

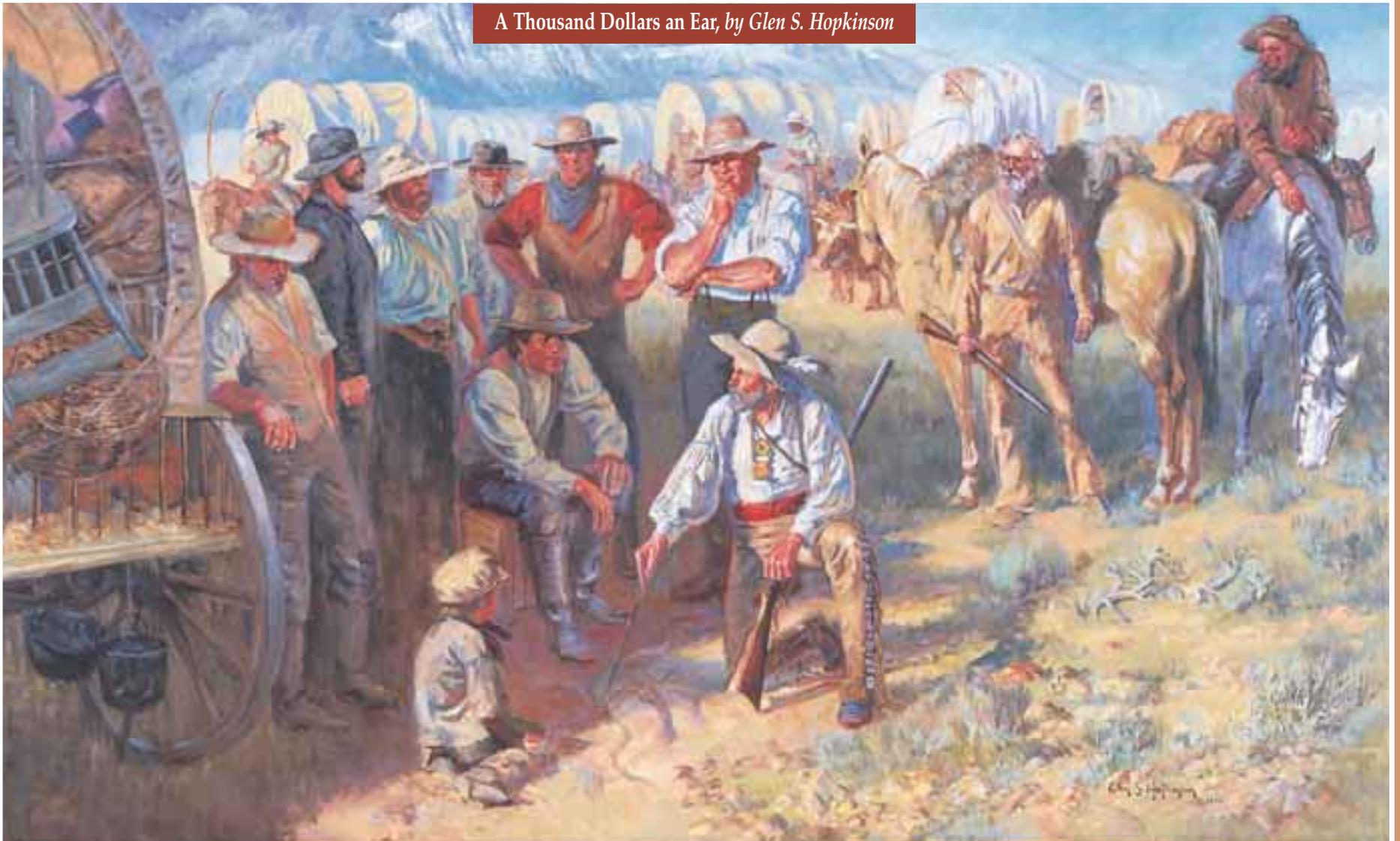
ENSIGN

A group of approximately 15 people of various ethnicities and ages are shown singing from black hymnals. They are arranged in several rows, with some in the foreground and others in the background. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The word "ENSIGN" is printed in large, blue, serif capital letters across the top of the image, partially overlapping the people's heads.

"Lift Up
Your Voice
and Sing,"
p. 42

Happiness,
Health, and
Marriage,
p. 28

A Thousand Dollars an Ear, by Glen S. Hopkinson



Explorer and mountain man Jim Bridger, center, who met with the advance party of Latter-day Saint pioneers headed for the Salt Lake Valley, "considered it imprudent to bring a large population into the Great Basin," President Brigham Young recorded. The explorer offered \$1,000 for proof that corn could be grown there. Replied President Young: "Wait a little, and we will show you" (B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church, 3:201).

ENSIGN

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 8

ON THE COVERS: *Front and back:* Photography by Craig Dimond. *Inside front:* A Thousand Dollars an Ear, by Glen S. Hopkinson, oil on canvas, 36" x 60", 1998. Courtesy of Glenn and Mary Potter. *Inside back:* Time to Laugh, by Liz Lemon Swindle, oil on canvas, 30" x 40", 1998. Courtesy of Repartee Gallery.

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“Who Shall ASCEND into the Hill of the Lord?”



BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

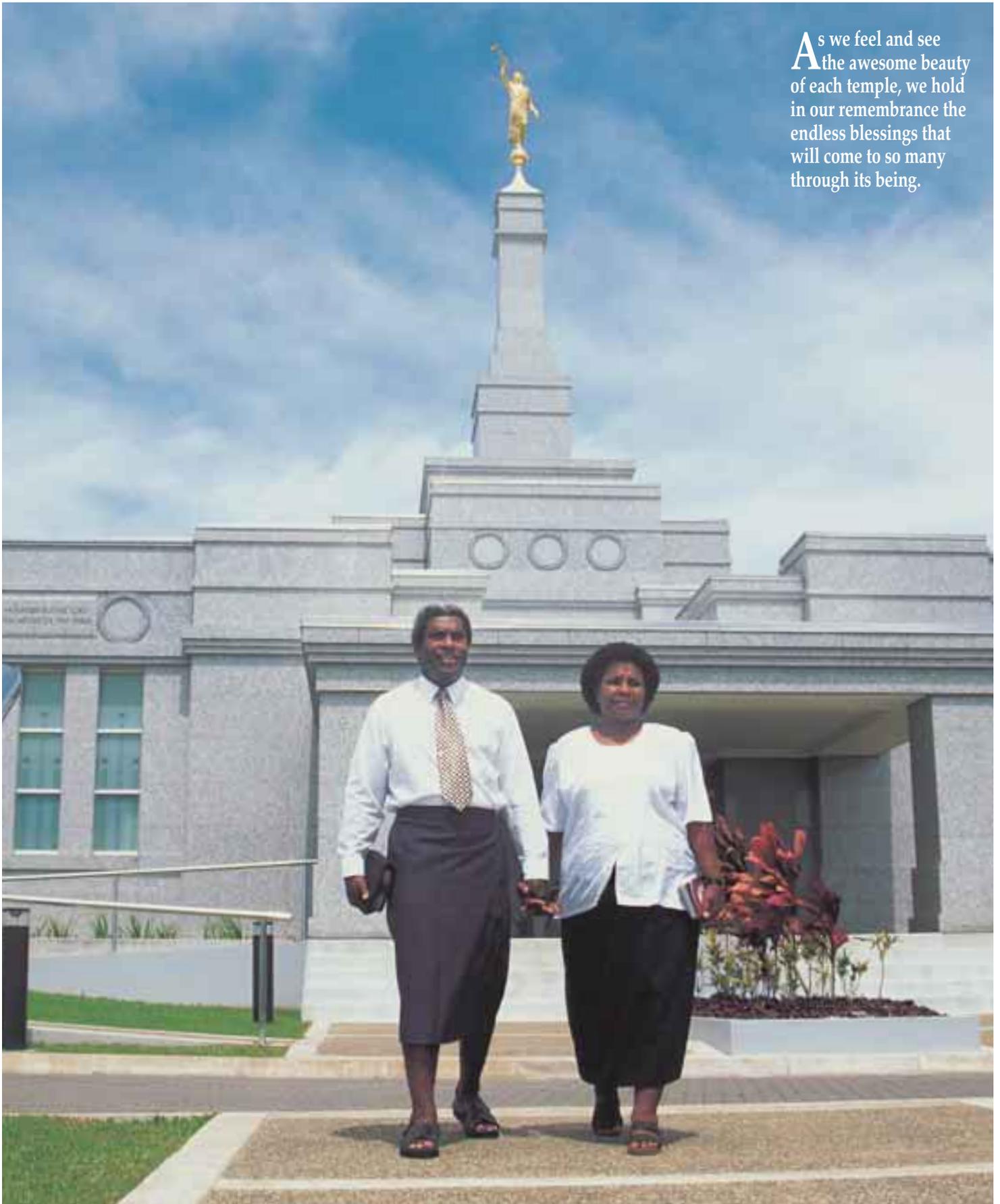
In the 24th Psalm is the query, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?” (Ps. 24:3). I believe we find the beauty and sanctity of “his holy place” as we enter the magnificent temples of God. Under the prophetic inspiration of President Gordon B. Hinckley, we are living in the greatest day of temple building. Almost every week last year a new temple was dedicated. In one month as many as seven temples were dedicated. Never before in any age has temple construction gone forward on such a grand scale. The faithful Saints who pay their tithes and offerings have made this possible, and each will receive eternal blessings because of his or her faithfulness. Those who take advantage of the blessings of the temple will also be eternally blessed.

Each temple building is an inspiration, magnificent and beautiful in every way, but the temple building alone does not bless. The endowed blessings and divine functions—involving much that is not of this world, such as priesthood keys—come through obedience and faithfulness to priesthood authority and covenants made.

As we feel and see the awesome beauty of each temple, we see in vision and hold in our remembrance the endless blessings that will come to so many through its being. However, we should remember that we have faithful leaders and Saints in parts of the world where as yet they have no hallowed sanctuary in which to receive the sanctifying and cleansing ordinances of the temple. They are stake presidencies, patriarchs, high councilors, bishops, and other priesthood leaders, and a host of faithful Saints, as yet unendowed, who desire above all else to be sealed to their beloved parents, companions, and children. We have the blessing and the responsibility of helping them receive the blessings of the temple. Future temples will in a measure be a sanctification of our devotion and labors to build the kingdom of God in our time.

In the magnificence and splendor of our modern temples, well might we pause and reflect upon the laborers without shirts and shoes who built the Nauvoo and Kirtland Temples. Each temple that stands today is a vindication of Joseph and Hyrum Smith and a triumph for them and all of our people who suffered the destruction, the beatings, and the murders at the hands of the cruel tyrants in the mobs who drove our people west.

As we feel and see the awesome beauty of each temple, we hold in our remembrance the endless blessings that will come to so many through its being.



There is triumph for little Sardius Smith, a lad of about nine years who, at the Haun's Mill Massacre (30 October 1838), crawled under the bellows in the blacksmith shop to seek safety and, when discovered, was shot dead. There is triumph for Bishop Edward Partridge (1743–1840), who was seized in his home and dragged to the town square by brutal and heartless men who proceeded to pour hot tar over his body and sprinkle it with feathers.

In the temples of the Lord, we learn obedience. We learn sacrifice. We make the vows of chastity and have our lives consecrated to holy purposes. It is possible for us to be purged and purified and to have our sins washed away so that we may come before the Lord as clean, white, and spotless as the newly fallen snow.

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?” We can see in vision the almost endless hosts of the elect, the devout, the believing who shall come to God's holy sanctuary to seek its blessings. As they enter those hallowed halls, Nephi would remind all that “the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name” (2 Ne. 9:41).

As the Saints come into the sacrosanct washing and anointing rooms and are washed, they will be spiritually cleansed. As they are anointed, they will be renewed and regenerated in soul and spirit.

We can see in vision the countless couples in their youth and beauty coming to be married. We see clearly the unspeakable joy on their

countenances as they are sealed together and as there is sealed upon them, through their faithfulness, the blessing of the holy Resurrection, with power to come forth in the morning of the First Resurrection clothed with glory, immortality, and eternal lives. We can see unnumbered families surrounding the altar, all clothed in white, with bowed heads and clasped hands, as they are sealed one

to another, as though they were born in the new and everlasting covenant. We can see the army of angelic young children with the mirth and eagerness of youth, coming to the house of the Lord with awe and wonder to be baptized for the dead.

We see the vision of the heavenly hosts unnumbered whose eternal odysseys have been suspended as they wait for their vicarious work to be done, including the purification of baptism, the hallowed blessings of the endowment, and the exalting beatitude of sealings. We can see families dancing, shouting, and crying with joy in their being united in another world.

We are grateful for the presence of the sealing power that binds in heaven that which is bound here on earth. We render thanks for and veneration to our great and humble prophet, who holds all of these keys.

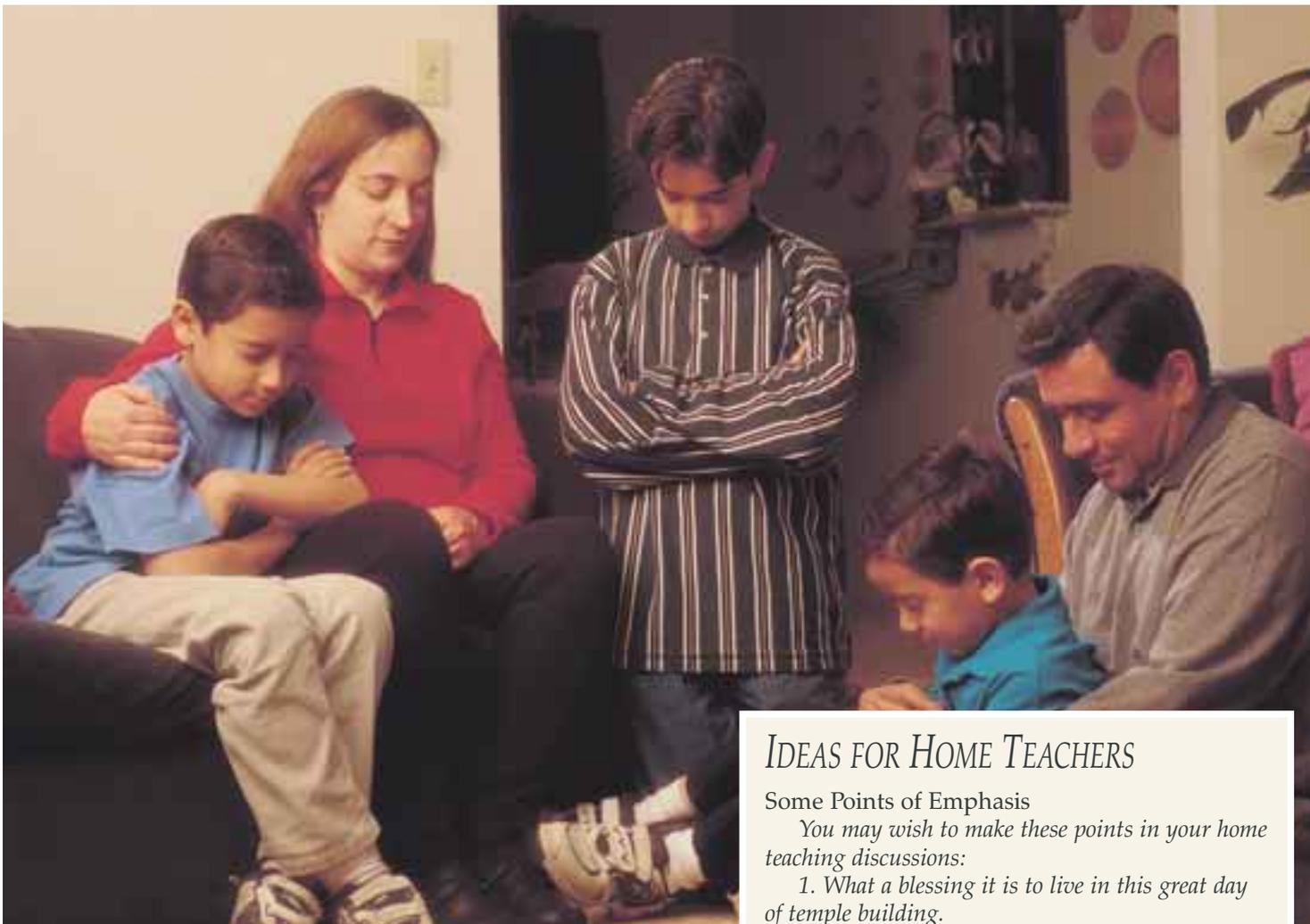
“Who shall stand in his holy place?” May there be extended a help-

ing hand to those who have wavered in their faith or who have transgressed, to bring them back. After fully repenting, they will have a special need for the redemptive portion of the endowment. May they know that their sins will no more be remembered.



PAINTING BY DAVID LINDSLEY

In the magnificence and splendor of our modern temples, well might we pause and reflect upon the laborers who built the Nauvoo and Kirtland Temples under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith and other Church leaders.



Our homes should be committed and dedicated only to holy purposes. In our homes all of the security, the strengthening love, and the sympathetic understanding that we all so desperately need should be found.

As we recall the commandment to stand in holy places, we should remember that beyond the temple, the most sacred and holy places in all the world should be our own dwelling places. Our homes should be committed and dedicated only to holy purposes. In our homes all of the security, the strengthening love, and the sympathetic understanding that we all so desperately need should be found.

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

“He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully” (Ps. 24:3–4). For “holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever” (Ps. 93:5). □

Gospel topics: temples, covenants, priesthood keys, sealing power

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

Some Points of Emphasis

You may wish to make these points in your home teaching discussions:

- 1. What a blessing it is to live in this great day of temple building.*
- 2. It is good to reflect on the early laborers without shirts and shoes who built the Kirtland and Nauvoo Temples.*
- 3. Many members still do not live near temples; we have the responsibility to help them receive temple blessings.*
- 4. The blessings of the temple come through obedience and faithfulness to priesthood authority and covenants made.*
- 5. In temples we learn about obedience, sacrifice, chastity, and consecrating our lives to holy purposes.*
- 6. Beyond the temple, the most sacred and holy places should be our own homes, places also dedicated to holy purposes.*

Discussion Helps

- 1. Relate your feelings about the temple.*
- 2. Are there some scriptures or quotations in this article that the family might read aloud and discuss?*
- 3. Would this discussion be better after a previsit chat with the head of the house? Is there a message from the bishop or quorum leader?*

Identity, Priority, & Blessings

Some people on life's journey forget who they really are and what is really important. Without sure identity and priority, blessings that matter most are at the mercy of things that matter least.



BY ELDER RUSSELL M. NELSON
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

An understanding of the inter-relationships between identity, priority, and blessings can help Latter-day Saints deal better with life's challenges.

It is important to know who you are and who you may become. It is more important than what you do, vital as your work is. You pursue an education to prepare for life's work, but you also need to prepare for life—eternal life. I emphasize this because some people on life's journey forget who they really are and what is really important. Without sure identity and priority, blessings that matter most are at the mercy of things that matter least.

May I illustrate by reading from a letter written by a young mother:

"Dear Elder and Sister Nelson,

"My husband . . . just started his internship. . . . We have four children, ages 20 months to seven years (and would like to have more). My problem is that I don't see how he can give time to our family as the prophets have directed us to do. . . . My seven-year-old and five-year-old have already asked me,

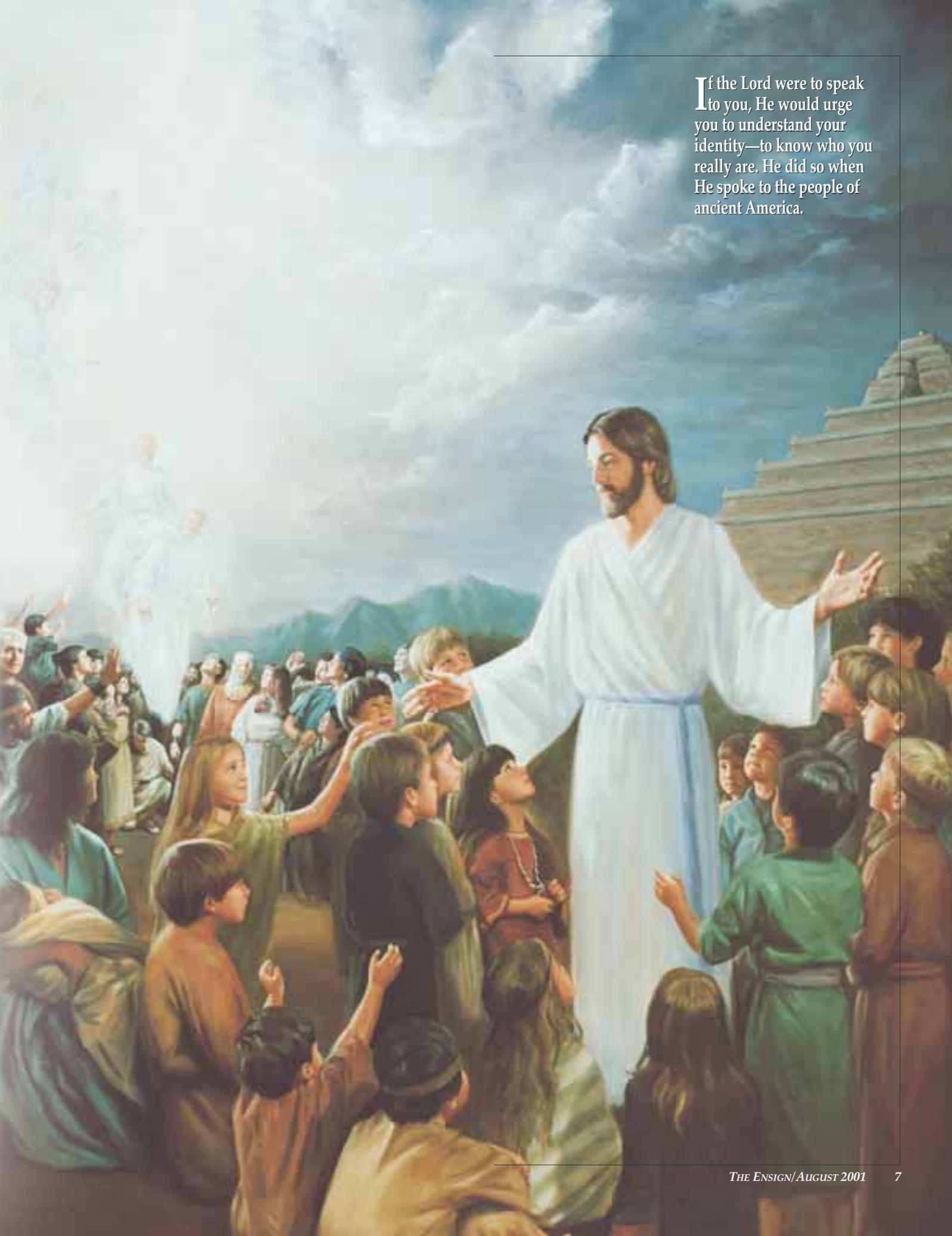
'Why doesn't Daddy come home anymore?' They seem to be comfortable with my answer that Daddy is busy helping many sick people, but what should I tell them when they are old enough to understand that Daddy could have chosen a less time-consuming specialty? . . . Please help me understand. I have been praying for peace and understanding.

Signed, "With much respect and admiration."

Now, why do I trouble you with their problems? Simply because many of you are or will be where they are now—very busy and very frustrated. They should solve their own problems, and I'm confident they will. Perhaps we can use their quandary as a springboard for our discussion.

Such concerns are not limited to those in the medical profession. The wife of a doctor, like the wife of a truck driver, soldier, or airline pilot, must know that her husband's work will take him away from home. That places the burden of fidelity, identity, and priority squarely on the shoulders of each individual and every married couple as they strive to merit the blessings of the Lord. It was never easy to be a committed Latter-day Saint, and it isn't now. But the rewards are well worth it.

If the Lord were to speak to you, He would urge you to understand your identity—to know who you really are. He did so when He spoke to the people of ancient America.



IDENTITY

If the Lord were to speak to you, He would urge you to understand your identity—to know who you really are. He did so when He spoke to the people of ancient America. After identifying Himself, He informed His listeners of their identity:

“Behold,” He said, “*ye are* the children of the prophets; and *ye are* of the house of Israel; and *ye are* of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed” (3 Ne. 20:25; emphasis added).

You share that same identity, which means even more if you have been sealed to your companion in the temple. Some of you are still searching for the right one. I wish you well! Keep searching! Don’t forget: “Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord” (1 Cor. 11:11). Isn’t that a nice scripture? I love it!

Whether married or single, you will all have work to do. I hope it will be enjoyable. It’s nice to bounce out of bed each morning eager to enjoy a day’s work, and it is especially gratifying when we can bless the lives of others. But please remember: You work to sustain life; you don’t live to sustain work.

Your life will be a blessed and balanced experience if you first honor your identity and priority. Keep a good, long-range view, knowing that the days of retirement from your work will come. There will also be an end to your mortal life. For the hale and hearty, those realities seem pretty remote—about the last things they worry about. But the day of your demise is coming, and eventually you will stand before the Lord in judgment.

Contemplation of life after retirement and life after death can help you deal with contemporary challenges. I hope you will pardon reference to my personal experience. Hopefully, lessons from my life may be relevant to you and to the busy intern husband and his wife who wrote the letter.

Retirement looks a long way off for this couple. Even a year of internship seems unbearable. And it will probably be followed by a residency that lasts

even longer. Those terms *intern* and *resident* mean just what they say. An intern is “confined to” and a resident “resides in” a hospital. That portends double trouble for a family.

I remember when I was a resident in a large hospital in Boston. I was off duty every other night and every other weekend. On nights off, I arrived home to my wife and our four children after the babies’ bedtime. I departed in the morning before they were all awake. In order for me to attend sacrament meeting, I had to trade hours of duty with some of my Jewish or Seventh-day Adventist colleagues. They were willing to cover for me temporarily on my Sabbath as I covered for them on theirs. Incidentally, I enjoyed some of my very most successful home teaching experiences on those highly prized nights off.

My years of training were followed by a surgical career that was wonderful and filled with challenge and reward. But now it is behind me. Thankfully, my dear wife is still with me. Recently we celebrated our 55th wedding anniversary. Our family is most precious to us. She has blessed us with 10 children. The time that elapsed between my graduation from medical school and my entering private practice was about 12 years. Seven of those 10 children arrived before we could really “afford” them. Now all 10 have been married in the temple

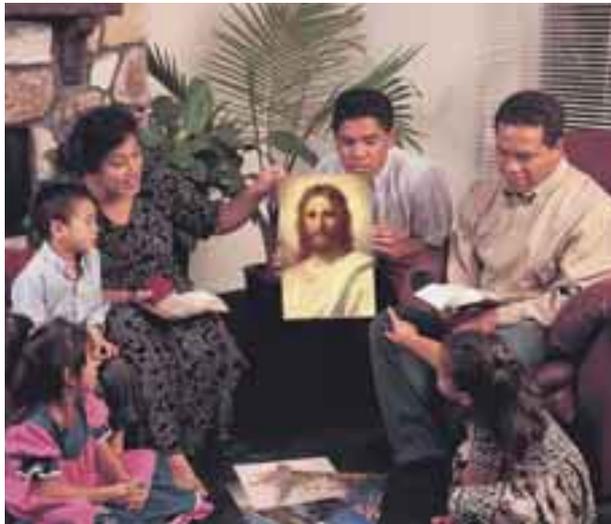
and have families of their own. They have brought us 52 grandchildren. We are so grateful for temple endowments and sealings that bind us together forever!

PRIORITY

My background in medicine may be relevant, even though most of you are not doctors of medicine. Eternal principles that govern happiness apply equally to all. I doubt that the Lord cares much which honorable vocation you pursue. But He does care if you love one another and serve one another (see Mosiah 4:15). And He cares that you have the obedience and self-discipline needed to maintain your identity and honor your highest priorities.

Through thick and thin, Sister Nelson and I

PHOTO BY STEVE BUNDERSON



Wives, learn the doctrines and teach them to your children. The days are gone when the husband was the theologian and the wife was the Christian.

have merged our identity and fixed our focus on our highest priority, our eternal marriage. Through the prolonged period of education and later medical practice, she could have complained about my schedule, but she never did. Our children did *not* feel they were deprived of their father's time, simply because Sister Nelson never murmured. Their attitudes were shaped by her attitude. Every moment we were together she seized as an opportunity to provide a little bit of heaven on earth for me and our children.

Now our children are adults with little ones of their own. We enjoy extended family home evenings once a month with all available members of our family. At that time we also celebrate family birthdays. Many names are written on each birthday cake. After those gala gatherings are over—when peace and quiet have again been restored—Sister Nelson and I lovingly embrace each other, grateful that we never allowed anything to take higher priority than our love—husband for wife, and wife for husband.

I pay tribute to Sister Nelson, this magnificent wife and mother who has always been supportive. When people have asked her how she managed with 10 children with so little time available from her husband, she has responded with a twinkle in her eye, saying, "When I married him, I didn't expect much, so I was never disappointed."

Through those years of internship, residency, and all that followed, she faithfully served in Primary, Young Women, and Relief Society. In addition, she sang with the Tabernacle Choir for 20 years.

You young women can learn much from Sister Nelson's example. Sustain your husbands in their important work, and don't be selfish in your expectations. Let your husband return to a home of affection, not contention. Meanwhile, learn the doctrines and teach them to your children. The days are gone when the husband was the theologian and the wife was the Christian.

President Gordon B. Hinckley gave counsel to you sisters. He said: "I urge each of you young women to get all of the schooling

you can get. You will need it for the world into which you will move. . . . No other generation in all of history has offered women so many opportunities. Your first objective should be a happy marriage, sealed in the temple of the Lord, and followed by the rearing of a good family. Education can better equip you for the realization of those ideals."¹

President Hinckley also said, "In the process of educating your minds, stir within yourselves a greater sensitivity to the beautiful, the artistic, and the cultivation of the talent you possess, be it large or small."²

Thank you, sisters, for your faith and devotion. The Church is greatly strengthened by your service. Your responsibilities are of such import that, should you fail, the brethren would not succeed.

Brothers and sisters, be of good cheer. Take life one step at a time and do the best you can each day. Life passes so swiftly. We do not know how many years we may have together here in mortality. For Sister Nelson and me, that number is dwindling down to a precious few. We are profoundly grateful that our love endures, even in our empty nest. Real love is not measured in terms of moonlight and roses but in terms of who will care for you when you are old.

