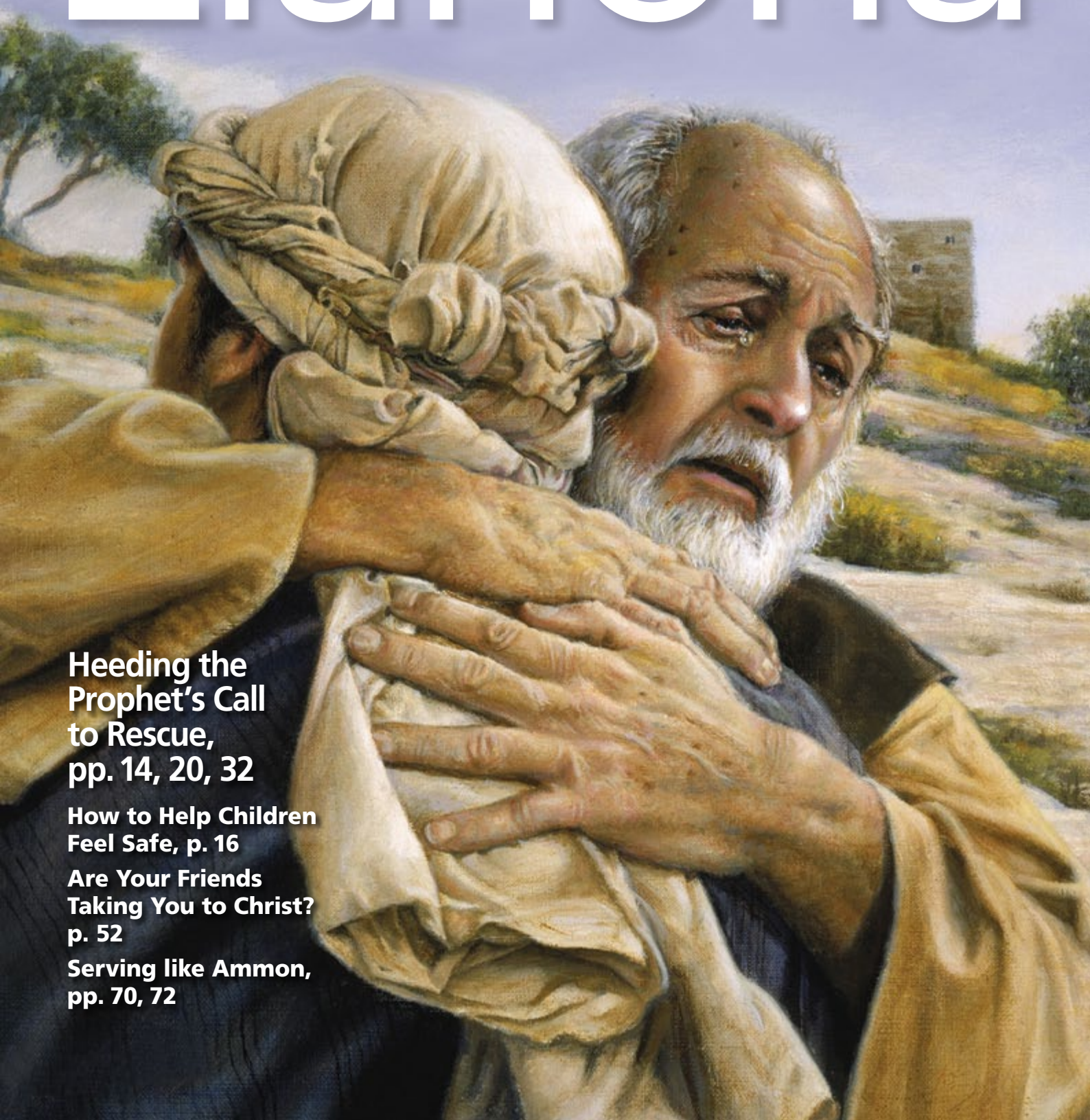


# Liahona



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GIFT OF THE AVALON FOUNDATION, IMAGE COURTESY OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C., USA

*The Return of the Prodigal Son, by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo*

*When the prodigal son realized that he had sinned, he humbly returned to his father and said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son"*

*(Luke 15:21). But his father welcomed him home and said with joy, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (verse 24). Likewise, there is joy in heaven when we repent.*



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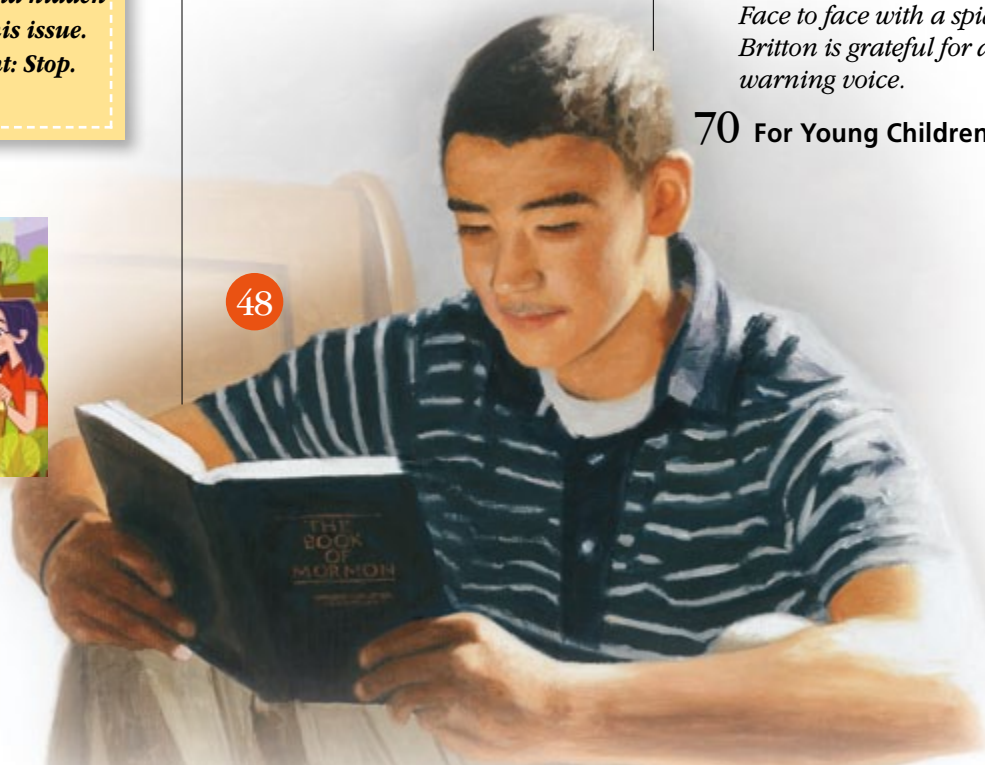
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Official international magazine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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For subscriptions and prices outside the United States and Canada, contact your local Church distribution center or ward or branch leader.

Send manuscripts and queries to *Liahona*, Rm. 2420, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA; or e-mail: [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org).

The *Liahona* (a Book of Mormon term meaning "compass" or "director") is published in Albanian, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Cebuano, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kiribati, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Malagasy, Marshallese, Mongolian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Tahitian, Thai, Tongan, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese. (Frequency varies by language.)

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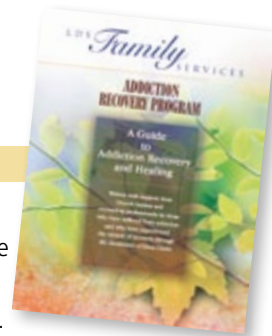
**For Readers in the United States and Canada:**

February 2011 Vol. 35 No. 2. LIAHONA (USPS 311-480) English (ISSN 1080-9554) is published monthly by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150. USA subscription price is \$10.00 per year; Canada, \$12.00 plus applicable taxes. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. Sixty days' notice required for change of address. Include address label from a recent issue; old and new address must be included. Send USA and Canadian subscriptions to Salt Lake Distribution Center at address below. Subscription help line: 1-800-537-5971. Credit card orders (Visa, MasterCard, American Express) may be taken by phone. (Canada Poste Information: Publication Agreement #40017431)

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Salt Lake Distribution Center, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368.

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## FOR ADULTS

Before she joined the Church, Betsy Doane was addicted to drugs and alcohol. Now as a Church-service missionary, she helps others follow the 12 steps of the **Church's addiction recovery program** (see page 14).

The program's workbook is available in many languages at [www.recoveryworkbook.lds.org](http://www.recoveryworkbook.lds.org).

## FOR YOUTH



**Caves and waterfalls in Honduras** can teach us about receiving revelation through the Holy Ghost (see pages 28, 30). To see more photos from Honduras, visit [www.liahona.lds.org](http://www.liahona.lds.org).

## FOR CHILDREN

See how many of the king's sheep you can find on page 72. Then play a similar game at [www.liahona.lds.org](http://www.liahona.lds.org).



## IN YOUR LANGUAGE

The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at [www.languages.lds.org](http://www.languages.lds.org).

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By President  
Henry B. Eyring  
First Counselor in the  
First Presidency



# HOW GREAT SHALL BE YOUR Joy

**F**ew joys in life are sweeter and longer lasting than knowing that you have helped others take the restored gospel of Jesus Christ into their hearts. Having that joy is the opportunity of every member of the Church. When we were baptized, we made a promise that we would “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that [we] may be in, even until death, that [we] may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that [we] may have eternal life” (Mosiah 18:9).

All members accept part of the charge given to the Church to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world, wherever and as long as they live. The Lord said it clearly: “Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor” (D&C 88:81). Full-time missionaries are to have the power to teach those who are not yet members of the Church. Members of the Church are to have the power to find those the Lord has prepared for the missionaries to teach.

We need to exercise our faith that the Lord has prepared people around us to be taught. He knows who they are and when they are ready, and He can guide us to them by the power of the Holy Ghost and give us words to invite them to be taught. The promise the Lord gave to a missionary in 1832 is also the promise He gives to us in our charge to find people ready for teaching by the

missionaries: “I will send upon him the Comforter, which shall teach him the truth and the way whither he shall go; and inasmuch as he is faithful, I will crown him again with sheaves” (D&C 79:2–3).

And the promise of great joy for the faithful missionary is also ours as faithful members who give our hearts to missionary work:

“And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!

“Behold, you have my gospel before you, and my rock, and my salvation.

“Ask the Father in my name, in faith believing that you shall receive, and you shall have the Holy Ghost, which manifesteth all things which are expedient unto the children of men” (D&C 18:16–18).

In addition to the Holy Ghost to help us recognize and invite those ready to be taught, the Lord has called and trained leaders to guide us. In a letter dated February 28, 2002, the First Presidency placed increased responsibility for missionary work on bishops and wards.<sup>1</sup> With the help of the ward or branch council, the priesthood executive committee develops a missionary plan for the unit. In that plan are suggestions on how members can find those ready to be taught by the missionaries. There is a person called as the ward



or branch mission leader. That mission leader has close contact with the full-time missionaries and their investigators.

There are many ways you can better meet your personal obligation to help find people for the missionaries to teach. The simplest way will be the best.

Pray to be guided by the Holy Ghost. Talk with local leaders and missionaries, asking for their suggestions and promising them your help. Encourage those involved with you in this work. And be a witness at all times in what you say and do that Jesus is the Christ and that God answers prayers.

I testify that the Holy Ghost will direct you to those who seek truth as you pray and work for that guidance. And I know from experience that your joy will be lasting with those who choose to take the gospel into their hearts and then endure in faith. ■

**NOTE**

1. See “News of the Church: Ward and Branch Missionary Work Emphasized,” *Liahona*, Aug. 2002, 4; “Stake Missions Recently Dissolved,” *Ensign*, June 2002, 76.

**TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE**

- *Teaching, No Greater Call* instructs us to encourage those we teach to set goals to help them live the principles they have learned (see page 159). With the family, consider identifying the blessings of missionary work as mentioned by President Eyring and, if prompted, invite the family to set goals for sharing the gospel.
- Consider brainstorming with the family ways to share the gospel, remembering President Eyring’s counsel that “the simplest way will be the best.” To learn more about brainstorming, see *Teaching, No Greater Call*, page 160.

## YOUTH

### The Many Missionaries in My Life

By Elizabeth S. Stiles

The first Sunday I attended church with the missionaries, I recognized people I had grown up with and knew from the community. I saw one of my best friends from school, the elementary and high school secretaries, a girl I had not been exceptionally nice to in the past, and even a young man I once had a crush on.

Each of these individuals had a lasting impact on me. My best friend was a young woman of great integrity, and because of her I chose to continue investigating the Church. The secretaries who remembered me from school helped me know that I am important. I learned about godly love and charity from the young woman who embraced me despite my less-than-kind behavior toward her in the past. My early teenage crush set such a good example, I recognized his light and wanted to be around him.

These experiences helped me learn that, even before my first exposure to the missionaries, Heavenly Father had prepared me to receive the gospel through the people He placed around me. From them I learned that the small things we do can have great effect. Most important, I have learned that missionary work starts with me.



## CHILDREN

### The Gospel—a Gift to Share

The word *gospel* means all the teachings and ordinances given to us by Jesus Christ and His prophets. The gospel is like a basket filled with gifts from Heavenly Father. You can help give these gifts to other people. With whom could you share the gift of the gospel?

Match the scripture verses with the pictures of some of the gifts that are included in the gospel. Write on each picture the number of its matching scripture.

1. James 5:14–15
2. Mosiah 16:6–7
3. 3 Nephi 18:1–10
4. D&C 20:72–73
5. D&C 33:16
6. D&C 89:4, 18–21
7. D&C 132:46
8. D&C 137:10
9. D&C 138:32–34







Faith • Family • Relief

# A Restoration of All Things

Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

**T**he Prophet Joseph Smith organized Relief Society as an essential part of the Church. As a presidency, we hope we can help you understand why Relief Society is essential in your life.

We know that New Testament women showed faith in Jesus Christ and participated in His work. Luke 10:39 tells of Mary, who “sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word.” In John 11:27 Martha bears witness of Christ: “She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” Acts 9:36, 39 speaks of “a certain disciple named Tabitha, . . . full of good works. . . . And all the widows stood by . . . shewing the coats and garments which [she] made.” Phebe, in Romans 16:1–2, was “a servant of the church” and “a succourer of many.”

These patterns of faith, testimony, and service continued in the latter-day Church and were formalized with the organization of Relief Society. Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president, taught: “Just as the Savior invited Mary and Martha of New Testament times to participate in His work, women of this dispensation have an official commission to participate in the Lord’s work. . . . The organization of Relief Society in 1842 mobilized the collective power of the women and their specific assignments to build the Lord’s kingdom.”<sup>1</sup>

We accomplish our work as we focus on Relief Society’s purposes: to increase faith and personal righteousness, strengthen families and homes, and seek out and help those in need.

I testify that Relief Society was divinely organized to assist in the work of salvation. Each Relief Society sister has an essential role to play in accomplishing this sacred work.

*Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.*

## What Can I Do?

1. What help will I provide my sisters this month that exemplifies the faith of female disciples of Jesus Christ?
2. What teaching of the restored gospel will I study to strengthen my testimony this month?

For more information, go to [www.reliefsociety.lds.org](http://www.reliefsociety.lds.org).

## From Our History

**S**ister Julie B. Beck has taught that “we know through the Prophet Joseph Smith that Relief Society was a formal part of the Restoration.”<sup>2</sup> The process of restoration began with the First Vision in 1820 and continued “line upon line, precept upon precept” (D&C 98:12). When the Relief Society was formally organized on March 17, 1842, the Prophet taught the women about their essential place in the restored Church. He said, “The Church was never perfectly organized until the women were thus organized.”<sup>3</sup>

### NOTES

1. Julie B. Beck, “Fulfilling the Purpose of Relief Society,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 108.
2. Julie B. Beck, “Fulfilling the Purpose of Relief Society,” 108.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 451.

## From the Scriptures

Joel 2:28–29; Luke 10:38–42;  
Ephesians 1:10



# Small & Simple Things

*“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).*

## CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD

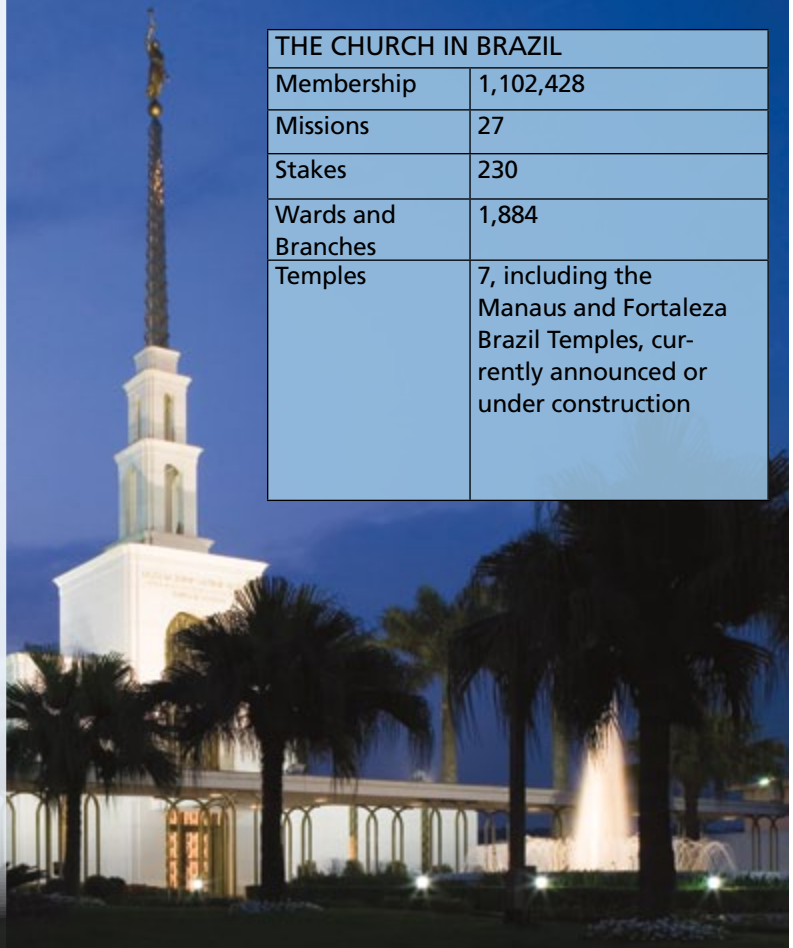
### Brazil

When Max Richard Zapf emigrated from Germany to Brazil in 1913, he had been a member for five years and became the first known Church member in Brazil. After a Brazilian family requested materials from Church headquarters, the mission president of the South American Mission visited Brazil in 1927 and sent missionaries in 1928. The first mission was created in São Paulo in 1935, and by 1939 the Book of Mormon had been published in Portuguese.

The first temple in South America was dedicated in São Paulo in 1978, shortly after the revelation on the priesthood extended the priesthood to all worthy males. The Church’s second-largest missionary training center, located in São Paulo, was dedicated in 1997.

Brazil was the third country (following the United States and Mexico) to reach one million members.

THE CHURCH IN BRAZIL	
Membership	1,102,428
Missions	27
Stakes	230
Wards and Branches	1,884
Temples	7, including the Manaus and Fortaleza Brazil Temples, currently announced or under construction



### Why Sing?

Singing hymns can invite the Spirit into our Church meetings, our homes, and our everyday lives. President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961) of the First Presidency taught, “We get nearer to the Lord through music than perhaps through any other thing except prayer.”<sup>1</sup>

The Church has provided a Web site for accessing the hymns (available in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish). Music.lds.org includes instructions for leading music and for playing hymns using keyboards and also suggestions for choosing appropriate hymns for sacrament meeting.

Music and lyrics can be read, downloaded, or played

directly on the Web site, which could be especially useful for members who do not have a piano or keyboard.

Music can be used at home as well as at church. The First Presidency has counseled: “Teach your children to love the hymns. Sing them on the Sabbath, in [family] home evening, during scripture study, at prayer time. Sing as you work, as you play, and as you travel together.”<sup>2</sup> Hymns can bring a spirit of love and unity into the home.

#### NOTES

1. J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 111.
2. *Hymns*, x.

## Strengthened by a Hymn



I decided to compete in a marathon with work colleagues in Western Cape, South Africa. I trained and worked very hard in preparation for the race.

On the day of the race, I woke up, read my scriptures, and prayed. I was nervous, but I also felt that I needed to trust in the Lord. I knew that if I did, He would provide sustenance and support.

We were required to walk or run 40 kilometers (25 miles). We started at 8:00 a.m. The weather was cool and slightly rainy, so at first I enjoyed the walk and was

doing well. But when I was about 10 kilometers from the finish line, the race became very hard for me. I had muscle pulls in one leg, and I had some blisters. I wanted to quit. Then I began singing a hymn:

*Fear not, I am with thee; oh, be not dismayed,  
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid.  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, . . .  
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.  
("How Firm a Foundation,"  
Hymns, no. 85)*

Over and over the words of the hymn flooded my mind and lifted my feet, and I finished the race in the strength of the Lord's hymn.

This experience taught me that the gospel of Jesus Christ is about endurance. It is like walking or running in a race. We get tired sometimes, rest, and walk again. Heavenly Father does not give up on us no matter how many times we fall; to Him what counts is how many times we stand up and walk again. His gospel is about finishing the race.

**Khetiwe Ratsoma, South Africa**

### IN THE WORDS OF CHURCH LEADERS

## Care for the Poor



"Throughout history, the Lord has measured societies and individuals by how well they cared for the poor. He has said:

"'For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the

children of men to be agents unto themselves.

"'Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment' (D&C 104:17–18; see also D&C 56:16–17).

"Furthermore, He declares, 'In your temporal things you shall be equal, and this not grudgingly, otherwise the abundance of the manifestations of the Spirit shall be withheld' (D&C 70:14; see also D&C 49:20; 78:5–7).

"We control the disposition of our means and resources, but we account to God for this stewardship over earthly things. It is gratifying to witness your generosity as you contribute to fast offerings and humanitarian projects. Over the



years, the suffering of millions has been alleviated, and countless others have been enabled to help themselves through the generosity of the Saints. Nevertheless, as we pursue the cause of Zion, each of us should prayerfully consider whether we are doing what we should and all that we should in the Lord's eyes with respect to the poor and the needy."

**Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Come to Zion," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 39.**

## MILESTONES IN CHURCH WELFARE SERVICES

The humanitarian outreach program of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints strives to improve the lives of those in need by providing food, clean water, vision care, wheelchairs, immunizations, and emergency response. From simple beginnings, the program has expanded through the years to help millions throughout the world.

**Late 1920s:** Welfare farms are established. Harvests are stored in storehouses.



**1932:** First cannery is established.

**1936:** General Church Welfare Committee is formed. Fourteen welfare regions are created to manage welfare activities around the world.



**1936:** First official employment center is established.

**1936–40:** Production projects begin, including a sawmill, a tannery, a pasta plant, salmon canning, peanut butter canning, soap production, and milk bottling.

**1937:** First regional storehouse is erected in Salt Lake City.

**1938:** Construction begins on Welfare Square, including a grain elevator and a central storehouse.



**1938:** The first Deseret Industries thrift store opens in Salt Lake City.

**1940:** Construction on Welfare Square is completed.



**1945:** Church ships large amounts of food, clothing, and other supplies to struggling members in Europe at the end of World War II.

