

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • OCTOBER 2005

Ensign

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the Greatest
Challenge
in the World, p. 2

Myths about
Mental Illness, p. 31

Eternal Marriage
Starts Now, p. 45



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The Raising of Lazarus, The Large Plate, by Rembrandt van Rijn

This unsigned etching is dated about 1632 and captures the story found in John 11:43–44: “[Christ] cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”

Ensign



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

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The Ensign (ISSN 0884-1136) is published monthly by
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E.
North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA.
Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah, and at
additional mailing offices.

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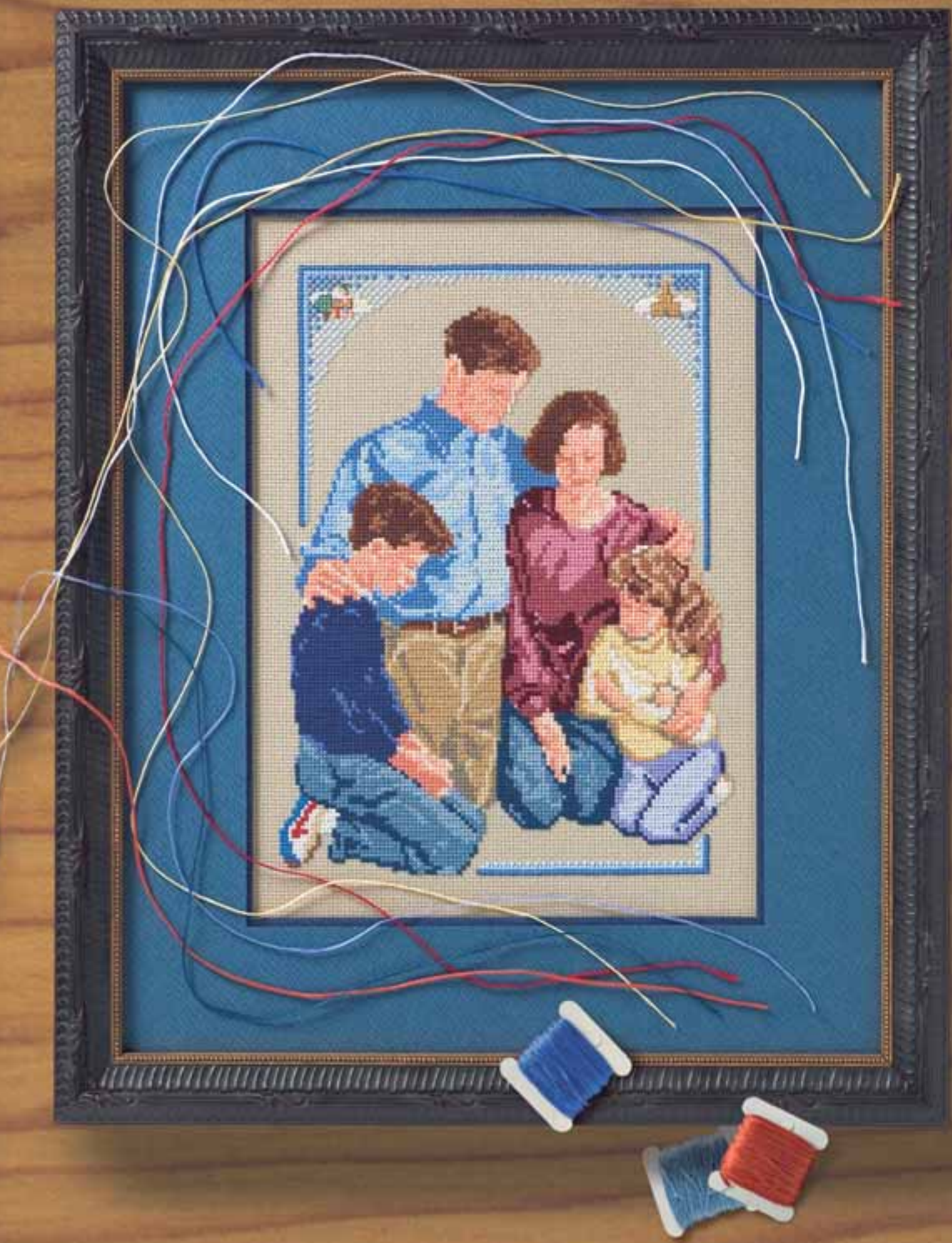
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CANADA POST INFORMATION: Publication Agreement
#40017431



A Thousand Threads of Love

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Parenthood is the greatest challenge in the world. In fact, on the subject of parenthood there are about as many opinions as there are parents, yet there are few who claim to have all of the answers. I am certainly not one of them.

I feel that there are more outstanding young men and women among our people at present than at any other moment in my lifetime. This presupposes that most of these fine young people have come from good homes and have committed, caring parents. Even so, the most conscientious parents feel that they may have made some mistakes. One time, when I did a thoughtless thing, I remember my own mother exclaiming, “Where did I fail?”

The Lord has directed, “Bring up your children in light and truth.”¹ To me, there is no more important human effort. Being a father or a mother is not only a great challenge; it is a divine calling. It is an effort requiring consecration. President David O. McKay (1873–1970) stated that being parents is “the greatest trust that has been given to human beings.”²

A Great Challenge

While few human challenges are greater than that of being good parents, few opportunities offer greater potential for joy. Surely no more important work is to be done in this world than preparing our children to be God-fearing, happy, honorable, and productive. Parents will find no more fulfilling happiness than to have their children honor them and their teachings. It is the glory of parenthood. John testified, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”³

In my opinion, the teaching, rearing, and training of children requires more intelligence, intuitive understanding, humility, strength, wisdom, spirituality, perseverance, and hard work than any other challenge we might have in life. This is especially so when moral foundations of honor and decency are eroding around us. For us to have successful homes, values must be taught, and there must be rules, there must be standards, there must be absolutes. Many societies give parents very little support in teaching and honoring moral values. A number of cultures are becoming essentially valueless, and many of the younger people in those societies are becoming moral cynics.



Surely no more important work is to be done in this world than preparing our children to be God-fearing, happy, honorable, and productive.

The Best Hope

As whole societies have decayed and lost their moral identity and so many homes are broken, the best hope is to turn greater attention and effort to the teaching of the next generation—our children. In order to do this, we must first reinforce the primary teachers of children. Chief among these are the parents and other family members. The best environment should be in the home. Somehow, someday, we must try harder to make our homes stronger so that they will stand as sanctuaries against the unwholesome, pervasive moral dry rot around us. Harmony, happiness, peace, and love in the home can help give children the required inner strength to cope with life's challenges. Barbara Bush, wife of former United States president George Bush, once said to the graduates of Wellesley College:

"Whatever the era, whatever the times, one thing will never change: Fathers and mothers, if you have children, they must come first. You must read to your children and you must hug your children and you must love your children. Your success as a family, our success as a society, depends not on what happens in the White House but on what happens inside your house."⁴

To be a good father and mother requires that the parents defer many of their own needs and desires in favor of the needs of their children. As a consequence of this sacrifice, conscientious parents develop a nobility of character and learn to put into practice the selfless truths taught by the Savior Himself.

I have the greatest respect for single parents who struggle and sacrifice, trying against almost superhuman odds to hold the family together. They should be honored and helped in their heroic efforts. But any mother's or father's task is much easier where there are two functioning parents in the home. Children often challenge and tax the strength and wisdom of both parents.

Years ago, Bishop Stanley Smoot was interviewed by President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985). President Kimball asked, "How often do you have family prayer?"

Bishop Smoot answered, "We try to have family prayer twice a day, but we average about once."

President Kimball responded, "In the past, having family prayer once a day may have been all right. But in the future it will not be enough if we are going to save our families."

I wonder if having casual and infrequent family home evening will be enough in the future to fortify our children with sufficient moral strength. In the future, infrequent family scripture study may be inadequate to arm our children with the virtue necessary to withstand the moral decay of the environment in which they will live. Where in the world will the children learn chastity, integrity, honesty, and basic human decency if not at home? These values will, of course, be reinforced at church, but parental teaching is more constant.

When parents try to teach their children to avoid danger, it is no answer for parents to say to their children, "We are experienced and wise in the ways of the world, and we can get closer to the edge of the cliff than you." Parental hypocrisy can make children cynical and unbelieving of what they are taught in the home. For instance, when parents attend movies they forbid their children to see, parental credibility is diminished. If children are expected to be honest, parents must be honest. If children are expected to be virtuous, parents must be virtuous. If you expect your children to be honorable, you must be honorable.

Among the other values children should be taught are respect for others, beginning with the child's own parents and family; respect for the symbols of faith and the patriotic beliefs of others; respect for law and order; respect for the property of others; respect for authority. Paul reminds us that children should "learn first to shew piety at home."⁵

Appropriate Discipline

One of the most difficult parental challenges is to appropriately discipline children. Child rearing is so individualistic. Every child is different and unique. What works with one may not work with another. I do not know who is wise enough to say what discipline is too harsh or what is too lenient except the parents of the children themselves, who love them most. It is a matter of prayerful discernment for the parents. Certainly the overarching and undergirding

principle is that the discipline of children must be motivated more by love than by punishment. Brigham Young (1801–77) counseled, “If you are ever called upon to chasten a person, never chasten beyond the balm you have within you to bind up.”⁶ Direction and discipline are, however, certainly an indispensable part of child rearing. If parents do not discipline their children, then the public will discipline them in a way the parents do not like. Without discipline, children will not respect either the rules of the home or of society.

A principal purpose for discipline is to teach obedience. President David O. McKay stated: “Parents who fail to teach obedience to their children, if [their] homes do not develop obedience society will demand it and get it. It is therefore better for the home, with its kindness, sympathy and understanding to train the child in obedience rather than callously to leave him to the brutal and unsympathetic discipline that society will impose if the home has not already fulfilled its obligation.”⁷

Teaching Responsibility

An essential part of teaching children to be disciplined and responsible is to have them learn to work. As we grow up, many of us are like the man who said, “I like work; it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours.”⁸ Again, the best teachers of the principle of work are the parents themselves. For me, work became a joy when I first worked alongside my father, grandfather, uncles, and brothers. I am sure that I was often more of an aggravation than a help, but the memories are sweet and the lessons learned are valuable. Children need to learn responsibility and independence. Are the parents personally taking the time to show and demonstrate



and explain so that children can, as Lehi taught, “act for themselves and not . . . be acted upon”?⁹

Luther Burbank, one of the world’s greatest horticulturists, said, “If we had paid no more attention to our plants than we have to our children, we would now be living in a jungle of weeds.”¹⁰

Children are also beneficiaries of moral agency by which we are all afforded the opportunity to progress, grow, and develop. That agency also permits children to pursue the alternate choices of selfishness, wastefulness, self-indulgence, and self-destruction. Children often express this agency when very young.

Let parents who have been conscientious, loving, and concerned and who have lived the principles of righteousness as best they could be comforted in knowing that they are good parents despite the actions of some of their children. The children themselves have a responsibility to listen, to obey, and, having been taught, to learn. Parents cannot always answer for all their children’s misconduct

An essential part of teaching children to be disciplined and responsible is to have them learn to work. The best teachers of the principle of work are the parents themselves.



The scriptures tell us that parents are to teach their children “faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost,” as well as “the doctrine of repentance.” These truths must be taught in the home.

because they cannot ensure the children’s good behavior. Some few children would tax even Solomon’s wisdom and Job’s patience.

There is often a special challenge for those parents who are affluent or overly indulgent. In a sense, some children in those circumstances hold their parents hostage by withholding their support of parental rules unless the parents acquiesce to the children’s demands. Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “Those who do too much *for* their children will soon find they can do nothing *with* their children. So many children have been so much *done for* they are almost *done in*.”¹¹ It seems to be human nature that we do not fully appreciate material things we have not ourselves earned.

There is a certain irony in the fact that some parents are so anxious for their children to be accepted by and be popular with their peers, yet these same parents fear that their children may be doing the things their peers are doing.

Generally, those children who make the decision and have the resolve to abstain from drugs, alcohol, and illicit sex are those who have adopted and internalized the strong values of their homes as lived by their parents. In times of difficult decisions they are most likely to follow the teachings of their parents rather than the example of their peers or the sophistries of the media, which glamorize alcohol consumption, illicit sex, infidelity, dishonesty, and other vices. Those strong young people are like Helaman’s 2,000 young men who “had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them” from death.¹² “And they rehearsed . . . the words of their mothers, saying: We do not doubt our mothers knew it.”¹³

A Firm Belief in Deity

What seems to help cement parental teachings and values in place in children’s lives is a firm belief in Deity. When this belief becomes part of their very souls, they have inner strength. So, of all that is important to

be taught, what should parents teach? The scriptures tell us that parents are to teach their children “faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost,” as well as “the doctrine of repentance.”¹⁴ These truths must be taught in the home. They cannot be taught in the public schools, nor will they be fostered by the government or by society. Of course, Church programs can help, but the most effective teaching takes place in the home.

Parental teaching moments need not be big or dramatic or powerful. We learn this from the Master Teacher. Commenting on the Savior, one writer said:

“The completed beauty of Christ’s life is only the added beauty of little inconspicuous acts of beauty—talking with the woman at the well; . . . showing the young ruler the stealthy ambition laid away in his heart that kept him out of the kingdom of Heaven; . . . teaching a little knot of followers how to pray; . . . kindling a fire and broiling fish that His disciples might have a breakfast waiting for them when they came ashore from a night of fishing, cold, tired, and discouraged. All of these things, you see, let us in so easily into the real quality and tone of [Christ’s] interests, so specific, so narrowed down, so enlisted in what is small, so engrossed with what is minute.”¹⁵

And so it is with being parents. The little things are the big things sewn into the family tapestry by a thousand threads of love, faith, discipline, sacrifice, patience, and work.

There are some great spiritual promises that parents may have visited upon them; these are the same divine promises made to their valiant forebears who nobly kept their covenants. Covenants remembered by parents will be remembered by God. The children may thus become the beneficiaries and inheritors of these great covenants and promises. This is because they are the children of the covenant.¹⁶

God bless the struggling, sacrificing, honorable parents of this world. May He especially honor the covenants kept by faithful parents among our people and watch over these children of the covenant. ■

NOTES

1. D&C 93:40.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay* (2003), 155.
3. 3 John 1:4.
4. “Text of Mrs. Bush’s Speech,” *Washington Post*, June 2, 1990, sec. C, p. 4.
5. 1 Timothy 5:4.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 219.
7. *The Responsibility of Parents to Their Children* (pamphlet, n.d.), 3.
8. Jerome Klapka Jerome, in *The International Dictionary of Thoughts* (1969), 782.
9. 2 Nephi 2:26.
10. In *Elbert Hubbard’s Scrap Book* (1923), 227.
11. “The Man of Christ,” *Ensign*, May 1975, 101.
12. Alma 56:47.
13. Alma 56:48.
14. D&C 68:25.
15. Charles Henry Parkhurst, in *Leaves of Gold* (1938), 177.
16. See 3 Nephi 20:25–26; Orson F. Whitney, in Conference Report, Apr. 1929, 110–11.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

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

1. Tell family members that a sanctuary is a place of protection from danger or distress. Invite each person to draw a picture of what he or she thinks a sanctuary looks like. Ask them to explain what they drew and why it is a sanctuary. Read aloud the first paragraph after the heading “The Best Hope.” How can our homes be a sanctuary?

2. Read aloud the first sentence of this message. Then share what President Faust said are some of the challenges of parenthood. Ask family members to share ideas of how parents can meet these challenges. What advice from President Faust could the family implement in the coming months?

3. Reading together the sections “Teaching Responsibility” and “A Firm Belief in Deity,” make a list of what President Faust said children need to learn. Select one or two of these topics to discuss. You may want to include some scriptures in the discussion. Bear testimony of the blessings of teaching and learning the gospel in the home.



STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

AS EQUAL PARTNERS

A continuing series giving insights for your study and use of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”

“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.”¹

Presiding, Providing, and Protecting

Fathers are to preside in the home, but presiding does not mean a man is to rule or exercise unrighteous dominion over his wife or children. The Savior taught His Apostles that the rulers among the Gentiles exercised



authority over their subjects. “But it shall not be so among you,” He cautioned, “but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant” (see Matthew 20:25–27). Presiding, then, is to love and serve and sacrifice. The Apostle Paul taught, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25). President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) stated: “Brethren, I say to you with all soberness, [Jesus Christ] is the model we must follow as we take the spiritual lead in our families. Particularly is this true in your relationship with your wife.”²

The Lord said “that every man who is obliged to provide for his own family, let him provide, and he shall in nowise lose his crown” (D&C 75:28). In today’s world being able to provide for a family often depends on a father’s willingness and opportunity to obtain sufficient education. But acquiring an education and suitable employment and providing the necessities of life does not mean spending an inordinate amount of time working to create a high standard of living. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) warned that some fathers spend so much time providing for things far beyond the necessities of life that physical possessions become their false gods and they have little time to preside in their families in love and righteousness.³

The responsibility to protect a family stretches far beyond the obvious physical shelter and security a father should provide. President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) taught: “A righteous father protects his children with his time and presence in their social, educational, and spiritual activities and responsibilities.”⁴ Fathers can protect their children by teaching them to make wise choices regarding the media they choose and the friends they spend time with.

Nurturing Children

In 1942 the First Presidency stated: “Motherhood . . . becomes a holy calling, a sacred dedication for carrying out the Lord’s plans, a consecration of devotion to the uprearing and fostering, the nurturing in body, mind, and spirit, of those who kept their first estate. . . . To lead them to keep their second estate is the work of motherhood. . . . Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels.”⁵

One of Satan’s most effective deceptions is to demean the work of wife and mother in the home. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles cautioned that “this is an attack at the very heart of God’s plan. . . . Don’t



Husbands and wives are to share as equal partners in the responsibilities of parenthood and help each other in a spirit of selfless sacrifice.

be lured away from the plan of our God to the ways of the world, where motherhood is belittled, femininity is decried, and the divinely established role of wife and mother is mocked.”⁶

Prophets have emphasized the importance of mothers devoting their full-time efforts to nurturing their children. But to those who have to work to provide for the needs of their families, President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: “Do the very best you can.

I hope that if you are employed full-time you are doing it to ensure that basic needs are met and not simply to indulge a taste for an elaborate home, fancy cars, and other luxuries.”⁷

Helping One Another as Equal Partners

Mothers have primary responsibility to nurture children, and fathers are to preside, provide, and protect. But these roles are not exclusive. Husbands and wives are to share as equal partners in the responsibilities of parenthood and help each other in a spirit of selfless sacrifice.

The divine design to give mothers and fathers different primary responsibilities in the family reflects certain eternal differences between men and women. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” teaches that “gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.”⁸ These innate differences and unique responsibilities enable a couple to come together in unity, to complement each other’s strengths and gifts, and to forge the relationship that makes an eternal family possible. ■

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. “To the Fathers in Israel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 50.
3. See “The False Gods We Worship,” *Tambuli*, Aug. 1977, 2–3; *Ensign*, June 1976, 4–5.
4. “Being a Righteous Husband and Father,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 51.
5. In Conference Report, Oct. 1942, 12–13.
6. “The Joy of Living the Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 74–75.
7. “Women of the Church,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 69.
8. *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.

Family Home Evening



IT'S A MATTER OF TIME

Spending time together is one of the most important blessings of family home evening.

We are grateful for family home evening. It is time well spent," write Wesley and Marnie Spencer, Providence Fifth Ward, Providence Utah South Stake, in response to a request for readers to share their family home evening insights and experiences. Though the Spencers acknowledge that at the time handling five young children was no easy task, sometimes everything came together like it did one night when their children felt the spirit of the Holy Ghost during home evening.

"It was my turn to give the lesson," says Sister Spencer. "I found an article in a *Friend* magazine (Aug. 1993, 14). It was the story of the appearance of Jesus Christ to President Lorenzo Snow in the Salt Lake Temple.

"The children sat spellbound as I read them the story, recounted by President Snow's granddaughter. When she was a young girl, she visited her grandfather in his office in the temple. As they were leaving, President Snow stopped and pointed out the spot where he had seen the Savior.

"As I concluded the story and read the prophet's testimony of the Savior to his granddaughter, our six-year-old daughter said with awe in her voice: 'That little girl will never wonder if Jesus is real. She will always know.'

"I said: 'That's right. She will always know.' I was about to explain how the Spirit can bear witness of Christ, when our four-year-old son spoke up. In a quiet, serious voice he said, 'The Holy Ghost is telling me right now that Jesus is real.'

"I looked at his solemn face and knew that he meant it. My heart swelled, and I ended the lesson with my testimony of the Savior. I recognized that even very young children could feel the Spirit when in the right setting. I am grateful that we worked to follow the prophet's counsel and take

time for weekly family home evening. In this instance, it provided an opportunity for our children to feel and recognize the Spirit."

Following are responses from other *Ensign* readers who have discovered the joy that comes to families when they spend time together in family home evening.





PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER, POSED BY MODELS



A Time to Learn and Help

James and Linda Bullough, of the Willow Creek Sixth Ward, Sandy Utah Willow Creek Stake, have always used family home evening as a place to

teach the gospel. When they discovered years ago that their son Adam had severe communication disorders, they decided to expand gospel teaching and family activities to include ways to help him.

“Each week during the family council portion of our home evening, we discussed ways to assist Adam,” writes Sister Bullough. “We reviewed the outline for Adam’s therapy sessions so we knew exactly what his weekly task was. Mom, Dad, two sisters, and a brother (at that time) became a fleet of five ‘quasi-deputized’ therapists reinforcing his task for the week.

“We spent several Monday evenings playing animal charades, shouting out the correct answers repeatedly to build Adam’s animal vocabulary. Once we made labels during



family home evening and pasted them on all of our household appliances. During the week, family members would read the labels to

Adam each time they were in the room with him. We played games like Simon Says and Twister at family home evening to help Adam learn multiple-step directions. And we wrote letters to missionaries.

"Adam's progress has been phenomenal. He was mainstreamed into a regular classroom in the first grade. As a fifth grader, he performed at the top of his class. His professional therapists are in agreement that the intensive help Adam received from his family on a consistent basis over several years has been the crucial element in his success."



Finding a Way to Spend Time

As a missionary in Japan, Nettie Hunsaker Francis, Las Vegas Third Ward, Las Vegas Nevada Stake, had the opportunity to teach

Seema from India, then a young mother. "Seema loved hearing about the

gospel, but our lessons were sometimes interrupted by her two small children, five-year-old Maya and two-year-old Saya," writes Sister Francis. "The girls were active and often demanded attention during our appointments. Several times Seema became frustrated and didn't know quite how to entertain her daughters so that we could continue our gospel discussion.

