

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • JULY 2014

# Liahona



**Parenting Young  
Adults, p. 34**

**Brazil: A Century of  
Growth, p. 18**

**Seeing the Savior in  
Symbols, p. 52**



*“Sometimes we become the lightning rod, and we must ‘take the heat’ for holding fast to God’s standards and doing His work. I testify that we need not be afraid if we are grounded in His doctrine. We may experience misunderstanding, criticism, and even false accusation, but we are never alone. Our Savior was ‘despised and rejected of men’ [Isaiah 53:3]. It is our sacred privilege to stand with Him!”*

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Stand Strong in Holy Places,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 50.



MESSAGES

- 4 **First Presidency Message:  
The Promise of Hearts Turning**  
By President Henry B. Eyring
- 7 **Visiting Teaching Message:  
The Divine Mission of Jesus  
Christ: Advocate**

FEATURE ARTICLES

- 18 **Pioneers in Every Land:  
The Church in Brazil: The  
Future Has Finally Arrived**  
By Mark L. Grover  
*The Church in Brazil has grown  
from one small immigrant  
family to more than one million  
members.*
- 24 **The Book of Mormon,  
the Gathering of Israel,  
and the Second Coming**  
By Elder Russell M. Nelson  
*The Book of Mormon is God's  
instrument to help accomplish  
two divine objectives.*
- 30 **Be Like Ammon**  
*Could Ammon's story help you  
activate the members in your  
ward or branch?*
- 34 **Ten Tips for Parents of  
Young Adults**  
By Wendy Ulrich  
*These 5 challenges and 10 sug-  
gestions will help you understand  
your young-adult children.*

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 **April 2014 Conference  
Notebook**
- 10 **What We Believe: We Teach by  
the Power of the Holy Ghost**
- 12 **Serving in the Church:  
Leading Like the Savior**  
By Ryan Carr
- 14 **Old Testament Prophets: Elijah**
- 15 **Teaching *For the Strength of  
Youth: Work and Self-Reliance***
- 16 **News of the Church**
- 38 **Latter-day Saint Voices**
- 80 **Until We Meet Again:  
Keep Your Eyes on the Shore**  
By Richard M. Romney  
*You won't get anywhere when you  
focus on the waves.*

ON THE COVER

Front: Photo illustration by Cody Bell.  
Inside front cover: Photograph © Robert  
Harding World Imagery/Corbis.

42



**42 Becoming Perfect in Christ**  
 By Elder Gerrit W. Gong  
*The Savior's perfection can help us overcome a perfectionist, self-critical, and unrealistic mindset.*



*See if you can find the Liahona hidden in this issue. Hint: Pick the purple flowers.*

64



**48 Divine Covenants Make Strong Christians**  
 By Elder D. Todd Christofferson  
*How do we obtain moral and spiritual power?*

**52 What Do You See?**  
 By David A. Edwards  
*Look closely at the gospel ordinances. You may learn something new.*

**55 Our Space**

**56 For the Strength of Youth: Work—Who Needs It?**  
 By Randall L. Ridd

**58 Moving Pipe in Muddy Shoes**  
 Raymond M. Allton  
*I had barely recovered from my morning job when my quorum adviser pulled into my driveway.*

**60 To the Point**

**61 Poster: Things Aren't Always What They Seem**

**62 Serving for the Right Reasons**  
 Rasem Maluff  
*I had a promising career in football. Did I really need to serve a mission?*

**64 Mormons Do Believe in God**  
 Brenda Hernandez Ruiz  
*When I told the woman I was a Mormon, she didn't want to talk to me anymore.*

70



**66 Special Witness: What can we do to be worthy of the Spirit?**  
 By President Boyd K. Packer

**67 My Lesson on Faith**  
 By Emma R.  
*A single cantaloupe seed taught me about faith.*

**68 My Body Is a Temple**  
 By Marissa Widdison  
*Do you have questions about your body?*

**70 Bringing Primary Home: We Become Members of the Church through Baptism and Confirmation**  
 By Jennifer Maddy

**72 Our Page**

**73 Prepared to Serve**  
 By Elder Eduardo Gavarret  
*The water was so cold, but I still wanted to be baptized.*

**74 Friends around the World: I'm Pedro from Brazil**  
 By Amie Jane Leavitt

**76 For Young Children: Sarah Walked and Walked**  
 By Heidi Poelman

**81 Prophet Portrait: Thomas S. Monson**

International magazine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

**The First Presidency:** Thomas S. Monson, Henry B. Eyring, Dieter F. Uchtdorf

**The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:**

Boyd K. Packer, L. Tom Perry, Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, M. Russell Ballard, Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales, Jeffrey R. Holland, David A. Bednar, Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson, Neil L. Andersen

**Editor:** Craig A. Cardon

**Advisers:** Jose L. Alonso, Mervyn B. Arnold, Shayne M. Bowen, Stanley G. Ellis, Christoffel Golden

**Managing Director:** David T. Warner

**Director of Operations:** Vincent A. Vaughn

**Director of Church Magazines:** Allan R. Loyborg

**Business Manager:** Garff Cannon

**Managing Editor:** R. Val Johnson

**Assistant Managing Editor:** Ryan Carr

**Writing and Editing:** Brittany Beattie, David Dickson, David A. Edwards, Matthew D. Flitton, Mindy Raye Friedman, Lori Fuller, Garrett H. Garff, LaRene Porter Gaunt, Jennifer Grace Fallon, Michael R. Morris, Sally Johnson Odekirk, Joshua J. Perkey, Jan Pinborough, Richard M. Romney, Paul VanDenBerghe, Marissa Widdison

**Managing Art Director:** P. Scott Knudsen

**Art Director:** Tadd R. Peterson

**Design:** Jeanette Andrews, Fay P. Andrus, Mandie M. Bentley, C. Kimball Bott, Thomas Child, Nate Gines, Colleen Hinckley, Eric P. Johnson, Susan Lofgren, Scott M. Mooy, Mark W. Robison, Brad Teare, K. Nicole Walkenhorst

**Intellectual Property Coordinator:**

Collette Nebeker Aune

**Production Manager:** Jane Ann Peters

**Production:** Kevin C. Banks, Connie Bowthorpe Bridge, Julie Burdett, Bryan W. Gygi, Denise Kirby, Ginny J. Nilson, Gayle Tate Rafferty

**Prepress:** Jeff L. Martin

**Printing Director:** Craig K. Sedgwick

**Distribution Director:** Stephen R. Christiansen

For subscriptions and prices outside the United States and Canada, go to [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org) or contact your local Church distribution center or ward or branch leader.

**Submit manuscripts and queries** online at [iahona.lds.org](http://iahona.lds.org); by email to [iahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:iahona@ldschurch.org); or by mail to *Liahona*, Rm. 2420, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.

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

© 2014 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America.

Text and visual material in the *Liahona* may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use. Visual material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated in the credit line with the artwork. Copyright questions should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA; email: [cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org](mailto:cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org).

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

July 2014 Vol. 38 No. 7. LIAHONA (USPS 311-480) English (ISSN 1080-9554) is published monthly by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150. USA subscription price is \$10.00 per year; Canada, \$12.00 plus applicable taxes. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. Sixty days' notice required for change of address. Include address label from a recent issue; old and new address must be included. Send USA and Canadian subscriptions to Salt Lake Distribution Center at address below. Subscription help line: 1-800-537-5971. Credit card orders (American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa) may be taken by phone or at [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org). (Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431)

POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 707.4.12.5). NONPOSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: Send address changes to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

# Family Home Evening Ideas

*This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are two ideas.*



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CODY BELL

**"Becoming Perfect in Christ,"** page 42: Using Elder Gong's teachings about perfectionism, put together a true-or-false quiz for your family to help them realize if they have perfectionist tendencies. You could use statements like "I can be happy even when I make mistakes" or "It's hard for me to forgive others" in your quiz. Together, read what Elder Gong teaches about relying on the Savior. You could also use pages 146–47 in *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* to teach how to set appropriate goals and overcome perfectionism.

**"My Body Is a Temple,"** page 68: Use the questions in this article to teach your children how to respect and love their bodies. You could serve a healthy snack, such as fruit or vegetables, to teach your children about good eating habits. You may want to play a sport or do an activity outside to help your children appreciate good health and energy. Encourage your children to reach out to a child or teenager in their ward, branch, or school who has disabilities. You could also sing "I'll Walk with You" (*Children's Songbook*, 140).

## IN YOUR LANGUAGE

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

## TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE

*Numbers represent the first page of the article.*

**Activation,** 30, 38

**Atonement,** 7, 42

**Baptism,** 52, 70, 73

**Book of Mormon,** 24, 30, 38, 55

**Callings,** 12

**Commandments,** 60

**Confirmation,** 52, 70

**Conversion,** 18

**Covenants,** 24, 48

**Eternal perspective,** 42, 80

**Faith,** 48, 67

**Family,** 34, 39, 40, 41, 80

**Family history,** 4, 6, 14, 55

**Holy Ghost,** 10, 40, 66

**Jesus Christ,** 7, 12, 42

**Marriage,** 41

**Missionary work,** 18, 30, 62, 64

**Old Testament,** 14

**Ordinances,** 52, 70

**Parenthood,** 34

**Physical body,** 68

**Pioneers,** 18, 76

**Prophets,** 14, 81

**Sacrament,** 52, 70

**Second Coming,** 24

**Service,** 12, 56, 58, 62, 73

**Teaching,** 10

**Temple,** 18

**Testimony,** 64

**Work,** 15, 56, 58

**Young adults,** 34



**By President  
Henry B. Eyring**

First Counselor  
in the First Presidency

# THE PROMISE OF Hearts Turning

**M**y mother, Mildred Bennion Eyring, grew up in the farming community of Granger, Utah, USA. One of her brothers, Roy, followed the family business of raising sheep. As a young man he spent many weeks away from home. Over time he became less interested in the Church. Eventually he moved to Idaho, USA, married, and had three children. He died at the age of 34 when his wife was 28 years old and their children were small.

Even though Roy's little family was in Idaho and my mother had moved about 2,500 miles (4,025 km) to New Jersey, USA, she often wrote them letters of love and encouragement. My uncle's family affectionately referred to my mother as "Aunt Mid."

Years passed, and one day I received a phone call from one of my cousins. I was told that Roy's widow had died. My cousin said, "Aunt Mid would want you to know." Aunt Mid had long since passed away, but the family still felt her love and reached out to tell me.

I was struck by how much my mother had filled a role in her family similar to the role the Nephite prophets had filled in their families by staying close to relatives they wanted to bring to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Nephi wrote a record that he hoped would influence the children of his brothers to return to the faith of their patriarch, Lehi. The sons of Mosiah showed that same love as they preached the gospel to the descendants of Lehi.

The Lord has provided ways for us to feel love in families that can continue forever. Young people in the Church today are feeling their hearts turn to their families. They are searching for names of family members who did not have the opportunity to receive the ordinances of salvation in this life. They take those names to the temple. When they enter the waters of baptism, they have the opportunity to feel the love of the Lord and of the family members for whom they are performing proxy ordinances.

I can still remember the love in the voice of my cousin who called and said, "Our mother has died, and Aunt Mid would want you to know."

Those of you who perform ordinances for family members are reaching out in love, as did the sons of Mosiah and the prophet Nephi. Like them, you will feel joy for those who accept your offering. You can also expect to feel the same great satisfaction as Ammon, who said of his missionary service among distant family members:

"Therefore, let us glory, yea, we will glory in the Lord; yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full; yea, we will praise our God forever. Behold, who can glory too much in the Lord? Yea, who can say too much of his great power, and of his mercy, and of his long-suffering towards the children of men? Behold, I say unto you, I cannot say the smallest part which I feel" (Alma 26:16).



I bear testimony that the feelings of love you have for your family members—wherever they may be—are a fulfillment of the promise that Elijah would come. He did come. Children’s hearts are turning to their fathers, and fathers’ hearts are turning to their children (see Malachi 4:5–6; Joseph Smith—History 1:38–39). When you feel the urge to find the names of your ancestors and take those names to the temple, you are experiencing the fulfillment of that prophecy.

It is a blessing to live in the time when the promise of hearts turning is being fulfilled. Mildred Bennion Eyring felt that urge in her heart.

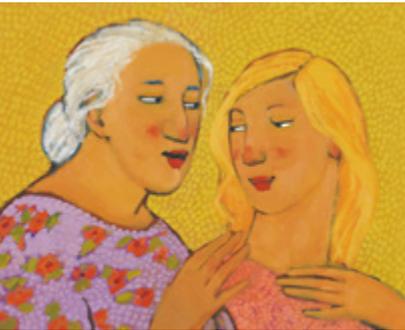
She loved her brother’s family, and she reached out to them. They felt their hearts turn in love to Aunt Mid because they knew she loved them. ■

#### TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

**Y**ou may want to read the prophecies about the spirit of Elijah with those you visit (see Malachi 4:5–6; Joseph Smith—History 1:38–39). Discuss ways to become involved with family history, including tools such as indexing, photography, and blogging. If those you visit are unfamiliar with FamilySearch.org, consider taking some time to show it to them.

## Getting to Know My Grandmother

By Jewelene Carter



For one of my Young Women projects, I volunteered to help my grandmother find her ancestors by scrolling through sheets of microfilm at the family history center in Mesa, Arizona, USA. As we sat side by side and searched for our family, I began to wonder: "Do I really know very much about

my grandmother who's right beside me?"

We found many family members, prepared their information, and went to the Mesa Arizona Temple to perform their baptisms and confirmations. Not long after, my grandmother gave me a bound compilation of her family history.

Because she suffers from rheumatoid arthritis, it is very painful for my grandmother to type. I enjoy helping her on the computer. Together, we write the stories from her life for our family's spiritual benefit. I love being a part of her life and learning so much about Church history as we collaborate on these projects.

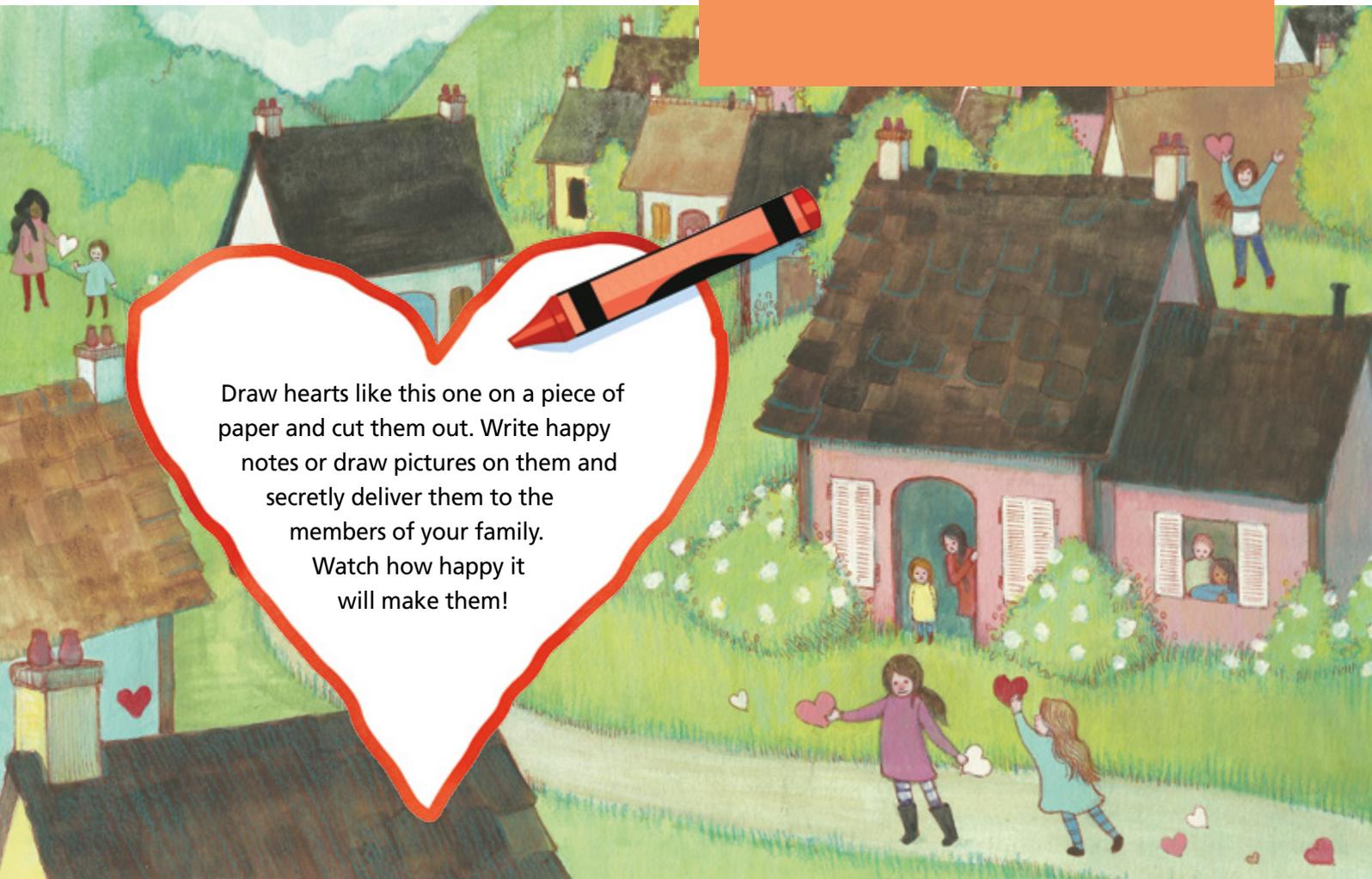
*The author now lives in Virginia, USA.*

## CHILDREN

### Love at Home

*Kindly heaven smiles above  
When there's love at home;  
All the world is filled with love  
When there's love at home.  
("Love at Home," Hymns, no. 294)*

Heavenly Father wants us to love our families so that we can be happy. The more we serve our families, the more we will love Heavenly Father and our family members.



Draw hearts like this one on a piece of paper and cut them out. Write happy notes or draw pictures on them and secretly deliver them to the members of your family. Watch how happy it will make them!

Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding the life and mission of the Savior increase your faith in Him and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to [reliefsociety.lds.org](http://reliefsociety.lds.org).



Faith, Family, Relief

# The Divine Mission of Jesus Christ: Advocate

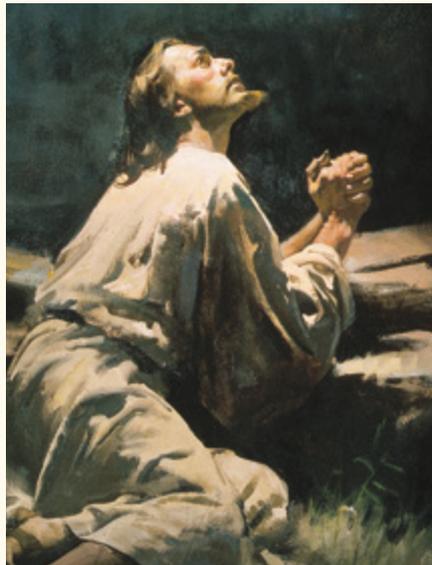
This is part of a series of Visiting Teaching Messages featuring aspects of the mission of the Savior.

Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father. The word *advocate* has Latin roots meaning “one who pleads for another.”<sup>1</sup> The Savior pleads for us, using understanding, justice, and mercy. Knowing this can fill us with love and gratitude for His Atonement.

“Listen to [Jesus Christ] who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him—

“Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified;

“Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life” (D&C 45:3–5).



Of Christ as our Advocate, Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “It is of great significance to me, that I may at any moment and in any circumstance approach through prayer the throne of grace, that my Heavenly Father will hear my petition, that my Advocate, him who did no sin, whose blood was shed, will plead my cause.”<sup>2</sup>

## Additional Scriptures

Mosiah 15:8–9; Moroni 7:28; Doctrine and Covenants 29:5; 110:4

## From the Scriptures

Throughout the history of the Lord’s Church, female disciples of Jesus Christ have followed His example. Esther was faithful and courageous. Her cousin Mordecai sent her a copy of the king’s decree that the Jews should be destroyed, and he charged her “to make request before [the king] for her people.” He added: “And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:8, 14.)

Despite the danger, Esther agreed: “So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish” (Esther 4:16).

Esther then spoke humbly to the king and “fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears . . . to reverse the letters . . . to destroy the Jews.” She added, “How can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?” (see Esther 8:3, 5–6). The king’s heart was softened, and he granted her petition.<sup>3</sup>

## Consider This

How can the advocacy of Jesus Christ inspire us to extend mercy and forgiveness to others?

## NOTES

1. See Russell M. Nelson, “Jesus Christ—Our Master and More” (Brigham Young University fireside, Feb. 2, 1992), 4; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “I Know in Whom I Have Trusted,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 83.
3. See also *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 180.

# APRIL 2014 CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

*“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).*

*As you review the April 2014 general conference, you can use these pages (and Conference Notebooks in future issues) to help you study and apply the recent teachings of the living prophets and apostles and other Church leaders.*

## DOCTRINAL HIGHLIGHT



## Marriage and Chastity

“[Recently,] the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve published a letter to leaders of the Church across the world. In part it read: ‘Changes in the civil law do not, indeed cannot, change the moral law that God has established. God expects us to uphold and keep His commandments regardless of divergent opinions or trends in society. His law of chastity is clear: sexual relations are proper only between a man and a woman who are legally and lawfully wedded as husband and wife.’ . . .

“As the world slips away from the Lord’s law of chastity, we do not. . . .