**1960:** New cannery and milk processing plant is completed at Welfare Square.

**1970s:** Church expands welfare projects and production to Mexico, England, and the Pacific islands.

**1973:** LDS Social Services (now LDS Family Services) is created as an official Church corporation.

**1976:** Church begins expansion of storehouses into all parts of Canada and the United States. Expansions of canneries and production facilities are also announced.

**1982:** U.S. president Ronald Reagan visits Welfare Square.



**1985:** Church begins to provide clean water wells in Africa, marking the beginning of a worldwide expansion of Church humanitarian efforts.



**1990s:** Latter-day Saint Humanitarian Center is established to sort surplus clothing and other goods, including medical supplies, for shipment throughout the world in response to poverty and disasters.

**2002:** LDS Charities begins wheelchair, clean water, and neonatal resuscitation initiatives.



**2003:** LDS Charities joins worldwide measles initiative and commits one million U.S. dollars each year in support of the campaign. Also, a worldwide vision treatment initiative begins.

**2010:** LDS Charities starts a food initiative to increase food production and nutrition in some of the poorest nations of the world. Ground is broken for a new 600,000-square-foot (56,000 m<sup>2</sup>) Bishop's Central Storehouse in Salt Lake City.

# HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

By Kimberlee B. Garrett

**L**ike many people, I have struggled for much of my life to recognize my self-worth. I have fought weight problems for many years, which have contributed to my negative feelings. Even though I have lost weight and lead a healthy lifestyle now, occasionally I still find myself fighting off those negative thoughts and feelings.

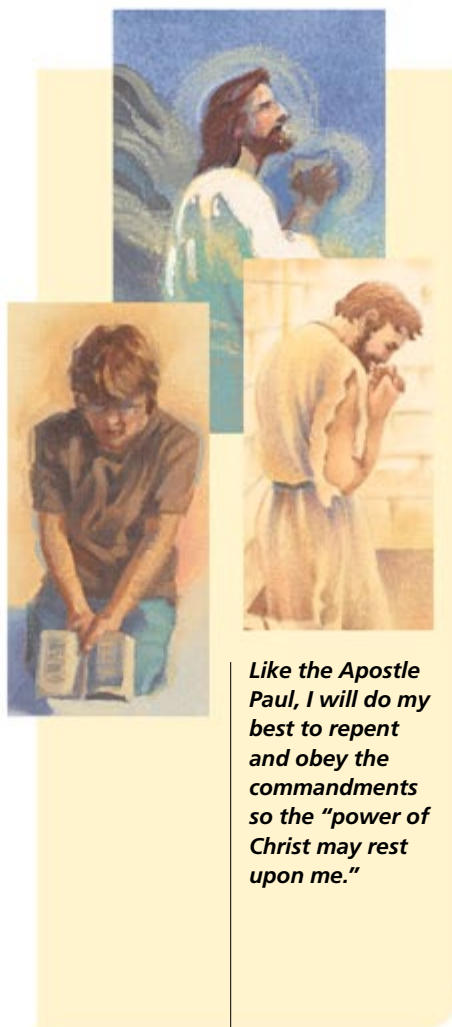
One morning I felt particularly low and was wondering how to make the situation better. I began to pray and ask for Heavenly Father's help to overcome these feelings of inadequacy. As I prayed, the following scripture came to my mind: "If ye have no hope ye must needs be in despair; and despair cometh because of iniquity" (Moroni 10:22).

*Iniquity* seemed to be such a serious word, so much so that at first I discounted the thought because I could think of nothing that I had done seriously wrong. However, the thought persisted, so I prayed, as instructed also by Moroni, for Heavenly Father to show me my weakness that I might be made strong (see Ether 12:27).

I found myself remembering three incidents during the previous two days when I had not shown patience with my children. I had put my own moods and needs in front of theirs

and had not been sensitive to their feelings. I felt bad and resolved to do better. I apologized to my children and prayed for forgiveness. As soon as I prayed, my feelings of inadequacy were lifted and I was able to feel the peace that had eluded me.

As though a light switch turned on



*Like the Apostle Paul, I will do my best to repent and obey the commandments so the "power of Christ may rest upon me."*

in my mind, I finally understood a simple concept that somehow I had missed all these years. When I have unresolved sin in my life, even if it is small, I give Satan power to influence me. He knows my weaknesses, and he knows what words will "stir me up" and "lead me to destruction" (see D&C 10:22). When it comes right down to it, I don't hate myself, but Satan does hate me and will use every tactic available to turn me away from the light.

However, when I repent, I rely on the power of Jesus Christ. Because He knows perfectly how to succor me in my weakness (see Alma 7:11–12), His power lifts me up and makes me strong in ways that I can't be on my own.

Even the Apostle Paul, so valiant in proclaiming the gospel, suffered weakness and was plagued by its effects on him. Nevertheless, when he prayed to have the weakness removed, the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul then went on to exclaim, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Likewise, I will do my best to repent and obey the commandments so the "power of Christ may rest upon me" and I can be filled with peace and love. ■

# THE ATONEMENT MAKES Repentance POSSIBLE

**W**e come to earth for the purpose of growing and progressing. We are slowed in our progress when we sin. Except for Jesus Christ, who lived a perfect life, everyone who has lived upon the earth has sinned (see Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8).

To sin is to break God's commandments. Sometimes we sin by doing something we know is wrong, but sometimes we sin by failing to do what we know is right (see James 4:17).

Every commandment from God blesses us if we obey it (see D&C 130:20–21). However, if we disobey it, there is a punishment attached (see Alma 42:22). This meting out of blessings or punishments is called justice.

Because our Heavenly Father loves us, He has made it possible for us to repent: to confess and forsake our sins and thus overcome their effects. He sent His Only Begotten Son,

Jesus Christ, to suffer for our sins. That is, Jesus paid the penalty required by the law of justice for our breaking of God's commandments. Because the Savior suffered for our sins, we will not have to suffer the full punishment for them if we repent (see D&C 19:16). His Atonement "satisfied the demands of justice" (Mosiah 15:9), allowing Heavenly Father to mercifully forgive us and withhold punishment.

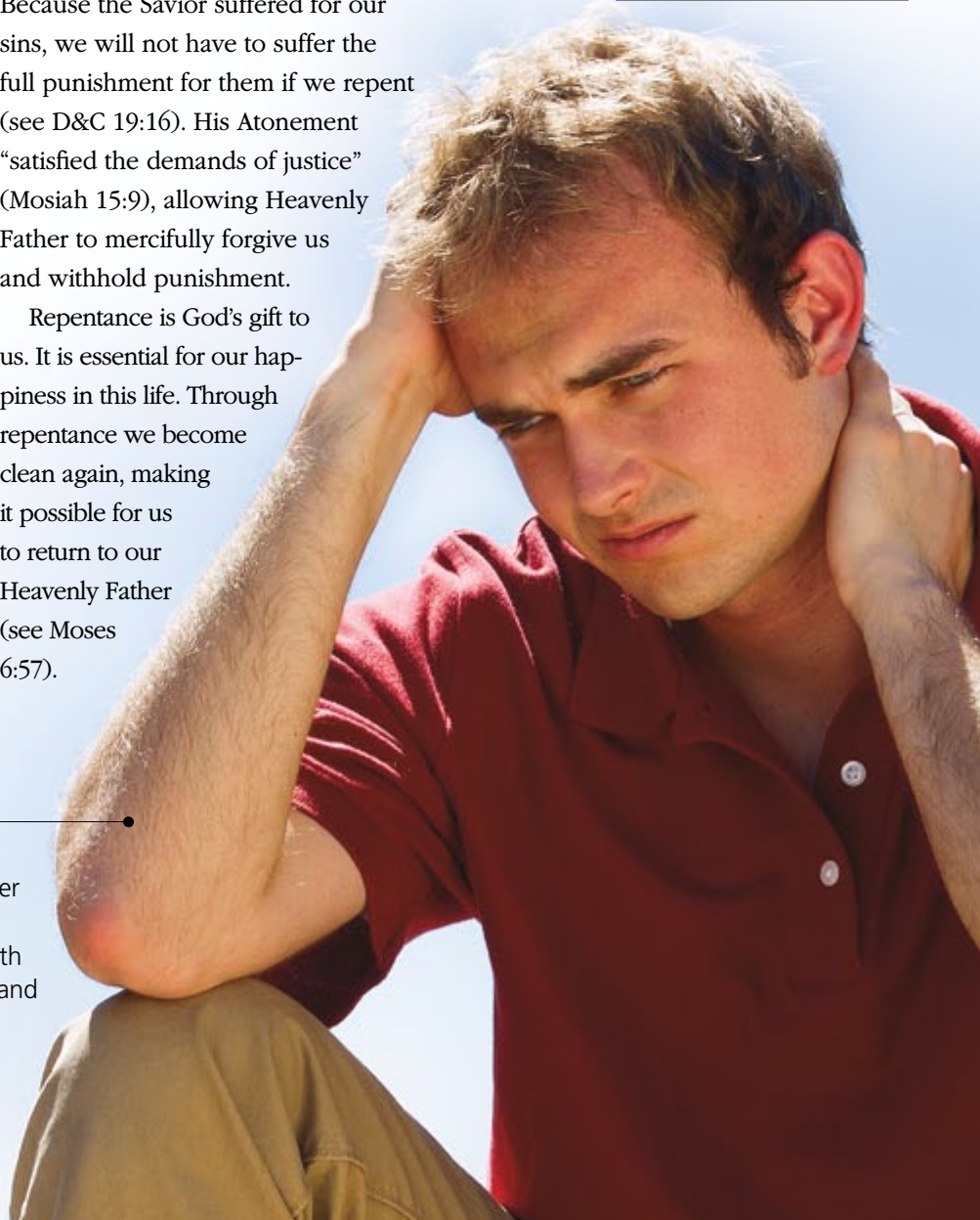
Repentance is God's gift to us. It is essential for our happiness in this life. Through repentance we become clean again, making it possible for us to return to our Heavenly Father (see Moses 6:57).

"He who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more.

"By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them" (D&C 58:42–43).

**The repentance process includes the following:**

*Have faith in our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ (see Alma 34:17).*



Recognize our sins and feel sorrow (see Luke 16:15; Alma 42:29–30).



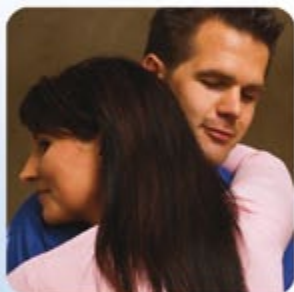
Confess our sins to Heavenly Father and, if needed, to our bishop or branch president (see D&C 61:2).



Abandon our sins (see D&C 58:43).



Make restitution when possible (see Ezekiel 33:15–16).



Forgive others who have sinned against us (see D&C 64:9; 3 Nephi 13:14–15).



Live righteously (see D&C 1:32). ■

*Jesus Christ paid the price for our sins in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. He said of His suffering, “[It] caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit” (D&C 19:18).*

**For more information,** see *Gospel Principles* (2009), “Repentance,” 107–13; and *True to the Faith* (2004), “Atonement of Jesus Christ,” 14–21; “Justice,” 91–92; “Mercy,” 102–3; “Repentance,” 132–35; and “Sin,” 163–64.



# FROM Rescued TO Rescuer

*My life was a downward spiral until I met a man who claimed to have the solution to my troubles.*

By Betsy Doane

One evening in 1978, I was at the Logan Airport in Boston, Massachusetts, USA, waiting for some friends to arrive. A man struck up a conversation with me, and we talked a little about our lives. I told him I had returned three months earlier from a trip to Central America.

I had gone to escape the painful realities of my life, I told him. Nine years earlier my brother had died. The following year my parents were killed in a car accident. A year later to the day, my grandmother died. Within a short time, I had lost several of the most important people in my life. I was devastated.

I inherited a large sum of money upon my parents' death, and I used it to try to escape my grief. I spent it on expensive clothes, cars, drugs, and trips to faraway places.

On my most recent trip I climbed a pyramid in Tikal, Guatemala. There, even though I was physically on a high place, I remember feeling the lowest I'd felt in a long time. I couldn't live the way I'd been living anymore. "God," I said, "if You're there, I need You to change my life." I stood there for several minutes, silently pleading for help from a being I wasn't sure was real. When I climbed back down the pyramid, I felt at peace. Nothing had changed in my life, but somehow I felt that things were going to be all right.

And so it was that three months later I found myself telling all of this to the man at the airport. He listened patiently and then asked if I knew that Jesus Christ had appeared in the Americas.

At that time I still didn't think much of God. What kind of God would

take away my family? I told the man as much, and he responded that the God he believed in had made a way for me to be with my family again. *Now* he had my attention.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Have you heard of the Mormons?" I didn't know much about them, but the man proceeded to explain the plan of salvation to me. And despite my initial disbelief, something about what he was sharing rang true.

My new acquaintance and I exchanged phone numbers, and over the next several months, we dated a bit. We also talked about the gospel. He gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon, and we discussed it and other scriptures for hours over the phone. He told me about Joseph Smith restoring the Church of Jesus Christ. It was an





amazing time of hope and growth.

Our friendship waned a little bit, but after several more weeks, my friend told me he'd like to send some friends to talk with me. The friends he sent were, of course, the missionaries. And with the full-time elders came Bruce Doane, a stake missionary who would later become my husband.

After several weeks of formal discussions, the missionaries asked if I would be willing to be baptized. I told them sure. Then they told me that before I could be baptized, I needed to be living the Word of Wisdom.

I hadn't been drinking or abusing drugs as much as in the past. Things were changing in my life; I felt more hopeful than I had in ages—but surely those habits would be impossible to break *completely*. Besides, I had already

given up so much in embracing the gospel—including several friends who thought I was crazy for showing interest in the Mormon Church. I had persisted because I felt that the gospel was true. But could I completely abandon long-standing addictions?

The missionaries offered to give me a priesthood blessing to help me. Immediately afterward, I threw away all the drugs and alcohol I had. And that night the desire to partake of anything that was against the Word of Wisdom left me. It was a true miracle.

I was baptized in June 1978. A little more than a year later, Bruce and I were married in the Washington D.C. Temple.

The gospel literally rescued me from despair. Before, I was lost in every sense of the word. My parents and brother and grandmother were gone,

but I felt as though I were gone too. After their deaths I no longer knew who I was. Now I have found my identity. I know that I am a child of God and that He knows me and loves me. As I was sealed to my parents, grandmother, and brother, my grief turned to joy with the assurance that we can be together forever.

The gospel of Jesus Christ also rescued me from my addictions. For the past few years my husband and I have served as LDS Family Services addiction-recovery missionaries, working with members of our stake who are struggling with different types of addictions. I am so grateful to be able to help these brothers and sisters. I feel blessed that I can share my story with them to help them understand how we can all be rescued by the gospel. ■

# Helping Children Feel Safe

**By Shawn Evans**

Licensed Clinical Social Worker,  
LDS Family Services

**W**e live in an age in which difficult issues—such as divorce, illness, death, accidents, natural disasters, warfare, job loss—threaten the sense of security in the home. However, there are many things parents can do to help children feel a sense of stability, security, and safety in spite of these disrupting influences.

## How Children React

In order to help children cope with traumatic situations, first we must understand how they react to them. These reactions are affected by the stability of the family and the child's age and emotional maturity.

### **Birth to Six Years Old**

An infant may express discomfort from disturbing events by fussing, crying, and desiring to be held. Often, all babies need is for a parent to hold them or feed them.

Young children are more mature than babies. Nevertheless, a disruption in the child's normal routine may cause a six-year-old to feel powerless. For instance, he or she may feel great



*By understanding how children react to traumatic situations, parents can help their children cope during difficult times.*

anxiety over being separated from parents during a natural disaster or in the months following a divorce. Parents can help young children in such circumstances by keeping as many routines in place as possible. They can continue to have family prayers, family meals, and other routines they had before the major change. This continuity helps provide children a feeling of comfort, confidence, and stability.

### **Seven to Ten Years Old**

Older children can understand when something or someone is taken away permanently, whether it be moving from a home or coping with a parent's death. As a result, they may become preoccupied by the troubling event. Their understanding of life has been badly shaken. They might discuss the traumatic event repeatedly as they try to understand how to deal with the problem. They might need help making sense of or expressing their feelings about the experience. Remember, their reasoning abilities are not those of an adult. For example, it is not uncommon for children to think they are to blame for their parents'

*“There have been a lot of changes in my life. Some things that didn’t change were family scripture study and prayer. I love the scriptures and am now trying to read them on my own every day. I like the peaceful feeling I get when I read them.”*

Michael H., whose parents divorced and whose mother later remarried.



divorce. Parents can help by learning what their children are thinking and feeling and then correcting misconceptions their children may have.

### **Eleven to Eighteen Years Old**

Children ages 11 to 18 may be concerned about events occurring locally, nationally, or internationally. Older teenagers start to realize they are going to transition from living at home to facing the turbulent world on their own. They may become overwhelmed with intense emotions and not know how to talk about them.

Parents can help their adolescent children by doing activities with them that their children like, such as making dinner, playing board games, or playing sports. Parents can also discuss challenging experiences they had when they were adolescents. As parents share their thoughts and feelings, children will feel more comfortable in sharing what they are thinking or feeling. This is how emotional intimacy is developed. Even if adolescents don’t show overt interest, they will be listening.

### **What Parents Can Do**

Parents must first recognize that their children are distressed.<sup>1</sup> Children might exhibit unusual behavioral problems such as prolonged sadness or irritability, increased or decreased appetite, disrupted sleep patterns, an inability to concentrate, or abnormal performance in school. Older children may start to engage in high-risk behaviors such as acting recklessly, using harmful substances, becoming sexually active, or withdrawing from family, friends, and social situations.

You can help by knowing how to nurture your individual children. For



PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM C. OLSON

*“My mom taught me from the scriptures that I can trust Heavenly Father even though I can’t see Him. After the earthquake, when I couldn’t find my mom, I knew that God would guide me, and He did. And though my sister died, I knew that I would see her again.”*

Anny A., a few months after the 8.0 magnitude earthquake in Peru in 2007.

*“I know that adults talk about bad things in life to warn me and help me understand things. But it helps if I also hear about the good things in the world and in their lives. It helps me remember how good life can be.”*

Erica M., who had five family members and friends die within the past 18 months.



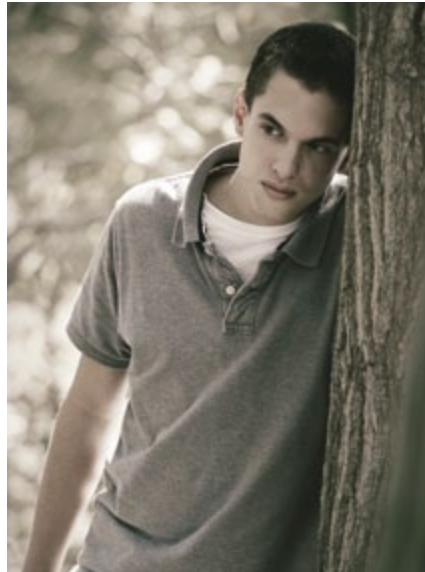
example, you can teach your children, especially when they are young, descriptive words to identify the emotion they are feeling. Some of these words include *sad, angry, frustrated, afraid, worried, and tense*.

If your teenager begins to act recklessly after a traumatic situation, listen carefully to his or her words *and* emotions. As with younger children, help your teenager correctly identify his or her feelings. And be understanding, knowing that the traumatic event may have triggered the reckless behavior.

As you begin these conversations with your children, try to avoid moralizing and expressing anger, criticism, or sarcasm. Identify the hurt or pain your child is feeling and show empathy. You could start by saying, “I know you’re sad that your friend died. I can only imagine how difficult that would be. I’m concerned that you are starting to drink alcohol as a reaction to your pain.” Starting a conversation in a harsh manner rarely leads to good outcomes.

### **Listen with Empathy**

Sometimes you may be tempted to avoid conversation with an upset



*“My dad finds time for us to be together, often when we are doing service for someone else. He takes the time to talk about life in general. And when you talk, you can feel inner peace.”*

Ryan P., whose father was unemployed for almost a year.

child. However, in many cases a child will not be able to deal with his or her troubling emotions without help. As you listen with empathy while your children discuss their concerns, they will feel loved and comforted.

One successful method of listening with empathy involves restating the child’s feelings to be certain you understand them. You may need to help them identify what they are feeling. You might say, “You seem sad and tense when I ask you about your friend whose parents divorced.” Wait for the answer; then allow your child to continue the conversation. Children tend to talk when they feel in control of the conversation.

### **Help Children Process Feelings**

A child’s sense of control can be increased by helping the child to process unpleasant feelings. Often, as you listen with empathy, you and your child will be able to identify the cause of those feelings. You might ask, “Why do you think you are feeling this way?” Wait for responses and listen carefully to the answers. They may not come right away.

*“There are scary, bad people in the world. But my daddy helps me feel OK. He calls me during the day and tells me he loves me.”*

Ally V., whose father is a police officer.



Sometimes you may need to brainstorm alternative solutions. You could ask how the solution your child is considering would affect others involved. Is the potential solution respectful of your family or friends? Is it realistic? How does it make the child feel? He or she may not figure out a solution immediately. Reassure your child that you love him or her and that it is OK not to have a solution right now.

### **Respond with Faith**

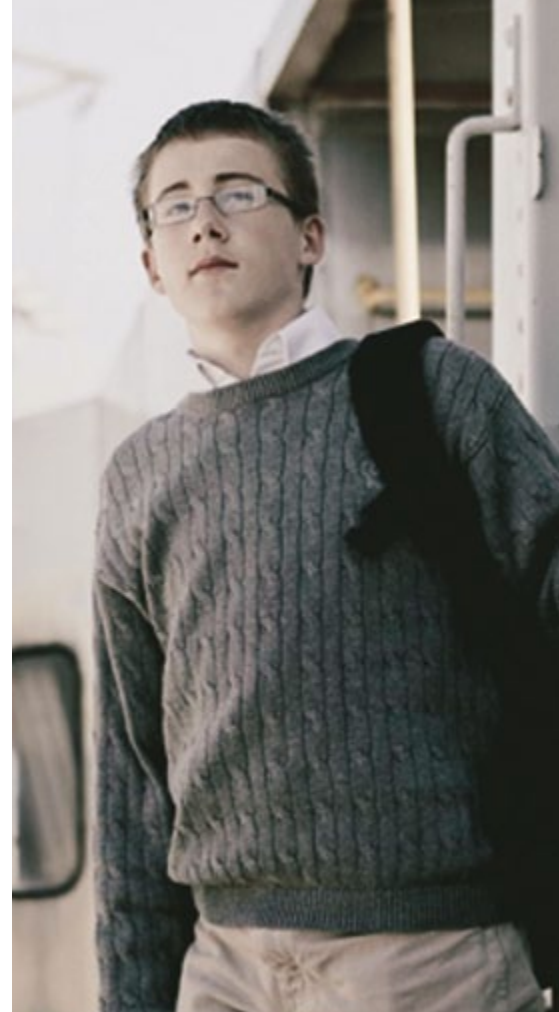
As you identify unusual patterns of behavior in your children and then help them express and understand their thoughts and emotions in an environment of love, your children will gain a sense of security and safety.

The most important thing you can do to foster this feeling of security and safety in the home is to build on the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. You can seek inspiration about how to help your children by fasting, praying, searching the scriptures, and attending the temple. You can talk to your priesthood leaders. You might also consider getting professional help, depending on how severe the problems are.

