

THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • AUGUST 2003

Ensign

A painting of a winter scene. In the foreground, a woman in a dark dress and a colorful shawl stands next to a man in a dark coat and hat. They are looking towards a horse-drawn wagon. The wagon is pulled by two horses, one dark and one white. A man in a dark coat and hat is standing on the wagon, looking towards the woman. In the background, there is a large, multi-story building with a steeple, likely a church. The scene is set in a snowy landscape with bare trees and a warm, orange glow from the sun or a fire.

**Your Family History:
Getting Started, p. 12**

**A Walk down
Parley Street, p. 42**



Looking Back at Nauvoo, by Gary Smith

On the morning of 4 February 1846, President Brigham Young led the vanguard company out of Nauvoo, beginning the migration of the Saints to Zion. The Mississippi River had frozen over for a brief period and allowed many to cross on the ice. Here, President Young pauses to look back at the temple rising high over the "city beautiful."

Ensign



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AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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The Fatherless and the Widows Beloved of God

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Many years ago I attended a large gathering of Church members in the city of Berlin, Germany. A spirit of quiet reverence permeated the gathering as an organ prelude of hymns was played. I gazed at those who sat before me. There were mothers and fathers and relatively few children. The majority of those who sat on crowded benches were women about middle age—and alone.

Suddenly it dawned on me that perhaps these were widows, having lost their husbands during World War II. My curiosity demanded an answer to my unexpressed thought, so I asked the conducting officer to take a sort of standing roll call. When he asked all those who were widows to please arise, it seemed that half the vast throng stood. Their faces reflected the grim effect of war's cruelty. Their hopes had been shattered, their lives altered, and their future had in a way been taken from them. Behind each countenance was a personal travail of tears. I addressed my remarks to them and to all who have loved, then lost, those most dear.

Death Shows No Mercy

Though perhaps not so cruel and dramatic, yet equally poignant, are the lives described in the obituaries of our day and time when the uninvited enemy called death enters the stage of our mortal existence and snatches from our grasp a loving husband or precious wife and frequently, in the young exuberance of life, our children and grandchildren. Death shows no mercy. Death is no respecter of persons, but in its insidious way it visits all. At times it is after long-suffering and is a blessing; while in other instances those in the prime of life are taken by its grasp.

As of old, the heartbroken frequently and silently repeat the ancient question: "Is there no balm in Gilead?"¹ "Why me; why now?" The words of a beautiful hymn provide a partial answer:

*Where can I turn for peace? Where is my
solace*

*When other sources cease to make me whole?
When with a wounded heart, anger, or malice,
I draw myself apart, Searching my soul? . . .*

*He answers privately, Reaches my reaching
In my Gethsemane, Savior and Friend.*

*Gentle the peace he finds for my beseeching.
Constant he is and kind, Love without end.²*



Let us remember that after the funeral flowers fade, the well wishes of friends become memories and the prayers offered and words spoken dim in the corridors of the mind. Those who grieve frequently find themselves alone.

The Widow of Zarephath

The plight of the widow is a recurring theme through holy writ. Our hearts go out to the widow at Zarephath. Gone was her husband. Consumed was her scant supply of food. Starvation and death awaited. But then came God's prophet with the seemingly brazen command that the widow woman should feed him. Her response is particularly touching: "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."³

The reassuring words of Elijah penetrated her very being:

"Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail. . . .

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah. . . .

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail."⁴

The Widow of Nain

Like the widow at Zarephath was the widow of Nain. The New Testament of our Lord records a moving and soul-stirring account of the Master's tender regard for the grieving widow:

"And it came to pass . . . that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

"Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

"And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

"And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

"And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother."⁵

What power, what tenderness, what compassion did our Master and Exemplar demonstrate. We, too, can bless if we will but follow His noble example. Opportunities are everywhere. Needed are eyes to see the pitiable plight, ears to hear the silent pleadings of a broken heart; yes, and a soul filled with compassion, that we might communicate not only eye to eye or voice to ear, but in the majestic style of the Savior, even heart to heart.

"Gladden the Lonely"

The word *widow* appears to have had a most significant meaning to our Lord. He cautioned His disciples to beware of the example of the scribes, who feigned righteousness by their long apparel and their lengthy prayers, but who devoured the houses of widows.⁶

To the Nephites came the direct warning: "I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against . . . those that oppress . . . the widow."⁷

And to the Prophet Joseph Smith, He directed: "The storehouse shall be kept by the consecrations of the church; and widows and orphans shall be provided for, as also the poor."⁸

The widow's home is generally not large or ornate. Frequently it is a modest one in size and humble in appearance. Often it is tucked away at the top of the stairs or the back of the hallway and consists of but one room. To such homes He sends you and me.

There may exist an actual need for food, clothing—even shelter. Such can be supplied. Almost always there remains the hope for that special hyacinth to feed the soul.



Fathers experience loneliness as well as mothers. We need not wait for Christmas; we need not postpone our response to the Savior's tender admonition: "Go, and do thou likewise."



Frequently the need of the widow is not one of food or shelter but of feeling a part of ongoing events.

*Go, gladden the lonely, the dreary;
Go, comfort the weeping, the weary;
Go, scatter kind deeds on your way;
Oh, make the world brighter today!⁹*

Let us remember that after the funeral flowers fade, the well wishes of friends become memories and the prayers offered and words spoken dim in the corridors of the mind. Those who grieve frequently find themselves alone. Missed are the laughter of children, the commotion of teenagers, and the tender, loving concern of a departed companion. The clock ticks more loudly, time passes more slowly, and four walls do indeed a prison make.

Hopefully, all of us may again hear the echo of words spoken by the Master, inspiring us to good deeds: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . . ye have done it unto me.”¹⁰

The late Elder Richard L. Evans left for our contemplation and action this admonition:

“We who are younger should never become so blindly absorbed in our own pursuits as to forget that there are still with us those who will live in loneliness unless we let them share our lives as once they let us share theirs. . . .

“We cannot bring them back the morning hours of youth. But we can help them live in the warm glow of a sunset made more beautiful by our thoughtfulness, by our provision, and by our active and unfeigned love. Life in its fullness is a loving ministry of service from generation to generation. God grant that those who belong to us may never be left in loneliness.”¹¹

“Could You Make Arrangements?”

Long years ago a severe drought struck the Salt Lake Valley. The commodities at the storehouse on



“Life in its fullness is a loving ministry of service from generation to generation. God grant that those who belong to us may never be left in loneliness.”

Welfare Square had not been their usual quality, nor were they found in abundance. Many products were missing, especially fresh fruit. As a young bishop, worrying about the needs of the many widows in my ward, I said a prayer one evening that is especially sacred to me. I pleaded that these widows, who were among the finest women I knew in mortality and whose needs were simple and conservative, had no resources on which they might rely.

The next morning I received a call from a ward member, a proprietor of a produce business situated in our ward. “Bishop,” he said, “I would like to send a semitrailer filled with oranges, grapefruit, and bananas to the bishops’ storehouse to be given to those in need. Could you make arrangements?” Could I make arrangements! The storehouse was alerted, and then each bishop was telephoned and the entire shipment distributed.

The wife of that generous businessman became a widow herself. I know the decision

her husband and she made brought her sweet memories and comforting peace to her soul.

Thank You

I express my sincere appreciation to one and all who are mindful of the widow. To the thoughtful neighbors who invite a widow to dinner and to that royal army of noble women, the visiting teachers of the Relief Society, I add, may God bless you for your kindness and your love unfeigned toward her who reaches out and touches vanished hands and listens to voices forever stilled. The words of the Prophet Joseph Smith describe their mission: “I attended by request, the Female Relief Society, whose object is the relief of the poor, the destitute, the widow and the orphan, and for the exercise of all benevolent purposes.”¹²



The widow’s home is generally not large or ornate. To such homes He sends you and me.

Thank you to thoughtful and caring bishops who ensure that no widow’s cupboard is empty, no house unwarmed, no life unblessed. I admire the ward leaders who invite the widows to all social activities, often providing a young Aaronic Priesthood lad to be a special escort for the occasion.

Widows and Widowers

Frequently the need of the widow is not one of food or shelter but of feeling a part of ongoing events. Elder H. Bryan Richards of the Seventy once brought to my office a sweet widow whose husband had passed away during a full-time mission they were serving. Elder Richards explained that her financial resources were adequate and that she desired to contribute to the Church’s General Missionary Fund the proceeds of two insurance policies on the life of her departed husband. I could not restrain my tears when she meekly advised me, “This is what I wish to do. It is what my missionary-minded husband would like.”

The gift was received and entered as a most substantial donation to missionary service. I saw the receipt made in her name, but I believe in my heart it was also recorded in heaven. I invited her and Elder Richards to follow me to the unoccupied First Presidency council room in the Church Administration Building. The room is beautiful and peaceful. I asked this sweet widow to sit in the chair usually occupied by our Church President. I felt he would not mind, for I knew his heart.

As she sat ever so humbly in the large leather chair, she gripped each armrest with a hand and declared, "This is one of the happiest days of my life." It was also such for Elder Richards and for me.

I never travel to work along busy Seventh East in Salt Lake City but what I see in my mind's eye a thoughtful daughter, afflicted with arthritis and carrying in her hand a plate of warm food to her aged mother who lived across the busy thoroughfare. She has now gone home to that mother who preceded her in passing. But her lesson was not lost on her daughters, who delight their widowed father by cleaning his house each week, inviting him to dinners in their homes, and sharing with him the laughter of good times together, leaving in that widower's heart a prayer of gratitude for his children, the light of his life. Fathers experience loneliness as well as mothers.

Pure Religion

One evening at Christmastime, my wife and I visited a nursing home in Salt Lake City. We looked in vain for a 95-year-old widow, whose memory had become clouded and who could not speak a word. An attendant led us in our search, and we found Nell in the dining room. She had eaten her meal; she was sitting silently, staring into space. She did not show us any sign of recognition. As I reached to take her hand, she withdrew it. I noticed that she held firmly to a Christmas greeting card. The attendant smiled and said, "I don't know who sent that card, but she will not lay it aside. She doesn't speak but pats the card and holds it to her lips and kisses it." I recognized the card.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After you prayerfully prepare, share this message using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. A few examples follow:

1. Ask family members to make a list of all the widows, widowers, and fatherless or motherless children they know. Read sections of President Monson's message that will help family members appreciate the challenges widows and others probably face. Invite them to gladden the heart of someone on their list.
2. Invite family members to tell of times they have visited or given other service to those who live alone. Read President Monson's thank you. Then read aloud the last section of this message, and bear your testimony of the blessings that come from remembering the lonely.

It was one my wife, Frances, had sent to Nell the week before.

We left more filled with the Christmas spirit than when we entered. We kept to ourselves the mystery of that special card and the life it had gladdened and the heart it had touched. Heaven was nearby.

We need not wait for Christmas; we need not postpone till Thanksgiving Day our response to the Savior's tender admonition: "Go, and do thou likewise."¹³

As we follow in His footsteps, as we ponder His thoughts and His deeds, as we keep His commandments, we will be blessed. The grieving widow, the fatherless child, and the lonely of heart everywhere will be gladdened, comforted, and sustained through our service, and we will experience a deeper understanding of the words recorded in the Epistle of James: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."¹⁴ ■

NOTES

1. Jeremiah 8:22.
2. "Where Can I Turn for Peace?" *Hymns*, no. 129.
3. 1 Kings 17:12.
4. 1 Kings 17:13–16.
5. Luke 7:11–15.
6. See Luke 20:46–47.
7. 3 Nephi 24:5.
8. D&C 83:6.
9. "Make the World Brighter," *Deseret Sunday School Songs* (1909), no. 197.
10. Matthew 25:40.
11. *Thoughts for One Hundred Days* (1966), 222.
12. *History of the Church*, 4:567.
13. Luke 10:37.
14. James 1:27.



OF WALKERS, WHEEL

BY JEAN HEDENGREN MOULTRIE

A few simple principles can aid us in reaching out to the frail elderly.

LaRae Poe of the Boardman Ward, Hermiston Oregon Stake, recalls how ward members helped her elderly mother feel valued and accepted. “When I took Mom to church, the members would hug her and make her feel so loved,” she says. “Home teachers visited regularly, and if there were extra problems, they would give her a blessing. Her visiting teaching companion took the time and extra effort to take her visiting teaching. When I was nursery leader, Mom was my assistant. Ward members who helped her feel loved made my heart warm.”

As a nurse who has worked many years in the field of gerontology, I am gratified when I hear of wards and branches like this one that embrace the elderly in their midst. Due to increasing life expectancy and other factors, the world’s elderly population is growing rapidly, and consequently we will likely see many more elderly members in our Church units. I have noted some useful principles that can aid Church members and others in reaching out to the elderly.

Encourage Independence

Sometimes we try to jump in and solve problems for seniors rather than letting them do as much as possible on their own. Encouraging independence fosters a sense of self-confidence and self-worth among the elderly.

I once gathered a group of youth and asked each of them to assist a disabled elderly person. Their task was to identify something that would make the person more independent in some way and then to create that item. The youth made items such as carryall bags that fit on walkers, lap trays for wheelchairs, and Velcro fastenings for clothing. One young person noted that a man who had a stiffened hand could not hold his own toothbrush. The youth stuck the toothbrush in a tennis ball, and the man could then easily hold the toothbrush and brush his own teeth independently.

The elderly are also better able to maintain a sense of independence and confidence if they feel they are making a contribution in some way. Where appropriate, Church callings, targeted to the skills and abilities of the particular member, can help. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said regarding this point: “We hope, where possible, that each can be a home teacher or visiting teacher. Even those



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROGER MOTZKUS

CHAIRS, AND WISDOM

who are somewhat confined to their beds and homes can sometimes assist in this watchcare through telephone calls, writing notes, or other special assignments.”¹

Remember That Social Skills May Be Deceiving

Once an elderly woman invited me into her home. Graciously she showed me through the apartment while entertaining me with a running commentary on how lovely this and that was. Her home sparkled; she was well groomed and gracious. I could see no obvious hint of problems or why food prepared for her sat uneaten.

She opened the refrigerator filled with prepared dishes. I pointed to stew, salad, and cheesecake and asked her what she did with those.

She smiled. “Aren’t they lovely?” she said.

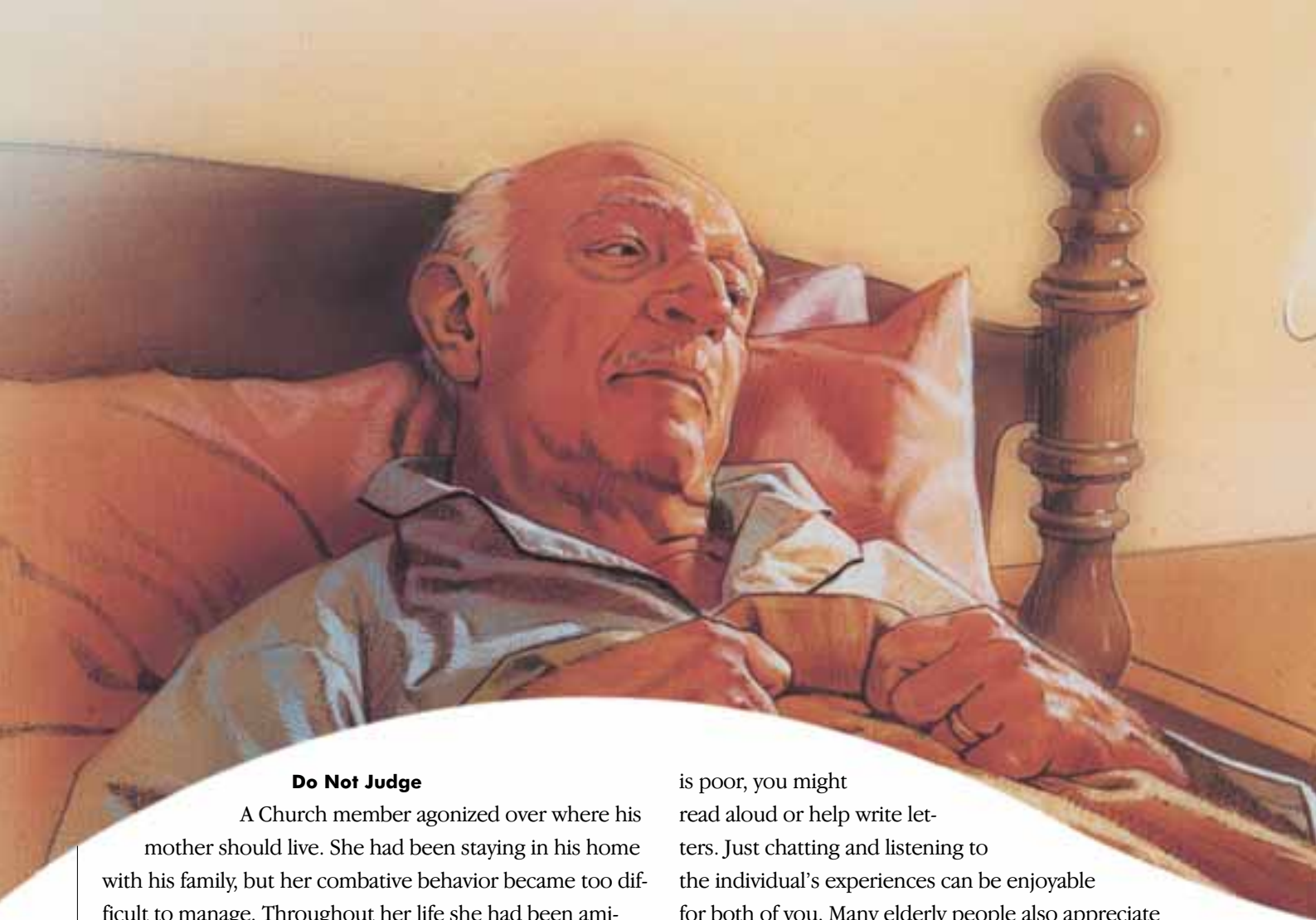
I pointed to the nearby fire extinguisher. “What do you do with that?” I asked.

She smiled. “Aren’t those pictures on it lovely?” she said.

She couldn’t figure out how to uncover the food dishes and put them on the table to eat. Nor could she comprehend why a fire extinguisher hung in her home. Gracious and charming, she used social skills to cover early stages of dementia.

While we should make every effort to encourage independence among our elderly friends, we also should be watchful for signs that an elderly individual may need help. In some situations, home teachers, visiting teachers, and neighbors are among the few contacts an elderly person has and perhaps are the only ones to note concerns and needs.

Bear in mind that impaired thinking ability isn’t necessarily a normal result of aging. Many factors can contribute to this, including medication problems, illnesses, improper diet, the effects of hospitalization and surgery, and so on. A thorough medical exam may be needed. If the elderly person has medical issues that have not been addressed or a housing situation that raises concerns, family members might be a resource. If the individual does not have actively involved family members, contact your local area agency on aging. It may be helpful to offer to transport the individual to a doctor’s office or clinic.



Do Not Judge

A Church member agonized over where his mother should live. She had been staying in his home with his family, but her combative behavior became too difficult to manage. Throughout her life she had been amiable and kindhearted, so it was a shock to those who knew her when she became physically violent, throwing items and swearing.

We may not know what changes have taken place in a person physically and mentally during the aging process. Nor do we always understand why family members have made particular decisions regarding the individual's care. Rather than judging the senior or his or her family members, it is much more helpful to provide support. A listening ear can help elderly people and their families as they sort out various options.

Visit

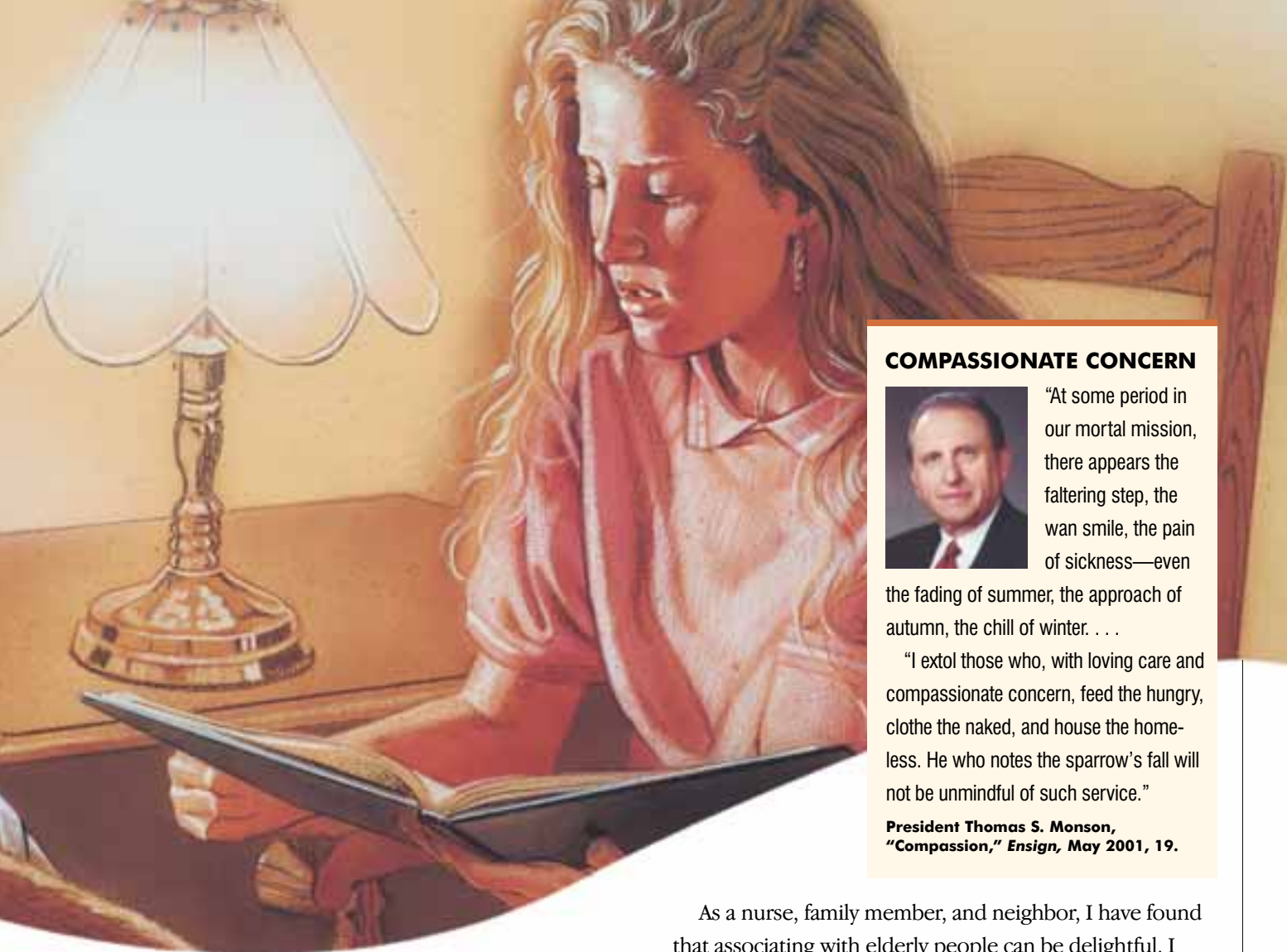
Many elderly Church members live with family members who care for them. Being a caregiver to an elderly person can be exhausting. Most caregivers are appreciative of individuals who can give them a short break, and the elderly person often enjoys a friendly visit.

