- I can be courageous by ...

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# Esther the Queen

By Kim Webb Reid

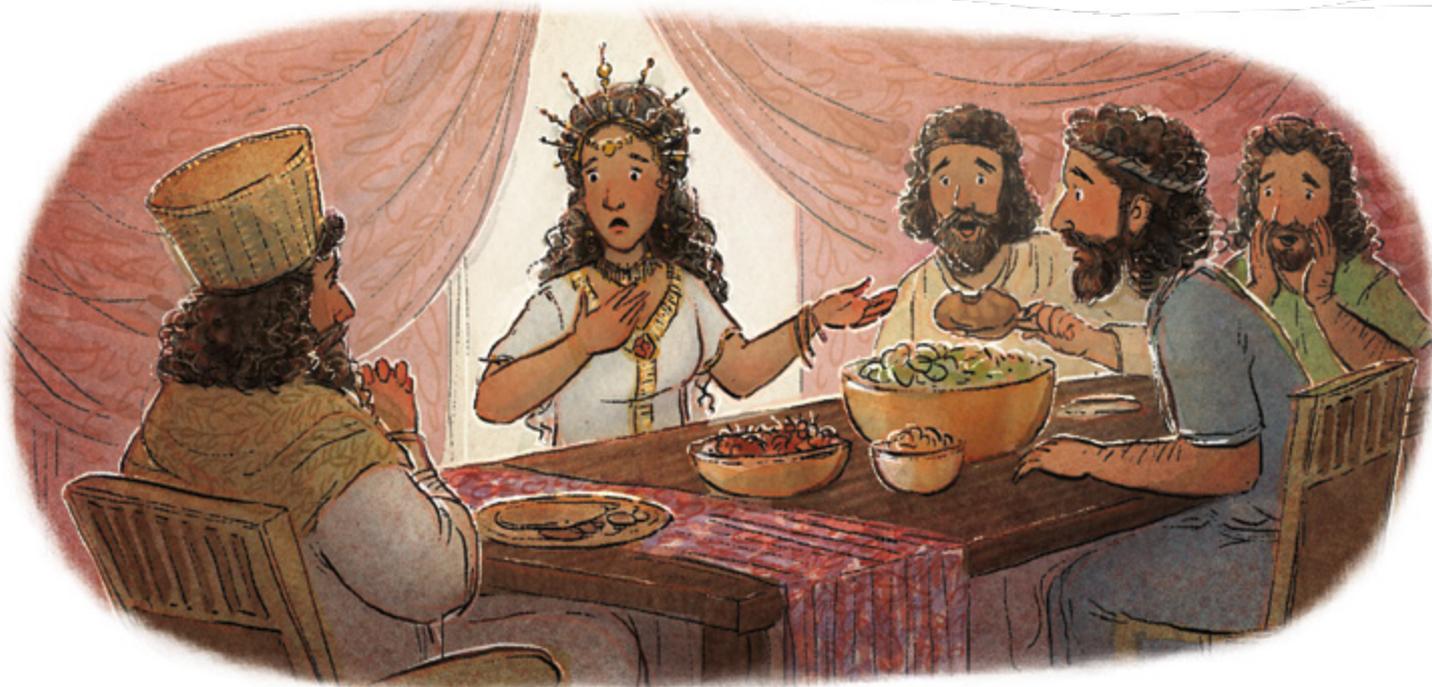


Esther was a queen.  
She was married to the  
king of Persia.