“While many governments and

well-meaning individuals have redefined marriage, the Lord has not. In the very beginning, God initiated marriage between a man and a woman—Adam and Eve. He designated the purposes of marriage to go far beyond the personal satisfaction and fulfillment of adults to, more importantly, advancing the ideal setting for children to be born, reared, and nurtured. Families are the treasure of heaven.”

**Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 19.**

Elder Andersen discusses how to handle questions and concerns about difficult topics at [lds.org/go/andersen714](http://lds.org/go/andersen714).

## PROPHETIC PROMISE



## Courage

“In order for us to make the correct decisions, courage is needed—the courage to say no when we should, the courage to say yes when that is appropriate, the courage to do the right thing because it is right. . . .

“ . . . Inner courage also includes doing the right thing even though we may be afraid, defending our beliefs at the risk of being ridiculed, and maintaining those beliefs even when threatened with a loss of friends or of social status. . . .

“ . . . As we move forward, striving to live as we should, we will surely receive help from the Lord and can find comfort in His words.”

**President Thomas S. Monson, “Be Strong and of a Good Courage,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 66, 67, 69.**

Learn from President Monson how we can cultivate courage at [lds.org/go/monson2714](http://lds.org/go/monson2714).

## Hastening the Work of Salvation

Some of the most important topics are addressed by more than one general conference speaker. Here is what three speakers said about hastening the work of salvation:

- “No matter how good your [missionary] message is, you may not get a chance to deliver it without consistent, persistent follow-up.”<sup>1</sup> —Elder M. Russell Ballard. Learn more about Elder Ballard’s invitation at [lds.org/go/ballard714](http://lds.org/go/ballard714).
- “The Gilbert Arizona Temple . . . became the 142nd operating temple. . . . When all the previously announced temples

are completed, we will have 170 operating temples throughout the world.”<sup>2</sup> —President Thomas S. Monson. Learn more at [lds.org/go/monson714](http://lds.org/go/monson714).

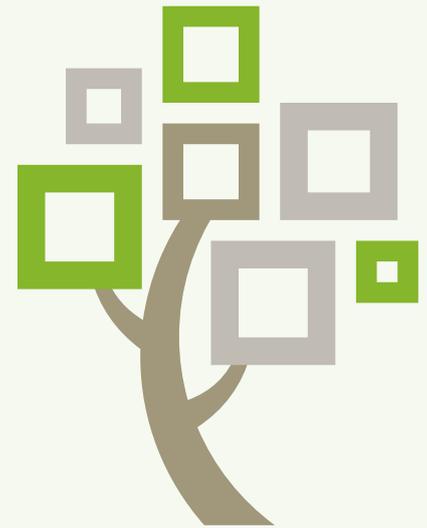
- “We are to ‘lay aside the things of [the] world, . . . cleave unto [our] covenants’ [D&C 25:10, 13], and come unto Christ and follow Him. That’s what disciples do!”<sup>3</sup> —Linda K. Burton. Watch Sister Burton’s address at [lds.org/go/burton714](http://lds.org/go/burton714).

#### NOTES

1. “Following Up,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 78.
2. “Welcome to Conference,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 4.
3. “Wanted: Hands and Hearts to Hasten the Work,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 122.



To read, watch, listen to, or share general conference addresses, visit [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org).



### HOW TO HOLD A “FAMILY TREE GATHERING”

“We finally have the doctrine, the temples, and the technology for families to accomplish this glorious work of salvation. I suggest . . . [each family] hold a ‘Family Tree Gathering.’ This should be a recurring effort.”

—Elder Quentin L. Cook, “Roots and Branches,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 47.

1. Gather with your family and share histories, stories, photos, and heirlooms.
2. Upload stories and photos to Family Tree and connect source documents with ancestors.
3. Determine which ancestors need temple ordinances to be done and make assignments to family members.

Find other ways Elder Cook says we can be blessed by family history at [lds.org/go/cook714](http://lds.org/go/cook714).

# WE TEACH BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST

We believe that teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost is essential to God's work of salvation. Effective teaching helps people grow in their faith and desire to live the gospel. Teaching can occur in many settings, such as giving lessons and talks at church; but we also teach when we discuss a scripture with a family member or when we explain to a neighbor what the priesthood is.

“Teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel.

“And they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit.

“And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:12–14).

Consider these four principles for effective teaching:

- **Love those you teach.** Get to know them. Prayerfully consider their needs as you prepare to teach. Try to use a variety of teaching methods: different ones can reach different people (see some ideas at right).
- **Teach by the Spirit.** Nephi taught, “When a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men” (2 Nephi 33:1). As you teach, you can invite the Spirit’s influence by bearing testimony and by using the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets. Pray for the guidance of the Holy Ghost as you prepare to teach. He can inspire you to know how best to teach.
- **Teach the doctrine.** Approved curriculum materials from the Church, such as scriptures, general conference talks, and

manuals, contain doctrine— eternal truths from God.

- **Invite diligent learning.** As you teach, remember that those who listen are responsible for their own learning. Encourage them to ask questions, share their thoughts on the topic, and ponder how they can live the principles of the gospel. Their testimony of those principles will grow as they live them (see John 7:17).

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) spoke of the importance of good teaching: “Eternal life will come only as men and women are *taught with such effectiveness* that they change and discipline their lives. They cannot be coerced into righteousness or into heaven. They must be led, and that means teaching” (quoted in Jeffrey R. Holland, “A Teacher Come from God,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 26). ■

*For more information, see Doctrine and Covenants 50:13–22; Handbook 2: Administering the Church (2010), 5.5.4.*

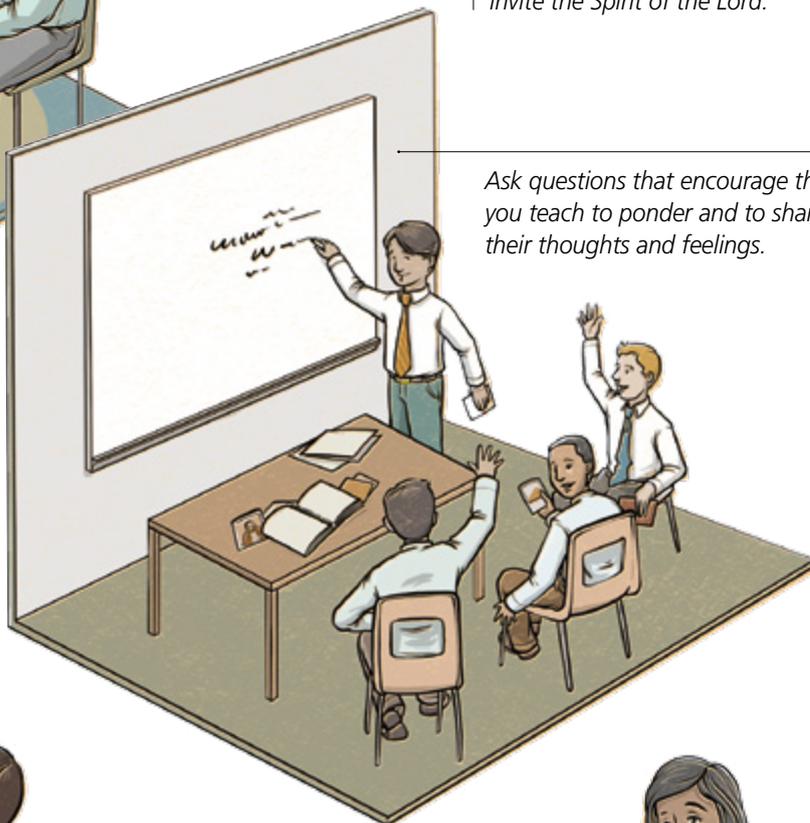
These are some teaching methods that can help you reach people with various types of learning styles:



Play or sing sacred music. Hymns and Primary songs can teach doctrine and invite the Spirit of the Lord.



Relate uplifting stories and examples, including stories from the scriptures and your own life.



Ask questions that encourage those you teach to ponder and to share their thoughts and feelings.



Display pictures and physical objects. Principles of the gospel can be compared to seeds, rocks, plants, and other familiar things.



Bear testimony of the principles of the gospel you are teaching. Testimony invites the Holy Ghost to bear witness of the truth.

# LEADING LIKE THE SAVIOR

By Ryan Carr

Church Magazines

There is a stark contrast between the worst leaders in the world and the perfect leader, the Savior of the world. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) explained: “Those leaders in history who have been most tragic in their impact on mankind were tragic precisely because they lacked to almost any degree the qualities of the Man of Galilee. Where Jesus was selfless, they were selfish. Where Jesus was concerned with freedom, they were concerned with control. Where Jesus was concerned with service, they were concerned with status. Where Jesus met the genuine needs of others, they were concerned only with their own needs and wants. Where Jesus was concerned with the development of his disciples, they sought to manipulate mortals. Where Jesus was filled with compassion balanced by justice, they have so often been filled with harshness and injustice.”<sup>1</sup>

To succeed as leaders in the Lord’s Church, we must follow His example. The following ideas can help us become more Christlike in our leadership.

Christlike leaders serve “with an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 4:5), seeking to do the will of Heavenly Father. The Savior said, “I came down from heaven, not to do mine

own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38).

Christlike leaders do not rely on “the arm of flesh” (2 Nephi 4:34). They humbly pray for guidance. They wait upon the Lord and seek to do His work in His time and His way instead of depending on their own talents and abilities.

Christlike leaders do not seek for positions in the Church; they see callings as opportunities to serve, not as promotions. Nor do they see releases

as demotions. A release is inherent with every calling.

Christlike leaders are servants; they help, teach, and encourage those they serve. They seek to bless others, as the Savior did: “He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world” (2 Nephi 26:24). They see themselves as the Lord’s representatives to help others return to Him.

Christlike leaders seek to help others develop. President Kimball also taught: “Jesus trusts his followers enough

## “BUT I DON’T HAVE ANY LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE!”

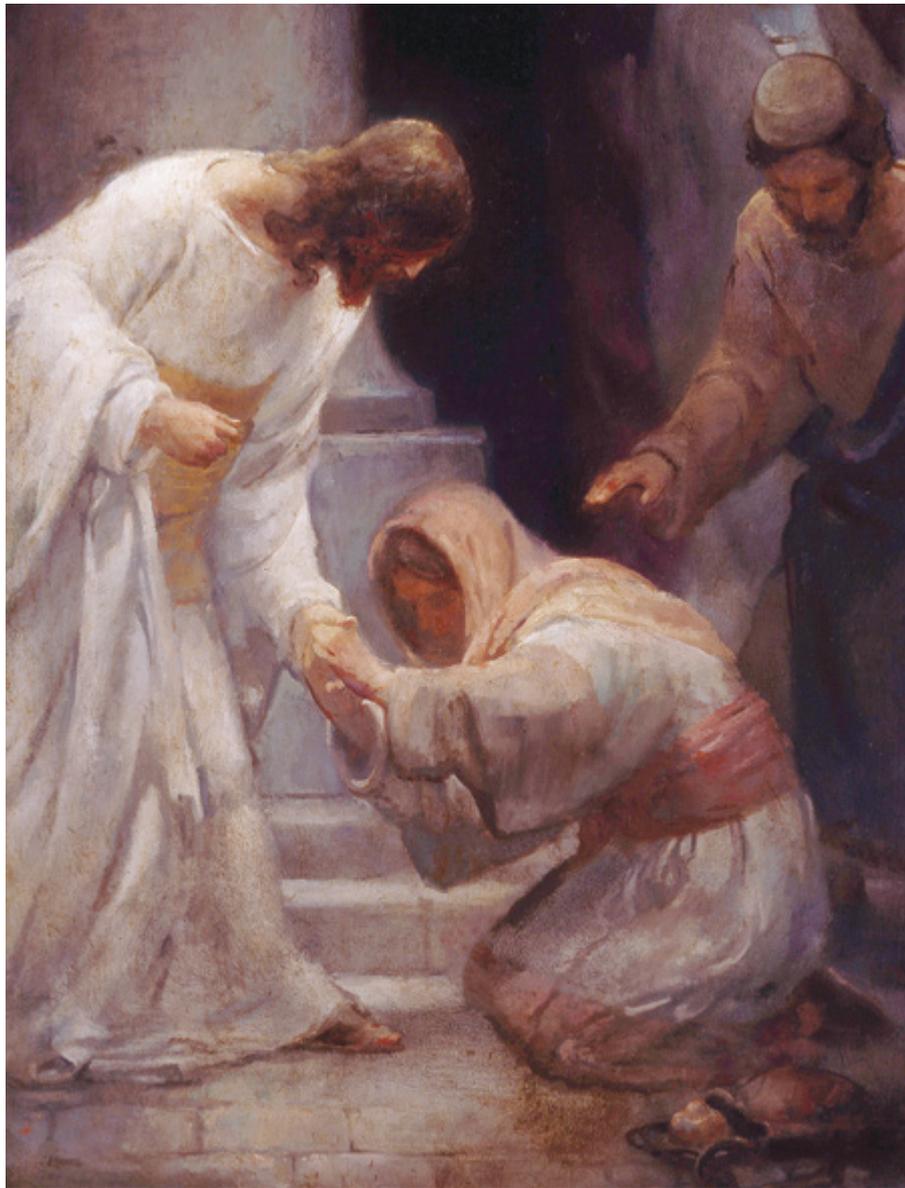
**D**on’t worry if you don’t have much experience yet. You have been called by inspiration, by one having authority (see Articles of Faith 1:5). The Lord sees what you can become. Your call to lead can be an opportunity to develop your strengths and overcome weaknesses.

In business and other organizations, a leader’s education and experience are often key qualifications, but the Lord’s way is different. President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) taught: “[The] apostles which God called, which Jesus, the Son of God called, . . . were not educated; they did not comprehend the sciences, they did not occupy high positions in Judeah—they were poor and illiterate; of humble callings in life. . . . Well, then, the Lord is different. He makes His calls different from those calls made by men.”<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, whom the Lord calls He qualifies!<sup>2</sup>

### NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 151.

2. See Thomas S. Monson, “Duty Calls,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 44; *Liahona*, July 1996, 42.



## FOR LEADERS WHO COUNSEL WITH CHURCH MEMBERS

**A**s you meet with Church members who need your help, they might want you to solve their problems for them. But doing so would deprive them of personal growth. They might come expecting an immediate solution, but their problems will often need more time to work themselves out. These are some common challenges. The following questions, suggested by priesthood leaders, can help as you prepare to counsel with members:

- Do you counsel and help members in such a way that overcoming their challenges remains their responsibility?
- Are you guiding members to find answers on their own?
- Are you following up on tasks they agreed to do?
- Are you helping them find resources to solve their own problems?
- Are you encouraging them to cry unto the Lord?
- Does your counsel encourage members to progress?

Of course, all situations are different, so it will be important to follow the guidance of the Spirit. Serving with love, patience, and spiritual sensitivity will lead to good results.

to share his work with them so that they can grow. That is one of the greatest lessons of his leadership. If we brush other people aside in order to see a task done more quickly and effectively, the task may get done all right, but without the growth and development in followers that is so important. . . .

“Jesus gave people truths and tasks that were matched to their capacity. He did not overwhelm them with more than they could manage, but

gave them enough to stretch their souls.”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet Joseph Smith described how he led the people so well: “I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.”<sup>3</sup> This is the essence of the Lord’s approach to leadership. ■

### NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, “Jesus: The Perfect Leader,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1979, 7.
2. Spencer W. Kimball, “Jesus: The Perfect Leader,” 6.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 284.

# ELIJAH

*“Elijah was one of the greatest of the prophets, and the Lord conferred upon him the sealing power.”<sup>1</sup> —President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)*

Ministered as a prophet in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.<sup>2</sup> Due to the Israelites’ wickedness, I sealed the heavens against rain, causing a famine in the land. During the famine, I lived by a brook and ravens brought me food, but then the brook dried up.<sup>3</sup>

The Lord commanded me to go to a widow who lived in Zarephath, and she would feed me. I found her gathering sticks to prepare a final meal for herself and her son. I told her that if she fed me first, her “barrel of meal [should] not waste, neither [should] the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.”<sup>4</sup> She exercised faith, and the Lord fulfilled His promise.

While I lived with her family, the widow’s son died. I pled, “O Lord my

God, I pray thee, let this child’s soul come into him again.”<sup>5</sup> The Lord heard my cry, and her son lived again.<sup>6</sup>

Later, I demonstrated the Lord’s power to the people of Israel by challenging the priests of Baal to a contest. The priests prepared a sacrifice and called upon Baal all day long to send down fire, but no fire appeared. I constructed an altar of 12 stones, symbolic of the 12 tribes of Israel, and dug a trench around the altar. Then I had the altar and its sacrifice soaked with 12 barrels of water, drenching the wood and filling the trench. I called upon the Lord, and He sent down fire that consumed the sacrifice, the altar, and the water. Afterward, I prayed unto the Lord, and He opened the heavens to rain.<sup>7</sup>

At the end of my life, I did not

die but ascended into heaven in a chariot of fire.<sup>8</sup> During Christ’s mortal ministry, I appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration and gave priesthood keys to Peter, James, and John.<sup>9</sup>

I appeared again in the latter days “to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers,” coming to the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836, and restoring the keys of the sealing power to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.<sup>10</sup> ■

## NOTES

1. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, ed. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. (1957–1966), 4:193.
2. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Elijah”; scriptures.lds.org.
3. See 1 Kings 17:1–7.
4. See 1 Kings 17:8–16.
5. See 1 Kings 17:21.
6. See 1 Kings 17:8–24.
7. See 1 Kings 18.
8. See 2 Kings 2:11.
9. See Matthew 17:3; Guide to the Scriptures, “Transfiguration”; scriptures.lds.org.
10. See Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16.



ELIJAH RAISES THE WIDOW’S SON FROM DEATH, BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; ELIJAH CONTENTS AGAINST THE PRIESTS OF BAAL, BY JERRY HARSTON; ELIJAH ASCENDING INTO HEAVEN, BY W. H. MARGETSON, COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM; THE TRANSFIGURATION, BY CARL HENRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERÖD, DENMARK; ELIJAH APPEARING IN THE KIRTLAND TEMPLE, BY DANIEL A. LEWIS; ILLUSTRATION OF CROWS BY KOZHISTOCK/THINKSTOCK



## WORK AND SELF-RELIANCE

As youth and children learn to work hard and be self-reliant, they are preparing to “contribute to the world in which [they] live” (*For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 40).

On pages 56–57 of this issue, Randall L. Ridd, second counselor in the Young Men general presidency, shares what he learned doing construction work with his dad. He discusses the importance of working hard, having a good attitude, and building the Lord’s kingdom. Brother Ridd reminds us: “So who needs work? We all do! It’s the mother of self-reliance, achievement, and joy in this life. As you cheerfully engage in work, all those around you will reap a rich harvest because of the seeds you sow.”

### Suggestions for Teaching Youth

- *For the Strength of Youth* says, “Set high goals for yourself, and be willing to work hard to achieve them” (40). You may want to watch with your children the Mormon Messages for Youth video “A Work in Progress” (see the Marriage and Family videos at [mormonchannel.org/come-follow-me](http://mormonchannel.org/come-follow-me)). Then work together to set some goals and make plans to achieve them.
- Work is a lot easier when we have a positive attitude. Read

“Moving Pipe in Muddy Shoes” on pages 58–59 of this issue and discuss how your attitude affects your work.

- “One form of idleness is spending excessive amounts of time in activities that keep you from productive work, such as using the Internet, playing video games, and watching television” (*For the Strength of Youth*, 40). Ask your children about the benefits and the dangers of the Internet, video games, and television. When do these tools turn into distractions? What blessings come from productive work? Consider helping your children experience these blessings by putting all technology aside for a time and working on a project together.

### Suggestions for Teaching Children

- Missionary work is hard work, and learning to be self-reliant will help children prepare for that work. With your children, make a list of household chores that missionaries should know how to do (doing laundry, cooking, and cleaning, for example). Then do some of those chores together.
- In his article, Brother Ridd reminds us that “the most important work is God’s work.” How



### SCRIPTURES ON THIS TOPIC

Isaiah 55:2

2 Nephi 5:17, 27

Mosiah 4:16–21

Doctrine and Covenants  
58:26–29

Joseph Smith—History 1:55

can your family further the work of the Lord? Think of an activity you could do together that would help bring others closer to Christ.

- Part of self-reliance is learning how to manage money. Teach your children the principles of budgeting and the importance of making tithing a part of their budget. ■

# NEWS OF THE CHURCH

Visit [news.lds.org](http://news.lds.org) for more Church news and events.

## LDS Charities Featured at United Nations Event

The work of LDS Charities was the subject of a recent panel discussion at United Nations headquarters in New York, USA. The event, “Discovering Mormonism and Its Role in Humanitarian Assistance,” was part of the Focus on Faith series sponsored by the nongovernmental organizations section of the U.N.’s Department of Public Information.

“This series aims to provide a broader understanding of how different belief systems share common foundational principles such as tolerance, mutual respect for those different than ourselves, and a commitment to reconciliation and peaceful resolutions to disputes,” explained panel moderator Felipe Queipo, a public information assistant at the U.N. who is a member of the Church from Spain.

“To care for the poor is a foundational duty of anyone who reveres God and the brother- and sisterhood of all—to serve, lift, bless, and relieve suffering independent of religious persuasions, social philosophy, nationality, tribe, gender, or

background,” said Sharon Eubank, director of LDS Charities, who participated in the discussion.

In her remarks she also reviewed the stated purpose of LDS Charities: to relieve suffering, foster self-reliance, and provide opportunities for service for families of all nationalities. Its key initiatives, she said, are clean water, neonatal resuscitation, vision care, wheelchair distribution, immunizations, food, and emergency response.

