

FOR YOUTH OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

THE New Era

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WE WANT THE BEST FOR YOU



Our happiness will come in living our lives the right way for the right reasons—reasons that are eternal, reasons that matter in this life and in the next.

By Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

How can you be truly happy? Here are some answers that are tried and true.

I want you to know from the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve that we think you are the greatest! We are immensely proud of you. We want the very best for you—we always have and we always will. Thanks for wanting to live gospel standards. We can have a lot of fun and we can have terrific times together. But that can ultimately only be in ways consistent with the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ. In this Church, as it says in the Book of Mormon, we live “after the manner of happiness.” Those of us who have lived a little longer and walked just a little farther have come to know what does and doesn’t make one happy. And what makes people happy is the gospel of Jesus Christ—even if at your age you are only beginning to learn that great truth.

True to the Faith

I would like you to go back nearly 600

years to the New Year of 1412. That week in the small village of Domrémy, France, a baby girl was born who, a little later, at roughly the age some of you are, changed the political and religious landscape of her world. Through military developments and a variety of personal religious experiences, Joan of Arc, sometimes called the Maid of Orléans, was made a captain in the French army at the tender age of 16. In a rather remarkable series of battles and victories, she brought acclaim to herself and her cause, inspiring not only the men under her command but also the entire French nation. Later she was captured, tried, and put to death—burned at the stake—her life complete at 19 years of age.

As the fires were being ignited around the stake to which she was tied, Joan was given a last chance to save her life and regain her liberty if she would deny her religious—and thus some of her personally motivated political—beliefs. She refused to deny anything she believed or anything she had said about her faith, and thus chose fire above freedom, and principle above politics. Maxwell Anderson, who wrote a moving drama about this young woman and her courage, has her say in his play as the flames begin to



*What your leaders
and I are saying to
you is "trust us."
We are trying to call
out to you, looking
back to the path we
walked and that you
are now walking. We
are still walking it
too, but we are doing
so now with the
advantage of a little
more experience and
a little more wisdom.
We want to help.*

We don't want to smother you or make you irritated or infringe on a glorious future, because that is exactly what we want for you—a glorious future! And that means wanting you safe, knowing the consequences of your actions.



consume her: “The world can use these words. . . . Every man gives his life for what he believes; every woman gives her life for what she believes. Sometimes people believe in little or nothing, [and yet] they give up their lives to that little or nothing. One life is all we have, and we live it as we believe in living it, and then it’s gone. But to surrender what you are, and live without belief—that’s more terrible than dying—more terrible than dying young” (*Joan of Lorraine*, act 2, interlude 3).

My young brothers and sisters, that is my message to you—a message from me, from the leaders of the Church, and from a teenage young woman of 600 years ago. “One life is all we have” and our happiness will come in living it the right way for the right reasons—reasons that are eternal, reasons that matter in this life and in the next. Now, we don’t want you to die! And we surely don’t want you to die young, but truly there are some things worse than dying. In Joan’s words that would be to “live without belief,” to surrender what you are and live contrary to what you know—or should know—to be true.

Be Strong and Courageous

Two years ago the Mutual theme was to be “steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works” (Mosiah 5:15). Last year’s theme was to “be . . . an example of the believers” (1 Timothy 4:12). And this year’s

theme is to “be strong and of a good courage” (Joshua 1:9). Those themes say scripturally and much more powerfully what that little French girl tried to convey so long ago.

They say:

Stand up and be strong. (In some cases that means to grow up and be strong.)

Be faithful.

Be courageous.

Be worthy.

Be clean.

Wickedness Never Was Happiness

In a phrase I remember from my own youth it means, “get serious”—serious about the gospel, serious about the decisions of life, serious about repenting if we need to, and serious about the consequences if we don’t.

As much as I loved my own young years—and I had a wonderful family, wonderful friends, and a wonderful life—nevertheless I don’t envy the challenges you face in the world in which you live, a world that is quite different from those idyllic young years of my life. You have more temptation than I had; you face a world much less committed to religious values; you deal with drugs I didn’t know existed; and pornography—well, in my day we didn’t even know what the word meant or what it represented. Now it is true that I also never had a computer or a cell phone or an iPod. You have many more material blessings than I had, but along with those blessings over those nearly 50 years have also come a lot more temptation, a lot more heartache, a lot more personal tragedy.

What your leaders and I are saying to you is “trust us.” We are trying to call out to you back over the years, looking back to the path we walked and that you are now walking. We are *still* walking it too, but we are doing so now with the advantage of a little more experience and a little more wisdom. We want to help. We don’t want to smother you or make you irritated or infringe on a glorious future, because that is *exactly* what we want for you—a glorious future! And that means wanting you safe,

knowing the consequences of your actions. I have seen those consequences in the lives of others for those 50 years I have been speaking of. But it could be 150 years—or in the case of Joan of Arc, 600 years. Not much changes. As Alma said more than 2,000 years ago, “Wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10). It’s still true!

What Matters Most

My young brothers and sisters, I love you. I have traveled the earth meeting you. I have loved you and admired you everywhere I have met you. You inspire me and fill me with hope. In so many cases you are doing better than my generation did, I suppose partly because you *have* been forced to take your faith seriously and to consider the commandments you are asked to keep. But unfortunately that isn’t true of everyone. Some lives have already been scarred and scorched in your teenage years—too soon, too sadly, too tragically—lives foolishly damaged almost before they have begun. Please don’t reinvent the moral wheel! Don’t feel that you have to learn every tragic lesson in life personally.

Listen to the words of the Lord. Listen to your leaders. Listen to your parents. Listen to the best that is within you. Above all listen to the sweet, soft, undeniable whispering of the Spirit which will teach you all things, including that what I am saying to you is true. It *is* true.

Believe in yourself, and believe in this gospel. Believe that we know what we are talking about, and what we are talking about is how terrific you are and how terrific your life can be if you will live the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I testify of President Monson’s love for you, of his true prophetic role, and of this true and living Church. I testify that God loves you and wants you to embrace that Church and that gospel. I testify that the Savior loves you and died for you because some things mattered more *to Him* than death, mattered even more than dying young. What mattered more than that to Him was you—your life, your chance, your time, your future. **NE**

From an address prepared for the New Year’s Eve celebration A Brand New Year in 2008.

HAVE COURAGE: LEAD OUT IN THE CAUSE OF VIRTUE!

By the Young Women General Presidency

Have you ever wanted to make a difference in the world but didn't know how to start? Have you wanted to stand up for something right but lacked courage because doing so might draw ridicule from your peers? This is the year to become the leader you were sent here to earth to be. Now, more than ever before, the world needs your light and your leadership. You can make a difference.

The 2010 theme invites us to “be strong and of a good courage” (Joshua 1:9). Strength and courage are attributes of leaders. As a member of the Church, you are a leader in the cause of virtue and righteousness.

Our prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, has called for us to have courage:

“Great courage will be required as you remain chaste and virtuous amid the accepted thinking of the times.

“In the world's view today there is little thought that young men and young women will remain morally clean and pure before marriage. Does this make immoral behavior acceptable? Absolutely not!”¹

Your courage to lead will come as you live the standards, make correct choices, and follow the prophet. Your strength will come as you strive daily to increase your testimony of the Savior by praying and reading in the Book of Mormon. Your strength to lead others will come as you live the standards found in the booklet *For*

the Strength of Youth. As you do these things, you will feel good about yourself. You will have confidence, and you will grow in spiritual strength.

And don't forget to smile! Have a positive attitude. “Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God” (D&C 123:17). Knowing what is right and wrong is always possible (see Moroni 7:16), and you are promised that the Holy Ghost will tell you “all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5). As you study, listen for the guidance of the still, small voice. You have the promised assurance that “by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5).

Whatever your circumstances, you were born to lead in your family, in your school, and in your community. So this year, be strong, have courage, and make a difference in the world! You are not alone. Heavenly Father will hear and answer your prayers and guide your actions as you remain pure and worthy of the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost.

You are daughters of our Heavenly Father, who loves you. These are your days. We love you and pray that you will be strong and courageous in living the standards and leading out in the cause of virtue. Your righteous example will make a difference! **NE**

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “May You Have Courage,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 125.

2010 Mutual Theme

“Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest” (Joshua 1:9).



Top: Elaine S. Dalton (center), president; Mary N. Cook (left), first counselor; and Ann M. Dibb (right), second counselor. Above: David L. Beck (center), president; Larry M. Gibson (left), first counselor; and Adrián Ochoa (right), second counselor.

PHOTOGRAPH OF YOUNG WOMEN PRESIDENCY BY BUSATH PHOTOGRAPHY; PHOTOGRAPH OF YOUNG MEN PRESIDENCY BY CRAIG DIMOND; ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL T. MALM

FACING CHALLENGES WITH COURAGE

By the Young Men General Presidency

Have you ever been worried about measuring up to a task? Imagine how Joshua might have felt as successor to the great prophet Moses. The heavy responsibility to lead the people of Israel into the promised land fell to Joshua. Remember that the promised land was occupied by numerous Canaanite nations, many of which were fearsome and war-like. Can you imagine that Joshua may have felt unsure of his abilities to accomplish such a daunting task, maybe even afraid?

In the space of four verses in the first chapter of Joshua, the Lord commands Joshua to be strong and courageous—three times! (see verses 6–9). Then the Lord promises Joshua that he will succeed in bringing the Israelites to their land of inheritance, that strength and courage will come to him because of his obedience to all the law, and—most significantly—that the Lord will be with him wherever he goes.

The 2010 Mutual theme is the third instance of the Lord's call to Joshua to "be strong and of a good courage" (Joshua 1:9). That same call to courage is yours. And the same promises are yours as well. With the Savior's help, you too will succeed in your callings and in your life. You will have strength to withstand any temptation as you obey the commandments and keep the standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*. As you honor the priesthood and each week renew the covenants you made at baptism, you can have the Savior's Spirit with you—always.

There were many unknowns facing Joshua. He didn't know how he would be able to bring the children of Israel into the promised land, but he trusted in the Lord. You face challenges in your life. You might be one of the

few members of the Church in your school or even in your family. You might feel isolated or discouraged or afraid. You might feel uncertain about your future in these troubled times. But be of good courage. The Lord is with you. You can trust in Him. He will help you succeed.

This wonderful reminder is found in Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." As we serve in our calling, we are committed to trust in the Lord. We encourage you to do the same. We love you. We trust you. You are part of a select generation of strong and courageous young men. **NE**



Joshua 1:9

THE ENCOURAGEMENT THE LORD GAVE TO JOSHUA CAN STRENGTHEN US AS WELL.

STRONG In the scriptures we find ways we receive strength:

- Be humble (see D&C 1:28).
- Put on the armor of God (see Ephesians 6:10–18).
- Pray for strength (see Moses 1:20).
- Strengthen each other (see D&C 108:7).

GOOD COURAGE

“My earnest prayer is that you will have the courage required to refrain from judging others, the courage to be chaste and virtuous, and the courage to stand firm for truth and righteousness. As you do so, you will be ‘an example of the believers,’ and your life will be filled with love and peace and joy.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “May You Have Courage,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 127.

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

...according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the “LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

2a Gen. 13:15 (14–17);
15:18 (18–23);
4a Gen. 31:28

c Deut. 11:1
d to Israel
Ta to Come
A 1:20

BE NOT AFRAID The scriptures teach us some remedies for fear:

- Love: “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear” (1 John 4:18).
- Faith: “Be not afraid, only believe” (Mark 5:36).
- Preparation: “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30).

THE LORD THY GOD IS WITH THEE

“If we are patient in our afflictions, endure them well, and wait upon the Lord to learn the lessons of mortality, the Lord will be with us to strengthen us unto the end of our days.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Behold, We Count Them Happy Which Endure,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 77.

DISMAYED The Hebrew word means to be beaten down or discouraged.



MOSES ORDAINING JOSHUA, BY DARRELL THOMAS

STRONG ENOUGH

WITH THE LORD'S HELP, YOU ARE.
(See Joshua 1:9.)

STICKING *My* NECK OUT

By Whitney Wilcox

I decided to follow my dad's advice and get out of my shell.

