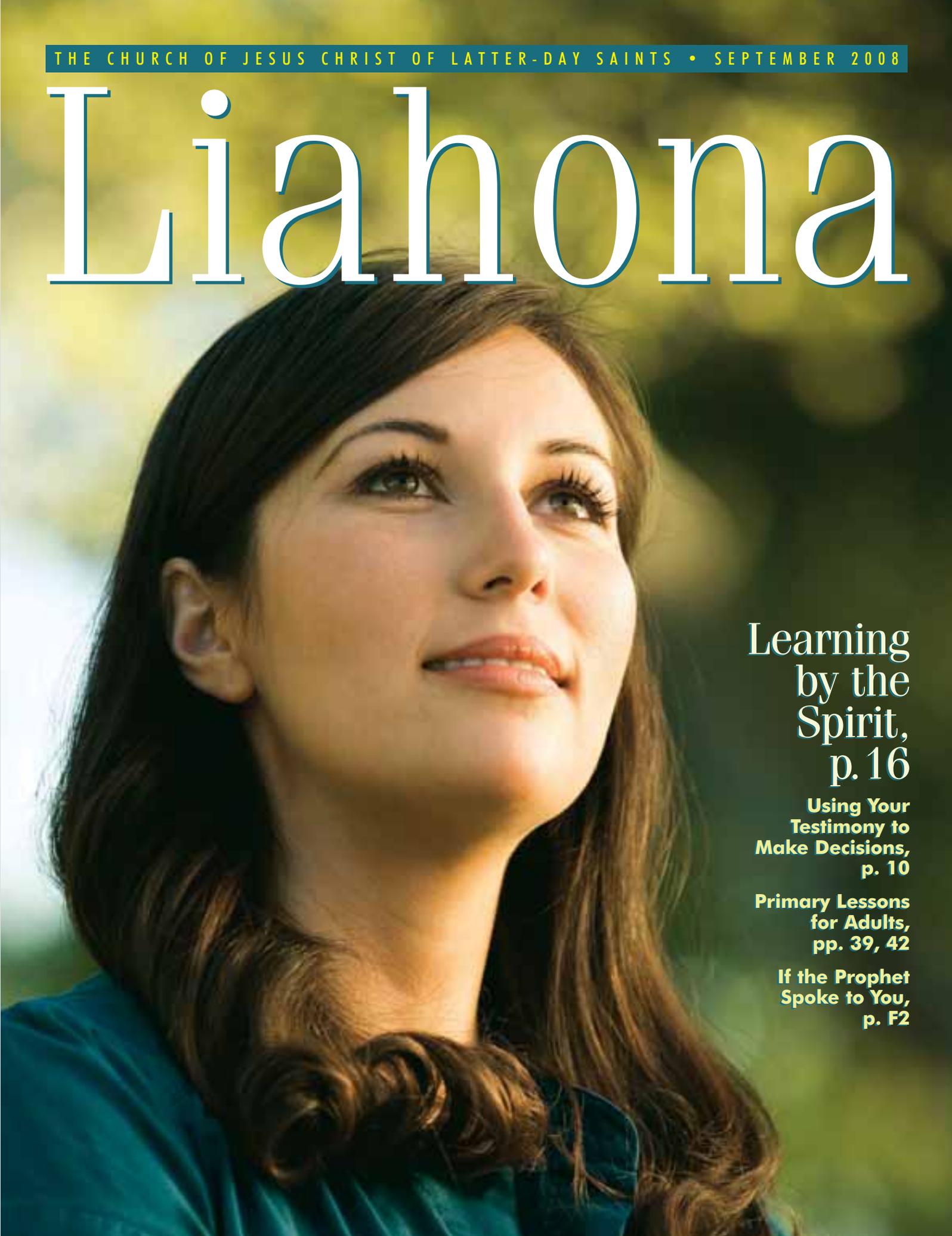


Liahona



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FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

*These teaching suggestions can
be used in the classroom as
well as in the home. You
may tailor these ideas to
your family or class.*

**"Strengthen Faith as
You Seek Knowledge,"**

p. 10: Make a treat for
family home evening as you learn
from this article. Assign each family
member one ingredient from the
recipe. Discuss the importance of
each ingredient and how it not
only makes the recipe better but

is essential to it. As you make the
treat, discuss how each of the five
principles in this article is impor-
tant and can improve our
lives.

**"The Power of Diligent
Learning,"** p. 16: Read

the four points that
Elder Jay E. Jensen learned from
President Boyd K. Packer. Discuss
ways each idea can help you be a
better learner. Invite family mem-
bers to make a goal to use these
ideas to become better learners.



As you look for the Dutch CTR ring hidden in this issue, think about how prayer can help you choose the right.



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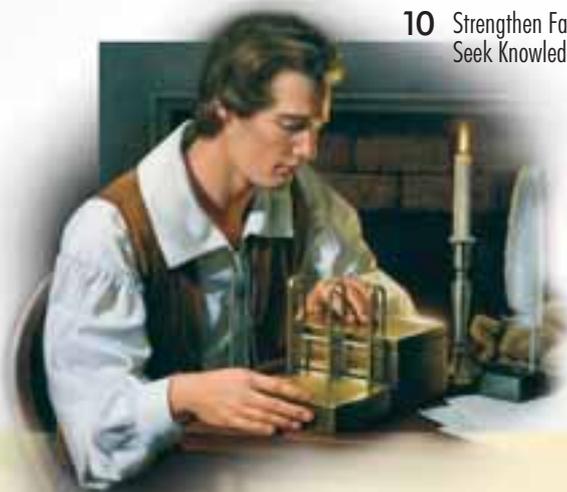
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10 Strengthen Faith as You Seek Knowledge



"From Generation to Generation," p. 44: Write the following on pieces of paper, and put them in a bowl: 1 Nephi 8:12–18; 1 Nephi 10:17; 1 Nephi 15:6–11; Mosiah 17:1–4; Mosiah 18:1–3. Pass the bowl to a family member, and have him or her take a paper and read the scripture aloud. Continue until all have been read. Ask what these scriptures have in common. Discuss the importance of passing the gospel from one generation to another.

"My Brother and the Puppy," p. F12: Give each family member a picture of a puppy. Read the story about the dog, having your family listen for the person the dog was loyal to and why. Discuss ways to remain loyal in your own family. In the coming week, when a family member does something kind, place his or her picture of the puppy where the good act occurred. Draw attention to these events in a future family home evening.



F 14 Omar's Key to Getting Along

ON THE COVER

Front: Photo illustration by Jerry Garns. Back: Photo illustration by Steve Bunderson; photograph of books by Welden C. Andersen.

THE FRIEND COVER

Illustration by Jim Madsen.

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Be One



BY PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING
First Counselor in the First Presidency

The Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, said of those who would be part of His Church: “Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27). And at the Creation of man and woman, unity for them in marriage was not given as hope; it was a command! “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). Our Heavenly Father wants our hearts to be knit together. That union in love is not simply an ideal. It is a necessity.

The requirement that we be one is not for this life alone. It is to be without end. The first marriage was performed by God in the garden when Adam and Eve were not subject to death. He placed in men and women from the beginning a desire to be joined together as man and wife forever to dwell in families in a perfect, righteous union. He placed in His children a desire to live at peace with all those around them.

But with the Fall it became clear that living in unity would not be easy. Tragedy struck early. Cain slew Abel, his brother. The children

of Adam and Eve had become subject to the temptations of Satan. With skill, hatred, and cunning, Satan pursues his goal. It is the opposite of the purpose of our Heavenly Father and the Savior. They would give us perfect union and eternal happiness. Satan, Their enemy and ours, has known the plan of salvation from before the Creation. He knows that only in eternal life can those sacred, joyful associations of families endure. Satan would tear us from loved ones and make us miserable. And it is he who plants the seeds of discord in human hearts in the hope that we might be divided and separate.

All of us have felt something of both union and separation. Sometimes in families and perhaps in other settings we have glimpsed life when one person put the interests of another above his or her own, in love and with sacrifice. And all of us know something of the sadness and loneliness of being separate and alone. We don’t need to be told which we should choose. We know. But we need hope that we can experience unity in this life and qualify to have it forever in the world to come. And we need to know how that great blessing will come so that we can know what we must do.

We need hope that we can experience unity in this life and qualify to have it forever in the world to come. And we need to know how that great blessing will come so that we can know what we must do.



The sacramental prayer can remind us every week of how the gift of unity will come through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our Natures Can Change

The Savior of the world spoke of that unity and how we will have our natures changed to make it possible. He taught it clearly in the prayer He gave in His last meeting with His Apostles before His death. That supernally beautiful prayer is recorded in the book of John. He was about to face the terrible sacrifice for all of us that would make eternal life possible. He was about to leave the Apostles whom He had ordained, whom He loved, and with whom He would leave the keys to lead His Church. And so He prayed to His Father, the perfect Son to the perfect Parent. We see in His words the way families will be made one, as will all the children of our Heavenly Father who follow the Savior and His servants:

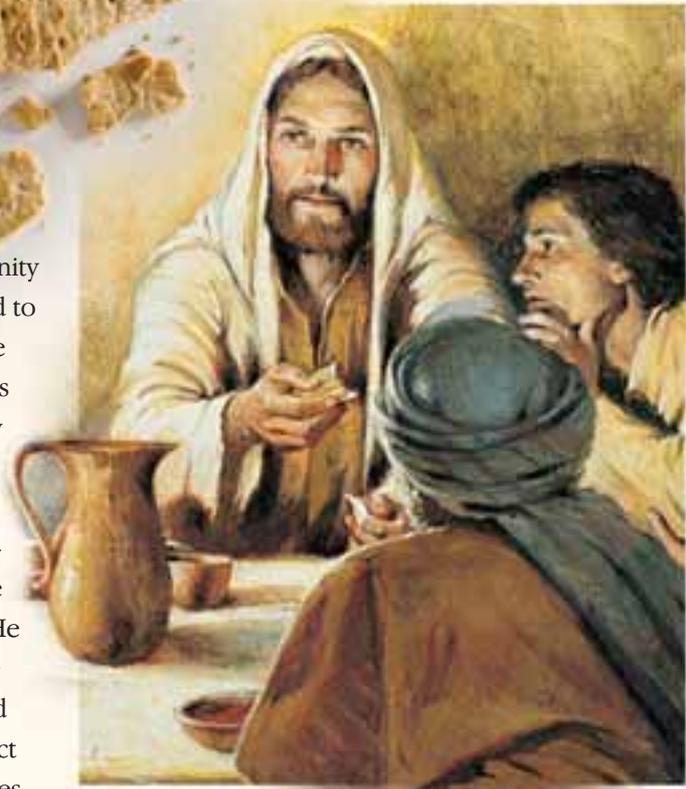
“As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

“And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:18–21).

In those few words He made clear how the gospel of Jesus Christ can allow hearts to be made one. Those who would believe the truth He taught could accept the ordinances and the covenants offered by His authorized servants. Then, through obedience to those ordinances and covenants, their natures would be changed. The Savior’s Atonement in that way makes it possible for us to be sanctified. We can then live in unity, as we must to have peace in this life and to



dwell with the Father and His Son in eternity.

The ministry of the apostles and prophets in that day, as it is today, was to bring the children of Adam and Eve to a unity of the faith in Jesus Christ. The ultimate purpose of what they taught and of what we teach is to unite families: husbands, wives, children, grandchildren, ancestors, and finally all of the family of Adam and Eve who will choose the way of unity.

You remember the Savior prayed, “For their sakes”—speaking of the Apostles—“I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth” (John 17:19). The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier. We can have Him as our companion because the Lord restored the Melchizedek Priesthood through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The keys of that priesthood are on the earth today. By its power we can make covenants which allow us to have the Holy Ghost with us constantly.

Where people have this Spirit with them, we may expect harmony. The Spirit puts the testimony of truth in our hearts, which unifies those who share that testimony. The Spirit of

God never generates contention (see 3 Nephi 11:29). This Spirit never generates the feelings of distinction between people which lead to strife.¹ Heeding the Holy Ghost leads to personal peace and a feeling of union with others. It unifies souls. A unified family, a unified Church, and a world at peace depend on unified souls.

Companionship of the Holy Ghost

Even a child can understand what to do to have the Holy Ghost as a companion. The sacramental prayer tells us. We hear it every week as we attend our sacrament meetings. In those sacred moments we renew the covenants we made at baptism. And the Lord reminds us of the promise we received as we were confirmed members of the Church—the promise that we might receive the Holy Ghost. Here are those words from the sacramental prayer: “They are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them” (D&C 20:77).

We can have His Spirit by keeping that covenant. First, we promise to take His name upon us. That means we must see ourselves as His. We will put Him first in our lives. We will want what He wants rather than what we want or what the world teaches us to want. As long as we love the things of the world first, there will be no peace in us. Holding an ideal for a family or a nation of comfort through material goods will, at last, divide them.² The ideal of doing for each other what the Lord would have us do, which follows naturally from taking His name upon us, can take us to a spiritual level which is a touch of heaven on earth.

Second, we promise always to

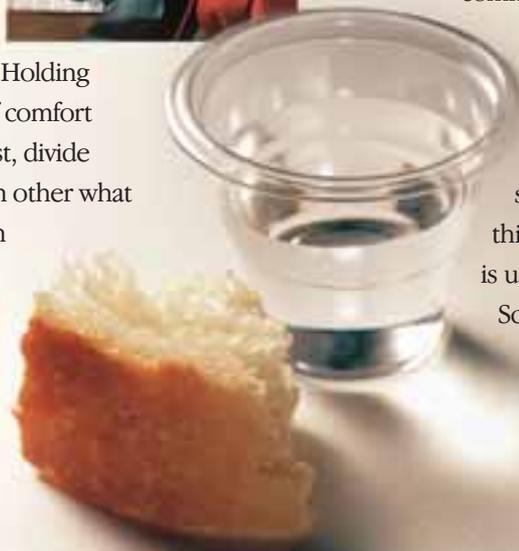
remember Him. We do that every time we pray in His name. Especially when we ask for His forgiveness, as we must do often, we remember Him. At that moment we remember His sacrifice that makes repentance and forgiveness possible. When we plead, we remember Him as our advocate with the Father. When the feelings of forgiveness and peace come, we remember His patience and His endless love. That remembering fills our hearts with love.

We also keep our promise to remember Him when as families we pray together and when we read the scriptures. At family prayer around a breakfast table, one child may pray for another to be blessed that things will go well that day in a test or in some performance. When the blessings come, the child blessed will remember the love of the morning and the kindness of the Advocate, in whose name the prayer was offered. Hearts will be bound in love.

We keep our covenant to remember Him every time we gather our families to read the scriptures. They testify of the Lord Jesus Christ, for that is and always has been the message of prophets. Even if children do not remember the words, they will remember the true author, Jesus Christ.

Third, we promise as we take the sacrament to keep His commandments, all of them. President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), a counselor in the First Presidency, as he pled for unity in a general conference talk—and he did so many times—warned us against being selective in what we will obey. He put it this way: “The Lord has given us nothing that is useless or unnecessary. He has filled the Scriptures with the things which we should do in order that we may gain salvation.”

President Clark went on:
“When we partake of the



Sacrament we covenant to obey and keep his commandments. There are no exceptions. There are no distinctions, no differences.”³ President Clark taught that just as we repent of all sin, not just a single sin, we pledge to keep all the commandments. Hard as that sounds, it is uncomplicated. We simply submit to the authority of the Savior and promise to be obedient to whatever He commands (see Mosiah 3:19). It is our surrender to the authority of Jesus Christ that will allow us to be bound as families, as a Church, and as the children of our Heavenly Father.

The Lord conveys that authority through His prophet to humble servants. Then faith can turn our call as a home teacher or a visiting teacher into an errand from the Lord. We go for Him, at His command. An ordinary man and a teenage junior companion go into homes expecting that the powers of heaven will help them assure that families are united and that there is no hardness, lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking (see D&C 20:54). Faith that the Lord calls servants will help us ignore their limitations when they reprove us, as they will. We will see their good intent more clearly than their human limitations. We will be less likely to feel offense and more likely to feel gratitude to the Master, who called them.

Barriers to Unity

There are some commandments which, when broken, destroy unity. Some have to do with what we say and some with how we react to what others say. We must speak no ill of anyone. We must see the good in each other and speak well of each other whenever we can.⁴

At the same time, we must stand against those who speak contemptuously of sacred things, because the certain effect of that is to offend the Spirit and so create contention and confusion. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) showed the way to stand without being contentious as he lay on a hospital gurney and asked an attendant who, in a moment of frustration, took the name of the Lord in vain:

“Please! Please! That is my Lord whose names you revile.”

“There was a deathly silence, then a subdued voice whispered, ‘I am sorry.’”⁵ An inspired, loving rebuke can be

an invitation to unity. Failure to give it when moved upon by the Holy Ghost will lead to discord.

If we are to have unity, there are commandments we must keep concerning how we feel. We must forgive and bear no malice toward those who offend us. The Savior set the example from the cross: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). We do not know the hearts of those who offend us. Nor do we know all the sources of our own anger and hurt. The Apostle Paul was telling us how to love in a world of imperfect people, including ourselves, when he said, “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. On separate pieces of paper, write the three promises we make each week as we partake of the sacrament. As you hold each paper up, discuss what the promise means and how we can fulfill it.
2. Before your visit, cut a paper heart into three pieces and label them *Change*, *Companionship*, and *Faith*. Begin by explaining that we are to become unified and of one heart. Then lay down the “Change” piece. Read or explain what President Eyring meant by changing our natures, and have the family give examples of changing. Repeat the same process with the other two pieces. Having completed the heart puzzle, ask the family for ways that they can become of one heart.
3. Read, or have family members read, parts of the first two sections of the message. Talk about how a family, although made up of individuals, can be united. Show that a single piece of thread can be easily broken but that many threads wrapped together are stronger. Emphasize that a family is stronger when united.



puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil” (1 Corinthians 13:4–5). And then he gave solemn warning against reacting to the faults of others and forgetting our own when he wrote, “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Corinthians 13:12).

The sacramental prayer can remind us every week of how the gift of unity will come through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we keep our covenants to take His name upon us, to remember Him always, and to keep all His commandments, we will receive the companionship of His Spirit. That will soften our hearts and unite us. But there are two warnings which must come with that promise.

First, the Holy Ghost remains with us only if we stay clean and free from the love of the things of the world. A choice to be unclean will repel the Holy Ghost. The Spirit dwells only with those who choose the Lord over the world. “Be ye clean” (3 Nephi 20:41; D&C

38:42) and love God with all your “heart, . . . might, mind, and strength” (D&C 59:5) are not suggestions but commandments. And they are necessary to the companionship of the Spirit, without which we cannot be one.

The other warning is to beware of pride. Unity which comes to a family or to a people softened by the Spirit will bring great power. With that power will come recognition from the world. Whether that recognition brings praise or envy, it could lead us to pride. That would offend the Spirit. But there is a protection against pride, that sure source of disunity. It is to see the bounties which God pours upon us not only as a mark of His favor but an opportunity to join with those around us in greater service. A husband and his wife learn to be one by using their similarities to understand each other and their differences to complement each other in serving one another and those around them. In the same way, we can unite with those who do not accept our doctrine but share our desire to bless the children of our Heavenly Father.

We can become peacemakers, worthy to be called blessed and the children of God (see Matthew 5:9).