Other Latter-day Saint participants included Ahmad S. Corbitt, director of the Church’s New York Office of Public and International Affairs, and John P. (Phil) Colton, who is serving with his wife, Barbara, as a U.N. representative for LDS Charities.

Brother Corbitt said that there are “people of goodwill in all the world religions,” emphasizing the importance of working together. Brother Colton explained ways that LDS Charities provided help to nearly two million people in 132 countries during 2013. ■

**Church representatives participate in a panel discussion at the United Nations.**



## NEW MISSION PRESIDENTS CALLED TO SERVE

The First Presidency has called 122 new mission presidents and their spouses to serve in their assigned locations effective July 2014. For information about the new mission presidents, go to [lds.org/go/2014mission](http://lds.org/go/2014mission).

## LEADERS OFFER COMFORT, SUPPORT IN PHILIPPINES

In February, 100 days after Typhoon Haiyan devastated Tacloban, Sister Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, and Sister Carol F. McConkie, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency, traveled to the disaster zone to offer support and comfort.

"I knew I needed to hug the sisters," Sister Burton said. "I knew I couldn't do much else, but I knew I needed to come to Tacloban and hug the people that I could."

Typhoon Haiyan destroyed more than 1.1 million homes in the central Philippines, leaving more than 6,100 people dead, including 42 Latter-day Saints. Following the storm, the Church sent relief supplies and partnered with local and international organizations to assist with food, shelter, water purification, debris removal, and livelihood restoration.

Both Sister Burton and Sister McConkie reported that they found hope and optimism among the Saints, who are rebuilding their homes and strengthening their testimonies by serving each other.

*Sister Carol F. McConkie visits with children in the Tacloban Philippines Stake Center.*



*Elder Jeffrey R. Holland speaks to members in Taiwan.*

## Apostles Minister to Many Nations

Members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles continue to carry the ministry of the Church throughout the world. During recent assignments:

- Elder Russell M. Nelson and Elder Neil L. Andersen offered counsel and direction to Saints in Australia, New Zealand, French Polynesia, Fiji, New Caledonia, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea. Elder Nelson spoke of the need to strengthen families, and Elder Andersen reminded members to be of good cheer. On a separate assignment, Elder Andersen met with members and community leaders in areas of the Philippines devastated by earthquakes and tropical storms.
  - Elder Dallin H. Oaks dedicated the Mexico City Missionary Training Center. He encouraged missionaries to study hard and dedicate themselves to the Lord.
  - Elder M. Russell Ballard told Saints in the South America South Area that “the day of the sons and daughters of Lehi is blossoming,” with 4.5 million members and 14 temples in South America. This fulfills a prophecy made by his grandfather Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) that South America would become a power in the Church.
  - Elder Jeffrey R. Holland encouraged members in Taiwan and Hong Kong to make the temple part of their lives by attending as often as they can.
  - Elder David A. Bednar reminded Latter-day Saints in Uganda that they are pioneers in building the Church in their country. He reminded members in Kenya of the importance of consistently showing love at home.
  - Elder Quentin L. Cook taught members in Central America of the importance of service to God, to each other, and to their neighbors.
- To learn more about the ministry of the Apostles, go to [lds.org/prophets-and-apostles](http://lds.org/prophets-and-apostles). ■



# THE CHURCH IN Brazil

THE FUTURE HAS  
FINALLY ARRIVED

**By Mark L. Grover**

Retired professor of Latin American studies, Brigham Young University

**I**n both physical size and population, Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world. But 100 years ago, its population was sparse, and few took advantage of its natural abundance: a tropical climate, rich land, and a wealth of minerals and water.

Max and Amalie Zapf were intrigued with Brazil and decided to make it their home. They had joined the Church in Germany in 1908 and immigrated to Brazil in March 1913. As the first known members of the Church to live in Brazil, they were excited to be in a country with so much promise. Yet the Church was not established in South America, and Max and Amalie soon realized how lonely they felt without the privilege of attending church and interacting with other members.<sup>1</sup>

After 10 years in Brazil, Max and Amalie Zapf learned of another faithful Church member, Augusta Lippelt, who had emigrated in 1923 from Germany with her four children and nonmember husband to the Brazilian southern state of Santa Catarina. The Zapfs moved to Santa Catarina to be close to the Lippelts.

Two years later the South American Mission opened in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The second mission president, K. B. Reinhold Stoof, also from Germany, was inspired to establish the Church among the large German immigrant population in southern Brazil. In 1928 he assigned two missionaries, William Fred Heinz and Emil A. J. Schindler, to Joinville, a city with a large population of German immigrants. In 1930, President Stoof visited the Zapfs and Lippelts and established a branch, where both families could finally attend church together and partake of the sacrament.

What a difference 100 years has made. Before the Zapfs arrived in 1913, Brazil had no members, no missionaries, and no Church organization. Today more than



*These missionaries served in Rio de Janeiro in the late 1930s, including Daniel Shupe, who helped translate the Book of Mormon into Portuguese.*

mainly in the German language until 1940, when it changed to Portuguese, the country's official language. Missionaries were serving in numerous cities throughout the country until World War II required them to leave the country. Missionaries returned after the war, and the work began again.

In the city of Campinas, in the state of São Paulo, several young men and women joined and remained faithful. One of those early members was Antônio Carlos Camargo. He joined as a teenager in 1947, dated and married a member of the Church, and in 1954 attended Brigham Young University and later the University of Utah. He and his

TIME LINE

1928: First missionaries sent to Brazil among the German-speaking population in Joinville

1930: First branch organized, in Joinville

▼ 1931: First Church-owned meetinghouse in South America dedicated, in Joinville



► 1935: First mission created, headquartered in São Paulo



a million members live in Brazil, making it the country with the third-largest population of Church members (after the United States and Mexico). The Church now has congregations in all of Brazil's states and major cities. Max and Amalie's descendants enjoy the benefits of a strong and vibrant Church with a unique and fascinating history.

### Growing Like an Oak

A prophecy given in Argentina in 1926 by Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggested that the region would initially have slow growth but that it would one day be mighty. He prophesied: "The work of the Lord will grow slowly for a time here just as an oak grows slowly from an acorn. It will not shoot up in a day as does the sunflower that grows quickly and then dies."<sup>2</sup>

Few joined the Church in the early years of the Brazil Mission, which opened in 1935. The Church operated

wife returned to Brazil in 1963 for his employment with a textile company and were surprised at the growth of the Church. When they left in 1954, there were only a few small branches, presided over by American missionaries. However, during their nine-year absence, almost 16,000 Brazilians had joined the Church, including many young families who had strong leadership abilities and a faithful commitment. Antônio stated, "They were great and noble spirits whom the Lord selected here in São Paulo."<sup>3</sup>

In 1966, 31 years after the Brazil Mission opened, the first stake in South America was organized in São Paulo. Elder Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, organized the stake with Walter Spät as president and Antônio as his second counselor.

Only a few of the new leaders had ever seen a functioning stake. But the Lord had prepared Antônio, who had significant experience with the Church in the United

States and was able to assist the stake presidency. From the leadership in the wards and branches of that first stake came leaders for many additional stakes. Their influence was felt throughout the country as the organization of stakes began at an impressive pace.

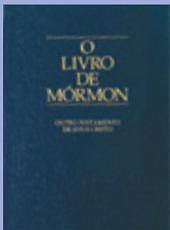
### An Era of Growth

One unexpected announcement prompted greater growth of the Church in Brazil: the building of a temple. The members knew the importance of temples, but most had seen them only in photographs. The closest temples were in the United States, thousands of miles away.

that facilitated growth. Many Brazilians were moving to urban areas and becoming more open to new religions. At the same time, President Kimball asked Brazilian stake presidents to set goals to increase the number of Brazilian youth called to serve missions. Soon more than half the missionaries serving in Brazil were native Brazilians. These returned missionaries later became local leaders in the Church.

But Church growth highlighted a challenge: a lack of experience by the members. This challenge, however, had a positive outcome: it required increased faith and spiritual guidance among the members. For instance, in November

► 1939: *Book of Mormon published in Portuguese*



1954: *First time a Church President, David O. McKay, visits the country*

1959: *A second mission organized*

1966: *First stake created in South America, the São Paulo Brazil Stake*

► 1978: *First temple dedicated in South America, in São Paulo*



President Kimball visited Brazil in March 1975 and in a regional conference announced the construction of a temple in São Paulo. Great anticipation and financial sacrifice led to its completion in 1978. Members helped pay for the cost of building the temple through donations. Many of them sold their cars, jewelry, and land to obtain funds for their donations.

The temple's dedication in October and November 1978 was preceded in June by the revelation on the priesthood (see Official Declaration 2). This revelation meant that all worthy members in Brazil could participate in the dedication and the blessings of the temple.

The priesthood revelation and temple dedication were the catalysts for one of the greatest missionary successes ever seen in the Church: more than 700,000 Brazilians joined the Church in the next two decades.

Additional events encouraged this growth. The country was going through important political and social changes

1992 a stake was organized in Uruguaiana, on the western side of Brazil, far from established stakes of the Church. When a faithful and longtime member of the Church, José Candido Ferreira dos Santos, was called as the patriarch of the newly created stake, he was concerned. He explained to the General Authority: "I can't be a patriarch. I have no idea what one is. I don't recall ever meeting a patriarch and do not have my patriarchal blessing." The General Authority suggested a solution. In the neighboring city of Alegrete, a new patriarch, Rui Antônio Dávila, had also recently been called and was in a similar situation. The two patriarchs needed to give each other patriarchal blessings.

As Brother Santos was receiving his blessing from Brother Dávila, he was surprised as he heard blessings pronounced relating to his past and his personal desires that the patriarch had no way of knowing. When Brother Santos in turn pronounced a blessing on the head of Brother Dávila, again tears flowed as the same experience occurred. The two men



embraced afterwards with a deep understanding of what had just happened.<sup>4</sup> Just as the Spirit inspired them to give their first patriarchal blessings, the Spirit inspired them as they gave hundreds more. The Lord provided many such spiritual blessings in a country where Church experience was limited.

### Perpetual Education Fund

A lack of education among members was another challenge. Often, when missionaries returned home, they were spiritually

in Brazil, stated, “It is a blessing to see the young members finish their education and get good jobs, but the real success of the program is to see the level of confidence in them increase. They have greater hope.”<sup>5</sup>

### Dedicated Members

The strength of the Church in Brazil is not just the number of members but also their dedication to the gospel. For example, Gelson Pizzirani, a retired airline administrator, was offered a challenging and lucrative



◀ 1985: Elder Helio R. Camargo is called as a General Authority, the first from Brazil

1986: Brazil becomes the fourth country to have more than 50 stakes

1987: The Brazil Area is created

1993: Brazil becomes the third country to have 100 stakes



◀ 1997: The Church's second-largest missionary training center is built in São Paulo



prepared but lacked the education to obtain adequate employment. Reinaldo Barreto, a stake president in São Paulo, explained, “It was a significant challenge to find work. Many missionaries lost hope of progressing, even losing the spiritual strength they had on their missions.” Education was often key to overcoming this challenge.

Consequently, the establishment of the Perpetual Education Fund by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) in 2001 has blessed thousands of Brazilian returned missionaries. It provides them with training opportunities, which have resulted in better employment. Members are better able to support a family and extend their educations even further. President Barreto, who became the administrator of the PEF program

Since 1999, thousands of Brazilian members have served in their communities as part of the Mormon Helping Hands effort.



job: help build a new airline in Brazil. At the same time, he and his wife, Míriam, were called to preside over the Brazil Brasília Mission. There was no question what to do. Since their baptisms as teenagers, they have dedicated their lives to the Church. Prior to their marriage, Brother Pizzirani was called to serve as a branch president. He was called to be a stake president at age 25 and accepted numerous other callings, including Area Seventy. Sister Pizzirani has served in stake and ward Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary callings. She expressed her feelings concerning the blessings of the gospel: “My life has been profoundly blessed because I have tried to keep the commandments.



▲ 2000: Recife and Porto Alegre Brazil Temples dedicated

2002: Campinas Temple dedicated

2002: Mormon Helping Hands receives national recognition as one of Brazil's most important volunteer organizations



◀ 2008: Curitiba Temple dedicated



▲ 2012: Manaus Temple dedicated

For every commandment I keep, I receive a blessing.”<sup>6</sup>

After finishing their mission in Brasília, their plan to settle down at home was interrupted by a short-term call to serve as president of the Brazil Campinas Mission. After a few months rest, they accepted a call in 2013 to be president and matron of the Recife Brazil Temple. One of the missionaries who baptized Brother Pizzirani was recently called with his wife to serve in the Recife Temple, where missionary and convert will serve together.

The example of the Pizziranis giving up career opportunities to serve the Lord is impressive but not unusual among the faithful members in Brazil.

The 100 years since the Zapf family arrived in Brazil have seen numerous positive changes but also occasional setbacks. Prophets who have visited, however, have never hesitated to express faith in the future of the country. Those prophecies are coming to fruition as Brazil takes its place in the world as a leader in economic growth and

## GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN BRAZIL

1935	1938	1948	1958	1968	1978	1988	1998	2008	2013	THE CHURCH IN BRAZIL *
148	216	536	1,454	31,635	54,410	265,286	703,210	1,060,556	1,239,166	Members: 1,239,166
										Stakes: 242
										Missions: 32
										Temples: 6 in operation, 2 under construction



\* As of November 2013

development. The descendants of the Zapfs—both their literal descendants and those who followed their footsteps in the gospel—are reaping the benefits of the hard work and patience of those early efforts to plant the gospel seeds. The second part of Elder Melvin J. Ballard’s prophecy given in 1926 has come to pass: “Thousands will join the Church here. It will be divided into more than one mission and will be one of the strongest in the Church.” ■

### NOTES

1. Sibila Hack Nunes (granddaughter of Max and Amalie Zapf), interview by Michael Landon, Curitiba, Brazil, July 30, 2004, Church History Library.
2. Melvin J. Ballard, in Bryant S. Hinckley, *Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin Joseph Ballard* (1949), 100.
3. Antônio Carlos Camargo, interview by Mark L. Grover, São Paulo, Brazil, June 27, 2006, Harold B. Lee Library, p. 22.
4. Jose Candido Ferreira dos Santos, interview by Mark L. Grover, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, May 4, 2010, Harold B. Lee Library; Rui Antonio Dávila, interview by Mark L. Grover, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, May 5, 2010, Harold B. Lee Library.
5. Reinaldo de Souza Barreto, interview by Mark L. Grover, São Paulo, Brazil, June 16, 2006, Harold B. Lee Library, p. 14.
6. Míriam da Silva Sulé Pizzirani, interview by Mark L. Grover, São Paulo, Brazil, March 21, 1982, Harold B. Lee Library, p. 7.



By Elder  
Russell M. Nelson  
Of the Quorum of  
the Twelve Apostles

# THE Book of Mormon, THE Gathering of Israel, AND THE Second Coming

*The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a tangible sign to the world that the Lord has commenced gathering Israel and fulfilling covenants He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

Chapter 5 of *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* is devoted entirely to the Book of Mormon. This chapter teaches that the Book of Mormon:

- Is the keystone of our religion.
- Testifies of Jesus Christ.
- Supports the Bible.
- Answers questions of the soul.
- Draws people nearer to God.



All of these assertions are absolutely true, but they are made from our point of view as mortal beings. What would be the perspective of our Father in Heaven and of His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, on the Book of Mormon?

Their perspective would surely be shaped by two long-standing promises They have made to all mankind. These two promises are interrelated, well documented, still in force, and yet to be fulfilled. The first is Their ancient promise to gather scattered Israel. The second is Their long-standing promise of the Second Coming of the Lord.

### The Abrahamic Covenant and the House of Israel

In the dispensation of Abraham, God made a covenant with Father Abraham that through his lineage, people of all nations would be blessed. Other important components of

that promise were made as well. These promises, given first to Abraham and later reaffirmed to Isaac and Jacob, included:

- A large posterity.<sup>1</sup>
- The inheritance of certain lands.<sup>2</sup>
- The seed of Abraham would bear the priesthood unto all nations, that all might be blessed through Abraham's lineage.<sup>3</sup>
- Those not descended from Abraham who accept the gospel would become the seed of Abraham through adoption.<sup>4</sup>
- The Savior of the world would come through Abraham's lineage.<sup>5</sup>

Many of Abraham's descendants—the tribes of ancient Israel—eventually rejected the teachings of the Lord and



killed the prophets. Ten tribes were carried captive into Assyria. From there they became lost to the records of mankind, though not lost to the Lord. Two tribes remained for a short time, but because of their rebellion they were taken captive into Babylon. When they returned, they were favored of the Lord, but again they rejected Him!

### The Scattering and Gathering of Israel

A loving but grieving Father scattered Israel far and wide, but He promised that one day scattered Israel would be gathered back into the fold. This promise was just as emphatic as the promise of the scattering of Israel.<sup>6</sup> Isaiah, for example, foresaw that in the latter days the Lord would send “swift messengers” to these people, who were “scattered and peeled” (Isaiah 18:2, 7).

As prophesied, *all* things were to be restored in this dispensation. Therefore, the long-awaited gathering of scattered Israel must come as part of that restoration.<sup>7</sup> The gathering of Israel is interrelated with the second promise because the gathering is a necessary prelude to the Second Coming of the Lord.<sup>8</sup> Again, that heavenly perspective is ever evident.



This concept of the gathering is one of the important teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Lord has declared, “I give unto you a sign . . . that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion” (3 Nephi 21:1).

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a tangible sign to the world that the Lord has commenced gathering Israel and fulfilling covenants He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.<sup>9</sup> We not only teach this concept, but we also get to participate in it! We do so as we help to gather the elect of the Lord on both sides of the veil.

Mercifully, the invitation to “come unto Christ” (Jacob 1:7)<sup>10</sup> can also be extended to those who died without a knowledge of the gospel.<sup>11</sup> Part of the preparation on behalf of those who live on the other side of the veil requires earthly efforts of those who live on this side of the veil. We gather pedigree charts, create family group sheets, and do vicarious temple work to gather individuals unto the Lord and into their families.<sup>12</sup>

This dispensation of the fulness of times was foreseen by God as the time to gather, both in heaven and on earth. The Apostle Peter knew that after a period of apostasy, a restoration would come. He declared:

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; . . .

“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:19, 21).

In our day, Peter, James, and John were sent by the Lord with “the keys of [His] kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel for the last times; and for the fulness of times,” in which He would “gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth” (D&C 27:13).<sup>13</sup>

Many aspects of the Abrahamic covenant have already been fulfilled. The Savior of the world did indeed come



through the lineage of Abraham, through Jacob's son Judah. Land was allocated for an inheritance long ago. A map in the LDS edition of the Bible shows how the land inherited by the tribes was divided among the descendants of Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh.<sup>14</sup> We learn from the Book of Mormon that the land reserved for the lineage of Joseph was the American hemisphere.<sup>15</sup>

The great promise that *all* nations would be blessed by the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has yet to be fulfilled. But this promise of the gathering, woven through the fabric of all scriptures, will be fulfilled just as surely as were the prophecies of the scattering of Israel.<sup>16</sup>

### **The Gathering as a Prelude to the Second Coming**

Why is this promise of gathering so crucial? Because the gathering of Israel is necessary to prepare the world for the Second

Coming! And the Book of Mormon is God's instrument needed to accomplish *both* of these divine objectives.<sup>17</sup>

The Book of Mormon is a gift from God to the entire world. It is the only book the Lord has testified to be true.<sup>18</sup> It is a gift from Nephi, Jacob, Mormon, Moroni, and its inspired and martyred translator, the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Book of Mormon is purposely addressed to the remnant of the house of Israel.<sup>19</sup>

Regarding the Second Coming, we know it is "now nigh at hand, and in a time [yet] to come" (D&C 63:53). And when the Savior comes again, it will not be in secret.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, much work must be done to gather Israel and prepare the world for the glorious Second Coming.

### **The Gathering of Israel in This Dispensation**

Thanks to the Book of Mormon, we know when this promised gathering will take place: "Wherefore, our father hath not

***Saints in every land have equal claim upon the blessings of the Lord. Spiritual security will always depend upon how we live, not where we live.***



***In the temple we receive our ultimate and highest blessings, as promised to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.***

spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled *in the latter days*; which covenant the Lord made to our father Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed” (1 Nephi 15:18; emphasis added).

Six hundred years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, prophets knew that the gathering of Israel would take place “in the latter days.”

To Latter-day Saints, the honored name *Abraham* is important. Each member of the Church is linked to Abraham.<sup>21</sup> The Lord reaffirmed the Abrahamic covenant in our day through the Prophet Joseph Smith.<sup>22</sup> In the temple we receive our ultimate and highest blessings, as promised to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.<sup>23</sup>

We need to gain that heavenly perspective. We need to know about the Abrahamic covenant and understand our responsibility in helping to bring about the promised gathering of Israel. We need to know *why* we are

privileged to receive patriarchal blessings and learn of our connection to ancient patriarchs. We need to know that Jacob’s son Joseph became the birthright son after Reuben lost his birthright.<sup>24</sup> Joseph and his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, became the seed to lead in the gathering of Israel.<sup>25</sup> Other tribes were to follow.

Think of those heavenly messengers who brought precious keys of the priesthood to the Lord’s restored Church. On April 3, 1836, after the Lord had accepted the Kirtland Temple, came Moses, who restored “the keys of the gathering of Israel” (D&C 110:11). Next, “Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed” (D&C 110:12). Thus the Abrahamic covenant was renewed as part of the Restoration! Then came Elijah, who restored keys of the sealing authority, as prophesied by Malachi.<sup>26</sup> Those keys are necessary to seal the families of gathered Israel and enable them to enjoy the greatest of all blessings, that of eternal life.

