

SMALL THINGS,

GREAT RESULTS

BY JOSHUA J. ACKER

“Now ye may suppose that this is foolishness in me; but behold I say unto you, that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass; and small means in many instances doth confound the wise. And the Lord God doth work by means to bring about his great and eternal purposes; and by very small means the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls” (Alma 37:6–7).

By drawing closer to the Lord, I was able to play a small part in something great.

After many days and nights of uncertainty and worry, I was slowly falling into a bout of depression. Once again my life was in a huge upheaval. Much of the problem was the typical teenage syndrome: struggles with dear friends, worries about the future, and the stresses of daily activities. Folded into the mix was the fact of a family moving across the country.

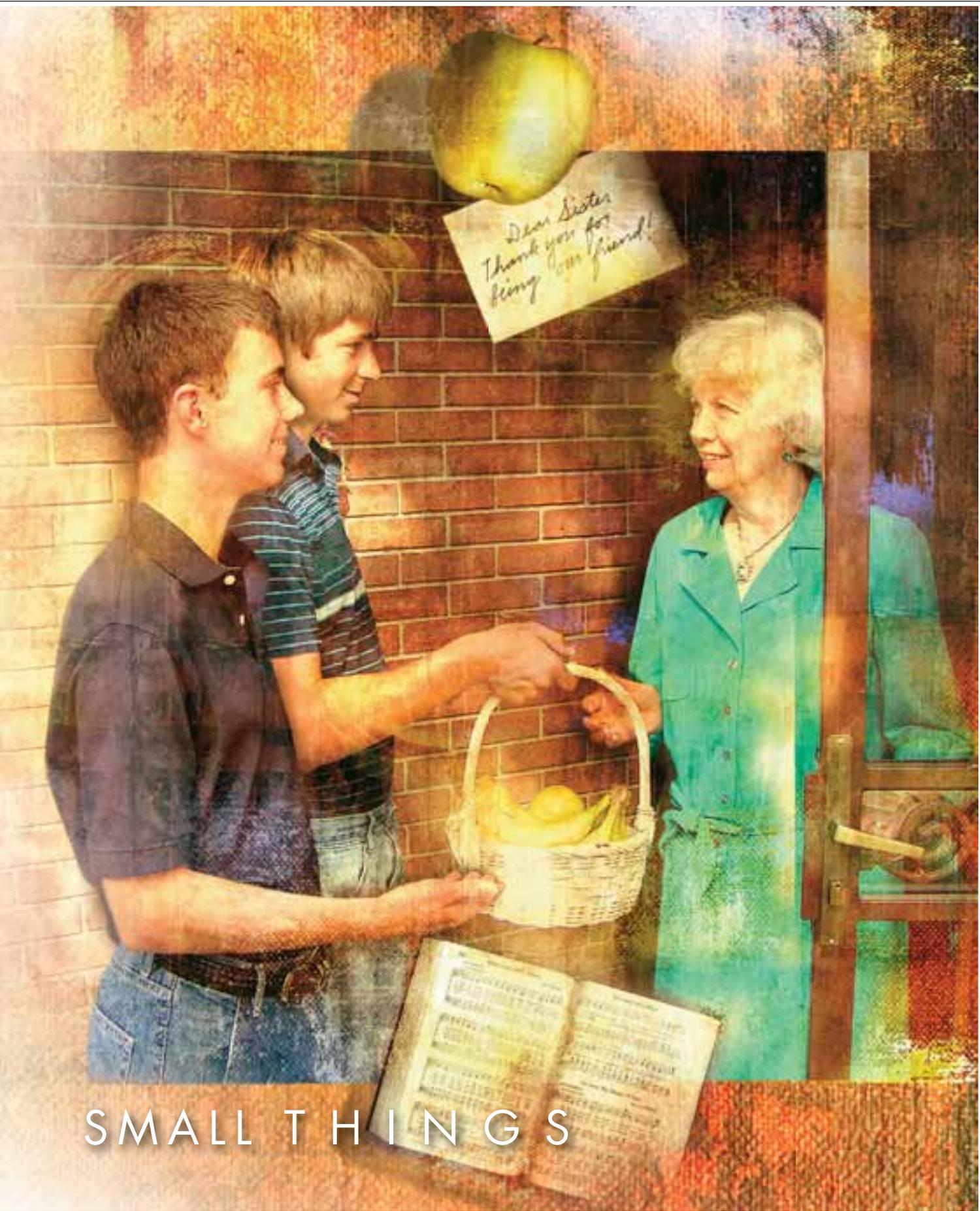
Nothing seemed good in my life, and I felt like I had nobody to turn to, until one friend asked me if I had prayed about my adversity and asked the Lord for help. The thought immediately came to my mind: “Why haven’t I thought of that?” So I began praying to Heavenly Father about my challenges. Little did I know that the Lord was about to change my life and the lives of others in a most unexpected way.