“**N**o!” I shouted, staring at my father in disbelief. My dad had just announced that he had been called as a mission president and we would be moving to the South American country of Chile for three years. The world felt as if it were falling in around me. Hot tears ran down my cheeks. *Three years. Chile. Moving.* The thoughts swirled in my head until I felt dizzy.

I looked at my younger brother, David, who had previously been grinning broadly, as he promptly burst into tears upon seeing my display. I felt guilty to be putting on such a show, but I couldn't help it. Three years away from everything I loved.

Suddenly another thought entered my mind: *Russell!* Russell, my 18-year-old brother whom I absolutely idolized, had just graduated from high school and would not be coming with us. “I won't go!” I told myself. “I'll stay here and live with my friends.” But even as I thought it, I knew that it wouldn't work.

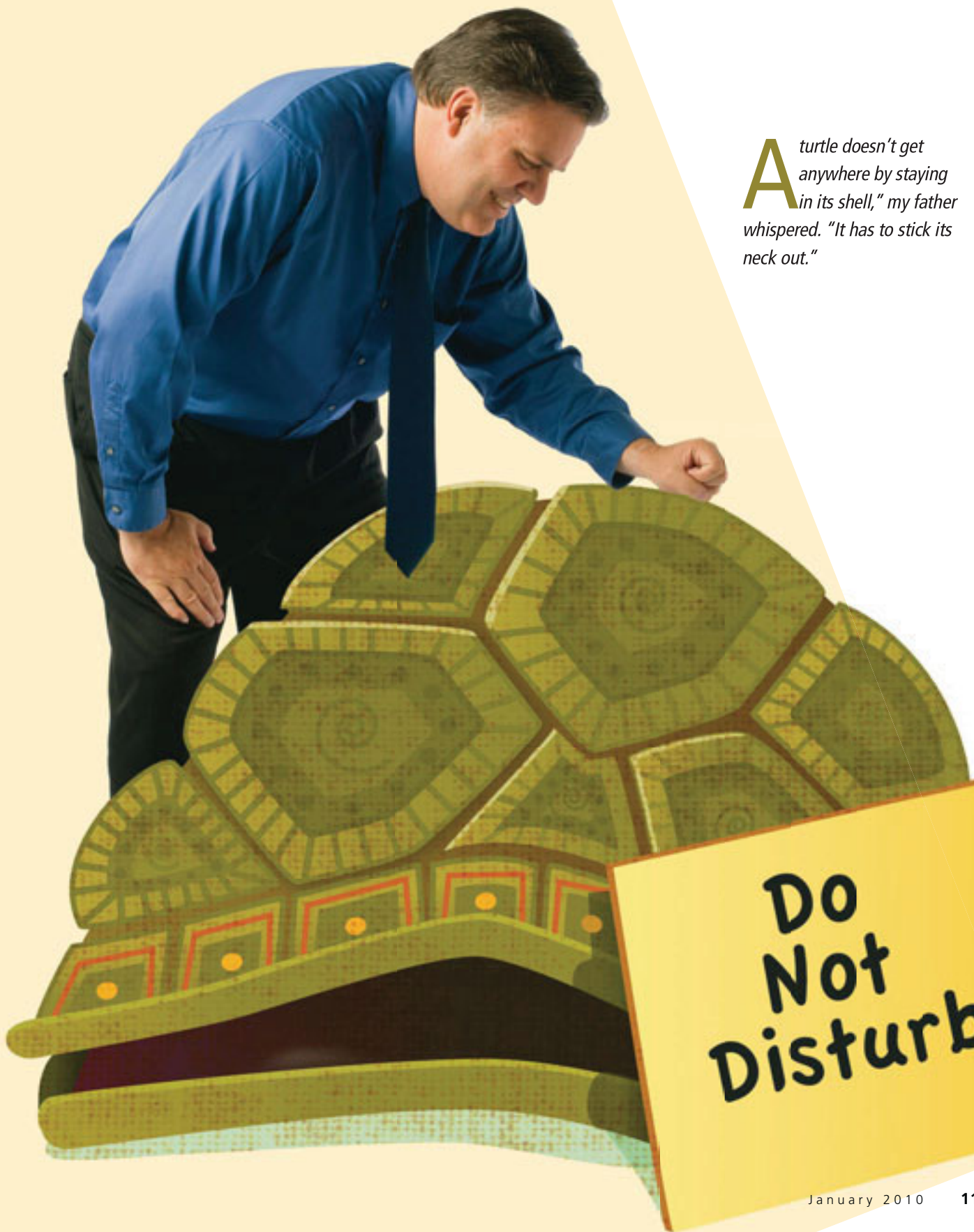
I was still upset when we drove to the airport four months later. On the plane, the flight attendant frequently handed me warm towels to dab away my tears. My dad put his arm around me and leaned in close to my ear.

“A turtle doesn't get anywhere by staying in its shell,” he whispered. “It has to stick its neck out.” At the time I didn't realize how much wisdom was in those words or how many wonderful experiences awaited me.

We reached Chile, and I began sticking my neck out by meeting new people, making new friends, and attending a new school. I stuck my neck out as I learned Spanish, shared my beliefs with others, and learned about another culture by being a part of it. The adjustments weren't easy, but each experience helped me improve. I slowly began to adapt and form a deep love for a country that I initially had wanted nothing to do with.

Before I knew it, three years had passed, and it was time for our family to leave. I remember sitting on the back porch of our home in Santiago, watching the sun casting the beautiful orange glow so typical of a Chilean sunset. “It's incredible,” I thought. I had fought so hard against coming, and now I didn't want to leave. I couldn't imagine leaving the people with their friendly greetings and kisses on the cheek. I couldn't imagine leaving the majestic snow-capped mountains and beautiful Pacific Ocean. I even loved the crazy buses that zipped through the streets of Santiago, the noisy street vendors, and the stray dogs.

“Okay, Whitney,” my dad called from inside the house. “It's time to go.”



A turtle doesn't get anywhere by staying in its shell," my father whispered. "It has to stick its neck out."

**Do
Not
Disturb!**



I learned that a turtle doesn't get anywhere by staying in its shell. It has to stick its neck out.

I got up and looked around for the last time. "Goodbye Chile," I murmured quietly. "I'll miss you."

While I was excited to see my friends again, and I couldn't wait to hug Russell, who had returned from his own mission a few days earlier, my heart felt like it was breaking. Living in Chile had changed me so much. My views, opinions, personality, dreams and hopes had all been shaped by my experience there. I didn't fully realize how much I loved it and how wonderful and unique my time there had been. Many people shy away from experiences that seem scary or overwhelming at first. We'd rather stay in our comfort zones than try something new—whether it's moving, serving a mission, trying out for a play or team, or giving a talk in church. Yet it is these experiences that give us joy and mold us into the people we want to be. These experiences are not always easy, but they're worth it.

As our plane touched down 10 hours later, my dad came and put his arm around me. "So, what did you learn?" he asked.

I smiled at him. "I learned that a turtle doesn't get anywhere by staying in its shell. It has to stick its neck out." **w**

THE POWER *of a* QUESTION

By Virginia Schildböck

I became friends with Kerstin when I was 14 years old. We went to the same school. I had known who she was for a long time, but I had not known her personally before because she was 12.

We got to know each other better when we both tried out for the school play. We soon became good friends, even though there was a two-year age difference. It wasn't long before we met together in the afternoons to go on walks and talk. One spring afternoon, on one of our walks, she asked something that would change her life forever.

Kerstin wondered why my brother and I didn't participate in the school's religion class like most of the students in Austria. I told her about the gospel of Jesus Christ and about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Then I bore my testimony and invited her to come to a youth activity. Later I gave her a copy of the Book of Mormon and the *Liahona*.

Since then Kerstin has participated in every Church activity and attends Church meetings every Sunday. She has even attended youth conference. Whenever we can, we walk to a little river that is close by to read our scriptures and work on Young Women Personal Progress.

Unfortunately, Kerstin cannot be baptized until she is 18. Her parents don't want to cause any arguments with her extended family members. Despite this obstacle, Kerstin has already managed to get her mother to attend church.

Kerstin also works with the missionaries. She speaks about the Church with everyone she meets and has helped get her father excited about the family history program, even though he has no interest in religion.

Kerstin is an example to me of how easy it is to speak with others about the gospel and how our Father in Heaven prepares people to hear His word. We need only open our mouths and have faith. The rest will take care of itself. **NE**

My friend asked why my brother and I didn't participate in the religion classes. That question gave me a chance to tell her about the gospel.



“Why do I need to forgive someone if I know I’m right?”

Although you may be right, don’t let your pride get in the way of your own happiness. By forgiving and letting go, you won’t have to carry the burden of a grudge around. You will feel happier and be able to enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

Missionaries often are ridiculed or have doors slammed in their faces, and although they are right, they still forgive people. Friends preserve their friendships by *choosing* not to be offended. Many youth raised in less-than-ideal homes choose to love and forgive family members.

If you are struggling to forgive, pray for help. Read examples of forgiveness from the scriptures, such as Nephi, who forgave Laman and Lemuel after they bound him (see 1 Nephi 7:16–21), or Joseph of Egypt, who forgave his brothers after they sold him into slavery (see Genesis 45:3–15). Reflect on the Savior’s Atonement and how freely God forgives you.

When you forgive, you follow the Savior’s example and bring peace into your life. **NE**

Forgive All



The Lord said: “I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men. And ye ought to say in your hearts—let God judge between me and thee, and reward thee according to thy deeds” (D&C 64:10–11). Even though we have done the right thing and the other person is wrong, we should still do as the Lord advises and “forgive all men.” We are rewarded for doing what is right.

Erika F., 16, Texas

Humility Wins



Pride is one of the biggest instigators to fighting and getting into debates over silly things. Odds are that both sides think of themselves as right. What most people don’t realize is the winner is the person who is a peacemaker. Humility and forgiveness are much more important than “winning the argument.” Do you really want to be the reason your friendship is ruined? Swallow your pride and be the bigger person.

Emma S., 17, Arizona

Lighten Your Load

Sometimes forgiveness is as much about you as it is about the other person or people involved. My Young Women leader put it this way: “The sooner you forgive, the sooner your spirit can become light again.” When you hold a grudge, you have almost physically added weight to your heart. Forgiving is a way to shed those extra pounds.

Becca S., 13, Utah

Let the Lord Judge

The Church teaches us to be Christlike. We are commanded to forgive everyone. The Lord has the right to judge and decide whom to forgive. But if we do not forgive—even when we know we are right—there could be a bigger consequence. I have experience with this and can say that forgiving does not harm us; rather, it brings good feelings as we stand for truth and righteousness.

Genelle C., 18, Philippines

Let Go of the Burden



We should forgive not only because our Savior did, but also because He commanded it. If we do not forgive those who have trespassed against us, our Father in Heaven will not forgive us our trespasses. I don't think I could lead any sort of life holding on to every wrong that has been done against me and carrying the weight of all my sins. The burden would be too much for me to carry.

Katy M., 18, Florida

Forgiveness Strengthens Relationships



One of my friends has this problem with her twin sister. She asked me this exact question. I told her that even if we know we are right, forgiving not only helps us avoid a fight, but it also teaches us to be humble. We learn that we must be an example to others, and by showing that

we are willing to compromise and that we don't want to argue, other people will notice that, and our relationships with them will be strengthened.

Tyler M., 18, Colorado

See It from Their Point of View



Even though it's hard, step back and look at the situation from the other person's point of view.

You wouldn't want others to hold grudges against you, so why do it to them? Do your best to forgive and forget. You will feel better, and so will the other person.

Madison D., 14, Utah

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

NEmore

Got questions? We've got answers. Go to newera.lds.org.



FORGIVENESS BRINGS PEACE

We can find all manner of reasons for postponing forgiveness. One of these reasons is waiting for the wrongdoers to repent before we forgive them. Yet such a delay causes us to forfeit the peace and happiness that could be ours. . . .

"Some hold grudges for a lifetime, unaware that courageously forgiving those who have wronged us is wholesome and therapeutic. . . .

"... The Savior has offered to all of us a precious peace through His Atonement, but this can come only as we are willing to cast out negative feelings of anger, spite, or revenge. For all of us who forgive 'those who trespass against us' (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:13), ... the Atonement brings a measure of peace and comfort."

