



About 12 years old

The Witness of the Holy Ghost

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance (1 Thessalonians 1:5).

From an interview with Elder Robert S. Wood of the Seventy, currently serving as President of the Brazil North Area; by Kimberly Webb

When I was sixteen years old, I came home early from one of my first dates as my parents had asked me to. I saw the Book of Mormon on my bed stand, and since I was still wide awake, I decided to read it.

I had read bits of the Book of Mormon before, but I had never read it all the way through. That night I got into the book so deeply that when dawn came, I was reading the final chapters of Moroni!

When I finished the Book of Mormon, I wanted to test Moroni's promise and ask Heavenly Father if it were true. I knelt next to my bed and prayed. That day I received a powerful witness from the Holy Ghost that the Book of Mormon is true.

The following Monday at school, one of my

friends who was not a member of the Church came up to me. He gave me a piece of paper and told me that it was a list of fifty facts proving that the Book of Mormon was false. I told him, "You're too late. I can't explain the 'facts' on your list, but none of them could convince me that the Book of Mormon is not true. I have received a witness from the Holy Ghost."

I kept the list. As the years went by, modern research helped me to understand better the culture and times of the Book of Mormon. The things in the Book of Mormon that historians once thought were false have since been proven true. One by one, I was able to cross off all fifty items on the list. From this experience, I learned that a testimony can't come in the same way that you learn other things. A testimony of the Book of Mormon can come only through the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost also lets us know what to do, and when He does, it is important to be obedient—even when it is hard. I was once visiting Washington, D.C., on business, and I had planned to go to the temple that evening. By the end of the day, however, I was so tired and frustrated that I decided, "No, I don't think I'll go to the temple tonight." I began to walk to my hotel.

When I reached the hotel, the Spirit came very strongly, whispering that I should go to the temple, anyway. I decided to obey. As I stepped off the curb to cross the street, I heard someone say, "Attention!" ("Look out!"). I was pulled back onto the



At 2 years old



With one of his teddy-bear collection

curb just as a car went whizzing by where I had been standing. I looked around. No one was there.

I safely crossed the street, got in my car, and started driving. The traffic was terrible, and I kept thinking, *Maybe I'll go back*. But I didn't.

Finally I reached the temple. I was given the name of the person whose temple work I would perform, and immediately I felt something special about that person. I noticed that it was a man who had been born and lived in France. I remembered the French voice that I had heard earlier, and through the entire temple session I felt as if he was right next to me. I realized that this man had been waiting for me to do his temple work on that day. I was supposed to go to the temple, and the problems at work had been designed by the adversary to keep me from doing the most important work.

Sometimes people won't understand your actions, but if you follow the Holy Ghost, you will always know that you are doing the right thing. When I received my mission call, I had finished two years of schooling at Stanford University. I announced that I was dropping out of school for two years to serve a mission, and soon afterward, my advisor asked to meet with me. When I walked into his office, the first thing he said to me was, "Robert, are you crazy?" He told me that I was making a mistake and that the university might never let me back in. He encouraged



The Woods' wedding reception



Elder Wood with his family

me to finish my schooling and then serve a mission.

Many years later, I received a call from the prophet asking me to retire and serve as a General Authority. At the time, I had a responsible position in the United States government. I accepted the call, just as I had accepted the mission call when I was nineteen years old, and I announced my retirement. Soon afterward, a senior official walked into my office. The first thing he said to me was, "Robert, are you crazy?" I said, "I think I've heard this before."

I wasn't crazy when I served a mission, and I wasn't crazy when I retired to serve as a General Authority. No matter what else is going on in your



In a pioneer parade at age 10



At age 20

life, when the call to serve comes, that is the moment to do it.

You can never really get a firm, unshakable conviction that Jesus is the Christ without sacrifice and obedience. When you say sincerely, "I will do whatever it takes, and I will give whatever the Lord asks of me," the Holy Ghost will grant you an even

stronger witness of the truthfulness of the gospel. Learn now which things are most important in life, how to use your time, and how to give willingly. When you do, your testimony will grow.