As you act with faith in Heavenly Father and His Son, you will receive blessings of comfort and support. Children will receive an added measure of comfort and stability as you and they live by the words of the prophets and continue the practices that bring peace into the home, such as family and personal prayer, scripture study, and temple worship. ■

#### **NOTE**

1. See John Gottmann and Joan DeClaire, *The Heart of Parenting: Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child* (1997).



### **THE FOUNDATION OF PEACE**

“How do we bring that peace into the lives of children who are

growing up in trying, troubling times? . . . The best and most meaningful resources are found within the home where faithful, devoted parents and supportive brothers and sisters love one another and teach one another of their divine nature.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Great Shall Be the Peace of Thy Children,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1994, 60.

# STRENGTHENING THE LESS ACTIVE

*All of us who lead in the wards and stakes must open the door to the lost sheep; stand aside to let them through.*

**By President Boyd K. Packer**

President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Activity—the opportunity to serve and bear testimony—is like medicine. It will heal the spiritually sick. It will strengthen the spiritually weak. It is a most necessary ingredient in the redemption of the lost sheep. Yet there is a tendency, almost a programmed tendency, to give opportunities for growth to those who are already over-surfited with activity. This kind of pattern, evident in our stakes and wards, may keep the lost sheep out.

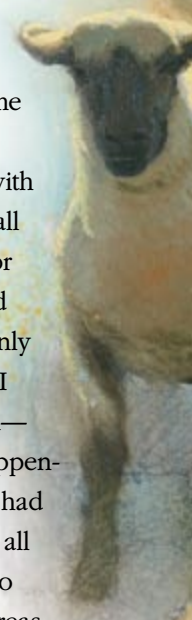
When a home teacher brings a lost sheep to meetings, it is only a beginning of his being found. Where can he be used for his spiritual benefit? Actually, there aren't many places in which a leader can use a person who is struggling for worthiness. Unfortunately, it seems that those few situations in which we could use them—to offer prayers, to make brief responses, to bear testimony—are almost invariably reserved for the active: for the stake

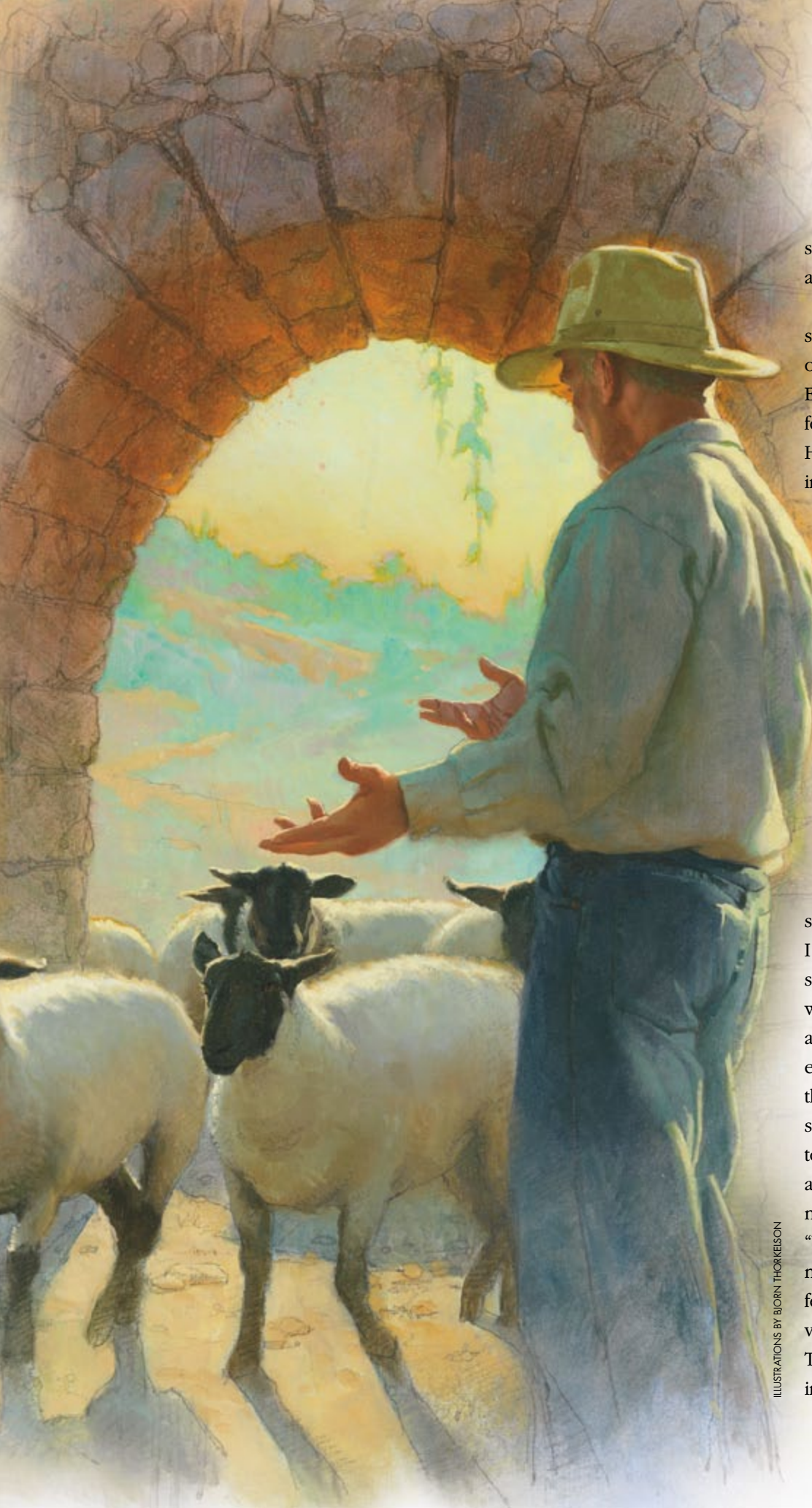
presidency, for the high council, for the bishopric, for the patriarch, for the auxiliary leaders. Indeed, we sometimes go to great lengths to import speakers and participants—to the loss of our hungry ones.

At a ward sacrament meeting I attended recently, a sister had been invited to sing whose husband was not active in the Church. He was, however, at the meeting. The bishop wanted a very special program for this occasion. His first announcement was: "Brother X, my first counselor, will give the opening prayer." His second counselor gave the closing prayer.

How unfortunate, I thought. The three men in the bishopric struggle with such concern over the spiritually sick, then take the very medicine that would make those people well—activity, participation—and consume it themselves in front of the needy!

Some will say: "We must be careful with the weak among us. It is better not to call on them to pray or to bear testimony, for they will be frightened and repelled and will leave us." That is a myth! A commonly accepted one, but a myth nevertheless! I have asked bishops—hundreds of them—whether they could certify to such a happening in their personal experience. I have had very few affirmative responses—in fact, all those bishops produced only one or two instances. So the risk is very small, whereas





such an invitation may result in a lost sheep being reclaimed.

Several years ago I visited a stake presided over by a man of unusual efficiency and ability. Every detail of the stake conference had been scheduled. He had done the usual thing in assigning prayers from the selected circle of the stake presidency, the high council, the bishops, and the stake patriarch. Those brethren had not been notified, so we changed the assignment from those who deserved the honor to those who needed—desperately needed—the experience.

The president had a detailed agenda for the general sessions, and he mentioned that there were 20 minutes in one session that were not scheduled. I told him that we could call on some to respond who otherwise would not have the opportunity and needed the strengthening experience. He countered with the suggestion that he alert several able, prominent leaders to prepare for possible speaking assignments. “There will be many nonmembers present,” he said. “We are used to having an organized and very polished conference performance. We have very able people in the stake. They will leave an excellent impression.”

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BJORN THORKEISON

Twice again during our meeting he mentioned the schedule and pressed to have the stake's "best performers" called. "Why don't we save this time for those who need it most?" I said. His reaction was a disappointed, "Well, you are the General Authority."

Early Sunday morning he reminded me that there was still time to alert someone and thus leave the best impression.

The morning session was opened by the president with a polished and stirring address. Next we called on his second counselor. He was obviously flustered. . . . (We had previously indicated that both counselors would probably speak in the afternoon session. We were to go to his home for the noon meal. He had known there would be time to go over his notes, so he had left them at home.)

For want of his notes, he turned to testimony, giving an inspiring account of an administration he had performed during the week. A brother, given up by his doctors, had been called from the very shadows of death by the power of the priesthood. I do not know what was on his notes, but surely it could not have compared in inspiration to the testimony he bore.

An elderly woman sat on the front row, holding hands with a weathered-looking man. She looked a bit out of place in the fashionably dressed congregation—rather homespun by comparison. She looked as if she ought to talk in conference, and given the privilege, she reported her mission. Fifty-two years before, she had returned from the mission field, and since then she had never been invited to speak in church. It was a touching and moving witness that she bore.

Others were called upon to speak, and near the close of the meeting, the president suggested that I take the remainder of the time.

"Have you had any inspiration?" I asked. He said that he kept thinking of the mayor. (The voters in that large city had elected a member of the Church to be mayor, and he was in attendance.) When I told him we could have a greeting from the mayor, he whispered that the man was not active in the Church. When I suggested that he call upon him anyway, he resisted, saying flatly that he was not worthy to speak in that meeting. At my insistence, however, he called the man to the stand.

The mayor's father had been a pioneer of the Church in that region. He had served as bishop of one of the wards and had been succeeded by one of his sons—a twin to the mayor, as I recall. The mayor was the lost sheep. He came to the pulpit and spoke, to my surprise, with bitterness and with hostility. His talk began something like this: "I don't know why you called on me. I don't know why I am in church today. I don't belong in church. I have never fit in. I don't agree with the way the Church does things."

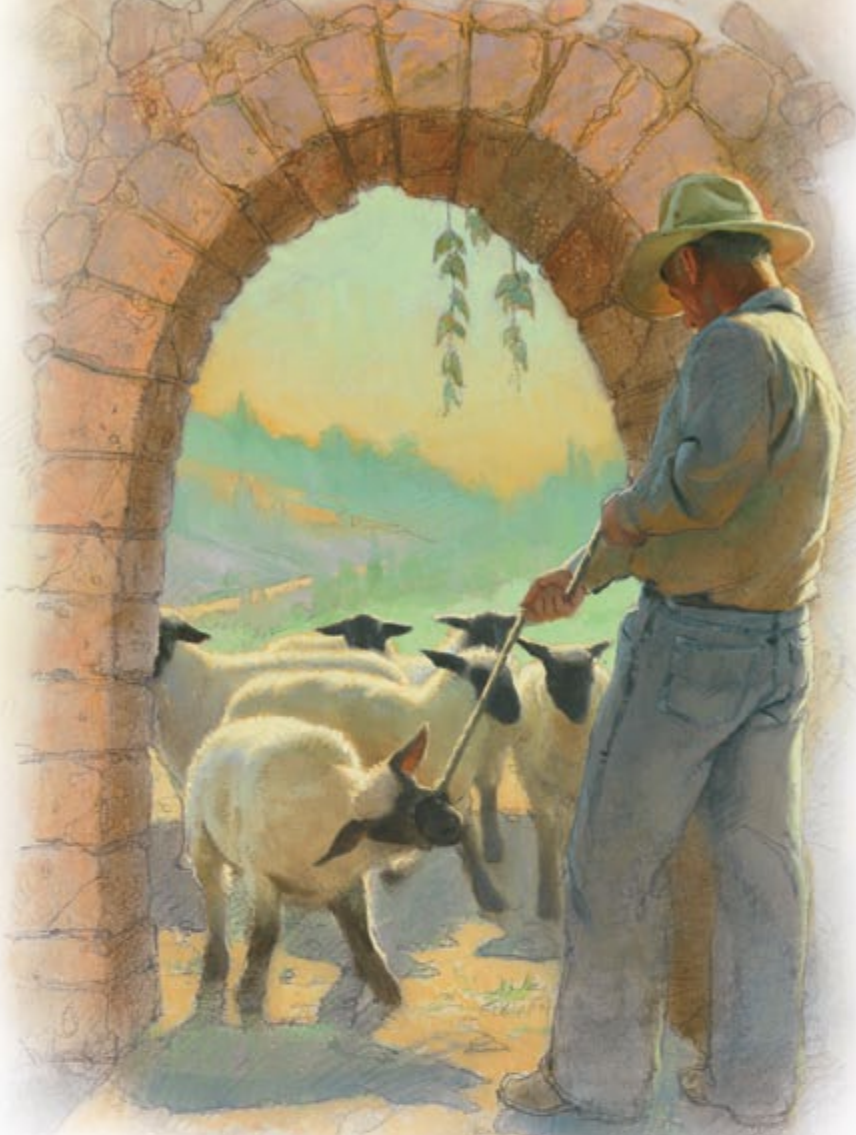
I confess that I began to worry, but he then paused and lowered his eyes to the pulpit. From then until his talk was over, he did not look up. After hesitating, he continued: "I guess I just as well tell you. I quit smoking six weeks ago." Then, shaking his fist in a gesture over his head towards the congregation, he said, "If any of you think that's easy, you have never suffered the hell I have suffered in the last few weeks."

Then he just melted. "I know the gospel is true," he said. "I've always known it was true. I learned that from my mother as a boy.

"I know the Church isn't out of order," he confessed. "It's me that's out of order, and I've always known that too."

Then he spoke perhaps for all of the lost sheep when he pleaded: "I know it's me that is





*We must learn not to block the entrance. It is a narrow way. Sometimes we assume the clumsy posture of trying to pull them through the gate that we ourselves are blocking.*

.....

wrong, and I want to come back. I have been trying to come back, but you won't let me!"

Of course we would let him come back, but somehow we hadn't let him know that. After the meeting the congregation flooded up—not to us but to him to say, "Welcome home!"

On the way to the airport after conference, the stake president said to me, "I've learned a lesson today."

Hoping to confirm it, I said, "If we had done what you wanted to do, you would have called on this man's father, wouldn't you, or perhaps his brother, the bishop?"

He nodded in affirmation and said: "Either of them, given 5 minutes, would have presented a stirring 15- or 20-minute sermon to the approval of all in attendance. But no lost sheep would have been reclaimed."

All of us who lead in the wards and stakes must open the door to the lost sheep; stand aside to let them through. We must learn not to block the entrance. It is a narrow way. Sometimes we assume the clumsy posture of trying to pull them through the gate that we ourselves are blocking. Only when we have the spirit of lifting them, pushing them before us, seeing them elevated above us, do we have that spirit that will engender testimony.

I wonder if that is what the Lord meant when He said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:12).

I do not appeal for the lowering of standards. Just the opposite. More lost sheep will respond quicker to high standards than they will to low ones. There is therapeutic value in spiritual discipline.

Discipline is a form of love, an expression of it. It is necessary and powerful in people's lives.

When a toddler is playing near the road, we steer carefully around him. Few will stop and see him to safety [and,] if necessary, discipline him. That is, unless it is our own child or grandchild. If we love them enough, we will do it. To withhold discipline when it would contribute to spiritual growth is evidence of lack of love and concern.

Spiritual discipline framed in love and confirmed with testimony will help redeem souls. ■

*Excerpt from an address given at a meeting for priesthood leaders on February 19, 1969. The full text can be found in Boyd K. Packer, Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled (1991), 12–21. Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization standardized.*



**By David M. McConkie**  
First Counselor in the Sunday  
School General Presidency

# Learning to Hear and Understand the SPIRIT

*One of the most important things we can do is learn to hear and follow the promptings of the Spirit.*

**M**y father grew up in the small town of Monticello, Utah. When he was seven, one of his daily chores was to bring the family's cows in from their pasture. His prized possession was his pocketknife, which he always kept with him. One day as he was riding his horse to fetch the cows, he reached into his pocket for his knife. To his dismay he realized he had lost it somewhere along the trail. He was heartbroken, but he believed what he had been taught by his father and mother: God hears and answers prayers.

He stopped his horse and slid off its bare back to the ground. There

he knelt and asked Heavenly Father to help him find his pocketknife. He climbed back on his horse, turned around, and rode back down the trail. After some distance his horse stopped. Dad climbed off the horse and put his hand into the deep dust on the trail. There, buried in the dust, he found his prized pocketknife. He knew that the Lord had heard and answered his prayer.

Because he had learned to listen to and act upon the whisperings of the Spirit, my father was blessed to see the hand of the Lord on many occasions throughout his life. He witnessed many miracles. Yet when he gathered his family to teach us the

gospel, he often spoke of his experience on the dusty trail in Monticello when the Lord heard and answered the prayer of a "freckle-faced seven-year-old boy."

In his later years he told us that he had learned something else from this childhood experience. With a twinkle in his eye, he said, "I learned that God can speak to horses!"

My father's experience as a young boy left a lasting impression on him because it was the beginning of his personal spiritual education. This was when he learned for himself that God hears prayers. This was when he began, as the Prophet Joseph Smith termed it, to *learn* the Spirit of God.<sup>1</sup>



### The Gift of the Holy Ghost

The Savior promised His Apostles that after He left them, they would enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost. He said, “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26). This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are entitled to this same gift. After we are baptized, the gift of the Holy Ghost is conferred upon us by the laying on of hands by one who is authorized to administer the ordinances of the gospel. This gift

is the right, when we are worthy of it, to the constant companionship of the third member of the Godhead.

The companionship of the Holy Ghost is one of the greatest blessings we can enjoy in mortality. Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said:

“Men ought—above all things in this world—to seek for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There is nothing as important as having the companionship of the Holy Ghost. . . .

“There is no price too high, no labor too onerous, no struggle too severe, no sacrifice too great, if out of it all we receive and enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the Spirit of God can be learned and that “by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.”<sup>3</sup>

One of the most important things we can do is *learn* the Spirit of God—learn to hear and follow the promptings of the Spirit. If we so desire and are worthy, the Lord will school us in the principle of revelation.

### Learning to Listen and to Act

To learn the Spirit of God, we must learn to listen with our hearts. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,



## CHECK THE TIRE

By Andrew M. Wright

When I was 15, my family and I took a vacation from our home in Arizona to the central United States. We drove through many states, including Kansas, Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, and Illinois.

Our vacation went well. We learned to enjoy each other’s company during the long van rides from place to place.

As we pulled into a restaurant one evening, we were all anxious to grab a bite to eat. As we got out of our van, I suddenly had a silent but powerful impression that told me to look at the back tire on our van. I started to walk toward the restaurant, but I

couldn’t shake the feeling. I looked back over my shoulder and then stopped. The impression came to my mind: “Check the back tire.” It was so forceful I couldn’t ignore it.

I approached the rear of the van and heard a hissing sound. Sure enough, our right rear tire had a leak and was quickly going flat. I ran to get my dad, who had already gone into the restaurant with the rest of the family.

My father took the van down the road to a gas station before the tire went completely flat. Since the tire wasn’t damaged, the repair was inexpensive and quick. And we were

able to fix the flat just minutes before the service station closed for the night. I don’t know what would have happened if I had ignored the prompting. But I do know that because I responded, we were able to continue our trip safely and conveniently.

Since that incident, I’m always reassured of the power of the Holy Ghost and how truly blessed we are as members of the Church to have that special line of communication. I am grateful for that experience, for it will stay with me, forever reminding me that our Father in Heaven loves, cares, and watches out for all of His children.

said: “The Spirit is a still, small voice—a voice that is *felt* rather than heard. It is a spiritual voice that comes into the mind as a thought put into your heart.”<sup>4</sup>

President Packer also taught: “Inspiration comes more easily in peaceful settings. Such words as *quiet, still, peaceable, Comforter* abound in the scriptures: ‘Be *still*, and know that I am God.’ (Ps. 46:10; italics added.) And the promise, ‘You shall receive my Spirit, the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, which shall teach you the *peaceable* things of the kingdom.’ (D&C 36:2; italics added).”

President Packer added: “While we may invite this communication, it can *never* be forced! If we try to force it, we may be deceived.”<sup>5</sup>

Of utmost importance in our schooling process is our responsibility to act, without delay, in accordance with the spiritual promptings we receive.

President Thomas S. Monson stated: “We watch. We wait. We listen for that still, small voice. When it speaks, wise men and women obey. Promptings of the Spirit are not to be postponed.”<sup>6</sup>

Learning to hear and understand the Spirit is a gradual and continuous process. The Savior said, “He that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (D&C 50:24). “For unto him that receiveth I will give more” (2 Nephi 28:30).

Just as Christ “received not of the

fulness at the first, but received grace for grace” (D&C 93:12), so also, as we keep His commandments, we will “receive grace for grace” (D&C 93:20; see also John 1:16) and “line upon line, precept upon precept” (2 Nephi 28:30). Our schooling process is often as gradual as the descent of the dew from heaven (see D&C 121:45; 128:19).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught that “there is no simple formula or technique that would immediately allow [us] to master the ability to be guided by the voice of the Spirit.” Rather, “our Father expects [us] to learn how to obtain that divine help by exercising faith in Him and His Holy Son, Jesus Christ.”

PORTRAIT OF BRIGHAM YOUNG BY DAN WEGELAND, COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM



Elder Scott continued: “What may appear initially to be a daunting task will be much easier to manage over time as you consistently strive to recognize and follow feelings prompted by the Spirit. Your confidence in the direction you receive from the Holy Ghost will also become stronger,” and “your confidence in the impressions you feel can become more certain than your dependence on what you see or hear.”<sup>7</sup>

As part of our schooling process, the Lord will help us to see the results, in our own life and in the lives of others, of our acting upon the promptings we receive from the Spirit. These experiences will strengthen our faith and give us greater courage to act in the future.

Learning to hear and understand the Spirit takes considerable effort. But the Lord has promised that the faithful will “receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that [they may] know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal” (D&C 42:61). ■

#### NOTES

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 132.
2. Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (1985), 253.
3. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 132.
4. Boyd K. Packer, “The Cloven Tongues of Fire,” *Liahona*, July 2000, 10; *Ensign*, May 2000, 8.
5. Boyd K. Packer, “Reverence Invites Revelation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 21.
6. Thomas S. Monson, “The Spirit Giveth Life,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, June 1997, 4.
7. Richard G. Scott, “To Acquire Spiritual Guidance,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 6–7.



#### A PRIVILEGE AND DUTY

“If you want the mind and will of God . . . , get it, it is just as much your privilege as of any other member of the Church and Kingdom of God. It is your privilege and duty to live so that you know when the word of the Lord is spoken to you and when the mind of the Lord is revealed to you. I say it is your duty to live so as to know and understand all these things.”

**President Brigham Young (1801–77), *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 68.**



# Revelation

## DROP BY DROP

Luis Andres Varela watches closely as a drop of water collects at the end of a stalactite in the Caves of Taulabe in Honduras. Each drop makes the stalactite grow by adding a little more to what previous drops have left behind.

But Luis sees more than just a stalactite—he sees a lesson about himself.

“Stalactites grow drop by drop,” he says. “That’s how our testimonies grow too. The Holy Ghost teaches us little by little. Each drop helps us grow in knowledge about the gospel.” (See 2 Nephi 28:30.)

