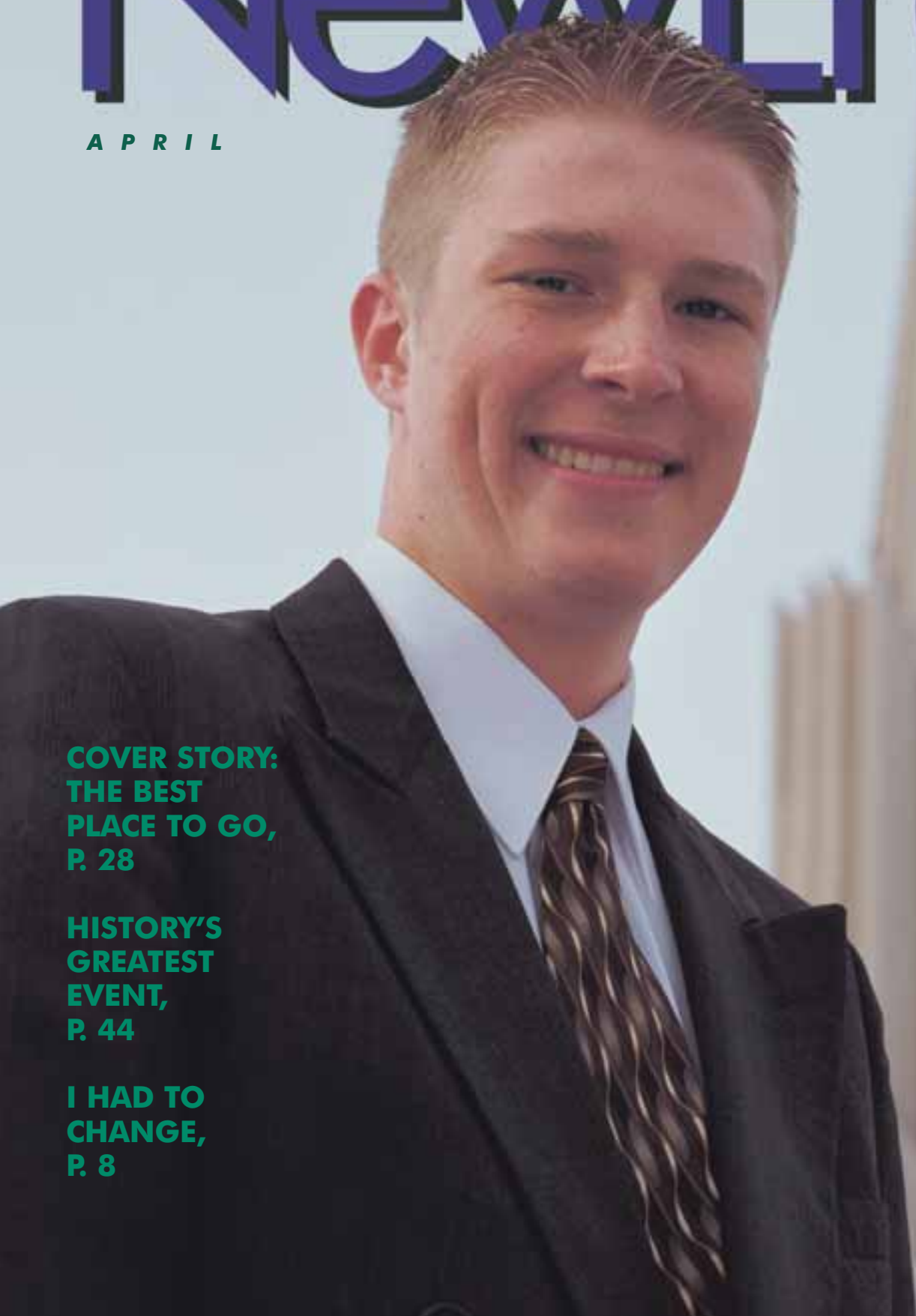


THE New Era

A P R I L

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**COVER STORY:
THE BEST
PLACE TO GO,
P. 28**

**HISTORY'S
GREATEST
EVENT,
P. 44**

**I HAD TO
CHANGE,
P. 8**

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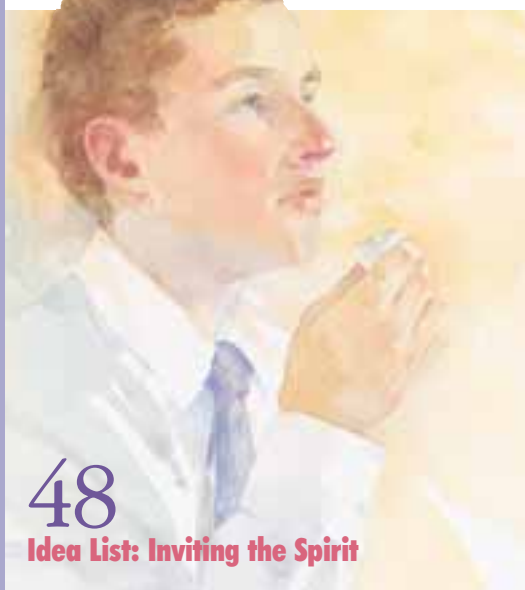
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the Draper Utah Sixth
Ward attends the Jordan
River temple regularly.
See "Blessings of the
Temple" on p. 28.

Cover photography:
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Christina Smith (back)

Making
the
temple
part of a teenager's
life brings bless-
ings. See "Blessings
of the Temple" on
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PROMISE OF *Peace*

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY



It is the Lord who has said that if we keep the commandments “the Holy Ghost shall be [our] constant companion” (D&C 121:46) to buoy us up, to teach us, lead us, comfort us, and sustain us.

Personal Peace and Freedom

I recall a very troubling conversation I had years ago with a young man in a South American airport, where we were both delayed by late planes.

His hair was long and his face bearded, his glasses large and round. Sandals were on his feet, and his clothing such as to give the appearance of total indifference to any standard of style.

He was earnest and evidently sincere. He was educated and thoughtful, a graduate of a great North American university. Without employment and sustained by his father, he was traveling through South America.

What was he after in life? I asked. “Peace—and freedom” was his immediate response. Did he use drugs? Yes, they were one of his means to obtain the peace and freedom he sought. Discussion of drugs led to discussion of morals. He talked matter-of-factly about the new morality that gave so much more freedom than any previous generation had ever known.

He had learned in our opening introductions that I was a churchman; and he let me

know, in something of a condescending way, that the morality of my generation was a joke. Then with earnestness he asked how I could honestly defend personal virtue and moral chastity. I shocked him a little when I declared that his freedom was a delusion, that his peace was a fraud, and that I would tell him why. . . .

Can there be peace in the heart of any person, can there be freedom in the life of one who has been left only misery as the bitter fruit of indulgence?

Can anything be more false or dishonest than gratification of passion without acceptance of responsibility? . . .

No family can have peace, no life can be free from the storms of adversity unless that family and that home are built on foundations of morality, fidelity, and mutual respect. There cannot be peace where there is not trust; there cannot be freedom where there is not loyalty. The warm sunlight of love will not rise out of a swamp of immorality. . . .

Is there a valid case for virtue in our world? It is the only way to freedom from regret. The peace of conscience which flows





Do you have problems and concerns and worries? Do you want for peace in your heart and an opportunity to commune with the Lord and meditate upon His way? Go to the house of the Lord.

therefrom is the only personal peace that is not counterfeit.¹

Peace and War

We are people of peace. We are followers of the Christ who was and is the Prince of Peace. But there are times when we must stand up for right and decency, for freedom and civilization, just as Moroni rallied his people in his day to the defense of their wives, their children, and the cause of liberty (see Alma 48:10). . . .

We must do our duty, whatever that duty might be. Peace may be denied for a season. Some of our liberties may be curtailed. We may be inconvenienced. We may even be called on to suffer in one way or another. But God our Eternal Father will watch over this nation and all . . . who look to Him. He has declared, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psalms 33:12). Our safety lies in repentance. Our strength comes of obedience to the commandments of God. . . .

Are these perilous times? They are. But there is no need to fear. We can have peace in our hearts and peace in our homes. We can be an influence for good in this world, every one of us.²

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only element that will destroy the hatred that exists among people. If they will bring this gospel into their lives and recognize the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man and the effects of the Atonement of Christ, there will be a far greater measure of peace in the world. We will not have peace until that happens more generally. That is why you and I are here, brothers and sisters. That is the objective of our work—to teach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and touch the hearts of people so that they can look upon one another as brothers and sisters, as children of our Father in Heaven.³

Peace and Death

The pain of death is swallowed up in the peace of eternal life. . . .

Whenever the cold hand of death strikes, there shines through the gloom and the darkness of that hour the triumphant figure of the Lord Jesus Christ, He, the Son of God, who by His matchless and eternal power overcame death. He is the Redeemer of the world. He gave His life for each of us. He took it up again and became the firstfruits of them that slept. He, as King of kings, stands triumphant above all other kings. He, as the Omnipotent One, stands above all rulers. He is our comfort, our only true comfort, when the dark shroud of earthly night closes about us as the spirit departs the human form.

Towering above all mankind stands Jesus the Christ, the King of glory, the unblemished Messiah, the Lord Emmanuel. In the hour of deepest sorrow we draw hope and peace and certitude from the words of the angel that Easter morning, “He is not here: for he is risen, as he said” (Matthew 28:6). We draw strength from the words of Paul, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ . . . all [are] made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). . . .⁴

Peace and the Temple

Take advantage of the blessings of the house of the Lord. What a privilege. Every man or woman who goes to the temple comes out of that building a better man or woman than he or she was when entering into it. That’s something that’s remarkable that happens with all of us. Is life filled with cares for you? Do you have problems and concerns and worries? Do you want for peace in your heart and an opportunity to commune with the Lord and meditate upon His way? Go to the house of the Lord and there feel of His Spirit and commune with Him and you will know a peace that you will

find nowhere else. Take advantage of it. What a great and wonderful blessing it is.⁵

Peace and the Holy Spirit

While there may be thorns and disappointments, while



there may be heartache, even heartbreak, there can be peace and comfort and strength from the Lord for those who follow Him. For it is the Lord Himself who has said:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:28–29).

It is the Lord who has said that if we keep the commandments “the Holy Ghost shall be [our] constant companion” (D&C 121:46) to buoy us up, to teach us, lead us, comfort us, and sustain us. To obtain this companionship, we need to ask for it, to live for it, to be loyal to the Lord.

I think Mormon knew very well from his own experience the truth of his words that the “Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God” (Moroni 8:26). Though we may sometimes be alone while among those of the world, we need not be lonely, for the Lord has given us the Holy Ghost to be our companion to walk with us. . . .

Though discipleship with the Lord requires times of standing humbly and courageously apart, the Lord will not forsake us. He also gives us the association of others who can edify and strengthen us as we go about our work of blessing others in the world. And if we are prayerful and loyal to Him and His commandments, the Lord’s promise can be applicable to us: “I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up” (D&C 84:88).

This is a promise from the Lord. I believe it. I bear testimony to you of its truth. May the Lord bless all who step out of the darkness of the world into the light of the everlasting gospel. May He bless us all to walk humbly and courageously and to know in our hearts that peace which comes from squaring one’s life with principle.⁶ **NE**

NOTES

1. From *Ensign*, Aug. 1989, 2, 5–6.
2. From *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 72, 74.
3. From *Ensign*, Apr. 1996, 73.
4. From *Ensign*, May 1996, 67.
5. From *Ensign*, Apr. 1996, 72.
6. From *Ensign*, Sept. 2001, 5.



The shrill cry of a car's horn broke into my thoughts. I had been sitting in my car at the stop sign for several minutes crying. I slowly pulled to the side of the road. The car behind me drove by, and I was again by myself as tears blurred my vision.

The process of repentance had never been more real to me. An hour had passed since I had gone to see the bishop. I had cried as I listened to his counsel and came to realize that I had offended the Lord and was not worthy to bless or pass the sacrament or attend the temple.