**President James E. Faust (1920–2007),
Second Counselor in the First Presidency,
"The Healing Power of Forgiveness,"
Ensign, May 2007, 68, 69.**

NEXT QUESTION

"How can I know when I am being guided by the Holy Ghost?"

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GROWING

IN THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD



David Schlacter knows that when you advance through the Aaronic Priesthood, you grow in the right direction.

By Sally Johnson Odekirk

Church Magazines

When he first received the Aaronic Priesthood as a 12-year-old, David Schlacter was excited just to be able to pass the sacrament. As a teacher, he learned to enjoy home teaching. Then, when he became a priest, he discovered the importance of the sacrament. Now an 18-year-old, he says that ever since that day he has seen over and over again that the priesthood is about serving others.

A member of the Champlain Ward in the Ottawa Canada Stake, David has learned a lot as he has progressed through the Aaronic Priesthood. He says, “The Aaronic Priesthood really is the preparatory priesthood, because as 12-year-olds we’re not called on to do certain things, such as giving someone a blessing. We start out passing the sacrament, collecting fast offerings, helping someone move. We begin to understand that the priesthood is about serving people.”

One of David’s favorite priesthood responsibilities is home teaching families in his ward. Home teaching taught him that service in all forms is appreciated. For example, when he was first ordained, he and his dad were assigned to visit an elderly couple. “They just enjoyed the company,” he says, “and I enjoyed doing little things to help them out. It’s nice to get out and do something for someone else.”

As he progressed in the Aaronic Priesthood, David also learned about the importance of quorums. In his ward the Aaronic Priesthood quorums are small, so he and the other priests go out of their way to invite others to come. He says, “We try to encourage quorum members who haven’t been participating to come to activities like dances and firesides. We try to be friendly and show that we welcome them.”

David has also learned about service from observing his quorum advisers. They make sure the quorum activities are running well and set the example for him to follow. He says that most of his advisers are young and have new

families. “It’s good to see them making decisions that led them to where they are now. We can see by their examples and the experiences they share with us how it leads to the lives they are living now and how that leads to having a happy family.”

One of the most important responsibilities for priests in the Aaronic Priesthood is to bless the sacrament. David says that the sacrament is one of the important things that Christ did with His disciples in Jerusalem and again when He visited the New World. “The sacrament is one of the main purposes of Sabbath observance,” he says. “It’s an important responsibility, and so you have to live your life worthily so that you can offer the prayer and be involved in the sacrament in a way that’s above reproach. You set the example when you bless the sacrament by living the standards.”

His advice to those just starting out in the Aaronic Priesthood: “Fulfill your responsibilities and magnify your callings, even if you think it’s just a small calling. We need to do our best for the benefit of those around us.” **NE**

NEmore

Want a free download of an Aaronic Priesthood purposes poster? Find it at www.lds.org/pa/ym/DutytoGod_purposes.pdf.

For more information on the Aaronic Priesthood, go to **GospelTopics.lds.org** and read the entry under Aaronic Priesthood.

DAVID’S FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

David lives the standards by following the example of the sons of Mosiah, found in his favorite scripture:

“They had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth; for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God.

“But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; . . . and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God” (Alma 17:2–3).

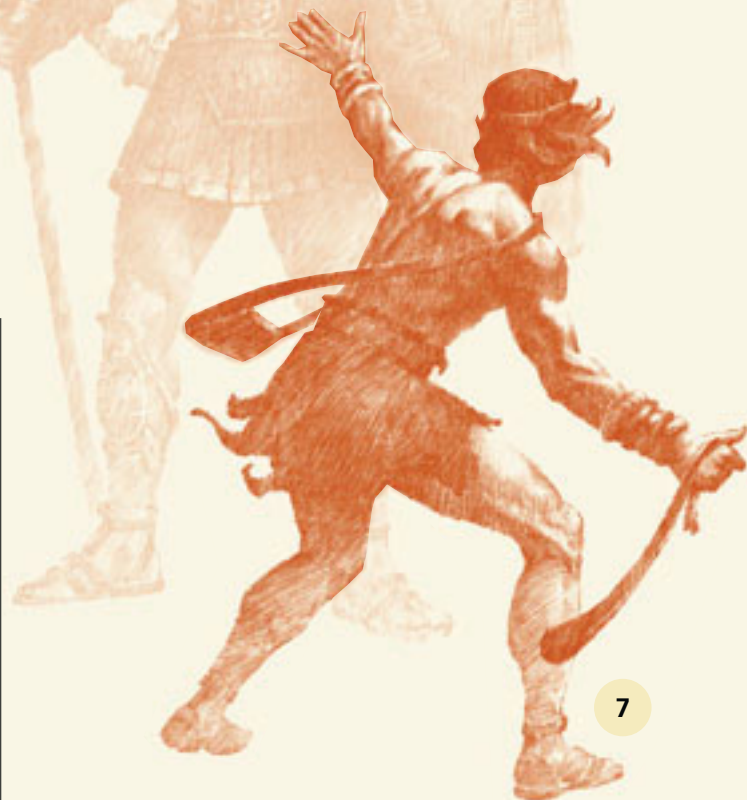
TIMELY EVEN TODAY

Think the Old Testament is too ancient to teach you anything? Better think again.

By Andrew Horton

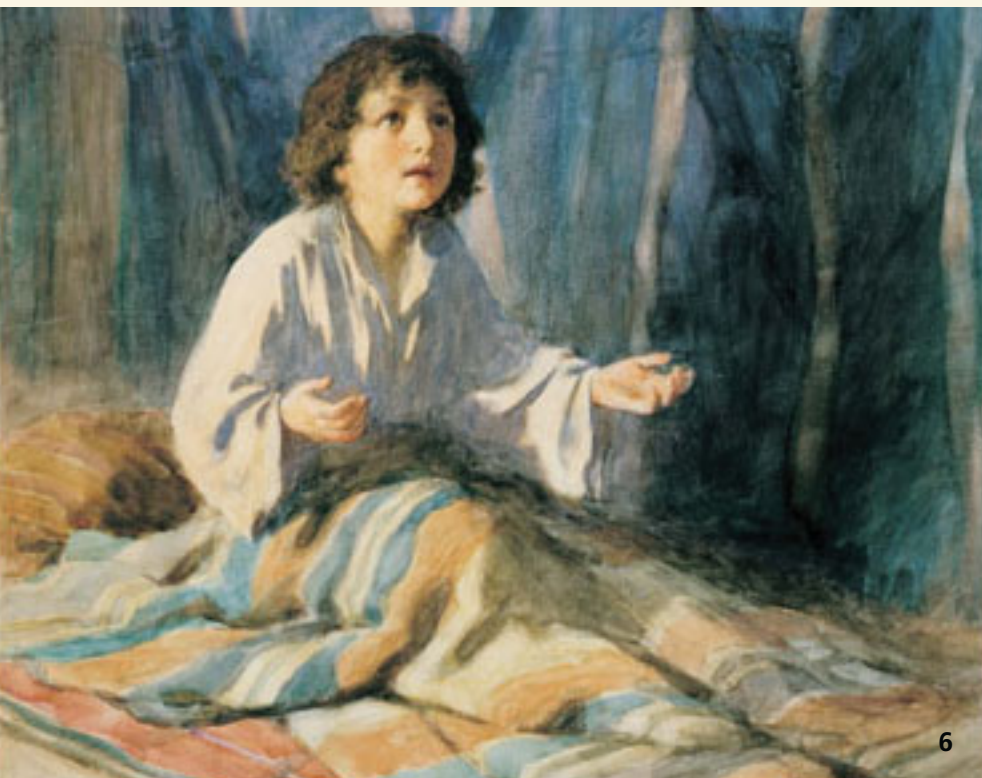
Church Educational System

Although the words, time, and culture of the Old Testament are very different from today, you may be surprised at how much you can learn from the Old Testament. With some prayerful study, you can find principles in the stories of the Old Testament that can apply to your life today. Here are just nine of many examples:



7

1. Joseph of Egypt fled from temptation (see Genesis 39:12). Fleeing temptation is always easier than sinning and repenting.
2. Joseph forgave others, even his brothers who had sold him into slavery (see Genesis 45). Do you forgive others, especially those in your own family?
3. The Lord provided manna each day to feed the Israelites (see Exodus 16:15). The Lord has also provided many things to nourish our spirits: prayer, scriptures, the sacrament, temples.
4. Exodus 28 specifies how Aaron and other priesthood holders should dress. The Lord asked them to dress in a certain way to remind them of important parts of their worship. When you go to church or to the temple, how does the way you dress affect your reverence and worship?



6



8

5. Much of the book of Leviticus is about sacrifice and its blessings. Your sacrifices—of time, talents, or money—will bring you the blessings of heaven.

6. From Samuel's example, we learn the importance of listening for and recognizing the Lord's voice (see 1 Samuel 3:4–10). As you learn to recognize and follow promptings from the Holy Ghost, your life will improve.

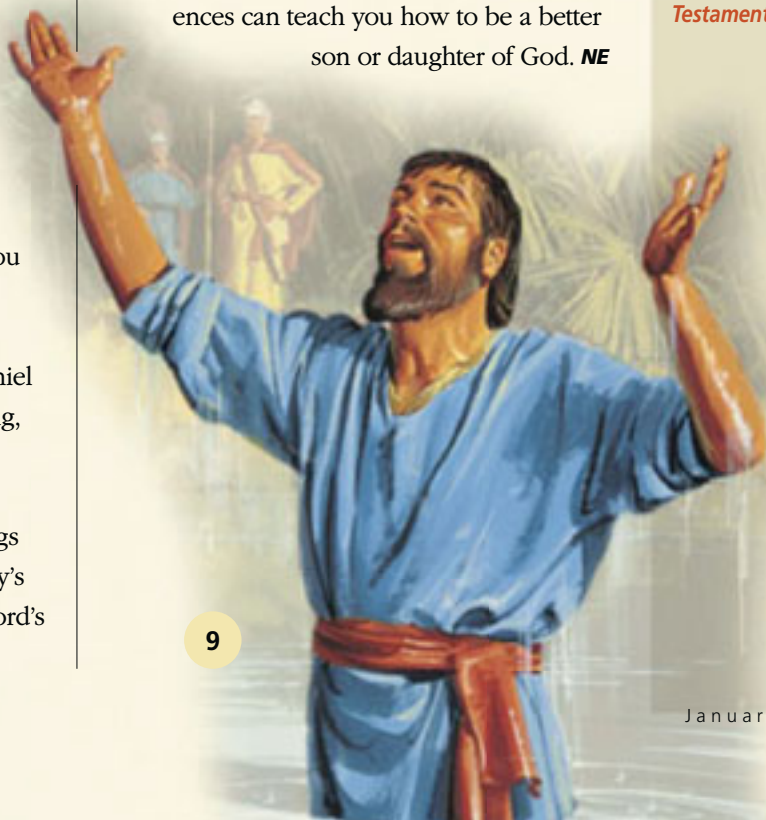
7. Young David's choices showed that he believed that "there is a God in Israel" (1 Samuel 17:32–51). Your choices testify whether or not you believe in God.

8. Daniel went against the king's command and was found praying (see Daniel 6:11). How often are you found praying, even when it seems hard?

9. Naaman learned that power comes when we obey the prophet (see 2 Kings 5:1–14). Following the counsel of today's prophets and apostles will bring the Lord's power into your life too.

King Nebuchadnezzar cast three Israelites into a fire. But when the king looked into the fire, he saw "four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire . . . and the form of the fourth [was] like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:24–25). As you look into the Old Testament, you can see God walking with His children. Their experiences can teach you how to be a better son or daughter of God. **NE**

Listening to the Spirit (above left), praying even when it's difficult (above), and following the prophet's counsel (below) are just a few of the lessons we can learn from the Old Testament.



9

What does the Old Testament tell us about what scriptural leaders accomplished as teenagers?

