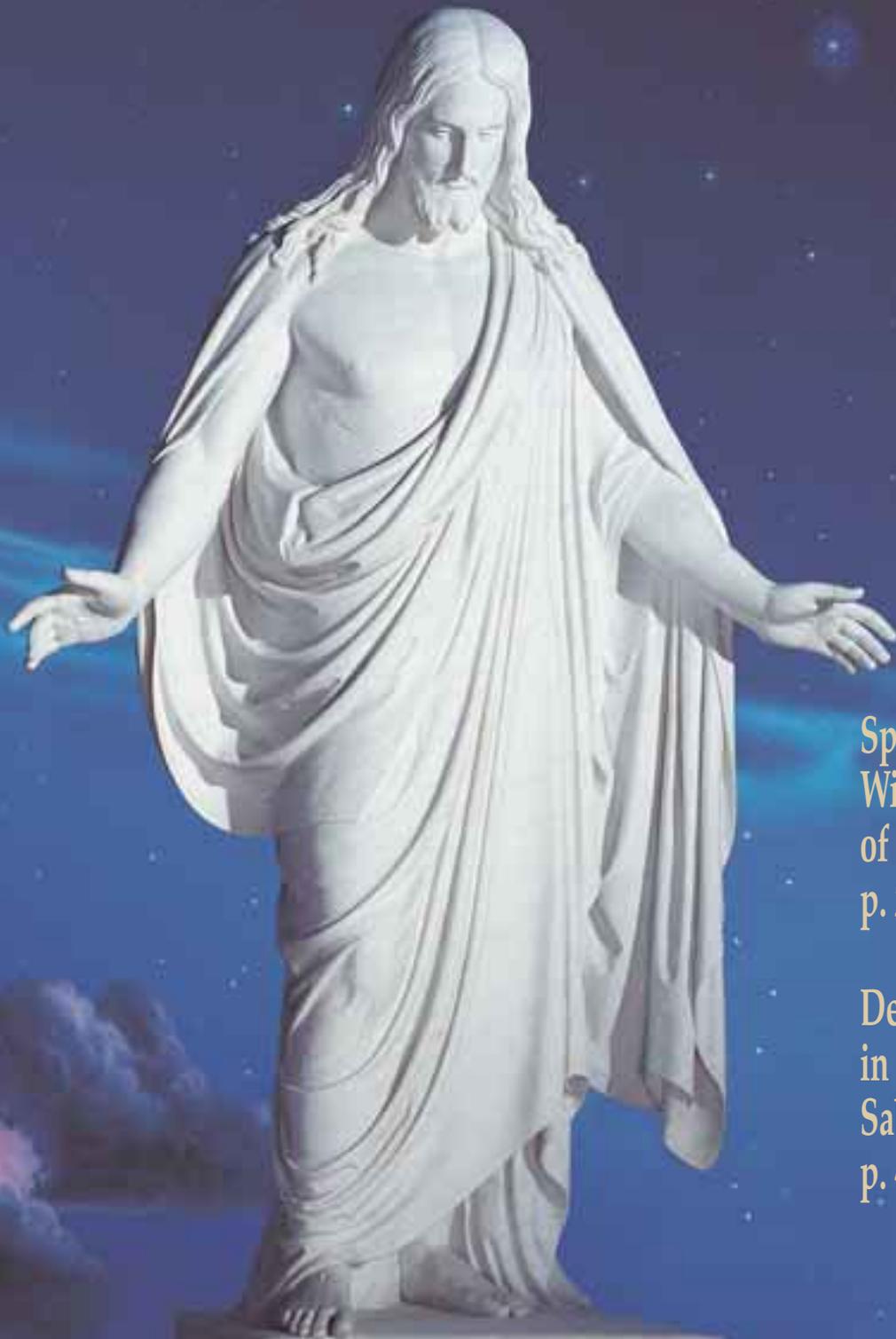


THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • APRIL 2001

# ENSIGN



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Witnesses  
of Christ,  
p. 2

Delighting  
in the  
Sabbath,  
p. 46

Christ at Emmaus, by Walter Rane



*"And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:30–32).*

# ENSIGN

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 4

**ON THE COVERS:** *Front:* The Christ, by Bertel Thorvaldsen; photo by Craig Dimond. *Back:* Photo by Acey Harper, from The Mission. *Inside front:* Christ at Emmaus, by Walter Rane, oil on panel, 28" x 32", 1999. *Inside back:* Rescue of the Lost Lamb, by Minerva K. Teichert, oil on canvas, 40" x 40", 1940. Both art pieces courtesy of the Museum of Church History and Art.

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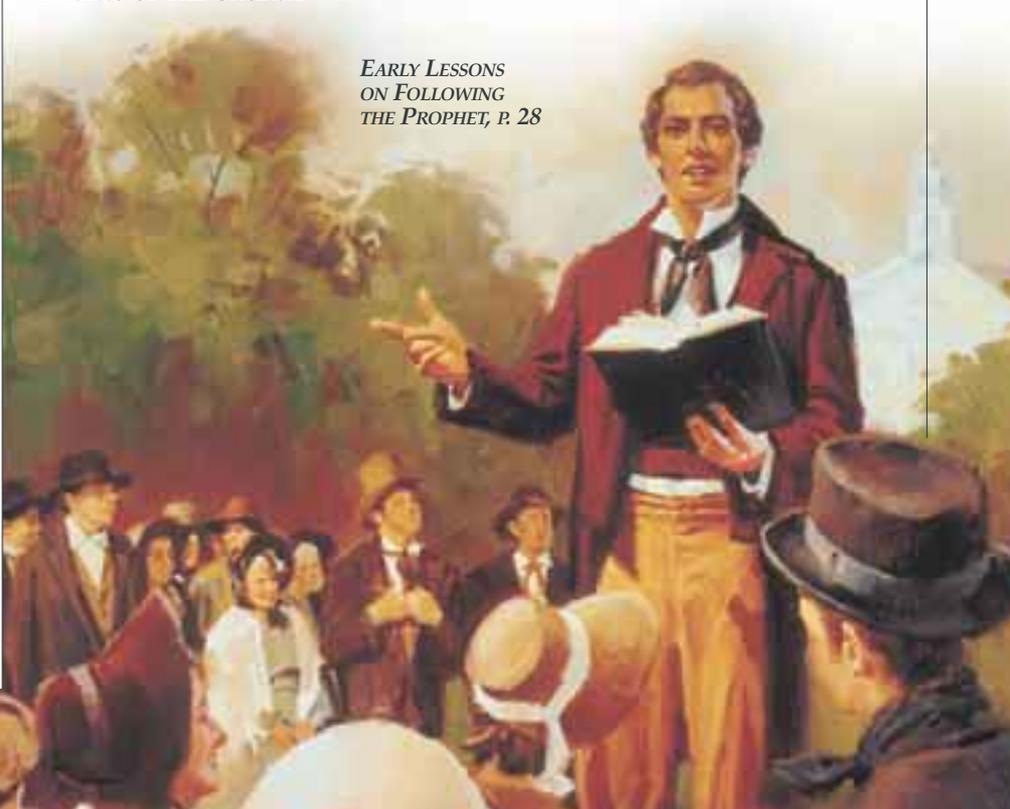




PHOTO BY ACEY HARPER, FROM THE MISSION

*The First Presidency, front row, and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the North Visitors' Center on Temple Square in Salt Lake City.*

# Special Witnesses of Christ



*Following is the text from  
a video presentation by  
the First Presidency and Quorum  
of the Twelve Apostles of  
The Church of Jesus Christ  
of Latter-day Saints.*

*The presentation was broadcast  
by satellite between general conference  
sessions on 1–2 April 2000.*



**PRESIDENT  
GORDON B. HINCKLEY**

**T**his great and ancient city of Jerusalem—it has always been an inspiration to me. It is so because this place bears the imprint of the Son of God. Two thousand years ago, the Savior of mankind was born in Bethlehem, a short distance to the south. He was brought here to the temple when He was an infant. Here Mary and Joseph heard the wonderful prophecies spoken by Simeon and Anna about this tiny babe who was destined to become the Savior of the world.

He spent His boyhood in Nazareth of Galilee to the north of us. When 12 years of age, He was brought back here to Jerusalem. Here He was found by His mother conversing with the doctors in the temple, “and they were hearing him, and asking him questions” (JST, Luke 2:46, footnote c).

It was near here that He gazed out over this city and said with sorrow, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, . . . and ye would not!” (Matt. 23:37).

Jerusalem was the scene of the final days of the mortal life of the Son of God. Here He suffered the



*President Gordon B. Hinckley speaking in Jerusalem.*

agony of Gethsemane, His arrest, His trials, His condemnation, the unspeakable pain of His death on the cross, His burial in Joseph’s tomb, and the triumphant coming forth in the Resurrection.

None can fully comprehend the splendor of His life, the majesty of His death, the universality of His gift

to mankind. We declare with the centurion, who said at His death, “Truly this man was the Son of God” (Mark 15:39).

Now, 2,000 years have come and gone since His birth in Bethlehem. Surely this is a time for remembrance and recommitment. In our day the Lord has called 15 special witnesses to testify of His divinity before all the world. Theirs is a unique calling; they are Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, chosen and commissioned by Him. They have been commanded to bear witness of His living reality by the power and authority of the holy apostleship in them vested.

I invite you to listen to the testimonies of these special witnesses. They will speak to us from various locations around the earth, testifying of His premortal, mortal, and postmortal ministry. God be thanked for the gift of His Son, the Redeemer of the world, the Savior of mankind, the Prince of Life and Peace, the Holy One.

.....  
**P R E M O R T A L M I N I S T R Y**

**ELDER NEAL A. MAXWELL**

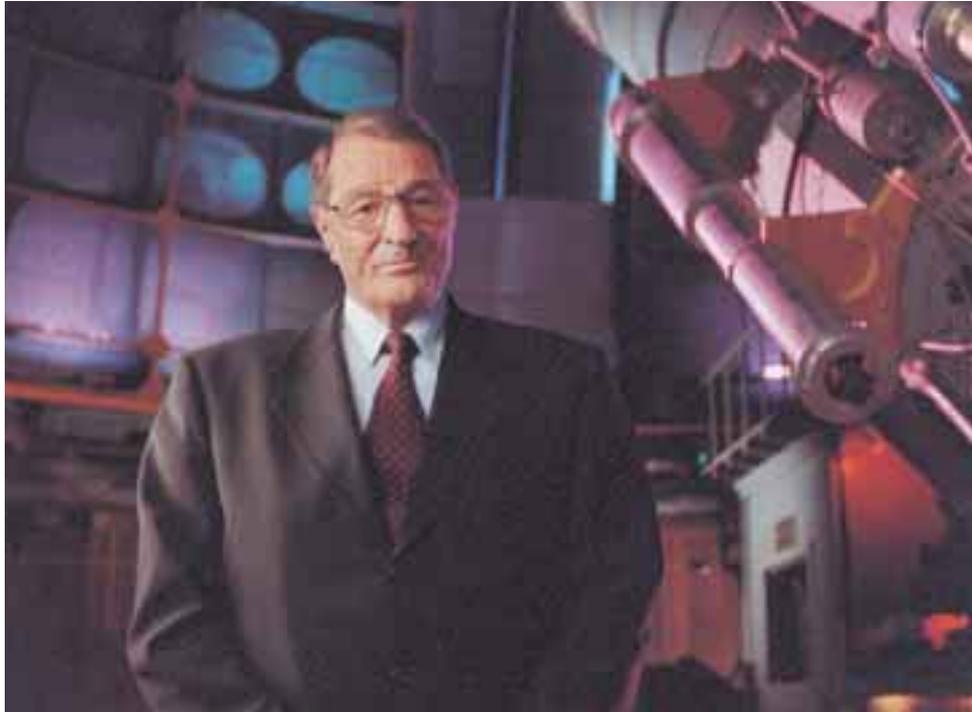
*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**T**his magnificent, far-reaching telescope is deliberately situated above the smog, so this powerful instrument can better probe the galaxies. So it is with life, and seeing by the lens of faith. If we are to see things more clearly, we too must lift ourselves

above the secular smog. Then, in the words of the hymn, we can “in awesome wonder consider all the worlds [God’s] hands have made . . . [and see God’s] pow’r thru-out the universe displayed” (“How Great Thou Art,” *Hymns*, no. 86). Otherwise, we will be kept

**B**y viewing the stretching cosmos, we can humbly contemplate the vastness of divine handiwork."





*Elder Neal A. Maxwell speaking from the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton, located outside San Jose, California.*

from probing Jesus' universal gospel and from seeing "things as they really are" (Jacob 4:13).

Nevertheless, by viewing the stretching cosmos, we can humbly contemplate the vastness of divine handiwork. Long before He was born at Bethlehem and became known as Jesus of Nazareth, our Savior was Jehovah. Way back then, under the direction of the Father, Christ was the Lord of the universe, who created worlds without number—of which ours is only one (see Eph. 3:9; Heb. 1:2).

How many planets are there in the universe with people on them? We don't know, but we are not alone in the universe! God is not the God of only one planet!

I testify that Jesus is truly the Lord of the universe, "that by [Christ], and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God" (D&C 76:24).

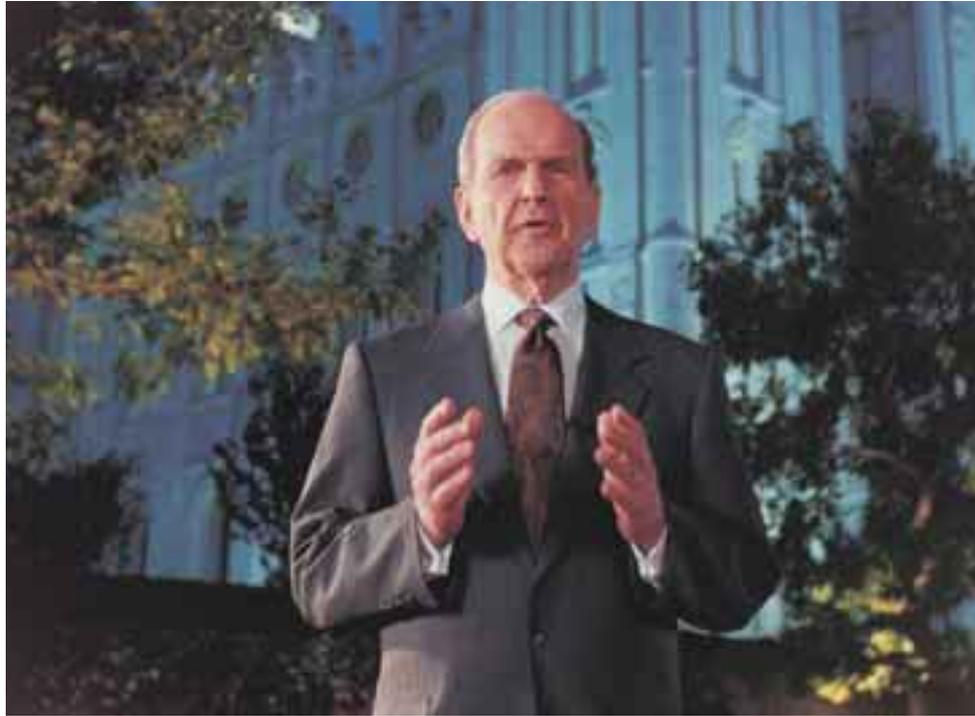
Having purchased us (see 1 Cor. 7:23) with His atoning blood (see Acts 20:28) in the great and marvelous Atonement, Jesus thereby became our Lawgiver (see Isa. 33:22). It is by obedience to His laws

and His commandments that we may return one day to His presence and that of our Heavenly Father.

The foregoing cosmic facts should bring us to our knees even now—long before that later Judgment Day, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ. I testify that Jesus fulfilled these great roles as Creator and Lawgiver out of His desire to immortalize all of Heavenly Father's children, with the most valiant to live in His Father's house, which has many mansions.

When Christ comes again, it will not be to the meekness of the manger; it will be as the recognized Redeemer and the Lord of the universe! Then, in a great solar display, stars will fall from their places in a witnessing way (see D&C 133:49), with much more drama than at His birth, when "the stars in the heavens looked down where he lay" ("Away in a Manger," *Hymns*, no. 206).

Yet in the vastness of His creations, the Lord of the universe, who notices the fall of every sparrow, is our personal Savior, of which I give apostolic testimony in the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen!



*Elder Russell M. Nelson speaking from the grounds of Temple Square in Salt Lake City.*

## ELDER RUSSELL M. NELSON

*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**W**henever I look at stars in the sky, I am reminded that about 4,000 years ago Jesus the Christ (then speaking as Jehovah—God of the Old Testament) made a covenant with Father Abraham. Included was the promise that the Savior of the world would come through Abraham’s lineage and that his seed would be multiplied “as the stars of the heaven.” In addition, Abraham was told that through his seed, “all the nations of the earth [shall] be blessed” (Gen. 22:17–18). This covenant was to be everlasting—even through “a thousand generations” (1 Chr. 16:15). Abraham was promised “that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee . . . even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (Abr. 2:11).

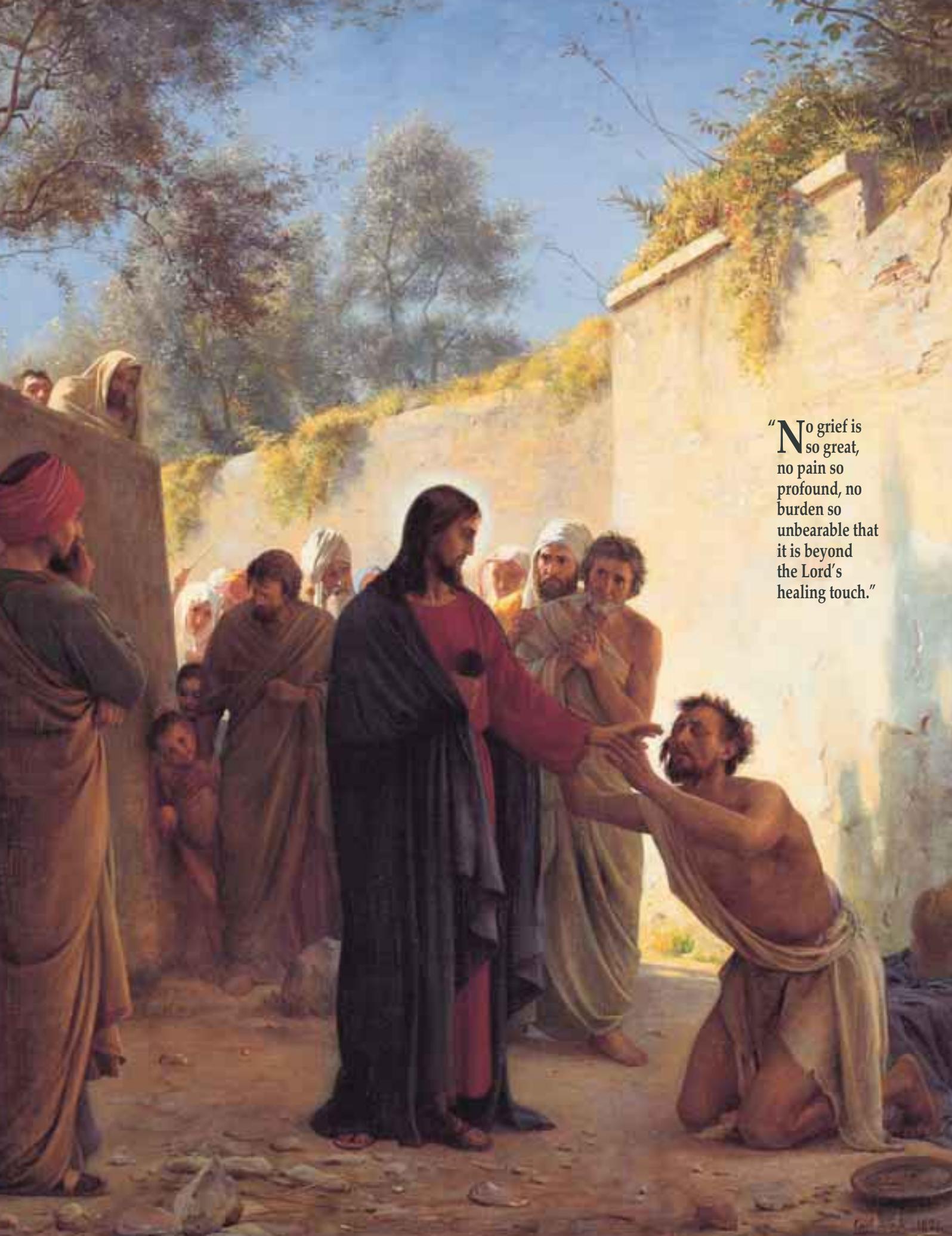
From scriptures we learn that this covenant “should be fulfilled in the latter days” (1 Ne. 15:18). Then the fulness of His gospel would be preached and many would truly believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

In 1836, keys of “the gospel of Abraham” were conferred (D&C 110:12). In 1843 the Lord declared to the Prophet Joseph Smith that “Abraham received promises

concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins—from whose loins ye are. . . . This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham” (D&C 132:30–31).

Brothers and sisters, you may also claim the supernatural blessings promised to the faithful lineage of Abraham. The Lord explained that blessings and responsibilities of His priesthood are yours because of your faith, works, and lineage—the lineage declared in your patriarchal blessings. You “are lawful heirs,” He said. “Your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage” (D&C 86:9–10).

The ultimate blessings of the Abrahamic covenant are conferred in holy temples. These blessings allow us to come forth in the First Resurrection and inherit thrones, kingdoms, powers, principalities, and dominions, to our “exaltation and glory in all things” (D&C 132:19). The fulfillment of the ancient Abrahamic covenant is feasible only because of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is He who has made it possible for us to dwell with God, with Him, and with our families eternally. This is His work and His glory. I love Him; I testify of Him and express my everlasting gratitude for Him now and forevermore, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.



**N**o grief is so great, no pain so profound, no burden so unbearable that it is beyond the Lord's healing touch."

.....

## MORTAL MINISTRY

**ELDER JOSEPH B. WIRTHLIN**

*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**T**wo thousand years ago, two travelers—a man and a woman—looked upon a small city, Bethlehem. The woman, heavy with child, had been traveling from Nazareth. The long journey was most difficult and so uncomfortable for her.

Due to a sudden influx of visitors, every inn, every room in the city was occupied. The only place Joseph and Mary could find shelter was in a place where cattle were kept.

And so He was born: Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the Beloved Son of God. The Creator of suns and moons and swirling seas lay wrapped in swaddling clothes, His surroundings among the most humble earth had to offer.

At a very early age and continuing throughout my life, I have marveled at the beautiful story of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The inspiring part of it all was the announcement through the prophets in the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. They knew the plan of salvation and the major part He would play in saving all mankind. The singing of the angels as the shepherds in their field were informed of the greatest event of history, and the Wise Men from the Far East who followed the star of Bethlehem—these inspired events captured my love and understanding of our beloved Savior.

As His birth, so His life. “Despised and rejected, . . . a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3),



*Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin speaking from Salt Lake City.*

He had no place to lay His head. In our modern age, where glory and fame is wrapped around medals and worldly wealth, it seems almost inconceivable to us that a solitary man, without home, without political influence, could change the course of history and eternity.

But I testify to you that He did. Jesus the Christ taught the words of life. He

showed the way to truth, the way to peace, the way to happiness. I testify that when He walked the earth, thousands looked into His eyes—yearning for answers, yearning for release from suffering and grief, yearning that the burdens they carried would be lightened. Everyone who looked into His eyes with faith found healing, peace, and happiness.

As an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I testify to you this day that the time will come when every one of us will look into the Savior’s loving eyes. And we will know then with a surety that a child was born to Mary who was indeed the Son of God, the Savior of the world. We will know that no grief is so great, no pain so profound, no burden so unbearable that it is beyond His healing touch.

He asks that we believe in Him, that we learn of Him, that we strive to follow His teachings. That each one of us may never forget the sacredness of this event and celebrate His birth by coming unto Him and keeping His commandments is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

**ELDER  
RICHARD G. SCOTT**

*Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles*

**W**e all have a vivid memory of our baptism and receipt of the Holy Ghost. As we grow in understanding of the full meaning of the life of Jesus Christ, of what He has done to bless every soul, that ordinance takes on increasing significance. We did live in the presence of our Eternal Father and of His Beloved Son, our Savior. Every mortal that has or ever will come to earth chose that privilege after fully understanding the plan of happiness that would guide our life here.

Only those who make and keep the covenant of baptism, diligently obey His commandments, and receive all of the other necessary ordinances will have a fulness of joy on earth and will live eternally in the celestial kingdom. For the truly repentant, baptism provides a remission of sins because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

The Savior said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). That is an absolute requirement for every soul that would receive a fulness of the blessings offered us. That is why we perform, in holy temples, the ordinance of baptism vicariously for our deceased ancestors. The Master Himself was baptized "to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). He is our perfect example in all things.

I testify that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is a resurrected being of perfect love and compassion. I witness that He gave His life that we might live eternally with Him and our Father in



*Elder Richard G. Scott speaking in front of the baptismal font in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.*

Heaven and our loved ones who qualify, through obedience to the commandments and receipt of all of the ordinances of salvation. I solemnly witness that I know that the Savior lives.

**ELDER L. TOM PERRY**

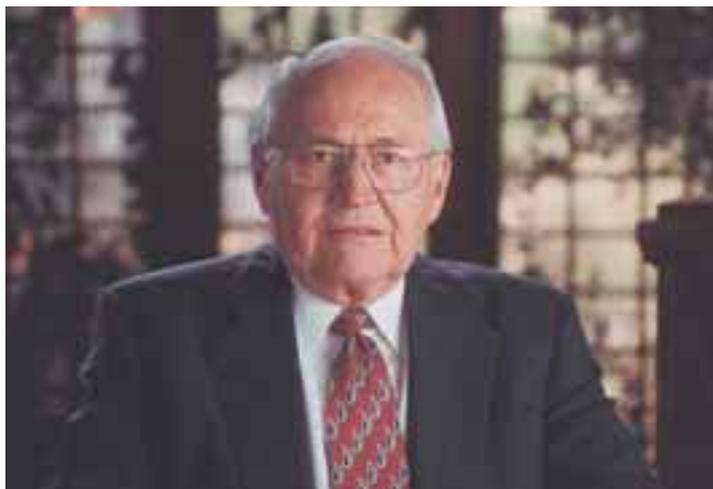
*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**T**here was an experience in my life which has often reminded me of the joy resulting from asking the question "What would the Savior do in this situation?"

I was among the first wave of Marines to go ashore in Japan after the signing of the peace treaty following World War II. Entering the devastated city of Nagasaki was one of the saddest experiences of my life. A large part of the city had been totally destroyed. Some of the dead had not yet been buried. As occupation troops, we set up headquarters and went to work.

The situation was very bleak, and a few of us wanted to give more. We went to our division chaplain and requested permission to help rebuild the Christian churches. Because of government restrictions during the war, these churches had almost ceased to function. Their few buildings were badly damaged. A group of us volunteered to repair and replaster these chapels during our off-duty time so they would be available for the holding of Christian services again.

We had no command of the language. All we could accomplish was the physical labor of repairing the buildings. We found the ministers who had



*Elder L. Tom Perry speaking from Salt Lake City.*

been unable to serve during the war years and encouraged them to return to their pulpits. We had a tremendous experience with these people as they again experienced the freedom to practice their Christian beliefs.

An event occurred as we were leaving Nagasaki to return home that I will always remember. As we were boarding the train that would take us to our ships to return home, we were teased by a lot of the other Marines. They had their girlfriends with them saying good-bye to them. They laughed at us and indicated that we had missed the fun of being in Japan. We had just wasted our time laboring and plastering walls.