You might consider taking the elderly individual for a walk around the neighborhood. If the individual's eyesight

is poor, you might read aloud or help write letters. Just chatting and listening to the individual's experiences can be enjoyable for both of you. Many elderly people also appreciate visits from children who accompany their parents. Check with the caregiver and the elderly person to find out what would be helpful and appropriate.

Do not forget the elderly who have moved to assisted living centers or nursing homes, regardless of whether their records have been moved from the ward. They need friends more than ever. When an elderly person is experiencing dementia, others may wonder if their visits are of value. Yet even if the elderly do not remember names, they often remember faces. And even when a visit is forgotten, the warm feelings from that visit may linger.

President N. Eldon Tanner (1898–1982) of the First Presidency emphasized the importance of ministering to our elderly friends and family members: "We all should assume some responsibility in remembering those of our families and our neighbors who find themselves confined for any reason—either at home or in nursing establishments. They need to be visited or given transportation to places they wish to go. Just a brief visit at regular intervals would certainly help the confined person and give the



COMPASSIONATE CONCERN



"At some period in our mortal mission, there appears the faltering step, the wan smile, the pain of sickness—even

the fading of summer, the approach of autumn, the chill of winter. . . .

"I extol those who, with loving care and compassionate concern, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and house the homeless. He who notes the sparrow's fall will not be unmindful of such service."

President Thomas S. Monson,
"Compassion," Ensign, May 2001, 19.

visitor satisfaction and joy for the privilege of having 'done something good in the world.'"²

Ensure That the Individual Has Home Teachers and Visiting Teachers

If you are in a position to do so, ensure that the elderly person receives regular visits from home and visiting teachers. This includes elderly people who live with their families. You might also consult with local priesthood leaders regarding the homebound receiving the sacrament.

President Benson said concerning home teachers and visiting teachers: "We hope each of the elderly individuals and couples has sensitive and caring home teachers and visiting teachers assigned to them. Great comfort and peace can come to those who know they have someone to whom they can turn in time of emergency or need. It is important that tact, diplomacy, and sincerity be evident in assessing and addressing such needs."³

As a nurse, family member, and neighbor, I have found that associating with elderly people can be delightful. I appreciate the richness they add to my life. I have found that as we reach out to our elderly friends and family members, we are blessed with the peace described in the scriptures: "See that ye love one another. . . . And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace" (D&C 88:123, 125). ■

NOTES

1. "To the Elderly in the Church," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 7.
2. "Preparing for Old Age," *Ensign*, Dec. 1976, 4.
3. *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 7–8.

Jean Hedengren Moultrie is a member of the Philomath Ward, Corvallis Oregon Stake.

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. Who are the elderly people in our wards, branches, or neighborhoods, and how can we offer our assistance?
2. How can we help our family members appreciate the elderly and be sensitive to their needs?

Your Family History: Getting Started

BY PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Several years ago Sister Packer and I determined that we should get our records in order. However, under the pressure of Church responsibilities with my travels about the world, and the obligations with our large family and a home to keep up both indoors and outdoors, there just was not enough time. But we were restless about this family history responsibility, and finally we determined that somehow we would have to make more time in the day.

During the Christmas holidays when we had a little extra time, we started. Then as we moved back to a regular schedule after the holidays, we adopted the practice of getting up an hour or two earlier each day.

We gathered together everything we had, and in the course of a few weeks we were amazed at what we were able to accomplish. The thing that was most impressive, however, was the fact that we began to have experiences that told us somehow that we were being guided, that there were those beyond the veil who were interested in what we were doing. Things began to fall into place.

As I have traveled about the Church and paid particular attention to this subject, many testimonies have come to light. Others who assemble their records together are likewise having similar experiences. It was as though the Lord was waiting for us to begin.

We found things we had wondered about for a long time. It seemed as though they came to us almost too easily. More than this, things that we never dreamed existed began to show up. We began to learn by personal experience that this research into our families is an inspired work. We came to know that an inspiration will follow those who move into it. It is just a matter of getting started.

Once we started, we found the time. Somehow we were able to carry on all of the other responsibilities. There seemed to be an increased inspiration in our lives because of this work.

Paths Open When We Start

But the decision, the action, must begin with the individual. The Lord will not tamper with our agency. If we want a testimony of



If you don't know where to start, start with yourself. If you don't know what records to get, and how to get them, start with what you have.

family history and temple work, we must do something about that work. Here is an example of what can happen when you do.

I once attended a conference in the Hartford Connecticut Stake. An assignment had been made three months earlier to all members of the stake presidency to speak on this subject of family history work. One had been a counselor in the stake presidency but became stake patriarch at that conference. He told this interesting incident.

He had not been able to get started in family history work, although he was “converted” to it. He just didn’t know where to start. When he received the assignment to prepare a life history from his own records, he was unable to find anything about his childhood and youth except his birth certificate. He was one of 11 children born to Italian immigrants. He is the only member of his family in the Church.

In fulfilling the assignment he tried to put together everything he could find on his life. At least he was starting, but there just didn’t seem to be anywhere to go. He could get his own life story put together from his own memory and from what few records he had.

Then a very interesting thing happened. His aged mother, who was in a rest home, had a great yearning to return once more to her homeland in Italy. Finally, because she was obsessed with this desire, the doctors felt nothing would be gained by denying

her this request, and the family decided to grant their mother her dying wish. And for some reason they all decided that this brother (the only member of the family in the Church) should be the one to accompany his mother to Italy.

All at once, then, he found himself returning to the ancestral home. A door was opening! While in Italy he visited the parish church where his mother was baptized and

If we start where we are—each of us with ourselves, with such records as we have—and begin putting those in order, things will fall into place as they should.



One man traveled to his ancestral home in Italy and met many relatives. He also found the parish church where his mother was baptized and the parish church where his father was baptized. He learned that the records went back 500 years.

also the parish church where his father was baptized. He met many relatives. He learned that the records in the parish go back for 500 years. He visited the town hall to look into the records and found people very cooperative there. The town clerk told him that the previous summer a seminarian and a nun had been there together looking for records of this brother's family name, and they had said they were collecting the family history of the family. He was given the name of the city where they lived, and he now could follow that lead. He learned also that there is a city in Italy bearing the family name.

But this is not all. When he came to Salt Lake City to general conference he returned by way of Colorado, where many of his family live. There, with very little persuasion, a family organization was effected and a family reunion was planned, which soon afterwards was held.

And then, as always happens, some of his relatives—his aunts and uncles, his brothers and sisters—began to provide the pictures and information about *his* life that he never knew existed. And, as always happens, he learned that this is a work of inspiration.

The Lord will bless you once you begin this work. This has been very evident to my family. Since the time we decided that we would start where we were, with what we had, many things have opened to us.

On one occasion I took to the Genealogical Society eight large volumes, manuscript family history work, consisting of 6,000 family group records of very professional family history work, all on the Packer family. All of it was compiled by Warren Packer, originally from Ohio, a schoolteacher, a Lutheran. He has spent 30 years doing this work, not really knowing why. There are two more volumes now added to the others. He senses now why he has been involved in this work over the years and very much has the spirit of the work.

We have had the opportunity, too, of locating and visiting the ancestral Packer home in England. Many of the large manor houses in England in recent years have been opened to the public. This one is not. It is about a 15-minute drive from the London England Temple, and it is built on the site of an ancient castle, with a moat around it. It stands just as it was finished in the early 1600s. The portraits of our ancestors are hanging where they were placed nearly 300





years ago. On the estate is a little chapel. In it is a stained glass window with the Packer coat of arms, put there in 1625.

Things began to emerge once we got to work. We still are not, by any means, experts in family history research. We are, however, dedicated to our family. And it is my testimony that if we start where we are—each of us with ourselves, with such records as we have—and begin putting those in order, things will fall into place as they should.

How to Begin

It is a matter of getting started. You may come to know the principle that Nephi knew when he said, “And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do” (1 Nephi 4:6).

If you don’t know where to start, start with *yourself*. If you don’t know what records to get, and how to get them, start with what you have.

There are two very simple instructions for those who are waiting for a place to begin. Here’s what you might do:

Get a cardboard box. Any kind of a box will do. Put it someplace where it is in the way, perhaps on the couch or on the counter in the kitchen—anywhere where it cannot go unnoticed. Then, over a period of a few weeks, collect and put into the box every record of your life, such as your birth certificate, your certificate of blessing, your certificate of baptism, your certificate of ordination, and your certificate of graduation. Collect diplomas, all of the photographs, honors, or awards, a diary if you have kept one, everything that you can find pertaining to *your* life; anything that is written, or registered, or recorded that testifies that you are alive and what you have done.

Don’t try to do this in a day. Take some time on it. Most of us have these things scattered around here and there. Some of them are in a box in the garage under that stack of newspapers; others are stored away in drawers, or in the attic, or one place or another. Perhaps some have been tucked in the leaves of the Bible or elsewhere.

Some very interesting things will start to happen once you show some interest in your own family history work. This is a firm principle.



Find a cardboard box and put it in the way and begin to put things in it, and as the things unfold you will sense something spiritual happening.

Gather all these papers together and put them in the box. Keep it there until you have collected everything you think you have. Then make some space on a table, or even on the floor, and sort out all that you have collected. Divide your life into three periods. The Church does it that way. All of our programming in the Church is divided into three general categories—children, youth, and adult.

Start with the childhood section and begin with your birth certificate. Put together every record in chronological order: the pictures, the record of your baptism, and so on, up to the time you were 12 years of age.

Next assemble all that which pertains to your youth, from 12 to 18, or up until the time you were married. Put all of that together in chronological order. Line up the records—the certificates, the photographs, and so on—and put them in another box or envelope. Do the same with the records on the rest of your life.

Once you have done this, you have what is necessary to complete your life story. Simply

take your birth certificate and begin writing: “I was born September 10, 1924, the son of Ira W. Packer and Emma Jensen Packer, at Brigham City, Utah. I was the tenth child and the fifth son in the family.”

It really won’t take you long to write, or dictate into a tape recorder, the account of your life, and it will have an accuracy because you have collected those records.

What then? After you’ve made the outline of your life history to date, what do you do with all of the materials you have collected?

That, of course, brings you to your book of remembrance. Simply paste them lightly on the pages so that they can be taken out if necessary from time to time, and you have your book of remembrance.

Once you begin this project, very interesting and inspiring things will happen. You cannot do this much without getting something of the spirit of it, and without talking about it, at least in your family circle. Some very interesting things will start to happen once you show

some interest in your own family history work. It is a firm principle. There are many, many testimonies about it. It will happen to you.

Aunt Clara will tell you that she has a picture of you with your great-grandfather. You know that cannot be so, because he died the year before you were born. But Aunt Clara produces the picture. There is your great-grandfather holding you as a tiny baby. As you check through the records you find that he died the year *after* you were born, an important detail in your family history.

That accurate data means something. The middle name written on the back of the picture means something too. You may not know it at the moment, but it is a key; the beginning of ordinance work in the temple for some of your ancestors.

You believe in the Resurrection. You must know that baptism for someone who is dead is quite as essential as baptism for someone who is living. There is no difference in the importance of it. One by one it must happen. They must do it here while living, or it must be done for them here after they die.

The whole New Testament centers on the Resurrection of the Lord. The message is that *all* are to be resurrected. Every scripture and every motivation that apply to missionary work have their application to ordinance work for the dead.

Now you have your own family history written, and you have your book of remembrance assembled. It sounds too easy—well it is, almost. But it does mean that you have to get started. Like Nephi,

you will be “led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which [you] should do” (1 Nephi 4:6).

So find a cardboard box and put it in the way and begin to put things in it, and as the things unfold you will sense something spiritual happening and not be too surprised at that.

As the Heart Turns

Family history work has the power to do something *for* the dead. It has an equal power to do something *to*

the living. Family history work of Church members has a refining, spiritualizing, tempering influence on those who are engaged in it. They understand that they are tying their family together, their living family here with those who have gone before.

Family history work in one sense would justify itself even if one were not successful in clearing names for temple work. The process of searching, the means of going after those names, would be worth all the effort you could invest. The reason: You cannot find names without knowing that they represent people. You begin to find out things about people. When we research our own lines we become interested in more than just names or the number of names going through the temple. Our interest turns our hearts to our fathers—we seek to find them and to know them and to serve them.

In doing so we store up treasures in heaven. ■

This article consists of extracts from President Packer's book The Holy Temple.

FAMILY HISTORY BASICS

BY PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

There are several basic component parts to family history and temple work. Over the years, they may be rearranged somewhat in emphasis, or the approach in programming Church participation may change somewhat. But the responsibilities stay about the same.

1. Each of us is to compile his or her own life history.
2. Each of us is to keep a book of remembrance.
3. As individuals and families we are each to seek out our kindred dead, beginning first with the four most recent generations on each line, and then going back as far as we can.
4. We are each to participate in other programs such as name extraction when asked to do so.
5. We are to organize our families and hold meetings and reunions.
6. If we have access to a temple, each of us should go to the temple as often as possible to do ordinance work—first for ourselves, then for our progenitors, then for all the names that have been gathered by means other than our own.

FINDING
LINKSIN THE
CHAIN

From Aagard to Zykstra, your family name is probably among those on record at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. After all, the library has in its records the names of more than *3 billion* deceased people, the largest collection of its kind in the world. And more than 36 million of those people are linked into families.

Each morning, patrons line up at the front doors of the library on the west side of Temple Square before its 8:00 A.M. opening, eager to get to work. They might claim a spot at one of the center's 160 computers or one of its more than 700 microfilm and microfiche readers. Or perhaps they will browse through some of its thousands of genealogical reference sources.

They might have access to many of these same resources closer to home. There are 3,960 local family history centers in 92 countries around the world, and some 100,000 rolls of microfilm are circulated to these centers each month for use by local patrons. Still, a strong attraction draws family history



researchers to the library in Salt Lake City, where so many resources can be found in one spot. The library is known worldwide. Family history research organizations from as far away as France and New Zealand plan annual trips to Salt Lake City for their members.

The library serves some 2,000 patrons each day. In the four floors open to the public (a fifth floor is used by the staff), visitors find records from the United States, Canada, the British Isles, Europe, Latin America, Asia, Australia, and Africa. The library's collection includes more than 2.3 million rolls of microfilmed records; 742,000 microfiche; 300,000 books, serials, or other publication formats; and 4,500 periodicals. Currently, microfilmmers are filming records in 45 countries. The

Right: The Family History Library in Salt Lake City serves some 2,000 patrons each day who come to search out ancestors. Above right: Employee Marcie Mock checks a map from the library's extensive collection.



PHOTOGRAPH BY DON SEARLE





Left: A book is sewn back together as part of the rebinding process in the library's conservation laboratory. Center left: Nancy Petersen films a book from among the Family History Library's collection.



Above: There is heavy demand for the computer terminals that allow patrons to access a wide variety of resources. Right: A library patron pinpoints information on a microfilm.

library's resources increase by an average of more than 4,000 rolls of film and 700 books a month.

As visitors stream through the front doors each day, some may stop to contemplate the mural in the lobby depicting men and women from every age in history coming unto Christ through the gathering of family history records.

And perhaps as they pore over lists of names on a computer or search through microfilmed records, some patrons stop to reflect that what they are doing was foretold by an ancient prophet. The mission of Elijah includes a key role in uniting the great eternal family of our Heavenly Father. Elijah reiterated prophecy about the linking of families 167 years ago when, under the direction of Jesus Christ, he appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple to restore the keys of this great work.

"Behold, the time has fully come," Elijah said, "which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi . . . to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers" (D&C 110:14-15; see also Malachi 4:5-6). To that end the great resources gathered in the Family History Library await those moved to assist in the work. ■



Right: Missionary Lonnie Yates from Gilmer, Texas, works on a microfilm reader in the library's repair area. Below: A missionary assists a visitor in the FamilySearch™ Center, an extension of the Family History Library located in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building across Temple Square.



MY FIRST Church Assignment



BY ELDER JOHN A. HARRIS
Area Authority Seventy

I developed an abiding love of family history as I discovered my roots in China, Great Britain, Latin America, and Switzerland.

A class on family history I attended shortly after my baptism made the Spirit of Elijah burn more brightly within me. I began to interview my grandparents, to fill in family group records, to complete pedigree charts, and to write my family history.

Just weeks after I was baptized at age 16, my branch president called me to attend a family history class. Because of that simple assignment, my entire life changed.

Growing up in Uruguay with the uncommon surname of Harris (inherited from my father, who was British), I already had a natural interest in family history because of my unique ancestry—which includes progenitors from Switzerland and China as well as Great Britain. The class made the Spirit of Elijah burn more brightly within me. I began to interview my grandparents, to fill in family group records, to complete pedigree charts, and to write my family history. Soon after completing the class I was called to serve as a family history instructor.

During the next few years I experienced spiritual direction several times while working on my family history, and since then I have learned that events like these are common when we are engaged in this great work.

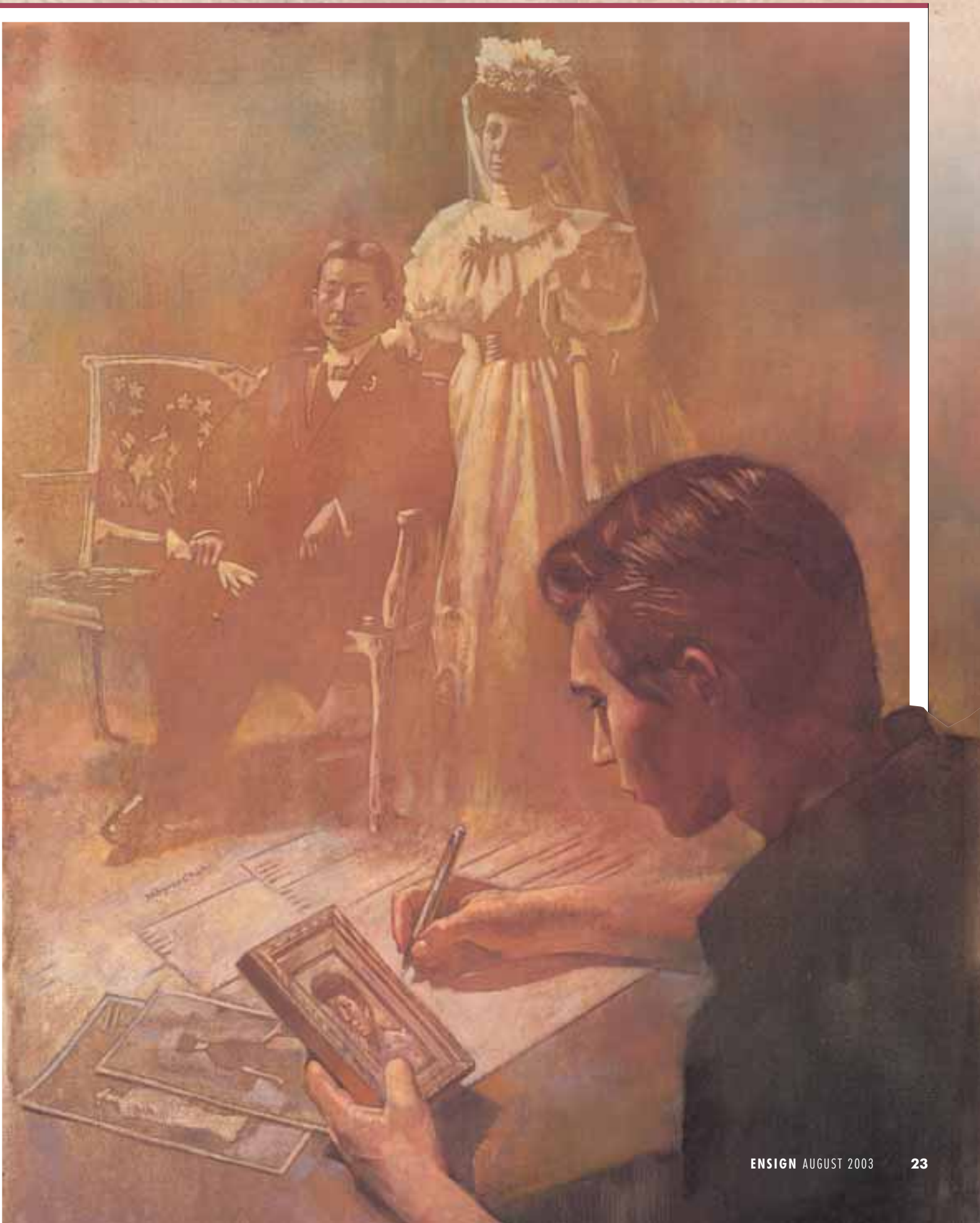
Archived Records in Uruguay

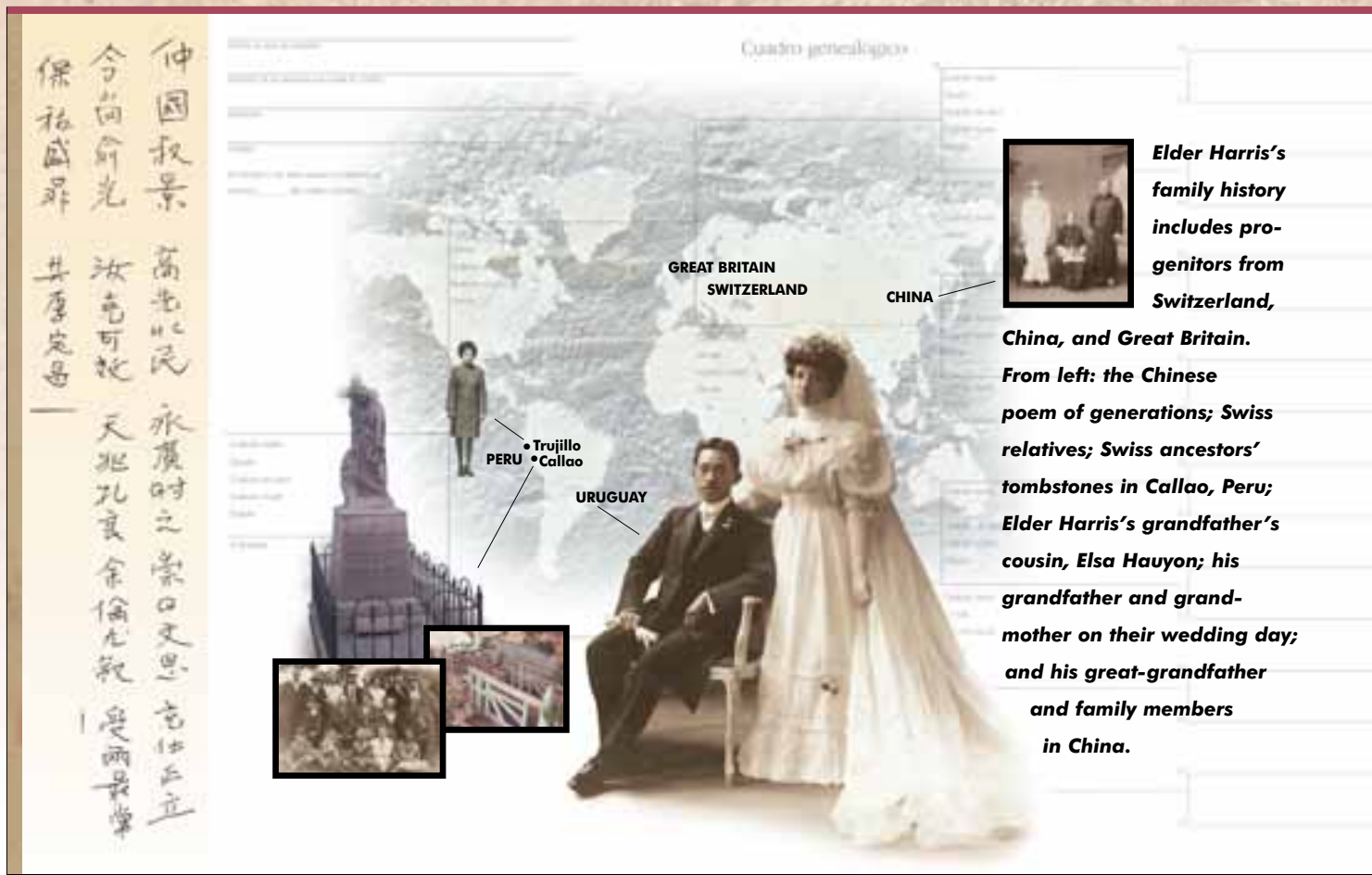
One of the most extraordinary experiences took place when I was 19 years old. I was released from serving as a counselor in my branch presidency so I could accept an assignment as chairman of family history for the mission. We were preparing for a visit from George H. Fudge of the Church's Genealogical Department in Salt Lake City; he was hoping to microfilm some of the vital records of Uruguay. I was asked to help make the arrangements.