God our Father lives. His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, is the head of this Church, and He offers to all who will accept it the standard of peace. May we all live worthy of that standard. ■

NOTES

1. See Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 131.
2. See Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places* (1974), 97.
3. In Conference Report, Apr. 1955, 10–11.
4. See David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 7–8.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2006), 157.

We must forgive and bear no malice toward those who offend us. The Savior set the example from the cross: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”



PERFECT FOR THE JOB

BY JO BINGHAM

In the busy rural town of Nsawam, Ghana—known as the bread town because of the many vendors selling bread at the roadside or from pans balanced precariously on their heads—lives Princesa Djanku, a young woman in the Djankrom Branch, Asamankese Ghana District. Baptized when she was nine years old, Princesa, her twin brother, Prince, and the rest of her family are all active members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

When Princesa was looking for a Personal Progress project, she didn't have to look far. In her own branch was a humanitarian aid missionary, Sister Thompson, struggling to teach English to the town's adults. Since most people in Nsawam don't speak any English and Sister Thompson doesn't speak the local Twi dialect, she was having a difficult time communicating with her students.

Enter Princesa, who learned English in school and speaks the four regional dialects, including Twi. She was perfect for the job. She could communicate with everyone.

"The project of helping in the literacy class came to my mind when I got to the knowledge value," said Princesa. "At first I felt it was too much to go stand in front of my mothers and fathers [the adults of her town] and teach them English. For the first and second week, it was not easy because they felt I was there to make a mockery of

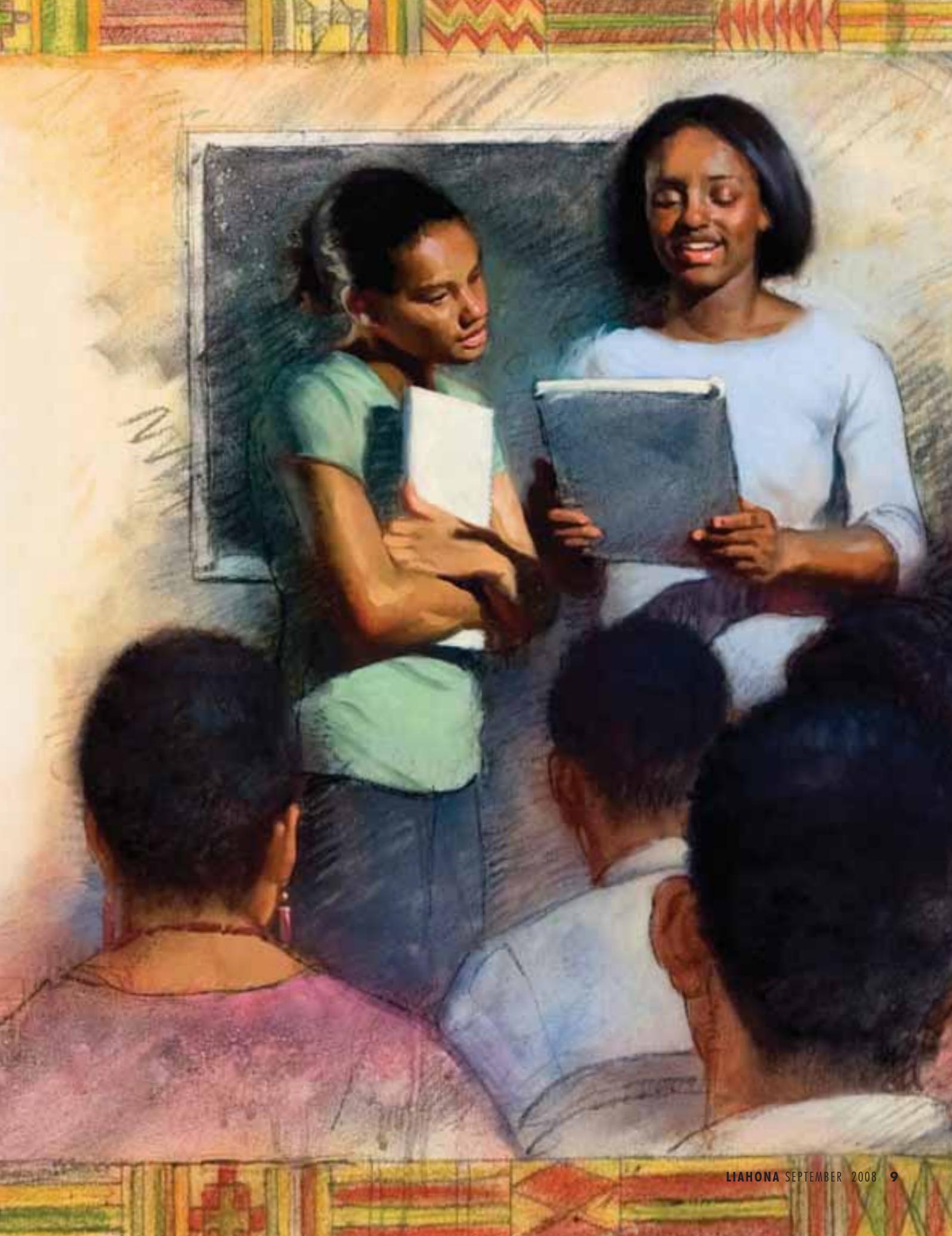
them, but then I had the opportunity to explain myself." After that, things went smoothly, and communication between the teenage teacher and adult students was much more effective.

After completing her project, Princesa considered leaving the class but decided against it. She says, "The literacy class is very interesting, and I never want to leave." Princesa continues to serve with love, remembering that those who serve others also serve God.

Princesa has since earned her Young Womanhood Recognition Award. She says, "The Young Women program has helped increase my testimony of the Church. I know that Joseph Smith was called of God and that the Church is true. I know President Thomas S. Monson is a living prophet and that he receives revelation for the whole Church. I know the doctrines and principles of the Church are all true."

Though Princesa is no longer in Young Women as a young woman, she is still in Young Women. She has been called to serve as the secretary in the branch Young Women presidency.

As one of her goals, Princesa hopes to go on a mission for the Church when she turns 21 so she can share her testimony and continue her tradition of service. ■



STRENGTHEN FAITH AS YOU SEEK KNOWLEDGE

BY ELDER QUENTIN L. COOK
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Let me share with you five principles that I believe are essential as you place faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at the center of your lives as you seek diligently for knowledge.

In the doctrines of the Church, faith and the quest for knowledge are not inconsistent; they are compatible and complementary. When I speak of faith, I am speaking of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith and knowledge require equal effort and commitment. We cannot expect to have faith at the center of our lives if all of our efforts are expended on knowledge, sports, hobbies, making money, or other pursuits.

Let me share with you five principles that I believe are essential as you place faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at the center of your lives as you seek diligently for knowledge.

1. Understand that there is truly opposition in all things. The choices you make are critical.

You are at the stage of life where you have numerous options for some of the most important choices you will ever make. These choices are the key to your future and your happiness.

The prophet Lehi near the end of his life taught, “For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11).

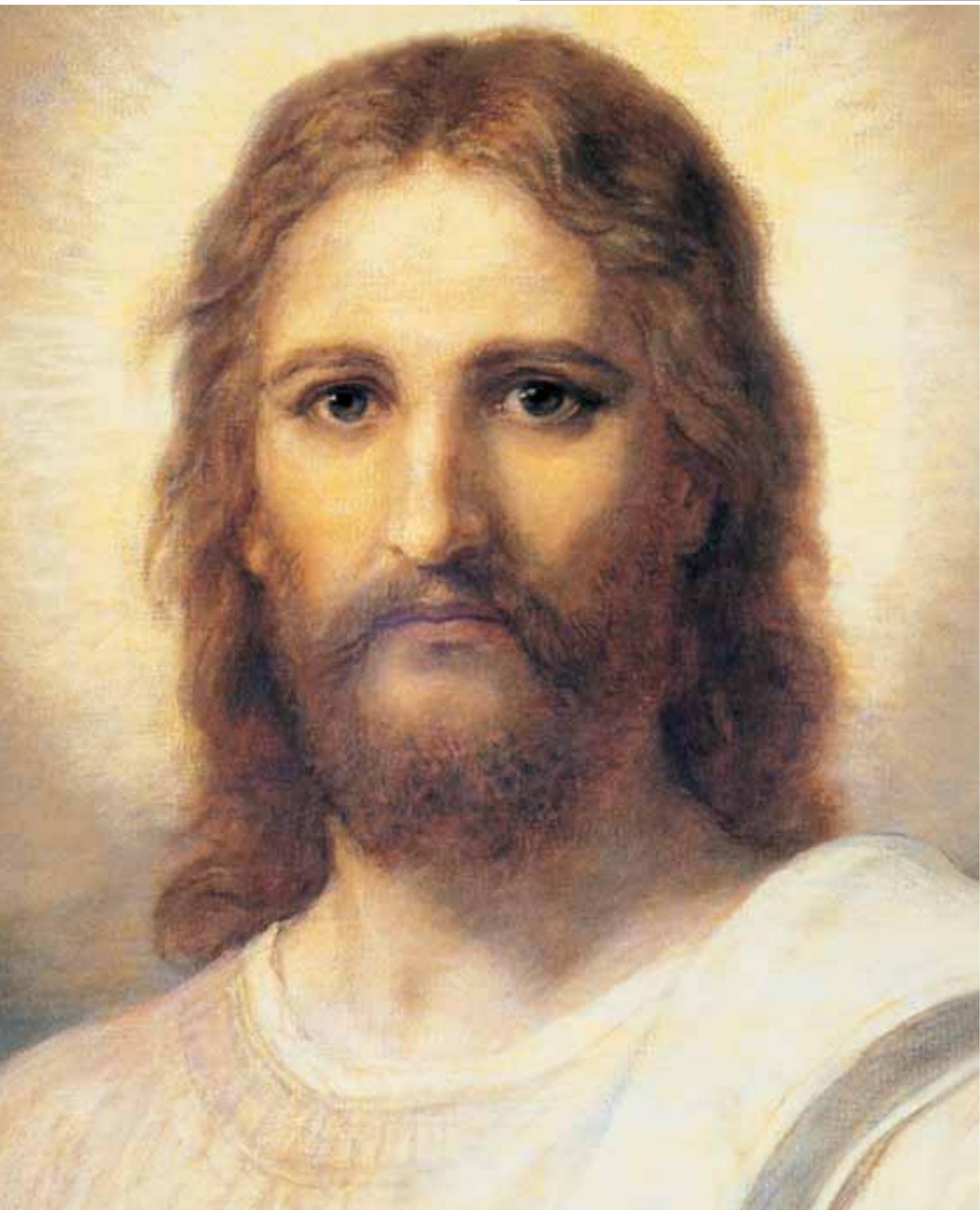
He continues later: “Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:27).

We know there was a war in heaven over the plan of salvation, so it is not surprising that the religious principles that have been taught in this, the last dispensation, are attacked with malignant ferocity.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) made this promise to you: “Here you are on the threshold of your mature lives. You . . . worry about school. You worry about marriage. You worry about many things. I make you a promise that God will not forsake you if you will walk in His paths with the guidance of His commandments.”¹

2. Strengthen your own testimony as a foundation for all of the choices you make.

The foundation for every important decision and choice you will make is your testimony of Jesus Christ and the Restoration of His gospel through the Prophet Joseph



The foundation for every important decision and choice you will make is your testimony of Jesus Christ and the Restoration of His gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Book of Mormon is an essential element of that testimony.



Smith. The Book of Mormon is an essential element of that testimony.

When I was 15 years old, I realized the significance of a testimony of the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith, and the Savior and how it affects our choices.

My brother, Joe, was 20 years old. It was during the Korean conflict, and only one young man in each ward could go on a mission. The others had to be available to be drafted into the military. A young man in our ward had gone on a mission early in the year; my brother's birthday was in September, so he didn't think he would get the opportunity to serve a mission.

Our stake president called my brother in and told him that one of the wards had not used its allotment and he might be able to

go. Missionaries were called at 20 years of age in those days, and my brother had just filled out his application to medical school. He was a good student. My father, who was not active in the Church, had made financial preparations to help him with medical school and was disappointed when he learned of the conversation with the stake president. My father counseled Joe not to go and suggested that he could do more good by going to medical school.

This was a big issue in our family. That night my brother and I talked about the choice. He was five years older, so it was mainly his thinking. As we reasoned it out, we concluded: If Jesus Christ was a great man but not divine, if Joseph Smith was a wonderful teacher but not a prophet, or if

the Book of Mormon had wonderful counsel but was not the word of God, then Dad was right—it would be better to go to medical school. But if Jesus Christ is divine, if Joseph Smith is a prophet, and if the Book of Mormon is the word of God, then it would be more important to accept the call and proclaim the gospel.

That night, more than ever before, I wanted to know the answers to these questions. I had always believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ. I believed in Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon, but I wanted confirmation from the Lord. That night, as I prayed, the Spirit bore witness to my soul of the Savior and the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and that Joseph Smith was a prophet. My brother received the same witness and made the choice to serve a mission. Incidentally, when my brother returned from his mission, he went to medical school. When I reached my 20th birthday, my father was happy to see me serve a mission.

3. Seek knowledge diligently, wisely, and humbly.

In the quest for both faith and knowledge, we need to maintain humility. Jacob taught:

“O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves. . . .

“But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God” (2 Nephi 9:28–29).

One reason to be humble about knowledge is that much of it is subject to change. My brother, Joe, as I indicated, is a medical doctor. Now in his 70s, he has taken the medical recertification exam in his area of expertise six times. He laughingly indicated to me that the questions are the same as those presented over 35 years ago, but the answers keep changing. On the exam 35 years ago, a typical multiple-choice question might be: What is the primary cause of a peptic ulcer? The answer would have related to stress. Today the answer to the same question would be that it is caused by bacteria that can live and grow in

the gastric tissue. As you can see, the questions have not changed, but many of the answers have. This is true in several fields of knowledge.

This example is not meant to reduce your commitment to knowledge; knowledge is essential. Knowledge in all areas is important. We are particularly fortunate to live in an age when the technological revolution is in progress.

Knowledge has always been important, and today we are at the threshold of new and exciting major technology. Certainly this technology revolution could have enormous benefits for the Church and for your fellow human beings. Knowledge, whether old or new, is important.

4. Follow the prophet’s counsel as you make your choices.

In a worldwide leadership training meeting, President Hinckley said:

“No one need tell you that we are living in a very difficult season in the history of the world. Standards are dropping everywhere. Nothing seems to be sacred anymore.

“. . . I do not know that things were worse in the times of Sodom and Gomorrah. . . . I think our Father must weep as He looks down upon His wayward sons and daughters.”

As was characteristic of President Hinckley’s positive leadership, he went on to say:



Rationalization for bad choices will not be effective, but repentance will. Those who repent will be particularly blessed by the Atonement.

“We must not give up. We must not become discouraged. We must never surrender to the forces of evil. . . . If it means standing alone, we must do it.

“But we shall not be alone.”²

Prophets are not speaking just to our own day; they give us counsel that will bless us and our children in the future and through the eternities.

If we follow the prophet, we can look to the future with great optimism.



5. Live so the Atonement can be fully efficacious in your life.

Rationalization for bad choices will not be effective, but repentance will. Those who repent will be particularly blessed by the Atonement. Without the Atonement, the eternal principle of *justice* would require punishment (see Alma 42:14). Because of the Atonement, *mercy* can prevail for those who have repented and allow them to return to the presence of God (see Alma 42:15).

I first began to understand the significance of the Atonement when my grandfather was dying. After attending law school,

I was studying for the California bar exam when my mother called and said if I wanted to see my grandfather before he died, I better come to Utah. My grandfather, who was 86 years old, was very ill. He was so pleased to see me and share his testimony.

He had three concerns:

1. He loved his 10 children very much. They were all good people. He wanted them all to be temple worthy.

2. His father was one of the young men who had carried members of the Martin handcart company across the Sweetwater River. His father had died when my grandfather was three years old, and he looked forward to seeing him and hoped his father and other family members would approve of his life.

3. Finally, and most importantly, he told me how he looked forward to meeting the Savior. He referred to the Savior as the “Keeper of the Gate,” a reference to 2 Nephi 9:41. He told me that he hoped he had been sufficiently repentant to qualify for the Savior’s mercy.

All of us have sinned, and it is only through the Atonement that we can obtain mercy and live with God. I can remember to this day the great love that Grandfather had for the Savior and the appreciation he had for the Atonement.

I personally testify of the divinity of the Savior and the reality of the Atonement, and I hope that you will prayerfully consider the significant choices that are before you. ■

From a Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional given on March 14, 2006.

NOTES

1. “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Liabona*, Apr. 2001, 30; *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 6.
2. “Standing Strong and Immoveable,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 10, 2004, 20.

IT'S YOUR MOVE

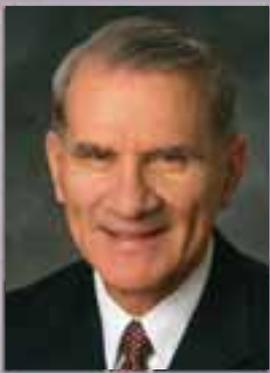
THE SMARTEST MOVE IS THE ONE
WHERE YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIDE.
(See Mosiah 5:10.)



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA SMITH; IDEA BY THERON CHRISTENSEN

The Power of Diligent Learning

BY ELDER JAY E. JENSEN
Of the Presidency of the Seventy



Make the most of the many opportunities you have to learn.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord counsels, “Wherefore, now let every man [and woman] learn” and learn “in all diligence,” for he or she that learns not “shall not be counted worthy to stand” (D&C 107:99–100).

The scriptures contain 144 references to learning. Consider some of them:

“Yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Hebrews 5:8).

“Learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God” (Alma 37:35).

“Learn to be more wise than we” (Mormon 9:31).

“Learn of me, and listen to my words” (D&C 19:23).

“Seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118).

“Study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people” (D&C 90:15).

“[Seek] diligently to learn wisdom and to find truth” (D&C 97:1).

As we consider the mandate of such divine admonitions, it is important to reflect on how gospel learning occurs. Gospel learning requires careful reasoning, study, and prayer. However, it is important to remember that

each of us is a dual being: a personage of both body and spirit. Because we are spiritual beings, it is essential that we learn by the power of the Spirit.

Learning by the Spirit

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “All things whatsoever God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit and proper to reveal to us . . . are revealed to our spirits precisely as though we had no bodies at all; and those revelations which will save our spirits will save our bodies.”¹

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord further emphasizes His divine pattern for teaching and learning:

“Why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth?”

“Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:21–22).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles emphasized the blessings of following this pattern by explaining what it means to understand and be edified: “The



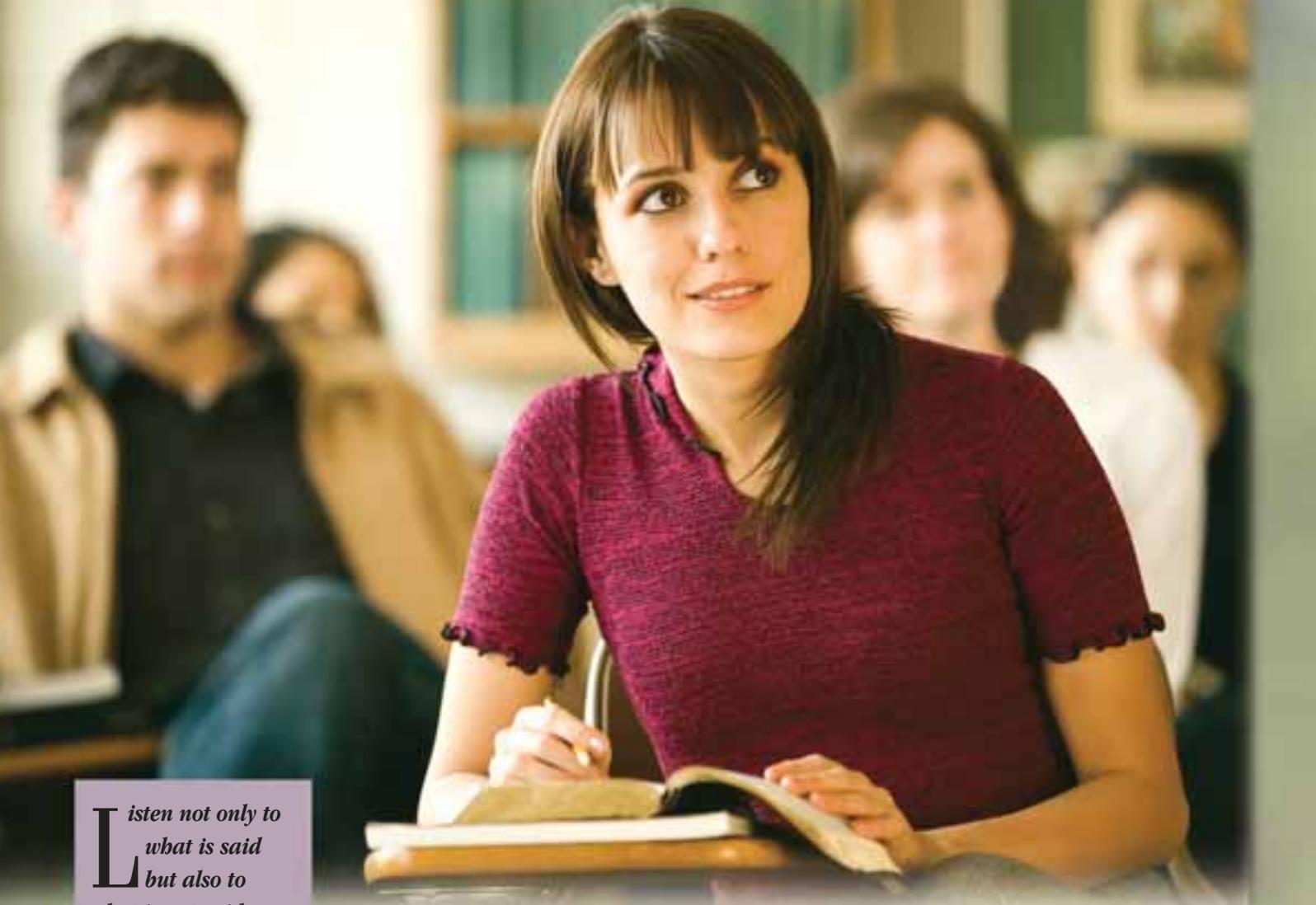
Gospel
learning
requires
careful reasoning,
study, and prayer.

verb *understand* refers to that which is heard. It is the same message to all. *Edified* concerns that which is communicated by the Holy Ghost. The message can be different and tailored by the Spirit to the needs of each individual.”²

In 2 Nephi 33:1, Nephi reminds us of another aspect of learning by the Spirit: “When a man speaketh by the power of

the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men.” This is a powerful promise. Yet it is fulfilled only if we invite the Savior into our lives.

The Savior stands at the door and knocks (see Revelation 3:20). The Holy Ghost stands at the door and knocks (see 2 Nephi 33:1–2). All we have to do is use our agency and invite Them in.



Listen not only to what is said but also to what is not said: the unspoken promptings of the Holy Ghost.

Inviting Diligent Learning

In the February 2007 worldwide leadership training meeting on teaching and learning, President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, provided specific counsel on how we can invite such diligent learning. I would like to summarize a few of the things I learned from President Packer about learning.

First, President Packer taught that being diligent learners means we want to learn. We show this desire when we are teachable and when we can be taught without resenting it. When we resent instruction and correction, we offend the Spirit and limit our opportunities for growth and progress.

Second, we need to pray—particularly in specifics. Pray formally and informally for

yourself and for the teacher. The teacher may not say something quite right. He or she may be weak and feeble in words and expression. But the Holy Ghost is not, and each of us can pray for ourselves and for the teacher: “Oh, Father, the teacher does not know the load and burden that I currently carry. Help him or her to teach me directly.” When you start doing that as a learner, you start getting answers.

Third, and this is so significant: listen. In particular, President Packer encourages us to listen to those who are experienced: “I learned early on that there is great value in listening to experience in older people. . . . I remember in the Quorum of the Twelve, LeGrand Richards didn’t walk as fast as the other Brethren, and I would always wait and

open the door for him and walk back to the building with him. One day one of the Brethren said, ‘Oh, you’re so kind to take care of Brother Richards.’ And I thought, ‘You don’t know my selfish motive’—as we would walk back, I would just listen to him. I knew that he could remember Wilford Woodruff, and he would speak.”³

Further, listen not only to what is said but also to what is not said: the unspoken promptings of the Holy Ghost. Each is important. Hopefully, you are always sensitive to what is not said by the teacher. If you are, the Holy Ghost will tailor the message to your needs.

Fourth, as you listen, it is important to organize what you learn. Take what you have heard, and then make it yours by writing it down and expanding it. If you really want to ensure that you’ve got it, find somebody to whom you may teach it. Generally speaking, until you can articulate what you’ve learned, you haven’t really learned it. Make the effort to organize what you learn; it will be worth it.

Preparing to Learn

In addition to what we do in class, we can do many things to invite diligent learning even before we come to class.

President Packer counseled: “Arise from your bed early . . . and then reflect in the morning when your mind is clear. That’s when the ideas come.”⁴ I know that is true. As we arise early to study, pray, ponder, and listen, revelation will come.

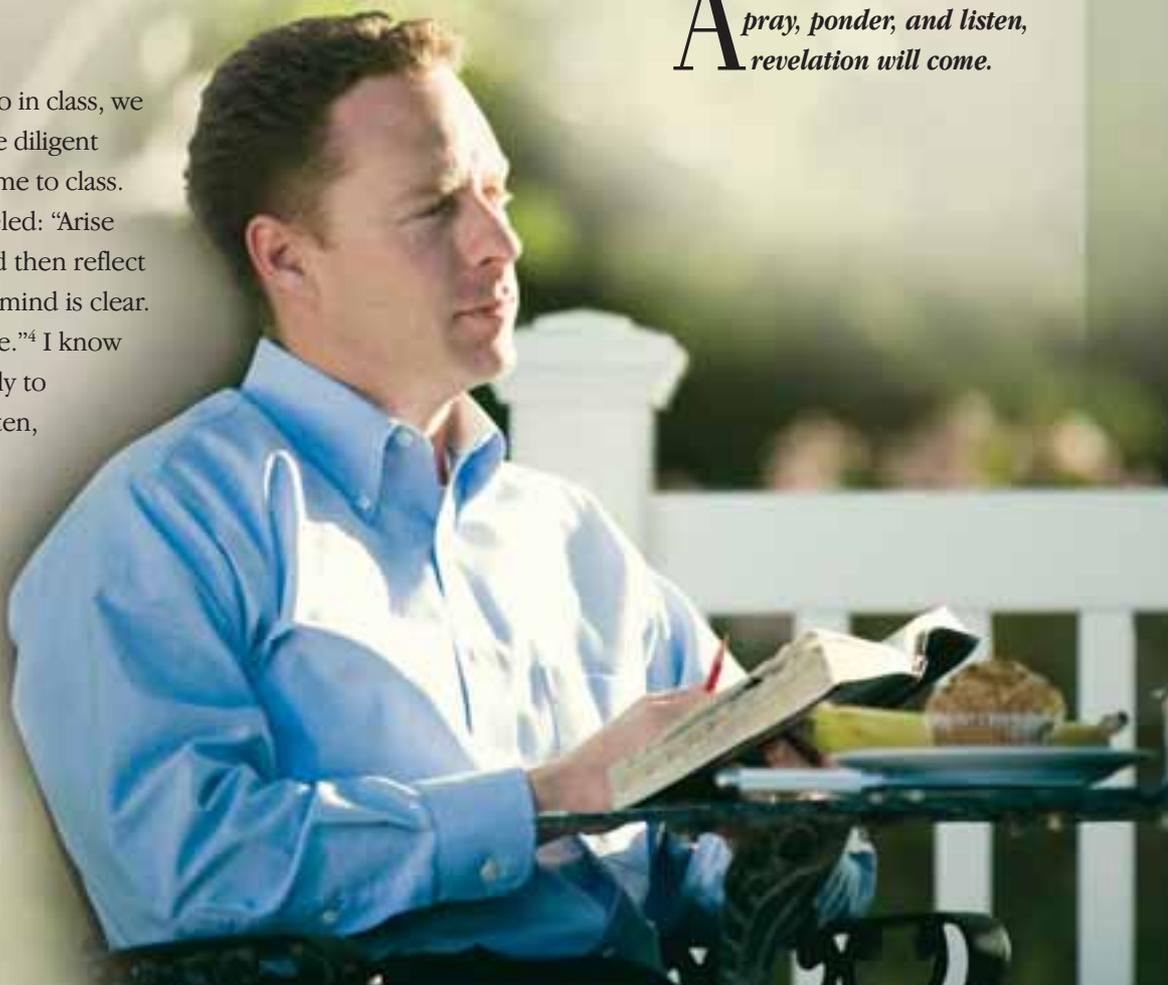
Also, be punctual to your meetings, particularly sacrament meeting, one of the most spiritual meetings in the Church. As you come, be reverent; leave yourself open to revelation. Come and listen to

the prelude music. Don’t seek out somebody to talk to. Come as a diligent learner, and prepare yourself to receive revelation.

Further, we can make a commitment to accept the responsibility for learning no matter how well the teacher or speaker can teach. Several years ago President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) remarked: “Testimony meetings are some of the best meetings in the [Church] in the whole month, if you have the spirit. If you are bored at a testimony meeting, there is something the matter with *you*, and not the other people. You can get up and bear your testimony and you think it is the best meeting in the month; but if you sit there and count the grammatical errors and laugh at the man who can’t speak very well, you’ll be bored. . . . Don’t forget it! You have to *fight* for a testimony. You have to *keep fighting!*”⁵

Now that is a very powerful observation.

As we arise early to study,
pray, ponder, and listen,
revelation will come.





I want to follow the example of the Savior; a master teacher. But what made Him a master teacher? He was first a learner.

Making the Most of Opportunities

Above all, stay at it. President Packer was very emphatic about this in his interview. Don't give up. Be persistent in learning. Make the most of the many opportunities you have to learn.

Many years ago Elder Marion D. Hanks, while an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, spoke of the power of making the most of our opportunities to learn. Elder Hanks told a story about Louis Agassiz, a distinguished naturalist, who was approached by an obscure spinster woman who insisted that she had never had a chance to learn. In response, Dr. Agassiz asked her to consider the chances for learning that she already had:

“What do you do?” he asked.

“I skin potatoes and chop onions.”

“He said, ‘Madame, where do you sit during these interesting but homely duties?’

“On the bottom step of the kitchen stairs.”

“Where do your feet rest?”

“On the glazed brick.”

“What is glazed brick?”

“I don't know, sir.”

“He said, ‘How long have you been sitting there?’

“She said, ‘Fifteen years.’

“Madame, here is my personal card,” said Dr. Agassiz. “Would you kindly write me a letter concerning the nature of a glazed brick?”

The woman took the challenge seriously. She read all she could find about brick and tile and then sent Dr. Agassiz a 36-page paper on the subject.

Elder Hanks continued:

“Back came the letter from Dr. Agassiz: ‘Dear Madam, this is the best article I have ever seen on the subject. If you will kindly change the three words marked with asterisks, I will have it published and pay you for it.’

“A short time later there came a letter that brought \$250, and penciled on the bottom of this letter was this query: ‘What was under those bricks?’ She had learned the value of time and answered with a single word: ‘Ants.’ He wrote back and said, ‘Tell me about the ants.’ . . .

“After wide reading, much microscopic work, and deep study, the spinster sat down and wrote Dr. Agassiz 360 pages on the subject. He published the book and sent her the money, and she went to visit all the lands of her dreams on the proceeds of her work.”⁶

Now there's something very fundamental about that, to invite diligent learning and not be content with mediocrity.

We can become better learners, and by being better learners, we will be better teachers. I want to follow the example of the Savior, a master teacher. But what made Him a master teacher? He was first a learner. May the Lord bless each of us as we follow Him and become better learners. ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2007), 475.
2. “To Understand and Live Truth” (an evening with Elder Richard G. Scott, Feb. 4, 2005), <http://lds.org/library/display/0,4945,5344-1-2783-8,00.htm>.
3. “Principles of Teaching and Learning,” *Liabona*, June 2007, 52; *Ensign*, June 2007, 84.
4. *Liabona*, June 2007, 52; *Ensign*, June 2007, 84.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2006), 75.
6. “Good Teachers Matter,” *Ensign*, July 1971, 61–62.

Chalk It Up to Learning

The chalkboard can enhance your teaching—when you use it properly.

As a teacher, I am always looking for effective ways to engage my students in the lesson. I thought I was making good use of the chalkboard or whiteboard until I saw the board in the classroom next door. There, neatly displayed in the center, was a simple statement of doctrine, a picture, and two questions along with instructions for the students to answer the questions. As the class members came in, I watched as they looked in their scriptures for answers to the two questions. They even discussed the doctrine with each other. And all this activity was happening before the start of class!

I was impressed. Here was a teacher using a simple tool to engage his students in learning during a time that was normally wasted. He still greeted his students and gathered them for an opening prayer, but when the lesson began, the Spirit of the Lord had already touched the hearts of many of the students. They were prepared for a wonderful experience in the scriptures.

Basic Guidelines

In addition to the guidelines in *Teaching, No Greater Call* (see pp. 162 and 182), I have found the following helpful in using the chalkboard or whiteboard to teach the gospel.

- *Keep it simple.* In the February 2007 worldwide leadership training meeting, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reminded teachers that visual aids are aids. He said: “They are not a substitute for a lesson. Use them in a way that you would use spice in cooking—to flavor, to heighten, to accentuate, to enrich. A map or a painting or a video clip or a key point written on the board—these can often make the difference between a good lesson and a great lesson.”¹

- *Prepare.* Before you teach your lesson, organize on paper what you want to put on the board.

- *Write legibly.* In *Teaching, No Greater Call* (item no. 36123), teachers are encouraged to “write clearly and large enough for all to see, making sure the material is well spaced, orderly, and easy to read.”² You may want to invite a class member to help you.

BY ROBB JONES
Church Curriculum
Development

If you're looking for something new to help others learn the gospel, you might start by taking a fresh look at something old—
THE CHALKBOARD!



Matthew
5:14–16

Consider drawing simple pictures on the board and inviting students to read a scripture to determine the relationship between the pictures.

What to Write

Here are several ways to use the chalkboard or whiteboard so class members have a more meaningful experience:

Write messages to class members—

- Greet students by writing, “Welcome to Class,” or, “Have a Great Day.”
- Compliment individuals for their school or Church achievements. For example: “Congratulations on achieving the Duty to God Award.”
- Have the quorum or class president write announcements for upcoming activities.

Create interest and enhance the lesson by writing—

- *The lesson title:* Write the title of the

lesson or a phrase that represents the lesson. This will help students think about the lesson before class starts.

- *A question:* Write a question on the board that you will ask later in the lesson. You could even ask students to write down a response before class starts. This will produce more meaningful discussions.

- *A drawing:* Many students are visual learners. Consider drawing or having a student draw simple pictures of people, objects, or events on the board. For example, you could draw a candle on a candlestick holder, a bushel, and a hill. Then you could invite students to read Matthew 5:14–16 and determine the relationship between the objects.



• *An outline:* The board can be used to organize the lesson into small parts that are easy for students to understand. For example, if you were teaching Mosiah 11:1–15 about wicked King Noah, his priests, and the burdens he put on his Nephite people, you could write on the board “Noah,” “Priests,” and “People.” As students discover the characteristics of each group, you or a student could write the characteristics under each title.

Increase student participation by writing—

• *Students’ thoughts:* Invite students to come to the board and write short phrases that represent their thoughts about



USE THE CHALKBOARD TO FOCUS ATTENTION

“I think that no teaching aid surpasses, and few equal, the chalkboard: first, because it is simple to use, and next, because it is universally available—everywhere in the world you

can get a chalkboard. You can use it to focus the eyes of your students while the main lesson is presented audibly. As you talk, you can put just enough on the board to focus their attention and give them the idea, but never so much that the visual aid itself distracts them.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, *Teach Ye Diligently* (1975), 266.

a topic, such as why temples are important to them.

• *Student surveys:* If you are teaching a lesson on Church standards, you could write the words “Word of Wisdom,” “Honesty,” and “Morality” in three columns. You could place check marks under the standards that class members think are most difficult for people to live. Then ask them to share their feelings.

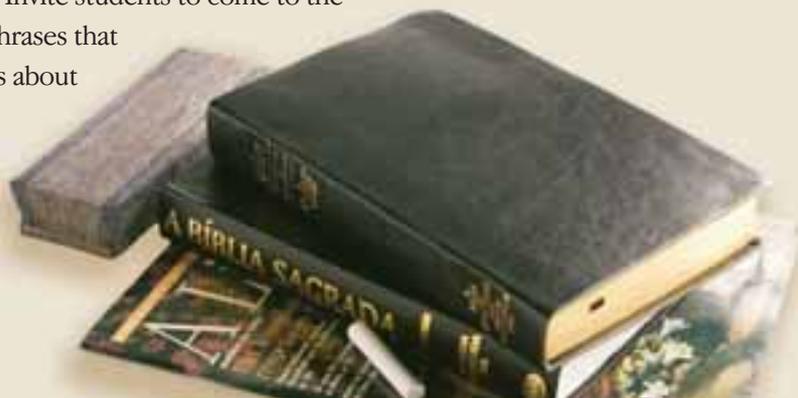
• *Students’ answers:* Use the board to have students write their answers to a question. Suppose you were giving a lesson on the Holy Ghost. You could have students write their answers to this question: “What truths does God reveal to us through the Holy Ghost?”

Effective Teaching Using a Simple Tool

Of course, these are only some of the many ways you can facilitate learning by using the chalkboard or whiteboard. You can think of other ways, adapting them to your class and topic. ■

NOTES

1. “Teaching and Learning in the Church,” *Liabona*, June 2007, 71; *Ensign*, June 2007, 103.
2. *Teaching, No Greater Call* (1999), 162.



REVELATION

and the Living Prophet

Joseph Smith knew the importance of revelation in the Church.

Beginning with the First Vision, Joseph Smith was God's prophet chosen to reveal His word and will to the earth. As he grew into this role, Joseph gained a clear understanding of the order of revelation in the Church. Here are some of Joseph Smith's teachings on revelation and the role of the living prophet.

REVELATION IS ESSENTIAL

"The doctrine of revelation far transcends the doctrine of no revelation; for one truth revealed from heaven is worth all the sectarian notions in existence."