"Finally one day when Maya and Saya were being especially disruptive, Seema closed her scriptures and said, 'What you are teaching me about the gospel of Jesus Christ is fine, but I need some help as a mother. Does your church give any specific ideas to parents?'

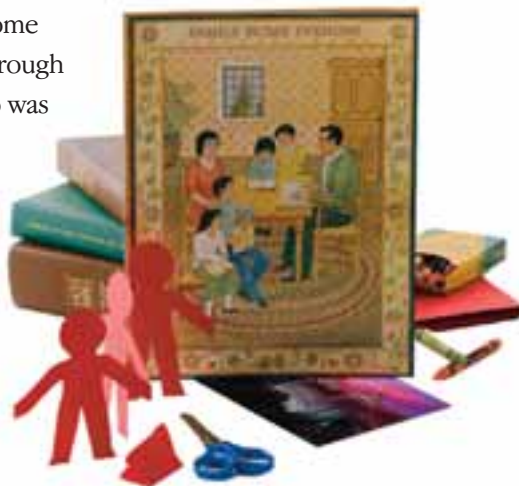
"In a flash of inspiration, my companion and I told Seema about the family home evening program. She was

very interested. The following day we gave her a copy of the *Family Home Evening Resource Book*.

"The next time we saw Seema, she was very excited. 'I stayed up most of the night reading your family home evening manual,' she said. 'Do you know what is in the book?' Before we could answer, Seema went on telling us about ideas for dealing with different age groups of children, first aid, family games, preparedness, and physical activities. She told us she was so delighted she was implementing it in her home.

Seeing the family home evening program through the eyes of one who was not of our faith helped me realize just what we have.

"Now, as parents, my husband, Mark, and I find ourselves looking for constructive ways to spend time with our children. I, too, feel excited when I think of the blessings that can come to our family as a result of the time we spend together in family home evening."



Time after Time

Maribeth C. Clark, Cedar Hills Fifth Ward, Cedar Hills Utah Stake, found life hectic after her marriage to

Michael, who had four teenage children. He had returned to

school, they were in the process of building a new home, and one of his daughters, Katherine, had come to live with them.

"A regimen of daily family prayers, regular scripture study, weekly family home evening, and ample neighborly service was a challenge amid our other heavy time demands," writes Sister Clark. "One Monday night at the dinner table,

we discussed going up to the site where we were building our new home. I suggested we stop and get an ice cream cone on the way and make it a family home evening. We all laughed, and throughout the rest of the evening, I continued to imply with each new activity that we were doing it for family night.

"That was our first family home evening as a married couple and Katherine's first family home evening in more than five years. We tried in the busy months that followed to teach gospel lessons for family home evening, but occasionally we called whatever we were doing a family night activity and just enjoyed the time together.

"At the end of the school year, Katherine went back to live with her mother. I gave little thought to what our weekly efforts at family home evening might have meant to her.

"Then, quite unexpectedly, eight months later, Katherine and her younger brother, David, came to live with us. On the first Monday night we were together, David asked what we were doing for family home evening. I looked at him quite startled. He told me that Katherine said we always had family home evening.

"It was then that I realized the time we spent together every Monday evening learning the gospel, even in our "impromptu" family home evening activities, had left an impact on Katherine. Thus, we continued our Monday night tradition."



Time over Treats

Brent and Becky Young, Santaquin Eighth Ward, Santaquin Utah Stake, found a way years ago to extend their time together on Monday evenings.

"Our children feel that good treats at the conclusion of family night are an absolute must," says Sister Young. "This has worked to our advantage. Over refreshments we like to talk about the things we have studied during the



evening. The kids are honest and helpful in their ideas and feelings, and conversation is usually more relaxed and open at that time.

We have discovered that having an atmosphere where our children can express their questions and ideas gives us valuable insight into their perceptions of what they are learning. We are sometimes surprised to find that what we thought we taught them and what they actually learned are two very different things. We use these opportunities to clarify and correct misunderstandings.

"By using family home evening as a tool to teach gospel principles and their practical applications, our family has drawn closer to each other and to the Lord.

"We have discovered that family home evening is a time when feelings can be shared, values taught, relationships strengthened, and love for the gospel and each other developed."

Spending consistent time together is an important part of family home evening. When this becomes a priority, families can be strengthened, individuals helped, and testimonies shared. ■

Each inset is a recent picture of the family in the story.

TAKE TIME FOR YOUR CHILDREN

- "1. Take time to always be at the crossroads in the lives of your children. . . .
- "2. Take time to be a real friend to your children.
- "3. Take time to read to your children. . . .
- "4. Take time to pray with your children.
- "5. Take time to have a meaningful weekly home evening. . . .
- "6. Take time to be together at mealtimes as often as possible.
- "7. Take time daily to read the scriptures together as a family.
- "8. Take time to do things together as a family.
- "9. Take time to teach your children.
- "10. Take time to truly love your children."

President Thomas S. Monson, quoting from President Ezra Taft Benson, *To the Mothers in Zion* (pamphlet, 1987), 8-12; in "Memories of Yesterday, Counsel for Today," *Ensign*, May 1992, 5.



Polynesian Pearls

The faith of Latter-day Saints in French Polynesia, like the pearls for which these islands are famous, grows layer upon layer, becoming brighter and more beautiful with time.

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY
Church Magazines

Pearls are the product of patience. They grow layer upon layer, gaining luster with time. In French Polynesia, faith in the restored gospel has also grown in such a manner. That growth began in 1844, when the first missionaries arrived, and generation by generation, it has provided hope and meaning. Today Latter-day Saints make up 8 percent of the population—20,000 members in 79 congregations. They are known as people who care for each other and for those around them. Like pearls, their glow is gentle. But as they reflect the light that comes from Christ, they truly shine. Here is a glimpse at some of these Saints.

Tubuai: Place of Beginnings

Just off the road on the far end of the island of Tubuai, Ronny Harevaa and his wife, Sandrine, tidy up the ground around a small stone monument. It is dedicated to the

memory of Elder Addison Pratt, the first Latter-day Saint missionary to visit this island 450 miles (700 km) south of Tahiti. Addison Pratt grew up in New Hampshire in the United States of America, but at age 19 he became a seafarer. He traveled to what are now the Hawaiian Islands, then sailed the Pacific, Atlantic, Caribbean, and Mediterranean before marrying and settling in New York. In 1838 he and his wife joined the Church. By 1841 they had gathered with the Saints in Nauvoo, Illinois. In May 1843 Addison Pratt was called by the Prophet Joseph Smith to help begin missionary work in the Pacific. On April 30, 1844, he and two other elders, Noah Rogers and Benjamin Grouard, arrived on Tubuai.

The islanders were eager to have a missionary among them, and Elder Pratt remained. He began learning Tahitian and preaching. The first convert was his interpreter, another American. Six of seven sailors on the island were also baptized and confirmed. Then on July 22, 1844—three years before Latter-day Saint pioneers arrived in Utah—the first Polynesian converts were baptized. By February 1845, 60 of the 200 inhabitants of Tubuai had joined the Church. From these beginnings and from the work of Elder Rogers and Elder Grouard on other islands, the Church spread throughout what is now French Polynesia.

Today on Tubuai, Ronny Harevaa is the president of the



Throughout French Polynesia, Latter-day Saints build on a heritage that began here in 1844. Top: Tera Temahaga of Takaroa shows handmade crafts. Heiana Teriipaia, Garry Mou Tham, and Fari Le Bronnec (above) and the Teihotaata family (left) of Raiatea say the gospel helps them stay strong. Bottom: On Tubuai, Sandrine and Ronny Harevaa care for the monument to Elder Addison Pratt.

Tubuai Australes District, which numbers 593 members in five branches. Quite a few of the members are his relatives, and President Harevaa has learned much from them. "There is a deep heritage and history here," he says, "a great love of the Church and family."





church, and little by little good things entered in."

They married

"Most people on Tubuai don't have a lot of material things, but they have all they need to be happy," says Lucien Hoffmann, president of the Mahu Branch. "Here you can get fruit from the trees, vegetables from the ground, and you can go fishing whenever you want. And when you ask people to help those who are sick or in need, they are always ready."

"My wife and I chose to live on Tubuai to be close to our parents," President Harevaa says. "It's a wonderful place to be together as a family." In fact, he has a brother who lives next door, another brother who lives in the house beyond that, and his father serves as one of his counselors. There are enough Harevaas on Tubuai that many people refer to President Harevaa as President Ronny, just to keep things straight.

In front of the Mahu chapel, one of three meeting-houses on Tubuai, Sandrine points out another monument honoring Addison Pratt. "I think Elder Pratt would be pleased to know that after more than 160 years, the Church is still strong here," she says. And it is still growing.

One recent convert is Johan Bonno, who was born in the Marquesas Islands, the northernmost part of French Polynesia. Although he had led a rough life, he became interested in the restored gospel because of a school-teacher who had moved to the Marquesas from Tubuai. "Maimiti spoke to me of the true Church," he explains. "She taught me about the Book of Mormon. Little by little, I let go of the bad things in my life. She invited me to

and moved to Tubuai. "My father-in-law invited me to a missionary open house, and there I felt a powerful, comforting feeling," Johan explains. "It filled me with a desire to know the truth. I prayed in earnest about Joseph Smith. I came to understand that the Lord had restored the Church through him." Johan was soon baptized and confirmed.

Today Johan and Maimiti are preparing to be sealed in the Papeete Tahiti Temple. "Having the light of the temple in our life will be like trading a 15-watt bulb for the brightest sunshine," he says. For Johan, learning of the restored gospel required building a layer of faith. So did getting married, moving to Tubuai, and joining the Church. Now going to the temple will add yet another layer to a pearl that keeps on growing.

Raiatea: Haven of Peace

When 23-year-old Spencer Moroni Teuia received his mission call, he couldn't stop smiling. After four years of delays waiting for dental procedures to be completed, this young man from the island of Raiatea received his call on his birthday. He remembers reading aloud phrases from the letter: "minister of the restored gospel," "advocate and effective messenger of the truth," "ambassador of the Savior," and thinking, "Wow! With all my weaknesses I'm going to have to trust in the Lord."

But that is something he is used to doing. Moroni grew up in the Church. He is the third of six children to serve a full-time mission, and he recalls "dreaming about serving a mission ever since I was a little boy." He remembers memorizing missionary scriptures during his four years of seminary and listening to returned missionaries talk about their missions. But he also remembers dental examinations, adjustments, and



Top: The Taumihau family joined the Church in Tahiti. Above right: Jewelry carver Johan Bonno (shown with his wife, Maimiti) joined the Church in Tubuai.

years of wearing an apparatus. “There were times when I almost gave up,” he says. However, with the encouragement of his family and his own perseverance, he kept hope alive. Today he is faithfully serving in the Tahiti Papeete Mission.

For Moroni and other young Latter-day Saints like him, the Church on Raiatea is a haven of strength. Garry Mou Tham, 16, a third-generation Latter-day Saint from the Avera Ward, explains. “Here,” he says, “we are different from the outside world. We have good relationships with friends and parents. We have the teachings of the prophets to remind us to stay close to our family, to read our scriptures together, and to have home evening. We know the Church is going to progress, and we choose to be part of the Lord’s great work.”

Garry’s friend Fari Le Bronnec, 14, agrees. He talks about two things that keep him safe from the world: seminary and prayer. “Seminary gives you a spiritual boost each morning,” he says. “And prayer can give

you a boost anytime you pray with faith.” The seminary and institute program is strong in French Polynesia, with a total of 740 seminary and 524 institute students in 2004–2005.

Another source of strength is the example members provide for those who are interested in the gospel. Such an example helped bring Adrien and Greta Teihotaata and their children into the Church. Although they had been without religion for years, “we decided we wanted to change,” Sister Teihotaata says. “We asked the Lord to guide us.” Just a few days later, neighbors invited them to an open house at the Uturoa Ward. “We decided to come back on Sunday,” Brother Teihotaata recalls, “and at church, we were impressed that everyone was involved—teaching, going to classes, taking care of children. They really seemed to love each other.”



Above: Iosua Brothers, a patriarch in Tahiti, was baptized and confirmed on Moorea in 1968. Like many others, he has seen the Church become a force for good all over the islands. Below: On Takaroa, the rising generation includes Ranitea and Vehina Teihoarii and Vaimiti Nyjland.





But little by little, the Church grew.” Kind of like a pearl.

Tahiti: Center of Strength

One way to see how far the Church has come in French Polynesia is to talk with the public affairs council in Papeete, Tahiti. At a recent meeting,



Right: In a place known for craftsmanship, the temple is revered as the brightest jewel of all. Opposite page, top: On Tahiti, patriarch Tiatia Teio and his wife, Imihaa, feel the temple’s influence. So do deacons Jesse Pereitai and Jean-Philippe McGrevy. Below: The French Polynesian flag flies over Raiatea and Spencer Moroni Teuiau.

It was fast Sunday, and “when testimony meeting began, we felt something peaceful we had never felt before—the Holy Ghost. We said, ‘This is something we need,’” Sister Teihotaata says. The family met with the missionaries and continued learning. Though their oldest son did not join the Church, Brother and Sister Teihotaata and their five other children were baptized and confirmed in 1998. Since then, keeping the commandments, studying the scriptures, and going to the temple “have strengthened us in our testimony, and so has the continuing example of members who have taught us and helped us,” says Sister Teihotaata.

Another member is at the stake center this day, one who was baptized in 1956. “The Church wasn’t so well known on Raiatea back then,” says Harriet Brodien Terooatea. “There weren’t many members, and meetings were held in a little house that had one room for a chapel and one room for the missionaries.

they reminisced about some significant events:

- The Church in French Polynesia celebrated its 160th anniversary in October 2004. Events included (1) public exhibits about the Church; (2) a spectacular in the stadium, featuring dancing, singing, choruses, and multimedia presentations; (3) a sports day including traditional competitions such as carrying bananas on a bamboo pole; and (4) a fireside with speeches from Church and government leaders, as well as a 500-voice choir. Many activities were covered by newspapers and broadcast on national television.

- Church officials have paid several courtesy visits to government officials, and several Latter-day Saints presently serve in the national assembly. The government has expressed thanks for the benefits the Church brings, especially its role in teaching family values.

- A 400-voice LDS choir performed before an audience of 30,000 during French president Jacques Chirac’s visit to French Polynesia in July 2003. The event was televised not only



in French Polynesia but also in France. The choir left many in tears when they sang “I Know That My Redeemer Lives” (*Hymns*, no. 136) and “God Be with You Till We Meet Again” (*Hymns*, no. 152).

• The Papeete Tahiti Temple celebrated its 20th anniversary in October 2003. To mark the event, members of the Paea Tahiti Stake did temple work from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. so all endowed members could perform at least one ordinance.

“The Church has come of age here,” says Marama Tarati, the Church’s national director of public affairs. “Throughout French Polynesia it is recognized as a force for good.” On Tahiti the Church has beautiful meetinghouses, congregations filled with faithful Saints, and—as the brightest jewel of all—the temple, a well-known landmark in the capital city.

The light of the temple has come into many lives. “Before I became a member of the Church I did not know what my life would be after death,” explains Marguerite Teriinohopua. Her family learned of the Church because another family prayed to find them. Ernest Montrose, now first counselor in the Faaa Tahiti Stake presidency, was at that time bishop of the Heiri Ward. When missionaries encouraged members to pray to find investigators, “I figured our family should go first.” Inspiration came. Bishop Montrose invited a coworker, Danielson Teriinohopua, to bring his family to a home evening with the missionaries.

“We were at the same time praying to be guided to the truth,” recalls Danielson, who is now a member of the high council. “At the end of the evening, we told them we wanted to know more—immediately.” Bishop Montrose scheduled another meeting the next night, then the next and the next. Within weeks the Teriinohopuas were baptized and confirmed, and a year later they were sealed in the temple. “Today I have a response to my questions,” Marguerite says. “In the temple I feel great peace and joy.”

Chanterel Hauata of the Heiri Ward also knows the joy of attending the temple. Although a benign brain tumor caused him to go blind six years ago, in the temple he



sees clearly. “It is a place of clarity,” he explains. “In the temple we learn of eternity. It lifts us beyond this mortal life.”

The Pepe Mariteragi family has also felt the blessings of the temple. When they gathered at the family home in Paea

in October 2003, they spoke about Tepahu, Pepe’s wife—their mother and grandmother. “She passed away seven months ago,” explained Lucien, one of her sons, “but our hearts are still turned toward her.”

“It is thanks to the gospel that we are able to deal with such things,” said Jean-Marie, another son. “The blessings of the temple give us the understanding that we can be an eternal family.”

This spreading of the gospel across generations is another indication of the maturity and strength of the Church. Bishop Moroni Alvarez of the Tavararo Ward and his wife, Juanita, talk about heritage that stretches back to his grandfather. They spread out seminary and institute diplomas for all six of their children and photos of all six while they were serving full-time missions. They talk about children married in the temple and grandchildren being raised in the Church. “We talked and studied and prayed together and shared our testimonies,” Bishop Alvarez explains. “Now they do the same with their children.”

Talk with Jared Peltzer, 21, of the Matatia Ward, Paea Tahiti Stake, as he prepares to leave for a mission in the Philippines, and you’ll meet his older brother Lorenzo, 30, who served in French Polynesia several years ago, and two younger





Tahia Brown of Takaroa works at one of the dozens of pearl farms dotting the island.

brothers, Narii, 18, and Hyrum, 14, who plan to be full-time missionaries. “We didn’t have a missionary tradition in the family until now,” says Jared. “But when Lorenzo went, it made me want to go, and now we’re encouraging our younger brothers too.” Layer upon layer, the pearl keeps growing.

Takaroa: Home of Heritage

If you live on Takaroa, you know about pearls. Many of those who live on the island owe their livelihood to pearl farming. Some raise the oysters in which the pearls grow. Others clean the shells, attach the oysters to cords, insert pearl starts, hang oysters in the water, harvest the pearls, or make jewelry and souvenirs.

“We take things Heavenly Father has given us and bring out the beauty that is in them,” explains Tahia Brown, who works at one of the dozens of pearl farms that dot the island. She and Marie Teihoarii, both former branch Relief Society presidents, love to display necklaces, table decorations, and other crafts made by Latter-day Saints. “I learned to do this from my mother,” Sister Brown explains. “Most of the sisters here do this or some other craft that requires skill. We work to earn food and to make good use of our time but also to create things of beauty.”

Pearls and shells aren’t the only things of beauty created here. Sisters like Tera Temahaga weave plant strands into exquisite fans, hats, and baskets, while others like Tipapa Mahotu use cloth and thread to sew brightly colored quilts and pillows. Tradition holds that quilt making was first taught by Addison Pratt’s wife, Louisa, who came to the islands in 1850.

Another evidence of the craftsmanship of the people of Takaroa is the tallest building on the island—a beautiful white church built starting in 1891. The building is remarkable for the heritage it represents. Political situations in

French Polynesia and the United States forced missionaries to withdraw from the islands in 1852. Missionaries did not return until 1892. But when they did, they found a congregation of 100 on Takaroa that had remained faithful. And

these Latter-day Saints were in the process of building a large chapel where they could worship together. Within a month, missionaries baptized and confirmed 33 new members, and the congregation began growing again.

“Today the chapel presides over the village, just as the Church presides over our lives,” says Sister Mahotu, 82. She traces her LDS roots back to her great-grandparents. “The chapel,” she says, “reminds us of the heritage our ancestors have given us. It reminds us that we can be faithful like they were.”

At the Family History Center located in an addition to the chapel, director Suzanne Pimati labors to honor those ancestors. She regularly organizes firesides and spends many hours on the phone encouraging everyone on the island to attend. “I am eager for everyone to find his or her ancestors,” she says. The Spirit of Elijah is strong on Takaroa. And with a computer to help the work along, Sister Pimati plans for many names to be sent to the temple.

“At one time, the population of Takaroa was 90 percent LDS,” explains Thierry Teihoarii, president of the Takaroa Tuamotu District. By the 1950s population was in decline, but in the 1960s the cultured pearl industry brought people back. Today there are two branches on Takaroa, with a total of 380 members out of 1,000 residents on the island. There are also four branches with an additional 450 members on neighboring islands.

“Our greatest challenge is still those who leave our islands,” President Teihoarii explains, “particularly the young.” Though many of the youth go away to boarding schools, for those who remain, seminary and institute become their main source of education. “Seminary helps them not to forget the gospel,” President Teihoarii says.

So does going to the temple. “Every year we make trips to perform temple ordinances, and the youth do baptisms for the dead,” President Teihoarii says. “It encourages the

youth a lot. It isn't just the accomplishment of saving enough for the trip. They know that if they want to go to the temple they must be worthy, and that helps them to stay strong."

Though his calling sometimes requires him to be gone on visits to other islands, President Teihoarii says his family has been greatly blessed. "The first thing I do when I come home is to share the faith and testimonies of the members with Marie and my two daughters. These are uplifting times for my family. We truly feel the Spirit is with us." His wife agrees. "There is so much to learn in the Church," she says, "and also many blessings. There is sweet work to do, and as we do it, the Church will prosper."

It is evening on the island of Takaroa. The sun is going down. The shadows lengthen around the white chapel as the Saints gather—teens for seminary, Sister Pimati to do family history work, President Teihoarii to meet with two branch presidents. It is the crepuscule, a time of gentle light. Light like that which shines from a pearl. ■

Left: On Tahiti, Betty Tama prepares to baptize Eddy Tama.



Clockwise from above: The Takaroa chapel. This chapel "presides over the village," says Tipapa Mahotu. Church leaders Pierre Tumarae,



James L. Brown, and Thierry Teihoarii meet at the chapel. Suzanne Pimati runs the Family History Center.

Bearing Testimony

BY ELDER JAY E. JENSEN

Of the Seventy



I testify that there is a divine power accompanying a declared pure testimony.

In my experiences at home and in the Church, I appreciate more and more the power of bearing testimony. Few accounts in Church history have left a more profound impact on me than these words of President Brigham Young (1801–77), who was influenced by a pure testimony:

“If all the talent, tact, wisdom, and refinement of the world had been combined in one individual, and that person had been sent to me with the Book of Mormon, and had declared in the most exalted of earthly eloquence, the truth of it, undertaking to prove it by his learning and worldly wisdom, it would have been to me like the smoke which arises only to vanish. But when I saw a man without eloquence, or talents for public speaking, who could only just say, ‘I know by the power of the Holy Ghost that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith is a prophet of the Lord,’ [the] Holy Ghost proceeding from that individual illuminate[d] my understanding, and light, glory, and immortality [were] before me.”¹

Using the scriptures and the words of the prophets, let us examine what a testimony is and how we should bear it.