That night I prayed fervently for the ability to do what I had been asked. Later I noticed a newspaper headline that read, "Genealogy in Uruguay." The story told about an upcoming meeting of Uruguayan genealogists. Then I saw that the newspaper was several days old. The meeting had already been held, but I decided to visit the address in the story anyway.

On the evening I decided to make my visit, I was also assigned to supervise a youth gathering and had to stay at the meetinghouse until 9:30 P.M. I didn't have the money for bus fare, so I walked to the place where the meeting had been held. By the time I reached the address, it was late. I rang the bell, hoping for the best, and a few minutes later a man opened the door.

I introduced myself, and the man graciously allowed me to come in. What he said next filled me with surprise: "I am glad you





Elder Harris's family history includes progenitors from Switzerland, China, and Great Britain.

From left: the Chinese poem of generations; Swiss relatives; Swiss ancestors' tombstones in Callao, Peru; Elder Harris's grandfather's cousin, Elsa Hauyon; his grandfather and grandmother on their wedding day; and his great-grandfather and family members in China.

came this late because I just arrived. Had you come a few minutes earlier you would have found an empty house." I soon learned he was part of the only group of genealogists in Uruguay. I also found out that the newspaper had published the story about the meeting despite having been asked not to do so.

I was able to set up a meeting for Brother Fudge with this group of eminent genealogists. They opened the archives to him. At his request, some of the indexes of family history records in Uruguay were microfilmed. I believe these were the first records microfilmed by the Church in Uruguay.

A Chinese Poem of Generations

A second significant event occurred a few years later when I was called to serve a mission to Peru. My grandfather, who was not religious but was the man I respected most, did not want me to go. Mine was a Chinese family, and my grandfather was its patriarch. In effect, the family was our religion, and obeying and honoring our elders was our moral code. For weeks my grandfather did not talk to

me because of my intention to go on a mission. One week before I left, he offered me a present. He gave me the razor I used during my mission—a razor I still keep to this day. He was a loving man. In order to help him feel better about my mission, I told him I would do what I could to find his relatives living in Peru.

In the first three months of my mission, I met Guillermo "Willy" Hauyon, my grandfather's nephew. I told Guillermo I had heard there was a Chinese poem in the family from which each generation took a word and incorporated it in their given names. To my surprise, he produced the poem and copied it for me. When I returned to Uruguay after my mission, I had my grandfather transcribe the poem in his own handwriting. Today it is a precious reminder of my grandfather and my heritage. The poem contains 48 Chinese characters and is used to mark generations; it has since proven invaluable in helping determine family relations.

A few months after finding the poem—while serving in the mission office—I traveled to Trujillo, Peru. There I met

Elsa Hauyon, who was then 82 years old. She turned out to be my grandfather's cousin, the only relative I have ever known who grew up with him in China. I spent hours talking to her, recording the names of my grandfather's brothers and sisters. I learned that there were 13 of them and not just the four my grandfather spoke of. With Elsa's help, I also traced our family back to the founder of my grandfather's hometown.

Swiss Ancestors in Peru

Another sacred family history event also occurred while I served as a missionary. Upon arriving in Peru, I was assigned to Callao, the port of Lima. It was most remarkable because, unbeknownst to me at the time, the tombs of my Swiss ancestors were in that very city. A relative eventually told me about the tombs, but I was unable to find them before being transferred to another city.

However, I believe the Lord wanted me to find my ancestors. While missionaries are seldom assigned to the same branch twice, I was. Almost a year later, I came back to Callao, and this time I discovered there were two adjacent cemeteries, one where my Schlupp ancestors are buried and the other where the records (dating back to 1820) for the family are stored. Searching through the records, I finally came across what I was looking for: "Elizabeth Schlupp, 57 years old, buried

THE REAL REASON



"Elijah came not only to stimulate research for ancestors. He also enabled families to be eternally linked beyond the bounds of mortality. Indeed, the opportunity for families to be sealed forever is the real reason for our research. The Lord declared through the Prophet Joseph Smith: 'These are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over, as pertaining to our salvation. For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, . . . they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect' [D&C 128:15]."

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "A New Harvest Time," Ensign, May 1998, 34.

September 16, 1875; Ana Maria Schlupp Kruse, 66 years old, buried January 24, 1918." I had found my Swiss ancestors!

I was ecstatic. I was able to complete four generations of my family history at last. Of all the places I could have been assigned, the Lord had called me not once but twice to Callao—the place where I could locate my Swiss ancestors.

A Lasting Impression

All of these wonderful events happened during the six years after my baptism. When I look back on my youth, I realize how much my testimony of the Church and its divinity has been strengthened through family history work and the Spirit of Elijah. I can truly say I have felt the Lord's influence many times in turning my heart to my ancestors. That chord, struck by my branch president who was inspired to get me started at age 16 with family history, still resonates today in the most sacred experiences of my soul. ■

Elder John A. Harris is an Area Authority Seventy serving in the Utah South Area.



Clockwise from left: Elder Harris's grandmother in traditional Chinese dress; a Swiss ancestor's tombstone, forgotten under the trees of a Protestant cemetery in the city of Elder Harris's first missionary assignment; family photo of Chinese relatives, including Elsa Hauyon.

That Happened

The kinds of questions you ask a relative can have a big effect on how interesting your family history will be.

BY LORIE NICOLES-DAVIS

Have you ever interviewed a relative, wishing you knew more about your family's history? If not, this article is just what you need to get started!

If you have, how did the interview go? Did you get everything you wanted, or did you go away from it wishing you had done something differently?

I have tried to learn from my mistakes and have now written several family histories. These experiences have been such a joy! I hope that what I have learned may help you write the history of your family or perhaps even the history of your own life.

Great Questions

The questions you ask are the key to getting good material—interesting stories and personal words of wisdom. Questions that probe for the varied facets of the person's life, questions that prod the memory, and questions that elicit anecdotes and entertaining bits of family history—these will make your family history enjoyable. After you have noted the basic facts and dates, try a few of these questions:

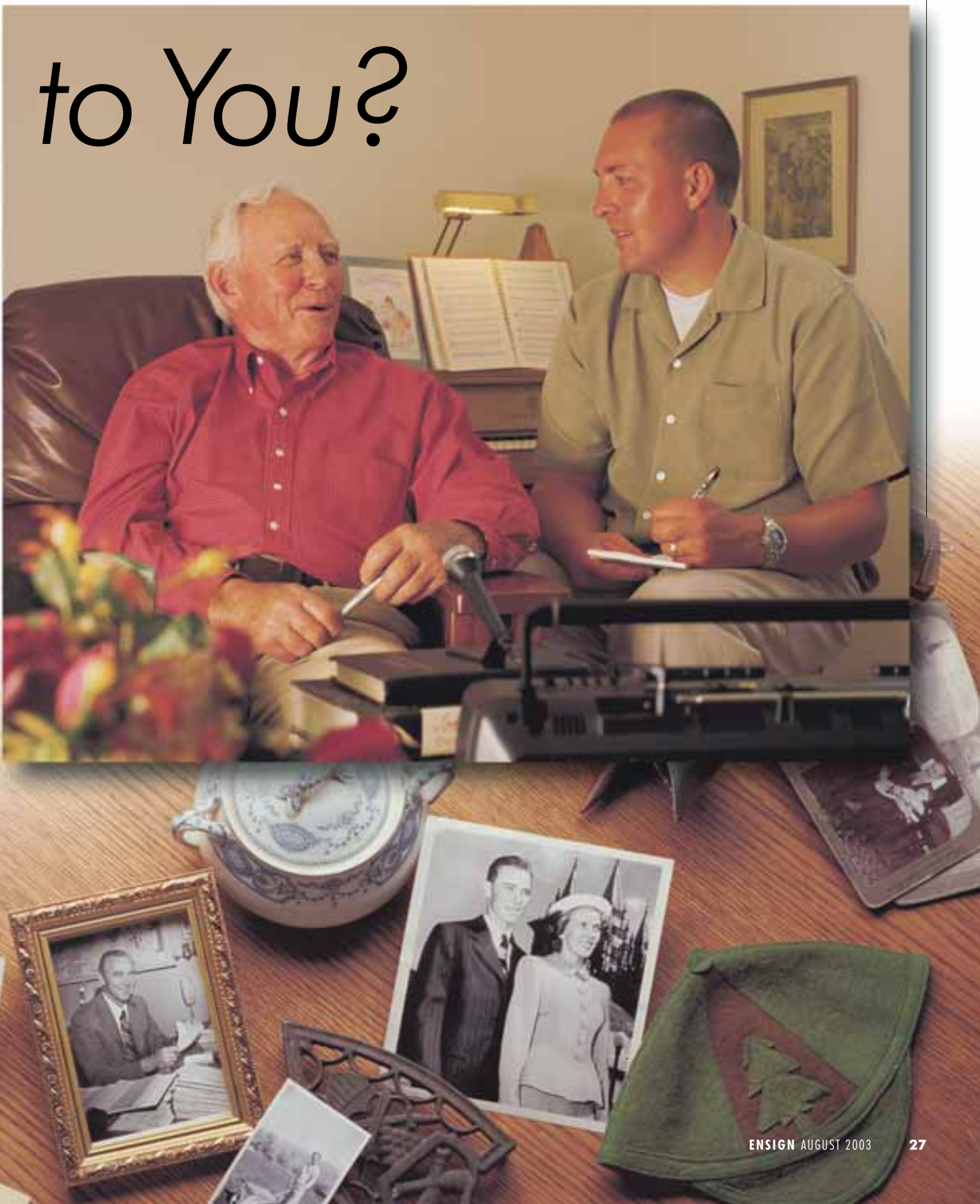
Questions about Childhood

1. What is the earliest event in your life you can remember? Tell me about it.
2. How did your parents choose your name?
3. Where did you grow up?
4. How did you travel or go places in those days?
5. What are the names of your brothers and sisters, in order? Do you remember how you felt and what you did when your younger brothers or sisters were born? How about ____? (Name the next younger child. Go through all the children's names.)
6. What experiences do you remember having with your brothers and sisters?
7. What kinds of things did you do for fun? Any other things?
8. Did your friends or family have any nicknames for you? What did they call you? Why did they call you that?
9. What chores did your parents have you do? How did you feel about doing them?

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CRAIG DIMOND, POSED BY MODELS



to You?





SUGGESTIONS FOR FAMILY HISTORY INTERVIEWING

1. Use a tape recorder and bring several 120-minute tapes.
2. Make your appointments for a time when you and your relatives can be relaxed. Sunday afternoons have been great for me! Plan about three hours for each interview.
3. Ask your questions, and then be quiet. Give your relatives time to think and talk without interruption. Making comments like "Oh!" "Really?" or "Wow!" will show your relatives that you really are interested in what they are saying and will encourage them to keep talking.
4. Use key phrases that prompt them to reminisce, such as "Tell me about that," "How did that make you feel?" and "What happened next?"
5. Check the tape so you won't end up thinking you are recording when the tape has actually run out. But be careful not to focus too much on the recorder. Some people can be very self-conscious about recordings.
6. When your relative seems to be getting tired, make an appointment for another session.
7. Transcribe your tapes. It may seem like hard work while you are doing it, but it will be worth it. Using a computer with word processing will make your job much easier.
8. Arrange the information you gathered in chronological order or topical arrangement.
9. Ask the person you interviewed to correct the draft. Don't hesitate to ask your relatives for clarification on what you were told. But keep the tape recorder handy; he or she will probably want to tell you more! ■

10. What was Christmas like when you were young?
11. Did you have a special way of celebrating birthdays? What special family traditions did you have?
12. Who baptized you? Who attended the baptism?
13. How did you feel about school? What did you do well in school? What did you do poorly? Which teachers did you like best?
14. Did you ever have any unusual or exciting adventures when you were a child? Any others you can think of?
15. What was an embarrassing experience you had as a child? Any others?

Questions about the Teen Years

1. Where did you live? Tell me about your home.
2. What was your favorite activity as a teenager? Tell me about it.
3. What was school like as a teenager? Was there something you were especially good at in school? What school activities did you participate in?
4. What books did you read? What were your favorite radio or television programs?
5. What was teenage music like then? What was your favorite kind?
6. Did you go to school dances? What were they like? How did teenagers dance then?



7. What home responsibilities did you have?
8. Did anything difficult happen to you as a teenager?
9. Who were your friends then? What did you like to do with them?
10. What made you decide on your career or college or your plans for your future? What goals did you have at that time?
11. Did you ever like someone who didn't like you? Tell me more.
12. When did you begin to have a testimony of Jesus Christ? What memories do you have of Church meetings or activities?

Questions about Adult Life

1. How and when did you meet ____ (name of spouse)? What was your first impression of him or her? Tell me all about it. What happened then? How did you feel?
2. When were you married? Where were you married? What do you remember about your wedding day?
3. What was it like to be a newlywed in those days?
4. What memorable or humorous adventures did you have?
5. What was it like to become a parent? How did you feel?
6. During your adult years, where have you lived? Why did you move there?
7. As an adult or parent, what did you like to do for entertainment? What were some of your favorite traditions?

8. What talents did you discover in yourself as you grew up? Tell me about all the things you learned to do. (It may be necessary to prod your relative on this one. He or she knows plenty but often doesn't think it will be interesting. You might need to read a list of talents and ask about the happiest or most challenging or unpleasant time with that talent.)
9. Have you had any personal or family tragedies in your life? If you would like, tell me about them.
10. How did you feel when your father, mother, brother, sister, spouse, or child died? How did you get used to life without that person? What helped you the most?
11. What was the greatest accomplishment or joy you have had in life? What others do you remember?
12. As you look back on your life, what is one thing you had to work really hard at, then finally succeeded? (Give your relative time to think about this question.)
13. Tell me about your testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Are there any spiritual experiences you would like to tell me about? ■

Lorie Nicoles-Davis is a member of the Buena Vista Ward, Buena Vista Virginia Stake.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Show family members a box or some other kind of container. Have them find in President Packer's article (pp. 12–17 of this magazine) what he said they could do with this box and then have them do it.

Invite family members to tell how it feels to get started with their family history. Bear your testimony of family history work.

2. Write several questions from "That Happened to You?" (pp. 26–29) on pieces of paper and place them in a bowl. Invite each family member to take one and write an answer to the question. Share the questions and answers. Then have each family member take another question, ask it of someone else, and write the answer. Place what was written in a family history box.

3. Read "My First Church Assignment" by Elder Harris (pp. 22–25). Review the suggestions for interviewing in "That Happened to You?" (pp. 26–29). Encourage family members to conduct an interview with a family member.





One Family

Some people simply talk about their family tree. Artist Valerie Atkisson of Manhattan, New York, created one of her own, a nine-foot hanging sculpture representing her ancestry. She used hundreds of triangles of folded rice paper, each bearing the name of one ancestor.

“I was interested in seeing, in a tangible, visible way, the dense and organic grouping of people from whom I am descended,” says Sister Atkisson. “While working on this sculpture, I thought a great deal about the victories and tragedies within the life of each person. My ancestors not only passed down their physical traits to me and their other descendants but also their beliefs, hopes, dreams, and fears. As I reflected on the human family, I realized we are all connected, all one family.”

Sister Atkisson began her sculpture with one triangle. On it she wrote her name, birth date, and birthplace. To that top triangle, she added two triangles: one for her mother and one for her father. She wrote the appropriate name, date, and place on each. Then she added two triangles to each parent’s triangle, and two to each grandparent’s triangle, and so on—each generation doubling the number of ancestors.

She continued back in time for 2,000 years. The names of ancestors born during the 20th century make up the top portion of the sculpture. The next section of triangles contains the names of northern European and Scandinavian

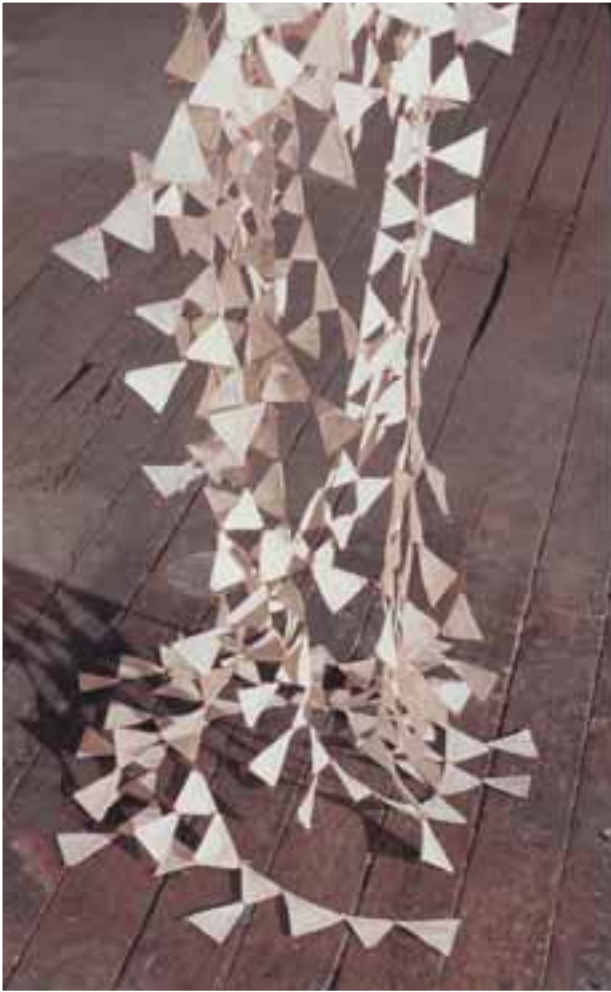
immigrants from 1900—their ancestors intermixed with descendants of early American colonists reaching back to the 1600s.

The middle portion of the sculpture names ancestors from various western and eastern European countries. At this point, however, the sculpture maintains the same width for several hundred years worth of names because Sister Atkisson encountered common ancestry as she moved back further in time. Rather than duplicate names on her pedigree, she listed her common ancestors only once—on her central patriarchal line.

Eventually some ancestral lines simply ended because information ended. The lower portion of the sculpture diminishes to a few family lines from England, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, and France from A.D. 500 to A.D. 6.

The sculpture, of course, is not a complete representation of all the artist’s ancestors, but it graphically shows the information Sister Atkisson found with reasonable research in the Manhattan FamilySearch™ Center in New York City. (The same information on our ancestors is available to many of us in FamilySearch Centers around the world or on the Internet at familysearch.org.)

Sister Atkisson’s sculpture hung in the window of the Joseph Smith Memorial Building in downtown Salt Lake City during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, reminding those who saw it that we are all connected to our past and that together we are one family. ■



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF VALERIE ATKISSON

"I was interested in seeing, in a tangible, visible way, the dense and organic grouping of people from whom I am descended," says artist Valerie Atkisson.





THE Talents



**Disciples of Jesus Christ
are commanded
to magnify and multiply
the spiritual gifts
God has given them.**

BY ELDER RONALD A. RASBAND
Of the Seventy

What parent has not looked into the eyes of a newborn infant and wondered in amazement about the child's future? What parent has not asked questions such as "What kind of life will my child have? For what purposes has this child come to earth now? What must I do as a parent to help this infant fulfill those purposes?"

Every one of us has been blessed with many marvelous capabilities, and one of the great objectives of our journey through mortality is to improve upon them. The Savior powerfully taught this lesson in His parable of the talents.¹

Good and Faithful Servants

A few days before His Crucifixion, Jesus took His disciples to a place on the Mount of Olives overlooking the city of Jerusalem (see Matthew 24:1, 3) and gave what is known as the Olivet discourse. The sermon is contained in Matthew 24 and 25 (see also D&C 45:16–75; Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:5–55).

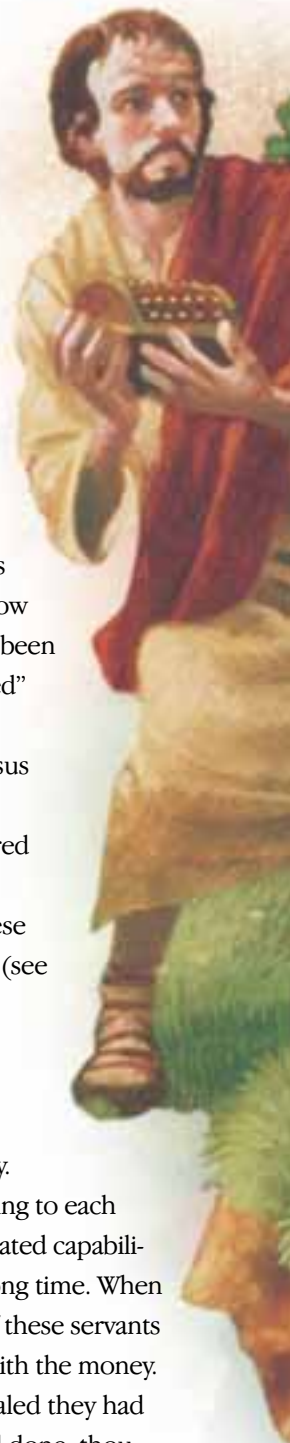
The quiet and panoramic setting was wonderfully suitable for the Savior to teach His disciples of the destruction of Jerusalem

and the signs of His Second Coming. As He spoke, His words distressed the disciples. Jesus tried to comfort them, saying, "Be not troubled, for, when all these things shall come to pass, ye may know that the promises which have been made unto you shall be fulfilled" (D&C 45:35).

As a part of this sermon Jesus gave several parables. In the Prophet Joseph Smith's inspired translation of the Bible, the Prophet made it clear that these parables refer to the last days (see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 25:1).

Jesus told the story of a master who gave each of his three servants a sum of money. The amounts were set according to each servant's previously demonstrated capabilities. The man then left for a long time. When he returned, he asked each of these servants to report what he had done with the money.

The first two servants revealed they had doubled his investment. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee



Those who
obtain other
talents shall
be given even
more talents in
abundance. But
those who do not
obtain other talents
shall lose even the
talents they had
initially received.



ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord,” was the master’s reply (Matthew 25:21; see also v. 23).

The Other Servant

The third servant then came trembling before his master. He had already heard what the others had reported and knew that he could not give a similar report. “I was afraid,” the servant said, “and went and hid thy talent in the earth” (Matthew 25:25). The master was upset. “Thou wicked and slothful servant,” he said. Then he commanded, “Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents” (Matthew 25:26, 28).