"Salvation cannot come without revelation; it is in vain for anyone to minister without it. . . . No man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he has the testimony of Jesus; and this is the spirit of prophecy [see Revelation 19:10]."

THE ORDER OF REVELATION

"Thou shalt not command him who is at thy head, and at the head of the church; for I have given him the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed, until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead" (D&C 28:6–7).

"The Presidents or [First] Presidency are over the Church; and revelations of the mind and will of God to the Church, are to come through the Presidency. This is the order of heaven, and the power and privilege of [the Melchizedek] Priesthood. It is also the privilege of any officer in this Church to obtain revelations, so far as relates to his particular calling and duty in the Church."

FOLLOW GOD'S PROPHET

"There are a great many wise men and women too in our midst who are too wise to be taught; therefore they must die in their ignorance, and in the resurrection they will find their mistake." ■

From Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2007), 195, 197, 202.



The Gospel of Jesus Christ Teaches the Eternal Potential of the Children of God



Teach the scriptures and quotations that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you teach to share what they have felt and learned.

What Is My Eternal Potential?

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “A woman’s richest rewards will come as she rises to fulfill her destiny as a devoted daughter of God. To all faithful Saints He has promised thrones, kingdoms, principalities, glory, immortality, and eternal lives. (See Rom. 2:7; D&C 75:5; 128:12, 23; 132:19.) That is the potential for women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is exalting, everlasting, and divine” (“Woman—Of Infinite Worth,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 22).

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president: “Oh, that every girl and woman would have a testimony of her potential for eternal motherhood. . . . Female roles did not begin on earth, and they do not end here. A woman who treasures motherhood on earth will treasure motherhood in the world to come, and ‘where [her] treasure is, there will [her] heart be also’ (Matthew 6:21).

By developing a mother heart, each girl and woman prepares for her divine, eternal mission of motherhood” (“A ‘Mother Heart,’” *Liabona and Ensign*, May 2004, 76).

What Can Help Me Reach My Eternal Potential?

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “God expresses his love for us by providing the guidance we need to progress and reach our potential. . . . He who knows most about us, our potential, and our eternal possibilities has given us divine counsel and commandments in his instruction manuals—the holy scriptures” (“God’s Love for His Children,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 59).

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency: “The purpose of God’s creations and of His giving us life is to allow us to have the learning experience necessary for us to come back to Him, to live with Him in eternal life. That is only possible if we have our natures changed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, true repentance, and making and keeping the covenants He offers all of His Father’s children through His Church” (“Education for Real Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 16).

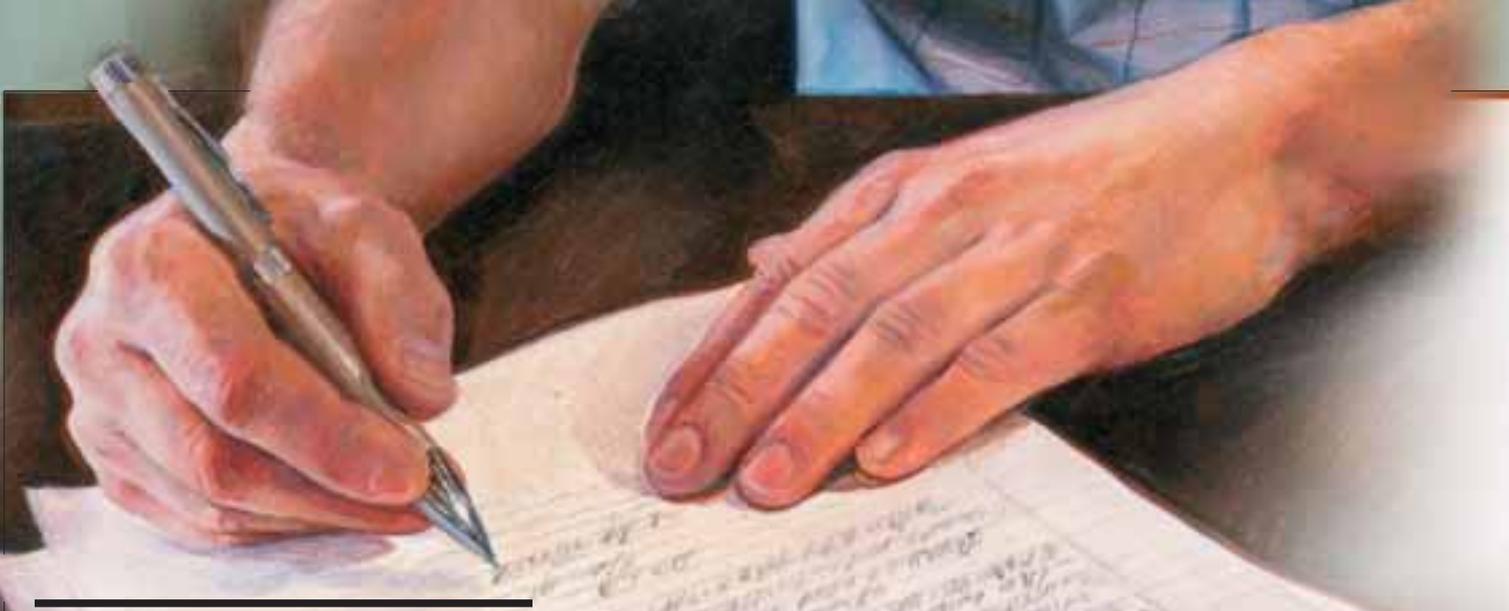
President John Taylor (1808–87):

“Our main object is eternal lives and exaltations; our main object is to prepare ourselves, our posterity and our progenitors for thrones, principalities and powers in the eternal worlds . . . ; that . . . they and we might be prepared, having fulfilled the measure of our creation on the earth, to associate with the intelligences that exist in the eternal worlds; be admitted again to the presence of our Father, whence we came, and participate in those eternal realities which mankind, without revelation, know nothing about. We are here for that



purpose; . . . we are building temples for that purpose; we are receiving endowments for that purpose” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* [Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2001], 8–9).

D&C 78:18: “Be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours.” ■



I Didn't Give Up

BY CARLOS A. DEL LONGO

A year after my baptism in 1963 in Argentina, I was called to serve as branch clerk. One day I came across some blank family group records and pedigree charts. Without any training, I began filling out the sheets with the help of my mother. She remembered the names of her ancestors and my father's, as well as the important dates in their lives, back to the fourth generation. She even remembered some of the people in the fifth generation and one person in the sixth.

I felt the desire to go further in my search, and I worked to verify the information my mother had given me. When I learned the purpose of family history work, I immediately began submitting to the temple the names of my deceased loved ones.

Though I had been successful on my mother's line, I struggled with my father's side. Despite my efforts, for close to 25 years I was unable to confirm the date of my paternal grandfather's birth. His marriage certificate stated that he was born in Udine, Italy, so I wrote about 30 letters to that

town and the surrounding towns. None of the replies confirmed what I was looking for.

In 1988 a branch of the family history library opened in Rosario, and I was called to work as a librarian. It felt like touching heaven, having all of that material within reach. I spent hours reading, and I ordered microfilm records from many cities. In the International Genealogical Index (IGI), I found the exact names of my grandfather and great-grandfather. I wrote to the town in Italy where the two men had been born and asked for their birth certificates. The parish

I wrote about 30 letters to Udine, Italy, and surrounding towns, but none of the replies confirmed what I was looking for.

priest sent them to me, but the records proved these men were not related to me.

I wrote again—asking this time if the priest had any information on my grandfather. He referred me to the city hall, so I wrote a letter there. My heart leaped with joy when I received a sheet of paper containing the names

and important dates pertaining to my grandparents, great-grandparents, second great-grandparents, and many other family members. This sheet also told me that my grandfather's name had been changed after his arrival in Argentina, explaining the confusion in finding his information.

I wrote to the city again and asked them to send me the sheet that preceded the one they had already sent. They did so, and it included the names of 27 more people. I had the temple ordinances done for all these

family members, with the assurance that they were indeed my ancestors.

Because of wonderful experiences like these, I feel well rewarded for my efforts in doing family history research. Though there have been disappointments at times, I have not given up. I can see that Heavenly Father has surely led me in my search.

I know that our Heavenly Father will provide an opportunity for all of His children to receive temple ordinances, whether now or in the Millennium. But I also know that our ancestors who accept the gospel in the spirit world are longing for us to do our family history work. If we give our best efforts to the Lord, He will provide a way. ■

Family History Reflections

BY STEPHEN C. YOUNG

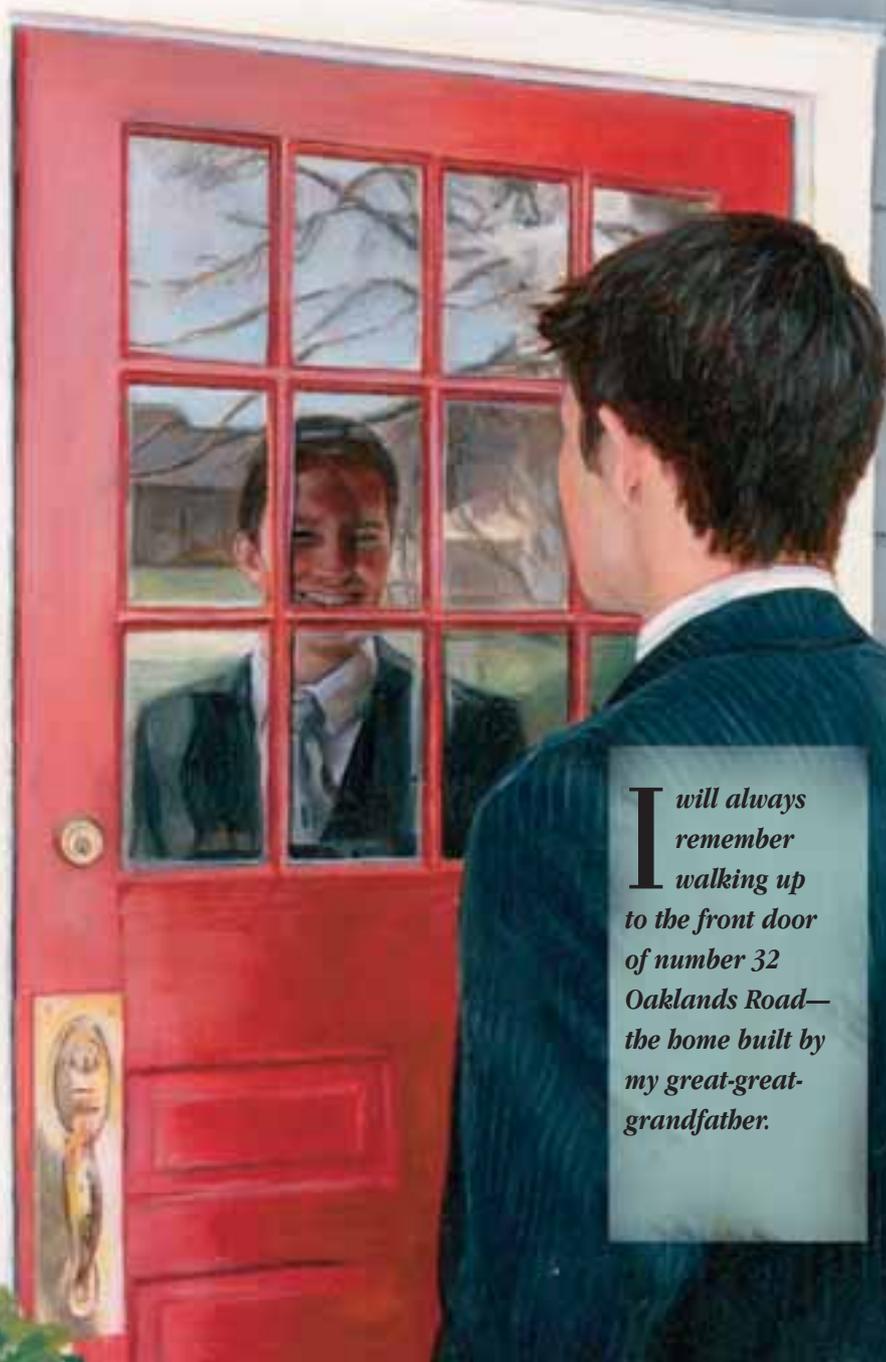
In the summer of 1979, I was surprised to learn that some of my mother's books and papers were stored in a backyard shed of ward members in my hometown of London, Ontario. In salvaging what I could from several moldering cardboard boxes, I discovered partially completed pedigree charts on my family, some family group records, and a few research notes. The real treasure was a four-page personal history written by my mother, who died when I was 11.

This wonderful handwritten history describes her childhood in England during the 1930s and her life through World War II. Finding these records stimulated my initial interest in family history and turned my heart to my ancestors.

Almost two years later, in April 1981, my father died unexpectedly.

Among his effects I discovered a ring that bore his initials, *CMY*, but I couldn't recall ever seeing it on his hand. He must have worn this ring as a young man while serving on a Canadian Navy minesweeper during the war.

Now, upon his death, I was the only living person appearing on my



I will always remember walking up to the front door of number 32 Oaklands Road—the home built by my great-great-grandfather.

one-page pedigree chart, so I had to rely on extended relatives to gather more information. One of these was Betty, a sister-in-law of my grandfather, still living at the family home in Bexleyheath, Kent, England. I had always hoped to visit and learn more about my mother's family, but as a single college student, I did not have the financial means to do so. Now, with the modest amount bequeathed to me after my father's passing, I could fund a trip across the ocean to visit.

On the day I went to visit Aunt Betty for the first time I felt nervous. Would she understand my great desire to learn more about earlier generations? I looked at my father's ring, now on my own right hand, reflected in the window of the double-decker bus I was riding in. It brought me comfort, as if his hand were resting on my knee in support of my errand.

Happily, Aunt Betty received me warmly and revealed many new and helpful details about my family, including the fact that my great-great-grandfather had built the home she was living in. That night I even slept in my grandfather's childhood bedroom. I never met him, but from the photos she shared, I learned that I bear an uncanny resemblance to him. She generously gave me some of these old family photos, letters, and a family Bible listing the full names, birthdates, and birthplaces of two generations of my ancestors starting in the 1830s.

It has been over 25 years since that rainy September afternoon in

England, when my tentative steps took me from the bus stop to an uncertain welcome at my ancestral home. Since then I have discovered a treasure trove of information from extended family members about my ancestors on both sides of the Atlantic, allowing me to ensure their temple ordinances have been done.

I will always remember walking up to the front door of number 32 Oaklands Road and seeing my own reflection in the glass. Now I know that the familiar face reflected back at me was not unlike the young face of my grandfather welcoming me home. ■

Searching in Finland

BY JUDITH ANN LAURUNEN
MCNEIL

My sister and I felt an emptiness because we had no idea who our Laurunen forebears were. All we knew is that they had come from Finland to America in 1901. So in August 2004, my sister Janice and cousin Sandy joined my husband, Charlie, and me on a trip to discover our ancestors.

In the process of researching for our trip, Sandy discovered a two-page report on the Laurunen Homestead, built in 1605. The earliest mention of our family was in 1569 in the town of Kauhajoki.

Once in Finland, we rented a car and left early the next morning for the long drive to Kauhajoki. We had a hard time finding it and were about to give up when Charlie caught sight of a small airport. We drove there to ask for help. Sandy showed a young man our report, and he kindly offered to take us to the town library. I am sure we would never have found Kauhajoki by ourselves since it is well hidden down a forested highway. It seemed the Lord was leading us in our journey.

At the library a young woman gave us a map, circling the Lutheran church and cemetery. We found the church easily. After two hours of research, with the help of the pastor and several clerks, one of them called our Laurunen relatives and told them they had visitors from America. They came immediately with family genealogies dating back to the year 1550.

With the church bookkeeper as our interpreter, we walked through the beautifully manicured cemetery. Sandy stood at her grandfather's grave for the first time. Later, she saw a picture of him and held his violin. We were all deeply touched as the void we had felt before was being filled.

Then our Finnish cousins drove us to the family homestead, which was pictured on our two-page report. They told us that our family had owned as much land as the eye could see. The house on the family homestead was enormous and had housed Laurunen families as far back as 1550. When the Russian military came into

Kauhajoki, they used the homestead for military headquarters. They burned down the church and all other homes in the area. Everyone, including our family, fled to the woods for safety. After the Russians left, our grandfather led the building of the new church that we had seen earlier. Eventually the land around the homestead was divided and sold.

In 2005 Janice, Sandy, and I returned to

Kauhajoki for another visit with our newly found cousins and more research. In 2006 we had our first Laurunen family reunion in America, and 15 of our Finnish cousins joined us. Eighty-nine family members celebrated the lives of our grandparents.

What a joy it has been to discover such a rich, fascinating family history and know more about who I am and where I came from. Family history is the work of the Lord. ■

Mom's Journal

BY EDNA F. CHANDLER

Mother had been living with me for almost five years. In love and gratitude I was glad I could care for her just as she had cared for me for so many years. But I missed her smiles and humorous comments. I longed to have her experience again the joy and excitement she had once felt when she went on rides with me. It hadn't really mattered where we went. Mother never missed pointing out the flowers, the birds on the telephone wires, or the children playing.

I missed the companionship we had enjoyed as we peeled potatoes, snapped beans, or read together. I



W*e walked through the beautifully manicured cemetery, and my cousin stood at her grandfather's grave for the first time.*

longed to share childhood experiences with her and tell her news about my siblings and her grandchildren. She had always enjoyed family dropping by, especially the grandchildren. But now her dementia had changed things. She really wasn't sure anymore who I was, other than someone special who cared for her.

It had been a particularly difficult day with Mother. She gave me the usual blank stares when I tried to make conversation and distrustful looks when I tried to assist her. I was exhausted and frustrated as

I sat down on the couch to think. I began to read aloud one of Mother's journals in hopes that she might be entertained by it and perhaps remember a little. My efforts proved futile, but as I continued to read to myself, the memories surfaced in me.

In those pages Mother repeatedly expressed the joy she had felt when her family would visit and the void she had felt when they left. She wrote of how hard it had been for her when my father became ill and, after a long struggle, had left her a widow at the age of 59. She wrote of how she missed Father and of how she worried about my older brother, who was stricken with the same disease.

Mother wrote of happy, fulfilling experiences like teaching Church classes and participating in single adult activities. She wrote of the satisfaction she had received in going to Dilkon, Arizona, to teach the gospel once a week on the Navajo Indian reservation. This brought to my mind how she had always emphasized the importance of being dependable when someone was counting on you. Sometimes her entries were short because she had been helping someone; they reminded me of how she often took food or gifts to anyone she thought needed help or cheer.

Many times in her entries she bore her testimony of the gospel.

I was especially touched by how she expressed the sorrow and worry she had felt when my daughter was born with Down syndrome and associated problems. Had she really spent almost a whole month feeding and caring for our other children as my

I felt an overwhelming surge of love for my brave mother and deep gratitude for the words of her journal that had brought her back to me.

husband and I went back and forth to the hospital while Debra Sue underwent open-heart surgery and related complications? Yes! And she had done it at age 70! I remembered

how she had always been there for me when I needed her. Through the years I learned that if she could not be with me in person, her faithful letters and prayers would sustain me.

That night, as I sang hymns to Mother to calm her to sleep, I had an overwhelming surge of love for my brave, always-sacrificing mother and deep gratitude for the words of her journal that had brought her back to me. ■



MATTHEW

5:14–16

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Savior taught us the importance of letting the gospel light shine in our lives.



