



THE
New Era

MARCH

2005

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ing when she's with her
ward on the grounds of
the Tabiti Temple. See
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Temple" on p. 30.

Cover photography:
Adam C. Olson (front)
and Steve Bunderson
(back)

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reaching
a landmark
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has been a
comforting
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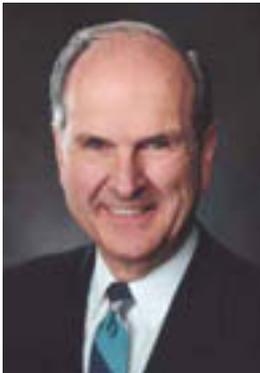
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NEXT TO THE Angels

ELDER RUSSELL M. NELSON
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



***We respect sisters—
not only in our
immediate families
but all the wonderful
sisters in our lives.
Without them, eternal
life would be
impossible.***

*Honor the women in your life:
your mother, sisters, and
future wife.*

When I was a young university student, one of my classmates urgently pleaded with a group of us—his Latter-day Saint friends—to donate blood for his mother, who was bleeding profusely. We went directly to the hospital to have our blood typed and tested. I'll never forget our shock when told that one of the prospective donors was unfit because of a positive blood test for a venereal disease. That infected blood was my classmate's own!

Fortunately, his mother survived, but I'll never forget his lingering sorrow. He bore the burden of knowing that his personal immorality had disqualified him from giving needed aid to his mother, and he had added to her grief.

I learned a great lesson: if one dishonors the commandments of God, one dishonors mother, and if one dishonors mother, one dishonors the commandments of God.¹

Honor Motherhood

During my professional career as a doctor of medicine, I was occasionally asked why I chose to do that difficult work. I responded with my opinion that the highest and noblest work in this life is that of a mother. Since that option was not available to me, I thought that caring for the sick might come close. I tried to care for my patients as compassionately and competently as Mother cared for me.

Many years ago the First Presidency issued a statement that has had a profound and lasting influence upon me. "Motherhood," they wrote, "is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels."²

Because mothers are essential to God's great plan of happiness, their sacred work is opposed by Satan, who would destroy the family and demean the worth of women.

You young men need to know that you can hardly achieve your highest potential



without the influence of good women, particularly your mother and, in a few years, a good wife. Learn now to show respect and gratitude. Remember that your mother is your mother. She should not need to issue orders. Her wish, her hope, her hint should provide direction that you would honor. Thank her and express your love for her. And if she is struggling to rear you without your father, you have a double duty to honor her.

The influence of your mother will bless you throughout life, especially when you serve as a missionary. Long years ago, Elder Frank Croft was serving in the state of Alabama. While preaching to the people, he was forcefully abducted by a vicious gang, to be whipped and lashed across his bare back. Elder Croft was ordered to remove his coat and shirt before he was tied to a tree. As he did so, a letter he had recently received from his mother fell to the ground. The vile leader of the gang picked up the letter. Elder Croft closed his eyes and uttered a silent prayer. The attacker read the letter from Elder Croft's mother. From a copy of that letter, I quote:

"My beloved son, . . . remember the words of the Savior when He said, . . . 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for you will have your reward in Heaven for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.' Also remember the Savior upon the cross suffering from the sins of the world when He had uttered these immortal words, 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Surely, my boy, they who are mistreating you . . . know not what they do or they would not do it. Sometime, somewhere, they will understand and then they will regret their action, and they will honor you for the glorious work you are doing. So be patient, my son; love those who mistreat you and say all manner of evil against you and the Lord will bless you and magnify you. . . . Remember also, my son, that day and night, your mother is praying for you."

Elder Croft watched the hateful man as he studied the letter. He would read a line or two, then sit and ponder. He arose to approach his captive. The man said: "Feller,



you must have a wonderful mother. You see, I once had one, too.” Then, addressing the mob, he said: “Men, after reading this Mormon’s mother’s letter, I just can’t go ahead with the job. Maybe we had better let him go.” Elder Croft was released without harm.³

Honor Sisters

We who bear the holy priesthood have a sacred duty to honor our sisters. We are old enough and wise enough to know that teasing is wrong. We respect sisters—not only in our immediate families but all the wonderful sisters in our lives. As daughters of God, their potential is divine. Without them, eternal life would be impossible. Our high regard for them should spring from our love of God and from an awareness of their lofty purpose in His great eternal plan.

Hence, I warn against pornography. It is degrading of women. It is evil. It is infectious, destructive, and addictive. The body has means by which it can cleanse itself from harmful effects of contaminated food or drink. But it cannot vomit back the poison of pornography. Once recorded, it always remains subject to recall, flashing its perverted images across your mind, with power to draw you away from the wholesome things in life. Avoid it like the plague!

Prepare for Temple Marriage

To you who are not yet married, think about your future marriage. Choose your companion well. Remember the scriptures that teach the importance of marriage in the temple:

“In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

“And in order to obtain the highest, a man

must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

“And if he does not, he cannot obtain it” (D&C 131:1–3).

The highest ordinances in the house of the Lord are received by husband and wife together and equally—or not at all!

In retrospect, I see that the most important day of my life was the day when my sweetheart, Dantzel, and I were married in the holy temple. Without her I could not have the highest and most enduring blessings of the priesthood. Without her I would not be the father to our wonderful children or grandfather to our precious grandchildren.

Honor the special sisters in your lives, brethren. Express your love to your mother and to the sisters. Praise them for their patience with you even when you are not at your best. Thank the Lord for these sisters who—like our Heavenly Father—love us not only for what we are but for what we may become. Humbly I thank God for my mother, my sisters, my daughters, granddaughters, and for my special sweetheart, companion, and friend—my wife!

May God bless us to honor each virtuous woman. **NE**

From an April 1999 general conference address.

NOTES

1. Many scriptures teach us to honor our parents. See Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Matthew 15:4; 19:19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; Luke 18:20; Ephesians 6:2; 1 Nephi 17:55.
2. In James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1965–75), 6:178. In 1935 the First Presidency stated, “The true spirit of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gives to woman the highest place of honor in human life” (in *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:5).
3. See Arthur M. Richardson, *The Life and Ministry of John Morgan* (1965), 267–68.

The highest ordinances in the house of the Lord are received by husband and wife together and equally—or not at all!

WHAT HAD TO HAPPEN?

Before the First Vision and before the Restoration of the gospel, the world had to be prepared.

The Restoration of the Church did not happen in the first appearance of Heavenly Father and His Son to Joseph Smith. Just as the ground needs to be prepared before seeds are planted, the right kind of nourishment needed to be given to the earth before the Church of Jesus Christ could be successfully restored.

During the hundreds of years following the Great Apostasy (see “What Happened to Christ’s Church?” *New Era*, Feb. 2005, 8), the Lord prepared the earth so He could plant His Church upon it. He set up a place where the Church would be allowed to grow and a time when the people would be ready to begin accepting it.

Renaissance and Reformation

Starting in the 14th century with the Renaissance, people began to break free of old ways of thinking. Science, art, literature, and many other areas of learning began to prosper in Europe. The way opened for new ideas, exploration, and inventions.

All these new ideas and the increased availability of the Bible due to new printing



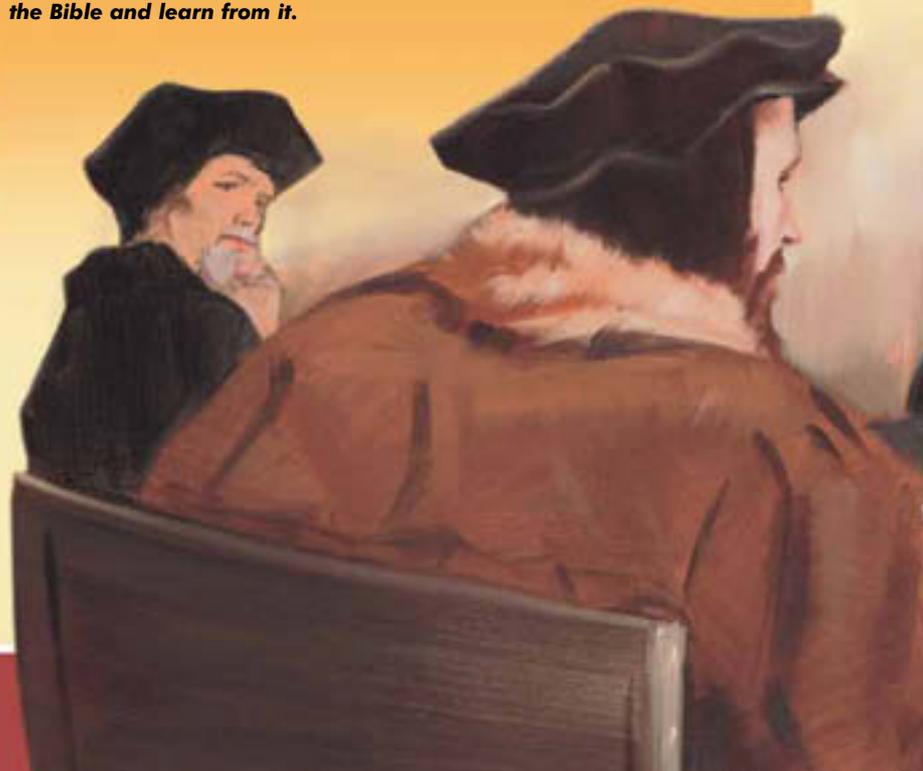
THE BIBLE

Before the Renaissance, copies of the Bible were slowly reproduced by hand, expensive to obtain, and in languages difficult for most people to read. So only the rich, the educated, and the clergy of the church could obtain and read the scriptures.

The invention of the printing press in about 1450 made it possible to mass produce the Bible. This mass production made Bibles less expensive. The lower price and new translations made the scriptures available to many.

The official English version of the Bible used by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the King James Version. For about seven years, more than 50 scholars worked on the King James Version using the best sources available. It was published in 1611.

Joseph Smith was reading the Bible in 1820 when he was prompted to “ask of God” (see James 1:5). After hundreds of years of limited access to the scriptures, anyone, even 14-year-old farm boys, could read the Bible and learn from it.



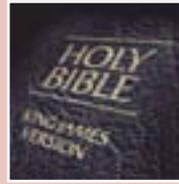
TOP (FROM LEFT): PAINTING OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION; MARTIN LUTHER POSTS HIS RELIGIOUS THESIS; BY DALE KILBURN; PHOTOGRAPH OF KING JAMES BIBLE; TADD PETERSON; PAINTING OF PILGRIMS; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION; BOTTOM: ILLUSTRATED BY DANIEL LEWIS

Christopher Columbus sought for new knowledge.

Reformers like Martin Luther began the Protestant Reformation.

The King James Bible was published.

The Mayflower landed in North America. Many others also sought religious freedom.



1492

1517

1611

1620

techniques inspired many to evaluate what they knew and how they felt about religion. People such as John Wycliffe in England and John Calvin in Switzerland began to question the practices of the Christian church. They saw that the church in their time and the Church in New Testament times were not the same.

Martin Luther was another of these people, called reformers, who saw that some of the practices of the Christian church were incorrect. He was a religious and educated man, and he wanted to change the practices of the church that did not match the teachings of the Bible. In 1517, in an attempt to promote discussion on the practices of the church, Luther wrote a document, identified as his Ninety-five Theses, and nailed it to the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany. This act marked the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

Luther was excommunicated from the Catholic Church for his actions of protest, but he kept his desire to conform to the teachings of the Bible. He opened the way for other reformers through his years of work and his German translation of the Bible. Many followed Luther and others like him who fought to reform the

MARTIN LUTHER

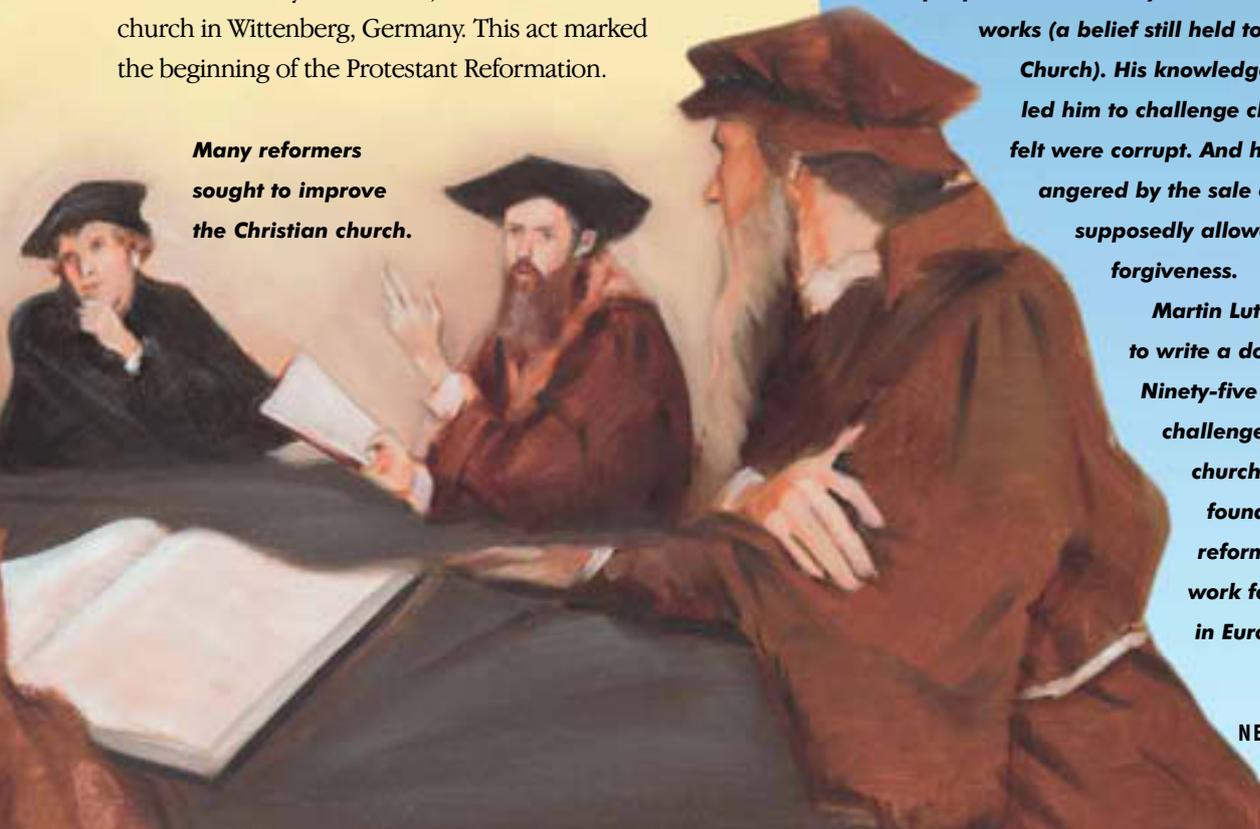
Born in 1483, Martin Luther is one of history's most important religious reformers, although he was not the first. Martin did not start out as a religious scholar. His father wanted him to be a lawyer, but Martin left his law training to join a monastery.

He studied the Bible in great depth and concluded that people were saved by faith alone and not by their good

works (a belief still held today in the Lutheran Church). His knowledge of the scriptures also led him to challenge church leaders, who he felt were corrupt. And he was especially angered by the sale of indulgences, which supposedly allowed people to buy forgiveness.

Martin Luther's studies led him to write a document called the Ninety-five Theses, which challenged the practices of the church. His efforts laid a foundation for future reformers who continued to work for religious freedom in Europe.

Many reformers sought to improve the Christian church.



**Inspired men wrote
America's Declaration of
Independence.**



1776

Christian church or to establish new churches. These people were called Protestants.

Some Protestants and other groups sought more religious and economic freedom. With the spirit of exploration still very alive, many departed Europe to form colonies elsewhere. One of the places they went was to America.

The Land of the Free

From the time Christopher Columbus sailed to the Americas, people were interested in going there. Colonists in North America formed thirteen colonies and eventually created a union that won its independence from Britain and all other countries. This new country, the United States of America, had a consti-



"The reformers were pioneers, blazing wilderness trails in a desperate search for those lost points

of reference which, they felt, when found would lead mankind back to the truth Jesus taught.