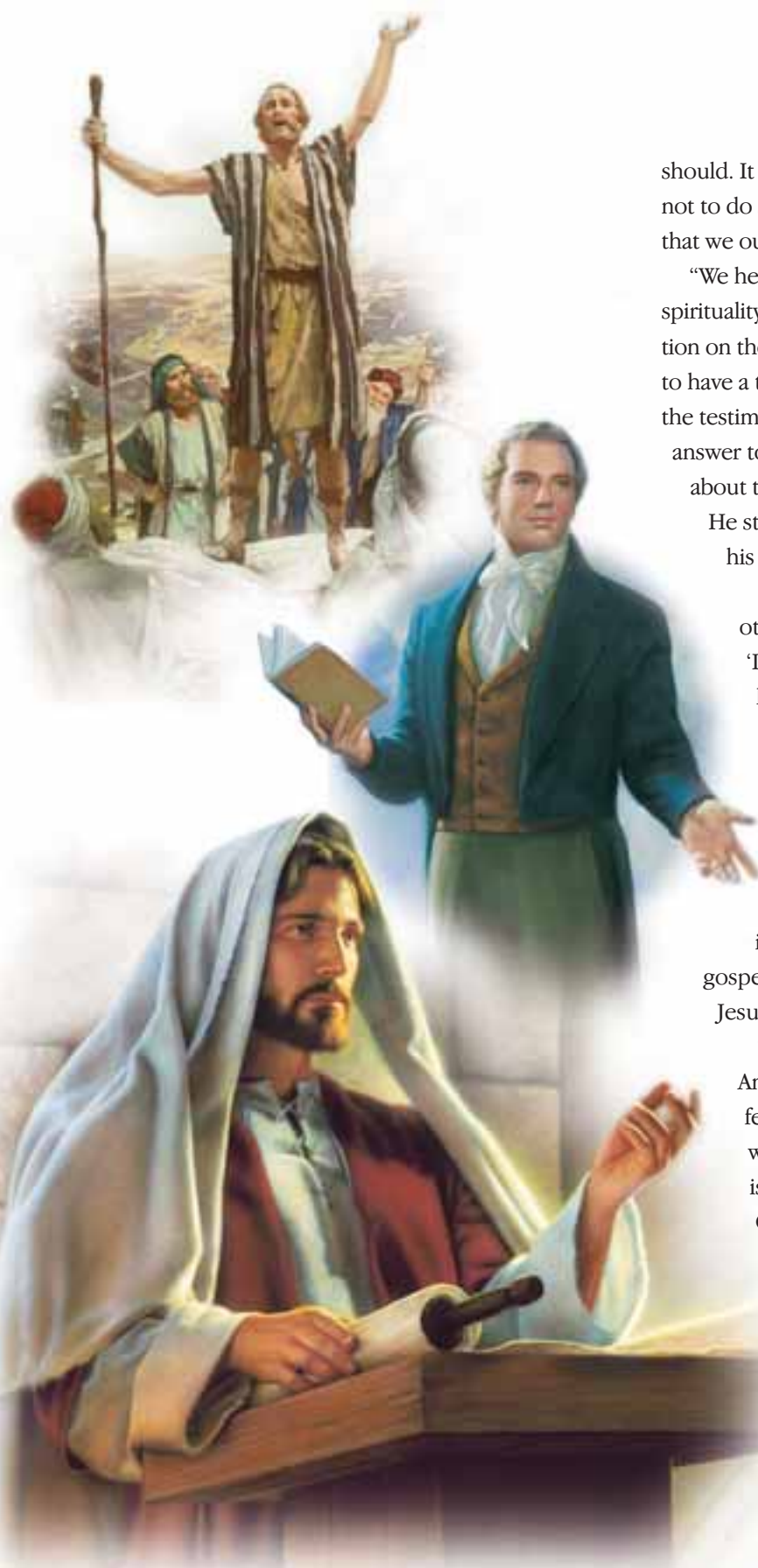
What a Testimony Is

A testimony is usually defined as knowledge or assurance of a truth that a person declares by the convincing power of the Holy Ghost. The Apostle Paul taught, “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 12:3). Because the things of God are known only by the power of the Spirit, they must be declared by the Spirit, and that means bearing testimony.

Because a testimony is personal, testimony bearing often begins with the pronoun *I*. (Parents, missionaries, and Church leaders may at times use *we*.) A testimony can be identified by the use of powerful verbs such as *know*, *testify*, *believe*, *certify*, *declare*, *affirm*, *bear witness*, *bear record*. Often it is a declaration of what you know, feel, experience, or believe, such as “We listened, we gazed, we admired!” (Joseph Smith—History 1:71, note). Generally speaking, a testimony is short, precise, and concise.

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, shared the following insight:

“I had an experience in the mission field that taught me much about testimony. In spite of the fact that all seemed to be under control, we were not progressing as we



should. It was not something we were doing that we ought not to do so much, I felt, as something we were not doing that we ought to be doing.

“We held a series of zone conferences to improve the spirituality in the mission. Rather than schedule instruction on the mechanics of missionary work, we determined to have a testimony meeting. In the last conference, in the testimony of one of the humble elders, I found the answer to the problem. There was something different about the brief testimony of this frightened new elder.

He stood for less than a minute, yet I learned from his expression what it was that was missing.

“The testimonies we’d heard from all the other missionaries went something like this: ‘I’m grateful to be in the mission field. I’ve learned a lot from it. I have a fine companion. I’ve learned a lot from him. I’m grateful for my parents. We had an interesting experience last week. We were out knocking on doors and . . .’ Then the missionary would relate an experience. His conclusion would be something like this: ‘I’m grateful to be in the mission field. I have a testimony of the gospel.’ And he would conclude ‘in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.’

“This young elder was different somehow. Anxious not to spend an extra second on his feet, he said simply, in hurried, frightened words, ‘I know that God lives. I know that Jesus is the Christ. I know that we have a prophet of God leading the Church. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.’

“This was a testimony. It was not just an experience nor an expression of gratitude. It was a declaration, a witness!

“Most of the elders had said ‘I have a testimony,’ but they had not declared it. This young elder had, in a very few words, delivered his testimony—direct, basic, and, as it turned out, powerful.

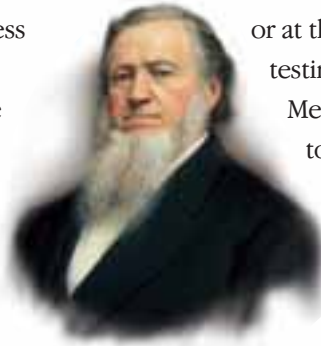
"I then knew what was wrong in the mission. We were telling stories, expressing gratitude, admitting that we had testimonies, but we were not bearing them."²

The First Presidency has emphasized the importance of brevity and conciseness when bearing testimony: "We are concerned that in some instances, members who desire to bear their testimonies in fast and testimony meeting do not have the opportunity to do so. Bishoprics are encouraged to help all people learn to express a brief, heartfelt testimony of the Savior, His teachings, and the Restoration, so that more members may have the opportunity to participate."³

What a Testimony Is Not

Sometimes we can learn much about a principle by identifying what it is not. I have found that a testimony is:

- Not an exhortation. Individuals who stand and exhort others in a fast and testimony meeting or even try to call others to repentance, even with the best of intentions, are usurping authority and are often offending others and disrupting the spirit of the meeting.
- Not an experience, although experiences may illustrate belief and conviction.
- Not an expression of gratitude or love, although these are often appropriately included in our testimony sharing.
- Not a public confession.
- Not a sermon or a talk on some doctrinal point, although someone may quote a scripture and then testify of it.
- Not a long explanation of *how* you know but rather *what* you know.
- Not merely saying the words "I have a testimony." It is not inappropriate to say this, but hopefully there is an expression following these words about the doctrines, truths, and principles of which you have a testimony.



Brigham Young said:
"When I saw a man without eloquence, . . . who could only just say, 'I know by the power of the Holy Ghost that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith is a prophet of the Lord,' [the] Holy Ghost proceeding from that individual illuminate[d] my understanding, and light, glory, and immortality [were] before me."

Bearing Testimony in Lessons and Talks

After teaching a lesson or giving a talk, a person should usually conclude the message with a formal testimony, the capstone to all that has been said. Full-time missionaries often insert short, concise testimonies following each key principle they are teaching and then conclude with a summary testimony of the key principles taught.

I express a caution to teachers in the classroom or at the pulpit not to overdo it when interspersing testimonies throughout their talks and lessons.

Members might not listen as intently by the Spirit to too-frequent testimonies, and investigators may be confused. Worse, they might perceive a testimony as some legal or judicial expression. Simply stated, we might make sacred things common, and then the impact of our testimony is lost. The Lord cautions, "That which cometh from above is sacred, and must be spoken with care, and by constraint of the Spirit" (D&C 63:64).

Illustrations of Testimony

Numerous illustrations of pure testimony appear in the scriptures. Alma knew that to reclaim his people he must bear pure testimony (see Alma 4:19). He tells the people *how* he knows (see Alma 5:45–46), then bears pure testimony of *what* he knows:

"I say unto you, that I know of myself that whatsoever I shall say unto you, concerning that which is to come, is true; and I say unto you, that I know that Jesus Christ shall come, yea, the Son, the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace, and mercy, and truth. And behold, it is he that cometh to take away the sins of the world, yea, the sins of every man who steadfastly believeth on his name" (Alma 5:48).

A powerful illustration of pure testimony comes from the account of the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon's vision of the three degrees of glory:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been

given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

“For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

“That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God” (D&C 76:22–24).

The Joseph Smith—History in the Pearl of Great Price is published in pamphlet form for missionary work with the title *The Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (item nos. 36081, 32667). In that account the Prophet declares in a simple, straightforward way, “I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it; at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation” (Joseph Smith—History 1:25).

We know that John the Baptist is bearing pure testimony when he uses the phrase *bear record*:

“And I, John, bear record that I beheld [the Savior’s] glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us. . . .

“And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son.

“And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father” (D&C 93:11, 15–16).

In some scriptures the Father or the Son bears testimony. For example, Nephi heard the testimony of God the Father, who



declared: “Yea, the words of my Beloved are true and faithful. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved” (2 Nephi 31:15).

The Savior testified of the Prophet Joseph Smith and of the translation of the Book of Mormon: “He has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true” (D&C 17:6).

The Savior testified of Himself: “I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 110:4).

I have great appreciation for the power of pure testimony. I continue to examine my own testimony bearing to keep it in line with correct principles taught by the scriptures and by latter-day prophets. I testify that there is a divine power accompanying a declared pure testimony. ■

NOTES

1. *Deseret News*, Feb. 9, 1854, 4; see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 315.
2. *Teach Ye Diligently*, rev. ed. (1991), 323–24.
3. First Presidency letter, May 2, 2002; see also M. Russell Ballard, “Pure Testimony,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 40–43.

Teachers should conclude lessons with a formal testimony, the capstone to all that has been said.



How Great Shall Be Your Joy



Heavenly Father loves us and wants us to do missionary and activation work in His way.

BY ELDER RODRIGO MYRRHA

Area Seventy
Brazil South Area

Section 18 of the Doctrine and Covenants teaches us that the Lord loves His children and desires that we work on behalf of their salvation. Each time I read this section, many experiences about the activation and retention of Church members come to my mind—experiences that remind me that the Lord will lead the work if we have faith in Him and put forth the required effort.

One of these experiences began a few years ago when I was assigned as a home teacher to a young man who had been raised in a faithful Latter-day Saint family. After he left home to attend school, he chose other paths. Month after month my home teaching companion and I visited him without success; it seemed he didn't even hear what we said to him. But when the tempests came and he was confused, not knowing what to do to resolve his problems, it was his home teachers he sought out.

At the time I was his stake president. He told me he remembered something his mother had taught him: "The Lord hears the prayers of those who sincerely seek Him." As he confided that he had returned to praying

and reading the scriptures, I saw with joy that the Lord had touched him.

I decided to follow up with him more closely, so I asked that he be assigned as my home teaching companion. Each month he and I visited four homes, and each month I prepared four different messages in an effort to strengthen my friend and help him in his return to gospel activity. Eventually he made the decision to repent, to faithfully attend his meetings, and to sincerely partake of the sacrament. The Lord's sacrifice was having an effect on his life.

For six months we visited a father who was the only member of the Church in his family. Despite our efforts and although we were always well received, we weren't having success in activating him or baptizing his wife and three children. We were then inspired to involve the children by picking them up on Sundays to take them to church. This became my companion's special responsibility.

Our efforts began to have an effect. The children loved being at church and were soon baptized. The whole ward worked to involve the parents, but it was still necessary for the Spirit of the Lord to touch their lives.

One time my companion, who had scarcely said a word during our monthly

visits, spoke up and bore his testimony in a very emotional way. He had experienced great difficulty in his life, and now he shared how marvelous it was to be in the arms of the Lord. His testimony was so sincere and powerful and the Spirit was so strong that all of us were touched. That same week the wife decided to hear the missionary discussions and was finally baptized. The husband became active again.

Today the family remains active and totally integrated in the ward, and they have been sealed in the Lord's temple. My companion continues to progress rapidly in the gospel. He married a wonderful young woman in the temple, and they now have two children. They are happy and contribute valuable service to our ward and to the Church.

Six people were converted to the gospel as a result of that experience. A collective miracle! I felt the joy described in the scriptures:

"And how great is his joy in the soul that repenteth!

"Wherefore, you are called to cry repentance unto this people.

"And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be

one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

"And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!" (D&C 18:13-16).

This experience taught me three essential principles:

1. The Lord is at the head of this work. He prepared the way. He is interested and directly involved in our missionary efforts.

2. The visits of home teachers and visiting teachers need to be consistent and well prepared. We need to take the Spirit of the Lord to the homes we visit. We need to gain the confidence of those we visit as well.

3. It is essential that we involve other people in the activation and conversion process. Ward or branch leaders can coordinate efforts with the ward or branch council and priesthood executive committee to help us accomplish our missionary objectives.

I testify that God is our Father. He loves us and wants us to do missionary and activation work in His way. We can then become powerful instruments in His hands for the salvation of His beloved children. ■



MONEY OR MISSION?

BY PATRICK GILL

I had my dream job, a new car, and everything I had always wanted. Why wasn't I happy?



Growing up, I was active in the Church. My parents were strong in their faith and encouraged me to do the right things. I believed the Church was true, but as I got older I found that it was easier to believe than to actually do the things I knew I should.

The topic of a mission came up often around my house. I wasn't sure if I wanted to go. I considered myself a typical teenager—I was really into skateboarding and listening to music, and I spent a lot of time with my friends. Giving up all of this to go on a mission seemed like a huge sacrifice.

By the time I was 18, though, I had decided to serve a mission. I graduated from high school and worked at several jobs, just waiting until I was old enough to go. My brother, who worked at a skateboard company, helped me get a part-time job at a shop close to home. It was my dream job, and everything went smoothly until the owner of the company mentioned to me that he needed a new manager. He said he would gladly give me the job if I were going to be around. I thanked him for the offer but told him I was planning to go on a mission.

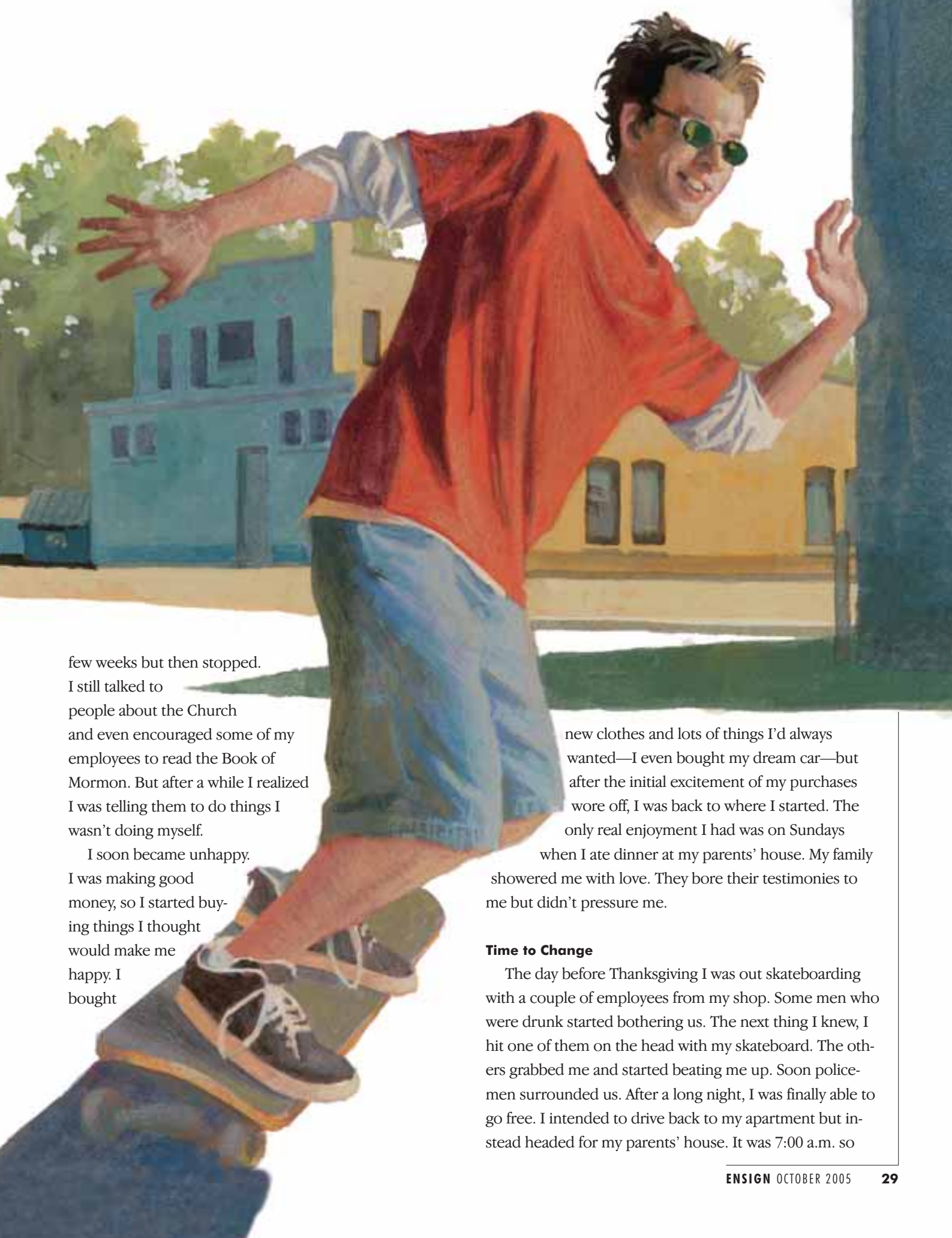
Later that night, I thought of all the things I could do

with the money I'd make as a manager. I could get my own apartment and a new car—anything I wanted! I decided to take the job.

The Way of the World

My parents were confused by this move. I told them I was just going to work at the skate shop until I could turn in my mission papers. My parents noticed a change in me, though, and finally my mom asked, "Are you still going on a mission?" All I could say was, "I don't know." After that, I got a new lecture every night. I tried to shrug them off, but I finally decided to move out of the house to escape my own guilt. When I told my parents, their hearts dropped. I was their last son, and I was going the way of the world.

Even though I had decided not to go on a mission, I had every intention of staying active in the Church. I soon found out I would have to work on Sundays, but I figured I could at least make it to sacrament meeting since my shift didn't start until 11:00 a.m. Throughout the week I worked 11-hour days, and trying to get up for a 9:00 a.m. Church meeting was a big task. I went to sacrament meeting for a



few weeks but then stopped. I still talked to people about the Church and even encouraged some of my employees to read the Book of Mormon. But after a while I realized I was telling them to do things I wasn't doing myself.

I soon became unhappy. I was making good money, so I started buying things I thought would make me happy. I bought

new clothes and lots of things I'd always wanted—I even bought my dream car—but after the initial excitement of my purchases wore off, I was back to where I started. The only real enjoyment I had was on Sundays when I ate dinner at my parents' house. My family showered me with love. They bore their testimonies to me but didn't pressure me.

Time to Change

The day before Thanksgiving I was out skateboarding with a couple of employees from my shop. Some men who were drunk started bothering us. The next thing I knew, I hit one of them on the head with my skateboard. The others grabbed me and started beating me up. Soon policemen surrounded us. After a long night, I was finally able to go free. I intended to drive back to my apartment but instead headed for my parents' house. It was 7:00 a.m. so



SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

As I was praying, I suddenly saw myself in missionary attire walking down a street in another country. I told myself it was time to prepare to serve the Lord.



"I would say, however, to those going on missions that they should study the Bible, Book of Mormon, Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and all our works, that they may become acquainted with the principles of our faith. I would also say to other young men who are not now going on missions, but who will probably have to go at some time in the future, that these things are of more importance to them than they realize at the present time. . . . I know that when young men are working around here, going to the canyon, working on the farm, going to the theatre, and so on, their minds are not much occupied with these things. But when they are called upon to take a part in the drama themselves, many of them will wish they had paid more attention to the instructions they have received, and had made themselves more familiar with the Bible, Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants."

President John Taylor (1808–87), Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor (2001), 72–73.

they were surprised to see me. I told them what had happened, and they were relieved that I was okay. I decided to pray and give thanks that nothing really serious had happened to me or to the man I had hit.

As I was praying, I suddenly saw myself in missionary attire walking down a street in another country. I finished my prayer but could not move for about 10 minutes. I finally stood up, and the first thing I did was take out my earrings. I told myself it was time to prepare to serve the Lord. I regretted all the bad decisions I had made and wished I had spent my time preparing to be a good representative of His Church.

I later found out that my whole family had fasted for me two weeks earlier. I am so grateful for the love my parents and family showed me during my time of rebellion. I am glad I prayed and realized that the Lord had other plans for me. I learned for myself that it is only through Him we can be happy, and I gratefully bore testimony of this to others as a missionary in the Brazil Belo Horizonte Mission. ■

Patrick Gill is a member of the Skyline Ward, Henderson Nevada Black Mountain Stake.

MYTHS ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS

BY ELDER ALEXANDER B. MORRISON
Of the Seventy

*Increasing our understanding
of mental illness helps us reach out
with love and compassion to those
who are suffering.*

In the Book of Mormon we read that the Nephites, who had been obedient to God's laws, "lived after the manner of happiness" (2 Nephi 5:27). What a wonderful and insightful thought: if we are obedient and follow God's commandments, we will be happy.