The Savior then gave the interpretation of the parable: Those who obtain other talents receive more talents in abundance. But those who do not obtain other talents shall lose even the talents they had initially (see Matthew 25:28–29).

Obtaining Other Talents

Every person comes to earth as a unique individual. Similar threads may run in families, but each of us has a tapestry all our own. Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote: “Each person in this life is endowed with those talents and capacities which his pre-earth life entitle him to receive. Some by obedience to law acquired one talent and some another.”²

The Lord made it clear that it is not good enough for us simply to return to Him the talents He has given us. We are to improve upon and add to our talents. He has promised that if we multiply our talents we will receive eternal joy.

In modern revelation the Lord affirmed the principles in this parable: “But with some I am not well pleased, for . . . they hide the talent which I have given unto them, because of the fear of man. . . . Thou shalt not idle away thy time, neither shalt thou bury thy talent that it may not be known” (D&C 60:2, 13).

Three Principles

Applying the teachings of the parable of the talents has been a challenge and a blessing in my life. The following principles have been a great help to me in my efforts with this process.

Seek earnestly to discover the talents the Lord has given you. The talents God has given us first become apparent in the interests we pursue. If you are wondering about your talents, make a list of the things you like to do. Include all the activities you enjoy from different dimensions of your life—spiritual, musical, dramatic, academic, athletic, and so on. Study and ponder your patriarchal blessing for insights and inspiration. Consult family members, trusted friends, teachers, and leaders; others often can see in us what we find difficult to see in ourselves.

I remember a wonderful Primary teacher who frequently invited me to read the scriptures in front of the class. She told me what a nice reading voice I had and how well I read. What she said and the way she encouraged me helped me gain confidence and realize a talent from the Lord at an early age.

As a 19-year-old missionary, I yearned to know if I had been blessed with any helpful missionary-related talents. I felt a great desire to know how I could magnify whatever gifts I had so that I could be a

more effective servant of the Lord. As I studied the scriptures and my patriarchal blessing, prayed fervently, and had various missionary experiences, several of my talents were made known to me.

Use your talents to build up the kingdom of God.



We should seek earnestly to discover the talents the Lord has given us, then use them to build up the kingdom of God.





LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Show a picture of yourself when you were much younger, and ask family members to do the same. Read together the first two paragraphs of this article, and tell about some capabilities you have developed. Invite others to do the same.

2. Take turns reading paragraphs from the second, third, and fourth sections of this article. Tell of a time when you were afraid to share a talent, and invite others also to tell of such times. Discuss ways we can overcome these fears.

3. Have family members underline the three principles taught by Elder Rasband in the last section of this article. Discuss ideas from this article that could help them discover and improve upon their God-given gifts and use them to build up God's kingdom. Express gratitude for the talents God has given you.

Our first priority in helping others is our family. Parents are in a unique and powerful position to encourage and support their children in developing their talents. We also have many opportunities to help others identify their talents. I am grateful for the many people who have helped me add to my talents. The successes in life of those we assist, sponsor, mentor, and lift as they pursue their own talents can bring us great joy and satisfaction.


Focusing on serving the Savior can guide us toward making proper decisions in our daily lives. This perspective prepares us to do whatever the Lord may ask of us at any time. President Gordon B. Hinckley exemplifies this important attitude: "My talents may not be great, but I can use them to bless the lives of others. I can be one who does his work with pride in that which comes from his hand and mind."³

Acknowledge God's hand in your success. We must never forget or stop acknowledging that all talents and abilities come from God. Some were given to us before our birth, while others have been acquired as we have developed. But in both cases, they are gifts from a benevolent Heavenly Father, whose gracious blessings are also the means for improving our talents and obtaining others. The Lord has said, "And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things" (D&C 59:21).

I am thankful for the knowledge He has given us—that we are His children and that we are to magnify and multiply our talents to our fullest potential. I know that if we will work hard and do our best, using our talents to bless others and build the kingdom of God, we will be brought back into His presence and hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21). ■

NOTES

1. The Greek word for talent means "a balance." In New Testament times, a talent was the largest weight (about 75 pounds or 34 kg) used for measuring the heaviness or value of metals such as gold or silver. A talent was not a coin but a sum of money (see Bible Dictionary, "Money," 733–34, and "Weights and Measures," 788).
2. *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1966–73), 1:688.
3. "Articles of Belief," Bonneville International Corporation Management Seminar, 10 Feb. 1991.



WORDS
OF
JESUS

Resurrection to Ascension

*“Ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth”
(Acts 1:8).*



The Savior’s words during His 40-day ministry to His disciples in Jerusalem provide a wonderful road map for us.

BY ELDER D. LEE TOBLER
Of the Seventy

As Jesus was taken from the cross and lovingly prepared for burial following the customs of the Jews, His disciples wanted to protect His body from intrusion or harm. They wrapped His body with fresh linen, and a great stone was rolled into place to seal the doorway of the tomb (see Matthew 27:57–60). Three days later Jesus emerged victorious over death from the tomb. For the next 40 days He taught and ministered to His disciples in what must have been an intensely powerful experience, preparing them for His Ascension into heaven.

The Savior’s words during these 40 days provide a wonderful road map for us as we contemplate His assured triumphal return to earth. The Lord gave at least three highly significant messages to His Jerusalem disciples: (1) His Resurrection was real and all are inheritors of that wonderful gift; (2) His Atonement was completed, but there would be requirements for us to fully partake of its blessings; and (3) His disciples were

responsible to carry the message of His gospel to the world.

The Reality of the Resurrection

To both believer and unbeliever, the evidence on the morning of the third day was compelling. The stone was rolled to the side. The dead Christ was no longer in the tomb. However, even with that evidence, the Lord chose to confirm His Resurrection in numerous glorious visitations. The first was to Mary Magdalene, who mourned outside the tomb. Two angels appeared to her and asked, “Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

“And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

“Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned

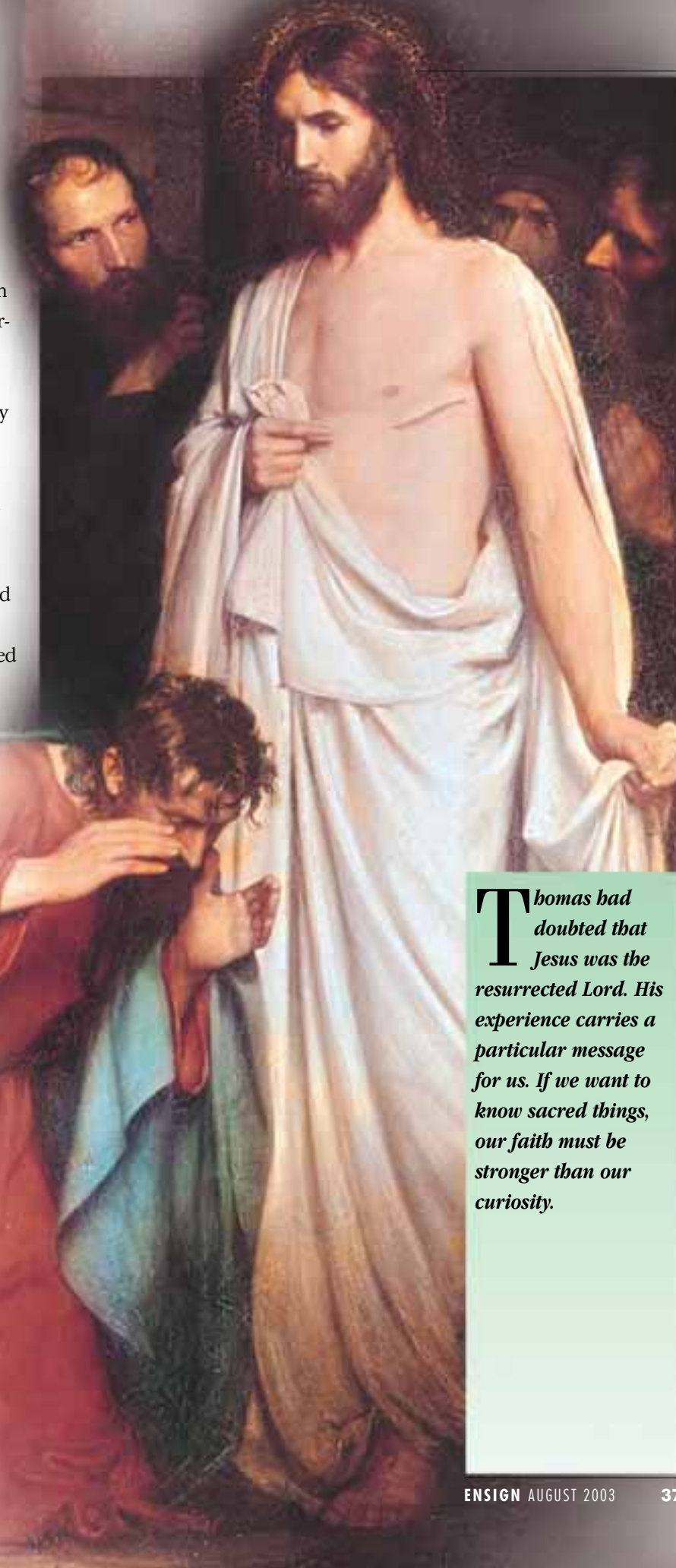
herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master” (John 20:13–16).

There is a great lesson to be learned from Mary Magdalene’s experience with the resurrected Lord. We learn that if we truly seek Him, if we truly want to know Him, we will find Him and know Him as He really is. Mary had become a disciple through conversion and had followed the Savior faithfully unto His death. By her own experience, she then knew that He was alive.

After this first confirmation of Christ’s Resurrection, others occurred. The risen Lord walked with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They spoke together of the rumored news of angels appearing and the Savior’s missing body. “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” He asked the two disciples.

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” and His Resurrection (Luke 24:26–27). The Savior then appeared to Simon Peter and afterward to the 11 Apostles and others. “Peace be unto you,” He said. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:36, 39).

While all these confirmations of His Resurrection are of great value, perhaps



Thomas had doubted that Jesus was the resurrected Lord. His experience carries a particular message for us. If we want to know sacred things, our faith must be stronger than our curiosity.

the most graphic is the Savior's appearance to Thomas and others eight days later. Thomas had doubted that Jesus was the resurrected Lord. "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands," Jesus invited, "and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God" (John 20:27–28). With this confirmation, Thomas was also given a gentle but clear reproof: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (v. 29).

Thomas's experience carries a particular message for us. If we want to know sacred things and experience all of the rich blessings related to those sacred experiences, our faith must be stronger than our curiosity.

There were other remarkable confirmations of the Lord's Resurrection, including His appearance, teachings, and meal with seven of His disciples on the shores of Galilee. "Lovest thou me?" was His question to Peter (see John 21:15–17). "Follow thou me" (John 21:22) was His command. By the time of His Ascension, there were no doubters of His immortality among His faithful disciples.

His Completed Atonement

The Savior was eager to help His disciples understand that while the Resurrection would be universal for all of Heavenly Father's children, there was a difference between becoming immortal and inheriting eternal life. In John 14, the Savior had already explained the difference to them:

"In my Father's house are many [kingdoms]¹: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

"Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (vv. 2–6).

Thomas's question (see John 20:25) still lingers in the hearts of many of our Father's children, and the Savior's answer remains today the only answer: No son or daughter of our Heavenly Father will be able to return home to Him except by becoming a partaker of the Atonement of Christ. When the resurrected Lord taught the disciples in Galilee, He made it clear why all the world must hear the gospel: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

Matthew further records the words of the Savior on this occasion:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19–20).

Therefore, we must conclude that partaking of Christ's Atonement for sin is conditional; it is dependent upon our being baptized and accepting His "way" and living His commandments. From the New Testament we learn that His way begins with a living faith in Jesus Christ as Redeemer of the world.

This kind of faith leads us to the covenant of baptism, when we take upon us His name and promise to keep His

commandments. Other covenants follow. We learn, as evidenced by His early disciples, that our lives must be consistent with our covenants. Only then will we receive that peaceful assurance from the Holy Ghost that we can become partakers of the Savior's Atonement. "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," Jesus told His disciples (Acts 1:5). In the end all ordinances must be validated by the Holy Spirit of Promise (see D&C 132:7). It is only when the Lord's Atonement is applied to us individually that we become free of our sins and worthy to enter the presence of our Heavenly Father.



After the Lord's question to Peter, Peter "saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs."

Taking the Gospel Message to the World

On the shores of Galilee and on the Mount of Olives, the Savior gave the assignment or calling to His Apostles that they (and others whom they would call) should carry the message of resurrection and redemption to the world. The Lord first introduced the assignment with an inquiry, referring to the meal He proffered His disciples: “Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs” (John 21:15). Jesus asked him a second time and received a similar response. Then He asked “the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep” (v. 17).

These early disciples had to make a critical choice. Would fish and bread, or other earthly goods and materials, take priority over the matters of heart and soul that are required for those who seek eternal life? If they had let earthly things become top priority, it would have been difficult to accomplish the more critical task, that of teaching Heavenly Father’s children throughout the world—the spiritual feeding of His sheep.

Then just before His Ascension into heaven, the Lord repeated the call: “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

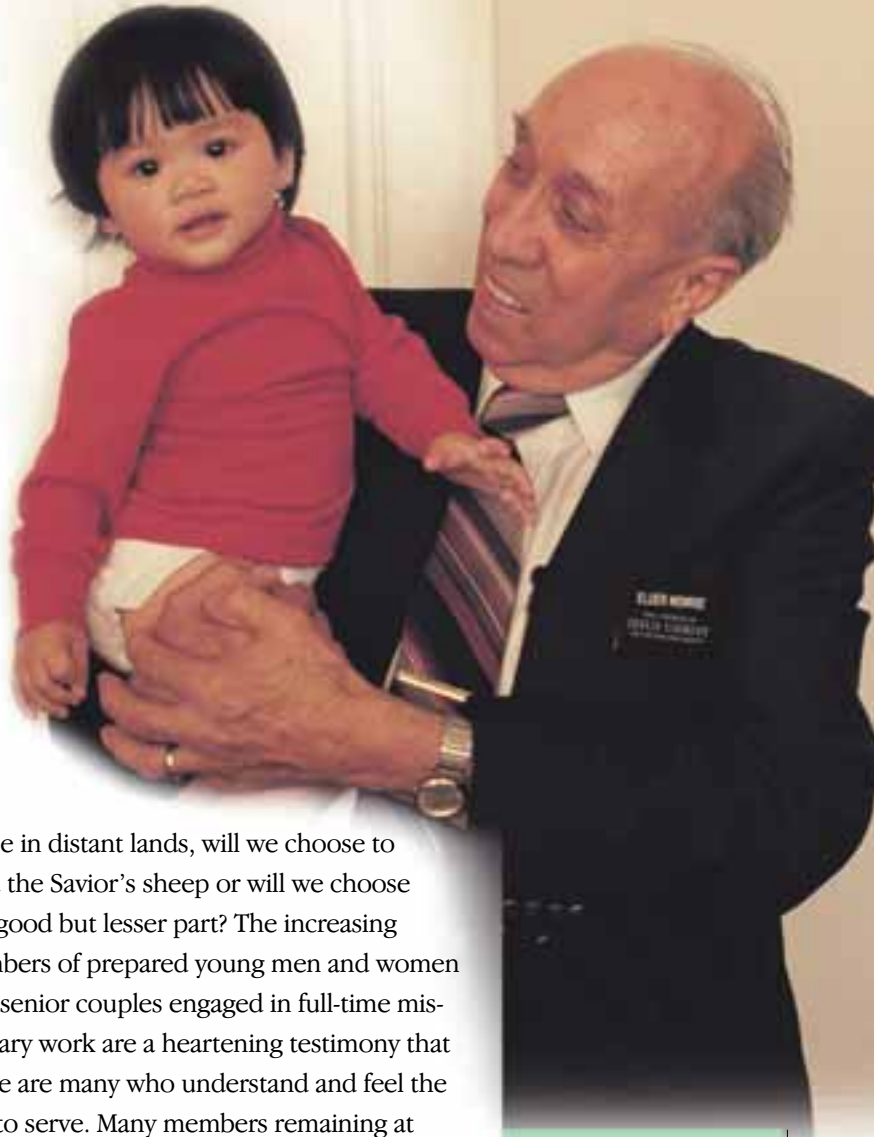
As members of the Church and disciples of Christ, we must come to terms with this challenge today. At a time when the prophets of God have called all members to be missionaries to neighbors, to family members, and to

those in distant lands, will we choose to feed the Savior’s sheep or will we choose the good but lesser part? The increasing numbers of prepared young men and women and senior couples engaged in full-time missionary work are a heartening testimony that there are many who understand and feel the call to serve. Many members remaining at home are increasingly joining the ranks of those who understand the need to teach the gospel at home as well as abroad. We are learning that disciples of Christ constantly look for ways to share this great message.

As we prepare for that future day when the Savior returns and reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords, these particular teachings take on increasing urgency. As we study the New Testament and pray for light and wisdom, we will be reassured of our divine origins. We will find great joy in the reality of resurrection, redemption, and exaltation through the Lord Jesus Christ. We will seek to carry the message to all, that our joy and their joy might be full and that we will all be able to partake of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. ■

NOTE

1. See *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 331.



At a time when the prophets of God have called all members to be missionaries to neighbors, to family members, and to those in distant lands, will we choose to feed the Savior’s sheep or will we choose the good but lesser part?

BY NADENE COPE SIMMONS

Some years ago, I had an experience that profoundly changed how I understood the Atonement. My afternoon of shopping had passed quickly, and I was driving to my mother-in-law's home to pick up my 17-month-old son and two-and-a-half-year-old daughter.

I waited patiently in the left turn lane, watching for a break in traffic as several cars sped by. Not until I started turning my car into the intersection did I see a motorcycle coming toward me at full speed. In an instant, my tranquil life turned into a slow-motion nightmare.

My mind frozen with horror, I felt myself automatically pumping the brakes and turning the wheel before the motorcycle slammed into the right rear end of my car. Somehow I pulled off to the side of the road and got out to face the horrific scene.

Through disbelieving tears, I saw the mangled motorcycle and a motionless body lying in the middle of the road. Police and fire-engine sirens wailed closer, and someone on the nearby curb yelled at me, but my numb mind just turned over and over in self-accusation. *I had caused this nightmare. My negligence might have killed someone.* "Heavenly Father," I prayed silently, "please fix everything. Please let everything be all right."

A sensitive bystander invited me into her home to call my mother-in-law and husband, and a police officer explained comfortingly that people often didn't see motorcycles coming. But their kindness couldn't silence one terrible question: had I killed the motorcyclist?

The wracking suspense lasted until my husband called the hospital and reported with relief that the 18-year-old driver had walked out with only a broken wrist. Somehow, my braking and steering had maneuvered the car such that he had crashed into the gas tank area—the softest part of my car. I realized in humility that my prayer had been answered even before I uttered it. But despite the

young man's miraculous escape, all was not well.

For two days I couldn't eat or sleep. I replayed every ugly, frightening detail of the accident over and over in my mind. "It was my fault," I kept thinking. "The children could have been in the car; I'm a bad driver; I should have been more careful." And worst of all, "I could have killed someone." The burden of guilt weighed so heavily on my shoulders that at last I asked my husband to give me a priesthood blessing.

Placing his hands on my head, he said lovingly, "I bless you that you may forget the trauma of this accident. I bless you that you may find peace of mind again." As he spoke,

the endless chant of blame and guilt faded away, replaced by thoughts of the Savior. Through His Atonement, He had already paid for the sins and mistakes of everyone who would turn to Him. Marveling, I reflected on my own suffering of the past two days. The pain had seemed unbearable. Yet the Savior bore the burden and pain for every sin repented of, every mistake, every sickness that would ever afflict humankind. And He had done

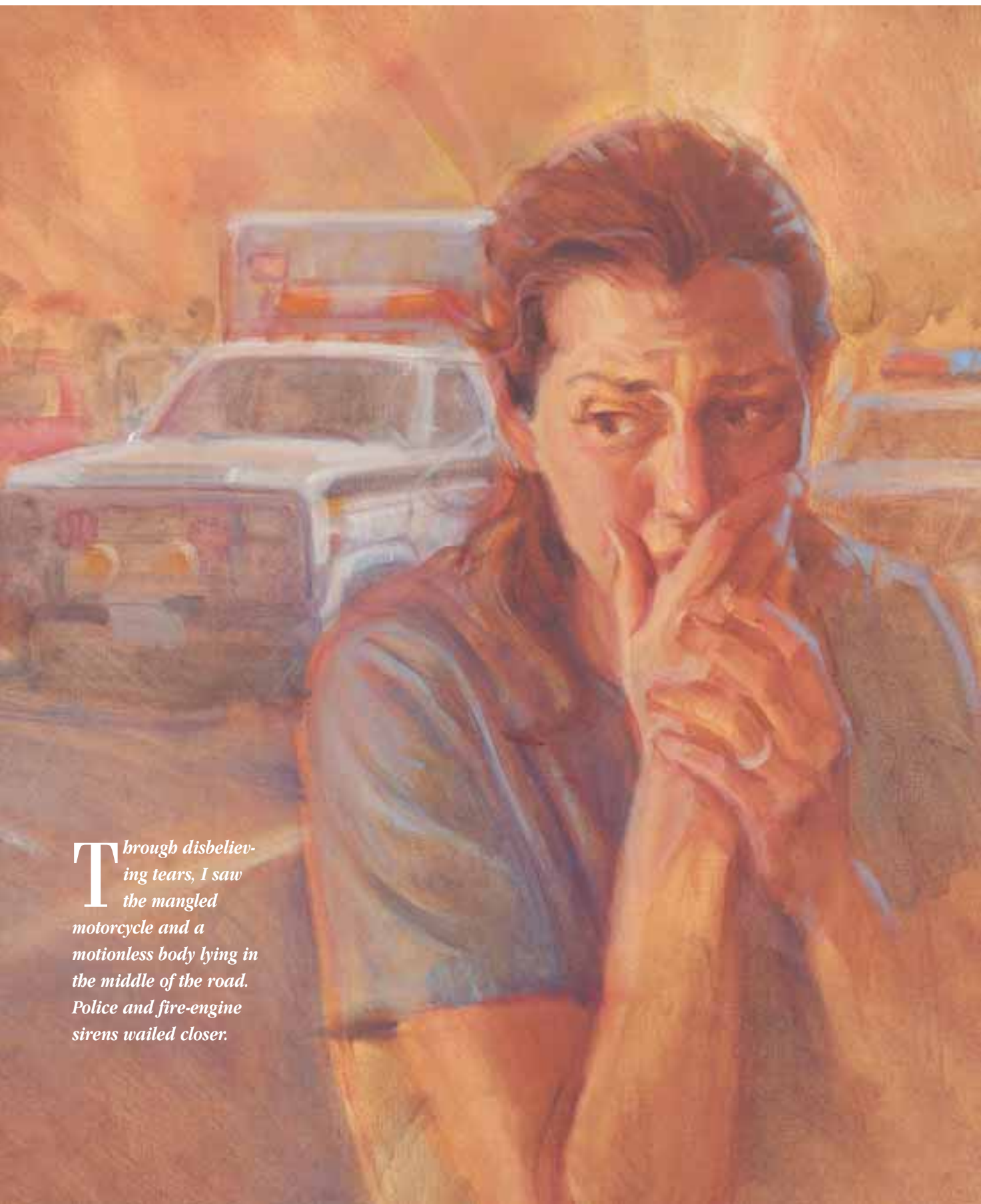
this for me! As the blessing concluded, I knew that the Savior loved me. And more strongly than ever before, I knew that I loved Him too.