"John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, Jan Hus, Zwingli, Knox, Calvin, and Tyndale all pioneered the period of the Reformation. Significant was the declaration of Tyndale to his critics:

'I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the scripture than thou doest' [see Roger Hillas, "The History of the Book," Washington Post, Apr. 10, 1996].

"Such were the teachings and lives of the great reformers. Their deeds were heroic, their contributions many, their sacrifices great—but they did not restore the gospel of Jesus Christ."

—President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "They Showed the Way," *Ensign*, May 1997, 51.

**The American
Revolutionary War
ended and a new
nation began.**



1781

tution that guaranteed religious freedom.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, at about the same time the United States was being established as a free country, a religious revival started in the northeastern United States. The Prophet Joseph Smith described this revival: "There was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion. . . . Indeed, the whole district of country seemed affected by it, and great multitudes united themselves to the different

religious parties, which created no small stir and division amongst the people" (Joseph Smith—History 1:5).

Because of the religious confusion surrounding him and prompted by his faith in the scriptures, Joseph

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

The prophet Nephi saw Columbus in a vision: "I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters; and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land" (1 Nephi 13:12).

In his own journal and in letters to others, Columbus wrote of how inspired he felt on his journey to the Americas. He said: "Our Lord unlocked my mind, sent me upon the sea,

and gave me fire for the deed. . . . Who can doubt but that the Holy Ghost inspired me?" (quoted in Mark E. Petersen, The Great Prologue [1975], 26).

After sailing for weeks, Columbus's crew was tired of waiting to find land. Columbus told his crew that if they did not find land in two days, they would turn around and go home. He then prayed to the Lord. On the following day they saw land—they had found the Americas. And many others would begin to come to America, forming governments that created a land of freedom.

A time of religious revival started where Joseph Smith lived.



Late 1700s

While reading the Bible, Joseph Smith decided to "ask of God."



1820

Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph in the Sacred Grove.



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized.



1830

went to the woods near his home in 1820. He prayed for answers to his questions. The answer to his prayer eventually resulted in the Restoration of the true Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days.

The Right Time

The Restoration of the true Church of Jesus Christ could occur only after Heavenly Father put in place all that would make it possible for His Church to blossom in a prepared land. The Renaissance, the Protestant

Reformation, the establishment of the United States as a free country, and the preparation of a 14-year-old boy named Joseph Smith were all part of the Lord's plan to bring the fulness of His gospel back to the earth so His children could be saved. **NE**

THE FOUNDING FATHERS

The Lord inspired people in the original thirteen colonies of America to write a constitution and form a government. In D&C 101:80, the Lord says He "established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood."

President Wilford Woodruff (1807-98) spoke about the good men who helped establish the United States of America: "Those men who laid the foundation of this American government . . . were the best spirits the God of heaven could find on the face of the earth. They were choice spirits . . . [and] were inspired of the Lord" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1898, 89).



WARD OF

BY JANET THOMAS
Church Magazines

Jared Reese and Jesse Gray (right) stand on either side of Teddy Fullmer, the person they got to interview. Opposite page: Marba Zabriskie enjoyed telling Holli Carrell and Cami Perrier what high school was like when she was their age.

Daniel Harbuck had a spark of inspiration one day. He had caught a ride home with one of the older members of his ward. And she was telling him some great stories about her life. He asked Sister Marba Zabriskie why he had never heard these stories before. She told him that the young people weren't interested.

"Not interested!" Daniel thought to himself. "Here I was hanging on her every word, and she thought no one was interested."

That's when Daniel had the inspiration. Why not get the teens in his ward to spend an evening with the older members of the ward, over refreshments, and listen to their stories?

He talked with his friends and priesthood leaders, and they all liked the idea. Soon invitations were sent to 11 older members of the Monument Park 11th Ward of the Salt Lake Monument Park Stake. They all met at the meetinghouse during Mutual activity time. Two or three youth were paired with each individual. Someone was assigned to take notes. The visits turned out to be a lot of fun—for the teens and the older members. They talked about all sorts of things. And best of all, they ended up finding some new friends.



Cami Perrier, 17, interviewed her neighbor, Teddy Fullmer. Cami says, "I live right next door, and I didn't know all this about her."

Teddy loved talking as well. "It was such an ego trip to have some young people actually listen to me. I've been thinking about one question in particular. They asked, 'What was your happiest moment?' It was fun reliving that time of my life. We really didn't know each other, although I've been around them since they were born."

Daniel Harbuck and Miguel Peña, both 18, interviewed Ferron Forsgren. They were impressed that he could once type 100

WISDOM





Whitney Fullmer (above, left) and Rebecca Harbuck (right) loved being able to ask all sorts of questions of Teddy Fullmer and Grace Bryner, long-time members of their ward. Far right: The years didn't separate Ferron Forsgren from Miguel Peña and Daniel Harbuck when their discussion turned to girls, cars, and gaining a testimony.

words a minute, wore racing goggles when he drove his first car, and had some good advice about impressing young women. Brother Forsgren also told them how he gained his testimony of the Church and how he has been active all his life. They found out that Brother Forsgren still plays tennis at the age of 87. Daniel says, "That's the kind of guy I want to be when I'm older."

Whitney Fullmer, 16, interviewed Henry and Fay Ellerman and found out that Brother Ellerman loves to golf and has made three holes in one. Their advice to Whitney was to get a good education and stay close to the Church.

After talking to Neva Paschal about her childhood, Jason Carrell, 17, learned to appreciate what he has. "She didn't have a lot of things growing up and considers what she now has as great luxuries."

The words of advice from these older members of the ward are what the youth remember most from their visits. It's sound advice: pray often, stay close to the Church, work hard, get a good education—and listen to your friends, especially those in your ward. **NE**



SOME QUESTIONS TO GET STARTED

These are a few questions the Monument Park 11th Ward youth used in their interviews with the older members of their ward. You can also ask your parents or grandparents these questions.

1. Do you remember any major historical events?
2. What was the happiest time of your life?
3. What were your favorite things to do as a teenager?
4. What was a date like when you were young? How did you meet your spouse?
5. What would you change about your life?
6. Have you had any life-changing experiences with the gospel?
7. Do you have any advice for us today?

WHAT I WAS MISSING



BY DONALD MCCLELLAN

When I was growing up, my parents never took my siblings and me to church. We were not a religious family. For me, Sunday was just a day off from school when we could play. I thought my life was complete. It wasn't until a friend showed me what I was missing that I realized how empty my life had been.

When I was 11 or 12, my mother was baptized into the Church. She would often ask me if I wanted to go to church with her, and I always said no. When we moved to Texas the summer before my junior year in high school, I still didn't go to church with her.

At the beginning of the school year I had no friends. After a few weeks, I became friends with Brad. He was in some of my classes. We would talk in class but never did anything outside of school.

One day my mom took me and my four siblings to church with her. I went, hoping to leave as soon as possible. When we sat down, I looked up and saw Brad preparing to bless the sacrament. Brad saw me as well.

The next day at school, Brad came to me and said, "I didn't know you were a Latter-day Saint."

I replied, "I'm not."



Pretty soon Brad was taking me to Mutual, youth conference, and I was even coming to church every Sunday.

Having never read the Bible, I didn't know much about Jesus Christ. Brad gave me a Book of Mormon, and I started to read it. From that time, there was a visible change in my life for the better. I knew what I was reading was true. The Holy Ghost bore witness of it. It was through the Book of Mormon that I came to know Jesus Christ and all He has done for me. I changed the way I acted. I started living the way the Bible

and Book of Mormon told me I should live.

One day Brad finally asked me, "Donny, what do we have to do to get you baptized?" I had never thought about it before, but it felt like the right thing to do. On June 26, 2000, Brad baptized me into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Three months later, I baptized my older brother, Dan. We are both currently serving missions.

Looking back at how I felt about religion before, I have gained so much. Now I know my Savior Jesus Christ. I have the scriptures to guide me. And I have the gift of the Holy Ghost, who bears witness of the truth. **NE**

Elder Donald McClellan is serving full time in the Utah Ogden Mission.

Q & A

*“Why does my room need to be clean?
Does a messy room
make me a bad person?”*

NEW ERA

If your parents ask you to keep your room clean, it’s probably because they know that a clean room is more likely to invite the influence of the Spirit. Plus, you’ll probably enjoy being in your room more; you’ll learn good habits of being clean and organized; and you’ll be able to find things more easily.

President Gordon B. Hinckley tells of cleaning his house when he was a youth: “Most homes were heated with coal stoves. . . . As winter came to a close, black soot and grime were everywhere, both inside and outside of the house. There was a ritual through which we passed each year. . . . It was known as spring cleaning. . . .

“When all of it was done, and everything was back in place, the result was wonderful. The house was clean, our spirits renewed. The whole world looked better” (“Be Ye Clean,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 47).

Notice President Hinckley said that cleaning the house renewed his spirit and attitude.

■ *The Lord asks us to be clean and organized, physically and spiritually.*

■ *A clean room is more likely to invite the peaceful influence of the Holy Ghost.*

■ *Clean surroundings can renew your spirit and improve your attitude.*

■ *You and others will be more comfortable in a clean room; you will be better able to concentrate there; and you will know where your things are.*

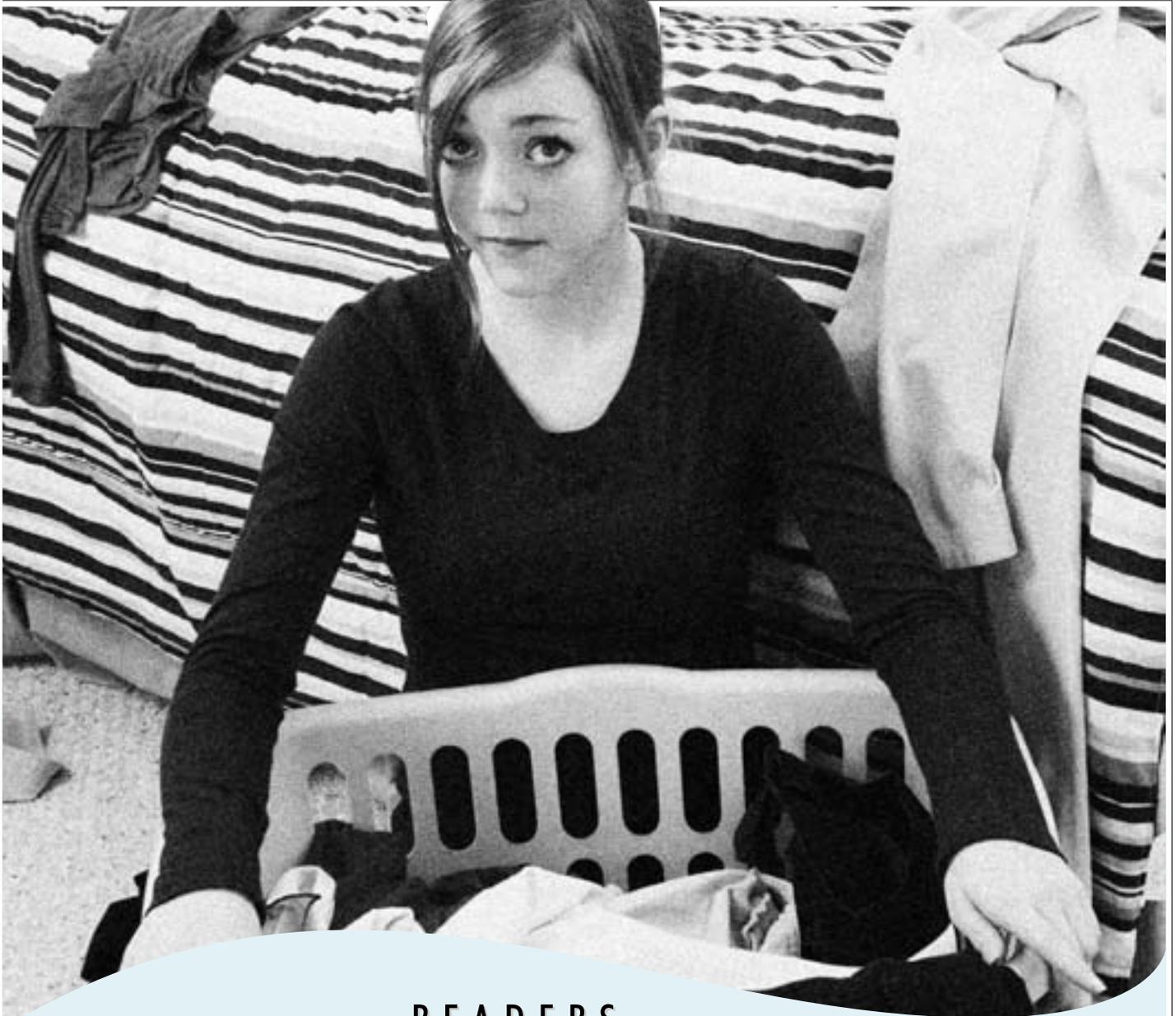
■ *If your parents are asking you to clean your room and you are hesitating, this is a good opportunity to try your faith by doing what they say.*

You may feel the same way when you clean your room.

Learning to keep your room clean will help you later. One day you’ll be a missionary or married, and your companion or spouse will appreciate your cleanliness. A clean room is more comfortable to you, your family, and your guests.

A clean room is an organized room, and being organized is a godlike trait. The Lord created the earth by organizing it: “They, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth” (Abraham 4:1). The Lord asks us to do things in order, to organize ourselves, and to be clean in body, mind, and spirit. By keeping your room clean, you will develop a divine quality.

As with any gospel principle, you can test the truth of this one. Clean your room, then keep it that way for a few months. See how you feel in a clean room. See if it’s more peaceful and inviting to the Spirit. See if you and your friends are more comfortable there.



READERS

If you find that you really do like having a clean room better than a messy one, then keep it up.

Having a messy room doesn't make you a bad person, but keeping your room clean can make you a better person. Even more important than a clean or dirty room, however, is whether you obey your parents and the prophet. You might at first question some of the things they ask you to do. But as you follow their counsel in faith, you will know why they have asked you to do it. **NE**



Having a clean room reflects your personality. When you have a clean room, it invites the Spirit to be there with you.

You won't need to be worried about it. It's a good feeling when your room is clean all the time. The Lord likes clean places, so we need to keep our rooms clean.

Johanna Schuerch, 12, Nome Branch, Anchorage Alaska Bush District

My room is not always clean, but when I decide to sort through my things, I find the same feeling every time. It's always a calm

and peaceful feeling. After cleaning, it makes me want to listen to Church music or read my scriptures or Church magazines. Even though cleaning your room may be a tiny effort, it brings the Spirit into your daily activities.

Mallory Jespersen, 14, El Cajon First Ward, Santee California Stake



The temple is always clean. When I am married, I will want my home to be as much like the temple as possible. I find that having

a cleaner room makes me happier, energetic, reasonable, and more likely to be kind to my brothers and sisters. I always feel safe and comforted in the temple and want my room to have that same spiritual feeling.

Stephanie Crandall, 14, Chesterfield Ward,
Grace Idaho Stake



A clean room helps you to remember to have clean thoughts and a clean spirit. Mosiah 4:27 says, "All things must be done in order." If you keep your room in order, then you will be blessed.

Kristi Walston, 14, Zionsville Ward,
Indianapolis Indiana North Stake



The Spirit dwells in the temples because they are clean physically and spiritually. When my room is clean, I can study the scriptures and focus on the principles taught instead

of on my room full of clutter. When things are organized, there is a lot less stress, which helps me focus more on the Spirit.

Elder Todd Cook, 21, Pennsylvania Harrisburg Mission



I had the same problem with keeping my room clean. I thought, "Since it's my room, I can keep it looking any way I want." But we were instructed by the prophet to

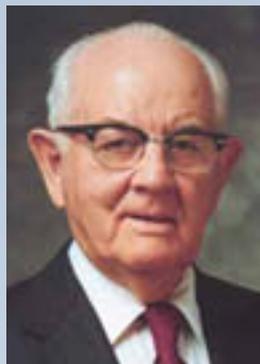
be clean in our actions. Having a messy room doesn't make you a bad person, but we should strive to follow the prophet's teachings.