It is important to understand, however, that happiness does not imply the absence of adversity. Every individual experiences temptation, opposition, and trials that test faith and endurance: "For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things" (2 Nephi 2:11).

Among the most painful trials an individual or family can face is that of mental illness. By mental illness I do not mean the temporary social and emotional concerns experienced as part of the normal wear and tear of living. Rather, I



Myth: People who are mentally ill just lack willpower.

Fact: The mentally ill cannot heal themselves simply through an exercise of will. They need help, encouragement, and love from others as they seek appropriate treatment.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT CASEY, POSED BY MODELS



mean a disorder that causes mild to severe disturbances in thinking and behavior. If such disturbances are sufficiently severe and of sufficient duration, they may significantly impair a person's ability to cope with life's ordinary demands. These illnesses may even threaten life itself, as in severe depression, or be so debilitating that the sufferer is unable to function effectively.

Though medical science has made marvelous progress in the past century in solving some of the mysteries of the brain, the truth is that knowledge in this complex area is still in its infancy. We still do not know exactly how the brain works nor exactly how and why parts of it may malfunction. One thing is certain, however: no individual, family, or group is immune from the effects of mental illness. Furthermore, we are learning that many mental illnesses result from chemical disorders in the brain, just as diabetes results from a chemical disorder in the pancreas. Why, then, is there still such misunderstanding and fear surrounding mental illness?

Myths and Misconceptions

Myths and misconceptions about mental illness unfortunately are found among Latter-day Saints just as they are in the general public.



Myth:
Someone is to blame for mental illness.

Fact: *Mental illness results from disease processes that are not caused by the actions of others. Blaming others only takes energy that would be better spent in becoming educated about the condition.*

These harmful attitudes include the following:

1. *All mental illness is caused by sin.* Make no mistake about it—sin, the deliberate breaking of God's commandments, does indeed result in behavior that is hurtful to self and to others. And for every transgression there must be a consequence or punishment. The demands of justice are inexorable, unless the person concerned invokes the power of the mercy provided by Christ's Atonement by repenting of the sin and recognizing Christ as his Savior.

The power of sin to harrow up the soul is vividly exemplified by the words of repentant Alma: "I was racked with eternal torment, for my soul was harrowed up to the greatest degree and racked with all my sins. . . . I was tormented with the pains of hell. . . . The very thought of coming into

the presence of my God did rack my soul with inexpressible horror. Oh, thought I, that I could be banished and become extinct both soul and body” (Alma 36:12–15).

Those who, like Alma, experience sorrow during the repentance process are not mentally ill. If their sins are serious, they do require confession and counseling at the hands of their bishop. As part of his calling, each bishop receives special powers of discernment and wisdom. No mental health professional, regardless of his or her skill, can ever replace the role of a faithful bishop as he is guided by the Holy Ghost in assisting Church members to work through the pain, remorse, and depression associated with sin. That being said, however, it must be emphasized that in many instances aberrant thoughts, actions, and feelings result from mental illness and not from sin. They come from disease, not transgression. They are not God’s way of punishing the sinner. To assume they are is not only overly simplistic but also contrary to the teachings of the Church.

The truth is that many faithful Latter-day Saints who live the commandments and honor their covenants experience struggles with mental illness or are required to deal with the intense pain and suffering of morally righteous but mentally ill family members. Their burdens—and they are many—can be lifted only by love, understanding, and acceptance.

2. Someone is to blame for mental illness. It is a common human tendency to blame others or oneself for whatever goes wrong in life. Many victims of mental illness wear themselves out emotionally by futile attempts to remember something they, their parents, or someone else might have done that resulted in their suffering. Some blame their problem on demonic possession. While there is no doubt that such has occurred, let us take care not to give the devil credit for everything that goes awry in the world! Generally speaking, the mentally ill do not need exorcism; they require treatment from skilled health-care providers and love, care, and support from everyone else.

Most often, victims blame themselves. Many seem unable to rid themselves of terrible though undefined feelings that somehow, some way, they are the cause of their own pain—even when they are not. Parents, spouses, or other family members also often harrow up their minds trying futilely to determine where they went wrong. They pray over and over again for forgiveness when there is no

evidence that they have anything of note to be forgiven of. Of course, in the vast majority of instances none of this works, for the simple reason that the victim’s thoughts and behavior result from disease processes which are not caused by the actions of others, including God.

Ascribing blame for mental illness causes unnecessary suffering for all concerned and takes time and energy which would better be used to increase understanding of what actually is happening—to get a complete assessment and proper diagnosis of the illness involved, to understand the causes, to get proper medication and learn behavioral and cognitive techniques that are part of the healing process. As victims, loved ones, and all the rest of us increase our understanding, then patience, forgiveness, and empathy will replace denial, anger, and rejection.



The Lord can provide comfort and strength to those who turn to Him. He has said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; . . . and ye shall find rest.”

3. All that people with mental illness need is a priesthood blessing. I am a great advocate of priesthood blessings. I know, from much personal experience, that they do inestimable good. I know too that

final and complete healing of mental illness or any other disease comes through faith in Jesus Christ. In any and all circumstances, in sickness and in health, in good times and bad, our lives will improve and become richer and more peaceful as we turn to Him. “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,” He said. “. . . Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly

in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30). He and only He has the healing balm of Gilead needed by all of God’s children.

We must understand, however, without in any way denigrating the unique role of priesthood blessings, that ecclesiastical leaders are spiritual leaders and not mental health professionals. Most of them lack the professional skills and training to deal effectively with deep-seated mental illnesses and are well advised to seek competent professional assistance for those in their charge who are in need of it. Remember that God has given us wondrous knowledge and technology that can help us overcome grievous problems such as mental illness. Just as we would not hesitate to consult a physician about medical problems such as cancer, heart disease, or diabetes, so too we should not hesitate to obtain medical and other appropriate professional assistance in dealing with mental illness. When such assistance is sought, be careful to ensure, insofar as possible, that the health professional concerned follows practices and procedures which are compatible with gospel principles.



Myth: All those with mental illness are dangerous and should be locked up. Fact: Most people with mental illness are not violent. With proper treatment, they can live productive lives and contribute to their communities.

4. *Mentally ill persons just lack willpower.* There are some who mistakenly believe that the mentally ill just need to “snap out of it, show a little backbone, and get on with life.” Those who believe that way display a grievous lack of knowledge and compassion. The fact is that seriously mentally ill persons simply cannot, through an exercise of will, get out of the predicament they are in. They need help, encouragement, understanding, and love. Anyone who has ever witnessed the well-nigh unbearable pain of a severe panic attack knows full well that nobody would suffer that way if all that was needed was to show a little willpower. No one who has witnessed the almost indescribable sadness of a severely depressed person who perhaps can’t even get out of bed, who cries all day or

retreats into hopeless apathy, or who tries to kill himself would ever think for a moment that mental illness is just a problem of willpower. We don't say to persons with heart disease or cancer, "Just grow up and get over it." Neither should we treat the mentally ill in such an uncompassionate and unhelpful way.

5. *All mentally ill persons are dangerous and should be locked up.* Sensational and incomplete media reports have conjured up stereotypical portrayals of the mentally ill as crazed and violent lunatics, dangerous to others as well as themselves. The truth is that the vast majority of people with mental illness are not violent, and the great majority of crimes of violence are not committed by persons who are mentally ill.¹

Furthermore, over the past 40 years, as effective medications for mental illness have become available and effective support programs have been developed, it has been shown that most mentally ill people—like those with physical illnesses—can live productive lives in their communities. They do not need to be locked up. Like everyone else, most mentally ill persons receiving proper treatment have the potential to work at any level in any profession, depending solely on their abilities, talents, experience, and motivation.

6. *Mental illness doesn't strike children and young people.* As noted by the National Institute of Mental Health, the truth is that an estimated 10 percent of children in the United States suffer from a mental health disorder that disrupts their functioning at home, in school, or in the community.² The majority of children who kill themselves are profoundly depressed, and most parents did not recognize that depression until it was too late. I reiterate: no one is immune to mental illness.

7. *Whatever the cause, mental illness is untreatable.* As mentioned, during the past 40 years numerous medications have been developed by the multinational pharmaceutical industry. These products have proven of inestimable worth to millions. They are not perfect, nor do they work effectively in every instance—far from it, unfortunately. But we are getting closer to the day when physicians will have available effective drugs which are specific in correcting the biochemical lesions concerned, without the side effects which too often limit the effectiveness of medications today.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions, personal reflection, or teaching the gospel in a variety of settings.

1. Use Elder Morrison's myths as a true/false quiz for your family. After each myth is read, talk about why it is false using Elder Morrison's explanations.

2. Ask family members to imagine themselves in a deep, dark, narrow hole with no ladder or tools to help them climb out. What are the most important things they would request from a rescuer? Liken the hole to mental illness and invite family members to glean from the article the most important tools a sufferer would need to be "rescued."

I have no doubt that such developments, which we are already beginning to see, will result in striking advances in the treatment of mental illness over the next decade.



Let Us Help Those in Pain

I hope these few thoughts about some of the myths surrounding mental illness can help us build understanding and rid ourselves of stigma and bias about this impor-

As we increase our understanding of mental illness, we are better able to reach out in compassion and love to those who are suffering.

tant problem. With knowledge and understanding come love, acceptance, empathy, and enfoldment. May God bless us to love all His children, to abandon none, and to lift up and strengthen those suffering and in pain. ■

Elder Alexander B. Morrison served as a member of the Seventy from 1987 to 2000.

NOTES

1. See Aaron Levin, "Violence and Mental Illness: Media Keep Myths Alive," *Psychiatric News*, May 4, 2001, 10.
2. See www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/childmenu.cfm.

Rembrandt

The Biblical Etchings

BY ROBERT O. DAVIS

Senior Curator,
Museum of Church History and Art

Born in 1606 in the Netherlands, Rembrandt van Rijn is regarded as one of the greatest of the Old Masters. His skill with oils is well known; however, it is in his etchings that we isolate his skills as a master draftsman. Rembrandt's etchings reveal his understanding of the Bible, his faith in God, and his compassion for the human condition. Of his some 1,500 authenticated pieces, one-third are of Bible subjects.

Portraying truth became his primary objective. He sought to portray the scriptures in all their depth, without relying on sectarian traditions.



*Self-Portrait
Leaning on a Stone Sill*
Facsimile, signed
"Rembrandt f. 1639"
Courtesy of Museum
of Art, Brigham Young
University

At his death in 1669, an inventory of his holdings was short. It included only one book—his well-worn Dutch Bible. On his easel stood an unfinished painting of a biblical scene, *Simeon and the Christ Child in the Temple*.

The Church recently acquired 17 of Rembrandt's 70 biblical etchings. Several are shown here. They are now featured together with many other Rembrandt etchings of the scriptures in an exhibit that will run through the end of December 2005 at the Museum of Church History and Art. To view the current exhibit online, visit

www.lds.org/churchhistory/museum/exhibits/current.

All images courtesy of the Museum of Church History and Art, except as noted.



Christ and the Woman of Samaria
See John 4:10, 14
Signed "Rembrandt f. 1658"
Actual size 5" x 6.38"



Christ Ministering
See Matthew 19:13–14
Unsigned, about 1640–49
Actual size 10.75" x 15.3"

Joseph Telling His Dreams
See Genesis 37:5, 9–11
Signed "Rembrandt f. 1638"
Actual size 4.38" x 3"



Peter and John at the Temple Gate
See Acts 3:1–2
Signed "Rembrandt f. 1659"
Actual size 5.25" x 8.38"



Return of the Prodigal Son
See Luke 15:18–20
Signed "Rembrandt f. 1636"
Actual size 6.25" x 5.38"



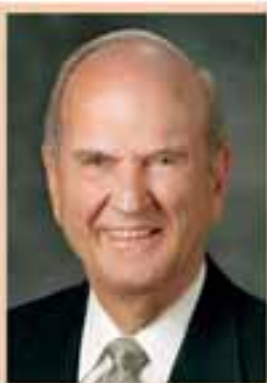
Judas, Pharisees in the Temple
See Matthew 27:3–5
Signed "Rembrandt f. 1648"
Actual size 9" x 5.3"



Presentation in the Temple
See Luke 2:27, 34
Unsigned, about 1639
Actual size 8.5" x 11.38"

KEYS of the PRIESTHOOD

The ninth in a series of articles about the priesthood and its purposes.



Keys are conferred by the laying on of hands by one who holds proper authority and whose authority is known to the Church.

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

Keyes are important and valuable. Most of us carry keys in pockets or purses wherever we go. Other keys are not only important and valuable; they are precious, powerful, and invisible! They have eternal significance. They are the keys of the priesthood.¹

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught “the fundamental principles, government, and doctrine of the Church are vested in the keys of the kingdom.”² Those keys refer to the right to preside over priesthood authority in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Keys carry the right to preside over a local organization of the Church, such as a stake, a ward or branch, a mission or district, a priesthood quorum, or a temple. Keys are conferred by the laying on of hands by one who holds proper authority and whose authority is known to the Church.³

All the keys of the kingdom of God on earth are held by members of the First Presidency and members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The President of the Church—the senior Apostle—presides over the entire Church and is the only person on earth who exercises all the keys in their fullness.⁴ He delegates authority by conferring or authorizing the conferral of keys upon other bearers of the priesthood in their specific offices and callings.⁵

Priesthood is the authority of God delegated to man to minister for the salvation of men. “The power of directing these labors constitutes the keys of the Priesthood.”⁶ We distinguish between holding the priesthood and holding keys of the priesthood. When an individual is given keys, he does not receive additional priesthood. What he has is the right to direct the work of the priesthood.

Preparation and Permission

To serve well as one who bears the holy priesthood, one needs both preparation and permission. May I relate a personal experience? Prior to my call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, I served as a medical doctor and surgeon. I had earned two doctor’s degrees. I had been certified by two specialty boards. That long preparation had consumed many years, yet the education itself did not allow me to serve the public. Why? Because I needed legal permission.

That could be granted only by authorities of the state government and directing boards of hospitals in which I desired to work. Once officials holding proper authority granted me a license and permission, then I could care for patients who needed surgical relief from their ailments. After legal administrators had exercised their keys, then I could render the service for which I had been prepared.



In return, I was accountable to those who granted those privileges. I was required to obey legal and ethical expectations and never abuse the power entrusted to me.

Just as the important steps of preparation and permission pertain to medicine (and other professions), they also relate to priesthood service. Those who hold the priesthood—Aaronic and Melchizedek—have authority to render priesthood service. As agents of the Lord, they have the right to perform sacred ordinances of the gospel. Keys authorize the performance of that service.

A distinction also exists between priesthood authority and priesthood power. When ordained to an office in the priesthood, one is granted authority. But power comes from exercising that authority in righteousness.⁷ Thus, although priesthood holders have authority, they must prepare themselves to have power. That they do through making themselves personally worthy and through learning and practicing the duties and doctrines of the priesthood.

Why do these things matter? Why is the power to act in the name of God so important? Why is it important that bearers of the priesthood prepare to serve with power? Because the priesthood is of eternal significance. The priesthood benefits every man, woman, and child who now lives, who has lived, and who yet will live upon the earth. Those who hold the priesthood need to prepare in order to make the blessings of priesthood power readily available to all of God's children. Those who hold priesthood keys need to understand how to use those keys wisely and righteously.⁸

History of Priesthood Keys

Keys and authority of the priesthood can be traced through three periods of history: in ancient days, during the Lord's mortal ministry, and in modern times.

Period One: Ancient Days. Priesthood authority was known anciently, even before creation of the earth. The



Prophet Joseph Smith declared, “The Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity.”⁹ President Brigham Young (1801–77) added that the priesthood “is the law by which the worlds are, were, and will continue for ever and ever.”¹⁰

In a premortal realm we existed as spirit children of God. Abraham was one of us. He was told that he was among those chosen before birth to be “rulers” (spiritual leaders).¹¹ Scriptures also relate that the Lord God fore-ordained after His holy order priests who were prepared from the foundation of the world according to His fore-knowledge. Thus, our callings to bear the holy priesthood were portended even before we were born.¹²

Adam received priesthood authority before the world was formed.¹³ We know that “the Priesthood was first given to Adam; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation.”¹⁴ The priesthood was conferred through generations from Adam to Moses “through the lineage of their fathers.”¹⁵ Referring to prophets of Old Testament times, the Prophet Joseph Smith declared that “all the prophets had the Melchizedek Priesthood.”¹⁶

Period Two: The Lord’s Mortal Ministry. During His mortal ministry Jesus conferred priesthood upon His Twelve Apostles and revealed the principle of priesthood keys. To His Apostle Peter the Savior said, “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt

bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”¹⁷ The Lord also promised these keys to James and John.¹⁸

Within a week of that promise, Jesus took Peter, James, and John to a high mountain. There, under the direction of the Lord, keys of the priesthood were bestowed upon those Apostles by Moses and Elijah (also known as Elias).¹⁹

The Master reminded His disciples of the source of their authority: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you.”²⁰

Not long thereafter, the Savior was crucified. Even before the early Apostles completed their labors, the Apostasy began. It occurred, as prophesied, when teachings of men with priesthood keys were rejected and sacred ordinances were defiled.²¹

Period Three: Modern Times. The restoration of priesthood keys is one of the many miracles of this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.²² As the Prophet taught, “The keys have to be brought from heaven whenever the Gospel is sent.”²³ In 1820 our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith. In May 1829 John the Baptist conferred the Aaronic Priesthood upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.²⁴ In so doing, he conferred “the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.”²⁵ Shortly thereafter

the Prophet and his associate received the Melchizedek Priesthood under the hands of Peter, James, and John.²⁶ Joseph Smith had keys to organize the Church, send missionaries, and ordain priesthood leaders.

Later, the Lord spoke to Joseph and Oliver of others to whom additional specific keys of the priesthood had been committed.²⁷ Each, in turn, conferred these keys upon Joseph and Oliver:

- Moses delivered the keys of the gathering of Israel and the leading of the ten tribes;²⁸
- Elias, the keys of the Abrahamic covenant;²⁹
- And Elijah, the keys of the sealing authority.³⁰

Joseph Smith conferred those restored priesthood keys upon all of the Apostles called in his day.³¹ In turn, these keys have been transferred through the generations to the present leaders of the Church. Today, the President of the Church actively holds every key held by “all those who have received a dispensation at any time from the beginning of the creation.”³²

A sacred moment of my life occurred on April 12, 1984, when the First Presidency and members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles laid their hands upon my head. As had been done for others before me, all the keys of the priesthood were conferred. Like each member of the Quorum of the Twelve, I hold all the keys of the priesthood as restored in these latter days, but some keys are not used unless specifically directed by the senior Apostle or upon his death. All of us in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles feel the weight of responsibility and the burden of timeless trust. We know the keys we hold have been restored “for the last days and for the last time.”³³

Obligations and Accountability

When hands are laid upon one’s head to be ordained or set apart, both the conveyor and the recipient of that priesthood authority bear obligations and accountability. Let me illustrate. Suppose you own keys to something of value in your life—a vehicle, a home, or a fine instrument. If you loan those keys to another with the intent that he or she use your property, you have certain obligations. You as the lender have a duty toward your borrower’s success. So you teach and train adequately to protect the user and, at the same time, safeguard your own valuable property. The receiver also has obligations. He or she must know applicable laws and obey them, take care of your property, and report back on how well he or she has used it.

The same concepts apply to keys of the priesthood. Temple presidents, mission presidents, stake presidents, district presidents, bishops, branch presidents, and quorum presidents hold priesthood keys of presidency. Their keys control the power of their unit of the Church. That the mission of the Church be accomplished, those leaders not only call and release, but they also train and hold accountable those whom they call. Thus, members who receive priesthood ordinations or callings to serve in the Church have obligations of obedience and accountability.

Every priesthood quorum has a president, whether it is a quorum of deacons, teachers, priests, elders, or high priests. Each president holds keys of authority. Quorum activities and opportunities for service are authorized by the president who holds those keys. Although a quorum president holds keys, his counselors do not. Auxiliary presidents do not hold keys. Counselors and auxiliary presidents serve on assignment from one holding

The priesthood was conferred in ancient days “through the lineage of their fathers.”



keys who, in turn, has delegated authority for each of them to act.

When one is released from his calling in the priesthood, if keys have been conferred, those keys are relinquished, to be given by proper authority to the new leader. When a bishop is released, for example, his priesthood ordination to the office of bishop remains, but his priesthood keys to serve as the bishop of the ward are conferred upon the new bishop.

Revelation, Loyalty, and the Privilege of Service

Those who receive the Melchizedek Priesthood are under solemn oath and covenant to “live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.”³⁴ By so doing, one becomes worthy to receive personal revelation.

Loyalty too is vital to receiving power in one’s priesthood. Loyalty to him who holds the keys to call and to release will foster unity, and unity is essential to success.³⁵ The Lord so explained when He said, “If ye are not one ye are not mine,”³⁶ and “Israel shall be saved in mine own due time; and by the keys which I have given shall they be led.”³⁷

We need to be reminded and warned that the privilege of priesthood service, if abused, may be withdrawn. That is not difficult to understand. The same caution applies in secular activity. If one were to drive another’s automobile recklessly, future permission from the owner would likely be refused. So it is with priesthood authority. If it is abused, “the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.”³⁸

Each bearer of the holy priesthood should feel deeply grateful for that incomparable privilege. It is humbling to know that each of us was foreordained from the foundation of the world for the responsibility we now have.³⁹

Bishops hold priesthood keys of presidency. They not only call and release, but they also train and hold accountable those whom they call.