This scared me. What would the people in the ward think when they did not see me blessing the sacrament? At that moment, it did not really seem to matter. I was ready to fall at the Lord's feet. Or so I thought.

I crept in the front door more than an hour after I should have been home from the interview. I tried to decide how to tell my

parents why I was late. As I sat in the dark, I tried to hold in my tears. Then I felt an arm on my shoulder. I looked through the haze of tears and saw my mom's gentle eyes. She said, "Have you been gone this entire time?"

"Yes," I said, as I told her the bishop and I had a lot to talk about. I hid my face.

She wrapped her arm around me in a gentle embrace. "No matter what you have done, your father and I will always love you," she said.

The tears rained into my hands. She left, and for the first time I think I truly prayed from my heart.

For the next few days, I felt like I could do no wrong. The bishop's words seemed easy to follow, and the road back didn't seem hard. But then I started to hang out with my old friends again, and slowly Satan's wedge began to pry at me. I started to wonder why things were so hard. I was angry with the Lord and questioned why things couldn't be easier.

I WAS THE 100th Sheep

NAME WITHHELD

*I was lost and angry.
But just like in the parable of the lost sheep, the Lord rescued me.*

I had to leave behind my old friends and way of life. I had to turn to the scriptures and prayer and find new friends with high standards. I finally felt forgiven.

I was feeling guilty and haunted by the things I had done, and I wasn't going to let myself forget them. I started to fall into the same traps again. I thought I had cast my troubles upon the Lord, and He was to take care of the rest. But things didn't seem any better, and I was ready to give up. I hadn't realized yet that I had not really thrown myself at the Lord's feet. I was being stubborn. I was a lost sheep, unwilling to cry for help. I was still trying to free myself from Satan's snare all alone.

That all began to change a few weeks later when my family and I moved. I was forced to do what I should have done in the first place. I left my old friends and life behind. In my new home no one knew me, and they saw me for what I could be.

As I made new friends with high standards, I tried to convince them that I was a lost cause and that they should give up on me. But they wouldn't. They showed the same love my parents had shown. Their love finally led me to believe that, someday perhaps, I could love myself too.

I turned to the scriptures and to prayer. I prayed

every night with tears in my eyes and with pain in my heart. Often I felt hopeless, but my prayers and my scripture reading uplifted me. Slowly, I began to regain my self-respect. It was a long and difficult process. Along the way I even discovered the joy of writing in a journal, which helped me focus my thoughts and say more sincere prayers.

One night while reading the scriptures, I felt something no words can describe. I found the peace that I had longed for as forgiveness came. The Lord healed my soul. I felt His love wrap around me. I felt free from my sins. I felt forgiven.

Days later I read Doctrine and Covenants 6:22–23: “If you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things.

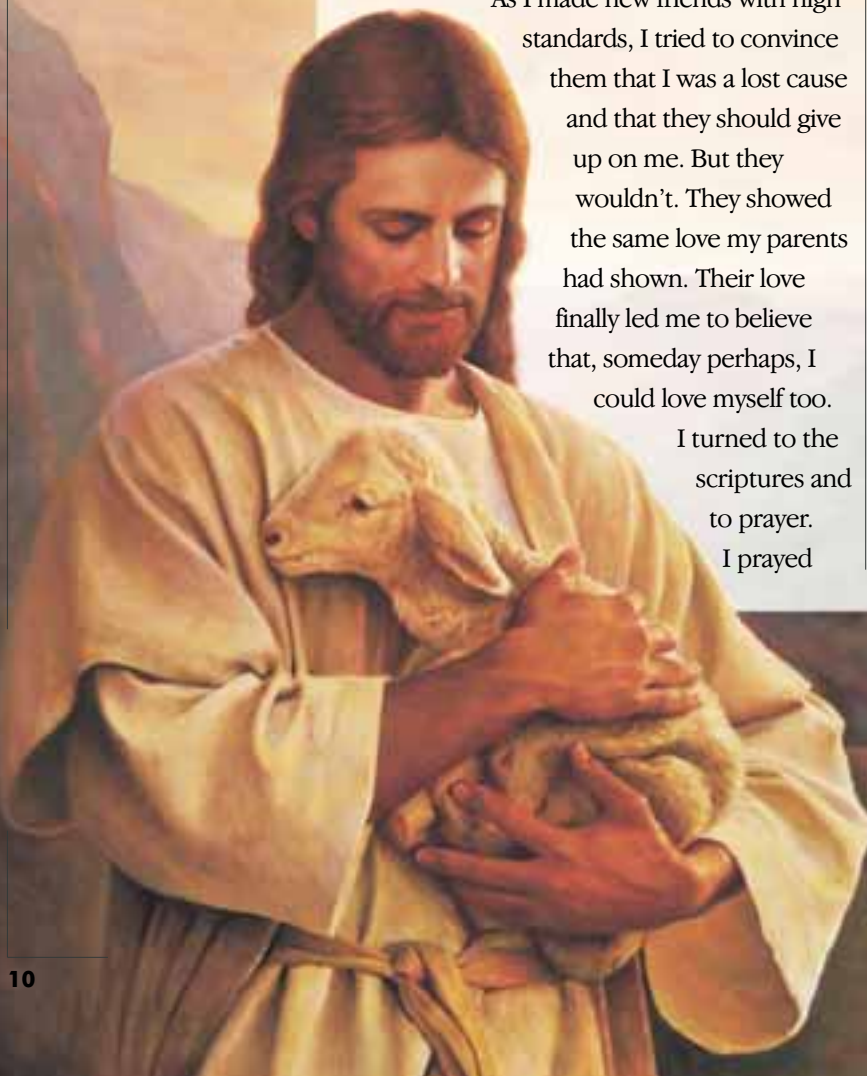
“Did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God?”

The feeling of peace I had truly was from the Lord. He left the “ninety and nine” to rescue me (Matthew 18:12). **NE**

EXTRA! EXTRA!

If you want to learn more about repentance, these scriptures have some interesting insights: Proverbs 28:13; Alma 34:30–33; 3 Nephi 9:20–22; D&C 18:10–13; 58:42–43.

In site: Read “You Can’t Pet a Rattlesnake” (*New Era*, May 2002) by Elder David E. Sorensen and “Q&A: How can I find courage to confess to the bishop?” (*New Era*, Oct. 1989) at www.lds.org in the Gospel Library.



ON BENDED KNEE

Humbly ♩ = 100-112

Words and music by
Kevin R. Olson

1. In prayer and deep sin - cer - i - ty, I
2. In for - mer times, a faith - ful youth Ap -
3. And Je - sus in Geth - sem - a - ne Proved
4. He gent - ly heals my ach - ing heart. My

come a - gain on ben - ded knee. This sweet com -
pealed to God for light and truth. Where dark - ness
His e - ter - nal love for me. A - ton - ing
lone - li - ness and fear de - part. The peace the

mun - ion makes me whole, Brings so - lace to my
and des - pair had been plain and pre - cious
drops of blood were shed and my soul from
Ho - ly Spir - it gives Is tes - ti - mo - ny

trou - bled soul. I dai - ly learn hu - mi - li -
truth a - gain. Thus Jo - seph's prayer a - midst the
sin and death. "Thy will be done," o - be - dient -
that He lives. I feel my Fa - ther's love for

ty In fer - vent prayer, on ben - ded knee.
trees Was an - swered while on ben - ded knee.
ly The Sa - vior prayed on ben - ded knee.
me When I'm in prayer on ben - ded knee.

*"Humble
yourselves, and
continue in prayer
unto him. . . .*

*"Cry unto him in
your houses, yea,
over all your
household, both
morning, mid-day,
and evening. . . .*

*"But this is not all;
ye must pour out
your souls in your
closets, and your
secret places, and
in your wilderness"
(Alma 34:19, 21, 26).*





The MIRACLE of the Priesthood

The Aaronic Priesthood was restored 175 years ago. To help commemorate the occasion, the Church magazines asked the Presiding Bishopric to share some thoughts about the Aaronic Priesthood and how it blesses the lives of youth and all Church members.

What are some of your thoughts and feelings about the spread of the Aaronic Priesthood across the world since it was restored on 15 May 1829?

Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop:

I would have enjoyed being present when the priesthood was restored. It would have been exciting to be across the Susquehanna River, sitting by a bush, watching John the Baptist ordain the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. (See D&C 13.)

As exciting as that would have been, I have come to understand that what has happened



The Presiding Bishopric:
Bishop H. David Burton (center) and his counselors, Bishop Richard C. Edgley (left) and Bishop Keith B. McMullin.

since then has been a miracle itself. First, adult brethren received the priesthood to organize the Church. Then over time, the priesthood was extended to youth. Now every worthy young man has the opportunity to hold the Aaronic Priesthood.

The real blessing of the priesthood, particularly the Aaronic Priesthood, is the preparation so many young men have received to serve missions, to go to the temple, and to provide for families. It's exciting to see what 175 years have produced.

What are some of the most significant accomplishments of the Aaronic Priesthood in this dispensation?

Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second

Counselor: The normal work of the Aaronic Priesthood is most significant, because it is inspiring and meaningful in the lives of Church members. The Aaronic Priesthood holds "the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel; Which gospel is the gospel of repentance and of baptism" (D&C 84:26–27).

Young priesthood holders pass the sacrament to offer every member an opportunity to commune with the Holy Spirit in the sacred covenants of the gospel.

The Aaronic Priesthood administers temporal affairs. That includes baptism, the sacrament, and caring for people who are in distress. Young priesthood holders do baptisms for the dead so those people can enjoy the blessings of the gospel. They pass the sacrament to offer every member an opportunity to commune with the Holy Spirit in the sacred covenants of the gospel. They greet members when they come to church, and they go home teaching with their Melchizedek Priesthood companions.

Do Aaronic Priesthood functions differ in different areas of the world?

Bishop Burton: It doesn't matter if you're a deacon, teacher, or priest in the Salt Lake Valley or in the Philippines. You have the same authority and the same basic responsibilities.

Bishop McMullin: The power is the same wherever it is. Even if there is only one youth Aaronic Priesthood bearer in an entire ward or branch, that Aaronic Priesthood bearer can do his duty.

Why are priesthood holders asked to collect fast offerings, pass the sacrament, and perform other duties?

Bishop Richard C. Edgley, First Counselor: The Lord has asked young men to do these duties. The priesthood represents an enormous trust from Him.

Bishop McMullin: When an Aaronic Priesthood bearer's hand is extended with a sacrament tray, he isn't just passing the sacrament. He is introducing into the lives of members the emblems of the holy Atonement and lifting the members heavenward. When he has his hand out with a fast-offering envelope in it, he is collecting the fast offering with an invitation extended by the Savior Himself to come

unto Him and help others by giving.

The priesthood is everlasting; it will forever bless Heavenly Father's children and lift them in ways only the priesthood can.

Why is the Aaronic Priesthood called "the lesser priesthood"? What does it mean that it is part of the preparatory gospel? (See D&C 84:26; 107:14, 20.)

Bishop Burton: What if the Aaronic Priesthood didn't exist, and we progressed through our youthful years and at age 19 all of a sudden we received the Melchizedek Priesthood and were called on a mission? How would missionaries feel? What preparation would they have?

The preparatory gospel takes on a different meaning when you think what it would be like if youth didn't have the privilege of participating in the Aaronic Priesthood. I believe our missionaries are more qualified because of their experience in the Aaronic Priesthood.

Bishop Edgley: It is a tremendous thing to think about the thousands of full-time missionaries who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood and were prepared with the preparatory priesthood. The Aaronic Priesthood is the beginning of the most holy calling in the priesthood—the Melchizedek Priesthood.

When I was baptized into the Church, I wasn't baptized by my father; I was baptized by a priest. When I was a priest, I had the blessing to baptize my sister. And one of the great experiences I had as a father was when my son, who was a priest, ordained his brother to be a teacher.

I believe it is important for our young Aaronic Priesthood bearers to understand the spiritual powers that accompany this priesthood. I also feel that when it is appropriate it is desirable to have priests of the

Aaronic Priesthood participate in ordinances when they are authorized to do so.