Sarah Gill, 14, Whitby Ward, Oshawa Ontario Stake



What's around you sets the tone for the whole room. When your room is cluttered, your thoughts may also be cluttered when you're trying to concentrate on something important.

When my room is messy, it's hard for me to do my



We ask you to clean up your homes. . . .

We urge each of you to dress and keep in a beautiful state the property that is in your hands."

—President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985),
"God Will Not Be Mocked,"
Ensign, Nov. 1974, 4.

homework. But after I clean it, I feel so much better. I can feel the Spirit strongly, and I can finish my homework with ease.

Brittany Acree, 15, Hylebos Ward,
Federal Way Washington Stake



When I clean my room, I feel good about myself. Having a place for everything and everything in its place isn't easy, but it pays off.

When you need something, you can find it. Having a messy room can cause a lot of frustration. If you come home from a bad day, a messy room may only make you feel worse.

Erin Stewart, 13, Gateway Ward,
Portland Oregon East Stake



By having a clean room, you can invite the Spirit to enter your room. You'll feel much better, and keeping a clean room helps to prepare you for when you have your own home.

Your thoughts and mind will be more open and clear, especially if you're studying in your room.

Jared Fredriksen, 16, Albertson Ward,
Goldsboro North Carolina Stake

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

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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

Q&A, New Era

**50 East North Temple Street, Floor 24
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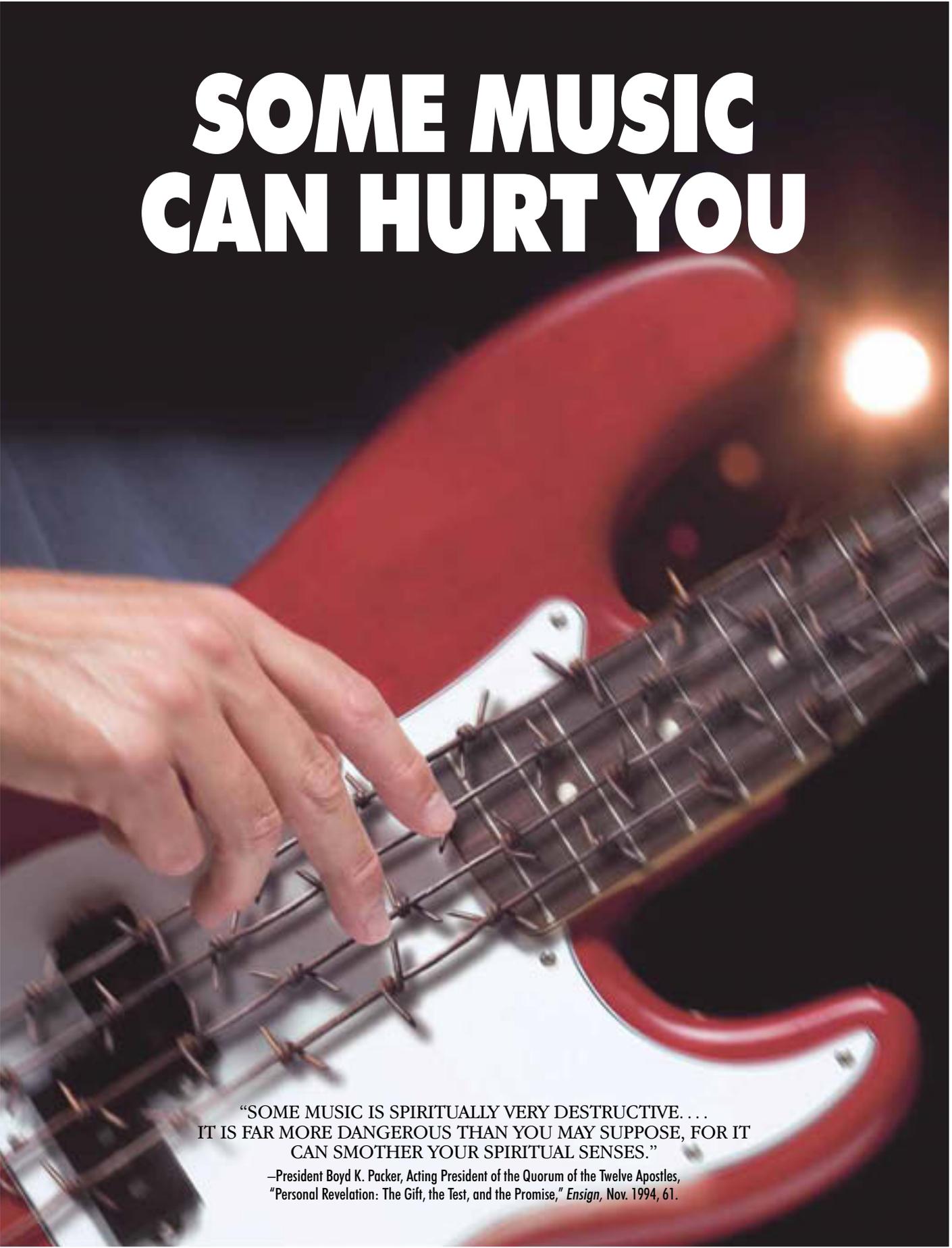
cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

Please respond by April 15, 2005.

QUESTION

"Is there anything wrong with getting a tattoo?"

SOME MUSIC CAN HURT YOU



“SOME MUSIC IS SPIRITUALLY VERY DESTRUCTIVE. . .
IT IS FAR MORE DANGEROUS THAN YOU MAY SUPPOSE, FOR IT
CAN SMOTHER YOUR SPIRITUAL SENSES.”

—President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,
“Personal Revelation: The Gift, the Test, and the Promise,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 61.

WE STICK TOGETHER



BY DON SEARLE

Church Magazines



Brothers can be a pain sometimes. They tease you—good-naturedly, usually. But they can also be there just when you need them, ready to back you up or tell the world how great you are.

Those would be the brothers in your priests quorum, if they're like the priests in the Leon Valley Ward, San Antonio Texas West Stake. If being in a quorum is supposed to be about brotherhood, they've got that part down.

Quorum Friendship

What happened to Ronny Rodriguez is an example. The other four active priests in this quorum more or less grew up together; they first met in elementary school. When Ronny came to the United States from his native Chile in 2000, his quorum welcomed him. His place in the group is solid.

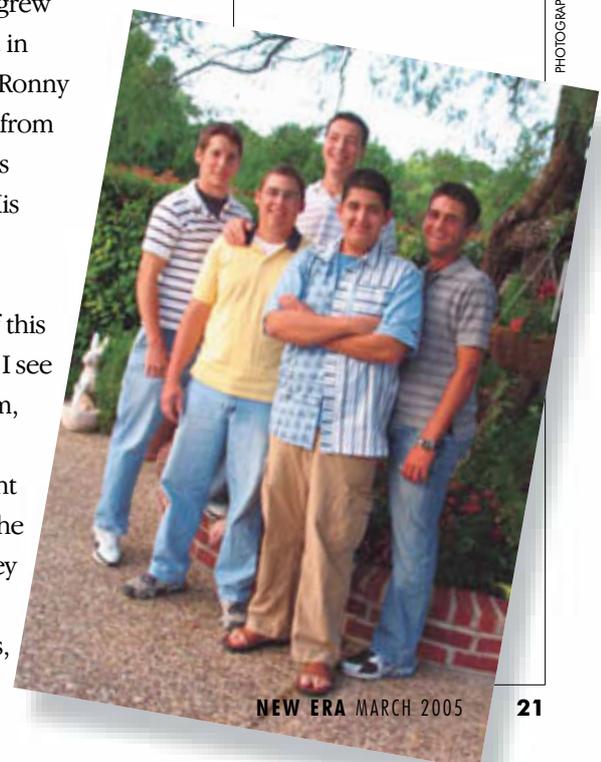
Ronny says one of the strongest characteristics of this group is friendship: "When I see someone from this quorum, I know I have a friend."

"We stick together," Brent Davis says. Unity is one of the quorum's strengths. Do they ever have disagreements? Yes, but when that happens,

Priests in the Leon Valley Ward in San Antonio, Texas, know the true meaning of brotherhood.

Left: A quorum cleanup project.

Below, left to right: The Leon Valley priests quorum: Chad Warner, Stephen Weatherholtz, Brent Davis, Ronny Rodriguez, and Marcus Lunt.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR, EXCEPT AS NOTED



These priests are on fire with enthusiasm for the Young Men program.

Far right, left to right: Stephen, Ronny, Chad, and Brent, with adviser Ned Lunt, Bishop Curtis Brown, and assistant adviser Brennan Ray. Marcus restrings a tennis racket at the club where he works.

“The priest’s duty is to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and administer the sacrament,

“And visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties.

“And he may also ordain other priests, teachers, and deacons.”

—D&C 20:46–48.

Brent says, they talk it out or laugh it off, forget it, and get on with their activity. Marcus Lunt says they’ve learned through the years that it is not useful to pick on each other’s weaknesses but much better to support each other in their strengths.

And they know how to offer support when it is needed. Sometimes, says Stephen Weatherholtz, people at school don’t accept others who don’t conform to some of their standards or ideas. But members of this quorum accept each other for what they are.

Bishop Curtis Brown knows what they are. They are good examples for others among the 28 youth in their ward. “These young men have an incredible faith,” says Bishop Brown. And they are reliable. When they tell him they will do something, the bishop knows it will be done.

Doing Their Duty to God

Family support and the work of quorum advisers help these young





men be strong. The lessons their advisers teach “apply to our lives. We can reflect on what we need to do to be more Christlike,” Chad Warner says. “Also, they’re like our brothers. They like to do things with us.”

Their advisers also like to do things *for* the young men in the ward. These five priests have received the Duty to God award or are well on their way to completing the requirements. They work individually with their leaders to set and fulfill goals. Leaders track their progress using a detailed chart developed on the computer. The young men also help plan youth activities.

Chad says he appreciates the way ward leaders have helped them grow. “We’ve had a lot of spiritual experiences. They’ve helped us realize we need to get closer to the Lord.”

As much as these young men like sports, they may only play basketball a couple of times a year for a Mutual activity. Instead, they do a variety of other things that help fulfill requirements for their Duty to God award, including service activities.

Do they enjoy clearing the limbs and debris from a drainage ditch so that water won’t flood over a low-lying road? Is this a trick question? No, but they will sweat to do it in the heat of a San Antonio summer morning because their service is needed.

Brennan Ray is an assistant adviser in the Leon Valley Ward priests quorum. He says the value of the Young Men program is “like a fire. It catches.” **NE**



JOBS, SPORTS, MUSIC

These priests have learned to handle responsibility. Quorum member Chad Warner works at a San Antonio theme park as chief of a crew of young people who run some of the games. It is Chad’s responsibility to collect all the money his crew takes in and deliver it to the park offices. Stephen Weatherholtz is a lifeguard at the swimming pool in the park, and sometimes he has to help handle emergencies when people are injured.

Ward Young Men president Ned Lunt says these priests have a lot of influence among their peers at school because of how they live and what they accomplish. They lead the way in their chosen activities, and that makes other students in their school want to know how they came to be the people they are. While one of the members of the quorum is his son, he is quick to praise the accomplishments of all these young men.

These are not guys who brag about themselves. But someone else in the quorum will tell you that when Marcus Lunt won the Texas state high school tennis championship in 2004, “He went 16-0. Undefeated.” Others will tell you that Chad Warner played a big part in winning some games for the high school basketball team last year. They will tell you that Brent Davis looks like a standout at catcher for the high school baseball team. Ronny Rodriguez, who enjoys soccer and rugby, is focusing on debate and the Spanish honor society in school this year. Stephen Weatherholtz, an accomplished musician, stands out in the high school choir.

Stephen’s focus on music was a deliberate choice when he began high school, even though as a lifeguard he is athletic and enjoys some sports. “Music to me is everything about feeling,” Stephen says. Ask him what kind of music he listens to, and he will name tunes by performers from almost every category. But, “On Sunday I listen to completely different music than I do on a weekday.” It is sacred or classical. “It gives me more of a feeling that Sunday is sacred.” **NE**

BELIEVING IS SEEING

BY DEBRA J. WORKMAN

A terrible accident blinded one of my brother's eyes. What happened next allowed us to see the power of the priesthood.

My family and I were on our way to attend my dad's high school class reunion in Park City, Montana, when the accident happened.

Halfway to Park City, my parents decided to stop and camp for the night. My dad asked my two older brothers, Bob and Dan, to gather wood and start a fire. He gave each of them a couple of matches. When Dan scraped his match against a stone, the flaming tip broke off and hit his eye, burning it badly before bouncing away. He cried out in terrible pain. My dad tried to comfort him, and my mom held ice on his eye to stop the burning.

When my brother had calmed down, my parents looked at his eye. Their worst fears were confirmed when they saw that the color of Dan's eye was no longer brown, but completely white. They covered his eye and made him as comfortable as possible.

We climbed into the car and headed for Helena, the nearest town, where my brother was immediately taken to an eye specialist. After the exam, the specialist told my parents that Dan was blind in the damaged eye.

He gave Dan some medicine to put in his eye and a patch to keep the eye clean and protected. He told my parents to go to the class reunion and then bring Dan in for another exam on the way home.

After we received the bad news, my dad gathered us together and announced that our family would fast the next 24 hours for Dan's full recovery. The day went by quickly

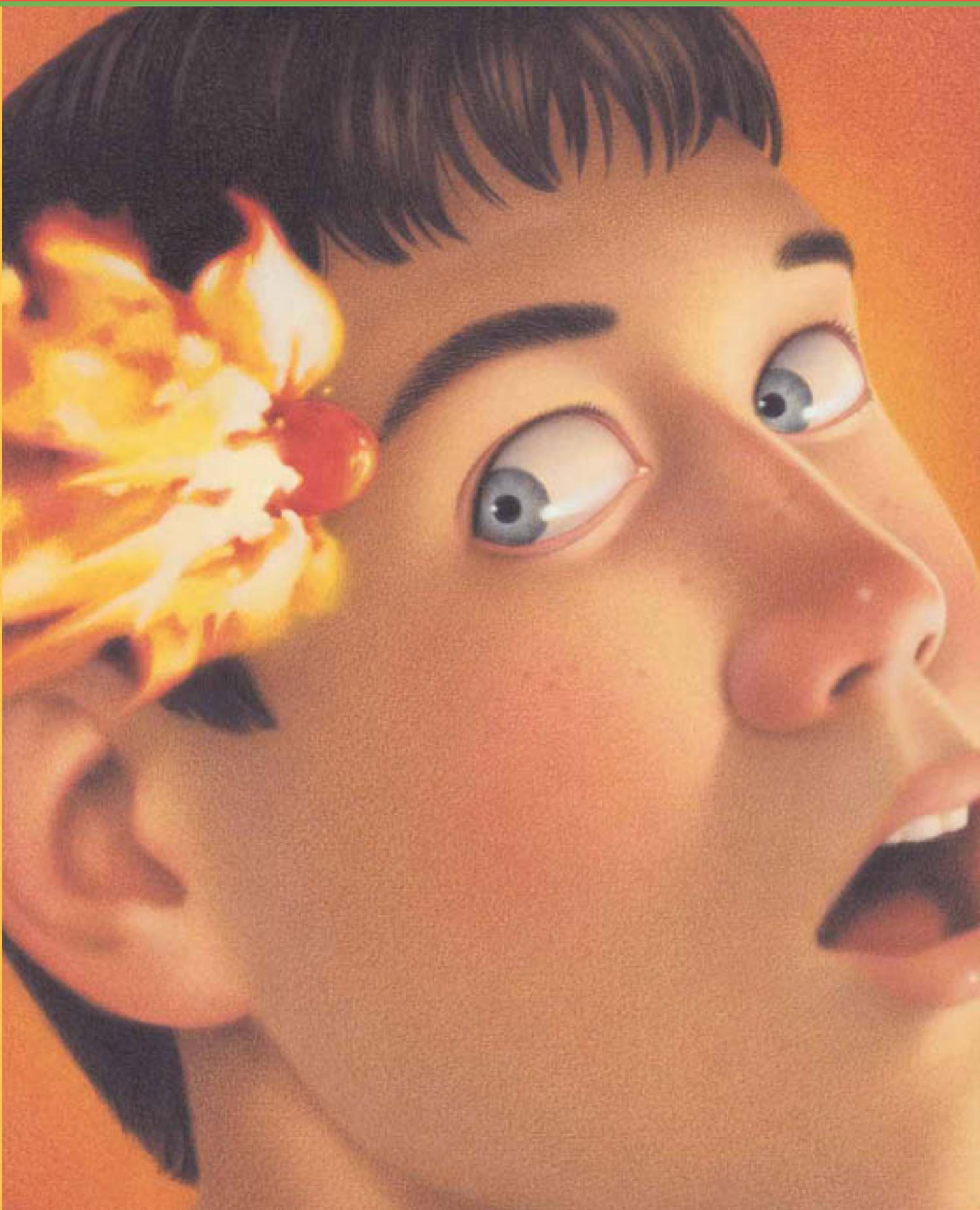
as we concentrated on Dan and his need for comfort and healing. I believed that whatever the outcome, the Lord loved Dan and would help him.