Luis remembers such an event in his life. One day while his family was reading the scriptures, he felt a calm,

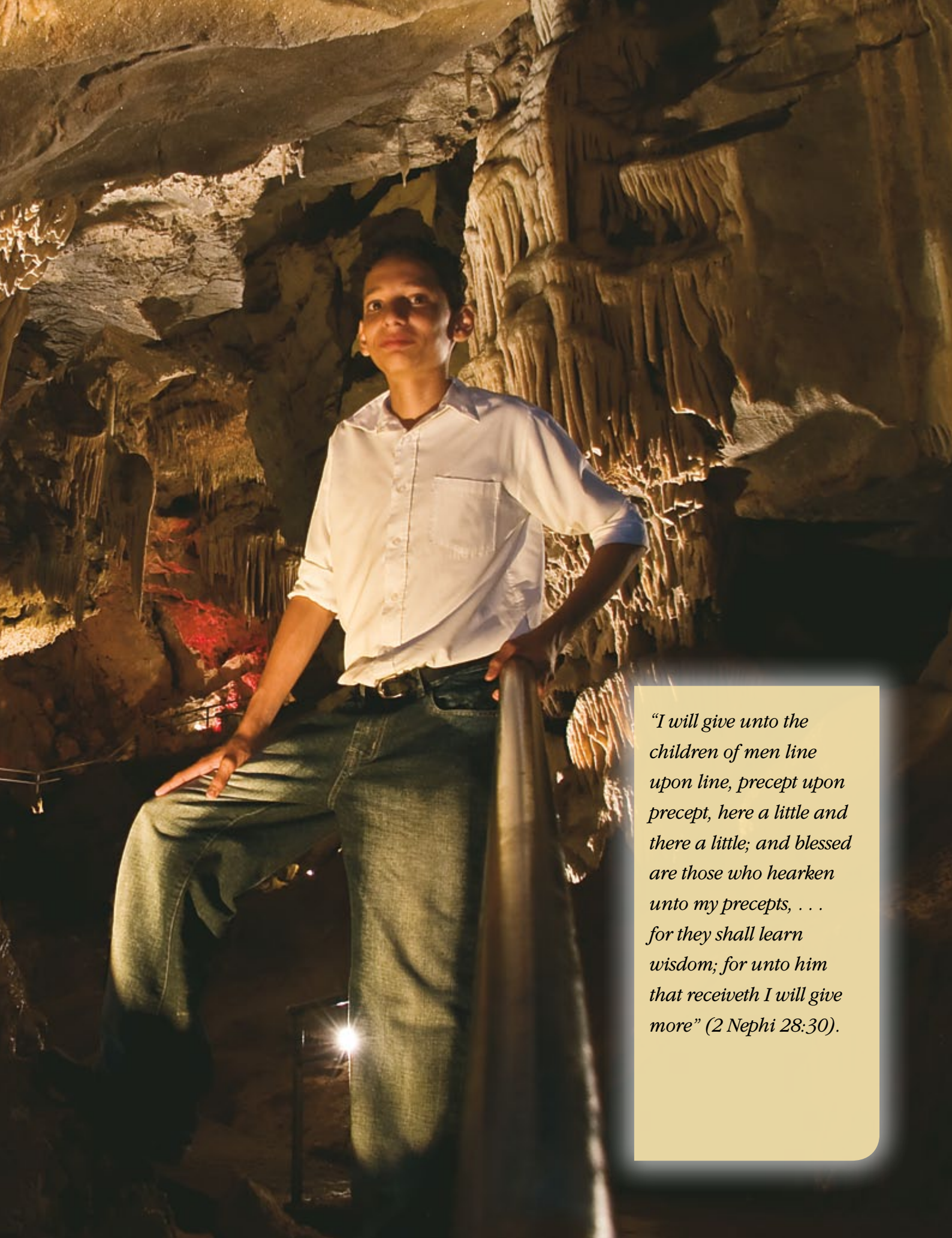
reassuring feeling that what he was reading was true.

“I’m only 14, but I know that I’ve received revelation because I have felt the Holy Ghost telling me the Church is true and Joseph Smith is a prophet,” he says. “Maybe I haven’t received a lot yet—I’m still like a very small stalactite—but if I do what I should so I can receive revelation, my knowledge and testimony will continue to grow.”

Luis says going to church, attending seminary, studying the scriptures, and fasting and praying all prepare us to receive “revelation upon revelation” (D&C 42:61).

“If I do these things,” he says, “my faith, like those stalactites, can stretch from here to heaven.” ■

ABOVE: PHOTOGRAPH © PHOTONONSTOP/SUPERSTOCK; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM C. OLSON



*“I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, . . . for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more” (2 Nephi 28:30).*



# Revelation

## POURING DOWN FROM HEAVEN

A heavy spray soaks those who get too close to Pulhapanzak Falls in Honduras. But José Santiago Castillo doesn't mind. To José, the pouring water represents a promise that has been meaningful to him since Heavenly Father first answered his prayers about the gospel.

"If we want wisdom, we can ask," José says (see James 1:5). "Just as a man couldn't stop this water, the Lord promises He will pour down knowledge upon the Saints." (See D&C 121:33.)

José's experience in the Church has taught him that a testimony grows line upon line, but that it doesn't have to be a slow process. There is a flood of revelation available.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the

least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them."<sup>1</sup>

"Before being baptized, I asked Heavenly Father to confirm that what He had revealed to me was true: the Book of Mormon, the Word of Wisdom, tithing," says José, now serving as elders quorum president. "Asking Him is how we get answers." (See Moses 1:18.)

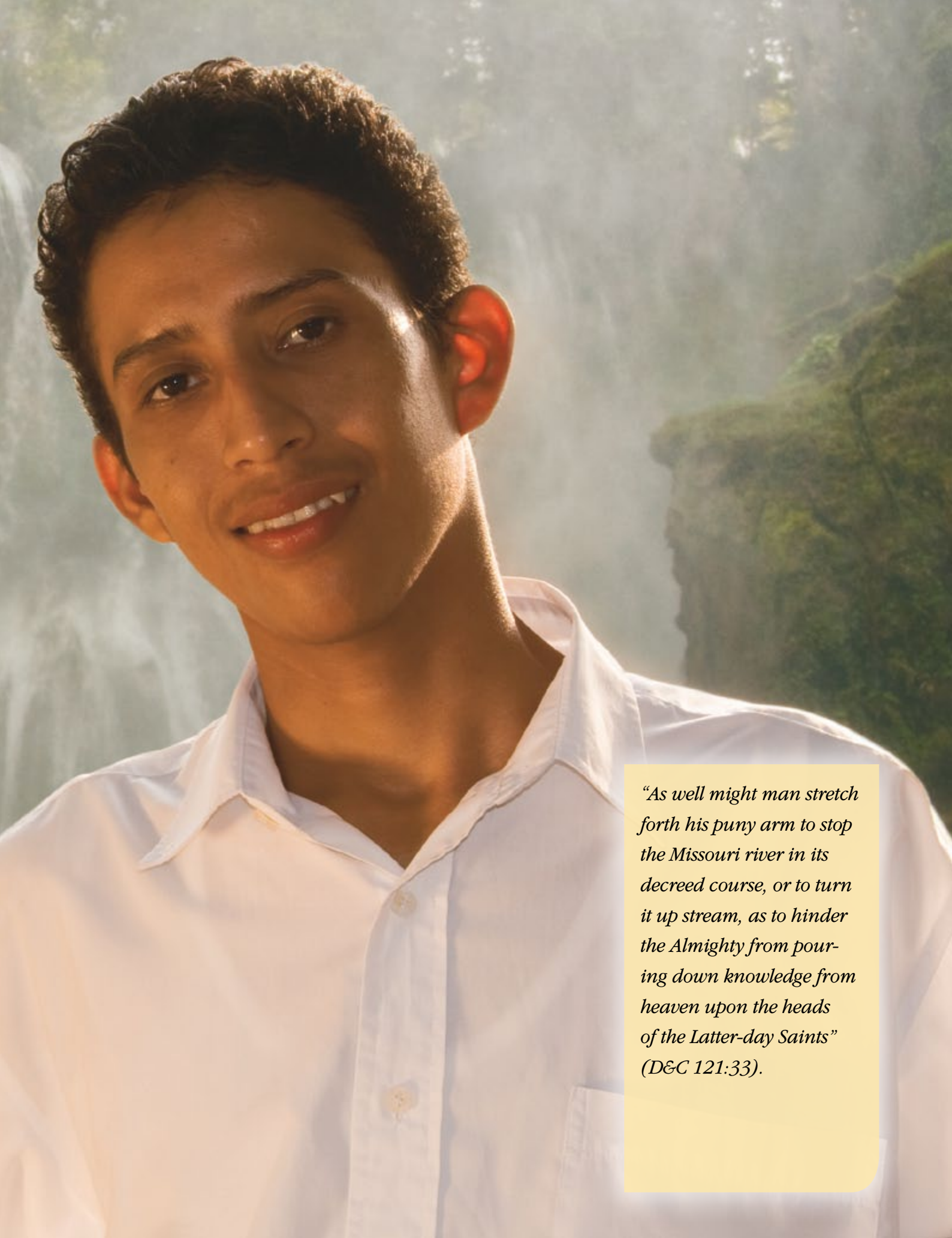
However, we must prepare ourselves to receive revelation. "If we want to get wet, we have to get in the water," José says. "If we want revelation, we must go where revelation will fall. We must be where we should be, doing what we should be doing. We learn many things if we are diligent." (See 1 Nephi 15:8–11.) ■

#### NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 268.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM C. OLSON





*“As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints” (D&C 121:33).*

*As the Savior's undershepherds,  
we have the responsibility to "reach  
out and rescue those who have  
fallen by the wayside."*

# Parables

## OF THE LOST AND FOUND

**I**n chapter 15 of the Gospel of Luke, the Savior uses three parables to teach the worth of a soul, showing us how to find and *return* that which is lost to the fold of faith and family.

In the parables, the sheep wanders, the piece of silver is lost, and the prodigal son wastes his inheritance in riotous living. But the shepherd searches the wilderness, the woman sweeps the house, and the forgiving father watches for his son's return, ever ready with an embrace and a warm welcome home.

The Savior's parables—and the three vignettes by Church leaders that follow—remind us that as His undershepherds, we have the responsibility to “reach out and rescue those who have fallen by the wayside, that not one precious soul will be lost.”<sup>1</sup>

#### NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Stand in Your Appointed Place,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2003, 57.

RESCUE OF THE LOST LAMB, BY MINERVA K. TEICHERT; ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT A. MICKAY



# Rescuing Lost Lambs

By Elder Donald J. Keyes

Area Seventy, Utah North Area



Years ago in the early spring, my wife and I had occasion to drive through beautiful Star Valley, Wyoming, USA. It

was a wonderful spring morning, and the landscapes and scenery were inspiring.

As Jackie and I drove into Star Valley, we enjoyed seeing an occasional flock of sheep sprinkled with dozens of baby lambs. Few things are more endearing than a baby lamb. As we drove down the busy road, we saw a small lamb outside the fence near the roadside. It was frantically running back and forth against the fence, trying to get back to the flock. I surmised that this little lamb was small enough to have pressed through an opening in the fence but was now unable to return.

I was confident that if we didn't stop to rescue the lamb, it would eventually wander into the nearby road and be injured or killed. I stopped the car and said to Jackie and our traveling companions in the backseat, "Wait here; this will take just a moment."

I naturally assumed with my total

lack of lamb-herding experience that the frightened lamb would be glad to see me; after all, I had the best of intentions. I was there to save its life!

But to my disappointment, the lamb was afraid and totally unappreciative of my efforts to save it. As I approached it, the little soul ran away from me as fast as it could along the fence. Seeing my plight, Jackie got out of the car to help. But even together we could not outmaneuver the quick little lamb.

At this point the couple in the backseat, who had been thoroughly enjoying the rodeo, piled out of the car and joined in the rescue attempt. With all of our efforts we finally corralled the frightened little lamb against the fence. As I reached down to pick him up in my clean traveling clothes, I quickly noticed that he had the distinct aroma of the barnyard. It was then that I began to wonder, is this effort really worth it?

As we picked up the lamb and lifted him over the fence to safety, he fought and kicked with all his might. But within moments he had found his mother and was pressed tightly and safely against her side. With our clothing a little disheveled but with great satisfaction and peace that we had made the right choice, we went on our way.

I have reflected on that experience several times since. I wonder if we would give that kind of effort to save



an unappreciative, less-active neighbor. I hope so! "How much then is a man better than a sheep?" the Savior asked (Matthew 12:12). In every branch, ward, and stake are lost and endangered lambs.

Replacing the word *work* with *rescue* in the hymn "Have I Done Any Good?" I invite you to consider its application in saving lost lambs:

*There are chances for rescue all  
around just now,  
Opportunities right in our way.  
Do not let them pass by, saying,  
"Sometime I'll try,"  
But go and do something today.<sup>1</sup>*

Our neighbors may seem unappreciative, frightened, or uninterested in being rescued. And our efforts to rescue them may take time, effort, energy, and the support and help of others. But this effort will be rewarded with eternal blessings. As the Lord has promised, if we bring "save it be one soul unto [Him], how great shall be [our] joy with him in the kingdom of [our] Father" (D&C 18:15).

#### NOTE

1. See "Have I Done Any Good?" *Hymns*, no. 223.



## SHE WOULDN'T GIVE UP ON ME

By Sonya Konstans

**W**hen I joined the Church in 1990, I was friendshipped by great families, was given a calling, and felt that I belonged. But a year later, after moving to a new ward, I began to drift away. I stopped attending meetings and started dating a man who was not a member of the Church.

I still believed the Church was true. I just didn't think I was good enough for it anymore. Then Kathy was assigned as my visiting teacher.

Kathy called every month for the first few months to try to schedule an appointment. Because I always dodged her visits, she started mailing me the Visiting Teaching Message instead. Every month the message would arrive like clockwork. This went on for four years, even after I married my boyfriend and we had two children.

## Exercising Compassion

By Elder Robert D. Hales

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



**I**n the parable of the lost sheep, the shepherd went after the lost sheep and searched until he found it. He then returned, rejoicing (see Luke 15:4–7).

In the parable of the lost coin, the widow lit a candle, which gave light,

Some months I would throw the message away unread; other months I would read it and then throw it away. When my marriage failed, I found myself with a toddler and an infant to raise alone. I suddenly needed answers. When my monthly Visiting Teaching Message arrived again, I decided to attend church for the first time in ages.

I felt so awkward, as if all my sins were written upon my sleeve. A sister I had known in the young single adult program welcomed me, and we sat down together. Suddenly here came Kathy. I looked away, embarrassed that I had not answered any of her kind notes. She smiled at me, chatted with my neighbor for a moment, and then sat with her husband.

When I got home from work the next day, there was a message from Kathy on the answering machine. I couldn't call her back. I just knew she wanted to tell me that I wasn't allowed

to come to church anymore, that my sins had been too great. I felt bad that Kathy had to convey this message to me, but I knew it was true. I had no place among the righteous. I couldn't call her back, but the next evening she called me again.

"I want to apologize," she said.

Why would Kathy possibly need to apologize to me?

"I didn't recognize you when I saw you at church on Sunday," she said.

"After sacrament meeting, I asked the sister you were sitting by who you were. By then you had already left. It was so good to see you."

I was dumbfounded.

"I hope we can sit together the next time you come to church," Kathy added.

"I'd like that," I said, suddenly feeling overcome with emotion.

We did sit together the next Sunday—and for many Sundays after that. She served as my inspiration to be



a better mother, a better member of the Church, and a better visiting teacher. She always listened patiently, without judging, just as I feel the Savior would.

Kathy sat beside me the day I received my endowment and the day I married my new husband in the temple. She remained my visiting teacher until we moved from the area. Her service blessed my family in ways I'm sure she never could have imagined—all because she wouldn't give up on me.

and swept every corner to find the coin. She rejoiced upon finding it (see Luke 15:8–10).

Both of these parables are examples of action taken to search, light up the darkness, and sweep until a treasured possession or lost soul is found and returned to a rejoicing home.

A good example of compassion and service making a difference is the example of Don and Marian Summers. While serving in England, they were asked to serve the last six months of their mission in the Swindon Branch to teach and assist

in activating members. For 80 years Swindon had been a branch with a faithful few and with many good members becoming less active.

Don and Marian wrote: "Our first visit to Swindon Branch was a bit disheartening as we met with the Saints in a cold, rented hall. The congregation numbered 17, including President and Sister Hales and 4 missionaries. Still wearing our winter coats, we all huddled around a small, inadequate heater while we listened to a Sunday School lesson."

The letter continued: "A branch



## SOULS TO SAVE

"Along your pathway of life you will observe that you are not the only traveler.

There are others who need your help. There are feet to steady, hands to grasp, minds to encourage, hearts to inspire, and souls to save."

President Thomas S. Monson, "How Firm a Foundation," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 68.



member approached me one day: ‘Elder Summers, can I give you a bit of advice? Never mention the word *tithing* to the Swindon members; they really don’t believe in it, and all you will do is upset them.’”

Brother Summers said: “We did teach tithing and all the other gospel principles. With example and the encouragement of a branch president, there was a change of heart, and faith and activity started to increase. The membership records were completely updated as we visited every member’s home. When the leaders started caring, the members began to respond, and a whole new spirit pervaded the branch. The members became excited again about the gospel and helping one another. . . .

“One young couple had a difficult adjustment to make as their customs, manners, and dress were different. They became offended at suggestions for changes. The couple twice wrote to the bishop [since by then it was a ward] and asked to have their names removed from the Church records. In the last letter they forbade any of the members to visit them, so [we] went to the florist and purchased a

beautiful plant of chrysanthemums and had it delivered to the young couple. It was a simple note: *‘We love you; we miss you; we need you. Please come back.’* Signed, Swindon Ward.

“The next Sunday was fast and testimony meeting and our last Sunday in Swindon. There were 103 members in attendance, compared to 17 six months before. The young couple was there, and in bearing his testimony, the husband thanked the Swindon Ward for not giving up on them.”

Each of us can have similar experiences in our local wards and branches by working with and loving those who are less active. What a joy it is to give “compassion, making a difference” (Jude 1:22) to those who may be ready to find themselves and then want to come back.

*From “Some Have Compassion, Making a Difference,” Ensign, May 1987, 77; spelling standardized.*

## Welcoming the Prodigal



**By Elder Spencer J. Condie**

Served as a member of the Seventy from 1989 to 2010

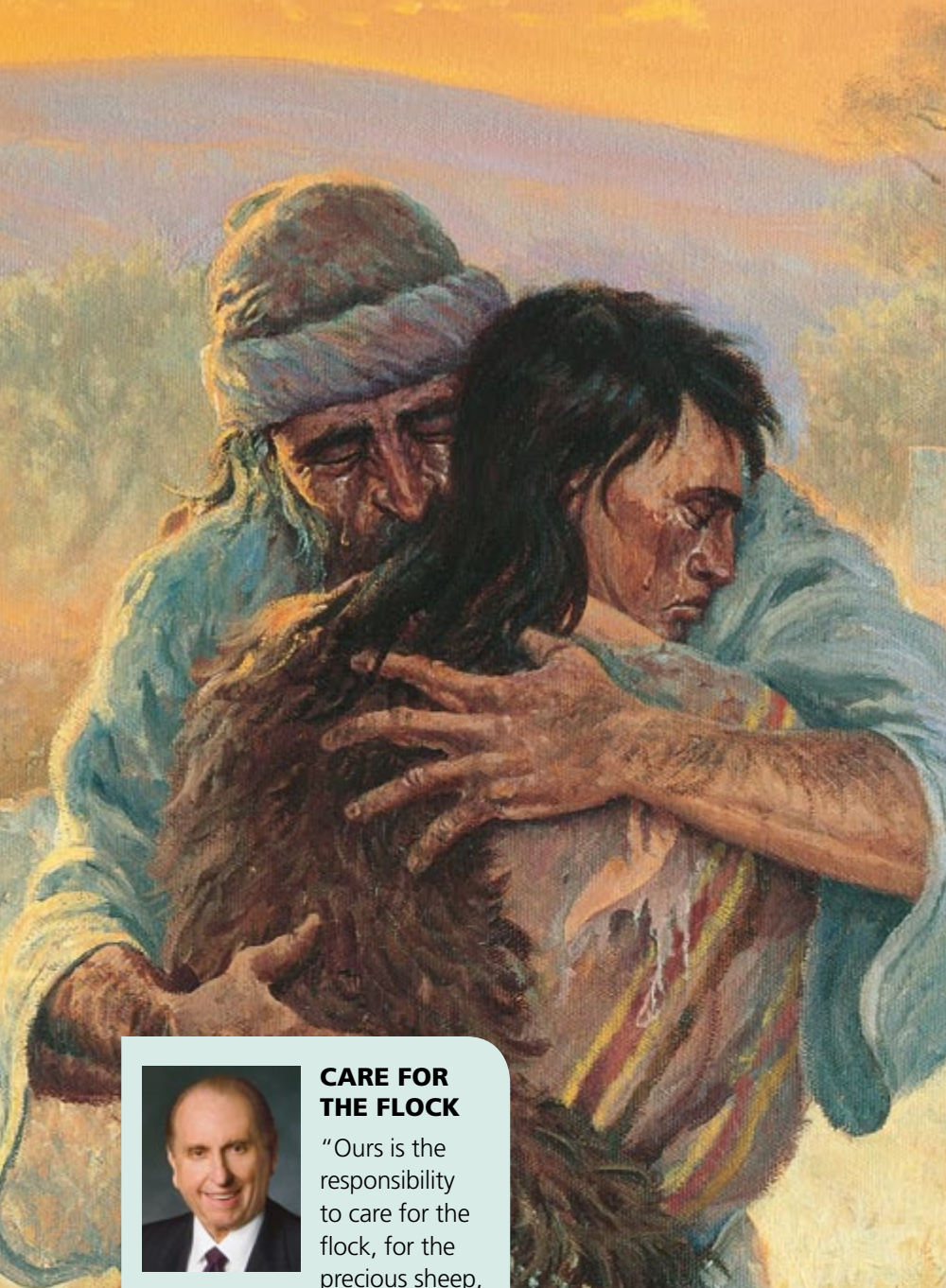
**T**he parable of the prodigal son illustrates in bold relief a wide variety of human dispositions. First, there is the self-centered prodigal son unconcerned with anyone or anything but himself. But, alas, after riotous living he discovered for himself

that “wickedness never was happiness” [Alma 41:10], and he “came to himself” (Luke 15:17). He eventually realized whose son he was, and he yearned to be reunited with his father.

His arrogant, selfish disposition gave way to humility and a broken heart and contrite spirit as he confessed to his father: “I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son” (Luke 15:21). Gone were the adolescent rebellion, immature selfishness, and relentless pleasure seeking, and in their place was an embryonic disposition to do good continually. Now, if we are completely honest with ourselves, we will each confess that there is or has been a bit of the prodigal son in every one of us.

Then there is the father. Some may criticize him for having been overly indulgent in granting the younger son’s request to “give me the portion of goods that falleth to me” (Luke 15:12). The father in the parable was undoubtedly sensitive to the divine principle of moral agency and freedom of choice, a principle over which the premortal War in Heaven had been waged. He was not inclined to compel his son to be obedient.

But this loving father never gave up on his wayward son, and his unrelenting vigilance is confirmed in the poignant narration that when the son “was yet a great way off, his father . . . had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him” (Luke 15:20). Not only was there an open display of



### CARE FOR THE FLOCK

“Ours is the responsibility to care for the flock, for the precious sheep,

these tender lambs, are everywhere to be found—at home in our families, in the homes of our extended families, and waiting for us in our Church callings. Jesus is our Exemplar. Said He, ‘I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep’ (John 10:14). We have a shepherding responsibility. May we each step up to serve.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Heavenly Homes, Forever Families,” *Liahona*, June 2006, 70; *Ensign*, June 2006, 102.

physical affection toward his son, but the father requested his servants to give him a robe, shoes for his feet, and a ring for his hand and instructed them to kill the fatted calf, joyfully declaring, “He was lost, and is found” (Luke 15:24).