Bishop McMullin: The Aaronic Priesthood functions under the direction of the Melchizedek Priesthood. It prepares not only the bearer but also the people of the Church for the exalting blessings that come through the higher priesthood. Among the requirements for salvation are faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and baptism. Everyone has to receive the sacrament. Everyone needs those ordinances, which prepare us for other opportunities.

Why are Aaronic Priesthood holders organized in quorums?

Bishop Burton: When one becomes a deacon, he not only receives the priesthood but also becomes a member of a quorum. What power there is in a quorum!

I have many pleasant memories of my Aaronic Priesthood years. That was a glorious time. When I was a priest, my bishop always insisted that all members of the priests quorum participate in ordinations of new priests in the ward. That was probably the first time I really realized what a quorum was all about. I really felt the Spirit when I realized we were participating in a sacred ordinance.

Bishop Edgley: An experience I had with my Aaronic Priesthood quorum was on a Scout outing. We were sitting around a fire with my wonderful Scoutmaster, who was also the assistant deacons quorum adviser. A couple of guys who were not active in the Church were looking at some pornographic material.

The Scoutmaster stopped as he was talking to the Scouts and asked if he could have the magazine. He closed it and then told us how hurt he was, how troubled he was. Then he testified of the power of the priesthood when we honor it. He handed the magazine back, and that young man threw it in the fire.

That Scoutmaster taught us by the power of the Spirit about the priesthood. Of all the lessons I've had in quorums and chapels, I am still impressed by that experience.

What advice do you have for Aaronic Priesthood holders?

Bishop McMullin: Read section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants about the duties of deacons, teachers, and priests. And then ask yourself, "How does this apply to me?"

Bishop Edgley: The Lord gives a remarkable promise to those who hold the priesthood. It is called the oath and covenant of the priesthood and is explained in section 84 of the

Doctrine and Covenants:

"For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit. . . .

"They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

"And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord;

"For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;

"And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;

"And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.

"And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

"Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved" (vv. 33–40).

The priesthood means more than being a deacon, teacher, or priest. It is God's power delegated to man. Through faithfulness, one can obtain the fulness of that power. **NE**



Q & A

“How can I feel peace with so many frightening things happening in the world and even in my own school?”

NEW ERA

We live in a world full of fear and frightening events. But feeling peace inside is possible even if everything around us is chaos. Jesus Christ offers each of us the same peace He promised His Apostles: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

There are a lot of things we can do to help bring peace into our lives—pray, study the scriptures, listen to uplifting music, go to church and seminary or institute, attend the temple. But it really all centers on one thing: “The price of peace is righteousness,” said President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 703). Or as President Gordon B. Hinckley has said, “You will find peace and happiness if you will live the gospel” (“Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 6).

Feeling peace inside is possible even during times of adversity.

We can feel peace when we keep covenants and commandments.

Although we will be tested and bad things will happen, we can have the calm assurance that God is watching over us.

Peace comes through the Holy Ghost, so we must try to be worthy of His companionship.

Repentance can free us from sin and guilt and restore peace to our souls.

That doesn’t mean we have to be perfect to have peace. But we have to be trying our best to choose the right and to get up every time we fall down.

Why does having the Lord’s peace in our hearts depend upon our righteousness? One reason is that we cannot do wrong and feel right. Another reason is that the peace Jesus offers us comes through the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and we must be living worthy of the Spirit’s companionship. If we have sinned, guilt will keep us from feeling the Lord’s peace. But through repentance we can become free from guilt and sin and be eligible for the companionship of the Holy Ghost again.

It is important to know that Jesus Christ’s promise of peace does not guarantee a life without hardships. All of us will be tested, since that is why we are here. Bad things sometimes happen to us or to someone close to us. But we can still feel peace.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY. POSED BY MODELS

After suffering in Liberty Jail for months, the Prophet Joseph Smith received these words from God:

“My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

“And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high” (D&C 121:7–8).

Our trials may seem like they last longer than a small moment, but with God’s help we become stronger.

“It is my testimony that we are

facing difficult times,” said President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. “We must be courageously obedient. My witness is that we will be called upon to prove our spiritual stamina, for the days ahead will be filled with affliction and difficulty. But with the assuring comfort of a personal relationship with God, we will be given a calming courage” (“That We Might Know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1999, 5). **NE**

READERS



Modern revelation states, “Learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world,

and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23). We can find peace by living the gospel as taught by our Savior and our modern prophets.

Israel O. Velasco, 17, General Santos Fourth Ward, General Santos Philippines Stake

There have been conflicts in every period of history. But if we obey the commandments and principles of the gospel, the promises of the Lord will be fulfilled, and our souls will be filled with peace. We will be able to withstand difficult times without losing faith if we are diligent and endure to the end.

Carlos Freire, 16, Bolívar Ward,
Guayaquil Ecuador Garcia Moreno Stake

Since one of the fruits of the Spirit is peace, one of the things that helps me feel peace is to live a clean life so I can be guided by the Holy Ghost. I love to sing, and this brings me peace. Singing hymns or listening to arrangements of hymns calms me and helps me keep the Spirit.

Óscar Luciano Mackay López, 17, Las Colinas Branch,
San Isidro Panamá Stake



I feel peace by reading the scriptures, doing good things, and constantly praying to our Heavenly Father for guidance. He can always make things easier for us, especially

during these bad times.

Denise Talaboc, 13, Mati Second Branch,
Mati Philippines District

In spite of the challenges and atrocities that so often happen, something that has helped me find peace in my life is knowing that God exists, He has absolute power over everything, He is loving, and He knows each of us. If there is anything we need to fix in our lives, we must do it now so we can enjoy the complete peace the Spirit of the Lord can bring into our lives.

Raquel Iveth Hurtado, 17, Los Repartos Branch,
Leon Nicaragua District



"Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me" (D&C 19:23). This scripture tells us how we can find peace despite



"Are these perilous times? They are. But there is no need to fear.

We can have peace in our hearts and peace in our homes. We can be an influence for good in this world, every one of us.

"May the God of heaven, the Almighty, bless us, help us, as we walk our various ways in the uncertain days that lie ahead. May we look to Him with unfailing faith."

—President Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Times in Which We Live," *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 74.

all that goes on around us. I have applied this scripture to my own life and have found peace in my soul.

Natacha D. Lemire, 14, Laval Ward,
Montréal Québec Stake

It is not always easy to feel the peace of the Lord; after all, we are in a probationary period and are tested every day. But if we keep the commandments and live the gospel, we can have peace.

Bjoern T. Kuchel, 20, Langenhorn Ward,
Neumünster Germany Stake



It is possible to have peace and happiness even amidst so much adversity. We can withstand anything with our testimony as our shield. The knowledge that Jesus

is our Savior and God is our Father is an anchor in the storm of life. No adversity is greater than the happiness and peace that come to us when we have faith and a strong testimony.

Francielly Aparecidapósta, 19, Guarani Branch,
Belo Horizonte Brazil Stake

New Era and reader responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send your answer to the question below, along with your name, birth date, ward and stake (or branch and district), and a photograph to:

Q&A, New Era

50 East North Temple Street, Floor 24

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA

Or e-mail:

cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

Please respond by 15 May 2004.

QUESTION

"Some people have told me I have an inferiority complex, but as far as I can tell, I'm just inferior. Since I'm not as smart or good-looking or talented as everybody else, what can I do to gain confidence and feel better?"

NEW LIFE

A photograph of a small purple iris flower growing from a cracked, dry earth surface. The flower is in the center of the frame, with its green leaves and purple bud clearly visible. The ground is composed of large, irregular, light-brown cracked pieces of earth. In the background, there are several rounded, brown mountains under a clear blue sky. The entire image is framed by a thin blue border.

JESUS CHRIST'S ATONEMENT SAVES US FROM
THE WASTELAND OF PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL DEATH.
REPENT, AND FIND NEW LIFE IN HIM.
(See 2 Nephi 9:10–12.)

MAKING MONDAY



BY RYAN CARR
Church Magazines

Even the youngest members of the Maucotel family (opposite page), of the Kent Washington Stake, participate in home evening. The Maucotels like to share their musical talents during home evening, as Jordan (above) demonstrates.

Teens share ways to make time for family home evening each week—and enjoy it.

It's 7:00 P.M., and you're on problem number four of your math homework. The first three problems have taken 20 minutes. Your sister pokes her head in the room and says, "Come on. Family home evening's about to start." What do you do?

If you're Tracy Brook, 15, of the Ottawa Ontario Stake, you drop your pencil and go. She says, "When I have a lot of homework, at first I think, 'Oh, I don't have time for family home evening.' But then after family night is finished, I feel a lot better."

Why does Tracy feel this way? Because family home evening blesses her life. "It strengthens everyone's testimony," she says. "We get to understand more about the Church and the scriptures."

Tracy's brother, Carl, 17, finds other blessings in family home evening. "It's a good way

to catch up with my family during the week because I have a busy schedule," he says. "We read the scriptures as a family and experience special moments together. It brings the Lord's Spirit."

Their older sister, Lisa, 19, agrees: "Homework used to get in the way, but now I've realized it's not that big of a deal. I can handle a half hour less studying. Spiritual things and the time I spend with my family—those are the things I remember and appreciate most."

If you visited the Fifields of the Bismarck North Dakota Stake or the Maucotels of the Kent Washington Stake, you would hear similar comments from the teens in those families. They also do their best to have family home evening every week. These three families, like others that hold weekly family nights, have several things in common: (1) They make family home evening fun and involve everyone. (2) They make family home evening a priority. (3) They enjoy family home evening so much these

MEMORIES





THE BLESSINGS OF FAMILY HOME EVENING

When family home evening first started in 1915 as a formal program, the First Presidency promised youth blessings for joining in home evenings: "Faith will be developed in the hearts of the youth of Israel, and they will gain power to combat the evil influences and temptations which beset them" (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:339).

teens all plan on having family home evening with their own children.

Involve Everyone

These teens all used the same word to describe their family home evenings: *fun*. One reason they enjoy it so much is because they help home evenings succeed. They pray, share scriptures, teach lessons, and choose hymns, activities, and treats.

During lessons, they like hearing from their brothers and sisters. Sara Fifield, 14, says, “It’s fun to hear things that happened to them that have to do with that topic. Everyone feels like they can share their experiences because everyone listens.”

Her sister, Lisa, 19, tells about a time she learned from her siblings: “Once we were talking about personal revelation, and we were all sharing experiences of times we prayed and felt the Spirit. That was a neat family night because we shared experiences that we hadn’t heard before from everyone.”

Lisa Brook enjoys teaching: “My favorite thing now is sharing ideas from the scriptures, like a devotional. I find so many good scriptures to use. I make a mini-lesson out of it. My sisters also enjoy giving a lesson.”

Her sister Tracy likes how their lessons are active and visual. “When we were younger, we used to act out scripture stories with dolls,” she says. “Now we use pictures and movies.”

The Maucotels suggest another way to make family night enjoyable: relate the treat to the lesson. For instance, one Monday night they read some scriptures on patience and, at the same time, made homemade ice cream.

Fourteen-year-old Isaac taught the lesson, sharing scriptures on patience. He said that



making ice cream by hand takes patience. You have to put in some work while you wait for the results you want.

His parents and four siblings listened to Isaac while they shook their bags of ice cream. Then they dug in, eating the cold, creamy chocolate ice cream right out of the bag. (See sidebar: A Lesson on Patience.)

It’s obvious that the children in these families don’t leave it up to their parents to do everything for home evening. Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “The full burden of planning and preparing for family home evenings should not be left to parents alone. The most successful ones I have witnessed are when the youth of the family take an active part.”¹

Make Family Home Evening a Priority

These three families have family home evening every week, no matter what. If the children are busy with music practice, homework, or some other project, they take a break for family night.

Lisa Brook says, “I’ve noticed the importance of making time for it, rather than just trying to fit it in—really making it a priority over things. The family, in the big picture, is so important.”

Isaac Maucotel (above) shares a verse for his family’s home evening lesson. Scripture study is an important part of home evening for the Brook family (opposite page, top), of the Ottawa Ontario Stake, and for the Fifields (opposite page, bottom), of the Bismarck North Dakota Stake.