Just as they were at the height of their teasing, up over a little rise near the train station came about 200 of these great Japanese Christians from the churches we had repaired, singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers." They came down and showered us with gifts. Then they all lined up along the railroad track, and as the train started down the tracks, we reached out and just

touched their fingers as we left. We couldn't speak; our emotions were too strong. But we were grateful that we could help in some small way in reestablishing Christianity in a nation after the war.

I know that God lives. I know that we are all His children and that He loves us. I know that He sent His Son to the world to be an atoning sacrifice for all mankind, and those who embrace His gospel and follow Him will enjoy eternal life, the greatest of all gifts of God. I know that He directed the Restoration of the gospel again here upon the earth through the ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I know that the only lasting joy and happiness we will ever find during our mortal experience will come by following the Savior, obeying His law, and keeping His commandments. He lives. This is my witness to you in His holy name, even Jesus Christ, amen.

## ELDER HENRY B. EYRING

*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**T**his building on its east facade has the words "The House of the Lord." The first time I walked just a few feet into the temple I had the feeling that I had been here before. In an instant, the thought came to me that what I recognized was a sense of peace beyond anything I had felt before in this life, but that I seemed to recognize, and almost remember.

We knew our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son before we came into this life. We felt peace with Them then, and we long to be with Them again, with our families and those we love.



*Elder Henry B. Eyring speaking from the east steps of the Salt Lake Temple.*

Dedicated temples are sacred places where the risen Savior may come. In them we can feel the peace of our associations with Him in the life before. In them we can make the covenants which help us to come unto Him in this life and which will permit Him, if we keep our promises to Him, to take us home to the Father, with our families, in the world to come.

Every part of these buildings and all that goes on inside them reflect the love of the Savior for us and our love for Him. I felt that one day, high in this temple. I was in one of the towers, in a place few people would have been since the building was dedicated. In a small room that has rarely if ever been used, I saw exquisite pioneer era woodwork.

I remember the sense of awe that came over me when I imagined the workmen who had so carefully carved and finished the detailed moldings. They toiled away without power tools in a place where, for the most part, only the Lord they loved and heavenly beings would look upon it. They did it not for man or for recognition but for Him, for His house. They knew, as I do, that He lives and that He asked His people to gather and to be worthy to build Him a house, that He might direct them and bless them and their families.

I know that He lives. I know that Joseph Smith was His prophet and saw in vision not only the shape of the windows for an early temple but the spread of temples across the earth. The Lord has in His loving-kindness entrusted the keys of the priesthood exercised in these temples to His servants, to bless us and our kindred dead and to finish the work for His glorious return. I know that is true, and it brings peace to my heart. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

**ELDER  
ROBERT D. HALES**

*Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles*

**I** have a great love for the scriptures. I love reading about the mortal life of Jesus Christ. There is so much in His life that can lift and inspire and strengthen us in our times of

need. To me, one of the most sacred chapters in all the scriptures is John chapter 17. The entire chapter is an intercessory prayer offered by Jesus Christ to His Father. He says, in effect, "If only the world could know you as I know you." He tells His Father that He has done everything He has been asked to do.

Sometimes we forget how remarkably obedient the Savior was. Everything that He did, everything that He said was out of obedience to His Father. His seeking out and caring for the poor, the calling of His disciples, His teachings both in the land of Palestine and in the Americas—all these things were done because His Father had commanded Him to do them. He had no personal agenda. He said, "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me" (John 8:28). What a perfect example of obedience!

In the choices we make in life, we need to know the Savior. His simple admonition "Come . . . follow me" (Matt. 19:21) could transform human existence if we would let it. He has the power to make our burdens light if we will turn to Him.

As an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I have the opportunity to bear testimony as a sacred witness of

the Savior. My greatest desire is that my testimony might penetrate the hearts of those who hear it.

I know that Jesus Christ lives. I know that He guides and directs His Church by revelation through His prophet in this very day and time. If we will have faith in our Savior, He will see us through our trials and tribulations, and we will be able to endure to the end and return to His presence after this mortal probation. He lives

and knows and loves each one of us. He so much wants to bless us if we will come unto Him. Of this I bear humble testimony and witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

**ELDER  
DAVID B. HAIGHT**

*Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles*

**I** often think of the time President Spencer W.

Kimball, a few years

ago, called me to the temple. I was busy as an Assistant to the Twelve at that time, and he telephoned me to meet him at the fourth floor of the temple. He said, "David, can you come right now?" And I said, "Yes, President." And he said, "Right now." And as I walked to the temple, my heart was beating fast, not knowing, of course, what President Kimball was calling me there for.

But he took me into a room that I hadn't been in before, and there President Kimball interviewed me regarding my worthiness. And, of course, I was amazed because of his speaking to me that way, because I didn't have any idea why I was there. And then he motioned for us to stand, and as I was standing with that wonderful man and he's holding my hands, he said to me, "With all the love that I possess, I'm calling you to fill the vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles." And when he said that, I thought I would collapse with the shock, the astonishment that came into my mind!

And so, as I had sleepless nights after that call, I mulled that in my mind and I have thought of it time and time again. He did not say, "As the President of



*Elder Robert D. Hales speaking from the Bountiful Utah Temple grounds.*

the Church” or “As the prophet” or “By my authority.” He said, in that humble, humble way of his, “With all the love that I possess.” He was teaching me that love is essential—the love that the Savior hopes that we will acquire—that we must show, that we must demonstrate, we must feel in our hearts and souls in order to teach the gospel properly.

As we meet with people out in the world and bear testimony of a living God, I have that warm, comfortable feeling in my heart that He’s real, that God lives, that He is our Father in Heaven, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh. I know that that’s true. I so bear my witness and my testimony and my knowledge and the burning that is in my heart that this is true, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, amen.

## ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS

*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**A**t the conclusion of His ministry, Jesus introduced the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. He broke bread and blessed it and gave it to His disciples, saying, “Take, eat; this is my body” (Matt. 26:26). “This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19). He took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, “This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28).

The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is a renewal of the covenants and blessings of baptism. We are commanded to repent of our sins and to come to the Lord with a



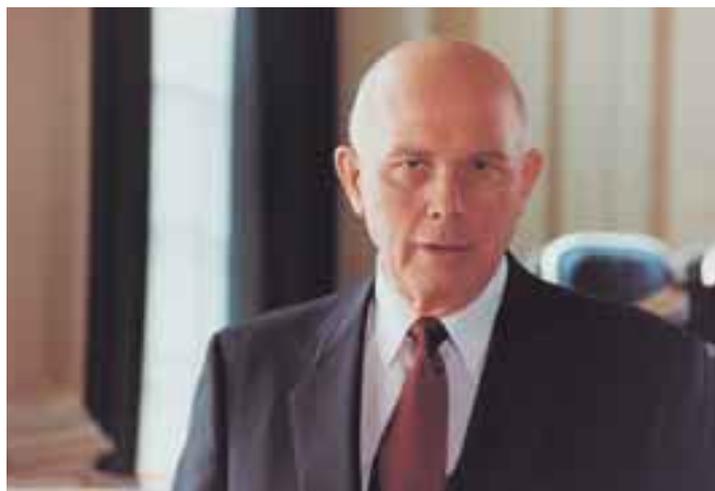
*Elder David B. Haight speaking from the Church Office Building.*

broken heart and a contrite spirit and partake of the sacrament. In partaking of the bread, we witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ and always remember Him and keep His commandments. When

we comply with this covenant, the Lord renews the cleansing effect of our baptism. We are made clean and can always have His Spirit to be with us.

The administration of the sacrament and the renewal of covenants and cleansing that take place in the partaking of the sacrament are the most important acts in the Sabbath worship of Latter-day Saints. We do this in remembrance of the blood of the Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. He is at the center of our faith. He is our Savior and our Redeemer.

In this year in which we celebrate the 2,000th anniversary of His birth, I add my testimony to that of His other Apostles. I testify that He lives and loves us. I testify that as the Light and Life of the World, He has provided the way for us to return to our heavenly home to enjoy the associations and highest blessings of God our Eternal Father, even eternal life, the greatest of all the gifts of God. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.



*Elder Dallin H. Oaks speaking from a chapel located in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building in Salt Lake City.*

## ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND

*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**F**ew places on earth are as sacred and important as this small grove of olive trees here on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. It was here in the Garden of Gethsemane, on that last night in mortality, that Jesus left His Apostles and descended alone into the depth of agony that

would be His atoning sacrifice for the sins of all mankind.

Moving slowly, kneeling, falling forward on His face, He cried, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mark 14:36).

To the thoughtful follower of Christ, it is a matter of surpassing wonder that the voluntary and merciful sacrifice of a single being could satisfy the infinite and eternal demands of justice; atone for every human misdeed; bear every mortal infirmity; feel every personal heartache, sorrow, and loss. But I testify that is exactly what Christ did for every one of us. I bear solemn witness that the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the compassionate foundation and central fact in God's eternal plan for our salvation and our happiness.

Is it any wonder that we walk quietly and reverently here? Is it any wonder that we make sacred covenants



*Elder Jeffrey R. Holland speaking from the Garden of Gethsemane.*

because of the love that was demonstrated here? Is it any wonder that Christ, the greatest of all, partook of the bitter cup and did not shrink here, that we might not suffer if we would repent and come unto Him?

I declare my wonder and awe, my adoration and apostolic witness of Him in His redeeming name, the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

### **PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY**

**J**ust outside the walls of Jerusalem, in this place or somewhere nearby, was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea where the body of the Lord was interred. On the third day following His burial "came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. . . .

*President Gordon B. Hinckley speaking from the Garden Tomb.*



“And the angel . . . said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

“He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matt. 28:1–2, 5–6).

These are the most reassuring words in all of human history. Death—universal and final—had now been conquered. “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Cor. 15:55).

To Mary the Risen Lord first appeared. He spoke to her, and she replied. He was real. He was alive, He whose body had been laid in death. Small wonder that when Thomas later saw Him with His wounded hands and side, he exclaimed in wonder, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

Never had this occurred before. There had been only death without hope. Now there was life eternal. Only a God could have done this. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ was the great crowning event of His life and mission. It was the capstone of the Atonement. The sacrifice of His life for all mankind was not complete without His coming forth from the grave, with the certainty of the Resurrection for all who have walked the earth.

Of all the victories in the chronicles of humanity, none is so great, none so universal in its effects, none so everlasting in its consequences as the victory of the crucified Lord, who came forth from the tomb that first Easter morning.

Those who were witnesses of that event, all who saw and heard and spoke with the Risen Lord, testified of the reality of this greatest of all miracles. His followers through the centuries lived and died in proclamation of the truth of this supernal act.

To all of these we add our testimony that He who died on Calvary’s cross arose again in wondrous splendor as the Son of God, the Master of life and death.

## ELDER M. RUSSELL BALLARD

*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**W**hen the Savior originally charged His Apostles, “Go ye into all the world” (Mark 16:15), His Church was very small, with members scattered in the geographic region now known



*Elder M. Russell Ballard in front of the painting “Go Ye Therefore, and Teach All Nations.”*

as the Middle East. His dynamic Apostles, like Peter, James, John, and Paul, traveling mostly by foot or by ship, did everything they could to keep the little flock together.

But the distance and the lack of communication made their work very difficult.

They themselves knew that the future would bring “a falling away” from the teachings of the gospel (2 Thes. 2:3); they also knew that eventually there would come to the world a restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I testify that the Restoration of the gospel was accomplished, beginning with the appearance of Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820.

Since that glorious day, more than 90 men have been called to serve as Apostles with the same commission as the Apostles of old, to teach all nations that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God our Eternal Father. Today, our labors are greatly enhanced by jet airplanes and remarkable technology that stretch the reach of our ministry to the furthest parts of the world. Since 1820, over 750,000 full-time missionaries have served in the world, teaching and testifying of Christ in over 100 languages and in 137 nations and territories.

I testify to you that it is the will of our Father in Heaven, through His Beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that this mighty work moves forward. It is by Him and through Him that our missionaries bear humble and sincere testimony. I’m a witness of that. I came to know for myself the truth of this work and of the Savior’s divinity while serving as a full-time missionary in England 50 years ago. I know it more surely today, through experiences too numerous and too sacred to discuss.

This is His gospel. He stands at the head—holy, divine, supreme, full of power, majesty, grace, and truth. He lived for us, and He died for us, because He loves us. I love Him more deeply and powerfully than I can find words to express. He is my Lord, my Savior, my Redeemer, and my friend. I know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God our Eternal Father. He lives and directs His Church today through His prophet and His Apostles. His great work will continue to roll forth until it fills the whole earth. This is my testimony in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.



"The young prophet Joseph Smith saw in vision God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in the Sacred Grove in Palmyra, New York."

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# POSTMORTAL MINISTRY

## PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

*Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

**I**n this room on April the 3rd, in 1836, there was fulfilled a prophecy which had been given more than 2,000 years before. The closing words of the Old Testament, given by the prophet Malachi, prophesied that, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

"And He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6).

When the angel Moroni appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith, he quoted many scriptures; among them, this one was separated out and appears as the second section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Then on that day in 1836, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in this room knelt in solemn and silent prayer, and after rising from prayer Joseph said: "The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

"[And] we saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit" (D&C 110:1-2).

The Lord spoke to them, and then Moses appeared and committed to them the keys of the gathering of Israel. Elias committed to them the keys of the gospel of Abraham. And then it happened: Elijah the prophet came, giving that same statement, the turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, and he said, "By this [you] may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is . . . at the [gates]" (D&C 110:16).



*President Boyd K. Packer speaking from the Kirtland Temple.*

Now, in our day, the marvelous work is moving forward—the family history work, the temple work in which families are being united for all eternity. And in a world that is degrading itself with the dissolution of families, this work goes forward across the world. It is a supernal work. It is a work designed by the Lord and introduced by Himself as

He came to this spot and introduced the prophet Elijah, who gave the keys of this work.

I bear testimony that Jesus is the Christ. This is a supernal work; the mind of man could not have conceived it. It is true. Jesus is the Christ. He lives. He directs and leads this Church. Of this I bear solemn testimony, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

*Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

**I** am humbled to stand on this sacred ground in historic Nauvoo. This city was also known as the City of Joseph, named after Joseph Smith, its founder. He it was who saw in vision God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in the Sacred Grove in Palmyra, New York. His life is a testament that he communed with the Christ to bring more spiritual truth, keys, and authority to the earth than any other prophet.

So much of the important history of the early days of our Church took place here. A magnificent temple was erected here. It was the second temple built in this dispensation. The Nauvoo Temple was built so that the members of the Church could receive the

highest blessings which God has for His people.

As I walk over these hallowed foundation stones of the Nauvoo Temple, my soul is subdued. On the last day before the temple was closed and the Saints left, many

virtually lived in the temple. My great-grandparents John and Jane Akerley were among the last to receive their temple blessings in this magnificent building, on February 3, 1846. This was providential, because John Akerley died at Winter Quarters. In time, this magnificent temple will be rebuilt to the glory of the Lord.

This is where the temple baptismal font was located. Said the Savior to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Salvation for both the living and the dead depends upon this and other ordinances, all of which is a powerful confirmation of my belief that Jesus is the Christ.

In the Gethsemanes of life which we all have, and often in my present calling, I have gone to my knees with a humble spirit to the only place I could for help. I often went in agony of spirit, earnestly pleading with God to sustain me in the work I have come to appreciate more than life itself. I have, on occasion, felt a terrible aloneness of the wounds of the heart, of the sweet agony, the buffetings of Satan, and the encircling warm comfort of the Spirit of the Master.

I have also felt the crushing burden, the self-doubts of inadequacy and unworthiness, the fleeting feeling of being forsaken, then of being reinforced an hundredfold. I have climbed a spiritual Mount Sinai dozens of times, seeking to communicate and to



*President James E. Faust speaking from Nauvoo, Illinois—the City of Joseph.*

receive instructions. It has been as though I have struggled up an almost real Mount of Transfiguration and, upon occasion, felt great strength and power in the presence of the Divine. A special, sacred feeling has been a sustaining

influence and often a close companion.

As I serve in the calling of the holy apostleship, I recognize that I am a very ordinary man. Yet I gratefully acknowledge one special gift. I have a certain knowledge that Jesus of Nazareth is our Divine Savior. I know that He lives. I know that through the unspeakable agony of the Atonement, men and women, if they repent, can be forgiven of their sins. Because of the miracle of the Resurrection, all will rise from the dead. I feel His love and marvel at the price He paid for each of us. I wonder how many drops of blood were spilled for me. This is the testimony I give of Him, even in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## **PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON**

*First Counselor in the First Presidency*



*President Thomas S. Monson speaking from the Grandin Building in Palmyra, New York.*

**W**e see today the beautifully and authentically restored Grandin Building situated in Palmyra, New York. The restoration of the Grandin Building had as its objective "to maintain the historical integrity of the building, while allowing the visitor to be enveloped in the history of the time."

This is where the first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed, with the

number of copies in this first edition totaling 5,000, an unusually large order for the rural printing business. Mr. E. B. Grandin had acquired a Smith Patented Improved Press from New York. The press featured new technology over the common presses of the day and offered the Prophet Joseph Smith the prospects of printing the Book of Mormon closer to his home.

Let's turn back the pages of history that we might more fully appreciate one of civilization's greatest wonders, namely the advent of movable type. Before Gutenberg discovered the possibilities of movable type, everything was printed with a quill pen, letter by letter, line by line, page by page. It was movable type from which Mr. Grandin printed the Book of Mormon. It was tediously composed by the hands of a skilled compositor, who learned from memory and experience every typeface, font, and size available. After the page was formed, it was inked and printed and then was available for binding.

The Lord brought forth the Book of Mormon at a period of time when printing methods would enhance its distribution far and wide. Modern-day printing presses now enable the Church to print and distribute millions of copies of the Book of Mormon each year.

May I share with you an experience I had many years ago in the southern area of the United States when, after a stake conference, a woman came forward and asked, "Do you know Elder Delbert L. Stapley?" I replied that he and I were Apostles of the Lord, serving together in the Master's work. She then handed me a copy of the Book of Mormon which contained an inscription and the signature of Delbert L. Stapley. She indicated the volume had been given to her grandmother when Elder Stapley was a young missionary. She added, "Could you present this book to Elder Stapley and tell him hundreds of my grandmother's descendants have been converted by this volume; and they, in

turn, conveyed the message of the Book of Mormon to others."

I presented that signed copy of the Book of Mormon to Elder Stapley. He listened attentively when I explained where and how it had been given to me. Quietly he examined his signature and said, "This is one of the happiest days of my life."

It is my personal testimony that the Book of Mormon changes human lives. It is indeed another testament of Jesus Christ.



*President Monson speaking from the Hill Cumorah.*

### PRESIDENT MONSON SPEAKS AT THE HILL CUMORAH

**W**hat a privilege to be here at the Hill Cumorah and to reflect on the momentous events that unfolded on September 22, 1827, when a plowboy prophet took a horse and wagon and, in the dark of night, rode to this hill, where he received

an ancient record from the angel Moroni. In a remarkably short time, this untutored young man translated a record detailing 1,000 years of history and then prepared the Book of Mormon for public distribution.

The way of Joseph Smith was not without mean-spirited criticism or monumental effort. Joseph did not wilt, nor did he waver. He later declared: "By the wisdom of God, [the plates] remained safe in my hands, until I had accomplished by them what was required. . . . When, according to arrangements, the messenger called for them, I delivered them up to him" (JS—H 1:60).

This beautiful area of God's garden attracts literally millions of visitors, most of whom come to see the Hill Cumorah Pageant. The visitor often comes with an attitude of curiosity. He or she departs with a soul touched by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Book of Mormon is a new witness of Jesus Christ. Its message spans the entire earth and brings its readers to a knowledge of truth. It answers that

piercing and universal question best phrased by Job of old: "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14).

Many years ago I was called to the bedside of Robert Williams, a young man who lay dying. His wife and their two children stood nearby. We were all trying to be brave, but

tears were in our eyes. Robert asked me, "Where does my spirit go when I die?" I offered a silent prayer. I noticed on his bedside table a copy of the triple combination. I reached for the book and fanned the pages.

Suddenly I discovered that I had, with no effort on my part, stopped at the 40th chapter of Alma in the Book of Mormon. I read these words to Robert: "Behold, it has been made known unto me by an angel, that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life.

"And . . . the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow" (Alma 40:11–12).

As I continued to read about the Resurrection, a glow came to Robert's face, a smile graced his lips, and his tired and ill body slept. I said good-bye to his wife and children. I next saw them at Robert Williams's funeral. In those precious corridors of memory, I think back to that night when a young man pleaded for truth and, from the Book of Mormon, heard the answer to his question.

I read the words, but God turned the pages. Yes, our Heavenly Father does answer prayers, in His own time and in His own way. I bear an apostolic witness that Jesus is the Savior of the world and that He and His Father appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith to usher in this dispensation of the fulness of times, and so declare in His holy name, the name of Jesus Christ, amen.



*President Hinckley speaking from the Sacred Grove.*

## PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

**T**his is the Sacred Grove. This hallowed ground is revered by Latter-day Saints throughout the world. Here is where it all began, the miracle of this great work which has spread over the earth. This is the scene

of the First Vision. It was here that God, the Eternal Father, appeared with His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lord. The Father, pointing to His Son, said, "*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*" (JS—H 1:17).

Do you realize the import of that declaration? Here was God, the Eternal Father, the Almighty, bearing testimony in words plainly spoken. No more important or compelling testimony has been given of the Risen Lord than this testimony of His own Father.

The curtains that had been closed for centuries were now parted. A new and glorious gospel dispensation was opened, introducing yet other marvelous revelations. Another testament of Jesus Christ was brought forth to speak as a voice from the dust. The holy priesthood, originally bestowed by the Master on His living Apostles, was restored upon living men by these same Apostles, now resurrected. There followed a veritable "cloud of witnesses" with keys and powers to complete the restoration of the Church established by Jesus when He walked the earth, now to be known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Here in this very place the long night of apostasy blossomed into the glorious dawn of a new age. God Himself was both seen and heard. Here, where we stand in the quiet of these trees, in this most sacred of places, the nature of Deity was again revealed.

The uncluttered and receptive mind of a boy became the instrument of the revelation here given and of many more yet to follow. Standing as the 15th in line from Joseph Smith and bearing the prophetic mantle which came upon him, I solemnly declare my testimony that the Prophet Joseph's account of these events is true, that the Father here bore witness of the divinity of His Son, that the Son instructed the boy prophet, and that there followed a train of events which led to the organization of "the only true and living church

upon the face of the whole earth, with which," He declared, "I, the Lord, am well pleased" (D&C 1:30).

Of the reality and personality of the living God and of His Son, our Redeemer, I stand as a solemn and reverent witness, speaking these words by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### PRESIDENT HINCKLEY'S CONCLUDING STATEMENT

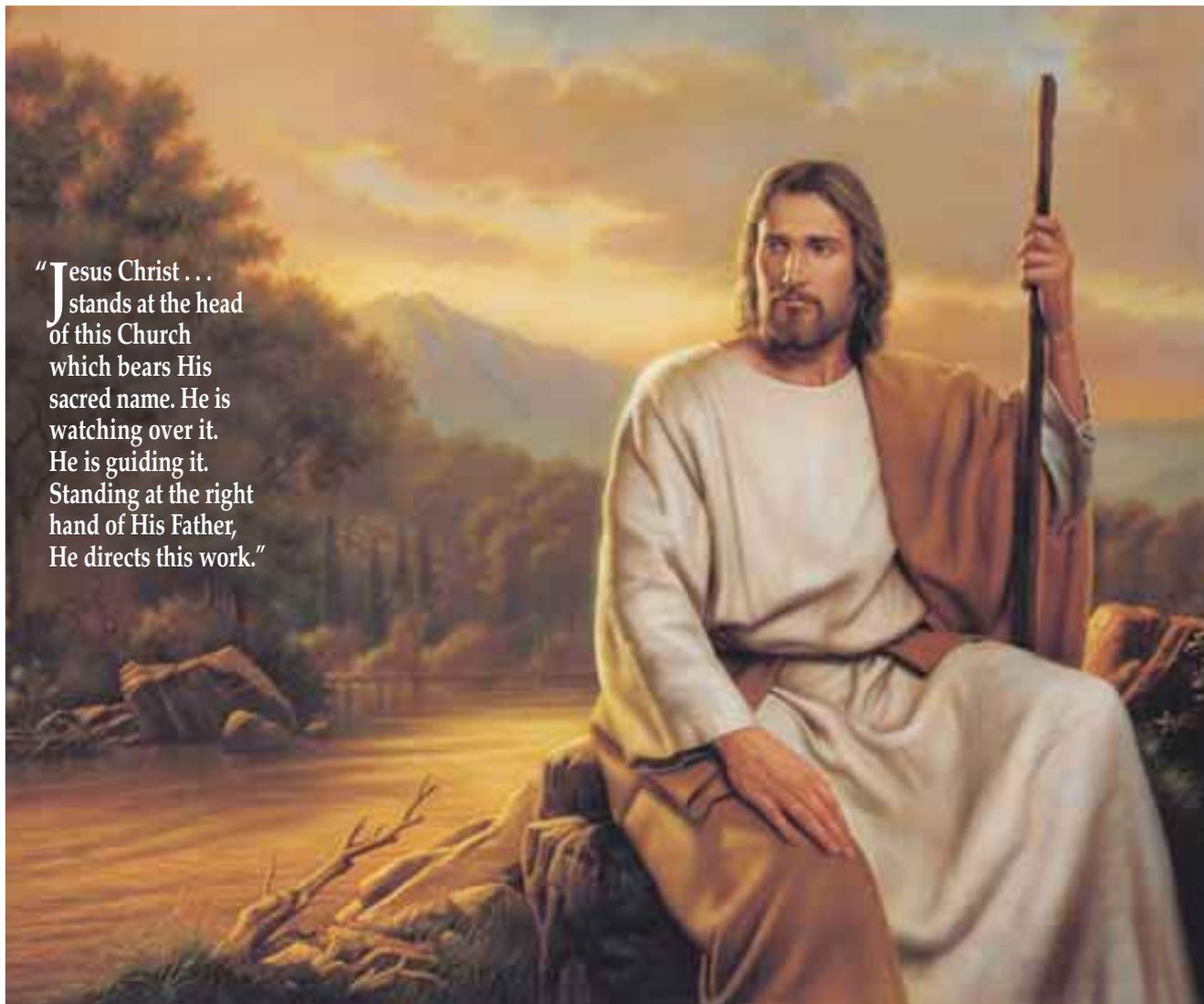
**H**ow I love my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! His stirring commission and His divine love motivate all of us in this work. I love my brethren. To a man they are loyal. Without hesitation

they respond to every call. They are true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is He, Jesus Christ, who stands at the head of this Church which bears His sacred name. He is watching over it. He is guiding it. Standing at the right hand of His Father, He directs this work. Unitedly, as His Apostles, authorized and commissioned by Him to do so, we bear our witness that He lives and that He will come again to claim His kingdom and rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Of this we are certain and bear apostolic testimony in His holy name, even the name of Jesus Christ, amen. □

*Gospel topics: Jesus Christ, Atonement, Church history*

**J**esus Christ . . . stands at the head of this Church which bears His sacred name. He is watching over it. He is guiding it. Standing at the right hand of His Father, He directs this work."



BESIDE STILL WATERS, BY SIMON DEWEY

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# FAITH

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## *in Jesus Christ*

*Faith in Jesus Christ takes us beyond mere acceptance of the Savior's identity and existence. It includes having complete confidence in His infinite and eternal redemptive power.*

BY JAMES O. MASON

Great faith in Jesus Christ led to abundant blessings for those who associated with the Savior during His mortal ministry. For example, a centurion begged Jesus to heal his servant who was sick. The Savior observed, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," and the servant "was healed in the selfsame hour" because of the centurion's faith.<sup>1</sup>

When the resurrected Lord appeared on the American continent, He told the assembled multitude, "So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews; wherefore I could not show unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief."<sup>2</sup> As a consequence of the multitude's great faith, their little children experienced the ministering of angels, healing, and other marvelous blessings.