When mortal life is over, each of us will return to God, who gave us life. In a judgment interview, I doubt that He will ask a surgeon, "How many operations did you perform?" or "Do you wish you

President Hinckley said to the young women of the Church, "Your first objective should be a happy marriage, sealed in the temple of the Lord, and followed by the rearing of a good family. Education can better equip you for the realization of those ideals."

PHOTO BY KELLY A. LARSEN



had spent more time at the hospital?" But I *know* He will ask if Sister Nelson and I remained faithful to our covenants to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ and always remember Him. No doubt He will carefully scrutinize my apostolic ministry, but that vital subject will probably be subordinated to His evaluation of my record as a husband and father.

I don't fear death. In fact, a scripture describes a Saint's death as "precious in the sight of the Lord" (Ps. 116:15). It will be precious to me, too, as I am reunited with our parents and our precious daughter Emily, who died some five years ago. Her passing left her young and righteous husband with five children. I will eagerly meet my ancestors and preceding prophets and apostles. And one day Sister Nelson and I will dwell together in the presence of our family and the Lord forevermore. We will have been faithful to covenants made in the temple and to the oath and covenant of the priesthood, which have assured us, in the words of the Lord, that "all that my Father hath shall be given unto [you]" (D&C 84:38).

Faithful sisters share the blessings of the priesthood. Think of those words "all that my Father hath." That concept is beyond our mortal comprehension. It means that no earthly reward—no other success—could compensate for the bounties the Lord will bestow upon those who love Him, keep His commandments (see Moro. 4:3), and endure to the end (see D&C 14:7).

AN INWARD COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

The Apostle Paul taught that divine doctrines, such as these of identity and priority, are to be written "not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Cor. 3:3).³ The importance of an inward commitment to the Lord is symbolized as we partake of the sacrament. Contrast it to other promises made in life, usually symbolized by an outward sign, such as a raised hand or a written signature. The Lord has invited us to symbolize our covenant with Him by a sign that is inward as well as outward. When the sacred emblems of His flesh and blood are administered to us, we are invited to take them into our bodies. As we do, His atoning

sacrifice literally becomes a part of our own identity.

One day you will be asked if you took upon yourself the name of Christ and if you were faithful to that covenant. The newest convert makes the same covenant that each of us has made, to take upon us the Lord's name. We are all allowed—even encouraged—to achieve the fulness of the stature of Christ (see Eph. 4:13).

I come to you in my true identity as a husband, a father, and an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. My priorities are my wife, my family, and my ministry. I am to teach plain and precious things that have been restored in these latter days. As special witnesses of His name in all the world, the Apostles "talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ" (2 Ne. 25:26).

In a very real way, you bear similar responsibility. As Jesus said to His faithful followers in ancient America, He would surely say to you, "Ye are my disciples; and ye are a light unto this people, who are a remnant of the house of Joseph" (3 Ne. 15:12). You and I are to bear witness; we are to minister; we are to enlighten; we are to be an example to all who come within our sphere of influence.

This privilege is ours, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year—even on vacation. The Savior stated simply: "What manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I

am" (3 Ne. 27:27). Your most sincere sign of adoration of Jesus is your emulation of Him. You know of Him. You know of His divine parentage. You know of His mission and ministry in mortality. You know of Him, not by direct visitation but through the testimony of the Holy Ghost. "The testimony of the Holy Ghost is the strongest testimony that can be given. It is better than a personal visit."⁴

CONNECTING IDENTITY, PRIORITY, AND BLESSINGS

The Lord has revealed our identity, inspired our proper priority, and will fulfill blessings as covenanted to the remnants of the house of Israel. The pages of scripture are replete with historical documentation of this interrelationship. In 1836, under



PHOTO BY MATT REIER

The importance of an inward commitment to the Lord is symbolized as we partake of the sacrament.

the direction of the Lord, “Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed” (D&C 110:12). That scripture bears upon our identity.

Delve deeper into sacred history and you will find that approximately 4,000 years ago the heavens were opened to Father Abraham. To him these words were spoken:

“Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah. . . .

“Behold, I will lead thee by my hand, and I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, . . . and my power shall be over thee.

“ . . . Through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God” (Abr. 1:16, 18–19).

“And I will bless [my people] through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;

“ . . . I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee . . . shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (Abr. 2:10–11).

These passages confirm the connection between your identity, priority, and promised blessings. Your responsibility is to apply these lessons to your life.

How do you discover your *identity*? First, remember that you are children of God, created in His image, sent here “for a wise and glorious purpose.”⁵ Then you need to search the scriptures. You will find that you are “children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

“[You are] neither Jew nor Greek, . . . neither bond nor free, . . . neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:26–29).

A husband’s highest priesthood duty is to love and care for his wife, to bless her and their children. A wife’s highest calling is to love her husband and nurture their children.

This identity entitles you to “all of the privileges and blessings which the gospel affords” (Official Declaration 2).

“For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God—

“Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.

“Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a savior unto my people Israel” (D&C 86:9–11).

How do you determine your *priority*? Ask yourself, What do I really want most of all? Compare your answer with the high standard revealed by your Creator. He said you are to “seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness; and all . . . things shall be added unto you” (JST, Matt. 6:38; see KJV, Matt. 6:33, footnote *a*). You build up the kingdom of God as you place your family first. A husband’s highest priesthood duty is to love and care for his wife, to bless her and their children. A wife’s highest calling is to love her husband and nurture their children. As you serve the Lord, know that your “duty is unto the church forever, and this

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because of [your] family" (D&C 23:3).

How do you obtain your *blessings*? How can you qualify for eternal blessings—even “all that [the] Father hath”? With your identity preserved and your priorities properly honored, our Father’s blessings will flow to you by virtue of the holy priesthood, which is without beginning or end.⁶

You can lay claim to all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, destined to be fulfilled in these latter days (see 1 Ne. 15:18). Blessings and responsibilities once extended to other nations (see Gal. 3:7–9, 14, 27, 29) have now been given to us (see D&C 110:12). Patriarchal blessings reveal our linkage to the great patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.⁷ *We are* the seed of Abraham through whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed. That identity merits our precious priority, which in turn brings to us the blessings of heaven.

These blessings include access to the Book of Mormon, which stands as another testament of Jesus Christ. It also stands as a sign that God will keep His covenants with the remnants of the house of Israel (see 3 Ne. 16:11–12; 29:3; Morm. 5:20; 8:21; 9:37).

This Church has been restored to the earth to fulfill divine prophecies and purposes. Israel is to be gathered. Families are to be sealed in holy temples (see 1 Pet. 3:18–20; 4:6; D&C 1:11; 138:10–37; Abr. 2:8–11).⁸ And the world is to be prepared for the Second Coming of the Savior.

Members of the Church are among “the elect of God” (Col. 3:12; see also Titus 1:1; D&C 84:34), to whom truths of the gospel and ordinances of the priesthood have been given. Enjoy these blessings and teach them to others by precept and example.

May you know your *identity*, who you are and who you can become; may you establish your *priority*, held high and protected from erosion; and may you qualify for *blessings* of the Lord to be with you, to bring joy to you—His faithful sons and daughters—and to your posterity. □

From a talk given at a Church Educational System Fireside at Brigham Young University on 10 September 2000.

Gospel topics: priorities, marriage, family, blessings

NOTES

1. “Stand True and Faithful,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 92.
2. “Rise to the Stature of the Divine within You,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 96.
3. Paul even told us how we can achieve that condition: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; . . . [by] being rooted and grounded in love” (Eph. 3:17). Alma taught how “a mighty change was . . . wrought in [the] hearts [of his people], and they humbled themselves and put their trust in the true and living God” (Alma 5:13). This change produced a visible transformation of their faces (see Alma 5:14).
4. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (1954–56), 3:153.
5. “O My Father,” *Hymns*, no. 292.
6. Adam held that priesthood. It was passed on by Methuselah to Noah. Melchizedek received it through the lineage of his fathers, and Abraham received it from Melchizedek (see D&C 84:14–17). To Abraham was specifically revealed the promise that through him and his seed—his biological and his spiritual heirs—“all the families of the earth [would] be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (Abr. 2:11; see also Abr. 2:8–10; Gen. 12:2–3).
7. Patriarchal blessings are conferred upon faithful members of the Church, that they might know who they are and that they might accept the responsibility of making the blessings of the priesthood available to their children and to all whom they can teach by word of mouth and by example.
8. Eventually, the families of all nations will be given the opportunity to be so blessed, whether in earth life or in the spirit world.

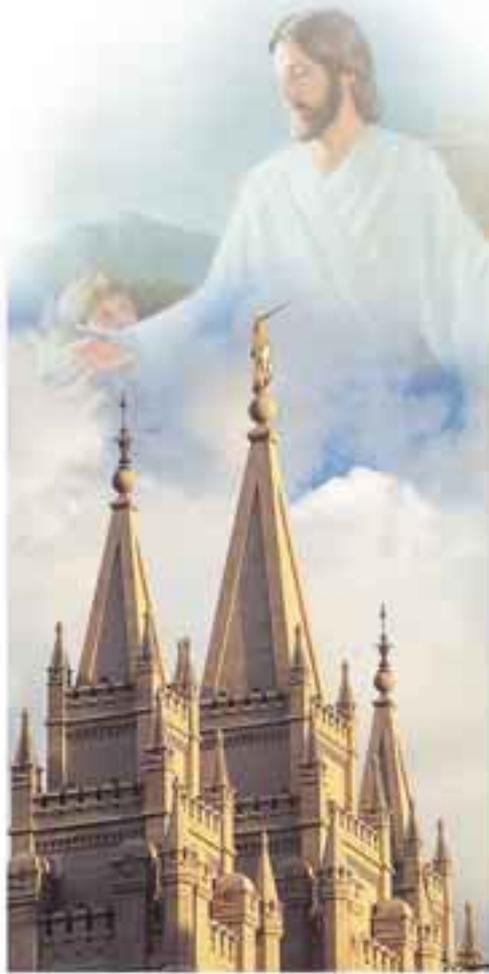


PHOTO BY CRAIG DIMOND

This Church has been restored to the earth to fulfill divine prophecies and purposes. Israel is to be gathered. Families are to be sealed in holy temples. And the world is to be prepared for the Second Coming.

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. How does knowing who we really are help us understand our purpose in life?
2. From a gospel perspective, what should our highest priorities be?
3. What blessings can we receive as we honor our identity and our highest priorities?

A D I S P O S I T I O N T O DO GOOD CONTINUALLY

*Perhaps the best evidence of true conversion
is the disposition to do evil no more.*



BY ELDER SPENCER J. CONDIE
Of the Seventy

More than 2,000 years ago a large congregation of Saints gathered round the temple in the land of Zarahemla to hear one of the greatest sermons ever recorded in holy writ. King Benjamin reminded his listeners several times that he spoke the words given him by an angel of God (see Mosiah 3:2; 4:1; 4:11; 5:5). After listening to King Benjamin's stirring sermon, the vast congregation cried in unison, "O have mercy,

and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins." In response to their pleas, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy" (Mosiah 4:2-3). This feeling of joy is one of the hallmarks of being forgiven of our sins, for, as Alma declared, "Wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10).

At the conclusion of King Benjamin's inspired address, the people believed all of his words and had "no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually."

KING BENJAMIN PREACHES TO THE NEPHITES BY GARY L. KAPP



The Beatitudes encourage the development of dispositions toward meekness, mercy, purity of heart, and many other godly attributes.

Mount. Whereas the Ten Commandments prohibit certain behaviors such as murder, adultery, and profanity, the higher law forbids even the dispositions leading to these evil behaviors—respectively, anger, lustful thoughts, and any swearing at all (see Matt. 5:21–37; 3 Ne. 12:21–37). The Beatitudes encourage the development of dispositions toward meekness, mercy, purity of heart, and many other godly attributes (see Matt. 5:3–12; 3 Ne. 12:3–12). When one has a disposition to do good continually, the natural consequence will be to “abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thes. 5:22) and not to “look upon sin save it were with abhorrence” (Alma 13:12).

King Benjamin cautioned his people: “I cannot tell you all the things whereby ye may commit sin. . . . But this much I can tell you, that if ye do not watch yourselves, and your *thoughts*, and your *words*, and your *deeds*, and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish.” He then lovingly admonished the Saints to “remember, and perish not” (Mosiah 4:29–30; emphasis added; see Alma 12:14).

CULTIVATING DISPOSITIONS

Many people’s dispositions mirror the cultural traditions that they internalized while growing up. The widespread consumption of alcohol, immodesty of dress and behavior, and cohabitation without marriage are but a few examples of cultural traditions alien to the spirit of the gospel. So it is that the “wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers” (D&C 93:39). These traditions seem natural because most people in a given society engage in such behaviors, but the commandments of God are based upon revealed truth, not popular preferences. Thus, King Benjamin warned his people that “the natural man is an enemy

As they recognized the goodness of God, the people of Zarahemla also experienced a “peace of conscience” and were “filled with the love of God,” two further manifestations that they had been forgiven (see Mosiah 4:3, 12). They learned of other indicators of forgiveness: they would “not have a mind to injure one another” (Mosiah 4:13), nor would they permit their children to “transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another” (Mosiah 4:14). Another token of a remission of sins was their inclination to help those in need and a desire to “impart of the substance that [they] have one to another” (Mosiah 4:21).

At the conclusion of King Benjamin’s inspired address, the people believed all of his words, and they experienced a mighty change of heart and had “no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2). Perhaps of all the evidence of true conversion and a remission of sins, this is the most significant: *the disposition to do evil no more, but to do good continually.*

THE LAW OF MOSES AND THE HIGHER LAW

A focus on dispositions constitutes a significant distinction between the law of Moses and the higher law introduced by the Savior in the Sermon on the

to God,” and he exhorted them to put off the natural man, or in other words to reject unholy traditions and to undergo a mighty change in their natural dispositions by yielding “to the enticings of the Holy Spirit” (Mosiah 3:19).

Sometimes members become so fond of certain traditions within the Church that a change in a given policy or procedure becomes a test of their faith. They believe in continuous revelation as long as it does not involve change. Describing the Saints in his day, the Prophet Joseph Smith once exclaimed, “I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them . . . will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 331).

DISPOSITIONS GROW FROM DESIRES

The seeds of our disposition toward good or evil are largely sown by our desires. In teaching the wayward Zoramites how they could gain a knowledge of the truth, Alma admonished them to “exercise a particle of faith,” and if they could “no more than desire to believe, [to] let this desire work in [them]” (Alma 32:27). What begins as a fleeting desire, when cultivated and pursued long enough, becomes a habitual form of thought or behavior. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972), then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, observed, “It is just as easy to form good habits as it is to form evil ones” (*The Way to*

Perfection, 10th ed. [1953], 150). Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “A thoroughly truthful man cannot culpably lie; nevertheless his insurance against falsehood is not that of external compulsion, but of internal restraint due to his cultivated companionship of the spirit of truth” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 134).

The eternal consequences of our desires and dispositions were poignantly explained to Corianton by his father, Alma, who taught that “in the last day it shall be restored unto him according to his deeds. If he has desired to do evil, and has not repented in his days, behold, evil shall be done unto him, according to the restoration of God” (Alma 42:27–28).

The person who fails to pay an honest tithe may develop a disposition similar to the individual who robs a bank: the main differences are the victims and the methods. The Lord Himself asks: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings” (Mal. 3:8).

Individuals who act in unrighteous anger toward



Confession must be followed by cultivating a disposition to do evil no more, evidenced by completely forsaking sin, and this requires the passage of time.

a neighbor may develop dispositions like those of a dictator who would run roughshod over others.

Internet and TV addicts who sample Satan's smutty smorgasbord of pornography gain the same inclinations as the person who actually commits immoral acts; the dispositions differ only by degree.

James described this process in sequential detail: "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14–15). Our dispositions are generally manifest in our behaviors, and thus James gives each of us the challenge: "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18).

DEVELOPING A DISPOSITION TAKES TIME

Some potential missionaries or a few couples planning to be sealed in the temple are occasionally distraught to learn that recent transgressions will require them to wait a year or longer before claiming the blessings of a mission or a temple marriage. They wonder if their fasting, their tears, and their prayers are of no avail in demonstrating a broken heart and a contrite spirit as they ask, "Why must we now be required to wait so long?"

This seems to be a fair question, especially in light of the Lord's assurance, "By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them" (D&C 58:43). Confession is a crucial prerequisite to forgiveness, but confession must be followed by cultivating a disposition to do evil no more, evidenced by completely forsaking sin, and *this requires the passage of time*. Peter graphically likened those who briefly repent but do not overcome a disposition toward evil to "the dog [that] is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. 2:22). In latter-day revelation the Lord underscored the importance of developing a disposition to do good continually when He declared, "I, the Lord, will not lay any sin to your charge; go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God" (D&C 82:7).

After Saul of Tarsus beheld a blinding heavenly light and heard the voice of Jesus Christ, he dramatically transformed his life, and his name was changed to Paul. Following a period of temporary blindness, his sight was restored by a blessing at the hand of Ananias. The chronicler of Acts then recorded that "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20).

But Paul's own account of his conversion is more detailed than the version in Acts. Paul wrote the

Galatians that after his conversion he did not immediately join the other Apostles in Jerusalem; rather he "went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years," said he, "I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days" (Gal. 1:17–18). Even after preaching the gospel in Damascus, when he joined his brethren in Jerusalem "they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple" (Acts 9:26). Given Paul's reputation of previously having sought to destroy the Church, it took time for others to acknowledge that he had now developed the disposition of a disciple of Christ.

MANIFESTATIONS OF DISPOSITIONS

There are many manifestations of our disposition toward either good or evil. For example, we may perceive ourselves to be kind and charitable, but we may have a penchant for telling ethnic jokes that belie our compassion. We may think we are patient and long-suffering, but then others may observe our mild symptoms of road rage when another driver suddenly cuts in front of us. We may envisage ourselves to be compassionate and tolerant among our work associates and neighbors, while our immediate family members may view us as intolerant and unkind.

Our use of time, especially leisure time, reveals our dispositions toward good or evil. The Lord declared, "For he who is faithful and wise in time is accounted worthy to inherit the mansions prepared for him of my Father" (D&C 72:4). Some individuals fill weekends and free evenings with television, whereas others visit the temple, study the scriptures and read other great books, teach young children how to read and write, visit patients in hospitals, share the gospel with neighbors, work on their family history, and become involved in community improvement projects and countless other worthy activities. Theirs is the disposition to do good continually.

Our attitudes also reflect our dispositions toward good or evil. Chronic criticism and persistent pessimism and their fellow travelers—sarcasm and cynicism—often reflect a lack of faith and trust in the Lord and a gnawing impatience in awaiting for His great plan of happiness to unfold in our lives. Nephi strenuously admonished that we "must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men" (2 Ne. 31:20). In the final chapter of the Book of Mormon, Moroni reaffirmed that "there must be faith; and if there must be faith there must also be hope; and if there must be hope there must also be charity" (Moro. 10:20). He further taught that charity, faith, and hope are essential for salvation in the kingdom of God (see Moro. 10:21).

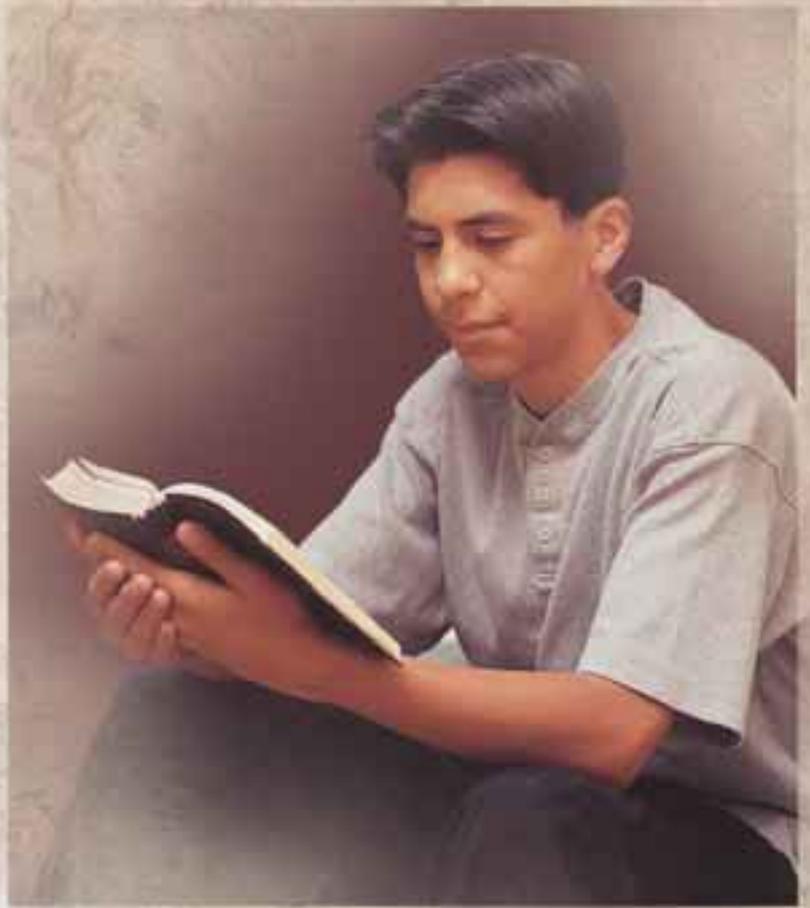
Our use of time, especially leisure time, reveals our dispositions toward good or evil.

Moroni then made a very important diagnostic declaration: “And if ye have no hope ye must needs be in despair; and despair cometh because of iniquity” (Moro. 10:22). Moroni did *not* say despair occurs because of *adversity*. There are countless individuals whose pockmarked souls have been tested to the limit, but they remain faithful and steadfast. It is *iniquity* which begets despair, because iniquity alienates the Comforter, who is a great source of faith and hope. Despair is manifest by a lack of faith, an absence of hope, and a failure to practice charity toward those who may have offended us or who may have tried to destroy our dreams. Without the healing intervention of faith, hope, and charity, disappointment soon turns to grief and then to despair. President Boyd K. Packer, now Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve, reassures us: “It was meant to be that life would be a challenge. To suffer some anxiety, some depression, some disappointment, even some failure is normal.” He then adds: “Teach our members that if they have a good, miserable day once in a while, or several in a row, to stand steady and face them. Things will straighten out. There is great purpose in our struggle in life” (“*That All May Be Edified*” [1982], 94). As long as we live righteously and continue to nourish our testimony and our faith, increase our trust and hope in a loving Heavenly Father, and persist in dealing with others with charity, the pure love of Christ, our disappointments will ultimately not turn to anguish, hopelessness, and despair.

HUMAN AND DIVINE DISPOSITIONS

It is good to contrast our human dispositions with the divine disposition of Jesus Christ. During His earthly ministry the Savior humbly acknowledged, “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, . . . for I do always those things that please him” (John 8:28–29). In the Garden of Gethsemane, in the depths of agony, He compliantly prayed, “Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42), thus reflecting “the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father” (Mosiah 15:7).

After Abraham was commanded to sacrifice his



son Isaac, he demonstrated to the Lord and to his posterity that he had a disposition to do good continually, as he “rose up *early* in the morning” (Gen. 22:3; emphasis added) to make necessary preparations for the sacrifice he anticipated would be required of him.

Joseph, Abraham’s great-grandson, provides another impressive example of an undeviating disposition to elude evil and to do good continually. When his master’s wife sought to seduce him, Joseph indignantly responded, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9). Then he fled from her presence. Joseph had decided long before meeting Potiphar’s wife that he would never offend God.

After Alma had been reviled and spat upon and cast out of the city of Ammonihah, an angel appeared to him and commanded him to return to the same hostile environment from which he had been rejected. His love of God in preference to any fear of men and his disposition to do good are reflected in the fact that “he returned *speedily* to the land of Ammonihah” (Alma 8:18; emphasis added).

When the Prophet Joseph Smith recounted the events surrounding the First Vision and the subsequent appearance of the angel Moroni, he confessed that, on occasion, he had “displayed the weakness of youth, and the foibles of human nature,” but he



We strengthen our disposition to do good each time we make and keep covenants.

you. . . . For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you" (Matt. 5:44; 6:14).

The Prophet Joseph Smith's words apply to President Gordon B. Hinckley: "A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race" (*Teachings*, 174). President Gordon B. Hinckley's exhausting travel schedule, exhausting to those who accompany him, demonstrates his disposition to do good continually by forgoing the comforts of home in order to bless the Saints throughout the earth.

THE "DISPOSITION OF ALMOST ALL MEN"

In modern revelation the Lord has forewarned us "that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion" (D&C 121:39). I can detect unrighteous dominion more easily in others than I can in myself. I may consider myself to be candid, resolute, and exacting,

whereas others may consider me to be unkind, intransigent, and unreasonable. One of the great safeguards against a disposition toward unrighteous dominion is the *presidency principle* and the *council system* in the Church. When leaders humbly seek and listen to the counsel of others, and when family members counsel together, they can generally make decisions which will receive the ratifying approbation of the Lord (see D&C 107:26–30).

Our disposition to do good or evil is often reflected in our interpretations of the commandments and our reactions to the counsel of the Brethren. For example, some individuals seek to negotiate a very *narrow* definition of tithing but prefer a very *broad* interpretation of the Word of Wisdom. In the words of Elder Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "There are those among us who are trying to serve the Lord without offending the devil" (*The Price of Peace*, BYU Speeches of the Year [1 Mar. 1955], 7). But there are many other faithful Latter-day Saints whose lives reflect the disposition of the Savior, who always sought to do those things which pleased His Father (see John 8:29).

hastened to add that "no one need suppose me guilty of any great or malignant sins. A disposition to commit such was never in my nature" (JS—H 1:28). The Prophet's natural disposition to do good was demonstrated during Zion's Camp. In May of 1834, the Prophet and his brethren were in the process of pitching their tents on the Illinois prairie when some of the brethren suddenly discovered three rattlesnakes and were about to kill them. The Prophet immediately intervened, teaching: "Let them alone—don't hurt them! How will the serpent ever lose his venom, while the servants of God possess the same disposition, and continue to make war upon it? Men must become harmless, before the brute creation; and when men lose their vicious dispositions and cease to destroy the animal race, the lion and the lamb can dwell together, and the sucking child can play with the serpent in safety" (*History of the Church*, 2:71). The Prophet Joseph lived as he preached.

Such is the disposition engendered by the Savior's admonition to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute

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. How can we develop a disposition to do good continually?
2. Why does it take time to change our habits? What help does the Lord offer us?
3. What link is there between repentance and developing a disposition to do good?

COVENANT KEEPERS

We can strengthen our disposition to do good each time we make and keep covenants. Each time we participate in priesthood ordinances, the powers from on high reach downward and draw us nearer to the heavens. Those who partake of the sacrament and temple ordinances with pure hearts and who faithfully keep their covenants require no lengthy instructions regarding modest dress, the payment of generous fast offerings and tithing, observance of the Word of Wisdom, or keeping the Sabbath day holy. They need no stern reminders to share the gospel with others, to attend the temple frequently, to conduct family history research, or to do their home teaching or visiting teaching. Nor do they need nudges to visit the sick and to serve those in need.

These are the faithful Saints of the Most High who keep the sacred covenants they have made in the house of the Lord, "having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins" (D&C 20:37). Covenant keepers "are willing to bear one another's burdens" and "are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things" (Mosiah 18:8-9). They live the law of consecration. Their time, talents, and financial resources all belong to the Lord.

Keeping their covenants has caused them to develop a disposition to do good continually, and they are "willing to take upon them the name of [the] Son, and *always* remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them" (D&C 20:77; emphasis added). Keeping covenants qualifies them

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that "when men lose their vicious dispositions . . . , the lion and the lamb can dwell together."



to claim the promised blessing of the sacramental prayer that "they may *always* have his Spirit to be with them" (D&C 20:77; emphasis added), and the continual companionship of the Spirit cultivates a disposition to do good.

I pray that we may "press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men" (2 Ne. 31:20). As we do so, we may become like King Benjamin's people, having "no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2). □

Gospel topics: repentance, conversion, covenants, good works

More on this topic: See Richard G. Scott, "The Path to Peace and Joy," Ensign, Nov. 2000, 25-27; Keith Crockett, "Retaining a Remission of Sin," Ensign, Nov. 2000, 79-80; Bible Dictionary, "Repentance," 760-61.

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ORDINANCES & COVENANTS

*Sacred ordinances and covenants provide
an endowment of divine power in our lives.*



BY ELDER DENNIS B.
NEUENSCHWANDER
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

We are all aware that the mission of the Church is “to help bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man by inviting all people to come unto Christ and be perfected in Him.”¹ One of the most significant teachings given by the Savior to the Apostles just prior to His arrest is this one recorded in John: “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”² This same doctrine was taught by King Benjamin in these words: “There shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.”³

These and many other scriptures, both ancient and modern, attest to the fundamental doctrine that Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice stand at the very center of the plan of salvation. For a Latter-day Saint, the doctrine of salvation only in and through the name of Jesus Christ and the Church’s mission to invite all to come to Him pertain to all who have lived, or will ever live, on this earth. This doctrine is inclusive by its very nature and excludes or exempts no one. In answer to the question of how the Church accomplishes this mission to invite all to come unto Christ, we all quickly respond: “by proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead.” We would not be wrong, of course. But in such a quick answer we miss some very critical pieces of information. The exact response to the question as set forth includes these statements:

Proclaiming the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people and preparing them to receive the *ordinances and covenants of the gospel*.

Perfecting the Saints by preparing them to receive the *ordinances and covenants of the gospel* and by instruction and discipline to gain exaltation.

Redeeming the dead by performing *vicarious ordinances of the gospel* for those who have lived on the earth.

Participation in sacred ordinances, both live and vicarious, and fidelity or obedience to the covenants associated with those ordinances are fundamental to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to the process of coming to Him and being perfected in Him. It is on this fundamental role of ordinances and covenants that I would like to focus.

In a very broad sense, everything ordained and established by God’s authority with the intent that it be applied in the lives of His children may be referred to as His ordinances. Consequently, the commandments,



Participation in sacred ordinances and obedience to the covenants associated with those ordinances are fundamental to the process of coming to Jesus Christ and being perfected in Him.



statutes, decrees, and requirements of God are properly defined as the ordinances of God. Understood in a somewhat narrower sense, ordinances are also solemn acts or ceremonies that have very specific sacred and holy purposes, significance, and meaning. My reference to ordinances is in this narrower application.