Throughout the years, this father had developed such a compassionate, forgiving, loving disposition that he could do nothing else but love and forgive. This parable is a universal favorite for all of us because it holds

out the hope to each one of us that a loving Father in Heaven stands in the roadway, as it were, anxiously awaiting the arrival of each of His prodigal children back home.

And now to the older, obedient son who protested to his forgiving father: “Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

“But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf” (Luke 15:29–30).

Just as there may be an element of the prodigal son in each of us, it may also be the case that every one of us is tainted with traits of the older son. The Apostle Paul described the fruit of the Spirit as “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, [and] temperance” (Galatians 5:22–23). While it may well be that the older son had, indeed, been obedient to his father, beneath the obedient surface was seething subterranean self-righteousness and a disposition to be judgmental, covetous, and totally lacking in compassion. His life did *not* reflect the fruit of the Spirit, for he was not at peace but rather greatly distressed at what he perceived to be a gross inequity of treatment. ■

*From a Brigham Young University devotional address given on February 9, 2010; punctuation standardized. For the full text of the address in English, visit [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).*

## PLEASE SEND SOMEONE

**D**uring a difficult pregnancy with my second child, I needed to take medicine to keep me from mis-carrying. The medicine amplified my feelings of fatigue and nausea.

To make matters worse, my husband was working 15-hour days, trying to keep up with his successful new business; we had recently moved to a new town; and my parents lived 400 miles (640 km) away. I knew no

one, was bedridden, and had to care for a toddler. I felt scared and alone.

In this state I turned to the One I knew wouldn't let me down—my Heavenly Father. I knelt by my bed and prayed, "Heavenly Father, I know that I have been promising for years that I would go back to church, and I think I'm ready now. But I don't have the courage to do it alone. Could Thou please send

someone to invite me to church."

The next day the doorbell rang. I was lying on the couch in my pajamas in a messy living room and feeling nauseated, so I didn't get up to answer the door. A few minutes later it hit me: what if that doorbell was the answer to my prayers and someone had come over to invite me to church?

I went back to my room, knelt again, and prayed, "Heavenly Father, I am really sorry for not answering the door. If Thou sent someone to



**M**y husband was working 15-hour days, and my parents lived far away. I knew no one, was bedridden, and had to care for a toddler. I felt scared and alone.



talk to me, I promise I will be ready for them tomorrow if Thou will send them again.”

The next day I got up, showered, dressed for company, and spent the day cleaning my house. Then I waited patiently for the doorbell to ring again. It did. When I opened it, I saw two women standing on my doorstep.

“We’re your visiting teachers,” they said. “Do you know what visiting teaching is?”

“Yes, I do,” I replied, excited that they had returned. “Come on in.”

One of those visiting teachers, the Primary president, began stopping by regularly to make sure I was all right. She even offered to take my toddler to church and to arrange for visits from the full-time missionaries. The visits strengthened my testimony and gave me the courage to return to church.

I can’t believe I lived so many years without praying to Heavenly Father and receiving His security and guidance. It is such a blessing to have the Savior help bear my burdens with His love and mercy. I am a better person because of His love, and I feel more and more like the person I was when I attended church in my youth.

Heavenly Father has proven to me that all things are possible in Him. All He asks of us is that we have faith in His ability to answer our prayers. ■

Wendy Walkowiak, Utah, USA

## OFFENDED BY MY FRIEND

I had a friend in my branch of the Church in Russia with whom I socialized at all Church activities. We had a lot in common, I had a lot of fun with him, and I was glad to have such a good friend.

But then something strange happened. For no reason that I could determine, he offended me badly. He did not ask for forgiveness, and I stopped associating with him. I did not even greet him on Sundays. That went on for two months. I was hurt and unhappy, but he said nothing.

Then I found out he was leaving our city. I didn’t think our relationship should stay the way it was; I thought we should reconcile. About then I remembered a scripture from the Book of Mormon: “Go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I will receive you” (3 Nephi 12:24).

It was difficult for me to humble myself and take the first step, but I prayed and then called him. I didn’t know what his reaction would be, and I was ready for the worst. What I heard shocked me.

He sincerely asked me for forgiveness, and I could tell by his voice that he had suffered a lot because of his action—just as I had. Most of

all, I remember one sentence that he repeated three times: “Natal’ya, thanks for calling!”

I was so happy! He moved a short time later, but we separated the best of friends.

Learning to love and forgive each other is one of our most difficult tasks. Forgiveness—especially when we are not at fault—requires that we be humble and overcome our pride. I learned that taking the first step to forgive and reconcile is worth it. ■

Natal’ya Fyodorovna Frolova,  
Netherlands



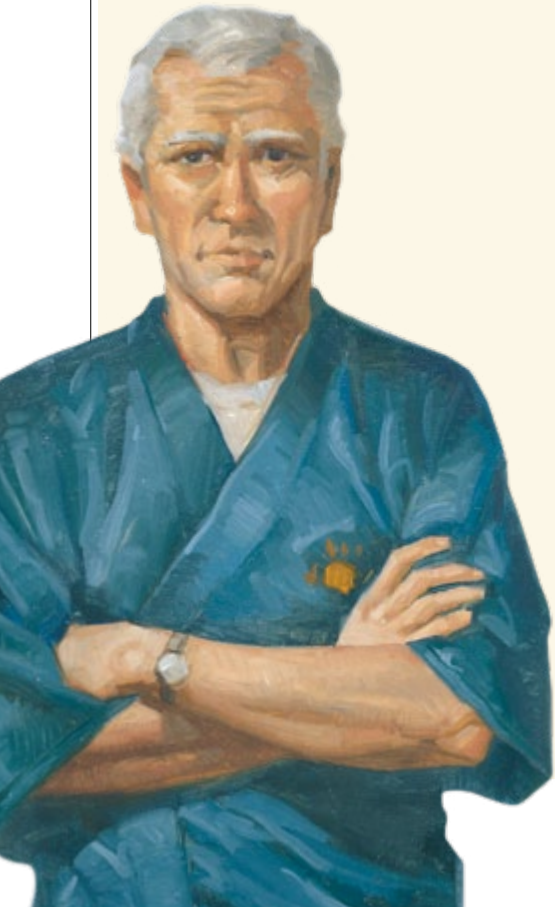
## I DON'T WANT TO KNOW YOU!

With a sincere prayer in my heart and my 14-year-old companion at my side, I knocked on Andy's door. This was our first visit to his home as his new home teachers. We had recently accepted the responsibility to visit him despite his reputation for being difficult. The door opened, and there he stood, dressed in a Japanese kimono.

"Yes?"

"Hi, I'm Irvin, and this is my companion. We are your home teachers and would like to visit with you."

His wife was sitting at a table behind him, dressed in the same fashion. They were having a Japanese-style dinner.



"I think you can see that we're having dinner and don't have time for you," he said.

"Perhaps we could come back some other time?" I asked.

"Why?"

"So we can get to know you," I responded.

"Why do you want to get to know me?" he asked. "I don't want to get to know you!"

I suppose we could have resigned as their home teachers right then, but we didn't. When we returned the next month, Andy actually let us in. We sat facing a wall lined with empty beer bottles that were arranged in the shape of antique cars. Our meeting with Andy was short, but we learned that he was a retired air force colonel. Our subsequent visits were also short and yielded little results.

One night as I was leaving a Church meeting, I heard a voice within me telling me to visit Andy. "No, thank you," I thought. "Not tonight."

When I stopped at a red light, the prompting to visit Andy came again. I thought, "Please, I'm in no mood for Andy tonight."

As I made my last turn for home, however, the same prompting came a third time, leaving me sure of what I needed to do.

I drove to his home and parked, praying for guidance. Then I approached his door and knocked. When Andy let me in, I saw a Book

of Mormon and a book of genealogy on the table. I felt a different spirit in his home; something was different about Andy too. He spoke softly of his love for his mother and his sister, who had compiled the genealogy.

For the first time, he talked openly with me. He told me about pain he'd been feeling in his back, adding that he was going to the March Air Force Base hospital in nearby Riverside, California, the next day. I asked him if he would like a priesthood blessing. Without hesitation he answered in a quiet voice, "I'll take it." I called our elders quorum president, who came to help give the blessing.

The next day doctors told Andy he had inoperable lung cancer. After receiving the news, he went to see the bishop. Within a few months, he was confined to his bed.

One evening when I arrived at his home for another visit, his wife ushered me to his room, where he lay in a frail condition. I knelt beside his bed and cradled him in my arms. I whispered, "I love you, Andy." With all of his strength, he put his arm on my shoulder and, with great effort, told me that he loved me too. Two days later he died.

His wife invited me to the funeral. Besides the four members of his family, I was the only one in attendance.

I'm so grateful I listened to the Spirit's promptings to visit Andy. ■  
Irvin Fager, Utah, USA

## MY TITHING COULDN'T WAIT

In my late teens, as I started spending time with the full-time missionaries, I realized how crucial it was to have a testimony of the principles I would soon be teaching as a missionary. I decided that one of the principles I wanted to understand better was tithing.

Many people gain a testimony of tithing during times of financial hardship. But growing up, I always had more than enough. If I ever had a financial need, my parents took care of it. I was grateful for that, but while I knew that they would pay for my mission, I decided that I wanted to finance half of my mission myself through my work as a part-time teacher.

About the same time, I realized that I hadn't paid a full 10 percent tithing from my last paycheck. I decided that with my next paycheck, I would make up the difference so that I could be a full-tithe payer.

When I was paid for the month, however, the amount was less than I had expected. The work I did was somewhat irregular, so my salary varied from month to month. I quickly realized that the paycheck would not cover my expenses *and* allow me to pay the balance of what I owed the Lord in tithing from my previous paycheck.

I considered my options and then


thought, "I'll just have to catch up on tithing next month." But then I remembered an institute of religion lesson on tithing. I particularly remembered what the Lord says in the Old Testament: "Prove me now herewith" (Malachi 3:10). This was an opportunity for me to put the principle to the test and to gain a stronger testimony of what I would soon be teaching others.

When I paid my tithing, I felt good about being caught up. But the opportunity to "prove" the Lord came the very next day—much sooner and in a greater way than I could have ever expected—when I was offered a full-time job as a kindergarten

teacher. I would be able to work right up until I left for my mission, and the money I would earn would be more than I needed to pay half of my mission expenses. This blessing dramatically increased my testimony of tithing. That testimony was bolstered again and again as I shared it with the people I served in the Germany Munich/Austria Mission over the next two years.

I know that the principle of tithing is true and that the Lord does "open [us] the windows of heaven" and pour out a blessing so great "that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10). ■

David Erland Isaksen, Norway



**I quickly realized that my paycheck would not cover my expenses and allow me to pay the balance of what I owed the Lord in tithing.**

# Young Adults and Family Home Evening

Members of the Church across the world reserve Monday nights for family home evening. As taught by modern prophets, family home evening is a time “for group activity, for organizing, for the expressions of love, for the bearing of testimony, for learning gospel principles, for family fun and recreation, and of all things, for family unity and solidarity.”<sup>1</sup>

For the following young adults, family home evening is a priority. Not all of them live with parents or siblings. Some participate in family home evening with roommates or ward members or friends from institute. Still others set aside time for private devotion. But all of them recognize the immediate and future blessings in their lives from following the admonition of prophets to participate in family home evening.

## A Blessing in All Aspects of Life

As a convert and the only member of the Church in my family, I attend family home evening at the young adult center in my city. Participating in family home evening has been important to me because I



have learned how to teach in a small group, I have come to better understand the gospel principles I was taught while investigating the Church, and I have seen others grow when they teach or share their testimonies.

I know that these are important skills for my future. When I have my own family, I will know how to organize a powerful and fun family home evening because of the good examples I've seen.

But family home evening is also an important part of my current stage of life. Sometimes it's easier to stay home on a Monday night, especially if the weather is bad or if I have lots of studying to do. But nearly every time I have this dilemma, I go to family home evening anyway because I know it's important to be around other young single adults to talk about the gospel and have fun together. Even when only a few others attend, it is still a great experience.



The nice thing about having family home evening at the young adult center is that we can come early or stay late to study, practice the piano, play games, or just relax—there is always something to do.

I know when I'm obedient and follow the prophetic admonition to participate in family home evening, I am blessed. I have seen evidence of this in my studies, in my work, in being blessed with energy for the week ahead, and in feeling generally uplifted.

Lenneke Rodermond, Netherlands

### A Foundation upon Which to Build

I was raised in a family in which we regularly had family home evenings. I remember that when I was a child, family home evenings were one of the most important events in my life, and I would wake up excitedly each Monday morning and remind my parents that family home evening was that night. Today as a young adult, I live with my parents and continue to spend this special time with my family each week.

Because our family consistently had family home evening from the time I was very young, I have always understood its importance. In Korea, where many parents and children

are very busy and family time is rare, home evening is a wonderful opportunity to be together and strengthen each other.



Another blessing that has come from my parents' efforts is that I've been given a firm foundation upon which to build my testimony of Jesus Christ. Though I learned the gospel in church, it was through family home evening lessons that I really came to understand its principles. As a result, I've been able to go to church and grow in the gospel based on my own faith and not on that of my parents.

Hye Ri Lee, Korea



### An Opportunity to Share My Faith

I am a 24-year-old young man who has gained a strong testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ by following the prophetic admonition to hold family home evening. Although I am the only member of the Church in my family, after I was baptized, I realized that family home evening could strengthen us, and I decided to introduce it at home.

The whole family now knows that Mondays are special days when we gather as a family to learn gospel truths. Sometimes we resolve problems in the family or discuss challenges, needs, or interests of individual family members. I have learned how to really commune with my Heavenly Father and to counsel with my family members in love. As a result, we have been more united, which is a great blessing.

In addition, family home evening has laid a strong foundation for my family in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and they are now investigating the Church. In fact, the full-time missionaries join us for family home evening once in a while.



## FAMILY HOME EVENING IS FOR EVERYONE

“It is for families with parents and children, for families with just one parent, and for parents who have no children at home. It is for home evening groups of single adults and for those who live alone or with roommates. . . . Regular participation in family home evening will develop increased personal worth, family unity, love for our fellowmen, and trust in our Father in heaven.”

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), President N. Eldon Tanner (1898–1982), and President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), *Family Home Evening: Happiness through Faith in Jesus Christ* (1976), 3.

I know that when I get married, my family will be blessed through family home evening, but I am also grateful that I've been able to make family home evening an important part of my life now. I know that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true and that the family home evening program is inspired of God.

Lebani Butawo, Zimbabwe

### An Established Priority

I was raised in a family that made family home evening a priority. In order to make it home in time on Mondays, we would go straight home from school without making plans to be with friends. Personal tasks, such as homework, were completed following family home evening. There really was nothing that took precedence over this special time for our family to be together.

Family home evening made an impact on us growing up not only because of the priority we placed on it but also because we worked together to make it happen. We



rotated who would give the lesson, who would prepare the refreshments, and who would say the opening and closing prayers. We didn't just listen to lessons but also had opportunities to be instructors. As a result, I was blessed to obtain a knowledge and testimony of the gospel and to have strengthened family ties.

Because family home evening has become a habit in my life, I look

forward to the blessings it will bring when I have a family of my own.

Chieko Kobe, Japan

### A Remedy for Homesickness

I grew up in a family in which my parents have been a glowing example to my two brothers, my sister, and me, and our family has received many blessings because of their efforts. For instance, we have grown together to become a close family, turning to each other in times of need or trials. And although some of my family members are less active, they still join in family home evening.

I spent some time living in Sydney, Australia, and was very homesick living so far from Ireland. Luckily, I lived near a Church meetinghouse where I attended family home evening with other young adults. This was a great blessing to me, and when I attended, I no longer felt homesick. It was great to mingle with fellow members in a relaxed setting and where the Spirit was present.

Linda Ryan, Ireland

### Something I Never Regret

I joined the Church in May 2009. Since then I have quickly come to value the blessings that come

from consistently attending family home evening. One memorable experience occurred when our young single adult ward played “chair soccer,” a variation of indoor soccer, in the cultural hall of a local meetinghouse. The point was to defend your chair while attacking other people’s with a rubber ball. I formed an alliance with two other players; by the end we were the only three still in the game, and we promptly turned on each other. Instead of getting upset about it, we couldn’t stop laughing! It was the most fun I have had in ages, and I know that I would be hard pressed to find an experience like that anywhere outside of the Church.

Everyone was having a great time, even if he or she didn’t win, but that’s not what made the experience special to me. What really made it



### A Priority for All of Us

There are many ways that I could spend Monday nights, from participating in university societies to other sporting and recreational activities. But those who live in our student house—all Latter-day Saints—have decided that it is important to hold family home evening, and we make it a priority. We have chosen this priority to strengthen one another during a time of life when living the gospel could be seen as difficult. Sharing testimonies and experiences with one another has brought us closer together as young adults and friends.

Family home evening is a time in the week when I can count on receiving spiritual nourishment. On numerous occasions I have come to family home evening with questions in my mind only to find the answers in lessons or spiritual thoughts that are shared. It is also a time to set and reflect on goals that help me develop personally.

Having made the decision to consistently hold family home evening, I don’t consider it a sacrifice. I know it is where I should be; it is also where I *want* to be. ■

Luc Rasmussen, Wales

#### NOTE

1. Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and N. Eldon Tanner, *Family Home Evenings, 1970–71* (1970), v.

memorable was the spirit of friendship I felt at the activity.

Moments like this help me lighten the overwhelming stress of graduate school. No matter how the week has gone, I know that I will always feel better if I go to family home evening. I may not always be thrilled about the activity and I may not always want to take the time, but I never regret going.

Matt Adams, Nebraska, USA



# Questions & Answers

## “I feel so alone at church. How can I learn to feel included?”

**A**s you prayerfully try to find an answer to your question, remember this teaching from the scriptures: when we join the Church, we “are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints” (Ephesians 2:19). This means we should be friendly to everyone at church. We’re all children of God trying to worship Him in love and unity.

Here are a couple ways to feel included:

**Get to know people of all ages.** In sacrament meeting, for example, you could sit by a single mother with young children. She might appreciate the help. Or you could welcome and get to know members who are new to your ward or branch. When 12-year-olds come into Young Men or Young Women, you could sit by them. It’s fun to have friends your own age, but if you reach out to others of different ages and interests, you’ll have more chances to develop friendships.

**Attend your ward or branch activities.** It’s hard to go alone, but you will make some friends by attending. Sit with someone who is sitting alone. Say hi and ask about his or her interests. That might be the start of a good friendship.

### Participate



Several months ago I left my country to go to one where I knew only my sister and her boyfriend. At church I felt like an outsider. Two or three months went by, and I felt the same feeling of loneliness until I decided to smile at others and ask, “How are you?”

Each Sunday that went by, they were saying more to me than the simple “I’m fine.” It also helped to participate in seminary and Mutual and to work on Personal Progress with other young women. Now I feel comfortable at church, as if I were at home.

*Vanessa B., age 17, La Vega, Dominican Republic*

### Get to Know Others

Years ago I had the same problem. So I decided I would try to be included and show people the real me. As soon as I opened up to others, they opened up to me, and this allowed for strong friendships to form among everyone in my quorum.

*MacCoy S., age 17, Utah, USA*

### Help Others



Remember that all people are children of Heavenly Father. Try to smile and be friendly with everyone. Help others.

Reach out to those who also feel lonely. When I serve others, I feel joy and do not feel lonely. It is also absolutely necessary to attend seminary or institute. We feel warmth and goodness there. Don’t be afraid of sharing your problems or worries. We are all brothers and sisters, and our problems and trials are similar.

*Igor P., age 19, Kyiv, Ukraine*

### Form Friends in Other Age Groups



I have become better friends with younger age groups and leaders, more so than those around my age. I know that a day will come when you will

be friends with those in the Church, and if not, it will be OK because you will still learn the Church material.

*Susanna Z., age 18, California, USA*



### Start the Conversation



A couple of years ago my family and I moved. The first few weeks that I attended church and Mutual, I felt alone. But I prayed every day that I would be able to make new friends and feel a part of my new ward. Little by little I have come to love and appreciate this ward. I had to be the one to initiate friendships. I had to start the conversation. I had to fully participate in classes and listen to what others said. With Heavenly Father's help, I now have close friendships with people I never pictured being friends with.

*Leah V., age 16, Colorado, USA*

### Make Friends with Your Leaders



I felt alone at church for many months. I enjoyed the meetings and activities, but I just did not feel that I meshed with the other girls. I then started talking to my leaders more than I used to. My leaders are fun. Once I started talking to them, I started feeling more a part of the program and that I had friends at Mutual.

*Kimberly G., age 14, Arizona, USA*

### Pray to Have Good Friends

At Church activities I would ask myself, "Why don't I have friends?" I felt sad and alone and went to God in prayer. I asked

my Heavenly Father to send me good friends. It hasn't been easy, but over time I've made many great friends. I'm not afraid to talk anymore and to get involved with groups of girls. I realize that Heavenly Father answered my prayers and that I was never alone.

*Daiana I., age 16, Corrientes, Argentina*

### Seek Out Companionship



When I first entered Young Women, I felt alone because I had left my friends in the Valiant class. However, I tried to support the young women, and they also supported me, and I was able to make new friends and interact with them. I no longer felt alone, and that made me happy. Now I am the president of the Beehives, and if I see a new sister who feels uncomfortable being with us, I talk with her, explain what we

do in class, and make her feel that she is part of us.

*Gredy G., age 14, Lima, Peru*



### GIVE TO OTHERS IN LOVE AND SERVICE

"Loneliness in the kingdom of God is often a self-imposed exile.

"We hope each of you feels the need to join with the whole ward or branch family and use your unique gifts and talents to touch the lives of all of our brothers and sisters. The opportunities we all have for caring and fellowshiping in the ward or branch are boundless if we are willing to give of ourselves in love and service."

**Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Belonging to a Ward Family," *Liahona*, Mar. 1999, 12.**

### NEXT QUESTION

"My parents are divorced. Sometimes I get advice from one of them that contradicts advice from the other. What do I do?"

Send your answer by March 15, 2011, to:

*Liahona*, Questions & Answers 3/11  
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA  
Or e-mail: [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org)

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter: (1) full name, (2) birth date, (3) ward or branch, (4) stake or district, (5) your written permission, and, if you are under age 18, your parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to publish your response and photograph.

# The Message Tasted Good

*I wasn't really looking for God, but when two young men asked if they could share a message with me, I decided to listen.*

By Anthony X. Diaz

**A**lthough I was baptized as an infant in one church and attended another on and off during my childhood, religion was never a huge part of my life. As I grew older, my family moved a lot, and we stopped attending worship services. I believed in God, but I did not think about Him or religion very often.