Lisa and Sara Fifiield (right), Jeanee and Jordan Maucotel (opposite page, top), and Carl Brook (opposite page, bottom) enjoy their families' Monday night activities.



President Gordon B. Hinckley also makes time for family home evening. In general conference he said, "There is nothing more important than your families. . . . The decision was made that Monday evening would be devoted to [family home evening]." President Hinckley appreciates invitations to community gatherings on Monday evenings, but he turns them down "with the explanation that I have reserved Monday as family home evening time. I earnestly hope that each of you will do the same."²

Enjoy the Blessings

The teens in these three families enjoy family night and have learned so much from it that they want to share its blessings with their future families. They say that peace, family unity, gospel-teaching skills, cooperation in the home, greater gospel knowledge, and improved communication skills come from holding family home evening.

Carl Brook says he loves "the feeling of having family home evening. I want my children to feel the same things I feel. It's a warmth that you can sense. It's a way to bond as a family and share a common goal and practice."

Jeanee Maucotel, 16, will have family home evening with her future family "because I'll love my children and want what's best for them. With my own family, I'll want them to have the kind of good experiences I had as a child."

Home evening blesses their lives while creating some good memories. These families laugh as they recall memorable lessons they've had and silly games they've played. The Maucotels, for instance, change their emergency-preparedness kits every six months. They eat the food stored in them and refill the kits with new snacks. One time, they had put a can of portable-stove fuel with the snacks. They laugh as they remember taking a few bites of the snacks, which tasted like fuel.

The greatest blessing is that family night brings these teens closer to their families and to the Lord. Jeanee Maucotel says, "By the time you start seminary, you'll be more familiar with the scriptures," she says. "Your testimony is already growing pretty well. Then you enter seminary, and it grows even more."

Lisa Fifiield says their lessons help her feel the Spirit, which lets her "know that whatever we are talking about is an important and very influential piece of my life. It's brought me closer to my Heavenly Father through my family."

These teens, from one side of North America to the other, are saying the same thing: if you make family home evening a priority, it can be a fun time to learn the gospel, be with your family, and bring peace into your home. **NE**

NOTES

1. "Therefore I Was Taught," *Ensign*, May 1994, 37.
2. "To Men of the Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 58.



A LESSON ON PATIENCE

The Maucotel family of the Kent Washington Stake shared this sweet idea for a family home evening lesson. Read the following scriptures on patience while making homemade ice cream.

Patience: Proverbs 14:29; Ecclesiastes 3:1; Romans 8:25; Mosiah 4:27; D&C 3:33–36; 10:4; 101:16.

Ice cream: Gather some sealable one-gallon-size plastic bags, sealable sandwich-size plastic bags, ice, salt, and spoons.

Combine the following ingredients in each sandwich bag: 1/3 cup whole or chocolate milk, one tablespoon sugar, 1/8 teaspoon vanilla. Seal the bags.

In each larger plastic bag, put three to four cups of ice and six tablespoons of salt. Add to that bag one or two smaller bags filled with the ice cream ingredients. Seal and shake for a few minutes until the ingredients are frozen. Enjoy.

*Now I understood
what my mother
had talked about
so often—I felt
completely at
peace, as if I
had come home.*

SAFE FROM THE STORM

BY GREG BURGOYNE

For as long as I can remember, every time my mother came back from the temple, she would tell us about the peace she felt there. Throughout my teenage years, we had visited the temple in Johannesburg, South Africa, to do baptisms. Finally the time came for me to receive my endowment just before I left to serve a mission.

We traveled 900 miles (1,400 km) that day to get to the temple, and my mother spent much of the journey telling me about her experiences there. She talked about the things she felt and of her closeness to Heavenly Father. By the time we arrived at the temple, it was getting dark. The sky's blue color faded into pink, then red, and finally black. The lights came on and lit up the temple's beautiful white spires. As we walked around the temple in the cold night air, the golden statue of the angel Moroni glistened under a spotlight. The temple grounds were quiet and restful, undisturbed by the buzz of the city.

During the endowment session, I marveled at the incredible beauty of the Creation and the amazing plan of salvation. It made me long to see my Heavenly Father again. Now I understood what my mother had talked about so often—I felt completely at peace, as if I had

come home. The session ended, and it was time to leave.

We were staying with my grandparents, and as we drove home with them, we saw that there had been a storm that evening while we were in the temple. I was amazed that I had not heard the thunder, rain, or wind while I was in the temple. In disbelief I stared through the car window at all the damage: electricity poles and trees had fallen down, road surfaces had been broken up or were flooded with water, and a few roofs had been blown off.

As I pondered the events of the evening, words came into my mind as the Spirit spoke to me: "Go to the temple often. It will be a refuge from the storm."

I have been to the temple several times since then, and every time I go, I leave behind the troubles and difficulties of this stormy world and take shelter in the peace and comfort of my Heavenly Father's love (see Isaiah 4:6; D&C 115:6). **NE**

Greg Burgoyne is a member of the Meadowridge Ward, Cape Town South Africa Stake.



BLESSINGS OF THE

Temple

"When I go with my family, it draws us closer together. It's the same when I go with my quorum. It's also a great testimony builder."

—Jonathan Ware, 16

BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

Lenae Crandall and her family didn't realize how much the temple blessed their lives until their mom died.

"You don't really think about being sealed until someone you love is gone," says Lenae, 17. "But it's okay my mom died, because we'll be together again, thanks to the temple."

Now Lenae, Brandallyn, Bethany, and Seth go to the Jordan River Utah Temple with their father almost every Friday—just like their mother did.

"After my mom died, we started doing baptisms for the dead," says Lenae. "It's nice. My mom taught us by example how going to the temple can bless your life."

The Crandalls aren't alone. While not everyone can go as often as the Crandalls, youth all over the world are discovering that preparing for the temple and attending regularly can change your life.

Waking up to Blessings

Jonathan Ware had been studying all night for four tests the next day. By 4:00 a.m. the 16-year-old was struggling to stay awake.

"Our quorum was meeting at 4:15 a.m. to do baptisms for the dead," he remembers. "I had to choose between trying to keep

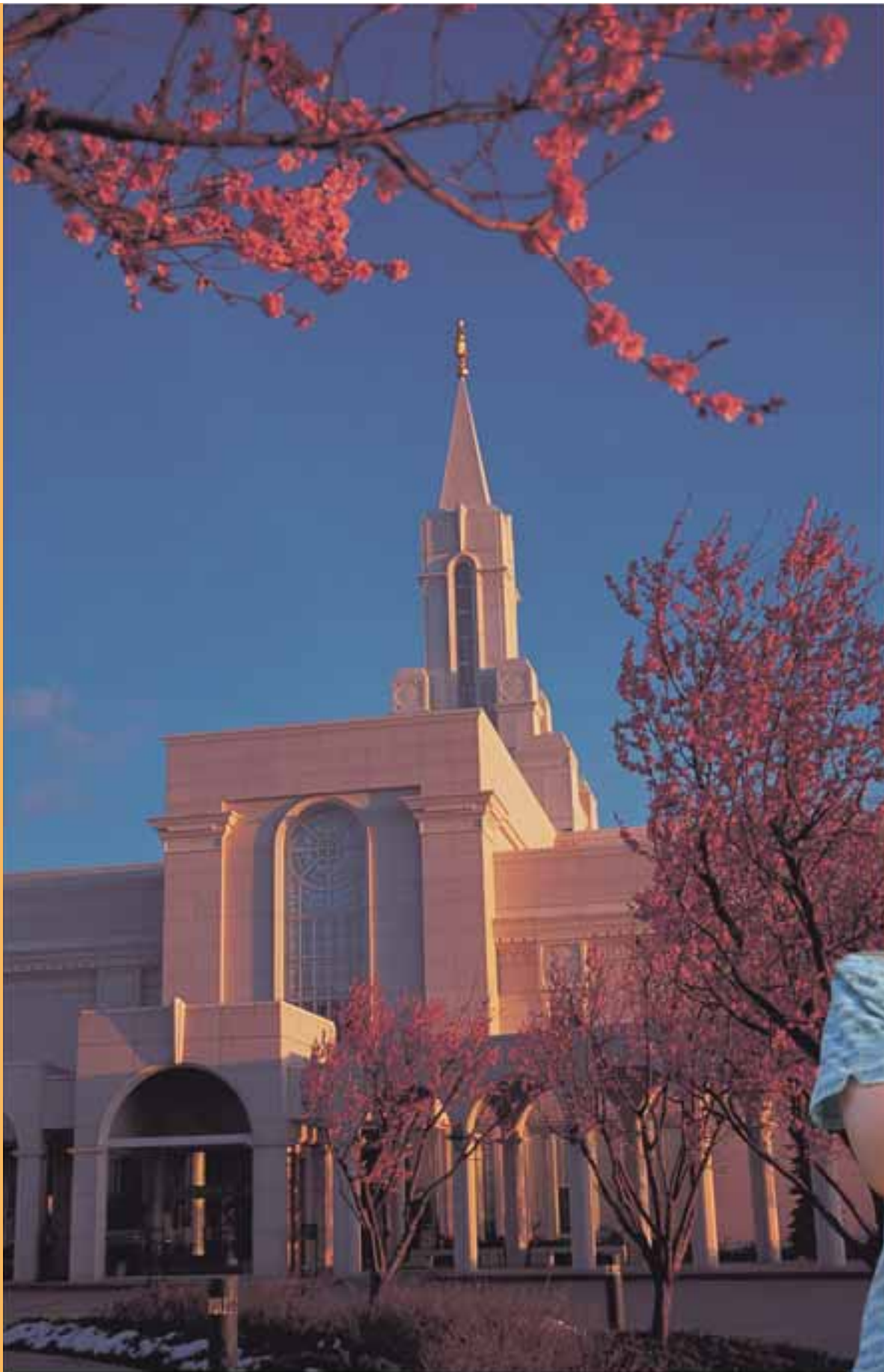
studying or going to the temple. I went to the temple."

And he passed his tests. "I knew I was being blessed for going."

Almost 10 years ago, the deacons in Jonathan's ward, the Draper Sixth Ward, Sandy Utah Hidden Valley Stake, started going to the temple twice a month before school. As those deacons got older, they continued the tradition until almost all of the 50-plus young men in the ward were performing baptisms for the dead sometime during every month.

So far, almost every one of them has served, or is preparing to serve, a full-time mission. And like Jonathan, all of them have stories about how they've been blessed by the temple.

"In one week," recalls Dave Nielsen, 19, "I contracted Bell's palsy, I blew out my knee, and two of my friends died. I was feeling really low." Dave decided to go to the temple. "It was like taking a breather from the trials of life," he says. "Doing temple work pulled me out of the dark feeling that had come over me. There's a power in the temple. It helps you see what's really important in life."



Bountiful Utah Temple

*"When you're worthy
of a recommend, you
have a better self-
image."*

—Lenae Crandall, 17



Billings Montana
Temple

*"My week goes a lot
better when I go to the
temple."*

—Bethany Crandall, 15



Peace of the Spirit

While the Crandalls and the young men of the Draper Sixth Ward have each had meaningful temple experiences, all of them agree there are specific blessings every young member of the Church can receive from going regularly. The blessings mentioned most often are how peaceful it is in the temple and how well they can feel the Holy Ghost.

"The Spirit hits you like a ton of bricks when you walk in," says Casey Hatch. "And you don't have to worry about blocking things out like you do at school. You don't have to worry

about what other people are wearing or the words they're using."

"It's calm," says Bethany Crandall, 15.

"There's no pressure. You feel free. You feel peace."

Why We Go

The teens named many other blessings as well (see accompanying photos and captions), from small blessings that brighten their day to blessings that have changed their lives. But they all recognize that receiving blessings isn't the most important reason to go to the temple.



"There are so many people unhappy with life. But at the temple everyone you see smiles and says good morning. It's such a positive place."

