

A SACRIFICE *but a* JOY

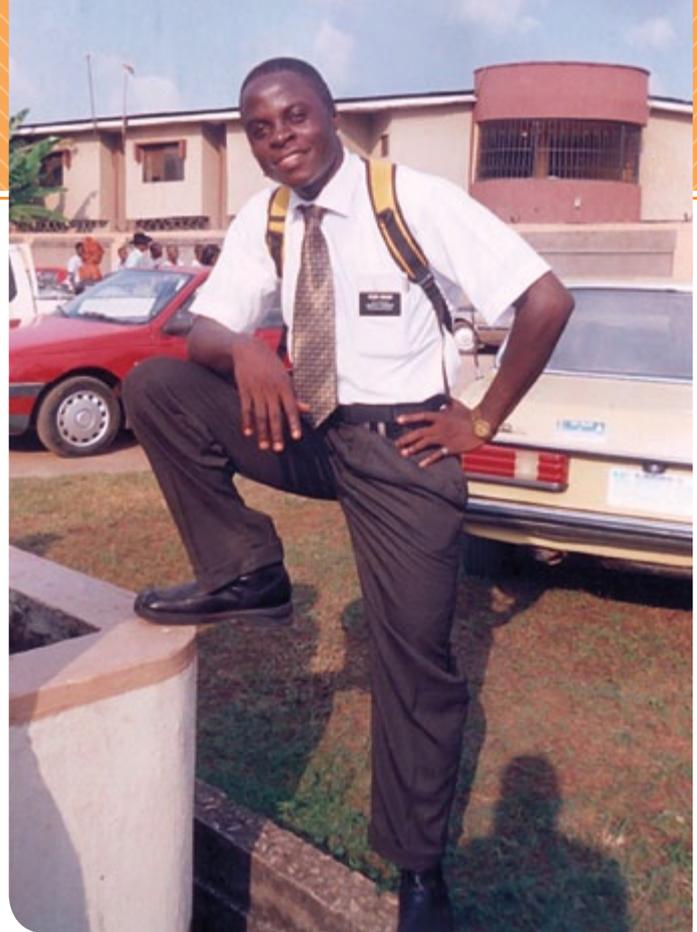
My desire to serve a mission almost became lost because I enjoyed the money I was making.

By Edward M. Akosah

When I was six years old, my mother met the missionaries and joined the Church in Ghana, Africa. My father had left her with five children, but the teachings of the Church helped keep our family strong. We loved each other and had peace in our home. I loved going to church with my mom and enjoyed attending Primary classes and then seminary.

As a young man I was called as a ward missionary and enjoyed proselyting with the missionaries. I also watched as some of the young men in our ward went on missions. When they returned, they were different. They were more learned and mature, both physically and spiritually. My older brother also served a mission. When he returned, I saw many improvements in his behavior. I kept asking myself, "What is it about a mission that makes all these people change and grow so much?" I became enthusiastic about going on a mission.

After I finished high school, I was working to save money for a mission. Soon my desire to serve a mission became lost because I enjoyed the money I was making. It would have been a sacrifice to go on a mission because the money I earned helped support my family. Each time I started filling out my mission forms, I thought about the



money I would be giving up, and I dropped my forms and continued working.

As my friends left on missions, I felt bad because I knew I should also be getting ready to go. This caused me to examine myself. I thought, "Sustaining the prophet and my leaders is not just raising my right hand. It's doing what they say and obeying our Heavenly Father's commandments."

Now was the time to serve a mission, so I submitted my mission papers to the bishop. It was the second happiest day of my life. The happiest was the day my bishop called me to his office and gave me a white envelope with my mission call to the Nigeria Ibadan Mission. My heart was full of joy.

In the missionary training center, I became better acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel and learned marvelous things. I was also able to receive my endowment in the temple. I am so grateful for my decision to come on a mission, and I have never regretted it. I too have grown spiritually on my mission. I believe it is because I am helping people receive the same gospel blessings that have brought so much happiness to me and my family. **NE**