Light of the World

“Jesus wants every one of us to know him because of the transforming power of that knowledge and because of the indescribable joy it brings into our lives. But the influence of the gospel is to extend beyond each individual. It is to be as a light that dispels the darkness from the lives of those around us. No one is saved solely and simply for himself alone, just as no lamp is lighted merely for its own benefit.”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Build It Right,” *Tambuli*, Nov. 1990, 47; *New Era*, Mar. 1990, 65.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

14 Ye are the “light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
15 Neither do men light a “candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your “light so shine before men, that they may see your good “works, and “glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 **17** *“THOU; not that I am come to “scatter the seed of the goodly;”*

Let Your Light So Shine

“The candle that the Lord has lighted in this dispensation can become as a light unto the whole world, and others seeing our good works can be led to glorify our Father in Heaven and emulate in their own



lives the examples they have observed in ours.

“Beginning with you and me, there can be an entire people who, by the virtue of our lives in our homes, in our vocations, even in our amusements, can become as a city upon a hill to which men may look and learn, and an ensign to the nations from which the people of the earth may gather strength.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “A City Set upon a Hill,” *Tambuli*, Nov. 1990, 8; “A City upon a Hill,” *Ensign*, July 1990, 5.

City on a Hill

Ancient cities were often placed on hills to offer greater defense and safety. People could see them from far away and knew where to flee if danger came. How is being a disciple of Christ like being a city on a hill?

Bushel

This word originally comes from an ancient Greek unit of measurement for dry goods (about 8.7 liters) and also refers to the container used for measuring this unit. Imagine covering a candle with a large container like a bucket.

Good Works

Read the words of the hymn “Have I Done Any Good?” (*Hymns*, no. 223). Write down a few things you can do to help or uplift someone, and plan times to do them. Put your list somewhere you will easily see it.

Editors’ note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected scripture verse, only a starting point for your own study.

WHEN IN ROME...

DO AS THESE ROMANS

These youth find strength in righteous living. From left to right: Andrew Bishop, Arianna Hibo, Riccardo Celestini, Denise De Feo, Davide Bosco, Dalila Vardeu, and Sami Pace.

BY JENNIFER MADDY
Church Magazines

Youth in Rome, Italy, stand strong against invading influences of the world.



People popped in and out of shops and waved hello to friends in the crowded city center. Some people discussed business on their way to work, while others traded opinions on politics. Children played, enjoying the morning sun.

That's what a typical day might have been like in ancient Rome.

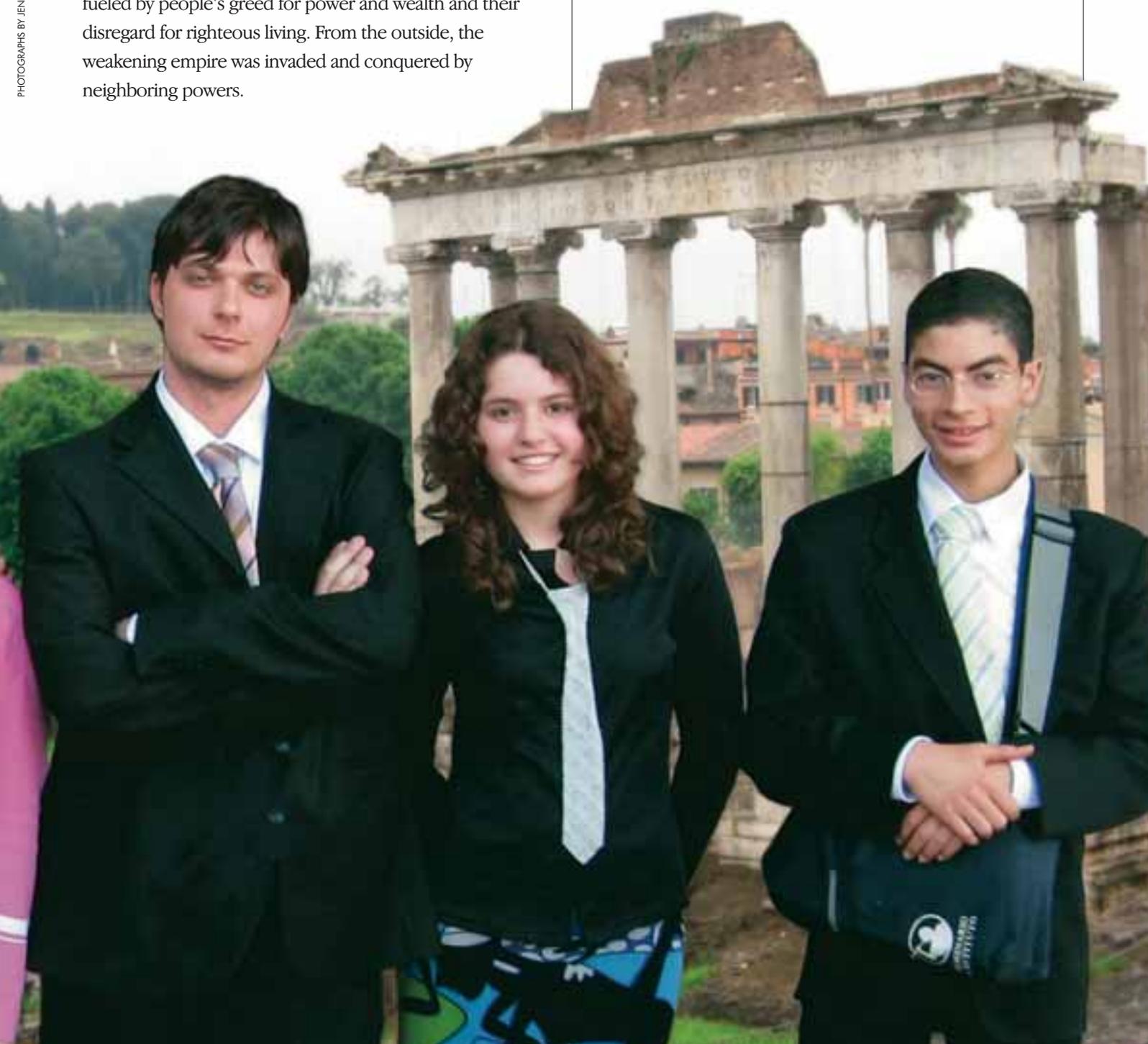
The Roman Empire was a mighty civilization with military and economic dominance. Who could have imagined its downfall?

But fall it did. From the inside, the empire's decay was fueled by people's greed for power and wealth and their disregard for righteous living. From the outside, the weakening empire was invaded and conquered by neighboring powers.

Today, the young men and young women of the Rome Italy Stake stand strong, as the empire once did. But these youth hold steady against the invading influences of the adversary and strengthen their spirituality by living righteously.

Roman Missionaries

In a letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ" (Romans 1:16). Today's Latter-day Saint youth in Rome are not ashamed, nor do they need encouragement in order to stand up for



Amid the ruins of an ancient city, these young Latter-day Saints build their lives on the gospel, good friendships, and high standards.

what they believe, though sometimes it might be hard.



Arianna Hibo, 15, says, “I have some friends who don’t share my ideas, but they always respect me.”



Dalila Vardeu, 15, adds, “I have friends who listen to me and try to understand what I am.”

And what is she? What characteristics describe these few Latter-day Saint youth surviving in the busy Italian capital? Honest, dedicated, friendly, righteous, and sincere in their desire to live and share the gospel.



Sami Pace, 16, served as deacons quorum president when he was the only member of the quorum. “I learned the importance of missionary work, even if up to now I have not had any results,” he says. “I’m the only young man in my area who’s a member. Every day I understand something more about missionary work.”



Denise De Feo, 15, sees an example in her older brother: “He’s on a mission now, and he’s having all these experiences. Not all of them are good, but every time he has something to teach. That comforts me.”



The youth know that even seemingly small acts of service or missionary work can have a positive impact on others. Davide Bosco, 17, says, “In the scriptures, the Lord asks us to shine (see Matthew 5:16)—not to do great things, but in the little things.”

For the Strength of Italian Youth

The young members in Rome do shine, and they do so in stark contrast to the many ancient Romans who unfortunately embraced unrighteous practices that contributed to their moral decay. Instead, today’s youth reflect the Light of Christ and strengthen

“I have some friends who don’t share my ideas, but they always respect me.”

their spirituality by maintaining high standards and attending the temple.

Denise finds that living the gospel provides a relief from the many pressures in today's world. The gospel also helps her know how to choose the right. "The things that my friends do are not always good things that I should do," she says simply.



But Riccardo Celestini, 14, emphasizes the importance of having support when trying to make right choices: "Sometimes I also need the help of my family or other help because I cannot stand alone."



Some of that other help comes from *For the Strength of Youth*. The pamphlet helps these youth in different ways. Andrew Bishop, 13, won't go to his baseball team's practices and games if they're on Sundays.

Arianna also follows the counsel on Sabbath day observance. She is a runner and had to race on many Sundays. Finally, she knew she had to make a decision. "I prayed, and even though it was hard for me to decide, I decided to go to church instead," she says.

For Davide and Riccardo, the counsel on honesty helps. "In school we have the opportunity to cheat and to copy homework from someone else," Davide says. "But not doing that will make the difference between us and other people." He adds that honesty "is one of the principles that you might think isn't very important, but it's what makes the difference."

Riccardo knows that honesty in sports is important too: "If you play fair, you know you were doing your best and not cheating. You are satisfied with what you have done."

Near and Far

There is one thing that these youth aren't satisfied with, and that's the number of times they can attend the temple. Without a temple in Italy, the Church members in

"I learned the importance of missionary work."



Rome drive about nine hours (one way) to the Bern Switzerland Temple. Trips to perform baptisms for the dead are infrequent. But even though the temple is far away, these youth keep it close to their hearts by striving to hold onto the special feelings they receive when they attend.

"When I'm at the temple, I feel at home," Sami says. "Every time I grow a little more."

"My favorite part about the temple is that I feel the Spirit very strongly," says Andrew. "I know that our ancestors are thanking us for helping them. We give them a gift."

Dalila agrees. "It is beautiful to feel that the people accept what we are doing for them. It's a wonderful experience."

Arianna wraps up her friends' comments: "All the things they said are true. The temple is a holy place on earth, and it doesn't matter that the temple is in Switzerland or Spain. The Spirit is always the same, and we can grow every time."

Present-day Rome is littered with broken pieces of ancient buildings, stairways, and arches—pieces of once-grand structures destroyed by stronger forces. The youth in Rome, on the other hand, take the pieces of their lives—the gospel, scriptures, family, standards, the temple—and develop solid testimonies that withstand the negative influences of the world.

Sami has one suggestion for gaining that strength: "Don't give up. Let's go forward." ■

"The Lord asks us to shine."





As I look to the Lord, He expands my limited, mortal vision to an eternal perspective.

Looking to the Lord

BY MARY N. COOK

First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

While my husband and I were serving in the Asia Area, we would often walk up Wan Chai Gap, a trail near our home in Hong Kong. The ascent is steep and difficult to climb, particularly on hot, humid summer days.

One Saturday I noticed that I wasn't enjoying our walk, which seemed more like punishment than exercise. Looking down at the pavement for nearly the entire walk, I felt as though we were never going to reach the top.

I made an interesting discovery that day. When I looked down, my vision was limited to a narrow stretch of pavement. Trudging along, I saw the same narrow view of pavement, pavement, pavement. But when I looked up, I had a gorgeous view ahead of me. I saw trees with bright yellow flowers. I saw birds flying and singing melodious songs. I saw Tai Chi students rhythmically opening colorful fans as part of their exercise routine. Soon we reached our goal, Stubbs Road, and beyond that I saw bright blue skies and fluffy white clouds.



Looking to the Lord

When we look down, focusing on the narrow view of our circumstances, we may miss seeing many of the opportunities the Lord has in store for us. Do we allow our circumstances to limit our view, or do we look up to the Lord, who can expand our vision?

Challenges—such as poor health, loss of a loved one, accident, divorce, or financial reversals—are a part of everyone’s life. We all encounter unplanned difficulties. Responding positively to those difficulties is a great challenge.

In *For the Strength of Youth*, the First Presidency promises: “The Lord will make much more out of your life than you can by yourself. He will increase your opportunities, expand your vision, and strengthen you. He will give you the help you need to meet your trials and challenges.”¹

The sons of Mosiah understood this principle and looked

to the Lord when they faced difficult circumstances. In the book of Alma we read:

“They had many afflictions; they did suffer much, both in body and in mind . . . and also much labor in the spirit. . . .

“And it came to pass that they journeyed many days in the wilderness, and they fasted much and prayed much that the Lord would grant unto them a portion of his Spirit to go with them, and abide with them, that they might be an instrument in the hands of God to bring, if it were possible, their brethren, the Lamanites, to the knowledge of the truth, to the knowledge of the baseness of the traditions of their fathers, which were not correct” (Alma 17:5, 9).

Then, rather than focus on their afflictions, they looked for ways to be instruments in the hands of God to lift and bless others. In answer to their fasting and prayers and their faith and works, the Lord gave them the help they needed in their difficult circumstances.



I didn't wait to be included; I looked for opportunities to be included.

Courage to Go Forth

I was 37 years old when I was sealed to my husband in the Salt Lake Temple. My single years presented many unique challenges. I had always thought that I would be married and have children by age 25, but I found myself in circumstances that were far different from my plans.

Many times I found myself looking down at the pavement, focusing on *me* and my circumstances. My perspective was narrow. Life seemed hard and unfair. I became discouraged. I lost my self-confidence.

I remember a significant point in my life when, like the sons of Mosiah, I looked to the Lord. I had always remained active in the Church and had a “knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Timothy 3:7), but I desired more. I made the decision to be more diligent in my scripture study, to be more prayerful, and to live more worthy of the guidance of the Spirit. I longed to be an “instrument in the hands of God,” as were the sons of Mosiah.

It “took courage to go forth” (Alma 17:12) and look for new opportunities. I set professional goals and enrolled in a graduate program to improve my job situation. I chose to move from a singles ward into a family ward. I became involved, attending family picnics and dinners and programs for adults. I joined the ward choir. I came to know the bishop well. He was a wise and caring man who extended callings to me that blessed my life.

Through visiting teaching and Relief Society activities, I became friends with many women, and they often included me in their family activities. But I didn't *wait* to be included; I looked for opportunities to be included. I volunteered to watch their children, and I invited their families to dinner. Their children became my children.

I also realized that the best place to love and be loved is within your own family. My brother had three children, and I became interested in their lives, schoolwork, and activities.

Because I was contributing, my self-confidence improved, and I found life to be more interesting and fulfilling as I looked to the Lord. Just as I saw the trees, flowers, birds, and people along the path when I looked up on Wan Chai Gap, looking to the Lord helped me see new opportunities for my life.

As I continue to look to the Lord, I recognize that He expands my limited, mortal vision to an eternal perspective. Through answers to prayers, I have learned that the Lord knows me, loves me, and is aware of me and of my circumstances. This knowledge has given me the faith that He *will* continue to help me meet future trials and challenges as I look to Him for opportunities and “choose righteousness and happiness, no matter what [my] circumstances.”² ■

NOTES

1. *For the Strength of Youth* (2001), 42.
2. *For the Strength of Youth*, 5.



Primary Songs Blessed Me

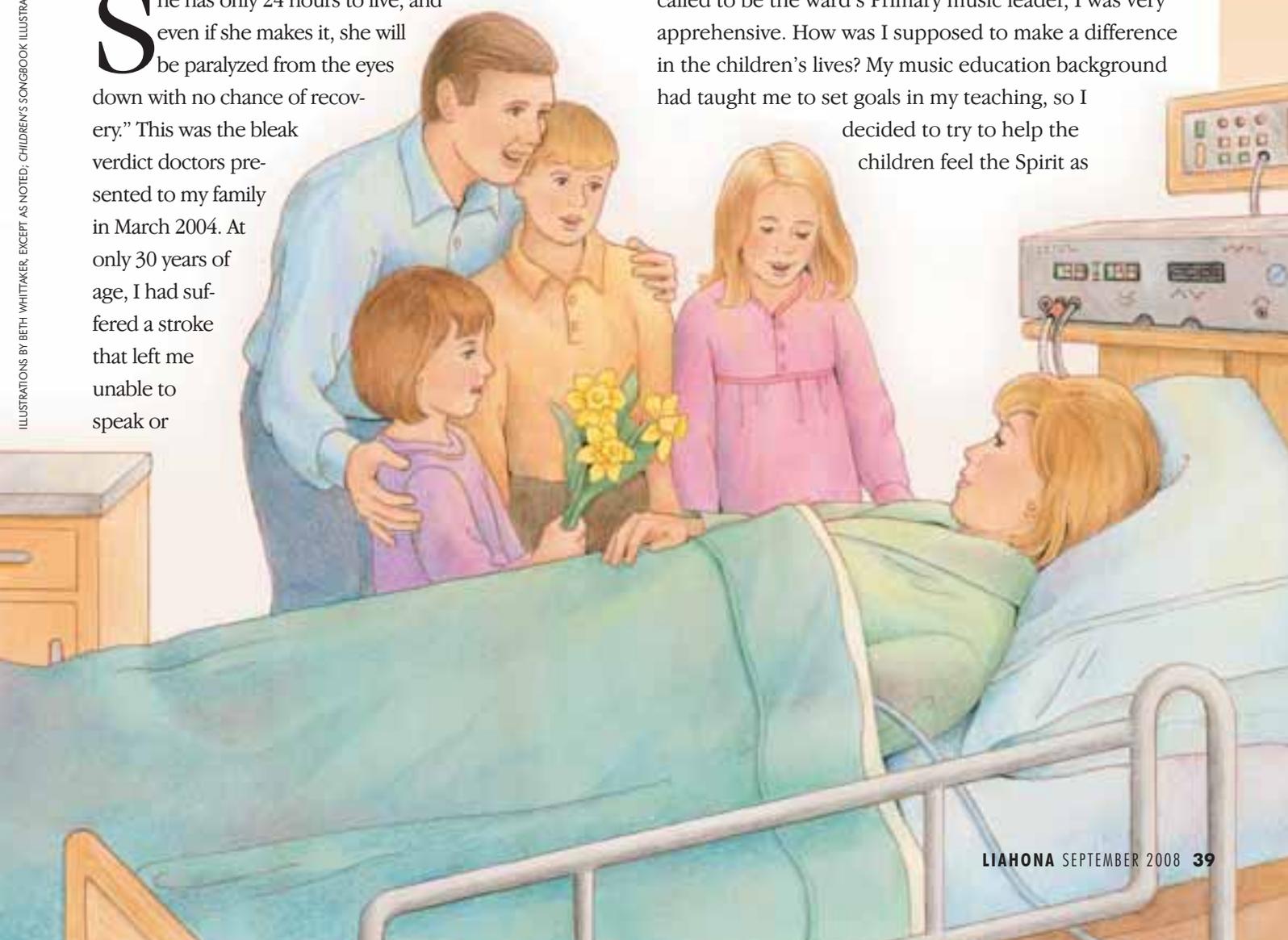
BY JENNIFER A. LYNN

I didn't expect to benefit from my calling as a music leader. Now it's hard to think of a way I haven't benefited.