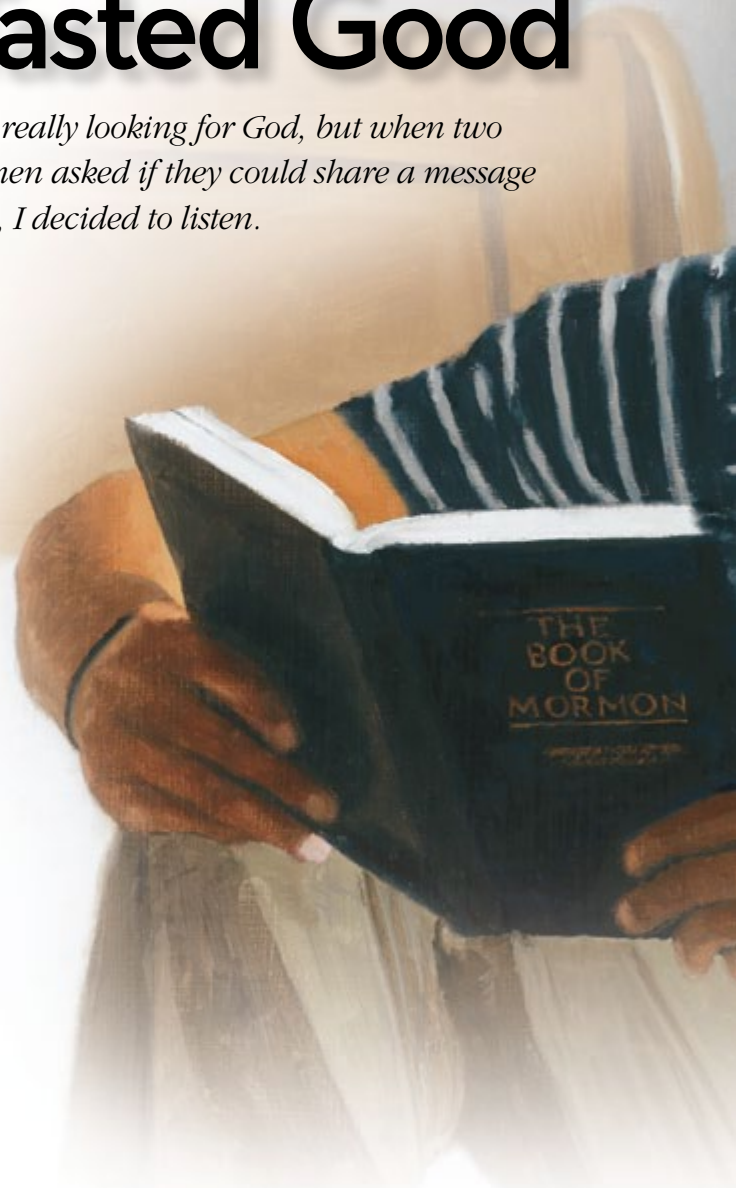
That all changed in 2006, when I was 14. My uncle Billy died; he was only in his mid-30s. His premature death made me realize how much I loved him and caused me to start asking questions internally. Where did he go when he died? Did he continue to live and have a future? What would become of his children and other family members left behind? What did his life mean? What did *my* life mean?

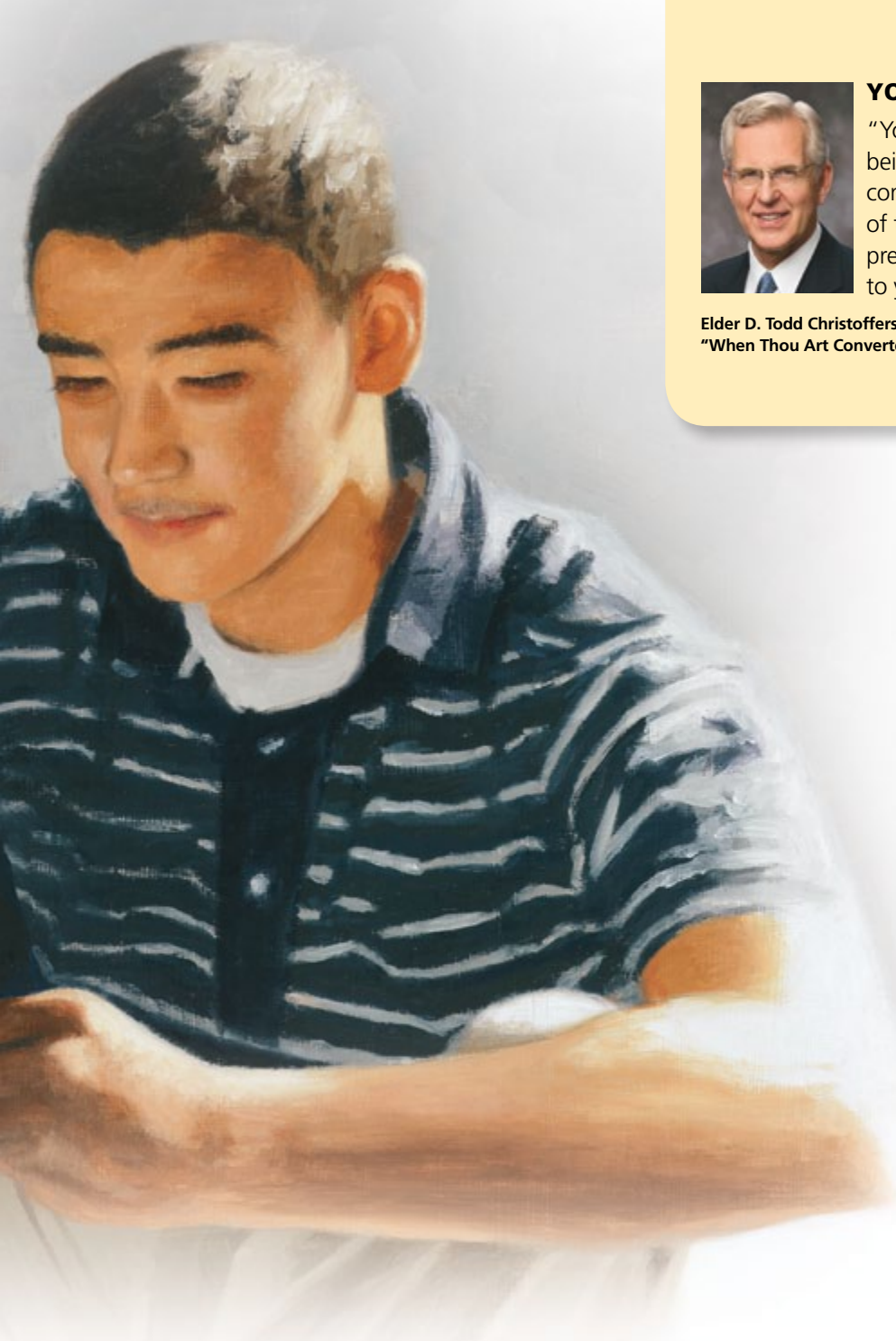
These thoughts ran through my mind for the next several months. One evening in September 2007, my mother, my three younger siblings, and I were leaving a deli in

**I remember reading in Alma 32 about the seed of faith developing and tasting good. That description was exactly how the Book of Mormon seemed to me.**

my hometown of Haverhill, Massachusetts, USA, and stopped to sit on a bench. Two young men in black suits, white shirts, and ties approached us. One of them said, "I know it may seem a little bit awkward to talk to two people you don't know, but could we share a message with you?"

We agreed. I knew they were going to talk to us about religion, and I was impressed that they didn't just thrust a card or pamphlet at us and walk off. Rather, these young men genuinely seemed interested in us and excited about their message. At the conclusion of their message, they asked if they





## YOUR CONVERSION

“You will know that the gospel is being written in your heart, that your conversion is happening, as the word of the Lord from His prophets, past and present, feels more and more delicious to your soul.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “When Thou Art Converted,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2004, 12.

The elders also introduced me to the Book of Mormon. I remember reading in Alma 32 about the seed of faith developing and tasting good (see verse 28). That description was exactly how the Book of Mormon seemed to me. What I was reading and what the missionaries were teaching me rang true, felt right, and tasted good.

My mom teased me about what she called my “hermit crab stage” because I would retreat to my bedroom and spend several hours reading the Book of Mormon. Although I didn’t recognize my feelings as the Holy Ghost at that time, I felt that this path was right.

When the missionaries asked me to be baptized, they encouraged me to pray about the decision. When I prayed to know if joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was what I was supposed to do, I received a very direct answer, to the point that it shocked me. The direction was clear: go forward with baptism.

I remember vividly the day I was baptized—December 15, 2007. As I stood in the cold water with Elder Kelsey and he raised his hand to the square, the Spirit just filled me up; it

could visit our family. My mother agreed and set up a time, so I have her to thank for what became a great change for good in my life.

We started learning the gospel. After a while Mom became busy with different things and didn’t continue to meet with the missionaries, but I did.

I connected easily with Elder Kelsey and Elder Hancock. Perhaps

part of the reason was that they weren’t that much older than I was. I felt great love from them and for them. Soon I felt that same love from ward members and from other youth in my stake.

The missionaries taught me the plan of salvation, which answered the questions I had about my uncle and about my own purpose in life.

seemed to take over my whole frame. I could say that I was also grinning from ear to ear, but that description doesn't even come close to describing what I felt.

After my baptism I continued to feel the Spirit. I *felt* sanctified. I *knew* that my sins had been remitted. I felt the approval of Heavenly Father that this was, indeed, the path I was supposed to take.

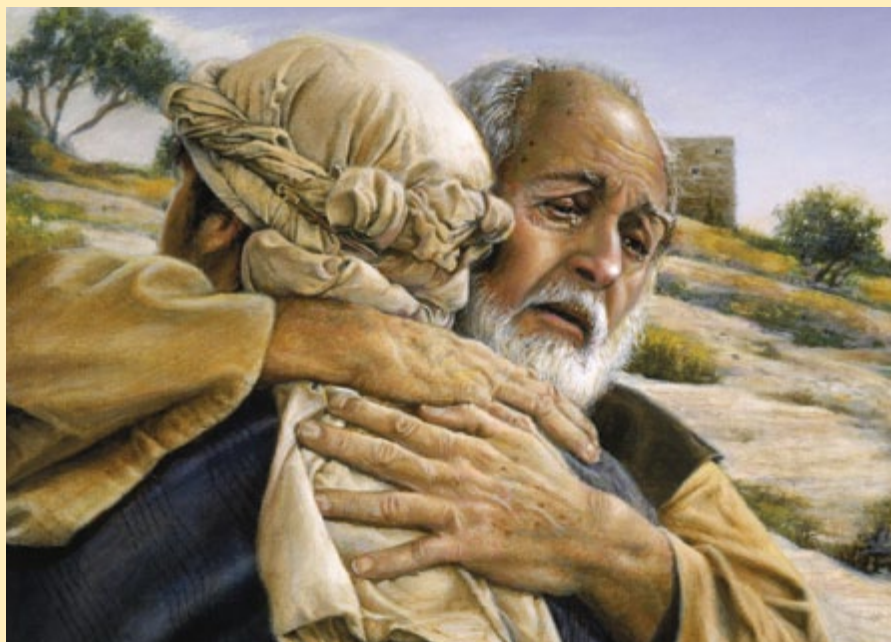
Occasionally, when little doubts pop up, I go back to that experience and remember how I felt that day. Remembering what I felt then helps me dispel any doubt I may encounter.

Even though we don't reenter the waters of baptism to have those powerful feelings again, we can remember that feeling when we renew our covenants through repentance and the sacrament. Each time I repent, I can find that feeling again—one of being cleansed and of being loved.

Feeling that love helps me identify with what Joseph Smith taught: "A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race."<sup>1</sup> Knowing the worth of a soul helps me be excited about opportunities to go teaching with the missionaries in my area. I also look forward to the day when I can serve a full-time mission and share how happy the gospel of Jesus Christ has made me. ■

#### NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 330–31.



#### KEEP LIVING THE GOSPEL

**A**lthough Anthony is grateful for the powerful spiritual experiences he had when he joined the Church, he knows that the light of one pivotal experience isn't enough to live on. "We have to keep our testimony burning," he says. "And we know the ways to do that. Read the scriptures. Go to church. That kind of thing."

Anthony notes that he can feel a difference when he is consistent with these practices and when he is not. And he has discovered ways to keep the pattern of gospel living "fresh."

"I remember studying in the Gospel Principles class the story of the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11–32). As I read about the young man who left his father's home, I thought, 'I could have been that son.' The Spirit bore a powerful witness to me that like that son, I could also return to my Father. The feeling was as though Heavenly Father was saying, 'I love you.' It was as powerful a feeling as I felt on my baptism day."

He has also found that it's important to ask questions in his prayers and scripture study. "When I read the scriptures," he says, "I look for answers to things I am thinking about or wondering. I ask Heavenly Father what He would have me learn from what I'm reading. I do the same thing when I go to church.

"When I ask questions, whether it's about something specific I should do in my life or about what something I'm studying means, I'm able to more easily feel the guidance of the Holy Ghost. I know Heavenly Father really is there and that He will always answer us."

# AN HONEST TITHE, A GREAT BLESSING

By Oscar Alfredo Benavides

**W**hen I was almost 17, I was baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and felt a desire to serve the Lord on a mission. When my mission call arrived a few years later, I was called to leave Peru and preach the restored gospel in Salt Lake City.

Even as I thought about the great blessing of serving a mission, many things that I was going to need weighed on my mind: documents, passport, visa, clothing, and, of course, money. I was working but wasn't making enough. I felt desperate! With a month and a half before I was to leave, I found I had only a small part of the necessary funds. All I could do was go to the Lord in prayer.

Because I didn't make very much money, the tithes I paid each month were meager. But I soon realized that the Lord doesn't care about the small amount: He cares that we pay the 10 percent He has asked. I felt a conviction and assurance that if I continued to pay tithing, the Lord would provide what I needed.

Everything began to come together. I got two additional jobs and obtained my documents. Many members of my ward, especially the Relief Society sisters, helped with other necessities. And the members of my stake offered their help as well. I left on my mission with what was required.

As a full-time missionary, I taught the law of tithing and its promises (see Malachi 3:10) with gratitude and testimony. ■



**H**eavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:32–33).

# WHERE WILL YOUR FRIENDS TAKE YOU?

By John Bytheway

**H**as this ever happened to you? You're sitting in church listening to the speaker when all of a sudden you hear loud noises coming from the ceiling above. To your great surprise, the roof opens up, revealing the bright blue sky, and you see the faces of four men peering down onto the congregation. The next thing you know, they are lowering another man on a stretcher onto the chapel floor.

Has that ever happened to you? Probably not. But something similar happened during the Savior's ministry.

## A Miraculous Healing

"Men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy" the story begins in Luke 5:18, "and they sought means to bring him in, and lay him before [Jesus]." The only problem was they couldn't bring their sick friend in because the place was packed! Even the doorways were blocked with the multitude,

and there was no way to get inside.

At this point the friends could have given up and gone home. But they didn't. You can almost imagine the conversation: "What should we do?" says one. "I have an idea," says another. "Let's go up on top of the building, make an opening in the roof, and lower him to the floor!" You can also imagine the sick man at this point hearing these unusual plans and saying, "You're going to do what?"

The story continues:

"They went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

"And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee" (Luke 5:19–20).

The scribes and Pharisees thought this was blasphemous, so Jesus responded:

"Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

"But that ye may know that the



**Be the kind of friend who takes people to Christ.**

Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house" (Luke 5:23–24).

ONE SICK OF Palsy LOWERED THROUGH THE ROOF TO JESUS, BY FRANK ADAMS, COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM



### If You Feel Spiritually Weak

Perhaps you haven't witnessed such an event, but there are a number of ways to apply this story to your life. You could put yourself in the place of the sick man. Let's say you were weak—not physically but spiritually. Where will your friends take you? Maybe there's a party or a movie or another activity, and you have little say in the matter—where will they take you? This story teaches us a wonderful lesson: There may come a day when you are not as strong as you should be. At that point your choice of friends will be critical. Choose friends who will take you to Christ. To have friends who will always take you to higher ground is an incalculable blessing.

### What Kind of Friend Are You?

But there's another way to look at this scripture. Put yourself in the place of the friends. What kind of friend are you? Although the Savior was the one who healed and forgave the man, the friends are also worthy of mention. They loved their friend and wanted to help him. They didn't give up and go home when things were difficult. Imagine the joy they must have felt when they looked down through the ceiling and saw their friend take up his bed and walk! That's another lesson: Be the kind of friend who takes people to Christ. These friends were courageous, persistent, even creative. In every word, in every action, in every choice, you can lead people to the Savior, who can heal us not only physically but also spiritually. ■

The story ends beautifully:  
 “And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

“And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day” (Luke 5:25–26).





By Elder  
Carlos A. Godoy  
Of the Seventy



# THE GOSPEL IS FOR EVERYONE

*I had often wondered where true happiness came from.  
Then I found it in “the big box.”*

**W**hen I was 16 years old and living in Porto Alegre, Brazil, my older brother had a friend who often visited our home. One day this friend told us that he had found a church and that he liked its members’ way of living.

He told us a little bit about his experience with joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but he wasn’t sure that my brother and I were “church material.” He thought that the standards of the Church would be too much for my brother and me to embrace.

Our sister, however, was a good, kind girl. Because of these traits, our friend thought that she might be interested in what Latter-day Saints stood for, so he asked our mother if she could attend a Church activity with him.

Our mother agreed but only on the condition that my brother or I go too. My brother was faster than I was and quickly said, “Not me!” So I was designated to go to the activity with my sister.

I didn’t really mind. I had been curious about the Church since I had first seen the large, square chapel across from my school. I had seen people coming and



*My brother’s friend wasn’t sure that my brother and I (above) were “church material.” But I was curious.*

going from the church often, and I had noticed that the men wore white shirts and ties. I wondered what could be going on inside “the big box,” as I then thought of the building.

## My First Activity

My sister and I arrived at the church with our friend. Inside, at the center of a large cultural hall was a small group of people: two sister missionaries and maybe six others. They were playing a simple game and enjoying popcorn and

juice. Everyone was laughing and having a good time.

“Who are these people,” I wondered, “and why are they so happy?” I knew it certainly couldn’t be because of the game they were playing or the physical environment or the treats they were sharing. Those were all so simple. The happiness seemed to be coming from inside them.

I had often wondered where true happiness came from and what I could do to find it. I thought maybe it came from exciting activities or taking exotic vacations or pursuing all that the world has to offer. And then I went to that meeting-house, where these people were so happy without any of

those things. It made a significant impression on me.

After the activity the missionaries stood at the exit to shake hands with everyone. When my sister got to the door, they asked her if she would be interested in knowing more about the Church. She said, “No, thanks.” But I was still curious. I felt a “desire to believe” (Alma 32:27), so when they invited me to learn more about the gospel, I said yes.

My parents weren’t interested in the missionary lessons or in having them conducted in our home, so I arranged to have the lessons at the meetinghouse. Over the next month I learned about the restored gospel of Jesus Christ—about what made those people in that cultural hall so happy. I learned that happiness came from doing what the Lord wanted me to do, that it came from within, and that I could be happy no matter what was going on around me. That doctrine was “delicious to me” (Alma 32:28). I wanted it in my life.

A month after that first activity, I decided to join the Church. In the years that followed, both of my parents also joined the Church.

### **Trials after Baptism**

I faced a lot of challenges after my baptism. The changes I needed to make in my life were significant. On top of that, sometimes I felt that I had no friends in the Church, and it was tempting to go back to my old friends. But my



**Elder Godoy as a missionary in Brazil, 1982.**

*My experience with conversion—my own and that of others—has taught me that the Spirit can touch anybody, anywhere and that there is no ideal profile for a potential member of the Church. All of us need the gospel of Jesus Christ.*



### **AN INVITATION TO SHARE GOSPEL JOY**

“To young men of the Aaronic Priesthood and to you young

men who are becoming elders: I repeat what prophets have long taught—that every worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much.”

**President Thomas S. Monson, “As We Meet Together Again,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 5–6.**

desire to feel joy—and my understanding that we can be happy regardless of external circumstances—helped me keep coming back to church. I knew I couldn’t “lay aside [my] faith” (Alma 32:36). Over time I made friends within the Church who helped me during the transition. And as I continued to live the gospel, my testimony and my happiness grew (see Alma 32:37).

My experience with conversion—my own and that of others—has taught me that the Spirit can touch anybody, anywhere and that there is no ideal profile for a potential member of the Church. All of us need the gospel of Jesus Christ. All of us are in the process of becoming more like Him.

That realization helped me as a missionary in São Paulo, Brazil; as a mission president in Belem, Brazil; and as a member of the Church. It has helped me as my wife and I have prepared our children for missionary service. Two of our children have already served full-time missions, and before they left, I reminded them not to judge people by their appearance or their way of living. “Don’t give up on someone because you find them strange,” I told them. “Try to see the inside. There might be another Carlos out there.”

I am grateful to recognize that we are all children of God and to know that everyone—not just a few people—is a candidate for receiving the joy that comes from living the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■

# REFLECT ON **ETERNITY**



See D&C 131:1-4; 132:1-20.

# WHEN I BECAME INVISIBLE



## Name withheld

**W**e had barely arrived in our motel room when the phone rang. I knew it would be bad news about Jodi, my nine-month-old sister. She had been in a coma since birth and required round-the-clock monitoring and special tubal feedings. We had left Jodi temporarily at a care center so our family could take a much-needed vacation.

I answered the phone. My grandpa was on the line. His voice was firm: “Get your dad.”

Their conversation ended quickly. My fears were confirmed. Jodi had died.

The next day, after we had arrived home, I breathed a sigh of relief.



the next or the next. They didn't wait for me after school either.

During this time my family received lots of support from the Relief Society and other ward members. However, chicken casserole did little to soothe my 13-year-old aching heart. When I returned to Mutual, my adviser gave a lesson on life after death. I started crying. My adviser looked down and continued reading. My classmates stared ahead. I sobbed. How I wished somebody would have cried with me or put her arms around me.

Looking back on these events, I

the loss of your friendship as well. There is something comforting about doing regular things.

**Don't feel the need to give a life-after-death sermon.** When this type of lesson is given, do as Alma counseled: "Mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort" (Mosiah 18:9). Your friend probably already knows she will see her loved one again, and if she doesn't, the topic will come up in a natural way as she expresses her thoughts and concerns. That's the time to bear your testimony

The school bus was at the top of the street. My friends would be coming. At last I would have somebody my own age to share my pain.

However, as I stood in my driveway waiting for my friends, something strange happened. It was almost as if I had become invisible. I watched as my friends crossed to the other side of the street and continued talking with one another. They didn't even look at me.

The next morning my friends didn't pick me up as they usually did. "That's understandable," I thought. They probably knew I wasn't going to school because of funeral planning. But they didn't come the next day or

realize that my friends were not cruel and uncaring. They just didn't know how to respond to my pain. They assumed that I wanted to be left alone to grieve and, since I was in mourning, I would not want to do anything fun.

Here's what I wish my friends and adviser had known:

**Be there for your friend.** Take her a note or flower, but most important, take yourself. Put your arms around her and let her know you care. And by all means, go to the viewing or funeral.

**Include your friend in things you normally do.** Your friend is already adjusting to the loss of a loved one. Don't make her adjust to

of the plan of salvation.

A year after my sister's death, my friend's mother died. I felt incredible sorrow. I thought, "The next time I see her, I'll tell her how sorry I am." Then, remembering my own experience, I knew that my friend needed me right then. Walking to her house, I felt apprehensive. What if she didn't want to see me? Maybe her family didn't want me there. Should I wait and talk to her later? But when she answered the door, I could tell she was glad I came. Her father and older siblings were busy planning the funeral. We went for a walk. I didn't have to worry about what to say. She did most of the talking. ■

# Sisters Should Share

By Adam C. Olson  
Church Magazines

**L**ike most sisters who are only 18 months apart, Marilia and Nicole P. of Cuzco, Peru, share a lot in common. Both of them love *ceviche*, a traditional Peruvian dish made with fish marinated in lime or lemon juice. They both say Lehi's dream is their favorite scripture story. And if "How Great Thou Art" were the only hymn in the hymnbook, they would both be happy singing it over and over again.