What is the perspective of the Father and the Son regarding the Book of Mormon? They see it as evidence of the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith. They see it as the instrument by which people can learn more about Jesus Christ, believe His gospel, and join His Church. They see it as the text to clarify our connection with the biblical house of Israel. The Book of Mormon declares the advent of the gathering<sup>27</sup> and is God's instrument to bring about that gathering. Without the Book of Mormon, there would be no gathering of Israel.<sup>28</sup>

The Book of Mormon contains the fulness of the gospel. Without the Book of Mormon, we would know little about the Atonement of Jesus Christ.<sup>29</sup> Because it teaches of the Atonement, the Book of Mormon helps us to repent, make and keep sacred covenants, and merit the ordinances of salvation and exaltation. It leads us to the temple, where we can qualify for eternal life.

Here on earth we can have that heavenly perspective in all we do. With that perspective, we see that missionary work is crucial to the gathering of Israel. In many nations, our missionaries search for those of scattered Israel.

Zion exists wherever righteous Saints gather.<sup>30</sup> Publications, communications, and congregations give nearly all Church members access to the doctrine, keys, ordinances, and blessings of the gospel, regardless of location. As a convenience to Saints across the globe, 143 temples are available, and more are coming.<sup>31</sup>

Saints in every land have equal claim upon the blessings of the Lord. Spiritual security will always depend upon *how* we live, not *where* we live.

The gathering of Israel is *not* an ultimate endpoint. It is but the beginning. The end to which we endure includes the endowment and sealing ordinances of the temple. It includes our entrance into a covenant relationship with God either by lineage or adoption and then dwelling with Him and our families forever. That is God's glory—eternal life for His children.<sup>32</sup>

Our loving Father in Heaven truly wants His children to return to Him, not by coercion but by individual choice

and personal preparation. And He wants them sealed as eternal families.

That is our Heavenly Father's perspective. That is the Beloved Son's perspective. And it can be our perspective as well. ■

*From an address given during the seminar for new mission presidents at the Provo Missionary Training Center on June 26, 2013.*

#### NOTES

1. See Genesis 13:16; 22:17; Abraham 3:14.
2. See Genesis 12:1, 7; Abraham 2:6.
3. See Abraham 2:9, 11.
4. See Galatians 3:26–29; Abraham 2:10.
5. See Genesis 49:10, 24.
6. See Isaiah 11:12; 22:16–18; 3 Nephi 15:20–22; Abraham 2:10–11.
7. See 1 Nephi 15:18; see also the title page of the Book of Mormon.
8. See Doctrine and Covenants 133:8–17.
9. See Genesis 12:2–3; 26:3–4; 35:11–12; see also chapter headings for 3 Nephi 21 and 29.
10. See also Omni 1:26; Moroni 10:30, 32; Doctrine and Covenants 20:59.
11. See Doctrine and Covenants 137:5–8.
12. See 1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Peter 4:6.
13. Paul also prophesied of our day: “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times [the Lord] might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth” (Ephesians 1:10).
14. See Genesis 35:23–26; 41:50–52. The tribe of Levi provided priests among the people and was neither numbered as a tribe nor received a tribal inheritance. Two sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, were given land inheritances and were numbered among the tribes in the stead of their father. The number of twelve tribes was thus maintained.
15. See Ether 13:8; see also Genesis 49:22.
16. See Leviticus 26:44; Deuteronomy 4:27–31; 28; 29; 30:1–10; Nehemiah 1:9; Isaiah 11:11–12; Jeremiah 31:7–12; Ezekiel 37:21–22; Amos 9:14–15; Matthew 24:31; Jacob 6:2. See also Russell M. Nelson, “The Exodus Repeated,” *Ensign*, July 1999, 6–13. The gathering of Israel is particularly forecast in Isaiah 49–51 and Jacob 5.
17. See Matthew 24:14; Doctrine and Covenants 133:17.
18. See Doctrine and Covenants 17:6.
19. See Mormon 7:10; 9:37; Moroni 10:31–34.
20. See Isaiah 40:5.
21. The covenant may also be received by adoption (see Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8; Galatians 4:5–7).
22. See Doctrine and Covenants 124:58; 132:31–32.
23. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–40; 132:19; Abraham 2:11.
24. See 1 Chronicles 5:1.
25. Ephraim was given the birthright in Israel to bear the message of the Restoration to all nations and to lead the gathering of scattered Israel (see Jeremiah 31:7–9; Doctrine and Covenants 64:36; 133:32–34).
26. See Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16; see also Malachi 4:5–6.
27. The doctrine related to the scattering and gathering of the house of Israel is among the earliest lessons taught in the Book of Mormon (see 1 Nephi 10:14).
28. See Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (1985), 554.
29. The word *atonement* in any of its forms appears in only one verse of the King James Version of the New Testament (see Romans 5:11). It appears in 24 verses of the Book of Mormon.
30. See Doctrine and Covenants 97:21.
31. As of May 2014.
32. See Moses 1:39.





# BE LIKE Ammon

*This hero from the Book of Mormon  
can teach us a lot about missionary work  
and activation today.*

**A**mmon is a heroic figure in the Book of Mormon, known for his valiant service that included defending the flocks of Lamoni, a Lamanite king (see Alma 17:25–39; 18:1–10). Ammon’s story, like many other scriptural accounts in the Book of Mormon, can teach us much about how to embrace the opportunities and overcome the challenges we face today.

## **A Meaningful Mission**

Suzanne E. Tarasevich of Millville, New Jersey, USA, learned some lessons from Ammon while serving a full-time mission with her husband, Adolf.

“When the large, white envelope containing our mission call arrived in our mailbox,” she says, “my husband and I were ecstatic. We had fasted and prayed about our call. Not that we were concerned about the *where* of the assignment, but we deeply desired a confirmation that we would have the abilities to meaningfully fulfill our calling.

“Later that evening, with children and grandchildren gathered, we opened the envelope and read our call to the Poland Warsaw Mission. As we did so, we felt peace in our hearts that this was, indeed, an assignment meant for us. We were both overjoyed.”

However, having arrived in the mission,

Sister Tarasevich found herself struggling to understand exactly what she could contribute. “My husband had immediately been given duties that provided him with challenging, growth-promoting leadership opportunities,” she says. “Though neither of us could speak Polish, his service seemed to transcend the language barriers.” On the other hand, she says, “I frequently struggled with feelings of uselessness and isolation. I doubted the meaningfulness of my missionary efforts.”

## **Mighty Missionaries**

Sister Tarasevich found herself thinking about great missionaries in the Book of Mormon. “During many years as a Primary teacher, I had often drawn on the inspiring and motivating power of the stories of Alma and the sons of Mosiah to teach the children about missionary work. Whenever I thought of missionaries, the image of a strong and powerful Ammon popped into my mind, and I could easily envision the dynamic young missionaries of our mission as modern-day sons of Mosiah. But I wondered if it showed a lack of humility for a gray-haired grandmother to aspire to such a role.”

While she was thinking, she says, an inner voice began to question her gently.



## FIND THE ONE WHO IS LOST

“It is important for each of us to ponder how it feels to be lost and what it means to be a ‘spiritual’ shepherd who will leave the 99 to find the one who is lost. Such shepherds may need the expertise and assistance of the search and rescue team, but they are present, accounted for, and climbing right beside them to save those who are infinitely valued in the sight of God, for they are His children.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Bring Souls unto Me,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 112.

“What was Ammon’s first assignment?”

“To be a servant, to tend the flocks, and to gather the scattered sheep,” she responded.

“Well then, be an Ammon.”

### Prepared to Serve

These thoughts provided Sister Tarasevich with insight. “Suddenly I understood exactly what the nature of my assignment should be,” she says. “I realized that while I hadn’t mastered the language skills needed to proselyte, years of Relief Society experience had prepared me to serve others—to seek out, find, and love those who felt forgotten and uninvolved.”

She began to view her missionary labors through new eyes. “I became aware of the many ways in which Christ-centered

principles could overcome language deficiencies,” she says. “I began to see what I could do to tend the flock and gather the scattered sheep.”

After that, she says, “life as a senior missionary became a wonderful period of learning and service as we were privileged to see the gospel change and enrich the lives of those who embraced it.” She often felt like singing what she calls Ammon’s hymn: “Behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God” (Alma 26:11).

### Saving the Sheep

Peggy Wallace Poll of South Weber, Utah, USA, gained her insights from Ammon when she was assigned to teach about rescue and

*Nourishing every person with love is a great way to follow Ammon’s example.*



activation at a stake priesthood and auxiliary leadership training meeting.

“Reading the familiar story of Ammon, I noticed something new,” she says. “Remember, Ammon is serving a mission among the Lamanites. He has been given an assignment to tend the royal sheep. There are other servants with him, and as they are bringing the sheep to Sebus to drink, robbers scatter the flock. This is terribly frightening to the other servants. Apparently, others who have allowed the sheep to be scattered have been put to death, and they are certain they will now suffer the same fate. (See Alma 17:25–30.)

“But Ammon sees an opportunity,” Sister Poll says. “He tells the other servants to be of good cheer because he has a plan. Read Alma 17:31–33, and you’ll see it clearly laid out:

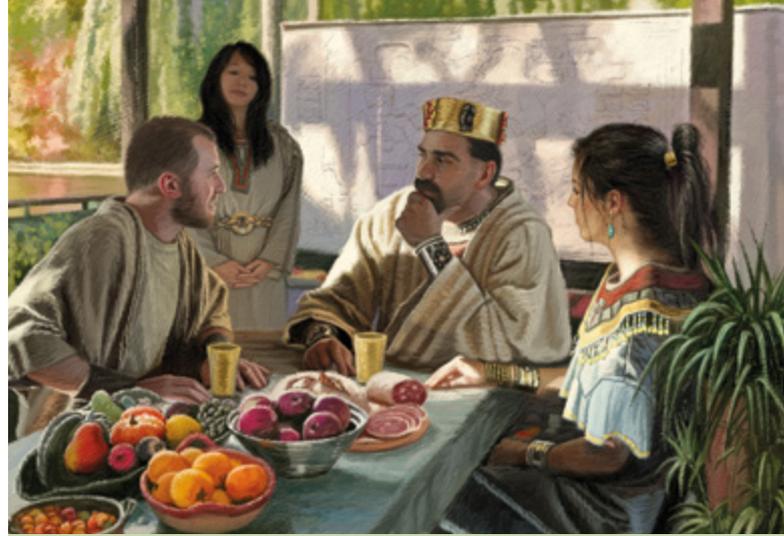
1. Notice as early as possible that sheep are missing.
2. [Rush] forth with much swiftness.’
3. Gather the sheep together.
4. Bring them safely back to the sheepfold.
5. Encircle them, keep them safe, and nourish them with love.”

Sister Poll says she was impressed with how this story can apply to activation: “It is possible to look at the story of Ammon as symbolic of Church leaders today, rescuing members who have scattered. There are many influences in the world that, like the robbers, can drive members away from the good word of the gospel. We must be vigilant and move quickly when one of His precious souls is missing from the flock.”

She quotes President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), who said, “I would hope, I would pray, that each of us . . . would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives.”<sup>1</sup> ■

**NOTE**

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Reach with a Rescuing Hand,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86.



## AMULEK CAN TEACH US TOO

**A**mulek is another great hero from the Book of Mormon. He shows what people can become when they return to the path of righteousness.

Wealthy and well-known, Amulek acknowledges that he had witnessed the mysteries and power of God but had hardened his heart. “I was called many times and I would not hear; therefore I knew concerning these things, yet I would not know,” he says (Alma 10:6; see also verses 4–5).

But the Lord sends an angel to tell Amulek to receive Alma, the prophet, into his home. Amulek feeds Alma, and Alma blesses and teaches Amulek and his household. Then Amulek joins Alma in the ministry, becoming a powerful second witness of gospel truths. (See Alma 10:7–12.)

Amulek becomes Alma’s companion in calling the people to repentance, and he preaches the gospel with such strength and authority that the people are astonished (see Alma 11:46). Bound and cast into prison, Alma and Amulek miraculously escape, establish the Church in Sidom, and then teach the gospel throughout the land (see Alma 14; 15; 31).

Just like Amulek, there are many in the Church today who, when they return to activity, will find that the Lord will bless them and that they can become powerful witnesses of the truth.

# TEN TIPS

## for Parents of Young Adults

By Wendy Ulrich  
Licensed Psychologist

When my husband and I helped our children move into college dorms or enter the missionary training center, we felt a combination of sadness and liberation to think that they—and we—were finally “done.” We soon realized, however, that along with gaining new competence and freedom, our children faced additional challenges. While our actual control over their lives evaporated, their need for support—a different kind of support—actually increased.



## TODAY'S CHALLENGES

Here are some of the challenges young adults face in today's world, along with questions those challenges generate for parents.



### LONGER SINGLE LIFE.

Societal trends of starting families later in life can leave some young adults feeling like perpetual adolescents. Others stress out, wondering if they will ever marry or have children. As parents, how can we best help them have an eternal perspective?

### FINANCIAL UNCERTAINTY.

Many of today's young adults may not match their parents economically. They may find it difficult to obtain a job—even with a college degree—or to provide for a family. As parents, should we pitch in economically, or should we assume our children will grow from figuring out their own finances?





**OVERWHELMING OPTIONS.** Today's young adults may have a greater variety of career choices. But sometimes all those choices can seem overwhelming. How can parents help adult children explore options but also decide on a satisfying career?

*Despite the challenges of today's world, parents can continue to bless their young adult children by providing righteous support and guidance.*

**LIVING WITH PARENTS.**

Whether or not they marry, a growing number of young adults between ages 18 and 34 are living with parents. When adult children live with their parents, how should parents properly negotiate matters such as who pays for groceries and how to discipline grandchildren?



**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION.** Today, young adults of all faiths are less likely to affiliate with a church than they were just one generation ago. How can we as parents encourage our adult children to remain active in the Church? How can we spiritually support them even if they opt out of Church activity?

# GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

Even as our adult children may surpass us in some ability or accomplishment, they still need and deserve parental support to navigate the world. Following are 10 guidelines to consider.

**1. FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILDREN WANT AND LOVE.** Instead of telling your young adult children how to get what *you* think they need, ask about *their* values, goals, and dreams. They may ask you to help them map out a path to get there. If they do, let *their* dreams guide your conversations. Explore pros and cons, pray for guidance, and keep talking. If they don't know what they want, encourage them to meet with a guidance counselor, take vocational interest tests, or get more experience through work and volunteering.

**2. PRAYERFULLY STUDY DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 121:34-46.** These verses apply beautifully to mothers and fathers. They teach correct principles about how to provide righteous guidance to our adult children.

**3. INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH MANY YOUNG ADULTS.** You may find that other people's children are also interested in how you navigated your

20s and 30s. Young adults are curious about how older adults balanced competing priorities, chose careers, or knew when they had found their spouse. When you interact with these young adults, you will understand more about the challenges their generation faces.

**4. POINT OUT THEIR GIFTS.** Helping young adults discover their talents and interests can help them imagine a satisfying future. Point out that people seldom enjoy anything until they invest enough effort to be competent. Even those with a lot of raw talent must spend time developing it in order to succeed.



**5. TRUST THEM WITH THEIR DECISIONS.**

This doesn't mean believing that they will always make perfect choices. It means trusting that they can be resilient, that God is forgiving, and that life can be deeply meaningful even when it includes overcoming failure or enduring trials. Young *children* can be scarred by trauma, but young *adults* grow from overcoming obstacles rather than avoiding them. Provide emotional and practical support, encourage breaks from the stress, pray with and for them, and inject a little humor.



## 6. PRAISE THEM FOR THEIR EFFORTS.

Praising young adults for hard work and resilience helps them stick with tasks longer, take on more challenges, and find more enjoyment in their work. A formula shared by President Thomas S. Monson states, “Work will win when wishy-washy wishing won’t.”<sup>1</sup>

**7. SEEK FOR INSPIRATION.** Our prayers and faith help us open our hearts to let God change us. One woman I know felt concern about the TV shows her adult children let their children watch. She felt the shows modeled disrespect and quarreling, even though they were considered age-appropriate. Not wanting to intrude, she prayed and fasted repeatedly about what to do or say. One morning her daughter-in-law called to ask for advice about how to manage disrespect and quarreling among her children. My friend shared her observation about the TV shows, an influence her daughter-in-law had never noticed. The young parents addressed the issue with their children. Changes were agreed upon, and the atmosphere in the home improved.



**8. TALK ABOUT MONEY.** With sensitivity to your own situation and the maturity of each child, prayerfully decide what financial help, if any, to give your children. Perhaps they need your help only to create a budget. If you give them financial assistance, be clear from the start if you want the money repaid or used in a certain way. Then cheerfully give them



the responsibility to manage their funds and learn from mistakes, including doing without tomorrow if they overspend today.

**9. BE HUMBLE.** When you feel inclined to berate yourself for parenting mistakes, try to deepen your humility instead of your humiliation. Apologize gracefully, say what you’ll do to improve, and then move forward with confidence. Let your children conclude from observing you that mistakes are not the end, apologies are not a sign of weakness, and forgiving others and ourselves brings peace.

**10. MEASURE TRUE SUCCESS.** When we focus too much on how others will judge us for our children’s choices (either for good or bad), we lose objectivity, and we often lose the Spirit. Remember that our success as parents is not defined by how well our children live our values but by how consistently and selflessly *we* live them.

As we prayerfully consider the needs and personalities of each of our young adult children, the Spirit can help us guide without criticizing, support without suffocating, and step back without abandoning. As we do so, our young adult children will come to trust that both we and the Lord are on their side. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

### NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Great Expectations” (Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Jan. 11, 2009), 6; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).

## NEPHI ANSWERED MY QUESTION

I was born in the Church, but my family rarely attended while I was growing up. Despite this, I always found a way to get to church on my own. In the early 1970s I was serving as a seminary teacher in Pittsburg, Kansas, USA. When we studied the Book of Mormon, I challenged the class—myself included—to read the entire book. One day while reading, I received a powerful testimony that it is true.

A few years later my parents came for a visit. While they were visiting, my father brought up some subjects we disagreed on that I didn't want to discuss with him. He persisted, however,

I turned to the story about Nephi and the broken bow, and I felt prompted to go to my father and ask for guidance and a priesthood blessing.

until I was close to losing my temper. I excused myself for a moment and went to my bedroom, where I knelt and prayed to Heavenly Father and asked Him for help in dealing with my father. The answer came in the form of a thought: the account of Nephi and the broken bow.

I turned to the story in 1 Nephi chapter 16. I thought about Nephi being humble enough to go to his father, who had murmured against the Lord, to ask where he should go to obtain food (see verse 23). With that thought, I felt prompted to go to my father and ask for his guidance as well as for a priesthood blessing.

When I returned to the living room and asked Dad for a blessing, his heart was touched and he began to cry. “Let me think about it,” he said.

Over the next few days he fasted and prayed. Then, before Dad and Mom left, he gave me a beautiful blessing.

After that experience, Dad began to turn his life around. On their way home from Kansas, my parents visited Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri, USA, where my father had a powerful spiritual experience.

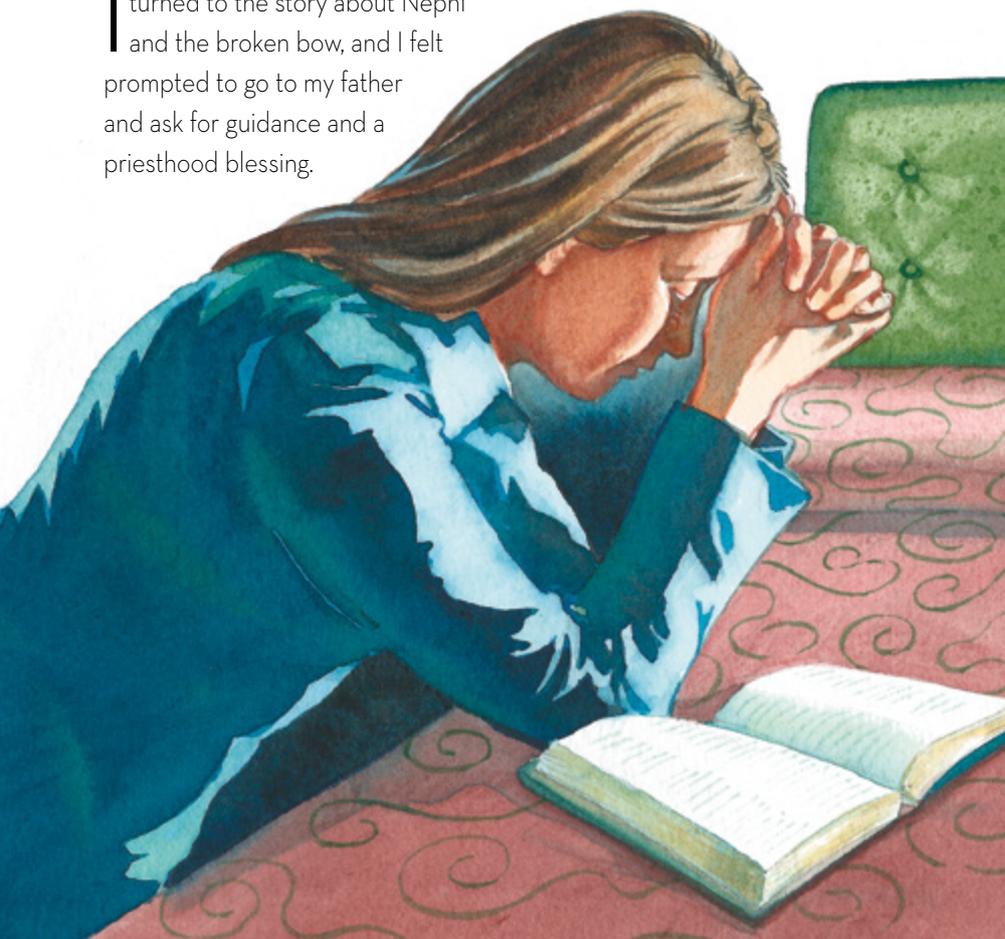
Before long, my parents became active and committed Latter-day Saints. Over the next several years, they served two missions together—one in Germany and one on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. Dad was serving as a stake patriarch when he died in 1987.