She has only 24 hours to live, and even if she makes it, she will be paralyzed from the eyes down with no chance of recovery." This was the bleak verdict doctors presented to my family in March 2004. At only 30 years of age, I had suffered a stroke that left me unable to speak or

move. Yet in those dark, lonely hours, experiences from my previous calling as a Primary music leader gave me hope.

I have always loved music and felt strength in the words of the hymns. Yet prior to my stroke, when I was called to be the ward's Primary music leader, I was very apprehensive. How was I supposed to make a difference in the children's lives? My music education background had taught me to set goals in my teaching, so I decided to try to help the children feel the Spirit as





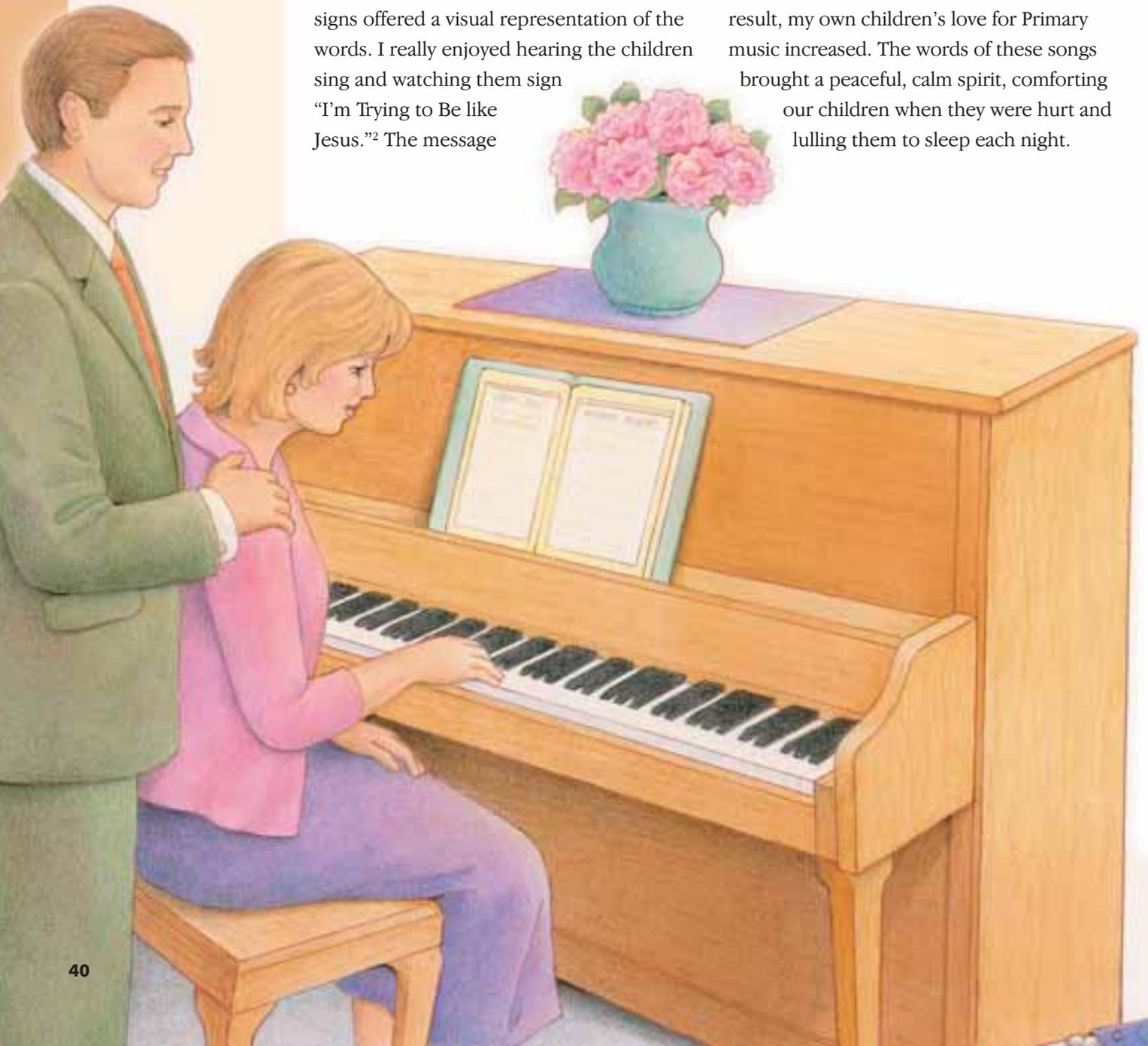
With so much recent experience singing Primary songs, I found they were what kept me going during my trials.

we sang. When we sang songs such as “I Lived in Heaven,”¹ I was astonished by the strong presence of the Holy Ghost in the room and by the children’s deep, thoughtful questions about the lyrics.

One of my favorite teaching methods was using American Sign Language (ASL). I found that the children understood the songs better when we discussed how the signs offered a visual representation of the words. I really enjoyed hearing the children sing and watching them sign “I’m Trying to Be like Jesus.”² The message

rang true in my heart, and I often felt that I was the benefactor of the Spirit that the children invited. I could sense my testimony growing, and I truly felt blessed by the Lord.

The blessings of my calling as Primary music leader were not limited to the Primary room, though. With the calling came the need to practice and play the music at home so I would be prepared each Sunday. As a result, my own children’s love for Primary music increased. The words of these songs brought a peaceful, calm spirit, comforting our children when they were hurt and lulling them to sleep each night.





They insisted on listening to the *Children's Songbook* CDs³ in the car—even if the ride was just a short one—and consequently began to memorize many of the songs.

However, it was not until after my stroke that I was aware of the far-reaching effects of this music in my life. With so much recent experience singing Primary songs, I found they were what kept me going during my trials. During my darkest hours I would pray and sing “A Child’s Prayer”⁴ in my head. As I cried out like the child of the first verse, “Heavenly Father, are you really there?” He would mercifully answer by reassuring me that I was not alone and that He *was* there, as stated in the second verse of the song. What a strength and reassurance!

During the recovery process, my husband and children came to my hospital room to hold family home evenings and frequently sang “Love Is Spoken Here.”⁵ That was the last song I had taught in Primary, and it was wonderful to hear my children sing it, knowing that I had planted those seeds. As they sang, I could relate to the mother in the song, praying on her knees (how I wished that I too could kneel!). Her pleas to Heavenly Father were also mine. I also shared the same gratitude for priesthood authority in my home. While I could not voice these thoughts to my family, the Primary song voiced these feelings for me.

It has been nearly four years since I suffered my stroke,

and I have been able to regain far more abilities than the doctors expected I ever would. I have a small amount of movement in my right arm, which allows me to type on my computer and operate a powered wheelchair.

I use a modified form of ASL—which I first learned in my Primary calling—to communicate. Because of this, I can still “sing” Primary songs with my children and express my feelings to family and friends.

Before my stroke I had always planned on singing at my children’s baptisms. In August 2005 my oldest child, Zach, was baptized. I was able to use my right hand to plunk out “When I Am Baptized”⁶ while my husband supported me at the piano bench. It felt good to express my deepest feelings about baptism through music and in a way that Zach would understand.

When I began serving as a Primary music leader, I did not think the calling would benefit me. Yet it plainly has! The Primary songs have blessed me with a better understanding of gospel principles, a strengthened testimony, the ability to communicate with my family, and the strength to persevere. The words and melody of Primary songs may be simple, but the message and the power of each one are clear.

We may not always understand why the Lord has given us a particular assignment. Even so, we must trust the Lord and put our faith in Him and His promptings. I am so grateful I was a Primary music leader before my stroke! The songs I can no longer sing can still communicate my feelings of the gospel to others. Every time I hear my children sing Primary songs, I know that their testimonies are being strengthened and that they share my love for the Lord and His gospel. ■

The words and melody of Primary songs may be simple, but the message and the power of each one are clear.



NOTES

1. *Children's Songbook*, 4.
2. *Children's Songbook*, 78–79.
3. Item no. 50428.
4. *Children's Songbook*, 12–13.
5. *Children's Songbook*, 190–91.
6. *Children's Songbook*, 103.

I Do My Part, and God Does the Rest

BY JENNY PIDERIT DE LA MAZA

I am a young adult now, but an experience I had when I was a little girl has helped me all my life. I'm from Renaico, a small town in Chile. I remember with some emotion when my mother, Ruby, was the president of the Primary. We had a small branch then; I was the only child who attended. She would teach the class. When we got to church on Sunday morning, she would say, "Good morning, Jenny. I'm your Primary teacher." This phrase was repeated every week. We would have an opening prayer and sing a song, and then she would proceed with the lesson.

She regularly visited children who were less-active, whom she lovingly called "my little darlings." Often we would find these children playing in the street, and Mama would stop the car and say in a cheerful voice, "Hey, see you at church on Sunday." Most of them said OK. But on Sunday it would be just Mama and me.

Sometimes I got frustrated when those children didn't come to church. I would say, "That's enough, Mama. They don't want to come." But she, in her loving way, would reply, "I need to be responsible in my calling and persevere."

One day the unbelievable happened.

A boy named Carlos came to church and said, "See,

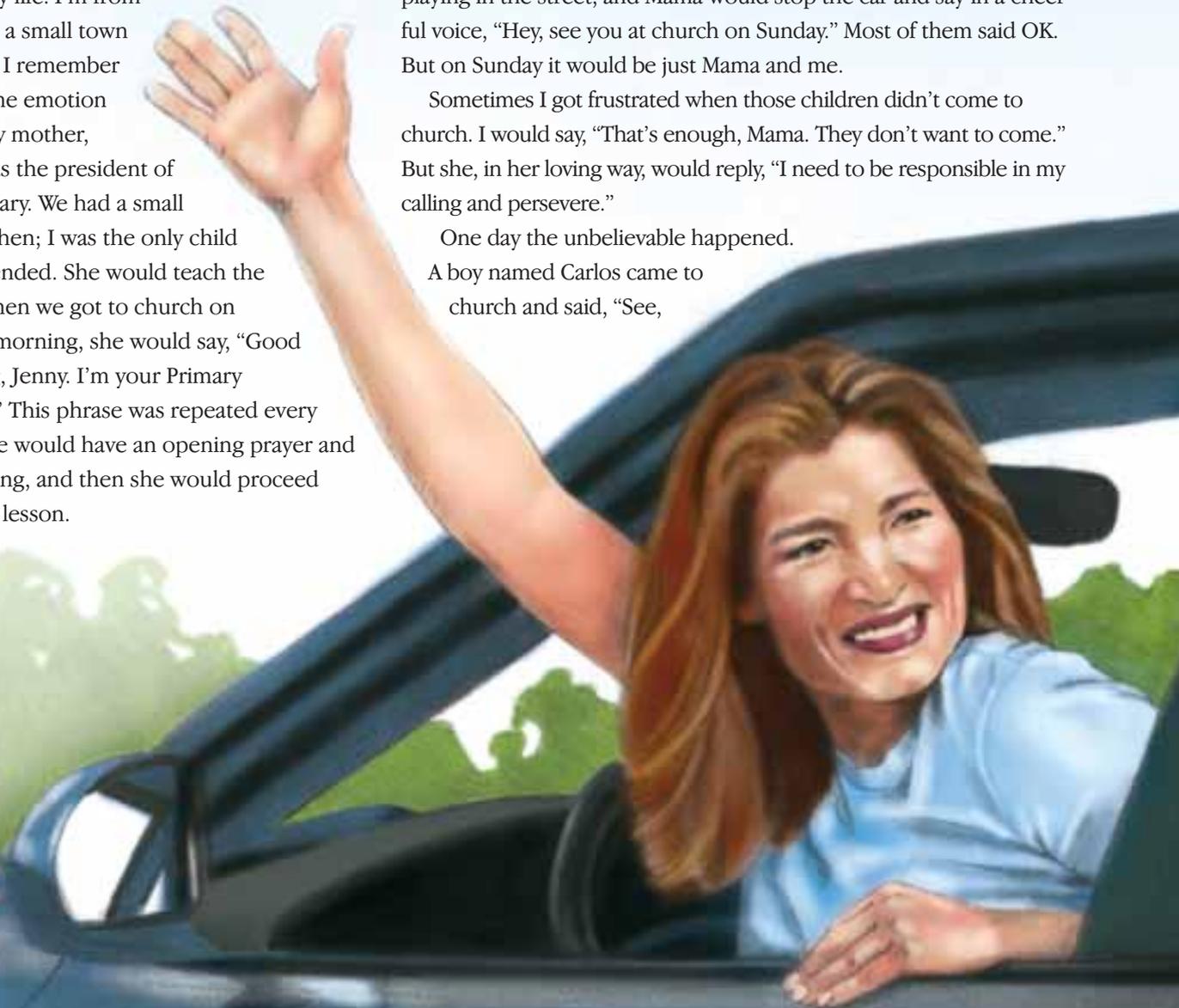


ILLUSTRATION BY NATALIE MALUAN

Sister Ruby, I told you I would come.” Well, at least now there were two of us. This made my mother’s face shine with joy, and every time Carlos came to class, she would say to me, “See, sweetheart, we need to be persistent, and God will do the rest.”

One day Carlos started coming with a boy named Alexis. The three of us loved playing together, and we are still friends today. From that day, more and more children started coming.

My mother was released from her calling after two years. When she left the Primary, 35 children were attending every week. How wonderful it was to see that my

mother’s love for the children was returned. More than 10 years have passed since she was released, and the Church is larger here now, but nobody has ever surpassed her achievement of getting 35 children to attend!

I am the Primary president now. I love these little children, who have taught me so much. I’m so grateful for this wonderful calling and for my mother’s example of perseverance. I know that Heavenly Father lives and that it is true what my mother says: “I do my part, and He does the rest.” ■



When my mother saw children playing, she would stop the car and cheerfully invite them to church.



FROM GENERATION

What will you do with the spiritual knowledge offered to you?

BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

If you've read the first verse of the Book of Mormon, you already know something about 17-year-old Juan Ordoñez and his 15-year-old sister, Mayra, of the Pachitol Ward, Patzicía Guatemala Stake.

Juan, Mayra, and their seven older brothers and sisters were "born of goodly parents," who have passed on skills the family needs to survive, such as the family trades of farming and tortilla making, as well as the language of their ancestors, Cakchiquel.

But those aren't the only ways their family is like Nephi's. Juan and Mayra have parents who understand that it is as important to pass on a "knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God" (1 Nephi 1:1) as it is to pass on physical survival skills.

While many teens don't have Lehi- and Sariah-like parents to pass on the gospel (see sidebar on page 47), for Juan, Mayra, and others who do, the question is: Will we be Nephi-like learners, who listen, apply gospel truths,

and pass them along as well? Or will we be like Laman and Lemuel, who heard the same information but didn't want to find out the truth for themselves and couldn't pass it on?

How Is It Passed On?

Juan can't remember how old he was when he started working with his dad in the fields. "The children would start going with me when they were small," Juan's dad, Joel, says. "They learned by watching and then doing what they could, depending on their strength and capacity."

Mayra learned to make tortillas the same way, watching her mom and sisters until she was old enough to pitch in and help.

But plowing, planting, and tortilla making aren't the only things being passed from one generation to the next. As Mayra's mother, Carmela, molded and shaped tortillas, she was also giving shape to her daughter's character. As Brother Ordoñez prepared, planted, or cultivated the ground, he was doing the same for Juan's heart.

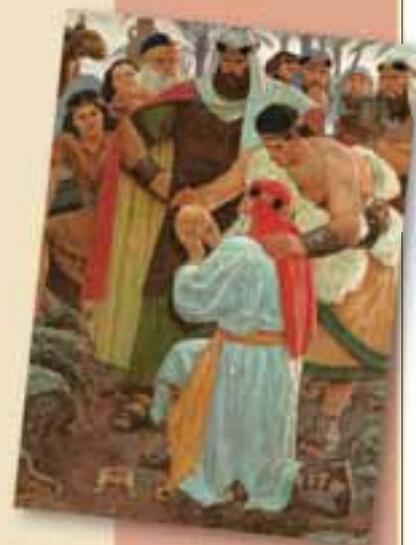
As the family spent time together, the children could see not just how their parents worked but how they lived. And when the opportunity arose, their parents made the gospel a topic of conversation while they worked.

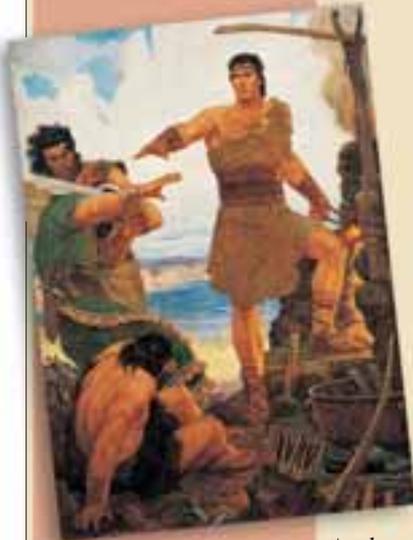
But observing—and even doing— isn't always enough. In the Book of Mormon's first family, Laman and Lemuel heard the same things that Nephi heard from their father, and they too even went and did what their father asked. But they were missing something important, something that Juan and Mayra have—a desire to learn.



The things that Juan (bottom left) and Mayra (left) are learning from their parents (opposite page) are important not only to their physical survival but to their spiritual survival as well.

TO GENERATION





If Juan and Mayra don't learn these important things for themselves, how will they be able to pass them on to their children?

How Much Do You Want It?

Juan and Mayra live in Patzicía, a Cakchiquel community a few hours from Guatemala City.

Because many of those who buy their tortillas and seek their plowing services don't speak Spanish, it was important to Juan and Mayra to learn Cakchiquel.

But not everyone feels that way. Cakchiquel isn't taught in the schools. The language has been passed down from generation to generation for hundreds of years. However, in each succeeding generation there are many who don't want to learn it or feel they don't need it.

A desire to know is key in more than just learning a language. Lehi wanted his family to know for themselves that the gospel is true, but not all of his family wanted to



know (see 1 Nephi 8:12, 17–18). In addition to hearing his father and doing what he asked, Nephi wanted to know for himself (see 1 Nephi 10:17). Laman and Lemuel, though they had obeyed their father, had done it grudgingly (see 1 Nephi



GAINING A TESTIMONY

“A testimony is not genetic. That is, we are not born with a testimony. Likewise, a testimony does not pass automatically from generation to generation without the examples of good teachers.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Teaching by Faith,” *Liahona*, Sept. 2003, 16; *Ensign*, Sept. 2003, 26.

2:11–12). They weren't interested in making the effort to find out for themselves, saying, “The Lord maketh no such thing known unto us” (see 1 Nephi 15:8–9).

Don't Break the Chain

As their children grew, Brother and Sister Ordoñez

often wondered if their children would listen. Would they obey? Would they want to know, like Nephi? Would they pass the gospel on to *their* children?

It may be too early to tell. But Brother and Sister Ordoñez have reason to hope.

Their older children are starting to pass gospel truths on. And the younger children are recognizing the importance of passing the gospel on too. “It's hard sometimes to take counsel from your parents,” Juan says. “But I'm grateful for their help.”

“They didn't just teach me how to cook



beans and make tortillas,” Mayra says. “They have taught me the right path—to follow God.” ■

LIVING THE GOSPEL ON YOUR OWN

What if your parents aren't passing on the gospel? Maybe they haven't accepted it, or they aren't living it. Being the first in your family to accept the gospel or the only one to actively live it can be lonely. But it doesn't mean you are alone.