## Marilia's Favorites

Favorite food: Ceviche  
Favorite scripture: Lehi's dream (see 1 Nephi 8)  
Favorite hymn: "How Great Thou Art" (*Hymns*, no. 86)  
Favorite subject in school: Science  
Favorite pastimes: Singing, dancing, and riding bikes



## Nicole's Favorites

Favorite food: Ceviche  
Favorite scripture: Lehi's dream (see 1 Nephi 8)  
Favorite hymn: "How Great Thou Art" (*Hymns*, no. 86)  
Favorite subject in school: Math  
Favorite pastime: Volleyball

## Sharing a Testimony of Prayer

Another thing they share is a strong testimony that Heavenly Father answers prayers.

"I know the Church is true because when I pray, He answers," says Nicole, who is 10. "When I ask Him for help, He helps me."

Nicole tells about a time when her friend got very sick and the doctors decided to fly her to Peru's capital city, Lima, because they didn't know how to treat her. "I didn't want her to go because she was my best friend," Nicole says. "I asked Heavenly Father to bless her. He heard my prayer, and she was healed."

Marilia, who is 11, says the reason she loves the story of Lehi's dream is that when Lehi found himself alone in the darkness, he prayed "and the Lord answered."

"I know the Church is true because I feel it in my heart when I pray," she says. "God hears me, and when I request something, He answers."

Another reason they both love that scripture story is because Nephi and Sam were obedient.

### Sharing Differences to Help Family

For all of their similarities, these sisters have some differences too. At school Marilia enjoys science, while Nicole prefers math. Marilia likes to dance, sing, and ride her bike. Nicole enjoys volleyball and likes animals.

Marilia is fascinated with cooking. She likes to watch cooking shows on television. Nicole spends time serving others, and she is quick to forgive.

The girls use their own traits



*At about 11,000 feet (3.4 km) above sea level, Cuzco is one of the highest cities in the world. The city is about 900 years old, making it one of the oldest cities in the Americas.*

and talents to help their family.

Marilia and Nicole live high in the Andes Mountains with their mom and dad, two younger sisters, and a younger brother. A love for their family is one of the most important things the two sisters share. And just as Nephi and Sam shared a desire to be obedient and help their family, Marilia and Nicole hope that their similarities *and* their differences will bless their family. ■





By President  
Thomas S. Monson

# We'll Carry You!

**W**hile driving to the office one morning, I passed a sign. It read, "It's the Service That Counts." That message simply would not leave my mind. In actual fact it *is* the service that counts—the Lord's service.

Many years ago it was my privilege to provide a blessing to a beautiful 12-year-old young lady, Jami Palmer. She had just been diagnosed with cancer. She learned that her leg where the cancer was would require multiple surgeries. A long-planned hike with her Young Women class up a rugged trail was out of the question, she thought.

Jami told her friends they would have to hike without her. I'm confident there was disappointment in her heart.

But then the other young women responded emphatically, "No, Jami, you are going with us!"

"But I can't walk," came the reply. "Then we'll carry you to the top!" And they did.

None of those precious young women will ever forget that memorable day when a loving Heavenly Father looked down with a smile of approval and was well pleased.

In the Book of Mormon we read of noble King Benjamin. He declared, "And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the

service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17).

This is the service that counts, the service to which all of us have been called: the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. ■

*From an October 2006 general conference address.*





## WE SERVED TOO

See how these children have stepped up to serve others.

### Serving with Sewing

**W**hen Sarah, age 9, from Oklahoma, USA, heard about last year's earthquake in Haiti, she thought about girls who had lost their homes. She had just gotten a sewing machine for her birthday, and she decided to make simple skirts for the girls. It took patience when Sarah had to pick out stitches to correct mistakes. But soon she had made 18 new skirts. She sent them to the Church Humanitarian Center for the girls in Haiti.



### Backpack Service

**A**lex, age 9, and Noah, age 6, from Oregon, USA, put together 15 backpacks full of school supplies for children who needed them. They collected donations from friends and family members who wanted to help. "Doing the backpack drive made me feel good inside," Alex says.



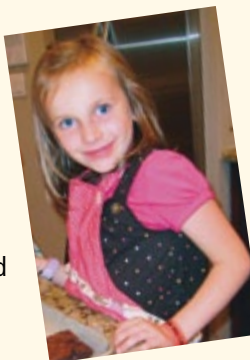
### Willing Hands

**R**ikki's branch in California, USA, needed someone to play the piano. She was only nine years old, but Rikki had willing hands. She had been taking piano lessons for five years, yet some of the hymns were hard to play. Now each week she chooses and plays the hymns for sacrament meeting. "Even though I was nervous, I knew it was important to serve my branch," she says. "I get a peaceful feeling when I play the hymns."



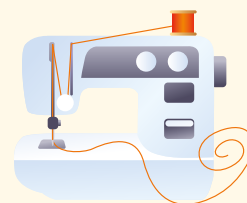
### Cookies for Soap

**E**liana, age 7, heard that her stake in Utah, USA, needed 300 bars of soap for hygiene kits for earthquake victims. She and her mom decided to make lots of cookies and trade them or sell them for soap. Each of their neighbors ordered at least a dozen. Using a coupon, they were able to buy 172 bars of soap. "I know Heavenly Father blessed me and my family for wanting to do our part," Eliana says.



## PLAY A MATCHING GAME

Draw a line between the child's or children's picture and an item below talked about in the story. Some of the stories will have more than one item.



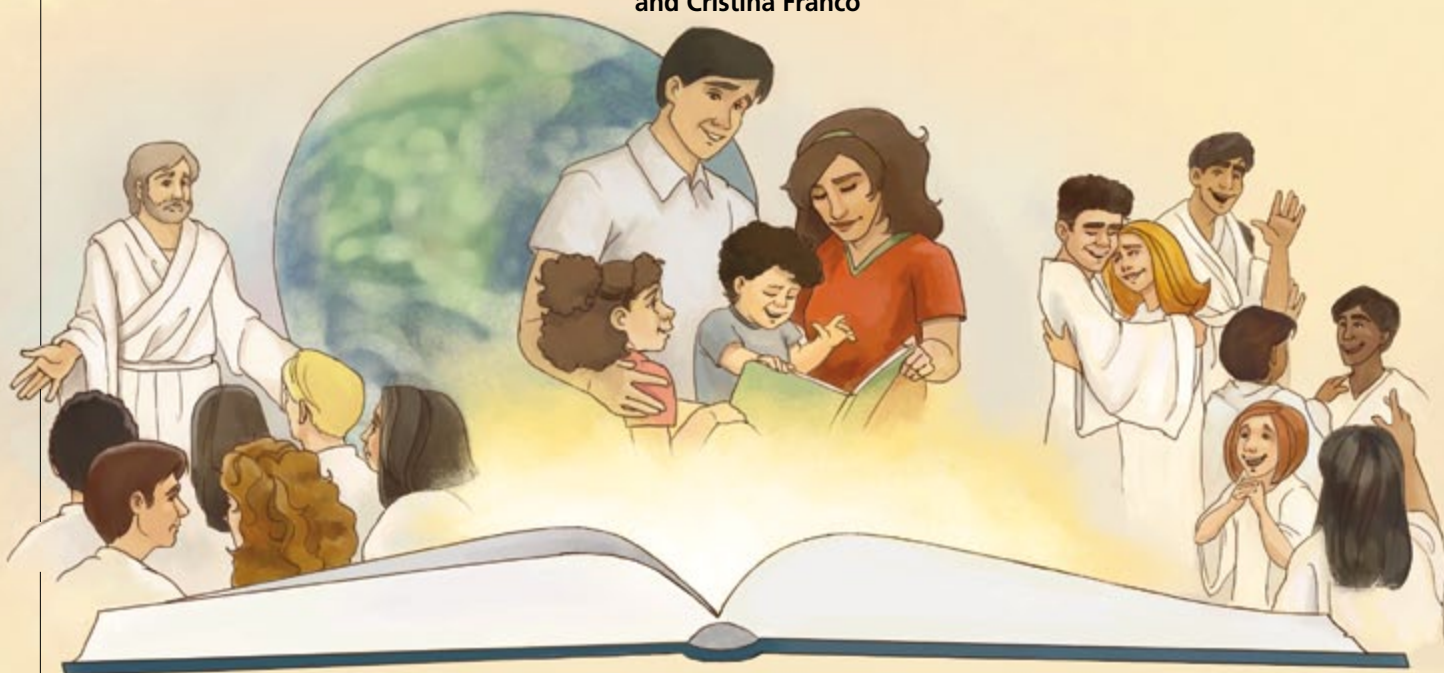
### Share Your Ideas

If you've found a good way to help someone in need, we'd like to hear about it. Look at page 3 to find out how to send us your idea.

# The Scriptures Teach of Heavenly Father's Plan

*"This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39).*

By Ana Maria Coburn  
and Cristina Franco



**W**hen we go to a town that we haven't been to before or when we go on a trip, we have maps to help us get there. These maps can guide us and help us not get lost.

Heavenly Father prepared "maps" to guide us through life. These "maps" are the scriptures. They are sacred books that help us understand why we are here on earth and how to return to Heavenly Father's presence.

The scriptures teach that each of

us is a son or daughter of Heavenly Father and that we lived with Him before we were born. He created the earth for us to live on. He sent His Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to die for us and to help us when we make mistakes or when we are sad or lonely.

Heavenly Father gave us commandments to help us become like Jesus Christ. To follow God's plan, we need to repent when we do something wrong, be baptized, and receive

the gift of the Holy Ghost to guide us every day. Heavenly Father's plan is a plan of happiness. He wants us to return with our families to live with Him and His Son, Jesus Christ.

## Activity

Read each scripture reference on page 65 and draw a line to its matching picture. Your family could use these pictures to talk about the plan of salvation in family home evening. ■



Celestial Glory



D&C 93:29

GENESIS 1:1



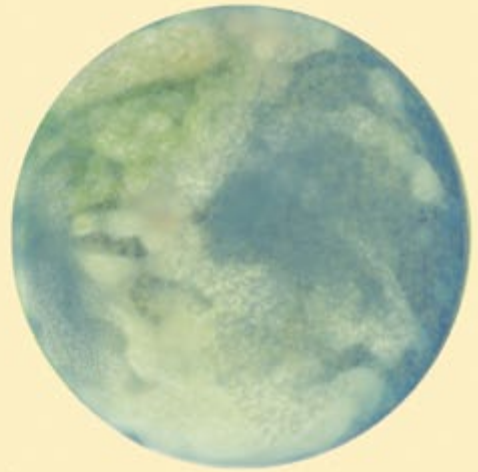
MOSES 5:4

3 NEPHI 17:18-24

3 NEPHI 22:13

ALMA 11:42

D&C 76:92-96



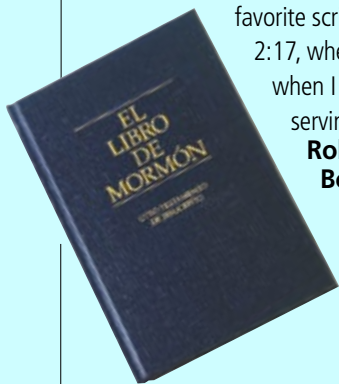
Premortal Life



# Our Page

**O**ne day when we were on our way home from church, I felt something in my heart that made me feel very happy. I felt that the Holy Ghost was with me, and I wanted to preach the gospel to all the people who don't know about this marvelous work that has changed my life and my family. When we reached home, I went to my room and read in the Book of Mormon. My favorite scripture is Mosiah 2:17, where it tells me that when I serve others, I am serving Heavenly Father.

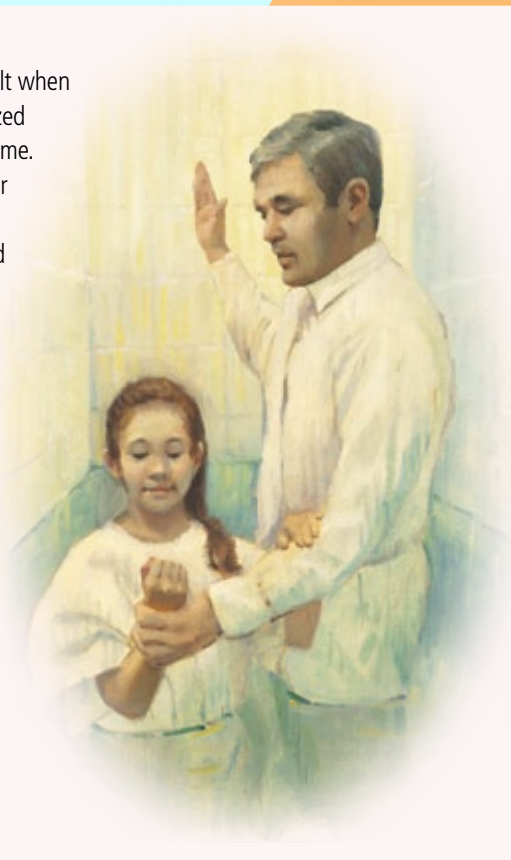
**Roberto C., age 10, Bolivia**



**Elena Z., age 9, Belarus**

**I** will never forget how happy I felt when I was baptized. My father baptized me, and my siblings sang songs for me. My mother asked if I wanted to bear my testimony, and I told her that I wanted to sing a Primary song I had learned that expressed how I felt. I sang, "I like to look for rainbows whenever there is rain and ponder on the beauty of an earth made clean again" ("When I Am Baptized," *Children's Songbook*, 103). While I sang, I felt as if my heart would come right out! I will never forget the faces of my family and how I felt that day. It was the most special day of my life.

**Esther F., age 8, Costa Rica**



**M**arcelo B., age 9, lives in Brazil. He has a testimony of the Savior. He knows that Jesus lives, and he knows that he can return to

Heavenly Father's presence if he obeys the commandments. He loves to read the children's pages in the *Liahona*.



**T**he Primary children of the Cabudare Ward, Barquisimeto Venezuela Stake, send their love to all the Primary children of the world. They love to sing hymns, and they pray for their Primary friends and for the prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, and for Sister Monson.



*Joshua A., age 12, Philippines*



**M**y parents were baptized before I was born, so I have been in the Church my whole life. My father named me Joseph because of the great things done by the Prophet Joseph Smith and also by Joseph who was sold into Egypt.

Joseph in Egypt saved many from famine, and the Prophet Joseph Smith restored the true Church to the earth. These two great Josephs inspire me to live the gospel.

I like Primary, and I love Book of Mormon stories. My favorite is in Alma 8, where Alma obeys the Lord and returns to teach the gospel to the people of Ammonihah with Amulek. I want to be a missionary with a persevering heart like Alma.

**Joseph O., age 11, Ghana**

**I**f you would like to contribute to Our Page, e-mail your submission to [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org), with "Our Page" in the subject line.

Each submission **must** include the child's full name, gender, and age plus the parent's name, ward or branch, stake or district, and the parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to use the child's photo and submission. Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.

# The Spider

## and the Still, Small Voice

*“It was a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper” (Helaman 5:30).*

**By Joshua W. Hawkins**

Based on a true story

**T**hanks for inviting me over, Jake,” Britton said as he stepped outside his friend’s house. “I need to go home for lunch now.”

The friends waved good-bye as Britton headed down the dirt road he usually took to and from Jake’s house. Then his eyes wandered over to the field he called “the Jungle.” It didn’t have any tropical plants or wild animals, just a small path through a sea of tall grass and dry weeds. It was the quickest way home.

Britton thought for a second and then quickly squeezed through the fence poles that surrounded the field.

Snap! Swish! Dry sticks and grass crackled as Britton tromped along the path. The hot sun on his back made his shirt feel sticky. Then a little breeze sprang up, and Britton decided to race the wind home.

The path narrowed. Britton knew a stream was up ahead, so he ran a little faster. Rounding a bend, he was about to leap across the stream when suddenly he heard the word **Stop!**



ILLUSTRATION BY CRAIG STAPLEY; PHOTOGRAPH BY BUSATH PHOTOGRAPHY

Instantly Britton came to a halt and listened. All he heard was the swishing of the grass in the breeze. Britton frowned. The voice had been quiet but perfectly clear, as if someone had whispered in his ear. But no one was in sight.

Britton shrugged and turned to jump over the stream. Then he froze. Right in front of his face shimmered a huge spider web stretching like a net across the path by the stream. In the center of the web waited a large spider.

For a few seconds Britton stared at the spider with wide eyes. Then he ran back along the path out of the Jungle. He decided to take the dirt road home after all.

“Mom! Mom! Guess what?” Britton burst through the door and rushed to find Mom. Between breaths he told her about his journey through the Jungle, the voice, and his face-to-face encounter with the spider.

“I was this close to it, Mom!” He held his fingers up to show her.

“Wow! That must have been creepy,” Mom said. “Where do you think the voice you heard came from?”

“I don’t know,” Britton said. “Nobody was there. Do you think it was just the wind?”

“Do you remember what we learned in family home evening about the still, small voice?” Mom asked.

“Yes. That’s how Heavenly Father talks to us sometimes, right?”

Mom pulled the scriptures off the shelf next to the kitchen table and opened to the book of Helaman.

“Here’s how the Lord’s voice sounded to the Nephites,” she said. “‘It was not a voice of thunder, neither was it a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but behold, it was a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper’” (Helaman 5:30).

“Hey! That’s what it was like—a whisper! I heard the still, small voice!”

Mom smiled. “Yes, you did. And you listened just the way you should have. I’m very proud of you.”

Britton gave Mom a hug. Making her proud made him feel good inside. And knowing he had listened to the still, small voice made him feel even better. ■



**O**ur Heavenly Father is only a prayer away, and the Holy Ghost is within whispering distance.”

Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president, “At All Times, in All Things, and in All Places,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 118.

# I Can Be a Missionary Too

By Estherlynn Kindred Lee

Based on a true story

*"Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work" (D&C 4:3).*

1. Brett was excited. He had just gotten a letter from his big brother Tony. Tony was a missionary. Before Tony left, Brett promised him that he would do missionary work too.



3. Mom, I want to serve others so I can do missionary work like Tony. What can I do?



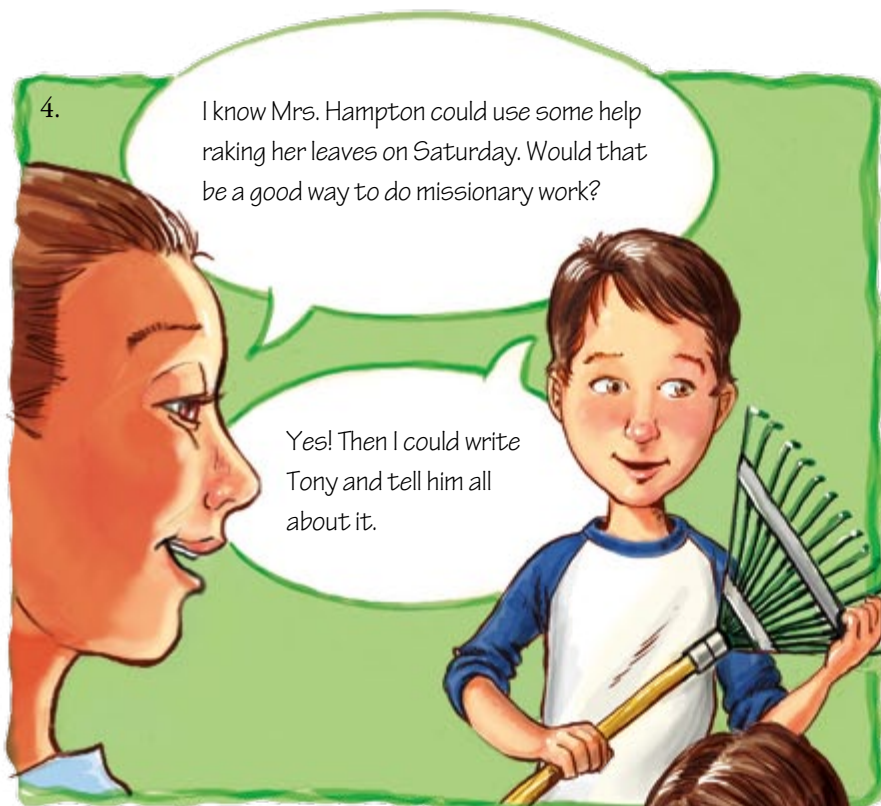
2. Brett, did you know that when you serve others, you are doing missionary work? I can't wait to hear about all the missionary work you are doing. Love, Tony





## HELPS FOR PARENTS

- Show your children a picture of Ammon protecting King Lamoni's sheep and tell the story (see Alma 17–18). Explain that Ammon's service opened an opportunity for him to share his testimony, just as Brett's service in the story helped him share the gospel. Do the "Finding King Lamoni's Sheep" activity on page 72.
- Make a list with your children of things they can do to be missionaries. Help them set goals to accomplish some of the items on the list.



4. I know Mrs. Hampton could use some help raking her leaves on Saturday. Would that be a good way to do missionary work?

5. The next Saturday, Brett sat down to write Tony a letter.

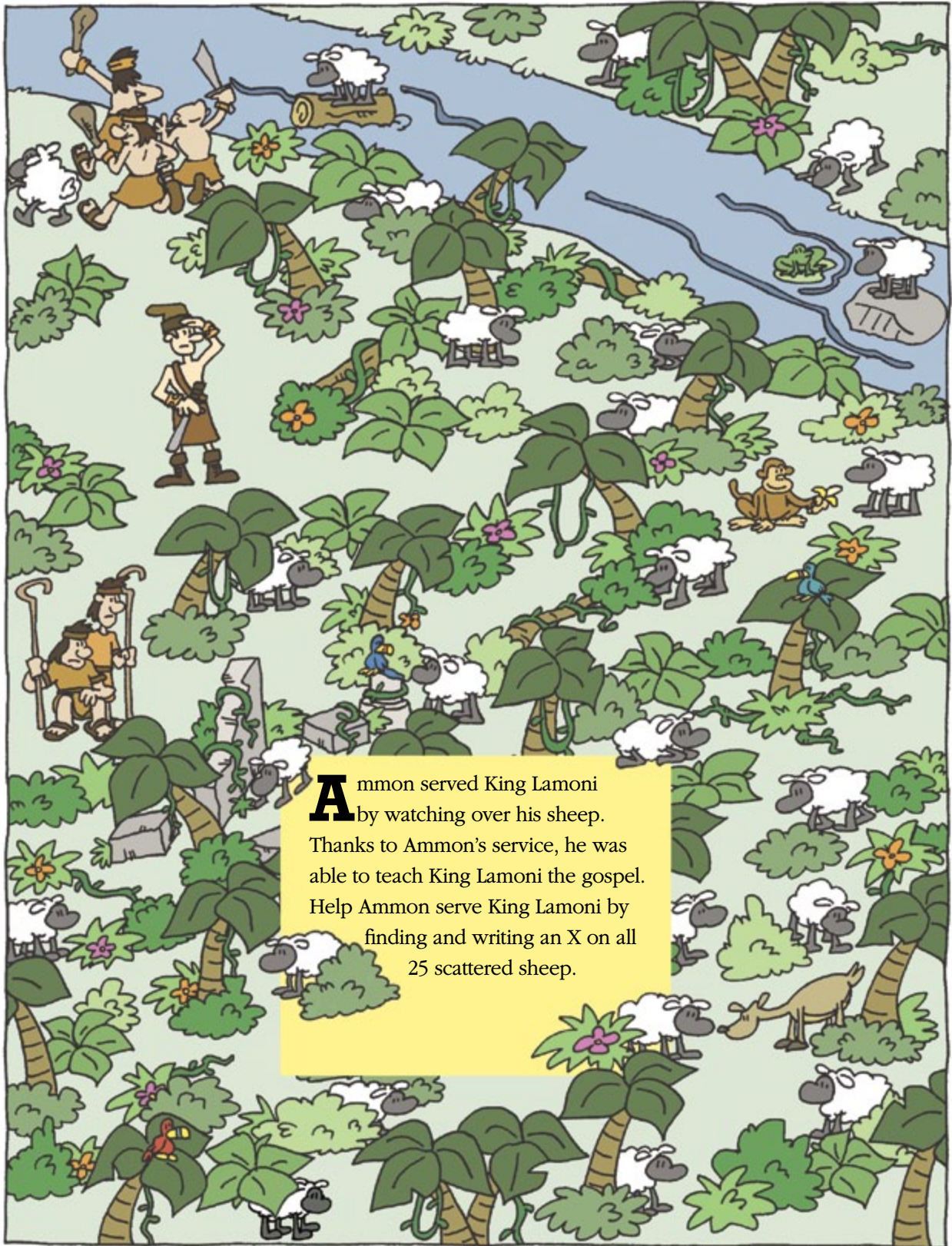
Dear Tony,  
I hope you are having as much fun as I am doing missionary work. We helped Mrs. Hampton today in her yard. She gave us a plate of cookies. Dad asked her if she wanted to come to church with us, and she said yes.  
Love, Brett

6. Brett folded the paper and stuck the letter and one leaf from Mrs. Hampton's yard inside an envelope.



# Finding King Lamoni's Sheep

By Arie Van De Graaff



**A**mmon served King Lamoni by watching over his sheep. Thanks to Ammon's service, he was able to teach King Lamoni the gospel. Help Ammon serve King Lamoni by finding and writing an X on all 25 scattered sheep.



