

Liahona



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Self-Reliance, p. 81**



The Sacred Susquehanna, by Glen S. Hopkinson

On May 15, 1829, near Harmony, Pennsylvania, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Acting under the direction of ancient Apostles Peter, James, and John, he laid his hands upon the heads of Joseph and Oliver and conferred the Aaronic Priesthood.

John the Baptist then directed Joseph that he should baptize Oliver and that Oliver should then baptize Joseph in the

Susquehanna River. Then they were to ordain each other to the Aaronic Priesthood. (See Joseph Smith—History 1:68–72; D&C 13:1.)

A few weeks later, Peter, James, and John appeared to Joseph and Oliver near Harmony, conferred upon them the holy Melchizedek Priesthood, and ordained them to be Apostles (see D&C 27:12; 128:20).



Liahona, June 2011

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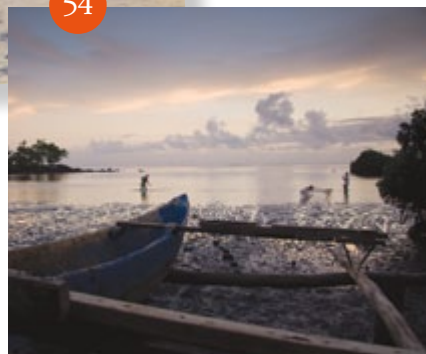
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More Online

Liahona.Lds.org

FOR ADULTS

"I Desperately Wanted to Stop" (page 24) tells how one man overcame his addiction to pornography. We've compiled a list of articles related to that topic at www.liahona.lds.org.



FOR YOUTH



Youth in Visakhapatnam, India, find strength in their families (see page 34). See more photos of these youth at www.liahona.lds.org.

FOR CHILDREN



Not all websites are safe to visit (see page 64). But this one is: **find games and activities** at www.liahona.lds.org.

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The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at www.languages.lds.org.

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



THE BLESSINGS OF Tithing

God's purpose in giving us commandments is to bless us. He wants to give us eternal life, the greatest of all His gifts (see D&C 14:7). To receive the gift of living with Him forever in families in the celestial kingdom, we must be able to live the laws of that kingdom (see D&C 88:22).

He has given us commandments in this life to help us develop that capacity. The law of tithing is one of those preparatory commandments. The law is that we give to the Lord one-tenth of all our income. It is simple enough that even a child can understand it. I have seen children hand a bishop a tithing envelope that contains one-tenth of the coins they earned.

One of the blessings that comes from paying a full tithing is developing faith to live an even higher law. To live in the celestial kingdom, we must live the law of consecration. There we must be able to feel that all we are and all we have belong to God.



There are at least three ways that paying a full tithe in this life prepares us to *feel* what we need to feel to receive the gift of eternal life.

First, when we pay our tithes to the Church, our Heavenly Father pours out blessings upon us. Anyone who has consistently paid a full tithe knows that is true. The blessings are sometimes spiritual and sometimes temporal. They are given in the Lord's time and according to what He knows is best for us.

As those blessings come, our faith is increased that God is the source of everything that is good in our lives. It becomes easier to see that consecration simply recognizes the truth that all of God's creations are His. It makes us *feel* gratitude that He asks only 10 percent of what He has already given us. So we are better prepared to live the law of consecration when it will be asked of us.

Second, all of us who have paid a consistent full tithe *feel* greater confidence in asking God for what we and our families need. He has promised blessings even greater than we can receive when we have been faithful to our covenant to pay our tithes (see Malachi 3:10). So one of the great blessings of tithing is confidence in

what the future holds. Whatever our circumstances may be, things will work out for the best. As we keep our promises, He will keep His. A feeling of peace is one of the great blessings of paying a full tithe. Those who have kept the commandment of tithing can testify that the blessing of peace is real and precious.

Third, those who pay tithing *feel* an increase in their love of God and of all God's children. That increase of love comes from understanding how the Father uses the tithes we offer to bless people in this world and for eternity.

Through His authorized servants, He expends the tithes with great care. The tithe payer helps the Lord build temples, where families can be sealed forever. The tithe payer helps Him send the gospel to people everywhere. The tithe payer helps Him relieve hunger and suffering in His own way through His servants. Any of those servants can tell you how love increased because tithing was used to bless people. And so can the faithful tithe payer.

Tithing settlement is months in the future. I pray that you and your family will begin now to plan and prepare to qualify for the blessings that God pours out on all those who can declare to Him that they are full-tithe payers. ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

- Sometimes the best way to teach a certain principle is to demonstrate it (see *Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 164). Consider asking a family member to demonstrate what one-tenth represents. He or she could demonstrate it by separating one item from a group of 10 items. To conclude, consider inviting a family member to show how to fill out a tithing slip.
- "Those you teach will benefit from each other's participation" (*Teaching, No Greater Call*, 63). Invite family members to share what they believe President Eyring means by the statement "*feel* what we need to feel to receive the gift of eternal life." Consider discussing the three ways in which paying tithing prepares us to feel what we need to feel to receive God's blessings.

YOUTH

Enough Money

By Fabiano dos Santos da Silva

I met the missionaries when I was 17. At that time my older brother and I lived together. Our mother had passed away the year before, and life was difficult. When the missionaries taught me, I could see that this Church was the church I had always sought. But the influence of my friends prevented me from going to church on Sundays.

One time I went to a Church activity during the week. Seeing all the young people laughing and playing brought me great joy. The missionaries, with the youth, took that opportunity to teach me a gospel lesson, and I felt so good I resolved to be baptized.

But even after I joined the Church, I faced challenges. I was the only member of the Church in that part of town and lived far away from the meetinghouse. My nonmember friends no longer wanted anything to do with me. When I felt alone, I prayed and felt the love of the Lord.

Each month, I received a small allotment of money from a fund my mother left. It was difficult to sustain myself with so little money. But I determined to be obedient. I paid tithing and also had to pay for transportation to seminary and Sunday meetings. I didn't understand how, but at the end of the month, I found that there had been enough money to do it all.

I know that I have been blessed by paying tithing. Obeying this commandment helped me gain a stronger testimony, serve a mission, and recognize blessings so I can strengthen new members who are facing challenges.

CHILDREN

I Can Pay Tithing

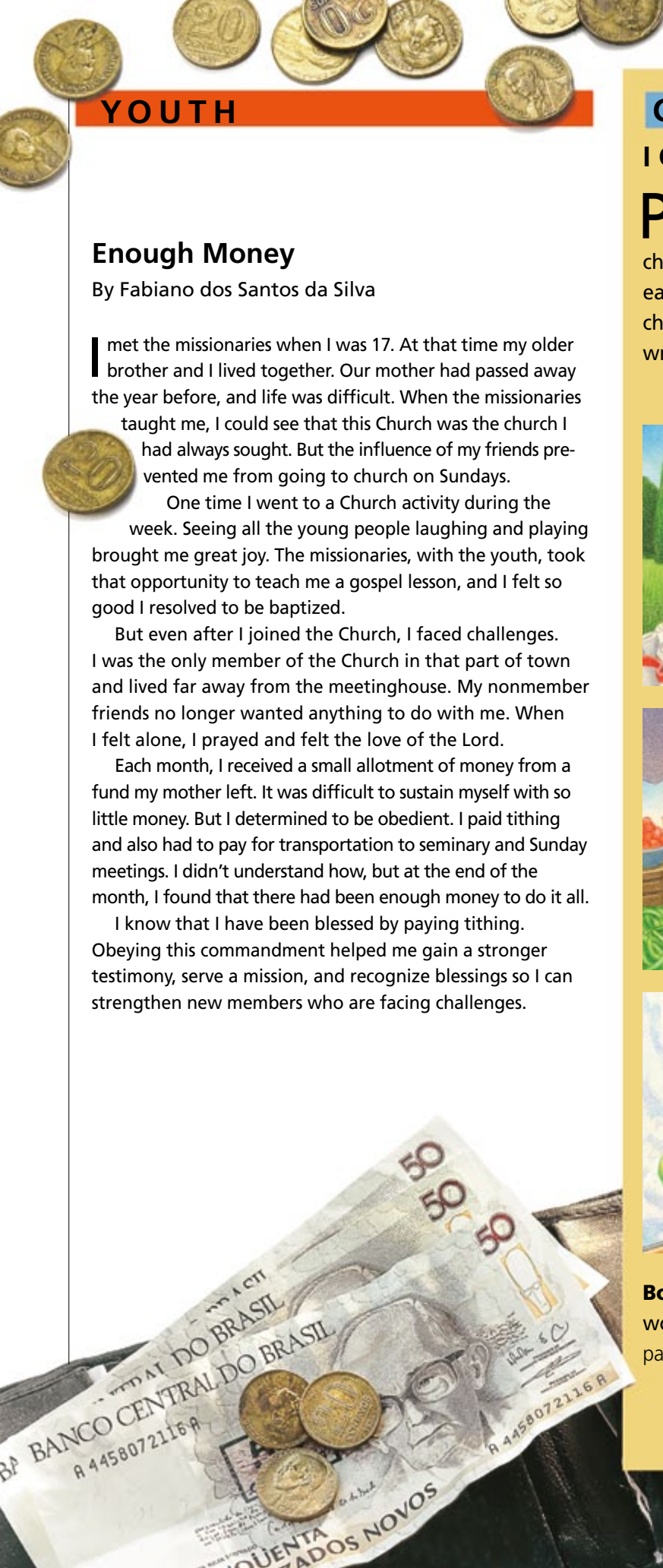
Paying tithing means **giving 10 percent** of what we earn to the Lord. Look at these three children doing jobs. On the first blank space by each drawing, write how much you think each child might earn for the job. On the second line, write how much the tithing would be.







Bonus question: Which of these tithe payers would receive the most blessings? (Hint: See the last paragraph of President Eyring's message.)





Faith • Family • Relief

Strengthening Families through Temporal Self-Reliance

Developing self-reliance—the ability to care for ourselves and our families—is the responsibility of every sister. We become self-reliant as we learn to love work, as we seek inspiration to find the best ways to provide for ourselves, and as we work with family members to meet basic needs.

When we are self-reliant, we use our blessings and resources to prepare for and avoid problems. Self-reliance, however, is enhanced as we pray for the courage to meet with faith the challenges that will surely come. Self-reliance also enables us to keep our covenant to care for others.

In Relief Society, we are taught self-reliance principles and skills. Sisters can learn about budgeting, debt relief, employment qualifications, the scriptures and the gospel, teaching others to read and learn, technology, physical health, fitness, addiction prevention and recovery, social and emotional health, preventing illness, gardening, food production and storage, emergency preparedness, and many other things that will help us become self-reliant.¹

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president, explains that “providing for ourselves and others is evidence that we are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . When [my mother-in-law] passed away suddenly last year, she left evidence of her self-reliant life. She had a current temple recommend and well-used scriptures and gospel study manuals. We lovingly divided up the pots, pans, and dishes with which she had prepared thousands of meals. She left us quilts she had made from old clothing. She believed in the old adage ‘Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.’ We saw the supply of food she had grown, preserved, and stored. Particularly touching were her little account books in which she faithfully recorded her expenditures over many years. Because she lived providently, she left some money she had saved for emergencies, and she left no debts! Most importantly, she had taught and inspired many others with the skills she had acquired during her faithful life.”²

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.

What Can I Do?

1. How can I help my sisters and their families improve in temporal self-reliance?
2. How can I improve my own temporal self-reliance?

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

NOTES

1. See *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 9.4.2.
2. Julie B. Beck, “The Welfare Responsibilities of the Relief Society President,” *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (2009), 6.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 231.

From Our History

Relief Society sisters have always participated in the work of saving souls temporally and spiritually. Each week as the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo met, sisters reported on people in need. Donations of money, goods, talents, and time were dispersed to relieve the needy. This foundational work of relieving suffering has continued to be the work of Relief Society through the generations.

When the Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, President Brigham Young (1801–77) counseled sisters to assist those in need and to learn skills that would allow them to take care of themselves. He said, “Learn to sustain yourselves; lay up grain and flour, and save it against a day of scarcity.”³ Under the direction of the priesthood, Relief Society continues to teach self-reliance, to safeguard the family, and to encourage personal righteousness and acts of charity, the pure love of Christ.

From the Scriptures

John 13:34–35; James 1:27; Mosiah 4:26; Doctrine and Covenants 29:34–35; 38:30; 44:6



Small & Simple Things

*“Out of small things proceedeth that which is great”
(D&C 64:33).*

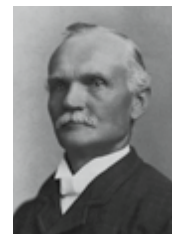
CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD

Germany

Although missionary work began in Germany in the 1840s, it wasn't until 1851 that two people who were likely the first converts there were baptized. The same year, President John Taylor, then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, went to Hamburg to help supervise the translation of the Book of Mormon into German. A branch was organized in Hamburg in 1852, but most of the early converts emigrated to Utah because of persecution. These included Karl G. Maeser, who later became president of Brigham Young Academy in Provo, Utah.

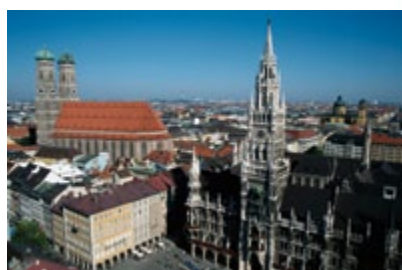
After World War I, Germany experienced great growth in Church converts, particularly from 1921 to 1925. The German Mission was divided into the German-Austrian Mission and the Swiss-German Mission. The East German Mission was created in 1937. Missionaries were pulled out of Germany during World War II. When they returned in 1947, the

country had been divided into East Germany and West Germany. However, missionary work continued, and on June 19, 1985, the Freiberg Germany Temple was dedicated in East Germany—the first temple in a communist country. Another temple was dedicated two years later, in Frankfurt, West Germany. The country was unified in 1990.

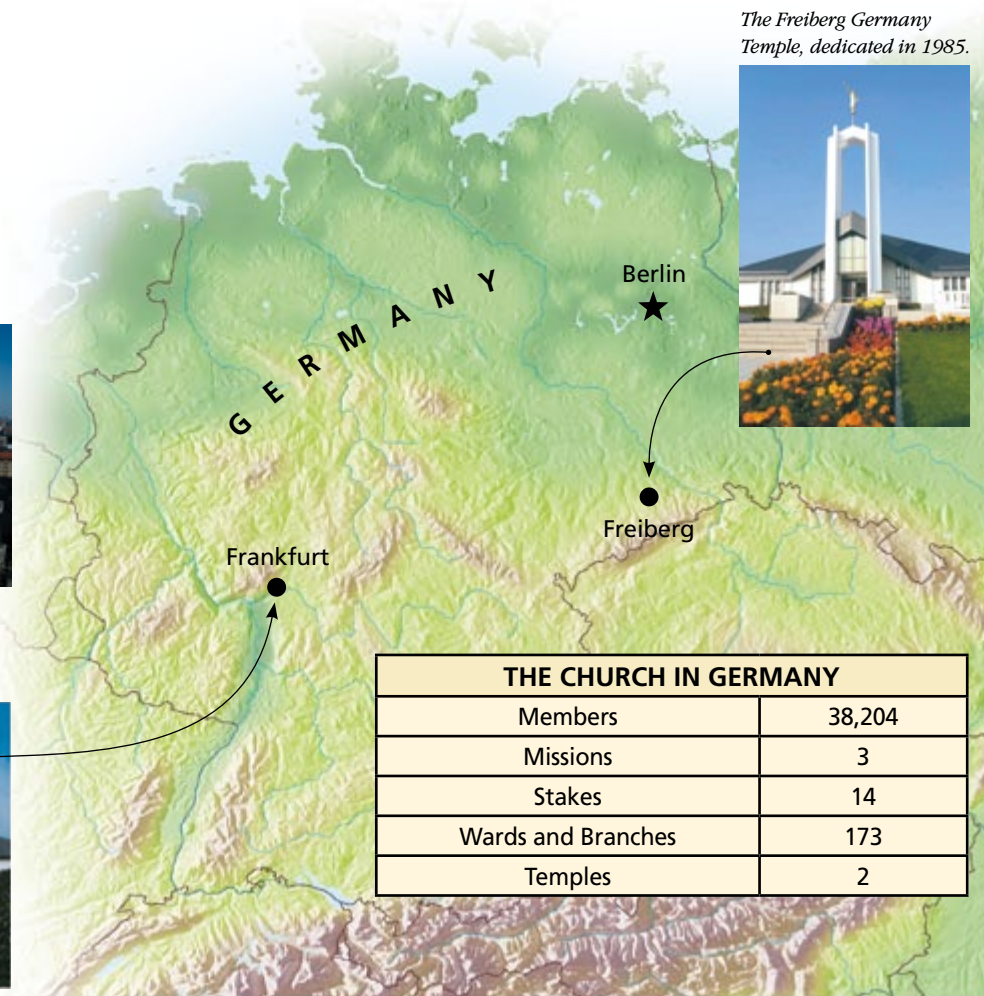


Karl G. Maeser emigrated from his native Germany to Utah, arriving in 1860.

The Freiberg Germany Temple, dedicated in 1985.



Above: A view of Munich, Germany. Below: The Frankfurt Germany Temple, dedicated in 1987.



THE CHURCH IN GERMANY	
Members	38,204
Missions	3
Stakes	14
Wards and Branches	173
Temples	2

The Gospel Comes First

Missionaries found and taught my great-grandfather in Samoa. In joining the Church, my grandfather had to forsake some of the traditional beliefs and religious practices of his people. Our family is proud of our Samoan heritage, but because of my grandfather's example, we have learned that the gospel comes first.

When I was a young man, my dad talked to me about the tribal band tattoos that are common and some of the popular foods that wouldn't necessarily be in harmony with the teachings of the Church. Dad said, "Don't participate in any of that. You're a child of God before you're Samoan, before you're a big, tough guy from the islands." That is something I have always remembered.

Today my wife and I live in Costa Rica. There are traditions and cultural etiquette here, as there are everywhere, that do not align with what the Church teaches. Sometimes we have to have the courage to turn from these practices and to the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Morgan Sa Mataalii, Costa Rica

Create a Profile on Mormon.org

Members of the Church across the world can share the gospel by creating a profile on Mormon.org. Visitors to the site use these profiles to learn about the Church directly from members. Create a profile and share your testimony by following these steps:

1. Visit mormon.org/create. Sign in using your LDS account. If you don't have an LDS account, register for a user name and password by providing your membership record number and date of birth. Find your membership record number on your temple recommend or by contacting your ward or branch membership clerk.
2. Provide information in the following fields: "About Me," "Why I Am a Mormon," "How I Live My Faith," "Frequently Asked Questions," "Personal Stories," and "Additional Information."
3. When creating your profile, keep in mind that you are talking to people who are not members of the Church. Avoid phrases they may not be familiar with. For example, you might say, "I teach a class of adult women once a month from the words of living prophets," instead of, "I serve as the Teachings of Our Time instructor in Relief Society."
4. Provide your picture, first name, and a short introduction. You can also link your profile to your blog, Facebook account, or Twitter account, though this isn't required. Avoid including detailed personal information, such as your last name or city of residence.

Once your profile is complete, it will be sent to moderators for approval. Once the profile is approved, visitors to the site will be able to read your testimony and contact you for more information about the Church.



Presidents of the Church Quiz

Match each item below to the President of the Church with whom it is associated.



1. Sunglasses. Worn by this President of the Church as he traveled to visit settlements throughout the Utah territory.

2. Top hat. This item is indicative of this prophet's renown for refined appearance and behavior.



3. Medal of Distinguished Service. This Church President received this award for his service as Secretary of Agriculture in the cabinet of U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower.

4. Welfare commodity tokens. This President initiated and led the Church welfare program during the Great Depression.

5. Saddle. This prophet loved his horse named Sonny Boy.



6. Journal. This prophet was committed to preserving Church history, and his records are among the most valuable histories of the Church.

7. Photo of BYU Jerusalem Center. This Church President negotiated to obtain land in Jerusalem to build the center.



8. Miniature microphone. This President used this device, mounted on his glasses, because several throat operations treating cancer affected his voice.

A. Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–44)

B. Brigham Young (1801–77)

C. John Taylor (1808–87)

D. Wilford Woodruff (1807–98)

E. Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901)

F. Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918)

G. Heber J. Grant (1856–1945)

H. George Albert Smith (1870–1951)

I. David O. McKay (1873–1970)

J. Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)

K. Harold B. Lee (1899–1973)

L. Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)

M. Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)

N. Howard W. Hunter (1907–95)

O. Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008)

P. Thomas S. Monson (1927–)



9. Cane. This President used a cane in his later years, which he lovingly waved in the air to greet groups of Latter-day Saints.

10. Tithing slip. This President emphasized Joseph Smith's teachings on tithing.

11. *Fiddler on the Roof*. This President loves literature and has quoted this classic on more than one occasion.

12. Typewriter. This President was one of the Church's most prolific writers.



13. Sword. This Church President served as commander of the Nauvoo Legion.

14. Floral lei. This prophet went to Hawaii at age 15 as one of the first Latter-day Saint missionaries there.



15. Pocket watch.

This item was worn by this prophet on the day of the Martyrdom at Carthage Jail.



16. Scouting Silver Buffalo Award. This President was the first major promoter of Scouting in the Church.



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF BYU JERUSALEM CENTER BY D. KELLY OGDEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF CANE BY JOHN LUKE; PHOTOGRAPH OF SILVER BUFFALO AWARD BY CHRISTINA SMITH

BLESSED BY Councils

By Elder M. Russell Ballard

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Some years ago when I was serving as a bishop, a family in our ward experienced a crisis when the father lost his job.

I was concerned about their well-being, and I visited their home to counsel with them and to offer Church assistance. Interestingly, they were reluctant to respond to my offer of temporary assistance, and so I took the matter to the ward council. In a spirit of loving confidentiality, I shared with them my concern for this wonderful family and asked for their ideas as to how we could bless them.

Our Relief Society president volunteered to visit with the mother to ascertain their temporal needs and to work with them in obtaining any commodities they needed—which, of course, was her responsibility according to the program of the Church. Within a couple of days, she had accomplished what I had been unable to accomplish, and the family humbly and gratefully accepted commodity assistance. The elders quorum president counseled with the father of the family—which, of course, was his right and duty—and worked with him on ways to find a job. Our Young Men president noticed that the family’s house was in desperate need of painting, and he arranged for his priests to work with the high priests group to paint the house.

During the course of my conversation with the parents, I discovered that they were

STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO NEED HELP

“Ward council members strive to stay informed about the needs, well-being, and spiritual progress of members in their organizations. They also stay informed about members who face special challenges or changing circumstances. This information allows them to strengthen those who most need their help.”

Handbook 2: Administering the Church (2010), 4.5.1.

Handbook 2 and the November 2010 and February 2011 worldwide leadership training broadcasts are available at LDS.org. Click “Menu” and then “Serving in the Church.”

heavily in debt and were in arrears on their mortgage. Following approved welfare guidelines, I inquired about the ability of their extended family to help but received little information. Our Relief Society president, however, was able to learn that the mother had a brother who was wealthy.

“There’s no reason to contact him,” the mother said. “We haven’t even spoken in years.”

I understood her dilemma, and yet I felt it was important to follow the order of the Church. And so I counseled with her and eventually received her permission to contact her brother, who lived in a distant city. I called him and explained the difficult circumstances in which his younger sister was living. Within three days he arrived in Salt Lake City and helped get his sister’s financial affairs in order. Meanwhile, our elders quorum president helped her husband find a steady job with a good income.

More important, however, was that they were closer and more united as a family. I don’t think I’ll ever forget that tender moment of reunion between the mother and her brother after years of estrangement. Although her brother had become alienated from the Church, there was an immediate spirit-to-spirit bonding. As a result, the brother eventually returned to full activity in the Church and renewed his relationship with his family.

All of this happened because of the inspired work of a faithful ward council functioning according to the program that God has outlined for His children through His servants. ■

From Counseling with Our Councils (1997), 15–17.

He Carried My Sorrows



ADVERSITY CAN LEAD TOWARD GOD

“There are those who have met disaster, which almost seems defeat, who have become somewhat soured in their natures; but if they stop to think, even the adversity which has come to them may prove a means of spiritual uplift. Adversity itself may lead toward and not away from God and spiritual enlightenment.”

President David O. McKay (1873–1970), *Treasures of Life*, comp. Clare Middlemiss (1962), 107–8.

“Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows” (Mosiah 14:4).

By Jane Bleak

I will never forget the summer and fall of 2009. On June 9 my father died after suffering from dementia for over 10 years. On June 25 our 22-year-old son died unexpectedly, and less than a month later, so did my cousin. On August 13 my 82-year-old mother had open-heart surgery and began a lengthy recovery. On October 18 my 41-year-old brother died. On October 31 my husband had a massive heart attack and flat lined for eight minutes. The firefighters, paramedics, and a priesthood blessing brought him back to us.

People often asked me how we handled all of these events. My consistent answer was that we would turn to the Savior, and He cared for us. He did not leave us alone in our trials. I felt ministered to and carried by the heavens. Truly, He “has borne [my] griefs” (Mosiah 14:4).