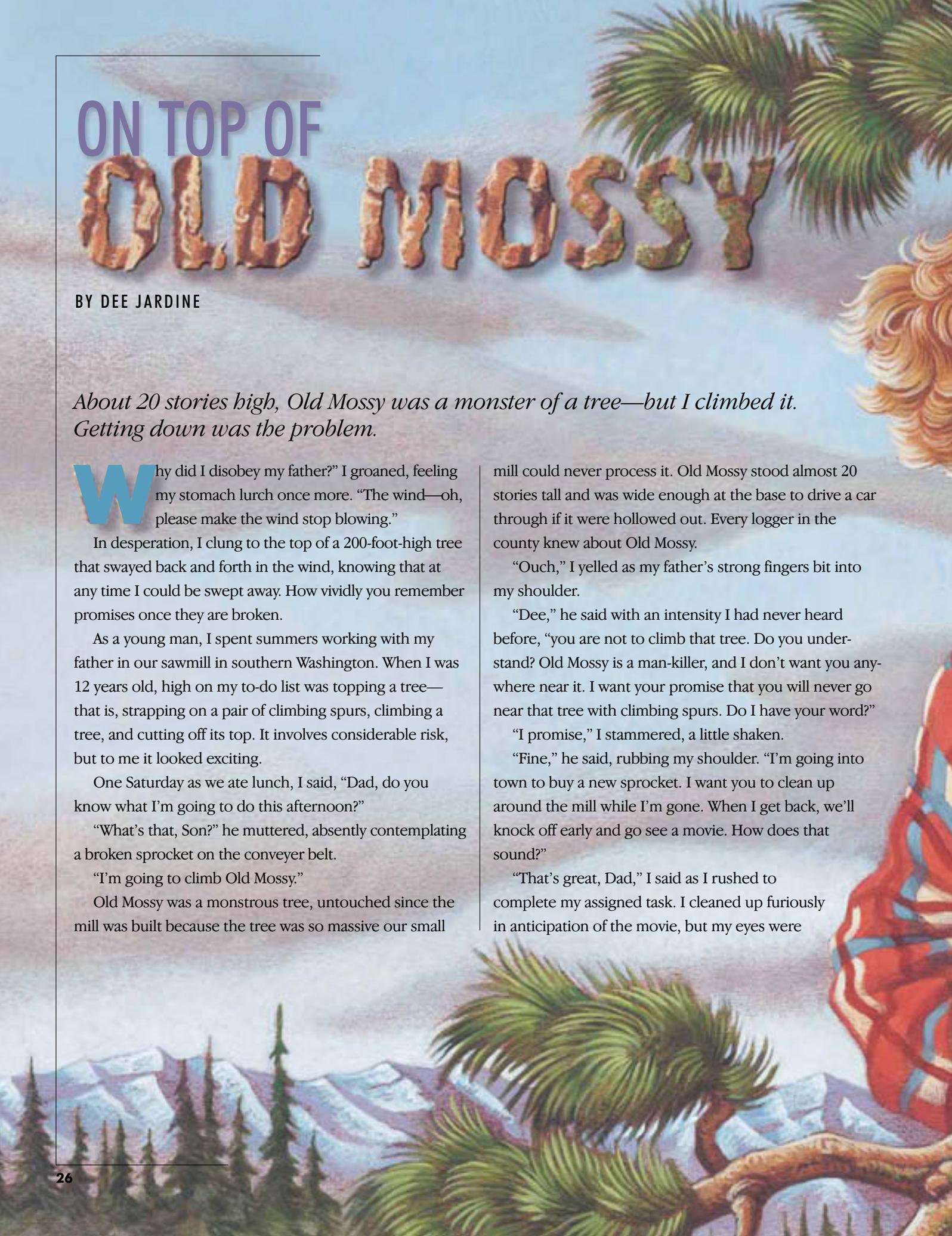
My dad had tears streaming down his face when he gave Dan a priesthood blessing. It was the most beautiful blessing of healing I have ever heard. My dad told Dan that the Lord loved him and had many things for him to do in this life. He also told him he would need both of his eyes to complete his mission on earth, that his eye would heal, and that his vision would be fully restored. During the blessing, we all felt the Spirit and knew that God was mindful of us, especially of my brother during this trial.

When we returned to Helena, the eye specialist invited us into his examination room, where he again looked at Dan's injured eye. He asked my parents if they were sure that this eye was the injured one. He said the eye he examined had to be the wrong eye because it was perfectly normal. Perplexed, he then checked Dan's other eye. It, too, was normal. The specialist told my parents that it was impossible for an eye to heal like that. He had no explanation for it.

But we knew what had happened. The power of the priesthood, coupled with fervent prayer, faith, fasting, and an acceptance of the Lord's will, had brought down the blessings of heaven. **NE**

Debra J. Workman is a member of the Pleasant View Fourth Ward, Provo Utah Edgemont South Stake.





ON TOP OF OLD MOSSY

BY DEE JARDINE

About 20 stories high, Old Mossy was a monster of a tree—but I climbed it. Getting down was the problem.

Why did I disobey my father?" I groaned, feeling my stomach lurch once more. "The wind—oh, please make the wind stop blowing."

In desperation, I clung to the top of a 200-foot-high tree that swayed back and forth in the wind, knowing that at any time I could be swept away. How vividly you remember promises once they are broken.

As a young man, I spent summers working with my father in our sawmill in southern Washington. When I was 12 years old, high on my to-do list was topping a tree—that is, strapping on a pair of climbing spurs, climbing a tree, and cutting off its top. It involves considerable risk, but to me it looked exciting.

One Saturday as we ate lunch, I said, "Dad, do you know what I'm going to do this afternoon?"

"What's that, Son?" he muttered, absently contemplating a broken sprocket on the conveyer belt.

"I'm going to climb Old Mossy."

Old Mossy was a monstrous tree, untouched since the mill was built because the tree was so massive our small

mill could never process it. Old Mossy stood almost 20 stories tall and was wide enough at the base to drive a car through if it were hollowed out. Every logger in the county knew about Old Mossy.

"Ouch," I yelled as my father's strong fingers bit into my shoulder.

"Dee," he said with an intensity I had never heard before, "you are not to climb that tree. Do you understand? Old Mossy is a man-killer, and I don't want you anywhere near it. I want your promise that you will never go near that tree with climbing spurs. Do I have your word?"

"I promise," I stammered, a little shaken.

"Fine," he said, rubbing my shoulder. "I'm going into town to buy a new sprocket. I want you to clean up around the mill while I'm gone. When I get back, we'll knock off early and go see a movie. How does that sound?"

"That's great, Dad," I said as I rushed to complete my assigned task. I cleaned up furiously in anticipation of the movie, but my eyes were



ILLUSTRATED BY GREG NEWBOLD



EXTRA! EXTRA!

To learn more about repentance, read these scriptures: Luke 15; Alma 57:21; 3 Nephi 9:22; D&C 18:11–13.

And read these articles in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org: “The Atonement and the Value of One Soul” (*Ensign*, May 2004) by Elder M. Russell Ballard and “Three Choices” (*Ensign*, Nov. 2003) by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin.

repeatedly drawn to Old Mossy. My work gradually ground to a halt as I stood there, completely captivated by my huge temptation. “Why, I could climb to the top and be down before Dad even returned from town,” I reasoned. “He wouldn’t even know.” With only a moment’s hesitation, I rushed to the storage shed and strapped on the climbing gear.

What a thrill it was to finally thrust those climbing spurs into the heavy bark and begin my ascent! I was so caught up in the excitement of the climb that I lost track of time. All at once, there I was—looking out over the tops of the other trees in the forest. The view was breathtaking. I hung there, luxuriating in the beauty of the moment.

I looked at the sky, at the horizon, and, finally, down at the ground. Immediately, nausea rippled through my body like a wave. I was suddenly so weak I could barely stand. I was more than 17 stories up with only two tiny climbing spurs and a rope as a lifeline. I shook with fright, incapable

of anything but clinging to the rope.

Then the wind began to blow. The tree swayed back and forth, and I became sicker and sicker. How I wished I had obeyed my father! No young man ever felt remorse so quickly. How long I clung there, I don’t know, but it seemed like forever.

“Son,” I heard my father shout. “Son, can you hear me?”

Looking far below, I saw him lying on his back at the base of that monstrous tree, his head cradled in his hands, looking up at me. I will never forget that moment. He shouted, “I want you to listen to me very carefully. Take a deep

breath and relax. You’re going to be just fine. Now, lean back against the rope and . . .”

Calmly and lovingly, he guided me step by step down the tree. When I finally reached the ground, I was weak and exhausted yet relieved and repentant. Dad untied the rope from my waist, helped me take off the spurs, and putting his arms around me, whispered, “Oh, my son, I love you so very much.”

Years have past, but in memory I still see my father at the base of Old Mossy, shouting, “Now, Dee, I want you to do exactly what I say.” My great faith in him gave me strength and courage to defeat the fear and sickness that had overwhelmed me. By obeying his instructions, I descended the tree into the safety of his welcoming arms.

From his example, I have realized that my Heavenly Father also loves me and will welcome me back when I repent for making mistakes.

If I obey His words with exactness, He too will strengthen and guide me through the challenges of life so I can return to the safety of His warm embrace. **NE**

Dee Jardine is a member of the Canyon View Second Ward, Orem Utah Canyon View Stake.

“Improve the shining moments . . .”

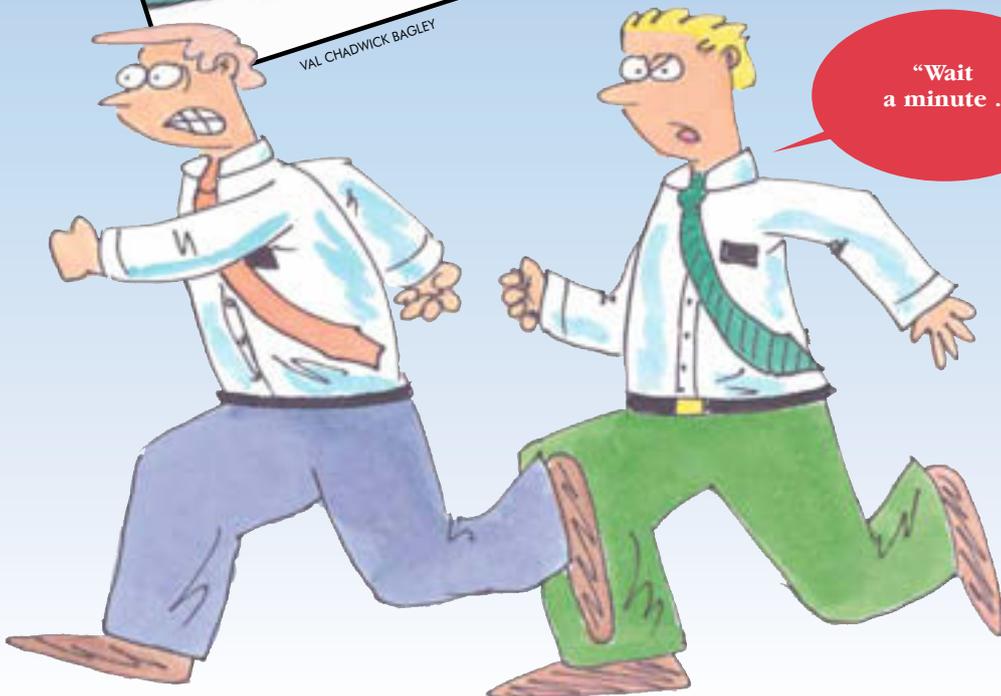
Basketball players in shining armor? What’s going on here? Send us your funny lines for this cartoon, and we’ll print the best entries in a future issue. Send your ideas to *New Era*, Extra Smile, 50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA. Or e-mail cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org



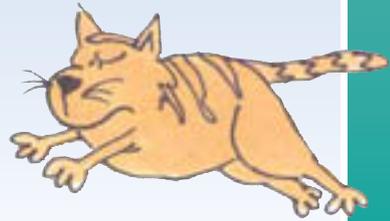
VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

“Wait a minute . . .”



RYAN STOKER



WE LOVE TO SEE THE TEMPLE

BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

Hironui Johnston, 16, and his sister Merirani, 15, spend a lot of time at the Papeete Tahiti Temple.

They aren't performing baptisms for the dead, except for a couple times each year. They aren't even inside the temple. They're on the temple grounds—not gardening or doing some other service project—just sitting or walking around. But always looking.

"I love to see the temple," says Merirani. "We have a lot of good memories here."

Hironui and Merirani go to the temple grounds because of how they feel there. It's a place where they can get away from the world.

"Our neighborhood isn't bad, but there are some bad kids there," says Hironui. "So we spend time here. It feels so good to be on the temple grounds."

Sometimes their whole family comes, whether for a family home evening activity or just to spend time together.

"Sometimes when we aren't getting along, we come here to put things right again," Hironui says. But even when the Johnstons aren't at the temple, the temple is part of their lives.

"I think we have a picture of the temple in every room in our house," Hironui says. "It's beautiful. It reminds us that our family can be together forever. Seeing it helps us feel the same peaceful spirit."



A Blessed Generation

Hironui and Merirani are part of the first generation of Tahitian members who don't know what Tahiti was like without the temple, which is now more than 20 years old.

That could make it easy for the youth to take the temple for granted. But for many of these young Tahitian Saints, the temple isn't overlooked;

it's looked at. It's part of their lives.

"When I see it, I want to go inside," says Wawona Auraa, 12, of the Tiapa Ward, Paea Tahiti Stake. "We love the temple."

But what has made the temple so important to a new generation of Tahitians? The answer was obvious after speaking with the youth in Wawona's ward. These young men and women understand temple blessings. They understand that being worthy to attend the temple can bless their lives, that temple ordinances can bring salvation to their ancestors, and that temple covenants can unite their families forever.

"Knowing that you have to be worthy to go there,

you live in such a way that you know you can go,” says Marvia Tauira, who was born only a few months before the temple was dedicated. “It helps me live a good life.”

“It helps us prepare ourselves spiritually to return to our Heavenly Father,” says Tenaya Auraa, 14.