DIFFERENT VIEWS ON ORDINANCES

I would like to make a few general observations concerning the role of ordinances in the modern Christian world. In Protestant denominations, grace and faith have gained ascendancy as the primary, or sole, requirements of salvation. The more singular the role of grace in the process of salvation, the less important is the role of ordinances in that process. That is, if I believe that God arbitrarily decides whether I will or will not be saved, then my participation in ordinances will have little overall effect. Likewise, if faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the primary or only requirement of salvation, there is

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed."

again little need for personal participation in ordinances. Additionally, if faith alone is the determining factor in salvation, one must somehow deal with the billions of people who have never heard of Christ or had the opportunity to confess His name.

As personal participation in ordinances loses significance, the importance of divine authority also becomes less significant. If this is true, then one baptism is as good as another. Indeed, many churches accept the baptisms performed by other churches as valid. Consequently, the concept of divine authority and the importance of properly administered ordinances as requirements of salvation are greatly diminished.

There is a corollary observation. The more claim a church has on antiquity and apostolic authority, the more prominent the emphasis on sacred ordinances and upon divine authority to perform them. The Catholic Church in the Western development of Christianity and the Orthodox Church in the East both assume this position. Each claims divine authority and teaches the importance of sacred ordinances referred to as sacraments in the Western tradition, and mysteries in the Eastern. Of these there are basically seven: baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, repentance (including confession), holy orders, marriage, and anointing, either of the sick or prior to death.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also claims an ancient origin and thereby places exceptional importance both on the role of ordinances and covenants and on the necessity of divine authority to administer them. The third article of faith teaches, "We believe that through the

Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel."⁴

Sacred ordinances and the divine authority to administer them did not begin with the Restoration of the gospel and the founding of the modern Church in 1830. The sacred ordinances of the gospel as requirements for salvation and exaltation were "instituted from before the foundation of the world."⁵

They have always been an immutable part of the gospel. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to

be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles."⁶

If this were not the case, salvation would indeed be an arbitrary matter and would be restricted to those few who may have been fortunate enough to have heard of, and believed in, Jesus Christ. It is this principle of consistent and unalterable requirements that gives true meaning to the performance of vicarious ordinances in the temple. The Prophet wrote that baptism for the dead and the recording of such baptisms conform "to the ordinance and preparation that the Lord ordained and prepared before the foundation of the world, for the salvation of the dead who should die without a knowledge of the gospel."⁷

Through time and apostasy following Christ's Resurrection and Ascension, however, the divine authority of the priesthood and the sacred ordinances were changed or lost, and the associated covenants were broken. The Lord revealed His displeasure over this situation in these words:

"For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

"They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god."⁸

This situation required a restoration of knowledge pertaining to the importance, significance, and appointed administration of sacred gospel ordinances, both live and vicarious, as well as the divine authority of the priesthood and priesthood keys to administer them.

May we now turn our attention to a discussion of some of the factors that make personal and worthy participation in sacred gospel ordinances, properly administered, so significant in our determination to come unto Christ and be perfected in Him.

A WAY TO KNOW GOD

First, *through personal participation in sacred gospel ordinances we come to know God.* I refer to the 84th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, in which we read:

"And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

"Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.

"And without the ordinances thereof, and the

authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh."⁹

Our participation in sacred ordinances teaches much about the order of God's kingdom and about Him. For example, it seems strange to think that one could enter a temple to perform some of the most sacred ordinances before submitting to baptism, which is one of the initial ordinances of the gospel. There is order in the kingdom of God, and there is order in the way we learn about it. To Nephi the Lord said, "I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have."¹⁰

Elsewhere the Lord has stated, "That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day."¹¹

We do not receive everything at one time but receive knowledge of holy things progressively and incrementally as we are worthy of, and obedient to, such knowledge. From the first ordinance of the kingdom, baptism, we progress through other ordinances such as confirmation and ordination to the priesthood, all of which lead to the most holy of ordinances, which are performed in the temple. Our participation in the sacred ordinances of the gospel orders our knowledge of the kingdom and thereby reveals the nature of God to us.

Sacred ordinances and knowledge of God are closely related. Therefore, what are some of the things we learn about God by participating in His appointed ordinances? Let us take baptism as an example. Baptism by immersion is for the remission of sins. One who has fully repented of his or her sins and with full purpose of heart receives baptism knows that God not only has the power to forgive and to take away the burden of guilt associated with sin, but that He does so. This person knows, through personal experience, something about God and His magnificent power and kindness. The only way to truly know these things is by participating worthily in the ordinance of baptism itself.

Baptism opens the door to the kingdom of God, through which one now not only passes cleanly but



As we partake of the sacrament, we express our willingness to take the name of Christ upon us, to always remember Him, and to keep His commandments.

with a sure knowledge that God forgives. The same can be said of all other sacred ordinances of the gospel. Over time and with obedience, we progress into the ordinances of the temple, where our convictions are strengthened that our most precious relationships are not affected by death. This knowledge we receive by participating in the ordinances that are meant to teach us such things. Otherwise, they will not and cannot be known. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught the following relating to knowing essential holy truth through our participation in sacred ordinances: "Reading the experience of others, or the revelation given to *them*, can never give *us* a comprehensive view of our condition and true relation to God. Knowledge of these things can only be obtained by experience through the ordinances of God set forth for that purpose."¹²

As sacred ordinances reveal the order of the kingdom of God in a progressive manner, our participation in them reveals to us a knowledge of the personality and character of God that can be gained in no other way.

A GATEWAY TO COVENANTS

Second, *sacred gospel ordinances are the gateway to solemn covenants with God*. Ordinances and covenants can hardly be understood apart from each other. By ordinances we enter into covenants, and by covenants we receive the ordinances. Though there may be ordinances that do not have an associated covenant—such as the blessing and naming of children, anointing of the sick, or blessings of comfort—there is no eternal covenant that is not connected to an ordinance. Our important steps toward God are introduced by sacred ordinances and are governed by the conditions of the covenants associated with those ordinances.

Perhaps it would be good at this point to make just a comment on the nature of covenants. Eternal covenants are extended or offered to us only by God. He is the originator of all such covenants, as He is the only one who has authority and power to guarantee their validity beyond the grave.

"And everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after

men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God."¹³

We cannot originate such covenants because we do not possess the power to guarantee them. Consequently, we can only enter into covenants that are offered to us by God, and we can enter them only in the way He prescribes. Examples of this, of course, are obvious and numerous. The gospel itself is the new and everlasting covenant between God and man. We can enter into that covenant in only one way: through baptism by immersion for the remission of our sins. Without obeying the ordinance, we can neither enter the covenant nor receive its blessings. God is the only one who can extend forgiveness of sins and bestow the blessings of membership in His kingdom that come through baptism. Such blessings, of course, include the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The ordinances of baptism and the sacrament are bound together inseparably. Through baptism we receive a remission of our

sins. Through the sacrament we "retain a remission" of sins.¹⁴ By participating in baptism and the sacrament, we agree, or covenant, that we are willing to take the name of Christ upon us, to keep His commandments, and to always remember Him. In both instances, based upon our obedience to the ordinances, God extends the promise, or covenant, that we would have His Spirit to be with us. Understanding the nature of the covenant and living in accordance with its requirements give life and meaning to the ordinance itself.

The Lord asks this question: "Will I receive at your hands that which I have not appointed?"¹⁵ The appointed authority in performing a sacred gospel ordinance is as essential to the validity of the ordinance as the ordinance itself is to the covenant that accompanies it. The Savior told Joseph in the initial visitation, "'They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a *form of godliness*, but they deny the power thereof.'"¹⁶

The "form of godliness" may have reference to ordinances common to many Christian churches, such as baptism, the sacrament, and marriage. These all may share similarity in their performance, but

The power of the Atonement itself is unlocked by sacred gospel ordinances performed under the keys of the priesthood.

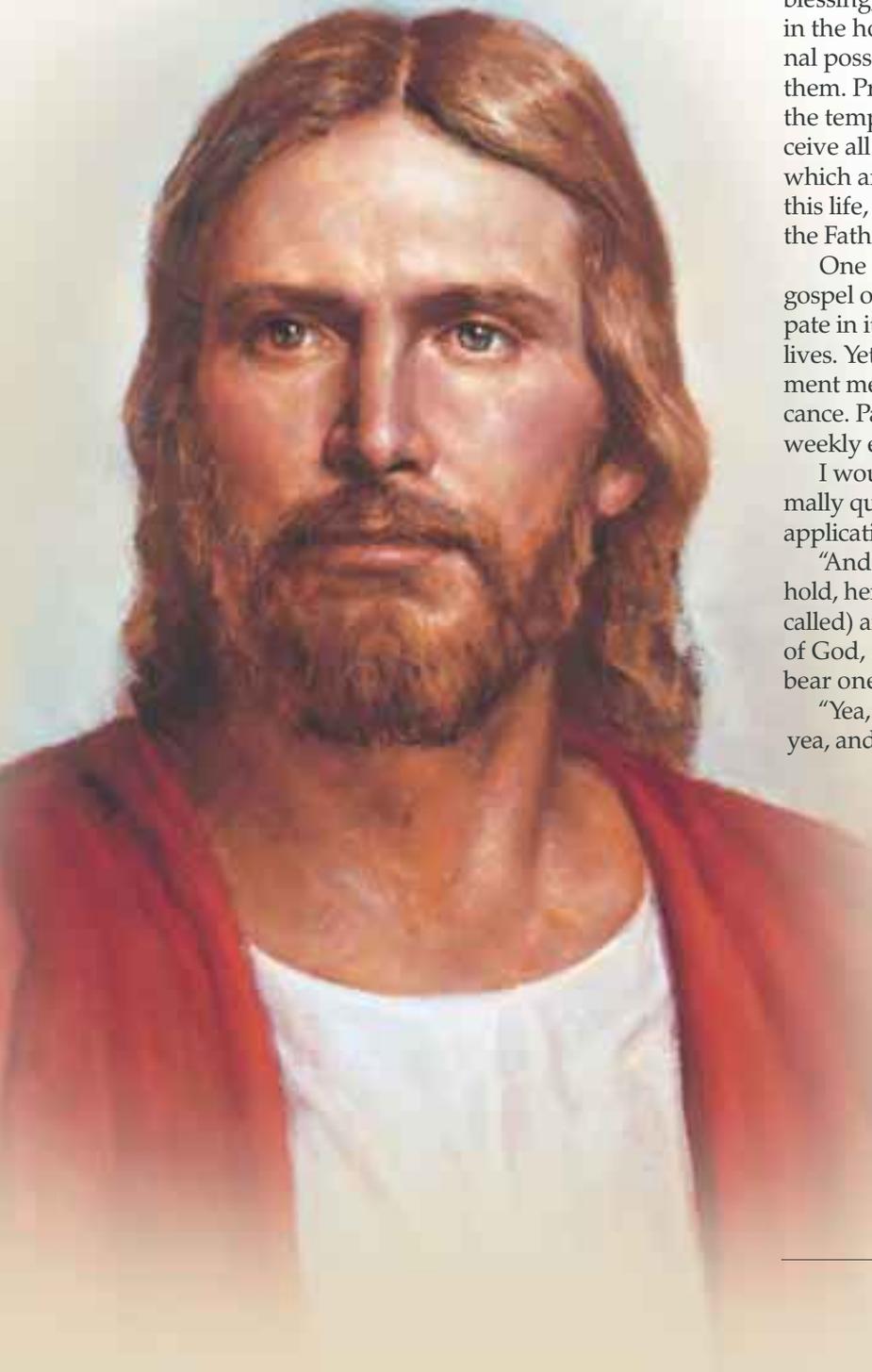


From the first ordinance of the kingdom, baptism, we progress through other ordinances such as confirmation and ordination to the priesthood.

without the priesthood authority and the accompanying covenant, the power of the ordinance is denied. If we eliminate priesthood authority and the covenant portion of an ordinance, we are left only with the “form of godliness.”

AN ENDOWMENT OF DIVINE POWER

Third, *sacred ordinances provide an endowment of divine power in our lives*. In His conversation with Pilate, the Savior said, “My kingdom is not of this world.”¹⁷ Numerous scriptures teach us that there is natural enmity between the world and the kingdom of God.



One of the things that set the kingdom of God apart is the sense of the holy that exists therein. The world can have a sense only of the secular. Worthy participation in sacred gospel ordinances changes our lives and brings blessings and power to us that we would otherwise not enjoy. The power of the Atonement itself is unlocked by sacred gospel ordinances that are performed under the keys of the priesthood. Remission of sins is extended through the ordinance of baptism. Confirmation brings with it the promise of the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. Ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood opens the way for “every man [to] speak in the name of God”¹⁸ by teaching, blessing, and comforting others. Worthy participation in the holy ordinances of the temple reveals our eternal possibilities and places us in a position to realize them. President Brigham Young (1801–77) taught of the temple endowment: “Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels.”¹⁹

One of the most beautiful yet most common of the gospel ordinances is that of the sacrament. We participate in it literally thousands of times throughout our lives. Yet because of its ever-present nature in our sacrament meetings, we can easily miss its supernal significance. Partaking worthily of the sacrament can bring a weekly endowment of divine power in our lives.

I would like to refer to a scripture which we normally quote in context of baptism, but has wonderful application to sacrament meeting as well:

“And it came to pass that [Alma] said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon (for thus were they called) and now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light;

“Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort. . . .

“ . . . What have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord?”²⁰

Isn’t this a perfect description of a sacrament meeting? Should we not all come to that meeting mourning for our sins and willing to mourn with others over this same matter? The Savior’s promise in the Sermon on the Mount is that those who mourn will be comforted. This occurs during the administration of the sacrament. I think this is why we come to sacrament meeting. As we partake of the sacrament, we express our willingness to take the name of Christ upon us, to always remember Him,

and to keep His commandments. For this, God extends His covenant that we will always have His Spirit to be with us. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter. As we come to the sacrament mourning for our sins, so may we also leave comforted and forgiven of our sins. Is it any wonder, then, that those who stay away from this sacred ordinance also estrange themselves from the covenant associated with it?

Sacred ordinances are ordained of God. They are essential to our salvation and exaltation. Through the sacred ordinances of the gospel, we learn of His kingdom and learn of Him, we enter into holy and eternal covenants, and we receive an endowment of divine power in our lives. All of these things bring us to Christ that we may be perfected in Him.

I bear my witness that we can come unto Christ and be perfected in Him by our worthy participation in the sacred ordinances appointed by God and instituted from before the foundation of the world. I testify of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and to the saving power of His holy name. □

From a fireside address at Brigham Young University on 27 October 2000.

Gospel topics: ordinances, covenants, faith

NOTES

1. The Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
2. John 14:6.
3. Mosiah 3:17.
4. A of F 1:3.
5. D&C 124:33.
6. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 308.
7. D&C 128:5.
8. D&C 1:15–16.
9. D&C 84:19–21.
10. 2 Ne. 28:30.
11. D&C 50:24.
12. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 324; emphasis in original.
13. D&C 132:13.
14. See Mosiah 4:11–12.
15. D&C 132:10.
16. JS—H 1:19; emphasis added.
17. John 18:36.
18. D&C 1:20.
19. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 302.
20. Mosiah 18:8–10.

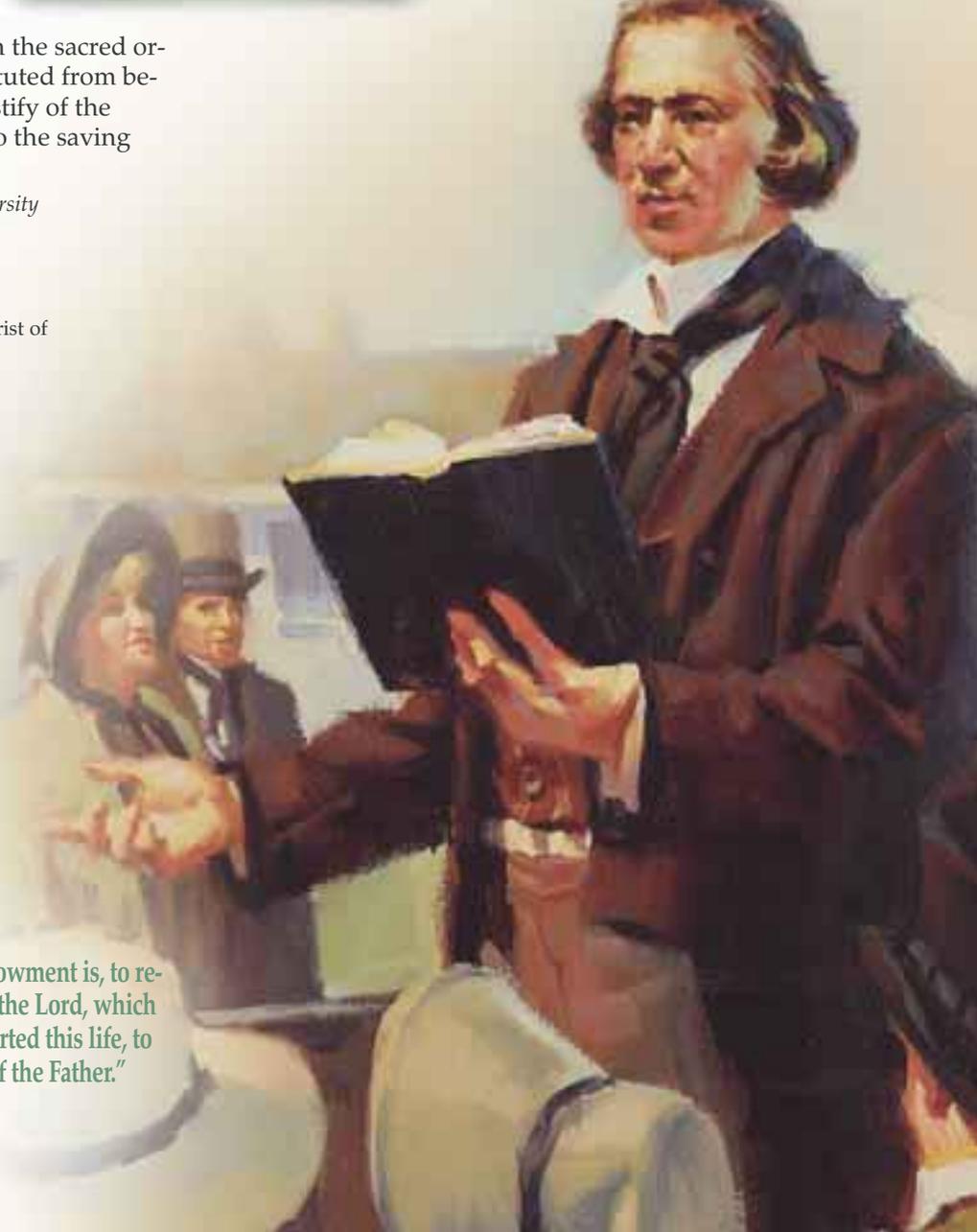
President Brigham Young said, “Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father.”

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. How are gospel ordinances gateways to covenants with God?
2. In what ways have gospel ordinances and covenants made a difference in your life?
3. How can we more fully participate in the sacrament each week?

More on this topic: See *Guide to the Scriptures*, “Covenant,” 55; “The Lord’s Covenant People,” chapter 15 of *Gospel Principles*; Bruce D. Porter, “The First Principles and Ordinances of the Gospel,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2000, 8–15.



Seeking the Son

BY JEANNIE LANCASTER

One morning several years ago, I felt discouragement wrap itself around me, draining my enthusiasm and slowing my movements to a crawl.

My two sons, both of whom have developmental disabilities, were struggling. Their progress up to that point had been slow but steady, yet now it seemed to be at a standstill. Though in the past I had generally been able to meet such challenges with some level of optimism, on that morning I wasn't sure I could. The specialists had always told me my sons needed a calm, patient, consistent mother who could provide structure and support coupled with lots of love. I was sure this wonderful woman existed somewhere, but at that moment I felt fairly confident she was not within the walls of my home.

As I passed the bathroom mirror, evidence of my defeat at the battle of the bulge assaulted my eyes. The cobwebs I found clinging in the corners of the hallway reconfirmed my assumption that I would most assuredly not receive the "Homemaker of the Year" award. Yes, I had given in to discouragement, and I was wallowing in it.

In the past I had found that vigorously doing some physical work helped to lift my spirits. So I set to work, stripping sheets off beds and cleaning the perpetual clutter in my sons' room. But it didn't seem to help. I didn't feel better.



It was then that I felt compelled to pause for a moment and gaze out the window at our front yard. The broad branches of a towering juniper kept the corner of our house in quiet shade. Other spreading junipers provided abundant ground cover. Out of the corner of my eye I spotted a flash of yellow. Looking closer, I realized it was the last remnant of some daffodils I had planted years ago, before the encroaching junipers had dominated the limited supply of sunlight.

But this daffodil was different from others I had seen. Its stem was not straight and tall as might be expected but was bent in a unique way. Bursting from the ground, it had hit upon the branches of the abrasive junipers. But instead of shrinking and dying, it had found a way to bend and reach out around the ominous branches. It had found the light, and it had flourished!

This may seem like a simple experience, but for me at that moment, it was profound. How like that daffodil we all need to be! Experiences often confront us that seem insurmountable, that sap our energy and faith. We can allow ourselves to shrink and wither away, just as the other daffodils had done, or we can struggle and search out a way to find the light. The purest form of light is our Savior, Jesus Christ. He is the one real source of peace in our life, and in following Him we can find an abundance of light and joy.

I still get discouraged at times. But I find strength from a lesson taught by a victorious daffodil on an early spring day. □

Jeannie Lancaster is a member of the Big Thompson Ward, Greeley Colorado Stake.

Gospel topics: hope, discouragement, adversity

Instead of shrinking and dying, the daffodil had found a way to reach out around the ominous branches of the junipers. It had found the light, and it had flourished.



An elderly couple is walking together in a park. The man, on the left, is wearing a brown sweater and light-colored pants. The woman, on the right, is wearing a matching brown sweater and light-colored pants. They are both smiling and looking towards each other. The background shows trees and a bright, sunny atmosphere.

HAPPINESS, HEALTH, AND

Marriage

BY ELIZABETH VANDENBERGHE

Evidence from a wide variety of sources supports the truth that marriage shaped by eternal principles is the path to greatest happiness and well-being in this life.

“**M**arriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God,” declared the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in “The Family: a Proclamation to the World.”¹ They went on to say that marriage is “essential to [God’s] eternal plan,” with husbands and wives under “solemn responsibility to love and care for each other.”

Then in 1999 President Gordon B. Hinckley reemphasized the crucial role of marriage with his admonition that “God-sanctioned marriage between a man and a woman has been the basis of civilization for thousands of years. There is no justification to redefine what marriage is.”² Yet people keep trying to redefine it to legitimize worldly philosophies or to serve their own agendas. Increasingly, believers in God-ordained marriage are called on to defend the institution from those who say it is irrelevant or passé. Parents often find themselves looking for ways to demonstrate the importance of marriage to their children who are bombarded by pressures from the world and, all too often, from their friends and associates.

A few decades ago, a proclamation on marriage and its validity would hardly have seemed necessary. Alternative definitions of marriage didn’t exist, and there were no movies, television shows, books, or other media products promoting alternative lifestyles. But any examination of marriage today requires consideration of a divorce rate over 50 percent and a high acceptance in some areas of cohabitation, which enables couples to forgo commitment for a living-together arrangement that lasts, on the average, two years.³ Some now call marriage just another lifestyle choice and even question whether it needs to exist between a man and a woman. One respected reviewer has commented that family studies textbooks often “downplay the value of marriage,” employing warm platitudes to describe nontraditional unions and

reserving heavy criticism for conventional marriages.⁴

Not surprisingly, a recent study conducted by prominent social scientists David Popenoe and Barbara Defoe Whitehead found that young people in the United States today are increasingly apprehensive and pessimistic about marriage. They display a remarkable increase in acceptance of out-of-wedlock childbearing, single parenting, and living together before marriage. No wonder the number of people getting married in the United States has dropped so markedly.⁵

Is the traditional definition of marriage urged by “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” a lost cause? Is it true that the proclamation’s high ideals are merely anachronisms befitting earlier times? When the question arises, should defenders of the family concede that marriage is simply *their* personal preference?

A growing body of academic research and a burgeoning group of scholars in family studies are saying a firm “no” to all of those questions. Informed by an abundance of objective, highly respected studies of various countries, races, and economic classes, many social scientists now affirm that marriage is of great advantage to the well-being of men and women in a myriad of ways. In assuring happiness, a lasting marriage proves more beneficial physically, mentally, and economically than exercise programs, medical treatments, therapy sessions, or financial investments.⁶ Of course, statistics merely reflect general tendencies, and there are many exceptions. Conversely, unhappy marriages run a complex gamut—from the dissatisfied couples for whom the present marriage, though flawed, is better than the alternative, to partners who inflict harm on each other. Thus the following recital of benefits applies to happy marriages, the ideal that so many people still seek.



THE FOUNDATION OF HAPPINESS



"Happiness at home is most likely to be achieved when practices there are founded upon the teachings of Jesus Christ."

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Our Sacred Duty to Honor Women," *Ensign*, May 1999, 39–40.

Findings reaffirm that marriage relationships need to be built on righteous principles—"a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other," in the words of the proclamation. It is clear that marriages based on righteous principles are the kind of marriages that lead to lasting happiness.

Of course, academic studies deal in objective statistics and trends, not exceptions. While happily married people may enjoy an advantage in the statistics, this does not mean a devoted husband or wife will automatically escape problems common to all human beings—illness, financial strain, anxiety, and so forth. Neither do the statistics indicate that single individuals—widowed, divorced, or never-married—cannot be happy or achieve meaningful lives with physical, emotional, and economic stability. As many never-married, divorced, or widowed Latter-day Saints have discovered, reliance on the Lord brings spiritual and other compensations that research cannot quantify.

What the current research does offer to a secular world is objective evidence to support the teachings of God through the ages by the mouths of His prophets. These studies enable beleaguered defenders of traditional marriage to add proof to moral and religious convictions when they are called on to defend marriage in a modern society that often rejects it as an institution, discounting or denying its moral basis. Moreover, the findings reported here can help couples appreciate the subtle but powerful blessings that can be theirs as they build their marriages on righteous principles.

HEALTH AND LONGEVITY

Overall, married people live longer, a statistical reality that is true across many different cultures, societies, and demographic groups.⁷ Typically, married people suffer less from illness and disease and are better off when they do fall ill.⁸ In fact, even illness recovery rates for married individuals are much higher than in the unmarried population.⁹ Married men and women also exhibit fewer risk-taking behaviors such as drunk driving, smoking, or drug abuse and have lower rates of suicide and alcoholism.¹⁰

Some researchers argue that all of these benefits result merely from *selectivity*: the likelihood that already healthy individuals are selected into marriage. However, since research shows that positive health changes often take place after marriage, many individuals lean toward a *causal*, rather than a selection, theory: marriage itself causes good things to happen with one's health.¹¹

Why? One psychology professor theorizes that the constant companionship between a husband and wife creates a "tranquilizing effect" which lessens the chances of disease, assists in recovery, and offers motivation to stay alive and well.¹² Other analysts see a "safety net" that encourages healthy behavior: spouses remind each other to eat well, establish regular sleep patterns, and see the doctor periodically.¹³

Men, in particular, benefit from such a safety net. While a woman's statistical chance of dying decreases gradually over time once she marries, a man almost immediately upon marrying experiences a sharp statistical decrease in the hazard of dying. Researchers point to the improved lifestyle many men encounter in marriage, one which counteracts such tendencies as irregular meal and sleep habits and a lack of social integration.¹⁴

For those concerned only with eating right and exercising to stay healthy, marriage researcher John Gottman offers a suggestion that aptly summarizes the research: "Remember," he says, "working briefly on your marriage every day will do more for your health and longevity than working out at a health club."¹⁵

MENTAL HEALTH AND PEACE OF MIND

In general, married people exhibit lower rates of depression and suffer significantly less from psychiatric disorders.¹⁶ Married people also enjoy higher general well-being than any unmarried segment of the population. One researcher says, "No part of the unmarried population—separated, divorced, widowed, or never married—describes itself as being so happy and contented with life as the married."¹⁷ These findings extend across racial, national, and socioeconomic class boundaries.

How to explain the correlation between marriage and happiness? Researchers point to several reasons, prime among them being the spiritual connection marriage offers to a couple's deepest values. In many cultures, a wedding usually means not just a legal tie but also a sacred vow before God and a religious community. The union between man and wife, according to John Gottman, often brings "a spiritual dimension that has to do with creating an inner life together."¹⁸ The deeper this shared spiritual meaning, the better the marriage, and the happier the people involved.

Some observers see a lasting marriage as offering a solid anchor in today's rapidly changing, complex society. Men and women participate simultaneously as parents, in careers, in the community, and in

Research shows that married people enjoy higher general well-being than unmarried segments of the population. This finding extends across racial, national, and socio-economic class boundaries.



Happiness

hobbies. In marriage, social scientists suggest, people can successfully bring all of their different roles together: husbands and wives can discuss children's problems, discuss work, and plan strategies for the future of family and career within a stable union which offers a secure base in a complicated world.¹⁹

Marriage also can promote mental well-being by offering an extended social network. Spouses may be able to lean on the spiritual and emotional resources of two families, in effect doubling their support system in both bad and good times.²⁰ Marriage can contribute to happiness by satisfying the deep human need for emotional closeness, providing a constant companion with whom to raise a family, go to church, and pray. It can also provide someone to take on the tasks one spouse is not good at—perhaps financial planning or cooking, for example—allowing each to focus on his or her strengths. This may sound simple, but experts say the “labor specialization” that comes in marriage works, and it does have an impact on peace of mind.²¹

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Research findings show that marriage and financial security are interconnected. Getting and *staying* married offer strong economic advantages. Generally, married couples are better off financially and save more than divorced, never-married, and widowed households. Per capita, they tend to invest greater amounts for education or retirement.²²

Typically, married women are better off economically than single women. Much of that financial advantage comes because a husband, in general, has greater earning power in today's society. When a marriage dissolves and there are children involved, the results can be devastating because single mothers are at a greater economic disadvantage.²³ But men also lose financially with divorce; a man's financial well-being is greatly diminished, and later remarriage usually does not bring recovery.²⁴

Obviously, not all single or divorced individuals face economic difficulties, just as not all married couples are well-off or frugal. But the economic security that a stable marriage generally offers doesn't mean being able to remodel the house every few years. It means greater access to food, clothing, health care, and education. It can also mean a secure life away from unsafe areas.