The Lord knew that Dad was a good man. It was through the Book of Mormon that I received my answer, and it was through my acting on that prompting that Dad came to know he needed to be a leader for our family. This experience changed everything for us.

I have learned that the Book of Mormon truly is another testament of Jesus Christ and that it is written for our day. I know that I can turn to it whenever I am discouraged and in any situation. The answers are there.

Indeed, the “words of Christ will tell [us] all things what [we] should do” (2 Nephi 32:3). ■

Judy M. Smith, Kansas, USA



## TWO LETTERS FROM MOM

In 1996 my wife and I had two sons, ages four and seven. We were a typical busy young family. Late one night my wife made time to write a letter to my nephew, Glen, who was then serving a mission in Finland.

For some reason, she felt she needed to write a long letter—one filled with details about what each family member was doing, where they were spiritually, what was happening in my Church calling and in her Church calling, the story of her conversion, her feelings about missionary work, and her testimony of the gospel.

It was a great letter, but I wondered if my nephew really needed that much information. Later she wrote him again.

Six years later, while I was serving as bishop and our boys were 10 and 13, my world suddenly changed. On January 2, 2002, my wife, only 42 years old, died of a heart attack.

At home I tried to continue following the principles in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”<sup>1</sup> I found that I could preside and provide, but I fell short in giving my sons the nurturing they needed. Nevertheless, we moved on as best we could.

In June 2012 my younger son, Sam, then serving a full-time mission in the Colorado Denver South Mission, sent me an email. “Something really cool happened this week,” he wrote. “I got two letters from Mom.”

He explained that he had received a package from his cousin Glen that

included the letters she had written to him while he was in Finland.

“He told me that these two letters Mom sent him on his mission were really written for me while on my mission,” Sam wrote. “So he sent them to me, and they were incredible!”

Learning of his mother’s conversion, testimony, and feelings toward missionary work was “a great moral support at this time,” Sam wrote. He said he planned to photocopy the letters and send the originals home.

“I had no idea that you had ever served as an elders quorum president or as the ward mission leader,” Sam wrote. He learned that when he was four years old, he “would jump on the bed after prayers and shout ‘I want to be a missionary.’”

The letters were powerful, personal, and poignant when written in 1996, but given the events of subsequent years, they had become even more so.

Then he added something he had learned about his mother: “Mom must have known that I would become a wrestler because she said that I could charm the socks off a pro wrestler. :)”

I was moved to tears by Sam’s reaction to the letters. A few weeks later he mailed them home. They were powerful, personal, and poignant when written in 1996, but given the events of subsequent years, they had become even more so.

My wife’s letters had strengthened my nephew, but like “casting bread upon the water” (see Ecclesiastes 11:1), they returned years later to bless her missionary son and widowed husband. ■

Ken Pinnegar, California, USA

### NOTE

1. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.



# I SAW YOUR MOTHER'S FACE

One Sunday in the summer of 2002, I woke up thinking of my mother, who had recently passed away. I was visiting my old home ward in Pacific Palisades, California, USA, where my mom had worshipped for almost 50 years.

I knelt in prayer to tell the Lord how much I missed her and to ask for a spiritual experience that day.

That afternoon I planned to attend the rededication broadcast of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple at the stake building in Santa Monica,

California. Unfortunately, I arrived too late to be admitted to the session. I returned to my car and headed back onto the freeway.

As I drove, I heard a voice say, "Randi, go check on Mary!" Mary is a dear friend of our family and a devout member of another faith. She and her daughter Natasha lived next door to my Aunt Ruby for more than 25 years. Because they had no family nearby, they became part of ours. After my aunt passed away in 1984, my mother often dropped by to visit Mary, always

bringing a small gift or something she had baked.

At first I ignored the prompting. I couldn't just drop in unannounced, and I didn't have my cell phone to call her. Suddenly the voice came again, louder this time: "Randi, go check on Mary!" This time I heeded the counsel, although I barely had enough time to make my exit off the freeway.

When I arrived at Mary's, she greeted me but looked ill. I could tell she had been crying. I asked her what was wrong. She responded that she had been quite sick and in pain from a neck injury. Also, she was extremely low on food. She said she had been too ill to walk to the pharmacy or the market.

When I asked her why she hadn't called someone in our family, she said, "I prayed and asked Heavenly Father to send someone to help me."

I told her that Heavenly Father had heard her prayers and sent me. We hugged, and then she told me something I'll never forget. She said, "When you arrived on my doorstep, I saw your mother's face, not yours."

I immediately felt my mother's sweet spirit near me, and I felt prompted to serve just as my mother would serve. Her life, after all, was filled with serving others.

I hope that I never forget the importance of heeding the voice of the Spirit and the example my mother set for me of serving others. ■

Randi Reynolds Allen, California, USA



When I arrived at Mary's, she greeted me but looked ill. I could tell she had been crying.

# YOU SAVED MY MARRIAGE

When I did construction work in Oman from 1979 to 1986, I worked for the ministry of defense. The ministry gave me projects located in the most inaccessible section of the country, and most of the time I was the only supervisor looking after the projects. I was also the only member of the Church working for the ministry.

One day at our company headquarters, I ran into an electrical engineer who, as he had in the past, made negative comments about the Church. I tolerated his comments because I was usually at headquarters for only a short time before I was away on another project.

Later, however, this man was assigned to inspect electrical work at projects being constructed along Oman's border with Yemen. We were scheduled to spend about an hour together before he flew back to headquarters.

When he arrived, he inspected the work and found everything to his satisfaction. During our time together, I centered our conversation on work and then drove him to the landing strip to see him off.

It was monsoon season, and the landing strip, located on a mountain plateau 6,000 feet (1,830 m) above the Indian Ocean, was covered with clouds. My co-worker's flight would be delayed.

My heart was pounding as I realized that I would have to wait in the

car with this man. After I said a silent prayer, a thought came into my mind to ask the man about his family, especially his wife.

I did so, and the engineer suddenly burst into tears, saying that he had just received word that his wife was seeking a divorce. The word *love* immediately came into my mind, and for the next two hours we talked about the love we should have for others and the love the Lord Jesus Christ has for all of us. Before I knew it, we had become friends. As we ended our conversation, the clouds cleared and the engineer boarded his flight. Soon I heard that he had resigned his position and returned home.

A few years later while on an outing with Aaronic Priesthood young men in Plymouth, a city on England's southern coast, I noticed a man making his way

toward me. As he approached, he said, "I thought it was you, Neil."

It was the electrical engineer from Oman. The next words he spoke have remained in my heart: "Thank you for talking to me about love that day on the mountain. You saved my marriage, and I will be forever grateful."

We shared a few more words, and he left. I haven't seen him since.

I will always be grateful for the inspiration I received in Oman. It blessed the engineer and gave me strength to maintain my Church beliefs when I was alone and far from home. ■

Neil S. Roy, Yorkshire, England

My heart was pounding as I realized that I would have to wait in the car with a man who had made negative comments about the Church.





By Elder  
Gerrit W. Gong  
Of the Seventy

# BECOMING

## Perfect in Christ

**W**e sing with our children, “I feel my Savior’s love, the love he freely gives me.”<sup>1</sup>

His atoning love, freely given, is as “milk and honey, without money and without price” (2 Nephi 26:25). Infinite and eternal (see Alma 34:10), the Atonement invites us to “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32).

Understanding the Savior’s freely given atoning love can free us from self-imposed, incorrect, and unrealistic expectations of what perfection is. Such understanding allows us to let go of fears that we are imperfect—fears that we make mistakes, fears that we are not good enough, fears that we are a failure compared to others, fears that we are not doing enough to merit His love.

The Savior’s freely given atoning love helps us become more forgiving and less judgmental of others and of

**Understanding the Savior’s freely given atoning love can free us from self-imposed, incorrect, and unrealistic expectations of what perfection is.**

ourselves. This love heals our relationships and gives us opportunities to love, understand, and serve as our Savior would.

His atoning love changes our concept of perfection. We can put our trust in Him, diligently keep His commandments, and continue in the faith (see Mosiah 4:6)—even as we also feel greater humility, gratitude, and dependence on His merits, mercy, and grace (see 2 Nephi 2:8).

In a broader sense, coming unto Christ and being perfected in Him

places perfection within the eternal journey of our spirit and body—in essence, the eternal journey of our soul (see D&C 88:15). Becoming perfect results from our journey through physical life, death, and resurrection, when all things are restored “to their proper and perfect frame” (Alma 40:23). It includes the process of spiritual birth, which brings “a mighty change” to our hearts and dispositions (Mosiah 5:2). It reflects our lifelong refinement through Christlike service and obedience to the Savior’s commandments and our covenants. And it recognizes the perfecting relationship between the living and the dead (see D&C 128:18).

The word *perfection*, however, is sometimes misunderstood to mean never making a mistake. Perhaps you or someone you know is trying hard to be perfect in this way. Because such perfection always seems out of reach, even our best efforts can leave



us anxious, discouraged, or exhausted. We unsuccessfully try to control our circumstances and the people around us. We fret over weaknesses and mistakes. In fact, the harder we try, the further we may feel from the perfection we seek.

In what follows, I seek to deepen our appreciation for the doctrine of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and for the love and mercy the Savior freely gives us. I invite you to apply your understanding of the doctrine of the Atonement to help yourself and others, including missionaries, students, young single adults, fathers, mothers, single heads of households, and others who may feel pressure to find perfection or to be perfect.

### **The Atonement of Jesus Christ**

Prepared from the foundation of the world (see Mosiah 4:6–7), our Savior’s Atonement allows us to learn, repent, and grow by our own experiences and choices.

In this mortal probation, both gradual “line upon line” (D&C 98:12) spiritual growth and transformative “mighty change” of heart (Alma 5:12, 13; Mosiah 5:2) spiritual experiences help us come unto Christ and be perfected in Him. The familiar term “endure to the end” reminds us that eternal growth often involves both time and process.

In the concluding chapter of the Book of Mormon, the great prophet



Moroni teaches us how to come unto and be perfected in Christ. We “deny [our]selves of all ungodliness.” We “love God with all [our] might, mind and strength.” Then His grace is sufficient for us, “that by his grace [we] may be perfect in Christ.” If we “deny not” the power of God, we can be “sanctified in Christ by the grace of God,” which “is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of [our] sins,” that we can “become holy, without spot” (Moroni 10:32, 33).

Ultimately, it is the Savior’s “great and last sacrifice” that brings about “mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance” (Alma 34:14, 15). Indeed, our “faith unto repentance” is essential for us to come unto Christ, be perfected in Him, and enjoy the blessings of “the

**Only our Savior lived a perfect life, but even He learned and grew in mortal experience.**

great and eternal plan of redemption” (Alma 34:16).

Fully accepting our Savior’s Atonement can increase our faith and give us courage to let go of constraining expectations that we are somehow required to be or to make things perfect. Black-and-white thinking says everything is either absolutely perfect or hopelessly flawed. But we can gratefully accept, as God’s sons and daughters, that we are His greatest handiwork (see Psalm 8:3–6; Hebrews 2:7), even though we are still a work in progress.

As we understand our Savior’s freely given atoning love, we cease fearing that He may be a harsh, faultfinding judge. Instead, we feel assurance, “for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17). And we understand that time and process are needed for growth (see Moses 7:21).

### Our Perfect Example

Only our Savior lived a perfect life, and even He learned and grew in mortal experience. Indeed, “he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness” (D&C 93:13).

He learned through mortal experience to “take upon him [our] infirmities . . . that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people” (Alma 7:12). He did not succumb to temptations, sins, or daily

pressures, but He descended below all of mortality’s trials and challenges (see D&C 122:8).

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Savior commands us: “Be ye therefore perfect” (Matthew 5:48). The Greek word for *perfect* can be translated as “complete, finished, fully developed” (in Matthew 5:48, footnote b). Our Savior asks us to become complete, finished, fully developed—to be perfected in the virtues and attributes He and our Father in Heaven exemplify.<sup>2</sup>

Let us see how applying the doctrine of the Atonement may help those who feel they need to find perfection or to be perfect.

### Perfectionism

A misunderstanding of what it means to be perfect can result in *perfectionism*—an attitude or behavior that takes an admirable desire to be good and turns it into an unrealistic expectation to be perfect *now*. Perfectionism sometimes arises from the feeling that only those who are perfect deserve to be loved or that we do not deserve to be happy unless we are perfect.

Perfectionism can cause sleeplessness, anxiety, procrastination, discouragement, self-justification, and depression. These feelings can crowd out the peace, joy, and assurance our Savior wants us to have.

Missionaries who want to be perfect now may become anxious or

discouraged if learning their mission language, seeing people baptized, or receiving mission leadership assignments do not happen fast enough. For capable young people accustomed to accomplishment, a mission may be life’s first great challenge. But missionaries can be exactly obedient without being perfect. They can measure their success primarily by their commitment to help individuals and families “become faithful members of the Church who enjoy the presence of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>3</sup>

Students beginning a new school year, especially those leaving home for college, face both excitement and concerns. Student scholars, athletes, artists, and so forth go from being a “big fish in a little pond” to feeling like a minnow in an ocean with unfamiliar tides and swift, unpredictable currents. It is easy for students with perfectionist tendencies to feel that, no matter how hard they try, they have failed if they are not first in all things.

Given life’s demands, students can learn that it is sometimes perfectly fine to do all they can and that it is not always possible to be the very best.

We also impose expectations of perfection in our own homes. A father or mother may feel compelled to be the perfect spouse, parent, homemaker, breadwinner, or part of a perfect Latter-day Saint family—now.

What helps those who battle perfectionist tendencies? Open-ended, supportive inquiries communicate

acceptance and love. They invite others to focus on the positive. They allow us to define what we feel is going well. Family and friends can avoid competitive comparisons and instead offer sincere encouragement.

Another serious dimension of perfectionism is to hold others to our unrealistic, judgmental, or unforgiving standards. Such behavior may, in fact, deny or limit the blessings of the Savior's Atonement in our lives and in the lives of others. For example, young single adults may make a list of desired qualities in a potential spouse and yet be unable to marry because of unrealistic expectations for the perfect companion.

Thus, a sister may be unwilling to consider dating a wonderful, worthy brother who falls short on her perfectionist scale—he does not dance well, is not planning to be wealthy, did not serve a mission, or admits to a past problem with pornography since resolved through repentance and counseling.

Similarly, a brother may not consider dating a wonderful, worthy sister who doesn't fit his unrealistic profile—she is not a sports enthusiast, a Relief Society president, a beauty queen, a sophisticated budgeter, or she admits to an earlier, now-resolved weakness with the Word of Wisdom.

Of course, we should consider qualities we desire in ourselves and in a potential spouse. We should

maintain our highest hopes and standards. But if we are humble, we will be surprised by goodness in unexpected places, and we may create opportunities to grow closer to someone who, like us, is not perfect.

Faith acknowledges that, through repentance and the power of the Atonement, weakness can be made strong and repented sins can truly be forgiven.

Happy marriages are not the result of two perfect people saying vows. Rather, devotion and love grow as two imperfect people build, bless, help, encourage, and forgive along the way. The wife of a modern prophet was once asked what it was like being married to a prophet. She wisely replied that she had not married a prophet; she had simply married a man who was completely dedicated to the Church no matter what calling he received.<sup>4</sup> In other words, in process of time, husbands and wives grow together—individually and as a couple.

The wait for a perfect spouse, perfect education, perfect job, or perfect house will be long and lonely. We are wise to follow the Spirit in life's important decisions and not let doubts spawned by perfectionist demands hinder our progress.

For those who may feel chronically burdened or anxious, sincerely ask yourself, "Do I define *perfection* and *success* by the doctrines of the Savior's atoning love or by the world's

standards? Do I measure *success* or *failure* by the Holy Ghost confirming my righteous desires or by some worldly standard?"

For those who feel physically or emotionally exhausted, start getting regular sleep and rest, and make time to eat and relax. Recognize that being busy is not the same as being worthy, and being worthy does not require perfection.<sup>5</sup>

For those prone to see their own weaknesses or shortcomings, celebrate with gratitude the things you do well, however large or small.

For those who fear failure and who procrastinate, sometimes by over-preparing, be assured and encouraged that there is no need to withdraw from challenging activities that may bring great growth!

Where needed and appropriate, seek spiritual counsel or competent medical attention to help you relax, develop positive ways to think and structure your life, reduce self-defeating behaviors, and experience and express more gratitude.<sup>6</sup>

Impatience impedes faith. Faith and patience will help missionaries understand a new language or culture, students to master new subjects, and young single adults to begin building relationships rather than waiting for everything to be perfect. Faith and patience will also help those waiting for temple sealing clearances or restoration of priesthood blessings.



**For those prone to see their own weaknesses or shortcomings, celebrate with gratitude the things you do well, however large or small.**

As we act and are not acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:14), we can navigate between complementary virtues and achieve much of life's growth. These can appear in "an opposition," being "a compound in one" (2 Nephi 2:11).

For example, we can cease to be idle (see D&C 88:124) without running faster than we have strength (see Mosiah 4:27).

We can be "anxiously engaged in a good cause" (D&C 58:27) while also periodically pausing to "be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10; see also D&C 101:16).

We can find our lives by losing our lives for the Savior's sake (see Matthew 10:39; 16:25).

We can be "not weary in well-doing" (D&C 64:33; see also Galatians 6:9) while taking appropriate time to refresh spiritually and physically.

We can be lighthearted without being light-minded.

We can laugh heartily with but not haughtily at.

Our Savior and His Atonement invite us to "come unto Christ, and be perfected in him." As we do so, He promises that His grace is "sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ" (Moroni 10:32).

For those burdened by cares to find perfection or to be perfect now, our Savior's freely given atoning love assures us:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

". . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28, 30).<sup>7</sup> ■

#### NOTES

1. "I Feel My Savior's Love," *Children's Songbook*, 75.
2. See also Russell M. Nelson, "Perfection Pending," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86–88.
3. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 10.
4. See Lavina Fielding, "Camilla Kimball: Lady of Constant Learning," *Ensign*, Oct. 1975, 62.
5. See, for example, Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Four Titles," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 58–61. President Uchtdorf also cautions, "Some might even think that their self-worth depends on the length of their to-do list" ("Of Things That Matter Most," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 20).
6. This insight comes from Carlos F. and Alane Kae Watkins, mental health advisers in the Asia Area, assigned in Hong Kong. Other insights for this article came from Susan Gong, Larry Y. and Lynda Wilson, Randy D. and Andrea Funk, Janet S. Scharman, and missionaries in the Indonesia Jakarta Mission.
7. See also Cecil O. Samuelson, "What Does It Mean to Be Perfect?" *New Era*, Jan. 2006, 10–13; Janet S. Scharman, "Seeking Perfection without Being a Perfectionist," in *Virtue and the Abundant Life: Talks from the BYU Religious Education and Wheatley Institution Symposium*, ed. Lloyd D. Newell and others (2012), 280–302.

# DIVINE COVENANTS

## MAKE STRONG CHRISTIANS

*What is it about making and keeping covenants  
with God that gives us power?*



**By Elder D. Todd Christofferson**

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**O**n August 15, 2007, Peru suffered a massive earthquake that all but destroyed the coastal cities of Pisco and Chincha. Like many other Church leaders and members, Wenceslao Conde, the president of the Balconcito Branch of the Church in Chincha, immediately set about helping others whose homes were damaged.

Four days after the earthquake, Elder Marcus B. Nash of the Seventy was in Chincha helping to coordinate the Church's relief efforts there and met President Conde. As they talked about the destruction that had occurred and what was being done to help the victims, President Conde's wife, Pamela, approached, carrying one of her small children. Elder Nash asked Sister Conde how her children were. With a smile, she replied that through the goodness of God they were all safe and well. He asked about the Condes' home.

"It's gone," she said simply.

"What about your belongings?" he inquired.

"Everything was buried in the rubble

of our home," Sister Conde replied.

"And yet," Elder Nash noted, "you are smiling as we talk."

"Yes," she said, "I have prayed and I am at peace. We have all we need. We have each other, we have our children, we are sealed in the temple, we have this marvelous Church, and we have the Lord. We can build again with the Lord's help."

### **The Power of Covenants**

What is the source of such moral and spiritual power, and how do we obtain it? The source is God. Our access to that power is through our covenants with Him. A covenant is an agreement between God and man, an accord whose terms are set by God.<sup>1</sup> In these divine agreements, God binds Himself to sustain, sanctify, and exalt us in return for our commitment to serve Him and keep His commandments.