May we be true to the trust the Savior has given to those who bear His holy priesthood and hold its sacred keys. I pray that we may use them wisely and precisely as the Lord would have us do. ■

NOTES

1. See Russell M. Nelson, “Keys of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 36–39.
2. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 21.
3. See D&C 42:11.
4. See D&C 132:7.
5. See D&C 107:8–9, 91–92; 124:123.
6. Joseph F. Smith, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 141.
7. See Russell M. Nelson, “Personal Priesthood Responsibility,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 44.
8. Information regarding priesthood keys is summarized in *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* (1998), 161.
9. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 157.
10. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 125.
11. See Abraham 3:23.
12. See Alma 13:1–5.
13. See *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 157, 167–68; see also D&C 78:16.
14. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 157.
15. D&C 84:15; see also D&C 84:6–17; 107:41–57.
16. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 181.
17. Matthew 16:19; see also D&C 128:10.
18. See D&C 7:7.
19. See Matthew 17:1–5; see also *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 158.
20. John 15:16; see also D&C 7:7.
21. Restoration scripture carries a similar prophecy and promise: “If my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place” (D&C 124:45).
22. See D&C 27:13; 128:18, 20–21.
23. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 157.
24. See D&C 13; 27:8; Joseph Smith—History 1:69, 72.
25. D&C 13:1; 107:20; Joseph Smith—History 1:69; see also D&C 129.
26. See D&C 27:12–13.
27. See D&C 27:6–13. Moroni also held keys for the Book of Mormon (see D&C 27:5).
28. See D&C 110:11.
29. See D&C 110:12; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (1954–56), 3:126–27.
30. See D&C 27:9; 110:13–16; see also D&C 128:17–18, 21; 132:7, 19.
31. See *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:154–56.
32. D&C 112:31; see also v. 30.
33. D&C 112:30.
34. D&C 84:44.
35. See D&C 124:45–46.
36. D&C 38:27.
37. D&C 35:25.
38. D&C 121:37.
39. See Alma 13:1–5.

Eternal Marriage Begins in Mortality

BY BRENT A. BARLOW
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*Our marriages must thrive
in this life if we are to qualify
for eternal blessings.*



In modern society, divorce has become an increasingly popular solution to marital difficulties. While we know the blessings of marriage can be sealed upon us for eternity through temple covenants, the marriage must thrive in mortality if we are to qualify for those blessings. Sadly, some Latter-day Saints are surrendering and ending their marriages rather than working through their difficulties.

TEMPLE PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND; INSET BY DENNIS GAUNT

Since ancient times apostles and prophets have confirmed the importance of marriage as the basis of civilization.

PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



Circumstances may dictate that a few marriages must end, but many couples can and should seek other solutions. Research shows that many couples who work through their difficulties and do everything reasonably possible to avoid divorce will eventually achieve happy and successful marriages—and prevent the hardships and consequences that divorce often creates for both adults and children.

The purpose of this article is to give hope and encouragement to those whose marriages seem to be failing, who are considering divorce. Couples who try to salvage their relationship often find that after the troubles are resolved their marriage is once again a happy, loving one—the kind of relationship they want to take with them into the eternities.

Current Trends

It is currently projected that approximately 50 percent of married couples in the United States will divorce before either the husband or wife dies. The divorce rate for couples in second marriages is even higher, approaching 60 percent.¹ A significant number of married couples in the United States also give divorce serious consideration but then decide to stay married.

These trends in society do not simply bypass Latter-day Saint couples. Indeed, our leaders frequently express concern over the troubles that plague LDS marriages. For instance, President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: “I have witnessed much of the best and much of the worst in marriage. Every week I have the responsibility of acting on

requests for cancellation of temple sealings. Divorce has become a very common phenomenon throughout the world. . . . I am grateful to be able to say that divorce is much less frequent with those married in the temple. But even among these there is far more divorce than there should be.”²

God “Hateth Putting Away”

An interesting scriptural passage about marriage and divorce recorded several thousand years ago has contemporary significance. In ancient times the Lord condemned the men of Israel for abandoning spouses through divorce. About 430 B.C. the prophet Malachi declared:

“Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. . . . Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.”

Then comes this insight and warning: “For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away [or divorce]” (Malachi 2:14–16).

Notice that the scripture does not say that God hates divorced people. But He likely does hate what divorce can and often does to people. Why?

Teachings on Divorce

Before discussing many of the consequences of divorce, let’s first note that divorce is warranted in a few instances.

The Savior noted that divorce may be justified when sexual unfaithfulness had occurred (see Matthew 19:9).

President Hinckley has taught: “There may be now and again a legitimate cause for divorce. I am not one to say that it is never justified. But I say without hesitation that this plague among us, which seems to be growing everywhere, is not of God, but rather is the work of the adversary of righteousness and peace and truth.”³

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has similarly observed: “What, then, might be ‘just cause’ for breaking the covenants of marriage? . . . In my opinion, ‘just cause’ should be nothing less serious than a prolonged and apparently irredeemable relationship which is destructive of a person’s dignity as a human being.”⁴

While noting the importance of marriage and the disruption of divorce, we should also offer hope and encouragement to Latter-day Saints and others who have chosen to divorce, and in some cases rightfully so.

It has been estimated that about 30 percent of divorces in the United States result from physical and mental abuse, excessive conflict, or other serious events.⁵ But what about the other 70 percent? Why should these couples work at reconciliation? What are the consequences of divorce?

Why Marriage Matters

In 2002 the Institute for American Values published a report titled *Why Marriage Matters: Twenty-One Conclusions from the Social Sciences* (see sidebar, next page). This report summarized the findings of more than a dozen family scholars and included over 93 citations from research and published articles.

And what was the report’s fundamental conclusion? “Marriage is an important social good, associated with an impressively broad array of positive outcomes for children and adults alike.”

The accompanying outline of the report’s 21 reasons why marriage matters is divided into five major categories.

These findings affirm that a stable marriage has

significance for men, women, and children. They give additional insights into why, as Latter-day Saints are taught, “marriage is ordained of God” (D&C 49:15). Couples contemplating divorce should seriously consider the possible consequences. One contemporary therapist, lecturer, and author, Michele Weiner-Davis, has written:

“The decision to divorce or remain together to work things out is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. It is crucial for those considering divorce to anticipate what lies ahead in order to make informed decisions. Too often the fallout from divorce is far more devastating than many people realize when contemplating the move.”⁶

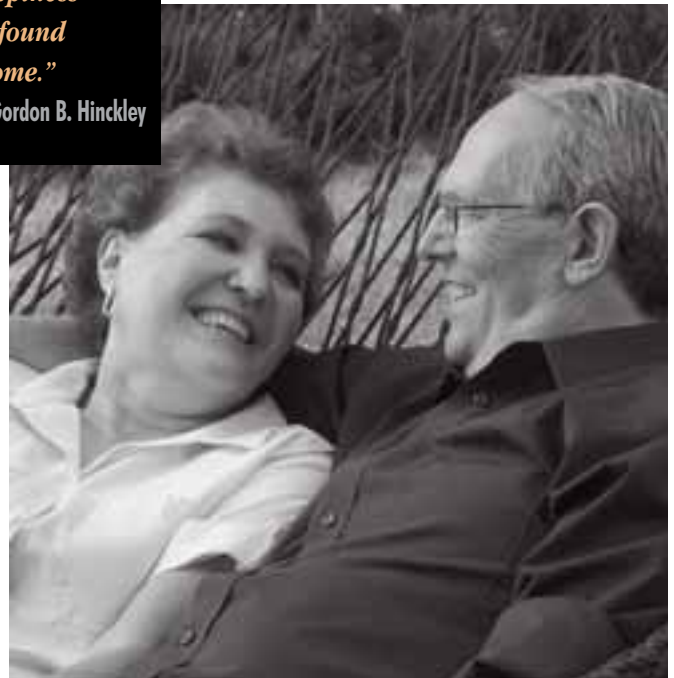
The Big Bounce Back

One more reason for troubled married couples to avoid divorce where possible is noted in another documented trend: many married couples recover from marital distress.

Researchers have asked this question:

“How many unhappy couples turn their marriages around? The truth is shocking: 86 percent of unhappily married people

You will know
no greater
happiness
than that found
in your home.”
—President Gordon B. Hinckley



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

SUMMARY FROM *WHY MARRIAGE MATTERS: TWENTY-ONE CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCES*

Family

1. Marriage increases the likelihood that fathers have good relationships with their children.
2. Cohabitation is not the functional equivalent of marriage.
3. Growing up outside an intact marriage increases the likelihood that children will themselves divorce or become unwed parents.
4. Marriage is a virtually universal human institution.

Economics

5. Divorce and unmarried childbearing increase poverty for both children and mothers.
6. Married couples seem to build more wealth than singles or cohabiting couples.
7. Married men earn more money than do single men with similar education and job histories.
8. Parental divorce (or failure to marry) appears to increase children's risk of school failure.
9. Parental divorce reduces the likelihood that children will graduate from college and achieve high-status jobs.

Physical Health and Longevity

10. Children who live with their own two married parents enjoy better physical health, on average, than do children in other family forms.
11. Parental marriage is associated with a sharply lower risk of infant mortality.
12. Marriage is associated with reduced rates of alcohol and substance abuse for both adults and teenage children.
13. Married people, especially married men, have longer life



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY, MAY NOT BE COPIED

T*he majority of those who said their marriage was unhappy in the late '80s and stayed married said their marriage was either "very happy" or "quite happy" when interviewed again in the early 1990s.*

who stick it out find that, five years later, their marriages are happier, according to an analysis of the National Survey of Families and Households. . . . Most say they've become very happy indeed. In fact, nearly three-fifths of those who said their marriage was unhappy in the late '80s and who stayed married rated this same marriage as either 'very happy' or 'quite happy' when interviewed again in the early 1990s."

The same researchers concluded:

"Permanent marital unhappiness is surprisingly rare among couples who stick it out. Five years later, just 15 percent of those who initially said they were very unhappily married (and who stayed married) ranked their marriage as not [happy] at all."⁷

An Exalting Relationship

Since ancient times apostles and prophets have confirmed the importance of marital relationships in society. President Hinckley has stated, "God-sanctioned marriage between a man and a woman has been the basis of civilization for thousands of years."⁸

Marriage is also the basis of great joy and happiness in life. "The Lord has ordained that we should marry," said President Hinckley, "that we shall live together in love and peace and harmony. . . .

"I am satisfied that if we would look for the virtues in one another and not the vices, there would be much more of happiness in the homes of our people. There would be far less of divorce, much less of infidelity, much less of anger and rancor and quarreling. There would be more of forgiveness, more of love, more of peace, more of happiness. This is as the Lord would have it. . . .

"You will know no greater happiness than that found in your home. . . . The truest mark of your success in life will be the quality of your marriage."⁹

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, summed up what we should feel toward marriage by saying: "Eternal love, eternal marriage, eternal increase! This ideal, which is new to many, when thoughtfully considered, can keep a marriage strong

expectancies than do otherwise similar singles.

14. Marriage is associated with better health and lower rates of injury, illness, and disability for both men and women.

Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being

15. Children whose parents divorce have higher rates of psychological distress and mental illness.

16. Divorce appears significantly to increase the risk of suicide among both adults and their adolescent children.

17. Married mothers have lower rates of depression than do single or cohabiting mothers.

Crime and Domestic Violence

18. Boys raised in single-parent families are more likely to engage in delinquent and criminal behavior.

19. Marriage appears to reduce the risk that adults will be either perpetrators or victims of crime.

20. Married women appear to have a lower risk of experiencing domestic violence than do cohabiting or dating women.

21. A child who is not living with his or her own two married parents is at greater risk of child abuse.

Project cosponsored by Center of the American Experiment; the Coalition for Marriage, Family, and Couples Education; and the Institute for American Values. See online report in archives, Feb. 14, 2002, at <http://www.americanvalues.org>.

For more information on this topic, please see: Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Women in Our Lives," Ensign, Nov. 2004, 82–85; Spencer W. Kimball, "Oneness in Marriage," Ensign, Oct. 2002, 40–45; Gordon B. Hinckley, "What God Hath Joined Together," Ensign, May 1991, 71–74. These magazine articles are also available at www.lds.org under Gospel Library, Church Publications, Magazines. See also the author's article "Marriage Crossroads: Why Divorce Is Often Not the Best Option" at www.utahmarriage.org.

No relationship has more potential to exalt a man and a woman than the marriage covenant. . . . I thank God for marriage."

—President Boyd K. Packer

and safe. No relationship has more potential to exalt a man and a woman than the marriage covenant. No obligation in society or in the Church supersedes it in importance.

"I thank God for marriage. I thank God for temples. I thank God for the glorious sealing power, that power which transcends all that we have been given, through which our marriages may become eternal."¹⁰ ■

Brent A. Barlow is a member of the Canyon View Eighth Ward, Orem Utah Canyon View Stake.

NOTES

1. David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, *The State of Our Unions: The Social Health of Marriage in America* (1999), 23.
2. "Loyalty," *Ensign*, May 2003, 59.
3. "What God Hath Joined Together," *Ensign*, May 1991, 74.
4. "Father, Come Home," *Ensign*, May 1993, 36.
5. Paul R. Amato and Alan A. Booth, *A Generation at Risk: Growing Up in an Era of Family Upheaval* (1997), 220.
6. *Divorce Busting: A Revolutionary and Rapid Program for Staying Together* (1992), 25.
7. Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially* (2000), 148–49.
8. "Why We Do Some of the Things We Do," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 54.
9. "Living Worthy of the Girl You Will Someday Marry," *Ensign*, May 1998, 51.
10. "Marriage," *Ensign*, May 1981, 15.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH



SARAH ANN AND ME

BY LESLIE ALBRECHT HUBER

Five generations ago, Sarah Ann Bean taught her daughter the gospel. Today I try to follow her example.

My first experience with family history was as a freshman at Brigham Young University, where I took an introductory class. We began with Ancestral File, a database containing thousands of names submitted by members of the Church and others. Out of curiosity, I typed in my grandmother's name. With the push of a few buttons, an entire pedigree appeared, stretching back hundreds of years. I was stunned and overwhelmed. As I looked at that chart, I wondered what I could possibly contribute. It seemed that all the temple work must already be done. Almost immediately, a clear thought came to me: "Focus on Sarah Ann Bean."

From Ancestral File, I could see that my third great-grandmother, Sarah Ann Bean,



had joined the Church in 1841 along with her entire family. Her temple work was completed. A little more investigation showed that the temple ordinances were also done for her immediate family and even for her ancestors, going back many generations. Perhaps, I thought, something has been missed or traced incorrectly. I asked my mother, grandmother, and other family members if they knew anything about Sarah Ann. Nobody did.

Over the course of the next year, I devoted a lot of time to learning about Sarah Ann. What I discovered made a lasting impact on my life in a way I had not imagined.

Learning of Sarah Ann

Sarah Ann was born October 31, 1828, in Quincy, Illinois, to James and Elizabeth Bean. Several years later when the community was flooded with destitute Latter-day Saints who had been exiled from Missouri, the Beans, like many other Quincy families, took them in. On July 12, 1841, the entire Bean family were baptized.

Soon after joining the Church, the Bean family moved to Nauvoo. Here, two months before turning 16, Sarah Ann married William Casper. About a year

later, on October 7, 1845, a daughter was born to them. During this time, tensions between the Saints and their neighbors continued to escalate. Finally, with few other options remaining, in the frigid February winter of 1846, the first Saints set off across the Mississippi River, leaving Nauvoo behind forever. A few weeks later, William, Sarah Ann, and their daughter joined the exodus.

The first stop the group made was in Council Bluffs, Iowa. That summer William was recruited to serve in the Mormon Battalion. He wrote in his journal, "There were many heartaches and tears as we made ready to leave our loved ones and friends."¹ Before departing, William told his wife: "Sarah Ann, you are in the hands of the same God as I am. May He bring us together again."² Sarah Ann stood on the dirt road crying, holding her baby, and watching her husband disappear, wondering if she would ever see him again.

While they stayed in Council Bluffs, the situation for the Casper family became desperate. Sarah Ann and her baby stayed with her mother, older sister, and two younger siblings. Sarah Ann's father was away seeking provisions for the trek west. Sickness was all around. Before long the entire family became ill. Sarah Ann's youngest sister died.

When her brother arrived home from temporary employment, he found that the family had “nothing but corn, pounded in a mortar, for food, and no one strong enough to pound it.”³

On June 13, 1847, Sarah Ann, her one-year-old daughter, and her 16-year-old brother set off across the plains in Jedediah M. Grant’s company. (The rest of the family would come later.) After a long and difficult journey, they arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on October 4, 1847. Two weeks later, William joined them, home from his service in the Mormon Battalion. When the rest of the family arrived, Sarah Ann’s mother searched desperately for her daughter in the crowd that had gathered to greet them. Her brother wrote of their reunion, “Oh, the tears of joy that were shed in that loved embrace.”⁴

Challenges continued for William, Sarah Ann, and their family. The first year, crickets ate most of the 11 acres of corn they had planted. Sometimes they resorted to boiling rawhide until it was soft enough to eat in order to save themselves from starvation.⁵ Despite the sacrifices she was required to make, Sarah Ann’s faith remained strong. She taught her children the principles of the gospel and the importance of trusting in the Lord.

Learning from Sarah Ann

In the years since I began collecting information about Sarah Ann Bean Casper, I have been able to do the temple ordinances for many deceased family members. However, none of them have been on Sarah Ann’s line. I have never found any missing or incomplete information on this family. Instead, I have realized that I was prompted to focus on Sarah Ann not because of anything I could do for her but because of what her story could do for me and my family.

OUR HERITAGE OF SACRIFICE



“Each of us has a heritage—whether from pioneer forebears, later converts, or others who helped to

shape our lives. This heritage provides a foundation built of sacrifice and faith. Ours is the privilege and responsibility to build on such firm and stable footings. . . . It is necessary to prepare and to plan. . . . Without a goal, there can be no real success. . . . Day-dreaming of the past and longing for the future may provide comfort but . . . this is the day of our opportunity, and we must grasp it.”

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “In Search of Treasure,” *Ensign*, May 2003, 19, 20.

Over the years, as I have researched family history, I have found many stories of faith and courage. Sometimes the histories of these people have been buried in time and forgotten. As I have rediscovered them, I have found an added source of strength in learning of the sacrifices they made for the gospel. When doubt or discouragement has crept into my life, I have often seen in my mind the image of a young woman, her cheeks streaked with tears, standing in the dusty road, clutching her baby as her husband walked off into the distance. Her commitment to the gospel is an enduring example to me.

There are five generations of women between Sarah Ann and me. As I have watched my two daughters grow, I have often thought of Sarah

Ann. Her story may have been lost for a time, but the effects of her teachings have endured. Generations of faithful women have continued to pass on the gospel principles that Sarah Ann embraced and taught to her children. Now I will teach my daughters these same principles. I will also teach them the story of Sarah Ann. When

challenges arise in my daughters’ lives, they can remember they are descended from a lineage of strong, believing women who have overcome seemingly insurmountable trials. I hope my daughters will someday find strength in the life of Sarah Ann as I have. ■

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NOTES

1. Journal of William Wallace Casper, as quoted in Russell R. Casper, “William Wallace Casper,” manuscript, n.d., Special Collections, Brigham Young University, 2.
2. Quoted in *Treasures of Pioneer History*, comp. Kate B. Carter, 6 vols. (1952–57), 4:436.
3. George Washington Bean, *Autobiography of George Washington Bean*, ed. Flora Diana Bean Horne (1945), 31.
4. Bean, *Autobiography*, 43.
5. See Kerry William Bate, *The Ebenezer Hanks Story* (1982), 47.



Rejoice in the Knowledge of Eternal Families



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.

The Prophet Joseph Smith: “The Great Parent of the universe looks upon the whole of the human family with a fatherly care and paternal regard; He views them as His offspring” (*History of the Church*, 4:595).

What Is God’s Plan for Families?

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “Temple work is concerned with the family, with each of us as members of God’s eternal family and with each of us as members of earthly families. It is concerned with the sanctity and eternal nature of the marriage covenant and family relationships. . . . Since every man and woman is a child of a

Heavenly Father, then each is a member of a divine family; hence, every person is his brother or sister” (“Why These Temples?” *Tambuli*, June 1992, 4; see *Ensign*, Aug. 1974, 39).

D&C 110:14–15: “Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers.”

How Can I Receive the Blessings of an Eternal Family?

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918): “Our [family] associations are not exclusively intended for this life. . . . Our affections and our desires are found fitted and prepared to endure . . . through all eternity” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* [1998], 385–86).

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “An eternal bond doesn’t just happen as a result of sealing covenants we make in the temple. How we conduct ourselves in this life will determine what we will be in all the eternities to come. To receive the blessings of the sealing that our Heavenly Father has given

to us, we have to keep the commandments and conduct ourselves in such a way that our families will want to live with us in the eternities” (“The Eternal Family,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 65).

Anne C. Pingree, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency: “When a woman chooses to have Christ at the center of her own heart, at the nucleus of her personal world, she brings the Lord into the core of her home and family, be it a family of one or a family of many. Wherever she lives and whatever her circumstances, as the heart of the home and the family, what is in each woman’s heart is reflected in the environment and spirit of her home” (“Choose Ye Therefore Christ the Lord,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 110). ■



BY DON L. SEARLE
Church Magazines

In Poland a Single Purpose



Zakopane, Poland, is a resort town, the kind of place where skiing is king in the winter and tourism fuels the economy during the summer, so residents are used to seeing people who do not fit the local mold.

Even so, townspeople strolling through the city park on a Friday afternoon slow down to gaze curiously at the young people, clustered around benches, cutting pictures out of magazines and pasting them onto poster paper.

The people in those small groups work enthusiastically, undisturbed by the curiosity of the passersby who peer over their shoulders. Their pictures cut from Church

magazines are turning into posters illustrating gospel concepts.

A day later, these 65 Latter-day Saints gather in groups around the cascades of a stream in a nearby national park, discussing the scriptural answers to gospel questions posed by a priesthood leader. That evening, they linger late in a city park roasting sausages over a fire and visiting with each other. Then in a special sacrament meeting on Sunday morning, they rise quickly one after another to bear testimony of the gospel.

They savor every spiritual moment and wring every social opportunity out of this all-Poland single adult conference because they know that when they go home, they will be once again part of only a handful of members in their cities. Many will be the lone member in a family, in an office, and perhaps in a large university.

Faces of the Church

Their faces are the faces of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Poland, where a high percentage of the members are young and single.



Agnieszka Mazinska of the Warszawa First Branch is one of those faces. An office manager for an association of Polish filmmakers, she says it is sometimes hard to be the only Church member in all of those situations: “It is hard to have friends outside the Church because they have different values. I cannot talk to them about spiritual things.” Sometimes it seems hard to stay active. But she has been doing it for 12 years now, since her baptism. Members of her family have at least come to appreciate how the gospel has shaped her, and occasionally now friends show an interest in the Church.

Members like Agnieszka are the majority in the Warsaw Poland District, says district president Robert T. Zelewski. The district has nearly 500 members in five branches spread over four cities. (Poland has approximately 1,300 members in total. There is also a district headquartered in Katowice.) President Zelewski says 60 to 70 percent of members in his district are single. There are no more than 30 families in the district that include a father, mother, and children.