The Savior was disappointed when His disciples and others demonstrated little or no faith in Him. On one occasion, Jesus boarded a small ship to cross the Sea of Galilee. There arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship. The Savior slept, oblivious to the danger and weary from the day's labors. The Apostles, fearing that the ship would sink, awoke Him, crying,

"Master, carest thou not that we perish?"

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

Jesus then asked, "Why are ye so fearful? *how is it that ye have no faith?*"<sup>3</sup>

Matthew wrote that Jesus did not do many mighty works in Nazareth, his home village, "because of their unbelief."<sup>4</sup> How often do we go without intended blessings because of our little faith?<sup>5</sup> No wonder the early Apostles pleaded to the Lord, "Increase our faith."<sup>6</sup>

Increased faith is as vital and necessary today as it was when Jesus walked the earth. Our modern world struggles with insufficient faith. President Gordon B. Hinckley said in a conference talk: "This is my prayer for all of us. . . . Increase our faith to bridge the chasms of uncertainty and doubt. . . . Grant us faith to look beyond the problems of the moment to the miracles of the future. . . . Give us faith to do what is right and let the consequences follow."<sup>7</sup>

In fact, the Restoration of the gospel occurred as the result of great faith on the part of the Prophet Joseph Smith while he was yet a boy in his early teens. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon was an act of faith in Jesus Christ on the part of ancient American prophets who wrote their revelations and spiritual experiences upon metal plates. They had faith that their record would be a significant part of a glorious restoration of the gospel in latter days. The angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith on a September night in 1823 when he approached the Lord in faith. He later wrote, "For I had full confidence [faith] in obtaining a divine manifestation, as I previously had one."<sup>8</sup>

### WHAT IS FAITH?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that faith is "the first principle in revealed religion, and the foundation of all righteousness."<sup>9</sup> The Apostle Paul defined faith as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."<sup>10</sup> The Prophet Joseph Smith further revealed through his inspired revision of the Bible (the

**A**fter rebuking the wind and waves, the Savior asked His disciples, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mark 4:40).

JST) that faith was the “assurance of things hoped for” (substituting *assurance* for *substance*). He explained that faith “is the assurance we have of the existence of unseen things. And being the assurance, . . . [faith] must be the principle of action in all intelligent beings.”<sup>11</sup>

A song that Primary children sing teaches the nature of faith:

*Faith is knowing the sun will rise, lighting  
each new day.*

*Faith is knowing the Lord will hear my  
prayers each time I pray.*

*Faith is like a little seed:*

*If planted it will grow.*

*Faith is a swelling within my heart.*

*When I do right, I know.<sup>12</sup>*

President Hinckley observed, “When I discuss faith, I do not mean it in an abstract sense. I mean it as a living, vital force with recognition of God as our Father and Jesus Christ as our Savior. When we accept this basic premise, there will come an acceptance of their teachings and an obedience which will bring peace and joy in this life and exaltation in the life to come.”<sup>13</sup>

Faith, belief, and hope are often used interchangeably, and it may be difficult to distinguish between these words. There is a difference, however. Although we cannot have faith without belief and hope, we can believe without having faith. Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, “Belief, in one of its accepted senses, may consist in a merely intellectual assent, while faith implies such confidence and conviction as will impel to action.”<sup>14</sup> The Savior taught, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”<sup>15</sup> The Apostle James said it another way: “Even so faith, if it

hath not works, is dead, being alone.”<sup>16</sup> So-called faith without works is not faith at all!

Faith is interwoven with other gospel attributes, especially hope and charity.<sup>17</sup> All three help bring us to Christ. Feelings of doubt, fear, despair, or discouragement are the opposite of faith, hope, and charity. Faith requires action, and action is inhibited by fear and doubt. Doubt and fear diminish as one’s faith increases. In the parable of the talents, the slothful servant’s underlying problem was lack of faith. On the day of reckoning, he rationalized, “And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth.”<sup>18</sup> The two servants who were given five and two talents, respectively, multiplied them through faith and personal effort. They were rewarded, while the faithless, fearing servant lost what he had received. Shakespeare described the negative effects of little faith, “Our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we oft might win by fearing to attempt.”<sup>19</sup>

**A**fter one interview, my bishop asked if I was going to live my entire life without knowing if the gospel was true.

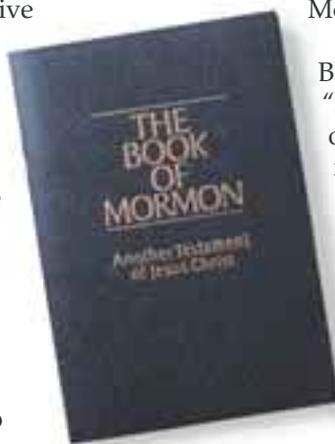


ILLUSTRATED BY BRIAN CALL

## FAITH IS IN THE LORD AND HIS PROMISES

Our faith is in our Heavenly Father and His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Although we talk of having faith in people, in principles, or in things, real faith focuses on eternal life through knowing “the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom [He has] sent.”<sup>20</sup> Faith takes us beyond mere acceptance of the Savior’s identity and existence. It includes having complete confidence in His infinite and eternal redemptive power to save us from sin and death.

Faith permits us to acknowledge Christ’s divine attributes, including infinite love for both the innocent and the sinner. It acknowledges the Lord’s limitless capacity to forgive and heal when we cast our burdens upon Him. Faith also includes certitude that His promises in the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets will be kept. Thus, integrity and obedience to the law of tithing, Word of Wisdom, and law of chastity are matters of faith. Those who pay tithing are able to enthusiastically testify that the Lord does “open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”<sup>21</sup>



*Faith in Jesus Christ can be strengthened by studying and praying about the Book of Mormon.*

## GAINING FAITH THAT SAVES

Jacob, Nephi’s younger brother, wrote that his faith and his people’s faith became “unshaken, inasmuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea.”<sup>22</sup> Our goal today should be the same, to have unshakable faith.

Some seem to acquire strong faith almost naturally as they grow up. For me, gaining strong faith was somewhat of a struggle. I was born of goodly parents and raised in a home where I grew up under the influence of the gospel. However, when I reached missionary age, my faith was not strong enough to enable me to feel comfortable teaching and testifying to others not of our faith. This unbelief led me to turn down my bishop’s urging that I serve a mission.

After one of our interviews, the bishop pointedly asked if I was going to live my entire life without knowing whether the gospel was true. He made it quite clear that it was up to me to do something about my lack of faith and encouraged me to make this a matter of urgent study and prayer.

Unfortunately, my desire was weak and I was unwilling to give the needed time and effort. As a university student, however, I found myself increasingly confronted with choices relating to gospel standards.

This helped me understand that I did need to know if the Church was true and, if it was, the necessity of leading a life consistent with its teachings. Therefore, I did not register for the next quarter’s university classes. I devoted several months to a careful reading of the Book of Mormon, the New Testament, and many chapters of the Old Testament. I knelt down frequently to ask God to help me understand the things I was reading and to give me a testimony of the Book of Mormon.

The fulfillment of the promise in the Book of Mormon that the Lord would “manifest the truth of it . . . by the power of the Holy Ghost”<sup>23</sup> did not happen immediately. One Sunday, not long after I finished reading the Book of Mormon, I attended fast and testimony meeting in my ward. A sister gave a beautiful testimony of the Savior and the gospel. I remember wishing I had such a testimony. As she sat down, I found myself getting to my feet. At that moment I experienced something indescribable in my heart and mind. The impressions were so powerful I felt like my hair was standing on end. I testified with certitude that the Book of Mormon was true and that Jesus, the living Christ,

was my Redeemer. I gladly received a call to serve a mission soon after that marvelous experience. My mission turned out to be one of the most important and fulfilling experiences of my life. My faith, to this day, continues to increase.

Those seeking faith in Jesus Christ, which motivates us to action, may not realize there is a price to pay. Many, like leprous Naaman,<sup>24</sup> expect some great thing without obedience and hard work.

Desire is the foundation of faith. Alma taught the Zoramites how to begin the process of gaining faith. He encouraged, “Arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you.”<sup>25</sup> Desire may be either augmented or quenched by circumstances. For example, the riches of the world, the honors of men, popularity, peer pressure, or keeping up with the Joneses may diminish our desire for faith, whereas pain, suffering, loneliness, or loss of loved ones often create deep emotions and a yearning for hope and faith.

## INCREASING OUR FAITH

Four steps, when coupled with desire, help us gain faith in Jesus Christ. They are *study, prayer, service and sacrifice*, and *personal righteousness*.

*Study.* We gain faith like any other attribute. The Prophet Joseph Smith instructed, “Faith comes by hearing the word of God, through the testimony of the servants of God.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, we see the importance of attending Church, studying the scriptures, viewing or listening to general conference where possible, and reading the reports of general conference.

*Prayer.* The Apostle Paul counseled that through our prayers we “might perfect that which is lacking in [our] faith.”<sup>27</sup>

*Service and sacrifice.* The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things.”<sup>28</sup> We must be willing to pass the same tests of faith and devotion as did Abraham.<sup>29</sup>

*Personal righteousness.* The Savior taught, “If any man will do [God’s] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”<sup>30</sup> Sin is the greatest of all faith destroyers. Pride, anger, selfishness, greed, or any other form of disobedience diminishes faith, while righteousness leads to greater faith.

What if we apply the four steps and the reward of faith is not forthcoming? We may need to evaluate our efforts. Moroni, for example, stipulated that in a quest for a testimony of the Book of Mormon, one shall ask with a sincere heart and with real intent.<sup>31</sup> He taught us, “Wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith.”<sup>32</sup> Ultimately, unshakable faith in Jesus Christ is a gift of the Holy Ghost.<sup>33</sup>

## NOURISHING AND MAINTAINING FAITH

Faith, if lost, is difficult to regain. Acquiring faith is not a one-time thing. It, like much else in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is acquired “line upon line, precept upon precept.”<sup>34</sup> Faith must be continually

nourished by repentance, partaking of the sacrament, and keeping sacred temple covenants and marriage vows. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles observed:

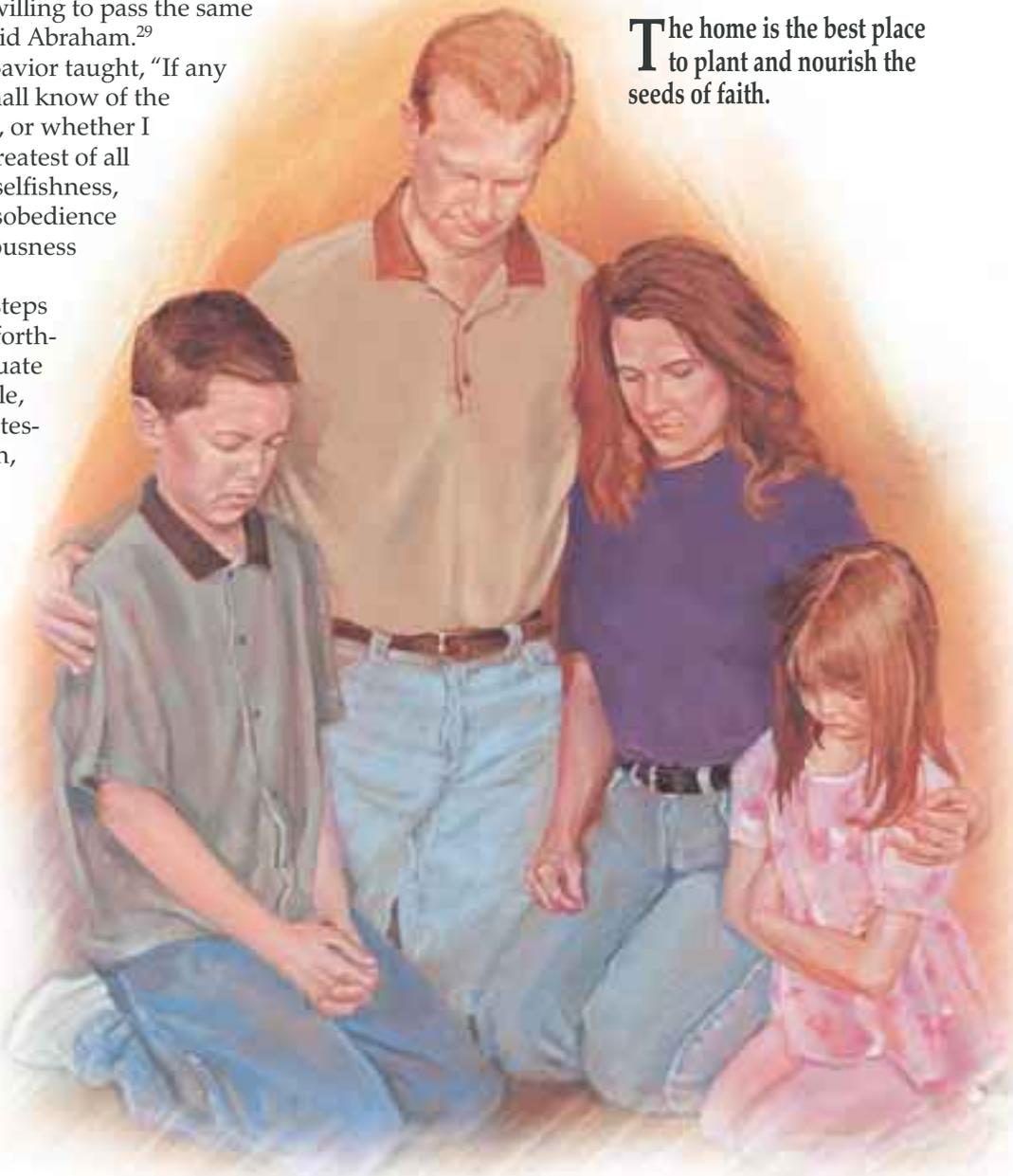
“If we cease nurturing our faith in any of these four specific ways [serving, studying, praying, and worshiping], we are vulnerable.

“Failure to study, for instance, is to be intellectually and spiritually malnourished. . . .

“A lack of deep personal prayer and deep genuine worship also erodes our faith.”<sup>35</sup>

We nourish faith by recounting examples of faith. That is why histories and journals are important. We all have had experiences that promote and build faith. They should be remembered and passed down to future generations.

**T**he home is the best place to plant and nourish the seeds of faith.



## FAITH IS DEVELOPED IN THE HOME

The home is the best place to plant and nourish the seeds of faith. Elder A. Theodore Tuttle (1919–86) of the Seventy testified:

“I am a product of a household of faith. I learned faith in my home. I was taught it. It was drilled into me. . . .

“We’re not going to survive in this world, temporally or spiritually, without increased faith in the Lord—and I don’t mean positive mental attitude—I mean downright solid faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>36</sup>

Parents are held accountable by the Lord to teach their children “to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, when eight years old.” When parents neglect this commandment, the Lord states, “the sin be upon the heads of the parents.”<sup>37</sup> Family home evening, family scripture study, and family prayer provide settings where parents can carry out this God-given responsibility to teach their children.

Unfortunately, some of us grow to adulthood without the wonderful opportunity to develop faith as a child. Lack of opportunity in the home, however, does not excuse anyone from gaining faith or being faithful. It is never too late; we are never too old to begin the steps leading to faith in Jesus Christ, which leads to action.

## THE BLESSINGS OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

Many go without the matchless blessings that flow from God when we have abiding faith in Him and His Only Begotten Son. Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles observed: “As an abstract principle faith is nothing; it is of no more worth than an abstract principle of mathematics. But faith in the heart of a man—a living, vibrant faith—can raise the dead, create worlds, and save souls.”<sup>38</sup> Faith is the motivating power for the 11 million members of the Church living in more than 160 countries. It is the force behind the 60,000 full-time missionaries who leave home and loved ones to build up the kingdom by preaching the gospel and magnifying special assignments. It is faith that leads, in our days, to the building of an unprecedented number of temples. Faith motivates members to

become and remain worthy to enter these temples and to perform ordinances in behalf of themselves and their kindred dead. Faith compels members of the restored Church to labor with might and strength to move the latter-day work forward to prepare for the return of our resurrected Lord, Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Thomas exclaimed, after he felt the wounds in the hands, feet, and side of the resurrected Lord, “My Lord and my God.” Jesus gently rebuked His doubting disciple and, in so doing, left us a marvelous promise: “Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: *blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*”<sup>39</sup>

May we be eager to merit the priceless gift of faith. May we have faith like Nephi of old, who was unequivocally able to say, “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded.”<sup>40</sup> I bear my personal witness that whoever desires and is willing to take the necessary steps will receive the joy and promised blessings of saving faith, which is faith in Jesus Christ. □

James O. Mason, a former member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy, is currently

servicing as president of the Bountiful Utah Temple.

Gospel topics: faith in Jesus Christ, prayer, service, sacrifice, righteousness

### NOTES

1. Matt. 8:10, 13.
2. 3 Ne. 19:35.
3. Mark 4:38–40; emphasis added.
4. Matt. 13:58.
5. See Matt. 9:29.
6. Luke 17:5.
7. “Lord, Increase Our Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 52–53.
8. JS—H 1:29.
9. *Lectures on Faith* (1985), 1.
10. Heb. 11:1; see also Joseph Smith Translation in footnote b.
11. *Lectures on Faith*, 7.
12. “Faith,” *Children’s Songbook*, 96–97.
13. “With All Thy Getting Get Understanding,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1988, 5.
14. *The Articles of Faith*, 12th ed. (1924), 96.
15. Matt. 7:21.
16. James 2:17.
17. See Moro. 7:42–47.
18. Matt. 25:25.
19. *Measure for Measure*, 1.4. 77–79.
20. John 17:3.
21. Mal. 3:10.
22. Jacob 4:6.
23. Moro. 10:4.
24. See 2 Kgs. 5:10–13.
25. Alma 32:27; see also vv. 21–43.
26. *History of the Church*, 3:379.
27. 1 Thes. 3:10.
28. *Lectures on Faith*, 69.
29. See Heb. 11:17–19; D&C 101:1–5.
30. John 7:17.
31. See Moro. 10:4.
32. Ether 12:6.
33. 1 Cor. 12:3; Moro. 10:5.
34. D&C 98:12.
35. “Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds,” *Ensign*, May 1991, 88.
36. “Developing Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 73.
37. D&C 68:25.
38. *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. (1979–81), 2:405.
39. John 20:28–29; emphasis added.
40. 1 Ne. 3:7.



Family home evening, family scripture study, and family prayer provide settings where parents can carry out the God-given responsibility to teach their children.

# EARLY LESSONS ON FOLLOWING THE PROPHET



*Stories from early Church history show that following a living prophet requires a willingness to sacrifice, confidence in his prophetic call, and a testimony from the Holy Ghost.*

BY GUY L. DORIUS

**A**t the first organizational meeting of His Church the Lord restored an important doctrine: He uses living prophets to reveal His will to His Saints. Anciently the Lord stated: “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Then in April 1830 the Lord again reminded His Saints to receive His word through the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

“For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith” (D&C 21:4-5).

In the early years of the Church those who came to understand and live this doctrine found safety. The names of Newel Knight, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Eliza R. Snow are held in honored remembrance.

Others found it more difficult to follow the Prophet, and their names have quickly faded from Church history. They gave heed, but only to a point, then something happened in their association with Joseph or he asked of them something they thought was beyond his purview. Their lukewarm obedience led to their separation from the kingdom of God. Many of these early members faced immense challenges, and we should be cautious not to make harsh

judgments, yet the examples of these individuals who fell away from the gospel in the New York (1829–30) and Kirtland (1831–37) periods provide insights on following living prophets.

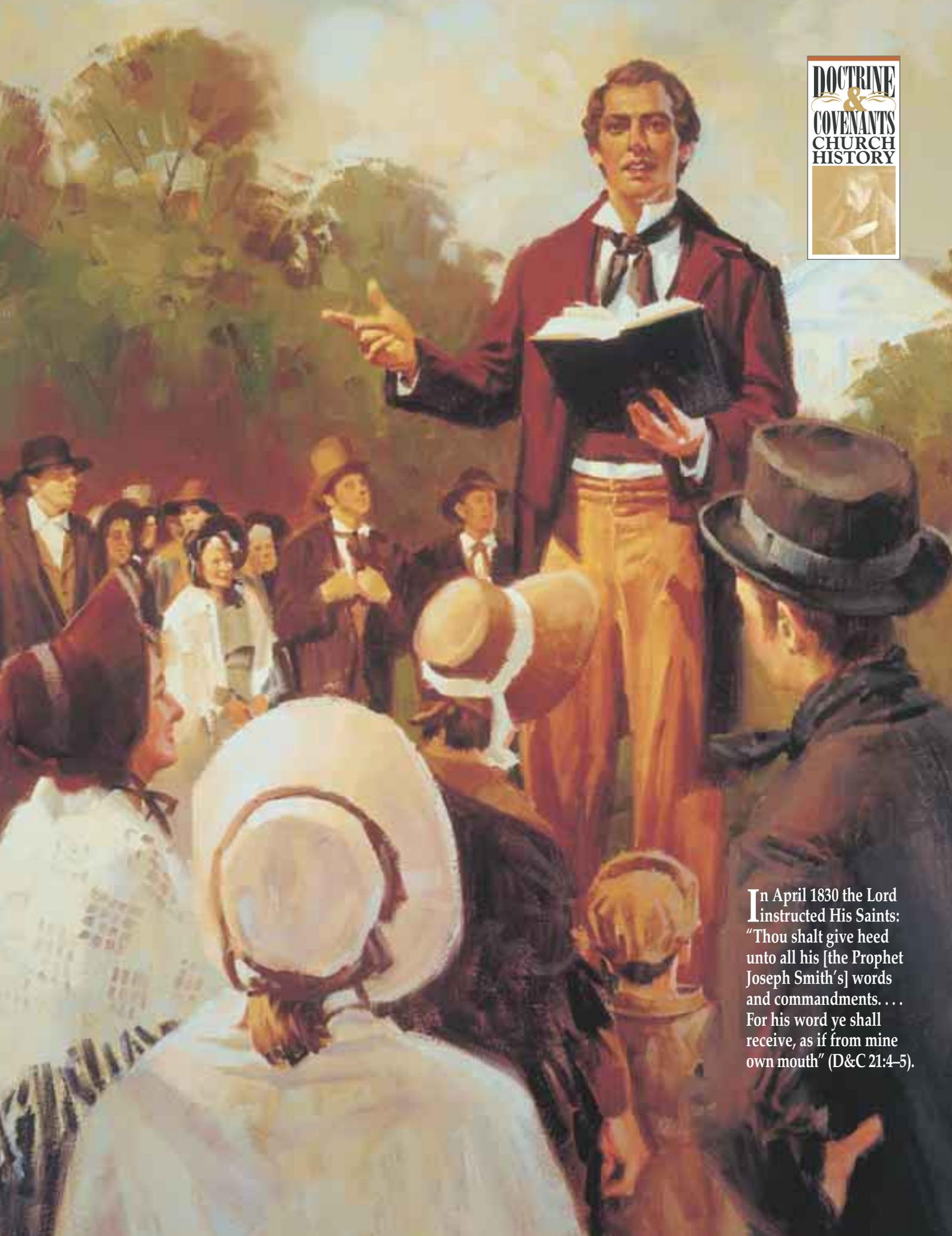
## A WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE

Many of the early challenges faced by the Saints appear to be linked with property and the cares of the world. They struggled like the rich young man whom the Savior taught: “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

“But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions” (Matt. 19:21–22).

The move to Kirtland provided one of the earliest tests for following the call of a living prophet. In December 1830 the Lord commanded the Saints through His prophet to leave their comfortable New York homes and settle in “the Ohio” (see D&C 37:3). The Lord counseled: “And they that have farms that cannot be sold, let them be left or rented as seemeth them good” (D&C 38:37).

Newel Knight, an early convert in the Colesville, New York, branch, went to the 2 January 1831 conference of the Church at Fayette, where he learned of the commandment to gather in Ohio. He stated: “It



In April 1830 the Lord instructed His Saints: "Thou shalt give heed unto all his [the Prophet Joseph Smith's] words and commandments. . . . For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth" (D&C 21:4-5).



**T**he Saints' move to Kirtland provided one of the earliest tests for following the call of a living prophet. Many arrived in Kirtland having left behind beautiful homes and farms, while others found the sacrifice too great.

was at this conference that we were instructed as a people, to begin the gathering of Israel, and a revelation was given to the prophet on this subject. Having returned home from the conference, in obedience to the commandment which had been given, I, together with the Colesville Branch, began to make preparations to go to Ohio. . . . *As might be expected, we were obliged to make great sacrifices of our property.*"<sup>1</sup> Newel and his family followed the prophet and left behind a beautiful farm. Many others did as well. Others, however, found the sacrifice of property and comfort too great and stayed in New York.

One such person was Philip Burroughs, a gentry farmer from Fayette. There is no record of his baptism into the Church, but the Lord referred to him in a September 1830 revelation as "brother Philip Burroughs" (D&C 30:10). An article in the 9 March 1831 edition of the *Reflector*, a Palmyra newspaper, just two months after the call to go to Ohio, gives some evidence of Philip's reasons for separating from the Church: "Our Waterloo correspondent informs us, that two of the most responsible Mormonites, as it

respects property, in that vicinity, have demurred to the divine command, through Jo Smith, requiring them to sell their property and put it into the common fund, and repair with all convenient speed to the New Jerusalem, lately located by Cowdery somewhere in the western region. A requisition of twelve hundred dollars, in cash it is said, was made upon one of these gentlemen, (Mr. B.)—'the Lord having need of it.' This request was promptly refused by the gentleman, who, at the same time informed the prophet that he would rather risk his soul as it was, (having been dipped) than trust his money or property in the hands of such agents as were applying for it."<sup>2</sup>

When Samuel H. Smith and Orson Hyde traveled through Seneca County, New York, on a mission from Kirtland in 1832, they went to Philip Burroughs's house. Samuel reported, "He was glad to see us and Sister Burroughs was strong in the faith."<sup>3</sup> A meeting was held at the schoolhouse, which a number of people attended, but Philip could never bring himself to follow the Saints to Ohio.

Another example is James Covill. James "had been a Baptist minister for about forty years, [and] covenanted with the Lord that he would obey any command that the Lord would give to him through Joseph the Prophet" (D&C 39, section heading). The Lord was pleased because James's heart was "right

before me at this time," but reminded him that he had rejected the Lord "many times because of pride and the cares of the world" (D&C 39:8-9). James was then instructed to go to Ohio (D&C 39:14), a command he received through the Prophet "with gladness" (D&C 40:2), and evidence suggests that he did unite himself to the Church.<sup>4</sup> Sadly his heart changed, and as the Lord noted, "straightway Satan tempted him; and the fear of persecution and the cares of the world caused him to reject the word.

"Wherefore, he broke my covenant, and it remaineth with me to do with him as seemeth me good" (D&C 40:2-3). James Covill faded from prominence in Church history.

The cares of the world are very real to those who accept the message of a living prophet. Prophetic teachings often run counter to the popular notions and ideas of the day. As James Covill accepted divine teachings, it seems that he also began to fear losing social status and position with friends or perhaps even losing family associations. And although we do not have specific knowledge of what cares of the world the Lord was referring to, it is likely that the move to Ohio would have also necessitated the sacrifice of material comforts for the kingdom.

Examples like those of Newel Knight, Philip Burroughs, and James Covill help us understand that blessings accompany the sacrifice of personal property and comfort in order to follow a prophet. The Lord continues to give Latter-day Saints commandments through a living prophet. Many of these sometimes seem as difficult for us as it must have been for the early Saints when they were told to pack up and move to "the Ohio." Yet the Lord honors our agency just as He did with the New York Saints, when He spoke through the Prophet Joseph Smith regarding the move to Ohio: "Behold, here is wisdom, and let every man choose for himself until I come. Even so. Amen" (D&C 37:4). If we use our agency wisely, as did Newel Knight and his family, we will find fellowship with the Saints. Or we may at tremendous cost choose to stay behind as the Church moves forward.