What is it about making and keeping covenants with God that gives us the power to smile through hardships, to convert tribulation into triumph, to "be anxiously

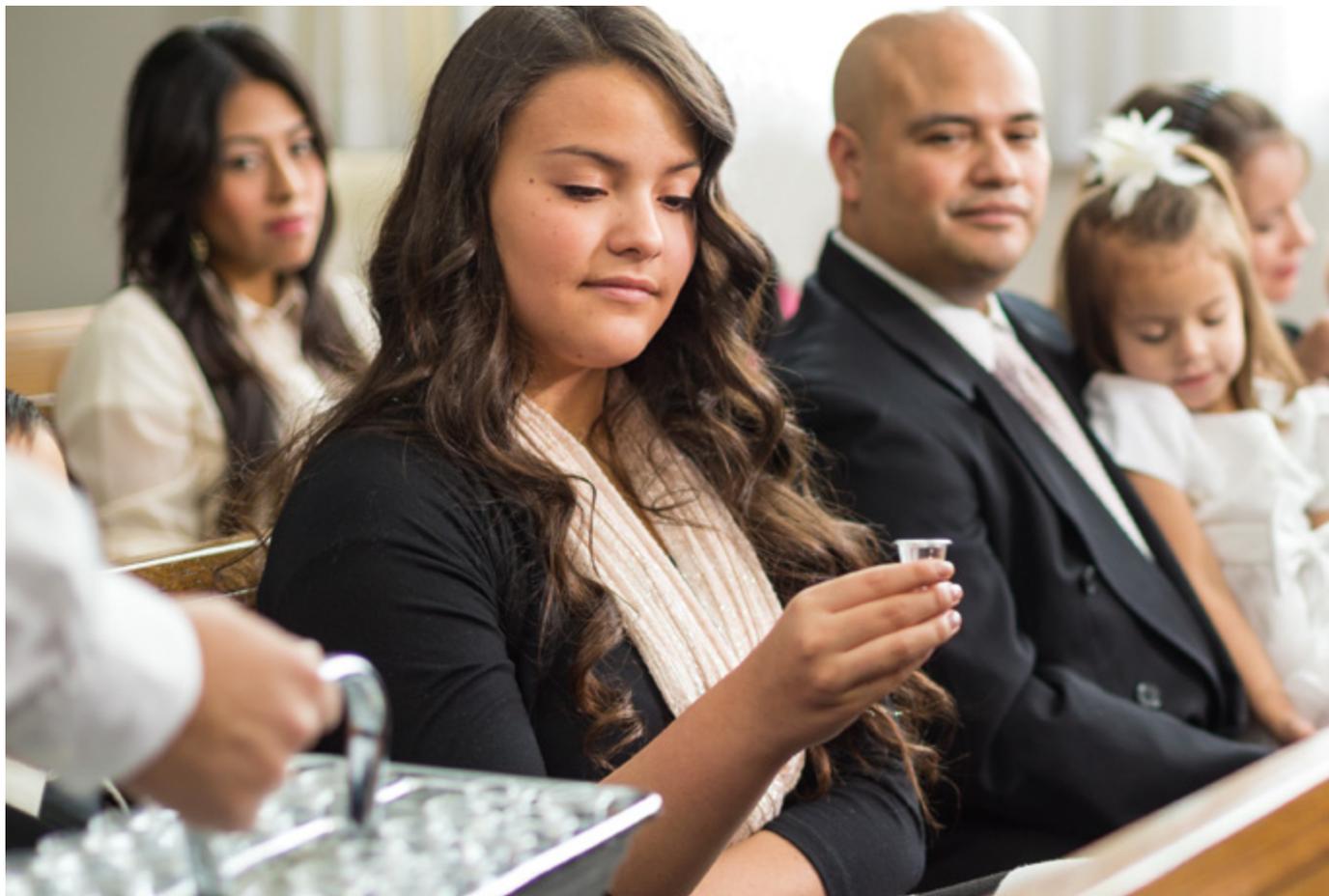
engaged in a good cause, . . . and bring to pass much righteousness” (D&C 58:27)?

### Strengthened by Gifts and Blessings

First, as we walk in obedience to the principles and commandments of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we enjoy a continual flow of blessings promised by God in His covenant with us. Those blessings provide the resources we need to act rather than simply be acted upon as we go through life. For example, the Lord’s commandments in the Word of Wisdom regarding the care of our physical bodies bless us first and foremost with “wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19). Furthermore, they lead to a generally more healthy life and freedom from destructive addictions. Obedience

gives us greater control over our lives, greater capacity to come and go, to work and create. Of course, age, accident, and illnesses inevitably take their toll, but even so, our obedience to this gospel law enhances our capacity to deal with these challenges.

In the covenant path we find a steady supply of gifts and help. “Charity never faileth” (1 Corinthians 13:8; Moroni 7:46), love begets love, compassion begets compassion, virtue begets virtue, commitment begets loyalty, and service begets joy. We are part of a covenant people, a community of Saints who encourage, sustain, and minister to one another. As Nephi explained, “And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God he doth nourish them, and strengthen them” (1 Nephi 17:3).



## Strengthened with Increased Faith

This brings us to a second way in which our covenants supply strength—they produce the faith necessary to persevere and to do all things that are expedient in the Lord. Our willingness to take upon us the name of Christ and keep His commandments requires a degree of faith, but as we honor our covenants, that faith expands. In the first place, the promised fruits of obedience become evident, which confirms our faith. Secondly, the Spirit communicates God’s pleasure, and we feel secure in His continued blessing and help. Thirdly, come what may, we can face life with hope and equanimity, knowing that we will succeed in the end because we have God’s promise to us individually, by name, and we know He cannot lie (see Enos 1:6; Ether 3:12).

Early Church leaders in this dispensation confirmed that adhering to the covenant path provides the reassurance we need in times of trial: “It was [the knowledge that their course in life conformed to the will of God] that enabled the ancient saints to endure all their afflictions and persecutions, and to take . . . not only the spoiling of their goods, and the wasting of their substance, joyfully, but also to suffer death in its most horrid forms; knowing (not merely believing) that when this earthly house of their tabernacle was dissolved, they had a building of God, a[n] house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Cor. 5:1).”<sup>2</sup>

They further pointed out that in offering whatever sacrifice God may require of us, we obtain the witness of the Spirit that our course is right and pleasing to God.<sup>3</sup> With that knowledge, our faith becomes unbounded, having the assurance that God will in due time turn every affliction to our gain. (See D&C 97:8–9.)

## Strengthened through the “Power of Godliness”

We have considered, first, the empowering blessings and, second, the endowment of faith that God grants to those who keep their covenants with Him. A final aspect of strength through covenants that I will mention is the bestowal of divine power. Our covenant commitment to Him permits our Heavenly Father to let His divine influence, “the power of godliness” (D&C 84:20), flow into our lives. He can do that because by our participation in priesthood ordinances, we exercise our agency and elect to receive it. Our participation in those ordinances also demonstrates that we are prepared to accept the additional responsibility that comes with added light and spiritual power.

In all the ordinances, especially those of the temple, we are endowed with power from on high (see D&C 109:22). This “power of godliness” comes in the person and by the influence of the Holy Ghost. The gift of the Holy Ghost is part of the new and everlasting covenant. It is an essential part of our baptism, the baptism of the Spirit. It is the messenger of grace by which the blood of Christ is applied to take away our sins and sanctify us (see 2 Nephi 31:17). It is the gift by which Adam was “quickened in the inner man” (Moses 6:65). It was by the Holy Ghost that the ancient Apostles endured all that they endured and by their priesthood keys carried the gospel to the known world of their day.

When we have entered into divine covenants, the Holy Ghost is our comforter, our guide, and our companion. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are “the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment” (Moses 6:61). The gifts of the Holy Spirit are testimony, faith,





knowledge, wisdom, revelations, miracles, healing, and charity, to name but a few (see D&C 46:13–26).

It is the Holy Ghost who bears witness of your words when you teach and testify. It is the Holy Ghost who, as you speak in hostile venues, puts into your heart what you should say and fulfills the Lord’s promise that “you shall not be confounded before men” (D&C 100:5). It is the Holy Ghost who reveals how you may clear the next seemingly insurmountable hurdle. It is by the Holy Ghost in you that others may feel the pure love of Christ and receive strength to press forward. It is also the Holy Ghost, in His character as the Holy Spirit of Promise, that confirms the validity and efficacy of your covenants and seals God’s promises upon you (see D&C 88:4–5; 109:14–15).

### Heavenly Father Will Be with You

Divine covenants make strong Christians. I urge each one to qualify for and receive all the priesthood ordinances you can and then faithfully keep the promises you have made by covenant. In times of distress, let your covenants be paramount and let your obedience be exact. Then you can ask in faith, nothing wavering, according to your need, and God will answer. He will sustain you as you work and watch. In His own time and way He will stretch forth His hand to you, saying, “Here am I.” ■

*From an April 2009 general conference address, “The Power of Covenants.”*

#### NOTES

1. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Covenant”; scriptures.lds.org.
2. *Lectures on Faith* (1985), 67.
3. See *Lectures on Faith*, 69–71.



**SUNDAY LESSONS**  
.....  
This Month's Topic:  
**Ordinances and Covenants**

# WHAT DO YOU SEE?

*When we study and ponder the symbols in gospel ordinances, our thoughts center on Jesus Christ.*

**By David A. Edwards**  
Church Magazines

**B**ecause symbols are all around us, we often don't think about them very much. But paying closer attention to gospel symbols can be a key to greater understanding.

The scriptures use words like *type, shadow, emblem, token, sign, parable, remembrance, witness, or testimony* to describe something that is meant to point our thoughts toward something else (see Moses 6:63). For instance, when Jesus introduced the sacrament at the Last Supper, He gave His

disciples the broken bread they were to eat and said, "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Now, obviously the bread was not literally His body; as He said, it is meant to *remind* us of His body—and *much more*. That's what makes symbols so powerful—they communicate without language and trigger a number of related thoughts all at once, adding depth and meaning.

Of course, ordinances are not

merely symbolic gestures; they carry real power to bless us through the authority of the priesthood. But they also contain symbols that teach us about the Savior and about our covenants. Even the act of submitting to and receiving a priesthood ordinance is an outward sign of a person's faith and humility. Here are many of the symbols connected with the ordinances of baptism, confirmation, and the sacrament, as well as some of the ideas associated with them. ■



## BAPTISM

**Water:** washing, cleansing, purification from sin

**White clothes:** purity (“there can no man be saved except his garments are washed white . . . [and] purified . . . through the blood of [Christ]” [Alma 5:21]); equality (whether rich or poor, all wear the same clothing at baptism, for “all are alike unto God” [2 Nephi 26:33])

**Raised right hand:** reaching up toward heaven, witnessing to heaven; also a token of an oath (see Genesis 14:22; Daniel 12:7)

**Immersion:** the death, burial, and Resurrection of Christ (see Romans 6:3–4); our spiritual rebirth in Christ (“born of water” [John 3:5])

## CONFIRMATION



**Laying on of hands:** physical touch by those representing God, transferring blessings from God to others

**Receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost:** called “baptism of fire” (see 2 Nephi 31:13); cleansing and spiritual rebirth in Christ

## SACRAMENT

**Eating bread:** remembering the body of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 26:26–29), the bread of life (“he that cometh to me shall never hunger” [John 6:35], “he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever” [John 6:58])

**Kneeling to pray:** humility, submitting to God’s will; a token of the everlasting covenant (see D&C 88:131)



**Placing bread and water before the congregation:** emblems of Christ’s sacrifice, which ended sacrifice by the shedding of blood (see Alma 34:13–14); we now bring a “sacrifice unto the Lord . . . of a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (D&C 59:8)

**Breaking bread:** Christ’s bodily suffering on our behalf, His physical death, His Resurrection so that we might live again

**Drinking water (originally wine):** the blood of Christ (shed in Gethsemane, during His sufferings at the hands of the soldiers, and on the cross), which “cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7) and “is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of [our] sins” (Moroni 10:33); blood as “the seat of life or vital energy of all flesh” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Blood”; scriptures.lds.org) and that which atones for sins through sacrifice (see Leviticus 17:11); living water (see John 4:14)



### FOCUSED ON THE ATONEMENT

“Every ordinance of the gospel focuses in one way or another on the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and surely that is why this particular ordinance [of the sacrament] with all its symbolism and imagery comes to us more readily and more repeatedly than any other in our life.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “This Do in Remembrance of Me,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 67.

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

### THINGS TO PONDER FOR SUNDAY

- How do the symbols in the ordinances of baptism, confirmation, and the sacrament help you remember the Savior and your covenants?
- What goes through your mind during the sacrament each week?

### THINGS YOU MIGHT DO

- Write in your journal about something you thought or felt during the sacrament.
- In church, talk about a symbol in the sacrament and how it helps you remember the Savior.

# OUR SPACE

## BAPTISM FOR MY GRANDFATHER

I'm grateful that our youth leaders planned a visit to the temple. As we were preparing for this trip to Apia, Samoa, we were happy for this rare opportunity. We joyfully went into the temple to do baptisms for the dead—for those who are in the spirit world waiting for us to find our family history and do work for them.

During baptisms, I saw a young man in our group baptized for Faataga Agavale, my grandfather. I felt tears of joy in my eyes, and I knew his spirit was there. I was very happy we were able to do work for him in the temple.

Saini Agavale, Samoa



## VITAL INFORMATION FROM A FRIEND

As a teenager, I didn't like going to church, so I didn't know much about the Bible or about God, nor did I want to. When I was 17, a friend of mine told me she was a Mormon. I had no idea what a Mormon was. I told my friend, "If I want to know anything about that church, I'll find out on my own."

Seeing that I wasn't too concerned about religion, she gave me a Book of Mormon and asked me to read it and pray about it. She didn't pressure me. Later that night as I opened the book, I noticed her testimony written in the front. As I read it, I felt that I should learn more about the Book of Mormon. So I started reading 1 Nephi. I could not put the book down. I needed to know more.

In a family home evening, her family taught me

about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Everything seemed to make sense. Soon I was taught by the missionaries and baptized and confirmed a member of the Lord's true Church. The gospel helped me know who I am, where I came from, and where I could go if I am faithful.

As I look back, I can see how the Holy Ghost helped me want to learn more. As I learned more, my attitude about church and God changed. For the first time in my life, I wanted to do what He wanted me to do.

The Book of Mormon changed my life, and I'm thankful for my friend who shared it with me. A true friend shares vital information such as this.

Michael P., Ohio, USA



**By Randall L. Ridd**  
Second Counselor,  
Young Men General  
Presidency

# WORK

## WHO NEEDS IT?

*Work may not always be fun, but you may be surprised at how good it can make you feel.*

**A**s a young man, I enjoyed playing and having a good time as much as anybody. And when I turned 16, I loved going out on dates and hanging out with my friends. I enjoyed those activities a lot more than work.

But, like many of you, I did have a job. My father worked in the construction business, building homes, and he frequently enlisted my three brothers and me to help him. The work was hot and demanding; there were times when I really didn't want to be working. But we had schedules to keep and projects to complete, so we worked hard each day until the job was done. Although I didn't realize it at the time, working with my family taught me a number of lessons.

### **Satisfaction Comes from a Job Well Done**

Building homes takes a lot of time, effort, and precision. One area where I thought we didn't need to be as exacting was in digging the footings for a house. My father thought differently.

To lay the foundation for a home, you first have to dig and pour the footings. Footings are pads of concrete that are wider than the foundation. Once the footings are poured and cured, you pour the foundation on top of the footings. Then you backfill dirt over them.

I often wondered if it really mattered that the footings were perfectly square. After all, with dirt covering them, no one would ever see them, and it wouldn't weaken the support structure

of the home. But my father still wanted the footings square and flat, measured correctly and carefully, and he did this with every home he built.

Looking back, I realize that my father treated everything he did in his work with the same care, even for things the owner would never notice. His careful attention to detail meant that people could trust him to do good work, and he had the satisfaction of knowing that his work was the best quality and that the owners would appreciate it.

There may be times when no one but you and the Lord will know how well you did the work you needed to do. Rest assured that the Lord *does* know your effort. As you do your best, you will feel good about yourself, knowing that you have



developed integrity, dependability, and useful skills.

You will learn through your experience the value of the Lord's law of the harvest: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7; see also D&C 130:20–21).

### Attitude Affects Everything

Digging footings meant long, hot hours, and I have to admit, I didn't always have a good attitude about it. Whenever my mother caught me complaining about having to work, she would say, "Watch out. You're going to lose your blessing, and you have to work anyway!" (See D&C 58:28–29.) She was right. Complaining never took away the job; it just took away the satisfaction and many of the blessings of doing it.

I found that when I chose to listen to my mother and to do the work with a cheerful heart, the time passed much faster, the work itself was done better, and I was a whole lot happier than I had been when I was complaining. Attitude affects everything.

### The Most Important Work Is God's Work

Serving a mission was a defining experience for me. I came to realize that no other work is more important than our Heavenly Father's work, which is to bless the lives of us, His children: "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39).

As you engage in Heavenly Father's work to serve His children, you will

find, as Alma did, great joy in being "an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is [your] joy" (Alma 29:9).

### An Invitation

So who needs work? We all do! It's the mother of self-reliance, achievement, and joy in this life. As you cheerfully engage in work, all those around you will reap a rich harvest because of the seeds you sow.

As you go about your week, I invite you to think about the lessons I learned and then try this experiment: the next time you are given a job to do, give it your best effort, have a cheerful attitude, and see what happens. You just might be surprised at how happy and good it makes you feel. ■

# MOVING PIPE IN MUDDY SHOES

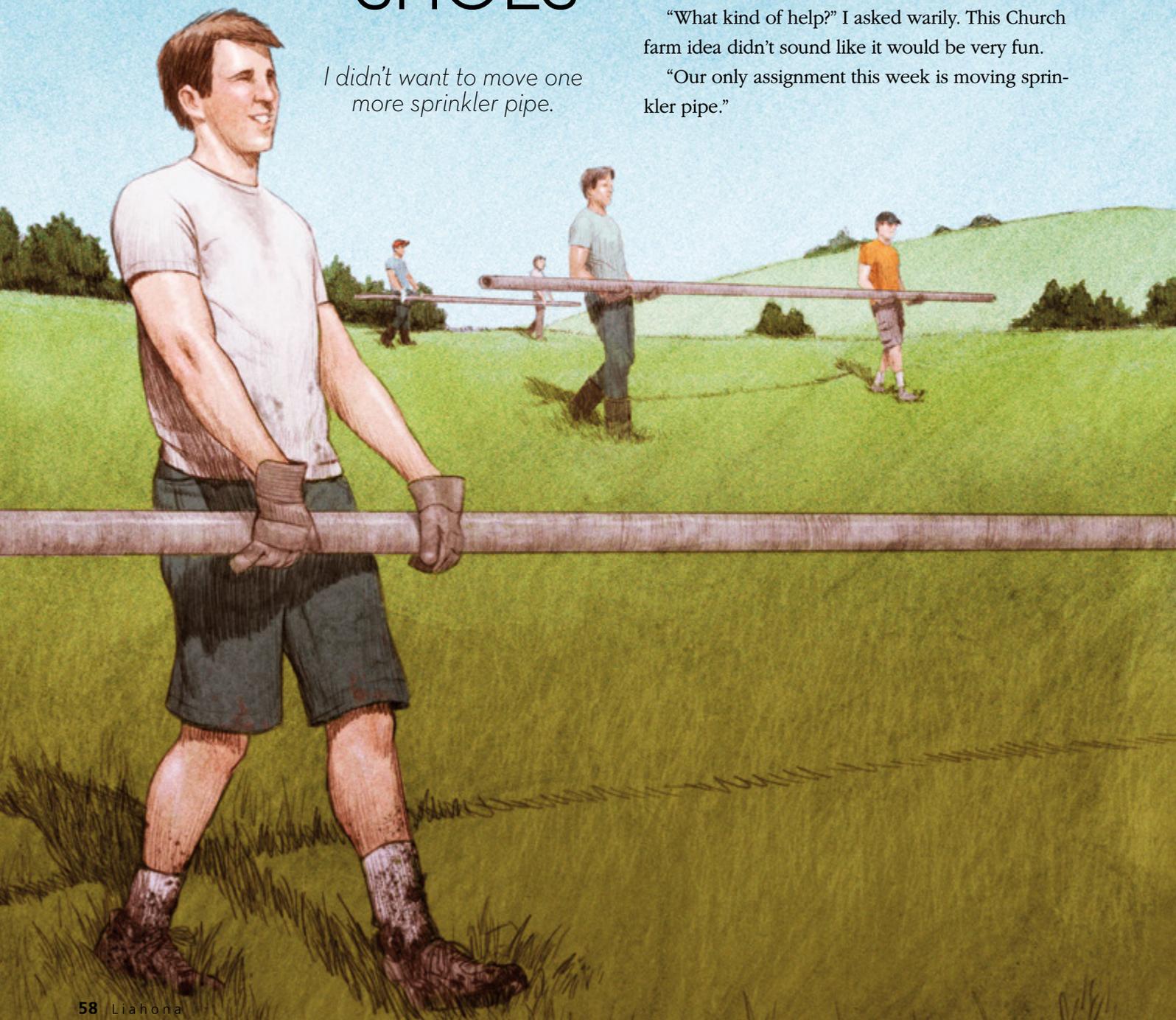
*I didn't want to move one more sprinkler pipe.*

By Raymond M. Allton

“Thanks, Bishop Rowley. We’ll be glad to help.” Brother Hulet, our deacons quorum adviser, took the clipboard from the bishop’s hand and announced, “I have a sign-up list for volunteers at the Church farm. I’m sure the Lord would be pleased if all of us would help out this coming week.”

“What kind of help?” I asked warily. This Church farm idea didn’t sound like it would be very fun.

“Our only assignment this week is moving sprinkler pipe.”



Moving pipe! The words filled me with dread. My thoughts turned to a few months earlier when mom had insisted that I get a summer job. In our small town, that meant pretty much one thing—moving pipe. So all summer, my cousin Scott and I were moving pipes.