—Dave Nielsen, 19



The temple is a sacred place where we can serve the Lord, feel the Spirit, receive essential ordinances, and receive answers to our prayers. "A place where the Lord may come, it is the most holy of any place of worship on the earth. Only the home can compare with the temple in sacredness" (Bible Dictionary, "Temple," 781).

The Crandall family made a list of things that make the temple special. Applying these things to your home could help make it more special, too.

The people there are worthy. Are you living worthy of inviting the Spirit into your home? Are you helping your family members keep the commandments?

It's reverent. Are you helping provide a reverent atmosphere by avoiding arguments and turning down the volume?

People are serving others. Do you look for ways to help family members?

People are thinking good thoughts. What do you think about at home? Do you entertain temptations or kick them out as soon as they enter your head?

There's no foul or unkind language. What words do you use, and how do you use them?

You listen to hymns and other uplifting music. Would you be uncomfortable if the Lord looked through the music you listen to?

Everyone is dressed nicely and modestly. Do you dress appropriately at home as well as in public?

There is a lot of praying. Do you pray enough with your family and by yourself?

It's clean. Clutter and filth can keep you from feeling the Spirit. Do you help keep your home clean?



“There’s more love and peace at home when you can go to the temple.”

—Dan Clayton, 17

“You’re there to serve God and help people who weren’t able to be baptized on earth,” Ryan Shurtleff, 17, says. “It’s a gift that allows them to live with Heavenly Father.”

“It’s about the most important work on earth,” says Dan Nielsen, 19. “There are so many who haven’t received those blessings. What if a family member couldn’t be with you forever because you didn’t do the work for them?”

Focused on the Temple

Every teenager in the Church can do temple work and receive these blessings if they will prepare themselves and go worthily when the opportunity arises. But whether you can go frequently or not, just being prepared is one of the blessings.

“If you’re worthy to go to the temple, you know you’re on the right path,” says Dave Nielsen. “If you’re worthy of a recommend, you’re doing the right things and setting the right example. The temple keeps your life focused. It helps you realize what’s really important.”

“Being worthy to go to the temple keeps me from wandering,” says Brandallyn Crandall, 19. “When you’re doing what’s right, you know where you’re going. It gives life more meaning.”

Recommend: Reality Check

Part of making sure you’re worthy is interviewing with the bishop to receive a recommend. Many youth are nervous about talking with their bishops.

“I knew I was worthy and trying to live right,” Brandallyn says of her first recommend interview, “but I was still afraid he might see something I didn’t.”

Jonathan Ware says, “It’s like a reality check. It makes you ask yourself, ‘Am I okay?’ ”

But the bishop’s job isn’t to keep you out

of the temple; it’s to help you be able to go.

“He wasn’t as scary as I thought,” Brandallyn admits.

“I love going for my interview now,” Jonathan says. “It’s reassuring to know I’m on the right path. The great thing about a recommend is, as I walk through school, I know I have it. I know the Lord trusts me in His house.”

Taking It with You

Preparing to go to the temple doesn’t end with being worthy; you need to prepare yourself mentally and spiritually each time.

“You have to clear your mind of worldly things and focus on spiritual things,” Bethany says. (For more on preparing to do baptisms for the dead, see “Baptisms for the Dead: What to Know Before You Go” on page 34.)

The only bad part about going to the temple is having to leave.

“When you’re in the temple, there’s a totally different feeling from what’s in the halls at school,” says Ryan Shurtleff. “It’s a feeling you don’t want to let go.”

But because you can’t stay in the temple forever, learning to keep the Spirit with you can be just as important as preparing to feel it.

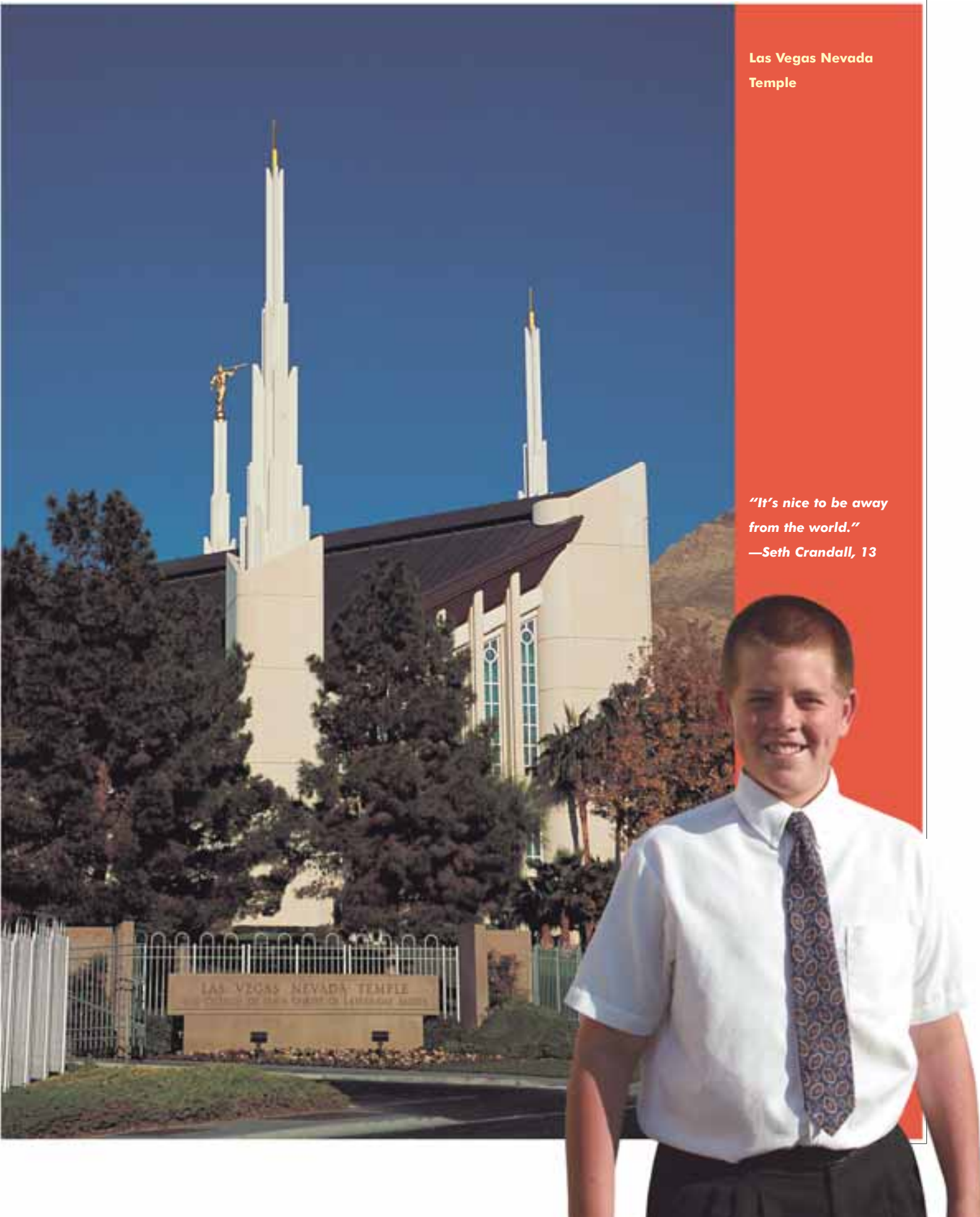
“If you want to feel the same outside the temple as you do inside, you should try to do the same things,” Brandallyn says. “Some people change the music they listen to on days they go to the temple. But if you have to stop listening to it before you go so you can feel the Spirit, doesn’t that mean when you go back to it the Spirit will leave? Why live a higher standard only on days you go to the temple? Our goal should be to live that way every day.”

It’s a challenging goal. Fortunately, one of the greatest temple blessings is that you’re always welcome back where you can feel that way again. **NE**

Las Vegas Nevada
Temple

*"It's nice to be away
from the world."*

—Seth Crandall, 13



BAPTISMS FOR THE DEAD: WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

“I’m going to the temple to do baptisms for the dead. What do I need to know?”

President Gordon B. Hinckley says temple work is a privilege, a responsibility, and a blessing both to you and the person for whom you do the work. Before you go to the house of the Lord, it is important to be spiritually and physically prepared. Sometimes anxiety arises not because we are unworthy to enter, but because we are unsure of *how* to enter. The following questions and answers might help ease some of your concerns.

Who can be baptized for the dead?

Any member of the Church who is at least 12 years old may be baptized for the dead. Young men must hold the priesthood. Most importantly, everyone who enters the house of the Lord must be worthy. You and your bishop or one of his counselors will determine your worthiness in an interview.

How do I get a recommend to do baptisms?

Youth who don’t hold a regular temple recommend can get a “limited-use recommend” to do baptisms for the dead. This recommend is obtained from the bishop, or one of his counselors, after completing a worthiness interview. If you’d like a recommend, schedule an interview with your bishop.

Can I go to the temple on my own to do baptisms for the dead?

Anyone with a temple recommend and adult supervision can participate in baptisms for the dead. However, most temples prefer that you make an appointment.

How do I make an appointment with the temple?

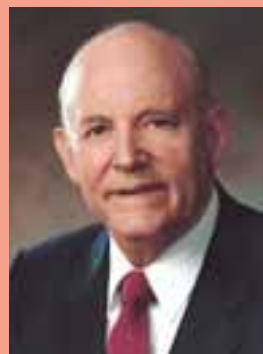
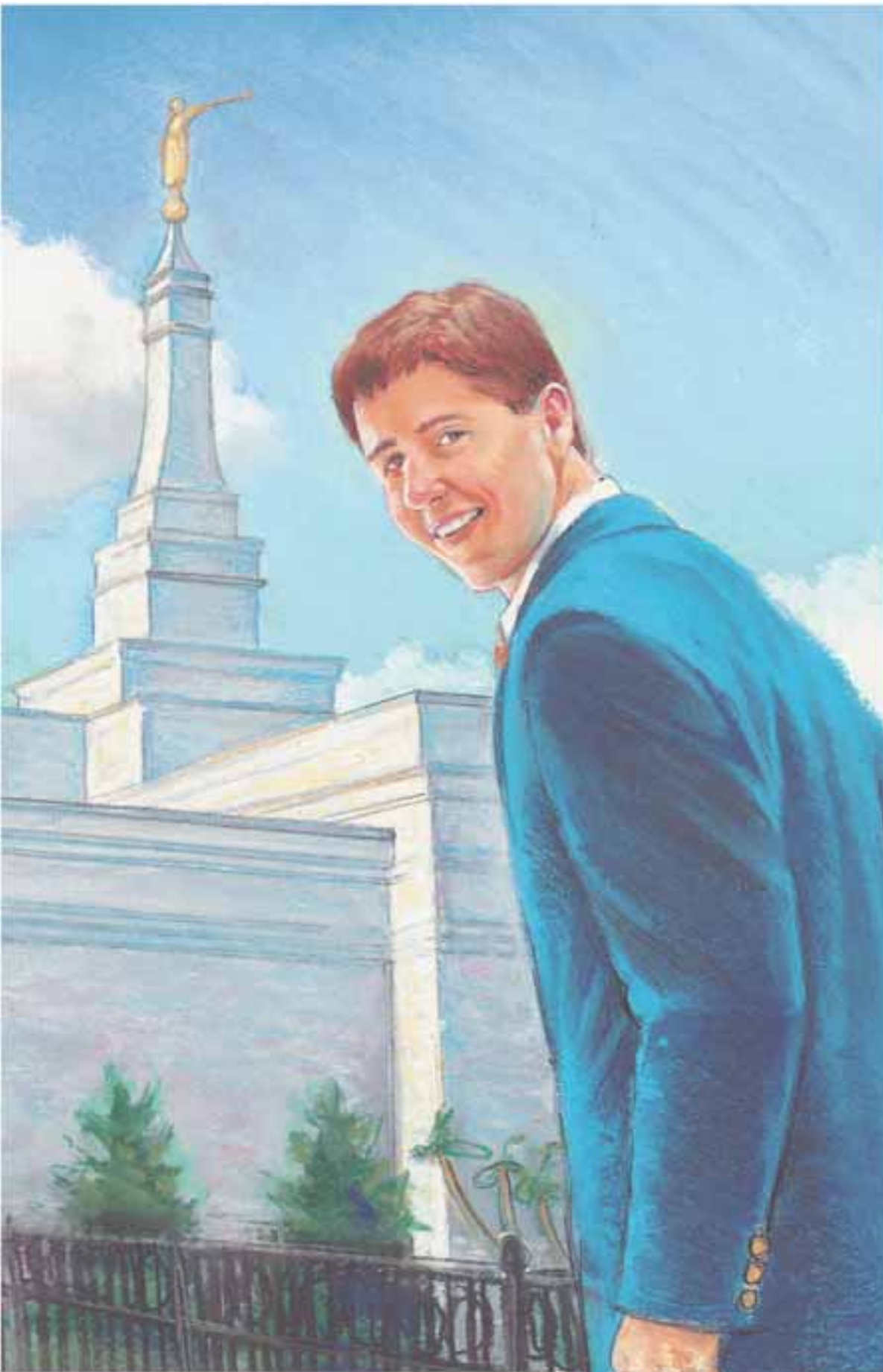
Before you go, call the temple you are planning to attend, and ask for the baptistry. Someone there can tell you whether or not you need to make an appointment. People who have been assigned, have made appointments, or have brought their own family names have precedence over those who have not.