## CONFIDENCE IN THE DIVINE CALL OF A PROPHET

As the faithful New York Saints converged on Kirtland, Ohio, the necessity of following the Prophet

Joseph Smith only intensified. Great challenges came as the Restoration continued through a period of spiritual outpouring. Valiant members stayed true to the cause and the Prophet, but there were those who chose not to follow. Many physical challenges and sacrifices provided a testing ground for the members of the Church, and other challenges caused some to question the appropriateness of everything done by the President of the Church.

Two such examples are Ezra Booth and Symonds Ryder. Ezra was a Methodist minister who became acquainted with the Church in 1831 through reading and discussing the Book of Mormon with John Johnson of Hiram, Ohio. They traveled to Kirtland and met with the Prophet, and on this occasion they witnessed a

miraculous healing of John Johnson's wife, Elsa.<sup>5</sup> She had been plagued with chronic rheumatism in her shoulder that prevented her from using her arm. When Joseph took her by the hand and said, "I command thee to be whole," she was immediately healed.<sup>6</sup> Booth was baptized in May 1831 and served a short mission in the Hiram region.

While in Hiram, Ezra taught Symonds Ryder of his newfound faith. Symonds visited with Joseph and witnessed what he perceived to be a miracle when in June 1831 he read of a destructive earthquake in China and "remembered that six weeks before, a young 'Mormon' girl had predicted the destruction."<sup>7</sup> He was baptized that same month, but his enthusiasm was short-lived. He soon received a ministerial call signed by the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon that stated that it had been given

them by the Spirit and that it was the Lord's will he be called to preach the gospel. In both the informal letter he received and in the official commission to preach, his last name was misspelled *Rider*, instead of *Ryder*. He left the Church, claiming that if the "'Spirit' through which he had been called to preach could err in the matter of spelling his name, it might have erred in calling him to the ministry as well; or, in other words, he was led to doubt if he were called at all by the Spirit of God, because of the [scribal] error in the spelling of his name!"<sup>8</sup> This error appears to have

### OUR GREATEST SECURITY



*"The greatest security of members of The Church of Jesus Christ*

*of Latter-day Saints comes from learning to listen to and obey the words and commandments that the Lord has given through living prophets. I would hope that the world would understand the importance of having a living prophet on earth today."*

**Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Hear the Prophet's Voice and Obey," *Ensign*, May 1995, 17.**



**Ezra Booth's confidence in the Prophet's divine call was largely based on his witnessing the miraculous healing of Elsa Johnson's rheumatic shoulder. He later rejected Joseph Smith's prophetic call, saying that the role of a prophet was too authoritarian.**

resulted in his rejection of the prophetic mantle of Joseph Smith.

Having one's name spelled in various ways was not unusual in that time. Symonds, who is mentioned in D&C 52:37, had his name spelled in a variety of ways in original texts, as did many others who did not take offense.<sup>9</sup> His lack of understanding of and faith in the role of a prophet led him to quickly return to his religious affiliation with the Campbellite movement.

Ezra Booth served a mission to Missouri, but when he returned to Ohio he had his own doubts about the living Prophet. Ezra argued that before he left for Missouri Joseph told him that he had seen in vision that the Church would be large in the wilderness. Ezra was disillusioned when he arrived in Missouri and found only a small number of converts, for he misunderstood when this prophecy was to be fulfilled. It also bothered him that the Prophet redirected mission assignments given by revelation when some declined their calls to serve. Ezra did not understand

what the Lord had taught the Prophet: "Wherefore I, the Lord, command and revoke, as it seemeth me good; and all this to be answered upon the heads of the rebellious, saith the Lord" (D&C 56:4). Ezra also rejected the Prophet Joseph Smith's claim as the only one to receive revelation for the Church. He felt this was an authoritarian type of leadership. Further, he questioned the Prophet's call because he considered Joseph's personality inappropriate. He felt the Prophet's jovial nature and levity with people were inconsistent with proper prophetic demeanor.<sup>10</sup>

These concerns and others led Symonds Ryder and Ezra Booth to leave the Church and persecute the Prophet. They rejected the divinity of Joseph's prophetic call because of what they regarded as his mistakes.

## A TESTIMONY FROM THE HOLY GHOST

Many early members had conversions tied to the witnessing of miraculous events, and when challenges came their testimonies of the living prophet seemed to suffer. Those early members who had testimonies rooted in the power of the Holy Ghost stood by the Prophet. Brigham Young and John Taylor are examples of this. They were not disturbed in their testimonies of a living prophet by every wind that blew because they were firmly anchored with a testimony

of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Ghost.

As members completed the construction of the Kirtland Temple in 1836, there was a season of great temporal growth and prosperity. The Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith a master plan for the growth of Kirtland. Elder Wilford Woodruff of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stated: "Joseph presented us in some degree the plot of the city of Kirtland (which is the stronghold of the daughter of Zion) as it was given him by vision. It was great, marvelous, and glorious. The city extended to the east, west, north, and south. Steamboats will come puffing into the city. Our goods will be conveyed upon railroads from Kirtland to many places and probably to Zion. Houses of worship would be reared unto the Most High. Beautiful streets [were] to be made for the Saints to walk in. Kings of the earth would come to behold the glory thereof, and many glorious things not now to be named would be bestowed upon the Saints. But all these thing[s] are better imagined than spoken by the children of Jacob."<sup>11</sup>

Land was purchased and monies accumulated to bring about this plan. Inflation and property values soared. The cost of building the temple put the Church in deep debt, and many members sacrificed much. Some Church leaders decided to enter the banking business in an attempt to resolve some of these problems and create an equitable medium for exchange. A local currency was to be exchanged only in the immediate area, which was a common practice in those times. Many historians have debated the wisdom of such a tactic, but in January 1837 Elder Woodruff gave some insight into the Prophet's perspective in this matter: "I visited the office of the Kirtland Safety Society and saw the first money that was issued by the treasurer or society. It was given to Brother Bump (in exchange for other notes), who was the first to circulate it. I also heard President Joseph Smith Jr. declare in the presence of F. Williams, D. Whitmer, S. Smith, W. Parrish, and others in the deposit office that he had received that morning the word of the Lord upon the subject of the Kirtland Safety Society. He was alone in the room by himself and he had not only the voice of the Spirit upon the subject but even an audible voice. He did not tell us at that time what the Lord said upon the subject but remarked that if we would give heed to the commandments the Lord had given this morning all would be well.

May the Lord bless Brother Joseph with all the Saints and support the above-named institution and protect it so that every weapon formed against it may be broken and come to naught while the Kirtland Safety Society shall become the greatest of all institutions on earth."<sup>12</sup>

The Lord had a hand in the establishment of the Kirtland Safety Society, but the success of the economic plan for Kirtland depended on the brethren keeping the word of the Lord as given them by the living prophet. Later, as the economy of Kirtland and other areas of Ohio began to collapse, Elder Woodruff noted: "President S. Rigdon addressed the congregation and laid before them their situation as to temporal things as the Gentiles are striving to besiege the Saints in Kirtland and would be glad to starve the Saints to death. He also stated that the Presidency had used every means for the deliverance of the Church but many of the Church refused Kirtland currency, which was their temporal salvation. In consequence of this they put strength in the hands of their enemies, and those that had done this thing must suffer by it."<sup>13</sup>

By April 1837 it was obvious to the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Sidney Rigdon that the disobedience of some would cause the suffering of many. By the summer of 1837 the Prophet and President Rigdon had withdrawn from the Kirtland Safety Society. The failure of the members to follow prophetic instructions led to a "great apostasy" of many prominent members. It is estimated that between 200 and 300 persons left the Church during this period.<sup>14</sup> Warren Parrish, John F. Boynton, Luke Johnson, and Lyman Johnson were among many in high positions who left in late 1837 and early 1838 and turned against the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Even Elder Parley P. Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles faltered in his testimony and in the excitement of the time questioned the Prophet's handling of the financial affairs. He quickly repented of this and sought forgiveness of the Church.<sup>15</sup> When he shared his feelings of apostasy with Elder John Taylor, Elder Taylor replied: "I am surprised to hear you speak so, Brother Parley. Before you left Canada you bore strong testimony of Joseph Smith being a Prophet of God, and to the truth of the work he has

### LOOK TO THE PROPHET



*"Of all mortal men, we should keep our eyes most firmly fixed on the captain, the prophet, seer, and revelator, and president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . This is the man who stands closest to the fountain of living waters."*

**President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994),  
"Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations,"  
New Era, May 1975, 16.**



**A**s we follow the teachings of President Gordon B. Hinckley, we will discover by the Holy Spirit that this is the Lord's work and that His guidance is given us through His chosen servant.

inaugurated; and you said you knew these things by revelation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. You gave to me a strict charge to the effect that though you or any angel from heaven was to declare anything else I was not to believe it. Now Brother Parley, it is not man that I am following, but the Lord. The principles you taught me led me to Him, and I now have the same testimony that you then rejoiced in, if the work was true six months ago, it is true today; if Joseph was then a Prophet, he is now a Prophet."<sup>16</sup>

Elder John Taylor's testimony of the Prophet was echoed by many faithful Saints who stood by Joseph Smith during these hard times. Apostates threatened to destroy Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and others. Brigham Young said it was because he proclaimed in public and in private that he knew "by the power of the Holy Ghost that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Most High God, and had not transgressed and fallen as apostates declared."<sup>17</sup> These two brethren never strayed from their belief that the work of the Lord was being administered by a living prophet.

## LESSONS FOR OUR TIME

Lessons can be learned from the stories of individuals who struggled to follow a living prophet. Those who chose to stand by the Prophet Joseph Smith, even in physically and spiritually demanding times, were blessed and are honored today. Those who were disobedient and disloyal soon fell into spiritual obscurity.

We live in an age of tremendous change and social pressure. Prophets and apostles continue to give us counsel and teach us the Lord's will as we live through this great period of the last days. If we individually give heed to the lessons of the past, we will find ourselves ready to sacrifice when the Lord requires it, because we will have chosen

to align ourselves with His servants.

Living prophets often give us counsel in areas that affect our social and economic well-being. Yet we must be able to receive their teachings without limiting the realms in which they may teach. In doing so, we can claim the promise made to all who obey a prophet when the Lord said that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory" (D&C 21:6).

To receive such a blessing we must have a testimony of the living prophet that is from the Holy Ghost. As we follow their inspired teachings, we will discover by the Holy Spirit that this is the Lord's work and that His guidance is given us through His chosen servants. □

*Guy L. Dorius is a member of the Battle Creek Third Ward, Pleasant Grove Utah East Stake.*

*Gospel topics: prophets, Joseph Smith, apostasy, Church history*  
NOTES

1. *Scraps of Biography—Tenth Book of the Faith Promoting Series* (1883), 68; emphasis added.
2. *Reflector*, 9 Mar. 1831, 116–17; spelling corrected.
3. Samuel H. Smith Journal, 1831–33, microfilm copy located in the Historical Department Archives. See also Larry C. Porter, "A Study of the Origins of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the States of New York and Pennsylvania, 1816–1831" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, Aug. 1971), 262–63.
4. Porter, "A Study of Origins," 266–67.
5. Although many records refer to John Johnson's wife as Elsa, her headstone in the Walnut Hill Cemetery in Council Bluffs, Iowa, has her name as Alice Johnson.
6. *History of the Church*, 1:215–16.
7. *History of the Church*, 1:158 footnotes.
8. *History of the Church*, 1:260–61 footnotes.
9. Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, Apr. 1974), 2:678.
10. Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio 1830–1838* (1983), 94–96.
11. Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 6 Apr. 1837; capitalization, punctuation, and spelling modernized in all entries.
12. Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 6 Jan. 1837.
13. Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 9 Apr. 1837.
14. Backman, *The Heavens Resound*, 327–29.
15. Backman, *The Heavens Resound*, 326.
16. B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor* (1963), 40.
17. Manuscript History of Brigham Young, ed. Elden Jay Watson (1968), 23.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Most Ensign articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. What sacrifices of personal property or comfort have I or my family made to follow a living prophet?
2. How well do I or my family understand the role of a living prophet?
3. Why is a testimony from the Holy Ghost needed to help us follow a living prophet?

BY PAULA K. BOOTHE

*We can be an influence for good in speaking out for clean, respectful language.*

When my brother Mark installed a trampoline in his backyard, the neighborhood children were drawn to it like a magnet. The family hastily formulated some restrictions regarding its use and posted a list of rules in the yard.

I was reviewing the list with seven-year-old Kelsie: "No playing under the trampoline. . . . No food on the trampoline. . . . No jumping with shoes." Kelsie seriously confided to me, "We have the most trouble with number three, 'No swearing.'"

"What do you do when someone breaks that rule?" I asked her.

"I say, 'We don't allow that kind of language on our property.'"

Even in first grade, Kelsie had encountered profanity. But she had been taught the importance of appropriate language, and her parents were good examples in their home.

We may know the use of profane and vulgar language is wrong. We may be free of this habit ourselves, and perhaps swearing is never heard in our homes. Yet it is likely that we and our children are frequently "vexed with the filthy conversation" (2 Pet. 2:7) of others in school, in business settings, or during leisure activities. Certainly we can avoid entertainment that relies on the use of profanity, but often we are placed in situations where we have little control over what others say. Yet even in those situations, we can be an influence for good in speaking out for clean, respectful language.

A common form of profanity is the desecration of the name of Deity. Even

many who rarely use other bad language have found this to be an acceptable form of self-expression. Often this is connected with violent feelings and with other harsh and profane words, further degrading the sacred terms for Deity.

Many members have heard of President Spencer W.

Kimball's request to a hospital attendant who swore in his presence: "Please! Please! That is my Lord whose names you revile" ("President Kimball Speaks Out on Profanity," *Ensign*, Feb. 1981, 3). Are we as courageous and kind in speaking out for right when we hear profanity? Or are we silent because we feel we will offend our friends and coworkers?

### AN INFLUENCE FOR GOOD

Just as an outspoken public has brought about sweeping changes in laws regulating the smoking of cigarettes, individual

Church members can be an influence for good in reducing the flood of profanity.

Gary worked with many salespeople who profaned the name of Deity. He was troubled by this but wondered how to mention it without damaging his friendship with his associates. When he heard a sacrament meeting speaker tell of his success in confronting the same problem, Gary felt encouraged to try a similar approach. He took each friend aside confidentially and told them how much he appreciated their friendship, adding, "But you know, when you use the name of the Lord like you do, it makes me uncomfortable. His name is sacred to me."

Spoken in kindness, this remark without exception received a response similar to, "I know you're right, and I'm sorry. I shouldn't do it; it's just become a habit."

In no case was anyone offended. In fact, some opportunities arose for sharing Latter-day Saint standards and beliefs. Speaking up

# STANDING UP TO PROFANITY



ILLUSTRATED BY CARY HENRIE

required courage on Gary's part, but he knew these men and women had "known better" at some time in their lives and simply needed a gentle reminder.

After hearing Gary relate his experience, I took courage when a similar situation occurred in my own life. For many years I was a member of a 120-voice women's barbershop chorus. I enjoyed my friendship with the other singers, none of whom were Church members.

On one occasion, a new piece of music—a medley of songs from a Broadway musical—was introduced. One part of the medley called for a group to speak some phrases while the chorus sang in the background. In these spoken phrases, the name of Deity was used several times in a common or profane way.

Although I would not be required to say these words, I was upset that they would be used at all. I spoke to the director and others of her staff. When no change was made, I personally boycotted participation in the music to a certain degree.

The music remained part of the chorus repertoire for a time. But I noticed a subtle change. The director, who had used these irreverent terms frequently in her own speech, seemed to be making an effort not to do so. When she slipped during rehearsals, she looked at me apologetically, and once she even mouthed the words "Sorry, Paula." My concerns about profanity became known to others in the group, and the frequency of its use diminished in my presence. I received encouragement from others in the chorus, and one friend told me she had spoken to the director in support of my position.

The Lord's counsel to "be patient in afflictions, revile not against those that revile" (D&C 31:9) reminds us that our defense of what is right must be based on friendship and consideration for offenders that will outshine the momentary criticism. They must know that we dislike the bad language we hear but that we value their friendship.

## DO NOT INDULGE IN SWEARING



*"We cannot indulge in swearing. We cannot be guilty of profanity; we cannot indulge in impure thoughts, words, and acts and have the Spirit of the Lord with us."*

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Converts and Young Men," *Ensign*, May 1997, 49.

## "A BRIGHT LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS"

Is the fear of being shunned reason enough for us to tolerate a profane world without speaking out in favor of wholesome speech? While some may choose to avoid us because of our standards, it has been my experience that many who do not live those standards themselves are attracted to us and will speak up for us or shield us from the profane language of others. "Language has its own ethics, and one who communicates truth is like a bright light in the darkness," said Elder

Ted E. Brewerton, now an emeritus member of the Quorum of the Seventy ("Profanity and Swearing," *Ensign*, May 1983, 73).

Even when we say nothing publicly about our beliefs, our righteous



habits can cast a “light of truth” into the lives of others, reminding them of wholesome values they know to be right. However, a good example alone is often not a cure for profanity. If “the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain” (Ex. 20:7), how does He view those who, by their continued silence, condone such actions by others?

President Kimball described a drama he attended that had been a long-running success on Broadway. “The actors . . . were blaspheming [the Lord’s] sacred name in their common, vulgar talk. They repeated words of a playwright, words profaning the holy name of their Creator. The people laughed and applauded, and as I thought of the writer, the players, and the audience, the feeling came to me that all were party to the crime” (*Ensign*, Feb. 1981, 4). He recalled the castigation in the book of Proverbs of those who condone evil: “Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not” (Prov. 29:24).

It may seem that our efforts to curtail profanity have little influence beyond our circle of acquaintance. Yet Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles notes, “If we knew how often the obedience of others is affected

by our own and how often our stepping forth soon brings forth a whole platoon of helpers and how often our speaking forth soon creates a chorus—we would be even more ashamed of our slackness and our silence” (*Wherefore, Ye Must Press Forward* [1977], 41).

“Slackness and silence” will do little to stop the pollution of profanity that seems to have seeped into every corner of our world. Those who have the courage not only to live their beliefs but to speak in their favor may find unexpected results. As an unknown poet wrote:

*You never know when someone  
May catch a dream from you.  
You never know when a little word  
Or something you may do  
May open up the windows  
Of a mind that seeks the light.  
The way you live may not matter at all . . .  
But then again—it might. □*

Paula K. Boothe is a member of the Damascus Ward, Gresham Oregon South Stake.

**Gospel topics:** profanity, integrity

**More on this topic:** See John S. Gholdston, “Words of Darkness, Words of Light,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1992, 56–59; Dallin H. Oaks, “Reverent and Clean,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 49–52; Spencer W. Kimball, “President Kimball Speaks Out on Profanity,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1981, 3–5.

Visit [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org) or see Church magazines on CD.

## LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. What prevents us at times from tactfully speaking out against profanity?
2. How can we politely let others know we are offended by their language?
3. What are the potential benefits of tactfully making known our views on profanity? Do these benefits outweigh the risks?
4. If we struggle with profanity ourselves, what are some ways we can overcome this habit?

Those who have the courage to speak out for clean speech may find that their lone voice has been joined by a chorus.



# ZACHARY & SEAN

*My two youngest sons taught me that some of the Lord's choicest blessings come imperfectly wrapped.*

BY ELIZABETH STODDARD



*Despite his disability, Zachary seemed to be a relatively healthy baby.*

**S**pring of 1983 was full of anticipation for our young family. Not only were we expecting the arrival of our fifth child, but a new job opportunity would be taking us to Virginia. As my husband, Mark, and I looked for a new home, we prayed to be guided to live near a family that was looking for the gospel. Little did we know about the

challenges that lay ahead—as well as the opportunities to learn and grow from those challenges.

Because my previous baby had been so big, our doctor was concerned that I would have difficulty delivering another large child. Consequently, during the latter part of the pregnancy I had a sonogram every month, and with each test I was assured that our baby boy was developing normally.

## ZACHARY

On August 16th, when I delivered Zachary, he squealed heartily. My joy on hearing his cry soon turned to confusion, however, when the doctor informed me that my new son had a disability called dwarfism.

The nurses whisked Zachary away to the intensive care unit, where he was to be given oxygen

until his lungs began to compensate for his undersized chest. As I lay in the recovery room and tried to come to terms with this new reality, I wondered if Heavenly Father was going to take Zachary home. Perhaps it would be easier to part now, rather than after we became too attached. Yet as I held him in my arms, I knew I was already attached to him.

The next day Mark and I gathered our children around us in the hospital room and explained their new brother's disability. Eight-year-old Rebecca Jo exclaimed, "It's just a test, a test for him and for us. We'll just cut his pants shorter."

Life can be wonderfully simple for children. For Mark and me, our son's condition was harder to accept. We loved him deeply, yet we went through a period of mourning as we replaced our expectations of a healthy baby with the reality of a child with severe disabilities. Then we remembered friends of ours who, although they had physical disabilities, faced their lives with faith and humor. As we reflected on their lives, Mark and I came to realize that Zachary could likewise be a positive example for others. We prayed often that we would be the kind of parents Heavenly Father wanted us to be—parents who could help Zachary realize his potential.

When Zachary was 10 days old, he was released from the hospital. That same day we boarded an airplane for our new home in Chantilly, Virginia. In only a few days we learned of a local couple, Ken and Patsy Swinson, who had a four-year-old boy with the same rare form of dwarfism our son had. They were eager to share their insights with us, and we wondered if this was the family we had prayed to be led to.

We discovered that having a child with disabilities made us reach deep inside to discover what is really important. We soon found the joy our small son brought, and we began to look forward to growing



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The nurses whisked Zachary away as I tried to come to terms with his condition.

with him in the coming years. His quick smile and large, expressive eyes captivated our hearts. His older siblings adored him, particularly two-year-old Alex, who showered him with brotherly affection.

Zachary had many of the problems incident to his particular form of dwarfism, including a small cleft palate, poor vision, and a twisted foot. He was not gaining weight, which was a concern, but still the doctors deemed him a relatively healthy baby.

## SOMETHING WAS WRONG

In January, while at the doctor's office, I noticed that five-month-old Zachary's muscle tone was changing. The doctor said, "Well, we'll check it next month," but I had an uneasy feeling that something was wrong. Later, as I was feeding Zachary, I said a silent prayer, asking what Heavenly Father had in mind for him.

Then came an understanding to me in the deepest part of my soul that Zachary would not be on earth much longer. Although I did not tell Mark about this experience, he later told me he had a similar impression.

Several days later, Zachary's cry awoke me early in the morning. I got up and changed his diaper and fed him a bottle. As I looked at our sweet son nestled in my arms, my heart welled with love. "Oh, you're so precious, I want to hold you a little longer," I whispered as I shared a few more minutes with him. Then I tucked him into his bassinet and went back to bed.

After two or three hours, Mark and I woke up. It had snowed recently, and the children were home because the schools were closed. Mark went to the bassinet at the foot of the bed and started blowing on Zachary's face.

I stretched lazily. "Mark, don't wake him up; I want to get ready for the day first."

Mark looked at me. "I think he's dead."

I scrambled to the end of the bed. When I saw Zachary's face, I immediately knew he was gone. Almost like a reflex action, I cried out in prayer, "Oh please, please; don't make me go through this, Father! I can't do it!"

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Sean's father and grandfather gave him a priesthood blessing in the hospital. Afterward, we felt we were given the gift of seeing him, for a few brief moments, without his disability.



In an instant I will never forget, a feeling of peace swept through my very core. It was as if Heavenly Father was right there with His arms around me. Mark felt it too, and we wept. As we looked at the sweet expression on Zachary's face, we each felt a witness that Heavenly Father had called this son home.

This was a moment in my life when much was at stake. I then realized we could bear this unthinkable loss—if we wanted to. I knew I could be heartbroken, but if I allowed myself to become bitter, it could destroy my testimony, my marriage, and all I held dear. Perhaps the decision was not even a totally conscious one, but it was made.

As soon as we turned our hearts to heaven, strength poured out upon us more than I could have imagined. With that strength came an overwhelming feeling of gratitude—gratitude that in spite of my initial thoughts in the hospital recovery room we had been given time to hold and love our little boy, gratitude for the gospel of Jesus Christ that gave us knowledge that Zachary's spirit was not dead and that one day we would be reunited with him.

Once again, as we had done five months before, we gathered our children around us to share in the powerful and sweet spirit that filled the room. We talked of tests and of gospel truths. We spent several hours in the room that morning—it was a spiritual feast for us—and we sensed the presence of Zachary's spirit nearby.

During that time our thoughts turned to the next few days and to the arrangements that needed to be made. At first we thought we would have only a small graveside service instead of a funeral—after all, we were new to the area and did not know many people. We thought that the spirit we felt was all we needed.

Then we remembered that we had prayed for opportunities to share our testimonies with others. There might not be a time when others would listen to our words as they would now. We remembered the Swinson family and our prayers to find a way to share the good news of the gospel with them. We thought of Zachary and what he would want us to do. What better use of his time on earth than to allow him to be an instrument in bringing the gospel to others?

We decided to have a funeral with speakers who would explain the beauties of the restored gospel and songs that would invite the witness of the Spirit. Mark and I would bear our testimonies, and our three

daughters, ages 10, 8, and 6, would sing "I Am a Child of God."

## SHARING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

The day of the funeral, the chapel was filled with new friends from church as well as Mark's co-workers and our kind neighbors. We hardly knew many of those who came to support us that day, but we felt the gospel message that was heard was of great value to all. Words cannot express the joy I felt at the funeral service and throughout that sacred day as we were given the opportunity to bear our witness of a divine plan.

After that event, life settled back to normal—at least, as normal as life can be after a child dies. Yet we felt continually nourished and sustained. My two-year-old, Alex, filled my aching arms with hugs. It seemed that when my heart felt the heaviest, one of my neighbors would stop by or call to offer support, curious to know how we could face death with such peace. My previously shy tongue was loosened, and I shared my testimony. At the request of friends, family, and neighbors who were not able to attend, we shared tape recordings of the service, and it amazed us to see the far-reaching effects as these copies were then passed

on to others who did not know us.

Several weeks after the funeral, Ken and Patsy Swinson called. "Could we come and talk to you?" they asked. "We felt something at the funeral, and we want to feel it again. Would you mind telling us about your religion?"

The next week we were called as stake missionaries and were told to teach our friends. I will always remember bearing witness of gospel principles and being thrilled by the Spirit that flowed so freely at our weekly visits with the Swinsons. The joy we still felt outweighed our grief.

On 6 April 1984, Ken and Patsy entered the waters of baptism. A year later they knelt with their children at the altar of the Washington D.C. Temple to be sealed, and near that time we were blessed with a sweet little girl we named Betsy.

## SEAN

In 1987 we welcomed another son, Sean, into our family. He was beautiful, and everything seemed fine until we learned, on the night of his birth, that he had



*Each time Sean smiled or laughed, I tried to capture the moment in my heart.*

Down syndrome and something was wrong with his heart.

Mark brought the children into my room the following day and told them, "We may not have this baby very long because of his heart problem, so we need to love him, appreciate him, and enjoy him." I was grief stricken. I wanted our little boy, Alex, to have the baby brother he had missed before.

But just as we had accepted Zachary's condition, within days we accepted Sean's infirmities. Again we learned afresh what is of true worth in this life: to love and be loved as our Savior taught. In years past, Mark and I had said a commonly uttered phrase, "It doesn't matter if we get a boy or a girl, just as long as it is a healthy baby." Those words now seemed shallow as we realized that some of the Lord's choicest blessings come imperfectly wrapped.