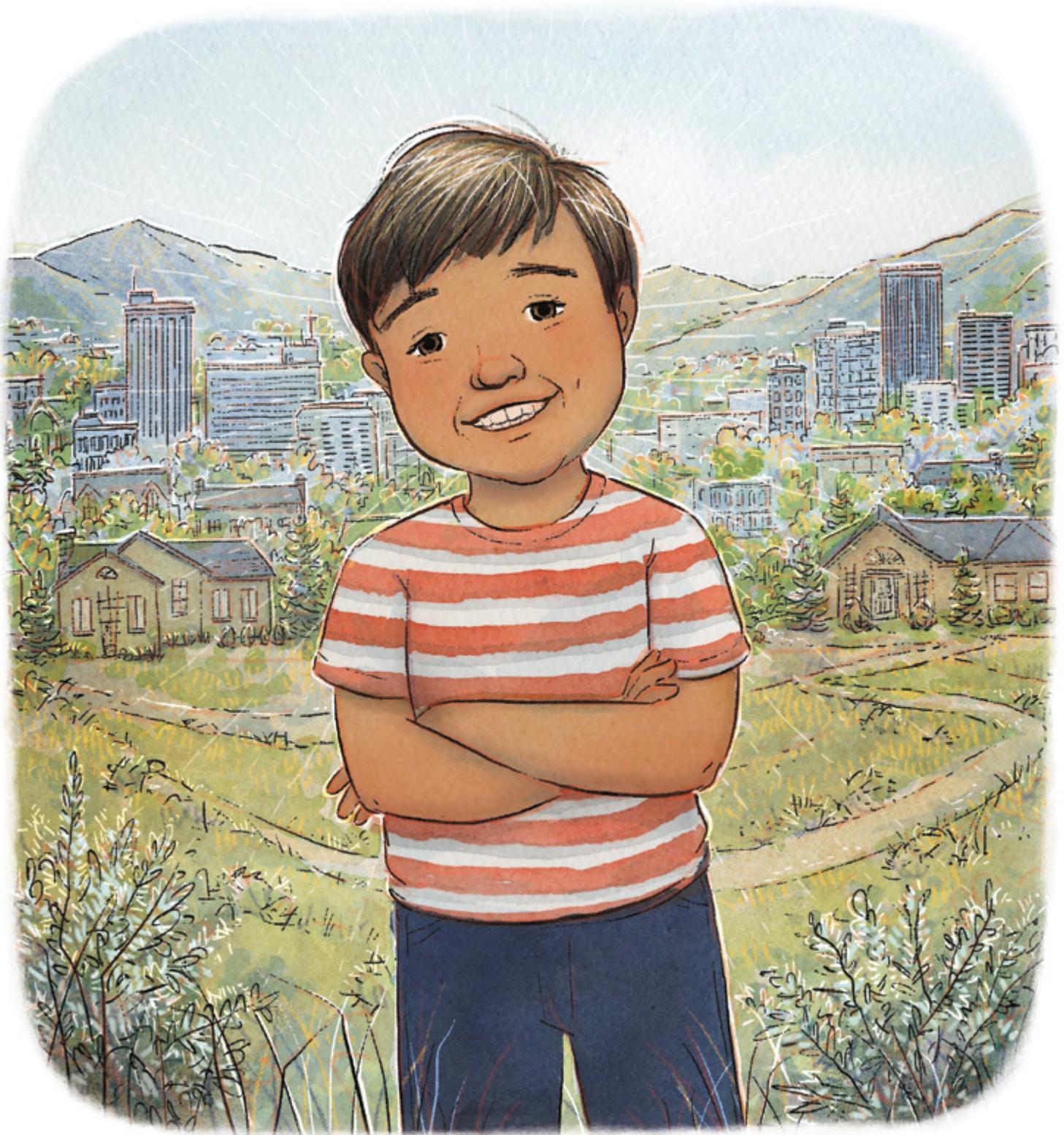


The king had a friend who was a bad man. He tricked the king into making a law that all Jews must be killed! The king didn't know that his wife, Esther, was a Jew.

Esther decided to ask her husband, the king, to save her people. But she was worried that he might be angry. Esther asked all of the Jews to fast and pray for her. Then Esther went to the king. He wasn't angry!



Esther invited the king and his friend to a dinner. At the dinner, Esther told the king that *she* was a Jew. The king was angry that his friend had tricked him. He would tell the Jews that they could protect themselves. Esther had helped save her people!