Do I have to bring my own family names to the temple?

Often you will see others come to the temple with pink- or blue-colored cards with names on them. These are the names of those who have died and need baptism and other temple ordinances done for them. You are not required to bring your own names, but it is wonderful when you do. Often the temple has names of people you may be baptized for that others have submitted. It is best to call ahead to find out if you need to bring your own names.

What if I bring my own names?

When you bring your own names to the temple, the order in which you are baptized and confirmed is different. First you are baptized, then you are confirmed. This is because you are doing both ordinances for the same person and must do them in that order. This also means that you will need to ask for two sets of baptismal clothing so that you have dry, white clothes to be confirmed in. When you use names provided by the temple, you are first confirmed for one group of people, then baptized for another. In this case you will only need one set of baptismal clothing.



GO OFTEN

“We hope that you, as young members of the Church, will go often to the temple to perform baptisms for the dead. When the time comes for you to go on a mission or be married, we pray that you will go to the temple worthily and feel the beautiful spiritual atmosphere that is present in the temple.”

—President
Howard W.
Hunter
(1907–95),
“Your Temple
Recommend,”
New Era, April
1995, 6.



THE BLESSING YOU CAN GIVE

"What a marvelous thing that is that you, an ordinary boy or girl, can stand in the place of some great man or woman who at one time lived upon the earth but who is now powerless to move forward without the blessing that you can give to him or her. . . . There is no greater blessing that you can have than to stand as a proxy in a great service to those who have gone beyond. And it will be your privilege and your opportunity and your responsibility to live worthy to go to the temple of the Lord and there be baptized in behalf of someone else."

—President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Inspirational Thoughts," *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 4.

What should I take with me when I go to the temple?

You should bring a change of white underclothing with you, because you will get wet. You should also make sure that the underclothing you are baptized in is white. Some temples provide underclothing, but it's always a good idea to bring your own. It is also useful to bring something that you can place your wet clothes in once you leave, like a plastic bag. Since all temples provide the baptismal clothing and a towel, you do not have to bring these items with you.

What should I wear?

If the Lord invited you to His home, what would you wear? Would you go with messy hair, a short skirt, or unclean feet? Going to the temple is an invitation into the Lord's house. You should dress in modest, clean, conservative clothing, like you're going to sacrament meeting.

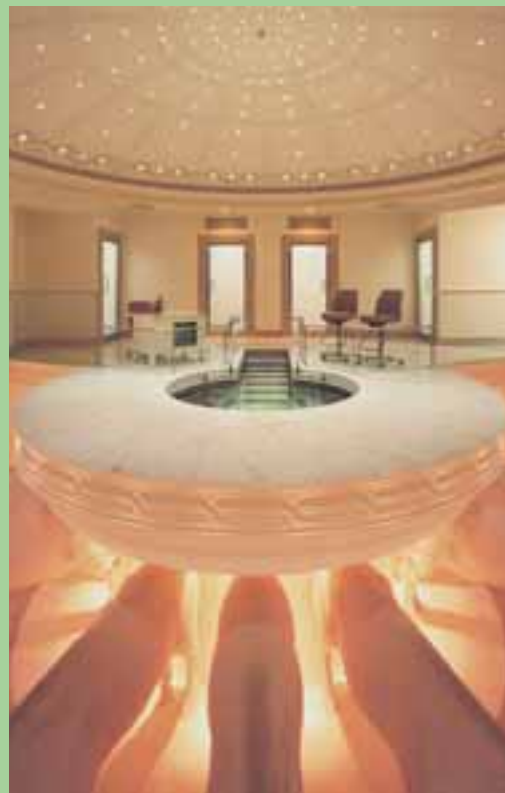
Is wearing jewelry or nail polish okay?

It is a good idea to wear as little jewelry as possible, since most of it needs to be taken off when you are baptized. You should not wear anything that would distract from the spirit of the temple by drawing attention to you.

There is no official policy on wearing nail polish, and the temple workers won't make you leave if you do. But if your nail polish is distracting and detracts from the Spirit, then go without it.

If I have long hair, what should I do?

It is best for young women to pull their hair back, so all of it will be immersed in the water when they are baptized. Some temples provide white hair ties. If possible, bring your own just in case.



How should I prepare while on my way to the temple?

Treating the time you are going to the temple as if it were the Sabbath is a wise idea. Listen to uplifting music, read scriptures alone or with your group, sing hymns, or pray. Do whatever will help you feel the Spirit.

What should I do while I'm waiting to be confirmed and baptized?

The baptistry provides scriptures and Church magazines for you to read. You can also pray, ponder, or do some self-evaluation. Observe the baptisms and think about those you are going to be baptized for. Enjoy the peace of the temple, and ponder its meaning as you are taken out of the world for a couple hours. If you must speak, speak softly.

How will I know where to go and what to do?

Don't worry. There are plenty of temple workers to direct you. They are there to help make your experience at the temple one of peace and enjoyment. **NE**

HOW I KNOW

WORTH Loving

BY TRICIA HARDCASTLE

I didn't know it at the time, but when I was 14 I was floundering. I had moved with my family to a new school in a big city, and after a year there I still wasn't adjusting. I didn't have any friends, and I felt like I wasn't worth loving.

I hoped that girls' camp that summer would offer a break from feeling down, but I only felt worse as I watched the other girls enjoying themselves without me. I knew that as I started high school that fall, my problems would worsen.

Then on the final night of camp, a young couple came to talk to us. As the husband bore his testimony of the Atonement, a powerful realization struck me: Jesus Christ died for *me*. I had always known that He died for the world, but until that moment I hadn't realized that He also died for me personally.

With this realization came a great feeling of worth and love. It was as if the Savior, the greatest of all, saw me when He was upon the cross and said, "Yes, I will die for her." If He was willing to do that for me, then surely I was worth something. As I thought about this I went off by myself, and for the first time ever, I opened my heart completely to my Father in Heaven. For two hours I talked with Him and felt the soothing warmth of His love.

Since that time I have not only grown to know my worth, but I have found joy in the world and discovered my place in it. I will forever be grateful to the Redeemer, who gave His life for me and allowed me to know that I am worth loving. **NE**

Tricia Hardcastle is a member of the Pocatello University Third Ward, Pocatello Idaho University First Stake.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

If you want to learn more about the Atonement, these scriptures have some interesting insights: Mosiah 3:7; 15:11–12; D&C 19:15–19; 45:3–5.

In site: See "To Be Free of Heavy Burdens" (*Ensign*, Nov. 2002) by Elder Richard G. Scott and "One by One" (*Ensign*, Nov. 2000) by Elder Ronald A. Rasband at www.lds.org in the Gospel Library.

THE EXTRA SMILE



"I know you're still learning the language, but you just told that gentleman that gaining a testimony will give him mighty heartburn."

While on vacation, our family was enjoying a swim in the hotel pool. Our daughter, Jennifer, heard some ugly language being used nearby. She walked over to the group and, in her kindest voice, said, "Didn't you read the pool rules? It clearly says 'No profound language.' " I guess they understood, because the profane language stopped.

JEWEL NELSON-BEARDALL, EDMONT
15TH WARD, PROVO UTAH EDMONT
NORTH STAKE



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

"And my father dwelt in a hammock."



RYAN STOKER

"The mechanic figured out why my car was making that awful noise. I accidentally put one of your CDs in the stereo!"



RANDY GLASBERGEN



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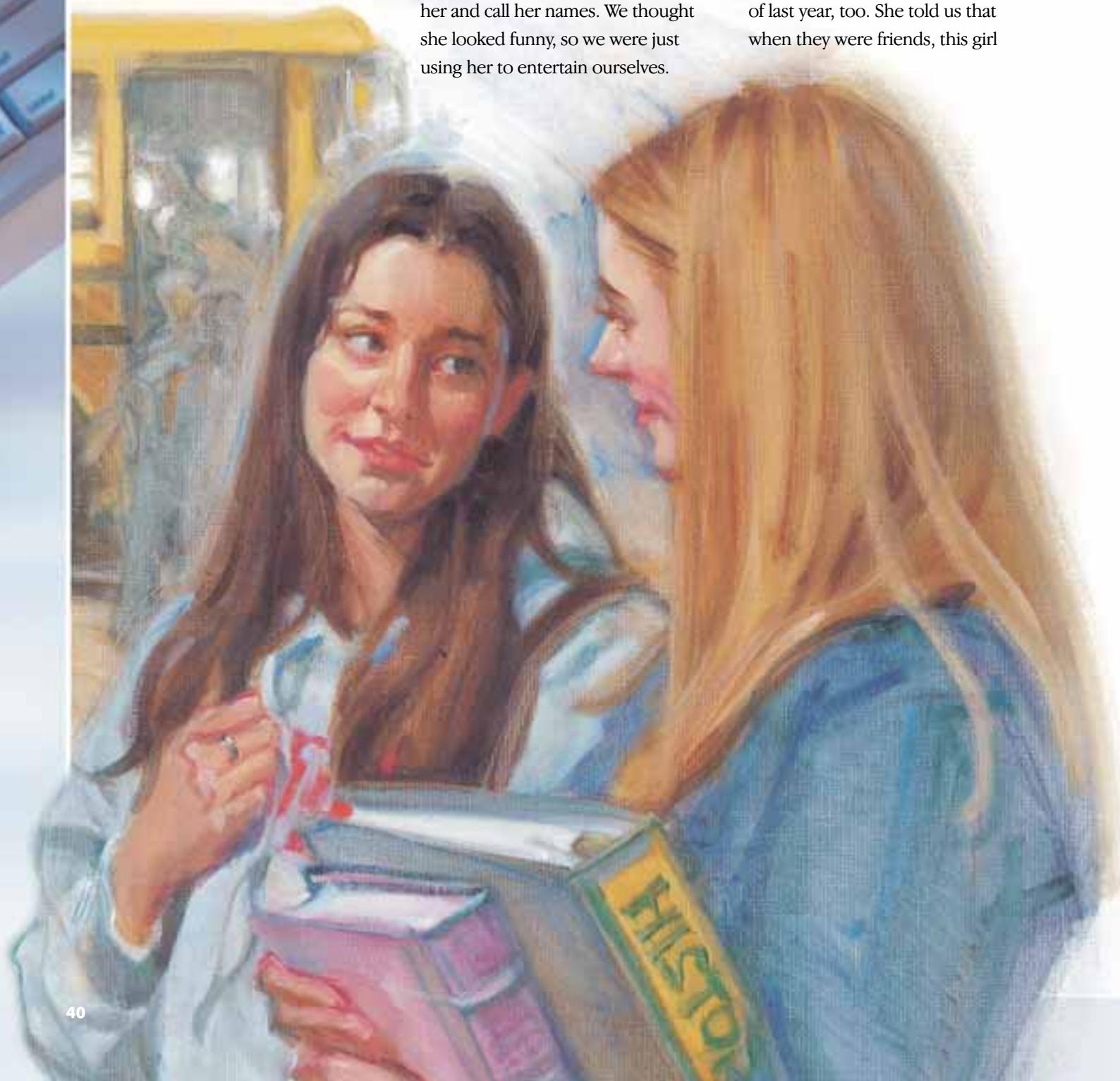
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YOU MEAN THE WORLD TO ME

NAME WITHHELD

I was never the most popular girl in my school, but I had tons of good friends, people to talk to and trust. Most of the students at school, including some of my friends and I, made fun of a girl in my class because she was different. We would tease her and call her names. We thought she looked funny, so we were just using her to entertain ourselves.