His family is one of them. An executive at a Warsaw hotel that is part of an international chain, President Zelewski was

Above: Singing a hymn in a park in Zakopane. Far left: Two women listen to the speaker at a single adult conference activity. Background: Tatra Mountains near Zakopane.

converted in 1989 after meeting a Latter-day Saint couple who attended an academic conference in Poland. He could see things he admired in their lifestyle, and they introduced him briefly to the gospel. A friendship developed. They invited him to the United States to help translate a book, and he was baptized within three weeks. Within a few months he was back in Poland as a newly ordained elder. Robert Zelewski was fortunate enough to find a young woman to marry who was already a member of the Church. They were sealed in the temple, and President Zelewski believes their daughter Maja, now approaching Young Women age, was the first child born in the covenant in Poland.

Things do not work out so simply for many Polish members. The rate of unemployment is high—perhaps 20 percent—and housing can be difficult and expensive to obtain for any young couple contemplating marriage. In Polish society, some young people, desirous to get out on



Young single adults attending the conference in Zakopane, Poland, pose for a group shot just outside the entrance to Tatrzanski National Park. Right: Izabela Markiewicz.

their own, can only do so by moving into an apartment shared with several other singles.

But for Church members, the hard part may be finding a potential mate who can share their spiritual values. Not only are members few in number, but single women far outnumber men in the Church.

Choices and Tradition

There are huge risks in marrying someone who is not a member of the Church, says Izabela Markiewicz of the Katowice Branch, and she would rather be single than be married to someone who could not understand her spiritual roots.

“Iza” (to her friends) grew up religious in a country where the dominant religion is often honored in name only. When she began to look for something more and prayed to the Lord for help, He “put the missionaries in my path.” At first she had only a historical interest in the Book of Mormon. But as she began to study the gospel,

“I felt at home.” Baptized in 1994, she later served a mission in the Illinois Chicago North Mission.

Iza shares the enthusiasm of other young members for gatherings like the single adult conference. “Sometimes you need to feel the mental and spiritual comfort,” she says, of being with other members. She spent a year teaching in a primary school in Russia. There were more members in that country, and more opportunities to feel the strength of associations with Latter-day Saints, so Iza chose to go back for another year.

But she recognizes the good that the Church can do for the people of her own country. “We can give them an alternative,” she says. “We can show them you can live your life in a different way.” Members can show that it is possible to enjoy life without practices that violate the Word of Wisdom or other spiritual laws. Iza adds somewhat wistfully that she wishes Polish society were more open to change and less bound by tradition.

Marcin Dąbrowski says tradition can be a serious difficulty in family relationships when one joins the Church. Members who are alone in their families face questions like these: Why do you have to go to church *every* Sunday instead of being with the family? Why can’t you drink coffee or tea with us



making decisions, this can be difficult to explain to the family.

Overcoming Isolation

Missionaries who come from outside Poland will say Poles can be guarded and reserved with strangers, but once you come to know them, they are warm and caring. Marcin says the missionaries approached him in a way that won his friendship and trust. First, when they met him on the street, they asked him for directions they needed, giving him the opportunity to be of some help to them. As they taught him about the gospel, they patiently answered his questions or promised to get answers. And they shared their own personal experiences in gospel learning with him. Now Marcin is invited frequently to help instruct new missionaries in Polish. He tells them how important it is to be open with investigators, to acknowledge that they faced spiritual challenges of their own.



Above: A group shows the poster they made during an activity in a city park in Zakopane. Top: Marcin Dąbrowski. Background: Making a poster.

Marcin, who works at a university library in Warsaw, holds a degree in Polish literature. “The first holy scripture I read was the Book of Mormon. Then when I read the Book of Mormon, I began to read the Bible.” From the beginning, he felt the Book of Mormon was true, and he felt immediately the positive influence of gospel principles. While he did not grow up in a religious home, he says family members have now begun to recognize the differences the gospel has made in his life.

President Zelewski comments: “It amazes me when people survive these obstacles [spiritual isolation and family indifference] how strong they become.” When trips are organized for Polish members to visit the Freiberg Germany Temple, he says, the members typically ignore the attractions of sightseeing or other activities and spend every bit of time they possibly can serving in the temple. Temple excursions to Freiberg can accommodate 60 members, and last time there were 70 who wanted to go. President Zelewski had to ask some members to stay home. “That is



one of the hardest things I have had to do in my calling.”

To help strengthen the Church in his district, President Zelewski focuses on leadership. His regular monthly meetings with branch and elders quorum presidencies are aimed at training and strengthening them. “I’ve learned one thing: if the leader has the support of his wife, it is much easier to carry the load.” Life can be much harder for a single leader who has less than full support at home.

President Zelewski is a strong believer in the importance of home teaching. He and his companion, a convert from Ukraine, have helped reactivate several members of the three families they teach.

Growing in the Gospel

Henry Kosak is an educator. Reared in what was then East Germany, he is now Church Educational System coordinator for the Baltic countries, Poland, and the Dresden Germany Stake. He emphasizes the importance of daily scripture study for members in Poland who have little more than the scriptures to help them become strong in the gospel.

There are 136 potential institute students in the Warsaw district, and efforts are being made to extend the reach of the program, Brother Kosak says. “We have just 12 seminary

The young single adult conference featured a Saturday night activity at which members socialized, ate Polish sausages, and sang. Right top: Gabrysia Olszewska. Right bottom: Adrian Krajewski.

students in all of Poland.” But many members, including young single adults, have a great desire to learn the gospel in greater depth and teach it to others. Poles are very patriotic toward their country, he says, and once they become converted to the gospel, they are great patriots to God as well.

David J. Barnett, formerly an Area Seventy (2001–04), is president of the Poland Warsaw Mission. In a question-answer session with the single adults, he is asked when there might be a patriarch in their country so Polish members can more easily receive patriarchal blessings. His answer: If they will help build membership in their areas so districts can become stakes, then they will have patriarchs. He counsels them to help bring their friends into the Church and teaches about the important role of members as undershepherds to strengthen and activate others in the service of the Savior.

Many of his answers about the growth of the Church in Poland have to do with the opportunities and responsibilities of members. “I feel the Polish people will grow as they



Above right: Three members perform in a skit. Background: Young single adults take a break during a scripture study activity in Tatrzański National Park.

learn to serve,” he says, expressing certainty that they will find joy along the way as they take full advantage of spiritual direction. “The Lord needs everyone to serve and to strengthen, and in time He will answer their prayers.”

Finding Family at Church

For the many members who are the only Latter-day Saints in their social and occupational circles, without support in the home, President Barnett says the Church is the answer—the place where “they have a family” of members. The support and love they crave can be found in the branch, in the district, among their brothers and sisters in the gospel.

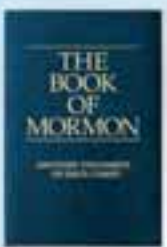
Agnieszka Mazinska’s face comes alive when she talks about the gospel and about her associations with other members. “I have decided my best friends are Church members.” She works at cultivating those friendships. “Branch members are my second family.”

Even at times when they feel isolated, members know they need not be.

“I had never thought that God could give responses, but He does,” says Adrian Krajewski, a member of the Lodz Branch who joined the Church in 2003.

Joanna Maria Manowiecka, a member of the Warszawa Second Branch, also was baptized in 2003. She says the principal difference Church membership has made in her life is in the influence of “the Spirit. I’ve never, ever felt something like this before. It’s amazing!” Joanna, known as Asia (Ash’-ah) to her friends, says her mother has been pleased with the positive difference the gospel has made. Asia looks back on her life before she found the gospel and makes this comparison: It is like being lost deep in a forest and then being given a map that leads you to the pathway out. “You just have to follow the map.”

No matter what challenges they may face at times, these young members will say they do not want to go back into that forest. They know when they look at life from an eternal perspective that following the map is the only safe and productive way to live. Says Iza Markiewicz: “The fact that you are sometimes on your own and you have to stand for what you believe makes you stronger.” ■



Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon

BY PRESIDENT EZRA TAFT BENSON

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Ezra Taft Benson was born on August 4, 1899, in Whitney, Idaho, to George T. and Sarah Dunkley Benson. After his mission to Great Britain, he married Flora Amussen on September 10, 1926. He was ordained an Apostle on October 7, 1943, by President Heber J. Grant. From 1953 to 1961 he served as Secretary of Agriculture in the cabinet of United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Elder Benson was set apart as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on December 30, 1973.

On November 10, 1985, he became President of the Church. He died in Salt Lake City, Utah, on May 30, 1994.

The following is an excerpt of a talk given in October 1988 general conference.

This has been a landmark year in the history of the Church in the use of the keystone of our religion—the Book of Mormon. This sacred volume of scripture has brought more souls to Christ, both within and without the Church, than ever before. . . .

The Book of Mormon is the instrument that God designed to “sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out [His] elect” (Moses 7:62). This sacred volume of scripture needs to become more central in our preaching, our teaching, and our missionary work.

At present, the Book of Mormon is studied in our Sunday School and seminary classes every fourth year. This four-year pattern, however, must *not* be followed by Church members in their personal and family study. We need to read daily from the pages of the book that will get a man “nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”¹

And when we are called upon to study or teach other scriptures, we need to strengthen that undertaking by frequent reference to the additional insights which the Book of Mormon may provide on the subject (see 1 Nephi 13:40; 2 Nephi 3:12). . . .

The time is long overdue for a massive flooding of the earth with the Book of Mormon for the many reasons which the Lord has given. In this age of electronic media and mass distribution of the printed word, God will hold us accountable if we do not now move the Book of Mormon in a monumental way.





PHOTOGRAPH BY JED CLARK

We have the Book of Mormon, we have the members, we have the missionaries, we have the resources, and the world has the need. The time is now!

My beloved brothers and sisters, we hardly fathom the power of the Book of Mormon, nor the divine role it must play, nor the extent to which it must be moved.

“Few men on earth,” said Elder Bruce R. McConkie, “either in or out of the Church, have caught the vision of what the Book of Mormon is all about. Few are they among men who know the part it has played and will yet play in preparing the way for the coming of Him of whom it is a new witness. . . . The Book of Mormon shall so affect men that the whole earth and all its peoples will have been influenced and governed by it. . . . There is no greater issue ever to confront mankind in modern times than this: Is the Book of Mormon the mind and will and voice of God to all men?”² We testify that it is.

Now, my good Saints, we have a great work to perform in a very short time. We must flood the earth with the Book of Mormon—and get out from under God’s condemnation

for having treated it lightly (see D&C 84:54–58). . . .

I challenge our mission leaders to show their missionaries how to challenge their contacts to read the Book of Mormon and pray about it. Missionaries need to know how to use the Book of Mormon to arouse mankind’s interest in studying it, and they need to show how it answers the great questions of the soul. Missionaries need to read with those they teach various passages from the Book of Mormon on gospel subjects.

I challenge our Church writers, teachers, and leaders to tell us more Book of Mormon conversion stories that will strengthen our faith and prepare great missionaries. Show us how to effectively use it as a missionary tool, and let us know how it leads us to Christ and answers our personal problems and those of the world.

I challenge those who are in business and other professions to see that there are copies of the Book of Mormon in their reception rooms. . . .

The Book of Mormon is the instrument that God designed to “sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out [His] elect.”





I challenge all of us to prayerfully consider steps that we can personally take to bring this new witness for Christ more fully into our own lives and into a world that so desperately needs it.

I challenge the homes of Israel to display on their walls great quotations and scenes from the Book of Mormon.

I challenge all of us to prayerfully consider steps that we can personally take to bring this new witness for Christ more fully into our own lives and into a world that so desperately needs it.

I have a vision of homes alerted, of classes alive, and of pulpits aflame with the spirit of Book of Mormon messages.

I have a vision of home teachers and visiting teachers, ward and branch officers, and stake and mission leaders counseling our people out of the most correct of any book on earth—the Book of Mormon.

I have a vision of artists putting into film, drama, literature, music, and paintings great themes and great characters from the Book of Mormon.

I have a vision of thousands of missionaries going into the mission field with hundreds of passages memorized from the Book of Mormon so that they might feed the needs of a spiritually famished world.

I have a vision of the whole Church getting nearer to God by abiding by the precepts of the Book of Mormon.

Indeed, I have a vision of flooding the earth with the Book of Mormon.

My beloved Saints, I am now entering my 90th year. I am getting older and less vigorous and am so grateful for your prayers and for the support of my younger Brethren. I thank the Lord for renewing my body from time to time so that I can still help build His kingdom.

I do not know fully why God has preserved my life to this age, but I do know this:

That for the present hour He has revealed to me the absolute need for us to move the Book of Mormon forward now in a marvelous manner. You must help with this burden and with this blessing which He has placed on the whole Church, even all the children of Zion.

Moses never entered the promised land. Joseph Smith never saw Zion redeemed. Some of us may not live long enough to see the day when the Book of Mormon floods the earth and when the Lord lifts His condemnation (see D&C 84:54–58). But, God willing, I intend to spend all my remaining days in that glorious effort. ■

Published in the Ensign, Nov. 1988, 2–9. Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling updated; endnotes added.

NOTES

1. *History of the Church*, 4:461.
2. *The Millennial Messiah* (1982), 159, 170, 179.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions, personal reflection, or teaching the gospel in a variety of settings.

1. Design a family home evening dramatizing one of the “great themes” or a story of one of the “great characters” from the Book of Mormon as suggested by President Benson. Invite family members to share personal experiences with the converting power of the Book of Mormon.

2. Display a picture of the world and then place it in a pan and pour water over it. Discuss what flooding the world means. Divide the article into sections and assign different family members to explain what their section teaches about flooding the earth with the Book of Mormon. Testify of how the Book of Mormon has affected your life and invite other family members to do the same.

3. Place one of President Benson’s challenges or visions on a poster and display it in a prominent place in your home. Decide how your family can work toward meeting the challenge. Follow up with a future family home evening, and chart your progress.

A NEW LOOK AT THE New Era



BY LARRY HILLER
Church Magazines

Here's a powerful resource that helps both teens and those who love them.

At the same time our teens are making life-shaping decisions, they are being bombarded by cultural influences that range from unwholesome to downright wicked. We try to give them wise counsel. But our youth are also going through the natural process of declaring independence, cutting apron strings, and looking more to peers and other adults for examples and advice.

As parents, teachers, and leaders of youth, we need all the help we can get. And there is a powerful ally available: the *New Era* magazine. To help provide a fresh perspective on this sometimes overlooked resource, we invited readers on lds.org to share stories about the *New Era*. Some of their responses follow.

Camille's Story

Camille Fox of Tucson, Arizona, says that when she was in middle school, she wanted to subscribe to one of the teen magazines the other girls were reading, although she knew much of the content was unwholesome. She also knew her parents would be against the idea. But, she says, "I rationalized that if I read the *New Era* from cover to cover, it would be no big deal for me to skim one of those other teen magazines on the side.

"But as I read the *New Era*, the Spirit filled my soul, and I knew where true joy and happiness come from. It helped me to feel Heavenly Father's love, gave me a greater desire to study the scriptures, and helped my testimony of Jesus Christ grow. I never asked for a subscription to one of those other magazines."

WILL THEY READ IT?

- Many teens like to feel it's their idea to read. Leave the magazine where they are likely to pick it up.
- Be familiar with the contents each month. Casually point out articles about topics you know they are dealing with.
- Use the magazine in family home evening and other teaching situations.
- Don't use the *New Era* as ammunition in a heated discussion or a discipline situation. (You might as well roll it up and swat them with it.)
- Be patient. Don't stop providing the *New Era* because they don't seem to be reading it. Many teens ignore the magazine for some time and then pick it up in a moment of crisis and find just what they need.

Nathan's Story

Nathan Craig, who now studies law at Southern Illinois University, recounts: "My two brothers and I were the only members of the Church our ages in a Kentucky town of 60,000. We looked forward to the *New Era* to see other Latter-day Saints and read their stories of staying faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Their stories inspired me to serve a full-time mission when many others did not understand why I would 'waste' two years of my young life. Those stories gave me the courage and the faith to keep the standards of the Church to qualify myself as a servant of the Lord.

"My brothers and I were the first from our small branch to serve missions in more than 15 years."

Reaching the One

Even while trying to establish their individuality, teens don't want to feel like the odd person out. They look to their peers for validation. Like Nathan, many Latter-day Saint teens turn to the *New Era* to see other young people who have the same values,

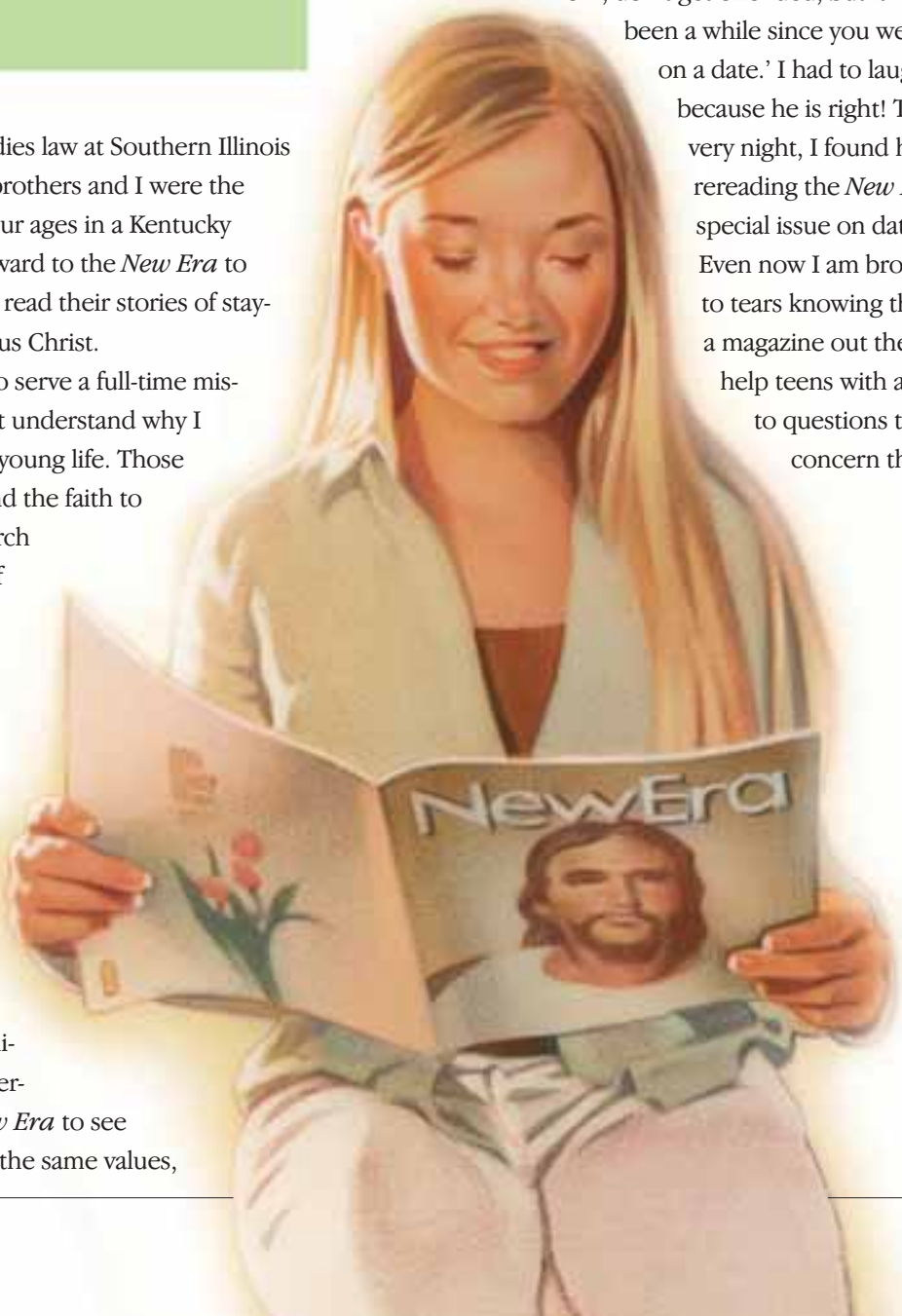
face the same challenges, and manage to remain true.

Even where the Church is more concentrated, many teens feel like loners, experiencing unique self-doubts and trials. The *New Era* holds up to youth both a window that shows others coping successfully and a mirror that helps them see their own worth.

A Friend to Parents

Our teens hear us a lot more than we think they do. But it really helps for them to hear another voice. "Jimmy has just turned 16, and dating is very much on his mind," writes Joni Grossman of Santa Monica, California. "As a single parent, I have not always had all the answers to his endless questions about dating. In fact, he recently said, 'Mom, don't get offended, but it has

been a while since you went out on a date.' I had to laugh, because he is right! That very night, I found him rereading the *New Era* special issue on dating. Even now I am brought to tears knowing there is a magazine out there to help teens with answers to questions that concern them."





Feeding Testimonies

Shelly Hawkes of Logan, Utah, reports: “The *New Era* provides resource material for my teenage son to use in family home evening. Last Monday, Harley finished a story on the power of the priesthood. I thought he was done, but he continued on to bear his testimony of priesthood power and how it blesses lives. That opened up a discussion of the situations that might give him the opportunity to bless others using the power of the priesthood he holds.”

Dale Nikolaus of Mesa, Arizona, tells of driving home with his football-playing son. “I discussed a recent *New Era* article comparing football and preparing for a mission. He sat quietly, staring out the window, not saying a word. I talked for a while and then drove quietly. While continuing to stare out the window he said, ‘Dad, keep talking. I’m listening.’ What sweeter words could a father want to hear?”

Teacher’s Aid

Teachers who read the *New Era* regularly find stories and quotations that enrich lessons and help explain principles on a teen level.

Leandra Snow, in Fresno, California, sometimes uses *New Era* articles in her early-morning seminary lessons. “The other day,”

she writes, “I was looking through the latest issue and came across the article ‘Are You Saved by Grace or Works?’ Our lesson the next day was about Paul’s epistle to the Romans, and I knew that trying to explain grace and works to my students would be challenging. I felt inspired to read this article to my students, and they, in turn, understood the principle and felt the Spirit.”

Feeling the Spirit, understanding the principles, seeing the examples of peers who live those principles—we want those things for our teens. And the *New Era* is good at helping to deliver them. ■

Read more stories about how the *New Era* has blessed lives at www.lds.org/gospellibrary, where you can also find the magazine online.

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WHAT’S IN THE *NEW ERA* THESE DAYS?