We can pray to ask Heavenly Father for help. We can be brave and courageous, like Esther. ■

*From Esther 2–8.*

# I Can Help Others Feel Loved

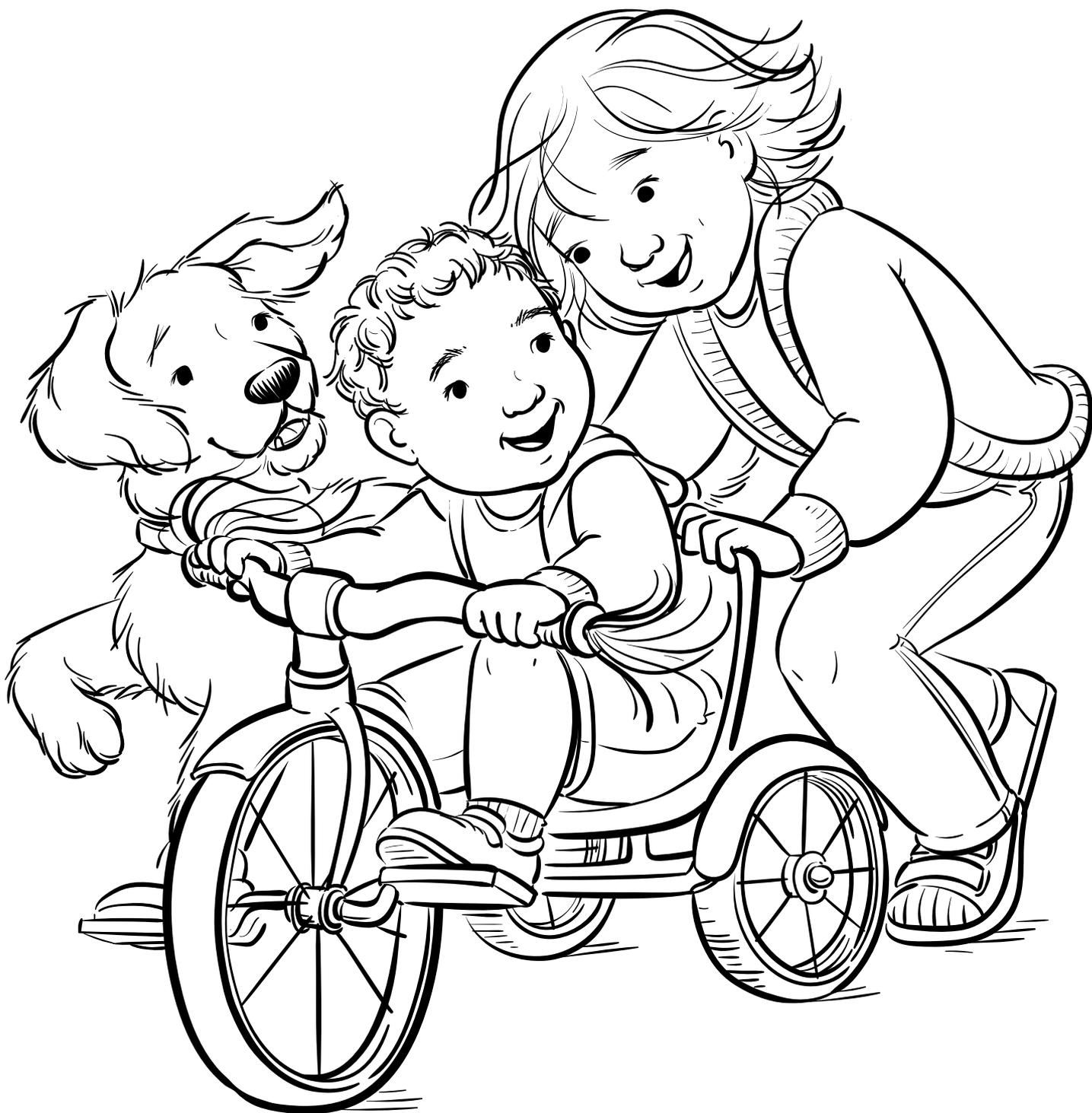


ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT



By President James E. Faust (1920–2007)

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

# OUR SUSTAINING SUPPORT

*Spiritual guidance in large measure depends upon being in harmony with . . . prophets, seers, and revelators.*

I desire to speak about the sacred offices of those priesthood leaders who have been “called and chosen” (D&C 55:1) to guide the Church in this day. . . .