Comfort also came in the form of family, friends, and members of our ward and stake. They took loving care of us in countless ways. Our 13-year-old granddaughter, Krystal, wrote us a letter after

our son Michael’s death. She reminded us that we were not alone when she wrote, “God is carrying you.” Her letter reminded me of the scripture in Doctrine and Covenants 84:88: “I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up.”

I gained strength by reading a talk by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles titled “Trust in the Lord.” He said: “Just when all seems to be going right, challenges often come in multiple doses applied simultaneously. When those trials are not consequences of your disobedience, they are evidence that the Lord feels you are prepared to grow more. He therefore gives you experiences that stimulate growth, understanding and compassion, which polish you for your everlasting benefit. To get you from where you are to where He wants you to be requires a lot of stretching, and that generally entails discomfort and pain” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 16–17).



In Gethsemane, Jesus Christ set a perfect example of trust when He asked His Father that “if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” But then He said, “Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (see Matthew 26:39–44).

He said that questions such as “Why does this have to happen to me?” or “Why do I have to suffer this now?” lead us into blind alleys. Rather, Elder Scott suggests asking questions like “What am I to learn from this experience?” “Whom am I to help?” and “How can I remember my many blessings in times of trial?”

I have resisted the temptation to ask, “Why?” Instead, I have asked for Heavenly Father’s guidance through my trials. He has blessed me with hope in

the future, helped me to heal my heavy heart, heightened my awareness of the goodness around me, given me opportunities to serve, deepened my compassion for others, and magnified my love for family and friends.

Through it all, I have gained a testimony that our challenge is to surrender our will to our Heavenly Father because only then can we personally be refined and polished in the ways He has specifically designed for each of us. ■

Handling Grief

- We are not left alone in our grief because Jesus Christ—“a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3)—has borne our sorrows as part of the Atonement.
- We can strive to resist the temptation to ask, “Why?” Instead, we can ask for the Lord’s guidance.
- We can accept the challenge to surrender our will to our Heavenly Father.

For more information on this topic, see Proverbs 3:5–6 and Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Sunday Will Come,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 28–30.

WHY CAN WE TRUST IN THE LORD?

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles helps answer this question in his general conference talk “Trust in the Lord” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 16–18).

1. God knows what He is doing. When we pass through trials for His purposes, we can trust Him to help us.
2. God’s plan is to exalt us so we can return to live with Him.¹
3. Overcoming trials is part of that plan. As we do so, we gain strength, understanding, faith, and trust in God.²

Consider sharing Elder Scott’s talk “Trust in the Lord” with someone who is struggling.

NOTES

1. See *Gospel Principles* (2009), 10–11.
2. See *Gospel Principles*, 17–21.

PRIESTHOOD

IS THE AUTHORITY TO ACT IN GOD'S NAME

Our Father in Heaven governs the heavens and the earth. By His eternal power the universe is kept in perfect order. To govern His Church on earth, He delegates a portion of His power and authority to worthy male members of the Church. This delegated authority is called priesthood. We see this pattern of delegated responsibility in the New Testament, when Jesus Christ gave His Apostles the authority to act in His name (see Matthew 16:19).

This is God's pattern of government. It is in place upon the earth today. Those who hold the priesthood are authorized to act in God's name in leading His Church and in administering the sacred ordinances necessary for salvation, such as baptism, confirmation, administration of the sacrament, and temple marriage. Every faithful Latter-day Saint man, woman, and child needs priesthood ordinances and is blessed by receiving them.

Offices of the Priesthood

There are two divisions of the priesthood: Melchizedek and Aaronic. The Melchizedek Priesthood contains greater authority than the Aaronic Priesthood.

Within these two divisions are specific offices, or areas of responsibility. The offices within the Aaronic

Priesthood are deacon, teacher, priest, and bishop. Within the Melchizedek Priesthood, the offices are elder, high priest, patriarch, Seventy, and Apostle. Those who hold these offices are organized into quorums, or groups. Each office has certain duties assigned to it.

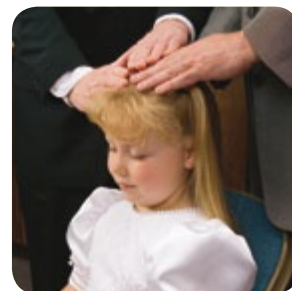
Keys of the Priesthood

The term *keys* refers to the authority to preside over specific Church units or jurisdictions. In stakes and wards, for example, only the stake president, the bishop, and quorum presidents hold priesthood keys. The keys are given by the laying on of hands by a priesthood holder authorized to confer them.

- Presidents of Melchizedek Priesthood quorums receive the keys of presidency and the administration of spiritual things (see D&C 107:10, 18–19).
- Presidents of Aaronic Priesthood quorums receive the keys of the ministering of angels and performing ordinances such as baptism and the sacrament (see D&C 107:20).
- The President of the Church holds all the priesthood keys for the entire Church (see D&C 81:1–2).

The offices and some of the duties of the Melchizedek Priesthood:

1. Elders “confirm those who are baptized into the church, by the laying on of hands for the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost” (D&C 20:41).



The offices and some of the duties of the Aaronic Priesthood:



2. High priests “administer in spiritual things” and have “a right to officiate in” the offices of elder, priest, teacher, and deacon (D&C 107:12).



3. Patriarchs give patriarchal blessings (see D&C 107:53; 124:91–93).



4. Seventies preach the gospel and are special witnesses of Jesus Christ under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (see D&C 107:25, 34).



5. Apostles serve as “special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world” (D&C 107:23).



1. Deacons pass the sacrament.



2. Teachers “watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them” (D&C 20:53).



3. Priests “teach, . . . baptize, and administer the sacrament, and visit the house of each member” (D&C 20:46–47).



4. Bishops are presidents of the priests quorum and, as high priests, preside over all members in a ward (see D&C 107:87–88). ■

“Without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh” (D&C 84:21).

By Mark L. Grover

I never asked God for anything that He didn't then give me," my wife, Deborah, said. This statement still astonishes me even though I was with her throughout its fulfillment. And it probably astonishes all those who know of Deborah's seven-year struggle with systemic lupus, her two-year fight with breast cancer, and her eventual death on September 19, 1990. But those who are amazed and astonished may not understand priesthood blessings or their fulfillment. It was with difficulty that I learned for myself what it means to hold the priesthood and to exercise it to bless others.

Although my parents were both active in the Church and faithful to its precepts, I don't remember the priesthood being a specific spiritual influence in my childhood. I don't recall being sick enough to need a blessing and have no memory of priesthood blessings administered to others in my family.

This lack of emphasis on priesthood blessings carried over into my own family when I married and my wife and

of my uneasiness about giving blessings and seldom asked for the additional spiritual help she may have desired.

In March 1989, when the doctor announced that my wife had cancer, our lives were altered. Because of the exotic nature of her cancer, it had eluded physicians for two years. By the time it was finally diagnosed, it had spread and her chance for recovery had significantly diminished. Knowing we were in a struggle we could not win on our own, we further opened our lives to spiritual help. Our ward fasted for Deborah, and we gratefully accepted the care of the Relief Society. Her battle became one fought by many. A friend who had endured the same chemotherapy my wife was about to receive confided that during the most difficult periods of the treatment, he had requested and received priesthood blessings. He advised us to do the same—to seek spiritual help in order to tolerate the effects of the treatments.

The chemotherapy was difficult. My wife experienced all the expected reactions. She was sick for several days after

Priesthood Blessings

LEARNING TO TRUST IN GOD

I had children. I gave priesthood blessings if someone was seriously ill or was having an operation. I also gave my wife a few blessings for emotional help, but those occasions were rare.

Giving a blessing was always a positive experience for me. But a lack of understanding and a shortage of self-confidence limited my exercise of this priesthood function. I struggled to know the words to say, unsure if what came into my mind was really what God wanted.

This situation changed little when my wife discovered she was suffering from systemic lupus. Those years of battling a disease of exhaustion and discomfort were aided by only occasional priesthood blessings. My wife was aware

a treatment. She spent most days in bed, and eating was a chore. But little by little we learned how to confront each challenge as well as possible.

During this difficult period, my wife, as our friend had advised, called on me for priesthood blessings. I gave her a blessing to help ease the anxiety she experienced the first week of chemo. Through a priesthood blessing, the fear accompanying an operation—though not completely eliminated—decreased. Long periods of vomiting stopped and sleep replaced restless nights as I laid my hands on her head and blessed her. These blessings gave us promises of help and comfort, intermingled with glimpses of the future. They filled us with warmth and joy.

*Every blessing
was fulfilled—
even though we
didn't get what
we desired
most.*



I wish I could say that giving blessings became easier for me then, but I can't. I gave the requested blessings, but my difficulty in exercising the priesthood persisted. I never mentioned my discomfort to my wife, but she could sense my reluctance. However, these were difficult trials, and she knew she was entitled to help and I was the conduit through which she could receive it. So when she needed help, she asked.



IN HARMONY WITH HIS WILL

"As we exercise the undoubted power of the priesthood of God and as we treasure His promise that He will hear and answer the prayer of faith, we must always remember that faith

and the healing power of the priesthood cannot produce a result contrary to the will of Him whose priesthood it is. This principle is taught in the revelation directing that the elders of the Church shall lay their hands upon the sick. The Lord's promise is that 'he that hath faith in me to be healed, *and is not appointed unto death*, shall be healed' (D&C 42:48; emphasis added)."

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Healing the Sick," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 50.

Before giving any blessing, I knew what I wanted to bless her with: I wanted more than anything to bless her to be healed. And she wanted that too. But that blessing never came. What did come were blessings of comfort, which didn't take the trial away but made it easier to bear.

Slowly I began to understand better how the priesthood and priesthood blessings work. Giving blessings wasn't a tool to get what I wanted but rather a way to receive needed help. I learned to trust in the Lord and His will instead of what I thought needed to be done. I gained confidence that the words that came to my mind were indeed the words God wanted me to say. And while giving blessings has never become easy for me, I have learned to trust in the feelings I have while giving blessings.

After Deborah completed her treatments, we began

the difficult phase of waiting to see if the drugs had been effective. We enjoyed this time free of doctor's appointments, tests, and treatments. However, in the back of our minds was the fear that some cancer had been able to survive the onslaught of the poisonous anticancer drugs and was reestablishing itself.

Little by little, small physical signs convinced us of our greatest fear: the treatments had not been successful. The doctors were upbeat, but we knew it was a matter of time.

The last six months of Deborah's life were incredibly calm. After one last procedure failed, we decided to discontinue the treatments and to go home and enjoy what time was left. Some may not believe that it was a wonderful few months, but it was the best time of my life.

During this period some concerned friends and family suggested that we needed to be more assertive with the Lord in our battle to save her life. They told me that I had the priesthood and should use it to cure her. Though I understood their feelings, these friends didn't understand what was happening. There was nothing I wanted more than to promise Deborah life, but those words never came while I was giving her a blessing. There was little she would have desired more than to have a blessing of health, but she never felt she should ask. We both believed in miracles but also recognized our limited perspective on an experience that fits into an eternal plan.

What did happen was a greater miracle. In the blessings, she was never promised life but was given the indisputable assurance that what was happening was God's will. She was not promised ease but was given help to endure the difficult times. She was not allowed to stay and raise our children but was assured of eternal bonds. She passed away with only limited pain and discomfort, with her family at her side.

I know that God does exist and deeply cares for us. He provides us with comfort and assistance when we need strength and understanding. Though life is difficult, the Lord has promised to help us through our trials, and one way help comes is through priesthood blessings. Knowing this, my wife was able to say, "I never asked God for anything that He didn't then give me." ■

The Power of a Righteous Example

By Jerry Stringam

In April 1992 my family and I were living in Provo, Utah, where we had moved from Canada so I could complete a degree in engineering at Brigham Young University. My son Jase, who was 17, had become friends with a young woman named Krista.

On the Saturday evening of general conference weekend, Jase came into the living room and asked if he could borrow the car to take Krista out for a milk shake. I tossed him the keys, and he went into the kitchen to call her. I could hear one side of the conversation, which went like this:

“Hi, Krista,
it’s me, Jase.

I was wondering if you would like to go out for a milk shake.” **Silence.**

“You mean after priesthood meeting?
Well, OK,
I’ll call you then.
See ya.”

Jase hung up the phone and came back into the living room.

“So are you going out with her?” I asked.

“She said she would like to go,” he replied, “but she told me to call her back after I get home from the priesthood session.” With a dejected look on his face, he slunk off to his room.

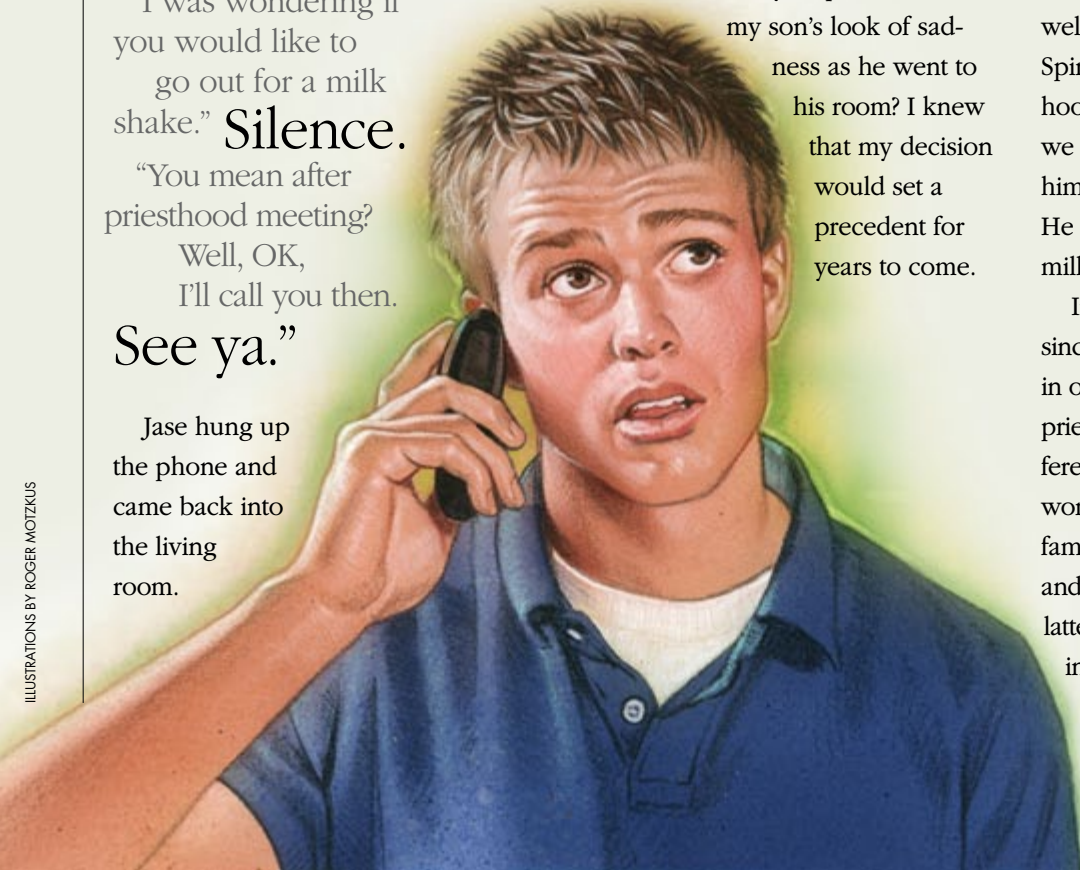
Something hit me like a ton of bricks. I had grown up in southern Alberta, nearly 80 miles (130 km) from the stake center. No one had expected me or even my parents, who had leadership positions in our branch, to show up for conference sessions, let alone the priesthood session. Now someone was counting on it.

What would my response be to my son’s look of sadness as he went to his room? I knew that my decision would set a precedent for years to come.

I got up from my chair and called down the hall to Jase and my second son, a newly ordained deacon, “Change your clothes. We have 10 minutes to get to the priesthood session at the stake center.” I hurried to get ready, and when I came out of my bedroom, both boys were ready, and we headed for the car.

I don’t remember the talks very well, but I remember that we felt the Spirit. It felt good to be at the priesthood session with my sons. When we came home, Jase felt good about himself, which made me feel good. He called Krista, and they went to get milk shakes.

In the two decades that have passed since that day, the priesthood holders in our family have not missed a single priesthood session of general conference. Because a righteous young woman stood up for her beliefs, our family had the opportunity to change, and we continue to hear the words of latter-day prophets and feel the Spirit in the priesthood session of general conference. ■



The Latter-day Saint Concept of Marriage



Hugh B. Brown was born on October 24, 1883, in Granger, Utah. He was ordained an Apostle in 1958. He served as a counselor to President David O. McKay for eight years. The following article is an excerpt from his book *You and Your Marriage*.

By President Hugh B. Brown (1883–1975)

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Marriage is and should be a sacrament. The word *sacrament* is variously defined, but among Christian people it signifies a religious act or ceremony, solemnized by one having proper authority. It is a pledge, or solemn covenant, a spiritual sign or bond between the contracting parties themselves and between them and God. That marriage was instituted and sanctified by the Lord Himself is shown by the following quotations:

“And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. . . .

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and

shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:18, 24).

When Jesus departed from Galilee and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan, a great multitude followed Him, and the Pharisees questioned Him regarding divorce.

“And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

“And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined

together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4–6).

Marriage Fulfills God’s Purposes

It is plain that God intended that man and woman should become one. By personally officiating at this first wedding, He sanctified the institution of marriage. It is a normal, healthful, and desirable state and was instituted to fulfill God’s purpose in the earth.

It is the central element in the domestic establishment. It is more than a human institution to be regulated solely by custom and civil law. It is more than a contract under the sanction of moral law. It is or should be a religious sacrament by which men and women solemnly undertake to cooperate with God in His avowed purpose to make earth life and mortality available to His spirit children and to bring to pass their immortality and eternal life.

There are those who say that the highest, most dedicated, and most desirable life may be achieved outside the marriage covenant. In other words, they would forbid those who seek the highest glory to be “contaminated by physical and animal-like associations.” There



is no warrant in the scripture for such doctrine. In the book of Proverbs we read, “Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord” (Proverbs 18:22). . . .

And in the Doctrine and Covenants we read, “And again, verily I say unto you, that whoso forbiddeth to marry is not ordained of God, for marriage is ordained of God unto man” (D&C 49:15).

Temple Marriage Brings True Happiness

The Latter-day Saints believe that in order to attain the best in life and the greatest happiness in this world and for the next, men and women must be married in the temple for time and eternity. Without the sealing ordinances of temple marriage,

man cannot achieve a godlike stature or receive a fulness of joy. . . .

To a Latter-day Saint, there is only one kind of marriage that is wholly acceptable: temple or celestial marriage, which is performed only in the temples of the Church. Temples are erected and dedicated in holiness to the Lord to provide a place where spiritual and eternal ceremonies and ordinances may be performed. While we recognize civil marriages performed by ministers of other churches and civil marriages performed by officers of the law or others legally qualified to perform them, we believe that only in a temple of God can a marriage for time and eternity be performed and then only by one having the authority which Christ gave to Peter when

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

This authority is referred to in the scriptures as “the keys of the

kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 16:19), and in celestial marriage those keys open the door to that kingdom.

Needs Are Fully Realized

Man has certain basic needs—moral, social, biological, and spiritual—and these can only be fully realized in the God-ordained institution of eternal marriage.

To live the abundant life here and eternal life hereafter, man must love and be loved, serve

Latter-day Saints believe that in order to attain the best in life and the greatest happiness in this world and for the next, men and women must be married in the temple.



blessings are intended to continue throughout the eternities to come. But to enjoy the privileges and advantages of eternal love as it relates to husbands and wives, parents and children, the ordinance that authorizes and sanctifies this most beautiful of all relationships is not acceptable if it contains the limitation “until death do you part.” For family relationships and conjugal associations to be eternal, the marriage contract must

authoritatively state, “for time and for all eternity.”

All people should realize their responsibility to their offspring and to the covenants they make with respect thereto. When the Lord said, “We without them cannot be made perfect” (D&C 128:18), He was referring to a chain whose links extend into the future as well as the past. In fact, we may

have more direct responsibility for those entrusted to us in this life than to our ancestors. We cannot be held responsible for the sins, either of commission or of omission, of our ancestors, but He has warned that in case of failure on the part of our

Latter-day Saints believe that God is actually the third partner in this marriage relationship and that bringing children into the world within the divinely sanctioned institution of marriage is part of His plan.

and sacrifice, have responsibility and exercise his God-given creative powers. “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

But perhaps the greatest value of marriage is not that which accrues to the individual man and woman. The purpose of their union in the beginning is indicated by the Lord’s commandment: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28). In proper marriage, there is opportunity for man to realize his natural urge to be creative and productive. This can be completely fulfilled and properly enjoyed only in the marriage relationship, in child bearing and child rearing. Parents should remember that the children born to them—their children—are also the children of God. He is the Father of their spirit bodies, and during the pre-earth existence He wisely made provision

for eternal element and eternal spirit to be inseparably connected and receive a fulness of joy. Latter-day Saints therefore believe that God is actually the third partner in this relationship and that bringing children into the world within the divinely sanctioned institution of marriage is part of His plan to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

The Eternal Nature of Marriage

When the Lord Jesus designated love of God and love of fellowmen as the two great commandments, He glorified love. In fact, we are told that God is love. Therefore, as God is eternal, so love must be eternal, and its fruits and



posterity, if it can be attributed to our failure in our duty to them, then the sins will be upon our heads.

Among the blessings of those who attain the highest degree in the celestial kingdom is the blessing of eternal increase, which, among other things, means that even after death men may continue to cooperate with God in bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

Progressing as Eternal Companions

The Latter-day Saint concept of eternal progression includes eternal development, eternal increase of knowledge, power, intelligence, awareness, and all the characteristics and capacities that make for godhood. But in the economy of God, man cannot attain this state of continuing perfection in his unfinished or unmarried state. There must be growth and increase of the whole man—in other words, the man who has found and been united to his other half.

This concept of marriage, with its divine perspective, gives new meaning and adds importance, dignity, and glory to the idea of marriage. With this concept the thoughtful person will be more careful and selective in the choice of his eternal companion. Certainly before entering into such an eternal contract, both men and women should be humble and thoughtful and should prayerfully seek for divine guidance.

The religious sanctity and sanction of the marriage relationship [are] greatly enhanced and appreciated where the couple, before marriage—and they must, necessarily, be of the same faith—start with the same goal in mind. They must prepare and be worthy to receive the sacred ordinance in edifices where only the worthy may enter. Here they receive instruction, make covenants, and then at the altar pledge eternal love and fidelity, each for the other, in the presence of

God and of angels. Surely such a concept and practice, with its accompanying obligations, makes for the permanence of the home, the glorifying of the institution of marriage, and the salvation of the souls of men.

An Act of Faith

Such marriage is essentially an act of faith, solemnized in the presence of a divine partner. There must be faith and courage to see it through, to endure to the end, despite the difficulties, trials, disappointments, and occasional bereavements which may be encountered.

When one accepts the conditions and obligations of this eternal partnership, he must realize that failure here is almost total failure. Whatever his successes may be in other fields of activity, if a man fails to discharge the obligations imposed by the eternal covenant, the appalling penalty will be the loss of celestial glory, accompanied by responsibility for the losses sustained by those with whom he made the contract and for whom he is responsible.

“Marriage is ordained of God unto man.

“Wherefore, it is lawful that he should have one wife, and they twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might

answer the end of its creation;

“And that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made” (D&C 49:15–17). ■

Subheads added; punctuation and capitalization standardized.



NO BLESSINGS WITHHELD

“What of the many mature members of the Church

who are not married? Through no failing of their own, they deal with the trials of life alone. Be we all reminded that, in the Lord’s own way and time, no blessings will be withheld from His faithful Saints. The Lord will judge and reward each individual according to heartfelt desire as well as deed.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Celestial Marriage,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 94.



I DESPERATELY
WANTED TO
STOP

Name withheld

How I am overcoming my addiction to pornography.

My struggle with pornography began during my youth, when others introduced me to inappropriate materials and behaviors. The gospel was not a major part of my life then. Although my family had attended church through my Primary years, by the time I was 13 or 14, we stopped going altogether. As a result, the teachings of the gospel did not really play a role in my decision making.

It never occurred to me to tell my parents what neighbors and so-called friends were introducing me to. I was too embarrassed to bring up what I had seen and experienced. I had no idea how to deal with it. For decades to come, my pornography addiction would remain my secret.

Influence of the Gospel

Shortly before I graduated from high school, a seemingly small miracle happened, an event that would turn my life in another direction. Despite the distance between my actions and gospel standards, one Sunday morning I followed a strong prompting to go to church and pay tithing. When I arrived at the chapel, I asked for people I knew. One of the names I gave was the Young Men president I had when I was a deacon, the last time I had attended church. He was now serving as bishop of the ward.

That good bishop helped bring me back into the Church. I confessed my sins, and he worked with me to set up a progress plan. Over several months I

repented. I advanced in the priesthood. I held a calling. I was doing so well, in fact, that I was called to serve a mission, and I had a period of several years when my addiction was under control.

Caught in the Net

When I returned home from my mission, I did not struggle with pornography; I simply did not have access to it. That changed in the late 1990s, when the Internet became increasingly pervasive. I accidentally stumbled across some pornographic images online, and I returned to pornographic sites over and over again during the following months. The web had ensnared me.