The more I learn of the Savior, the more I realize I need Him and my Heavenly Father. Every morning I pray that I may be protected from the mistakes of others and that my thoughts, words, and actions will harm no one. While the horror of that day no longer plagues me, my heart still softens in sympathy for anyone involved in an accident—including the one at fault. Now, more than ever, I want to comfort those in pain with my testimony of the Atonement. The Savior has paid the price; we can find peace. The Savior's words proclaim this truth: "Yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands" (Isaiah 49:15–16). ■

NaDene Cope Simmons is a member of the Ray Ward, Gilbert Arizona Greenfield Stake.

LIFTING THE BURDEN

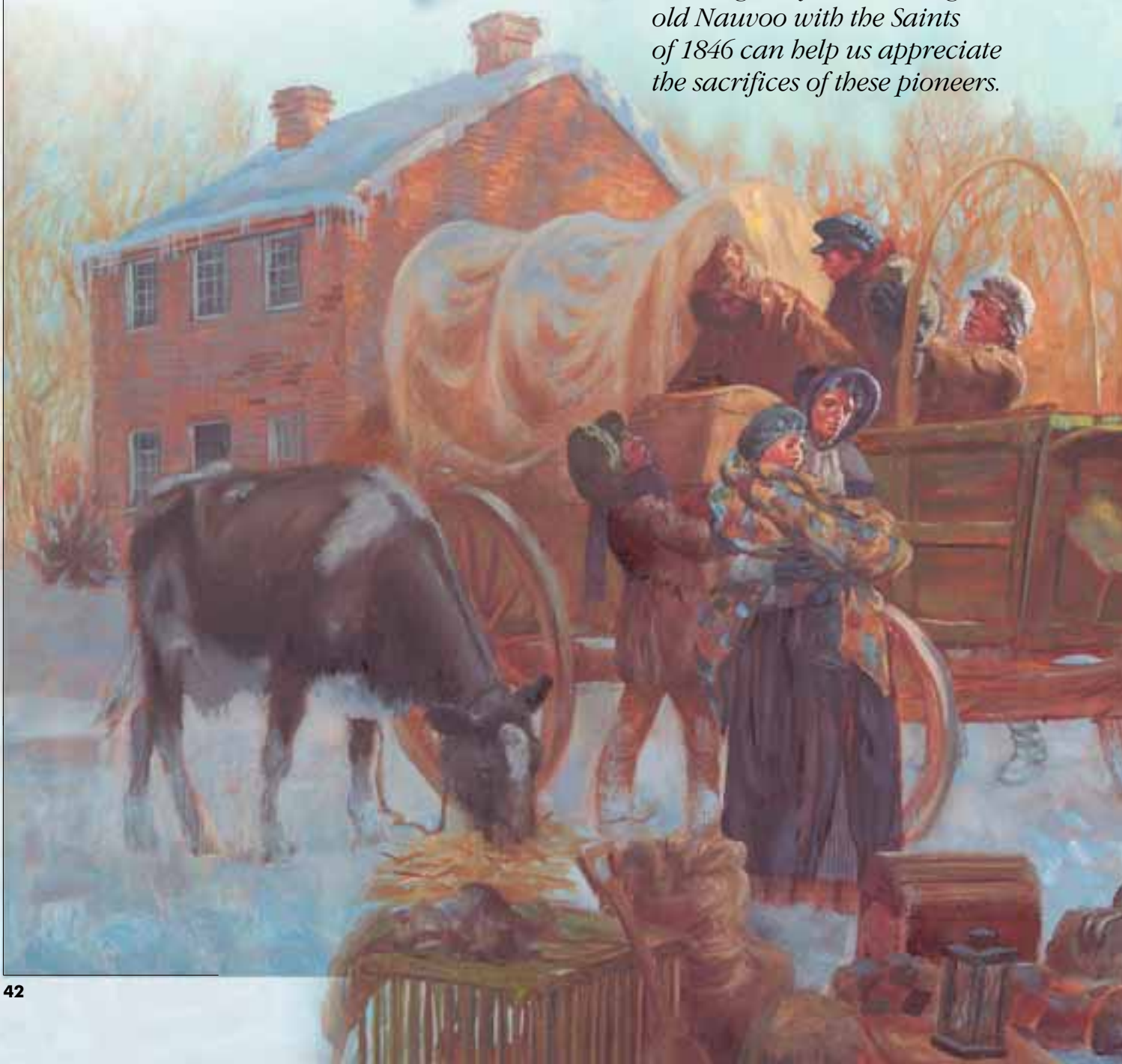
Sick with guilt, I thought I could never forgive myself for causing a traffic accident.



Through disbelief-
ing tears, I saw
the mangled
motorcycle and a
motionless body lying in
the middle of the road.
Police and fire-engine
sirens wailed closer.

A Walk down Parley Street

*An imaginary walk through
old Nauvoo with the Saints
of 1846 can help us appreciate
the sacrifices of these pioneers.*



BY JAMES W. PETTY

On 30 June 2002, during the final dedicatory service of the rebuilt Nauvoo temple, President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke of Parley Street, which leads to the site of the old Nauvoo Ferry, from which the early Nauvoo Saints began their trek to the Salt Lake Valley. Then he extended a heartfelt request that those present in the temple take time upon leaving the service to walk



Thousands responded to President Gordon B. Hinckley's request to walk down Parley Street.

down Parley Street. He asked that as they did so, they think of a young pioneer family and imagine the difficulty of leaving a comfortable home and departing for an unknown destination.

Those present at that dedicatory session received President Hinckley's invitation with enthusiasm. Thousands poured out of the temple and nearby meeting places and proceeded down the length of Parley Street. Fathers carried children on their shoulders, and mothers pushed babies in strollers. Some walked the entire length of road on crutches; others were pushed in wheelchairs. The stream of people continued until after dark.

My Walk down Parley Street

As I thought about my own ancestors who had lived with the Saints in Nauvoo, I began my own "walk down Parley Street." But my walk did not take place on cobblestone or gravel roads. As a professional genealogist, I made my walk through the old records and maps of Nauvoo and the journals, letters, and diaries of people who lived there in 1845 and 1846. As I read these historical documents, a picture began to form in my mind of my third great-

grandfather William Atkins Gheen and his wife, Esther Ann Pierce Gheen. They had heard the gospel in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and were baptized in 1840. A year later they sold their home and left all that they held dear to move to Nauvoo. William and Esther had eight children, all of whom

lived to adulthood, a rare blessing in that day.

William died in Nauvoo during the summer of 1845, at the age of 46, following a severe illness, leaving Esther to raise and care for their family.

As each new tidbit of information in my research came to light, Esther Ann Gheen and her story began to unfold before me. She became more than a name on a pedigree chart; she became a personality, a woman of strength. And my heart turned to her. What follows are my impressions of Esther Ann Gheen's walk down Parley Street on 24 February 1846.

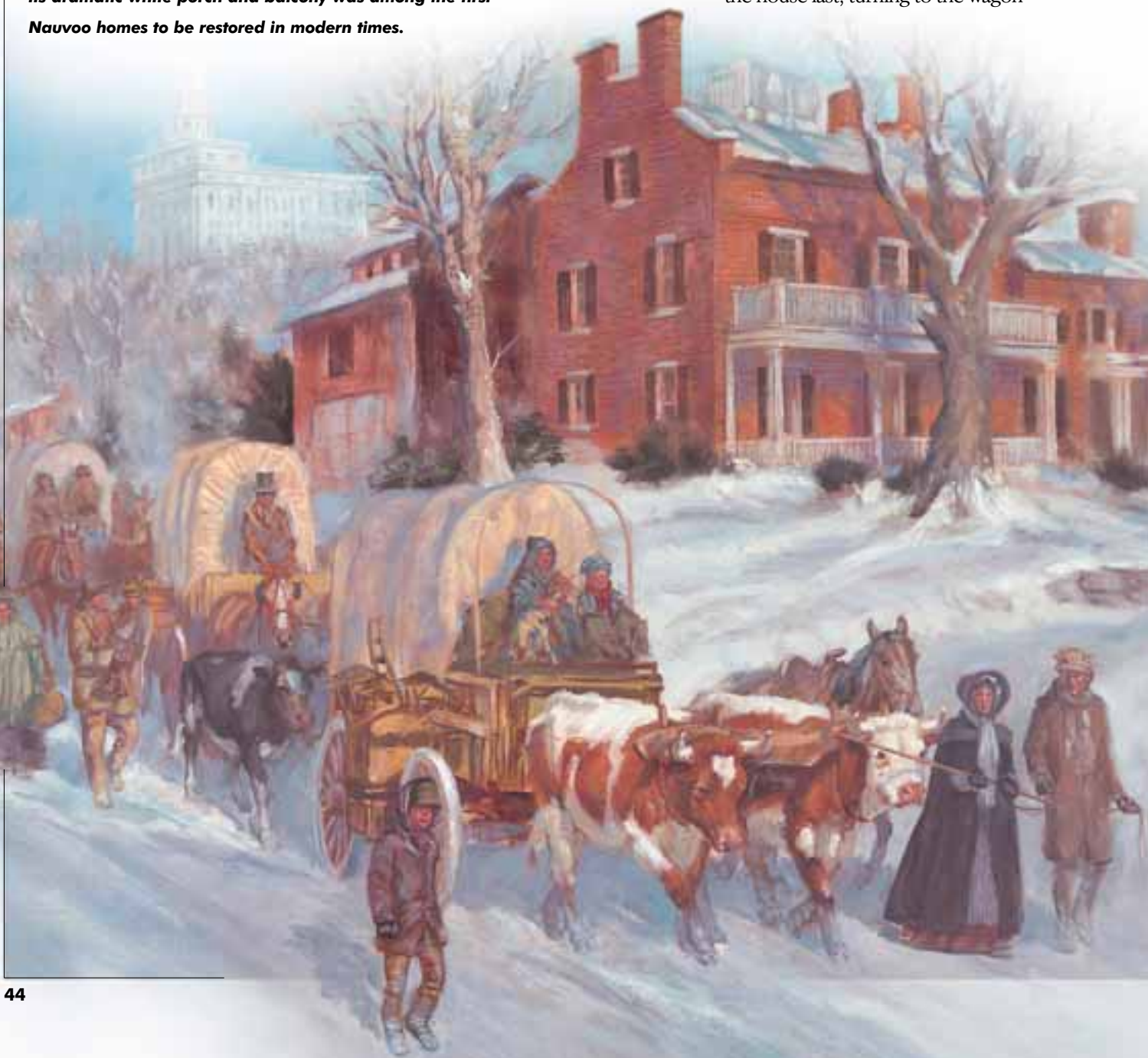
Stepping into the Snow

Like many of the families leaving Nauvoo, the Gheen family was unable to sell their home, so they simply walked away from it. I imagine Esther Ann Gheen rearranging the crockery on the table and adjusting the curtains over the

4 Just before the Gheens turned from Partridge Street onto Parley Street, they passed the home of Elder Heber C. Kimball, who would soon serve as First Counselor to President Brigham Young in the First Presidency. This two-story brick home with its dramatic white porch and balcony was among the first Nauvoo homes to be restored in modern times.

window one more time before willing herself to look away from her parlor. Then, gathering her four youngest children, she picked up the smallest, wrapped her in Grandmother Pierce's handmade quilt, and left.

I can easily imagine how the children felt as they stepped out of their warm house into the bitter cold Nauvoo morning, the snow crunching under their feet. The Mississippi River had completely frozen over between Nauvoo and Montrose, Iowa, and families with their wagons had been crossing over since early morning. I picture Esther leaving the house last, turning to the wagon



where her eldest son, Thomas, was helping the younger children onto the buckboard. She likely stopped to gaze at the temple. Her home on Partridge Street was at the foot of the rise that led to the temple two blocks away.

William and the Temple

Tender thoughts must have come quickly to mind when she looked at the temple, realizing then that she would never enter it again. She had received her endowment two months earlier on 18 December 1845. It must have been a wonderful day, and the covenants she had made with the Lord must have filled her heart with hope and peace. Then on 2 February 1846, Esther had been sealed for time and all eternity in the temple to her deceased husband, William.

William Atkins Gheen had loved the temple and had worked on it nearly every day since his arrival at Nauvoo in 1841. Then he had become ill with

a cold that settled in his lungs. Elder Heber C. Kimball, a counselor to President Brigham Young, recorded in his journal that he and President Young had often gone to visit William Gheen and give him a blessing. But on 15 July 1845, Heavenly Father called William home.

I think Esther would have gotten up early on the morning of 24 February 1846 and visited William's grave. Even though she knew their union would be eternal, it must have felt as if she were leaving part of herself behind.

Joining Others

Now Esther and her family headed down Partridge Street toward Parley Street, where they would join a host of other families moving toward the ice-covered river. A block away, Esther's daughter Margaret and husband James Downing may have fallen into step with them. The Downing family wasn't leaving Nauvoo, but I think they surely would have walked with their mother and brothers and sisters to the ferry.

A block past the Heber C. Kimball home,



1 *The home of William and Esther Ann Gheen, which is still standing.*



2 *Edward Hunter, a friend from Chester County, Pennsylvania, lived across the street. He was sustained as Presiding Bishop of the Church in 1851.*



3 *Merchant David Yearsly, who operated two stores in Nauvoo, lived next door to the Gheens.*



Esther and her family turned onto Parley Street, passing the home of Bishop Newel K. Whitney, Presiding Bishop of the Church. Bishop Whitney had remained in town to assist the Saints, and I can picture him out on the street, helping families with their supplies.

8 9 *No doubt on that cold February morning, the Gheens heard the clang of the blacksmith's hammer as he worked in the heat of the Webb blacksmith shop. The Seventies Hall was the last imposing structure on Parley Street. As they passed that red brick building, the Gheens left Nauvoo behind and arrived at the bank of the Mississippi River.*

Some Stayed Behind

At the corner of Hyde and Parley Streets, Gully's Store would have been teeming with activity as emigrants made final purchases.

Across the street to the north stood William Clayton's house—now empty. William Clayton had gone to Iowa with the Brethren, leaving his wife in the care of her parents until the delivery of their baby. After being notified of the birth of that baby seven weeks later in April 1846, William Clayton composed and wrote a hymn now known as “Come, Come, Ye Saints.”

I imagine Lucy Mack Smith saying farewell to passing friends. Mother Smith had spoken at a general conference



held in the temple the previous October 8th and had encouraged the Saints to follow the Quorum of the Twelve. She expressed her wish that she could go with them. But she was old, and her husband and four sons were buried in this place. Her surviving son, William, chose to remain in Nauvoo, as did her three daughters and many of her grandchildren. She wanted to go, but her ties to Nauvoo were strong and her health was declining.

Passing Main Street, Esther would have seen the Mansion House, two blocks to the south on Water Street. This was where the beloved Prophet Joseph had lived with his family. His widow, Emma, remained there with her sons, bound to the city by bonds she would never break.

The last imposing structure on Parley Street was the Seventies Hall, where many of the brethren of the Church had met for

instruction. It was a stately two-story brick building, and William Gheen had visited there often to learn more about the priesthood and other gospel principles, which he then shared with the family.

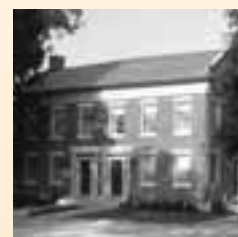
Crossing the Frozen Mississippi

The Gheens arrived at last at the Mississippi River. The old elm tree at the ferry, a landmark for steamboat captains and their crews, was bare of leaves and stood as a stark sentinel for the departing Saints. The ice was thick and solid, but they climbed out of their wagons to lighten the load as they crossed the two-mile stretch between Nauvoo and Montrose.

I imagine Esther, like many others, turning for a final look back. Even in the harsh cold of winter, Nauvoo was beautiful. The nearly completed temple rose above the city—standing as a symbol of sacrifice, dedication, and obedience. It had served its purpose—5,600 had received their endowments and helped establish the restoration of these sacred covenants in this dispensation. Esther finally turned and went on.



5 *Lucy Mack Smith lived in the Jonathan Browning home during the time of the exodus.*



6 *Erastus Snow, who was ordained an Apostle in 1849, built this duplex. The Snow family lived in one side, and the Nathaniel Ashby family lived in the other.*



7 *The Joseph Smith Mansion House on Water Street had served as a home to the Prophet's family as well as a hotel and a meeting place.*





***As the Saints left
their beloved
Nauvoo, I imagine
Esther, like many
others, turned for a
final look across the
Mississippi River at
the Nauvoo Temple.
Esther Ann Gheen
(above) and her
family thrived in
Salt Lake City.
Esther died in 1858.***

Thomas Gheen accompanied his mother and family to the camp of Heber C. Kimball at Sugar Creek, and then they tearfully parted as Thomas returned to Nauvoo. Esther and her children joined the nearly 300 men, women, and children traveling west in the Kimball Company.

Turning Hearts

Once in Salt Lake City, Esther's children grew and married. Esther passed away in 1858. Daughter Margaret remained in the East with her family, and son Thomas served the Union cause during the Civil War and was killed. But promises were fulfilled. Years later, when new temples were built, descendants of William and Esther served as proxy



for Gheen family members who needed their temple ordinances performed.

I realize I can never think of these beloved ancestors again without thinking of walking down Parley Street with them. I love them. My heart has been turned as promised in Doctrine and Covenants 2:1–2: “Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.”

But I am not alone. The building and dedication of the new temple in Nauvoo has provided an opportunity for the hearts of many to turn to their ancestors, whether they lived in Nauvoo or not. We can all symbolically take a walk down Parley Street and think of our own ancestors and their sacrifices in our behalf. And we can make sure we perform temple ordinances for them. By so doing, we help move the great work of temple and family history work forward with more strength than ever before—“If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming” (D&C 2:3). ■

James W. Petty is a member of the Crescent Park Third Ward, Sandy Utah Crescent Park Stake.



My Turn in the NURSERY

BY STEVEN H. JENSEN

I had just been released as stake president and was relaxing in a Gospel Doctrine class one Sunday when sisters came in seeking volunteers to help in the nursery. Our lesson that Sunday was on the importance of following the Brethren, and for years I had preached the counsel of President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), a member of the First Presidency: “It is not where you serve but how” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1951, 154).

I watched the sign-up sheet come down the aisle toward me. I began thinking of all the possible excuses I could give. “Maybe,” I thought, “they want only sisters to sign up.” Then it was there: the sign-up sheet was in my hand. I imagined a number of eyes watching me to see what I would do. I finally signed up for a time four months away. Surely I’d have a new calling by then.

The months flew by, and one Saturday morning I received a call reminding me that I had volunteered to assist in the nursery on Sunday. The next day I found a room of youngsters waiting. All could walk, but none could talk. When I entered, they all ran to me, and I lifted two in my arms and walked over to look at some pictures. Soon I exchanged them for two other children. We read, played, hugged, and had a good time together.

At the end of Primary, I helped a sister restore order to the room. Soon her son and husband joined her in cleaning up, and I began reflecting on the hours of unseen service rendered by this family compared to the visible service I had rendered. The words of Jesus Christ came to me:

“But when thou doest alms let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth;

“That thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly” (3 Nephi 13:3–4).

I had received many rewards for my service as a stake president. Yet this family too would receive their reward from a Father who knew well of their efforts on behalf of His children, and I felt it would be a great one.

Many thoughts rolled through my mind that day. The children didn’t care what I had once been or that I was well known to their parents. I was humbled, and I gained a deeper appreciation that it really *doesn’t* matter where you serve but how. ■

Steven H. Jensen is a member of the Lakeridge Fifth Ward, Orem Utah Lakeridge Stake.

ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN CALL



One Saturday morning I received a call reminding me that I had volunteered to assist in the nursery on Sunday. The next day I found a room of youngsters waiting.



Seeking a Balanced Life



BY ELDER DONALD L. HALLSTROM
Of the Seventy

Before my 30th year, I was called to be the bishop of an 850-member ward. Two weeks before that call, I, with a partner, had founded a company that hired and was responsible for several new employees. At the same time, my wife and I had three active children ages one to seven. The daunting responsibilities to properly care for my young family, the Saints entrusted to my stewardship, and a growing business seemed impossible. Would I know how to allocate my time

when any one of these three important and complex aspects of life threatened to become all-consuming? Was it possible to achieve a balance?

In those days, I often recalled a childhood memory. *The Ed Sullivan Show* was one of the most popular programs on television in the United States. As a variety show, it featured performers with widely divergent talents. One man appeared regularly. A number of poles, perhaps a dozen or more, were set up on stage, with stacks of dinner plates beside them. This agile individual

We must thoroughly understand the guiding doctrine and then do our best each day.

would spin a plate on top of one of the poles and then move to the next pole and spin a second plate and then a third and a fourth. As he proceeded down the line of poles, the rotation of the plates on the first and second poles would begin to slow, and the dishes would be in danger of falling off and crashing to the floor. Seeing this, the man would quickly run back to those poles and with a gentle spin increase the motion that allowed the plates to keep spinning. The excitement of the act was to witness the ability of the performer to expand the number of rotating plates while not letting any fall.

Invariably, a point would be reached where he was not able to keep up. There was a limit to his ability to increase the number and yet properly care for the plates already in motion. The sight of dishes sliding from their precarious

perches and the cacophony as they hit the hard floor vividly proved the point that even the most skilled performer has his limits.

Each of us must decide how many “poles” we are able to manage in our life and what they represent. Some individuals are spinning a single plate with all their effort, ignoring all other poles. Others are attempting to spin so many at the same time that the crashing of plates is often heard.

Each of us must decide how many “plates” we are able to keep spinning in our lives and the importance they represent to us.



Principles of Balance

Leading a balanced life can be difficult for any of us. There is not an exact pattern that works for everyone, and even our own blueprint may change during different phases of life. However, seeking balance—giving adequate time and effort to each of those things that really matter—is vital to success in our mortal probation. There are certain fundamental responsibilities we cannot neglect without serious consequence.

What are the essential poles of our lives? I wish to suggest four: our love for Heavenly Father and His Son, our care of our families, our service to the Lord, and our life's temporal work.

Love for Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

The scriptures speak powerfully of this sacred duty:

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matthew 22:36–37).

“Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ . . . and a love of God” (2 Nephi 31:20).

Our love of Heavenly Father and His Son is foundational to all else. They are the source of peace (see John 14:26–27). Love for Them is the supreme motivation to keep “in the right way” (Moroni 6:4). It enhances every other aspect of our lives and allows us to love ourselves and others more completely. Answers to our most challenging problems are found only when we love and have faith in Them.

Care of our families. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” states: “Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. . . . Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, . . . to observe the commandments of God.”¹

Prophetic counsel has taught us that “no other success can compensate for failure in the home”² and that “the most important of the Lord’s work you will ever do will be within the walls of your own homes.”³ Our desires and actions toward our families should be as Lehi exemplified when he partook of the sweet fruit of the tree of life and immediately was “desirous that [his] family should partake of it also” (1 Nephi 8:12).

For many, properly caring for the family is the first area of compromise when other demands arise, since the results of neglect are not always immediately apparent. But nurturing the husband-wife relationship and building a spiritual home require men and women of vision and commitment.