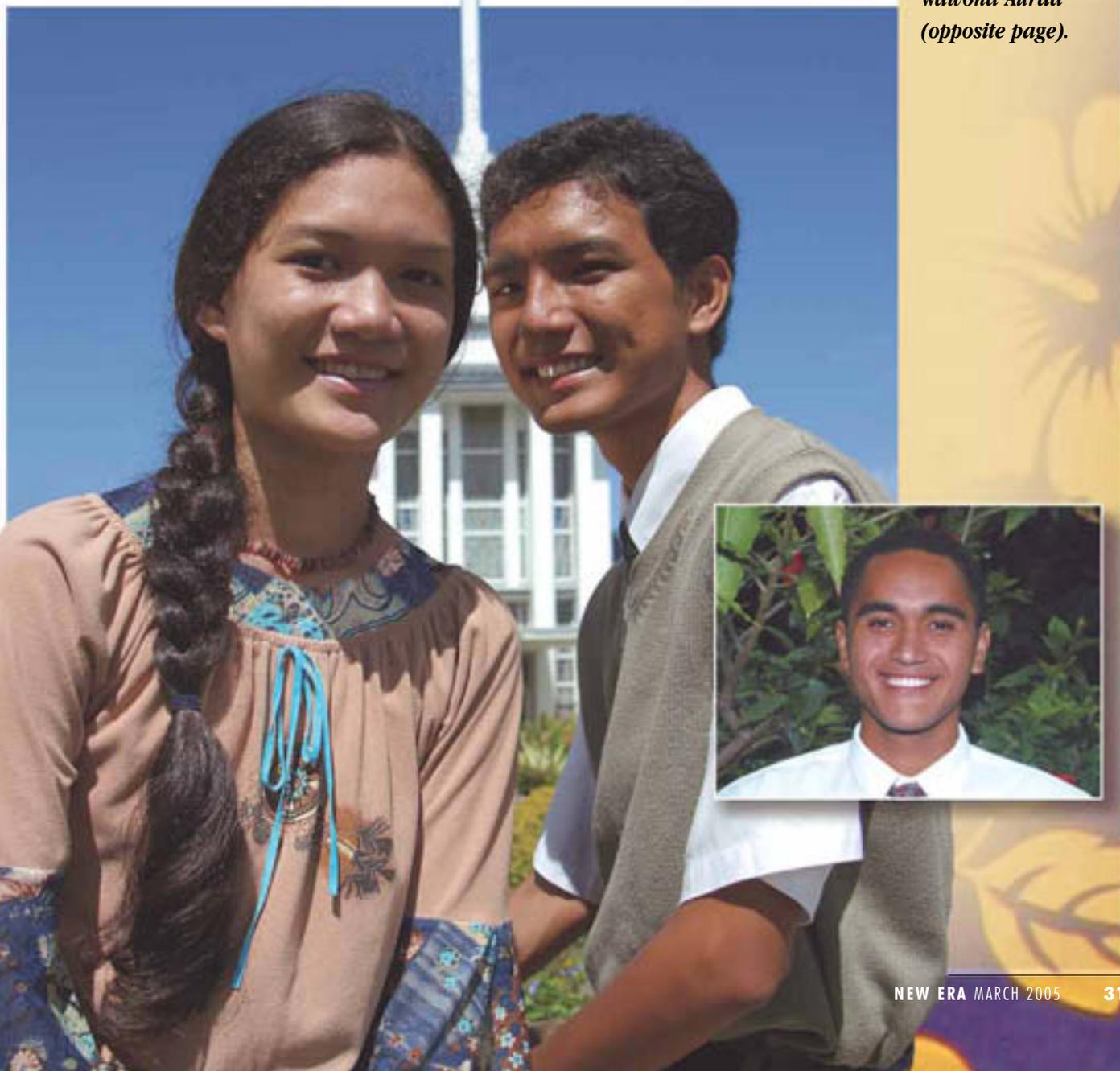
Performing baptisms for the dead is special to these youth. Until they’re older, it’s the only temple ordinance the youth of the

Church can perform. These young men and women see it as a blessing, not only to themselves but also to others.

“By performing baptisms for the dead, we can help some of our ancestors receive saving ordinances,” says Mataitini Auraa, 18. “It’s such a blessing to have a temple so close.”

The youth of the Paea Tahiti Stake are looking forward to the day when

Without the temple nearby, life would have been different for Merirani (below left) and Hironui Johnston (below right), Heifara Tauira (below inset), and Wawona Auraa (opposite page).



they can go to the temple to receive their endowment.

For Heifara Tauira, 18, who is looking forward to serving a mission, that day isn't far away. He's excited, he says, because he has grown up listening to the testimonies of those who have received their endowment. "They seem so strong in the Church," he says. "Their testimonies of the temple are strong."

Not only do these youth share a love of the temple, but they share the same hope—that through temple covenants they can be with their families forever.

"The temple can unite our families," says Mahearii Tauira, 12. "And we can be together forever."

Blessing Generations

The blessings of the temple link families together through the generations. And a love for the temple can also be passed from one generation to the next.

"We watch our parents go to the temple," says Hironui. "We see them living worthy to go. We see how their temple attendance blesses us, and we choose to follow them."

That love for the temple, which began with the Johnstons' parents, has been passed on to Hironui and Merirani. And it won't end there. Their actions can pass it on to the next generation.

"I want to have children someday," says Merirani. "I



"There are many reasons one should want to come to the temple. Even its external appearance seems to hint of its deeply spiritual purposes. This is much more evident within its walls. Over the door to the temple appears the tribute 'Holiness to the Lord.' When you enter any dedicated temple, you are in the house of the Lord."

—President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Holy Temple," *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 32.

want to teach them that the temple is the house of the Lord and that if we are faithful we can be together forever because of the temple."

The blessings of the temple go both ways. This generation is being blessed today. As they grow and do the work for their ancestors, those blessings reach into the past. And as this generation begins raising the next, those blessings will roll on into the future.

"The Lord has given us a real blessing by building His house in our land," Merirani says. "But the greatest blessing is that through the ordinances of the temple, our ancestors and families can be sealed together, and we can all live with our Father again. I would do

anything for that blessing." **NE**



As these young men and women grow up serving in the temple, the temple blesses not only their ancestors but their future families too.

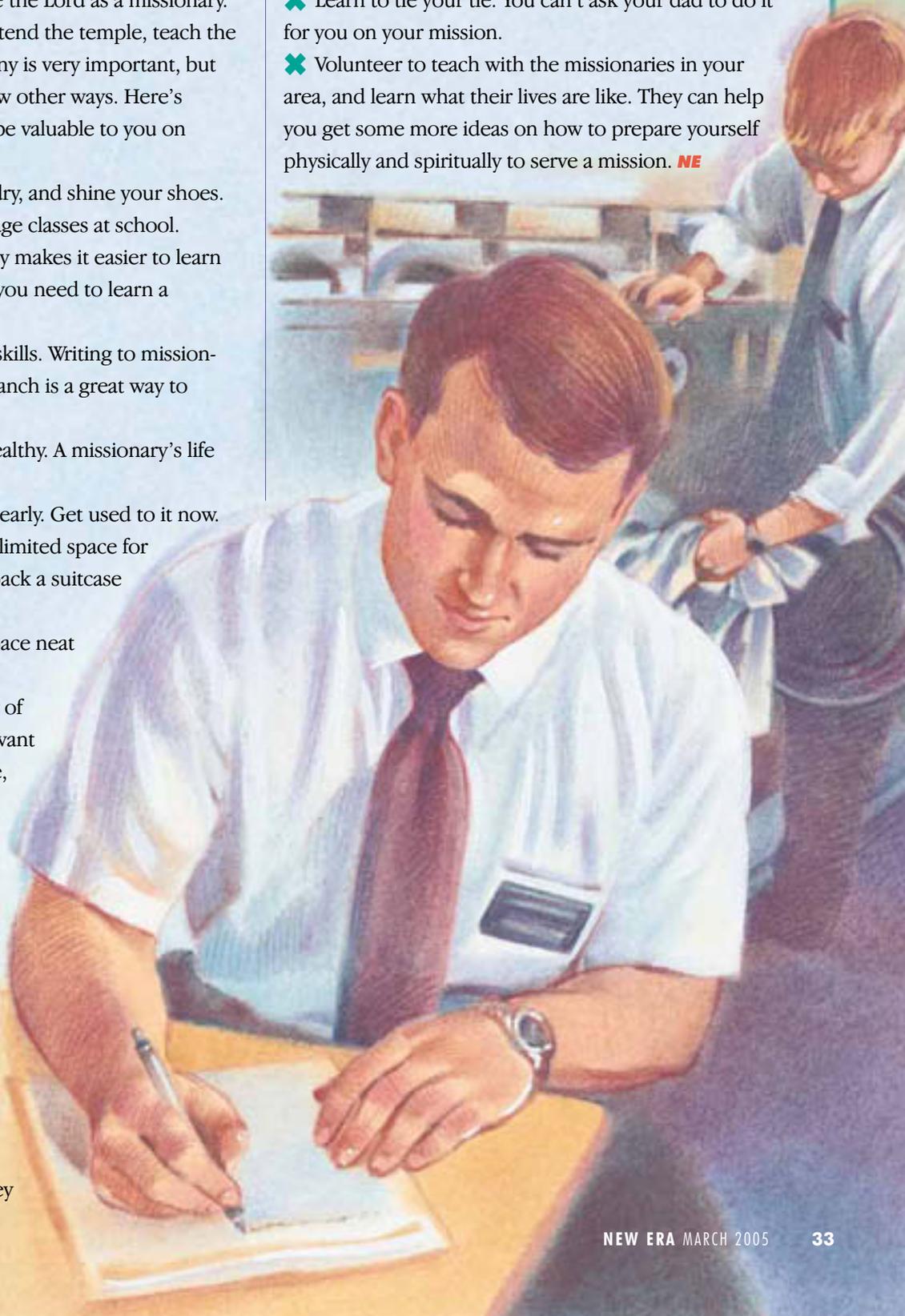
PRACTICALLY PREPARED

Long before you receive your call, there is a lot you can do to prepare to serve the Lord as a missionary. Spiritual preparation to attend the temple, teach the gospel, and share your testimony is very important, but you should also prepare in a few other ways. Here's some practical advice that will be valuable to you on your mission:

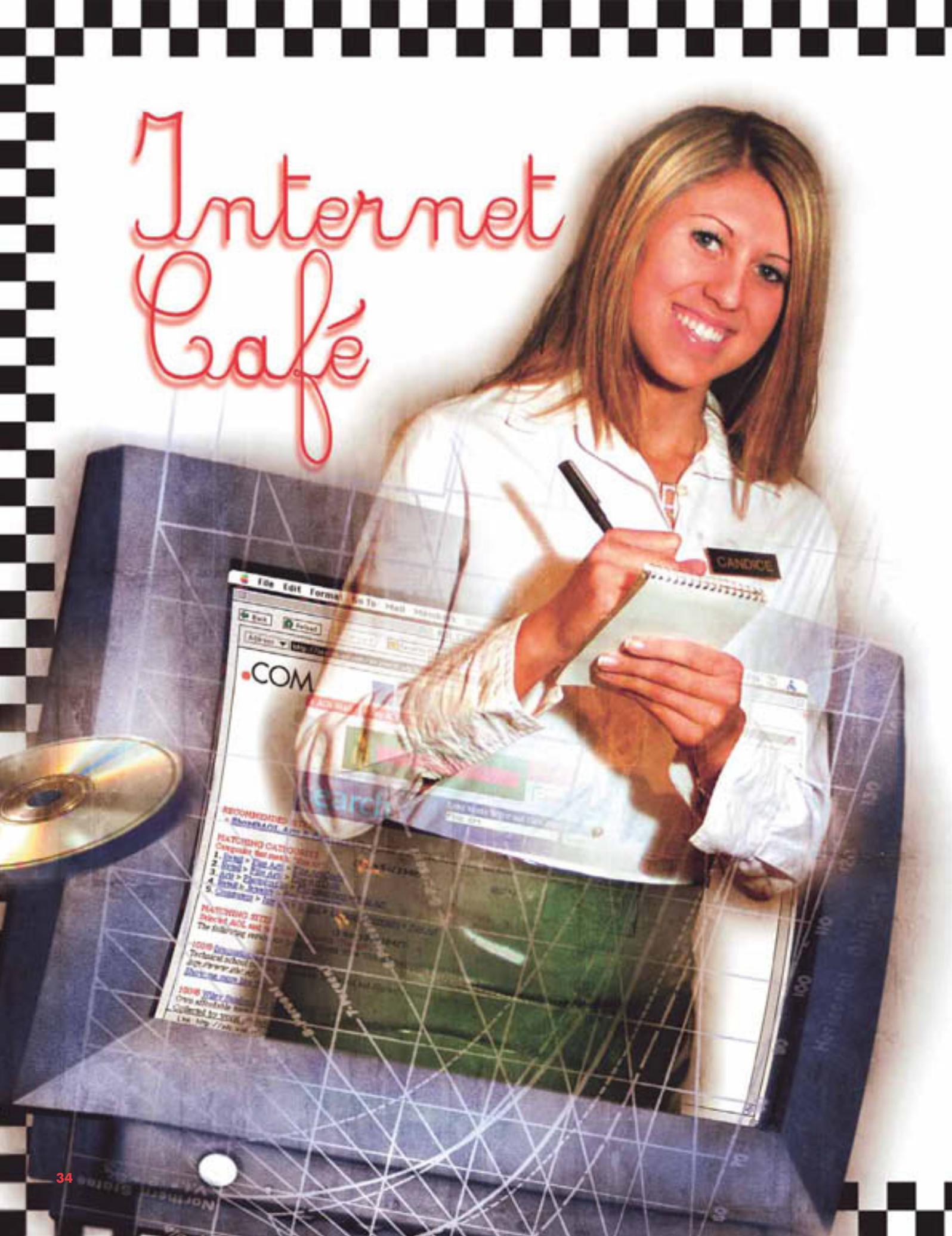
- ✦ Learn how to iron, do laundry, and shine your shoes.
- ✦ Pay attention in your language classes at school. Learning a new language usually makes it easier to learn another, a good skill to have if you need to learn a language for your mission.
- ✦ Practice your letter-writing skills. Writing to missionaries in your family, ward, or branch is a great way to practice.
- ✦ Stay physically fit and eat healthy. A missionary's life can be very demanding.
- ✦ Go to bed early, and get up early. Get used to it now.
- ✦ As a missionary, you'll have limited space for your personal items. Learn to pack a suitcase efficiently.
- ✦ Learn to keep your living space neat and clean.
- ✦ Learn how to cook a variety of foods—unless, of course, you want to eat the same thing (or worse, your companion's cooking) for two years straight!
- ✦ Learn to do minor mending jobs on your clothing, like sewing on buttons, hemming, or patching holes.
- ✦ Know how to work hard. Get a job, serve others, do your best at school, or participate in some other activity that takes great effort. Missionary work is just that, *work*.
- ✦ Learn how to manage money

as you pay tithing and save for your mission.

- ✦ Learn to tie your tie. You can't ask your dad to do it for you on your mission.
- ✦ Volunteer to teach with the missionaries in your area, and learn what their lives are like. They can help you get some more ideas on how to prepare yourself physically and spiritually to serve a mission. **NE**



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BY ARIANNE B. COPE

Your stomach rumbles with hunger as you slide into your seat at the new Online Restaurant downtown. On the front page of the thick menu, before an unbelievably long list of dishes from peach cobbler to Jordanian falafel, is the following warning:

“Our dishes have no health or safety standards. Eat at your own risk.”

“What kind of restaurant is this?” you ask yourself as you glance around at the other customers. Some of them are enjoying wonderful meals. Others are being served dishes that look rotten or poisonous.

The Online Restaurant of our life—the Internet—has some great menu items. It lets you talk to your friends instantly, buy new jeans, listen to general conference, hear your favorite song, play games with users around the world, and read the *New Era*.

But you can also view material on the Internet, on purpose or by accident, that will poison your spirit and mind, jeopardize your safety or your family’s, or get you into legal or financial trouble.

The good news about the Online Restaurant is that it’s possible to choose between the delicious and the deadly when you place your order—if you know what to watch out for.

Family-Size Your Meal

As you glance around, you notice that many of the customers eating dangerous dishes are sitting by themselves. The same situation could cause problems for you when you’re using the Internet. Try not to be the only person in the room when you’re online. Keep the computer in a room the whole family uses.

Talk to your parents if you come across anything on the Internet that makes you feel

uncomfortable. With your family, set up rules about Internet use, post them next to the computer, and then follow them!

All You Can Eat

The Online Restaurant may be all you can eat, but that doesn’t mean you should spend all day eating. Even if you’re not doing anything inappropriate, too much time on the computer is

damaging. Don’t let your time on the computer interfere with more important things like your school work, family relations, or your sleep.