On the first day of our summer job, we stood gazing across a vast landscape of green alfalfa. The 40-foot-long (12 m) pipes were linked together in a straight line that seemed to stretch out for miles. After a short training, Scott and I disconnected our first pipe. Scott lifted his end up, and cold water splashed all over my tennis shoes. We hefted the pipe through sticky mud and reconnected it at the next riser. As we walked back for the next pipe, my sloshing shoes became heavier as mud clung to them in ever-thickening layers. Eventually, the mud, water, and our own perspiration drenched our clothes and spirits.

My thoughts returned to volunteering at the Church farm. “Well, I—I don’t think I can come,” I stammered. “I have to go to my own job every morning.”

“That’s no problem,” assured Brother Hulet. “We always go to the Church farm in the afternoons.” Brother Hulet passed around the sign-up list. “When each one of you was ordained to the priesthood, you were given the power to act in the name of God. And when we serve Him by serving others, we are acting in His name. Besides, with all of us helping, the work won’t seem hard at all.”

The list was passed to me. I couldn’t believe that, so far, everyone had signed up to go every day this week. Didn’t they know how miserable this was going to be? I felt a great weight of righteous peer pressure exerted on me. Grudgingly, I signed up and passed it on.

Monday afternoon, I sat in my room recuperating from the morning’s work when I heard Brother Hulet honking his horn outside. I hesitated for a moment before changing back into my smelly, damp work clothes.

We soon pulled into the Church farm. Everyone but me raced toward the field. I lagged behind, head down, kicking rocks, when I was surprised by a hand on my shoulder. “Thanks for coming with us,” Brother Hulet encouraged.

“I know you worked hard this morning.” We walked together in silence for a few moments. Then he ran ahead to organize the group.

I watched him and thought about what he had said to me. I had worked hard that morning. I was tired and smelly, and I wanted to go home. But what about Brother Hulet? He had worked hard that morning too. So had all the guys, for that matter. So why did they seem happy to be here?

I caught up to the others, and we began our work. At first, I tried to cheer myself up by thinking of the noble sacrifice I was making. But soon my self-absorbed thoughts ended, and I noticed how quickly we were moving with everyone helping. We laughed and talked, and suddenly I realized I was actually having fun! In a few short hours we had completed our assignment.

As we rode home, I realized that what I thought was going to be an unbearable sacrifice seemed small. In fact, with everyone helping, it seemed like no sacrifice at all.

Brother Hulet stopped his station wagon in front of my house and looked back at me. “Thanks for your help today. Your hard work made it easy for the rest of us.” He smiled and winked.

I grinned back. “Thanks, but all of us helping together was what made it easy.” I climbed out of the car and closed the door.

Brother Hulet put the car in gear and began to pull away. “See you tomorrow, then?” he called through the open window.

“Sure. See you tomorrow,” I said. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*



# TO THE POINT



When I talk to **my friends**  
about the Church, they **say** they're  
**not interested because**  
it has **too many rules.**  
What can I tell them?

**O**ur attitude toward any “rule” has a lot to do with what we’re used to. If your friends were used to never brushing their teeth and you told them that you brush every day because you had been taught to, they might find this to be an oppressive rule. But you really don’t even think of it as a rule at all because it has simply become a habit, a way of life. While they might think never having to brush their teeth is a kind of freedom, you know the problems it leads to and how much better it feels to have clean, healthy teeth.

So it is with the Church’s “rules.” Your friends may think the standards we follow are restrictive, but you know that the Lord and His servants have given them to us to help us live a better life and return to Heavenly Father. Also, obedience to God’s commandments always brings blessings, not the least of which is the companionship of the Holy Ghost. You can try describing these benefits and blessings to your friends, and you can tell them that the only way to really know if the “rules” are from God is to try them out (see John 7:17). ■

## Why did God create us?

**I**t is important to understand that God did not “create” us in the sense of causing us to come into being out of nothing. Some basic part of us existed even before our spirit birth: “Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be” (D&C 93:29). Because we know this, we also know that Heavenly Father’s motivation in creating us was not random or arbitrary but deeply purposeful. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 210; see also Moses 1:39). Because Heavenly Father wanted us to have the chance to progress and become like Him, He created our spirits, and He provided a plan of salvation and happiness that necessarily includes this earthly experience. Perhaps, then, the simplest and best answer to this question is also the answer to why God does just about anything: because He loves us. ■

# THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM

Make sure your fun and adventure don't take  
you down a dangerous path.

*(See Helaman 3:29.)*





# SERVING FOR THE

By Rasem Maluff

In 2011, I made one of the most important decisions in my life. It has brought me the greatest treasures I have ever had. I decided to serve a mission, but it was not an easy decision.

The Lord gave me the opportunity to enjoy football during my childhood and my youth. I represented Paraguay in international tournaments, traveling with my country's national youth football team, Libertad, to countries in Europe, Asia, and South America.

Fortunately, my parents always coupled my sporting activities with a proper education and a spiritual upbringing. My mother's faith and testimony definitely were the seeds from which my own faith and testimony grew. Because of her faithfulness, I participated in seminary despite my busy sports schedule.

Although I had heard about full-time missions ever since I was a child, I could not make up my mind about serving a mission. That changed when my father accepted a call to serve in the bishopric of our ward. This was a difficult decision for my father, since he was deeply involved in my sporting career. He was always at my football practice and matches, and we spent a lot of time together. For this reason, accepting a call to serve in the bishopric would mean giving up time supporting my career.

During the sacrament meeting when my father was sustained, a powerful thought came into my mind, telling me that the sacrifices of others would be in vain if I was not willing to sacrifice important things for the right reasons. During the

testimonies, someone spoke about the idea that if we are obedient, our families can be eternal. That thought touched my heart, and I decided that I would do whatever was in my power to be with my family forever. During the classes that Sunday, the importance of obeying the commandments was brought up numerous times. So strongly did I feel the Spirit prompting me to serve the Lord that during family home evening, I informed my family of my decision to serve a mission.

.....  
***Nothing else has given me such great joy and peace or brought me so many miracles as has my missionary service.***  
.....

**YOUR DAY FOR  
A MISSION**

*To watch a video about the New Zealand rugby player Sidney Going, visit [lds.org/go/sid-going](http://lds.org/go/sid-going).*



# RIGHT REASONS

My decision meant that I would have to interrupt my college education as well as resolve the five-year contract that I had with my football club. From the start, the Lord opened doors and touched hearts so the contract could be resolved.

After I submitted my missionary papers, I listened to the April 2011 general conference, in which Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared the missionary experience of Sidney Going, who had been a professional rugby player and a member of New Zealand's national team. The fact that Brother Going served a mission and later returned and continued his professional career taught me a lesson. Throughout my mission and until this very day, listening to that

talk time and time again has blessed me and brought peace to my heart. The countless testimonies that family, ward, and stake members shared with me at different times not only strengthened my decision to serve but also sustained me during the difficult moments on my mission.

An additional source of satisfaction in my life was that my decision to enter the mission field helped my three closest friends also decide to serve a mission. They later served as zone leaders, as an assistant to the mission president, and even as a branch president. We now have our eyes set on the course that will allow us to return to Heavenly Father's presence.

I am not the same person I was three years ago. My greatest desire is

to do the Lord's will. The Lord blessed me "an hundredfold" (Matthew 19:29). I have a living and real testimony of the divinity of Heavenly Father, His Beloved Son and His Atonement, the purifying power of the Holy Spirit of God, and the marvelous work and wonder of these latter days, when the gospel has been restored to the earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith (see Isaiah 29:14).

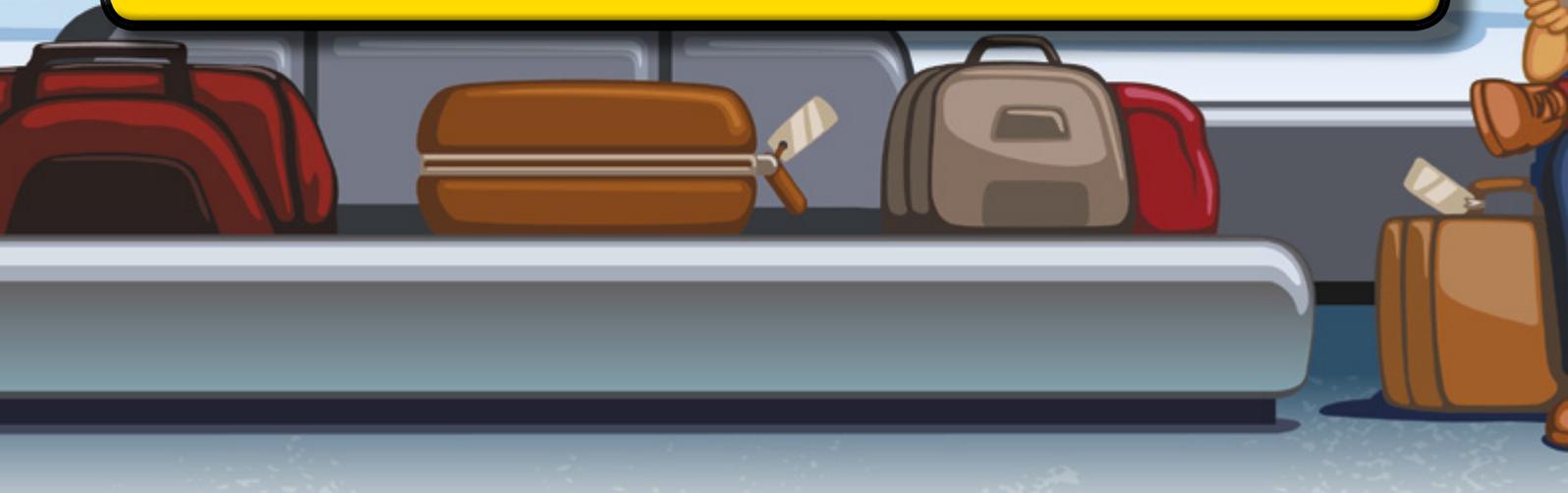
My heart overflows with love and gratitude for this sacred time and for knowing and loving so many brothers and sisters in the Uruguay Montevideo Mission. Few blessings are as great as serving among them. Nothing else has given me such great joy and peace or brought me so many miracles as has my missionary service. ■

*The author lives in Paraguay.*

# MORMONS **DO** BELIEVE IN GOD



*At an airport far from home, I had a chance to share the gospel with a stranger.*



**By Brenda Hernandez Ruiz**

I was traveling from Mexico to Montana, USA, and had a layover in Denver, Colorado. I walked around the airport, looking through huge windows at planes landing and taking off. I was nervous because I had never flown before. The airport seemed really big.

I looked at my ticket and realized I had two hours before my flight would depart. I decided to find a place to sit down and read until I boarded the plane. I felt scared as I looked for a place to sit. Almost every seat was taken. I decided to sit next to an older lady who seemed to be alone. She was the only one who didn't seem scary to me.

An hour or so passed before I decided to talk to her. I introduced myself; she seemed really nice and eager to talk to me about her grandchild's accomplishments. She

asked me a little bit about myself, and I told her all about my life in Mexico. Then I had a sudden urge to share the gospel with her. She asked me about my religion, and I told her that I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

She said she had never heard of it.

I smiled and said, "We are also known as Mormons."

She immediately changed her attitude. Her facial expressions and the way she talked to me changed. She didn't seem to know what to say. I had a feeling that our conversation had come to an end, but I tried to keep talking to her. I asked her about her religion. She said without hesitation, "I am Catholic."

She then said, "I don't understand. You are such a nice



girl. You seem decent. Why, then, would you want to be a Mormon?"

I was shocked by this comment, and I didn't know how to respond. I offered a silent prayer, asking Heavenly Father to help me explain what being a Latter-day Saint meant to me. I told her that I loved being a member of the Church, and because of the teachings of the gospel, I was able to be a better person and see things with perspective.

She looked surprised and said, "Mormons don't believe in God."

I tried not to laugh at this comment; instead I smiled and realized that this was my chance to share the truth with her. I explained some of our basic beliefs. I taught her about the plan of salvation and the importance of families.

She still didn't seem convinced, so I decided to bear my testimony to her. There in a huge airport, I was blessed with the courage to share my testimony about Joseph Smith, about the living prophet and apostles, and about the love I feel toward the gospel and the Book of Mormon.

I looked at the clock. It was time for me to catch my plane.

That afternoon strengthened my testimony in a way that I had never experienced before. I was happy that I shared my testimony with her and grateful that I was able to help change her mind about members of our Church. I can now be more confident when someone asks me about the Church. ■

*The author lives in Chihuahua, Mexico.*



# What can we do to **BE WORTHY** of the Spirit?

By President  
Boyd K. Packer

President of the  
Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

*The members of  
the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles are  
special witnesses of  
Jesus Christ.*



Listen to uplifting music.



Talk reverently.

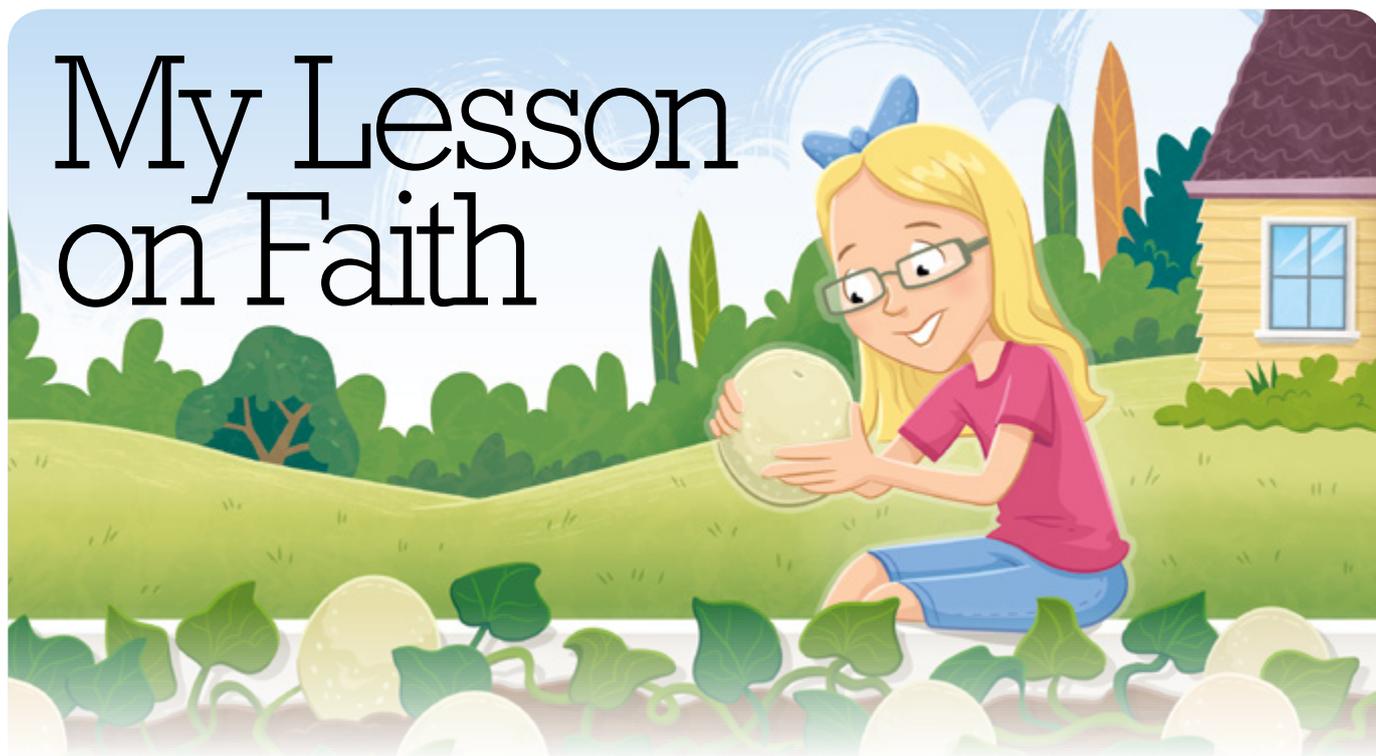


Repent when you make a mistake.



Dress modestly.

If you do these  
things, you will be  
watched over and  
the Holy Ghost will  
guide you.



# My Lesson on Faith

Emma R., age 11, Texas, USA

A few years ago, I taught a family home evening lesson on faith. My family had been spending lots of time talking about faith because my older brother had questions about why we need faith. I planted a seed I saved from a cantaloupe in a little cup. I told my family that faith was like a seed. If you took good care of it, the seed would grow.

We had never had much success growing gardens. But I hoped I could make this plant grow and that I could be a good example of faith. I put the cup in the window and took care of it. I waited and prayed for my seed to grow.

I had almost given up, but after a week I finally saw some green sprouting up. It grew in the window for another week. Then my parents helped me find a place to plant it in a backyard flowerbed.

I took good care of my plant. I

watered it and kept the weeds away. It kept growing bigger and bigger. I was so excited!

After weeks went by, I noticed flowers, and then small fruit began to sprout. We watched seven cantaloupes grow on the vine from my one little seed. To me it was a miracle and an answer to my prayers. The fruit was sweet, just like it says in Alma 32:42: “And because of your

diligence and your faith and your patience with the word in nourishing it, that it may take root in you, behold, by and by ye shall pluck the fruit thereof, which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet.”

This experience made me very happy and taught me and my family that faith is a true principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■

## YOUR TURN

We would like to plant a seed with you: have you thought about sharing your experiences with the *Liahona*? We welcome true stories about how you live the gospel of Jesus Christ. For example, you could write about a time when you had a prayer answered or when you invited a friend to church.

Your parents can help you send it in: online at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org), by email to [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org), or by mail to the address on page 3. Please include the name of your ward or branch and your parent’s permission.



## WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT HAVING A BODY?

Our bodies are so important and holy that the Lord calls them temples (see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17). And having a body is fun too! Bodies can run, sing, climb, laugh, draw, swim, dance, and do other fun activities. Also, we can use our bodies to learn, help people, create families, and make the world a better place.



## WHY DO WE HAVE BODIES?

Before we were born, we were spirits without physical bodies. There were a lot of things we couldn't do until we had a body. God sent us to earth to get bodies. We need both a spirit and a body to become like Heavenly Father. (See D&C 88:15.)

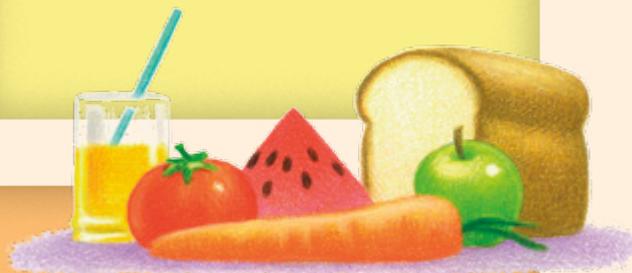
# My Body Is a

## WHAT IF THERE ARE THINGS I DON'T LIKE ABOUT MY BODY?

Sometimes our bodies don't look, move, or work the way we want them to. But no matter what our bodies are like now, we can choose to be grateful for them and use them to do good things here on earth. Someday, each one of us will be resurrected and have a body that is perfect (see Alma 40:23). God loves us no matter what our bodies are like, and we can love ourselves too.

## WHY DOESN'T EVERYONE LOOK ALIKE?

Bodies come in many shapes, colors, and sizes, and this is part of Heavenly Father's plan. Even though each body is different, all of us are created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:26). That means that our bodies are patterned after His perfect body. Every single body is beautiful because each one is a gift from our loving Heavenly Father.



## HOW SHOULD I TREAT MY BODY?

We should treat our bodies the way we would care for any priceless treasure—with love and respect. Through the prophets and the Word of Wisdom, Heavenly Father has told us what is bad for our bodies and what is good. There are lots of things we can do to care for our bodies:

- Eat healthy foods and exercise.
- Dress modestly and keep our bodies clean.
- Respect other people's bodies.
- Don't mark our bodies with tattoos or piercings.
- Don't use drugs, alcohol, tobacco, coffee, or tea.
- Play games that are safe and fun and stay away from activities that are dangerous.

When we take care of our bodies, we are better able to feel the Holy Ghost.

**As we care for our bodies the way God has commanded, we will be blessed!**  
(See Mosiah 2:41; D&C 89:18–21.)

# TEMPLE

By Marissa Widdison  
Church Magazines



# We Become Members of the Church through Baptism and Confirmation

By Jennifer Maddy

Mariela came home from school with a frown on her face.

"What's wrong?" Mom asked as she planted flowers in the garden.

"Sonia promised she would play with me, and then she didn't," Mariela said. She plopped down in the dirt next to Mom.

"I'm so sorry," Mom said. "It's important to keep promises. Next week when you are baptized and confirmed, you will make some very important promises called covenants."

"Really?" Mariela asked. She was excited to be baptized.

Mom put some yellow flowers in the ground. "You promise to obey the commandments. You also promise to take the name of Jesus Christ upon you. What does Heavenly Father promise if you do these things?"

Mariela thought about what she was learning in Primary. "That I'll have the Holy Ghost with me."

"That's right," Mom said. "You'll also become a member of Jesus's Church. How can you keep your promise to obey the commandments?"

"I can be kind, and I can tell the truth," Mariela said. "What does it mean to take Jesus's name upon me?"