Studies unequivocally show that current levels of poverty result more from family structure than from economic factors. Where there is only one parent—usually a single mother—there is often poverty. Conversely, a stable, two-parent family, as the Progressive Policy Institute declares, “is [a] child’s best protection against poverty.”²⁵

SEXUAL FULFILLMENT

Evidence defies the deceptive notion, prevalent in society, that marriage is sexually repressive and that affairs outside of it are fulfilling. This lie persists from years past and is perpetuated by a constant stream of movies, television, and books depicting the staple tale of the philandering husband or wife looking for excitement outside an affectionless marriage. However, this media image of sex, according to a researcher involved in a landmark study on the subject, “bears virtually no relationship to the truth.”²⁶

The truth lies much closer to the proclamation’s strong affirmation that “the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.” Those who abide by this moral code are much better off than those who don’t, according to consistent findings of research published in sources such as *The Journal of the American Medical Association* and *The National Health and Social Life Survey*.

Faithfully married people report being extremely satisfied with the physical intimacy in their relationships, more so than all other sexually active people. Married

men and women are least likely to associate sex with feelings of fear, anxiety, or guilt.²⁷ Also, unmarried couples who abstain from premarital sex are less likely to separate or divorce after marriage. Further, studies show that brides and grooms who have practiced chastity are less likely to have attitudes about marriage that contribute to adultery, divorce, and lower satisfaction with a married partner.²⁸

Research studies show that the factors vital to success in marriage include religious faith, commitment to an enduring relationship, and ability to solve problems together.

PHOTO BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



Health

THE CAPACITY TO LOVE



"The deeper our own mental, emotional, and spiritual reserves are, the greater will be our capacity to nurture and love others, especially our companion."

Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy,
"A Union of Love and Understanding,"
Ensign, Oct. 1994, 48.

Conversely, says the research, those who abuse the sacred powers of procreation through premarital sex or living together ultimately find that the benefits of marriage do not extend to them.

While the late 20th century saw an enormous proliferation in the number of men and women living together without a marriage license, research data clearly show that cohabiting couples experience greater conflict, lower-quality relationships, less stability, and less equality for the women involved. Women who live with a man outside of marriage also experience much higher levels of depression and economic insecurity and are more likely to be forced into sexual relationships against their will. Both men and women involved in a cohabiting relationship report lower levels of sexual satisfaction, with infidelity a prime problem.²⁹

Further, when cohabiting couples do marry, they display very high divorce rates throughout the world, with one study finding that individuals who cohabit tend to marry, divorce, and then live with someone again. The marriage phase can often be marked by drunkenness, adultery, and drug abuse, and the cohabiting phase by a distinct separateness in handling finances, spending free time, and envisioning the future.³⁰

What of remarriage after divorce? Judging from the statistics, it does not generate all the benefits of a first marriage. Remarriages may be marked by higher instability and higher divorce rates than first marriages. However, remarriage after the death of a spouse tends to avoid these statistical hazards, and the stepfamily challenge for those whose spouses died is not as daunting as that faced by post-divorce stepparents.³¹

Yet to say that remarriages are statistically more difficult than first marriages does not mean that they are not preferable to remaining single or to other alternatives to marriage. Perhaps those who think it might be easier just to start over rather than deal with the challenges of a difficult first marriage should consider the statistics before getting divorced.

A RESPONSIBILITY TO LOVE AND CARE

While research studies clearly demonstrate that the satisfaction level of people in good marriages is high, the data hardly guarantee perfect physical health, constant happiness, complete financial security, or blissful intimate relationships. What the research reveals is general trends, and the findings also

show that those positive trends are *much* more likely to flourish in a healthy marital atmosphere.

And just what is a "healthy marital atmosphere"? Studies of successful marriages indicate that it includes the following vital elements:

- Religious commitment is a high predictor of marital happiness and promotes other qualities central to the success of a marriage.³²

- Happily married couples realize that marriage and family life can be difficult. When problems arise, they tend to stay committed and sac-

rifice their own desires for the good of the family.³³

- Successful couples have a good understanding of one another, defend each other, and respect each other's opinions and choices.

- Successful couples realize that family life may be difficult and burdensome, but despite the challenges of marriage, divorce is not viewed as a helpful option. A realistic couple refrains from imagining, when problems arise, "Oh, no! I haven't married the right person after all!" or "If only we can manage to just stay in love!" Couples in love have problems, and the list of crucial characteristics of successful marriages does not include having found the perfect spouse or sustaining the emotional intensity of the honeymoon.

- Even successful marriages deal with their share of "unsolvable" problems: fundamental differences in personalities, desires, and goals that are not going to be changed or solved. But lasting marriages succeed even in the face of "unsolvable" problems through forgiveness, compromise, tolerance, patience, and acceptance.

- Lasting marriages successfully solve "solvable" problems—arising over everything from work schedules to trip locations—through discussions marked by "soft" beginnings void of harsh accusations. To calm escalating feelings, they also rely on "repair attempts": tactful humor, conciliatory comments, or soothing gestures.³⁴

- Successful marriages require maturity. Thus teenage marriages are much more likely to end in divorce than marriages formed when partners are more mature.³⁵

- Happy marriages avoid tendencies that religious leaders have preached against through the ages: narcissism, adultery, worldliness, and contempt for God-given values.³⁶

Finally, studies show that lasting marriages rely on a deep friendship marked by *positive* feelings rather than *negative* ones. Feelings are important. As one writer states, "Because our actions reflect the whole climate of our minds, everything that contributes to that

climate—which means all of our thoughts and actions, however ‘inconsequential’—is potentially of great importance.”³⁷ Positive thoughts, according to a lead researcher on marriage, contribute to a positive overflow in marriage that helps couples deal successfully with stressful tragedies as well as daily annoyances.³⁸

It is indeed a solemn responsibility to show the love and care needed to build this kind of successful relationship, for ultimately many of the blessings of marriage spring from our ability to share love.

THE GLUE OF SOCIETY

Affection, security, and a long life with health and happiness—obviously, this is the marital ideal. Not all marriages will reach it, and not all marriages can or should be preserved. But couples who completely abandon the ideal pay high costs, including increased physical, mental, and emotional problems for themselves and tragic consequences of divorce for their children.³⁹

Society suffers, too, from the loss of the ideal, because marriage not only strengthens communities and benefits economies, but also ensures responsible sexual union by keeping parents attached to their children.⁴⁰

In many ways, marriage is the glue holding society together. Even more important, it is an eternal principle that all of us—whether single or married—need to uphold and defend. It benefits not only husbands and wives but the entire world.

This should come as no surprise, since it was ordained and blessed by God Himself. □

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A more extensive treatment of these findings is in David C. Dollahite, ed., Strengthening Our Families: An In-depth Look at the Proclamation on the Family (2000).

Gospel topics: marriage, family, obedience, faith, perseverance, love, morality

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In many ways, marriage is the glue holding society together. It benefits not only husbands and wives but the entire world.

Marriage

Guatemala

Building toward the Future

BY DON L. SEARLE
Assistant Managing Editor

Gospel roots have grown deep in this land of ancient American heritage. The blossoming of the present holds promise for even greater future growth.

Berta Lopez points to a row of young women in a picture on the yellowed page of a Church magazine: “There I am.” She was a teenager then, one of a handful attending an activity for Latter-day Saint girls in Guatemala City that day in 1951. There were fewer than a dozen.

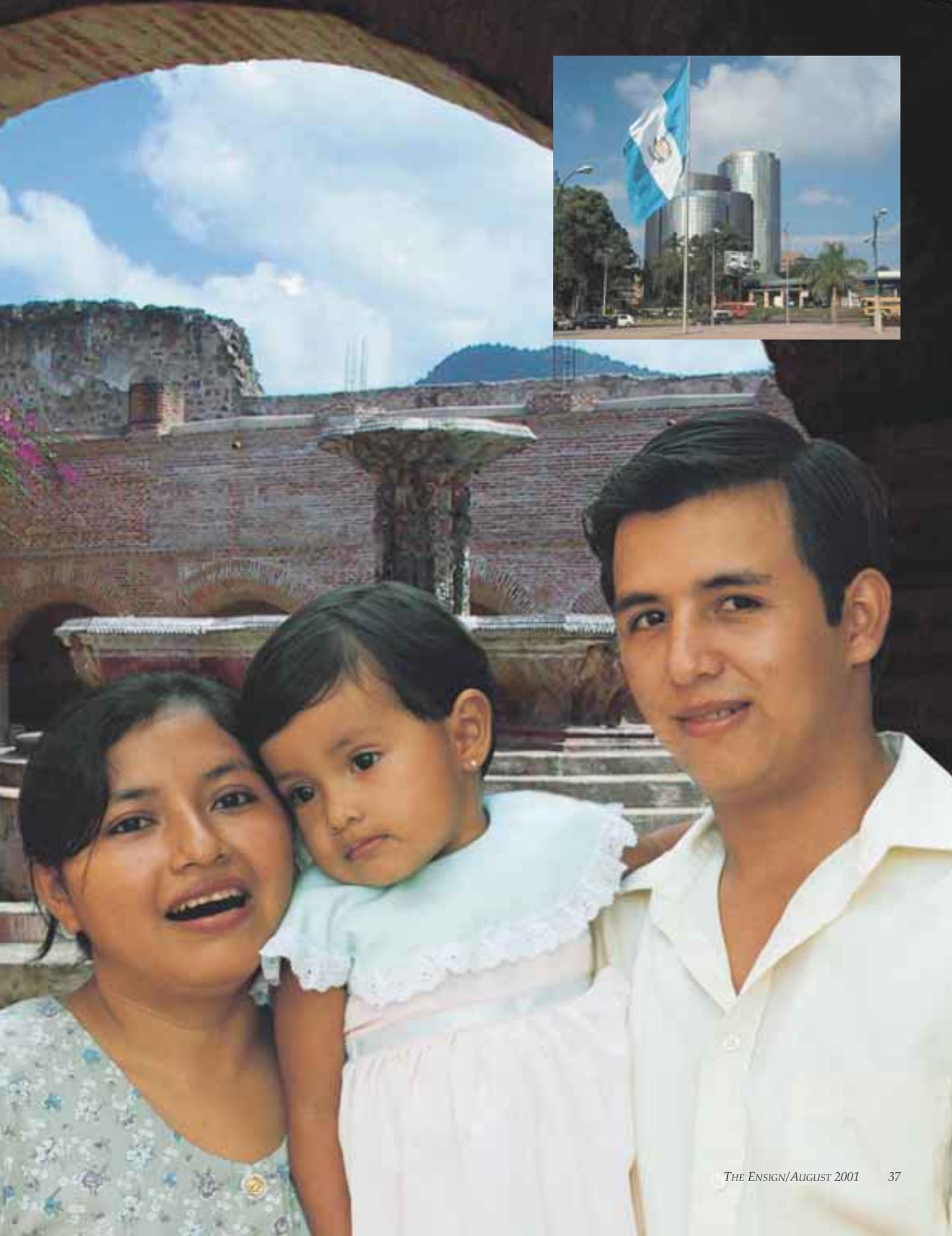
But that was two generations ago for the Church in Guatemala.

Now Berta can look out her window at the house next door where her daughter, Gina Ramirez, is directing an activity for a Primary Valiant class. Gina is Primary president in their suburban branch of the Guatemala City Guatemala Stake, one of 20 stakes in the city. What Berta sees represents the kind of growth that members in Guatemala could only dream of 50 years ago.

In another part of the capital city, young Ricardo Ayala goes with his family to their stake center to watch a fireside broadcast from Salt Lake City with simultaneous translation in their own language. Being able to receive these live satellite transmissions is a blessing that came to Guatemalan members just last year.

Ricardo, a member of the Guatemala City Guatemala

Far right: Ada and Nery Marroquín of Retalhuleu with their daughter, Blanca. Right, background: Fountain in a courtyard in Antigua. Top right: Modern buildings in Guatemala City.



Palmita Stake, will finish secondary school this year, and then he hopes to go on a mission a few months later when he turns 19. While finding a job may not be easy in a country where unemployment and underemployment are high, he has planned to work and save so he can pay the whole cost of the mission himself.

Because of Latter-day Saints like the Lopez and Ayala families, perceptions regarding the Church have changed in Guatemala. The kind of misinformation about the Church that once circulated freely here has little credibility now. Too many Guatemalans know Latter-day Saints and know what they stand for. The proportion of Church members in this nation's population (about 1.5 percent) is close to that of the United States (about 1.8 percent). Just as the temple has become a landmark in Guatemala City, Latter-day Saints are becoming landmarks in their society.

A GROWING SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Latter-day Saint missionaries were first sent to Guatemala in 1947 after John F. O'Donnal, a North American living there, visited Church headquarters in Salt Lake City and reported that there were people in the country ready to hear the gospel. His wife, Carmen, was the first Guatemalan baptized; Brother O'Donnal would later serve as a mission president and temple president in Guatemala.

In 1952 the Central American Mission was created. When it was divided in 1965, it served six countries: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Panama. Now there are four missions in Guatemala alone and 40 stakes in the country. In 1989 Elder Carlos H. Amado, a native of Guatemala, was called as a member of the Seventy.

One of the greatest challenges for Guatemalan members is fighting traditions, says Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Seventy, Central America Area President. Traditional religion does not teach strong member involvement in meetings or in teaching and leadership positions. Some new members do not make the transition to living the gospel smoothly, and some older members have simply slipped out of activity, so there is much work to be done in activation.

Following counsel from the Area Presidency, local priesthood leaders visit the homes of less-active members and use the commitment pattern familiar to missionaries to try to help change lives. They ask questions beginning with "Will you?" Will you visit with the bishop about resolving problems that are keeping you from full Church activity? Will you visit with him

about getting a recommend and going to the temple? The questions are suited to the members' needs.

Priesthood leaders are usually surprised at how easy it is to activate using this approach, Elder Robbins says. For example, when Bishop Milton Leonel Lima of the Minerva Ward, Jalapa Guatemala Stake, tried this approach with 14 members, 10 accepted the invitation and began making the necessary changes in their lives. The bishop and his counselors immediately began identifying other members to visit.

The Area Presidency is also putting emphasis on the bishops' duty to strengthen young men and young women. "Right now, we're focusing strongly on getting a greater number of our young men on missions," Elder Robbins says. The percentage of those going on missions rose more than 50 percent in 2000.

There are also economic challenges for many members in Guatemala. As many as 25 percent are unemployed or underemployed. But the Church plays a role here too. The area Employment Services office has a training program that provides help, particularly for returned missionaries, in preparing for and finding a job or in starting a business. The Church also assists microcredit organizations that help small businesses get started. Moreover, some stakes, in an effort to provide uplifting opportunities

for youth during school breaks, are offering not only spiritually enriching activities but also classes or instruction that teach job skills.

A CULTURE IN CHANGE

Life for Guatemalans has changed significantly in the years since the gospel was introduced in their country.

A generation ago, in the mid-1960s, Spanish-speaking Latter-day Saint missionaries began learning Mayan languages in order to teach whole families; often only the father of a family, who had the most contact with the dominant Spanish-speaking culture, could communicate with them. Now it is no longer necessary for missionaries to study most of those languages because most of the indigenous people speak Spanish. While the literacy rate in the country remains lower than that of industrialized nations, it has improved, and this, says Elder Robbins, allows many of the Mayan members to take advantage of the scriptures that have been translated into their languages. All of the Book of Mormon is available in Kekchí and selections from it in Quiché, Cakchiquel, and Mam, the principal Mayan languages of the country.





Above: The family of President Federico Castro, Atlántica stake, Guatemala City. Top right: Udine Falabella, first stake president in Guatemala, more recently temple president. Right: Guatemalan couple visits Mayan ruins at Tikal. Bottom: Guatemala City Guatemala Montserrat Stake patriarch Felipe Nicolás Juárez and his wife, Rosario. Background: Early morning, central park, Quetzaltenango.



In places like Polochic and other centers of Mayan population, meetings and Church business may be conducted largely in the native languages. Many of these members of Mayan descent have a humble faith that is manifest in their devotion to the gospel and their duty in it. Some will arise early in the morning and walk two to three hours one way to attend their Sunday meetings.

But indigenous members are less and less isolated in Guatemalan society, and many have come into the mainstream in ways that were unforeseen a generation ago. The Boj family of Quetzaltenango is a good example. Members of the family are well known in the community as successful entrepreneurs running their own businesses. Timoteo and Eva Boj joined the Church in the mid-1970s. They, their eight children and children's spouses, and their 18 grandchildren are well grounded in Church service. The family includes four past bishops, four past Relief Society presidents, six past Primary presidents, four past Young Men presidents, five past or presently serving Young Women presidents, six returned missionaries and one still serving. They are a family of hearty good humor who eagerly serenade visitors with a local favorite song, "Luna de Xelajú" ("Moon of Xelajú"; Xelajú is the old traditional name for Quetzaltenango). Their example and love for others has also brought many into the Church.

A VIBRANT, LIVING FAITH

Examples of faith can be found in every stake and ward or branch. Following are just a few.

- Carlos Santíz, president of the Mazatenango Guatemala Stake, points to notes made on a whiteboard during a meeting with bishops, explaining how they followed the direction of Church leaders to meet in council and plan to serve the needs of less-active members. "I'm grateful to the Lord for putting me in this stake presidency because it's a challenge, but a challenge"



I needed, and it has brought growth," he says.

• Nery Eduardo Marroquín, a counselor in the bishopric of a ward in the Retalhuleu Guatemala Stake, was an evangelical Christian before coming into the Church five years ago through the influence of his wife, Ada. He grew up in a home where he learned the importance of personal prayer, the Bible, and worship of Jesus Christ as the Savior, but he also felt there was something more. He found it in ordinances offered through the gospel that could allow him and his wife to have an eternal family. "Christ said no one will come to the Father 'but by me' [John 14:6]. And the ordinances are through Him. That's why it's such a blessing to have a temple in Guatemala."

• Hector Gonzalez of the Villa Nueva Guatemala Stake says the gospel has given him strength to face the battle with cancer that cost him a leg and nearly cost his life. At one point, when he wondered why this should happen to him—a returned missionary, married in the temple, with a wife and baby daughter—his wife brought him his patriarchal blessing, and he found hope in its promise of a long life of service. When it became obvious that he would lose his right leg, he received a

THE CHURCH AT A GLANCE

National population:
approximately 11.5 million

Church membership:
more than 175,000

Stakes: 40

Missions: 4

Wards and branches: 449

*Church-owned
meetinghouses:* 261

Temple: Guatemala City,
dedicated 1984

Missionary Training Center:
Guatemala City



Top: The Ayala family of Guatemala City's Palmita Stake, Rubén and Iris, center, with three of their children, Rubén, left, José, and Ricardo. Above: Guatemala City's Montúfar Chapel, first Church-built chapel in Central America. Left: Hector Gonzales of the Villanueva stake, a cancer survivor, with wife, María, and daughters, Andrea, left, and Angie. Background: Small farm plot near Quetzaltenango.



spiritual witness that he would be all right in the end. After the surgery, he recalls, "It was incredible the support I found in reading the Book of Mormon. It was as though it gave me the strength to go on." Looking back, he considers it a blessing that his job required him to walk more so the cancer was discovered before it could spread farther and that through his work he had the medical benefits he needed. Now back at work, he says, "I know the Lord has been watching over me. I know He has cared for me through all of this."

• Jorge Popá, now a member of the Quetzaltenango Guatemala Stake, originally invited the sister missionaries to his home to help his wife understand the English instructions that came with the bread maker he had bought her. The sisters agreed—if they could also share the gospel message with the family. After the missionary lessons and full instruction on the bread maker, Jorge and his wife, Mirna, told the missionaries they still weren't interested in baptism. But it would not be over so easily. That night, each could not sleep, each felt moved to get out of bed at the same time and pray about what they had been taught, and each received the same strong spiritual manifestation of the truth. They sought out the sister missionaries at church on Sunday and asked to be baptized. After their baptism, they faced the problem that many Guatemalan converts face: how to tell their family they had broken with the traditional religion. Their oldest son (now a deacon, but then just four) solved that problem for them at a family gathering. When someone passed around the tea, he stood and announced, "We don't drink that! We're Mormons."



Three generations of the Timoteo and Eva Boj family help strengthen the Church in Quetzaltenango.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Udine Falabella was president of the first stake organized in Guatemala, in 1967. In 1965, as district president in Guatemala City, he had organized the first temple trip from the area, by bus across Mexico to Mesa, Arizona. It was a great blessing to Guatemala when the temple was dedicated there in 1984, he says. It was a blessing for him to serve later as its president; he was released in 2000 after more than four years in that position.

He recalls that in dedicating the temple, President Gordon B. Hinckley pronounced a blessing of peace on the country (see "Guatemala City Temple Dedicated," *Ensign*, Feb. 1985, 77). Not long afterward, the country's long period of civil strife came to an end. Perhaps more

important, though, was the fact that Guatemalan members could now enjoy the peace of the temple and its covenants no more than a few hours from their homes.

Brother Falabella's granddaughter Evelyn was married in that temple in December 2000. She says many young Guatemalans who see unhappy or failing marriages around them have lost faith in the institution of marriage and may feel it is better to put time into developing their careers, marrying later if at all. "I believe if I didn't have the gospel in my life, I wouldn't have dared get married right now." But through the gospel, she says, there is peace in facing the challenges because we can know the eternal reasons for marriage and the everlasting blessings it can bring.

And that, says Brother Falabella, is indicative of the change that has come to Guatemala in his lifetime

through the Church: thousands of strong Latter-day Saints now have at hand all the means to implement full gospel programs and enjoy their full blessings.

José Sazo agrees that the gospel blessings available in his country and his generation are rich—for those who strive to live up to them. José, who was not yet born when that first stake was created in Guatemala, is now president of the Guatemala City Guatemala Florida Stake.

It takes constant, consistent effort to maintain strong families and marriages, he says. President Sazo and his wife, Claudia, both served missions in their country, and they agree that a large part of the secret to maintaining strong marriages can be found in two good habits learned by missionaries: frequent, loving companionship evaluations (conversations about how their marriage is going) and regular gospel study. "If I had a prescription for happiness," President Sazo says, "it would be to study the scriptures together always."

With their own two small sons, President Sazo adds, "We are agreed on this: we want to do everything we can for them so they will become strong leaders and the Lord will be able to call them to do whatever He wants, without reservation."

So it was with those strong members of the Church in this country more than half a century ago who were willing to persevere in the gospel no matter what challenges they faced. And so it is now with the heirs of their spiritual legacy: the future of the Church in Guatemala will be in the hands of those ready to answer the call of the Lord without reservation. □

Gospel topics: faith, missionary work, Church growth



As ward choirs perform, the Spirit of the Lord is invited into our meetings, and the hearts of both the choir members and the congregation are touched.

"LIFT UP YOUR VOICE AND *Sing*"

Members describe how their lives have been enriched as they have participated in ward choirs.

A ward choir can do a great deal to influence the spirituality of a meeting. When a choir performs appropriate music, the hearts of both the choir and congregation are touched as the Spirit of the Lord is invited into the meeting. But the benefits of a ward choir do not end there. During practices, choir members experience fellowship and unity as they sing together. Little wonder that disciples of Christ have long been encouraged to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" and "come before his presence with singing" (Ps. 100:1, 2).



Choir members often experience fellowship and unity as they sing together.

I sang in the choir for six years before I left Naperville for school. I am sure I will be in many more choirs throughout my life, but the lessons of fellowship, service, and spiritual growth I learned by being a part of our Naperville First Ward choir will remain with me forever.—**Rebecca R. Sorenson, BYU 198th Ward, BYU 15th Stake**

CHOIR CHANGED ME FOR THE BETTER

When I was 12, I joined my parents for weekly choir practices in the Naperville (Illinois) First Ward. Each member of our choir did not have wonderful musical talent, but together our voices blended beautifully, and with the help of the Spirit we touched lives.

For me, the most influential part of singing in the choir was the fellowship I felt. Although I felt awkward at church and school during my early teenage years, I was perfectly comfortable and happy singing with the ward choir. I had friends there: adults who did not look down on me for being young but rather would laugh with me, let me hold their babies, and sometimes even save a seat for me in the front row. My choir director personally invited me every week and helped me feel I was an important part of the alto section.

As I sang songs of rejoicing with the choir, I began to develop a testimony of the gospel, I began to understand that Father in Heaven knows and loves me, and all the truths I learned in Young Women began to be embedded in my heart.

THE "OTHER" CALLING

Participating in a successful ward choir has taught us many important lessons:

1. We have learned to ask the Lord for specific help and then to have faith to receive that help. Before and after performances we pray that our diction will be good, that we will remember the things we have worked so hard on during practice, that those who need to hear our message will be in attendance, and so on.

Once, after a not-so-lustrous practice before a performance, the person offering the prayer asked that the message would be received by the congregation even if it took angels attending us to answer our prayer. During our performance that night, the sound we heard coming from our own voices was like nothing we had ever heard before. We knew our prayer had been answered.

2. We've seen that music can transcend prejudices and break down barriers. Many in our community have viewed the Church as non-Christian, but as some of these people have listened to our music, they have come to realize that members of the Church have strong testimonies of the Savior. Following a recent interfaith choir festival, for example, one pastor's wife and a church organist both said they were deeply touched by the words of a beautiful piece of music we performed that bore testimony of the Savior.



Music appeals to our spirits in different ways than talks or lessons do.

3. We have found that the Lord blesses us for the sacrifices of our time, effort, and energy with an outpouring of His Spirit. One of our choir members wanted to invite her friend to church but didn't want to make him wait an extra hour after meetings while she attended choir practice. Instead of skipping practices to be with him, she invited him to join the choir. He said he recognized the Holy Ghost for the first time in his life when he sang with us. Eventually he was baptized, and today, five years later, he serves as a counselor in the bishopric. In spite of his many responsibilities, he continues to sing in the choir.

Regardless of what my calling is in the Church, I continue my "other" calling: singing in the ward choir.
—Lisa Wasiura Harrison, North Muskegon Ward, Grand Rapids Michigan Stake

COME, LET US SING

Music appeals to our spirits and emotions in different ways than talks or lessons do. Ward members who have difficulty following a talk, including children, often find that a choir selection redirects their attention and refreshes them for the rest of the meeting.

It helps if choir practice isn't all work. Twice a year our choir held what we called a "Bring-Along Sing-Along." Families brought their favorite treats to share and their hymnbooks or other music. While the young children watched a video, we sang hymns, holiday songs, favorites from past performances, and new music. When we couldn't sing any longer, we enjoyed the treats together. These casual evenings added a lot to both our fellowship and our repertoire.
—Amy B. Johnson, Marston Lake Ward, Columbine Colorado Stake

AN INFLUENTIAL DIRECTOR

Several years ago, my husband and I joined a ward choir in Newbury Park, California. Getting ward members to enlist in choir is usually challenging,

but our choir director, Susan Davis, was blessed with the right ingredients to successfully recruit our musical army.

Sister Davis's enthusiasm was the spark that lit the fuel we all brought with us to practices. I could see that she loved the sacred music she was teaching us; and because of her example, choir members also came to revere the majesty of stirring music. In addition, choir members who already loved to sing shared their contagious excitement with more novice singers, encouraging bashful ward members to attend practices. Several teenage boys attended because the Young Men president was an eager participant and they liked hanging around him. That helped solve the seemingly constant challenge of finding enough men to participate.

Our choir rehearsals were made as convenient as possible. We practiced at Sister Davis's house, for not only was it more cozy than our ward building, it was closer to all choir members' homes and had a playroom where choir members' young children could be watched by the older children. Sister Davis also valiantly did her best to start and end rehearsals on time, which helped choir members to not begrudge the time spent singing.

I have tried to carry on Sister Davis's legacy in my current ward, where I serve as Primary music leader. The five-year-olds may not yet understand how learning to sing Primary songs (with good posture and energy!) may strengthen their testimonies and bless their lives for years to come, but I do, for I had a good teacher.—**Leslie-Maria Harris Cramer, Helensvale Ward, Gold Coast Australia Stake**

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDE

Shortly after my wife and I moved into a new ward, I was asked to serve as ward choir director. I soon found that most choir members shared similar opinions about the choir: "We are hurting for some talent," "Ever since Sister So-and-So moved away, our

choir has diminished," "Our ward just doesn't have a lot of musically talented members."

I set out to help change those attitudes. During our first rehearsal, I heard plenty of soprano, a faint alto part, two strong tenors, and one strong bass, all doing their best to search for the notes.

I handed out the first piece of music, which was a simple hymn arrangement that I felt was suitable for the choir's capabilities. However, after reading through it once, the choir

was ready to give up. I encouraged them, working on each part repeatedly line by line. Once the choir felt more secure with the parts they were singing, they felt more comfortable following my directions to open their vowels, sit up tall and sing from their diaphragms, and add appropriate dynamics and phrasing.

As the choir continued to practice music that was challenging but possible for them, and as they were offered consistent, positive reinforcement, their attitudes began to change. Once their outlook was more positive, their improvement was swift, and they set a high standard for the choir that has continued to rise to this day.

I have learned that the greatest favor ward choir directors and members can do for themselves and other ward members is to go into the choir with an

NINE TIPS FOR CHOIR DIRECTORS

1. All should feel welcome to participate in ward choir, regardless of their ability. Help choir members feel accepted, and don't embarrass anyone for making mistakes. Positive reinforcement is more effective than criticism.

2. Use the Latter-day Saint hymnbook as the basic resource for your choir. Ideas to vary hymns for performances can be found on page 382 of *Hymns*. You might also consider using other Church resources such as *The Choirbook* (available at distribution centers, item no. 31239, U.S. \$1.25). Check with the ward music chairman for all music to be performed.

3. Choose appropriate music that is within the ability of the choir. If the music is always difficult, some choir



members will become discouraged. On the other hand, if your choir sings only the easiest of pieces, they may soon lose interest. Maintain a balance, and choose music with a variety of styles and tempos.

4. Enlist the help of others in the choir, including a choir president and a librarian.

5. Rehearse with specific performance dates in mind. Sing in sacrament meeting at least once or twice a month.

6. Introduce less familiar hymns to the ward by performing them in sacrament meetings.

7. Spend one or two minutes at the beginning of choir practice explaining simple music theory for the benefit of those who don't read music. Teach note values, musical terms, and so on.

8. In scheduling choir practices, make sure they are consistent and that they do not conflict with other meetings. Practices should not be longer than one hour. Start and end practice on time, but avoid making choir members who come late feel guilty.

9. Enjoy singing together! Remember that the Lord delights in "the song of the heart" and that He will bless you for your efforts (see D&C 25:12). □

optimistic attitude, never doubting that the Lord will work with the talent they have. That is requisite to success and, more important, to inviting the Spirit.
—**Brett H. Stewart, Huntington Beach Fourth Ward, Huntington Beach California Stake**

BEYOND THE CARES OF THE WORLD

One Sunday morning after choir practice, while I was still at the ward meetinghouse, I received an urgent telephone call from my wife, Kathy. As she had been getting the family ready for church, she noticed that vandals had spray-painted vile words along the side of our white van. Kathy was upset about the invasion of our property, and she was reluctant to drive it to church in that condition.