Although doctors reassured us that an operation would solve Sean's heart problem, we recognized a deep feeling that had haunted us from the beginning of his life in embryo. We tried to convince ourselves we were just nervous because Zachary had died.

When he was nine months old, Sean had open-heart surgery. The week before the procedure was excruciating. Each time Sean smiled or laughed, I tried to capture the moment in my heart. I tried to hold him closer and savor each moment. In the process I nearly drove myself crazy with the pain of anticipating his loss.

The night before surgery, Mark and his father gave Sean a priesthood blessing in the hospital. After that, Sean seemed to be a different baby. His responses were quicker, his smile brighter, and he seemed extra happy. We felt we were given the gift of seeing him, for a few brief moments, without his disability.

The following day, we waited anxiously for hours, having been told things were not going well. Finally the surgeon entered the private waiting room, exhausted. One of Sean's valves was deformed and could not be replaced, he said. Sean's heart would not start up again. The surgeon would do what he could.

I pleaded with Heavenly Father, *Please let us keep Sean.* How ironic it was—I had feared having a baby with a mental disability, and now I was begging for the chance to raise him. A lifetime with him would have been a priceless gift. Yet in that short period after the doctor left, I realized I must yield my will to Heavenly Father's. The moment the surgeon returned, I knew Sean had been released from this earth.

## LETTING GO

This time, however, I felt we were expected to advance in our capacity. We were not led in the same way we had been with Zachary. No overwhelming power of the Comforter swept through Mark and me as it had that morning in Virginia. This time we felt a quiet calm and knew what to do. The Lord let us take those steps ourselves, but once again we felt our Savior's love at the funeral. Once again we felt joy as we stood together to testify of our faith in the Lord and of our love for Sean. Once again we discovered the strength that comes from friends and family.

On occasion people have said, "Just think of it as a blessing that those two children don't have to suffer in this life." Yet we had been looking forward to life with each one of them and to seeing our other children grow up alongside brothers with disabilities.

The love we felt for these two sons was undiminished by their challenges.

I am grateful for the short time I had with each of them and for the lessons they taught me. I have learned that life is precious, no matter what form it comes in. I saw the beauty in Zachary's and Sean's lives, as well as the beauty that accompanied their deaths. The resulting

opportunities for sharing the gospel have strengthened our own testimonies and made us closer as a family.

It has been more than 12 years since Sean passed away. We have come to realize that happiness is not just the result of things going right; in spite of the burdens we carry, it is up to us to choose to be happy. We learned that we progress in overcoming the challenges inherent in our earthly experience. We learned that our family progressed much more quickly after we decided that we were going to grow from life's difficulties. And we have also learned that Heavenly Father helps us in ways we cannot imagine. □

*Elizabeth Stoddard is a member of the Canyon Ward, Spanish Fork Utah East Stake.*

*Gospel topics: adversity, disabilities, family, sanctity of life*

## LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

*Most Ensign articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:*

- 1. In what ways can we receive Heavenly Father's help when we experience trials?*
- 2. Why do challenges seem to make some people bitter and others stronger?*
- 3. In what ways does an eternal perspective influence our view of death?*

# Looking for William Moulton

*Our search for our English ancestor led us to records in an old vault—and much more.*



BY MICHELE M. MESERVY

**O**ur family had been searching for records on our ancestor William Moulton since before I was born. Everyone calculated that William had been born about 1780 in or near Irchester, England, and my grandfather and great-grandfather had spent considerable energy trying to find his name in the parish records. They had also hired an English research specialist who had searched 132 English parishes but to no avail.

Shortly after my grandfather died, my dad, Heber Moulton, dreamed that Grandpa came to him and cautioned him not to “drop the ball” on family history research. My dad and his cousins didn’t drop the ball. As a small child, I remember overhearing them talk about how to find William Moulton, and their talks always ended with an expression of trust in the Lord. They spent years organizing the family, holding reunions, creating the Moulton Research Foundation, raising money for research, and doing temple work. About 7,000 descendants of William Moulton had been identified, and all of them could trace themselves back to William. *But who was William?*

*Identifying William, the father of Thomas Moulton (inset), had been the goal of research for decades.*

PAINTING BY AL ROUNDS

## AN UNSELFISH WORK



*"What a glorious privilege to do the work for those who have gone on before us. This aspect of temple work is an unselfish work. Yet whenever we do temple work for other people, there is a blessing that comes back to us."*

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), "A Temple-Motivated People," *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 5.

## A CALL TO FAST TOGETHER

Despite these diligent efforts, there were no new clues on William. The family decided to have a day of fasting and prayer. Family leaders mailed letters to all descendants for whom they had addresses. The letter said in part: "We've made good progress on some of the other lines, but not on the Moulton line. It seems right for us now to come to the family and ask for a day of special fasting and prayer. Open your fast with a special prayer to our Heavenly Father that He will bless those researchers who are working with us that we may come to know the parents of William Moulton."

Many of William's descendants did as requested. Days and months passed.

Nothing new on William. Finally, Dad decided to put an ad in the Irchester area newspaper requesting contact with any Moulton. He received an answer from the newspaper editor asking for more information. Hopeful, Dad sent the requested information, but he did not receive a reply. More time passed. Disappointment.

## A TRIP TO ENGLAND

Shortly after that, my husband, Rayman, and I had the occasion to go to England. Before we left, I felt strongly we should look for William Moulton. My patriarchal blessing promised that if I pursued family history, my ancestors would petition our Heavenly Father for a blessing for me. I felt also that the fasting and prayers by William's now-distant offspring would help prepare the way for us.

As we prepared for our trip, I tried to live close to the Lord so He could guide me. I read and studied. I got a list of several parish graveyards to check. And one day, I went to the temple with the express purpose of gaining insight on how we could find William Moulton. I left the temple feeling we would find William or the clues we needed to find his parents. There was no doubt in my mind.

We arrived in Irchester, England, one afternoon and promptly asked for directions to the historic parish church. Walking down picturesque streets and passing homes with thatched roofs was like a step back in time. We arrived at the parish church, but, to my dismay, we saw that many gravestones had been used to create a fence around the perimeter of the parish lawn. Windblown and worn, these stones were undecipherable. As if to reflect my emotions,

clouds gathered and gentle rain descended.

We quickened our pace until we reached the rear of the old church and proceeded to examine the remaining gravestones. Thorns, weeds, and bushes stood in the way. We knew we must work quickly because there were no motels or guest houses in the village. We had to finish our search before the final bus departed.

I took out a clean cloth and used it to scrub the gravestones. Soon a man, curious about our activity, came over and expressed dismay about the disarray of the parish church grounds. Then, in a compensating tone, he asked if we would like to view the parish records. My heart began to pound. He said he would go with us to fetch Mr. Bailey, who, if he wasn't too busy, would likely let us see the records.

We gathered our belongings and headed up the street to Mr. Bailey's home.

Upon our arrival, Mr. Bailey stopped painting his house and immediately went with us to the parish church. He said the vicar wasn't around, but that if we were careful, he would show us the records himself.

Curious and reverent, we entered the ancient church. I was immediately awed by its splendid beauty. Here our ancestors had worshiped. My eyes gazed from massive ceilings to marble floors, from wooden pews to stained-glass windows. They finally rested on a very old vault near a window.

We followed Mr. Bailey to the vault, where precious vital records had been preserved. Mr. Bailey unlocked the vault and began taking out book after book. The search began as we gently but excitedly examined parched pages. Soon we found records of William's children, marriage records, and so forth. This energized us, and while Mr. Bailey and Rayman searched some books, I searched others.

Then we found it—the clue! Rayman found an entry for Wm. Moulton, age 60, 1812. Age 60! Researchers had assumed that William had died as a young man. After recalculating his birth, I went back in the birth records but did not find him listed. However, I did find a record listing him as a bachelor, eliminating the possibility of an earlier marriage and family. We took photographs of the evidence.

## MEETING ENGLISH COUSINS

The story doesn't end here. The man who had fetched Mr. Bailey returned and informed us that he

had just talked to people at his work. One of them had worked with a Charlie Moulton years ago—the only Moulton they knew of in Irchester. Our friend did not know Charlie’s address, but knew he lived in a narrow house opposite Bradshaw Street. With full hearts, we expressed our gratitude and carefully placed the books back in the rustic vault. The clouds parted and the rain lifted. The sun warmed us.

Our next challenge was to find cousin Charlie. We had just left the parish property when up strode a Scotsman. He was very interested in what we were doing and inquired where we were going. Upon our answering the Scotsman remarked, “Well, I am going that way myself. I don’t know Mr. Moulton, but come along. Let’s go.”

Trying to keep pace with the Scotsman, Rayman and I trotted briskly up the hill. After a while, he paused, commenting, “Now, a narrow house opposite Bradshaw Street. It must be that one there. Yes. That one right there.” We thanked him, and he walked away.

I knocked on the door, but no one answered. We went next door and knocked. An 80-year-old man opened the door. It was Charlie Moulton, who was there caring for his sick elderly neighbor. I explained that I was from America and had come to find some information about the Moulton family. Since the sick neighbor was resting, Charlie took us over to his house. He said he had been expecting us to come and that he had set out for us some information and addresses. He chatted about

*A typical street in Irchester, England. Charlie Moulton, a distant cousin, chatted about his relatives and shared information and addresses.*



his relatives and of their leaving England to make new homes in America.

How did Charlie Moulton know we were coming? Why had he decided to gather information and set it out?

Why was he expecting us? Trying to piece these unusual occurrences together made

little sense until Charlie mentioned something about a recent newspaper article. A newspaper article? My mind raced back to Dad’s efforts in submitting an ad to the newspaper months ago and the disappointment when nothing had come from it. Could it be that the information had been published? Indeed! That was the first evidence we found that it had been published, but what timing—only the week before we arrived.

Charlie gave us addresses of his relatives and told us of a cousin Ada living on Thrift Street. We had no sooner started in search of Thrift Street when we met the same Scotsman, who immediately directed us to Thrift Street. When we entered the home, the woman who had answered the door called into the other room, “Your friends from America are here.” Then she said to us, “We’ve just been talking about you.” I tried to say something like “I don’t think she was expecting us,” but by now it was evident the way had been prepared and the Lord’s hand had been involved. After sharing Moulton family history with us, Ada’s friends insisted we spend the night with them.

## RETURNING HOME

Researchers took the information to which we had been led and later identified William, his parents, brothers, and sisters. The family had lived a few miles from Irchester. Their temple work has now been done, as well as another generation located, along with their children.

After arriving home, we sent copies of the Book of Mormon as “thanks” to those who helped us.

We have heard from some of them, thanking us, finding much interest in the book. Seeds have been planted and influence spread. The story, I think, will never end. □

*Michele M. Meseroy is a member of the Sharon Fifth Ward, Orem Utah Sharon Stake.*

*Gospel topics: family history, fasting, unity*



*Searching the records from the parish vault.*

# “Call the Sabbath a ...

*Ideas that help us keep the spirit of the Sabbath.*

“**T**he sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath” (Mark 2:27).

These words of the Savior remind us that the Sabbath day was meant to be a blessing rather than a burden to those who observe it. Its blessings flow not only from attending Church meetings but also from engaging in activities appropriate to the spirit of this sacred day. Because circumstances differ among Church members, the kinds of Sunday activities each of us may choose in order to gain spiritual strength and draw closer to the Lord will vary. Following are some experiences shared by *Ensign* readers on this important topic.



**T**he Sunday that my friends and I gathered to read the scriptures, express gratitude, and talk about the things of our souls helped me understand the spirit of Sabbath peace and worship.

## OBSERVING THE SPIRIT OF THE SABBATH

My parents grew up as nonbelievers in Russia, so when we were baptized in 1992, we were converts not only to the Church but also to Christianity. We understood that joining the Church would change our beliefs as well as our attitudes and our very lives. One source of that change was the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy, which was totally new to us.

At the time of my family’s conversion, some Church members in Moscow were from other countries and were living in the city as employees of their governments or of private businesses. These members were our walking manuals; it was by being around them that I learned what Church members should do to please the Lord. My best friend then was a Latter-day Saint named David Matthews, who was a teenager like me. Whenever I visited his family on Sundays, I could tell it was a special day. I remember how quiet their house was on that day. They had many children in their family, and during the week all kinds of sounds could usually be heard in their home. But not on Sunday. The children behaved differently, and not because they had to but because they wanted to. I felt the same

spirit in David’s home that I felt when priesthood holders administered the sacrament in church.

A few years later I finally learned where this spirit of Sabbath peace and worship came from. During a trip to St. Petersburg that I took with some other Church members, I was discussing with one of my friends, Rebekah Nielson, our plans for the coming day, which was Sunday. Of course our plan would include going to the local branch to participate in Sunday meetings. “Then,” Rebekah said, “we will come back to the place we are staying and will have a quiet and peaceful Sabbath.” She said this with reverence and devotion, and I could feel her love for our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ. Sabbath observance was a commandment that was written on the tables of her heart (see 2 Cor. 3:3).

And so it happened. After returning from the branch meetings, the group of us sat together and talked about the things of our souls. We read the scriptures together; we talked about things we were grateful for. We spent the day with “thanksgiving, with cheerful hearts and countenances” (D&C 59:15). I felt the same spirit I had felt in the home of the Matthews family. It was the Spirit of the Lord, which spoke peace to our minds (see D&C 6:23).

I shall never forget that special Sabbath day when I learned that it is not only the letter of the law but also the spirit that makes the day holy. It changed my whole view of that day of the week. Now I knew that the only true source of rest was Jesus Christ Himself. Only in Him could I find enough strength for the week ahead. Since then the Sabbath has become a day of my Lord, or, in other words, a day when my joy can be full (see D&C 59:13).—**Ivan Makarov, Severo-Zamoskvoretsky Branch, Moscow Russia North District**



## CLEARING A SPACE

As a desire grew in me to keep the Sabbath day holy, the first thing I realized was that before I could fill my Sundays with spiritually nourishing activities, I had to free them of all the things that drained me. Over time I have learned to let Sunday be the focus of my week and to spend time during the other days preparing for it. I have my own personal checklist of things that are to be done before I go to bed Saturday night: have the house clean, have my lesson prepared, make sure there is gas in the car, plan dinner and prepare as much of it as possible ahead of time, wash and lay out church clothes, and pack my church bag.

At first it was a struggle to plan ahead and make sure all of these things were done and still go to bed at a decent hour on Saturday night. Now I think of such preparation as a gift that

I give myself each week. It is such a joy to wake up on Sunday morning and be able to focus calmly on the things of the Spirit. The renewal I feel after a peaceful Sunday more than makes up for the extra effort I spend during the week preparing for it.

In addition to the temporal preparations I do on Saturday, I have begun using it as a day to prepare spiritually. I begin praying on Saturday for the blessings I want to receive on the Sabbath day: an increased understanding of the Atonement, a greater appreciation for the sacrament, the ability to learn by the Spirit from the talks and lessons, and strength and inspiration for the coming week.—**Sharli Turner, Littlerock Ward, Palmdale California Stake**

Delight<sup>+</sup>

(Isa. 58:13)



**O**ne Sunday a neighbor boy came by to talk to our son about a money-making venture. “We’re closed on Sunday,” our son told him.

### “CLOSED ON SUNDAY”

The example of a neighbor not of my faith—whose dedication to keeping the Sabbath day holy was an important part of her own faith—prompted our family to reexamine our approach to Sunday. After a family discussion we decided to do some things that would set this day apart from other days of the week.

1. We selected special music for use on Sunday—classical music, Mormon Tabernacle Choir recordings, and recordings of the hymns and Primary songs. When we put this music on as we were getting ready for church, we found that we went to our meetings with a calmer, more receptive spirit.

2. We began opting for simpler Sunday meals that could be cooked slowly in the oven while we were at church. In addition, we tried to prepare desserts a day ahead.

3. We refrained from changing into “grubbies” after meetings. Instead, we changed into comfortable clothing that would be appropriate to greet company in. We began to notice that everyone modified their behavior to conform to this better dress.

4. For our Sunday activities we played quiet games together; had parent-child interviews; wrote letters to missionaries and to grandparents; read scriptures, Church magazines, and other good books; listened to inspirational talk tapes; and occasionally took a nature walk together. Sometimes we had our family home evening lesson on Sunday, leaving Monday free for another family activity.

The effects on our family were readily apparent one Sunday when a neighbor boy came by to talk to our 10-year-old son about some items our son sold as a money-making venture. Our son replied simply to his friend, “We’re closed on Sunday.”—**Betty Jan Murphy, Pine Ward, Payson Arizona Stake**

### MAKING SUNDAY A FAMILY DAY

Some think of the Sabbath as a day of prohibitions—a day you can’t do this or that. But it’s actually a day of privileges, a day of celebration, a day to reflect, a day to restore our souls. When we observe the Sabbath, we don’t miss out on things; we learn to appreciate life and our families.

Over the years, for us the Sabbath day was first and foremost a family day. Among other things, we invented several games we could play on Sunday that helped both young and old focus on the gospel.

For one such game we divided into two teams and then took turns trying to guess gospel-related words and phrases that we had previously written on slips of paper. For another activity we wrote different gospel topics on pieces of paper and put them in a bowl. Each person would draw a paper and then have about 10 minutes to prepare a talk on that subject. My husband and I helped the younger children prepare theirs, and when everyone was ready we would take turns giving our talks. We discovered that we have very imaginative and creative children, and this activity turned out to be a great source of fun.

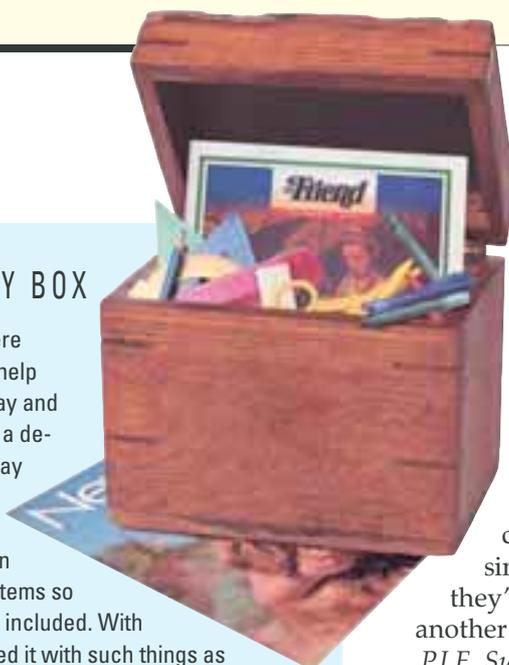
When our middle daughter, Julie, was 17 and had many nonmember friends, I asked her if it was hard to say no to them when they asked her to go to a movie, go swimming, or participate in a similar activity on Sunday. She said: “No. In fact, by Sunday I am grateful to get away from the outside world. I really need that time to just be with my own family. It’s great to be able to say no, I can’t go with you because I spend Sundays with my family.”—**Sharlene T. Barber, Farragut Ward, Knoxville Tennessee Stake**

## SUNDAY ACTIVITY BOX

When our children were young we found a way to help them enjoy the Sabbath day and at the same time maintain a degree of reverence: a Sunday activity box. We used this special box for years, and I was always on the lookout for additional items so we could rotate what was included. With our children's help, we filled it with such things as copies of the *Friend* magazine; pencils; crayons; coloring books with gospel themes; Church-related books, tapes, and games; puppets; a flannel-board kit; and even some small toys the little ones could play with quietly.

One idea we came up with was to cut out small pictures from past *Friend* magazines, organize the pictures by topic (such as the sacrament, the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon), and put them in small photo albums that could be looked at on Sundays. We also put in the box a small flip chart that we used to write some scriptures we wanted to memorize. When the Primary children's sacrament meeting presentation was coming up, the words to the songs went on the pages of the flip chart so we could learn and sing the songs together.

In this way our family was able to observe the Sabbath and create priceless memories of good times together.—**Connie Jameson, Anderson Ward, Greenville South Carolina Stake**



decorative ribbons to give to someone of their choice: one ribbon is for the chosen recipient to keep; the other is for that person to pass on to someone of his or her choice. Our children write notes expressing their feelings of gratitude to the person they've chosen and encouraging them to honor another person with the second ribbon.

*P.I.E. Sunday.* This is a Sunday on which Dad has a "priesthood interview for everyone," and Mom makes a favorite pie to be eaten afterwards. This is a great day for self-evaluation, setting goals, and working on journals and scrapbooks.

*Missionary Sunday.* Activities for this day might include inviting the full-time missionaries over for dinner and having them talk about missionary work, writing to and making things for family and ward missionaries currently serving in the field, holding a meeting in our home with missionaries and neighbors, attending missionary open houses and firesides with our friends who aren't members, and so forth.

*Service Sunday.* On this day we focus on serving others, doing such things as home teaching or visiting teaching or making appointments for future visits, presenting an appropriate and short musical program at a local nursing home, inviting others over for family home evening, taking a loaf of homemade bread to someone who needs a boost, or collecting some food and supplies from our pantry for a charity drive.

## HAVING A THEME

To make Sundays more meaningful, our family sometimes has a theme for the day. The theme becomes the basis for our choices of the day's activities. Here are some examples:

*Blue Ribbon Sunday.* On this day we remember and acknowledge gratefully people who have made a positive difference in our lives. The children each create two

**F**ocusing on service as a theme is one way our family observes the Sabbath, which might include visiting someone who needs a boost.



PHOTO BY STEVE BUNDERSON

## IS IT WORTHY OF THE SABBATH?



*“People frequently wonder where to draw the line: what is worthy and what is unworthy to do upon the Sabbath. But if one loves the Lord with all his heart, might, mind, and strength; if one can put away selfishness and curb desire; if one can measure each Sabbath activity by the yardstick of worshipfulness; if one is honest with his Lord and with himself; if one offers a ‘broken heart and a contrite spirit,’ it is quite unlikely that there will be Sabbath breaking in that person’s life.”*

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985),  
*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*  
(1982), 219.

This thematic approach to Sabbath observance gives our family something to look forward to and allows us to regularly focus our attention on important areas of the gospel.—**Shalynn Sedgwick, Bridgeport Branch, New Haven Connecticut Stake**

### BOOK OF MORMON TIME

Several years ago my wife and I shared a common concern that our children were reading the Book of Mormon but were not necessarily gaining personal testimonies of it. After praying and counseling together, we decided to establish in our home what we called “Book of Mormon time.” Each family member committed to personally read from the Book of Mormon daily whenever possible. My wife offered to read with the younger children so they could participate. Each of us agreed to select something from the week’s reading to share with the family on Sunday.

Book of Mormon time has become a highlight of our Sabbath day experience. We gather and take turns sharing the chosen passages. Each family member follows along in his or her personal copy of the Book of Mormon as the reader reads the selection aloud and tells the family why it was chosen.

Book of Mormon time has had such a profound impact on our family that our three sons who have served missions faithfully continued to share their verses each week in their letters home. I, in turn, recorded the references and thoughts from each family member to send to the missionaries in my weekly letters to them. We all love the Book of Mormon, and we know that the Holy Ghost teaches us eternal principles through it.—**Dale S. Bills, Spanish Fork 12th Ward, Spanish Fork Utah South Stake**

### IDEAS FOR FAST SUNDAY

In the last few years we have tried to do a lot better at using fast Sunday as a means for enhancing

our family’s Sabbath day worship. Here is what has worked for us:

We begin our fast together on Saturday afternoon following a family meal. While we eat we discuss with the children common purposes for the upcoming fast and ask each child if there is a specific purpose he or she would like to add. After the dishes are done we review the purposes for which we are fasting and then kneel together in prayer, asking for divine help to make the fast day meaningful for us and our children. Throughout the fast day we remind each other of our family’s purposes in fasting.

**F**ast Sunday can be a time for special family experiences, such as receiving father’s blessings and sharing testimonies.

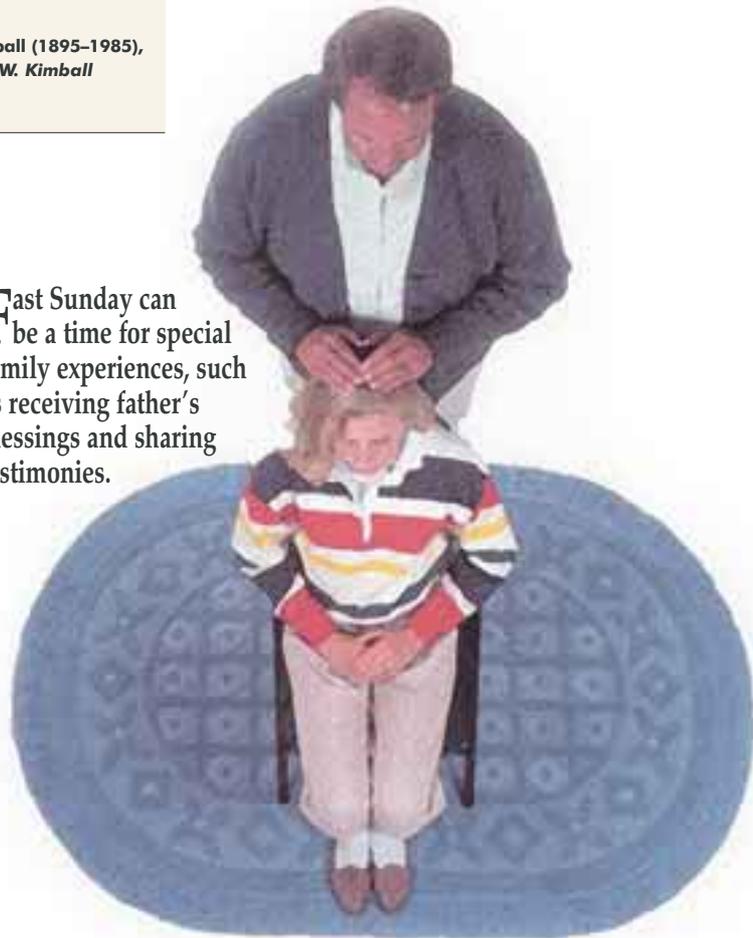




PHOTO BY STEVE BUNDERSON

**S**haring with each other verses from the Book of Mormon has become a highlight of our Sabbath-day experience each week.

Besides participating in such Sunday activities as listening to uplifting music, reading Church magazines and good books, writing letters to family and friends, and attending firesides, I found it helped me to get up a little earlier than my roommates and use the quiet morning hours to study my scriptures, write in my journal, review my patriarchal blessing, or read from the Relief Society lesson manual.

Sunday also provided the opportunity for “roommate bonding.” Since our schedules during the week were so different and so busy, my roommates and I rarely had time when we could all be together. On Sunday, however, we set a time to gather in the kitchen and pooled resources to make a respectable dinner. We talked and laughed as we prepared and then enjoyed the meal together. Afterward everyone helped clean up and do the

Immediately after returning home from our Church meetings, and before closing our fast, we have a family gathering in which we bear our testimonies and express our feelings. As our young children have observed their parents and older siblings bear testimony, we have seen their testimony of the gospel grow and their ability to bear pure testimony increase. We have had many joyous experiences that have bound us together spiritually during this family testimony meeting.

One of our family traditions is to have each child receive a father’s blessing on the fast Sunday following that child’s birthday. We do this following the family testimony meeting because it seems that then our spirits are more receptive to the Spirit.

We close the fast by kneeling together and praying sincerely about the purposes of the fast. We have knelt in a circle and asked each family member to offer a prayer. Afterward we ask our children what they have felt prompted to do as a result of their fasting.—**Jeff and Juanita Hill, Canyon View Third Ward, Orem Utah Canyon View Stake**

## LIVING AWAY FROM HOME

Sunday had always been a family-oriented day for me. When I left home to attend college, however, that changed. Sunday was no longer a family day, but it remained a special day. In many ways I think I learned to appreciate and honor the Sabbath day more while I was on my own, for it was no longer Mom and Dad’s responsibility to make Sunday unique but mine.