A good way to monitor yourself is to tell your parents when you plan to use the Internet, what you’ll be using it for, and for how long. Then don’t access it any other time without their permission.

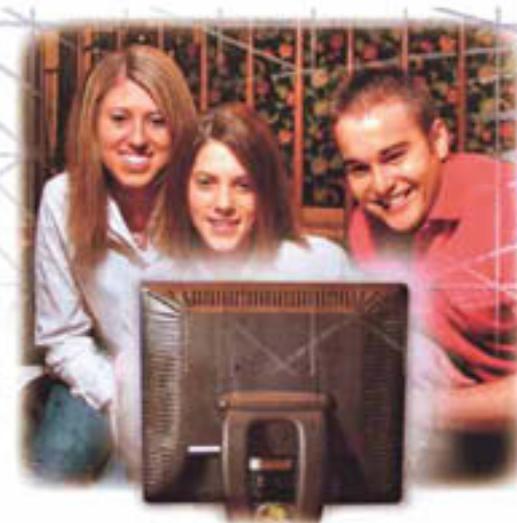
Can I Taste Some of That?

You also notice some customers wandering around to strangers’ tables and sampling their food. They think it’s a great way to get a free meal. Not only is this rude, but they might sample someone’s “arsenic soufflé” by accident.



The menu at the Internet Café is virtually endless. While there are many wonderful entrées to sample, there are just as many you don't want near your table. The good news is that it's possible to choose between the delicious and the deadly when you place your order—if you know what to watch out for.

What's on your menu today?



EXTRA! EXTRA!

For more about the dangers of Internet pornography, read "Danger Ahead! Avoiding Pornography's Trap" (*New Era*, Oct. 2002) in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org.

You shouldn't be caught doing the same thing online with file sharing. You can stumble across pornography files mixed with music files. And downloading certain songs or movies from the Internet violates copyright laws and is dishonest. There are no "free meals" in cyberspace.

Private Table, Please

You wouldn't just give out all your personal information to the waiter or the guy sitting at the next table, would you? The same goes for the Internet. Information about you like your name, age, address, school, identification numbers, and telephone number is private. You shouldn't give personal information in chat rooms, on bulletin boards, or on Web sites. You also shouldn't post this information on your own Web site. E-mail isn't totally safe either, so watch what you put in your messages.

E-mail a la Carte

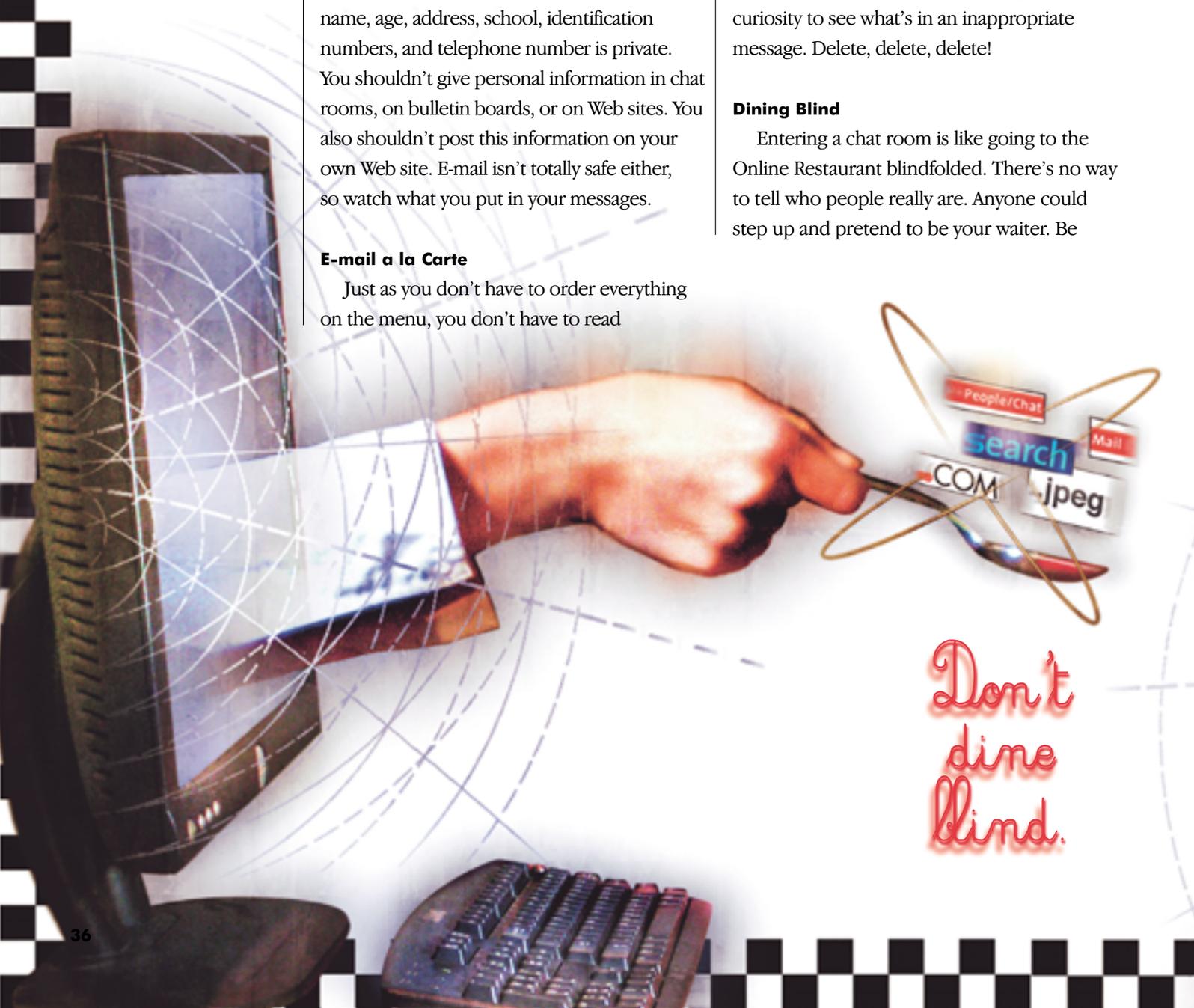
Just as you don't have to order everything on the menu, you don't have to read

everything that comes to your e-mail account. Some messages contain viruses or lead to bad sites. A filter on your e-mail account can help, but messages you didn't order will still seep through. The best protection is to avoid opening e-mails, especially attachments, from people you don't know. Even e-mails from people you do know can have viruses attached that were forwarded without their knowledge.

If you receive messages that are threatening, suggestive, or make you feel uncomfortable in any way, tell your parents. Don't give in to curiosity to see what's in an inappropriate message. Delete, delete, delete!

Dining Blind

Entering a chat room is like going to the Online Restaurant blindfolded. There's no way to tell who people really are. Anyone could step up and pretend to be your waiter. Be



Don't
dine
blind.



careful who you correspond with. And never arrange to meet in person someone you've met online without parental permission and supervision. Never send a person your picture, address, or anything else without first checking with your parents.

Safer Menus

You can purchase filtering software or subscribe to an Internet service provider that blocks objectionable sites. It's like asking for a menu that doesn't list any meals with poison in them.

But even with a safer menu, there will always be dishes that slip through the cracks. If your food was moldy, you wouldn't eat it. Likewise, when searching the Internet, even with a filter, don't click the link to any site that looks objectionable.

Take Out

Be careful when using the Internet outside your home. The Internet at schools is usually filtered. But other public places, like Internet cafés and libraries, usually don't have filters.

Avoid accessing the Internet at your friends' homes. Just as you wouldn't eat disgusting food if your friends offered it to you, never let them show you inappropriate things on the Internet. If something is going on that makes you feel uncomfortable, leave immediately.

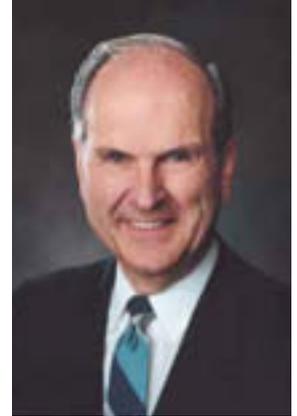
You Are the Master Chef

No one can force you to order or eat anything. Most of the time, you have to be looking for bad sites to find them. If you do accidentally stumble across something sexually explicit or anything that makes you uncomfortable while exploring Internet sites, simply turn away and turn off the computer.

The most effective protection is self-control. With the Internet, don't give in to the curiosity to take a peek at inappropriate stuff. Each time you resist temptation and stick to gospel standards, you'll become stronger. But you're never above the risk of slipping. Satan's temptations are powerful, so always be on your guard.

If you're cautious about what you're viewing and know what to watch for, you're ready to order. Go ahead and spread your napkin on your lap, pick up your fork, and dig into all the good things you'll find online. **NE**

Arianne B. Cope is a member of the Logan 29th Ward, Logan Utah Central Stake.



"We marvel at computers and the Internet that enable transmission of data with remarkable speed. We are truly grateful for these electronic servants. But if we let them take over our time, pervert our potential, or poison our minds with pornography, they cease being servants and become instead false Gods."

—Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, "Getting Where You Want to Go," *New Era*, May 2003, 6.



ARE YOU SAVED BY *Grace or Works?*

“We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.”

—Articles of Faith 1:3

Heavenly Father wants all of His children to return to Him. The help or strength He gives us through the love of Jesus Christ is called *grace*. The things we must do are called *works*.

To gain eternal life, we need both grace and works. A Christian author, C. S. Lewis, compared grace and works to the blades of a pair of scissors. Both are necessary. To ask “Are you saved by grace *or* works?” is like asking “Do you cut with this blade or that one?”

We receive God’s grace because of the Atonement. We can’t raise ourselves from the dead, so the Resurrection is an example of His grace. We can’t purify ourselves from sin, so the Lord’s forgiveness is another example of grace. But before He will forgive us, we must repent—that’s our part, our works.

Besides repentance, our works also

EXTRA! EXTRA!

To learn more about grace and works, read these scriptures:

Works: Matthew 5:16; 7:21; 10:22; James 2:14–26

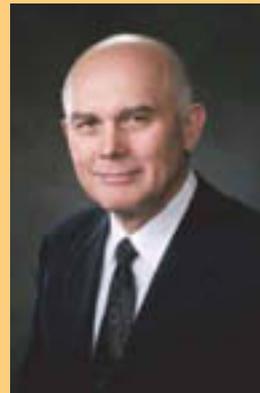
Grace: John 1:17; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:23–24; Ephesians 2:8–9

Both: 2 Nephi 10:24; 25:23; Mosiah 13:28; Alma 42:23; Moroni 10:32–33

Also read “Have You Been Saved?” (*Ensign*, May 1998) by Elder Dallin H. Oaks in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org.

include receiving ordinances, keeping covenants, and serving others. While these works are *necessary* for salvation, they aren’t *sufficient*. They are not enough because we can’t live perfect lives, but we can do our best to live righteously. By doing so, we invite the Lord’s grace into our lives and qualify for the gift of salvation.

If your friends ask, “Does your church believe you are saved by grace or works?” you could say, “We believe that we are saved by grace after all we can do (see 2 Nephi 25:23). We don’t earn salvation. Heavenly Father and the Savior will bless us with eternal life, through Their grace, if we do our part. They have asked us to have faith in Jesus Christ, repent throughout our lives, be baptized and receive other ordinances, and faithfully endure to the end. If we do that, we are promised eternal life through the grace of God.” **NE**



“After all our obedience and good works, we cannot be saved from the effect of our sins without the grace extended by the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”

—Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “What Think Ye of Christ?” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 67.



GENERAL YOUNG WOMEN MEETING

**“A GREAT AND A MARVELOUS WORK”
SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2005
CONFERENCE CENTER**

The theme of this meeting refers to the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. All young women 12 to 18 years of age, their mothers, and Young Women leaders are invited to attend the meeting or view it on television, listen to it on the radio, or access it via the Internet at www.lds.org/broadcast

For those who receive KBYU or BYU-TV, note the following times for the initial broadcast and later rebroadcast:

| LIVE BROADCAST | REBROADCAST |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 8 p.m. Eastern | 10 p.m. Eastern |
| 7 p.m. Central | 9 p.m. Central |
| 6 p.m. Mountain | 8 p.m. Mountain |
| 5 p.m. Pacific | 7 p.m. Pacific |

If you live in an area that does not receive KBYU or BYU-TV, contact your priesthood leaders for a viewing time and place. Information about international broadcast times is also available at www.lds.org/broadcast

In 1 Nephi 14:7, the Lamb of God says, “I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting.” I would like every young woman to know that Joseph Smith was the Lord’s instrument in restoring the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth. All of our work rests upon our testimonies of Joseph Smith as the prophet of the Restoration.

—Susan W. Tanner, Young Women general president

To prepare for the general Young Women meeting:

- Read Joseph Smith—History in the Pearl of Great Price.
- Memorize the words to “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer” (*Hymns*, no. 26) or “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet” (*Hymns*, no. 19).



BE PREPARED . . . FOR CONFERENCE

Consider this method for finding personal answers to your questions and individual help for your challenges during general conference. You’ll be amazed at how much you can hear when you’re really listening.

- 1. Write a list of questions, concerns, or problems you want and need spiritual direction on.** Be specific and list anything that is important to you. (For example: How can I get along with my brothers and sisters better? How can I do better in school?)
- 2. Pray every morning and**

night about the items on your list. Ask specifically to find answers in conference.

3. Arrange your schedule so you can watch, listen to, or read the sessions of conference without being distracted. Try to get enough sleep before conference begins so you won’t be tired and can focus on the talks.

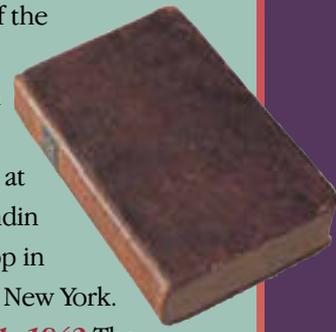
4. Listen for the answers. Many times direct answers will come in a talk, but other times they may come as you listen to the music or prayers or reread the talks in the *Ensign*. Be open to the promptings of the Spirit.

“All of us will be tested. And all of us need true friends to love us, to listen to us, to show us the way, and to testify of truth to us so that we may retain the companionship of the Holy Ghost. You must be such a true friend.”

—Elder Henry B. Eyring
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,
“True Friends,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 29.

IT HAPPENED IN MARCH

March 26, 1830 The first copies of the Book of Mormon were available at the Grandin bookshop in Palmyra, New York.

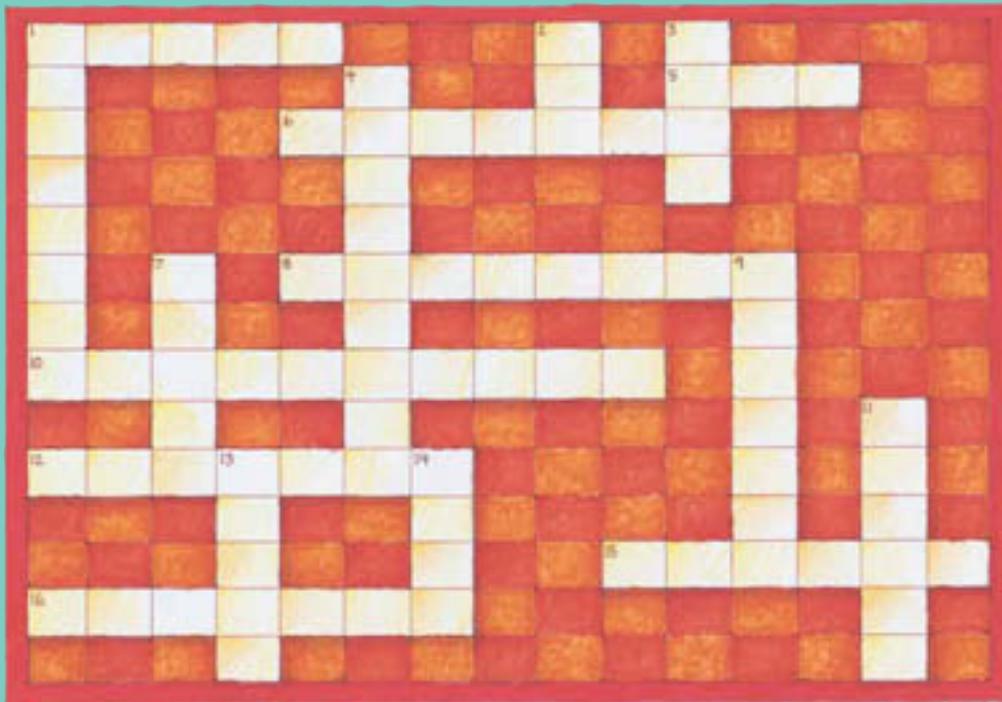


March 1, 1842 The *Times and Seasons* published Joseph Smith's Wentworth Letter, which gave a short history of the Church and statements that are now called the Articles of Faith.



