



Blessings of

BY ELDER ENRIQUE R. FALABELLA

Area Authority Seventy
Central America Area

My mother died when I was five years old. We lived in Guatemala City, Guatemala, and at that time we were not members of the Church. My father believed in God but didn't know anything about the plan of salvation or what had become of his wife's spirit. It was hard for him to raise four children alone.

When I was about 12 years old, my sister saw two missionaries walking past our house and invited them in.

They taught us the gospel, and after a few weeks my sister and I decided to be baptized. But my father wasn't sure. A brother in the ward visited him and left a pamphlet about the plan of salvation. When my father read that our family could be together forever, he knew he wanted to join the Church. It was the answer to his hopes and dreams.

At that time the nearest temple was in Mesa, Arizona, in the United States. It was difficult to make such an expensive trip. Later, when my father was called as district president, the mission president asked him, "Well, what are you planning to do?"

"We are going to the temple," my father answered. He organized a group of about 100 people who traveled together to the Mesa Arizona Temple. Our family was sealed, and we all felt my mother's presence. We knew she had accepted the gospel.

**Guatemala City Guatemala
Temple**

the Temple

When my wife, Blanca, and I were married, the laws of Guatemala required that we be married civilly first. I didn't like that ceremony—it said that we were married only until death. The next day we left for Arizona, though we had to sell some of our possessions to afford the trip. Being sealed to my wife in the temple for eternity was one of the most joyful experiences of my life.

But we soon discovered that we didn't have enough money to return to Guatemala. When we went to church, a man shook my hand and left a U.S. \$20 bill in it. Another man did the same. I had said nothing of our problems. But we had told Heavenly Father.

I was a stake president when the temple in Guatemala was announced. It was my privilege to help raise funds for the temple and prepare the people to be worthy to enter it. We were asked to raise U.S. \$10,000. Children, young people, and adults all participated. The people of the stake were so enthusiastic that we raised about \$27,000—almost three times as much as our goal.

When our youngest child, Daniel, was 11 years old, he told us he wanted a special gift when he turned 12. He wanted to go to the temple and be baptized for some of his ancestors. The whole family got involved in

family history. We grew closer to our living relatives and found several ancestors whose temple work had not been done. On my son's 12th birthday, he was baptized for these people. I performed the ordinances. Daniel gained a greater testimony of temple work.

As you can see, many of the best moments of my life have been spent in the house of the Lord. It can be the same for each of you.

Always remember that our Lord Jesus Christ loves children. When we read about His visit to the Americas after His Resurrection, we learn that He called the children to Him and blessed each of them. There are not many times in the scriptures when the writer couldn't record the things that were said, but this was one of them. The words and the blessings were so sacred they could not be written. (See 3 Nephi 17:12–23.) Jesus loves you just as He loved those children.

I believe that my testimony was just as firm when I was 12 years old as it is today. You do not have to be a grown-up to have a testimony of Jesus Christ or to make a difference. Perhaps sometimes you don't realize how much good you are doing for your parents, for your relatives, and for the world. ●



“Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” (Matthew 16:19).