One evening after a long practice for a school play, I was dropping off a couple of my peers in the neighborhood when I felt the prompting to ask one friend if he

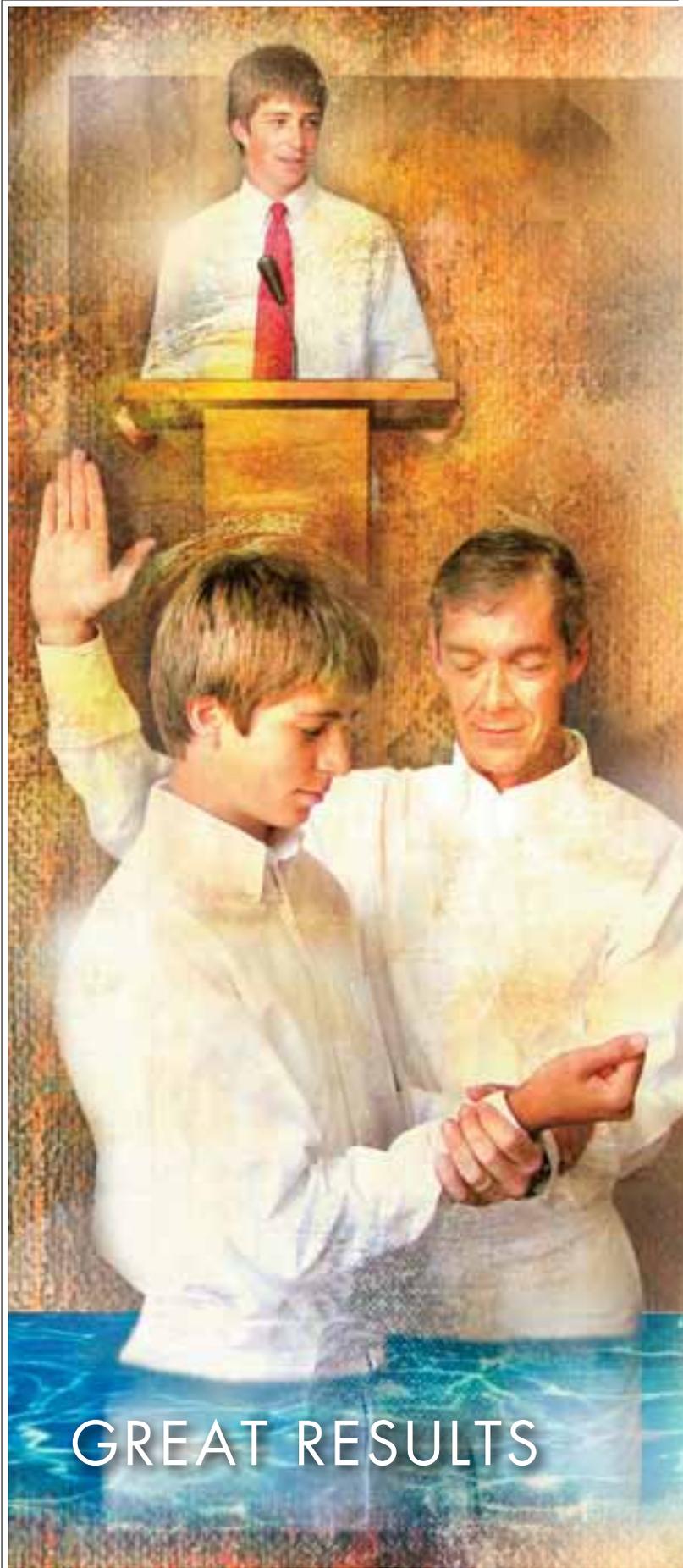
would like to come to a service project my stake was doing that night for Mutual. He had received the missionary lessons a few years before but had not chosen to join the Church. Immediately, I felt a slight embarrassment for asking him to a Church activity starting in only a few moments. To my complete surprise, he politely accepted the invitation, and after arranging for him to borrow some Church clothes, we were at the meeting with the other youth.

Known in my stake as the “Seminary Basket Project,” this popular activity consists of the youth’s visiting the lonely and elderly of the community during the holiday season. After visiting several homes, bringing them bags of fruit accompanied by a short message and hymn, my friend remarked on what a good time he had been having. Once again I felt awkward as I followed the prompting to invite him to the testimony meeting following the activity. He joked a little about people who cry when bearing testimony but agreed to go to the meeting to “check it out.”

At the meeting I again had a prompting, this time to bear my testimony. Unable to sit still, I walked up to the podium and



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expressed how grateful I was for the help of the gospel in my challenges. Sure enough, I became one of the “criers” my nonmember friend and I had been joking about just a few minutes before! The meeting continued, with a tremendous feeling of the Spirit obviously present. Many uplifting testimonies were borne, and there was something miraculous still to come.

A complete shock hit me as I watched my friend stand up, slip out of the pews and approach the stand! The feeling I had as I watched my friend bear his testimony and say, “I’m gonna be a Mormon,” is indescribable. The thought of the enormity and importance of what had just transpired stuck with me throughout the rest of the evening.

Because of the support and example of good friends and the prompting of the Lord, my friend had ended his long internal struggle with the idea of becoming a Latter-day Saint. It was a relief for those who had pretty much given up hope. What a joyous day it was when only a few short weeks later my friend informed me of his baptism date! There was hardly enough room for the supportive friends who attended his baptism, and almost no one was without a tear in his eye. The same Spirit was present for his confirmation during the next day’s fast and testimony meeting.

Many bore testimony about how my friend’s decision to change his own life had changed their lives. It was evident that not only had many pleading prayers for my friend been answered, but many others’ testimonies had been strengthened. God had brought about His great and eternal purposes by bringing one precious soul into His Church while also strengthening those involved. If we rely on the Lord, pray, and strive to be a righteous example, He *will* make us an instrument in His eternal plans, better our lives, and bring about great things. **NE**