March 12, 1961 The Holland Stake was organized in the Hague, Netherlands (above). It was the first non-English-speaking stake in the Church.

March 6, 1999 President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the Colonia Juárez Chihuahua Mexico Temple (below).



TEST YOUR LDS I.Q.

You've probably been singing "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" (*Children's Songbook*, 57) since you were in Primary; now you can check to see how well you've been listening. Fill in the crossword puzzle to test your knowledge of the parables of Jesus. You can find the answers and refresh your memory by turning to the scripture references.

Across

1. Precious gem of great price (Matthew 13:45–46)



5. Lamp fuel (Matthew 25:1–13)
6. Event to separate wheat and tares (Matthew 13:24–30)
8. Return of the ___ son (Luke 15:11–32)
10. Containers for new wine (two words) (Mark 2:22)
12. Five wise, five foolish (Matthew 25:1–13)
15. Don't put your candle under this (Matthew 5:14–16)
16. The least of seeds (Matthew 13:31–32)

Down

1. More humble than the Pharisee (Luke 18:9–14)
2. Percentage of lost sheep (Luke 15:3–7)
3. It's in your brother's eye (Luke 6:41)

4. Compassionate passerby (Luke 10:30–37)
7. Behold, a ___ went forth to sow (Matthew 13:3–9)
9. Beggar at the rich man's gate (Luke 16:19–31)
11. The unwise servant got only one, and he lost it (Matthew 25:14–30)
13. Divided from the sheep (Matthew 25:31–34)
14. The foolish man's foundation (Matthew 7:24–27)

Answers:
 Across: 1. pearl 5. oil
 6. harvest 8. prodigal
 10. new bottles 12. virgins
 15. bushel 16. mustard
 Down: 1. publican 2. one
 3. mote 4. Samaritan
 7. sower 9. Lazarus 11. tal-
 ent 13. goats 14. sand

THE PROOF IS IN THE DOING

BY ELDER KENNETH JOHNSON
Of the Seventy



As I learned and tested gospel principles new to me, I invariably found them to be true.

Some years ago, a client seeking my professional advice described to me the nature of his business, which involved selling secondhand furniture and household goods with his father. Their stock was acquired by attending auctions and market sales and by clearing unwanted items from homes. They were careful to only buy items they could sell for a profit.

On one occasion, the son had contracted to clear the contents of a home following the death of an elderly occupant. Hanging in one of the rooms was a painting. Pausing to examine it, he considered the possibility that one day he would discover an antique or painting of far greater value than the previous owner had realized. But concluding that this painting was not in that category, he carried it to his vehicle and put it among the other items.

Later, as he and his father were unloading the vehicle, the father picked up the artwork and said, "I wish I knew more about paintings and how to tell if they are valuable." The son responded that he was sure this one was not valuable. Nevertheless, the father felt it would be worth having the painting checked by a friend of his who managed an art gallery.

Several days later, the father's friend informed him that the painting probably had a value of at least £12,000 (almost \$29,000 U.S. in the early 1970s). Excited by the news, the father and son pick up the painting. This time they carefully wrapped the work of art in a blanket, and the son held it securely in his arms as they returned to the shop. The painting sold at auction for £12,500.

In telling this story, my client concluded by saying, "I can't imagine why anyone would be prepared to pay so much for such an ordinary painting."

How Do We Judge?

I have often reflected on the response of the young man. He had no interest in the painting. He judged it to be of little or no value.

How do we judge the value of the gospel in our lives? Do we really appreciate our indebtedness to the Savior? In exploring my own feelings, I often ponder the scriptures.

Many who witnessed the Savior during His mortal ministry had only a superficial understanding of what He did and who He was. This is confirmed by an incident that followed Jesus's feeding of the five thousand:

“And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

“Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

“And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?” (Matthew 13:54–56).

It would appear that many who associated with Jesus saw Him as a great miracle worker or teacher but not as the Son of God. How do we progress, then, to real understanding? I believe the answer is revealed in the words of the Savior to the Jews: “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine” (John 7:17).

Testing Gospel Teachings

I am grateful that I was brought up in a home where Christian values were taught and observed, although without

benefit of the knowledge of the Restoration of the gospel. Later, as I was invited to explore the message of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, each new doctrine required deep consideration, often resulting in a change of lifestyle. But those changes did not come about as a result of passive belief or mere intellectual assent. The proof was in the doing, in the exercise of faith. As I learned and tested gospel principles new to me, I invariably found them to be true.

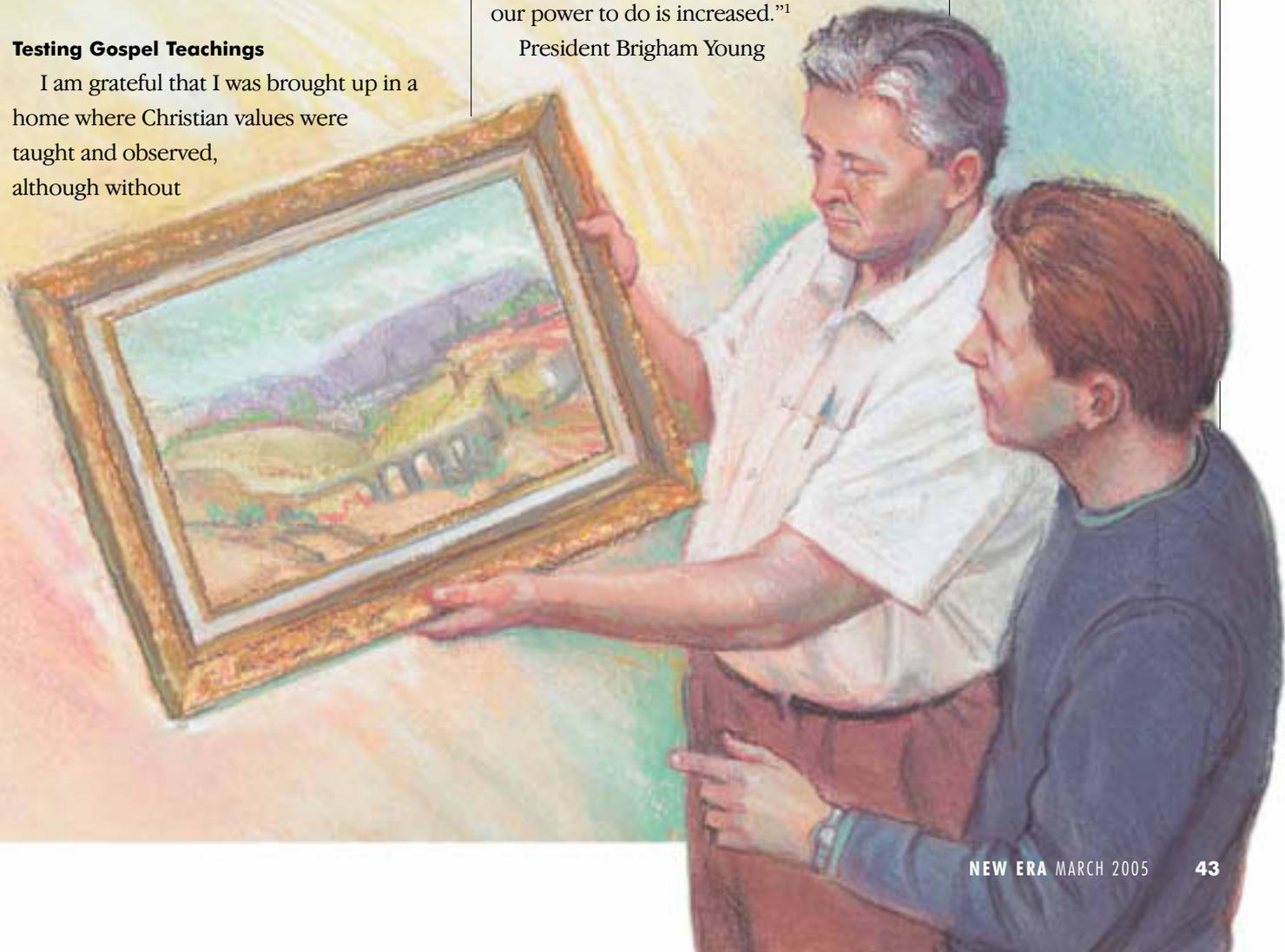
One example of this process concerns the law of the fast. As I observed this law each fast day, I gradually gained a testimony of the principle of fasting.

President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) often quoted the saying, “That which we persist in doing becomes easier to do; not that the nature of the thing is changed, but our power to do is increased.”¹

President Brigham Young

The young man had no interest in the painting. He judged it to be of little or no value.

How do we judge the value of the gospel in our lives? Do we really appreciate our indebtedness to the Savior?



expressed his belief that “every principle God has revealed carries its own convictions of its truth to the human mind.”² My experiences as I grew in the gospel bore out these statements about learning eternal truths, especially the relationship between obedience and testimony, on doing and knowing.

What Is Tithing?

I can vividly recall a sunny Sunday afternoon in July 1959 when Pamela (whom I later married) and I were walking and talking together. I was contemplating becoming a member of the Church. Pamela said, “I can’t remember the missionaries teaching you about tithing.”

“What is tithing?” I asked.

Pamela responded that members give 10 percent of their income in obedience

to God’s law and as an expression of their gratitude for all that our Heavenly Father has given them.

There have been a few moments in my life when I felt faint as a result of shock, and this was one of them. “Ten percent!” I echoed. “That’s impossible. There’s no way I could afford to pay tithing.”

Pamela calmly replied, “My father does. He has a wife and four children, and his income is less than yours.” She followed up by mentioning another family I had come to know in the branch, informing me that they lived on less money than I did and that there were six children in the family. This proved to be a useful challenge to me. If they could manage, I thought, then so could I.

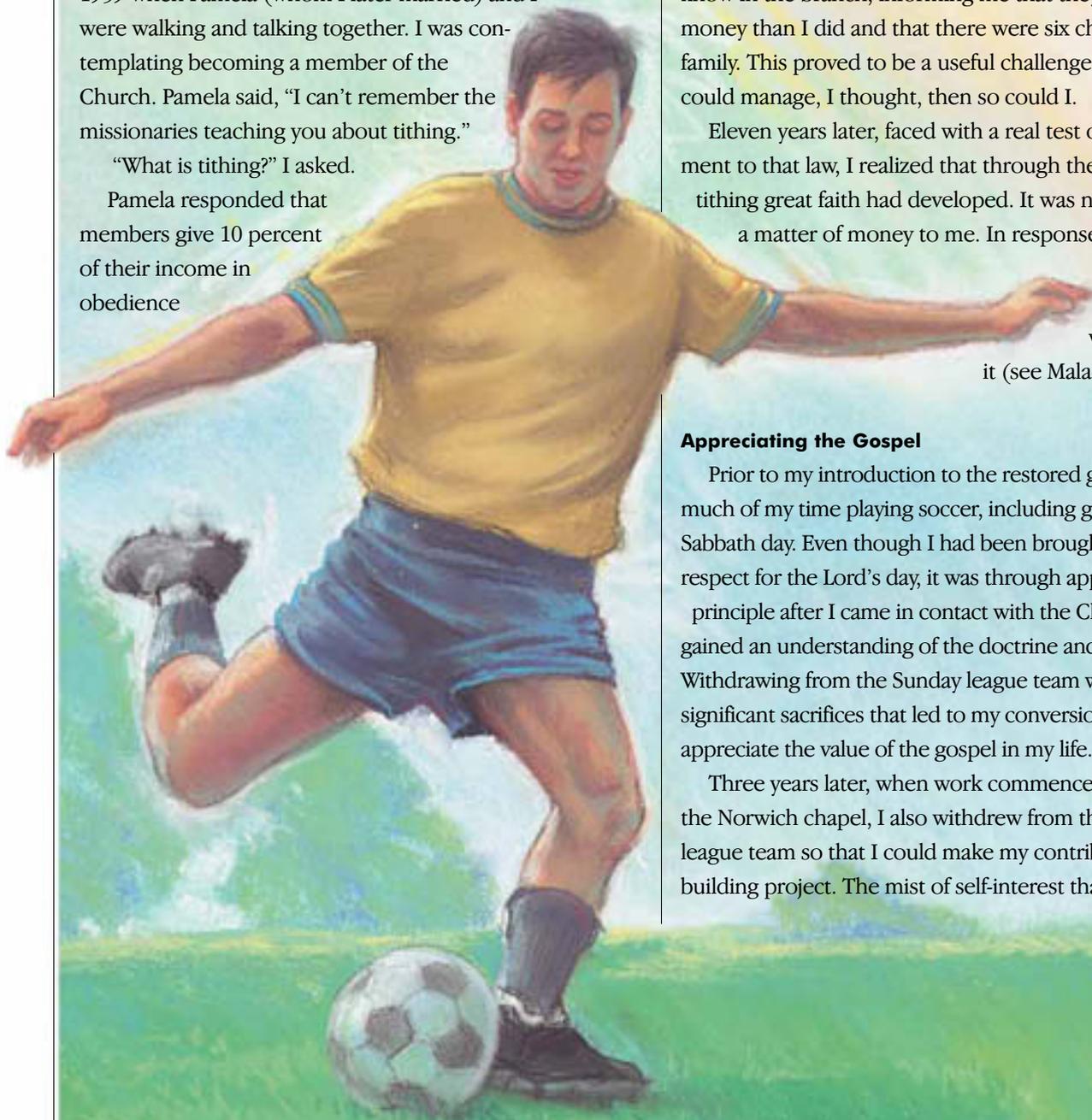
Eleven years later, faced with a real test of my commitment to that law, I realized that through the payment of tithing great faith had developed. It was no longer simply

a matter of money to me. In response to that test, I followed my faith, and was blessed for it (see Malachi 3:10).

Appreciating the Gospel

Prior to my introduction to the restored gospel, I spent much of my time playing soccer, including games on the Sabbath day. Even though I had been brought up to have respect for the Lord’s day, it was through applying the principle after I came in contact with the Church that I gained an understanding of the doctrine and its blessings. Withdrawing from the Sunday league team was one of the significant sacrifices that led to my conversion. It helped me appreciate the value of the gospel in my life.

Three years later, when work commenced on building the Norwich chapel, I also withdrew from the Saturday league team so that I could make my contribution to the building project. The mist of self-interest that had



previously restricted my vision was beginning to disperse, and a new panoramic view was emerging, bringing with it a deeper appreciation for and an increasing love of life.

This transition within ourselves is described in the words of the Savior to the Jews, recorded in John 8:31–32: “If ye continue in my word [I interpret this to mean, “If ye continue to live in harmony with my doctrine,”] then are ye my disciples indeed;

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” These words reinforce the relationship between doing and knowing.

Applying What We Know

To me there is an analogy between engaging in a physical fitness program and applying and knowing about gospel principles in our lives. When we regularly engage in physical activities, the benefits may not be dramatically apparent. However, when illness, injury, or lack of desire interrupt our fitness programs for a prolonged period, we experience great difficulty in regaining the level of fitness we previously enjoyed. Some become so discouraged that they do not persist but settle for a lesser level of fitness.

This can be true of living in harmony with gospel principles. The benefits may not always be noticeable, and this may cause some to question the reality of the doctrine and thus to lose faith and discontinue Church activity. Those who work their way back to spiritual fitness usually discover a greater appreciation for the gospel. Others

slip away, and walk no more with the Lord.