There are others like you in the Church and in the scriptures. When Alma the Elder was a young man, he was the only one who accepted the gospel Abinadi taught. He was chased out of the city for defending the truth. But because he was bold enough to live and teach the gospel, soon



others believed. His children were blessed by his faith, and it helped to establish a multigenerational chain of believers whose examples and leadership were a great strength to the Church.

If you have felt alone in living the gospel, take heart. There were others like you then, and there are many like you now.

“Perhaps not since the early days of the Church has the first generation constituted such a large percentage of total Church membership as it does

today,” said Elder Paul B. Pieper of the Seventy in the October 2006 general conference. “Your faith and testimonies are a great strength and blessing to others. . . .

“ . . . As a first-generation member, you occupy an important place in your family. You are an example to your family of a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Whether they are members of the Church or not, as you live the gospel at home, those around you will feel the Savior’s love through you. They know that you are engaged in something good, even if they do not understand it or have enough faith to accept it. Be



patient and kind, pray each day to know how you can serve them, and the Lord will help you and bless you to influence your family for good. By being consistently good and upright, you will establish patterns of faithfulness and righteousness. Those patterns will shape your life, but more importantly, they will become a standard for your family and posterity” (“The First Generation,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 11–12).

So whether you are part of the first generation or the fifth, how you live can help create or continue a long chain of generations that enjoy the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ.



Gaining a Testimony

I'm so grateful for having the *Liabona* in our home. Many of my questions are answered in it. An article written by Elder David A. Bednar, "Seek Learning by Faith" (Sept. 2007), has helped me. I felt the Spirit while reading it, and the answer came to me that in order to have a testimony of the Book of Mormon, one should bear that testimony, and the Spirit will help you know the Book of Mormon is true.

Genes L. Nallonar, Philippines

Three Messages to All

Every day I feel more and more grateful for our Church magazine, the *Liabona*. It plays a very important role in my life. Numerous times the *Liabona* has helped me make the right decisions. In the April 2007 article "Three Messages to Young Adults," Elder Earl C. Tingey encouraged the youth to be active members of the Church. He advised them to prepare for tomorrow by making wise decisions today so that if they are in a bad situation, they won't have to panic not knowing what to do but will be prepared to face it. This article was addressed to the young adults of the Church. I am 55 years old, but when I read it, I realized that it was written for me too.

Olga Kbripko, Ukraine

How Did You Like the Magazine?

My husband used to be the person in charge of distributing the *Liabona* throughout Peru each month. In his travels he would meet people who were not members of the Church working in security booths. When they would ask, "What are you carrying in your van?" his kind reply was, "Magazines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—magazines called the *Liabona*."

They would often be intrigued and want to know more about it, and my husband always carried some extra copies that he gave away. He always went to the same places, so when he returned, he would ask them, "How did you like the magazine?" And if they said they had read it, he would get their names so the missionaries could go to their homes and teach them about the Church.

One day, years later, we were leaving the temple. What a surprise it was when my husband knew the person in the security booth. He had been baptized, and now he and his loved ones were preparing to be an eternal family.

Thank you, dear brothers and sisters, for writing such interesting articles. They help us all to progress, and

everything we read in the magazine touches our hearts.

Ana Meza de Eulogio, Peru

The Importance of Repentance

I have been called to serve as the fourth-Sunday Relief Society teacher. One lesson I gave was on a talk titled "Repentance and Conversion" by Elder Russell M. Nelson in the May 2007 *Liabona*. As I was preparing my lesson, I learned and felt how important repentance is.

I always look forward to reading the *Liabona*. There are many things I can learn and feel through the *Liabona*.

Anonymous, Japan

Liabona Is Our Guide

I have read the *Liabona* for more than 34 years. I am often brought to tears when I read about my brothers and sisters and how they faithfully strive to live the gospel. I love everything in the *Liabona*, but I especially thank you for the article "Helping Those Who Struggle with Same-Gender Attraction" by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland (Oct. 2007). Together with the scriptures, the *Liabona* is a guide for our family.

Name withheld



E-mail your comments to liabona@ldschurch.org.

Or send them to:

Liabona, Comment

50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA

Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

the Friend



A Message for *Misti*

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

During the message I delivered at general conference in October 1975, I felt prompted to direct my remarks to a little girl with long, blonde hair who was seated in the balcony of the Tabernacle. I called the attention of the audience to her and felt this small girl needed the message I had in mind.

At the conclusion of the session, I returned to my office and found waiting for me a young child by the name of Misti White, together with her grandparents and an aunt. As I greeted them, I recognized Misti as the one in the balcony to whom I had directed my remarks.

I learned that as her eighth birthday approached, she was in a quandary concerning whether or not to be baptized. She felt she would like to be baptized, and her grandparents, with whom she lived, wanted her to be baptized, but her less-active mother suggested she wait until she was 18 years of age to make the decision. Misti had told her grandparents, "If we go to conference, maybe Heavenly Father will let me know what I should do."

As we continued our visit after the session, Misti's



**President Monson
teaches us about
inspired messages.**

grandmother said to me, "I think Misti has something she would like to tell you." This sweet young girl said, "Brother Monson, while you were speaking in conference, you answered my question. I want to be baptized!"

The family returned to California, and Misti was baptized and confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ●

From an April 2007 general conference address.

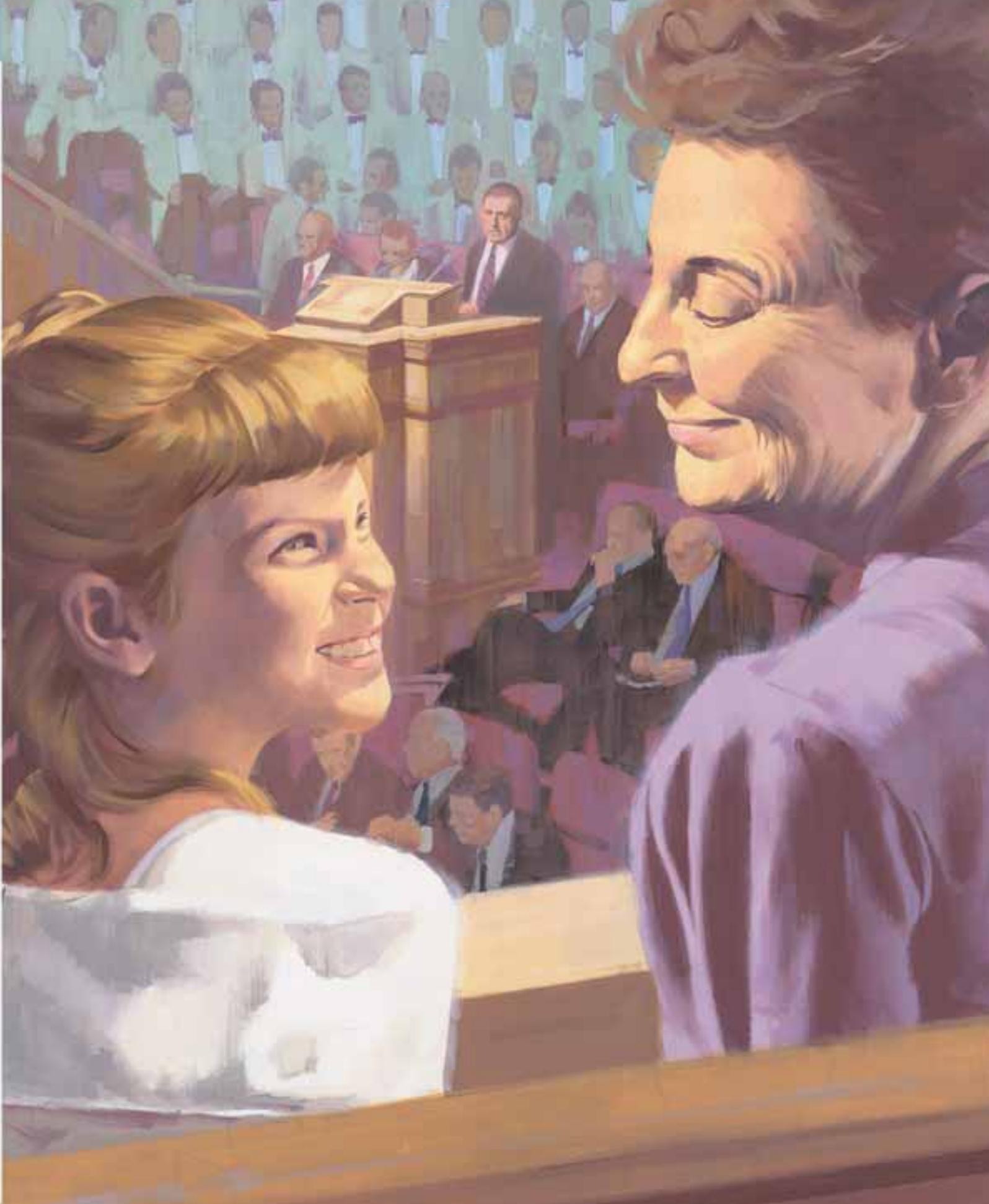
THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How do you think President Monson knew he should tell Misti his talk was for her, even though he had never seen her before?

How can listening to the Holy Ghost help you show other people that Heavenly Father loves them?

2. Why do you think Misti believed that if she listened to general conference Heavenly Father would help her know what to do? How can listening to Church leaders help you choose the right? Are they speaking to you, even if they don't mention your name?

3. How do you think Misti's choice to get baptized right away helped her life? How can following the prophet help your life?



“[Ask] for whatsoever things ye stand in need, both spiritual and temporal; always returning thanks unto God for whatsoever things ye do receive” (Alma 7:23).



Blessings I Am Grateful For

Note: This activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at www.lds.org. For English, click on **Gospel Library**. For other languages, click on **Languages**.

Heavenly Father, Are You Really There?

BY LINDA CHRISTENSEN

“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24).



When Jesus lived on the earth, many people came to listen to His words. They brought their children so Jesus could bless them, but the disciples told them to go away. Jesus said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14). Jesus loved the children and blessed them.

The Primary song “A Child’s Prayer” reminds us of that scripture story and teaches us about prayer.

*Heavenly Father, are you really there?
And do you hear and answer ev’ry child’s prayer?
Some say that heaven is far away,
But I feel it close around me as I pray.*

*Heavenly Father, I remember now
Something that Jesus told disciples long ago:
“Suffer the children to come to me.”
Father, in prayer I’m coming now to thee.*

Heavenly Father loves you. You are His child. He wants you to pray to Him often—anytime, anywhere. The next verse of this song reminds you to pray.

*Pray, he is there;
Speak, he is list’ning.
You are his child;
His love now surrounds you.*

*He hears your prayer;
He loves the children.
Of such is the kingdom,
The kingdom of heav’n.
(Children’s Songbook, 12–13)*

Activity

You can use the prayer journal on page F4 to remind you to pray. Remove the page, and place it

by your bed or in your scriptures. Color the picture, and write down the things you would like to thank Heavenly Father for when you pray. He loves you and hears every prayer. He blesses you with what you need.

Sharing Time Ideas

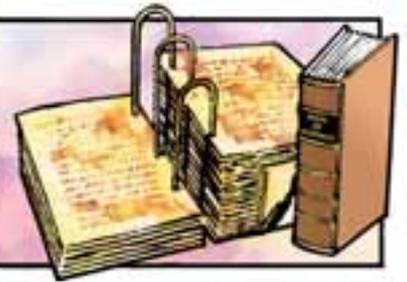
1. *Prior to sharing time, make three simple signs for children to hold: Ask, Seek, Knock. Begin sharing time by helping the children find Matthew 7:7, and read it together. Hold up the signs, and review the words with the children. Memorize the scripture together. Bear testimony that we learn about prayer from the scriptures. Display Gospel Art Picture Kit 305 (Enos Praying) and 403 (The First Vision). Share those scripture accounts about prayer (see Enos 1:1–18; Joseph Smith—History 1:14–20). Allow time for the children to share experiences they have had with prayer. Conclude by singing a song or hymn about prayer, and bear testimony of the power of prayer.*

2. *Show 3-53 from the Primary 3 picture packet, and share the story about Karolina’s prayer (Primary 3, lesson 26, pp. 123–24). Repeat the weekly gospel principle: “Heavenly Father wants me to pray to Him often—anytime, anywhere.” Scramble the words in these two phrases: “call upon his holy name” and “cry unto him.” Write the scrambles on the chalkboard, and ask the children to work together as classes to unscramble the phrases (see “Scrambles,” Teaching, No Greater Call [1999], 184). Invite them to look in Alma 34:17–18 to help them find the answer. Explain that these two phrases are ways of describing prayer. Choose key words (“crops,” “fields,” “houses,” “household,” and so on) from Alma 34:17–27 that name some things to pray about. Write them on the chalkboard. Have the children find them in the scriptures, and discuss how this passage of scripture applies to their lives. Bear testimony of the power of prayer in your life. ●*

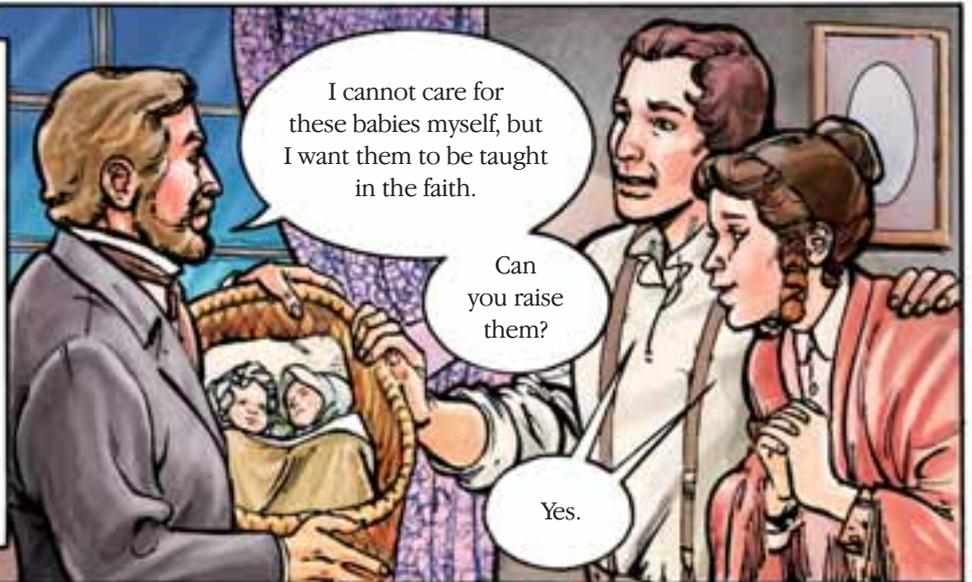


FROM THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

Trials for Joseph and Emma



In Ohio, Emma Smith gave birth to twins—a girl and a boy. The babies lived for only three hours. Another Latter-day Saint woman had twins on the same day. She became very weak and died. Her husband, John Murdock, needed help raising the twins.



I cannot care for these babies myself, but I want them to be taught in the faith.

Can you raise them?

Yes.

One night Joseph and Emma stayed up late to take care of the babies, who were both sick. A mob of angry men came into the home. The men grabbed Joseph and carried him away from the house.



The wicked men hurt Joseph and poured hot tar on him.



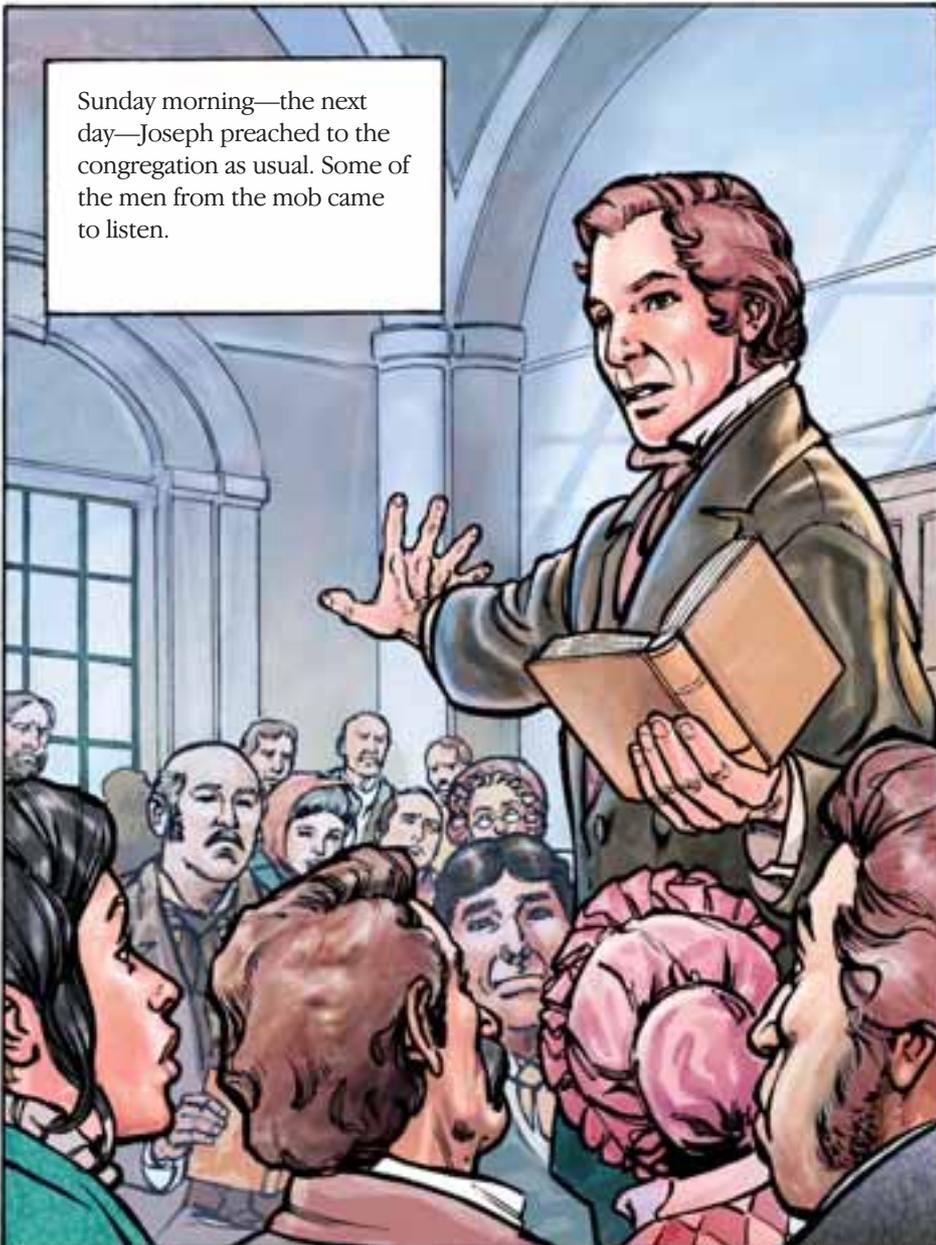
When the mob left, Joseph was very weak. He crawled back to the house. When Emma saw Joseph hurt, she fainted.



Joseph's friends carefully washed him.



Sunday morning—the next day—Joseph preached to the congregation as usual. Some of the men from the mob came to listen.



Joseph's baby son caught a bad cold the night the mob attacked Joseph. A few days later, the baby died. But Joseph and Emma continued to have faith in Heavenly Father's plan of salvation.