Service to the Lord. A natural extension of our love of God is our desire to serve Him. The Lord said, “If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me” (D&C 42:29). The way we serve Him is by



serving one another. “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17). Elder Dallin H. Oaks said, “Service is an imperative for true followers of Jesus Christ.”⁴

Our time spent in Church service may vary during different periods of our lives depending on specific callings we receive and our family circumstances. However, our desire to serve should never waver.

Life’s temporal work. Although our careers or occupations may appear to be temporal, they support other, more eternal aspects of life and can provide valuable service to others (see D&C 29:34). Again, “The Family—A Proclamation to the World” gives clear direction: “By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these



sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.”⁵

Church leaders have strongly encouraged individuals to obtain a quality education that will allow choices in our life’s work, and they have encouraged dedication to an honorable trade or profession that will serve our spiritual life.

These four poles must not be neglected in our lives. Each needs constant care to fulfill its proper role in making us “whole” as righteous followers of Christ (see Mark 2:17).

President Gordon B. Hinckley has taught:

“I think . . . all of us in this Church . . . have a fourfold responsibility. One, [members and leaders] have a responsibility to their families, to see that their families have a measure of their time. . . . None of us can evade that. . . . That is basic and fundamental.

“If we are employed, we have a responsibility to our employer. We are not at liberty to short-change him. . . .

“We have a responsibility to the Lord, of course, to do that which is expected of us as a servant in His house.

“And . . . we have a responsibility to ourselves to take some time to do a little meditating, to do a little exercise. . . .

Giving adequate time and effort to each of those things that really matter is vital to success in our mortal probation. There are certain fundamental responsibilities we cannot neglect without serious consequences.



Four poles seem essential to balance in our lives: love of God, love for our families, service to the Lord, and our temporal work.

Consistent and sincere prayer, along with daily pondering of our love for the Lord and our desire to serve Him, will allow the Spirit more access to our minds and our hearts.

“... How do you balance them? I don’t think that is difficult. I served in many capacities in this Church. I am the father of five children, who were young and growing up when I was serving in those various capacities. . . . We enjoyed life. . . . We just did what the Church expected us to do.”⁶

Constant Care

As sincere followers of Christ, we must constantly evaluate what is most important. Are we so intensively focused on one pole that the plates atop the others are in danger of falling because of our neglect? Or are we spinning too many poles? Do we need to simplify our lives to keep all that truly matters in proper motion?

How can each of us know if our life is out of balance? Well, most of us just know. We simply need to admit it and exercise the discipline to change, substituting higher values and better habits for those we have been living. We need to follow the counsel of our

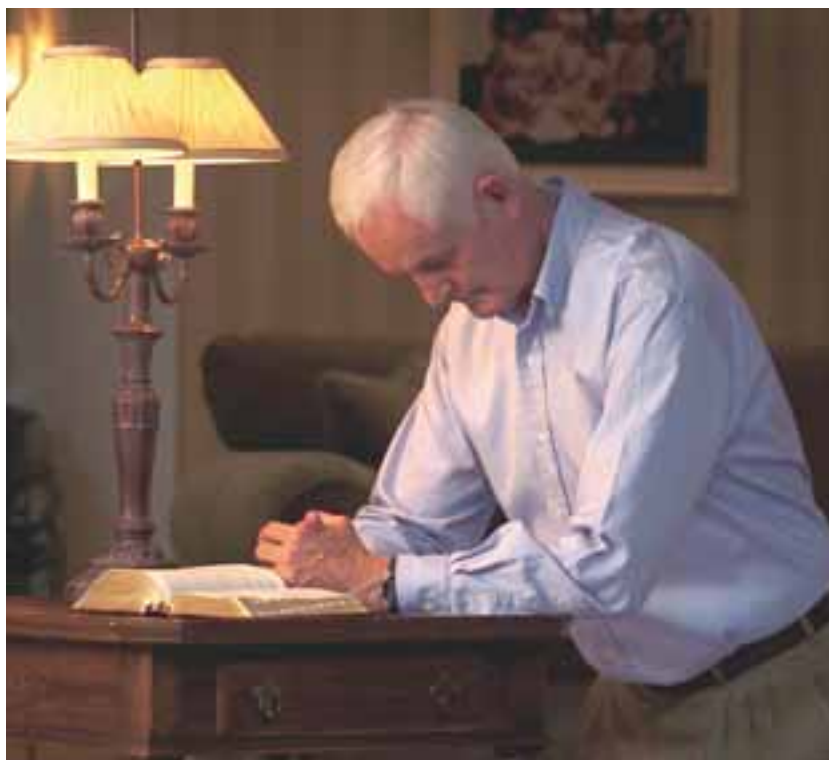
prophets to do it now before any further damage is caused by our lack of attention to other indispensable parts of life.

For some people, however, the recognition of imbalance in life may not be so clear. While serving as a stake president, I saw a member of our stake become prominent in the business community. He had a growing family and held positions of responsibility in the Church. All appeared to be in order. Then it became evident that he was paying too high a price for his temporal success. The first indication was his request to be released from all Church callings because of their time conflict with his work-related obligations. Even more alarming, through a series of behavioral problems with his children, priesthood leaders became acutely aware that basic family duties were being neglected. Communication with his wife and children had deteriorated because they seldom saw him. When they did, he was usually preoccupied by professional demands or simply too tired for family activities or even meaningful conversation. Only through tragic and agonizing events was this man brought to a realization of the consequences of his actions on his own spiritual health and that of his family.

Three Guides

Regular self-evaluation is critical to seeking a balanced life. There are three valuable sources of help to show us things “as they really are, and . . . as they really will be” (Jacob 4:13) in our lives.

Promptings of the Spirit. Through consistent righteous actions that invite the Holy Ghost into our lives, we “may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). In our own spheres of activity, we may be able to say, “By the power of the Spirit our eyes



YES, YOU CAN DO IT



“Not long ago, one of my children said, ‘Dad, sometimes I wonder if I will ever make it.’

The answer I gave to her is the same as I would give to you if you have had similar feelings. Just do the very best you can each day. Do the basic things and, before you realize it, your life will be full of spiritual understanding that will confirm to you that your Heavenly Father loves you. When a person knows this, then life will be full of purpose and meaning, making balance easier to maintain.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Keeping Life’s Demands in Balance,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 16.

were opened and our understandings were enlightened” (D&C 76:12). Consistent and sincere prayer, along with daily pondering of our love for the Lord and our desire to serve Him, will allow the Spirit more access to our minds and our hearts (see D&C 8:2–3).

Scriptures and the words of living prophets. The scriptural teachings of the Lord will help us if we “liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23). Following the direction of living prophets, who understand our current world, provides safety, for “even as many . . . who [believe] in the words of the holy prophets . . . [shall] have eternal life” (D&C 20:26). Through consistent study of ancient and modern scripture and the words of today’s prophets, we are constantly reminded of those things that have everlasting value.

Regular communication with a trusted friend. Our spouse or, if not married, a trusted friend with shared values, can be a vital channel for honest reflection. However, this will only happen when we are listening and our spirit is sufficiently humble to accept constructive feedback (see Alma 7:23). Planning time with our companion and children or other family members and trusted friends is crucial for constructive communication. Many families find it effective to discuss the calendar during family home evening, specifically scheduling time for husband-wife and family activities.

The answer I found as a young bishop, which has served me well in the ensuing years, was simply that we must thoroughly understand the guiding doctrine and then do our best each day. We organize, prioritize, and live worthy of the spiritual guidance required when making difficult decisions. Often we seek counsel from those closest to us. From time to time, we may be out of balance for a brief period as the immediate needs of one portion of

our life take temporary precedence. When this occurs, we knowingly work through the issue and seek to stabilize ourselves as soon as possible, before the short-term solution becomes a long-term trait.

When we are out of balance, we have a choice. We can delay making changes and experience the tragedy of a failing family or the sorrow of losing our own spirituality; or we can be attentive and continually nudged by the whisperings of the Holy Spirit to make necessary adjustments. Seeking balance among the essential responsibilities of life is preparatory to salvation.

We must “see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength.” However, to encourage our constant effort, we are counseled, “It is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize” (Mosiah 4:27). It is my witness that it can be done and the prize is “eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 14:7). ■

NOTES

1. *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. David O. McKay quoting J. E. McCulloch, *Home: the Savior of Civilization* (1924), 42; in Conference Report, Apr. 1935, 116.
3. Harold B. Lee, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee* (2000), 134.
4. *Pure in Heart* (1988), 37.
5. *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
6. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 33.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Ask a family member to stand on one leg with eyes closed. How long and why could he or she do this? What might cause a person to lose balance in life? Discuss the three guides for maintaining spiritual balance. Share an experience when one of these guides helped you (see Mosiah 4:27).

2. What are “the essential poles of our lives”? Discuss how family members spent their time during the past week. Applying the suggestions in this article, discuss how family members would like to spend their time the next week.

After Divorce

Help for Latter-day Saint Men

Men face challenges after divorce that are not often discussed, but there is much they can do to find healing.



BY A. DEAN BYRD

I was dying emotionally, and everything that mattered to me had been changed in a way I had no ability to control,” said one Latter-day Saint man after his divorce. “I felt helpless and lost. Ordinarily stable and unemotional, I found myself waking up at four o’clock in the morning and physically shaking. I closed my door at the office and cried uncontrollably for half an hour at a time.”¹

In my work as a professional therapist, I have found that the above description of a Latter-day Saint man’s journey after divorce is all too typical. Yet few would know it. Often men keep such feelings inside and suffer in silence. They experience confusion about marriage, they grieve over lost and altered relationships, and some even wonder if the Lord cares for them. Their suffering is real.

The challenges divorced men face in the aftermath of divorce are not often discussed. Yet there is much they can do to respond to their challenges within a gospel framework, making healing possible.

The Need for Support

Many divorced men report experiencing a deep sense of personal failure and feel they have lost everything important to them. This sense of loss is frequently manifested by anxiety, depression, and guilt. Men in general are expected to bear their struggles in private, partly because society views outward emotional expression by men as being incompatible with masculinity. As a result, men are less likely to ask for or receive emotional support. Frequently others automatically assume the men are responsible for the divorce, particularly if they do not have custody of their children. This often increases divorced men’s feelings of failure and alienation from others.

Though the gospel offers many wonderful resources, some Church settings may seem awkward both for the brother who is divorced and for other members of the ward. One man described the following situation:

“I will never forget the ward social a week or so after we made the decision to separate. We went together—one of the last times we tried that experiment—but separated at the door, and for the rest of the evening, she was surrounded by sympathetic, nurturing sisters. And I was



Following divorce, fatherhood can become more difficult in almost every way. Yet it is crucial that fathers remain actively involved in the lives of their children.



Consider sharing with your bishop your concerns and difficulties and asking him to assist you in seeking the Lord's counsel.

alone. A few of the brothers spoke to me about sporting events or news of the day. . . .

"Although that evening is the most poignant in my memory, it simply encapsulates for me the total experience of the next two months."²

While social support may be difficult to find, such support is an important part of the healing process. Frequently others do want to help; they just don't know how. Often the fear of being intrusive prevents them from reaching out.

What Can Divorced Men Do to Find Support?

Divorced men can do much to allow others to help. If you have been divorced, consider the following:

1. *Meet with your bishop.* Share with him your concerns and difficulties. Seek his counsel about how you should be involved in the ward. Let him know you want to follow the Lord's counsel, and ask him to assist you in seeking it. A priesthood blessing can help provide hope and peace.

One recently divorced brother received a beautiful blessing from his bishop that gave him specific advice, as well as comfort and assurance of the Lord's love. He said he was directed in the blessing "to schedule family home evenings at my home, to conduct personal priesthood interviews with my children, and to begin each visit with my children in prayer. I had thought my children might be resistant to having two family home evenings or might object to personal priesthood interviews or even prayers. They were not." This man's children valued his efforts to follow the bishop's counsel and provide spiritual direction in their lives.

2. *Meet with your quorum or group leader.* Share with him what you feel comfortable sharing, asking him to keep confidences. Jointly determine what you might do to help in the quorum or group. Service can provide a wonderful opportunity to look beyond your own situation and improve your perspective. It may even be helpful to have periodic interviews with your leader to discuss your needs and to solicit his counsel.

3. *Seek help from home teachers.* Home teachers can be an excellent source of support, encouragement, and practical help. One brother was blessed with home teachers who became his close friends. He stated: "There were frequent phone calls, frequent visits. Once the quorum president called to ask if I had been home taught the previous month. I responded, 'Which visit should count as a home teaching visit, and which message should count as the home teaching message?' My home teachers had met with me on six different occasions that month, two at their request and four at mine. How blessed I felt to be the recipient of such kindness and concern during my time of need."

4. *Seek the Lord's help.* There is no difficulty too small or too large to warrant the Savior's concern and help. Make your prayers personal. Read the scriptures as if the Lord were talking to you. Listen for answers to your questions and prayers; then act on the answers you receive.

A brother who sought guidance from the Lord stated: "I wanted to know and do the Lord's will. I allowed Him to talk to me. I heard Him speak to me through the scriptures. I felt His love. For the very first time, I felt the blessings of the Atonement in my life, and I knew the blessings were real."



As you make the effort to spend time with your children, you will have more opportunities to listen to them, to learn of their concerns, and to develop close relationships with them.

When Children Are Involved

Following divorce, being a father can be more difficult in almost every way. In nearly three-fourths of all divorces, mothers gain custody of the children. Fathers are frequently relegated to visitor status, and they may feel less effective as parents. The limited time they have with their children may be more focused and less relaxed. For example, fathers may spend more time solving problems and less time simply enjoying the company of their individual children.

In addition, divorced fathers may feel uncomfortable when returning to the home where the mother lives. There may be an awkwardness about negotiating visitation times, and sometimes one may feel unwanted and in the way.

One divorced father said, "It's strange to come to your former home and knock on the

door instead of just walking in." These types of trying situations can contribute to many men spending less and less time with their children. Research suggests that about 50 percent of children lose contact with their noncustodial parents (usually fathers) within five years of the divorce.³ This happens in families even where divorce has been fairly amicable. In other divorce situations, anger, blame, and conflict between a divorced couple can erode relationships between fathers and children. In such cases, the heartache does not end when the divorce is final; it simply continues.

Despite the discomfort involved, it is crucial that divorced fathers remain involved in their children's lives as much as possible. Wise mothers will encourage this involvement. Structure your schedule so that you spend time with each child individually as



Know that the Lord can help you. Make your prayers personal, and act on the promptings you receive.

well as with all of the children together. As you make the effort to spend time with each of your children, you will have more opportunities to listen to them, to learn of their concerns, and to develop close relationships with them.

Your children will also benefit when you refrain from criticizing your former spouse in front of them. Be courteous and civil to your

former spouse, and make sure your children see this. Such behavior will make them less likely to feel torn between their parents.

Financial Challenges

If a divorced couple has dependent children and the mother is not employed, frequently the father carries the bulk of the financial responsibility for two households. Sometimes second or third jobs become necessary. My experience in working with divorced Latter-day Saint men suggests that while there are exceptions, most are concerned about financial support and are willing to sacrifice whatever is necessary for the family.

Be realistic about finances with your former spouse and children. A budget may be more important than ever. You may want to schedule regular, positive discussions about finances; such discussions should focus on solutions rather than problems. If needed, obtain professional financial advice. The bishop or your quorum leaders may be able to help you in locating ward or stake resources to assist with financial planning.

The Importance of Forgiveness

The frustrations and hurts associated with divorce can leave deep wounds in individual lives. Yet the Lord has commanded all to forgive. Recall Doctrine and Covenants 64:9–10:

“Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

“I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.”

WHAT OTHERS CAN DO

1. Ask the divorced member how you might be helpful. Take your cues from him; do not assume you know what is best for him. Let him decide.
2. Help the divorced member feel included in the ward and in your social circle. Encourage him to be involved in the ward by inviting him to attend ward or social activities with you. Sit next to him in Church meetings.
3. Avoid judging the divorced member; leave that to the Lord. Be supportive of the member's efforts to find healing in this difficult situation. Reach out, welcome, and love as the Savior would.
4. Ask him how he is doing, and be willing to listen if he wants to talk. But do not pressure him to disclose more than he is comfortable with, and don't center all your conversations around the divorce. Do not feel you need to offer advice unless he asks for it.
5. If you are in a position to do so, ensure that he receives regular visits from caring home teachers.
6. Provide opportunities for service. Helping others is a good way to get outside of oneself, and such activities frequently result in increased feelings of self-worth.
7. Pray for inspiration to know how to help the divorced member. Encourage him also to pray so that he may receive Heavenly Father's guidance and feel His love.



**The Savior will help
you put your life
together again.
There is no burden
He cannot lift,
no tears He cannot
dry, no pain too
great for Him
to help you bear.**

If your actions have contributed to the divorce, you may need to repent of any wrongdoings. The repentance process can be painful, but once you have repented fully and obtained the Lord's forgiveness, remember that you are also obligated to forgive yourself. Do not forget the lessons you have learned from your experiences, but allow yourself to move forward rather than being mired in the past.

The path to forgiveness can be difficult and heartwrenching; yet it unclutters the soul of resentment and pain. Forgiveness is the crowning part of true healing—the balm of Gilead applied to our wounded souls.

The Savior Will Help

For the Latter-day Saint who has experienced divorce, there is no greater gift than the Atonement. Invite its blessings into your life. The Savior will help you put your life

together again. There is no burden He cannot lift, no tears He cannot dry, no pain too great for Him to help you bear. His grace is sufficient. His love can sustain you. His arms can embrace you. And in those times when you are unable to walk, He will carry you. In a personal way, you can come to know and feel His love. Like Nephi of old, you can be encircled in the robes of His righteousness (see 2 Nephi 4:33). ■

NOTES

1. S. Brent Scharman, "LDS Men and Divorce," in A. Dean Byrd, ed., *Finding Happiness and Wholeness after Divorce* (1997), 69.
2. Quoted in Scharman, "LDS Men and Divorce," 92–93.
3. F. F. Furstenberg and G. B. Spanier, *Recycling the Family* (1984); cited in L. Patricia Papernow, *Becoming a Stepfamily* (1993), 106.

A. Dean Byrd is a member of the Highland Seventh Ward, Highland Utah East Stake.

More on this topic: See S. Brent Scharman, "When You Don't Have Custody," *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 58–63; Jeffrey R. Holland, "An High Priest of Good Things to Come," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 36–38; Gordon B. Hinckley, "A Conversation with Single Adults," *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 58–63; Don L. Searle, "No Longer a Husband," *Ensign*, Feb. 1988, 24–27.

An Aussie Pioneer

When our family moved to rural Melbourne, we thought we were pioneers. But after I found the gospel, the real pioneering began.

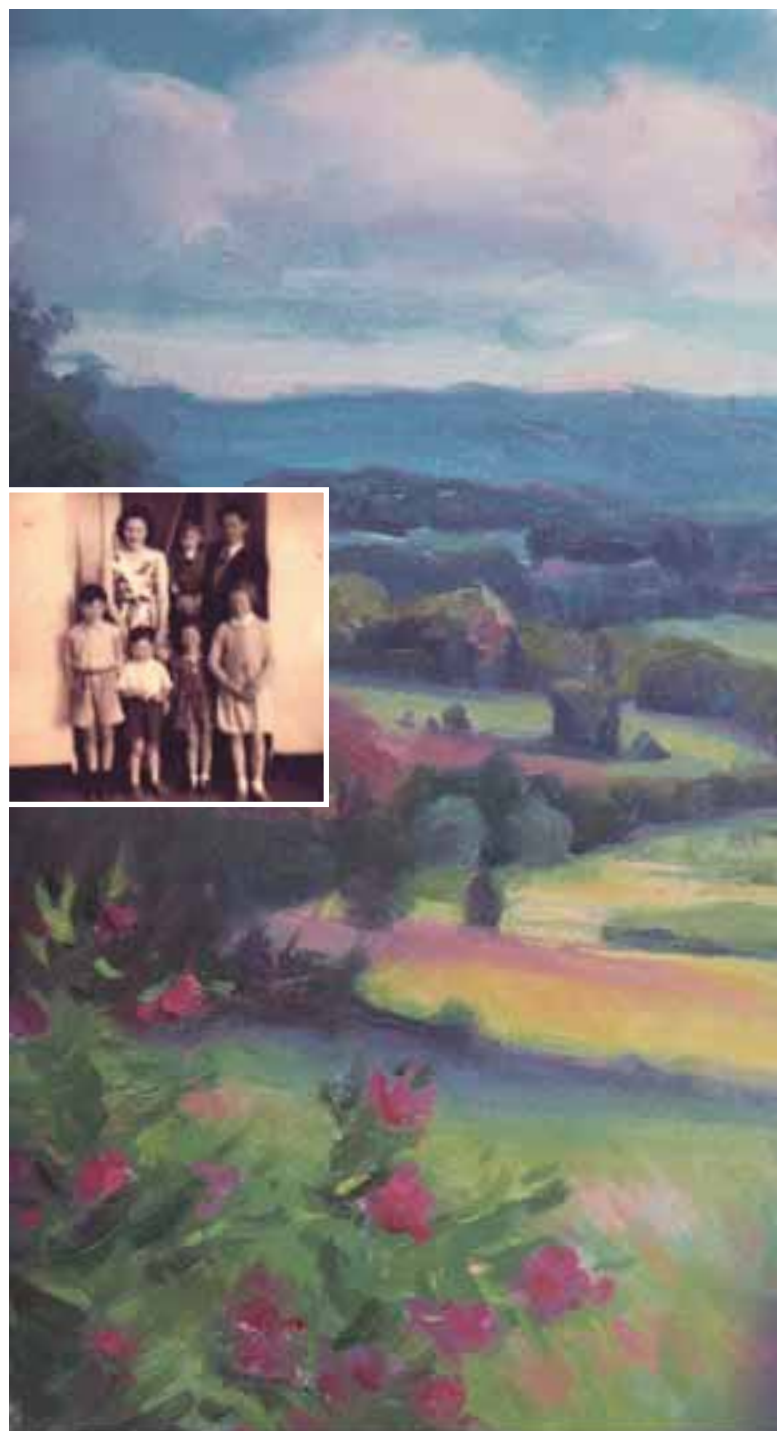
BY SARAH MARTIN

In 1960 my husband, Cecil, and I emigrated from Ireland to Australia, bringing with us very little money and six young children. I didn't realize at the time that I was pioneering. I had always wanted to move to Australia, and this was a dream come true. We managed to buy a plot of ground and put a house on it. However, with our meager finances, we had to settle in an undeveloped area. We had no indoor plumbing. And I was somewhat surprised to find that roads in this developing area of Melbourne were not surfaced. Nevertheless, I loved Australia. It was like coming home.

Usually things come to pass if you wait long enough. Eventually, modern conveniences came along. Our children grew up, married, and I became a young grandmother. We paid off the house and bought a car. Only two of our children were still in school. What more could anyone want? It was time to relax. Our pioneering days were over.

Meeting the Missionaries

I began to wonder about God. My mother had taught me a great deal about Him. Now I wanted to know if He was real. I started to read the Holy Bible and to pray. It seemed like something of a contradiction to ask someone you don't believe in if he is there. Heavenly Father must



have heard me. Our youngest son told us he had been talking with two missionaries and he wanted to join the LDS Church. I was 40 years old and had traveled or lived in several areas of the world, yet I had never heard of this church. I was happy our son wanted to join a church, but I wanted to meet these missionaries first.

When I met the missionaries, I was comfortable with them. We were happy to attend my son's baptism and found it to be a nice experience. Everything seemed to be



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL MALM

in order, and we didn't mind that he was a member. Then the missionaries asked if they could give me six short lessons. I thought this would be a good idea, as I would be finding out what my son believed. My husband was not interested in hearing what they had to say, but I listened to the lessons for the next five months.