I returned home immediately to help. But to my surprise, I noticed that even in the face of this disturbance in our lives, the lovely music from choir practice would not leave my mind.

When I got home, I found the right solvent for the spray enamel, and we proceeded to clean the vehicle. Because some time remained before church, our family continued to work on several other cars in the neighborhood that had been similarly vandalized. Even now, I can distinctly remember feeling happy as we performed this service for our neighbors. The choir song continued to play in my mind, and I never felt distressed or angry during the whole episode. Gradually, my mood influenced my wife's attitude as well, dissipating her anger as the vandalism was erased. The positive power of this music had lifted us both above the reach of one evil deed.

A couple of years after that incident, a similar experience occurred. Again we were learning a piece of music in ward choir that was particularly moving. Its gentle and beautiful melody carried the Savior's comforting message "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden" (Matt. 11:28).

It was at this time that I became seriously ill with a perplexing disease which often left me almost paralyzed with pain, unable to move or sleep for long periods of time. Once again, the miracle of music calmed my soul. I can remember clearly now the experience of lying in my bed, hardly able to move, feeling frightened about the future, and then being able to hear this beautiful choir song over and over in my mind. It dispelled my anxiety and misery and lifted me out of the cares of the world into a realm of enveloping peace. It was a quiet experience that was truly unforgettable.
—**Brent R. Laycock, Heritage Ward, Calgary Alberta (Canada) Stake**

"A PRAYER UNTO ME"

One thoughtful ward music chairman in our stake, Judith Spragg, helps the director and singers by making tapes of all the parts for each of us. If someone cannot attend a rehearsal, he or she checks out a tape and doesn't miss out. One brother with a beautiful voice has difficulty reading music. He takes a tape along with him in the car, practicing his part as he commutes to work. He then comes to choir practice confident and ready to join in.

I have found that in addition to support from ward members and the ward music chairman, the choir director needs the support of the bishopric. In wards in our stake where bishops select sacrament meeting themes several months in advance, all the music of the meeting generally reflects that theme. And I have noted a boost in morale when choir members see the bishop and his counselors leave their usual seats to sing in the choir!

Ideally the choir director has the help of others who are called to serve in the choir. For example, a choir librarian may number all the music and check it out to members who want to practice at home. A choir president may arrange for prayers

and coordinate with those who print the weekly program regarding choir rehearsals.

Choir attendance increases when the participants rehearse with a purpose. On one occasion I substituted for the choir director at the rehearsal after church. As choir members passed through the chapel where we were going to practice, several of them asked me when the music would be performed. When I told them there was no definite date, they didn't stay for the rehearsal. On the other hand, when choir members know we are singing for a Christmas program, a sacrament meeting the following month, or any other occasion, they are more likely to practice with dedication.—**Anne Kirby, Turner Ward, Salem Oregon Stake**



Participating in choir can help members feel a sense of belonging in their wards.

DRAWN INTO THE WARD FAMILY

In the past few years, newly baptized members, move-ins, and the shy have found new friends in the Pasadena Second Ward choir, while some disaffected members have found a place where they may blend back into activity. One choir member, Mary Ellen Robertson, observes: "It's easy to slip in and out of meetings unnoticed and to not participate as fully in the life of a ward when you're a single woman like me. I feel the choir has drawn me into the ward family in a way nothing else did. It's not that I don't participate in

THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC



“Encourage our people to have music that contributes to spirituality and worship. . . . Music is such an important part of our service.”

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994),
The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson
(1988), 324.

other Church programs; I do. It’s just that I feel I’m a welcome part of the choir and that my presence and participation are truly valued.”

Choir director Jeff Parkin, together with choir president Jean Wharton and accompanist Jennelle Anderson, has identified three objectives for the choir: that the choir experience be spiritual, that it be enjoyable, and that it be gratifying through a commitment to musical standards.

Every rehearsal opens and concludes with prayer. Brother Parkin and the choir members often discuss how the lyrics and music intertwine to convey gospel principles. The choir members pause to reflect upon the application of those principles in their individual lives. Sister Wharton shares: “I have never before felt that I was telling a story with the music. Before it was just words. Now I feel the Spirit and the message in every piece we do.”—*Susan Kamei Leung, Pasadena Second Ward, Pasadena California Stake*

A FAMILY MATTER

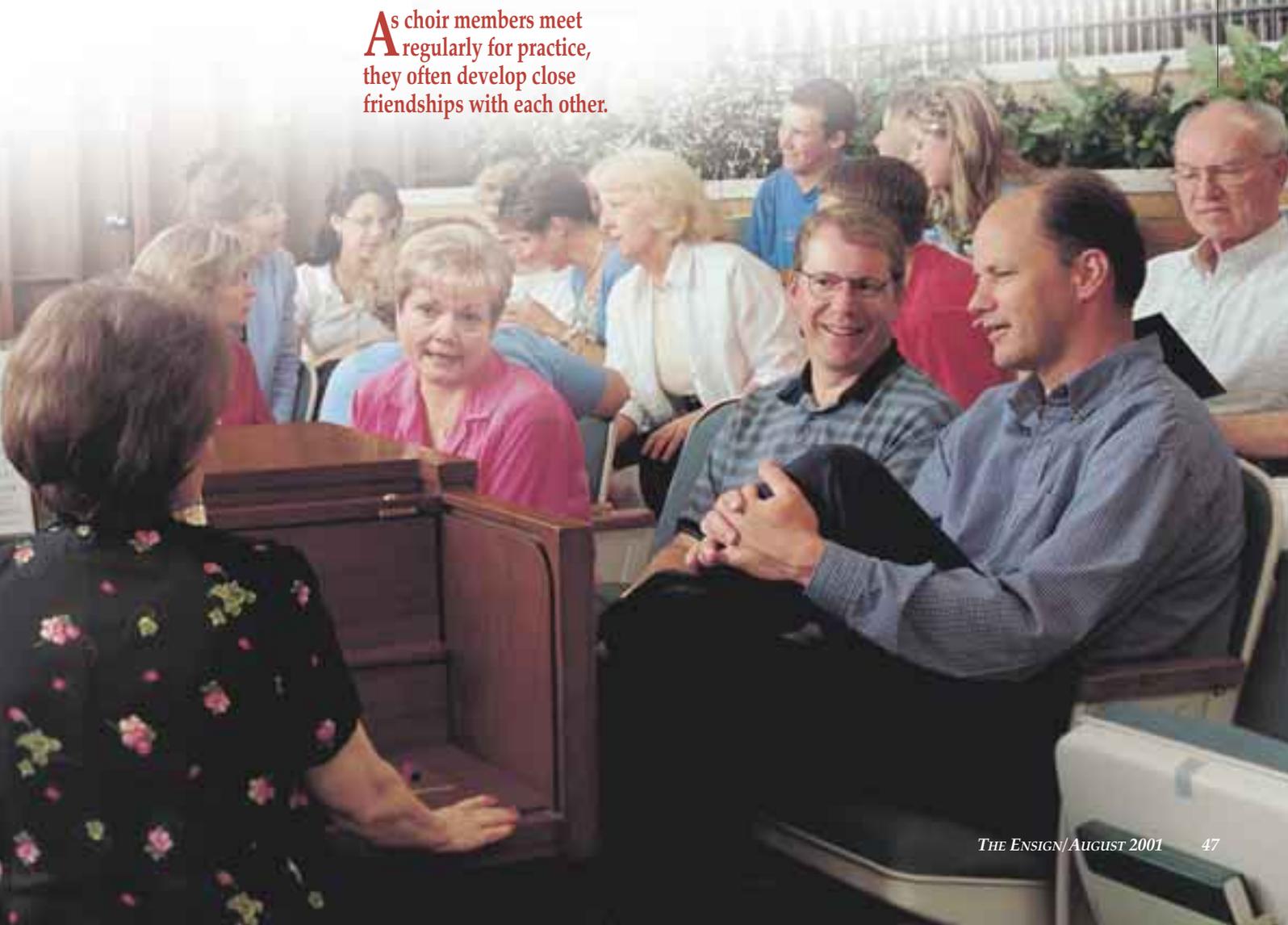
We usually make ward choir practice a family activity. Because so many men in our ward travel for their employment during the week, our choir can rehearse only on Sundays. To help families spend time together on this day, our choir director said, “Bring your family with you and have them all sing!” We have four complete families that come—some have younger children

who play quietly while we rehearse—and a few other partial families.

We find that it is unifying for us as a family to share ward choir together, and we feel it is an important way to serve the Lord. Together, we enjoy participating in a choir whose music can add so much to the spirit that is felt in sacrament meeting.—*Ruth Wilcox, Kentlands Ward, Washington D.C. Stake* □

Gospel topics: ward choirs, music, hymns

As choir members meet regularly for practice, they often develop close friendships with each other.



I just need to get control of my life—the Internet has run my life for months,” I wrote in my journal. I am an active member of the Church—with knowledge of gospel principles and a desire to do what is right. I have a good husband. We were married in the temple and want to raise our six children—ages 2 to 14—according to gospel principles.

Yet when I first logged on to the Internet, I didn’t know the effect it would have on my life. I simply found a site where I could play chess with others. I didn’t foresee getting into trouble or developing a negative habit. The game room had a chat feature so I could talk with other chess players, but this didn’t worry me. I tried to find people who were polite and who respected my wishes to have appropriate conversations.

Playing chess in and of itself wasn’t the problem. The real problem was twofold: first, I could play *any time* and for *as long as I wanted*; and second, chess is more popular with men than women, so I was continually competing with and conversing with men.

It wasn’t unusual for me to spend four to seven hours in a day online, usually when my children were asleep or busy. The time flew by as I sat at the computer, engrossed in playing chess and chatting with my new friends. I had started out just playing in the evenings, but as time went on, I found myself online in the morning or afternoon also.

Soon after I began playing, my husband had to work out of town for a couple of months. This gave me the perfect opportunity to spend my evenings on the Internet. At night after my children were in bed, I began staying up very late.

Even after my husband returned home, I continued to keep late hours, which led to sleep deprivation. He would go to bed, and I would stay up—online. My husband sometimes suggested that I cut back on the amount of time I was spending on the

computer, but I enjoyed the social aspects and improving my game skills.

My game did improve over time, and my online friendships with men got closer. My habit was becoming a destructive addiction. I allowed myself to be distracted from nurturing my marriage because of other friendships. I became more emotionally involved than I intended with a couple of these male friends. There were times when I would think I was spending too much time online or being influenced too greatly by the people I played with, so I would try to take a break by cutting back. However, I would do so only for a few days or a week. Then I went right back online, playing and conversing into the night and neglecting things such as scripture reading, time with my husband, activities with my children, and cleaning the house.

Though attempts at cutting back lessened my drive for chess a little, they did not reduce my social needs. Soon my drive to fuel my friendships became more important than my drive to play chess. The lives of my chess friends, with their problems and activities, became my life. What they were thinking, saying, and doing affected my moods and thoughts. When I wasn’t online, I was thinking of them and their lives. Many times I found myself depressed because of my emotional involvement.

One relationship in particular was affecting my spiritual well-being. My religious discussions with one friend caused me to question the gospel. Not only were we playing chess and chatting, but we were corresponding daily through e-mail. We found it so easy to open up to each other online and in writing about our personal experiences and feelings even though we hadn’t actually met in person.

I knew that my Internet experiences were affecting nearly every part of my life and that I was becoming addicted to it. I wanted to get out of it, but

TANGLED

*I had allowed the Internet
to take over my life.
It wasn't unusual
for me to spend
seven hours
a day online.*

IN THE WEB

NAME WITHHELD

BECOMING ADDICTED



"The Internet is a new source of information that offers tremendous

opportunities as well as another potential—becoming addicted. . . . Worldly influences enter our homes in new shapes and forms to challenge our resolve to use our time wisely and for the Lord's purposes."

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "A Year of Jubilee," Ensign, Nov. 1999, 76.

I didn't know how I was going to do it. In spite of everything, even knowing that the situation was not a healthy one, I still chose to be online with friends rather than quit.

By now, others could see I had a problem and were worried about me. My long hours at the computer and my online friendships were harming my relationship with my husband. Since much of my time online was after the children went to bed, I sometimes missed our joint nightly prayers. My husband felt left out, but he was very patient with me. I am grateful he didn't nag me. At a time when he needed comfort and help for his own feelings, he tried to be understanding. He was willing to talk to me. He listened when I got upset or depressed about things that happened with my online friends. I'm sure it seemed unbelievable that I was allowing them to affect me in such a negative manner. I know he was concerned about the effect my online friendship was having on my testimony, and it was disturbing to him to hear of my doubts. Yet his willingness to talk with me about my online friendships and about my doubts helped me.

The turning point came for me when my stake president requested an interview with me because my Internet activities had been brought to his attention.

He asked me about my Internet activities and counseled me to discontinue my online friendship with the friend who was having a negative effect on my testimony. I knew ending this friendship was the right thing to do, and because of my belief in following the counsel of Church leaders I gained the strength to make the necessary changes. I had to accept that my behavior was seriously affecting me and my family. There was the possibility that if I continued, I would endanger everything that was precious to me, which could include eternal consequences.

I felt that though it would be hard to do, it was right to end the friendship. I felt at peace about the interview and knew what I

needed to do. I went home and recorded my feelings in my journal in order to preserve what I felt at the time. In case of a change in my feelings or difficulty in keeping my resolve, I knew it would be helpful to have those things recorded.

Since for some time now, this one friendship had been the driving force of my online addiction, breaking it off played a big part in giving me back control of my life. After taking that step and getting that negative influence out of my life, I turned to strengthening my testimony. Interviews with priesthood leaders have been a blessing to me. I have benefited from the inspiration of my bishop. A counselor in our stake presidency counseled me to read and study the scriptures 15 minutes a day. My study

It is a blessing to have my normal life back. Now I can clearly see how anyone can gradually go from harmless Internet use to addiction, choosing to ignore warning signs or better judgment.

PI FELT A GREAT
PEACE

had not been regular, but now, as I have recommitted myself to the scriptures, I have gained a greater love and appreciation for them. Prayer, fasting, and reading the scriptures have helped my testimony grow in ways it couldn't have when my mind and energies were so focused on the Internet. I am so grateful for my growing testimony.

My husband gave me two priesthood blessings that helped me by providing counsel and inspired thoughts. Throughout, he has remained close to the Spirit and prayed for me. One of the most amazing things has been his ability to forgive. Even knowing that my feelings for an online friend weren't as they should be, he forgave me. Because of his forgiveness and because of the changes I have made, our marriage is back on the right track and has become stronger.

It is a blessing to have my normal life back. Now I can clearly see how anyone can gradually go from

harmless Internet use to addiction, choosing to ignore warning signs or better judgment. I am grateful I was saved from situations that could have brought heartache and pain. I never met any of my online male friends in person, but I'm uncertain of what might have happened in three months or six months or a year.

I am grateful for a Heavenly Father who hears and answers prayers—not only mine but those said on my behalf. I know He can intercede in personal ways to help us. I know that our leaders can receive inspiration for our benefit and that if we choose to listen to them, we can change our lives. □

Gospel topics: Internet, priorities, family, scriptures

More on this topic: See James E. Faust, "The Power of Self-Mastery," *Ensign*, May 2000, 44; Russell M. Nelson, "Living by Scriptural Guidance," *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 17; Mary Ellen Smoot, "We Are Instruments in the Hands of God," *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 91.

Visit www.lds.org or see Church magazines on CD.

TIPS FOR INTERNET SAFETY

With the benefits of the Internet come hazards. We can take a few precautions that will help us and our children to screen material.

1. Place your computer in an open-access area. Having the computer in sight reminds everyone in the family to be careful about the information they access. It also encourages you to sit down with your children and use the Internet together. If you do not know a lot about the computer or the Internet, ask your child to teach you. They might enjoy the invitation to share their knowledge with you.

2. Talk with your children about the Internet. In a family home evening lesson or as the need arises, periodically discuss with your children how the Internet can be used for good or evil. Help them to understand the importance of accessing only appropriate sites. It is important to resist not only pornography but

also graphically violent material or anything else that is not wholesome. Realize too that in some cases hypertext links on an appropriate site could link to other sites with questionable material.

As you talk with your children about appropriate Internet use, encourage them to be good examples to their friends. If they or their friends are accessing questionable information, your children need to feel confident that they can talk to you. Establish a relationship founded upon open communication.

3. Bookmark child-friendly sites. Bookmarking is an easy-to-use feature on your computer that allows you to mark sites you want to visit often. Marking a selection of appropriate sites gives your children a good choice of places to visit when they use the Internet. Once you have accessed a site you would like to mark, click on the word *Bookmarks* at the

top of your screen, then select *Add Bookmark*.

4. Teach your children to avoid giving out personal information. Establish some house rules about what personal information can and cannot be shared on the Internet. For instance, one rule might be, "I will not give out my street or e-mail addresses or credit card numbers without parental approval." Discuss guidelines as a family.

5. Check your browser history routinely. Most Internet browsers maintain a history of Web sites visited recently. In some cases, you can press an arrow to the right of where you type an Internet address to see a drop-down list of recently visited sites. Also pressing CTRL-H while your cursor is in the address box will generally show the history.

6. Know the parents of your children's friends. Your children may use a computer at their friends' homes or other places. Talk with the parents of your children's

friends to find out if they have blocked inappropriate Internet sites. Knowing the parents helps you become familiar with their family's entertainment standards.

7. Ask your Internet Service Provider (ISP) about filtering methods to block inappropriate information before it gets to your home. Does the provider filter content? How extensively? If you're not satisfied with the filtering provided, you can purchase and install filtering software.

8. Share your learning with others. Talk to family and friends about what you and your family have discovered as you have searched the Internet. Ask them how they have avoided inappropriate Internet sites. What sites have proven to be especially beneficial?

The bottom line is—there's no foolproof filtering technology. We need to have our own internal moral filters. —*Eric L. Denna, president of the BYU Sixth Stake and information technology vice president at BYU*

FROM NEW YORK TO UTAH SEVEN CHURCH HEAD

Each place that served as Church headquarters has its own significance in the development of the restored Church.

BY KEITH W. PERKINS

Today it is easy for us to identify Church headquarters as Salt Lake City, Utah. But at various times from 1830 to 1848 if a friend had asked a Church member, “Where is the headquarters of your church?” the answer would not always have been so simple.

One important perspective in seeking to identify Church headquarters at any given time period, particularly during the ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith, is to recognize that *wherever the prophet of the Lord was, there was the headquarters of the Church*. Even now, headquarters is—in a certain and real sense—wherever the prophet is, the senior Apostle of the Lord on earth who holds the leadership of the keys of the priesthood.

Students of Church history today are increasingly comfortable in identifying seven geographical sites as Church headquarters locations. All seven are well known to members of the Church who study the Doctrine and Covenants and who read accounts of Church history. But some members may not have thought of one or two as headquarters locations.

Identifying a location during the ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith is sometimes challenging, particularly for periods of time when the Church had not yet been able to build a headquarters building. Thus, the following questions are helpful when considering what places might be identified as a Church headquarters location:

1. Did the prophet and his family live there?

2. Did the Church have its offices or conduct its business there?

3. Did members of the Church gather there?

4. Were general conferences held there?

5. Were missionaries called and sent to preach the gospel from there?

6. Did many significant Church events happen there?

7. Was a temple built there?

Some locations have more supportive information for them than others. Yet research suggests that the following qualify as headquarters locations at one time or another: (1) Fayette, New York; (2) Kirtland, Ohio, for two different periods; (3) Hiram, Ohio; (4) Far West, Missouri; (5) Nauvoo, Illinois; (6) Winter Quarters, Nebraska; and (7) Salt Lake City, Utah.

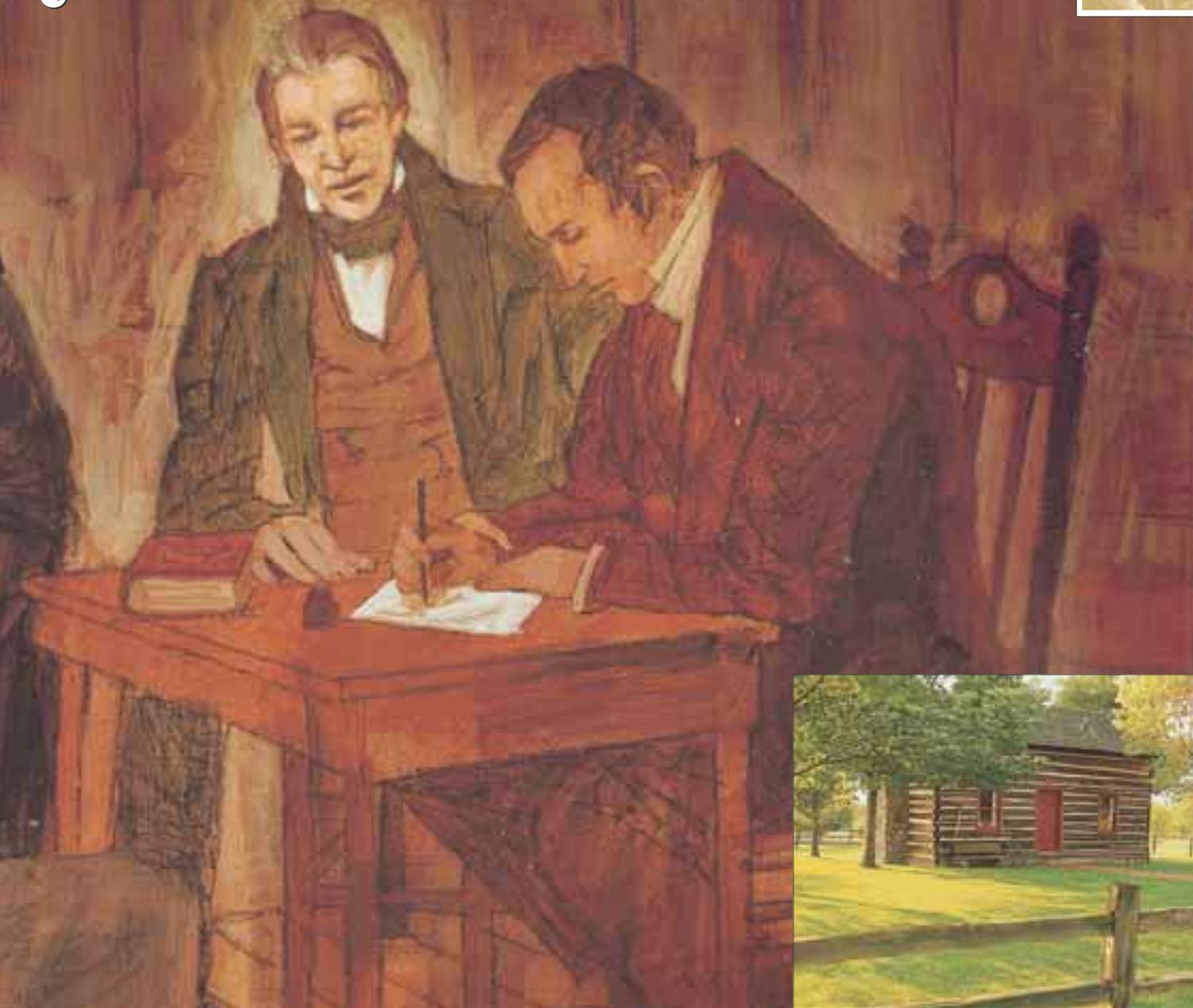
FAYETTE, NEW YORK (JUNE 1829–JANUARY 1831)

At the invitation of the Peter Whitmer Sr. family, the Prophet Joseph Smith moved to Fayette, New York, from Harmony, Pennsylvania, in June 1829. His wife, Emma, soon joined him. Thereafter, they lived in Fayette off and on for the next year and a half, making trips back to Harmony and Colesville, Manchester, and Palmyra, New York. They finally settled in Fayette in August 1830 and stayed until January 1831.

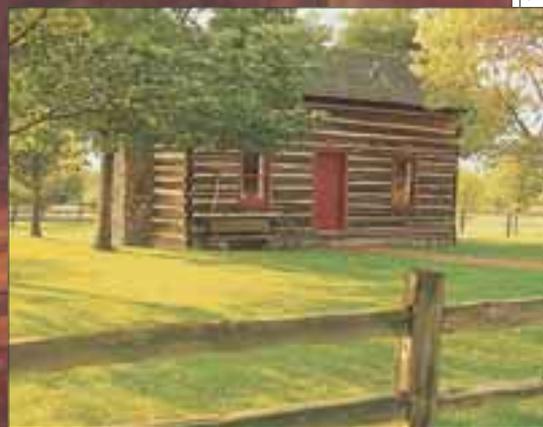
The Peter Whitmer Sr. farm was the location of notable events, such as the finishing of the Book of Mormon translation in 1829, the witnessing of the plates



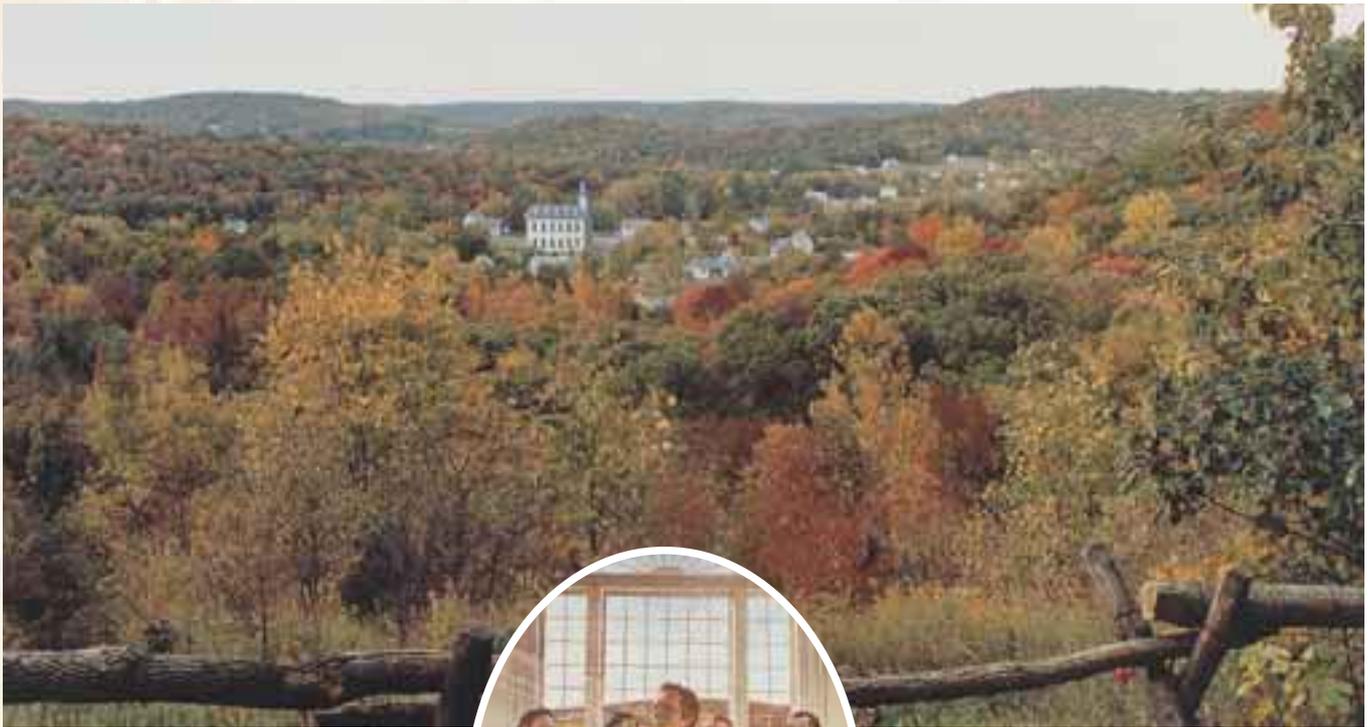
QUARTERS



LEFT ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM WHITAKER, INSET PHOTO BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



Top left: On 6 April 1830 the Prophet Joseph Smith and five associates met to officially organize the Church at Fayette, New York. Above: A replica of the Peter Whitmer Sr. family home, the first headquarters building and scene of many significant events. Left: The seven Church headquarters locations numbered in chronological order.



by 11 additional men, the 1830 organization of the Church, and the beginning of the inspired work to translate (make corrections to) the King James Version of the Bible (Joseph Smith Translation). Twenty sections of the Doctrine and Covenants, including revelations on Church organization and government (see D&C 20) and the gathering of Israel (see D&C 29; 38), were received and recorded here.

The first three conferences were held here in June and September 1830 and in January 1831. It is not widely known that at this time the Fayette area was home to the largest of the three groups of members. The Prophet conducted Church business in Fayette and received many new convert visitors here, including Parley P. and Orson Pratt, Sidney Rigdon, and Edward Partridge. Many early baptisms were also performed nearby, and from here the Lord called and sent four men to preach the gospel to the Lamanites.

KIRTLAND, OHIO, FIRST PERIOD (FEBRUARY–SEPTEMBER 1831)

In December 1830 the Lord directed Church members to “assemble together at the Ohio” (D&C 37:3). With the arrival at Kirtland of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his family about the first of February 1831, Church headquarters was now in Ohio. The Prophet and his wife first resided in the home of Newel K. and Elizabeth Whitney for a few weeks; then in March 1831 they moved to the Isaac Morley farm about one mile away.

Above: This painting of Kirtland, Ohio, shows how prominent the temple was on the town horizon in 1836. Kirtland was headquarters for the Church for two different periods, February–September 1831 and September 1832–January 1838. Left: The Prophet Joseph Smith organized the leading quorums of the Church during the second Kirtland period.

The work of translating the Bible continued here. Four sections of the Doctrine and Covenants (see D&C 41–44) were received in the Whitney home, including the law of the Church (see D&C 42) and guidance on discerning evil influences (see D&C 43). Additional instructions on evil spirits (see D&C 46; 50) and clarifications on the law of consecration (see D&C 48; 51; 53–54) were received at the Morley farm. Edward Partridge was called at Kirtland as the first bishop of the Church. The fourth general conference was held here in June 1831 on the Morley farm. At this conference the first high priests in this dispensation were called and ordained.

Church membership swelled from 200 to about 400 during this time, and most lived in Kirtland. Many new converts, such as William W. Phelps and John and Alice Johnson, traveled to or gathered at Kirtland to be near the Prophet. Numerous pairs of missionaries were called by revelation from Kirtland at this time (see D&C 42; 44; 49; 52) and sent to preach in Ohio, the eastern United States, and Missouri.

