

BY JANICE H. JOHNSON

# Because I Was

*If I had been home in bed, I would have missed it.*

I hated early-morning seminary. I was raised in Boulder, Colorado, and all we had was early-morning seminary. I tried every excuse why I should not go: “Teenagers need their sleep.” “My life is too busy.” “I’m too tired to pay attention, so I don’t get anything out of it.” Nothing worked. Every morning around 5:45, my mom would wake me, push me in the direction of the shower, and get me out the door for seminary.

This was my pattern all four years until the late fall of my senior year. I arrived at seminary, but the teacher had not shown up. A good friend of mine stood up in front of the class and said, “Since the teacher isn’t here, I think we should just take turns reading aloud the assigned reading.”

Someone started reading 2 Nephi 33:10–11: “Hearken unto these words and believe in Christ; and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ. And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should do good.

“And if they are not the words of Christ, judge ye—for Christ will show unto you, with power and great glory, that they are his words, at the last day; and you and I shall

stand face to face before his bar; and ye shall know that I have been commanded of him to write these things, notwithstanding my weakness.”

As I listened to these words, I thought, “I believe in Christ. If I believe in Him, then these words are true.” As I completed that thought, the Spirit touched me more profoundly. I was so struck by it that I remember looking around the room to see if others were feeling the same thing. They didn’t seem changed or appear as if they were feeling something different. This was a lesson that I was learning privately, just for me. The feeling didn’t go away. I carried it with me for the rest of the day. It was the beginning of a strong testimony for me.

I have often thought about that event and contemplated the act of being diligent. I had been attending seminary reluctantly for almost four years. But because I was diligent and obeying my mother’s desire that I attend, I was taught by the Spirit. If I had been at home in bed sleeping, I would have missed that opportunity. It is often when I least expect it, when I have been diligent day after day, month after month, and year after year attending church, reading the scriptures, or praying that the Spirit whispers to me and confirms the truth of the gospel. I am glad I learned that lesson at 17 while attending early morning seminary. **NE**



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