The promise to those who live in harmony with the Word of Wisdom and who “[walk] in obedience to the commandments” is that they “shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones” (D&C 89:18). The admonition to “keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments” is significant.

Verse 19 adds another dimension that to some may seem almost unrelated to what is often seen exclusively as a health code. But the verse contains the great key and linkage between doing and knowing: “And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures.”

Possibly there are doctrines that may not be easily tested in practical terms. Nevertheless, I believe the key that opens the way to our personal understanding of the plan of salvation, with a personal assurance regarding the blessings of the Atonement of the Savior in our own lives, is found by faithful adherence to gospel principles.

A testimony of the restored gospel is like a fabric with divine doctrine and eternal principles woven together to create a vision of such exquisite beauty that only those who follow the prescribed pattern of doing it—that is, of living the gospel—may discover its truths. **NE**

Adapted from an article in the March 1995 Ensign.

NOTES

1. Bryant S. Hinckley, *Heber J. Grant: Highlights in the Life of a Great Leader* (1951), 49.
2. *Journal of Discourses*, 9:149.

When we regularly engage in physical activities, the benefits may not be dramatically apparent. However, when illness, injury, or lack of desire interrupt our fitness programs for a prolonged period, we experience great difficulty in regaining the level of fitness we previously enjoyed. This can be true of living in harmony with gospel principles.

LEARNING TO LOVE

BY JOCELYN M. BECKER

In the summer after I graduated from high school, I left for China to teach English to young children in a boarding school. It was the first time I would be so far away from home.

As I first started teaching, all I could think about was missing my family. I was ready to leave my current adventure and go back to my comfort zone. Then, through prayer and scripture study, I started to gain a deeper appreciation for the gospel. I became more grateful for my family and for the Lord's blessings in my life. I began to realize how much Heavenly Father loved me.

Suddenly my problems weren't as big. I didn't miss my family as much, and I wanted more than ever to see the students as Christ sees them. I began



to realize what Christ said about children being pure of heart. They loved me, even with all my faults.

As I loved them with all of my heart, teaching became a little easier. I began to see all of their talents and wonderful qualities. My patience level was higher. For the first time I realized what they and I must mean to my Heavenly Father. I had more love for my students than I had even thought possible. I gained a deeper love for my family and all those around me. Loving the students made it easy to understand what they needed me to teach them, and my love for them made me a better person. **NE**

Jocelyn M. Becker is a member of the North Field Ninth Ward, Pleasant Grove Utah North Field Stake.

NEARER TO THEE

BY SERA HOWELLS

I had been learning to play the piano for only a few months when I decided to learn some Church hymns. I started trying to play “Nearer, My God, to Thee” (*Hymns*, no. 100). I eventually learned the music by heart a couple of weeks later. I then sat down and carefully read its words and realized just how much closer to God that song made me feel. The hymn comforted me and showed me that God is always with us. **NE**

Sera Howells is a member of the Cardiff Branch, Cardiff Wales Stake.

I OBJECT

BY JOSEPH GONZALES

When I was a new ninth-grade high school student, my English teacher announced that we were going to watch a movie as part of our study of Shakespeare and his works. She told us the movie was R-rated and asked if anyone had any objections. I built up the courage to raise my hand and told my teacher that I did not watch R-rated movies. My face felt like it was about to burst and my whole body felt like it was sweating, but inside I knew I had done the right thing. My objection seemed to silence the class, and I felt everyone’s eyes on me.

Later, my teacher questioned me further on the subject, and I told her that I would not watch the movie. My teacher left it up to me to choose between watching the movie she selected or accepting a lower grade for the assignment.

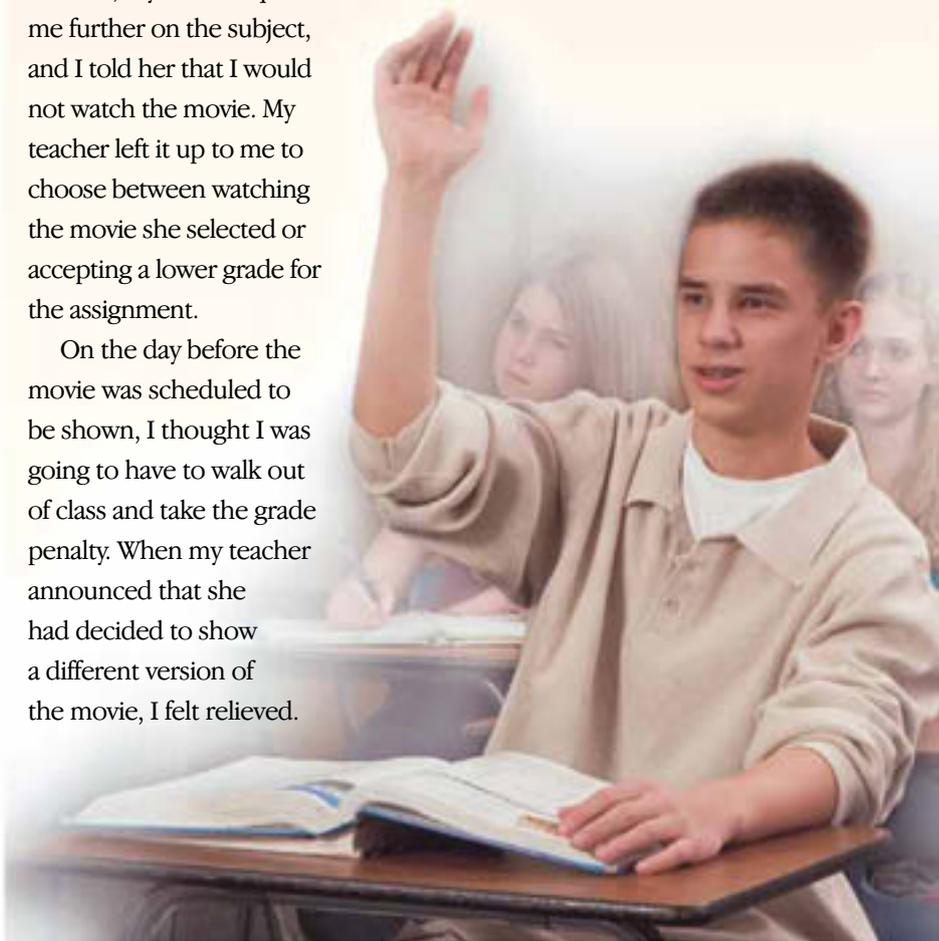
On the day before the movie was scheduled to be shown, I thought I was going to have to walk out of class and take the grade penalty. When my teacher announced that she had decided to show a different version of the movie, I felt relieved.

There was plenty of moaning and whining from many of the students because of the change in plans. I thought everyone would be mad at me.

Instead, the students quickly quieted down, and my friends called me over to sit with them. Their support made me feel great. After class, I thanked my teacher for her decision to show an appropriate version of the movie.

I’m thankful for the standards of the Church. I know that when we keep high standards, we can make a difference in the world in our own small ways. **NE**

Joseph Gonzales is a member of the Pearl City First Ward, Waipahu Hawaii Stake.



D&C 9:7-9

In these verses the Lord tells Oliver Cowdery what more he could do to receive revelation. The same advice applies to you.

Doctrine and Covenants 8 and 9 are revelations to Oliver Cowdery through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Oliver desired the gift of translation when he was the Prophet's scribe. The Lord told Oliver he would be blessed with the knowledge he desired if he was faithful.

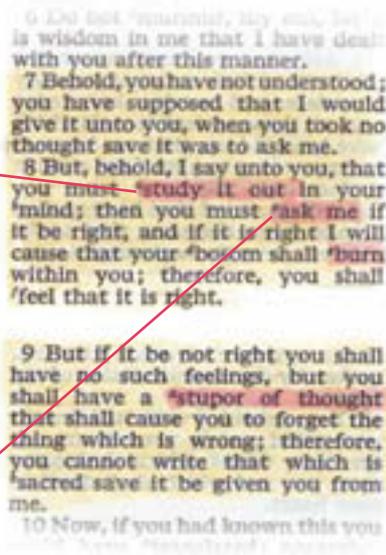
Oliver, however, did not do all he needed to do to translate the ancient records at that time, so the Lord told him to continue as a scribe. The Lord promised him another chance to translate if he continued to be faithful.

Read these scriptures to see examples of people whose pondering and study led them to great revelations:

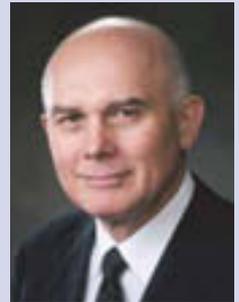
- 1 Nephi 11:1
- Helaman 10:2-5
- D&C 138:11

What problems do you need the Lord's help with?

Think through your problem, pondering what you can do to resolve it, and then consult with the Lord in prayer. If you "ask in faith, with an honest heart, believing that you shall receive a knowledge" (D&C 8:1), He will answer you. But remember the Lord will respond in His own way and time (see D&C 88:63-68).



“What does a ‘burning in the bosom’ mean? Does it need to be a feeling of caloric heat, like the burning produced by combustion? If that is the meaning, I have never had a



burning in the bosom. Surely, the word ‘burning’ in this scripture signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity. That is the witness many receive. That is the way revelation works.

“Truly, the still, small voice is just that, ‘still’ and ‘small.’ ”

—Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 7.

stupor=a daze or state of reduced sensibility

To learn more about receiving revelation, read these articles in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org: “Communion with the Holy Spirit” (*Ensign*, Mar. 2002) by President James E. Faust, “Personal Revelation: The Gift, the Test, and the Promise” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1994) by President Boyd K. Packer, and “Scripture Reading and Revelation” (*Ensign*, Jan. 1995) by Elder Dallin H. Oaks.

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

Mutual Activity Ideas

- Read the article, “Ward of Wisdom,” on page 12. Suggest organizing a similar event in your ward or branch. You can expand the group that you select to interview to include those of all ages. Make a list of good advice gleaned from your interviews.
- Review the Idea List on page 33. Plan an activity to learn or practice some of the skills suggested on the list. You could even make some of the skills into a competition, such as seeing who can pack the most things in a suitcase or who can properly tie a tie the fastest.

Personal Progress or Duty to God

- As part of your scripture study, read the article, “Are You Saved by Grace or Works?” on page 38. Use the scriptures listed there as a way to study more about this doctrine.

Family Home Evening Ideas

- After reading together the article, “Internet Café,” on page 34, have a family discussion about using the computer and create a list of family rules. The rules could include restrictions on the amount of time spent on the computer, what types of games will be allowed, what to do about unwanted e-mail, or how to avoid unacceptable Web sites.
- Have a music appreciation night. Using the poster on page 19 as a starting place for a discussion, try playing different kinds of music as a way of expanding the musical tastes of your family.



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SUNDAY LESSON HELPS

In addition to the Resource Guides (printed in May and November in the *Ensign* and *Liabona*), Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood teachers may find these additional resources helpful in enhancing lessons 11–15.

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Lesson 11: Extended Family Relationships

“Count the Ripples,” *New Era*, Feb. 2005, 26.
Janet Thomas, “The Family Secret,” *New Era*, Nov. 2004, 36.

Lesson 12: The Blessings of the Priesthood

Debra J. Workman, “Believing Is Seeing,” this issue, 24.
Brad Larsen, “Me? Give a Blessing?” *New Era*, Jan. 2005, 40.

Lesson 13: The Priesthood Can Bless Families

Caroline H. Benzley, “Watching Over the Church,” *New Era*, Feb. 2005, 30.
H. David Burton, Richard C. Edgley, and Keith B. McMullin, “The Miracle of the Priesthood,” *New Era*, Apr. 2004, 12.

Lesson 14: We Have a Wonderful Legacy

“What Happened to Christ’s Church?” *New Era*, Feb. 2005, 8.
“What Had to Happen?” this issue, 8.

Lesson 15: Blessings of the House of Israel

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

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Lesson 11: Faith Sufficient to Obtain Eternal Life

Q&A: “I resolve to think about Jesus Christ all day, then struggle to do it . . .” *New Era*, Jan. 2005, 16.
Kenneth Johnson, “The Proof Is in the Doing,” this issue, 42.

Lesson 12: Repentance

Q&A: “I’ve been through the repentance process, but how do I know if I’ve really been forgiven?” *New Era*, Feb. 2003, 16.
“I Was the 100th Sheep,” *New Era*, Apr. 2004, 8.

Lesson 13: Receiving Forgiveness As We Forgive

“Can I Be Forgiven?” *New Era*, Mar. 2003, 8.
Michael D. Call, “Guilt Ridden,” *New Era*, Mar. 2001, 26.

Lesson 14: The Sacrament

Stephen A. West, “Out of Small Things,” *New Era*, July 2003, 12.
Idea List: “Always Remember Him,” *New Era*, Oct. 2000, 15.

Lesson 15: Enduring to the End

Christoffel Golden Jr., “You’ll Be Tested and Taught,” *New Era*, Feb. 2005, 42.

MY DATING DILEMMA

I love the Instant Messages. They're incredibly relevant to my life. When I read the Instant Message "Dating Dilemma" in the October *New Era*, I felt I knew exactly what the author was talking about. I have been casually dating a really great guy from school for over a year, and lately I have felt that our relationship was getting a little too serious. I prayed about it and felt that we should just be friends. I finally told him this morning and was a little down the whole day because of it. Then I came home and saw this Instant Message reminding me that I am happiest when I follow the Lord's will. Thank you, Tiffany Day, for writing about your experience.

Leila Watts, Andover Ward, Anoka Minnesota Stake

KISSING COURAGE

I really enjoyed the October 2004 *New Era*. I was especially glad to see the article on kissing: "What Do Kisses Mean?" I turned 16 a few weeks before reading that article, and I was getting ready to start dating. I had decided to wait until I was at least engaged to kiss, but I was thinking about giving in. Reading that article helped me to strengthen my resolve. I know I'll be better off in the long run. Thank you!

Heather Kenison, Copperhill First Ward, Salt Lake Hunter Copperhill Stake

AN EXTRA SMILE

Thank you for all the hard work you put into the *New Era*. I especially enjoy the Extra Smile. It always makes me laugh. I also enjoy the poem and photo.

Ashlea J. Parsons, Doonside Ward, Sydney Australia Hebersham Stake



"Reading that article helped me to strengthen my resolve."

BEING A BETTER STUDENT

I would like to thank the youth in the Yakota Military Branch who wrote the Idea List ("How to Be a Better Student") in the November 2004 issue. I believe that this article will enable me to do better in school and get better grades than I got last time, by doing all the things they mentioned.

Rusty Griggs, Riverside Third Ward, Murray Utah North Stake

THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

Thank you so much for such a wonderful magazine for youth. I find great strength and spiritual uplift in reading the stories and experiences shared by the youth and leaders of the Church across the earth.

It has helped me so much in my life and constantly reminds me about gospel principles that I need to understand and put into practice. I particularly enjoy the *New Era* Posters, the poetry, the inspirational ideas and suggestions, and the simple, easy-to-read format. It is much needed, especially in the world we live in today. Thanks again for this awesome magazine that helps me to choose the right.

Richard Ryan, Maitland Ward, Newcastle Australia Stake

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

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50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-3220, USA*

*Or e-mail us at
cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org
Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.*



THE MASTER DESIGNER

BY KRISTI M. JOHNSON

I got up this morning, early, before the sun,
And with a pen and pencil, ink and oil,
Endeavored to copy the work of the Master.

He starts with royal purple and a rosy pink.
I mix my colors,
Almost, but not quite right.

There!
I'm ready to start.

His canvas has changed already.
The pink is a fiery orange,
The satiny purple, a pale blue.

I know if I remix my colors,
His will change again.

I don't know how He paints this beautiful canvas
That changes with each passing moment.
I don't know, yet.

But one day I will,
And I, too,
Will paint.



*“We watch our parents
go to the temple,” says Hironui
Jobnston, 16. “We see them being worthy
to go. We see how their temple
attendance blesses us, and we
choose to follow them.”*

See “We Love to See the Temple,” p. 30.