I wanted to reach out to someone for help, but I wasn't sure whom—or how. How could I talk to my parents about this? How could I admit to my bishop that even though I had made so much progress, I couldn't stop engaging in this immoral behavior? I desperately wanted to stop, but I was too embarrassed by my weakness to confide in anyone, so I kept my addiction to myself.

I didn't even tell my wife, whom I married in 2000. I wanted to tell her about my struggle when we were dating, but I was terrified that she would look down on me or, worse yet, refuse to marry me. So I lied. And I continued to do so in our marriage. I found myself being sneaky to prevent being caught. I hid pictures on my computer. When my wife asked me about particular Internet links, I denied knowing what she was talking about. Addictions

are like that; they create great liars. I knew it was creating a wedge in our marriage and causing her great pain, but I would not acknowledge that I had a problem. What mattered most to me was not my behavior but how people perceived me.

My double life—and the resulting loss of the Spirit—made me vulnerable to increasingly serious sins, including infidelity. My wife had strong impressions that something was wrong and told me about them. With great remorse, I admitted to what I had done.

That was my lowest point, the point at which I realized that *I had to change*. Sitting across from me was the woman I loved. She loved me. I had betrayed her. I determined then to do whatever it took to save our relationship and our family.

Recovery

I began meeting with my bishop regularly in working through the repentance process and Church discipline. He recommended I attend meetings of the addiction recovery program, offered through LDS Family Services. I had never heard of the program. I learned that the group held free, confidential meetings based on the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, adapted into a framework of the doctrines and principles of the Church.

I admit that during the first few meetings, I thought, "I don't need to be here. I don't really have a problem with pornography. I can quit any time." That, of course, wasn't true.

DELIVERANCE: ONLY IN GOD



“Are you struggling with some sin or weakness? It can be something as simple as not having the willpower to rise in the morning early

enough to have time for scripture study and prayer. It can be something so powerful, such as Internet pornography or lack of moral self-control, that you feel you have been pulled down into an abyss and there is no hope for you. Do you find yourself hating what you are doing but not able to find the willpower to turn away from it? Then reach out and humble yourself. The Lord’s enabling power is sufficient to change your heart, to turn your life, to purge your soul. But you must make the first move, which is to humble yourself and realize that only in God can you find deliverance.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Be Strong in the Lord,” *Ensign*, July 2004, 12.

With my bishop’s encouragement, I continued to attend. My pride began to melt away, and I began to work the steps of the program: honesty, hope, trust in God, truth, confession, change of heart, humility, seeking forgiveness, restitution and reconciliation, daily accountability, personal revelation, and service. For the first time in a long time, I was living a “sober” life, a life free of pornography. Recovery isn’t ever really “over,” but I had been introduced to a new level of freedom. It came because as I participated in the 12 steps, I came to understand what was behind my addiction.

I learned that most people battling addictions have turned to some kind of “self-medication” to fill the voids they feel in their lives. Pain, sorrow, loneliness, fear, or other kinds of discomfort can act as triggers that can entice people to use this self-medication to make them feel better. Some people use prescription drugs. Others use illicit drugs. Others use alcohol. For me, pornography offered the short-term, artificial “quick fix” I thought I needed.

Knowing what triggered my addiction was one thing. Avoiding environments that aided my addiction was another. This stance requires being vigilant 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the rest of my life. I cannot get online “just to browse.” In fact, if I am by myself, I don’t go online at all. I can’t look at an ad and entertain thoughts in my mind. We don’t have cable TV in our home. When I commute to work, I avoid taking certain roads because I know there are billboards along those roads that could trigger inappropriate thoughts. If I start to slip and my mind begins to wander, I turn to my wife, to my bishop, and to prayer for strength.

My addiction affects the most minute parts of my life, but taking these precautions is worth it. I cannot neglect these defenses because I know what my addiction can do to me and to those I love.

Reliance on Deity

It’s not just a matter of avoiding the bad, though. I also must make

constant, conscious efforts to turn to the good. Several of the 12 steps have helped me do this by bringing me closer to God.

Every day when I wake up, I get on my knees and thank Heavenly Father for giving me the opportunity to repent of my sins and to come to Him through the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ. I ask Him to let me know His will so that I can do it. I ask Him to lead me away from temptation. I pray as though I rely on Heavenly Father every minute of the day—because I do—and I keep that prayer in my heart throughout the day. I pray again each night. I also spend some time in the scriptures daily so that I can focus my thoughts on virtuous things. If I don’t make these a habit, I don’t have the Spirit in my life. And left on my own, I am not strong enough to resist temptation.

For a long time I believed I could overcome my behavior anytime I wanted to by my own willpower. But I failed miserably. After a while I got tired of doing it on my own, especially when “on my own” wasn’t working. I realized that I could not do what I needed to do without the Lord’s help. Ether 12:27 helped me understand this better. The Lord told Moroni, “My grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.”

Once I went to Him, still doing all I could do (see 2 Nephi 25:23), I realized that I could do much better and

become much more with His help than I ever could dream of by relying on my own merits (see Alma 7:14).

My wife and I now serve as facilitators at the addiction recovery program meetings. She has learned—and is helping others understand—that the Atonement is for not only those who are working to overcome an addiction but also those who have been affected by the addiction through no choice of their own. If we turn to the Savior, His grace can work in all of our lives.

To those who are battling addiction and to the people they love, I can attest that there is hope. There is always hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Hope in the Savior

I am deeply grateful to Jesus Christ because He literally saved me from the chains of sin. Addiction is like being held by chains that “bind the children of men, that they are carried away captive down to the eternal gulf of misery and woe” (2 Nephi 1:13). When I realized I was in trouble, I didn’t know where to turn. I was desperate because I could not free myself from my predicament. But the Lord could free me. When I turned to Him, He was there to help.

I can relate with Ammon: “Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things” (Alma 26:12). I know that God *can* help us do all things, including overcoming the chains of addiction. ■



HELP IN OVERCOMING PORNOGRAPHY

The *addiction recovery program*, offered through LDS Family Services, includes free, confidential support meetings for people dealing with addictions to alcohol, drugs (both prescription and illegal), tobacco, coffee or tea, pornography, inappropriate sexual behavior, gambling, codependency, and eating disorders. To find a meeting near you, visit www.ldsfamilyservices.org. Your priesthood leader may also have information about nearby meetings.

Even if you cannot attend one of the meetings, you may benefit from the program study guide. *Addiction Recovery Program: A Guide to Addiction Recovery and Healing* (item no. 36764) is available in many languages from Distribution Services or as a PDF at www.recoveryworkbook.lds.org.

CombatingPornography.org is a Church-sponsored website offering help for individuals facing addiction. It can also help their spouses, parents, and priesthood leaders.

Let Virtue Garnish Thy Thoughts (item no. 00460) is a booklet designed to help those struggling with pornography. It discusses how to recognize destructive media, resist and avoid the temptation of pornography, and abandon pornography addictions. It also lists scriptures and other Church resources on repentance, the sanctity of the body, and overcoming worldly influences. Church leaders and family members can share the booklet with loved ones struggling with pornography. The booklet is available from Distribution Services in many languages. It is also available in American Sign Language on DVD.

Other talks and articles on this topic are listed at www.liahona.lds.org.

THE TRUE PATH TO Happiness

As we pursue the true path to happiness in our families and professions, I pray we will use our knowledge and influence to bring greater righteousness, peace, understanding, and freedom to people all over the world.

The recipe for “the good life” has been debated for centuries. When the Apostle Paul was in Athens on Mars Hill, he encountered “philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks” (Acts 17:18). The Stoics believed that the highest good was virtue, while the Epicureans believed that the highest good was pleasure. Many Stoics had become proud and used the philosophy as “a cloak for . . . ambition and iniquity.” Many Epicureans had become hedonists who took as their motto “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.”¹

Many in the academic world have long pointed to Aristotle’s advocacy of “intellectual contemplation” as a blueprint for “the good life.” A reviewer writing in the *New York Times Book Review* asserted that modern philosophers “have concluded that there is no single right balance of elements that constitutes ‘the good life for man.’”²

An article in the *New York Times* asserted, “Marital happiness is far more important than anything else in determining personal well-being.” The author challenged colleges

to spend less time “preparing students for careers” and more time “preparing them to make social decisions.”³

As I read these statements, I reflected on what the Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God.”⁴

In the spirit of the statement in the *New York Times* about marriage and the Prophet’s optimistic declaration, I am confident that we can have the happiness that we desire and that God wants for us. What must we do to attain it?

Be Grateful for Your Heritage

Always be grateful for your blessings, especially your heritage. When we are blessed with goodly parents, we should be grateful. This is the debt each of us owes for our heritage.

An old Chinese proverb reads, “When you drink the water, don’t forget the well from whence it sprung.” It is clear from the



**By Elder
Quentin L. Cook**
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

scriptures that we are to honor our parents. A proverb reads, “My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother” (Proverbs 6:20). The great German philosopher Goethe put it this way:

*What from your fathers’ heritage is lent,
Earn it anew, to really possess it!*⁵

It is clear that we need to be grateful for our parents and take positive action to acquire that

which they would hope to bestow upon us. This is a step toward personal happiness.

Commit Yourself to the Family

Second, commit yourself to the eternal institution of the family as the foundation for happiness. In the world at large, many are choosing not to get married or are delaying marriage. The family is an eternal institution ordained of God from before the foundation



I assure you that the joy, love, and fulfillment experienced in loving, righteous families produce the greatest possible happiness we can achieve.



of the world. Most people will marry and be blessed with children. There is no greater blessing in this life than having children. Some of the most poignant passages in all of scripture capture the sublime significance of children in our Heavenly Father's plan. They are truly "an heritage of the Lord" (Psalm 127:3).

When I was in my 20s, President David O. McKay (1873–1970) gave a prophetic message about marriage and children. He was 95 years old and in the last year of his life. He taught that the pure love between a man and a woman "is one of the noblest things on earth, and the bearing and rearing of children the highest of all human duties."⁶

President McKay then shared his concern about the increasing acceptance of divorce. In 1969 California was the first state in the United States that allowed what has been called "no-fault divorce." Prior to that time, there had to be a reason for the termination of a marriage,

such as infidelity or other extreme conditions. President McKay was obviously concerned that the institution of marriage was in trouble. He stated, "The increasing divorce rate in the United States today is a threatening menace to this nation's greatness."⁷

When we look back at what President McKay taught, it was truly prophetic. The current editor-in-chief of *U.S. News and World Report* has chronicled the history and consequences that have occurred since then. He reports that "divorce rates have more than doubled since the 1960s," and births to unwed mothers "have risen from 5 percent in 1960 to about 35 percent today." He explains the results and the adverse impact on children. He makes it clear that "the stable family of two biological parents . . . turns out to be the ideal vessel for molding character, for nurturing, for inculcating values, and for planning for a child's future."⁸

The *New York Times* article concludes, “Modern societies . . . have an affinity for material concerns and a primordial fear of moral and social ones” and, as a result, they have a “spiritual blind side.”⁹ Isn’t this what President McKay prophesied?

Let me assure you that the vast majority of marriages between faithful members of the Church are happy and successful. For those not yet married, you should move forward with faith and confidence toward the ultimate goal of marriage and family. I would counsel you to find a righteous spouse

whom you admire and who will be your best friend. I assure you that the joy, love, and fulfillment experienced in loving, righteous families produce the greatest possible happiness we can achieve. That happiness is the foundation for a successful society. Those who are righteous and are not able to accomplish this goal are entitled to every blessing that our Father in Heaven has for His children.

Be Involved in a Positive Way

Third, be involved in the world in a positive way and be a powerful

force for good. A significant challenge is to adhere to the scriptural injunction to live in the world but not of the world (see John 17). President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972), as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught that though we are in the world, “we are not of the world in the sense that we are under any necessity to partake of . . . evil customs, . . . fashions, . . . follies, false doctrines and theories.”¹⁰ In addition, your contribution to the place where you live is part of your challenge to be an example, share



the gospel, and live according to the truths you have been taught by parents and prophets.

To accomplish this challenge, you will want and need to be involved in the world in a positive way. We must be tried and tested and found worthy of a greater kingdom. As President Thomas S. Monson has taught, “Decisions determine destiny.”¹¹

This is not an easy life; it was not meant to be. Nevertheless, we know that the Lord will cause our trials to bless us and be for our good. He will give us the strength to stand firm despite opposition. Righteousness is its own reward, and the scriptures promise us that the reward for righteousness is “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23). I counsel you to be involved in the world in a positive way.

Live and Communicate Your Standards

Fourth, live and communicate your standards to those you interact with. Challenges will come to many of you as you seek employment. You will need to be wise. My recommendation would be to let potential employers know you have high ethical and moral standards, including a commitment to your family.

I learned the significance of this early in my career. After finishing my education at Stanford Law School, I focused on working for a particular law firm. No members of the Church were

associated with the firm, but its lawyers were individuals of character and ability. After a morning of interviews, the most senior partner and two other partners took me to lunch. The senior partner inquired if I would like a pre-lunch alcoholic drink and later if I would like wine. In both cases I declined. And the second time, I informed him that I was an active Latter-day Saint and did not drink alcoholic beverages.

I received an offer of employment from the firm, and a few months later the senior partner told me that the offer of alcoholic beverages was a test. He noted that my résumé made it clear that I had served a Latter-day Saint mission. He had determined that he would hire me only if I was true to the teachings of my own church. He considered it a significant matter of character and integrity.

In my years in San Francisco, California, USA, I knew some members who avoided letting their associates know they were Latter-day Saints. Invariably, they were drawn into compromising situations that could have been avoided had they forthrightly declared what they believed.

Be a Light

Finally, be a light to the people where you live. When my wife and I were starting out as a newly married couple in the San Francisco Bay Area in the mid-1960s, the Latter-day Saint population was relatively small. In addition, the San Francisco Bay Area had become a magnet for drug abuse

and all manner of promiscuous and sinful conduct. A concerned stake president back then asked the leadership of the Church if leaders should encourage Church members to remain in the San Francisco Bay Area.

President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973), then a senior member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was assigned to address the issue. He met with a group of priesthood leaders and told them that the Lord had not inspired the construction of a temple in our area only to have the members leave. His counsel was to:

1. Create Zion in our hearts and homes.
2. Be a light to those among whom we live.
3. Focus on the ordinances and principles taught in the temple.

If we will follow President Lee’s counsel today, we can successfully be in the world but not of the world. However, we must each determine whether we will look to the world or focus on the temple.

Over our lifetime we will face many worldly challenges. One of these challenges is that we will find that the Church and its teachings are not understood and are sometimes misrepresented. A few years ago Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles called on Church members to let their voices be heard in defending the faith and correcting false information. He pointed out that it is particularly important for us to participate in the “‘new media,’ made

possible by the Internet.”¹² In a world with diverse communications and with members spread all over the globe, there is a need for Latter-day Saints to respond to and defend against irresponsible and inaccurate descriptions of the Church when they occur. We are grateful for what has transpired since Elder Ballard’s article, and I reiterate his challenge.

I am confident that we can attain the happiness we desire and that God wants for us. It is my prayer that as we pursue the true path to happiness in our families and professions, we will use our knowledge and influence to bring greater righteousness, peace, understanding, and freedom to people all over the world. ■

From an address delivered at Brigham Young University–Hawaii on April 10, 2010. For the full text in English, visit <http://devotional.byuh.edu/node/416>.

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Be involved in the world in a positive way and be a powerful force for good.

SAILING SAFELY HOME

By Richard M. Romney

Church Magazines



Though the seas of life may be rough at times, Latter-day Saint teens in Visakhapatnam, India, know that the harbor of home is a haven of peace.

Pictures on the Wall

Two of those Latter-day Saint teens, Naga Bushan Ratnam and Pavani Kotala Ratnam, live with their parents in a small apartment far from town but near the steel mill where their father works. You can tell by the pictures in the apartment what the priorities are. Family photos fill a bookshelf near the front door, and in the sleeping area, pictures of the Savior, the temple, and the First Presidency adorn the walls.

“When I wake up, those pictures are the first things I see,” Pavani says. “When I go to sleep at night, they are the last things I see.”

Pavani believes we all can create havens of peace in our homes. “That’s why I keep things clean,” she says. “That’s one way to make it comfortable for the Spirit to be here.” And at school, “I always have *For the Strength of Youth* in my book bag, so whenever I take up a book, I keep seeing it.”

Naga finds that conversations with his sister bring him peace. “Of course we talk to our parents and seek their counsel on many things,” he says. “Our father is the district president, so we talk with him all the time both officially and unofficially. And we love to talk with our mother. But there’s something special about being able

Every day the fishermen of Visakhapatnam, India, sail out to sea. Most days the waves are gentle, the ocean is kind, and the boats return laden with fish. Occasionally, however, the waters turn rough. Skies darken, menacing waves rise, and the fishermen rejoice just to return safely to their harbor.

Every day the Latter-day Saint youth of Visakhapatnam set out into the world. Most days life treats them well. They gain knowledge, make friends, and return home filled with the joy of life. Occasionally, however, the world turns rough. Discouragement pounds like waves, temptation towers tall, and doubt darkens the spiritual sky. On those days they rejoice as they return safely to their havens of peace, harbors they call home.





Church and family provide safe harbors for the Ratnam family (previous page) and for (clockwise from top left) Sujith, Sandeep, and Hepsiba Batha; Pavani and Naga Ratnam; the Butty family; and other youth from Visakhapatnam, which has three branches.

travel—all four of them—40 kilometers (25 miles) each way on a single motorbike just to get to their meetings. They talk about prayers of faith for Pavani when she was sick on the day Dad was baptized, about the priesthood blessing Dad gave to seriously ill Naga during school exams, and about the way Dad always counsels with Mom, with them, and in prayer with Heavenly Father when making major decisions.

“I have seen positive changes as our family has grown in the gospel,” Pavani says. “My parents’ example and my brother’s example have guided me as the youngest of the family. I know that Jesus Christ has helped me through every part of my life. I have people around me who help me and love me, and I have the Savior’s love. That love is more important to me than anything else.”

Such love was evident when the family traveled to the Hong Kong China Temple to be sealed. On earth, Naga says, the temple is the safest harbor of all: “It is a place of holiness. Just thinking about it brings holiness into our home.” And that makes the Ratnams’ apartment a joyous place to be.

Scripture Safety

Hepsiba, Sandeep, and Sujith Batha, who live with their parents in downtown Visak (as locals call the city), say the scriptures are an anchor in their harbor of peace. “By reading the scriptures, we invite the Spirit to guide us in the correct path, to take good decisions in our lives,” Hepsiba says. “We also invite the Spirit into our home when we have family home evening and family prayer.”

In fact, Sandeep says, his mother reminds them “to pray every day while going out and coming in. When she says, ‘Please be thankful,’ that makes me want to be thankful for everything.”

to share with my sister.” When Naga gets upset, Pavani calms him down. Naga is somewhat reserved, so Pavani helps him to be more outgoing.

“But most of all, we strengthen each other in keeping the standards,” Naga says. For example, Pavani will ask Naga for advice about modest clothing. “If he doesn’t think it’s up to Church standards, I won’t wear it,” she says. And they often talk about giving service, both in the Church and in the community. Such discussion is partially responsible for Naga’s dream to someday be a cardiologist (heart doctor). “I want my career to be another way of giving service,” he says.

The Ratnam teens explain that having the priesthood in their home also adds to their family’s well-being. They reminisce about how their father led the rest of them into the Church eight years ago, even when they had to

Sujith says that in addition to their home, another place of peace is in branch meetings, where members learn the gospel together and where everyone is welcome to worship, and in activities where youth with the same standards can strengthen and reassure one another. “The Lord tells us that we are the light of the world,” Sujith says (see Matthew 5:14). “As we gather together, we keep that light burning bright and feel more comfortable sharing it.”

Happily Home

It was that kind of sharing that brought the gospel to the Butty family. Sisters Sandhya and Sudha Butty and their mother and father can hardly stop smiling—they are so eager to tell about how they were introduced to the Church.

“We joined the Church as a family,” Sandhya explains. “We had been looking for the right church for a long time.

We knew we needed to be baptized. Then one day our father saw two elders. Their name tags said, ‘The Church of Jesus Christ,’ and he knew he had to speak with them.”

Discussions began in earnest. “We learned that, to do the will of the Father, Jesus Christ suffered for us, accomplished the Atonement, and made it possible for us to return to Heavenly Father by following Him,” Sudha says. With that testimony solidly in place, joining the Church seemed like sailing home through friendly seas, and the Buttys have rejoiced in their decision ever since.

Every day the fishing boats sail out from Visakhapatnam. Every day the youth of the Visakhapatnam First, Second, and Gajuwaka Branches set out into the world. All of them can return safely to a familiar harbor. But in the case of the Latter-day Saints, it is a harbor that’s not only safe for now but also secure for eternity. ■

SAILING ON THE FRIEND SHIP

Pavani Kotala Ratnam has learned a lot about friendship by living the principles of the gospel. “When we joined the Church, I was made fun of in my class at school because I would never cheat. I never told lies. If I was asked to do anything good, I would do it for sure. And I always talked to everyone politely. I had good friends at church, but my school ‘friends’ didn’t like my standards. They told me I was crazy and laughed about me in front of others.

“I talked with my dad and my mom about what kind of friends I should have,” she continues. “Talking to them was one of the best decisions I ever made. They helped me to feel good about myself, to choose friends who built me up, and to try to be friendly with everyone.

“Soon I was talking with everyone—the big guy, the better student—I talked to everybody. I tried to set a good example. In the beginning I didn’t find any friends who encouraged me, and I had a hard time. But my teachers encouraged me. There were times when they asked, ‘What makes you different?’

“Other students kept saying, ‘Why do you behave like that?’ and ‘Why do you talk to that guy when he is not of your social class?’”

But eventually those waves of opposition stopped pounding. “I knew I was different in a good way and that I should be myself and do what is right. I had that determination,” she says.

Today Pavani is known by the other students as a friendly young woman who is a positive influence in her school.



PRESIDENT MONSON WANTS TO SEE YOU

About 15 years ago I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Four years later my health was steadily declining, and I was using a wheelchair. I felt extremely frustrated by my condition because for my entire life, I had been very active.

About that time I went to a conference in Dundee, Scotland, attended by President Thomas S. Monson, then a counselor in the First Presidency. Following the meeting, a member approached me.

"Brother Sharkey?"

"Aye?"

"Come down to the front to see President Monson."

I had no

intention of doing that, but a few minutes later the man returned.

"Brother Sharkey," he said, "President Monson is waiting to see you."

"But he doesn't know me," I replied.

"Even so, he is waiting to see you. He has heard about your illness."

I agreed and went to see President Monson. He greeted me warmly and asked whether I would like a priesthood blessing. I told him I would.

We found a room, and President Monson asked whom I would like to anoint me.

I asked if we could send for my bishop. When someone left to

find him, one of President Monson's traveling companions reminded him that if they didn't leave soon, they would not make it to the Edinburgh airport on time.

President Monson smiled and, referring to himself and to me, responded, "When you're our age, you learn to prioritize. We'll be there in time."

When my bishop arrived, he and President Monson administered to me. The blessing President Monson gave me was not a blessing of healing; it was about managing my condition and its accompanying ailments. It was also a blessing for my family to be able to help me in managing my disease.

Now, a decade later, I still have Parkinson's, but at age 74 I am doing well. I have indeed found ways to manage my illness. I feel good, and I have not used a wheelchair since the day I received the blessing. My doctor calls me his "star patient."

I will always be grateful to President Monson for his kindness in speaking to and blessing a man he didn't know. But I'll also be grateful for what he taught me about using the priesthood.

We hold different keys and offices in the Church, but we hold the same priesthood. President Monson's kind act taught me that the priesthood isn't about who holds it but about how we use it to bless the lives of Heavenly Father's children. ■

George Sharkey, Scotland

President Monson greeted me warmly and asked whether I would like a priesthood blessing.

BLESSED BY THE PRIESTHOOD

I joined the Church as a single mother in 1996, several years after my twin sister, Theresa, joined. When Theresa was baptized, a mutual friend said to me, “Why would she join that church? They make their women stay in the background.”

From association with members of the Church, I knew that my friend’s understanding was inaccurate—the marriages I saw among members of the Church were some of the strongest and most equal I had ever seen. I knew that only men in the Church held the priesthood, but I sensed that they used the priesthood to benefit all.

That truth was reinforced to me when I was diagnosed with breast cancer 11 years after my baptism. Upon hearing the news, I received a spiritual prompting that I should seek a priesthood blessing, which I did that evening. In the blessing, I was promised that the cancer would leave my body, that my body would be made whole, and that the Spirit would guide my doctors.

That blessing was the first of many I would receive over the next three years of treatment and surgeries. It gave me faith to know that healing would come physically if it was the Lord’s will or that it would come spiritually—and I would be given strength to deal with my trial.

I experienced the second kind of healing one night following an



Upon hearing the news that I had breast cancer, I received a spiritual prompting that I should seek a priesthood blessing.

operation. I remember waking up in extreme pain. Just then this thought entered my mind: “You know that you will get better. You have been promised that your body will be made whole. You know you’re going to get through this.”

On another occasion I woke up in the middle of the night worried about the future. “What is going to happen to me?” I wondered. That panic lasted for a couple of hours, but

it was the only time during my three-year battle that I felt such anxiety. The peace from the priesthood blessings I received sustained me and enabled me to get through things I thought I couldn’t endure.