TEENS IN THE

Although we remember most of the well-known people in the Old Testament because of the things they did as adults, we can sometimes discover hints about what these remarkable people were like in their teens. In fact, discovering the decisions and choices they made while growing up may help you in living your life today. Here are a few examples:



Isaac

Born to Abraham and Sarah when they were in their old age, Isaac was a child of promise. Although the scriptures do not give his exact age, they say he was a “lad” when he accompanied his father Abraham and was prepared to become a sacrifice (Genesis 22:3–19). He learned from his father to follow the Lord’s guidance and show faith; then Isaac’s life was preserved.

Moses

After being discovered as a babe in the bulrushes and taken to the palace to be raised as a prince, Moses received a first-class education (see Acts 7:22). In his teens, he may have been taught to read and write Egyptian.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC: BY TED HENNINGER, © 1979 IRI; BOY SAMUEL CALLED BY THE LORD: GOD APPEARS IN A NIGHT VISION TO THE BOY PROPHET SAMUEL, BY HARRY ANDERSON, © IRI; RUTH PLEDGES LOYALTY TO NAOMI, © 1990 ROBERT BARRETT, DO NOT COPY

OLD TESTAMENT

Samuel

Samuel was born as a gift from the Lord to his mother Hannah. She promised to give him to the Lord to be raised by the priest Eli. Samuel grew and served, and when he was about 12 years old, he was awakened by the voice of the Lord calling to him in the night (see 1 Samuel 3:4–10). Even as a boy, Samuel learned to listen to the voice of the Lord. This began his preparation to become a prophet.

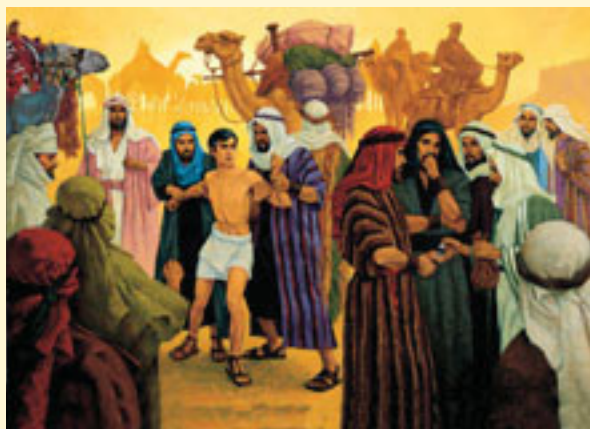
Ruth

Ruth was young when her first husband died. Rather than return to her family, Ruth chose to go with her mother-in-law and accept what she had been taught about the God of Israel. She said to Naomi, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16). Ruth married again and became the great-grandmother to King David, the line in which Jesus Christ was eventually born.



Joseph

Joseph was about 17 when his older brothers sold him to traders who took him as a slave to Egypt. Even in such circumstances, Joseph was blessed. Joseph did a good job for Potiphar, the man who bought him, and everything Joseph



worked at prospered (see Genesis 39:3–4). Joseph continued to work hard and was loyal to his master. Despite false charges and accusations, Joseph eventually rose to become a leader in Egypt second only to Pharaoh. His success put him in a position to help his own family during difficult times.

Daniel

After his family and people were captured and taken to Babylon, Daniel and three friends were brought to serve in the palace of the king. As teenage boys, they refused to eat the sacrificial meat and drink the wine that those in the palace ate. They kept the commandments and were given knowledge and skill. In Daniel 1:20, it says that the king found these four “ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.”

David

David was the youngest of eight sons who lived in Bethlehem. While a boy, he proved his courage by saving his father's sheep from attack by a lion and a bear. While still a teen, David was chosen by the prophet Samuel to be a king (see 1 Samuel 16:12–13). At first, Samuel thought David's older brother was the one whom God would choose because he was tall and well-built, but the Lord said to the prophet that it was the boy David who was to be made king. Samuel was told, “The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).



When did the men and women of the Old Testament begin preparing for a lifetime of service to the Lord? From the scriptures we find that it was when they were young. When you are in your teens, you are old enough to learn about the Lord and do His

will. As the prophet Alma said to his son Helaman, “O, remember, my son, and learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God” (Alma 37:35). Instead of waiting until you’re an adult, right now is the perfect time to start living a righteous life. **NE**

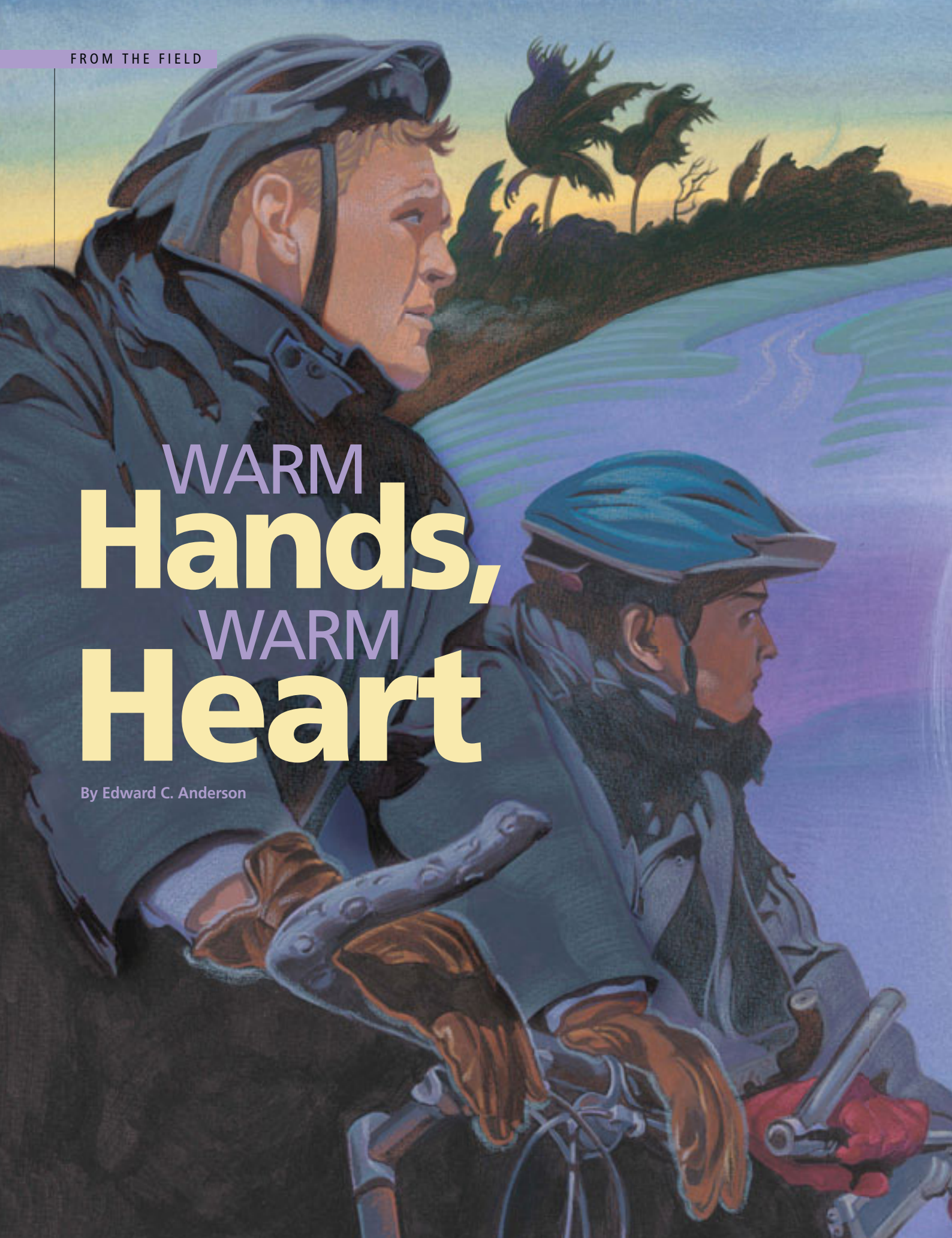
Information for this article came from the Bible Dictionary in the LDS version of the King James Bible and from *The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. Henry Snyder Gehman (1970).



FROM THE FIELD

WARM Hands, WARM Heart

By Edward C. Anderson





It was easy to give when there was extra, but giving away something valuable to me was much harder.

The Kuang Kuang Hao, a special express train, sped through the countryside in Taiwan, passing scenes of quiet rivers, hills dotted with Chinese burial mounds, scattered villages, and endless waves of rice fields. As I stepped off the train in Miao Li, the cold winter wind hit me in the face.

Despite the cold, missionary routine in my new area soon became settled. I enjoyed being a senior companion and had a good junior companion. I was comfortable giving the missionary lessons and interacting with the people.

In our branch I met a member named Hu Chin Hsi, who looked like a scarecrow with wild, straggly hair. His eyes were bright but sunken, and his body was thin and straight. He talked with enthusiasm but stopped often to wheeze and cough because he had a chronic lung and respiratory disease. Despite his struggles, Brother Hu was a faithful member and the branch clerk.

One cold winter night we rode our bikes

to visit Brother Hu. He lived on a hillside, where the winter wind blew. His home made of loosely nailed planks with a dirt floor was just large enough for one man to lie down and store a few things in. Brother Hu explained he was poor because the money he made as a tax assessor was spent on medicine to keep him alive, and any leftover money was spent on food.

As the rainy season became more severe, we knew Brother Hu needed more help to survive until spring. We collected two extra comforters, some clothing, and some money for food. Brother Hu was grateful for the gifts, and with tears in his eyes, he thanked us over and over.

Everything seemed fine until we noticed he had nothing to keep his hands warm. I thought we could buy him a pair of cloth gloves, but I knew these gloves didn't last long and often came apart. Brother Hu needed something dependable, long-lasting, and warm.

I had a pair of leather, fur-lined gloves that were given to me by a companion who had completed his mission the previous summer. He told me the gloves were rare and that it would be impossible to find or buy such gloves in Taiwan. The moist, cold tropical air of Miao Li proved how valuable a gift those gloves were, and I guarded them

everywhere I went. But now someone else needed them.

When Brother Hu needed blankets, clothes, and money for food, we shared. Now he needed gloves, and I was more than willing to buy him some cloth gloves but not give him mine. I rationalized that I had two more winters as a missionary on this island and needed warm gloves. I even bought a pair of cloth gloves to give Brother Hu, but I was uneasy and unhappy.

I contemplated my behavior and realized I was being selfish. If it didn't cause me any hardship or sacrifice, I was willing to give. But a rare possession like my gloves was a harder test.

Though it seemed like such a sacrifice at the time, I gave Brother Hu my leather, fur-lined gloves. I took the cloth gloves, which caught on my bike and totally unraveled two days later. What lasted, though, is my memory of Hu Chin Hsi with his cough and wheeze and what I learned from giving to him.

As I think of sacrifice and charity, I think of how trivial and insignificant a pair of gloves or any temporal possession seems. I think of the greatest sacrifice made by the Son of God. He who had little or none of the earth's possessions, no worldly titles or honors, gave up that which was most precious—His life—for each of us. **NE**

Three Priests in Pennsylvania

By Hillary Holbrook

These young men know their duty, and they're doing it well.

The organ plays a beautiful, touching sacrament hymn. Ward members open their hymnals and begin to sing along, reflecting on Christ and the Atonement. And three young men reverently break bread in preparation for the passing of the sacrament. The three priests, Randy Hulet, Reuben Kendall, and Ethan Kennedy, of the State College First Ward in State College, Pennsylvania, are busy fulfilling one of many Aaronic Priesthood duties.

"It's an honor to break the bread and bless the sacrament each Sunday," says Ethan, 18. "It's a big responsibility, and we, as priests, need to make sure that we're worthy so we can perform this service for the congregation."

Administering the Sacrament

Blessing the sacrament isn't something that came naturally to Reuben, who recently joined the priests quorum as a 16-year-old. "I was so nervous. I thought, 'This is going to be impossible. I'm going to mess up a lot.' But I said a little prayer that I wouldn't mess up, and I didn't," Reuben says.

Randy, 18, says that passing the sacrament as a deacon and helping to prepare it as a teacher gave him the confidence that he needed to administer the sacrament as a priest. He says that fulfilling his priesthood responsibilities earlier on made his duties as a priest seem "more real," and that he had the desire to "say the sacrament prayers in a way that would be pleasing to Heavenly Father."

