



A TIMELY

TESTIMONY

Why should I bear my testimony to someone who just wanted to laugh at me?

BY DAN BARKER

As a new missionary serving in the Massachusetts Boston Mission, I realized that I could not simply testify of what my dear parents knew to be the truth. I had to have my own conviction of the truth of the gospel and the Book of Mormon.

I remember the day well. I was praying, and a fire filled my soul. Never before or since has the Holy Ghost warmed me to the same magnitude. I knew, without a doubt, that what I had been taught regarding the gospel and the Book of Mormon was indeed the truth. I could now go on with a firm resolve and conviction.

I had only been out six months and my companion only about a month. We decided on this particular day to set up a street board in the mall with a First Vision/Book of Mormon theme. Partway through the day a man came over to us, and I proceeded to walk him through the street board presentation. As I was concluding the discussion this individual began to chuckle. I asked him what he found so amusing.

He replied, "Let me see—God, angels, and a 14-year old boy. Yeah, right!"

I was at a loss as to my next move. I felt that he would not be teachable, but the Spirit whispered to bear my testimony of Joseph Smith and his calling in bringing forth the Book of Mormon. I did so and thought little more about the incident.

In the fall of that year, I was transferred to another town. Since there was a small branch there at the time, it was not uncommon for my companion and me to speak in church often. This particular Sunday was no different.



As I was sitting on the stand waiting for the meeting to begin, I noticed a small family of four walk into the chapel. They were by themselves, and I assumed that they were visiting.

At the end of the meeting, a number of the branch members were congratulating my companion and me on our talks. Again, I noticed the man of this family patiently waiting at the perimeter of the small group of members. Finally, he extended his hand to me and thanked us for our message. He said to me that he could tell by the look in my eyes that I had no idea who he was but that he knew me well. He asked me if I recalled a number of months ago being in the Newington Mall and talking to an individual about the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith and having that individual laugh at me.

It all came flooding back to me. Yes, I did remember. He said he was that man. He first apologized for treating me the way he had and then told me that when I bore my testimony of my conviction in the Book of Mormon, he felt something inside, an emotion he had never experienced before. He pondered for some time my words to him, and then he finally felt impressed to look up the elders in his town. He and his family gained a testimony of the Book of Mormon and the gospel and were baptized.

It was on this day that I realized that if the Holy Ghost could put the right words into the mouth of an unrefined missionary such as myself, then by the same Spirit others would come to know the truth of this great book. More than ever, I knew the Book of Mormon changes lives just as it had mine months earlier as a new missionary. **NE**