HIRAM, OHIO (SEPTEMBER 1831–SEPTEMBER 1832)

Motivated by a desire to find a secluded place in which to continue his work of translating the Bible, the Prophet



BELOW: TARRING AND FEATHERING THE PROPHET BY C.C.A. CHRISTENSEN. © COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF ART, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. LEFT: DRAWING COURTESY OF WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

and his family moved in September 1831 to Hiram, Ohio, about 30 miles southeast of Kirtland. There they stayed with the John Johnson family for about one year. During this period the Prophet was rarely in Kirtland, making only a few day trips into town to handle problems between members living there (see D&C 70; 72; 78).

The Lord instructed the Prophet before his move to Hiram, “to retain a strong hold in the land of Kirtland” (D&C 64:21), so it is doubtful that the Prophet intended to initiate a permanent shift in where members were to gather, but there are important factors that show Hiram was Church headquarters for a year.

At Hiram the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon labored diligently on the translation of the Bible, which stimulated them to inquire of the Lord about significant doctrinal and organizational matters. A historic series of special conferences was held at Hiram from September to November 1831, during which sections 1, 65–69, and 133 of the Doctrine and Covenants were received. At one of these conferences it was decided to publish a book

containing more than 60 of the Prophet’s revelations and call it the Book of Commandments. The Lord gave through the Prophet a “Testimony of the Witnesses of the Book of the Lord’s Commandments” (see Explanatory Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants). This testimony was agreed to by those present and carried to Missouri for publication to the Church. In all, 17 sections were received here. Section 76, a vision received by Joseph and Sidney concerning the destiny of God’s children, was given on 16 February 1832 in an upstairs room of the Johnson home. Counselors in the original First Presidency of the Church were called and set apart here in March 1832.

A significant number of Church members lived in and around Hiram near the Prophet. New converts called at the Johnson home, and from here missionaries were sent forth.

The Prophet’s enemies, worried that Hiram would become a major Church center, attacked Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon on the night of 24 March 1832. A few days later the Lord reiterated his instruction that the Prophet Joseph visit Missouri (see D&C 78:9). Before

leaving on 1 April, he placed his family in the care of friends in Kirtland. He returned with his family to Hiram in June 1832, staying here until September that same year.

KIRTLAND, OHIO, SECOND PERIOD (SEPTEMBER 1832–JANUARY 1838)

The Prophet and his family moved back to Kirtland in September 1832 and lived above the Whitney store until their own home was finished not far from the site of the Kirtland Temple. They lived in their new home from February 1834 to January 1838.

Kirtland served as headquarters longer than any other location during the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Priesthood keys were restored by Moses, Elias, and Elijah (see D&C 110). The School of the Prophets was inaugurated, and marvelous spiritual manifestations were seen by many. Nine general conferences were held here, and the original Quorums of the Twelve and the Seventy were

organized during this period. The first patriarch, Joseph Smith Sr., was called. The first stake, stake presidency, and high council were organized. The first latter-day temple was constructed, in which a partial endowment was given.



Above: Drawing of the John and Alice Johnson farm in Hiram, Ohio, showing how it appeared when it served as Church headquarters for a year in 1831–32. Right: On a cold March night in 1832, a Hiram mob attacked the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, dragging them into a nearby field, where they were beaten, tarred, and feathered.



Twenty-seven sections of the Doctrine and Covenants came during this second Kirtland period. In one, the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89) was revealed, and in another the Prophet saw “the celestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof,” and “the transcendent beauty of the gate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter” (D&C 137:1–2).

Hundreds of members were gathering to Missouri at this time, but Kirtland was still where the larger group of

Saints was located, growing from a few hundred to about 2,000 between 1834 and 1837. Four future Presidents of the Church—Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Lorenzo Snow—came at this time to meet the Prophet Joseph Smith. They were instructed in the doctrine and organization of the Church, which prepared them for the day when they would lead the Church. Heber C. Kimball also joined the Church and came from New York to Kirtland. He was tutored by the Prophet Joseph Smith and sent with Orson Hyde and others to Great Britain, where approximately 1,500 individuals joined the Church.

Apostasy among Church members in Kirtland led the Prophet Joseph and his family to abandon their home in January 1838 and move to northern Missouri, where many members had already gathered. The Prophet and his family never returned to Kirtland.

FAR WEST, MISSOURI (MARCH 1838– FEBRUARY 1839)

A joyous welcome greeted the Prophet and his family in Far West. Because of serious dissension among some Church leaders in Missouri and the apostasy in Ohio, one of the first matters the Prophet needed to handle was the reorganization of the leading quorums. New leaders were called at an April 1838 conference here.

Eight revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants were received at or near here, including one which gives the Church its present name and instructs a temple be built in Far West (see D&C 115:4, 8). The Lord’s law of tithing and its disbursement (see D&C 119–20) was revealed here, and the Prophet began writing a history of the Church (see JS—H 1:1–2).

Many faithful members left Kirtland and gathered to northern Missouri. A large group arrived in the fall of 1838, swelling the Latter-day Saint population to about 5,000. In a July 1838 revelation (see D&C 118), the Lord also called the Twelve Apostles to go to England for missionary work.

From Far West, Brigham Young, as President of the Quorum of the Twelve, led the Church into Illinois in January–February 1839 while the Prophet wrote instructions to the Church from jail in Liberty, Missouri.

PHOTO BY MATT REHER



The area with trees and houses in the center background of this photograph was set aside by the Prophet Joseph Smith for a temple at Far West, Missouri. While living in Far West, the Prophet received eight Doctrine and Covenants revelations. Church population in the area swelled to about 5,000.

NAUVOO, ILLINOIS (MAY 1839–FEBRUARY 1846)

Once released from jail, Church leaders moved quickly to purchase, survey, and clear land for a new gathering site. At a conference in October 1839, Nauvoo (Commerce) was appointed as a stake of Zion and a gathering place, along with Hancock County, Illinois, and Lee County, Iowa. It was a place where the Prophet felt free to teach the Saints many doctrines that had been revealed to him, such as baptisms for the dead and the eternal nature of the family. The book of Abraham, new editions of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Wentworth letter, containing the Articles of Faith, were printed.

The Lord again commanded the Saints to build a temple (see D&C 124:28–31) so that sacred temple ordinances could be performed to unite families forever and provide the opportunity for exaltation to all

who would obey the principles and ordinances of the gospel.

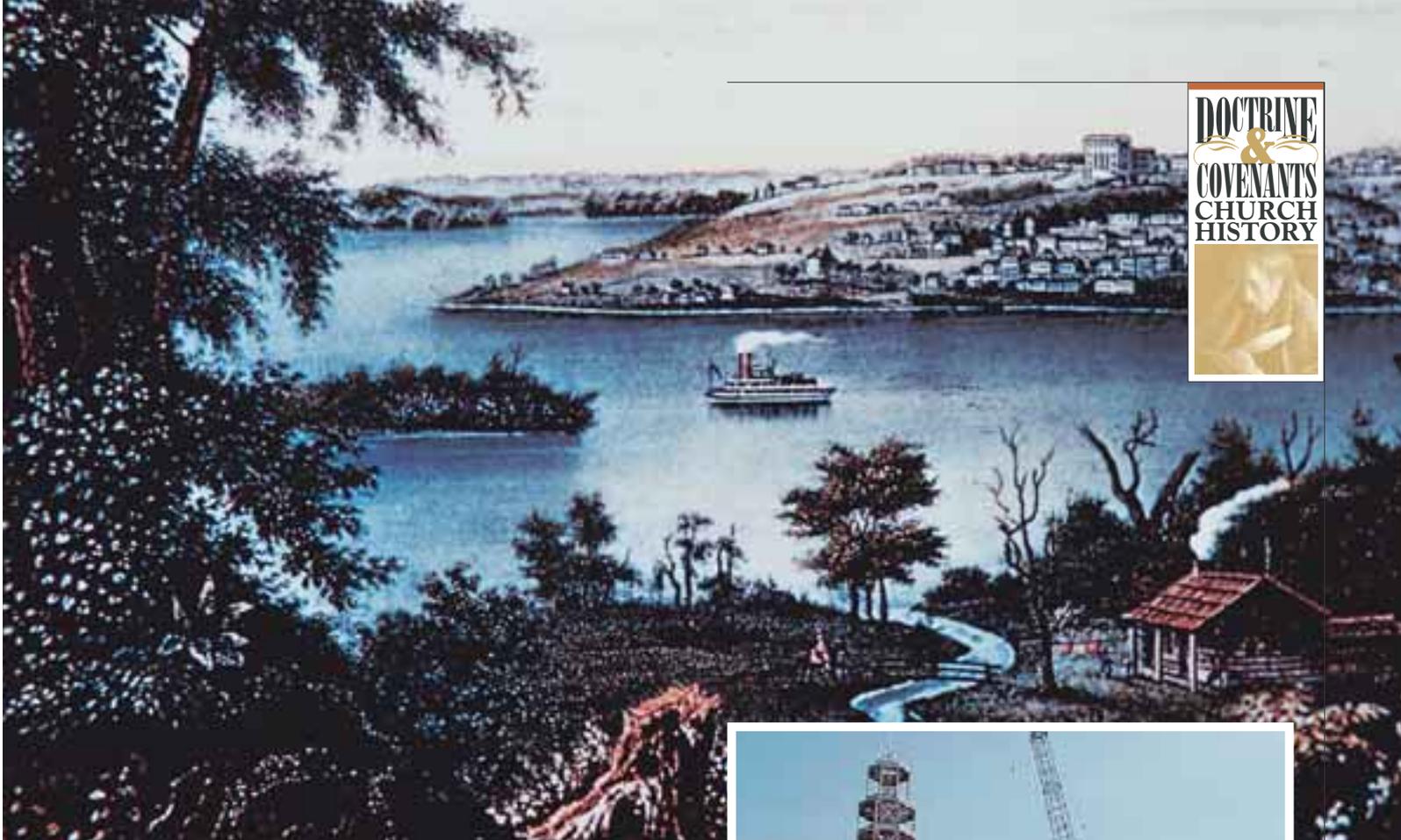
Eleven general conferences were held here, and the responsibilities of women in the Church were further revealed with the establishment of the Relief Society. The role of the Quorum of the Twelve was firmly established, and in 1844 they were given all of the keys necessary to preside over the kingdom of God. Here Brigham Young was sustained by the Saints to lead the Church following the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Missionaries continued to be sent to Great Britain and to the eastern United States, and many converts journeyed to gather at Nauvoo. At its peak in 1845, Nauvoo was home to more than 11,000, mostly Latter-day Saint residents.

WINTER QUARTERS, NEBRASKA (JULY 1846–MAY 1848)

Forced to abandon their temple and beautiful city of Nauvoo, the Saints sought to establish a new headquarters in the Rocky Mountains. The name Winter Quarters is used here to describe a collection of more than 100 settlements, including Council Bluffs, along the Missouri River in the present-day states of Nebraska and Iowa. This area was where the Saints temporarily gathered while preparing to move west.

From here a 500-man army, the “Mormon



Above: This painting of Nauvoo, Illinois, from the Missouri side of the Mississippi River shows how the city looked in 1844, with the temple occupying a prominent place on the horizon. Right: Photograph of the partially rebuilt Nauvoo Temple, taken on 13 June 2001.



Battalion," was raised to assist the United States in its war against Mexico. Brigham Young, as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, received significant revelations here. One guided the Saints to their new home in the tops of the mountains (see D&C 136).

In 1847 a pioneer company under the leadership of President Brigham Young and the Twelve left Winter Quarters to find the place the Lord had prepared for their new home. When President Young and the Twelve returned here that same year, the First Presidency was reorganized in December 1847 with Brigham Young as president. Three general conferences were held, and more than 10,000 Saints congregated here. The Saints were then encouraged to undertake preparations and depart for their new home in the Rocky Mountains.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH (SEPTEMBER 1848–PRESENT)

When President Brigham Young arrived in Salt Lake Valley for the second time, in September 1848, a new headquarters was in place; since then, every prophet-president has guided the Church from Salt Lake City.

Soon after his arrival in the valley, four new apostles were called and missionaries were sent to

France, Germany, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries. President Brigham Young also designated a site for the building of a temple. Property surrounding this site was set aside for Church purposes and became known as Temple Square. In 1848 a large meeting facility known as the Bowery was constructed on Temple Square. A series of other meeting halls were built and replaced until a large dome-shaped house of worship, the Tabernacle, was opened for the October 1867 general conference. The building of a temple was undertaken in 1853 and was dedicated in 1893. Today that temple stands as a symbol of the Latter-day Saints and their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first general conference in Salt Lake City was held in October 1848 in a temporary covering. More than 300 general conferences have been held in Salt Lake City. In April 2000, about 21,000 people gathered



LEFT: PAINTING BY AL ROUNDS; INSET AND BELOW: PHOTOS BY MATT REIER

Above: A painting of Winter Quarters, 1848, showing where many Saints found temporary shelter along the Missouri River. Right: The Winter Quarters Temple with a pioneer cemetery in the foreground.

in the new Conference Center, along with 9,000 in the Tabernacle and Assembly Hall, with many more participating by satellite broadcast.

The Church Administration Building, with offices for the First Presidency and other General Authorities, was constructed in 1917, and the Church Office Building was opened in 1972 to provide much-needed office space. Missionary calls have been issued from here for more than 150 years.

Three revelations now found in the Doctrine and Covenants were received, and a new book of scripture, the Pearl of Great Price, was canonized here. Numerous Church programs and auxiliaries have been organized to meet the needs of the growing, worldwide Church.

SUMMARY

From the small group of Latter-day Saints that gathered 6 April 1830 at Fayette, New York, the Church has grown to more than 11 million

Aerial view of Salt Lake City, Utah. The non-gray area is Temple Square: (1) Conference Center, (2) Museum of Church History and Art, (3) Family History Library, (4) Assembly Hall, (5) Tabernacle, (6) Visitors' Centers, (7) Temple Annex, (8) Salt Lake Temple, (9) Joseph Smith Memorial Building, (10) Relief Society Building, (11) Church Office Building, (12) Church Administration Building.



members worldwide. The Book of Mormon has been translated into more than 100 languages, and the gospel is being taught throughout the world by more than 60,000 missionaries. "There was never a

brighter day than today in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . What we see today is but the scratching of the surface of far greater things yet to come" (Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Lengthened Shadow of the Hand of God," *Ensign*, May 1987, 52, 59). □

Keith W. Perkins is a member of the Orem First Ward, Orem Utah Stake.

Gospel topics: Church history, prophets, gathering, Zion

More on this topic: See Alexander L. Baugh, "From High Hopes to Despair: The Missouri Period, 1831–39," *Ensign*, July 2001, 44–55; Richard E. Bennett, "Winter Quarters," *Ensign*, Sept. 1997, 42–53; "House of Revelation" and "The Times and Seasons," *Ensign*, Jan. 1993, 31–43; Glen M. Leonard and T. Edgar Lyon, "The Nauvoo Years," *Ensign*, Sept. 1979, 11–15; see also 16–50; Milton V. Backman Jr., "Kirtland: The Crucial Years," *Ensign*, Jan. 1979, 24–28.



Keeping a journal! I thought. *What an agonizing struggle!* I was a mother with five small children. My husband was busy with his Church calling, and we were trying to start a business. I wanted to follow the counsel of a prophet of the Lord to keep a journal, but when I wrote, it was so unfulfilling. I wrote about what my children had done to test my patience and how tired and frustrated I was. I didn't have much spirituality in my life or my journal, and I wanted to change.

After praying about my situation, I read the prophet Nephi's words in 1 Nephi 9:3–5. Part of verse 4 really caught my attention: "Wherefore these plates are for the more part of the ministry; and the other plates are for the more part of the reign of the kings and the wars and contentions of my people."

I realized that Nephi was keeping a separate record of the spiritual progress of his people! I decided that I should follow this direction in my journal writing.

I have always written my journal on loose pages in a folder. To have two journals I decided to keep my spiritual account on pink pages and my everyday events on white pages. My goal was to eventually have more written on pink pages than white. I thought that if this happened it would mean that I was becoming more spiritual.

After two weeks I was still struggling to fill one pink page. And, in fact, I had begun in my frustration to write even more on the white pages. What had gone wrong with my plan? After praying again I realized my problem was not in what was happening, but in my attitude toward the everyday events of my life. I wasn't appreciating my blessings or approaching my activities in a spiritual way. I pondered how I could possibly turn everyday happenings into entries on my pink pages.

I started by observing my children's activities more closely and quietly with the hope of enjoying them

more. I then wrote on my pink pages short, positive comments about them, what they did, and how they each made me feel. Instead of recording my frustrations on the white pages, I began to write my feelings of gratitude. After one month my pink pages outnumbered the white! Even seemingly negative experiences began to take an important place on my pink pages as I learned to express my feelings in a more constructive way. I also recorded how I felt before and after my prayers. This helped me learn to listen and recognize answers from God.

The prophet Nephi wrote: "Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not" (1 Ne. 9:5). When I started writing on the pink pages of my journal, I thought it was a great idea. It wasn't until I focused on the "hidden" spiritual elements of my life that I truly began to realize His "wise purpose" for me.

By negatively dwelling on the mundane or the crises in our lives, we may miss the spiritual promptings that can come. We can strive to appreciate our blessings and record in our journals how we have been enabled to conquer our afflictions with the Lord's help.

After a while I stopped keeping different colors of pages. My attitude toward life has become more positive, and my journal keeping has become a spiritual habit. To this day, before I write in my journal, I stop and ask myself, *How many "pink" experiences have I had?* It has helped me stay spiritually "in the pink." □

Pamela J. Reid is a member of the Birkenhead Ward, Auckland New Zealand Harbour Stake.

Gospel topics: spirituality, attitude, journal keeping, prayer

Pink and White Pages

BY PAMELA J. REID

Thirsting for the Living Water

By Victor Manuel Cabrera

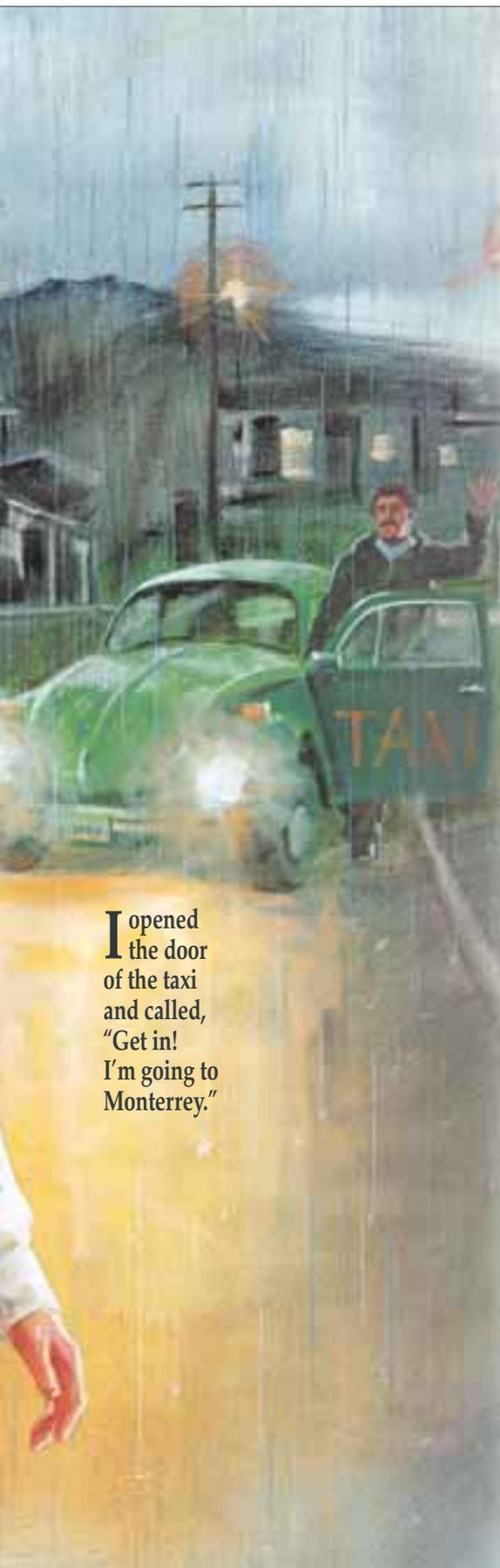
As a child, I was never taught to read the Bible. I went to church on Sundays, but I contributed nothing and felt nothing in return. I was disillusioned by my religion. I remember having serious arguments with my mother over a metal object called the *Santísimo* that my parents worshiped and expected me to worship as well. I could not. I searched for a better alternative, wanting to find God—wanting to know if He even existed. I thirsted to know Him and His words. But I could not seem to find what I sought.

There were moments when I felt close to quenching my thirst. When I held my first child, a daughter, in my arms for the first time, I had a feeling that God really did exist. Many years later, when her sister was born, I experienced the same feeling. Once I told my cousin that I felt in my heart I was somehow going to become a priest with real authority from God. She said that was impossible because I had a family to take care of.

Most of the time, however, an inexplicable tiredness weighed upon my soul. I was spiritually thirsty and could find no place to drink.

In April 1994 I was living in the city of Monterrey, Mexico, earning a living as a taxi driver. One day it rained for hours, sending water cascading down the mountainsides. After driving around in the rain for hours, I found myself in a little town about eight kilometers (five miles) from Monterrey. It was about 9:30 P.M., nearly time to go home. Suddenly I saw two young men on foot. They were





I opened the door of the taxi and called, "Get in! I'm going to Monterrey."

wearing dark trousers and white shirts, and they looked drenched from head to foot.

When I approached them, I opened the door of the taxi and called, "Get in! I'm going to Monterrey."

The taller one, who had a very fair complexion, replied, "We don't have any money."

"No charge," I replied.

They quickly got into the taxi.

As I drove, we talked. They asked if they could share a message about Jesus Christ with me. I agreed and gave them my address.

When I got home, I woke my wife and told her about the two young men. "What a coincidence," I said. "One is Mexican and the other is American, and they are both named Elder."

"Elder means missionary," my wife answered, knowing just a little about the Church.

From deep within me, I felt something stir. These young men had left a feeling of exquisite wonder in my heart. I felt that I was close to finding the water that would quench my thirst, that it was within reach.

The missionaries came to our home on 5 June, and I was happy to listen to them. Two weeks later, on 19 June, I was baptized. My wife was baptized four months later, in October. Our oldest daughter had been receiving religious training at a school. When she went to church for the first time, she cried, "Papa, this is so much better than what I am learning at school!" She too was baptized in October.

In December 1995 we were sealed as a family in the Mexico City Mexico Temple for this life and for eternity. Now we are a family enjoying harmony, peace, and happiness. We know who we worship. We know where we came from and where we are going. We love God's word, especially the

Book of Mormon, and we love His Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Through these gifts we have found that well of living water the Savior spoke of to the woman of Samaria: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). □

Victor Manuel Cabrera is a member of the Mirador Ward, Monterrey Mexico Roma Stake.

Gospel topics: conversion, missionary work

The Very Experience I Needed

By Ruth Harris Swaner

"Sister Swaner," the stake president said as he sat across his desk from me, "Heavenly Father wants to call you to serve in the extraction program."

"The what?" I replied, bewildered. I had expected a teaching assignment, something that would coincide with my past experience.

Instead, for the next 15 minutes the stake president explained the record extraction program to me. When he finished, echoing in my ears were such phrases as "foreign language" and "commit yourself to 12 hours a week."

Then he added, "There are no pats on the back in this endeavor. Your efforts will be an act of selfless service."

I reluctantly said yes to the calling and shook his hand as I left the office.

Soon I began learning about reading and transcribing entries from old German civil and parish records. I felt overwhelmed and apprehensive.

After several weeks in a training program, I returned to the stake president's office to be set apart. As he did so, he cautioned me not to look at the handwriting on the records as obscure letters or faceless names. "See them as real people," he counseled. "See them as fathers, mothers, children, and grandparents who lived upon this earth. They loved, had trials and challenges, and now have the opportunity to accept the gospel of Jesus Christ and be baptized vicariously."

In the weeks following, I pondered the stake president's words and prayed that I could serve in my calling freely and lovingly. I also asked Heavenly Father to help rid me of pride. I knew I must serve the Lord and give Him the praise and glory.

I began my work by extracting names from German parish records of the 16th and 17th centuries. I was surprised to discover how valuable my high school German class was to me now.

After studying the scribe's handwriting for two months, I grew to know and love him. His penmanship became familiar to me. I witnessed his good days and his bad, such as when his quill had dripped or smudged ink across the page. On those days I prayed for special help and guidance.

I also grew to love those with whom I served in doing the extraction work. I was inspired by their dedication and the life experiences they shared with me. Not least of all, I appreciated the good sisters who patiently instructed me. Through their loving tutoring I gained the knowledge I needed to do the work, and my confidence increased.

As the months passed, a transformation was happening. I was loving my calling. Humbled by the challenges, I realized this selfless service was the very

experience I needed at this time.

I am grateful for the lessons in humility, repentance, patience, and endurance that my calling in the extraction program taught me. I am grateful for the opportunity I had to give members the tools by which they can find their ancestors and provide gospel ordinances for them. I am also thankful for the blessing of learning to rely upon Heavenly Father. □

Ruth Harris Swaner is a member of the Smithfield 11th Ward, Smithfield Utah North Stake.

Gospel topics: service, humility, family history

A Wrong Turn at the Right Place

By Sandra S. Kaup

"If this doesn't work, then I'll give up," I muttered to myself as I wrote in my notebook.

In a last attempt to reach out to a Being whose existence I was unsure of, I was penning what I thought of as a letter or prayer to God.

As a student attending college in Omaha, Nebraska, I had allowed my studies to lead me to doubt God's reality. Gradually an emptiness came over me that work, school, or even family and friends could not fill. I became entangled in self-destructive behaviors, and it seemed nothing could bring me peace.

In these discouraging circumstances, I picked up a pen and pleaded for answers from God. I asked Him why I was here and how I was supposed to know what to do. I told Him I needed answers soon and without them I would find it difficult not only to believe in Him but also to feel accountable for my actions.

On a crisp autumn day not long

after this, I traveled to the neighboring city of Council Bluffs, Iowa, to run an errand. On the way back to Omaha I took a wrong turn, and in the process of trying to correct my mistake I ended up in the unfamiliar territory of north Omaha. As I drove, trying to find my way back downtown to my apartment, a sign on the side of the road caught my eye. It directed interested travelers toward a visitors' center. I turned down the street as indicated, not sure why I was doing so but thinking that at least I might get specific directions for getting home.

Upon arriving at the visitors' center, I immediately spotted a sod house and a covered wagon, which sparked my curiosity. While I was looking over these things, an elderly gentleman came out of the visitors' center building and greeted me with a firm handshake and a warm smile. He offered to show me around the grounds, and after telling me about the sod house and covered wagon, he led me up a hill to some kind of cemetery. The sunlight was spilling through the trees overhead onto many of the modest, weather-beaten gravestones. My guide told me of the families who had risked their lives to go west and how people had lost their lives here.

Then he said nothing for what seemed like a long time. It was so quiet; I had never experienced such silence. I stood among the gravestones, the sun warming my

As we walked among tombstones in the Winter Quarters cemetery in Omaha, Nebraska, my guide told me of the pioneers who had gone west between 1847 and 1852 and of those who had died here.

back against the cool breeze. There was such beauty here and I felt such a calm feeling that I didn't want to leave. I walked around, bending down every few feet to read the gravestones. It saddened me to find that so many marked the graves of little children, even babies. I kept thinking, *Why would these people risk losing so much?*

My guide then asked me if I'd like to see a film about these pioneers, and being intrigued, I answered yes. We entered the building, and after the man introduced me to his wife, I watched the film. It related the story of Joseph Smith and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. It also told of the persecutions that arose and how the Latter-day Saints had to leave their homes. They journeyed west, and many had died at this very location, called Winter Quarters, during the winter of 1846–47.

Most importantly, the film answered the question I had asked myself in the cemetery. These people had sacrificed and had risked losing so much for one simple reason: they had faith. They had faith in a living, active God who actually directed them as they prayed and as they heeded their prophet's voice. God had not abandoned

them but had led them by the hand, strengthened them, and given them the gift of courage in response to their faithfulness.

Before I left the visitors' center, the couple asked me if I wanted to fill out a card so that missionaries could contact me. I did so, and as we said our good-byes they handed me a copy of the Book of Mormon. After what had turned out to be a most interesting detour, I had no problem finding my way back home to my apartment, even though I had completely forgotten to get directions.

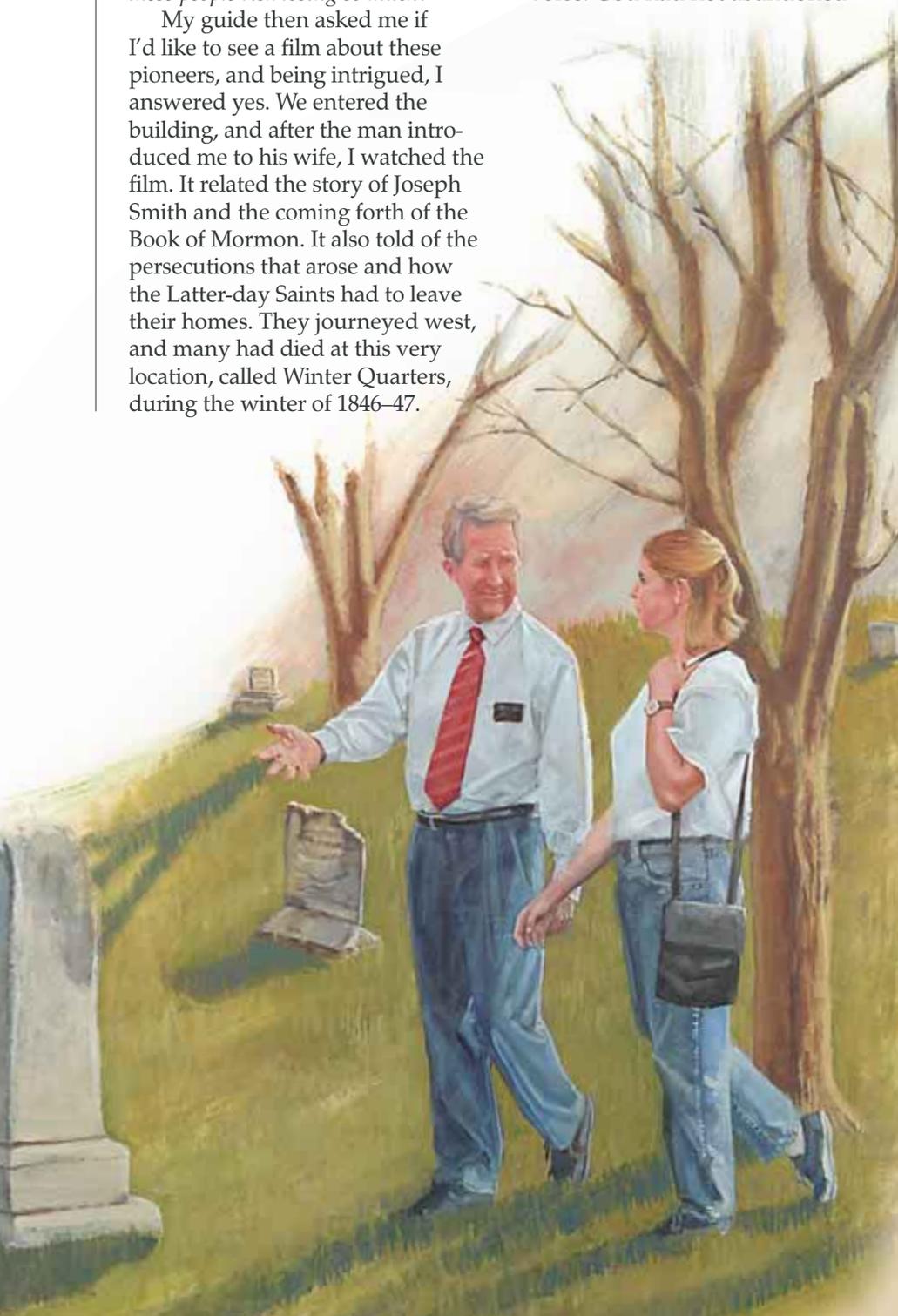
Not long after this, missionaries contacted me and taught me about a Father in Heaven who loves me and about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Over time, my faith in God was restored. There was calmness, satisfaction, and a fulfillment I had never known before as I feasted on all that God had revealed and on His love for me. Feeling assured that it was the right thing to do, I was baptized on 20 March 1990.