Reuben says that every time he blesses the bread or water, he "feels the Spirit overwhelmingly." He adds, "Just like the sacrament prayers never change, the way that I feel when I say them never changes, either. The Spirit is always there, so long as I am worthy to feel it. It's a comfort. It's there to help me do well."

Not only do the three teens understand the importance of the ordinance, they also understand that wearing a white shirt and tie to church each Sunday is important because it shows respect for the ordinance and for Jesus Christ. "Despite the fact that I like colored shirts, I know that I should wear a white shirt when I help with the sacrament. White is a symbol of purity," Ethan says.

Aside from administering the sacrament, the three priests also work hard to fulfill their other priesthood responsibilities as they prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and serve missions, like teaching the gospel and assisting in missionary work.

Teaching the Gospel

These three young men have had home teaching assignments since they were 14, including Ethan who lived in Germany at that time. "My father and I would go home teaching to a woman who lived 45 minutes away. She was less active, so home teaching her was the only interaction she had with the Church each month," Ethan says.

Having that assignment when he was younger and fulfilling his current home teaching assignment has helped Ethan understand the importance of teaching. Furthermore, he says, it has prepared him to serve a mission in the near future. "When I go on a mission, I'll be able to teach people lessons and not have to worry about

it because of my experiences as a home teacher,” Ethan says. “It’s a testimony to me of how the Aaronic Priesthood is helping me to prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood.”

Reuben says that home teaching is great preparation for a mission because “it gets you more comfortable teaching lessons to people and using the Spirit to help you teach, and then that will later help you prepare for the MTC when you learn how to teach and on your mission when you’re actually teaching.”

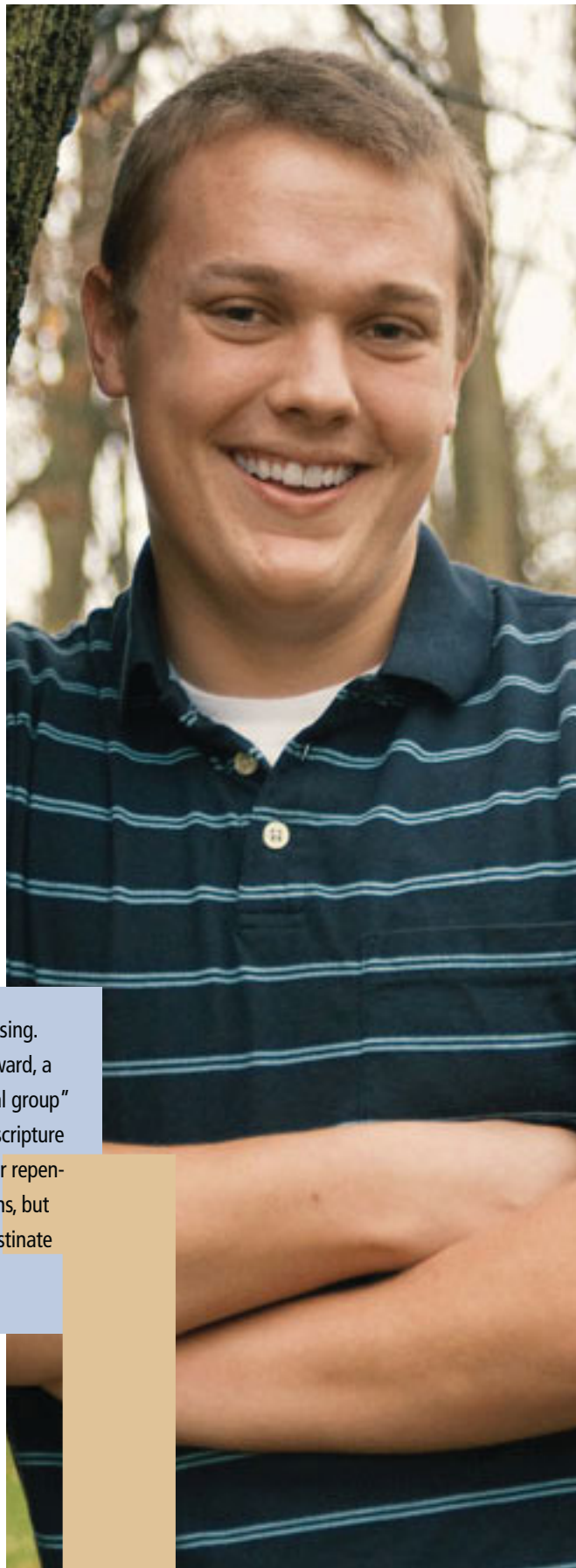
Reuben remembers his experience as a 14-year-old teacher and going home-teaching for the first time. “I was kind of nervous because I hadn’t done it before, but then after I read over the lesson, I thought, ‘I can do this.’ Having the Spirit with me helped because it helped me to say the things that the people we were visiting needed to hear, even though I hadn’t originally planned on saying certain things,” Reuben says. “I’ve learned that in order to have the Spirit help you, you first have to prepare and try to be ready. If you can do that, it can help you out a lot.”

Other Priesthood Duties

While administering the sacrament and teaching the gospel are duties that these three teens get to experience often, there are other priesthood duties that are fulfilled a little less frequently, like participating in a priesthood ordination or assisting in missionary work.

Randy Hulet, 18, is originally from Blacksburg, Virginia, and loves to sing. He participates in four different choirs—a seasonal youth quartet in his ward, a regular ward choir, a regular school choir, and “an elite 16-member choral group” at his high school. Randy is one of five siblings. He says that his favorite scripture is Alma 34:32–34, which is a warning to not procrastinate the day of your repentance. “We don’t know when Christ is going to come again. We have signs, but we always have to be ready for it. It helps me to remember to not procrastinate things,” Randy says.

When Ethan’s younger brother was ordained a teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood a year and a half ago, Ethan was able to participate in the ordination and blessing. “I was able to stand there for him. It was really cool. I was very happy that I could do that for him and support him,” Ethan says.





Building a Testimony

Most LDS teens at some point in their young lives are given opportunities in the Church that enable them to have spiritual experiences and gain a testimony. Such has been the case with Reuben, who attended a testimony meeting during a week at a camp in Pennsylvania for LDS young men.

“Throughout my deacon and teacher years in the Aaronic Priesthood, I had a testimony, but that night at camp truly affirmed that testimony,” Reuben says. “During that testimony meeting, I felt the power of the Holy Ghost witnessing to me the truths of the gospel that Jesus Christ is the Savior and that through Joseph Smith the gospel was restored to the earth.”

Reading the scriptures also helps Reuben build his testimony because, Reuben says, he can receive personal revelation from the scriptures and “get something totally different out of the scriptures than what I thought I would going into that reading session.”

Receiving personal revelation is not a new concept to Randy, who says a turning point in his testimony came when he received his patriarchal blessing. “After I got my patriarchal blessing, I read it for the first time. I then realized that Heavenly Father cares about all of us and that the blessing comes from Him. Receiving that blessing just manifested to me that patriarchal blessings are personal scripture for us.”

Ethan has also felt the power of the Holy Ghost, which has strengthened his testimony. Ethan, who is the eldest of four siblings, tells of a time when his youngest sister was

Reuben Kendall, 16, doesn't mind a little grease under his fingernails. He loves cars and has taken many elective courses at his high school to learn about them. “Cars are a lot more technical and computer-driven now than they ever have been, so I love to take classes like auto-technology,” Reuben says. Aside from cars, Reuben is into computers and video games. Reuben, who was born and raised in State College, Pennsylvania, is the youngest of four boys in his family. His favorite scripture is 2 Nephi 13:18–26, which is a prophecy given by Isaiah. “I find these scriptures particularly interesting because it's a testimony of revelation,” Reuben says. “Isaiah saw all these problems way back then, and it applies today.”

baptized. “We were living here in Pennsylvania when she was baptized, and we drove up to the Susquehanna River, where Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were baptized,” Ethan says. “My sister was baptized in that place. That experience reaffirmed what I knew—that baptism is the only way to return to Heavenly Father. It is the gate to eternal life.”

Assisting in Missionary Work

Priests who are 16 years old can also assist in missionary work, something that Reuben, Randy, and Ethan recently had the opportunity to do.

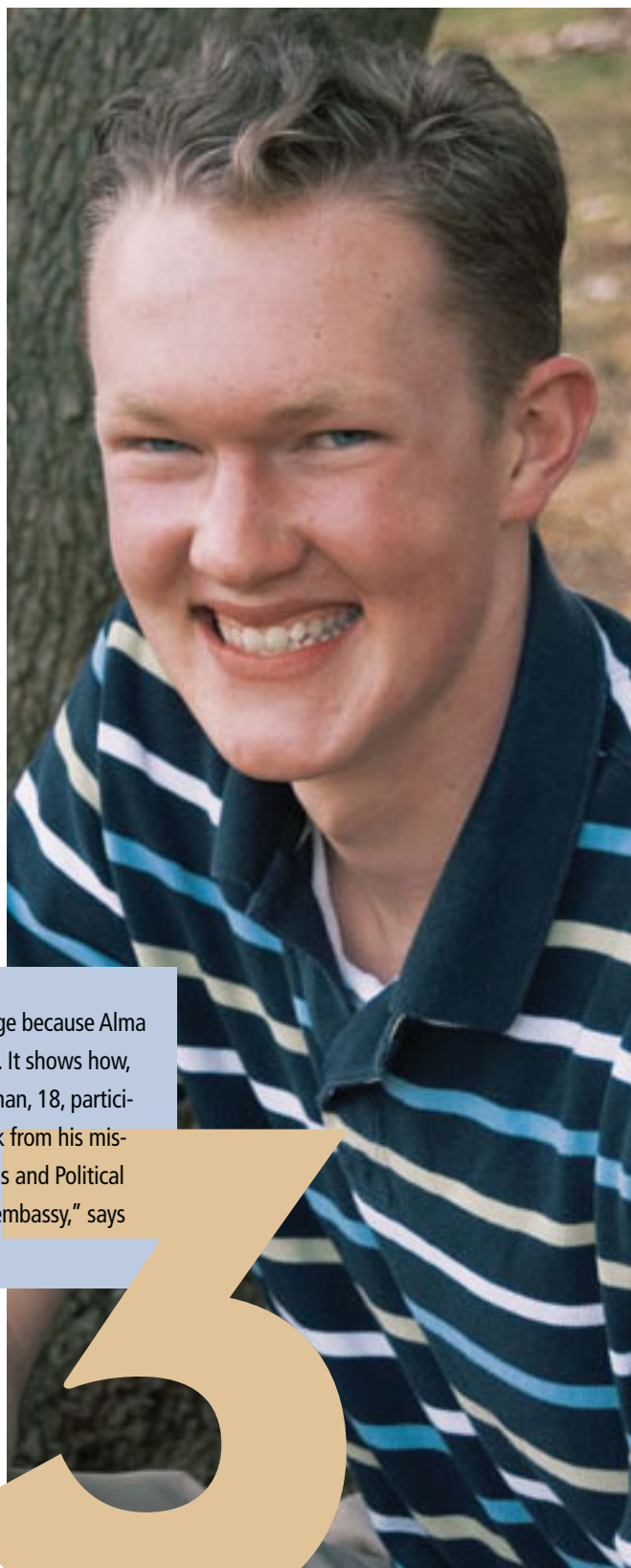
Ethan says that going out with the missionaries taught him the importance of being a hard worker. “We would be walking down the street, and the missionaries would talk to perfect strangers. They would say, ‘Hello,’ or, ‘Would you like to hear this message we have?’” Ethan says. “A lot of people would ignore the missionaries or say, ‘No, thank you,’ but the missionaries would keep on trying. It was a real lesson to me that I need to be persistent when I serve a mission.”

Helping with missionary work was also an eye-opener after visiting less-active members in the ward. “It’s nice to know that there are people who come to church every

Ethan Kennedy’s favorite scripture is Alma 32:21. “I love this passage because Alma is teaching the Zoramites about faith and how their testimonies can grow. It shows how, as long as we have faith, our testimonies can be nourished and grow.” Ethan, 18, participates in all the same choirs with Randy and sings tenor. After he gets back from his mission, he wants to go to college and double major in International Relations and Political Science. “I want to do something with the foreign services or work in an embassy,” says Ethan, who is fluent in German after living in Germany for many years.

week, but there are many people who don’t come. And knowing they’re out there really makes me want to try to help them come back to church. It’s increased my awareness,” Ethan says.