The priesthood continued to strengthen me through a postoperative infection and a serious fever. One night during this time my brother-in-law came to the hospital and gave me a blessing. My temperature had been rising all day, but after the blessing it steadily declined. I was amazed but not surprised.

I saw the promise come to fruition that my doctors would be guided. When I awoke after one of my operations, the surgeon came to see me.

“I was all done,” she explained, “but something told me to go deeper, and I found additional problem areas, which I was able to remove. We’re fortunate to have found them.”

She is not a member of the Church, but the promise of the blessing I had received early on had come to pass. The Spirit had guided her.

I am grateful for the worthy priesthood holders in my ward and family who have reached out to me and used the priesthood to bless my life. I am grateful for their wives who support and sustain them as they honor their priesthood and use it to bless others. Most of all, I am grateful that Heavenly Father has blessed us with His power on earth, a power that blesses all of His children. ■

Virginia Gillis, Massachusetts, USA

DAD, I NEED YOU

I was moving sprinkler pipes on a section of our farm in northern California, USA. This particular day was a treat because Dad was there to help me. When we finished, we jumped on our all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and headed for home with dinner on our minds. Dad led the way.

Our farm was bordered on one side by the Pit River. We rode on the edge of the field so we wouldn't flatten the alfalfa with the big tires on our ATVs. The field was on our right, and the river, at the bottom of a steep embankment, was on our left. We couldn't see very well because it was misty.

We were cruising along fairly fast when I veered off the trail and hit a clump of sagebrush with my right rear tire. The impact forced me to turn the ATV sharply to the left toward the river and down the embankment. I tried stopping, but the bank was too steep and I was going too fast. I thought for sure I was going in the river. Fortunately, there was a tree on the bank right in my path. The next thing I knew, I was looking down at the ATV—from the tree! I was as scared as I had ever been.

I felt that I had just had a brush with death, but other than a few scratches and bruises, I was unhurt. After I calmed down and took a few breaths, I realized there was no way I was going to get the ATV back up the bank by myself. I kept expecting my dad to poke his head over the edge of the embankment, looking for me, but he

didn't. That made me feel even worse.

I scrambled to the top of the bank, but my dad was nowhere in sight. I said a silent prayer to my Father in Heaven, asking Him to send Dad back to get me. Then I started walking.

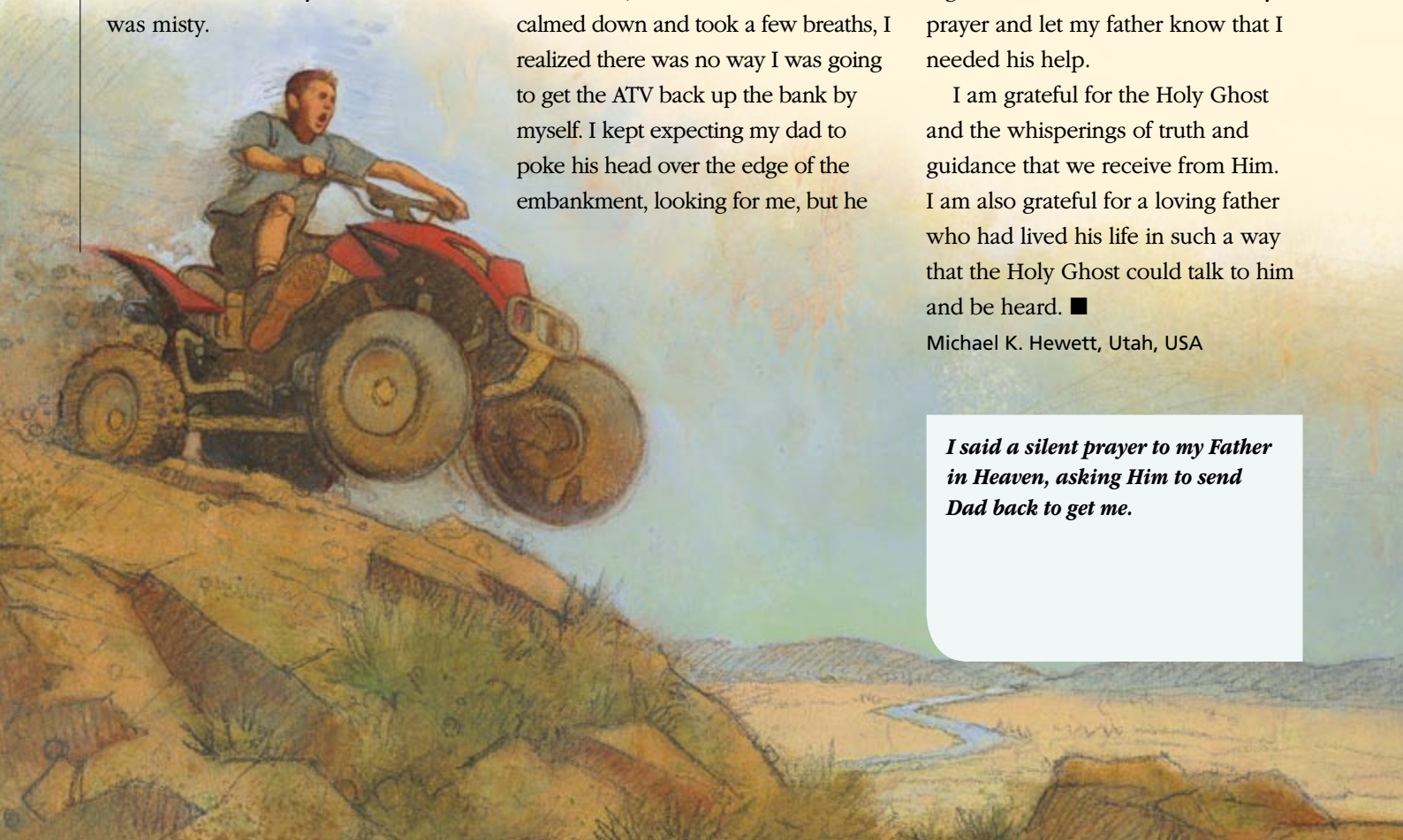
Meanwhile, Dad was almost home when he thought he heard me call out to him. He looked back for the first time since we had left the field. Only then did he notice that I wasn't behind him. He knew something was wrong and came looking for me until he found me.

Dad later told me that he had heard me say, "Dad, I need you!" At the time, he was more than two miles (3 km) away. I knew then that a loving Father in Heaven had heard my prayer and let my father know that I needed his help.

I am grateful for the Holy Ghost and the whisperings of truth and guidance that we receive from Him. I am also grateful for a loving father who had lived his life in such a way that the Holy Ghost could talk to him and be heard. ■

Michael K. Hewett, Utah, USA

I said a silent prayer to my Father in Heaven, asking Him to send Dad back to get me.



WOULD YOU LIKE A BLESSING?

One morning I was walking up a steep hill on the south side of the Brigham Young University campus when I heard a crash behind me. I turned around and saw a young man lying facedown on the pavement, his bike several yards away in pieces. I stood in shock until he weakly tried to lift his head. Then I hurried toward him, along with four other people who had been walking up the hill.

The student who reached the biker first carefully turned him over, revealing severe cuts on the biker's lips, nose, chin, and eyebrow. Another student called for help on his cell phone. A young mother standing next to me offered a piece of cloth, and the first student stanching the biker's bleeding lip with it. A second woman and I stood by, anxiously waiting for paramedics to come.

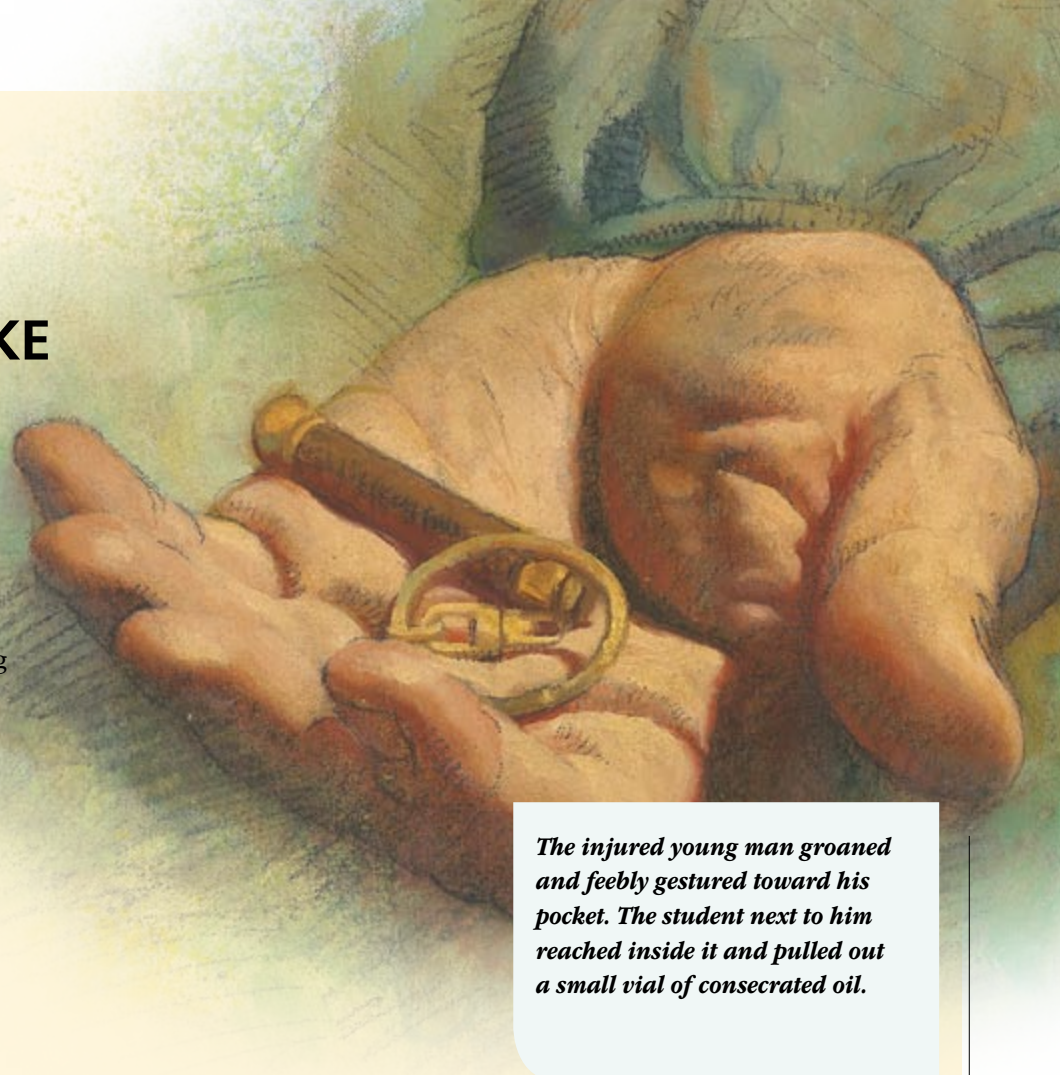
The injured man's eyes flickered open, and he looked in confusion at the faces around him.

"Where am I?" he said. "What happened?"

The student holding the cloth to his lips answered, "You're on the south side of campus. You crashed your bike."

The biker groaned. "It hurts," he said. "Help me."

The student said that help was on



The injured young man groaned and feebly gestured toward his pocket. The student next to him reached inside it and pulled out a small vial of consecrated oil.

the way and asked the young man his name.

"David," he said, sobbing softly. "Where am I?" he asked again.

An older man in a suit—likely a professor—approached and asked David if he wanted a blessing. He nodded gratefully.

The professor paused. "I don't have any oil, though," he said, looking around. Those nearby shook their heads. The injured young man groaned and feebly gestured toward his pocket. The student next to him reached inside it and pulled out a large key ring with a small vial of consecrated oil attached.

"He has some!" exclaimed the student.

The biker calmed down as soon as the professor and the male students

laid their hands on his head and gave him a blessing. A feeling of calm came over me too as the professor promised the young man that he would recover, be at peace, and draw nearer to the Savior through this experience.

Soon the paramedics came and took the biker away. As I walked to class, I realized that he carried consecrated oil with him so he could use the priesthood to bless someone in need. This day, however, he himself was blessed. I left with a deep feeling of love for faithful men who live ready to bless others and for the Lord, who also blesses them. ■

Lia McClanahan, Utah, USA

THE POWER OF Education

By Suzy Taggy Coelho
Caldas Nelsen

My mother grew up knowing nothing but abandonment, starvation, and poverty. She didn't receive much formal schooling, but she knew the value of education and its power to change lives. In sewing together scrap pieces of paper to make me a notebook for school, my mother made one thing clear: education could help me escape a life of poverty.

Humble Beginnings

I was born in northern Brazil more than three months premature. Thirty years ago, there was almost no chance for a premature baby to survive in the cockroach-infested public hospital. The doctors told my mother that I would be dead within a few hours. I did not die. The Lord helped me survive.

When I was about five years old, my father left my mother, my four siblings, and me. My mother had also been abandoned by her parents when she was small, so she had no family to turn to for support. We didn't have

My mother told me to work hard in school because it was the one thing that could overcome poverty.

enough money to rent a house, so instead we rented a plot of dirt. We built our home of scrap wood, paper, and plastic with a roof made of dried leaves. We had no furniture other than a hammock, which two or three people would often share, and our bed, which we made from a few flattened cardboard boxes. We had no running water, no electricity. We had nothing.

Mom worked as a housekeeper and did people's laundry. I went with her to the river and helped the best I could; then we would walk for hours delivering the clothes. This time working side by side was precious for me. It is when I built a relationship with my mother.

Even though we worked hard, we never seemed to have enough money. Sometimes we would have hardly anything to eat. My mom gave us her food and sometimes went for days without any for herself. We would drink water and go to bed because it was all we could do to avoid the hunger pangs.

Do you know how to split one egg among six people? I do.

I had a small group of friends when I was young, but as we grew up, we took different paths. The girls turned to selling their bodies to make money, and the boys would steal. When they invited me to join them, I felt something inside tell me it wasn't right. I know the Lord was aware of me even then, before I was a member of the Church, and I have continued to see evidence of His hand in my life.

Refusing to Give Up on School

My siblings and I had long been on a waiting list for public schools. When our opportunity to enroll



finally came, my mother told me good things about school. She said if I took education seriously, I would be someone someday. I will never forget her words: “I am sorry that I am not able to provide a good life for you. I am sorry that you had to learn the hard way the importance of work so early in your life, but now you will have the opportunity to get an education. Whatever happens, never give up school because it is the only thing that will take you away from this life.”

Once I was in school, we had to be inventive to come up with school supplies. I would find blank pieces of paper in garbage cans and bring them home. My mother sewed them together to make a notebook. She would buy a pencil to divide in three so my two sisters and I could each take a section to write with at school. Our other two siblings were not yet old enough to come to school with us.

My mother sent me off to school with a homemade notebook and a third of a pencil.

A New Faith

Because my mother had suffered so much her entire life, she didn’t believe there could be a God. Throughout my childhood, neither did I. But as I got a little older, I started asking questions about God. I asked myself why my family never had a chance to have a good life and why I never had toys, enough food, or new clothes. Every time I asked these questions, I felt somehow in my heart that I wasn’t alone. This feeling comforted me for many years.

When I was about 13 years old, Latter-day Saint missionaries came to our home. They answered all of my questions and taught me about Jesus Christ. They told me there was a church where I could learn more about the gospel in special classes for people my age. They taught me how to pray. They told me about the Book of Mormon. When I was baptized, none of my family came.

I felt lonely, but I knew I was doing the right thing. I was introduced to a new life—a life of hope, happiness, faith, and love. My peers, I knew, were seeking solace in drugs and immorality. I found mine in a loving Heavenly Father and the gospel of His Son. After my baptism I knew that the Lord had been aware of me my entire life.

I learned a lot about the gospel. I met people who shared my beliefs. Some of the members got to know a little bit about my life when they visited me at home. They generously helped me buy clothes and shoes for



OBTAIN TRAINING

“The Lord wants you to educate your minds and hands, whatever your chosen field. Whether it be repairing refrigerators, or the work of a skilled surgeon, you must train yourselves. . . . You will bring honor to the Church and you will be generously blessed because of that training.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2001, 34; *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 8.

When I was accepted into the nursing program, I knew it would be hard, but I also knew the Lord would be with me.



INSTITUTE

No matter where you obtain your education, you can gather with other young adults at one of the more than 500 institutes of religion around the world. To find a location near you, contact your local priesthood leaders or visit www.lds.org/institutes.

church and notebooks for school. I babysat regularly for Church members and made more money than I ever had before. Because I was so young, it might have been easy for me to stray from the gospel. But with the support of Church members, I remained firm in my newfound faith.

The gospel truly changed my life. After I was baptized, I felt I had more energy to learn in school. I learned a lot and became a tutor. If I did not

know a subject, I would study until I knew it so well *I could* teach it. I used the money to help at home.

I received my patriarchal blessing and was counseled to serve a mission because the Lord reserved a special blessing in my mission that would change my life forever. I didn’t know what that meant, but I knew I would understand in time if I was obedient.

New Opportunities

I served in the Brazil Curitiba Mission from 2000 to 2002. Through my association with a particular

companion, I was able to go to the United States to study. I knew this would indeed change my life forever. I knew my Heavenly Father was aware of me and had a specific plan for me. This opportunity to further my education was an answer to my prayers.

I knew that it would be challenging to learn a second language, but I also knew it was possible if I worked hard enough. I studied at the Brigham Young University English Language Center and spent up to 10 hours a day in the library. One of my teachers suggested we pray for the gift of tongues, so every night I prayed and asked Heavenly Father for this gift. He certainly helped me.

After I completed my studies at the English Language Center, I was accepted at several universities. I decided to attend Brigham Young University–Idaho and apply for the nursing program. I heard that it was very difficult to get into the program, especially for international students. So I studied my hardest. My friends teased me, saying I should move into the library because I spent so much time there. Even when it closed, I went home and kept studying.

When times were difficult, I remembered the words of President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008): “You need all the education you can get. Sacrifice a car; sacrifice anything that is needed to be sacrificed to qualify yourselves to do the work of the world.”¹ I knew those were the words of a prophet of God, and I took them seriously.

“Sacrifice anything that is needed to be sacrificed to qualify yourselves to do the work of the world.”

I knew those were the words of a prophet of God, and I took them seriously.

When I was accepted to the nursing program, my heart filled with gratitude and happiness. I knew it would be hard and I would have to continue to make sacrifices, but I knew the Lord would be with me.

While in school, I met my husband, and we were married in 2007. My mother also joined the Church that year. She told me that she had never known why I was so happy, even with all the terrible things that had happened to us. But once she joined the Church, she understood. The gospel of Jesus Christ has blessed my family, and I’m happy to see my mother blessed after all the sacrifices she has made. I will always be grateful for her.

By the beginning of 2010, I was preparing for graduation—and was pregnant with our first child. Two months before I was to graduate from the nursing program, I had complications with my pregnancy, and our baby was born via cesarean section. My teachers told me I should take time off from school and graduate later. But I was so close—only two months away!

So my husband and I carefully organized our time so we could properly balance our priorities and I could complete my education. I scheduled my study time so I could give my husband and our son the attention they needed. Sometimes my husband’s parents stayed with our son while I was in class. Two great classmates helped me review class materials. I felt that the Lord had sent all of these people to support me through this difficult time.

A Better Life

After graduation I passed the state certification exam and started working as a nurse to help support our family while my husband completes his education. Even though I am not planning on working once my husband starts his career, if a tragedy or economic hardship requires me to work in the future, my education helps me feel prepared to do so.

Mom was right: education *does* have the capacity to change lives. It has changed mine, and it will change the lives of my children. I hope they will realize that I am successful because I followed the Lord’s plan for me. He wanted me to get an education, and He helped me every step of the way. I hope my children learn how to work like I did and that they come to value education as much as I do. ■

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2001, 34; *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 8.

PERPETUATING EDUCATION

The Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) was established in 2001 to help members of the Church obtain the education and training they need to be self-reliant. Members of the Church who qualify for the program receive a loan to help pay for their education. They repay the loan after gaining employment. In order to qualify for a PEF loan, an applicant must do several things, including the following:

- Be a worthy, active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Single male applicants between 19 and 26 must be returned missionaries or have an approved exemption.
- Be endorsed by priesthood leaders.
- Enroll in an institute of religion, unless married or over age 30.
- Live, work, and attend school in a PEF-approved country. PEF loans are available to members in over 40 countries.
- Commit to pay as many school costs as possible with personal money, graduate and gain better work, and fully repay the loan.

If you are interested in applying for a loan through PEF, contact your local priesthood leader. Learn more about the program by visiting pef.lds.org.

“How can I tell if my trials are meant to help me become better or if they are Heavenly Father’s way of warning me that I am headed down the wrong path?”

Trials can help you become better—no matter what their cause—if you use them to grow spiritually. Your conscience will let you know if you’re heading down the wrong path. If you feel bad about something you’ve done, pray to Heavenly Father and ask for His forgiveness. Try to fix whatever problems you’ve caused. You might also seek counsel from your parents and priesthood leaders. These steps will help you feel better and get you going in the right direction.

Trials that are not the result of sin can also help you become better. These kinds of trials can test your faith or patience or can teach you about yourself. To use these trials for your growth, ask yourself what you can learn from them and what you can do better.

Your faith can be strengthened during trials if you ask for Heavenly Father’s help. As the Savior did when He was suffering, you can pray “more earnestly” (see Luke 22:44). Heavenly Father might remove the trial, or He can strengthen you to bear it well (see Mosiah 24:14–15).

Friends and Family Can Help



One of the ways that Heavenly Father warns me when I am heading down the wrong path is that He will inspire friends or family members to share their testimonies or a personal experience with me. If I feel guilt or a desire to change as they share their feelings, I know that I need to repent and make some changes in my life.

Luis S., age 17, Florida, USA

Search Your Heart

Search your heart to know whether what you are doing is truly something our Father in Heaven would want you to do. We have the Holy Ghost in our lives to teach us good from evil. If you seek God and

ask, the Holy Ghost will show you what you must do. Whether the trial is to teach or warn, it serves the same purpose: to help you grow and become perfected in Christ if you react with faith and reliance on the Lord.

Emily B., age 18, California, USA

The Lord Will Comfort You



Heavenly Father meant for all trials to become strengthening experiences and shape you into a better person. It’s all in how you handle them. I know that

some trials seem like too much for us to get through, but they will bless us in time if we have faith. I always try to remember what the Lord told us: “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:18). With this knowledge you can overcome any trial you face, and you will grow stronger. If you feel like Heavenly Father is warning you that you are headed down the wrong path, have faith and listen to the promptings of the Spirit so you can hold on to the iron rod. He loves you and always wants you to be the best you can as He helps you through life.

Olivia B., age 18, Minnesota, USA

Think about It

I feel the best way to find out the purpose of the trial is to fast and pray about it sincerely. Also try thinking about it. If you overcame the

trial, would you become a better person or would you remain unchanged? If you think overcoming the trial will make you better and happier, then you are on the right path.

Ammon K., age 16, Utah, USA

Stay on the Right Path



We should read our scriptures and pray daily, and if we are doing those things and are in tune with the

Holy Ghost, God will make it known to us what choices we should and shouldn't make. If you think the path you are going down isn't one your Father in Heaven would choose for you, turn back. Always stay on the strait and narrow.

Elizabeth P., age 15, Pennsylvania, USA

Pray to Learn from Trials



Our Heavenly Father always gives us trials throughout our lives, and they are to strengthen us in His gospel and in our

faith. If we are on a bad path, that is the consequence of the bad choices we made. Always pray so that God will strengthen you and help you discern what is good from that trial. I have a firm testimony that the trials Heavenly Father puts in our way are to edify us, to increase our testimony, to help us learn not to fall again, or to help others through our experience.

Ruddy R., age 17, Guayas, Ecuador

Trials Can Warn

I think that all trials are meant to make us stronger, even if sometimes it doesn't seem like it. When I was 14, I became ill and had to take eight months off from school and study from home. This trial helped to make me a better, stronger person. It helped me appreciate what I have. Sometimes trials can make us reevaluate where we are going in life, so they can be a good warning bell.

Jennifer P., age 17, North Island, New Zealand

Be Patient

If the hardships are a result of breaking a commandment, then it's probably a warning. But if they are out of your control, they may be there to help you grow. I would pray and ask Heavenly Father if there is something you need to change or learn from this experience, and if so, ask Him to let you know what it is.

Pray for strength and comfort. And be patient; the answer may be on its way.

Michaela P., age 17, Idaho, USA



TO BECOME MORE LIKE THE SAVIOR

"Our Heavenly Father, who loves us completely and perfectly, permits us to have

experiences that will allow us to develop the traits and attributes we need to become more and more Christlike. Our trials come in many forms, but each will allow us to become more like the Savior as we learn to recognize the good that comes from each experience. As we understand this doctrine, we gain greater assurance of our Father's love. We may never know in this life why we face what we do, but we can feel confident that we can grow from the experience."

Elder James B. Martino of the Seventy, "All Things Work Together for Good," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 101.

NEXT QUESTION

"I'm overwhelmed when I think about all that I need to do to live the gospel. Where do I start?"