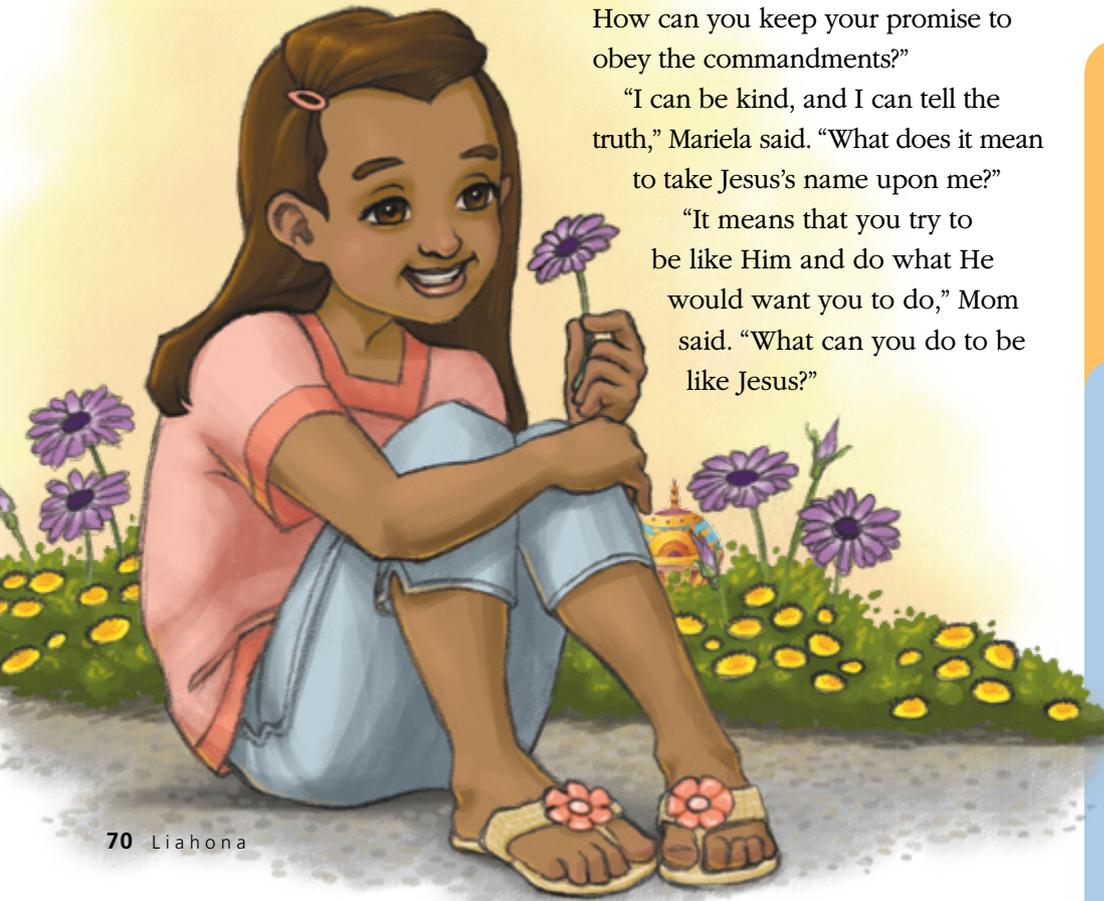
"It means that you try to be like Him and do what He would want you to do," Mom said. "What can you do to be like Jesus?"

Mariela twirled a purple flower between her fingers. "I can sit with the new girl at school. And I can try to be nice to Sonia," she said.

"Those are great ideas," Mom said. "And when you take the sacrament, you can remember your promises."

Mariela smiled. "I know another promise—to water the flowers so we can have a beautiful garden!" ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*



## Song and Scripture

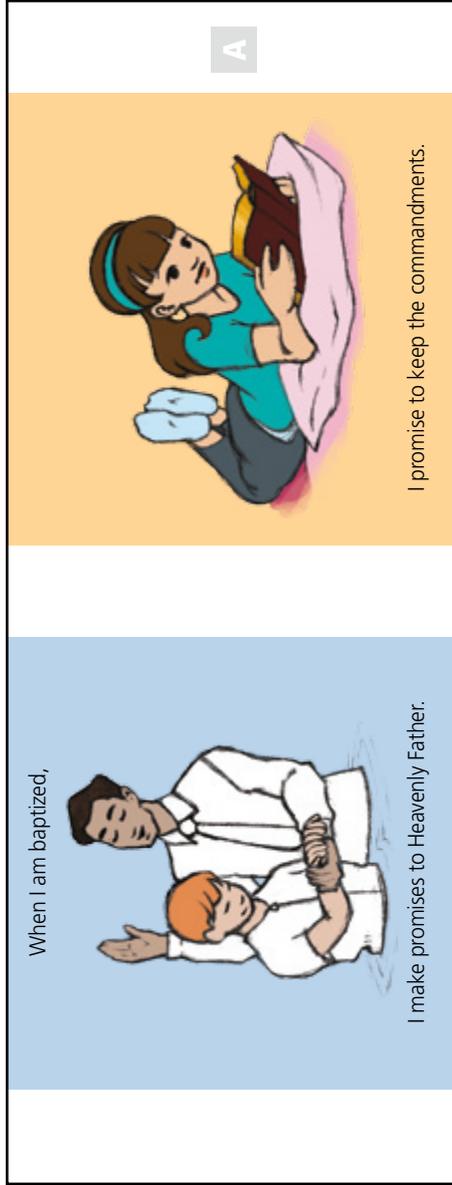
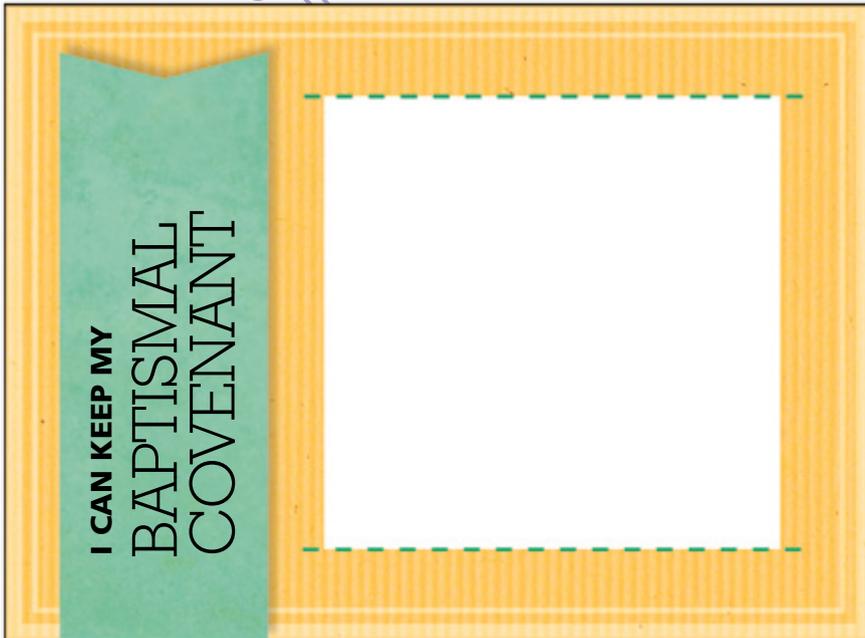
- "Baptism," *Children's Songbook*, 100 (verses 1 and 3)
- John 3:5

## Ideas for Family Talk

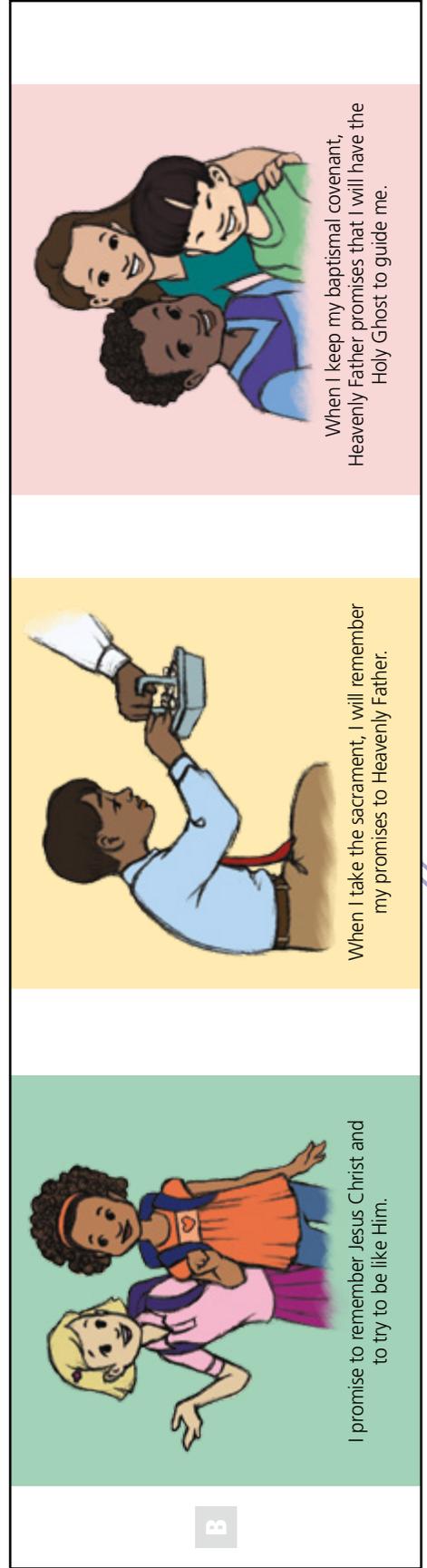
Mariela thought of ways she could keep her baptismal covenant by following Jesus Christ. Your family could think of ways to be more like Jesus at home, at school, and in other places. Make a family goal to think about the baptismal covenant when you take the sacrament.

# I Can Keep My Baptismal Covenant

To make a movie about your baptismal covenant, cut out the frame and picture strips. Glue or tape the two picture strips together into one long strip (overlap A and B). Glue or tape the frame and picture strip to heavy paper. Cut along the broken lines on the frame to make two slits. Slide the picture strip through the slots so the pictures show on the front of the frame.



A



B



# OUR PAGE



Lesslie Q., age 6, Ecuador



Lady Q., age 9, Ecuador



Satya S., age 11, Indonesia



"Book of Mormon," William M., age 10, Brazil



In our Primary presentation one year, I played the piano for "I Lived in Heaven." The next year I led the sign language for "I Love to See the Temple." The next year my goal was to learn "If I Listen with My Heart." I know the Lord gave me talents, and I should develop them and use them to bless others—then my talents will grow. I know that I am a daughter of God and that Jesus Christ gave His life for me.

Luna Marisol I., age 8, Argentina



By Elder  
Eduardo Gavarret  
Of the Seventy

# Prepared to Serve

*“Learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God” (Alma 37:35).*

I grew up in the city of Minas, Uruguay. When I was six years old, my mother and older sisters were baptized into the Church. My father never joined the Church, but he was always happy that we went to church. He even kept the Word of Wisdom and paid tithing.

Our branch was very small, and we did not have a church building. We met in a rented house. The house had a small swimming pool outside that we used for baptisms.

As my eighth birthday got closer, I was excited about being baptized. But on the day of the baptism, it was raining and very cold. My mom said that maybe I shouldn’t be baptized that day because of the cold weather. But it was my birthday, and I wanted to be baptized on that day.

I remember putting on my white clothes and getting into the pool to be baptized. I knew that the water would be cold, but I did not feel cold. I knew that I was doing the right thing, and I had a warm feeling.

A short time later a chapel was built for our branch. At that time Church members could help build the meetinghouses. My job was to pick up nails and screws that had fallen on the ground so they could be used again.

It was a simple job, but it was very important to me. It taught me how to serve, and it helped prepare me for future Church service. Remember that even though you are young, the things you do now matter. ■





# I'm Pedro from Brazil

From an interview  
by Amie Jane Leavitt

**P**edro lives in the largest country in South America—Brazil. He lives in Curitiba, the capital of the Brazilian state of Paraná. Pedro likes to spend time with his mom and dad and his older brother and younger sister. They love to visit the temple and go to the beach together. Pedro looks forward to being a missionary someday! ■

\* "Hello, friends!" in Portuguese.

*Each morning I read the scriptures and pray with my family before I go to school. My favorite subjects are art and the history of the Brazilian Indians. Not many of my friends at school are members of the Church. I talk to them about what I believe and invite them to come to church with me.*



*Olá, amigos!\**



*I like to draw. I spend many hours every week on my artwork. I also like to visit the library and look at the art books.*



*I love to play football. Another sport I like is hapkido, a kind of martial art from Korea.*



*My favorite scripture story is when Nephi returns to Jerusalem to get the plates of brass. I like to set and complete goals. I plan to earn my Faith in God Award before I turn 12.*



### I LOVE TO SEE THE TEMPLE

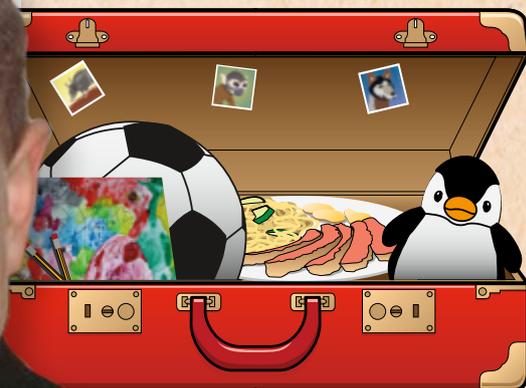
My family likes to visit the temple in Curitiba and walk through the gardens together. I was only four when the temple was built, but I remember going on the tour at the open house. It is a special memory for me.

### READY TO GO!

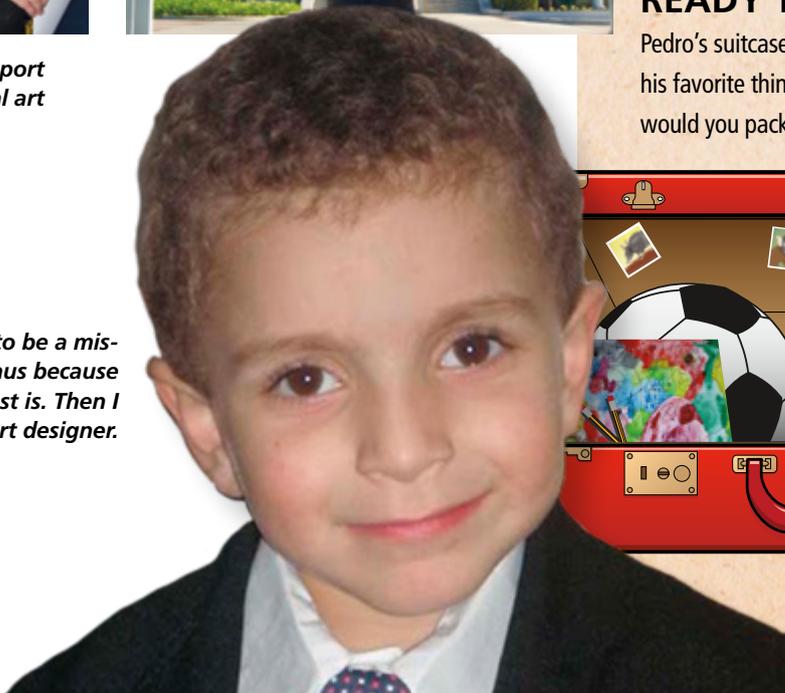
Pedro's suitcase is packed with some of his favorite things. Which of these things would you pack in your suitcase?



*Did you notice that the passport stamp was missing from January? You can cut it out and add it now!*



*When I grow up, I would like to be a missionary. I want to serve in Manaus because it's where the Amazon forest is. Then I want to work as an art designer.*



# Sarah Walked and Walked

By Heidi Poelman

Based on a true story



Sarah hopped and skipped. She was ready to hike around Silver Lake with her family. Her brother, Josh, ran ahead.

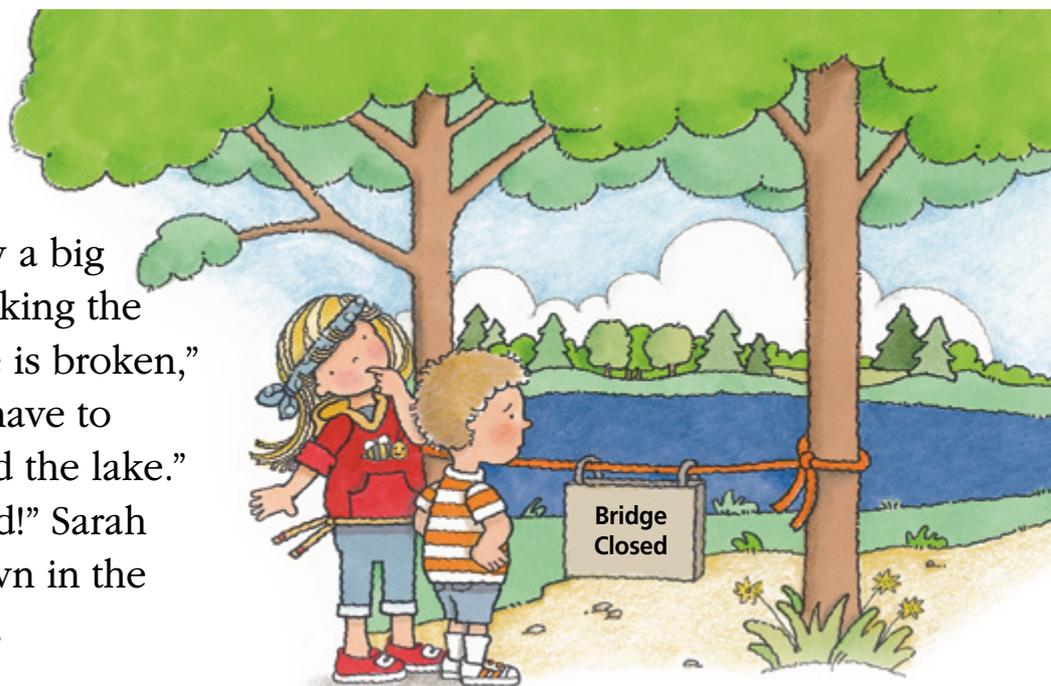


Soon the sun began to feel hot on Sarah's arms. Her legs began to feel tired.

"Don't worry," Mom said.  
"We're almost back to our car."

Then Sarah saw a big orange rope blocking the path. “The bridge is broken,” Dad said. “We’ll have to walk back around the lake.”

“But I’m so tired!” Sarah said. Josh sat down in the dirt and frowned.



“Do you remember the story of the pioneers?” Mom asked. Sarah nodded. She liked the pioneers.

“They had to walk a very long way,” Mom said. “Sometimes it was really hot, and sometimes it was really cold. But they kept walking. When they got to their new home, they built houses and temples.”

Sarah was glad the pioneers kept walking. She would keep walking too. She held her hand out to Josh. “Come on,” she said. “We have some more walking to do.” ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*





How is your life different from an early pioneer's life?  
How is it the same?

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK W. ROBISON

## KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SHORE

By Richard M. Romney  
Church Magazines

A canoe trip to an island in a nearby national park sounded like the perfect opportunity to get closer to my son. The Aaronic Priesthood leaders and the young men in our ward had been planning the trip for months, and I was able to accompany them.

My son McKay was in great condition, participating in three sports in high school. That's probably one reason the leaders put us in the same canoe—they knew he could paddle hard if the need arose. I had some experience guiding a canoe, so we seemed like a good team.

I was also eager to have the time on the lake to talk. McKay had been through a lot since the death of his mother, and I hadn't always been able to respond in the best way to his needs and interests.

We had training, we had life vests, we knew how to swim, and we had experienced leaders guiding us.

What we hadn't counted on was the wind. We had paddled for several miles, then cut across the middle of the lake and were nearing the shore when an unusually strong headwind kicked up.

The other canoes were able to make it to shore, but McKay and I were in the final boat. The waves were picking up, and we were turning off course as we paddled and paddled,



*My son taught me a powerful lesson about where to look and how to endure.*

trying to make any progress at all. I was becoming exhausted and alarmed. I dug into the water and pulled with all my might, trying to steer us back on course, but we seemed to stay exactly in the same position.

We were in danger of capsizing when finally I admitted aloud that I didn't know if I had the strength to continue. Then my son said, "You're looking at the waves, Dad. You won't get anywhere doing that. You've got to keep your eyes on the shore. See that tree on the hill? That's our goal. Focus on that, and we'll make it."

He was right. Once I focused on the tree, I could stay on course. My arms felt renewed strength. McKay called cadence for the strokes—"Pull. Rest. Pull. Rest." And steadily, we moved.

We reached the shore, others reached out to help, and we sat and caught our breath. That night in our tent we talked, father and son, about our experience.

Together, we remembered what President Thomas S. Monson has taught about the lighthouse of the Lord: "It beckons through the storms of life. It calls, 'This way to safety; this way to home.'"<sup>1</sup>

That afternoon, a tree on the shore had been our lighthouse. When I was close to despair, my son had wisely counseled me not to look at the waves but to keep my eyes on the shore. And we had pulled together, in more ways than one. ■

#### NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, "Standards of Strength," *New Era*, Oct. 2008, 2.



ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT T. BARRETT

## **PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON**

When he was young, **Thomas S. Monson** raised rabbits and **pigeons**. Known for his kindness, he gave his **pet rabbits** to a family who needed food at Thanksgiving and his **train car** to a boy who had no Christmas presents. When he grew up, he worked in the publishing business for the ***Deseret News***. As an Apostle, he organized the first stake in East Germany and got permission for the Church to build the **Freiberg Germany Temple**. President Monson has called all members of the Church to go to the rescue of those who need help.

# Also in This Issue

## FOR YOUNG ADULTS



### **BECOMING** Perfect in Christ

p. 42

Understanding the Savior's freely given atoning love can free us from incorrect and unrealistic expectations of what perfection is.

## FOR YOUTH



p. 48

### **DIVINE** **COVENANTS** MAKE STRONG CHRISTIANS

How do our covenants with God bring us strength? Here are three ways.

## FOR CHILDREN

### My Lesson on Faith

Emma grows cantaloupes to teach her family about faith.



p. 67