The three young men are anxious for the day when they get to serve in the mission field. But for now, they’re busy doing what they always try to do best—fulfill their priesthood duties. **NE**



TO THE POINT

How do I tell a friend her music is inappropriate without losing her friendship? She always tells me that if I'm her friend, then I won't complain about it. What should I do?

The music and the friends you surround yourself with are strong influences in your life. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said: “Choose your friends carefully. It is they who will lead you in one direction or the other.”¹

Discussing the music you and your friend listen to can be a good experience for both of you. Respectfully explain your feelings about the value of good media and the destructive nature of bad media. Share with her how her choice of music prevents you from enjoying your time together more fully.

If she continues to listen to music that offends the Spirit, consider changing friends. Friends are important, but not at the expense of your spiritual well-being. **NE**

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2001, 36; *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 4.

Is Satan real? Can he harm us or cause us to have bad thoughts?

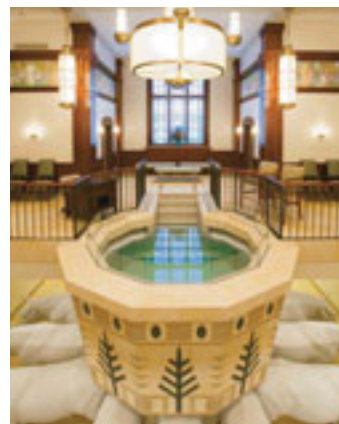
Satan is real. In the premortal life he was known as Lucifer. He rebelled against our Father in Heaven’s plan during the great council in heaven and sought to destroy the agency of man. He was “cast down” and became the devil, the enemy of righteousness and of those who seek to do the will of Heavenly Father. He is the author of deception and lies, a subtle and practiced deceiver. (See Moses 4:1–6.) He and his followers try to imitate the work of God to lead people astray.

Satan uses many techniques to tempt us, but we can triumph over him through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, obedience in honoring covenants and keeping commandments, repentance, and receiving the proper ordinances. Satan can place temptations in our way and urge us to do bad things, but he has no power over us unless we allow it.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Satan cannot seduce us by his enticements unless we in our hearts consent and yield. . . . We can resist the devil; if we were not organized so, we would not be free agents” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church*:



**Baptismal
font in
the Helsinki
Finland
Temple.**



others were baptized without the correct authority.

Because our Heavenly Father is merciful and just, He does not condemn those who did not have the opportunity to be baptized during their lifetime. In order for these deceased persons to have the opportunity to receive eternal life, baptisms for the dead are performed in their behalf by worthy Church members in temples (see 1 Corinthians 15:29; D&C 124:29–36; 128:18).

The deceased persons, who are in the spirit world, choose to accept or reject the gospel and the ordinances done on their behalf (see D&C 138:58–59).

By performing baptisms for the dead, you are giving more of Heavenly Father's children the opportunity to receive all of His blessings. **NE**

What do you want to know? E-mail your questions to newera@ldschurch.org. Please put "To the Point" in the subject line.

Joseph Smith [2007], 213).

"When Satan's lies succeed in deceiving us, we become vulnerable to his power," said Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles ("Be Not Deceived," *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 43).

President James E. Faust said, "I once heard [a temple president] say, 'The devil is not smart because he is the devil; he is smart because he is old.' Indeed, the devil is old, and he was not always the devil. . . . And Nephi states that the devil 'hath no power over the hearts' of righteous people. We have heard comedians and others justify or explain their misdeeds by saying, 'The devil made me do it.' I do not really think the devil can make us do anything" ("The Forces That Will Save Us," *Ensign*, Jan. 2007, 7–8).

At another time, President Faust said, "If we are conscientiously trying to avoid not only evil but the very appearance of evil, we will act for ourselves and not be acted upon.

"Much of what comes from the devil is alluring and enticing. . . .

" . . . In simple terms, that which is good comes from God, and that which is evil comes from the devil. You can't have it both ways and find true happiness; some have tried, but in the long run all have failed" ("The Devil's Throat," *Ensign*, May 2003, 51).

"Protection against the influence of the devil is found by obedience to the commandments and laws of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The message of all the prophets and apostles is that truth, righteousness, and peace shall in the end prevail over error, sin, and war; the faithful shall triumph over all their afflictions and enemies, and shall triumph over the devil. There shall be a complete and lasting victory of righteousness over wickedness on this earth, which will be done by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Bible Dictionary, "Devil"). **NE**

**My nonmember
friends ask why we
do baptisms
for the dead.
They think it's
strange. How do I
answer them?**

The Savior taught, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). This means that in order to receive eternal life—the purpose of our existence—a person must be baptized and receive the Holy Ghost.

Although baptism is essential, there are several reasons why many people have not been baptized. Some lived without a knowledge of the gospel, and



Now is the time to prepare for the wonderful future that awaits you. Personal Progress will help you prepare and will help you understand your identity as a daughter of God.

Personal Progress is not a program that is separate and apart from your life. It is a tool that you can use to draw closer to the Savior, serve others, be anxiously engaged in good works, learn leadership skills, develop relationships with others, and prepare for temple covenants. Personal Progress helps each young woman who participates develop daily righteous routines. When you do small things consistently, they become part of who you are and they change you. It really is “by small and simple things” that “great things [are] brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).

The **new revised Personal Progress booklet** has the temple on the cover. The temple is the symbol for the youth of the Church. The temple is the reason for all that we do in the Young Women program. We hope as you look at the temple on the cover, you will always remember that participating in Personal Progress helps you prepare to make and keep covenants in the temple someday.

The new Personal Progress book is pink! It is a reminder that you are a daughter of our Heavenly Father and have unique feminine characteristics, gifts, and roles. The book contains instructions on how you are to proceed, as well as the age-group symbols for the years of participation in the Young Women Program. Most of the value experiences and projects are the same, but some have changed just slightly to be more current and more focused on the temple covenants you will one day make and keep. Any questions?

How do I begin Personal Progress? Beginning is easy! Just open the book and start on any one of the values that interests you. You don’t have to do the values in order. Doing the required experiences will help you gain a knowledge of what the value is and why it is important for you in your life.

Who can participate? Anyone who desires to participate is welcome. You can invite your nonmember friends to do Personal Progress with you. Your mothers or other exemplary women may also participate. We are all progressing and trying to grow and develop and become all that our Heavenly Father intended we should become.

How quickly should I proceed? Usually when you open the Personal Progress book, you can find some things you are already doing at school or in your home. Be sure to give yourself credit for these things and plan ahead so that you can do them with purpose. Each Sunday, you might evaluate what you have accomplished in your Personal Progress and write in your journal. Then you will be able to really give yourself credit for all the good that you are doing. You can go at your own pace. If you do one experience each month and two projects each year, you will be

WHAT'S NEW IN PERSONAL PROGRESS?

By Elaine S. Dalton

Young Women General President

The Young Women Personal Progress program takes on a new look with some new additions.



THE BEEHIVE SYMBOL is the beehive, which is a reminder of harmony, cooperation, and work.

THE MIA MAID SYMBOL is the rose, which is a reminder of love, faith, and purity.



THE LAUREL SYMBOL is the laurel wreath, which stands for honor and accomplishment.

YOUNG WOMEN MEDALLION

When you complete Personal Progress, you will record your testimony in your journal and arrange to have an interview with the bishop. You will then be eligible to receive your Young Womanhood medallion. The medallion has been changed to include the age-group symbols as well as the temple. It also has a small ruby in the center of the Mia Maid rose. This ruby symbolizes that you have completed your Personal Progress and the new value of Virtue. The ruby will remind you that a virtuous young woman is precious and that "her price is far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10).

HONOR BEE

Young women who have earned their medallion may go on to earn an Honor Bee by reading the Book of Mormon again and doing additional service, including helping another young woman with Personal Progress.

PERSONAL PROGRESS BOOK AND JOURNAL

When you complete a value experience and project, you will receive a gold sticker to go in the back of your Personal Progress book. Add the date on which you completed this value. Your book will become your personal record of all the good things you are accomplishing.

Young Women
PERSONAL PROGRESS

**STANDING AS A
WITNESS OF GOD**

finished by the time you are a Laurel. Then you will have the privilege and opportunity to mentor other young women who are working on their Personal Progress. When you do this, you may earn an **Honor Bee**, which symbolizes going the extra distance in serving others. The honor bee can be worn with your Young Women medallion.

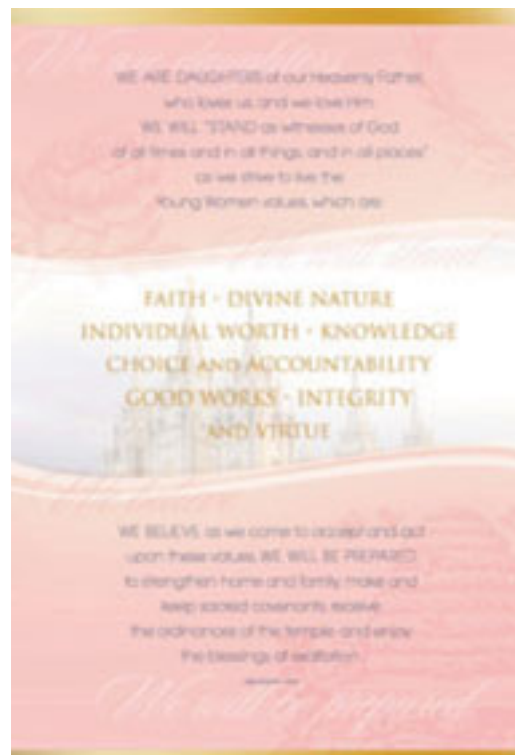
Can I do Personal Progress at Mutual? You can do some of your Personal Progress at Mutual. A project could become your Mutual activity. You may also work on Personal Progress on Sunday as you learn about the values and study the scriptures in your Young Women class. Ask your adviser to read or explain any scriptures you do not understand. Remember that although Personal Progress is “personal,” you may do some parts of it with others.

What kinds of leadership opportunities does it give me? As you organize and prepare to accomplish a 10-hour project, you may invite other young women in your class or ward to help you. They will benefit from their service and participation, and when they need you, you can help them. Doing this will help you learn the leadership skills for your future roles as a wife, mother, and homemaker. It will also help you learn how to organize, communicate, and complete a difficult task.

Should I do Personal Progress with my mother? You are invited to participate in Personal Progress with your mother. Both of you are constantly doing so many good things. You can encourage each other and recognize the good things you are doing and you can even approve each other's projects and sign each other's books! Have fun together, and if your mother does not desire to participate, you may also do Personal Progress with an older young woman or another righteous woman who is working on her Personal Progress. You can also ask for the help of your leaders when you need it.

Why am I asked to keep a journal? For many of the value experiences and projects, you will be asked to write in your journal your thoughts and feelings, as well as the things you are learning. This journal will become a precious record for you of your days in the Young Women organization and the commitments you have made. Writing in your journal will also invite the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

The blessings of participating in Personal Progress extend far beyond the Young Women years. You will draw closer to the Savior. Your faith and testimony of Him and of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ will increase. You will be prepared for your divine mission and roles on the earth. You will taste the sweetness of service and experience the joys of righteous accomplishments. You will feel the promptings of the Holy Ghost, which will guide and teach you. You will develop a pattern that will bless your life, now and throughout all eternity. It is a pattern of progress and of making and keeping temple covenants. May you each be blessed as you begin with us this pattern of progression. We love you! The Lord loves you! You are His precious daughters. **NE**



THEME POSTER AND CARD

We have also provided a new theme poster, which contains the new eighth value of Virtue. You will probably see one of these in the Young Women room where you meet each week. We have also provided a smaller version—a theme card—for your room or your locker at school. It has the theme on the front and an explanation of the age-group names of Beehive, Mia Maid, and Laurel on the back.



TORCH NECKLACE

When you enter the Young Women organization, your leaders will present you with a “torch” necklace. This necklace symbolizes your commitment to stand for truth and righteousness at all times and in all things and in all places. The symbol of the flame will also remind you to “arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations” (D&C 115:5). Wear this necklace proudly, and remember your commitment.