Send your answer by July 15, 2011, to:

Liahona, Questions & Answers 7/11
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA
Or e-mail: 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.

Your Example

Living the gospel strengthens not only you but others as well.

I have deep admiration and respect for young men who honor the Aaronic Priesthood. Let me tell you about three of them who come from the Nairobi Kenya Stake in Africa.

Martin Becomes Strong

At age 14, Martin of the Westlands Branch found himself away from his home in Nairobi, attending a boarding school where he was the only member of the Church. In Martin's school, on certain days of the week, only tea and bread were offered for breakfast. With 700 students, school authorities did not have the means to provide a special menu for one, so Martin chose to take water with the bread.

On Sundays he had to attend church with the rest of his

Martin



MATTERS

schoolmates. There he had to listen to religious teachings he knew were sometimes distorted. From time to time schoolmates would steal glances at him as they talked in low tones about his “strange” beliefs. Occasionally, some would even call him a devil worshipper.

These challenges strengthened rather than weakened Martin. He was greatly encouraged by monthly visits from his parents and frequent messages from his branch president, who always sent the latest issue of the *New Era*. Reading it helped increase his courage to face these trials.

Joseph Never Misses

Joseph of the Riruta Ward holds the office of teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood. He remains faithful to the gospel despite being the only Church member in a large school in which many of his peers participate in drugs and other evils. Joseph has never missed church. He is always early, and he is clean and ready to serve as assigned by his quorum president and bishop. He helps prepare the sacrament almost every Sunday.

Humphrey Posts Assignments

Humphrey of the Upper Hill Ward is also a teacher. He was baptized into the Church just two years ago. As Martin did, Humphrey currently attends boarding school. Part of the reason his faith has grown so much since

he joined the Church is that he receives all his seminary assignments by post (by mail), does them, and returns them promptly to his seminary teacher.

When boarding school closes, Humphrey typically has to walk 45 minutes one way on Sundays to get a ride to church. Nevertheless, he is always early at church and ready to serve as assigned.

Whenever he receives an assignment to speak, Humphrey is diligent in his preparation. It is clear to all who listen that he has put much effort into preparing his talk.

Living the Standards

Today in most of the world, standards of morality continue to erode. Often young people who seek to connect with something good and honorable do not know where to

Joseph



**By Elder
Joseph W. Sitati**
Of the Seventy



Humphrey

find it. Institutions of learning have bought into the false idea that moral standards are defined personally and are variable.

But by living the standards of your faith, you can help your peers to witness the stability, confidence, peace, and joy that come from the gospel. Your example can help prepare others to be receptive to the teachings of the restored gospel. Duty to God for young men and Personal Progress for young women can help you grow closer to God and earn the trust of adults and peers.

The Ultimate Example

Whether you are a young man or a young woman, you honor the priesthood as you live your life in a way that communicates to your peers and to others around you that you truly follow the Savior. The Savior's life as a young man sets a wonderful example for you. When He was only 12, He was drawn to the work of His Heavenly Father, even as He honored His earthly parents. The scriptures say He taught others in the temple. He astonished older, well-learned people with His understanding of doctrine (see Luke 2:42–52). The Savior demonstrated that 12 years of age is not

too young to begin understanding the deep things of the gospel if we qualify to have the Spirit with us.

The scriptures provide many additional role models of youth who were valiant in their faith: Joseph, son of Jacob; Daniel; Nephi; and others. In addition, we can look to latter-day prophets and apostles for examples in our time.

The restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood is evidence that Heavenly Father trusts the young men and young women of the Church. He expects you young men to use the priesthood to bless His children young and old. You do so by teaching the gospel, baptizing, administering the sacrament, helping the sick and afflicted, visiting homes to strengthen families, and serving as assigned by your bishop or branch president. Through the Aaronic Priesthood service you render, people come to feel the love Heavenly Father has for them. In the same way, you young women can follow the Savior's example by living worthy to go to the temple, serving those around you, caring for those in need, and developing your strengths and talents.

In many units of the Church, I have seen young men going about these priesthood duties with reverence and dignity. I have also seen young women serving with all their heart and soul. Such service and the manner in which it is given strengthens your faith in God the Father and in His Son, Jesus Christ. It can also build the faith of those you serve. ■

JULIET IS TRUSTED

Young women, you set an example in the same way as young men: by living the gospel. As you work on Personal Progress, you will learn principles that will help you to know who you are as daughters of God and what Heavenly Father expects of you.



Juliet is one example. A member of the Westlands Branch, Juliet was baptized into the Church as a child of record. Despite difficult circumstances, including being raised by a single mother with no regular income, Juliet had high values which so impressed school authorities that she was appointed to be head girl of her school. She is literally the most trusted student in the school.

Juliet has learned that she participates in honoring the priesthood by living gospel standards. Her example demonstrates that young men and young women who honor the priesthood can find favor with God and with mankind.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:41–43

Joseph Smith taught the Lord's way of exercising priesthood authority.



Persuasion

Persuasion—encouraging others to believe or do something by reasoning or pleading with them.



Long-Suffering

Long-suffering—patience.

“As the Lord is patient with us, let us be patient with those we serve. Understand that they, like us, are imperfect. They, like us, make mistakes. They, like us, want others to give them the benefit of the doubt.

“Never give up on anyone. And that includes not giving up on yourself.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Continue in Patience,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2010, 58.

Gentleness and Meekness

Here are some things the scriptures teach us about gentleness and meekness:

- They are among the fruits of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22–23).
- Gentleness is a mark of the Lord's servants (see 1 Thessalonians 2:7; 2 Timothy 2:24).

41 No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

42 By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

43 Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reprov'd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy.

- The meek shall inherit the earth (see Psalm 37:11; Matthew 5:5).
- Meekness is a sign of faith in Christ (see Moroni 7:39).
- Meekness leads to the visitation of the Holy Ghost (see Moroni 8:26).

Love Unfeigned

Unfeigned—genuine; not faked or pretended.

Has someone shown you genuine love recently? How can you show that kind of love to others? Write about it in your journal.

Without Hypocrisy and without Guile

Hypocrisy—pretending to be something you are not.

Guile—deceitful; cunning.

Reproving Betimes with Sharpness

Reproving—scolding or correcting gently; expressing disapproval.

Betimes—speedily; early; before it is too late.

Sharpness—clarity.



When Moved Upon by the Holy Ghost

“An inspired, loving rebuke can be an invitation to unity. Failure to give it when moved upon by the Holy Ghost will lead to discord.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Be One,” *Liahona*, Sept. 2008, 6; *Ensign*, Sept. 2008, 8.

Editors' note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected scripture verses, only a starting point for your own study.

THE SACRED GROVE



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN TERFORD

What happened here changed the world. Let it change your life.

SIGNS OF THE SPIRIT

By Pedro Ovalles

Serving a full-time mission in the Dominican Republic, I had just been transferred to a new area that had a reputation of being difficult to find people to teach. When I arrived, we had only one investigator. His name was Oriviades. He had attended church before, but because he was deaf and communicated using sign language, previous missionaries hadn't been able to teach him.

One day my companion and I decided to fast and pray for a miracle that would allow us to teach Oriviades. We set an appointment with him at a time when one of his family members would be available to help translate, since neither my companion nor I knew sign language.

When we arrived to meet with Oriviades, however, none of his family members was there. When Oriviades briefly left to get a chair, my companion and I took the opportunity to pray that the Spirit would guide us. Before we had even finished the prayer, I felt the Spirit's presence strongly.

Oriviades began signing, but we couldn't understand him. We simply smiled at him and looked at each other, trying to figure out what we should do. We decided to write a note indicating a time for our next appointment, hoping that next time



we would have a translator. But suddenly both of us felt strongly that we should stay and try to teach him. "Let's at least try—the Spirit will help us," I told my companion.

We tried using drawings and rudimentary hand signals as we taught the lesson. Gradually we started understanding Oriviades's signs and were able to sign in reply to him. He seemed to understand us perfectly.

We felt prompted to share our testimonies with him. We showed him a picture of the First Vision, and I wrote on a piece of paper, "I know it's true."

Then, using signs, Oriviades

responded, "I know it's true—God told me. I prayed and know it's true."

My companion and I left the appointment with tears in our eyes. I knew that God had allowed us to testify of the restored gospel to this investigator and that the Holy Ghost had carried our message unto his heart (see 2 Nephi 33:1). I learned that we don't need to speak perfectly or eloquently when we share the gospel—sometimes, we don't need to speak at all.

It's incredible how simple things like fasting, prayer, and faith can work mighty miracles in our lives and in the lives of those we serve. ■

Teach a **Man** to Fish

By Adam C. Olson

Church Magazines

Ezra stopped paddling his small outrigger canoe and watched the sun sinking toward the Pacific on the other side of the bay. For years he had fished these waters with his father, but today he had trouble seeing the familiar sight through his tears.

Today he was alone.

As the canoe rocked gently on the water, he could hear the words his father had often spoken: “Watch carefully, Ezra. Someday when I am gone you will need to know how to support the family.”

Today was the day his father had warned him about and tried to prepare him for. But it had come too soon. He was only 16. He wasn't ready.

The Responsibility

Ezra idolizes his father. He had waited impatiently for years until his father said that at age seven, Ezra was finally old enough to help him set and check the fishing nets.

Fishing didn't provide a lot of money, but it was enough to feed Ezra, his five sisters, and their mother; support Ezra's oldest sister on her mission in the United States; and help their neighbors. Ezra was even able to begin saving for his own mission.

But now his father was gone. His death was unexpected, and it broke Ezra's heart. Losing his father meant losing his hero, his bishop, his mentor.

But added to the heartache was a terrible realization: the responsibility his father had tried to prepare him for was suddenly his. Ezra would have to support the family now.

The Prayer

He couldn't even consider fishing that first week after his father's passing. His emotions were too raw. The thought of taking his father's canoe, using his father's nets, and doing his father's work without him was unbearable.

By the following week he knew his family needed him to go, but the burden was overwhelming. For as much as Ezra wanted to be like his father, he recognized more than ever just how far he was from achieving that goal.

“I felt like there was no hope,” he says. “I found it difficult the first time to walk in the steps of my father. As I took the canoe out into the sea, I felt his absence. Those words my father had spoken came back to me, and I felt the weight of responsibility for my family.”

Standing in the shallows of the Pacific, he turned to the only Person who could help him—the One his father had taught him to trust.

“Show me where my father stood,” Ezra prayed. “Help me fulfill my father's wish for me.”

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM C. OLSON, EXCEPT AS NOTED

When he needed help, Ezra, a 16-year-old in Samoa, turned where his father had taught him: to his Heavenly Father.



Ezra and his friend Fetu return in an outrigger canoe from pulling in their nets.

The Answer

In the early evening silence after that prayer, Ezra felt something change. He felt led to his father's fishing spot, and the things his father had taught him came to mind when needed.

"After that prayer, I felt extra strength," he says. "I knew Heavenly Father would help me."

Just as the Savior showed His ancient Apostles where to cast their nets, Ezra received help too. "I caught a lot of fish that day," he says.

Like Father, Like Son

Though he had doubted he could do what his father did, Ezra learned that he could do more than he thought.

"It's been a big change in my life—the way I think, see things, and do things," Ezra says. "I realized I can do what my father did."

Ezra has become more like his father than he believed he could. He has followed in his father's footsteps as a fisherman—and as a teacher.

The second week Ezra went fishing, his friend Fetu asked if he could come along and learn. Ezra has taught Fetu how to fish, and Fetu has helped Ezra with his work and kept him company.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to teach others as my father taught me," says Ezra. "It makes me happy to know I am not only a fisherman like my father but also a teacher."

Teach a Man to Fish

The saying goes that if you give a man a fish, you have fed him for a day, but if you teach him to fish, you have fed him for a



Ezra plans to serve a mission. He remembers that Heavenly Father answered him when he called. "I want to be able to answer Him when He calls me," Ezra says.



Having to take over his father's role as provider, Ezra says, "I found it difficult the first time to walk in the steps of my father."

lifetime. Ezra's father certainly did the second.

However, Ezra learned much more from his father than how to fish. He learned that he could rely on his Heavenly Father. This knowledge will serve him throughout his life even better than his ability to fish.

Knowing how much he needs his Heavenly Father's help, Ezra is careful to worthily fulfill his responsibilities as a priest, the office to which his father ordained him the week before he died. He also schedules his fishing so that it doesn't conflict with school and seminary.

What's more, he is saving what money he can from fishing so that one day he can be a fisher of men (see Matthew 4:19).

"During one family home evening, my father expressed his desire that we all serve missions," Ezra says. "That is my utmost goal."

Ezra remembers that the Lord answered him when he called. "I want to be able to answer *Him* when He calls *me*." ■

What SWIMMING Taught Me

Swimming taught me that all peer pressure isn't bad. Sometimes it helps you succeed.

By Marissa Thompson

I was seven years old, and I didn't know how to swim, so my mom enrolled me in afternoon swimming lessons with my friend Angie. At the end of each lesson, our teacher would take us out into the center of the pool to practice our strokes. We were always safe in the middle since our teacher supported us under our stomachs and we wore "bubbles" on our backs.

Peer Pressure at the Pool

One day Angie and I didn't have our bubbles on, so we clung to the side of the pool. Angie decided she wanted to try to swim across the corner to the adjacent wall, about four feet (1.2 m) away. I was hesitant at first, but then she dared me. So even though I was scared, I took in as much air as I could and plunged under the water, hoping to reach the other side. Instead of floating with ease as I had done before with my back bubble, I began to sink. I was in a state of panic. I knew I was going to drown. Then I remembered what my teacher had told me a few weeks earlier: "If you lose control while swimming, just stretch one of your

arms straight up out of the water, and someone will come help you."

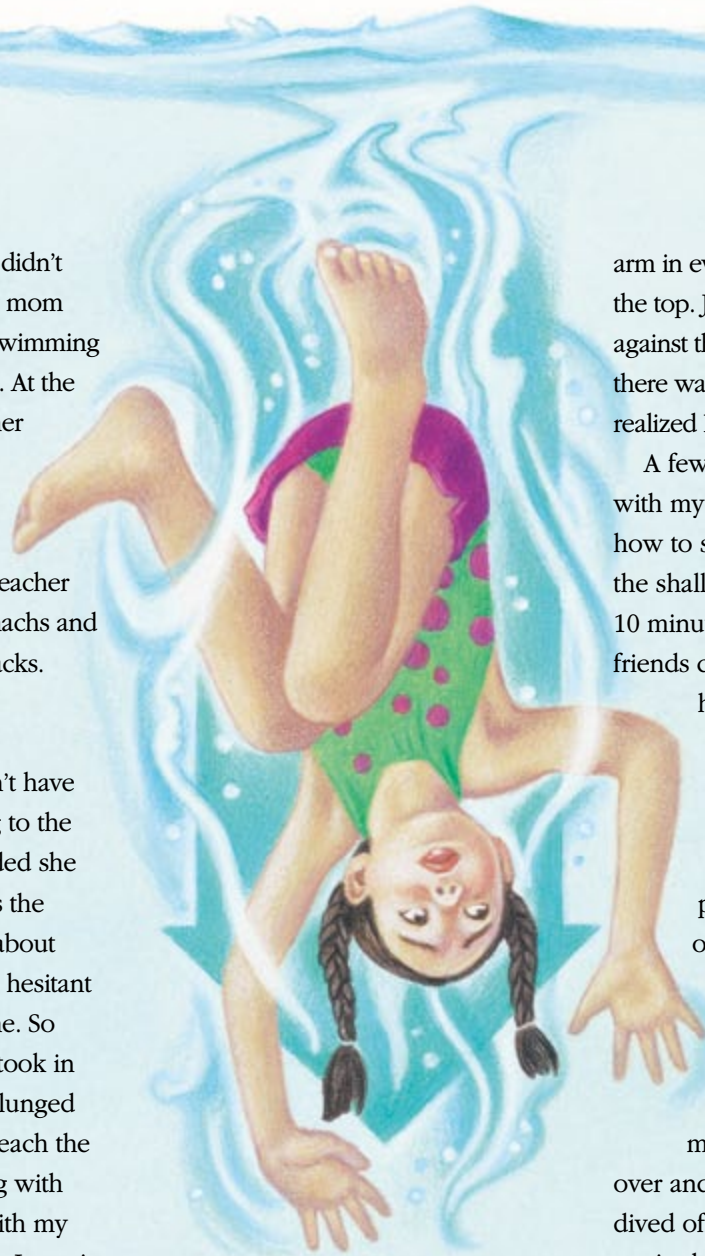
With this thought in mind, I stretched my arm in the direction I thought was up. I didn't feel any air. I stretched my

arm in every direction, never finding the top. Just then my head bumped against the side of the pool. Angie was there waiting for me. I guess she hadn't realized I was "drowning."

A few weeks later I was at a lake with my family. Still not knowing how to swim, I waded around in the shallow water. I was there about 10 minutes when I saw one of my friends coming into the lake. I was horrified. "What if Stephanie finds out I can't swim?" I thought. I'd be so embarrassed. So I quickly dropped to my knees and began to pretend to swim—I walked on my arms while kicking my feet. Stephanie jumped in the water and began swimming for real. This only added to my embarrassment. After a while she came

over and talked to me. Then she dived off in another direction, leaving me in the wake caused by her perfect, coordinated strokes. I resumed my fake swimming, feeling foolish.

After a few minutes I decided to stop being so scared and try to swim. I was in shallow water, so I lifted my



arms from the ground and started dog paddling. It worked. I floated. It was only for a few seconds, but I floated. I did it again and again throughout the evening. By the time we left, I could dog paddle across the entire lake.

Peer Pressure Is Powerful

When I think back on these two experiences, I'm amazed by the power of peer pressure. One day it almost made me drown; another day it motivated me to learn to swim. That's how it is with peer pressure—it can either be negative or positive, but it's always powerful.

Peer pressure was one reason the Pharisees wouldn't believe in Christ's words: "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43). In his dream Lehi saw people who were ashamed of the Lord because of those who were mocking and pointing from the great and spacious building (see 1 Nephi 8:26–28).

I'm familiar with this negative side of peer pressure—the side that makes people turn away from what they know is right. I've been mocked because of my Latter-day Saint standards. I've had friends who have

wanted me to shoplift clothes, cheat on exams, and be cruel to other people. Instead of wanting me to float and succeed, it was as if they were anchors pulling me down, trying to drown me.

But I've also had friends who have motivated me to do good things—things that have made my life better, not worse. When I was in the eighth grade, my friend Ali convinced me

to try out for drill team for the next school year. This wasn't an easy feat, since the thought of trying out for an activity as a new freshman in a big high school terrified me. Ali convinced me to do something worthwhile that I might never have done without a little encouragement from a friend. And because of this friendly peer pressure, my adjustment to high school life was a lot easier.

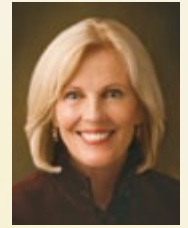
Good friends motivated me throughout high school and into college, giving me the courage to run for student council, work for good grades, and nourish a testimony of the gospel. These friends were positive influences in my life. They wanted me to succeed, and they helped me grow.

These experiences have taught me that not all peer pressure is bad, as many people tend to think. It depends on the type of pressure and from whom it is coming. I've learned that when I surround myself with the right kind of influences, I'm less likely to sink into the ways of the world. Positive pressure from the Church and from friends with high standards is the force that has acted like a back bubble in my life, keeping me afloat. ■





My father gave me a special gift the Christmas before he passed away. It was a necklace with a little silver bell. It reminded me to always listen to the Spirit and remain pure. It is a precious treasure to me.



TRUST in the Lord

From an interview with Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president; by Megan Withers Roxas

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart” (Proverbs 3:5).

As a young girl I followed my father everywhere he went. I always admired how dedicated he was to the Lord. He set a high standard for me of selfless service. He took a week off from work every year. However, instead of going on a trip, he would ask my family to help him paint the widow’s house next door. This is just one example of many acts of service. He was always thinking of others.

When I was in high school, my father became very ill. I prayed

constantly and asked Heavenly Father to bless my father to get well. He was in the hospital for one month, and then he passed away.

This was a tragedy for our family. To us it didn’t make any sense because we needed our father. I prayed to understand why this happened and why Heavenly Father hadn’t answered my prayers. It felt to me like the heavens were silent. I didn’t get an answer to my prayers. I felt that Heavenly Father had left me all alone. But I continued to pray.

A year later I attended a sacrament meeting where the speaker read a scripture from Proverbs:

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

The Spirit witnessed to me that this was the answer to my prayer! I needed to trust the Lord. It took a long time to receive that answer, and it wasn’t the one that I had wanted, but it was the *most* wonderful answer to prayer. I wasn’t supposed to understand why this happened. I was supposed to trust in the Lord.

When you trust in the Lord, you can do anything—even if it is really hard—because He does direct your path. He’ll walk by your side. He’ll hold your hand. He will send His angels to surround you. That’s my testimony. And it is true for all of us. ■

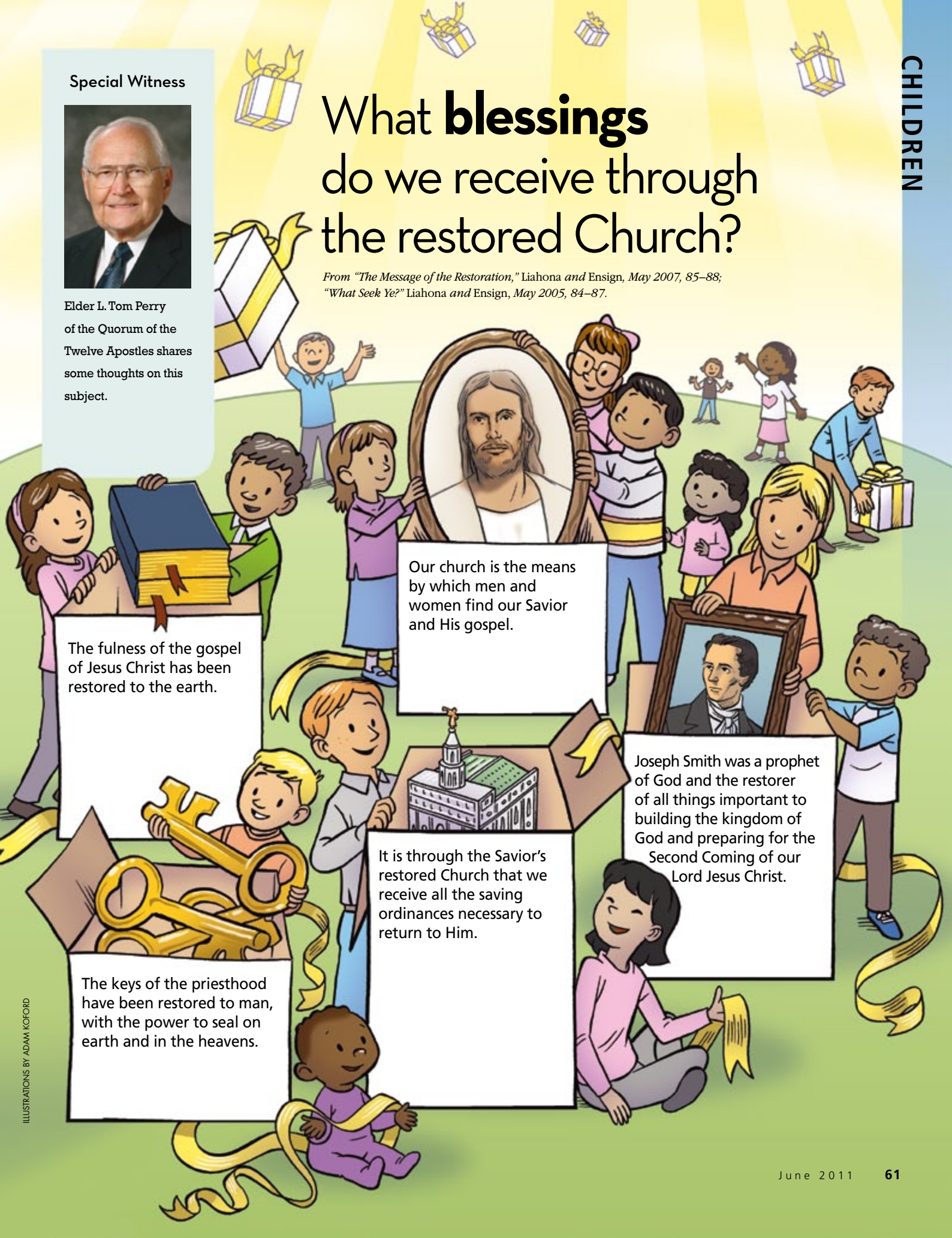
Special Witness



Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares some thoughts on this subject.

What blessings do we receive through the restored Church?

From "The Message of the Restoration," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2007, 85–88; "What Seek Ye?" *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2005, 84–87.



The fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth.

Our church is the means by which men and women find our Savior and His gospel.

Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and the restorer of all things important to building the kingdom of God and preparing for the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is through the Savior's restored Church that we receive all the saving ordinances necessary to return to Him.

The keys of the priesthood have been restored to man, with the power to seal on earth and in the heavens.

You can use this lesson and activity to learn more about this month's Primary theme.

The First Principles and Ordinances of the Gospel

Make It Possible for Me to Live with God Again

By Ana Maria Coburn
and Cristina Franco

"We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Articles of Faith 1:4).