I had not realized, however, how difficult the journey could be. I soon found out as I experienced criticism and opposition from family and friends. While I faced these challenges and adjusted to a change in lifestyle, I thought of the pioneers. As with them, I felt that God gave me the gift of courage because I had the faith to begin my journey.

I am grateful that as I reached out to Him who created me, He reached back and helped me find His Church. I feel at peace and know that God does not abandon us in times of trial but carries us as He carried many of His weary pioneers across that difficult trail that led to a place of hope and promise. □

Sandra S. Kaup is a member of the Smoke Ranch Ward, Las Vegas Nevada Meadows Stake.

Gospel topics: conversion, visitors' centers, pioneers, trials



Unraveling Records of the Past

- Members of an ancient Syriac Christian group in the Middle East are looking far to the west for the preservation of some of their most precious religious texts—to scholars at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

- That same BYU group is serving Islamic scholars by translating selected works of Muslim philosophers.

- And that same BYU group makes available to other researchers what is believed to be the world's largest library of digital images of the Dead Sea Scrolls, ancient documents discovered in caves near the Dead Sea in 1947.

The scholars are part of BYU's Institute for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts. The institute also includes the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS). But FARMS devotes its efforts largely to the study of the times, places, and cultures of the Book of Mormon and ancient scriptural texts of interest to Latter-day Saints.

The BYU scholars who work with texts from other religions (their group was originally called the Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts, or CPART) gained international attention in the mid-1990s for their efforts to put digital images of all the

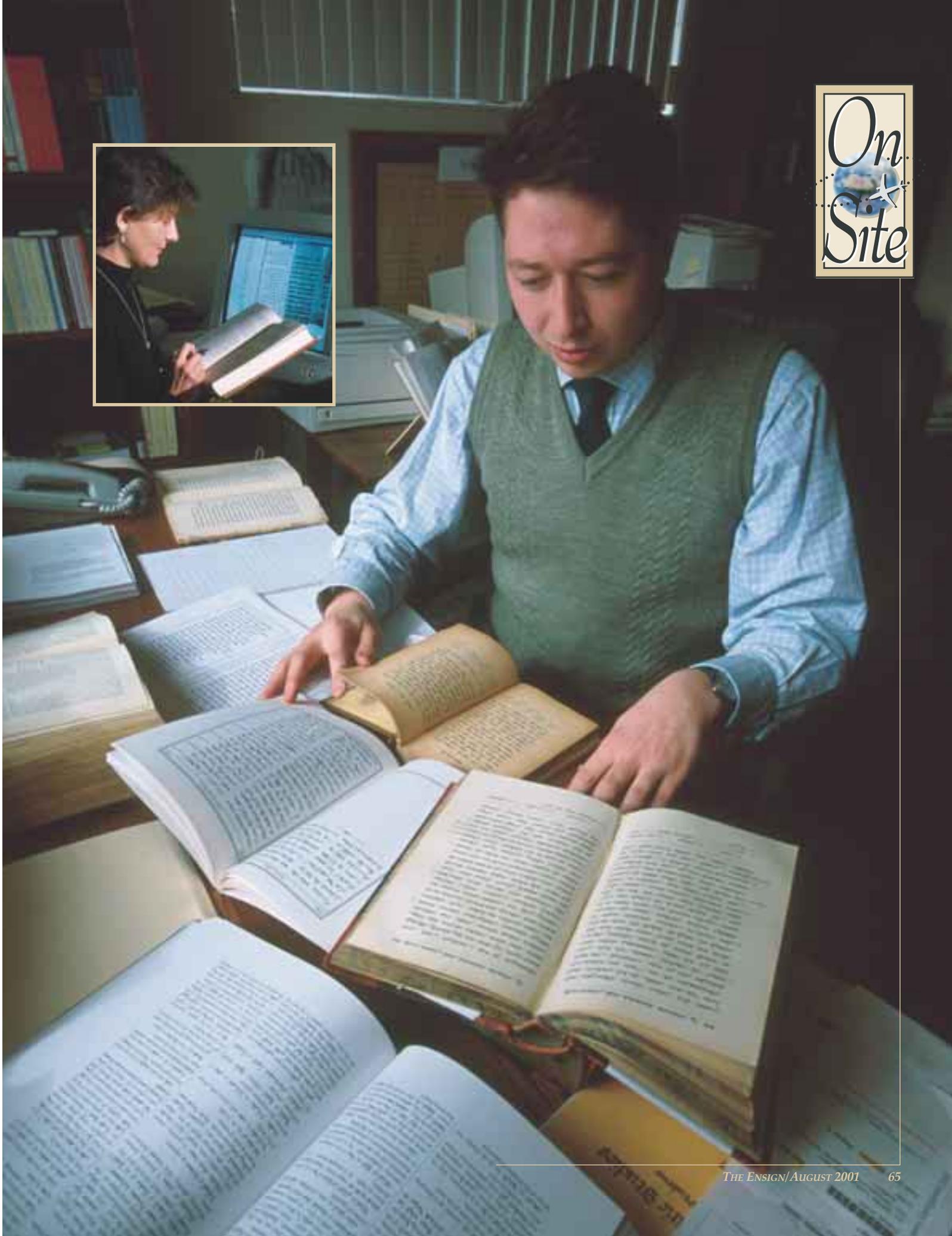


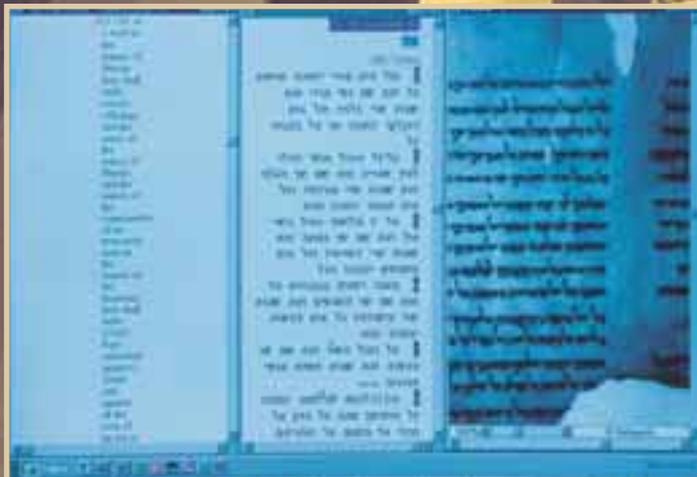
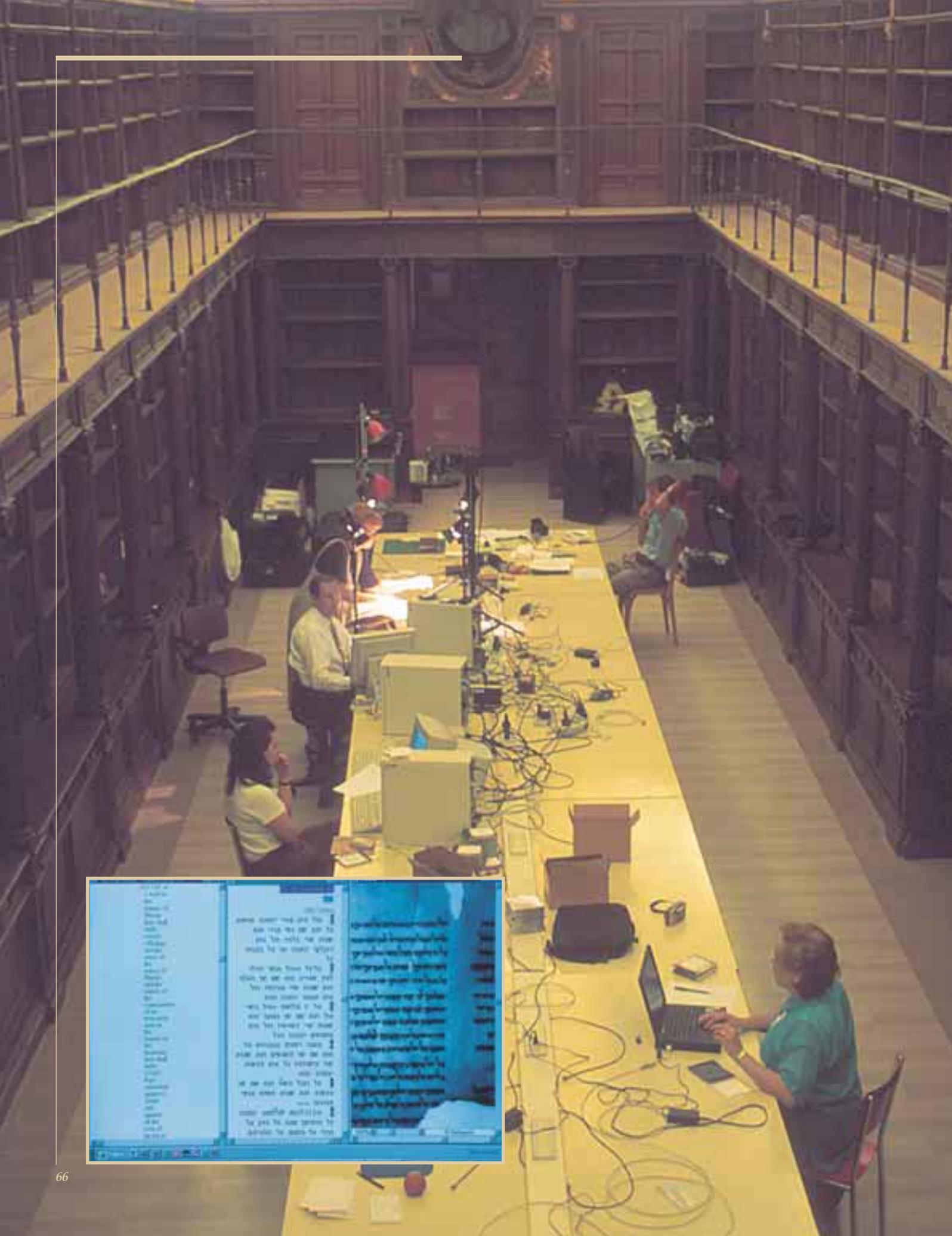
Top left: Scholars photograph an ancient document as part of their preservation work.

Left: This small silver scroll, shown here unrolled, is among artifacts donated to BYU's Institute for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts.

Right: Kristian Heal, who studied the Syriac language at Oxford University, examines a sampling of texts by Syriac Christians.

Inset, right: The institute staff includes researchers such as Irena Abramian, who is fluent in Armenian, Russian, Hebrew, and English.







Dead Sea Scrolls into a CD-ROM database. The database now includes thousands of images.

The scholars' later publication of the translated writings of important Islamic philosophers opened dialogues with Muslim scholars, and their efforts to preserve those Dead Sea Scroll images drew the attention of Syriac leaders. Some of the Syriac documents they have been asked to publish are located in the Vatican Library in Rome.

The BYU institute focuses on three activities that are of great value to scholars and leaders of other faiths: preservation of ancient documents, translation (by scholars who are recognized experts in their field) and subsequent publication, and inclusion of documents in readily available electronic databases.

Their work in preservation is fascinating—sometimes amazing. They can “stitch” together document

fragments on the computer to make one integrated image. Using computer technology, they have taken black images of carbonized documents—scorched in a burning church in Petra, Jordan, or volcanic ash at Herculaneum, in Italy, centuries ago—and produced easily readable images.

The Dead Sea Scrolls database produced at BYU has literally changed the world for scholars studying the scrolls. In the past, a researcher might have expected to wait half a lifetime to examine just one fragment of one scroll. Now, a scholar anywhere in the world can slip a CD from BYU into a computer and read in one sitting an entire text written two millennia ago.

Weston Fields, executive director of the Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation in Jerusalem, commented that not long ago, none of his publication team knew where BYU was. Now, “Provo [Utah] has suddenly become an international center of Dead Sea Scrolls study.” □

Gospel topics: history of religions, translation of languages, education

Left: BYU researchers work in a library in the Vatican as part of their examination and translation of ancient scriptural texts.

Inset, far left: Computer software allows researchers to compare an English translation from Hebrew, left, with the Hebrew text, center, and a photograph of the original document.

Above: Steve and Susan Booras, both part of the BYU research team, study images of an ancient carbonized scroll whose writings can be recaptured through use of computer technology.

Inset, right: Steve Booras, institute operations manager, searches for a CD from the institute's extensive collection of Dead Sea Scroll images, located in the Harold B. Lee Library at BYU.

One Can at a Time

It would take an elephant to feed my family for a year, I thought as I tried to make a plan for our food storage. And how could I afford it or store it all? Just then an old saying about elephants popped into my mind: “How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.” The question for me was, “How do you store an elephant?” The answer was—one can at a time!

The Church has provided many areas with a wonderful resource: the dry pack cannery. If there is one nearby, we can sign up to pack various products at reasonable prices. Dry packing in number 10 cans is a convenient and safe way to store the basic foods needed for long-term storage. Our “elephant” could fit nicely in our storage room. The next question was, how could we afford it? Our family came up with the following ideas for financing our food storage:

1. *Save all the change that comes home.* It is amazing how much money five people can contribute in just a week. With only \$1 per week per person, we could dry pack one can of potato pearls, or three cans of flour, or one can of delicious apple slices.

2. *Use the money from our tax return for quantity purchases.* A case of six cans of basic items of milk, flour, sugar, and wheat was affordable and helped us be much more prepared. When we added pasta and beans, we felt that in an emergency we could actually create family meals for a month.

3. *Buy one extra item when at the store.* Oils, salt, and spices are necessary for a complete storage plan. The cost of one item was seldom noticed in our grocery bill, but our storage room benefited greatly.

An article in the *Ensign* about debt reduction states, “Your most



important savings is food storage” (Jack M. Lyon, “How Many Loaves Have Ye?” *Ensign*, Dec. 1989, 41). We have tried to balance this with monetary savings. Each time we purchase an item on sale for food storage, we try to save the extra amount we would normally have spent and add it to our food storage fund.

Our food storage is growing day by day, can by can, case by case. We are better prepared and no longer afraid of being trampled by the enormity of the food-storage elephant.—**Mary L. Wilson, Indian Hills Ward, Pocatello Idaho Stake**

Preparing Children for Baptism

When our oldest child was seven, we were anxious to help prepare him to make sacred covenants with his Heavenly Father by being baptized and confirmed. My husband

decided to use the missionary discussions to teach him about the principles of the gospel and the covenants made at baptism. My husband purchased a set of missionary discussions and taught one every few weeks during family home evening. We were all blessed by this because the discussions are brimming with information, and we felt the special spirit that accompanies their message. We have continued the tradition of using the discussions to prepare all our children for baptism, confirmation, and a love of missionary work.

When our oldest son turned 16, he taught his seven-year-old brother the missionary discussions the same way we had been doing it as a family. His experience teaching his brother has increased his desire to serve a mission, and making the missionary discussions part of our home has helped all our testimonies to grow.—**Carolyn M. Roche, Green Valley Fourth Ward, St. George Utah Green Valley Stake**



Helping Your Family Keep the Sabbath

The scripture “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6) has been our motto and guide as we try to teach our children good habits and righteous principles. We found it especially helpful to share Sabbath day and family home evening activities with our children, particularly during their teenage years. Following is a list of ideas to help encourage Sabbath and family home evening observance.

1. *Define a day.* We teach our children that the Sabbath day and Monday evening are reserved as special family times. No other activities should intrude unless they are really

necessary and permission is given by Mom or Dad. Our children have usually accepted this. With their support we feel more peace in our home and are grateful to know we are assured weekly time away from worldly distractions.

2. *Plant the habit of doing worthwhile activities.* Demonstrate that the Sabbath is a special day of worship, service, and personal rejuvenation. Sabbath activities that we began in our children’s youth have spilled over into their teen activities. For example, we often took our children to visit the elderly at nursing homes. Now they occasionally gather with friends on Sabbath evenings to sing at nursing homes. Service continues to bless them

with sweet experiences.

3. *Visit family and friends.* Along with attending Church meetings and fulfilling Church responsibilities on Sunday, we occasionally visit family and friends, especially those with whom our teens have a common interest. Sometimes we have family or friends visit us for a modest dinner or dessert.

4. *Welcome newcomers in your neighborhood.* One of our teenage daughters earned the neighborhood title of the “Unofficial Welcome Wagon” after resolving to help move-ins feel welcome in the community. Now whenever she sees a “for sale” sign go down or a moving truck drive up, she is there (along with the rest of us) to welcome our new neighbors. These visits sometimes occur on the Sabbath or as part of family home evening.

5. *Strengthen youth of part-member families.* Some Latter-day Saint youth do not have members of the Church in their family to strengthen them on the Sabbath. We have friends from Canada who periodically have an informal youth gathering at their home on Sunday evenings. The youth sing hymns, make treats and deliver them to others, enjoy the spirit of the Sabbath, and strengthen their friendships.

The Sabbath day provides us an opportunity to grow closer to our Heavenly Father and at the same time to our families. By teaching our children appropriate Sabbath activities while they are young, we enable them to embrace this important day throughout their lives.—**Alison Affeltranger, Sego Lily Ward, Sandy Utah Granite South Stake**



Strengthening Our Families through Family Home Evening

Hold your family home evenings . . .,” counsels President Gordon B. Hinckley. “I can remember when it was begun. I was a little boy five years old, and my father said, ‘President [Joseph F.] Smith has asked us to hold family home evenings.’ And we did it. It was not easy to do at first. We were more prone to laugh and giggle than we were to be well behaved. But we did it. I see the fruits of it in my own family and in the families of my grandchildren and in the families of my great-grandchildren. The principle of family solidarity carries with it a conviction of its truth” (“Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, June 1999, 3–4).

EFFECTIVE FAMILY HOME EVENINGS

Family home evening fosters love and unity within families, invites the Spirit, and helps family members strengthen their testimonies and withstand temptations. For most families, Monday night is the best time to hold family home evening. That night is kept free

of Church meetings and activities so families can meet together and strengthen one another as they learn and practice gospel principles together.

Family home evening need not be a stiff, formal meeting. It should be enjoyable and relaxing. It could include family prayer, gospel instruction, hymns or Primary songs, and a family activity. Lesson material can be found in many Church resources, including the scriptures, *Gospel Principles* (item no. 31110, U.S. \$3.00), the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* (31106, U.S. \$5.00), and Church magazines. Family home evening might include activities such as holding a family council, reading the scriptures, enjoying a recreational activity, planning and carrying out a service project, having a family talent show, or enjoying special refreshments.

“Family home evening presents a special opportunity to teach the gospel to the family,” said Elder

Merlin R. Lybbert, while serving as a member of the Seventy. “The parents of a five-year-old were concerned about how they should teach of Nephi’s encounter with the wicked Laban. . . .

“As this young boy, my grandson, knelt beside his bed that evening, his prayer demonstrated his understanding and personal application of the lesson. He said, ‘And help me, Heavenly Father, to be obedient like Nephi, even when it’s hard’” (“The Special Status of Children,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 32).

BLESSINGS FOR ALL

Whatever our circumstances, we are blessed by participating in family home evening. “Family home evening is for everyone,” President Spencer W. Kimball and his counselors declared. “It is for families with parents and children, for families with just one parent, and for parents who have no children at home. It is for home evening groups of single adults and for those who live alone or with roommates” (*Family Home Evening* [1976], 3).

For nearly 90 years now, prophets of God have counseled us to hold family home evening. Today prophets plead with us to strengthen our families through weekly family home evening. As we follow their counsel, we are blessed to learn how inspired this counsel is. □

Gospel topics: family home evening, parenting

Family home evening fosters love and unity within families, invites the Spirit, and helps strengthen testimonies.



MEETING MEMBERS IN FIJI

Speaking to members in Fiji at a meeting on 21 May, President Hinckley called on them to “make the Church shine” in their country. He met with some 900 members at a stake center in Nadi, Fiji, during a stop on the return trip from the dedication of the Perth Australia Temple.

“The gospel shines through your faces. It makes you look so attractive, wonderful. Stay that way. Stay with the Church. Let everything that you do bring credit and honor to the Church of which you are a member, and the Lord will bless you, magnify you,” President Hinckley promised.

“God bless you, my beloved associates in this great work,” he added. “May He smile with favor upon you. May you know that the Lord loves you, and may each of us seek to live according to the pattern which He has established.”

He assured those gathered to hear him that obedience would bring blessings. “The Lord cannot bless you unless you are obedient to His commandments. I hope, therefore, that you pay your tithes and offerings. Be they large or small, be honest with the Lord, and He will open the windows of heaven and pour down blessings upon you that there will not be room enough to receive them.”

Even though the 40-minute meeting had been arranged on only a few hours’ notice, members came from throughout the

the 28 April through 12 May open house (except Sundays), including prominent citizens from government, business, media, and interfaith groups.

Other Australian temples in Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney have been dedicated in recent years, and ground has been broken

for a fifth temple, in Brisbane. Speaking of the new temples, Peter Meurs, president of the Perth Australia Warwick Stake, said, “Australia is emerging as a very significant place for the Church. The new temples will assist our many new members to unite their families eternally and cement their faith in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.”



PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD HUNTER

The Perth temple is Australia's fourth. "The new temples will assist our many new members to cement their faith," said a local leader.

Perth Australia Temple Dedicated

President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the Perth Australia Temple in four sessions on 20 May. The new temple is the Church's 106th in operation and the fourth in Australia.

In his dedicatory prayer, President Hinckley said, “We thank Thee for this land of Australia, where this and other temples have been built. We thank Thee for the freedom of worship which obtains here. May this great nation always remain a place of individual liberty, that men and women may approach Thee within these walls without threat or disturbance of any kind.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles also participated in the dedication, along with members of the Australia/New Zealand Area Presidency: Elders Kenneth Johnson, Val R. Christensen, and

Victor D. Cave of the Seventy.

Nearly 2,773 Latter-day Saints attended the dedication of the temple, which will serve 12,000 of Australia's approximately 104,000 members. Some 37,000 people attended



Australian youth help seal the new temple's cornerstone.



"The gospel shines through your faces," President Hinckley told members in a meeting in Fiji, where he stopped on his return from Australia.

island of Fiji to attend. The opportunity to meet with the prophet was especially sweet for Fijian members because they had not been able to attend the dedication of the Suva Fiji Temple last June. That temple dedication was held quietly, out of the public eye, during a period of civil unrest.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland also spoke at the meeting, bearing his testimony of the Restoration of the gospel in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times, and of the prophetic calling of President Hinckley.

FAREWELL TO AN ASSOCIATE

President Hinckley paid tribute on 25 May to Elder Loren C. Dunn, president of the Boston Massachusetts Temple and an emeritus member of the Seventy, who died on 16 May of complications following surgery. Speaking at Elder Dunn's funeral in Salt Lake City, President Hinckley was joined by President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency; President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; and

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

President Hinckley called Elder Dunn "a noble man in the finest sense of the word" and "the most willing worker I've ever seen." Elder Dunn's service as president of the Boston temple was probably the capstone of his 34 years of full-time Church service, the Church President said. "He's gone to a greater work than he ever knew here."

President Monson spoke of Elder Dunn as "a giant of a man," a man of great kindness. "He died in the service of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

President Faust eulogized Elder Dunn as a dedicated, obedient servant of the Lord who endured to the end. "A giant oak among us has fallen," he said.

President Packer spoke of celebrating the life of one so worthy and able. He noted how well Elder Dunn and his wife, Sharon Longden Dunn, had functioned together in service. "It has been a joy to associate with them." □

President Hinckley, President Faust Honor Pioneers

During a program in Salt Lake City on 12 May, President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated as a memorial a restored pioneer cabin. On the same day, President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, spoke during a program in Wyoming honoring Church members who had helped memorialize the sacrifices of Latter-day Saint pioneers in that state.

President Hinckley spoke at the dedication of the Richard and Mary Goble Pay cabin at This Is the Place Heritage Park in

President Hinckley referred to the sufferings of the group of pioneers, including Mary Goble's and Richard Pay's families, who were part of a wagon train company that traveled and suffered with the Willie and Martin handcart companies. These westward-bound pioneers were stalled by early snowstorms in Wyoming in 1856. Many of that group died before rescuers sent by President Brigham Young arrived.

"All who are the posterity of the pioneers of that generation today accept this restored cabin as a



PHOTO BY R. SCOTT LLOYD, CHURCH NEWS

President Hinckley dedicates a restored cabin at This Is the Place Heritage Park.

Salt Lake City. The cabin once belonged to the Pays, who were grandparents of Marjorie Pay Hinckley, the President's wife. Originally located in central Utah, the cabin was restored by Pay family members and donated to the park.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles also attended the dedication.

In his dedicatory prayer,

reminder of a great and unequalled heritage," President Hinckley said in the prayer. "As their vision was large, may our vision be large; as their faith was strong, may ours also be strong."

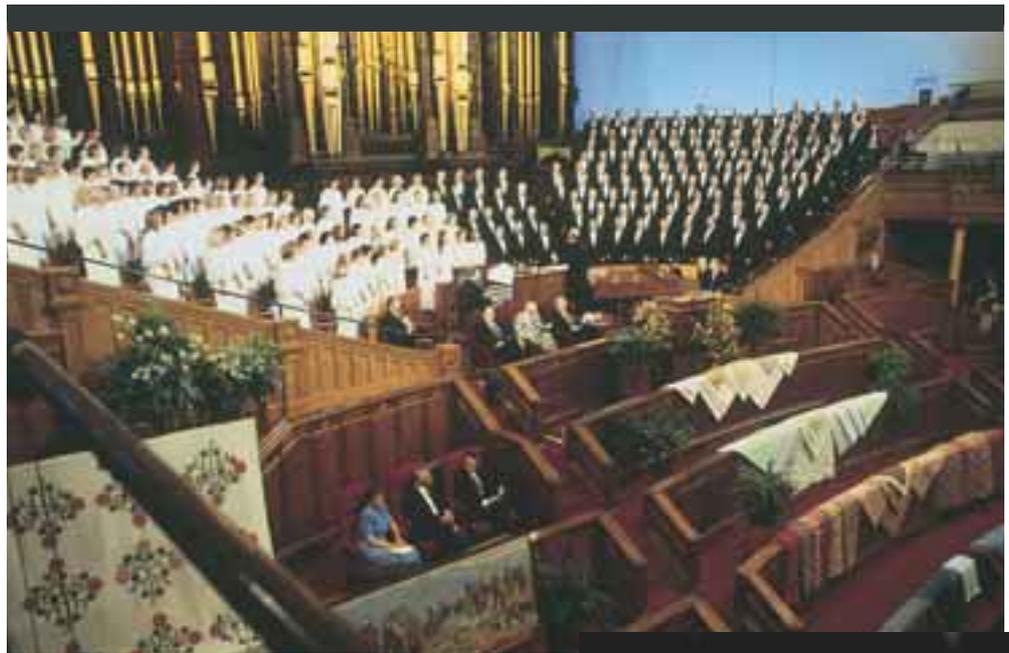
In remarks during a program in Wyoming, President Faust spoke of the two rescues of the Willie and Martin pioneer group. First, many of them were

rescued from death in 1856. The second rescue came in the 1990s, when saving ordinances of the temple were performed for many of them and the monuments to their sacrifice were erected at historic sites.

President Faust was the keynote speaker for a program honoring Scott and Dee Lorimer. While president of the Riverton Wyoming Stake, Scott Lorimer and his wife, Dee, led efforts to bring out of obscurity the historic sites where monuments and visitors' centers have now been developed. Because of their efforts, the Wyoming State Legislature declared 12 May 2001 "Scott and Dee Lorimer Day." The program honoring them was held at Central Wyoming College in Riverton.

President Faust spoke of the "terrible price in the agony and suffering for the faith" paid by the Willie and Martin companies. "We wonder why a kind and merciful God did not temper the elements to spare them from their profound agony. I think I have found the answer to my own satisfaction. I may be wrong, but I believe their lives were consecrated to a higher purpose through their suffering and their example. Their love for the Savior was burned deep into their souls and into the souls of their children and their children's children, and it will be so forever."

Elder Donald L. Staheli of the Seventy, President of the North America Central Area, attended the program, as did state governmental leaders and the current president of the Riverton stake, Lloyd Larsen. □



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CRAIG DIMOND

Church leaders and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir paid tribute to Brigham Young on his 200th birthday. Right: President Hinckley holds up Brigham Young's cane, which in 1847 he used to mark the spot where the Salt Lake Temple would be built.

President Brigham Young Honored on 200th Birthday

President Brigham Young was honored on the 200th anniversary of his birth, 1 June, during programs in both Salt Lake City, where he helped the Church and its members put down roots in the mid-1800s, and in his Vermont birthplace.