- Powerful messages from the First Presidency and other General Authorities
- The ever-popular posters
- Ideas for family home evening, devotionals, etc.
- Suggestions for activities
- Heart-warming personal stories of teens who overcome challenges
- Practical ideas on everything from personal growth and better study habits to improving family relationships
- Articles on challenging current issues: pornography, gambling, substance abuse, how to respond to those critical of the Church, and more.

Find the *New Era* online at www.lds.org/gospellibrary.



But once he stood at the pulpit, this brother's appearance was transformed in a most remarkable manner, and he immediately captured our attention. His posture became erect, almost military, although he wore no uniform or medals. His manner was that of a soldier—old, but proud. Slowly but confidently he began his compelling story.

During World War II he had served in an infantry battalion in an area where constant combat covered the earth with blood, pain, and death.

His squad was commanded by a sergeant who had earned the hatred of his men through extraordinary harshness. One terrible night a mortar shell exploded not far from the sergeant, critically wounding him. The commanding officer stopped a dilapidated truck that often passed by to pick up the wounded and dying and take them behind

N*o one wanted to help the dying sergeant. Then, after something of a pause, Brother Thamas stepped forward.*

the lines to be cared for or buried.

The squad watched the fate of their dying leader from a distance. Not one went to help him. The officer asked for a volunteer to carry the man to the truck and accompany him behind the lines. No one volunteered.

Then, after something of a pause, Brother Thamas stepped forward. "Moved by compassion," he told us,

Moved by Compassion

By Juan Aldo Leone

Brother Thamas, a thin elderly man, sat by himself, often some distance from the other members who gathered to greet each other at the beginning of our Sunday meetings. His was a small figure, humble in appearance. He had been recently baptized and had no family. His Spanish, although understandable, was a mixture of Portuguese, French, German, English, and his

native Hungarian. In brief conversations with those members who tried to fellowship him, he spoke of far-away Hungary.

One day the bishop asked him to speak for a few minutes in sacrament meeting. He was surprised but accepted. We too were surprised to hear his name announced. We prepared ourselves for a brief and simple testimony.

"I decided to carry the unfortunate fellow and go with him on his trip. I took care of him the best I could during his long and painful ride.

"I returned later in search of my squad. When I reached the front, I learned that fierce bombardment had wiped out a large number of men on the awful night of my departure. Not one man from my squad had survived apart from myself. And then I understood. I thanked God for having moved me to compassion. He saved my life and gave me a chance to hear the restored gospel."

Our simple affection for a bent old man changed to appreciation, admiration, and gratitude for his having shared an example of the pure love of Christ. ■

Juan Aldo Leone is a member of the Villa Allende Ward, Córdoba Argentina Sierras Stake.

Deer in the Headlights

By Arlene Housman

Many years ago I was returning home after dropping my husband off at school. The drive would take me through a canyon in the mountains of Utah.

I had our new baby, April, with me. This was long before infant car seats, so April lay wrapped in a blanket on a pillow in the

Not Enough for Tithing?

By Ana Cristina Merino Rivas

Shortly after I was baptized, I married a man who was not a member of the Church. He controlled all the money I earned and never let me pay tithing.

I suffered for 10 long, unhappy years, during which I could not progress. Eventually I was divorced and began to support my daughter and myself. However, what I earned was insufficient to pay for our rent, bills, food, clothes, and the other things we needed. If I had enough for one thing, I could not afford another.

One day I started to pay tithing anyway. As always I continued to plan my budget. And I began to realize that I had enough money for everything, even with the same

salary. At first I couldn't

believe what was hap-

pening. Then I read

the passage in the

Bible where the

Lord says, "Prove

me now herewith

... if I will not

open you the win-

dows of heaven, and

pour you out a blessing,

that there shall not be room

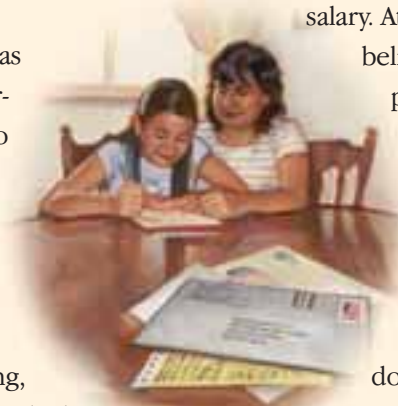
enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

I knelt down and cried unto the

Lord in gratitude. He has never

forsaken me. ■

Ana Cristina Merino Rivas is a member of the North Park Second Ward, Provo Utah North Park Stake.



front seat, her head resting on my leg.

To stay awake on this late trip I was singing the last hymn we had sung at church, "Abide with Me; 'Tis Eventide" (*Hymns*, no. 165). As I sang it started raining. When we reached

the canyon the rain turned to snow and began sticking to the pavement.

Rounding a bend on the narrow two-lane road, I found a herd of deer directly in my path.

I hit the brake, and the car slid. On

my right was the mountain, and on my left the road dropped off to the river. There was nowhere to go but straight ahead. Holding the steering wheel with one hand and grabbing my baby with the other, I got ready for impact. But to my amazement, the deer just stepped aside, allowing us to pass.

After clearing the herd, I looked in the rearview mirror. The herd hadn't frozen in the headlights or scattered—as deer normally would when frightened. They had merely backed up enough to let a little Volkswagen bug through. It felt to me like our parting of the Red Sea.





I rejoiced for the 10 miles (16 km) home, thanking God for “abid[ing] with me.”

When I arrived home and got out of the car, I realized what a tragedy it could have been and wasn’t. Tears started to flow. Even if I had hit just one deer, it could have caused serious damage to the tiny car and injury to my baby and me. The near miss had occurred five miles (8 km) from the nearest farmhouse, and we hadn’t passed any vehicles on the road through the canyon or the rest of the way home. I cried with joy, holding my baby in my arms and thanking God for protecting us from harm. ■

Arlene Housman is a member of the White River Ward, Auburn Washington Stake.

“No Mormons Allowed”

Name withheld

We had just moved to a small rural town where not many members of the Church lived. Our little branch was a friendly, close-knit group, and we

Rounding a bend, I found a herd of deer in my path. I hit the brake, and the car slid.

enjoyed each Sabbath day and the opportunity to attend church. Our only concern was for our children, who had few playmates their ages in our branch. My husband and I decided to look for ways to make friends outside of the Church so our children could have new friends and get to

know people from different faiths.

My hopes were soon dashed, however, when a local children’s group told me that because we were “Mormons,” we were not welcome in their group. I had belonged to similar groups in other areas where there weren’t many Latter-day Saints, and religion had never been an issue before. I assured the leaders of the group that I would not try to proselytize or force my religion on anyone; my family and I just wanted to make friends and meet new people. But they remained firm in their decision and did not allow us to join.

I decided that I would be kind, Christlike, and friendly to the people of this town so they would see that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are good

people. We started inviting other children over to play, inviting neighbor families to dinner, and visiting with others in an effort to get to know people. I read conference talks, Church magazine articles, and scriptures about fellowship, kindness, and serving others. Then I worked to put these principles into practice in my life. I knew if I could show the people of this town how kind and loving Latter-day Saint families can be, this group would be sure to accept us in time.

Time passed, however, and although we were able to befriend the leaders of this social group, they remained firm in their “no Mormons allowed” position.

I decided then to continue being neighborly and kind to the people in my town, but I also decided to search out a similar social group in a neighboring town. But even there I was told that Latter-day Saints were not allowed to join their group. By then I was so frustrated I wanted to cry. What was wrong with the people in these two towns? Couldn’t they see that we were a kind, fun family?

I prayed for the Spirit to guide me and help me be as friendly and Christlike as possible. I prayed that those who knew me would feel in their hearts that we were good people. I prayed they would experience a change of heart that would lead them to accept us. Still, I felt as if my prayers weren’t being answered. No matter how hard I tried, I was

unable to soften their hearts.

Then one evening I received a phone call that shattered my hopes altogether. The leaders of the group called and told me once again that my family was not welcome in their group. They were concerned that we might be expecting to join in the future because we had made so many friends in the community. They said some very hurtful things, and I cried with a broken heart. All of the dinners, service projects, cookies, and sidewalk chats had meant nothing to these people. Where had I gone wrong?

That night I prayed a heartfelt and sincere request for help in dealing with those who had such strong feelings against the Church. I felt as if I were now entitled to their favor because of my efforts, and I explained this to my Father in Heaven.

The answer was stronger than any impression I had received for quite some time: “Follow Christ.”

It confused me at first. “Yes,” I thought, “but I already do.” The cookies, the friendship, the reaching out—I was being as Christlike as I

could. Still, the only impression I received was “Follow Christ.”

I then realized that when my energies are focused on following Christ, I am not affected as much by the opinions of others. I serve them because it is right and not because it will help my image as a Latter-day Saint. I am friendly and neighborly because I feel friendly and neighborly, not because I have some self-centered reason for being friendly.

“Follow Christ” has become my motto whenever I am troubled by those who dislike us because of our faith. I now find joy in serving others regardless of their reaction to my kindness, and I am blessed for it. I did not come to earth to win the approval of others. I came here to prepare to return to my Father in Heaven, and the only way to get there is to follow the Savior. ■

The leaders of a local children's group told us that because we were “Mormons,” we were not welcome.



Creating a “Conference Basket”

As a single mom of three girls ranging from Primary age to midteens, I wanted to help them attentively watch general conference. But conference weekend usually occurs when they are at their father’s

home. Undeterred, I decided to start a tradition of making a “conference basket” for them to take with them so that I can also be part of their enjoyment of conference. Included is a special poem from me and activity booklets I create ahead of time for each daughter. I also add a variety of fun goodies—a new box of crayons, pencils, novelty erasers,

and a large bag of chocolate candies, for example.

The booklets, titled “My General Conference Report,” each contain space for jotting down notes of conference proceedings: who conducted, who gave opening and closing prayers, who sang the music, and which songs were sung. There are also pages for taking notes on each talk. The child lists the speaker and his or her Church calling, the subject spoken about, and any prominent scripture references used. These pages show simple illustrations of the conference

pulpit, prompting the children to draw each speaker, a practice that helps them to

better remember the names and faces. Additional pages often offer simple games, such as word searches and “tic-talk-toe”—all with a conference theme.

I save my booklets on the computer to make changing or reprinting them easy. But simply writing down the ideas in a notebook for your child would work too. Whether your children are with you at conference or away from home, this simple idea can



help them focus on the important messages shared.

Following each conference I am pleased to review my children's booklets. Knowing that they watched all the sessions and took notes helps me be more attentive to conference as well.

Michele T. Adams, Riverdale Fourth Ward, Riverdale Utah Stake

A Lunch Box and a Life History

For years, the thought of compiling 50 years of my life history seemed daunting—until I learned how to write brief stories about specific, cherished memories from my past.

Each memory, or vignette, takes only a few moments to write, and I don't worry about selecting them in chronological order. I simply pick my most poignant memories and write a few descriptive paragraphs. For instance, I wrote one vignette about my father's black lunch box, which has become a symbol to me of his hard work and love for our family. I described the special treats he used to leave for me inside it and included an old picture of us, showing the lunch box in hand. I was even able to create another special memory by sharing that vignette



Book of Mormon Stories

A few years ago we sharpened our family home evening focus to concentrate on the scriptures. Because we have young children, we decided to use what is now titled *Book of Mormon Stories*, an illustrated scripture reader available at Church distribution centers. To begin, my husband and I made a list of all the chapter titles. Then we reviewed the list and chose a gospel principle relating to each story. A quick search on the Church's Web site at www.lds.org produced several Church magazine articles and

Primary sharing time lessons that we could use to supplement each principle. Even without Internet access, you can simply use several of the book's supplemental features—maps, glossaries, and a time line of events—to enhance your lessons. Illustrated stories can also be found in the *Friend* magazine.

To organize the information we gathered, we made a simple schedule that shows at a glance which principle to focus on, which story to share, and where to find

additional lesson material. Our schedule fits neatly in our family home evening binder, so family members know where to find it when it's their turn to teach.

As we have studied together, not only have we learned the scriptural accounts more thoroughly, but we have also learned to apply the gospel principles taught in them.

Laura Erasmus, McKenzie Ward, Calgary Alberta South Stake

Editor's Note: Book of Mormon Stories (item no. 35666000; U.S. \$6.00) is available online at www.ldscatalog.com or by calling 1-800-537-5971 within the United States and Canada. A variety of printed languages and audiovisual options are available.



with my father shortly before he passed away.

I have also written a vignette about my mother's Monday wash-day routine and am writing stories about each of my seven children and my grandchildren. Topics such as memorable birthdays, favorite holiday traditions, and early school

memories could also jump-start anyone's writing efforts.

Thanks to family history vignettes, a task that once seemed daunting is now very enjoyable for me. And the best part is that I can do a little bit at a time.

Myrna Alta Spendlove Schwieder, Ammon Seventh Ward, Ammon Idaho Footbills Stake

President Hinckley Travels the World

President Gordon B. Hinckley visited members in seven cities and dedicated a temple in Aba, Nigeria, as he traveled around the world in July and August, adding several thousand miles to his extensive travel as Church President.

President Hinckley's meetings with members ranged from small groups gathered on airport runways to thousands of Latter-day Saints participating in cultural celebrations.

Vladivostok, Russia

While making a brief stopover for plane refueling in Russia, President Hinckley greeted 200 members at an airport in Vladivostok. President Hinckley's visit to the city was the first by a President of the Church.

"Live the gospel and establish the work in this great place," President Hinckley said to the group.

President Hinckley told the members that they reminded him of a small congregation of Saints he met in Korea 50 years ago. He said that group of Saints now numbers in the thousands and told the Russian Saints he believes that in the future, thousands of Saints would live in their town. President Hinckley said if they would be true and faithful the Lord would bless them.

Seoul, South Korea

President Hinckley spoke in Seoul, South Korea, to members gathered for a

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG HILL, CHURCH NEWS



President Hinckley attends a meeting in Korea.

regional conference. The meeting was broadcast throughout the country and to locations in the United States and Australia.

President Hinckley spoke of previous stopovers in Korea. He apologized for missing a cultural celebration involving 1,500 adult and youth performers the evening prior to the conference due to a travel mishap.

He said: "God has poured out His blessings upon this people, and the security and the peace and the well-being of this nation rests on the righteousness of the nation. I believe with all my heart that if the Saints will live the gospel they will be spared from war and other afflictions."

Taipei, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, China

While visiting in Taipei, Taiwan, and Hong Kong,

China, President Hinckley met with members, and he dedicated Church office buildings in both cities. Both buildings have chapels, classrooms, and Church office space.

In the meeting with members in Hong Kong, he described receiving inspiration about the Hong Kong China Temple being part of a multistory building; it was a pattern, he said, that was used again for the Manhattan New York Temple. President Hinckley also expressed his gratitude for the members. He said, "I just want to tell you how much I love you. You are wonderful people."

Aba, Nigeria

When President Hinckley arrived in Nigeria on August 6, the day before dedicating the Aba Nigeria Temple, Latter-day Saints in Nigeria

welcomed him by lining the street leading to the temple grounds. They also performed "The Day of Rejoicing," a cultural event to celebrate the arrival of the prophet and the completion of a new temple.

The program involved nearly 1,500 youth and children who had prepared for almost a year practicing music and dance routines. Youth from five stakes in Nigeria participated in the event. The audience, including local Church leaders, parents, and the prophet, sat on chairs or stood on a sloping hill just below the temple for the program.

The day after the cultural celebration President Hinckley dedicated the Aba Nigeria temple. The temple is the third operating temple in Africa and the Church's 121st operating temple worldwide. (See accompanying article on p. 73.)

A Million Miles

During the trip President Hinckley also met with small groups of members during brief stops in Delhi, India, and Nairobi, Kenya. He told the members during these visits to continue "keeping the faith, living the gospel, doing what they ought to do, taking care of their families, providing for them, giving them spiritual strength."

President Hinckley has traveled more than one million miles since becoming President of the Church in 1995. ■

Church News contributed to this report.



The Apia Samoa Temple was dedicated on September 4, 2005.

Members Celebrate Progress on New Temples

Apia Samoa Temple

After fire destroyed the original Apia Samoa Temple, members waited two years for a new temple to be built. Their wait ended on September 4, 2005, when a new temple was dedicated on the same ground where the original temple had stood.

The Apia Samoa Temple today has more than 16,000 square feet (1,486 m²), slightly larger than the former temple built in 1983.

After two decades of attending a temple close to their homes, members in and around Samoa said they have learned gratitude from traveling to a temple farther away for two years. While the temple was being built in Samoa, members had to travel 475 miles (760 km) to the Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple.

"I believe members now have learned to be more

appreciative of having the new temple," said Uele Va'aulu, Church public affairs representative in Samoa. "They are now more eager to do their family history and are filled with the Spirit of Elijah."

Newport Beach California Temple

The Newport Beach California Temple was

dedicated on August 28, 2005, becoming the Church's 122nd operating temple. Before the dedication more than 150,000 people attended the temple open house. Newport Beach stake president Weatherford Clayton said many visitors commented on the beauty of the temple. "I believe they can appreciate why it is an incredibly sacred building for us," said President Clayton.

With more than 770,000 Church members in California, the state has the largest population of Latter-day Saints in one state, outside of Utah. The Newport Beach California Temple is the seventh operating temple in California, serving 50,000 members.

Aba Nigeria Temple

President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the Aba Nigeria Temple on August 7, 2005. The temple is located near the Ogbor River. As part of the temple construction, the Church built a bridge over the river and a road leading to the temple.

During the dedication ceremonies, President Hinckley

said the temple would be a blessing to the people just as the Accra Ghana Temple has been to African Saints since being dedicated in 2004.

Rexburg Idaho Temple

After waiting 19 months since President Hinckley announced that a temple would be built in Rexburg, Idaho, more than 8,000 members attended the temple's groundbreaking services held on July 30.

"Members and even some nonmembers are excited the day has arrived, and they are looking forward to watching the temple go up," said Farrell Young, a Church member in Rexburg.

The Rexburg Idaho Temple will join operating temples in Boise and Idaho Falls as the third temple in Idaho. A fourth temple for Idaho was announced for Twin Falls in October 2004. The Rexburg Idaho Temple will serve 17 stakes in the area. Rexburg's temple will also serve the almost 12,000 students attending Brigham Young University—Idaho. ■



President Hinckley is greeted by members at the Aba Nigeria Temple.

Dedications Bring Operating Temples Worldwide to 122

With the recent dedications of the San Antonio Texas, Aba Nigeria, and Newport Beach California Temples, the total number of operating temples around the world has now reached 122.

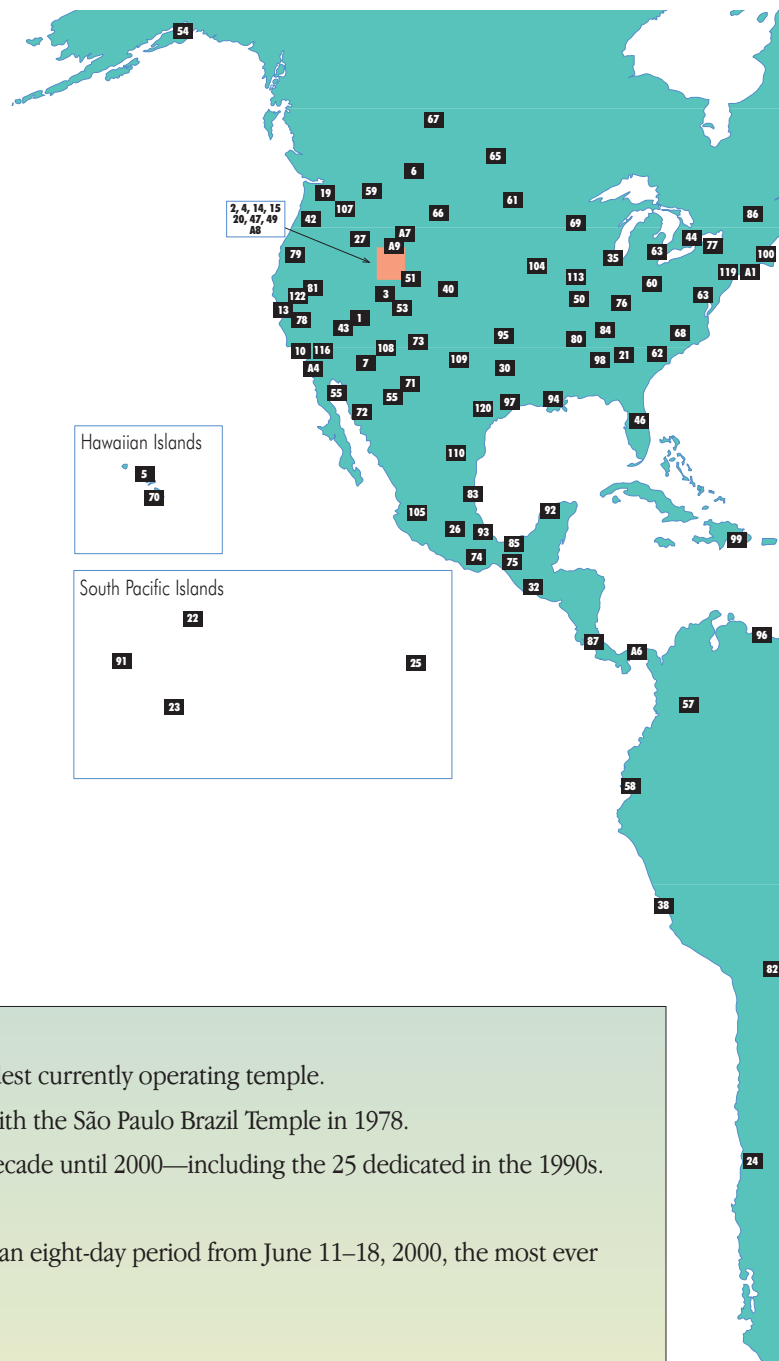
Since President Gordon B. Hinckley was called to lead the Church in 1995, the Lord has directed temple construction in a way few expected. In the last 10 years, 84 temples have been announced or dedicated—nearly double the 47 temples dedicated in the previous 118 years.

President Hinckley has said that the temple is a place where we can learn more about life after death and the purpose of this life.

“Every temple that this Church has built has in effect

stood as a monument to our belief in the immortality of the human soul, that this phase of mortal life through which we pass is part of a continuous upward climb, so to speak, and that as certain as there is life here, there will be life there,” he said. “That is our firm belief. It comes about through the Atonement of the Savior, and the temple becomes, the bridge from this life to the next” (“Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 4).