The fourth article of faith talks about four important principles and ordinances of the gospel you need to follow so you can live with Heavenly Father again.

First, you need to have faith in Jesus Christ. To have faith in Jesus Christ is to believe that He lives, that He is the Savior, and that He loves you, even though you have never seen Him. When you have faith in Christ, you will want to do what He has asked you to do, such as pray, attend church, be kind, and keep the commandments.

One important thing Jesus has asked you to do is be baptized when you are eight years old (or older). You will be baptized by immersion—as Jesus was. That means your whole body will go under the water. Your baptism will

be done by someone who has the priesthood authority to baptize. When you are baptized, you also make a promise with Heavenly Father. You promise that you will keep the commandments, and if you do, He promises that you will have the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

After you are baptized, you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Someone who holds the priesthood will put his hands on your head to give you the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost will guide, teach, and comfort you and will testify of Jesus Christ.

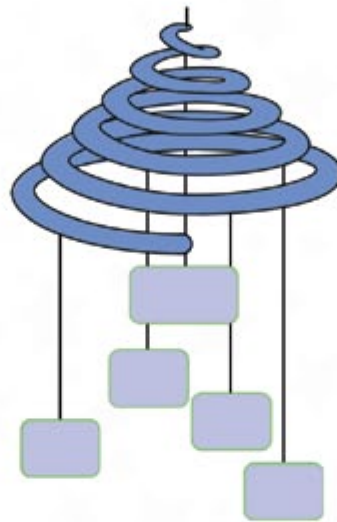
From the day you were born until age eight, you are clean and innocent because of the Atonement

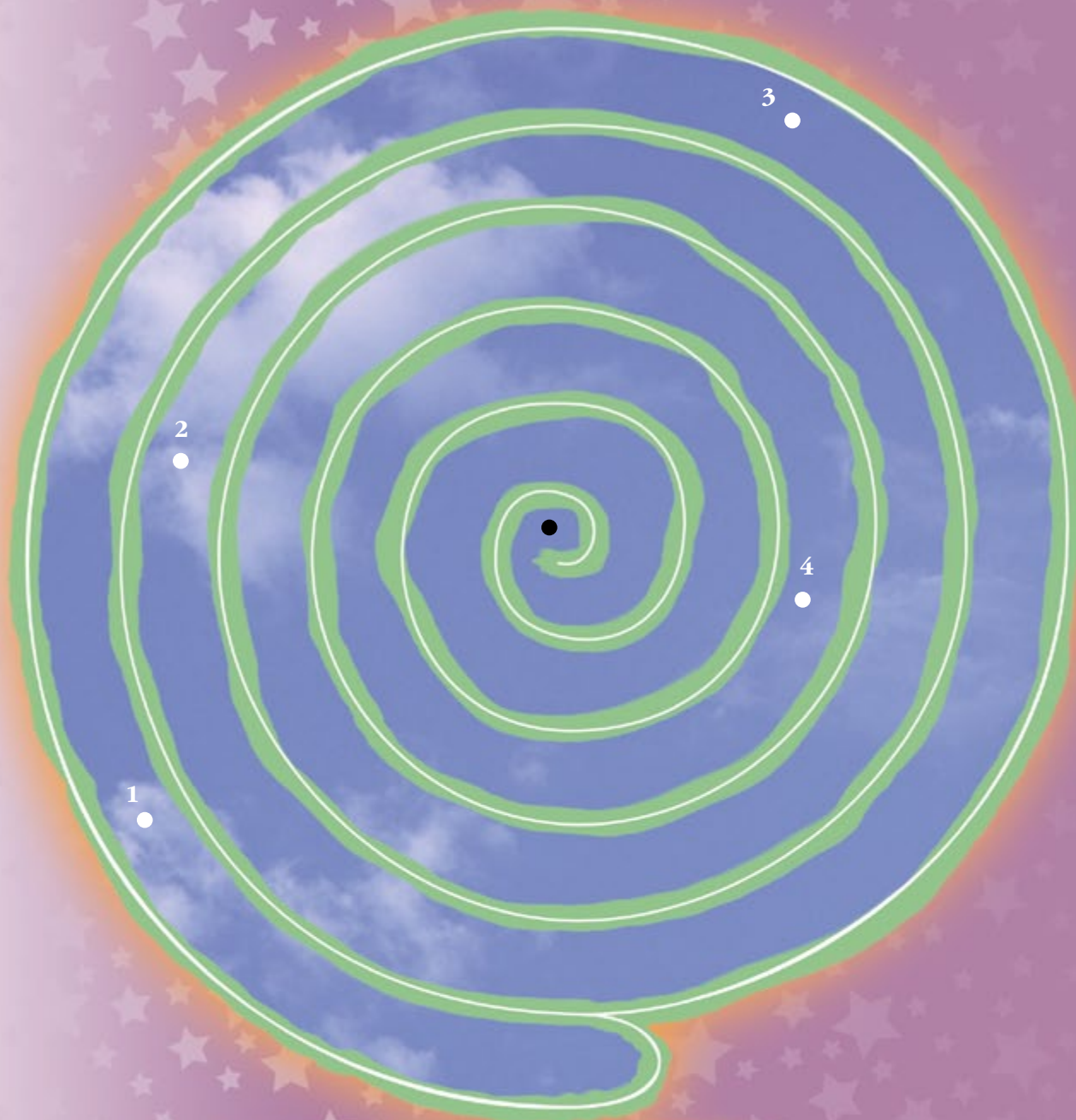
of Jesus Christ. After you turn eight and are baptized, you need to repent of anything you do wrong. To repent is to feel sorry and to ask for forgiveness from Heavenly Father and from anyone you may have hurt. After you have repented, you need to try hard not to make the same mistake again and to be more obedient to the commandments. The Atonement makes it possible for you to become clean again if you repent.

Having faith in Jesus Christ, repenting, being baptized by immersion, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost are important because they will help you return to live with your family forever and with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. ■

Activity

You can make this springing mobile as a reminder of the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Glue page 63 on heavy paper. Cut out the five signs; then cut out the mobile on the solid lines. Cut or punch where indicated. Hang the signs from the mobile with string or ribbon.





●
The first principles
and ordinances of the
gospel are:

●
1. Faith in the
Lord Jesus Christ

●
2. Repentance

●
3. Baptism by
immersion for the
remission of sins

●
4. Laying on
of hands for the
gift of the Holy
Ghost

Crash AND Tell



I will keep my mind and body sacred and pure."

My Gospel Standards

By Danielle Kennington

Based on a true story

"Be faithful, and yield to no temptation" (D&C 9:13).

Connor sat down at the family computer and typed in the website address his friend had given him. "You've got to check it out!" his friend had said.

But as soon as the website appeared, Connor felt awful. He quickly tried to close the page, but the more he clicked, the more bad pictures popped up. In a panic, Connor hit the off button on the computer and ran to his bedroom.

Connor felt sorry he had seen those pictures. Since his baptism a few months ago, he had started to feel the special peace of the Holy Ghost. But after seeing those pictures, Connor didn't feel peace at all. He felt guilty and scared that someone would know what he had seen.

Connor was quiet during dinner. He tried to listen to his family's conversation, but the pictures he had seen kept coming back into his

mind. The sick feeling in his stomach wouldn't go away.

When he said his prayer that night, Connor told Heavenly Father about the pictures he had seen. He said he was sorry and wouldn't do it again. After the prayer he felt a little more peace, but he also had a feeling that he should go talk to Mom. Connor really didn't want to tell her what had happened. What if she got angry or was disappointed?

Finally, Connor decided to talk to her. He went to Mom's room and sat on her bed, where she was reading.

"Mom, can I talk to you?" he asked.

"Sure, honey," Mom said. "What is it?"

He blurted it all out. He told her about what his friend said, and he told her about what he saw when he visited the site. Mom watched him closely, but she didn't seem angry.

"I didn't know what to do," Connor said. "So I just turned off the computer and ran away. I'm so sorry, Mom. I shouldn't have typed in that address in the first place, but

I didn't know it was bad."

Mom gave Connor a hug. "Connor, I am so sorry you saw those pictures," she said. "Some people try to trick children into seeing bad things. But you did the right thing. If you see bad pictures on the computer, you need to 'crash and tell.' That means push the power button to turn off the computer and then come and tell me right away. You did exactly the right thing."

Connor felt so relieved!

"Connor, I want you to know it is not your fault," Mom said. "It was a mistake, and you don't need to feel guilty about what happened."

"But, Mom, if I did the right thing, why did I feel so bad inside?"

"The Holy Ghost lets us know when something is dangerous," Mom explained. "That feeling you got was the Holy Ghost telling you to get away. I will put a filter on our computer

that will block bad sites, but sometimes bad things still might get through. So if something like this ever happens again, you know what to do, right?”

“Crash the computer and tell you,” Connor said.

“Exactly!” Mom said.

Before he got back in bed, Connor said a prayer to thank Heavenly Father for the relief he felt. As he prayed, he felt peace from the Holy Ghost. He knew things would be OK. ■

INTERNET SAFETY TIPS

- Get a parent’s permission before you use the Internet.
- Use the Internet only when other people—like your parents—are around.
- Unless a parent gives you permission, never give out your real name, age, address, phone number, or other personal information.
- Bookmark your favorite websites so you don’t have to search for them.

To escape from an inappropriate website:



1. Turn off the screen or the computer.



2. Tell an adult.



3. Never visit the site again.



4. If someone shows you an inappropriate site, don’t be afraid to walk away.

If you are looking for a safe, fun website to visit, check out friend.lds.org. We have stories, coloring pages, videos, slide shows, games, and more.



Our Page



The Primary children of the Ville-Marie Ward, Montréal Québec Stake, and their teachers and leaders enjoyed visiting the Montréal Québec Temple grounds. They were calm and reverent as the temple presidency welcomed them and gave them a tour of the grounds. They loved seeing the colorful flowers and the beautiful temple. They also viewed a film about the temple, and each received a small card with a picture of the temple.

Michael G. (right), age 11, from Panama, loves his karate classes and studies hard in school. Once he got to be "principal for a day" at his school because of his good grades.

Michael is already a courageous missionary. When the Church had an information stand at the international fair near his home, Michael and his parents stood at the entrance of the fair, gave people pamphlets about the Church, and invited them to visit the Church's stand. He also gave a pass-along card to a friend's family, and the missionaries taught them about the Church. He is looking forward to being a full-time missionary.



E-mail your drawing, photo, experience, testimony, or letter to liahona@ldschurch.org, with "Our Page" in the subject line. Or mail it to:

Liahona, Our Page

50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT, 84150-0024, USA

Each submission **must** include the child's full name, gender, and age plus the parent's name, ward or branch, and 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.



A PRAYER FOR COMFORT

One night I dreamed twice that our house was on fire and everything was burning. After that I was very frightened. So I prayed to Heavenly Father that I would not have this dream anymore. When I went back to sleep, I dreamed that I was in a beautiful field. I felt very calm, and I wasn't afraid anymore.

Nivia Angelica A., age 10, Mexico



Jeremiah P., age 10, Samoa



My Big Decision

By Rebecca Shaw

Based on a true story

“Their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands” (D&C 68:27).

Nicole, the Johnsons are coming again tonight,” Mom said. “Have you prayed like they asked you to?”

“No, not yet,” I said.

Elder and Sister Johnson are a missionary couple in our ward. They’ve been coming to family home evening to teach me the missionary discussions.

My family hasn’t always gone to church, so there were some things I didn’t understand. Now that I’m about to turn eight, Mom says that I need to decide if I’m going to be baptized.

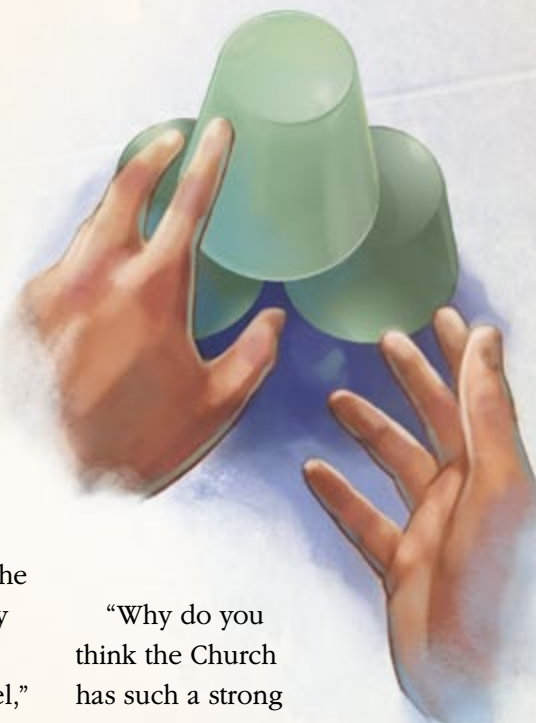
Last week Elder and Sister Johnson taught me about how Joseph Smith prayed to find out the truth. Then they asked me to pray about getting baptized.

“Pay attention to how you feel,” Sister Johnson said. “That’s how the Holy Ghost helps us know what is true.”

I thought maybe I could wait until I’m 14 like Joseph Smith was.

Tonight for our lesson Elder

Johnson stacked cups on top of each other to make a tower. He said if you don’t have a good foundation, the whole tower falls down.



“Why do you think the Church has such a strong foundation?” he asked.

I remembered last week’s lesson. “Maybe it’s because Heavenly Father and Jesus told Joseph Smith how to restore it,” I said.

“Right,” Elder Johnson said. “And we have living prophets and apostles to keep it on the right track.”

That made sense. I always had a good feeling when I heard about President Thomas S. Monson.

Then Sister Johnson asked me the question I was dreading.

“Have you prayed about getting baptized?”

“No, not yet,” I said.

“Do you want to be baptized?” Sister Johnson asked.

I wished I could answer her, but I just shrugged my shoulders.

My little sister thinks I’m scared of being dunked in the water because that’s what she would be scared of. But I like the water, so I wasn’t sure what I was worried about.

“Are you afraid of the responsibility?” Sister Johnson asked.

As soon as Sister Johnson said that, I knew she was right.

Mom said that after I’m baptized, I’ll be accountable. That means I’ll be responsible for what I choose. I’ll have to be careful to keep God’s commandments. I’m not sure if I’m ready



Father in Heaven knew you would . . . be required to make some decisions that would be beyond your own ability to decide correctly. . . . He included a provision for you to receive help . . . through the Holy Ghost."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "To Acquire Spiritual Guidance," *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 6.

for that responsibility. What if I stop going to church like my dad did?

"When you turn eight, you will be accountable for your choices even if you don't get baptized," Sister Johnson said. "But after you get baptized and confirmed, you'll have a lot more help in making good choices. That's because you'll

have the gift of the Holy Ghost."

We talked about some of the commandments I would need to keep. I already knew that smoking and alcohol and drugs are bad for you, so keeping the Word of Wisdom didn't sound hard.

After the Johnsons left, I didn't feel afraid of being baptized

anymore. I wanted to make right choices and keep Heavenly Father's commandments. And I was glad the Holy Ghost would help me.

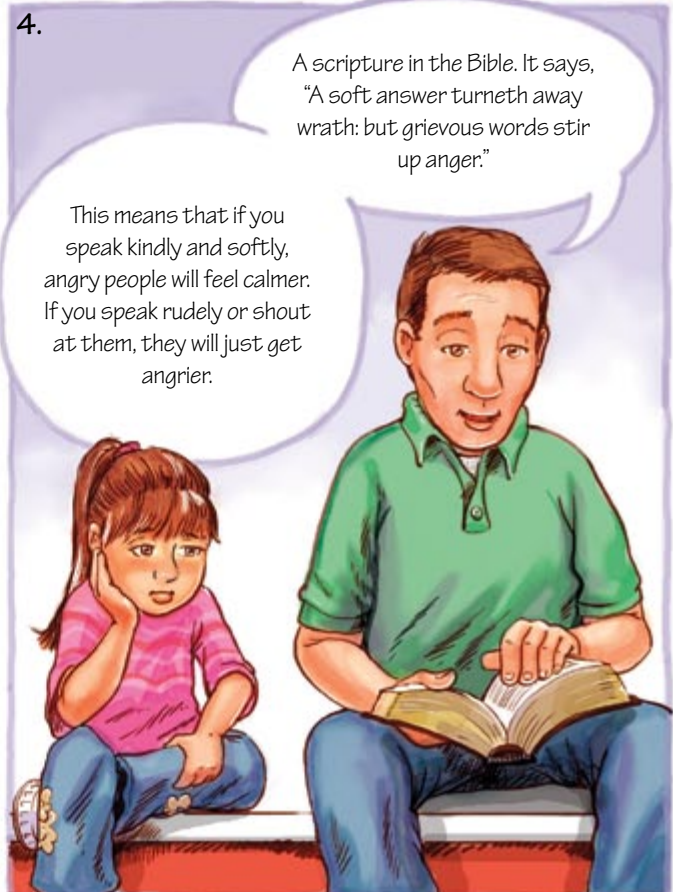
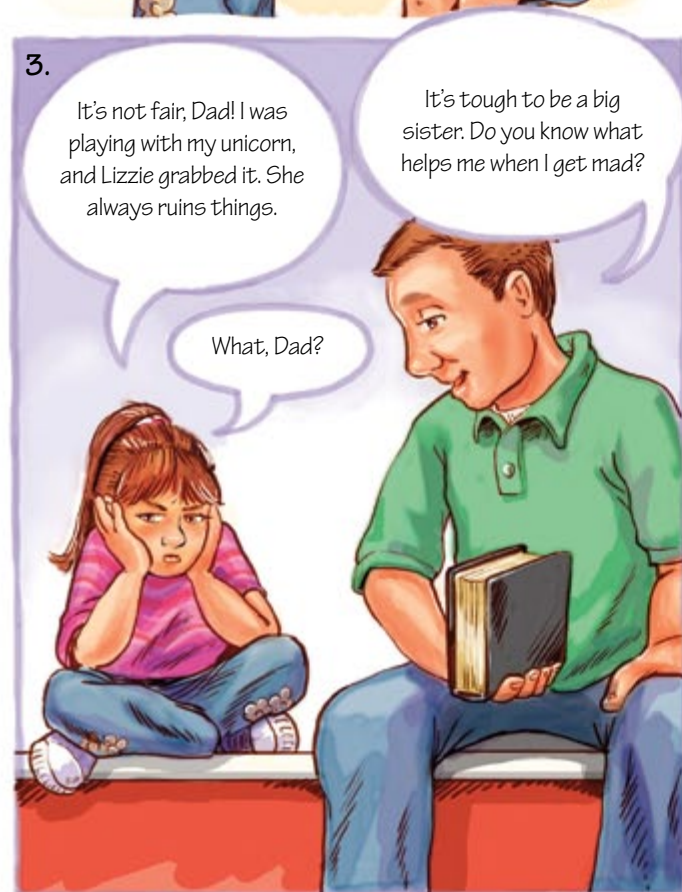
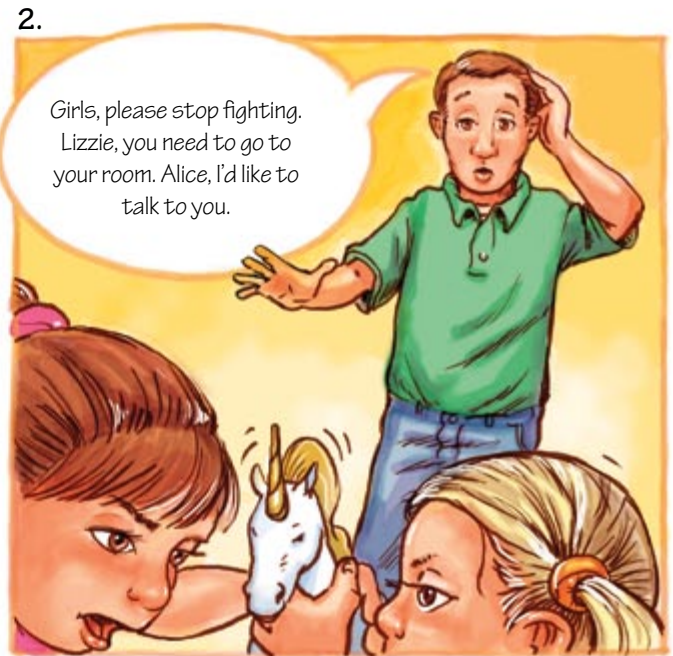
I went to my room and knelt by my bed. While I was praying, I felt sure that it was a good idea to get baptized. I knew that feeling was the answer to my prayer. ■

A Soft Answer

By Laura Hunter

Based on a true story

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1).



5.

Do you think that will work with Lizzie?

Next time, just try it and see what happens.



6.

I want the fairy wings!



7. Alice remembered what Dad had told her.

Lizzie, would you like to wear my crown?
You can be a princess, and I'll be your fairy friend.



8.

OK, I'll be a beautiful princess!

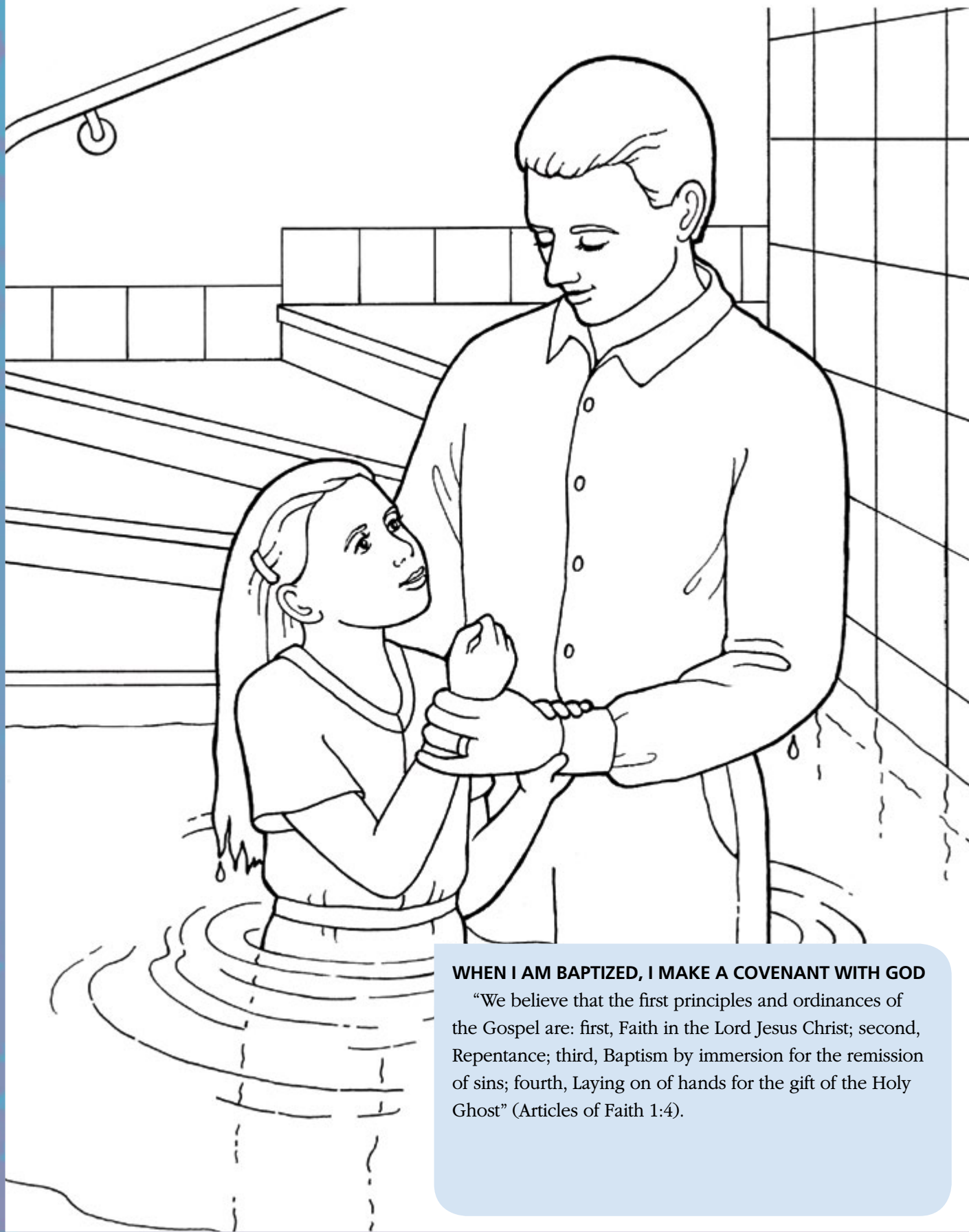
Come on, your highness.
Let's play!





Sometimes it is hard to remember to give a soft answer when you are angry. Ask a parent to help you cut out one of the soft-answer reminders. You can color it and tape it to a shirt, a door, a book, or wherever else you want to help you remember to give soft answers.





WHEN I AM BAPTIZED, I MAKE A COVENANT WITH GOD

“We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Articles of Faith 1:4).

Need Growing Internationally for Indexers

By Hikari Loftus

Church Magazines

All over the world, people are searching for their ancestors.

And all over the world, other people are making that search possible.

FamilySearch indexing, introduced online in 2006 and powered by volunteers around the world, is the process of taking physical records (such as those found on microfilm) and entering the information they contain into a searchable, online database.