One of the major things I did to set the Sabbath day apart from the rest of the week was to set aside my homework. When I did so, I found that Sunday brought needed physical and mental renewal and a welcome freedom from stress and worry. It allowed me to concentrate more fully on the Savior and the gospel.

## A GREAT DAY FOR FAMILY HISTORY

The Sabbath is a great day to get people involved in various forms of family history. For example, sometime during Sunday each member of our family goes to his or her room for about an hour of personal time. During this time the children might write in their journals. Sometimes I will go in their rooms and give them ideas of what to write about. This has been our children’s first experience in recording their personal histories. Even the children who can’t write still record their experiences by dictating their stories to their older siblings. Setting aside a specific time for journal writing on Sunday makes it more likely that family members will actually do it.

Viewing home video recordings is an especially exciting way to involve everyone in family history. Children are usually thrilled to see themselves on the TV screen. This activity strengthens family relationships as we relive some of our happiest moments together.—**Shannon Stahura, Orchard First Ward, Orem Utah East Stake**

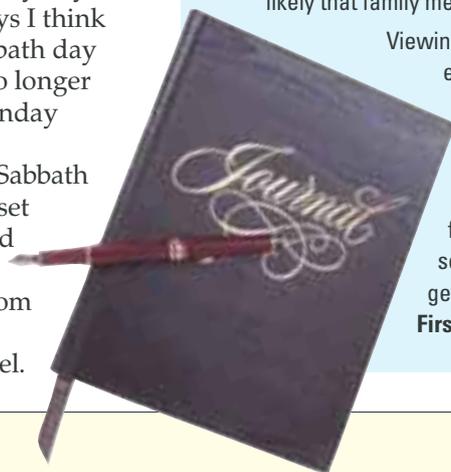
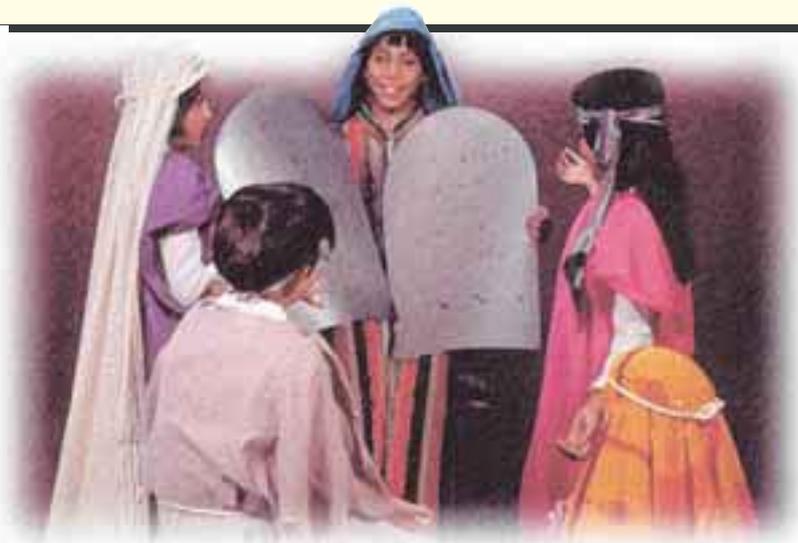


PHOTO BY JED A. CLARK



**R**eenacting a favorite scripture story is only one of many possible Sabbath activities for children.

Going away to college gave me the opportunity to learn to value the day the Lord set apart for us to rest from our labors and cares. I came to realize that no matter where you are or what your situation, you can make Sunday

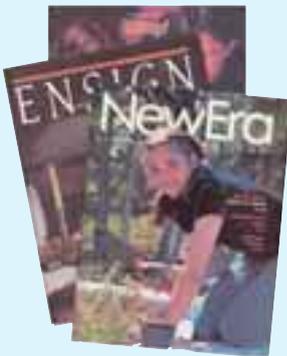
a special day.—**Lesley Taylor, Italy Padova Mission** □

*Gospel topics: Sabbath observance, parenthood, Ten Commandments*

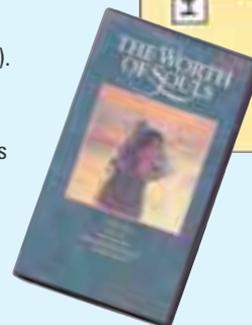
dishes. Although we were all away from our families, our Sunday dinners together helped us feel not so far from home.

### “WHAT CAN WE DO ON SUNDAY, MOM?”

Children sometimes ask what they can do on the Sabbath, and with a little thought we can provide a variety of answers. As you and your family consider the ideas below and generate some of your own, you will likely come to feel that there are many more things to do than not do on the Sabbath day.



- Read the scriptures, Church magazines, and good stories and books.
- Research a gospel question or word, perhaps using the Topical Guide in the Bible.
- Dramatize and videotape scripture stories.
- Hold a spelling bee using scripture words or other gospel terms.
- Create crossword puzzles that feature items from the Book of Mormon, names of Primary songs, or facts about your family.
- Listen to or read talks given by General Authorities.
- Listen to appropriate music.
- Learn a Church hymn in sign language or another language.
- Record your testimony, special events, and memories in a journal.
- Watch a Church video (usually available for checkout from the ward library).
- Work on family history, books of remembrance, or scrapbooks.
- For dinnertime, create a table centerpiece that features an ancestor and his or her time period, then read about that ancestor during or after the meal.
- Using a gospel or family theme, write a poem or song or make a simple poster together.
- Create a newsletter to send to family or friends.
- Make a card, draw a picture, or write a thank-you note, letter, poem, or story for a specific person (such as a shut-in, newcomer, bishop, teacher, relative, missionary, or someone in military service).
- Attend a fireside or hold an extended-family fireside that features a newly returned missionary, a newly married couple, an elderly family member, or someone else you’d like to hear from.—**Carol Hansen, Huntington Beach Sixth Ward, Huntington Beach California North Stake**



## Increasing Our Faith in Jesus Christ

**W**hile serving as a member of the Seventy, Elder Stephen D. Nadauld related the following experience: "A stake president and I took the opportunity to visit a young woman. . . . Her husband had been killed in a car accident; she was living in a modest apartment with her two young children. I suppose we expected to find her upset and discouraged. . . . On the contrary, she was cheerful; she was calm; she was very gracious. She thanked us for coming and then said, . . . 'Brethren, I want you to know I believe in the plan of redemption. I am grateful to my Savior for the promise of a glorious resurrection with my husband. I am grateful for His redeeming sacrifice.' Then, putting her arms around her two children, she said, 'Our faith in Jesus Christ will see us through'" ("Faith and Good Works," *Ensign*, May 1992, 82–83).

This sister's humble declaration demonstrates how faith in the Savior can replace fear and doubt with hope and courage.

**A** young widow testified of Jesus Christ and the Resurrection and then said, after hugging her children, "Our faith in Jesus Christ will see us through."

### FAITH IS NECESSARY

In today's uncertain world, we may not know what tomorrow will bring, but faith in Jesus Christ can give us spiritual peace, even in the face of calamity and heart-break. As President Ezra Taft Benson explained while serving as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Faith in [Jesus Christ] means believing that even though we do not understand all things, He does" ("Jesus Christ: Our Savior and Redeemer," *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 8).

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle of the gospel (see A of F 1:4). By exercising faith we receive strength to face difficulties and overcome temptations. As we put our faith in Him, repent, and are obedient, He will forgive our sins and help us return to Him. "If ye will have faith in me," He has promised, "ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me" (Moro. 7:33).

### NURTURING OUR FAITH

We study and practice to develop the skills we need in any earthly endeavor. So also do we develop faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word

of God," the Apostle Paul explains (Rom. 10:17). Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles observes that "simply hearing the words of doctrine can plant the seed of faith in the heart. And even a tiny seed of faith in Jesus Christ invites the Spirit" ("The Power of Teaching Doctrine," *Ensign*, May 1999, 74).

Once the seed of faith has been planted in our hearts, it must be nourished. Our faith in Jesus Christ is nourished as we study, search, and ponder the scriptures; fast and pray; participate in sacred ordinances; keep our covenants; serve the Lord and others; sustain our Church leaders; and obey the commandments.

As our faith in Jesus Christ grows stronger, we learn to walk with faith in Him. "To have faith in Christ," says Sister Sheri L. Dew, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, "is to believe in Him, follow Him, and rely on Him. And it is to be blessed with the peace of conscience and mind that the Apostle Paul spoke of when he said, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me'" (Philip. 4:13) ("Our Only Chance," *Ensign*, May 1999, 67). □  
*Gospel topics: faith in Jesus Christ, peace*



# WELCOME TO www.lds.org

Let's say you need a copy of President Gordon B. Hinckley's Sunday morning conference talk at the last general conference—in Italian. Where are you going to find *that*?

Or let's say you'd like to search for your great-grand-

father in the Church's family history records, but the nearest Family History Center is miles away. Will you have to wait until another day?

Or let's say you need a copy of that brochure *To the Home Teachers of the Church* to use in your quorum presidency meeting. How can you get one?

The answers are as close as your computer. You can find these things, and much more, by logging on to **www.lds.org**, the Church's official Internet site. You'll be joining some 30,000 other people who use it each day. They find everything from information about basic teachings of the Church to a conference talk in the May 1982 *Ensign* or this month's Primary Sharing Time resources from the *Friend*. They find the latest news from Church headquarters as well as what media in areas around the world are saying about Latter-day Saints.

Visitors who log on to the Church's Web site are



**Feast on the word.** If you click **Gospel Library** on the home page menu (right), you will get this screen that allows you to search the scriptures, Church magazines, First Presidency and visiting teaching messages and Primary Sharing Time materials (upper right corner), past conference talks, and other gospel related resources.

greeted by a screen that offers direct links to the scriptures online, the Church magazines database, feature articles, news items, and recently broadcast programs. There is also a menu that lists:

- Basic Beliefs—a link to information about the gospel.
- The Scriptures—the four standard works.
- Gospel Library—a database that includes Church magazines since 1971 and also Church curriculum materials.
- Family Resources—materials to help in teaching and strengthening families.
- Family History—a link to the Church's Family History Library site with all its resources and helps.
- News Media Resources—news, including releases and photos provided for journalists.
- Order Church Materials—a link for ordering Church curriculum materials on line.

Printed materials necessary for gospel study and basic administration of Church programs are still available to members who need them, regardless of whether they have a computer. But if you know your way around the World Wide Web or are willing to learn, a library of materials is now as close as your keyboard.



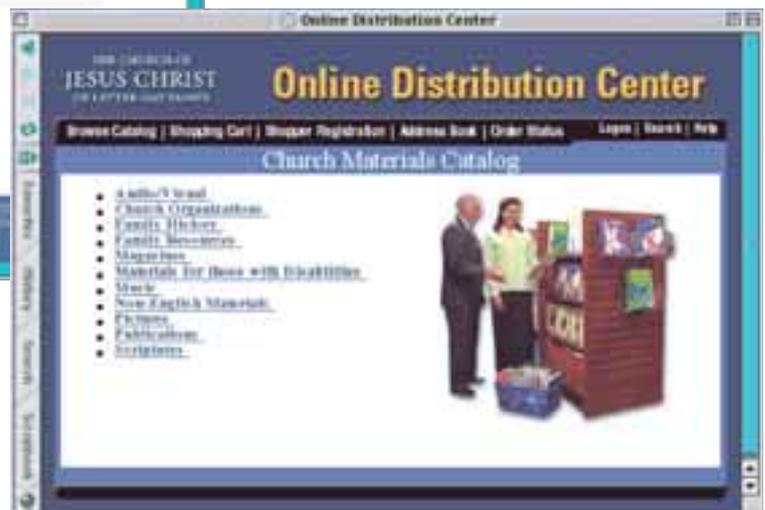
Help a friend. By clicking Basic Beliefs on the home page menu (above), you can find information to help explain the basics of the gospel to a friend or loved one. Those interested in learning more can request a free copy of the Book of Mormon or a Church video.





Strengthen your family. *Ideas for activities (left) are only part of what is available online. Other resources include helps for strengthening marriages, strengthening parent-child relationships, and strengthening individuals.*

Find an ancestor. *Clicking on the home page's Family History link leads to the FamilySearch™ page that invites you to search for a particular ancestor (below) or use other family history resources.*



Order Church materials. *Through the Online Distribution Center (right), you can order materials for ward or branch use or for your family and have them shipped to you.*

# HEALING THE SPIRITUAL WOUNDS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

*A correct understanding of the Atonement and of gospel principles can replenish the faith and hope of those who have been sexually abused.*

BY ANN F. PRITT

**T**oday Julia\* is secure in her faith in Heavenly Father and in her belief that He cares about her and answers her prayers. But she did not always feel this way. Having suffered from sexual abuse as a child, she struggled to reconcile her experiences with what she had been taught about Heavenly Father. She could not understand why He, being all-powerful, didn't stop the abuse. She wondered why it was so difficult for her to feel Heavenly Father's love and to recognize His answers to her prayers.

She found no easy answers to these questions. However, Julia began working through her painful past with the help of her bishop and a professional counselor. As she studied and prayed for a better understanding of gospel principles and acted upon the knowledge she received, she was able to feel

Heavenly Father's love for her and find the peace and healing that had eluded her.

This pattern is common among those who have been abused. They often grow in confidence as they gain a better understanding of the Atonement, agency, and the Lord's mercy and as they develop a closer relationship to Heavenly Father. Many have found comfort through prayer, forgiveness, keeping sacred covenants, and service.

## POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF ABUSE

Many who have been abused have experiences like Julia's and find it difficult to feel the influence of the Holy Ghost as well as to feel answers to prayer. Although they may interpret this as a lack of Heavenly Father's love, there is another explanation. A basic defense children use against sexual abuse is to shut down their feelings, helping them to get through the trauma. Yet this response also cuts them off from positive feelings. As a result, those who have been sexually abused may have difficulty feeling the love of Heavenly Father, His servants, and other nurturing people in their lives.

Sexual abuse can lead to deep spiritual wounding in other ways. People who have experienced such abuse may develop erroneous ideas about Heavenly Father, doctrines of the gospel, and their own worth. No wonder President Gordon B. Hinckley has condemned the sexual abuse of children in strong terms:

"The terrible, vicious practice of sexual abuse . . . is beyond understanding. It is an affront to the decency that ought to exist in every man and woman. It is a violation of that which is sacred and divine. It is destructive in the lives of children. It is reprehensible and worthy of the most severe condemnation. . . .

*\*All names have been changed.*



**P**riesthood blessings can help individuals find peace and healing.



Those who have been abused often grow in confidence as they gain a better understanding of the Atonement, agency, and the Lord's mercy.

## THE CHURCH CONDEMNS ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR



*"We condemn most strongly abusive behavior in any form. . . . When there is recognition of equality between the husband and wife, when there is acknowledgment that each child born into the world is a child of God, then there will follow a greater sense of responsibility to nurture, to help, to love with an enduring love those for whom we are responsible."*

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "What Are People Asking about Us?" *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 72.

"Shame on any man or woman who would sexually abuse a child. In doing so, the abuser not only does the most serious kind of injury. He or she also stands condemned before the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

### HEALING PRINCIPLES

Those who seek spiritual healing after sexual abuse can become whole again and feel peace in their lives as they come to correctly understand and apply principles of the gospel:

*Finding hope in the Atonement.* No spiritual healing can take place without the healing balm of the Atonement. Not only can its sanctifying power assuage our hurts, but it can transform our very souls. Where there was once anguish, there can be peace; where there was despair, hope; where there was sorrow, joy. We read in the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—

"That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness;

"That through him all might be saved" (D&C 76:40–42).

Through the Atonement the Savior took "upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people . . . that his bowels [would] be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he [would] know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities" (Alma 7:11–12). He understands and knows how to heal us if we will turn our hearts to Him and allow Him to carry our burdens.

Carrie felt alone and misunderstood, isolated in the shame, humiliation, and pain of the abuse she had experienced. In one illuminating moment, she read that the agony of the Atonement caused the Savior, "even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit" (D&C 19:18). Carrie realized that she was not alone in her suffering and that the Lord had suffered far more. And she realized that He had been sent "to heal the broken-hearted" (Luke 4:18) and that through His Atonement He could heal her wounded soul.

One author wrote: "There is a miraculous rebirth, a spiritual phoenix that emerges with our acceptance

of the Savior and His Atonement. His spirit heals; it refines; it comforts; it breathes new life into hopeless hearts. It has the power to transform all that is ugly and vicious and worthless in life into something of supreme and glorious splendor. He has the power to convert the ashes of mortality to the beauties of eternity."<sup>2</sup>

*Improving our relationship with Heavenly Father.* The scriptures reveal the true nature of God as our loving Father and underscore our importance to Him as His children. We learn that "God is love" (1 Jn. 4:8) and that "the worth of souls is great in the sight of God" (D&C 18:10). This includes *all* souls, each and every one.

Dale had been sexually abused by a neighbor and physically abused by his father, and as a result, he believed most authority figures were

stern, demanding, and punitive. He couldn't imagine a loving Heavenly Father who valued him despite what had occurred.

As two Latter-day Saint missionaries taught him the gospel, he was surprised that these former football players were gentle and understanding. They knew of his challenges and still accepted him fully. With their encouragement, Dale engaged in pleading prayer and came to feel Heavenly Father's acceptance and understanding, which brought deep peace to his spirit.

To those who have been abused, Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said:

"Recognize that you are a beloved child of your Heavenly Father. He loves you perfectly and can help you as no earthly parent, spouse, or devoted friend can. His Son gave his life so that by faith in him and obedience to his teachings you can be made whole. He is the consummate healer."<sup>3</sup>

*Learning about agency.* Moral agency is an integral part of our mortal experience—indeed, it is a central feature of our Heavenly Father's plan. Our purpose in mortality is to exercise our agency in ways that lead us back to Christ. Yet some individuals use their agency to make evil choices, and others suffer deeply as a result.

In most cases Heavenly Father does not prevent individuals from accomplishing evil; to do so would compromise the agency of all of His children. He knows that moral agency is a precious gift that must be protected, for the proper and best use of it will result in the greatest gift of all: exaltation and eternal life.

An experience of Alma and Amulek illustrates the importance of agency. Amulek was horrified when faithful women and children were thrown into the fire, and he implored Alma to exercise the power of God to save them. Alma replied:

“The Spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand; for behold the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory; and he doth suffer . . . that the people may do this thing unto them, according to the hardness of their hearts, that the judgments which he shall exercise upon them in his wrath may be just; and the blood of the innocent shall stand as a witness against them, yea, and cry mightily against them at the last day” (Alma 14:11).

The gospel teaches that when bad things happen to people, this does not make *them* bad. No one can destroy another’s possibilities for eternity. We are judged only for our own desires, intentions, and actions, not for the actions of others against us.

*Understanding repentance.* When people are sexually abused, they often develop incorrect ideas about themselves and their relationships with others, and they may treat people inappropriately. The good news of the gospel is that through faith, diligent effort, and the help of the Lord, they can change their behavior and repent of their own harmful actions.

Such was Rachel’s experience. As a result of the sexual abuse she had suffered as a child, she felt consumed by shame and anger. She turned her anger on others, lashing out at those who were closest to her. However, as she learned to separate the hurtful things that had been done to her from the wrong things she had done in her life, she was able to give her perpetrators responsibility for their acts while accepting responsibility for her own wrongs. There was no need for her to repent for bad things done to her—they were not under her control, were not her choice, and had even started when she was too young to understand what was happening. But she could repent of her own acts of agency that had hurt others. In doing so, she began to experience a sense of peace and forgiveness that she had not dreamed possible.

*Remembering the Lord’s mercy.* Sexual abuse often results in feelings of shame and in an excessive fear of judgment by others. This, in turn, may lead to an obsession with perfection. Yet the Lord knows we experience different levels of difficulty in this life, and He

asks that we do the best we can with what we have. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “God thus takes into merciful account not only our desires and our performance, but also the degrees of difficulty which our varied circumstances impose upon us.”<sup>4</sup>

The Lord wants each of us to return to live with Him again and will help us do so. He proclaimed, “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). Only He is capable of pronouncing final judgment on anyone, for He alone fully knows our challenges, our choices, and the desires of our hearts.

In the premortal existence we knew that making mistakes would be part of the mortal experience. Aileen Clyde, a former counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, wrote: “We live by choices and can work toward becoming perfect by choosing well. This perfecting does not have flawless living as its aim; rather, perfecting is the exercise of agency amidst difficult choices that yields growth and progress.”<sup>5</sup>

Naomi’s life was spinning out of control. Like many others who have been sexually abused, she believed that even her smallest mistakes were proof of her lack of worth. Paralyzed by her fear, she did not dare cook, clean, balance her checkbook, or teach her children. But she realized that not doing these things was also a mistake. Caught in this double bind, she felt almost unable to function.

When she finally realized that mistakes were an inevitable part of the plan of salvation and that they could not diminish the Savior’s love for her, she found the courage to face the things she had so feared. She learned that the Lord Jesus Christ felt the weight of our infirmities as well as our sins through



**T**hrough prayer, individuals can feel Heavenly Father’s acceptance and understanding.

the Atonement (see Alma 7:11–12), and she was able to lean on Him for strength and guidance.

*Seeking peace through prayer.* Whether or not we feel Heavenly Father’s influence in our lives at any given time, we can still pray to Him and receive His help. He loves us and wants us to communicate with Him. President Ezra Taft Benson said of prayer: “Prayer will bring solace and comfort. It has healed sickness [and] comforted those distressed. . . . Truly there is power in prayer.”<sup>6</sup>

Naomi echoed the feelings of many when she said, “Prayer has always been an outlet for my emotions. I could tell Heavenly Father my hurts and needs that I couldn’t tell anyone else. When the time was right for me to begin the healing process, Heavenly Father led my life in significant ways to bring me into contact with the people who could help me the most.”

*Understand righteous use of the priesthood.* If abuse came at the hands of a priesthood holder, there may be confusion about what the priesthood is and how the Lord intends it to be exercised.

The scriptures clearly teach that priesthood power is lost when it is used unrighteously:

“The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and . . . the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

“That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn,

## HOW TO HELP THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ABUSED

■ *Be a friend.* Many people who have been abused feel distant from others. Don’t feel that you have to solve their problems; just be willing to listen empathetically.

■ *Be trustworthy and dependable.* Many abusers held a position of trust and then violated that trust. It can help survivors immeasurably when they are able to consistently count on others.

■ *Facilitate their activity in the Church.* Be sensitive to the possibility that survivors of abuse may feel unworthy and uncomfortable in Church settings. Let them know that the scriptures which describe God’s love for His children apply to them. Provide opportunities for them to serve others, and show them that righteous living can bring joy and happiness.

■ *Withhold judgment.* Unfortunately, some people who have been abused may turn to questionable activities to dull their pain. Without condoning their behavior, realize that as they work through their pain they will be better able to keep their bodies and minds free of things that are harmful to them.

■ *Don’t expect them to quickly “forgive and forget” or “just get over it.”* Until the issues have been worked through, the effects of the abuse may still be an ongoing and painful part of the person’s everyday life. Genuine forgiveness may take time, and it does not happen by merely denying one’s feelings and avoiding the issues.

■ *Be sensitive to the needs and feelings of the abused when teaching, speaking in sacrament meeting, or giving comments*

*in Church classes.* For example, when talking about families, be aware that not every person has a family he or she wants to be with. Holidays may be especially difficult for those who have been abused, particularly Mother’s Day and Father’s Day.

When talking about enduring trials, recognize that the Lord never intended anyone to experience abuse so that they could learn lessons from it. Abuse is always wrong and is condemned in the strongest terms by the Lord’s prophets and by the Savior.

■ *Help survivors of abuse understand that they are not bad because bad things were done to them.* Appropriately place responsibility on the perpetrator. Don’t imply that being abused was the victim’s fault. People do not have to repent of evil that was done to them; in fact, they cannot do so.

It can be painful for abused children to hear about divine intervention for the righteous. Although Daniel was saved from the lions, does that occur all the time for all of us? Clarify the truth so that any who have been abused and not rescued will understand that they are still worthy individuals.

■ *Teach the importance of respecting others’ bodies.* Emphasize that all have the right to keep their bodies private, regardless of another person’s status or authority.

■ *Never give up in bearing testimony of the power of the Savior.* Lovingly testify that we can access His marvelous power and love again and again.

Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man. . . .

“No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned” (D&C 121:36–37, 41).

As a child, Jeanette had been physically and emotionally abused by her father and sexually abused by her brother, both of whom were outwardly active in the Church. As a result, it was difficult for her to trust priesthood leaders and even attend church. Her attitudes about the priesthood began to change, however, as truly honorable priesthood holders showed caring and concern, doing much to help her heal.

One such person was her bishop, who listened nonjudgmentally and with deep concern as Jeanette haltingly told of her past experiences. He met with her regularly to offer support and inspired counsel. He shared scriptures and explained gospel principles, and he gave Jeanette priesthood blessings that helped her understand she was loved by Heavenly Father and was important to Him. The bishop also extended to her a Church calling that enabled her to build needed friendships in the ward. His example helped Jeanette understand the essential role of priesthood holders in the healing process.

*Extending forgiveness.* Forgiveness is a crucial part of healing. It may not be a single event; rather, it is often a difficult process requiring much soul-searching, earnest prayer, and often the guidance of a bishop or stake president.

Forgiveness does not imply that an individual has “forgotten” all memories of the abuse, that he or she condones the behavior or absolves the perpetrator of responsibility, or that he or she must become reconciled with the perpetrator, particularly if there is the possibility of further abuse. What forgiveness does imply is that an individual has relinquished feelings of hate or bitterness toward another, has placed the matter in the Lord’s hands, and has enabled Him to operate more fully in his or her life. In forgiving, an individual frees himself from the perpetrator and is therefore better able to progress.

Raised in a home where his mother did not protect him from his father’s abuse, Stephen struggled with bitter feelings toward both of his parents. Realizing he would never fully understand his parents’ behavior, he eventually was able to leave the matter in the Lord’s hands and let go of his rancor. In time, the



The scriptures help us draw closer to the Savior and thus find peace.

self-condemnation he had felt because of his own shortcomings was replaced by self-acceptance and peace.

## THE GOSPEL: A MESSAGE OF HOPE

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of hope and of eternal possibilities. Through it, even in our darkest hours, we can receive spiritual strength and a heightened understanding of the Savior’s love for us.

Brandon said, “I have realized that the Lord kept me going when all else failed and no one was there. I have a stronger love for Him now, and that love is incomprehensible. He is my best friend, and one day I know all the other questions will be sorted out and answered.”

Let us put our faith in Jesus Christ and trust that He will heal. He wants each of us to come to Him, and He will help us do so, for He has said:

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

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28–30). □

*Ann F. Pritt, a therapist, is a member of the Kaysville Ninth Ward, Kaysville Utah East Stake.*

*Gospel topics: abuse, repentance, Atonement, prayer, priesthood, forgiveness*

### NOTES

1. “Save the Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 54.
2. Tad R. Callister, *The Infinite Atonement* (2000), 206–7.
3. “Healing the Tragic Scars of Abuse,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 32.
4. “According to the Desire of [Our] Hearts,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 21.
5. “We Must Cherish One Another,” in *Hearts Knit Together*, ed. Susette Fletcher Green, Dawn Hall Anderson, and Dlora Hall Dalton (1996), 176.
6. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (1988), 422.

## David Led the Way

By Sergio Arroyo

**A**s missionaries in the Chile Antofagasta Mission, my companion and I were teaching a young lady and her brother, who was eight years old.

For the second discussion, her brother invited David Marín, a friend his age, to attend. David was a small boy, and he did not yet know how to read. But he looked at us attentively, listened enthusiastically, and asked for a copy of the Book of Mormon. My companion and I glanced at each other. Since David didn't read, we

silently decided against giving him a Book of Mormon.