One Friday night some of my friends and I were at a friend's house. We stayed up late talking, and we started talking about this girl. Then one of my friends said that she used to be friends with this girl and that she was made fun of last year, too. She told us that when they were friends, this girl



used to call her on the phone every day after school. She said that sometimes it sounded like she was crying.

This made me think twice about how this girl must have felt. So I decided to stop making fun of her. That next week, instead of saying something mean or laughing at her, I would smile at her. After a few weeks, we began saying hi to each other in the halls. The next month we started talking more. We became very good friends.

One day we were walking to the bus, and this girl looked at me and said, "You mean the world to me, and I am so glad you're my friend because you're so nice to me. You respect me for who I am, and you make me so happy. You give me a reason to come back to school every day."

After she told me this, I couldn't speak. All I could do was say thanks and think about how much our friendship meant to her. It made me feel like someone out there loved me and respected me for how I acted toward them. It made me feel like I was worth something.

JORDAN'S ADVICE

BY EMILY CRAW

A couple years ago, I was very frustrated. I was trying to make new friends, and my family was having problems. After the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, I was worried about the possibility of war and was scared that something else bad would happen to the United States. Focusing on all the negative things going on around me made my own battle with Satan more difficult. I needed to be comforted.

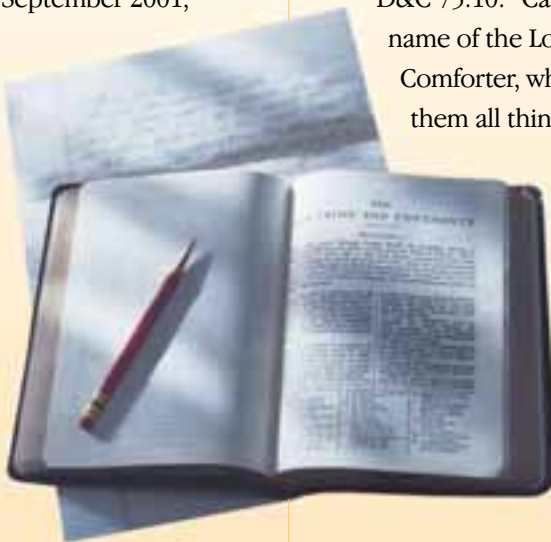
My brother, Jordan, had just left on his mission. He was the peace-maker in the home, and I could

always talk to him when I was troubled. In a letter, his advice to me was to read the scriptures. I opened the scriptures and read D&C 75:10: "Calling on the name of the Lord for the Comforter, which shall teach them all things that are expedient for them."

I got a feeling to pray for comfort and answers. When I did, the Spirit came to me,

and my heart felt warm. I felt that the scriptures are true and that if I lived righteously, I didn't have to worry. My prayer calmed me, and I didn't worry anymore.

Emily Craw is a member of the Greenfield Ward, Logan Utah Cache Stake.



THE SHINING MOMENTS

VICKSON BOCKARIE

I served as a full-time missionary in the Ghana Accra Mission. As the only Church member in my family, I was very happy and grateful to our Heavenly Father to have been a missionary of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. I was so happy to

serve the Lord for two years.

Besides the sacrament hymns, one of my favorite hymns is "Improve the Shining Moments" (*Hymns*, no. 226). This hymn is very lovely, comforting, and inspiring to me whenever I think of its words. This hymn teaches me

that I have to do my best to make use of my opportunity to serve the Lord by bringing more souls to Him through faith, repentance, and baptism.

Vickson Bockarie is a member of the Sewa Road Branch, Bo Sierra Leone District.

What Was I MISSING?

BY ROSALYN COLLINGS EVES

I threw myself on top of the dingy green bedspread and stared at the ceiling. My throat felt tight from fighting back tears. I couldn't understand what was wrong with me. It had been a beautiful spring day. My companion and I were teaching several wonderful people in Kecskemét, Hungary. I was serving the Lord and should be joyful. So why had this oppressive sense of failure overcome me?

I knew many missionaries who struggled with occasional feelings of inadequacy; lately those feelings had seemed to become my permanent state of mind. But wasn't I doing things right—praying regularly, reading the scriptures, working hard, obeying mission rules? Still, I felt so imperfect. It seemed as if my faults were preventing the Lord from reaching the people who needed to hear the gospel.

My companion was on her bed, reading a letter from home. I wanted to talk to her, but she was new in the country and struggling to adjust to mission life and to learn Hungarian. She didn't need to hear about

my problems.

I opened my scriptures and began reading in Ether 12:27: "And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me . . ."

I stopped. This scripture was one of my favorites. I had read it many times and had even prayed about it in the Missionary Training Center, asking the Lord to grant me humility and help me be strong. I knew that the Lord often teaches us humility through our weaknesses. Hadn't Alma said as much to the poor people who had been cast out of the synagogues (see Alma 32:6–16)? I knew that if I could learn humility, the Lord would make me strong. But I did not feel strong, and my weaknesses were becoming more evident with every passing day. So what was I missing?

I decided to read the verse again. This time it was different. It was as if I had missed something in my previous



readings. “My grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me.” As I read that line again, the Spirit overwhelmed me. “The grace of Christ is sufficient!” With insight from the Spirit, I felt things begin to fall into place.

Turning to the end of the Book of Mormon, I read Moroni’s beautiful invitation: “Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ” (Moroni 10:32).

The Spirit was trying to teach me. My problem was not that I had done something wrong but that I had failed to do something right. In my pride, I was trying to make myself perfect, rather than humbling myself before Jesus Christ and asking for His help in overcoming my weaknesses. Of course I was failing! None of us can do it alone—we can become perfected only *in* Christ, with *His* help. We must do

our part, of course. But unless we truly come unto Christ, we cannot be saved, nor can the power of the Atonement take effect in our lives. But if we come unto Christ, then His grace is sufficient for us—not too little, but enough.

Things did not change overnight, but peace began to find its way into my heart. Although I still struggled occasionally, what I had learned about the Atonement helped me keep an eternal perspective and reminded me that it was not necessary to endure everything alone.

I will always be grateful for the opportunity to serve a mission. And I am particularly thankful for that quiet night in Kecskemét, Hungary, when I learned about the power of the Atonement to heal and make whole. **NE**

Rosalyn Collings Eves is a member of the State College University Ward, Altoona Pennsylvania Stake.

THE GREATEST EVENT IN HISTORY

BY PRESIDENT EZRA TAFT BENSON (1899–1994)
Thirteenth President of the Church



The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a glorious reality. He broke the bonds of death for all of us.

The greatest events of history affect the greatest number for the longest periods. By this standard, no event could be more important than the Resurrection of the Master.

It is a high and sacred honor to bear witness to the divine mission of Jesus Christ; to represent His great Church; to be an ambassador of truth to our Father's children; to be called by a prophet of the Lord to go into the world and proclaim the glad tidings that God has again spoken from the heavens: that the heavens are not sealed, that God still communicates with men on the earth, and that the pure gospel of Jesus Christ has again been restored to the earth in its fulness. . . .

As a people we have just joined with others of the Christian world in the celebration of Easter. It is, therefore, most fitting that we consider together that most glorious event, the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Testimony: Jesus Is the Christ

I bear witness to you that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of the world—the very Son of God.

He was born the babe of Bethlehem.
He lived and ministered among men.
He was crucified on Calvary.
His friends deserted Him.

His closest associates did not fully understand His mission, and they doubted. One of the most trusted denied knowing Him.

A pagan governor, struggling with his conscience after consenting to Jesus' death, caused a sign to be erected over the cross proclaiming Him "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John 19:19).

He asked forgiveness for His tormentors and then willingly gave up His life.

His body was laid in a borrowed tomb.

An immense stone was placed over the opening.

In the minds of His stunned followers over and over echoed some of His last words, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

On the third day there was a great



earthquake. The stone was rolled back from the door of the tomb. Some of the women, among the most devoted of His followers, came to the place with spices “and found not the body of the Lord Jesus” (Luke 24:3).

Angels appeared and said simply, “Why seek ye the living among the dead?

“He is not here, but is risen” (Luke 24:5–6).

There is nothing in history to equal that dramatic announcement: “He is not here, but is risen.”

“He Is Risen”

The greatest events of history are those which affect the greatest number for the longest periods. By this standard, no event could be more important to individuals or nations than the Resurrection of the Master. The eventual resurrection of every soul who has lived and died on earth is a scriptural certainty, and surely there is no event for which one should make more careful preparation. Nothing is more absolutely universal than the resurrection. Every living being will be resurrected. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). . . .

Yes, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a glorious reality. He became the first fruits of them that slept. He truly rose from the tomb the third day, as He and His prophets foretold, and became in very deed the resurrection “and the life” (John 4:6). He broke the bonds of death for all of us. We, too, will be resurrected. Our spirits will be reunited with our bodies (see Alma 11:43). . . .

Resurrection, a Glorious Reality

Yes, Christ’s Resurrection was abundantly verified. The witnesses are many. Throughout the 40 days following His Resurrection, the Lord manifested Himself at

intervals and gave instructions in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. . . .

He had told His followers that He must soon ascend unto His Father in heaven. And as the time of His Ascension drew nigh, the Lord in that last solemn interview gave His parting instructions to His disciples.

And when Christ and the disciples had gone “as far as to Bethany” (Luke 24:50), where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived, the Lord lifted His hands and blessed them. And while He yet spoke He rose from their midst until a cloud received Him from out of their sight. As the Apostles stood gazing steadfastly upward, two personages clothed in white apparel appeared by them. They spoke unto the 11 saying, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

Worshipfully, and with great joy, the Apostles returned to Jerusalem. The Lord’s Ascension was accomplished. It was truly a literal departure of a material being, as His Resurrection had been an actual return of His spirit to His own physical body. Now the disciples began to comprehend more fully that He had truly overcome the world. Not that He had displaced Caesar or even Pilate, who ruled over Judea. The great majority of the world’s people had still not even heard of Him. Not that man’s inhumanity to man was suddenly wiped out. But there was victory over the grave, always, until then, the final conqueror of all men.

His Kingdom Not of This World

Then the realization began to dawn on



His faithful followers that His kingdom was not of this world. He had overcome the world of hate, envy, greed, and lust. He had shown the way for man to break the chains of selfishness and vengeance which had bound him, doomed him to mediocrity, a prisoner of his own misconceptions. His disciples were quickened with a realization that this was what He had been teaching them. This was what His life had spelled out to them. More clear became His ringing words:

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:43–44).

Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ liberated man from the world by the pure gospel of love. He demonstrated that man through the love of God and through kindness and charity to his fellows could achieve his highest potential. He lived the plain and sure doctrine of service, of doing good to all men, friends and enemies alike. His charge to return good for evil is still the greatest challenge to the mind of man. At the same time it is man’s greatest weapon.

Impact of His Life

No other single influence has had so great an impact on this earth as the life of Jesus the Christ. We cannot conceive of our lives without His teachings. Without Him we would be lost in a mirage of beliefs and worship, born in fear and darkness where the sensual and materialistic hold sway. We are

far short of the goal He set for us, but we must never lose sight of it; nor must we forget that our great climb toward the light, toward perfection, would not be possible except for His teachings, His life, His death, and His Resurrection. . . .