With 122,000 LDS and non-LDS active indexers having completed 547,978,000 records since it began, FamilySearch indexing has had notable success. However, those who coordinate indexing have a new goal: indexing records in languages other than English.

“More and more of the names we are indexing aren’t English names,” said Jim Ericson, product marketing manager for FamilySearch. “We are trying to get people who speak different languages more involved so we can do a better job with non-English names.”

Although indexing English records continues to grow, it is far surpassed by the growth of international records. Projects are becoming available from a variety of countries as more governments and records custodians become aware of the services provided by FamilySearch, Brother Ericson said.

To begin, FamilySearch employees take records from governments, libraries, and other

such sources and create digital copies of them. These copies are then gathered into small groups called “batches,” which are available to volunteers online. Volunteers log into FamilySearch, download a batch, and enter the data they see on the screen. That data is later made available more widely to family history researchers. Each batch is a compilation of work that a volunteer could complete in about 30 minutes, says Katie Gale, Indexing Project Coordinator for FamilySearch.

Volunteers participating in FamilySearch indexing might include people whose native language is not English (the site is currently available in seven languages), but it could also include people who have language skills from missionary service, school, or other training.

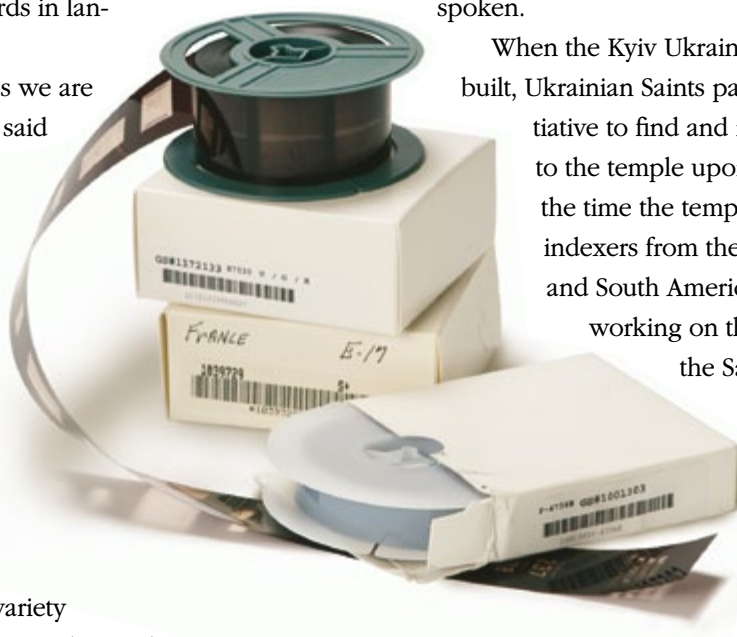
Even if projects aren’t available in a country where you live or served, projects could be available from countries where the same language is spoken.

When the Kyiv Ukraine Temple was being built, Ukrainian Saints participated in an initiative to find and index names to bring to the temple upon its completion. By the time the temple was dedicated, 401 indexers from the Ukraine, Russia, North and South America, and Europe were working on the Kyiv project, and the Saints were able to bring

200,000 Ukrainian names to the temple.

As indexing work grows in an area, FamilySearch personnel who provide indexing batches

will identify areas of growth and then, where possible, accelerate the release of projects related to that region.



At the current rate of indexing, it could take some countries up to a decade to have currently released batches completed—thus the need for additional indexers. Many batches in languages other than English average between two and six years to complete.

“If the project goes on and on, it provides no value to anybody,” said Paul Starkey, Indexing Operations Manager for FamilySearch. “The whole purpose of indexing is to provide these records [electronically] so that people can find their ancestors. We try to turn the projects around fairly quickly.”

The Church owns some 2.4 million rolls of microfilm containing genealogical records that are stored in the Granite Mountain Record Vault. These equate to some 15 billion records waiting

BEGIN INDEXING NOW

Get started by going to indexing.familysearch.org.

Select one of seven languages to work in from the drop-down menu.

Click on **Get Started**. The indexing software will automatically download and launch the application.

Practice with a training batch to become familiar with the software.

Start indexing! You can select a batch from any project, organized by countries. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN, © IRI

to be indexed. Countless other physical records exist throughout the world.

“[Finding a name and personal records] is an experience that turns the hearts of the researchers to their fathers,” Brother Ericson said. “Members of the Church can use the information that has been indexed to document their ancestors’ lines and provide the saving ordinances of the temple.”

While virtually anyone with access to a computer can participate in the simple task of indexing, its importance shouldn’t be minimized, Sister Gale said. “If people [could] see indexing as the grander vision of family history, they could see the importance of it and the need for more volunteers.”

“We need more people engaged in indexing,” Brother Ericson said, “and we are asking people to share this program with their friends and family members, whether or not they are members of the Church. It’s not exclusive to members of the Church. There is a fun interaction when everyone is working on a common goal.” ■

FamilySearch indexing coordinators have a new goal for volunteers: indexing in languages other than English.

Growing Self-Sufficiency in Ecuador

By Heather Wrigley

Church Magazines

Individual freedom and citizenship responsibility depend upon the principle of helping the individual to help himself,” President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), thirteenth President of the Church, said in his 1975 inaugural address of the Benson Institute Agriculture and Food Institute and Corporation, a Latter-day Saint Charities program.

Under that philosophy of self-reliance, the Benson Institute has worked with thousands of people to improve food production, nutrition, and health, increasing of quality of life for some of the world’s poor.

In 2009 members of the Benson Institute traveled to Ecuador, a country rich in agriculture. However, according to the World Health Organization, in this country of nearly 15 million people, 23 percent of children under age five are chronically malnourished. The efforts of the Benson Institute are helping lower that statistic as those involved work toward breaking the poverty cycle.

One woman, a mother of six, said before the Benson Institute came, it was often difficult to provide for her family: “It’s so sad to be a mother and be so poor that you can’t give your children a meal or a portion of bread each day,” she said.

The families working with the Benson Institute learned improved planting techniques, crop rotation, small animal farming, balanced nutrition, personal hygiene, and proper food preparation.

The hunger that was a daily trial for many has become less frequent with the implementation of

new farming techniques. Families saw a dramatic increase in food production that allowed them to store their own food as well as sell their products for income. In addition, families experienced better health as their diet and sanitation improved. Eating the fruits of their labor from the garden



Families working with the Benson Institute have seen better health as their diet and sanitation have improved.

has provided them with nutrients their diets previously lacked.

“We used to have children who didn’t perform,” a local teacher said. “After the program, the children learned much more quickly. Before, we had children who became ill frequently; after, the children no longer became ill. They used to sleep in class; afterwards, they no longer fell asleep in class. They had looked a lot more tired, but after the program they were much more healthy looking, with more energy.”

All of the Church’s welfare initiatives are based on proven principles of self-reliance. That along with the Benson Institute’s practice of building on decades of experience and knowledge continue to bless the lives of tens of thousands of people throughout the world. ■

View a video about the project in Ecuador online in English and Spanish at <http://lds.org/church/news/growing-self-sufficiency-in-ecuador>

Raise Light to World, Apostles Tell Central American Saints

Each member of the Church must build a deep faith in Christ, Elder M. Russell Ballard and Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles told members in Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua during their assignments in Central America in January 2011. Along with other Church leaders, they counseled members to strengthen their families through prayer, scripture study, temple service, family home evening, observance of the Sabbath day, obedience to the Lord's commandments, and sharing their faith with those around them.

Elder Christofferson and Elder Ballard presided over conferences in several stakes and participated in firesides for local priesthood leaders, parents and married couples, young single adults, and youth. They also met with 1,100 missionaries in four missions, stake presidencies, bishops, and branch presidents.

Elder Scott Returns to Mozambique

"You are some of the most precious children on earth, and God loves you," Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles told Latter-day Saints of Mozambique while he was recently in the Africa Southeast Area. Eleven years after dedicating this country for the preaching of the gospel, Elder Scott returned in January 2011 to find that the Church has made great progress.

On Elder Scott's first visit, there were only 40 Church members in Mozambique, and the country was part of the South Africa Johannesburg Mission. At the time of his second visit, the Church had grown to more than 5,000 members spread throughout 2 districts, 19 branches, and 3 groups meeting across the country. Mozambique is also the headquarters of the Mozambique Maputo Mission, which covers all of Mozambique and Angola.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ELDER NEIL L. ANDERSEN

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles meets with members and missionaries in the Pacific Area.

Before leaving, Elder Scott took time to meet and thank doctors who were in Mozambique with the Church's humanitarian aid program.

Elder Bednar and Elder Andersen Strengthen Saints in the Pacific

Church members and missionaries in the Pacific were recently instructed, uplifted, and edified by two members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Elder David A. Bednar and Elder Neil L. Andersen.

Elder Bednar met with missionaries and members in Tonga, New Zealand, Hawaii, and the Marshall Islands. For members in the Marshall Islands, Elder Bednar's visit was an important event, as it is believed to be the first time a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles had ever visited.

Elder Andersen fulfilled assignments in Australia, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, and French Polynesia.

"As we travel to the isles of the sea and the uttermost parts of the earth, we see the Church is everywhere," Elder Bednar said. "It is firmly established, it is growing, and there are faithful, good people. It is truly miraculous." ■

For more on the ministry of modern prophets and apostles, visit lds.org/study/prophets-speak-today.

Faith and Family Inspire New Caledonians' Temple Visit

In January, 147 members of the Church from New Caledonia spent a month in Hamilton, New Zealand, to attend the temple there.

For many it was the first time they had worshiped in a Latter-day Saint temple. For others it was an annual event.

"We don't have a temple in New Caledonia, and most members come from very humble families," said Georgie Guidi,

a member of the group. "The parents work all year to save the money for the trip." The temple is located more than 1,000 miles (1,600 km) from these members' homes.

He said the reason they are so willing to go to New Zealand is that the experiences they have there strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ and bring their families together.

Gerard Mou-Tham, district president in New Caledonia, added that "coming to the temple is an opportunity for many to increase their faith and to grow closer to God." ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Solomon Islands Prime Minister Presented with Family Proclamation

The Church presented a copy of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" (*Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 128) to the prime minister of the Solomon Islands, Danny Philip, in a brief ceremony on Friday, January 21, 2011.

Elder Dirk Smibert, Area Seventy, and other Church representatives met in the prime minister's home and presented him with the proclamation as well as a statuette of a family.

El Salvador Temple Dates Announced

The First Presidency of the Church has invited members and the general public to tour the San Salvador El Salvador

Temple during its open house held from Friday, July 1, 2011, through Saturday, July 23, 2011, except Sundays.

A cultural celebration will be held on Saturday, August 20, 2011, followed by the dedication of the temple the next day.

Site Allows Members to Share Talents to Build the Church

Helping in the Vineyard is a new Church website created to house the growing number of volunteer projects Church members can assist with. Projects include translation, FamilySearch indexing, photography, tagging videos and images, and editorial work and are available from any location with Internet access.

Vineyard creators hope to have 10,000 volunteers register and participate in online

projects during 2011. Members can sign up to participate at vineyard.lds.org, currently available only in English.

Museum Opens New Children's Exhibits

The Church History Museum in Salt Lake City has unveiled two new exhibits featuring creative learning environments and children's artwork.

The Gospel Blesses My Life features art by children from 42 countries around the world depicting how a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ blesses lives.

A Book of Mormon Fiesta: A Latin American Celebration features interactive sections that celebrate Latin heritage within the Church and portray stories of Latin American members.

For more information about the exhibits, visit churchhistorymuseum.org. ■

COMMENT

Courage to Be Stronger

I reflect daily on the counsel and advice I receive in the *Liahona*. It helps me in my daily decisions, and I find I am more committed to living the gospel. The magazine gives me the courage to be a little stronger.

Ramon Cristopher Hipolito Villaluna,
Philippines

Solves Impossible Problems

The messages in the *Liahona* keep me strong. When I need to make seemingly impossible decisions, I reread the messages and I find the perfect solution. Please never stop including the First Presidency Message and Latter-day Saint Voices.

Evelyn Forson, Ghana

This Is the Truth

The *Liahona* has been a guide in my life since I joined the Church 15 years ago, and I have received strong impressions from the Spirit as I have read from its pages. It is my refuge in times of sadness. As I read the stories of Saints around the world and the words of the General Authorities I feel comfort, peace, and a confirmation that this is the truth.

Felipe Urbina, Costa Rica

Please send your feedback or suggestions to liahona@ldschurch.org. Submissions may be edited for length or clarity.

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

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

“The True Path to Happiness,”

p. 28: After sharing the article with your family, consider these questions: How do the decisions we make now affect future happiness? How can we be sure we are making righteous decisions?

“The Power of Education,”

p. 42: The author of this article was impressed with what President Gordon B. Hinckley said about education: “You need all the education you can get. Sacrifice . . . anything that is needed to be sacrificed to qualify yourselves to do the work of the world.” As a family, discuss sacrifice and the blessings that come from it.

My Daughter’s Questions

As bishop of our ward, I encouraged parents to give their children opportunities to teach in family home evening. My wife and I decided to do as I had said.

Our son taught first, and we enjoyed his lesson on prayer. The next Monday was our daughter’s turn. She had been baptized only a few months before. Her topic was God’s creation. She asked a series of questions, which we answered in turn. She then bore her testimony and concluded.

My son exclaimed, “You’ve not taught us yet; you were only asking

“Teach a Man to Fish,”

p. 54: Read or summarize this article with your family. How did Ezra prepare to face his trials? How did Heavenly Father help him? Discuss what your family can do to prepare.

“Trust in the Lord,” p. 60: Read the article as a family. Consider asking family members to share experiences when their prayers were answered. Talk about the different ways that Heavenly Father can answer prayers and the importance of trusting Him.



questions.” But I told my family that I had been moved when my wife, answering one of the questions, said that she is grateful to God for creating family units and giving her a wonderful family with a loving husband. I told them that my heart was full of gratitude when my youngest daughter answered the question “Who created the world?” by exclaiming, “Jesus.” I found many other answers overwhelming in their insightfulness.

So even though my daughter did not “teach” as my son expected, her lesson—and others my children have taught—are my favorite family home evenings.

Richard Ikpegbu, Nigeria

BUILDING ON A SURE FOUNDATION

By Joshua J. Perkey

Church Magazines

Not far from the vast expanse of the Ohio River lies a small town on the outskirts of Louisville, Kentucky, called Anchorage. Once a farming community where a riverboat captain established his last portage, it has become home to families of many diverse faiths.

It was there in church, at home, and while exploring the marvelous world beneath the woods of sycamore, oak, maple, chestnut, and willow trees that I learned one of the fundamentals of Christianity: that Jesus came as the master teacher, instructing us in the ways of goodness and integrity.

My parents were good folks, faithful in their church. They taught me how to be a good person and that there are certain things that are right, such as being kind to others, and certain things that are wrong, such as stealing. On the other hand, they also taught that what one person believes to be true is just as valid as what someone else believes to be true, even if those beliefs differ in fundamental ways. In this philosophy, as I understand it, there are no eternal principles true for everyone, just personal viewpoints that intelligent people have the right and obligation to determine are true for themselves.

Because of those underlying tenets of moral relativism, I had a difficult time believing what the Mormon missionaries taught me about the



A testimony can become unshakable.

need for the Atonement, priesthood authority, and prophets. Indeed, my journey to conversion took me six long years of constantly challenging and questioning who I was, what I believed, and whether there could, in fact, be a God who had established eternal principles of truth and error, sin and consequence.

Remarkably, I did receive a spiritual confirmation, but it did not come until I was humble

enough to accept it. First came a witness of baptism, then of the Book of Mormon, then of Joseph Smith as a true prophet. Additional witnesses followed, line upon line, regarding today's prophets and apostles.

Eventually, there came a point in my life when I didn't just believe the gospel was true—I knew it. The culmination of many little witnesses created a foundation upon which my faith was sure, a bulwark against which challenges to testimony break.

It is our divine right to seek answers from the Lord. And we must keep spiritually nourishing ourselves every day so our testimonies remain strong. But I also know that in the Lord's program, it is not productive to keep questioning principles about which we have received a witness. In fact, it may lead to apostasy.

I no longer struggle with the moral relativism of my youth. I know that when the prophet speaks, his words are from God. When circumstances arise that challenge my testimony, I trust in the witness I have already received, and then I do my best to live by it. That is the road to peace; that is the way of happiness. ■

The Church Welfare Plan

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF SELF-RELIANCE AND SERVICE

“Our primary purpose was to set up . . . a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift and self respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership.”

President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945), in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 3; see also *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* (2002), 115.

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THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY
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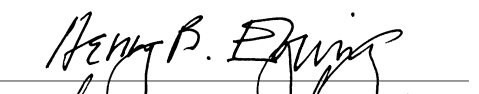
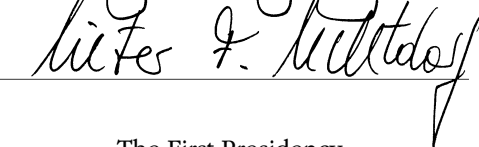
June 1, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the welfare program of the Church. The pages that follow include a brief history of the origin of the program, will acquaint you with the Church's international welfare efforts, and show welfare principles at work in the lives of Church members throughout the world.

This anniversary serves as a reminder for all of us to become more self-reliant and to help people help themselves. As you review this special section, we encourage you and your family to prayerfully consider and act upon self-reliance and other welfare principles.

Sincerely yours,

The First Presidency

Providing in the Lord's Way

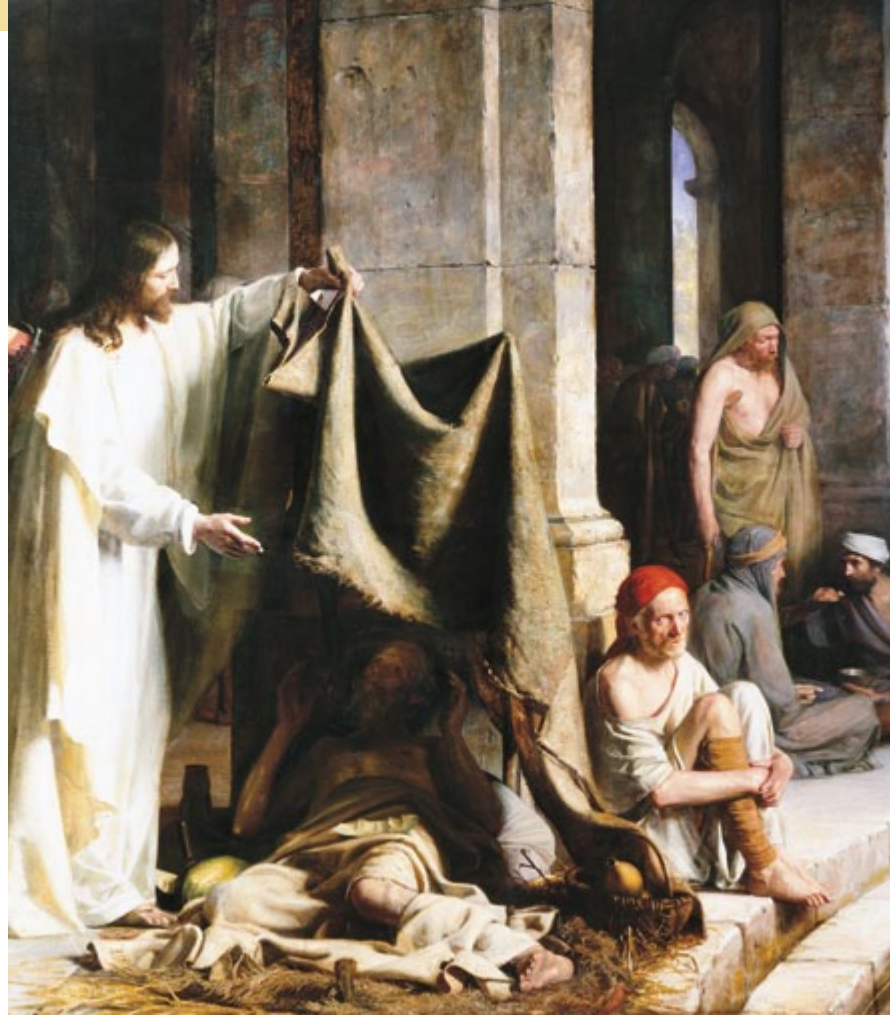
It was a time when the stock market saw huge losses. Banks and other financial institutions failed. Unemployment soared. People were losing their homes. Governments intervened with expensive programs to try to reverse downward trends. More and more people were forced to turn to public institutions for food and other necessities.

This description of the 1930s could also apply to more recent times. Then—as well as now—the Church's welfare plan has been available to “help the people to help themselves,”¹ in times of disaster, in widespread economic depressions and recessions, and in the smaller, more personal challenges families and individuals can face at any time.

Although the welfare plan we know today wasn't introduced until 1936, Saints in *every* dispensation have practiced principles of provident living because the Savior Jesus Christ is the architect of the welfare plan. President Thomas S. Monson has said: “The Lord provided the way when he declared, ‘And the storehouse shall be kept by the consecrations of the church; and widows and orphans shall be provided for, as also the poor.’ (D&C 83:6.) Then the reminder, ‘But it must needs be done in mine own way.’ (D&C 104:16).”²

To provide in the Lord's way, we must develop our own self-reliance and then seek to help others become self-reliant. “Devoted men and women help to operate this vast and inspired program,” said President Monson. “In reality, the plan would never succeed on effort alone, for this program operates through faith after the way of the Lord.”³

The 75th anniversary of the welfare plan—commemorated this year—gives Latter-day Saints the opportunity to reflect on basic principles such as



becoming self-reliant, caring for the poor and needy, and serving others. When we live these principles, we are better able to alleviate suffering, build character, and foster unity.

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* (2002), 115.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “The Way of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 7.
3. Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 7.

“The real long term objective of the welfare plan is the building of character in the members of the Church, givers and receivers, rescuing all that is finest down deep inside of them, and bringing to flower and fruitage the latent richness of the spirit, which after all is the mission and purpose and reason for being of this Church.”

President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), First Counselor in the First Presidency, in Glen L. Rudd, *Pure Religion: The Story of Church Welfare Since 1930* (1995), 301.

Saints in every dispensation have followed the Savior's example in caring for the poor and needy.

Photographs on page 81—Top: Members unload food at the Bishops' Central Storehouse in Salt Lake City, 1937. Middle: Filipino youth plant seedlings in a garden. Bottom: Members work on a stake welfare farm in Utah, 1948.



Seventy-Five Years of Living Providently

Although the Church welfare plan was not yet formalized, the early Saints recognized the importance of living a self-reliant life, caring for the poor and needy, and serving others. The Prophet Joseph Smith stated, “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.”¹

Not long after the Church was established, small bishops’ storehouses and tithing offices were erected to help the needy. Joseph Smith instituted the gathering of fast offerings in Kirtland, Ohio, during the 1830s.² The principle of tithing was also introduced during this period (see D&C 119). Tithing and fast offerings were paid in the form of labor, produce, and other commodities. Bishops and branch presidents oversaw the distribution of these resources as they do today.³

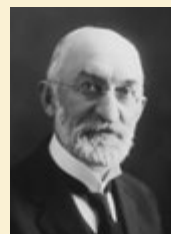
Many of the early Saints struggled to support themselves. To combat idleness, Church leaders and members united to find ways to create sustainable livelihoods. Some found work constructing Church buildings and completing public works projects. Others farmed and sold goods to provide for themselves and their families. As they labored together, the Saints were blessed with enough to meet their needs.

While the challenges of our time are different, Latter-day Saints continue to provide for themselves and care for the poor and needy by following the teachings of the Savior and the example set by previous generations.

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 330–31.
2. See Howard W. Hunter, “Fast Day,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 72.
3. See Glen L. Rudd, *Pure Religion* (1995), 2, 4.

Information in this time line comes from the following sources, unless otherwise noted: Susan Clayton Rafter, Supporting the Rescue of All That Is Finest (2005); Glen L. Rudd, Key Moments in Church Welfare Services (2008); Glen L. Rudd, Important Events for Historical Church Welfare (1999); Glen L. Rudd, A Brief History of the Church Employment Program (1998); Glen L. Rudd, Pure Religion (1995).



1936

- April 6: President Heber J. Grant and his counselors announce the Church security plan in general conference.
- October: The Church forms the General Welfare Committee.

“When we fast, . . . we feel hunger. And for a short time, we literally put ourselves in the position of the hungry and needy. As we do so, we have greater understanding of the deprivations they might feel. When we give to the bishop an offering to relieve the suffering of others, we not only do something sublime for others, but we do something wonderful for ourselves as well.”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Law of the Fast,” *Liahona*, July 2001, 90; *Ensign*, May 2001, 73.



The Saints in California’s Central Valley provide the labor for a Church-owned vineyard in Madera, California, USA. The vineyard produces hundreds of tons of raisins to be used by the poor throughout the world.