Later that same day, we happened to meet David again in the street. He said, "Elders, when are you going to give me my Book of Mormon?" Still thinking he would have no use for the book, we let the opportunity go by a second time. After all, he was

**W**hen we met David again, he said, "Elders, when are you going to give me my Book of Mormon?"



just an eight-year-old boy.

When we taught the third discussion to the young lady and her brother, little David was there again. After the discussion, he asked us again, this time a little annoyed, "And where is my Book of Mormon?"

I looked at him and felt something special. Smiling, I tried to explain why we hadn't given him the book, saying, "You cannot read it, David." His face fell. But at that moment, the thought came into my mind, *His parents can read it*. So I continued, "But your parents can. Let's go to your house and talk with them."

David smiled, jumped for joy, and took us to his home. There we met his father, Don Astemio; his mother, María; his sisters, Macarena and Valeska, both age 11; and his one-year-old brother.

The Maríns were a humble and loving family. The father had once been a fine athlete, but he had been afflicted with Parkinson's disease for about seven years; for the past two years, he had been confined to bed.

After listening to the discussions, David, Macarena, and Valeska were baptized but not Don Astemio because of his illness. His wife, María, was not baptized either.

We continued to visit the family, and one day Don Astemio said, "Tomorrow I am going to be baptized," adding, "and afterward I will be healed." When I heard these words, I felt great joy, but I was also afraid. I knew his faith had grown, but what would happen if he could not walk after his baptism? I tried to explain to him that baptism would heal him spiritually—but a physical healing was in the hands of our Father in Heaven. In spite of everything my companion and I said, he remained certain that after his baptism

he was going to walk.

On the night before his baptism, I knelt and prayed with all my heart, asking Heavenly Father for His will to be done. After my prayer, I felt a special peace.

The next day, Don Astemio stood with great difficulty. He could not take a single step without help. When we got to the meetinghouse, we had to go up a long staircase to the second floor. We were all moved by the great effort and pain it took Don Astemio to go up those stairs, step by step. When we finally walked into the building, the members there looked at us with surprise.

When Don Astemio came out of the water, I saw he had great faith, but his body was the same. He could not stand by himself.

We left him at his home after the service. He did not want to go to bed but remained sitting calmly in an armchair.

The next day, we dropped by to visit him. As we approached his home, we could see little David playing outside with a ball—and there was Don Astemio, running and playing with his son! I could hardly believe what I was seeing. My eyes filled with tears, and in my heart I thanked Heavenly Father for His great love. Two weeks later, María was baptized.

While Don Astemio's healing was unusual, I am grateful that the Lord blessed this family in a remarkable way. Left to our own intelligence, my companion and I would have continued to ignore little David, but the Lord knew something we didn't. He knew that this child would be the means by which an entire family would come into His Church and be helped in ways we could not have foreseen. □

*Sergio Arroyo is a member of the Los Presidentes Ward, Santiago Chile Ñuñoa Stake.*

*Gospel topics: faith, miracles, conversion, missionary work, children*

## Cold Cereal or Hot Soup?

By Chris Wright

I could tell it was going to be a difficult day. After a restless night I woke up to the full assault of influenza—headache, nausea, fever, and chills. The day before, my husband had kissed me good-bye before boarding a plane for a business trip to the East Coast of the United States.

*How am I going to take care of myself, let alone four children?* I wondered. I called Ben, my seven-year-old, to my room and charged him with the task of watching his younger brother and sisters.

That afternoon my visiting teacher called on the phone. She perceived I wasn't feeling well and offered to help, but I declined the offer. "We're fine," I insisted.

Ben did the best job a seven-year-old could do. The children ate cold cereal for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. But the diaper rash, dirty dishes, and disarray told me I should have allowed my visiting teacher to help. Why had I not accepted her offer?

Months later I attended a Relief Society lesson that focused on occasions recorded in the scriptures when the Savior received service. For example:

- While journeying through Samaria on His way to Galilee, Jesus stopped at a well to rest. When a Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water, He entreated her: "Give me to drink." An opportunity for Him to teach the woman followed, and ultimately many Samaritans came to believe in Christ because of this woman's testimony (see John 4:7–42).

- While dining in the house of Simon the Pharisee, Jesus

graciously allowed a woman to wipe His feet with her hair and to anoint them with ointment. Jesus perceived the Pharisee's disapproval, yet He not only permitted but praised the woman's humble act of service. "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven," He declared; "for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little" (see Luke 7:36-50).

• Jesus asked two of His disciples to bring Him a donkey to ride into Jerusalem, and when He entered the city the crowd cast their garments and palm leaves in His path. "Hosanna to the Son of David," the people shouted. He accepted their worshipful jubilation fit for a king (see Matt. 21:1-9).

The Savior's invitation "Follow me" was apparently more inclusive than I had previously understood. These scriptural examples suggested that we should follow His example not only in *giving* compassionate service but also in *receiving* service graciously.

Another year the flu season found me again. Five children now graced our home, and the East Coast still beckoned my husband for weeklong business trips. However, this time when a dear friend called and asked how I was, I told her I felt terrible.

She responded, "I'll be right over." She took my little ones for the day, providing for their care and allowing me the rest I so desperately needed. When she brought the children home that night she also brought homemade chicken noodle soup. How my children feasted on that soup! The next morning she called again, and because I was still feeling ill I allowed her to take my children the second day. Another friend took care of them the third day until I got back on my feet. These dear sisters were as ministering angels to me and my children.

How grateful I am for the Savior's admonition to follow Him in all things! □

*Chris Wright is a member of the Liberty Third Ward, Huntsville Utah Stake.*

*Gospel topics: service, Jesus Christ, love*

## *I Asked God to Touch My Mother's Heart*

*By Adilson José Horta*

One day in October 1992 as I was coming home from my school in Cape Verde, I noticed two young men dressed in white shirts and ties. I decided to speak to them. As we talked, I could feel great love emanating from them. They told me their names and the name of their church: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Then they invited me to become acquainted

**A**fter praying, I went to talk with my mother, who before had said she would not permit me to be baptized.

with their families by showing me photographs. They also expressed an interest in coming to my house and meeting my family.

When they came to my house, my mother was courteous, but she was not interested in their message. Still, I liked the discussions immensely; each one seemed better than the last. The testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the news of the restored gospel were the most marvelous messages I had ever heard. They truly changed my heart. Eventually, the missionaries mentioned baptism. My mother was not pleased with my desire to join the Church and would not permit me to be baptized.

I continued to investigate the Church and to attend every Church meeting and activity. But I was also obedient to my mother. Many times the elders explained to her the importance of my being baptized, but she would not change her mind.

One day in sacrament meeting, a sister missionary spoke on the subject of prayer. Her words touched my heart deeply, and



later at home I meditated on what she had said. Prompted by the Holy Ghost, I decided to pray. I went up on the porch of our house and prayed out loud, opening my heart to my Father in Heaven. I fervently told Him of my desire to join His Church and asked Him to touch my mother's heart so she would let me be baptized.

It was a prayer I will never forget. I went into the house and opened the subject of baptism with my mother. Without a single objection, she responded, "If this is your desire, you may be baptized." My heart was filled with

happiness and praise to God. I knew without a doubt He had heard and answered my prayer.

I was baptized on 13 February 1993 on the island of São Tiago, Cape Verde. A little over a year later, after many more fervent prayers, I baptized two members of my family, my Aunt Edna and my Aunt Ana. In June 1994 I received one of the greatest blessings of my life when I baptized my mother.

Our Father in Heaven is loving and kind. And He always answers our prayers in the way He knows is best for us. □

*Adilson José Horta is a member of the Praia First Branch, Praia Cape Verde District.*

*Gospel topics: prayer, missionary work, conversion*

## Why Was It So Hard to Learn Italian?

By Wendy McLeod Smith

**A**nd I bless you with the gift of tongues," my stake president said as he set me apart for my mission in Rome. The words still echoed through my memory. Then why could I not learn Italian?

My struggles began in what was then called the Language Training Mission. While other missionaries were progressing in learning Italian, I lagged behind. French had been easy for me to learn in high school. Even without the gift of tongues, it shouldn't be so hard for me to learn Italian. I could think of no good reason for my difficulty.

When we arrived in Italy, my struggles continued. I decided I

must make myself more worthy to receive the promised gift of tongues, so I tried to be letter-perfect in keeping every commandment and every mission rule. This pursuit of perfection turned me into a kind of robot, and robots do not make good missionaries! It was driving my poor companion crazy. There was nothing left for me to do but to accept my inability to speak Italian well and to be myself, not a robot.

To my amazement and relief, I discovered that being myself was the most effective way to do missionary work. In spite of my broken Italian, heart communicated to heart, spirit communicated to spirit, and our beloved Savior could be served.

Gradually my speaking and understanding of Italian improved, but it remained a challenge—with one exception: the subject of food storage. As far as I could tell, a food storage program had not been introduced; or at least the members in Rome were not familiar with it. This was a topic especially close to my heart, since I had studied about it at Brigham Young University. Therefore, I worked with several members of the branch in Rome to produce a booklet and present a fireside on food storage. I was asked to be one of the speakers. When the fireside was over, one of the members exclaimed with surprise, "You spoke with *perfect Italian!*"

It wasn't until years later that I discovered information that explained why learning Italian had been so difficult for me. Shortly before my mission I had been in an accident and suffered a near-fatal brain injury. The information noted that, among other side effects, this kind of brain injury could make learning another language nearly impossible.



Impossible—unless, of course, one is blessed with the gift of tongues. I am grateful to a loving Heavenly Father who, as we seek His help, blesses us in ways beyond our realization. □

*Wendy McLeod Smith is a member of the Elmwood Lane Ward, Westminster Colorado Stake.*

*Gospel topics: missionary work, priesthood blessings*

## The Memory of My Father's Faith

By Ricardo Enohi

**B**oth my parents were born in Japan. They came to Brazil before I was born, and I grew up speaking Portuguese. When I was seven, they divorced.

Like many young people, I had problems as I entered adolescence. I frequently argued with my father, with whom I was living. I also acquired some bad habits. At age 15, I started drinking alcohol and smoking. At 17, I started using drugs. I was looking for fun, and I thought nothing I did made any difference. But despite having friends, I felt alone. I wondered what the purpose of life was.

It was my father who showed me the way out of my loneliness. He was a Christian with a strong belief in God. One day he became paralyzed by an illness, and doctors told him he would never walk again. But he forced himself to start walking one week later by using a wall for support. And he did resume walking. He told me, "I believe in God, and I know that with His help I can overcome my problems." His words impressed me, but it would be some time before I realized how strongly rooted in my heart they had become.

Shortly after my father began walking again, I received a letter from my mother. She had returned to Japan and was working in a factory in the city of Fukui. "Come to Japan," she wrote. "I can get you a job." I became excited about living in the land of my ancestors and decided to go.

When I arrived in 1992, I was intrigued by the technology and other conveniences available in the country. But I also faced many new challenges. I had a job, and although I looked Japanese, I couldn't speak Japanese. I struggled to learn the language. My coworkers were not always patient with me.

Despite my Christian background, I had never attended

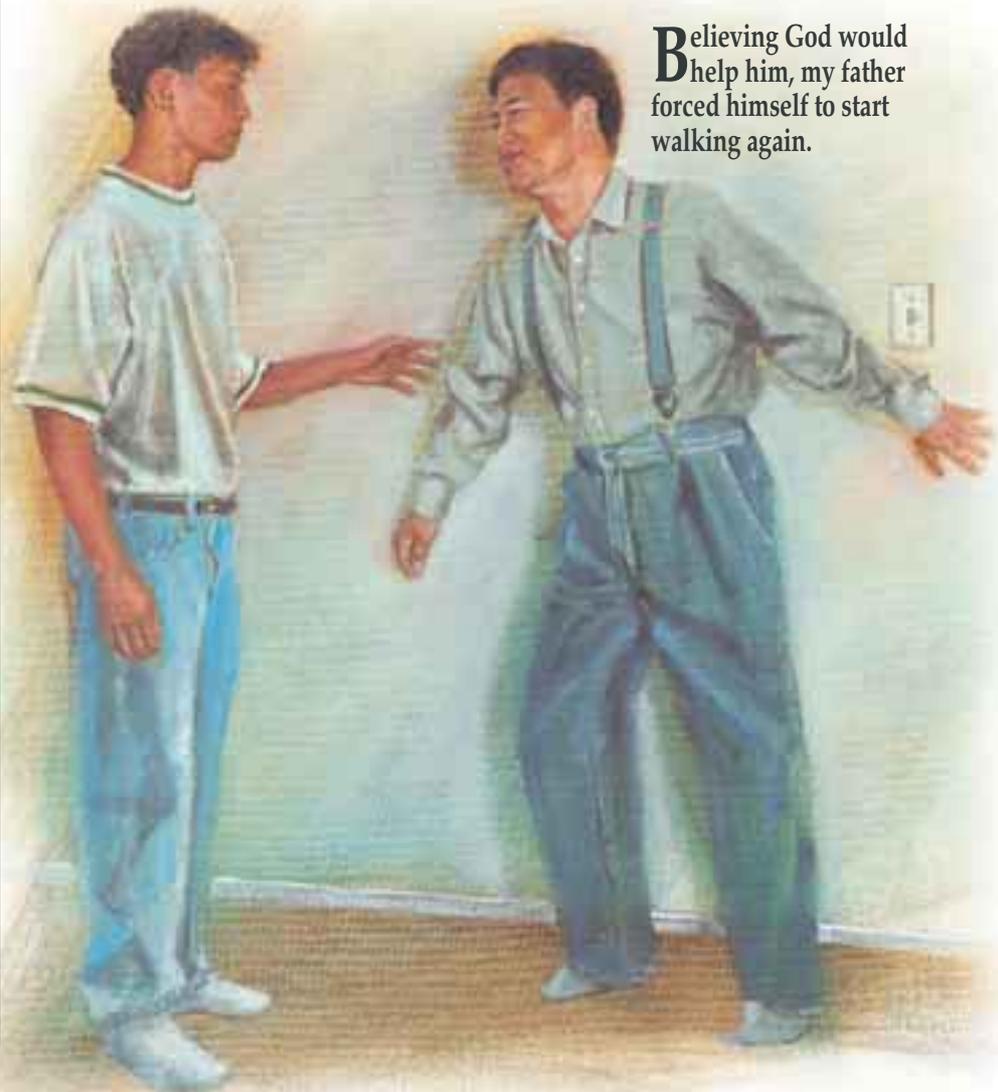
church or read the Bible regularly. But now, as I faced these obstacles, I remembered how my father's faith had given him strength. My thoughts turned increasingly to God.

One day I was walking in downtown Fukui when two young men walked up to me. One of them didn't look Japanese, but he spoke Japanese when he introduced himself.

I said, "I'm sorry, but I don't speak Japanese. Do you speak English?"

He answered, "Of course! I'm American!"

The young man started speaking English, which I had learned in school. He told me he and his



**B**elieving God would help him, my father forced himself to start walking again.

companion were missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They talked briefly about Jesus Christ and invited me to church. I hesitated but finally agreed to go.

The first meeting I attended was a fast and testimony meeting. I came late, and as I walked into the chapel, a young woman was crying and talking about how the gospel helped her with her problems. After listening to her and to some of the other members, I realized that all of them had problems. They weren't perfect, and they knew it. But I could also see they had something strong inside them. Their faith in God was helping them. *With that kind of faith, I thought, maybe I could overcome my problems too.*

I continued attending church, and I pondered often what I learned there. I also read the Book of Mormon. One day I accepted the invitation to ask God if what I was learning was true. As I prayed, something strong touched my heart, and I thought, *This is the right way. I already believe in God. It's time to follow Him.*

As I continued to pray and attend meetings, the Spirit continued to guide me. Finally I told the elders I wanted to hear the discussions. I wanted to follow God and return to His presence someday. I was baptized on 21 June 1993.

As a member of the Church, I found new strength in meeting the challenges of life in Japan. And after preparing earnestly, I was called on a mission. I was called to serve in São Paulo, Brazil. I was very excited about sharing the gospel in my homeland.

When I look back at my old life, I realize how blind I was. We can go through life the right way or the wrong way. At first I chose the wrong way. I knew

God existed, but I wasn't ready to follow Him. Then the gospel touched my life. Now I know that following Heavenly Father and our Savior is the only way to true happiness. □

*Ricardo Enohi is a member of the Guarujá Ward, Guarujá Brazil Stake.*

*Gospel topics: faith in Jesus Christ, conversion, repentance*

## The Shadow of Death Was on Her Face

By Victoria Ekong

**S**ome months after our baptism, my husband and I were faced with unexpected adversity. Some of our most distressing trials concerned our children. It seemed as though no week passed without one of them being admitted to the hospital.

These trials went on for almost two years. Our income as civil servants went toward medical bills. The financial strain was so great that my husband and I had to sell many of our belongings just to obtain food. I even had to sell some of my clothing. We lost everything we had worked for. But none of these trials shook our faith. We remained active in our branch in Nigeria and true to our covenants. Even when we did not have money for transport, we walked to church on Sunday mornings.

One December evening in 1997 our daughter, Pricilia, fell ill. She had a high fever, and blood started coming out of her mouth. My husband was not home, and I was confused and afraid. I could see the shadow of death on her face.

As I prayed for help, the Spirit

prompted me to take her to our branch president, who lived far from us. Somehow I managed to get her down from our third-floor flat, carrying her on my back, and out to the main road. It was too late to catch a bus, so I desperately tried to get a taxi.

The first taxi driver who came by refused to take us, saying, "I don't want to carry a dead person in my car." However, a second taxi driver responded to my pleas and helped us, even though I had no money. When we arrived, the branch president carried Pricilia up to his flat, laid her on his couch, placed his hands on her head, and gave her a blessing. I heard him sigh and pause, then tell Pricilia that it was not yet time for her to go home and that she must fight to live.

Immediately after the blessing, Pricilia opened her eyes and groaned. We took her to the hospital, where we learned she had cerebral malaria, a deadly disease. For the next eight days she remained unconscious in the hospital, and the doctors did not believe she would survive.

The day Pricilia was discharged—healthy and normal—the doctor told me that few people survived who were as sick as she had been. Those who lived were left disabled. "Pricilia is a lucky girl," he said. But to me luck had nothing to do with her recovery. My conviction was that she had been saved by priesthood power.

Today, Pricilia is a healthy and happy girl. She is everything a parent could want a daughter to be. Furthermore, the sicknesses that so beset our family have passed. We have outlasted these trials and have truly been blessed. □

*Victoria Ekong is a member of the Victoria Island Ward, Lagos Nigeria Stake.*

*Gospel topics: priesthood blessings, faith*

## One Family's Approach to TV-itis

**Y**ears ago, our family consisted of seven addicts.

We did not have a Word of Wisdom problem—we had TV-itis. The TV disrupted mealtime and bedtime, spurred silly arguments among our children, and stifled the communication in our family. But it was not until I heard a Relief Society lesson on the influence of television in the home that I finally pulled the plug and put the TV in storage. Here are some steps we used to combat the “withdrawal symptoms” from TV and a discussion

of the positive changes this decision has made in our lives.

First, we made it a family project to find worthwhile activities. One activity that resulted from our brainstorming was to gather a series of interesting, inspiring books. In the evening we popped popcorn, huddled around the fire, and chose someone to read to everyone.

Second, I began the enjoyable task of teaching my daughters cooking, embroidering, machine sewing, knitting, and crocheting. I taught one daughter first-year typing. Music lessons and gymnastics became part of our lives. My husband taught whittling, drawing, and painting to our children. Daily practicing was no problem because the noise and enticement

of TV were nonexistent.

After eliminating the TV we quickly began to see the value of our decision. A real change occurred in a boy who had been living with us that year and was struggling in school. When I attended parent-teacher conference at midyear, the counselor showed me how the boy's grades had dramatically improved beginning in November. “What happened in your family in the month of November?” he asked. “We got rid of the TV,” I replied.

While permanently eliminating television may not be the answer for every family, our lives are definitely happier and richer without it. And the children are developing talents and abilities that will bless their



ILLUSTRATED BY JOE FLORES

lives and their children's lives in the years to come.—**Geraldine Bartholomew, Winder First Ward, Salt Lake Winder West Stake**

## Our New Easter Tradition

**A** year after my husband and I were married, my mother-in-law died of cancer. We were expecting our first child and were saddened that our children would not know their Grandma Judy in this life. This experience prompted us, years ago, to create a new Easter family tradition to help our children understand the blessings of the Resurrection.

On the Saturday before Easter Sunday, we take our children to visit and decorate the graves of our loved ones. Visiting these graves gives us a wonderful opportunity to discuss the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the true meaning of Easter. We teach them that because Jesus Christ was resurrected, their great-grandparents, Grandma Judy, and all who have died will one day be resurrected. We have even gathered around a loved one's grave and sung the hymn "He Is Risen!" For families who do not have relatives buried nearby, this tradition could work at any cemetery.

We hope that by continuing this tradition, our children will develop a true understanding of Easter and a testimony of the Resurrection of our Savior. As we have made new family traditions that focus on Jesus Christ, we have felt the Holy Ghost illuminate our lives and bring us closer to our loved ones.—**Pamela Richardson, Midvale Fifth Ward, Midvale Utah Stake**



# "I'm Thankful for You"



**M**ark Twain said a good compliment could carry him for two months. Likewise, family members can lift one another with a list of compliments in the "I'm Thankful for You" activity. Here's how you play:

1. Sit in a circle. Give each family member a sheet of paper and have them write across the top: *I am thankful that \_\_\_\_\_*. Mom or Dad can help those who are unable to write.

2. Ask family members to write their names on the line and pass the sheet of paper to their left. Then everyone should finish the sentence by writing at the bottom of the paper one good quality about that family member. One could write, "I am thankful that Sarah helps me with my homework" or "is so thoughtful." Other compliments could be "I am thankful that Dad tickles me

when I am sad," "helps me," or "trusts me."

3. After all have written the quality they are thankful for, have them fold the paper up a line or two, covering the words just written, and pass it to the left.

4. Pass the sheet to the left until all have written what they are thankful for on each piece of paper. If the family is small, the papers can go around twice.

5. When you have finished rotating the papers, the person to the right of the family member named at the top of the sheet reads the list of compliments.

This activity is simple and inexpensive, but the words are priceless. Our family participates in this about once a year to remember how grateful we are for each other.—**Marlene Ellingson, Southern Estates Ward, Mesa Arizona Kimball Stake**

ILLUSTRATED BY BETH M. WHITTAKER

## How to S-t-r-e-t-c-h One Income

**I** am a father, student, and part-time employee with a wife and six children. A friend of mine, feeling financially besieged after the birth of his first child, asked how we supported a large family on less than one income. After contemplating his question, we determined 10 ideas that have worked for us:

1. *Pay a full tithing.* The mere 10 percent of your income will be repaid to you in blessings, opportunities, and assistance.

2. *Pay fast offerings.*

3. *Meet your important obligations first.* Pay all your bills and known expenditures (including savings, if possible) as soon as the paycheck arrives, then live on whatever is left. This helps keep variable expenses such as groceries, gas, and entertainment under control.

4. *Save on groceries.* It is easy to let this expense get out of control. You can save a surprising amount by planning ahead. I suggest:

- avoiding prepared foods
- limiting the times you eat out
- taking advantage of sales

(stock up on sale items you could use in your year's supply)

- using coupons to save money

5. *Save a percentage of your income in a place that is difficult to access.* This makes it less tempting to raid your funds.

6. *Save for periodic expenses.* This



pertains to Christmas expenses, annual memberships, subscriptions, or anything that comes due quarterly, semiannually, or annually. If you know your auto insurance is due twice a year, put aside one-sixth of the semiannual payment every month.

7. *Avoid debt.* Try not to buy on installment. It may be necessary for a car, a home, or education, but it is not essential for furniture, a stereo system, TV, toys, and other wants. For unavoidable debt, borrow only what is absolutely necessary. If you use credit cards, pay off the balance in full every month if you can.

8. *Save on new-baby expenditures.* It is not necessary to buy a brand new crib, dresser, play pen, changing table, car seat, swing, or new clothing. These things are often found, in good condition, at yard sales and thrift shops.

9. *Have insurance.* Health, auto,

life, and renter's or homeowner's insurance are worthy investments. Getting a high deductible will save you substantially on premiums.

10. *Avoid impulse buying.* Wait at least a day before buying anything expensive. Keep a general-purpose, short-term savings account and use it for special sales or good deals. Knowing how long it has taken you to save will help temper rash impulses.

Our house is not likely to be featured in a magazine, but as students, living within our means is top priority. For today, it is much more important to live on less than we earn. A spacious home full of expensive things is a small comfort if you have crushing debt. We enjoy the peace that comes from following the counsel of the prophets and living within our means.—**Chad Petty, Chapel Hill Ward, Durham North Carolina Stake**

## Selections from Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley

### BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of the world, He who left His Father’s throne on high and condescended to come to earth to be born in a manger among a hated people in a vassal state and who became the Savior and Redeemer of the world, the great Healer, the great Teacher, the King and Leader, He who had been under His Father’s direction, the Creator of the earth.

“Believe in Him. Worship Him. Hold His name sacred. Never profane His Holy name. You boys and girls who are here, every one of you, do not profane the name of Deity, neither the Father nor the Son. Never let their names cross your lips in profanity. Stay above that and look to Them in love and respect and great kindness” (regional conference, Oahu, Hawaii, 22 Jan. 2000).

### PEACE, FRIENDSHIP, AND RESPECT

“I don’t like bigotry. I don’t like hate. They are so incompatible with the spirit of the gospel and the teachings of the Lord. I like peace. I like friendship. I like mutual respect. As we have these things, I don’t think that is going to slow down the growth of the Church—it may enhance it. I believe that we can do much, and I think we are doing much. I think we are making very substantial headway” (interview with *Deseret News*, 25 Feb. 2000).

### BE GOOD PARENTS

“[The Lord] expects us to be good parents, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives. He expects husbands to treat their wives with deference and respect. He expects wives to treat their husbands with kindness and helpfulness. He expects us to be good parents to our children.

“We have the great concept that every one of us is a child of God. We sing about it.

We teach it. We believe it, but sometimes we don’t act as if we did. . . . Let us look to our children with love. They are our Father’s children, and ours is a custodial relationship to

them for their lives” (meeting, Guam, 31 Jan. 2000).

### TITHING

“I have never heard anyone complain about the payment of tithing who paid his tithing because he relies on the Lord. It was the Lord who promised that He would open the windows of heaven and pour down blessings upon us if we would keep that commandment. It is my belief that He has the power to keep His promise, and it is my testimony that He does so” (meeting, Worcester, Massachusetts, 16 Oct. 1998).

### RESTORATION

“God spoke to His prophet in parting the curtains on this, the dispensation of the fulness of times. He introduced His Beloved Son, our Savior, our Redeemer, of whom you have sung tonight, and told him to listen to Him. That marked the beginning of this work. That beginning is different from the beginning of any other church on the earth. It is unique and different and we never need be ashamed of it. We have to be very, very grateful for it and acknowledge it and live up to its teachings” (meeting, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 4 Aug. 1998).

### PRAYER

“Believe in prayer. My brothers and sisters, I hope there isn’t a man or woman or child here who does not believe in the efficacy of prayer. I remind you that the Church came out of an initial prayer offered by the boy, Joseph Smith. . . . The Lord will hear the prayers of faithful people as certainly as He heard the prayers of the boy Joseph. I believe that with all my heart” (meeting, Burlington, Vermont, 14 Oct. 1998). □

PHOTO BY STEVE BUNDERSON





PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEWIS

*"You must continue to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong," President Monson urged young adults in the CES broadcast.*

## Prepare, Perform, and Serve, President Monson Teaches

**T**his is your time. What will you do with it? Are you where you want to be with your life?" asked President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, in a January Church Educational System satellite broadcast.

Speaking at Ricks College, President Monson told young people that in order to be successful in life, they must pass through three "gates": the gate of preparation, the gate of performance, and the gate of service.