When I met the missionaries, I was comfortable with them. They asked me if they could give me six short lessons. I thought it would be a good idea.

I began to worry because my early religious instructions had taught me that the heavens were closed and to beware of false prophets in the last days. These two young men were telling me there was a modern prophet at the head of their church, that he received revelation from God even today, and that he held the keys of the priesthood.

How could this be true? I had never even heard of this church before. Yet each time the missionaries came into my home, they brought wonderful feelings of peace and love. The feelings reminded me of Christmases, birthdays, beautiful summer evenings, and happy family times around the fire in winter. I felt as if I were coming home to someplace beautiful that I had not been able to find since childhood. I began to believe.

The missionaries wanted me to be baptized, but I was still afraid. I shed tears every night as I prayed for guidance to know if this was the true church. When I think about it now, I wonder why it took me so long to accept the truth. I had just spent months praying to know if God really existed; He had sent two of His representatives to tell me “Yes, He does exist,” and I still couldn’t see it. This was mostly because of early teachings that were deeply

entrenched in me. But eventually, almost six months after I first met the missionaries, I was baptized.

A Pioneer Again

Soon after joining the Church, I once again became a pioneer, subject to misunderstanding and even verbal abuse. Sometimes I felt alone in a sea of snide remarks and outright attacks on my beliefs. My husband, my other children, friends, in-laws, and acquaintances all tried to persuade me to leave the Church. I lost numerous friends, including my best friend. Though we remained friendly to the day she died, our close relationship never returned.

Nevertheless, I loved attending Church meetings on Sunday, though I lived eight miles away from the meetinghouse and it was difficult to get there. I had to walk two miles to the train station and another mile after I got off at the station to get to the chapel. Oddly, all this had the effect of bringing me closer to the gospel. I began to wonder why it was considered quite acceptable for me to attend any other church but a grievous offense to go to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Why should people, some of whom were mere acquaintances, care so deeply that I had joined the Church? I came to the conclusion that one central power—Satan—was against my baptism and was using every means he could to dissuade me from the truth. As opposition came, my testimony grew; I knew the Church was true. This period of adversity made me more determined than ever to hold on to the teachings of the gospel.

I feared my husband might try to keep me from going to church. Instead, five years later, he joined the Church himself. Six years from my baptism we were sealed in the temple for time and all eternity. A few years ago our youngest daughter was baptized and had her little girl blessed in sacrament meeting. In 25 years all of my family members, immediate and extended, have grown to respect the Church.

I have learned that to be a pioneer in the gospel is a significant and important role. Through it, rich blessings can come to us and to our future generations. ■

Sarah Martin is a member of the Footscray Ward, Deer Park Australia Stake.

Prepare to Be Strong through Trials

Prayerfully select and read from this message the scriptures and teachings that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Share your experiences and testimony. Invite those you teach to do the same.

Helaman 5:12: “It is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, . . . it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo.”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Our Father in Heaven does not wish us to cower. He does not want us to wallow in our misery. He expects us to square our shoulders, roll up our sleeves, and overcome our challenges.

“That kind of spirit—that blend of faith and hard work—is the spirit we should emulate as we seek to reach a safe harbor in our own lives. . . .

“Use your ingenuity, your strength, your might to resolve your challenges. Do all you can do and then leave the rest to the Lord” (“Finding a Safe Harbor,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 60–61).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Your trust in the Lord must be more powerful and enduring than

your confidence in your own personal feelings and experience.

“To exercise faith is to trust that the Lord knows what He is doing with you and that He can accomplish it for your eternal good even though you cannot understand how He can possibly do it. We are like infants in our understanding of eternal matters and their impact on us here in mortality. Yet at times we act as if we knew it all. When you pass through trials for His purposes, as you trust Him, exercise faith in Him, He will help you. That support will generally come step by step, a portion at a time. While you are passing through each phase, the pain and difficulty that comes from being enlarged will continue. If all matters were immediately resolved at your first petition, you could not grow” (“Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

D&C 58:2: “Blessed is he

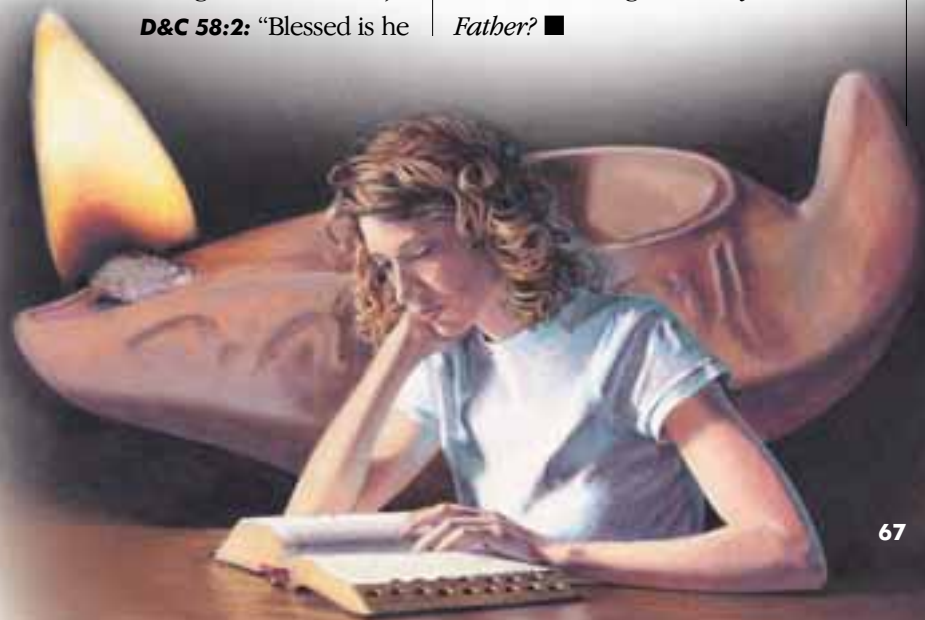
that keepeth my commandments . . . and he that is faithful in tribulation.”

Barbara W. Winder, former Relief Society general president: “In applying the parable of the ten virgins to our lives, our modern prophets have explained that the oil of preparation is accumulated drop by drop through daily righteous living.

“Consistently attending sacrament meetings adds oil to our lamps. So too will fasting, praying individually and as a family, visiting teaching, controlling our bodily appetites, teaching gospel principles, nourishing and nurturing, watching over one another, studying the scriptures. . . . Keeping the commandments and following the words of the prophet may be the greatest preparation we can make for any eventuality to come” (“Becoming a Prepared People,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 88).

• *In what ways can we increase our faith in the Lord? How will that faith support us in our tribulations?*

• *What actions are a result of trust in a loving Heavenly Father?* ■



From “Silver Question” to Golden Contacts

In Schweinfurt, Germany, where my husband was stationed with the United States Army, there were two military posts. To get between posts, soldiers often walked to the front gate and hitched a ride. Sometimes as we offered soldiers a lift, we’d start chatting. I would ask what unit they served in, where they were from, and how long they’d been stationed there. Then I would casually ask what came to be known as our silver question: “Are you LDS?”

Often the soldier would ask, “What is that?” and we’d have an opportunity to ask the “golden questions”: “What do you know about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?” and “Would you like to know more?”

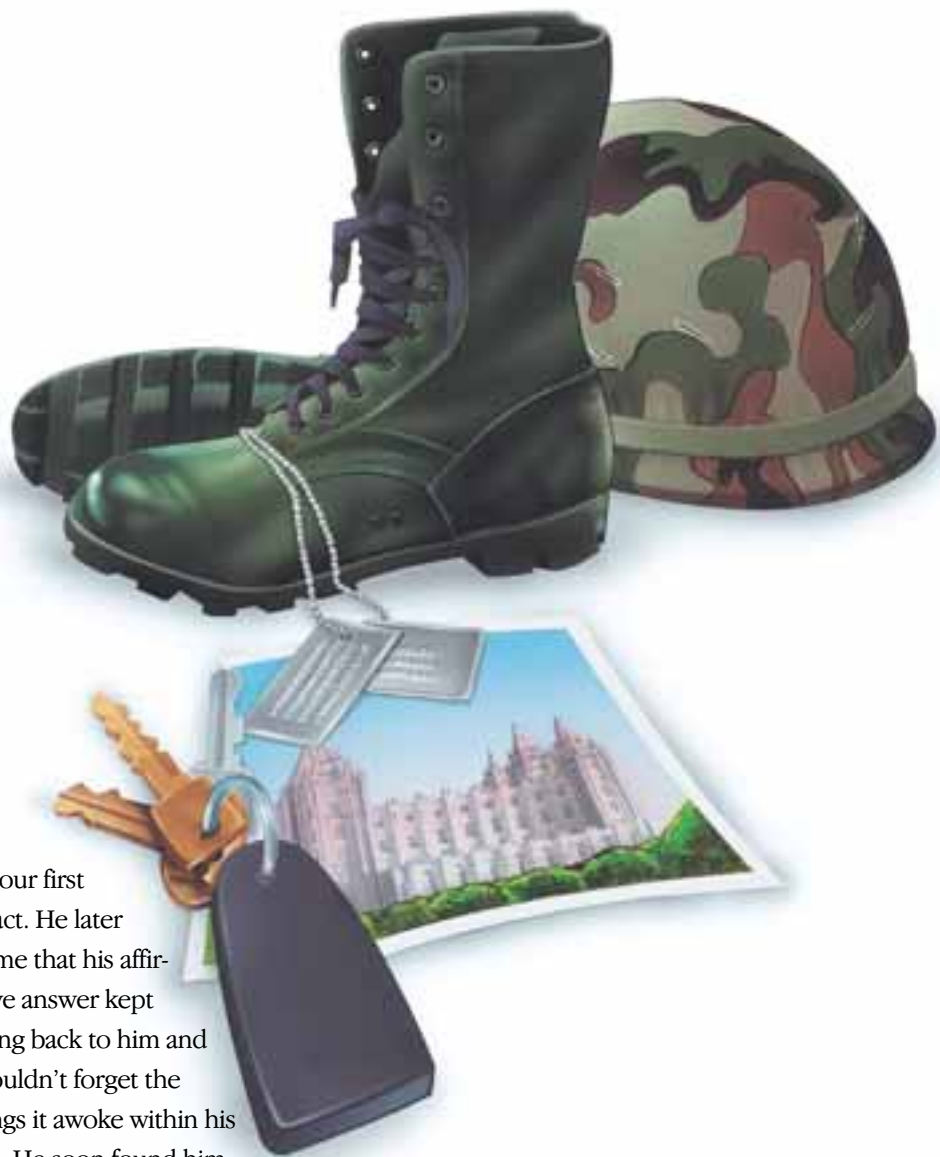
At other times there would be a quiet pause; then a soldier might look over at me with an open mouth and say, “Yes, how did you know?” In those cases, I would check the soldier’s name tag and ask him if he wanted a ride to church on Sunday and to be assigned home teachers. Many soldiers found their way into active participation in our branch with our silver question.

One young Latter-day Saint began coming to church about two months

after our first contact. He later told me that his affirmative answer kept coming back to him and he couldn’t forget the feelings it awoke within his heart. He soon found himself passing the sacrament and teaching a class. Before we left Germany, he had met Jackie, another single Latter-day Saint soldier, and married her in the temple.

We have found that the simple question “Are you LDS?” can open many doors to finding members in the military and helping them become active in the Church.

*Damaris Fish, Auburn Seventh Ward,
Auburn Washington Stake*



Ideas for Relief Society Music Training

The Relief Society five-minute music period is an ideal time to acquaint sisters with some of the basics of music. An understanding of these fundamentals can help the sisters more effectively use sacred

FOUR TIPS FOR FAMILY HOME EVENING

music, particularly the hymns, in their worship.

Relief Society music directors might consider doing the following activities during the music period:

- Explain the elements of a music staff.
- Give a short course in music directing.
- Demonstrate how to follow the music director.
- Explain the purpose of the sections in the back of the hymnbook:
 - Using the Hymnbook
 - Authors and Composers
 - Titles, Tunes, and Meters
 - Tune Names
 - Meters
 - Scriptures
 - Topics
 - First Lines and Titles
- Explain note values.
- Discuss time signatures.
- Demonstrate different music rhythms.
- Explain the dynamics of a particular hymn.
- Discuss the meanings of the mood and tempo markings noted at the top left of the hymns. Sing a hymn accordingly.
- Sing the words of one hymn to the tune of another. The “Meters” section, pages 405–9 of the hymnbook, will show you which hymns are interchangeable.
- Read the scriptures listed at the bottom right corner of the hymns.

Jolene Stephens Picker, Murray 32nd Ward,
Murray Utah Parkway Stake

Do we have to have family home evening again?”

Have your children ever asked this? By the time I had my own family, I had gained an appreciation for this inspired program and wanted it to be successful. Here are some ideas we have used to enhance our family home evening experiences.

Remember the purpose of family home evening. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, once said the purpose of family night is “to draw families together in love, to open the doors of communication between parents and children, to make them happy they live together and belong to one another—eternally” (Lucile C. Tate, Boyd K. Packer, *A Watchman on the Tower* [1995], 166).

Make it fun. Our children love to play games, so we created our own versions of popular television game shows. For instance, it’s easy to jot down four subject categories and make up increasingly difficult questions for each category. I have used topics such as prophets from the Book of Mormon, Jesus’ baptism, or scripture stories we

have read. Much to my children’s delight, I have also included categories with questions about them.

Look for ideas everywhere. Church magazines and the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* (item no. 31106; U.S. \$5) are excellent sources for family home evening ideas. Many *New Era*, *Ensign*, and *Liahona* articles can provide a base for family home evening discussions. For young children, the *Friend* has stories and activities coinciding with each month’s Primary theme and family home evening activities and lesson ideas.

What about those Mondays when you don’t have specific plans? Be consistent and hold family home evening anyway. Use the time to brainstorm new ideas together. Some of these planning sessions turned up ideas for memorizing the Articles of Faith, sharing favorite Bible and Book of Mormon stories, and reading aloud journal

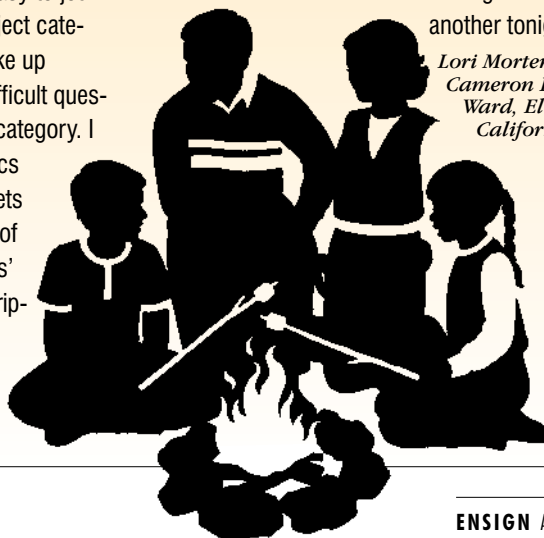


entries. Also, as I observed my children throughout the week, I discovered needed lesson topics such as respecting others’ property, telling the truth, and being a good friend.

Dare to be different. Nobody said family home evening must be held in a circle on the living room floor every week. Why not add some exciting locations and activities? Our family has loved huddling around a backyard campfire, anonymously delivering treats, and inviting others to share our evening.

The point of family home evening is to draw families together in love. I knew our family nights were succeeding when one of my sons asked on a Thursday afternoon, “When is family home evening? Can we have another tonight?”

Lori Mortensen,
Cameron Park
Ward, El Dorado
California Stake



Because Sally Smiled

By Jennifer L. McQuade

Shortly after I moved into a new neighborhood, the local bishop sent a letter welcoming me to the ward and apologizing that my home teachers hadn't contacted me yet. Although I appreciated and saved his letter, I rarely attended church and didn't take the first step back to full activity until one Sunday morning several years later.

Feeling that I should go to church, I looked up the meetinghouse closest to me and headed off, alone and nervous. The parking lot was full. I pulled in, feeling like an out-of-place stranger labeled "less active." As I approached the back doors, a woman ahead of me struggled with an unwieldy baby carrier while shepherding another child alongside her. Despite her full load, she held the door open for me with a smile and said, "Hi, I'm Sally!" Caught off guard by her friendliness, I returned the greeting. Sally continued down the hall, leaving me glad I had come.

When the bishop announced the

blessing of new babies during fast and testimony meeting, I was surprised to see my new friend give the baby to her husband to take to the front. Her newborn was being blessed that day, and she had still taken the time to greet me! I sheepishly reflected that if I had just had a new baby, welcoming an unknown

woman to church would be the last of my concerns.

Becoming active was a gradual process, but Sally and other thoughtful members continued to befriend me. Diligent visiting teachers set up appointment after appointment. Friendly ward members called to tell me about stake conference or

Despite her full load, she held the door open for me with a smile and said, "Hi, I'm Sally!"



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRIAN CALL

changes in the meeting schedule. Single adult leaders consistently invited me to activities, even when they knew my polite “Maybe I’ll come” really meant “Don’t plan on me.” And eventually their efforts were rewarded.

Although Sally’s simple greeting took no planning and very little time, her kind act helped open the door for me to enjoy the blessings of Church activity. Many years later I still reflect often upon the results of Sally’s smile. ■

Jennifer L. McQuade is a member of the Litbia Springs Ward, Powder Springs Georgia Stake.

Forsake Wrath

By Wanda Jo Cooke

Although the scriptures are meant for all of Heavenly Father’s children, they can speak to each of us in a very personal way when we ponder them and apply them to our particular challenges. I found this to be the case several years ago when I faced a painful situation.

My husband and I were experiencing a challenging time in our lives. He had recently lost his employment, so we were struggling financially as we tried to survive on my meager salary. Fortunately, our difficulties were tempered by the love we had for each other and by the love of some special friends in our ward.

Then things took a turn for the worse.

One day at work a coworker phoned for me to come to his office. I went, assuming he wanted to see me about some of the projects we were working on jointly. To my surprise, he proceeded to express strong disapproval for an action I had taken. Although I apologized, he continued to berate me, pointing out some of my personal characteristics he said he couldn’t tolerate. I was dumbfounded; I had great respect for this man’s abilities and had thought we had a cordial working relationship. Moreover, I could not understand why he felt he had the authority to chastise me when I was a couple of steps above him in the company structure.

His ranting continued until I was reduced to tears. After the whole experience, I still couldn’t understand what had made him so upset. Apparently his own life had become filled with misery, and I was the unlucky person on whom he unloaded his feelings.

When I reported this to my supervisor, I received little satisfaction. The whole experience left me feeling discouraged, alone, and vulnerable. My husband and I were already worried about his not being employed, and now I wondered what would happen to us if I lost my job.

When I arrived home that evening and explained to my husband what had happened, he opened the scriptures and read from Psalm 37, commenting that he now understood

why he had felt impressed to read it that day during his scripture study.

“Cease from anger, and forsake wrath,” the psalm states. “Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. . . .

“The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow. . . .

“But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble.

“And the Lord shall help them” (Psalm 37:8, 14, 39–40).

Although I had read this psalm many times before, I was amazed at how much it seemed to apply to my circumstances. Had my husband not read this passage of scripture to me, I would likely have become angry and bitter because of my experience at work. However, the message Heavenly Father conveyed through the scriptures healed my heart as it taught me that I should be calm and free of bitterness. It gave me great hope to realize the many blessings I would receive if I heeded that message.

I returned to work the next day with joy and forgiveness in my heart and was better able to overlook the shortcomings of coworkers.

The spiritual growth that resulted from this experience has proven to be a valuable source of strength that I have drawn upon many times since. How grateful I am for both the universal and the personal nature of the scriptures! ■

Wanda Jo Cooke is a member of the Hixson Ward, Chattanooga Tennessee Stake.

“My Heavenly Father Loves Me”

By Ricardo Lopes de Mendonça

Like most parents-to-be, we anxiously awaited the birth of our first baby. We acquired clothing and furniture and chose two names—one for a boy and one for a girl.

We also chose a special song to sing to our baby throughout the pregnancy. The song we selected was “My Heavenly Father Loves Me” (*Children’s Songbook*, 228–29). We sang these words often, imagining how wonderful it would be to have a baby in our family:

*Whenever I hear the song of a bird
Or look at the blue, blue sky,
Whenever I feel the rain on
my face
Or the wind as it rushes by,
Whenever I touch a velvet rose
Or walk by our lilac tree,
I’m glad that I live in this
beautiful world
Heav’nly Father created for me.*

One morning my wife awoke covered with little red spots. We went to the doctor and learned that those little red spots were rubella. The doctor also gave us the disturbing news that since my wife was in the first trimester of her pregnancy, our

We chose a special song to sing throughout the pregnancy, and we sang it often, imagining how wonderful it would be to have a baby in our family.

baby ran a serious risk of being born deaf, blind, or disabled in other ways.

That night we paid special attention to the second verse of our song:

*He gave me my eyes that I
might see
The color of butterfly wings.
He gave me my ears that I
might hear
The magical sound of things.
He gave me my life, my mind,
my heart:
I thank him rev’reently
For all his creations, of which
I’m a part.
Yes, I know Heav’nly Father
loves me.*

We thought about the future and everything that could happen. It was

a time of much prayer and fasting to accept the will of our Heavenly Father. We had faith that the Lord would be with us, no matter what happened.

Our daughter, Alice, was born one month early. After her birth an endless array of tests began to determine the effects of the rubella. When nothing was found, someone spoke of a miracle. We, without a doubt, believe it was.

Alice is now seven years old, and she loves to sing her favorite song, “My Heavenly Father Loves Me.” We are eternally grateful, but we are also aware that difficult situations don’t always turn out this well and that trials are part of our mortal probation. But we have learned that if we



trust Him we have nothing to fear, for as the song teaches, “I know Heav’nly Father loves me.” ■

Ricardo Lopes de Mendonça is a member of the Parque das Laranjeiras Ward, Sorocaba Brazil Trujillo Stake.

Lock the Back Door!

By Kelli Allen-Pratt

Early in our marriage we lived in Anchorage, Alaska. One night I awoke from a deep sleep and found myself consumed with an urgent thought. I woke my husband and asked if he had locked the sliding glass door in the back of the house. He said he had. I tried to put the thought out of my mind and go back to sleep. I kept telling myself I was just being paranoid, but the feeling that I needed to lock the door persisted. Sleep would not come. Finally, I had a distinct impression: “Kelli, go lock the back door!”

I pulled myself out of a

warm bed and walked downstairs. The glass door appeared to be locked. I started to walk away, but then I pulled on the door handle. The door slid open! The lock was set, but the door had not been closed tightly enough to engage the lock. I pulled the door closed, locked it securely, and went back to bed.

When morning came I gave little thought to my experience of the night before. But as I pulled the curtains open, something caught my eye. Large footprints in the snow led up to the door and then away again. The thought I had tried

so hard to toss aside had kept an intruder from entering our home.

How very grateful I am for the prompting of the Holy Ghost, which protected our family that cold winter night. It has forever changed the way I listen. ■

Kelli Allen-Pratt is a member of the Highland Third Ward, Highland Utah East Stake.

One night I awoke from a deep sleep and found myself consumed with an urgent thought: “Kelli, go lock the back door!”





President Hinckley (center) tours the restored sawmill in Kirtland, Ohio.