Catching the Vision of Self-Reliance

Many members might think of welfare as a program to help members in temporarily difficult circumstances. But the intent of the Church’s welfare plan is much more vast; it also involves promoting self-reliance as a way of life. President Thomas S. Monson has taught that self-reliance—“the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the necessities of life for self and family”¹—is an essential element of our temporal *and* spiritual well-being.²

A mere desire to become self-reliant is not enough. We must make a conscious, active effort to provide for our own needs and those of our families. Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop, reminds us that when we have done all we can to be self-reliant, “we can turn to the Lord in confidence to ask for what we might yet lack.”³ Being self-reliant allows us to bless others. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles says, “Only when we are self-reliant can we truly emulate the Savior in serving and blessing others.”⁴

Self-reliance involves several facets of a balanced life, including (1) education, (2) health, (3) employment, (4) family home production and storage, (5) family finances, and (6) spiritual strength.



Left, top: Dutch Saints harvest and load potatoes for German Saints in 1947. Above: Food-production training in Ecuador has helped members grow more productive gardens.



1937

- The Church establishes the first Bishops’ Central Storehouse, in Salt Lake City.



1938

- Welfare Square property is purchased in Salt Lake City, and construction begins.
- April: Church security plan is renamed Church welfare plan.
- August 12: The Church opens its first Deseret Industries thrift store, in Salt Lake City.



1. Education

The Lord commands us to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118). President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught: “We believe in education. This Church encourages education. There is incumbent upon every member of this Church, as a mandate from the Lord, to get all the education you can get. . . . There is incumbent upon the Latter-day Saints a dictum from the Lord Himself to educate our minds and our hands.”⁵

Gaining an education was the goal of Roberto Flete Gonzalez of the Dominican Republic, who enrolled in college shortly after returning from his mission. His father agreed to cover his living expenses so that Roberto could focus on his studies, but a short time later, Roberto’s father died, leaving the family in a dire financial situation.

Roberto quit school and began working to support himself, his mother, and his sister. He wondered how he’d ever be able to finish school.

Weeks later President Hinckley announced the Perpetual Education Fund, “a bold initiative” that would help youth in developing areas “rise out of the poverty they and generations before them have

known.”⁶ Roberto applied for and was granted a PEF loan, which allowed him to continue his studies. This opportunity not only helped with immediate finances, but it also helped Roberto have the faith to marry and form an eternal family because he knew he would be able to provide for them.

Roberto finished medical school while serving as a bishop and became the first Church member on the National Board of Dominican Medical Schools. But the best results, he says, have been at home. “There have been changes in my family as we are now further removed from the cycle of poverty,” he says. “I am grateful that my son won’t have to live the same way I did because we’ve stepped out of that cycle.”

For more information, visit the Education and Literacy section of providentliving.org and visit besmart.com, a website to help Latter-day Saint youth prepare for higher education.

“All we can learn that is true while we are in this life will rise with us in the Resurrection. And all that we can learn will enhance our capacity to serve.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Education for Real Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 21.



1939

- The first storehouse and cannery at Welfare Square begin operation.

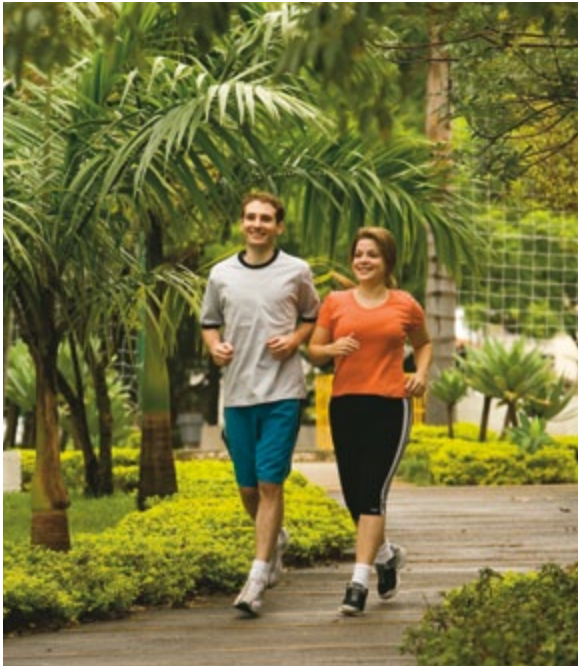


1940

- August 27: President David O. McKay dedicates the Welfare Square grain elevator. Church members donated over 70,000 hours of labor to build it.

1941

- April 20: Original Welfare Square milk-processing plant begins operation.



Far left: Latter-day Saint students pursue education to be better prepared to meet the rigors of today's competitive world. Left: Exercise and good nutrition are an important part of treating our bodies with care and respect.

2. Health

Because we are created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:27), our bodies are temples and should be treated with care and respect (see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17). The Word of Wisdom, found in Doctrine and Covenants 89, is the Lord's code of health and was revealed to Joseph Smith in 1833. It teaches that we should eat nutritious foods and avoid harmful substances. Apostles and prophets have since taught that we should shun all substances or practices that abuse our bodies or minds and that could lead to addiction.⁷

Sainimere Balenacagi of Fiji learned this lesson as a teenager when she was attending a wedding with some friends who were not members of the Church. Many people there, including Sainimere's friends, were drinking and smoking and invited her to drink. "I was taught my whole life to live the gospel standards, so I rejected the offer without hesitation," Sainimere says.

She knows that the blessings of adhering to the Word of Wisdom go beyond physical health: "I have found extra protection in the sense that I am able to make better choices because of the closeness of the Holy Spirit. I see clearly that standards do not restrict our freedom; they protect us from consequences that lead to restricted freedom."

For more information, see the Physical Health section of providentliving.org.



Sainimere Balenacagi knows both the physical and spiritual blessings of following the Word of Wisdom.

"Our physical bodies indeed are temples of God. Consequently, you and I must carefully consider what we take into our temple, what we put on our temple, what we do to our temple, and what we do with our temple."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Ye Are the Temple of God," *Ensign*, Sept. 2001, 18.

ABOVE, FROM LEFT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN LUKE, ISRAEL ANTUNES, AND CRAIG DIMOND



1948

- March 1: The Church opens a regional employment office in Salt Lake City.



1960

- March: New Welfare Square milk-processing plant is completed.

1963

- Pasta manufacturing plant and new Welfare Square cannery begin operation.



Top: A young woman is helped at an employment resource center in Mexico. Above: Oséias Portinari says the employment resource center in São Paulo, Brazil, “gives unemployed members a better vision of life.”

3. Employment

In many wards and branches, finding employment is the most pressing need members face as they strive to become self-reliant. Priesthood quorums and Relief Society sisters can help these members. They should work closely with these individuals, identifying helpful community resources, mentors who can personally assist those in need, and available job opportunities. The power of members working together in faith to bless those in need will often lead to successful employment.

In some areas of the world, the Church has

“Our Heavenly Father asks only that we do the best we can—that we work according to our full capacity, however great or small that may be.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Two Principles for Any Economy,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov 2009, 56.

established employment resource centers. Currently, there are more than 300 centers in 56 countries that offer services such as career workshops, networking meetings, and individual job counseling. The new Church website LDSjobs.org also provides resources for jobseekers, employers, and Church leaders.

After Oséias Portinari of Brazil was laid off at work, he spent more than two months searching for a new job. Unable to find a position, he volunteered at his local employment resource center in São Paulo. Helping others in their job searches offered Oséias an opportunity to improve his own interviewing and job search skills. He took the career workshop several times and eventually became an instructor. To his surprise, as he diligently served others, Oséias soon began to receive calls from prospective employers, which led to gainful employment.

Oséias is grateful for Church resources that give unemployed members a better vision of life. He says, “I know that as we put in effort, the Lord opens doors.”

For more information, visit LDSjobs.org, employment.lds.org, or your nearest employment resource center.

1973

- The Church creates LDS Social Services to help families.



1976

- Welfare facilities are expanded throughout the United States and Canada.
- March 29: New Welfare Square bishops’ storehouse is completed.

1978

- The Church forms the Emergency Response Committee to help millions of people around the world affected by disasters.

4. Family Home Production and Storage

In 2007 the Church introduced *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage*, a pamphlet that provides a simplified approach to family home storage. The First Presidency encourages members worldwide to focus on having a basic supply of food and water and some money in savings. Members can begin by producing or purchasing a few extra items and setting aside a little money each week as their circumstances allow. Following this pattern over time, members can establish a home storage supply and a financial reserve suitable for their needs.⁸

After learning of this counsel, the Lugo family of Valencia, Venezuela, felt inspired to begin their own home storage. Each week they began setting aside a small amount of food, water, and money. Even with their limited resources, they were able to gather a modest reserve after only a few months. Later that year a workers' strike in Venezuela put many local workers' jobs in jeopardy. Brother Omar Lugo was among those who eventually lost their jobs.

It took nearly two years for Brother Lugo to find new employment. During that time, Brother Lugo and his family lived on their savings and food storage. Despite the difficult challenges of unemployment, the Lugos experienced peace and comfort because they were prepared. They faced the uncertain future with confidence, knowing they had followed the counsel to gradually build their home storage.⁹

For more information, visit the Family Home Storage section of providentliving.org or refer to the pamphlet *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage*.



Families in the Democratic Republic of Congo work together to grow cassava as a food staple and to process the root into flour for daily use and for longer-term storage.

"This new [home storage] program is within everyone's grasp. The first step is to begin. The second is to continue. It doesn't matter how fast we get there so much as that we begin and continue according to our abilities."

Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop, in "Family Home Storage: A New Message," *Liahona*, Mar. 2009, 14; *Ensign*, Mar. 2009, 60.

TOP LEFT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; TOP RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPHS BY HOWARD COLLETT



1980s

- First employment centers outside the United States are established, in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

1981

- The Church builds a Deseret Industries thrift store at Welfare Square.



1982

- September 10: U.S. president Ronald Reagan visits welfare facilities in Ogden, Utah.



Devon and Michaela Stephens say that creating a budget helped them gain “firm control” of their finances.

5. Family Finances

Another aspect of provident living is wisely managing income and expenses. The First Presidency has counseled:

“We urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt. . . .

“If you have paid your debts and have a financial

“All of us are responsible to provide for ourselves and our families in both temporal and spiritual ways. To provide providently, we must practice the principles of provident living: joyfully living within our means, being content with what we have, avoiding excessive debt, and diligently saving and preparing for rainy-day emergencies.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Becoming Provident Providers Temporally and Spiritually,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 8.

reserve, even though it be small, you and your family will feel more secure and enjoy greater peace in your hearts.”¹⁰

Successful family finances begin with the payment of tithes and offerings. When members put the Lord first, they are better able to care for themselves and others.

Another part of successful financial management involves knowing your income and expenses and controlling money rather than letting it control you. When Devon and Michaela Stephens of Arizona, USA, created a budget, they had only a vague idea of how much money they spent each month. But making a budget with specific categories helped them “come out of the clouds and down to earth,” Michaela says. “It was alarming to find we had less money than we thought, but it was also intensely exhilarating to suddenly feel that we had firm control of what we had.”

For more information, visit the Family Finances section of providentliving.org or refer to the pamphlet *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Finances*.

1983

- The Presiding Bishopric is designated to direct the welfare program.

1985

- Church Humanitarian Services program begins.



1990s

- The Church uses its Humanitarian Service Center to sort surplus clothing and other goods for shipment throughout the world in response to poverty and disasters.

1996

- The Church establishes Latter-day Saint Charities as a nongovernmental organization to facilitate humanitarian activities in select countries.¹
- Welfare Services builds its first bishops’ storehouses and home storage centers outside the United States, in Mexico.
- Renovation of Welfare Square begins.

6. Spiritual Strength

Spirituality is essential to our temporal and eternal well-being. We all experience trials. Striving to increase our spirituality will help us face these trials well and give us hope for better days.

Nirina J-Randriamiharisoa of Madagascar currently lives in France while she pursues her education. When she first arrived, she struggled with loneliness and homesickness. “I sought for solace through prayer, scripture reading, and the gentle whisperings of the Holy Spirit,” says Nirina. “These things brought me closer to Heavenly Father and the Savior, and I felt peace.”

In time Nirina made friends and participated in activities within and outside the Church and found happiness. But then some tragic news from home shook her world. “One morning I received a message telling me that my brother had died. I had no idea I could feel such sadness. In the days and weeks that followed, I struggled through moments of loneliness, anger, and despair. Doing even the most basic things became serious challenges.”

A few months later, a close friend also passed away. The added sorrow increased Nirina’s already-heavy burden. For just a moment Nirina considered not attending church, but then she remembered that the same things that had buoyed her in her earlier difficulties could bolster her now.

“As I had when I first moved to France, I sought comfort in prayer, scripture reading, and the Holy Ghost. Through this I discovered more strongly that the Spirit and the doctrine of eternal families can bring us comfort and that the Atonement of Jesus Christ has a real effect in our lives,” she says. “Whatever trials we face, there are no ‘dead ends’ with the Lord. His plan is a plan of happiness.”

For more information on self-reliance and provident living, see *Providing in the Lord’s Way: Summary of A Leader’s Guide to Welfare*, available in many languages at providentliving.org.

NOTES

1. *Providing in the Lord’s Way: Summary of A Leader’s Guide to Welfare* (booklet, 2009), 1.
2. See Thomas S. Monson, “Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare,” *Tambuli*, Feb. 1987, 3; *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 3.
3. H. David Burton, “The Blessing of Work,” *Liahona*, Dec. 2009, 37; *Ensign*, Dec. 2009, 43.
4. Robert D. Hales, “A Gospel Vision of Welfare: Faith in Action,” in *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (booklet, 2009), 2.
5. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 724.
6. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Perpetual Education Fund,” *Liahona*, July 2001, 62; *Ensign*, May 2001, 52.
7. See, for example, Russell M. Nelson, “Addiction or Freedom,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 6; M. Russell Ballard, “O That Cunning Plan of the Evil One,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 108.
8. See *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage* (pamphlet, 2007).
9. See “Family Home Storage: A New Message,” *Liahona*, Mar. 2009, 12–13; *Ensign*, Mar. 2009, 58–59.
10. *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Finances* (pamphlet, 2007).



Nirina J-Randriamiharisoa has found that consistent gospel living can buoy us up even through the most difficult times.

“A strong testimony gives peace, comfort, and assurance. It generates the conviction that as the teachings of the Savior are consistently obeyed, life will be beautiful, the future will be secure, and there will be capacity to overcome the challenges that cross our path. A testimony grows from understanding truth distilled from prayer and the pondering of scriptural doctrine. It is nurtured by living those truths with faith anchored in the secure confidence that the promised results will be obtained.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Transforming Power of Faith and Character,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 46.



1997

- LDS Social Services makes a record number of adoption placements in one year with 629—the highest number the agency achieved in the 20th century.²



1999

- March: Welfare Services begins a major employment initiative to establish up to 50 new employment resource centers throughout the world.
- LDS Social Services is renamed LDS Family Services, and programs are expanded.



Increasing Our Compassionate Service by Following the Savior

Whosoever will save his life shall lose it,” the Savior taught, “but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it” (Luke 9:24).

Of this admonition President Thomas S. Monson said: “I believe the Savior is telling us that unless we lose ourselves in service to others, there is little purpose to our own lives. Those who live only for themselves eventually shrivel up and figuratively lose their lives, while those who lose themselves in service to others grow and flourish—and in effect save their lives.”¹

It can be difficult to find the necessary time and energy to help our family, neighbors, ward or branch members, community, and even strangers. When do we help and how, especially when each of us has a finite amount of time? How do we serve when our circumstances limit our abilities?

Our Exemplar is, of course, the Savior Jesus Christ, who has invited us to follow Him (see Matthew 4:19). Although we do not share His divine calling, we can share in His ministry. Describing that ministry, the

Apostle Peter said that Jesus “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38).

Jesus healed the sick and ministered to the afflicted (see Matthew 9:20–22; Mark 8:22–25).

Perhaps we will not perform the same mighty miracles, but we can comfort and minister to the needs of those who are dying, ill, or mourning.

The Savior miraculously fed those who had no food (see Matthew 14:15–21). We can give generous fast offerings, serve in Church welfare food-production projects, and contribute to community efforts to feed the needy.

Jesus was aware of and ministered to the individual (see Luke 8:45–48). As we seek to follow His example, the Spirit will open our eyes to see the suffering, the lonely, the estranged. And we can be guided to help meet their needs.

Jesus spent time with others, even when He hadn’t planned to (see Luke 24:29) **and even when He was dealing with His own concerns**

2001

- A new career workshop is introduced at employment resource centers. Self-employment workshop materials are introduced a year later.
- September 5: Following the completion of the renovation of Welfare Square, a rededication ceremony is held.



2003

- January 25: The Provident Living website is launched, providentliving.org.
- A major proposal is approved to increase the number of bishops’ storehouses throughout the world.
- The Church begins four major humanitarian initiatives: neonatal resuscitation training, clean water, wheelchair distribution, and vision treatment.

(see Matthew 14). We are counseled to give service in a wise and orderly way and not to “run faster than [we have] strength” (Mosiah 4:27). But sometimes our greatest opportunities to serve and bless come when it is least convenient. In the Savior’s parable, the good Samaritan interrupted his journey, then and there, to minister to the stricken man’s needs (see Luke 10:30–37).

No one was beneath the Savior’s notice or too low for Him to reach out to (see Matthew 9:9–13). As the Savior did, so can we love and lift others, teaching them a better way and inviting them to join us in the abundant life the Savior offers.

Heavenly Father knows our unique abilities, circumstances, and desires, and He knows how we can use them to bless others. As we draw closer to Him and seek His direction, He will help us know whom, where, and how to serve.

Visit the Service section of **LDS.org** for ideas about serving in the Church, in your community, in missionary capacities, and in humanitarian service.

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “What Have I Done for Someone Today?” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 85.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).



Far left: Brother Chiroque, a Young Men president in Chulucanas, Peru, works with Alex, a member of the teachers quorum, to build crutches for an injured man in their branch.

Fast offerings, like those being collected by these deacons, are vital to helping the needy.

The Strength of Many

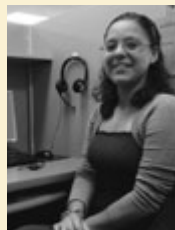
The Law of the Fast

The Lord established the law of the fast to bless His people and provide a way to care for those in need. He instructed the Saints “to impart of your substance unto the poor, . . . and [it] shall be laid before the bishop . . . to administer to the poor and needy” (D&C 42:31, 34). Fast offerings are a primary resource for the Lord’s storehouse. Church members are encouraged to give an offering at least equal to the value of the two meals not eaten while fasting. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) asked members to give “much, much more—ten times more where we are in a position to do it.”¹

When we understand and live the law of the fast, our love and compassion for the less fortunate increase. Fasting, accompanied by prayer, is a form of true worship. When we obey the law of the fast,

2009

- June: A new adoption website is launched, ItsAboutLove.org.³



2010

- April: A new employment website is launched, LDSjobs.org, currently available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.
- Food production is added to humanitarian initiatives.

NOTES

1. See “Humanitarian Activities Worldwide,” providentliving.org/content/display/0,11666,4600-1-2323-1,00.html.
2. See C. Ross Clement, “LDS Family Services” (unpublished history prepared for LDS Family Services, May 10, 2000).
3. See Kimberly Bowen, “LDS Family Services Launches New Web Site,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2009, 78.



Symbolic of the added power that comes when we unite to serve others, priesthood brethren in Louisiana, USA, help remove a fallen tree after Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005.



Projects like peach production provide a variety of nutritious foods that both sustain and brighten the lives of those who would otherwise suffer hunger.

we gain spiritual strength, temporal blessings, and a greater desire to serve others.

President Thomas S. Monson taught: “The concept of fast offerings appears as early as the time of Isaiah when, speaking of the true fast, he encouraged people to fast and ‘to deal thy bread to the hungry, and . . . bring the poor that are cast out to thy house’ [Isaiah 58:7]. The Prophet Joseph instituted the practice of collecting fast offerings for the poor in Kirtland, Ohio; and later at Nauvoo, Illinois, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles sent a general letter to the Church defining ‘the principle of fasts,’ stating: ‘Let this be an ensample to all saints, and there will never be any lack for bread: When the poor are starving, let those who have, fast one day and give what they otherwise would have eaten to the bishops

for the poor, and every one will abound for a long time. . . . And so long as the saints will all live to this principle with glad hearts and cheerful countenances they will always have an abundance.’”²

Food Production

The production and processing of food to feed the hungry has been a cornerstone of the welfare plan since it was first introduced. What began as scattered gardens and work projects located throughout Utah became a vast network of over 1,000 farms and food-production projects run by the stakes and wards of the Church. Welfare farms operated in North America, Europe, Australia, and Polynesia. By the 1980s these farms and production facilities were consolidated, enlarged, and improved. Some smaller projects were sold.

As in the past, these farms and facilities are supported by members of the Church who provide most of the labor—all volunteer. Members contribute hundreds of thousands of days each year to produce, process, and distribute food that will be used to support the needy. Over 100 million pounds (45 million kg) of grain, beans, meat, fruit, vegetables, and other commodities are produced annually, ensuring that bishops have food available to support those in need.

“If every member of this church observed the fast and contributed generously, the poor and the needy—not only of the Church, but many others as well—would be blessed and provided for.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “Rise to a Larger Vision of the Work,” *Ensign*, May 1990, 97.



As part of the ongoing effort to meet people's most basic needs, young women in Hong Kong assemble soap and other hygiene items for victims of disaster.



Projects to serve others strengthen the bonds between us and help us develop Christlike attributes. Here, young Latter-day Saints in Mexico, involved in neighborhood improvement, wash a home.

In areas of the Church where storehouses are not available or readily accessible, bishops and branch presidents use fast offerings to provide the needed commodities and services.

The Lord's Storehouse

Since the welfare program was introduced in 1936, members of the Church have labored together to relieve the suffering of those who stand in need. Economic downturns, natural disasters, unemployment, sickness and disability, or times of loss have all required that the Saints work together under the direction of the priesthood to ensure that needs are met and that individuals and families are blessed. Over the years millions of members have willingly given of their time and talents to bless others and replace, as President Monson says, "the weakness of one person standing alone [with] the strength of many serving together."³

When President Heber J. Grant spoke of the welfare system in 1936, he envisioned that "no new Church machinery" would be required but that "stake and ward organizations, the priesthood quorums, the Relief Society, and the various auxiliary organizations [would] render the maximum service [they]

could furnish in the interest of the general welfare of the Church."⁴ The Lord had already established the organization needed to bless the poor and needy—priesthood quorums were in place, Relief Societies were organized, and the priesthood of God was on the earth.

The members of the Church, with their consecrated labor, their talents and abilities, become an integral part of the Lord's storehouse. In addition to the fast offerings that are paid to the fast-offering fund of the Church, priesthood leaders can draw on the time, talents, abilities, and energies of all the members in blessing those who stand in need.

By accepting the opportunity to assist others in their hour of need, we demonstrate our love for God and His children. This is welfare in its purest light, and its faithful practice will exalt both the giver and the receiver, as envisioned by prophets in our day.

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, 184.
2. Thomas S. Monson, "Be Thou an Example," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 44.
3. Thomas S. Monson, in "Messages of Inspiration from President Monson," *Church News*, Feb. 6, 2010, 2.
4. Heber J. Grant, in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1965–75), 6:19; capitalization standardized.



“To all within the sound of my voice I declare that the welfare plan of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is inspired of Almighty God. Indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ is its architect. He beckons to you and to me, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him’ (Revelation 3:20).

“May we hear His voice, may we open to His presence the doorways of our hearts, and may He be our constant companion as we strive to serve His children.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “The Way of the Lord,” in *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (booklet, 2009), 13.

Making Principles of Welfare Part of Your Life

Living welfare principles is about putting our faith in Jesus Christ into action—by eliminating unnecessary debt, living within our means, and establishing family home storage and financial reserves, for example. Our faith leads us to educate our minds and our hands and to work every day of our lives to be self-reliant. Having taken care of our own needs, we are better able to provide for ourselves and serve others. May we follow the counsel not only to *do* good but strive to *be* good, not just to *do* better but to *be* better.¹ Obedience to the Lord’s counsel brings temporal and spiritual blessings. It allows us to face the challenges of life armed with courage and confidence rather than fear and doubt.

President Thomas S. Monson reminds us of our duty to lift and bless others:

“My brothers and sisters, may we ask ourselves the question . . . : ‘What have I done for someone today?’ May the words of a familiar hymn penetrate our very souls and find lodgment in our hearts:

*“Have I done any good in the world today?
Have I helped anyone in need?
Have I cheered up the sad and made someone
feel glad?
If not, I have failed indeed.
Has anyone’s burden been lighter today
Because I was willing to share?
Have the sick and the weary been helped on
their way?
When they needed my help was I there?”*

“That service to which all of us have been called is the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.”² ■

NOTES

1. See Robert D. Hales, “A Gospel Vision of Welfare: Faith in Action,” in *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (booklet, 2009), 1.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “What Have I Done for Someone Today?” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 87.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Interested in learning more about the topics discussed in these pages? Several pamphlets, DVDs, websites, and other resources may be useful to you. Visit 75yearsofwelfare.org for more information.



MAY NOT BE COPIED

In His Constant Care, by Greg Olsen

*“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings,
and not one of them is forgotten before God?*

“But even the very hairs of your head are all

*numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value
than many sparrows” (Luke 12:6–7).*



In 1829 the ancient Apostles Peter, James, and John appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood. Through the same process of ordination, all worthy male members of the Church are able to receive and then exercise the priesthood—the authority to act in God’s name. See pages 14, 16, and 19.