. . . My Brethren [in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles], without exception, are good, honorable, and trustworthy men. I know their hearts. They are the servants of the Lord. Their only desire is to labor in their great callings and build up the kingdom of God on earth. Our Brethren who are serving in this day and time are proven, tried, and true. . . . Their hearts are so pure, their experience so great, their minds so sharp, and their spiritual wisdom so deep that it is a comfort just to be in their presence.

. . . [When I was called, I was counseled] that the most important thing I should do is to always be in harmony



with my Brethren. . . . That resonated as something I wanted to do with all my heart.

. . . I have concluded that spiritual guidance in large measure depends upon being in harmony with the President of the Church, the First Presidency, and the Quorum of the Twelve—all of whom are sustained . . . as prophets, seers, and revelators. I do not know how we can expect to be in full harmony with the Spirit of the Lord if we are not in harmony with the President of the Church and the other prophets, seers, and revelators. . . .

My counsel to the members of the Church is to support the President of the Church, the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, and other General Authorities with our whole hearts and souls. If we do, we will be in a safe harbor. . . .

We also need to support and sustain our local leaders, because they also have been “called and chosen.” Every member of this Church may receive counsel from a bishop or a branch president, a stake or a mission president, and the President of the Church and his associates. None of these brethren asked for his calling. None is perfect. Yet they are the servants of the Lord, called by Him through those entitled to inspiration. Those called, sustained, and set apart are entitled to our sustaining support. ■

*From an October 2005 general conference address.*



EDMUND BLAIR LEIGHTON (1852-1922), *THE BLIND MAN AT THE POOL OF SILOAM*, 1879, OIL ON CANVAS, 40 X 50 1/4 INCHES. BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART, PURCHASED WITH FUNDS PROVIDED BY JACK R. WHEATLEY, 2014.

**THE BLIND MAN AT  
THE POOL OF SILOAM,  
BY EDMUND BLAIR  
LEIGHTON**

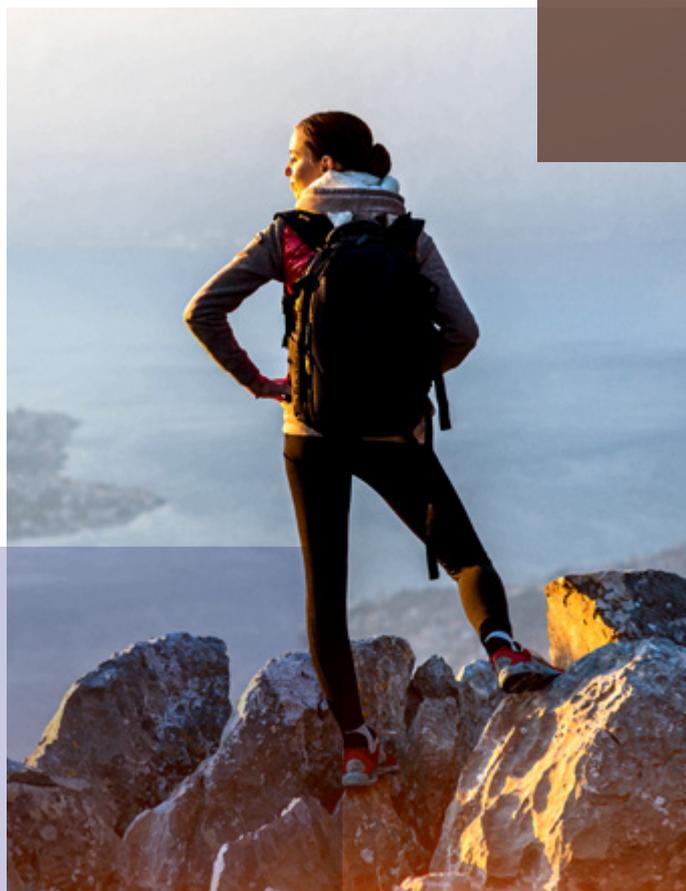
*"He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. . . .  
"If this man were not of God, he could do nothing" (John 9:11, 33).*

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THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