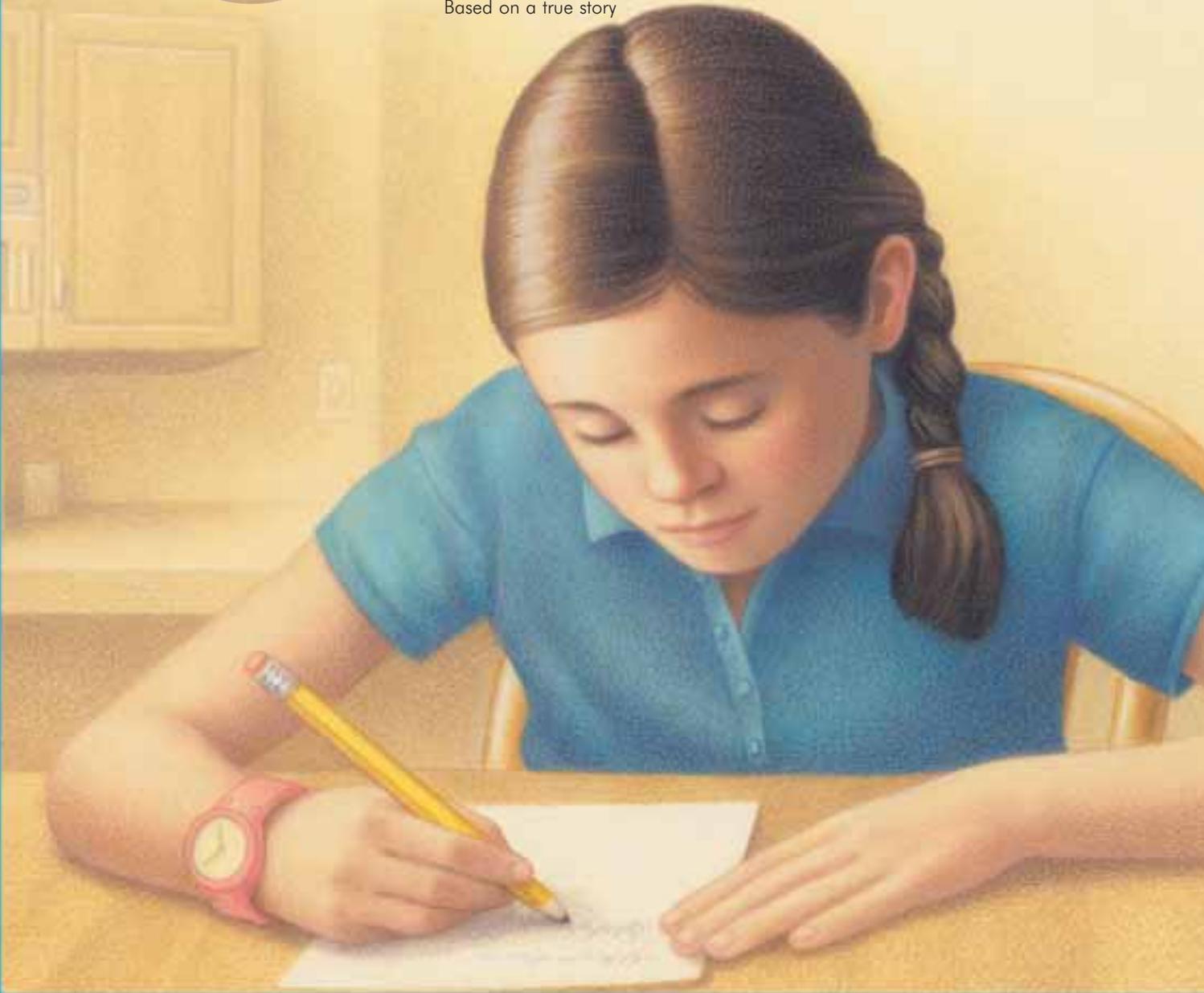


"Learn to do well" (Isaiah 1:17).



PRESIDENT GRANT'S EXAMPLE

BY HEIDI ROSE
Based on a true story



Class, please pass your papers to the front.” Heidi reached behind her to pick up Molly’s paper. She loved to look at Molly’s beautiful writing before she passed it forward. Her letters seemed to flow together perfectly. Heidi looked at her own paper and was embarrassed for anyone to see the poor handwriting. She slid her paper under Molly’s and passed it forward.

“Mom, will you write my homework for me?” Heidi asked as she walked in the door. Her mother had beautiful handwriting too. Maybe if her mother wrote her homework, she wouldn’t feel so embarrassed.

“Why do you want me to write your homework? Are your arms broken?” her mom teased.

Heidi told her mother about Molly’s beautiful writing. “I wish I had practiced my handwriting more last year.” Heidi sat down at the table and plopped her face in her hands.

“You know, Heidi,” her mom said, “if you work hard enough at it, your handwriting can be as good as anyone’s. You just have to put your mind to it.”

Heidi wasn’t so sure. She pictured Molly’s writing and thought there was no way hers would ever look like Molly’s.

“Do you remember the prophet Heber J. Grant?” Mom asked.

Heidi looked up. “Yes. We learned about him in Primary.”

“He had bad handwriting when he was young. He really wanted to improve, so he practiced and practiced until his handwriting was so good that he received an award for his penmanship.”

Heidi was amazed! She looked up to the prophets, but she had never realized they had problems just like hers when they were young. She decided that if Heber J. Grant could work to improve his handwriting, so could she.

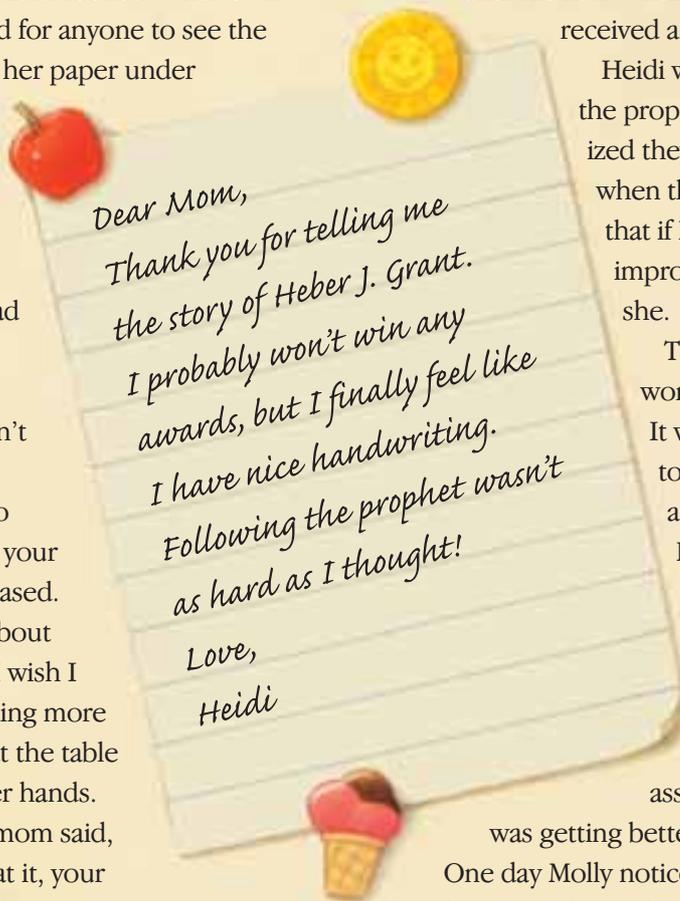
The next day at school Heidi worked hard on her handwriting. It was difficult at first. She had to stay late to finish writing her assignments, but the story of President Heber J. Grant motivated her to continue.

It was weeks before Heidi began to notice any improvement. It still took her a long time to do her assignments, but her writing was getting better.

One day Molly noticed. “Heidi, you have really nice handwriting,” she said.

“Thanks.” Heidi blushed. She couldn’t help but let a smile creep across her face.

That night Heidi left a note on the refrigerator for her mother. It was in beautiful handwriting. ●



“The holy scriptures, the guidance of your parents, and the diligent teaching you receive in Primary . . . will fortify you in your determination to be your best self. Study with purpose, both in church and in school.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Your Celestial Journey,” *Liahona*, July 1999, 115; *Ensign*, May 1999, 97.

Time for Family Prayer

Show each child the correct path to follow so he or she can join the family in family prayer. Then color the picture.

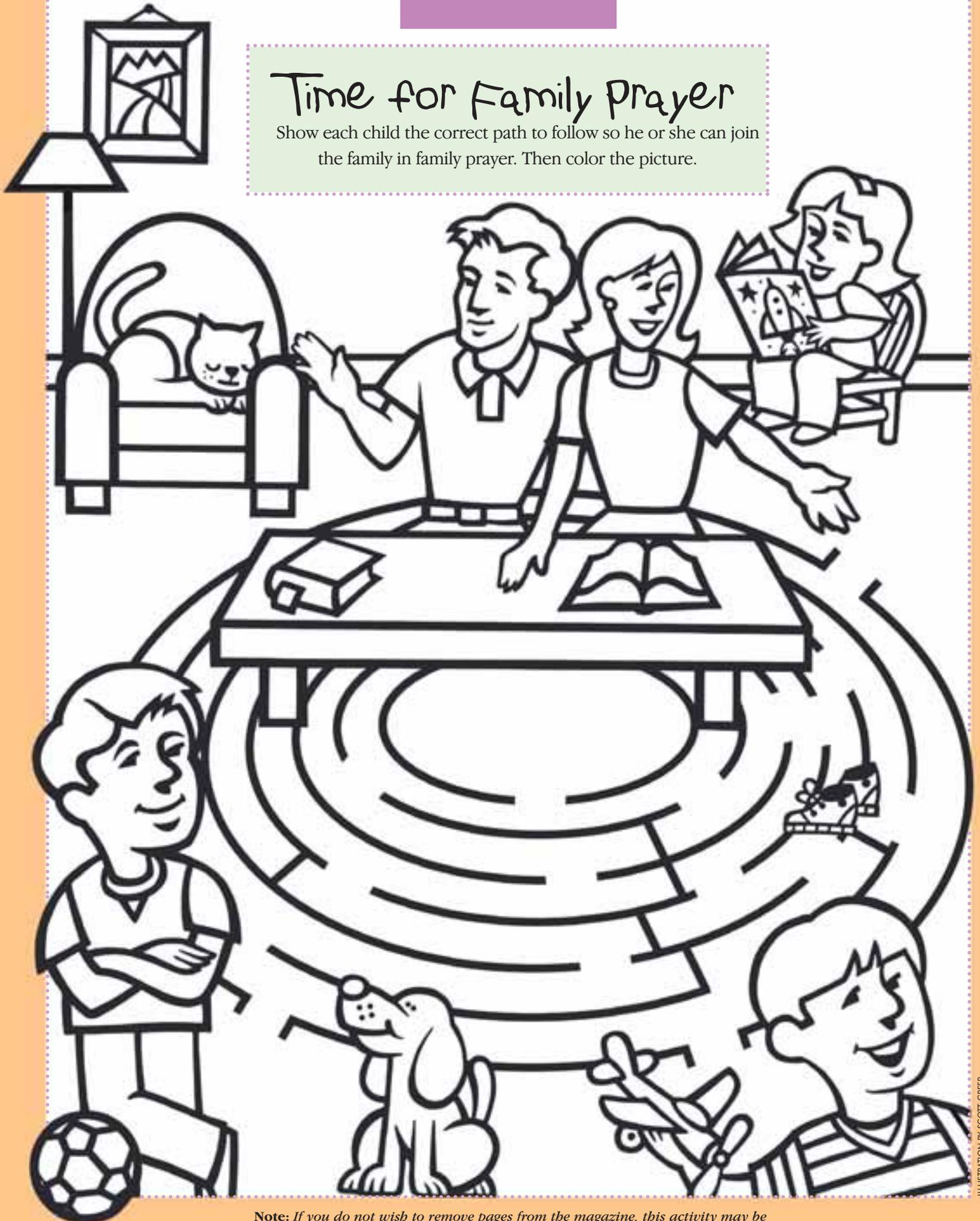


ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT GREER

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ILLUSTRATION BY APRIL STOTT

I CAN PRAY TO HEAVENLY FATHER, AND HE WILL HEAR AND ANSWER MY PRAYERS

“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24).

My Brother and the Puppy



From an interview with Elder Keith R. Edwards of the Seventy, currently serving as President of the Philippines Area; by Callie Buys

“Shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother” (Zechariah 7:9).

I was blessed to grow up with people who loved me and influenced me for good. The greatest influences in my life were the members of my family. My parents chose the right, and they trusted me to do the same. And my older brothers set good examples for me to follow.

One older brother taught me an important lesson when I was five years old. That was when my twin, Karl, and I received a puppy. We did not understand the responsibilities that come with having a pet—we thought it was just another toy that didn’t require any particular care. We didn’t worry too much about giving the dog food or water or taking care of it. But we had an older brother who felt just the opposite. He had a great love for animals. He saw the need and took care of our puppy.

That dog grew up thinking that it belonged to our brother, and we used to argue about whose dog it was. Karl and

I insisted that it was our dog, and we had contests with our older brother to see whom the dog would go to

if we called to it. The dog always went to our brother.

The dog understood loyalty and the love our brother showed it. This experience taught me a powerful lesson about the law of the harvest, which tells us that as you sow, so shall you reap. My brother planted love when he took care of our dog, and he reaped the rewards of trust and loyalty.

My mother knew this lesson too. She had great faith. When she was young, her parents seldom attended church, so she often went to church by herself. Her loving example helped bring her parents into activity and involvement in the Church.

When I was growing up, my mother would get up regularly in fast and testimony meeting and bear her testimony. Then she would say how much she appreciated her sons and what good boys we were. Her faith in us provided great benefits. Even if we did not always live up to her words, she showed us what we could become.

Just as my mother had faith in me and my brothers, I have great faith in the rising generation of children today. You have been saved for these times. I am amazed to see so many wonderful, beautiful young children who have such great faith. You

children are the future of the Church, and you are being prepared for a great work. As you serve in faith, you will sow seeds of righteousness and harvest the blessings the Lord has prepared for you. ●



CHILDREN ALL OVER THE WORLD PRAY, SING PRIMARY SONGS, AND LEARN ABOUT THE GOSPEL—JUST LIKE YOU! THIS MONTH LET'S MEET OMAR SALGADO OF VALLE DE ANGELES, HONDURAS.

Birds and cats and dogs don't always get along very well. Usually one of them is chasing another.

But at nine-year-old Omar Salgado's house in Honduras, it's not unusual to see him with the family's bright green parakeet on his arm while the cat looks down from the roof or for the cat to pad quietly around the outdoor kitchen while the dog rests near the door. Everyone seems to get along.

Omar smiles as he puts the parakeet back in its cage so he can go feed the chickens. He's happy to help take care of his family's animals. Helping out doesn't just make his parents happy—it's one of Omar's secrets to getting along with others.



Omar's Key to

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS VALLE DE ANGELES, HONDURAS?

HONDURAS
Valle de Angeles •



Taking Care of Each Other

Everyone in the Salgado family gets a chance to help out. But being the oldest, Omar knows his parents expect him to help his younger brother and sister when they need it.

Honoring his parents and strengthening his family are important to Omar. The Salgados have to rely on each other because they don't have many neighbors. The closest house is at least a 10-minute walk away.

So even though he gets to see friends at school and at church on Sundays, Omar spends a lot of time with his six-year-old brother, Arnold, and four-year-old sister, Nathaly. Just like their animals, they get along pretty well. "We try not to fight," Omar says, because it's more fun to be friends.

Spending Time Together

When Omar, Arnold, and Nathaly are together, they can find plenty to do. The family likes to sing hymns together. Omar's favorite hymn is "Teach Me to Walk in the Light" (*Children's Songbook*, 177).

The trio play games a lot. One of their favorites is hide-and-seek, hiding from each other in and around their house and in the surrounding woods. Another favorite is tag. They chase each other all over the clearing around their house.

"I like to play with him," Arnold says of his older brother.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM C. OLSON; MAP DETAIL BY THOMAS S. CHILD; IMAGE OF EARTH © MOUNTAIN HIGH MAPS

Getting Along



Living in the Valley of Angels

While Arnold likes to play with Omar, Nathaly likes to draw with him.

Omar enjoys drawing and coloring with his colored pencils. Usually he will draw landscapes, mountains, and houses. It's no wonder. There are plenty of beautiful things to draw where he lives in the mountains near Valle de Angeles, a town known for its skilled artists. Even the name, which means "Valley of Angels," is beautiful.

The valleys and mountains that surround Omar's house are filled with beautiful trees and plants. In fact, Omar's family lives on a flower farm, where his dad takes care of flowers that will be sold because they're pretty.

Omar fills entire notebooks with his colorful drawings. And often Nathaly can be found coloring right beside him.

Learning to Be Good

Getting along and doing things together help strengthen Omar's family. So do going to church and reading scriptures together.

"I learn a lot at Primary," Omar says. "My teachers are good."

At Primary, Omar learns about Jesus, and he says learning about Jesus helps him know how to help his parents and be a good son.

Omar especially likes to read stories from the Book of Mormon. "I like Nephi," he says. His favorite stories are about the iron rod and Nephi building the ship. Nephi was a good son, who always tried to strengthen his family.

"Nephi was obedient," Omar says as he finishes feeding the chickens. He puts the feed away and waits for a minute to see if there is anything else he can do before running off to play tag. "I try to be obedient too." ●



FAVORITES

Game: Freeze tag

Primary song: "Teach Me to Walk in the Light"

School subject: Art

Scripture character: Nephi



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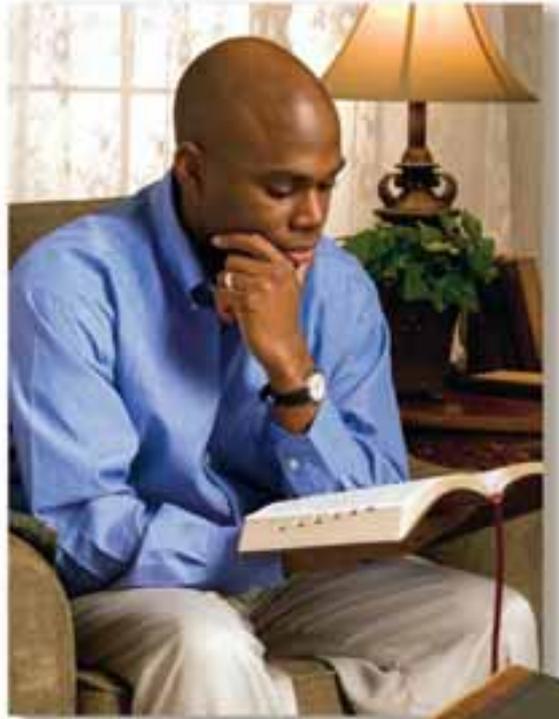
Little One, by Jay Bryant Ward

During Jesus Christ's visit to the people gathered in the land Bountiful in A.D. 34, He "took their little children, one by one, and blessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them.

"And when he had done this he wept again;

"And he spake unto the multitude, and said unto them: Behold your little ones"

(3 Nephi 17:21–23).



The Lord commands us to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118). This is one of more than 140 scriptural references to learning. How can we make the most of our opportunities to learn? See “The Power of Diligent Learning,” p. 16.