**Jesus Christ Created  
the Earth for Me**

“For behold, this is my work and my glory—to  
bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man”

(Moses 1:39).

## Training Emphasizes Importance of Councils

By Adam C. Olson

Church Magazines

During the November 2010 worldwide leadership training meeting, in which the Church's new handbooks were introduced, Church leaders emphasized the importance of effective ward<sup>1</sup> councils in supporting overburdened bishops and in carrying out the work of salvation.

"*Handbook 2* seeks to reduce the workload of the bishop by enhancing the role of the ward council and its members," said Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. This role includes assisting the bishop "on matters of importance to the whole ward" and "helping in the rescue role of activation and retention."

### The Importance of Councils

During the November training, Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that "the Church is governed through councils at the general, area, stake, and ward levels" and that "the new handbooks significantly enhance the role of councils in the Church."

Elder Cook discussed three fundamental councils at the ward level essential for the bishop to conduct the affairs of the Church and how these councils are affected by information in the new handbooks. These include the bishopric, the priesthood executive committee, and the ward council.

The bishopric will function mostly as it has in the past. While the PEC will continue to meet regularly and will handle some of the items

previously handled by the ward welfare committee, Elder Cook suggested that PEC meetings will probably decrease in length because of a likely increase in the meeting frequency of the ward council.

The new handbook "elevates the role of the ward council in administering the ward under the keys of the bishop," said Elder Cook.

### Elevating the Ward Council

The handbooks elevate the ward council by suggesting what the bishop can delegate and expanding the roles of council members to assist him.

"The primary effort of the ward council is the work of salvation in the ward," Elder Cook said. "Many issues now come directly to the bishop.

Hopefully this will change as bishops delegate more matters in ward council meetings and/or privately to individuals, including such items as welfare, retention, activation" and so forth.

Elder Cook explained that while the bishop will continue to handle "problems that require a common judge in Israel," he can, with the consent of the member seeking repentance, delegate to others "the extensive counseling that may be necessary" to assist members recovering from addictions or who need help with financial issues, family matters, or other problems.

"Members of the ward council do most of their work outside of ward council meetings," Elder Cook said. "They work with their counselors and with home teachers, visiting teachers, and others in reaching out and ministering to those . . . who need assistance."

He urged priesthood and auxiliary leaders to identify and resolve concerns that can be appropriately handled within the quorum or organization to alleviate the burden on the bishop and ward council.

*"The primary effort of the ward council is the work of salvation in the ward."*

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

## Every Member Counts

During the broadcast, the importance of contributions from every member of the council was emphasized by a panel consisting of Elder M. Russell Ballard, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, and Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Elder Walter F. González of the Presidency of the Seventy; and Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

“I think we have the mistaken notion that every element of revelation coming to the ward has to come through the bishop,” said Elder Bednar. “By virtue of his keys, he has to acknowledge it and affirm it, but he doesn’t necessarily have to be the only vehicle through whom it comes.”

Elder Bednar emphasized the importance of unity once the presiding authority has made a decision in order for the council to operate under the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Elder Holland warned against a cultural

A second worldwide leadership training meeting will be held on February 12, 2011, to focus on the responsibilities of stake presidents and bishops, the work of quorums and auxiliaries, and the special challenges of units that lack sufficient members and leaders to carry out the full programs of the Church.

disregard for the value of women in councils. “We sometimes have not been as inviting or as encouraging . . . to the women sitting in the council as we should be,” he said. “We’ve got to have the help of the women.”

The panel emphasized that wise leaders listen.

“The gift of discernment operates more effectively when we’re listening as opposed to when we’re talking,” said Elder Bednar.

Elder Ballard added that the principle of listening applies to every member of the council and that no one member should dominate the conversation.

“When [the] Spirit operates within the council system of the Church, the work will go forward, and we will rescue many more of our Father’s children,” Elder Ballard said. “It’s one grand work that we all put our shoulder to.” ■

### NOTE

1. The terms *ward*, *bishop*, and *bishopric* also apply to *branch*, *branch president*, and *branch presidency*. The terms *stake*, *stake president*, and *stake presidency* also apply to *district*, *district president*, and *district presidency*.

## EFFECTIVE WARD COUNCILS

The following is specific counsel for running effective councils given during the worldwide leadership training meeting in November 2010.

### EFFECTIVE COUNCILS:

- Spend minimal time during meetings on calendaring, activity planning, and other administrative business.
- Focus on matters that will strengthen individuals and families.
- Invite full expression from all council members, who then unite

behind the bishop’s decision.

- Unify organizational efforts to respond to individual, family, and organizational needs.

- Meet regularly, more often than in the past, but typically no longer than 60 to 90 minutes.

- Protect confidentiality. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

# New LDS.org Now Live

By Breanna Olaveson

Church Magazines

It has been about five years since the current LDS.org launched, bringing entire databases of resources directly to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But the Internet has changed drastically since then, and as technology's capabilities increase, so do the possibilities for LDS.org.

The new LDS.org, also referred to as LDS.org 3.0, has been designed to incorporate some of the Internet's strengths, becoming more visually engaging, more useful to members, and easier to navigate.

While some areas of the site are still in development, the creation of the new site was also a good time for Church leaders to refocus the site's strategy.

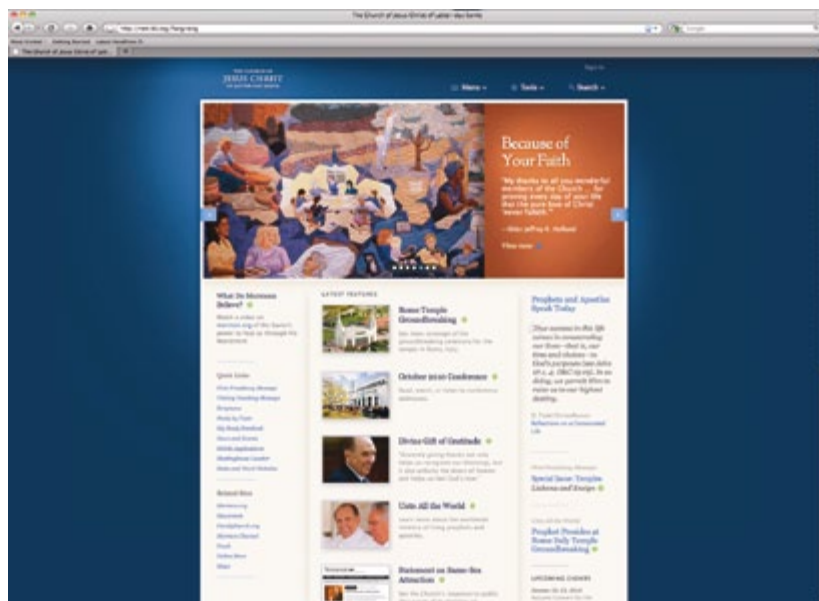
"We've had LDS.org for many years, but its content has been driven more by what Church departments need to communicate than by the audience's needs," said Elder Craig C. Christensen of the Seventy. "In designing this site, we asked, 'What do Church members need, and how can the Church help them?'"

LDS.org 3.0 focuses on emphasizing the teachings of living prophets, facilitating online gospel study, providing ways to share the gospel, making materials easier to find, and providing content in several languages.

## Teachings of Living Prophets

With so many voices on the Internet competing for attention, the new LDS.org focuses on bringing one voice to the forefront—the prophetic voice.

Lee Gibbons, director of LDS.org, said the intent is to give the teachings of modern prophets



**The new LDS.org focuses on the teachings of modern prophets, provides greater tools for online study, and includes greater search capabilities.**

and apostles prominence by creating a “gateway” that focuses on their ministry and what they are teaching today.

The Prophets and Apostles Speak Today section of the site features recent messages and provides personal insights from the lives and ministry of the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

## Tools for Online Gospel Study

The previous version of LDS.org provided access to the scriptures and other Church materials, but the new site provides tools for online study.

By signing in to the site, users can highlight and underline passages, take notes, keep a study journal, and organize materials into files for later use. These features are available for all content in the Study area of the site, which includes the

scriptures, general conference, lesson manuals, Church magazines, and more.

### Sharing the Gospel

Content on the new site is media rich, using video, audio, photography, gospel art, and other graphics to communicate the gospel message. But the content isn't there to benefit only members of the Church. It, like the gospel, is to be shared. Most of the site's content is integrated with popular social networking sites and e-mail so users can easily share content and direct their friends to learn more about the gospel.

"There's not only an opportunity, but perhaps a call to action that members should be doing more sharing," Brother Gibbons said. "We're trying to enable that."

### New Search Capability

Another important function that has been improved is the site's search capabilities. The search bar, available at the top of nearly every page on the site, returns a short list of recommended results, hand selected for many frequently searched topics. A comprehensive listing of all materials that match the search terms is also available.

The results page also suggests synonyms that may return better results and provides options for refining searches.

### Languages

The new LDS.org is a Web site for the worldwide Church, and thus it will be rolled out in stages in 11 different languages as the translations are finalized and approved. Approximately 90 percent of Church members speak one of these 11 languages: Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. ■

## New Temple Presidents Begin Service

Beginning on November 1, 2010, 53 new temple presidents and their wives began serving in temples around the world. There are currently 134 temples in operation around the world with another 23 announced or under construction.

### Aba Nigeria

Alexander A. and Theresa A. Odume\*

### Anchorage Alaska

Melvin R. and Sharon V. Perkins

### Birmingham Alabama

Kent R. and Geniel R. Van Kampen

### Campinas Brazil

George A. and Jeannette N. Oakes

### Caracas Venezuela

Luis M. and Juana P. Petit

### Chicago Illinois

Paul W. and Ann P. Castleton

### Ciudad Juárez Mexico

Manuel and Elsa M. Araiz

### Cochabamba Bolivia

Lee W. and Connie C. Crayk

### Columbia River Washington

T. Dean and Patrice A. Moody

### Columbus Ohio

Edward J. and Carol B. Brandt

### Copenhagen Denmark

H. Hjort Nielsen and Ellen Haibrock

### Curitiba Brazil

José M. and Aida C. Arias

### Dallas Texas

Robert C. and Talmadge M. Packard

### Detroit Michigan

Phillip G. and Margaret K. Pulsipher

### Draper Utah

Russell E. and Christine C. Tueller\*

### Edmonton Alberta

Bryce D. and Kathryn Card

### Fresno California

Paul B. and Judith H. Hansen

### Guadalajara Mexico

Jaime F. and M. Teresa Herrera

### Halifax Nova Scotia

Douglas M. and Carol Ann Robinson

### Hamilton New Zealand

James and Frances M. Dunlop

### Hong Kong China

John M. and Lydia C. Aki

### Johannesburg South Africa

Kenneth S. and Muriel D. Armstrong

### Kyiv Ukraine

B. John and Carol Galbraith\*

### Lima Peru

Robert W. and Kay Lees

### London England

C. Raymond and Irene M. Lowry

### Manhattan New York

W. Blair and Suzanne J. Garff

### Medford Oregon

David J. and Pauline Davis

### Melbourne Australia

Malcolm R. and Ruthje M. Mullis

### Memphis Tennessee

T. Evan and Lou Anne W. Nebeker

### Mérida Mexico

Zeniff and Elizabeth Mejía

### Monterrey Mexico

C. Juan Antonio and Isabel S. Machuca

### Nashville Tennessee

R. Lloyd and Judy R. Smith

### Nauvoo Illinois

Spencer J. and Dorothea S. Condie

### Nuku'alofa Tonga

Pita F. and Lani A. Hopoate

### Orlando Florida

David T. and Lana W. Halversen

### Panama City Panama

D. Chad and Elizabeth B. Richardson

**Perth Australia**

Geoffrey J. and Lesley M. Liddicoat

**Portland Oregon**

Myron G. and Gearldine T. Child

**Provo Utah**

Robert H. and Janet L. Daines

**Raleigh North Carolina**

J. Mitchel and Z. Sue Scott

**Reno Nevada**

Franklin B. and Joyce C. Wadsworth

**Rexburg Idaho**

Clair O. and Anne Thueson

**Santiago Chile**

Julio E. and Elena Otay

**Santo Domingo****Dominican Republic**

Larry K. and Joann W. Bair

**Seattle Washington**

Donald E. and Jane H. Pugh

**Seoul Korea**

Song Pyung-Jong and Yang Gye-Young

**Spokane Washington**

Charles H. and Elizabeth M. Recht

**St. George Utah**

Bruce C. and Marie K. Hafen

**St. Paul Minnesota**

C. Kent and Karen J. Hugh

**Tampico Mexico**

Barry R. and Risa L. Udall

**Tuxtla Gutiérrez Mexico**

Jorge D. and Irma Del Toro Arrebillaga

**Twin Falls Idaho**

Karl E. and Beverly C. Nelson

**Winter Quarters Nebraska**

Maury W. and Joan Schooff ■

*The Twin Falls Idaho Temple is one of 53 temples that received a new president on November 1, 2010.*

*\*These couples began serving earlier in the year.*

**IN THE NEWS**

## New Online Store Makes Resources More Accessible

It's difficult for many of the 14 million members of the Church to travel to one of 130 retail stores to obtain Church materials. So Church Distribution Services is reversing the process. A new online store is now bringing materials to the members.

Store.lds.org makes it easy to order gospel study materials, music, media, art, garments, temple clothing, home and family resources, and other materials. Materials ship free of cost around the world, with a small fee for expedited delivery.

Visitors to the site identify their country. As online stores specific to each country become available, they will show the available products in that country's primary language and with all prices listed in local currency. Some free material can be downloaded directly from the site.

The new site replaces lds.catalog.com and launched initially in English, Spanish, and Russian. Other languages will be available in coming months, including Portuguese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese, in that order. ■

**COMMENT****Trying to Be an Example**

I want to tell you that I love reading the *Liahona* magazine, and I know it contains the words of the prophet. I have a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and of prayer. I am grateful for the gospel in my life, and I try to be an example to other young people who do not yet know the word of the Lord.

Tatiana G., age 15, Uruguay

**Peace Has Penetrated My Soul**

I am not yet a member of your church, but joy, love, and peace fill me because I have finally found the truth. A friend gave me a copy of the *Liahona* and the Book of Mormon to read, and even though I found the truth in them, I hesitated because some people told me this was not a good church.

But since I felt the truths of Christ, I began to read again, and now a great feeling of peace has penetrated my soul. The teachings are clear and edifying—and that is the presence of the Spirit in the work. There are no units of the Church where I live, but I pray that the Lord will open the doors so that the restored gospel can come to my city and I can be baptized. ■

Konan Alphrede, Côte d'Ivoire

*Please send your feedback or suggestions to [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org). Submissions may be edited for length or clarity.*



## WORLD BRIEFS

### Japanese Triple Available Online

A Japanese edition of the triple combination, combining into one volume the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price, is now available online at [scriptures.lds.org/jpn](http://scriptures.lds.org/jpn). An audio recording is also available at the same site and will be available on CD soon. The scriptures site includes footnotes, maps, and photographs and allows readers to mark the scriptures and perform key word searches. The scriptures site now includes 19 languages.

### Church Now Casting for New Testament Project

In an effort to attract participants from around the world for the LDS Motion Picture Studio's New Testament film project, the Church has created a Web site, [casting.lds.org](http://casting.lds.org), where interested members of the Church may apply to participate as actors or extras in all Church film and video productions, including the New Testament project. Filming will begin in spring 2011 in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, and will continue through the summer.

### Youth Resource Guides Help Teachers

New resource guides supplement the Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women lesson manuals,

*Aaronic Priesthood Manual 3* and *Young Women Manual 3*, for 2011. The guides provide teachers with recent general conference references, discussion questions, additional scripture references, and activity ideas that tie into and refresh the existing lessons, making them more relevant to issues youth face today. The guides are available in 27 languages at Church distribution centers or online at [resourceguides.lds.org](http://resourceguides.lds.org).

### New DVDs Available for Study of D&C

A new set of four DVDs assists in the study of the Doctrine and Covenants and Church history. The set contains interactive charts, quotations from latter-day prophets and apostles, paintings, and learning activities. It features videos such as *Legacy*, *Mountain of the Lord*, and *Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration*, which has been showing in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building since December 2005. *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Visual Resources DVDs* is available in English, Portuguese, and Spanish. Order online at [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org) or by calling 1-800-537-5971. Check with local distribution centers for availability. ■

## FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are a few examples.

### "Learning to Hear and Understand the Spirit," p. 24; and "The Spider and the Still, Small Voice," p. 68:

These articles teach us about the importance of acting on promptings of the Spirit. Before reading one of the articles out loud, invite family members to listen for ways they can recognize the Spirit.



After reading the article, you might tell about a time you felt the Holy Ghost and invite family members to do the same.

**"Parables of the Lost and Found,"** p. 32: To teach family members the importance of seeking out those who are spiritually lost, you could play a game of hide-and-seek. After the game, read one or two stories from this article and share what you learned about seeking out those who are lost. You might want to identify neighbors or friends you can fellowship. Then discuss ways you can invite them to come back to church.

**"The Gospel Is for Everyone,"** p. 54: This article teaches that "there is no ideal profile for a potential member of the Church." To teach this concept, consider switching labels on canned food or putting sugar in a salt shaker. Invite family members to choose a can of food to eat from or to taste the "salt." Read Elder Godoy's article. As a family, think of those with whom you could share the gospel.

**"We'll Carry You!"** p. 62: As a family you could read this article and discuss when family members have helped others or received service. Then think of ways to serve. You could carry out your plan as a future family home evening activity. ■

# A SEAT AT THE BRIDEGROOM'S FEAST

By Melissa Merrill

Church Magazines

Going to a wedding reception alone isn't always comfortable. But when an old friend invited me to his wedding dinner, I knew I couldn't miss the opportunity to celebrate with him and his new bride.

The day of the wedding, I arrived just before dinner started. I spotted an empty seat and asked one of the women at the table if it were taken.

"Are you *supposed* to be here?" she questioned, eyeing me suspiciously.

I had no idea what prompted the question—or the manner in which she asked it. There wasn't someone checking a guest list. The seating wasn't prearranged. I was on time and dressed appropriately. What could be the problem?

I smiled nervously. "I'm a friend of the groom," I assured her. She nodded, so I sat down and tried to strike up friendly conversation with the six couples at the table. Whatever discomfort I had felt before was magnified given the "welcome" I'd received. I desperately scanned the room for someone—anyone—I knew, but aside from the groom, there wasn't a familiar face anywhere.

But then it happened. My friend, seated next to his bride at the front of the crowded hall, stood. As he did so, he saw me on the opposite side of the room. He paused, smiled, and placed his hand over his heart as if to say, "Thank you for coming. I know you sacrificed to be here. It means so much that you're with us."



*A feeling of relief and happiness washed over me. Whatever anyone else thought, in the groom's estimation, I belonged.*

A feeling of relief and happiness washed over me. Whatever anyone else thought, in the groom's estimation, I belonged. I smiled as I mirrored his gesture. I hoped my friend knew how much I wanted to celebrate and share in his and his wife's joy. Whatever social awkwardness I had felt was gone in that 10-second exchange, and I spent the rest of the evening infused with confidence.

Days later, in preparing to teach a Relief Society lesson, I studied Matthew 22 and read of a king preparing a marriage feast for his son, who represents the Savior. About these verses of scripture, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "Those who keep the commandments of the Lord and walk in His statutes to the end, are the only individuals

permitted to sit at this glorious feast. . . . Those who have kept the faith will be crowned with a crown of righteousness; be clothed in white raiment; be admitted to the marriage feast; be free from every affliction, and reign with Christ on the earth."<sup>1</sup> That promise is powerful anytime, but it was especially so because of my experience earlier that week.

As I taught the lesson, I realized that obedience is the only requirement for accepting an invitation from Jesus Christ to rejoice with Him, to have a place at His feast. And that feast is one at which guests need never feel insecure because they *do* belong. Although I am as yet far from perfect in my obedience, I hope one day to qualify to meet the Bridegroom and with hand over heart—a heart submitted to His will—say, "I'm so happy to be here." ■

#### NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 165, 166.



WORDS OF CHRIST

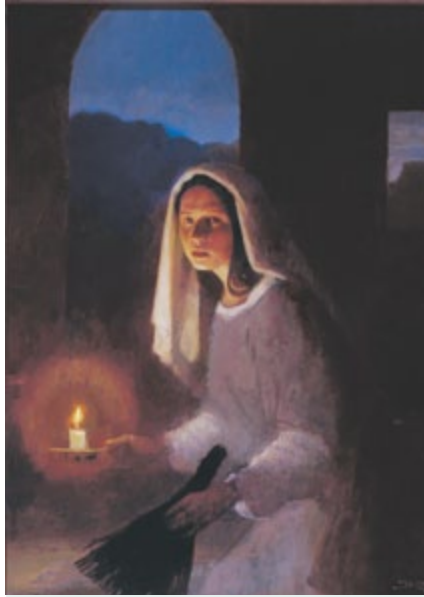
*Children Playing by a Wooden Fence,*  
by Anne Marie Oborn

*“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*

*“And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in*

*all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

*“Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you?” (Matthew 6:28–30).*



**I**n the parables in Luke 15, the sheep wanders, the piece of silver is lost, and the prodigal son wastes his inheritance. But the shepherd searches the wilderness, the woman sweeps the house, and the forgiving father watches for his son's return. We, likewise, can heed the call from President Thomas S. Monson to "reach out and rescue those who have fallen by the wayside, that not one precious soul will be lost." Read four stories of rescue in "Parables of the Lost and Found," page 32.