

## THE BOOK THAT SAVED MY LIFE

Name withheld



My family and I joined the Church when I was 12. At the time, I had no idea of the magnitude of that gift. I didn't even know if the Church was true, but my father and mother were impressed with the message the missionaries carried. I liked the missionaries too but didn't fully understand what they were saying. Eventually they invited us to be baptized, and my family decided we would join as a family or not at all. I agreed and was baptized without ever being converted.

I attended church and seminary, but my family later fell away. I had friends at church and went to seminary and Mutual to be with them. I didn't care about the gospel or the teachings and thought church was generally boring. My life grew troubled as I began to engage in activities such as shoplifting and vandalism. My father became abusive, and I thought about suicide.

However, suicide was never an option. I couldn't do that to my mother, whom I loved deeply. So I was left to find an answer. I looked around and saw my friends from church. The one thing they had that I didn't was a testimony. So at the age of 16, four years after my baptism, I sat down to read the Book of Mormon for the first time.

It was difficult, and it took me nearly two years. As I read in 3 Nephi about the Savior's visit to the Nephites after His Resurrection, where He blesses their children and angels descend from heaven and encircle them, it was as though I stood among the Nephites and saw with my own eyes that miraculous

event. The Holy Ghost bore witness of that great moment.

I could not read any more, as my eyes blurred with tears. When I regained my composure, I continued reading. A few more weeks passed, and I finished the book, knelt, and prayed to know if it was true. But I got no answer.

Days passed with me kneeling regularly and pleading to know if the book was true, if the Church was true, but still I got no answer. Despairing, weeks after I'd finished reading, I knelt one more time and asked, "Heavenly Father, is the Book of Mormon true?" The answer that came was not what I expected: "I have already told you. You know it is."

I had gained my testimony weeks before, when I read about Christ blessing the children. I knew that this Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is the kingdom of God on earth, restored by a prophet and led by a prophet, as in days of old.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Book of Mormon saved my life, but it would be more accurate to say the restored gospel saved me and continues to renew me and nourish me each day. It is my most precious possession. ■

### YOU CAN KNOW FOR YOURSELF

Whether you already have a testimony of the Book of Mormon or you want to gain that witness for yourself, reading and praying about the Book of Mormon will deepen your conversion.

The Book of Mormon helps all of us draw closer to Jesus Christ. The Book of Mormon will help you know that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is God's true Church on the earth. Open your heart as you open its pages, and you will see how your life can change for the better.