SCRIPTURE RIBBONS

As you complete each value experience and project, you will receive a ribbon for your scriptures.

You may use this ribbon to mark your favorite scriptures on the values. The ribbons will be the color of the values: white for faith, gold for virtue, and so forth. Your leader will present this ribbon to you in a Young Women meeting when you have completed all the requirements.

ADVANCEMENT CERTIFICATES

As you advance from one age group to another, you will be recognized by your bishop with a certificate of recognition and completion. This may be kept in a special place to remind you of the things you have learned and done in your Beehive, Mia Maid, and Laurel years.

OPTIONAL RIBBON ORGANIZER FOR YOUR SCRIPTURES

If your mother or leader is interested, an optional ribbon organizer is available, which you can slide down the spine of your scriptures to keep from losing the value ribbons you have worked so hard to earn.

Editor's note: The new Personal Progress items will be available through Distribution Services after January 15, 2010.

Young Womanhood
Laurel Years
Mia Maid
Beehive Certificate

Name _____ a young woman in the _____ Stake/Church

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

having completed the following accomplishments is awarded this

CERTIFICATE OF PROGRESS

and in For the Strength of Youth, making progress in Personal Progress, attending church regularly, and being "an example of the believers"





Learning from Personal Progress

By Marissa Jensen

One little book helped lead me to joy and guide me through trials.

I remember my first Mutual activity. I went as a guest or investigator a couple of days after my 12th birthday, before I was even a member.

To be honest, I really didn't want to be there. My excuse was that I didn't know anyone who claimed they went to this Church. At the time, I was attending a different Christian program that was just mainly fun. I really liked my friends there and the competitive games provided by the youth directors. So technically I was comparing the two church programs to see which one I liked best, and I was sure that I already knew which one I preferred and didn't need to prove it by going to Mutual.

Or so I thought.

After my mom pleaded and begged, I found myself the following Wednesday night dragging up the concrete steps and opening the door for the first time.

I was instantly welcomed by many girls my age and even some older. "Strange," I thought. "They don't even know me and yet, they're going out of their way to be extra nice." There was this warm, sweet peace enfolding me as I timidly sat down in a chair in the room where the Beehives were meeting. I don't really remember much from my real first encounter with the Church, but I do remember one thing—how I felt.

I do recall the Beehive activity was being read out of a cute periwinkle-colored book. I participated to the best of my ability and passed off my first value experience. I didn't know at the time that this little Personal Progress

book, and what it guided me to learn, would reach the depths of my heart and only four months later help me want to enter the waters of baptism.

Now, almost four years later, I have gained a humble testimony of my Savior through the teachings and powerful messages located right in that same cute little book I was introduced to years ago. This book helped me understand and live the gospel by studying and heeding the scriptures and words of modern prophets.

I am so grateful that I followed the counsel of Jesus Christ and came unto Him. I shudder to think of where I might have been drifting if I had stayed with what I thought was just a fun church program so long ago.

I came unto Christ because of these words in the Book of Mormon: "And again I would exhort you that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing" (Moroni 10:30).

He continues and strongly states in verse 32: "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; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God."

A short time ago, my world came to a drastic halt when my beloved friend became very ill. At first I just assumed it was just a very bad cold, and he would

recover. But to my saddened heart, the news soon came to me that my dear companion was dying slowly of a rare sickness.

I am talking of my horse, which I rode in various competitions around the United States. We had the honor of riding to our first national champion title at the 2007 Canadian National Arabian horse show.

He was everything I could ever hope for as a faithful mount and friend. Now he was dying of liver and kidney failure. He taught me a lot through the nearly four years I had been graciously given to know and adore him.

I now know that this was all part of God's plan and that this would be a trial for me to overcome in my life. I would have to lean on the principles I was taught in the scriptures, by prophets, and in Personal Progress, as my faith was tested. After many weeks of struggling,

I realized I had forgotten to go first to the Lord for comfort.

I know that I am a daughter of a Heavenly Father who loves me and I love Him. I know that all the Personal Progress values reflect the Redeemer, even Christ himself. And as we strive to become perfect just like Him, we can go to those values and study them thoughtfully and prepare ourselves for any obstacles in our daily lives.

I hope that Young Women everywhere will learn of the unique importance of Personal Progress and work diligently to fulfill all of its requirements. **NE**



Going to Mutual activities and working on Personal Progress values changed my life and taught me how to overcome obstacles.

PRAYING FOR AN ANSWER

Sometimes you pray for help, but the answers come only after your faith is tested.

By Sylvia Waterböhr

One day while taking a math test, I couldn't remember how to solve one of the problems. I had prepared for this test, but I could not remember what I had reviewed at home. I did, however, have faith that I could ask my Father in Heaven for help.

I decided I would accept the first prompting I felt. After the prayer, I had the feeling that I could solve the problem in a specific way. But I began to doubt because it seemed like an odd way to work the problem. So I went ahead and did it on my own as well as I could.

Once all the tests had been handed in, our teacher went over the test with us. I found that the feeling I had had after the prayer would have led to the right answer, but I had not listened.

Later, during final exams, I found once again that I could not solve one of the problems, even though I had practiced this problem at home.

I wanted to ask Heavenly Father for help, but I remembered when I had bluntly rejected His help. Now I felt ashamed to ask. But because I couldn't think of any other solution, I prayed for help anyway.

Once again I doubted when the prompting came; I was even more confused than I had been before. But I had promised the Lord that I would listen. So I suppressed the doubts and did exactly what the prompting said I should do.

After correcting the tests, our teacher announced our grades. She made it exciting by starting with the worst grades and working up to the best ones. When she did not call my name among the 3s—a low grade—I was pleased that I would have a 2, the best grade I had ever gotten in math. But when she didn't call my name among the 2s, I felt quite differently. I was absolutely certain that I could not have gotten a 1, so I began to fear that I had done the very worst in the whole class.

But then my name was called among the 1s. A lump appeared in my throat when I recognized the hand of the Lord in this and knew of His love for and patience with me. When some of my classmates said, "You did great!" I could only shake my head. I succeeded only when I followed the prompting. **NE**



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN LUKE

FAITH-FILLED SERVICE

Equipped with wheelbarrows, gloves, shovels, trash bags, and plenty of energy, youth from the Salt Lake Holladay South Stake joined with young members of the Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Greek Orthodox, and Catholic faiths to share similarities and offer service in the community. Braving a light spring drizzle, the group of about

200 teens filled the banks of a nearby river, clearing out weeds, laying fresh soil, and planting new shrubs. Eli Fullmer, a priest from the Holladay 18th Ward, explained how meeting youth of other faiths increased his desire to reach out. "I'm more ready to serve because I feel like I'm friends with everybody."

By starting the project out with an interfaith worship service, the

youth were able to focus on their common beliefs and devotion to God. After rendering service together, the teens participated in a memorial tree planting. They were reminded that they are all children of God. "We're all similar," reflected Danielle Chard, a Mia Maid from the Holladay 14th Ward. "We have similar standards. We're all good people."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JULIA WOODBURY



"Prayer is your personal key to heaven. The lock is on your side of the veil."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Prayer and Promptings," *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 46.

BY THE NUMBERS

270,000

Number of books in the Church History Library collection. When stacked on top of each other, the books would be as tall as Mt. McKinley in Alaska.



THE CHURCH IN SOUTH KOREA

The first official missionaries arrived in Korea in 1954. They learned to speak the language and taught many young students. The Korean Mission was created in 1962, with seven branches of the Church.

The Book of Mormon was printed in Korean in 1967. The first stake was created in Seoul, South Korea, in 1973. Two years later, membership had increased to 9,000, and by 1983, it had reached almost 29,000.

The Seoul Korea Temple was dedicated in 1985. When the 1988 Olympic Games were held in Korea, the Brigham Young University Folk Dancers performed at the opening ceremonies, viewed by an estimated audience of 1 billion people worldwide.

Here are a few facts about the Church today in South Korea:

Membership	81,251
Missions	4
Temples	1
Wards & Branches	142
Family History Centers	24



SEOUL KOREA TEMPLE, © 2000 GEORGE EPPERSON

Information from Newsroom at LDS.org.



COME HOME SOON

The young women of the Pleasant Ridge and Grove Park Wards from Knoxville, Tennessee, got together recently to make personalized "military dolls" for the children of parents who are stationed overseas. The young women took pictures of the child's parent who is away, transferred the image onto material, and sewed stuffed dolls for the children to have. Then the girls hand delivered the dolls along with thank-you cards to the families.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF REBECCA MCCOMBS



SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

See if you can find these books of the Old Testament. Names of the books are hidden in the grid reading forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally.

Genesis	Kings	Song of Solomon	Obadiah
Exodus	Chronicles	Isaiah	Jonah
Leviticus	Ezra	Jeremiah	Micah
Numbers	Nehemiah	Lamentations	Nahum
Deuteronomy	Esther	Ezekiel	Habakkuk
Joshua	Job	Daniel	Zephaniah
Judges	Psalms	Hosea	Haggai
Ruth	Proverbs	Joel	Zechariah
Samuel	Ecclesiastes	Amos	Malachi

MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

3 Nephi 9:14 is my favorite scripture because this is the scripture that gave me a testimony that Christ lives and wants us to follow Him.

Olivia K., 15, Heves, Hungary

Tell us about your favorite scripture in one or two sentences. Go to newera.lds.org and click on Submit Your Material.





That Book Made Me CURIOUS

I stared at the Book of Mormon and pondered the message the missionaries had taught.

By Wilfredo Valenzuela

One day my friends and I got together to celebrate. At my friend's house, we were talking, drinking, and smoking. But one of my friends, Patrick, didn't join in. I then realized that Patrick never tried any of the stuff the rest of us did; I remembered that he was a Mormon.

As it got late, everybody separated except Patrick and me. We left together in a jeepney. Still wondering why Patrick didn't join in, I thought back to a day four years before, when we were 16. I remembered we were walking in the street near our school when I told him I wanted to be a priest someday.

"In our church you could already be a priest," Patrick replied. "You just need to be ordained. Then when you turn 19, you can preach the gospel as a missionary."

"That's ridiculous," I said, thinking he didn't know much about the gospel. "How can a 19-year-old preach to people? Priests take a lot of time to study so they can preach."

Patrick insisted that 19-year-olds in his church could preach. He told me that his church also has another book of scripture, and he gave me a copy. I browsed through it at home, and I felt something mysterious in that book. But

I didn't really care about it; I just stuck it in a box, where it lay for the next four years.

Now, as we rode in the jeepney after the party, I asked Patrick where he was going. "I'm meeting some friends. They're elders—missionaries." I remembered having seen them around. I asked Patrick if he would take me to the elders so I could ask them some questions about their church.

We met up with the missionaries at a store near their subdivision, and they greeted us by shaking our hands. It was very formal. But after they introduced themselves to me, I realized they seemed like any other guys. They wanted to set up an appointment to answer my questions.

"OK, I'll just get your number so if I'm available, I will text you," I replied. I wasn't really planning to text them.

When I got home, I got the book Patrick had given me four years before—something about it made me curious. The next morning I texted the missionaries to teach me. They started with the Restoration of the gospel. It sounded so different, and I told myself, "Why do people want to restore things when they know that older generations are different than our generation now?"

After two discussions I decided not to pursue them anymore. When asked why, I replied, "I'm just not interested anymore." One week passed. I sat staring at the Book of Mormon, pondering the message I had been taught. I started to read what the missionaries told me to in 3 Nephi 11. I read that Jesus went to another nation to show that He was the Savior and Messiah. In 3 Nephi 15, I recognized one passage that I had read before in the Bible, in John 10:16. It was something the missionaries hadn't even taught me yet.

Tears fell down my face, and I found myself weeping in my room. I realized the love Jesus Christ has for us. He loves us so much that He gave His own life to save us from our sins. I didn't hesitate to pray, asking to know if the Book of Mormon I was holding is true. Praying in my room, all alone, I suddenly felt that somebody was there listening to me.

My heart was softened by the impressions I had received. I stood up and said, "This is the true Church. I know that this is the Church that Jesus Christ restored."