President Hinckley Dedicates Kirtland Historic Sites

By Alan and Teresa Chapman

In an emotional service at the dedication of historic Church sites in Kirtland, Ohio, on 18 May, President Gordon B. Hinckley paid tribute to the early Saints and marked the tremendous growth of the Church. The restoration project was the largest ever undertaken by the Church outside of Nauvoo.

"May this area become a great gathering place for Thy people from over the earth," said President Hinckley in the dedicatory prayer. He prayed that Church members would "come here, walk about with reverence and memories, . . . and grow in faith and testimony concerning Thy work and Thy kingdom," and that Kirtland would become a "place where the stranger will be touched by Thy Spirit and come to know something of

. . . Thy cause and kingdom."

At the dedication President Hinckley spoke of the Kirtland Ward sacrament meeting he had attended earlier in the day, during which time he said his mind began to wander across the globe to similar meetings being held in 160 nations.

"I thought of the miracle of what has come to pass as this work has spread across the world," said President Hinckley.

"I think those who walked these roads could not have dreamed—although the Prophet [Joseph Smith] spoke of it—of the marvelous expansion of this great work," President Hinckley said, then paused to contain his emotion. "We are part of an incomparable miracle. I wish to emphasize that."

In April 2000 Church leaders announced plans to reconstruct and restore sites in Kirtland, the 19th-century pioneer settlement where the Church's first temple was built, the priesthood quorums were organized, and extensive missionary efforts began. Kirtland was the headquarters of the Church from 1831 to 1838, when persecution in the area eventually caused the early Saints to move on to Missouri.

Nearly 2,000 Latter-day Saints had settled there by the time of the Kirtland Temple's completion in 1836. The temple is now owned and operated by the Community of Christ, formerly the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The first phase of the

restoration project was completed in 2002 when the Church opened the new Historic Kirtland Visitors' Center, the restored Newel K. Whitney home and store, and the reconstructed John Johnson Inn.

Projects completed for the May dedication include a 170-year-old sawmill that was originally constructed to provide lumber for the temple, the only known restored ashery (which produced potash, then used in manufacturing) in North America, and Kirtland's first framed schoolhouse.

President Hinckley was accompanied at the dedicatory service by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Presidency of the Seventy, and Elder Dale E. Miller of the Second Quorum of the Seventy. Other religious, community, and government leaders also attended.

Prior to the dedication, President Hinckley accepted a road marker plaque from Ohio Lieutenant Governor Jennette Bradley. The road marker summarizes the significance of Kirtland to the state of Ohio and is one of more than 340 to be presented around the state as part of Ohio's bicentennial celebration.

While in Kirtland for the dedication, President Hinckley also held a fireside with members in the Kirtland area. Fifteen hundred Latter-day Saints filled the Kirtland Ohio Stake Center on 17 May to hear President Hinckley commemorate the restoration and reconstruction of Historic Kirtland.

"Kirtland is an unusual place, a remarkable place, an interesting place, and a very important place in the history of this work," President Hinckley said.

He spoke of Palmyra and Harmony as the birthplaces of the Restoration and of Kirtland as the place where many of the principles that govern the Church today were put into place. In Kirtland the first high priests were ordained, the Word of Wisdom was received, and the first high council and stake were organized. Other important events that occurred there include the organization of the First Presidency, the calling of

Apostles who were organized into a quorum, the calling of the original First Quorum of the Seventy, the filling of the office of patriarch, Joseph Smith's receiving of the Egyptian scrolls that he later translated into the Book of Abraham, and the acceptance of the Doctrine and Covenants revelations by the body of the Church.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell added his testimony and spoke about "the Kirtland cascade," referring to the revelations and manifestations that occurred in Kirtland during the Church's time there. "These important revelations connect us to daily life," Elder Maxwell said. ■

Latter-day Saints and Muslims Prepare Aid for Iraq

By Sonja Eddings Brown

Within the walls of a Latter-day Saint meetinghouse in southern California in May, the world changed just a bit due to a special partnership and an act of service for people suffering from the conflict in Iraq.

The event was an unprecedented humanitarian aid effort between Muslims and Latter-day Saints, organized and held in Pasadena, California. The mission was to prepare some 10,000 family hygiene kits for people in need in Iraq. The project was part of a large shipment of emergency supplies donated by LDS Humanitarian Services.

"We are told by relief workers in Iraq that these

family hygiene kits will be most welcome," said Elder Tad R. Callister, an Area Authority Seventy. The kits contain such items as hand soap, towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and combs.

Nour International Aid and Mercy Corps International transported the goods by ship, which traveled from Los Angeles to Turkey and then on to Iraq.

The cultural hall in the Pasadena California Stake Center lived up to its name at this multicultural gathering. Members of local mosques arrived dressed in traditional attire. Raymond O. Lowry Jr., president of the Pasadena California Stake, welcomed the 300 Latter-day Saint and



Working side by side, volunteers from the Church and the Muslim community in Pasadena, California, assemble family hygiene kits that were later donated to people in need in Iraq.

Muslim volunteers, then offered a prayer to begin the event. Dr. Yahia Abdul-Rahman, head of the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California, also shared a prayer on behalf of his people. It was a testimony to the importance of the day that both spiritual leaders prayed for almost identical blessings upon their people—to please God, to care for their families, and to bless their service.

The shared labor of the volunteers will be a permanent memory for everyone. Members of the Pasadena stake worked shoulder to shoulder for several hours with members of the Muslim community, assembling kits with washcloths, toothbrushes, and other hygiene necessities, while discovering how much they had in common.

"We've just been talking, and I found out that Hedab lives next door to one of my good friends!" said Carolyn Peterson of the Pasadena stake after meeting one of the Muslim volunteers.

Most of the Muslim volunteers, like Traore Lancind of West Africa, had never been inside a Latter-day Saint

meetinghouse. "When they spoke at the mosque and said that we could help today, I wanted to come," said Mr. Lancind. "This is much different than our mosque. We go only for prayers. You do so many things inside your church."

A particularly memorable moment occurred when those of the Muslim faith requested to use the nearby Relief Society room for a midday prayer. In minutes, shoes came off, prayer rugs came out, and without restraint some 50 faithful Muslims expressed their thanks to God surrounded by the walls of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was a very reverent moment, and it spoke volumes of how welcome the Muslims felt. Friendship and understanding between the two faiths blossomed.

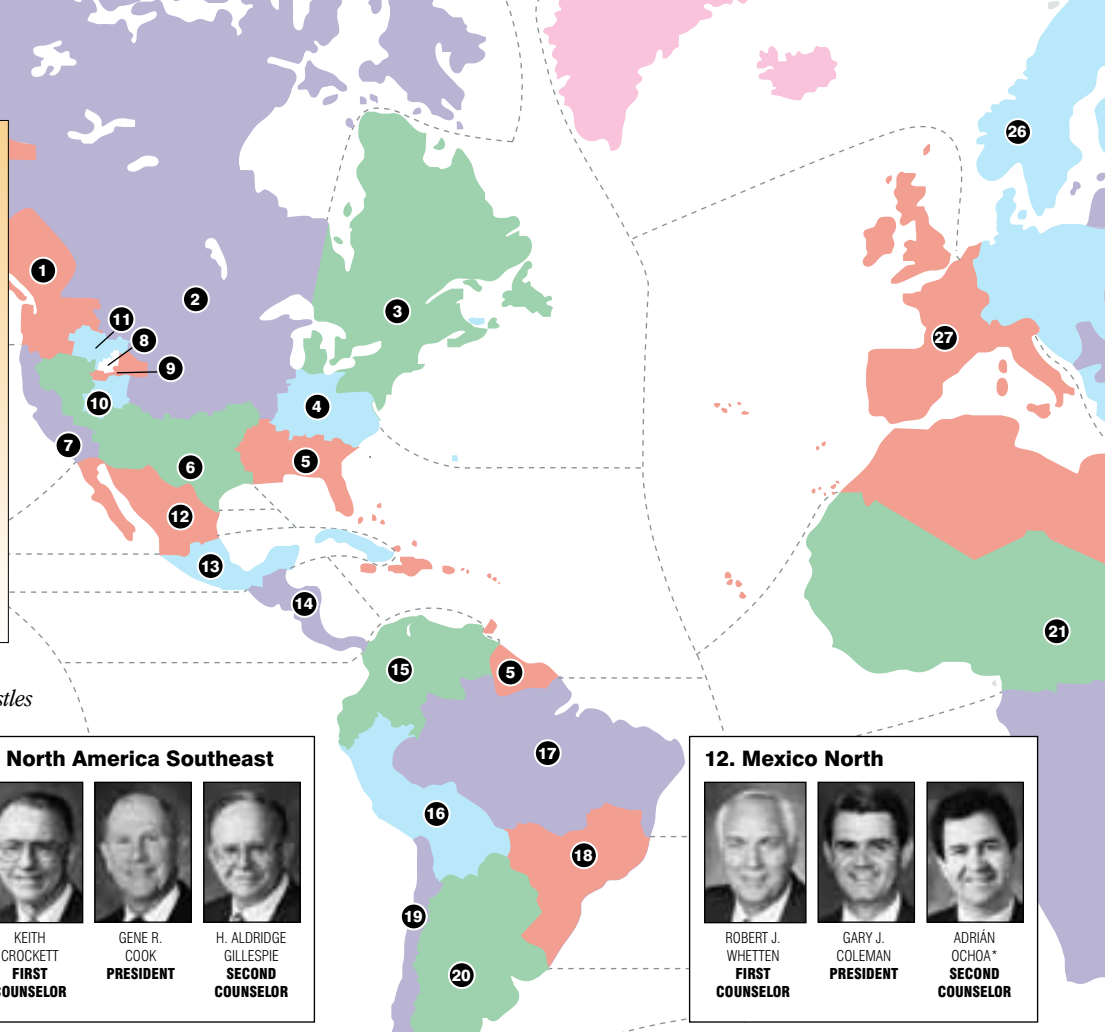
Dr. Abdul-Rahman expressed his admiration for the Church: "You have so many examples to offer us to learn from—your commitment, your voluntary work, your prompt action to help those who need it and without asking for any rewards. Our friendship is not just for today." ■

New Area Presidency Assignments

The First Presidency has announced changes in assignments for Area Presidencies. The changes are effective 15 August 2003. All presidency members belong to the First or Second Quorum of the Seventy unless otherwise noted.

*Area Authority Seventy

**Member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



1. North America Northwest



STEPHEN A. WEST
FIRST COUNSELOR

QUENTIN L. COOK
PRESIDENT

KEITH K. HILBIG
SECOND COUNSELOR

5. North America Southeast



KEITH CROCKETT
FIRST COUNSELOR

GENE R. COOK
PRESIDENT

H. ALDRIDGE GILLESPIE
SECOND COUNSELOR

12. Mexico North



ROBERT J. WHETTEN
FIRST COUNSELOR

GARY J. COLEMAN
PRESIDENT

ADRIÁN OCHOA*
SECOND COUNSELOR

2. North America Central



DONALD L. HALLSTROM
FIRST COUNSELOR

DONALD L. STAHELI
PRESIDENT

WILLIAM W. PARMLEY
SECOND COUNSELOR

6. North America Southwest



H. BRUCE STUCKI
FIRST COUNSELOR

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Primary Celebrates 125 Years

By Lisa Ann Jackson
Church Magazines

The first Primary meeting was held on 25 August 1878 in Farmington, Utah, with 224 boys and girls. Today—125 years later—there are nearly one million Primary children throughout the world, and the Church has marked the anniversary with events throughout the year.

The Primary commemoration began in February, when more than 20,000 children, parents, and Primary leaders gathered at the Conference Center in Salt Lake City and tens of thousands more gathered in meetinghouses around the world to participate in the first-ever broadcast for Primary children.

“I think there never was before a meeting such as this of boys and girls,” President Gordon B. Hinckley told the congregation. “And your coming together in these many different places is a sign of the wonderful growth which this Church has experienced since it was first established.”

Children and their parents heard messages from President Hinckley; Sister Coleen K. Menlove, Primary general president; Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, first counselor in the Primary general presidency; and Sister Gayle M. Clegg, second counselor in the Primary general presidency. The full text of each of their talks was printed in the May issue of the *Ensign*.

“We hope children will remember this all of their

lives,” Sister Reynolds said of the broadcast.

Individual branches, wards, and stakes have been encouraged to hold their own local anniversary celebrations in August. The Primary general presidency encouraged local Primaries to participate in service projects or explore the history of Primary, tying activities to the theme “I’ll Follow Him in Faith,” says Sister Reynolds.

The Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City is commemorating the 125th anniversary with an exhibit of Primary memorabilia and nostalgia. Visitors will see bandalos, Merrie Miss Articles of Faith banners, Targeteer flags, and issues of the *Children’s Friend* dating back to the early 1900s. Visitors to the exhibit can also vote for their favorite Primary songs. Submissions are tallied each week during the exhibit, and as of 29 May, the top five all-time favorites were: (1) “I Am a Child of God,” (2) “I Love to See the Temple,” (3) “A Child’s Prayer,” (4) “We’ll Bring the World His Truth,” and (5) “Book of Mormon Stories.”

“If you are under 100 years old and you ever went to Primary, you’ll find something [in this exhibit] that will remind you of your Primary experience,” says Marjorie Conder, the exhibit’s curator, “and more especially, the *feelings* of your Primary experience.”

The exhibit is on display through November. ■



Items such as a Targeteer flag and a CTR airplane are some of the memorabilia on display at the Museum of Church History and Art, commemorating 125 years of Primary.

Artists Shine in Art Competition

By Lisa Ann Jackson
Church Magazines

With works ranging from traditional oil paintings to a collage of beads and straw, the Sixth International Art Competition, sponsored by the Museum of Church History and Art, honored the talents of Latter-day Saint artists throughout the Church.

“This is one of the finest gatherings ever of artwork with Latter-day Saint meaning,” says Robert O. Davis, a curator at the Church’s museum who served as a judge for the competition. “The artists delivered works that are ambitious and thoughtful and express their visual content in compelling ways.”

With the theme “Latter-day Saints Yesterday and Today: Beliefs, History, Life,” the competition drew more than 700 entries from Latter-day Saint artists representing

30 countries. Of the entries, 171 were selected for display in the Sixth International Art Competition exhibit at the museum. Twenty works of art were given Awards of Merit with cash prizes of U.S. \$500 each, and six of the works were given Purchase Awards and added to the museum’s permanent collection.

The exhibit is on display at the Museum of Church History and Art through 1 September. It can also be viewed on-line at www.lds.org/museum.

This year’s competition drew a wide variety of entries. Among those recognized were a hand-knotted rug depicting Lehi’s vision of the tree of life, an acrylic painting on papier-mâché with scenes from Church history and modern times, a photograph of an apartment with the walls papered with images of the Savior and photos of Church leaders, a



This scratchboard drawing, *Brightly Beams Our Father's Mercy* by Joseph Lasura, is one of 171 works of art selected for exhibition in the Sixth International Art Competition.

bronze statue of children eagerly waiting by the mailbox for a letter from their missionary brother, and a mixed-media composition depicting the universe.

"The works of art showcase many styles and many different media and cultural viewpoints," says Brother Davis. And that's really the point of the competition. Museum curators hope to encourage Latter-day Saint artists—both professional and amateur—to create works reflecting the gospel through an artist's personal and cultural lens. The museum hopes to uplift

visitors with gospel-oriented art and discover artists the Church may be able to use in the future—to create works of art for use in temples, visitors' centers, or Church magazines, for example.

"We really do discover artists through the competition, and that is one of our goals," Brother Davis says.

The museum is already planning for the Seventh International Art Competition, to be held in 2006. The theme is "Our Heritage of Faith." Information about the next competition is available on the museum's Web site. ■

Sister Elaine Cannon Dies at Age 81

Elaine Anderson Cannon, who served as the Young Women general president from 1978 to 1984, died 19 May 2003 in Salt Lake City. She was 81 years old.

Born in Salt Lake City on 9 April 1922 to Aldon Joseph and Minnie Egan Anderson, she married D. James Cannon in the Salt Lake Temple on 25 March 1943. They have six children, 25 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren.

Sister Cannon most recently served as a stake Relief Society president and a temple worker. In addition to



Sister Elaine Cannon

her service as Young Women general president, she also served on the Young Women Mutual Improvement Association General Board, Youth Correlation Committee, Curriculum Planning and Writing Committee, Church Activities Committee, and BYU's Church Educational System faculty. ■

The Lesson

I Remember Best

Do you remember a lesson or gospel discussion that was particularly insightful or enjoyable and that blessed your life or the life of someone else? Please send an account of the lesson you remember best to Teaching, *Ensign*,

50 East North Temple Street, 24th Floor, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA; or e-mail cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org with "Teaching" in the subject line. Please include your name, address, telephone number, and ward and stake (or branch and district). ■



New Testament Chronology Chart—Published in the January, April, and July 2003 *Ensign* magazines, this chart can now be purchased as a two-sided foldout poster. The chronology chart (item no. 36835; U.S. \$.50) is designed to assist members in their personal study and teaching of the New Testament. To order, contact your local distribution center or visit www.ldsacatalog.com.

MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

A U G U S T 2 0 0 3



from Uruguay, China, Peru, and Switzerland. See page 22.

- The past really comes to life when you ask the right questions of the people who lived it. See “That Happened to You?” on page 26.

Strengthening Family Ties

- Family history can seem overwhelming. Where do you start and how do you find the time? On page 12, President Boyd K. Packer shares his own story of how he found time to make family history part of daily life.

- What makes your family ancestry unique? Elder John A. Harris of the Seventy shares several extraordinary experiences he had while seeking his ancestors

“Hot” FHE Tips

Hold family home evening around a backyard campfire? Why not? Learn how one family used a variety of ideas to enhance their Monday nights together, page 69.

Your Balancing Act

Ever wonder how you can possibly handle all the home, Church, and job responsibilities that seem to be competing for your time? You can do it—with careful planning and weighing of your eternal priorities. See “Seeking a Balanced

Life,” by Elder Donald L. Hallstrom, page 52.

Between Resurrection and Ascension

After Christ’s Resurrection, what were the specific messages and instructions He chose to share with His disciples? See “Words of Jesus: Resurrection to Ascension,” page 36.

Wakened by a Whisper

Her husband was sure he had locked up the house for the night, but the prompting to check wouldn’t let her sleep. The next morning she discovered why. See “Lock the Back Door!” page 73.

Serving the Elderly

Getting old isn’t easy. Knowing how to relate to and help the elderly can be pretty challenging too. For ideas on how to help aged friends and family members feel valued and accepted, see “Of Walkers, Wheelchairs, and Wisdom,” page 8.

Help for Divorced Men

After divorce, many men feel a deep sense of failure and loss. For solid suggestions on how the gospel can help them find

peace and emotional strength, see page 58.

Silver Question, Golden Contacts

Are you timid about sharing the gospel? Learn how one question can make a difference, page 68.

Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 67.

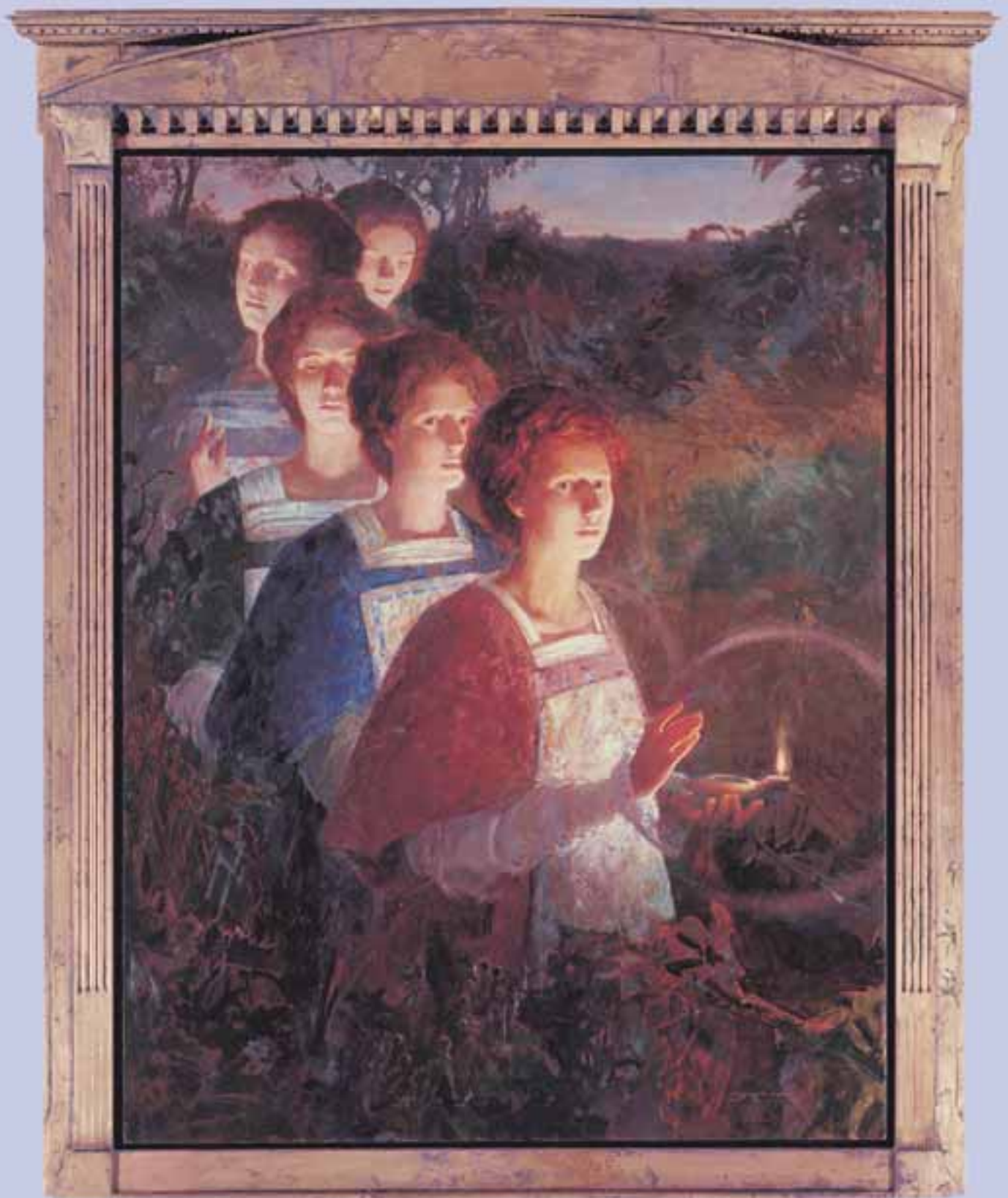
Did You Know?

If you work with the Aaronic Priesthood or Young Women, your lesson manuals are as up-to-date as you are. And you are up-to-date if you subscribe to and read the *New Era*. In addition to the supplementary articles listed in the Resource Guides in the May and November *Ensign* and *New Era*, each current issue of the *New Era* contains more articles and stories that will enrich and support the lessons you will be teaching in the weeks to come.

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The Five Prepared, by J. Kirk Richards

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps" (Matthew 25:1-4).



On 30 June 2002, during the final dedicatory service of the rebuilt Nauvoo temple, President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke of Parley Street, which leads to the site of the old Nauvoo Ferry, from which the early Nauvoo Saints began their trek to the Salt Lake Valley. Then he suggested that those present take time upon leaving to walk down Parley Street, and many did so. Join in an imaginary walk through old Nauvoo with the Saints of 1846. See “A Walk down Parley Street,” p. 42.