President Young was rightfully recognized as a builder, an innovator, a colonizer, and a motivator, but "he never lost sight of his greater mission. He was prophet, seer, and revelator to his people," said President Gordon B. Hinckley at an evening concert program in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

"The prophet in him shone with greatest luster when he spoke of such

matters as the plan of man's salvation, the eternal possibilities of the human soul, the Atonement of the Savior of mankind and its effect upon the sons and daughters of God, and of the great God of the universe, the Father of us all," President Hinckley said.

"On this his 200th birthday, we pause to honor him. We love him. We admire him. We respect him. We testify of the divinity of his calling and of the magnificence of his accomplishment and do it all as those who look to him still for leadership in moving forward this great cause and kingdom, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

President Hinckley was

accompanied at the program by President Thomas S. Monson and President James E. Faust, respectively First and Second Counselors in the First Presidency. President Monson conducted the program, which included a selection of hymns and American folk songs performed by the Tabernacle Choir and remarks by Thomas B. Williams, president of the Brigham Young Family Association.

The true blessings that come to the descendants of the prophets are not material or social, but spiritual, Brother Williams said. "Brigham Young was, above all else, a passionate witness of Jesus Christ," he noted, and the blessings



that come to his descendants flow from heeding his testimony and following his example. Brother Williams bore testimony of the prophetic callings of President Young and of President Hinckley today.

Descendants of President Young offered the prayers for the program. His only living granddaughter, 102-year-old Marian Morgan of Seal Beach, California, was in attendance.

At a luncheon earlier in the day, President Hinckley had been honored with the first-ever Brigham Young Heritage Award, given by This Is the Place Foundation. His efforts in remembering the pioneers and in building the community founded by Brigham Young were cited.

Before the evening concert, a new bronze statue of President Young was unveiled at the Brigham Young Cemetery on First Avenue, one block east of the Church Office Building. The statue depicts President Young,

the father and teacher, reading to two of his children.

Utah Governor Mike Leavitt had proclaimed 1 June 2001 as a special “Brigham Young Day in Utah” to honor the 200th birthday of the man who was, among other things, the first governor of the territory of Utah.

Brigham Young was born 1 June 1801 in Whitingham, Vermont, and on the anniversary of his birth, some 180 people from all over New England—members of the Church and others interested in honoring the native son—gathered in the small Whitingham Municipal Center in Jacksonville, Vermont, to mark the occasion.

Don Garbe, president of the Hinsdale [New Hampshire] Branch, which includes Whitingham, said the program and the talks were helpful in “clearing up misconceptions many New Englanders have about Brigham Young and about the Church.” □



A statue portraying President Young with two of his children was unveiled at the Brigham Young Cemetery in Salt Lake City on 1 June.



PHOTO BY SHAUN STAHL, CHURCH NEWS

Elder Holland dedicated a memorial to the hundreds of pioneer women who made great sacrifices to help colonize southern Utah.

Elder Holland Dedicates Memorial to Pioneer Women

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicated a pioneer memorial in southwestern Utah on 4 May honoring the women who helped settle the area.

In his dedicatory prayer, Elder Holland asked that the monument become “something of a beacon . . . to remind us of who they were and what they did.” In remarks earlier, he told the audience that the memorial pays tribute to those women’s valor and endurance.

The Pioneer Women’s Memorial is located in Washington, Utah, founded in the late 19th century by Latter-day Saints sent by Brigham Young to raise cotton in the warm climate.

The memorial includes a plaque engraved with names of Latter-day Saint women who were among the first colonizers in southwestern Utah and a heroic-size bronze statue of a pioneer woman carrying a child and her scriptures.

“In her arms she holds the essence of what is precious to her—her family and her faith,” Elder Holland told the 1,000-plus people attending the dedication. “Look into her face. She’s facing the future with faith.”

Elder Holland also quoted Western American writer Wallace Stegner, who said of the pioneers, “Mormon men were strong, but Mormon women were incredible.” □



Elder Charles Didier



Elder Cecil O. Samuelson Jr.

Changes in Presidency of Seventy

In June the First Presidency announced changes in the Presidency of the Seventy. Elder Charles Didier and Elder Cecil O. Samuelson Jr. will succeed Elder L. Aldin Porter and Elder Marlin K. Jensen.

Elder Porter, who had been the senior President of the Seventy since 1996, will become emeritus in October. Elder Jensen, who was serving as the executive director of the Priesthood Department and as general Sunday School president, has been called to serve in the Europe Central Area Presidency.

At the time of this call, Elder Didier was serving in

the Utah South Area Presidency and as assistant executive director of the Family and Church History Department. He was previously a member of the Presidency of the Seventy from 1992 to 1995. Elder Samuelson had been serving as President of the Utah North Area and as assistant executive director of the Temple Department.

Elder Earl C. Tingey is the new senior President of the Seventy. Also continuing in the Presidency of the Seventy are Elders D. Todd Christofferson, David E. Sorensen, Ben B. Banks, and Dennis B. Neuenschwander. □

Institute Program Marks 75 Years

“Our spiritual knowledge gives secular knowledge a purpose,” said Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, speaking at a 6 May fireside commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Church’s institute program. Elder Eyring emphasized a balance between spiritual and secular learning.

The fireside was broadcast from the institute at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho, to institutes in North, Central, and South America. The first institute was founded in 1926 at the University of Idaho under the direction of President Heber J. Grant to provide a spiritual haven for students not attending Church schools. □

1880 U.S. Census Released on CD-ROM

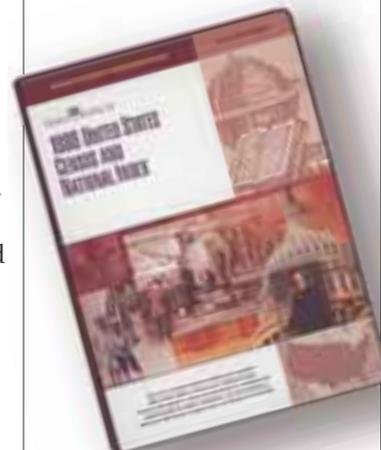
Suppose you needed information about an ancestor who lived in the United States in 1880, but all you knew was the first name and approximate birth year. Before, your task would have seemed impossible. But now chances are good you will be able to find that person quickly using the 1880 United States census records just released on CD-ROM by the Church.

The 56-CD-ROM set puts 50.5 million names and data about those individuals at the fingertips of family history researchers, along with a powerful search engine. “It is the most significant family history product the Church has produced to date,” said Ray Madsen, manager of resource files for the Family and Church History Department.

The 1880 census provides the most comprehensive census picture of the country’s population as the nation expanded westward. The record’s nationwide and regional indexes allow researchers to search broadly or more narrowly, according to the information they may have. The versatile search engine, developed by the Family and Church History Department and used in a number of other family history products, allows “bits and pieces” or “wild card” searches, Brother Madsen explained. Researchers may use the bits and pieces they have about an individual—first name, place of birth, or

occupation, for example. In a wild card search they may replace easily mistaken or unknown letters with an asterisk and the search will turn up names with the blanks filled.

Completion of the extraction project took 17 years and involved 11.5 million hours of work by extractors. The Historic Census Project of Minnesota Population Center at the University



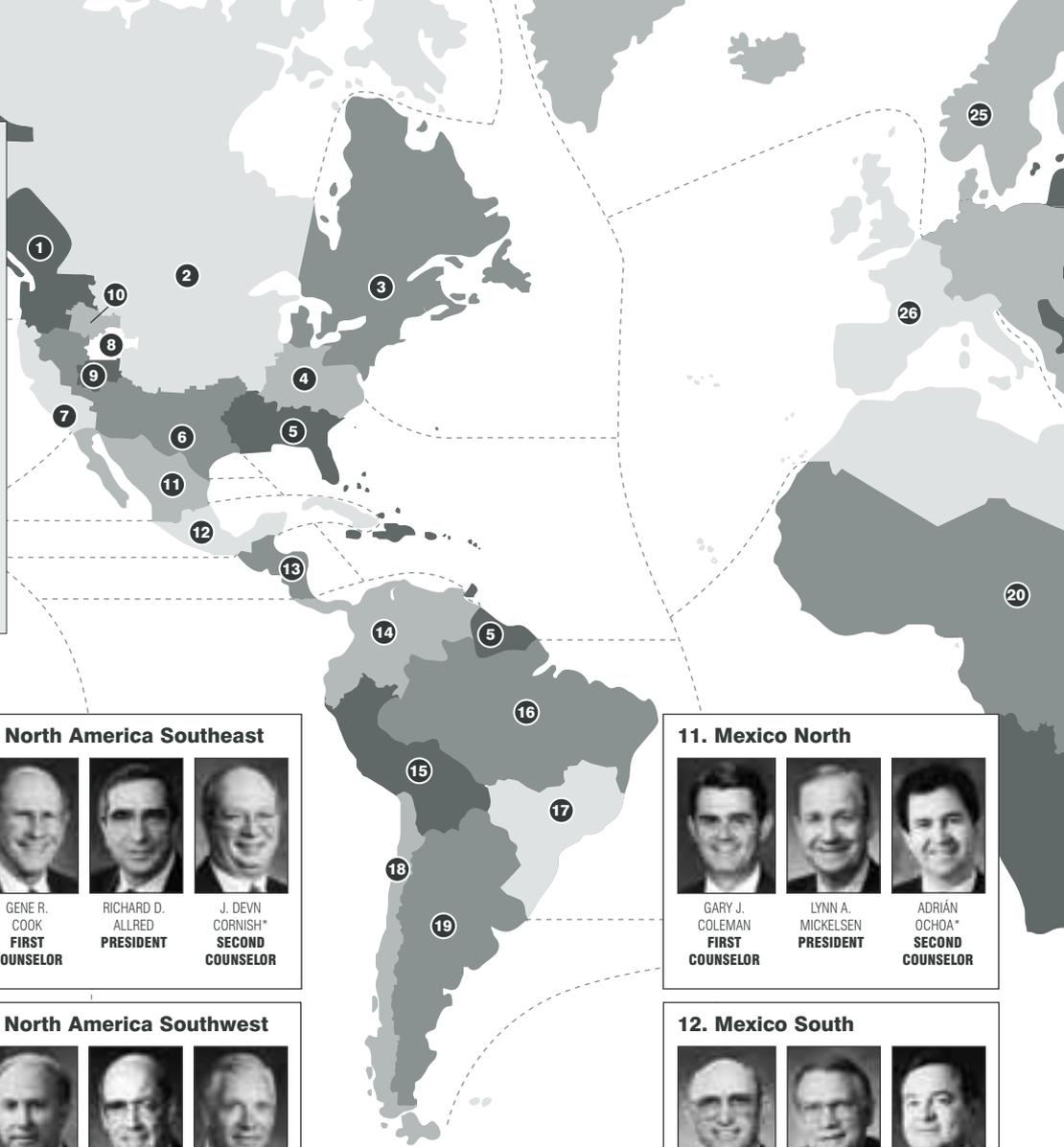
of Minnesota worked as a partner with the Church.

Brother Madsen said that the 1880 U.S. census record can be used effectively by researchers in conjunction with the 1881 British census record introduced by the Church in 1999 (this includes 30 million names from England, Wales and Scotland) and the 1881 Canadian census soon to be completed.

The 1880 United States census record package (item no. 50168000, U.S. \$49.00) includes 35 data CDs, 20 index CDs, and a viewer CD and is available through Church distribution centers. □

New Area Presidency Assignments

The First Presidency has announced changes in assignments for Area Presidencies, including the creation of the Idaho Area in the western United States. The changes are effective 15 August 2001. All presidency members belong to the Quorums of the Seventy.



1. North America Northwest





WILLIAM R. BRADFORD
FIRST COUNSELOR

QUENTIN L. COOK
PRESIDENT

STEPHEN A. WEST
SECOND COUNSELOR

5. North America Southeast





GENE R. COOK
FIRST COUNSELOR

RICHARD D. ALLRED
PRESIDENT

J. DEVN CORNISH*
SECOND COUNSELOR

11. Mexico North





GARY J. COLEMAN
FIRST COUNSELOR

LYNN A. MICKELSEN
PRESIDENT

ADRIÁN OCHOA*
SECOND COUNSELOR

2. North America Central





BRUCE C. HAFEN
FIRST COUNSELOR

DONALD L. STAHELI
PRESIDENT

DENNIS E. SIMMONS
SECOND COUNSELOR

6. North America Southwest





RICHARD J. MAYNES
FIRST COUNSELOR

F. BURTON HOWARD
PRESIDENT

DALE E. MILLER
SECOND COUNSELOR

12. Mexico South





JERALD L. TAYLOR
FIRST COUNSELOR

RICHARD H. FALABELLA
PRESIDENT

ARMANDO GAONA
SECOND COUNSELOR

3. North America Northeast





SPENCER J. CONDIE
FIRST COUNSELOR

W. CRAIG ZWICK
PRESIDENT

GLENN L. PACE
SECOND COUNSELOR

7. North America West





LYNN G. ROBBINS
FIRST COUNSELOR

DIETER F. UCHTDORF
PRESIDENT

DUANE B. GERRARD
SECOND COUNSELOR

9. Utah South





W. ROLF KERR
FIRST COUNSELOR

JOHN H. GROBERG
PRESIDENT

NED B. ROUCHE
SECOND COUNSELOR

13. Central America





JULIO E. ALVARADO*
FIRST COUNSELOR

ENRIQUE R. FALABELLA*
PRESIDENT

E. ISRAEL PÉREZ*
SECOND COUNSELOR

4. North America East





J. KENT JOLLEY
FIRST COUNSELOR

SHELDON F. CHILD
PRESIDENT

GORDON T. WATTS
SECOND COUNSELOR

8. Utah North





MONTE J. BROUGH
FIRST COUNSELOR

CREE-L. KOFFORD
PRESIDENT

L. EDWARD BROWN
SECOND COUNSELOR

10. Idaho





D. REX GERRATT*
FIRST COUNSELOR

C. SCOTT GROW*
PRESIDENT

RONALD L. LOVELAND*
SECOND COUNSELOR

14. South America North





H. ALDRIDGE GILLESPIE
FIRST COUNSELOR

ROBERT J. WHETTEN
PRESIDENT

ROBERTO GARCÍA*
SECOND COUNSELOR

*Indicates an Area Authority Seventy

24. Australia/New Zealand



VAL R. CHRISTENSEN
FIRST COUNSELOR

KENNETH JOHNSON
PRESIDENT

VICTOR D. CAVE*
SECOND COUNSELOR

26. Europe West



WAYNE S. PETERSON
FIRST COUNSELOR

HAROLD G. HILLAM
PRESIDENT

JOHN MAXWELL*
SECOND COUNSELOR

27. Europe East



KEITH K. HILBIG
FIRST COUNSELOR

DOUGLAS L. CALLISTER
PRESIDENT

ROBERT F. ORTON
SECOND COUNSELOR

25. Europe Central



RONALD A. RASBAND
FIRST COUNSELOR

D. LEE TOBLER
PRESIDENT

MARLIN K. JENSEN
SECOND COUNSELOR

28. Asia North



YOSHIHIKO KIKUCHI
FIRST COUNSELOR

DONALD L. HALLSTROM
PRESIDENT

GARY S. MATSUDA*
SECOND COUNSELOR

29. Asia



E. RAY BATEMAN
FIRST COUNSELOR

H. BRYAN RICHARDS
PRESIDENT

JOHN B. DICKSON
SECOND COUNSELOR

15. South America West



CARLOS H. AMADO
FIRST COUNSELOR

DAVID R. STONE
PRESIDENT

JUAN UCEDA*
SECOND COUNSELOR

16. Brazil North



DARWIN B. CHRISTENSON
FIRST COUNSELOR

ROBERT S. WOOD
PRESIDENT

ROBERT R. STEUER
SECOND COUNSELOR

18. Chile



FRANCISCO J. VINAS
FIRST COUNSELOR

STEPHEN B. OVESON
PRESIDENT

JOHN A. HARRIS*
SECOND COUNSELOR

20. Africa West



H. ROSS WORKMAN
FIRST COUNSELOR

H. BRUCE STUCKI
PRESIDENT

R. CONRAD SCHULTZ
SECOND COUNSELOR

22. Philippines



ANGEL ABREA
FIRST COUNSELOR

MERRILL C. OAKS
PRESIDENT

JOHN M. MADSEN
SECOND COUNSELOR

17. Brazil South



NEIL L. ANDERSEN
FIRST COUNSELOR

ATHOS M. AMORIM
PRESIDENT

ADHEMAR DAMIANI
SECOND COUNSELOR

19. South America South



KEITH CROCKETT
FIRST COUNSELOR

JAY E. JENSEN
PRESIDENT

CLAUDIO D. ZVIC*
SECOND COUNSELOR

21. Africa Southeast



CHRISTOFFEL GOLDEN JR.
FIRST COUNSELOR

ROBERT C. OAKS
PRESIDENT

STEVEN E. SNOW
SECOND COUNSELOR

23. Pacific Islands



EARL M. MONSON
FIRST COUNSELOR

RONALD T. HALVERSON
PRESIDENT

ROBERT K. DELLENBACH
SECOND COUNSELOR

In the Spotlight

BYU MEN'S VOLLEYBALL WINS NATIONAL TITLE

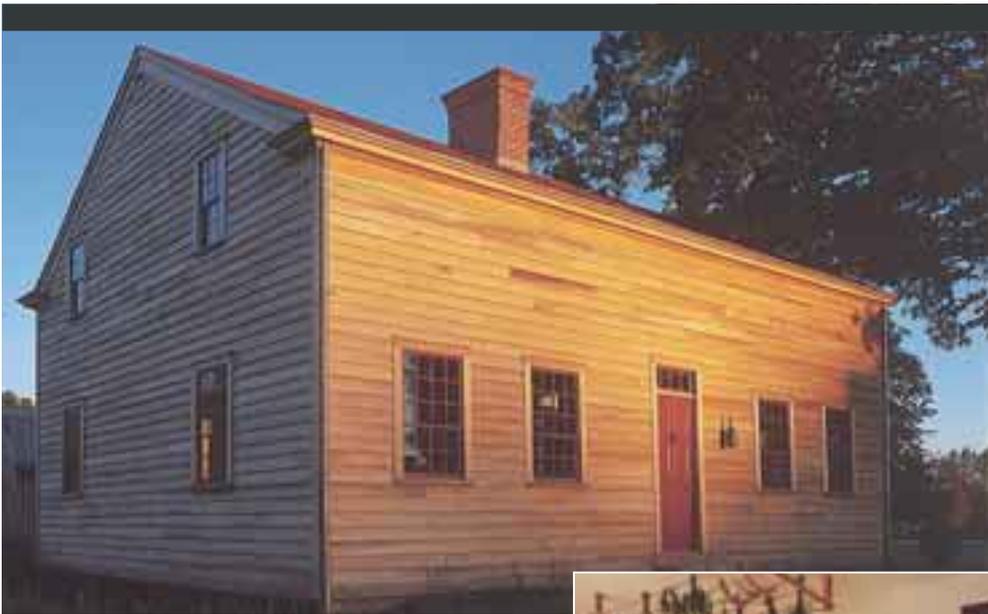
Brigham Young University's men's volleyball team won the 2001 National Collegiate Athletic Association championship, defeating the top-ranked University of California at Los Angeles, 3-0.

Along with securing its second NCAA championship in three years, the team earned the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF) regular season title, the 2001 MPSF Coach of the Year title, and All-American ranking for four players.

FIRST LATINO BRANCH FORMED IN JAPAN

Until recently, English-speaking branches were the only fully non-Japanese-speaking branches in Japan. But earlier this year, the Kouga Branch, the first all-Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking branch in Japan, was organized in the Japan Kobe Mission.

David F. Robertson, recently released as president of the mission, said the branch is in a factory district of Japan's Shiga prefecture, which employs thousands of workers from South American countries. "Some were already members and leaders in South America before they came to Japan," says Brother Robertson. "The creation of this branch allows these members to worship and serve in their native tongue." Latino members who have joined the Church in Japan are a major part of the branch.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CRAIG DIMOND

The Church received an award for its restoration of the Joseph Smith Sr. frame home in Manchester Township, near Palmyra, New York. Right: An interior photo of the home's kitchen.

Church Receives Award for Joseph Smith Home

The Preservation League of New York State has given a 2001 Excellence in Historic Preservation Award to the Church for the restoration of the Joseph Smith Sr. frame home in Manchester Township, near Palmyra, New York.

"This statewide award program recognizes those who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the preservation of New York State's irreplaceable architectural heritage," said Scott P. Heyl, Preservation League president. "The careful restoration of the building has returned this magnificent structure to its original appearance and will certainly add to the interpretation of the site."

"The frame house was the last-built heritage of the Joseph Smith Sr.

family," said Don Enders, Church curator of historic sites. "It is a wonderful place where sacred aspects of the gospel were carried out, such as bringing the gold plates home and placing them there." Elder Spencer J. Condie of the Seventy, a counselor in the Presidency of the North America Northeast Area; Brother Enders; and Steve Olson, operations director for the Museum of Church History and Art, represented the Church at the awards ceremony in New York City on 1 May.

The Smith family moved to the Palmyra area in 1816, establishing a farm in Manchester Township and building a log house where Joseph received the visitation from the angel Moroni (JS—H 1:30-47). By 1822 the eldest son, Alvin



Smith, had begun work on the larger frame house. He died before it was completed, but in 1825 the Smith family moved into the partially finished farmhouse. It was in this house that Joseph hid the gold plates beneath the fireplace hearth, and once between his younger sisters, who were in bed, during a mob intrusion (see "Cradle of the Restoration," *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 44).

The Smith family moved out of the frame house in 1829, and over the years successive owners altered the building.

In 1997 the Church began work to restore the frame house to its original state. The home is situated somewhat between the Palmyra Temple and the Sacred Grove. □

AUSTRALIAN STAKE RECEIVES SERVICE AWARD

The Perth Australia Warwick Stake received an award for the best community project in Western Australia for the year 2000. Stake members spent a day cleaning the Ocean Reef Beach for the start of the summer season.

Robert Hill, Minister for Environment and Heritage, presented Warwick stake president Peter Meurs with a picture that now hangs in the stake center. A number of other government dignitaries were also present at the awards ceremony.

TENNESSEE STAKE INVOLVES INMATES IN QUILTING

For the past several months, inmates of the Brushy Mountain Correctional Complex

in Wartburg, Tennessee, have been spending their Saturdays quilting. Eight to 10 quilts are completed each month and delivered to child welfare agencies.

The project was started by a Latter-day Saint inmate at Brushy Mountain, who contacted leaders of the Knoxville Cumberland Stake and asked for their help in beginning a service club at the facility. Stake members provide quilting supplies and finish the edges after inmates have tied the quilts. In addition, weekly worship services are being held at the facility under the direction of Cumberland Stake President Richard Riggs.

Inmates have expressed appreciation for the program. One inmate said that many feel sorry for crimes they have committed and that the project provides a way for them to repay the community.

Pass-Along Cards Available in Spanish

Pass-along cards, released in English last year as an effective tool for members to use to share the gospel, are now available in Spanish in the United States and Canada. The Spanish-version cards have a depiction of the Savior on one side and an invitation

on the back to call a toll-free number and request a Church video, *The Lamb of God*, also available in Spanish.

To order pass-along cards in Spanish or English for use in the United States and Canada, contact your local distribution center.

English-language pass-along cards featuring *The Lamb of God* are also available for use in the United Kingdom and Ireland, as well as Australia and New Zealand. The cards are also being used in several other European countries. □



Policies and Announcements

The First Presidency sent the following letter, dated 25 April 2001, to General Authorities; Area Authority Seventies; stake, mission, and district presidents; bishops and branch presidents, to be read in sacrament meeting.

In the priesthood session of the April 2001 general conference of the Church, the creation of a Perpetual Education Fund was announced. This fund will provide loans to help returned missionaries and other needy members in less-developed countries obtain education needed for job skills.

Members wanting to contribute to this fund may do so through their ward or branch by writing PEF on the "Other" line on a donation slip. They may also send donations directly to Church headquarters in care of Treasury Services, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150. Questions relating to this program may be directed to the Perpetual Education Fund office at 801-240-7841.

We anticipate that lives will be enhanced and blessed as educational and vocational opportunities are made available. □

Comment

Call for Articles

If you have personal experience pertaining to the following, we invite you to share your suggestions: "Some members of my family are not active or are uninterested in the Church. I want them to feel the joy I feel from living the gospel but do not wish to bring contention into the home. How can I help my family come closer to God?"

Send responses by 10 September to *Ensign* Editorial, 24th Floor, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3224. At the top of your submission, write "Questions and Answers," along with your name, address, telephone number, ward, and stake. You can also reply by e-mail to cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org. Put "Questions and Answers" in the subject line.

While we cannot acknowledge receipt of individual responses, authors whose submissions are selected for publication will be notified. If you want your manuscript returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and allow up to a year.

Nourishing Faith

At special times in my life, I have felt the Holy Ghost as a companion. My lack of faith at certain times was hard to understand. Reading the article "Faith in Jesus Christ" (Apr. 2001) helped me to know it is a process. I had been praying for stronger faith and a desire to understand the concept to a greater degree. While reading, I realized it's not something you just get, but something you nourish to receive. Thank you.

Ann Hart
Henderson, Nevada

Fighting Profanity

I enjoyed the article about profanity in the April *Ensign*. I feel another way that we can stand up to profanity is not to watch shows that use any kind of bad language, including taking our Heavenly Father's and our Savior's names in vain. If we would not support the companies that make TV shows and movies with such language in them, maybe the movies with this kind of content would decrease.

Bethlyn Robison
Cedar Hills, Utah

Illustrating the Messages

Since my *Ensign* had not yet arrived, I accepted the offer from my bishop's wife to download the visiting teaching message from the Church's Web site for me. Then, the next day, the April *Ensign* arrived in the mail. As I turned to the message, it gladdened my soul to read it in

column format, with a color illustration pertaining to the gospel principle taught in the message. The Spirit was there.

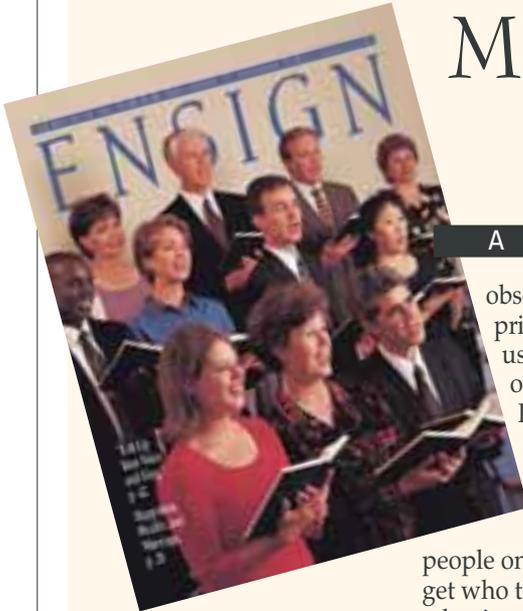
The computer printout had the same message. However, until this experience, I had not considered the layout of the Church magazines as being part of the way the Spirit

can convey the message.

The *Ensign* does indeed provide the word of the Lord, in the manner that He would have it done. It is to bring us closer to our Savior, Jesus Christ, as we are taught by His Spirit.

Sharlie Carter
Louisville, Kentucky

Note: Beginning with the 2001 issues, page layouts with illustrations (PDF format) are available at www.lds.org in the Gospel Library. Be aware that this format requires more time to download.



Making the Most of This Issue

AUGUST 2001

observing gospel priorities can qualify us for the blessings of heaven, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains. "Some people on life's journey forget who they really are and what is really important," he says. "Without sure identity and priority, blessings that matter most are at the mercy of things that matter least." See p. 6.

The Seven Sites of Church Headquarters

Can you name the seven places where the Church has had its headquarters since 1830? Revelations that are part of the Doctrine and Covenants were received at each of these locations. See p. 52.

"Tangled in the Web"

Turn to page 48 to see how a young mother took control of

herself after letting the Internet consume much of her time.

Food Storage: Putting away an Elephant

"How do you store an elephant? One can at a time." Three simple tips on p. 68 can help you finance your food storage.



Home Teachers and Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pp. 2 and 70.

Blessings of Marriage

Marriage based on eternal principles can help convey blessings of health and well-being. See p. 28.

Did You Know?

Did you know you could be one of the *Ensign* authors one month? Contributions on specific topics are requested periodically via a "Call for Articles" printed in the Comment section near the back of the magazine. Unsolicited contributions are also accepted for review. Send manuscripts

to the addresses listed on the magazine's contents page: 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3224, or cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org. If you would like to have your manuscript returned, please be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Lift Up Your Voice and Sing!

Want to lift your spirits? Whether or not you have had musical training, participation in ward choir can enrich your life. See p. 42.

Strengthening Your Family

- Begin a family discussion about recognizing God's hand in our lives by reading "A Wrong Turn at the Right Place," p. 62.

- Discover how to use the missionary discussions to prepare your child for baptism. See p. 68.

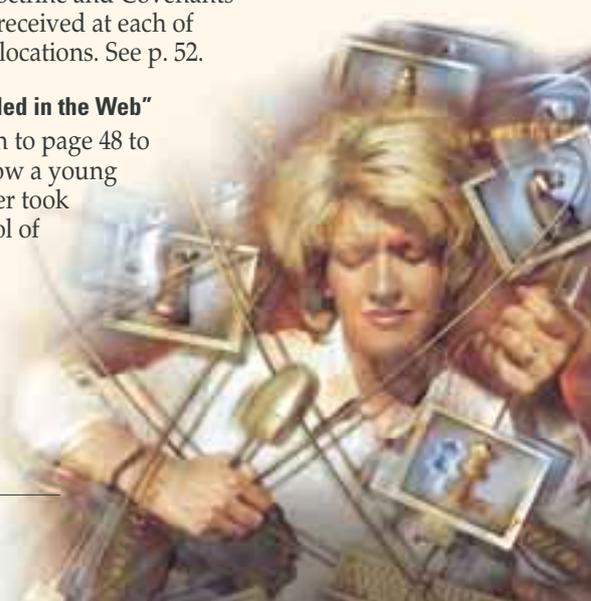
- Want to help your family learn to enjoy keeping the Sabbath and taking part in family home evening? One family shares five ideas that can help, p. 69.

Do You Really Know Who You Are?

Honoring our identity as children of God and

GOSPEL TOPICS

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Time to Laugh, by Liz Lemon Swindle



During a time of peace in Nauvoo, Emma Smith enjoys a moment in play with her children: Julia Murdock Smith, right; Joseph Smith III, top; Frederick Granger Williams Smith, left; and Alexander Hale Smith.



Those who participate in ward choirs come to appreciate the Lord's words: "For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads" (D&C 25:12).