The day before my baptism, I repeated the process of praying. Again what I had heard and felt sunk into my heart, and I knew the Holy Ghost had revealed the truth to me. I knew the truth that Jesus is the Christ. I felt in my heart and mind that I desired to be baptized, believing that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ I could be cleansed.

Jesus Christ atoned for our sins, and this is the very reason I was converted. I know that He was the only one who has the power and the authority to rebuild His Church in our dispensation. Now as a missionary serving in the Philippines Cagayan de Oro Mission, I am doing the best I can to help people feel the great happiness I have now. **NE**



Would you like to share how you gained or strengthened your testimony? We welcome articles about faith-promoting experiences. You can e-mail your story to newera@ldschurch.org. Please put "How I Know" in the subject line.



EVERYDAY EXAMPLE

By John Taylor

When I was a junior in high school my parents invited my very best friend, Joe, to live with us. Joe's parents moved away when he was about to graduate. He did not want to leave, so my parents welcomed him into our home so that he could finish high school.

Joe came from a different background than I did. His family had their struggles, and the principles of the gospel were not emphasized as much as they were in our home.

Joe and I shared a room together in the basement of my parents' house. Every night before I went to bed I would make it a point to read my scriptures. Joe, on the other hand, had not developed a habit of reading his scriptures every day. There were nights when it was late and we were tired. Joe would often complain and tell me to turn the light off and go to bed, but I persisted, knowing that the Lord would bless me if I read my scriptures as He had commanded. Eventually, Joe moved into the room next to mine, but he always knew when my light was still on.

Joe had told me that he wasn't sure if he wanted to go on a mission, but once he was 19, he surprised us all by announcing that he was going to serve. He turned in his mission papers and received a call to the Toronto Canada East Mission.

The Sunday came for him to give a talk in sacrament meeting. He said a few things that were a surprise to us all, particularly me. Joe said that one

of the biggest influences in his decision to serve a full-time mission was the example that I had set for him in reading my scriptures every night. He said that although I might have not realized the impact it was making, he had thought about it a lot. My scripture reading had impressed him to turn his life around and serve a mission. He said that if it weren't for me and my family, he probably wouldn't be going. As I listened to him, I felt the power of the Holy Ghost flow through my body. I had no idea of the impact I had made on Joe's life.

Joe was the first in his family to serve a mission. Later, his younger brother also served. Joe's family has been greatly blessed ever since through active service in the Church. Great blessings come to those who keep the commandments of the Lord. We may never know how they will come, but they will come. **NE**

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

By Samantha Pehrson

Some time ago, I had experiences that caused me to stray. I stopped going to church and reading my scriptures, and I started doing and saying things I shouldn't. I didn't care at all. I put God at the back of my thoughts and out of my heart.

Then my seminary teacher brought up a question that changed my perspective. He asked, "Would you like to

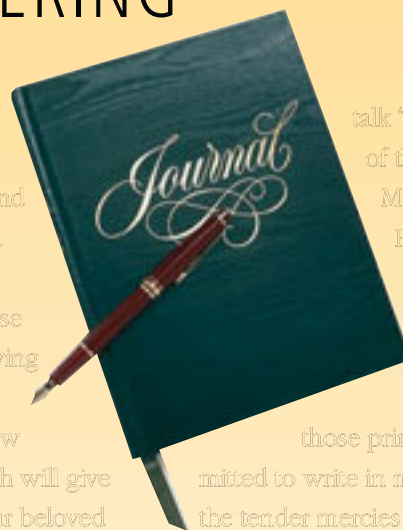
WORTH REMEMBERING

By Nathan Wareham

In my studies of the Book of Mormon, I was reading in Jacob and came across these verses.

"I cannot write but a little of my words, because of the difficulty of engraving our words upon plates. . . . But we can write a few words upon plates, which will give our children, and also our beloved brethren, a small degree of knowledge concerning us. . . . Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts" (Jacob 4:1-3).

As I read these words I remembered my commitment to keep a journal. I made this commitment in an amazing mission district meeting where we were to draw principles from Elder Bednar's



talk "The Tender Mercies of the Lord" (*Ensign*, May 2005) and also President Eyring's talk "O Remember, Remember" (*Ensign*, Nov. 2007) and apply

those principles to us. I committed to write in my journal daily of the tender mercies of the Lord, and I have kept that commitment faithfully.

Sometimes it is difficult, as Jacob points out, but I rejoice that one day my future children will read and see that the Lord has blessed me with tender mercies every day. I know that when you keep a journal and write those tender mercies you see during the day, not only you but also your children will see the hand of the Lord in their lives, and they will receive it with thankful hearts. **NE**

know when you're going to die? And if you did know, what would be some things you would change?" Most of the students in my class said they would be more charitable, read their scriptures more consistently, and make up with people they were mad at.

As I was pondering about this, I thought, "Shouldn't we already be doing those things? It shouldn't take the matter of death for us to decide to do them. And if we do them, we don't have to worry about our salvation."

Then I thought about the things

I was doing and how, if I continued to do them, I probably would not end up in the place I wanted to be. I told myself that I won't have to worry if I try harder to do the things I need to and should do, but first I had to give my heart back to God.

I know that we are children of our Heavenly Father and that bad things happen for a reason: to strengthen us and our faith. If we continue to do the things we should and remember that God always loves us and wants us to be eternally happy, then we will be happy. **NE**

Be true to who you are and the family name you bear

TRUE NAME

TO
HER

*This
good
citizen
knows
where she
stands.*

When Madilin Neibert received her school's citizenship award at the end of her seventh grade year, it took her by surprise. As one of only seven LDS youth in her school, she'd spent a lot of time that year standing up for her beliefs. Some didn't understand or agree with her, but Madilin learned that she didn't need to go along with the crowd to earn her friends' respect.

What gives her strength to stand by her convictions? Madilin quotes a favorite motto, "Be true to who you are and the family name you bear." She is true not only to her earthly name but also her heavenly identity as a daughter of God.

What was it like to be recognized as a good citizen in your school? I'm really grateful that I got that award. It meant a lot to me because I know I'm doing my part to be a citizen and to be kind to others and to my teachers.

What gives you the courage to stand up for your standards? Listening to my leaders. They tell us every Sunday that we need to make good choices and set the example for others. I also like to think about Esther. She was steadfast. When the odds were against her, she stayed with her beliefs and put her trust in God. Although my situation is not as intense, I identify with Esther because she also had to stand up for what was right.

How has your testimony been strengthened? When I share my testimony with friends at school, it is strengthened by my hearing myself repeat it over and over again. I know that it will be OK if I am different from other people, because I am following the standards of the Church.

What would you tell others in your situation? They can make it through. There's always going to be someone who *will* accept them for the right reasons. Just look for those people, and stay friends so that you won't ever be alone.

How does Heavenly Father bless your life? By giving me a kind family, a really good ward, and the awesome Young Women program. I also feel that I have a lot of opportunities to develop my talents, and because there are not a lot of LDS members in my school, I get lots of opportunities to teach others about the gospel. **NE** —As told to Julia Woodbury



PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMILLE NEIBERT

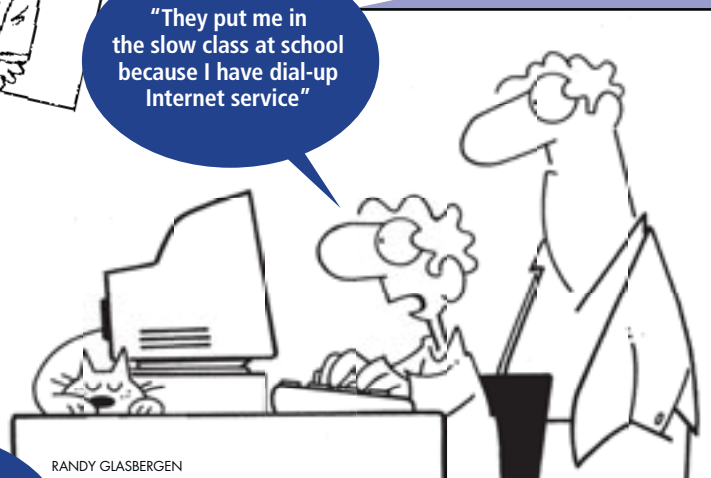
Name:
Madilin Neibert
Age: 13

Location: Union, Kentucky

Hobbies and interests:
Dancing; spending time
with her little brother and
sister; playing clarinet;
singing; competing
in speech.



"They put me in the slow class at school because I have dial-up Internet service"



"Okay, I get the rock part, but what are paper and sissors?"



NEmore
See a different Extra Smile online every week at newera.lds.org.

THE PRIESTHOOD

I liked the story about the priesthood (May 2009). The priesthood has changed my life in many ways. One way is through home teaching. My dad and I home teach widows who like us to come over to share a message with them. I have the priesthood for a good reason, and that reason is to serve God. I help pass the sacrament on Sunday, and that is using the priesthood. I use the priesthood to do my duties and to serve other people. When I serve other people, it makes me feel good about myself. I also like sharing the gospel with my friends. I try to invite my friends to church. I like holding the priesthood; it gives me many blessings in my everyday life. I am also grateful for Melchizedek Priesthood holders, because they can give blessings to people who are sick.

Andrew K., Virginia

I CAN RELATE

I liked "A Rebel No More" (Sept. 2009). A lot of teenagers today can relate to this story. I think it was good how the boy turned his life around. It was touching.

Neal H., California

ROLE MODELS

I really liked the article by Elder Benson E. Misalucha called "Role Models" (Aug. 2009). It made me think of the people in my life who are good role models.

Zac C., Florida

*I liked the article about
role models.
It made me think
of the people in my life
who are
good role models.*

OUT OF THE BEST BOOKS

The article, "Out of the Best Books, Movies, or Music" (Aug. 2009) had valuable suggestions and guidelines. You mentioned reading classic novels. What about watching classic movies? They may seem old-fashioned, but in reality they are very good. Even though these movies are older, the story lines are interesting. Old movies, just like classical books and music, shouldn't be forgotten. I would love to see our youth grow to love wholesome books, movies, and music from the past, as well as wholesome things from the present.

Kristine L., Arizona



GOOD ADVICE

Technical knowledge of the Church is always helpful, but stories about latter-day family situations are very inspiring. I especially appreciated the September 2009 Q&A on page 14. Not everyone has an example of advice given to them by a parent, so it is good to have good advice for the rest of us.

Ben M., California

PATRIARCHAL BLESSINGS

Thank you for publishing the story about getting patriarchal blessings (Aug. 2009). I went to get my patriarchal blessing the day after I received this issue of the *New Era* and was excited to be able to read more about blessings. It gave me a better knowledge of what they are and made my blessing mean a lot more to me than if I hadn't read the article.

RJ R.

SAVING MONEY

I read the article "Maxed Out" (June 2009). I think it has good advice about saving money. I am trying to save for my mission and for fun. The article helped me realize how important it is to save and also not to get into debt.

Jakob D., Oklahoma

We love hearing from you. Write to us by going online to newera.lds.org and clicking Submit Your Material.

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Snowfall

By Rachel Jones Snider

Soft and watery she glides
cob-webbing my hair
and how did I live
devoid of her whiteness
eclipsing the joy I once could see
in crackling browns
and sopping greens
she ghosts the mountains
clothes leafed tangles
in purity
and mounds upon
each antlered tree
cloaking earth's rough beauty
in sanctity.

BEHIND THE SCENES

It's pink! That was one of the first phrases used by the Young Women general presidency in describing the new Personal Progress booklet and journal. The new booklet is similar to the last booklet, except the experiences and projects for the eighth value, Virtue, have been added.

In fact, there are a lot of new items for the new Personal Progress. The medallion has been redesigned with temple spires and all three class symbols: the beehive, the rose, and the laurel wreath, plus a small ruby. Now girls can earn an Honor Bee after earning their Young Womanhood Recognition to add to their chain with their medallion. The Young Women presidency looked to the past for the class symbols and for the Honor Bee.

Read inside to find out more about additional awards that will be given to mark your Personal Progress.



See *"What's New in Personal Progress"* by Young Women general president Elaine S. Dalton on page 32.

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