His Comforting Spirit

We feel His comforting spirit in the sweet prayer of a child and the quiet abiding faith of all who have let His gospel permeate their lives. What a priceless gift it is that we can know Him through our own prayers and through the sacred and solemn testimonies of those that have seen Him, known Him, felt His presence. . . .

His Church Restored

Yes, this same Jesus has already come to earth in our day. The Resurrected Christ—glorified, exalted, the God of this world under the Father—appeared to the boy Joseph Smith in 1820. This same Jesus who was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Moses, the Creator of this earth, has come in our day. He was introduced by the Father to Joseph Smith in these words: “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

The appearance of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ to the boy Prophet is the greatest event that has occurred in this world since the Resurrection of the Master. As the restored Church of Jesus Christ we humbly and gratefully bear this witness to all men. This message is a world message. It is the truth. **NE**

From an April 1964 general conference address; capitalization modernized.

The appearance of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ to the boy Prophet is the greatest event that has occurred in this world since the Resurrection of the Master.

INVITING THE SPIRIT

In a troubled world, members of the Lord's Church can turn to our Heavenly Father and through the Holy Ghost find peace. Here are some ways to bring the Comforter into your life.

Enjoy His Word "It is the Spirit which will bear record to your heart as you read the scriptures, as you hear the Lord's authorized servants" (Henry B. Eyring, *Ensign*, May 1991, 67).

Pray "Humble, trusting prayer brings consolation, solace, comfort, direction, and peace the unworthy can never know" (Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 88).

Fast "Fasting, coupled with mighty prayer, is powerful. . . . [Fasting] will energize us spiritually, . . . fill our homes with peace, lighten our hearts with joy, . . . prepare us for times of adversity, and open the windows of heaven" (Joseph B. Wirthlin, *Ensign*, May 2001, 75).

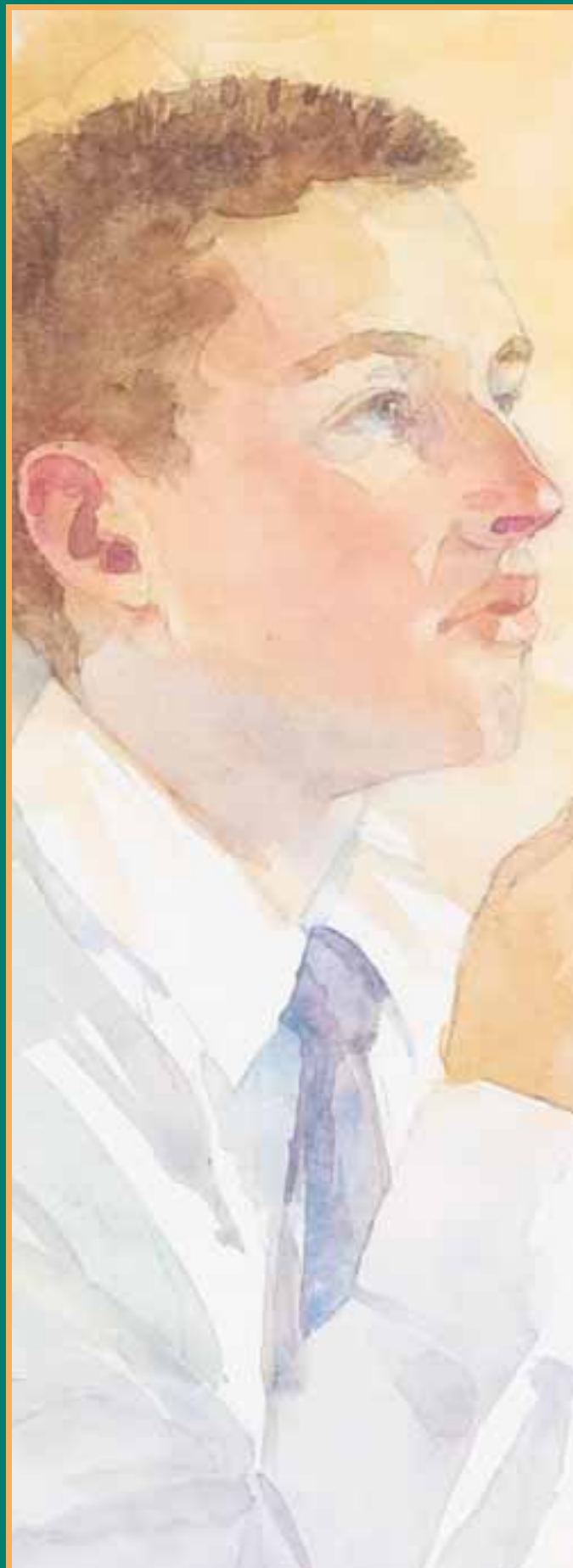
Obey "To have the Spirit with us each day it is necessary to be obedient" (Robert D. Hales, *Ensign*, June 1999, 13).

Keep the Sabbath Day Holy "No recreational pleasure can equal the cleansing renewal and the spiritual guidance and growth God has promised those who faithfully partake of the sacrament and honor Him each Sabbath day" (Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, May 2002, 34).

Avoid Degrading Media "To me, it is impossible to maintain the Spirit of the Lord while listening to music or watching movies or videos that celebrate evil thoughts and use vulgar language" (M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 39).

Watch Your Words "You cannot take the name of God in vain or use filthy language and still have the right to the ministering of angels" (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 2002, 53).

Serve Others "As we press forward in His service, spiritual experiences will increase our faith, and we will find great joy" (M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, May 2000, 32). **NE**



Mutual Activities

- The next time your ward plans a trip to the temple to perform baptisms, try reading together the article “Baptisms for the Dead: What to Know Before You Go” on page 34.

- Have a night devoted to creating poster ideas for the *New Era*. To identify some topics, use the index headings from the back of any December copy of the *New Era*. Provide paper and markers. Hang all the posters created around the room so everyone can see them. Send the best ideas to *New Era*, 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84150.

Service Project Suggestion

- To add a service aspect to your next youth trip to the temple, have the youth, who are finished before the others and are waiting, go outside to the temple parking lot and clean the windows of the cars of the temple patrons and workers. Come prepared with window cleaner and squeegees or rags. Make sure the cleaning project is approved by the temple administration and security. The youth could leave notes on the cars whose windows they clean that the window cleaning was courtesy of your ward or stake.

Family Home Evening Idea

- The next time you are asked to take charge of the lesson for family home evening, consider some of the ideas for family home evenings presented in the article “Making Monday Memories” on page 20. In addition, check out the Church’s Web site for additional ideas. Go to **lds.org**, then click on Home and Family. Select Family Home Evening. Next, click on Lesson Topics or Activities for a list of activities or lesson plans.

SUNDAY LESSON HELPS

In addition to the Resource Guides (printed in May and November in the *Ensign* and *Liahona*), Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood teachers may find these additional resources helpful in enhancing lessons 14–17.

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Lesson 14 The Blessings of the Temple

Adam C. Olson, “Blessings of the Temple,” this issue, 28.
“Baptisms for the Dead: What to Know Before You Go,” this issue, 34.

Lesson 15 Temple Marriage

Tamara Leatham Bailey, “The Temple-Going Type,” *New Era*, Apr. 1998, 34.
Spencer W. Kimball, “Live for the Future,” *New Era*, Nov. 2002, 36.

Lesson 16 Journals

Q&A: “My life isn’t very exciting. . . . Do I still need to keep a journal?”
New Era, Sept. 2003, 16.
Spencer W. Kimball, “The Angels May Quote from It,” *New Era*, Feb. 2003, 32.

Lesson 17 Keeping Family History Records

Arianne B. Cope, “Saving the Stories,” *New Era*, Sept. 2003, 38.
Caroline H. Benzley, “The Story of a Lifetime,” *New Era*, Oct. 2003, 28.

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Lesson 14 Obedience to God

Shane Hamilton, “The Other Side of the Fence,” *New Era*, Sept. 2003, 34.
Richard L. Evans, “Why All the Rules?” *New Era*, Nov. 2003, 44.

Lesson 15 Exaltation through Keeping Covenants

Keith B. McMullin, “Are You a Saint?” *New Era*, Feb. 2003, 38.
Carlos E. Asay, “The Temple: The Place for You,” *New Era*, Mar. 1997, 4.

Lesson 16 Tithes and Offerings

Q&A: “Do I need to pay a fast offering if I give so little?” *New Era*, May 2003, 16.
Poster: “Love God with All Your Might,” *New Era*, July 2003, 19.
Jennifer M. Severino, “10% Tithing=100% Blessings,” *New Era*, Dec. 2002, 7.

Lesson 17 Patriarchal Blessings

“About Patriarchal Blessings,” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 32.
Rachel Murdock, “Worthy of My Blessing?” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 36.

IT'S POSSIBLE

The Poem of the Month in January 2004 reminded me of another relationship we all have in our lives. One who makes all the impossibles possible is our Savior. He gave us a beautiful gift, the Atonement, that makes living with our Father in Heaven a possibility forever.

Karen Nielsen, Anaheim Second Ward,
Anaheim California Stake

GOOD LUCK, CHRIS

I loved the "Ice Dreams" article in the January 2004 magazine, because, like Chris Obzansky, I figure skate too. I have heard of Chris and his partner, but I had no idea he is LDS! After reading this story, I know the Lord will help me to develop my talent. I wish Chris the best of luck on his mission and with skating.

Kt Schirtzinger, Pittsburgh Sixth Ward,
Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Stake

MEDALLION TESTIMONY

Thank you for the article "More than a Medallion" (Nov. 2003). The stories of the young women in the article gave me a lot of inspiration to continue working on my Personal Progress. I have always thought it would be fun to get the medallion, but I realized that gaining experience and testimony and learning more about the Savior are most important. This program has already helped me a lot, and I am looking forward to receiving my medallion next year.

Evenaz Sariah Deyro, Pasig Second Ward,
Pasig Philippines Stake

SOCCER EXAMPLE

Thank you very much for the November 2003 article "The Playmaker." I am grateful for the example that Aleisha has set. I esteem her for her obedience

*"The New Era posters
might be short,
but they say a lot."*

towards Heavenly Father, though she could have played in the Olympics and World Cup. I am glad for her that she seized the chance to play soccer on a good team. When I saw the name Brigham Young on her shirt, I thought, "Those players play in honor. Somehow it is special. Hopefully I will play in such a shirt in a few years."

Olivia Prochazka, Wettingen Ward,
Zürich Switzerland Stake

POSTERS SAY A LOT

I am so grateful for the *New Era*. It has brought a lot of blessings into my life.

The *New Era* posters might be short, but they say a lot. The poster "Spread Thin?" (Oct. 2003) meant a lot to me. I realized that I was trying to do too many things at once. Now I've sorted out my life and can get a lot more done.

Austin Fullmer, Copperas Cove First Ward, Killeen Texas Stake

MEANT FOR ME

Thank you so much for this awesome magazine. I've been getting the *New Era* for almost two years now, and almost every month there seems to be an article that was put there just for me. I especially wanted to thank you for the article "Who's Telling the Truth?" (Feb. 2004). It helped me realize that we need to act on what we learn before we can receive a testimony. That article was meant for me.

Karissa Baker, Northridge Seventh Ward,
Orem Utah Northridge Stake

We love hearing from you. Write us at the following address. Please include the names of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

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We've Got Mail
50 E. North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

Or e-mail us at

cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.





GARDEN TOMB,
BY LINDA CURLEY

BREAK FORTH INTO JOY

BY JENNIFER ROSE

Break forth into joy, ye saints of the Lord!
And sing with one voice that rings to the sky,
To praise the Lamb, the Blessed adored.
Break forth into joy, ye saints of the Lord.

Rise up and resound; let angels hear!
Come honor our God from every way,
For He will calm and lift our fears.
Rise up and resound; let angels hear.

Now come we to glory the God on high!
His hands will guide; our souls will seek.
Embrace His words, and anthems reply,
“We come now to glory the God on high!”



*“Being worthy to go to
the temple keeps me from
wandering. When you’re
doing what’s right, you
know where you’re going.
It gives life more meaning.”*

*See “Blessings of the
Temple,” p. 28.*