The 122 operating temples include the Apia Samoa Temple, which was rededicated on September 4, 2005, after the original structure was destroyed by fire in 2003. An additional nine temples are under construction or have been announced. ■



Temples by the Numbers

- 1877** Year the St. George Utah Temple was dedicated, the oldest currently operating temple.
- 16** Temples dedicated in the following 100 years, ending with the São Paulo Brazil Temple in 1978.
- 26** Temples dedicated during the 1980s, the most in any decade until 2000—including the 25 dedicated in the 1990s.
- 34** Temples dedicated in 2000, the most in any year.
- 4** Temples dedicated by President Gordon B. Hinckley in an eight-day period from June 11–18, 2000, the most ever in that time span.
- 6** Countries with at least one dedicated temple in 1978.
- 40** Countries with at least one dedicated or announced temple in 2005.
- 40** Years the Salt Lake Temple was under construction.
- 4** Calendar years since 1980 during which no temple was dedicated: 1982, 1988, 1991, and 1992.
- 26** Years between the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple and the Laie Hawaii Temple, the longest span between dedications among currently operating temples.
- 4** Times two temples have been dedicated on the same day since the small temple building program was announced.
- 253,015** Square footage (23,500 m²) of the Salt Lake Temple (including annex), the largest temple in the Church.
- 280** Height, in feet (85 m), of the Washington D.C. Temple, the tallest in the Church.

Temples around the World

Operating Temples, Dedication Date

- 1 St. George Utah
April 6, 1877
- 2 Logan Utah
May 17, 1884
- 3 Manti Utah
May 21, 1888
- 4 Salt Lake
April 6, 1893
- 5 Laie Hawaii
November 27, 1919
- 6 Cardston Alberta
August 26, 1923
- 7 Mesa Arizona
October 23, 1927
- 8 Idaho Falls Idaho
September 23, 1945
- 9 Bern Switzerland
September 11, 1955
- 10 Los Angeles California
March 11, 1956
- 11 Hamilton New Zealand
April 20, 1958

- 12 London England
September 7, 1958
- 13 Oakland California
November 19, 1964
- 14 Ogden Utah
January 18, 1972
- 15 Provo Utah
February 9, 1972
- 16 Washington D.C.
November 19, 1974
- 17 São Paulo Brazil
October 30, 1978
- 18 Tokyo Japan
October 27, 1980
- 19 Seattle Washington
November 17, 1980
- 20 Jordan River Utah
November 16, 1981
- 21 Atlanta Georgia
June 1, 1983
- 22 Apia Samoa
August 5, 1983
- 23 Nuku'alofa Tonga
August 9, 1983
- 24 Santiago Chile
September 15, 1983
- 25 Papeete Tahiti
October 27, 1983
- 26 Mexico City Mexico
December 2, 1983

- 27 Boise Idaho
May 25, 1984
- 28 Sydney Australia
September 20, 1984
- 29 Manila Philippines
September 25, 1984
- 30 Dallas Texas
October 19, 1984
- 31 Taipei Taiwan
November 17, 1984
- 32 Guatemala City
Guatemala
December 14, 1984
- 33 Freiberg Germany
June 29, 1985
- 34 Stockholm Sweden
July 2, 1985
- 35 Chicago Illinois
August 9, 1985
- 36 Johannesburg South Africa
August 24, 1985
- 37 Seoul Korea
December 14, 1985
- 38 Lima Peru
January 10, 1986
- 39 Buenos Aires Argentina
January 17, 1986
- 40 Denver Colorado
October 24, 1986

- 41 Frankfurt Germany
August 28, 1987
- 42 Portland Oregon
August 19, 1989
- 43 Las Vegas Nevada
December 16, 1989
- 44 Toronto Ontario
August 25, 1990
- 45 San Diego California
April 25, 1993
- 46 Orlando Florida
October 9, 1994
- 47 Bountiful Utah
January 8, 1995
- 48 Hong Kong China
May 26, 1996
- 49 Mount Timpanogos
Utah
October 13, 1996
- 50 St. Louis Missouri
June 1, 1997
- 51 Vernal Utah
November 2, 1997
- 52 Preston England
June 7, 1998
- 53 Monticello Utah
July 26, 1998

Map not to scale

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| 54 Anchorage Alaska
January 9, 1999 | 79 Medford Oregon
April 16, 2000 | 104 Winter Quarters
Nebraska
April 22, 2001 | A4 Sacramento California
April 21, 2001 |
| 55 Colonia Juárez
Chihuahua Mexico
March 6, 1999 | 80 Memphis Tennessee
April 23, 2000 | 105 Guadalajara Mexico
April 29, 2001 | A5 Curitiba Brazil
August 23, 2002 |
| 56 Madrid Spain
March 19, 1999 | 81 Reno Nevada
April 23, 2000 | 106 Perth Australia
May 20, 2001 | A6 Panamá City Panamá
August 23, 2002 |
| 57 Bogotá Colombia
April 24, 1999 | 82 Cochabamba Bolivia
April 30, 2000 | 107 Columbia River
Washington
November 18, 2001 | A7 Rexburg Idaho
December 20, 2003 |
| 58 Guayaquil Ecuador
August 1, 1999 | 83 Tampico Mexico
May 20, 2000 | 108 Snowflake Arizona
March 3, 2002 | A8 Draper Utah
October 2, 2004 |
| 59 Spokane Washington
August 21, 1999 | 84 Nashville Tennessee
May 21, 2000 | 109 Lubbock Texas
April 21, 2002 | A9 Twin Falls Idaho
October 2, 2004 ■ |
| 60 Columbus Ohio
September 4, 1999 | 85 Villahermosa Mexico
May 21, 2000 | 110 Monterrey Mexico
April 28, 2002 | |
| 61 Bismarck North Dakota
September 19, 1999 | 86 Montréal Québec
June 04, 2000 | 111 Campinas Brazil
May 17, 2002 | |
| 62 Columbia South Carolina
October 16, 1999 | 87 San José Costa Rica
June 04, 2000 | 112 Asunción Paraguay
May 19, 2002 | |
| 63 Detroit Michigan
October 23, 1999 | 88 Fukuoka Japan
June 11, 2000 | 113 Nauvoo Illinois
June 27, 2002 | |
| 64 Halifax Nova Scotia
November 14, 1999 | 89 Adelaide Australia
June 15, 2000 | 114 The Hague
Netherlands
September 8, 2002 | |
| 65 Regina Saskatchewan
November 14, 1999 | 90 Melbourne Australia
June 16, 2000 | 115 Brisbane Australia
June 15, 2003 | |
| 66 Billings Montana
November 20, 1999 | 91 Suva Fiji
June 18, 2000 | 116 Redlands California
September 14, 2003 | |
| 67 Edmonton Alberta
December 11, 1999 | 92 Mérida Mexico
July 8, 2000 | 117 Accra Ghana
January 11, 2004 | |
| 68 Raleigh North Carolina
December 18, 1999 | 93 Veracruz Mexico
July 9, 2000 | 118 Copenhagen Denmark
May 23, 2004 | |
| 69 St. Paul Minnesota
January 9, 2000 | 94 Baton Rouge Louisiana
July 16, 2000 | 119 Manhattan New York
June 13, 2004 | |
| 70 Kona Hawaii
January 23, 2000 | 95 Oklahoma City
Oklahoma
July 30, 2000 | 120 San Antonio Texas
May 22, 2005 | |
| 71 Ciudad Juárez Mexico
February 26, 2000 | 96 Caracas Venezuela
August 20, 2000 | 121 Aba Nigeria
August 7, 2005 | |
| 72 Hermosillo Sonora
Mexico
February 27, 2000 | 97 Houston Texas
August 26, 2000 | 122 Newport Beach
California
August 28, 2005 | |
| 73 Albuquerque New Mexico
March 5, 2000 | 98 Birmingham Alabama
September 3, 2000 | | |
| 74 Oaxaca Mexico
March 11, 2000 | 99 Santo Domingo
Dominican Republic
September 17, 2000 | | |
| 75 Tuxtla Gutiérrez Mexico
March 12, 2000 | 100 Boston Massachusetts
October 1, 2000 | | |
| 76 Louisville Kentucky
March 19, 2000 | 101 Recife Brazil
December 15, 2000 | | |
| 77 Palmyra New York
April 6, 2000 | 102 Porto Alegre Brazil
December 17, 2000 | | |
| 78 Fresno California
April 9, 2000 | 103 Montevideo Uruguay
March 18, 2001 | | |

New Online Training Available

New interactive training available at www.lds.org uses e-learning technology to train members serving in Church callings. Online training is currently available for Church record keepers, Primary teachers, and Young Women leaders. Topics include learning to manage unit finances and membership records, teaching children reverence and appropriate behavior in Primary, and using Personal Progress.

The training lessons are presented in a downloadable slide show format and have been posted on the Internet to increase availability to members. Each slide show requires between 15 to 30 minutes to complete. Slide shows include video and audio clips, printable application questions, practice scenarios, interactive dialogues, and tables and charts with suggestions related to the training topic.

- Announced or under Construction, Announcement Date**
- A1 Harrison New York
September 30, 1995
 - A2 Kiev Ukraine
July 20, 1998
 - A3 Helsinki Finland
April 2, 2000

Training Clerks and Auditors

Eleven slide shows are available in English for clerks and local unit leaders learning to record and manage unit finances and membership records. Currently, German and Spanish translations of some of the lessons are available. The lessons will eventually be translated into 12 other languages: Cantonese, Dutch, French, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Swedish, and Tongan. Translations will be posted online as they become available.

The lessons mimic the personal training a newly called priesthood holder with record-keeping responsibilities might receive from his predecessor. A narrator guides each of the lessons, periodically asking viewers to answer questions, take notes, or participate in interactive learning activities.

Six of the lessons address the roles of bishops, stake presidents, stake auditors, stake audit committees, and stake and ward clerks in caring for historical, financial, and membership records. Other lessons discuss “how to” procedures for processing weekly donations, handling expenses, and updating membership records using the Member and Leader Services software.

By examining interactive forms and watching choreographed charts, clerks and auditors learn how to properly complete data fields on Church records and how to support their local priesthood leaders by keeping accurate records. Along with the lessons, clerks and auditors can



The Church is using the Internet to provide interactive training.

download a 22-page question-and-answer sheet. The list of more than 60 questions and answers covers many of the basic questions that clerks and auditors ask upon beginning their callings.

To view this lesson, click on “Serving in the Church” listed in the left column at www.lds.org, click on “Melchizedek Priesthood,” then “Record-Keeping and Auditing Training.”

Teaching Children Reverent Behavior

Six slide shows in English provide teachers and leaders suggestions for overcoming common behavior concerns many Primary teachers face.

Topics covered by the training include dealing with disruptive and inattentive students, setting rules for acceptable Primary behavior, caring for students with special needs, responding positively to negative behaviors, talking to disruptive children, and using ward resources to encourage reverence.

Each lesson uses a real-life

scenario to describe suggested approaches to teaching appropriate behavior.

For example, one segment shares Sister Pond’s approaches to dealing with a disruptive student. Sister Pond learns that teaching Primary means becoming an example to the children as well as teaching lessons. Viewers watch as Sister Pond obeys promptings from the Spirit to enhance preparation for her lesson and prayers for her students. The online training pauses several times to ask viewers how they would respond in Sister Pond’s situation.

To view this lesson, click on “Serving in the Church” listed in the left column at www.lds.org, click on “Primary,” then “Help Children Behave Appropriately.”

Using Personal Progress

Eight slide shows in English are now available online to help leaders and parents encourage young women to use Personal Progress to remain temple

worthy and prepare to become future leaders, wives, mothers, and homemakers.

The set of lessons opens with a video clip from Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He relates the Savior’s parable of the 10 virgins and teaches of the importance of preparation. In the same slide show, viewers can click on a map of seven areas around the world to hear young women testify about how Personal Progress helped them prepare for the future.

In another lesson, viewers observe a conversation between Sister Chan, a Young Women leader, and Lin, a young woman in her class. Viewers review how Sister Chan learned and recognized Lin’s interests and helped Lin set Personal Progress goals that matched her interests. At the end of the lesson, visitors are asked to apply the lesson’s principles to members of their own class.

A conversation in another lesson teaches leaders how to meet with parents and introduce the Personal Progress program. Viewers watch a ward Young Women president ask Maria about her future goals and then suggest how Personal Progress could help her reach those goals.

Other topics addressed in the lessons are how to modify a value experience, how to use Mutual to support Personal Progress, how Young Women leaders can gain a testimony of Personal Progress by earning their Young Womanhood Recognition award, and how to encourage young women to continue setting

Personal Progress goals.

To view this lesson, click on "Serving in the Church" listed in the left column at

www.lds.org, click on "Young Women," then "Encouraging Young Women to Work on Personal Progress." ■

Online Braille Resources Opens "New Era" for the Visually Impaired

By Chad Phares, Church Magazines

There was a time when Nolan Crabb of the Jefferson City Ward, Columbia Missouri Stake, rarely commented on anything out of the manual during priesthood meeting. When he did, it wasn't because he had read it.

But that was before the Church introduced downloadable and printable Braille curriculum on www.lds.org.

Now Brother Crabb, who has been blind since birth, is able to search the manual using a specialized computer about the size of a laptop. He uses the device to read downloaded curriculum during class.

"This is just about as revolutionary as the Gutenberg press," Brother Crabb said, comparing the way modern technology has opened scriptures to the blind with the way early printing equipment opened the Bible to the masses.

Thanks to the online Braille resources that the Church introduced last year, Brother Crabb and many other Church members who are visually impaired have easy access to the curriculum and scriptures that many members have had for years.

"With new technology,

we knew providing Braille resources online was a possibility," said Doug Hind of Special Curriculum.

In addition to the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price, Braille versions of the *Friend*, *New Era*, and *Ensign* are also available online. Each First Presidency Message and Visiting Teaching Message since August 2004 can be found as well.

"This is a great blessing for those who have the technology," Brother Hind said.

In addition to having easier access to Church curriculum, people can save storage room with online Braille resources. Because Braille type requires more space than regular type, books in Braille are larger. The Braille Book of Mormon alone is five volumes long.

"I teach Sunday school, and I tell my children to bring their scriptures," said Don Mitchell, of the Columbia Heights Ward, Vancouver Washington Stake. "But I can't bring mine because if I did, I'd have to carry them around on a cart."

Although Brother Mitchell doesn't own a special device from which he can read Braille, he is able to choose

the curriculum he wants to bring to church and print it on an embossing printer, thus eliminating the need to lug bulky books.

The Church is currently prioritizing what curriculum

material to post online in Braille. Meanwhile, visually impaired members are excited for what is to come.

"It's a whole new era for people who are blind," said Brother Crabb. ■

New Web Site Features Joseph Smith's Life, Mission

By Walter Cooley, Church Magazines

The life and mission of Joseph Smith are the subjects of a new Church Web site featured at www.josephsmith.net. Presented in a multimedia format, the site is a compilation of history, art, and academic research about the Prophet's life, the places he lived, and the events he influenced.

The Church has launched the site during the bicentennial year of the Prophet's birth to increase members' access to commentaries, testimonies, and artwork about the Prophet. Much of the information was previously unavailable online.

"Josephsmith.net takes the most authoritative statements about the role of the Prophet in restoring the gospel and consolidates them into one location," said Steven Olsen, assistant managing director of the Church's Family and Church History Department.

Content on the site is divided into five sections that detail Joseph Smith's mission as a prophet to restore the Church, the historical events of his life, and comments from Joseph Smith's contemporaries.

The "Mission of the Prophet" section includes information on seven important events and blessings of the Restoration, such as temples, the translation of the Book of Mormon, and the restoration of priesthood authority.

In the "Life of the Prophet" section, visitors can choose one of 14 categories describing time periods in Joseph's life, including his call from God, his trials and persecutions, his marriage to Emma Smith, his role in temple building, and his Martyrdom.

The "Witnesses of the Prophet" section includes 45 testimonies, including statements from all 14 Presidents of the Church since Joseph Smith and testimonies from the present First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Sections contain six tabs that allow visitors to navigate extra resources: quotes about Restoration events from Joseph Smith and his contemporaries; responses on why each event is significant; and a list of further readings from the scriptures, Church curriculum, and academic papers. Each section also has a multimedia slide show displaying

images of the Prophet's letters or journal entries and artists' depictions of Restoration events, places, and people.

Brother Olsen said the site is designed in multiple layers to allow members to research according to the degree of information they need. The site includes a topical search function to help visitors easily locate quotes or statements.

Josephsmith.net also features 21 virtual tours of Church history sites, including the Sacred Grove; the Peter Whitmer home, where the Church was organized in 1830; and the room at Carthage Jail where Joseph and Hyrum Smith were martyred in 1844. The virtual tours were included so that members who may never be able to visit

the sites can see the locations of the Restoration.

The site, created by the Family and Church History Department, is just the beginning of attempts to increase members' access to information from the Church's library and historical archives.

Many of the scanned images of the Prophet's original writings were available only upon special request at the Church archives in Salt Lake City. Previously, only a handful of authorized visitors saw these documents each year. Brother Olsen said he anticipates additional original-document images will be added to the site in the future.

"This is the best site to get information on the Prophet and his role in the Restoration," said Brother Olsen. ■

Comment

A Sacred Gift

Thank you for your July 2005 article "The Body, a Sacred Gift." For more than seven years an eating disorder has been the lens through which I see my body. My battle to turn to the Lord and the healing power of the Atonement was considerably aided by your article and its timing. I appreciate your constant sensitivity to today's problems and your courage in addressing them.

Name Withheld

"Strengthening Future Mothers"

I am currently serving as a bishop, and I wanted to let you know how much I

appreciated the article "Strengthening Future Mothers" in the June 2005 *Ensign*. We have had discussions about this article in our ward, and it has had a beneficial impact here. I appreciate the tone of the article and the specific messages it presented.

James N. Ricks, Highland 21st Ward, Highland Utah South Stake

Inner City Hope

I want to thank you for the article "Building Hope in the Inner City" (Aug. 2005). I was born and raised in East St. Louis, and the article gave me hope for the city. My family moved out of East St. Louis in the early '70s. I joined the Church with my husband in 1979 in

Minnesota. The article made me proud to have been from East St. Louis. I hope I will be able to visit and see the chapel there.

Cathy Whiteside Johnson, Pietown Branch, Eagar Arizona Stake

Shayla's Helper

Thank you so much for the inspirational article on helping children with special needs in your August issue ("Embracing Members with Special Needs"). I have been called to be "Shayla's helper" during Primary, and it is the most humbling calling I have ever held. Shayla has many health problems and is in a wheelchair. My being Shayla's helper allows her mother and father to have their own callings because Shayla needs constant care. Sometimes when Shayla is ill and not able to go to church, I go to her home after sacrament meeting to be with her so her mother and father can attend their meetings.

Shayla is an amazing daughter of God, and He loves her so much. Shayla's Primary class includes her in activities during class time and Sharing Time. It is wonderful to see how kind and loving the other children are toward her. Without knowing it, Shayla teaches others about compassion, patience, long-suffering, and other virtues needed in this earth life.

Your article inspired me to try to do more for Shayla. She has taught me so much, and I love her as my own.

Annette Tucker-Matkin, River Fifth Ward, South Jordan Utah River Stake

Call for Articles

Members are invited to submit personal accounts that

demonstrate the power of gospel principles in overcoming spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, or social challenges. These accounts may touch hearts or reflect a dramatic situation, but all should bear testimony in a powerful way of how the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the application of gospel principles can change lives. Stories of conversion, activation, family history, challenges with children, dealing with the death of a loved one, challenges with health, divorce, overcoming addictive behaviors, or stories of survival are all possible topics.

Send 1,000–2,000 word responses by June 20, 2006 to *Ensign* Editorial, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150–3220, USA, or to cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org. Clearly mark your submission "Narrative," and at the top of your submission, write your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and ward and stake (or branch and district).

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



MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

O C T O B E R 2 0 0 5

But he wasn't happy. To read about how the Lord answered the prayers of Patrick and his family, see page 28.

Flooding the Earth

In 1988 President Ezra Taft Benson challenged Church members

to fulfill the Lord's commandments regarding the Book of Mormon. "We must flood the earth with the Book of Mormon—and get out from under God's condemnation for having treated it lightly (see D&C 84:54–58)." To read President Benson's landmark address, see the Gospel Classic on page 60.

Keys of the Priesthood

"Why is it important that bearers of the priesthood prepare to serve with power?" asks Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Because the priesthood is of eternal significance. . . . Those who hold priesthood keys need to understand how to use those keys wisely and righteously." See page 40.

Myths about Mental Illness

Does someone you know suffer from a mental illness? Chances are, the answer is yes. Elder Alexander B. Morrison, formerly of the Seventy, discusses seven common myths and misconceptions about mental illness that can often bring pain and prejudice. See page 31.

Home Teachers,

Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 53.

Strengthening Your Marriage, Your Family

- A wedding in the temple may mean nothing if you can't help your marriage succeed in mortality. Learn some ways to make sure your marriage really is eternal—beginning now. See "Eternal Marriage Begins in Mortality," page 45.

- This month's "Strengthening the Family" explores the idea that husbands and wives are obligated to help each other as equal partners in their sacred responsibilities as fathers and mothers. See page 8.

- Are your home evenings a joyful family time? A few readers tell how they have made family home evening the most rewarding evening of the week in "Family Home Evening: It's a Matter of Time," page 10.

Money or Mission?

Patrick Gill wasn't sure he wanted to go on a mission. He had a great job, a new car, and everything he wanted.

It's a Wonderful Gift

And it's going to arrive, free, with your December *Ensign*. It's the classic *Mr. Krueger's Christmas*, starring Jimmy Stewart.

This 25th anniversary DVD version is newly remastered with improved picture and sound to enhance the music of the Tabernacle Choir. This short, heartwarming film is ideal for viewing with those you'd like to receive the gospel message.

Plan now to share this experience with others. In fact, why not share the whole *Ensign* experience with them? In the United States and Canada, you can order gift subscriptions at www.ldscatalog.com or by calling 1-800-537-5971. Subscription orders received by October 26 will begin with the December issue. Outside the United States and Canada, please order through your nearest Church distribution center or your ward magazine representative.

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MAY NOT BE COPIED

Back o' Hill Road, Stirling, Scotland, by Diane Dean

As a missionary in Scotland in 1898, David O. McKay noticed the stone plaque in the upper right corner of this building. He found inspiration in the words carved there—"What-e'er thou art act well thy part"—and said, "That was a message to me that morning to act my part well as a missionary."



*“The little things are the
big things sewn into the family
tapestry by a thousand threads
of love, faith, discipline,
sacrifice, patience, and work.”
See President James E. Faust,
“A Thousand Threads of Love,”
p. 2.*