### THE GATE OF PREPARATION

"The Lord has counseled, 'If ye are prepared ye shall not fear' (D&C 38:30). Fear is the enemy of growth and accomplishment," said President Monson. "It is necessary to prepare, to plan, so that we don't fritter away our lives. Without a goal,

there can be no real success."

President Monson emphasized the importance of education in preparing for one's life. "Study something you like and which will make it possible for you to support a family," he said. "While this counsel would apply almost certainly to young men, it also has relevance to young women. There are situations in life which we cannot predict which will require employable skills."

### THE GATE OF PERFORMANCE

President Monson urged young members always to have courage to do what is right. "You must continue to refuse to compromise. . . . You must maintain the courage to defy the consensus. You must continue to choose the harder right, instead of the easier wrong," he said.

In seeking to accomplish

one's goals, President Monson cautioned, some things are more important than ambition. "It is a good idea to be ambitious, to have goals, to want to be good at what you do, but it is a terrible mistake to let drive and ambition get in the way of treating people with kindness and decency," he said. "The point is not that they then will be nice to you. It is that you will feel better about yourself."

### THE GATE OF SERVICE

Quoting Dr. Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965), President Monson said, "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

As we live our daily lives, we find countless

opportunities to follow the example of Jesus Christ, said President Monson, and "when we are on the Lord's errand, we are entitled to the Lord's help."

He spoke of a painting of the Savior that hangs on the wall opposite his desk. "When confronted with a vexing problem or difficult decision, I always gaze at that picture of the Master and silently ask myself the question: 'What would He have me do?' No longer does doubt linger, nor does indecision prevail. The way to go is clear."

In conclusion, President Monson encouraged young people to likewise seek heavenly help in knowing how to serve others. "There is no feeling so gratifying nor knowledge so comforting as to know that our Father has answered the prayer of another through you." □

## BYU Women's Conference to Be Broadcast

**B**righam Young University's Women's Conference 2001 will be held on 3–4 May. Eight hours of selected talks will be broadcast over the Church satellite system to meetinghouses throughout the United States and Canada. The same broadcast can also be seen on the same days on KBYU-TV and BYUTV (channel 9403 on the Dish Network System, 500 series).

Church units in the Caribbean, Latin America,

Europe, and the British Isles can capture the broadcast on 19 May for later viewing. Local units have been authorized to record and retain a set of the broadcasts for Church use only, and members may record presentations for home use only.

For more information, call 1-801-378-7692 or access the conference Web site at [womensconference.byu.edu](http://womensconference.byu.edu). (Do not enter "www" at the beginning of the Web address.) □



*A mudslide jarred loose by the quake in El Salvador destroyed homes in one area and claimed several lives.*

## Church Aids Quake Victims in El Salvador, India

After two major earthquakes struck El Salvador in January and February and another hit India in January, the Church sent humanitarian aid to both countries, joining international efforts to help the hundreds of thousands of people who lost homes and loved ones.

In El Salvador, 15 Latter-day Saints died when a quake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale struck off the Pacific coast of this Central American nation. Just four weeks later, a second quake of 6.6 magnitude had its epicenter on land, near the nation's capital. Church humanitarian aid, including 500,000 pounds of food, 3,200 tents, 25,000 blankets, 34,000 hygiene kits, 7,000 school kits, 30,000 pounds of first-aid supplies, tools, and wheelbarrows, was sent to the area.

Hundreds of member homes were completely destroyed or badly damaged. Church assistance included providing building materials as members helped each other repair and rebuild homes.

Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Seventy, President of the Central America Area,

reported that all missionaries in the area were safe. Missionaries were allowed through police barricades shortly after both quakes to help dig in the rubble for survivors and to help recover items from partially buried homes.

Local priesthood leaders assisted members in



*Missionaries helped dig in the rubble for survivors and helped recover items from partially buried homes in El Salvador.*

need by using fast-offering funds and offering temporary shelter in chapels to those who lost their homes. None of the 86 Church-owned meeting-houses in the area sustained structural damage, but some rented meeting-houses were destroyed.

Coincidentally, the Church Humanitarian Department had sent an airplane loaded with goods to El Salvador three days before the first quake struck, and a filming crew from the Church Welfare Department was en route to Central America when the disaster occurred. The crew was soon on the scene to document how the Church responds to disaster situations.

"Someday I hope the members can look back on this trial as a time of personal growth and learning, a time to reach out to the needy in loving service, and a time when they learned how the Church welfare program works," said Elder Robbins.

In northwestern India, tens of thousands lost their lives or were injured when a 7.9-level quake struck.

No members, missionaries, or Church property were directly affected.

The Church sent more than 600,000 pounds of food, blankets, clothing, and medical supplies to the areas most impacted by the disaster. Emergency supplies were distributed by charitable organizations. The Church also sent funds to help with search and rescue operations, temporary shelters, and purchase of refugee camp supplies by local relief agencies. □



*In Washington, D.C., visitors learn about the Savior through a display that includes an interactive model of Jerusalem. Similar high-tech exhibits are also in Mexico City and will soon be in Salt Lake City.*

## Church Visitors' Centers Put Technology to Work

High technology is being used in innovative ways to help teach the gospel to members of the Church and those of other faiths. In newly remodeled visitors' centers in Washington, D.C., and Mexico City, Mexico, interactive technology helps guests learn about Church teachings of their choice. The same type of high-tech teaching will also be in use on Temple Square in Salt Lake City beginning this fall.

In the centers, visitors can touch a computer screen in an exhibit on prophets, for example, to choose one of several gospel topics they'd like to learn about. A video segment instantly appears of a member of the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve Apostles teaching about that topic.

In a plan of salvation

exhibit, guests can touch a computer screen to choose video segments of children explaining basic elements of the plan. By touching yet another screen, visitors can view footage of Church members, some of whom live near the visitors' center, who share how various aspects of the gospel, including the Book of Mormon, have blessed their lives.

The "Life of Christ" exhibit includes a large, three-dimensional replica of Jerusalem. Around the perimeter of the map are small pictures of scenes from the life of Jesus Christ. When visitors push the button below each picture, the map lights up in the location where the corresponding event took place, such as at Gethsemane or Golgotha, and an audio account of the event is played.

David E. Salisbury, recently released director of the Washington D.C. Temple Visitors' Center,

said both members and nonmembers have reacted positively to the new exhibits. "These exhibits have been particularly effective in allowing those who choose not to take a tour with the sister missionaries to still personalize their visit," said Brother Salisbury. Guests can even choose to interact with the exhibits in English or Spanish.

"Visitors especially seem to like the fact that they can be alone as they watch video segments of actual Church members sharing their personal experiences on gospel topics of the visitor's choice," Brother Salisbury said. "Some people will stay at such an exhibit for a long time." After interacting with exhibits on their own, many guests then begin asking the sister missionaries questions about the gospel, he said.



*With interactive exhibits, visitors can choose a gospel principle they would like to learn about by touching a computer screen. Video segments then appear, showing Church members sharing their testimonies of that principle.*

The success of the high-tech exhibits in Washington, D.C., and Mexico City will soon spread elsewhere. Last November and January, the South and North Visitors' Centers on Temple Square were closed for renovations. The two centers had not been substantially altered in more than two decades.

These remodeled visitors' centers, scheduled to open this fall, will incorporate interactive technology similar to that used in Washington, D.C., and Mexico. Other changes will also emphasize the Salt Lake City centers' focus on the Savior, says Richard Heaton of the Church Missionary Department, who oversees all visitors' centers exhibits and tours.

The *Christus* statue will remain on the top floor of the north center, but large murals from the New Testament currently on the top floor will trade places with Old Testament murals on the ground floor. The new "Life of Christ" exhibit, with its large interactive replica of Jerusalem, will be placed in the center of the ground floor. "When visitors walk in, they'll immediately see images of the Savior all around them," says Brother Heaton.

Other new exhibits in Salt Lake City will focus on the family, temples, the scriptures, and principles of the Church welfare program. The scriptures and welfare exhibits include large dioramas featuring scenes from the Book of Mormon and the parable of the Good Samaritan. □



PHOTO BY SCOTT FOUST

Church members portray trumpeting angels in Jesus the Christ pageant in Mesa, Arizona.

## Church Pageant/Musical Schedule for 2001

Following is the Church's pageant and musical schedule for 2001. For more information on the *Savior of the World* musical, call 1-801-240-0080, or for information on Church pageants, call 1-801-240-7800.

Pageant/Musical	Location	Date
<i>Savior of the World</i>	Salt Lake City, Utah	13-17, 20-23, 27 March 3-7, 10-14 April
<i>Jesus the Christ</i>	Mesa, Arizona	5-7, 10-14 April
<i>Mormon Miracle</i>	Manti, Utah	14-16, 19-23 June
<i>America's Witness for Christ</i>	Palmyra, New York	6-7, 10-14 July
<i>And It Came to Pass</i>	Oakland, California	17-21, 24-28 July
<i>Castle Valley</i>	Castle Dale, Utah	26-28, 31 July, 1-4 August
<i>City of Joseph</i>	Nauvoo, Illinois	27-28, 31 July, 1-4 August
<i>Martin Harris: The Man Who Knew</i>	Clarkston, Utah	10-11, 14-18, 21-25 August
<i>Nativity Pageant</i>	Calgary, Alberta, Canada	18-24 December

## Video on Doctrine and Covenants, Church History Released

A new Church video, *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (item no. 53933, U.S. \$3.00), is now available for home and classroom use. The video presents accounts and stories of the Doctrine and Covenants and Church history that teach a theme or principle members can apply in their own lives. Many episodes of the

video come from earlier Church Educational System videos produced for seminaries and institutes.

To order the video, contact your local distribution center or visit official Church Web sites at [www.ldscatalog.com](http://www.ldscatalog.com) or [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org). □

*Joseph Smith enters Carthage Jail in a scene from the new Church video.*



PHOTO BY BEQUELLE LEVA



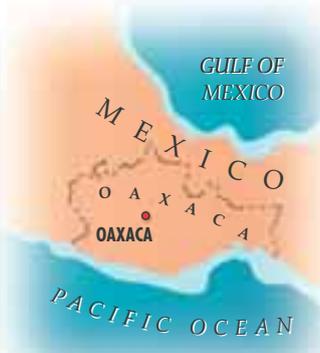
Twenty-five years ago Luis and Ruth Sánchez traveled 1,200 miles to be sealed in the Mesa Arizona Temple. Today the Sánchezes and thousands of other members feel blessed to have a temple in their own city.

## The Church in Oaxaca, Mexico

In 1949 Arwell L. Pierce, then president of the Mexico Mission, climbed a hill overlooking Oaxaca, capital city of the state of Oaxaca, and felt impressed that the gospel of Jesus Christ would flourish there. The first LDS missionaries began working in the city that year.

But President Pierce's impression looked doubtful when, soon thereafter, severe persecution forced missionaries from the area and member meetings ceased.

In 1951 young Elder Joe J. Christensen was sent with his companion to check on the handful of members in Oaxaca. Elder Christensen, now an emeritus member of the Seventy, particularly remembers finding one member, a young mother named María Real de Alcazar. "She greeted us very warmly, then went into her hut and brought



out a jar of clay. She put in her hand and pulled out her tithing, which she'd been faithfully keeping for months," recalls Elder Christensen. "Her circumstances were so humble, I hesitated to receive it from her."

The faith of local members such as Sister Alcazar has led to the fulfillment of President Pierce's impression. Today, a house of the Lord and the Mexico Oaxaca Mission headquarters stand in the city of Oaxaca. Nearly 9,000

A street market in the city of Oaxaca reflects the colorful local culture.

members live in the city, and a total of 24,000 Latter-day Saints live in the state of Oaxaca, which includes 67 wards and branches.

Oaxaca is located on the relatively narrow neck of land in southeastern Mexico, a region that was once a center of ancient Mesoamerican cultures. Close to Oaxaca city are the famed Monte Albán ruins. The archaeologically rich area is often called "land of the temples" because of its many ruins.

Modern Oaxaca members are characterized by their love of the temple of the Lord. Until the temple in Mexico City was built

in 1983, Oaxaca Saints sacrificed greatly to travel more than 1,200 miles to the nearest temple in Mesa, Arizona.

Last year's completion of the Oaxaca Mexico

### OAXACA STATE, MEXICO

Members: 24,000

First branch organized: 1956

Current wards and branches: 67

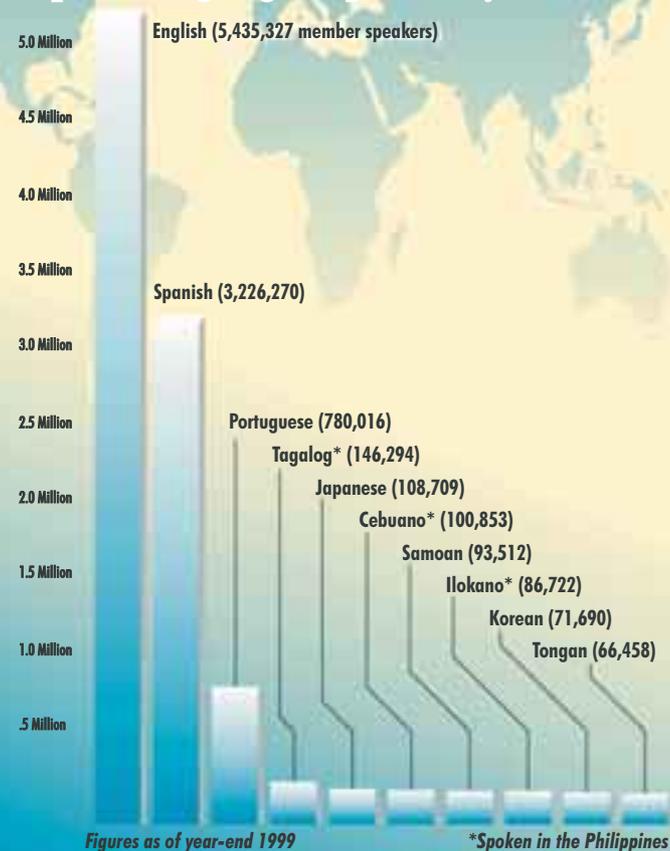
Temple district: Oaxaca Mexico Temple

Temple is considered a great blessing by members who dreamed of the day they would have a temple nearby. Ruth Sánchez Velasco, a member of the La Noria Ward, Oaxaca Mexico Atoyac Stake, says, "In 1966, when my husband and I went to the Mesa Arizona Temple to be sealed, I received my patriarchal blessing. In it I was told, 'You will see the day when you will not have to travel far to enter the house of the Lord, . . . and you will enter there many times.' When they built the temple in Mexico City, just five hours away, I thought the promise of my blessing had been fulfilled. But now I realize that that promise has been fulfilled right here in my birthplace of Oaxaca." —**Kristine Miner, BYU 92nd Ward, BYU 9th Stake** □



PHOTO © STONE IMAGES

## Top 10 Languages Spoken by Members



## In the Spotlight

### HOMELESS LINE UP FOR FREE HAIRCUTS FROM ELDERS

When missionaries show up at an El Paso, Texas, homeless shelter each week, long lines of people are awaiting their arrival. As part of their community service program, elders serving in the El Paso 9th and 13th Wards spend two hours a week giving free haircuts to the homeless.

"Whenever a new elder transfers into one of the wards, members teach him how to cut hair," says Linda King, a local public affairs specialist. "We've

equipped the elders with scissors, clippers, capes, and aprons."

The program has been a success. Several days after having his hair cut, one man came back to tell the elders he had landed a job, thanking



PHOTO BY LINDA KING

*Elders in El Paso, Texas, give free haircuts in a local homeless shelter.*

them for their help. "It plants a lot of good seeds," says Elder Nate Alsop. "It's a humbling experience to see the light in their eyes when we tell them we're helping for free."

Shelter director Ray Tullius says he always knows when the missionaries have arrived because the atmosphere immediately changes. "They bring a different feeling when they're here," he says. Lanny J. Nalder, president of the Arizona Tucson Mission, agrees. "They're doing a wonderful service, bringing a spirit to the homeless they rarely feel anywhere else."

### SIERRA LEONE MEMBERS HELP WAR VICTIMS

Members of the Freetown Sierra Leone District recently gave service at a facility for victims of civil war atrocities, patients whose hands were amputated by rebels in this northwest African country.

District members cleaned the facility and donated clothing to the patients. W. S. Thompson of the district presidency offered encouragement to the patients, telling them that the Lord was mindful of their present situation and that physical healing will come in the Resurrection.

### COUPLE LISTED AS LONGEST MARRIED IN WORLD

After celebrating their 80th wedding anniversary, a member couple were

recently inducted into the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the longest-living married pair in the world. Doc and Viola Colvin, members of the Pima Fourth Ward, Pima Arizona Stake, were married in 1920 and later sealed in the Mesa Arizona Temple.

When asked how they've maintained such a lasting, successful marriage, Sister Colvin replied, "We've just gotten along well—and lived a long time!" Apparently, this principle has worked well in the Colvin family: in recent years Brother and Sister Colvin have celebrated the 50th wedding anniversaries of each of their three children.

The Colvins have 14 grandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren, and 16 great-great-grandchildren. □

## Comment

### A Perspective on Muhammad

Thank you for the article "A Latter-day Saint Perspective on Muhammad" (Sept. 2000). We are serving as senior missionaries, teaching English in Roi Et, Thailand. Much that was said about Muhammad and Islam could also be said about Buddha and Buddhism. We came to serve and teach the Thai people, but they are also serving and teaching us. Most of them don't yet have the fulness of the gospel, but they have already been taught the importance of kindness, charity, service, and reverence for life. They are wonderful people, truly children of God and our brothers and sisters. Elder and Sister McBee Thailand Bangkok Mission

### Touched by Paintings

I just want to tell you how much I enjoy the paintings and poems included in the *Ensign*. I spend time looking at them and

thinking about them and appreciating. A painting which comes to my mind at the moment showed loved ones grieving and the unseen departed spirits close by trying to give love and comfort to those mourning for them

(“Sanctify to Thee Thy Deepest Distress,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 42). The painting said so much that couldn’t be expressed or described without a lot of words.

The *Ensign* brings light, comfort, and goodness into

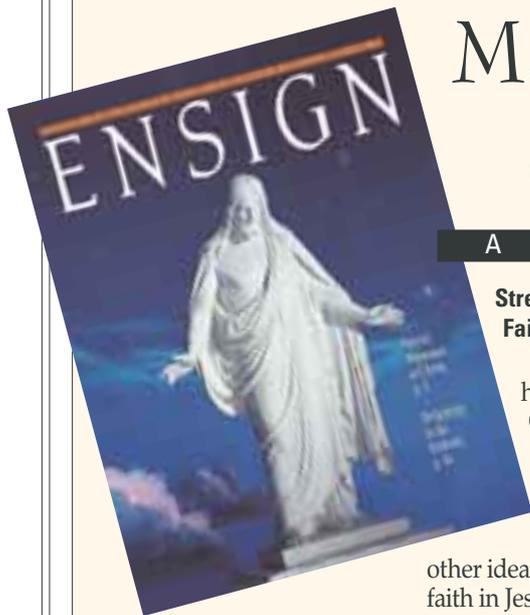
our lives. I am grateful for it.

**Sharon Larsen**  
Edmond, Oklahoma

**Historic Milestones**

Your article “Historic Milestone Achieved: More Non-English-Speaking Members Now Than

English-Speaking” (Sept. 2000) could have included the first non-English-speaking stake, organized just 39 years ago! The Dutch-speaking Holland Stake was organized in 1961.  
**J. Edwin Strobel**  
Rexburg, Idaho



# Making the Most of This Issue

A P R I L 2 0 0 1

**Strengthening Your Faith in Jesus Christ**

“Faith comes by hearing the word of God, through the testimony of the servants of God.” James O. Mason shares this and

other ideas to nurture our faith in Jesus Christ, p. 22.

**How Well Are You Following the Prophet?**

Life is a test, and one of its questions is, Do you follow the living prophet? Stories from the lives of Latter-day Saints during the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith help us understand what it means to follow prophets today. See p. 28.

**What Can Adversity Teach Us?**

The mother of two children with disabilities learned that blessings often come in unexpected ways. See p. 38.

**Honoring the Sabbath—and Enjoying It**

Read how families can joyfully keep the Sabbath. See “Call the Sabbath a Delight,” p. 46.

**Teaching about the Resurrection**

Help children understand the power and significance of the Resurrection by reading how one family turned tragedy into testimony. See “Our New Easter Tradition” on p. 71.

**Healing from Sexual Abuse**

An understanding of the Atonement, power of the priesthood, prayer, and agency can help heal those who have been sexually abused. See p. 58.

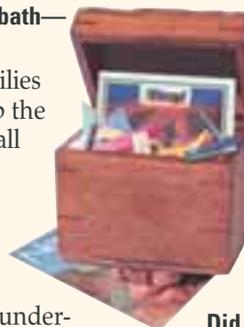
**Ways to Stretch One Income**

Learn how a family of eight stretched their modest income. See p. 72.

**For Family Home Evenings**

- “I’m thankful for you.” Do these words need to be spoken more often in your family? For a family night activity that can help, see p. 71.
- Most stories from Latter-day Saint

Voices can be used for



**Home Teachers and Visiting Teachers**

Home teachers are encouraged to use “Special Witnesses of Christ,” p. 2. The visiting teaching message is on p. 53.

**Did You Know?**

Each *Ensign* feature article has information at the end to help you use it. The gospel topics for each article suggest areas in which it might be used for personal study and reflection or as support material for lessons in the home or in Church classrooms. Some articles also include suggestions for possible discussion (“Let’s Talk about It”). See, for example, “Zachary and Sean,” p. 38.

**The Testimony of “Special Witnesses”**

Feel the true spirit of Easter by reading inspired testimonies of the Savior and His gospel from the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as they spoke from Jerusalem, Palmyra, Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Salt Lake City. See “Special Witnesses of Christ,” p. 2.

**How to Find a Cure for TV-itis**

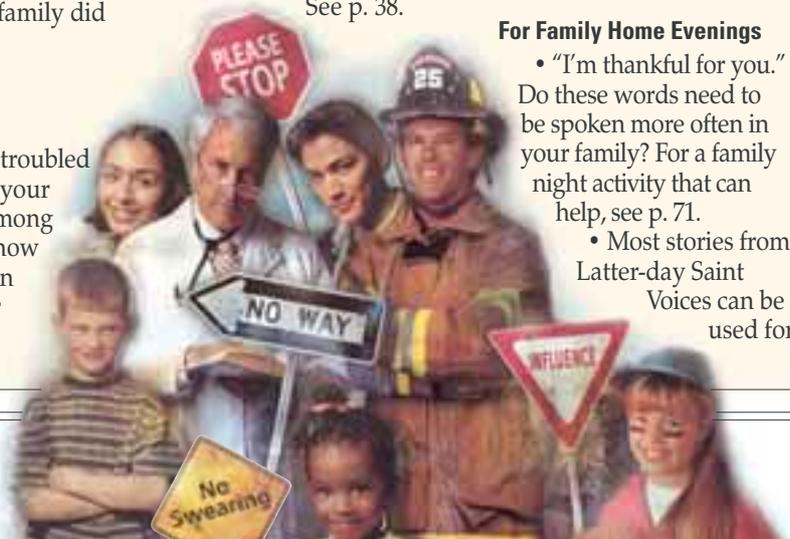
Want to pull the plug on your family’s or a family member’s addiction to TV? Read how one family did it, p. 70.

**Speaking Up for Clean Language**

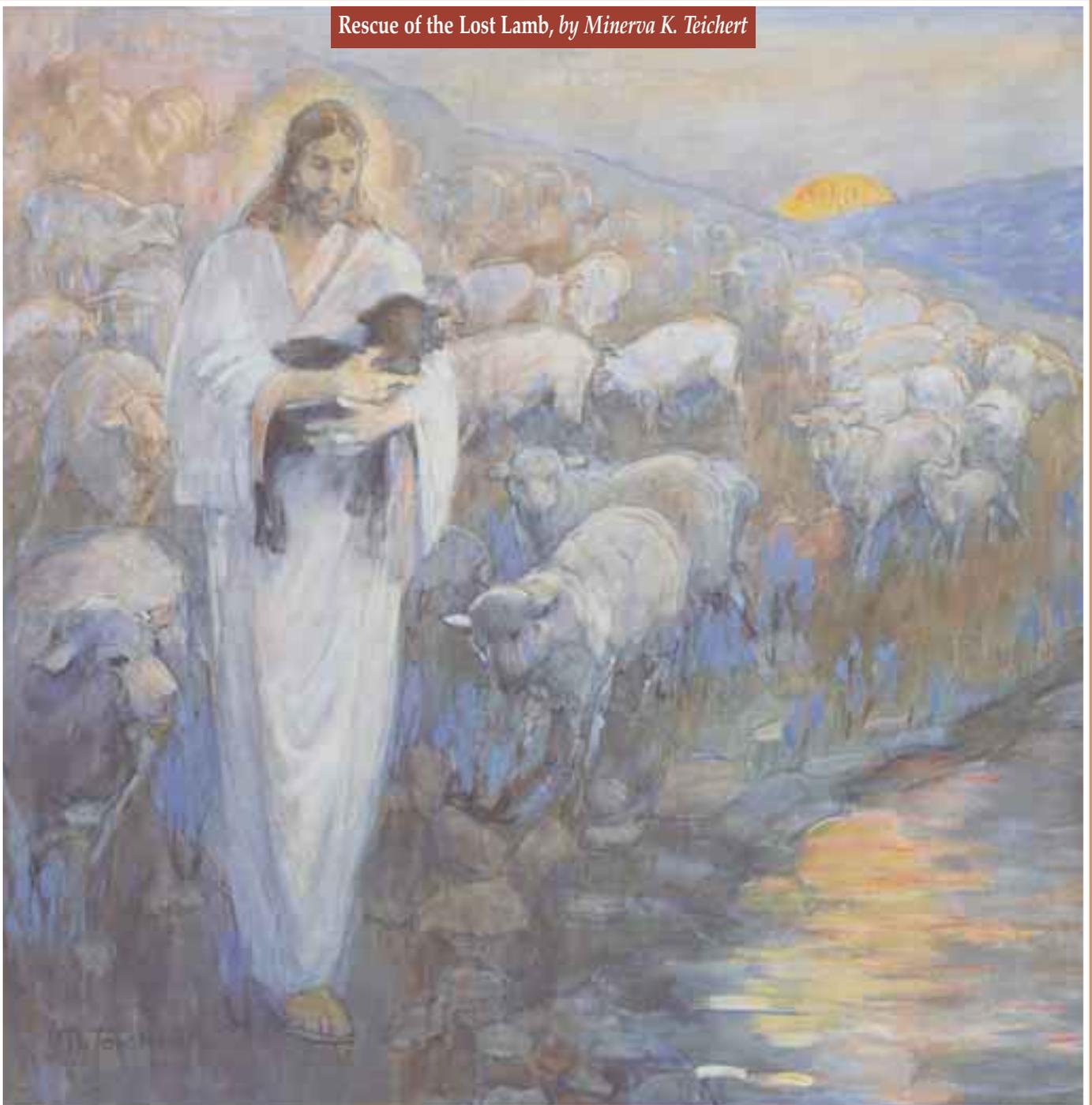
Are you ever troubled by profanity in your workplace or among friends? Learn how others have been an influence for good. See p. 35.

**GOSPEL TOPICS**

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Rescue of the Lost Lamb, by Minerva K. Teichert



*“What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? . . . And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.” (Luke 15:4, 6).*



*"In our day the Lord has called 15 special witnesses to testify of His divinity before all the world. Theirs is a unique calling; they are Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, chosen and commissioned by Him. They have been commanded to bear witness of His living reality by the power and authority of the holy apostleship in them vested. I invite you to listen to the testimonies of these special witnesses."*

*—President Gordon B. Hinckley*



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